



6 October 2010

***Titanic* Centenary Cruise to help modern seafarers around the world**

One hundred years on, modern seafarers around the world are set to benefit from a new charity partnership between the Titanic Memorial Cruise and the Mission to Seafarers.

The first cruise ever to recreate the voyage of the Titanic will sail on 8 April 2012, coinciding with the centenary of the sinking of the iconic vessel. A contribution will be made to the charity for every passenger who has booked to travel.

The Mission to Seafarers, which has Her Majesty The Queen as patron, and HRH The Princess Royal as president, was set up in 1856 to provide practical and spiritual support for merchant crews in the heyday of Britain's maritime empire. Today, it operates in more than 230 ports all over the world, offering welfare services and centres for the globe's 1.2 million mariners.

Miles Morgan, managing director, The Titanic Memorial Cruise, said: "People from all over the world were on board the Titanic so we wanted to find a maritime charity partner who works globally to reflect the fact that the disaster touched so many different nations. As well as a donation per passenger we are looking at a variety of other fundraising activity."

"We're proud to be the charity whose work around the world will benefit from such a unique voyage. Over 95 per cent of the world's food, clothing and goods travels by ship, so without brave seafarers of all nationalities, half the world would freeze and the other half starve. The *Titanic* story speaks across horizons and generations, reminding us all that the ocean is a dangerous power, and that those who sail it are vulnerable human beings engaged in one of the planet's most perilous jobs", said Revd Tom Heffer, Secretary General of the 154-year old charity.

In 1912, the Mission to Seafarers had a close connection with the *Titanic*. On the morning that the 'unsinkable' ship sailed, the Mission's chaplain and lay reader in Southampton were among the last to come ashore, having visited all parts of the vessel, spending time 'in quiet talks' and prayer with members of the crew, many of whom would shortly go down with their ship.

The Revd Canon Huw Mosford, the Mission to Seafarers' director of chaplaincy, will lead a special memorial ceremony on board the *Balmoral* on 15 April 2012 starting at 11.40pm, when the *Titanic* struck the iceberg 100 years ago.

There will also be a Mission to Seafarers exhibition on board *Balmoral*, including extracts from the Annual Report from 1912, never seen before in public, making reference to the Chaplain's visit the morning the ship sailed from Southampton.

The Balmoral Cruise Liner is operated by Fred Olsen Cruise Lines. It has been chartered for the event by ABTA-bonded Miles Morgan Travel, which specialises in cruise and luxury holidays.

Relatives of those who lost their lives on the great ship, authors, historians and people who are just fascinated by the Titanic story have already booked to travel on the centenary cruise.

The ship will sail with 1,309 paying passengers, exactly the same number that sailed on the Titanic.

For more information about the cruise visit www.titanicmemorialcruise.co.uk or to book call 01934 525584.

Ends

About The Mission to Seafarers:

Officially founded in 1856 as The Missions to Seamen, The Mission to Seafarers dates back to 1835 when John Ashley, an Anglican priest, started visiting ships at anchor in the Bristol Channel. Unlike Royal Navy sailors, who benefited from having their own chaplains, the merchant sailors had no welfare services. Ashley was so moved by their isolation and neglect that he relinquished his living to visit them aboard their ships and offer pastoral and practical care.

Through a global network of staff and volunteers, today's Mission still helps far-from-home seafarers, many from the world's poorest nations, offering support and assisting them in emergency, shipwreck, or abandonment in foreign ports.

Piracy, loneliness, danger, storms, and separation from loved ones are some of the problems routinely encountered by the planet's 1.2 million working seafarers. Night and day, in more than 230 ports around the globe, the Mission offers care and assistance for mariners of all ranks, nationalities and belief.

The Mission staff visit ships in ports when seafarers are prevented from going ashore by berthing duties, or by security or immigration regulations. It also runs centres which provide

'a home away from home'. Here seafarers, many on year-long contracts, can contact their faraway loved ones, request assistance with translation, or financial or legal problems, and get a break from isolation and the demanding routines on board ship.

For further information:

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