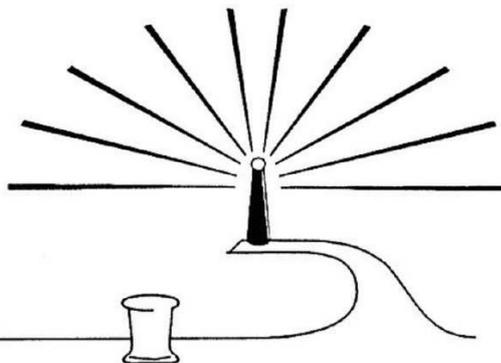


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Newsletter

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From the desk

It is always a great joy to tell in our Bulletin about the nice experiences. We are grateful for the good co-operation with (among others) the Seaman's Centre in Amsterdam, Global Recordings Network in the Netherlands, the Bible Society and the Pocket Bible League.

In this newsletter we start with the Annual Report for 2015. We want to thank all of you very warmly, who support this work in prayer and financially! On the website you can see a more detailed financial report.

From the treasurer

In 2015 the gifts and donations received were less compared with the year before in 2014. More than 700 Tagalog Bibles (the most common language spoken in the Philippines) have been bought. The reason for this was an urgent demand for them on the ships. Not only crewmembers had asked for them but also small gospel communities on board the Cruise ships had a wish for Bibles so as to be able to loan them to guests and inquirers. Every year money is given out for Christmas parcels containing special and useful gifts for the crews on the large Cargo ships. The contents of the parcels are mostly paid for by the volunteers themselves. Also many long evenings were used by dear people knitting woollen caps. The wrapping and the special bags and related costs of the many Christmas parcels are for the Mission.

On our financial balance Sheet is a post called: remaining expenses. Noted here you find the costs for a new Internet address. It is registered as: www.havenlicht.com and we think that this shorter address will be much better to remember and give easier access to it.

As Het Havenlicht mission we are being helped by a constant group of supporters. The majority of them donate a gift at least twice a year. We are really grateful for this and we hope that you will be behind us again supporting this work in the Dutch ports in the year 2016.

Jan Gooier, Treasurer

The IJmuiden region

Visiting the Cargo ships demands much climbing and it is an effort carrying things. You always have a heavy bag



with Bibles with you and literature. You sometimes have to be an acrobatic in order to keep your balance (one hand for the ship and one hand for yourself). Also a must is ,to have the least possible contact with greasy steel cables or grimy ships parts. Sometimes you succeed in this but other times not. For the most part the Bulk carriers with their cargoes of coal or iron ore are real filthy. In addition to visiting the ship comes the effort of climbing up the 40 step gangway hanging alongside. Once on deck there is the Bridge with its many stairways, sometimes 8, before you come to the captain's quarters. Often it is not easy after all that climbing when gasping for breath, to explain to the captain who we are and what the purpose of our visit is. With most ships it is not clear of what nationality the crew is. This means that you

have to climb down the 40 steps of the gangway again before you know in what language the Bibles or literature needs to be brought up. You can imagine that being in a good physical condition is a priority here. Fact is that when you visit ships ,a good condition comes to you for free!

Last Autumn I had to go to Hospital for surgery. In the weeks after I wasn't allowed to drive or carry heavy things. Because of these restrictions the ship visitation program in IJmuiden had come to a halt. But in December we had a free hand again. Anneke had prepared many Christmas parcels and we were able to make many sailors happy. Port missionaries know that around Christmas the sailors are more open to the message of the Lord Jesus. The people are longing to be with their families back home, especially at that time. Many sailors ask us to pray for them and their family members who are mostly living on the other side of the world.

Ten years ago the Lord called us to start with this fine work among seamen, in co-operation with Harbourlight Port mission. In all those years it happened only once or twice that we didn't get permission to come aboard a ship and rarely was our offer of Bibles, biblical literature and warm clothing refused, but it did happen last week. It was on a large Bulk carrier with an Indian crew. After a short introduction on my part the person on duty, a First Officer, reacted by saying in perfect English: "With all respect Sir, but we will not take any Bibles or such as we



are all Hindus". Well, that was clear language. I wished him Good Day and in my mind I shook the dust off my feet. But in general, over the years, we nearly always meet friendly people. They are happy to welcome unexpected visitors on board, to later receive Bibles, CD's with Christian music and some brochures called: a letter for you, all in their own language. But on the other hand, sailors also meet people that want to do business with them, wanting to earn some money, but with us that is not so.

Countless times we have prayed with and for sailors, young and old, from the ship's Master to the young cook's mate. It is sometimes on a one to one basis but at other times standing in a circle holding hands, be it in the Mess room or on deck. It so happens that ten men are present and after the AMEN they have tears

in their eyes. It is especially Anneke who has a fine feeling for such a need among the men. This also happens when we open our bags with used clothing and woollen hats. They are empty in no time. Spiritual needs and practical needs go hand in hand.

Jan and Anneke Best

Rotterdam 1

John the mess room man stayed behind after that the other seafarers had gone back to their tasks. "Can I have a Bible in my language?" So often, when things are quiet in the Mess room there is a chance to have a good talk. On deck of another ship: a Rumanian sailor is so surprised when accepting a brochure called "The Bridge". "It is in my own language!" Sometimes it is busy in the Control room, also this time. A sailor from Italy (Luca) asks; "What if I do things that aren't right?" I answered: "When you come to Him as you are, He will never turn you down but will welcome you because you have come to Him." He was happy to receive the Gospel of Luke (Luca), just like his name. He then tells me it is needful for him to read this "evangelio". He is all smiles now.

On a ship with a Russian crew the Officer on the Bridge shares with me in a soft voice that he is also a believer. The other crewmembers are not interested in my coming. We were there for encouragement of the Russian Officer who accepted a Bible, wanting to place it in the Mess room.

When boarding still another ship, the sailor on deck asked me why I wanted to come on board. He checked me out in a rather critical manner. After the promise that I wanted present the captain with a bottle ship, he gave me permission to come aboard this small boat. Besides talking to this Russian I also spoke to Ian from the Philippines who was so happy with our conversation. He was so encouraged.

Just like on this ship, we so often hear that people are surprised to see "someone" come aboard. They in a certain way expect from us to bring an encouraging word. They really are in need of a good word for they miss out on so many things. The literature, mostly tracts, are being read on the spot with a serious attitude.

It is God who began a good work in us all! Thank you for interceding for the sailors.

With hearty greetings,

Wout de Vries.

Between the Waves

Floating house of prayer, the Offshore Crane ships. Depending on what person is in what shift on board the



Hermod, sometimes four meetings can be arranged for prayer, worship and Bible study. When there are musicians among us, we have “live “meetings in the proper sense of the word. This season the Hermod was a few months on location in Congo and we now have 20 Congolese workers on board. A number of them attend the meetings with us. For every one present we had new material available to encourage living the life-with-the –Word (Bible’s, DVD’s and tracts in French). It later became clear that their actual language was Lingala, an important native tongue.

A new way to spread the Gospel is in the off-line sharing of the free on-line WEB- content, especially where Bibles are forbidden (Malaysia) or where DVD players and Internet is not available; but very much

present are the Mobile Telephones. The Jesus film for instance can be shared within 2 minutes between two telephones.

A nice testimony came from a sailor on the offshore tender Surfer 2606: he had watched the Jesus film at home with all his relatives. Friends around the neighbourhood were also present. At the same time and in Gods time, the outreach to the Asians on board continues . We can see more and more Chinese Malaysians taking an interest in the Gospel. Most Malaysian Christians are from Sarawak and speak the Iban language. The people from Western Malaysia are mostly Muslims and the Government is very strict there. However, an elderly Iban sailor commented: “On our ship it is where Muslims come to Jesus!”.

Now it is of importance that Christians live according to the Word and to do this we encourage one another. Joel who for ten years has been giving Bible studies, is also present here on board and is leader of the meetings held after the 6-18 Watch. Also persons from the “Client” are present there. This is of great importance, because before God we are all the same and so in the meetings where we come together in His Name, there are men from all ranks and positions . Come to think of it, only under God’s guidance can this be done.

At the present moment the Balder is moored at the Caland Channel, west of Rotterdam. On board the Pipe-laying installation is being installed/constructed again. It will take 7 months to realise this and extra personnel has been taken on. Imagine, among these are old acquaintances of mine are fervent prayer-supporters who have held prayer-meeting aboard the Hermod since 2014. Now they have set their minds on doing the same thing here. To help them we quickly brought a box of Bibles, films and song sheets on board. Finding a place to meet is rather difficult for the Management is not so in favour of Gospel meetings among the crew. But in someone’s cabin the first meetings have already taken place. We also plan to take people to the meetings of the Fire Church in



Rotterdam on a regular basis. Our usual gathering for the people on Watch after the 00-12 to 12-24 shift hasn’t been planned yet.

As a last remark : the Christian witness to Western unbelievers continues on, be it in a subtle way. In the Control room for instance, on the PC screen we had playfully placed some images referring to Joseph from the Bible. It was meant to remind the people of the actuality of God’s Word. The men here mostly have the idea that religion is just traditional and ritual . I believe that in just sharing with people that God created heaven and earth can be a means of working the miracle of faith in someone. Our faith troubles the average Atheist for he cannot gather how a highly trained

Nautical Engineer can become a believer. It keeps gnawing at his mind till (hopefully) a hole appears in the wall.

Michiel Kramers

Amsterdam

We can report about so many things that have happened but for reason that we must keep it brief, I want to only write about three things that we have experienced. We received a phone call to come and visit a Captain. In order to fulfil this wish Yvonne and I drove directly to this ship and the Pilipino Captain received us in a cordial way. This captain holds a weekly Bible study for his crew. He mentioned that everybody is present then, except the crewmen on duty.

We put him in contact with our colleague in Manilla on the Philippines, encouraging him with this. In leaving we prayed for him. It was nice to also briefly meet a Rumanian sailor there. Because he didn't have a Bible we were



happy to present him with one. That's logical, isn't! Some days later we again received a phone call to visit a ship. This time it was the First Officer contacting us. Soon after we climbed the gangway of this huge ship, a tanker. This Officer also was a Bible-study group leader, meeting with his colleagues. It was good to have spent some time there allowing us ample time to pray for and with a number of seamen. With some we are still in contact.

On December 24 a church service was held in the Seamen's Centre in Amsterdam where also 8 co-workers of our Port mission The Harbourlight were present. The Hall was packed and it was great that we could have a part in it. Many thanks for all your faithful prayers and other tokens of fellowship.

Theo and Yvonne van Zuilekom

Rotterdam 2

It is with a grateful heart that we can look back on the year behind us. There are many reasons to praise the Lord



for. Reason No.1 is my new co-worker René Reifel from Germany. He arrived last September to re-enforce our team. For years I have been praying for this. We could use at least 10 full-time workers, for every day around a hundred ships enter the port of Rotterdam. Reason No.2 to be thankful for is my great team. It is so great to work together with Wout de Vries and other team members. We do the port mission work as best as we can and God leads and blesses us every time we visit the ships. Reason No.3 is the very successful Christmas-parcel-drive we held last year. In 2014 we had the privilege to hand out 850 parcels. In 2015 this has risen to 1200 parcels! This could be realised thanks to the help of many faithful supporters in Germany and Holland.

Every parcel is not only a tangible evidence to show God's love but is also a chance to further the Gospel. Also in every parcel Christian literature is enclosed and in handing them out, we had some good talks.



On a large Container ship we had the opportunity to present the Gospel to a First Officer from Greece. On the same ship we met sailors from Zanzibar in Tanzania. Another sailor, Isa, I had met before on two different ships. When he heard we were coming, he quickly came down the gangway to give me a big hug. He has a New Testament in which he reads a lot. On another big Container ship we talked for three hours with two Muslim men. One was from Egypt and the other one was from India. They asked us many questions and we could explain the Gospel to them. The Egyptian sailor joyfully accepted a Bible in Arabic. Time and again God gives us such conversations and meetings.

Not only to pass on the Good News but also to encourage believing Christians. On one Container ship we met a young Philippino believer and he was so glad to see us. We sat there for at least 2 or 3 hours chatting and answering questions. He was hungry for the Word of God and in the end didn't really want to let us go. Another encouraging story is about the Philippine Boatswain we met. It turned out he was at the point of joining the Jehovah's Witnesses. God used us to warn him and to put him on the proper path. He was searching for the Truth and his heart was open for the Gospel. From the port of Rotterdam we wish you God's richest blessing.

Felix Henrichs

Knitting Woollen Hats

Over the years there have been many industrious knitting ladies at work for The Harbourlight Port- Mission, knitting woollen hats for the sailors. We receive all of them with a grateful heart. Now comes a short account of two faithful and committed knitters:

Hello, we are a mother and a daughter (together with our spouses) who are very much involved with the work of Het Havenlicht, calling ourselves backstage workers. It is now ten years ago that we came in contact with the Mission. It was an article that we read in the Visie magazine that caught our attention. I became ill soon after and was just sitting at home and wanted to knit a woollen hat for charity purposes. The remarkable thing about it is



that it didn't end with just one. My mother started to knit also and others became involved by giving us the wool. After a while I didn't knit that many anymore for my health had improved and I developed activities outside the house. But my Mum kept on and has been knitting more than I ever did. We now can send more woollen hats to the Mission.

Last year we sent off the one thousandth woollen hat! We never thought that such a thing was possible but stitch by stitch and woollen hat after woollen hat this was realised. We are so grateful that this has been possible. What a privilege to serve God with what we have, doing what we can. Our abilities to serve God are so varied! Doing this knitting has been so encouraging for us through the years.

A woollen hat sent to Havenlicht is not just a woollen hat. No, it also prepares the way for the Gospel to be spread. It not only warms one's head, but one's heart at the same time. After all, the heart is the most important: we can have peace with God.



Something special notes about our woollen hats:

+ As far as we know not a single one that we knitted for Het Havenlicht Mission has been the same- always there was a difference, be it in colour, pattern, way of knitting or the kind of woollen thread.

+ these days we sew on every one an embroidered label with clear symbols of the Gospel (at least we try to). Should there be any other person to try this, good on you! For we have not applied for a patent

+ On the one thousandth woollen hat ,we have made a special embroidery in the form of a Lighthouse. This in honour of Het Havenlicht Port mission and at the same time to show that God's light shines in the darkness.

+ There is much more to tell but no, then this report will be too long. Together with God life can be good, no matter the circumstances. What a blessing, what happiness! We wish everybody this realisation of His nearness and peace ,with all our heart!

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