

## Special 10-year Anniversary Edition

### A DECADE OF SUPPORT FOR UK MERCHANT NAVY SEAFARERS AND THEIR FAMILIES



SUMMER 2022

## Hello,

A warm welcome to your special Summer 2022, tenth anniversary edition of the Merchant Navy Fund newsletter.

This year, as we celebrate the incredible milestone of the Merchant Navy Fund's tenth anniversary, in addition to the extraordinary milestone of HM Queen Elizabeth's Platinum Jubilee, we look back at the impact the Fund has had on the lives of UK Merchant Navy seafarers and their families since its formation.

The Fund was set up in 2012 as a collaboration between The Seafarers' Charity and the Merchant Navy Welfare Board to recognise that many of those with a Merchant Navy background wanted to see their donations used specifically to support British Merchant Navy seafarers and their families.

Thanks to your support, we have raised **£720,000** in donations and awarded more than **£700,000** in grants to support UK serving or retired MN seafarers in need and their families, since 2012.

We are confident that the Fund will be here to continue to support UK Merchant Navy seafarers and their families in need into the future, but with no government funding we rely on the support of our kind and loyal donors. If you would like to donate the easiest ways are online, by text, or by post:

#### Online

[bit.ly/MerchantNavyDay2022](https://bit.ly/MerchantNavyDay2022)



#### By Text

**MNF 5** to 70085 to donate £5  
**MNF 10** to 70085 to donate £10  
**MNF 15** to 70085 to donate £15



#### By Post

You can complete the donation form enclosed and return it in the freepost envelope provided.



## What lies ahead

As we eagerly prepare for Merchant Navy Day on the 3rd of September, we encourage anyone with a personal connection to the Merchant Navy to share their stories.

Many people are connected to the Merchant Navy in some way, either from service or through friends or family members who bravely served. Each year, Merchant Navy Day recognises the unique contribution our seafarers make to the United Kingdom, and we want to honour the seafarers who have worked so hard to keep this country going by sharing who they were and their unique stories.

If you have a story you'd like to tell or would like to celebrate the memory of a loved one, we would love to hear from you. Just email [Rory Warwick at rory.warwick@theseafarerscharity.org](mailto:rory.warwick@theseafarerscharity.org) or call directly at 020 7932 5962, to tell us about your connection, and if you would like we can share it with our seafaring community.



## Fly your Flag

Enclosed with this year's Summer Newsletter you will find your free Fly the Red Ensign window sticker. To celebrate Merchant Navy Day, and the magnificent seafarers we are so proud of, we encourage you to put up your removeable window sticker in your car, home, shop, or any window and share your support for all to see.

We would also like to encourage you to share a photo of your flag on your social media accounts with the hashtag #MerchantNavyDay to help raise awareness of the day and the needs of our seafarers.

Visit our website to find out more information about how to get involved, download the social media toolkit or make a donation.

[www.theseafarerscharity.org/merchant-navy-fund/merchant-navy-day](http://www.theseafarerscharity.org/merchant-navy-fund/merchant-navy-day)



Associated British Ports, Humber Port Office in Grimsby

## A Decade of Difference



### In 2013

In its first year, the Merchant Navy Fund received significant support from individuals wishing to see their donations support UK Merchant Navy seafarers.

By the end of 2013 there were sufficient funds accrued to give several significant grants. The first grants were made to five organisations supporting the welfare of UK Merchant Navy seafarers and their families, totalling **£79,920**.

A **£35,000** grant was awarded to **Sailors' Children's Society**



As part of their support scheme, the Sailors' Children's Society offer families a week away in one of seven caravans owned by the Society. Due to extensive wear, the caravans needed replacing. The grant was used to replace an existing unit with a new caravan of the same standard.

### In 2014

We were able to offer grants to organisations totalling **£76,380**. Recipients included Care Ashore, Nautilus Welfare Fund, Sailors' Children's Society, Shipwrecked Fishermen, and Mariners Royal Benevolent Society.

A **£10,000** grant was awarded to **Care Ashore** (Formerly the Merchant Seamen's War Memorial Society)

A charity that provides comprehensive support to former seafarers, including sheltered housing, holidays, and entertainment.

The grant was to assist with their Health and Wellbeing Programme to assist seafarers in improving their health and fitness. The grant was able to fund a fully equipped gym with organised training sessions provided by a qualified trainer twice a week.

*The grant not only enabled the fitness sessions to continue, it also allowed for an additional supervised session to be provided each week. To further enhance the project new equipment was also purchased to meet the increase in demand.'*

Trevor Goacher, CEO, Care Ashore

A grant of **£16,000** was awarded to **Nautilus Welfare Fund**



The grant funded an innovative IT project providing residents in Merchant Navy Seafarers' homes in Mariners Park in Wallasey, Care Ashore in Surrey, and Sir Gabriel Wood's Mariners' Home in Scotland with computer equipment, software, and training along with improved internet access.

*Considering many of our residents had never used a computer before I am amazed at how quickly and enthusiastically they set about learning how to use them.'*

Steven Bradley, General Manager of Sir Gabriel Wood's Mariners' Home

## In 2015

The fund had received over **£91,000** in generous donations from legacy gifts and individual supporters and we were able to distribute grants totalling **£51,163** to five organisations.

**A grant of £30,000 was awarded to Shipwrecked Fishermen & Mariners Royal Benevolent Society**

The grant provided funding for emergency and one-off grants to means-tested seafarers in dire welfare need.

Such as Mrs Darrow who was widowed in 1983 when her husband drowned at sea. Urgent electrical work was needed before a cooker could be installed in her home. A small grant was able to help with the cost.

## **The first Fly the Red Ensign Campaign**

In 2015, we also launched the inaugural 'Fly the Red Ensign' Campaign to remind people of Merchant Navy Day on 3rd September.

We asked local authorities across the UK to raise the Red Ensign on public buildings or landmark flag-staffs as a way of engaging with local communities about the contribution of the Merchant Navy to our way of life.

Just over 200 local authorities took part, resulting in strong local media coverage throughout the country.



The Lord Mayor of the City of London celebrating Merchant Navy Day on 3rd Sept 2015

## In 2016

The Merchant Navy Fund had raised over **£220,000** since its launch in September 2012, to help finance organisations supporting our Merchant Navy seafarers. This year, thanks to a very generous legacy received in 2015, we were able to distribute twelve grants totalling **£171,878** to ten organisations.

**A grant of £6,500 was awarded to Sailors' Children's Society**

The grant was put towards their Children's Support Scheme, providing support to the families of 171 children and young people from Merchant Navy and Fishing Fleet families on low incomes - to help with essentials such as school uniforms, winter coat and shoes, school trips, educational equipment and more.

## **Flying the Red Ensign... again**

We extended 2015's inaugural Fly the Red Ensign campaign, taking place on the build-up to Merchant Navy Day on 3rd September, and doubled the number of UK local authority and community events to just over 400. We achieved significant print and online local and regional media coverage in the process.

## In 2018

We were able to give grants totalling **£180,237** to thirteen organisations, funding services ranging from welfare and support, healthcare, hardship and poverty grants and youth welfare.



**A £4,000 grant was awarded to Queen Victoria's Seamen's Rest**

This grant went towards their port-based welfare services, contributing to the cost of a new sports area at Tilbury Seafarers Centre so that seafarers have active and healthy options of things to do whilst ashore. The sports area includes a 5-a-side football/basketball pitch, a golf putting green, and an outdoor table tennis area.

## In 2017

By its fifth year, the Merchant Navy Fund had managed to distribute an incredible **£449,889** in grants, including **£70,548** in 2017. Within five years the Merchant Navy Fund had funded a wide range of services from physical and mental health care, housing, entertainment and financial support, among many others.

**A £5,000 grant was awarded to Community Network**

The grant went towards costs for the Seafarers Link phone group, a free service offering regular, group friendship telephone calls which enable up to six people to talk at the same time. It offers an easy way to connect with people who have a maritime background to share stories and experiences from the comfort of their own home through weekly or fortnightly regular calls.

“

*Community Network's Seafarers' Link phone groups are a worthwhile activity that gives people, who'd otherwise not be able to, the chance to talk to fellow or past seafarers.'*

Vice-Admiral Peter Wilkinson CB CVO



Tilbury Port Centre basketball court



**In 2019**

We were able to give grants totalling **£80,556** to eight organisations, supporting 771 individuals with grant funding.

**A £2,000 grant was awarded to Manx Marine Society**

The grant funded welfare support and assistance to ex-seafarers and their dependants, considered to be needy and in poor circumstances on the Isle of Man. It supported individual welfare grants to three Merchant Navy beneficiaries to help them live a more comfortable life by giving financial support and assistance to help meet their personal needs.



**A grant of £1,315 was awarded to the Falklands Veterans Association**

The grant provided funding for welfare support and services, enabling the daughter of a late PO(E) killed in action on the British Merchant Navy ship SS Atlantic Conveyor in 1982 during the Falklands Conflict to visit the Falkland Islands with the support of a very close friend.



**In 2020**



We were able to give grants totalling **£73,000**

**A £10,000 grant was awarded to Shipwrecked Mariners' Society**

The charity provides financial assistance to seafarers and their dependants who have suffered hardship, misfortune, or poverty, as a result of an accident, illness, disability, unemployment or retirement.

The grant supported UK Merchant Navy seafarers and their dependants who did not fit within the charity's set criteria to ensure everyone can be offered help when needed. The charity supported two individuals with deteriorating health and mobility issues by awarding them with hardship and welfare grants to improve their living circumstances.

*“ We provide financial help to both retired and working-age seafarers and their dependants who are in need... Since Covid, many have had to rely on Universal Credit for living costs as their income has disappeared. There's a 4 to 6-week wait for many benefits and we help keep the lights on until they kick in.”*  
 Captain Justin Osmond, Shipwrecked Mariners' Society Chief Executive

With the coronavirus pandemic, funding like this has never been more needed. Thanks to the Merchant Navy Fund, they have been able to help more individuals facing difficult times, as the charity continues to receive more applications for assistance.

**In 2021**

The fund awarded **£58,300** to five organisations supporting UK serving or retired MN seafarers in need and their families.



**A £20,000 grant as awarded to Age UK for The Silver Line**

The grant was to ensure the continued provision of a much-needed telephone friendship group, which connects older seafarers via regular, supervised conference calls.

The group aims to help reduce loneliness and isolation and enhance relationships and social interaction by ensuring continued connections with other seafarers and seafaring communities.

A vitally important service over the past few years as restrictions from the pandemic have limited social contact for many of the callers.

*“ When we were faced with the possibility of the helpline not being available due to the coronavirus, it was the callers and their stories that meant we knew we couldn't let them down – being there for all those lonely older people who need a friendly voice at the end of the phone, day or night.”*  
 Alan Walsh, Head of Helpline at The Silver Line

Since awarding the grant the team that supports the calls, including the coordination and technical support, has been able to expand the number of groups running each week.

**In 2022**

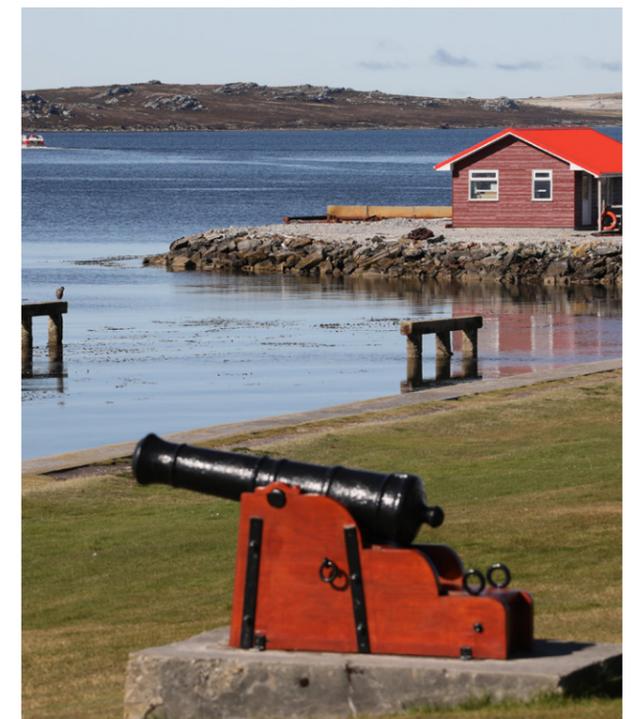
So far this year we have awarded **£30,000** across three organisations supporting Merchant Navy seafarers and their families who have paid a high price for life at sea.

In the modern world, that means confronting issues such as homelessness, unemployment, the strain on separated families, poverty, and hardship.



**A grant of £2,200 was awarded to South Atlantic Medal Association '82**

The grant will partially fund a weekend commemorating the 40-year anniversary of the Falklands conflict. The commemorative weekend included a service with a choir and wreath laying on the first day, followed by a variety of outside events to raise awareness of the conflict. The event also included multiple food stalls and military vehicles which were on display.





## In loving Memory

We would like to offer our heartfelt thanks to the friends and families of those who have passed this and last year for the special donations you have made in their memory. A gift in memory of someone close to you is a wonderful way to remember them, and your gift will help us support seafarers and their families long into the future.

Trevor Jones

Geoffrey Morris

Eileen Brammer

David Freeman

Jack Craig

Anthony Wilson

Mary Craig

Robert Stone

William Dockeray

Edward Cahill

Peter Cheyne

Captain Raymond

Hart

Mick Rowley

John Green

Peter Knight

George Carter

T M Williams

Gavin Moffat

George Anderson

We also thank those who have chosen to make a quiet personal remembrance of a friend or family member anonymously. We may not have their names, but we honour them all the same.

For information on In Memoriam Giving, or to request envelopes for a donation collection at an event or service, please email [mnfund@theseafarerscharity.org](mailto:mnfund@theseafarerscharity.org) or phone **020 7932 0000**.

The Merchant Navy Fund (MNF), administered by The Seafarers' Charity and supported by the Merchant Navy Welfare Board, is a unique fund to specifically benefit UK Merchant Navy seafarers and their families. The aim of the fund is to help finance those charities supporting our own Merchant Navy seafarers. Thanks to your donations, we continue to make a difference and improve lives. For more information, please visit [www.merchantnavyfund.org](http://www.merchantnavyfund.org), email [mnfund@theseafarerscharity.org](mailto:mnfund@theseafarerscharity.org) or phone **020 7932 0000**.



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The Merchant Navy Fund is administered by The Seafarers' Charity (Seafarers UK, formerly King George's Fund for Sailors), and supported by the Merchant Navy Welfare Board. The Seafarers' Charity is a Registered Charity in England and Wales, No. 226446, incorporated under Royal Charter. Registered in Scotland, No. SC038191. Registered office: 8 Hatherley Street London, SW1P 2QT.

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