

ABOUT THE AUSTRALIAN MARINERS' WELFARE SOCIETY

Following closure of the Sydney Sailors' Home in 1979, the Council turned its attention to providing facilities for retired merchant seafarers.

In December 1990, Mariners' Court, offering accommodation for 40 residents in comfortable, fully furnished serviced rooms with private facilities, was officially opened at Woolloomooloo. However, following a decline in occupancy, the facility was eventually sold in 1998.

This ushered in a new era for the organisation, which continues actively to serve seafarers today, but in ways quite different from those envisaged when the Sydney Sailors' Home was established.

In 2002, it reinvented itself as the Australian Mariners' Welfare Society. Today, under the leadership of its Chairman Captain Alan Tait, the Board of the Society oversees an active program of practical support for serving and retired seafarers.

For example, the organisation funds home unit accommodation in the northern suburbs of Sydney for a number of former seafarers, as well as offering scholarships to promising young Australians planning a career at sea to attend the Australian Maritime College at Launceston, Tasmania.

The Sydney Sailors' Home building, close by the Overseas Passenger Terminal in Circular Quay, is now a heritage-listed property maintained by the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority. Since being vacated by the Home, it has seen service as a marionette theatre and a tourist information office, and currently houses the Billich Art Gallery.

Membership of the Australian Mariners' Welfare Society is open to any person with an interest in maritime affairs. Further information about the Society is available from:

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THE SYDNEY
THE SYDNEY SAILORS' HOME
1859-2009
SAILORS' HOME
150 YEARS OF CARING FOR SEAFARERS

JAN BOWEN

