

PRESS RELEASE



21 September 2010

The Big Remembrance

24 hour Act of Remembrance on World Maritime Day

Maritime Charity urges public to remember merchant seafarers on 23rd September

To mark World Maritime Day during the International Year of the Seafarer the Principal Chaplain of the global charity Sailors' Society will be leading a ceremony during which each of the 35,675 names on the National Merchant Navy Memorials in Trinity Gardens, London will be read aloud.

The Tower Hill memorial which was built by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and unveiled in December 1928, stands as a visible reminder of the sacrifices made by Merchant Seafarers in times of military conflict, and who have no grave but the sea.

The Sailors' Society is committed to replacing isolation with belonging for the world's seafarers and has supported them and their families for the past 193 years. The Society believes that the event will serve as a formal and dignified Act of Remembrance. It will take 24 hours to read each name on the memorial and ensure that each and every seafarer's contribution has been recognised. Principal Chaplain Revd. David Potterton will be assisted in the reading by other Sailors' Society Port Chaplains, staff and supporters, as well as by Merchant Navy Veterans from the Prince of Wales Sea Training School Association, remembering their shipmates who perished at sea.

Revd David Potterton, Principal Chaplain at the Sailors' Society said,

"We wanted every name on the memorials to be read on World Maritime Day as a reminder of the huge loss of merchant seafarers in times of military conflict. Every ship and every name will be remembered to ensure that they are honoured and not forgotten."

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission, which built and now maintains the Tower Hill Memorial is backing the event. The Commission's Director-General Richard Kellaway said:

"At over 22,500 sites in 150 countries, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission helps ensure that those men and women who laid down their lives are never forgotten. I hope this event to honour seafarers will help remind people of the sacrifice of those who helped keep Britain and the Commonwealth supplied during the darkest days of war."

The reading of names will commence at 0001hrs on 23rd September and conclude at 2400hrs the same day.

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To cover this event.....

Please contact Zoe Mitchell for more details on attendance and covering the event. To find out more about the Sailors' Society visit www.sailors-society.org or follow them on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/SailorsSociety>.

Ends

Words: 371

Notes to Editors:

The Sailors' Society is an international charity that provides a personal lifeline for seafarers throughout the world. Existing to enrich and enhance the well-being of the world's 1.2 million seafarers, the charity offers practical help, emotional and spiritual support and, when in dire need, financial assistance and family liaison through our Port Chaplains and Seafarers' Centres. Our Port Chaplains visit thousands of ships every year, directly addressing the needs of seafarers - irrespective of a person's belief or nationality - as well as maintaining vital links within the Ports that they operate. The recent volcanic ash cloud halting so many flights across the globe has highlighted the continued great value of the shipping industry in the modern world. Despite so many planes being grounded, the shipping industry ensured that not only could organisations continue to trade internationally but also made sure stranded holiday makers could return home.



The Sailors' Society is backing the **IMO Year of the Seafarer** campaign with a new fundraising drive asking for just £1 for every seafarer the charity aims to reach in 2010

For more information, please visit www.sailors-society.org, follow them on twitter at www.twitter.com/sailorssociety or contact Zoë Mitchell at Logical Creative Marketing on: 0845 345 69 69 or email: zoe@lcm.co.uk

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission is responsible for marking and maintaining the graves of those members of the Commonwealth forces who died during the two world wars, for building and maintaining memorials to the dead whose graves are unknown and for providing records and registers of these 1.7 million burials and commemorations found in most countries throughout the world. For more information visit www.cwgc.org