

Mission to Seafarers: Port of Thunder Bay Ministry Plan - 2015

Prepared February 25, 2015



Caring for seafarers
around the world

MISSION TO SEAFARERS

Port of Thunder Bay

Suite 450, 100 Main St.

Thunder Bay, ON P7B 6R9

Tel: (807) 344-8241

E-mail: flyingangel@tbaytel.net

Web Site: www.missiontoseafarers.ca

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	3
The Port of Thunder Bay	1
Origins	1
Description of the Port.....	1
North	1
Downtown Port Arthur	1
Intercity	1
South	2
Cargo and Vessel Traffic.....	2
Grain Production in Canada	2
Seaway Tonnage	2
Port of Thunder Bay: Cargo Tonnage.....	2
Port of Thunder Bay: Domestic Verses Foreign Vessels	3
Foreign Seafarers	3
The Mission to Seafarers.....	4
Origin.....	4
Mission Statement and Goals	4
Goals	4
Description of Service	5
Seafarers' Centre.....	5
Van	5
Resources	6
Publicity.....	6
Assessment of the Next Five Years	7
Plans for 2015	7
Replace Van.....	7
Recruit Volunteers	7
Publicity.....	7
Upgrades to Seafarers Centre.....	7

The Port of Thunder Bay

Origins

Thunder Bay, Port Arthur and Fort William prior to 1970, was originally a fishing community called Prince Arthur's Landing and Fort William was a fur trading post dating to the early 1800's. With the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1885 it became a port for the transshipment of cargo. In the first part of its history vessels shipped goods within the Great Lakes.

In 1959 the St. Lawrence Seaway opened. This meant that larger ocean-going vessels could transit the St. Lawrence River, and they could make it up to Thunder Bay. The Port facilities were rebuilt to accommodate larger vessels including the building of Keefer Terminal, which opened in 1960.

Description of the Port

The Port is located on the north west shore of Lake Superior. It is connected to the Atlantic Ocean by the St. Lawrence Seaway. It takes an ocean-going vessel/laker approximately 5 days to transit from Thunder Bay to Montreal.

The port is administered by the Thunder Bay Port Authority.

North

The facilities in the north part of the Port are about a 15 minute drive one way from the Seafarers' Centre and shopping.

Lakehead Industrial and Marine is a ship repair facility, presently in bankruptcy proceedings. It has the only dry dock in the Canadian upper Great Lakes.

Current River Terminal is a grain elevator owned by Richardson's International.

Richardson's Terminal is a grain elevator owned by Richardson's International.

Downtown Port Arthur

Pool 6 is a passenger terminal operated by the City of Thunder Bay. It is within walking distance of the downtown and about a 15 minute drive one way from the Seafarers' Centre and shopping.

Intercity

The Intercity facilities are within walking distance of the Seafarers' Centre and shopping.

Viterra A and B are grain elevators owned by Viterra.

Canada Malting is a grain elevator.

Keefer Terminal is a warehouse facility with wharfs, and it has a large capacity crane. The Seafarers' Centre and the Canadian Coast Guard station are located at Keefer Terminal. It is owned and operated by the Thunder Bay Port Authority.

Thunder Bay Terminal is a coal and potash terminal. Thunder Bay is the only port on the Great Lakes that ships potash.

South

Western 10 is a grain elevator located on the Kaministiquia River. It is located in the area known as Westfort and has access to a convenience store and churches within a 15 minute walk. It is about a 15 minute drive one way from the Seafarers' Centre and shopping.

The facilities in the south part of the Port are about a 30 minute drive one way from the Seafarers' Centre and shopping, and are otherwise isolated from the city of Thunder Bay.

Mobile Ex formerly known as Valley Camp is a bulk handling terminal with a wharf.

Mission Terminal is a grain elevator.

Superior Terminal is a grain elevator owned by Cargill and Parrish and Heinbecker.

Cargo and Vessel Traffic

Grain Production in Canada

The grain production in 2013 was a record and 2014 was the second best year on record. Grain is shipped principally through the ports of Vancouver and Thunder Bay with smaller amounts through Churchill and other Canadian ports, and some is shipped through American ports. For the foreseeable future, Thunder Bay will continue to be a significant port for shipping grain.

Graph courtesy of the Thunder Bay Port Authority

Seaway Tonnage

The St. Lawrence Seaway brings vessels from the Atlantic Ocean into the middle of the North American continent through Montreal, the St. Lawrence River, and the Great Lakes. Thunder Bay is located on the North West shore of Lake Superior. The graph shows a steady shipment of cargo, albeit the tonnage dropped when the global recession happened.

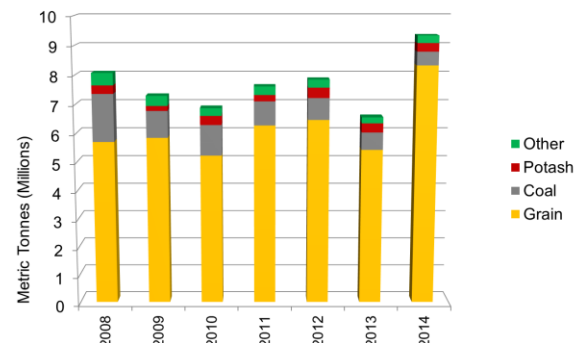
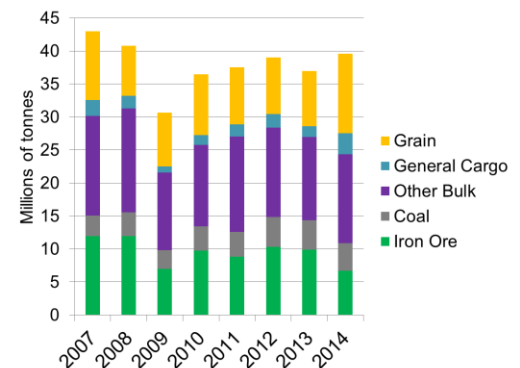
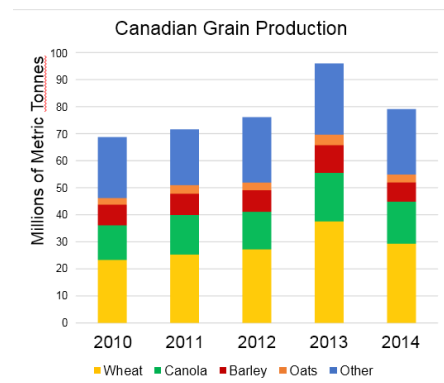
The Seaway is continually working to improve its efficiency and reduce costs. One project it is working on is an automated method of tying up ships as they move through a lock, which would reduce the time it takes to move a ship through the lock.

Graph courtesy of the Thunder Bay Port Authority

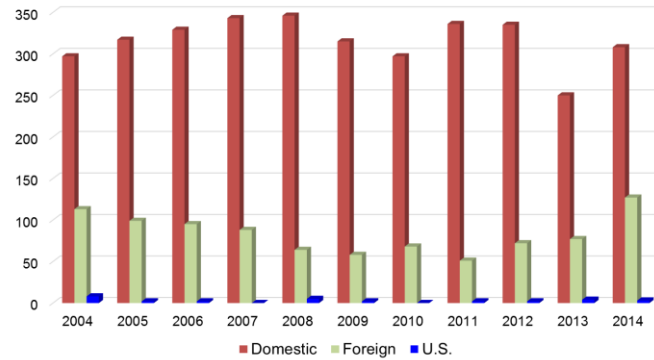
Port of Thunder Bay: Cargo Tonnage

Grain is the largest commodity shipped in the Port. The Port is the only port on the Great Lakes that ships potash. Coal is expected to decrease with the conversion of Thunder Bay from coal to wood pellets. Other includes project cargo shipped out of Keefer Terminal.

Graph courtesy of the Thunder Bay Port Authority

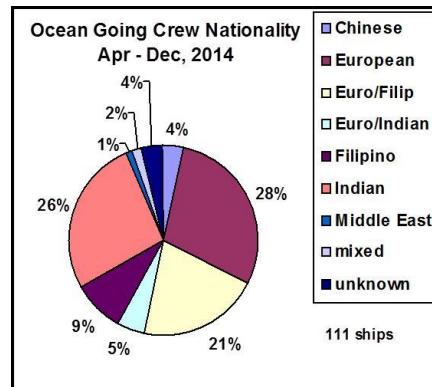


Port of Thunder Bay: Domestic Verses Foreign Vessels



Graph courtesy of the Thunder Bay Port Authority

Foreign Seafarers



Graph prepared from Mission to Seafarers: Port of Thunder Bay data

In Canada, once the crew has been cleared by the Canadian Border Services Agency, they can go ashore unescorted, which is not the case in the United States.

A consequence of the increased security as a result of 9/11 is that the access to port facilities by the general public has been restricted. In the case of ports in the United States, the access is even more stringent. For a ship that discharges its cargo in the United States, when it comes to Thunder Bay to load, it is even more imperative for the crew to be assisted in getting ashore.

The Mission to Seafarers

Origin

The predecessor of the Mission to Seafarers was the Seamen's Church Institute. It was supported by Thunder Bay churches, and was primarily a hostel so that seamen could sleep off their ship while cargo was being discharged or loaded. With the construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway, larger vessels replaced the smaller vessels and seamen could comfortably sleep onboard their ship. Also turn around times decreased. The Seaman's Church Institute closed in the mid 1950's.

The Mission to Seafarers in Thunder Bay was organized on December 6, 1961, St. Nicolas' Day and its first season of operation was 1962.

Mission Statement and Goals

The mission of the Society is to promote the spiritual, moral and physical well-being of Seafarers and their families world-wide.

Goals

Our goals fall into two categories, Direct Ministry and Providing Resources to Minister to Seafarers:

Direct Ministry

- Provide ministry to seafarers and port personnel who request our services.
- Visit seafarers aboard ocean-going ships in the Port of Thunder Bay.
- Transport seafarers to shopping, the Seafarers' Center and upon request to worship or for a tour of city.
- Operate the Seafarers' Centre as a welcoming place where seafarers are provided with an opportunity to connect with volunteers and relax. Seafarers are offered free of charge:
 - communications facilities to contact their family;
 - Bibles in various languages;
 - warm clothing; and
 - Christmas bags.
- Offer an annual Blessing of the Fleet service for local mariners.

Providing Resources to Minister to Seafarers

- Educate the community about seafarers and enhance the profile of the Mission in the community.
- Attract, train and retain volunteers.
- Fund raise to operate the local station and provide for capital improvements.

Description of Service

The Seafarers' Centre is normally staffed by appointment. The Chaplain or a volunteer Ship Visitor visits a ship and makes an appointment for the van to come to the ship. In some cases appointments are made through the Ship's Agent or stevedore. Generally the Centre is open in evenings when an ocean-going ship is alongside.

When the Seafarers' Centre is not staffed, the phone is forwarded to the Chaplain or a volunteer in his absence. This means that an on-call service is provided 24/7.

Seafarers' Centre

The Seafarers' Centre is located at Keefer Terminal. It is a house trailer, and has a main living room, kitchen, clothing room, 2 phone booths, office, bathroom and chapel. The services offered are:

- coffee, pop
- currency exchange
- Internet: 3 computers for seafarers each with web cam and Skype
- wireless Internet
- long distance telephone card - SeaFare Card
- iVittamobile SIM Card
- telephones
- postage stamps
- fax
- satellite TV
- warm clothing
- Bibles in 20 languages
- magazines

The Centre is a house trailer, built in 1981. Since 2013, the Board has made capital improvements, replacing windows, one door, and the flooring. The shelving in the clothing room was upgraded.

Currently the Centre has 4 computers: living room, office and 2 phone booths. The living room and office computers are used by the Chaplain and volunteers to conduct the administration of the Mission, and the living room and phone booth computers are used by the seafarers. They are connected as a network and one printer is attached to the network.

Van

The van is used primarily to transport seafarers from their ship to the Seafarers' Centre and shopping, then they are returned to their ship. Occasionally it is used to help them pick up food, drive them to worship, and take them on tours to sites such as Kakabeka Falls and the Terry Fox monument.

This past shipping season (2014) we transported 1,202 seafarers, 791 of which came to the Centre. Transportation is highly desired. In addition to using the facilities of the Centre to get in touch with their families, seafarers need to get to a store to purchase toiletries and other items. Most of our activity in 2014 has been at Current River Terminal, Richardson's Elevator, Mission Terminal and Superior Terminal. As noted above, Current River Terminal and Richardson's are about a 15 minute drive one-way north of the Seafarers' Centre, and Mission Terminal and Superior Terminal are about a 30 minute drive one-way south. To illustrate the necessity of our service, in 2014 a seafarer took a taxi from Mission Terminal to the Centre, and it cost him \$70 one-way.

Considerations for a van:

- The maximum size van that a person can drive with a G class license (regular passenger vehicle) is 9 passengers.
- Often 8 or more seafarers from a ship would like transportation at a given time. It is a 60 minute round trip from the Seafarers' Centre to Superior Terminal or Mission Terminal in the south end of the Port. In an evening shift, there is time to make a maximum of 3 pickups. With a smaller van during a busy time of the year, we may not be able to transport everyone ashore who would like to go ashore.

The Chaplain receives a car allowance as part of his salary package with the Diocese of Algoma, to which the Mission to Seafarers contributes. When visiting ships, the Chaplain uses his own vehicle instead of the van.

Resources

The Chaplain is hired at 3/8 time. The Chaplain functions as the executive director, is over-all in charge of the operation of the Centre and visits ships. The Chaplain's role is to ensure that the Mission helps seafarers as a Christian outreach. He coordinates the work of the Board and volunteers and has contact with seafarers, Ship's Agents, people in the port and in churches, and Chaplains in other ports.

Volunteers do the majority of the work at the Mission to Seafarers. There are about 25 on strength, and about 12 do direct ministry with seafarers: Watch Keeper, Driver and Ship Visitor. The Board of Directors establishes policies for the operation of the Seafarers' Centre and oversees the Chaplain, fund-raising, publicity, volunteer recruitment and maintenance of the Centre. Seven of our current volunteers now have 15 or more years of service, and are likely to retire in the near future.

While the Mission receives grants from both the Diocese of Algoma and the Port of Thunder Bay, almost 2/3 of the annual budget (\$46,000) is actually derived from small donations of under \$1,000. This means we are very dependent upon our volunteers to both staff the Centre for the seafarers and to organize and run fundraisers in order to keep the Mission afloat. Currently our major fundraisers include a meat sale and a dinner attended by about 150 people.

Clothing is for the most part donated, and seafarers take warm clothing almost as quickly as it comes in.

Publicity

In order to obtain the resources to minister to the seafarers, the public needs to be aware of the ministry and its needs. We communicate through our web page, Facebook page, annual newsletter, annual report, and donation thank you letters.

Assessment of the Next Five Years

It is anticipated that vessel traffic will remain consistent with the levels that were seen in the past 10 years for the foreseeable future. There may be a slight increase in grain shipped over the past 10 year average due to increased grain production.

A principle reason seafarers come to the Seafarers Centre is to connect with home primarily using wi-fi. New ships are being constructed with the capability for seafarers to have access to the internet. This could mean that the trend will be for fewer seafarers to visit the Centre. The Centre will continue to serve as a base of operations, and other services at the Centre will continue to be offered. It is therefore anticipated that the status quo will remain for at least the next 5 years, as it will take time for the shipping stock to be renewed.

Transportation will continue to be in demand so that seafarers can have access to shopping, and if time permits to attend worship or go on a tour. However, there may be a slight drop in the need for transportation if seafarers are not attending the Seafarers' Centre as often to access wi-fi.

Laker seafarers are often not aware that the Mission to Seafarers is available to assist them.

Plans for 2015

Replace Van

The 1981 van is unserviceable and it will be disposed of. The Board is intending to purchase the best used van that it can afford in March 2015 in preparation for the opening of the 2015 shipping season, and continue fundraising towards a new van at some point in the future.

Recruit Volunteers

It has been found that 2 or 3 new volunteers need to be recruited annually to keep our volunteers at a good strength. In 2014 we were a bit short of volunteers, particularly when more than 2 volunteers were out of town.

Publicity

Include in the 2015 Operating budget:

- Roll up banner for PR events (\$200).
- Tent for outdoor PR display (\$200).

Raise capital funds and as funds are available:

- Sign on west side of Seafarers' Centre is deteriorating. Replace it with a larger sign (\$400).
- Sign for pick up at Viterro (\$200) a sign would make it easier for both seafarers and MtS Drivers to pick seafarers up as sometimes it is confusing for the seafarers to know where they could be picked up.

Upgrades to Seafarers Centre

Raise capital funds and as funds are available:

- Replace furnace (\$3,500).
- Install baseboard trim (\$300).
- Replace windows: bay (\$700), living room (\$500) and bathroom (\$150), which completes the replacement of the Centre's windows.

- Install a new storage cabinet in the bathroom (\$100) for items that cannot be frozen i.e. can't store in shed.
- Replace main door (\$700), possibly redesign the entrance including a ramp.

Include in the 2015 Operating budget/solicit donations for:

- Upgrade 2 computers; put the best in the living room and office, and put those computers in the phone booths (2 x \$800).
- Upgrade 2 monitors in the phone booths (2 x \$150).
- Upgrade the speakers on the 4 computers (4 x \$30).