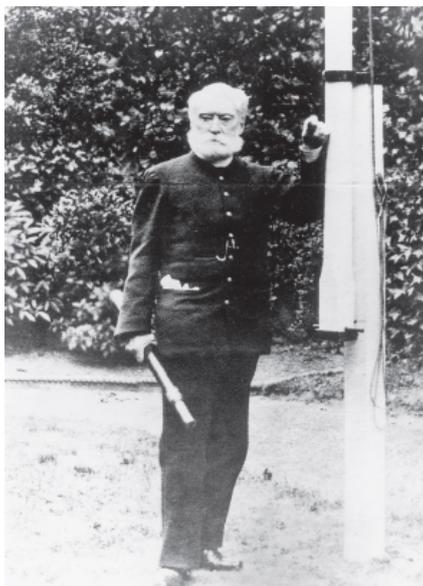
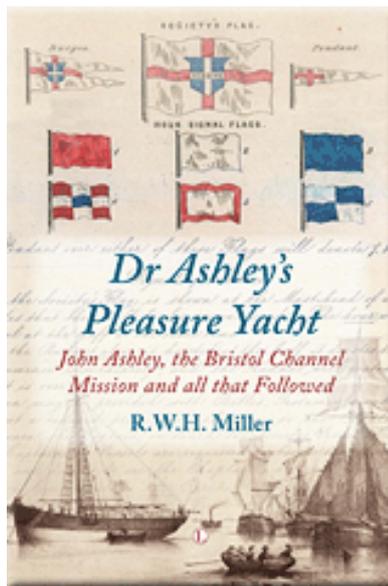


The Revd Dr John Ashley, Founder of The Mission to Seafarers (formerly The Mission to Seamen)

Married in St Marylebone Parish Church on 15th September 1868



The Revd John Ashley



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In 1835 John Ashley was on the shore at Clevedon, a small town on the north coast of Somerset, with his son who asked him how the people on Flat Holm (a small island in the Bristol Channel) could go to church.

For the next three months Ashley voluntarily ministered to the population of the island. From there he recognised the needs of the seafarers on the four hundred sailing vessels in the Bristol Channel and created the Bristol Channel Mission in 1836. Ashley raised funds and, in 1839, a specially designed mission cutter was built with a main cabin which could be converted into a chapel for 100 people.

Using his example, a number of Anglican ministries followed suit and in 1856 it was decided to establish a single organisation. The Mission to Seamen was made a missionary society of the Anglican Communion and its work grew in line with the rapidly expanding British maritime empire.



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Today the Mission to Seafarers works in 50 countries and in 500 ports



*The Melbourne Mission to Seafarers
717 Flinders St, Docklands, Melbourne, Australia*

Down the southern end of Flinders Street, past the Bunjil sculpture and across the way from the gleaming skyscrapers of the Docklands lies the **Mission to Seafarers**, one of Melbourne's most compelling buildings.

With its distinctive domes the Mission, built in 1917, is considered one of the best examples of Spanish Mission Revival in Melbourne. Established as a safe place

for seafarers to rest, relax and enjoy some local hospitality, the Mission still makes daily pick-ups at the port, giving salty sea dogs from around the globe a place to hang their hat.

There's a nautical-themed chapel complete with sailors in stained glass windows and a pulpit shaped like a ship's stern. Then there's the stunning Norla Dome, a former gymnasium (you can still see the hooks in the ceiling where weights were hung) that now operates as an art gallery. The dome was originally painted in a nod to the cathedrals of Europe, but superstitious sailors were spooked off by images of demons and the painting was removed. Sadly no photos exist of the work and it's consigned to Melbourne's invisible history.