

Her er det gratis at slappe af

Here you can relax for free

≈ Af Hanne Baltzer / By Hanne Baltzer

Paw Ankjær leder Seamens club Aarhus, som er en selvstændig organisation styret af en fondsbestyrelse. Den samarbejder med Sea Health and Welfare og Sømandsmissionen.

"Vi er forpligtet efter ILO-konventionerne, som handler om gode arbejdsvilkår for arbejdere verden over. Konkret handler det her om, at der i hver international havn er et tilbud om velfærdsgoder, at vi er behjælpelige overfor sømændene uanset nationalitet," forklarer Paw:

"Det er jo et vidt begreb, hvad der er velfærd. Når jeg er på havnebesøg, kan jeg se, at det betyder noget, at vi er der. Succeskriteriet er tilfredse og glade søfolk. Det er en kæmpe gave at se deres tilfredshed, men svært at regne økonomi på netop det."

Velforberedt velfærd

Formålet er at yde velfærd, det være sig i form af hyggelige lokaler og fx taletidskort til

mobiltelefonerne, men især aviser på sømændenes eget sprog hitter. Inden Paw tager rundt på havnen, har han tjekket, hvilke skibe der ligger i havnen, og hvilke nationaliteter sømændene har. Derefter printer han dagens aviser.

"Vi er seriøse og velforberejdede, når vi tager på skibsbesøg. Nyhederne fra hjemlandet er helt klart døråbnere for os. Og de er gratis for sømændene. Jeg gør mig umage med at huske alle. Vi prøver i det hele taget at opfylde deres behov så godt som muligt."

I de velindrettede og hyggelige lokaler tæt på DOK1 i Aarhus kommer mange søfolk i aftentimerne, og som havneudvidelserne udvikler sig, er placeringen af Seamens Club Aarhus rigtig god. Flere måneder om året anløber store krydstogtskibe tidligt om morgenen, og de mange besætningsmedlemmer søger mod Seamens Club, som prioriterer at holde åben:

"Der kommer virkelig mange. Forleden

mere end 100. Vi lægger hus til, og Sømandsmissionen stiller med medarbejdere. Det giver en god synergi, og samarbejdet fungerer upåklageligt."

"Vores opgave er at give søfolkene en mulighed for et frirum midt i en fortravlet hverdag. Typisk er det kokken, vi møder. Måske fordi han ofte arbejder selv og lægger øre til de andres snak og har travlt med at servicere kollegerne. Så har han brug for et frirum om aftenen."

Paw har været bestyrer siden 2009. Århus havn og skibsfarten i det hele taget har udviklet sig voldsomt de senere år, og det har naturligvis også haft indflydelse på måden, Seamens Club arbejder på. Siden 1992 har man fx ikke haft værelser at udleje. Når erhvervet ændrer sig, ændrer behovet sig også.

Fra dæksfolk til kaptajn

Paw er glad for, at fordelingen af arbejdsopgaver mellem Sømandsmissionen og Seamens Club er fordelt uden gråzoner: "Det var med en vis skepsis, jeg så sømandsmissionær Jørgen Knudsen begynde her på havnen, for skulle vi nu løbe i hælene på hinanden, og hvem gjorde hvad. Vi har haft nogle gode dialoger og har i årenes løb opbygget et virkeligt godt samarbejde, som er fortsat, selvom sømandsmissionæren nu hedder Søren Thuesen. Vi har hvert vores mål for arbejdet, og vi arbejder begge ud fra et kristent udgangspunkt. Alle kan komme her - fra dæksfolk til kaptajnen. Mangfoldigheden er stor, og det er spændende. Hver ny dag på arbejde ER ny. Det kan jeg lide. Det sjoveste er netop at møde den enkelte sømand og så prøve at give ham en fin oplevelse og afhjælpe akutte behov. Et skibsbesøg er mange ting." •

Paw Ankjær is the daily leader of Seamen's Club Aarhus, which is an independent organization run by a board of trustees. The organization cooperates with Seahealth and Welfare, and the Danish Seamen's Mission.

We are under the ILO-conventions, which focus on proper working conditions internationally. The concrete goal is to make sure that every international harbor offers welfare



"Vi vil gerne give frisk energi til fortravlede søfolk. Og hos os koster det ikke at slappe af. Det er et 100 procent værested," siger Paw Ankjær.

"We want to provide renewed energy for busy sailors, and here taking a break is free of charge. It is truly a place of retreat," says Paw Ankjær.



benefits, and that we are helping all sailors, regardless of their nationality," Paw explains.

"Welfare is an abstract term. When I visit harbors I become aware that our presence makes a difference. The criterion for success is to see happy and satisfied sailors. It is an amazing gift to see their satisfaction, but that type of value is not something that we can account for in numbers."

Well-prepared welfare

The aim is to provide welfare – whether it is in the form of comfortable surroundings, prepaid calling cards, or newspapers in the visitors' own languages. Before going around the harbor, Paw has checked what ships are in at the current moment, and what nationalities the crews represent. Then he prints out today's papers.

"We are serious and well-prepared when we go out to visit the ships. Bringing news-

papers to the crews is definitely a great way in, and we give them away for free. I do my best to bring newspapers for all nationalities. We try to respond to all their needs in the best way possible."

The cruise season extends the opening hours

In the well-furnished and cozy facilities, located in the center of Aarhus harbor, many sailors drop in during the evening, and as the harbor expands, the location of the Seamen's Club only becomes more ideal. For several months every year large cruise ships arrive early in the morning, and many crew members go to the Seamen's Club, which strives to stay open:

"A lot of people come here. Recently we hosted more than a hundred. We provide the facilities, and the Seamen's Mission provides the staff. This creates a positive synergy and the collaboration runs smoothly."

"Our task is to provide a free space for the sailors during their busy lives. It is often the cooks we encounter. Perhaps because he often works alone. He hears what everyone else talks about and he is busy serving others, so he needs a place to rest in the evening."

Paw has been manager since 2009. Aarhus

Harbor, and the shipping industry in general, has developed significantly in recent years, and this has affected the way in which the Seamen's Club operates. In 1992 they stopped renting out rooms. When the industry changes, the needs change as well.

From deck cadet to captain

Paw is happy that the responsibilities are distributed clearly between the Seamen's Mission and the Seamen's Club: "I was somewhat skeptical when I found out that seamen's missionary Jørgen Knudsen was working here at the harbor. Would we dog each other's footsteps, and who was responsible of what? Since then, we have had a healthy dialogue, and over the years we have established a strong collaboration, which continues even though the seamen's missionary is now named Søren Thuesen. We have different visions for our work, and we both stand on a Christian foundation. Everyone is welcome here – deck cadets as well as captains. There is great diversity and it is exciting. Here, every day is truly a new day. I like that. The best part is meeting the individual sailor and trying to give him a good experience and help him with his current needs. Visiting a ship is never trivial. •