

## Settling well into ship life...

It has taken us a very short time to settle into our cabin here on *B-Deck* of the *Anastasis*, which is no-doubt due to the prayers of our friends (thank you!). Our cabin is small but we have made it home with pictures of family and friends and a few of Guernsey and Dartmoor. We have a few items of furniture and a large bed that takes up a lot of room and doubles up as our sofa. We share sinks, showers and our *liquid only* toilet with other crew in our neighbourhood. The small kitchen on our corridor is also shared with a host of cockroaches! We are thinking of making some curtains for our portholes and maybe some shelves for our books.

The sailing so far has been really calm which is a relief. Going through the fjords of Norway on a beautiful morning was a lovely experience – most of the crew watched (with their breakfast takeaways) as we sailed into Bergen. The atmosphere was great. There are a quite a few couples our age on board, two of them we knew from our short term visit 3 years ago so it has been really good catching up as well as making new friendships. We have also been invited to join 2 cabin groups and are going along to both for now!

## Our journey so far ...

### A report from Wilhelmshaven, Germany.

Prior to arriving in Germany, the ship's crew were asked to pray for the ship's relations with the local Christians. Apparently, a rumour had been circulated in the state church that we were a 'cult' and we were even refused a docking area in the middle of the town. As time went on, the attitude of people towards us changed drastically as they began to catch the vision for Mercy Ships as they visited the ship and met us personally. In the end it was a very successful visit – the public tours were extremely well attended – about 10,000 people visited the ship in the 3 weeks we spent there and we were overwhelmed with donations – which even included 1 ton each of German sausages and cheese for the crew's meals! We had a wonderful send off with many people waving all along both sides of the dock, and a brass band playing as we left. Chris and I felt really proud to be part of it all!

## News from Anastasis

Big news released to the crew last week. The *Anastasis* will be doing a mercy run into the troubled city of Freetown, Sierra Leone. On the way to Benin, the ship will be dropping off some vehicles and medical equipment to *Operation New Steps* which provides free prosthetics limbs to victims of the troubles in Sierra Leone.

There are 280 people on board at the moment and numbers are expected to increase to 400 in West Africa (plus local day workers and translators).

## Anastasis Itinerary

Bergen, Norway	1 Sept. 2000	19 Sept. 2000
Deftzil, Holland	20 Sept. 2000	24 Sept. 2000
Rotterdam	25 Sept. 2000	11 Oct. 2000
Tenerife	17 Oct. 2000	29 Oct. 2000
Sierra Leone		TBA
Cotonou, Benin	6 Nov. 2000	30 May 2001

## Computer department

The first two weeks in the computer department were a little frustrating as the system was new to me and all the existing staff were away. But now, the previous guy is back for 6 weeks to hand over to me as the Computer Department Manager. It is going to be a challenging job to maintain the computers and provide solutions to the problems but I am enjoying it already. There are about 80 computers on board in various states of repair and a very troublesome email system that demands constant attention.

We will be moving office next week which involves moving the ship's main computers but the new office is much better than the current cramped area. There is also another new guy, Ben also from the UK, in the department who is here for two years.

## Vicki's work...

When we arrived on the *Anastasis* I was thrust immediately into the International Christian School's summer programme. I was running an all day fun summer school up to 13 children aged 6-13 – which was quite a challenge. I was glad to have had experience with the 'Good News Hounds Club' in Guernsey. Now I am even further challenged in my job as a primary school teacher. Originally, I had been asked to help with the pre-school but the ship was unable to recruit a new kindergarten teacher, so they have asked me to fill in as the teacher until I am needed to work in the hospital in Africa. We have 10 children in the morning (the pre-school and kindergarten combined) and I have the 5-year-olds only in the afternoon. I have to admit that although the lesson preparation is a lot of hard work, I am really enjoying myself with the children and am finding it really rewarding.

In each new port I also have to dress in the ship uniform and attend an evening Medical Reception – this consists of a medical presentation, a tour of the ship and refreshments for invited medical guests. The purpose of these formal occasions is to inform them about the medical ministry of Mercy Ships and encourage them to help with the work – either by helping to obtain medical supplies or perhaps volunteering themselves.