GUILD OF BENEVOLENCE

of the Institute of Marine Engineering, Science & Technology
What is the Guild of Benevolence?

The Guild of Benevolence is a charity providing assistance to those in need within the marine community and their dependants worldwide. We provide assistance that is uniquely tailored to each hardship case that is brought in front of our committee, including:

• Making regular grants to supplement a very low income.
• Helping with shortfalls in reasonable nursing home fees.
• Making single lump sum grants to assist in the purchase of costly items that are essential for the recipient’s wellbeing.
• Assisting with the cost of essential home repairs.
• Assisting with essential and reasonable funeral expenses in excess of any state contribution.
• Assisting with costs of respite care.
• Assisting with debt relief.
RMS *Titanic* and the creation of the Guild

The Guild originated from the Titanic Engineering Staff Memorial Benevolent Fund set up in 1912 by the Institute together with the Daily Chronicle newspaper to help the bereaved families of the engineers of the RMS *Titanic*, which sank on 15 April 1912.

Tragically, all 35 engineers on board lost their lives, from the Chief Engineer to the Engineer’s Clerk, the ship’s designer and two engineers from Harland & Wolff.

These heroic engineers stayed at their posts until the end, maintaining electrical power and keeping the lights on throughout the ship, thereby reducing the danger of panic among the passengers. Power to the radio office was also continued enabling the transmission of distress signals until minutes before the ship sank beneath the waves.

In 1934, the Fund was expanded in response to World War I and became The Institute of Marine Engineers Guild of Benevolence. Since then, the role of the Guild has further developed to assist more generally in the relief of hardship for marine engineers, scientists and technologists and their dependants.
Donations make a huge difference to the lives of those in need within the marine community and their families.

• ‘I am absolutely indebted to the Guild for all their financial assistance provided over the past few years, without which my life would have been unimaginable; receiving that extra grant every quarter took the pressure off paying the priority gas, electricity and water bills and without which I really cannot imagine how I would have managed – huge thanks to yourselves, the Chairman and everyone who donates to make these grants possible!’

• An independent 82-year-old widower who served at sea as a 4th Engineer, living on his own, had an accident while carrying out maintenance on his home. He was hospitalised for a short while where tests showed he was suffering memory loss, possibly dementia and glaucoma was also diagnosed. Shortly after returning home his boiler broke down. Having a very low income, with no savings or debts and the immediate family being unable to assist he could not afford a replacement. The Guild Trustees agreed to cover the cost of the new boiler and its installation. In addition, the Guild made enquiries with other charities and received a contribution from the Shipwrecked Mariners Society towards the cost.

• An ex seafarer and IMarEST member who served at sea for a number of years became unemployed. Being concerned that funds to cover mortgage, bills and food would soon run out he approached the Guild for assistance. The Trustees assisted with a payment of £1,000 as well as covering the cost of a seafarer’s medical certificate. The Guild also offered their advice with respect to other organisations that could be contacted for help including the Seafarers Advice and Information Line, SAIL.

The Guild has on a few occasions awarded payments through either the Mission to Seafarers, Apostleship of the Sea or the Liverpool Seafarers Centre for seafarers suffering hardship when their vessel was arrested and abandoned by the owners and had received no pay or provision for repatriation. Whilst the International Labour Organisation Maritime Labour Convention 2006 has been ratified by most countries, Flag State assistance does not appear to be enforced in some cases hence immediate help falls to volunteer organisations in the ports.
Guild Membership

Membership of the Guild commits you to an ongoing donation in the form of an annual subscription or a lifetime membership.

Annual – £15.00
Lifetime – £250.00

To join please download and complete the membership form and send to the address as detailed.
Who qualifies for help?

- Marine and electrical engineers Mercantile or Naval, who possess or have possessed Certificates of Competency or Service issued by the relevant governmental administrations, or equivalent qualifications.
- Past and present members or employees of The Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology (IMarEST) or of The Guild of Benevolence.
- Wives, husbands, partners, widows, widowers, dependent children or other dependent relatives of any person qualifying under any of the above categories.

The Committee has sole discretion to decide who is eligible for relief and whether or not they are covered by the above descriptions.
How do beneficiaries find us?

The larger we have grown, the more we have been able to help the marine community worldwide, not just in the United Kingdom. The Guild is a constituent member of the Charities of the Merchant Navy Welfare Board (MNWB). This allows people to access our help through other maritime bodies associated with the MNWB, many of which are international.

We do still receive a huge number of referrals from national institutions within the UK such as:

- Merchant Navy Welfare Board (MNWB)
- Mission to Seafarers and apostleship of the Sea
- The Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association – Forces Help (SSAFA Forces Help)
- The Royal Naval Officers’ Association and Royal Naval Benevolent Funds
- Royal British Legion
- Age Concern
- Occupational Benevolent Funds Associations
- Various local social services departments.

We also receive recommendations from IMarEST and its members. In addition, we advertise through maritime journals and aid directories.

How is the Guild funded?

Individuals can become members of the Guild and pay a monthly or annual donation. Donations are also received from IMarEST members and branches throughout the world and from companies associated with the marine industry. The Guild also sustains a regular income through a diversified investment portfolio and is occasionally the beneficiary of a legacy in remembrance of a loved one.
Apply for help

We want to reach those who need our help as quickly as possible, with the minimum amount of administration involved.

• Complete a form to confirm either your details of sea service as a marine engineer or the person on whom eligibility will be based, or Membership of the IMarEST. If you provide supporting evidence of sea service such as a Discharge Book, Certificate of Competency or Service this will help speed up the consideration process, as less time will be spent verifying history.
• Provide details of your financial situation – income and expenditure, savings and any other information that can help the Guild Trustees to make a decision on your circumstances.
• Expect to receive a home visit from a Guild Trustee or a representative from SSAFA – the Armed Forces charity. They will help you in completing the application form.

If we are unable to help, you will be informed quickly and, if possible, will be advised of other organisations that might be able to assist you.

All information provided is treated in the strictest confidence, in accordance with the latest Data Protection Legislation, and will not be passed on to any other beneficiary organisations without your express permission.

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