

## Four tall ships at 829<sup>th</sup> HAMBURG PORT ANNIVERSARY

Liaison Officers to look after the well-being of the crews

The world's greatest port festival, from 10 to 13 May 2018

Hamburg, 25 April 2018 – Their masts, soaring as high as 60 metres, will dominate the scene around Landungsbrücken at the 829<sup>th</sup> HAMBURG PORT ANNIVERSARY. The tall ships are a top favourite with visitors. The *Kruzenshtern*, *Sedov*, *Mir* and *Alexander von Humboldt II* are the four tall ships coming to the world's greatest port festival, from 10 to 13 May this year. They will set the pulses of maritime enthusiasts racing and, like most of the other 300 vessels at the festival, they invite visitors to come on board. The HAMBURG PORT ANNIVERSARY will be one day longer than usual due to the public holiday for Ascension on the Thursday, and has a varied maritime programme lined up for the whole family.

### Personal service for the crews of the tall ships

Hamburg Messe und Congress as the Organiser of the HAMBURG PORT ANNIVERSARY has "signed up" interpreter Christine Mielsch and her team of three as Liaison Officers to ensure the well-being of the tall ship crews during their time in Hamburg. Their responsibilities are focused on the tall ships, and clarification of organisational matters related to them. That includes dialogue with the other organisations involved in holding the HAMBURG PORT ANNIVERSARY, exchanges with the Hamburg authorities and institutions, and planning of leisure activities for the cadets.

"We see ourselves as intermediaries between the crews and the responsible bodies in Hamburg," says Christine Mielsch, explaining the extensive and varied issues handled by a Liaison Officer. "We convey information in both directions, we are the first contact for both sides, and we also look after everyday matters that occur on board. That ranges from questions of protocol to support in personal matters. We will accompany the captains to the Captain's Dinner on the *Rickmer Rickmers* on the Saturday evening, to the reception at the Hamburg Ministry of Economics, Transport and Innovation, we will help to procure spare parts, or explain where public WiFi is available in Hamburg."

### Programme planning for on-shore visits

One of the main points covered by Christine Mielsch and her team is organisation of leisure activities for the cadets. That is particularly important for the three tall ships under Russian flags, that is the *Kruzenshtern*, *Sedov* and *Mir*. They are sail training ships for the Russian merchant navy, and each of them has more than 100 young cadets on board, including 10% female cadets. The cadets will go on shore in Hamburg often after weeks of sailing the oceans, but the low level of their pay means that many of the leisure activities in Hamburg are not accessible for them.

That is where Christine Mielsch comes in. She negotiates with museums such as the International Maritime Museum and the Speicherstadt Museum to get reduced rates or free admission for the cadets, is currently in discussion with the Miniatur Wunderland and Hagenbeck's Zoo, she arranges guided tours of the city and the port, and free admission to the exhibition on the *Cap San*

*Diego*. The cadets are naturally welcome on the Hamburg Museum Ship *Rickmer Rickmers*. “The Submarine Museum is also very close to it,” adds Christine Mielsch, presenting the Soviet submarine U-434, which was built in 1976. She wants to widen the programme for the cadets with the addition of career-relevant aspects, and has contacted institutions such as the Navigation Centre, which coordinates and monitors all shipping movements in the Port of Hamburg.

A sporting highlight for many cadets is the football competition organised by the Hamburg Command of the German Armed Forces, where the crews of ships at the HAMBURG PORT ANNIVERSARY can participate. On the Saturday, a meeting is planned between the cadets and young people from Hamburg whose mother tongue is Russian. Hamburg has a number of Russian speaking organisations working in the fields of culture, education and integration, and running their own educational institutions. The cadets can attend lessons there, and in return the young people from Hamburg can visit the cadets on board the tall ships and learn about life and training on board.

### **Trust that has grown up over the years**

Christine Mielsch has been interested in sailing ships ever since her childhood. “Water, wind and waves have always fascinated me.” She has a special relationship with the *Mir*, where she first went on board in 2004. “When I first set foot on the gangway, I felt I was immersing myself in the Russian world. I was captivated straight away by the atmosphere on board – the language, the sounds, even the smells. And it I still get the same feeling today, every time I go aboard.”

Since that time, Christine Mielsch went on board twice or three times a week every time the *Mir* came to Hamburg in the winter. She helped to clear up organisational matters, and to sort out everyday problems. “The crew were very friendly to me right from the start, and over the years I have developed a close relationship of trust with some of the crew members. For example, I have known Captain Andrey Orlov for nearly 15 years now. He was First Officer on the *Mir* back in 2004.”

### **Four days on constant duty**

The four Liaison Officers are available to help the tall ship crews almost round the clock at the HAMBURG PORT ANNIVERSARY. “There is no question of work-to-rule or regular hours here. So I hope I will be allowed to sleep on the *Mir*. In previous years they let me put my kitbag in a cabin that’s normally used as an office, and have my quarters there. One of my team will likewise be sleeping in the Festival area, and the other two will be going home for the night.” This will be the third year that Christine Mielsch and her team are looking after the crews of the tall ships at the world’s greatest port festival. She can draw on her experience as a Liaison Officer at other maritime events, and on her outstanding language skills. Christine Mielsch has been working as a freelance translator and interpreter for Russian and English since 1992, and is a trained tour guides – she has led guided tours of Hamburg in Russian, English and German since 2014. The other team members are likewise tri-lingual.

## **Welcome aboard!**

Many of the vessels invite people to join them on board for the parades. For an overview, and other useful tips for the world's biggest port festival, please visit <https://www.hamburg.com/port-anniversary/> or call the hotline of Hamburg Tourismus from 08:00 to 20:00 daily, on phone +49 40 30051300.

## **Get the app**

The HAMBURG PORT ANNIVERSARY app puts all the information on the port festival of superlatives in your pocket – it is available free of charge on iTunes and Google Play. Many of the functions can be used even without an internet connection.

## **Service for cyclists**

The BIKESEITTER Park is available for cyclists to hand in their bike and enjoy the HAMBURG PORT ANNIVERSARY without worrying about their cycle – it is safe in a fenced-off area between the Gruner + Jahr building and Baumwall metro station. The service is available daily during the opening times of the HAMBURG PORT ANNIVERSARY, at a charge of €3 per day. For more information, see [www.bikesitter.de](http://www.bikesitter.de)

The HAMBURG PORT ANNIVERSARY would like to thank all its sponsors, especially its longstanding principal sponsor AIDA Cruises. Thanks to their support, the world's greatest port festival thrills more than a million visitors from all parts of the world every year.

**Organiser:** City of Hamburg – Ministry of Economics, Transport and Innovation  
Responsible for organisation: Hamburg Messe und Congress GmbH

**Contact:** Hamburg Messe und Congress GmbH, Press and Public Relations  
Andrea Heyden, Tel.: +49 40-3569-2446, E-mail: [andrea.heyden@hamburg-messe.de](mailto:andrea.heyden@hamburg-messe.de)  
Press texts and photos available for download at [www.hamburg.de/hafengeburtstag](http://www.hamburg.de/hafengeburtstag)