



The Maritimes

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Workers struggles

catching fire throughout NZ/Aotearoa





ORGANISING GLOBALLY
FIGHTING FOR OUR RIGHTS

Global congress unites transport workers

Seafarers Bill of Rights and Ports of Convenience Campaign on agenda

by Terry Ryan
Assistant General Secretary

The City of Durban in South Africa hosted the ITF's 41st Congress, the first on the continent of Africa, from 2-9 August 2006.

The Port of Durban is the busiest in Africa, and one of the ten largest in the world.

It acts as a major gateway to not only South Africa but to neighbouring countries such as Zimbabwe, Zambia, Botswana, and Malawi.

This Congress was the ITF's biggest ever gathering in its 110-year history, with 1207 people from 342 unions and 108 countries registering.

The ITF family gathered to meet the challenges posed by the congress theme of "Organising Globally" – fighting for our rights.

The host union was SATAWU (South African Transport and Allied Workers Union) and SATAWU General Secretary Randall Howard acted as facilitator to introduce speakers to the congress opening session, which was chaired for the last time by President Umraomal Purohit who was standing down after being in office since 1998.

Following a vigorous rendition of South Africa's national anthem by the SATAWU choir, the Mayor of Durban welcomed the delegates.

Other speakers included the Director General of the Ministry of Transport in South Africa, Mpumi Mpofu, who offered her strong support to the meeting saying that "any threat to the rights of workers anywhere in the world, is a threat to workers everywhere."

There were powerful speeches from ITF President Umraomal Purohit, President of the congress of South African Trade Unions, Zwelinzima Vavi, President of SATAWU Ezrom Mabyana, and SATAWU's Limpopo region chair Kate Matlou.

International trade unions

General Secretary of the ICFTU (International Confederation of Free Trade Unions) Guy Ryder used his address to explain changes to the global trade union movement, which will see the creation of the new International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC).

The objective he said "was to bring together all the democratic and independent forces of world trade unionism."

While most countries with ITF affiliation were represented apologies were received from Palestine, Israel, and Lebanon for obvious reasons.

Another apology was received from the Iran bus drivers union whose president is in prison charged with illegal trade union activity. In fact Mansour Osanloo, leader of the Tehran bus workers, has been in prison since December 2005.

Women membership

Women are becoming a larger and more influential part of the membership of transport unions.

The latest figures put the total of between 12.7% and 16.5%, or 557,314 at the latest count.

The MUNZ delegation attended the women's session to express solidarity and learn some of the issues particularly in the Maritime Industry.

For women seafarers the use of repeat short-term contracts in the cruise industry leads to companies off-loading costs such as maternity leave onto workers.

Shifts in passenger information, and ticketing to call centres is also of importance.

The women seafarers noted the increase in casualization, together with the effects of outsourcing to ever cheaper labour markets, which make the promotion of gender equality even harder.

Large numbers of women members are employed in clerical and administrative jobs in many port areas, as well as dockers.

Technological advances have overcome assumptions that only men with their physical strength/skills can do dock work.

It was pointed out that many women are now entering these jobs, particularly in the USA and India.

The ITF launched the women's programme in 1994.

Since then they have secured a women's committee, a women's officer and a department at the ITF along with 5 places guaranteed on the executive board.

The women's conference in Durban made history as the first ever conference to play a full constitutional part of the ITF congress.

Seafarers Section

The Seafarers section meeting was the largest of the sectional meetings with over 300 attending.

[continued on page 29]



Newly elected President of the ITF, Randall Howard of South Africa

"Any threat to the rights of workers anywhere in the world, is a threat to workers everywhere"

Contents

ITF South Africa Congress	2
General Secretary Report	3
President's Report	5
News	6
Training and Education	8
Vice President's Report	9
Leonhardt and Blumberg campaign	10
Union History	12
Saronic Wave Solidarity	14
Sky 75 ITF report	15
Winning "Shelf Respect"	16
Sisters in solidarity	18
Port Roundups	19
Obituaries	30
Letters	31
Branch contacts	31
The Back Page	32

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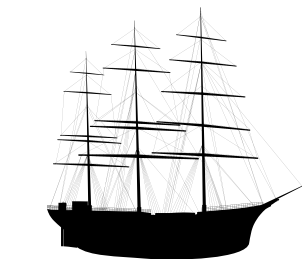
Deadline for all Port reports, submissions, photos and letters:
7 November 2006 for next edition

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Union members in action in Auckland and Whangarei, 2006 (thanks to NDU and Local 13)

Thanks to our photographers including Simon Oosterman, Terry Ryan, Harry Holland, Fred Salelea, Russell Mayn, Kathy Whelan, Bill Connelly, Bob Riwai and others



Winning "Shelf Respect" page 16



Union History page 12

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A rational maritime industry for New Zealand



by Trevor Hanson
General Secretary

Triennial Conference

The triennial conference of the Maritime Union is coming up in October.

This is the main meeting of our Union, held every three years, and will be where the results of the upcoming Union elec-

tions are confirmed.

It is also the opportunity for the future direction and policy of the Union to be set by remits from our branches throughout New Zealand.

The Conference is held in Wellington and will be attended by delegates and observers from all Union branches in New Zealand.

It is also an important international event for the Union as we will be joined by delegates from the international workers movement, including the Maritime Union of Australia, ILWU (West Coast USA and Canada) and Japanese maritime unions.

Japanese maritime union conference

On that note I recently returned from attending the Conference of the Japanese Dockers Union in Tokyo as representative of MUNZ.

This large and militant Union has provided us with a high level of support throughout the years, and they take their international commitments and membership of the ITF very seriously. I passed on our Union's fraternal regards and offered our thanks for their hospitality and solidarity.

Most recently this involved the case of the Saronic Wave, where the Japanese and Korean maritime unions and ITF offices carried out solidarity actions on our behalf after the use of non-union labour in Whangarei.

The only way forward for workers in the modern globalized economy is to beat the bosses at their own game, and use our international connections and solidarity to help each other.

There are millions of workers in the world, and our power is in unity and organization. We all have common goals.

Union elections

The Maritime Union is a democratic organization, unlike the companies most of us work for.

National officials are all elected by the membership, from the membership, for the benefit of the membership.

The four national positions open for election are the General Secretary, Assistant General Secretary, National President and National Vice-President. Nominations have been received from branches for each of these positions as per the rules of the Union.

All members will receive voting forms in the mail to complete and return in the next few weeks. A statement from all candidates will be supplied in this mailout as well.

Make sure you vote and exercise your democratic rights in the Union.

[continued next page]

“Rather than the efficiency and stability of a planned and rational industry, we have the chaos of an escalating race for survival”

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Maritime industry developments

The pressure to make a profit and beat the competition has reached crazy levels in our industry.

Rather than the efficiency and stability of a planned and rational industry, we have the chaos of an escalating race for survival by both Stevedoring Companies and Port Companies.

All of us are aware that the main problem is the shipping companies, particularly the container line operators who are using their dominant position to place the remaining remnants of conventional cargo into containers.

These container lines are using their position of strength to drive the Port Companies margins as low as they can by playing them off against each other.

To assist this process they are using the language of “port rationalization” – saying there are too many ports, and making thinly veiled threats as to who and which port is going to miss out.

So in a nutshell the country is being held to ransom by multinational operators who have no interest in anything except how much they can screw out of us.

Right at the bottom comes maritime workers, whose wages and conditions will be attacked through casualization, liquidation and every other trick in the book.

These companies do not have the right to put a cloud of doubt over any port or region, and in the process damage both business and workers in these areas.

A recent example of what this means was in Lyttelton where one company lost its major contracts, and the other company retained its contracts.

The Union negotiators, faced with complete closure and the loss of all jobs in one company had to find a way through the problem while doing least damage to all the other members at the port.

In this particular case the members of the affected company – after continual threats of closure – got to a stage where they were so stressed out they were ready to all walk away.

As negotiators we were aware if this happened we could be immediately faced with a cheap operator attempting to muscle in.

The problems associated with that scenario would have a required complete port stoppage.

We finally reached an agreement which cost eight jobs and those remaining retained conditions so as not to impact on the other members in the port.

Another problem is that in an effort to survive, ports under threat adopt a blind eye to safety, and this is not just our guys but from Port Company management level down.

I am well aware that in order to retain contracts all sorts of hours and short cuts take place as well as unsafe work practices.

There is no doubt in my mind or those of our officials and our membership that the present escalation will continue on its market driven course and we have to look at all options towards protecting jobs and conditions.

I am sure that industrial action at port level will occur where one port comes under attack, but although such actions assist the national situation the benefits are relatively short lived and we need to change the structure of the industry.

One of our prime goals should be to hammer home to both Port Companies and Stevedores that where contracts change between competing employers, and redundancy occurs as a result, we demand that any of our affected members are not disadvantaged and are given first right to any permanent work at their Port.

Coastal Shipping

The issue of Coastal Shipping has continued to be in the public eye.

A recent report put out by the New Zealand Shipping Federation must be understood in terms of being an employers document with the interests of employers first.

However we have a strong interest in supporting a rejuvenated coastal shipping industry, and should support the overall goal of a New Zealand shipping industry where we have jobs for New Zealand seafarers.

Although stopping well short of the obvious solution of coastal cabotage, the steps outlined in the Shipping Federation report are logical and practical from an industry standpoint.

We can support the wider goal here, while at the same time asserting the right of workers to secure well-paid jobs, and promoting ideas such as the public ownership of ports and a publicly owned shipping line.

Our concerns in the maritime industry around both shipping and ports are shared by a diverse range of groups including the Green Party, the CTU and the Keep Our Port Public campaign which unites many individuals and groups.

With this increasingly wide support we are in a good position to put the interests of workers high on the agenda.

Free Trade deals

The Maritime Union has ensured local jobs on the waterfront will be protected from being undermined by free trade deals.

At a Union meeting in July 2006 with Government officials, the Maritime Union was advised wording in New Zealand's GATS schedule had been changed to specifically exclude self-loading by ships crews.

The meeting was attended by Maritime Union officials Terry Ryan and Joe Fleetwood.

The result was a small but significant change due to the persistence of the Union.

Progressive Dispute

The locked out distribution workers at Progressive Enterprises have shown a great amount of determination and guts.

All New Zealanders are aware of the struggle of these workers against their employer – Progressive Enterprises – who are owned by Woolworths Australia, who recently increased their profits by a billion dollars a year.

The Maritime Union has been a leading supporter of these workers with donations, delegates on the picket line, and media backup.

All New Zealand unions have got behind the distribution workers as well as the CTU and the Australian CTU.

Of further note is the support that the ITF and affiliated unions have provided the workers, with the Maritime Union working alongside the Rail and Maritime Transport Union, the Maritime Union of Australia, Australian transport unions and the ITF international headquarters in London to generate international support for their struggle.

Terry Ryan has been working in this area to great effect.

You can read about the dispute elsewhere in this edition of the ‘Maritimes.’



We will not accept victimization of unionists

by Phil Adams
National President

Progressive Enterprises Lockout

It is heartening to see the response to our fellow workers at Progressive Enterprises in their struggle.

Our collective actions resulted in a victory for these workers in a notoriously poorly paid industry and shows what can be done with determination.

Their unscrupulous employer has a bad reputation throughout Australasia and it is times like these we must come together to support workers who are after a fair deal.

Toll managers reveal their true nature

Just in case anyone was wondering what type of people we are dealing with in Toll Management, the Maritime Union received news of the appalling treatment one of their staff – and a leading New Zealand trade unionist – has received at their hands.

We recently received the following news from the Rail and Maritime Transport Union (RMTU).

RMTU National President Jim Kelly, when not being a Union activist, is employed as a fitter in Hillside Workshops in Dunedin.

Jim is currently on the waiting list for heart surgery as he needs a valve in his heart replaced.

Accordingly it is not in his best interests to get worked up, stressed etc. However Jim is currently very stressed.

Why? Jim has no sick leave entitlement left and occasionally he is unwell and gets severe chest pains and has to go home or not come to work.

Toll has advised him that if this occurs he will not be paid sick leave.

This despite the collective Agreement provision which states; "13.9 – If your sick leave entitlement is exhausted you and your manager may agree to additional paid sick leave.

Favourable consideration will be given in cases of serious illness or fatigue/stress that could affect safety."

The RMTU advise there are a large number of members who have received additional paid sick leave for illnesses in the past and it highlights the disparity of treatment in this case.

Some have suffered illnesses way short of life threatening which is what Jim Kelly's situation is.

This undermining of the RMTU collective agreement with Toll, and the loss of paid sick leave for Jim, is causing Jim worry about the financial affects of the illness on the family home and other matters.

This is very stressful and as a result the doctor has had to double Jim's medication dosage.

RMTU General Secretary Wayne Butson says this is a direct attack on the RMTU by Toll management.

The Maritime Union agrees totally and has made our full support of Jim Kelly known to the RMTU and also Toll.

I wrote to Toll CEO David Jackson and told him that the Maritime Union had been informed of his company's attitude in denying Jim Kelly extra sick leave while he battles his heart condition.

I told him it was disgusting and our Union wondered what sort of heartless people they are.

Jim apart from being an excellent bloke is President of a very influential union in New Zealand and serves his members very well – and perhaps the stress of helping his fellow members and the dealings he has with Toll has brought on his health problems.

Wayne Butson has written his appreciation to us for our support and says "Actions such as yours illustrate the joint values that our two Unions share and the fact that we are united in a shared philosophy of obtaining justice for workers . . . please pass on my thanks to your members for their support as well."

We wish Jim all the best in his recovery and put down the very clear warning to Toll that if they try this business with anyone else, whatever Union they are in, whatever their status, we will be on their case right away.

We will be especially aware of any attempts to single out those union officials, delegates and activists who serve their fellow workers well.

Union business

The Union has a number of important events coming up including our Triennial Conference and the elections for national officials.

All members should make sure they take the opportunity to vote in the union elections.

"We will be especially aware of any attempts to single out those union officials, delegates and activists who serve their fellow workers well"

Retirement Funds Online

Members of both the Waterfront Industry Superannuation Fund (WISF) and the Seafarers Retirement Fund (SRF) can now access their websites.

The Waterfront Industry Superannuation Fund now has its own website with latest information about the fund at <http://www.wisf.co.nz>

The Seafarers Retirement Fund annual report can be accessed at:

http://www.munz.org.nz/website_srf06/index.html



Campaigning against the National Party's anti-worker 90 Day Bill at the Avondale Markets, from left, Local 13 Secretary Russell Mayn, Seafarers delegate Peter Davis, Auckland Seafarers President John O'Neill and Auckland Seafarers Secretary Garry Parsloe



Crane inspections in NZ ports

Maritime New Zealand have advised that during the months of September, October, and November they will carry out ship inspections to ensure that ships cranes, derricks and associated gear is in satisfactory condition.

Gear must comply with New Zealand Maritime Rules – in particular Rule 49.

This will apply to both New Zealand ships and foreign flagged ships.

Law requires the owner and Master of each ship to ensure that its lifting appliances and cargo gear are:

- In good repair and working order
- Have valid certificates for proof tests within the last 5 years or after repairs
- Have been thoroughly examined by a competent person within the last 12 months
- Have been inspected by a responsible person before use
- Are clearly and permanently marked with the safe working load

Maritime New Zealand has also advised that they are going to employ permanent Health and Safety Officers in the very near future.

Maritime Union General Secretary Trevor Hanson says the Ships Lifting Inspections are a direct result of recent and past incidents where it has been extremely lucky that no one has been killed.

All workers are advised that the Inspectors who carry out the pending campaign will also be taking note of any bad safety practices in the loading and unloading operations of the vessels they inspect.

For more information:
<http://www.maritimenz.govt.nz>

Enforcing the law

It's your right to be safe at work

From the Guide to Health and Safety in Employment Act

If workers and the employer can't agree on a matter of health and safety, there are a range of steps that may be taken.

Workers themselves can take action. The Health and Safety in Employment Act guarantees the right of workers to refuse to do work that they reasonably believe could cause serious harm.

Advice from a health and safety rep is enough for a reasonable belief.

Where a trained health and safety rep has brought a hazard to the attention of the employer and is not satisfied with the result, that rep may issue a hazard notice [section 46A].

The notice must be on the prescribed form (available from <http://www.worksafereps.org.nz/toolkit/files/HazardNotice.pdf>)

An OSH inspector may be informed of the notice, which serves as a 'prior warning' for the purposes of an OSH infringement notice.

Any person can contact OSH and request an inspec-

tor to visit their workplace to investigate a matter of health and safety.

OSH inspectors have the power to enter and inspect a workplace.

The inspector may issue:

- Improvement notices
- Prohibition notices
- Infringement notices

A person may be prosecuted under the act where they take or fail to take any action, knowing that this is reasonably likely to cause serious harm.

If an inspector or enforcement authority decides not to prosecute, any party may initiate prosecution by laying information with the courts under section 54A of the HSE Act.

Employers can not insure against fines under the act. Thanks to Local 13 Health and Safety Officer Bob Riwai for sending this article in. For more information:
<http://www.worksafereps.org.nz>

“The HSE Act guarantees the right of workers to refuse to do work that they reasonably believe could cause serious harm”

Union Elections

Maritime Union members are currently voting for their four national officials in the three-yearly Union Elections.

All members have been sent ballot papers for postal voting.

These ballot papers must be received by the Returning Officer by 10am, Monday 6 November 2006.

Three candidates are contesting the position of General Secretary, two candidates are contesting National President, and two candidates are contesting National Vice President.

Only one nomination was received for the position of Assistant General Secretary, which will mean the candidate Russell Mayn will be declared unopposed on 6 November.

If any member has not received their ballot papers, please contact: Phil Mansor, Returning Officer Telephone 04 3850 792 Mail Maritime Union National Office, PO Box 27004, Wellington

Changes to Post Codes

New Zealand Post have changed all of the post codes that have to go on bulk mail items such as the Maritimes magazine.

The Union had to comply as part of NZ Post's requirements for reduced postage for bulk items.

Members will therefore see that their address may differ, as well as NZ Post in some instances redefining the suburb as well.

When you change your address please notify the National Office as this is where the labels are generated.

It would also be of assistance if changes to other details such as telephone numbers and email address will also assist us in keeping current records accurate.

To contact the National Office with a change of details: Telephone 04 3850 792 Email edgar.spark@muno.org.nz Mail Maritime Union National Office, PO Box 27004, Wellington



Windfarm turbine blades arriving in Bluff (photo by Harry Holland)

Push for cheap labour trafficking

The Maritime Union of New Zealand says that growing pressure to import unskilled labour into Australia under a free trade agreement has confirmed its worst fears.

Maritime Union General Secretary Trevor Hanson says that proposals to allow companies to import unskilled Chinese workers into Australian ports and construction sites gave a clear message to New Zealand workers.

"This is the equivalent of a huge neon sign flashing out the warning that free trade deals will inevitably lead to a collapse in wages, conditions and workers rights."

Mr Hanson said it was time there was a national debate on free trade.

"There is no debate and there is no attempt to involve the public, or even let them know the full implications of what these free trade deals mean."

He says the issue was not about race and immigration.

"All workers whatever their nationality should receive good wages and conditions – these deals are about knocking the bottom out of wages and conditions."

The Australian Financial Review reported earlier this year the Chinese Government has put Canberra on notice it would demand Australia go further on the issue of temporary entry of workers in the free trade agreement now under negotiation.

Maritime industry targeted

Shipping, construction and mining are three key areas that Beijing has nominated as key to the labour negotiations that start at the end of this year.

The Chinese government has used separate World Trade Organisation negotiations to raise the issue of Australian port deregulation, by wanting to have ship crews loading and unloading ships, rather than local workers.

The Australian Financial Review said China might be interested in a point-to-point Chinese owned and staffed shipping line stretching from inland Australia to inland China.

Mr Hanson says the recent failed attempt by Hong Kong based multinational Hutchison to buy into the Port of Lyttelton earlier this year was an example of the "slippery slope of free trade."

"Obviously the multinationals would much rather have low-cost labour employed under Chinese conditions working in New Zealand, just as they would in Australia."

Independent unions have no right to organize in China.

Mr Hanson says New Zealand has been hypnotized with propaganda about the benefits of market access for New Zealand products to overseas markets.

"It is the old tactic of divide and rule, turning workers against workers, on a grand scale. The issue is about wages, conditions and the right of all workers to secure jobs and human rights. There's no free in free trade for the workers."

Mr Hanson says that if people want an example of the reality of work conditions under free trade, they should look at overseas workers in the New Zealand fishing industry.

"They are underpaid, overworked, and as numerous reports have indicated suffer from poor safety conditions and are often abused and even assaulted. What happens when that situation moves ashore?"

He says the Maritime Union is planning for strong and co-ordinated national action if there is any attempt to undermine conditions through free trade agreements, and has offered its support to Australian unions.

Building our strength

Training and Education courses



Lyttelton branch members at their recent training seminar



by Fred Salelea
Union educator

July and August have seen some courses postponed and cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances and the nature of our industry.

However we have successfully completed courses at our Whangarei, Bluff, Tauranga, Gisborne, Napier, Lyttelton, and Wellington Branches, including a special Rotorua course.

Topics ranged from Our Union at Work, Organizing the Workplace, Working with Members to Resolve Workplace Issues and Involving Women in the Waterfront Industry.

Our Education Program is successful due to the effort and attendance of our members who participate from each branch and the officials who follow up on the programs.

All of our branches from the tip of sunny Whangarei to Bluff in the depths of the far south have members that are coming through our Education program with the potential to be leaders in the future.

It's up to us to give our members every opportunity to attend available courses to give them the skill and knowledge to grow within our union.

For more information on training courses contact your branch or contact Training Officer Fred Salelea – Mobile: 021 2291432

Email: salelea@xtra.co.nz

Website: <http://www.munz.org.nz/training.html>

On the Battle front

Laila Harré and the NDU have been in war mode against Australasia's largest retailer, Woolworths, which now owns New Zealand's Progressive supermarkets chain.

The commitment and conviction of the workers was on the line and they were resolute in their claim for what is rightful and just.

The Australian owners who locked out the workers at the three supermarket Distribution centres and refused to let them back to work until they gave up on their claim for a national collective agreement were not prepared for the repercussions.

The management of Progressive handed the workers the platform needed to gain the moral high ground.

While the dispute was seen as about money, there was little reason for the wider union movement to get involved.

But the company laid down a challenge that unions couldn't afford to ignore.

The Maritime Union both here and across the Tasman threw their weight behind the NDU and the Progressive workers, together with many other Unions.

Our members of the Maritime Union of New Zealand contributed with cash donations, food parcels and fronted up on the battle front to lend their support.

This dispute has become one of the defining industrial struggles of recent times.

Progressive learned that you can't starve vulnerable New Zealand workers into defeat, because on our doors and on our lockers it reads "A Harm to one is a harm to all" and "Touch one touch all".

The "Seafarers Bill of Rights"

Maritime Labour Convention 2006



by Joe Fleetwood
National Vice President

Maritime conferences like this occur roughly every ten years.

February 2006 was the end of a very long five

years of negotiation between Governments, ship owners, social partners, and seafarers.

Solas-Marpol-STCW, now known as the 'Seafarers Bill of Rights', is the "fourth pillar" of protection for world shipping and seafarers, and has brought together over sixty ILO conventions, based around living and working conditions, dating back to 1920 for seafarers.

The Seafarer Bill of Rights addresses the bare minimum standards for hours of work and rest, repatriation, minimum wage, medical certificates, employment contracts, health and medical care, welfare and social security protection, wages, manning levels, recruitment and replacement, leave, training, food and accommodation, recreational facilities, and other important terms and conditions.

The Bill ensures standards are set at acceptable levels for around 1.2 million seafarers around the world, and casts a searchlight on New Zealand's disgraceful open coast policy, and the exploitation that goes on with FOC shipping.

The adoption of this "fourth pillar" has put in place a complaint procedure for seafarers being victimized, and more importantly, has ensured the enforcement of Port State authority for vessels larger than 500 gross tonnes on international voyages to carry a declaration of labour compliance and maritime labour certificate.

For this convention to come into force it must be ratified by thirty countries that together control 33% of the world's gross tonnage shipping.

New Zealand must adopt and ratify, so that together we can rid the seven seas of substandard ship owners and ships of shame.

The Maritime Union will be telling the New Zealand government – enough is enough. We must contribute to the protection of workers of the world.

Western Australian workers organize for working class

Maritime Union of Australia hosts conference

by Joe Fleetwood
National Vice President

It was inspiring to attend the Maritime Union of Australia Western Australia State Conference held 26-28 July, 2006.

I was proud to speak on behalf of the Maritime Union of New Zealand.

The main theme of the Conference was the global attacks coming from multi-national corporations, working with their allies in right wing Governments.

Topics included the colonialization of the Philippines and East Timor, the Employment Contracts Act in New Zealand, and now Australian Prime Minister Howard's version of Thatcherism with the misleading title of 'Work Choices for Australian People'.

MUA National Secretary Paddy Crumlin and MUA Western Australian State Secretary Chris Cain concentrated on the need to engage the rank and file, families, veterans and communities in International Solidarity.

A good friend of both the World Maritime Industry and myself, ILWU secretary-treasurer Willie Adams from the West Coast USA spoke on many issues.

These included the lock-out of 2002, and how the Bush Administration deemed the workers of the ILWU to be "Trade Union Terrorists."

ILWU members work for some of the worlds most powerful employers, who generate hundreds of millions of dollars profit off the backs of the working class.

The ILWU were able to secure a six year deal with career paths for their workers.

President of the Liverpool Dockers Tony Nelson delivered a heart wrenching report of the attacks upon the working class of the UK in the "Thatcher" era.

Tony talked of the Liverpool Dockers dispute, with 500 dockers blacklisted, still campaigning for the right to their rightful workplace on the docks.

He mentioned something dear to our hearts in New Zealand – Government approved exploitation with Flag of Convenience vessels, casualization, privatization, and deregulation of the waterfront.

National Secretary of the Australian Construction, Forestry, Manufacturing and Engineering Union (CFMEU), John Maitland, spoke on the need for the workers of the world in the transport chain to link together.

This is the only way we can be effective in achieving worker control over the corporate controlled globalization process.

Organising the four main modes of transport – rail, road, sea and air – will play a massive part for the workers of the world in achieving their fair share of the profits we produce.

We must educate our rank and file workers, communities and the wider public, and even some of our veterans, as a lot of us have fallen into comfort zones.

The main thing that stood out for me was building worker capacity to organize and fight the struggle – collectively, we will survive.

John is currently retiring from his union position as national secretary but not retiring from the class struggle – a true defender of the working class.

President of the KMU, a Union from the Philippines, Wilson Baldonoza, told some horrific stories of atrocities committed on his people, and the global exploitation of Filipino guest labour.

By the end of this year, there should be another 300,000 people entering Australia under 'Work Choices' legislation.

Currently there are over 10 million Filipino workers around the world as guest labour – 80% of the Filipinos live in poverty, with mass unemployment and debt.

Wilson mentioned the daily politically-motivated killing of workers and union organisers, genocide, rape and torture.

To date, there have been 705 organisers go missing - although Wilson did make the point that 'the military hate it when they go missing'.

Wilson has been made an "enemy of the state" – but he is most definitely a "friend of the workers."

There were many speakers from Australian Unions including the MUA, and many rank and file delegate speakers from the floor contributing their ideas to get rid of the Australian Government and its anti working-class legislation of 'Work Choices'.

One speaker of note was Alannah McTiernan, member of the State Parliament, and the Western Australian Minister of Transport, who supports state cabotage, skill training for workers, and a path forward for the workers, as opposed to a race to the bottom.

Western Australia Conference

The conference endorsed remits including;

- 107 construction workers sacked on Perth-Mandurah rail line were offered our support.

- Conference agreed to fight the Government's support for exploitation of guest labour ("Section 457")

- Stolt Dispute - a victory for the union in securing the manning for the replacement tanker vessel if it trades on the Australian coastline.

The WA state conference will continue to push hard and support other unions in their continual struggle to re-instate apprenticeship positions into enterprise agreements, and will call on state and federal Labour Governments to commit to reinstate into state and federal agreements.

Solidarity for the Philippines working class

The Conference condemned the Arroyo government for their anti working class policies, and for the attacks on the Filipino people.

We congratulated the KMU for continuing to fight for the workers.

We note the Howard Governments 'Work Choice' legislation was designed to casualise the Australian work force by lowering all terms and conditions of collective enterprise agreements, and to bring the demise of organised labour by utilising and exploiting foreign guest labour.

We as workers of both New Zealand and Australia need to campaign hard against the continual attacks from multi-national globalisation on workers of the world, to ensure equality and social justice for generations to come.

I would like to finish off with thanking the Western Australia branch officials of the MUA, Chris, Keith, and Ian, and all the branch staff, the National officials and the MUA rank and file.

It was great to meet with old friends, and to make new friends.



No place to hide

Shipping multinationals
can't beat solidarity

“The real winners are the seafarers employed on the 11 Leonhardt and Blumberg vessels, who now have protection for their wages, conditions and rights”

by **Kathy Whelan**
New Zealand ITF Co-ordinator

Leonhardt and Blumberg is a large German Shipping Company based in Hamburg.

This 103 year old company owns approximately 45 ships and its Chief Executive Frank Leonhardt heads the German Shipowners Association.

It is from their privileged and influential positions inside the German maritime industry that Leonhardt and Blumberg launched a series of attacks against maritime unions around the world.

In particular Mr Leonhardt urged all his German shipping colleagues to ignore the rights of international seafarers by refusing to allow any of his Flag of Convenience vessels to be covered by ITF international minimum standards.

Last year the Japanese ITF inspectorate first raised concerns about the L&B containership NYK Prestige that was chartered to the normally ITF friendly NYK Line on which all attempts to reach a satisfactory crew agreement had failed.

Naturally we were worried that this could signal a change of attitude by NYK toward the ITF, and so began our campaign.

Coordinated actions among affiliated unions included protests against the Germany embassies and alerts to dockers in countries visited by the NYK Prestige.

Eventually the German Union Ver-di hosted an ITF international delegation to visit Leonhardt on his own turf in Hamburg, Germany.

Half an hour before the agreed time Leonhardt cancelled the meeting.

Instead he used the opportunity to try to intimate coordinators and unions with misguided and ill-informed industrial threats, which only demonstrated his limited understanding of how other countries industrial systems operate.

Standing on the steps of the Leonhardt and Blumberg headquarters, Frank Leonhardt's statements were disappointing to say the least and the entire delegation, which included union representatives from Japan, Australia, Korea, Germany and the UK left with more resolve than ever.

Our targeted campaign continued to gain momentum throughout the ITF network receiving strong support from ITF affiliates and all our inspectorates.

Many coordinated international actions took place against the German owners and the charterers, using a mixture of political and legal activities.

These eventually led to the signing of ITF uniform (“total crew cost”) agreements for three L&B vessels – NYK Prestige, Cap Lobos and the Damascus, which although a huge victory was by far the end of the campaign.

The next target were three container ships, the Hansa Flensburg, Hansa Rensberg and the Hansa Sonderburg which trade Sydney, Melbourne, Tauranga in New Zealand, Mexico and Los Angeles and are time chartered by the German shipping giant Hapag – Lloyd.

And after some persistent and dogged attention by the ITF inspectorates and affiliates in the Asia/Pacific region the agreement for these three ships were signed and signals the latest in a series of successes and follows on from wins with the “Hansa Africa” in Canada, Japan and Korea.

The total number of L&B vessels now covered by the ITF is 11 which is a quarter of his fleet and comes almost 20 months after the campaign was formed around the refusal of L&B to sign a TCC for the “NYK Prestige.”

It was an enormous surprise to L&B that actions in Australia have been so successful despite the Howard Government's dictatorial industrial relations regime and this is testament to the resolve of Australian workers and their ability to be effective in the most difficult of circumstances.

Similarly in New Zealand the campaigns has seen the development through the ITF of the “Tauranga L&B team” which has established meeting times around the arrival of L&B ships and includes MUNZ seafarers and Dockers who have become active in a very difficult port.

On the West Coast of the USA, dockers have paid particular attention to these vessels and have ensured that safety is as always a number one priority.

The inspectorate continues to support every part of the campaign and forms a significant link in the activities against L&B.

Activity in all Asia Pacific Inspectorates had been ongoing and consistent.

The real winners of course are the seafarers employed on the 11 L&B vessels, who now have protection for their wages, conditions and rights and know that they can rely on the maritime union affiliates around the world whenever they need them.

The Leonhardt and Blumberg campaign team will meet again in Sydney in November where the strategy and tactics will be revised and refined to build on the advances of the campaign and identify new ways to advance the FOC campaign.

The Tauranga committee comprises of Phil Spanswick, Richard Rankin, Jimmy Rosser, Tony Carter, Taffy Jones and is being coordinated through Kathy Whelan.

Any members wishing to join the team and participate in the campaign are welcome and urged to do so.

Regular reports will be given through stop-work meetings and updates are available from the Coordinator (Kathy Whelan) or the MUNZ Tauranga branch.

For more information:

<http://www.itfglobal.org/transport-international/ti24-seafarers.cfm>



Local 13 Secretary Russell Mayn (left) and Auckland Seafarers Secretary Garry Parsloe (right) with the Chief Officer of the Golden Trader

Golden Trader pay dispute settled in favour of crew

by Garry Parsloe

The 'Golden Trader' had laid alongside the wharf in Auckland for many months with the crew having difficulty in getting paid by their employer.

The employer in the first instance was the Tongan Government, who sold the vessel to a Japanese Company who on sold to another Japanese Company.

Whilst all this was going on, the ITF and the Auckland Branch of the Maritime Union was constantly pursuing whoever the Agent of the day was to advance the Seafarers some form of financial assistance (an advance on wages) until all wages could be settled up.

On the 1 June, the owners asked the crew to sail to Napier to load logs for Pusan, making this request while a large amount of wages were still outstanding.

The crew took the sensible decision of refusing to sail until the outstanding wages were paid and the vessel was stored with enough fresh food to last the voyage.

After discussions between the crew and the Auckland Seafarers Branch of the Maritime Union, then involving ITF co-ordinator Kathy Whelan and the owners, an agreement was reached where the ship would be stored, and the crew paid back pay of US\$28,859.16 and US\$2775 for their April wages.

The company also agreed to pay the May wages when the vessel arrived in Napier.

With this undertaking in place the crew agreed and then sailed to Napier.

When the vessel arrived back in Auckland, we found that while the crew had been paid for April the company had not paid the May balance that was to be paid in Napier.

Therefore we were back in dispute again.

It was only after refusing to sail from Auckland again that the company agreed to pay all the rest of the outstanding wages on the following Monday.

With this assurance in place, the vessel went to anchor until the wages were paid out onboard and the vessel could then continue on its voyage to Pusan.

In summary, whilst it was great to help the crew get their full entitlement, the real jewel in the crown of the whole dispute was the way all the crew banded together, and with the support of ITF, never shifted from their position of fighting for what was rightfully theirs.

New Zealand ITF Affiliates Meeting

by Joe Fleetwood

The New Zealand ITF Affiliates Meeting was held at the RMTU office in Wellington on 23 August 2006, and was chaired by New Zealand convenor Wayne Butson.

The meeting was attended on behalf of the Maritime Union by myself Joe Fleetwood, Trevor Hanson, Terry Ryan, and also by representatives of the Merchant Service Guild (MSG), the Aviation and Marine Engineers Association (AMEA), the Engineering, Printing and Manufacturing Union (EPMU), the National Distribution Union (NDU), and the ITF.

Wayne Butson was re-elected as country convenor. (This was earlier moved by Terry Ryan, seconded by Mike Williams.)

Topics discussed included decisions taken at the ITF congress in South Africa, which covered all forms of transport throughout the world – rail, road, sea and air.

Helen McAra of the MSG was asked about the Ratings Task Force.

There will be a meeting held in November 2006 to discuss work skills and training for seafarers of the world.

The RMTU have been working closely with the TWU transport union in Australia in organising New Zealand road transport, and the NDU voiced their concerns regarding their lack of input.

ITF inspector Kathy Whelan reported on Maritime Union-ITF activities in the fishing industry.

We have met with Government Ministers, Immigration and the Department of Labour officials to tighten up on regulation enforcement.

Many foreign seafarers are still being abused and exploited through the disgraceful "open coast" policy, and we run the risk of becoming the social dumping ground of the Pacific.

These ITF meetings are important for our regions, as they help to bring the transport unions together in our struggles, for example against multi-sector employers like Toll.



A quiet and decorous manner

'The Maritimes' presents its third and final instalment from Chapter 2 of the forthcoming history of the New Zealand Seafarers Union, by historian David Grant.

by David Grant

Through 1881 and 1882, disputes continued despite the Seamen's Union growing in membership. Ships continued to sail short handed, often behind time with traders and owners profits declining.

Some owners threatened to bring in Chinese seamen whom they pay a fraction of what local seamen were paid, yet still higher than what many of these men were paid on overseas steamers trading to and from China.

It was not only the cheap labour concept that played a part in widespread opposition to this, many New Zealanders including unionists, held racist attitudes towards such foreigners – not wanting their ports to be, as one newspaper reported, 'overrun by Orientals of low morality'.

At this time, notions of the racial superiority 'of the English classes' were never far from the surface, irrespective of personal or political ideology.

It needs to be noted that seafaring life drew together men from many countries, races and cultures but because of the in-built racism prevalent at the time, much antagonism was directed towards Melanesian, Polynesian – including Maori – seamen.

As a consequence, New Zealand-based seamen were less heterogeneous than otherwise might have been the case. The vast majority of them were born in the British Isles with Scotsmen and 'Scouses' being particularly prominent. As late as 1899, just 26 per cent of New Zealand seafarers were locally born.

By 1918, the figure was even less, at 24 per cent. There was an almost total absence of Maori on inter-colonial ships, and just a handful on coastal traders.

Refusal to employ unionists

Increasingly, union men tried to persuade others to join them and not work the boats. Most were reluctant because of the ship-owners continued refusal to employ unionists, and they filled the gap.

There was sometimes chaos on the waterfront. Knots of union men would loudly abuse non-union labour boarding the boats.

In February 1881, three seamen who had signed articles to work on the *Huia* for six months were arrested by police when they refused duty on board after a pay dispute. (They were all subsequently fined more than a week's pay). Such incidents exacerbated tensions.

Days after this, some non union men boarded the *Tui* with swags, coats and caps pulled down over their foreheads, to make them indistinguishable from the passengers.

Union men gathered on the wharf were gobsmacked when these men subsequently removed their 'disguises' and began crewing the boat. Hoots and boos echoed around the harbour.

More union men who signed on but refused to take up duties on northern steamers were arrested by police and taken to court.

Destitution and poverty

Late in February, two, George Frank and Mathien Jerris, arrested off the *Huia* were sentenced to a day's detention. In the meantime, union men who were not been routinely refused work became destitute there being little welfare to ease the burden of poverty stricken families.

It seems remarkable that very few seamen abandoned the union simply to be employed and membership continued to remain steady.

The Seamen's Union did have some small successes.

In Port Chalmers, after long negotiations with the Union Company, its members agreed that Port Chalmers would be the final port of discharge for all seamen engaged by the company (the vast bulk of them lived there), and that each side would give 24 hours notice of withdrawal of labour at the port.

Both sides also arranged that no seaman engaged by the company should be discharged against his desire at any New Zealand and Australian port except for Port Chalmers and that the maximum eight hours of work, (fought so hard for by the union hitherto) would apply on union boats in Sydney, Melbourne and Port Chalmers where the families of all the men were located, conditional that men be paid overtime when other labour was scarce.

Moreover, men residing at ports other than Port Chalmers were now permitted to work their passage back to their home port in any of the company's steamers.

That these accords were able to be settled owed much to the far-sightedness of the Union Company's managing director James Mills who understood that profits for his firm depended on a contented and productive work-force. For many of his contemporaries in northern ports this was a lesson yet to be learned.

'Very respectable indeed'

Slowly however, as the 1880s proceeded, and encouraged by the accord arrived at in Otago, there became a greater willingness on both sides to reach agreements and owners and agents employing union men to crew their boats became more the rule than the exception. The vast bulk of experienced seafarers joined the union.

Conversely, many non-unionists who worked on boats were unreliable workers, sometimes drunk and 'ne'er-do-wells' as Hutchison recorded in December 1881.

(Following Hutchison, local MP George Fisher became president of the

Wellington union. It was now 'very respectable indeed').

More and more employers opted for union men – who by all accounts were 'reliable' and had a 'sound work ethic' – and agreed to pay them the monthly wages for the various classes of seafarers, overtime for work between 5pm and 8am, and accede to their wish for restricted hours of work.

By 1883 only the Auckland waterfront was experiencing periodic disputes among unionists and ship-owners who continued to refuse to pay the regular monthly wages southern seamen were now earning of £7 a month, plus overtime and reduced hours of work.

By peaceable means

In case militant action was a consequence (which was unlikely), Thos Dobson, president of the Seamen's Union in Dunedin travelled to Auckland in July 1884 and counselled the local branch to secure their objects by peaceable means, rather than strikes, which were 'injurious to themselves and the union.'

Auckland's seamen's frustrations were easy to understand. In contrast to union acceptance in the south, the Northern Steamship Company, the second biggest in the country, dragged the chain.

By comparison with its main rival-the Union Steamship Company- Northern was a backward enterprise with a small fleet of decrepit steamers and their business confined to the north of New Zealand.

Trade was sagging, opportunities for expansion limited, money tight and profits a close-run thing. Moreover trade unionism among seafarers was weakest in Auckland, it being the home port to the mosquito fleet, a flotilla of many owner-operated scows, schooners and small steamers.

Many of the men working on these vessels lived with the hope of owning their own vessel one day and employing their own hands. Indeed, when the union tried to organise these men, some scow owners offered them shares in the vessel to alter their status and, from 1894, remove them from the jurisdiction of the Arbitration Court. These smaller companies, of course, provided stiff competition to Northern.

In this context, there was little surprise that seamen and firemen from this company's Iona and Rowena walked off on 23 October 1884 in response to the company's refusal to recognize the union's rules on wages (this company was paying £6 a month rather than the standard £7), and overtime.

Subsequently, the crews on all other Northern Co. steamers also went on strike when their ships arrived in Auckland. By 26 October the Wellington, Annie Milbank, Glenelg, Macgregor, Rotomahana, Coromandel and Enterprise were also idle.

Seventy men were now on strike. With the Rotomahana, Enterprise and Rowena the only steamers to be trading regularly between Auckland and Thames the latter

port was effectively closed down. (Captain Farquhar of the Rotomahana could not hire labour of any description and was forced to man his vessel on the following trip with just his five sons, aged 13 to 19.)

In contrast to the Northern Company, the Kamo Coal Company, owner of the collier Waitaki did agree to pay union rates and their men returned to work, as did most of the other smaller companies soon afterwards.

It was noteworthy too that the New Zealand Herald came out in support of the unionists considering that the seamen were not 'asking anything out of reason' and commended them on their 'quiet and decorous manner'.

But Northern refused to budge and on 24 October 10 of the 16 steamers idle at Auckland and Onehunga were Northern Company ships.

Then Northern's owner and manager Alexander McGregor a gruff, no-nonsense Nova Scotian, had five striking seamen from the Wellington arrested as their articles had not expired. They were taken to prison although the union posted their bail and hired three defence counsel for their court hearing.

First protest of its type

Meantime, union men, led by branch secretary Edward Ellison, protested on the wharf carrying sandwich boards calling on all seamen not to work on ships with non-union regulations. This was the first protest of this type in New Zealand.

On 29 October, Dodds once again urged striking men in Auckland to uphold their rights but in doing so 'act with patience and forbearance'.

A cablegram from Sydney had a different message, urging the men not to concede anything in their troubles with the Northern Company, reminding them-and the local press-that the union in Australia and New Zealand now comprised 14,000 men-and that they could furnish the Auckland strikers with up to £800 from their coffers. Meantime, McGregor had 17 seamen working his ships arrested for desertion.

By the middle of November however, with the union showing no signs of weakening, the Northern Company capitulated, helped by an 'inducement' of £100 paid to the company by the union as recompense for any loss caused by the strike. This ushered in a period of relative calm on New Zealand ships and wharves.

In his annual report for 1885, Dodds commented that all branches were flourishing, there being over £2,000 in the coffers even after rendering assistance to other (unnamed) unions and that the union had 'no reason to complain' of the treatment received from steamship owners over the preceding 12 months-and that there had been very few accidents among members.

There were occasional flare-ups on Northern vessels. Late in 1885 McGregor announced an end to overtime payments

for cargo work on 1 October citing slackness of trade.

There was plenty of unemployed labour available and unionists appeared vulnerable.

But when Dodson hurried north to stiffen their resolve, McGregor buckled and withdrew his threat.

In August 1886, the newly formed Australian Steamship Owners' Association was able to accomplish what McGregor could not. It managed to impose by force a wage-cut on Australian and trans-Tasman seamen. Early in 1887, trouble brewed on the Northern Company's Glenelg and Chelmsford. In an argument on the former, one seaman struck the captain.

Strife also occurred in July of that year when the Auckland union and its members protested the proposed use of Pacific Island labour on Northern's new South Sea Island trader, the Richmond.

'Natives', the union reported, were prepared to work for less money and at all hours under the captains' directions.

This contretemps was still simmering when McGregor dropped a bombshell just 17 days later when it gave notice that it was about to drop wages from £7 to £6 a month, and abolish overtime, in direct contravention of the rules of engagement that had been widely accepted since 1884.

Clearly McGregor aimed to force the company's hand and by doing so he began one of the most extraordinary industrial disputes in New Zealand's history.

“... McGregor aimed to force the company's hand and by doing so he began one of the most extraordinary industrial disputes in New Zealand's history”

Saronic Wave protests reach around Pacific



Contributions from Russell Mayn and Kathy Whelan

The recent dispute with the vessel "Saronic Wave" in Whangarei is a sign that maritime workers have had enough of watching their local work disappear as shipping contracts change within a Port.

The Maritime Union placed pickets on a Kiwi fruit vessel to support the use of local Union stevedores, and received major support from maritime unionists in Tokyo when the vessel docked.

These actions were reported on in the July edition of the Maritimes.

Further support came from other Asian ports.

Local 13 Secretary Russell Mayn says the Whangarei Branch are to be congratulated on the result they achieved for the membership of their Branch.

He says members mobilised at short notice to support the Whangarei Branch, and the benefits of the amalgamation into one united Maritime Union showed with Seafarers and Dockers on the picket line.

"To all MUNZ members who gave up their time up to stand on the line a big 'Thankyou'."

International Solidarity played a decisive part in winning the day, through the ITF and our comrades in the All Japan Seafarers Union and the All Japan Dockworkers we managed to follow this vessel across international borders.

the ship, met the master and demanded ending the use of non-Union stevedores in New Zealand ports.

South Korean support in Pusan

ITF Inspector Bae in the South Korean port of Pusan reports that he visited the Saronic Wave on Saturday 17 June.

He delivered a protest letter to the captain that called upon the ship owner and charterers to stop using any non-unionized dockers.

Inspector Bae reports the Captain promised he would report to the owner.

Russell Mayn says the way Unions worked together shows that Globalization is not only a tool for the corporates but has the potential for Unions to achieve fair and just outcomes for all workers.

"International solidarity has to be embraced and this dispute is an excellent example of the effectiveness of like minded unions, which resulted in the vessel involved getting an ITF agreement onboard, local stevedores preserving their work and the Northern Region got to stretch its legs with the backing and support of a united national Maritime Union."

Congratulations to all those involved – "Touch One Touch All".

Osaka maritime unionists add voice

After Tokyo dockers and seafarers visited the Saronic Wave on 13 June 2006, the vessel docked at Osaka on 15 June, where ITF Inspector Osaka/Kobe Mash Taguchi reports that an ITF delegation visited the ship.

The delegation comprised Deputy Chair of Osaka Dockworkers Unions Council Mr. Kojima, Acting President of the Japan Port and Transport Workers Union Confederation (Kinki Region) Mr. Narayama, JSU Osaka Branch representative Captain Takahata, and Inspectors Sigeru Fujiki and Mash Taguchi, all of whom visited





Crew of the 'Sky 75' gathered at the Timaru Seamen's Centre

Sky 75

by Kathy Whelan
ITF Co-ordinator

The Sky 75 is a Korean owned and flagged fishing vessel chartered to a New Zealand company and working off the New Zealand coast.

Readers of the Maritimes will be interested to know that it has once again come to the attention of the ITF.

We have been following the Sky 75, and we publicized an incident in September 2005 when Indonesian fishermen escaped from the vessel in the Port of Nelson following abuse from the Korean Officers.

Since that incident, the vessel had been squid fishing around the Auckland Islands.

When entering the port of Timaru on Monday 12 June, the Burmese crew gave the pilot letters to be handed on to the ITF and Maritime New Zealand seeking assistance.

Their problems were listed as wages, abuse and safety concerns.

Maritime New Zealand responded and detained the vessel owing to deficiencies.

The Labour Department were alerted and commenced an investigation on the wages and conditions of employment of the crew under New Zealand law.

This is essential in order that minimum wages and conditions are the entitlement of foreign fishers in the New Zealand fishery. I met with the crew and the owner over a two day period in Timaru.

The crew had been receiving an average of NZ\$500 per month.

Under NZ law they are entitled to a minimum of a 42 hour week at the minimum rate of NZ\$10.25 per hour.

We used the Seamen's Centre as our meeting place, and on the first night the owner called in the Police alleging we were stopping him from talking to his crew.

This rubbish worked to our advantage as the Police were able to witness how scared the crew were of the owner, and ended up cautioning the owner on intimidating the crew.

We nearly reached agreement for an interim payment to the crew but at the point of signing it, the owner said that he had a new condition to the agreement – that three crew members had to be sent home immediately.

The three he had targeted were the only members of the crew who spoke English and would mean that we had little if any communication with the remaining crew, unless we brought an interpreter in.

Singling out people in a dispute for any reason is just not an option, so things stalemated. The three crew members who were targeted by the employer for repatriation were taken off the boat and were billeted by locals.

The problem we have in these cases is the process is slow, and by the time it is completed and the wages calculation done the crew have long since gone so enforcing the end result is often impossible.

Burma doesn't have a banking system, so we can't even transfer funds.

The community of Timaru was marvelous, even though we had a massive snow fall which I am still thawing out from, some crew members had no shoes or warm clothing – saying that the Korean Bosun had thrown their gear over the side when they were at sea as a punishment.

Red Cross responded by taking each crew member to their store and rigging them out with warm gear. Locals donated food and the port workers took up a collection.

Tony Townshed of the Maritime Union and Wayne Mitchell of the NZ Fishing Guild were brilliant, having already been on the case since Monday they stayed with me for the two days I was down there and wore a track to and from the boat as and when required – we were on the job from 9 in the morning until 10:30 at night.

Dave Morgan receives ITF gold medal

At the 41st Congress of the International Transport Workers Federation held in Durban South Africa in August 2006, retired National President of the New Zealand Seafarers Union Dave Morgan was honoured for his services to the international maritime community by the awarding of a gold medal.

General Secretary of the ITF David Cockroft noted Dave Morgan's life time of dedication and leadership of seafarers, a truly deserving award for a trade unionist who has served seafarers and led the way globally for most of his working life.

Dave went to sea in Australia in 1956 and was elected shipboard delegate within a year. He moved to New Zealand in 1963 and was elected as a union Branch Secretary in 1969 and then National President of the New Zealand Seamen's Union in 1973.

He served in this position for 30 years. During this time he was a National Executive member of the New Zealand Federation of Labour, and President of the Trade Union Federation.

He has been a member of many New Zealand Government bodies in the maritime industry.

He is the only non-office holder to have been awarded such a medal by the ITF.



ITF General Secretary David Cockroft presents Dave Morgan with his award for lifetimes service at the 41st ITF Congress, Durban, South Africa, August 2006

WINNING SHELF RESPECT

The biggest industrial dispute of recent years has united workers throughout New Zealand – as well as receiving support from around the world.

600 workers from distribution centres in Auckland, Palmerston North and Christchurch were locked out without pay by their employer Progressive Enterprises from Friday 25 August until Friday 22 September 2006.

The workers set up pickets, camped outside their workplaces, campaigned in the community, and received huge support from other workers and the community.

The unity and solidarity of the workers paid off.

The members of the National Distribution Union (NDU) and Engineering, Printing and Manufacturing Union (EPMU) won a three-year settlement that achieved the key aim of equal pay across Auckland, Palmerston North and Christchurch distribution centres.

A single national pay rate will deliver a 19.7% to the lowest paid distribution centre in Christchurch within two years.

Also achieved are two wage increases to the base rate of 3.8% on 1 August 2007 and another 3.8% on 1 August 2008, with a one-year increase of 4.25% this year for Palmerston North, 5 weeks annual leave for those with 10 years service and a \$1000 interest free loan for the returning workers.

“While this settlement results in three separate agreements we have only got there because the employer has failed completely in its mission to force workers to give up their national bargaining power. Three separate agreements were always an option, but our determination to bargain nationally was absolute and because of that we have achieved our pay parity objective” said NDU Secretary Laila Harré.

Laila Harré says that Progressive “gave up the fight in the face of overwhelming public support for the workers by late last week. They came back to us and said they wanted to bargain.”

International Union Support

The locked out workers have received a massive amount of support from workers and the community for their struggle.

Unions in New Zealand and internationally have rallied around the cause.

Maritime Union General Secretary Trevor Hanson says the Union was committed to financial, practical and moral support for the workers and their pickets.

He says the situation is a serious one because it showed how multinational corporates in New Zealand are determined to create a low-wage economy.

The Maritime Union along with the Rail and Maritime Transport Union carried out joint discussions on solidarity actions with Australian unions including the Maritime Union of Australia, the Rail Tram and Bus Union, and the Transport Workers Union.

A solidarity delegation arrived in Auckland on Sunday 16 September from those three Australian Unions, bringing with them a donation of A\$15 000.

Maritime Union of New Zealand Assistant General Secretary Terry Ryan worked alongside the National Distribution Union, the New Zealand International Transport Federation (ITF) co-ordinator and the ITF head office in London.

The national executive of the Maritime Union representing all branches passed a resolution unanimously on 12 September for members to contribute the equivalent of one hour a week wages to the fund for the locked out workers until the conclusion of the dispute – boosting the lockout fund by thousands of dollars.

For more information:
<http://www.shelfrespect.org>



Support for the workers:

Maritime Union officials visit the Mangere picket line, from left, Garry Parsloe and Russell Mayn (MUNZ), Karl Andersen (NDU), picket captain Daniel Patea, Sid Keepa (NDU) and Bob Riwai (MUNZ)

“Progressive gave up the fight in the face of overwhelming public support for the workers”

“The CEO of Woolworths Australia earns as much every day as a fulltime checkout operator earns in a year”



Locked out workers in Auckland with supporters on the picket line

Who owns our supermarkets and how much money do they make?

New Zealand's supermarket industry is a 'duopoly' of two huge companies – the Foodstuffs group and Progressive Enterprises.

Woolworths Australia owns Progressive and their three supermarket chains – Countdown, Foodtown and Woolworths.

They are the biggest retailer in Australasia and recently announced a 24.3% increase in their profits to A\$1.1 billion a year.

The CEO of Woolworths Australia, Mr Roger Corbett, earns A\$8.5 million a year. That is as much every day as a fulltime checkout operator earns in a year.

Progressive (Woolworths, Countdown and Foodtown) control 44% of the market.

Foodstuffs (Pak N Save, 4 Square and New World) has about 56% of the market.

Woolworths Australia is a gigantic company (and the third largest Australian company and biggest retailer Australasia) had a turnover of \$A32 billion last year (excluding Progressive Enterprises).

The company expects sales to increase by 8-12% next year.

When you think about how much of your family income you spend at the supermarket – let's say 15% – and you multiply that by all households – you can begin to imagine what gigantic businesses supermarkets are.

We spend over \$11 billion at the checkout each year.

That means nearly \$1 in every \$10 spent by individuals, government and businesses each year is spent at the supermarket

Between 2001 and 2005 wages increased more slowly in wholesale and retail jobs than the average for all jobs.

This means that already low-paid supermarket workers have fallen further behind other workers. Over this four year period, overall wages had risen by around ten percent.

But in the retail and wholesale trade sector the increase was only around eight percent, meaning a yearly increase of only two percent.

Because the increases were below inflation it meant supermarket workers had been earning less every year.

However Union campaigns at Woolworths, Countdown and Foodtown last year won a 60 cents an hour pay rise – the biggest pay catch up since the 1990's when the Employment Contracts Act dragged supermarket wages way down.

But there is still a long way to go.

A significant proportion of supermarket wages losses came from the removal of penal rates - which most young workers haven't even heard of.

All New Zealand supermarkets are still paying youth rates and it's time they stopped.



Locked out Christchurch workers stage a flying picket at Dunedin Countdown with the support of local workers



Maritime Union of New Zealand women members at their August course and conference in Rotorua

Sisters in solidarity: Maritime Union women

by Janita Barton
Local 13

I have recently had the opportunity to meet some of our members as a result of injured stevedores being placed in the road office on light duties.

Over the last couple of months we have had a few of our members through both offices with injuries.

Although this is not good for our members as they are injured, it has been a good experience for the Maritime Union members in the office having the guys there.

The members in the road office work between both Fergusson and Bledisloe Terminals which is a good way for us to meet more of our members at both wharves.

The members in the road office now feel more confident to venture into the mess rooms and say hello to some of the guys.

I also attended the league games in the weekend held at Ellerslie.

It was good to see a large number of members there to support their teams.

Well done to those who played in the two games, there was certainly no shortage of players ready to represent their teams and the games were played with great mana.

Both games gave their supporters plenty to cheer about, and a good afternoon was had by all.

It was also good to see so many members later that evening at the Maritime Club enjoying a laugh together at the end of the day.

Last month I was lucky enough to attend the MUA Women's Conference in Melbourne and found this to be very informative and helpful.

I co-facilitate our women's education course with Fred Salelea and in August we held our fourth two day women's education course, which was held in Ngongotaha – Rotorua.

We invited two of the women from the MUA attend as guests.

It was great to have these women along at our course and the members from MUNZ really enjoyed meeting them.

At the course we had women from Auckland, Tauranga, Lyttelton and Australia, and a good mix between wharfies and seafarers.

This was a really rewarding two days and I enjoyed sharing my experiences with other members, and listening and learning from them as well.

I look forward to meeting more of you in the near future and staying involved in our union helping to keep us strong.

“This was a really rewarding two days and I enjoyed sharing my experiences with other members”



Maritime Union of New Zealand Napier Branch members at their recent Union training course

Port Roundup: Napier



by **Bill Connelly**

Around and about

The port is reasonably quiet at the moment, with most of our seasonal exports loaded for this year.

The only excitement of any consequence we have had over the past few months was a fire in one of the bitumen tanks that was being cut up and dismantled for scrap.

It caused quite a stir with eight appliances being dispatched to the scene and it was finally extinguished with a blanket of foam (see colour photo page 31).

Also two of our tallow tanks have been removed and I understand they have gone to New Plymouth.

Members who have recently left the industry:

Toll Logistics New Zealand Limited

Three members from Toll's were made redundant earlier on this year and their presence in affairs of the Branch will be greatly missed. They are as follows:

Doug Owen joined the Napier Branch on 10 January 1966 and was one of the Branches longest serving members. He left on 31 May 2006 after over 40 years service on the waterfront. Doug served on the Napier Branch Executive for the past 10 years and his contribution to the Branch affairs was both informative and reliable.

Allan McDougall (Mac) left on the 25 June 2006 after joining the Napier Branch on 1 February 1972. Mac, as he was affectionately known, has always taken a keen interest in the Branch affairs and has been on the Branch Executive since Port Reform in 1989.

Allan was also a dedicated first-aider and the first on the scene if anyone needed his assistance. His input and insight into the Napier Branch affairs has been invaluable over the years and for this we thank him.

Rangi Taurima joined the Branch on 17 June 1974 and has always taken a keen interest in the union's affairs.

He was a Health & Safety representative for Tolls and passed on his vast knowledge of the industry to the younger members, we now have on the Napier register.

Rangi has not enjoyed the best of health over the past few years, but he seems to have taken a new lease on life with his retirement. Rangi left the industry on 7 June 2006.

These three men have waited long and hard for some recognition of their service to the industry and it has finally come to fruition, receiving their full redundancy payments.

They were three of our members employed by Pufflett and Smith Limited after the introduction of Port Reform in 1989.

For those of you who are not aware, Pufflett and Smith went into liquidation on the 28 March 1991 and these three members only received 5.6 cents in the dollar of their redundancy entitlements.

I am happy to report that, at last, they have received the recognition they so rightly deserve, although they had to wait 15 years to get it. They will be missed.

The Officers, Executive and members of the Napier Branch wish Doug, Allan and Rangi all the best in their retirement and our only message to you all is to enjoy the time with your families, which as you are aware, has been somewhat limited since the introduction of Port Reform.

Ohope Beach accommodation

Members should be aware that the holiday accommodation at Ohope Beach is now at a premium, because of the sale of the front two units.

We still own unit number 3 and bookings can be made through the Napier Branch, by contacting the Secretary either at the Union Office, his home or on his mobile telephone number.

Gold Coast accommodation in Australia

This is proving to be a most popular destination for all members throughout the country.

Please note that the confirmation period for bookings is now six months, which put quite simply means that members nationally can now book six months in advance. Members from other ports who have used the property recently have come from Port Chalmers, Auckland and Australia.

Vacancies for 2007 are now available. For dates available, application and booking details please contact the Secretary.

Port Roundup: Timaru



by **Kevin Forde**

We have been working on fertiliser boats, with a new one coming in every couple of weeks.

Timaru Cargo Services are flat out with fish boats and transfers out of port.

Turnbulls members are getting cross hired by the port company with a few transfers.

We are looking forward to the Interport with six members going down.

Shelves were running thin at the local Progressive owned supermarkets, as Union members were boycotting them and donating to the cause, and we sent money through to Lyttelton branch to present to the Christchurch locked out workers.

Elections last month had Kevin Forde elected as President, Tony Townsend elected as Secretary, with Peter O'Driscoll and Wayne Hanson on the executive.

Port Roundup: Wellington Seafarers



by Joe Fleetwood

Local activities

The branch is active in the local affiliates council (LAC) for the CTU, supporting other unions in the action against the 90-day Workers 'No Rights' Bill, and all other campaigns, marches and pickets.

We have donated \$1,000 to the Auckland branches of the NDU and EPMU, who were locked out by their Australian Employer, Progressive Enterprises (Woolworth's).

I attended a rally in Palmerston North on 9 September, along with Mike Shakespeare.

After speaking briefly, I presented \$2,000 from National Office, on behalf of the Maritime Union, to the locked out workers.

Sheryl Cadman, national official of the NDU, spoke at our latest Wellington stop work meeting, and provided an in-depth report on the dispute, which in turn encouraged some more members to return to Palmerston North the following weekend to provide continual support.

Branch Executive Elected:

President – Mike Clark

Vice President – Glenn Wylie

Secretary/Treasurer – Joe Fleetwood

Executive/SRF – Barry Millington

Executive – John Shaw, Vicky Malone,

Billy Wright, Marion Leslie

Woman's Officer – Fiona Daniel

A good mix of experience and youth, who will take the branch forward for many years to come.

Government

A meeting has finally been secured on 8 November, with Minister of Transport Annette King.

Topics of discussion will include:

- the adoption of the ILO Maritime Labour Convention, aka Seafarer's Bill of Rights
- the disgraceful open coast policy
- exploitation of NZ/STCW 95 AB compliance certificates
- casualization and deregulation of the waterfront

Maersk

General Secretary Trevor Hanson and I met in late August with two of the local managers from Maersk, to discuss issues pertaining to the Maritime Industry.

Talks were surprisingly positive, and we are rescheduling an official meeting to discuss ports and shipping for New Zealand.



Wellington members at their recent Maritime Union training and education course

Toll

Bargaining has been initiated for the renewal of the Toll Collective Employment Agreements.

Two dry dock agreements have been concluded, Arahura (Auckland), and Kaitaki (Brisbane). There was a slight hiccup in Brisbane which was resolved amicably.

The Purbeck was picked up for four weeks while the Challenger was away, and currently has work-bys on board. We are meeting with Toll to discuss the delivery voyage of the Purbeck to Venezuela.

The remits committee meet on Fridays, 10am at the Union Rooms. All are welcome to attend.

Strait Shipping

Their new vessel, Monte Stello, arrived in the first quarter of 2006.

It has spent quite some time in Auckland dry-dock, and several months alongside in Wellington for repairs. It is due to pick up mid-October, with the contract current until June 2007.

We are meeting with the company to put the first dry-dock run agreement together.

The Wellington Branch, Dockers and Seafarers, recently attended a meeting of terminal staff in Picton, to put together and initiate bargaining for a collective agreement. Outstanding issues are being dealt with.

NIWA

We have initiated bargaining for the renewal of the collective agreement between MUNZ, MSG, AMEA, and the employer NIWA.

We have had two remit meetings on board the Tangaroa. An official meeting will be held between the three unions, where negotiating dates are to be set.

Off Shore

The Offshore solutions Collective Employment Agreement has been concluded and signed off, with a significant redun-

dancy package, and conditions going forward for the next four years.

We have also had talks with all Off Shore employers regarding the introduction of trainees into the industry.

We have initiated bargaining for the renewal of the multi party CEA between MUNZ and six of the employers.

Remits are due, and must be endorsed by local branch executive, and forwarded to the Wellington Branch.

I attended a meeting in Melbourne at the end of August with the MUA, Farstad, and by phone to Swire.

MUNZ has secured a 50/50 agreement with the MUA on board the Far grip and the Pacific Wrangler. Australian EBA – equal amount of time on the NZ coast to be completed on the Australian coast.

There are two ENSCO rigs due out early next year, along with the Rockwater2.

There are 14 MUNZ members currently in Australia employed by Farstad.

These workers are required to ring both the local and Wellington Branches before joining each trip – the contract was originally with the MUA, not the employer; the deal being a trip-by trip basis as agreed by the Unions, and pending the availability of MUA IR's.

Some of these 14 have been striking private deals with the employer, asking him to retain the 20% casual load payment, and have it deferred in case of a shortage in work.

Not only does this go against Union principles, it lines the employers' pockets with interest incurred, and also creates a crawler in the work place. Private deals will not be tolerated by our Union.

We had a problem with an employer withholding union fees for many months.

However, I spoke with this employer, quietly and calmly, and we have agreed he is to pay monthly.

When employers withhold fees, this penalises our workers by showing them as unfinancial with the union, and they will be pulled off their vessels in Australia.

Wellington Seafarers Report

by Mike Clark
Branch President

With this being my first opportunity to write for our publication, I would like to thank members who took the time to vote in what was a very close result.

The past few months have been productive ones at the Wellington Branch, finalising awards and working on a number of issues for our members.

The future of MUNZ is exciting with new opportunities unfolding in the off-shore in New Zealand and Australia.

WA State Conference

During July I was fortunate to attend the Western Australian State Conference with Joe Fleetwood and Duncan Murray.

A large number of overseas visitors, many other MUA branches and other prominent Australian Unions attended.

Among the many issues was the current Australian Government's 'work choice' legislation which is designed to attack workers rights, wages and conditions, an updated version of our old Employment Contracts Act which was only revoked by constant lobbying by Unions to the Government.

A widely debated point was the visa and guest worker legislation now commonly known in Australia as Section 457 – which is designed to further lower wages and conditions and coupled with 'work choice' legislation exploitation of foreign workers.

There were many other hotly debated issues but one that has to be mentioned is the resolution concerning the skill shortage and training opportunities, a resolution that was wholeheartedly supported by your representatives as we are currently lobbying New Zealand employers.

I would like to acknowledge the WA Branch for their hospitality shown to the New Zealand representatives.

If any members would like more information about the conference please feel free to ask at the next stop work meeting or by phoning me at the Union Rooms.

Social

Social get-togethers are being held because we believe the unique nature of our industry that it is important to communicate regularly with one another. The first gathering was Friday 23 August.

I would like to thank Stu Shaw and Fraser Thomas for preparing the food. It was great to see so many attend. It was an enjoyable evening and we hope this is a sign of closer relationship between the watersiders and seafarers as the same issues confront us all on a daily basis.

I would like to congratulate members who put their names forward and were voted onto the Branch Executive. I look forward to your input.



Wellington Retired Seafarers Committee, from left, Kathy Whelan, Furse Vidal, Eddie Dooley and Bluey Holland

Wellington Retired Seafarers Committee winds up

by Kathy Whelan

Those remaining member of the Wellington Retired Seafarers Committee – Kathy Whelan, Furse Vidal, Eddie Dooley and Bluey Holland – met recently to decide on how to disseminate the balance of funds in the Wellington Retired Seafarers fund.

As the Maritime Union Wellington Seafarers and Waterfront Branches now host and fund a Christmas Function for retired wharfies and seafarers, it was felt there was no reason for the Committee to continue and it was agreed to formally disband it.

Funded purely from donations from members of the Seafarers Union, the Committee was set up in 1979, the Centenary year of the NZ Seamen's Union to host a party for Retired Seafarers as part of the celebrations.

It was so successful that they continued in the form of a Christmas party over a 15 year period where a good time was always had.

The money in the fund will be donated to the two local (Wellington) hospices and to children suffering from cancer.



Retired New Zealand Seamen's Union Member Frank Harkness and Kathy Whelan at the Merchant Navy commemoration, Wellington

Auckland Maritime Union members join the NDU picket in Mangere, September 2006



Port Roundup: Auckland Seafarers



by **Garry Parsloe**

CTU Government Forum

The Council of Trade Unions/Government Forum was held in the Rutherford Room at

the Function Centre of the Alexandra Park Raceway, Epsom, Auckland.

There were over three hundred Delegates and activists from across all Unions.

Registration was at 3.45pm with a Unions Auckland presentation at 4.30pm.

This presentation was focused on ensuring that all Unions attend and participate in the CTU Unions Auckland Meetings as this is the Forum where Unions can come together to collectively support each other in their struggles and disputes.

It is the role and responsibility of every Union through their Secretary to protect the conditions of every worker in their Union and where better to do that than at the CTU Unions Auckland Meetings because that is the Forum that provides for all Unions to collectively discuss, debate and arrive at the best ways to protect our members conditions.

The CTU Local Affiliates Council (as it was called at that time) worked hard to elect a Labour Government and played a pivotal role in organizing the Union Movement to elect a left wing Government.

Hence the importance of being part of Unions Auckland.

Unions Auckland at this present time is running a campaign to defeat the 90 Day Bill and after we defeat the Bill there will be other attacks on workers conditions and we will collectively fight them (that is our strength) so support the CTU Unions Auckland and it will support you.

The Prime Minister was welcomed to the Forum along with Hon Annette King, Hon Pete Hodgson, Hon Parekura Horomia, Hon Ruth Dyson, Hon David Benson-Pope and Hon David Cunliffe.

Also in attendance were Lynn Pillay, Nanaia Mahuta, Darien Fenton, Maryan Street, Ashraf Choudhary, Mark Gosche, David Hereora and Judith Tizard.

The welcome was delivered by CTU Vice President Helen Kelly then the Prime Minister set the scene for the Forum.

After the Prime Ministers speech we broke up into workshops for the next hour then at 6.45pm the facilitators reported back on the findings from those workshops.

This was followed by a question and answer session before there was a wrap up from the Prime Minister and Carol Beaumont.

It was a very positive and productive Forum and we look forward to the next one.

Where are they now? Dennis (Geordie) Thompson

by **John O'Neill**

Auckland Seafarers Branch President

About 1980, Geordie was diagnosed with incurable cancer and doctors said he only had about nine months to live.

So Dennis could get the full value out of the Pension and Welfare, three specialist opinions were sought, all concurring with the doctors opinion and thus Geordie was promptly paid out.

Dennis saying "never die" went over to Waiheke where he took to only eating organic food and lots of garlic. Would you believe it, two years later not a trace of cancer was found.

This was no mistake by the medical profession as I know all about his illness all the way through as a member of my family was suffering from the same thing.

After being passed fit to resume his occupation as a seaman, the Shipowners Federation and the Pension were very reluctant to let him come back to sea as he had been paid the death benefit.

The Auckland union secretary at the time Wally Vale argued with the shipowners about someone beating death and was successful in having him shipped out on the Totara maritime carriers Ro-ro (roll on roll off).

Dennis found the work a bit hard and he still needed ongoing treatment so he left the sea of his own volition this time and retired to Waiheke to the alternative lifestyle of the island where he lived for twenty years.

Two years ago Dennis was sectioned to a rest home halfway house where he now resides, if anyone would like to contact Dennis here please contact the Auckland Seafarers branch.

Dennis just celebrated his 70th birthday in June and his long term memory is good, not so his short term memory. We talked about the old times.



At the Auckland Seafarers Delegates Meeting, from left, Auckland Seafarers Branch President John O'Neill, Ron Whittle, and Auckland Seafarers Branch Secretary Garry Parsloe



Light touch required:
A \$10 million Americas Cup support vessel is loaded onto a container ship at New Plymouth (photo by Shane Parker)

Auckland Seafarers Delegates Meetings

On the fourth Monday of every month the Branch holds a Delegates Meeting that enables the Secretary to report on the progress of all the Agreement Negotiations, the Settlements, Disputes and any other issues impacting on the Branch.

At the June Meeting we had a visit from Ron Whittle who was visiting Auckland.

Ron has just retired from the Industry after a lifetime at sea.

He was always involved in Union activities and played a prominent role in the Union all through his many years at sea.

The Delegates thanked Ron for his years of loyal service in the struggle to protect Seafarers wages and conditions. They also wished Ron all the best for his retirement.



Garry Parsloe with a friend at the Auckland Waterfront Reunion, 11 June 2006 (photo by Terry Ryan)

Port Roundup: New Plymouth



by **Shane Parker**

The Port of New Plymouth is having a quiet period at the moment with one oil exploration job finished and the next one not due to start until

December.

We have had a very busy period and the members are looking forward to a bit of R and R.

Two of our long term members Alan Holdt and Murray Moratti have resigned to enjoy the fruits of working 30 odd years in the industry. Good on them and we wish them all the best.

There is still some concern about Maersk's plans for our port and other provincial ports.

We recently held our AGM which was attended by both watersiders and seafarers. Local MP and Associate Minister of Transport Harry Duynhoven whose father was a watersider attended and a frank discussion was held on a wide range of subjects.

We hope that by the time this is published the NDU lock out is resolved.

There is plenty of admiration for the way this dispute has been handled and good to see fellow workers fighting for a share of the fat profits made by Progressive Enterprises.



Local 13 President Denis Carlisle greets old timers Tom King and Ray Schultz at the Auckland Waterfront Reunion, 11 June 2006 (photo by Terry Ryan)

Local 13 League:
Bledisloe Terminal versus
Fergusson Terminal



Port Roundup: Auckland Local 13



by **Russell Mayn**

Everyone in Auckland is looking forward to the 2007 Interport Sports at Bluff.

At a time when everything is changing this sporting event

is one of the lasting events that makes our union unique and special.

Maritime workers have a proud history of struggle combined with an organisation that does not yield to legislation or unfair employers is the reason why we survived the era of the Employment Contracts Act.

New members are embracing this history and ideology and we will be stronger for this in the future.

Progressive Dispute

Nothing has shown this more than the support the rank and file has generated in supporting the NDU/EPMU workers who at present are locked out of their workplaces.

To the members who have attended the picket lines, donated food and dug deep in providing financial assistance you are what solidarity and unionism is about.

To the membership of the NDU and EPMU who have shown the courage to take Progressive Enterprises head on, you are to be congratulated.

With the support of unions throughout New Zealand and the world we know you will win this struggle.

This dispute may well be the catalyst for change within the labour movement in New Zealand where a greater focus is directed at gaining Collective Agreements.

Multi Employer Collective Agreements should be the right of New Zealand workers but it seems that unless unions receive a change in legislation they are doomed to remain in the too hard to do basket.

The Labour Government has to take onboard what has happened to the workers at Progressive and add some backbone to the meaning of Good Faith Bargaining.

Workers should have equal conditions for the same work free from geographical restrictions.

The cost to the families of the workers locked out by Progressive will not be forgotten and this will only strengthen the resolve to expose this company for what it really is.

A company intent on maximising profits at the expense of workers and their families.

So where do we go from here?

I don't have all the answers but I do know that we are heading in the right direction if we take International bullies to task.

At some Ports and onboard some ships our experience, skills and productivity is often taken for granted.

The Maritime Union represents Seafarers, Dockers, Administration staff, Tradesmen and every classification of worker in the Maritime Industry.

If our industry suffers further casualisation and marginalisation these skills will be lost for a long time and the consequences for the New Zealand economy will be long term.

Government and employers must realise and confront the reality that maritime workers cannot survive on an as require basis which is developing under the continual squeeze by shipping companies to remove any stability from the workplace.

The cost to workers and their families of a seven day 24 hour operation is not fully appreciated and the push for casual and contracted labour is not the answer.

Productivity cannot increase under conditions of uncertainty.

The long term strategy must be to strengthen our current Collectives, look to negotiate MECA's that provide stability and to achieve this we must have a local and national platform that allows for this to take place.

National Conference

The National Conference in October gives every Branch/Local the opportunity to submit remits for debate and this forum sets the national policy for the union into the future.

Locally in Auckland the Port is due to receive delivery of three new container cranes, these new cranes will join the fleet of new diesel electric straddles.

Like all Ports throughout New Zealand the cost of infrastructure expenditure is reducing the profitability of the Ports and this impacts on the amount of money available for wage settlements.

Members from Local 13 are attending the Masters Rugby League tournament in Australia held on the Gold Coast and then travelling to Sydney to play the local MUA members in a touch tournament on the Saturday before the League Grand Final. We wish them the best of luck and are sure that they will have a great trip.

In closing we look forward to seeing everyone at the Bluff in February.

"Touch One Touch All"

Port Roundup: Bluff



by Ray Fife

Tasman Trader

The port has had its fair share of crane incidents aboard ships lately.

The latest incident occurred on the vessel 'Tasman Trader' when in the port during July.

A 40 ft container was being loaded in the tween deck on the vessel when the sheave broke away from the top of the crane causing the lift to drop.

The sheave, block and wires crashed onto containers that were already loaded causing a fair amount of damage.

At the time there were no men standing in the vicinity as the men were down below as it was a rough night, therefore out of harms way when the incident happened.

In normal circumstances the men would have been on top helping to steady the container, luckily they were not as the sheave and block landed where the men would probably have been standing.

We stopped the rest of the ship and would not go back to work until all the cranes were checked by Maritime New Zealand and the fault identified.

We were put under pressure to return to work but cited the Health and Safety Employment Act, particularly PART II (6) which clearly defines the role of the employer in ensuring the safety of their employees.

What did not help the situation is that at the time there were no Maritime New Zealand Inspectors stationed in our area to carry out any inspections.

Because of this we did not use the ships cranes again and finished loading the ship using a shore crane.

The Health and Safety Act is a powerful tool to use when confronted with these situations, it is there to ensure that members can question safety issues and make sure that procedures are in place that makes the work place as safe as possible to work in.

Log Loader

We had another incident where a Wagner log loader was tipped over.

While loading a log ship the Wagner delivered a load of logs to the ships side, as he backed off the log wires hanging from the ships crane got tangled around the log loader claws as the driver backed off, one wire came out but the other somehow got jammed.

As he turned while still backing off the wire became taut.

The driver was now side on to the ship the weight of the crane pulled the Wagner



A Wagner log loader involved in a freak accident in Bluff – no injuries reported (photo by Harry Holland)

to a halt, the machine then started to rock from side to side then crashed on to its side.

Luckily no one was hurt but the driver was badly shaken.

It was a freak incident, one that no one would ever think could happen, but goes to show that anything can happen and highlights the dangerous environment that we work in.

Union Education

Our Branch along with the Port Chalmers Branch held a combined delegate training course here in Bluff in June.

There was an excellent turnout of 13 members from both ports and Fred Salelea delivered a very informative presentation that all members found easy to understand.

All participants left with knowledge that will benefit themselves, fellow members and the union.

There was good interaction between the two Branches, all members enjoying the chance to speak to others from within our union. The outcome is that the two Branches will now co-ordinate all future courses together.

Our union is very fortunate to have a facilitator such as Fred, who comes from the union ranks, to be able to deliver courses that meet the needs of our union.

Sky 75

The ongoing saga with the Sky 75 continued in our port recently.

The trawler arrived in Bluff with only the Korean officers on board as the Burmese crew had left the trawler in Timaru citing they were mis-treated by the officers and under paid by the company, which at the time was dealt with by the ITF co-ordinator Kathy Whelan.

This time it was the officers asking for assistance, as it was in between fishing seasons the company released the officers and

were to send them back to Korea, but the catch was that the company wanted them to pay their own way back and also stated that they would pay all outstanding wages once they got back to Korea.

They refused to leave the ship as they wanted the company to pay for their air tickets, but the main issue is that they wanted all their wages that were owed, to be paid here in New Zealand.

They were of the view that if the wages were not paid before they left the trawler they were unlikely to see any of it at all.

Kathy was once again involved along with the Department of Labour and because it was a drawn out process, the Koreans finally lost patience and flew home.

Their reason was that they could not wait until it was settled, as they needed to be back to be able to get employment with other trawlers.

They were given ITF contacts over in Korea if they had trouble in pursuing the outstanding wages owed.

It is ironic that the officers who mistreated the crew were in turn put in a similar situation.

Interport Sports

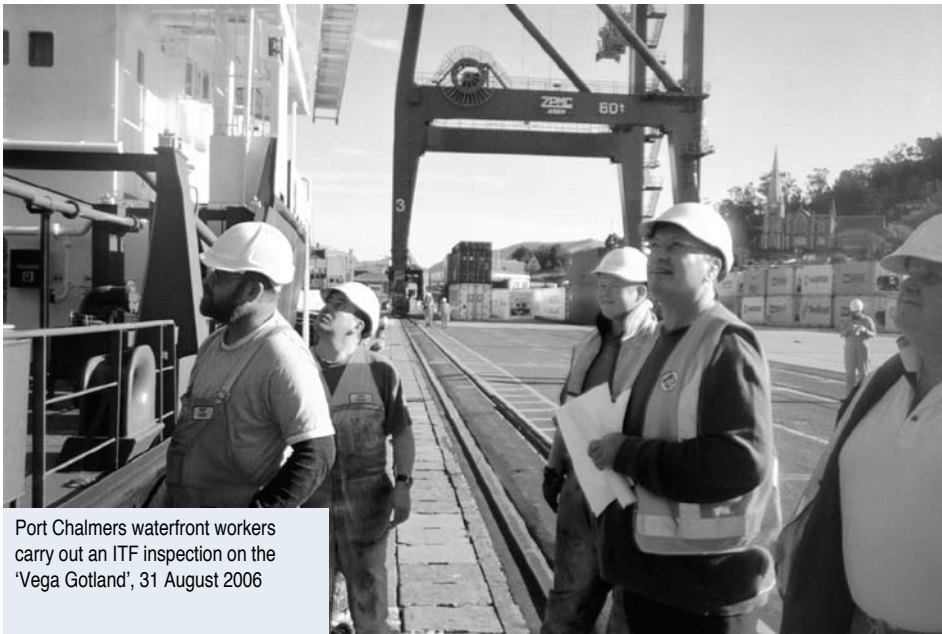
We are well on our way in organising the tournament here in Bluff next year.

Just a reminder that entries did close on 30 September, but we will accept late entries depending on which sport you enter.

We have not seen many seafarer members enter to date, maybe many are unaware that the tournament is open to all MUNZ members, that the comradeship that develops at the tournament is everlasting.

The tournament is a time for everyone to enjoy a week of sport, which is not too serious, to socialise, catch up with old friends and make new lasting friendships.

If you wish to enter your branch secretary will have entry forms and information on accommodation etc.



Port Chalmers waterfront workers carry out an ITF inspection on the 'Vega Gotland', 31 August 2006

Port Roundup: Port Chalmers Local 10



by Phil Adams

Greetings from the Ranfurly Shieldless South.

We have seen off another winter where the weather has been reasonable compared to up north (no snow.)

The port has been going through a steady offseason with plenty of ship movement in the terminal, but not as much cargo as the busy season.

The quiet season has allowed the Port Company to strengthen our multi-purpose wharf in preparation for the new crane expected to arrive from China late this year or early next year.

Two new straddles are also set to arrive soon giving the Terminal the equipment to service the four cranes we will soon have in operation.

A large area called J Block has been sealed and will see straddle rows and block stacks set up which will be most welcome given the serious shortage of space.

Sheds

The sheds continue to be busy and with the busy season almost upon us, a dedicated night shift will work through the season.

The Union has negotiated a special rate for those working the night shift and this was well received.

It was also heartening to see that the steady flow of people leaving down there seems to have stopped for the time being, perhaps morale has picked up. We are well served by our delegate Dave Burgess down there.

Also congratulations to Chris Meek from the sheds who was chosen to referee at the World Underwater Hockey champs in the UK held recently.

Terminal

In the terminal we have recently had 10 B's upgraded to cadets; the successful applicants were Karl Tamati, Fraser Adams, John Johnston, Paul Connell, Steve White, Adam Seymour, Brent Webster, Steve Wedlock, Dave McKie and Dwayne Lewis.

The B's have reverted back to the 3 day guarantee. The Union has now made arrangements with management for the B's to work 4th and 5th days at Port Otago's Harbourcold on the present hourly rate.

With further talks regarding alternative hours, which if agreed by all members would see remaining B's upgraded to cadets, but only after agreement to alternative hours.

Port Chalmers Cargo Services

The lads at Port Chalmers Cargo Service have been relatively busy with cement, logs, fish the main cargoes being handled.

Our delegate Noel Currie has been off sick, we wish him a speedy recovery particularly for Harry Cotton's wedding next year.

Vega Gotland

Recently we had a Maersk chartered vessel in port with serious safety deficiencies.

We examined the ship on its arrival and refused to work in areas where it was not safe. We then told Lyttelton and Wellington of our concerns and they also inspected the vessel and refused to work in bad areas.

The vessel has had work done in Australia by shore side welders and we believe the next time in all will be fixed.

This was a good exercise by the three branches that forced Maersk to fix the problem. Thanks especially to Lyttelton secretary Les Wells and Wellington Waterfront secretary John Whiting for their efforts.

One very heartening aspect of this was the complete co-operation from management at three port companies where all agreed workers safety was central, and would not be jeopardised.

The only disappointment was the local performance of our two MSA inspectors whose attitude and performance left a lot to be desired.

Delegate training

Recently eight of our lads attended delegate training in Bluff and all were impressed with Fred Salelea and his training regime, and are looking forward to the next training day in our port.

Sports Tournery

It was indeed good to see the long list of names for the Sports Tournery in Bluff next year. Winky has stated that those who do not pay the 50% entry fee by a certain date will not be attending.

Deaths

Since the last issue we have had two deaths of local retired members, Norman (Snake) Mitchell and seaman Gerry Blandford. Gerry was at one time vice president of the local seafarers and both members served the Union well.

Our sympathy goes out to their families.

Port Otago Profit

It is indeed good to see another good year for Port Otago, and around a \$7 million profit going to the owners the Otago Regional Council.

This provides a very good reason as to why we should keep ownership of our ports in public hands.

The profit share was also very well received by local members.

Sick leave

Members who are off sick at the moment include Noel Currie, Keith Currie and Jim Terry. We wish them all the best for a speedy recovery.

It is good to see Neville Greaney and Geoff (Rambo) Glendinning back from their operations.

While on this subject it is indeed good to see the work of our sick benefit committee members Cyril Todd and Mark Middleitch. These two are constantly checking on our sick members to see how they are, very much appreciated.

Social Committee

The Social Committee held a social at Wobbly's Bar on 9 September and from everyone I spoke to the night was a huge success with around 80 attending the karaoke.

They tell me the Abo's were the star attractions with Steve Smith hogging the limelight and microphone for most of the night.

Conference

The triennial national conference of the Union is coming up and the branch are sending three observers Mike Lysaght,

Andrew Jennings and Robert McIntosh, all of whom will attend their first conference and hopefully will learn from the experience.

Queenstown Unit

The Unit continues to be popular and we must apologize to the many outside port who fail to get to use it, as it is full most of the time given its close proximity to our port.

If anyone wants info on the Unit, ring Ian Quarrell on 034727216 or Phil Adams on 034728052.

Talk to students

On 7 September Victor Billot and myself spoke to a class of management students at the Otago Polytech about our Union and its history. The speech was well received and we were thanked by the class for the information about our Union and Unionism in general.

It is also reported that one of our members is getting married early next year – congratulations Victor and Julie.

New arrivals

Recently we have had MUNZ member Dianne Babbington arrive from Auckland to work for the Port Company, she appears to be settling in well and is our first woman worker in the yard and also straddle driving. We hope she enjoys her time with us.

Horse

Our horse Ohoka Jasper is back after a good spell and we hope he is destined for big things this year. Both John and I are dusting off our suits for cup week where we hope Ohoka Jasper will perform with distinction.

Our other horse with Davey Dick and Dick Markham we think is running around with the Kaimanawa Horses, so we hope they find it soon so we can see how good it is.

Meetings

It is good to see the numbers attending our bi-monthly meeting, numbers attending are around 70 on average and debate is good (sometimes volatile.) It is a great avenue for members to voice their concerns and debate the issues.

It is good to see a local seafarer Alan McDonald at the meetings, his reports to the meeting are always well received.

Finally it is always pleasing to contribute to our excellent Union magazine which is well received in our port, long may it continue.

Port Roundup: Lyttelton Local 43



by Les Wells

One of the big happenings in Lyttelton at the moment is the assembling of the third container crane.

Once this has been completed it will be moved into place and checked out.

Once it is fully operational the other two cranes will be overhauled one at a time, so it will be some time before we have three cranes in operation.

Lyttelton Stevedores

We have gone through a major restructuring at Lyttelton Stevedores with eight men taking severance, this leaves us with a workforce of ten men and there have been some major changes to the way they work.

Toll

Toll have had men going to Auckland on transfer to work on bananas. They seem to have found the experience quite different to what we work down here.

Lyttelton Port Company

Lyttelton Port Company have just signed up fifteen cargo handlers to do a trade certificate of Cargo Handling.

They also have the opportunity to get eight crane drivers through a refresher course on driving ships cranes.

This was able to happen because the Union insisted upon Watersiders driving the ships cranes. (The company wanted the crew to drive as the staff had not driven ships cranes for a long time).

I am happy to report our members carried out the job in a very professional way.

I believe the Competition is still not carrying a lot of cargo but we can only hope this will pick up in future. Currently we only have about three seamen ashore.

After speaking with Joe Fleetwood there could be more jobs coming up so hopefully all our seagoing members could be employed in the near future.

Port Roundup: Mt Maunganui Tauranga



by Phil Spanswick

Greetings from sunny Mt Maunganui.

We are currently in negotiations with Quality Marshalling, United Containers Limited and Champion Flour Mills,

all of which are progressing slowly.

The next set for negotiations is Toll Logistics and we are presently organising the Union's claims to serve on the employer.

In tandem with the RMTU we have stepped up our ITF ship visits which should be of benefit to those seafarers.

The Tauranga Stevedores situation has settled down, however the debate over service with Kaimai still rankles with the guys.

The NZL situation has settled down now that the new owners have finally taken over the Company.



Merchant Navy commemoration,
Wellington, August 2006

Port Roundup: Wellington Waterfront



by John Whiting

Pacifica Settlement

The collective agreement covering Pacifica's Wellington Stevedoring operation has been renewed for a one year term. The negotiations resulted in increases in wages and conditions that were endorsed by the members working for Pacifica.

Centreport Negotiations

The Centreport multi-union collective agreement expires its two year term on 9 October. Our call to the membership for remits resulted in a very healthy and carefully considered log of claims.

These claims were endorsed by a well attended combined MUNZ/RMTU stopwork meeting and negotiations are underway.

MUNZ/RMTU Amalgamation

The combined stopwork meeting also unanimously endorsed a resolution expressing our concern that the amalgamation process appears to be faltering and urged our National officials to urgently reactivate the process towards completion.

We believe the current moves by big industry players, especially Maersk, necessitate more than ever that the maritime workforce must be in one Union.

"Vega Gotland"

This ship, despite being a new build completed in 2005 arrived on the coast with major safety concerns.

The deck working areas were largely incomplete, and had many unprotected openings, there was a total lack of anti-fall barriers including around open hatchways and ladder accessways were either in the wrong place or were non-existent.

Co-ordinated action at Port Chalmers, Lyttelton, and Wellington included inspections, protests and decisions not to work the ship on its next call unless the job was made safe.

We sought the involvement of Maritime NZ Safety inspectors, they did get involved and served improvement notices on the ship's master and owners/charterers.



Gisborne branch members at a recent Maritime Union training seminar (photo by Fred Salelea)

Also, for the first time, the Port Companies followed our lead and adopted a common position of stating they would not allow the ship to work.

The end result is "Vega Gotland" arriving in its second visit with a large amount of the safety deficiencies remedied.

We have inspected the ship and noted the final details required to make the job safe.

We would like to thank our fellow members at Port Chalmers and Lyttelton for their solid stand. Unified action always works!!!

Geoff Davies

We recently farewelled our good mate Geoff Davies into a well-earned retirement after 44 years in the industry.

Geoff's first few working years were in small ships on the NZ coast and he then joined the Wellington waterfront in 1962.

His long years of loyalty and mateship to his fellow workers and to the Union were noted with appreciation at his farewell function and he went with the best wishes of all of us.

Port Roundup: Gisborne



by Dein Ferris

Winter is on the way out, summer's coming and we are looking forward to a better year than last.

All signs are pointing to a back to normal squash season so here's hoping.

The winter seemed shorter this year due to a few extra boats (kiwifruit) and a few outport transfers, one of these to Bluff.

The writer is never going to complain about being cold ever again (sorry Ray what do you mean ice on cars is normal and you don't need heaters or hotwater bottles. You mean everyone wears their clothes to bed.)

Seriously we did enjoy our few days there.

We have just had Union trainer Fred Salelea in port presenting the delegates course and I am please to say all permanent staff plus a casual attended.

I hope Fred has forwarded the photo of our lovely looking bunch.

The members have been attending not only Fred's course but resat first aid and forklift courses.

I heard tell our regular callers the Virginia and Gemini Forest are to be replaced in the near future by two new vessels.

Global congress unites transport workers

continued from page 2

Key note speaker was the Director of Labour Standards of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Cleopatra Doumbia-Henry who urged seafarers to ensure that the new labour standards convention is ratified and enforced.

Known as the "Seafarers Bill of Rights", the convention brings together, and updates over 60 maritime labour standards of the ILO.

It was adopted in February this year following 5 years of intensive negotiations involving governments, shipowners, and the ITF representing seafarers' unions.

The convention provides standardisation of all ILO conventions since 1920 and as closely as possible reflects the Seafarers Bill of Rights, and once ratified will be the first truly enforceable ILO convention.

However Doumbia-Henry pointed out that at least 30 countries, representing 33% of world shipping gross tonnage, had to ratify the convention before it could come into force.

The success of the ratification process will depend on how active we are.

Dockers Section

The Dockers section meeting of 280 attendees was, as were all other meetings, translated into 10 languages.

The Port of Convenience (POC) campaign was launched along with an accompanying draft strategy.

The strategy builds on the input of various affiliates meetings over the past 2 years.

The campaign aims to promote acceptable standards in ports and terminals around the world and stamp out the exploitation of dock workers, and prevent job losses.

Affiliates identified several key topics on which the campaign could focus.

These include global terminal operators, competition, privatization, casualization, and the undermining of Trade Union Rights.

The initiative will seek the support of Seafarers, given the long history of co-operation between dockers' and seafarers' unions on the flag of convenience (FOC) campaign.

It will also attempt to develop strategic alliances in the regions and sub regions to strengthen unions through solidarity.

The meeting determined to increase the ITF World Dockers committee to 16 members, the extra seat to be for an Arab representative.

This sees the world representation on the committee as Europe 5, North America 2, Latin America/Caribbean 2, Africa 2, Asia-Pacific 4, and Arab countries 1.

Paddy Crumlin was elected chairman of the World Dockers Section after being nominated by the ILWU and the Danish dockers Union.

Terry Ryan held onto his Asia-Pacific seat after being nominated by the Philippines Port Workers Union, and seconded by the All Japan Dockworkers Union.

Some key points of discussion were:

The POC campaign which will deal mainly with the big four multi-nationals, DPW (who recently annexed P&O), AP Moeller, Hutchinson's, and PSA.

These four giants are in most countries in the world.



Maritime delegates from left to right, Jim Tannock (MUA), Terry Ryan (MUNZ), Nick Stam (Holland), Bob McIlraith (ILWU), Joe Fleetwood (MUNZ) and in front Dave Schleibs (MUA)

Dockers are under siege all over the world as multi-nationals conduct a worldwide conspiracy to restrict wages, and the ability to organise.

The POC campaign is designed to go some way to rectify this problem.

Although the "European directive" attacking dockers has been defeated twice, right wing supporters of the multi-nationals are putting it back on the table for the third time.

Ports no longer stand alone and are part of global networks.

To finish this section of the report from Durban it would be remiss not to point out a few statistics of the local port.

Durban is the ninth largest in the world, it has 26 kilometres of wharf with 218 berths, 50 cranes, and 4 island berths.

The record move in one month by a tug is 1014 moves. It has 4 tugs working 24 hours a day.

This is easy to comprehend as in our stay up to 24 ships were anchored off, never less than 12.

The port handles one car carrier each day. Durban Port is state owned, and the dockers are organised by SATAWU.

Joint Seafarers-Dockers meeting

The FPC (Fair Practice Committee) was appointed with 102 voting delegates from 61 countries, and 4 officers.

New Zealand representatives on the FPC are Terry Ryan, of MUNZ and Helen McAra of the NZMSG.

Delegates unanimously agreed to set up an AP Moeller-Maersk worldwide network of union activists and officials.

Opening the meeting, Ron Carver of the Teamsters (USA) said that although some unions had good relations with the company and collective agreements, Maersk comes down with an iron fist on workers trying to secure union recognition for the first time.

Maersk is the biggest trucking company in the USA, and apart from shipping is involved in oil, trains, and ship building.

The choice of Maersk is the fact that they have a code of conduct that clearly states its commitment to human and social rights, this gives some hope for negotiation given the company's corporate culture.

A meeting of the AP Moeller-Maersk network will be held in Copenhagen next spring, the location of Maersk's headquarters (probably to coincide with next years FPC meeting in Italy).

Apart from the Dockers and Seafarers other sections of transport workers to meet outside the plenary session were Railways, Civil Aviation, Urban Transport, Inland Navigation, Tourism Services, Fisheries, and Women Transport workers.

The New Zealand Delegation to the 41st Congress was Terry Ryan and Joe Fleetwood (MUNZ), Helen McAra, (NZMSG) and Wayne Butson (RMTU), while Dave Morgan was an invited guest of the ITF to receive a gold badge for service of many years.

Dave, along with eight other recipients, were presented with their badges at conference's end, a moving occasion for the recipients who all spoke to congress.

Dave Morgan included in his speech the words of a great Maori philosopher:

*Ki mai koe ki au
He aha to mea nui o te Ao
Ka ki atu au ki a koe
He tangata, he tangata, he tangata*

*If you should ask me
What is the greatest thing in the world?
I would answer,
It is people, it is people, it is people.*

Obituaries

Sam Broughton

(1951 – 2006)

by Mike Clark

President, Wellington Seafarers Branch

It is with deep regret that we announce the untimely death of one of the absolute characters of New Zealand seafarers – Sam Broughton – aka Black Sam.

Sam was a loyal member of the old Seamen's Union having joined in 1966, later the Seafarers Union and now the Maritime Union of New Zealand, he came up through the ranks as deck boy, bucko, AB, IR as well as Bosun and AB/Cook.

To the many seafarers and wharfies who knew him Sam could be well classified as a stand out personality not only because of his stature (6 ft/4in) and trademark white cheesecloth headband but also because of his frequent brushes with the Maritime hierarchy hence a lot of his early days at sea were spent on the "Nga" boats where naughty boys were sent and where Sam was most happy.

We all remember that TV clip back in the early 90s of Sam chaining himself to the gangway of the Straitsman and being dragged off by the cops.

Myself and Joe Fleetwood were fortunate to share some precious last minutes with Sam and his whanau where he lay in state at the Stratford Marae on 12 September.

Seamen have two families, and Sam's two families, his whanau and his seagoing family were able to share in many stories of the different facets of Sam's life.

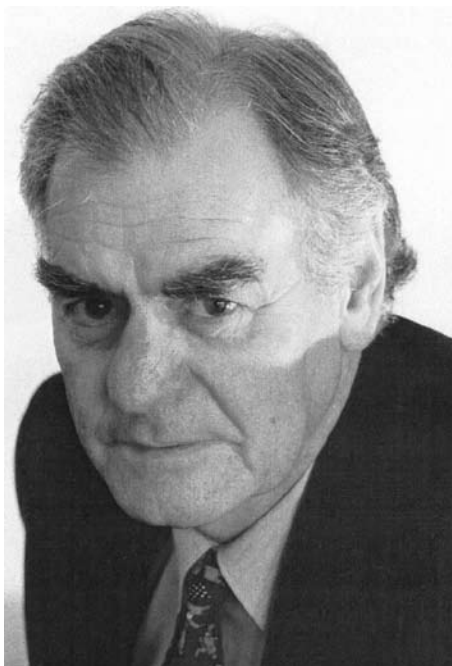
I had sailed on many ships with Sam as had Joe and Joe's relationship also included being part of the fraternity in the 70s and 80s.

It was a very moving experience being welcomed onto a Marae to farewell an old friend and many thanks to his partner Kathy and whanau for allowing us that privilege.

As Joe rightly pointed out not many seafarers have a university degree but Sam did, it was a degree in snipology – lend us \$50 brother.

Farewell mate,

AROHANUI – Rest in Peace.



Ross Fast

(1935 – 2006)

by Kathy Whelan

Seafarers farewelled shipping industry icon Ross Fast who died in June at the age of 70.

Ross went to sea as a deck boy at the age of 14 and worked his way up to Master before coming ashore to work as a wharfie with Union Steamship Company at Lyttelton and shore skipper for Holm Shipping.

Ross was a proud paid-up member of the NZ Seamen's Union and through his ship operating career worked hard and was totally committed to maintain a strong and viable New Zealand shipping industry.

By 1981 he had become a senior executive with Geo. H. Scales and ultimately became the Chief Executive and was instrumental in founding Tasman Express Line.

After leaving Scales and spending two years establishing the McKay Shipping Agency he founded a new shipping agency that evolved into South Pacific Shipping – the position most of today's seafarers will remember Ross for.

In a message to Ross's widow Valerei the Union recorded their respect of a man who spent his life totally committed to creating a strong viable New Zealand Maritime Industry and for the full involvement in it of New Zealand seafarers of which he had a passion and high regard of. The Union noted the very bad period in his life after the collapse of South Pacific Shipping, with all of the attendant recriminations, which lesser people wrongfully put on him to cover their own malodorous part in the affair.

Justice was only partially served when the Court correctly absolved Ross of any blame in the matter.

Ross was a man of vision and he never tired of fighting for those visions.

The Maritime community in New Zealand will miss Ross – a battler for the advance of New Zealand Shipping and his tireless advocacy for employment of New Zealand Seafarers.

In this he was successful and New Zealanders, seafarers in particular, benefited greatly through his efforts.

While recently archiving the records and files of the Seafarers' Union files on George H Scales and the formation of SPS which contained correspondence between Ross and the overseas operators he was dealing with, his faxes were demands for a ship to be crewed by New Zealanders – history records he was successful.

His kind of bluntness, his faith in people, his love of the sea and above all his enormous integrity will be missed in the maritime community in this country, in an industry sorely in need of such staunch friends and supporters as Ross Fast.

The Union sends its sympathy to Ross's wife Val and family.



Photo of the month: A fire in a bitumen tank at the Port of Napier attracts attention (photo by Bill Connelly)

Letters

Unity on the RockWater 2

Recently on RockWater2, MUNZ members were involved in a dispute.

The dispute was about the correct payments for catering staff.

This dispute was won by MUNZ members being united.

I would like to commend all members involved especially newer members for their support and solidarity which gave us the strength for victory.

Thanks to Mike Williams also for his support and guidance throughout the dispute. Unity is Strength.

Also – Know Your Award.

I would like to stress to all Seafarers that will work in the Offshore to get a copy of this document and read it and understand it.

Sometimes management forget to pay what you are entitled to.

This has happened on numerous occasions in the past.

So members – read the award, check your pay slips, understand what you are all entitled to, and make sure that we all get these conditions that have been fought for over the years. Be Aware!

Barry Jackson (0004)

Brothers not forgotten

In Wellington on 3 September 2006 the final resting place of the plaque to commemorate our comrades from the Second World War was unveiled at the Wahine Memorial in Frank Kitts Park, which boasts a spectacular resting place overlooking Wellington Harbour.

Over 35 000 seafarers lost their lives keeping ‘the lines open’ from 1939–1945 and after sixty years they were officially recognized with a ceremony which I and several other union members (young and old) were proud and honoured to attend.

It really hit home to me why we should protect our inheritance from these brave exceptional humans.

So I suppose Father’s Day was befitting for this unveiling with Marion Hobbs declaring that the Government planned to find a date to commemorate each year.

But the part of a speech or prayer that I will forever remember as I stood proud with my comrades was “because no stone marks a sailors grave nor no wave carries his name.”

Thanks to the crews of the Westport, Purbeck, Aratere, Kaitaki, and Kathy Whelan, with a special appearance by Dave Morgan.

Michael Will (2655)

PS. Yes Milburn Carrier, the Purbeck’s crew is unionized, thank you for asking us safely from afar.

Rainbow Warrior

Kia Ora,

I wanted to write saying ‘good on’ the Maritime Union of New Zealand for its strong stance against bottom trawling.

Last year I was crewing the Greenpeace vessel ‘Rainbow Warrior’, whilst we were using direct action to stop New Zealand vessels from their destructive form of fishing in international waters.

I was at sea when I heard of the Maritime Union support for our actions, and this backing was significant and morale boosting.

I hope the Union keeps up its support against high seas bottom trawling.

As the ‘Malakhov Kurgan’ shows, foreign crews are getting ripped off while fishing in New Zealand waters.

What we need in this country is sustainable fisheries providing good quality employment for New Zealanders.

Bottom trawling indiscriminately destroys ocean floor habitat and as falling orange roughly stocks show, also harms the target fish: it’s a fishing method that belongs in the last century, and the earlier New Zealand fishing practices get with the times and provide modern, sustainable forms of fishing, the sooner we can have better and more reliable jobs for kiwi fishermen.

Gareth Hughes

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MUNZ member Alby Patton working on the "Vega Gotland", Port Chalmers, 31 August 2006 (photo by Victor Billot)



Joe Fleetwood presents a cheque for \$350 to Carol Bradnock of Angels for Children for Special Needs and Disadvantaged children and their care givers



Ray Haslam, Trevor Conroy, Wayne Wikaire and Ray Schultz at the Auckland Waterfront Reunion, Pt. Chevalier RSA, 11 June 2006 (photo by Terry Ryan)



It's not often you can pull the wool over the eyes of a wharfie from Bluff - but Harry has got a sheepish look here



Life members of the New Zealand Seamen's Union Eddie Dooley and Bluey Holland reminiscing of the old days over a pint



Dave Morgan, Jim Woods and Tommy Gregory at the Unveiling of the Merchant Seafarers memorial plaque on Queens Wharf, Wellington, September 2006