



# The Maritimes

Issue 26 • Winter 2009

Magazine of the Maritime Union of New Zealand

ISSN 1176-3418



# Ports of Auckland workers ratify agreement



MUNZ Local 13 members at Bledisloe Terminal, Ports of Auckland, 22 June 2009 (photo by John Darroch)

Maritime Union members at the Ports of Auckland have ratified their collective employment agreement with Ports of Auckland.

The new agreement was ratified by a meeting of members at the Ports on Thursday 25 June 2009.

The agreement will be signed next week. Details of the agreement are being kept confidential.

The previous agreement had expired 30 November 2006 and had led to a series of industrial actions by members at the Port, including stopwork meetings.

It has been stressful time for Ports of Auckland members recently.

A restructuring announced by the Port Company in May 2009 will effectively close down the permanent workforce at Bledisloe Terminal.

Local 13 President Denis Carlisle says he believes that it is a good agreement in the current economic climate.

Ports of Auckland is wholly owned by Auckland Regional Holdings, the commercial arm of Auckland Regional Council.

The role of the port has been debated lately as business interests push for privatization.

The chairman of the Ports of Auckland Board of Directors Gary Judd was recently replaced, and further complications for the Port include the new "supercity" proposal and redevelopment proposals for the waterfront area.

For more information, see Ports of Auckland campaign website [www.portsofauckland.com](http://www.portsofauckland.com)

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'The Maritimes' is published quarterly by the Maritime Union of New Zealand.

ISSN 1176-3418

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Deadline for all Port reports, submissions,  
photos and letters:  
4 September 2009 for next edition

Cover photo:  
Photo collage of Maritime Union of New  
Zealand members at Fullers Ferries,  
Auckland, 4 June 2009  
(photos by John Darroch)

For more on-line photos, see  
www.flickr.com/maritimeunion

Thanks to our photographers and  
contributors of photos including John  
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# Looking to the future

By Victor Billot

The Maritime Union is facing a time of change. This year will see our third Triennial Conference, where the Union will decide on the future structure of our organization. A proposal to regionalize the Union will be voted on. This could have a big impact on our success.

We also have the union elections coming up, where our national officials will be elected by the membership at large. I believe there is one area where the Union has to invest time and money into getting things set up for the future.

This is the area of developing our young members into the union activists and working class leaders of tomorrow.

Over the years I have met some dedicated younger members of the Union. On the picket line at the Ports of Napier dispute I met numerous union members, in their late teens, twenties and thirties. They were learning every day, they wanted to be a part of what the Union was, they were inspired and fired up by the experience.

Where are they now? We should have got every one of those active young members and found a way to bring them in.

It is no secret that at a national executive meeting of the Union, there is a lack of younger faces. Usually there are just one or two under forties in attendance.

In the next five years we are going to see an enormous exodus of skill and knowledge from the industry as many of our experienced members and officials retire.

In the next ten years, it is going to be even more extreme. Are we prepared? Who is going to be sitting at that table in 2012, in 2015? What should we be doing to address this challenge?

The Union has already made some positive steps. We sent some younger members to the MUA Youth Conference. Some branches involve their younger members on the executive.

However these efforts need to be more consistent and carried out on a national level otherwise those from bigger or better resourced branches are going to get an unfair advantage.

That is not a Union way of doing things.

We now have a growing Veterans' Association, represented on the national executive. We can learn from the veterans.

Likewise the Maritime Union of Australia has a thriving youth section. We can learn from the MUA.

We need to set up a Youth Network in the Maritime Union of New Zealand, to represent the young workers in our industry. Such a network must be co-ordinated at the national level.

We need to identify and involve the younger members, and find out what they want.

Then we need to ensure they are receiving union training, getting invited to attend national and regional meetings as observers, and being given the opportunity to attend union conferences and gatherings in New Zealand and overseas to represent the Union. These aren't freebies. In return we expect that those who step up to the challenge put their energy back into building union awareness amongst young people, starting with their worksites.

If we are serious, we will back the plan with resources.

A Maritime Youth fund should be set up with resources from the national union and every branch of the Union.

It should be administered nationally, with the express goal of funding youth training and development.

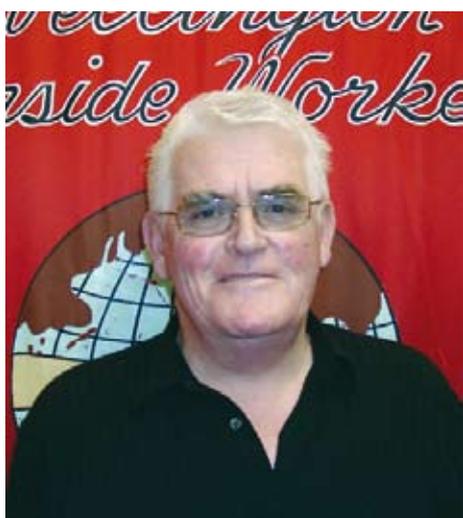
I believe the 2009 Triennial Conference of the Maritime Union of New Zealand is the place to start.

Every branch should identify at least one younger member to attend the Conference as a youth observer. Two national youth representatives should be elected, to take turns at attending national executive meetings.

At the Conference, we should establish the youth network and the youth fund.

It's time to look to the future. There is literally no time to lose.

# A perspective on the maritime industry



By Trevor Hanson  
General Secretary

## Regionalization

The question of regionalization was debated at our May 2009 National Executive meeting.

The outcome was a recommendation that we go forward, with the regionalization proposal being fine tuned, then being taken to all ports and then to our National Triennial Conference for a final vote.

I believe the outcome is positive and recognises the need for changes in the way we operate.

My personal opinion as General Secretary is that the changes proposed don't go far enough.

My view which I have firmly held for some years is that it is necessary to bring all dockworkers and seafarers in New Zealand into one union. I presented a document outlining this view at a previous National Executive meeting.

This view has come under some criticism but events since that time have reinforced my belief that we cannot afford to sit back and allow the continuing attacks on maritime workers to continue.

In one to one discussions I have had with many of the officials from our branches, it is clear there is a desire for all workers in their ports to act as one.

The ongoing division and lack of co-ordination is allowing us to be attacked by employers and yellow associations masquerading as unions.

This situation is likely to worsen with the recession and with the National Government which is historically anti-union. The proposed regional central funded structure could should be extended to include the other genuine Unions with whom we work alongside in all ports.

## A National Union

A true national Union backed by our current assets would provide services on a national basis to all.

For example, one obvious advantage of a proper national structure would be the ability to identify differences in agreements between ports. The weak link in the chain could be identified, assistance provided if required, and the best terms and conditions could then become the standard.

Secondly, the National Government will change employment laws to permit non-union collective agreements on work sites where a union collective exists.

This threat combined with current yellow associations/unions can only be combated by a united unionized workforce.

A strong, centralized and nationally based Union is required.

This will not undermine the independence of our branches or the rank and file control which is a historic feature of our Union.

It will actually improve and assist the operations of the Union.

Our current fragmented approach to negotiations, training, services, legal, accounting and administration is inefficient and needs to change.

Given our level of resources, there is no reason why this cannot be quickly achieved.

We need a nationally based health and safety officer, an organizer responsible for accident compensation, and a national training officer.

Serious thought needs to be given to a nationally contracted legal service, and the benefits of a national auditor would include a far more efficient and cost effective service.

Up to now our branches have provided these services on a relatively satisfactory basis but the time has come to provide these services on a national basis.

The branches of the Union have built up and maintained considerable assets in a prudent way over many years.

This is also true of the seafarers national assets which upon amalgamation were allocated to two branches with the surplus being placed into a trust.

The income generated from this trust is combined with the income off the investments from the former Waterfront Union is used for the running of our union.

The assets of both the seafarers and wharfies were built up by those who came before us, so that when the time came we could face a hostile political and economic climate as we do today.

There are not many of the current union members left whom were part of the early process.

It is timely to remind ourselves that when a maritime worker joins our union they join on the basis of using the available services when they arrive and when they leave they leave behind the same or better. A successful national-based union must include the other unions we work beside. The benefits would be immediate. Correctly managed by the national and branch officials nationally, this would solve the fragmented approach we currently have to issues such as terms and conditions in our industry.

The parochial idea that if our port is OK we do not have to worry about what is happening elsewhere has never been correct, but it is even more of a threat to the future of our union now.

My view of this matter has been confirmed by the Napier dispute in 2007, and events since then have made me even more convinced that we need (a) a national union and (b) one union inside the wharf gates.

## Retirement

This year sees the national elections for the national official positions for the Union.

I have always said that I would retire at age 65. My birthday falls on 6 November this year, which gives me 50 years employment, 19 years of them first as General Secretary of the New Zealand Waterfront Workers Union and then the Maritime Union of New Zealand.

I became a wharfie at the Port of Timaru at age 27, and have been through all of the dramatic changes that have occurred since then.

My first job was discharging sugar off a coastal vessel, and the Timaru Branch had a policy that all members with the exception of Tally Clerks were available for all classes of work.

New members were expected to be able to drive ships gear and cranes after two years employment.

So like all members at Timaru it was rolling wool, carrying bags of peas and mostly working on meat boats, both conventionally and meat loaders. Every wharfies dread was to turn his disc for No.3 hatch on the Port Caroline, three to four weeks of loading frozen meat was not a good go. At that time Timaru had a register of around 300 and Oamaru wharfies were regular top ups they drove up every day for a 7am start then drove home again at 5pm.

This continued until the last of the coastal shipping disappeared and the Oamaru register was closed.

Modernisation and the arrival of containerisation was preceded by unit loading.

At the time there were always labour shortages and in peaks the use of casual labour and crew labour for top ups was permitted under agreement with the Union, employers and the Waterfront Industry Commission.

The hours of work in this era were a pleasure in comparison with today's environment. 7am until midday with a hour for lunch, and then 1pm until 5pm with a provision to come back at 6pm to finish a ship provided it could finish by 9pm. Saturday was 7am until midday with a provision to work from 1pm until 5pm to finish a vessel.

At the time of my entry into the union, a night shift was agreed for all Ports.

By comparison to current shift work the hours were excellent – 5pm until 11pm with a 30 minute meal break and a hot cooked meal provided.

### Port Reform

In 1988, because of legislation changes requiring 2,000 members for registering, our Union had to change from a Federation to a National Union because there were insufficient numbers at Port Level to continue as Branch unions in their own right.

The world wide change to containerisation through the 1980s brought about the slow demise of conventional shipping.

The consequences were labour numbers in all ports were too high, and the process of port reform began and culminated in legislation that removed the Waterfront Industry Commission and the introduction of company employment in October 1989. This was the beginning of a new era which I can honestly say has had our Union fighting a defensive action ever since.

In my view the debacle of 1700 members leaving the industry at the time was an indictment on all concerned. Most took voluntary redundancy and some were forced out.

The procedure of allocating labour to the companies at each port was unscrupulous and corrupt with each one of our members that chose to stay marking his preference for which company he wanted to work for. The employers then sat down and horse traded between each other on whom they would employ.

The end result was that many ended up working for a company they didn't want to. The ramifications of this became obvious when companies started to fall over in liquidations and receiverships.

The National Government's Employment Contracts Act in 1991 completely wiped out anything we had retained from late 1989.

The attacks came thick and fast. Casualization grew.

One of the worst cases occurred in Napier, when Pufflet and Smith went into receivership with some 70 of our members laid off, finally receiving 5 cents in the dollar for their owed entitlements.

Although some were re-employed, the majority came back as casuals and to this day there is still a high number of casuals in the port.

Similar events occurred in all New Zealand ports and of course legislation to allow Yellow Associations/Unions has undermined us across the board.

Our battles against ISO were tough and extremely costly. The only successes being Port Chalmers, Bluff and Lyttelton.

During this time was the terrible event in Lyttelton of the loss of Christine Clarke's life on the picket line as she supported our cause.

The worst blow we took was when New Zealand Stevedores folded up taking some 200 of our members out of employment with no redundancy or liabilities paid.

At the same time the seafarers lost their coastal trans Tasman vessels.

### Economic pressures

The Labour-Alliance Government elected in 1999 replaced the Employment Contracts Act with the new Employment Relations Act.

While beneficial to New Zealand workers as a whole, little was done for Wharries or Seafarers and our specific industry problems.

We made extensive submissions and appearances, lobbying the Government on casualization, hours of work, and yellow unions both before and after our 2002 amalgamation. These were largely ignored.

The Labour Government did not want to offend big business.

With a new National Government, it is likely there will be a change to employment legislation back to the situation that applied under the old ECA.

Workers will once again feel the effects of individual contracts with the insecurity that goes with that.

There is a continual "race to the bottom" driven by extreme competitive capitalism at all levels – between individuals, businesses, ports and entire nations – and until this is overcome through regulation and organization then the negative effects will continue.

New Zealand has pursued a "free trade" strategy that has not been in the interests of working people.

The Maritime Union has continually spoken out against free trade simply because it is unworkable and it hurts workers both here and internationally.

I will never forget a delegation of Thai unionists telling us to protest by any means available the New Zealand-Thailand free trade agreement.

The reason was they knew the result would be an influx of young people moving to the city from rural homes to be paid sweatshop wages, and in many cases leaving young children behind with grandparents.

### Amalgamation

One of our biggest successes is the amalgamation of the New Zealand Seafarers' Union and the New Zealand Waterfront Workers' Union.

From 2003 until now my life has certainly had plenty of colour added to it. Coming from the waterfront side of the equation, I truly have an admiration for the seafarers discipline and union principles.

I have been lucky enough to see the situation change from a surplus of Seafarers, some who had not worked for up to two years, regaining employment due to the offshore and blue water agreements between MUNZ and the MUA.

Joe Fleetwood set up an offshore database with all unemployed Seafarers on it, which led to major attacks from employers.

At the time, we met with then Minister Ruth Dyson and explained the crisis of employment in the industry.

On the same day as the meeting, the offshore employers suddenly went crazy and every available New Zealand Seafarer was employed.

The employers grudgingly utilised the database but since then they have accepted it as the only practical way of manning their ships.

There have been some criticisms of aspects of the amalgamation but my view is it has been a success overall.

My observations of the Wellington situation is that Joe Fleetwood and John Whiting have made significant progress in unionising workers both in Wellington and Picton, and Garry Parsloe and Russell Mayn have operated on the same basis both in Auckland and Tauranga.

The current recession will present our union with some major challenges into the future.

It appears port restructuring will be driven by market forces because politically it is a hot potato.

The danger is ports will fall into foreign ownership with profits disappearing offshore.

But wharries are wharries and seafarers are seafarers and our combined past histories show the spirit of resistance and the fight for workers' rights that have served us well.

When the occasion arises I have no reason to doubt the fight will continue.

This is an attempt at a broad overview of how things have developed during my time in the job.

I am reasonably sure that I could fill a few more pages of extremely humorous events that have happened during my time in the industry – and of course there are some events that I could not report on.

# Changes to Union structures



By Phil Adams  
National President

## Regionalization

The National Executive received a presentation on regionalization at its May 2009 meeting.

This proposal has been approved by the executive and will be sent to ports for discussion. The goal is to progress the proposal and get it endorsed formally at the Triennial Conference in November.

This issue of the Maritimes features an outline of regionalization and its purposes. The main goal is to achieve the most effective use of our resources by grouping together our branches in three regions, Northern, Central and Southern.

This will assist in co-ordinating our union activities and provide a better service for members. Branches will maintain their independence and assets but will work together under regions which will be centrally funded.

We encourage all members to read this material so they can ask questions and offer their opinion to officials when they visit ports with the proposal.

## Triennial Conference

The third Triennial Conference of the Maritime Union will be held in Wellington in November of this year. This is the main meeting of the Union and it is where the decisions are made that set the course for the future of the Union.

The final decision on regionalization will be made at the Triennial Conference.

The Union will hold elections via postal ballot of all financial members later this year as well, for the four national official positions of the Union, National President, National Vice President, General Secretary and Assistant General Secretary.

Members will be advised of the date of the elections and supplied with information on the candidates.

Make sure to exercise your democratic rights and vote.

## Job losses

The effects of the recession are having a mixed impact. Despite the national downturn, some ports are experiencing high turnover of work at the present time, whereas in other areas we are experiencing pressure with lower levels of work and even redundancies.

However all the predictions are that the economic situation will worsen over the next year with unemployment expected to rise to 8%, a figure not seen since the worst times in the 1990s.

Although it is easy to think that things will soon pick up, a realistic look at the problems of the overseas economies, especially the United States, shows that we are in for some rough weather.

The maritime industry, with its central role in global trade, is a weathervane of what is going on in the world economy.

An interesting presentation from Jimmy Tannock of the Maritime Union of Australia showed just how big the downturn in container traffic around the world is.

Ten leading world ports saw massive decreases in container traffic over the year between January 2008 and January 2009.

Shanghai in China saw a drop from 2,290,000 teu to 1,900,000 teu in this period – a 17% decrease.

Singapore dropped from 2,380,000 teu to 1,920,000 teu, a decrease of 19.3%.

Long Beach in California went from 521,342 teu to 399,295 teu, a decrease of 23.4%.

Guangzhou, a large port in China, was hit with a drop of 30.9% of its container traffic – just under one in three containers.

It dropped from 977,000 teu to 675,000 teu.

The figures were obtained from Lloyds List and it is noted that since January 2009 that the situation has continued to worsen. Those are some massive hits.

Along with the massive number of container vessels at anchor around the world, it gives a picture of how serious the current crisis in the global capitalist economy is.

Such a major downturn in world trade will soon hit New Zealand. We have to be prepared for the attacks on jobs, wages and conditions as employers look to prop up profits by squeezing the workforce. With the National Party in power, they will have the help of the Government. We will have to stay alert and prepare for some tough times.

**“Make sure to exercise your democratic rights and vote in the upcoming union elections”**

# Regionalization

At the May 2009 meeting of the Maritime Union national executive, a proposal was put forward for Regionalization of the structure of the Union.

The proposal was discussed and endorsed by the national executive. The proposal will go back to the branches for discussion at branch stopwork meetings. Branches will then vote on the proposal. If approved, the new regional structure will be implemented following endorsement at the National Conference.

## Why regionalization?

Regionalization will achieve a stronger and more efficient union that addresses the changing industrial environment we are working in.

Regionalization will finalise the amalgamation process between Seafarers and Waterfront Workers that started in 2002. Regionalization will establish a national and regional fee structure which will be based on fairness and equity that will address the necessary level of representation in the regions, and the escalating cost of maintaining national and international representation.

The goals and objectives of regionalization include strengthening the financial base of the union, sharing operational costs and information.

There will be a standardization of negotiating and operational procedures.

If an opportunity to amalgamate with a like minded Union arises, we are in a strong organized position to progress discussions

## Proposed New Regions

Three regions will be created that will cover all existing branches.

- Northern Region (Whangarei, Auckland Local 13, Auckland Seafarers, Tauranga, Gisborne)
- Central Region (Napier, New Plymouth, Wellington Waterfront, Wellington Seafarers, Nelson)
- Southern Region (Lyttelton, Timaru, Port Chalmers Dunedin, Bluff)

There will be legal and governance issues that have to be worked through.

These include the funding of the regions, branch assets and trusts, and representation at the regional and national level.

The need to move to a standardized union fee system is also a part of regionalization. More information on the proposal will be supplied to members over the next couple of months.





Maritime Union General Secretary Trevor Hanson, Wellington Seafarers Branch Secretary Joe Fleetwood and ITF inspector Grahame McLaren join the Wellington protest against Air New Zealand's actions

## Maritime workers support air crews in Zeal dispute

The Maritime Union has been backing supporting out flight attendants employed by Air New Zealand subsidiary Zeal 320. As the Maritimes goes to print, the EPMU and Air New Zealand are still in mediation over the dispute.

Waterfront workers and seafarers supported protests by locked out workers in Auckland and Wellington on 7 May. The 240 crew employed by Zeal walked off the job for four days, and management issued a lockout notice for the strike period. Zeal staff work on trans-Tasman and Pacific routes, and some domestic flights. The workers do the same work as flight attendants employed by Air New Zealand, but are employed on inferior wages and conditions.

The air crew are members of the EPMU. Maritime Union General Secretary Trevor Hanson says MUNZ will give full and active support to the workers and their union the EPMU.

He says the tactics of Air New Zealand management are "textbook anti-worker, anti-union stuff."

"They have been using lock outs, threats, strike breakers, holding companies - all to reduce the wages and conditions of their workers."

Mr Hanson says that Air New Zealand management will find that their actions will only damage the company. "Workers are no longer prepared to accept this type of activity with fat cat executives ripping off the workers who generate the profit."

He says there is a new and combative mood amongst workers who were standing up for their rights.

As a majority public-owned company, Air New Zealand has an obligation to act in the public interest.

For more information see:  
<http://www.epmu.org.nz/zeal>

# ACC under threat

A major campaign is underway to stop attacks on ACC by the National Government. The campaign group ACC Futures Coalition was launched earlier this year, backed by many community organizations and groups including the Maritime Union. There are mounting concerns about the future of ACC under a National Government. ACC is the sole provider of accident compensation in New Zealand. If you are injured at work or outside work, ACC provides comprehensive, no-fault personal injury cover.

ACC Futures Spokesperson Hazel Armstrong says the goal for the campaign is to build cross-party support for retaining the status of ACC as a publicly owned single provider.

"We want to maintain and improve the provision of injury prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and a no fault compensation social insurance system that benefits all New Zealanders."

Unions have strongly backed ACC in its current form and are supporting the campaign.

CTU President Helen Kelly says the Government is determined to turn ACC into an insurance scheme "in preparation for its privatisation."

Such moves would undermine the accident compensation system, and compromise worker health and safety, she says. "Workplace safety depends on a culture of openness in documenting and analysing all incidents and acting upon their causes." Ms Kelly says ACC is based on community responsibility.

"New Zealanders gave up the right to sue for a 24 hour no-fault scheme where the community shared the cost of prevention, compensation and rehabilitation of those that have an injury."

ACC has been around for a generation.

In 1967, a Royal Commission report known as the "Woodhouse Report" recommended that existing workers compensation should be extended to all injuries on a no-fault basis.

The Accident Compensation Commission, which later became ACC, was established in 1974.

In 1999 the Fourth National government allowed private insurance operators to provide work-related accident insurance, but this change was repealed by the incoming Labour-Alliance Government. ACC was re-instated as the sole provider of accident insurance cover in 2000.

For more information see <http://www.accfutures.org.nz/>



National Executive of the Maritime Union of New Zealand, Waterside House, Wellington, 15 May 2009 (photo by Luke Appleby)

## Budget takes transport down the wrong road

The Maritime Union says the budget announced in May is a step backward for transport.

Maritime Union General Secretary Trevor Hanson says the lack of support for the maritime industry is a glaring omission. Mr Hanson says the abandonment of the SeaChange strategy to build up New Zealand shipping in favour of building more roads is a bad mistake.

"The Government has poured money into roading as the world hits peak oil and climate change. They are moving in exactly the wrong direction. Shipping is the transport mode of the future that is low-impact, environmentally responsible and cost effective in the long term, but has been sidelined."

New Zealand is dependent on maritime trade, but its coastal fleet has been decimated by opening the coast to foreign vessels. The Maritime Union has several key goals for a secure and stable New Zealand economy.

These include the public ownership of key assets such as ports, the development of a national ports strategy "KiwiPort" to get ports working together, the strengthening of job security by reducing casualization of jobs, and support for the development of New Zealand shipping.

## Free trade dairy debacle predictable

The collapse of free trade in dairy products going into the United States was predictable and inevitable.

Maritime Union General Secretary Trevor Hanson says New Zealand has been naive in allowing free trade ideology to replace common sense.

He says that nations such as the United States would support free trade as long as it served their interests, then would abandon it when it no longer suited them, which is what had now happened.

He says that New Zealand needs to abandon free trade, and work towards a stable economy that ensured assets remained in New Zealand ownership, secure jobs were available in a regulated labour market, and a wide range of industries was nurtured and developed with appropriate policies. Mr Hanson says the Maritime Union has been extremely concerned about how free trade could mean employers being allowed to import short-term casual labour across borders to attack wages and conditions – a situation that was causing problems around the world.

For more information, see [nznotforsale.org.nz](http://nznotforsale.org.nz)

## Unemployment hits workers hard

The Council of Trade Unions said in May 2009 that although unemployment at 5 percent, or 115,000 people, is less than many had forecast at this time, there are some worrying trends in the figures.

Youth unemployment is at 19.6 percent, for those aged 20-24 years it is 12 percent, Maori unemployment is 11.9 percent and Pacific peoples at 13.1 percent.

Unemployment in the Auckland region is at 6.5 percent, 7.8 percent in Gisborne/Hawkes Bay and 9 percent in Northland. In addition, employment has decreased by 24,000, the jobless number has increased to 224,100, and the number of those unemployed for more than 6 months is up by 9,000.

CTU Secretary Peter Conway says that the recent spate of redundancies and forecasts points to unemployment going higher over the next year.

"Although these figures released today are lower than some expected, it is important that everything is done to head off the rise in unemployment.

This should include: direct investment in job-rich projects across infrastructure, home insulation and environmental work; more support from government procurement for the domestic economy, and; greater assistance for those laid off including training opportunities."

For more information, see [www.union.org.nz](http://www.union.org.nz)

# Campaign for a Living Wage Petition and Referendum

In this edition of the Maritimes, each Maritime Union member will receive a copy of a new petition to boost the minimum wage.

May 2009 marks the beginning of the Unite Union Campaign for a Living Wage to get an immediate rise in the minimum wage to \$15 an hour.

The Maritime Union of New Zealand endorsed the campaign at its national executive meeting in May.

We're asking all our members to play their part in collecting some signatures for the petition.

## How it works

The first part of the campaign is to collect over 300,000 signatures within 12 months on a Citizen's Initiated Referendum Petition.

After the petition has been presented to Parliament every voter in New Zealand will get the chance to vote in a referendum.

The referendum question is:

"Should the adult minimum wage be raised in steps over the next three years, starting with an immediate rise to \$15 per hour, until it reaches 66% of the average total hourly earnings as defined in the Quarterly Employment Survey?"

The current adult minimum wage is \$12.50 an hour – \$500 a week.

We believe that an adult in a full time job should have a reasonable standard of living without getting into debt or relying on charity or income support. \$15 an hour – or \$600 a week – is a good start.

Unlike superannuation or benefits, the minimum wage is not automatically increased each year.

By making it 66% of the average wage (the same as the married rate for superannuation) it will keep the lowest paid New Zealand workers out of poverty.



Petition supporters at the campaign launch, Auckland, 11 June 2009 (photo by Resistance Photography)  
More photos at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/12492550@N03/sets/72157619498844907/>

## How to help the campaign

Enclosed in this issue of the Maritimes is a petition form and a flyer about the campaign.

We are asking all MUNZ members to ask their families and friends to sign the petition which can be freeposted back to the Unite Union.

There are some simple rules for people signing the form:

1. They must be enrolled to vote on 7th May 2010 when the petition closes. (only those over 18 years old can be enrolled).
2. They must put their signature on the form.
3. Their name and address must be able to be read clearly.
4. Don't put other comments on the form.

Unite is asking people to give us their phone and email contact details so we can keep them informed about campaigns - but this is optional.

Simply return the petition to the freepost address on the form. It doesn't need to be filled up to send back - but the more the better.

More petition forms can be downloaded from the website below.

For updates on the campaign visit <http://www.unite.org.nz>

The Maritime Union contact for the campaign for any questions is Victor Billot, email [victor.billot@munz.org.nz](mailto:victor.billot@munz.org.nz)



## Trans Tasman Oil and Gas Alliance

The petrochemical industry deals in an international commodity at international rates and employs under international standards.

But many Kiwi workers in this industry have to head overseas so they can get paid more money for doing the same job.

Unions from both sides of the Tasman are organising the Trans-Tasman Oil and Gas Alliance to bring Kiwi terms and conditions up to Australian standards.

The Alliance is a joint project between the two big unions in the New Zealand Oil and Gas industry and their Australian counterparts, and it's about giving Oil and Gas workers a way they can all push for better terms and conditions.

Any worker in the offshore can join the Alliance by joining the Engineering, Printing and Manufacturing Union (EPMU) or the Maritime Union of New Zealand (MUNZ). Both unions already have strong collective employment agreements in the Oil and Gas industry but we need all offshore workers on board to make sure the Alliance gets stronger.

Because there's only one way we'll win the same wages and conditions of oil and gas workers in Australia, and that's by standing together for a fair deal.

To find out more about the EPMU, MUNZ and the Trans Tasman Oil and Gas Alliance you can: Contact Maritime Union Wellington Seafarers' Branch Secretary Joe Fleetwood on 021364649 or email [joe.fleetwood@munz.org.nz](mailto:joe.fleetwood@munz.org.nz)

Call 0800 1 UNION / 0800 186 466

Visit [www.epmu.org.nz](http://www.epmu.org.nz)

Visit [www.munz.org.nz](http://www.munz.org.nz)

Join the "Oil & Gas Alliance" group on Facebook [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com).

## Media watch

### Wellington WEA online

Wellington Workers' Education Association (WWEA) presents "Educating for Social Change", including Jim Delahunty's "Behind the News" on Wellington's Access Radio 783AM [www.accessradio.org.nz](http://www.accessradio.org.nz) This is a public interest show which offers alternative information and comments on issues facing working people. Prior shows are available to listen at [http://www.accessradio.org.nz/educating\\_for\\_social\\_change.html](http://www.accessradio.org.nz/educating_for_social_change.html)

Also available to view are online videos of our lunchtime forums.

This season, the forum topic is "The Economy."

This subject has been addressed by a breadth of individuals from all sectors of society.

The lunchtime forums run on Mondays 12pm-1pm.

They are available to view online at <http://weawellington.blogspot.com>

### Film on Burmese workers

An ITF film outlining the dire working conditions of undocumented Burmese migrant fishers has won a labour film festival award.

The film, *Abandoned, but not forgotten: the plight of Burma's migrant fishers*, has been awarded "Best labour film short of 2009" by the Geneva Labour Film Shorts Festival, which took place on 16 June in Geneva, Switzerland.

The film exposes the brutal treatment of migrant workers from Burma employed in Thailand's fishing industry and outlines the steps seafarers' unions are taking to expose these crimes and help the workers win basic rights.

Other films shown address the need to defend independent media, union strategies to end child labour, the importance of maternity protection for women workers and a united steelworkers' response to the global financial crisis.

A list of the film line-up is online at: [www.labourfilmshorts.org](http://www.labourfilmshorts.org)

Watch the film at:

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=deCo\\_ZBsk-U](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=deCo_ZBsk-U)

## Send it in.

We want to hear from members about what they want to see in the Maritimes magazine.

It's your magazine. We're looking for photos and news tips from members. Get in touch to tell us if there is something you'd like to see in the Maritimes.

Mail  
PO Box 27004,  
Wellington,  
New Zealand

Email  
[victor.billot@munz.org.nz](mailto:victor.billot@munz.org.nz)

Fax (09) 9251125

Mobile 021482219



<http://www.flickr.com/photos/eneas/3471986083>  
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/>

## Influenza A (H1N1) Swine Flu: Protecting yourself and others

Personal hygiene is really important in reducing your chances of getting the new Influenza A (H1N1) virus, or passing it on to others:

### Wash and dry your hands frequently

Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds and dry them for 20 seconds, or use an alcohol-based hand rub.

Wash your hands before preparing food and eating or smoking; after coughing, sneezing, wiping children's noses, visiting the toilet or changing nappies.

### Cover your cough and sneeze

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and put your used tissue in a bin. (If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve, not your hands.)

Remember to wash your hands afterwards.

Avoid touching your nose, mouth or eyes. Germs spread that way.

### Stay away from other people if you or they are sick

If you become unwell, stay away from other people.

Try to stay a metre away from sick people to reduce the spread of germs.

Reduce time spent in crowded settings.

### Contamination and cleaning

Regularly clean flat surfaces such as bathroom sinks, bedside cabinets, desks and table tops where germs can live for up to 48 hours. Wipe them down with a household disinfectant.

### If you've got flu symptoms

Stay at home for seven days after your symptoms begin or until you have been symptom-free for 24 hours, whichever is longer.

### If your condition worsens

Seek medical advice by PHONING Healthline 0800 611 116 or your healthcare provider first to avoid potentially infecting others

### More information at

<http://www.moh.govt.nz/influenza-a-h1n1>

<http://worksafereps.org.nz/>

## Employers should pay for swine flu quarantines

The Maritime Union has asked employers to pay workers sent home due to swine flu quarantines.

Maritime Union of New Zealand General Secretary Trevor Hanson says maritime workers are in the front line and are an at risk group for exposure to infectious diseases coming into the country.

"Our members work in busy, large workplaces on the waterfront, in close contact with crews and passengers on vessels arriving from overseas. We also have many seafarer members working on ferries which carry a large number of overseas travellers."

Mr Hanson says if workers are quarantined due to workplace exposure to swine flu, then employers have a responsibility to keep them on the payroll while they are away from work.

He says the Maritime Union is supporting calls from the Engineering, Printing and Manufacturing Union that since quarantine can mean significant costs to workers, these costs should be met by their employer if the exposure is work-related.

Mr Hanson says that the economic effects of even short periods of missed wages for low income workers could be serious.

"We are especially concerned at the effect on casual workers who are at even greater risk of having their livelihoods stripped away."

He says the Maritime Union has also asked that workers exposed to swine flu through their work and quarantined should be assisted by their employers to get household supplies delivered.



# Flag of Convenience campaign

By **Grahame McLaren**  
ITF New Zealand co-ordinator

**Vessel: Pacific Faithful**  
**Owner: Oldendorff (Germany)**  
**Flag: Liberian**  
**ITF Inspection, Tauranga 24 March 2009**

On the 24 March 2009 at the Port of Tauranga, Australian Assistant ITF Co-ordinator Matt Purcell together with myself and Maritime Union Tauranga Branch Secretary Eddie Cook carried out an inspection on the above vessel.

This vessel is typical of the German company Oldendorff, where there are many different nationalities on board and definitely no ITF agreement. I conducted the inspection and was forthright but at the same time polite in seeking documents from the Master who was reasonably co-operative but under instructions not to pass on any information on crew's wages or conditions.

Matt Purcell explained to the Master the future requirements of the new Australian government for Single/Continuous Voyage Permits for Foreign Flagged vessels. These new laws will probably mean vessels must have ITF agreements on board. I also brought to the Master's attention that whilst on the New Zealand coast, Oldendorff vessels would need to have an ITF approved agreement. If not industrial action could occur.

After the inspection, networking took place within two separate areas of Australia that also had Oldendorff vessels in port. ITF inspector in Townsville Graham Bragg visited the 'Pacific Freedom' while the Tasmanian ITF contact in Bell Bay visited the 'Lilly Oldendorff.'

The message about Single/Continuous Voyage Permits for Foreign Flagged vessels in Australia was again passed to both Masters – no agreement, no permit in the near future.

The result was that within three hours of each other, three Oldendorff vessels were visited as a co-ordinated mini campaign against this anti-ITF vessel owner. This action was meant to jolt Oldendorff and keep them guessing as to their future in this region.

The likelihood of Oldendorff signing agreements seems remote but with the possible changes to the permit system to operate on these coasts they may grudgingly sign agreements.

There are past instances where due to boycott or trade restrictions they have had to sign an agreement for their vessels.

# Indonesian crew helped by ITF and Maritime Union



The Shinji at Ports of Auckland

**By Grahame McLaren**  
**ITF New Zealand Inspector**

On Tuesday 26 June 2009 while conducting ITF training in Tauranga I received a call from the Auckland waterfront police station.

The previous evening, 12 Indonesian fishermen from the New Zealand/Korean joint venture fishing vessel "Shin Ji" had handed themselves in and had spent the night at the police station.

The reasons they gave for leaving the vessel were non-payment of wages, problems with harassment from the Korean officers and bosun, and substandard living and working conditions.

After discussing the situation with MUNZ officials, I left Tauranga for Auckland. The crew had been taken to Auckland Seafarers Centre from the police station. I found the fishermen being looked after by Terry Nobbs of the centre who had provided the hungry men with snacks and drinks. MUNZ Auckland seafarers' executive member Peter Davis and rank and file member Greg Carncross were also in attendance reassuring the crew that we would do all we could for them.

Peter and Greg had also gathered a lot of useful information regarding the New Zealand and Korean owners/charterers and agents, and provided me with a list of contact details for all involved.

I spoke with the fishermen, and it transpired that the men had not been paid since their arrival in New Zealand waters on 21 April.

This was confirmed by a telephone call to the Indonesian manning agents. The men all agreed when asked on cell phone by an interpreter provided by the Indonesian embassy that they would not under any circumstances be willing to return to the vessel.

They stated that they just wanted the wages they were owed and to be repatriated to Indonesia.

Peter and I told the charterers that the men must be paid all monies owing in cash in US dollars and then be repatriated to Indonesia as soon as possible. Needless to say the employers were not happy at the prospect of this.

We contacted the immigration department and they sent a representative along with the Korean Consul to investigate the situation.

The Immigration representative told the charterers in that the men were their responsibility and that if any of them were to abscond they would vigorously pursue the company for the recovery of every cent spent trying to track down anyone who disappeared.

They also advised that they would be cancelling the men's fishing visas.

We told the charterers that the men must be put up in a hotel/motel until payment and repatriation could take place.

After some negotiation, it was agreed that the crew would get a meal and then go to motel accommodation by taxi.

The next day, Peter and I went to the motel to check on the men and to continue negotiations with the charterers.

After communication with the owners in Korea and the manning agents in Indonesia, it was eventually agreed they would pay the crew and fly them home.

The next stumbling blocks were the facts that the crew's passports were locked in the charterer's office in Christchurch and would not arrive in Auckland until Friday. As far as the company was concerned the crew would have to pay for their own airfares.

After they were told this was not going to happen, they finally agreed to pay for the airfares as well.

Later that evening I had a call from the charterers informing that one of the vessel's Korean engineers who spoke some Indonesian had been talking to the fishermen.

They had supposedly told him that the main problem on board was the Captain and indicated to him that if the Captain were removed they may be willing to go back to the vessel.

I informed the charterer that this was all well and good but they would still need to be paid in full before this could happen, and of course we would need to speak to the crew to confirm this.

The next morning (Thursday) Peter and I carried out an inspection of the vessel Shin Ji. The vessel was in need of a good clean and there were large areas of rust on the deck in the galley, no bed linen, no hot water with the crew expected to shower in cold sea water.

We also pointed out that the life rafts were almost inaccessible due to fishing gear being stowed all around them.

On the plus side we found the vessel to be well provisioned with full fridges and dry stores. All the problems were pointed out and the charterers agreed to rectify them for the new crew coming on board.

We informed them that we would be checking to make sure they did so.

We then headed out to the motel to talk to the men about the possibility of them going back on board if the Captain was removed.

We first spoke to them in a group and they said that they were still unwilling to return to the vessel.

At this point the charterer suggested they may be scared to talk candidly in front of each other, so Peter and I went into another unit where we called in each man individually and asked the question of him again.

It was unanimous, they wanted to go home.

During these interviews one of the men also told us that he had been punched twice in the back of the head by the Korean Bosun. It seemed this talk of going back if the Captain was removed was just a ploy by the charterers to try to get them back on board.

We informed the charterers of the men's decision and told them something needed to be done today and threatened to bring in the police in regard to the assault by the Bosun.

We also threatened to get the media involved and expose the whole situation. This mention of media and police involvement seemed to spur them into action and a couple of hours later they informed us that the passports had arrived, the flights were booked for 0650 hours the next morning and that they were in the process of getting the money together.

We called Trevor Hanson at MUNZ national office and told him the good news. Trevor told us that Joe Fleetwood would contact his friend Mr Hanafi from the Indonesian ITF affiliated union KPI. He would ask that someone met the fishermen on arrival in Jakarta to ensure no one was there to try and take any of the money back from them as this has been known to happen in the past.

At 0400 the next morning (Friday) at Auckland airport, Peter and I met with the crew, the NZ charterers and Mr Rosihan T Saragih from the Indonesian embassy who had flown up the previous evening.

I had calculated the amount owed to each man and had printed out individual accounts which Peter and I split between us and then took half the men each and had them count out their money in front of us and then sign the accounts.

The total amount of the back pay was NZ\$52,776.

The men were very happy to finally get their wages and be on their way home and were very grateful for our help.

We received word from KPI in Indonesia that the men arrived home safely and that the manning agent had also been there to meet them and reported that they avoided having to hand back any money.

I have also since telephoned one crew member who speaks a little English at his home in Central Java and he reports all is well.



The Indonesian crew with ITF inspector Grahame McLaren at their motel accommodation



MUNZ Auckland Seafarers' Branch executive member Peter Davis ensures the workers pay is correct at their early morning departure from Auckland International Airport



# International Transport Workers' Federation

## London 16–20 March 2009

By Garry Parsloe  
National Vice President

### Day One: Dockers' Section Meeting

On the 16 March 2009 Assistant General Secretary Russell Mayn and I attended the ITF Dockers Section committee meeting in London.

Chairman Paddy Crumlin opened the meeting by welcoming everyone to London and this meeting.

Frank Leys then gave a series of reports on ITF Dockworkers' problems from ports all around the world.

Dutch Dockers' Union rep Niek Stam gave a report on their dispute over their pension scheme. This issue has been going on for five years and needs international support, for example pickets on shareholders' meetings.

There is an issue of 1.5 billion Euros going missing out of the Dutch Dockers' pension scheme and this must be resolved in the Dockers' favour.

In this session both Russell Mayn and I gave reports on our dispute with the Ports of Tauranga.

Frank Leys and Paddy Crumlin both joined in the discussion and gave their full support to MUNZ in this dispute. Russell and I drafted a motion for the meeting to consider on how best to resolve our problems in the Port of Tauranga. The resolution was carried in a later session.

There were reports from other Unions all stating that they were under pressure from Port Companies who were intent on removing organised labour from their port. After the morning smoko on day one we had a report from the women's committee. There was a report on issues surrounding women Dockworkers and how the economic climate is affecting women's issues.

The next session dealt with the on-going dispute with the Maersk contractors' intimidation against Indian trade unionists. In summary Maersk hires a number of contractors to provide on dock trucking at its GTI Port in Mumbai.

For over two years these contractors have met the drivers' efforts to join a Union with violence and intimidation.

To date, despite constant pressure from the ITF in global dialogue with Maersk and its terminal operator APM, the worlds largest transport company has proved unwilling or unable to ensure the basic trade union rights of the drivers who work on their terminal.

The ITF wants Maersk to abide by its own business principles of respect for freedom of association. Maersk must provide an environment safe from violence and intimidation against workers who try to join a Union.

After lunch on day one we continued on with the dispute with Maersk in Mumbai. In this session Ron Carver from the Teamsters' Union expanded on some of the serious issues that we are confronted with in the Maersk Mumbai dispute.

The next session was on young workers' issues and on how the ITF was promoting awareness among young workers within the ITF.

After afternoon smoko we addressed a resolution regarding freedom of association and labour standards in the Maersk Mumbai port terminal's dispute.

We discussed the wording of the motion before it was passed as a resolution.

The next session was on Health and Safety and was presented by Frank Leys. We discussed onboard ship accidents and how best these accidents can be avoided.

The next session was on climate change. This was a very lengthy session because it affects our membership on a daily basis as we all work within a transport industry. Whilst we support action on climate change we do not support it if it means the loss of jobs and attacks organised labour. After afternoon smoko we had an information and database presentation. Information is a very strong tool for the trade union movement and we must improve on the way we distribute our information.

### Day two: Seafarers' Section Meeting

On day two I attended the Seafarers' Section Meeting.

After the Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting we addressed the first agenda item which was headed "Dealing with the Economic Crisis".

This section was presented by ITF Seafarers' Section Secretary Steve Cotton.

Steve produced a slide presentation which covered new tonnage, existing tonnage, the dollar exchange rates, Lloyds' register, the decline in Tanker tonnage, Bulk carrier tonnage, Container tonnage and container rates.

The most serious loss of tonnage is in the Car trade and the Container trade. Steve stated that Seafarers world wide are facing the loss of at least 20,000 jobs.

Steve concluded by stating that there are hard times ahead for Seafarers with increased competition, job losses and wage cuts.

Most of the speakers in this session were convinced that the recession that we are in will turn into a very bad global economic depression and this in turn will make it very difficult for Unions to get good wage rises if any for their members.

In this session we also dealt with manning levels, wage increases, training for Seafarers and the supply of labour from developed and undeveloped countries.

After morning smoko we continued the discussion around the economic crisis before discussing the next agenda item which was the ITF claims for the 2009 IBF (International Bargaining Forum).

Whilst discussing the claims we again got into what level of wage rates we should claim.

Along with the wage rate we also discussed what conditions of employment we should address. Leave rates should be increased substantially and voyage lengths/tours of duty should be reduced to combat fatigue, assist with retention, and make a sea going career more attractive to young people.

After lunch we continued discussing the claims for the 2009 IBF.

After smoko we dealt with safe manning levels, proposed changes to STCW, training for Seafarers, the introduction of general purpose ratings, rest and fatigue issues, changes to the criteria of Seafarers' medicals and Port State Control issues.

The last session on day two was a report on the Flag of Convenience Campaign.

### Day Three: Fair Practices' Committee

The ITF Fair Practices' Committee Meeting was held on the 19-20 March 2009.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to this section.

The agenda was agreed and matters arising from the last meeting of the fair practices' committee were discussed.

There was a lengthy presentation on issues contained within the recommendations regarding the claims for the International Bargaining Forum.

There was a report on certification, manning agents, study leave, procedures for disputes, discipline and grievance procedure and issues of equality and fatigue. ITF delegates from all around the world joined in the debate in regard to the claims that the ITF negotiating team should put forward in the round of negotiations.

After lunch we addressed the Dockers' claims for the International Bargaining Forum.

Paddy Crumlin chaired this section and expanded on the last IBF negotiations and on the claims for this round of negotiations.

The next session was on the issue of piracy and how piracy was now putting Seafarers at risk, especially now as these pirates are holding the crews for long periods of time till ransoms are paid.

There is a need to have Seafarers caught up in areas of warlike operations to be compensated, not only financially but given access to counselling for both the Seafarer and their families.

The next session was on climate change. In this session we addressed all the complex issues that are captured within any effort to move forward on climate change. Sometimes it comes down to environmental sustainability or jobs for workers. There is a real need to find balance with this issue.

The above session took us into the next issue which was shore leave for Seafarers. There were some horror stories about Seafarers not being allowed shore leave in some ports for months on end.

After afternoon smoko ITF dockers' secretary Frank Leys presented a slide presentation on the global economic crisis.

We need to manage the impact of this crisis on our membership. This crisis creates the need for alternative bargaining and the ITF will support Seafarers and Transport workers along the transport chain.

In the next session we dealt with all the resolutions from both the Seafarers' and Dockers' section committees.

All the resolutions were discussed at length and our resolution on the Ports of Tauranga was carried unanimously.

The day ended on this positive note.



ILWU International President Bob McEllrath, MUA Sydney Branch Secretary Warren Smith, MUNZ National Vice President Garry Parsloe and Ray Familathe of the ILWU at the ITF International Meeting

### Day Four: Fair Practices' Committee

The last day opened with a Flag of Convenience (FOC) Campaign review.

At the FPC meeting in 2008 the committee had requested that the FOC campaign review working group provide the FPC with an interim report detailing the progress made by the working group and highlighting all the key issues.

The FOC Campaign working group's previous report to the FOC concentrated on the procedures and methodology applied in developing a response to the review, as approved by the ITF's 41st congress in Durbin in 2006.

This report, along with other information given to the FPC, explains the progress of the FOC campaign group.

The reports were endorsed by the meeting. After morning smoko we had a Fair Practice Committee report around FPC meeting structures and working groups.

There was a long discussion around getting the best value out of these meetings. After lunch we had an audit report and a full financial report.

The next session was headed "Offshore Task Force". In this session we were made aware of human and trade union rights abuses in Mexico by many employers in the Gas and Oil sector.

Leading offshore Gas and Oil companies involved in joint ventures are responsible for these ongoing abuses.

The Mexican authorities fail to apply "Best Practice" for Health and Safety skills for offshore workers and Seafarers engaged in the industry.

The final session was headed "Future of the ITF Inspectorate".

In this session we had a presentation on the duties of the ITF Inspectorate.

The report expanded on funding and expenditure.

We need to maximise the inspectors' skills and increase their participation in FOC and POC campaigns.

A more coordinated approach will improve the effectiveness of the FOC campaign and the POC (Ports of Convenience) campaign.

As this was the last item on the agenda the Chairman then closed what was a most productive meeting.

# Workers' rights in East Timor

## National Union Congress in Timor Leste (KSTL)



**By Mike Clark**  
**Wellington Seafarers' Branch President**

In February 2009, Wellington seafarers' branch secretary Joe Fleetwood and I attended the Jobs for Resources Seminar and 8<sup>th</sup> conference of the East Timor trade union movement held in East Timor (Timor Leste).

This meeting was held on 24–25 February in conjunction with the Timor Leste Trade Union movement (KSTL) and the Timor Leste Government.

It was followed on the 26–27 February by the 8th anniversary and National Congress of the KSTL.

The main purpose of this event was to show our solidarity with the Timorese trade unions and to add our voice to the many other international unions to stop offshore investors' exploitation of the oil and gas sector in Timor at the expense of the Timorese people.

The conference was opened at 9am on the 23 February by the Vice Prime Minister the Right Honorable Jose Luis Gateres who welcomed all representatives to the seminar and gave a brief rundown on the problems facing the country, and also in the offshore oil and gas sector.

The next speaker was the Secretary of State for Natural Resources the Hon. Alfredo Pires who spoke on training for employment, and creating a strong system that is relevant to the needs of the Timorese people.

This was followed by a union presentation which included Norrie McVicar from the ITF head office and Maritime Union of Australia Assistant National Secretary Mick Doleman.

Mick emphasized the MUA, along with many others including MUNZ, are committed to the Timorese people and ensuring they play a central role in building the infrastructure to extract oil and gas from the Timor Sea.

The following day there were various speakers including representatives from local unions, international training providers, and from Didge McDonald of Work-safe, a Northern Territory Government safety training provider for the oil and gas industry.

There was then a panel discussion on "How to put together a cohesive training and employment strategy for Timor Leste" with reps from industry, training, and unions, followed by a general discussion and closing comments by a rep from the Government.

In the question and answers session, one that stood out was asked by Joe Fleetwood. Joe asked as there are now 14 rigs operating in the Timor sea and the potential for more, how many Timorese are employed on them?

The answer was out of a workforce of between 140–180, there were between 7–10 Timorese workers.

With training, education and assistance from international unions, Timorese people can have control of their own natural resources.

On the Wednesday, a group of 10 of us including the Aussie contingent hired two 4WDs and took a tour of the island.

We saw oil company properties and a memorial on the site where many Timorese people were slaughtered during the Indonesian invasion.

One could not help being moved at the tragic aftermath and the remaining scars. The highlight of the day for me was stopping for a swim and picnic lunch where several of the team distributed beachballs and volleyballs along with other water toys to a dozen or so of the local village kids.

The joy on their faces and the fun they had especially when some of the guys joined in was priceless and made for a memorable day.

On Thursday 26 and Friday 27 February we attended the 8th Anniversary and National Congress of KSTL, the East Timor trade union confederation.

The theme was to strengthen the local unions and fight for decent work and conditions in Timor Leste.

The invitation to attend was taken up primarily because of our support and solidarity over the years with East Timor.

There were around 150 delegates from local unions including public services, teachers, nurses, maritime, energy and transport workers, construction, agriculture and bank workers.

International representatives included MUNZ, MUA, Norwegian seafarers, the ITF and various other Australian unions.

The first day was taken up with messages from most unions present and was difficult to understand as both languages spoken, Portuguese and English had to be translated for the benefit of all present, which was time consuming.

The following day had speakers from the international unions offering continued support and solidarity for the workers of Timor Leste.

The afternoon had the election of officers which included delegates from the thirteen districts as well as delegates from the other worksites.

For me it was a very sobering trip as we do not have to suffer the indignities that are imposed on workers in other countries where only a small minority of the population have a reasonable standard of living.

# May Day in Cuba



Cubans celebrating May Day (1 May) 2009 on the 50th anniversary of the Cuban Revolution (photos by Amber McGowan of the Maritime Union of Australia)

In April and May 2009, Wellington Branch executive member Barry Millington attended the May Day celebrations in Havana, Cuba, on behalf of his branch. Barry has been at sea for 42 years, joining the New Zealand Seamans Union in 1973 and he has been in the industry pretty much since then. He currently works on the interislander ferry Kaitaki. An invitation had been extended from Cuba for trade unions around the world to attend the May Day event which was commemorating 50 years of the Cuban Revolution, which took place in 1959. Barry was among workers from 58 countries to meet in Cuba for the May Day Celebrations. Two hundred trade unions from around the globe were represented in addition to over 700 delegates from solidarity movements.

He says an invitation came through the Maritime Union of Australia who were sending a delegation of over twenty members to Havana, and the Wellington Branch decided to send a representative. Barry's journey was to have some added extra drama along the way. He arrived in Havana, Cuba on 29 April via Mexico. His flight was the last flight into Cuba from Mexico before the border was closed due to the swine flu alert. On 30 April, Barry joined a union delegation that visited the William Soler Childrens Hospital. "It is quite amazing, some of it was state of the art. The Cubans are seriously into their health system." On May Day he accompanied the MUA delegation to the Plaza de la Revolucion early in the morning.

"We got on buses and were dropped off near the march. We had seats. It was an incredible sight. We must have been there for hours watching a continuous sea of people. It was quite emotional with almost a carnival type atmosphere. There were lots of Cuban unions."

An estimated 1.4 million joined the rally which marched past President Raul Castro for four hours.

Barry then attended a function at the Workers' Club that evening. His impressions of Havana were generally positive.

"Things seemed to be happy. It was a little bit beaten up I guess. The way they have kept going is a miracle with the blockade from the USA. It's amazing they've achieved what they've achieved in health and education."

Due to the problems with swine flu in nearby Mexico, Barry had to leave Cuba early at short notice on Saturday 2 May to make his connecting flights.

His flight to Cancun in Mexico made an emergency landing, and when it landed was surrounded by fire engines. Finally he made it home via a lengthy wait at Mexico City airport, where everyone was wearing face masks, and Los Angeles, an experience he says put a bit of a cloud over his journey.

Barry thinks he will return to Cuba at some stage "under my own steam."

Watch the May Day in Cuba film by Jamie McMechan, MUA film unit  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_YU-T2qRebc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_YU-T2qRebc)

Thanks to Amber McGowan of the MUA for the photos and to Mich-Elle Myers of the MUA for background information on Cuba



Wellington seafarer Barry Millington at May Day 2009, Havana, Cuba



# Mining and Maritime Unions unite

By Garry Parsloe  
National Vice President

The Mining and Maritime International committee meeting was held on 24–25 February 2009 in San Francisco, California. Unions represented included the CFMEU (Construction Forestry Mining and Energy Union, Australia), NUM (National Union of Mine Workers, South Africa), ILWU (International Longshoreman and Warehouse Union, West Coast USA, Canada, Hawaii and Alaska), MUA (Maritime Union of Australia), USW (United Steelworkers Union, USA and Canada) and ICEM (International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers' Unions.) Assistant General Secretary Russell Mayn and I attended on behalf of the Maritime Union of New Zealand. ILWU Secretary-Treasurer Willie Adams welcomed everyone to San Francisco, the ILWU and to this very important meeting. International committee chair Rick Newlyn of the MUA presented a "Mining and Maritime Initiative" that was an action plan based on the Sydney declaration. There was a full and detailed discussion around the action plan with all speakers having an input into the best ways of advancing the action plan and getting the best value from it.

In this session both Russell Mayn and I were able to give reports on our recent dispute with the Ports of Tauranga. We both stressed the importance of the International solidarity because it was the threat of the International that brought the dispute with the Port of Tauranga to a successful conclusion.

After morning smoko we had a discussion around the Secretariat role and responsibilities.

The next agenda item was headed Global links/blogs facilitator. We discussed how best to get information out to our rank and file and the membership of other unions. There is a need for both a blog site and newsletters.

After lunch on day one we addressed the Mining and Maritime organizational structure. We made changes to the structure and a general tidy up in regard to responsibilities.

The next session was the Mining and Maritime report from the Asia region.

This session was presented by Peter Murray of the CFMEU.

Peter gave a report on the X Strata campaign, the Rio Tinto dispute and the ABCC dispute in Australia regarding Noel Washington's court appearance, which was withdrawn and all the charges dropped with the pressure from the Trade Union movement.

The next agenda item was an Americas and Canada regional committee report. This session was presented by Director of the United Steelworker Union Steve Hunt and Willie Adams of the ILWU.

Both speakers reported on disputes and developments around those disputes from their regions.

After afternoon smoko on day one we heard an African regional report from Glenn Mputane of the South African NUM.

He reported on the preparations so far for the Mining and Maritime conference which is set down for 2011 in South Africa.

Day two opened with an address from ICEM President Manfred Warda. Manfred spoke on issues facing the global trade union movement, the global economy, climate change and links with the ITF.

After morning smoko on day two, we had a session that was headed Mining and Maritime projects-action plan. The X Strata campaign report was given by Peter Murray and Andrew Vickers of the CFMEU. The Grupo Mexico campaign report was given by Steve Hunt of the United Steelworkers.

After listening to Steve's report we had a discussion around how best to support the miners in Mexico who are under massive pressure from the Mexican Government. The Mexican Government has done everything they can to destroy the Mexican Miners Union.

Peter Murray gave a report on section 457.

This section is for bringing temporary skilled labour into Australia. Our Union will sign up to the agreement that the CFMEU have put together. This agreement will give the workers that go from New Zealand to work in Australia the protection that workers must have when entering the Australian workforce. The Rio Tinto campaign was discussed at length.

We had a session on the global financial crisis and retrenchment and agreements. Oupa Komane from NUM presented this report which raised serious issues of casuals not getting any work and permanents having their hours rolled back.

There was a session on global framework agreements from NUM prior to a discussion around dates for future meetings before we departed from another most positive and productive Mining and Maritime meeting.

## New international union for maritime professionals

More than 24,000 shipmasters, officers and ratings are among those who will benefit from a pioneering new "trans-boundary" union for maritime professionals, which was launched in May 2009.

Nautilus International, based in the UK and the Netherlands, represents those working in the shipping sector, at sea, on inland waterways and ashore.

The launch follows many years of increasingly closer cooperation between Nautilus NL and Nautilus UK, including joint industrial negotiations with companies employing British and Dutch members.

## Employers back down after industrial action

Industrial action by dockers in Belgium over a "five-point plan" proposed by employers in negotiations has put the plan on hold.

Workers represented by ITF affiliated unions took part in stoppages on 8 June.

The employers plan included provisions to hire workers several times a day, rather than for every shift; change the functions of some dock workers so that they no longer have "registered docker" status; reduce docker-specific social security allowances when work is not available and cut week-end and night-time working allowances. ITF dockers' section secretary Frank Leys says employers in Belgium are trying to introduce greater flexibility in hiring and firing and other measures in response to the economic downturn.

Similar steps are being taken in other European countries.

"We cannot allow workers to carry the largest part of the economic burden of a financial crisis caused by irresponsible bankers who are still collecting their bonuses."

Industrial action across Belgian ports is a rare occurrence as a strong system of social dialogue and joint decision-making has always existed.

## 76 trade unionists murdered around the world in 2008

2008 was another difficult and often dangerous year for trade unionists around the world, according to this year's ITUC Annual Survey of Trade Union Rights Violations, which details abuses of fundamental workers' rights in 143 countries.

76 trade unionists were killed due to their actions to defend workers' rights, and many more were attacked physically or subjected to harassment, intimidation or arrest by the authorities.

More information at:  
<http://survey09.ituc-csi.org/>

## Global unions back Iranian working class

Four global union organisations representing over 170 million workers held a worldwide action day on June 26 to demand justice for Iranian workers.

Demonstrations took place outside Iranian embassies and consulates to protest the ongoing denial of rights and arrests of trade unionists within the country.

The ITUC (International Trade Union Confederation), EI (Education International), ITF (International Transport Workers' Federation), IUF (International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations) formed a coalition for the event, which is the latest move in an ongoing campaign to secure justice and trade union rights inside Iran. Amnesty International has backed this campaign.

They are calling for the immediate and unconditional release of jailed trade union members and leaders including Mansour Osanloo, Ebrahim Madadi, Farzad Kamangar, and the annulment of the one year prison sentences recently handed down against the five leaders of the Haft Tapeh Sugarworkers' Union, as well as the release of trade unionists arrested in Tehran on May Day.

For more information see [www.justiceforiranianworkers.org](http://www.justiceforiranianworkers.org)

## Young transport workers organizing

The ITF executive have endorsed a plan by to boost the role of young workers.

A delegation of young transport workers made a presentation to the ITF board in April.

They invited members to take a number of steps, including to endorse a proposal for a dedicated young transport workers event at the ITF's congress in Mexico in 2010, encouraging affiliates to invite a significant number of young workers to ITF events, and amending the ITF constitution to recognise the importance of promoting the young workers' programme.

The young workers will set up a committee in the run-up to congress and beyond and to draft a resolution on young workers for the event.

More information at

<http://www.itfglobal.org/youngworkers/index.cfm>

## Hebei Spirit seafarers set free

The two Indian officers known as the Hebei Two – Jasprit Chawla and Syam Chetan – have at last been found not guilty of the main charge against them following an oil spill off the coast of South Korea and will be set free. They have been detained in the country for the past 18 months.

A South Korean supreme court pronounced the men not guilty of causing destruction to property after their vessel, the Hebei Spirit, was hit by a crane barge, which led to a devastating oil spill in December 2007.

However their conviction for allegedly failing to do more to prevent the oil leakage from the tanker remains intact.

The men have returned to India.

Captain Jasprit Chawla said: "We are just waiting to come back to India and be united with our family. The last 18 months have been a traumatic experience for us and we would have been behind bars if it had not been for the efforts of those who supported us and we are very thankful to them."

Commenting on the verdict, ITF general secretary David Cockroft said everyone was pleased to see the men's innocence upheld but that it was still unacceptable that the lesser charge against them had not been removed.

For more information, see

<http://www.itfglobal.org/news-online/index.cfm/newsdetail/3395>

<http://www.itfseafarers.org/>

# Workers Online

The Maritime Union is online. We have our main website at [www.munz.org.nz](http://www.munz.org.nz) that features contact details, union news and information. Our website also has a page of links to other useful websites at [www.munz.org.nz/index.php/links/](http://www.munz.org.nz/index.php/links/)

The Maritime Union has pages at Flickr (photos), YouTube (videos) and Facebook (social networking.)

Our Flickr page is [www.flickr.com/maritimeunion](http://www.flickr.com/maritimeunion) and our YouTube page is [www.youtube.com/maritimeunionnz](http://www.youtube.com/maritimeunionnz)

Some members are on Facebook, the social networking site. We have a Maritime Union of New Zealand group and just search for "Maritime Union of New Zealand" under groups in Facebook and you will find us if you would like to join. We invite members to send in their videos and photos for our websites.

## More websites

Some organizations the Maritime Union is affiliated to:

New Zealand Council of Trade Unions  
[www.union.org.nz](http://www.union.org.nz)

International Transport Workers' Federation  
<http://www.itfglobal.org/>

Some other maritime and transport union websites:

Maritime Union of Australia  
<http://www.mua.org.au/>

UK Rail and Maritime Transport Union  
<http://www.rmt.org.uk/>

International Longshore and Warehouse Union  
<http://www.ilwu.org/>

South African Transport and Allied Workers' Union  
<http://www.satawu.co.za/>

Some news websites:

LabourStart workers' news  
[www.labourstart.org](http://www.labourstart.org)

Indymedia news website  
<http://www.indymedia.org.nz/>

# Minimum wage

The adult minimum wage increased by 50 cents per hour to \$12.50 an hour on 1 April 2009.

A worker on the adult minimum wage will now earn \$100 for an eight hour day and \$500 for a 40 hour week.

The new entrants and trainee rate increased by 40 cents to \$10.00 an hour which is \$80 for an eight hour day and \$400 for a 40 hour week.

Adjusted for inflation, the real gain in income is only 10 cents an hour or \$3.78 a week for minimum wage adult workers. There is still no minimum wage for workers 15 years old and younger.

# Melbourne wharfies leave Bonds box on docks

Waterside workers at West Swanson Dock, Melbourne, refused to load a container of Pacific Brands plant equipment on May 31, in sympathy with worker and community outrage over the company's behaviour. Workers on all three shifts, day, twilight and midnight – around 200 men and women – unanimously voted to endorse the following statement:

"We the employees of DP World Melbourne are sickened by the actions of Pacific Brands in axing 1850 Australian jobs. We fully support the workers of Pacific Brands in their fight to retain their jobs in Australia.

"Collectively we refuse to assist Pacific Brands in sending offshore, equipment that has been purchased by us as Australian taxpayers."

Pacific Brands announced they are laying off 1,850 Australian workers while paying themselves a multi-million dollar 170 per cent executive pay hike. They are now attempting to ship out taxpayer-funded plant equipment offshore, despite earlier denying they would do so.

"The workers at the Melbourne docks have voted and taken a stand," said MUA National Secretary Paddy Crumlin.

"The community sentiment is these Pacific Brands company executives are morally bankrupt. This container is spoiled dangerous goods. They said it's contaminated, they wouldn't touch it. The company has put profits before people and the public good."

# New Zealand should follow Aussie lead on job protection

The Maritime Union says the New South Wales' State Government could teach John Key something about protecting jobs. Nearly \$4 billion worth of NSW government goods and services including uniforms, cars and even trains, will have to be sourced from Australian companies in order to boost local production and jobs, in an upcoming budget announcement that has been welcomed by Australian unions. Maritime Union of New Zealand General Secretary Trevor Hanson says this idea should be adopted immediately here. "We have watched the collapse of LWR recently with the loss of large numbers of jobs – so why are we not insisting that Government requirements for uniforms and clothing go through this and other local companies?"

The Maritime Union is also supporting local ownership of ports and the re-introduction of cabotage where New Zealand coastal shipping is given priority in New Zealand waters.

# Fisheries' Minister throwing jobs to the sharks

The Maritime Union has slammed comments by Fisheries Minister Phil Heatley about employment in New Zealand's fishing industry, and say they make a bad joke out of the Government's commitment to protect jobs.

Maritime Union General Secretary Trevor Hanson says Mr Heatley has publicly admitted that New Zealand jobs are not a priority in the New Zealand fishing industry. The comments were made at Parliament's primary production select committee, when Mr Heatley was being questioned about the objectives in the 2030 Fisheries Plan.

Mr Hanson says the Maritime Union is angry and perturbed at the lack of any forethought by many of the major players in the industry and the irresponsible role of the Government.

"The fishing industry is one of our most valuable assets, and New Zealand workers have the right to work in this industry as well as the responsibility to manage this globally endangered resource."

Mr Hanson says if the private sector is unable or unwilling to train and employ young New Zealand workers, the Government should be acquiring the vessels and training New Zealand crews to fish our waters.



# Selling the port plan still doesn't float

**By Denis Carlisle**  
**President, Auckland Waterfront Branch Local 13**

The Ports of Auckland privatization plan has, like Frankenstein's monster, been brought back from the dead.

A campaign is going on behind the scenes and over 2009 we have seen strategically placed articles popping up in the business press, usually from the pens of those who stand to gain from selloffs.

This is obviously part of a concerted effort being pushed by small minority driven by short-term self-interest.

The plan to try and privatize the Ports of Auckland didn't float in the glory days of the 1990s when selling off the family silver was in fashion.

It is even less likely to meet with success in 2009.

Times have moved on. The tide is running against the privatization agenda. The global economic crisis brought about by deregulated "pirate capitalism" is creating something of a backlash.

The general population is coming to the conclusion that their interests are not served very well by handing over control to the pirates.

We can point to the local example of the Ports of Lyttelton, where a bungled part-privatization scheme in 2006 failed after generating major public opposition.

If there is any worse area than ports as a candidate for privatization, we'd like to hear about it.

The global maritime industry is run by a shrinking group of powerful transnational corporations, whose interest in the New Zealand economy extends to how far they can bleed it.

Privatization supporters try to conceal the real reasons for the selloff behind all sorts of unrelated issues which have no connection to the ports' issue.

They complain about losses by local government when it tries to involve itself in risky entrepreneurial activities and share investments.

But these speculative ventures have no relationship to important local infrastructure like the Ports of Auckland, and in fact the ownership of a solid, long-term asset like the port is the complete opposite to the get-rich-quick mentality.

The public of Auckland expects their elected representatives to responsibly manage key public assets and infrastructure for the good of Auckland and the wider economy. The interests of New Zealand are in no way served by selling off ports to global operators.

Around the world this has led to numerous problems including ports of convenience, notorious for the use of short-term labour imported to displace local workers. Over 99 per cent of our imports and exports as a maritime trading nation move by sea. We have already handed over the bulk of coastal and international shipping to overseas operators who pay no tax.

The last thing we want to do is replicate this disaster by handing over control of our ports to overseas monopolies who can then establish a stranglehold over our economy.

In fact, the Maritime Union has argued for the establishment of a "KiwiPort" where public ownership of ports is combined with a national ports plan to ensure New Zealand's interests are served.

Ports occupy a vital strategic place in our national transport and logistics infrastructure and should be operated for the benefit of industry and the wider community.

The biggest lie is that money obtained from hocking off assets like the Ports of Auckland could be spent on public goods like the local transport system.

If the proponents of port privatization think the public is going to buy that one, they're dreaming.

What they are after is getting their hands on the profit from privatized enterprises, and perfuming the whole smelly deal with a bribe of a short-term cash fix that will quickly evaporate and leave us with the same third-rate infrastructure as before.

The Maritime Union argues that public ownership of our ports should be extended.

We should not be tenants in our own country.

An earlier version of this article appeared in the New Zealand Herald, Tuesday 7 April, 2009

# Operation Hope

In 1985, a remarkable project occurred that involved many New Zealand maritime workers: "Operation Hope."

The Union Steam Ship company Ngahere, crewed by seafarers and union members who had donated their time, carried a shipment of aid supplies to Africa.

Editor of World Movement magazine Ruben Wilberg has set up a website to commemorate "Operation Hope" at <http://operationhope1985.com>

According to the Operation Hope anniversary website "it was television pictures of famine in Tigray – in the north east of Ethiopia – that stirred Gerry Hill of the Cooks and Stewards Union to float the idea of Operation Hope – the New Zealand aid ship to Africa."

"A Corso project partner – the Relief Society of Tigray – reported that nearly 4 million Tigrayan people were 'severely affected' by drought.

Tens of thousands had walked out of the Tigray across the border into Sudan, and camps run by REST and by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.

REST was one of a number of agencies to receive goods consigned on the MV Ngahere, and Operation Hope."

Ruben writes "In February 2008 I came across the story of Operation Hope . . . I found the story an inspiring reminder of the good that people are capable of.

As we approach the 25th anniversary of the relief mission I thought it would be nice to set up a web site about it so that the people involved could take a sentimental look back and that others less familiar with what happened could become familiar.

It is my hope that it will stand as an outstanding beacon for the good will that mankind is capable of."

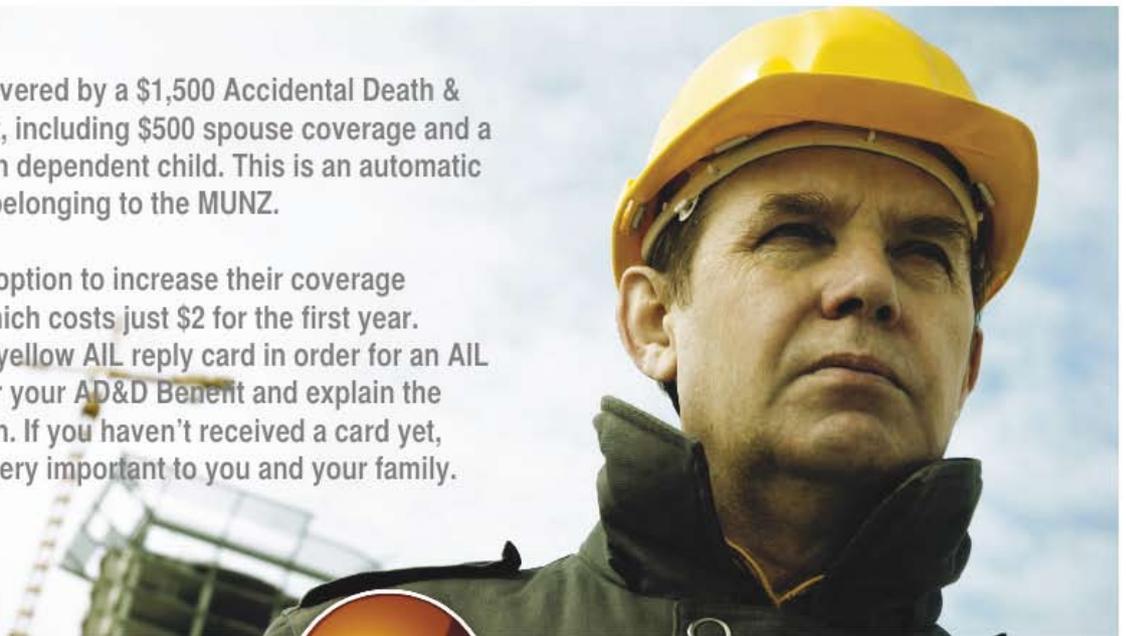
Large number of seafarers, some of whom are still working in the industry, were involved in Operation Hope.

The Maritimes will be running an article to commemorate the anniversary and we would welcome any information or material from anyone connected to the project. Please get in touch with the Maritimes magazine at PO Box 27004, Wellington, or email [victor.billot@munz.org.nz](mailto:victor.billot@munz.org.nz)

## \$1,500 AD&D

All members are now covered by a \$1,500 Accidental Death & Dismemberment Benefit, including \$500 spouse coverage and a further \$500 coverage on dependent child. This is an automatic membership benefit of belonging to the MUNZ.

Members also have the option to increase their coverage an additional \$10,000 which costs just \$2 for the first year. Members must return a yellow AIL reply card in order for an AIL representative to deliver your AD&D Benefit and explain the additional \$10,000 option. If you haven't received a card yet, please call AIL. This is very important to you and your family.



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# The Kaitawa

Wellington seafarer Tony Mowbray (MUNZ 1154) writes:

"By the time this goes to print, another anniversary of the loss of the Kaitawa (23 May 1966) will have passed. But I thought the membership might be interested in these snapshots of her.

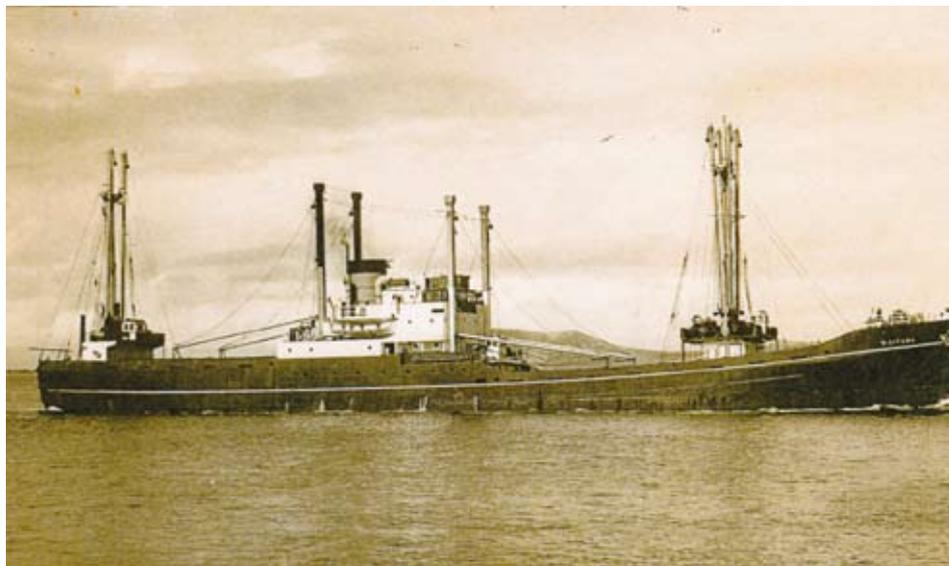
My late father spent a lot of time on her between 1960-1965.

Maybe some of the older members can put names to faces, the only ones known to me in this picture are my father (far left, by rail, with woollen hat) and Bill Kemp (second from right).

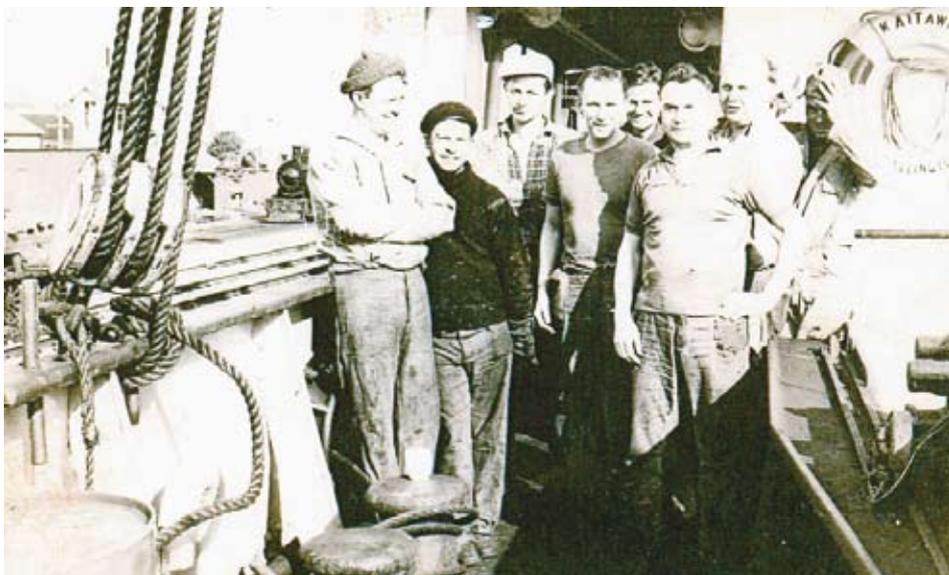
The other photos are of her in Greymouth and working cargo.

A copy of my father's last discharge and a copy of the New Zealand Herald front page story reporting the disaster also enclosed.

I hope this is of some interest to members and a small tribute to men lost in the tragedy."



The Kaitawa



Tony Mowbray writes "Maybe some of the older members can put names to faces, the only ones known to me in this picture are my father (far left, by rail, with woollen hat) and Bill Kemp (second from right)."

CERTIFICATE OF DISCHARGE		M. 1407
FOR SEAMEN DISCHARGED BEFORE THE SUPERINTENDENT OF A MERCANTILE MARINE OFFICE IN NEW ZEALAND		No 24267
SEAMAN'S NAME: <b>MOWBRAY ANTHONY H.</b> <small>(Block letters—Surname first)</small>		<small>NOTE—Any person who forges or fraudulently alters any certificate or report, or who asks use of any certificate or report which is forged or altered, or does not belong to him, shall for each such offence be deemed guilty of an offence, and may be fined or imprisoned. N.B.—Should this certificate come into the possession of any person to whom it does not belong, it should be handed to the Superintendent of the nearest Mercantile Marine Office or sent to the Secretary, Marine Department, Wellington.</small>
PARTICULARS OF BIRTH		
Name of Ship: <b>M.V. KAITAWA</b>	Date Month Year: <b>10 18 126</b>	Place and Country: <b>NEW ZEALAND</b>
Official No.: <b>178388</b>	Date engaged: <b>11th JUNE 1965</b>	Port engaged: <b>AUCKLAND</b>
Port of Registry: <b>WELLINGTON</b>	Capacity: <b>AB</b>	No. of Certificate (if any):
Registered Tonnage: <b>1317</b>	Date discharged: <b>16.2.65</b>	Port discharged: <b>AUCKLAND</b>
Horsepower (b.h.p.): <b>1450</b>	Description of Voyage or employment: <b>HOME TRADE</b>	
I certify that the above particulars are correct, and that the above-named seaman was discharged accordingly, and that the character described hereon is a true copy of the report concerning the said seaman.		Dated this <b>17</b> day of <b>AUGUST</b> 1965
Authenticated by: <i>[Signature]</i>		Signature of Seaman: <i>[Signature]</i>
CHARACTER FOR CONDUCT: <b>V.G.</b>	CHARACTER FOR ABILITY: <b>V.G.</b>	CHARACTER FOR SOBRIETY: <b>V.G.</b>
500 lks./11/63—78580 W		17 AUG 1965 OFFICE SEAL OR STAMP

Tony Mowbray Snr. discharge card from the Kaitawa

# Tom Spiller and the Spanish Civil War

by Dean Parker

Following the end of World War II, a veteran of the fight against fascism turned up on an Auckland ANZAC Day parade to march with the RSA. He was told he couldn't. He could, though, tag along at the end, by himself.

His name was Tom Spiller. He was, in that notorious American jumping-the-gun designation, a "premature anti-fascist".

Tom Spiller was born in Napier in 1910. He was an apprentice on the railways when the Depression hit. He was laid off, went to work on government schemes and in 1932, convinced that capitalism was a dead loss, joined the Communist Party.

By 1936 he was ready to leave Napier and see the world. He was on the waterfront at the time and took the opportunity to sign on as a trimmer with an English ship and work his passage to London. He arrived in time to take part in demonstrations against Oswald Mosley's fascist Blackshirts. He was one of those who blocked Mosley's attempted march through the Jewish East End and was batoned down by police for his trouble.

By 1937 he was in Madrid. It was a logical step for him. Having confronted and defeated the fascists in London, it was time to do the same in Spain.

Spain was a feudal country in the grip of aristocrats, landlords, business-owners and the church. A Republican government, bent on reform, had been elected by workers and peasants. The Spanish Army officer corps rose up against this government and with the backing of the German and Italian fascist powers and local fascist leagues, launched a vicious civil war. The League of Nations declared itself neutral and the United Kingdom and France announced an embargo on any assistance to the besieged government.

"International Brigades" were immediately formed around the world, volunteers signing up to go to Spain and fight the attempted coup. Tom Spiller joined the English Brigade.

He was posted straight to the Jarama front in February as part of a 10-man machine gun unit.



There'd been no time for proper training. The first bullet he fired was at the enemy. But he could look after himself; he'd been at cadet school in Trentham and at territorial camps.

On the first day his unit was hit by a shell. Eight of the unit became immediate casualties. He survived.

Jarama was near Madrid, a bloody battlefield, the biggest trench battle since WWI as the insurgents fought to take the capital and the Republican forces, backed by the International Brigades, to hold it.

Spiller described it as "like something out of Dante's Inferno". A day could end with the burial of 80 comrades in a single grave. One dawn violent shelling of the front-line trenches was followed by a panic among the Republican forces. Enemy Moors, fighting with the fascists, had achieved a break-through.

Figures were running past Spiller in a chaotic retreat. He saw a machine gun on a bipod lying on its side. He crouched low and ran to it.

There were twenty or thirty shells in it. Moors were running toward him, right in front of him with their flowerpot hats and "screaming blue murder". He let them have it until a mortar exploded in front of him and bowled him.

He'd lost his gas mask and his helmet but still had his rifle. He ran back to a field of grapevines and olive trees.

Injured comrades were lying at the foot of each tree. Moors were everywhere, yelling and shouting. He put the sights of his rifle on zero and let the Moors have it. Five rounds, load, five rounds, load. Then he'd fall back, tree by tree.

As he continued his retreat he saw Moors rushing up and shouting to each other as they found a wounded Brigader. He saw a wounded man reach up and desperately grab the bayonet of a Moor and wrestle with it. Other Moors swarmed up and speared the man from all sides.

At one olive tree he took cover behind, a wounded man reached up and clutched at Spiller and pleaded, "Don't leave me behind!" Spiller figured if he stayed, they'd both been goners. He forced the wounded man off and fired and ran and fired and ran. He said he could hear the screaming behind him as the wounded were bayoneted to death.

Right through the fighting at Jarama he'd had a pal with him, a seaman, also from Napier. This pal had survived the retreat. He didn't survive the counter-attack to regain the lost positions.

"I felt a little like crying when I found out about it," Spiller wrote to a friend in Napier.

But Spiller had learnt to live with death and his letter home, without pausing for breath or tears or even a new paragraph, went straight on to address more immediate problems: "A German machine gunner [is] belting hell out of this dug-out at the moment, curse the bloody skink a 1000 times."

Spiller moved on from the Jarama front and fought at the ferocious and disastrous Republican counter-attack at Brunette, west of Madrid. He recalled being met by Brigaders who would say to him, "Are you still alive?" He said at times he felt lonely. His cobber was dead and Australians he'd got to know were also either dead or wounded. Finally he copped one. He actually copped three, two in the leg and one in the shoulder. He recuperated and was preparing to return to the front when he was offered command of a brigade, the 15th. All of those in command of the 15th brigade in Spain were later either killed in action or executed.

Fortunately he was asked to do something else.

He was asked to go to Australia and concentrate on signing up more volunteers.

He spoke at meetings in Australia and helped form Spanish Aid committees.

From Australia he came back to New Zealand where he was greeted by special branch police and asked how long he intended to stay. "As long as it bloody suits me," he replied.

He did a nationwide tour for the Spanish Medical Aid Committee, living out of a small truck.

He intended returning to Spain. He had written, "I'm only on leave from the brigade, although of course I could not be forced to go back. Personally speaking I've had a bellyful of fighting and all that goes with it, but I know that I wouldn't be playing the game not to go back again, most of my pals and comrades are now dead." But he didn't return. The war in Spain was lost. A staggering 23,000 members of the International Brigades remained there forever, under Spanish soil.

The Germans and Italians had now tested their weapons in war and tested the resolve of the parliamentary democracies to fight fascism. When the former were found unexcelled and the latter non-existent, the two powers pushed ahead with territorial expansion and the Spanish Civil War became the overture to full-blown war across Europe.

Again Tom Spiller offered his services for combat. This time it was to the regular New Zealand Army. Incredibly he was found unfit.

**RETURNED FROM SPAIN**

A New Zealand Wharf Laborer who  
Fought in the International Brigade

**TOM SPILLER**

Will deliver a Lecture on his experiences  
whilst in Spain

AT THE  
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on SAT., JAN. 23rd, 1938 at 8 p.m.

Chown's Gem Print Service, 188 Norton Street, Leichhardt.

At the end of the war, fascism defeated, he turned up for the ANZAC Day parade. He was told his earlier Spanish service didn't make him a real war veteran and he wasn't allowed to march with the RSA. But he could march by himself, at the back. He declined.

He remained a life-long communist and in 1983 returned to Spain, visited Jarama and laid a wreath for his dead Napier comrade. He died in December, 1984, just as the Fourth Labour Government here was setting about its task of transforming New Zealand in the interests of everything he had fought against.

### Addendum

Tom Spiller had a mate in Spain, a seaman. This was Fred Robertson, "Robbie", a drifting English seaman who'd beached in the Pacific, ending up at Napier jobless during the 1930s depression.

He'd joined the local branch of the Communist Party and briefly become a hero of the 1931 Napier earthquake, rescuing survivors from the collapsed Napier Hospital before returning to the anonymous lines of the unemployed.

When Tom Spiller took off to London, working his passage, Robbie Robertson went with him and then took off on a ship to the east coast of Africa.

In Barcelona early in 1937 he jumped ship and re-joined Spiller and signed up with the International Brigades.

A few weeks later, during a night-time attack to regain lost positions at Jarama he was killed in hand-to-hand fighting.

"Robbie is dead," Tom Spiller wrote to a fellow Party member in Napier. "I felt a little like crying when I found out about it."

In 1983 Tom Spiller returned to Spain, visited Jarama and laid a wreath for Robbie Robertson.

### Kiwi Compañeros

Tom Spiller's story appears in "Kiwi Compañeros - New Zealand and the Spanish Civil War", edited by Mark Derby.

"Kiwi Compañeros" is the first-ever account of New Zealand's role in the Spanish civil war of 1936-39, a war that became a ruthless rehearsal for World War Two (we review this book on page 46 of this edition of the Maritimes magazine.)

Volunteers from more than 50 countries arrived in Spain to take sides, including New Zealanders who went as combatants and nurses and laid down their lives. The book records the actions of those New Zealanders involved, including those who worked for the Spanish cause at home by raising funds, lobbying politicians, writing poems and leaflets.

This article originally appeared in the New Zealand Herald and is reprinted with the kind permission of the author. Thanks to Gerry Hill for bringing it to our attention.

The photograph of Tom Spiller is reproduced with permission from the Communist Party of New Zealand papers, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand.



From left, Auckland seafarers Luke Foster, John O'Neill, Jack Wyatt, Bo Davies, Garry Parsloe and Hector Thorpe at the 2009 May Day Rally

# Auckland Seafarers': May Day

by Garry Parsloe  
National Vice President

On Friday 1 May 2009 Auckland unionists gathered at the bottom of Queen Street for the May Day march.

We assembled at 5.15pm and marched at 5.45pm.

Most Unions brought their banners and the NDU brought their picket bus. We marched up to Aotea Square where I introduced the May Day speakers.

The first speaker was Labour MP Darien Fenton then Co-Leader of the Greens Russell Norman followed by Auckland City Councillor Richard Northey who spoke on all the dangers involved in the Auckland "Super City" concept.

On Saturday 2 May 2009 we held our May Day Function at the Maritime Club in Anzac Avenue.

There was a good turn out of unionists from most unions.

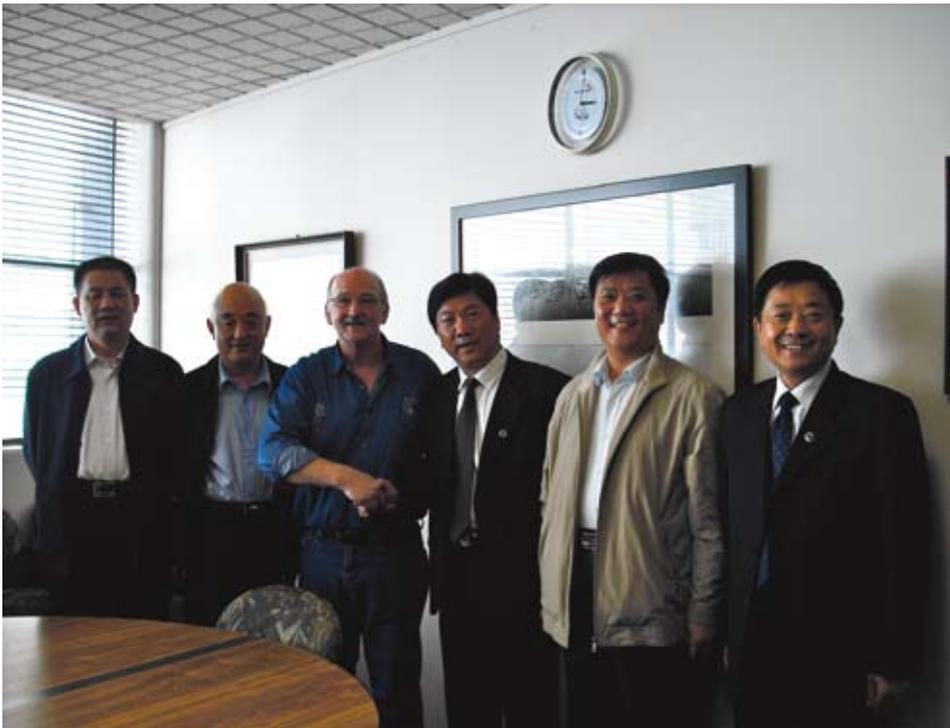
We showed videos of disputes from New Zealand and a selection of disputes from other countries.

The speakers were Labour MP Carol Beaumont, Auckland Regional Council chair Mike Lee and Bronwyn Maxwell from the Auckland CTU Organising Centre who spoke on UnionAID.

There was an excellent spread of food prepared by Donny Hooper, Paul Gradiska, Jimmy MacNeil and Paul Fry, all MUNZ members.

Everyone commented on what a great job the cooks did.

The function was very successful and I am sure that we will have our May Day Function back at the Maritime Club again next year.



Maritime Union National Vice President Garry Parsloe with a delegation of Chinese trade unionists visiting New Zealand

# Meet The Ministers

At 5pm on 17 April 2009 CTU Unions Auckland hosted a Meet the Ministers meeting at the Trades Hall, 147 Great North Road in Auckland.

There was a good turn out of MPs, Union Officials and Union Delegates.

I introduced the three speakers who were Leader of the Opposition Phil Goff, and Labour List MPs Darien Fenton and Carol Beaumont.

All the speakers spoke on a range of topics before we entered into a question and answer session which was also very informative.

The meeting itself was most productive and CTU Unions Auckland intends to have more of these "Meet the Ministers" meetings as we go forward.

# Chinese delegation

By Garry Parsloe  
National Vice President

On the 29 May 2009 the Auckland Seafarers Branch hosted another Trade Union Delegation from China.

This time it was a Delegation from the Hebei Province and was headed by Mr. Du Xinjain from the General Labor Union. We had a lengthy discussion around issues facing workers in both New Zealand and China especially around issues of Pension and Welfare Schemes, retirement, unemployment and access to medical benefits. As this Delegation was only in New Zealand for a short visit we did not have a follow up meeting but both parties felt that the meeting we did have was a most productive one and there were many ideas to take away and hopefully advance on in the interest of workers in both countries.



Maritime Union National Vice President Garry Parsloe with Labour Party leader Phil Goff



MPs forum, from left: Lynne Pillay MP, MUNZ National Vice President Garry Parsloe, Darien Fenton MP and MUNZ Assistant General Secretary Russell Mayn

## Mount Maunganui Tauranga

by **Eddie Cook**

There have been lots of problems here in Tauranga/Mt Maunganui with RMTU and NZL and the Ports of Tauranga, but we will endeavour to fight all the way to the bitter end and win.

There is still a lot of work around the port which is good for our members but still waiting for the result from NZL setting up their terminal at Sulphur Point which could take a while to sort out.

We are currently in negotiations with Comvita which are going okay and ready for CRS Container Park (NZL) and our big one at Ballance early next month.

We have had talks with NZL and C3 about how these two companies are progressing work wise and there are a few redundancies floating around, especially NZL, so there are a few interested people.

A lot of interest about the Regionalization and what benefits it will have on our branch in the near future.

The Kiwifruit season is about a third of the way through with just over 20 ships so far with another 40 odd to go so plenty of work there.

C3 are again cross hiring our members from NZL so a bit more work around as they are really busy this week.

All the best to our comrades in Auckland for their huge battle with the Ports of Auckland and we will back them up for any action that they may take in the near future.

We should be hearing something from our members from the Bay Hoppers who get taken over by Go Bus early next month but wish then all the best in their newest battle.

## Gisborne

by **Dein Ferris**

At the time of writing this report Winter has arrived up from the deep south, which normally means a slowdown in shipping at the Port.

The recession does not appear to have had a great impact here so far.

We seem to have been in keeping with past years shipping wise, with outport visits at regular intervals to Wellington and Napier. According to reports record tonnages of logs are going over the wharf at present (these are done by ISO) and the Port showed a profit of some \$1.6 million.

We have just completed a Kiwifruit vessel with another two projected to complete the season.

We have another mill being built at present due for completion in 2010.

It will produce product similar to that which we now load for Juken Nissho (finished timber) so hopefully as we are already loading this type of cargo we will be able to get a contract for this. We have heard a rumour that the Juken Nissho ships are going to increase but will believe it when we see it.

I have just returned from the National Executive meeting held in Wellington on 13–15 May 2009 at which Regionalization was keenly debated.

It appears that the Gisborne Branch is again a leader as we have already adopted much of that to be discussed by the Branches. We, like the Seafarers, will await the outcome.

That's about it for now, cheers.

## Lyttelton

by **Les Wells**

Over the last few weeks we have been going through talks with Pacifica over redundancies.

As there were no volunteers, it ended up with six Watersiders and one Foreman leaving the industry.

It is of little consolation but we were able to get the men that left the first call for any casual work.

This amounts to one day a week so it will not keep the wolf away from the door for very long.

We wish the men that had to leave all the very best in the future and hope things work out for them.

There is a noticeable down turn in cargo across the wharf at Lyttelton Stevedoring Services and C3, and hopefully we can manage our way through it without too much damage being done.

As with the other companies I believe there is a downturn in the Terminal and there is a chance of LPC going into conventional stevedoring of steel. I would have to say a lot of the old hands are not too keen on doing it and you cannot blame them.

We have started talks with SGS. The men do not want much just a wage increase which is not unreasonable, but the Company has reneged on this so it looks more and more likely that we will have to issue a strike notice.

## Timaru

by **Kevin Forde**

It has been quiet at the port with no transfers. We have been working palm kernel vessels. The container trade at the port company is down compared to previous months.

Planning is underway for the old timers do later in year, probably November.

**Maritime Union  
online  
[www.munz.org.nz](http://www.munz.org.nz)**

# Napier

by Bill Connelly

## Around and about

We have just about finished the busiest part of the year with members having to work very long hours to keep up with the continual loading of seasonal products at the port.

## C3: Formerly Toll Logistics New Zealand Ltd

Their current Collective Agreement expires on 31 December 2010.

## Hawkes' Bay Stevedoring Services Limited

Our members employed by this company have been in continual employment on a regular basis and their idle time content is minimal. Their current Collective Agreement is in place until 31 July 2009.

## Kelcold Limited

Their agreement expires 1 December 2010.

## Workers' Memorial Day

This was held on 28 April, with, for a change, the sun shining down on us and about 100 in attendance. The service commenced at the Seafarers' Centre at the main entrance to the port. Our Branch Vice-President Alan Burke opened the proceedings with a timely reminder about safety at work and paid tribute to all those workers throughout the world that had been injured or killed at work.

The Memorial service was conducted by Neville Stevenson, with other speakers being Guy Stone from the Port of Napier and Maevis Watson, a trade unionist and an advocate of ACC.

After a short service we then moved to the main entrance of the port to conduct a service for two of our members who had lost their lives, since Port Reform, Brian Martin in March 1995 and Ian Stothart in January 2005.

Dave Norman, the former manager of Hawkes' Bay Stevedoring Services, spoke of Brian and Ian and their association and employment with the company. He reminisced over the good times spent over many years during their employment with the company and said they are still in his thoughts to this day.

The families of both Brian and Ian were present to take part in and witness the unveiling of two memorial plaques. Brian's granddaughter Kate Jobbins unveiled his plaque, while Sue Stothart, Ian's wife, did the honours for his unveiling.

A sad time for all concerned, but one that will keep Brian and Ian forever in our collective thoughts.



Workers gather at Port of Napier for Workers' Memorial Day, 28 April 2009 (photos by Bill Connelly)



Napier Branch Vice President Alan Burke speaks at the Workers' Memorial Day on behalf of the Maritime Union



Sue Stothart at the unveiling of the plaque honoring her husband Ian Stothart



Kate Jobbins at the unveiling of the plaque honouring her grandfather Brian Martin

# Auckland Waterfront Local 13

By Russell Mayn

## Groundhog day

I know it seems a strange title for a report but never has it been more suitable.

Instead of waking up to the same day again and again as in the movie, what we are facing in the stevedoring industry is what seems to happen every ten years – and the repetition is exactly the same as in the movie.

I, for one, have had a gutsful of it: redundancies, restructuring and a new word for the same beast, “consolidation.”

It is difficult to put your finger on what is exactly wrong but the lack of controls within the financial sector is one, and now it seems that the majority of companies are saying that they are close to breaching banking covenants or they have no money available because of the economic downturn to enter into bargaining for pay increases.

Our members are well aware of the economic downturn because they are closely allied to the markets through their superannuation investments, and they don't need to be continually reminded of the reality of the economic crisis.

What everyone is wondering is what happened to the good years when profits were up and the tonnage across the wharfs meant that everyone was working their days off because the companies were short of labour.

The old saying “make hay while the sun shines and put a little away for a rainy day” needs to be dusted off by both employers and unionists, but it is difficult when it seems that as soon as a profit is made the customer demands a reduction in contract prices or the shareholder wants a larger payout than is prudent.

This leaves the worker in an impossible position as he/she has no input or leverage in these matters.

This is the realm where managers and advisors dwell and never shall the common man step. Perhaps we would be better served if the common man dwelt there for a few years because they couldn't make a bigger hash of it than the leaders of investment and big business have of the current situation.

The free market seems to be only free when none of the major players are being hurt, as soon as the reality of what a free

market means in a time of recession some of the theories are back in the drawer and practical forces take control.

It brings into scrutiny what the free market will mean to New Zealand if our food exports now have to compete with protectionism, yet our doors remain fully open to competition from the free market.

The experts say that during a recession or economic crisis the worst reaction is to head towards protectionism, as it slows the global economy, but it is difficult to argue against when you are the worker that is losing his/her employment while work that could be done is being contracted to an overseas company.

The worrying thing is that globally I don't see any real changes being proposed to make sure that when we come out of the economic crisis we don't repeat this social disaster in the future.

In fact I hear the same old rhetoric surfacing: privatisation, liberalisation of labour laws, political changes such as the Super City in Auckland to further weaken the democratic rights of average working families.

This should be the time for Unions to flourish as workers become disenfranchised in the workplace but nothing will be achieved unless we mobilise and organise.

Easy to say but harder to put in practice.

## Regionalization

At the National Executive Meeting in May, I believe the Maritime Union of New Zealand took the first step in reorganising to create a stronger, more functional Union. Regionalization will stimulate long needed debate on our local and national structure and organising capacity.

There will be many members who are for this change and many who are opposed. This is healthy as no change should ever be undertaken just for change's sake.

The question is being asked and the membership should make themselves conversant with regionalization so that an informed decision can be made later in the year.

To quote Denis Carlisle “change will always be with us” and if managed properly, regionalization could be the first step in a journey for the Union that puts in place an efficient struggle based structure that prepares for future change and manages this change to the benefit of all members. Branches/Locals will by nature manoeuvre to protect what they have in place and no one should apologise for this.

But this is the time to put parochial issues to the side and take the bull by the horns. We have demonstrated time and time again that when we are fully united and committed we have achieved formidable results.

The unfortunate fact is that we just don't do it enough.

Regionalization will supply the resources to follow through with what we started in the amalgamation between the Seafarers and Dockers in 2002.

Auckland is a great example of how sometimes we go 80 percent of the way but just don't seem to finish the job. In everything but name, the Seafarers and Dockers are working as one Local.

All we need to do is the paper work, put it to the vote and amalgamate the two Branches/ Locals.

Regionalization must not weaken Local structure and there is no intention for this to happen.

Branches /Locals will have representation in their Region and on the National Executive and the challenge for everyone is to make sure that they take the options and make them work.

The next debate on Regionalization will take place in August and if Locals/Branches have further questions or consider that further alterations should take place this should be the venue where the debate takes place.

In closing, it was great to see all the Veterans and present members at the Waterfront Reunion the other week and a big thanks to the staff from the Pt Chevalier RSA for all their help on the day.

“Touch One Touch All”



MUNZ Local 13 members, Bledisloe Terminal, Ports of Auckland, 22 June 2009, from left Dave Phillips, Eddie Stephens, Jermaine Witihera and Vinnie Clarke (photo by John Darroch)



At the 2009 Auckland Waterfront Reunion, from left Jimmy Neill, Barry Prescott, Phil Goff, Terry Ryan and Ray Haslam

# Wellington Seafarers

by Joe Fleetwood

## Employment laws

If any members voted for National in the last election, the reality is now sinking in. People wanted change and now change is what they will get.

We will be going backwards with rights on the job, returning to the era of the Employment Contracts Act.

The National Government is a government by, of and for employers.

As the recession deepens, who will pay? Profits for the boss will be paid for by attacks on workers wages, conditions and benefits. As workers' we have to understand the political reality and support our class, the working class, which means sticking together and not being sucked in by tax cuts and other bribes rolled out by the National Government.

## Regionalization

The National Executive met on the 13-15 May and Regionalization was on the agenda.

As you can imagine this was a hot topic. MUA Deputy National Secretary Jim Tannock was in attendance and helped us to move forward in a positive and constructive way without getting bogged down with individual issues.

A motion was put to the executive and endorsed by all to take back to our branch stop work meetings for discussion.

## Kiwirail

We have finally settled this agreement retaining terms and conditions which will see us through until January 2011. There are still a couple of outstanding issues from the terms of settlement that need to be sorted.

Former General Manager Seamus O'Sullivan confirmed before he left that the funding has been agreed for the re-vamping of the WO/WO shore facilities at the Wellington terminal.

Also the parties need to meet to discuss and reach agreement with the IR/AB manning issue within the company.

## Higgins Tow Services

John Whiting and I have been in collective agreement talks for a couple of months now with the company and the conclusion is not too far away.

The new collective agreement when in place, will provide union terms and conditions. The first one is never great but it is the bench mark for the future.

The new collective agreement is better than the individual contracts the members are on now.

Big thanks to the delegates for their continual help and support, good stuff comrades.

## Strait Shipping Vessels

We have initiated bargaining and signed off the bargaining agreement. Remits are steadily coming into the office.

The remit committee will need to meet and discuss all remits, and we will go into agreement talks early June.

## Strait Shipping Terminal

John Whiting and I have just finished 2 days of negotiating the renewal of the terminal collective in Picton on 21-22 May. There is some tidying up of the wording but the agreement was endorsed by all union members.

A big thanks to our delegates Donna and Michelle, whose input at the negotiating table was valuable and they represented the collective in a professional manner.

## NIWA

The terms of settlement have been signed off by all parties.

The company and union will then proof the agreement, and then print the new copies of the collective agreement for signing them off to all members.

## Offshore

Comrades, the offshore in NZ has slowed up for now. When will it kick off again?

How long is a piece of string. But we can confirm we are in continual contact with all employers discussing up and coming work opportunities.

The New Zealand Offshore agreement comes up for renegotiation in October this year, and we will be seeking many changes in our offshore agreement.

We will call for remits over the next couple of months.

Members will have received a letter from the Union pertaining to an agreed administration fee payable to the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) from all MUNZ members working on the Australian coast engaged under the Trans Tasman Federation.

There is a reviewed Memorandum of Understanding that is to be signed off by all parties.

This should happen very soon, any questions contact me direct.

## Branch clothing

All members are reminded about the branch clothing we have available from the Secretary. We have long sleeve black dress shirts, caps and beanies available for sale.

## Delegate system

As members of the trade union movement, it is important we support the delegate system and our delegates receive 110% support.

The delegate is your union rep on the job and knows the agreement inside and out. He or she can and will give you the help and support needed, something to remember and never forget.

United we stand – Divided you crawl.

## Stopwork meetings

Members, do not forget about your social responsibility to your Union to attend your stop work meetings. Attend your stop-work meeting and have your say, don't sit on board your ship or in the mess rooms ashore whinging about things, attend and have your say comrades.

This is a Union condition that we will not let go.



At the Wellington Branch office, 15 May 2009, from left, Nelson Branch Secretary Kenny Knox, Wellington Waterfront Branch Secretary John Whiting, Wellington Seafarers executive member Wayne Davies, Wellington Waterfront executive member Bradley Clifford, Wellington seafarers executive member Barry Millington, "Maritimes" editor Victor Billot, Wellington Seafarers' executive member Mike Shakespeare, Wellington Seafarers' Branch Secretary Joe Fleetwood and Wellington Seafarers rank and file member Alan Windsor (photo by Luke Appleby)



The Government research vessel Tangaroa

# Stronger Safer Offshore



**By Wellington Seafarers' Branch Secretary Joe Fleetwood and Branch President Mike Clark**

When we think of safety in the offshore sector of our industry, it conjures up images of huge steel structures rising out of the ocean amid flare offs and millions of litres of oil and gas being processed on FPSOs or piped ashore to processing plants.

But how many of us spare a thought for the workers working on the back decks of supply vessels?

Supply vessels, or anchor handling tugs as they are also called, operate close to offshore structures and are unlikely to be involved in a major disaster themselves. However, they are more likely to be involved in fire fighting, helicopter crashes, personnel rescue or any other emergency that occurs on an offshore installation.

Anyone who observes the crew working on the back of these vessels would appreciate the dangers associated with it.

One of the most difficult of many dangers is when a vessel is engaged in either deploying or retrieving anchors which can range in weight from 12 up to 100 tonnes. I'm sure many involved in these operations currently or in the past will recall accidents or near misses.

The other dangers to crew on deck are being washed up or down the deck, or even worse over board.

Then there is the risk of being hammered by loading or discharging cargoes, and also bulk hoses which are an everpresent danger, especially in rough sea conditions. It is imperative that crew members involved in these operations are fully aware of the dangers involved.

This means being prepared to pull the pin on these operations when they consider their health and safety to be compromised. Members then notify whoever is in charge on the bridge of the reasons for halting operations. Union members have a duty to look out for one another.

One of the other dangers comes in the form of FRCs (fast rescue crafts) which in the event of an installation emergency would most likely be deployed.

Companies operating these vessels should make sure that all crew involved in these operations receive the appropriate training such as FRC certification.

There is no point trying to solve a disaster when we might be creating a new one. We all have a part to play in safety on these vessels.

The Union welcomes any comments on the above issues or on any other matters concerning safety in the offshore. Please do not hesitate to contact the Wellington office.

# Wellington Waterfront

by John Whiting

The reverberations of the world wide financial crisis are certainly impacting heavily on New Zealand families with some 25,000 workers tossed onto the redundancy scrapheap nationwide, many with no financial compensation. The gross excesses of the international fat cats fall hardest on those at the end of the food chain.

Our lifeblood as Maritime workers is the flow of ships and cargoes through the Port of Wellington.

The last six months have seen adverse effects on this flow.

Container volumes, especially imports, are well down, with many ships working one crane operations. The previous pressure for ships to sail immediately on completion of cargo is also changing with some staying alongside for later let-goes.

Presumably there is now more slack time in shipping schedules!

The fall off in ships / cargoes has impacted on the Wellington workforce, as always firstly, and hardest, on our casual members.

As previous memberships did in tough times, it becomes vital that we stick together as Unionists, support each other, and protect the terms and conditions contained in what is more than ever, our most important document, our collective agreement.

Also, working safely and sensibly on the job, and being ready to face up to, and deal with, whatever pressures may come to bear on us.

Since the last issue of the Maritimes four members have left the employ of the Wellington Port Company, Trevor Manning, Steve Davies, Laverne Kellog, and Michael Mace.

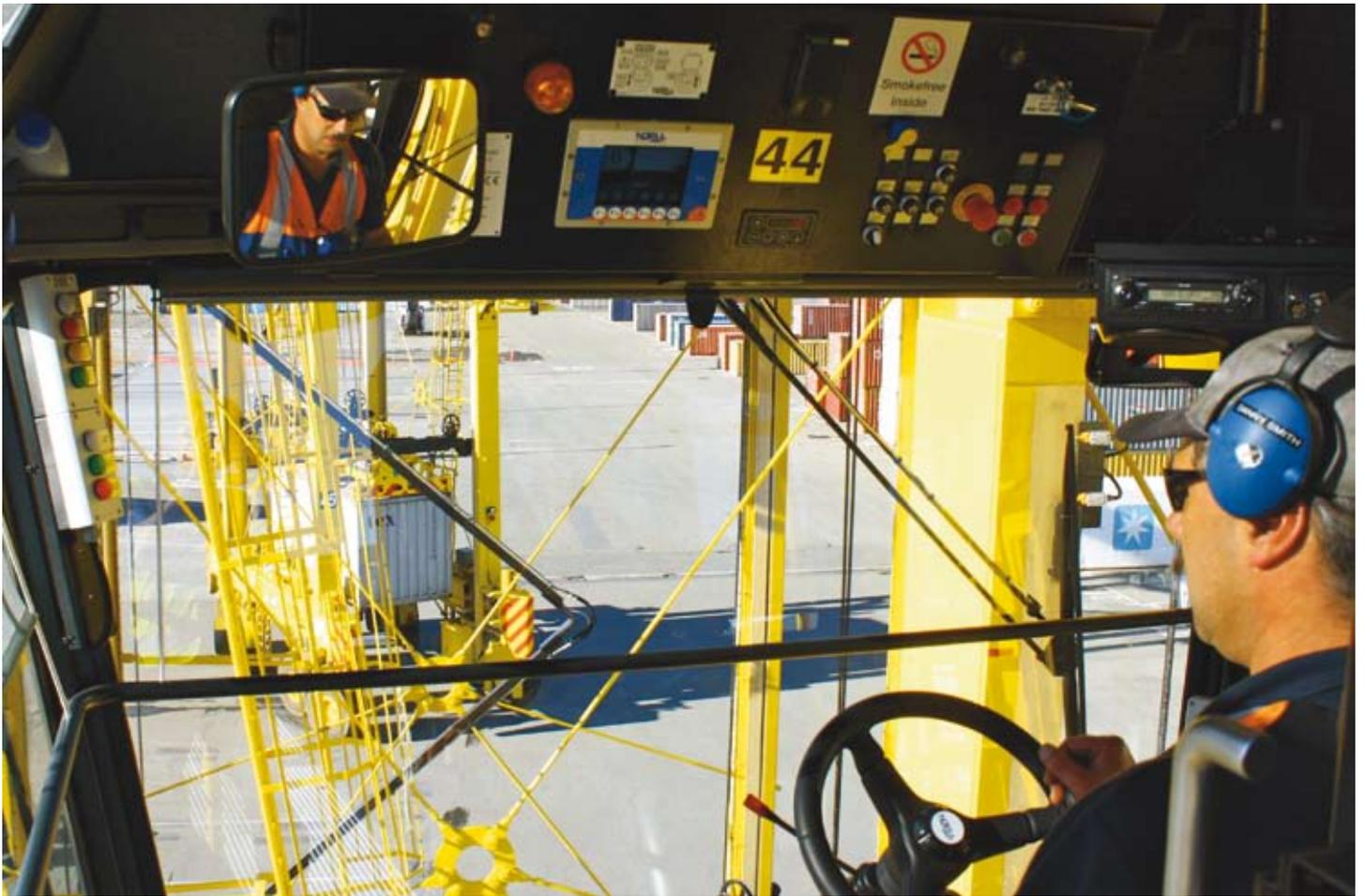
Trevor Manning, who has retired after 38 years industry service comes from a family with many waterfront / seagoing connections. Trevor's father was a 1951 lockout veteran, his brothers were wharfies and seafarers, and his son Glen a wharfie.

Trevor's fine sporting record includes an Olympic gold medal as the goal-keeper of the New Zealand Hockey team, winning finalists against Australia at the 1976 Montreal Olympic Games.

Trevor, we thank you for your loyalty to your fellow members and as an upholder of collective terms and conditions over many years.

We wish you all the best for the future.





Danny Smith, straddle driver, Centreport, Wellington, 15 June 2009 (photo by Luke Appleby)



Straddle, Centreport, Wellington, 15 June 2009 (photo by Luke Appleby)



4am, 14 March 2009. With the ship 39m below the glass floor under his feet, cargo handler Wayne Welsh operates one of three cranes loading a container ship at Port Chalmers (photo by Stephen Jaquiere, reproduced with permission from the Otago Daily Times)



3.45am, 14 March 2009. Port Otago safety officer Matt Dougherty records container movements as a ship is loaded at Port Chalmers (photo by Stephen Jaquiere, reproduced with permission from the Otago Daily Times)

# Port Chalmers Dunedin

by Phil Adams

## Terminal

Greetings from the South. As winter starts to bite, things have not let up in the Terminal. We have been told there is a recession but someone forgot to tell the Terminal. In the month of April we handled 24,000 TEUs which is a record for the terminal. The men are responding well but it is taking a toll on them. The Port Company is looking at purchasing two side loaders which will solve the lack of machinery.

## Port Chalmers' Cargo Services

The Port Chalmers' Cargo Services boys are reasonably busy with logs, fish and phosphate. We expect to meet with management shortly to discuss the downturn in conventional cargo around the country. As we believe our port is doing alright at the moment, we hope to avoid any problems. The Secretary recently attended a meeting with the members at PCCS who are being asked to look at savings for their company. All agreed that dropping wages and conditions and the guarantee was not an option as they have had to accept too much change over the years and it is time to say enough is enough. The Secretary was buoyed by their staunch stance.

## Vessel Operations

The vessel operations team still only consists of the 25 lashers and all have joined our branch. We have met with them and they have nominated Korey Cook as their delegate. They are all good lads who were told of the benefits of being in the Union and they know we will not let them down.

## Branch elections

We have just completed voting for the branch elections. Interest was high with only one uncontested position, Phil Adams being elected unopposed as Secretary / Treasurer. Three members stood for President, two for Vice-President and 11 stood for the five positions on the Executive. In a closely fought vote, Ian Quarrell was voted in as President and Graham Wall as Vice President. The new executive are Tim Camp, Paul Napier, Andrew Jennings, Stu Crawford and Graham Wright.

Shane Priest from the sheds and Korey Cook from the lashers will attend the last hour of executive meetings as delegates. Congratulations to all successful candidates and commiserations to those who missed out this year including the editor of this magazine. Special thanks to our illustrious returning officer Cyril Todd who did an excellent job in a professional manner assisted by the two returning officers Graeme Berryman and James Binnie.

## David Dick

Now the elections are over one name was not seen in the ballot and that was President David Dick who stood down this year as retirement may just be around the corner. It is with much regret that we saw Davey was not standing again as he has served the Union over a long period and for the last ten years as President. He saw the branch through the Mainland Stevedoring battles which we won and constant stressful negotiations which have seen our branch gain a very good collective agreement. Dave worked to keep permanent jobs in the port and not allow casualization to take hold. He has always put the members first and was always available to attend meetings and never shirked his responsibilities. His work on the national executive was also well received. It will be hard to replace his experience and ability. We know Davey will not walk away from helping the Union in the future. Thanks Davey you can leave knowing you have made a difference to our Union and all for the better.

## Regionalization

Our branch will discuss regionalization at our June meeting where our officials will present a proposal for a regional structure for the Union. As amalgamation does not look likely, regionalization could be the alternative for going forward. A Northern, Central and Southern Region would be set up with some form of central funding. Before being introduced, the proposal will have to be debated at branch level to see whether it is supported by members. We need to remember that carrying on in the current form is not an option.

## Retirement

Recently we saw Dave Perkins and Bryan Berryman retire. Both were good members of the branch and will be missed. Good luck for your retirement. It is also noted that the branch will be holding a function in June for all those who have retired in the last couple of years.

An apology is due for not holding it earlier but circumstances prevented this.

## Sick list

Good to see Jeff Hindle back on the decks after illness and also Neville Scoles is making good progress in his quest to get back to work. It is also good to see Dave Burgess back.

## National Conference

Our Triennial National Conference will be held in October 2009 and the branch is hoping to send some observers.

## Clothing

The Secretary has new styled union t-shirts for sale to members in the office. Coloured caps, beanies and jackets are also available.

## Labour Party

Our officials met recently with Pete Hodgson. It was a good meeting where we told him where we see the Labour Party and how they can get back to the Treasury benches. Clare Curran, the new MP for Dunedin South, is set down to meet with us soon. At our last national executive meeting the new President of the Labour Party, Andrew Little, addressed us and was a breath of fresh air. For those few members who helped National get in, they will soon see how this Government looks after workers – keep an eye on your holidays and payment for stat days.

## Queenstown Unit

For those wishing to make a booking or inquiry about this wonderful asset, please ring Alan Middleditch on 03 4728753 or Ian Quarrell on 03 4727 716 or the Secretary Phil Adams on 03 4728 052.

## Super and Medical

A reminder to new members to make sure you join the the Superannuation and the fully subsidized Medical Scheme. Some are putting off joining which is crazy as the medical scheme is free and the Super has up to 7% paid in by the employer. Be in.

## Sheds

The lads and girls at the Sheds have had meetings with management that included Ron Horner and Bruce Trainor from the terminal management team. Having Ron and Bruce at the meetings and listening to their concerns they have achieved more from them than the existing management who never listened and caused morale at the sheds to reach an all time low.

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The Shed lads and girls have felt themselves to be the poor cousins but a different approach by management will go a long way to lifting their morale.

**Drug and alcohol**

Recently Phil Adams and Graham Wright have met with the company over its drug and alcohol policy. The company is insisting on random testing and although sympathetic with their goal of trying to stop accidents we have a national policy.

We say if the company thinks there is a drug or alcohol problem in the workforce, they should try to find out why people are abusing alcohol or drugs.

Workload could be a major factor.

We recently have had a couple of individuals tested positive. We continue to remind members if you feel you have a problem, contact our officials and it will be held in the strictest confidence.

If you have a problem, do not hide it – let us know.

**ITF**

The Secretary was recently called upon to assist an Engineer on one of the Maersk 4100's.

After meeting the engineer who felt he was being picked on by the Chief Engineer and wanted to return home immediately, we convinced him to stay on for the remaining 14 days of his contract as failure to do so may have had him blacklisted for future work. He took our advice and thanked the ITF for their help.

ITF inspector Grahame MacLaren is planning to run ITF training in our port soon.

**Adams' Family**

Like Alan McDonald who has returned to sea after an absence, Keith Adams has donned his sea boots again to work on the Interislander vessels. This means four members of the Adams family in the maritime industry, Keith and Les on the Interislander and Phil and son Fraser working for Port Otago. Only one missing is Uncle Fester.

**Horse**

Sadly and for the sake of many with empty pockets, Born on the Tyne has been retired and is to be used as a hack. We are now looking for the next horse to break our hearts especially the General Secretary and Les Wells.

That's about it and with the new executive the future looks good for our branch as long as we stay united. Remember to use your officials.

Make sure you feel proud to be part of the most influential Union in the maritime industry.



Maritime Union Port Chalmers Dunedin Branch Local 10 newly elected executive, June 2009, back row from left, Andrew Jennings, Graham Wall, Stuart Crawford, Graham Wright, front row from left, Tim Camp, Paul Napier, Ian Quarrell (President), Phil Adams (Secretary/Treasurer)



Port Chalmers Dunedin Branch President David Dick (centre) recently stood down from his position after many years in the job. Pictured here with National President Phil Adams (left) and 'Maritimes' Editor Victor Billot (right) in May 2009. (Photo by Luke Appleby)



Socializing at the 2009 Interport, Timaru (photo by Graham Thin)

# Interport Sports Tournament

**New Plymouth 7–11 February 2010  
featuring Golf – Fishing – Pool – Darts**

**The annual Interport Sports Tournament is a great place to meet port workers from all over New Zealand in a social setting.**

**Many great friendships have been formed at previous tournaments and are always rekindled each year.**

**With either golf or fishing during the day and pool and darts played in the evening, it is always a memorable week for those who attend.**

**Wives/partners are always welcome and are warmly included in the social aspect, there is a ladies' day at the golf as well as inclusion in other activities.**

**If you have any questions, contact your local Council of Sport representative or see the website [www.munz.org.nz/interport](http://www.munz.org.nz/interport)**



MUNZ officials and members of the Veterans' Association at the Veterans' Association AGM in Auckland, May 2009. With now over 300 members, the Veterans' Association re-elected its executive of Doug Phillipp (President), Eric Dunne (Vice President), Terry Ryan (Secretary) and executive members Barry Prescott, Dave Mora, Bill Cunningham and Peter Arnold.

## Fool's gold

By Charles Smith

I was a crew member on the Katanga bound for Auckland with a cargo of coal from Westport.

We were off the Hen and Chicken Islands at the same time that they were dredging up the gold from the Niagara.

It was early afternoon and the captain gave the order to have some deep sea lead drill. It is possible that some may not know what that entails.

What it means is that you have a twenty eight pound lead sinker attached to a very long thin wire rope that was marked off every ten fathoms.

At the base of the lead was a rather deep hole which was filled with wax or soap, which was to pick up what was on the bottom.

If it was a sandy bottom it would pick up some grains of sand, if it was rocky the lead would be scored, and if it was muddy nothing would show.

That was called arming the lead.

We, the sailors got everything ready. But the chief officer himself armed the lead and firmly believed that nobody touched that lead after he finished with it.

He was wrong.

A sailor slipped away and went into the electricians work shop, gathered up some brass filings then rejoined the men.

When the chief officer gave the order to pass the lead over the side the sailor with the brass filings managed to get that job, and just as he was letting the lead go he pressed the filings into the soap.

We got our soundings and when the lead was brought back up we all crowded around. The chief officer was astounded to see the brass filings, but he didn't know what they were.

The sailor that instigated it all cried out "F--- me, we've struck gold!"

The officer said nothing and just picked away with his fingernail at the gold. But not us. The instigator wanted to know if we could strike a claim, and we all joined in wanting to know if we could make more than one claim.

By this time the officer has the find in his handkerchief and as he walked away he said that he would make further enquiries. We kept it going by saying that we would take him to court if he tried to keep the find to himself.

An hour or so later the captain requested that I report to his cabin. The reason why he called for me was because I was the bosun.

I went up to his cabin and he asked what the hell was going on down aft. I told him the full story. He said that it was the funniest thing he had ever heard and was sorry that he couldn't have been there to see it and promised to carry it on. He must have thought better of it, because we never heard any more from him.

Charlie Smith was associated with the waterfront since 1954 and retired in 1990. His first ship on the New Zealand coast was the Komata and he shipped out many ships that flew the New Zealand flag often as bosun. In 1972 he came ashore in Auckland and worked for the USSC as a foreman stevedore. Two years later he transferred to Mount Maunganui where he worked until retirement.



Robert Sullivan

## Vindy boys remember daring rescue

by Emma Dinwiddie

Every other Wednesday the “Vindy Boys” – ex-sailors who completed their training aboard the TS Vindicatrix at Sharpness in England – get together for lunch at the Woolston Club to reminisce about their time at sea.

One such tale began in the middle of the night on 30 January 1955 when two sailors aboard the Panamanian SS “Liberator” fell down the hatch in rough Atlantic seas and sustained serious injuries.

Cunard’s RM Queen Mary, equipped with two hospitals and several surgeons, answered the SOS and deployed lifeboat crews of volunteers who swung into action and began a daring rescue that would remain a legend for many years to come. Woolston resident Robert Sullivan was one of those men, who at just 23 years of age, was awarded a medal for his courage and devotion to duty by the Shipwreck and Humane Society.

“I was never scared. All my life I was brought up on small boats,” said Bob, now 77.

Originally from Glenarm in Northern Ireland, Bob recalled the treacherous rescue mission in his thick Irish accent and said it was all part of a sailor’s duty to look after one another.

“If he’s a sailor and he needs help, you do it.”

The Queen Mary’s 1000 passengers lined the rails as their crew safely delivered one sailor and a surgeon onto the Liberator’s deck. The injured sailors were then brought over to the Queen Mary for treatment.

On their return Bob said the rescuers were immediately rewarded for their efforts.

“The captain called us into his cabin and said whatever we wanted from the Queen Mary we could have it.”

In true sailor fashion he asked for a glass of “Nelson’s blood” (seaman speak for rum) and waited for the rest of his mates to get back.

If you’re a Vindy boy who has lost touch with your fellow sailors, get in contact with Terry Knight on (03)3842057 or Dave Spice on (03)3837152.

This article originally appeared in the Bay Harbour News on 8 April 2009 and is reprinted with their kind permission. Thanks to Terry Knight for bringing it to our attention.

## An important message for veteran and retired members receiving the Maritimes magazine

The Maritime Union is updating its mailing list of retired and former members of the Maritime Union of New Zealand, the New Zealand Seafarers’ Union and the Waterfront Workers’ Union.

To ensure our records are accurate, we are requesting that all veteran members above join the Maritime Union Veterans’ Association.

Membership is free.

To continue receiving copies of the Maritimes, you must be a member of the Veterans Association.

If you are not receiving a copy of the Maritimes magazine, then you are not on the membership list.

To join the Veterans’ Association, please contact the Veterans’ Association at PO Box 2645, Auckland.

A copy of the membership form is also available on our Maritime Union website and can be downloaded and printed off at the following address:

<http://munz.org.nz/veterans>

Note that you may have given your name previously to someone to get a copy of the magazine – but if you have not filled in an official form you are not a member of the Veterans’ Association.

To keep getting the magazine, or with any queries, please write to PO Box 2645, Auckland.



Crewmates of Tony Littlewood at his onboard memorial service in 2009 (photo by Tony Rodick)

## Tony Littlewood, AB

It was with great sadness that we learnt of the death of our shipmate and friend on 6 January 2009.

Even though Tony had retired the year previous through ill health, he died quite suddenly and unexpectedly.

We were unable to attend his funeral as we were on the ship at the time and would like to record these few words about our mate.

Tony emigrated from UK to New Zealand as a child, with his family in 1952.

Tony left school at 15 and went to work at Wellington Hospital with his father who was the head porter and held the cleaning contract.

Tony left the Hospital not long after that and went to sea. The first ship he ever sailed on was the Monowai.

Tony spent all of his working years at sea until reluctantly retiring last year through ill health.

One of Tony's career highlights was being part of the delivery crew which bought the Wahine out to New Zealand from Scotland. The Wahine was then put into service as a rail ferry between Wellington and Lyttelton before it sank in a horrendous storm off Wellington 1968.

Tony wasn't on the Wahine the day it sank, he was working on the Union Hobart and they were docked in Brisbane at the time.

Tony was in a pub when he heard the news and watched what was happening on TV in that pub.

On emigrating to New Zealand, Tony's family had set up home in Wellington, but as a young man he moved to Kaiapoi where he started a family, then moved the family to Lyttelton. He later returned to Wellington permanently in the early 1990s. Tony is father to Michael, Francis and Louise, father-in-law to Justine, and "Granddad Tony" to Sophie and Isabella.

Tony is also brother to Liz, Peter and Gaye, uncle to Chris, John, Dushane and Damian. Tony married into a large seafaring family, the Horans.

He was extremely proud to be part of that family and he was a much loved and respected son-in-law and brother-in-law. Not long before his own death Tony had attended his mother-in-law's funeral, Lorna Horan, a woman he admired greatly and loved very much.

Tony's son Michael also followed in Tony's footsteps and went to sea as a deck boy and is now Mate. There were times when Michael and Tony were both on the same ship, with Michael as 2nd mate and Tony as crew.

Tony's last ship was the Westport which he joined on 23 March 1991. Tony enjoyed his life at sea and it was a very long and hard decision to leave the ship and retire from his seagoing career on 27 February 2008.

Tony was an excellent seaman, a good shipmate and a loyal and proud member of the Union. Tony was never shy about speaking his mind and he certainly didn't tolerate fools.

A service for Tony was held in both Lyttelton and Wellington. Unfortunately his crew of the Westport were on at the time of both services.

But we were able to farewell our shipmate and comrade at a service held on board, on 24 March, with his last crew of which his nephew in law Kevin Horan was sailing as Master, and joined by his brother-in-law retired AB Charlie MacIlquham, we said our last farewells and scattered Tony's ashes 12 nautical miles off Karamea River mouth.

The Seafarers' Union was the formidable, principled and respected Union it was because of people like Tony.

Farewell mate, you fought the good fight, we miss you.

Contributed by Red Campbell MUNZ 1286 for crew "Westport"  
Thanks to Kathy Whelan for forwarding photo



## Ray De Thierry

24/12/1952–6/4/2009

Port Chalmers Dunedin branch member Ray de Thierry died while snorkelling at Stewart Island.

Ray had been a member at Port Chalmers for five years starting as a casual before moving through to a permanent cargo handler and latterly he was employed as a night shift security officer.

At Ray's funeral we learnt of a man who had led a colourful life, leaving the Waikato as a young man to seek his fortune working at some of the power stations in the South Island until he joined Port Otago.

He was a dedicated family man who also excelled at sports massage, being associated with not only the Highlanders but the Otago and Dunedin club sides.

Ray was an excellent member of the branch respected by all who met him.

When I worked the third shift Ray would always come up for a yarn, and just the week before he died he was up asking for some more Maritime Union beanies.

It is very sad to lose one of the good blokes.

Our deepest sympathy to all of Ray's family at his untimely death.

He will be missed by all.

– contributed by Phil Adams



## John MacMillan, AB

AB John MacMillan died in Wellington on 27 February 2009.

John was born in the Isle of Lewis and at the age of 13 in 1941 joined his father's fishing boat which was deployed to Dunkirk to pick up soldiers.

At the age of 15 he joined the Merchant Navy where he worked through the war years, sailing on home boats until coming to New Zealand in the late 1950s.

He joined the Union and sailed on various vessels and trades including Aramoana, Aotea, the Offshore Industry, Union Endeavour and retired in 1989 after 46 years at sea.

To his wife Nancy, son Donald and family, our heartfelt sympathy at the passing of our friend and shipmate.

– contributed by Kathy Whelan

## Clinton George Moa

Clinton, a Local 13 member working for C3 since 2004 and Leonard and Dingley prior to that as a casual, was drowned in January 2009 saving three young girls at a Northland beach.

The following extract from the Herald on Sunday describes Clinton as an "incredible hero".

"An international sportsman who sacrificed his life to save three young girls from drowning at a Northland beach was farewell yesterday as an "incredible hero". Clinton Moa, 34, was with his partner and 3 year old daughter at Mitimiti, west of Kaikohe, when the girls were swept out to sea in a rip on Sunday.

He managed to get all three safely back on land but was 'swept away' before he could save himself."

Reading the eulogy, Sifa Liava'a who worked with Clinton as a casual said the big guy was always looking out for him and was very safety conscious after being involved in two serious accidents that could have claimed his life.

He said that wharf work was sometimes dirty and dangerous but Clinton enjoyed the camaraderie of the waterfront.

The Maritime Union offers its condolences to all his family in remembrance of this generous and honourable man.

– reprinted from the Port News

## Gerry Merito

G.K. Merito, who was a household name as a foundation member of the Howard Morrison Quartet, passed away aged 70 at the Waihou Hotel in the Waikato in January 2009.

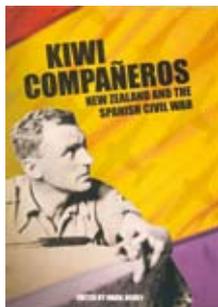
Not so well known was that Gerry was a watersider from March 1972 until February 1984 when he retired sick.

A proud member of the union, Gerry played at the Waterfront Reunion 5 years back at the Pt Chevalier RSA and introduced himself as Bureau No. 1240 Merito reporting for duty.

All New Zealand along with Local 13 mourn the passing of Gerry, widely recognised as one of New Zealand's greatest entertainers and songwriters.

May he rest in peace.

– reprinted from the Port News



## **Kiwi Compañeros – New Zealand and the Spanish Civil War**

**Edited by Mark Derby  
(Canterbury University  
Press, retail price \$45)**

The Spanish Civil War (1936–1939) was one of the most brutal conflicts of the

twentieth century. Overshadowed by the Second World War, it would not seem to have a lot to do with New Zealand.

Yet a surprising number of New Zealanders were involved in the war. This book tells their stories.

The war was highly politicized. A right-wing military uprising was led by General Franco against a left-wing Government. In the following three years, around half a million people were killed, both combatants and civilians.

The pro-Government “Republican” side had the backing of the Soviet Union, but its factions became divided and started fighting amongst themselves, especially the communists and anarchists.

The right-wing “Nationalists” received major military assistance from Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, and gradually the tide turned in their favour.

This book covers the individual stories of a number of New Zealanders who were involved in the war, or those who later emigrated to New Zealand.

Of special interest is the high proportion of seafarers and waterfront workers who went to the war as part of the “International Brigades”.

These were made up of volunteers from around the world and fought alongside the Republican forces.

Other New Zealanders served in non-combatant roles, including doctors and nurses, and a minority of individuals who for various reasons were involved on the “Nationalist” side.

The story of Tom Spiller is featured in this magazine. Other waterfront workers and seamen who were in Spain during the war included Robbie Robertson, Charlie Riley, William Madigan, Ron Hurd, Jim Hoy and Don Miles.

Some of these men also saw service in the Second World War, and several were involved in maritime and transport unionism after the war.

“Kiwi Compañeros” is an outstanding collection of history. It is highly readable and features extensive illustrations, background information on the war, and the political and social impact outside Spain.

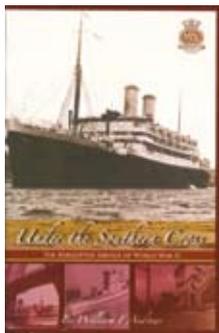
But the parts that most stand out are the personal accounts and stories of those who were there, and the impact it had on their lives.

Published by the Canterbury University Press in association with the Labour History Project, “Kiwi Compañeros” joins other recent titles in the Labour History Project series such as “Revolution” and “The Big Blue” as a major contribution to New Zealand working class history.

“Kiwi Compañeros” can be ordered direct from the publisher at

<http://www.cup.canterbury.ac.nz/order/>  
or telephone 03 364 2914

More information on the Labour History Project (formerly the Trade Union History Project) at <http://www.lhp.org.nz>



## **“Under the Southern Cross”: The Forgotten Service of World War Two**

**by William F Andrews**

William F Andrews says his book “has been written on behalf of the Australian and New-Zealand Merchant Navies of the Second World

War in order to establish the 3rd of September as Merchant Navy Day in Australia and all Commonwealth countries, the same as Great Britain and Canada.”

The Australian Government last year proclaiming Merchant Navy Day on the 3rd of September.

Mr Andrews hopes the New Zealand Government will follow suit.

He came to Australia for the third time in 1953, and had 45 years of a sea going career in Britain and Australia with service in the Atlantic and Mediterranean in the Second World War.

In the year 2000, he decided to write a book about the industry he had served. If anyone is qualified to write it, then he is. “Under the Southern Cross” is a book of several parts.

The author has taken the unusual step of moving away from the traditional biography by writing about “the life of John Ward, a fictional character who is based on the real life stories of Australian merchant seamen.”

The first part of the book follows the adventures of John Ward as he travels the Indian Ocean searching for his lost brother with colourful experiences in Ceylon, India, Africa and Madagascar amongst others. The second part of the narrative deals with the Second World War.

There are also a number of appendices where the author provides a history of the Second World War from the merchant seaman’s perspective, Port Victoria, Flags of Convenience Shipping, the Union Movement and Merchant Navy Day.

The great service of the merchant seamen in the war has only slowly and belatedly been recognized.

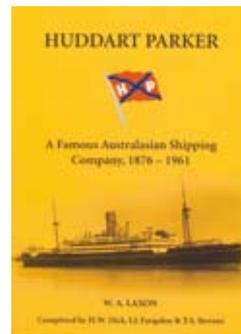
Thanks to the dedication of those such as Mr Andrews, they are no longer the “forgotten service” and their place in history is now guaranteed.

There are a few minor typesetting and proofreading glitches, but these do not take away from the vast range of life experience that this book presents.

This book will be of interest to anyone in the maritime industry, to veteran maritime workers, and to those with an interest in maritime, military and working class history.

Copies can be obtained by emailing [admin@masterperformers.com.au](mailto:admin@masterperformers.com.au) or phone (0061) 7 31624954  
Video interviews with the author can be found on these websites:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/theunionshow>  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HukGGLAP-uo>  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=85cmFlebyzw>  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O-2hGEUvjgE>



## **Huddart Parker: A Famous Australasian Shipping Company 1876-1961**

**by W. A. Laxon,  
completed by H. W.  
Dick, I. J. Farquhar  
and T. S. Stevens**

The Australian shipping line Huddart Parker

was a major maritime industry player in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, maintaining a passenger line to New Zealand.

As the publishers note, “the coastal liners Westralia and Zealandia, trans-Tasman liners Ulimaroa and Wanganella and Bass Strait ferries Nairana and Tarooma were all household names.”

Auckland maritime historian Bill Laxon died while writing this book and his draft was completed by three of his friends, Howard Dick, Ian Farquhar and Tom Stevens.

Published by the Nautical Association of Australia, the book is of high quality, with extensive illustrations of the vessels owned by the company, and it provides a substantial account of the origins of the company, the times of prosperity and the eventual decline and takeover.

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New Plymouth, 1985, from left: Sprigger White, Mark Gilmore, Colin Wilson and correspondent Barry Jackson (photo supplied by B. Jackson)

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There are a number of appendices on related areas including a detailed fleet list. This history is written from the perspective of the owners of the shipping lines: the family founders, their business dealings, the wider economic developments, and the technical aspects of their fleet of vessels are the main focus of the book.

There are few references to the working lives of the seafarers aboard the ships and some dim sounding comments about maritime unions. In that sense it is a company history, not a workers history.

For all those with an interest in maritime history, including those retired maritime workers who may have experienced the later part of the era in person, it would make an excellent addition to the library. Members of the Maritime Union of New Zealand are offered a generous \$10 discount of the book at the special price of \$NZ37.00 (both prices inclusive of postage and packing to any address in New Zealand).

New Zealand orders can be placed with Ian Farquhar, P O Box 1175, Dunedin

For more information on the Nautical Association of Australia, see <http://www.nautical.asn.au/>

# Letters

## Offshore

I keep hearing of members working in the offshore getting work through the company and not using the correct procedure, ie not informing a union official about the job.

There is a union database in operation.

If you are out of work you inform your branch official or get in touch with the Wellington Seafarers' Branch.

Yes it's simple.

Remember this – the conditions we enjoy in the offshore industry were hard fought for by the rank and file and the Unions of Australia and New Zealand.

There is still an ongoing problem in the offshore industry of members not receiving their correct payments. Make sure you read and understand the agreement you are working under and check your pay slips.

Remember comrades it's your money you could be losing.

Be aware.

In unity,

**Barry Jackson**

**MUNZ 0004**

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 Email: [joe.fleetwood@munz.org.nz](mailto:joe.fleetwood@munz.org.nz)

## Wellington Waterfront

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 Fax: 04 3848 766  
 Mobile: 021 606379  
 Address: PO Box 2773, Wellington  
 Email: [john.whiting@munz.org.nz](mailto:john.whiting@munz.org.nz)

## Wellington Stores and Warehouse Local 21

Phone: 04 3859 520  
 Fax: 04 3848 766  
 Address: PO Box 27004, Wellington

## Nelson

Fax: 03 5472104  
 Mobile: 027 6222691  
 Address: PO Box 5016, Nelson

## Lyttelton Local 43

Phone: 03 3288 306  
 Fax: 03 3288 798  
 Mobile: 0274 329620  
 Address: PO Box 29, Lyttelton  
 Email: [les.wells@munz.org.nz](mailto:les.wells@munz.org.nz)

## Timaru

Phone/Fax: 03 6843 364  
 Mobile: 021 2991091  
 Address: PO Box 813, Timaru

## Port Chalmers Dunedin Local 10

Phone: 03 4728 052  
 Fax: 03 4727 492  
 Mobile: 0274 377601  
 Address: PO Box 44, Port Chalmers  
 Email: [phil.adams@munz.org.nz](mailto:phil.adams@munz.org.nz)

## Bluff

Phone/Fax: 03 2128 189  
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 Address: PO Box 5, Bluff  
 Email: [ray.fife@munz.org.nz](mailto:ray.fife@munz.org.nz)



MUNZ members next to a new straddle, Centreport, Wellington, June 2009, from left Himi Bristowe, Danny Smith, Danny Curtis, John Whiting (photo by Luke Appleby)