



The Maritimes

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Conference 2009 Special



Hands off ACC

Stop the privatization of our scheme

What's going on with ACC?

The Maritime Union is opposing the "privatization by stealth" of ACC by the National Government.

The Union is part of the ACC Futures Network which is campaigning to keep ACC as it is.

If ACC or parts of it are privatized, workers will be worse off.

In 2008 the National Party was elected to government with a policy to investigate the opening of the work account of ACC to "competition" – which really means privatization.

By October 2009 this had become a clear commitment (without the promised investigation) subject only to the Government's 'Stocktake' of ACC confirming the feasibility of the policy. The Government has already said that it is likely to get the answer it wants from the Stocktake and is now speaking openly about the possibility that more of the ACC's accounts could be handed over to the private business.

The prospect of privatization of the work account is what led to the formation of the ACC Coalition.

Who and what is the ACC Futures Coalition?

The ACC Futures Coalition formed following a seminar held in September 2008 on the future of ACC in light of the policies the political parties were taking into the election.

Our aim is to keep the current model of ACC as a single, publicly owned provider and to seek to maintain and improve the scheme. We currently consist of a number of participating organisations representing treatment providers, academics, consumers and recreation providers, plus unions.

Information about us can be found on our website www.accfutures.org.nz.

Some of the reasons the Maritime Union and others oppose the privatization of ACC

- It is our scheme funded by levies paid by New Zealanders. Privatizing it will hand our money over to Australian owned insurance companies. Merrill Lynch in Australia last year predicted a \$200 million killing for insurers if ACC was privatised;

- ACC is administratively more efficient than a system managed by private sector providers. The scheme was established as a public-owned provider precisely to avoid the unnecessary costs of duplicating systems and providing a profit to insurance company shareholders;
- Levies will inevitably increase over time to meet these costs. When the work account was privatised in the late 1990s private insurers were prepared to accept losses initially as they competed for market share.

These initial losses would have to be made up at a later date.

- Employer levies are more than twice as high in Australia, Canada, and the USA where the private sector has a greater role in provider services than under ACC in NZ.

- When the work account was privatised last time unions and treatment providers reported that some employers were placing pressure on workers not to lodge claims for workplace injuries.

- When the work account was privatised last time treatment providers reported that private insurers were reluctant to approve claims and were often late in honouring invoices.

- When the work account was privatised last time workers were unsure about their entitlements and who their employer's insurer was.

- ACC is not an insurance company and the profit motive has no place in its operations. In the words of the founder of the scheme, Sir Owen Woodhouse, the scheme always had a "social welfare purpose and intent".

Overall we will end up paying more and getting less and the only beneficiaries will be the Australian insurers.

ACC's financial 'crisis'

Since the election the Government has sought to promote the idea that the ACC was in a financial crisis so severe that the only remedy was radical surgery.

The Minister even used the word "insolvent" to describe the financial state of the scheme. The truth is somewhat different.

ACC has revenue of over \$4 billion a year and expenditure of around \$3 billion a year. It also has reserves of more than \$10 billion - it is far from insolvent.

It is true that ACC has been facing increased costs as claims are increasing at a rate greater than population growth and the cost of claims is increasing at a rate higher than inflation.

The impact of the recession on investments and the change in accounting standards have also impacted on the Corporation, but the real driver for increases in levies is the commitment of the Government to fully fund ACC by building in the future costs of injuries today into today's levies. Professor Tim Hazledine has exposed the problems with this approach in this article in the NZ Herald. In it he likens full-funding of ACC to paying for all of your child's education through to their graduation from university on the day they start school aged 5.

That is not an approach we take with any other government services so why would we do it with ACC?

The answer is probably that it will make the privatization of the work (and other) accounts easier to undertake as it is the same approach that private insurers are required to use when establishing their premiums and managing their funds.

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www.flickr.com/maritimeunion

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A time of transition

by Victor Billot

There has been what might be termed a changing of the guard in the Maritime Union over the last few months. This was evident at our Triennial Conference in Wellington in October.

I thought it was the most well run conference we have had so far. It also came to my attention that we are seeing many long standing members of the Union, including officials at the national and branch level, move into retirement.

Four well known and respected officials were awarded life memberships as acknowledgement of their contribution.

But their departure leaves a gap.

This transition period will have to be managed as we are moving into uncharted waters with an economic recession and a National Government to contend with.

It is good to see we have a mix of old and new national officials following the Union elections.

I am confident that we have a good combination of officials age-wise and geographically speaking as well as representing wharf and seafaring areas of the Union.

There were a couple of remits passed at the Conference which I believe are vital to the future of the Union.

One was a commitment to youth training and education.

The other was a remit that affirmed the Maritime Union (now affiliated to the Labour Party) must also seek to support other parties who are potential allies on the left.

Both these remits are the example of the forward thinking we need to succeed as a union.

While it was good to hear from all speakers, including the international speakers, I think in future it would be useful to break the Conference up into discussion groups, and have some presentations from rank and file members, or specific sectors within the Union such as youth, women or veterans.

Having said that, there were plenty of contributions from the Conference floor and it could never be said that maritime workers are a shy and retiring bunch.

As someone into gadgets, it was interesting for me to hear some different views on new technology. Some thought as unions we need to move into the "iPod age" whereas others stressed the need for face to face organizing. I think we need both.

We've got to be able to communicate and relate using the latest tools. We've also got to always keep the focus on organizing, training, stopwork meetings, political campaigning and the social side of union life.

Transport is a global industry and our links with global unions are important to us.

At our Conference, speakers from different countries seemed to have different approaches.

Despite the different styles, the message was the same.

The future for transport workers is with progressive trade unionism backed by international solidarity and driven by the members. As this is the last issue for the year I need to give some personal thanks. Firstly to those regular or occasional contributors to the magazine, whether officials or rank and file: without your efforts the magazine would not exist.

Also special thanks to a few individuals. Edgar Spark whose efforts with our Union database have meant that our mailing list system has been improved and kept up to date, and Ramesh Pathmanathan whose administrative work keeps things ticking along.

A special thanks to Jim Swann, of Southern Colour Print, for services above and beyond the call of duty in streamlining the production of the magazine.

Finally, a thanks to Trevor Hanson. His support for the magazine since its modest beginnings in 2003 have been invaluable. He has had to front the media many times since I joined the Union and in this way he has contributed much to the high profile and respect the Maritime Union enjoys.

2009 Conference sets Union on future path



by Joe Fleetwood
General Secretary

This is my first column as the incoming General Secretary of the Maritime Union of New Zealand. I'd like to start off by thanking all members who voted in our union elections recently. It is the right and responsibility of all members to take part in this democratic process. The new leadership team is in place.

I would also like to thank the outgoing General Secretary Trevor Hanson who has provided leadership to the Union for two decades, a massive commitment by any measure.

Trevor was awarded life membership of the Union at our National Conference in October along with long serving members and officials Denis Carlisle, John O'Neill and Terry Ryan.

We know Trevor will stay in touch with the Union and we will be able to draw on his long experience of our industry in the future. Thank you comrade.

Conference

Our 2009 Conference held in Wellington was a success and we have full coverage of it in this edition of the Maritimes. The Maritime Union was honoured to have representatives from several international maritime unions present, as well as representatives from all our union branches.

There was good debate on remits and the mood was generally forward thinking. The presentations from Phil Goff (Labour Party leader), Helen Kelly and Peter Conway

(CTU), Andrew Little (EPMU) and our international guests were all thought provoking and delegates asked some good questions.

With the elections and Conference out of the way, we have a mandate and a roadmap from the membership as to where they want to see the Union going in the years ahead.

ACC

The Maritime Union is part of the campaign to protect ACC.

The ACC Futures Coalition has been established to promote the current model of ACC against attacks that claim that ACC is somehow in trouble.

The Government is testing the waters to see if they could get away with privatizing various ACC accounts and open these to competition – a plan that was briefly introduced in the 1990s and which failed. The campaign goal is to keep ACC as a publicly-owned single provider committed to the its original principles: maintaining and improving the provision of injury prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and “no fault” compensation social insurance system for all New Zealanders.

We have some more information about this campaign in this edition of the Maritimes.

Port of Timaru

The Maritime Union is part of the Timaru Port Network. This group was set up following the public meeting we organized in Timaru in September to bring together the community to discuss the future of the Port there after Fonterra withdrew their local export cargo from the Port of Timaru in favor of long distance rail.

Representatives on the network also include business, farmers and the district council.

While each of these organizations has its own distinct interests in the port, we believe that this is the first time such a diverse group has come together for some time, if ever.

The actions of Fonterra have come under close scrutiny. The national executive of our Union met with Fonterra manager Nigel Jones earlier this year and firmly expressed our concerns.

As part of the Timaru Port Network, the Maritime Union has taken a leading role in driving a debate about the future of regional ports such as Timaru. Should the future of regional ports such as Timaru be determined by the short term interests of large corporates such as Fonterra who essentially have a monopolistic effect on the market? The Maritime Union does not think so.

The Timaru Port Network has set up a meeting with the Minister of Transport Steven Joyce in December to represent our concerns.

MMP

Since 1996 New Zealand has operated under the MMP system for our general elections.

There will be referendums held on whether we should keep MMP in the next few years and already some conservative elements are putting the pressure on for a return to the old system.

There have been a few problems with MMP, but these problems are more a result of politicians who have acted badly than the system itself.

MMP is more representative and it is a fairer system.

One main problem with the old system is that it worked against the Labour Party whose working class voters were concentrated in cities and favoured the National Party whose voters were more evenly spread over town and country. As a result we had the mad situation of Labour winning more votes in many elections but still losing the election because it won fewer seats than National. Smaller parties could win large numbers of votes but the system worked against them. Since MMP was introduced, we have had nine years of Labour led Government and four of National led Government. This is because MMP is basically a fairer system.

Most arguments against MMP are negative. It is said that the old system promoted “strong Government” but if we remember the 1980s and 1990s both major political parties went rogue and swung to the political right.

There was no way of stopping them until MMP came along and gave the opportunity for other parties to influence decisions and represent the people. In the last ten years the Green Party and the Alliance Party have both contributed to Labour-led Governments and pushed worker friendly policies.

MMP is simply a system for electing MPs. In itself it doesn't mean we get good Governments that work for working people. But it does mean that a full range of political views is represented.

I look forward to working with you all in 2010, and in the meantime wish members and families all the best for the festive season.

A busy year in the maritime industry



by Phil Adams
National President

Another year is almost over and it has been a busy one for the Maritime Union.

We have seen industrial problems at the Ports of Auckland and Port Otago. Most other ports have seen union activity around looking after our members' interests whether that be individual on the job problems or wider issues.

Timaru has been the subject of a union campaign around the future of regional ports and we have organized a public meeting on this issue, as well as meetings with Fonterra, local stakeholders and the Minister of Transport.

The Union has supported campaigns to advance workers' rights including Darien Fenton's Redundancy Protection Bill and the UNITE Union's petition for a referendum to raise the minimum wage. We've also made submissions on phasing out methyl bromide, protecting ACC and promoting the maritime industry as an important part of the future of New Zealand's transport industry.

One of the good things about the Maritime Union is that it steps up to the challenge of helping out others, whether this is through donations and support many branches give to good causes in the community, our advocacy for local jobs and better conditions in the fishing industry, or our work with the ITF to sort out problems experienced by crews on overseas vessels in New Zealand waters.

Union elections

The Union has elected its new General Secretary Joe Fleetwood and Assistant General Secretary Ray Fife.

I was re-elected unopposed as National President and Garry Parsloe was re-elected unopposed as National Vice President. Results were sent out to members as a late news item in the last edition of the Maritimes.

We offer our congratulations to the successful candidates and our commiserations to others who put their name forward but did not make it through this time.

It is good to see active involvement in the Union elections as we are a democratic union whose officials are answerable to the rank and file members.

On that note we also note the retirement of Trevor Hanson who has served for many years as General Secretary of the Maritime Union and previous to that the Waterfront Workers' Union.

It will be hard to replace Trevor's knowledge of the industry and we thank Trevor for leaving the Union in good shape, having managed our administration and finances and also has taken an active role in leading the Union in the many industrial and political disputes we have seen in that time.

ACC

The Maritime Union is concerned about proposed changes to ACC. The National Government is aiming at privatizing parts of ACC and is already trying to push up levies.

The only people privatization would benefit are the Australian insurance corporations who would move in. ACC has been attacked as being in financial crisis, but this is simply not true. The last time National tampered with ACC in the 1990s it created a mess.

Even the Employers' and Manufacturers' Association in Auckland is worried about the proposed changes this time round. The Maritime Union is backing the ACC Futures campaign along with many other unions, advocacy groups, medical and health professionals.

The website is www.accfutures.org.nz

Conference 2009

The 2009 Triennial Conference of the Maritime Union was held in October in Wellington.

The Conference went well and I went away with the sense that it had been a positive and constructive meeting of our Union.

We had a number of international guests including some who had come a long distance. These guests represented some of the most active and respected Unions in the world today.

National President of the marine section of the RMT (UK) Steve Todd had to come the furthest, along with RMT rank and file delegate Tony Lloyd.

The All Japan Dockworkers' Union (ZenKowan) was represented by Deputy General Secretary Shosaku Machida. Ray Familathe, International Vice President of the ILWU attended from the USA, along with Vice President of ILWU Local 13 (Long Beach, California) Ray Benavente.

There was a solid delegation of officials and rank and file members from the MUA and we heard invigorating presentations from MUA National Secretary Paddy Crumlin and MUA West Australian Branch Secretary Chris Cain.

There was also a well-received ITF presentation from Australian ITF co-ordinator Matt Purcell and New Zealand ITF inspector Grahame MacLaren.

In addition to these international unionists the Conference was opened by Labour Party leader Phil Goff, and we heard presentations from the CTU and EPMU. There were some good discussions around remits.

Four life memberships were awarded at the Conference Dinner to Trevor Hanson, Denis Carlisle, Terry Ryan and John O'Neill.

Terry is retired and active in the Veterans' Association. Trevor, Denis and John have a long history of service to the Union and we wish them all well in their future endeavours.

We even got to listen to local musician Chris Prowse and his band play live music at the bar from his recent CD commemorating the 1951 waterfront lockout.

It was a good conference and this bodes well for the future of our Union.

On that note I wish all members, veterans, their families and friends of the Union a merry Christmas and best wishes for the New Year.

National officials elected



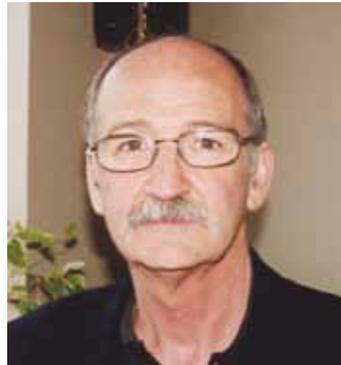
Joe Fleetwood: General Secretary



Phil Adams: National President



Ray Fife: Assistant General Secretary



Garry Parsloe: National Vice President

The Maritime Union of New Zealand has elected two new national officials in their three-yearly union elections. The new General Secretary of the Union is Joe Fleetwood of Wellington.

A new Assistant General Secretary of the Union has also been elected, Ray Fife, of Bluff.

The National President of the Maritime Union, Phil Adams of Port Chalmers, was re-elected unopposed.

The National Vice President of the Maritime Union, Garry Parsloe of Auckland, was also re-elected unopposed.

The elections took place in a postal ballot of all financial members of the Union.

The new General Secretary of the Union, Joe Fleetwood, thanked members for their support and thanked all members who took part in the democratic process of the elections.

Job losses avoided at Port Otago

The Maritime Union of New Zealand has reached an agreement with Port Otago Limited that will prevent job losses. Maritime Union National President Phil Adams says a meeting of 150 cargo handlers held on 19 November at Port Chalmers voted in favour of a proposal hammered out by the Unions and the Company. Members of the Maritime Union of New Zealand and the Rail and Maritime Transport Union attended the meeting. Mr Adams says the proposal will see no compulsory redundancies amongst the workforce.

"We believe the workforce will respond to the Company's efforts by continuing to ensure a high level of productivity." He says some outstanding issues around the work force structure were also addressed by the Unions.

"This is a mutually acceptable solution for Port Otago and its workforce and we are very happy that after some time a negotiated solution has been put in place."

A number of voluntary redundancies are occurring at Port Otago.

"It is a difficult economic period, but the Port has weathered difficult times before and we are confident we will this time as well."

Port Otago Limited is owned by the people of Otago through the Otago Regional Council.

Housing costs hit workers hard

The CTU is calling for a major boost to investment in low-cost housing.

Recent figures show that despite rising average incomes, accommodation costs are still hurting low and middle-income families.

"A particular reason for this is rent" said CTU Economist Bill Rosenberg.

"Those households with lower income are more likely to rent than own. So, while reduced interest rates have seen the costs of servicing a mortgage fall, median expenditure on rent has gone up by 9.5 per cent."

"Now is just the right time to significantly increase the funding for low-cost rental housing, through Housing New Zealand and local government."

Nineteen per cent of renters, as opposed to only six percent of homeowners, spend more than 40 per cent of their household income on housing – that's over 100,000 households.

With one in four households paying at least a quarter of their income to housing (either rent or mortgage) it's still hard going in the bottom half of the labour market.

"Since the data for this survey was collected, mortgage costs have also begun to rise again," added Rosenberg.

"Home owners will soon be hurting as much as those renting. The Government should be looking at options such as shared equity and low-cost loans for new houses."

Unemployment rising

The Council of Trade Unions says more can be done to assist the unemployed. The unemployment rate, as measured by the Household Labour Force Survey (HLFS) published today, went up to 6.5 percent in the September quarter which is 150,000 people.

CTU Secretary Peter Conway says now would be a good time for the Government to increase funding for skills training for those unemployed seeking a job.

He says that recent unemployment benefit statistics showed a slight dip below 60,000 but this was well up on 17,700 from mid 2008.

The HLFS shows that there are 150,000 unemployed, 122,100 workers wanting to work more hours and a total of 254,000 people who are jobless once those discouraged from seeking work are added to the figures.

Maori unemployment is at 14.2 percent, Pacific people at 12.3 percent and youth unemployment (15-19 years) is at 25.1 percent.

"For all the talk that the recession is over, this shows that unemployed workers are continuing to bear the brunt of a recession caused by the global financial crisis."

"More needs to be done to assist these workers."

For more information see www.union.org.nz

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Maritime Union members were among workers on the Wellington rally to support low paid public sector workers on 27 November (photo courtesy SFWU)

Low waged workers reject "pay freeze"

Thousands of protestors took to the streets across New Zealand on 27 November to demand an end to the "wage freeze" on low paid public and community sector workers.

Demonstrations in 27 towns and cities from Kaitia to Invercargill coincided with strike action by workers hit by the pay freeze.

The strikes involved public hospital service workers and community support workers employed by IHC/IDEA Services New Zealand who belong to the Service and Food Workers' Union, and South Island hospital administration staff who belong to the Public Service Association. School support staff who belong to the New Zealand Educational Institute also joined the rallies in advance of their own Fair Deal day of action.

CTU President Helen Kelly says the Government has to realise that a wage freeze on low paid workers is a backward step.

"It's backward because low paid workers will spend all their salary which is good for the economy. It's backward because we will never catch up with Australia if we can't even increase the lowest incomes. It's backward because wages elsewhere in the economy are still going up.

Most of all, it's backward because the cost of living is still going up too, so a wage freeze really amounts to a wage cut for those least able to afford it."

"And where will these essential public services go by freezing the pay of school support staff, cleaners and orderlies, and administrators in our schools, hospitals, social services and government departments? If the Government doesn't recognise that those workers are vital then those services are only going to go backwards, to the detriment of everyone in New Zealand."

The three unions are taking the collective action in support of a wide range of workers, many of whom are paid only marginally above the statutory minimum wage.

They include: school support staff; hospital cleaners, food service staff and orderlies; South Island hospital administration staff; and workers supporting the elderly and disabled.

Unions Creating Alternatives: CTU Biennial Conference 2009

by Garry Parsloe
National Vice President

On 21–22 October 2009 Maritime Union General Secretary Trevor Hanson, Assistant General Secretary Russell Mayn and I attended the Council of Trade Unions Biennial Conference.

CTU President Helen Kelly gave the opening address. She spoke on all the damage that the National Government intends to impose on ACC, workers rights, employment issues, lockouts, current disputes, union membership, union coverage and the important role that the CTU plays for workers.

CTU Secretary Peter Conway then expanded on procedural matters, before we dealt with the apologies and obituaries. Peter then addressed the financial report. He reported on our present financial situation and went on to say that we need to work within our budget. Peter concluded this session with a Biennial report.

Just prior to morning smoko we went into the remit session.

There was a discussion on vulnerable workers especially around labour hire companies and contracting out. Pay equity was discussed and agreed. Gender equity was discussed at length and received by conference.

Other remits discussed were adult education, Pacific Island workers, Union education in schools, global economic crisis, training resource, treaty inclusion in employment law, community relationships and privatization of prisons.

All of the above issues were discussed at length and endorsed by conference.

After morning smoko Prime Minister John Key addressed the conference. He spoke about the end of the recession stating that we are now out of the recession and moving forward.

He went on to talk about the New Zealand economy, unemployment, youth employment, youth education, the 90 day bill, employment law and the Governments move to implement changes to the ACC. After the Prime Ministers presentation he fielded questions from Union delegates on wage levels, prison labour, job cuts, ACC and low wage workers.

Whilst he fielded the above questions he had difficulty in answering them and mainly avoided the direct answer to the questions in favour of speaking around them.

After lunch Helen Kelly addressed the Conference under the heading of "Union Change".

Four things that need to change:

The law needs to change (to make Collective Bargaining easy to access).

Unions need to change (to make membership easily available).



CTU President Helen Kelly

Union leadership needs to be systematically developed (to make sure we have the leaders we need).

Unions need better resourcing (so we can do our job).

After afternoon smoko we had the report back from the workshops then returned to discuss the report of the remit committee.

Day Two

Day two opened with a presentation from Labour Party leader Phil Goff.

Phil spoke on all the good work that the last Labour Government achieved including minimum wage, four weeks' annual leave and working for families.

He went on to talk about unemployment, the economy, the global crisis, the need for fairer redundancy payments and a better sharing of wealth.

Phil concluded by pointing out all the dangers that are contained within the National Governments proposed changes to ACC. The next speaker was the ACTU Secretary Jeff Lawrence.

Jeff spoke about the excellent working relationship between Australian and New Zealand Unions. He went on to talk about "Your Rights at Work" campaign and how successful the campaign had been.

Jeff then addressed the current industrial situation in Australia and where new legislation will assist in Collective Bargaining. Next speaker was Russell Norman from the Green Party. Russell stated that his party has never flinched from working class issues and has always supported workers and their Unions whilst also working hard to protect the planet.

Prior to morning smoko there was a presentation from Bill Rosenberg under the heading of "Alternative Political Economy Presentation".

After morning smoko we went back into workshops to address campaigning and the Alternative Economic Strategy.

After lunch on day two we had a presentation from the CTU Runanga then the report back from the workshops before we discussed the resolutions from the Union Change paper and the 2009 conference resolution.

At this part of the conference both Mike Sweeney and Trevor Hanson gave their farewell speeches to the conference.

The conference stood as one to honour both Mike and Trevor for their contributions to the Trade Union movement. We all sang "Solidarity Forever" and then headed home from a most productive conference.

For more information see:
www.union.org.nz

ITF Oceania

Organising Globally Seminar

9-11 November, Sydney, Australia

by Garry Parsloe
National Vice President

The welcome address was delivered by ITF Asia/Pacific Regional Secretary Mahendra Sharma.

He spoke on some of the campaigns that the ITF is involved in.

The next speaker was ITF Vice President Asia/Pacific Region and National Secretary MUA Paddy Crumlin.

Paddy spoke on the important role of the ITF in the Asia/Pacific Region, then went on to talk about the need to organise in the region.

He also addressed the massive growth in the Oil and Gas Industry in the region.

Next speaker was ITF General Secretary David Cockroft.

David spoke about the make up of the Asia/Pacific Region and the importance of having a strong voice in the region.

The next speaker was New South Wales Premier Nathan Rees, who spoke on industrial relations, work choices, health and safety in employment and free trade agreements.

After morning smoko on day one Warren Smith of the MUA chaired the panel discussion on Climate Change in the Transport Industry.

The panel was made up with David Cockroft (ITF), Paddy Crumlin (MUA) and Tony Maher (CFMEU).

All speakers addressed the dangers of climate change and the need to do something about the associated problems especially from the Trade Union movement.

After lunch on day one we had a session headed "White Ribbon", the elimination of violence against women.

The speakers were Kevin Maher and Mick Doleman.

The next session was headed "Key Issues" including Pacific Islands and Timor Leste.

There was a good presentation and debate around offshore oil and gas issues.

There was a country report from Fiji, and a DVD presentation from ACTU President Sharan Burrow, ACTU Secretary Jeff Lawrence, NZCTU President Helen Kelly, MUA Secretary Paddy Crumlin and AWU Secretary Paul Howes.

A lot of the above was under the heading "Developments and opportunities in the sub-region under a Rudd Labor Government."

Day two opened with a presentation on the global economic crisis. Speakers spoke on how the crisis impacts on workers and that unions and their members must do what they can to lessen the impact on workers' families.

There was a Veterans' report from President of MUA Veterans Association Fred Krausert.

After morning smoko we had a Youth presentation from North Queensland organizer Jamie Midson then MUA Sydney Branch Secretary Paul McAleer who spoke on issues affecting youth in the Oceania Region.

In the session headed "Review of existing regional ITF organising projects, campaigns and initiatives", there were sub sessions on ITF Seafarer Union development programme projects, ITF Global freight forwarding project and offshore oil and gas initiatives.

So comrades, as you can see from the above we had a very productive and full on Seminar/Meeting.



Contributions welcome.

All members are welcome to send in contributions to **The Maritimes**.

We need photos, letters, articles, comments and anything else you can think of.

If there is something you'd like to see in **The Maritimes**, send it to the Editor:

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Maritime Union of New Zealand Conference 2009



The conference gives a standing ovation to retiring General Secretary Trevor Hanson

by Victor Billot

The Maritime Union of New Zealand held its third Triennial Conference from 27–29 October 2009 in Wellington, New Zealand. Ten representatives of the Maritime Union of Australia attended, as well as two representatives each from the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (West Coast USA, Canada, Alaska and Hawaii), the Rail and Maritime Transport Union (United Kingdom) and ZenKowan, the All-Japan Dockworkers Union. 29 delegates and 25 observers from the Maritime Union of New Zealand attended.

Conference opens

The Conference was opened on the morning of Tuesday 27 October by the Leader of the Labour Party Hon. Phil Goff. He welcomed delegates and acknowledged retiring General Secretary Trevor Hanson, and thanked the Union for their support of the Labour Party. Mr Goff spoke about the effects of the current recession on New Zealand workers and the lack of support coming from the National Government. He criticized the calls for a wage freeze from Minister of Finance Bill English. He noted that their tax cuts had benefited the very wealthy most while doing nothing for most workers. The 90 day bill and the attempts to start privatizing ACC showed where the current Government was heading and social services were under threat.

He was joined by Labour MP Darien Fenton who spoke briefly on her Redundancy Protection Bill which would soon come before Parliament. She explained the importance of the Bill as many workers had no redundancy protection in their employment agreements and at a time of rising unemployment this was very serious. She asked the Maritime Union to support the campaign and distributed some campaign postcards for members to fill in and send to the Prime Minister.

National President

The National President of the Maritime Union of New Zealand Phil Adams then addressed the Conference. Phil welcomed delegates and observers, and gave a special welcome to the overseas guests from Australia, USA, Japan and UK. He said the Maritime Union was a numerically small union that punched above its weight. The pressure was on with the economic crisis and the election of an anti-worker Government. The global recession was caused by the unregulated operations of the finance sector under a free market capitalist system. However those who had caused the crisis were being bailed out while workers were expected to pay the cost. It is obvious that organized labour in New Zealand and elsewhere is under attack on many fronts.

In recent months we have seen a string of industrial attacks by employers on Telecom lines engineers, dairy workers, concrete workers, public service workers, bus drivers, cleaners, corrections workers and of course maritime workers. "The Maritime Union has played its part in resisting these attacks but we have to realize that this will be an ongoing situation. There must be a united response from workers and Unions." He noted the good result in the Port of Napier dispute in 2007 and thanked all those who had supported this struggle, especially the international who had offered major support. He talked about the lack of a transport strategy for New Zealand and how this was causing problems in the industry. He reminded members that the Union elections were underway and all members should vote. He congratulated the four members John O'Neill, Terry Ryan, Denis Carlisle and Trevor Hanson who were receiving life membership of the Union. He closed by saying Unions were here to stay. By uniting and acting collectively, workers can then face employers from a position of strength.

Returning Officer Report

The Conference went over the approval of various Union committees including the Finance Committee, trustees of Union trusts, auditors, solicitors and the returning officer.



Solidarity with the ILWU Borax miners in California

This was followed by a report by the National Returning Officer for the Maritime Union, John Whiting.

Mr Whiting said that all branches had been advised on 27 August that nominations were open for President, Vice President, General Secretary and Assistant General Secretary.

The nominations closed on 28 September and the following valid nominations were received.

President: Phil Adams (elected unopposed)

Vice President: Garry Parsloe (elected unopposed)

General Secretary: Joe Fleetwood and Russell Mayn

Assistant General Secretary: Victor Billot and Ray Fife

A national postal ballot had been prepared for the positions of the General Secretary and Assistant General Secretary.

Ballot papers together with the candidate's statements had been posted to all the members on 12 October.

Those ballots had to be received back by 12 noon on Friday 6 November to be counted.

Mr Whiting commented that in his view Conference and the incoming National Executive must update and amend our rules for union elections.

This included the need to ensure that members were able to attend candidates tours meetings.

Mr Whiting noted his thanks to Edgar Spark, Ramesh Pamathanan, and Dave Butler for their assistance in the election process.

He also thanked former returning officer Phil Mansor for his guidance.

USA

Following lunch of Tuesday, the first international presentation came from Ray Familathe, International Vice President of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU).

The ILWU represents workers on the West Coast USA, Canada, Alaska and Hawaii.

Mr Familathe offered the best wishes of the ILWU and its national officers.

He acknowledged a number of MUNZ officials who had played a major role including past President Dave Morgan and former Assistant General Secretary Terry Ryan.

He also thanked Trevor Hanson, Joe Fleetwood, Peter Harvey and Graham McKean, who were the MUNZ delegation who had travelled to the West Coast USA in 2002 when the ILWU was locked out by employers with support from United States President George Bush.

"I want to thank those Brothers for coming up, walking the picket line with us when we were locked out, it was a really difficult time for us, many of our members had never faced any type of major labour disputes in their career since they had come onto the waterfront," he said.

"Having people like Trevor (Hanson) who has experienced many, many difficult situations like that in his life sharing his experience and lifting the morale of our Rank and File members in the ports of

Los Angeles and Long Beach down with Local 13, 63 and 94 – I just want to extend gratitude for all of that."

Mr Familathe spoke on the effect of Wal-Mart and the shift of manufacturing to China.

This had led to a large increase in the ILWU membership prior to the economic crisis as there was a major demand for labour to handle the large amount of goods coming into the USA from China. There had been ongoing problems leading up to the economic crisis with how the US economy was being run and the resulting recession had hit dockworkers hard.

Pressure came on from employers. The ILWU had supported Barack Obama and were optimistic that he would make positive change.

One of the major issues was trying to establish national health care. This is such a major issue in the USA the ILWU have to negotiate health care as a vital part of their collective employment agreements.

Mr Familathe also noted the Employee Free Choice Act was a major political issue that was aimed at improving the ability of workers to organize.

He also spoke about the struggle to organize workers at Blue Diamond and a new campaign to organize boron miners in inland California.

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Maritime youth, from left:
Bradley Clifford, Tracey Foster and Jason Simi of Wellington



Napier members at Conference 2009, from left: Dave McKenna, Alan Burke, Greg Keen



ITF representatives:
New Zealand inspector Grahame McLaren and Australian co-ordinator Matt Purcell



Wellington Seafarers Branch observers, from left:
Mike Shakespeare, Tania Kahui and Ray Cook



Former Presidents:
former President New Zealand Seafarers Union and Maritime Union of New Zealand Dave Morgan with former President of the Waterfront Workers Union and current Secretary of Lyttelton Branch Les Wells



Wellington Seafarers Alan Windsor and George Clark with Pat Harkess (MUA)

Photos by Alan Windsor and Victor Billot

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Mr Familaithe introduced fellow international guest ILWU Local 13 Vice President Ray Benavente from Long Beach, California.

Mr Benavente spoke briefly on the importance of union education for young members to encourage them to take responsibility for their Union.

UK

The next International guest speaker was National Secretary of the marine division of the RMT Steve Todd.

He was accompanied by rank and file seafarer Tony Lloyd.

This UK Union represents many maritime workers as well as rail workers (including the London Underground) and is one of the fastest growing and most militant UK unions with around 80,000 members.

Mr Todd works with seafarers and said in the last few years he had worked alongside MUNZ on issues such as the Seafarers Bill of Rights which is known as the MLC, the Maritime Labour Convention.

He explained how there had been a massive reduction in numbers of merchant seafarers in the UK.

There was a problem with social dumping (cross border labour) and the use of overseas workers in the industry who are exploited and have poor wages and conditions.

The RMT had no problem with non-UK seafarers in the industry provided they had the same conditions as UK workers. There was a lack of jobs and a lack of training in the industry both for seafarers and dockers, with an aging workforce and very few young people coming through. The UK Labour Government had not been good for workers and would probably lose the next election to the Tories (Conservatives) who would be bad as well. He also spoke about the vital role of international union solidarity in dealing with shipping giant Maersk.

Japan

Deputy General Secretary All Japan Dockworkers Union (Zen Kowan) Shosaku Machida addressed the Conference and was assisted by Ms Takako Uchida, his translator from the Japan office of the ITF. Mr Machida brought greetings from Zenkowan, which was established in 1946. Zenkowan's history of international activities started in 1959, when Zenkowan hosted the first Asia Pacific Dockers' Conference in Tokyo, responding to the proposal made by Mr Harry Bridges, the then President of ILWU.

Zenkowan friendship with MUNZ has also had a long history; it started with the visits of the then General Secretary, Mr E.G. (Ted) Thompson and the then

Assistant General Secretary, Mr Sam Jennings to Japan in 1974 and 1976 respectively, followed by our then Vice President, Mr Onohara, visit to New Zealand in 1978.

Since then the two unions have continued the exchange programme every four years and it continues until today.

"In this way, the friendship of our two organisations has been cemented through years of strenuous efforts and comradeship among our great predecessors."

In Japan there had been a change of Government in August 2009 with the Democratic Party winning against the Liberal Democratic Party which had been in Government for many years.

Their right wing policies had been bad for working people especially with the replacement of permanent workers by non-regular workers (casualization.)

There were a large number of "working poor" in Japan, especially since the economic crisis, and they were not protected by labour laws.

Social security and health care were other major issues for Japanese workers.

The port industry had been hit by deregulation and use of non-regular workers, as a result of the previous Government policies, but there was hope there would now be a change of direction.

Mr Machida said ZenKowan will continue to pressure shipping lines and shippers in order to protect livelihoods, rights and employment of Dockers.

He said he had heard of similar problems faced by New Zealand workers and congratulated MUNZ on their stance.

He concluded by saying that all maritime workers on the Pacific Rim should work together, and presented a gift of a traditional Samurai (warrior) helmet from ZenKowan.

West Australian Offshore Industry

Chris Cain, the President of the West Australian Branch Maritime Union of Australia gave a forceful presentation on the offshore industry in Western Australia and began by making some observations on the state of the union movement.

"If there is anything that you are going to take from this conference brothers and sisters it is to organize workers on the ground no matter whether they are black white or yellow."

"Our job as trade unionists is to organize and the challenge for us all today is that when we leave this conference we go back down to the ports, we go back on to the ships and we say quite clearly how important it is to organize labour."

He explained how the memorandum of understanding saw New Zealand and UK seafarers working in the Australian offshore on the same terms and conditions as Australian seafarers and this was a result of organized labour.

There was 97% membership of the Union amongst the 3000 workers in the Western Australia offshore industry.

There were multi-billion dollar projects coming on line in the offshore in West Australia.

Mr Cain said it was important to bring on the youth of the Union and as part of this process the MUA was running a youth conference in Brisbane.

"We are ready to fight and we will fight, believe me the Maritime Union of Australia will stand shoulder to shoulder with any progressive left wing militant union to enhance wages and conditions and jobs for all workers around the world."

Following this presentation the Conference broke for the day and enjoyed some entertainment at the bar from Chris Prowse and band who played songs from the recently released album "Trouble on the waterfront" that commemorated the 1951 waterfront dispute.

Day Two

Wednesday 28 October started with a report from the outgoing General Secretary Trevor Hanson.

Following this report the Conference worked through the first session of remits.

Council of Trade Unions

New Zealand Council of Trade Unions Secretary Peter Conway and President Helen Kelly spoke to the Conference after lunch on Wednesday.

Mr Conway addressed the conference first. He said the Maritime Union always had a direct approach, and in tough times "we certainly need unions like yours."

The Government was on the offensive in a number of areas and it was a case of "a death by a thousand cuts" with the ACC, health and safety, pay equity, and wage freezes.

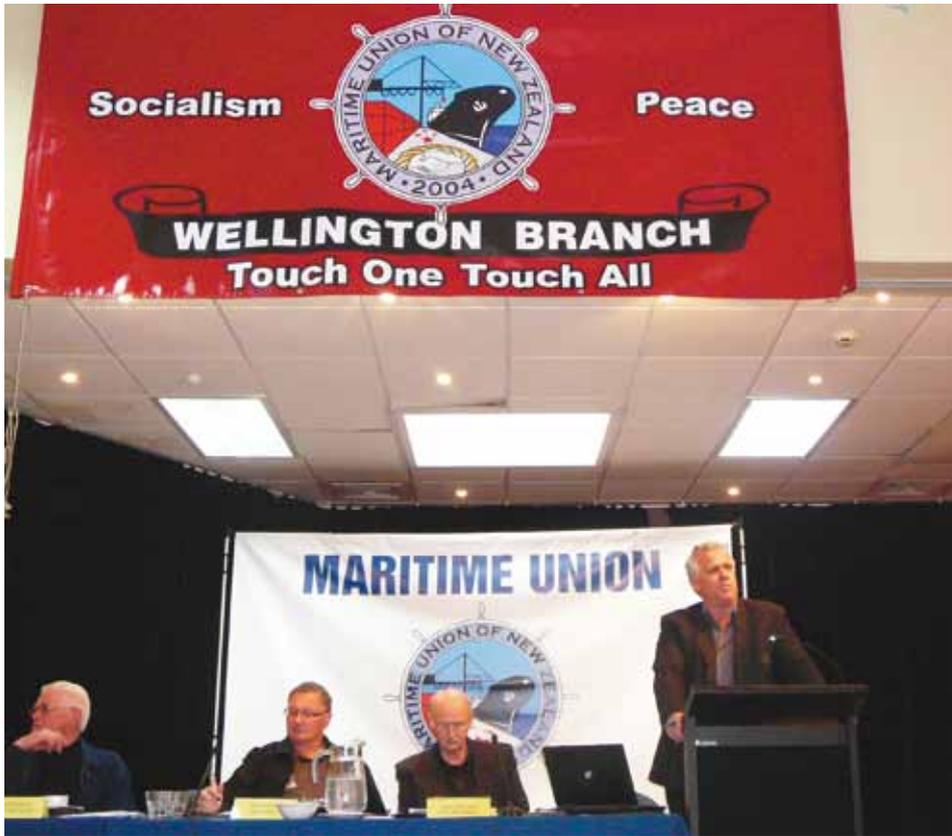
The 90 day bill had undermined job security.

"If you are two months on the job in one of those small firms and you happen to point out that there should be a safety guard on that particular piece of equipment and 10 minutes later you are sacked. You've got no right of appeal, nothing, gone."

However there had been a small rise in the minimum wage which showed we couldn't assume the worst all of the time. There had been growing employer militancy seen in disputes such as VisionStream/ Telecom and Open Country Cheese.

"We are seeing a lot of solidarity in the union movement at the moment and that is very heartening but we are being stretched and there is a risk of a damaging rerun of the 1990s."

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MUA National Secretary Paddy Crumlin addresses the Conference

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Mr Conway spoke about the Alternative Economic Strategy that he and CTU economist Bill Rosenberg had worked on. There were three reasons for such a strategy.

Firstly, business as usual under capitalism results in inequity. An example was Hedge Fund managers in USA that earned 23 times the average wage and the ratio in the top 500 top firms of 319 to 1 between CEO salaries and the average worker's salary.

"That has become the norm. So business as usual is resulting in huge inequities and that is not even getting into global inequality and massive poverty in some parts of the world."

Secondly the global financial crisis showed there needed to be better supervision, regulations, state control and ownership in the financial sector.

"If they are too big to fail then they are big enough to be state owned or regulated."

"Thirdly, while the last Labour led Government swung things around impressively since 2000, New Zealand is still and largely in the grip of a neo-liberal political economy."

So the alternative frame work that we came out with is based on three things: Sustainable economic development, decent work in a good life and thirdly voice, participation, decision in the workplace economy.

Some of the proposals in the Alternative Economic Strategy included buying back the Telecom network, compulsory super from employers rising to 6%, higher tax

rate for those on \$150,000 or above, land tax, capital gains tax, a green new deal around green investment funds, taking advantage of Kiwi Saver funds and that building up a stake of ownership of the New Zealand economy.

CTU President Helen Kelly thanked the Maritime Union for its level of involvement and how it always turned up to support other workers which often gave a much needed boost.

Ms Kelly said the CTU was making changes to build a stronger union movement.

"Only 22% of workers in the country belong to a trade union. Only 9% of workers in the private sector have the privilege of union membership and we know that union membership has great benefit to working people and we can't be happy with that sort of union coverage." The CTU had identified four areas that need change to make union membership available to a lot more workers. The law needs to change, the way that unions operate needs to change, we need to build the leadership to bring about that change and make those thresholds lower, and we also need to be smarter about how we use the resources we have got.

"The Union movement in New Zealand should bring about the improvement in all working people's lives. It should be institutions that are capable of looking after all workers' interests and all workers should be able to easily get involved and access union membership."

Ms Kelly discussed ways in which a new structure could be set up to help people

get involved in unions that were in areas where it was difficult to join a Union. Union leadership training and using new membership systems were two other areas that needed work, as was the use of social websites like Facebook that were very popular amongst younger people. She finished by acknowledging the work of Trevor Hanson over the years and thanked the Maritime Union for its active role in promoting workers' interests through its public statements.

Offshore Oil and Gas Alliance

EPMU industrial officer Paul Tolich gave a background on the development of the Offshore Oil and Gas Alliance.

MUNZ and EPMU had negotiated a memorandum of understanding and agreed on demarcations and agreed to cooperate.

This was followed up by working with the Hydro Carbon Alliance between the Australian Workers' Union and the MUA. "That was the beginning of the four unions starting to work more closely together." A recent agreement in Taranaki had seen a 50/50 manning agreement for the four unions, EPMU, AWU, MUNZ and the MUA.

"This achieved things that we don't think of being achieved before which was we are going to get Australian rates paid in New Zealand dollars. It will be a benchmark for that industry. The first time I think it has been achieved."

The use of strategic alliances had not been around for a long time but was beginning to be used more.

The EPMU had been working with the AWUNZ (Northern). Transport unions had recently met with the CTU and Pilots Association to work together.

Mr Tolich gave some background on some of the disputes and events he had been involved with MUNZ and its officials especially Trevor Hanson.

EPMU

EPMU Secretary and President of the Labour Party Andrew Little gave a report. He said how the EPMU and MUNZ had started working closely together after the 2005 Southwards dispute in Petone.

"It was MUNZ members who actually took action and enabled us to bring that dispute to a head and to a satisfactory resolution."

He said the role of MUNZ in many disputes has been absolutely critical. The ability to manage the flow of goods that many of the employers of our members want to put across the wharf was critical.

"The reality is what we are seeing today is companies, particularly large corporates are using their power, using whatever legal means and devices they have got to

deprive workers of their legitimate rights or their employment protections and to exert even more control over workers." Mr Little spoke about the two major disputes that the EPMU had faced, with VisionStream/Telecom and Zeal320/Air New Zealand, which MUNZ had assisted with. He also spoke about the actions of the National Government especially with the ACC issue.

MUA

General Secretary of the Maritime Union of Australia Paddy Crumlin presented the last talk for the day shortly after flying in from overseas.

Mr Crumlin said that it was important to have strong unions to gain the respect of the employer.

"It's the respect that's got the hard edge of fear. If you aren't feared in the workplace, if you haven't at the end of the day got the respect on the capacity to do things and to change things and to win things then unionism is very bleak going forward."

He discussed the need to have an organizing strategy. The MUA was developing the ways it communicated with its members, it had a new website and had a Film unit of young maritime workers.

He spoke about unity and talked about the ITF and the need for it to be active and campaigning.

The support of dockworkers was central to the ITF as they supported it through the inspectors on vessels and also financially. There were struggles around the world ranging from the EPMU dispute to the Boron miners with the ILWU to the assassination of Pedro Zamora in Guatemala where the ITF had worked.

Conference dinner

Delegates and union guests enjoyed a conference dinner on the evening of Wednesday 28 October at the Brentwood Hotel.

Four life memberships were awarded to long serving officials and members Trevor Hanson, Terry Ryan, John O'Neill and Denis Carlisle.

Tributes were made to retiring MUA officials Jimmy Tannock and Rick Newlyn for their great contribution over the years to MUNZ.

Thanks to the Wellington Seafarers' Branch who organized the evenings proceedings including the popular band and karaoke that continued on into the small hours.

Thursday 29 October

The final day of the Conference had several remit sessions and included a conference photo which is reproduced in this edition of the Maritimes.



Maritime music: Assistant General Secretary Russell Mayn (left) and Wellington Waterfront Branch Secretary John Whiting with members of the Chris Prowse Band following their performance at the Conference, from second left – Tessa Rain, Eva Prowse, Chris Prowse and Bill Hickman.

ITF

There was a joint ITF presentation from ITF Australia Co-ordinator Matty Purcell and New Zealand ITF co-ordinator Grahame McLaren.

Mr Purcell spoke about the close working relationship the ITF in the two countries have with each other.

Some key campaigns he spoke about included the Leonhardt and Blumberg campaign and the ANL campaign which had both been successful.

There were changes expected to the Flag of Convenience campaign with the focus on a fair and equitable system for seafarers worldwide rather than national flags.

"We have created a system whereby with the IBF, International Bargaining Forum and the TCC agreements, we have been able to lift the bar if you like, lift the standards for seafarers internationally." The ITF had to ensure that dockers were organized.

Work was going into organizing unions from labour supply countries that didn't have follow up services for their members. Grahame MacLaren outlined the plan for ITF training for MUNZ members.

The ITF had been active in New Zealand in areas such as IIF agreements, repatriations of overseas seafarers and dismissal, back pay and medical issues.

From the 23 - 26 of June in Istanbul Turkey the 140 or so ITF inspectors from all over the globe, along with the ITF Secretariat and guest speakers gathered for the 2009 Worldwide ITF Inspectors Seminar.

The main focus in Istanbul was the new Maritime Labour Convention.

"The aim of the seminar was for us as Inspectors to try and understand how this comprehensive new convention can be applied to improve seafarers' lives."

Communications

Communications Officer Victor Billot gave a short report on communications.

He reported on how communications which included publications such as the Maritimes magazine, media relations, websites and communication with members had helped in a number of areas including the 2007 Port of Napier dispute. Other areas of work included submissions to Government, political campaigns, reports and speech writing.

He said it was urgent to start developing and training younger members.

Corrections

President of the Corrections Association Bevan Hanlon was asked to say a few words as he was in attendance.

He spoke about the history of CANZ and how it had a good relationship with the Maritime Union.

He spoke on some issues including double bunking with prisoners and prison privatization, which he described as a method of attacking wages and conditions of the workforce around the world.

Superannuation

The final presentation from the day was from the Waterfront Industry Superannuation Funds (WISF) and the Seafarers Retirement Fund (SRF). WISF Chairman David Young, WISF Director Paul Martin and SRF Chairman David Scott reported on the progress of the funds and answered questions from the floor.

Following this final presentation, some last minute business was dealt with and President Phil Adams declared the Conference in recess until 2012.



International guests: Maritime Union of New Zealand National President Phil Adams (centre) with All Japan Dockworkers Union Deputy General Secretary Shosaku Machida (left) and translator Takako Uchida of the ITF Japanese Council of Transport Workers' Unions (right)



International guests: from left, Maritime Union of Australia WA Branch Organizer Mick Canning, Maritime Union of Australia WA Branch Secretary Chris Cain and Maritime Union of New Zealand Wellington Branch Secretary (now General Secretary) Joe Fleetwood



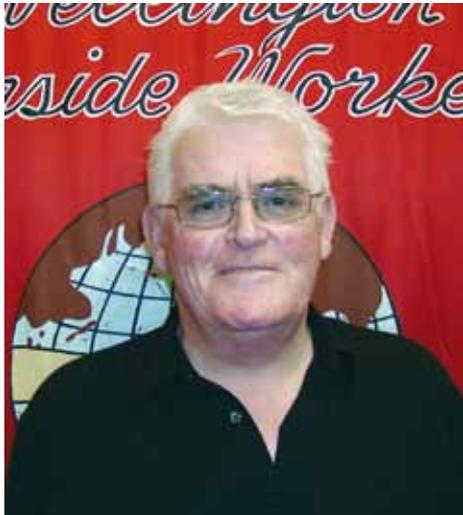
International guests: from left, RMT (UK) National Secretary (Marine Division) Steve Todd, rank and file RMT seafarer Tony Lloyd, ILWU Local 13 Vice President Ray Benavente, and ILWU International Vice President Ray Familathe



International guests: MUA representatives from left, Sydney Branch Assistant General Secretary Joe Deakin, Newcastle Branch Deputy General Secretary Len Covell, Steve Paras (Newcastle Branch) and Kevin Fennessey (Melbourne Branch)

Trevor Hanson valedictory speech

Maritime Union of New Zealand 2009 Conference



By Trevor Hanson

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all guests and members to our 2009 Triennial Conference of the Maritime Union of New Zealand.

As you are aware this is my last conference, and in nine days time I will have completed 50 years of working life. For the past 37 years I have been an active unionist. These years have been kind to me, my time as a union official has been very rich in human experience and I have met an amazing range of personalities. The job has always been about the rights of workers, and wrongs to workers, and I can honestly say that every day I have learned something new about human nature.

As part of the experience I learnt the trade of how to deal with and defy employers, or any one else who has attacked our Union, or kindred workers.

At age 27 I joined the Timaru Branch of Waterfront Workers' Union as a rank and file worker where I was introduced to active unionism.

My role as an official at the port of Timaru came through a branch election when nominations for our Branch Executive were about to close.

There were not enough candidates standing, and the gang I was working in decided that one of us should stand. They picked me and said you won't go over the line but at least we'll have a vote. They were wrong – I was elected – and they unwittingly set me on a rollercoaster ride of highs and lows for the next 33 years as a union official.

I can say the first part of this journey was mostly enjoyable and fulfilling, as the regulated society we lived in was good for workers, families and unions.

My predecessor President of the Timaru Branch, Lloyd Jenkin called me aside when I got elected and said to me there are three rules you need to learn – they are never talk to an employer without a witness, always take written notes, and never drink alcohol during work hours.

Those rules are just as valid today as they were then. I admit that although I stuck to the rules at work, I have always enjoyed a few after work.

Recession

The current recession is undoubtedly the worst downturn since the 1930s. It is a recession that definitely had all of the ingredients to cause world wide labour struggles.

Despite the premature celebrations that it has all just sailed past us, we can be sure that the roll on effects and instability could continue for years to come.

It is the fourth cycle since the mid 1960s when the bandages have been applied to keep the system going.

The developed world, including New Zealand has experienced the highs and lows of these cycles. Poorer nations have fared worse, with genocide, terrorism, war, crime and exploitation blighting the lives of millions if not billions.

Few would have predicted the reverse of history, with many of the hard won gains of working people around the world being reversed and obliterated in a few short years.

Many of the words we now hear came from this era – the demands for competition, privatization, casualization, flexibility, all to produce more profits for employers.

Globalization

The shipping industry was the first globalized industry and first saw practices that would soon become common, with the removal of the developed world's crews and replaced with cheap labour beginning some 50 years ago and promoted under the Flag of Convenience system.

The first direct attack on New Zealand waterfront workers was October 1989 when the Waterfront Industry Commission was finished. This saw 1700 jobs go from the industry.

Many workers ended up working for employers they didn't want to work for, but if they wanted a job they had little choice.

Many then lost their jobs through liquidations, redundancies and

restructuring, and the increased casualisation across all ports.

I don't have to spell out the damage of this period. The growth of company culture, the effects of the Employment Contracts Act, and the growth of yellow unions, all took their toll.

This all happened at a time of decline in conventional cargoes and increasing use of containers, and larger container vessels. Seafarers were under attack with the loss of the corner system and section 198 of the Maritime Transport Act (1994) which allowed overseas ships including Flag of Convenience vessels to carry domestic cargo on the New Zealand coast.

Followed by the loss of the Trans Tasman vessels, this left tankers, cement boats, Pacifica and Inter Island Ferries as the only permanent employment available.

The remainder of New Zealand seafarers were then dependent on casual employment.

Seafarers have had to roll with the punches. Over the last few years, an agreement with the MUA has provided good employment opportunities in the Australian offshore, but there is no long term job security for these workers. Fishermen have been attempting to get into the industry without correct qualifications.

Yellow Unions

The most serious issue we face is the formation of company unions by aggressive employers.

This is done entirely for the purpose of undermining genuine unions. Under current legislation there is no serious examination of company unions connection with management.

Anti-union employers use a small quantity of anti unionists as the core of their workforce and rely on a continual turnover of semi-casual labour.

The first experience was with a group of ex-members from Tauranga who had taken redundancy in 1989 and were then employed by ISO and moved in on work in Gisborne.

Years of conflict took place as ISO attempted to operate as a suitcase stevedore, turning up in different ports with a short term casual labour force overseen by a small group of permanents under direct control of their boss.

This happened in Gisborne, Tauranga, Napier and all other North island ports, followed up by attacks in the South Island where ISO operated under the new name of Mainland.

Bluff, Port Chalmers, Timaru, Nelson, and Lyttelton all saw action as we defended unionized, secure local jobs.

The struggle had some tragic results. Lyttelton Port Company contracted out its coal loading operation to a West Coast contractor who employed non-union labour.

Christine Clarke died on 31 December 1999 from injuries sustained on the picket line at Lyttelton two days earlier when she was run over by a motorist in a 4WD vehicle who objected to the picket line. Christine was a Lyttelton local and simply a supporter of the unions who was there to lend a hand, for which she paid the ultimate price. The man who committed this crime was given soft treatment by the courts which shows us how the system is stacked against workers.

That event is something that will not be forgotten and has left some deep scars.

The last instalment in the battle was the 2006 Napier dispute where, with the assistance of the International Transport Federation and the MUA in particular we had a major working class victory.

I believe this dispute showed we have the ability as a Union to run a successful and well-organized campaign.

But the underlying problem remains.

Under current legislation, unions have to be operated at arm's length from employers. But it is impossible to prove that employers are calling the shots and it is simply a legal fiction.

Port companies are aware of the situation and in some cases are more than happy to form temporary alliances with anti-union stevedores to destroy unionism in their port with a long term goal to create Ports of Convenience.

The danger is always the parochial and individual outlook that puts my job, my company, my port first and that fails to recognize as a national union, part of a global transport chain, we are only as strong as our weakest link.

During the previous Labour Government we lobbied, made submissions, appeared before select committees, all on the issue of these company unions.

We understood the legislation was based on ILO Conventions. What we did request was that a real test be carried out by the Registrar of Unions on any new application to register a union.

As far as I am aware we are the only union who has ever challenged the registrar over a registration. This stalled the application but it eventually went through.

Prior to Labour being elected in 1999, seafarers were given open public promises of a return to cabotage when Labour regained power. This never happened.

After coming to power, we were told by the Government the cabotage policy had been changed and this damaged the relationship and trust with our seafaring members.

Over the years waterfront branches gradually disaffiliated from Labour Party, to the stage where only 3 branches remained affiliates.

Our National Executive recently made a unanimous decision to reaffiliate with the Labour Party mainly because they are the largest opposition group and we recognise the dangers a National Government carries for all workers.

If the Maritime Union is to have any effect on Labour we need to have an active involvement at the local level.

Our affiliation with Labour cannot be based on sentimental reasons and must be focussed on what they can deliver for us, not the other way around.

Unless there is a genuine commitment to reconnect to the concerns and issues of working class New Zealanders, which I believe is happening to a degree, then the result will not be a happy one.

The National Government is approaching things in a more gradual and calculated way in order not to create the type of mass resistance that grew in the 1990s.

In recent months we've seen a whole range of major industrial disputes with employers on the offensive, against a background of recession and a pro-employer Government.

These have included a protracted struggle at the Ports of Auckland and the current situation at the Port of Otago.

In addition there have been a number of major industrial disputes, including bus workers and concrete workers (NDU), Open Country Cheese (Dairy Workers), cleaners (Service Food Workers Union) Telecom lines engineers who are members of the EPMU contracted out, and know the issue of private prisons double berthing and confinement in containers.

New Zealand Ports

The other issue which faces us is the rationalization of New Zealand ports.

The Union has actively supported a planned future for New Zealand ports, not the chaotic, inefficient and parochial current system which plays into no one's hands except global operators.

We'd like to see a level of public ownership and national co-ordination to get ports working together, a concept we call KiwiPort.

Our goal was to move to a system of hub ports working in with smaller feeder ports and using coastal shipping to transport between them. This solution has support in the industry.

Now National is pushing heavy trucking as the main transport mode and is pouring millions into roading.

We spent considerable time making a submission against this rule change, as did many other credible NZ organisations. All realised the damage this rule change will bring to all New Zealanders and our expectation is it will be rubber stamped and carried out despite widespread opposition.

So, although we face continual pressures, I believe we have responded in the correct way on most occasions, though I believe that a more national focus to our Union and one Union inside the wharf gates would have led to better results.

A fighting union

Our Union has fought hard battles.

The maritime strikes of 1890 and 1913 and the waterfront lockout of 1951 tested maritime workers to the limits but even after setbacks we have always regrouped. The attacks of recent years have been more fragmented in nature but they have been ongoing attacks.

With the effects of the global recession, and the domestic situation, there will be some stormy waters to navigate in the months and years ahead.

We face an era where the great progress of the working class throughout the twentieth century for secure jobs and a just society has been halted and even reversed by an aggressive capitalist elite and their unending search for profits extracted from the labour of working people.

However as history has shown, the struggle is an ongoing one and the tide sometimes runs with us and sometimes runs against us.

Those who came before us sacrificed much to achieve many of the conditions we enjoy today.

The challenges for the Union ahead will be severe but I believe if we maintain our traditions of militant unionism, socialist principles and solidarity, we will be well equipped to face those challenges.

I will not be part of those decisions but I will watch the progress of the Maritime Union with interest and I wish you all well in your endeavours.

Trevor Hanson retired as General Secretary of the Maritime Union of New Zealand in November 2009. The above is an abridged version of his speech to the Conference.

Conference 2009 Remits

“One of the main purposes of the Triennial Conference is to set Maritime Union policy, and make the decisions about how the Union operates and what it does”

One of the main purposes of the Triennial Conference is to set Maritime Union policy, and make the decisions about how the Union operates and what it does.

The Maritime Union is a democratic organization where all members can have an influence and have a say at branch level.

Branches bring remits to the Conference, which are then debated and voted on.

If the remits are passed then the Union will follow through and take action on them.

At the 2009 Conference, 35 remits were received.

The remits are listed below under their category, and note what branch the remit came from. At the bottom of each remit, information includes the recommendation of the Remit Committee on the remit, the delegate who moved the remit and the delegate who seconded it, and whether it was carried or lost.

Regionalization, union structure and rules, fees

Remit 1

(Lyttleton Local 43)

Existing Branch/Local assets in preparation for Regionalisation

That the Triennial Conference of MUNZ discusses an alternative amendment to the template for Regionalization that would take into account particular assets that have been accumulated by Branches/ Locals through levies and additional fee structures to create unique facilities to cater for their membership. This notes that there has been considerable time and resources committed to the establishment of a future structure that would benefit all Maritime Union members and in time become the basis for a stronger well resourced regional structure. The intent of the motion is to stimulate debate where by consensus we may alleviate some of the concerns that members within Local 43 have in regards to the future security of the Holiday Homes owned by Local 43. Further this notes that by addressing any impediments and treating these particular assets in context with how they were established it would assist in establishing that such assets were treated in a fair and equitable fashion consistent with all Branches/ Locals.

Aims

1. The aim if successful is simply to remove any barriers that may stall the gains that are achievable under the draft proposal for Regionalization.
2. If passed this resolution would not preclude in the future any asset that has been given a particular status from being managed by a regional structure. This would provide the Branch/local with a reassurance that in going into a reorganised structure, control over an asset that was secured by a levy or additional fee outside of the regular Union

Aims

1. The aim if successful is simply to remove any barriers that may stall the gains that are achievable under the draft proposal for Regionalization.

2. If passed this resolution would not preclude in the future any asset that has been given a particular status from being managed by a regional structure. This would provide the Branch/local with a reassurance that in going into a reorganised structure, control over an asset that was secured by a levy or additional fee outside of the regular Union

fee was under the management of the Branch/Local until agreement was reached on the future of that particular asset.

Recommended: Endorse for discussion

Moved: George Clark because the original mover Mike Norris is an observer

Seconded: Lee Rogers

Carried

Bill Connolly asked his vote be recorded against

Remit 2

(Wellington Seafarers Branch)

The Wellington Seafarers Branch supports the actions of our National Executive to move from the structure we are currently administrated by, to a regional structure for Munz. (Moved at Stopwork Meeting by A. Windsor, seconded D. McIsaac, Carried 57 for none against.)

Recommended: Endorse for discussion

Moved: Joe Fleetwood

Seconded: Mike Shakespeare

Carried

Remit 3

(Nelson Branch)

The Nelson Branch Support the actions of our National Executive to move from the structure we are currently administered by to a regional structure for MUNZ.

Recommendation: Coupled with Remit 2

Recommended: Endorsed for discussion

coupled with Remit 2

Remit 4

(Wellington Seafarers Branch)

The Wellington Seafarers Branch moves that if Regionalisation falls over, at or before National Conference, we go straight to a National Central Funded Union for the betterment and future for all members of the Maritime Union of New Zealand.

(Moved at Stopwork Meeting by M. Catcahopolie, seconded by M. MacDonnell.

Carried 57 for none against.)

Recommended: Couple with Remit 5.

Endorsed for discussion

Moved: Glen Wylie

Seconded: Mike Clark

Carried

Remit 5

(Nelson Branch)

The Nelson Branch moves that if regionalisation falls over, at or before National Conference we go straight to a national central funded union for the betterment and future for all members of the Maritime Union of New Zealand.

Recommended: Couple with Remit 4.

Endorsed for discussion.

Remit 6

(Bluff Branch)

That a comprehensive review of the union rules to be undertaken to reflect current and future requirements and to remove obsolete provisions.

Recommended: Couple with Remit 7

and Endorsed for discussion

Moved by: Ray Fife

Seconded: Les Wells

Carried

Remit 7
(Auckland Seafarers/Local 13)

Rule Review

Given that two Triennial conferences have taken place since the formation of the Maritime Union of New Zealand and that much has been learned during this time of the varied needs and governance issues required within our Industry and our Union. Therefore move that the General Secretary be charged with undertaking a full and comprehensive review of the rules of the National Union.

This notes that there are many rules currently existing that are no longer practical or in any way reflect the need of the Union at this particular point in time. Further that any review takes into consideration the need for Branch rules to be included in order that any future issues raised at a local or National level can be dealt with in a timely and efficient manner. Further that the mover fully appreciates the complexities involved in such a review and recommends that this be undertaken in conjunction with all the National Officials.

Recommended: Couple with Remit 7

Auckland Seafarers/Local 13

Moved by: Garry Parsloe

Seconded: Denis Carlisle

Carried

Remit 8
(Auckland Seafarers/Local 13)

Branch/ Local Restructuring/ Amalgamations

Given the debate that has already taken place around Branch regionalization/ amalgamations and the resolution that was passed at the special national executive meeting held on the 31st August and the 1st September 2009, where the national executive endorsed the draft objectives and principles and that the national union would support and encourage Branches/ Locals to organise or amalgamate on a regional basis. This motion recommends that consideration be given to any Branches/ Locals that agree on a plan to amalgamate/ regionalise and makes allowance so that any amalgamated/ regional structure is in no way disadvantaged by way of representation at a National level if an amalgamated/ regional structure is adopted. The aim is to maintain a balance between Branch/ Local representation and regional representation by allowing any amalgamated Branch/ Local or regional structure to maintain the same number of representatives and voting rights as it would have been provided for under the existing Branch/ Local structure. This notes that it is intended by the mover that any representation or voting rights would be reviewable if at a future stage MUNZ agreed to restructure. Further in order for this if agreed to be implemented there will have to be amendments to the National rules undertaken.

Moved by: Garry Parsloe

Seconded: Denis Carlisle

Carried

Remit 9
(Wellington Seafarers)

Regardless of what ever structure the Maritime Union of New Zealand is governed by, there should be one union one fee paid by all, based on a percentage of gross earnings. For this to happen, there should not be a cut-off date, but a time frame set as to bring everyone on to an even keel (eg) 3 year period.

(Moved at stonework meeting by R. Cook, seconded by G. Rogers, carried 57 none against.)

Moved by: Glenn Wylie

Seconded: Joe Fleetwood

Carried

Remit 10
(Nelson)

Regardless of what ever structure the Maritime Union of New Zealand is governed by there should be one union fee paid by all, based on a percentage of gross earnings for this to happen there should not be a cut-off date but a time frame set as to bring every one on to an even keel (eg) 3 year period.

Recommendation: Couple with Remit 9

Remit 11
(Bluff)

That a National Official where practical attend union meetings at Branch level on a regular basis, so that the membership hear first hand on matters that the union is dealing with nationally and internationally, thereby hopefully expanding on the participation levels at union meetings.

Moved by: Ray Fife

Seconded: Les Wells

Carried

Remits On Education And Training

Remit 12
(Auckland Seafarers/Local 13)

That following the last Triennial conference the meeting acknowledges the success in organising and implementing the Veterans' Association. This notes that the numbers that are now registered are significant and have exceeded all expectations.

This however highlights a possible deficiency in the resources that are being allocated to the youth within our Union. To assist in promoting up and coming delegates and in line with educational options available through the ITF and sister Unions who have developed extensive Youth education and development programmes. That this Triennial conference endorses future participation from the rank and file membership who represent the youth within the Maritime Union of New Zealand.

The National Executive shall endeavour to provide resources for representatives to attend selected National Executive Meetings and approved Youth conferences.

Further notes that any Branch/ Local wishing to nominate representatives supply the National Executive with relevant documentation supporting nominations in order to aid with any selection process that may be necessary.

Moved: Denis Carlisle

Seconded: Carl Findlay

Carried With Remit 13

Remit 13
(Wellington Seafarers/Nelson)

Union training for our youth. (Moved at stopwork meeting by A. Windsor, seconded by D. McIsaac, carried 57 for none against.)

Recommendation: Coupled with Remit 12

Moved by: Joe Fleetwood

Seconded: Mike Clark

Carried With Remit 12

Remit 14
(Bluff)

That MUNZ work jointly through education and political groups such as the CTU to introduce and encourage legislation requiring labour education in history and social studies for all schools at all levels. That MUNZ assist in the development of these educational programs, including the development of educational materials and resources in order to assure quality labour education.

Recommendation: Endorsed

Moved by: Ray Fife

Seconded: Les Wells

Carried

Remit 15
(Port Chalmers Dunedin)

That the incoming National Executive of MUNZ examine the exact costs of employing a training officer, with the additional task of also identifying and recording health and safety problems at all ports, to be presented to all appropriate authorities.

The actions taken by employers and Government agencies on receipt of such reports to be recorded and kept for future reference in cases of accidents and health issues.

The reason for this remit is the complete avoidance of the issues by Maritime New Zealand, with no voice for workers.

Recommendation: Endorsed

Moved by: Graeme Wall

Seconded: Les Wells

Carried

Remits On Superannuation

Remit 16
(Wellington Seafarers Branch)

The Wellington Seafarers Branch wants the Triennial Conference to address combining both SRF / WISF Superannuation schemes together; this would create an economy of scale which could encompass the best of both schemes to meet members' requirements in today's climate. (Moved at stonework meeting by A. Windsor, seconded I. Iken, carried 57 for none against.)

Recommendation: Endorsed Couple with Remit 17

Moved by: Joe Fleetwood

Seconded: Eddie Cook

Carried With Remit 17

Remit 17
(Nelson Branch)

The Nelson Branch wants the Triennial Conference to address combining both SRF / WISF Superannuation schemes together. This would create an economy of scale which could encompass the best of both schemes to meet members' requirements in today's climate.

Recommendation: Endorsed Coupled with Remit 16

Moved by: Joe Fleetwood

Seconded: Eddie Cook

Carried With Remit 16

Remit 18

(Auckland Seafarers/Local 13)

That the MUNZ Triennial conference considers and debates the merits of giving its members, that are part of the Waterfront Industry Superannuation Fund, a one off entitlement to access up to, but not more than 50% of their superannuation balance after ten years or more continuous contributions to the Waterfront Industry Superannuation Fund.

Recommendation: Endorsed

Moved by: Carl Findlay

Seconded: Dein Ferris

Carried

Remit 19

(Veterans Association)

The Veterans' association calls on this Triennial Conference to note and recognise the good work of the Trustees' in guiding the fund through the world wide recession in protecting our members' interests. We further recognise that the percentage of the deferred beneficiaries in the fund keep increasing as members retire. We are also well aware that most enquiries regarding movements and concerns originate from veteran members and very often veterans' officials are unable to assist with simple answers. Therefore we request this MUNZ Triennial meeting to have the MUNZ Trustees persuade the employer trustees to have a veteran's official attend trustee meetings in an observer capacity. The veterans' association believes that in this way all members including deferred beneficiaries would be adequately represented with veterans' administration lightening the workload of MUNZ officials in regard to veteran enquiries.

Recommendation: Cannot proceed as remit not covered by rules, endorse and open for discussion or reject

Moved by: Les Wells

Seconded: Bill Connolly

Carried

It was noted at the Conference that there was no Remit 20 (typing error).

Remits on recognition of service

Remit 21

(Auckland Seafarers/Local 13)

Vote Of Thanks to MUA

That this Triennial council formally acknowledges the impending retirement of comrades Jim Tannock and Rick Newlyn from their positions as officers of the Maritime Union of Australia. Special note be given to the time and considerable expertise that both of these officials have placed at the disposal of the Maritime Union of New Zealand under the Trans Tasman Federation. Further notes that this council endorses a vote of thanks to Jim Tannock and Rick Newlyn and wishes them a long and prosperous retirement.

Recommendation: Endorsed

Moved by: John O'Neill

Seconded: Bill Connolly

Carried

Remit 22

(Wellington Seafarers Branch)

That Life Membership be awarded to Mike Williams at the October 2009 Triennial Conference of the Maritime Union of New Zealand. (Moved at stopwork meeting by M. Masters, seconded B. Pierce, Carried.)

Recommendation: Endorsed

Carried

It was recorded that this Remit had to be approved by National Council.

Remits On International And ITF

Remit 23

(Bluff)

That the ITF Flag of Convenience and Port of Convenience campaigns to be supported by the membership and that MUNZ provide information/education to the membership on the campaigns.

Recommendation: Endorsed

Moved by: Les Wells

Seconded: Eddie Cook

Carried

Remits On Veterans

Remit 24

(Veterans Association)

With the veterans' association reaching 350 members, with still plenty of room for growth potential, the old chestnut of being adequately funded to ensure the membership is properly serviced, raises its head. There are so many areas of expansion needed, such as welfare, health, Political lobbying, dispute logistics, along with other areas in which we can be of assistance to MUNZ and its branches.

It is the intention of the veterans to introduce a small fee to cover postage and incidentals. However this will not cover the ability to look after our most vulnerable members, or support MUNZ to the extent that we would like with industrial disputes. We therefore call on this MUNZ Triennial Conference to consider requesting each MUNZ branch or local to make an annual donation to the veterans' association of \$1.50 per branch member equivalent.

Recommendation: Cannot proceed as remit not in rules. Endorse as subject for discussion or reject

Political

Remit 25

(Bluff)

That MUNZ continue efforts at all levels of the union to involve members in union political action at community, provincial and national levels. MUNZ strongly encourages members to get involved in the union, to be educated and informed about union business and supporting others in their struggles.

Recommendation: Endorsed

Moved by: Ray Fife

Seconded: Ian Quarrell

Carried

Remit 26

(Auckland Seafarers/Local 13)

Taking into account the current political climate where a right wing National Government has been elected into power and the decision taken that MUNZ would affiliate to the New Zealand Labour Party. This recommends that suitable thought be given to the political system currently operating in New Zealand, MMP. Clearly a suitable coalition partner or partners for Labour must be established if the National Party is to be defeated in the next election. That MUNZ actively promotes any political party that it believes has the credentials to support the principles MUNZ subscribes to and has the ability to become a reliable left wing coalition partner to a successful Labour Government. Further that the commitment to organise both at the workplace and in the political arena go hand in hand and one cannot be successful without both of these principles as founding beliefs.

Recommendation: Endorsed

Moved by: Alec Tairua

Seconded: Carl Findlay

Carried

Remit 27

(Auckland Seafarers/Local 13)

That this Triennial Council after hearing the ongoing difficulties some Locals are experiencing in organising monthly stopwork meetings under the current laws and regulations. Notes the need for clear and precise changes to the Employment Relations Act to reflect the basic right of a Union to organise and meet on a regular basis where every member of the Union has the right to join the debate and cast their vote. Under current legislation any total withdrawal of labour whilst in contract is considered an illegal stoppage and any Union which undertakes such a stoppage is liable for damages. Political parties must be taken to task and recognise that if they require the support of Unions and the organisational resources Unions bring to the party whilst in opposition and during election campaigns then such basic working rights cannot be denied under legislation. Further MUNZ commits to lobby both the New Zealand Council of Trade Unions and the New Zealand Labour Party to seek agreement that if returned to power in the next General Election the Labour Party will seek to amend current legislation relating to illegal strikes in order that Unions and their members can function going into the future. This notes that if the right to withdraw labour existed in an unfettered manner many of the current anti worker attacks and shameful employment behaviour by Companies would be a thing of the past.

Recommendation: Endorsed

Moved by: Denis Carlisle

Seconded: Russell Mayn

Carried

Remit 28

(Port Chalmers Dunedin)

That the incoming National Executive of MUNZ makes every effort to get changes made to current legislation to ensure that the Registrar of Industrial Unions tests all applications for registration of a Union, and seeks proof that any application is genuine and no employer has had any part in the application.

Furthermore the CTU must be part of this process. Furthermore that this policy is adopted by the NZ Labour Party.

Recommendation: Endorsed

Moved: Victor Billot

Seconded: Ian Quarrell

Carried

Remit 29

(Port Chalmers Dunedin)

That the incoming National Executive of MUNZ advocate, promote and educate on an ongoing basis for an integrated rail road coastal shipping transport system.

The effect of the National Government policy favouring heavy trucking and ignoring coastal shipping is a social, economic and environmental travesty.

Furthermore that this policy is adopted by the NZ Labour Party.

Recommendation: Endorsed

Moved: Victor Billot

Seconded: Ian Quarrell

Carried

Remits on Workplace, Industrial and Solidarity

Remit 30

(Bluff)

That MUNZ re-affirm union policy around the important issue of working hours.

Recognising that working hours are determined by collective agreements, union policy must remain to strive to achieve the reduction of working hours particularly with the issue of fatigue due to working excessive hours.

Recommendation: Endorsed

Moved by: Ray Fife

Seconded: Ian Quarrell

Carried

Remit 31

(Bluff)

That conference re-affirms that all lashing / unlashings of cargo should be performed by dockers.

Recommendation: Endorsed with change of wording to read:

The conference re-affirms that all lashing / unlashings of cargo shall be performed by MUNZ members.

Moved by: Ray Fife

Seconded: Alan Burke

Carried

Remit 32

(Bluff)

That a template be developed to encompass the core clauses in branches collective agreements, such as long service leave, sick leave and annual leave, thereby when branches go into negotiations they are able to strive for the best conditions from other agreements.

Recommendation: Endorsed

Moved by: Les Wells

Seconded: Ray Fife

Carried

Remit 33

(Bluff)

That this conference recognises the importance of a growth strategy across all sections of our industry as a path forward for the next 3 years. Included in this strategy should be a campaign to organise the unorganised in our non-traditional areas without compromising the core fundamentals of who this union represents.



Napier delegate Alan Burke speaks from the floor

This initiative must include the development of a recruitment campaign, but also recognising the funding requirements for such a campaign.

Recommendation: Endorsed

Moved by: Ray Fife

Seconded: Ian Quarrell

Carried

Remit 34

(Port Chalmers Dunedin)

That the Maritime Union of New Zealand continues its support for other Unions under attack particularly in the present political and industrial climate.

Further that the National Executive examine the possibility of setting up a dollar a week contribution from all financial members to assist other workers and Unions in dispute whilst National is in power and to be reviewed at the determination of the next Government.

Explanation: Our history is one of proudly assisting both financially and physically workers and Unions in their time of need, under the realisation that every victory is one for all NZ workers, we are also very conscious of the need to preserve our own assets, for our own future fights.

Recommendation: Endorsed

Moved by: Victor Billot

Seconded: Ian Quarrell

Carried

Resolved that:

In this Third Triennial Conference of MUNZ having just passed Remit 34 endorse the actions of National Officials in granting \$5,000 to the EPMU during their recent struggles.

Moved by: Ray Fife

Seconded: Terry Ryan

Carried

Late Remit

Remit 35

(Wellington Seafarers)

The Wellington Branch Seafarers because of current and previous urgent problems request the indulgence of Conference to accept a late remit.

This is a late Remit to MUNZ National Conference from the Wellington Branch Seafarers Stop Work meeting.

All clearances from the Maritime Union of New Zealand must be signed by the General Secretary then co-signed by the branch official before being provided to the person requesting such clearance. The purpose of this resolution is to preserve our good relationship with other International Unions.

Recommendation: Endorsed with change of wording to read:

The Wellington Branch Seafarers because of current and previous urgent problems request the indulgence of Conference to accept a late remit.

This is a late Remit to MUNZ National Conference from the Wellington Branch Seafarers Stop Work meeting.

All clearances from the Maritime Union of New Zealand must be signed by the General Secretary then co-signed by the branch official and the Branch Secretary before being provided to the person requesting such clearance.

The purpose of this resolution is to preserve our good relationship with other International Unions.

Moved by: Joe Fleetwood

Seconded: Glen Wylie

Carried

Maritime Union of New Zealand Triennial Conference



Front row, from left: Taffy Hicks, Stuart Crawford, Pat Harkness, Ray Fife, Mike Shakespeare, Dave McKenna, Paul Napier, Ray Cook,

Second row: Tony Lloyd, Ray Benavente, Ray Familathe, Russell Mayn, Phil Adams, Trevor Hanson, Garry Parsloe, Shosaku Machida,

Third row: John Shaw, Steve Todd, Henry Nee Nee, Grant Williams, Craig Harrison, Wayne Wolfe, Steve Thompson, Eddie Cook, Alec
John Whiting, Ross Tangney, Dein Ferris

Fourth row: Craig Marsh, Bradley Clifford, John O'Neill, Brian Callaghan, Graeme Wall, Alan Windsor, Dave Schleibs, Wayne Hanson,
Glen Rogers, Joe Fleetwood

Back row: Barry Millington, George McIntosh, Bill Connelly, Mick Canning, Les Wells, Michael Norris, Clinton Norris, Terry Ryan, Len

ence, 29 October 2009, Wellington, New Zealand



Rachel Goddard, Greg Keen, Ian Quarrell, Glenn Wyllie, Bill Lewis, Jason Simi
a, Takako Uchida, Matt Purcell, Rick Newlyn, Denis Carlisle, Marion Leslie, George Clark, Dawn Clark
Tairua, Tania Kahui, Gordon Kopu, Mike Clark, Grahame MacLaren, Kevin Fennessey, Alan Burke, Ramesh Pathmanathan,
, Steve Paras, Peter Harvey, Chris Cain, Tony Mowbray, Victor Billot, Carl Findlay, Wayne Davies, Daniel Staley, Tony Townsend,
n Covell, Dave Morgan, (right of screen) Steve Murray, Tracy Foster, Mark Larkin

Rank and file report

Stu Crawford is an executive member of the Port Chalmers Dunedin Branch of the Maritime Union.

He attended the October 2009 Triennial Conference of the Union as a delegate. It was the first time he'd been to a Conference and the Maritimes talked to him about what he got out of the Conference.

"This was the first MUNZ conference I'd been to. I've been a member for about 2 and 1/2 years. I started as a B on a 3-day week, 24 hour guarantee, since then I've become a full time cargo handler. That involves driving straddles and machinery, washing and lashing containers, landing and hatching."

"I was elected to the executive in 2007 and last year (2008) I attended the MUA Youth Conference in Australia. This was the first MUNZ national meeting I had been to."

"What I found good about it were the international speakers – they gave a perspective from the outside. I was interested in the big fight the ILWU have for health care in the USA.

The Japanese delegate spoke about changing their Government and how important it is to have influence over the Government."

"Phil Goff seemed to have a presumption that we should support Labour but he seemed unprepared to give an undertaking at looking at some of the issues like casualization and yellow unions."

"I thought Andrew Little (Labour Party President) performed a lot better."

"I spoke to the ILWU delegates and the Japanese and to some of the other MUNZ delegates."

"With the remits, it sometimes looked like there was a lack of unity amongst the branches. Some of the remits seemed very focussed on the local ports, there seemed to be a lack of cohesiveness. Ports need to think outside their own domain."

"I would encourage all union delegates and exec members to take the opportunity to attend a conference if they can. It gives you a wider perspective."

"We had a pretty good mix from Port Chalmers. It is an ageing demographic in the industry. But you need the youth so they can take over when the others leave."

"It seems to me we need to get involved in the road transport sector, we need to build unionism in that sector. I come from a truck driving background.

You've got to make it attractive to people in that industry. I spoke to the Americans and the Japanese about this – the Japanese have a truck driving section in the Union. By doing this we'd improve the situation within the ports. What about starting with container truck drivers?"



Wellington seafarers branch observers Barry Millington and Tony Mowbray

Rank and file report

by **Tony Mowbray**
Wellington Branch, MUNZ 1154

On 27–29 October I was fortunate to attend the Maritime Union Triennial Conference in Wellington as an observer.

We had a significant international guest list as well as a good turnout of delegates and observers from our own Union.

This was pleasing to see not only for the Conference but as a tribute to our outgoing General Secretary Trevor Hanson.

I would like to thank Trevor for his contribution to the Union movement, especially the Maritime Union, and wish him all the best in his retirement.

We had the obligatory conference opening and then an opening address from the Hon. Phil Goff and Darien Fenton MP. They highlighted the job losses in New Zealand during the past year and the National Party's anti-worker policies being put in place through things like proposed privatization and ACC.

It was good to hear him say when Labour is re-elected they would reverse such legislation. This only proved to me the hard work the working class had in front of us again.

All members of every Union need to be active within their organization to repel these attacks, with no time to sit back pretending it may not happen.

This shows now more than ever the importance of organization in the workplace with the present Government slashing hard fought for rights like smoke and lunch breaks, ACC, and even one of our most precious conditions, the stopwork meeting.

CTU President Helen Kelly and EPMU Secretary/Labour Party President Andrew Little reiterated the issues facing all workers.

The CTU and Labour Party are working on campaigns.

The proposed privatization of ACC is a real shocker as it is not in trouble as the Government would have us believe, and the basis of the CTU/Labour Party campaign will be to alert us to the fact it actually has \$11 billion reserves.

All the internationals gave a brief history of their own campaigns and struggles in their respective countries, many parallels to our own. The conclusion was the 'must' of international solidarity.

I think it was best summed up by ILWU Vice President Ray Familathe when he said "international issues are international."

This was well proved in the Napier dispute which may have had a different outcome without international solidarity. We had reports from Communications officer Victor Billot, ITF reports from Grahame MacLaren and Matt Purcell (from Australia). There were also superannuation updates from the trustees. MUA West Australian Branch Secretary Chris Cain gave a promising outlook for the Australian oil and gas projects with good scope for future employment within the industry.

It was fitting that all branches agreed to make an annual payment to our veterans as these members are just as important as the youth of our organization.

It was also pleasing to hear that MUNZ are serious about setting up successful training courses again.

These training courses are crucial as the youngsters entering the industry have no or limited knowledge of unionism. This is in no way their fault, as they are products of the ECA regime of the 1990s.

Throughout the conference our remits were worked through in sessions and there was a lot of discussion on them. None was rejected.

I will close my report by congratulating all successful candidates in our recent elections and urge all members to get active and organize.



Wellington delegates, from left: Glen Wyllie, Mike Clark, John Whiting, Joe Fleetwood



MUNZ members at Conference 2009, from left: John Shaw (Wellington Seafarers), Wayne Davies (Wellington Seafarers), Taff Hicks (Nelson), George Clark (Wellington Seafarers), Bill Lewis (Nelson)



South Islanders: from left, National President Phil Adams, Bluff delegate Ross Tangney and Nelson delegate Brian Callaghan



Auckland Waterfront Branch Local 13 President Denis Carlisle speaks from the conference floor while Local 13 delegate Alec Tairua looks on



New Zealand ITF co-ordinator Grahame McLaren with Bluff Branch Secretary Ray Fife, recently elected Assistant General Secretary

Conference Minutes

These will be available at all branch offices for members to read in December. Thanks to Dawn Clark for her massive work in recording and transcribing the minutes.

Labour Party Conference

by Garry Parsloe
National Vice President

The Labour Party Annual Conference was held in Rotorua, 11-13 September 2009. Day one opened with the introduction of Delegates/Affiliates. MUNZ was welcomed to the conference as the newest Affiliate.

John Ryall from the SFWU gave a report from the Employment Relations Policy Committee.

He expanded on many of the good things that were done to lift the minimum conditions for New Zealand workers during the 1999-2008 Labour Government, including:

four weeks annual leave, lifting the minimum entitlement and method of payment for sick leave and bereavement leave.

Payment of time-and-a-half for those working on public holidays. 14 weeks paid parental leave.

Greater security of employment for vulnerable workers.

An almost 100% increase in the minimum wage and its extension to young workers.

Statutory rest breaks during the working day.

John concluded by stressing the importance of holding onto all of our hard won conditions.

The next speaker was Trevor Mallard MP who spoke on Industrial Relations policy development.

He said it is important that we grow our strength so as we can deliver in 2011, especially around wages and superannuation.

The next speaker was President of the Council of Trade Unions Helen Kelly. Helen spoke on Social Partnerships, Collective Bargaining, Union Structures and how unions operate.

Helen addressed some of our present disputes and how best we fight around these disputes.

Jill Ovens from the SFWU spoke on climate change.

Jill stated that the issue of climate change has to be taken on globally and it is important that New Zealand and the rest of the world tidy up their carbon footprints.

The next speaker was Leader of the Labour Party Phil Goff. Phil gave an overview of all the good work that the last Labour Government did.

Phil then went on to say that the last Labour Government did make mistakes and we must learn from those mistakes

and position ourselves not in front of but alongside voters in the 2011 elections.

The next speaker was Labour Party President Andrew Little.

Andrew stated that the base of the Labour Party is the Trade Unions and those unions are the anchor for the Labour Party.

Andrew went on to say that the unions must be in the forefront of the debates that are taking place within the party.

Andrew concluded that we must have everything in place going into the next elections in 2011.

Next speaker was Secretary of the Labour Party Chris Flatt.

Chris spoke on some of the issues that the party is facing.

Notice of dismissal of no less than 4 weeks; Compensation for redundancy in the amount of 4 weeks remuneration for the first full year of the employee's continuous employment with the employer;

Further compensation for redundancy in the amount of 2 weeks remuneration for each subsequent full or partial year of the employee's continuous employment with the employer, up to a maximum entitlement of 26 weeks remuneration.

At the end of Darien's presentation there was a long and full debate from affiliates on this most important issue.

After lunch on day one we gave a presentation to Mike Sweeney for his contribution to the Labour Party.

The second presentation was for Mike Smith the out-going General Secretary for his contribution to the Labour Party.

After the presentations we had an Election of Officers for the coming year.

After the Elections for Officers we entered into discussions on the remits that were before the Party Conference.

The next speaker was Labour Finance spokesperson David Cunliffe.

David spoke on the benefits that workers receive under a Labour Government as opposed to the removal of those benefits under a National Government.

After David's presentation we spent some time on General Business before the closing of day one.

On the evening of day one we had the official opening of the Conference.

This contained Powhiri, Karakia, a welcome from Rotorua Mayor Kevin Winters and Steve Chadwick MP for Rotorua.

The above was followed by the President's address from Andrew Little, Leader of the Labour Party Phil Goff, Leader of the Progressive Party Jim Anderton and Deputy Leader of the Labour Party, Annette King.

All the speakers were positive and all believed that a Labour victory was achievable in 2011.

On day two, Saturday 12 September 2009 we went into Remit Workshops.

Russell Mayn and I attended Workshop 1, Economics and Environment.

This workshop covered Economic Development, Industrial and Regional Development, and Transport.

After morning smoko on day two



Garry Parsloe with Labour MP Carol Beaumont

Next speaker was Charles Chauvel MP who spoke on policy development on Dependent Contractors' rights and protections.

Charles spoke on the Members Bill Project/Independent Contractors Bill. Charles then addressed all the problems that Contractors and contracting out brings to unions and their members.

At the end of Charles's presentation there was a full debate from affiliates on this most important subject.

Next speaker was Darien Fenton MP. Darien addressed her Redundancy Protection Private Members Bill. Darien stated that her bill was drawn from the ballot last month. The Bill is based on the recommendations of the Public Advisory Group on restructuring and redundancy and aims to provide all working New Zealanders with basic redundancy protection to help tide them over between jobs.

Under the Bill all New Zealanders who are made redundant will have a minimum right to:

Russell and I attended a forum to listen to presentations from Phil Twyford MP, Mayor of Manukau Len Brown and Chairman of the Auckland Regional Council Mike Lee.

All the speakers were determined to address and fix major transport problems and were also opposed to any sale of public assets e.g. the Ports of Auckland. They were well aware of the benefits of keeping our ports in public hands.

In the lunch hour on day two I attended a Union Campaigns Session where we heard reports on the Telco Visionstream Dispute, the SFWU Healthy Hospitals Campaign, the Dairy Workers Union Dispute with Open Country Cheese and a report from Darien Fenton MP on her Redundancy Protection Bill.

After lunch on day two Russell and I attended a session headed New Zealand's Economic Future.

In this session there was a debate around Fonterra's behaviour and how Maersk is with Fonterra driving where we export from and what ports we shift cargo between.

Day two concluded with a presentation from President New Zealand Council of Trade Unions Helen Kelly.

Helen spoke about the impending attacks on the Holidays Act, the 90 Day Law, unemployment, Collective Bargaining, union coverage and union density.

On day three, Sunday 13 September 2009 the conference reconvened with a Financial Report.

We then had a report from the new Labour Party Secretary Chris Flatt.

Chris addressed some of the dark years in politics and some of the great gains by Labour in their years in Government.

Before morning smoko on day three we had the Leaders Address from Phil Goff. Phil spoke at length on all the benefits that Labour brings to workers and their families. Phil went on to address some of the mistakes of the past and the need to get it right before heading into the 2011 Elections.

Labour will look after the quality of life for families, will look after the youth of New Zealand and ensure that there will be a job for everyone that wants one.

Phil went on to talk about KiwiSaver, Superannuation, skilled work, unemployment, redundancy provisions, education and a better New Zealand.

At noon we had a Conference Closing address from Annette King before we all departed from a very positive and productive Conference.

MUA National Council

2–5 November 2009, Sydney

by Garry Parsloe
National Vice President

General Secretary Trevor Hanson and I attended the above Conference in Sydney.

The Conference opened with Paddy Crumlin addressing some of the strategic priorities for the next 12 months.

The official opening of the Conference was from the Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government Anthony Albanese. This section was headed "The future for Australian Maritime Unions".

Anthony stated that there is no Labour Party without the input of the Trade Union movement.

He went on to talk about shipping and how important it was to have a strong Australian shipping industry.

After the morning break on day one Paddy Crumlin opened his session headed "Getting the Agenda for the next 3 years".

Paddy talked about skills for training, working with the ACTU, single voyage permits, tonnage tax, International Registers, Cabotage and maritime industry training.

The next session was headed "The National Shipping Policy Agenda", "Consolidating the New Government Shipping Policy" and "Looking forward to the second term".

This section was delivered by Paddy Crumlin (MUA), Martin Byrne (AIMPE) and Fred Ross (AMOU).

All speakers spoke on how best to support a vibrant maritime industry, labour reform, manning and other industry issues.

After lunch on day one we had another session from Paddy Crumlin regarding the strategic priorities for the next 12 months. Paddy expanded on the duties and coverage of the Executive over the year in their allocated areas.

The next session was presented by Mick Doleman and was headed "Building a strong well resourced union structure – securing decent work".

Mick enlarged on the MUA union dues structure.

He said that the union was working hard to get away from cash payments and onto Direct Debit payments.

The next session was around some proposed changes to the rules. It was presented by MUA National Legal Officer Jo White.

Day one concluded with the MUA financial report.

Day two opened under the heading of "Preparing for the ITF Congress 2010" and "Building Strategic Organising Alliances" and "Building Regional Solidarity".

There were a number of speakers including Paddy Crumlin (MUA), Tony Maher (CFMEU), Tony Sheldon (TWU), Bob Hayden (RTBU), Garry Parsloe (MUNZ), Trevor Hanson (MUNZ), Wayne Butson (RMTU), John Mahuk (PNG Maritime and Transport Workers Union), Rigoberto Monteiro (Timor Leste Trade Union Federation) and Mick Doleman (MUA).

All speakers addressed issues that their unions were involved in with most speakers giving their views on how to deal with all the problems that Trade Unions face in today's climate.

The next session was a Queensland Branch report presented by Branch Secretary Mick Carr.

Mick reported on developments to bring the Southern Queensland Branch and the Northern Queensland Branch into one Queensland Branch.

Day two concluded.

Day three opened with a Tasmanian Branch report that was presented by the Branch President Jason Campbell.

Jason stated that the Tasmanian Branch is in growth mode and there was a requirement for another official in the Branch to handle all the growth.

The next session was headed "The MUA National Growth Plan" and it was presented by Warren Smith and Ian Bray the two Assistant National Secretaries.

Both speakers spoke about an organising strategy, growth and campaigns.

They expanded on proposed new tonnage, diving and towage issues.

Ray Familaithe from the ILWU gave a report on some of the struggles the ILWU are facing.

Just prior to smoko we had a Veterans' report from Fred Krausert from the MUA Veterans Association.

Fred reported on some of the campaigns that the Veterans are involved in. He expanded on health reform and medical systems.

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After morning smoko we had a women's report delivered by MUA National Women's Liaison Officer Mich-elle Myers. Mich-elle stated that now over 5% of the MUA membership are women.

The next session was a Victorian Branch report that was presented by the Branch Secretary Kevin Bracken. Kevin spoke about the proposed third terminal for Melbourne, freight rates and other branch issues.

The next session was a Youth Report presented by Mich-elle Myers. It was a good report which addressed the need to promote youth within the Industry.

The next presentation was from the ILWU Canadian Branch (Vancouver). They reported on issues facing their union especially collective bargaining, disputes and organising.

After lunch on day three we had a Darwin Branch report then a presentation from National Secretary of the Australian Workers Union Paul Howes. Paul talked about the importance of International Solidarity and local unions working together.

The next presentation was from Tony Maher of the CFMEU. Tony spoke on the need for unions to work together, climate change, economic development and union density.

The last presentation on day three was from the Maritime Mining and Power Credit Union and the Maritime Superannuation Report.

The presentations addressed the importance of saving and having an understanding of investment strategies and the returns on those investments.

Day three concluded.

Day four opened under the heading "Safety in the Maritime Sector" and was presented by Mick Doleman.

Mick spoke on shipping, stevedoring, offshore oil and gas and diving.

Mick went on to say that we must maintain high safety standards in all our areas of employment.

The next speaker was Steve Todd from the U.K Rail and Maritime Transport Union. Steve spoke on amalgamations, international solidarity, trade union leadership, employment opportunities and political issues.

The next report was the Western Australian Branch report which was presented by WA Branch Secretary Chris Cain.

Chris spoke on the growth of the offshore industry in the Western Australia.

Chris then expanded on other projects in Western Australia especially offshore, diving, barging, moorings and service vessels.

The next session was headed "The Fair Work Act, Award Modernisation, New EBA Template".

This session was presented by the MUA Legal Officers.

There was discussions and debates around issues such as single voyage permits.

Late in the afternoon on day four we had a session headed "Developing the Australian Transporting Unions Federation (TUF)".

The speakers were Paddy Crumlin (MUA), Tony Sheldon (TWU) and Bob Hayden (RTBU).

Under the above heading the Chairman invited ITF Secretary David Cockroft to address the Council.

There were discussions and debates about how best to build the TUF and advance the benefits that the building will bring to workers and unions.

Day four concluded with Paddy Crumlin summing up on the way forward.

It was a very productive National Council Meeting.

Wellington Waterfront

by John Whiting

Trevor Hanson

We would like to pay tribute to retiring General Secretary Trevor Hanson who has been a member of the Wellington Waterfront branch for many years. We moved his nomination for Life membership of the Union at the May 2009, National Executive meeting.

This was a fitting recognition of Trevor's dedication in the service of Maritime Union members and earlier of Waterfront workers.

As others have already noted, Trevor never forgot his connection with the rank and file members.

On a personal note I would like to thank Trevor for his ready support and assistance to me and the Branch during the period 1996 to 2003 when we were faced with a hostile Port Company management wielding the Employment Contracts Act on us.

Trevor, we wish you and Anne a long and happy retirement whilst knowing you will retain an ongoing interest in the progress of the Maritime Union.

Port Company - CentrePort

We have been engaged in ongoing negotiations with CentrePort around the falloff in box numbers handled through the Wellington container terminal.

As always in these situations, the employer seeks relief from their financial setbacks out of our terms and conditions. The negotiations have reduced a long wish list down to the real agenda around drive times and some other amendments to conditions.

Whatever is the final shape of the proposals, implementation will depend on our membership's endorsement.

The alternative, changes being imposed by the Company, would force us into a fight to protect ourselves.

In closing, we wish all the members of the Maritime Union season's greetings and all the best in continuing the struggle.

Maritime Union photos online
www.flickr.com/maritimeunion

Mount Maunganui Tauranga

by **Eddie Cook**

Firstly condolences to Eddie and his family for the sad loss of his mother.

The port is down in volumes on cargo so far in the first 6 months (27%) but looks to be a better outlook in the future.

Finally a good deal for our members at Comvita after all this time but the wait was worth it.

Balance is still proving to be a hard one but we have still got a few tricks yet so we will see what happens.

The last of the NZL members are in the process of getting their redundancies thanks to the Kiwifruit contract going to ISO, but it is not the end of the story so we will see what we can come up with and wish them all the best in their search for new jobs.

C3 are in the process of changes for everyone although only short term and thanks to Ray, Stu, Tony, Whetu, Dave and Russell for reaching a good result.

The AGM for the branch is on 15 December so hopefully we have a good turnout and lots of people to help out on the Committee.

Many thanks to Corrine for all the great work that she did for the union as she was made redundant due to circumstances beyond our control but wish her all the best for the future.

Should be hearing a lot of good things coming up soon for the branch as there is a heap of brilliant ideas floating around so remember to keep sticking together and we will end up winning.



Tauranga members, October 2009, from left: O'Brian Williams, Luke Maaloga, Tahu Ihe, Peter Winiata and Branch Secretary Eddie Cook



Tauranga Mount Maunganui Branch Secretary Eddie Cook and Branch President Peter Harvey at the 2009 Conference

Gisborne

by **Dein Ferris**

We have nothing to report this issue other than to thank Trevor for his input into the Gisborne Branch over the last twenty odd years.

Welcome to Joe and Ray as our new Officials along with incumbents Phil and Garry.

We wish all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



Russell Mayn, EPMU National Secretary Andrew Little and Garry Parsloe at an EPMU Rally. Garry is presenting a cheque from MUNZ to support the EPMU's struggle with Telecom.



Auckland members at Conference 2009, from left: Daniel Staley, John O'Neill, Craig Harrison, Carl Findlay, Craig Marsh and Waine Wolfe

Auckland Local 13

by Russell Mayn

You know the year is nearly over when you get a ring from Victor telling you that you have nearly missed the deadline for the Maritimes magazine.

It only seems a couple of weeks since the last report and had the same phone call. The year for local 13 has had its ups and downs, set amongst the backdrop of the financial crisis and the problems that follow for all ports when the cargo volumes fall.

We finally settled the Collective Employment Agreement with the Ports of Auckland, this agreement covers the majority of members in the port and it would be fair to say that the negotiation was a long and at times bitter exchange between the Union and the Company. Whilst the hope was that the signing off would bring some semblance of stability in the port, I believe the opposite has been achieved.

At present the workforce and the Union are frustrated with what they perceive as a return to industrial relations that in the past has produced negative results. The consolidation of the two terminals at the port, Bledisloe and Fergusson has left a bitter taste in the mouth of many who work at the coal face.

The Union throughout this process disagreed with the company that consolidation would be a progressive and more efficient formula for the port. The loss of experienced stevedores has left the port with insufficient manpower to service the vessels. As the largest port in New Zealand we believe the primary focus should be on turning vessels around and this seems to have been lost in the so called consolidation.

Attempts to engage with the Port Company to address the concerns from the Union and delegates have been less than successful and if what we are hearing around the traps is accurate other port users using the port are facing the same frustrations with consolidation.

This brings us to the question of how is change measured and when is the time to review whether change has provided what it was originally intended to. If the result of consolidation was to have trucks backed up, vessel turnaround times increased and morale at the lowest I have it for years, then it gets a tick.

The challenge for the Port Company in the New Year is to re-engage with its employees, accept that their employee's choice is to have union delegates represent them in the workplace and be listened to by the Company.

They do not wish to be dealt with on an individual basis, this approach has been firmly rejected time and time again, the choice is to have collective representation as members of the Maritime Union of New Zealand.

In a recent memorandum the company stated "its approach was to engage directly with their employees and at the same time as required by legislation or employment agreements recognise their employee's rights to representation".

This can only be interpreted as we will deal with the Union when required by law but otherwise we are not interested.

The only reply from the Union to such a statement can and always be "That the Union is here to stay".

All this demonstrates to the workforce is that if the Union was not around this would be the attitude the company would take in dealing with them as individuals. I wonder if other port users who are currently dealing with the Port Company management are experiencing the same frustrations?

Finally we have all the stevedoring companies and the port company in contract and I cannot think of when we have achieved this in a long time. Considering the financial crisis and the repercussions associated with this debacle this will hopefully mean that when we are due to return to the table negotiations will take place under a buoyant economy.

National Government

The National Government has a few choice Christmas presents to leave us under the tree, firstly the changes to the ACC legislation and the introduction of privatization within the scheme.

Our industry is dangerous and any watering down of coverage and benefits will impact directly on workers and their families. Secondly the 2025 taskforce recommendations to the government will appear on the agenda and there will be the expected changes to employment relations legislation to contend with.

On the bright side all the Union Christmas functions are just around the corner, it is a time to meet up with current friends and just have a natter with the Veterans. We should never lose sight that part of the Union is based on socialising and for me the Old timers and Christmas functions are part of our heritage and should never be lost.

Interport

Interport is scheduled for February 2010 and thanks to the New Plymouth Branch everything looks like it's on track for a great week's entertainment as always. The whisper is that the Auckland Fishermen are going to win the award for the best Groper and that the Golfers are focusing on the indoor sports.

Denis Carlisle

It would be wrong not to acknowledge the considerable contribution that Denis Carlisle has made to the Maritime Union and to the working class throughout New Zealand.

Denis has been President in Auckland for some fifteen years firstly for the New Zealand Waterfront Workers Union and subsequently for the Maritime Union of New Zealand.

It would be fair to say that his tenure in office has been in some of the most difficult industrial arenas for sometime. Through the Employment Contracts Act and the rebuilding that followed, his ability to preserve and enhance conditions on the Auckland Waterfront is unquestionable and I have been fortunate enough to learn many skills from him. I have witnessed the Irish temper in full flight and been on the receiving end a couple of times as well but the wit and foresight has always been there and has served the Local admirably.

The progression from Individual Employment Agreements to Collective Agreements was a considerable challenge and has not been achieved easily, and as President Denis can be proud of those achievements.

All these kind words are going to cost him a beer, but joking aside, no bugger it at least half a dozen. To quote an excerpt from his final report to the November stopwork meeting "I was born working class, I have lived working class and I will die working class" – I think that sums it up pretty well.

For those who have read the Port News Christmas edition you will recognise the tribute to Denis as being the same, the reason for this was that it was just too hard to find any other kind words with telling "porkies".

We all wish Denis the best in his retirement and look forward to his contribution as a Veteran.

I would like to take the opportunity to wish all members and veterans of the Maritime Union of New Zealand and their families a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Safe New Year.

To our office administrator Fay Glassford a big thanks for all the work she has put into the office over what has been a very busy time.

"Touch One Touch All"

Port Chalmers Dunedin

by Phil Adams

Season's greetings from Port Chalmers. Although it is the season of good will in the terminal, it has been a very stressful time recently for all concerned. With the loss of 40K TEUs and the Union knocking back a proposal which included 10 hour night shifts but no forced redundancies. After that the company decided they would interview all cargo handlers with the intention of making 4 compulsory redundancies. Our officials looked at the situation and after last minute negotiations which included the possibility of industrial action, they took a proposal to a full meeting of members. This included permanent washpad men and up to 10 lashers being trained in the role of lander. If accepted, no forced redundancies would take place. After good debate at the meeting the proposal was accepted and now we believe peace in our time is with us. How long for, no one knows. I would personally like to thank the Branch President Ian Quarrell and Vice President Graeme Wall for their outstanding work on behalf of the branch during this stressful time, and also the Executive for standing behind us. But all credit must go to the membership for staying united throughout, so from the officials and the Executive a big thank you. It certainly made our job a lot easier and was done in the full tradition of watersiders throughout the years, and all of our members should be proud of that fact. Now everyone can enjoy Christmas without any threats hanging over our heads. A big thank you also to those who took voluntary redundancy which in turn saved jobs. Most were long serving members and in particular our new life member Dave Dick, our much vaunted returning officer and former executive member Cyril Todd, and former executive members Keith Currie, Rick Richon and George Meikle. All have given great service to the Union and losing their experience at this time mean the branch will have some catching up to do. We are also losing the long serving Webster brothers Steve and Harley and they will leave a large gap as both were excellent workers and members.

Veteran and retired members' function

Our branch thanks the above members and we hope to see you each year at our Retired members and Union shout, which this year will be held on the 11 December 2009.

It is hoped at this function the life members and our last two 1951 lockout watersiders Walter (Ginger) Meehan and Gordon (Buck) Forgie will be presented with polo shirts. The photo of John Carrington in the last Maritimes, was as noted the grandfather of Phil, Les and Keith Adams. He was of course also the great grandfather of Fraser (Phil's son.)

Executive resignation

During this time of restructuring Andrew Jennings resigned as an executive member. Andrew had been an executive member for about three years and in that time served the branch well. As a result of his resignation Andrew Corbett will take his position for the duration of the term. Congratulations Andrew.

Sick list

Rodger Paul (as a result of car accident), Peter Sharples and John Johnston are all off work. We wish them a speedy recovery.

Branch calendars

Ship planner James Passmore has put together a 2010 calendar, with photos of current members. Any person requiring one should see either James or Phil Adams. Well done James.

Caps and beanies

These are available from the Secretary and polo shirts are also available. There is even one for Lobby.

Japanese guests

After the national Triennial Conference in October, our branch hosted the Deputy General Secretary of ZenKowan (All Japan Dockworkers' Union) and his interpreter. They were very impressed with our harbor, Larnach's Castle and Dunedin in general. The Executive hosted them that evening at the Custom House restaurant. On Saturday Phil Adams and wife Barbara took them through to Queenstown where they took a trip on the Earnslaw and went jet boating on the Shotover. They have since sent a thank you for looking after them while in the South.

Holiday Unit

With Queenstown in mind, the holiday unit is proving popular and can be rented by contacting Ian Quarrell on 021472021 and Alan Middleditch on 034728753.

End of year events

The annual Kids' Party is on 19 December at 3pm at the Harbour Rugby Club. This is a time honored event and is eagerly looked forward to by our children. The annual Christmas Social was held on the 28 November at the Zingari Richmond Rugby Club.

Union Shout and Retired Members' Shout

This was held on Friday 11 December at the WIC bureau. After the year we had it was a good chance to mingle and have a beer and feed with our retired members who fought for the conditions we currently enjoy.

4 High Straddles

The company has recently purchased two 4-high stacking straddles from Kalmar to add to our fleet. We believe they are the only 4-high straddles in New Zealand and will alleviate the lack of space in the terminal.

Transfers

Graham Wright has taken a position in Harbour Control, Ron Lee has taken a position in the garage, Ian McLean has taken Dicky's old job on the pilot. We wish them well with their new ventures.

House Bus

Commiserations must go to member Don Saxton who recently had the misfortune of having his new house bus, worth around \$17 000, go up in flames on the road hours after being purchased. Don is philosophical about the loss as there was no injury involved.

Triennial Conference

Our contingent to the Conference was impressed with the guest speakers and general debate. At our December meeting there will be a report back on the Conference. Our team was Phil Adams, Ian Quarrell, Graeme Wall, Paul Napier and Stu Crawford.

Meetings

It is heartening to see the numbers turning up for our last meeting, including 87 members at our AGM. At the previous meeting we had a turn out of 120. Meetings are the cornerstone of our Union and these numbers mean that members are interested in the running of our Branch.

National Union elections

The national elections for the Union are now over and I thank the Union for having faith in me to be re-elected unopposed as National President. Congratulations to Joe Fleetwood and Ray Fife for gaining the General Secretary and Assistant General Secretary positions respectively. I am sure Vice President Garry Parsloe and I will have no problem working with either of them. Commiserations to the Maritimes' editor for failing to gain a position, and particularly Russell whom I have enjoyed working with in his position of Assistant General Secretary.

Russell always kept in touch and his knowledge as a trustee of the Super Scheme was invaluable. Hopefully Russell will continue to contribute as officials of his calibre and ability are hard to find.

Also I convey from our branch all the best to Denis Carlisle who is retiring as President of Local 13. Denis has also kept in touch with our branch offering assistance where he could and he will be missed as a strong leader in our Union.

Port Chalmers Cargo Services

Noel Currie reports PCCS are relatively busy at the moment with logs, fish and fertilizer.

Our branch offers its deep sympathy to PCCS member Terry Dougherty at the tragic loss of his son Chris.

Chris worked as a casual at times, although I met him only once, I was impressed by his attitude. He will be deeply missed.

That is our final Maritimes roundup for the year. This year has seen our branch, particularly the Terminal members, pushed to the limit.

However in a way it has a positive as members have seen how being in a united Union prepared to fight to retain and gain wages and conditions reaps rewards in the end. As officials, this support makes our job easier.

Although the 11 members named as possible redundancies are known, it is now time to support them as they were unlucky and any one of us could have been in that 11.

The strength of our Union is to be unified 100% and this will see us move to the future as the major maritime union in New Zealand.

Merry Christmas from the branch.



It's that time of the season again in Bluff –but will Santa make an appearance again this year?

From left, Andrew Morgan, Wayne Finnerty, Tom Morgan, Kevin Bryan, Peter Topi, Aorangi Black, and of course Santa (possibly also Bluff branch president)

Bluff

by Ray Fife

Firstly I would like to thank all those who gave me their support in the recent National Elections.

I would like to congratulate Joe Fleetwood in being elected General Secretary and my commiserations to Russell Mayn and Victor Billot.

I am taking on the job as Assistant General Secretary with a commitment to work with Branches and rank and file members to ensure that we can achieve outcomes that will benefit all members in all areas of the union movement.

One area that is of importance is empowering the members so they are more involved and have their say, another is to ensure that health and safety in the workplace is improved through ongoing education.

Triennial Conference

Executive member Ross Tangney and I attended the Triennial conference in October. Both of us felt that it was a very positive conference with the union moving in the right direction in looking to the future. All guest speakers were well worth listening to.

Speaking to delegates from other ports who were attending conference for the first time, it was interesting to note that they enjoyed the experience immensely.

It reinforced to them the need of solidarity in the union movement. More delegates need to attend these types of forums, particularly younger members to learn what the union is all about.

The remits endorsed at Conference have set a pathway forward for the union for the next three years.

Now it is the responsibility of the National Executive to set strategies so that we can implement them.

The Port

The port has noticed a slight increase in cargo movements over the past few months, I believe that we are not quite out of the recession yet, even though others are saying that we are. How can we truly be out of a recession when the unemployment rate is still increasing and there is no real job growth?

Trevor Hanson

On behalf of this Branch I would like to thank our outgoing General Secretary Trevor Hanson for his service over the past 19 years. Trevor led this union through some pretty tough years, particularly the 1990's where we were at the mercy of a union bashing National Government. Trevor was not afraid to speak out on issues that affected the union movement, he fought along side the membership when scabs were trying to take our jobs and was always available to listen to any concerns that Branches had.

We wish Trevor all the best in his retirement.

Old Timers' Function

Once again we had 70 ex-members attending our yearly event. Our past members thoroughly enjoyed the evening, the comradeship they had formed while on the waterfront still exists today and it showed in the way they greeted each other at the start of the night.

One thing that came out of the evening was the insistence by all those who attended that this yearly get together not stop.

On behalf of our members I would like to wish all members throughout the country a very merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.



At the Timaru Branch Christmas Function, Saturday 21 November 2009, from left, Ron Cooper, Peter Groot, Rodney Donald (Mud Guard), Leath Sadler and Wally Glover



At the Timaru Branch Christmas Function, Saturday 21 November 2009, from left, Allan Park, Mick Charteris, Les Coffey, Alister Ferguson and Ken Meade

Timaru

by **Kevin Forde**

The Old Timers Function and Christmas Party was held on Saturday 21 November at the Town and Country Club.

It was a good night.

Attendees included Les Bush (age 93) and Andy McGovern (age 91).

In some sad news, local retired member Rodney Donald known to all as "Mud Guard" who attended the function died the following day unexpectedly. He enjoyed his time at the function with old friends and workmates.

Shipping in the port – ISO have taken sawn timber and this is of major concern to us to have a non-union outfit in the port again.

We are flat out with fertilizer, transfers in and out of port, fish and bulk cargoes and cross-hiring.

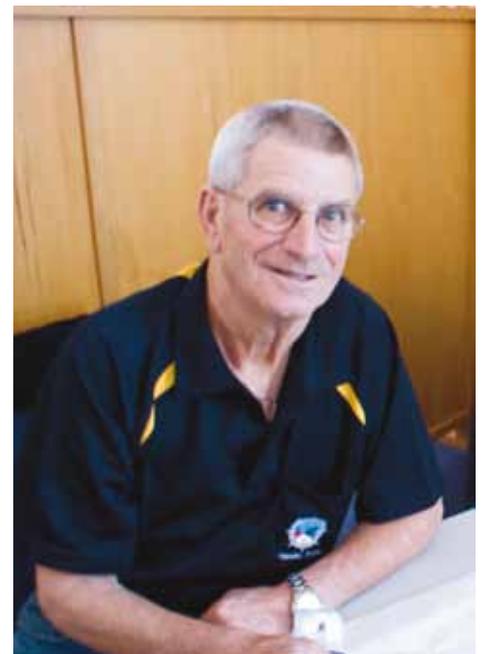
Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all.



At the Timaru Branch Christmas Function, Saturday 21 November 2009, from left, Ray Taylor, Graham Thin, Kevin Ansell and John Haly



At the Timaru Branch Christmas Function, Saturday 21 November 2009, from left, Alister Hyde, B. Crawford and Jerry Flynn



Timaru Branch President Kevin Forde



At the Timaru Branch Christmas Function, Saturday 21 November 2009, from left, Pat Coffey, Len Stewart and Jim Charteris

Photos by Rachel Fahey

More photos online at www.flickr.com/maritimeunion



Wellington Branch Maritime Union members join the rally in support of low paid workers Friday 27 November

Wellington Seafarers

by Mike Clark
Branch Secretary

Political

On Friday 27 November there was a rally for low paid workers zero pay increase. Workers included in this category were public services, schools and hospitals, some as low paid as \$12.95 an hour. Speakers included CTU President Helen Kelly, Labour MP Charles Chauvel, Green MP Sue Kedgely, as well as rank and file workers.

Some of these people with families are struggling to survive now and can ill afford a zero pay increase as the CPI rate of inflation is running at 2%, so these workers are actually getting a pay decrease.

It was ironic that one of the speakers pointed out John Key's housekeeper was paid \$20 an hour. Sue Kedgely noted more than 290 in the health sector were on salaries over \$100K while the CEO of TVNZ was on \$800K.

Demonstrations were also held in 27 towns and cities around New Zealand to coincide with strike action by workers hit by the pay freeze.

CTU President Helen Kelly said the pay freeze was a backward step because low paid workers spend all their wages which is good for the economy, and New Zealand would never catch up with Australia if we could not increase the lowest incomes. Most of all it was backward because the cost of living was rising so a wage freeze amounts to a wage cut for those least able to afford it.

KiwiRail

KiwiRail is blaming the recession for the 13% fall in its freight volumes. Also the proposed increase in the weight trucks are allowed to carry could impact on its business by up to 10%. The three ferries carried 2.2% fewer commercial vessels, 6.4% fewer passengers and 2.9% fewer passenger vehicles.

Let's hope as a Union that these figures rise over the next few months and into the New Year, then they won't be coming to the crews to go outside the collective agreements terms and conditions which causes grief to officials and members trying to sort it.

The Aratere has been dry docked in Auckland for a couple of days for repairs and also to take measurements for the proposed lengthening which will enable more freight to be transported across the strait.

One would hope that more seafarers will be employed to lash the cargo so as there is minimal delay to turnarounds.

Triennial Conference

The Triennial Conference was held in Wellington at the Brentwood Hotel, Kilbirnie, from 27-29 October.

Delegates from all ports were present along with observers and of course our international comrades from the MUA, ILWU, RMT and All Japan Dockworkers. The conference was opened by Labour leader Phil Goff and for the following three days speeches and remits took up a large portion of our time.

Wednesday night was the dinner with tributes to retiring MUA members and officials Deputy National Secretary Jimmy Tannock and Assistant National Secretary Rick (NewZealyn) Newlyn plus some of our own officials – Local 13 President Denis Carlisle, Auckland Seafarers' Vice President John O'Neill, Veterans' secretary and former Assistant General Secretary Terry Ryan and last but not least retiring General Secretary Trevor Hanson, in that role for the past 19 years. This is only a brief, members are welcome to read the full 160 plus pages of the minutes which will be available at all branch offices in December.

Elections

Once again the national union elections have come and gone, congratulations to the successful candidates and commiserations to the unsuccessful.

Thank you to all who voted, that's what democracy is all about, your freedom of choice.

Joe Fleetwood, like Trevor before him, has some huge challenges ahead, so it is of paramount importance that as trade unionists we get behind him and give him our full support at branch and national level.

For a full list of national officials see page 3 of this magazine and for branch officials see the inside back page.

Offshore

Not much has changed in the offshore since the last journal and in late December will see the finishing up of the "Enso 701" and the two support vessels the "Yeo Tide" and "Pacific Warlock" which have provided work for our members over the last two and a half years.

The "Kan Tan 4" and the two Farstad tugs "Far Scimitar" and "Far Grip" have now been put back to January because of technical problems.

Because of industrial action happening in the Oil and Gas sector in Australia over their EBA (Enterprise Bargaining Agreement) there have been limited opportunities for members, but that will change when things are signed off over there as indicated by MUA officials at our Conference.

Christmas

The Wellington offices will be closed only for the statutory days over the holiday break, the office phones will be directed over to officials' mobiles in this period. Finally to all members, the officials and executive of the Wellington Branch wish all of you, your family and friends a very Merry Christmas and Prosperous New Year, to those who are having a break over the holiday season, enjoy and stay safe.

Wellington Seafarers' Christmas Function

by Mike Clark
Branch Secretary

On Saturday evening 21 November the Wellington Branch had a successful Christmas function which doubled as a farewell for retiring General Secretary Trevor Hanson.

This was the first function held by the branch except for the old-timers' function in many years.

The venue was the Bodega in Ghuznee Street with music provided by wellknown Wellington rock band Howzat, who kept the members on the dance floor for an amazing five hours of fun.

The night was a huge success and it was great to see so many of the older members mingling and chatting with the younger ones, who out of their work clothes and in their civvies were very pleasant on the eyes – one standout was Paul Saggars (AKA Staggars the pirate) resplendent in red suit, snakeskin boots and panama hat. The Wellington organizers would like to thank all of you who participated in this occasion, especially those who travelled long distances to attend.

Also to everyone else who took the time out of busy lives to make the night very special, thank you - also thanks to Murray and the team at Bodega which turned out to be a great venue, for the service and food, and the bar staff who were under pressure with thirsty seafarers and dockers replenishing their empties.

I'm sure given the success of the night your executive will be working hard over the coming months to ensure we have another, provided the funding is there. The only disappointment about the night was the theft of a couple of handbags of members' partners which resulted in a huge inconvenience to the ladies.

To the perpetrators – thank your lucky stars you weren't caught, because natural justice would have taken place.



At the Wellington Xmas Party, from left: Paul Saggars (Staggars), Alan Harkess, Joe Fleetwood, Glenn Wyllie and Alan Windsor



Waterfront representatives: Wellington Waterfront Branch President Dave Winton and Branch Secretary John Whiting at the Wellington Xmas Function

The Physical Initiative



My name is Carl Paddick and I am director of the Physical Initiative, a company that specialises in providing health and fitness programmes for the national and international shipping industry. It is a real honour to be asked by MUNZ to write a piece for their magazine. For the past 17 years the Physical Initiative has conducted literally thousands of health and fitness assessments on seafarers from all over the world. The assessment findings continue to impress upon us why our services are much needed in the industry, but rather than blatantly promote them, I wanted to share some of my insights into why it is so important to stay fit and healthy for sea faring duties. Nowadays it's very rare that a moment goes by without being exposed to the many messages of the media and health industries telling us to "lose weight", "exercise more", "drink more water", "eat healthier" and "get more sleep". Behind this advice is a billion dollar industry waiting to take our dollars for the exchange of the latest pharmaceuticals, foods, supplements, exercise machines and services that claim to achieve the best results in the shortest amount of time. For some, keeping up with the latest health and fitness trends is a pastime we've come to know and love but for many it's a complete minefield that is shrouded in skepticism due to the many mixed messages of the 'experts'. So as seafarers, should we be that concerned with all these health and fitness commandments?

Don't we have different needs and requirements? If our health has been relatively good up to now, do we need to make any changes for the future?

The answer to all these questions is well, "yes" and "no", so let us spend the next couple of minutes looking into it further.

Fit for the Medical Examination

Firstly, prior to entering the shipping industry, all seafarers must obtain their 'pre' medical fitness certificate by passing a medical examination (given by an approved medical practitioner).

When required this must be kept up to date by passing the 'periodic' medical examination.

In these medical examinations: blood and urine samples, height, weight, eye sight, respiration (lungs) and hearing are tested. These tests will highlight any mild, moderate or serious health problems requiring intervention before the seafarer is deemed medically fit for service.

Our age, personal medical history, genetics and family history can play a small part in the outcome of these assessments but here's where it gets interesting:

Obesity (high body fat), (non genetic) high blood pressure and cholesterol levels, type II diabetes (high blood sugar levels), obesity related asthma (breathing difficulties) and certain forms of osteo-arthritis (problems in the joints of the bones) are all very much within our control.

Failing the periodic medical examination is a major concern for many seafarers every year. The good news: it does not have to be this way!

By making the appropriate and specific changes, you can develop peace of mind in the knowledge that passing your medical examination will be something that's easy to do.

Fit for Sea

I am sure that I am not alone when I say that our land working friends and relatives have little concept of what it is like to work aboard a seagoing vessel.

The majority would struggle with the necessary stamina and fitness but it is worth remembering that these 2 physical requirements must be maintained least we find ourselves incapable of going to sea too. From my consultations with seafarers, I have found that fatigue continually poses a significant problem upon crew health and stamina.

Watchmen and those who perform around the clock shift duties are most affected but if the ship is rolling for extended periods, interrupted sleep patterns can deregulate the energy levels of the entire swing.

Our office based cousins have the facility of elevators (and often use them) but as seafarers we are called upon to use the stairs.

For some of us who are struggling with our fitness, moving from the engine room to our cabin deck is a big effort and we arrive at our cabin door very much out of breath. Others experience neck, back, hip, knee or ankle pain when moving around or even in stationary positions.

More often than not we are unaware of the muscle imbalances, faulty posture positions, inflexibility issues and repetitive movements that cause strain and overuse. How we deal with these ongoing issues is mostly left up to ourselves.

Some of us do have access to a gym on board the vessel. If we have received adequate advice on the appropriate gym exercises (given our current fitness condition) and instruction on how to use the equipment (no self plug intended here!), we have a good chance of improving our fitness and health.

Cabin based exercising is another useful option. However in the many years of working with seafarers I have never met an individual who is practising an effective cabin based exercise programme.

Fit for Shore Leave

When on leave some seafarers choose to unwind by spending time resting and relaxing. Others have an active lifestyle participating in hobbies and sports (some activities require an amount of physical conditioning).

For the first few days, the shift workers invest the time adjusting to land-based living and those who have families gather the necessary energy to run around with the children.

So: from the discussion so far it seems the media and medical profession do have a case when it comes to looking after ourselves, as seafarers need good health, lots of energy and optimal stamina and fitness levels at sea and ashore.

But are they right in asking us to spend extra dollars to become fitter and healthier? The answer is "No"! Let's briefly look at what they're asking us to do and then assessing if it really costs us anymore.

"Lose weight"

Lose weight really means lose the extra body fat and regularly eating nutritious foods low in fat, sugar and salt saves you money as you're not spending out on food your body doesn't need (such as fast food, sweets, fizzy drinks, including the zero sugar varieties, chips and alcohol in excess).

Eating smaller portions cuts down the cost of food too. Practice makes perfect in this vital area – at sea and ashore.

“Exercise more”

Walking, jogging, playing touch, swimming, volleyball and cricket (to name a few) are all cheap activities to participate in. If you like the thought of exercising with others, some councils have subsidised facilities, others have ongoing initiatives for families.

Check with your local community sports facility or council regarding what facilities are available.

Cleaning the car, doing the gardening, mowing the lawn, cleaning the house and taking the dog for brisk walks are all low or no cost activities that get us moving and assist fitness. Anyone can do them whatever the age.

“Drink more water”

As long as the tap water has been deemed safe to drink, there will be no additional cost (above your water bill)!

Bottled water has become all the rage lately but there’s no need to afford the extra outlay.

Sure, if you don’t like the slight chlorinated taste of some water supplies get a bench top water filter (a relatively inexpensive add-on).

“Eat healthier”

Buying fresh fruit, vegetables, nuts, seeds, whole grains, and a moderate amount of fish, lean meat and dairy foods each week is no more expensive than buying the processed low nutrition equivalents.

It’s just a matter of a little education (if at all required) and discipline.

“Get more sleep”

Are you kidding me? This should come at no cost to you! While there’s no official number of sleep hours required, going to bed earlier may increase energy levels the next day and improve health.

In conclusion

We now understand that as seafarers, we need to be fit and healthy so that we can pass our medical examinations, safely complete our sea duties and maintain the optimal quality of life when on leave. Regardless of job description, age, ethnic background and sex we owe it to ourselves to make the necessary changes to our body weight, exercise, eating, drinking and sleeping habits so that our health and fitness improves.

The good news, we still get to keep our money – healthy body, healthier financially!

For more information: www.physicalinitiative.co.nz



Congratulations to Lyttelton member Don Cameron who recently celebrated 30 years of service. From left, Terminal Manager Peter McDonald and Don Cameron.

Lyttelton

by Les Wells

It has been a busy time for us here in Lyttelton with many things happening around Port.

C3 Limited

The 32/7 agreement has been ratified by the Lyttelton Stevedores who have requested the 160/4 cycle stop immediately and the 32/7 commence as of 9 November.

LSS

They have been busy for the last few weeks. The men have also been doing out of Port transfers to Timaru. The men have also been crosshired by Pacifica and C3 Limited which seems to be working well.

Pacifica

We went into mediation this week to try and get settlement on payment made to the men that went redundant this year. We will be moving onto the Authority to get this settled.

LPC

The port company have recently developed a Drug and Alcohol Policy which is now being rolled out across the business. The Drug and Alcohol program has been put together with the cooperation of the combined Unions in this Port.

We believe it is better to have a policy in place that the Union has had input into than one that has been imposed upon us.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish all members and families a great Christmas and a happy New Year.

Maritime Union
online

www.munz.org.nz

UNITE Union "Halloween March" in Auckland campaigning for a rise in the minimum wage (photo by John Darroch)



HORROR STORY

What has happened to real wages in New Zealand 1982–2009?

By Mike Treen
Unite National Director

Official data on wage movements in New Zealand point to a real wage decline of around 25% between 1982 and the mid 1990s that has never been recovered. There have been two series measuring wages in the period – the Prevailing Weekly Wage Index (discontinued in June 1993) and its replacement the Labour Cost Index. I have created a continuous series based on the LCI series back to 1982 (by adjusting the PWWI numbers before December 1992 when PWWI at 1000 was equivalent to the LCI at 868). These numbers are in turn deflated by the CPI index covering the whole period. What is revealed is that by the mid 1990s real wages had declined at least 25%. There has been no recovery since then and real wages remain 25% below their 1982 peak. This result can be directly attributed to the combination of the massive de-unionisation as a result of the anti-union employment laws and the recession that accompanied it in the early 1990s. The decline in real wages wasn't offset by a decline in tax rates for middle to low income earners at that time.

Between March 1982 and June 1991 the tax rate for the bottom 20% of wage and salary earners increased from 15.8% to 18.0%, the middle 20% went from 25.3% to 23.7% while the top 20% went from 38.5% to 28.4%.

It seems clear that for the big majority of wage and salary earners the tax changes would have made them worse off (especially including GST).

The period from the mid 80s to mid 90s also saw a 10% drop in the share of GDP measured as "compensation of employees".

There was a corresponding rise in the proportion measured as "gross operating surplus", that is profits and interest. In today's dollars that equals \$18 billion from the pockets of workers to the coffers of capital.

Of course we were also told that if the cake was grown we would all benefit. A little pain now for the riches to come. Productivity has increased by 80% between 1978 and 2008. So real wages are 25% lower but our output is 80% higher. "Average wages" don't capture the real position of the majority of wage and salary earners because the average has been dragged up by the inflated incomes of the very wealthy in society.

Real ordinary time average hourly earnings have risen from \$21.08 in September 1996 to \$25.06 in June 2009 (measured in June 09 dollars). Even using LCI figures there has been an average of 1.3% difference between the median and mean changes every quarter between June 2000 and June 2009. The only quarter where the median exceeded the mean was the most recent one.

Real wages have declined

We know from experience in the industries we represent that real wages have declined further than that represented by the average ordinary time wage. These industries were hit by the removal of allowances, penal rates for overtime and weekend work, and casualisation of hours. We estimate the real income of housekeeping staff in major hotels is only 60% what was earned in the 1980s. Households made up for the loss in real wages by working more hours (principally more women and young people) and going into debt.

A report by Simon Collins in the New Zealand Herald (25 November 2006) found that average family income in 2001 in constant dollars was the same as in 1981 despite the fact that the proportion of women working went from 47% to 61% and the percentage of families working 50+ hours a week went from half to two thirds.

The proportion of households spending more than 30% of their income on housing has gone from 11% in the late 1980s to more than twice that today.

20% of NZ families with children live in severe or significant hardship according to the Ministry of Social Development.

Global crisis

Across the globe this system seems to produce more goods and services than can be marketed profitably.

Each time it runs into trouble it has sought to expand its sphere of operations.

Trade barriers in poorer countries get knocked down while they are maintained in the rich. Industries are privatised.

Controls on the movement of capital get lifted. Property rights are entrenched.

Wages get cut in one country to get a competitive advantage over another.

Promises were made that if the rich got richer eventually it would trickle down to the rest of us.

Greed became normalised as a necessary part of getting ahead. Grotesque salaries were paid no matter what the performance of the companies. Outright fraud became commonplace.

But it was never enough. New crises kept emerging – except now they had immediate international consequences as capitalism was tied together by a thousand threads in every country.

The world's banks were given even more freedom to create debt on a colossal scale to keep everything ticking over. Personal, corporate and government debt kept on growing.

In the US debt went from 163% of GDP in 1980 to 346% in 2007 (Rod Oram, Sunday Star Times, 5 October 2008).

In New Zealand average household debt went from 60% of GDP 15 years ago to 160% today.

This is the second most indebted in the OECD.

This fuelled a housing price bubble as prices doubled since 2000 – as they did in the UK and Australia. We were told not to worry. We were encouraged to use our houses as an ATM machine.

Average household expenditure exceeded average income on average about 6% but increasing to 15% in recent years.

In the 3 decades before 1980 we saved about 10% of our income.

Housing bubble

Throughout the world there was a housing bubble. But in New Zealand it was bigger than most.

Writing in the Listener on October 18, 2008, economist Gareth Morgan noted that “average house prices used to be twice a graduates salary; nowadays it is eight times that and the median salary is less than the interest on the average mortgage.”

He included a chart which showed that the housing affordability for a 25- year 80% mortgage went from 20% of average income for decades to 50% in a surge after 2000.

Another chart revealed house prices were 45% above the 30-year trend line.

“Median house prices rose from 3.5 times the median household income in 1991 to 4.6 times the median household income in 1997, leveled off until 2001, then rocketed to 6.3 times the average household income last year, roughly double the average in North America.

Prices have fallen slightly since then to 5.7 times the median household income last month.”

This was always going to end in tears.

The government refused to do anything as it couldn't “interfere” in the operations of the free market – that is the freedom of big business to rob us blind.

Now the banks worldwide are in trouble as the bloated financial merry go round comes to a halt and we discover their massive debt creation (which gave them billions in commissions and fees) ended up in the hands of households and businesses who could not repay.

As the bubble deflates in housing prices many working people will be left owing more on their houses than they are worth.

A Canterbury University study by Professor Chris Eves reported in the Sunday Star Times, 21 December 2008, estimates that it is true for 20% of mortgages already.

Everyone will be cutting back on spending – households and businesses.

Banks will be intensifying the cutbacks by radically reducing their lending in a desperate attempt to restore their balance sheets.

We are entering a downwards spiral and no one knows how far it will go.

Will it be a simple recession with 10% unemployment like the 1990s? Or are we looking at 30% unemployment like the 1930s Depression? No one knows.

With the recession biting, unemployment rising and banks restricting lending – it seems households are cutting their expenditure and retail sales are falling rapidly.

Big ticket items like motor vehicles are seeing their sales hit a brick wall.

House sales are down 50%.

Household expenditure in NZ is about two-thirds of GDP.

If average household expenditure were to drop in New Zealand from 115% of GDP to just not spending more than current income then that would equal at least a 10% decline in GDP.

The 1990-91 GDP decline was about -2% and official unemployment rocketed to 10% (with official rates of 25-30% for Maori and Pacific people). The consequences would be terrifying.

Once the decline started it will be difficult to stop.

Just like the seemingly virtuous circle of more debt = more production = more jobs then the reverse will be a vicious circle of debt reduction = production decline – job losses on a massive scale.

Economic collapse

As Rod Oram wrote in the Sunday Star Times: “The danger, though, is that the economy will collapse. If the slowdown starts to bite deeper, we're risking a vicious downward spiral. Business confidence will crumble then capital spending and employment will drop; a rise in unemployment will wreak havoc on highly indebted households; banks will sell off repossessed properties; and the housing market will tumble.”

The New Zealand economy was kept ticking over these last 15 years on debt.

The combination of declining real wages, benefit cuts and overall government expenditure cuts produced a deep recession in the early 1990s driving official unemployment over 10%.

We got out of it because the rest of the world started their debt fuelled growth path and we picked up the coat tails.

Going into this recession we are in a much worse situation than 1990. Real wages haven't recovered and families are under pressure already.

There can be no return to debt creation as a substitute to an expansion of real incomes for the big majority. The deep inequality that grew in New Zealand society and the absolute poverty that exists at the bottom of the income ladder must be addressed.

Raising the minimum wage to two thirds of the average wage is a vital first step giving everyone a fair share of the economic pie.

www.unite.org.nz

The never ending arm wrestle

by Hector Thorpe
MUNZ 3111

Get organised

History records the maritime worker recognised early the importance of organisation via unions to achieve work place conditions.

Multiple Unions

The diversity and nature of their profession together with the ever changing influence of the Industry Commission, Industry employment, Shipping Company employment, Port Company employment or Government legislation ensured many unions were established including but not limited to (in alphabetical order) Cooks and Stewards', Harbour Board Workers', Marine Engineers', Railway and Transport, Seamen, Ship officers', Stevedores', Tally Clerks' and Waterside Workers'.

Amalgamation

These Maritime Unions worked independently of each other, but for reasons including Government legislation, rationalisation and "to enable a stronger position to defend their interest" a steady amalgamation progress has ensued.

Solidarity

Further advantage was achieved with solidarity and affiliation both locally and internationally to like minded organisations.

Please find below some Maritime Union of New Zealand (MUNZ) affiliates, associates or strong solidarity bonds that are held with other organisations.

NZ Council of Trades Unions (NZCTU)

www.nzctu.org.nz

The Trades' Union Council was founded in 1896 with seven affiliate unions being The Boilermakers' Union, The Operative Bootmakers' Society, The Operative Bakers' Union, The Operative Tailors' Society, The Tailoresses' Union, Wellington Typographical Society and NZ Bookbinders' and Paper-rulers' Society. With policy and name changes over the years the NZCTU website reports forty affiliate unions representing 350,000 workers or 80% of the unionised work force.

MUNZ officials play an active part within the NZCTU local affiliates Council.

Maritime of Union of Australia (MUA)

www.mua.org.au

The MUA was established in 1993 through the amalgamation of the Seamens' Union of Australia and the Waterside Workers' Federation. Both unions had a long history of solidarity with their first joint industrial action taken by Sydney Wharfies and Seafarers' in 1837.

National Unionism was formalised in 1902 and 1906 respectively.

The past Trans Tasman Accord, job sharing opportunities, a uniformed Trade Union Name and logo plus a history of "genuine solidarity" bonds the MUA and MUNZ.

International Transport Worker's Federation (ITF)

www.itfglobal.org

An International Trade Union Federation of 654 Unions representing 4.5 million transport workers in 148 countries.

ITF Seafarers' and Dockers' Section

The Seafarers' and Dockers' section through their Fair Practices Committee is best known for their 54 year joint Flag of Convenience (FOC) political and industrial campaign to determine a genuine link between the real owner of a vessel and the flag the vessel flies.

What is Flag of Convenience?

FOC is where beneficial ownership and control of a vessel is found to lie elsewhere than the country of the flag the vessel is flying.

The motivation for the Shipowner to abandon the flag and laws of their own country for another reflects a business opportunity, not national responsibility. For the seafarer it can mean crushed exploitation, savage intimidation and life and limb threatening neglect.

The ITF will declare a register FOC based on three main issues.

- (1) If the flag state does not enforce international minimum social standards on its vessels, including respect for basic human and trade union rights, and the right to collective bargaining with a bona fide trade union.
- (2) If they do not enforce the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Conventions.
- (3) If they do not enforce the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) safety and environment Conventions.

MUA and MUNZ within the ITF

The ITF Executive is structured with a President and five Vice Presidents which are responsible their respective regions or group being North America, Latin America, European, Asia/Pacific, and Women's. National Secretary Paddy Crumlin has lifted the MUA profile within the ITF as he is Vice President of the Asia/Pacific Section and spokesperson for the Dockers' Section.

Kathy Whelan was NZ's ITF Inspectorate for many years in which time she secured many victories and raised the profile for NZ. Grahame Mc Laren is our current Inspector and National Vice President Garry Parsloe is NZ's ITF Convenor.

Global Union Federation (GUF)

www.global-union.org

The GUF is an international federation of a dozen national and regional trade unions organised in specific industry sectors.

Most major unions are members of one or more global union federations, relevant to the sectors where they have their members, e.g. the ITF as a GUF member represents transport workers.

Other federations in GUF include Building and Wood Workers' International, International Arts and Entertainment Alliance, Education International, International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers' unions, International Federation of Journalists, International Metalworkers' Federation, International Textile, Garment and Leather Workers' Federation, International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Association, Public Service International, Union Network International, Industrial Workers of the World.

International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)

www.ituc-csi.org

The ITUC is the world's largest trade union federation formed in 2006 but had its roots from 1920 through the International Federation of Christian Trade Unions which transformed into then the World Confederation of Labour in 1968. It then merged with the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions to form the International Trade Union Confederation.

The ITUC has close relations with GUF and the Trade Union Advisory Committee to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), working together through the Global Unions Council. It also works closely with the ILO and maintains contacts with several other United Nations (UN) Specialised Agencies.

The ITUC represents 170 million workers in 158 countries and territories and 316 national affiliates. NZ workers are affiliated to the ITUC via the NZCTU.

International Labour Organisation (ILO)

www.ilo.org

The ILO was founded in 1919, in the wake of the war, to pursue a vision that universal, lasting peace can be established only if it is based upon decent treatment of working people.

It became the first specialised agency of the UN in 1946 and is the only tripartite UN agency.

It brings together 28 Governments, 14 of which are elected at the three yearly conferences, the 14 Workers and 14 Employers Groups elect their own representatives respectively.

Australia plays a leading role in the ILO as the MUA National Secretary Paddy Crumlin was elected Vice Chairperson of the Workers Group 10th Maritime Session of the International Labour Conference. This was in recognition of the Maritime Union's contribution to the historic "Seafarer's Bill of Rights" also known as the "ILO Superconvention" a convention that spans continents and oceans, providing a comprehensive labour charter for the world's 1.2 million or more seafarers.

International Maritime Organisation (IMO)

www.imo.org

Founded in 1958 as the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organisation renamed in 1982, the IMO is mostly recognised by seafarers for their International Conventions of Safety of life at Sea (SOLAS) and (MARPOL) oil, air, chemicals, goods in packaged form, sewage and garbage pollution. It also established the International Mobile Satellite Organisation and the Global Maritime Distress Safety System, and later the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW95). SOLAS safety, MARPOL pollution, STCW training and the Seafarers' Bill of Rights are now the four pillars of a single International regulatory system for the global maritime industry.



National Distribution Union members picket in Auckland, 2009 (photo courtesy NDU)

Missions to Seafarers

www.missiontoseafarers.org

Formally the Seamen's Mission, often called the Flying Angel, with ministers to over 300 ports through Chaplains, lay staff and volunteers they provide a service of help and support, sermon notes and prayers, transport, international contact calls to loved ones, hospital visits, foreign exchange, a shop for toiletries, mail and a beer.

Often it is the first point of contact at each port for many international seafarers; also it's a place where their concerns of hardship are often raised.

Employers Counter

The International Shipping Federation has consultative status within the ILO, IMO and UN; they did endorse the Seafarers' Bill of Rights (I'm sure an arm twist from the ITF helped).

Plus the International Chamber of Shipping and International Maritime Employers Committee effectively represent their members.

Locally the Employers Association remain accustomed to their advantage and along with the National Government continue to undermine industrial relations.

As of March 2009 there were 159 registered unions in NZ with a total membership of 387,959.

This union membership represents 17.9% of the total employed labour force, and 21.5% of wage/salary earners for that period. (Department of Labour 2009, www.dol.govt.nz)

Roger Kerr of the Business Round Table reported "only one worker in five now belongs to a union in NZ, most want to be treated as individuals rather than as parts of a collective lump of labour." (NZ Business Roundtable 2004, www.nzbr.org.nz)

The National Government's future labour relations policy is likely to be influenced by such statistics and lobbying. The arm wrestle continues!

Source: Above websites plus www.paperspast.natlib.govt.nz www.thecommunityarchive.org.nz www.Wikipedia.com www.dnzb.govt.nz



2005: Only four in this photo played in 2004, including number 11 Murray Payne (now C3 stevedoring operations manager) and Vincent Haerewa (wearing vest) now labour allocator, number 8 Brian Johnson, and number 15 Ezra Johnson who later left for Australia. Numbers 14, 6, 12 and kneeling player work elsewhere. In 2006 three more players joined the workforce, Jade Williams and Teeny Rayner (both GHE's) and Quinton Haerewa who later on left to join the NZ Army.



2008: First year playing in the C3 Ltd strip, new players to the team and work force are number 6 Jamie Rayner and number 7 Aaron Samuels, who still works at C3 HQ in the IT Department. 2007 was the last year we played in the Toll Owens strip, and another three joined the team and workforce, Kurt Ormsby, Eru Wills and Isaac Smith.



2009: fifth year in a row. Another two players join the team and workforce. Middle row, third left is Bryce Hoete, and (absent) permanent Thomas Kiwi.

C3 Basketball Tauranga

Vincent Haerewa of C3 in Port of Tauranga sent in photos and a short history of their basketball team from 2004–2009.

Vincent says they have been playing Men's Premier League Basketball in 2004, coming second that year, but winning every final up to 2009.

The Maritimes did not have enough space to print all the photos but here is a selection.

List of Players (and years represented)

Vincent Haerewa (2004–2009)
 Brian Johnson (2004–2009)
 Murray Payne (2004–2008)
 John Pouwhare (2004–2008)
 Mark Jacob (2004–2005)
 Ray Reweti (2004)
 Damon Tanatiu (2004)
 Daryl Jacob (2004)
 Keiaro Jacob (2004)
 John Miller (2004)
 Alex Pope (2004)
 Andre Henare (2004)
 James Lesley (2004)
 Darcy Rawiri (2004)
 Damian Bennett (2004)
 Ezra Johnson (2005–2009)
 Quinton Haerewa (2005)
 Andy MacKay (2005)
 Jade Williams (2006–2009)
 Teeny Rayner (2006–2008)
 Jared Thompson (2006–2008)
 Ryan Piddington (2006–2009)
 Gabe Aletenhufen (2006–2007)
 Kris Thompson (2006)
 Matt Kendrick (2006)
 Lee Fowler (2006)
 Eru Wills (2007–2009)
 Jamie Rayner (2007–2009)
 Aaron Samuels (2007–2008)
 Isaac Smith (2007)
 Kurt Ormsby (2007)
 Thomas Kiwi (2009)
 Bryce Hoete (2009)
 Kalem Saia (2009)
 Lawrence Cockrell (2009)
 Russell Ngatoko (2009)
 Duran Farell (2009)
 Federico Pasquali (2009)



Obituary: Hugh Blain Barrow 5 June 1926 – 4 November 2009

I was shipmates with Hugh for 3 and 1/2 years in the Pearl Kasper and then in McCullums Tow Boat and Barge Naumai and Hazel Repton for many years in the 1960s. McCullum's then were the only tow boat and barge outfit employing NZSU AB's, unlike Parrys and Julain who took anyone off the street.

Hugh sat and got his river masters ticket while with McCullums with the idea of possibly getting a tow boat skippers job, but the ferry in Whitianga came onto the market, so Hugh bought it and ran the ferry for many years.

After some time he found he was just keeping his head above water financially, so applied to the Thames District Council to increase the fares. They originally knocked him back so Hugh took the ferry off the run and made a name by becoming the only New Zealander to stage a one man strike. It didn't last long, people couldn't get to work or kids to school, so the Council quickly capitulated. He lost the ferry during a bad storm when it broke its moorings and became wrecked. I think he used a fishing boat while he had two new boats built in Auckland. The smaller of the two he named Stella B after his wife.

Hugh sold the ferries some years ago as he was having great difficulty with his legs, having to resort to a walker recently. I attended his farewell gathering in the afternoon of Wednesday 11 November when around twenty relatives and friends boarded the Stella B ferry and took his ashes out in the Estuary he had plied backwards and forwards in for so many years. His ashes were cast into the water to the sound of Eight Bells being struck to signify the end of Hugh's shift.

Another good shipmate from the old days has departed.

Contributed by Allan Phillips,
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**Maritime Union of New Zealand Timaru Branch
Christmas Party and Old Timers' Function
Timaru Town and Country Club, Saturday 21 November 2009**

