

The Maritimes

Newsletter of the Maritime Union of New Zealand

Issue One

February/March 2003

Welcome to the New Union!



Delegates at the first Maritime Union Conference, Wellington, November 2002

Welcome to the first edition of 'the Maritimes', a new magazine for a new Union - the Maritime Union of New Zealand.

The formation of the Maritime Union of New Zealand is a major step forward for seafarers and waterfront workers in New Zealand.

It brings together two of New Zealand's oldest and respected Unions - the New Zealand Seafarers' Union and the New Zealand Waterfront Workers' Union.

This means greater unity and strength in dealing with the pressure in what are tough industries.

The problems we face are similar - casualization, Flag of Convenience shipping, the use of cheap foreign crews, and attacks on the Union by aggressive employers are all part of the same picture.

But we bring to the task a common history and common strengths - a rank and file, struggle-based approach that puts the

power with our members.

Wharfies and seafarers have always stood by each other in our common cause - actively working for better conditions for our members, and working for a better deal for all New Zealand workers.

The growing unity of maritime workers in New Zealand has been matched by the growing unity of maritime workers internationally.

Our friends in the Maritime Union of Australia have been supporting our amalgamation process, with the benefit of their experience in doing the same thing a decade ago.

The Maritime Union of New Zealand will also continue to work in international solidarity with other Pacific unions such as the ILWU (West Coast USA), ZenKowan (Japan) and Korea.

We continue to play a role in the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF).

At a time when the corporate

owners of the maritime industries are becoming increasingly globalized and concentrated, our best strategy is to globalize as well - through solidarity and unity with our counterparts around the world.

'The Maritimes' is going to be a regular communication within and outside the Union.

In this first edition, we bring messages from the Union leadership, news articles on some of the big issues, and reports from our locals and branches around New Zealand.

If there is something you would like to see in 'the Maritimes', let us know.

Contact details are on page 9.

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Heavy weather ahead!

by Trevor Hanson
General Secretary

This first edition of 'The Maritimes' is the forerunner to what we intend to be a magazine to which we can all contribute. It will provide us with a snapshot of our industry, and the chance to contribute our thoughts, letters and photographs.

Our first inaugural meeting was a complete success and the comradeship between our members was self evident.

I have included in this edition a contribution of how I personally see the events leading up to our amalgamation. Of course I have leaned towards the wharfie side of the industry, because that is the side I know best.

But from here on in we have begun the process of becoming a united organization.

Not only officials and delegates but rank and file members have to take part in this process of 'cross pollination' as our Australian counterparts put it.

This will happen over time, but we should use our initiative

to speed the process up wherever possible.

The reality is the amalgamation process needs to be membership driven.

I realize that present day circumstances make involvement hard, particularly for those members who work around the clock with very little spare time.

I am hopeful that our Seafarers will continue - as they always have in the past - help fill in the gaps and give generously of their time.

Every member of our new Union is well aware of struggle we are in.

The purpose of a Union is to deliver a fair wage with fair conditions, and to be able to use the collective strength of our members to achieve this aim.

The globalization of large corporate business has had its flow-on effect on New Zealand.

Our industry is a complicated jigsaw of 40 or more enterprise and ship agreements - with the result of our members being played off against one another.

The easy answer would be to let it go and let the chips fall where they may.

But that is not in our nature - and I hope it never will be.

What we need to do is pick up our game and fight using all the tools we have available - it comes down to saying enough is enough.

But this action has to be led from members themselves, and it is absolutely no use ignoring problems on the job, then passing it onto the nearest union official to try and resolve in an argument between himself and the employer.

There needs to be action on the job, and then the official has got something to argue with.

In the present situation there is far too much attention paid to the so-called legalities, and what is perceived to be a sympathetic Government.

It is time for the members - who are the Union - to stand up and fight for their rights.

We have some pretty heavy weather ahead of us, but with a new united organization and growing international links we can only go onwards and upwards.

On a lighter note, one goal we have is to include retired members in 'the Maritimes' mailing list and draw on their knowledge both present and past.

Our brother organisation the Maritime Union of Australia has a complete organisation of retired members - who not only look after their own interests, but give very freely of their time to assist the Union in many areas.

I hope a similar arrangement could be set up here, and be linked to the MUA retired members organisation.



Representatives from all New Zealand ports were joined by five delegates from the Maritime Union of Australia at the first meeting of the Maritime Union of New Zealand in Wellington, November 2002.



Unity for Maritime workers at home and abroad

by **Dave Morgan**
Joint National President

November 2002 was a major month for both the New Zealand Seafarers Union and New Zealand Waterfront Workers' Union as we were host to several historical events that will put New Zealand Seafarers into a good position for the future.

The most important area of development was the first joint National Council meeting of the Maritime Union of New Zealand - the first of two such meetings to be held in the year of transition, leading up to the Maritime Union elections in October 2003.

All National Council members of the NZSU and NZWWU attended this meeting which took place over two days and a good deal of progress was made.

Even more important was that each group of workers gained a stronger understanding of their industrial/political partners into the future.

The Union also hosted a strong delegation of five National and State Officials from the Maritime Union of Australia, who were in New Zealand to attend the inaugural meeting of the Tasman Maritime Federation.

Our Australian comrades stayed on as fraternal guests to the Maritime Union of New Zealand Joint Executive Conference, in which they provided great support for our amalgamation.

The first meeting of the Tasman Maritime Federation also took place at this time.

This marks the coming together internationally of New Zealand and Australian maritime workers, as both waterfront workers and

seafarers are now joined into single Unions inside the wharf gates in their national jurisdictions.

It is a step towards closer relations as the industrial and political climate in which we live and work changes.

The inaugural meeting of the Tasman Maritime Federation commits our Union to internationalism and in particular the ITF policy from the ITF 'Globalising Solidarity' Congress in Vancouver.

Both the TMF and Maritime Union of New Zealand meetings endorsed motions on issues of importance to the development of this significant new Trade Union grouping in our region.

The structure of the Federation was set out, the TMF will meet regularly, the next meeting will be in Australia in March 2003.

The meeting resolved to share the training resources of the MUA/ACTU/NZCTU through the MUA training officer (Eddie Seymour) to develop modules for membership training in New Zealand using local material and the ACTU Unions@work programme.

This will be done in the first half of 2003.

The meeting called for the formation of an ITF regional affiliates group to be set up in the Oceania region.

To promote the TMF there will be a link from existing websites leading to a page on the MUA site (and the Maritime Union of New Zealand site when it is set up.)

These motions that came from the TMF meeting were also adopted by the Joint Executive meeting of Maritime Union.



ITF New Zealand Inspectorate

Kathy Whelan
ITF Coordinator for New Zealand

The amalgamation of the Seafarers Union and Waterfront Workers Union into the Maritime Union of New Zealand, and the formation of the Trans Tasman Federation, is complemented by the ITF in Australia and New Zealand.

The ITF Australian and New Zealand inspectorates have worked together over a long period of time and especially so over the last year.

New Zealand seafarers and wharfies are proactive in New Zealand ITF campaigns and the Australian and New Zealand ITF inspectorates work together daily.

This trans-Tasman unity was helped by a seminar held in Australia last October and attended by Australian and New Zealand volunteer wharfies and seafarers who are active in the ITFs Flag of Convenience campaign.

We recognise that an Australian issue is a New Zealand issue and vice versa, with industries in both countries badly affected by Flag of Convenience shipping and the policies of respective Governments who have allowed FOCs into the Tasman and on our coasts.

The battle rages on but the future looks positive as we consolidate ourselves not only in New Zealand with the formation of MUNZ - but also in the region with the formation of the Trans Tasman Federation.

Unions oppose Iraq War

At the time of going to print the war in Iraq is being touted as "inevitable".

The political situation does seem to indicate a major conflict is about to erupt.

Sane voices throughout the world are a rising tide against it.

'The Maritimes' joins those sane voices in saying **NO WAR IN IRAQ.**

The Maritime Union has endorsed the NZCTU position in opposition to the war.

An email graphic doing the rounds speaks quite eloquently and produces the last word in what the war is really all about: OIL.

The Oil Companies stand to gain access to something in the order of 1.2 Billion barrels of Iraqi oil.

With that kind of prize for the warmongers, you can imagine that the information output from the world sheriff's office is becoming quite bizarre.

The pantomime being played out with the UN Weapons Inspectors beggars belief.

At time of writing the US propaganda machine is going into full gear to 'reveal' the so-called evidence.

This from the same people who gave us Vietnam. and the rhetoric and attitude is the same.

Maybe if the United States hadn't bombed eighteen countries since the Second World War we could give them some credence.

Iraq has been the subject of sanctions imposed by the United States for many years now and the main victims are the children of Iraq who have died in their thousands deprived of medicines through the blockade.

The war is not about democracy

— it is about power and money.

Once again the ordinary people will be the ones who suffer.

The war is getting the fingers of people throughout the world and we should include ours.

The New Zealand Trade Union movement is four square behind the opposition to the war in this country and the Unions need support for their stand against the invasion of Iraq.

Timaru pickets

The Maritime Union picketed a foreign crewed ship in Timaru on January 17.

The Panamanian-registered "Ocean Melody" was carrying cargo normally carried by New Zealand-crewed ships between New Zealand ports.

Joint President of the Maritime Union Dave Morgan says the use of foreign-crewed ships working between New Zealand ports is a threat to New Zealand jobs and New Zealand conditions.

Special efforts have been made under the terms of Section 198 of the Maritime Transport Act to allow the Ocean Melody to carry grain between New Zealand ports. Under the act, foreign ships coming into or leaving New Zealand can carry New Zealand cargo between ports only after they have dropped cargo off or are about to pick it up.

The Maritime Union believes the use of 'Flag of Convenience' vessels in New Zealand waters is creating a security risk for New Zealand.

Wharfies compo claim gets boost

Wharfies formerly employed by New Zealand Stevedores have won a High Court ruling that boosts their financial compensation.

The case affects out of pocket former employees of New Zealand Stevedores and its subsidiaries Waitemata, Kaimai, Timaru, Canterbury, Wellington and Otago Stevedoring Services Ltd.

The company was liquidated four years ago.

It was owned by US maritime transnational Stevedoring Services of America (SSA).

Justice David Baragwanath ruled that under the Receivership and Companies Act, employees have priority over general creditors.

In January, Justice Baragwanath set interest payments at 12.4% compounding for the four years up to his judgement in June 2002.

This is to be followed by a yet to be determined lower interest rate.

The outstanding holiday pay and wages owed to the workers amounted to more than NZ\$1.8 million.

Liquidator Dennis Parsons has calculated the amount has now ballooned to \$2.86 million due to compound interest.

Justice Baragwanath noted in his ruling there was no justification for allowing the earning power of the fund to remain with SSA rather than passing to individual employees.

Employees had good reason to expect prompt payment of their entitlement as priority creditors.

The ruling is being taken to the Court of Appeal.



Trans-Tasman unity: delegates from Australia and New Zealand attending a seminar held in Australia last October for wharfies and seafarers active in the ITF's Flag of Convenience campaign.

Changes to Health & Safety Act

Changes to the Health & Safety in Employment Act passed through Parliament in December 2002 and will come into force in May 2003.

Maritime Union officials attended a two-day seminar on the impact of the changes on workers and the expected reaction from employers.

Against our opposition the health and safety requirements of Maritime Transport Act will now be covered by the amended Health and Safety Act.

This is a backwards step and one that we fought against even though some members did not understand the issues involved.

The Merchant Service Guild also supported the changes.

The Maritime Safety Authority will continue to be the Authority but under a warrant from OSH, as far as we are aware.

This weakens its position in our industry.

The ILO has always recognized the Maritime Industry as being different and that it is unique in these matters.

The Maritime Conference of the ILO is an example of that.

Attempts made to change that position in other countries and national jurisdictions have been resisted strenuously by seafarer unions internationally with some success; we were not successful in New Zealand.

New provisions

We must now be aware of the provisions of the Health and Safety Act.

It provides for elected health and safety representatives who, after training, will be able to register a hazard notice.

Any worker who believes on reasonable grounds that their work is likely to cause serious harm may refuse to perform work.

Advice from a Health and Safety rep is sufficient grounds.

So it can be seen how important the matter of proper, democratically conducted elections for Health and Safety reps will be.

It is also possible to see how the employer will be working hard now to put in place systems that he believes will comply with the Act and cut us out of our rights.

Employers, workers and unions must act in good faith to develop and maintain a health and safety system.

If your workplace already has a system you are happy with, you can agree with your employer to continue with it.

Beware! This is an extremely sensitive area and we need to be on our guard to ensure the basic requirements of the Act are implemented in the interests of our health and safety.

Employers must provide workers with reasonable opportunity to participate.

The recommendations of Health and Safety representatives or committees must be adopted by the employer unless a written explanation is given for not doing so.

Health and Safety Representatives must be allowed two days paid leave a year to attend approved training.

Unlike the previous situation these provisions will no longer be covered by the Maritime Transport Act, but rather the Health and Safety in Employment Act.

The Act will come into force early May 2003.

The Maritime Union has urged the NZCTU to put more seminars in place for delegates, and the CTU National Affiliates Council resolved to put a full campaign in place to see the Act is used to its full benefits in the interests of workers.

The Maritime Union has also asked the Maritime Safety Authority to put seminars in place for Maritime Union delegates and others to fully understand how the new arrangements will work in the Maritime Industry.

We are writing to all employers asking for meetings to review current systems and see what is required for agreement on the implementation of the new law in May 2003.

Port Roundup: Auckland Seafarers



by Garry Parsloe

We held the Auckland Branch Old Timers Social at the Maritime Club, Anzac Avenue on

the 13 December 2002.

The Auckland Secretary welcomed all the Old Timers to their Social and thanked them for their past struggles which have helped preserve the Union in the good condition that it is in.

The Secretary then read faxes from the vessels which among other things wished them all the best on this very special day.

The ships faxes were indicative of the high regard that the Old Timers are held in by membership.

Guest Speakers were National President Dave Morgan, Auckland Branch President of the Waterfront Workers Union Denis Carlisle, and Pat Lumber, ex-National Executive member of the both the Cooks and Stewards Union and the New Zealand Seafarers Union.

Other Union officials present included Gerard Hill (ex-Auckland branch Assistant Secretary), Alex McDonald (ex-National Councillor of the NZSU), Fred Anabell (ex-National President, New Zealand Cooks and Stewards Union), Jim Hewitt (ex-President Auckland WWU) and Ray Bianchi (National Secretary of AWUNZ).

Also in attendance was ITF Co-ordinator Kathy Whelan.

A special thanks must go to the Cooks (Kevin Dixon and Ricky Edwards) for the excellent spread that they put on.

As always it was an excellent day out for all the Old Timers.

On behalf of the Auckland Branch Executive I want to thank all those individuals and ships crews for their donations which made the Old Timers Social the success that it was.

Port Roundup: Auckland Local 13



by Terry Ryan

Auckland First Local

The December stopwork meeting in Auckland was

attended by General Secretary Trevor Hanson and Joint President Dave Morgan.

The following resolution was carried unanimously:

"Given that MUNZ is now a reality based on the decision of the Joint Council's to have NZ-WWU change its name to MUNZ with the NZSU disband and join MUNZ. We now need to determine how different branches identify themselves.

Further realizing that the Joint Council made no allocation or preference to the naming of locals during their deliberations.

And considering that the spirit and intent of the amalgamation was to model MUNZ on the ILWU Locals concept to ensure preservation of the whole if part was attacked, and as this concept was endorsed unanimously at the NZ-WWU Triennial Conference, along with the formation of local trusts to protect Union assets.

Therefore the Auckland branch of MUNZ Waterfront Workers Division recommends to this December SWM that this branch officially be known as 'MUNZ Auckland Branch Local 13.' and appear on all letterheads, business cards etc.

So Local 13 was born - all letterheads, cards, notepads have been printed and carry the Locals number.

Port Roundup: Mt Maunganui



by Phil Spanswick

Greetings from Mount Maunganui, the Surf Capital of New Zealand.

2003 will be an interesting year as a number of our Collective Agreements are up for re-negotiation.

They are P & O Ports on 1 April, Ballance Agri Nutrients 15 June and Toll on 2 July.

We are currently planning our negotiation time lines for these Agreements.

We are currently in dispute with Owens in trying to settle our Collective Agreement and we are attempting to resolve the dispute through mediation.

We have finally settled the Digger Drivers Collective Agreement for Export Log Management which has a twelve month term.

Our delegate training programme will continue this year and our intention is to ensure all delegates and activists are involved.

The local Sports Day is to be held on the 3rd of February.

Port Roundup: Gisborne



by Dein Ferris

We are into the squash season in Gisborne.

Currently we are trying to get the agreement settled with New Zealand Stevedoring, and there has been some pressure with Toll hiring labour from another source.

Members enjoyed their Xmas break.

Port Roundup: Napier



by **Bill Connelly**

Around and about:

The port is pretty quiet at the moment after a reasonably busy last few months. With the holiday now over we are back into the swing of things.

Members who have recently left the industry:

Keith Vann recently retired from Hawkes Bay Stevedoring Services Limited and is right into his favourite leisure activity of sailing full time.

Keith had been in the industry since May 1974 and will be well known to many of the Southern Cross group members from around the country.

Robin Oates who has worked for Omniport Napier since its inception in February 1990 has retired from full-time employment, but in speaking to him the other day he made his intention known that he would be putting in the occasional day as a casual.

Ohope Beach accommodation in New Zealand:

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

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

Gold Coast accommodation in Australia:

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

Please note that the confirmation period for bookings is now

SIX MONTHS, which put quite simply means that members nationally can now book six months in advance.

Members from other ports who have used the property recently have come from Mount Maunganui, Wellington and Port Chalmers.

The following dates are available for this year:

25 January to 8 February 2003

19

April to 3 May 2003

31 May to 14 June 2003

14 June to

28 June 2003

I will be heading down South on holiday for about ten days from the 1 February onwards and will not be back in the office until around about the 15 February.

Those members from out of port with bookings for Ohope and

Port Roundup: New Plymouth



by **Shane Parker**

New Plymouth Branch members have been very busy lately.

There has been increased drilling offshore with work for seaman and some watersiders.

Business in the Port and the whole province is the strongest it has been in many years with the dairy industry booming.

This means more exports coming through the port and increased

fertilizer coming in.

There has also been an increase in the meat trade to the USA.

The new intake of men to the branch has gone well with all men doing extensive training with cranes, gear, diggers and forklifts.

It's good to have some new blood in the industry.

We are one of the few branches which still have an annual picnic day in our award, which is observed on the last Monday in January.

It is now old-timers day, and includes golf, bowls and a few beers for past and present members: always a good day to share memories and tell stories.

Port Roundup: Whangarei



by **Danny Schick**

Whangarei Branch is pleased to report that our members are standing together now more than ever.

We have been quiet as far as shipping is concerned over the past few weeks since the start of the New Year.

On the union front we are currently battling with employers over a wrongful dismissal case and looking for reinstatement of a fellow worker.

Although we are going forward as far as our union membership is concerned, we have to keep our eyes open to other employers in our port hiring non-union labour from WINZ.

**'The Maritimes' is the official newsletter of the
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**Deadline for all Port reports, submissions, photos and letters:
April 11 2003.**



The last unfurling of the Wellington Seafarers' Union banner at January's anti-war rally in Wellington.

Port Roundup: Wellington Seafarers



by Mike Williams

We have experienced busy months in the holiday period due to the arrival of the

Santa Regina and issues of Tranzrail and the Offshore.

The political campaigns have been on the question of cabotage and the protest campaign against the war on Iraq.

The Wharfies and the Seafarers will continue to meet regarding setting up a Wellington branch and where we are situated.

The Santa Regina

The Santa Regina, cargo passenger ferry, arrived on December 23.

It's the first time for many years that a New Zealand crew has delivered a ship.

The ship has come from Marseilles in France and the delivery crew put everything in place from rosters to the safe operation of the vessel and accommodation.

The issues between the company and the union have all been solved, thanks to the union crew.

The ship has engaged NZ Seafarers from Nelson, Lyttleton, New Plymouth, Tauranga and

Wellington.

The ship itself is as big as the Arahura but only licensed to carry 112 passengers.

However, the companies intention is to expand that next summer to 400 which will mean a lot more work in the catering department.

Offshore

The drill-ship 'Ocean Bounty' and the two 'Swires' supply vessels are due to finish in the next month.

The New Zealand crew will continue working on the 'Ocean Bounty' in Australia, and the discussions are underway whether the same will happen to supply vessels.

The seismic vessel 'Polo Duke' is working a 50/50 arrangement with MUA and is due to finish in a month.

The 50/50 crew arrangements with the MUA have been successful and have really helped in the Trans-Tasman Federation relationship.

Tranzrail

There have been some issues in mediation with Tranzrail and a full report will be given to the next stopwork meeting.

There are also some major issues in regards to health and safety and manning levels on the Aratere.

Cabotage

The cabotage campaign is important and the Wellington branch needs to give it some more focus.

The War in Iraq.

It is important for union members to attend the rallies against the war in Iraq.

For over a decade an inhuman campaign of American-imposed sanctions — the most complete ever in recorded history — has destroyed Iraq as a modern state, decimated its people, ruined its agriculture, educational and health care systems, as well as its entire infrastructure.

As if that wasn't bad enough, the United States is now seeking to wage war against the Iraqi people, which will see thousands more innocent lives brutally lost.

It is accordance with the traditions of our movement for unions to take a lead against war and fascism.

At the moment the antiwar movement needs money, printing resources, and, most importantly, large numbers of people to be actively involved in day-to-day anti-war agitation and rallies.

To build the strongest possible anti-war movement we need the practical solidarity of everyone in the trade union movement.

I personally witnessed the police brutality which occurred at the last rally outside the American embassy in Wellington.

The next rally occurs in Wellington on the 15th February and will meet at Glover Park at midday.



Around 70 Wellington Maritime Union and RMTU members attended a joint meeting at the Wellington Stadium on December 8 last year to discuss problems at Centreport.

Port Roundup: Wellington Waterfront

by John Whiting



Central Stevedoring, a port company subsidiary, have taken over the port companies stevedoring work and have set up their own workforce, who have formed an employees' association.

The problems with work coverage and the employer-based 'union' are being challenged by us legally.

Ultimately, our members will have to defend themselves in the way workers have always done as a last resort.

We have upped the game in our campaign for a satisfactory double time rate working on statutory

holidays.

We are aware many of our members around the country are getting this.

Wellington members took the decision not to volunteer for work on statutory holidays from Christmas and New Year onwards unless double time rates are paid.

Managers then chose to use the Central Stevedoring workforce on certain days.

Compounding this problem is reduced availability of work with the loss of the P&O 4100 box container ships to Wellington.

The renewal of the collective agreement with Capital City Stevedores has been successful for a two year term.

The Christmas Shout for current and retired members was well enjoyed by all as the back page photos will show.



A good turnout at the Wellington Christmas Shout for current and retired members at Waterloo Hotel.

Port Roundup: Lyttelton

by Les Wells



I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone the best for the New Year.

Lyttelton has finally settled all 4 areas as far as contracts are concerned.

As always we have not been able to satisfy all of the members but hope we have something that can work for us in the future.

As I write this we are getting nearer to the Interport tournament. When this goes to press it will be over and I hope the local boys have kicked arse, but if we don't I am sure everybody will have had a good time and enjoyed the mainland hospitality.

A major concern for Lyttelton is the intended sale of Pacifica Shipping.

We can only hope it is sold to a Union-friendly company.

As you will be aware Lyttelton was not chosen as one of the ports of call for the P & O 7100's (I hope Port Chalmers is enjoying the weekend work).

We have been chosen as the South Island port of call for the new MSC service.

It is like everything in shipping, there is always someone else out there to pick up cargo.

One of the big problems facing South Island ports is a competitive attitude between ports.

This has led both our members and those outside our Union to go for the bosses' mentality.

Some ports will break every condition and work practice to attract shipping.

While they work under this environment they will bring down the conditions and safe working conditions of others.

It's a competition in lowering standards - and in the end we all lose from it.

Port Roundup: Nelson

by Brian Callaghan



It's been a busy time recently up until Xmas but Januray and February are usually

quieter times.

A big year is forecast in the log trade, with not enough storage space available to meet the demand.

Gear bulk ships have been calling to load MDF and timber on a monthly stopover.

Port Nelson recently put in a super yacht berth which is regularly used, but its position between Sealords and the lay up berth is questionable.

It's a hive of activity around the quay at present with numerous apartments been built and more are in the planning stage.

Long time member Lester Bigwood recently finished up.

He started in Bluff in 1964, transferred to Nelson in 1980 and is off to Queensland to live.

All the best to Lester and his family.

Our members rooms have just had a facelife and are a big improvement and we wish all members a prosperous 2003.

Port Roundup: Timaru

by Kevin Forde



There have been a few new developments at Timaru.

The Port Company have got two brand new cranes that have recently come into use.

These are the biggest lever cranes in New Zealand and can carry 2 x 20 foot containers side by side.

Mainland have been working on logs here and the Port Company have been crosshiring them.

We have told them that we will not work on same hatch or gang with them.

Members at Timaru Cargo Services have been working out of port transfers at Port Chalmers and Lyttelton, and Turnbells out of port transfers to Lyttelton.

The main work at the moment is phosphate and fish and we have been working on the Chatham islands trader the Rangitikei.

Jerry Flynn has resigned from the Union after about twenty five years.

Port Roundup: Bluff

by Ray Fife



The big event in Bluff recently was our picket on January 8.

Mainland were loading veneer and worked a ship for twelve hours, finishing at 7pm.

Fifty Union supporters turned out at short notice for a picket at the Port Gates to remind Mainland that anti-union companies are not welcome down south.

Around 20 police were present when they turned up and left.

Our picket received good coverage from the Southland Times and Otago Daily Times as well as TV One 6pm news.

We will continue with our stance, obviously it is frustrating with the injunction but we are abiding by it.

In other news, three new permanent staff have been taken on by Southland Stevedoring Services which is a real positive - it is a long time since this has happened.

Work is reasonably busy, with sawn timber and fertilizer the main products going through.

A shout for all our retired members in November went well with about seventy people attending.



Maritime Union members at Bluff with local supporters mounted a strong picket against Mainland on January 8.

Port Roundup: Port Chalmers



by Phil Adams

Our port has been very busy over the Xmas - New Year period.

This is largely due to the new 4100 vessels calling every weekend which has meant those that remain over this period were kept very busy.

Port Chalmers Cargo

Things were reasonably quiet although work is now picking up and the positive result re their calm against Stevedoring Services of America has seen their spirits lifted which is probably happening throughout New Zealand.

Interport

We have members preparing to attend the annual sports tourney held this year in Lyttelton.

We have a strong team of golfers, fisherman, darts and pool players which should see them come home with all the spoils of victory.

Winky Waugh will lead the team with Davy Dick our President helping out. Good luck to all concerned.

Mainland

Recently we have had Mainland Stevedoring operating in Bluff.

It was gratifying to see the local branch put up a solid picket.

This has to be done to convince other employers in the port to remain with the local labour.

Our branch have written a letter to the RMTU National Office in regard to their members attitude to the scabs and the help they are giving to our members who resist Mainland.

We feel very strongly on this because if didn't cross picket lines and refused to work alongside these people, it would have gone a long way to stopping their encroachment into our ports, particularly in the South Island.

Not all RMTU members are at fault as the local RMTU members in our port stood alongside us and helped repel them from our port and we know this happened in Lyttelton as well.

With talk of further amalgamation with the RMTU, they will have to get their act together before our port will consider it.

Union Shout

In December we held our retired members and union shout. It was great to see so many of the retired members attend and in good health.

We cannot underestimate the

work these people did in gaining the current wages and conditions we enjoy.

The amalgamation is quietly taking effect in our port with local seafarers being invited along to our meetings.

Local success

John Pearce, a member in Port Chalmers, had a very proud day on Sunday 19 January.

His son Mahal won the New Zealand Golf Open at Middlemore in Auckland to pocket \$130 000.

South Island Organiser

Further to the Mainland picket in Bluff, the need for a South Island organiser is now more important than ever.

Having him in Bluff would have taken the pressure off and given us better coverage and better organisation.

Hopefully this will be sorted out sooner rather than later.

New members

We have had an increase in our numbers which is a good sign. Most are local and known to everyone and it has not taken long for nicknames to appear.

"Plank" and "the Parrot" are some that they have inherited. Well that's about our report.

We are entering some interesting times, and that is the reason for the statements and letters that we have been written lately.

These things have to be said as saying nothing is achieving nothing.

The way some areas of our industry are heading makes me fear for the future as we are seeing with the lack of awareness and action from some people.

The trouble is they think the Mainland problem is not theirs, but they can be rest assured that they will not stop until they have created the same situation they have in the North Island.



The Queenstown Holiday Home is available to members, book through Ian Quarrell (03 4727 216) or Phil Adams (03 4728 052).

Whose news is it anyway?

Often union members do not get a fair go in the news.

The problems and concerns that working New Zealanders have on and off the job are not often highlighted by the media.

Our voices are drowned out by the power and money of big business.

However for those of you who have a computer and a modem, a huge number of news and information sources are available on the internet.

If you have a printer you can always run an article off, and stick it up on the work noticeboard or in the lunchroom.

The Maritime Union is currently working on a new website at www.munz.org.nz - which will be up and running in the next month.

In the meantime you can check out what's going on at these websites:

The official CTU website:
www.union.org.nz

Maritime Union of Australia:
www.mua.org.au

International Longshore Workers Union (West Coast, USA):
www.ilwu.org

International Transport Workers Federation:
www.itf.org.uk

Independent News Media:
www.indymedia.org.nz

Independent journalist John Pilger:
www.johnpilger.com

The Guardian, a high quality UK and international newspaper:
www.guardian.co.uk

The Shooting of Steven Wallace

At the December 2002 meeting of the CTU National Affiliates Council the Maori Committee or Runanga reported they had discussed the matter of the Wallace Family of Waitara.

The family are under great stress and in dire financial difficulties as a direct result of the police shooting of their son Steven in the high profile case in Waitara, and in the latter case, because of the costs associated with their private prosecution against the police for murder.

The Runanga called for support for a national appeal being launched to assist the family.

This appeal is supported by several prominent New Zealanders concerned for the principles in the case.

The Cabinet is now considering a police recommendation that the Crimes Act be changed.

This would stop future private prosecutions of police involved in such actions during their work.

This an outlandish proposal.

It goes against the fundamental rights of people to protect themselves against excessive behaviour of the police.

Workers have experienced this on picket lines in this country and their rights must be protected.

NZCTU President Ross Wilson has spoken to John Rowan QC who represented the Wallace family and who provided a good background to the case and his concerns.

The NZSU Committee of Management discussed the appeal and recommended to stopwork meetings in January that we make a substantial donation to the appeal.

This will represent a political statement on behalf of the union members about the rights of the people to bring such prosecutions.

It will also assist the appeal in a practical way.

The recommendation carried unanimously at the December 2002 stopwork meeting was:

"That we donate \$2000.00 to the Steven Wallace appeal from the general account of the Union and that ships be circulated with the relevant material supplied by the NZCTU."

A New Zealand Transport Strategy

The Government has launched a transport strategy for New Zealand in which it sets out objectives for the future of New Zealand's transport industry.

The strategy has been developed in partnership with the Green Party.

It represents a fundamental change in the way Government will deal with transport.

According to the strategy document, all modes of transport – road, rail, sea and air – will be looked at in an integrated and long term way.

It is an approach that the New Zealand Seafarers Union has argued for over a long period of time.

There is much to be done as there is not a universal understanding that the effects of a minimal cabotage regime have come ashore, and are impacting on all forms of transport in New Zealand.

The strategy has just been released, and while there is nothing industry specific in it in terms of the Maritime industry, it is a guide for policy development in the industry.

It also gives us the opportunity to again put our case at a high level as it talks in terms of "key studies which have examined the need for regulatory change in ports and shipping."

Winds of change in maritime industry

The Waterfront Workers' Union and the Seafarers' Union, two of the oldest New Zealand trade unions, are now one.

Wharfies and seafarers amalgamated late last year under the banner of the Maritime Union of New Zealand.

The power of the two old unions historically lay in their size, militancy and vital position at the gateway of New Zealand's economy.

In recent times both unions suffered from the effects of casualisation, and in the case of New Zealand seafarers, replacement by cheap crews from the Third World.

Maritime Union General Secretary Trevor Hanson says that the formation of the new union comes at a time of rapid technological change, a shrinking labour force, and the pressures of globalisation.

Both wharfies and seafarers occupied pivotal roles in three of New Zealand's most notable industrial conflicts – the maritime strike of 1890, the general strike of 1913 and the 151-day waterfront lockout of 1951.

Former seafarer and wharfie Ted Thompson served in the Merchant Navy during World War Two, before joining the waterfront in 1946.

He played an active part in the 1951 dispute and the Waterfront Union until his retirement from the wharves in 1980.

He was a long time supporter of joining the two maritime unions together, though not everyone agreed with the idea.

"I am disappointed by the time it took, but I'm overjoyed that it has happened."

He says that in the new industrial environment it may be logical to form a trans-Tasman union.

This is not a new idea.

Australian unionist George Sangster was sent to New Zealand in 1879 to help organise seafarers.

Sangster helped establish several branches of the Seamans' Union of New Zealand as a part of the Australian Seamans' Union.

In his 1968 union history 'Against the Wind', Conrad Bollinger wrote "despite calamitous industrial defeats and internal disruptions, the Seaman's Union has had a continuous and active existence from 1880 until the present time."

This made the Seafarers' Union



Ted Thompson, former seafarer and waterfront unionist, in 2002

the oldest union in New Zealand.

Seafarers and waterfront workers in New Zealand had started to form associations from the 1870s.

A society of Auckland "lumpers" – as waterfront workers were known at the time – started to meet in 1873.

The New Zealand Herald urged that the rules of the new organization should not seek to regulate "terms between master and men."

It was a sign of things to come in the relationship between working class organization and establishment media.

The history of these unions show that globalisation is not a new phenomenon.

Waterfront labourers and seafar-

ers stood alongside one another in the trans-Tasman Maritime Strike of 1890.

The Waterfront Dispute of 1951 was the most serious conflict between New Zealand workers and big business in the twentieth century.

Wharfies under the militant leadership of Jock Barnes and Toby Hill were involved in ongoing conflict with employers.

In the charged atmosphere of the Cold War, the National Government came in behind the employers and the full powers of the State were used against the wharfies.

The media denounced them, marching unionists were batoned by police and the Waterfront Union was deregistered.

After 151 days, the wharfies and their allies had to call it a day and the waterfront was split up between port unions under the supervision of the Government.

The sixties and seventies saw unions regroup and regain a position of strength, but a gradual decline in membership numbers continued.

Port Reform in 1989 saw the reduction of levels of waterfront labour, and the anti-union legislation of the 1990s saw all New Zealand unions under pressure.

The new Maritime Union will help maintain the influence of organised labour in the maritime industry.

The lessons of history show that good working conditions are not handed out, they are won by constant work and struggle.

The Maritime Union will continue with this philosophy.

The Maritime Union of New Zealand: a view on our past and our future

By Trevor Hanson

[The following article has been adapted from a speech to the Inaugural Conference of the Maritime Union of New Zealand, November 2002.]

All members and friends reading this today are aware the formation of the Maritime Union of New Zealand has been a long time coming.

Wharfies and seafarers are two workforces that have been by tradition and nature similar in our approach and philosophy.

We both had the luxury of around 40 years of regulations that served us well.



Those years - particularly after the 1951 lockout - were used by those who went before us to negotiate earnings and conditions reflecting the work environment at that time.

The biggest plus was the leadership knew they were in good times and the cycle was in favour of workers, and they deliberately planned to provide for those following them when the cycle turned against them.

I willingly acknowledge that is why we are here today.

What I am about to write will not be well received by some but as far as I am concerned it is the truth.

Prior to both of our organisations losing the "Commission and the Corner" respectively, our problems were small in comparison to what we face today.

In those days it was easy to take strike action. A couple of days off was a welcome diversion - after all your job was always there when you came back.

The cycle started slowly turning against us in the early eighties, driven in the main by shipowners.

This was nothing new - the same agenda they have had throughout our respective histories.

They wanted cheaper labour, ships worked around the clock and above all - they didn't want Unions.

They went and found allies in the farming sector and big business, and unfortunately for us a Labour Government that only too willingly went into bat for them during the dark days of the late eighties and passed legislation against our two unions.

Things soon went from bad to worse.

Not only did employers relish their newfound 'freedoms' but many of our members took on the company culture.

Divisions at port level soon became apparent, and the introduction of the Employment Contracts Act in 1991 ushered in redundancies, receiverships and severances.

The culture of 'company unions' was established and the me first, look after number one philosophy began rearing its ugly head.

Currently we have two major players on the waterfront undermining us through 'company unions' - one is continuing to have a major effect on us in particular.

The Seafarers have had similar problems, although I am not qualified to speak on their behalf.

I don't think they have been hit as hard on the non-union front, but are certainly suffering from foreign crew labour and the removal of

cabotage.

There are many other areas of attacks - both seafarers and wharfies have suffered casualisation and contracting out.

During this process we took action and fought back.

Union members answered the call to defend their jobs, and I am proud of the victories that were achieved.

These battles saw the demise of several non-union contenders at Auckland and Lyttelton.

Initial attacks from outside non-union companies on the waterfront had to be fought.

The last battle with Mainland Stevedores in the South Island, although not totally successful, has protected Lyttelton, Port Chalmers and Bluff.

Seafarers have had similar experiences.

One thing I am sure of is each action taken by our respective unions does have a reaction - I can well imagine how many players we would have in the industry today if we had stood back and just let it happen.

Just to refresh your memories,



the attacks made on us were by people who were quite willing to be paid for hours worked on low pay.

ISO was forced into paying guaranteed wages in the middle of the South Island dispute, and in a roundabout way this was a victory on its own.

Before I move on I would take this opportunity to thank the Seafarers, who stood beside us on every one of our disputes.

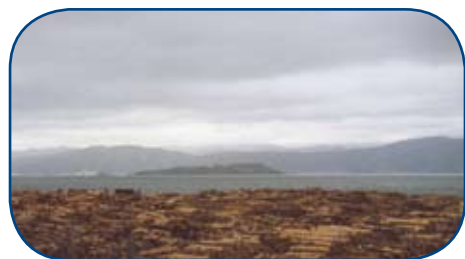
Where to from here? Firstly we have to recognise that there is not going to be any quick fixes.

We are in for more of the same, unless free market capitalism is turned around, which will be no easy task.

But in these uncertain times anything is possible.

One thing I am certain of is technological changes will continue.

Increasing ship sizes and more containerisation are the name of the game, with the big boys determined to fight for market share at any cost.



Like our comrades in the ILWU on the West Coast of the USA, we must remain vigilant to work being contracted out to cheaper labour, and we should demand training in all areas of work we cover.

The success of the Maritime Union of New Zealand (and the industry itself) depends very much on bringing younger people through, and giving them the opportunity and training to take on the role of the active Union members of tomorrow.

I have no doubt in ports that have large cargo volumes the Union will grow, and achieve the best wages and conditions.

I am of the strong opinion after the Lyttelton situation that we need to be talking across the bargaining table with one voice - and that we should make every effort to make this a reality.

Another area to be looked at is the strain being placed on officials that are carrying out dual roles.

It is not ideal for a branch official to carry out his normal work duties and his union role at the same time, as it leads to shortcuts that are not beneficial to either himself or to the members.

As I see it now, we should proceed with our locals concept and at the same time regionalise, thus making available paid officials to help at smaller ports on a regular basis.

Another area that needs to be considered is the ability our Local concept will give to enable us to extend by 'clipping on' groups of like minded workers to this framework.

We will need to do this for long-term survival and the Maritime Union will have to consider employing a person with specific organizing skills to work on this.

I am aware that there are a lot of costs involved, but if we want to grow and to provide a good level of services, we need to take the plunge.

Finally we have to make the Union visible by challenging the political and employment policies that are badly hurting New Zealand workers today.

I am sure that with work it can be achieved.

Any organization that has taken the battering that we have in the past 13 years and survived is well placed to continue.

We might have to change direction, and learn a few new tricks, but Seafarers and Wharfies have never been slow to learn.

I am absolutely sure that our new Maritime Union of New Zealand will be the best possible way to achieve our goals.



The Ballad of '51

Wellington poet and one-time wharfie Bill Sewell died in January 2003.

Shortly before, he released a book of poems about the 1951 waterfront lockout.

The book is called "The Ballad of '51" and deals with the history of wharfies in New Zealand.

"The Ballad of '51" is available from bookstores.

The Maritime Union have two books to give away.

Send a postcard to 'the Maritimes', PO Box 27004, Wellington, saying what you would like to see written about in 'The Maritimes' and the best two replies will win a free copy.

We will have a review of "the Ballad of '51" in the next issue.



Union clothing

The Maritime Union is preparing a range of special Union clothes for members and friends.

The range will include caps, t-shirts, beanies, polar fleeces and polo shirts.

All clothes will be New Zealand made by unionized manufacturers.

Catalogues have been sent out to branches.

Members will be able to buy Maritime Union clothes through their local branches.

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The Back Page!



Left to right - Colin Smith, Bill Dougherty and Zeo Unkovich.



Retired and current members enjoy a drink at the Pt. Chalmers Xmas Shout.



Some snaps from Port Chalmers Waterfront Xmas Shout, December 6 2002

Right - Jim Campbell, Ivan (Hook) Nicholson, Mervyn (Cruddy) Scoles and Bill Hawkins.

Left - Owen (Dr. Rossi) Hill



Duda Hiini, Keith Perkins and Les Fitzgerald at the Bluff Past Members function in November 2002.



Tiny Metzger, Bill Slater and Reg Michele at the Bluff Past Members function in November 2002.



Some scenes from Wellington Waterfront Xmas shout 2002.



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The Maritime Union of New Zealand is affiliated to the International Transport Workers' Federation.