

DECEMBER 2011

THE *Transport Worker*

**FOC – a yoke
for NZ
taxpayers**



The journal of the RMTU
NZ's largest specialist transport union



ISSUE 4 • DECEMBER 2011

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One year after the disaster memorials are unveiled to remember the 29 workers killed.

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The new vacation flats at Mount Maunganui are named after RMTU stalwart Brian Cronin.

COVER PHOTO

The Rena on Astrolabe Reef - story page 5.
Photograph: Maritime New Zealand.

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Wayne Butson
General secretary
RMTU

AS I was travelling home last night from work I was ruminating as to why 1,000,000 New Zealander's who were enrolled to vote, didn't. Could it really be that three in every ten Kiwis just don't give a shit about who is running this country? Is it the young, the not so young, middle aged or the old who make up most of this disengaged group? The consensus view amongst the staff in our office had been that it was the youth who didn't vote. I am not so sure, because most of the youth I have talked to on the issue of voting weren't going to enrol, let alone vote!

An excited voice from Cairo

So these thoughts were swirling around in the grey matter when I became aware of an excited voice on the radio screeching and yelling his celebration. He was a 62-year old Arab from Cairo, Egypt who was about to have a vote in a democratic election for the first time in his life. Yes, 62 years of age and voting for the first time. To say he was over the moon at the prospect would be a massive understatement. The democratic elections in Egypt are a result of the 'Arab summer of discontent'. As you all know the Arab world has risen up against tyrants and dictators who have ruled many of these Arab nations with iron-fisted oppression and military strength. These countries have seen thousands upon thousands lay down their lives so that their comrades and fellow citizens can live in a democratic society with governments elected by the people, for the people. These people know, and understand, the value of having a vote and know that it is to be treasured.

What has happened to NZ voters?

To be fair, listening to this happy old man added to my confusion and distress at the weekend's election participation and turnout. Has New Zealand really become a society where we are only motivated to vote 'out' a government when we think they have done their dash or have done something which galvanises us all to get rid of them and at any other time we don't care? If this is true then we are all in a very scary place.

In my view there is a duty upon us all to study all of the respective parties' policies and to vote for the party or person whom it is we believe will do the best thing for us and for our country. If this is the case then why did the young not get fired up to support the party which was arguing to lift their wage rate to a minimum of \$15 per hour and not the party which is going to reintroduce some sort of youth training wage?

There is one thing we can be sure of though, and that is three more years of attacks on decent workplace laws, attacks on unions and their members, job cuts, spending cuts, beneficiary bashing and so on. The same old list of failed in the past and failed in the future policies of neo-liberal economic theory. To misquote George Gregan in his infamous comment in Rugby World Cup 2003 'Three more years boys, three more years' is not something I am looking forward to under a John Key-led government!

Also Union elections

This is the last issue of The Transport Worker for 2011 and it is another huge

Profitability, flexibility and productivity Vs unity, solidarity and strength of purpose.

32 page issue jam-packed with our Union. 2011 has been election year on our front as well. All the KiwiRail industrial councils have been through the electoral meat grinder and we have many new faces. We must record our appreciation and thanks to those who either stepped aside or were replaced at the ballot box. In either case they have done a thankless job with the best interest of their fellow worker at the forefront of their mind. A hearty thank you to you all. This Union would not be what it is without the tireless work of the rank and file elected delegates.

We have had our Conference 2011 and it was a goodun. All of the delegates who attended embraced the event and threw their heart and soul into making sure it was a success. I thank you all. I found it a particularly satisfying Conference as well.

Hard year looming

2012 will be yet another busy year for us all. The rail industry MECA expires 30 June and I am sure that the employers (NZRC, KiwiRail and Veolia) will have things that they want to achieve in the wage round and many of them will be at the expense of our members in the name of profitability, flexibility and productivity. There are many faces of these three evils of necessity for a business but there are few that we have not stared down in the past and, despite what the John Key-led Government's Employment Relations Act changes may be, I know that where there is unity, solidarity and strength of purpose we shall prevail.

The first up challenge though, will be for us all to get through the Christmas/New year holiday period unscathed. So please, all of you, have a great Christmas/New Year break but above all else make you sure are around to share our happy, healthy and prosperous 2012. Merry Christmas everyone! 🍷

Wishing all our Union members a very Merry Christmas and a safe and happy New Year.

From the president, general secretary, NMC and staff.

Retirements

Dear editor,

It is with some regret I tender my resignation from the RMTU after 41 years. Following restructuring of the staff and duties in the pay office Wellington and the amalgamation of the payroll functions I have decided to accept the redundancy package and enjoy some leisure time.

I wish to thank all the staff and delegates at the RMTU for the support they have given me during the considerable changes that have taken place over the years of my working career and the favourable terms I have enjoyed from their efforts in negotiating our employment contracts.

I wish the RMTU staff and members all the best for the future as KiwiRail positions itself for growth and expansion.

Paul Pryce

Payroll administrator.

Dear editor,

As I have now retired from my position as LE/s with Veolia Transport, I unfortunately also have to tender my resignation from the RMTU.

I have enjoyed my time as a railwayman and am sorry to be going, as the workmates I have been associated with have been good value.

I would also like to thank the RMTU for all the support they have given me, and my fellow workers, over the past 17 years and 10 months.

To all my former colleagues and to all KiwiRail, and Veolia staff, I wish you all the best and continue to strive for the good of all workers. Please remember that a union is only as strong as you, the members, want it to be.

My best wishes to all staff and their families for the future. As the only LE/s with an artificial leg, I think I have proved that a disability only exists in the eyes of the person seeing it.

Once again, thank you fellow workers and RMTU for all the good times.

Roger Howe

Ex-LE/s Veolia, Westfield.

Tribute

Dear editor,

I wish to say a very big thanks to our outgoing KIC Southern loco engineer rep comrade Murray Dunlop.

Murray has, for many years now, held the position as a loco engineer's rep for the southern area. In his time he has worked very hard at issues that have included better cab and working conditions for LEs. Murray has always been happy to give advice to branch officers across the South Island and has always been a staunch supporter of health and safety in the work place. I would like to make mention of Murray's input into the issues we have on the Midland Line and with that the Otira tunnel. Murray's work in these areas has been outstanding, to say the least. Murray has also always been on hand to represent staff when they have had issues at work.

Murray, at times your job as our rep may have seemed thankless but I want to say that your work over the years has not gone unnoticed among the troops.

It is my pleasure on behalf of locomotive engineers across the southern area to say "thank you very much" for your work as our rep.

Mike Kilsby

Otira.

Political spin and Government economic management

C TU economist, Bill Rosenberg presented the facts and figures below just prior to the election. We thought they were worth publishing afterwards as a reminder of how duplicitous the National Government was – and is.

The graph (right) shows nine years of operating surpluses under Labour and three years of deficits under National. It also shows falling public debt under Labour and rising debt under National and Crown Net Worth rising under Labour and falling under National.

Labour ran surpluses of 2.88% of GDP on average. National ran deficits of 4.93% of GDP on average.

So who was really the more prudent economic manager?

But we also have to take several factors into account.

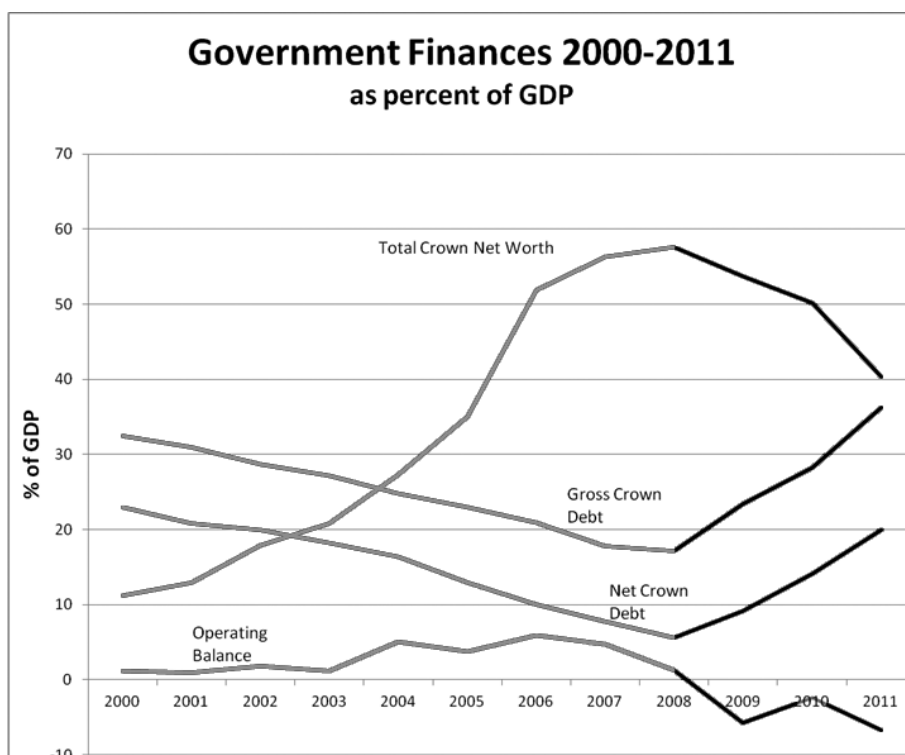
The global financial crisis hit in 2008 and in those circumstances, any Government needed to go into deficit to ensure there was support for economic activity.

We can debate how to fund costs arising from the Canterbury earthquakes but any Government would have been required to take on a significant burden.

But we can rightly be critical of National for the tax switch (we labelled it a 'tax swindle' from day one). Apart from its unfairness, it has also resulted in an extra \$1.1 billion fiscal deficit.

And of course National claim that Labour stored up some expenditure commitments from 2005 that impacted post-2008. That expenditure was based on Treasury advice at the time that the country could afford it.

But the graph exposes the incredible spin National put on the relative strengths of economic management between the




major parties. The fact is that Labour ran nine years of surpluses, reduced debt, built up assets, and along the way reduced the number on unemployment from 162,000 to under 20,000. National's record was dismal by comparison.

CTU secretary Peter Conway asks: "If we are mature enough to recognise the fiscal burdens that National had to confront, surely they can acknowledge the credible and responsible economic management of Labour in the prior nine years? Without it, they would have started from a position of weakness like many other countries, rather than one of low debt, which has ensured that government debt is still low by international comparisons."

Which leads me to another bit of spin. National is somehow trying to position Labour as the spend and bust Party with a fiscal hole in the next few years despite

this credible record while at the same time National is proposing a slush fund from asset sales from which they can draw for a capital spend up. This is pure spin. Leaving aside the merits of asset sales, there is no fiscal difference between:

- using the proceeds of assets sales to reduce borrowing; or
- using the proceeds of asset sales for capital expenditure on schools and hospitals that would have been financed from borrowing anyway; or
- using the proceeds of borrowing for capital expenditure on the same assets.

"The net result is the same, less borrowing or more assets. It just looks different. But that is the political point. If the slush fund is used for areas that would not have been spent on anyway then that can be argued. But no one should be fooled by the spin," says Conway. 

Big brother is watching!


K IWI RAIL'S plans to install GPS devices in all its vehicles – rail as well as road – has RMTU members anxious and concerned.

The devices require drivers to swipe their drivers licences before the vehicle

will move. Members are concerned that this smacks of Big Brother tactics and management will be able to watch their every move – when they stop for a pie, go to the loo or simply forget to 'unswipe'.

RMTU general secretary Wayne Butson

says: "Our members are very concerned which is why we have initiated a discussion with KiwiRail management."

He says that while management can see many benefits including safe and responsible driving they also need to address the concerns of drivers. 

AS long as New Zealand tolerates FOC (Flags of Convenience) vessels plying its waters the more likely disasters such as the MS Rena are likely to occur, says RMTU general secretary Wayne Butson.

"More needs to be done to grow our own coastal shipping and grant FOC ships limited access," he said. "The Rena was largely doing the work of what our coastal ships used to do before it was all opened to foreign competition. Now our coastal shipping is dominated with FOC vessels."

These FOC vessels are now effectively New Zealand's coastal shipping industry with officers unfamiliar with New Zealand's sea conditions.



The crack in the Rena's hull is getting larger and breaking up getting closer.

"Nor are they obliged to comply with New Zealand maritime rules and regulations."

The Rena is registered in Monrovia, Liberia who, along with Panama, the Marshall Islands and others, have registered more than half the world's merchant ships



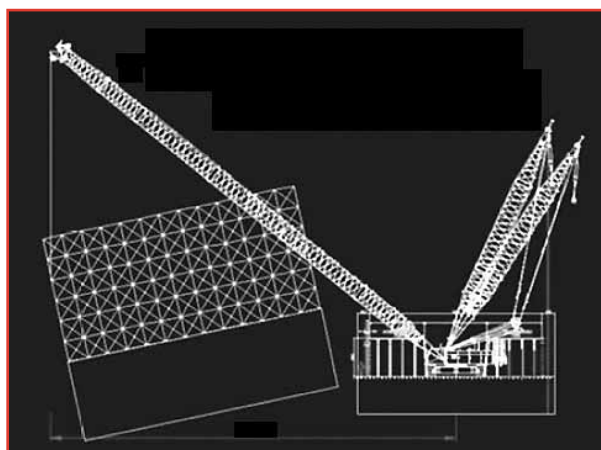
Escaping containers lurk beneath the waves – a danger to passing vessels.

Rena failure

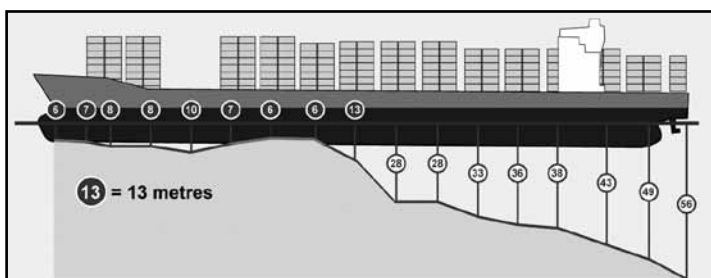
The downs and downs of FOC



Containers being removed.



Diagrams show how the containers are being extracted and the lie of the ship on the reef.



and account for almost 40% of dead-weight tonnage.

Crews on flag-of-convenience ships such as the Rena, are forced to work long hours for low pay, says Butson. "There is little enforcement of international labour, safety and environmental regulations in these countries."

The Rena made four port calls in the five days before its grounding on Astrolabe Reef and while in port her captain and officers worked around the clock loading and discharging cargo.

"The upshot of this excruciating work load was to leave them tired and unfocused," he said. "No wonder they struck the reef. What's more miraculous is that it doesn't happen more often."

The effects of the MS Rena disaster is likely to be with us well into 2012 as salvors continue to extract containers from the stricken container ship.

The International Transport Workers' Federation lists 32 FOC registries in countries that are unable or unwilling to enforce international labour, safety and environmental laws and regulations.

The ITF believes there should be a 'genuine link' between the real owner of a vessel and the flag the vessel flies, in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. There is no "genuine link" in the case of FOC registries.

Globalisation has helped to fuel this rush to the bottom says the ITF. In an increasingly fierce competitive shipping market, each new FOC is forced to promote itself by offering the lowest possible fees and the minimum of regulation. In the same way, ship owners are forced to look for the cheapest and least regulated ways of running their vessels in order to compete, and FOCs provide the solution.



Ian Stuart Jenkins

2/11/1932 – 22/10/2011

It was with deep sadness that members were advised of the death of Ian Jenkins a life member of the RMTU. He passed away on Saturday 22 October just before his 79th birthday.


Ian joined New Zealand Railways in Greymouth as clerical cadet in the Way & Works branch and from there his career took him to Christchurch, Wellington, Auckland and then back to Wellington. He was a long serving union official becoming a representative to the NZ Railways Welfare Society from its inception and served in many capacities including at Council and Board level until he retired in November 1992. His involvement in the RMTU continued until recently.

After his return from Auckland Ian became a representative on the Executive Committee of the Railway Officers' Institute (a predecessor to the RMTU) and held this position until he was appointed to the position of assistant general secretary of the ROI in 1972. He continued as such until the ROI amalgamated with the Railway Trades Association and the Locomotive Engineers' Association in 1991 to form the Combined Union of Railway Employees (CURE).

Ian was also an industrial officer for CURE, a member of the NZ Railway Superannuitants' Association and a member of its executive committee. He became its general secretary in 1999 on the death of his predecessor Vern Ross. He filled this post until ill health forced him to relinquish the position last year.

Ian spent a lifetime tending to the interests, trials and tribulations of railway workers both at work and in their retirement and for this he is thanked. His input has, and will be, missed. Allied to this he was an active member of the Wellington Referees Association for over 50 years and of his church.

A life well lived in the service of others.

Condolences go to his family and friends for their loss. 



RMTU NATIONAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE 2011-2013 TERM

Aubrey Wilkinson - national president
Howard Phillips - national vice president & central NZ rail
Wayne Butson - general secretary
Dave Marden - North Island ports
Ruth Blakeley - South Island ports
Barry Simpkins - northern North Island rail
Doug Blakie - South Island rail
Bill Sweeney - general

KiwiRail Industrial Councils 2011-2013 TERM

■ KIWI RAIL NETWORKS INDUSTRIAL COUNCIL

Scott Wilson - RMTU organiser
Jerry Hohepa - infrastructure mechanical
Kevin Jones - operations scale 1
Phil Kearns - infrastructure sigs, comms, traction
Buzz Terrey - infrastructure bridges/structures
Hopa Bell - infrastructure track supervisor
Geoff Young - operations train control
Edward Dargaville - track worker

■ KIWI RAIL PASSENGER INDUSTRIAL COUNCIL

Wayne Butson - RMTU organiser
Hayden Smith - loco engineers
Brian Armstrong - train manager (long distance)
Harvey Paterson - train manager (urban)
Glen Hughes - yard operations
Scale 1 - vacant

■ KIWI RAIL FREIGHT INDUSTRIAL COUNCIL

Todd Valster - RMTU organiser
Barry Simpkins - (NMC) locomotive northern
Doug Blakie - (NMC) terminals southern
Wally Wallbutton - locomotive central
Dean Ngatai - terminals northern
Len Miller - CT site
Michael Williams - locomotive southern
John Maguren - yard terminals

■ INTERISLANDER INDUSTRIAL COUNCIL

George Laird - RMTU organiser
John Finch - ferry operations (outside) north
Liz Connell - scale 1 (inside) north
Tania Haraki - scale 1 (inside) south
Newton Poplewell - ferry operations (outside) south

■ KIWI RAIL MECHANICAL INDUSTRIAL COUNCIL

John Kerr - RMTU organiser
Howard Phillips - NMC electric suburban Wellington
Paul Riddell - Auckland metro maintenance
Stuart Johnstone - Hillside workshops
Kasia Kurene - Hutt workshops
Laurence Hall - South Island depots
Steve Brown, Shane McNae - North Island depots

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Fiji oppresses union activity

The Fijian government decree that virtually outlaws union activity has been slammed by international union organisations – including the CTU in New Zealand.

The Bainamarama regime's Essential National Industries (Employment) Decree 2011 nullifies long-standing bargaining agreements, allows the government to sack union officials, makes unions re-register under new rules and all but eliminates the right to strike – in any industry that the government may designate from time to time.

Unions also have to apply for a permit if they want to hold a meeting of three or more people.

The Decree, the latest in a series aimed at curtailing labour rights, now covers four industries and 11 corporations, including Air Pacific.

EPMU assistant director, Strachen Crang, says it was orchestrated by the military and employers from those industries to attack good pay and conditions built up over time.

"It has been revealed that Air Pacific has paid top US lawyers to help the military regime draft the Decree," he said.

EPMU aviation members have petitioned Air Pacific and the union will follow this up with a meeting with Air NZ CEO Rob Fyfe.

International Transport Federation president Paddy Crumin said: "The human rights of all Fijians are being crushed. We intend to take lawful international solidarity action in conjunction with international

unions, human rights activists and community support."

Additionally, the Fijian government's decision to imprison two of their country's most prominent union leaders – Felix Anthony (general secretary of the Fiji Trade Union Congress [FTUC] and Daniel Ura (president FTUC) – has angered union leaders in New Zealand and abroad. Both were arrested without charge.

The dictatorship searched the homes of both men and their union offices, who were arrested following their attendance at the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in late October in Perth.

Unionists around the world have been called upon by the International Trade Union Confederation to protest loudly at this abuse of power. 🌐



The CTU arranged this protest outside the Fijian Embassy in Thorndon, Wellington. Above Helen Kelly and Wayne Butson and (l) Sai Lealea let the Embassy have their opinions loud and clear.

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Or phone 0900 UNAID (0900 862 43) to automatically donate \$30.



Pike River 29 remembered one year on

19-11-2010 - 19-11-2011

AT the unveiling of a memorial for the Pike River 29 in Greymouth on the first anniversary of the tragedy, a spokesperson for the families, Bernie Monk, passionately told the crowd "we need to get the men out of the mine and returned to their families, whatever it takes".

He received a standing ovation from everyone except Prime Minister John Key who remained seated.

Director of organising from the EPMU, Ged O'Connell, spoke on behalf of all unions with a strong speech talking of the union's absolute commitment to safe workplaces where "workers in any industry go to work and come home safely to their families".

The service at Rugby Park, Greymouth was arranged by the Public Service and was just one of five services that families attended that day which began with a trip to the mine portal early in the morning.

Work continues daily at the mine to find a way to re-enter it but for the families this is painstakingly slow.

From the portal they know their men



The Atarau memorial. The mine portal can be located from this site which is also beside a river. The owner of the land said the water coming from the mine goes into the river. As he put it: "Our boys' DNA is in this river."

are just 2 kms away. In the 12 months since the first explosion they have yet to be reached and the families are waiting and angry.

At Atarau 12kms from the portal entrance and beside the river where water directly from the mine flows past, one of the first memorials was unveiled. This service was for the families who extended an invitation to the unions to attend.

Alisha Osbourne sang Sarah McLachlan's 'In the arms of the angels' and the children of the Pike 29 unveiled the stone and plaque. Laid in a semi circle on the site are 29 stones, one for each miner. The stone for the memorial came from the mine and the 29 stones gathered from around its entrance.

The weather was fine and families sat around the stones with picnic baskets talking quietly, laying flowers and tributes.

Individual stones bear the names of



the men written in black vivid, some with childish handwriting painstakingly scribed 'I miss you Dad' with other stones bearing the words: 'Love you, Mum and Dad'.

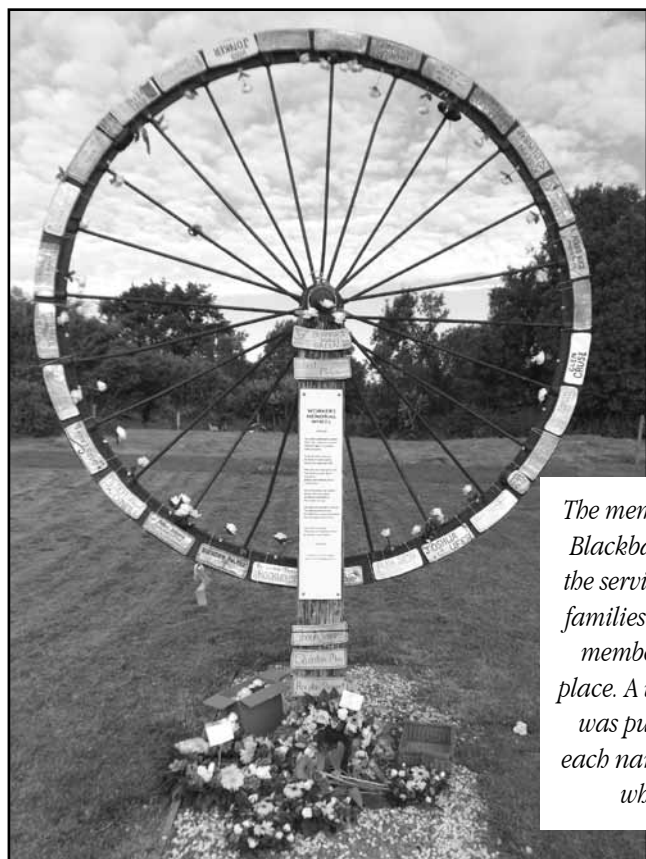
To read the stones is to feel the nearness of the raw grief and anger, emotions that were strong and present throughout the day.



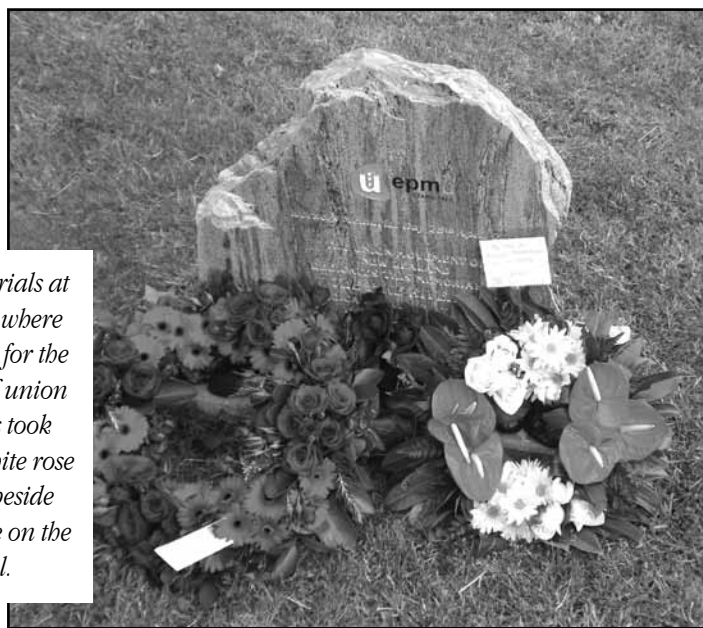
Near the Atarau Memorial is this signpost with the names of the places each man came from and the distance to that place. The men's names are written underneath.



The memorial in Greymouth.



The memorials at Blackball where the service for the families of union members took place. A white rose was put beside each name on the wheel.



When you look up from the Atarau Memorial a single tree marks the point in the distance near the entrance to the mine's portal.

From the Atarau service families travelled into Greymouth for the Rose Garden Memorial and the unveiling of the Richie Cornell Memorial Stone.

After the Public Service at Rugby Park families and unions travelled to Blackball for a private service at the Blackball Museum Memorial Wheel. Amongst the attendees was president of the CTU Helen Kelly, Green Party members Russell Norman and Kevin Hague, general secretary of the EPMU Bill Newson, Archdeacon Tim Mora, Nigel Hampden QC (engaged by the EPMU on behalf of the families at

the enquiry) and other union faces closely involved with Pike River since the events of 19 November 2010.

As the 29 names were called out family members or representatives of the families came forward six at a time and quietly tied a white rose to the Memorial Wheel beside the name of their man.

The wheel is perfectly balanced and turned a little each time a rose was tied on.

White roses appeared at each small shift of the wheel as it scribed a full circle.

Bernie Monk cheekily told the crowd that as a hotel owner he never had much time for unions until after Pike River when Helen Kelly came down to help the families set up the structures and networks that have enabled them all to deal with the

massive challenges of the last 12 months.

He acknowledged the role unions play, particularly in workplace health and safety and reminded everyone that we all have a part to play in the struggle for better health and safety outcomes at work.

Other speakers were EPMU national secretary Bill Newson, Helen Kelly and EPMU organiser for the West Coast Garth Elliott.

Solidarity Forever was sung – or a good attempt made – as wreaths were laid from the EPMU and RMTU.

The day concluded with drinks at the Blackball Hilton where many of the 29 would have had a beer or two from time to time.

More from Pike River over the page

Mine tragedy trigger for in-depth enquiry

By Helen Kelly

THE evidence is stacking up at the Pike River enquiry showing it to be one of the most disgraceful episodes of corporate negligence this country has seen. No realistic second exit, insufficient safety gear, no safety drills, no emergency procedures, 41 minutes before the explosion was noticed and then the final indignity – no one to help the two survivors as they made their hour and a half struggle out of the death trap in which 29 of their brothers lay.

Why was the company shown such deference both during the short time the mine was operating and after the explosion? Pike River was inspected only a few days before the explosion and nothing was done. It had had incidents, cut corners and operated while a number of senior staff held serious safety concerns. Those who spoke up were not supported, a number held such grave concerns they quit, told their husbands not to work there, fell out with management – and nothing was done.


After the explosion, the Prime Minister deferred to mine management as they controlled the public message. Even though they had already, on any objective assessment, failed in running the mine safely, they were able to present to the public a veneer of control over the rescue and then recovery. With Minister Brownlee praising mine manager Peter Whittall saying “his clarity of communication is admirable” we could all take comfort the truth was being

told”. Whittall spoke at the Government memorial service telling the country miners were attracted to the company because of the chance to work with new equipment and in a new culture where safe operators were valued. A service where the company was on the stage with the Government while the families sat in the stands.

Meanwhile New Zealand’s media rushed to stories of human interest rather than of accountability. Whittall became their hero. When the Australian media had a go they were described as “vultures” for asking hard questions.

Whittall said he met all miners to talk safety before they worked in the mine but never practiced an evacuation. It is very unlikely he spoke to 17 year old Joseph Dunbar; killed before he had officially started work. A boy that had never exited the mine before – he had only ever gone in.

And now we see a reluctance to re-regulate the industry even in the context of a growing number of examples where profits are put before human safety. The Minister of Labour refuses to budge even though it is clear that current regulations are insufficient leaving labour inspectors without teeth and workers without voice.

The contradiction between the disrespect shown the Pike River workers and their families and the reverence shown to their employer is a growing trend and challenges the egalitarian values we believe in. It is time to reclaim those values. 



Phil Goff



Adrian Douglas, NZTA



Bill Rosenberg, NZCTU.



Brian Byas, Port Lyttelton.

From ‘would’ to ‘could’

A number of important amendments to the Employment Relations Act 2000 have been enacted. One of them is related to what is referred to as the “justification test”.


Prior to the amendment, the court, when considering whether or not a dismissal was justified, was required to ask the question “would a reasonable employer

have dismissed the employee in the circumstances that existed at the time of the dismissal.” The amendment changes the word “would” to “could”.

Generally, the view is that, when asking the question “could a reasonable employer have dismissed the employee in the circumstances that existed”, the change would bring about a far more flexible approach

towards answering the question, ‘Was the dismissal justified?’.

The question is, will this change in wording make a real difference in practice?

The Employment Court will shortly consider that question in a case *Angus v Ports of Auckland Ltd* in which Andrew Angus seeks to be reinstated in employment with Ports of Auckland Ltd until his personal grievance (unjustified dismissal) is decided by the Court. 

Conference highlights hard year ahead



MANY of the members who attended this year's National Conference, either as delegates or observers, described it as 'the best ever'. The Conference had a strong theme, and involved active participation in debates and training exercises as well as listening to some stimulating and thought-provoking speakers.

Attendees were put on notice from the beginning that this would be a conference that was about 'doing things' as well as 'talking about doing things'. Our national president and general secretary started with two hard-hitting addresses that put delegates on notice that if the slogan 'Stronger Together' was to mean anything we have to change the way we do things. That means branches talking and listening to one another, and forging stronger links between rail and port members to counter the threats that we all face. There was a strong emphasis on planning to meet the challenges of attacks on our earning power and terms and conditions of employment and to ensure that we have safe and healthy workplaces.



Hazel Armstrong, lawyer.

Phil Goff formally opened proceedings

with a speech that listed the failings of the current National/ACT government and put the responsibility for that squarely at the Prime Minister's door. The media attention this generated meant that Conference was screened on prime time TV news. There followed addresses from other politicians from Labour and the Greens as well as talks from employer representatives, fellow unionists from New Zealand and overseas, legal experts and our own organising staff.

Topics were as varied as the global financial crisis, the need to mobilise our members as part of the election campaign, the right to refuse unsafe work, the future of New Zealand's ports and the threats to workers' rights both here and abroad.



Shane Jones, MP.

Vigorous discussion

Delegates were not just on the receiving end either – there were remits to debate and vote on and workshops that involved active participation and planning. Conference voted to change our union's position on discussing random drug and alcohol testing and delegates energetically worked on how to ensure better communication

with our members in the workplace, between branches and the wider union movement and with the community at large.

Throughout these workshops, whether they focused on encouraging better communication, or fighting for health and safety, the emphasis was on an organising approach – getting people actively involved by ensuring that we hold relevant and lively branch meetings, maintain the flow of news and information and educate members about their rights, and the importance of building solidarity – on and off the job.

It wasn't all hard work though. We had a formal dinner to celebrate the long stewardship of our former president Jim Kelly featuring many outstanding speeches by friends, family and comrades. All of these were upstaged by Jimmy himself, who gave us the



Aubrey Wilkenson, president.



Andrew Cassidy, First Union.

Continued on the next page

benefit of his wisdom in the most compelling and funniest talk of the Conference. Few of us who heard it will ever forget Jim's version of the first pay round after the fall of Muldoon.

Grant Craig, FRONZ



Peter Conway, NZCTU

At the end of the three days we'd been put on notice that there is a reason organising workers is called 'the struggle'. No one at Conference was left in any doubt about just how high the stakes are over the next few years – the biggest

economic crisis of our lifetimes in a hostile political environment is staring us in the face.

Hard times a'coming

By the time you read this we'll know if we did enough to get rid of the National/ACT government. Regardless of the result, we know that the next few years will be hard. Conference delegates and observers also know that our union is in good shape, that we have demonstrated that we can hit hard when we have to and that we can mobilise our members behind the issues that matter – jobs, wages, health and safety and the right to a say in what goes on in our workplaces and society.

We have much to do in the weeks and months ahead and we've made a good start. 🇳🇿

New to conference

Fourteen people experienced the RMTU annual conference for the first time. Here are their first reactions.



(l) Timothy Lawton, Lyttleton port.

Very encouraging and has motivated me to help my fellow union members.



(r) John Kerr, organiser.

Enlightening and interesting and good to meet delegates from outside of the South Island.



Stuart Johnstone, Hillside rail.

I now know the importance of the RMTU being a national union.



Karyn Amooore, Auckland rail.

The conference has been a vibrant gathering of dedicated unionists, both local and international. Solidarity forever – stronger together.



Michael Nijssen, Timaru port.

The conference was very insightful and challenging.



Bill Sweeney, Auckland rail.

Very rewarding and a good wind up from Wayne for the branches to get their act together.



Shaun Wilson, Bay of Plenty port.

A well planned and executed conference packed with excellent speakers and informative workshops.



Alan Robertson, Christchurch rail.

Very informative and [reveals] more to our union that meets the eye.



Mervyn Read, Port Chalmers.

I have enjoyed the opportunity to discuss work practices and conditions with fellow union members.



Naylor Young, Timaru port.

Learnt a lot and will take back to Timaru the good vibes from the conference.



John Millward, Palmerston North rail.

A real eye opener, superb speakers, and a real education.



Mike King, Hawkes Bay rail.

Enjoyed the international speakers and learnt a lot from fellow delegates.



Stu Marsh, Lyttelton port.

Enjoyed the workshops. Good to hear how other unions are running their campaigns.



David Kearns, Hillside rail.

Highly impressed by the speakers, and it is vital to work with other unions to build up our collective strength.

President urges new direction for Union

By Aubrey Wilkinson
President

WE as a union, and you as branch leaders, have a lot of important decisions to make. Some tough calls to support or reject and, more importantly, a direction to map out for our union into the future.

This National Conference is the highest decision making body of our union and I do encourage involvement and participation to the highest level of our collective ability.

To help us define our direction we must remember what we have learnt and endured over the past 12 months. The highs and the lows, what worked, what didn't, the problems we overcame and the causes of those problems.

Our branches operate effectively when dealing with problems raised within. Fair to say, some branches more effectively than others. Yet all branches do deal with their problems. What they don't deal with effectively – or don't deal with at all – are the causes. Put simply, we stamp out the fires and fail to deal to the arsonist. We don't have the resources, or the endurance from our people, to keep up the good fight, and although we have passion and tenacity, we are also getting older and wearier.

I encourage branches to bring on, shoulder tap, or even coerce younger members, female members and any other activists, and to mentor them so when we do let go of the reins, there is someone as effective as us to hit the ground running, so to speak. In my travels and experience within this union and internationally, I have noticed that if there is someone ready to take on your role, the branch is so much stronger, and that translates into a union that is so much stronger and more than ready to deal with any of those arsonists.

While it is a fact that *The Activist* and *The Transport Worker* publications keep us fully informed and are a damned good read, along with e-mails etc, that, it seems, is where solidarity stalls.

It amazes me how branches do not interact or even bother to communicate with each other. Even more concerning, two branches situated in the same town rarely meet, and in many cases do not meet at all. This needs to change for the collective good of everyone in our Union.

After saying all that, I can share the success of two rail branches and a port branch having their first combined paid stopwork meeting that I am aware of. From that meeting came resolutions supporting our brothers and sisters in the mechanical division.

Also from that combined stopwork meeting came the re-launch of the 'NZ work for NZ workers' campaign into the media and out into the public domain throughout the country followed by a peaceful picket in Tauranga that raised public awareness to another level of understanding.

After that meeting KiwiRail struggled to justify their decision to go offshore.

Sadly 44 members were made redundant from Hillside and 10 redundancies from other areas. I am certain that our collective action saved more job redundancies.

This reinforces the need for us all – all our branches – to work together, meet regularly, and to get to know and understand face-to-face, each other's problems or issues because at the very least, doing these things will make our employers step back and take stock of what they are dealing with should they put a foot wrong.

The combined meeting also brought out some things which must be acknowledged. The passionate speeches from David Kearns and Kasia Kurene who work at Hillside and Hutt Workshops respectively and for actually having the courage and presence of mind to ask for help. To Stuart Johnston for his passionate delivery in Wellington, well done mate. Also to Shane McNae for the diligent work in the meetings leading up to the action, Alby Barr for his



hard work helping to raise a decent picket with picketers from Hamilton, and to the other unions which supported us along with Greenpeace. To Kelvin Martin I say it's not an easy job educating people to attend and support pickets and to have the added pressure of stepping up and taking a leadership role through the campaign in Tauranga from start to finish. Your leadership along with Phil Spanswick was invaluable. Lastly, to all those who took the time to support your brothers and sisters during the campaign, we thank you.

John Kerr arrived on the scene as our new South Island organiser, just as things started to ramp up with our campaign. John also did some amazing work in Dunedin and nationally and I am sure that our members were extremely appreciative of his efforts. He had some fantastic help from Phil Kearns so well done to you and thanks to Phil. It is plain for all to see the positive results if we work together, plan together and execute that plan in a timely manner.

While handing out plaudits, we must recognise the awesome efforts of our paid staff and officials including Libi Carr/Angel, John Kerr, George Laird, Todd Valster, Phil Spanswick, and Scott Wilson with special recognition to Julia Harrison who is a pleasure to work with. Our members appreciate the huge effort she goes to running the national office, and Leonie Stieller, our accounts manager and receipts policewoman of all Union transactions keeps us all on our toes. Thank you both.

Finally to Wayne. I can't imagine where our Union would be placed without his input. As general secretary he has proven time and again how much value and worth he brings to any situation.

Thank also to the NMC and Union sup-

Continues on the next page

Conference photos



(above)
Mihi for
Shane
Jones



(r) Howard
Phillips,
NMC



Dave Kearns, Hillside



(r) Todd Valster and Karen Amooore with money raised for locked-out ANZCO workers.

D&A – a serious for Conference


THE Union's policy position towards random drug and alcohol testing was also debated at Conference. Previously the policy was to oppose this type of testing.

Members will be aware that for some years the rail industry (and most of the ports) have had a drug and alcohol testing policy, usually based on the principles of pre-employment, post incident, reasonable cause and transfer into safety critical roles. The Union had held random testing at arm's length on the basis of concerns over privacy and a genuine belief that through encouraging members to seek help if they had drug and alcohol problems, the problem could be eliminated from the industry through education.

KiwiRail has pursued random testing for their own reasons, chiefly to satisfy their customers who have been insisting that KiwiRail employees comply with the customers' drug and alcohol policies, usually including random testing, and through concerns that the problem was not getting

significantly better. Unfortunately, in this case they have been right.

The RMTU agreed to enter into discussions with KiwiRail on the possibility of moving to a random testing regime and, after lengthy discussions, agreed in principle to the concept subject to certain criteria. One of which was: that the national conference would have to endorse the concept. This was therefore discussed and after a significant debate, the proposal to withdraw the current policy was agreed. There was also a presentation and debate over the type of testing – urine vs. oral fluid. From the material presented, urine testing appears to provide the best and safest option currently available.

Further discussion with KiwiRail will now proceed. Any draft agreement will need to be implemented by variation to the CA (70% acceptance) and after a comprehensive education programme followed by an amnesty, where members who wish to enter rehabilitation voluntarily, can do so without penalty. 


port and endorsement in the president's role and to Jim Kelly for his personal endorsement as his successor. Much will be remembered of his time as president.

We welcome our new KiwiRail council

members and thank those in the old committee – your work was certainly appreciated.

While we may talk about working together, forming plans, targeting problems

and effectively positioning ourselves to attack our problems, the biggest cause of our problems is the current government. The election will reveal our fate.

We must deal to our arsonist. 

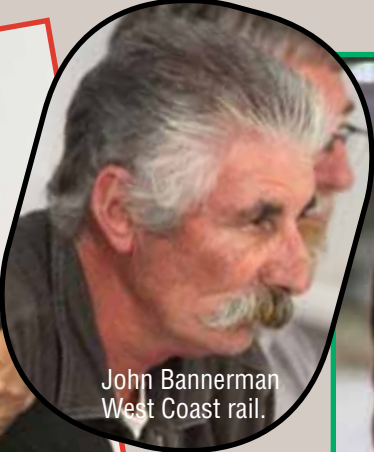
CONFERENCE PHOTO ROUNDUP



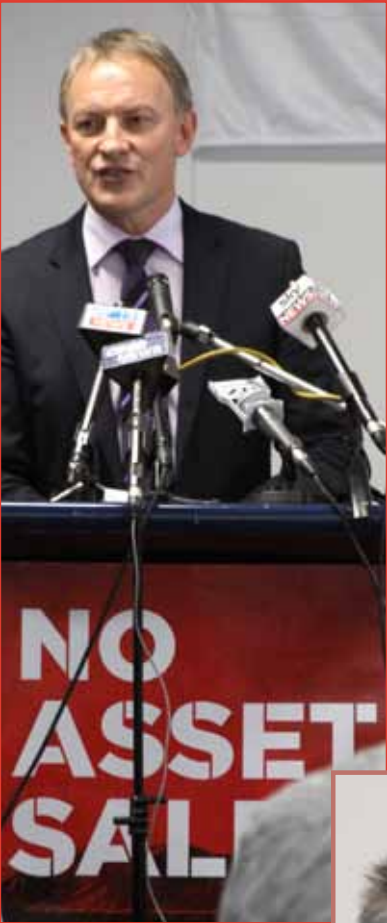
Bernie Snook,
Waikato rail.



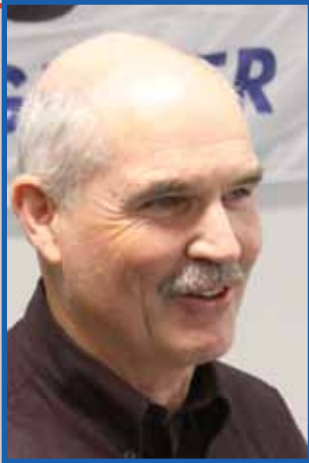
Leonnie,
Aubrey & Julia



John Bannerman
West Coast rail.



Roy Weaver
Port
Taranaki
CEO.



Sara
Lunum P
Tauranga
manager



John Freeman
NZTA manager.



Warren Stoddart
Wellington port.



Mario Soljan AIL.

The RMTU's
novel answer to
T-shirt
competitions



Jan Logie Green MP.



(l) Roy Cowley NZ
Harbours and LE Funds.



Robyn Haultain NZ Nurses.

Owen Doogan RTBU
president.



(above)
James
Williams
Auckland
rail.



(r) Phil
Spanswick
organiser.



Neville Donaldson
SFWU.

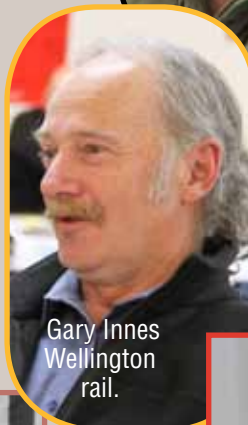
Daniel Manu
Port Taranaki.



(l) Dean
Grant
Hawkes
Bay rail.



Gary Innes
Wellington
rail.



(r) Ray
Brown
Waikato
rail/
TKM.



Gareth Hughes Green MP.

(r) Jim
Quinn
KiwiRail
CEO.



(l - r) Kelen
Marten, Barry
Simpkins,
Dave Marden,
Kasia Kurene
and Doug
Blakie
winners of the
T shirt
competition
with one of
the judges
Jim Kelly.



Jimmy's farewell



Ross Wilson, Jim, Wayne and Aubrey.

ON the second evening of the Annual Delegates Conference a dinner was hosted by the RMTU to mark the retirement from Union affairs of immediate past president James "Jim" Kelly in the Police College dining room. The Kelly whanau attended as special guests including Jim's wife Elizabeth, daughter Lisa, son Steven, brother Charlie and his wife Linda. Other distinguished guests included Clare Curran MP, Ross Wilson, Edgar Spark, Dave Morgan, Eddie Dickson, Terry Stock, Ian Swift, Phil Bosworth, Geoff Davenport, Hazel Armstrong and John Murfitt. The general secretary was the master of ceremonies and endeavoured to keep things rolling along although he did get into trouble at one stage when talking about a certain "strong, shiny bald head".

A long list of speakers de-



Edgar Spark and Dave Morgan.



Jim with lawyer Geoff Davenport.



Eddie and Joy Dickson with Ian Swift.



(r) Clare Curran Labour MP.

Libi, Julia and James Williams.



The Kelly whanau.



above (l - r) Owen Doogan, Jim and Lisa

(below) Julia and Leonie give Jim a kiss goodbye.



scribed Jim the man and the things he may have done during his years. As you can imagine, after 21 years as Union president the stories were wide and varied – many bringing the house down.

Special note was made during many speeches of his leadership during the 1994 general rail strike, the 2000 Ministerial Inquiry into H&S of rail workers, the Take Back The Track campaign, the renationalisation of rail and the formation of KiwiRail. Especially, Jim's symbolic handing over of a \$1 coin to the then Minister of Finance Michael Cullen.

During the evening we learnt what it meant for a Glasgow-born Kelly to come to NZ and begin his rail career – a career in which his railway activism and leadership was to the forefront.

A great time was had by all with great food, good company and much merriment.

We wish Jim a great future and return him

(below) Tania Haraki, Ian Swift and Jim.



full time to his family so that he can spend more valuable time with them.

Jim, we are proud to have called you a brother, walked with you on the journey and know that the RMTU will always have a special place in your heart as you will in ours. 🇳🇿

Retirement savings made easy

A KiwiSaver scheme for ALL RMTU members

RAIL workers can now piggy-back aboard the benefits port workers have enjoyed with the NZ Harbours Superannuation Plan by opening a KiwiSaver account with them or transferring to it from the one they have.

The Plan is sponsored by the Rail & Maritime Transport Union and administered by Melville Jessup Weaver.

Contributions are invested between three fund managers:-

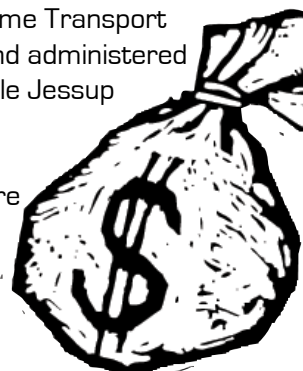
- AMP Capital Investors (NZ) Ltd;
- TOWER Asset Management; and
- Tyndall Investment Management New Zealand Limited.

All top-rated schemes.

The NZ Harbours KiwiSaver Scheme operates in similar fashion to all others; you get the most out of it if you and your employer make regular contributions at a minimum rate of 2% of your taxable earnings.

Download a copy of the investment statement and application form at:

www.harbourssuper.org.nz



Horrrifying conditions for fellow workers

Mining and Maritime Initiative
Durban, South Africa
October 4 to 7, 2011

By Dave Marden
North Island Port rep NMC

AT best guess, some 300 to 400 unionists from many parts of the unionised world attended this conference including from New Zealand, Australia, USA, Canada, Mexico, several African countries and proxy speakers representing other regions where members were unable to attend, particularly the Middle East.

The fundamentals of the conference were to improve conditions and rights of workers within the whole chain of (to quote the T-shirt) "from pit to port", covering the mining sector, energy production and transportation.

Massive corporate profits

With an ever-increasing global appetite for minerals and energy, international corporates are making massive profits, yet imposing pay cuts and poorer conditions on those at the coal face.

The way forward is to challenge this expanding epidemic with global campaigns at all levels from the bargaining table to contract agreements, governments, trade agreements, shipping lines and corporations to mention but a few.

Juxtaposed to this is the current state of the global financial markets, particularly in Europe, the consequences of which we have all felt.

The irony being, that those who created the monster are now back in control.

Governments which embarked on policies protecting Joe Public have failed and we continue to see the gap widening between 'them that have and them that haven't'. The current global movement protesting corporate and individual greed is but a symptom.

For struggling economies the impact is more severe especially where social services

and support mechanisms are poor or non-existent. Outcomes for the majority lowly paid or out-of-work workers is considerably worse where there is a real shortage of work (eg: SA has 40%+ unemployment).

However in all this the union movement is alive and more than kicking. In SA and its



Some of the 3-400 delegates.

neighbours a resilient people have worked very hard to grow some strong unions such as SATAWU and NUM.

Though there are strong moves within Africa to expand and support each other through union expansion, strength and cross border solidarity, some of the poorer economies are struggling. Unions there face issues of casualisation, government oppression, monarchical oppression, lack of finance, labour brokers and a basic lack of resources – to mention a few.

Tough political climates

Some delegates from these regions need to engage their fellows in up too 11 languages in what are very tough political climates. The issues they must deal with are harsh compared to what we deal with in NZ.

In SA and its neighbours there are virtually no social services. This includes families who have lost loved ones due to a WPI. The greedy companies offer no support either.

From a port perspective, it was interesting to note that Durban Port handles approximately 78% of SA's cargo and is capable of berthing up to 60 vessels. A high percentage of the port's labour is imported.

On day three we were divided into three groups covering subjects of importance to a conference seeking ideas and strategies to help, strengthen, support and aid the

plights faced globally. They included: Oil and gas alliance; Grupo Mexico; and South Africa (African strategy).

In choosing "Grupo Mexico" (mining, shipping, rail corporate) we learnt through Juan Montufar, who spent two years, two months and 20 days behind bars for staying hard to his union beliefs, about the struggle for unions and the Mexican people, and with his on going struggle with GM.

There is no doubt that international pressure from unions helped gain his release. He was also offered \$US2 million to denounce his union!

He was accompanied by Carlos Esquer of Los Mineros (minor's union) who showed a video from the general secretary of the National Union of Mine and Metal Workers of Mexico, Napoleon Gomez, who must live in exile in Canada as his life is in danger within Mexico. He runs the union from there.

13 failures

We listed 13 failures of GM and the Mexican Government to its people and unions including:

- Government, OM and dock union corruption.
- 55,000 people murdered and 63 miners left to die 150 metres down (In Chile miners were saved at a depth of 700 metres). It is said that cameras showed the Mexican miners linked hand in hand after the explosion. They were left to die even after massive protestations from the Union and families. It is called industrial homicide.

We must not rest easy when we can see the plight of those merely seeking basic human rights and living conditions – and the right to go home at the end of the day. Companies like Grupo Mexico are expanding their cancerous global tentacles at the expense of good working people and their families. They have no personal connection to their workers and very little thought or concern about H&S and loss of life – especially where it affects their bottom line.

Union support must continue. Even the smallest offering can help.

Continued on the next page

Labour @ Hutt shops

ON November 1, local Labour MPs Trevor Mallard and Chris Hipkins (Hutt South and Rimutaka), Labour candidate for Te Tai Tonga, Rino Tirikatene (now elected) and the then leader of the Labour Party Phil Goff visited the Hutt Shops for a tour of the workshops followed by brief speeches and refreshments. Hutt managers, CEO Jim Quinn and Hutt RMTU delegates welcomed this Labour delegation and walked them around keen to make sure any questions were answered and to show Labour what this valuable



(l-r) Paul Morrison branch secretary, Chris Hipkins Labour MP, Phil Goff and Colin Kinsey.

facility can do. A large group of journalists also came along.

Phil spoke very positively on the value of local heavy engineering, NZ build and maintenance of rail rolling stock. He clearly acknowledged that the current Government and KiwiRail management did not put enough effort into understanding the value of building and maintaining our rolling stock and locomotives. Cheaper does not mean better and the price of a wagon or locomotive sourced

from overseas does not take into account the wider benefits of employment within KiwiRail and the wider business community. He also pointed out we need facilities where our young people can learn and use their engineering trades.

These views are consistent with what the RMTU has been saying about both Hillside and Hutt workshops and in addition the whole-of-life costs of the cheaper wagons and locomotives. We believe recent major rolling stock purchase decisions were flawed and were an example of short term thinking that will end up costing more economically and socially. 🇳🇿



Mallard, Goff and Hipkins with security in tow.

Egalitarianism remote ideal in 21st century NZ

NEW ZEALAND generates a lot of wealth but it is NOT spread evenly;

- The top 1% has as much wealth as the bottom 60%.
- The top 150 individuals and families increased their wealth by \$7 billion in the last year.
- The top 10% of income earners got \$2.2 billion a year worth of tax cuts.
- National's tax cuts have added \$135 a week to the gap in take home pay between someone earning \$30,000 and someone earning \$150,000 a year.
- 106,000 New Zealanders left permanently for Australia in the three years to end of August 2011.
- Up to a quarter of NZ's children – 270,000 – currently live in poverty.

■ The chief executives of our biggest 47 companies received pay rises averaging 14% in the last year.

■ From 1982 to 2010, the top 10% of households was the only group to increase their share of total income – all other households lost their share.



Email your support to:
minero_consejo@prodigy.net.mx
with letters to our own politicians.

As with most conferences we left inspired and with much to do as we fight the on-going local, regional and global battles. We acknowledge delegates from countries

where the ideology of rulers conflict, with and are inhospitable, to unions – many of whom put their lives on the line every day.

Understanding what some of our sister and brother unionists go through is mind boggling. With no disrespect to the Pike River tragedy, in SA this year over 100 min-

ers have lost their lives. Between 1984 and 2008, 20,370 miners died there, albeit that SA is a massive mining country.

We must promote the ongoing H&S banner and give our support to campaigns aimed at improving the rights and conditions of those with less. 🇳🇿

Port Tauranga leads the way

NEW ZEALAND ports compare well to ports around the world and some are punching well above their weight, according to a recently released report from the Ministry of Transport, as the following graphs reveal. Especially productive is Port Tauranga with grand plans for future expansion.

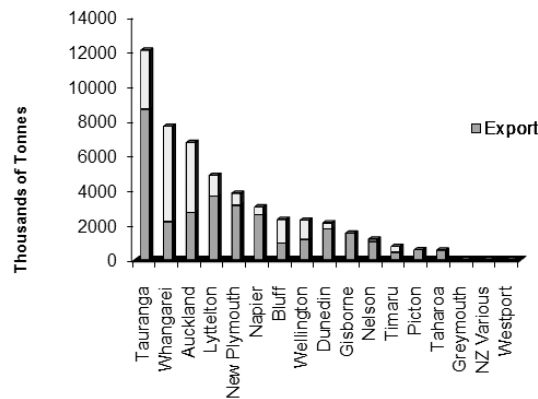
In some cases the report says NZ ports are out-performing the Australians.

The 12-page report focusses on six ports – Auckland, Tauranga, Napier, Wellington, Lyttelton and Otago – which together handle over 90% of the country's seaport container throughput.

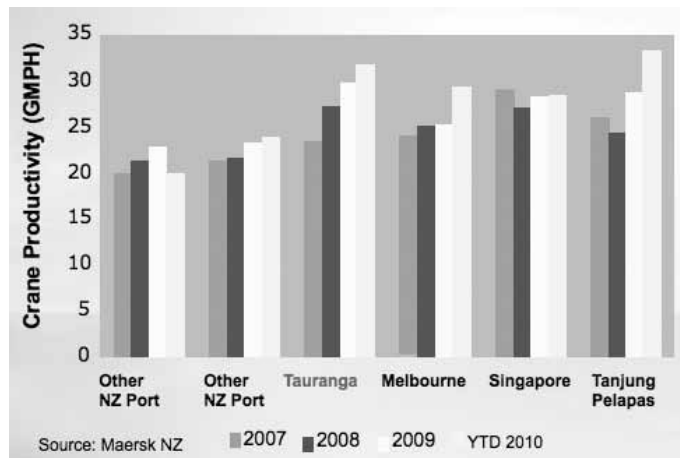
Tauranga had the highest overall productivity levels while Wellington had a higher crane rate but lower vessel rate. Auckland was the opposite of Wellington. However Tauranga's lead is gradually being whittled away.

Compared to Australia our national average vessel rate was higher.

The report gave NZ ports a pass mark saying there was still room for improvement. 🌐



New Zealand import/export volume by port



Port productivity – a world class outcome

\$2-shop wagons

THE IAB wagons from China have raised many concerns over build quality, braking compatibility and dynamic stability. Feedback from members in the field is that the build quality is poor in comparison to NZ-built wagons and while these photos are not close-ups the welds shown are less than ideal quality. As part of the commissioning and approval process the RMTU was asked for sign-off of these wagons prior to entering service. Two main issues were raised with KiwiRail before conditional sign off was given:

- Is the braking of these wagons within a dedicated IAB consist and with other wagons? KiwiRail provided an in-depth report on wagon braking to dispel the rumours that the non-IAB wagons were dumbed down, braking wise, to match the lesser braking effort of the IABs. Better brake blocks and modified variable load valves have also improved the IAB braking which was just within code before these modifications. We will

publish this report in the near future.

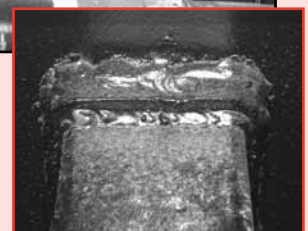
- On dynamic stability, the unmodified IABs were unstable due to the friction block fitted when they arrived. An IM-type friction block was fitted which improved dynamic stability. The union has been told that there is IAB frame flexing which "is not a safety issue but may reduce the life of these wagons". KR expects these wagons to be in service for 25-40 years.

One positive note to balance the off-shore build: at least from the sounds of it, these wagons are going to need a lot of maintenance now and in the future.

While not confirmed, we have been told that one of the major issues with the IABs is that we did not design them in NZ like the Australians did when they designed their IM type wagons and then got China to build them. The conditional IAB sign off by the RMTU was based on KR informing the Union of all the issues and mitigations for the IAB wagons.



Examples of poor welding



Clearly, if they haven't then sign off would be withdrawn. 🌐

RTBU 9th Council

GENERAL SECRETARY Wayne Butson attended the four-day biennial National Council meeting of the Rail Tram and Bus Union (RTBU) of Australia in early November. The Council meeting was held in the Old Parliament House in Canberra. All of the RTBU's national officers, national divisions and state branches attended.



(r) Noel Morris Queensland and Satoru Yamada JRU with Wayne.

The theme was 'Better engagement' and the new direction for the Union, outlined by the new national secretary Bob Nanva, was adopted. Council adjourned on the Wednesday morning so all delegates could attend Parliament House



RTBU national secretary Bob Nanva presents Wayne with a memento after his speech to the Council.

to watch and listen to deputy Treasurer Bill Shorten move the new Superannuation Bill which will increase the mandatory employer contribution from 9% to 12%. On Wednesday afternoon Wayne addressed the Council on the NZ economy, RMTU campaigns and other issues. That night the Council dinner was held and it is notable that five Cabinet Ministers and 23 Federal Labour MPs attended. With that many politicians in a room the dinner speakers' list was impressive to say the least. The existing ties between the RTBU and the RMTU remain strong and our unity and solidarity across the ditch is assured. Global Solidarity Forever. 🌐

PACT



Dave Kearns from Hillside addressing a rally of locked out community care workers employed by the PACT Trust at the 'Occupy Dunedin' site in the Octagon.

Hillside workers enjoyed huge community support during their campaign against jobs cuts and it was good that Dave stepped up to show support for the locked out workers. The parties subsequently reached a settlement via mediation in which the employer doubled its pay offer. 🌐

New log cradles, pro local build and not!

WHEN Port Napier wanted to invest in specialised log bolsters for transporting logs on rail (pictured below) they looked local and got their bolsters manufactured in the Hawkes Bay. With KiwiRail, it was an overseas build (Sweden) for their log bolsters (pictured) and even contractors to fit them to wagons in NZ. KiwiRail will say time was against them for manufacturing and delivery



— an excuse we are tired of. For installing these KiwiRail bolsters we haven't heard the excuse nor even been consulted with over the contracting out of RMTU members' work. Members must be very vigi-



lant of any contracting out of RMTU members' work. The RMTU cannot insist on contractual consultation over contracting out of RMTU members' work unless we know about it — and, of course, BEFORE it happens. 🌐

DL update

Information provided by KiwiRail, RMTU LE rep and LEs.

KiwiRail

- All 20 locos from the initial batch have been commissioned.
- Currently ring-fenced for service into the upper North Island although running rights have been obtained across the entire NIMT and MNPL.
- Two locos are currently not in service due to concerns around vibration with one not in service post major engine repairs.
- In conjunction with the manufacturer we are confident that we have identified the primary fault causing the vibrations and they are undergoing post modification testing.
- Previous concerns with respect to wear on alternator brushes have been remedied with a new brush holder designed and installed in four locos and being rolled out across the balance of the fleet.
- DL locos have, to date, undertaken 3,522 freight service 'trips' for a total of 486,717 kms.
- Second order for 20 additional DL locos has been placed. Delivery programmed for July 2012.
- Previously identified 'alterations or fixes' being engineered into 2nd batch eg – emergency egress mechanism.
- Two principle alterations to cab layout being the lowering of the front window by 60cm and altering the cabinet design to allow the seat to rotate fully 180 degrees to the right.
- Mean distances between DL failures are improving




RMTU LE Rep

- The compressors have been shutting down en route for no apparent reason. It was found that over notch four excessive voltage was causing the inverter to pulse and the compressor would shut down. A software fix was required to ensure compressor restart – 7 of 20 DLs have the new software.
- The alternators have been destroying brushes. New brush holders have been designed and installed. The new holders have four instead of two bolts holding the brushes, 6 of 20 done
- DLs have been blowing up traction motors. Eight destroyed to date. Cracks have been found in the bearing housing allowing grease to seep out possibly when the DLs were shipped to NZ. All DLs will require traction motor rebuilds over time.
- Faults on some of the DLs include: code

66/65 engine faults, vibration issues, traction motors, boogies requiring repair, blower engines seize, a gearbox issue, low speed alternator issue, blots broken in axle housing and auxiliary generator over voltage.

Suggested cab improvements/changes from LEs for the next batch and retrofitting into the first 20 DLs include:

- Driver's seat height adjustment.
- Driver's footrest.
- Speedo and display console.
- Headlight brightness.
- Headlight selector switches.
- Windscreen lamination.
- Window latches.
- MU2A valve markings and headlight set up for multiple running.
- Cab visibility and blind spots.
- Access to driver's seat. 

BAY OF PLENTY RAIL BRANCH

WE learnt a lot from the picket of the CNR wagons early in the year, which we hope to capitalise on in 2012. The main point is to challenge the use of contractors by using the wording from the Collective Agreement.

The branch will have to look at the interaction between the KiwiRail groups in an effort to build a stronger branch.

The new DL Locomotives are improving reli-

ability. After working on and around these locos the cabs have some trip hazards in them and the foot rests are too low. Water pumps for the wash and window washers if not turned off just burn out.

Traction motors

Also the traction motors are re-engineered and are similar to the DX traction motors. There has been one traction mo-

tor with a collapsed armature bearing and another with a collapsed traction motor bearing which had to be parked at Wharoa and waited for repairs. Also a DL had a alternator replaced. We thought KiwiRail were buying new locos. How many other components are second hand? The new traction control is working well.

Merry Xmas and a Happy New Year from the Bay of Plenty. 

GREETINGS from Auckland. The RWC was an absolute success apart from the opening night where Auckland Transport catered for 50,000 when in reality 200,000 party goers showed up. Nobody could cope. Lucky there were no riots. Just shows how civilised and patient Aucklanders are! This aside, most of the other events ran successfully.

With another year at the end we are really starting to see big changes in the rail network. Along with another Christmas shutdown for two weeks we will be coming back to find even more changes. The electrification is progressing really well, though it's sad to see so many contractors with nice new equipment doing work that should be done by railway men.

Posts are appearing on the Western Line with the earth wire going up and hangers starting to appear. Brilliant to know Auckland Metro is getting \$650 million to spend on new electric units from Spain, made by CDF (58 x three car sets). It is also positive to see the new electric-only depot being

AUCKLAND RAIL BRANCH

built at Wiri.

The Manukau branch will be the first new bit of track laid since the 1950s in the Auckland region. This will hopefully open in February 2012. The new timetable change, which was supposed to take place in February 2012, has been delayed for a few months due to Auckland Transport issues.

The new signalling system is nearly up and running throughout the Auckland network. Hopefully, after Christmas, it should be completed apart from the Papakura to Pukekohe section.

The new ASR rules are still having problems, most of the time it has been TCO making the mistakes and the LEs falling into the trap. They need to be more aware of the changes and rules governing these areas.

Staff numbers are still growing at a very fast rate for both Veolia and KiwiRail.

Good to see the new DL locos. It appears that most of the LEs are getting to grips with them and understanding, when

problems arise, how to fix or reset them.

We still have a wish list. We hope the next government will appreciate the North Auckland Line and do something here as the holiday highway will not solve the freight problem in the North. Of course, Britomart to Mt Eden, the underground loop, is a must-do as at the present time. Britomart is maxed out during rush hour periods and with an underground loop in operation, it would increase Britomart's capacity five-fold.

Mr. Quinn, shame on you to see all these new Chinese-built wagons come straight off the boat, into car-and-wagon Westfield to be repaired and altered for operation! I am sure Hillside would not have made those mistakes. What is the true cost of these 'cheap' wagons is the question that will not be honestly answered?

Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, from all us in the city of sails.



WAIKATO RAIL BRANCH

THE branch has had a busy 2011 with the main issues of contention being mainly servicing issues including a number of D&A cases. There have been some difficulties in the CT Site with the introduction of a new manager that we hope may be resolved in the new year. Our executive remained largely the same, however it will be vital that the Waikato delegates who attended the National Conference will help invigorate the branch. Merry Xmas and a happy New Year.



HAWKES BAY RAIL BRANCH

WE are getting ready for the squash season and hope it goes well. The building of a loop at the port should help improve the service to the port. Merry Xmas from the Bay.



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■ insurance@unionplus.co.nz

■ www.unionplus.co.nz



BAY OF PLENTY PORT BRANCH

THE year is fast coming to a close and we still have the C3 and Champion Collectives to be settled. As with the Bay of Plenty Rail branch we have learnt some valuable lessons from the picket earlier in the year, and we hope to build on that in 2012. Merry Christmas from NZ's surfing capital. 🏄



(l to r) Roger McIntyre, Peter Cooper and Graham Harvey.



Shaun Wilson and Craig Cooney.



(l to r) Keith Hatwell, Paul Hansen and Jarrod Boud.



(l to r) Steve Cole, Whare Dickson and Ronnie Nielsen.



Grant Smith (Cruise), Kelvin Rush and Murray Hume.

\$1,500 AD&D

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

Members also have the option to increase their coverage an additional \$10,000 which costs just \$2 for the first year. Please complete and return the enclosed reply card to have an AIL representative deliver your AD&D Benefit and explain the additional \$10,000 option. This is very important to you and your family.



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ANOTHER year “almost” done and dusted. I guess one could sit back and look at all the issues we have faced as local branches or on a national scale this year, and weigh up what’s been achieved in a climate that has not been union friendly.

To the many that have supported the union cause, whether it be our own battles locally or the fight for others, a salute to you all! In the efforts toward pickets, financial, petitions, attending meetings, hand outs, to mention a few, the fact remains that our union cares and works hard in a time when the current government and its leaders put themselves and their wealthy corporate followers and/or supporters first — and will

THE branch has been very busy endeavouring to have total membership coverage. We have delegates walking round with their books checking and keeping a watch on what now seems to be an influx of locomotive engineers.

Wellington Metro is looking forward to a major revamp of its staff facilities. Behind the scenes, the contractors have been busy prefabricating all the new modules and work is to commence on 27 November to give the lunchroom a much needed overhaul and an extension to the ladies amenities.

The Interislander has had its ship issues with the return from Singapore of the expanded Aratere. She has now re-entered service and joined her sister ships. We live in hope that the Christmas period (and the Aratere) will run smoothly. Our members, alongside their Picton brothers and sisters, have gone the extra mile and put up with

WITH the collective agreement settled for the next three years between RMTU, MUNZ and the Lyttelton Port Company our attention is focussed on the General Election. Brian Byas, Andy Kelly (LPC delegates) and Grant Donaldson (KR delegate and relocated Hillside worker) attended the MPs forum at Addington Raceway in Christchurch on the 15 November. Representatives from Labour, Greens and Mana answered questions put to them by delegates from different unions around Canterbury.

One of the biggest issues for many un-

continue to do so if they win this election, with an even more dire approach to unions pending.


By the time this gets to press we will all be well aware of what the following three years may bring if the blue brigade get back in.

As the year closes there are some things that come to mind that definitely need a mention. The catastrophic events that will never be forgotten in NZ history, the tragedies of both Pike River and the Christchurch earthquakes, and the loss of our union legend who passed away just over 12 months ago — Brian Cronin. His

legend lives on!

Finally, a big thanks to Jim Kelly for his inspirational leadership and his efforts in contributing not just to the RMTU but to the union movement as a whole, over the many years of service as the RMTU’s president. Words do not express the gratitude and appreciation you deserve.

The Port of Napier branch members wish you and yours the best for the festive season — be safe, stay safe and come out the other side to 2012 ready to take on a new year of promise, hope and — rest assured — change.

Hokaka whakapai. 

WELLINGTON RAIL BRANCH

some very trying times since her return. We hope management at all levels will remember our efforts when it comes time for contract talks in 2012.

It is also with regret that we acknowledge the passing of a well-loved long serving member and delegate Mukund Bhai Dullabh Bhai Mistry or just Mistry to his friends and workmates at the Interislander and the wider rail community.


The branch has also seen restructuring in payroll, the project planning group and property — never a good time for all those workers involved.

On Friday 18 November 2011, Gary Innes (assistant branch secretary) and Telai Sefesi (branch secretary) visited most sectors of the Wellington rail branch. Networks, A-box, train control, payroll, Metro, EMU depot, paint bay, Kaiwharawhara,

inspections and comms Interislander terminal, CT Site, and the Wellington freight diesel depot were all visited during a full day of meet and greet.

We intend to visit the outer depots and the odd network’s toolbox as time allows and look forward to making contact with the Hutt Shops and Wellington port branches in the New Year.

On a side note, Toast Martinborough on 20 November went off very well, everyone had a great day over in the Wairarapa. While Wellington got the rain the staff dealt with the very happy public on the trains return.

The Wellington rail branch would like to wish all our fellow members a joyous Christmas and a prosperous New Year. Please take care of yourselves and family, relax, enjoy the break, and we will see you in 2012. 

LYTTELTON PORT BRANCH

ion members is around asset sales. This is particularly relevant for the RMTU where a Tory government would see KiwiRail sold again — and the Port of Lyttelton (amongst other assets in Canterbury), ostensibly to fund the rebuild of Christchurch.

The irony of selling an asset like the Port of Lyttelton which returns a good revenue stream into Canterbury and, in doing so, assists the rebuild of Christchurch anyway, is that by selling the Port there would be a one-off gain and then NZ would still have to find the money to rebuild Christchurch from

somewhere while we watch the revenue from the Port repatriated overseas.

A reminder to us all of the importance of our vote!

On a more positive note, to build solidarity and relationships we are planning our final branch/executive meeting and our Christmas function to include our rail brothers and sisters. This will be the first combined rail and port branches meeting and a first combined Christmas do. We are looking forward to all getting together at

Continued on the next page

LYTTELTON PORT BRANCH [cont]

the end of a bloody hard year.


The inspiration for a combined 'do' follows on from the annual conference that was attended by Brian Byas, Andy Kelly, Stu Marsh and Tim Lawton (City Depot delegate) where the message was strongly given by the National Management Committee of the RMTU and by general secretary

Wayne Butson, that we must build our links and relationships with each other in the good times so that when the times get tough and we need each other, we can make the call to people we know and have built a relationship with.

This weekend, Saturday 19 November, is the first anniversary of the Pike River

mining disaster. The RMTU Lyttelton branch secretary will be attending the public memorial service and the private unions service.

A wreath will be laid on behalf of the RMTU to our comrades and fellow workers who died at work, and for their families with whom we mourn and pray for the recovery of their loved ones.

Kia Kaha 


MARLBOROUGH RAIL BRANCH

GREETINGS to all. Well it has been a harrowing time in the past month or so for our brothers and sisters at the Interislander and its rail yard with the Aratere arriving back from her major refit. Her teething problems have been well documented by the press who leapt on every unfortunate episode she suffered. The story that was not told was the outstanding way my comrades from both the Interislander and the rail yard rose to

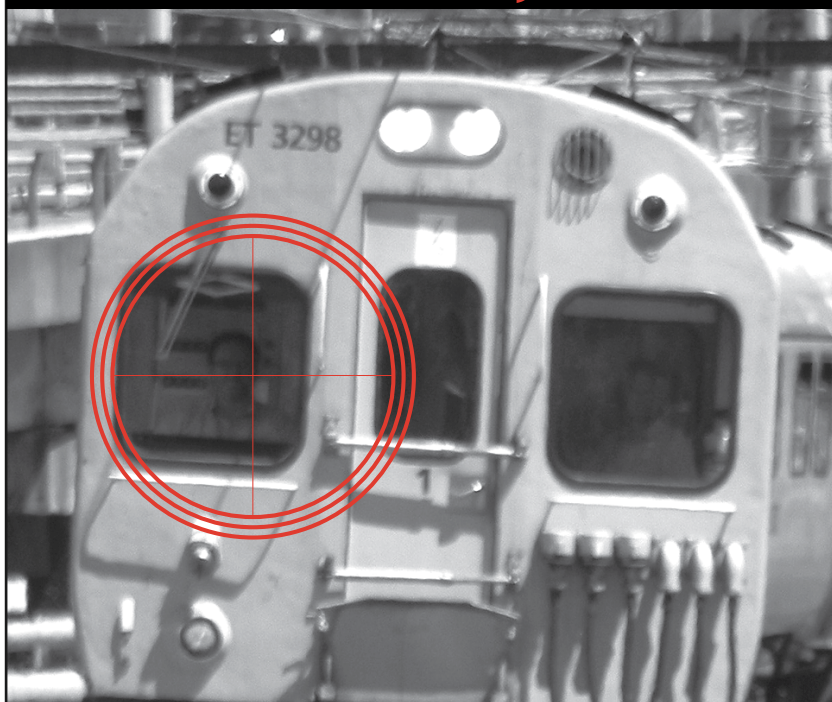
the daily logistical challenges of moving both freight and passengers to alternative services to create as little disruption to our customers as possible. The constant battling with rescheduling of ships and trains was somewhat tedious so 'big ups' to the staff in Picton. We should all be proud of ourselves for what we have achieved. In the past eight months we have shown resourcefulness, innovation and, at times, great fortitude in doing this and have gone beyond the call of

duty. We have proven that we are an asset to the company and not a liability.

We look forward to seeing what the New Year has in store for us and whether or not management recognises what we have done. With a bit of luck all ships and freight will be achieving 'on time performances' and with it bringing a brighter future for not only us but our customers as well.

On behalf of the Marlborough branch RMTU we wish you all a wonderful Xmas and New Year. Safe travels to all. 

Sickness, accident & death



The New Zealand Locomotive Engineers' Sickness, Accident and Death Benefit Fund

In the last 10 years 230 locomotive engineers had to retire due to medical reasons. They received a total payout of \$4,737,097 from the above Fund. LEs who didn't belong to the Fund and who were forced to retire did not receive anything.

You could be next to miss out!

For as little as \$403 a year your future – or those of your next of kin – could be better assured.

Contact:

Julia Harrison, PO Box 813, Wellington
Telephone: (04) 499-2066
Fax: (04) 471-0896
Email: julia@rmtunion.org.nz

**Attention LEs
Join this Fund now for
your own peace of mind**

CANTERBURY RAIL BRANCH

YES we are the winners of the Rugby World Cup. Did we win it, or did France lose? OK one point is good as 20; we are the team with the most so it's ours. Our election is just around the corner and by the time this goes to print we will know what we are in for, for the next three years. Has this government done well? Well, we sacked our own workers and are buying trains from overseas while we have 157,000 unemployed. We are borrowing \$300 million a week to run the country and our power bills are already too high so now we are going to sell these power authorities to help the country's debt. Now hold on, let's have a cup of tea. If we put the power stations into foreign hands and even if we do own 51%, by hook or by crook they will skyrocket power prices. This is a fact. Selling the family china does not work. We have tried and it didn't work. Air New Zealand, Tranz Rail, Telecom – how many floggings can the people take? We have paid for it through low wages when we should be level with the Aussies. Hello, can you smell the coffee?

Well-oiled

Is the DL fleet of locos running like a well-oiled machine? Is the new extended ferry at \$57 million proving itself in the freight business even with its 11 million overrun? I'm saying there's trouble 'down at mill'. Managerial decisions are rearing

their ugly heads and we are seeing many bad decisions being made with costly consequences. This is not good enough. These managers are being paid big money by KiwiRail to make the RIGHT calls on our business and we are continually being short-changed. Where is the accountability? Every time one of these 'captains of industry' messes up with a bad call it has a domino effect down the chain. When a business is not going well managers make snide remarks to staff. Cheap shots at certain individuals especially if they are union officials. They are good to wind up. When a manager makes these remarks it makes the point that they are not competent. Throwing dispersions at certain staff is a feeble attempt to take the focus off themselves.

Unjust accusation

A case in point recently concerned a manager who accused one of our members that he had deliberately and without authority changed a programme which had been designed for the locomotive radio system. One visit to the regional manager resulted in "don't tell me it has to be handled formally". The content of the letter passed to our member was that they could possibly fire him for what he had allegedly done. When the disciplinary meeting took place our members took the disciplinary team through a practical demonstration of why this electronic failure had occurred. It

was proven that the contractors from whom the computer program was purchased had made the blunder and when our member installed the gear it showed where the fault lay. The HR manager present for this hearing was convinced that our member was not at blame. When we asked management for an apology it had to be extracted with some persuasion. The apology could have been better written by a primary school pupil. Shame on you KiwiRail for treating our member like this. Shame on you for not listening to our union officials who could have had this matter sorted out amicably with no fuss. This was entirely the company's mismanagement. On top of this our troops are still out in the field inspecting bridges and track every time we get another quake, from Timaru to Picton, it's not the managers, but the troops who are doing it hard so that this organisation can run trains to make money for the country. Why don't you try and support us in achieving this and stop firing the cheap shots, undermining members who have given their blood, guts and lives working for the company.

Training session

John Kerr, our south island industrial rep, ran a delegate training session in the EMPU building here in Christchurch. A well run session with an excellent turnout and presentation. How inspirational to have such a session amongst many photos

Continued on the next page



Please cut on the dotted line

RMTU ERNEST WILLIAM FILE SCHOLARSHIP

THE Ernest William File Scholarship was established in 1978 by members of the Locomotive Engineers Association as a tribute to Ernest William File, the retiring general secretary of the Association. The Scholarship was continued and expanded by the Combined Union of Railway Employees and the Rail and Maritime Transport Union has continued to support it on the same basis.

The scholarship is open to applicants in two groups:

- ◆ the children of a locomotive engineer; and/or

- ◆ those who have a parent who is a member of the Rail & Maritime Transport Union at the time of application.

Three years

There are up to three scholarships available per group, each tenable for up to three years by scholars who are undertaking full time study for their first tertiary qualification at any tertiary institution in New Zealand. The value of the scholarship is \$500 per annum.

Written applications may be made on the application form on the following page and should include details of your

most recent scholastic achievements, career intentions, the names and addresses of two referees and sent to the address below before 1 March 2012.

The General Secretary
Rail & Maritime Transport Union
PO Box 1103
WELLINGTON

For more information and conditions for application please phone:


04-499-2066

CANTERBURY RAIL BRANCH [cont]

on the building walls of former and living trade union officials who had fought hard and long for the respect and honour of their union members and to give them dignity while forging this great country of ours for

a better and fairer living. Standing proud to serve their fellow workers. Standing to be counted. Kia Kaha.

To all of our members who have had the sorrow of losing a loved one during

these terrible times with the earthquakes and have lost their homes our branch offers its heartfelt sympathy to one and all – and to every one of you let's hope for a really top Merry Christmas and a happy New Year. 

TIMARU RAIL BRANCH

THE Timaru Rail branch welcomes Shannon Edwards to the terminal team. He has just finished shunting school and now is undertaking OJT (on the job training) under the guidance of Gavin Currah. Here in Timaru tonnage has boomed and our terminal shunt team is working well with the CT team to manage wagon movements in and out of the Timaru CT site.


Contractors Fulton Hogan are finishing resealing parts of the CT site and while this is being done it is causing a few problems. However, it is good to see the work being done.

Like many terminals, bull hooks and

new IACs and IABs are causing headaches for shunting crews. Please, if you can keep this class of wagon in packs it will help us all. If every yard does a little bit to help in this regard then the job is easier in each terminal downstream, as it were.

We continue to have problems with our DSG and DSC locos. The Timaru DSG is forever breaking down and needing to be sent to Christchurch for repairs. Last time it went there three days after it came back it crapped out again, thus needing to go back north for more repairs. We know this sorry state of affairs is no reflection on our mechanical brothers and sisters; rather it is reflective of the years of under maintenance

and investment in shunt locomotives by successive management teams. We hear rumours that KiwiRail is going to overhaul four DSGs a year at Hutt Workshops with each taking two months to do. Yay, we say! Whilst on the subject of remotes, the remote boxes are becoming crap as well and so the news that there are four new boxes for the refitted shunt locos is good news to our ears – and good news for our workmates at Hutt Shops as well as they look around for work!

The festive season is upon us and we wish all fellow RMTU members and workmates a very Merry Xmas and a Happy New Year. See you all safe and well in 2012. 

PORT TIMARU BRANCH

PRIME PORT BRANCH has had a tough but good year. We're rebuilding our structure and organisation and have a new branch president in Naylor Young and a new secretary in Mike Nijssen. Both

Naylor and Mike attended the National Conference and found it stimulating and motivating.

Regular organiser visits, updated notice boards, and RMTU branded clothing for

delegates have all been put in place. In June we had an education seminar at which we trained half a dozen key delegates and we're aiming to get another five trained before the end of the year. Josh Meyer is shortly going on a CTU Health and Safety Representative

Continued on the next page

ERNEST WILLIAM FILE SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Surname of applicant: First Name(s):

Contact postal address for academic year:

Age (yy:mm): Date of birth:

University/institute at which enrolled:

Degree/qualification(s) for which enrolled:

Student ID if known

Which year is this of your undergraduate study? (eg first, second etc.):

References (use separate sheets if necessary):

Latest academic results (Sixth or Seventh Form and certified copy of Bursary results) – attach copies:

Parents name & signature:

Loco Running Non Loco Running:

Parent name(s) and signature(s)

Applicant's Signature:

Date of Application:


PORT TIMARU BRANCH [cont]

training course.

We're also looking at organising a social event for members over the summer to bring people to together for a little rest and relaxation.

Trade fluctuates at Prime Port – MSC/Hamburg Sud and Maersk are slot chartering, logs and fertilizer volumes appear to be on the rise. Transformers for the Benmore Dam upgrade are about to arrive with each weighing a mere 230 tonnes!

The branch is looking forward to 2012 – we have an organising plan leading into our bargaining in 2013 and we intend to maintain the momentum we've established this year.

A very Merry Xmas and let's all have a prosperous successful 2012. 

OTAGO RAIL BRANCH

THE branch has seen some arrivals in the persons of Alister Grant, back from Timaru to swell the ranks of the locomotive engineers, and our immediate past president (Brother Jim Kelly) who has left the realms of the Hillside Workshops and joined the Mechanical Depot staff. Jim is relishing the new environment and enjoys the variety of work and the new challenges and opportunities that field work is providing. He is also very impressed with the professional attitudes displayed towards safety in the field and has expressed his appreciation to the membership of the RMTU and to the general secretary for the role they played in securing him a position as a result of the redundancies made at Hillside recently.

We were disappointed that our candidate for the KIC was unsuccessful and congratulate Mike Williams on his success. Democracy is a blunt instrument.


Locomotive engineer Bill Howell has had surgery on his shoulder and is now back at work, albeit on light duties, we wish him a speedy and complete recovery from his affliction.

There is an ongoing push to get all the locomotive entertainment radios working as they are intended, so that they may fulfil their role as one of the anti-fatigue management tools available for LEs. The campaign is meeting with some success and if all the defective ones are reported they can be rectified.

Cleaveland Tuhura has returned to work after the resolution of a long battle with KiwiRail Networks. The settlement could not have been reached without the full support of the RMTU and its committed branch officials.

Hanlon Corbett, who was badly injured in a shunting accident, is making good progress at home after surgery and is receiving physiotherapy and taking pain killers. Although it may still be some time before Hanlon returns to work we look forward to his return in the fullness of time. The Department of Labour has also conducted an investigation.

The newer operations staff are proving to be a great success story and will prove to be a great asset to the organisation

The season is once again a busy one and hopefully mutually profitable for the company and workers alike. 

Rail & Maritime Transport Union Inc
Statement of Financial Position
As At 30 June 2011

	Note	2011	2010
		\$	\$
CURRENT ASSETS			
BNZ Accounts	5	523,253	511,788
Accounts Receivable	3	12,804	20,190
Interest Accrued	4	10,311	12,021
Tax Refund Due	2	3,746	9,189
Total Current Assets		550,114	553,188
NON CURRENT ASSETS			
Fixed Assets	6	168,252	118,714
Investments	7	2,554,862	2,282,141
Total Non Current Assets		2,723,114	2,400,855
Total Assets		\$ 3,273,228	\$ 2,954,043
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Accounts Payable	8	99,188	96,307
Current Portion of Finance Lease	11	1,622	2,133
GST Payable		24,420	23,716
Konemu Provision		12,903	12,903
Income Tax Payable	2	-	-
Provision for Leave		64,997	74,290
LE Reunion Trust Fund		6,350	6,350
Total Current Liabilities		209,481	215,699
NON CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Non Current Portion of Finance Lease	11	-	1,622
Total Non Current Liabilities		-	1,622
NET ASSETS		\$ 3,063,748	\$ 2,736,722
Represented by:			
MEMBERS' FUNDS	10	\$ 3,063,748	\$ 2,736,722

Signed on behalf of the National Management Committee

General Secretary

30 September 2011
Date

National President

30 September 2011
Date

The accompanying notes form part of, and are to be read in conjunction with these financial statements.

New holiday home opened


THE redevelopment of the New Zealand Railways Staff Welfare Trust's property in Grove Avenue, Mount Maunganui involved the demolition of the two old accommodation blocks and the construction of seven new units.

The new Cronin block, named after RMTU organiser and stalwart supporter of the Trust Brian Cronin, was officially opened on Wednesday 28 September in the presence of his wife, Mandy and his two daughters, Amelia and Bridget.

The Cronin block contains four, three-bedroom units sleeping a maximum of six people, with one constructed to full paraplegic standard, while the second block has two units, one with four-bedrooms and sleeping a maximum of eight and a three-bedroom unit sleeping a maximum of six. Additionally there is a unit for the caretaker and family containing three bedrooms and an office.

Each unit has an en-suite attached to the master bedroom, and separate toilet and a bathroom with a bath and separate shower. The kitchens are professionally designed and contain a gas hob, electric oven, dishwasher, microwave etc.

All the units contain heat pumps.

There is no doubt the units provide members with excellent accommodation while in Mount Maunganui and are an example of the many benefits of membership of the Welfare Trust. 



Mandy Cronin and her daughters Bridget and Amelia.



A wide view of the flats with a cruise liner in the background.



Wayne and Chris Ball.



Carol and Brent Thompson.



Agnes and Ricki Kuka conducting the blessing of the complex.



(below) (l to r) Keith Small (Covekinloch), Wayne, Rowan Black (the builder) and Chris Ball (Trust manager).