



## Canadian Merchant Service Guild Eastern Branch NEWSLETTER

### CMSG Welcomes Marine Atlantic Members and Vessels



The Eastern Branch of the Guild is extremely pleased to announce that we have been certified to represent another new bargaining unit of Officers. On March 11th, at a vote counted at the Canada Industrial Relations Board offices in Dartmouth NS, the Guild became the official representative for the Mates, Engineers, and Electricians employed at Marine Atlantic. This new group comprises almost 140 Officers and we are very pleased that they've become Guild members. Arrangements have already been made to begin work on their behalf, including taking over outstanding issues from their previous representatives.

### Eastern Branch Executive Board - Motion Passed to Establish Bursary for Guild Members Upgrading Professional Certification

District meetings held throughout the Branch this winter were well-attended. The Branch Board met this year in Quebec City and it was a very busy 3-day event. The GSO Advisory Committee occupied the first day. The Board spent much time discussing the Eastern Branch's resolutions to the upcoming Guild convention, this May.



One of the motions passed at the Board meeting is that the Guild is establishing a bursary available to members who are upgrading their professional Certification. This bursary may be awarded annually in the amount of \$1,000.00 to a member who meets the requirements and is chosen by the Committee of

Branch Executive Board, National Officers and Eastern Branch staff: (left to right) D. MacPhee, B. Carter, E. Day, S. Pelletier, M. Elrick, D. Salt, W. Parent, R. Michaud, M. Pouliot, L. Tellier, R. Whyte, M. Morin, A. MacIntyre, G. Colbeck, A. Lachance, J. Pouliot, A. Coughtry, G. Legge, R. Stavenow, H. Reid, V. Arenillas, M. Boissoneault, D. Moffat, R. Gregoire, W. Derraugh, M. Boucher, J. Thomson, and T. Spindler. Missing from photo: L. Byrne, W. MacArthur and P. Corbett.

members (Bursary Trustees) who will review the applications for this bursary. Details are being reviewed and will be explained to members once confirmed.

## Staffing Updates

The Eastern Branch of the Guild, since the award of our latest certification, is looking to increase staff in our Dartmouth Office. We expect to conduct interviews for an extra position in the Dartmouth Office within the next few weeks. The new LRO will have the representation of the Officer group at Marine Atlantic as a particular area of focus. Until that hiring and transition, Mr. Mario Elrick will continue to respond to the representational issues of those Officers. The Branch is making efforts to visit vessels and contact members on a more frequent basis and these efforts are being well-received by members throughout the Branch.

## Organizing

The Guild is pleased to report that we are continuing our efforts to reach out to Officers in need of representation. The Officer group at Marine Atlantic is a particularly welcome development for our organizing efforts and there are other groups which we have also identified on the basis of calls from Officers asking for our help and representation. We intend to follow up on those requests as well, and are working on many of them now.

The Guild has been approached by the Engineers at Algoma Tankers asking if we would become their representatives. An overwhelming majority of those Officers signed applications to join the Guild and we have applied to CIRB to become the certified representatives for those Officers. We expect that a vote will be ordered within the next few weeks.

## Health and Safety issues at Marine Atlantic

The Guild continues to follow and monitor the situation with the asbestos problem on the Atlantic Freighter. The situation now is that containment and abatement procedures have been addressed, and the Guild will continue to talk to the Company to address further issues on behalf of our members on-board that vessel as and when they arise.

The issue of potential exposure to asbestos in members who've worked on the Atlantic Freighter in the past is still being addressed by the Company, as we understand it.



Eastern Branch LRO visit to *MV Atlantic Freighter* (left to right) Blaine Snow (Electrical Engineer), Wayne Billard (Chief Officer), Mario Elrick (LRO) and Frank Skinner (Master)

## GSO Negotiations

Branch staff and GSO representatives returned recently from a mediation requested by the Arbitration Board Chairman. While the Chairman's attempts to get the Parties together were laudable there was as usual nothing positive from the meetings. There will be a report coming out to all Guild GSO members from the National Office but we fully expect the scheduled arbitration to go ahead in Ottawa on May 23rd. We thank the Committee members for their input and all the members for their patience in this process.

## Important Reminder!

Guild members are reminded of the cards given to members containing emergency numbers to be used in the case of a marine incident. Please keep these cards available and use them if an incident occurs. All emergency calls are monitored, and should be made as soon as possible after the incident.

The recent tragedy involving a Coast Guard vessel and a sealing vessel off Sydney, NS is only the most recent reminder of the dangers of work at sea. Guild members are currently being represented relating to that incident. Our thoughts and respects are given to all involved.



Greetings from  
MV Caribou



## Eastern Branch Congratulates New National Officers of the Guild

Following the retirement of former National President, Mr. Larry Dempsey, the Guild has two new National Officers. Capt. Mark Boucher and Ms. Joy Thomson have been acclaimed as the new National President and the new National Secretary Treasurer, respectively.

Mark is a member of the Eastern Branch and is very well known to members in the East, first as a Captain, Guild representative and Eastern Branch Board member, and then as Branch staff member, Branch Secretary Treasurer, and National Secretary Treasurer.

Joy's background as an Engineer and also as a Guild staff member from the Western Branch will be invaluable in her transition to the National Office.

Greetings from *MV Caribou* (left to right): Andrew Upshall (Sr. Engineer), Alex Le Drew (2<sup>nd</sup> Engineer), Fraser Allen (Sr. Engineer), Dan MacKinnon (Electrical Engineer), Dave Bennett (Electrical Engineer), Quinton Oxford (2<sup>nd</sup> Engineer), Wayne Macdonald (Electrical Engineer), Roy Parsons (Master - C/O) and Harold Weir (Chief Officer).

### Staying Connected Is Easy!



Members can connect with the Branch publication on the "Eastern Branch Updates" section of the National Office website at [www.CMSG-CMMC.ca](http://www.CMSG-CMMC.ca)

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## Negotiations and Grievances

*The following is the status of negotiations being addressed by the Eastern Branch staff and negotiating committees:*

- Bay Ferries – negotiations are ongoing – one session held so far.
- Marine Atlantic – Marine Atlantic's application to the CIRB for a section 18 "consolidation of bargaining units" was ultimately ruled on by the CIRB and dismissed (again). This was the third application of this type by the Company in the past seven years. This type of action is expensive to defend but the Guild did defend our certifications and will do so again as required. The negotiations for the Mates, Engineers, and Electricians are ongoing.
- Nfld. Provincial Ferry Captains – this agreement has finally been signed and we are already seeking new proposals from the members for the next negotiations.
- MV Arctic – proposals have been presented but vessel operations have limited the opportunities for negotiating meetings.
- GLPA – one district has signed a new agreement and the other 3 are in various stages of negotiations with the Authority.
- Oceanex – three negotiating sessions have been held and we're planning our next meeting with the Company.
- Upper Lakes Mates and Engineers – the Mates agreement has been concluded. The Engineers offer was rejected and a strike vote taken. The Parties have since agreed to settle the final outstanding items through an interest arbitration rather than strike action. That arbitration is scheduled to be held in Toronto on June 28<sup>th</sup>.
- Maersk/Seabase – Notice to Bargain was given and proposals exchanged. We held 2 sessions for the Captains and Chiefs and did the exchange for the Mates and Engineers. We are extremely disappointed in the Company approach to these negotiations. We are now headed to arbitration on these two negotiations as well.
- Cancrew – Notice to Bargain has been given and proposals have been exchanged. We have held three direct negotiating sessions so far and further meetings will be scheduled soon.

- MacKeils – proposals have been exchanged and one session of negotiations held.
- OSG (Overseas Shirley) – proposals have been exchanged and one negotiating session has been held.
- APA Launchmasters – proposals have been exchanged and one negotiating session has been held.



### **Grievances:**

Each Guild office has various grievances being worked on by staff. We have inherited some grievances at Marine Atlantic and are working on them concurrently with the other matters that occur on a regular basis.

Grievances include dismissal issues, improper lay offs, benefit plan problems, accommodation issues, and various stages so each grievance will not be explained in detail here. It is correct to say that many grievance issues arise from time to time and Branch staff follows each grievance on its own merits at each level.

The Guild asks members who have potential grievances to contact our offices early in the process to make sure the grievance process in your contract is followed. It is also beneficial to discuss the alleged violation with Guild staff to determine what part of your Collective Agreement has been violated.

All grievances need to be discussed with the member and investigated as required. The Guild will try to discuss issues with the various employers to attempt resolution before grievances arise and sometimes this approach works well. However we will use the grievance processes provided in collective agreements as needed to represent our members.