

*Serial
(Maritime)*

THE MARITIME LAW ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA
AND NEW ZEALAND

FIFTH ANNUAL MEETING

HOBART, 13TH/14TH OCTOBER, 1978

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

PHYNNE & MACARTNEY
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Ladies and Gentlemen,

Once more, I have pleasure in presenting to you my report of the activities of the Association during the past year. As you know, the year began with the adoption of a new constitution embodying three important changes - the first of these was the broadening of the Association to encompass New Zealand; the second was the provision allowing for the establishment of branches in the several States of Australia and in New Zealand, and the third was the establishment of the Council of the Association, made up of the Executive Committee and representatives of each of the branches of the Association. It gives me great pleasure to report that, resulting from these changes, branches have been formed in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia and also in New Zealand. Efforts are also being made to enlist further members of the Association in order that Branches might be formed in South Australia, the Australian Capital Territory and in Papua-New Guinea.

Following the formation of the branches, the first meeting of the Council was held in Melbourne on 8th April, 1978.

At this meeting, Mr. Ken Carruthers, the Chairman of the New South Wales Branch, was elected to the office of Vice President of the Association. I would like to record both my pleasure at Ken's election and my gratitude to him for the role he has played in the affairs of the Association and particularly on the Executive Committee of the Association during my long absence overseas during the first half of this year.

The business discussed by the Council included the holding of Annual Meetings of the Association. The Council resolved to recommend that the Annual Meetings of the Association in 1979 and 1980 be held in New Zealand and Queensland respectively. It further resolved to recommend that proposed dates and venues of future Annual Meetings be a matter of business for discussion at the immediately preceding Annual Meeting. The Executive Committee concurs in these recommendations and proposes to adopt the practice of opening the subject for discussion at each Annual Meeting.

The Council also discussed arrangements for liaison between branches, the number of meetings of the Council to be held each year and the question of reimbursement of travel costs of those attending Council meetings. It is proposed to hold discussion of this topic of reimbursement of travel costs under general business later in this meeting. A second meeting of the Council is to be held at 4.30 p.m. this afternoon at the conclusion of the day's proceedings, and branch delegates and members of the Executive Committee are requested to attend.

I want to pay special tribute to those who laboured to carry on the affairs of the Association in my absence overseas. I have already mentioned our Vice President, Ken Carruthers. To his name I want to add those of the other members of the Executive Committee, Bob Desmond, Paul Willee and Ian Dixon. To them fell the task of giving effect to the new constitution by ensuring that the branches were duly formed and in holding the first meeting of the Council and, furthermore, in arranging this Annual Meeting. The reports which have reached me of the vigour and activities of the branches and the thoroughness of the arrangements for this meeting testify to the excellence of the work done in my absence.

Membership of the Association increased during the year from approximately 150 to about 220 (these figures are necessarily somewhat approximate, if only because there are some 96 members who have not paid a subscription for the current year. Circulars will be sent to all members shortly after this meeting bringing this matter to the attention of those who have not paid. Furthermore, branch secretaries are being asked to contact those who have not paid subscriptions for more than one year to see whether they wish to remain members of the Association).

On the subject of membership, I want particularly to refer to the New Zealand branch which, in the space of one year, has achieved a membership of 41, only one less than the number admitted in Victoria and Queensland. This is no mean feat and calls for congratulations from members and Executive Committee alike.

To give you an idea of the distribution of memberships, the number of members admitted, according to localities, is as follows:-

| | |
|------------------------------|-------|
| N.S.W. | 70 |
| Victoria | 42 |
| Queensland | 42 |
| New Zealand | 41 |
| Western Australia | 15 |
| South Australia | 6 |
| Australian Capital Territory | 3 |
| Papua-New Guinea | 2 |
| Tasmania | 1 |
| United Kingdom | 1 |
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| | 223 |
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Turning to the international sphere, the Association received a letter of congratulation from the Comité Maritime International upon the announcement of the adoption of our new constitution. Current activities of the Comité include the running of a seminar in January next year to discuss the new Hamburg Rules, the preparation of draft texts for Protocols to replace gold units by "SDRs" in the limitation of liability provisions in the various Brussels conventions and negotiating with the International Chamber of Commerce on the implementation of the new joint ICC/CMI arbitration rules. If any member of the Association is interested in the "SDR" draft Protocols, I can provide him with a copy.

As I said earlier, we will open the matter of the next Annual Meeting for discussion when we come to deal with "general business". I should explain, however, that the Council has already resolved that the 1979 Annual Meeting be held in New Zealand and the 1980 meeting in Queensland.

All that remains for me to do is once again to pay tribute to Graeme Thompson for the thoroughness of his organisation of this meeting. Every detail has been planned with meticulous care and every effort has been made to give you the best that Hobart can provide. (I even suspect that Graeme has brought influence to bear on the Almighty to turn on some fine, warm, windless weather instead of what usually passes for weather in Hobart at this time of the year).

Ladies and Gentlemen, I would ask you to show your appreciation of Graeme's efforts by acclamation.