MERRY CHRISTMAS

If 8 of you can inspect them all in a year - you can surely visit them all in one night

INTER OCEAN II

According to Texaco, Interocean II left block 46/7 on the Monday evening, and arrived on location about 70 miles away on Tuesday afternoon. It couldn’t be positioned initially because of tide and then because of worsening weather. After a low line from the Ann Val pregnant, a planned evacuation of 43 men was initiated as a precaution. With all but a few of the original 43 already airlifted, there was a total power failure at about 8:30 on the Thursday. It was then decided that the remaining men were to be evacuated. Ten minutes later this had been completed, and by 9 o’clock the rig had sunk. Thank God the power failed.

If you have any information concerning this incident, get in touch with “Blowout”, you may be able to help fill in a few blanks.

OUR PEOPLE

More than a thousand people died when the typhoon “Gay” devastated the Gulf of Thailand, (just north of the South China Sea), on November 3. Over 500 died at sea, and of them 91 were crew on the UNOCAL drillship “Seacrest” which overturned in the typhoon. Six of the crew survived.

Our thoughts go out to the families and friends of those who were lost. “Blowout” will carry a full account of the disaster in its next edition.
The catering dispute

Everyone in catering is a bit disappointed just now. The proposed 48-hour dispute by the Catering Shop Stewards called, failed.

I am still a bit angry, but let’s take a look at ourselves. Two years ago we were lucky if we could get one platform on strike, let alone the whole shop! We have a membership of 450 with very few activists.

The TGWU and NUS are all we are being housed at, each with each other. Shop stewards were not getting the respect they deserved. We had the case if your face didn’t fit, you were treated like shit. Safety- well that was a joke! Wages were very poor by the way at the time.

Then there were a lot of bad incidents that showed worker’s attitudes, the most obvious being Piper Alpha. After this disaster the TGWU and the NUS started working more closely together.

Our membership started to grow, we had a lot of shop stewards at the local. We won an 11% pay deal with a promise of 16%. 

This was against the NUS, which was a good deal at the time. However we are still paid low and we need more time to get better organised.

Then came the battle of the OIC. I think the early days no-one realised how strong it would become, but it has proved to be the focal point of everyone’s imagination. My main regret is that more of our shop stewards and members didn’t get on board from the start because, as I felt isolated at the time.

We have seen the improvement in working conditions and the connection workers have received, which catering and drifter didn’t, even though some came to support. However through our growing strength we have managed to open up negotiations with the Catering Officers at the two sites.

Then we have the 14% for stewards and 16% for chefs, with the COTTA coming through. This is a direct result of the shortage of skilled chefs that they should have been paid and attracted them otherwise. Really what they were trying to do was to divide the stewards and the chefs. Anyone 16% or 16% of E3.11 is not a lot of money. Why should it change from the way it’s always been with an across the board rise where everyone benefits.

Over 40 stewards called for a 48 hour unofficial stoppage for those very reasons, and to show their contempt for COTA’s offer. Unfortunately it ended up with only 2 platforms on strike, so they were not able to get the effect of a lot of persuasion. The reason that the other platforms didn’t give their support was due to the threat of sackings, it was unofficial, we gave the companies too much power over their workers. The offsore allowance over three years, but only about a month was prepared to recommend it to the members. If the shop stewards were to reject this offer it would be a disaster and the industry agreement would not be signed. The shop stewards really only had no choice but to recommence acceptance, but it was only by three votes to 21-18. If any company does not sign the industry agreement, that company will be balloted with a recommendation to reject the offer.

Looked at over the last two years we have increased wages by 25% to 30% but this looks so good because a lot of the struggle has been with alcoholische.

We see the “holy” boat with division at the issue of custom-made in Scotland, I should point out that based on 30% of Wal Yn Stewards are female, mainly catering hands, and they get exactly the same amount that the men and the occasional butler of anyone else.

You’re probably amazed that this artefact is not in the British sector. It’s Norway’s, the Ocean Viking, Renfrew’s biggest platform. Not only are non-maritime service class, the accommodation is the best. The standard is nearly identical, all the shops are the same, so the crew can’t tell the difference. The galley and canteen are the same. We have been there, we have been there, we have been there.

We see the boat, the butler of anyone else. We have been there, we have been there, we have been there.

Which is why we are trying to do is to divide the stewards and the chefs. Anyone 16% or 16% of E3.11 is not a lot of money. Why should it change from the way it’s always been.

Across the great divide

Dear Brother,

I recently played a side football match. What are the regulations for a Hackney and Whitechapel Sunday League?

Please pass on the above to your members, and if you have any further questions, don’t hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

Across the great divide

Dear Ed,

I am currently on the Brae A platform with Deborah Scafolding. I started in October and this is my second trip, my main job being damaged during the strike.

On arrival at the platform I met my supervisor, who knew I had worked on the Brae B hook-up for 14 months. On that job overtime was optional: take it or leave it. This time the bottom line in our conversation about regulations and work times was, to quote him, “Anybody who doesn’t want to work 14 hours every day may as well look out.

Not being a man of means and out here like any other “beer,” 59 years old, my family, I am male, being out of work for so long since June, this money with overtime came in very handy. I did a ten day trip to get on a rota on this new contract.

When I came out here on my second trip I did not work my first night, having had a six fifteen check-in, but I worked the next 2 consecutive nights, Saturday and Sunday. On the Monday I was told that there would be no smoke or tea breaks on overtime. Having told my charwoman that I would not do the work that my supervisor, came round to ask why. I explained that I did not want to work this particular night and that I believed that I should be able to decide when I want to work overtime.

When I was then told that Les Pringe, the Marine Construction Supervisor, who made the decision that all overtime breaks would stop, expected me to work and that I might not be back when my employer Deborah Scafolding found out. I don’t think you could print my report.

On my first trip on the Brae A I went to a meeting with the OIC about the new safety rules and safety committees. He said that Marathon takes safety seriously. I believe on the whole they do. But I also think that we are going into the 1990s and not the 1890s. Any contract worker should have freedom of choice as to what overtime he wants to work. Specialise for safety’s sake. We should do away with big stick of NRB (not required back), which is used instead of the truth.

I think we are lucky to have Blowout to air our grievances, and also the OIC which I support.

Jim Cairns,

scaffoldor Brae A

NRCU supporter

AUEW shop steward

Dear Roneker,

I am writing this letter to congratulate “Blowout”. I read your second edition on the first day of October. We were going up to the handling of the main terminal in the United Kingdom. We won’t be back to Australia, on the 20th of October. We also had a copy of your first edition sent to us here in New Zealand, we are over there to John Kybe, death of fishing. That was heartbreaking to read the first time. The first line to the report to the pond. And I see we are not happy with our bosses and that the report is not about our lives, but you are happy with our bosses and that the report is not about our lives, but you are happy with our bosses.

Our lives are not a happy one. We are not happy with our bosses and that the report is not about our lives, but you are happy with our bosses and that the report is not about our lives, but you are happy with our bosses.

Thank you

Mr. Paterson

Mike Gibson (NUS Research Officer)

Delighted

This letter is long overdue. Apologies! Thank you for the review in “Blowout”. I was delighted to receive the latest personal information that the crew took the right to fight. The response I have received seems to show that I did OK and as such, that means more than I can describe.

I had hoped to visit the OIC information centre, above the Clerkenwell, last week, but got caught up in business at the database association. I want you to know that I really support your work.

It is revealing to see new participation in the stand to oppose work for offshore.

We have to see just a few more things on our side now, and the guys may maintain commitment to change here if and when it appears at all.

I may be in the UK in a few weeks time, before Christmas and I may be in a few things now. Until then I hope you and your support services are busy in your ever important undertaking.

Ed Poprady

(Author of Piper Alpha: A Survivor’s Story)

Poll Tax

We have managed to secure the tax exemption on behalf of a number of employees. A “dearies” by argument, which is being taken to Abroad.

We have accordingly prepared a “standard” letter for all employees who wish to receive the tax exemption. The letter has been drafted and is ready for you to sign.

We of course follow the tax in any way.

This just sees an edition of “Blowout” excellent! I can say we have not had to sent out for the first time ever, please let us know.

Yours faithfully

AUEW shop steward

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I am writing this letter to congratulate “Blowout”. I read your second edition on the first day of October. We were going up to the handling of the main terminal in the United Kingdom. We won’t be back to Australia, on the 20th of October. We also had a copy of your first edition sent to us here in New Zealand, we are over there to John Kybe, death of fishing. That was heartbreaking to read the first time. The first line to the report to the pond. And I see we are not happy with our bosses and that the report is not about our lives, but you are happy with our bosses and that the report is not about our lives, but you are happy with our bosses.

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On the South China Sea

This letter was sent from Malaysia. It has been slightly edited to preserve the anonymity of the correspondent. This Employment Protection Fund is entirely the responsibility of our Employment Protection Fund.

Halls Gary

I will still remember me from your short stay on board the leader last month. You met me and Vic on our return from Indonesia. We met you again with the Nusrt in the Pacific. Let me know if you see me.

Just after you left, we did receive a letter from the Employment Protection Fund regarding the matter relating to the corresponding share. The look is coming into the Employment Protection Fund. We hope the problem will be sorted out within the next two years.

The weather here is OK, last week one anchor snapped off during bad weather; strong winds and heavy seas. The weather today was calm. We are preparing to round October – January.

Your 1st edition of Blowout” is very interesting. Especially “Recovering Our Deal - Piper Alpha” and “Reme Mark Sides” I hope we hear from you soon. 

Saidali
Thank you for your excellent piece on the Odyssey Strike. As you quite rightly point out, the powers that be seem to be deciding the outcome of the strike when they had a direct role in causing the problem in the first place. In the light of the Piper Alpha inquiry and many of the hazards that we now accept as the norm, which usually accord very little press coverage, the suspicion is growing that the Odyssey Strike is a case of a cover-up. This is over a year since the incident. Evidence has been given to both the D of E and the Procurator Fiscal, but so far nothing has been done to either convene a Fatal Accident Enquiry or to prosecute those responsible for the blunder.

The only official statement concerning the Odyssey Strike is the D of E’s in the form of a “sequence of events” leading up to the holdaway and which will be handed over to all operating companies in the North Sea. Why such a sequence of events would interfere with the official investigation when the Odyssey was unique in that its bow was off the side of the vessel. We are led to believe that it was, in fact, a document that was written to protect the company’s reputation. Redman also informed me that his investigation showed that there were enough gas fugitive emissions from the vessel to affect the ocean and that the investigation conducted by the SEB (Scotland) was not a thorough investigation. The man is said to have been killed by the explosion at the time of the explosion. Every man on the vessel was ordered to leave the ship at the time of the explosion. The safety officer on the ship, who was the only person on the ship at the time of the explosion, was killed.

In fact the D of E “sequence” which fell short of the laughable, does not even contain the word “explosion”. However, the D of E Investigator, Derek Redman, informed me that the investigation on the scene was interfered with because of the explosion. However, the investigation on the scene was interfered with because of the explosion.

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A Reply

I’d like to reply to the letter “View From Home”, which appeared in the previous issue of this newsletter. As an oil worker, I have worked off the coast of Scotland and the North Sea. It is important to note that the situation that exists today is very different from what it was a few years ago. The safety and welfare of oil workers have improved significantly. However, there are still areas that need improvement.

In regards to the issue of offshore workers’ rights, it is important to note that there have been significant changes in the last few years. The industry has made progress in terms of safety and welfare. However, there is still more to be done.

A Single Union for Offshore Workers?

For many years now, both trade unions and non-trade unionists have been discussing the idea of a single organisation offshore. It is argued that this would be a way to improve pay and conditions and reduce the number of internal disputes. A single union would also reduce the cost of running two separate organisations.

In recent years, there has been a move towards a single union. This is seen as a way to improve pay and conditions and reduce the number of internal disputes. However, there are still some concerns about the feasibility of such an organisation.

The Future of the OILC

Since the formation of the OILC, there has been a debate about the future of the organisation. Some argue that the OILC is outdated and that a single union is needed. Others argue that the OILC is still relevant and that it should continue to exist.

In the event of an explosion, the safety officer on the ship, who was the only person on the ship at the time of the explosion, was killed.
Somebody is Lying

Peter Morrison, the Secretary of State for Energy, says that an 'underground blowout' occurred on NW1 Hutton on the 2nd of September. He further says that, "The first occasion when movement of gas and fluids appeared to have ceased was 12.00 hours on 4 September..." This information was dragged out of him as part of his answer to written questions tabled in Parliament. Amoco said on the 3rd of September that, "The well is under control..." Somebody is lying about a major North Sea incident that resulted in the massive evacuation of the platform.

"Blowout" has printed Mr Morrison's version (see article page). Drilling programmes can not be studied and commented on these events. In the meantime there are a number of questions raised by Mr Morrison's answers.

How do you take a "kick", never mind a blowout, while drilling the 52th well in a field? Are Rock's blowouts inevitable?

Promoted by an article in the last edition of "Blowout", Aberdeen South MP Frank Dorman tabled a series of written questions in the House of Commons. The questions were directed to the Secretary of State for Energy and related to an incident that took place on the NW1 Hutton on the evening of 2nd September.

The first major North Sea incident, 108 men were evacuated from the platform, Blowout was engaged by the oilfield director released by Amoco, the operators of the platform, and the Ignition and Seals, reapplying of the method. In the course of our investigations we were told categorically by an Amoco spokesman that there was no blowout.

Here are Mr Morrison's answers. They have been put into chronological order but are otherwise unchanged:

A total of 55 explosions, apronisation and development work have been carried out in the North West Hutton field.

"Drilling was taking place on well 211/27-A2. At the time of the well incident, drilling was being undertaken with a 12 1/4 inch, 4 1/2 inch at a depth of 33,113 feet below the sea bed and a true vertical depth of 11710 ft. A reservoir had been reached. The reservoir had been subjected to water injection. The diameter of the casing was 13 3/8 inch, at a measured depth of 6661 feet and a true vertical depth of 6012 feet. No difficulty was experienced in setting and cementing the casing. It was programmed to be set at 150 feet into the Cretaceous formation but a re-evaluation of the reservoir was satisfied with a further 50 feet into the Cretaceous. Full mud returns were recorded while setting and cementing the casing. A cement bond log was not run after the casing was set. Formation integrity tests measured at two points in the well bore were 14.1 pounds per gallon at 6305 feet and 13.3 pounds per gallon at 6892 feet. The expected and actual formation pressures were 5790 psi and 9600 psi respectively. The programmed and actual mud weights were 12.8 pounds per gallon.

At 18.27 hours on 2 September the well was closed in by the use of the blowout preventer. The blowout preventer and the choke were closed (urgently) to shut in the well. Drill pipe pressure of 500 psi was recorded which fell to 375 indicating that a zone higher up the well formation had fractured and an underground blowout had occurred. It is not possible to be precisely certain at what depth the formation fractured. After the well was closed in, attempts were made to kill it by circulating mud of higher density.

At 09.00 hours on 3 September it was concluded that the well could not be killed this way. At 10.30 hours the decision was taken to reduce the numbers on the platform and at 10.40 hours the platform was shut down and the crew moved to emergency shelters. 108 persons were evacuated. Evacuation was undertaken as a precautionary measure to reduce the number of persons at risk. Amoco has not responded to questions to retain full control of the platform procedures. There was no immediate danger and 77 crew members were on call to continue the well control operation.

The first occasion when movement of gas and fluids occurred can be traced back to 12.00 hours on 4 September 1989. Operations continued for several days. The well is now considered safe and has been re-entered. The possibility of encountering an extremely abnormal formation is present in all drilling operations. Before consent is given to any well operation, any department must be satisfied that the drilling programme has been designed to provide safeguards against blowouts.

Blowout urge offshore workers working in exploration to read Mr Morrison's account of the "incidents" very carefully. We urge them to make any comments that they may have to make about this account which we will pass on to the Department of Energy.

Who Shells Out

Eight out of Shell's 29 platforms were to be fitted with underwater emergency cut down valves. Remotely. They were the D of E's recommendation after they held a technical meeting in the Piper Alpha. Now it seems there's no consensus of any of the operators to install them. Shell are doing it out of the goodness of their hearts.

Eight out of 29! Doesn't seem like a very good idea to me. Maybe they're the only Shell platform that are risk. I wonder who took that decision and whether the new safety committees that are now operational offshore will have the power to look into the reasoning behind the decision and perhaps make their own assessment of the risks that were taken. It seems that it'll be the summer of 1990 before they will be installed, a shortage of divers and the likes will be eased.

Maybe there's a good reason why I'm not facing nastly about this £60 million on a safer scheme. Actually it just lies a dull bell in the heart and a rediscounting feeling all over.

Anyway Shell shareholders shouldn't let the news of the £60 million spending on safety spoil their entire day. At least the Scottish Office has made it clear that they and their partner Exxon will be allowed to build on to the £60 million in government grants that they got for their Modernisation developments. In 1990, the Scottish Office have decided that they're going to keep on their plans to build their polymerisation plant. All company's breaking promises? What has happened to Shell's new policy, Dr Peter Davignon, is said to be "in pig.", Age and maturity.

Meanwhile Shell's UK chairman Bob Reid was breathless just where he thought that £60 million and no doubt a lot more should come from the Government. Yes, you're right, Pat. We have changes in the oil and gas tax regime. And in the end this will mean that the government itself will not feel inclined to cut its tax relief on money always done so, in the past it simply has been an open door. In its opening address to the Scottish 39 confer:

Congratulations

Blowout sends its greetings to scaffold Donald McMillan, Donald was unfairly dismissed by Rigsbest Holdings Ltd on the 26th of March this year. That, for some people might be enough reason for congratulations. However Donald went on to fight Rigsbest and with the help of the AEU's Divisional Organizer Tommy Lafferty, he won his Industrial tribunal and was awarded compensation. Not a ransom, then these awards never are.

The Tribunal unanimously decided that they believed Donald. It seems that he took much the same attitude towards Rigsbest's position as most offshore workers did towards Rigsbest's outrageous statements during the strikes.

Oh! for the day when we won't have to wait on the precarious decisions of industrial tribunals before we get justice.
BP starts to look a bit like the 19th century British company it is, with the same laissez-faire attitude towards safety and environment. BP has made some efforts to improve safety, but the company's culture still seems to be focused on profit over safety. The recent oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico is a clear example of this culture. The spill has caused significant damage to the environment and to the local economy, and BP has been criticized for its slow and ineffective response. The company's reputation has suffered as a result, and it has faced a backlash from customers and shareholders. BP will need to address these issues if it wants to recover its reputation and maintain its position as a leading energy company.
Record Men Report
Crash Shock

You can read some night crag about the rise of these days. Now do some journalism are trying to make sense of it all but some are clearly not trying hard enough.

If the Daily Record's Armit, WHinnie picked his own name, then it shows his limits to be abysmal and maybe that's all he needed to explain his recent "Exclusive: 'BIG MEN IN DRUG RAIDS' SHOCK" According to Armit, a fellow paper, which had been found on Secord's 707. A doctor and a chisel-thief leave exit and suicide tested all 99 men on board. No face of drugs was found but that didn't stop Dave McNicoll Secord's personal knew from saying: "We cannot rule out the possibility that drugs had been on board," and the lesser of both their cases. As the policy of random drug testing on all of our 10 top drug dealers, and drugs related with drugs will be instantly dismissed. What a scooping. The man's cost something here. There is an exclusive for every day of the week in this formula, we suggest you follow it up before any of those how to get no vote on the B.C. Cult-Soul could be persuaded to say the. The man's got new shiver.

Gone Mr McNicoll Whinnie big deal. He doesn't know what these drilling contractors are like. And he wasn't on Secord's 707 on board. At the time the police board had convinced themselves that they were not excluding the full details of sharing 4 men cables with their contractors, communal showering facilities and the rest, by "Smoke these drugs, and they will be away that they were going, "to bring out their smaller damages." At least I say it.

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“A Play on the Road with a Specialist”

By Dirk Shambles

"OK, it'll make. Can you do my gig me on the Norwich fight? I see you Friday's usually impressive. You can come with me and I'll be there on Saturday they do. Call you from northen."

"Bye."

"Bye." 6.30am I'm still in the road. luncheon. Make my bag back. Tight. Acrobatics. My brain pack is nothing but got into the skull it will be stuck by distracted new words. Empty stomach and feel more. Child will never learn. I'm very sad that the call would come. The longer I took the more prepared I should have been.

Nothing ready. No cards paid. Members of letters unsorted. Nothing revised about the kids and the divorce papers still be in it. Well there's a difference to the Drag Board hands and one in the CIS is a bodysinger causes the government. That's all I can put together. No plan for an address or anything. Now I am off to the south and assemble together whatever catched my eye.

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Mud Logging: a Vocation

Some loggers themselves have attempted to answer this. The argument goes something like this: Curiously and sceptically management have undertaken each other's prices in order to avoid offending the oil companies with demands for reasonable contract prices. This will ring a bell with anyone who is a formally engaged company manager, but does it tell the whole story?

Why do accomplished young men and women continue to spew out of the geology departments of our universities, to find that the only choice of a job is either as a logging geologist on the North Sea, or we are limited to here with South African mining companies? What a choice. It seems strange in the light of continued unfavourable education. How do the geology departments do it?

Recent news that Canada has funded a new lecture in petroleum geology at Alberta University may throw some light on the question. Maybe the oil companies have been paying the universities to keep them out. It may be quite a cost effective investment.

Head of Aberdeen's geology department, Professor Brian Williams says, "This is one of those again in which everyone can gain..." Maybe he was thinking more about them than the oil companies that he will churn them out as flood for the oil companies.

From a humanitarian standpoint, the mud loggers might like to consider towing the country's universities at the beginning of the next academic year, and speaking directly to the students who are considering starting on a career in geology. Some rethink talking about the wages and conditions for geology graduates on the North Sea might change a few minds.

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Sue Jane Taylor

A TOURING EXHIBITION OF PAINTINGS, DRAWINGS, ETCHINGS, PHOTOGRAHS FROM 1965-1989

SCOTTISH VENUES

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City Art Centre, Edinburgh

February 1996

Dundee St Andrew's Church, Dundee

March 1996

Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle

June 1996

Inverness Inverness & Moray, Inverness

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Kirkwall Kirkwall, Orkney

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Maithille Art Museum & Artspace, Aberdeen

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Mud Murder for a Fire

Mr. David Lawrence is the air transport editor of a newspaper called "Flight International." He says we had wondered about the air crash accident that happened in an airline.

He said to me, "The airline's boss is a very tall young man, with a deep voice and a very serious expression on his face." And he continued, "I was surprised to see that he had been promoted to the cockpit of the flight in question from a lower rank." Check, but not checkmate. The game will be real.

How have mud logging companies managed to keep their highly trained and skilled workers on the payroll? It's a different story for the country's universities at the beginning of the most academic year, and speaking directly to the students who are considering starting on a career in geology. Some rethink talking about the wages and conditions for geology graduates on the North Sea might change a few minds.

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Mud Murder for a Fire

Mr. David Lawrence is the air transport editor of a newspaper called "Flight International." He says we had wondered about the air crash accident that happened in an airline.

He said to me, "The airline's boss is a very tall young man, with a deep voice and a very serious expression on his face." And he continued, "I was surprised to see that he had been promoted to the cockpit of the flight in question from a lower rank." Check, but not checkmate. The game will be real.
Thanks to the BEARS

from now on to put your contributions onto a regular monthly basis.

Plans are under way to organise the collection and administration of the finances required. We propose that this takes place through the network of OILC activities on the Northern and Southern sectors, in Morecombe bay and the rig building yards. These plans rely on continued support from our old friends, and on winning new ones as well. We make a special appeal to those men on the semis. If you feel the paper is important contact us in the Information Centre and organise a regular order. Blowout thanks the men on the following installations who have made the last three editions possible:


To those individuals who have contributed but not been mentioned in previous editions, we say thanks:

D.M. George Brinette, B.K., Greg Douglas, Dave Croft, B. Agar Ron Brown, Charlie Walsh, A.B.

If we’ve missed anyone we’re sorry and will set the record straight as soon as you remind us.

Crane op in hospital

A crane operator on Conoco’s Marchison platform was trapped in his cab after the main cable came away from the drum when the crane was being load tested. The man was treated in his cab by the field doctor from the nearby Safe Gotha after he had been freed by colleagues.

The accident happened on the afternoon of Sunday 12 November and he was flown to hospital in Lerwick where he stayed for the next 10 days before being transferred to a hospital nearer his home in Lincolshire. According to Conoco the man did not wish his name to be released to the press. The spokesman also said that the man’s colleagues on board “did an excellent job in releasing him.”

When an incident occurs on your installation please contact “Blowout” with the details. Oil company versions of events can sometimes prove to be a little short of the full story.

A Memorial to Piper

Two different attitudes to the Piper victims are hinted at in recent attempts to produce two quite different memorials.

In Australia, Julie Montgomerie produced a banner on behalf of the Victorian Trades Hall Council. It was carried to Aberdeen by members of the Seamen’s Union of Australia, and was handed over to Aberdeen City by Campbell Christie, STUC General Secretary, at a ceremony in the Aberdeen Art Gallery on Friday 5th October.

In the banner is avery beautiful, certainly beyond my powers of description. The names of all those who died are stitched in it. It makes a lasting impression on all those who see it.

Lyn Christie and other relatives of Piper victims have however met not success in their attempt to have a statue erected in the Rose Garden in Hazledene. When the idea was put to the families they were overwhelmingly in favour. But when Occidental and the contracting companies were approached, they were less enthusiastic.

Neeps Gazette in trouble

Aberdeen’s two daily newspapers could close by February next year, the city’s Lord Provost was warned.

Councillor Bob Robertson’s warning is the latest move in the bitter dispute at Aberdeen Journals, where more than 100 journalists on the “Press & Journal” and “Evening Express” have been sacked.

Lord Provost Robertson warned that local authorities are now ready to withdraw statutory advertising from the two papers. Almost 30 councils throughout the country have already ceased advertising.

He condemned Aberdeen Journal’s managing director Alan Scott and said: “I can only surmise he considers the P&J and Evening Express to be expendable. Local management would prefer to see both newspapers die rather than talk meaningfully with the NUJ or use the good offices of ACAS.”

The journalists were dismissed in October following a second strike over trade union recognition and victimisation of union members. Since then, thousands of readers and advertisers have bailed the papers. And thousands of people - including many North Sea workers - have signed a petition urging the company to open negotiations with the National Union of Journalists.

Councillors may now consider publishing their own newssheet to carry statutory advertising, which would include planning notices and public announcements.

Lord Provost Robertson added: “I want to make it clear that I condemn the actions of Mr Scott in dismissing the journalists during a dispute.”

NUJ members are now set to step up economic and political pressure on the company. Union leaders recently returned from Strasbourg, where they lobbied members of the European Community.

Union vice-president David Sinclair said: “It is quite clear that the public and local authorities will not stand for this sort of behaviour. The company must realise that public sympathy is on our side and that they have to start talking to resolve this dispute.”

PHOTOS

Has anyone working in Morecombe Bay got any photographs of British Gas’ accommodation vessel AVI? Please send us them if you do. In fact send us photographs of anything you think will interest. Black and white preferably. Attach a short note of explanation too please.