

Pay 2008

RBS and Unite have reached agreement on Pay 2008. Full details are available on posters around the campus and in Catalyst Spring 2008, but in summary:

Unite submitted a pay claim seeking an increase in the Pay Pot commensurate with RPI+ (Retail Price Index), and RPI was running at 4% as at end December 2007.

The agreement reached gives an overall increase in Pay Pot (for those groups of staff covered by the negotiations) of 3.71%:

- 58% of staff will receive a rise of > 4%
- 61% of staff will receive a rise of >3%
- 72% of staff will receive a rise of >2%

Whilst we acknowledge that this is not a great deal for all of our members, we are confident that it was the best deal available and an improvement on the Bank's initial offer.

During negotiations, Unite sought to significantly reduce the number of members receiving no pay rise through changes to the matrices, and some improvements were eventually secured, potentially having a positive impact on the awards to around 5500 staff rated as Level 3 and Level 4 in their End Of Year (EOY), over 4000 of whom might otherwise have received 0%.

Within this debate, the Bank advised that around 80% of those receiving no pay rise were rated as Level 1 or 2 in their EOY, thus any member who feels unfairly rated should, in the first instance, have an open discussion with their Line Manager and if unsuccessful contact their local Unite rep or the RBS Member Helpline on 0870 241 4425.

Albert Hall

Chair, Unite-Amicus Group Technology Divisional Committee.

Group Technology Delegate to National Company Committee.

MEET US ON FRIDAY

There will be a Unite stall outside the Aldgate Union canteen on Friday 18th April. Why not come along and join your local branch? See www.amicustheunion.org/rbs/goodmans for more information about us.

BRANCH MEETINGS

Branch meetings are held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month - either in Aldgate Union or the basement in Mansell St Contact Jan Koszuta for details.

The dates of the next three are below:

- Tues 13th May
- Tues 10th June
- Tues 9th July

It's your union so why not come along and see how it works?

Super Six Quiz

1. What was the surname of the brothers associated with building the first hot air balloon?
2. Barnsley has beaten two Premiership football clubs in the previous rounds of the FA cup on route to their semi-final appearance, name those 2 teams?
3. Who was the author of Journey to the 'Centre of the Earth'?
4. In this year's TV's 'Dancing on Ice' competition name the runner-up
5. In which city would you find the National Railway Museum?
6. Select the first Beatles single to hit number 1:
 - a) Help
 - b) Yesterday
 - c) From Me to You
 - d) Yellow Submarine

Send your answers to harriet.culkin@unitetheunion.com and you could win a bottle of champagne.

Colombia – A personal link with Aldgate Branch

For more information on Colombia go to: www.justiceforcolombia.org

For those Disappeared, Displaced, Massacred, & Executed.

In February we had a visit from Emigdio Triana. Emigdio is an activist with UNEB, the banking union in Colombia. He came to our branch committee and we took him to a typically English restaurant on Brick Lane!

Through an interpreter and using some schoolboy Spanish and some rather better English on his part, we chatted extensively about differences between the UK and Colombia. In Colombia there is fear among many bank workers when it comes to signing up to union membership as this is a risky thing to do. Membership in HSBC in Colombia is 'only' 10% but it represents a significant proportion of people who are prepared to stand up and be counted.

Emigdio had just come through a dispute with HSBC in which they responded to UNEB's pay claim with a refusal and by taking away a number of union rights for employees. Despite the nominally low union membership rate, most of the staff were incensed and came out on strike. The dispute was quickly won.

I thought of Emigdio when I heard that a couple of

weeks after Emigdio's visit, on March 7, Rafael Boada, a regional President of UNEB, was the target of a failed assassination attempt as he arrived home in his car. However, Leonidas Gomez Rozo's body was found in his flat in Bogota on March 8. Leonidas was the chair of the national committee of UNEB in Citibank.

There have been many death threats against UNEB leaders since the paramilitary group Aguilas Negras declared UNEB 'a military objective' last summer. Colombia is the most dangerous country in the world for trade unionists according to a recent Amnesty International report. Trade unionists involved in labour disputes and campaigns against privatisation are particularly targeted, and Emigdio himself has had three death threats!

Since 1991, some 2,245 members of trade unions have been killed, 3,400 threatened and more than 130 have "disappeared", according to figures from Colombia's National Trade Union School. We fear for our friend Emigdio and all our colleagues peacefully organising their trade union branches in Colombia.

OBITUARY

Bob Morton 1943 – 2008

Bob Morton, long serving Branch Secretary of Goodmans Fields branch, very sadly passed away in January 2008. Bob had been representing union members here for longer than anyone can remember. He had held representative positions since at least the 1970's – through all the various union configurations: BIFU, Amicus and Unite. Although he had retired from the Bank in 2001 after almost 40 years service, Bob kept active in his branch, bringing immense passion and commitment to the Secretary position. He was a familiar sight on the regular recruitment drives and campaign days in the Alie Street building, engaging staff as they made their way to coffee or lunch. Like a force of Nature - Bob was always there.

Bob was also one of a team of members who represented London's interests in the wider NatWest / RBS union committees. Using great tact and tenacity, he built alliances with key players on major issues, such as the campaign to improve regional allowances, the struggle against job losses in the early 1990s, and the proper internal organisation of the union. Bob built a special relationship with the Seconded Representatives, who field the vast majority of initial requests for help from members.

He would regularly assist in the covering of the help-line and was still dealing with individual casework right up to the end.

Many of Bob's former colleagues attended his funeral to swap stories and reminisce. It transpired that as well as a jazz aficionado and film buff that Bob devoted a lot of time to voluntary work for ELATT (a training charity based in the City). Indeed he was their longest serving volunteer and they are establishing a commemorative position on their board in his memory. Bob also managed to fit in money raising for the Essex Air Ambulance service in his spare time.

To all who knew him Bob was a very special person, who was always keen to help. He could "talk the hind legs off a donkey", a feat normally preceded in committee by a request along the lines of 'very briefly, chair.....'.

Bob will be sorely missed. His ability to listen to people and make them feel that their issue was important, which it genuinely was to Bob, will be so hard to replace. Shortly after he passed away, one of the Reps had to explain to a member who rang looking for the 'really helpful Mr. Morton' that he was not available to assist them anymore.

Bob Morton - a remarkable life of service. Donations to ELATT welcome - see <http://www.elatt.org.uk/>