

# BOATBUILDER HANGS UP HIS APRON

FRANK STARK – JANUARY 27, 1938 – MAY 21, 2008

After a relatively brief illness, Frank Stark died peacefully at home on May 21. Frank was born at home in Bluff on January 27, 1938. He started a carpenter's apprenticeship but soon transferred to a Lyttelton boatbuilder, JM Millar, after pleading with him for a job.

After completing his apprenticeship in 1958, Frank started contracting for the oil companies to make a quid before moving back to boat work. He started Stark Bros that same year with his brother, Jim.

With the later involvement of his other brothers and three sons, work and family became almost inextricably linked and intertwined, often time at work being with family or enabling other family to be at home. He was proud of his staff, he enjoyed seeing them achieve and better themselves, and many apprentices and young people worked for Stark Bros over the years.

Training apprentices and seeing their abilities as they developed was a particular joy for Frank. Out of the hundreds (he lost count) trained over the years, only two did not meet his expectations. Staff would frequently return after many years to say thanks for the training they received at Stark Bros.

While Frank was a man of relatively few words who often preferred to reflect on others' achievements rather than his own, the industry respected him. This was reflected when launching new vessels, when his joy was to see the pride and sense of achievement that this brought in others. To this end, the commitment of the majority of the staff has been nearly perfect over the years, which many believe is where their success has come from.

Frank also took pride in the customers who had stayed with them through thick and thin. Customers who left and then returned to tell of their experiences with other companies were never questioned.

Frank was a man with a strong Christian faith, and it was through his beliefs that his constant presence and wisdom will be greatly missed at Stark Bros Ltd.

This is obviously an emotional time for Frank's family and the company, especially in its 50th Jubilee year. We share and mourn the loss of an excellent boatbuilder and a talented designer, a friend and a family man.



# SYSTEMS MAN WAS BIG ON SAFETY

SIMON KENNETH FRASER – MAY 23, 1937 – JUNE 7, 2008

BY AJ MOORE

The director of Maritime Management Systems, Simon Kenneth Fraser, who was deeply involved in building safety awareness in the commercial fleet, died on June 7, aged 71.

Simon was educated in Wellington and spent his working life with BP Oil. He became the managing director of a subsidiary, Dominion Oil Refinery, based in Auckland. In 1989 Simon lost his left forearm after a fight with a skill saw, but recovered and completed his career. His business prowess was well recognised, as was his commitment to his job and the people who worked for him.

In 1993 he briefly owned an electronics shop before he became the chief executive of Maritime Management Services Ltd, a safe ship management company established by the New Zealand Marine Transport Association.

His favourite saying when talking at directors' meetings was, "It is my wish and desire, and therefore company policy..."

In December 1993 MMS became New Zealand's first privately owned SSM company. He later bought the company from the MTA and developed it into a leading provider of safe ship management

services in the restricted limit sector. He was known for his vitriolic comments while reading accident and incident reviews, and for his skill in writing minutes. He also worked closely on the merger of Survey Auckland into MMS.

Simon enlisted the help of the marketing manager at Dominion Oil, Margaret Russell, to help him run the business. When the MSA became Maritime New Zealand, Simon enhanced the system and earned deep respect for his involvement in the rule-making process and for helping operators to accept the new regime.

Simon's health became an issue in his later life, and Margaret Russell assumed the role of chief executive in 2000. Simon remained a director and continued to participate in the business.

Simon was also closely involved with the Bucklands Beach Yacht Club, where he was a former vice-commodore. He would regularly share his views while standing on the deck with a beer. Simon is survived by his partner, Pip, four children and eight grandchildren.



# A KEEN MAN CALLS IT A DAY

KEITH PENNEY – JANUARY 20, 1922 – MAY 9, 2008

BY BADEN PASCOE

My close friend, Keith Penney, sadly died on May 9. I did a story in 2003 on Keith's seafaring life that appeared in issue 32 of Professional Skipper. It is a great story about a young man who hung around the boats at the Whangarei town basin and spent the rest of his life skippering coastal traders and looking after Parry Bros' fleet of tugs and barges for more than 30 years.

Right from the beginning his keenness never wavered, and

out of this evolved one of the most professional seamen I have ever met. Quite simply, he was a perfectionist, and there were no rough edges to anything he did. Keith Penney will be missed but admired among the Auckland towboat boys for a long time to come.

