



International  
**LONGSHORE & WAREHOUSE  
UNION**

**LOCAL 500**

---

January 4, 2012

**LOUIS A. KAUFMAN**  
**November 8, 1930 – December 29, 2011**

Lou was registered for work on the Vancouver Waterfront on June 15, 1954. He retired December 1, 1995. In between those dates Lou made a lasting impression.

Lou was the first President of Local 500 after amalgamation in 1966 of all the Locals servicing vessels in Burrard Inlet. He was President until 1969. He was President again in 1971, 1973, 1981 & 1982, and again in 1988. This was when we had one-year terms. Between 1966 and 1988 Lou was elected President 8 times by the Membership of Local 500.

Lou was Secretary Treasurer of ILWU Canada in 1970.

Lou was much admired for his smarts and his verbal skills. But Lou is best remembered for his fighting spirit for the vision he had for the Vancouver Waterfront. Lou was a Scorpio. Lou said that as a Scorpio he was a “fixed and determined person who liked open confrontation.” Lou always provoked confrontation whether with his co-workers or with the employer.

The best way to remember Lou is from his own words. Some quotes from Lou’s many newsletters.

- The reason for becoming involved in ILWU activities: “An attempt to create some medium for the maintenance of justice in a scene where workers are being subtly maneuvered by professional knaves.”
- It is a myth that the Longshore Locals cannot obtain an Industry Contract without the aid of the Area Officers. The real reason why the bureaucracy has opposed change is because they fear their jobs would become redundant. Their fears are justified.
- The GREATEST WEAKNESS in OUR UNION is not the Membership, but the CONSERVATIVE APPETITES of THOSE NEGOTIATING on THEIR BEHALF.
- In the early seventies the walking bosses [ILWU Local 514] were forced to meet the Maritime Employers under a separate name and table. Thus successfully dividing the 500 foremen (who all came from the Longshore ranks) from the Longshore workforce. This move created a further split in the workforce on the docks.
- I first took office as President in 1965 and led our Union into amalgamation and held the post during the formative years of Local 500 up to 1974. During that period, the ILWU let the Employers pay for and run the Dispatch Centre. It is high time that we in the Port of Vancouver follow the direction of every other port between Mexico and Alaska and operate a Union Despatch (Union Hiring Hall).

Peter Haines  
ILWU Local 500 Secretary Treasurer