

THE WORKER'S DAY

SPRING IS OFFICIALLY HERE AND WITH ANTICIPATED EXCITEMENT WE ARE getting a taste of summer. We're experiencing longer days and warmer evenings. Ponsonby locals are sprucing up, cleaning out the house, pottering in the garden, dusting off the BBQ. Winter is officially behind us.

This month brings many great things, best of all the first long weekend in five long months. Labour Day. No doubt you have plans. If not, it might be time to make them. A weekend at the beach, your first dip in the sea this summer. A visit to friends out of town, or maybe just a lazy lunch with the family. No matter how you spend it, Monday 26th October is an opportunity to celebrate the eight hour working day and the (somewhat elusive) 40 hour worker's week!

Is it just me or is a 40 hour working week something of the past in NZ? What has happened to eight hours for work, eight hours for recreation and eight hours for rest that the labour movement advocated in the mid 1800's? In a recent survey of working life (2008 Statistics NZ), nearly one-third of employees and 58% of employers said they were working on average 45+ hours a week. 32% of all workers had worked one or more evenings in the month prior to the survey. That is hours in the office; but let us not forget we are a nation of DIY'ers, clearly evident in our own neighbourhood, and it is predicted that on top of our day to day jobs we also spend 10+ hours in an average week working at (and/or on) our home. Exhausted yet?

Perhaps we should be taking a day out this month to acknowledge just how busy our lives have really become and celebrate what we do manage to achieve in one working day. How much work, how many jobs, how much family time, study etc, not to mention exercise, in reality gets crammed into a working week.

Perhaps this pending public holiday is a timely opportunity to acknowledge just how well we have learnt to manage the juggling act of modern life. Give yourself a pat on the back. Celebrate all that you have achieved this year. Perhaps you've already started planning for the year ahead. Take the time out to assess what is important for you. Maybe there are things you can do without, because let's face it: life is only going to get busier with summer on its way. May we all have the time to enjoy it!

Happy Labour Day! (CHARLIE PERRY) PN

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