

**U.A. LOCAL 67**

HAMILTON • BRANTFORD • NIAGARA • ONTARIO



***125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary***  
**COMMEMORATIVE HISTORY**



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE MEMBERS OF  
LOCAL 67 FROM UA CANADA ON  
125 YEARS OF UA PRIDE AND EXCELLENCE



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Director of Canadian Affairs



**Bruce Myles**  
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Our most sincere congratulations  
for your **125<sup>th</sup>** founding anniversary.

Through your work and commitment,  
you have **contributed** to build our  
country and, our **United Association**.

From the Officers,  
Brothers and Sisters  
of **LOCAL 144** –  
Montreal, Quebec



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**PRESIDENT** Tony Scialdone | **VICE-PRESIDENT** Chris Everett  
**BUSINESS AGENTS** Roodney Clarke | James Everett | Reg Kenwell  
Steven Marshall | David Martell | Scott Morrison | Eddy Panetta | Brendan Traynor



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office@ualocal46.org

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# CONGRATULATIONS

LOCAL 67

125 YEARS



**Happy 125th Anniversary! Your hard  
work and dedication have truly made a  
difference in the lives of your members.  
Over the years, you've set the standard  
for professionalism and built a strong,  
supportive community.**

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EXCELLENCE IS AN ATTITUDE

**Congratulations and Best Wishes to  
U.A. Local 67 on Your 125th Anniversary!**

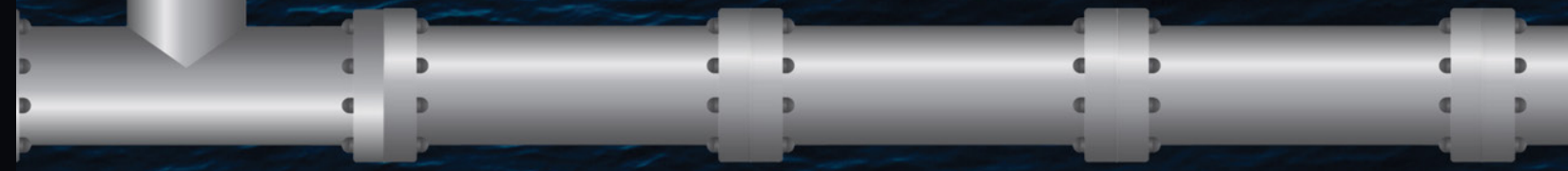


**From the Officers, Members & Staff of U.A. Local 496, Calgary AB  
Business Manager-Financial Secretary TREVOR ROBERTSON  
Business Agent ERIC JONES**

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**FROM ONE BLACK SHEEP TO  
ANOTHER, CONGRATULATIONS ON  
CELEBRATING YOUR 125TH  
ANNIVERSARY FROM THE EAST  
COAST!**





**Congratulations on 125 years, and cheers to many more years of keeping them Honest!**

**Andrew Tarr**  
*Business Manager*

**Ian Frost**  
*Business Agent*

**Tony Panetta**  
*Business Agent*

**Nick Pontrelli**  
*Business Agent*

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**CONGRATULATIONS**  
**on Reaching this Milestone of 125 Years!**

Here's to a rich history and a future filled with continued success, growth and collaboration.  
Happy Anniversary!

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**Congratulations to U.A. Local 67  
In Celebrating and Achieving 125 years Strong!**

Representing 10 United Association Local Unions in the Province of Ontario

U.A. LOCAL 46

U.A. LOCAL 67

U.A. LOCAL 71

U.A. LOCAL 401

U.A. LOCAL 527

U.A. LOCAL 628

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**CONGRATULATIONS**

**UA  
LOCAL  
67**

**ON  
125 YEARS!**





**PLUMBERS, STEAMFITTERS & WELDERS LOCAL 67**  
*125th Anniversary Celebration*  
**DINNER/DANCE GALA**

**SATURDAY, JUNE 29, 2024**  
5:00 p.m. to Midnight

**Niagara Falls Convention Centre**  
6815 Stanley Avenue, Niagara Falls, Ontario

Cocktail Reception ..... 5:00 to 6:00 p.m.  
Seating and Welcome ..... 6:00 to 6:30 p.m.  
Dinner, Dessert and Presentations..... 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.  
Music and Dancing ..... 8:30 to Midnight

LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION



CHEF DE L'OPPOSITION

June 29, 2024

Dear friends,

On behalf of Canada's Common Sense Conservatives, it's an honour to send my best wishes to Business Manager Nathan Bergstrand and everyone at UA Local 67 as you celebrate your 125th anniversary!

When you received your charter in 1899, Canada was not even forty years old. Much has changed since then – both in Ontario and across the country.

Today, we honour the members of Local 67 who – quite literally – built the province into what it is today. And we pay homage to those who fought tirelessly to make Canada a better place for workers.

As you gather to remember this proud history, you are offering much-needed hope to Canadians going through hard times. Many families are struggling to make ends meet. Parents are struggling to give their children the opportunities they need to thrive. Record numbers of people are forced to turn to food banks just to get by.

Working with you, we will bring home the Canada we know and love. A place where Canadian workers can unlock their full potential – in a country that works for those who do the work.

Let's bring it home!

Sincerely,

The Hon. Pierre Poilievre, P.C., M.P.  
Leader of His Majesty's Loyal Opposition and Canada's Common Sense Conservatives



HOUSE OF COMMONS, OTTAWA, ONTARIO K1A 0A6  
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES, OTTAWA (ONTARIO) K1A 0A6



# REFLECTING ON LOCAL 67'S WELL-

# SPENT AND FOUGHT-FOR 125 YEARS

My fellow Brothers and Sisters:

Allow me to first preface this address to advocate for the recognition of the importance of time.

Time is often seen in two ways, ubiquitous and overlooked or appreciated as being so valuable that it is regarded to some as priceless. The value of time with loved ones, family members and those within one's circle cannot be quantified. This time is precious, and more often than not it is severely undervalued when bartered in the marketplace. Even when the trade is fortified with a skill for one's craft, time is often sold at such a deep discount that many never realize the true value of that very time.



It is unfortunate that throughout history, many skilled, hardworking humans needlessly offer so much under-compensated time to their employers that they completely overlook their own self-worth, just to have what little time is left over with their family and loved ones.

Hence, the essence of the union movement and possibly the very thoughts of the original 30 charter-signing members of U.A. Local 67 back in 1899.

Our charter members realized the value of time before so many others in society. The need to bargain for a fair trade-off of their time. Never forgetting the inherent value of a tradesman that is fortified with skill, dedication and craftsmanship.

From this, a union was born.

The founding members of Local 67 imbued a spirit of precision, hard work and militancy within the organization from the day our charter was signed 125 years ago. A spirit that I proudly believe we continue to carry on to this day.

They realized, much like we know now, that the compensation offered for their skill and time could never equal the value of the time spent away from family. They fought, overcoming insurmountable odds to forge a path that had never been walked before. True pioneers.

Without any guarantee of success, the charter members and those who have held the line ever since have laid the foundation for us. From that, we continue to strive to enhance and support the un-bartered time union members work so hard to enjoy, away from work and with those we choose to spend our time. This is why we fight for the shortest and safest work week possible at the highest compensation rate that can be acquired within this highly competitive job market.

So let me thank every member who has offered up the most precious commodity one has to offer, their time. This offering has led to a steadfast union movement in the Hamilton, Brantford and Niagara areas for the past 125 years.

Being a third-generation U.A. member after my father and his father before him, I am profoundly grateful to have been the Business Manager for the past nine years and look forward to working with the recently acclaimed Business Agents Ken Luxon, Don Krieg and Steve Murray over the next three years. Your officers pledge to properly maintain the jurisdiction when called upon and to increase work opportunities throughout the Hamilton, Brantford and Niagara areas wherever possible.

In preparation for this address, I reflected upon the words and milestones noted by those that have come before us. From that, I could clearly surmise one thing: that everything ebbs and flows. Change is the only constant. Tides change and winds move invisibly against us. In response, we must navigate even when we cannot see the stars to do so. We must persevere with faith in what we know to be right in our hearts.

We must foresee the changing of times and adapt to best serve each other and our loved ones around us. Often, people have been yoked with long-begotten ideology that no longer pays dividends. Old allegiances dry and crack under the sunlight of a low tide. We must adapt as a membership and as an industry to the reality that is, rather than what we hope it would be. Many times, we hold true to our beliefs, but as the pendulum swings, a shift occurs and we seemingly change alliances merely by holding true to ourselves and the belief of what's right.

Thank you to those who have made it possible to celebrate this most auspicious occasion of Local 67's 125th anniversary. At this time, we put down the tools and take part in much-needed refreshment and reflect on those who sit beside us now, but also those who have sat beside us in the past and those who are no longer here but sit with us in memory and spirit. Remember to recognize their role, and never forget yours, in the ongoing history of this great organization.

It is truly my honour to be the steward of this most necessary institution during this monumental occasion of our 125th anniversary.

Happy to meet, sorry to part, happy to meet again.

Fraternally,

Nathan Bergstrand  
Business Manager/Financial Secretary-Treasurer  
United Association Local 67

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Art Direction: Andy Taucher  
Layout & Design: Steven Demanett



*The Story of U.A. Local No. 67*

# BUILDING UP SOUTH ACROSS 125 YEARS OF SERVICE

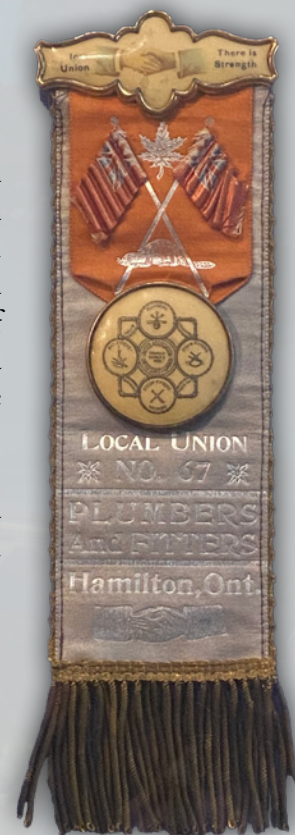
*“Local 67 always feels proud of their progress and are in the forefront of the labor movement of Hamilton and quite a factor in all matters.”*

— United Association General Organizer John W. Bruce, April 1917 U.A. Journal



Organized into Toronto-based **Local No. 46** when it was chartered by the United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipefitting Industry of the United States and Canada (U.A.), less than a decade later the plumbers and steamfitters in and around the City of Hamilton saw the need to organize a local of their own after the emergence of the militant Hamilton Labour Movement. Subsequently, the U.A. granted those pioneers in organized labour a charter as Local No. 67 on **June 29, 1899**.

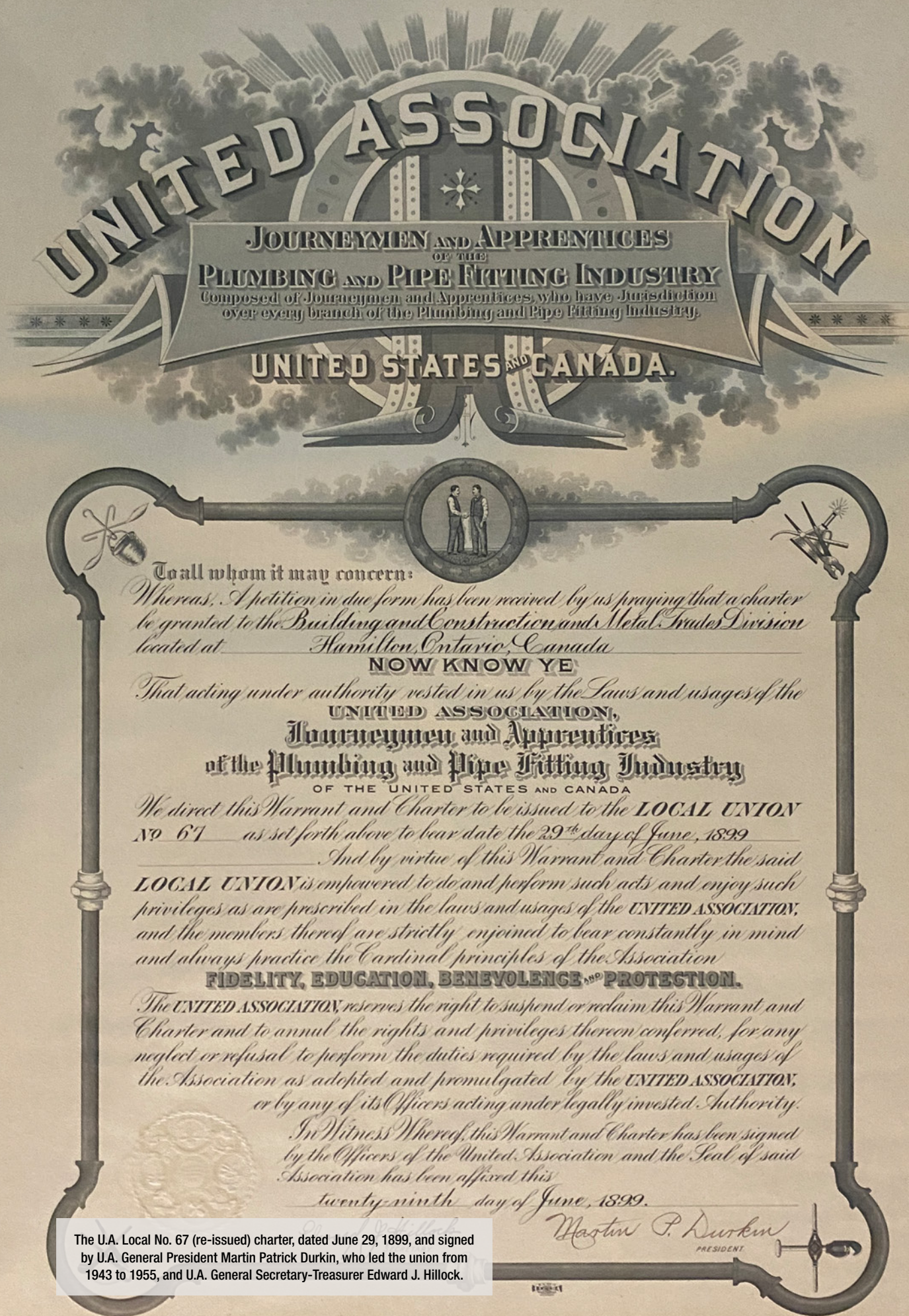
With a membership of about 30 plumbers and fitters, it was not long before those early members of the fledgling local began fighting for better wages and working conditions – actions from which



future members would greatly benefit. To that end, on September 23, 1899, the local submitted its “credentials” to the **Hamilton Trades and Labour Council** to become affiliated with that organization.

Soon into the local’s existence, during the first decade-and-a-half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century the city surged ahead as its leaders offered its cheap electric power to entice American firms to open plants in and around Hamilton. Between 1900 and 1915, more U.S. money was invested in Hamilton industries than in those of any other city in Canada, and the Hamilton Steel and Iron Company would grow into the giant Steel Company of Canada, and labour likewise swelled.

During that time, on May 4, 1904, Local 67 and its employing



The U.A. Local No. 67 (re-issued) charter, dated June 29, 1899, and signed by U.A. General President Martin Patrick Durkin, who led the union from 1943 to 1955, and U.A. General Secretary-Treasurer Edward J. Hillock.



contractors reached a compromise in lengthy but peaceful negotiations for a working contract after the union asked for an increase to its journeyman wage scale from 27-1/2 cents to 33 cents per hour. The resultant agreement provided the local's journeyman plumbers and fitters with a wage rate of \$2.70 per day for a nine-hour day (or 30 cents per hour) and half days on Saturdays.

Regardless, tension between labour and employers pervaded at the time throughout Hamilton, as its largest companies sought to establish non-union "open shops" and were generally hostile towards unions. The violent Hamilton Street Railway strike in 1906, the city's first major strike, symbolized that hostile relationship, although the 180 employees did gain union recognition.

Just two years later, following a November 21, 1908, visit to Hamilton and Local 67, U.A. General Organizer Frank J. Kennedy was able to report in the January 1909 U.A. *Journal* monthly publication that it was "gratifying to learn of the good conditions that prevail in their jurisdiction." By that time, the local had grown to 52 members in good standing.

## MAKING EARLY ADVANCES

After struggling since its inception to secure a plumbing by-law and the appointment of a "competent" plumbing inspector for the City of Hamilton, Local 67's efforts were finally rewarded in 1910 when the city's Board of Control recommended that a plumbing by-law be passed and an inspector be appointed. City Council carried out the recommendation and a committee drafted the by-law, and in June the following year Local 67 member and treasurer Brother David S. Wark was named plumbing inspector.

Meanwhile, in September 1910 the U.A. assigned **Brother John Bruce** of Local 46 as

## U.A. ORGANIZED OVER 130 YEARS AGO

With a general lack of stable, national organizations to represent steamfitters and plumbers at the time, **Patrick J. Quinlan**, a plumber from Boston, sent a letter to **R. A. O'Brien**, a plumber in Washington, D.C., on April 25, 1889, proposing the formation of a new, national pipe-trades union. Subsequently, on October 7, 1889, 40 delegates from 23 piping-trades locals in 10 states and the District of Columbia assembled in Washington for a convention.

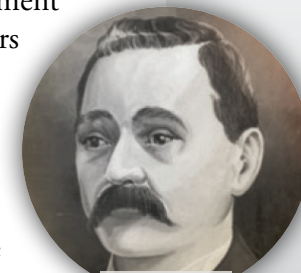
Four days later, the **United Association of Journeyman Plumbers, Gas Fitters, Steam Fitters and Steam Fitters' Helpers of the United States and Canada** (U.A.) was born on October 11, 1889. The U.A. selected Brother Quinlan as its president, Brother Henry Collins of New York City as its vice president and Brother O'Brien as its secretary-treasurer.

Meanwhile, most steamfitters were attempting to sustain their own national union, the National Association of Steam, Hot Water and Power Piping Fitters and Helpers, that they had formed in 1888, soon after which it would become the International Association (I.A.). For two decades, however, the two piping unions clashed regularly over jurisdiction – before the American Federation of Labor (A.F.L.) ordered the I.A. to amalgamate into the U.A. in 1912.

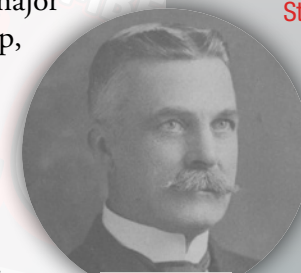
The union endured through two world wars and the Great Depression, after which on January 1, 1947, it changed its name to the **United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry of the United States and Canada**.

its first general organizer to serve Canada, a position in which he would remain until his retirement in January 1963. "His importance to the welfare and rise of Local 67 can never be underestimated," the local's 100<sup>th</sup>-Anniversary Celebration publication from 1999 states.

General Organizer Bruce would frequently visit and work with Local 67 during his tenure. Early on, he attended the local's annual banquet



Patrick J. Quinlan



Richard A. O'Brien



Local 67 members pose while working on a house in old Britannia Park in Hamilton that was built in one day on August 14, 1913, as a publicity stunt during the celebration of Hamilton's Centennial and Old Boy's Week. (The nine-room structure on Shennan Avenue was soon after given to a man who had most closely guessed the number of beans in a large glass jar displayed inside the house.)

on March 24, 1911, after which he reported:

***"Local 67 is going strong and are out for better conditions, and I believe that they will experience no difficulty in getting the same."***

Throughout the decade, as often noted in the local's membership meeting minutes, the local's membership regularly came to the aid of anyone or any organization in need. Hardly a meeting passed without a reference to some action taken for a needy brother or for a good cause, including cases of unemployment, for which union dues were waived until the member was able to resume work.

A Good and Welfare Fund was already in operation, and from it liberal amounts of

money were taken to assist an unfortunate brother's family. If money was left over from any union project, the balance was devoted to that cause.

As well as conducting its own affairs, the local often expressed its opinions on a wide range of subjects outside the union. At various times, it opposed the increase in Hamilton Street Railway fares; resented the cost of blood transfusions and the high cost of drugs; complained against the mishandling at polling booths; berated a local radio station for not carrying labour news; opposed toll roads and the high cost of gasoline; resented the number of judges and magistrates sitting on labour boards; advocated for the free use of parks; sought income-tax relief for parents of crippled children; and spoke out against Sunday sports.

## LOCAL 67 CHARTER MEMBERS

These men signed the original Local 67 charter issued by the United Association on June 29, 1899.

George Andrews  
Walter Brittain  
William Cook  
Frank Drake  
C. Garson  
George Grant  
Robert Harbison  
Steve Jones  
William Laidlaw  
Edward Madden

David Mark  
William J. McCardle  
Robert McCardle  
Alex McKenzie  
R.R. McNeil  
William Miles  
Daniel Mitchell  
Robert Murphy  
H. Whitton

By that time, members of Local 67 were completely aware of the need for political action to address some of their problems. Interestingly, the local's minutes indicate at times that it supported a political party and always one that could have been considered just left of centre.

In 1913, with a population of 100,000 people, Hamilton boasted 499 varied industries, employing 27,000 wage-earners. That year, as strong employment persisted, Local 67 came to an agreement with their employing contractors for a 2-cent increase that raised the local's journeyman pay to 42-1/2 cents per hour – although the union was still unable to get the "notoriously unfair," as Brother Bruce noted in his report in that July's *Journal*, George Stevenson plumbing shop to sign an agreement.

Out in the field, among the projects on which Local 67 members worked during the mid-1910s was construction of the lavish, new **Royal Connaught Hotel** in downtown Hamilton beginning in late 1914. The 13-storey building at the corner of King Street East and John Street South would be completed in 1916 (and was later converted to The Residences of Royal Connaught condominiums beginning in 2014).



A crew of Local 67 members working on a job around 1915.

## LOCAL 67 HELPED FOUND O.P.T.C.

Brother Alfred Carver and Brother John D. Edwards of Local 67 were among the representatives of United Association (U.A.) locals from throughout Ontario who met on March 11, 1917, in St. Catharines to form a U.A. council of all locals in the province. That day, those men established the **Ontario Pipe Trades Council** (O.P.T.C.) and appointed a committee to draft its bylaws and ways-and-means.

Local 67 Brother Ralph Bowes was selected as the council's first (interim) president until elections could be held. The council's next meeting was then held in Hamilton on April 22, 1917.

The council has since evolved to administer various legal and legislative programs to benefit the members of its U.A. locals, as well as their families and all working people in Ontario. To those ends, in addition to promoting legislation that protects public safety and health, the O.P.T.C. also promotes safe working conditions, fair wages with employee benefits and industry training.

In 2024 as Local 67 celebrates the 125th anniversary since it received its charter from the U.A., the O.P.T.C. represents 10 U.A. locals in the province. Those locals, including Local 67, have a total membership of over 22,000 skilled, unionized piping-trades professionals.

## TAKING ON CHALLENGERS

The outbreak of World War I in Europe in July 1914 had severely hampered construction employment throughout Hamilton, Ontario and Canada over the ensuing three years. In February 1916, for instance, employment was so slack that the local cut its business agent's wages from \$120 per year to \$60, its secretary's wages from \$150 per year to \$100; and its treasurer's pay from \$50 per year to \$40.

Nevertheless, a year later, Local 67 remained resolute. U.A. General Organizer E. W. Leonard was even able to announce in the May 1917 *Journal* after attending the Pipe Trades Council of Buffalo, New York, quarterly convention on April 15 that visitors from Local 67, as well as those from Local 46 in Toronto, "reported progress."

Indeed, after Local 67 plumbers and fitters refused to report to work for the only four shops in Hamilton that did not sign their work

agreement, the local succeeded in having those employers sign the contract on March 27, 1916. "I addressed a meeting of the members who were out and found them determined and ready for a battle," Brother Bruce later reported in that May's *Journal*. "After arranging matters and talking it over with the employers, we were able to sign them all up, giving us a splendid victory and making this a 100-percent town and union shop."

The local also had to contend with ongoing jurisdictional disputes, such as non-union steamfitters working at the **Tuckett Tobacco Plant** declaring they would not join the union unless they were permitted to work 10-hour days, which the local opposed. On another occasion, a few union members were found working 10-hour days at the **Proctor and Gamble Plant**, so they were made to answer for their conduct or be charged.

Then in early March 1917, the local gained a new, three-year agreement with its contractors that granted an increase in journeyman wages to 47-1/2 cents per hour for two years and 50 cents per hour for the third year, limits on the number of apprentices that could be employed on jobs and the union shop throughout the city. During the local's March 6 meeting, according to General Organizer Bruce's report in that year's April *Journal*, members congratulated their Negotiating Committee for the "splendid agreement," which they "adopted without a dissenting voice."

As the local continued to make gains, on March 11 of that year, it was an active participant in forming the new **Ontario Pipe Trades Council** during a meeting in St. Catharines, Ontario, with most other U.A. locals in the province. Local 67 member



Local 67 members working for contractor Saynor Plumbing pose around 1920.

Brother Ralph Bowes was appointed the first president of the organization, which in 2024 as the local prepares to celebrate its 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary continues to promote the union piping industry and its U.A. locals throughout the province.

Before the war ended, a number of the local's journeymen and apprentices had joined the Armed Forces. Subsequently, their welfare became the concern of the rest of the union, whose members added, in whatever way they could, to the comfort of their brothers who were fighting for freedom.

Members who were overseas fighting were supplied regularly with food parcels, money and tobacco, and the local waived soldiers' union dues while their memberships were reserved. The local considered the welfare of the families of those members as well.

But during the darkest period of the war in 1917, as living costs escalated and the local felt that the U.A. was not working enough on its behalf, the local's secretary contacted other Canadian locals about withdrawing from their

parent body, if necessary. In protest, the local withdrew its attendance from that year's U.A. convention, and eight months later, a standing vote of 38 members present at a meeting was in favour of paying no assessment to and leaving the U.A.

However, Brother Bruce pleaded to the local for conciliation. Afterwards, a secret ballot reversed the previous decision, and Local 67 remained in the U.A.

Local 67 entered into a new agreement with its employers in 1919 that provided several improved conditions. One of those provisions established the five-day workweek beginning September 1, a first for any U.A. local in Canada, with the 70-cent-per-hour pay scale for journeyman plumbers and fitters.

## WAGING A 'BITTER FIGHT'

After an initial flurry of activity following the First World War, which ended in November 1918, economic recession set in early in the 1920s. While employment picked up by the middle of



Local 67 members and their families pose during the local's picnic at Dundas (Ontario) Driving Park on July 16, 1921.

the decade, the volume of construction still dipped significantly.

In 1921 while a significant number of its members were unemployed, Local 67 settled on a new contract with employing contractors that contained a slight reduction in wages but retained all of the local's current working conditions. Shortly after, every piping shop in the local's jurisdiction signed the agreement.

On May 31, 1923, the Labour movement was given more visibility in the city with the opening of a new **Labour Temple** on Catharine Street, North, to replace the inadequate Central Labour Hall on John Street. Paying rent of \$80 per year, Local 67 held its first meeting there on December 5, 1923, at which time the local had about 100 members.

From 1924 to 1926, its employers put pressure on the local to make additional contract concessions, but General Organizer Bruce refused to concede and insisted that the local would sign only at the previous year's pay rate. As negotiations faltered, the local called a strike, during which working members were assessed 15 percent of their wages while the local's annual picnic was canceled and the salary for the combined office of business agent and financial secretary was reduced to \$520 per year.

In response to the strike, the contractors attempted to establish open-shop conditions and imported strikebreakers from outside the city – some of whom the local persuaded to quit. The secretary of the Building Trades Council of Hamilton and District also wrote a letter to the 12 unions represented by the council, soliciting their moral support for Local 67 can containing an excerpt from a Local 67 correspondence, which read in part, "The employers of the city are employing unfair means of getting men by misrepresenting the situation by telling them that the strike is over, and that there are non-union shops which is untrue."

Brother Bruce provided a further accounting of the "bitter fight" in the September 1924 *Journal*: "Local 67 had to come out because of the fact that the employers would not meet or discuss the situation. ... The employers were using all of the old-time tricks of trying to get men and taking advantage of the conditions prevailing, and were extensively advertising all over the province and especially in Toronto, and were successful in getting in a few non-union men, but owing to the splendid work of our pickets, we were able to keep the field clear."

But the number of members who were unemployed increased as the month-long strike continued, and the pressure on their families grew. Consequently, after getting the majority

of employers to sign the local's agreement and accept its conditions, in November 1924 the local called off the strike.

Later in the decade, Local 67 and its employing contractors signed a new agreement on June 1, 1928, following a week of negotiations. The pact called for a journeyman wage of \$1 per hour, an increase of 5 cents per hour over the previous scale.

The local was forced to go on strike again, however, beginning August 17, 1929, while seeking a new, hourly pay scale of \$1.07-1/2 for the first year of a new contract and \$1.12-1/2 per hour for the following year. After four days, the local's members returned to work after the two sides signed a deal on August 21 for a wage of \$1.07 per hour for a 44-hour week until April 30, 1930, and then a wage of \$1.10 per hour for a 40-hour week.

## SURVIVING HISTORIC WOES

Working in 1929 under a contract for which it had fought hard and that would eventually reduce the

workweek down to 40 hours, an optimistic Local 67 had demonstrated it was one of the leading U.A. locals in Canada as it marked only its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in June that year. General Organizer Bruce even declared in the *Journal* shortly afterwards, "This is a splendid victory, and while it took longer than our members expected, the victory was so complete, it was worth the effort."

However, while it took a couple of years to filter through to the construction industry the Great Depression, the historic economic and human catastrophe that began when the U.S. stock market crashed on October 29, 1929 (history's "Black Tuesday") devastated trade unions throughout the 1930s. In particular, the nationwide financial collapse brought hard times to U.A. members across North America as unemployment among its ranks soared.

"Construction all but stopped, and this led to a significant decline in manufacturing," the official U.A. international history recounts. "The economies of both (Canada and the United States) spiraled ever downward, until



A crew of Local 67 members working on a job sometime during the mid-1920s.



Local 67 members working on construction of a Bank of Montreal building in 1928.

unemployment reached extremely high numbers and workers began to give up altogether.” The union’s history even notes that the *Journal* ran several issues during the early 1930s that offered advice on how members could make their wages go as far as possible, although much of the focus of the articles was either on calling on the government to take action to help people or on trying to offer some hope and encouragement to the U.A. membership.

As its overall international membership declined, the U.A. held no conventions between 1928 and 1938. Regardless, “the union held it together,” the U.A. history declares.

But in 1930, government figures placed the minimum standard of decency for a family at \$1,200 to \$1,500, while throughout the Great Depression, about 60 percent of male wage-earners and 82 percent of the female workforce were earning less than \$1,000 per year. As jobs disappeared, people were forced to dip into

whatever savings they had, or pawn and sell their belongings.

U.A. members in Canada looked for work in the United States. What’s more, during that time, contractors attempted to gain concessions from Local 67 and other building trades locals, but Brother Bruce was the driving force against wage cuts or any increased working hours.

In July 1935, in fact, Local 67 and its “master plumbers” negotiated a code schedule that called for a wage of 80 cents per hour for the local’s journeyman members. What’s more, the agreement also reaffirmed the 40-hour workweek for the union plumbers and steamfitters.

Underlying those difficult times, throughout the 1930s a strong bond of brotherhood flourished and Local 67 often held social functions such as picnics and parties for members and their families. But those distractions did not alleviate the problems

of the unemployed during those days before unemployment insurance; eventually, however, public welfare offered a measure of relief before the Depression ended along with the devastating decade.

## WINNING ANOTHER CONFLICT

The outbreak of World War II in Europe and Asia in 1939 would ultimately quell the final remnants of the Great Depression by the beginning of the 1940s, and U.A. locals – including Local 67 – recovered and grew as a result of the work created by the military-material demands of the war. With the busy wartime economy created for the “Allies” in their fight against the “Axis,” U.A. membership across North America ballooned from 81,000 in 1941 to 210,000 members, many of whom built and expanded shipyards, weapons plants, aircraft factories and other facilities to support the war.

In Hamilton and throughout the Local 67 jurisdiction, factories started humming again and workers began going back to work in the wake of a tremendous outpouring of energy, money and resources. While wages would be controlled by the wartime government, workers suddenly were again in demand as the unemployment rate of 11 percent in 1938 was quickly replaced by a labour shortage.

About 100 Local 67 members served in active Armed Services during the war. Of its 24 steamfitters employed at the time the war started, 14 joined the military.

Notably, ship-building came to Hamilton during the war years, providing considerable additional employment for the local and all of the region. With construction of those Liberty Ships, welding came into its own – but, instead of joining the U.A., the welders affiliated themselves with the boilermakers union despite special efforts to enroll them into Local 67 for a reduced initiation fee of \$10.



Local 67 members working on construction of Hamilton Hall classroom and administration building and Edwards Hall dormitory at McMaster University in Hamilton during the second half of the 1920s, during which the school moved to the city from Toronto in 1930.



## LOCAL 67 UNION HALLS AND MEETING LOCATIONS

(All locations are in Hamilton. No records of location exist before 1903.)

**Central Labour Hall**  
133 King Street, East  
1903 – 1904

**Trades and Labour Hall**  
17 Main Street, East  
1904 – 1908

**Trades and Labour Hall**  
22-1/2 John Street  
1908 – 1923

**Hamilton Labour Temple**  
110 Catharine Street, North  
1923 – 1956

**Local 67 Offices Orange Hall**  
175-1/2 James Street, North  
1956 – 1958

**Local 67 Offices Delta Block**  
1296 King Street, East  
1958

**Local 67 Union Hall**  
1636 Barton, East  
1958 – 1977

**Local 67 Union Hall**  
300 Fennell Avenue, East  
1977 – 2000

**Local 67 Union Hall**  
195 Dartnall Road  
2000 – current



Former Local 67 Union Hall at 300 Fennell Avenue, East.

During the war, the Regional War Labour Board guided workers and the building trades, with U.A. officials including Local 67 **Business Agent Alex Bonner**, **Business Agent Len Heywood** and Brother Bruce serving on that federal body. Anxious to get the viewpoints of unions on the demand for a basic rate increase, in 1943 the board awarded a 5-cent wage

increase to Local 67 and also put a 48-hour workweek into effect.

The following year, the board granted the local a cost-of-living bonus of 35 cents. With that, the pay rate for Hamilton's union plumbers and fitters was \$1.62 per hour.

Nevertheless, the local recommended during that time that the board open up an agreement to raise the hourly rate to be on a par with Local 46. That desire for parity persisted over the years and remained a thorn in the local's side whenever Hamilton's wage scale fell behind that of its sister U.A. local.

In 1944, the U.A. increased the radius of the Local 46 territorial jurisdiction, extending its limits as far as Oakville. That year, Brother Bruce was particularly active for the local, tirelessly interviewing management and working out union details, while even helpers in the shipyards were taken into the union.

The war brought a great expansion in industrial work, but progress in organizing plumbers and steamfitters had slowed down, prompting Brother Bruce to urge U.A. members to make every effort to organize all

people working in the piping industry in and around Hamilton. A year later, when U.A. **General President Martin Durkin** visited the city, Mayor Samuel Lawrence combined with him in stressing the necessity of organizing all workers who were working at pipe trades, no matter in what capacity.

But work was so abundant that the U.A. appointed **Brother Joseph Connolly** as a special organizer to assist General Organizer Bruce in Canada. Before the war ended, the U.A. would appoint Brother Connolly to serve in Canada as general organizer.

A significant addition to the industries located in Hamilton also occurred in 1945 when **Peller Brewing** (later Amstel) erected its plant on Burlington Street. Local 67 successfully pushed for an agreement covering all tradesmen on the construction site, and the work was performed by a 100-percent union force. Other jobs available to Local 67 members at the time included the plumbing and heating on the east extension of the **Proctor and Gamble** facility in Hamilton, which was carried out by long-faithful union plumbing contractor **Adam Clark**.

Just before the war officially ended on September 2, 1945, with the surrender of Imperial Japan to the Allies after Nazi Germany had capitulated on May 8, the Local 67 wage scale as of August 12 of that year stood at \$1.06-1/2 per hour for a 40-hour workweek. The scales of the other locals represented by the Ontario Pipe Trades Council at that time including \$1.17 per hour for Local 46, \$1.25

per hour for **Local No. 552** of Windsor, \$1.10 per hour for **Local No. 71** of Ottawa and \$1.01 per hour for **Local No. 244** of St. Catharines – while at the time, all locals reported to the U.A. that there was “plenty of work in sight.”

## LEADING TRADES LABOUR

Almost immediately following the war, the U.A. formed a special committee to eliminate jurisdictional disputes, which had dogged Local 67 since it was chartered in 1899, and the re-organizing of the U.A. along different trade lines. General Organizer Connolly also noted in 1946 that a Steamfitter's Certification Act was taking shape and a Provincial Plumbing Ordinance would soon become law.

Hamilton's leaders were also recognizing the important role labour unions were playing in the city and, as such, invited Local 67 to attend a meeting on town planning that year. But the city was also rocked by its longest strike when the entire labour force gave support to steelworkers in their 13-week-long strike against the Stelco Steel company, through which they won substantial wage increases.



A crew of Local 67 members working on a job sometime during the early 1930s.



Local 67 members pose during a job sometime in the mid-1930s.

## LOCAL 67 BUSINESS MANAGERS

(Business agents along with parttime presidents and secretaries ran the affairs of the local through 1964, when the local installed a fulltime business manager. No records of officers exist before 1903.)

### Business Agents

**Robert McCardle**

1903 – 1905

**Fred Stanton**

1905 – 1907

**Edward Madden**

1907 – 1909

**Ben B. Herr**

1909 – 1912

**Thomas O'Heir**

1912 – 1913

**Alex Bonner**

1913 – 1917

**Edward Madden**

1917 – 1920

**Alex Bonner**

1920 – 1925

**John Edward Mercer**

1925 – 1930

**K. J. McKenzie**

1930 – 1931

**Alex McLennan**

1931

**Jason Biren Junor**

1931 – 1934

**Alex Bonner**

1934 – 1937

**Edward Coons**

1937 – 1939

**Alex Bonner**

1939 – 1940

**Edward Coons**

1940 – 1941

**Len Heywood**

1941 – 1943

**Harry Barker**

1944 – 1947

**Leslie Henwood**

1947 – 1948

**Richard Darley**

1949 – 1950

**Harry Barker**

1951 – 1954

**Herbert R. Hazell**

1954 – 1956

**Tom Taylor**

1956 – 1957

**Charles Hewitt**

1958 – 1959

**Stephen Cole**

1960 – 1961

**Charles Hewitt**

1962 – 1964

### Business Managers

**Charles Hewitt**

1964 – 1965

**Norman Beanland**

1966 – 1967

**Trevor Byrne**

1967 – 1982

**Fred Wilson**

1982 – 1992

**Harry Cybulski**

1992 – 1995

**Neil McCormick**

1995 – 2000

**Howie Murray**

2000 – 2007

**Bob Bolan**

2007 – 2009

**Mark Ellerker**

2009 – 2015

**Nathan Bergstrand**

2015 - current

That action and eventual victory assisted Local 67 with its negotiations, along with the help of Brother Connolly, for a new wage agreement. Ultimately, the local accepted an offer from its contractors in 1947 for a new journeyman wage scale of \$1.42 per hour and an additional fringe benefit of 6 cents per hour worked for a **Vacation Fund** for members.

By that time, welding had become an integral part of the piping industry. During 1947, welding technology also quickly advanced, and many welders joined Local 67.

That following year, the local again took strike action while plumbers and steamfitters were in high demand, but in August the contractors suddenly raised the local's journeyman wages to \$1.50 per hour. Then in November, the Hamilton branch of the **National Association of Plumbing and Heating Contractors** agreed to pay the local's journeymen \$1.60 per hour in a contract lasting until the end of the next year.

In 1948, however, little work was available in the local's jurisdiction, and at one point only 132 of its members were employed after soldiers who had returned from the war filled the union. Regardless, in 1949 a new agreement gave the membership a 15-cent increase per hour and a 4-percent pay clause for vacations that was to become effective in 1950.

By November of that year, the labour market had greatly improved and the local's member plumbers and fitters were in demand again. That same month, **Business Agent Leslie Henwood** was instructed to seek help from the American Federation



Local 67 apprentices and members participating in the local's trade school in 1946.

of Labor (A.F.L.) to deal with organizing firms installing oil burners, while the local also voiced its collective concern that the U.A. should have jurisdiction over piping installed for air conditioners.

The local ended the year with the best auditor's report in its history, with a balance of \$14,046.82. Moving forward over the next few years, the number of unemployed members per year would decline while wages still continued to increase; in June 1950, the local and its contractors signed an agreement for a 10-percent pay raise and two percent vacation pay.

Work remained plentiful throughout the first half of the 1950s. What's more, Local 67's employers were constantly calling for more certified welders.

During that time, in April 1952, the U.A. revealed details for new jurisdictional boundary lines to include the Town of Oakville for Local 67. With that, the Hamilton local and Local 46 of Toronto would contact each other.

Then in May of that year, the Local 67 membership turned down an offer from its

contractors for a \$1.95-per-hour wage and four percent vacation-pay benefit but no cost-of-living increase. After the local made an application to strike to the U.A., two months later the Minister of Labour awarded the local a cost-of-living bonus of 25 cents to the basic rate, which was set at \$2.05 per hour, for a 40-hour workweek; more statutory holidays; and double-time rate for overtime work.

On September 4, 1953, another agreement raised the local's journeyman scale to \$2.15 per hour with an additional 10 cents for vacations.

Employment dropped considerably in 1954 as industrial work all but disappeared from the Hamilton landscape. With upwards of 65 members unemployed that March and without any industrial work possibilities in sight, the local sent a delegation to the Capitol in Ottawa to report on the labour situation in Hamilton.

Undeniably, by that time Local 67 had earned the status of being an active and, at times, militant organization. As such, it was, at the very least, the vanguard of the building trades in Hamilton, if not all of Ontario.



Local 67 members (left to right) George Baikie, Ross Couldridge, Lee Green and Sam Gargarello at work on a blast furnace project in 1951.

## REALIZING NEW SUCCESSES

Entering the second half of the decade, in 1955 while continuing to guard all it had won and improve wages and conditions, Local 67 braced itself for whatever lay ahead. With unemployment spiking even during the summer, when good times were always expected, large numbers were laid off from jobs at the Dofasco steel plant and shifts there were reduced from 10 to eight hours.

Conversely, a large amount of plumbing work was anticipated at the Jockey Club, and the local was assigned a sizable job at the (now former) Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital. As a result, early 1956 was a busy time for the local's members.

That March, the local reached a settlement with its employing contractors on a contract that included a 15-cent-per-hour wage hike.

Also during the active year, while the local discussed moving its offices and meetings into a building of its own, it instead rented an office in the **Orange Hall** on James Street, North, beginning in October, by which time the local had more than 345 members.

After the U.A. had alerted the local of the importance of welding in the industry, welders argued for a charter of their own during this time. However, while they attempted in October 1956 to organize their own local, the U.A. denied their application for a separate charter.

Local 67 was also aiming to gain a \$1.25 minimum wage in a new contract and asked the U.A. to send a general organizer for three days to help with negotiations. Meanwhile, on a larger stage, all U.A. locals were by that time urging the union to establish a provincial-wide wage rate.



Out in the field, the local continued to face jurisdiction incursions, including by the steelworkers who were still encroaching on the work of the Building Trades (as they would again in the 1980s) before the trades established the difference between riggers and plumbers that year. Then in November, some Local 67 members complained to the local about the intrusion into their territory by London U.A. **Local No. 593** to the point at which the local instructed its business agent to "be extra vigilant in protecting the area."

The local moved offices again in 1958, relocating to a pair of rooms it rented in the **Delta Block** on King Street, East, under a 15-month lease at \$50 per month. But as the construction industry in Hamilton remained cyclical and at the mercy of weather, in February of that year 69 members were unemployed.

The local's negotiating team obtained a new working contract from employers in February 1957 that provided an initial \$2.65-per-hour journeyman wage rate. The following year, the rate would increase to \$2.90 per hour.

Then in June 1957, Local 67 achieved one of its primary and long-discussed ambitions when it purchased the building at the corner of Julian and Barton Streets in Hamilton for \$35,000 to serve as its own headquarters. In September, a committee composed of the Executive Board and the Finance Committee arranged for the renovation of the future and first-ever **Local 67 Union Hall**.

Among its many activities during that time, in 1957 the local's delegates to the Hamilton Building Trades Council were expelled from the organization for not backing down after asking to see the council's financial statement. As a result, Local 67 withdrew from the Council, although it would reaffiliate the following year when its delegates were seated again.

Another matter of concern was the pre-fabricated piping that was being shipped from

Italy and Japan into Hamilton and Ontario. The local subsequently warned companies such as the **Hydro-Electric Power Commission of Ontario** (Ontario Hydro) that its members would not install the imported product.

Meanwhile, the union was also raising awareness of the importance of preparing for the new "Atomic Age," as advancing technology was making demands for improvements in all related fields. Subsequently, the local brought instrument men into its hall and set up a school in which apprentices could learn about piping in the atomic industry.

When 220 members were unemployed at one time in 1959, the local decreed that a fine of \$50 would be charged against anyone working more than 40 hours per week. Also, the local claimed that cliques were found working with employers, and it stressed that members must work through the business agent.

Continuing to remain active on all fronts, that March Local 67 sent a resolution to the Pipe Trades Council asking that there be a Canadian "head office" located in Toronto. That action was the initial stage in establishing a U.A. Canadian Director, a desire long-expressed by the local.



Local 67 members (left to right) Pete Stewart, Danny Leach, Art Pater, Vic Cook and Tom Harrison work at the Taylor Forge & Pipe Works engineering and manufacturing company plant sometime during the early 1950s.



Local 67 members (left to right, front row) Sam Hobbs, Herb Barker, Gil Arnott, Art Krotz, Harry Baker and Ed Fletcher; and (back row) Ed Elliott, Jack Hardy, John Bruce and Fred Stone receive their U.A. Years of Service awards during a pin ceremony sometime in the 1950s.

The local next turned to other important issues, and for the first time, talk centered around a pension plan for its members, although that would become a contentious issue for the local in the future. Additional attention was also given to ongoing jurisdictional disputes, advancing the welding trade and the loss of industry, for which the local prepared resolutions to be sent to the Federal Government to act on the disappearance of the textile industry and its idle workers throughout the country.

During the second half of the 1950s, the local also dealt with general items of interest that included establishing a credit union for members. Further issues the local addressed involved a hospitalization plan and group insurance for members; a drive directed to establish a hospital in the east end of the city; and allocating \$10,000 to improve its union hall.

## REFUSING TO BACK DOWN

Unemployment hounded Local 67 in the construction “offseasons” during the early 1960s and, in particular, in 1960 when the carpenters went on strike in Hamilton. In March of that year, 116 members were not working; 108 members were unemployed in May; and in July, 43 members were not working while the local had a deficit of \$5,000 in back dues.

Yet Local 67 was prepared to fight back again with strike action, if necessary, during contract talks that year after its Negotiating Committee rejected a February offer from the master plumbers. After a last-minute meeting with the employers, however, the local received a 40-cent raise in a two-year agreement that provided an immediate 20-cent hourly boost and then two 10-cent raises in 1961.

Meanwhile, trouble had been brewing within the local’s Executive Board, whose members were demanding more autonomy from the U.A. as they were angry at the way in which the International Office in Washington, D.C., was dictating to them. At a special meeting in June 1960, General Organizer Bruce explained that all the local’s officers were to be removed from office and a Committee of Trustees would be appointed to run the Hamilton local’s affairs.

The members refused to accept Brother Bruce’s advice and at one point threatened to leave the U.A. But the general organizer then put the local under U.A. trusteeship and picked an 11-man committee to run the local until the differences with the U.A. were resolved.

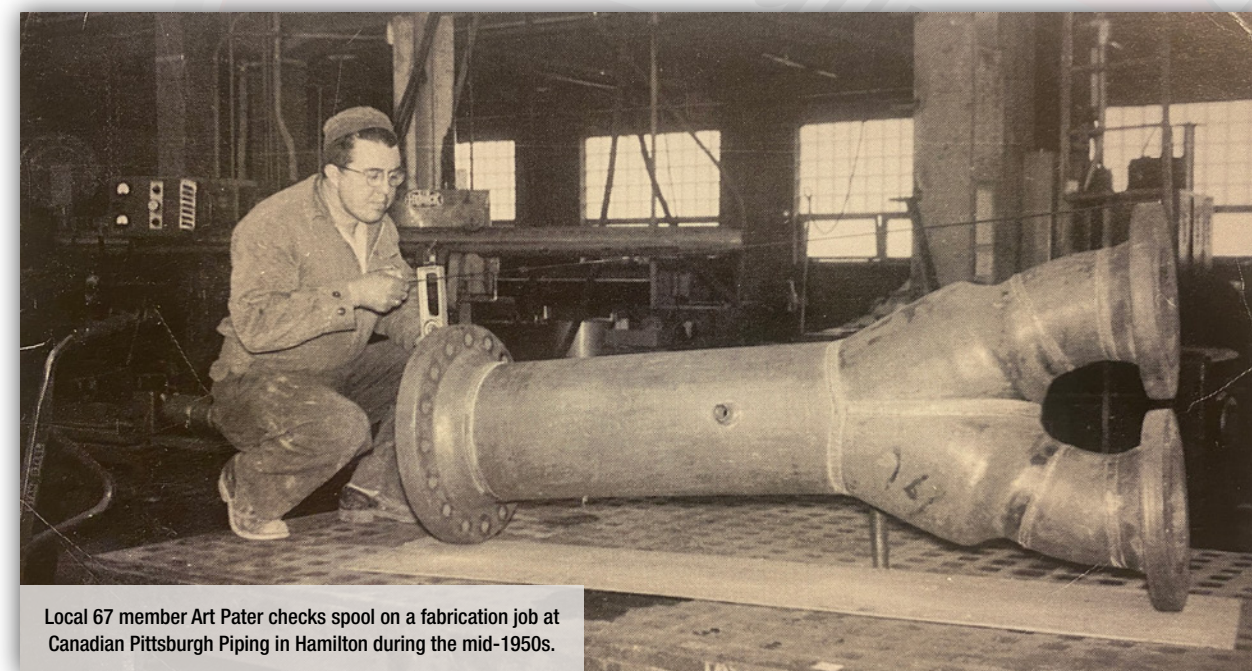
Later in the year, it was also disclosed that the cost of the local’s building, including fees, alterations and new equipment, amounted to \$59,255.77.

The employment trend continued in 1961, during which 129 members were without jobs in January, 91 were not working in April and 89 were unemployed in November. While improvements were made in working

conditions in 1962, including employers being required to pay workers in cash either on a Thursday or Friday and to provide washrooms with running water, in March about 200 members were not working (the local sent food parcels to members who were off work for six weeks).

Regardless, after many months of negotiating, the local rejected a new contract offer from its employing contractors and voted in October in favor of a strike. The employers replied with another offer in November that the local’s membership narrowly voted down, after which in December the local decided to strike before it won a new agreement with a 35-cent-per-hour increase over 15 months.

With members working on jobs at area industrial concerns such as the **Shell Oil** plant and the **C.F. Braun** petrochemical plant in Oakville, the local again threatened to strike in 1964 as its current contract was coming to an end. While the local’s Negotiating Committee asked for a large package that included a shorter workweek consisting of 32 hours or four days, a 55-cent-per-hour wage increase and coffee breaks, the two sides finally settled without too



Local 67 member Art Pater checks spool on a fabrication job at Canadian Pittsburgh Piping in Hamilton during the mid-1950s.

## LOCAL SUPPORTS BROTHERHOOD FROM WITHIN

Fraternal events sponsored by Local 67 for its members and their families have always helped provide camaraderie. Way back in April 1900, for instance, the local held a “Smoking Concert” to which the Master Plumbers’ Association of the local’s employers was invited, while at other times during those earlier years, theatre parties and stag parties were arranged.

Throughout the years since Local 67 was founded in 1899, members have participated in local-supported sports teams that have competed in baseball, hockey, golf, bowling, and soccer leagues – including the annual U.A. softball tournament in Cincinnati. Meanwhile, members and their families have enjoyed yearly picnics, Labour Day parades and Christmas parties, as well as service-award “pin” ceremonies and other more-formal functions and celebrations.

much difficulty even though all of the local’s demands were not met.

By increasing its dues that year, Local 67 was able to elect **Brother A. Woodcraft** as an assistant business agent. The local also took another step forward by re-affiliating with the Hamilton Building Trades Council and the Hamilton Labour Council.

## GAINING NEW REWARDS

Work was plentiful for Local 67 members throughout 1965, with manhours being provided by the **BP refinery** in Bronte and construction of the 14-storey **Terminal Towers** high-rise office building in Hamilton, among other jobs. In

fact, prospects for more work were so promising that at one point the local had 127 apprentices waiting to be processed.

By that time, the local had strongly been considering establishing a **Welfare Plan** for its members through its collective-bargaining agreement with contractors. That year, after the local appointed four trustees to review a plan, after which the membership voted to accept the insurance benefit.

Local 67 set pickets for another strike on June 17, 1966, after the Minister of Labour advised the local that there would be no further conciliation meetings during its contract negotiations with contractors. However, the strike ended one month later on July 17 when the local accepted the employers’ offer.



The Local 67 baseball team (with some family members) during the late 1950s.



Local 67 members (left to right, front row) Don Mains, Ern Latham, Al Espie, George Baikie, Herb Frayne and Mat Rigiel; and (back row) Gil Arnott, Jack Day, Val Sawko, Bill Devlin, Dave Emsic, Charlie Hewitt and Harold Simms pose during a late 1950s Labour Day celebration and parade in Hamilton.

Later that year, the local faced deep internal problems over the installation of non-U.A.-fabricated pipe and fittings on a couple of jobs. In one instance, members on a job for contractor Sheaffer-Townsend project strongly disagreed with an agreement signed by the local that gave the company the right to have the members install the pipe, for \$1,000 to be donated to a worthy cause, that had been fabricated by a non-union shop.

At the local’s next regular meeting, members rebuffed officers who had signed the agreement and passed a motion that the \$1,000 cheque not be cashed but instead be deposited in the local’s safety deposit box. The members then overwhelmingly passed another motion that the local and Sheaffer-Townsend enter into a new agreement that provides that the piping be reworked by the local’s members.

The membership enjoyed favorable employment and work conditions in 1967 and 1968, the former during which the local accepted a record 27 new apprentices for initiation into the union. Among the new

work that was made available were jobs at an expanding Ontario Hydro power plant.

But after the local’s appeal to the International Office to change the Ontario Agreement with Hydro failed, it hired a lawyer to resolve the issue in court in order to have the agreement renegotiated. With the local also dealing with jurisdictional problems at Hydro, including a dispute with the ironworkers over hanging pipe, at the Shell Oil refinery, where Local 67’s jurisdiction had been given to a sister

## HELPING THOSE IN NEED

In addition to supporting appeals from within labour for brothers, sisters and locals in need, Local 67 has a long and proud record of contributing resources, time and talent to worthwhile causes. Donations have been made to the **Big Brothers**, **Red Cross**, **Community Chest**, **Christmas Seals**, **General Hospital** and the **Cerebral Palsy Foundation**, while other appeals the local answered have included requests to help victims of fire, flood and other natural disasters.

## U.A. MERGERS HAVE GROWN LOCAL 67

The U.A. has amalgamated three locals into Local 67 over the years.

Steamfitters and fabrication-workers **Local No. 474** of Hamilton was merged into Local 67 on **August 15, 1972**. The U.A. had organized and chartered Local 474 on May 1, 1953, to represent workers employed by the Crane (or Pittsburgh Piping) pipe-fabricating firm.

Plumbers and pipefitters **Local No. 674** of Brantford was merged into Local 67 on **January 1, 1976**. The U.A. had organized and chartered Local 674 on June 15, 1946.

Plumbers and pipefitters **Local No. 666** of the Niagara Peninsula was merged into Local 67 on **March 1, 2013**. The U.A. had formed and chartered Local 666 on November 25, 1961, with the consolidation of Local No. 244 of St. Catharines, Local No. 595 of Welland and Local No. 784 of Niagara Falls, Ontario. (Local No. 413 of Thorold, Ontario, was later merged into Local 666 on July 1, 1982.)



U.A. local, in late 1968 the refinery work was returned to the Hamilton local.

In more-routine matters, the local decided that it would adopt political association with the New Democratic Party – but without promising financial obligations.

Hard negotiating resulted in just rewards for Local 67 in 1969, during which the Building Trades Council met with employers in January for a discussion on contracts for all trades at one time. But after Local 67 informed the Construction Association that it would sign only its own U.A. agreement, rates continued to be set in accordance with local agreements.

Although work was plentiful as the 1960s were coming to an end, chiefly at the Dofasco

steel plant, in downtown Hamilton development and at **Sheridan College** in Oakville, the local had broken even recently in jurisdictional matters. After settling a dispute with the ironworkers over gas lines at Dofasco, the sheet metal workers union won an assignment at the Shell refinery but the slide valves at BP were allotted to Local 67.

Before the decade was out, however, the local and its 900 members engaged in its longest and most bitter strike beginning May 20, 1969, after the **Mechanical Contractors Association of Hamilton** (M.C.A.H.) had locked out the local during the ongoing strike by carpenters. In response to that and not being paid unemployment insurance and lockout pay amounting to \$40 per week per member, the local set up pickets at the association's headquarters that day, after which a five-month-long work-stoppage followed that forced many members to travel to the jurisdictions of other U.A. locals for work.

After rejecting previous offers from the contractors, a “stormy” five-hour union meeting ended September 28 with members turning down a proposal that would have given them one of the highest wage rates in the construction industry, according to an article in the next day's *Hamilton Spectator*. Finally on October 11, 1969, the local's members accepted by a 486-to-47 vote a contract that gave them a \$7.53-per-hour total wage and fringe-benefits package for journeymen by the following November – which made them not

only the highest-paid U.A. members in Canada but the highest-paid construction workers in the country.

## ENJOYING 'GOOD TIMES'

*“For the members of Local 67, the 1970s was a period of ‘Let the good times roll.’”*

The Local 67 100<sup>th</sup>-anniversary program made that declaration as five major projects in the local's jurisdiction employed its members during the decade: a new **Ontario Hydro Nanticoke Generating Station**, the **Texaco Refinery** in Nanticoke and a Stelco Steel project on Lake Erie in Nanticoke; the erection of “E” blast furnace at **Stelco Hilton Works**; and the “Number 4” furnace at Dofasco. U.A. member “travelers” out of sister locals from all over Canada and the United States even worked in the area throughout that period of high employment to help handle all of the work.

By one point in 1970, 43 fitters, 33 welders, 20 plumbers, five apprentices and seven foremen from Local 67 were working on the Ontario Hydro project, which had started in 1969. With eight coal-fired boilers, it first went online in 1972 before it was completed in 1975.

The local won another favorable collective-bargaining agreement in June 1971 after overwhelming voting to strike again against the M.C.A.H. With the local's members in a fighting mood, after 14 days the local was successful in gaining a beneficial new contract.

The local also continued to grow in size, as at one point in 1972, large numbers of applicants were waiting to be initiated into the local and work on the large projects in its jurisdiction, especially those in Nanticoke.



Local 67 members pose during a job sometime in the 1960s.

When the U.A. merged Hamilton-based **Local No. 474** into Local 67 on August 15, 1972, the local again expanded. The addition of Local 474 members, who were employed by the Crane (or Pittsburgh Piping) pipe-fabricating firm, brought into the Local many highly trained welders and fabricators.

Additional new significant gains realized in 1973 alone included dental insurance and the retirement **Local 67 Pension Plan** for members as fringe benefits in the local's collective-bargaining agreement with its contractors. After four months of negotiating for a new contract, in July of that year the local again carried a strike vote before the M.C.A.H. provided a new agreement that the membership accepted in August.



Local 67 member Art Pater bends pipe for a project while working at Crane Piping during the 1960s.

The contract, which went into effect on August 3, provided a new journeyman base pay rate of \$8.32 per hour until May 1, 1974, after which the wage scale would be \$8.69 per hour for the ensuing year until April 30, 1975. Fringe benefit contributions from the contractors included 3 cents per hour worked by the local's members to the Local 67 Training Fund; 40 cents per hour to the local's Health and Welfare Fund; 25 cents per hour to the Pension Fund; and 10 cents per hour to the local's **Supplementary Unemployment Benefit Fund**.



Local 67 member George Behr works on fabricating a pipe header for a nuclear power plant while working at Crane Piping during the 1960s.

The following year, during which the local restricted the intake of new members even though the construction industry showed signs of being able to keep members busy, the local also endorsed a plan by the British Columbia Building Trades, submitted to the Central Labour Council Convention, whereby decisions made by unions affecting Canadians should be made by Canadians, and all Canadian union officials should be elected by Canadians. The resolution was a direct challenge to U.S.-based unions such as

the U.A. and would allow their Canadian members more rights on issues that were purely Canadian in nature.

Also in 1974, among the jobs providing ample manhours for union plumbers and fitters, construction began on the \$490-million Texaco Refinery in 1974 and was completed in 1978. During this period, Stelco built the **Lake Erie Steel Works**, which included a large blast furnace, a basic oxygen furnace, a boiler house and coke ovens, with union craftsmen from Local 67.

At the midpoint of the decade, Local 67 was considered a force to be reckoned with, both by other trades, who attempted to poach the work of the U.A., and the employers, who were aware that the local was prepared to fight for its rights.

Case in point, after the M.C.A.H. presented a 19-point ultimatum to Local 67 during the next round of new-contract negotiations in April 1975, the local promptly refused them and instead voted to strike. Consequently, on May 29, the local's Negotiating Committee reached a tentative two-year agreement with the contractors, which on May 31, 740 of the local's 1,300 total membership voted to accept by a 659-to-71 margin.



Local 67 members march in the Hamilton Labour Day Parade during the late 1960s.

The new pact provided the local's journeymen with a total wage-and-benefits package of \$13.69 per hour, which included vacation pay amounting to \$1.14 an hour and improvements in the Health and Welfare and Pension plans, as well as an increase in compensation for travel to jobsites from 16 cents to 20 cents per mile.

In comparison with the other Ontario U.A. locals that negotiated new agreements at that time, Hamilton's was a superior contract. What's more, the pact represented the highest construction package rate in Canada.

The U.A. amalgamated another local into Local 67 the following year when it merged Brantford-based **Local No. 674** and its 140-plus members into its Hamilton-based sister on January 1, 1976. The possibility of such a merger had been raised as far back as 1966, when some members of the Brantford Local began pressing for the move, which was affected after Local 674 Business Manager Bob Searle, who opposed a merger, was replaced in a local election.

More dramatic change came for Local 67 when on May 3, 1977, it held its first general membership meeting in its new union hall at **300 Fennell Avenue, East** in Hamilton, which it had purchased for \$250,000. The facility not only contained the local's offices and training classrooms, but also additional office space for rent, one of the best banquet halls in the city and the "Club 67" where members could gather socially and for recreation.

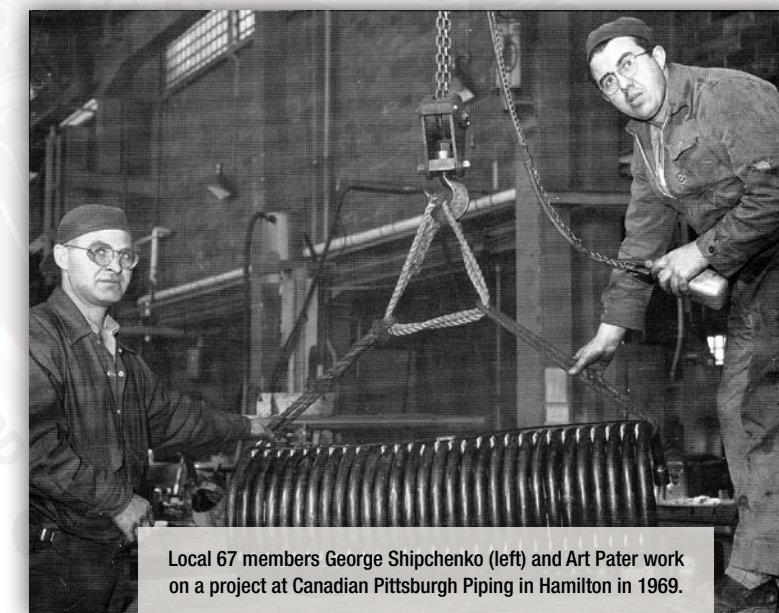
## LOCAL 67 SCHOLARSHIP AIDS STUDENTS

Officers and members started the **Local 67 Scholarship Fund** in 1999 to supply scholarships for immediate family members who would be attending college. The fund was initiated by the members with a \$10,000 donation.

That year, the first-ever recipient of the scholarship was **Melanie Bliedung**, the daughter of **Brother John Bliedung** and his wife, Darlene. In a letter of thanks to the local, Melanie wrote, "I am proud to know my father and brother both are part of a union that is helping encourage people to further their education."

But while Local 67 opposed provincial-wide bargaining for contracts, by that time the government had it in place and that year the U.A. designated the Ontario Pipe Trades Council to act as bargaining agent for the local and its sister locals throughout the province. When the government instructed all trades in provincial bargaining to comply with it by April 1979, the local set out to lead the way in making such bargaining work – but only after warning of the potential for turmoil and instability resulting from the bargaining structure.

But first, when it came time to negotiate for a new agreement for the local's 1,600 members through provincial-wide bargaining in 1978, a vote to consider strike action in



Local 67 members George Shipchenko (left) and Art Pater work on a project at Canadian Pittsburgh Piping in Hamilton in 1969.



Local 67 members (left to right) Adam Ritchie, Al Zanberg, Vic Langdon, Al Pottruff and (kneeling) John Birchall on a job at the Petro-Canada Oakville Refinery circa 1973.

May was passed. But a month later, a contract that would go into effect June 15 was accepted province-wide by only a slim majority of votes, providing a \$1.50-per-hour raise for the local for a total package of \$15.52 per hour.

What's more, the local on June 27 approved allocation of some of that pay increase to a new **Health and Welfare Plan** for members.

**Maintenance agreements** were on the horizon as the prosperous 1970s ended and the Canadian economy sagged into the next decade. Indeed, primarily as the result of the use of new technology and products, which made the "shut down" to upgrade large industrial facilities – an important supplier of manhours for the local – less frequent, maintenance work would become a main source of employment for Local 67 in future years.

## DOING WHAT'S NECESSARY

During the early 1980s, Local 67's employment picture was again poor as the country endured an economic recession. The local's employers attempted to capitalize on the situation by demanding a return to several items the local had gained through collective bargaining; namely, a 40-hour week; cutting back jobsite show-up time; and giving bosses the right to veto the union's choices of shop stewards.

In response, the local took a strike vote in 1980 during negotiations for a new working contract with the M.C.A.H. The local was again victorious when the agreement gave it a wage-and-benefits journeyman pay package of \$18.57 per hour.

But at one point in 1981, 410 of the local's fitters and 122 of its welders were out of work, while most of the employed members were employed at Stelco or Dofasco. The high unemployment, high mortgage rates and the high inflation prompted Local 67 to seek political action, and it agreed to donate \$100 to the Brantford and District Labour Council towards hiring buses to send protesters to Ottawa.

The next year, a 13-week-long provincewide U.A. strike beginning May 25 tied up an estimated \$8 million in construction projects across Ontario, while Local 67 paid out approximately \$300,000 in strike pay to its members during the shutdown. The contract in dispute covered work in the industrial commercial and institutional sector of the construction industry, while the union also had agreements in at least six other divisions, including electrical power systems, Ontario Hydro, universities and school boards, pipelines and residential construction.

During the contentious quarrel, both sides even escalated a "war of words," as the August



Local 67 members participating in a Steamfitters Course at George Brown College, Casa Loma Campus, in March 1974.



Local 67 members march in the 1975 Labour Day Parade in Hamilton.

12, 1982, *Hamilton Spectator* reported. The **Mechanical Contractors Association of Ontario** published a newspaper ad and issued a news release charging that the union's voting structure was hampering a negotiated end to the strike, according to the newspaper, saying that offers were rejected by many plumbers and pipefitters who were employed in other sectors of the construction industry and not involved in the strike. The union discounted the contractors' complaints and countered them by noting that "many plumbers and pipefitters were lucky if they made \$12,000 a year under the economic recession."

The strike ended in late August after the plumbers and pipefitters accepted a two-year agreement that gave them a \$4-per-hour increase in wages and benefits, including \$2.50 per hour upon ratification, 50 cents in November and \$1 the following May. Afterward, *The Spectator* reported in its October

4, 1982, issue that while the \$4 package improvement became an industry-wide pattern during building-trade negotiations that year, "the plumbers had demanded \$4.50, claiming the contractors did not get around to offering even \$4 until well after the strike began."

The persistence of high unemployment and the burden of multi-trade bargaining continued to badger Local 67 throughout the remainder of the first half of the 1980s. At a time when the local's unemployment soared to nearly 1,000 members, all efforts were being made to secure



Local 67 delegates to the 1976 U.A. convention were: (left for right, front row) Don Walker, Richard Murchie, Gord McCymont, Archie Robertson, Charlie Hewitt and Hugh Kerrigan; and (back row) Chuck Gibson, Dan Allen, Don Bock, Trevor Byron, John Thomas, Lee Ellis, Bert Creary, Dave Forbes and Jiff Copoc.



Local 67 members (left to right, front row) Brother Whitham, Brother Rostron, Brother Harrower, Brother Gargarello and Brother Connor; and (back row) Brother Hewitt, Brother Wilson, Brother Creary and Brother Kerrigan pose during the local's U.A. Years of Service awards pin ceremony in 1985.

work for members and even cut costs to become more competitive; subsequently, the local fashioned a new Maintenance Agreement with a change from 36-hour 40-hour workweeks and a reduction in pay.

The local also urged its members to become more politically active by pressing their members of Parliament to work for their interests and those of union piping labour.

At the same time as the Ontario Pipe Trades Council was holding its first meeting concerning a new contract in 1984, other trades

were joining themselves into groups for the purpose of negotiating a contract. However, Local 67 strongly opposed that strategy, which it saw as an attempt to set a rigid pattern for negotiating that had proven to be difficult to break.

Concurrently, despite the fact that 800 of its members were unemployed, the local roundly rejected an M.C.A.H. contract offer, as it was determined to set a proper pattern for settlement, even though negotiations could continue into 1985. But the Pipe Trades Council was able to reach an agreement with the contractors in May.

## STILL MOVING FORWARD

Low employment continued into the second half of the 1980s, but by 1986 maintenance work had become the main source of employment for Local 67 members, who were working under two maintenance agreements designed to provide jobs to the building trades. The U.A. **General President's Agreement for Plant Maintenance** had been used in refineries for a number of years and had been expanded to Stelco Lake Erie in the early 1980s, while the **National Maintenance Agreement** was designed for



Local 67 retiree Sam Gargarello (center) displays his 50-year U.A. Service Award that he received during the local's 90th Anniversary Celebration in 1989, while flanked by U.A. Canadian Director Russ St. Eloi (left) and Local 67 officer Rod Simpson.

work predominantly within the steel industry.

Meanwhile, Local 67 was making further use of its building by providing space to its Health and Welfare Fund administrator, Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee (J.A.T.C.) and credit union. The local also benefited by receiving rental income from those tenants.

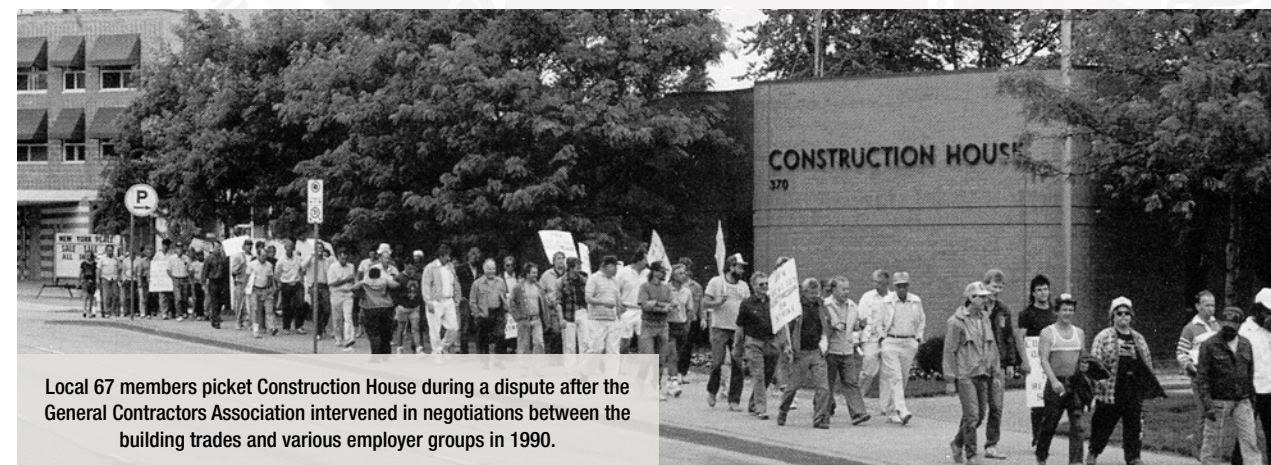
The local was also leading the way at the time to have on-site flush toilets made available on construction sites whenever practicable. But it would be a while before legislation was actually passed to address the issue and amend the Construction Safety Act.

Subsequent contracts and the newest that went into effect on May 1, 1987, increased wages and benefits for Local 67 journeyman members in Hamilton to a total of \$25.34 per hour over the following year. The agreement also set wages and benefits for members in Brantford, who would earn a total of \$23.73 per hour during the year.

The M.C.A.H. took the local before the Ontario Labour Relations Board that year after filing a grievance against the local over apprenticeship-intake and the interpretation



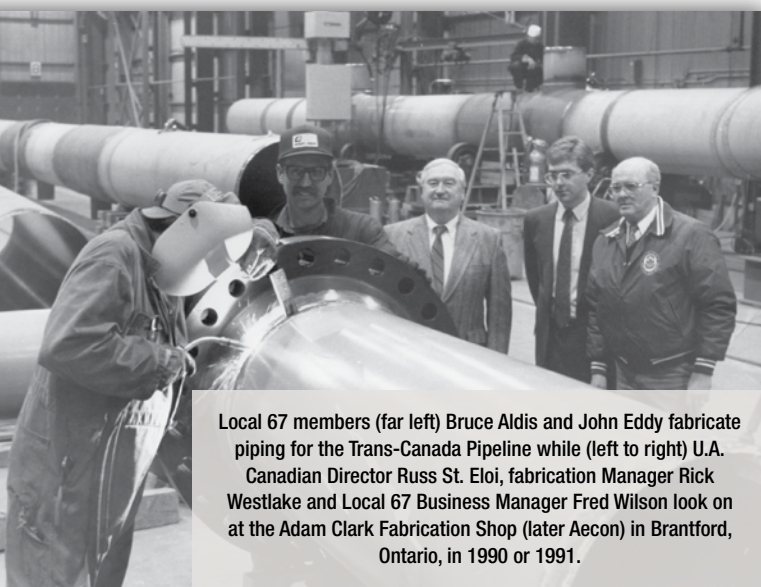
Former Local 67 officers Charlie Hewitt (left) and Trevor Byrne display their gifts during a dinner/dance celebration recognizing their contributions to the local held in 1990.



Local 67 members picket Construction House during a dispute after the General Contractors Association intervened in negotiations between the building trades and various employer groups in 1990.



Local 67 retirees and (center, front row) Brother Rostron, Brother Connor, Brother Gargarello and Brother Whitham display their U.A. Years of Service awards during the local's 90th Anniversary Celebration in 1989 while joined by (front row) International Representative Bill Weil (far left) and International Representative Robert Watson (far right), and (back row) Local 67 President Fred Spice, Business Agent Hugh Kerrigan, Canadian Director Russ St. Eloi, Business Manager Fred Wilson, Ontario Pipe Trades Council (O.P.T.C.) Business Manager Trevor Byrne, Special U.A. Rep. U.A. Canadian Office Representative George Meservier, International Representative Mich Grenier, U.A. Treasurer Charles Habig and O.P.T.C. President Bill McRoberts.



Local 67 members (far left) Bruce Aldis and John Eddy fabricate piping for the Trans-Canada Pipeline while (left to right) U.A. Canadian Director Russ St. Eloi, fabrication Manager Rick Westlake and Local 67 Business Manager Fred Wilson look on at the Adam Clark Fabrication Shop (later Aecon) in Brantford, Ontario, in 1990 or 1991.

of the agreement. The contractors wanted to decide who they were going to hire, but they lost the grievance and their two appeals to the initial decision.

Negotiations for a new provincial agreement were concluded in 1988 with the union accepting the offer of a \$3 increase over two years. Although some other trades went on strike, none was able to gain any more than what Local 67 achieved in its contract.

As of May 1, 1988, the local's wage schedule amounted to \$26.97 per hour, which would be raised on May 1, 1989, to \$28.49. That new scale gave the Hamilton local the highest pay rate in Ontario.

Also that year, the local began leasing the banquet hall in its building, which had almost always lost money, to Hillcrest, a major caterer in Hamilton. Hillcrest, who often used the hall for functions, agreed to a deal whereby it would lease the hall for an amount that was equal to the monthly mortgage owed by the local.

With the entire country seemingly in recession in 1989, Local 67 was not too affected by the slump as its members were kept relatively busy on a number of significant

projects. Those included construction and installation of the \$180-million **"Z" Line** at Stelco that would produce both conventional and special heat-treated galvanized steel; a mill at Dofasco; and work at Ontario Hydro in preparation for the installation of scrubbers, which was to be a multi-million dollar job.

## EXPERIENCING NEW LOWS

With Local 67 members working on a range of jobs as it entered the 1990s, including the **Z Line** and the new, \$30-million **Commerce Place Tower** in Hamilton, the latter was the first major construction project to be brought to a halt when about 32,000 Ontario building-tradespeople, including the local's plumbers and fitters, went on strike after their contracts with employing contractors expired on April 30, 1990. Elsewhere, among scores of other construction sites on which Local 67 members were employed that would be shut down by the strike was the \$41.6-million, 15,235-square-meter expansion of the **Hamilton Regional Cancer Centre**.

The local's 1,300 plumbers and pipefitters returned to work eight weeks later after the



Local 67 delegates to the 1991 U.A. convention were: (left for right, front row) Charlie Hewitt, Rod Simpson, Harry Cybulski, Fred Wilson, Fred Spicer, Hugh Black and John Tweedie; and (back row) Jim McMahon, Howie Murray, Bruno Pasinato, Neil McCormick, Jim Wilson, John McVey and Les Ellerker.



Local 67 members (left to right, front row) Pat Duggan, Jim Smillie Jr., Ray Daga, John Fischer, Terry Williamson, Dave Halchuk and Eric Capoferri; (middle row) Frank Caporale and Bruce Henderson; and (back row) Fred Leeming, Dave Leckie, Bert Creary, Bill Merritt, Gene Ingram, Rudy Bigcanoe, Don Graham, Ted Martin, Alan Dupon, Ross MacDonald, Gabor Pasztor, Ray Bergeron and Cleve Campbell pose while working on a portion of a skid in the Calorific Fabrication Shop in 1998 that would later be shipped overseas once completed, after the project was gained for its employer through the local's Market Recovery Fund.

provincial Ontario Pipe Trades Council collectively voted narrowly in favor of a new, two-year contract on July 4. While Local 67 was opposed to the agreement, voting 87-percent against the deal, the new pact provided plumbers and pipefitters with a \$2-per-hour pay increase in its first year and an additional \$1.75 per hour for the second year, at which time the local's total wage-and-benefits package through April 30, 1992, would be \$32.09 per hour for Hamilton workers and \$30.48 per hour for workers in Brantford.

"Obviously, our members in Hamilton and Brampton will be extremely disappointed with the results," Local 67 **Business Manager Fred Wilson** told *The Hamilton Spectator* the next day, "but we'll have to bite the bullet and accept it." During the strike, the local had assessed employed members \$20 per day and paid striking members \$100 per week initially, \$150 per week two weeks before the strike ended and \$250 for the final week.

Meanwhile, having been reluctant to allow new members into the local because of the fear that too many members would cause unemployment. But by the 1990s, the local had begun to embrace the thought and come to an understanding that a non-union plumber was a

bigger threat to employment possibilities, and the local was accepting new members again.

The increases in new initiation fees and also in its dues "check off" system, with which employers submitted local dues for members through their earnings, helped place the local on solid financial footing during the early 1990s as well. While the industrial base in its jurisdiction

## RETIREES CLUB UNITES

Retired Local 67 members formed their own organization and were officially recognized as the **Retired Members' Association** in June 1987. The club elected **Brother Gil Amott** as its first president.

was shrinking, Local 67 was healthy nonetheless – although it seemed its future had to include residential-type work, of which the local had done little throughout the years.

Also by 1991, upwards of 70 members were working in the **Adam Clark U.A. fabricating shop** in Brantford, which had been opened in late 1990. The successful operation employed those fitters and welders, who worked in two



Local 67 members working on construction of the Thorold Cogeneration Station natural gas-fired power plant in 2009 before it would be brought into operation in March 2010.



shifts at the time, under the **U.A. Commercial Pipe Shop Fabrication Agreement**.

But the Canadian economy stalled as the early 1990s progressed, leaving about 8,000 of the 18,000 building-trades craftspeople in Hamilton and Brantford, including many Local 67 plumbers and fitters, unemployed by November 1992. In response, Local 67 members joined hundreds of other building trades members from around the province in a November 24 rally at Hamilton City Hall to demand that legislators all at levels address the floundering construction industry.

In contract negotiations that year, Local 67 protested the M.C.A.H. proposition to give “tear-out” work of existing plumbing in demolition or renovation jobs to the labourers union, as it was customary for the U.A. to take out their own work. After a week-long strike during which the local overwhelmingly rejected by a 98-percent “nay” vote an offer for a \$3.63-per-hour increase in wages and benefits over three years, the membership accepted the same financial offer in an agreement from which the contractors withdrew their “tear-out” clause.

After new **Business Manager Harry Cybulski** was voted into the position that year, one of his first priorities was to keep an “Asbestos Exposure Log Book,” from which he soon realized there was a major health problem affecting members who were exposed to asbestos fibres for long periods of time while on the job. Ultimately, the research and information provided by the book became important in lawsuits against asbestos manufacturers, who were made responsible for the health problems they created and were ordered to compensate people affected by their products, as well as the creation of new regulations for the use and handling of asbestos that were implemented across North America.

Also during that time, for the first time in its history Local 67 successfully contested certifications of non-union contractors. All previous certifications had been through



Local 67 member steamfitters and welders working with Modern Niagara Mechanical on construction of the Maple Leaf Foods meat-processing facility at Red Hill Business Park in Hamilton in 2013, one of the largest refrigeration projects ever undertaken by U.A. members after it began in 2009.

voluntary recognition, whereby the employer agreed to sign an agreement.

But in large part as a result of the falling demand for petroleum products and electricity, Ontario Hydro canceled some of its projects while others were delayed due to environmental concerns, adding to the local’s unemployment. As such, in October 1992 the local had 716 members out of work while that year, 81 percent of construction in the Hamilton area was performed by non-union labor.

Although the Local 67 U.A. agreement prevented the local from assisting the employers to compete and secure work for members, the local and the M.C.A.H. worked on setting up other agreements for certain types of light industrial maintenance and also continued to discuss the possibility of a residential agreement.

As 1993 began with 764 members unemployed, the local approved a **Stabilization Fund** at the cost of 50 cents per hour worked by members to be used to help companies fight non-union competition. (However, the decision would later be disapproved by the M.C.A.H., which claimed the monies should be deducted from the base rate,



Local 67 member Aaron Hamilton (right) works with U.A. Local 787 member Ryan McDonald on construction of the Maple Leaf Foods meat-processing facility in 2013.



Local 67 members Kevin Slattery (left) and Joseph Richard work on the Maple Leaf Foods meat-processing facility in 2013.

meaning all funds that had been contributed by the membership had to be refunded.)

The local also approved an internal resolution that it would cease making financial contributions to any political party. As a result, close ties that had been encouraged with the New Democratic Party came to an end.

The year 1993 still ended with a total of 630 members unemployed. But by that time, the concerns of the local's members were moving away from the purely local spectrum, and issues that at one time could be settled locally had become provincial matters. Indeed, the Ontario Pipe Trades Council had become, at the very least, the mouthpiece of many issues facing Local 67 during the 1990s.

## An 'Attitude Change'

“The year 1995 marked the advent of an attitude change for Local 67 members,” the Local 67 100<sup>th</sup>-anniversary program declared just four years later, “and service to the members set the tone of events for the latter part of the decade.”

Seeking changes as it entered the second half of the 1990s, Local 67 approved computerizing of its dispatching system, which had not been changed for many years, and also urged tighter voting procedures for the upcoming local elections. The large number of candidates seeking office in 1995 demonstrated that desire for a change from the status quo in the local.

(Later, another change was implemented in the dispatching system whereby job listings would be put on phone messages, allowing the members to inquire about employment opportunities without having to travel to the union hall and wait for an opportunity.)

Meanwhile, unacceptable levels of long-term unemployment reinforced the local's collective conviction that the Market Recovery Fund and an aggressive organizing campaign were needed to return the local to a healthier state of affairs. Concurrently, they also more-readily accepted the philosophy that unions needed to “organize the unorganized” to survive and prosper.

New **Business Manager Neil McCormick** acted quickly to implement a wage and cost

stabilization plan for construction projects that would assist contractors with bidding after he was elected to the top position in 1995, meeting that July with the M.C.A.H. to discuss the topic. That October, he moved that the Market Recovery Fund of \$1 per hour per member be implemented and initiated, and by the following month it was in place.

Before the year was out, the fund had secured a job at **Chedoke Hospital** in Hamilton. Regardless, the local still had 512 members on its out-of-work list.

But by June 1997, the Market Recovery Fund had been used for 55 jobs on which union contractors bid, and it successfully helped those employers win 28 of those. With that, it created 23,960 manhours of work.

At the end of the year, the local's work situation continued to improve, with the out-of-work list reduced to 324 members. There were also 133 U.A. members from out of town on travel cards working in the area at that time.

Seeking even more ways to advance union piping labour, the local by 1997 realized



Local 67 member Brother Garry T. Ellerker, who passed away unexpectedly on April 30, 2016, at age 62.

that its current union-hall facility could not accommodate the training that was required in the late 1990s and the future, which at the time the U.A. was promoting as a method to compete with the non-union threat. To that end, that year the business manager appointed a committee to investigate the feasibility of selling the property at 300 Fennell Avenue, East and purchasing another building that

## HOCKEY TOURNEY BUILDS BROTHERHOOD

Local 67 had held its **Annual Hockey Tournament** for U.A. locals since 1991. Since that time, it has become a staple of the local while bringing together brothers and sisters with locals from across Canada and the United States.



Local 67 retirees receiving their 50-year U.A. Service awards in 2019 were Jerry Arabski, Afton Sam Arnold, Raymond Austin, Dennis Barker, John Bellini, John Berger, Hugh Black, George Bolton, John Boyd, Richard Budd, Gunter Burger, Edmond Carbonneau, Ralph Condello, Peter Dahl, Pasquale Filice, Hansel Fros, James Galea, Ronald Gravelle, Gary Graybiel, Tullio Greco, Raymond Gunn, John Heaney, Gerald Holyome, Fred Hutchison, Patrick Kelly, Jom Lanigan, Andre Lupien, David Luxon, Trevor Marciano, Ted Martin, Peter McConnachie, Dan McIntyre, William McMaster, Ernest Meger, John Miller, George Neven, William Orgill, Joe Patko, F.A. Pottruff, Denis Robert, Hartley Smith, J. Rick Usher, Winston Walters and Ethelbert Wilkinson.



Generations of Local 67 members together at the local's Union Hall in 2020 are (left to right) Robert Murray Luxon, Ken Luxon, Zachary Luxon and Dave Luxon.

could be used as a modern training centre as well as a union hall.

The local then added another business agent to its staff in 1998 to help adequately protect its jurisdiction. Using the U.A. Constitution, Business Manager McCormick appointed **Brother Bob Bolan** to assist him and **Business Agent Howie Murray**.

When Local 67 reached its 100<sup>th</sup> charter anniversary in 1999, which it celebrated with a gala dinner-dance on June 11 at the War Plane Heritage Museum at Mount Hope, it was building a new union hall and \$26-million modern training centre. Meanwhile, it was pouring money into its training programs to ensure a supply of skilled workers for the future, about which Business Manager McCormick declared in the June 2, 1999, *Hamilton Spectator*. "We know that we have to stay on top of training needs if we expect to stay employed."

## NEW HALL, OLD ISSUES

The new "Y2K" (Year 2000) Millennium brought with it new achievements and new challenges for Local 67 as it made its way through its next quarter-century and towards its 125<sup>th</sup> charter anniversary in 2024. Most notably, the local settled into its new Union Hall and Training Centre at **195 Dartnall Road** in Hamilton as it entered the 2000s.

With Brother Murray taking over as business manager in 2000, the local's membership was kept busy during the first half of the new decade with a large amount of commercial and industrial work. Those jobs included new hospital builds and renovations, for which members were primarily installing piping for medical-gas systems, and institutional work at schools that featured constructing and upgrading college residences in the local's jurisdiction.

Elsewhere, industrial work on which Local 67 members were employed included construction beginning in 2004 of a new, \$368 million, 83,600-square-meter candy-manufacturing plant in Brantford for Italian confectionery giant **Ferrero** that would be operational in October 2006. The local's



While the Local 67 Christmas Party in 2020 was canceled because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the local did host a "drive-by" Santa Claus, who wore his mask for protection from the disease while greeting the local's families.

plumbers, fitters and welders were also employed during that time on reheat furnace projects at Stelco Steel and Dofasco and a reline job for the No. 2 blast furnace Dofasco.

However, work in the local's jurisdiction and, subsequently, employment for its members slowed dramatically beginning in 2005. Over the next decade, the local faced its share of challenges with the deindustrialization of steel, paper and manufacturing mills in the Hamilton region.

Many Local 67 members traveled to the jurisdictions of other U.A. locals during that time for work, including Sarnia, Ontario, **Local No. 663** for maintenance and upgrade shutdowns at the Suncor and Imperial Oil plants in its territory, as well as work through **Local No. 666** in Niagara at the **Cytec Industries** (now Solvay) chemical manufacturing site in Niagara. In their home jurisdiction, Local 67 members were able to gain manhours on jobs such as an expansion of the **Bunge Canada** agriculture-processing facilities with a new vegetable-oil plant in Hamilton and upgrades to the city's **St. Joseph's Hospital**.

During that time, **Brother Bob Bolan** served as the local's business manager from 2007 into 2009. **Brother Mark Ellerker** succeeded Brother Bolan when he was elected to the position and served as business manager from 2009 into 2015.

As work remained mostly stagnant throughout much of 2010 and 2011, reprieves came and went with employment through other U.A. locals and occasional jobs in and around Hamilton. Those included expansion of **McAsphalt Industries**, a leading asphalt-products manufacturer, with a new processing and shipping facility.

By that time, Local 67 officials and members knew they had to diversify the local's focus to



Local 67 members work on a project at the ESSO Nanticoke, Ontario, oil refinery in 2022.

regain employment. In doing so, they would look at all sectors of work opportunities, including commercial, institutional, residential and light industrial.

One of those opportunities appeared in 2012 with the start of construction of the new **Maple Leaf Foods meat processing facility** at Red Hill Business Park in the suburbs of Hamilton, the largest and most technologically advanced plant of its kind in Canada. Local 67 members, along with members from U.A. refrigeration **Local No. 787** and sprinklerfitting **Local No. 853** performed key roles on the project, which when completed in early 2014 began processing 400 different types of deli meats and hot dogs.

Local 67's crew numbered more than 220 members at peak manpower, who by project's end had installed more than 104,000 linear



Local 67 retiree Italo DiDomenico, a member since April 16, 1946, poses after receiving his 75-year U.A. Service Award in 2022, at which time he was the local's longest-standing member, with Business Agent Ken Luxon (left) and Business Manager Nathan Bergstrand (right).

meters of pipe. "Local 67 members have worked collectively to meet all their contractors' building schedules and have proven there is nothing that can't be accomplished through hard work, determination and cooperation," Business Manager Ellerker declared after work on the largest meat processing plant in North America was completed.

Those U.A. craftspeople, along with travelers from locals across Canada, "performed outstandingly" on the project, Maple Leaf Foods Director of Engineering Robert Kaminski also said at the time. "The quality of work from the welds to the installation was excellent. The U.A. always got the job done for us, which is important because we are always changing the specs as we go along."

In order to strengthen the U.A. presence in the region, the international union merged Local 666 into Local 67 on **March 1, 2013**, thereby increasing the local's territory to include the Niagara Peninsula and its membership by about 500 plumbers, fitters and

apprentices. The local would maintain a satellite branch office in Niagara to better service the members in that area.

At that time, Local 67 was a firmly industrial-based member local that included a combination of plumbers, steamfitters, welders and metal trades craftspeople. With a membership of more than 2,100, it now serviced the southwest corner of Lake Ontario and included the Niagara Peninsula, Haldimand, Norfolk, Brant, Halton and Hamilton-Wentworth regions.

But closures and downsizing of industrial facilities such as the Petro Canada refinery and the former Stelco Hilton Works steel mill, which new owner U.S. Steel was shuttering, was gutting the region's industry. With the completion of the Maple Leaf Foods plant, work and employment again decreased dramatically beginning in 2014.



Local 67 retiree Sabatino Paolini (third from right), a member since December 2, 1958, received his 65-year U.A. Service Award in 2023, after which he stands at the awards ceremony with (left to right) Local 67 business agents Steve Murray, Ken Luxon and Don Krieg and Business Manager Nathan Bergstrand; and his family.

## Local 67 Training And Education

### COMMITTED TO PREPARING ONLY THE BEST WORKFORCE

Ever since it was organized in 1899, Local 67 has made training its members to be skilled piping craftspeople a priority. While it did not have a structured, formal training program in place to educate its apprentices during its first several decades, trainees new to the industry were taught over a period of five or even six years through the system of apprenticeship.

Incorporating that time-tested method of building-trades education, apprentices work with veteran member journeyman plumbers and pipefitters on jobsites to learn the trade. The trainees are paid during the apprenticeship, in essence "earning while they are learning" as the local's apprentices continue to do in 2024.

Even during the earliest times of that period of informal training, Local 67 sought ways to improve its educational offerings. In one such instance, the local joined other Ontario-based building trades locals in 1909 to lobby public-school-systems to institute programs to supplement on-the-job training. As a result, one of the first in Canada was the **Hamilton Technical School** that was built in 1909.

By 1955, Local 67 was placing further emphasis on education in order to supply a well-prepared workforce for an influx of jobs. At that time, **Business Manager Harry Barker** stressed setting up a school to train members in the various methods of the trade (and the local even made a suggestion to the Ontario Pipe Trades Council to set up a school for the training of business agents).

Attention to developing and advancing apprentice training continued into the next decade, during which in 1965 the superintendent of Hamilton's public schools arranged new building-trades curriculum, including plumbing and pipefitting for night classes. Meanwhile, the training for fifth-



A Local 67 apprentice class and instructors sometime during the 1990s.

year Local 67 apprentices in welding was already being held in the local's training room at its union hall.

The **Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee (J.A.T.C.)**, the body of an equal number of union and employer representatives that oversaw the Local 67 training program, then established an Applications Committee to review potential apprentice candidates, which held its first meeting in June 1965. By that time, the collective-bargaining agreement between the local and its employers of the Mechanical Contractors Association of Hamilton included a fringe benefit that provided a 3-cent contractor contribution for each hour worked by Local 67 members into the **Local 67 Training Fund** to finance the J.A.T.C. programs.

Then in the late 1980s, Local 67 opened a welding shop at its union hall on Fennell Avenue in Hamilton in which welding classes were held. The local moved out of that building in 1999 and into its current union hall on Darthall Road in no small part to have more room to establish its modern, spacious **Local 67 Training Centre**.

Soon after moving into the new facility, **Business Manager Neil McCormick** declared in an article in the June 2, 1999, *Hamilton Spectator*.

**"We know that we have to stay on top of training needs if we expect to stay employed."**

From there, the J.A.T.C. continues to provide industry-best training programs for apprentices, journeypersons and metal-trades members of Local 67 through a five-year, U.A.-sanctioned apprenticeship training program and regular journey-level upgrade courses that keep members up to date on industry advancements and certifications.



(Left to right) Local 67 training instructor Chris Legris, Training Coordinator Dale McGavin and member Doug Hynes work on controlled bolting in the local's training centre in 2023.



Local 67 members at work at BMF Fabrications in Brantford, Ontario, in April 2024.

## EFFECTING ITS RECOVERY

Construction work and employment were still sluggish in 2015 – although Local 67 members did complete a successful job at Oakville Hospital that year – and the local's General Fund reflected that stagnation. From April to October of that year, the fund's balance dipped from \$1.384 million to just below \$877,000.

When current Local 67 **Business Manager Nathan Bergstrand** took over the position in 2015, he and his staff were tasked with rebuilding the fund. Among initial efforts was a review of manpower and ways to reduce costs, and in September the local held discussions with the M.C.A.H. regarding ways to increase market share with advertising.



That year, the local and the U.A. also finalized their Maintenance Agreement with General Motors (GM), which was operating automobile-production plants within the local's jurisdiction at St. Catharines and Ingersoll, Ontario. Additionally, negotiations in late 2015 for the local's members working in the gas-distribution sector yielded a new, five-year contract with a 1.75-percent wage increase.

Local 67 members during that time worked on various projects such as a project at the **Monarch Plastics** facility in Oakville in 2016 and the cogeneration combined heat-and-power plant at McMaster University beginning in 2017. Elsewhere, increased work in the **Aecon** fabrication shop and a shutdown at the **ESSO oil refinery** (operated by Imperial Oil, which is owned by ExxonMobil) in Nanticoke also employed members.

But unemployment persisted among Hamilton's and Niagara's union plumbers and fitters. In June 2017, roughly 25 percent of the local's members hired out through the union hall were not working.

As the national economy improved, so did work for Local 67, which steadily increased over the final years of the decade. Among other projects that supplied a boost in manhours for the local during that time was additional work at Dofasco and construction of a (US)\$165-million, 46,500-square-meter **General Electric** (GE) factory in Welland, Ontario, which when completed in 2018 would initially produce the U.S. company's new reciprocating gas engines.

What's more, in 2018 Local 67 began to focus on the residential market. In doing so, the local increased its market share exponentially over the next few years and laid the foundation for several hundred members to work in that sector by the local's 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2024.

With more members working again, in June 2018 the local's General Fund rebounded back to a balance of more than \$1.5 million.

After going on strike on June 1, 2019, for the first time in three decades, Local 67 was also able to hold the line on 36-hour workweeks and 50/50 dispatch on industrial projects with the successful, provincewide U.A. strike after months-long negotiations between the Ontario Pipe Trades Council and the Mechanical Contractors Association of Ontario broke down. The new collective-bargaining agreement maintained the flexibility that allowed members to schedule personal appointments and training classes without losing employment hours.

The agreement also provided for a total 6.7-percent wage increase over three years for three territorial "zones" created across the local's jurisdiction. With that, annual total wage-and-benefits hourly increases for the local's journeymen amounted to:

- In Hamilton (Zone 9), \$1.33 for the first year, \$1.30 for the second year and \$1.52 for the third year commencing May 1, 2021, and ending on April 20, 2022;
- In Brantford (Zone 9A), \$1.30 for the first year, \$1.26 for the second year and \$1.48 for the third year; and
- In Niagara (Zone 8), \$1.32 for the first year, \$1.28 for the second year and \$1.50 for the third year.

## STRONG INTO YEAR 125

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic that began in early 2020, which claimed the lives of more than 53,000 Canadians and 1-million Americans over the next three years, forced Local 67 to close its offices in March and for many months afterwards. While the local initiated online Executive Board and general membership meetings, it experienced its lowest number of manhours that year in recent records as jobsites were shut down as a precaution against the disease.

Although many members were able to

continue to work as they were deemed “essential” workers on important jobsites and construction projects, the local canceled its annual hockey tournament in 2020 and 2021, and service-award pin ceremonies, picnics and the Labour Day parade were all canceled or heavily modified. Even the local’s annual Christmas parties were held on a drive-thru basis for those couple years as well.

Beginning April 1, 2020, U.A. members from Local 67 and Local 46 worked around the clock to install oxygen lines in temporary COVID-19 facilities across the Province of Ontario. They designed and installed oxygen systems for a 100-bed facility at **Joseph Brant Hospital**, an 80-bed facility at **Trillium Hospital** and a 75-bed facility at the **Owen Sound Arena**.

Each facility had a one-week schedule for its particular scope of work, so the union plumbers and fitters had to finish the projects quickly – while still following all of the COVID-19 distancing protocols. One contractor for whom the members were working even commented to a U.A. member, “Thanks for helping lead the charge in your area of expertise to get us to the finish line. We are proud to have you guys work with us.”

Beginning in 2021 and over the next three years right up to its 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2024, Local 67 saw a huge surge in high-rise residential apartment and condo builds, which employed many of its members. In fact, that market went from working just a couple dozen members years ago to employing hundreds over that time period.

Elsewhere, among other work providing manhours for the local’s members was an electric arc furnace install project at **Valbruna ASW** specialty-steel plant in Welland and cogeneration facilities at GM and Stelco in Nanticoke.

Meanwhile, the Ontario Pipe Trades Council negotiated a new, three-year agreement with the Ontario Mechanical Contractors Association that went into effect on May 1, 2022, and will continue through April 30, 2025. The contact has provided Local 67 with annual wage and benefit increases that has brought the local’s current schedules, beginning May 1, 2024, to:

- In Hamilton (Zone 9), \$51.89 per hour for the base rate and \$74.68 per hour for the total wage-and-benefits package;
- In Brantford (Zone 9A), \$50.08 per hour for the base rate and \$71.65 per hour for the package; and
- In Niagara (Zone 8), \$51.02 per hour in the base rate and \$72.69 per hour for the package.

With that contact in hand, the immediate future for Local 67 looks promising, with members working on construction of a large new 469-bed, \$3.6-billion **South Niagara Hospital** beginning in July 2023. The hospital is expected to take approximately five years to build while employing upwards of 150 U.A. members, with opening planned for summer 2028.

A battery-component plant coming to Port Colborne will also employ up to 200 members for up to six years throughout three phases of the job; electric vehicle expansion at GM in St. Catharines and de-carbonization work at Dofasco will likewise occupy Local 67 members. A steady high-rise residential outlook for the next couple of years, the large chocolate factory job in Brantford that is ongoing, a hydrogen plant on OPG properties in Niagara employing up to 30 members also will keep members working.

What’s more, the pipe-trades council has hired a new organizer for the Local 67 area,



Local 67 members at work at the E.S. Fox Constructors fabrication shop in Hamilton in June 2024.



helping it to focus on organizing new members and contractors over the coming years.

Local 67 can also look back on 125 years of experience, having been part of the building of the residential, commercial and industrial infrastructure in the Hamilton, Halton and Niagara regions over that time. In doing so, the local and its membership can be encouraged and inspired by the many rights and benefits they enjoy for which previous generations initially fought and won.

With a jurisdiction that stretches from the Oakville border, down to Fort Erie and south of Highway 401 in southern Ontario, the members of Local 67 are able to service the vast and diverse territory by remaining among the most highly trained men and women in the piping industry. As such, the local’s achievements will continue to support its sense of pride gained through 125 years of brotherhood and quality craftsmanship, which will help ensure its long-term survival and ability to thrive. ■



## U.A. LOCAL NO. 67 OFFICERS AND STAFF, 2024



**Nathan Bergstrand**  
*Business Manager*  
SINCE 2015



**Ken Luxon**  
*Business Agent*  
SINCE 2018



**Don Krieg**  
*Business Agent*  
SINCE 2013



**Steve Murray**  
*Business Agent*  
SINCE 2022



**Mandy MacDonald**  
*Office Coordinator*  
SINCE 2012



**Melanie Taylor**  
*Office Administration*  
SINCE 2017



**Kayla Krieg**  
*Office Administration*  
SINCE 2021



**Colleen Culp**  
*Bookkeeper*  
SINCE 2022

## RELIABLE ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES INC.

### U.A. LOCAL NO. 67 PENSION AND BENEFITS OFFICE, 2024



**Lisa Cryer**  
*Manager*  
24 YEARS



**Elisa Groves**  
*Pension & Benefits Specialist*  
11 YEARS



**Amanda Paul**  
*Pension & Benefits Specialist*  
THREE YEARS



**Maria Pereira**  
*Administration*  
ONE YEAR



## U.A. LOCAL NO. 67 TRAINING STAFF, 2024



**Dale McGavin**  
*Training Coordinator*  
SINCE 2018



**Mike Bozich**



**Vince Clayton**



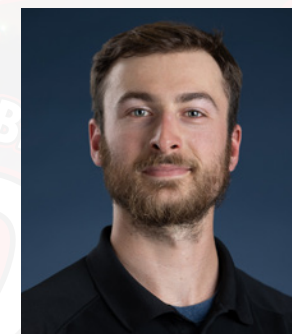
**Mike Engel**



**Adrian Kovacek**



**Mark Kramer**



**Chris Legris**



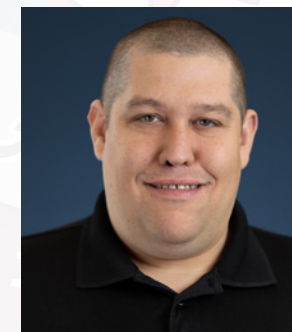
**Eli Maloch**



**Wayne Marzec**



**Ron Nazark**



**Jesse Scott**



**Adam Smith**

NOT PICTURED: Angelo Anzit, Tom Hand Jr., Warren Hyde, Wayne Knox, Chris Paterson, Barrington Price

## WELD SHOP STAFF



**John Noseworthy**  
*Supervisor of Welding and Certification*  
SINCE 2021



**George Aucoin**



**Peter Jursza**

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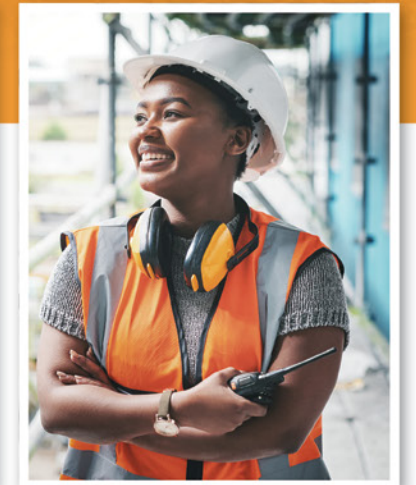
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*General Secretary-Treasurer*

**Mark McManus**  
*General President*

**Michael A. Pleasant**  
*Assistant General President*



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BUSINESS  
MANAGER



*Brett Bozak*  
BUSINESS  
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Business Manager

Brent Payne  
Assistant Business Manager

Pierre Jodoin Marc Laframboise  
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Barry Kenny  
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Dan Goar  
Business Representative

Ron Attig  
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John Bennett  
Business Representative

Sean-Keoni Ellis  
Organizer

Curtis Montag  
Vice-President



[www.ualocal230.org](http://www.ualocal230.org)



*Cape Breton, NS*

**CONGRATULATIONS TO  
UA LOCAL 67 ON YOUR  
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**BEST WISHES TO U.A. LOCAL 67  
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