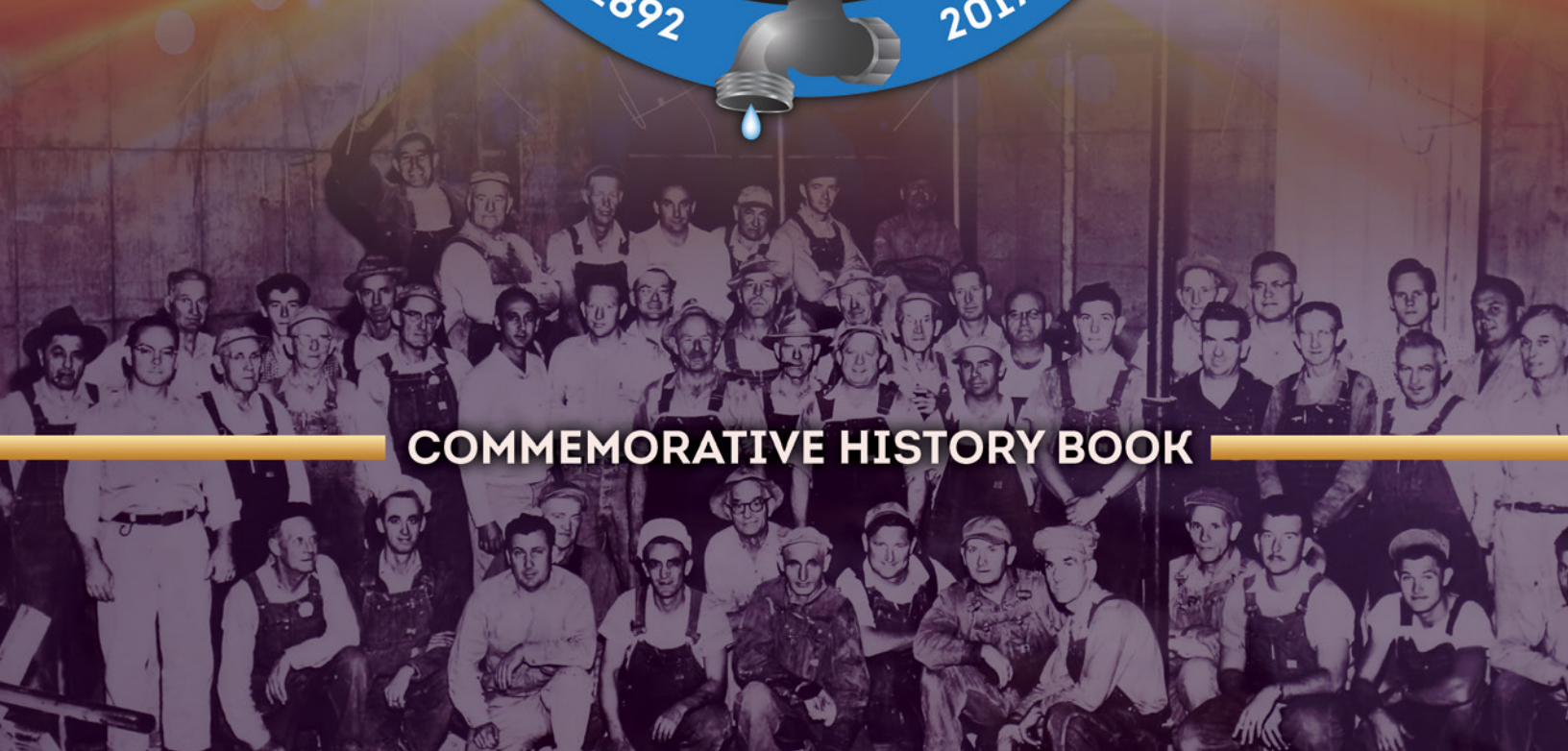


# 125 Year Anniversary



COMMEMORATIVE HISTORY BOOK





# Southern California Pipe Trades District Council 16

CONGRATULATES

## UA LOCAL UNION 78 LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

ON ITS 125TH ANNIVERSARY

*We extend our best wishes  
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- Mike Layton**  
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- Rodney Cobos**  
Assistant Business Manager
- Jerry Trevino**  
Director of Service Department
- John Ferruccio**  
Director of Organizing
  
- Local 78 – Doug Marian**  
Business Manager
- Local 114 – Michael Lopez**  
Business Manager
- Local 230 – Mike Hartley**  
Business Manager
- Local 250 – Glenn Santa Cruz**  
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**Murray Company extends  
Congratulations to the men and women  
of United Local Association 78  
on your 125th Anniversary!**

*We wish you many more years of success  
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## **LOCAL UNION 78**

*on your*

# **125th ANNIVERSARY**

*from the*

Officers and Staff

*of the*

United Association  
of Journeymen and Apprentices

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General President*

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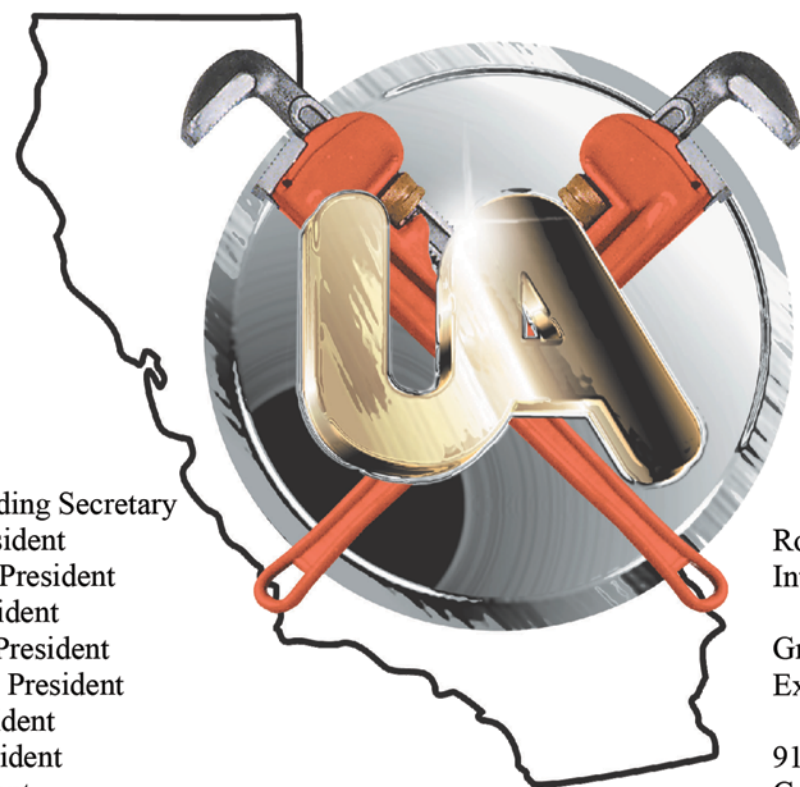
TO PLUMBERS & PIPEFITTERS LOCAL UNION 78  
ON 125 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE!

FROM PLUMBERS & STEAMFITTERS  
LOCAL 398



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**U.A. LOCAL PLUMBERS NO. 78  
ON 125 YEARS OF QUALITY CRAFTSMANSHIP**



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Of dedicated work

For organized labor

and

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Community.



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Officers and Staff  
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BAKERSFIELD, CA

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Business Manager

Edward Arambula  
Business Agent



Javier Flores  
Organizer



WE CONGRATULATE  
**LOCAL 78**  
on **125 YEARS**

**U.A. Local 68**  
Chartered May of 1892

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Financial Secretary-Treasurer

Rick Lord  
Business Agent

Jeffrey LaBroski  
Business Agent

Phillip White  
Business Agent

Brian Granger  
President

Jeff Warden  
Vice President

Arthur Juarez  
Recording Secretary

Tim Sandusky, Jr.  
Inside Guard

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David Bowman  
Martin Cerna  
Jeremy Pavlich  
Chato Woodard

Examining Board  
Devlin Alsup  
Jason Britnell  
Eric Cortez  
Othon Guillen V  
Jim Seay

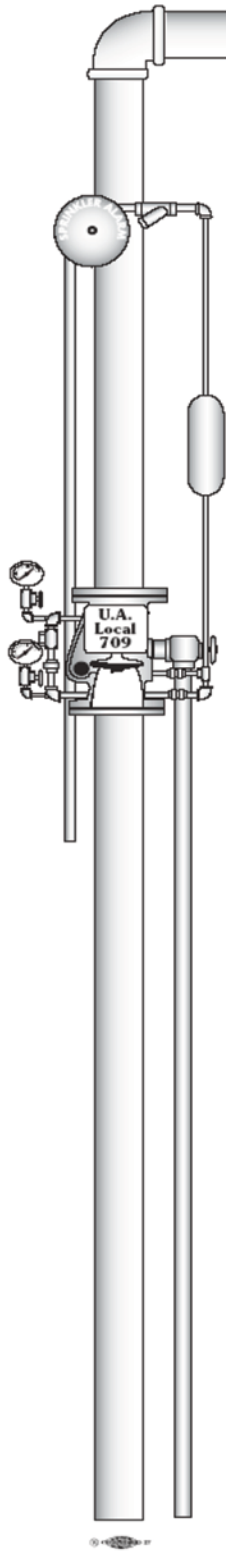
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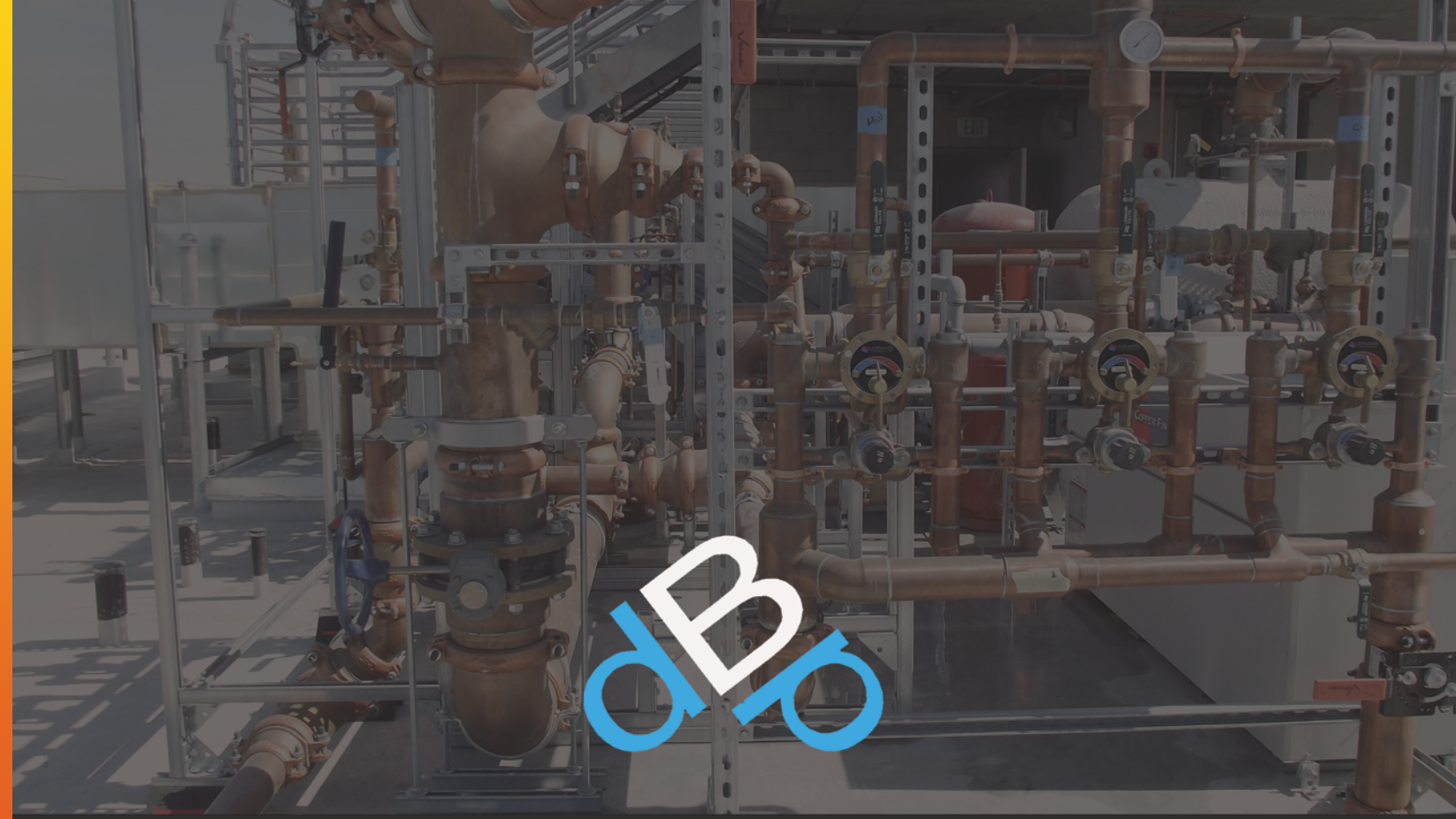
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## U.A. Plumbers Local 78 125th Anniversary Family Picnic & Carnival

**Saturday, September 16, 2017**  
11:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

**Los Angeles Trade Technical College**  
400 West Washington Boulevard, Los Angeles

Food Trucks, Live Entertainment, Children's Activities,  
Carnival Rides, Dunk Tank, Raffles, Gift Bags for Kids and more!

Service Pins presented  
Apprentice Graduation Certificates presented

### OUR FOREFATHERS BROUGHT US TO THIS MOMENTOUS OCCASION

On behalf of the officers, staff and members of United Association Plumbers Local No. 78, serving Los Angeles and Long Beach, we welcome you in joining us for the celebration of our 125th Anniversary. Local 78 has been a proud charter local of the United Association for the last 125 years, providing the Los Angeles metro area and now Long Beach with the highest-quality skilled craftspeople while bringing career opportunities to the neighborhoods we serve.

I would be remiss if I did not thank the officers and members that came before us, whose hard work, loyalty and determination built this great local union. Their efforts afforded us the opportunity to build a career and pass along our heritage, skill and education to the next generation. I am personally grateful for their sacrifices and successes made on our behalf, bringing us to this joyous occasion, our 125th Anniversary.

It is truly a privilege and honor to serve the membership of Local 78 as their business manager during this time of celebration. As a second-generation member, I would like to offer a special "thank you" to my father, Dale Marian, a member of 53 years, for his support and guidance over the course of my career and life.

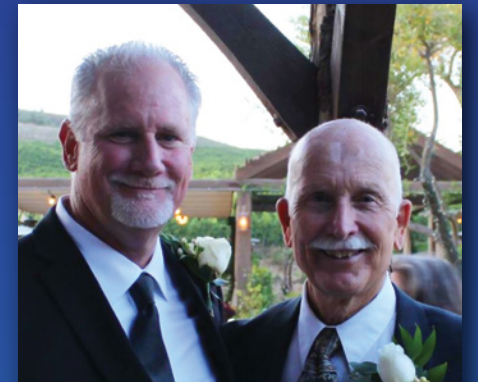
I would also like to thank the previous business managers and agents who helped get me from a first-year apprentice to where I am today, business manager of the greatest local union in the United Association. As business manager, I have set many goals for myself and our local, but the priority has always been to grow our membership, contractor base and market share, thereby sustaining employment and benefits for the members I serve. Of course, I can not do this alone; the support and loyalty from the current business agents and officers who make up our leadership team are essential to ensure our continued success. The dedication of my office staff is second to none.

From the bottom of my heart, thank you everyone and congratulations.

There were countless hours of hard work put into making this celebration a success. I want to thank the members of the Anniversary Picnic Committee and the office staff for their diligence, ensuring all members, families, friends and guests fully enjoy this anniversary celebration as the momentous occasion it truly is.

Fraternally,

**Douglas A Marian**  
Business Manager/Financial Secretary-Treasurer



Local 78 Business Manager Douglas Marian with his father, Dale A. Marian, a retired 53-year U.A. member.

This book was proudly produced by

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**United Association Local 78 and Union Histories give special thanks to the following for their contributions to this book:**

United Association Research/Archives Department

Head Historian: Calvin Jefferson  
Art Direction: Andy Taucher  
Layout & Design: Steven Demanett





UNITED ASSOCIATION PLUMBERS LOCAL No. 78

# A 125-YEAR HISTORY OF ENRICHING LOS ANGELES AND THE SOUTHLAND

THE OLDEST CONTINUOUSLY OPERATING TRADE UNION IN CALIFORNIA



The earliest known plumbers in the Los Angeles area traveled from Philadelphia to San Diego in 1852 and then made their way north to the city, where they drilled wells and provided a few wealthy ranchers and farmers with gravity-fed water systems and a “new-fangled porcelain device called a water closet.” In 1855, those early plumbers constructed their first known project in Los Angeles, a brewery.

As in most trades, as their numbers grew, plumbers in Los Angeles began to organize; subsequently, a group of the city’s plumbers first met in 1871 and soon after formed the **Los Angeles Plumbers and Gas Fitters Protective Association**. With 17 original members, the Association worked hard to recruit every new plumber in the area.

The Los Angeles plumbers and fitters for a short time were associated with the Knights of Labor, as was the National Association of

Plumbers, Steamfitters and Gas Fitters, which had been formed in September 1884 under the Knights. However, the Knights were never well-organized and general public opinion constantly held them responsible for ongoing labor violence around the country, leading to the organization’s quick demise beginning in the late 1880s. By that time, the National Association had already separated itself in 1885 to form the International Association of Journeyman Plumbers, Steamfitters and Gas Fitters.

Meanwhile, the Los Angeles Plumbers and Gas Fitters Protective Association was flourishing in the midst of a construction boom in its city. In fact, meeting minutes for the Association from July 17, 1888, noted that the local was “one of the strongest unions in the city.”



However, as building projects began to wane, the union likewise began to falter. During that time, a great portion of the members staged

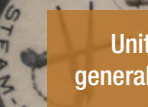
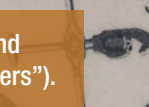


# UNITED ASSOCIATION

Journeyman Plumbers, Gas Fitters,  
Steam Fitters and Steam Fitter's Helpers

UNITED STATES AND CANADA.

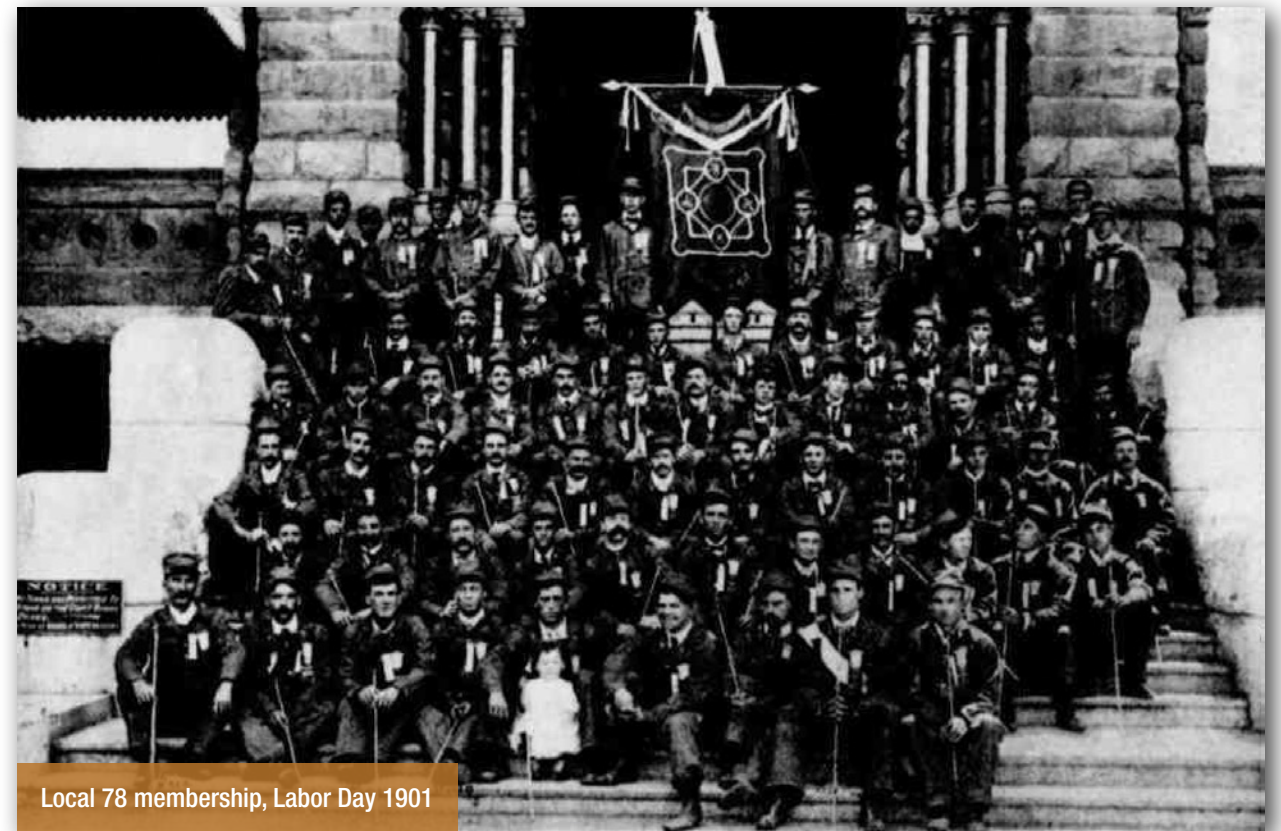
**PLUMBERS.**  **GAS-FITTERS.** 

**STEAM-FITTERS.**  **STEAM-FITTERS' HELPERS.** 

*Issued to Plumbers, Gas & Steam Fitters*

To all whom it may concern:  
Whereas, A petition in due form has been received by us praying that a charter be granted to LOCAL UNION N<sup>o</sup> 78 to be located at Los Angeles Calif.  
**NOW KNOW YE**  
That acting under authority vested in us by the Laws and usages of the **UNITED ASSOCIATION, Journeyman Plumbers, Gas Fitters, Steam Fitters and Steam Fitters' Helpers OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA.**  
We direct this Warrant and Charter to be issued to the **LOCAL UNION** named above to bear date the *First day of January A.D. 1892.* And by virtue of this Warrant and Charter, the said **LOCAL UNION** is empowered to do and perform such acts and enjoy such privileges as are prescribed in the laws and usages of the **UNITED ASSOCIATION**, and the members thereof are strictly enjoined to bear constantly in mind and always practice the Cardinal principles of the Association.  
**FIDELITY, EDUCATION, BENEVOLENCE AND PROTECTION.**  
The **UNITED ASSOCIATION** reserves the right to suspend or reclaim this Warrant and Charter and to annul the rights and privileges thereon conferred for any neglect or refusal to perform the duties required by the laws and usages of the Association as adopted and promulgated by the **UNITED ASSOCIATION**, or by any of its Officers acting under legally invested Authority.  
In Witness Whereof this Warrant and Charter has been signed by the Officers of the United Association and the Seal of said Association has been affixed this *First day of January 1892.*

United Association Local 78 charter, dated January 1, 1892, and signed by the United Association's second general president, John A. Lee (with a handwritten note that it was "Issued to Plumbers, Gas and Steam Fitters").



Local 78 membership, Labor Day 1901

an ineffective strike against shop owner S. M. Perry, after which many members left town "and the union went quietly out of existence," according to an article in the October 19, 1891, *Los Angeles Herald*.

Around the time the remaining Los Angeles plumbers and gasfitters found themselves without a union, 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 another national pipe-trades union. Subsequently, on October 7, 1889, 40 delegates from 23 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** 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.

Nearly two years later, the plumbers and gasfitters in Los Angeles set about to organize a new local union for themselves and met to do so on October 17, 1891. Two days later, the *Herald* reported favorably on the meeting and the collective optimism of the city's piping-industry journeymen:

*"This time they propose to make the organization a permanent success and an efficient addition to the international association ... in the hope that in this era of solid development, unadulterated with rainbow chasing, the union will live."*

Soon after, the United Association chartered Local No. 78 for Los Angeles and the Southland – the greater Los Angeles region – on **January 1, 1892**, issuing the charter for the city's plumbers, gasfitters and steamfitters.



## INITIAL GROUNDWORK & EARLY GROWTH

Early on, the Local 78 membership was busy with a range of work that included a good amount of school construction, kindling the local's long-standing close relationship with the Los Angeles school board. Members were also employed on jobs with the Los Angeles department of water – as they would be throughout the next 125 years, including the construction of the earliest well fields, the earliest electric power plants, the aqueduct from the Owens and Colorado rivers and the vast network of mains in the city.

Away from the jobsites, the local's initial members were also marching in parades and enjoying regular dances and dinners, among other activities. In particular, on August 3, 1892, the National Plumbers' Association of Los Angeles, comprised of union contractors for which Local 78 worked throughout the city, hosted a banquet at its hall on South Main Street for the local's members, who numbered about 40 at that time.

The local remained focused on its members' prosperity, and to that end in December 1893 approved a measure allowing members to "work for what wages they could get" for hanging gas fixtures. The following year on January 5, the local even formed a committee and provided it with \$20 to "assist our worthy and needy members" by giving them small loans.

Also that year, Local 78 joined several union locals to form the Orange County Council of Labor, "a central body composed of four

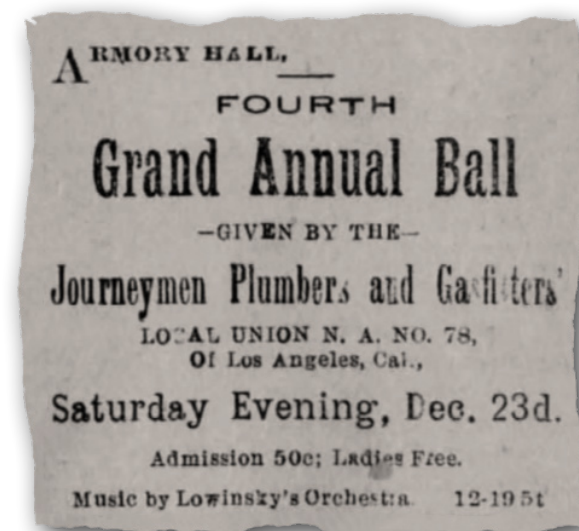
delegates from each order." Other founding members included locals from the bakers, carpenters, cooks and pastry cooks, electrical workers, iron molders, printing pressmen and tailors unions.

But trouble was already brewing for the journeyman plumbers of Los Angeles, who by March 1895 were earning \$4 per day. By March 27 that year, several of their 60 employing "master plumbers" were threatening to reduce that daily wage to \$3, although relations between the employers and employees in the union plumbing industry were "amicable," according to that day's *Herald*.

Regardless, on April 1, 15 journeymen were locked out of their jobs by six plumbing businesses after the plumbers quit their jobs when the wage decrease was enacted. During the dispute, the plumbers asserted that if they accepted the reduction, "the public will not receive the benefit of it but on the contrary it merely means so much more added to the profits of the boss plumbers," the newspaper reported on March 31, while the contractors countered that they would have no difficulty replacing the locked-out employees at the reduced scale of wages.

By early 1897, work had become so scarce in Los Angeles that many Local 78 members were unemployed, and on April 19, 1897, the *Herald* reported that of the local's 70 members only about seven were working. In that climate, the local's membership dropped to 49 in September that year and then to just 27 journeymen and helpers in September 1898.

Still making \$3 per day in mid-1899, Local 78 journeymen in early August that year demanded an increase in wages to \$3.50 from the master plumbers – and set a deadline date of August 15 as the day they would not work unless they were granted the new rate. While some contractors did not immediately comply (and one, Newell Brothers, told the *Herald* that it had hired non-union men and refused to



Announcement in the December 20, 1893, *Los Angeles Herald*.

pay the increased wages), in the end the union plumbers did not strike.

An historic building boom in Los Angeles beginning in late 1901 grew the local from 35 members in June of that year to nearly 290 by December 1905. During that time, the local's plumbers were making \$4 per eight-hour day in June 1902 and were busy enough to threaten a strike – which ultimately was avoided – if their pay was not increased by 50 cents and they were not given half days on Saturdays.

## 'MISERY, LOW WAGES AND STARVATION'

The bottom fell out for Local 78 beginning in late 1907, and over the next several years the local would endure some of the most difficult times in its history in the face of a construction drought and intense anti-union hostility from plumbing contractors, the public and even the *Los Angeles Times* newspaper. The situation was so precarious, in fact, that the local in early February 1908 agreed to take a pay cut from \$5 down to \$4 per day, while U.A. General Organizer E. W. Leonard reported from Los Angeles in the May 1908 U.A. *Journal*, "There

Los Angeles Dec 15/1893

Meeting called to order by J.B. Newell in chair

The following was transacted

Roll call of Officers and Members

Reading minutes of Special meeting which stood approved as read

Reading minutes of Regular meeting which stood approved of as read with two exceptions

One of which was a motion to allow members to work for what wages they could get at Gasfixtures hanging

The other was to correct error which was a donation of twenty five dollars to Cook's Union which should have read the Typographical Union which were both duly corrected

Report of Board Directors

Meeting of Board Directors called to order at 9 P.M. Dec 12. 93 in the case of J. Dehanty the following questions were asked

Member, Did you tell your brother to go to work

Local 78 meeting minutes from December 15, 1893.



is only misery, low wages and starvation surrounding the workers there.”

The Local 78 membership dropped to below 200 before the end of that year, having been significantly affected in 1907 when its steamfitters left to form U. A. Local No. 330.

With little work, journeyman plumbers and steamfitters were taking jobs doing janitorial work or washing dishes, while there were twice as many “unfair” non-union men in the city as there were members of the U.A. “To be exact, Local Union No. 78 has 125 members and there are 250 poor, deluded fellows under the control at the present time of the Unfair Employers,” Brother Leonard reported.

The situation was compounded by the lack of a strong plumbing ordinance in the city, which allowed poor work to persist. Local 78 in December 1908 presented a proposal for a bill to establish a plumbing board and require all plumbers in the city to take out a license, but the City Council refused to pass it. (The following year, Council condemned a similar bill that was pending before the state legislature to establish a state board of plumbers.)

Perhaps most damaging were the negative tactics of the Merchants and Manufacturers’ Association of Los Angeles in its ongoing effort to destroy the city’s unions – which included sending circulars throughout the country that stated there was “plenty of work at good wages” in Los Angeles during that time. Subsequently,

A soldier overlooks Alessandro Flying Training Field near Riverside, California, which Local 78 helped build in 1917 during World War I.



the city was flooded with non-union, out-of-town men seeking employment.

But the U.A. made “every effort” to place its craft “in a more solid position” in the city, including having its international organizers give Los Angeles more attention. The union also divided the city into 34 districts and targeted each individually with letters and meetings to organize its plumbers, or as Brother Leonard described it, “Every non-union man is being accosted.”

Meanwhile, Local 78 did enjoy some moments of contentment, in particular in February 1910 when the city’s unions dedicated their new **Labor Temple** at 540 Maple Avenue, in which the local would hold its meetings for the next four decades. Later that year in September, Local 78 also won first prize for “best appearance” in Los Angeles’ Labor Day parade, having marched in white duck trousers, blue chambray shirts and gray felt hats.

But the city’s anti-union war reached both its lowest and most climactic point when on October 1, 1910, a member of the International Association of Bridge and Structural Iron Workers union bombed the *Los Angeles Times* building with dynamite, killing 21 newspaper employees and injuring more than 100 others. The event provided Harrison Gray Otis, the vehemently anti-union publisher of the *Times* who also controlled the Merchants and Manufacturers’ Association and spearheaded its decades-long fight against the “closed” union shop, with additional material to denounce and berate unions.

### **‘THE MOVEMENT IS NOW ON’**

**E**ntering early 1911, Local 78 consisted of 175 members while there were also about 100 non-union journeymen in the city and 290 “master” plumbers, 225 of whom were working for themselves and not hiring any help. A year later, Local 78 had taken steps to close all of the “open” shops in



The Labor Temple at 540 Maple Avenue in Los Angeles, circa 1908.

Local 78’s earliest meeting locations were the **Los Angeles Labor Temple** at 520 San Pedro Street and, after it was built in 1908, the Labor Temple at **540 Maple Avenue** – where the local would continue to meet at least into the late 1940s.

Los Angeles and in doing so began a nearly year-long strike against those non-union plumbing concerns. After it commenced in late January 1912, U.A. General Organizer Thomas B. Clark announced in the *Journal*, “The movement is now on and we will all do the best we know how to make it stick.”

Bolstering the local during that time was the return of the steamfitters from the by-then defunct Local 330. The union’s presence in the city would be further heightened with the organizing of U.A. Sprinklerfitters Local 535 in June 1912 (although it would go defunct before 1916).

Giving further hope to the union journeymen plumbers and fitters, by early 1912 the local had a Sanitary Committee that was working in conjunction with an employers’ committee to “frame a plumbing ordinance for the registration and examination of employees and journeymen.” In fact, the first plumbing codes in Los Angeles had already been developed some time before by a small group of Local 78 plumbers that worked closely with the city officials to form the regulations. From those early efforts, a “very effective” plumbing code eventually developed for the City of Los Angeles around this time that was almost exclusively

the work of Local 78 and the original Master Plumbers Association of Los Angeles.

While the campaign of the city’s anti-union elements to reduce wages by creating competition among workers continued in earnest, the city’s labor market had become so “glutted by the false and misleading advertisements,” as Brother Clark described in the December 1913 *Journal*, that the City Council finally took notice. Subsequently, city officials issued a nationwide warning to non-residents to stay away from Los Angeles.

Local 78 likewise continued to counter the ongoing operation to throttle labor in the city. To that end, the local and most every local in Los Angeles in early 1915 began collecting

Before 1912, the co-existing **International Association of Steam and Hot Water Fitters and Helpers**, comprised mainly of pipefitters, and United Association (U.A.), dominated by plumbers, gasfitters and sprinklerfitters, waged bitter disputes primarily over work jurisdiction. That year, however, the American Federation of Labor (A.F.L.), recognizing that jurisdiction of work was the foundation of its existence, ruled that a single union would represent all of the pipe trades, and the International Association reluctantly agreed to merge into the U.A.



The California State Association, affiliate of the United Association, appointed Local 78 **Brother F. M. Van Norman** to be its first statewide organizer on July 1, 1922.

donations and asking sister locals around the country to contribute to a fund to send two delegates to Europe to inform workers who were considering migrating to the United States of the actual lack of employment in Southern California and throughout the country.

Indeed, by mid-1915 Southern California was well into one of the worst construction periods in its history, and Local 78 was feeling its full effects as many members remained idle and the local's finances diminished. Brother Clark even conceded in the *Journal*, "We find Los Angeles in about the same position it has been for several years, the locals holding on like grim death and striving all the time to gain a little ground as best they can."

But conditions began to turn for Local 78 when on March 20, 1917, the California State Senate passed a bill establishing a plumbers' examination law, which had been championed at the state level by Local 78 **Brother L. C. Brightwell**. The bill was signed into law by Governor William Stephens on April 6.

Helping to boost employment, in late 1917 after the country had entered World War I, the U.S. military began work on **Alessandro Flying Training Field** near Riverside, California, and U.A. Local 364 of that city accorded jurisdiction of the facility to Local 78. During construction under general contractor Twohy Brothers, General Organizer Clark noted in the February 1918 *Journal*, "Every member did his work in first class style and did it in quick time." (*The field was renamed March Air Reserve Base a month after it opened in February 1918 in honor of 2nd Lieutenant Peyton C. March Jr., the recently deceased son of then-Army Chief of Staff Peyton C. March, who was killed in an*

*air crash in Texas just fifteen days after being commissioned.*)

As the Los Angeles local's situation continued to improve, in April 1918 it was able to convert one of the area's largest plumbing shops, **Glendale Hardware Company** of Hollywood. As Brother Clark described it in the *Journal*, during a visit from himself and Brother Brightwell, the shop's owner "handed over the applications of all plumbers and fitters in his employ and stated that after that date his shop was a union shop."

Soon after, the U.A. chartered auxiliary **Local No. 669** to represent the city's sprinklerfitters in September 1918.

Wages were also beginning to escalate for the union journeyman plumbers as they gained momentum and construction in the city picked up. After asking for a wage scale of \$6.50 per day in September 1918, on July 1 the following year, daily wages were raised to \$7. A year later, Local 78 negotiated another increase that significantly increased the scale for journeymen to \$8 per day and the pay for helpers (or apprentices) to \$5 per day.

### HISTORIC HIGHS TO HISTORIC DEPRESSION

**A** letup in construction projects in the early 1920s stalled Local 78's advance to the point where it posted "Keep Away" warnings in the U.A. *Journal* throughout 1920 and into 1921. General Organizer Clark even noted in one of his reports from mid-1920, "I desire to warn the traveling members that a lull in the building activities is quite evident, as there is an over-supply of building tradesmen, I would advise not coming to this city."

Regardless, the local continued its mission to get a plumbers examination rule passed by the City Council. Unfortunately, the similar state law had been throttled by a court ruling that it was unconstitutional and discriminatory

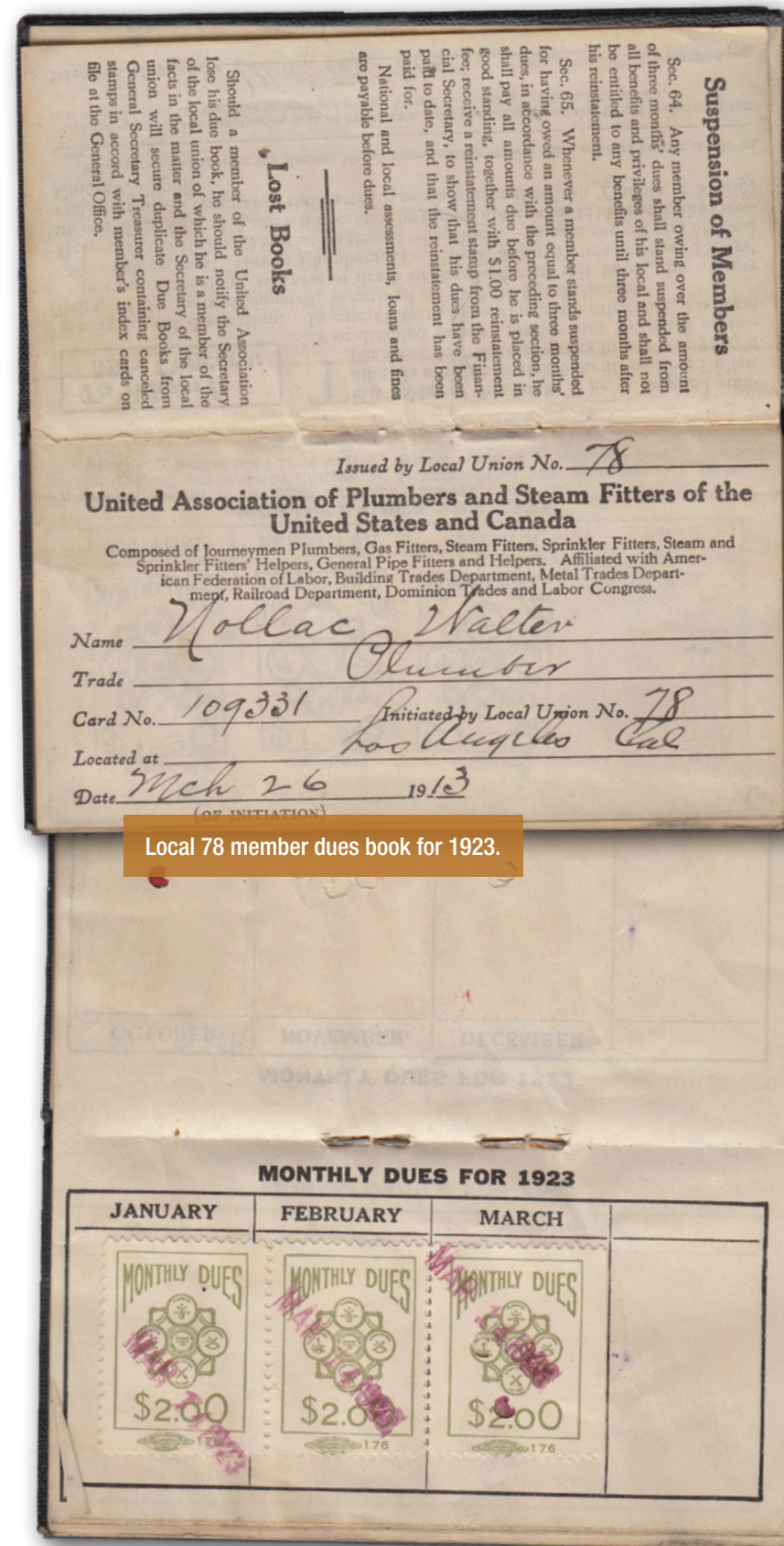
– leaving the plumbing industry of the city and the state at the mercy of "unscrupulous" plumbers.

What's more, the Merchants' and Manufacturers' Association had not curbed its own devious activities and was again advertising in "hundreds of newspapers throughout the United States, spreading their propaganda about the wonderful and unsurpassed conditions existing in Los Angeles." Before the end of 1920, the association succeeded in flooding the city with mechanics and "thousands of other laboring men."

Meanwhile, the group also threatened to stop all construction in the city on January 1, 1921, "until the plumbers' union and various other unions working under the closed shop plan would yield to their demands."

Local 78 prevailed, though, and later that year its membership grew to more than 420 journeymen and apprentices. The local at the time was also working on a high-profile upgrade of the **Washington Baseball Park**, home of the Los Angeles Angels until 1925, that had almost been given to a non-union firm before Local 78 **Business Agent A. G. Work** landed the job.

In 1922, most all of Southern California enjoyed the start of an unprecedented period of flourishing construction that would last throughout much of the decade. Building was so robust, in fact, that during 1922 a separate plumbers local, **U.A. Local No. 761**, was created for the City of Glendale with a portion of members from Local 78.





Over the ensuing several year, many of downtown Los Angeles' most famous historic buildings were erected, including majestic movie palaces, the Biltmore Hotel and City Hall. In all, 155 projects of at least 50,000 square feet were constructed from 1920 to 1929, according to an article in the January 8, 2017 *Los Angeles Times*.

The **Western Plumbing Officials Association**, which is now the **International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials** (I.A.P.M.O.), was then founded on May 17, 1926, by the plumbing inspectors of Los Angeles, most of whom were members of Local 78. For many years to follow, the City of Los Angeles maintained one of the finest plumbing research laboratories in the United States and the work done there was the basis

The charter of **U.A. Local No. 616** of San Pedro, California, was revoked on September 17, 1932, and its members were then amalgamated into Local 78.

of code development throughout Southern California; in 1945, the Western Plumbing Officials Association became the first to adopt the Uniform Plumbing Code (UPC) in the United States. (Local 78 **Brother George Campbell** was the last chairman of the Western Plumbing Officials Association before it became the I.A.P.M.O. in 1963.)

The construction boom in Los Angeles during the 1920s – the likes of which would not be seen again by the city until after the new “Y2K” millennium some 70-plus years later – also filled the Local 78 membership rolls. By June 1929, the local had grown to 577 member journeymen and apprentices.

Indeed, the 1920s was a prosperous era for Los Angeles, during which the city's population

more than doubled in size to more than 1.2 million residents from 1920 to 1929. An extensive modernization of the city also took place in 1920s, bringing with it vast suburban sprawl and business and financial centers – much of which Local 78 helped build.

But the Great Depression, which began when the U.S. stock market crashed on October 29, 1929 (history's “Black Tuesday”), brought hard times to U.A. members in Los Angeles and across the country as unemployment soared, according to the U.A. International history. It 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, such as growing their own food in their own gardens, but much of the focus was either on calling on the government to take action to help people or on trying to offer some kind of hope and encouragement to the U.A. membership.

“... Construction all but stopped, and this led to a significant decline in manufacturing,” the U.A. history recounts. “The economies of both (the United State and Canada) spiraled ever downward, until unemployment reached extremely high numbers and workers began to give up altogether.” But while membership declined, and no U.A. International conventions were held between 1928 and 1938, “the union held it together.”

Likewise, Local 38 dues-paying membership dropped as members went without work and wages. The decline was dramatic, decreasing from 600 members in September 1930 to 375 in June 1932 – the summer during which Los Angeles hosted the Olympic Games – to a low of 244 in June 1934.

As the Depression began to ebb with the implementation of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's federally funded “New Deal” job-creation programs around the country, the local began to regain its membership, and in June 1935, 276 members were again paying

dues. Around that time, Local 78 **brothers Ralph McMullen and Earl Schultz** set up the maintenance department for the **City of Los Angeles Housing Authority**, a significant portion of which involved plumbing work that would be performed by Local 78 members.

Just two years later in June 1937, the Local 78 membership was up to 485 journeymen and apprentices. That December 16, the local and the U.A. were also able to gain a collective-bargaining agreement with the motion picture industry to service the many major movie studios in Hollywood and Los Angeles.

With the Depression nearing its ultimate end and World War II already raging in Europe and Asia, in June 1939 Local 78 had grown back to 588 members.

### WAR, GROWTH & NEW DISTRICT COUNCIL

Following the official entry of the United States into World War II after the Japanese attack on the U.S. Naval Base at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the

The U.A. created an auxiliary to Local 78 and issued its charter August 26, 1937, to serve the local's plumbing, heating and piping supply “helper” employees; however, the auxiliary was very short-lived.

busy wartime economy of the 1940s pulled the nation and unions completely and finally out of the grip of the Depression. The Los Angeles region itself underwent rapid industrial growth during the war as Kaiser Steel opened a giant mill in Fontana and the big aircraft companies – North American Aviation, Lockheed, Douglas and Hughes – expanded with war contracts.

Across North America, U.A. membership swelled from 81,000 in 1941 to 210,000 members, many of whom were working in shipyards, weapons plants, aircraft factories and other facilities to support the war. Local 78 also grew rapidly, expanding from 849 members in June 1941 to more than 1,100 in June 1943.

The local's support for the men fighting the war was palpable, and during its meeting in

Local 78 membership during the early 1940s.







Members and guests at Local 78's 50th Anniversary celebration on January 10, 1951: (first row, left to right) P. L. Baldwin, P. Buckhouse, A. Maslow, G. Reinheimer, A. Williams, A. Ure, E. Hillock, R. McMullen, A. Kuykendall, C. Bailey, C. Van Atta, B. Holmes, G. Carbinier, D. Humphrey and D. Killian; (second row) H. Emptage, H. Crawford, E. Glueckert, A. Ludwig, H. Suess, E. Roach, M. J. Howlett, G. Hannel, H. Linneman, H. Sharp, L. Fitzpatrick, B. Webster, H. Magel, J. Basso, J. A. McDonald, H. Pearson, E. Cannon, J. T. Taylor, C. B. Young, H. Armstrong, E. Schultz and J. Mears; (third row) J. Davis, W. Root, B. Hutchinson, N. Edwards, E. Killip, R. Meyers, A. M. Miller, H. Nordstrum, H. Fischbeck, G. Hansen, A. Portnick, R. Stoll, J. Shaul, C. Bowman, G. Bauer, C. M. Wiley, A. Pecan and V. D. McGonagle; (fourth row) A. Bonser, E. Tritschler, M. Charney, E. Herfter, E. Nielsen, J. Wallace, D. Ahern, L. A. Mathis, E. Edwards, C. Forster, H. Allen, D. Richards, J. Stewart, T. Morris, L. M. Masterman, H. Ables, G. Hannel, A. Israel, E. Voight and M. Adams; (fifth row) B. Scannapieco, L. M. Wickland, E. J. Brown, H. Lechner, F. Stearns, W. Davis, J. Flach, G. Linneman, G. Campbell, A. Eisenman, B. Kaplan, G. Hill, B. Muir and A. Gustafson; and (top row): A. Virtue, D. MacDonald, W. Bertelsen, F. Van Norman and H. E. Wright.

February 1942, the local with agreed to write a letter to the U.A. International Office urging it to "spend the money in the convention fund to buy defense bonds." Then in August 1943, the local voted to pay the dues of any journeyman or apprentice who entered the armed services.

Meanwhile, the local's members were further supporting the defense effort through efforts such as volunteering time to help build anti-aircraft batteries around the Lockheed Airport in Burbank and elsewhere around the city.

During the war, Local 78 journeymen were being paid \$1.50 per hour for eight-hour days, with double-time being paid for any overtime. In July 1942, the local had asked its employers of the Master Plumbers' Association for a raise to \$14 per day, however the federal government's Office of Price Administration by that time had imposed a wage freeze on most

labor throughout the country and the increase was subsequently deferred until July 1945, when the journeyman scale was increased to \$2 per hour for eight hours.

With its membership – and income – having substantially increased over the previous four years, Local 78 on February 14, 1945, approved the establishment of a building fund with which it could purchase a new union hall in the future. Then in July after the local received its wage raise, the local increased a per-month assessment it had levied on each member the year before from \$1.50 to \$5 per month in order to bolster its operating fund.

Meanwhile, Local 78 in March 1945 again became embroiled in another of the on-again, off-again jurisdictional disputes at the motion picture studios. However, after the sides in the dispute – the plumbers, carpenters, electrical

workers, machinists, janitors, painters, screen set designers and interior designers locals – had been on strike for 22 days, nine major film producers on April 2 threatened to fire any union member who "did not return to work and perform their services" by the next day, the April 3 *Los Angeles Times* reported.

The **Southern California Pipe Trades Council**, through which all U.A. locals in the region by that time were negotiating contracts, won a new pipe-trades agreement beginning July 1, 1947, for Local 78 as well as locals 114 of Santa Barbara, 202 of El Centro, 230 of San Diego, 280 of Pasadena, 364 of

San Bernardino, 398 of Pomona, 403 of San Luis Obispo, 484 of Ventura, 494 of Long Beach, 545 of Santa Monica, 582 of Santa Ana and 761 of Glendale. The pact with the **Plumbing, Heating and Piping Employers Council of Southern California** set the rate for journeyman plumbers and heat-piping, air-conditioning, industrial and utility pipe-work journeymen at \$2.25 per hour.

However, the locals within the Pipe Trades Council in late 1948 were dissatisfied with the council and the restrictions of its imposed "lines of trade demarcation." What's more the U.A. in 1946 had begun forming district councils

Local 78 officers and guests at the local's 50th Anniversary celebration on January 10, 1951: (front row, left to right) Walter Bertelsen, vice president; Walter S. Davis, president; Edward J. Hillock, U. A. general secretary-treasurer; Elwood J. Brown, business manager/financial secretary-treasurer; and V. D. McGonagle, Frank Stearns, Mahlon J. Adams and Jesse B. Flach, Executive Board members; (middle row) William H. Brown, delegate to Los Angeles Central Labor Council; L. M. Wickland, Delegate to Los Angeles Building and Construction Trades Council; Earl Schultz, chairman of Finance Board; George S. Hill, Examining Board member; Abe Eisenman, delegate to the Los Angeles Central Labor Council; R. J. Picard, secretary of District Council No. 16; F. Van Norman, president of California Pipe Trades Council; Dan MacDonald, secretary of California Pipe Trades Council; and Archie Virtue, U. A. general organizer; and (top row) George H. Linneman, delegate to Federated Municipal Crafts; H. E. Wright, Examining Board member; W. B. Hall, Ernest O. Voight and Barney Kaplan, delegates to the Los Angeles Central Labor Council; H. F. Lechner, past president; Bernard Scannapieco, delegate to the Los Angeles Metal Trades Council; Ralph A. McMullen and George L. Campbell, delegates to the Los Angeles Building and Construction Trades Council; and Floyd W. Aldrich, Executive Board member.





## TRAINING FUTURE, CURRENT MEMBERS REMAINS A PRIORITY

Local 78 is committed to helping its signatory contractors grow their market share by providing the most skilled and highly trained workforce in the plumbing industry. But the local's premier training programs took many years to develop.

Early in the local's history, apprentices learned solely through on-the-job training while working every day beside a journeyman plumber, gasfitter or steamfitter. It was not until September 1922 that the local and its employers began discussing "the willingness of the Master Plumbers to cooperate in establishing a regulated apprenticeship system."

Soon after, as the need for more plumbing journeymen grew with an unprecedented influx of construction in and around Los Angeles during the 1920s, Local 78 **Brother Ralph McMullen** was certified as the first teacher of plumbing in California. He subsequently taught apprentices at the Frank Wiggins Trade School.

By the 1940s, the Los Angeles union plumbing industry had a more formal training program in place, which was administered by the Los Angeles Public Schools system. *(Interestingly, the Japanese conquests in the Far East early in the World War II made tin – an essential ingredient in solder – scarce and forced U.A. locals, including Local 78, to incorporate lead welding courses into their curriculum during that time)*

By the mid-1950s, the plumbing contractors of Los Angeles and Local 78 had formed a Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee (J.A.T.C.) to manage its training education. The program was operated in conjunction with Los Angeles Technical-Trade Junior College, whose facilities the union used for classroom and laboratory teaching.

February 26, 1972, was a "landmark" day for Southern California's pipe-trades locals. That day, U.A. District Council 16, of which Local 78 was (and still is) a member, dedicated its first training center for pipe-trades apprentices. Since then, the council now operates nine training centers for its 13 locals.

The District Council's training facilities and programs are now funded by its **Apprentice and Journeymen Training Trust Fund of the Southern California Plumbing & Piping Industry**, into which all locals and their contractors contribute.

Local 78 plumbers primarily train at the **Compton Training Center** on South Laurel Park Road in the Los Angeles suburb of Compton. Today, the five-year plumbing apprenticeship period is divided into one-year segments, each of which includes 1,700 to 2,000 hours of on-the-job training and a minimum of 246 hours of related classroom instruction.

All U.A. apprentices receive a strong general education in the trade, with core courses in basics such as mathematics, science, drafting, welding and other pipe-trades related courses.

The Training Trust Fund further provides myriad opportunities for Local 78 journeyman plumbers to upgrade their skills, so that they are up-to-date with the most current and modern techniques in the plumbing industry. To that end, beginning July 1, 2011, an additional 5-cent-per-contribution hour was designated to be added to the Apprentice and Journeymen Training Trust Fund "to help offset the out-of-pocket expenses that journeymen and apprentice members experience while pursuing upgrade training."



Local 78 installation of officers ceremony on January 13, 1954.

throughout the country under which its local would be administered – and against which the Pipe Trades Council had filed an unsuccessful civil action in the Los Angeles Superior Court.

Ultimately in November 1948, Local 78 passed a resolution absolving itself from the Pipe Trades Council and declaring itself a member of the new U.A. **District Council 16**, along with locals 202, 280, 403, 484, 494, 545, 582 and 761. *(Local 78 remains a member of District Council 16 as it celebrates its 125th anniversary in 2017.)*

To culminate a decade in which the local experienced several significant changes, on March 11, 1949, Local 78 executed an agreement with the International Alliance of Theatrical and Stage Employees (IATSE) by which the latter would give "full recognition to the United Association ... over all plumbing and pipe-fitting work on all permanent and temporary facilities required by the Motion Picture Industry." The jurisdictional victory for the plumbers and fitters local applied to work being done for the Columbia Pictures, Loew's, Paramount Pictures, 20th Century Fox, Universal Pictures, Warner Brothers Pictures, RKO Radio Pictures, Samuel Goldwyn Studios, Republic Productions and Hal Roach Studios companies.

### GAINING NEW BENEFITS & THE HILTON

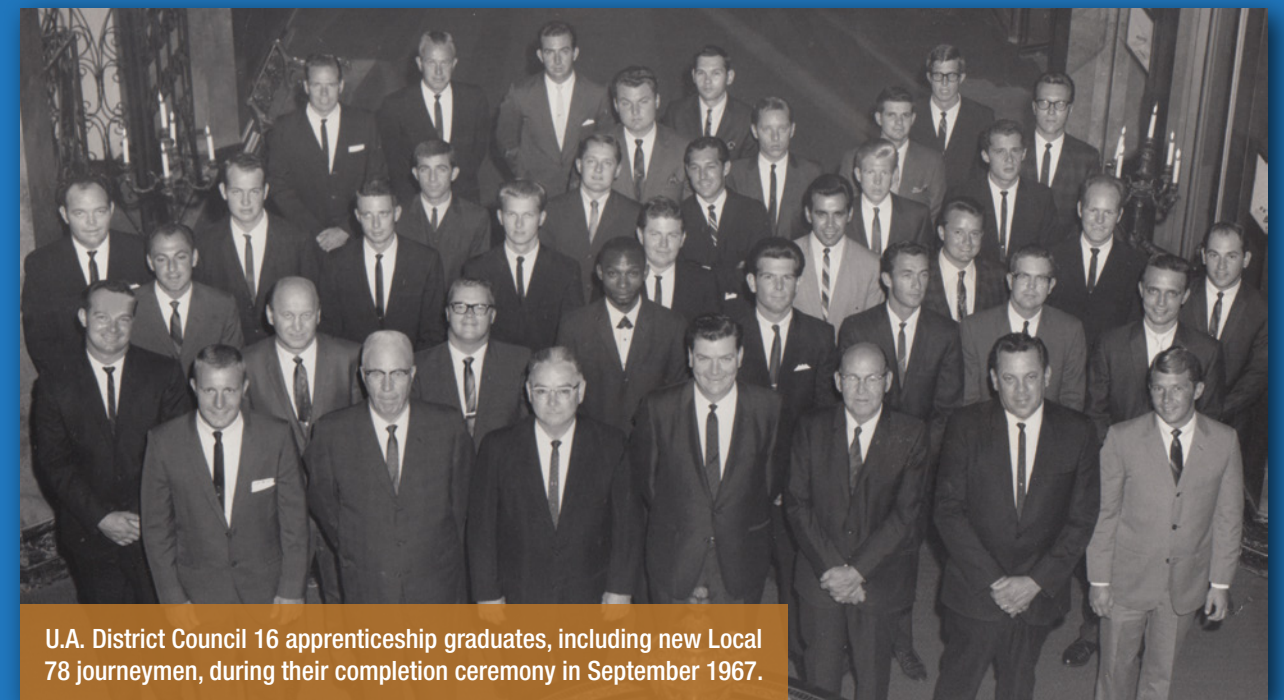
The 1950s was a busy time for Local 78 members, who would work on an abundance of smaller commercial and residential jobs during the decade's early years.

The local also gained a new contract in March 1950 that provided a 35-hour workweek for which daily hours were 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wages were also increased to \$2.90 per hour beginning July 1, and employees were given seven holidays and 12 paid vacation days.

What's more, the contract also set up a **Health and Welfare Fund** "according to the plan of Local 1, United Association," affording members of Local 78 an employer-sponsored insurance benefit.

The following year, work became so plentiful that many members were working on Saturdays and Sundays – in violation of the union's law. Accordingly, the local issued a warning to members that they must not work on weekends and would be penalized for doing so.

As the local's condition remained strong into mid-1953, it asked for a 25-cent-per-hour raise in June that year, even though four years still



U.A. District Council 16 apprenticeship graduates, including new Local 78 journeymen, during their completion ceremony in September 1967.



Local 78 members working on construction of the Beverly Hilton Hotel in August 1954.



15 that stated, "As of July 16, no member of Local 78 shall work for an employer who is not signatory to an agreement to pay journeymen the wage of \$3.15 an hour and an additional 2-1/2 cents an hour on the welfare fund."

Ultimately, the contractors agreed to the raise, and by July 1954 the local's journeymen were being paid \$3.25 per hour plus another 10 cents per hour for hospitalization and medical care. As the local continued to press its employing contractors for additional wage concessions, that scale was bumped up in July 1955 by another 10 cents per hour, then an additional 7-1/2 cents was added on January 1, 1956, and another 10 cents beginning that July 1.

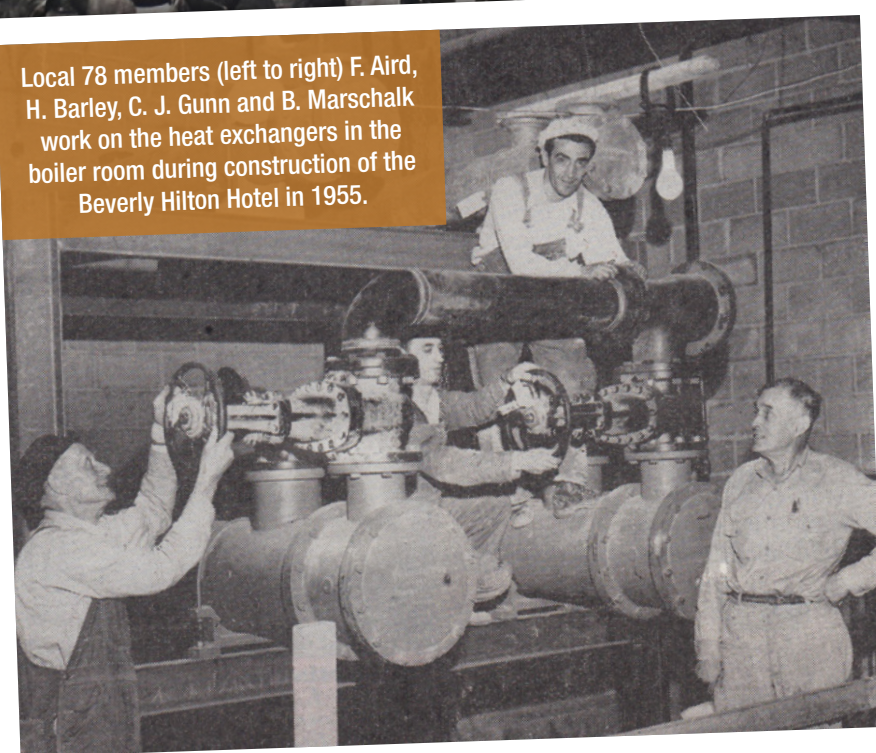
In addition to its contract triumphs, highlighting the many projects – both small and internationally prominent – in which Local 78 was involved during the decade, a large number of members worked on construction of the new, dramatic **Beverly Hilton Hotel**, which would open in the spring of 1955.

Construction of the eight-story luxury hotel at the intersection of Wilshire and Santa Monica boulevards in Beverly Hills posed some intricate problems for the craftsman of locals 78 and 250. Its height-saving design called for low floor-to-ceiling distances and, as a result, the between-floor piping "required some pretty fine work in tight quarters," the March 1955 *Journal* described. "Tying in the great complexity of air-conditioning, sanitary plumbing and other piping in a limited space over one of the three kitchens on the first floor was another massive accomplishment."

In the end, the union plumbers and fitters were up to the task and helped the elegant, \$14 million Beverly Hilton to become an instant landmark.

Soon after, however, the nearly 8,000 plumbers of District Council 16 (now the exclusive bargaining agent for Southern California's U.A. locals, including Local 78) were on strike

Local 78 members (left to right) F. Aird, H. Barley, C. J. Gunn and B. Marschalk work on the heat exchangers in the boiler room during construction of the Beverly Hilton Hotel in 1955.



remained on its current agreement, which did include a clause that allowed wages to be renegotiated annually. After contractors hesitated to grant a new wage scale, many of them reported that their plumbers and pipefitters "have left their jobs to 'go fishing,'" the *Times* reported on July 15, 1953.

While the running contract also included a "no strike" clause, Local 78 passed a resolution on July

Local 78 members (left to right) T. P. Stearns, W. A. Bertelson and C. C. Davies line up the plumbing in one of the large public restrooms during construction of the Beverly Hilton Hotel in 1955.





## HOLDING ON & BECOMING STRONGER

Following the relatively prosperous 1950s, the 1960s were marked with jurisdictional strife within the movie industry during the new decade's early years and a construction drought during the second half of the decade that left many Local 78 members unemployed for extended periods. Meanwhile, early on the local was still working to build and maintain the area, including projects at such prestigious locales as the Hollywood Park racetrack in Santa Anita.

As the 1960s progressed, the frequent jurisdictional disputes within the film studios were highlighted in January 1965, when Local 78 picketed construction work on a new Technicolor Laboratory at Universal Studios. The local would remove the pickets only after their plumbers were paid the "going construction rate" of \$5.20 per hour plus benefits – whereas plumbers on the job before the pickets were members of IATSE Local No. 789 and had been paid the \$3.89-per-hour maintenance plumbing rate, according to the January 28 *Times*.

## LOCAL 78 ELECTED FIRST BLACK U.A. OFFICER

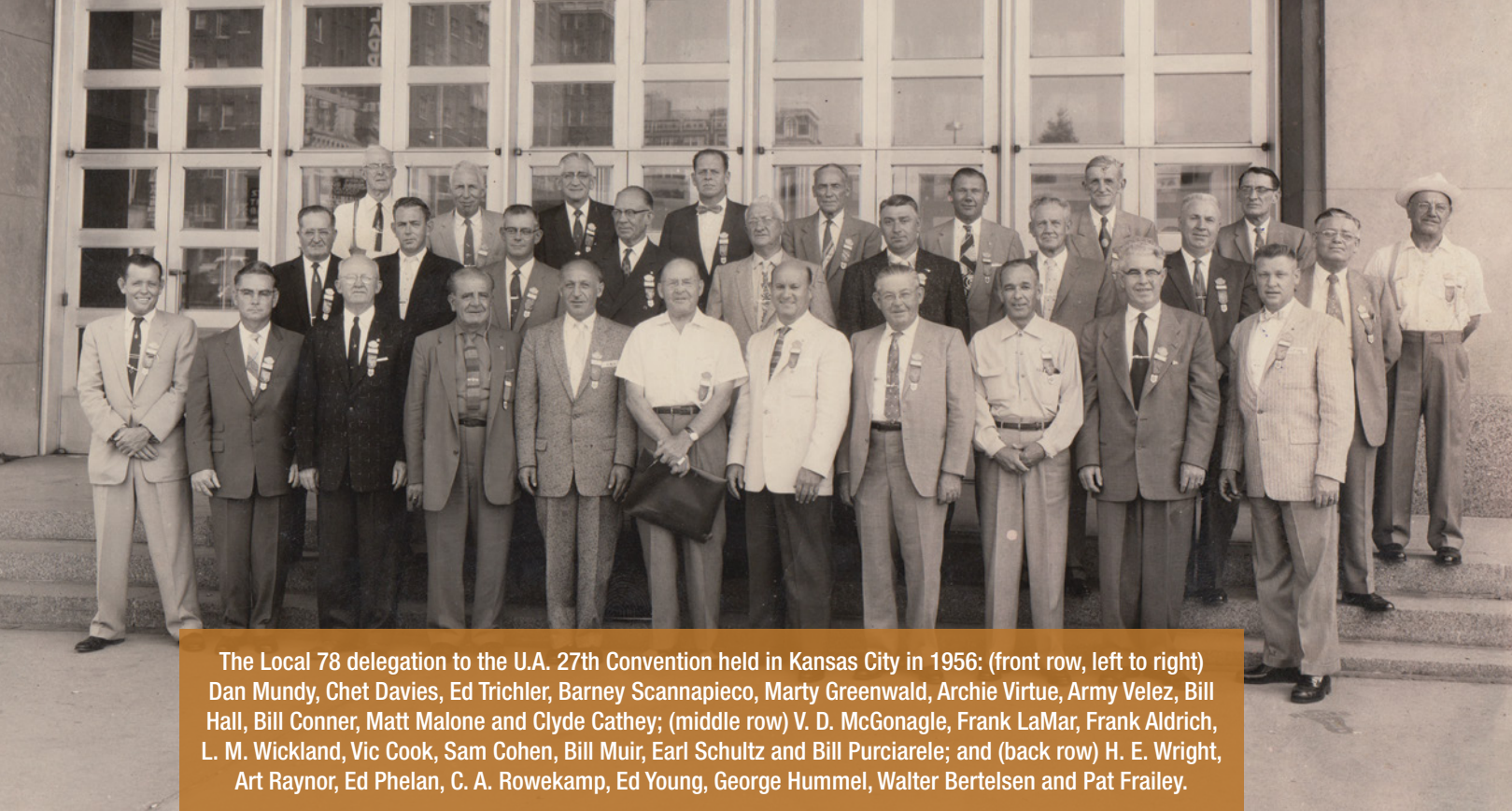
When the Local 78 membership in December 1965 elected **Brother John W. Hill** to be chairman of the local's Examining Board, he became the first black officer within any United Association local in the United States.

Brother Hill and other officers of the local were installed on January 13, 1966, after he received the highest number of votes for the post among 10 candidates. As chair, he would oversee the board that was charged with administering tests to applicants for membership in the local.

At the time of his election, there were an estimated 100 black members in the 3,200-member Local 78.

The following month, the U.A. signed a contract with the movie companies for a minimum wage scale of \$4.12 per hour for its plumbers engaged in maintenance work within the studios. The agreement went into effect February 1, 1965 and ran through January 31, 1967.

During that time, Local 78's membership had surged to 3,263, including 375 apprentices, by June 1964 and to 3,267 by June 1965, 379 of whom were apprentices.



The Local 78 delegation to the U.A. 27th Convention held in Kansas City in 1956: (front row, left to right) Dan Mundy, Chet Davies, Ed Trichler, Barney Scannapieco, Marty Greenwald, Archie Virtue, Army Velez, Bill Hall, Bill Conner, Matt Malone and Clyde Cathey; (middle row) V. D. McGonagle, Frank LaMar, Frank Aldrich, L. M. Wickland, Vic Cook, Sam Cohen, Bill Muir, Earl Schultz and Bill Purciarele; and (back row) H. E. Wright, Art Raynor, Ed Phelan, C. A. Rowekamp, Ed Young, George Hummel, Walter Bertelsen and Pat Frailey.

beginning July 1, 1955, over wage negotiations. While the union was seeking an immediate 12-1/2-cent-per-hour raise and another 5 cents on January 1, 1956, the employers were offering a two-year agreement providing 10 cents an hour more starting immediately, another 7 cents the coming January 1 and an additional 10 cents beginning July 1, 1956.

Also at issue was the union's preference for a one-year deal – although it would accept two years if the final annual raise was 15 cents per hour. The union further wanted a 1-cent-per-hour contribution from employers for "apprentice training."

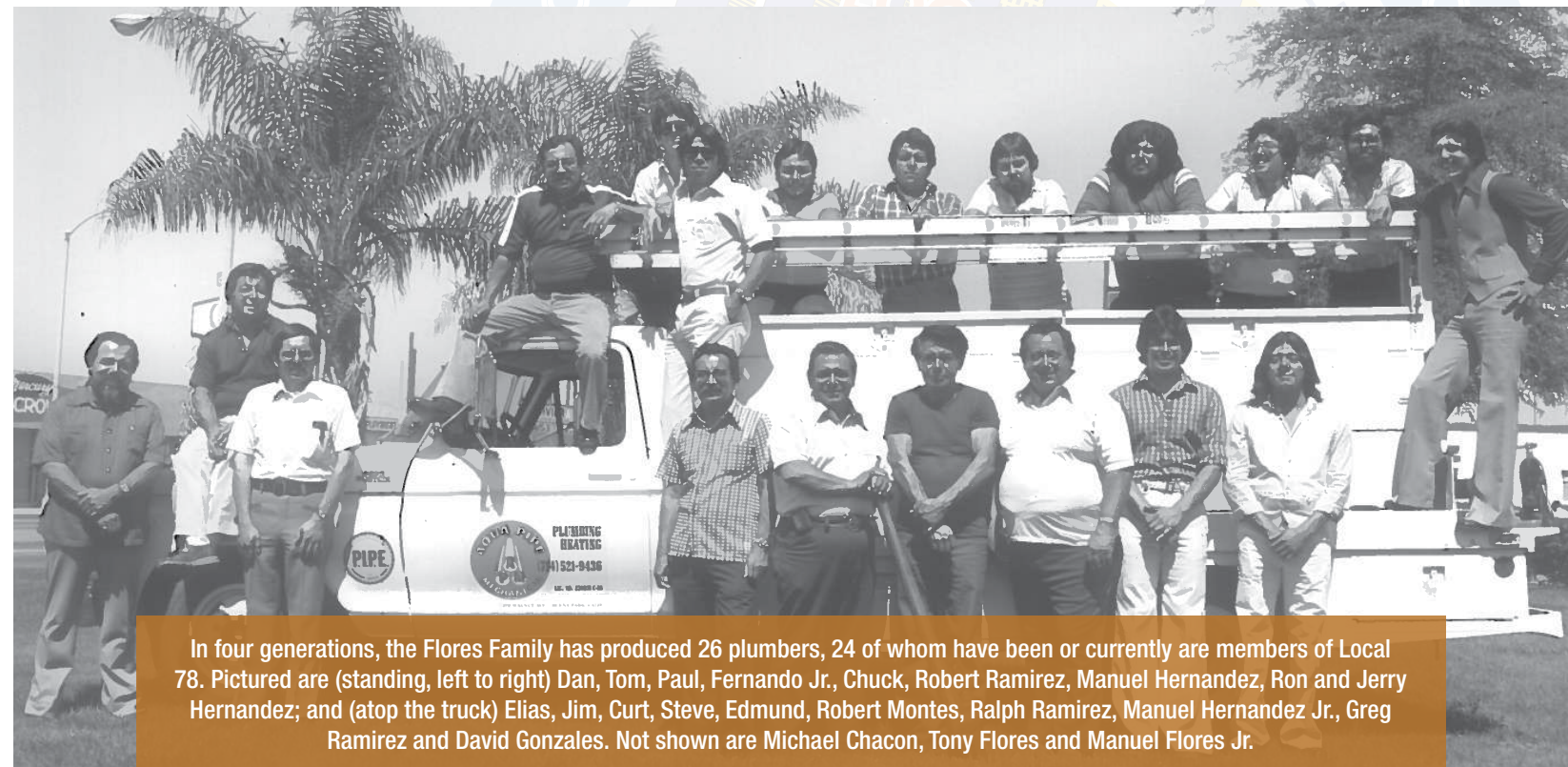
Eventually, the two sides agreed on a new, two-year deal that culminated with a \$3.55-per-hour wage for all District Council 16 piping craftsmen beginning January 1, 1957.

But when that agreement ended, Local 78 and District Council 16 commenced a prolonged strike on July 2, 1957, that would last for 47 days. In the end, a new three-year pact, which was brokered by a federal mediator, provided a 55-cent-per-hour wage increase and 10-percent increases on fringe

benefits. It was approved by Local 78 members on August 18, 1957, during a mass meeting held in Hollywood Legion Stadium.

The local also gained its first employer-funded **Pension Trust Fund** for retirement benefits in late 1959 when District Council 16 and the Plumbing, Heating and Piping Employers Council of Southern California signed a new agreement for the coming three years. The contractors' initial contribution into the new fund was set at 2-1/2 percent of gross monthly payroll for each employee. (A short time later, Local 78 **Brother Edward J. Tritschler** would be the first retiree to receive a pension payment from the fund.)

That three-year contract also raised journeyman hourly wages to \$4.33 effective July 1, 1960; to \$4.58 on July 1, 1961; and to \$4.83 on July 1, 1962. It further provided 4 percent of payrolls into the Southern California Pipe Trades Health and Welfare Trust Fund, 7-1/2 percent into the Vacation and Holiday Benefit Fund and 1 percent into the district council's **Apprentice and Journeyman Training Trust Fund** and **Industry Promotion Fund**.



In four generations, the Flores Family has produced 26 plumbers, 24 of whom have been or currently are members of Local 78. Pictured are (standing, left to right) Dan, Tom, Paul, Fernando Jr., Chuck, Robert Ramirez, Manuel Hernandez, Ron and Jerry Hernandez; and (atop the truck) Elias, Jim, Curt, Steve, Edmund, Robert Montes, Ralph Ramirez, Manuel Hernandez Jr., Greg Ramirez and David Gonzales. Not shown are Michael Chacon, Tony Flores and Manuel Flores Jr.



But by late 1965, construction within the Local 78 jurisdiction had dropped off so significantly that many members were seeking work with other sister U.A. locals. The need to travel for employment became so severe that the local printed its “Rules for Hiring Procedures” within its February 24, 1967, *Drips From The Faucet* newsletter, which addressed requirements for travelers.

That year’s May 5 newsletter then announced, “Regardless of what anyone has said to the contrary, the work situation at Local 78 is not good and there are no prospects of it improving in the immediate future.”

In that situation, new members were not joining the local – and with many current members traveling out of town for work, the local’s operating funds were depleted by then. Local 78 had utilized its Negotiating Fund for operating expenses, but that was also nearly exhausted by 1967.

In response, the local’s membership voted on June 8, 1967, to increase monthly dues to twice the hourly wage rate for journeymen and apprentices, effective July 1, 1967. That day, the local was also provided a wage increase for construction journeymen to \$5.64 per hour as part of its current contract, which also included a Health and Welfare contribution of 8 percent of payroll, holiday contribution of 10 percent, pension contribution of 14 percent and training and promotional contribution of 1 percent.

After the prolonged period of sluggish construction employment, into mid-1968 the local’s work “situation was clearing up rapidly” to the point where members were turning down jobs. With the construction industry on the upswing, the local even turned a focus towards “the all-important objective” of organizing non-union repair plumbers, which was necessary to stabilize wages in that industry because in small repair shops “the employer is at the mercy of



(Left to right) Vince Mangan, Marshall “Slim” Howlett and Calvin Emery of Local 78 and Burt Marschuck of U.A. Local 250 in 1970.

the profit margin and the plumber is at the mercy of the employer,” the March 1969 *Drips* newsletter proclaimed.

With employment strong, the local voted during a special meeting on June 28, 1969, by an 84-percent majority against a contract proposed by contractors and instead accepted an interim agreement – to which more than 100 contractors were signed by July 2. As part of the contract that was being disputed, the local was asking for a four-day work week, which Local 78 **Business Manager Calvin Emery** stated in a *Drips* he believed was “an absolute necessity in the construction business and most especially in plumbing. Without it, we will not be able to start any substantial number of new apprentices nor will we be able to provide an equitable distribution of available work.”

The dispute, which was also the product of differences over wages and benefits, left Local 78 and District Council 16 without a contract into

September. During that time, the local decreed that any of its members who were working for a signed contractor within the district council would pay a \$5-per-day assessment to fund a strike, which by mid-July appeared imminent.

After an ensuing 80-day strike, the employers council and the district council finally reached an agreement on September 16, 1969. Terms of the contract included the continuation of the current wage of \$6.60 per day until July 1, 1970, when the scale would increase to \$7.45, and then it would be raised to \$8.30 on July 1, 1971. The work week would remain at 40 hours until July 1, 1971, when it would be decreased to 36 hours, while all fringe benefits remained at a total of 40 percent of payroll earnings.

Indeed, U.A. District Council 16 and Local 78 had become so strong by late 1969 that they were able to hold out for nearly three months until they received the \$3.51 in hourly wage and benefits increases they were seeking from



(Left to right) Local 78 Business Manager Calvin Emery, Building Committee members William Purciarele and Bill Holland, and Secretary-Treasurer Lee Carlson at the Open House for the local’s new headquarters at 2504 West Seventh Street on August 29, 1970.



## MEMBER ASCENDED TO U.A. LEADERSHIP

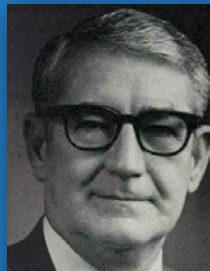
Local 78 **Brother Joseph A. Walsh** was unanimously chosen United Association General Secretary-Treasurer on December 28, 1972, after having served as Executive Vice President of the U.A. since March 1969. (He replaced retired General Secretary-Treasurer William T. Dodd, who was affected by a revision of the U.A. Constitution, passed during the General Convention held in Denver in August 1971, that provided that "those General Officers and International Representatives ... who are 70 years of age or older shall take their retirement effective January 1, 1973.")

Brother Walsh was initiated into Local 78 on February 26, 1946, following his service in the U.S. Navy during World War II. He was awarded his journeyman's certificate after completion of the required apprentice training courses.

In 1953, he was elected recording secretary of Local 78, beginning a career of distinguished service to his fellow U.A. members. The following year, he became business agent of the local and served in that capacity until 1957, when he was elected Local 78 business manager – an office to which he was elected three times.

Brother Walsh was also secretary of the Los Angeles Joint Apprenticeship Committee, a trustee of the Southern California Pipe Trades Apprentice and Journeyman Training Trust Fund and an active participating member of the California State Apprenticeship Committee of the State Pipe Trades Council. He further served both as vice president and president of the California Pipe Trades Council.

Brother Walsh passed away in 2007.



Brother Joseph  
A. Walsh

the employers, who the union were able to divide during the strike.

Then with the new contract in hand, Local 78 in September 1969 completed its move into a new building of its own at **2504 West Seventh Street**, in which it would conduct all of its union business for the next 12 years (when the local would move to its current location on West James M. Wood Boulevard).

## UPS & DOWNS OF THE '70S, '80S & '90S

**K**eenly aware that the quality of its craftsmen was vital in maintaining and increasing its market share, Local 70 formed a "Workmanship Committee" in January 1970. Articles added to the local's by-laws charged the committee with investigating "any complaints of substandard plumbing work being performed by U.A. members within the territorial jurisdiction" of Local 78.

But as the early 1970s progressed, construction work faltered as inflation slowed housing and large construction jobs, leaving several Local 78 members unemployed. Consequently, many members opted for retirement at that time, decreasing the overall active membership of the local.

The local dealt with a nearly constant rate of unemployment of around 150 of its roughly 1,000 members throughout 1970. The situation persisted through 1971 and into early 1972, when many "major" jobs that had been scheduled to be underway were instead held up because of shortages generated by a wage-price freeze that had been instituted on the industry.

What's more, promising indicators in early 1972 such as an influx of calls for apartment work and the start of work on St. Vincent Hospital were being negated by non-union contractors, who during the early 1970s were making great inroads into work previously being performed by signatory constructors within the Local 78 jurisdiction. The local was further being hampered by increased jurisdictional encroachment into its territory by other building trades that were performing some of the plumbers' functions on various jobs.

District Council 16 did gain a new contract for its locals for July 1, 1973, that raised journeyman wages to \$9.14 per hour for the coming year – although the wage was not confirmed by the Construction Industry

Stabilization Committee, under its Wage Stabilization Program, until March 5, 1974. However, the new contract also established a **Contract Administration Fund**, the trustees of which would be one attorney representing the employers and one attorney representing the district council.

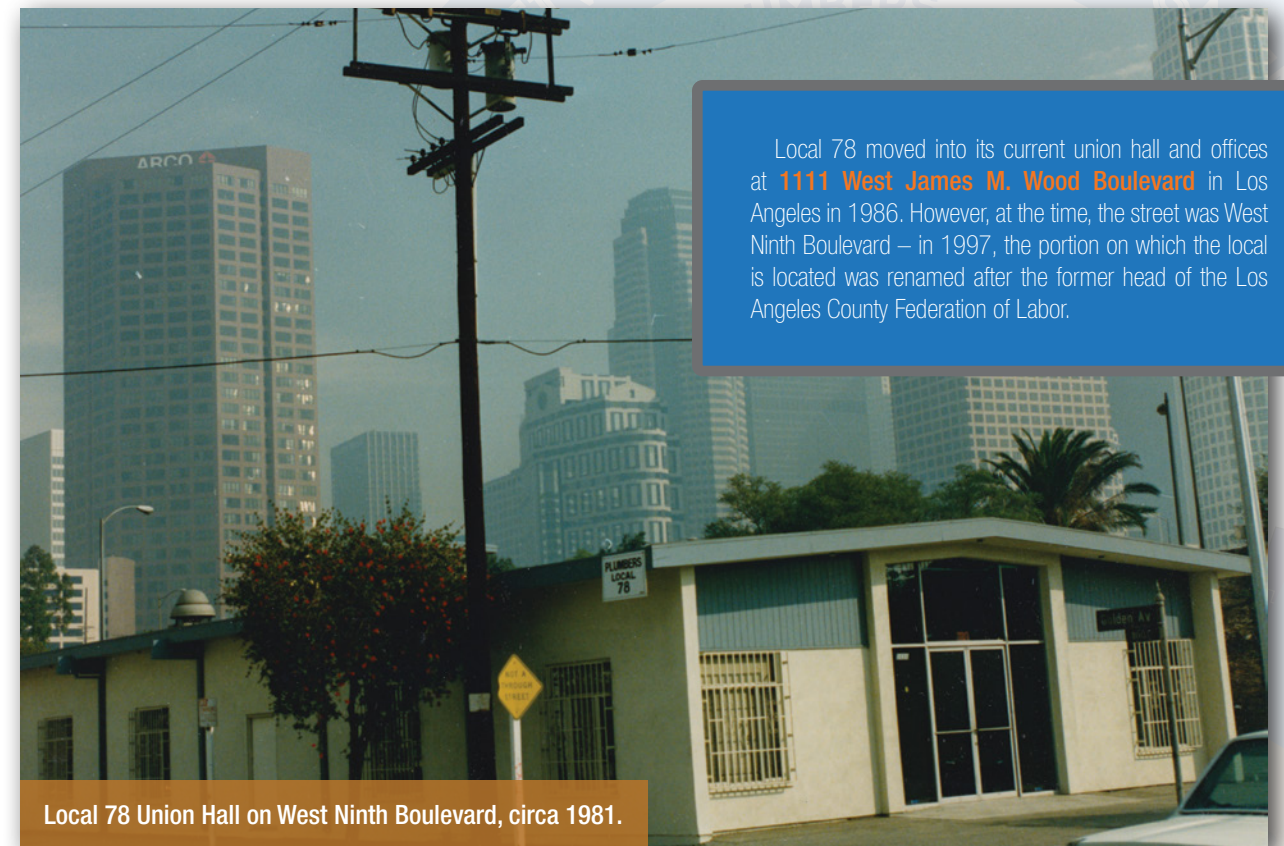
When construction and unemployment for Local 78 were not fluctuating during the mid- and late-1970s and the early-1980s, they were stifled through the bulk of those years as economic recession and stagnation was, more often than not, the norm. Statewide, for instance, construction jobs fell 28 percent during a recession from 1973 to 1975, and during a 1981 to 1982 recession, jobs dropped by 24 percent.

But as the nation, state and City of Los Angeles were climbing out of the economic turmoil, District Council 16 was able to sign a new contract that provided a total earnings

package of \$21.38 per hour to journeymen by the late-1980s. Contactors also agreed to pay \$2.99 per hour into pensions and \$1.92 per hour into health insurance.

Before the end of the 1980s, Southern California's construction industry was rolling once again – and the union plumbing industry was briskly expanding along with it. Beginning in the mid-1980s, 64 large developments were completed in the city while the Los Angeles skyline was remade in the process, according to the January 8, 2017, *Los Angeles Times*, before the boom collapsed in an early 1990s recession.

Work remained slack into 1995, while several major projects were on the horizon that would soon begin to carry Local 78 to its 125th anniversary in 2017. The motion picture industry also had a number of large projects starting up in the mid-1990s that would carry over to the Local 78 in-house plumbers at the studios.



Local 78 Union Hall on West Ninth Boulevard, circa 1981.

Local 78 moved into its current union hall and offices at **1111 West James M. Wood Boulevard** in Los Angeles in 1986. However, at the time, the street was West Ninth Boulevard – in 1997, the portion on which the local is located was renamed after the former head of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor.



In the meantime, the local and the city's building trades unions completed negotiations for a contract with the **Los Angeles Unified School District** that was approved by the Board of Education on March 4, 1996. With the district's budget due to receive a 2.6-percent increase, for the first time in seven years there was funding to start restoring employees' wages and the new agreement returned pay to 1991 levels.

The following July 1997, Local 78 rolled out a new initiative for the local called "**Partners in Progress**" that was designed to

create new markets, reach full employment and double local membership in the coming five years. The program was based upon principles that were developed and agreed upon by the local's membership.

That summer, the local also completed successful negotiations with the Los Angeles Community Colleges and the motion picture studios, both of which consisted of "very good" pay increases as well as favorable "language changes." The local also voted on or was negotiating pay increases in its Los Angeles Housing Authority Agreement, Hollywood Turf Club (race track) agreements, Los Angeles City Agreement and the agreement for its Los Angeles County members.

### POLITICAL ACTION & THE STAPLES CENTER

**B**efore an extended period of frenetic, expansive construction in Los Angeles took hold with the new 2000 millennium, national and state-sponsored attacks on labor, including prevailing wages, spearheaded by California Governor Pete Wilson in the 1990s kept Local 78's long-established **Political Action Committee** busy. But in the June 2, 1998, primary election, the local helped defeat California Proposition 226, which would have weakened labor unions by forcing them to annually obtain written permission from their members to withhold wages or dues to be used for political purposes.

Then later that year, Local 78 helped reverse the political climate within the state when it put its full backing behind the victory of Gray Davis as governor in the November



Local 78 apprenticeship graduation of Rudy McCoy, Jeff Petitt, Larry Petitt, Randy Petitt, Rick Solomon, Ralph Miller, Bill Lotspeitch, Dick Floyd, P. K. Balliett, Mike Erland and Cal Emery in 1986.

3, 1998, gubernatorial election. During the campaign, officers and members of Local 78 donated over 1,000 hours to the Davis campaign, with volunteers donating an average of 20 hours of their own time. The local also unanimously voted during its September 10, 1998, regular union meeting to further support Davis financially through assessments on each member of \$72 for 1999 and 2000.

"We should all take a moment and savor our victory, for Local 78's financial commitment and the hard work of Local 78 members which helped make our victory possible," **Business Manager John Hall** declared in the December 2, 1998, *Drips* newsletter. (*Only months into his second term, however, Governor Davis was recalled and removed from office in 2003.*)

Meanwhile, work was on the upswing, highlighted by \$1.5 billion in projects for the city school district and \$1 billion in work at the **University of Southern California** Medical

Center for the coming year.

Ground had also been broken on March 31, 1998, for the new, \$375 million **Staples Center** arena, which would serve as the home of the N.B.A. Los Angeles Lakers and Clippers and the N.H.L. Los Angeles Kings. Local 78, along with Sprinklerfitters Local 709 and Pipefitters Local 250, helped complete the project on time for its first scheduled event, a Bruce Springsteen concert on October 15, 1999.

The over \$6 million worth of plumbing work installed in Staples by Local 78 members working for Murray Company, Pan-Pacific and H.L. Moe included basic sanitary, sewer and storm lines and aluminum beverage conduit. What's more, the U.A. team also installed over 500 fixtures to the arena's restrooms, locker rooms, restaurants and concessions stands.

A new, four-year contract beginning July 1, 1999, added total increases for wages and



Local 78 shows its support for California gubernatorial candidate Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley in 1982. (The first black to head a gubernatorial ticket in California, Bradley lost elections in 1982 and 1986 to Republican George Deukmejian.)



Local 78 members show their support for a Project Labor Agreement for the Long Beach Civic Center project during a meeting in April 2015.



benefits of \$2.25 per hour effective July 1, 2002. Journeyman plumbers were receiving \$37.10 per hour and service and repair journeymen were receiving \$35.71 before the pact was negotiated.

With construction of the Staples Center in full swing, Local 78's work situation was encouraging into late 1999 as the local's contractors were beginning to win additional projects. What's more, by that time, two years of hard work had produced several union-friendly Project Labor Agreements on \$2.4 billion dollars of school work.

As the end of the decade, the century and the millennium approached, Local 78 could look back over a previous year that was increasingly more kind to the union and its membership. During 1999, the local's pension plan was even improved so that members could receive full benefit for all the hours they work.

### 'IN WHAT SOME MAY CALL A BOOM'

The projected construction blitz in Los Angeles was upon the city in full force beginning in 2000. As a result, Local 78 **Business Agent Terry Lairson** was able to comment in the April 28, 2000, *Drips* newsletter, "Brothers and Sisters, we are in what some may call a boom in construction right now. The out-of-work book is as low as I've ever seen it and it looks like it will stay that way for quite a while."

Indeed, members of Local 78 during the initial years of the new Y2K millennium were extremely busy helping to renovate and build the City of Los Angeles. Among dozens of projects, Local 78 members and hundreds of U.A. journeypeople worked diligently during that time to construct a new entertainment complex to house the Academy Awards ceremony, build a new city cathedral and

renovate the city's historic City Hall.

Plumbing work for the \$430 million **Hollywood and Highland Center** on Hollywood Boulevard, which includes the **Kodak Theatre**, home to the Academy Awards, was performed by about 30 U.A. plumbers working for Murray Company. The project included the installation of basic plumbing and site utility sewage and storm drain work and was completed in November 2001.

The new, \$163 million **Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels** in the heart of the city opened in 2002 after Murray Company and Local 78 plumbers installed the \$2 million plumbing.

Meanwhile, the \$112 million, three-year retrofit project for City Hall featured an \$8 million mechanical and plumbing package that included a new plumbing system with about 425 fixtures and stainless, cast iron, ductile iron, copper, and carbon steel piping installed by Local 78. What's more, the entire plumbing system was built on ball joints to allow movement of two feet in any direction in the case of an earthquake.

A large amount of hospital medical-gas piping installations into 2003 helped keep the local's work prospects strong. Some \$1.5 billion worth of projects, all signed to a Project Labor Agreement, for the Los Angeles City Colleges were also starting up at that time, further buoying employment for the local.

The local remained busy into 2005 and the balance of the decade, highlighted by its work on the \$2.5 billion **L.A. Live** entertainment complex in the South Park District adjacent to the Staples Center. L.A. Live's first phase opened in October 2007 and contained Microsoft Theatre and the Microsoft Square retail plaza.

Additional projects during that time included a \$500 million expansion of the University of Southern California's County Medical Center

U.A. Local No. 494 of Long Beach was merged into Local 78 and Pipefitters Local 250 of Los Angeles on December 1, 2013. Local 494 had been organized in February 1932 with the assistance of Local 78, whose rules and by-laws were adopted by the new local.

and the new, \$428 million **Kaiser Permanente Sunset Boulevard hospital**, which was built under a national labor/management partnership that gave the hospital's unions a stronger voice in what they felt was needed in the hospital. In addition, over the next several years, a Project Labor Agreement ensured that U.A. members worked on many of the 159 new construction projects completed at a cost of more than \$14 billion by the Los Angeles Unified School District as part of the largest construction program in its history.

### BUILDING UP HOPES FOR THE FUTURE

As Local 78 approached its 125th anniversary in 2017, its membership was working on most of the many, more prominent construction projects in the still-growing Los Angeles area. The Southern California economy did slow by the mid-2010s, curtailing construction and increasing unemployment, but when the economy began to recover, the city's downtown was primed for an influx of building projects.

The subsequent construction boom can also be traced back to 1999, when the Staples Center opened and the city's adaptive reuse ordinance took effect, making it easy for developers to redevelop old, vacant office buildings into residences, according to the January 8, 2017, *Times* article.

Then in 2016, after a year-and-a-half of anticipation, Local 78 was finally enjoying a marked improvement in its unemployment, "evidenced by a dwindling out-of-work list



Local 78 Brother Eli Houta installs plumbing at the Metropolis Residential Tower 3 in 2017.



Local 78 elected officers for 2016 to 2018.

and a skyline full of cranes.” Before year’s end, downtown Los Angeles was undergoing its largest construction development in modern times – “an explosion juiced by foreign investment that’s adding thousands of residences, construction jobs and a multitude of shops and restaurants,” according to the *Times*.

Local 78 members are also building the new Los Angeles **N.F.L. football stadium**, a palatial, \$2.6-billion facility for the Rams and relocated Chargers in the suburb of Inglewood. Originally projected to open in

Local 78 has truly benefitted from the recent activity and has been involved in most all of its most major projects, including construction of the 73-story **Wilshire Grand Center and Hotel**, for which work began in 2012. Once completed on June 23, 2017, the \$1.2 billion facility in the Financial District of downtown Los Angeles was the tallest building in Los Angeles and the ninth tallest in the United States.

Two blocks away, the four-tower **Metropolis** community, a \$1-billion development with 350 hotel rooms and more than 1,500 condominiums, is being constructed with Local 78 labor. In all, an estimated 2,800 union construction workers will have been employed on the Metropolis and Wilshire Grand projects once the former is completed.

Wilshire Grand Center and Hotel, 2017



The Metropolis Residential Tower 3 under construction in 2017.

FOR 125 YEARS

2017





The Local 78 softball team that won the 2017 Los Angeles/Orange Counties Building and Construction Trades Council softball tournament.

2019, construction was delayed by almost a year because of weather to the start of the 2020 N.F.L. season.

The new, \$350 million **Banc of California Stadium** is also being built in Collinwood on the former site of the Los Angeles Memorial Sports Arena by Local 78 craftspeople. Once completed, it will serve as the home of the Los Angeles Football Club when it begins play in Major League Soccer in 2018.

Also included on the extensive list of projects on which Local 78 members were involved or were recently working are the 24-story residential and retail towers at 755 and 732 Spring Street; the three 40-plus-story-tower **Oceanwide Plaza**; the 34-story 888 Hope tower; the 34-story Apex II tower; the 40- and 31-story mixed-use 1212 Flower complex; the 50-plus-story residential tower at 825 Hill; the two 35-story-tower **Circa** luxury condominiums in the South Park neighborhood; the Long Beach Civic Center, library and new outdoor amphitheater; and the new Universal Studios **“Wizarding World of Harry Potter”** attraction ... *just to name a few.*

At 125 years old on January 1, 2017, Local 78 has remained committed to continuously

recruiting and training future generations of world-class plumbing and piping tradesmen and women. Meanwhile, the local has also maintained a steady commitment to fostering lasting relationships with its contractors and project owners, increasing job opportunities for its members. Local 78 further has stayed focused on fighting for fair wages and self-funded retirement plans, which allow members to enjoy the quality of life they deserve in retirement.

What’s more, throughout 125 years, the local has embraced its obligation to be a direct conduit to better sanitation both locally and across the world. In the near future, it will look to improve the utilities in Los Angeles, in which about one-fifth of the city’s water pipes were installed before 1931.

All the while, Local 78 will continue its participation in the political arena, where it makes decisions and will continue to do so based on the local’s commitment to represent the interest of working families on the important issues that affect their lives.



The Local 78 Union Hall on West James M. Wood Boulevard in 2017.



CONGRATULATIONS ON 125 YEARS!

**Laborers' Local 300** is proud to celebrate Plumbers Local Union No. 78 and its incredible history of providing quality craftsmanship for Los Angeles.



# LIUNA!

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### Local Union No. 78

on your

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**Congratulations to UA Local Union 78 on your 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!**



**Your brothers and sisters at UA Local Union 393 honor and celebrate your success and support for working families.**

**Congratulations on 125 amazing years!**

**Plumbers Local 78**

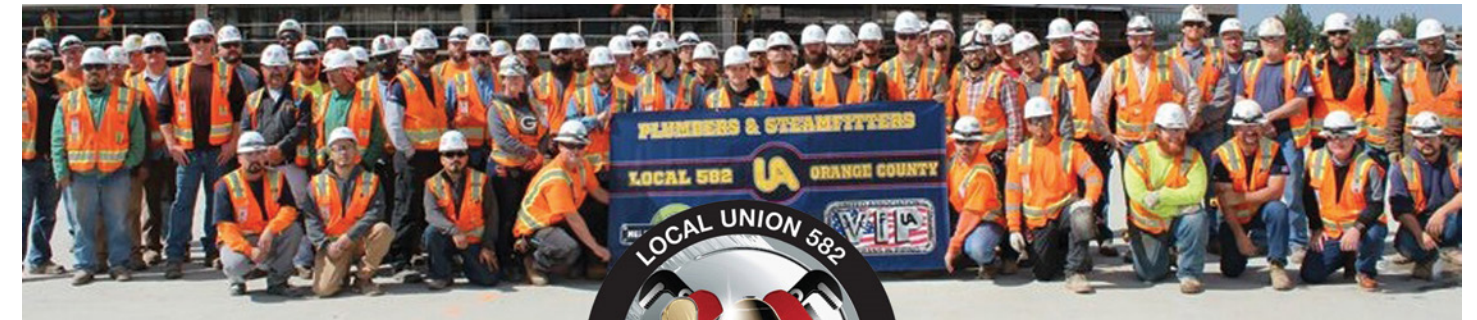


**From the Officers & Members of Plumbers & Pipefitters  
Local 484**

**CONGRATULATIONS  
UA LOCAL 78  
ON YOUR 125<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY**

**IN SOLIDARITY  
UA LOCAL 467  
SAN MATEO COUNTY, CA**

Mark Burri, Business Manager  
Eric Tassio & Chris Collins, Business Agents



*U.A. Local 582 Congratulates the  
Brothers and Sisters of U.A. Local 78 on Your  
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We are honored to be a part of this occasion and look forward to many more years of partnership in the plumbing and piping industry.





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**THE MEMBERS AND STAFF OF OPCMIA LOCAL 755 WOULD LIKE TO WISH ALL THE BEST TO LOCAL 78 ON THEIR 125<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY**

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LUKE ADKINS-VICE PRESIDENT  
CHUCK CORTEZ-BUSINESS MANAGER/FINANCIAL SECRETARY  
JOHN VANCISE-RECORDING SECRETARY

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Geoffrey D. Herrig, Business Agent

**The Officers and Members of UA Local 38 Salute UA Local 78 on it's 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

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James E. Killeen, III <i>Business Manager</i> <i>Financial Secretary</i> <i>Treasurer</i>	James L. Spencer <i>Business Representative</i> <i>Organizer</i>

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To the hard-working dedicated members of  
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Local 78**  
On reaching your Historic  
Milestone of  
**125 years**



**Strength  
in  
Brotherhood**  
**I.B.E.W. Local 40 Officers,  
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Best Wishes for The Future!**



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The working women and men of the Los Angeles Labor Movement congratulate UA Plumbers Local 78 on their 125-year anniversary!



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Congratulations and Best Wishes for the Future



From Your Brothers & Sisters in Colorado Springs!

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