

Local 475

On August 3rd, 1904, Local 475 was founded on Halsey Street in Newark, New Jersey, with 15 charter members.

The Local quickly grew to 50 Steamfitters and Helpers before the end of 1904. The future success of the Local was recognized by President William M. Merrick of the United Association, in a 1904 edition of the U.A. Journal.

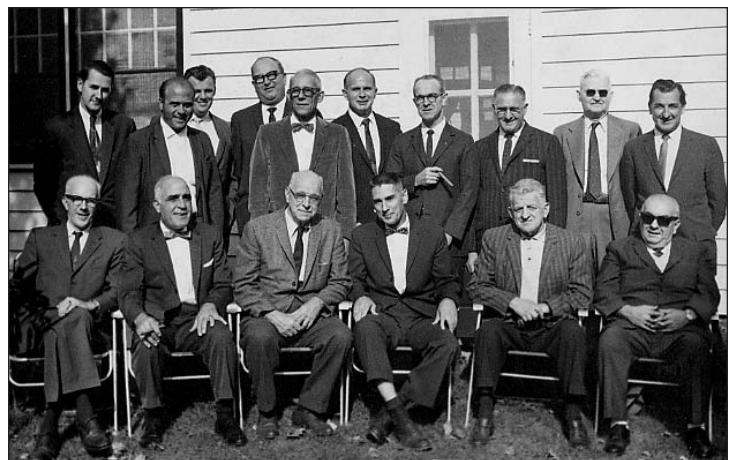
“On Thursday evening, September 8th, I installed the first group of officers for Local Union number 475, Steamfitters and Helpers of Newark, who have rapidly gained membership and today control the majority of Steamfitters and Helpers in that city.”

In the early years and throughout the 20s and 30s, the Local benefited from the 15 breweries and bottling plants that set up shop in our territory. These were prosperous times for Newark, and as the city grew with industry, the Steamfitters Local 475 grew and prospered as well. A boom of chemical plants began to sprout up along the Newark waterfront and port Elizabeth. Plants like Reichold, American Cyanamid, Linden Chlorine, GAF, Dupont, and Diamond Shamrock. The smoke stack industry that New Jersey is famous for continued to expand along the Route 1, New Jersey Turnpike corridor with the construction of Newark Airport, Standard Oil Refinery at bayway, General Motors, Budweiser and Merck. These plants were and still are a major reason Local 475 is one of the best territories in the United Association.

In 1940 the local grew in size with the consolidation of Elizabeth's Local 180 and Plainfield's Local 318. The membership took a sudden hit in 1941, as many of our Brothers rushed off to war after the bombing of Pearl Harbor.

As World War II came to an end, the returning G.I.'s entered the post war economy. Local 475's ranks swelled with the influx of new helpers and returning journeyman.

New labor laws from F.D.R.'s administration, and the desire of the GI.'s to share in the American Dream gave greater influence to the nation's labor movement.



As the years moved through the 60's, 70's, and 80's the local always seemed fortunate to have a major project to carry the work load. Jobs like Englehard in 1974, The Natural Gas Plant in Linden in 1971, and the around the clock task of putting the refinery back on-line after a violent explosion rocked Union County in 1975.

In August of 1977, Local 475 headed west; consolidating with Local 300 from Bernardville, and Local 309 from Summit. Today, Local 475 covers the middle of the state, from Newark to the Delaware River.

New technology and tougher environmental policies helped bring about new large scale industrial projects which continued to fuel the local. The huge expansion at the brewery, the garbage burners in Newark and Rahway, K-15 in Schering, The Linden Co-gen, MSO in Merck, and the Polypropolyne Plant for Conoco-Phillips.



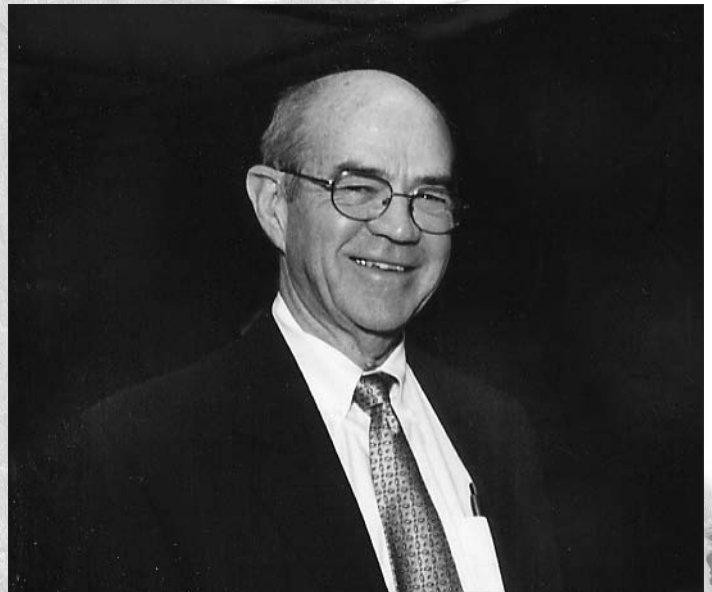
Today, Local 475 reaps the rewards of being located in the heart of the great state of New Jersey, which has evolved into the Mecca of the Pharmaceutical Industry. Over the years our Steamfitters have logged in enormous hours at Merck, Schering-Plough, Hoffman-LaRoche, Aventis, Johnson and Johnson, Ortho, Ethicon, Ciba-Geigy, Pharmacia, Pfizer, Medarex, Organon, and Imclone.

The landscape of our territory has evolved over the past century, from old chemical factories and breweries, to pharmaceuticals and bio-techs. One thing remains constant, Local 475 is strong and continues to build the systems that will power future generations.



Whether it is on Halsey Street or South 17th Street in Newark, Williams Street in East Orange, or Mt. Bethel Road, in Warren, The HEART of Local 475 is the Union Hall. It is here that jobs are dispatched, jurisdiction protected, funds managed, Apprentices trained, contracts negotiated, and collective bargaining agreements enforced. The officers of Local 475, past and present, have always provided strong representation within the Building Trades, and the Pipe Trades in New Jersey.

Here at the Union Hall's fund office, the benefits that we depend on every day are managed. These benefits, that we all take for granted, were not always in place. The Health and Welfare Fund was not established until 1951. The Local 475 Pension Plan was founded in 1953. The Vacation Fund became a strike issue in 1961, before becoming a part of our current wage package; and it wasn't until 1980, after several heated battles, that the Annuity Fund took flight. Today the Funds Office is responsible for managing over 200 million dollars. One think is certain about all of these benefits; none of them would have been possible without the efforts and commitment of the Steamfitters of yesterday, to leave behind a better Union for the Steamfitters of tomorrow.



Funds Administrator, James Reilly

Thanks to our Funds Administrator, and his hard working staff, and your Board of Trustees, Local 475 members, and their families, take comfort in knowing that their security, now, and in the future, is job number one at the funds office.





Looking back over Local 475's history, its members can take pride in the contributions the local has made to our local industries, communities, and the overall quality of life in North Jersey.

The attention to detail, craftsmanship and the hard work of the steamfitters before us is an example for all who follow.

Although nothing remains the same as evidenced by the technological changes to our industry, we hope some things never change, such as the spirit of cooperation between Local 475 and our Union Contractors. We share a common interest in maintaining quality workmanship and a satisfied construction user.

As Union members we will always safeguard, advance and promote the principals of collective bargaining while protecting the working rights of our membership. We will continue to share in the common bond of brotherhood, working together to strengthen the labor movement.

Tonight, we celebrate one hundred years of history made possible by one hundred years of Unionism. Each for all and all for each, may this never change!

