



# International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Vancouver Island

Quarterly Newsletter

Since 1902

## LOCAL 230 CELEBRATES 110 YEARS

Local 230 recognized its 110th anniversary with a Celebration held the evening of March 16th at the Grand Pacific Hotel on Victoria's Inner Harbour. 110 years is a long time in terms of a local union that has come from cobblestone streets of Victoria's early years to today's information super-highway. Preceding the Wright Brothers first powered 17 second flight at Kitty Hawk, Henry Ford's first Model "A" car in Detroit, and the first electric movie theatre opening in Los Angeles. Local 230 started with 20 brave electrical workers. The linemen from the BC Electric Company came together one evening and by the following resolution; *"Be it resolved that we the Electrical Workers of the City of Victoria, here assembled decriing it an object worthy of our efforts to place Labour & it's Rewards on an equal basis with Capital and conscientiously believing that Organizing action is the just and right means thereto, Do hereby form ourselves into a United Body for that purpose & subscribe our names hereto ..."* chartered the beginning of our 110 year old Local.

The IBEW 230 membership was originally linemen, then telephone workers and bus drivers because at the time the city buses were electric and the workers

for the bus company were employees of B.C. Electric, however within the first few years the Local represented construction electricians and were very active in the Victoria Building Trades, and Trades and Labour Councils almost from the beginning. At one of the earliest meetings of the Local Union the members voted to give

*"a hardy support to the Suspender Makers Union"* another meeting in 1904 moved to donate a *"portable light to the Royal Provincial Jubilee Hospital"* this is the same hospital that employed over 230 members just last year with the Twin Nurse Tower project, and where Local 230 members continue to perform the maintenance and construction work.

During the prohibition years Local 230's Press Secretary Frank Shapland who was a regular colourful contributor to the International

Union's "Electrical Worker" wrote, *"some of our floating brothers blew in and being successful in getting a job immediately bought a houseboat located on the shore of the inner harbour and proceeded to keep "batch". However, they found out at times when taking Scott's Emulsion for toothache or on the day after payday when it was their duty*



Local 230's Charter Members 1902.



The Jordan River Dam supplied Victoria's Power Generation needs in the early 20th Century.

## Summer 2012

*Inside This Quarterly*

[www.ibew230.org](http://www.ibew230.org)

### Page 1:

- Local 230 celebrates 110 years

### Page 2:

- Business Manager's Report
- Local 230 celebrates 110 years (Continued...)

### Page 3:

- Local 230 celebrates 110 years (Continued...)
- Shop Steward Training

### Page 4:

- Survival of the Fittest – Breslin Strategies
- Youth & Politics

## News and Notes:

Building & Metal Trades Christmas Dinner Dance Saturday December 15th  
Victoria Edelweiss Club Band is "Flatline" \$20 per person

Wanted: 3 under 25 year old creative smartass' for help in developing relevant and comical You Tube and Avatar Video Scripts.

Email: [Admin@ibew230.org](mailto:Admin@ibew230.org) for tickets and interest in the video brainstorming sessions.



**FIND US ON FACEBOOK**

# Business Manager's Report



United Way representatives Kim Manton and Linda Hughes with Business Manager Venoit

Well it's been a short ten years since I had the honour to host the Local 230 100th Anniversary and ten years later the honour was that much more. As it should be, we tried to outdo ourselves from previous events and I think we were able to achieve that. We brought in trainers from all over North America and put on a day and a half of training for close to 40 members. We were able to fill the second largest venue in Victoria to capacity for a fantastic evening of great food by kitchen staff at the Grand Pacific Hotel; we received positive words from International Vice-President Phil Flemming who was in attendance.

We had tables bought by many of our employers and service provider's filled with our membership. Brother Trevor Williams from Local 258 won the Flat Screen Smart TV provided by the IBEW Provincial Council which was raffled off with all proceeds going to the United Way. Labour Representative Kim Manton and Victoria United Way Director Linda Hughes were in attendance to help sell tickets and present the Local with an award in recognition of our membership's continued support. Comedian Brad Muize kept everyone laughing and Roxslyde kept the dance floor busy after that.



We also designed a long-sleeve T-shirt "Delivering the Promise" in recognition of our proud past and ongoing success, these will be available for sale in the office as well as at Unit Meetings, however please give us a call to let us know that you would like one and at what meeting you will be attending and what size you are. I would finally like to thank Jen and Nicole from our office who put their heart into making this event an incredible success.

## LOCAL 230 CELEBRATES 110 YEARS (Continued...)

*to take a copious quantity of antidote for snake bites down in Mexico, that they ran in great danger of drowning, so they all bought cork life belts and donned them on such occasions which lightened the labours of the salvage men."*



Sister Ruth Ralston Electrician at Yarrows Shipyard 1943 walking down Douglas Street after work.

The years around the Second World War brought a huge demand for Naval Vessel construction and huge need for men and women into the workforce as well. By

1942 there were 42 women in the electrical department at Yarrows Shipyard alone.

At the end of the decade the Local 230 Marine members saw an increase of five more Statutory Holidays recognized in the Collective Agreement for a new total of eight! By 1954 the Shipyards received an additional Stat, and double time for work on Saturdays.

Members of Local 230 have been involved in major infrastructure and construction projects from the beginning in B.C. and from the late forties through the late fifties our inside wiremen worked at constructing several pulp and paper mills throughout the Island. In the late sixties, Local 230 along with other Metal Trades Affiliates gave up their individual bargaining rights for their members at the Federal Government Dockyard and created the Dockyard Trades and Labour Council (West). At the same time Local 230 along with the other BC locals gave their BC Hydro and Power

Authority workers throughout the Province over to a newly chartered IBEW Local 258 to represent all Public Power Authority workers. Throughout the sixties and seventies the Local 230 membership saw good growth in all its branches on the Island.

The marine section had newly formed BC Ferries work, the inside section saw good commercial and industrial construction growth and the cablevision section flourished with increased interest in home entertainment and the 70's sitcom.

The eighties came the infamous 3



Electrical Construction Crew Public Works Dockyard 1929.

# LOCAL 230 CELEBRATES 110 YEARS (Continued...)



Local 230's 1962 Executive Board.

Bills (19, 20 and Vanderzalm) hell bent on diminishing the unions rights, and followed by a long and difficult recession which pushed many of our members out to Ontario where a tradesmen could name



Some of the Boys that made Local 230 strong throughout the World Wars and Great Depression.

his job, and the hours he was going to work. Then just before the end of the decade in Victoria the Empress Hotel needed some major work, the Eaton's Centre put a hole in the ground and the Gold River Mill had a major expansion, along with other work in the Crofton and Port Alberni Mills. Then came further work in the marine section, with the build out of the Super Ferries. All the while many of our commercial contractors continued to etch out market share for their companies and the IBEW hands working for them. The balance of the private line section moved over to Local 258, employer changes in the cablevision sector brought anti-union notions and after a lengthy strike and a drawn out legal battle we lost the vast bulk of the cable sector, and another downturn in the economy hit again. By the end of the century we were booming north Island with a Co-gen in Campbell River and the construction work has continued to climb in the Local ever since, although most years it would be difficult to point to a job with over 15 men working on it, our membership over the past decade has moved from 833 to close to 1300 and our market share on the Island you may as well say is 100% in the marine section, and



Local 230 Business Manager 71'-92' Jim McAvoy was instrumental in creating and building upon many of the benefits our membership enjoys today.

in construction has hit 73% with most years landing in the high 50% low 60% range of all Industrial, Commercial, Institutional and High/Low-rise Residential work, our push back into these construction markets has been difficult to copy in most trade unions throughout North America, and for that Local 230 members of the IBEW can feel a little more proud heading in to work each day.

## SHOP STEWARD TRAINING

One of Canada's most prolific non-formal educations is Labour Education provided by unions, and the most prominent course taught is Shop Steward Training. In concert with our 110th Anniversary Celebration I had asked the Canadian Labour Congress to facilitate their Steward Level One Course for our members. I would like to thank Pacific Regional Director, Amber Hockin and Instructor Orion Irvine for making that happen. The Steward is the real backbone of any union, and often the main point of contact between the union, its members and management. Our membership greatly relies on having educated members on-site in the workplace with knowledge and real life experience to handle problems that come up.

This course builds the skills, confidence, and knowledge a steward needs to represent our members. Participants learn the roles and responsibilities of their position as stewards, the handling of grievances and complaints, problem-solving skills, protecting contractual provisions in the collective agreement and current issues for stewards. I would like to thank; Vice-President Greg Gyorfi, Brothers; Blair Coppinger, Keith Coppinger, Chris Donaldson,



Local 230 members on Steward Training.

Duncan McKay, Kevin Munson, Heng Phosy, Dale Pittman, Mark Salmon, Brent Strank, and Sister Kim Westdorp for showing continued interest in steward training and great representation in the workplace with our members.

## SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST – BRESLIN STRATEGIES

Mark Breslin is noted as the number one speaker in North America on construction leadership, strategy and labour-management relations. He believes that highly skilled and motivated workers aren't born—they're made. They learn by observing, listening, studying and mimicking this behavior in others. This is why it is so important that employers, labor leaders and training personnel alike put the necessary elements in place to ensure that union members receive the proper influence and education. Mark has dedicated his 26 year career in the construction industry to encouraging construction and manufacturing organizations to take a hard, honest look at their

current training and development practices. In a thought provoking and intelligent way, he provides the tools necessary to help others envision a better future for their industry—including steps they can take to make the vision a reality. Tens of thousands of apprentices, journeymen, business and labour leaders have heard Mark's call to action for creating positive change at all levels, which will result in growth and long term sustainability for their organizations—particularly during difficult times. Mark joined us for our 110th Anniversary and addressed the members who attended the Shop Steward and Code of Excellence courses.



Mark Breslin founder Breslin Strategies.

## YOUTH AND POLITICS

For the first time ever we have three and maybe even four different age groups (Traditionalist, Baby Boomer, Gen-X & Millennial) working on our jobsites, and each group has been shaped by their social surroundings and the events of their time. Essentially, we have been shaped into very different personalities, we see things differently and we communicate differently. Sister Kate Walsh from our Canadian District Office attended our 110th Anniversary Celebration and provided insight to our members who attended the Code of Excellence and Shop Steward Courses about the generational gaps that exist within our membership and our Next-Gen Initiative. This initiative is intended to engage our younger members and provide us with important understanding of how they view and value our Union.

Brother Matt Wayland, also from our Canadian District Office, spoke to our members about the importance of being politically aware and engaged. Over the past decade it has become abundantly clear political parties like the BC Liberals and now the Federal Conservatives have a problem with unions in Canada. When governments dismantle our apprenticeship system, tear up Collective Agreements like our Highway Construction Agreement which was used to build the Inland Island Highway, send new Ferry Construction off to Germany without even allowing the local business to bid on the work, it hurts the very business' and workers who faithfully pay their taxes and contribute back in to our communities. Governments make it tougher to get onto Employment Insurance even when only 40% of eligible unemployed get it in the first place, and knowing it's not even tax revenue. Employment Insurance was created to help out workers who found themselves unemployed due to no fault of their own, paid for by workers and employers, and today our federal government is looking at the EI Fund as a slush fund they can dip into any time and for any reason they want to. When governments repeal 80 year old



Sister Kate Walsh and Brother Matt Wayland.

Fair Wage Laws which guarantee electrical workers union or non-union, a minimum living wage, they are saying they don't value the work we do and they don't care how much less we should earn. Matt's message was, it has never been so important when you look at what harm these recent governments are doing to us, to go meet with your MLA's and MP's and let them know what matters to you, and then get out and vote in our economic interests.