



Members of Bricklayers Local 1 at work in the early 1900s.

Bricklayers Local 1 celebrates 125 years

If it was the brick house that stood strong against the big bad wolf, that's because brick is built to last. So are the local unions of Bricklayers and Allied Crafts (BAC). This year marks the 125th anniversary of BAC Local 1 of Oregon and Southwest Washington.

BAC Local 1 began on May 22, 1893, when 56 members of an existing organization — the Bricklayers Benevolent and Protective Union — got a charter from a 28-year-old national union then known as the Bricklayers and Masons Union of America.

Most U.S.-based trade unions give each local affiliate

a unique number. Bricklayers designates the first local in each area as Local 1, so there's a Bricklayers Local 1 of Minnesota/North Dakota, a Local 1 of Philadelphia, and so on.

At the time, they worked 60 hour weeks for \$6 a day. The union allowed them to \$8 a week if they became sick or disabled (unless the condition was caused by drunkenness or other immoral conduct.)

For the local that began as

ONLINE EXTRA

More images from the BAC Local 1 celebration and pin dinner are online at <https://bit.ly/2ImRaYV>

Local 1 Portland, it was a tough first year. A financial collapse known as the Panic of 1893 produced a severe national depression that lasted until 1897. By 1894, Local 1 had 116 members, and 100 of them were officially out of work (Actually, to the consternation of their fellow members, 23 of them were scabbing, working non-union.)

Business cycles have always been a hazard for the local, as with every construction union.

But when there was work to be had, the local set out to make it good work, at good pay.

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PORTLAND'S LIVING ROOM: Pioneer Courthouse Square was laid by, you guessed it, union bricklayers. Above, Friends of Pioneer Square president Philip Bogue accepts a ceremonial brick September 1981 from Local 1, contractors, and the masonry training center. From left: Tilesetter apprentice coordinator Chuck Phelps, William Billings, Bogue, Bill Belanger



FORTY YEARS OF DEFENDING UNION WAGES AND BENEFITS. Local 1 business managers going back to 1977 were there for the union's 125th birthday. From left: John Mohlis (1994-2001), Keith Wright (2001-2011), Jim McNanny (1977-1993) and Matt Eleazer (2011 to date).



THREE GENERATIONS OF BRICKLAYERS? Brad Crom and his son Zach are members of Bricklayers Local 1. Will Zach's son follow them into the trade?