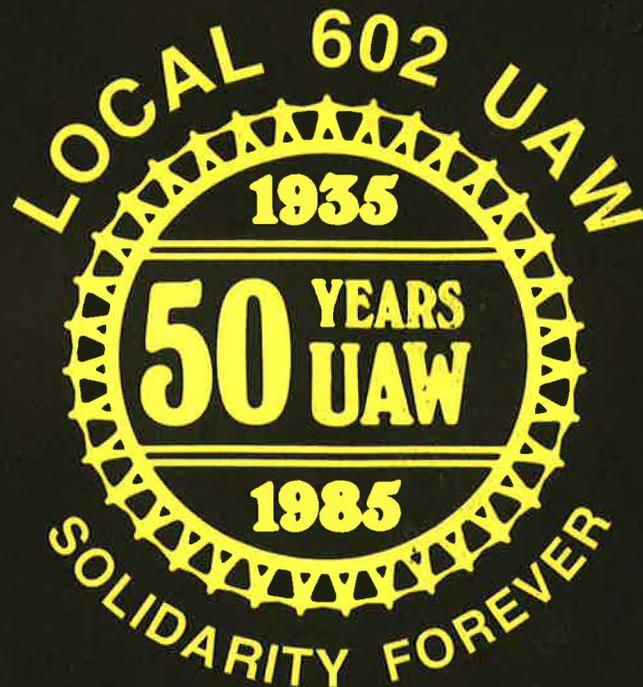


We Make Our Own History



50TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE BOOK

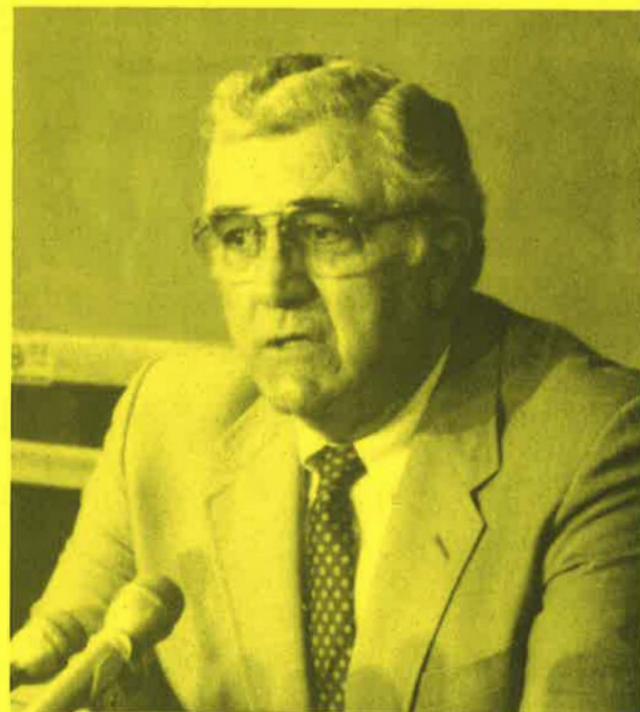


**LOCAL 602 DEDICATES THIS UAW
50th ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIVE
BOOK TO OUR RETIREES.**

**WHEN WRITING THE HISTORY OF OUR
LOCAL, WE DISCOVERED MANY PIONEERS
WHO HAVE BEEN FORGOTTEN OVER THE
YEARS. THESE ARE THE MEN AND WOMEN
WHOSE COURAGE AND DETERMINATION
FORGED THE BASIS FOR IMPROVING
WORKING CONDITIONS AND THE STANDARD
OF LIVING FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.**



**STAN MARSHALL
DIRECTOR, REGION 1-C**



**OWEN BIEBER
PRESIDENT, INTERNATIONAL UAW**

In 1935, Fisher Body employees organized and became members of Amalgamated Local 182 AIW-CIO headed by Homer Martin. The President of the Fisher Body unit Floyd Ryan and the membership became disillusioned with the International staff of the CIO.

After the Wagner Labor Act was passed, it brought hope and rekindled spirits. Fisher Body broke away from Local 182 in 1937, to organize their own union.

A company union was formed by management, and working conditions reverted to pre-union days. Seniority rights and health and safety policies were virtually non-existent.

To openly talk organizing meant immediate discharge, and "industrial spies" were placed in the plant to enforce this policy. The employees were determined; however, and in 1938, Don

Fahler, a paint employee called the first organizing meeting. Small groups began to form, disguised as "prayer meetings" in the plant and meetings were held in private homes. The wives and daughters formed a Women's Auxiliary and worked in support of the men who were trying to organize.

Under the guidance of Lester Washburn, Senator Prichard, Lyle Stone, Chester Cowan, Jack Price, Horace Logan, Steve Gmazel, Jess DeCair, Bill Ingram and the Eno brothers and many other people who were involved in organizing the Local, Archie Perry was elected Chairman of the Organizing Committee.

Unity in the face of adverse conditions paid off. On January 18, 1939, Local 602 UAW was chartered, becoming the first Local in the Lansing area to join the UAW.



**WALTER REUTHER, PRESIDENT
INTERNATIONAL UAW
1946-1970**

FLOYD RYAN

PRESIDENT 1939-40

Union meetings were held in any available building, and plans to establish a union hall would have to wait, there were other priorities such as production standards and working conditions. There was no relief time, no benefits, no seniority or wage agreement, and production speed ups were common. Discharge for minor infractions of company rules occurred often, and the officers and committeemen of the fledgling Local struggled to ease the workers' plight. Fisher Body was an open shop, and the committeemen collected union dues of \$1.00 per month from each member. Dues buttons were issued and the members proudly wore them into the plant. Ryan resigned to accept a position on the International staff.

THOMAS ENO

PRESIDENT 1939-40 (Completed Ryan's term)

Elected 1940-41, 1948-49

Our first union hall was established on S. Washington Street, a small building that we shared with Local 652, as there were no full time officers.

Wages were poor, and the Bargaining Committee worked to establish a written Local Wage Agreement, that was signed by an International directive on June 24, 1940. However, workers were not happy with this Agreement. On December 9, 1940, a petition was circulated in the plant demanding increases for all job classifications below \$1.00 per hour. An agreement was signed in February 1941 to pay increases, retroactively to August 1, 1940, bringing most wages to a maximum of \$1.15 per

hour. A step forward, but working conditions were still very poor, and there was so much to be done.

Management described the individuality of workers as a "chopsuey of humanity" of which 85% were readily replaceable. It was insinuated that the union was a questionable and antagonistic source of information for the workers.

Drives were conducted to increase membership. The Cushion Room was the first department to become 100% union, and the members stood proud in united support of the Local officers.



Lansing Caravan in Flint



ERNEST VAN AMBERG 602



F. PLOCH 602



JACK BEARD 602



DALE LOTT 602



REX POTTER 602



LYLE STONE

PRESIDENT 1941-42, 1949-50, 1950-51, 1961-63

Pearl Harbor Attack! The United States entered World War II. Patriotism swept the country, but at Fisher Body, Lansing, it was business as usual. Meetings with management were disappointing; there were no plans for military production. The union protested by organizing a demonstration of 3500 workers at the State Capitol to draw public attention to management's shocking lack of interest in supporting the war effort.

Suddenly, auto production ceased. The workers were laid off and the plant sat idle for several months. Eventually, production of 90mm aircraft carriages began. There were 4700 pre-war employees but now the number of employees fluctuated between 600 and 1700. Thousands of square feet in the plant were unused, there was one foreman for every three workers, and management contended that the jobs available were unsuit-

able for approximately 400 female employees, who remained on layoff.

The Ingham County War Fund, (now known as the United Way), was founded. Oscar Wade was elected by the Lansing area Locals to serve on the Executive Board as the UAW representative. The Union requested payroll deduction for workers' contributions to this fund. Management refused.

Tragedy struck when a gas explosion, in the plant, killed three workers, several more were injured. Cause: unknown! Because of military security, the press was denied access to the scene of the accident and information provided to the union was incomplete.

A "No Strike Agreement" was in effect and management took advantage of this by consistently rejecting all union suggestions to improve health and safety for the workers and to further the war effort. Frustration mounted, and the struggle continued.



BILL INGRAM

PRESIDENT 1942-43 (Completed Stone's term)

Brother Stone resigned as President to accept a position with the International.

The plant was idle at times while Management submitted more bids for military contracts. The workers, at various times, built tailsections for aircraft, gun mounts, hulls for tank destroyers, and small parts for aircraft for the Army. The first Navy contract required the building of 5 inch naval gun mounts. Parts for the P-75 experimental pursuit plane were produced for a time, but after three pilots had been killed while flying them, it was scrapped. Health and safety, wage inequities, discrimination, and seniority rights were concerns of the Shop Committee, but little progress was made.

The Women's Auxiliary 202 held dances and planned picnics and parties for the workers and their families to ease the pressure on the job. The membership looked to the future.





OSCAR WADE

PRESIDENT 1943-44

After a short period of time, Brother Wade resigned to serve in the armed forces. War production continued, and working conditions were still very poor. The cafeteria, located in the basement of Building 1, was very bleak. Line-speedups were frequent and manpower was added when absolutely necessary. No relief time was provided, no smoking areas, no seniority rights and wage rates remained the same by order of the NWLB (National War Labor Board). Committeemen were allowed 15 hours a week to take calls, write grievances, collect the monthly union dues, and the contributions to the war fund. Battles were fought in many parts of the world; and in Lansing, another type of battle was continuing for workers rights. Through it all, the Union maintained its patriotic support of the war effort.



WEBB EWING

PRESIDENT 1943-44 (Completed Wade's term)

Elected 1957-61

At last, a military contract that management felt women could handle, and they returned to work. Separate lists were still maintained for men and women. The women were laid-off first regardless of hire-in date and were paid less per hour, than men, for similar jobs.

A small step forward, a few blacks were hired, but they were placed only on sanitation and had no transfer rights.

Many special shop meetings were held to negotiate wage agreements for the new jobs available due to the Navy contract, and the Bargaining Committee took the position that wages should be in line with other plants doing similar work. Management did not agree. Most rates were finally settled to the Union's satisfaction and war production continued.





CHESTER COWAN

PRESIDENT 1944-45

After a short period of time in office, Chet Cowan resigned to return to his trade of decorating and painting.

Webb Ewing, who became President, the union officers and Committee continued their efforts to improve working conditions and to assure management live up to the contracts that were in effect.

Heating and ventilation were minimal, adding to the workers' difficulty of keeping up with their operations. Work was added at the Foremen's discretion. Blacks and females were restricted to certain classifications, at lower pay, and the committee began a concerted effort to change these restrictions. Progress was slow to non-existent. War production continued.



ARCH PERRY

CHAIRMAN OF ORGANIZING DRIVE

PRESIDENT 1945-48

The year 1945 brought the entire country from numbing grief because of the death of U.S. President F. D. Roosevelt, to the overwhelming joy of V-E Day and V-J Day. The war had ended!

The first issue of the Lansing Labor News was published on March 15, 1945. A union member was disciplined for taking a copy into the plant; and later, another union member was discharged for writing pro-worker/anti-management articles.

Negotiations began for a new national contract, with wages as the primary demand. On November 11, 1945, the longest strike in G.M. history began. Women's Auxiliary 202, work-

ed in the strike kitchen, preparing food for the men on the picket lines. They also planned a Christmas party for children and held dances.

At the Local level, management refused to meet with the Bargaining Committee, in spite of urging from Lansing city leaders to end the strike. They were asking for more wages, better working conditions, and full employment.

Morale remained high, and community support of the strikers was strong through the long cold winter.

Agreement was reached on the National contract, but the Local was not settled. The International directive stated that no one would return to work until all Local contracts had been signed.

113 days after the walkout, the workers returned to the plants. The union's job remained to enforce the agreement and see that management lived up to its provisions.



JOSEPH SANTORO

PRESIDENT 1950-51 (Completed Stone's term)

Elected 1951-56

June 25, 1951 the Korean conflict began and many of our members volunteered or were drafted into the armed forces.

Fisher Body management refused to enforce the seniority agreement, and a strike vote was taken with overwhelming support.

1952 was a landmark year for our Local. We needed a new and permanent home, so the Building Committee with the approval of the Executive Board and membership, purchased the land on which our Local now stands. A ground breaking ceremony took place in July 1952.

Bricks were sold to the members for 50¢ each and the Social Building Club was formed by the members who purchased these bricks. In essence, the union hall did belong to the members.

The hall was completed on December 6, 1952, with an opening ceremony attended by over 1,200 people. Guests and speakers included Governor G. Mennen Williams, the Mayor of Lansing, and representatives from churches of all faiths. The Local President was given a standing ovation.

Once again, a strike vote had to be taken, when management refused to settle grievances and attempted to speed-up the line. 93% support! Another first! Three Fisher women were the first in the Lansing area to retire on union negotiated pensions.

Money was donated to help rebuild the Humane Society Building, that was destroyed by fire. This building, located on Sunset Avenue, stands today, as a symbol of our memberships' community spirit and generosity.

Several of our members were avid fishermen and a Sportsman's Club was formed. Fish fries were held at the hall, and fishing contests were held. Mort Neff was invited to the hall to present a program on wildlife.

The largest attendance in several years to a union meeting took place in 1954. The issue was shift preference. When the meeting adjourned, the swing shift had been eliminated, by membership vote.

The 1954 National Agreement provided the S.U.B. Agreement.

In June 1955, Fisher Body became a union shop.



GROUND BREAKING CERIMONIES for the NEW HOME OF LOCAL 602 - by 602 SOCIAL BLDG. CLUB INC.



DON STEERE

PRESIDENT 1956-57

Brother Steere was one of the youngest members to serve as President of a UAW Local.

The Local Shop Committee worked toward improved health and safety measures.

The Fair Practices and Anti-Discrimination Committee became very active and worked with the Shop Committee to gain equal job opportunities.

COPE (now known as V-Cap) and Community Chest, received strong support from the members and leadership.

Workmen's Compensation classes were held to educate the members of their rights under the State Comp Laws. Local leadership worked with Auto Body Credit Union and final arrangements were made: management to provide payroll deduction for credit union members.

At the International level, the AFL merged with CIO, and the union became UAW-AFL-CIO. When his term was completed, Don Steere left the plant to return to construction work. He was a supervisor of the crew that tore out the old paint department when major remodeling of the plant began in the 1970's. He was killed in a construction accident in Ohio, shortly after the Fisher Body remodeling was completed.



GEORGE SMITH

PRESIDENT 1963-65

John F. Kennedy, U.S. President, was assassinated, and Local 602 members joined the nation in mourning.

Preparations began for negotiating new contracts. Priorities at the national level included working conditions, improved pensions, earlier retirement eligibility, longer vacations, and elimination of overtime to provide more jobs.

The Bargaining Committee at the Local focused on shift preference, wages, relief, protective clothing, and Paragraph 78 grievances.

Negotiations slowed, strike votes were taken and despite long hours at the bargaining table, the company refused to settle. At the Local Hall, the officers waited. Suddenly a phone call from Detroit gave a directive -- Strike! The workers left the plant and gathered at the hall to sign up for picket duty.

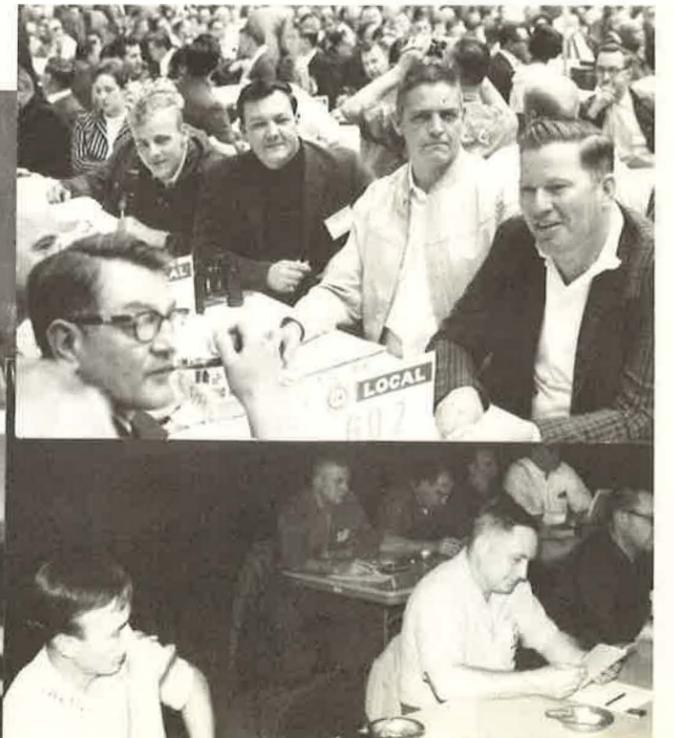
Area merchants made donations to the Local in support of the strikers.

Retirees, friends and families of the workers organized a demonstration in front of the Oldsmobile Administration Building to show their support for the improved benefits that the National Committee members were attempting to negotiate.

Thirty-one days later, the UAW announced that tentative agreement had been reached, but the workers would not return to work until an agreement was reached at the local level.

When interviewed by the Labor News staff, the Chairman of the Bargaining Committee stated that progress was being made, but there were 139 Paragraph 78 grievances to be settled before a tentative agreement could be presented to the membership for ratification.

The strike lasted 36 days, the contracts were ratified and the members proudly returned to work.





LLOYD CAIN

PRESIDENT 1965 66

(Resigned to accept International position July 1966)

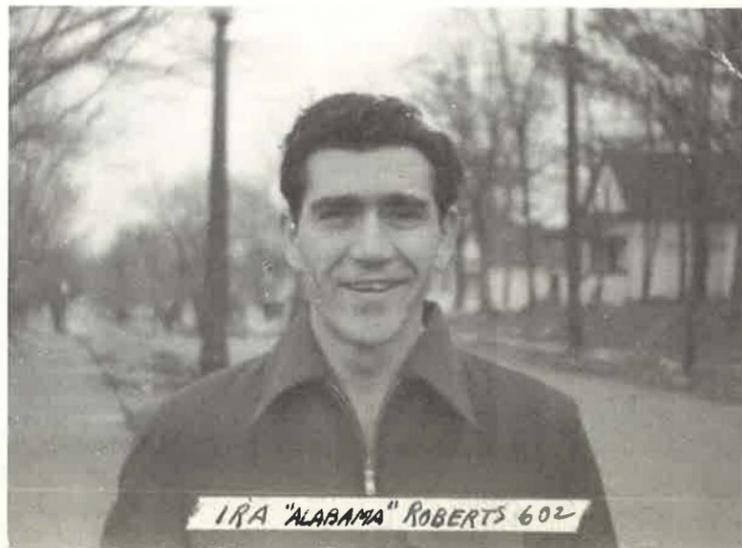
A new local contract had just been ratified, with working conditions as a main concern.

The Local Union Executive Board was in a transition period. A new generation had been elected to office, and soon new ideas and programs would emerge.

The Local officers felt that an intensive education program for new officers and committeemen was imperative in order to best represent the members, however, funds were low.

Educational classes were conducted and the committeemen attended and then went into the plant to work, with no lost-time provisions.

The officers and Shop Committee worked together to bring about a renewed unity of the rank and file. Tragedy struck at the Local when Charlie Pope the Chairman of the Bargaining Committee was murdered. The membership mourned the loss of this dedicated union officer.





RICHARD SANDBORN

PRESIDENT 1965-66

(Completed Cain's term Elected 1966-1975)

May 9, 1970 remains as the darkest day in our union's history. UAW President Walter Reuther and his wife Mae, were killed in a plane crash near Pellston, Michigan. Millions of UAW members mourned the loss of our great leader.

The officers and members in their efforts to improve working conditions and living standards, proved to be an inovative and progressive group of people.

Within the Local, activities increased. A Retirees Chapter was formed, a national organization of women (N.O.W.) chapter began organizing, new member dinners, and orientation classes were held, and a Consumer Affairs Committee assisted members with problems in that area, dances were held and the

Local participated in the Annual Labor Day Rallies.

In the community, members became candidates for public offices, the Women's Committee was commended for its effort in a voter registration drive, and officers and members worked on campaigns for Presidential, Congressional, and State candidates.

The Sportsmen were not forgotten. The Local sponsored bowling leagues, softball, baseball, and golf leagues. When two flag football teams in the Lansing area needed a sponsor, Local 602 membership voted not only to sponsor them, but also to purchase their gym equipment.

The Local 602 C.B. Operators Club was formed to assist in strike action, and later, organized the largest C.B. coffee break ever held in the state.

Improvements at the national level included improved representation, wages, more job protection, more relief time, improved S.U.B., health care, and more paid holidays.

The 1967 National Agreement also provided for full time Pension, S.U.B. and Insurance Representative, with one alternate to assist the members. A union Health and Safety Representative was appointed. The 1973 contract allowed a night shift benefits representative.

Local bargainers continued their ongoing struggle for improved working conditions, wages, and settlement of unresolved grievances.

In 1970, G.M. refused all offers and a strike was called, that lasted eight weeks. This resulted in the victory of "30 & Out", and the Christmas - New Year's paid holidays.

January 18, 1969, the Local celebrated its 30th Anniversary with a two-day open house. Many prominent speakers were present.

The Local participated in picketing area supermarkets in support of the table grape boycott, walked picket lines in support of strike actions, participated in the poor people's march and the rally for unemployed workers held in Washington, D.C.

Other notable events included the formation of UAW-CAP, Walter and Mae Reuther Family Education Center at Black Lake was opened, and the Lansing Labor Council placed a member of Local 602 in the position of a Workman's Compensation and Unemployment Representative for the Lansing area.

The first Local 602 columns written by the President, Financial Secretary and Chairman of the Shop Committee appeared in the Lansing Labor News.

Books on unionism were presented to High School libraries, union prescription centers opened with discounts to union members, and auto insurance was made available to the membership through the Credit Union, and efforts were begun to form a joint Union-Management Substance Abuse program.

1974 brought discouragement when a large number of employees were laid off.





ROBERT SOMERS

PRESIDENT 1975-84

Brother Somers served the longest term as President of Local 602. (9 consecutive years.) He also served longer than any other President in the Lansing area UAW Locals.

1975 saw many layoffs and few recalls of employees. The Bargaining Committee attempted to settle 78's by trying to get management to boost manpower. Oil and gas prices were going up, car sales were down.

Once again the Local leadership, showing foresight and great concern for all auto workers, published many articles in the Labor News and gave out "Buy American" pins and bumper stickers in an effort to bring the foreign import issue to the attention of the entire community as well as the membership.

Letters were sent to the U.S. Olympic Committee, protesting the use of foreign autos as the official olympics cars.

Demands meetings were held to began preparations for negotiating a new contract.

In spite of the economy, the laid off employees were recalled, and new employees were hired.

The National Agreement held many improvements. Wages, health and safety and health care were main issues. Vision care and shift premium on holiday pay were new benefits. Locally, the Bargaining Committee spent long hours settling grievances, negotiating health and safety issues, and wage agreements. The contracts were ratified.

Local 602 membership showed their generosity and community spirit by giving to many collections, during these years, giving over 2000 books to the Veterans in Battle Creek, \$775.42 to aid in the solving of the Atlanta Child Murders, contributions to the Ingham County Food Bank, and the Lansing Care and Share programs.

The members also showed their caring attitude for fellow workers by collections for the family of a Cushion Room employee who lay in a coma caused by a motorcycle accident, a worker whose home had burned, a benefit party given to raise \$1,400.00 for an artificial limb for a Trim employee, a \$2,500 Christmas collection for the family of a Skilled Trades worker who was killed in the plant. They organized a benefit that raised \$10,000.00 for the families of three employees who died in a sludge pit, one of whom was a foreman. Local 602 members also took pride in raising money for the "Toys for Tots" program each Christmas, and gave generously to the "Old Newsboys" annual drive.

The generosity and support of our members extended to striking unions both locally and out-of-state. \$949.00 was collected for the Lindberg Heat Treatment Strikers. The leadership participated in rallies for Melling strikers. Local 602 headed the boycott of Trailways Bus Co. in support of the striking bus drivers, marched with strikers at the anti-union WJIM building, walked the picket line with employees of the Michigan National Bank, supported the IMPCO workers, and the A P Parts plant workers in Toledo, Ohio. (A P Parts workers were out for 11 months).

In 1978 the Local leadership spearheaded a drive to assist the Virginia coal miners and their families. \$3,500.00 was raised and the Local President led a caravan of vehicles to Virginia to deliver cash and food to the strikers.

September 19, 1981, members again participated in marches in Washington, D.C., including the Solidarity Day Rally. Participants numbered over a half million members, representing all unions. The Michigan Solidarity Day was held December 8, 1981, in the Lansing Civic Center.

It was standing room only as union members from all across the state arrived by buses, vans and cars.

As the time drew near for negotiating the 1979 National contract, petitions were signed by the members to make C.O.L.A. on pensions a priority demand. The Financial Secretary of the Local rode a bicycle from Lansing to Detroit to deliver these petitions to Solidarity House.

When settled, the contract brought the membership improved pensions, increased PPH days, health care and dental improvements, additional paid holidays, vision coverage for retirees, and the stock ownership plan.

At the Local level, the Bargaining Committee, after many long hours, settled over 700 grievances, improved wage, E.O.H., shift preference and protective clothing agreements, improved cafeteria service, eliminated salary parking in the south lot.

January 1978, 200,000 UAW members were on indefinite layoff due to foreign imports; the SUB Fund was low and the International staff went to Washington D.C., to help get the UAW members TRA entitlement. At Fisher Body Lansing, the A-Line night shift was laid off. The interest rate on new car loans soared to 18.5%, and the Auto Body Credit Union refused to grant loans for the purchase of foreign cars.

In an effort to keep the membership well informed, the Local began publishing a newsletter.

To maintain the moral of the members, the first parking lot party was held with dancing, food and drinks. Interest was shown in making this an annual event.

The sponsored sports teams contributed a bright spot. The Local 602 team took 1st place in the 28th Annual Region 1-C Bowling Tournament, and the "Wrecking Crew" softball team won the shop league championship.

The deep concern of the officers was shown for the members both active and laid off, when free legal advice and a Food Buying Club were made available at the hall.

Return to work! In March 1981, the anxiously awaited word was sent to all laid off employees, area hire provision was implemented, and manpower was increased to meet the new record line speed of 120 jobs per hour between the two lines.

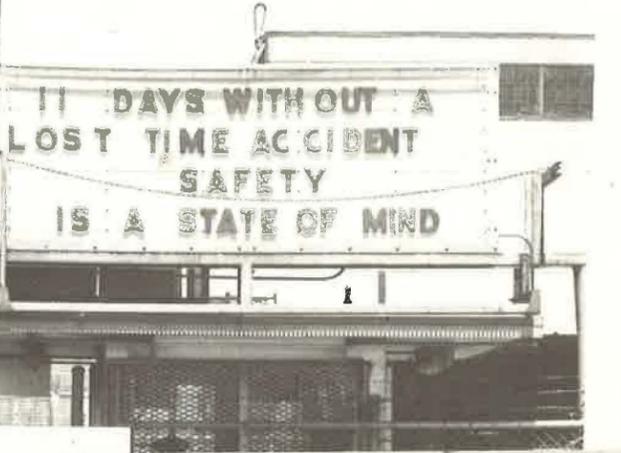
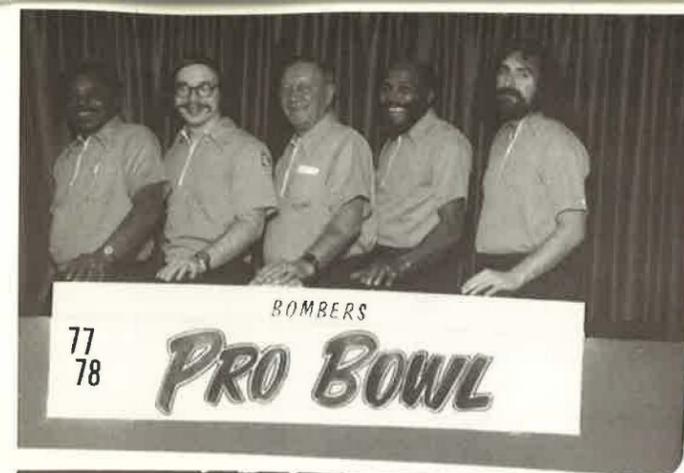
The 1982 contract provided legal services, G.I.S., profit sharing, and 104 SUB credits for employees with ten or more years of seniority.

G.M. announced a new car build was scheduled for the '85 model run, and Fisher Body, Lansing would be one of the first plants to have robots.

Plant closings brought the first G.I.S. employees, and later the Document 28 area provision allowed laid off brothers and sisters from Flint to hire in at Fisher Body.

Overtime hours were scheduled, and the first profit sharing checks were received.

In 1983, the first "Union Awareness" class was held at the Local, devised to educate the members on the history and function of the UAW.





TERRY WARD

PRESIDENT 1984-

A new generation assumed leadership of the Local. New programs and activities were initiated that brought more member participation than ever before.

Union awareness classes were held regularly. A growing interest was shown by the rank and file members who are selected from each department to attend these classes. Many members called the hall to ask when they would be able to participate.

The officers participated in many new programs designed to assist the members. The Local President was elected as Chairman of the New Joint Labor Committee (JLC), and he participated in the leadership class to reconstruct the QWL program.

Attention was given to the Union Hall, and many improvements were made. Parking lots were repaved, and remodeling began in the club room.

Community spirit within the leadership and members soared when the Local co-sponsored a Cystic Fibroses Golf Tournament. This event became the largest benefit golf tournament to be held in the Lansing area. Support and donations were given to the Special Olympics.

Our union Brothers and Sisters were not forgotten when the Local donated to assist the A P Parts Workers in Toledo, Ohio. They only recently returned to work after an 11 month strike. \$5000 was sent to the Kentucky Mine Workers.

The Local devoted itself to participation in the UAW 50th Anniversary celebration in Flint, and many members took part in the week-long activities.

Local officers and members assisted the organizers of the State workers.

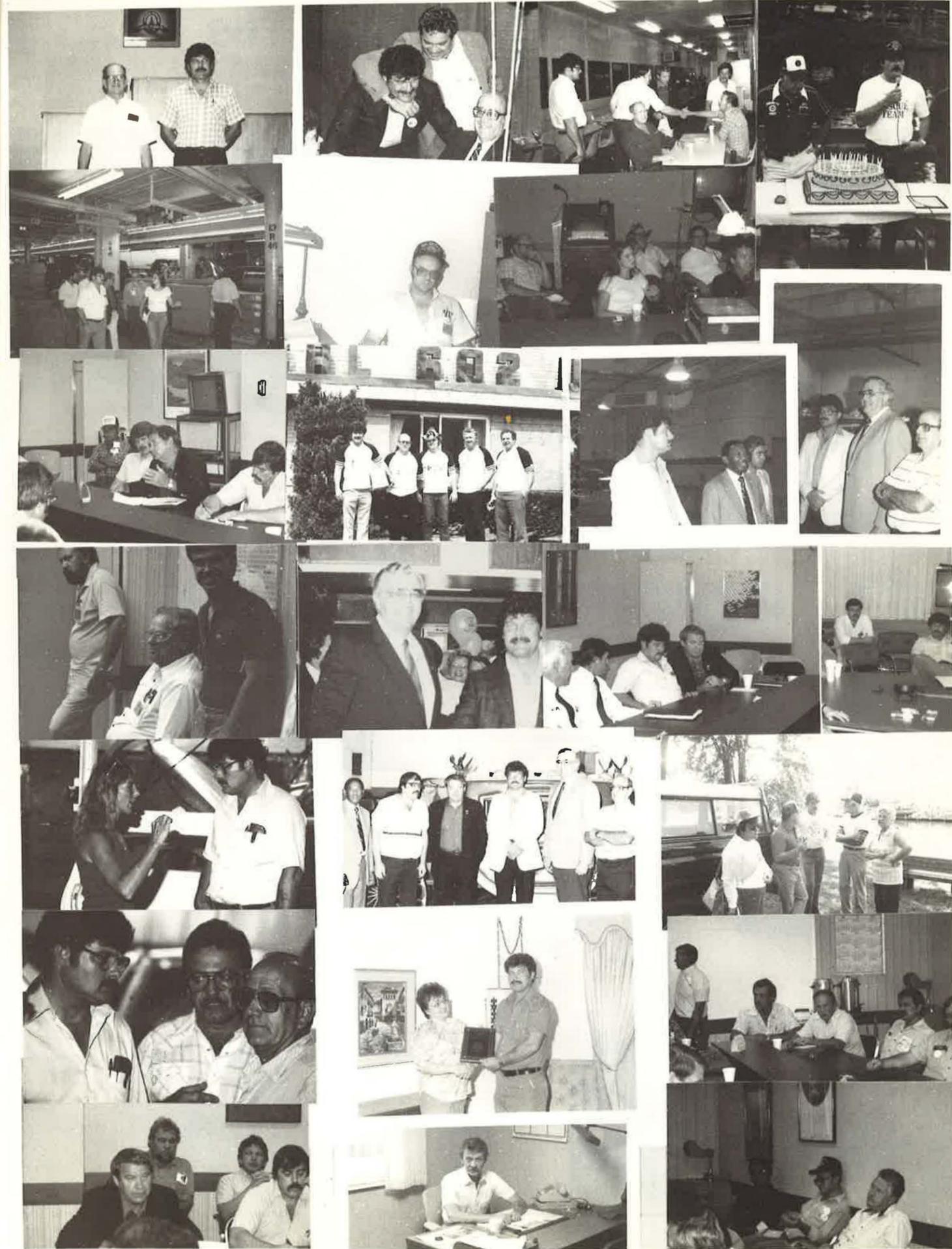
The Auto Content law remains a major concern, and "Buy American" is an ongoing campaign.

Fisher Body hired approximately 1600 new employees in 1984 and the first Joint Union-Management orientation classes were held, at the Main Street School and the Union Hall.

International President Owen Bieber met and talked with the rank and file members for the first time in this plant.

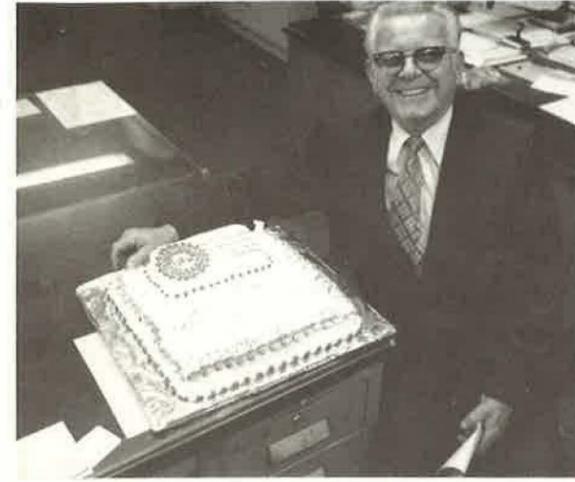
Fitzgerald Park in Grand Ledge was the setting for the largest family picnic and outing to be held by the Local. An estimated 4000 members and their families attended. Everyone agreed, "It was a great day."

Fisher Body, 1908-1984. Gone but not forgotten. Our plant was officially renamed BOC Body Assembly. The end of an era!



CONVENTION DELEGATES

OUR RETIREES



SUMMER PICNIC 1985



UAW 50th ANNIVERSARY FLINT & LANSING



UNION AWARENESS & LEADERSHIP TRAINING



FISHER BODY:

"WE HAVE NO JOBS FOR BLACK WORKERS"

The UAW had to tackle the issue of racial discrimination early on. Black workers had been among the most militant fighters for the union; without their support it would have been impossible to defy the bosses.

In the early 1940s it became clear that black workers could not get equality on the shop floor without the active support of their union brothers and sisters. And unity of all UAW members was essential if the strength of the new organization was to be maintained.

Bill Ingram was one of the first leaders of Local 602 to demand that Fisher Body hire black workers. Ingram and the Shop Committee took that demand into negotiations, even through management and many of the rank and file members were bitterly opposed to integrating the plant. In the 1943 negotiations, management argued that they didn't want to hire black workers, "because most of them were winos and would not work regularly." But the Shop Committee did not give up and management finally agreed to change the hiring practices.

Ingram then went before the Lansing Chapter of the NAACP and told them that Fisher Body would be hiring some black people, and that we wanted them to send some reliable people.

On January 14, 1944, Emanuel Parker, the first black worker hired into Fisher Body, four days later Dave Trueheart was hired. Both men were assigned to sanitation. Eleven months later Perry Robinson and Floyd Austin were hired, and were also assigned to sanitation. The next group of black workers hired were assigned to the paint department and the body shop.

Not all UAW members understood the importance of maintaining solidarity. When Monroe Buchanan was put on a welding job in the body shop, the workers staged a sitdown protest. Once it was understood that an integrated

workplace was here to stay, most attitudes changed. A few years later the same body shop workers elected Buchanan, District Committeeman. He was the first black committeeman in Local 602, and possibly in the UAW as a whole.

In 1950, Fisher Body management was still determined to keep black workers in undesirable jobs, such as booth cleaners, deadener booths, and welding. In 1952 black workers were assigned for the first time to the trim department - the first step in getting them on decent jobs. In 1953 Velma Dukes became the first black female to work at Fisher Body.

The members of Local 602 thank the following workers who led the way in creating a unified, integrated workforce at Fisher Body:

- * Al Kelly: first black worker on the Local 602 Executive Board.
- * George Jones: first black Material Truck Driver, F.P.
- * Fannie Price: Millwright and first black Skilled Tradesman.
- * Willie Campbell: first black Journeyman.
- * Willie Sanders: first black person in the Layout Department.
- * Willie McKenny: first black person in the Pipe Shop.
- * Ted Huntley: first black Electrician
- * Jim Heard: first black person in Small Tools Department.
- * Calvin Sturdivant: first black person in Jig Repair.
- * Beth Mays: first black female pipefitter.



WOMEN IN OUR LOCAL



In the early thirties, Fisher Body had hundreds of women employees, most of them working in the Cut and Sew Department. In 1942, the plant shut down and ceased production of automobiles.

The plant sat idle for several months before management received a government contract and started producing war materials. Management would not recall any of the women who were laid off. They contended, "That the jobs were not suitable for female employees."

In late 1943, women were returned to work. They received less pay than the male employees and were placed on a separate seniority list.

A key issue in the 1945-46 strike was wage parity for women, although separate seniority lists lasted into the 1950's. Women were very active in the Local. Among these are Laura Brooks, who on May 6, 1948, received notification from the UAW International office in Detroit that she had been appointed to the International staff to handle unemployment compensation.

In 1944, LaVanch McKouen was elected to the Shop Committee. The first woman elected to



be Financial Secretary was Esther A. Beech. Later LaVanch McKouen, Helen Moore, and Nina Houser also served terms in this office.

Dorothy Stevens was elected as Committeeman in 1967 and again in 1970. She represented the Cushion Room employees. In 1979 she was elected for Zone Committee, and served in that position until her retirement in 1984.

Valla Nemeth was very active in politics and held many offices in the community and received many awards. She was nominated to the Michigan Women's Hall of Fame, received the Doug Fraser award for Community Services, the YMCA Diana Award representing labor, and the Walter Campbell award.

Other women who contributed to our history include May Blood and Betty Galloway who served as Chair of the Women's Committee. Ann Hulbert was Chairperson of the Retired Workers Chapter for many years.

The history of women would not be complete without a tribute to the Women's Auxiliary 202, whose enthusiastic support aided the workers in their early organizing struggles, through the bleak war years and the 1946 strike.



OLD TIMES



ART AVIS



ADDITIONAL HISTORY

1946-51

Walter Reuther was elected President of the UAW.

Fisher management violated the manpower agreement by laying off 10% of the workforce, then attempted line speed-ups. Letters were sent to the employees blaming the lack of work on the strikers.

An intense time study program began that reflected that the employees wasted time by scratching the head, taking an unnecessary half-step, taking too long a stroke with a hammer, and even 7 hundredths of a second to spit. Instructions were given to the workers on how high to raise a hammer and how to place the feet when taking a step. Reprimands were given for violations of these instructions.

Three-day disciplinary layoffs were given to a Body Shop employee for whistling at his own wife, and to a Cushion Room employee for singing on the job.

Summer weather brought 100° temperatures and high humidity. Management stated that fans were unnecessary even though a number of employees collapsed on the line. The Trim Department workers walked out.

Inflation soared and a survey showed that 45 out of 100 Fisher employees did not own a new car whose prices ranged from \$741.00, to \$976.00.

Petitions were signed by 136,000 G.M. employees and presented to the National Labor Relations Board. A nation wide vote was taken, and in February 1950, all G.M. plants, by a margin of 8 - 1, became union shops.

The National contracts provided that Union dues be paid by payroll deduction, S & A Benefits were raised to \$38.50 per week, the Corporation would pay half of the \$7.20 premium for Blue Cross - Blue Shield coverage, and the first pension contract was negotiated.

At the Local level, the leadership organized a blood bank through the Red Cross, sponsored the city's only all-union bowling league and the 3,000 Fisher workers raised over \$2,000.00 to assist a fellow employee who lost his home, his wife and three children in a fire.

1957-63

Unemployment reached 7% in Lansing, and the Community Services Committee assisted the workers. Homes and cars were repossessed, and the leadership urged Congress to extend exhausted unemployment benefits.

Fisher Management laid off 20% of the work force and again tried to speed-up the lines. Cut-and-Sew Department was the primary target. The Shop Committee protested these tactics, and in 1959, despite attempts by the International to negotiate the issue, more jobs were lost when General Motors eliminated the Cut-and-Sew Department at Fisher and moved it to Grand Rapids and Livonia.

The economy slowly began to recover in 1963, and at Fisher Body, because separate seniority lists were still maintained, all the men were returned to work, but a few women still remained on lay off.

The long dreary recession appeared to be coming to an end.



ATTENTION, G. M. WORKERS!

Your local union is in the process of formulating demands to present to local management in connection with the national demands of all G. M. Workers. These local demands will be presented to local management in an effort to work them out across the conference tables. If this cannot be done your local union will use strike action to settle these demands.

As you know, the G. M. department of the Intl. UAW-CIO has presented General Motors with demands for all G. M. workers. One of the most important being a 30 percent wage increase which must be obtained if the workers are to have the proper purchasing power in the post-war world.

You can rest assured that all demands, both local and national, are reasonable and proper and well within the ability of the corporation to grant. These will be explained in this paper in a series of articles which will contain the facts of labor's case against General Motors.

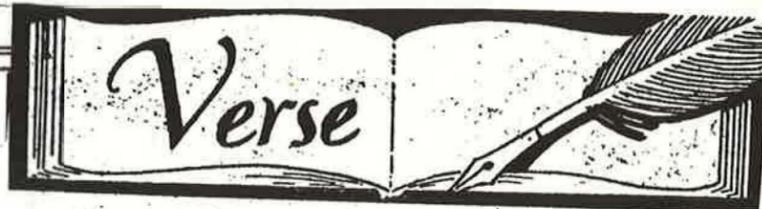
You are warned to guard against the misrepresentations and slander that will be forthcoming in the reactionary newspapers and over the radio, who will assist General Motors in every effort to confuse and divide the workers. So beware of most press and radio reports. False propaganda is even now being disseminated by them. Authentic information about any point is available by simply calling your local union hall.

Signed, William Inghram,
Fisher Bargaining
Committee

Fisher Local Election Will Last 6 Days

Voting on Local 602 delegates to the national convention and officers, top committeemen and standing committee chairmen will start at the Fisher Local hall, 1111 W. St. Joseph st., Sunday, Feb. 24 and continue through Saturday, March 2.

Polls will be open daily from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m., the election committee states. Installation of those elected will be made at the first regular meeting of the local after the strike.



United Labor

'Way back yonder in '32
The working man was mighty blue
The market crash had barely cooled
When the laboring class again were fooled.

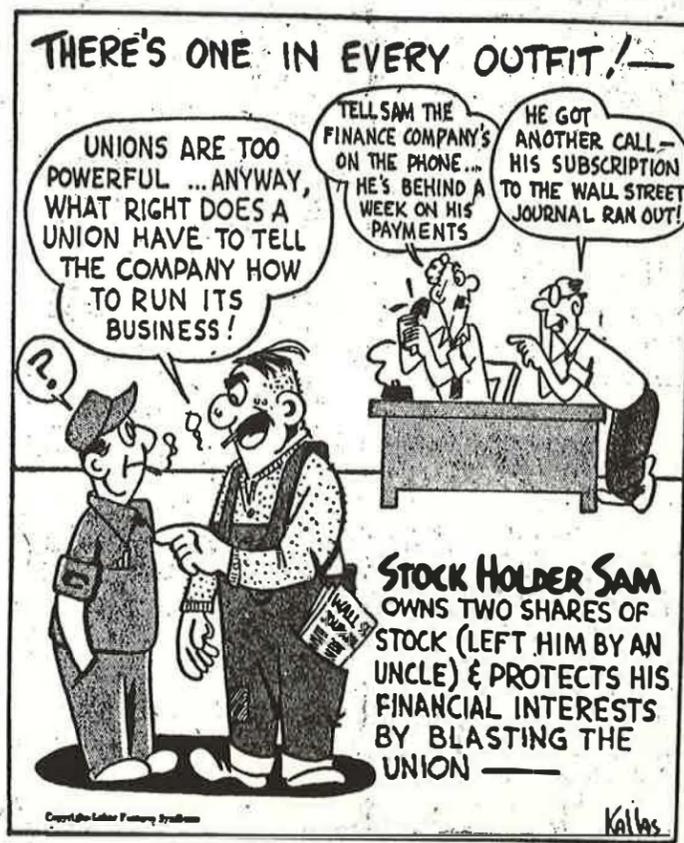
Jobs were scarce and hard to find,
There was no contentment, no peace of mind.
The best of workers scarce got their due,
While friends and relatives of management grew.

Then workers turned to a mutual friend,
A Labor Party who would not bend.
They organized for a solid front
And elected men who could stand the blunt.

The fight had begun, their jobs to secure,
And bring peace of mind they felt would endure.
The path wasn't easy, they fought all the way
But the progress they made is history today.

Now we have a Union that is strong and secure
No more harassment must labor endure.
With faith in our Union it's certain we'll find
Joy and contentment, and at last -- peace of mind.

E. F. M.
Local 602 Member



Drives 125 Miles For Picket Duty

Lew Smith regularly drives 125 miles from Marion to do his share of picketing at the Fisher Body, taking his chances with an old, 1935 car and making the trip alone and paying his own expense.

All winter he took whatever weather they could throw at him, both driving and on the picket line, where he always did a double shift to save making so many trips.

Why? Surprised and a little puzzled by the question, he answered simply:

"I think it's my duty as a union member."

The strike committee says that sort of spirit helps explain why Fisher Local has over 98% member participation on picketing.

"Over 80 percent are up to date on their share of duty. Though some are a bit behind, others have put in twice as much time as



LEW SMITH

required. Most delinquencies were due to sickness. Some of these members have returned and put in as many as twenty continuous hours to catch up lost time," the committee said.

They say this is why morale is so high in Local 602.

Peter McGuire's Dream

by Alton Levy

(EDITOR'S NOTE: The author was a popular trade union editor in New York who died last year.)

Walter Reuther was in rompers
When a Jew named Samuel Gompers
(Many years before the old Triangle fire)
Set a project into motion
That was based upon a notion
Of an Irish labor leader, Pete McGuire.

It was simple, Pete's conception,
And it got a swell reception,
From the workers who were throwing off their chains.
Once a year, at least, said Pete,
Let's "down tools" and, when we meet,
Pool our energy, our efforts and our brains.

This proposal by McGuire
Spread just like a prairie fire
And, before you could say "pinkerton" or "scab,"
Every state throughout the nation
Had a labor demonstration
And a speaker with a wondrous gift of gab.

Every gain that labor's winning
Had a modest, small beginning
In the rallies of the old McGuire scheme;
But there's little cause for bragging
For that old-time spirit's lagging
And those holidays of yore are but a dream.

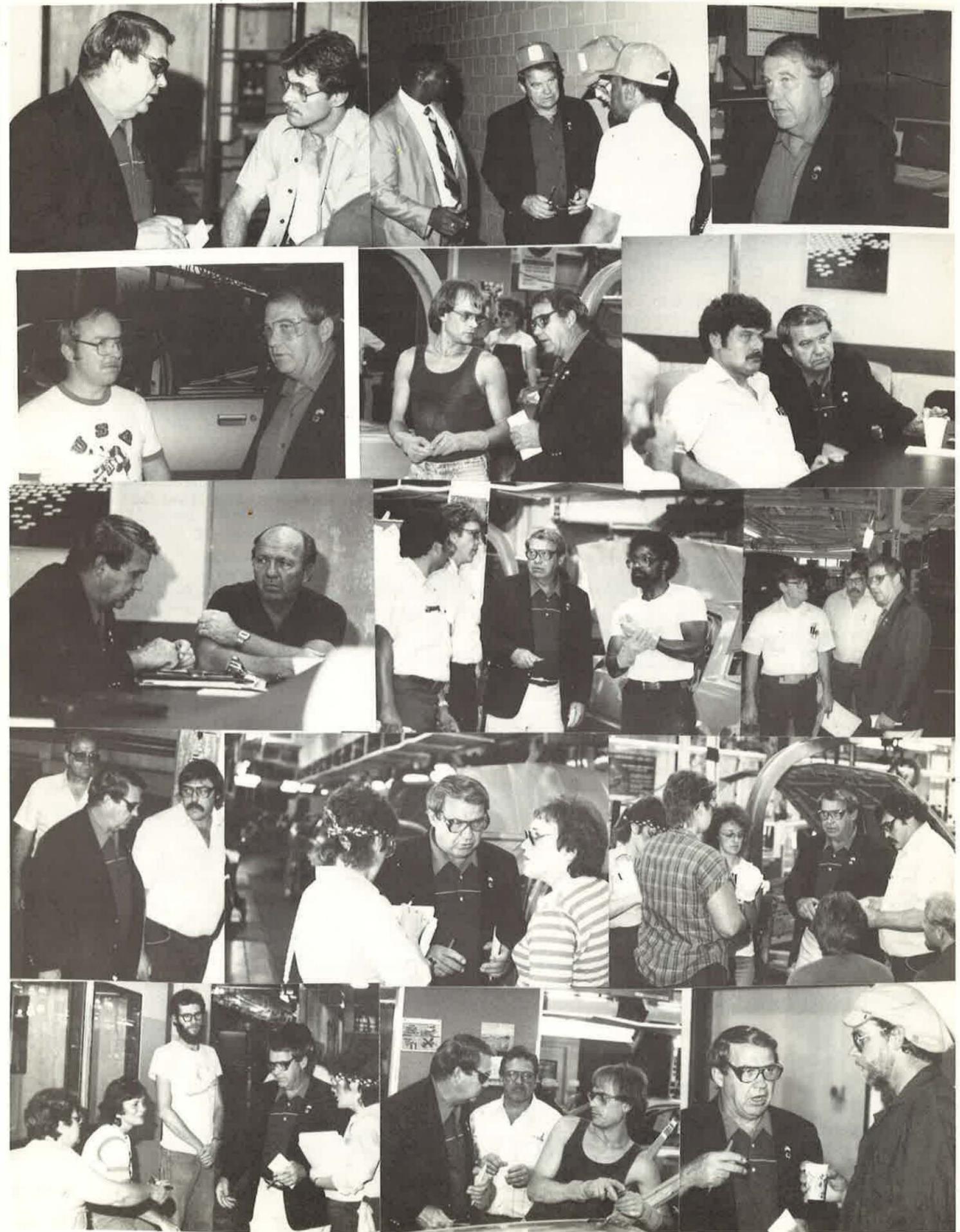
Yet to those who can remember,
On that day of each September
There was something almost magic that was shared
When the workers - young and older -
Marched with shoulder close to shoulder.
As for color or religion - no one cared!

So once again let's be old-fashioned;
Let our voices be impassioned
As we fight together for our rightful place.
And this sixth day of September
Let each union man remember
Labor looks upon the man and not his race.

OWEN BIEBER TOURS PLANT, 7-30-85



STAN MARSHALL TOURS PLANT, 8-16-85



ON FEBRUARY 11, 1937, WE WON . . . We had a Union . . . Our Union, the UAW-CIO! And we won recognition as a Union from the General Motors Corporation. We also won representation rights for our Union members. The UAW-CIO was our bargaining agent—for members of the Union only. The first Contract covered just one page—but it made history!



Agreement entered into on this 11th day of February, 1937, between the General Motors Corporation (hereinafter referred to as the Corporation) and the International Union, United Automobile Workers of America (hereinafter referred to as the Union).

The Corporation hereby recognizes the Union as the Collective Bargaining agency for those employes of the Corporation who are members of the Union. The Corporation recognizes and will not interfere with the right of its employes to be members of the Union. There shall be no discrimination, interference, restraint or coercion by the Corporation or any of its agents against any employe because of membership in the Union.

The Corporation and the Union agree to commence collective bargaining negotiations on February 16th with regard to the issues specified in the letter of January 4th, 1937, from the Union to the Corporation, for the purpose of entering into a collective bargaining agreement, or agreements, covering such issues, looking to a final and complete settlement of all matters in dispute.

The Union agrees to forthwith terminate the present strike against the Corporation, and to evacuate all plants now occupied by strikers.

The Corporation agrees that all of its plants, which are on strike, or otherwise idle shall resume operations as rapidly as possible.

It is understood that all employes now on strike or otherwise idle will return to their usual work when called and that no discrimination shall be made or prejudices exercised by the Corpor-

ation against any employe because of his former affiliation with, or activities in, the Union or the present strike.

The Union agrees that pending the negotiations referred to in Paragraph Two, there shall be no strikes called or any other interruption to or interference with production, by the Union or its members.

During the existence of the collective bargaining agreement contemplated pursuant to Paragraph Two, all opportunities to achieve a satisfactory settlement of any grievance or enforcement of any demands by negotiations shall be exhausted before there shall be any strikes or other interruption to or interference with production by the Union or its members. There shall be no attempts to intimidate or coerce any employes by the Union and there shall not be any solicitation or signing up of members by the Union on the premises of the Company. This is not to preclude individual discussion.

After the evacuation of its plants and the termination of the strike the Corporation agrees to consent to the entry of orders, dismissing the injunction proceedings which have been started by the Corporation against the Union, or any of its members, or officers or any of its locals, including those pending in Flint, Michigan and Cleveland, Ohio, and subject to the approval of the Court to discontinue all contempt proceedings which it has instituted thereunder.

GENERAL MOTORS CORPORATION

/s/ William S. Knudsen
/s/ J. T. Smith
/s/ D. Brown

UNITED AUTOMOBILE WORKERS

/s/ Wyndham Mortimer, First Vice President
/s/ Lee Pressman, General Counsel, CIO
/s/ John L. Lewis, Chairman, CIO



EDUCATION DEPARTMENT • 8000 EAST JEFFERSON AVENUE • DETROIT, MICHIGAN 48214

— CHARTER —
International Union
United Automobile Workers of America

To All To Whom These Presents Shall Come:

Know Ye, That the International Union, United Automobile Workers of America, established for the purpose of effecting thorough organization of the automobile industry, and composed of Local Unions and members in different sections of the country, doth, upon proper application and under conditions herein provided, hereby grant unto

<i>William Kalushky</i>	<i>Vergill Myers</i>	<i>Emerson Rice</i>	
<i>Amy Mitchell</i>	<i>Thomas Lane</i>	<i>Harold Vancott</i>	<i>Harold Reams</i>
<i>Vergill Reed</i>	<i>James Dillon</i>	<i>Norris Tenby</i>	<i>Norris Logan</i>
<i>J. B. Lane</i>	<i>Chris A. Lee</i>	<i>Walker Hunt</i>	<i>Roman Thelma</i>
<i>William Kline</i>	<i>Chester Brown</i>	<i>Edmund Johnson</i>	

and to their successors, this Charter, for the establishment and future maintenance of a Local Union at Flint, Michigan to be known as Local Union No. 602 of International Union, United Automobile Workers of America.

Now, the conditions of this Charter are such: That said Union forever and under any and all circumstances shall be subordinate to and comply with all the requirements of the constitution, by-laws and general laws or other laws of the International Union, United Automobile Workers of America as they may from time to time be altered or amended: That said Union shall, for all time, be guided and controlled by all acts and decisions of the International Union, United Automobile Workers of America as they may from time to time be enacted: That should the Local Union above chartered take advantage of any powers, privileges or rights conferred under the laws as they may exist at any time, said action shall not prevent the International Union, United Automobile Workers of America from retelling, amending, changing or abolishing any such powers, privileges or rights.

So long as the said Union adheres to these conditions, this Charter to remain in full force; but upon infraction thereof, the International Union, United Automobile Workers of America may revoke this Charter, thereby annulling all privileges secured hereunder.

In Witness Whereof, We have hereunto set our hands and affixed the seal of the International Union, United Automobile Workers of America, this Eighteenth day of January One Thousand Nine Hundred and Thirty-seven

General Executive Board:

<i>Harold Reams</i> <small>President</small>	<i>John J. Houser</i> <small>Vice-President</small>	<i>Russell J. Merrill</i> <small>Vice-President</small>
<i>Richard L. Frankenstein</i> <small>Vice-President</small>	<i>Alvin H. Kramer</i> <small>Vice-President</small>	<i>A. J. Michel</i> <small>Vice-President</small>
<i>Ed Hall</i> <small>Vice-President</small>	<i>Geo. Lamotte</i> <small>Vice-President</small>	<i>Paul E. Miley</i> <small>Vice-President</small>
<i>Wendell G. Harts</i> <small>Vice-President</small>	<i>Chas. Maddux</i> <small>Vice-President</small>	<i>Chas. H. Millard</i> <small>Vice-President</small>
<i>A. J. Thomas</i> <small>Vice-President</small>		<i>F. C. Fisher</i> <small>Vice-President</small>
<i>Walter W. Wells</i> <small>Vice-President</small>		<i>Richard E. Feisinger</i> <small>Vice-President</small>
<i>James Casey</i> <small>Vice-President</small>		<i>Walter P. Feutcher</i> <small>Vice-President</small>
<i>Tracy H. Hall</i> <small>Vice-President</small>		<i>Frank A. Quici</i> <small>Vice-President</small>
<i>Theris P. Hall</i> <small>Vice-President</small>		<i>Leota Washburn</i> <small>Vice-President</small>
<i>Dalmond Gant</i> <small>Vice-President</small>		<i>Leo A. Alder</i> <small>Secretary-Treasurer</small>





We wish to thank all of the Brothers and Sisters who assisted with the compilation of the material in this commemorative book: Lloyd Cain, Richard Sandborn, Bob Somers, Terry Ward, Dorothy Stevens, Don Brown, Richard Divine, Richard Ballard, Carolyn Lorenz, Valla Nemeth, Kenneth Schultz, Calvin Sturdivant, the Lansing Labor News staff and others.

A very special thanks to Bill Ingram and Senator Pritchard whose dedication to their fellow workers helped organize this Local. Without the sharing of their memories of the events that took place in our Local, and without their pictures, mementoes, and hard work, this undertaking would not have been possible.

**Local 602
50th Anniversary Committee**

Ralph Morrison, Chairperson
Sylvia "Sam" Hall
Rex Pennington
Kenneth Williams
Bill White
R.T. Taylor
Joe Solis



