



Celebrating 40 Year Partnership at Port of Oshawa

Oshawa (Sept. 29, 2015) – For the past four decades, they’ve been carrying out one of the most dangerous jobs in Canada. They’re the crews who work in the heat of cargo holds and under cranes hoisting tonnes of steel. They load, unload, sort, and store cargo through extreme weather conditions, winter and summer.

This year the International Longshoremen’s Association, Local 1997 celebrates its 40th year at the Port of Oshawa.

“It was Local 1997 that helped build our port and reputation for service excellence,” said Donna Taylor, President and CEO of the Oshawa Port Authority, and an Honourary Longshoreman who has worked with the Local for 38 of its 40 years. “It’s thanks to our strong partnership with the ILA, that the port continues to thrive, drive business, and grow.”

The ILA, the largest union of maritime workers in North America, has been around since the late 1800s. However, it wasn’t until 1975 that Bill Egan organized the Oshawa Local. The experienced longshoreman from Ireland, who’d been around harbours across Canada, got a call from a newly formed stevedoring company to help with cargo at the Port of Oshawa. Egan handpicked his crew, and on October 14th, 1975, the official Charter was granted.

“We are now into our third generation of longshoremen at the Port of Oshawa,” said Barry MacDonald, Business Agent for ILA Local 1997, who worked with Egan and has watched the local chapter grow to 26 members and over 60 Cardsmen. “We’re proud of our association with the port, and proud to see our skills get passed on through the generations.”

ILA Local 1997 has gained international recognition for its skill, expertise and versatility. Its members have become so specialized in handling cargo, from bulk to massive project cargo, that they’ve been asked to train crews at ports around the world, from the Arctic to Trinidad.

“Our team at the Port of Oshawa, has been setting the highest industry standards,” added MacDonald. “We look forward to building on our partnership with the port and continuing to play a role in its success.” Visit: www.portofoshawa.ca

For further information contact:

Danna O’Brien dobrien@portofoshawa.ca 416-500-0699