

Brother James "Jim" Gratton

LONGTIME BUSINESS MANAGER LEFT INDELIBLE MARK ON LOCAL 400

During the 26 years Jim Gratton served as business manager of Local 400 from 1972 until his retirement in 1998, the local grew in both size and stature. Among his accomplishments while leading the local and as president of the Monmouth and Ocean County Building Trades Council, Brother Gratton helped turn construction of the Great Adventure amusement park from non-union to union in 1974. The next year, he negotiated the creation of the Service Trades Council to represent union trades crafts and unions representing maintenance and service personnel working at the park.

Brother Gratton, who joined the local as an apprentice in 1954 and became a journeyman in 1959, also negotiated a maintenance agreement for the building trades at Oyster Creek Nuclear Generating Station in 1974 and was part of the team that negotiated a project labor agreement for a second nuclear plant at the Oyster Creek site. While that project was abandoned, the project labor agreement went on to set the standard for similar agreements across the country.



Under his leadership, Local 400 established a residential program that enabled the local to control its jurisdiction from the bottom up. His administration also promoted the establishment of an annuity fund that would secure a better retirement for the local's brothers and sisters.

Brother Gratton organized a mass demonstration of the building trades at Fort Monmouth that had a profound effect upon the fort and the communities surrounding it. Meanwhile, picketing took on a new form with his use of an airplane and helicopters, forcing labor laws to be written to address that then-new concept.

Recognizing the importance of having qualified linemen, Brother Gratton also convinced the Northeast Apprentice Training program to use Local 400's property and building as the location for their school.

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