

M.E.B.A. Celebrates 142nd Anniversary



Founded on February 23, 1875 on the banks of the Great Lakes, the M.E.B.A. observed its 142nd anniversary. M.E.B.A.'s ten founding fathers met in Cleveland, Ohio all those years ago to form a united front in order to combat oppressive and dangerous working conditions of the day. The founders were representatives of three Lakes alliances, a river association and an ocean port – and over the course of a few days, they

hammered out a cohesive Constitution for a national organization that protected and enhanced their members' interests. This was the beginning of the National Marine Engineers' Association. Eight years later the word "Beneficial" was added to the name.

Early on, our forefathers battled for favorable legislation to certify and license waterborne engineers. They secured U.S. officers – both deck and engine – aboard U.S.-flagships, helped repeal controversial seafarer fees, and raised the standard of living for all mariners. Those early struggles and many others paved the way for the worker protections and benefits we often take for granted today.

On the occasion of the Union's 50th anniversary in 1925, National M.E.B.A. Delegates were received by U.S. President Calvin Coolidge at the White House. The President noted, "It gratifies me to hear of the excellent record you have made [in the last 50 years] for loyalty, skill and devotion in the service you perform... You have ever lived up to those fine traditions of the sea which you and other Americans have helped to create. It must give you satisfaction to feel what an essential role you play in maintaining your country's standing on the seven seas, and I know we can count on your continued loyalty as we work out the future of our shipping."