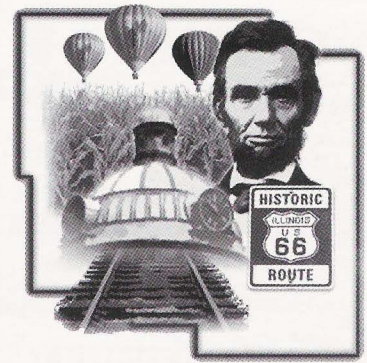


Our Times

Summer 2002

The People, History, and Culture of Logan County, Illinois

volume 7 issue 2



Read All About It

Lincoln Evening Courier

In 1945, the *Lincoln Evening Courier* was named "America's Foremost Small Town Daily Newspaper" by the New York Museum of Science and Industry, the first time one of its annual business awards had gone to a newspaper. The honor brought with it a display in the museum at Rockefeller Center in New York, a radio program dramatizing the lives of publishers Allyne and John Nugent, and a write-up in *Time* magazine. "We thought that was pretty big stuff," says Jean Caughlan McCue.

Jean had come to work at the *Courier* as a reporter and photographer that June, after graduating from the two-year "Emergency Curriculum" in the



John L. Nugent, left, and Allyne V. Nugent, center, co-publishers of the *Lincoln Evening Courier*, receive an award from the New York Museum of Science and Industry recognizing the *Courier* as "America's Foremost Small Town Daily Newspaper." Robert P. Shaw, museum director, is at right. *Lincoln Evening Courier*, Jan. 4, 1946.

School of Journalism at the University of Illinois.

She arrived at an interesting time. The paper had begun mailing free copies of the *Overseas Courier* to Logan County servicemen and women, and in August it published a special edition commemorating the end of World War II. So a 20-year-old on her first job could decide she'd chosen an exciting career.

A Little History

The *Lincoln Evening Courier* traces its ancestry back to the first newspaper in Lincoln, the *Lincoln Herald*, published in 1856. By 1915, various newspapers had come together to form *The Lincoln Courier-Herald*.

From 1916-25, the paper was published by Willard E. Carpenter and his wife, Allyne. It became the *Lincoln Evening Courier* in 1921.

A Lincolnite who wanted to speak to the editor would have gone to the former *News-Herald* building at 117 N. Kickapoo (present site of Abe's Carmelcorn). In 1923, after the Knights of Columbus bought that building, the paper moved to the basement and first floor of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows (I.O.O.F.) building at 112 S. McLean (now Lincoln Furniture and Floor Covering).

(Continued on page 2)

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The People, History, and Culture of
Logan County, Illinois

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Lincoln, IL 62656
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The mission of *Our Times* is to publish well-researched, interesting articles about the people, history, and culture of Logan County, Illinois.

Our Times is published quarterly and is distributed free-of-charge to anyone who requests it.

Copies of *Our Times* may be obtained at Prairie Years Bookstore at 121 N. Kickapoo Street in Lincoln or at any of the publication's advertisers. Or call to be placed on the mailing list.

On a Personal Note by Pam Sheley

When I began my short career in the printing business, I was sure I possessed all the knowledge I needed to produce a piece of printed material. I was an avid reader, and I had been exposed, early in life, to the inside of the newspaper business. Granted, it was only watching the Christmas parade from the upstairs windows of the *Courier* building with Jack Getchel and his family, but in my eyes, that counted.

I'm sure my impressive credentials caught Tom Seggelke's attention when he hired me at Key Printing. The first day on the job, Tom's mother, Maxine, sat me down in front of a computer. The keyboard looked familiar, but the screen did not: one small window, allowing only one line of type to be viewed. Once a word left the window, it could not be changed; you started over. I did a lot of starting over. The computer produced a long strand of "tickertape" with small holes, each representing a letter or a formatting command. The formatting our modern computers perform automatically was entered with a complicated sequence of keystrokes and special commands. Learning Latin would have been easier than learning all the em spaces,

thin spaces, forced returns, left justified, or right justified. Some days the floor of Tom's garage, where he housed half of his printing operation, resembled Times Square after the New Year's ball had dropped and the crowds had gone home. My own celebration of errors!

The other half of Key Printing was located in Joe and Maxine's home. After getting the tickertape correct, I drove to their house and ran the tape through the Photon that printed the words on a slick piece of photo paper. Each typeface required changing a glass "wheel." I was warned that the wheels were expensive and difficult to replace. I'm not a particularly graceful person, so this was the most nerve-wracking part of the job. The paper was then developed, dried, and run through the wax machine. Then it was back to Tom's garage to lay it out on a paste-up board. All these were preliminary steps in the long journey to produce a piece of printed work: negatives still had to be shot, plates made, and presses run. The post-press work was equally challenging: trimming, collating, padding, folding, and—my personal favorite—stapling. Tom's stapler stood taller than I did, and could staple a booklet or my finger with equal precision. When I proved this theory, Tom worried that I might bleed on the final product. Who could blame him? After that much work, who wants to start over because of a little blood?

Today, typesetting is done on large computer screens, with graphics and fonts at your fingertips. We have desktop publishers, color printers, and user-friendly word processing programs. Now anyone with a Hewlett Packard or Gateway thinks he or she is a printer. While they may produce a piece of printed material, craftsmanship still lies cradled within the arms of the pressman and the typesetter. There is a mystique from days gone by, captured in the faint smell of printer's ink and processing chemicals clinging to a freshly printed page. It evokes a wistful sigh from this former print-shop girl. Do you appreciate your *Our Times* a little more now? **PS**

(Continued from page 1)

The building boasted large windows, where the staff continued its practice of placing rotating displays. In 1915, the display was war photographs sent from Germany by former editor Walter Niebuhr.

Allyne Carpenter became owner and publisher in 1925 after Willard Carpenter died.

In 1927, the *Courier* bought *The Lincoln Daily Star*, which had ab-

sorbed the *Popular Review* (formerly the German *Volksblatt-Rundschau*). Lincoln was now a one-newspaper town.

On a trip to Europe in 1930, Allyne met John Nugent. They were married, and in 1933, they moved into Mrs. Nugent's home at 225 Third Street. They lived there with their pets—including two Great Danes who greeted visitors by jumping up and putting their paws on their shoulders, almost knocking them over, says Jean McCue. They had two parrots, Jean says: one squawked, "Sing to me, Polly!"; the other sang, "Am I blue?"

In 1939, the *Courier* moved to its current home: two remodeled brick buildings at the southeast corner of McLean and Pulaski streets (601 Pulaski).

Dick Eimer worked at the paper in those days and remembers that after the paper was printed at the I. O. O. F. building on Saturday morning, the press was torn down under the supervision of the factory man. Dick's father used a wrecker and crane to haul it out piece by piece from the basement through a hole cut in the first floor.

After workers grabbed an hour or two of sleep Saturday night, they reassembled the press in the new building. Sunday night and Monday were spent making adjustments so the Monday edition could be printed. "We never missed a day," says Dick.

Not Just a Little Lady

But then, while Mrs. Nugent, the publisher, was a fair and considerate boss, "she ran a very tight ship," says Billie Baldwin Cheek, who worked at the *Courier* all but seven years between 1950 and 1998. "I was scared to death of her when I first went to work there," Billie remembers. "You didn't leave your desk unless you had a good reason."

Mrs. Nugent had designed every corner of the new newspaper plant, including her elegant office with its chandeliers and its mock fireplace given her by some of her employees. A tiny woman, she always wore a hat and suit

and very high heels, and she and her husband both used cigarette holders. She was “very dependable, reliable, very trustworthy,” remembers Billie.

She was generous, too, holding baby showers for employees and buying an entire layette—complete with hand-sewn slips from the Philippines—at Marshall Field’s for Billie’s first baby. (It turned out to be a boy.)

John Nugent was a snappy dresser with an English accent. He wore French cuffs and later had a black lens in his glasses after losing the sight in one eye. The walls of his office were covered with photographs of the couple and the celebrities they had met on their trips to London on the ocean liner *Queen Elizabeth*.

Lena Wertheim, John’s secretary, spent time going over the *Wall Street Journal* with him. John was assistant publisher and had responsibility for the Landauer’s account, but Mrs. Nugent was the real boss.

The *Courier* was “belligerently Republican” (*Time*, Jan. 7, 1946), and in those days, says Billie Cheek, “you published what you wanted. If somebody wanted to keep something out of the newspaper, and [the Nugents] wanted to, they did. Today, it’s a different story,” she says.

Jack Getchel was circulation manager at the *Courier* and took sports photographs. One time, Mrs. Nugent sent him out to take pictures of a scandalous incident at a small public facility.

“I brought the photos and laid them out on her desk,” he says. “They never made the paper, but before the day was over, there was a new [supervisor at that facility].”

Of course, the *Courier* also editorialized openly, and occasionally Mrs. Nugent wrote a column.

Other Folks

Ken Goodrich was managing editor for years. “Ken would type all of his news stories and never use more than two fingers, and man, he was fast at it,” remembers Jack Getchel.

Ken was a strict boss who covered his share of night assignments and wrote a column of local news. The “Editor’s Notebook” was a direct descendent of the chatty columns that had always run in the paper.

When Ken’s grandson was voted president of his third-grade class, it



Ken Goodrich. Lincoln Daily Courier, October 20, 1962.

made the column, as did the news that LeRoy Allison had played well at a bridge tournament in Chicago.

Other columns over the years included Clem Garton’s “East O’ Town,” which combined his homespun philosophy with news about area farmers.

Other long-time employees include Society Editor Mabel Mulsick, Circulation Manager Orville Werth, and Advertising Manager Delber Geskey.

The *Courier* printed local news in great detail. A reader who picked up the paper during the Depression, for example, might find himself confronted with a list of every woman who baked cookies for the *Courier* Kiddies’ Christmas Party.

Frances Eisele Montgomery was Billie Cheek’s predecessor in accounting and management. Frances was a very dedicated employee, who carried work home

every night to do at a card table in her living room.

Every Friday morning, Frances would go to the bank to pick up the exact cash she needed to make payroll. She counted out each person’s pay and put it in an envelope, placing it with the others in a little wire basket. As she made the rounds of the newsroom, each employee would take his cash out and sign his envelope.

When the *Courier* was sold to William Joy—and for several years after—nobody in the building but Frances had ever done the payroll.

The Courier is Sold

In 1968, the Nugents sold the *Courier* to William V. Joy, owner of the *Centralia* [Illinois] *Sentinel*. James Fetgatter, the publisher, spent several days a week in Lincoln, but didn’t make any real changes.

In fact, Billie Cheek says that after The Copley Press, Inc. bought the *Courier* in December, 1985, their accountants were astounded to discover that all the bookkeeping was still being done by hand, including all the accounting ledgers and every statement that came out of the office.

Advertising accounts were kept in two huge ledgers Billie could barely carry from the safe to her desk.

For that matter, reporter Paul Ayars says the paper is “not the same place at all” since Copley bought it and poured a lot of money into upgrading the operation, including bringing in computers. An artistic managing editor, John Plevka, brought the paper’s appearance up to date.

What’s in a Name?

From 1921 until 1956, the name of the paper was *Lincoln Evening Courier*. Beginning in 1956, it has had three different names.

1956: *Lincoln Daily Courier*

1968: *Lincoln Courier*

1992: *The Courier* ■

Inside the Newsroom

Reporter/Photographer

Bill Danley went to work at the *Courier* in 1953 as sports editor and was there about 2 1/2 years. "They worked us to death at the *Courier* in those days," he says. "You not only had to be a reporter; you had to carry a camera and take pictures, develop your own film, and make your own prints."

A reporter carried a Speed Graphic camera, a "big, big camera," says Jean McCue, who used one when she worked at the *Courier* from 1945 to 1947. For each picture, Jean put a separate sheet of film in a black holder and slid it into the heavy camera.

Larry Shroyer "took me under his wing and was just like another father to me," says Jean. "We used to call him one-shot Shroyer. He could go shoot a picture, and it would be good." Larry took the most pictures; he also worked for other area newspapers, and Jean pinch-hit for him when he was away.

When servicemen left on the train at 3 a.m., either Jean or Larry would take pictures—and end up alone at the *Courier*'s darkroom developing the film in the "wee hours of the morning" so it would be ready for that day's paper.

Jean quit her job when she was very pregnant with her first child and found herself "on top of a building taking a picture of another burning building." She went home and told her husband, Dick, "I'm done."

In later years, Harry Salmons was the paper's photographer, but he spent most of his time developing other people's pictures. He would come in at about 3 or 4 a.m. to find the rolls of film shot by the reporters lined up on the counter. When the reporters came in, Harry was gone and the prints were on their desks. When Bill Martinie was managing editor, Matt Mason did that job.

During the Logan County Fair, as many as ten rolls of film would be processed every day, and one page of the paper would be nothing but pictures. A box of photos of 4-H kids was always in the newsroom, and people could come in to get a picture of their son or daughter.

Today the paper only scans negatives, so, says city editor Dan Tackett, it has lost "the small-town touch of being able to hand them a picture of their grandchildren." Photographer Ann Klose takes most of the pictures and develops them in the darkroom, but she'll soon be using a digital camera.

Sports Editors/Managing Editor

Bill Martinie says he is a sports fanatic, who learned on the job when Allyne Nugent gave him the chance to be sports editor at the *Courier* in 1961. "I was green," says Bill, so managing editor Ken Goodrich read everything he wrote and made sure he wasn't off base that first year.

At the time, the paper covered 17 high schools, as well as Lincoln College and Lincoln Christian College. Bill spent at least four nights a week covering games, including all of the Lincoln High School games.

His day started at 6 a.m., when he put out the page for the day—the sports deadline was 10 or 10:30. If he didn't have a game that night, he would work on records and maybe write "Marty's Column" about local sports. If there was a game, Bill would go home in the afternoon and be at the game about 6:30 or 7 p.m., carrying a notepad so he could interview coaches when it was over. He was back at the office by 9:30 or 10. Coaches would call in their scores from

10 until midnight; he'd write up the stories and be home by 1 or 1:30 a.m. The next day, he'd start the process all over again.

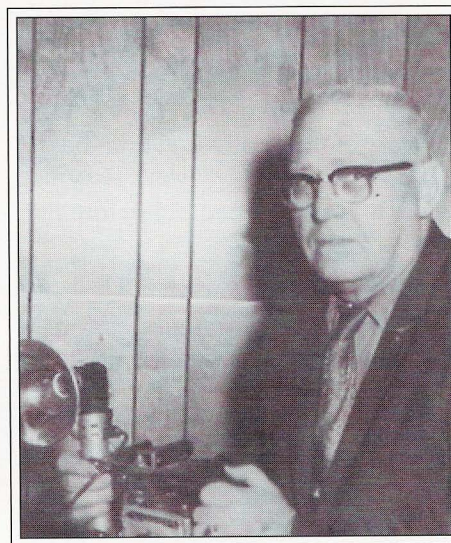
Jack Getchel was in charge of circulation, but he went along to the ball games to take pictures.

"Most of the time," says Jack, "we would have people attending at least four games—he'd go to two, I'd go to two, and a lot of times Wayne Schrader would cover two games."

"We never went to a whole game," says Jack. "We would go to Elkhart and Williamsville, stay for half a game, and leave and go to the next game and go back [to the *Courier*]. One of us would develop the pictures, and the other guy would help Bill answer the phone."

Bill had gone earlier to every high school to get a group shot and an individual head shot of each player; if someone made a basket, Bill already had his picture.

When Ken Goodrich retired in 1973, Bill became managing editor, assigning stories and writing editorials. A challenging job, it was especially tough during local strikes.



Larry Shroyer. History of Logan County Illinois 1982.

"In those situations, no matter what you write, somebody's unhappy," says Bill, who was also uncomfortable when people asked him to keep something out of the paper. "If it was public information and on the record, we printed it, regardless of who was involved," he says. Bill left in 1984.

Dick Huston was sports editor from 1954 to 1957 and 1973 to 1989. He enjoyed interviewing coaches like Loren Wallace, who had something to say even when his team lost.

Man of the Month

Bill Danley wrote the first Man of the Month article.

"Allyne Nugent was a bright old gal, but she had no more tact than the man in the moon," Bill remembers. She said, "You know, Danley, we've got a whole lot of old guys in this town and they're going to die any day, and we're not going to have any information. So go to them and do an interview."

Bill suggested instead that they choose a man of the month; it would be an excuse for biographical information that could be used at death.

Bill says, "To tell you the truth, I think people were pleased. They were people of some accomplishment and almost without exception, good, solid citizens. So I didn't have to be insincere when I told them they had made a contribution to the community. It was a lot better than telling them they were going to die."

The first Man of the Month was Art Gimbel; John Gordon was the first Man of the Year.

In later years, the feature included women and became the Citizen of the Month, with a panel of judges choosing the Citizen of the Year.

When Copley Press bought the *Courier*, they replaced the monthly feature with an annual breakfast at the Maple Club to honor the Citizen of the Year, who is chosen by a local panel from nominations.

Other interviews could be difficult. Dick interviewed one coach before basketball season. "I'd say, 'Who are your top rebounders?' and he'd say, 'Oh, they're all expected to rebound.' I'd say, 'Who's your best ball handler?' He'd reply, 'They're all supposed to be ball handlers.'" "He was evading the issue," says Dick. "You don't expect the little guards to be jumping over the rim. You don't expect the great big forwards to go running down the court."

Dick enjoyed watching Kevin Seitzer make it to the big leagues in baseball, seeing the Lincoln High School basketball team go to the state tournament in 1955 and finish fourth in the state in 1980, watching Lincoln College finish second in the nation in the National Junior College Tournament, and keeping track of athletes after they left high school—whatever their careers.

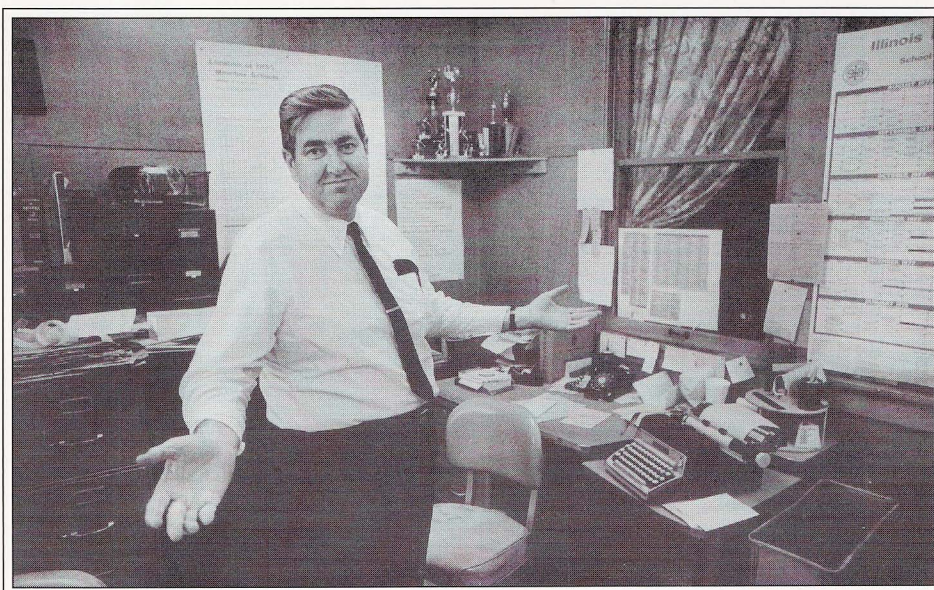
Reporter

Paul Ayars started at the *Courier* in 1982, working part time for Dick Huston. He started full time in 1985, replacing Pat Kirby.

Paul writes a variety of stories, although one of his main responsibilities is to cover education. Consolidation stories—incorporating Beason into the Chester-East Lincoln school district, for example—are not easy to tell, but he finds them enjoyable. He also has covered tons of major weather stories, like the huge snowstorm that began on a Friday night before New Year's. Paul wrote that story on deadline, and it appeared in Saturday's paper. In addition, Paul has always been fascinated with writing about people, as in Citizen of the Month and Year articles and a recent feature on Woody Jones. Lately, he's been focusing on Lincoln Developmental Center.

But the best part of his job is representing the public, although he worries that the public is losing its right to know. While professional politicians talk about the issues, local elected officials such as school board members don't spend a lot of time studying the law, and they tend to say, "I can't say anything." From the public's point of view, Paul doesn't think they have that right.

Paul is contest entry coordinator for the paper and points out that eight out of the last ten years, the *Courier* has won the sweepstakes trophy for the best daily newspaper in its division (circulation 10,000 and less) in the Illinois Press Association. ■



Sports editor Dick Huston, named media member of the Illinois Basketball Coaches Hall of Fame in 1985, needed lots of data. Courtesy D. Huston.

Hot off the Presses

City editor Dan Tackett remembers the old teletype. When a news bulletin came in, bells would ring, “just like in the movies, and you’d rush over to the teletype machine and look at it,” says Dan. Today, Dan gets an e-mail message.

When he started working as a reporter at the *Courier* in 1968, Dan typed his stories on a manual typewriter, using a heavy lead pencil to edit his copy.

Dan had a pair of shears and a bottle of rubber cement on his desk. If he wanted to insert a sentence at a different spot in his story, he would cut that sentence out, “slap that rubber cement on it,” he says, and paste it in the proper spot.

Editor Ken Goodrich would make his changes to Dan’s story and give it to someone to type up a final version. Then an operator would type that version into a teletypesetter machine, which put out a narrow ribbon like tickertape. The spool of tape was

placed in the Linotype machine. The tape commanded the Linotype to form the text into individual lines of metal type.

When Richard “Dick” Eimer went to work at the *Courier* in 1935, there was no tickertape. An operator sat in front of the Linotype machine and typed in the text. When he finished typing a line, molten lead was forced into molds of the letters he had typed (hot type). As the lead cooled, it hardened into a line of type with raised letters—a slug.

The slugs were placed—one at a time—in a big frame to be printed. (That’s why newspapers have individual columns: each column is the width of one slug.) Headlines were made of larger type, so most were set by hand.

Once the page was finished, it was put into a little hand printer, and a copy was made to be proofread. In later years, proofreader Bertha

Koller read every page of the newspaper every day. When she found an error, she marked the line, which had to be reset.

After the paper was printed, all the lead pages were melted in the *Courier*’s smelter, so the lead could be used again the next day.

Dick Eimer’s first duties at the *Courier* were working in the mail room—printing addresses directly on the papers with an addressograph machine—and doing job printing on the small presses (the *Courier* printed the county fair book for years).

Later, he worked in the lead room—a hot job because of the gas burners used to melt the little chunks of lead. Some of the molten lead he ladled into pigs (the forms that supplied lead to the Linotype machine), and some he used in stereotyping.

In this process, Dick poured molten lead over a mat engraved with the details of an advertisement or the comics. The resulting form was placed in the frame with the rest of the page.

If the ad department needed a picture of a man in a suit, Dick cast it from a collection of mats. Bill Coombs, the ad composer, put the ads together.

When Hazel Alberts worked at the *Courier* from 1953 to 1955, Delbert Geskey was advertising manager. The ad people chose their illustrations from a huge book of clip art; the corresponding mats were kept in little drawers.

Engraving photographs was also done in the lead room.

When Dick Eimer developed lead poisoning, Mrs. Nugent put him to work selling classified ads and running the press.

“Working on the press was a dirty job,” says Dick. The Nugents were collecting Bundles for Britain; the printers would go through the clothes looking for pants or a shirt they could wear and then throw away.



Workers in the “back shop” pose in new uniforms in the parking lot of the new Lincoln Evening Courier plant in 1939—the only time uniforms were provided during the years Richard Eimer worked there. Back row, left to right, Richard Eimer, Andy Anderson, Floyd Altman, John Lenhardt, Dave Stewart, Jacob Lenhardt. Front, left to right, Pat Whitesell, John Graney, George Lenhardt, Bill Coombs, Bill Phillips. Courtesy Richard Eimer.

When Dick became head pressman, it was quite a thrill. He says the old flatbed press “had its little odd ways about it. You stood right there and had to keep loosening and tightening the paper [called the web] as it went through the various rollers.”

Photomechanical Printing

When the *Courier* went to the photomechanical process, copy from the newsroom and the news wire was punched on tickertape and placed in a photomechanical reader, which set type on strips of film.

Lisa Carlin Whitson began working at the *Courier* in 1978, designing ads.

Photographs for the ads were shot by Matt Mason to whatever size the ad staff specified. Then each photo was shot on a process camera to produce a piece of paper the right size with the picture in half-tone dots.

The type, or copy, for the ads came to Lisa on smooth, slick, white paper, which she put through a waxer so it would stick to a grid sheet.

Working from a layout, Lisa cut apart the copy with an Exacto knife and placed it and the waxed picture on a grid sheet. If she needed a border, she cut a piece from a roll hanging nearby. “I ran around for 20 years with a knife in my hand,” she says.

When she was done, she gave a proof to the ad people to check, then filed the ad for the appropriate day.

Later, Lisa made pages up for the paper in the same way. The pages lay on banks of makeup tables, where anyone who walked by could stop to read a story and catch any errors.

When the paste-up page was completed, it was shot by a huge camera, then transferred to a plate for printing.

Today, the *Courier* receives its wire copy and photos via satellite, reporters write their stories using word processors, and Lisa and Dan Tackett design the pages with computers—sizing pictures and moving both pic-

tures and text with the click of a mouse.

Pages and negatives are sent from the computers to an image setter, which burns the image onto film. The film is processed automatically, and a plate made from the negative.

Color and Deadlines

Matt Mason went to work at the *Courier* in 1978 when the new off-set press was installed, but it wasn't until Copley took over in 1986 that the *Courier* began printing in color. The first color image Matt printed was a picture of a miner at Turriss Coal Mine.

Those early days of color were exciting—and stressful. John Titone, production manager at the *State Journal* in Springfield and the *Courier*, told him, “Printing’s like black magic: sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn’t.” Ink, paper, and humidity—all those variables can change “and just wreak havoc with us,” says Matt.

Ideally, the paper is printed by 1:30 p.m., so the people who put in the inserts can do their job and the papers can be on the trucks by 2.

“We get edgy sometimes because we get close to deadline,” admits Matt. Someone may still be finishing a story—poking along—and if it’s an important story, Matt understands. But at the same time, he’s thinking, “We gotta get the paper out!”

Matt says the image of the editor running in and yelling, “Stop the presses!” is false. Only on a few occasions—the shooting of the mayor of San Francisco was one—were the presses stopped to change the front page.

Printer Doug Brickey may look at a negative and spot an error; then the decision becomes, is it bad enough to correct, or is it too late?

Several years ago, an entire Life-style section had to be reprinted when someone discovered it was

garbled. Other times—because they’re on deadline—if they find an error, “we just pick up where we left off,” says Matt, or make changes after printing the spoiled copies that are a product of beginning a press run.

As for complaints, Matt says there aren’t too many about ink rubbing off now that the *Courier* is using a low rub ink. He prints the paper a little darker than some area papers to make it easier to read.

Paper Boys

According to Dan Tackett, people used to say that the newspaper business was the only big business in the world that depended on a 12-year-old kid to deliver its product.

Bob Ball was a paper boy in the ‘30s, when the *Courier* was located in the I. O. O. F. building. Every afternoon, he went to a window in the basement, picked up his papers from the pressman, and went to a booth to fold

(Continued on page 9)



Philip Richmond, 12, and Jim Sansoucie, 12, two of 67 carriers. Lincoln Daily Courier, Oct. 20, 1962.

Two More Area Papers

Lincoln Shopper

In 1968, the *Courier* was bought by William V. Joy. In 1969, Bob Borowiak came to Lincoln to work at the paper and walked into a dispute between Joy's company and the International Typographical Union (ITU), Local 327.

The union included all the workers in the "back shop"—everyone who physically put the paper together—except for the printers, who had their own union. The ITU's contract was up for renewal, and things weren't going well.

Betty Reiners [Schmidt] was a teletypesetter operator and treasurer of the local union. She had worked at the paper for 20 years. "We were a family," she says; it was awkward to find some friends on the other side of the fence.

One day, Bob Borowiak returned from lunch to be told he no longer had a job. Non-union people were present to take over the union jobs. Union president Charlie Hamilton called the international; it authorized a strike, and the local union struck in June, 1970. Betty and Charlie went to the other unions in Lincoln to tell their story, and they responded with financial help and food drives.

After some businessmen suggested the strikers start a shopper, they came to an agreement with Bob Wilson, who owned the *Lincoln Graphic* and other papers and printed them on his press in Decatur. They moved into the front of a building he owned at 711 Broadway Street in Lincoln and got to work.

"We were able to get a little proof press and a couple of typewriters and a few cases of hand type, and we started a newspaper," says Charlie Hamilton. If they needed large numbers for ads, they cut them out of old newspapers. Using a couple of old clip art books for graphic art, the group pasted the paper up and took it to Decatur to be printed. It was later printed in Mason City.

A little hamburger joint called Geri's bought the whole front page of the first issue for an ad, and the first *Lincoln Shopper* was published August 26, 1970. The staff sectioned off a Lincoln city map into areas and got busy throwing papers on porches. Eventually, Ken Theobald was in charge of making sure the *Shopper* was delivered free to every household in Logan County.



Owners of the Lincoln Shopper, 1972. Standing, from left, Pat Rogers, Dick Duel, Ken Theobald, Bob Borowiak, Bob Wilson, Harold Forehand, Charlie Hamilton. Seated, from left, Sherry Duel, Betty Reiners [Schmidt]. Courtesy Bob Borowiak.

One key to the *Shopper's* success was its policy of printing free want ads for individuals. People also loved the detailed articles about weddings and reunions.

It wasn't easy. Staff members were living on strike pay and taking their turns on the picket line. The front room of the little office had tall plate glass windows on two sides; in winter, it got so cold that Betty sometimes typed with her gloves on.

"We were print craftsmen, not businessmen," says Betty, so Mr. Wilson taught them how to keep their books.

The first Linotype was bought used from a man in Emden, but a lot of things were given to them, says Bob. When the *Pekin Times* upgraded from hot metal to computers, the *Shopper* got several machines and several thousand dollars worth of lead for \$141.

"There were a lot of times we felt like quitting," says Charlie. It helped that the *Courier* was no longer doing commercial printing; the *Shopper* eventually stepped into the void.

The *Lincoln Graphic* was purchased in 1971 but discontinued in 1972. In January of 1972, the business was incorporated as Lincoln Printers, Inc.

In addition to "a lot of man hours," says Bob, there was a lawsuit filed by the *Courier* that was finally dropped, and an IRS investigation that turned up nothing wrong.

Bob Wilson died in 1972. As people sold their shares, Charlie Hamilton and Bob Borowiak became owners. They sold the *Shopper* to the *Courier* in 1987. Today, Lincoln Printers is primarily owned by Bob Borowiak.

Mt. Pulaski Times-News

Harry Wible came to Lincoln in 1925 with his wife, Margaret, and his daughters, Jean [Martin] and Geri [Zimmermann]. He worked for *The*

Star; after it was sold to the *Courier* in 1927, he was that paper's advertising manager and in charge of the carrier boys.

Harry had worked on his father's newspaper in Golden, Illinois, attended Gem City Business College in Quincy, and always dreamed of owning his own paper. In 1932, he formed the H. J. Wible Printing Company in the Odd Fellows Building in Mt. Pulaski. He purchased the *Mt. Pulaski Times* from the Ayers estate and the *Mt. Pulaski News* from Paul and Rell Beidler, thus creating the *Mt. Pulaski Times-News*. In 1940, he moved his operation to what had been the old Jenner Hotel at 209 S. Washington.

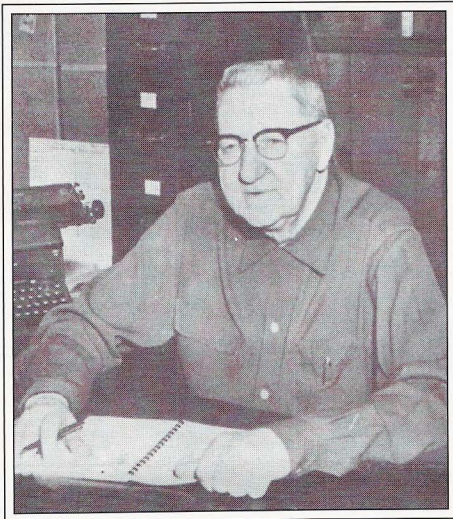
As editor and publisher of the weekly *Times-News*, Harry Wible was Mt. Pulaski's biggest fan. "Show me it is good for Mt. Pulaski, and I'm 100 percent for it," he said. His daughter Jean says he wouldn't write anything derogatory about anyone in town, and it was his policy not to print negative letters.

Harry had a flair for writing, according to former employee Pat Guffey Lucas. Certainly, anyone who has read the 1961 Sil-Tennial (125th) Edition of the *Mt. Pulaski Times-News* can vouch for his ability to tell a lively story. His penchant for hard work and desire for accuracy were put to good use on the 160-page edition, on which he worked long, long hours, Pat says.

Harry had taken a course in photoengraving in Rolla, Missouri, and his paper often included two or three pages of pictures. For that matter, Jean says, picture taking was the greatest thing he did for the community. Someone might call on a Sunday afternoon to say they were having a birthday party and ask if he could take a picture. "I can just see him grabbing that camera," she says, "and he'd go out and take it and go up and develop it—that day, lots of times."

An attraction of Harry's paper was an entertaining column written by Hattie Kerwood. When Jean's future husband, Harry Martin, Jr., was in school at the University of Illinois, his fraternity brothers used to grab the *Times-News* to read her column. Harry Wible's column, "Reflections," was also popular.

"Dad had two families—us and the community," says Jean. Writing scripts for a "womanless wedding" and shows put on by the grade school, serving as a trustee for the Tomlinson Estate and president of the Mt. Pulaski Park District, spearheading the Fall Festivals, starting a bowling alley—he was tireless. He was named *Courier* Citizen of the Year in 1963 and recently named by the *Courier* as one of the outstanding Logan County citizens of the 20th century.



Harry J. Wible, 1892-1971. The newspaper was his life. Mt. Pulaski Times-News, Feb. 4, 1971.

In 1967, Harry's family and staff surprised him with an issue of the *Times-News* honoring his 75th birthday and 35 years of printing the paper. The mayor of Mt. Pulaski declared the week of August 20-26th "Harry J. Wible Week," and 1,000 people attended a variety show held in his honor.

Other members of the *Times-News* "family" were Alma Hargrave; "Jinks" Leckbee; Frank Passmore, Jr.; Florence Stoll; Paul Beidler; Don Wible; and Jim Dodge.

Harry Wible died January 21, 1971, having sold the *Times-News* to Jim Dodge and Keith Richardson. It is published today by Mike Lakin. ■

(Continued from page 7, *Hot Off the Presses*)

them into squares.

It usually took the youngster 2 to 2 1/2 hours to walk his route with his bulldog, Snooky. It was "very seldom" that Bob walked up to a house. Folded as the papers were, "I could sail them right up on the porch," he remembers.

Mrs. Nugent was a great lady, says Bob. One day, the boys went on strike. The papers sold for ten cents each; they were getting a penny a paper and wanted two cents.

Mrs. Nugent came out and sat down with the boys. It was during the Depression, and she couldn't afford a penny raise, she said, but she finally agreed to give them an extra 1/2 cent a paper. The boys thought that was pretty good, so they went back to work. The papers were late that day.

The paper boys were independent businessmen. Saturday mornings, they collected from their customers and then went to the *Courier* offices to pay for their papers.

Jack Getchel, circulation manager in the '60s and '70s, remembers when the weekly rate was 25 cents, and the kids brought in nickels, dimes, and quarters—which had to be hand-wrapped and taken to the bank. "It was absolutely a madhouse," he says.

At one time, says Jack, there were 100 kids waiting for a route and about 40 routes: the Wolpert brothers had the same route for over 20 years. Jack ran contests with trips to Six Flags as prizes, filled a display case with games and shirts and hunting knives that could be redeemed when a carrier earned enough points, and gave awards to the outstanding carriers of the year.

The *Courier* then owned a Corvair panel truck, and most of the papers were dropped off on the kids' porches in bundles; the kids rolled them up and put a rubber band around them.

By 1977, when Jack left the *Courier*, there were fewer paper boys and girls and more motorized routes, including routes in the country, where papers were previously delivered by mail. ■

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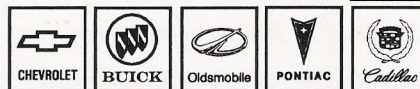
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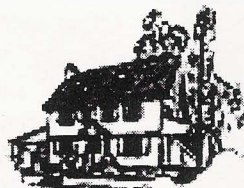
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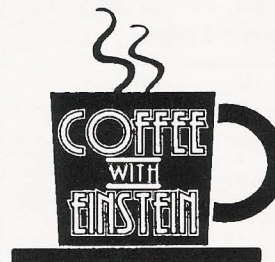


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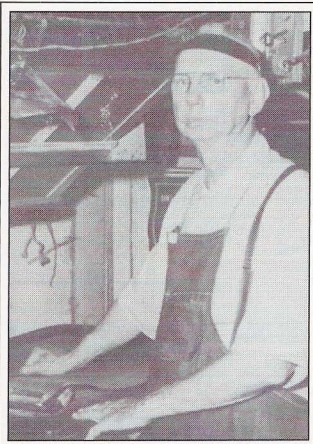
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Two Editors—Two Styles



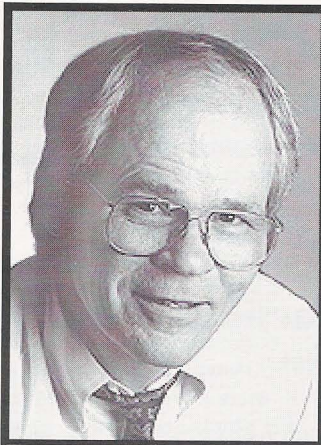
Grant Heatherwick. History of Logan County Illinois 1982.

Grant Heatherwick was the owner and editor of the *Middletown Ledger* for over 50 years (1909-1960). "If there was a high school graduation or a funeral, Grant attended it, and he was his own reporter," says Middletown resident Hersche Wark. His detailed articles, says Winnie Golden, helped preserve "much of our precious heritage."

"He never printed anything that was derogatory about anybody," says Herschel. Recalls Dean Noon, "I heard one time that a guy in town was sent to prison for stealing chickens—but there never was anything in the paper about it."

The Courier managing editor Jeff Nelson agrees that "the best news we've got is the news no one else has. That's local news, so we put it on the front page."

Like Grant Heatherwick, Jeff loves the town he covers—his adopted home of Lincoln—but his philosophy is different. The editor's function, he says, is "to bring the news to the people as fairly as possible—news that may be good or bad, that we feel is important to the community—no matter how it's received." ■



Jeff Nelson. Courtesy The Courier.

Our Times

The People, History, and Culture of Logan County, Illinois

Inside This Issue

Lincoln Evening Courier

Inside the Newsroom

Hot off the Presses

Two More Area Papers

Two Editors—Two Styles

Material for this issue is from the *Courier*, *Mt. Pulaski Times-News*, *Mt. Pulaski 1836-1986*, *Middletown Ledger*, and the memories of our friends. Note: Linotype is a patented name. In this issue, it is also used to refer to any similar machine.

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