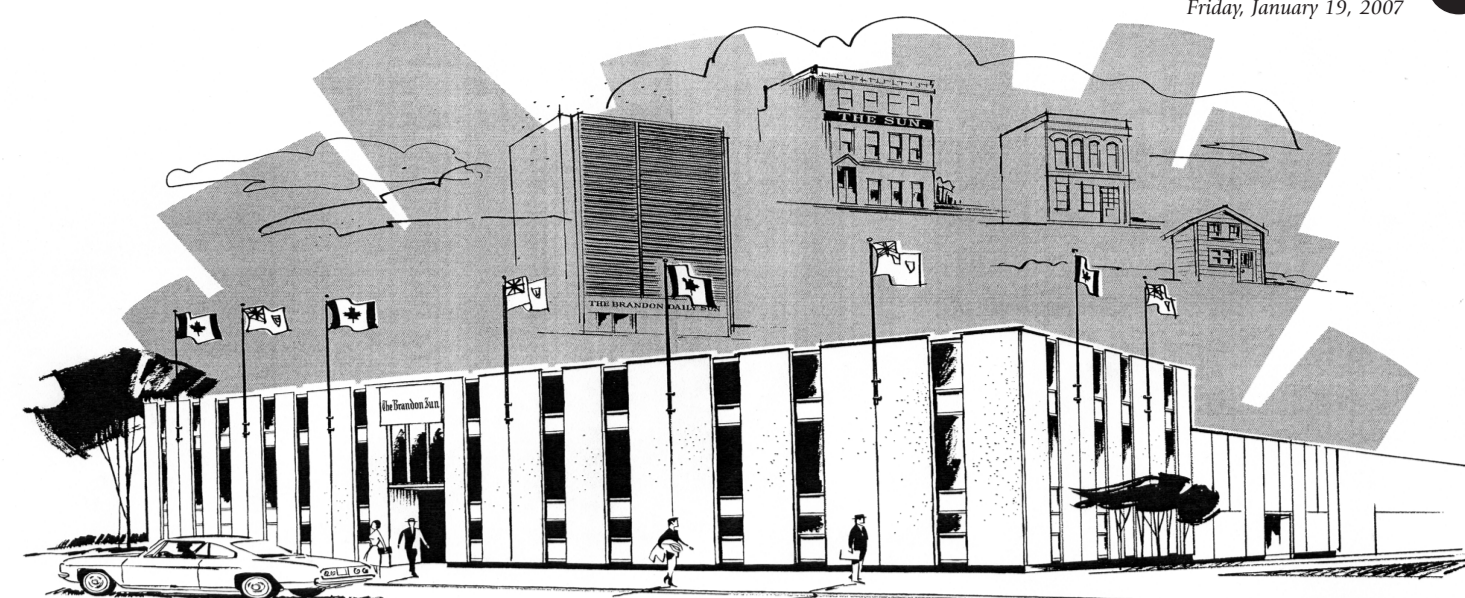




"A bright progressive paper indicates a prosperous town or city and in this respect the Sun can be said to fairly represent the City of Brandon."

— FROM THE BRANDON SUN, JAN. 19, 1907.



This sketch, above, commissioned sometime in the 1970s, shows the succession of homes enjoyed by the Brandon Sun. From our first building — at top on the right — counterclockwise to the current building, this newspaper has long been a proud tenant of central Brandon. We've been housed on 12th Street, Eighth Street and 10th Street, but you've been able to find us for the last 40-odd years at 501 Rosser Ave.

Slightly older than the city

CONTINUED FROM PAGE A1

But Brandon was booming, and like the city the paper grew for the next 14 years under White's hand, despite a brief financial interruption. The Sun then went through a series of different owners and publishers until it was taken over by J.B. Whitehead in 1903.

Three generations of Whiteheads would successfully operate the Sun for the next 82 years, including E.C. Whitehead, who assumed full control of the paper on the death of his father in 1941. Under E.C., the Sun's circulation grew from 3,000 to more than 11,000 subscribers.

His two sons, Joseph and Lewis, both took an active role in the operation and management of the newspaper, but it was Lewis who eventually took over from his father in 1961, after his brother died of polio in 1953 at the age of 28.

During his tenure, the Sun's reputation travelled much farther than the borders of Manitoba. Maclean's magazine once described the paper as "the Cadillac of Canada's small dailies."

Ownership of the Sun passed to Thomson Newspapers, Ltd. in 1987, after Lewis was forced to abandon his beloved newspaper due to ill health.

"In 40 years in business, the most difficult decision I have ever had to make is the one which is announced today," Whitehead said. "In recent years the Sun has made dramatic improvements thanks to the loyalty and imagination of our staff members."

Then in November, 2001, the FP Canadian Newspapers Limited Partnership acquired the Sun and the Winnipeg Free Press from Thomson, and a new era began.

The current publisher of the Sun, Ewan Pow, started out with the paper in 1967 as an appren-

tice pressman straight out of high school.

He moved up through the ranks over the next 20 years, going to the advertising department in 1968, and serving as a sales representative, to a stint as classified manager, advertising director and then marketing director before leaving in the fall of 1988. He returned to take over the reins as publisher in April, 2004.

Pow said he intends for the Sun to continue as a leader within the community, and to discuss the important issues of the day.

"The new owners expect us to produce the best small city newspaper in the country," Pow said. "Compared to some of the big chain owners, we have relative freedom. (FP Newspapers) let us determine our own coverage and content. Most chain-owned newspapers could never claim that."

Throughout the years, the Sun has kept pace with the technology of the time — and even outpaced some of its peers, Pow said.

"We evolve every day. We have absolute state-of-the-art presses and computer-to-plate technology. The computers our staff operates on would make the guys at many larger papers drool if they found out."

The Sun's longest-serving full-time employee, press room supervisor Randy Smith joined the company 37 years ago. He said the presses and the staff have undergone tremendous changes since then.

"When I started we were still on hot metal (plates) in the press room," Smith said. "The first big change was moving from hot metal to the offset presses. Papers were small, and there was some colour."

Smith said the latest innovations have been more colour capacity as well as a better picture quality, thanks to a computer-to-plate system installed in 2004.

"Now it's all electronic, and done through laser imaging. It's hugely faster. With the

machines we have, we can do 70 plates an hour."

The introduction of new technologies over the decades has allowed the Sun to better serve the citizens of Brandon and Westman.

Retired Sun vice-president Fred McGuinness, who continues to be involved with the Sun as a writer with the twice-weekly Community News Edition, looks back on the paper's history with no small amount of pride.

"In a city as young as Brandon, relatively speaking, it is reassuring to reflect upon the news that this newspaper has kept pace with its home setting," McGuinness said.

City councillor Errol Black has often used the Sun archives for his research into the city's past. Black said papers like the Sun are needed in the community, especially for public discourse.

"The newspaper reflects what's happening in the city," Black said. "It reflects the city and what (the people) believe in, the politics, and the rest. Occasionally it pisses me off, but apart from that ... the less information people have, the less interesting society is."

Brandon Mayor Dave Burgess called the Sun the "paper for all of Westman" in an interview last week.

"The Brandon Sun has had a huge and long history with serving the public," Burgess said. "It's always been something that has had a quality and reputation that people have counted on for all those years. It's part of the fabric of the community."

"It's quite easy to predict that the paper will be an integral part of Brandon's future, continuing to report on issues that in our future, will be our history."

So here's to the Sun's — and the city's — next 125 years: may they be as fruitful.

mgcoerzen@brandonson.com



There are marked differences between the very first issue and yesterday's front page. But there are similarities, too. Volume 1, No. 1 has a third of a page of advertisements on the front — that's been reduced to make room for photos. But the Brandon Sun maintains a varied assortment of local and regional news as a focus.

"We're writing a history book of Western Manitoba, one day at a time."

— EWAN POW PUBLISHER THE BRANDON SUN

Through generations of employees, hospitality has been a constant hallmark of the 'characters' at the Brandon Sun

BY FRED MCGUINNESS

I must have been healthy in my mid-teens, if exercise means anything. In the early '30s, on an average of 20 times a day I left the office of CP Telegraphs, at 1039 Rosser Ave., also known as the Smith Block, rounded the Bank of Montreal corner, and walked pass the Cecil Hotel to get to what is now known as the Old Sun Building.

I went in the 10th Street door, and up a half-dozen steps to the business office where Ted Woodley held forth. Publisher J.B. Whitehead had his office on the street side of this department, but I rarely saw him.

To deliver my Canadian Press dispatches in this pre-electronic period, I then went through that business department and into the commercial-printing section and up a long, long set of stairs to the top floor. I walked through the bindery, presided over by Eddie Johnson to

get to the editorial department.

There were real characters in the editorial department. Chief of them was Editor William H. Noakes, a British-trained journalist and cartoonist. Along with his regular editorial duties, he had an irregular, self-imposed duty to write his Sun Gads. These were one-paragraph acid drops containing the Noakes opinion on current news, local or national. They were presented in batches.

These editorials-in-miniature were so frequently reprinted in other dailies that, for a number of years, the Sun was rated by Canadian Press as the most-frequently quoted daily in Canada.

Noakes created words to fit specific deeds or functions. If the publisher prevailed upon him to write an editorial salute to a recently deceased business person Noakes did not like, he would do as he was bidden, but all the time he grumbled about how much he hated writ-

ing what he called a "son-of-a-bitch-uary."

Another denizen of this department who gave the paper a reputation that far outstripped its size was the sports editor, H. L. Crawford.

Years earlier, as a little boy playing war games, Crawford so frequently played the role of Boer-War General Kruger that he became "Krug" to such an extent that many persons did not know he was christened Howard.

Krug Crawford was a graduate in law who never practised. He felt his calling in life was to write about sports and comment upon their importance as a healthy social diversion. His daughter Beth, a classmate of mine at Earl Oxford school, told me that she could not recall a single night when her father was at home; he was either at a sports event, or in the office writing tomorrow's copy.

It won't take me long to tell you all about the photographers; there weren't any. The editor who really wanted to reproduce a photograph had to have the subject photographed by Jarrett or Smith, who ran photo studios, and then send their print to an engraving house in Winnipeg. Even if you were in a super-rush this process would take four days, minimum.

There were interesting extras that were offered to the public for major news events, usually sports or elections.

Below the first-floor windows on the 10th Street side of the building there was a series of hooks that would hold large bulletin boards, about three feet wide and four feet in length.

Having been trained in art, Editor Noakes could print news bulletins in an attractive but abbreviated style. I can remember making innumerable trips to him the day of a World Series game, or in the evening of an election. There

would be a crowd of several hundred watchers, mainly male, and they were quite vocal as the news moved them to jeers or cheers.

As the chief of the bindery, Eddie Johnson had a number of responsibilities. The books he bound were mainly commercial-type, like columnar books for accountants. In the basement he had one odd machine, the central feature of which was rows of wires pulled taut. With these wires, and inks of several colours, he could print perpendicular straight lines for accountants.

On the west side of the ground floor was the job-printing department. It was later relocated to the 100 block on 12th Street. Letterheads, envelopes, calling cards, wedding invitations and the like were produced here. Art Nixon, a local wrestler of note, was the senior hand.

My neighbour, Bob Shaw, worked here when there was work for him. I often watched

him performing on an old Miehle press. In that brief period in which the jaws were open, he had to remove a card that had just been printed and insert a blank for the next impression. This was definitely not the type of work on which you let your mind wander.

To get to the door of the Sun's basement in the early '30s you had to watch your footing. You had to walk over the rails of a CPR spur line that served Pioneer Fruit and McKenzie Seeds, along with the newspaper. Inside the north door you entered on the landing of a staircase, one arm of which led up to the job-printing shop, and the other of which led to the floor of the basement.

Viewing the scene from that landing was an old flatted press that had seen better days.

On a raised platform on the 10th Street side were three Linotype machines, two of them

operated by Tom Stark and Earle Finley. On the west end was a press for printing accounting paper and the rest of the space was taken up by rolls of newsprint. Every afternoon carriers awaiting their copies tried — in vain — to be comfortable while lolling on those rolls. Older carriers would read aloud to us from spoiled copies of that days paper. I remember the buzz of excitement when we were told that a woman at Callander, Ont., had been delivered of quintuplets. Instant conclusion: Papa Dionne had fallen asleep and left his motor running.

There must have been a period when that Sun building was brand new, but that was back before the turn of the century. As it was, it had many benefits, such as a location in the heart of the business district. Offsetting those benefits, however, was a total lack of parking, and the sorry truth; there was no room for expansion. The Cecil

Hotel was one close neighbour and that CPR spur line was another. Cramped and old fashioned it may have been, but it sufficed until a dramatic wave of improvement changed it forever.

Sincere feelings of pride were developed when the Sun moved into its new, and present, home. In the latter part of the '60s, when you approached the plant along Rosser from the west, the sun reflected off the stonework and that row of flags on the roof snapped in the breeze. This was dramatic stuff. I have always lamented that those flags became an item of contention. Without any proof to the contrary, we always blamed college students for having a mad desire to steal those flags. It was Lew Whitehead's decision that the flags had to go ... he worried that someone was going to be injured in clambering up to the roof. College students beware — the flags are now back.

Once you got inside the plant you found a pleasant, co-operative crew with a wide range of talents. I always felt that much of the Sun personality came from female staff members, individuals like Nareen Doak, Ervina Munn, Lynne Leader, Susan Palmer, Nell Figol, among others upon whom you could count for a cheerful response. This attitude was by no means restricted to the women: Don Ready, Lorne Preston, and Willard (the Shadow) Ames also helped to shape that corporate personality.

This personality was responsible for the fact that the premier, or cabinet members felt free to visit the plant when they were in town. The coffee pot was always on; in pioneer fashion, the latch string was on the outside.

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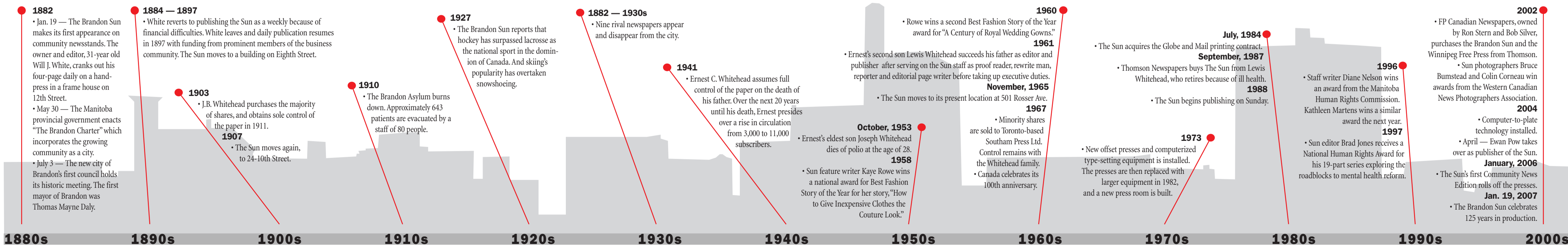
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ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF PROUD SERVICE TO OUR COMMUNITY



- 1882**
 - Jan. 19 — The Brandon Sun makes its first appearance on community newsstands. The owner and editor, 31-year old Will J. White, cranks out his four-page daily on a hand-press in a frame house on 12th Street.
- 1884 — 1897**
 - White reverts to publishing the Sun as a weekly because of financial difficulties. White leaves and daily publication resumes in 1897 with funding from prominent members of the business community. The Sun moves to a building on Eighth Street.
- 1903**
 - J.B. Whitehead purchases the majority of shares, and obtains sole control of the paper in 1911.
- 1907**
 - The Sun moves again, to 24-10th Street.
- 1910**
 - The Brandon Asylum burns down. Approximately 643 patients are evacuated by a staff of 80 people.
- 1919**
 - Ernest C. Whitehead assumes full control of the paper on the death of his father. Over the next 20 years until his death, Ernest presides over a rise in circulation from 3,000 to 11,000 subscribers.
- 1927**
 - The Brandon Sun reports that hockey has surpassed lacrosse as the national sport in the dominion of Canada. And skiing's popularity has overtaken snowshoeing.
- 1927 — 1930s**
 - Nine rival newspapers appear and disappear from the city.
- 1941**
 - Ernest C. Whitehead dies of polio at the age of 28.
- 1944**
 - Ernest's second son Lewis Whitehead succeeds his father as editor and publisher after serving on the Sun staff as proof reader, rewrite man, reporter and editorial page writer before taking up executive duties.
- 1945**
 - Ernest's eldest son Joseph Whitehead dies of polio at the age of 28.
- 1947**
 - The Sun moves to its present location at 501 Rosser Ave.
- 1953**
 - Minority shares are sold to Toronto-based Southam Press Ltd. Control remains with the Whitehead family.
- 1958**
 - Canada celebrates its 100th anniversary.
- 1960**
 - Rowe wins a second Best Fashion Story of the Year award for "A Century of Royal Wedding Gowns."
- 1961**
 - Ernest's second son Lewis Whitehead succeeds his father as editor and publisher after serving on the Sun staff as proof reader, rewrite man, reporter and editorial page writer before taking up executive duties.
- 1967**
 - The Sun moves to its present location at 501 Rosser Ave.
- 1969**
 - Ernest's second son Lewis Whitehead succeeds his father as editor and publisher after serving on the Sun staff as proof reader, rewrite man, reporter and editorial page writer before taking up executive duties.
- 1973**
 - New offset presses and computerized type-setting equipment is installed. The presses are then replaced with larger equipment in 1982, and a new press room is built.
- 1974**
 - The Sun begins publishing on Sunday.
- 1976**
 - Ernest's second son Lewis Whitehead succeeds his father as editor and publisher after serving on the Sun staff as proof reader, rewrite man, reporter and editorial page writer before taking up executive duties.
- 1978**
 - Ernest's second son Lewis Whitehead succeeds his father as editor and publisher after serving on the Sun staff as proof reader, rewrite man, reporter and editorial page writer before taking up executive duties.
- 1987**
 - The Sun acquires the Globe and Mail printing contract.
- 1988**
 - Thomson Newspapers buys The Sun from Lewis Whitehead, who retires because of ill health.
- 1989**
 - The Sun begins publishing on Sunday.
- 1996**
 - Staff writer Diane Nelson wins an award from the Manitoba Human Rights Commission. Kathleen Martens wins a similar award the next year.
- 1997**
 - Sun editor Brad Jones receives a National Human Rights Award for his 19-part series exploring the roadblocks to mental health reform.
- 2002**
 - FP Canadian Newspapers, owned by Ron Stern and Bob Silver, purchases the Brandon Sun and the Winnipeg Free Press from Thomson.
- 2004**
 - Sun photographers Bruce Bumstead and Colin Corneau win awards from the Western Canadian News Photographers Association.
- 2006**
 - Computer-to-plate technology installed.
- 2006**
 - April — Ewan Pow takes over as publisher of the Sun.
- 2006**
 - January, 2006 — The Sun's first Community News Edition rolls off the presses.
- 2007**
 - Jan. 19, 2007 — The Brandon Sun celebrates 125 years in production.