



PRINTING PRO FOR 61 YEARS

By Tom Schuman

When Burton Sintz went to work as a printer for the two Brookville newspapers in 1947, his father had suggested “he won’t last long.” Sintz says that was based on some previous short stints in a garage and as a school janitor, among other roles.

But this job – this passion for print – was a different story. The now 89-year-old made the short walk to the newspaper office/commercial print shop for the last time in 2008. Sitting with Shirley, his wife of 62 years, in their home one block off Main Street in the small southeastern Indiana community, he recalls the connection he formed.

“I loved my work. I was fascinated with it, never tired of it,” he says. He adds that his bosses always “really appreciated you.”

For many years, the time was divided between newspaper work early in the week and commercial print jobs on Thursdays and Fridays. Later in his career, Burton worked solely on the commercial side of the business.

Burton admits to a lack of “creature comforts” for much of that time – cramped quarters, poor lighting and a lack of air conditioning. Advances in technology, from linotype machines to offset presses and more, did help ease the printing processes.

No matter, he was ready and on the job.

“I didn’t use my sick days very much. I think I went about 15 years one time without missing a day of work,” Burton offers, bemoaning a different mentality that is often in place today. “I believed in giving the boss a full day’s work for a day’s pay.”

One of the few periods away from work was while serving his country in the Army from 1950-52. He spent 11 months in Korea, during two stints, as a jeep driver for a forward observation team. His



The exterior of Whitewater Publications offers a tribute to Brookville’s sesquicentennial, one of thousands of printing projects undertaken by Burton Sintz.

job back home, however, was protected and there was little doubt that he would return.

“One time I thought about going to another newspaper in Richmond, but she (pointing to Shirley) knocked that out. We were happy here, really.”

Shirley notes that in the popular days of catalog stores, her husband had the idea of opening a Montgomery Ward outlet. He didn’t leave his job though; rather, in Shirley’s words, “putting me in that stupid store for four years.” She later returned to her aide position in the local elementary school, where she worked for 35 years.

“She loved that like I loved printing,” Burton shares.

And Burton was not the only Sintz to call the newspapers home. His younger brother Donald – “I got him his job in the mechanical area” – also spent more than 60 years with what is now Whitewater Publications, including serving as long-time editor of the *Brookville Democrat*. Burton worked with his daughter, Donna, who continues today as lifestyle editor at the papers, for more than 30 years.

Sporting a Franklin County Wildcats sweatshirt while we talked, Burton says he and three friends always found time to go to the local school’s football and basketball games. While he laments having to give up such pursuits as well as no longer being able to work, he looks back with pride on the “fact that I enjoyed putting my best in every job.”

And he did just that for 61 years.