



Harvey Marks, a versatile member of The Liberal staff for the past nine years, works at the keyboard of one of the three linotypes in the old hot lead shop. The linotypes cast a whole line of type at one time, by forcing molten metal at 625 degrees Fahrenheit

into small moulds. A resident of Bradford, Marks now works in the new composition shop in Aurora, where he picks the proper type sizes and styles for advertisements.



David Belanger, employed at The Liberal for two years, uses a wooden block and rubber mallet to level the type on the proof press. A paper mache impression of the surface was made under a

mat roller, which applied a ton of pressure. This mat was used to make another metal mould to go directly onto a press.

The Liberal gets the lead out



The last issue of The Liberal to be published by the hot metal type method was "put to bed" Tuesday, October 1. Working in the shop in the paper's Yonge Street offices are Norm Stunden, Harvey Marks

and Dave Belanger. All three now work in the composition shop in the offices of The Aurora Banner, on Wellington Street in Aurora.

In the past three months the method of producing The Liberal has changed entirely. The big, noisy linotype machines are gone now. The huge gullotine is no longer. And those heavy, cumbersome page-sized iron frames which held the type just before it went to press have disappeared too.

In fact, the whole composing room operation, once found in the basement of The Liberal offices on Yonge Street, has completely vanished — staff and all — and has moved to a big, bright room in the Aurora Banner offices on Wellington Street in Aurora.

And it's there the two newspapers are put together each week.

The copy still is produced at the same old Yonge Street stand, but it's what happens to it afterwards that is the name of the Aurora operation.

The old machines and hot-lead system have given way to a new computerized photo-offset system.

The work horse of the hot-type method of composition was the linotype. This machine derived its name from the way it cast a whole line of type at one time. Molten metal at a temperature of 625 degrees Fahrenheit was forced into small moulds and automatically trimmed to size.

The Liberal had three of these machines to set all the type for the news columns and the body copy in advertisements.

Another machine, called a Ludlow, cast the headlines after they were hand-set. The different letters and styles were kept in drawers and the printer arranged them on a "printer's stick" for

casting in the Ludlow.

The headlines and the columns of copy were then laid out within the metal frame. There were metal rules between the columns and when necessary, thin metal strips were used to space out the type to fit snugly the holes around the advertisements.

The metal frame was then tightened to lock the type into position and transferred from the "imposing stone" or table on a four-wheeled dolly to a mat roller.

A paper mache mould of the page was created under a ton of pressure. This mould was sent to a press in Brampton where hot metal was again used to create the printing surface which went directly on the press.

Photographs were transferred onto a plastic surface and placed directly on this printing plate.

Once the presses started to roll, another edition of The Liberal would be finished inside of half an hour.

Now, the linotype machines have been replaced by Compugraphic 4961s and keyboard typesetters.

On the keyboards, paper tapes are punched in code. These long tapes are then fed through the computer-programmed photo-typesetting machines. A light flashing through a spinning cellulose "font" registers the letters on photographic paper at 30 lines per minute based on 8 1/2 point type, 11 em line.

If any mistakes occur on the tapes when they are punched, new tapes are typed and a corrected version of the photographic paper is pasted over the error.

Both machines are small and compact, fast and clean.

Fumes from the molten metal used in the old shop, made it a smelly place to work.

"Now we have clean air all the time," said veteran operator, Harvey Marks. In the old shop he worked primarily with the Ludlow, but now he "marks up ads" — which involves deciding on the proper style and size of type to be used in advertisements.

Another veteran linotype operator, Ed Lloyd, now sets ads and headlines on a headliner machine. As on the Compugraphic, the headlines come out on long strips of photographic paper.

Where formerly his efforts were set into the iron page forms, the paper headlines Ed now turns out are processed chemically, dried, waxed and pasted on a cardboard layout sheet.

To be reproduced in printer's ink, photographs must first be screened — or broken down into small dots — in the Banner dark room. These screened versions of the photographs are then waxed and pasted on the layout sheets with the stories, headlines and advertisements.

At Newsweb Enterprises in Willowdale, the layout sheets are then photographed again and a full-sized negative is used to make metal plates for the presses.

The basement at The Liberal offices is not the same without the old machines. Even the mice have been cleared out, as the basement area is about to be changed into a news room and circulation offices.

Although it's still dark and gloomy down there, the editorial department is hoping to shed a little light when it moves in.



Compositor Harvey Marks assembles linotype slugs, Ludlow slugs and spacing material for a page of semi-display advertisements. Different letters and styles of

the large headline type were kept in drawers. The printer would select them and arrange them on a "printer's stick" for casting in a machine called the Ludlow.

Arranged in columns in a metal frame, the casts of the type were locked into position before a paper mache impression was made under a heavy roller.



Shop Foreman Norm Stunden, employed at The Liberal since 1947, puts together the last page of the paper to be composed of hot metal type.