

29 years on staff

Betty Acton a linotype specialist

BY KATE GILDERDALE

Two things spring to mind at the mention of Betty Acton's name; one is speed skating and the other is her famous son Keith.

Perhaps less well-known is the fact that Betty worked as a linotype operator for 29 years, most of them with the Stouffville Tribune. "I started in 1944 and worked full-time until 1953, when Kevin was born," recalls Betty. She returned to work part-time until 1957, when she moved to the Economist and Sun office in Markham. She returned to the Tribune in 1963.

"I learned the job at The Tribune," Betty explains. "Their full-time operator had to leave suddenly to go into the services, and they asked me to take over. I went in perfectly green. I didn't like it at first; it was hard to learn and tiring to sit and work for such long hours; but as I became more efficient I started to enjoy it." After three or four months of 'fooling around' with the machine, Betty began to feel comfortable with it.

The linotype machine was huge and required regular maintenance to avoid problems. Things got jammed up easily. "I used to go in on Saturday afternoons, and clean ev-

erything out with gasoline to make sure nothing got stuck." Without the sophisticated storage capability of a computer, deadlines were even more of a headache.

When Betty started work, her hours were 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. "Wednesday was press day and it would usually be at least 7 p.m. before I left. Sometimes it was as late as 11 p.m. if something drastic happened." For three or four years, she was the only linotype operator at the paper, and she would try to come in even when she was sick.

"There was an elderly man who could operate the machine and he would help out," she says. "On Tuesdays he would arrive at noon and take over until 6 p.m. and then I would come back and work at night." In those days, the staff consisted of Mr. Nolan and his son, with a man at the back doing 'job work' and one other woman.

Betty had been at the paper for about four years when a keen young reporter named Jim Thomas arrived on the scene. "I was here when he came," she remembers, "He always worked very long hours and he really enjoyed it."

Holidays consisted of a week

in the summer. "The paper shut down for one week and you took that week whether it fitted in with your plans or not," she laughs. Although Betty enjoyed her years at the Economist, she disliked the driving and wanted to be closer to home so that she could give more time to sons Kevin and Keith.

Part-time work could be a problem, Betty remembers. "You never knew when you were going to be called to come in. The last four months I was back to four days a week and I wasn't working on the linotype anymore, I was doing advertising paste ups," says Betty. "I really enjoy that and I like the challenge."

She considered going on with the job when the plant moved to Newmarket, but the drive and the fact that she would have to work at night made her decide against it. "If the plant had stayed here I might have carried on," she states. "They even suggested I could learn to put the page together, and I was really looking forward to that."

Throughout her years at The Tribune, Betty always used the same machine. "They bought two new ones over the years, but I always worked on the original one."



Betty Acton worked the linotype machine at the Tribune for 29 years both full and part time. The mother of professional hockey player Keith Acton was working at the paper when a keen young reporter named Jim Thomas started his career. Jim is now editor of the Tribune.

Hathaway's has come long way since 1972

When Hathaway's Interior Design opened in 1972, they specialized in paint and wallpaper only. Since then, David and Brian Hathaway along with their wives Susan and Irene, have expanded the business.

Besides the over 400 wallpaper books and Pratt and Lambert paint, they carry samples of fabrics, custom blinds, carpeting and floor and wall tile.

While the Hathaway brothers install the blinds and drapes and do custom painting and wallpapering, wives Susan and Irene man the store.

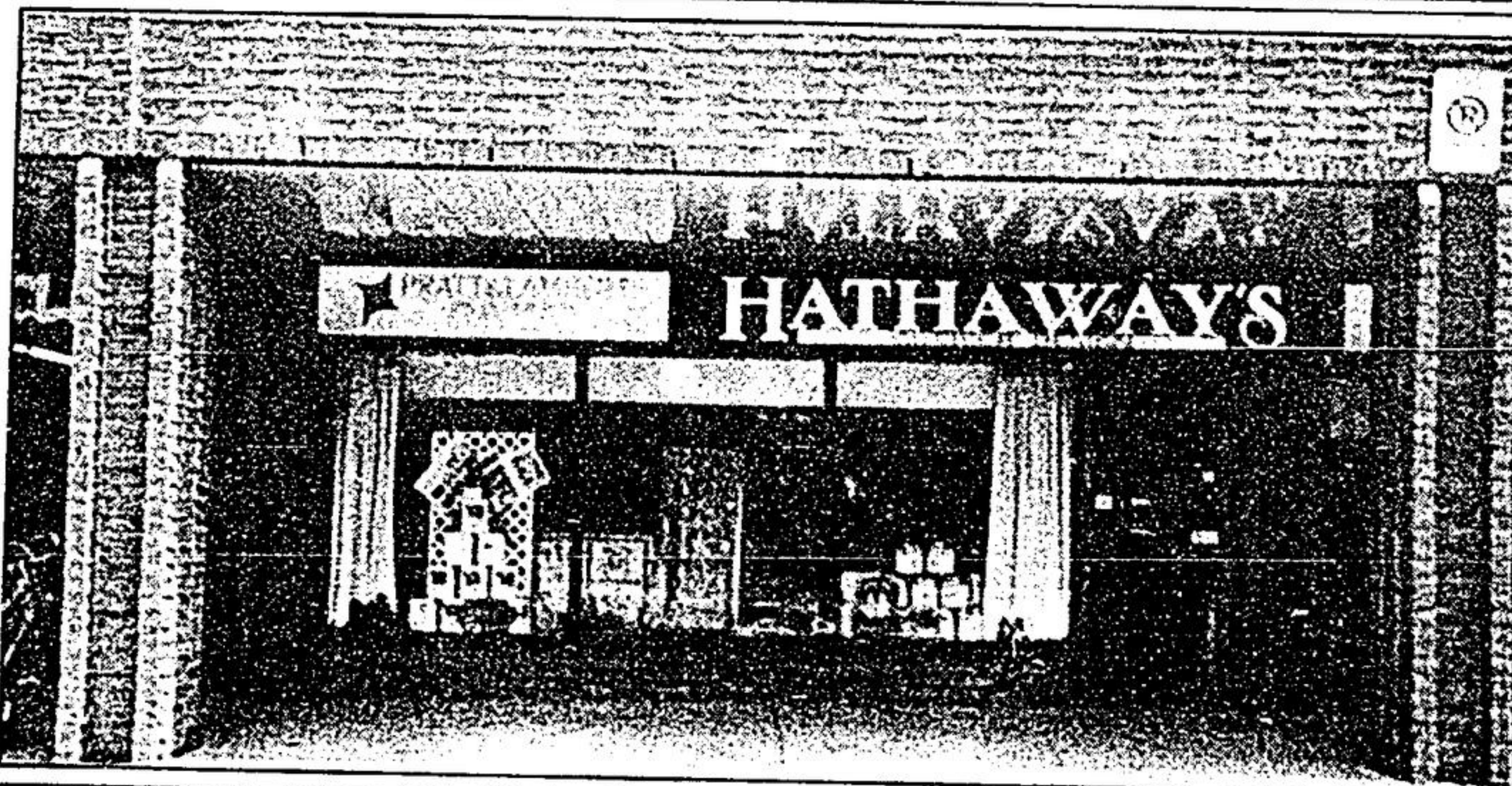
Customers are able to draw on their over 16 years of expertise as well as talk to any of their three interior decorators who make home consultations.

Hathaway's Interior Design is a division of Hathaway Decorators which was opened in 1951 by Harry Hathaway as a service company. David and Brian were the two sons who took an interest in the decorating trade and eventually took over from their father.

In the early seventies when times were slack the two companies complemented each other. Now however, both operations are very busy.

Susan Hathaway attributes this to the fact that they provide "service you can count on" as well as "top quality products".

"Our painters don't just slap paint on" she said. "It is custom work".



Hathaway's Interior Design in Stouffville has expanded from having paint and wallpaper. Now they carry fabric samples, carpeting, custom blinds as well as floor and wall tiles. At left, Susan and Irene Hathaway — wives of owners David and Brian — check a wallpaper sample book.