

A history of Osage County newspapers

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Herald-Chronicle

With the development of communities in Osage County, came local start-up of newspapers. Early newspapers played a significant role in development of communities and dissemination of information. The following is a partial history of Osage County newspapers, listed by town. Other newspapers existed in Osage County, but to narrow the history, only current Osage County towns are included here.

Burlingame

The first newspaper published in Osage County was known variously as the *Weekly Osage Chronicle*, the *Osage Burlingame Chronicle*, and the *Osage County Chronicle*. It began publishing Oct. 12, 1863. This was a Saturday weekly paper published by M. Marshall Murdock. On Feb. 1, 1873, Murdock sold to W.F. Chalfant, and the name was changed to *The Osage County Chronicle*.

The Burlingame Herald, a weekly, and independent in policy, was first published Sept. 29, 1881, with Mr. Hooper as publisher. The paper was last published on Feb. 2, 1884. It later changed its name to *The Burlingame Blade*.

Another newspaper, *The Osage County Democrat*, began publishing in November 1881, with Mr. McCaslin at the helm. That newspaper stayed alive for five years, when it was then sold in January 1887, to *Kansas People*, who moved the operation to Osage City.

Other early newspapers that served Burlingame in the late 1800s were *The Burlingame Independent*, *The Burlingame News*, *The Osage County Real Estate Journal* and *The Burlingame Democrat*.

As was frequently done, newspaper operations popped up overnight, then were sold months or years later, switching owners and names.

The Burlingame Enterprise was first published Oct. 10, 1895, by C.A. and Ed Stoddard. *The Burlingame Enterprise* bought *The Chronicle* on May 29, 1919, and a week later, changed its official name to *The Enterprise-Chronicle*.

The Enterprise-Chronicle outlasted all the county's other newspapers. On July 15, 1977, Kathleen and Kurt Kessinger bought *The Enterprise-Chronicle* from Jerry and Belinda Engler. The Kessingers then bought several other area operations over the years: *The Overbrook Citizen Times* (purchased from Bruce and Jane Smith in 1980); *Lyndon News Herald* (purchased from Harold, Edith, Greg and Angie Dalrymple in August 1989); *Osage City Journal-Free Press* (purchased from Jerry and Ethel Allen in April 1990). In 1990, they combined the newspapers and changed the name of the new product to *The Osage County Chronicle*.

On March 2, 2002, Kurt Kessinger died, and his wife continued to operate the newspaper for nearly five more years. She sold it in January 2007, to Chris and Catherine Faimon.

"I decided to sell because I felt it was time for *The Chronicle* to have new, young and energetic leadership," Kathy Kessinger said.

Carbondale

The first newspaper published in Carbondale was *The Carbondale Journal*, a weekly, started May 29, 1879. Bana and Riggs were the publishers.

It was common for newspapers to affiliate themselves with a political party or reform movements. The most unusual name was when the *Carbondale Independent* changed its name (1885) to *The Astonisher and Paralyzer*, a weekly Republican paper operated by R.F. Playford.

Commented the *Melvern*



The former location of the county's oldest newspaper, *The Osage County Chronicle*, in Burlingame. The *Chronicle* merged with *The Herald* in February 2007 to become *The Osage County Herald-Chronicle*.

Record, "How long the people of that community will submit to such an affliction we are unable to say."

As written in "The Early Years of Osage County," by Roger Carswell, "The editor adequately astonished and paralyzed the people of the county when a scandal arose over how he had gotten possession of the newspaper. Playford was the administrator of the estate of the owner of the newspaper, E.G. Bush. Playford sold the newspaper to himself at a low price, with no public notice. The deceased E.G. Bush's wife received nothing from the estate."

Two years later, the name changed to *The Carbondale Record*. The last issue was published Feb. 26, 1909.

Other newspapers in the late 1800s were *The Carbondale Record*, *The Carbondale Calendar*, *Osage County Courier*, and *Carbondale Post*.

Students at Carbondale High School started a newspaper Feb. 4, 1921, and printed for three months. It was called the *Carbondale High School Gazette*.

Lyndon

The first paper published in Lyndon was *The Signal*, July 9, 1870, by publisher J.J. Johnson. The paper changed its name over the years and was known as *Lyndon Weekly Times*, *Lyndon Times*, *Kansas Times* and *The Lyndon Journal*.

The Endeavour Spirit, a weekly religious paper, published by J.K. Schriver, began Sept. 21, 1901, and lasted one month.

The weekly *Osage County Democrat* began Jan. 6, 1910, by Sylvester Fowler. The paper was suspended on Jan. 2, 1913.

The final Lyndon newspaper, *The Lyndon Osage County News*, started Aug. 17, 1967. It was a weekly published by Edith and Harold Dalrymple. The newspaper was originally located at 632 Topeka, which is now Dalrymple Liquor. It relocated to a former bank building on Topeka Avenue in 1977. The Dalrymples bought out *The Peoples Herald* from Jack Miller in July 1970.

In December 1988, Harold died and his wife, Edith, and son and daughter-in-law, Greg and Angie, operated the paper until they sold to the Kessingers in August 1989.

"We owned and operated the paper and liquor store at the time of Dad's death," Greg Dalrymple said. "It became a lot of work so we sold the paper to the Kessingers."

"My parents felt if they put out a quality newspaper, the income would take care of itself," Dalrymple said. "Advertisers would come to you."

Melvern

The first paper, *The Melvern Record*, was a weekly started Jan. 31, 1882, by W. S. Riley.

The weekly *Melvern Review* began Jan. 8, 1891, by Isaac and J. C. Farley.

On Feb. 24, 1928, the paper consolidated with the *Quenemo News* with J.L. Parrish as publisher. In 1931, V.V. Tilly, publisher, combined the paper

at Quenemo and called it *News-Melvern-Enterprise*.

The *Melvern Messenger* was started May 4, 1932, and was published at Emporia by Lawrence M. Shearer. It lasted a month.

Olivet

Olivet had two papers over the years. The first was called *The Olivet Advertiser*, started in 1910 by A.A. Torrence. It lasted about nine months. *Olivet Observer* started March 2, 1932, and sold to the *Journal Free Press*, Osage City, Aug. 3, 1932.

Osage City

The first Osage City newspaper, a weekly, was called *The Shaft*. It first printed Aug. 19, 1871, by W.H. Morgan and A.B. Cooper. It changed to the *Osage City Free Press*, *Free Press-Public Opinion*, and *Public Opinion*. On Feb. 23, 1933, the last issue was published and consolidated with the *Osage County Journal*.

In 1974, Ethel and Jerry Allen bought the *Free Press* from Jim and Ann Reed. The Reeds had converted the paper from letterpress to paste up. On April 1, 1990, the Allens sold to Kurt and Kathy Kessinger. Jerry Allen died in 1994.

"The thing that I liked best about the newspaper was that it was exciting and lots of activity," Ethel Allen said. She disliked the long hours. "Things were never boring. It was always interesting."

One of her fondest memories was when the *Mary White Story* was filmed at the newspaper office.

"It was very exciting," Allen said. "Arlo Bell was even asked to be in the movie."

Other newspapers in Osage City included *The Osage City Republican*, *Kansas People*, *Weekly Kansas People*, *Knights and Ladies of Security*.

The Osage County Herald was first published July 15, 1880, and suspended on Sept. 22, 1881, moving to Burlingame.

On July 1, 2003, *The Osage County Herald* again opened its doors. Owners in the venture included Bob and Amy Hanson, Casey Mussatto, Quintin Robert, Dick Wentzel, Steve Giesy, Steve Keleson, Garly Davis and Cliff O'Bryhim, with Bob Hanson as editor. They used the name *Herald* because most every paper Bob Hanson had worked for was called *The Herald*. With interest from local people, another newspaper was begun in the county.

The coverage was community centered and staff made effort to cover all of the county towns, with lots of sports and school coverage. The paper was first located at 613 Market Street. Operations moved June 3, 2004, to 531 Market. In January 2007, the company sold to Chris and Catherine Faimon.

"We were very pleased with the response we had," Bob Hanson said. "It is a difficult thing to start a paper from the ground up. We had some very gratifying moments during the time prior to the consolidation of *The Herald*, *Chronicle*, and D&M Printing."

Overbrook

The Overbrook Herald began April 11, 1889, with S.A. Stauffer as publisher. It was sold in 1901 to the *Overbrook Citizen*, which was started Jan. 14, 1898, by Don Quellen, publisher. Over the years, publishers included Joseph E. Berger, who died in 1918 at age 23. He was the youngest editor in the state. George and Harriett Larrigo were publishers later, and they also bought the *Scranton Gazette* and *Carbondale Record*, publishing all at Overbrook.

Quenemo

The Osage County Republican began July 29, 1886, with C.W. Searing and Son. Searing sold the paper March 3, 1892, to the *Weekly Offering*. Other newspapers were *The Osage County Sentinel*, *The Peoples Herald*, *The Quenemo Republican* and *Quenemo News*.

The News-Review-Enterprise started publication Jan. 15, 1932, with V.V. Tilly and John Rogers as owners. The paper sold to *Peoples Herald*, Lyndon, June 15, 1939.

Scranton

The Kansas Plebeian, a weekly paper started by E.D. Hunt, began publication July 13, 1882.

The Scranton Gazette was started May 2, 1890, with Ralph M. Parker and O.K. Stakebake as publishers.

The Scranton Record on Jan. 5, 1940, was purchased by George Larrigo and soon after combined with *The Overbrook Citizen*.

One newspaper

In January 2007, Chris and Catherine Faimon, Burlington, purchased *The Osage County Chronicle* and *The Osage County Herald*, the only two active newspapers in Osage County.

Along with the newspapers, Faimons also bought D&M Printing from owners Marilyn and Dale Jennings.

They combined the two newspapers into one, serving as the official newspaper for all cities within Osage County, while continuing the printing operation.

The company is doing business as *The Osage County Herald-Chronicle* and D&M Printing, located at 527 Market St., Osage City.

The Faimons also own *The Coffey County Republican*, and operate that twice-weekly newspaper in Burlington.

Chris Faimon, a native of Osage County and 1989 graduate of Burlingame High School. One reason he was interested in becoming involved with the newspaper was his familiarity with the communities it serves.

"Both papers had history and interesting qualities," Chris Faimon said. "We chose the name for the newspaper by combining the names of both. We didn't want to downgrade the importance of either one."

"Just like every business, the newspaper business must change with the times. Readers can expect to see the newspaper evolve with readers' needs. We will keep utilizing technology as we move with the digital age."

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