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By KEVIN 'CHILL' HEARD

Managing Editor

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As the close nit cadre of employees speaks about the respect for their job, the name of William Otis Walker was never far behind in their reverence. What W.O. Walker means to this paper is

more than historical. His hopes and dreams for this community can never be separated from that of this paper. The name W.O. Walker will always be synonymous with the Call and Post.

While so many C&P employees feel a collective bond with Walker, there remains a smaller grouping that actually worked with
Walker
. And, of that group, some shared an actual family bond.

Last week, Janet Thomas, the niece of W.O. Walker came in to share her thoughts and memories of working for the newspaper and her uncle.

The, then, Janet Waller, remembers coming to the “old” Call and Post on 55th as a child and watching the paper in action. Though, it wasn’t until her adult years that she agreed to join her father and uncle.

Coming to Cleveland in 1945 from Washington D.C., at the age of 14, Janice eventually attended Glenville High School. After graduating, in 1948, she held several jobs including positions at The Urban League, as well as, being the first Black hired at Rosenblums.

Recalling her many years and numerous duties at the paper, Janet insisted that she kept it strickly professional despite her family ties to the paper’s leadership.

“At home, he was ‘Uncle Will.’ But, at the paper, I called him ‘Mr. Walker,” Janet states proudly. She remembers that every politician of the day came to the paper to see her uncle. One of her most memorable recollections occurred during Cleveland’s embattled “riot” days. The very “fair skinned” Waller sat at the desk when the Black Panthers came to visit. Aside from her uncle having to let the revolutionary group know that not only was the young lady out front “not” a “White woman,” she was his niece.

Janet also recalls that one of the Panthers found her a little too interesting. Making it his business to hang out at her desk, he tried to strike up some friendly side conversation with her

but was told, in no uncertain terms, by her and an older, more seasoned, female co-worker to keep it moving!

Thinking about her initial days at the paper, she offered a slight smile as she told me about how many of the older women at the Call and Post warned her to watch out for the fellas who worked down in the printing press room. “They were the party guys.”

Janet still carries a torch for the newspaper that her uncle built and wishes it nothing but success in the midst of its 95th Anniversary. It was a delight to hear her personal recollections. While she maintains that she has always been the quite and reserved type, she was more than giving of her time by sitting down with us to share her story.

The upcoming articles in this space will be dedicated to telling the story of the first year to this current year of former C&P employees. From the names you may have long forgotten, to names you may have just recently come to know.

The Call and Post Newspaper, 95 years and counting, stand up and be counted. Be a part of the history that you or your family helped to build. Email us at Info@call-post.com or give us a call at