Full stop.
Turning the page

There is no need for a wake – this is no funeral. Western News lives on.

Today, you hold our final print edition in your hands. Tomorrow, the only thing missing will be ink on the tips of your fingers. Because we will still be your storytellers. The stories and images you have come to expect, about the people and progress of this institution, will continue as part of your everyday life.

Yes, we are transforming, following your lead, going where you want us to go, delivering news in ways you want it. It will mean change. For you. For us.

But it is where you are already – it is where we need to be.

Half of you already find us on your phone. Others on social media. Still others across various websites and apps and, yes, even other print publications. We are happy to have you as readers, no matter how you like us.

In recent weeks, we have heard from many of you – readers who loved this print product for their entire university careers, thanking us for our work, mourning the loss of ‘their newspaper.’

Keep in mind, digital isn’t an entirely cold wasteland, just as print isn’t always a warm hug. These are merely vehicles we use to carefully package and safely deliver what we are truly about: Your stories. About discoveries. And people. About governance. And gifts. About celebrations. And silly moments.

And they do not end here with the stopping of the presses.

No, this is no funeral. It is, in fact, a celebration of nearly five decades of commitment and dedication from an entire community to this unique experiment in Canadian journalism. No other university dared try what we have done so successfully for so long. We continue it into the future with you at our side.

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Without you, none of this would have worked.

Let the last words we write on these pages be these:

Thank you.

What a wild idea this was

You may forget what a ridiculous idea it was almost half a century ago to create a university employee-run, yet journalistically independent (and, later, ad-supported) newspaper. Nobody had done that before – nobody will ever try that again.

Members of the Western community should be proud of an institution that would support such a publication – it speaks volumes about the university’s commitment to an open conversation and a wide window into its people, research and operations. Western News was a 46-year-old experiment in community journalism, yielding results which are perhaps even more important tomorrow than they were yesterday.

In this, our final print issue, we suspend our usual collection of stories and instead share some nuggets of our history, along with a celebration of some important pieces of this publication’s editing, production, and printing past that will no longer be necessary as we enter a digital future.
Offering a different voice

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, student activism, particularly in the way stories were approached in the student-run Gazette at the time, was one reason university administrators created a professional journalistic voice for Western’s students, staff and faculty. The ever-lively, student-focused Gazette sparked a desire among many for wider, more balanced coverage of university community news and Canadian university issues, in general.

There were others before

Western News did not come completely out of the blue – or out of the Purple, as our case may be.

There were others before us – a short pre-history, if you will. The University of Western Ontario Newsletter, a one-page leaflet-style publication, debuted on Sept. 23, 1965. That eventually evolved into UWO News. Western Times started in 1971. Between university Senate meetings, the Times published the minutes of the previous meeting. It lasted just a year.

These were traditional newsletter-style publications, simple, workman-like, boring.

Enter Western News on Nov. 16, 1972.

Western News distribution box, 50 locations across campus, circa 2018.
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Different kind of storytelling

It took a different kind of journalist to work for Western News as opposed to The London Free Press or a Toronto Star. When you work at a giant metro newspaper, there’s an insulation you have wrapped around you, your coverage and the people you’re covering. You can say things a little more boldly; you can say things a little more pointedly and you’re pretty safe, you’re not going to get called out on it too much.

There is a more personal connection to what you are covering at a university newspaper like this. There is also more of a commitment to having a fuller story told. You see a little more attention paid to getting both sides of the story, to getting a deeper understanding of the issue sometimes, because it affects the lives of our readers more, how they go about their work.

It still takes a different kind of journalist to understand that balance and that kind of attention to a different storytelling.

Standing, on its own

Western News was unique among peers for many reasons, perhaps none more so than its generation of revenue through on-campus and off-campus advertising. In the 1980s, paid advertising was introduced and there were some hesitations and questions at first – other editors from across the country warned us away; they said it was bound to fail as nobody would want to advertise in a university-focused publication. But the experiment paid off.

Ad revenue was used to offset the costs of production, printing and delivery expenses up until the final issue.
Ever-changing; always steady

Over its course, Western News has been an instigator, a partner, and always a forum where some of the larger discussions on campus took place. It served as a meeting post and trading post, as well as a place for entertainment. Our role changed over the years because we reflected what the campus needed at the time.

Today, it’s best known as a showcase of what the university does for the world, reflecting its expertise, ideas and excellence, not just in the faculty, but in the staff and students and their roles as ambassadors for the university.

Always your newspaper

We were always a small town newspaper — our town just happened to be a university. So we covered the campus that way. Our readers and advertisers saw that on our pages, saw we were about telling those local stories. To cement our relevance and place in the university community, Western News sought out ‘people stories’ involving not just professors, but staff, students, even alumni, from the Main Campus and the Affiliated Colleges.

Each week, the Western News team worked to feed more than a print edition, by providing dozens of stories and photographs for the university homepage; Inside Western; faculty, department and unit websites; social media channels; alumni magazines and faculty publications; press releases; and so on.
The paper was a paper

As other university newspapers died, Western News carried on — and thrived. Like the university itself, the publication evolved. Today, Western News stories and photographs are distributed across eight different platforms, including the familiar print edition available in boxes on campus, free of charge in London public libraries, and distributed to larger, outside news organizations which use it as a generator of story ideas.

On the web, Western News now gets eternal life. Through social media, such as Twitter and Facebook, our stories are a “backdoor pitch” for coverage from outside media, ranging from community newspapers and major dailies to local television and national networks.

Never more necessary

Across campus, the need for quality university-related content has risen dramatically. In response, the Western News team expanded its offerings over the last decade — now offering news of the day, research, faculty/staff profiles and honours, alumni, town and gown, student profiles, features, campus initiatives, commentary, and on and on.

Western News has been embraced as a primary content provider for the university homepage, faculty homepages, faculty and alumni newsletters, faculty alumni magazines, community newspapers, Inside Western, Western Alumni News and supplementary content for Alumni Gazette and Impact Western.

Western News content is among the most popular on social media channels. Content is increasingly used to aid in story-telling surrounding fundraising and community relations projects.

Our content has never been more necessary — or more popular.
Associate or Full Professor, School of Food and Nutritional Sciences

A Full-Time Tenure-Stream Appointment

Brescia University College invites applications for a tenure-stream appointment at the rank of Associate or Full Professor in the School of Food and Nutritional Sciences.

The preferred candidate will possess a doctoral degree in one of the following areas of expertise: nutrition communications, food product development or nutrition and global health. The successful candidate will have a strong record of research accomplishments and demonstrated abilities in teaching and graduate advising. Additional objectives of the position are to expand and enhance the outreach of our Food and Nutritional Sciences program; build collaborative relationships with the food industry and other organizations; and to develop community-based partnerships.

The successful candidate would also be expected to show educational leadership within the program commensurate with experience.

Information about Brescia University College and the School of Food and Nutritional Sciences may be found on the university website: www.brescia.uwo.ca. Brescia University College is a Catholic university college for women affiliated with the University of Western Ontario. Brescia University College offers instruction to both women and men. Brescia is committed to the principles of employment equity and welcomes applications from all qualified individual, regardless of gender, race, ethnic origin, religious affiliation, age, marital status, and persons with disabilities, in accordance with Canadian immigration requirements. Canadians citizens and permanent residents will be given priority. Candidates with foreign academic credentials must document Canadian equivalency. This position is subject to budgetary approval.

Applicants should submit a letter of application, curriculum vitae, and three letters of reference to the Vice-Principal and Academic Dean, Brescia University College, 1285 Western Road, London, Ontario, Canada N6G 1H2. Applications will be received until a list of candidates is put forward for final consideration.

The 2019 Rhodes Scholarships

Every June, the Rhodes Trust announces the launch of its global competition for the Rhodes Scholarships. A class of 89 Scholars is selected each year from the Rhodes constituencies around the world. The Scholarship supports postgraduate study at Oxford University in England, and covers both university fees and a stipend for living expenses. Successful candidates in the upcoming competition will undertake their programs of choice at Oxford in the fall of 2019.

Selection of candidates is made on the basis of extraordinary intellect and outstanding character, capacity and instincts for high leadership, demonstrated rigor and commitment to service and extracurricular activity, with a focus on effective positive change in the world. All candidates must have reached their 19th and not have passed their 25th birthday on 1 October 2019.

The School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies invites interested candidates to contact Paula Menzies Cameron (pmenzies@uwo.ca) for information on how to apply. The university application deadline is Friday, August 24, 2018. International and domestic candidates seeking the endorsement of the President must meet the application deadline, and complete a successful interview with members of Western’s Selection Committee. The Rhodes Scholarships program information is available at www.rhodeshouse.ox.ac.uk.

Who’s quarter backing the management of your retirement assets?

“I retired from Western in 1997 and Mitch Orr and his team have managed my funds very well indeed since then. He has made consistently good recommendations, kept me very well informed and I am completely satisfied with his performance over the last 19 years.”

– Dr. Richard Butler, Professor Emeritus

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Ages 5-7

Walking through a storied past

In four decades, Western News has had only four editors – Alan Johnston (1972-2000), Jim Anderson (2000-2004), David Dauphinee (2004-2010) and Jason Winders (2010-). Johnston was the publication’s founding (and longest-serving) editor at 28 years. Anderson was a reporter-turned-editor. Dauphinee arrived at Western after a career at The London Free Press and led Western News into a Digital Age. Winders shed the print edition and has been charged with taking it into the future.
Our brave new world

For years, we have watched as fewer and fewer of you picked up the print product every week, while more and more of you consumed our content in its various digital forms. Print declined; digital exploded. It is not an uncommon story. But it is one we have been well-prepared for.

In just the last year alone, Western News stories accounted for nearly a half million page views. Mobile and tablet users now constitute 52 per cent of all readers – the first time in our history this cohort has topped desktop users. More than one-third of our online readers come to Western News stories via social media (34 per cent). Facebook mobile sent the biggest numbers of users (42,777 or 30 per cent).

Now, the time, energy and resources we once allocated to the production of a print product fewer people wanted, are being better deployed delivering deeper content digitally.
Only the beginning

There are few corners of this university Western News has not told the story of – and we will continue to do so in a new environment.

Free from the demands associated with the print edition, our team will cover more events in a timely manner, as well as provide new types of content not feasible in print, due to time or space limitations, including exclusive features and profiles, photo essays, videos, podcasts, etc., as well as long-form assignments.

We still love print – and we mark this passing with a celebration of its history alongside a touch of sadness.

However, the stories do not end here. In fact, this is only the beginning.

– 30 –
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