

Newspaper Accounts From the Past

Historical societies often are the beneficiaries of the public's generosity, and so it was recently with the Colebrook Historical Society receiving from Victor Tucci, a number of well-preserved newspapers from the past, each one featuring some momentous occurrence, such as the first manned lunar landing, the San Francisco Earthquake and subsequent fire, President Kennedy's assassination, etc. We have combed through the collection and extracted what we consider to be pertinent items relevant to our area or high on our interest level. Let us begin with the July 21 1969 edition of the Winsted Evening Citizen. The entire front page is a solid red photo of a portion of the Moon's surface with the black headline superimposed on it reading: **"Man Homeward Bound From the Moon"**

Inside there are pictures of Armstrong, Collins and Aldrin Jr. (how young they look!) and the two-word headline: "Heading Home". There was extensive coverage, but we found it interesting what had to be left on the moon's surface. It proved to be some pretty expensive junk. All told, the astronauts discarded nearly one million dollars worth of cameras, tools and breathing equipment. The cameras consisted of a \$250,000 black and white TV camera, a \$50,000 Kodak and an \$11,176 Hasselblad.

They dumped the back packs which kept them alive during the walk on the surface; each cost \$300,000 (they were made by the Hamilton Standard division of United Technologies). There were also \$45,000 worth of special tools. The largest item was the 2-ton lunar module. NASA was reluctant to put a value on this, as it was only a component of the entire lunar module, which has a value of some \$41,000,000.

The flag that was left was one of a large number of flags NASA had purchased from different manufactures. They removed the labels and one was selected at random. This was done so that no company could make a big thing of their flag being on the moon.

In what has to be one of the greatest upstagings in history, a small item on page 3 reports that the Soviet Union landed the unmanned Luna 15 on the moon about 500 miles from where the American Astronauts were preparing to return to earth.

The American public was ecstatic; two items attesting to this is the notice the Town of Barkhamsted put in the paper saying "Due to the closing of the town office building today in observance of the first lunar landing of American astronauts, tax collector Richard Kittredge will be collecting taxes Tuesday from 9 a.m. to noon."

A look at the TV schedule (which basically consisted of three channels in those days) revealed the following: TV scheduled Apollo coverage on the three networks for Monday will have CBS and NBC having the conclusion of 31 hours of continuous coverage through 6 p.m. ABC will have the conclusion of 30 hours continuous coverage.

Other events were also happening around the world, of course, and tucked in under the story of the lunar landing was news from Viet Nam stating that they had had a quiet day; only one mortar attack had been reported, and the U.S. had lost its 2,862nd helicopter. (No mention of what happened to the crew - a small item perhaps, but one that pointed up the fact that nobody

really cared what happened to human beings over there. The politicians continued to vomit forth their empty words and the military-industrial complex counted their ill-gotten gains.)

An item reported that Cubans had lined the Havana waterfront to welcome seven Soviet warships. This was reported to be the largest show of Soviet power in the Western Hemisphere since the missile crisis of 1962.

News of the Middle East reported a ground-to-air battle raging across the Suez which was the fiercest fighting since the 1967 Arab-Israeli War. Artillery duels raged for more than six hours up and down the 103 mile canal. Both sides claimed to have downed several of the enemy's warplanes, and each side denied the other's report.

Closer to home the big domestic story centered on a report filed by the police chief of Edgartown, Mass., where he swore out a complaint against Senator Edward Kennedy, who he charged with leaving the scene of an accident. Kennedy's car, carrying the senator and Mary Jo Kopechne, skidded off a narrow bridge and landed upside-down into eight feet of water.

The accident wasn't reported for several hours, and when located, the senator claimed to have been disoriented in the crash. Subsequently this story became a major scandal, with various allegations being hurled by one party or another. I wasn't there, so can't shed any new light on the subject.

In Colebrook news, John Furlong resigned as principal at the Colebrook Consolidated School. The teacher-principal submitted his letter of resignation to the Board of Education, effective immediately. This was the third year in succession that the Colebrook School Board has been faced with finding a teacher-principal after mid-summer resignations were tendered. Roy Lake of Colebrook was principal at the school for one year prior to Mr. Furlong. The year before that Edward Haggerty, teaching principal here for four years, tendered his resignation.

And finally, turning to the real estate section, we come upon some eye-opening news: "Make an offer on this 5 ½ room ranch! The asking price is \$23,900, but owner's willing to listen. Kimball Agency".

"Oversized cape with four finished rooms and two rooms partly finished. Large living room with carpeting and fireplace. Family-sized kitchen with enclosed porch. All city utilities. \$20,000".

"Help Wanted: recent high school graduate, female, to work in production control department. No experience necessary. TRW, Colebrook Division, Rt. 8, Winsted, Conn".

"For Sale: 1969 Triumph Bonneville motorcycle, 650 cc. \$1,200".

Historic Bytes

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