

A Brief History of the *St. Helena Star* Newspaper

On September 25, 1874 the first issue of the *St. Helena Star* was printed in a building on Hunt Avenue. The publisher was Dewitt Lawrence. Abraham Clock, a pioneer resident, paid \$20 for the first issue. A subscription cost \$3.50 per year. In early 1876 Charles Gardner bought the paper and moved offices into upstairs rooms at 1230 Main Street. In late 1877 built a new office, about where the Model Bakery is now located. In January 1885 Gardner sold to Willis Mackinder.

In 1887, the *Star* had two competitors - the Times and the Independent. By the end of the year the *Star* was the only paper in town and moved into the Oddfellows Building (completed 1885). A cylinder press had been purchased. Mackinder sold the *Star* to his brother Frank and a partner. A four horsepower steam engine was added to the equipment for running the presses. Frank Mackinder was 21 years old when he bought the newspaper and was editor until his death in 1937.

In 1900 Mackinder constructed a stone building for the *Star*, sharing the building with the post office, as he was postmaster from 1899 to 1915. In 1924 the post office moved out. The machinery was "of the latest type (for 1924) and each machine had an electric motor. The *Star* reached practically every family in the area.

Mrs Lola Mackinder owned and managed the newspaper after her husband's death. Her son Edward Starr Baldwin was editor. "Starr" was commonly seen at all town events with a camera. Lola died in 1963, leaving her son in charge.

Starr Baldwin died in 1984 and the newspaper was sold. By 1997 Krsek Publishing acquired the paper, re-selling it in 2003 to Pulitzer Newspapers. Oliver & Karen Caldwell bought the *Star* Building in 2004, restoring it and opening as an art gallery in 2007. In 2005 Pulitzer was acquired by Lee Enterprises, who own our 139 year old beloved newspaper today.