

Presenting ‘RE-EMPHASIS’

About this series: Jerry Dahl spent years capturing memorable images for Clinton Herald readers, some of whom have asked us to feature his work as part of our celebration of the Herald’s 170 years. Many remember feature pages called “Emphasis,” in which he would focus on an aspect of local life in pictures and story. We asked Dahl to share with us some of his work that was most memorable to him and will present those again in “Re-Emphasis” on select Thursdays over the next few months. Thank you, Jerry.

—Chris Baldus, Clinton Herald editor



CLOWNS ON PARADE, 1989:



These are additional Jerry Dahl photos pulled from the Clinton Herald archives from the first Felix Adler Day in 1989.



Photographing the first Felix Adler Day

By **JERRY DAHL**
Clinton Herald photographer

The first Felix Adler Day in Clinton (before the Felix Adler Discovery Center) was basically a clown parade event in 1989 to celebrate Clinton’s famous clown Felix Adler. I don’t remember how many clowns participated in the parade but many clowns across the country came to Clinton to remember and honor Felix Adler.

The featured clown of the day’s event was famous clown Emmett Kelly, Jr. (pictured above).

I remember being invited to watch and photograph Kelly as he went through the process of putting on his clown makeup before the parade.

Kelly followed in the footsteps of his father Emmett Kelly, Sr., also one of the great American circus clowns, best known for his role as Weary Willy, a mournful tramp dressed in tattered clothes and made up with a growth of beard and a bulbous nose.

Kelly, Sr. died in 1979 at the age of 80. Emmett Kelly, Jr. was known as the world’s most famous circus clown and a beloved classic image of Americana. He passed away in 2006 at the age of 82.

Felix Adler (real name Frank Bartlett Adler) was born in Clinton on June 17, 1895. He was an American circus performer and entertainer, known as “The King of Clowns.” He performed for Ringling Bros. Barnum & Bailey for 20 years and was inducted into the International Clown Hall of Fame in 1989.

Adler was also known as the “White House Clown” for his number of command performances before United States presidents.

Felix died in 1960.

Kelly, Jr. without clown makeup

RE-EMPHASIS

JUST HORSEING AROUND, 1977

By **JERRY DAHL**
Clinton Herald photographer

During my career at the Clinton Herald, I not only was required to photograph assigned sporting events, news events and photos for

feature stories, but was expected to generate my own feature photo opportunities to record little slices of life in our community and coverage area. We called these "stand alone photos." Most of these photos featured people in

the community but on occasion I would slip out in rural areas to check out the landscapes or rural photo opportunities.

I did not select this photo because it was a great image, but perhaps because it brought smiles on

the faces of many Herald readers. The photo of a playful horse in the midst of cattle relaxing on the Bill Mommsen farm near Goose Lake was widely distributed by the Associated Press. The photo was used by many newspapers throughout

the country with the Mommsens receiving numerous newspaper clippings from readers.

And the photo did place first in the features category of the Iowa Associated Press Managing Editors photo contest in 1978.



JERRY DAHL | CLINTON HERALD

A sunny autumn day proves to be the relaxing element for a horse on the Bill Mommsen farm in Goose Lake as it joins a herd of cud-chewing cattle on Oct. 28, 1977.

RE-EMPHASIS

HISTORY-MAKING MAYOR, 1995

Clinton mayor-elect LaMetta Wynn is surrounded by the winning smiles of her daughters as the final results are posted at the Clinton County Courthouse Tuesday night, Nov. 7, 1995. From left are Debbie Wynn, Carol Wynn, Kathy Wynn Calvin, Wanda Wynn, LaMetta and Linda Wynn.



By **JERRY DAHL**
Clinton Herald photographer

Sometimes a news story has historical significance the moment it happens. That was the case when LaMetta Wynn was

elected mayor of Clinton on election night, Tuesday, Nov. 7, 1995. LaMetta became the first black mayor of Clinton and the first female black woman mayor in Iowa.

Wynn won the election by 870 votes over incumbent mayor Darrell Smith. Prior to

becoming mayor LaMetta served 12 years on the Clinton School Board. A graduate of Galena High School in Galena, Illinois, she worked as a registered nurse for 30 years.

LaMetta was mayor of Clinton from 1995 to 2007. She announced her candidacy

on Jan. 26, 2006 for the Iowa Senate, District 13 as a Republican, but lost the election to incumbent Democrat Roger Stewart.

Born Aug. 4, 1933 in Galena, LaMetta and her husband had 10 children. She died on June 24, 2021 at the age of 87.

RE-EMPHASIS

RIVER KING DAVID JOHNSON

Clinton High running back David Johnson, shown here on the road against Davenport Central, led the River Kings to an 11-1 record his senior season, 2009.



By **JERRY DAHL**

Clinton Herald photographer

I did not select this photo to single out any specific event, but to remember a standout student and athlete at Clinton High School, David Johnson. Covering sporting events at the Clinton Herald was almost a full-time job in itself. (I think Roy Dabner might agree with that).

Lots of memorable teams and sporting events and star athletes in the Clinton

Herald coverage area during my 35 year career. David Johnson was just one of many very talented athletes.

David was a three sport star in football, track and basketball. He played as a running back and defensive back for the River Kings football team. He set numerous school records including touchdowns in a season, career receptions, career receiving yards, career and single-season total offense and single game record for touchdowns. As a senior

Johnson led Clinton to an 11-1 record while accounting for a school-record 42 touchdowns and was selected 2009 Outstanding Offensive Player for Clinton. In four seasons, Johnson compiled 4,682 rushing yards and another 14 receiving touchdowns.

He took up kick returning as a senior, averaging 36.5 yards per attempt and returning one for a touchdown. He was invited to play at the 2010 Shrine Bowl All-Star Game.

Academically, David maintained over a 3.0 grade point average throughout high school.

Johnson attended University of Northern Iowa from 2010 to 2014 and during his senior season, he set numerous school records, including career rushing yards, career rushing touchdowns and career all-purpose yards for the Panthers.

The Arizona Cardinals selected Johnson in the third round in the 2015 NFL draft and was signed to a four-

year, \$2.9 million contract with a \$639,373 signing bonus. He experienced a breakout season in 2016. He posted 15 straight games with at least 100 yards from scrimmage, matching the Lion's Barry Sanders (1997) for the longest singleseason streak in NFL history.

In 2018, Johnson signed a three-year, \$39 million contract extension with the Cardinals, with \$30 million guaranteed.

In 2020, the Cardinals traded Johnson to the

Houston Texans and in 2022 he was signed to the New Orleans Saints.

David announced his retirement from professional football on May 19, 2024.

Johnson is the founder and president of The Johnson Family's Mission 31 Foundation. The organization seeks to provide opportunities, support and resources to seriously-ill children and their families by offering daily support and life-changing experiences.

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RE-EMPHASIS

CAMBRIDGE PLACE FIRE, 1986

By **JERRY DAHL**
Herald photographer

Lots of major fires to remember in my days at the Clinton Herald and the fire at the Cambridge Place apartment complex in December of 1986 was perhaps one of the most dramatic blazes I remember.

Living only several blocks away, I remember arriving in the early stages of the fire early on a Saturday morning when it was still dark (see photo below) and remaining at the scene for several hours.

About 95 residents, many that were elderly, were evacuated from apartments that were connected to the building that was on fire.

The Clinton Herald was not into publishing photos in color during that period of time, but because of the fire's drama I slipped a roll of color film into my camera and an early morning decision was made on the following Monday to have color separations made elsewhere in time for publication for Monday's afternoon paper.



Part of the old Schlick Army Hospital, where wounded soldiers from World War II came to convelese was consumed by flames within 10 minutes after a fire started early Saturday morning. The former hospital was currently used as office space for the Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency. Firefighters were able to save the remainder of the complex which is now known as Cambridge Place.



RE-EMPHASIS

GRAND EXCURSION ARRIVES, 2004



By **JERRY DAHL**
Clinton Herald photographer

Riverboats paddling up and down the Mississippi River have always been a popular attraction for Clinton and area residents. In 2004, residents had an opportunity to enjoy a whole day of riverboat activity as Clinton joined other communities hosting the 150th anniversary of the Grand Excursion.

The original Grand Excursion was a promotional voyage by train and steamboat into the Upper Mississippi River valley that took place in June 1854. It marked the first railroad connection between the East Coast and the Mississippi River, and it included dignitaries such as former president Millard Fillmore. In 2004, 150 years later, the Grand Excursion route was retraced by both riverboats and a steam locomotive.

The original route took travelers overland from Chicago, Illinois to Rock Island,

Illinois, then upriver to Saint Paul, Minnesota Territory on several steamships.

Approximately 1,200 people took part in that excursion, many of whom were noted reporters and distinguished residents from the Eastern United States.

Boats participating in the 2004 Grand Excursion included Anson Northrup, Celebration Belle, Delta Queen, Harriet Bishop, Julia Belle Swain, LaCrosse Queen, Mississippi Queen and Spirit of Peoria. The Clinton celebration featured a parade and

other festivities, plus canon fire as each boat passed through Clinton's drawbridge.

Some of the boats docked along Clinton's riverfront as passengers disembarked to join in the festivities. Others passed by on their journey north.

The 2004 Grand Excursion was from June 25-July 5. Because of high water on the Mississippi River, the Delta Queen was delayed and I caught up with it as it passed under the Savanna Bridge a couple days later.



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—Chris Baldus, Clinton Herald editor