

“ She had (and still has) a great nose for news. She was also supportive, fair in her feedback, and it’s obvious she cares deeply about her community. ”

*Sally Pitt, Graphic reporter 1984-85*

## Inquiring minds want to know

Heather Moore has been at the Eastern Graphic for 50 years.

When you say it like that...so many questions spring to mind.

How many headlines has she written? How many stories has she edited? How many photos has she taken? How many reporters has she trained and mentored? How much change has she witnessed in the eastern PEI community, but also within the journalism profession?

What we know is, that as the world around her evolved, as the faces around her changed, as the industry adapted, Heather was the steady hand at the wheel, upholding the founding principles of the Eastern Graphic to produce a top quality newspaper each and every week. Hers has been a truly remarkable career.

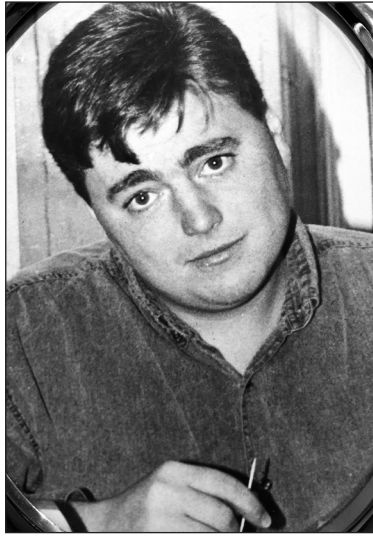
I had the great pleasure to be a small part of it. I became one of the Lively Ones around Year 20 of Heather’s tenure. I walked into the office at the old fire hall building not knowing much of what I didn’t know, but with a burning desire to meet people and tell their stories. Heather was sitting at her desk, near the dark room, with nothing but papers and notes piled up around her. She waved me over and we chatted.

I don’t recall the exact detail of the conversation, but I know she gave me the lay of Graphic land, told me how we go about putting the paper out each week and what the expectations were of me as a reporter. And she sent me off with a list of stories and what would be a regular departure line for me and every other reporter about to embark on their daily journey: “Remember...inquiring minds want to know!”

My time at the Graphic was, in hindsight, perhaps the last of what many have called the “golden age” of journalism. Newsrooms were full of reporters. Layout rooms were full of people putting together papers and fliers. The advertising department had separate offices. There were no cell phones, no social media, computer pagination was in its very early stages. You jumped in the car and you visited people in their homes or their offices, and you used a pad to make notes of the interview. You had to talk to people to find out what was going on. Everyone loved the newspaper and everyone read it. It was a beautiful time!

Our technology consisted of small Radio Shack word processors (perhaps one of the early lap tops) that we pounded out stories on. When you wrote a story or two or three, you could put a yellow stickie on the side with the file story names listed in pen, and give the machine to Heather to edit. She would then upload onto a bigger computer, print out the stories on paper, run the paper through the wax machine, cut the stories to size then lay them out manually on the broadsheets on the layout table.

Heather liked to have the word



Dennis King at the Eastern Graphic circa 1992.



Hon. Dennis King, Premier of P.E.I.

processors propped up a bit, so she took the ends of two pencils to make legs and placed them eraser-end down. I suppose the rubber ends aided stability and avoided slippage of the machine! When she was done of the computer, she would take the pencil legs out and use them on the next machine. They were hers, and hers only!

At that time, all of the photos in the paper were taken with a manual Pentax camera. When you took a picture in those days, you didn’t know if it was a good one until you developed the film in the darkroom. Someone’s eyes might be closed, the exposure might be off, it might be blurry. You didn’t know until you put it through the process of development using a dangerous, toxic chemical mixture that could only be applied IN TOTAL DARKNESS. The best and only protection one had was a red kitchen apron.

When I think of Heather at the Graphic, I often picture her standing in the darkroom wearing the red apron. She was a magician with photographs and spent countless hours in there each week making sure each photo was as perfect as it could be.

I also think of her consistency and passion for writing her name on pieces of fruit she would bring to the office. “Heather’s banana...hands off” served as a warning that I don’t think any Graphic staffer dared to challenge, as did her “This is my orange...Heather Moore, September 5, 1992” declaration.

There were other unofficial Graphic rules we learned to live

by. The paper wasn’t officially ready until Heather taped the box filled with the broadsheets and declared “let’s put this paper to bed.” You didn’t bother Heather on a Wednesday (the only day of the week she ever took off) unless the Graphic building was on fire! And it wasn’t officially Christmas season until Heather started to softly sing “Silver Bells” in the layout room.

Of course, we had a few little spats too! There was the time my rather lackadaisical effort at the weekly “On the Street” question resulted in me being asked to step outside on the step for a “chat”, and the screen door being slammed so hard against my head...lets just say there were a lot of flies in the Graphic office for a few days until Wayne Dooks managed to repair the screen! And there was the time that I forgot to go to Georgetown to take photos for the most popular special section on the Graphic calendar - the annual “Day In the Life of Eastern PEI” section.

I remember her asking in extreme frustration: “How can you forget Georgetown...you live there!” Every year since, the first question from Heather at the Day in the Life story meeting has been “OK, who is going to Georgetown?”

My memories of the Graphic are ones I cherish. I grew up at the Graphic. I learned about the importance of people and how listening to them tell their stories is one of the great privileges a person can have. I learned what community pride is all about. I learned that if you treat people fairly and honestly, even in difficult circumstances, they will respect you for it. I learned all of that from Heather Moore and I am so grateful for it.

Knowing her as I do, I know she will be looking forward to this week being over. I know she would much rather write the headlines than make them. But I also hope she takes a moment of reflection to truly understand what her career at the Graphic has meant to her community, and what a positive impact she has had on so many people.

That impact continues. While the look and design of the Eastern Graphic has evolved over time, as has the technology and human resources required to create the paper each week, one thing has remained constant: Heather Moore. Her focus has always been to put out a weekly newspaper that reflects the communities it serves by sharing the stories and pictures of the citizens who call those communities home. The true magic of the Graphic is that it is as much a paper that people want to be in, as it is a paper that people want to pick up each week to see just who is in it. Nobody understood that better than Heather Moore. She is the one who has made that magic happen, week in and week out, one edition at a time for the last 50 years.

I hope she keeps it going. Remember, inquiring minds want to know.

**Dennis King,  
Premier of  
Prince Edward Island**

## Community at heart of Moore’s work

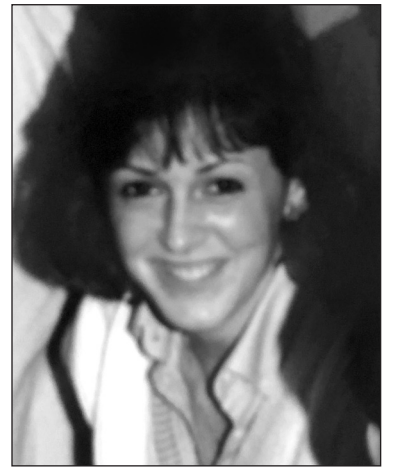
I met Heather Moore the day I started at the Eastern Graphic back in April of 1984. It was my first full-time journalistic job after graduating from Kings College in Halifax, and I was a “city girl.”

I distinctly remember Heather’s dry sense of humour. It took me a bit to be able to tell when she was joking and when she was serious. The first week, as I was learning more and more about PEI, I asked about the price of potatoes. Heather deadpanned, “As many as you can carry.” “Really?” I asked, thinking this was a huge benefit to living on PEI: free potatoes! She paused before shaking her head, “No!”

Heather, Rachel Threlkeld and I used to have lunch at the old Kingsway restaurant on Fridays and it’s there I learned Heather ate her meal, one food group at a time, which I always thought was an interesting characteristic. We also shared many a deep thought, and laughs, over a beer with Jim MacNeill at the former Lobster Shanty on Tuesday nights after we finished “putting the paper to bed.”

I learned a lot from Heather over my two years at the Graphic. She had (and still has) a great nose for news. She was also supportive, fair in her feedback, and it’s obvious she cares deeply about her community.

After leaving the Graphic I worked as editor of a weekly



Sally Pitt came to the Eastern Graphic in 1984 fresh out of journalism school.

paper in Cape Breton for a couple of years before returning to PEI to join the CBC, where I worked in various roles as reporter, host, and producer for 33 years. I retired from CBC last year and am now teaching journalism part-time at Holland College in Charlottetown. Over the years I’ve occasionally heard from Heather who’s heard of an injustice outside the Graphic’s coverage area that might make a news story. Much appreciated, Heather!

Congratulations Heather on 50 years at the Graphic. That’s an incredible achievement. Those who worked with you benefited from your wisdom. And the community has benefited from your compassion, digging, attention to accuracy, balance, fairness, and thoughtful journalism.

**Sally Pitt  
Stratford, PEI**



Sally Pitt retired last year after 33 years with CBC.

**More letters  
on pages 18 & 19**