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local operator took over and pushed in the matching plug. The inspector left the switchboard, shaking his head.

"Becky Jazz Garters! Tony God Damn!" he muttered. "It beats me!"

The Provincetown operators didn't see the inspector's report to his superiors, but they were never hassled again.

Provincetown Advocate, Thursday, December 15, 1977

The Advocate renovates, expands building

The Advocate building at 100 Bradford St. in downtown Provincetown is undergoing extensive renovations and expansion this winter that will convert the little brick building into a three-story structure.

The addition, which was designed by architect John Moberg of Mobic Design-Build of Cambridge, will accommodate not only the growing number of customers and advertisers who walk into the building, but will provide space for the increasingly complex job of producing the paper.

The present facility has been putting a strain on the staff, which has been grappling with the task of typesetting and composing more and more pages of both news and advertising, especially in the height of the tourist season.

The building has cramped the services the paper wants to provide its advertisers. The added space, carefully laid out for maximum efficiency, will make doing business with The Advocate far more comfortable. It will also give the paper new room for new photoelectronic equipment that will take it through all seven production steps before it reaches the printer.

The major contractor for the project is Gordon Crowley, who began work last Thursday. It will not be an easy job because Crowley has to completely remove the roof from the 60- by 24-foot building without disturbing (too much) the operation of the paper.

The work he has been doing since last week is inside, preparatory to removing the roof without having the existing plaster ceiling land on top of a nervous staff.

Much depends on the weather, but the building is expected to be finished by April.

The new space and equipment, which is a major capital investment for this newspaper, will not only make The Advocate more efficient, but will give it an added capability for producing very high quality typeset copy for a whole range of commercial printing and advertising work.

The new equipment will significantly speed up production, give The Advocate more quality control and might make it possible to have the paper out on Wednesdays instead of Thursdays, which is an advantage for advertisers as well as readers.

The paper will continue to be printed out of town, but three pre-press processes that are now done by the printer will be done here. The result should mean more work for the production staff, which now works only part-time in the off season.

The new second floor will include an office for the editor and publisher, a spacious newsroom for a growing staff of reporters and editors, a conference room for interviews with news sources, planning news coverage and business strategies, a new composing room and two fully equipped new darkrooms.

The first floor will have a significantly larger lobby, a specially designed counter for the receptionist area, a stairway to the news operation on the second floor, a large office for the business and advertising departments, new storage space and a room for handling the newspaper's circulation.

The appearance of the building will be a radical departure from the trim little brick building built by the New England Telephone Company in 1938 to resemble a half-Cape.

The building will retain the brick facing of the existing building on the first floor level. The second floor and the third, which will be under a steep gable, will be faced with white cedar clapboards that will be allowed to weather to driftwood grey trimmed with white.

The effect is to convert the existing half-Cape to a Greek Revival style that repeats a design very common in Provincetown. The first design criterion for the architect was to make the building as "Provincetownish" as possible.

The third floor of the new building will be an apartment that was designed to become a part of the newspaper operation if the space is ever needed in the future.

The addition required a variance from the zoning board because an outside back stairway to the apartment was too close to the sideline. Another variance was required for a possible front porch, although at this time the decision has not been made to build it.

The variance was granted with the active support of most of the neighbors who own fine and well-kept homes on Winslow Street. No one objected to the project at the zoning board hearing.

The Advocate building used to house the telephone company's switching equipment, which in 1938 was a modern wrinkle in the communication industry called "the lift-the-receiver type."

A story in the Feb. 3, 1938 issue of The Advocate announced the construction of the new building. At that time telephones with cranks were used to signal the operator. This building was erected to carry the very heavy switching equipment that made it possible for a telephone caller to simply lift his receiver to summon the operator.

A light showed up on the telephone operators' switchboard and a generation of Provincetown folks still remember the

familiar voices of the operators saying, "Number please."

Walter Chrysler bought the building soon after the telephone company developed the next-to-the-latest communications wrinkle, direct dialing.

Chrysler used the building for many years as a museum for his Sandwich glass collection. It was he who added, for security reasons, the tin-clad shutters that are still on the building.

In April, 1975, when Dan and Janet Boynton owned The Advocate, they acquired the building from Jules Brenner

and after some interior alterations moved the paper from its former location at Carver and Commercial Streets.

The building has been extremely successful as a newspaper office in this location. Almost all of its advertisers find it convenient, despite the lack of parking, because the vast majority of them can walk here easier than they can drive elsewhere.

For that reason and because of a strong feeling that The Advocate belongs downtown in the center of things, it was decided to expand rather than relocate.



Advocate expansion in progress.

Advocate photo by Steven Schwadron