

Discovery Road
Presents

"The Newspaper"

Small town newspaper story documented for television big tear sheets, rags and the underground

The Mormon Pioneer National Heritage Area (MPNHA) and *Discovery Road* are delivering the story of the small-town newspaper in Utah and the region. The program looks at several neighborhood papers to see how they operate and stay relevant in the news business today. The internet plays a role in keeping small newspapers in business, but many others have folded up and disappeared. Some of the earliest newspapers in the territory are shown in *The Newspaper* episode of *Discovery Road*.

"Well when Brigham Young and the Latter-Day Saints came to Utah, they are right in the middle of basically nowhere. In the desert, (the) Great Basin. Very few opportunities for getting news and information from back east and even among themselves. So, Brigham Young

decided to start a paper.” Brent Ashworth, collector, and rare documents dealer said in an interview with *Discovery Road*.



HISTORIC NEWSPAPER-Rare documents and book collector Brent Ashworth shows an original copy of one of the early newspapers in the west during videotaping in his Provo, Utah store. Ashworth was interviewed for the documentary *The Newspaper*. -Photo credit *Discovery Road*

The Sanpete Messenger has been owned and operated under the direction of Suzanne Dean for more than 20 years. The Messenger has become a standard of journalistic excellence, winning national awards for news coverage, sports reporting, photographic work, and editorials. Dean transformed the Sanpete County paper into a reliable communication tool that blankets the cities and towns with good, solid journalism. In the documentary Dean shares her personal account of when she knew she wanted to be part of the newspaper business. It came during elementary school when she was assigned to listen to radio coverage of the 1960 political conventions. During the broadcasts Dean heard network correspondent Nancy Hanschman Dickerson

reporting on the conventions and was influenced by her talent and style.

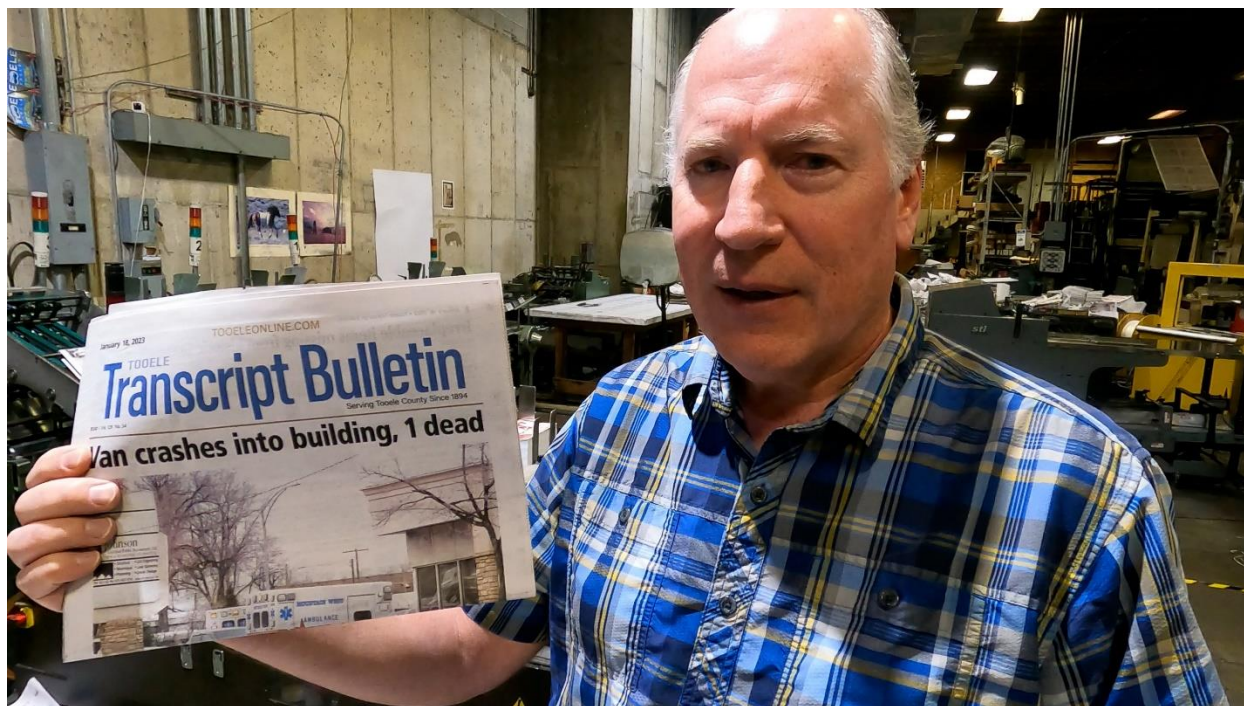
“She had a first-hand view of what government was doing. And I really felt that government was very important. I was really enamored by politics and how the government worked and the constitution, government and all those things. And being a reporter gives you a front row seat to watching that process.” Dean recalled.



GETTING THE NEWS OUT- Editor and publisher Suzanne Dean is seen working on the latest edition in the office of the Sanpete Messenger in Manti, Utah. -Photo courtesy *Discovery Road*

Discovery Road then traveled to Tooele, Utah to see firsthand what a newspaper printing operation is all about. The film crew was able to see how the newspaper is put together from start to finish. Transcript Bulletin Publishing (TBP) has been in the business for 128 years. TBP prints the Tooele Transcript Bulletin along with several other Utah Newspapers. They also have a publishing and design service that turns out magazines, posters, and other special print orders.

“We’ve been here since 1894, and I think one of the key reasons we’re still around, is our eagerness to try and invest in new equipment and better ways to serve our customers,” said TBP president Bruce Dunn.



PRINTING THE NEWSPAPER-Bruce Dunn, president of Transcript Bulletin Publishing, holds up a copy of the Transcript Bulletin during an interview with *Discovery Road*. The Tooele printing facility is featured in *The Newspaper* episode of the documentary series. -Photo credit *Discovery Road*

TBP prints the Beaver County Journal, The Gunnison Valley Gazette, The Sanpete Messenger, The Times News, and many other newspapers each week. Most of the newspaper story materials are sent to TBP through the internet in a PDF file. The news stories, photographs, and advertising are then placed in newspaper format and burned onto plates for the printing press. If not for the elephant-sized press machines and the latest technology advances at the TBP many of the smaller periodicals would not have their newspapers printed.

Discovery Road producer and creator James Nelson says this episode gives viewers important insight to the life and times of small-town newspapers in Utah and the intermountain west.

“The voice that these newspapers gave to people in small towns and outposts was vital for well over a century. The papers are like scrapbooks of life out west. Unfortunately, the numbers just keep dwindling.” Nelson said.



APPROACHING DEADLINE-Workers at the Transcript Bulletin Publishing facility rush to stack and bundle the latest edition of newspapers coming off the presses. The huge printing operation prints newspapers and other publications at the Tooele, Utah location year-round. -Photo credit *Discovery Road*

The Discovery Road television team visited Ken Sanders Rare Books where they unearthed a few underground newspapers from the past. They also discovered a fascinating lesson about what materials were used in the early days of printing the papers.

“Now the Deseret News, the first newspaper here. It was originally printed on one hundred percent, on cotton rag. The early issues they

begged their subscribers. ‘Rags! Rags! Give us your rags!’ They would trade you. If you’d give them a bundle of cotton clothing, they could pulp that and turn that into paper. It wasn’t paper. What we think of paper, wood pulp paper doesn’t come in until the 1870s as widespread use.” Ken Sanders states in the documentary.

The Newspaper shows viewers original issues of The Salt Flat News. It was a paper that focused on one of the most remote stretches of the planet to find their news stories. The historic and world-famous Bonneville Salt Flats are barren and seem empty and that’s what made their short-lived paper so interesting.



FINDING THE PAST-James Nelson, writer-producer for *Discovery Road*, pages through historic documents, and records at Ken Sanders Rare Books in Salt Lake City, Utah. The popular bookstore provided artifacts for the documentary show *The Newspaper*. -Photo credit *Discovery Road*.

“Certainly, the presses have stopped for hundreds, if not thousands of small-town newspapers. The internet keeps gobbling up those that are left behind. However, the countless stories that were written and the news that was delivered will always be part of the iconic landscape of the American West.” Nelson said in summarizing *The Newspaper* episode of *Discovery Road*.

Discovery Road is an award-winning ongoing documentary series broadcast each Saturday on the Utah Education Network (channel 9) at 6pm MST and on several local cable television stations in Utah and surrounding states.

The Mormon Pioneer National Heritage Area (MPNHA) is a federally designated area of central and southern Utah running along the beautiful and historic U.S. Highway 89 — including the All-American Road Utah State Route 12, and Capitol Reef Scenic Byway Utah State Route 24, which both intersect with U.S. 89 and together form the MPNHA’s Boulder Loop. The area includes the counties of Sanpete, Sevier, Piute, Wayne, Garfield, and Kane.