Remembering Roy
Legend lives on at Indiana University
At the time of Roy W. Howard’s death, President Lyndon B. Johnson said, “He was already a legend in his profession, and will go down in the history of journalism as one of its commanding figures.”

On Sept. 9 and 10 — almost 20 years to the date of Howard’s passing — Indiana University paid homage to this 5-foot, 6-inch newspaper giant with the introduction of a $345,000 memorial program, funded in part by a $234,000 grant from The Scripps-Howard Foundation.

The program includes a computerized historical archive, an oral history on the life and career of the man who led Scripps-Howard for more than 40 years, a study constructed in his name, an ongoing national college reporting competition and public affairs reporting seminar for competition winners.

Howard’s grandchildren and children joined 100 journalism educators and Scripps-Howard executives on Sunday, Sept. 9, for the opening of the Roy W. Howard Archive.

The following day, IU and the foundation hosted a seminar for the 10 winners of the first Roy W. Howard National Writing Competition for Public Affairs Reporting, during which each winner received a $1,000 scholarship.

“Locating this multi-faceted project at Indiana University is particularly appropriate,” said Dr. Richard G. Gray, dean of the IU School of Journalism. “Roy Howard’s early newspaper roots were in Indianapolis, and there has been a close association of the Howard name with Indiana over the years.”

By coincidence, the commemoration marked a milestone in Indiana University’s association with the Howard family. Thirty years ago this fall, the university bestowed an honorary doctorate of laws degree on Roy W. Howard, when the journalism building was dedicated in honor of Ernie Pyle, the long-time Scripps-Howard columnist who became renowned for his reporting on Americans in peace and wartime.

The oral history project, for which Gray was the principal investigator, features videotapes and audiotapes with members of the Howard family, close friends, retired Scripps-Howard executives and public figures who were associated with Howard, such as Carlos Romulo and Mrs. Douglas MacArthur.

The oral history has been augmented with correspondence, memorabilia and other pertinent papers donated by the interviewees. There also are clippings and copies of newspaper stories bearing the Howard byline. Everything is cross-indexed with the Library of Congress, where the main body of Howard’s personal papers are deposited.

The written and taped documentation along with memorabilia pertaining to Howard’s career are housed in the Roy W. Howard Memorial Room of Ernie Pyle Hall.

The room, which also will be used as a study for journalism grad-
The Howard family traveled across the country to attend the dedication of the Roy W. Howard Room at Indiana University's school of journalism. Assembled in the newly decorated study for doctoral students are, from left — seated, Jack R. Howard and Jane Howard Perkins, children of the legendary newspaperman; standing, Mrs. Michael (Candace) Howard; Jack Howard's son Michael Balfy Howard; Mrs. Jack (Eleanor) Howard; Mrs. Perkins' grandson, Roy Howard Perkins; her son and daughter, Timothy Howard Perkins and Jennifer Perkins; and Jack Howard's daughter, Pamela Howard Gumprecht.

Remembering

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Above, Dan K. Thomasson, editor of Scripps-Howard News Service, returned to Indiana University, his alma mater, to lead a session of the Roy W. Howard Public Affairs Reporting Seminar. Above right, Indiana University doctoral student Bob Baker gives visitors a tour of the newly constructed Roy W. Howard Room at the School of Journalism’s Ernie Pyle Hall.

the well-being of the body politic in ways the journalism profession today seldom makes clear.

Dan K. Thomasson, editor of Scripps-Howard News Service and an IU graduate, was another seminar speaker.

"The old adage that it is the job of the newspaper to fill the holes left by our electronic brethren never has been more true," he said.

Public affairs reporting, according to Thomasson, is the newspaper profession’s highest calling.

Other speakers included: Gene Miller, associate editor, The Miami Herald; James Polk, NBC News correspondent; and Helen Thomas, White House bureau chief for United Press International.

Archive contributors include: Jacques A. Caldwell, foundation president; Mrs. Mark Ferrer, wife of Scripps-Howard’s late general business manager; Frank Ford, retired chief editorial writer for Scripps-Howard; Naomi Lowenstho, Howard’s long-time assistant; Jack Howard, chairman of the executive committee of Scripps-Howard and chairman of the board of Scripps-Howard Broadcasting Co.; The Scripps-Howard Foundation and The Library of Congress.

The Howard legacy

Roy W. Howard was an astute businessman, but his first love was always the printed word. And during his 69 years of active newspaper work, he gained worldwide recognition for the words that poured from his portable typewriter.

William R. Burleigh, vice president and general editorial manager of Scripps-Howard Newspapers, said at Indiana University’s Roy W. Howard Seminar and Commemoration in September, "...to listen to the voice of Roy W. Howard is to be called back to the basics."

Here’s a sampling of his thoughts on the nature of the work he loved.

• 1930 — From Red Barrel magazine, Coca-Cola’s in-house publication: "When a man bought an evening newspaper 25 years ago, he bought it for news, for information and for the entertainment it would furnish the entire family for the evening. With the distractions of today, a man may give his newspaper a 10-minute reading. Every newspaper story, therefore, must be written so that a busy man with very limited time can get the high spots in a few minutes."

• 1955 — A quote from a manuscript Frank Ford, retired chief editorial writer of Scripps-Howard Newspaper Alliance, wrote about Howard: "No date on the calendar is as important as tomorrow to a man who still has ideas, plans and purposes. Yesterday may be rich in memories, but for a man with health and continuing interests, tomorrow is rich in promise. I realize, that if you really enjoy it, work is a vacation. Once you become an addict, your happiness and your very life become dependent on it."

• 1955 — In a message to Sigma Delta Chi, which he served that year as honorary president: "American journalism will, I believe, prove to be in the future what it has been in the past — the people’s refuge and champion in times of stress and readjustment. The newspapers will continue to be the bane of the demagogue and the liar, and the chief reliance of those who seek the truth to use it in the service of humanity."

"Judging on the basis of the past, I am certain American journalism will not fail in the task that is ahead. Criticize it, check up on it, call it to account, but keep your faith in it. Permit no force to undermine it or abridge its freedom, for when its freedom is abridged or ended, so also will be yours. Ended also will be this democracy of ours which, with all its shortcomings, is still the freest and the most enlightened government that the mind of man has yet evolved."

• 1960 — A quote from Time magazine: "Newspapers, I think, are the common denominator of popular thinking. In the old days newspapers thundered at their readers. Now they are down among them."

• 1962 — From an article Howard wrote for Scripps-Howard News: "As one with a normal sense of nostalgia with a lot of agreeable memories of the past, and not too many allergies toward some of today’s practices, I can say truthfully that I’d be happy to start all over again today under the conditions I faced in 1905, 22 years of age, $22-a-week salary, and no diversions strong enough to offset the pull of a good story or a chance to score a beat."

"I believe that the old hurdles on the road to success — disinterest, lethargy and a lack of news sense — are as great as ever. Over-emphasis on 'security,' something never to be fully achieved, will, I suspect, continue to cause as many disappointments and heartaches as the evils it strives to eliminate. But even so, the top prizes in both opportunity and money will be greater than ever before, and most of them will go, not necessarily to the most brilliant, but rather to those whom journalism is both a means of livelihood and an ever exciting competitive game."

"Despite its critics, I believe that journalism is destined to be with us for a long time."