

75 Years of your **Chronicle** & ECHO

War and - the big



THE very first *Chronicle & Echo* was published on Monday, November 2, when the two separate newspapers, the *Chronicle* and the *Echo* merged.

Oddly, there was no fanfare and no mention of the fact on the front page. It was not until readers reached the editorial comment on page 8 that the new newspaper was explained.

The first lead story was a tragic one: the death of Northampton Mayor-elect Alderman A G Slinn (it was thought vulgar to report first names). He would have been the town's first Labour Mayor.

The other main story was about aviatrix, 19-year-old Peggy Salaman, who had reached Uganda on her way to the Cape of Good Hope and hoped to beat the record of six-and-a-half days for the flight.



WEDNESDAY, August 15, 1945, the day all readers had been waiting for . . . the end of World War Two.

Baron Suzuki, Japanese Prime Minister, is reported in the C&E as saying: "The very great damage caused by the atomic bomb completely changed the war."

The front page picture was a smoke flare being let off in Northampton Market Square as the news reached the town. Rejoicing began at midnight with crowds singing and shouting. Over-enthusiastic revellers lit a bonfire next to the fountain and burnt market stalls.



THE Weedon train crash on Friday, September 21, 1951, made national as well as local news.

The London to Liverpool express left the rails two miles south of Weedon with the engine and first four carriages plunging down a 20-foot embankment. The leading coach was "smashed to matchwood".

The C&E's reporter based in Daventry was quickly on the scene and gathered several first-hand accounts from survivors. The paper followed the story throughout the day with the Final Edition reporting that eight had died. This total was revised in the Stop Press end column to 10.

Changing shape



THE last quarter of the 20th century were times of great change for Britain's newspapers and the C&E was no exception.

Advances in printing technology meant the use of more colour in pictures and advertisements and the development of computers led to a quantum leap in quality of print. At the same time, many newspapers which had been broadsheet were switching to the smaller tabloid format. The C&E carried out exhaustive research in Northamptonshire to find out what readers wanted and the consensus was that they preferred tabloid newspapers to the unwieldy broadsheets.

We listened and on Monday, October 7, 1991, the C&E appeared as a tabloid for the first time in its history. The first lead story was a sombre one . . . the report of the murder of an antiques dealer in Northampton. This was balanced, however, with a picture and story about six-year-old twins Daniel and Adam Linsdell, from Greens Norton, who won the C&E's Special People Award.

The page 1 advertisement highlighted bargains to be found at Brierleys in Gold Street, Northampton.



THE superb picture on the front page of Friday, February 8, 1952, showed Northampton Mayor, Councillor Frank Lee, reading the Proclamation of the Accession to mark the beginning of Queen Elizabeth II's reign.

The impressive ceremony was held on the steps of the fountain in the Market Square.

The proclamation was printed in full along with descriptions of other ceremonies in London.



IN July, 1959, printers were on strike and the C&E responded with duplicated Emergency Editions.

This one from Tuesday, July 14, announced that Kislingbury had won the title of Northamptonshire's Tidiest village.

The giant paper reels used to print the C&E weigh up to a tonne each and are moved around the press hall by hand on a narrow-gauge railway

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peace stories



The digital cameras used by our photographers have a resolution of 10 megapixels

SATURDAY, November 13, 1982, saw a special report of a visit to Northampton of the Queen (above). The headline reflected her concern that many royal fans had waited in the cold and the rain to catch a glimpse of her.

WHO can forget the Cobblers' triumphant visit to Wembley in May, 1997 (right), when they won promotion at the play-offs?



Sunday editions



THE C&E publishes six days a week with only Christmas Day being the exception. But there were two occasions in the last 75 years when editors felt compelled to bring readers tragic news by printing a special Sunday edition.

They were the outbreak of World War Two and the death of Diana, Princess of Wales.

The Sunday, September 3, 1939, paper included a transcript of Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain's sombre radio speech to the nation.

We reported that Italy may remain neutral, a false hope as it turned out, and that the United States would also try to keep out of the war.

Northampton had already made preparation for hostilities with basements at Notre Dame



School in Abington Street, being converted into air raid shelters. Sandbags protected principal buildings in the borough.

Di is dead . . . the black-framed headline of our Sunday, August 31, 1997, brought the news to readers in Northamptonshire. The eight-page special edition told of the fatal car crash in Paris which claimed the life of Diana and her lover Dodi Fayed.

Readers, who had always had a special place in their hearts for our local princess, were stunned and many more column inches were – and still are – devoted to the circumstances of her untimely death.