

THE TWIG—From Start to Finish

By BROOKS MCGIRT

To most Meredith students, the TWIG is only a large piece of folded paper, covered with printed words and pictures, which miraculously appears at their doorways every other Thursday night.

For a much smaller segment of the Meredith Population, however, the TWIG represents little less than a work of art — the end product of two weeks' work.

THE START

The two weeks begins every other Monday after the previous TWIG has come out on Thursday. On this fateful Monday, reporters exhausted from the weekend and facing two weeks' work due tomorrow, may be seen heading for that particular person or group on the campus which is called "the Beat." At times, it almost seems that the name comes from the tendency of many persons to "beat it" if they even mildly suspect the approach of the intrepid reporter. So, much of the "Beat Monday" (newspaper jargon for "Blah's Monday") may be and often is spent chasing one's Beat to various locations on the campus.

If the reporter is lucky, she may see all her assigned Beats by 6:00, when her findings are due. Then she can fold her news neatly and shove

NO NEWS, when nothing is happening. All that an editor can do in a case like that is scrape up every little bit of news, assign to appropriate people — and pray.

TWIG WRITING

Writing for the TWIG is another one of those tasks which only seem to occur in the weeks during which the writer has assigned to her three quizzes, two term papers and play practice every night. That's why on Thursday night at approximately two o'clock a.m. there are lights still burning in these workers' rooms — TWIG stories are due the next day.

And, believe it or not, most of the stories do get in on time. Then comes the really fun part — at least for the editor and her assistants — LAYOUT. Again these hearty souls gather, like priestesses of some mystical cult, to begin the slow, tedious task of fitting the stories to match the space. This, my friend, ain't easy! There is always one little space left over somewhere — a space which is always too short for this story, too long for that one — a space which nothing fits.

But the problem that is even more horrendous is that which arises when the amount of news is suddenly inadequate for filling those



Emergency Inspiration

for pages, or when advertising must be covered with four-pages of news. Then comes those last-minute, last-ditch calls for emergency materials. And from somewhere, from nowhere, in fact, stories appear. At least the layout is completed—headlines, pictures, stories all nicely placed and labeled—and off goes the rough draft to the printers.

FROM THE PRINTERS

Newspaper printing firms have the terrible habit of adding errors to those already in the stories. So, on Tuesday armed with pencils, copy readers hover over "The Proofs" and mark out, re-spell, add, and generally correct errors so that the final copy will be, as always,

(Ha, Ha!) mistake-free! Back goes the paper to the printers, where careful typesetters make new errors in the corrections and at last the paper is printed and returned to school. Editor, reporters — everyone — relax. But not for long — the next week the whole business starts again.

TWIG STORY

That's the story of the TWIG — one issue from beginning to end. It sounds like a lot of hard work, and, strangely enough, it is. But it's hard work with a purpose, for not anything (well, hardly anything!) can match the feeling a newspaper worker gets when she sees the results of her handiwork, perhaps even reads her own words in print

— that moment is worth all the blood, sweat, and tears that go into each issue of the TWIG.



Layout Labors



"Beat Monday" Again

it under the door or the TWIG room. And forget about it — for a couple of days at least.

NEWS SEARCH

For that night, editor and associate editor gather for the night-long search for enough news to cover those four blank pages. Sounds easy, doesn't it? Well, usually it's not all that difficult; but then there are those weeks feared by every newspaperman — weeks when there is

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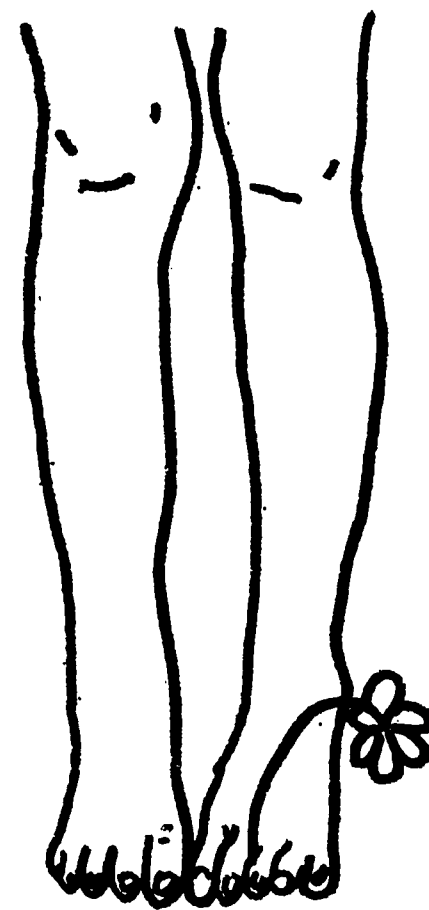
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