

# Paper remembers founder and his legacy

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At the sound of the doorbell I leave my desk and walk down the short hallway to greet the still-unknown visitor.

Upon opening the door I discover an elderly gentleman with white hair and bespectacled eyes as blue as they must have been when he was 20 years old.

Clad in red and brown plaid pants either reminiscent of the 1970s or left over from an early-morning golf outing, he would smile at me, lean ever so lightly on his cane and walk into the office.

Having been on The Jambar staff for three years, the sight of Burke Lyden was not unusual. Many times I have sat with him and listened to his stories, and this day would be no different.

"Good afternoon Mr. Lyden," I say. "How have you been?"

His smile reaches his eyes, and they give off a boyish twinkle that belies his advanced age.

He says, "Oh, good, good. Still getting around," and continues into the middle of the office where he stops to take in the office that has grown and changed since his year as the top editor.

He inquires about the paper and staff members, many of whom are out of the office on this particular Tuesday.

Lyden has been a familiar face at The Jambar long before I joined the staff — well over 70 years in fact.

After all, as the paper's founder, he had more right to the office than just about anyone.

Although he often pressed his yearly subscription fee on us, we would never collect from him.

The jambar hanging on the office wall was a gift from Lyden that he had shipped from Wales along with another one for himself.

On more than one occasion Lyden regaled the staff with the story of the paper's founding and the meaning behind its name. He told stories of the Youngstown of the 1930s as well as of the steel mills, the Depression and of a man nick-named Bone-setter Reese, who had a gift for alleviating back pain.

Although the plot of the stories never changed, the details did, and every time Lyden retold the stories, I learned something new about the city in which I grew up.

But never again.

Lyden died Thursday at the age of 91, and he took with him a vivid history of YSU, Youngstown and The Jambar.

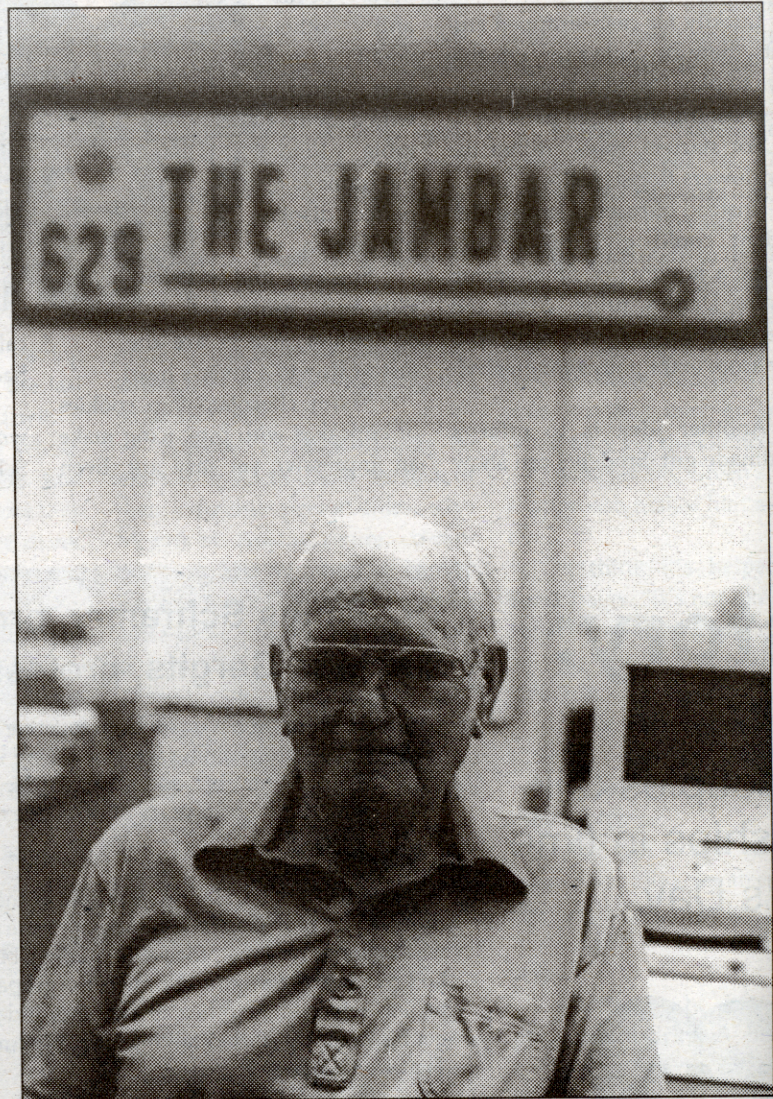
I don't know a whole lot about Lyden. Even during the several conversations we had over the past three years, 91 years is a long time to cover. But I know the stories he told, I saw the delight with which he told them, and I know that at 91 he had a memory and attention to detail that most people don't enjoy at 30.

Factually speaking, Lyden graduated from The Rayen School in 1927, he founded The Jambar in 1931, he was the first Youngstown College letter-winner having lettered in fencing, the first president of the YC Alumni Association, and he worked for the Youngstown City Water Department for 17 years.

He married Ann Higgins Aug. 22, 1935, and buried her in 1993. He had three sons, two grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Family members Lyden saw pass before him include his parents, one of his three sons, seven brothers, two sisters and three grandchildren.

Lyden was also so much more. He had a dedication to YSU throughout his life that few stu-



JAMBAR ARCHIVE PHOTO

## LYDEN

dents today could even understand, let alone exhibit.

Nary a football game nor theater performance went by without Lyden in attendance.

He was up-to-date on all the campus events and changes and could always be counted on to stop by The Jambar office during the first few weeks of the fall semester to see how the new staff was doing.

Yes, I will miss Burke Lyden, but more importantly, I regret that this year's staff is the last to hear

his stories and glean the tidbits of knowledge he so willingly and eagerly dispersed to anyone who would listen.

I hope this article serves as tribute, memorial and history to the man who started this paper.

Long after I leave The Jambar and long after staff members who never knew the paper's founder replace me, this paper will continue. And through it, Burke Lyden will never quite be forgotten, though never again known.