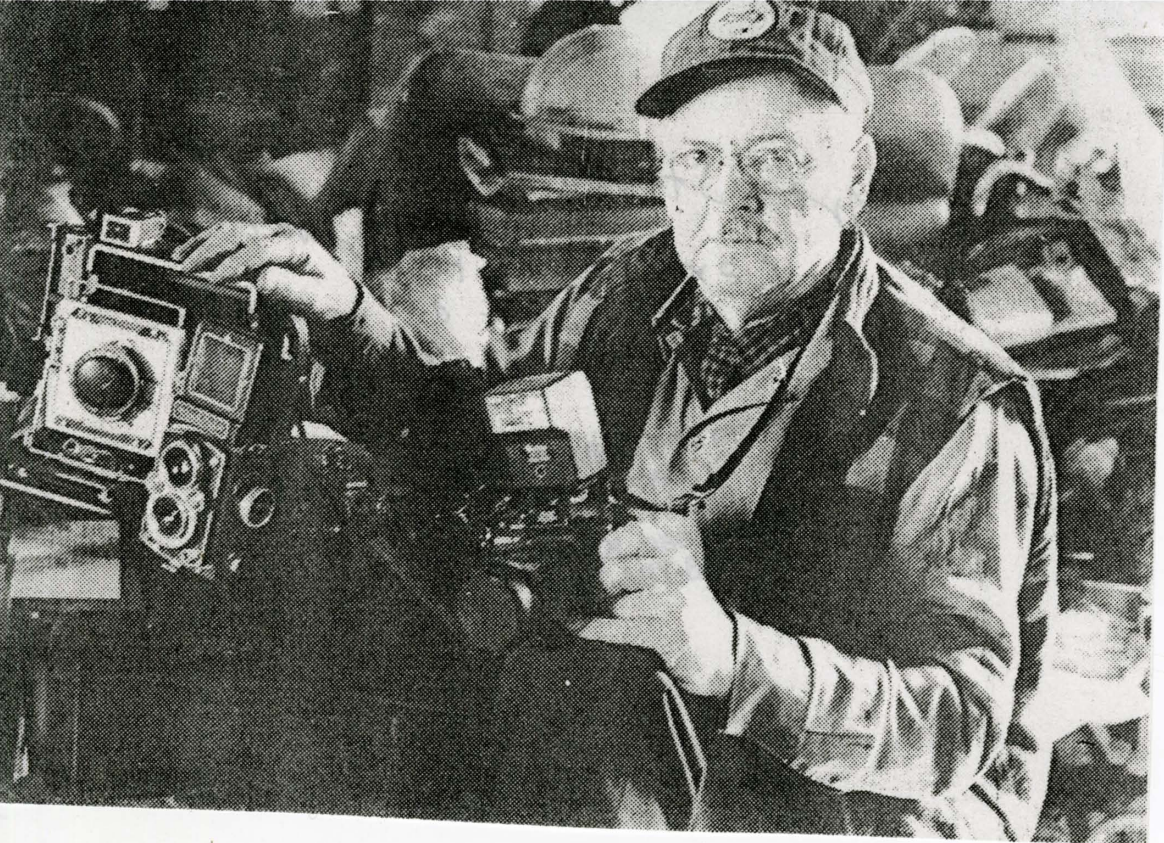




ART STEWARDS SKILLS AS A WELDER
EARNED HIM THE NAME OF
MOREHEAD'S MR. FIXIT.

1980

From The Collection Of:
Dr. Jack D. Ellis
552 W. Sun St.
Morehead, KY 40351
606-784-7473

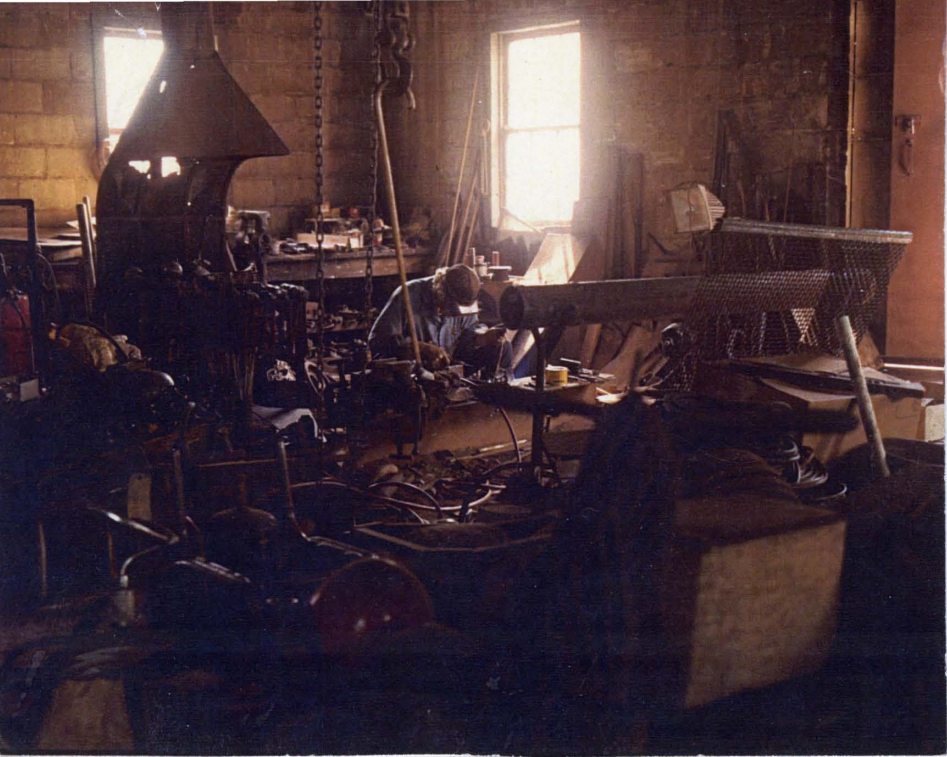


Mrs Stewart

Cameras - ~~PHOTO~~
USED TO PHOTOGRAPH
MUCH OF
MR. WIRENDA'S
HOSPITAL

From The Collection Of:
Dr. Jack D. Ellis
552 W. Sun St.
Morehead, KY 40351
606-784-7473

1980



ART SKILLFULLY REPAIRS
A BROKEN PART AT HIS
MACHINE SHOP ON WEST
MAIN ST. NOTICE THE OLD
BELLOWS AND ASSORTMENT
OF SCRAP STEEL AND IRON
THAT HE OFTEN USES IN
REPAIR WORK.

1960

From The Collection Of:
Dr. Jack D. Ellis
552 W. Sun St.
Morehead, KY 40351
606-784-7473

2 cols

From The Collection Of:
Dr. Jack D. Ellis
552 W. Sun St.
Morehead, KY 40351
606-784-7473

ART STEWART

WELDING / HIS

MACHINE SHOP

1960



ART STEWART OR
19602

**From The Collection Of:
Dr. Jack D. Ellis
552 W. Sun St.
Morehead, KY 40351
606-784-7479**

Local Trivia

Secrets of Success

■ Wiley May's longevity can be attributed to his ability to adapt and learn new skills.

SECTION C

History

THE MOREHEAD NEWS, FEBRUARY 16

About the Author



Dr. Jack Ellis is a retired Morehead State University Library director and a retired minister.

Morehead Memories:

People & Places

Wiley May's Machine Shop 1929-Date Art Stewart-photographer- welder 1946-1960

By Jack D. Ellis
Special to The Morehead News

"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver" (Proverbs 25:11)

This is the story of two businesses and two men who contributed to the history and development of Morehead and Rowan County. Each business and each man was as different as could possibly be, yet each man and each business were vitally interconnected.

In 1929 Wiley May, a native of White Oak in Morgan County, Kentucky, established what can be considered the oldest continuous business in Morehead on the same site. It was in 1929 when Mr. May set up a blacksmith shop on Morehead's West Main Street (near the corner of Main and 519 today). Steve Bowles already had a thriving blacksmith business in Morehead, and everyone advised Wiley he could never be successful. His friends predicted his business would not last a year. But over 70 years later, it is still open for business, operated by his stepson, Art Stewart, an industrial technology graduate of MSU. It is also in the original building where it all began at 936 West Main Street in Morehead.

tractors and wagons were being replaced by trucks. Change was everywhere, but there wasn't much demand for shoeing horses and mules or repairing broken wagon wheels. However, there was a big demand for someone to repair broken automobile axles, tractor wheels, truck beds and plow points. (There were no replacement parts stores available and it took weeks to get parts from the factory).

Wiley was equal to the challenge of repairing broken metal parts by welding them together. After a couple of years he bought an old generator. He then built the first portable welding machine in this region of the state. It was made from an old 6-cylinder truck engine and a generator welded on a steel frame attached to a trailer. So now instead of waiting for the business to come to him he could go where the business was. His adaptability would be the secret of his longevity in business.

On the job welding

The old bellows in the Wiley's Machine Shop was seldom cool. People were bringing in iron plows, mowing machines, tractor axles and truck frames to weld. His business prospered even during the great

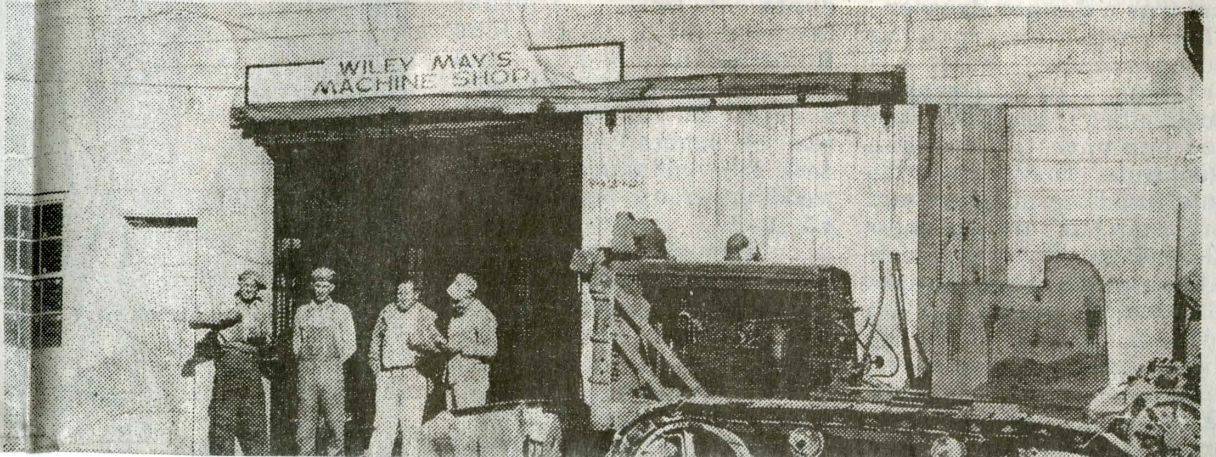


Art Stewart began his career in photography in 1946 as a photographer for Morehead College's yearbook.

with his home-made portable welding machine, would go to the job and do on-the-job welding. Whether it was a broken steel masonry saw at the Bluestone Stone Works, or a drive shaft on a Morehead & North Fork Railroad engine, or a steam boiler at the Haldeman Brick Yard, Wiley was the welder on the spot. Wiley May was one of this communities colorful characters who was known to color much of his conversation with profanity, but he was a master craftsman and hard worker. For over 30 years machinist May did his share to keep the wheels of industry rolling in old Rowan County. Wiley May died in 1958 and his step-son, Arthur Stewart Jr., who had been recording many "Morehead memories" on film for 15 years, gave up a



Curt Hutchinson's DeSoto-Plymouth Dealership on West Main Street in 1953 at the present site of Mullins' Food Market. Photo by Art Stewart. Left to right, Rodney Williams, salesman; Bethel Hall, parts manager; Curt Hutchinson, owner.



business success
The secret of Wiley Mays' longevity was that he was able to adapt and learn new skills. (Isn't that what is still required today in order to be successful?) In 1929, horses were being replaced by cars, mules were being replaced by

two months after he opened his shop in 1929. Many businesses failed in Morehead, but people were repairing old broken equipment because they could not afford to buy new machinery. When the broken machinery could not be brought to the shop, Wiley,

business to take over operation of the machine shop he inherited from his step-father.

Art for arts sake

Arthur Stewart Jr. was born August 11, 1922 at the home of his grandfather, Dr. J.B. Messer, who owned a farm where the Morehead Sewer Plant is located. He was the son of Flora (Messer) and Arthur Stewart Sr. His father died shortly after Art Jr. was born. His mother married Wiley May in 1928 when Arthur Jr. was six years old. Arthur Jr.'s grandfather was a medical doctor, preacher, farmer, grocery store owner, gristmill and saw mill operator. (Doctors in those days had to have other income in order to practice medicine). Art was close to his grandfather Messer growing up. He instilled within him a positive approach to life that remains with him to this day. His grandfather's philosophy was "can't is not in our vocabulary."

"Art," as he was known by his friends, enrolled at



Wiley May's Machine Shop on West Main Street in Morehead. Built in 1929, and still in business in 2001, operated by his step-son Art Stewart Jr. It is the oldest continuous business at the same site in the same building in Morehead.



Art Stewart displays cameras he used for many years as a free-lance photographer.

Breckinridge when he was in the second grade and graduated from the College Demonstration School in 1940. Art Stewart grew up helping his step-father around the old machine shop. In fact, he still has a scar on his hand where a steel drill went completely through his hand due to his carelessness.

Early newspaper carrier

One of Art's earliest jobs was selling Grit newspapers in the Bluestone area. He made two cents on each paper he sold, and was trying to earn enough money to buy a bicycle but his progress was very slow. After a couple of years, his step-father promised him if he had not saved up enough money by the end of the year to buy the bicycle he would make up the balance. Art managed to save \$20 and his step-father provided the balance. The total cost of the bicycle, ordered from Sears Roebuck was \$34.95. Art recalled it was bright red with balloon white-wall tires, rear baggage carrier, front light, storage tank and handlebar streamers. It also had mud flaps with after dark reflectors. Art rode the bicycle to school from Bluestone to Breckinridge during most of his high school years. He remembered that while at school he kept it behind Breck under the concrete steps leading up to the gym. It was dry and safe there and he never had to lock it.

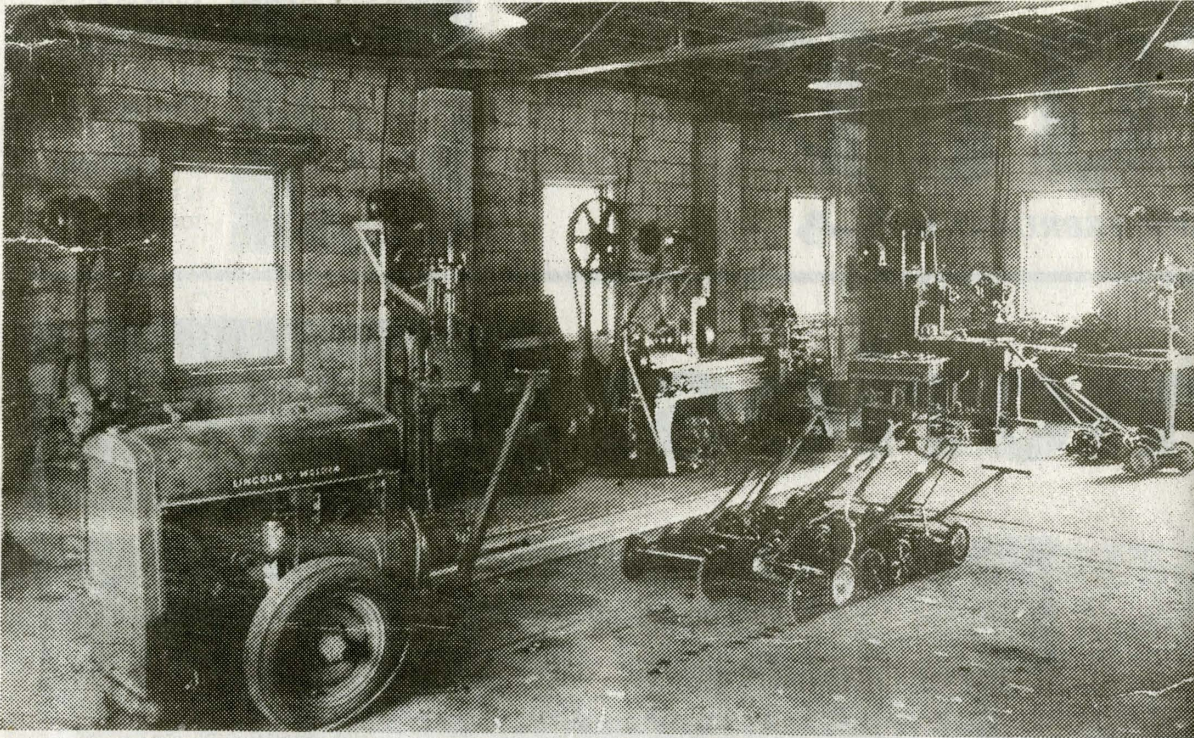
Following his high school graduation, Art Stewart enrolled at Morehead State College before entering the Army in 1943 during WW II. He served for three years in the Air Corps and the Army Engineers while in Europe. It was during his tour in the Army that Art became first interested in photography. Following his discharge in 1946 he returned to Morehead to complete his college degree and began a career in

Justice is a machine that, when someone has once given it the starting push, rolls on of itself.



Dr. T.A.E. Evans, one of Rowan Counties early physicians, is one of Art Stewart's favorite photos.

Wiley May From C-1



Inside Wiley May's Machine Shop in the 1930s. It must have been spring by all the push lawn-mowers. That was all that were manufactured in the early 1930s.

photography.

While in college he and his friend, Drexel Wells, did much of the photographic work in the College yearbooks. At first it was just a hobby for them, but local free lance photographer, Roger Barbour, moved to Lexington and Art and his classmate, Drexel Wells, became much in demand as free lance photographers. Art said, "Drexel Wells and I supplemented our G.I. College support check as free lance photographers as we photographed weddings, school events, news items and portraits."

Art was a dapper dresser

The two enterprising photographers built a darkroom on Drexel's grandmother's back porch; and used her bath tub to wash their prints. They were in the photo finishing business and were kept busy during their college days. Following their college graduation, Drexel Wells left Morehead and Art Stewart became the only "photographic game in town." Stewart said, "I was kept busy taking news photographs, portraits, commercial and social photographs such as club meetings, weddings and receptions."

Art recalled that as a frequent photographer at social events, he was often in homes, churches, businesses and schools. Therefore he always felt it important to

always wore a white shirt, suit and tie that was appropriate for the event." (Those of us who remember Art in those days are acutely aware of the contrast with his dress later on as a welder and machine shop operator). But photography was his profession and he dressed for every occasion. He had a darkroom in the basement of his home on Old Flemingsburg Road.

Art has dozens of cameras but seldom takes pictures any more. One of his favorite cameras is a large Speed Graphic which takes large 4x5 negatives with clear detail and depth of field. Another favorite is a twin lens Rollaflex he used to snap numerous weddings and social events. He confided, "That was the camera I used to take Jack Ellis and Janis Caudill's wedding pictures on November 17, 1949."

Favorite famous photographs

Art's favorite photograph was one he snapped of Dr. T.A.E. Evans, early Rowan County physician, as he sat at his old wooden roll top desk. But perhaps Stewart's most famous photograph is one that showed Dr. C. Louise Caudill and Nurse Susie Hableib walking across a footbridge as they made a house call in rural Rowan County. Art recalled his favorite subjects were children because they were so uninhibited

photography. He said, "So many people were always so critical, and if one hair was out of place, it had to be taken over or retouched."

Photographed much Morehead History

Art Stewart fondly recalls his photographic experiences when he was snapping pictures for The Rowan County News as well as portrait, club meetings, business events and other assignments. Today at his home in Morehead, Mr. Stewart has thousands of negatives of Morehead history filed chronologically in cigar boxes. But when asked about a particular photo he is reluctant to look for it unless you know exactly when it was taken. He did supply this writer some photos for his article from "culls" already printed.

Mr. Stewart has never thrown away a negative. "Anytime you throw away a negative, you are throwing away a moment frozen in time that can never be replaced." Also, he said, "If one picture is worth a thousand words, one negative is worth a thousand pictures."

In 1960 Art Stewart

exchanged his camera for a welding torch when he took over the machine shop left to him at the death of his stepfather, Wiley May.

But during a decade and a half of photographic work he has captured and frozen in time many Morehead Moments and Morehead Memories.

WET BASEMENT?

HIGH TECH BASEMENT SYSTEMS

- Save Up to 50% Over Other **Water Proofing** Methods
- Full Lifetime Written Guarantee
- Cracked and Bowed Walls **Anchored & Repaired**
- Free Written Estimates

Authorized Dealer Of

Basement Systems
Basement Water Control

(606) 674-3070



Here's an offer you can't...

(you know the rest.)

Local Trivia

People Person

■ Art Stewart genuinely enjoys talking to people who bring in items for repair.

SECTION C

History

THE MOREHEAD NEWS, FEBRUARY 23

About the Author



Dr. Jack Ellis is a retired Morehead State University Library director and a retired minister.

Morehead Memories:

People & Places

Art for Arts Sake

By Jack D. Ellis
Special to The Morehead News

"A man of Tyre, skillful to work in... brass or iron to grave (or sculpture) any manner of engraving." (2 Ch. 2:14).

In 1960 Art Stewart put away his camera and took over the operation of the machine shop he inherited after his step father's death. For a couple of years he tried to do both photography and welding work but found he could not do justice to either. Therefore, he hung up his cameras and moved from the darkroom to the machine shop. It was a complete metamorphosis as he traded the dark room and the smell of chemicals for a welder's torch and the smell of burning iron.

From picture man to "fix it" man

Art Stewart, once known as the "picture man," became widely known as the "fix it" man. Art studied hard, learned the welding profession and soon gained a wide reputation for being able to repair about anything. Mr. Stewart laughed and said, "Over the years I've repaired everything imaginable. From broken teeth to mowing machine teeth, mixing machine gears to tractor gears, from desk chairs to dozer seats, from scythe

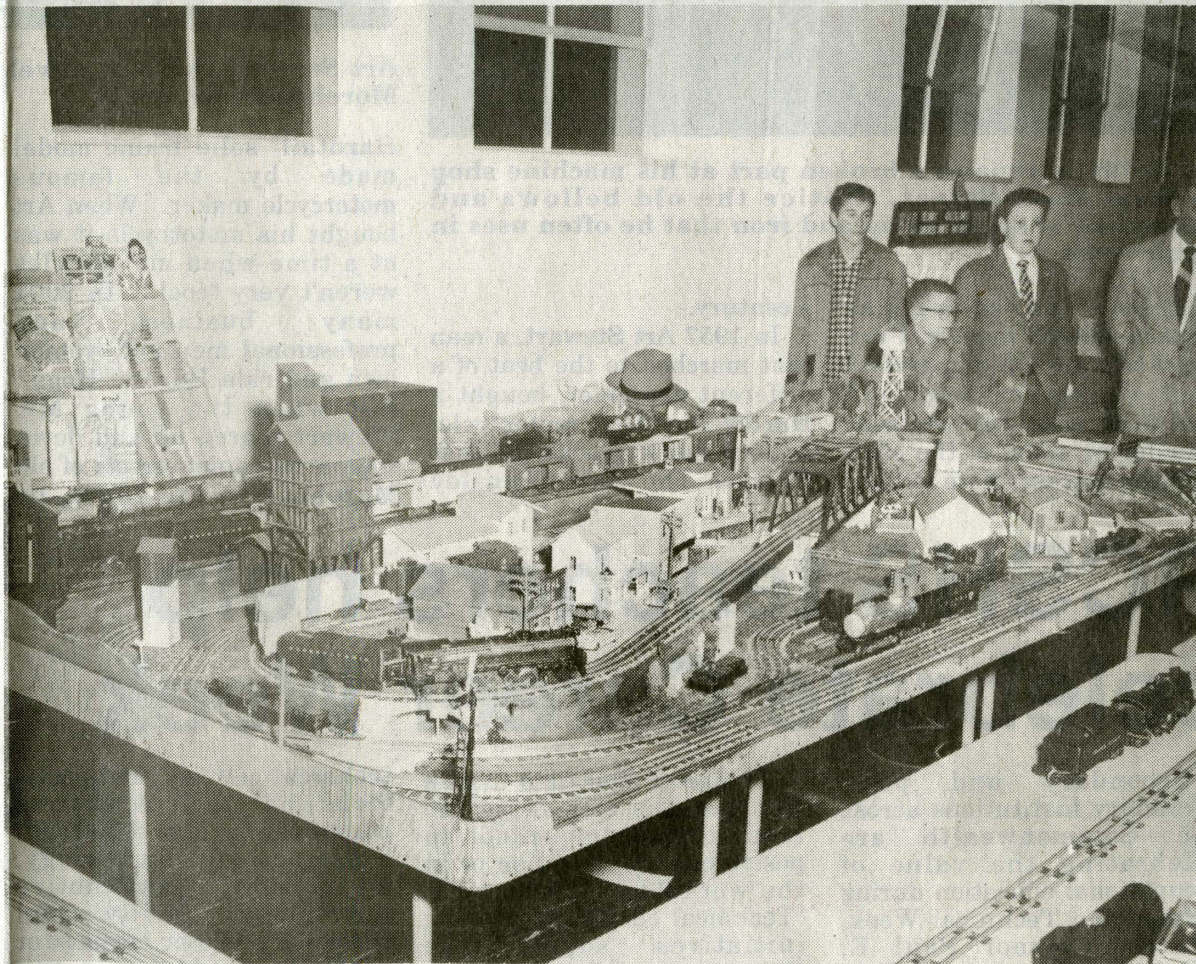
blades to grader blades." He recalled welding gas and water pipes under almost every street in Morehead. Also welding steel at the top of many of the buildings under construction in Morehead. He literally has worked at the lowest and highest points throughout the city of Morehead.

In his reputation as Morehead's "Mr. Fix it," Art enjoyed the challenge of putting broken pieces back together again. Throughout his life time he has

maintained his grandfather Messer's "can do" philosophy. There was just almost nothing that Morehead's "Mr. Fix it" could not repair. His knowledge came from years of experience, keen insight into the nature of the problem, keeping abreast of the latest technology and a sincere enjoyment of his work. Art said, "People come to me and say they hear that I can fix anything. That's a good reputation to have, and there's a great deal of satisfaction that comes with looking at what is seemingly impossible to repair and then doing a good job repairing it."



Some of Morehead's first Little League baseball players photographed by Art Stewart are, left to right: Eddie Radjunas, Robert D. Fraley, Roy W. Cline and Larry Riddle (1950s).



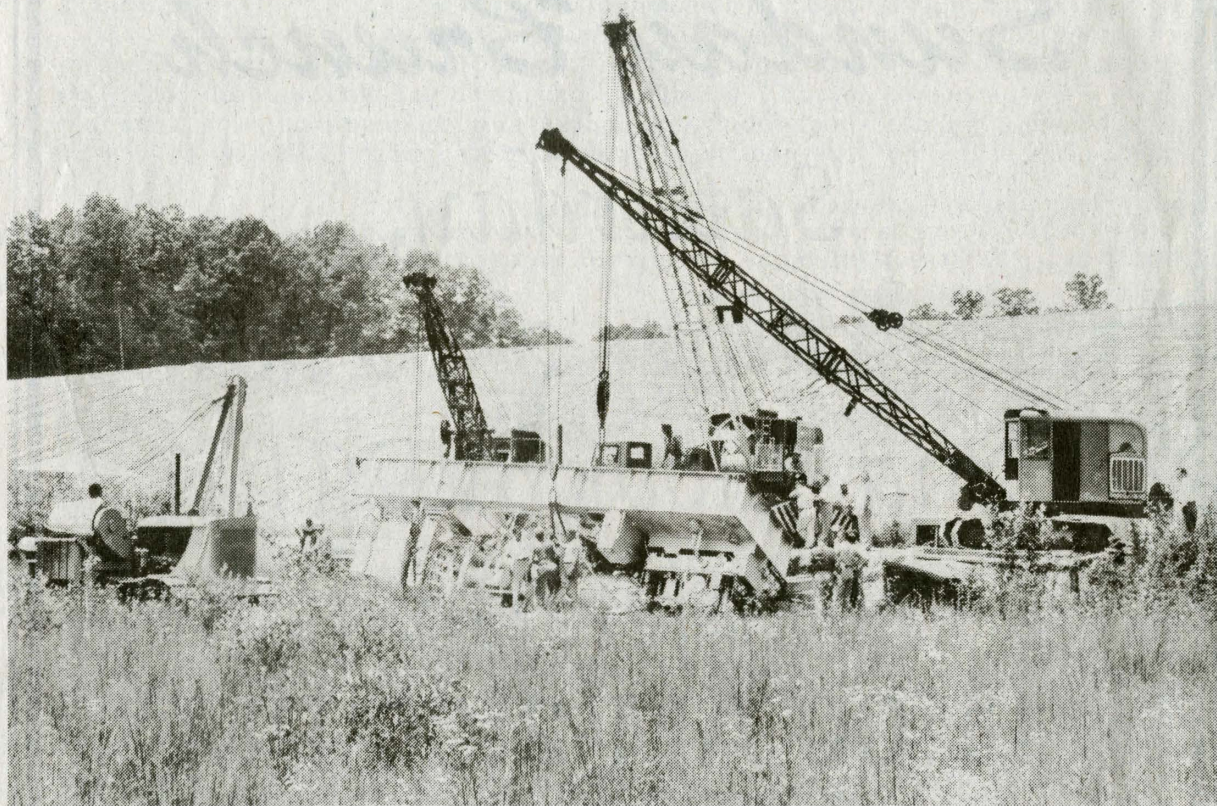
Tom Young, MSU professor, displays his famous model train and village this writer wrote about a few months ago. Display was in the old bookstore at MSU in the basement of Radar Hall. Photo by Art Stewart (1950s).

The inside decor of the old machine shop at 936 West Main Street is a reflection of the unique personality of Mr. Stewart. An old school desk serves as his executive office,

the floor is carpeted with a hodgepodge of metal and carpet scraps. Stacked everywhere are old iron and steel parts from almost every piece of equipment ever made.

There appears to be no organization to the "mess" but Art makes no apology. He says, "This is my place of

See ART on C-2

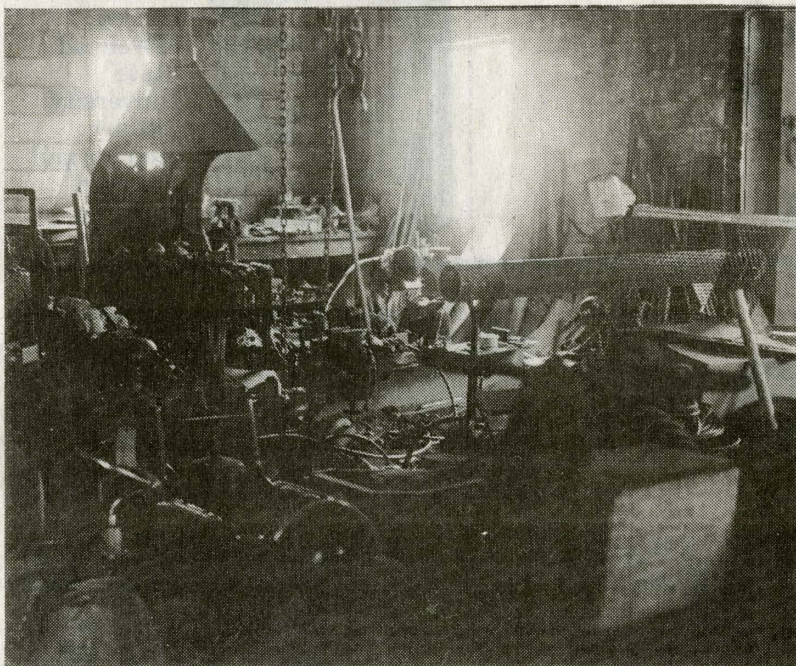


As a welder, Art Stewart was often called upon to repair such equipment as this giant gas turbine at the T.G.T. Plant at Cranston, Ky. It had dropped off the soft gravel road on Highway 377 and overturned (1950s).



One of the many moments captured in time by Art Stewart are local men delivering Christmas gifts to children. Eugene White (left), Bill Fraley (right).

Art From C-1



Art skillfully repairs a broken part at his machine shop on West Main Street. Notice the old bellows and assortment of scrap metal and iron that he often uses in repair work.

business, and, as long as someone doesn't move it, I can put my hands on whatever I need whenever I need it." That is an amazing statement considering some of the stuff has been stacked there for half

a century.

In 1957 Art Stewart, a man that marched to the beat of a different drummer, bought a Harley-Davidson motorcycle. Art was quick to point out that it was the last "Harley



Art Stewart skills as a welder earned him the name of Morehead's Mr. Fix it.

Hardtail" solid frame model made by the famous motorcycle maker. When Art bought his motorcycle it was at a time when motorcycles weren't very "cool." In 2001 many business and professional men and women own and ride Harley "Hogs." But when the young Mr. Stewart roared up and down the narrow quiet streets of old Morehead in the 1950s, he

created quite a "stir" among the old timers. Art, with his philosophy of never selling anything, still is the proud owner of that Harley today.

People person

Art Stewart is a "people person" and genuinely enjoys talking to people who bring things for him to repair. He takes pride that he can speak to them in a language they understand from businessmen

in three piece suits, to college professors with PhDs to farmers in bib overalls. He enjoys meeting and talking with everyone. He especially derives great satisfaction at seeing the happiness on his customers faces when he has repaired something they thought was lost forever.

For almost twenty years, Art Stewart recorded Morehead moments in time on film with his camera. For an additional thirty plus years he has repaired things that were broken from the people of Morehead and Rowan County. Webster's definition of art is (1) An occupation requiring knowledge or skill. (2) The conscious use of skill and creative imagination in the production of aesthetic objects.

Art considers both photography and welding to be an art. His photography creatively captures aesthetic moments in time on film as an artist captures aesthetic moments in time on canvas. Artists use their skill with a paint brush. Art uses his skill with a welding torch and he wields his welding torch and

camera as an artist wields a paint brush. Both create something beautiful and long lasting.

Art successfully traded camera for welding torch

In 1960 when Mr. Stewart traded his camera for a welding torch it seemed bizarre indeed. But he recalled fondly, "I've always enjoyed everything I've ever done, and I feel sorry for people who don't enjoy their work." He emphasized that as long as he has his health, he will never retire. He said, "I can honestly say that every day of my life I have always looked forward to going to work. I'll never retire as long as I can come down to the shop and putter around."

Art Stewart still lives in Morehead and is married to the former Betty (Click), an administrator in the Rowan County Schools. They have two children, Trish and Tommy. Art is one of the people who has helped Morehead grow with his welding skills, and captured much of that growth with his photo skills.

RCSHS teachers help celebrate Career Week

Secondary and post-secondary institutions across the Commonwealth are celebrating the value of occupational education during Career and Technical Week, which Governor Paul E. Patton has proclaimed Feb. 11-17.

The theme of Career and Technical Education Week is "Want Career Success? Get Career Skills." The event is sponsored by the Kentucky Community and Technical College System, the state Cabinet for Workforce Development, the state Department of Education, and the Kentucky Association of

Technical education assists Kentuckians in making the transition from school to postsecondary education or in the workplace, Patton said. "Technical education training initiatives supply the Commonwealth with a versatile, well-educated and well-trained workforce."

Almost 400,000 Kentuckians - from middle school students through adults - participate in the state's career and technical education programs. They may be studying business education in high school, learning technical skills at a

technical college. Programs focus on such areas as computer technology, construction technology, agriculture, automotive technology, family and consumer sciences, business or marketing education and health services.

"Success on the job requires thinking, learning and analytical skills," Patton said. "Success on the job requires the ability to adapt—the average person will change careers five to seven times in his or her lifetime.

"Students and adults who need new skills can get the instruction and training



Career and Technical Education Teachers at Rowan County Senior High School include: from left, seated: Paul Courtney, Technology Education; Evelyn Rose, Pathway to Careers; Hillary Lewis, Family and Consumer Science; Charlie Charles, Technology Education. Standing, Lisa Sorrell, Business; Cindy Rhodes, Business; Peggy Jones, Family and Consumer Science; Debbie Law, Business; Amy Turner-Watson, Agriculture.