

Eric W. Allen Jr. (1920-1986)

By Floyd J. McKay

Editor of the *Medford Mail-Tribune* from 1968 to 1985, Eric W. Allen Jr. was known for liberal editorials addressed to a conservative community. He was a prominent member of an informal group of progressive editors who were influential in Oregon politics and media after the Second World War.

Allen was born on September 14, 1920, in Eugene, where his father, Eric W. Allen, was the first dean of the School of Journalism at the University of Oregon. He was educated at the university and at Reed College. After early jobs with newspapers in Oregon and California and army service in World War II, Allen was United Press International bureau chief in Fresno, California, and Salem, Oregon. He left journalism from 1944 to 1948 to serve as private secretary to governors Earl Snell and John Hall.

Allen joined the Mail-Tribune in 1948 as city editor. Known for editorials defending civil liberties and the environment, he was active in civic affairs in southern Oregon and served as a Pulitzer Prize judge on three occasions.

Allen retired as editor in 1985, the same year he was named to the Oregon Newspaper Hall of Fame. He died on Christmas Day 1986. He was inducted into the University of Oregon's School of Journalism and Communication Hall of Achievement in 2017.

Sources

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