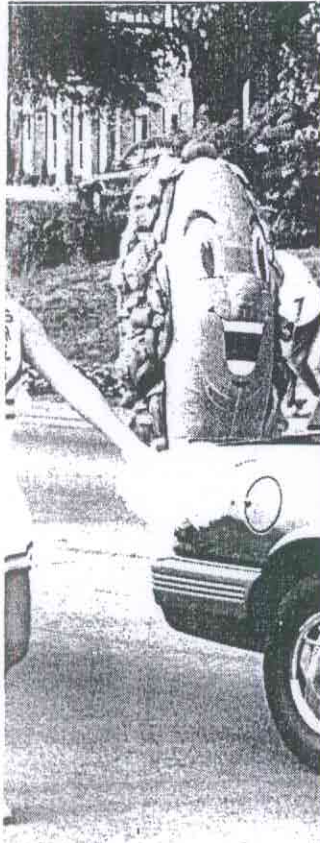


ously approved the appointment.

graduate of Centre College, Court for five years.

For Voice-Tribune 9-21-94



staff photo by STEVE RUSH

he J-town Gaslight Festival
d and ended near the J-town
ept. 11-18.

Locals interviewed for book on John Sherman Cooper

By ANNE SCHOLTZ HEIM
Staff Writer

Lexington Herald-Leader story editor and former reporter Harry W. Merritt is in the midst of the hardest assignment of his life: a book on the late John Sherman Cooper, elected by Kentuckians to the United States Senate five times.

Merritt, 41, is at the tail end of a 15-month leave of absence, without pay, from the paper to write a book on the life of the longtime senator from Somerset — and several East End residents are playing a part in it.

At the age of 10, Merritt recalled, he had "an intense immersion in politics" and became fascinated with it, especially liberal Republicans. Cooper was a liberal Republican whom Merritt described as unique as a senator, especially from Kentucky.

When Merritt came to Kentucky in 1980 as a reporter for the then-Lexington Leader, he figured someone was already doing a Cooper book.

During the summer of 1992, Merritt "put out feelers" to see if a book had indeed been done and if not, how it would be received.

At that time, he hooked up with the University Press of Kentucky, which had expressed an interest in the project. Merritt contacted a literary agent, but there was no interest. The University Press was not able to give Merritt an advance payment for the book, he said. "It's not ever going to be a big moneymaker."

Instead, Merritt has relied on his wife, Susan Zator, to support the couple during his quest for information for the book during his leave from his job.

He has tried to get grant money for the project, and has received a total of \$9,550 in grants and speaking fees since July 1993. Mary Bingham, after talking with Merritt, wrote him a \$5,000 check from the Bingham foundation.

"I got more out of that \$5,000," he said, including several trips to Washington, a trip to Kansas, one week in Boston and part of

See page A-2

tour
ur of wicked
tricia O'Brien's
unch.'
elf, page B-3

Tale of two teams
Both teams played games last
weekend, but U of L and UK
played two different sports.
See Earl Cox on Sports, page B-1

about any illegal activity, such as burning on the site, "we'll jerk the permit immediately."

Attorney John Carroll pleaded with the council to understand how drainage and other problems had thwarted Stone's efforts to move ahead on his dream house on the 14-acre site.

The mostly finished home needs roof and gutter work, and there is still sodding and stone moving to be done, he said. A swimming pool needs to be fenced, and a cabana is only under roof, Stone said.

Carroll argued, "If the work can be finished, it's not fair to

project now."

But Fox Harbor neighbors Wayne Aho and Bill Scott said they had their doubts that Stone could finish in six months.

Aho, who said he's heard "nothing but the noise from earth movers for years," told the council, "they build airports faster than this."

Scott said he was "disturbed to hear them threaten that the noise could go on even longer" if Stone and Baxter Builders couldn't get the permits extended.

Pat Proctor, Baxter Builders' principal, had argued that Stone,

other lots he owns nearby instead of continuing his sole project, and that could have resulted in more construction and noise.

But council members, looking visibly reluctant, gave Stone the extension.

They hedged, however, on a request from Hunting Creek representatives to fund the subdivision's holiday decorating project.

Council member Anne Simms told Kathy Brooks and a group of 14 other women that the city didn't have enough money budgeted to finance decorations, but that they were welcome to whatever wreaths and lights the city

Other subdivisions are also welcome to use what the city has, Simms said.

Falk proposed planting trees in land in the Don Calley Open Space and renaming the tract "Mayors' Grove."

Members approved funding for four trees to honor deceased mayors at a cost of about \$2,000. In the future, additional trees will be planted in a semicircle. Plaques at their base will bear the mayor's name and length of service to the city.

In other action, the council: *Gave final approval to two ordinances. One allows residents

Locals are interviewed for book on late Sen. Cooper

From page A-1

his computer and printer. To save money, he also housed for several weeks in Washington, skipped meals, and he walks to the UK library, about a mile from his home, to do research. "I can be pretty damn cheap when I have to be," he said.

"This book needs to be done," Merritt said. "This book should have been done long ago." Louisville's Bob Schulman seven years ago penned a small book on Cooper, an overview, Merritt said, called "The Global Kentuckian."

"John Sherman Cooper was a highly unusual politician," he said. Cooper led a unique life and defied the norms of what was expected of him, Merritt said. For instance, Cooper married late and was divorced before marry-

ing a Washington socialite, Lorraine Rowan Shevlin. He had no children but spent about 25 years paying off his father's debts after his death. "People in all walks of life go on about how great he was," which makes Merritt's job more difficult, he said. "Such a variety of people have praised this man."

A 1960 Newsweek poll of 50 Washington news correspondents named Cooper the ablest man in the Senate, according to The Kentucky Encyclopedia.

If Cooper had been a hated or controversial figure, a book would have already been done, and it would be easier to find sources and other facts.

In this odyssey, Merritt has talked to about 45 people, including Cooper's best friend from World War II, Cooper's brother, the sister of an old girlfriend and

East Germany, India and Nepal.

Cooper, Merritt said, was a member of the Senate during its greatest era, according to many historians. Cooper was in the middle of "all kinds of things that changed America," such as the civil rights movement and the Vietnam War.

"It's very, very hard work. It is also a marvelous adventure."

After devoting 15 months, full-time, to the book, Merritt is not finished. Nor is he even close. "I

don't know when I'll be done with it. ... There is a future in this thing. I'm not discouraged, and I don't intend to give up."

His goal with the book now is to get it done, and have the end result be "a book that captures a very rare human being and an even rarer politician," one that has reader appeal and stands up to scrutiny from historians.

To pass along information to Merritt for the book, call him at (606) 268-2165.

COMING

FALL FASHION ENCORE

NEW LOCATION

St. Matthews recycles garbage issue

By ANNE SCHOLTZ HEIM Staff Writer

their contents will be mixed with the regular garbage if the bags burst or come open.

It is unlikely that much, if

material from those that don't is picked up when the bags are separated and then it all is taken to a compost facility in Oldham