

When the Public's Right to Know is Threatened

And

when the rights of free speech and free press are at risk, all of the other liberties we hold dear are endangered

By Christopher Dodd

Inyo's remote location has always placed an added emphasis on the importance of a free and vibrant newspaper. It often took days for news to travel to remote and distant Inyo and the county's citizens were anxious to read about it as soon as it arrived.



And the myriad of dealings Inyo County encountered with Los Angeles while the southland city was buying property, acquiring water rights, and building an aqueduct, piqued the interest of every Inyoite as they clamored to keep informed.

In 1870, W.A. (Bill) Chalfant moved to Inyo County with his family where his father quickly began the Inyo Independent newspaper, predecessor of the Inyo Register. Chalfant's father was elected County Assessor in 1887 and Chalfant assumed leadership of the local newspaper.

Chalfant had a deep interest in Inyo County's history, and set about locating and obtaining as many records, stories, documents and important bits of information as he could find to preserve the story of

Inyo ... a book of that same name that he would soon author. Chalfant served the county as a newsman and historian right up until his death in 1943. An advocate and proponent of an informed public, Chalfant's legacy continues today in his many books and the newspaper still being printed that he helped found.