

COMMENTS REGARDING THIS LEE ALLEN TRIBUTE JOURNAL . . .



Several years ago, when I first joined the Editorial Board and Jim Willis was the Senior Editor of the *Journal of Ophthalmic Prosthetics*, I thought that a tribute journal to Lee Allen would be appropriate. Of course, I had this thought before Lee had passed away in 2006. I share this revelation to show that this project has been on my mind for several years. Meeting Lee Allen at several conferences and then later corresponding with him over the years only cemented my feeling that Lee was a rare person, one I felt privileged to have met.

As Senior Editor, it has been exciting, interesting and at times exhausting (in) celebrating Lee Allen. I do not think anyone who assembles a project of this magnitude feels totally comfortable prior to going to press – for any single article in this tribute *Journal* could have been expanded into a book on itself.

Thinking back on the past, I believe it was unfortunate that we did not create this tribute *Journal* while Lee was still alive. I could have used his editing and writing skills in the formation of this retrospective.

Lee's greatest skill may have been his teaching ability. Fortunately, I was able to recruit many talented and inspired professionals who had benefited from his teachings who were only too happy to participate in this project. This *Journal* is the first one dedicated and composed entirely for a single individual. It is also the most lengthy journal the American Society of Ocularists has ever assembled. There is a reason for



Lee Allen

This black and white block print by Lee Allen is of the beloved “Old Capital” on the campus of the University of Iowa.

these distinctions: His genius will not be seen again soon.

To many ocularists, the name Lee Allen is almost a cliché, perhaps a myth. The ophthalmic photographers describe Lee as a *legend*. It is my hope that this tribute journal introduces this legend to those who may not be familiar with this rare craftsman, which many professions claim as their own. I am certain that, after reading through all of these interesting articles, we will all come to understand why Lee is held in such high regard by many individuals, and why the University of Iowa flew the U.S. flag at half mast above the “Old Capitol” in his honor.

Michael O. Hughes, B.C.O., B.A.D.O.
Senior Editor
Journal of Ophthalmic Prosthetics