



TRIBUNE TOWER FAREWELL

A CELEBRATION OF THE ICONIC TRIBUNE TOWER
AND THE PEOPLE WHO WORKED THERE

Featuring the photography of John O'Neill

FOREWORD

For all involved in providing stories and encouragement for this labor of love, and for those of us privileged to work within the hallowed walls of Tribune Tower for some or all of the past four-plus decades, three words consistently arise when we think of the Tower: Home. Iconic. Family.

A house becomes a home only because of those who inhabit it, a transformation that springs from relationships, accomplishments, and shared memories. Tribune Tower was “home” to countless thousands of us who worked there, forged careers there, were mentored and provided mentorship there, formed lasting relationships there, and who continue to reflect fondly on our time spent there.

The Tower was a true icon. The millions of visitors who touched the stones implanted in the foundation and edifice, and who were moved by the inscriptions inside and out, were awed by the building - as were those of who passed daily through its doors.

The Tribune Tower was for many of us symbolic of the Freedom of the Press and all who fought for that special right that helps make the United States (still) the “beacon on the hill” for millions of citizens in this country and for those yearning to come. Yet it was also symbolic of the characteristics of those who worked there: Strong. Ethical. Courageous. Visionary. Purposeful. Innovative. Kind. Industrious. Fun. Memorable. Innovative. Transparent. Accomplished. Welcoming. Enduring.

We all were and remain a part of a very special family - alumni of Tribune Company and its subsidiaries. Like many families, we’ve been blessed to have a “patriarch” in John O’Neill,

whose gift transcends being a skilled photographer to one that distinguishes the truly great from the good: he faithfully captures the essence of his subject. This commemorative book exists because of John and his remarkable lens.

I was asked to write this foreword on behalf of many. For the vast majority of us, we started our careers in Tribune Tower. Speaking personally, everything I learned to be successful in business I learned while working at and because of the Tribune and those I was fortunate to have worked with. I know I am not alone.

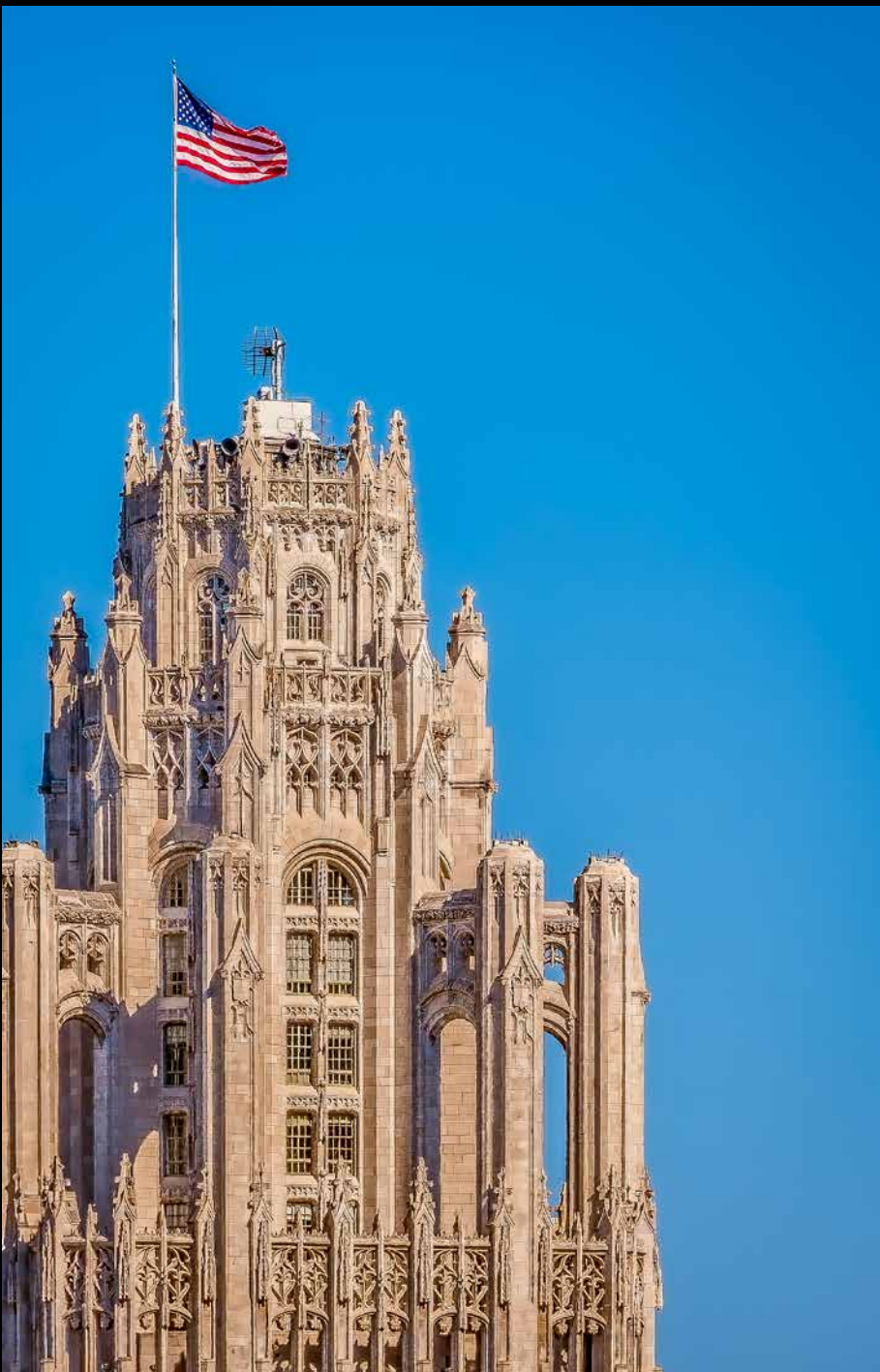
Lastly, in a “new media” world that has seen unparalleled shifts in media business models and consumption habits, content has been, is, and always will be king. No better evidence of the irreplaceable role of content, via images and words, exists than this book.

To John and to all who contributed to this book’s development and publication: thank you. So much.

—CHUCK DELGRANDE



THROUGH THE YEARS



THE TOWER

Until the Omni Towers were built just north and east of the Tower, it was still silhouetted against a field of blue sky when viewed from the south. And now with the announcement that a 1,400 foot tower will be built on our back parking lot, this view of the Tower lit by the morning sunrise may be gone.

BOB KAHN: I like architecture...modern and European. But, when it came to the Tribune Tower, I thought it was the ugliest building in the world. Regardless, I took a job there (June 1961), and worked on various floors of the Tower. I ran up and down many flights of stairs and never got to appreciate the building.

But on a cold wintry night, in February 1973, the night before I was to move to New York to work in the Trib's office there, I drove downtown and spent almost two hours walking up and down Michigan Ave, just looking at what I now found to be the most beautiful building in the world: Tribune Tower. It was a bittersweet time. I loved Chicago and I loved the Tower, but the move to New York was a move upward.

I will remember that night forever.

Although I grew to love and admire the Tower, I knew I was going to miss the many friends and people who were the heart and soul of the Tower.



Surrounded by the crown.



Looking out from the crown through the incredible cement lattice work.

THE CROWN

When you're in the Tower Crown, it totally surrounds and overwhelms you. What looks impressive from street level it much more awesome up close. The scale is magnificent. Those massive buttresses are six stories tall. There is absolutely no way to get all of the detail in one photo without a fisheye lens. I had seen a decades-old black and white fisheye image that I wanted to recapture in color before we left. It ended up being one of my favorite Tower images of the thousands I've shot.

LORI BOTTERMAN: This looks like a gemstone. I love this angle. Having the great pleasure to have been sent to the Crown several times, your photos truly capture the magnificence.

JOHN'S REPLY: The Crown always took my breath away! It was the the way it surrounded you with architecturally awesome and unique beauty. I've heard it's the only gothic tower in North America. I've certainly never seen anything else like it.



Inside the crown.

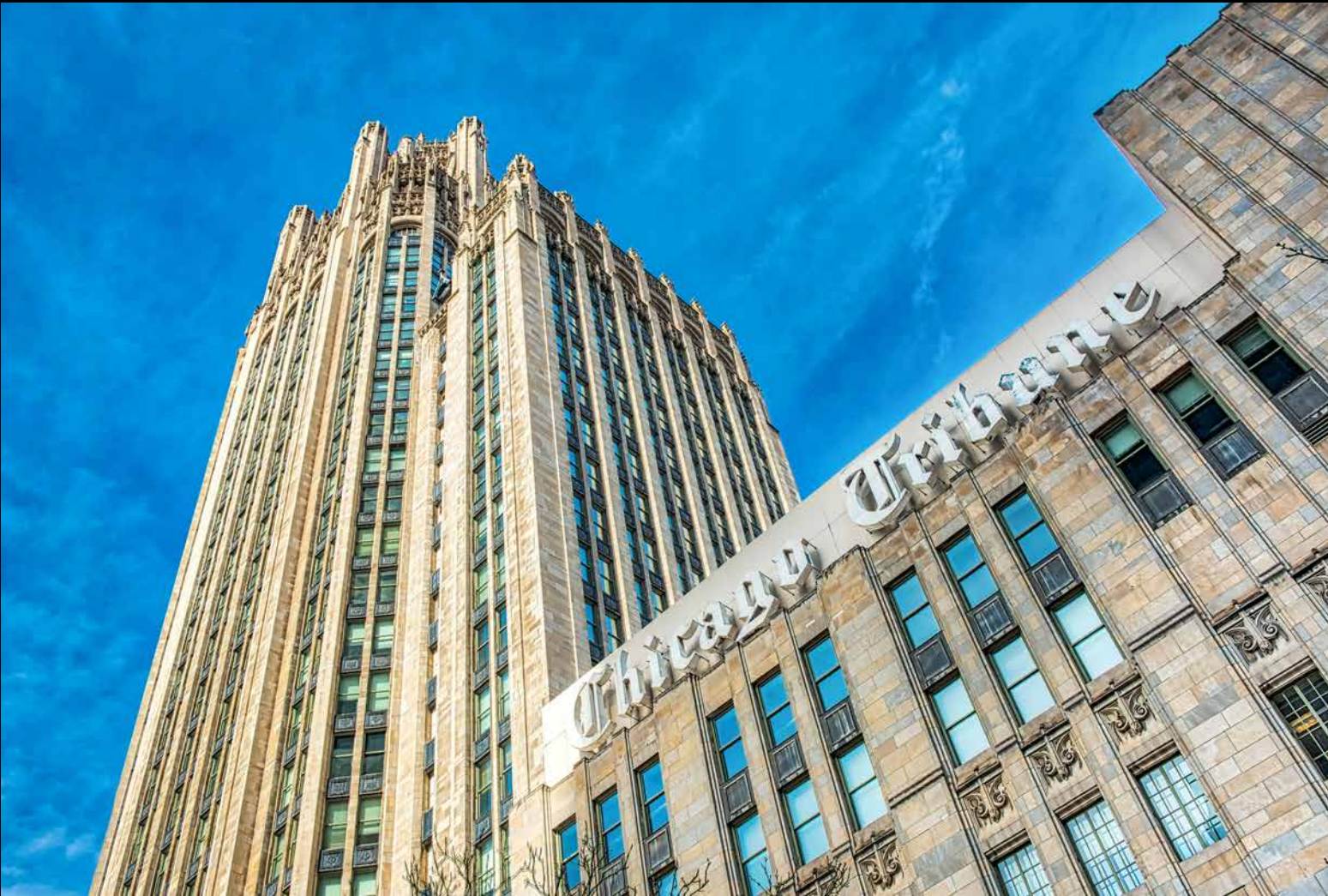
ON THE ROOF

JOHN O'NEILL: The awesome scale of the flying buttresses at the Trib Tower's Crown are hard to believe until you are surrounded by them. They are five stories tall and surround the building. From street level with the lights on, I think the crown looks like limestone lace.

MIKE LOGAN: I remember Charlie Cacelli taking me up to the flying buttresses — "Vertical Disneyland" as he called it.

CHRIS BELEC: One of the most unique rooftops, views, and experiences of Chicago. We would get up there a few times until we were forced down to the back porch. Can't remember what floor that was but there was a grill there. I guess it was enough time since Schovanec interrupted air travel into O'hare with his grilling at the Rosemont office.

SHERRI STERLING SCHMIDT: Even almost 28 years later, I feel the tug on my heart. I have wonderful memories and lifelong friends from my time spent there and a few other Tribune properties.



John O'Neill: In our final week at the Tower, I thought I'd grab the iconic Pioneer Plaza angle of the Tower as we left it. Immediately after leaving the scaffolding went up and the renovations began.



Mary Beth Cobleigh-Beal: The bones of a place are always an integral part of the heart and soul of it.

A GRAND VISION

MIKE SPAULDING: What a grand vision, the overall appeal of the angle taken, the angles of the Tower itself, plus the blues of the windows, sky and border.

BOB KAHN: The inspiration for the Tribune Tower was the Cathedral of Notre Dame. The flying buttresses of the Tower are an homage to the Cathedral. For this little Jewish boy, being on top of the tower really was like being in a cathedral.

MARIANNE GUMOS: The Light is glowing! You have to visit France to see the "Originals," the true gothic cathedrals. I am sure you will be in ecstasy. Thank you, USA, for not forgetting your origins.

CHARLENE GETTY: What's going to happen to this beautiful building?

JOHN O'NEILL: The main lobby and exterior will be protected thanks to historical preservation. The rest will be converted to retail and high-end condos.



Tribune from across the river over the flags on the Michigan Avenue Bridge.



View from the very top.

VIEW FROM THE TOP

JOHN O'NEILL: This is a view I had hoped to see, but never thought I actually would. This photo was taken from the old observatory deck high atop the Tribune Tower, up by the flag-pole above the Crown on the 34th floor. The cityscape view is absolutely breathtaking. You look far down on the Wrigley Building, London House, the river, and the south skyline as the city goes by. This rare and incredible view used to be the highest point in Chicago and was an observatory people could visit.

MIKE SPAULDING:: Magnificent hues and blues, great angle and a grand vista. Love the stuttering cars crossing the river. Great series, great subject, fantastic photographs.

RAY MILLER JR.: All across our great land, there are examples of our nonchalance about our history. I'm all for progress, but we must respect and preserve those iconic legacies that define our heritage.



From the flagpole on 34, looking north.



When the North Michigan Avenue skyline is viewed from the London House Hotel, Trib Tower is the focal point.



John O'Neill: The detail at the top of the Tower crown is nothing short of magnificent. The church towers in Europe that inspired it were much lower and easier to view though. I thought I'd share an image I took with a telephoto lens that highlights that detail at night. This was in October 2010, and was also the first time the Tower had ever used colored lights on top as many buildings do today. I convinced them to do it for a Breast Cancer Awareness initiative I was heading up. They were supposed to be pink...but as you can see, they were a little off. At least we got the Tribune thinking of changing colors at the top for special observances.



Looking up with flags, taken a few days before we left the Tower for good.



Corporate H.Q.: Tribune Tower, Wrigley Building, and DuSable Bridge from the Riverwalk at blue hour in 2015.



Trib Tower flies the “W”!

John O’Neill: In April 2018, with our pending move out of the Tower being imminent, the Chicago Tribune sales department made a “Farewell to Trib Tower” the theme for their 60th annual Campbell Awards (their top sales awards). In celebration of the event and their drive to always win, they contacted me and asked me to do a special edition of the Trib Tower Crown in black and white with the Cubs W flag and the American flag in color. Signed, framed, and numbered prints were given to all of the attendees to remember the event.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I must take a moment to thank some key individuals who helped make this book happen. First, Chuck DelGrande and Bob Kahn, for lighting the initial fire, and especially to Chuck for his generosity and encouragement. Mike Halston, Ernie Kayser, and Chuck Betzold for their historical insights. Added thanks to one-day photo assistants Mike Halston and Bob Kahn for helping me shoot some of the images in this book. Chuck Betzold, a friend, and long-time colleague and Tribune historian, not only provided some key historical images, he also served as a tour guide in the closing weeks and gave me key access for some of these photos. Thanks as well to the many friends and current and former colleagues who contributed content for this book.

Special thanks also go to Kim Gorsuch-Bradbury and her talented team at weeva.com for their thoughtfulness and encouragement in pulling this content together and making it look great.

And last, but most significantly, thanks to my wife, Pat, a 20-year Tribune employee herself, for her endless patience and support putting up with countless hours of me shooting and editing these images, and gathering the content.

John O'Neill