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“THE LAMINATOR” RUSS RUSSELL ARCHIVES 25 YEARS OF HUNTSVILLE CRE

HUNTSVILLE, AL *June 19, 2013* —The man now known about town as The Laminator, began using clear UV film lamination to preserve *Huntsville Times* news articles, local magazine articles, and construction site photography to preserve and document chronologically, what he foresaw as Huntsville’s precipitous rise as one of the nation’s smartest and most innovative cities. In 1988, Russ Russell was a young upstart in Huntsville’s burgeoning commercial real estate market. It began as a creative sales strategy, designed to compete against well-established commercial brokers who were ‘kicking my butt’ in Huntsville commercial real estate during the 1980s. Today he has every *Huntsville Times* real estate section over the past 25 years, laminated and archived in his office.



“I grew up in a Huntsville that was rapidly growing from a small town into an innovative city as a result of NASA and the space program,” Russell says. “I saw that the *Huntsville Times* and many of its publications always had the early scoop on economic development projects, evolving technologies, prestigious personnel moving to Redstone Arsenal, and significant government-related contracts. I wanted to chronicle that evolution through print media documents and photographs, but I also realized these articles were a sort of crystal ball into the future.”

Russell began sending laminated new stories and articles to small businesses, city leaders, military dignitaries, and commercial landowners, with hopes of leveraging relationships and sharing pertinent information about the City that would attract big business. “What started as a creative sales tool aimed at increasing sales by building up a portfolio of listings I could move, turned into twenty-five years of recorded Huntsville history from the commercial development perspective.” In fact, Russell has built a reputation as an avid Huntsville historian, known for his engaging and often creative approach to keeping the business community informed of significant economic news; and he often uses anecdotes and humor about himself and community business leaders to put together flyers and presentations to commemorate important economic events.

Russell’s archives go back 25 years to December 1988 when after receiving one of his first laminated stories, Huntsville attorney, Dieter Shrader listed the Ol’ Heidelberg restaurant building with Russ Russell Commercial Real Estate’s firm for \$675,000. “I have years of ‘thank you’ emails and notes from people all over Huntsville,” Russell says.

Russell regularly distributes to Cummings Research Park, both the Huntsville/Madison County and Madison City Chambers of Commerce, and the Better Business Bureau. Many businesses throughout Huntsville regularly receive The Laminator's articles including the U.S. Space & Rocket Center, the Huntsville Museum of Art, many restaurants and most of the local nonprofit organizations, as well as various politicians, lawmakers, athletes, military brass, and business owners who say they appreciate and enjoy Russell's documents. Andy Kattos, president of Servisfirst Bank admits he sometimes follows Russell's example by laminating and distributing pertinent financial-related news articles to his business banking customers.

"I opened my doors in 1987 with one listing — an office building located at 1580 Sparkman Drive," Russell fondly recalls. Today, Russ Russell Commercial Real Estate has acquired the largest number of commercial real estate listings in North Alabama; Russell is the only commercial Realtor in the state of Alabama to hold three professional commercial designations as a Certified Commercial Investment Member (CCIM), a Certified Exchange Advisor (CEA), and Specialist, Industrial and Office Real Estate (SIOR); and the Only Realtor in the U. S. to hold four designations including Accredited Land Consultant (ALC). For more information, contact Russ Russell at 256-536-7777 or visit his website at www.russrussell.com.