

From the Vault: Happiness is worth celebrating!

From the Vault is an exclusive feature for the Keepsake Community from Hallmark Historian Samantha Bradbeer.

Proud History

Peanuts, the popular comic strip featuring characters like Charlie Brown, Linus, Lucy and Snoopy, was created and drawn by American cartoonist Charles Schulz (1922-2000). This month marks its 70th anniversary – as *Peanuts* made its first appearance on October 2, 1950, in seven newspapers.

Over the next decade, *Peanuts*' popularity grew, and, so much so, that it's zany characters eventually caught the eye of Hallmark Editor [Arnold Shapiro](#), who fostered the iconic partnership between the two global brands.

Peanuts' relationship with Hallmark began in 1960 with a retail test of 4 greeting cards. "Certainly Schulz is the cartoon champion of all time - and for greeting cards, too. He is a magician with a pencil. The simplicity of his drawings and the unaffected frankness depicting everyday life give his characters an appeal the public never tires of," said Hallmark founder [J.C. Hall](#).

Since 1960, over 1 billion Hallmark *Peanuts* cards have been sold. Their immediate popularity inspired a variety of other Hallmark products featuring *Peanuts* characters— books, candles, gifts, partyware, ornaments and more – that have been sold and treasured in over 40 countries worldwide.

Today, Hallmark is celebrating *Peanuts*' 70th anniversary with joyful gifts and exclusive collectibles, including over a dozen ornaments, in stores and online. When the time came to curate this collection, countless artists, designers, and writers visited the Hallmark Archives for inspiration. Many of their final designs pay homage to *Peanuts*' early history.

To learn more about their inspiration and love for these timeless characters, I sat down with Keepsake Artist [Tracy Larsen](#) – one of the main contributors to the *Peanuts* ornament line.

Creating Magic

In 1973, Hallmark offered an assortment of glass-ball ornaments and 12 yarn figures—the first collection of what would become Keepsake Ornaments. Since then, the brand has introduced more than 10,000 ornaments, and more than 100 ornament series.

In those earliest days, Hallmark had a vision of creating gifts and ornaments with magical qualities: ornaments that would recall timeless memories, celebrate beloved traditions, and commemorate the special times we share with family and friends.

Hallmark's first *Peanuts* ornaments debuted in 1977. "In some of the early *Peanuts* ornaments, Keepsakes would use 2D images and artwork of the characters and wrap them around ball ornaments, a pretty simple process," explained Keepsake Artist Tracy Larsen. "We also did some fairly involved sculptures that featured scenes that were placed inside a round ornament and sometimes featured light."

Today, technological advances and artistic innovations bring new kinds of magical qualities to Hallmark ornaments every year. In addition to unparalleled artistry and craft, Hallmark introduced sound, light, motion, interactive storytelling and more in order to bring their loyal collectors and fans the very best. "Some of my favorite *Peanuts* products I have helped create feature the characters playing instruments and moving while they play - in sync with others of the gang, and sophisticated light shows - timed to Christmas music," said Tracy. "The characters are versatile enough to allow us to put them in a lot of fun situations with more complex processes."

And he should know. "It seems like I've been working on *Peanuts* artwork my whole life!" Tracy laughed. "I still have my early drawings, from around age 6 or 7, of *Peanuts* characters." As he grew older, Tracy began taking art classes, and, after receiving praise and encouragement from his high school teachers, he attended Brigham Young University and studied illustration.

A few years later, Tracy met with Hallmark Recruiter Arch Unruh. "In 1987, I sent a portfolio and application to Hallmark and received a job offer to work in the Licensing Design Studio, doing mostly greeting cards featuring licensed characters," recalled Tracy.

Tracy spent the next 8 years as a greeting card artist. “My first Hallmark assignment was a birthday card of Snoopy doing his ‘happy dance’ on the cover. I also created gift wrap, puzzles, calendars, etcetera, and I even had the opportunity to create two birthday gifts that were sent to Charles Schulz,” said Tracy. Shortly after sculpting one of those gifts – Snoopy as Rodin’s *The Thinker* – Tracy began thinking about sculpting full-time. “I sent my portfolio to the Keepsakes Studio, and I was hired in 1995,” said Tracy. His experience with licensed characters made him a perfect addition, and it didn’t take long for him to get his first *Peanuts* ornament assignment. “It was the Winter Fun with Snoopy series that started in 1998, and I have done every one of those in the series for the past 23 years!” he exclaimed.

Recreating that Schulz Style

It takes the efforts of a full-time staff of artists, designers, and writers to translate Schulz’s work into hundreds of products each year. Their first step in preparing a design is often a trip to the research files. Countless Hallmark employees have also reviewed vintage *Peanuts* greeting cards and products in the Hallmark Archives, and visited the [Charles M. Schulz Museum](#) and *Peanuts*’ corporate offices to access the original comic strips.

“I was a regular reader of the newspaper strip. I also owned the *Peanuts Treasury* and *Happiness Is a Warm Puppy*. I would laugh out loud while I read them,” recalled Tracy. Today, he frequently flips through the comics for ideas, especially for the Spotlight on Snoopy ornament series. “I like to see the different personas that Schulz gave to Snoopy - from Joe Cool to the WWI Flying Ace, fighting the Red Baron,” said Tracy.

A Charlie Brown Christmas and other cartoon specials have also served as inspiration. “I’ve been fortunate to serve as the lead artist for a few years on the development of the *Peanuts* line, and one of my main ‘go to’ sources for reference and ideas is *A Charlie Brown Christmas*,” said Tracy. “I was five years old when it first aired on TV in 1965. It quickly became my favorite. I would make sure that I would watch it every year! I loved the music and the message, and still do.”

Every *Peanuts* design created by Hallmark is therefore an adaptation of an original drawing by Schulz. Artists update the characters by putting them in new situations and experimenting with fresh stylings. While there are some design

restrictions – to remain faithful to Schulz’s original intent - there is a great deal of judgment that allows the artists to experiment with backgrounds, facial expressions, gestures, props and situations. “Since he created the strip for over 50 years, there is plenty there to draw from,” said Tracy. “But, for some ideas, like the Beagle Scout and Winter Fun With Snoopy ornaments, I draw on personal experiences of scouting and winter activities I have participated in.”

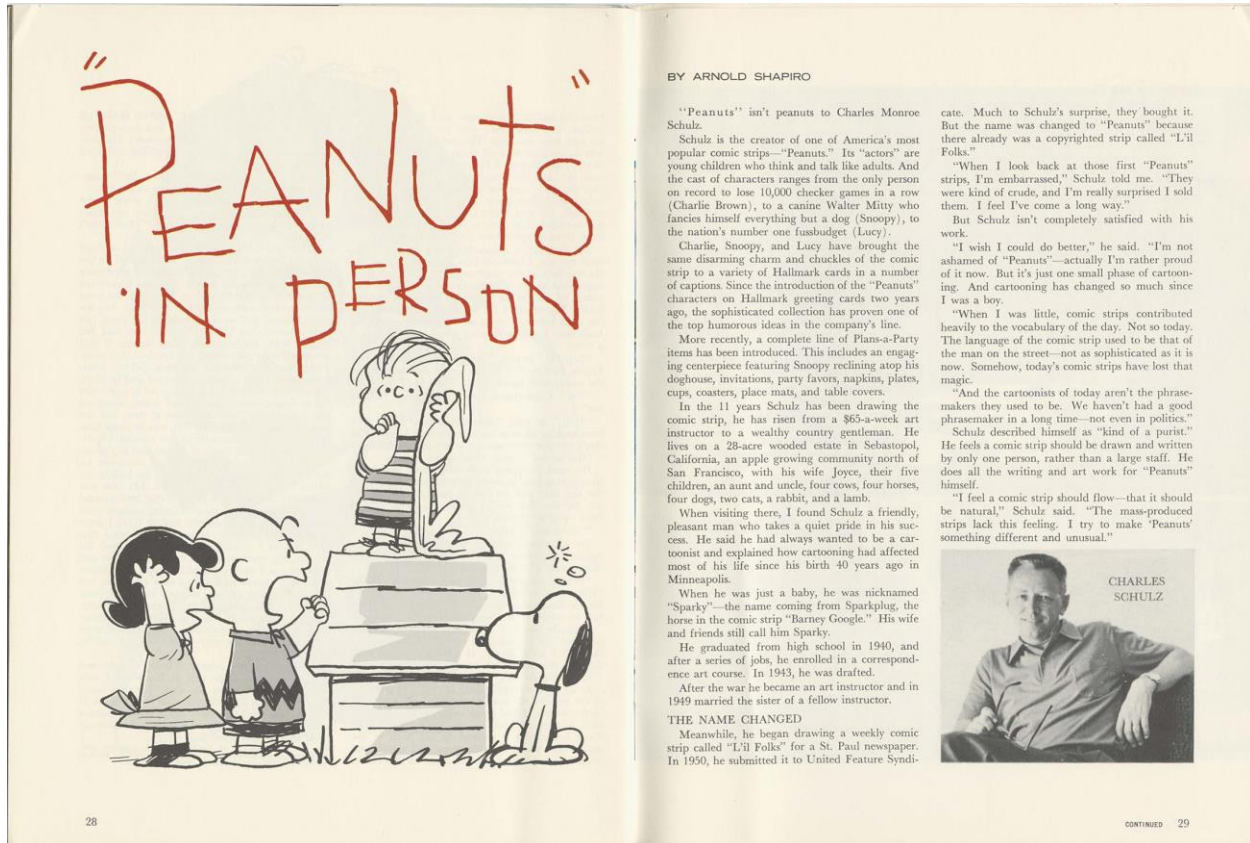
Over 60 years of working together, Hallmark has gained infinite trust and respect from Schulz and his family. So exacting and accurate are their depictions of Charlie Brown and friends that Hallmark is one of the few companies approved to redraw *Peanuts* artwork on new product, and Tracy and countless others continue to find new ways to delight fans of all ages.

“I’m fortunate to have sculpted 5 *Peanuts* ornaments for the 2020 ornament line – [The Peanuts Gang The Perfect Tree](#), [The Peanuts Gang Portaging Pals](#) (Beagle Scouts), [The Peanuts Gang You’re a Good Man, Charlie Brown!](#) (70th Anniversary), [Peanuts Spotlight on Snoopy – Doctor Snoopy](#) (#23), and [Peanuts Winter Fun With Snoopy](#) (#23),” said Tracy. “I was especially honored to be able to create the 70th Anniversary ornament, which features Lucy and Linus holding up Charlie Brown while being led by Snoopy. The message of ‘You’re a good man, Charlie Brown!’ still rings true after 70 years, and I hope *Peanuts* fans enjoy it as much as I do.”

Photos:

- Charles Schulz, c. 1960s.
- *Peanuts* greeting card, 1960.
- “Peanuts in Person,” *Cards Magazine*, Winter 1962.
- Peanuts comic strip, signed by Charles Schulz to Don Hall, Sr., 1976.
- *Peanuts* Collection, Keepsake Ornament, 1977.
- Left to right: Charles Schulz, Jeanne Schulz, Adele Hall and Don Hall, Sr, 1985.
- Charles Schulz reviewing product, 1985.
- “Good Grief! Look at all those *Peanuts* products...,” *The Noon News*, May 25, 1985
- Letter from Charles Schulz to Don Hall, Sr. regarding his Hallmark visit., June 17, 1985.
- Winter Fun With Snoopy #1, Keepsake Ornaments, 1998.
- Keepsake Artist Tracy Larsen sculpting an ornament, 2008.

- Left to right: Tracy Larsen, Edythe Kegrize, and Joanne Wright discussing ornaments, 2018.
- Keepsake Ornament - [The Peanuts Gang You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown!](#) (70th Anniversary), 2020.



TIME TO THINK

Schulz has a tremendous insight into human nature. He has been called "one of America's sharpest, if kindest, social critics and analysts." And he attributes this to taking time to think.

"Actually, what a cartoonist needs most is time to think," Schulz said. "I wish I had more time to think, but extra projects seem to take so much time."

Schulz puts in about 25 hours a week at his drawing board. He begins his day about 9:30 a.m. when he walks the 100 yards from his 14-room split level contemporary house to his studio. He works there until about 4:30.

On Mondays and Tuesdays he usually works on the daily strips. These are drawn six weeks in advance.

On Wednesdays he starts on a Sunday strip—working 10 weeks ahead on this. Thursday mornings he finishes the Sunday strip, and Thursday afternoons he plays golf.

"That leaves Friday to work on whatever comes," Schulz explained. "Maybe I'll work on a Hallmark card. Maybe I'll start on the next week's daily strips and get ahead. I really don't have a strict schedule."

TIME FOR FAMILY

Schulz never works on weekends and seldom at night.

"Those times are reserved for my family," he said. "I enjoy being with my children."

And though he sometimes denies it, Schulz gets many ideas for "Peanuts" from himself and his family.



30

"Sparky is really Charlie Brown," Mrs. Schulz told me, "or rather, he was. Before we were married, he was shy and reserved. He felt he could never do anything well. He's different now."

"But he's still quiet and kind of reserved. In fact, he's the most uncelebrity-like celebrity you'll ever meet."

"And I guess I'm Lucy," she added, "though I don't like to admit it."

The ideas for Linus and his security blanket, Lucy's antics, and Frieda and her cat all came from Schulz's family.

Schulz is just under six feet tall, weighs about 175, has blue eyes, dark blond hair, and a crew cut. He doesn't smoke or drink, and "Good Grief!" and "Rats!", often used by his characters, are the closest he comes to swearing.

He enjoys bridge, golf, bowling, swimming, and tennis. He has a putting green, tennis court, and swimming pool on his property. And he and his wife bowl and play bridge at least once a week.

Schulz also is an avid reader. This is evidenced by a library full of best sellers and classics—most of which Schulz has read.

"When I find an author I like," he said, "I go on a kick of reading all his books." "In fact, I've developed almost a neurosis against it," he said.

A STRONG FOLLOWING

Schulz's fan mail comes from everywhere and everywhere.

"A couple years ago, when Charlie Brown didn't get any valentines," Schulz said, "I received thousands of cards from fans—many sending all the valentines they had received to Charlie Brown."

Schulz also has a strong following among the clergy. Priests, ministers and rabbis all have written him about the strip. And he gets many requests from high schools and colleges asking permission to use the "Peanuts" characters as the theme of yearbooks.

As for fine art and painting, Schulz said, "I enjoy looking at it, but I've never painted a picture. It looks so simple, yet I know it isn't and I know I couldn't do it."

"I very seldom draw for the fun of it, but I'm surprised to find out how much fun drawing can be."



The infectious charm of the "Peanuts" counter draws Jack Jonelson (left) and Walt Richards of line planning.



Specialty designs Jim Knekeovich designed the "Peanuts" centerpieces in the delightful "Peanuts" Plans-a-Party collection.

And drawing has paid off for Schulz. "Peanuts" appears in 614 newspapers, in 35 countries and eight languages. In addition to the comic strip, Schulz has published 12 anthologies of the strips, and another is in the works. The Ford Motor Company uses "Peanuts" in its advertising. There is a set of rubber dolls featuring all the characters. And there are "Peanuts" records, calendars, toy pianos, T shirts, sweat shirts, and pajamas on the market.

Besides all these, Schulz does a teenage cartoon for religious publications. He illustrated Art Linkletter's book, "Kids Say the Darndest Things," and he has worked on a "Peanuts" cartoon book for President Kennedy's physical fitness program, an assignment he considers quite an honor.

HONORS AND SUCCESS

Illustrating the President's book is only the latest of many tributes Schulz has received. In 1955, he was named the outstanding cartoonist of the year by the National Cartoonist Society. He was awarded its "Reuben," which is the equivalent of an "Oscar" or "Emmy."

Schulz won the Yale Humor Award as outstanding humorist of the year in 1956. Four years later he received the School Bell Award from the National Education Society. And in 1961, he was voted his community's "Man of the Year" award.

Has success spoiled Charles Schulz? Not in the least. Charlie Brown may be "Blah" and "Wishy-washy," Lucy may be a fussybudd. Linus may be insecure. And Snoopy may be neurotic. But Schulz—he's just a nice guy.



A three-day visit with "Peanuts" creator Schulz and his family was an ambition recently fulfilled for Hallmark Editing Manager Arnold Shapiro. The Northwestern University grad is an ardent fan of the comic strip and had always wanted to meet its creator. Shapiro conceived the idea of adapting "Peanuts" characters to greeting cards and wrote and developed the first cards. The 28-year-old Kansas City native came to Hallmark in 1958 from the CBS news team in Chicago.

32

SALUTE TO SERVICE

35 YEARS



HELEN VOSS (Box Assortment)



EARLE WOOD (Cutting)



LEE BINTON (Printing)



GLEN RODIE (Printing)



FRANK COZAD (Sales)



ALLAN DALY (Salesman)



JOE FOX (Salesman)



LOU HALLER (Salesman)



MARGUERITE KUNA (Personnel)



AL MOELLER (Salesman)



EDYTHE MOORE (Bond Store)



CLARENCE PERRY (Salesman)



DON SEEM (Fixture and System-made)



GENE SMITH (Sales)



GENE SPAW (Product Control)

20 YEARS

HELEN BAILEY (Customer Services); HELEN BLAND (Shop); RUBY BOYD (Promotional Personal); HELEN BRYANT (Credit); RUSS BURCH (Transportation); ELMER BUSS (Salesman); ED CLATWORTHY (Line Planning); HELEN DONALDSON (Switchboard); JACK GATWOOD (Building Service); LUCILLE HANSON (Office Services); JIM HARMON (Shop Finish); JANE HARTNETT (Treasury); DOROTHY HEDIN (Litho Art); JUNE HEMBREE (Payroll); ED HENRY (Engraving); RUTH HINDMAN (Westwood); CHARLENE HOLLENBECK (Order Control); ARMANDA KENDRICK (Card Shop); BERNARD KENSINGER (Shop Finish).

CATHERINE LATZ (Box Assortment); MELVIN LONG (Building Security); ANDY MILLER (Salesman); MARLAN MORRISSEY (Season Order); BETTY NABER (ED Merchandise Control); PEACHIE NOLAN (Building Service); MARIE PERRY (Hand Packaging); JACK POINDEXTER (Warehouse); ELIOTT ROBERTS (Salesman); GLADYS ROLLER (Colorware); ROYCE SHERWOOD (Salesman); CLAUDE SMITH (Salesman); LULU SNEED (Hand Packaging); SUE STAIR (Personnel); ARLINE TIMM (Hand Packaging); VIRGINIA WEBBER (Payroll); DON WILSON (Shop Finish); GREIG YARGER (Salesman); AUDREY ZOLLARS (Litho Art).

15 YEARS

BILL ALEXANDER (Salesman); RUTH ATTWOOD (Topoka); VADA BAILLIE (Lawrence); ISABELLE BARTON (Box Assortment); ROY BENNER (Everyday Order); CHARLIE BETH (Warehouse); HELEN BOONE (General Ledger); ROY BROMAN (Leavenworth); TOM BROOKS (Sales); CARL BRUNER (Westwood); BUD BRUNTON (Lawrence).

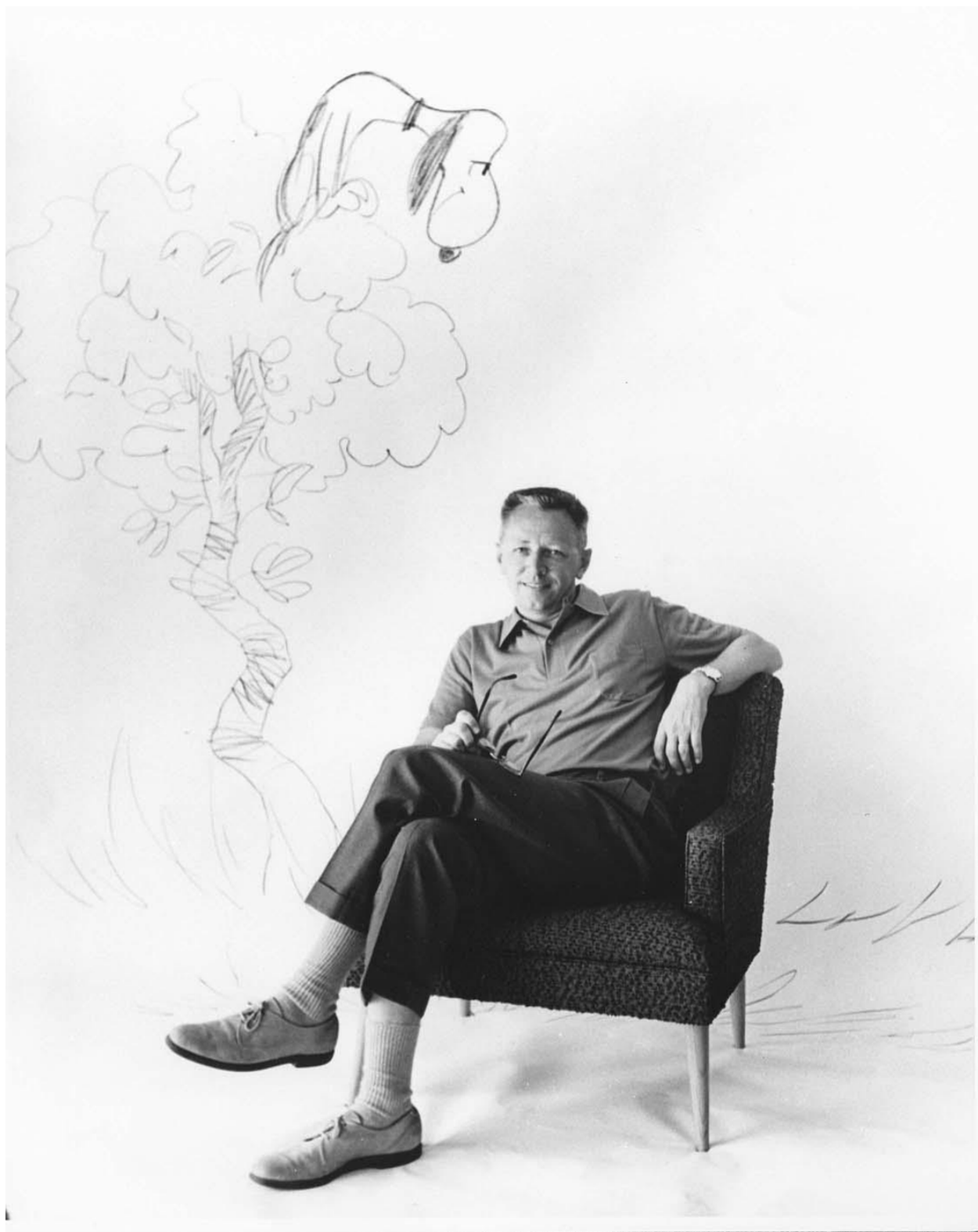
LARRY CHANDLEE (Manufacturing Admin.); RAMONA COCHENNET (Emporia); GEORGE CONK (Salesman); MARY EDWARDS (Leavenworth); CRAIG ELLIOTT (Sales); FERN FARNSWORTH (Shop Finish); ANN GERDEMAN (Treasury); THURMAN GISH (Product Control Admin.); WARREN GLENN (Large Die Cut); MARY JANE GLYNN (Leavenworth); BESSIE HALEY (Crown Room).

WALTER HALL (Salesman); GENE HANKINS (Computer Programming); BOB HARDEN (Lawrence); DICK HATCH (Salesman); EDNA HAWKINS (Building Service); CODY HENDERSON (Topoka); HAROLD HOLLINGER (Shop Finish); NADEEN

HOUSTON (Westwood); MARY CATHERINE KEEGAN (Design); DAN KENNEDY (Salesman); JERRY KNIPP (Machine Maintenance); ART LETHERRAROW (Building Management).

BETTY LIVINGSTON (Customer Services); BOB MAYHEW (Finished Goods); BOB MCCLUSKEY (Contemporary Design); FRANK MCCLURE (Personnel); DON McMILLAN (Salesman); LEM MELTON (Cost); JOHNNIE MILLER (Crown Room); CAROLYN PICKETT (Design); SUE POWERS (Leavenworth); ANNA REGIER (Emporia); FRAN ROGERS (Specialty Design); BETTY KOLIN (Topoka).

LOU SCHMITT (Design); DALE SEWARD (Topoka); FINDLEY SHEPHERD (Research Shop); PHIL SILDM (Retail Store); DELOKIS SMITH (Billing); GILGIE STARKLEY (Order Control); IRENE TIBBS (Topoka); CHARLES WAGGENER (Creative Mechanics); JACK WARD (Shop Research); MARGUERITE WRIGHT (Colorware); FRED WURST (Shop); MAURICE YOUNGSTROM (Cutting).





CHARLES M. SCHULZ
NUMBER ONE SNOOPY PLACE
SANTA ROSA, CALIF. 95401

June 17, 1985

Mr. Donald J. Hall
Chairman of the Board
Hallmark Cards, Inc.
Kansas City, MO 64108

Dear Don:

Since we got home, we became completely involved in rehearsals for our big ice show; thus, I have fallen behind in my correspondence.

Before too many more days go by, I want to tell you how much Jeannie and I appreciated your many courtesies. It was a pleasure meeting all of the people with whom we have corresponded these past years, and it certainly inspired me to want to continue the high standard of our creations.

Thank you again for everything. I appreciate being able to call you my friend.

Best regards,

Charles M. Schulz
Charles M. Schulz





FRIDAY, MAY 25, 1985, HALLMARK CARDS, INC.

DEBBIE PHELPS

Over the years, nearly every product line has included Peanuts characters. And Sales Promotion has created dozens of innovative promotions, graphic displays and merchandisers for Peanuts products. Many of the Peanuts products available today from Hallmark and Ambassador are on display today in the headquarters Cr

today in the headquarters Crown Room lobby.

A sampling of the hundreds of Hallmark Peanuts products





