The Birmingham Eccentric

16 PAGES, PART 1

SIXTY-FOURTH YEAR—NO. 7 | BIRMINGHAM, OAKLAND COUNTY, MICHIGAN, THURSDAY, MAY 15, 1941 | $1.50 PER YEAR (In Oakland County)—SINGLE COPIES, 5c

Let's quit sobbing about "our lost democracy." It really isn't lost at all. If you want it restored, here's the way to do it: whenever you want to criticize or compliment a unit of government, write or 'phone your elected representatives in that unit. They are the bridges between dictatorship and democracy.

THIS and THAT

By G. R. A.

Price of Freedom

I think that I shall never see
A great big man politically.
To be so large and big and tall
You've got to be in some things small
In which most voters would garner in
Must ballyhoo with lots of din.
I'd rather be a single rose
And toot my horn and blow my nose
In quiet pastures, clothed in green,
Than any other human scene.
So let me bloom in shaded place,
Away from politic's fast pace.
For he who enters in the game
Of getting folks to know his name
Must play all sorts of funny tricks—
Both in the cities and the "sticks."
The chap who wants official goal
May gain the job—but his poor soul
Too often writhes in torment's pain;
What profit is there in such gain?

The trouble lies not only in
The lust of some men for great power;
Equally it is up to all folks
Who are neglectful every hour
Of the need, in our great land,
To act as Free Men; take a stand
To uphold Right—to sacrifice
Their selfishness! This is the price
Democracy exacts of all—
Else Freedom totters, and will fall!
—G. R. A.

Mystery of Grand Opera

For years Lawrence Tibbett, grand opera baritone, has argued that in this country Grand Opera ought to be sung in English, so that more listeners would understand what they are all about. One evening last week, in Ann Arbor, I listened to the Tibbett person and, with one exception, he himself sang his numbers in foreign tongues; which reveals some inconsistency. A friend of mine, somewhat learned in musical matters, recently said to me: "Perhaps the chief reason why opera is sung in foreign tongue is because, were it given in English, the themes of many of them would bring about guild slaughter—for many opera operas are written around guerile plots. By sticking to foreign languages, opera can be shrouded in mystery."

It's Up to F. D. R.

In a national crisis that involves international situations, such as the present one, with Hitler plain in the European way, it is only too true that our own citizens must look to Washington for information and direction. English, in the face of conflicting reports, differing public statements, the people will be confused. They are confused today. They want to get into the war, even though most of them want to help Britain in every way short of war. Therefore, the only necessary act for President Roosevelt and his close advisors to do is to tell the utter and brutal truth: that ENGLAND ABOUT TO FALL? This question, alone, will serve to sway the people of the United States toward war, if answered in the affirmative. So long as it remains unanswered, our people will be loathe to accept as literal truth all the suggested dangers implied in utterances of men like Stimson, Hull, Knox, and Willkie. It's up to the President to tell the nation the exact truth of the international situation.

June Graduates

Next month is June; it is the month of many things, including bowlyweds and high school and college graduates. It is a great month for making a start in life—and plenty are the challenges confronting folks today as they embark upon either matrimony or the more prosaic job of making money in a world where standards still need defending.

Mother's Day vs. War

Last Sunday was Mother's Day in the United States. It was the annual day when children and fathers pause in their whirlwind rushing about and pay homage not only to their own maternal origin but to the whole institution of Motherhood. What a better world this would be if all mothers, who once faced death that life might live, pledged themselves to a consecrated study of the cause and cure of war; and who would insure greater permanency to the very children they have borne—without which assurance Motherhood is but one of the human arsenal of the God of War.

Labor Must Be Wise

Heaven forbid that American labor shall ever, as a national policy, be forbidden to organize and also to strike for redress of grievances; but labor leaders should be to shackle all individual freedom. But it does seem to us that some intelligent control, in the form of government and honest private leadership, should be imposed upon those labor leaders who, in a great emergency, prevent labor from engaging in work that must be done. Unless labor, itself, ceases to endanger the national defense program, it will bring upon itself those controls that result in a definite loss to labor's right to organize and to strike. The whole people will stand just so much monkeyshines in the ranks of labor; then Congressional reaction will set in, to the hurt of the honest and decent rights of labor.

Half-Mill Cut Suggested for City's Budget

Public Hearing on '41-'42 Expenditures Called for May 26

A one-half mill cut in the City tax rate for 1941-42 was seen as a probability today following an executive session of the City Commission last night in which preliminary estimates were discussed.

Although it is probably that the budget will be talked at the regular meeting next Monday evening, it is planned that a hearing will be held on Monday evening, May 26, at which time the public will be invited to attend and have the opportunity to voice its opinion. Final adoption is scheduled for June 2.

Figures submitted last night by City Manager D. C. Eebert and discussed by the Commission resulted in a tentative rate of 18½ mills or $18.50 per thousand of assessed valuation, compared with $19 a thousand last year. An even greater cut would have been possible had the assessed valuation stayed the same or had increased; however, the Assessor and Board of Review cut valuation of property by $196,680 to a new figure of $17,954,800. The cuts applies

(See BUDGET, Page 2)

Lincoln Avenue Light Asked Again

State action on a traffic light at South Woodward and Lincoln avenue is expected by the City Commission, it was revealed Monday night. In recent months, 10 of the city's 11 injury-accidents have occurred on that section of the highway, City Manager Donald C. Egbert declared. Two weeks ago a Birmingham delegation visited Lansing and again asked for action.

The matter came up Monday night when a letter was received from J. A. Evans, of the Universal Blower Company, asking for installation of Lincoln avenue at Woodward on the east side. At present, there is nothing but a dirt trail, and cross traffic at this point, from both sides of the highway, proceeds at its own peril without benefit of traffic control.

The proposed improvement of Lincoln for the short distance would involve about $1,900 for a 20-foot width of concrete. Only three—property owners abut, and assessment will be complicated, it was indicated. Before the commission takes further action, a report from Assessor Elmer W. Haack is awaited.

Pick Two Students for Junior Award Day

Carol Jean Watt and Michael Carney, both members of the Junior Class at Baldwin High, have been honored with selection as two representatives from Birmingham who will attend Junior Award Day at the University of Michigan Saturday. Several hundred students will be guests on that day.

'Murder in Rehearsal' Now in Rehearsal

Rehearsals for "Murder In Rehearsal" are now going ahead at top speed, it was announced this week. This mystery melodrama to benefit the British War Relief Society will be presented Friday, May 23, in the Village Playhouse. Tickets are on sale at LaBelle's, Wilson's and Shain's.

Says Railroads Fighting 'Rear-Guard' Action in Opposing Waterway

The railroads are fighting a "rear-guard" action in opposing the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence waterway, the Exchange Club was told Tuesday in a talk by Allen Dean, of the Detroit Board of Commerce, which is backing the project.

He described the railroad lobby as one of the most powerful in existence, and added that the rail carriers have no "God-given right" to a monopoly. On the other hand, he said that waterways would not hurt the railroads.

Next week, a speaker will present the railroad side of the issue.

Every president since Taft, both Republican and Democrat, have endorsed the seaway improvement, Dean declared.

"It is a need because the 2,000 mile route now exists, but there are 48 miles of 'bad road'," he pointed out. "Even with the shallow, narrow channel now existing, eight million tons of shipping have been carried in a year, and as late as last year, there were sailings for Europe about every ten days.

Great Lakes carriers now move 95 million tons a year, more than all the ports of the world combined, he said; the greatest area producing for export is in the Great Lakes region, he declared.

Dean added that national defense is the newest channel, because Fort Wayne, Detroit, is to become the national depot for mechanized equipment of the Army, and that is to be shipped abroad. The project can be completed in 3½ years, he said, the same time it takes to build a cruiser. Many of these heavy ships could be started here now, releasing coastal shipyards to build urgently-needed cargo ships.

Every advance has been opposed by many honest and sincere people, Dean added, displaying a copy of an 1839 poster put up in Philadelphia, blasting the new railroad as an outrage, the ruination of trade and annihilation of the people's rights.

Only Red Neckties In 29 Years

Friends of L. H. France, of Lakhrap Townsite, have marveled at his collection of neckties—all red, but of many shades and patterns. He owns none of any other color. The occasion of Mother's Day last Sunday brought out why. On June 2, 1918, when he left his native Germany to sail for America, his mother gave him a red tie, accompanied by the wish that he think of her each time he wore it. In the 29 years which have followed, he has never worn another hue.

Rally Is Tonight At Cranbrook Hall for County Library

Tonight is the time for the Proposed Oakland County Library rally, to be held at 8 o'clock at the Cranbrook School auditorium. In attendance of about 200 is expected, with visitors coming from as far away as Port Huron and Ann Arbor.

A dinner for those taking part in the program will be held at the Birmingham Community House previously, with these hostesses: Mrs. Cora Farrar, temporary chairman of the Committee for the Proposed Oakland County Library, and Miss Adeline Cooke, librarian at Baldwin Public Library.

The Speakers

Clifford Smart, principal of the Auburn Heights High School, and legislative chairman, Oakland County Parent-Teachers' Association, will preside at the rally. Adam Strohm, librarian of the Detroit Public Library, will speak on "The American Library and Democracy." Miss Addie Gilbert, librarian of the St. Clair County Library, will speak on "The County Library in Action," and Miss Adeline Cooke will give library facts of Oakland County. The motion picture "Portrait of a Library," which visualizes the traveling library service to rural areas as given by the Montclair, N. J., Public Library, will be shown.

The W.P.A. state-wide Library Project, Baldwin Public Library, Birmingham, Pontiac City Library and the Royal Oak Public Library are cooperating in the rally. Other organizations behind the movement for a county library include the American Association of University Women, Oakland County Federation of Women's Clubs, Oakland County P.-T.A., League

(See RALLY, Page 2)

Arrest Parents For Language In Front of Children

An unusual charge, using indecent language in the presence of children—their own children—has been placed against James Hillin, and his wife, Dorothy, of 1264 Webster avenue.

The couple was arrested Monday evening after Hillin's sister, Mrs. Maxine McAllister, of Dearborn, had complained to Assistant Prosecutor Harvey Lodge, who authorized warrants. The offense is alleged to have been committed in the presence of the Hillin children, a boy, 13, and a girl, 11, who are now staying at the County Juvenile Home.

When arraigned before Justice Forbes S. Hascall, the pair pleaded not guilty and trial was set for May 30. Yesterday they had not yet furnished bail and were still in the County Jail at Pontiac.

Bloomfield Tax Rate May Be Cut Slightly

Clarence E. Otter Named Mayor at Organization Meet

A slight decrease in the Bloomfield Hills tax rate is in sight, it was indicated Tuesday night at the City Commission meeting when the tentative budget was adopted and annual organization meeting held.

Clarence E. Otter was elected to his fellow commissioners to a second term as mayor; Luther B. Allen was named mayor pro tempore; George C. Booth, clerk; Manley D. Davis, treasurer; Harry J. Klingler, chief of police and fire, and Luther Allen, highway commissioner. None of these jobs is full-time. Norvil Farrar acts as deputy clerk and treasurer, while City Manager Harry W. Starr is also assessor, supervising police chief and engineer.

The budget will be formally adopted at a public hearing to be held Tuesday evening, May 27, in tentative form, it calls for the expenditure of $57,670, compared to $52,575 last year. The contingent fund was increased from $2,000 to $3,000, to improve Hickory Grove road, $1,200 was allocated. Police cars will be bought, and there will be slight increases in salary, amounting to about $1,000. $15 a month for the employees.

The tax rate will probably be set at $8 a thousand, compared with $8.95 last year.

The board of review will complete its work Saturday. Valuation of Hills property last year was $3,940,450 and will probably show an increase this year, as there has been about $50,000 in new buildings.

Citizenship Day Parade Sunday

Sunday is "Citizenship Day" in Oakland County and in many places throughout America. The celebration here will consist of a parade at Pontiac, and independence memorial at Pontiac High School for new 21-year-olds. Edwin Sharp Burdell, of New York City, director of famous Cooper Union, will be the speaker.

A number of Birmingham and

Dr. Burdell

Bloomfield Hills people are planning to attend, although there is no class of "21" in either this year. Efforts are being made to have the Baldwin High School band play in the parade. The parade will pass on Huron street with the program at the high school starting at 2:30 p. m.

Henry S. Booth, of Bloomfield Hills, is chairman of the day.

Mayor John E. Martz has issued the following proclamation:

"I Am An American" Day—Proclamation

"Pursuant to Public Resolution No. 67 by the Congress of the United States and the proclamation of the President designating Sunday, May 18, 1941 as 'I Am An American' Day, also known as Citizenship Day, I urge that this day be observed as a public occasion in recognition of the duties and privileges reaching voting age; that the American flag and the County of Oakland flag be flown and that our citizens attend the civic ceremony on the afternoon of said day in the City of Pontiac."

JOHN E. MARTZ,
Mayor.

Will Audit Books

Fletcher, Van Tiffin & Ross, certified public accountants, have been engaged by the Board of Education Monday night to make the annual audit of the books, for $330, will be the same as last year. Ernest H. Fletcher lives in Bloomfield Village.

BURGLARY INSURANCE. Best Coverage. Reasonable rates. See Burglary Insurance Headquarters at 264 Bankers Arcade bldg. Phone 2-1100. Ask for Mr. Hoffman. Call or write J. R. HOWARTH & SON. National Bank Bldg.

School Board Balk Saves It $676

When the school board balked recently at paying a $676 special assessment on school property for the Eton road drain, it got results, Monday night, the City Commission voted to pay the assessment out of city funds. Attorneys for the school board advised them it is unlawful to tax special assessments on school districts, and told the board not to pay.

Mayor John E. Martz said that there is "precedent both ways." City Manager D. C. Egbert said the matter was not worth a court fight. Except for that portion of the school district which lies outside Birmingham, the same set of taxpayers pay the bill anyway.

Commission Splits 5 to 4 on Economy

Majority Rejects Request for Oiling; Issue Not Yet Clear

An economy move in street and other improvements was advocated by Commissioner Rudy Ecorse, Commissioner Harry E. Bissett, who is concerned with the coming increase in federal taxes. A 4-3 vote of the Commission upheld in part, at least, his plea for retrenchment.

Mayor John E. Martz, Luther Hancock and Wilmer E. Moody voted with Bissett in rejecting a request for oiling of Latham and Northlawn avenues at the southwest corners of the City, while Commissioners Ray A. Palmer, Ralph I. Colwell and William Colt Allen voted the other way.

Issue Not Clear

However, the issue was not clear cut. Moody, it appeared, favored rejection of the request for oiling because the petition did not have enough signers. (There are several vacant lots on the two streets.) Bissett is taking a more stringent view, favoring a general curtailment of extra expenditures and ending the spiraling of debt on projects requiring special assessments and a share to be paid by the city-at-large. (Light oiling can be accomplished by residents tacking up their own collection.)

"I don't think the people realize what is getting ahead with these huge war expenditures," Bissett declared. "I think we ought

(See ECONOMY, Page 2)

Recreation Funds Still Coming In

The Birmingham Recreation Commission at its meeting Monday afternoon, checked over the contributions from organizations received to date for the support of the summer recreation program.

Members of the group were gratified at the returns so far, for many organizations have increased their contributions over last year. A number of organizations, however, have not yet notified the Recreation Commission of their decision, so that the budget is not necessarily in a tentative form.

"We are especially anxious to hear from all organizations which have not yet answered our appeal for participation," said Mrs. Rowland Quinn, chairman, "because we cannot plan definitely until all pledges are in."

The new sandboxes, work tables and benches and bulletin boards made with materials furnished through the generosity of the P.-T. Council Recreation Committee are completed. The sandboxes were made by Baldwin High School shop classes, the tables and benches by the NYA out-of-school project and the bulletin boards by H. W. Price, WPA recreation supervisor.

The equipment has the same attractive, durable finish that is used on Michigan roadside picnic tables, and will be distributed next week to the centers throughout Birmingham, Adams, Barnum, Holy Name, Pierce and Quarton Schools and Torrey Field.

June Draft Quota Set At 28 Men

Birmingham district's draft quota for June has been set at 28 men it was revealed this week. The number is the same as in May. No date was set for induction, but the group sent to Detroit on May 8, three were rejected; the others were sent to Camp Grant, Rockford, Ill., where they were all patched within 48 hours for their training camp.

CITIZENS LEAGUE

Annual meeting of the Oakland County Citizens League will be held tonight at 8 o'clock, at the city hall, Pontiac.

Beauty Rest Mattresses Reno Royal Mattress Co. Phone Elwood 17-200

Drawing of New Church

This is an artistic conception of the new Redeemer Lutheran Church which will be built out West Maple avenue on a six-acre plot at the City limits. John Stahl, of Detroit, was engaged this week as the architect.

Softball Meeting

The softball season for 1941 will get under way next Wednesday evening with a meeting at the Community House at 8 o'clock to adopt a schedule and decide on policies. Director Lloyd Chapman urges all team managers and captains to attend. Interest seems higher this year than last, and 12 teams are anticipated, it was said. Good umpires are a necessity, and any men wishing to join an Umpire's Club are also urged to attend.

Masons Announce Show Next Week

Many prominent business and professional men of Birmingham will don feminine garb and present a musical comedy and "beauty contest" all their own next Monday and Tuesday nights at the Community House auditorium, starting at 8:30 p. m.

The production is being sponsored by the Masonic organization under the direction of Miss Iva C. Keefer, of Pittsburgh, Pa.

Approximately 60 men will have roles in the show with five of them playing "girls" in the contestants from Franklin, Bloomfield Hills, Royal Oak, Beverly Hills and Birmingham. Ray H. Bechtold, high school principal, will act as "Miss Birmingham" it was revealed.

The show, entitled "Everybody's Here," is a sequel to the "Woman-less Wedding" staged here by the same company two years ago. The setting will be the town hall during Old Home Week. A master of ceremonies introduces the guests among whom will be men and women of national prominence and celebrities of the radio and screen.

Some of the highlights of the performance include the appearance of the "Girls of the Gay 90's." In their frills and furbelows, the "girls" will present a song and dance typical of that period. In contrast, a group of young men will appear as the "Girls of 1941." Other attractions include Uncle Joe and Aunt Mandy in a mellow southern melody, and Angelo and his dancing bear in an unusual skit. Many laughs are in store with the arrival of Evelina and Hiram Komikal and their family of eight Komikal kids. Lovers of interpretive dancing will be thrilled by a ballet composed of local men. Solos, choruses and dance routines will be introduced during the performance—Be eye-

(See MASONS, Page 2)

Youth, Still Limping From Ice Mishap, Finds Gliding a Much Safer Sport

Elmer Meeker, one of The Eccentric's delivery men, limped through the office Monday morning, and mentioned the fact casually, "I was up 2,000 feet Sunday and traveled for 13 minutes."

Meeker is a glider fan, but his limp is not to be associated with that sport; rather, it came last winter when he took up ice skating. Definitely, he is convinced that soaring a half mile above the earth in a flimsy glider is more safe than ice.

"Last Sunday, the weather was perfect for gliding," he declared; some of the boys went as high as 8,700 feet and traveled more than 100 miles."

Generally cool air, but rising columns of warm air brought about the ideal conditions, he explained. They used the Triangle Glider Port near Plymouth, and among the several clubs present was the Soar Heads Glider Club of Birmingham. Its members are Allen Wellington, Bob Mastrigan, Bill Hatherley, Bill Sherman of Detroit, and Randolph Meeker, Elmer's brother. The latter soared 5,000 feet and landed an hour and 35 minutes later.

Their motorless glider is valued at $400. Rarely do the flyers use parachutes, but when they have them they stay out of thunderclouds, Meeker said. Violent winds in a thunderhead may tear off a wing, and in that case, a chute is a handy thing to have. The same applies to acrobatics.

"How do you get home?" Meeker was asked.

"That's easy," he answered. "We just go to the nearest phone and call the glideport. The fellows then take a car and trailer and come after us!"

Meeker looked rather sleepy Monday. A 100-mile trip into Ohio was the reason; he did not arrive home until 2 a. m.

Doorbells Buzzing In School Canvass

Doorbells are really buzzing in Birmingham this week as more than 100 women canvass the city, street by street, distributing the red-and-white leaflets telling about the special school vote to take place on June 9.

The drive is to end Thursday evening, May 22, when the Birmingham P.-T.A. Council is to meet to review the program, according to Mrs. F. H. Mellinger, president. Cards for every home have been made out and these are to be turned in by that time.

Those who have not yet registered for the election were reminded by Mrs. Mellinger that May 31 is the deadline. Any qualified elector in February and March of this atmosphere are not included in this estimate.

Lumley declared that while the men are on strike, a membership drive is also in progress and he said that a new charter for carpenters, Local No. 968, will be installed Friday night at the K. P. hall. Another local—an older one—has 250 members.

He said that before any jobs would be permitted to open after the strike, all conditions will be required to sign union agreements.

"We expect that all building in Birmingham from now on will be union," he declared.

Today, a "holiday" has been called and all picketers will be called away to attend the funeral in Detroit of the picket who was killed Monday.

Refunding to Save Taxpayers $87,734

The recent refunding of $443,875 in Birmingham municipal bonds will save the City $87,734.74 in interest charges, it was estimated in a report submitted to the City Commission Monday night by Treasurer H. H. Corson. The new average interest rate is 2.507 per cent. Cost of refunding, including the period when overlapping interest must be paid, was set at $2,032.61.

Workers Now Taking the School Census

"Cooperate with the school census takers," was the note sounded Wednesday by the schools' business manager, Louis M. Randall. Mrs. Guy Taylor and Mrs. Jack Wilson are now going from door to door to get names of all young people between the ages of 5 and 19 inclusive. Every name is worth from $15 to $15 to the district, for the census is used as a basis for state aid, he said.

"People sometimes confuse our census people with book agents," Randall added.

Almost All Activity Stops in Walk-out

'Sympathy' Stoppage Also Occasion for Membership Drive

New building in Birmingham valued at a quarter of a million dollars was at a standstill this week as carpenters, bricklayers, plasterers, electricians and other building trades workers stood idle in a sympathy strike for the teamsters' union of Detroit.

C. E. Lumley, head of the A. F. L. Building Trades Council of Oakland County, with headquarters in the First State Bank Building, Birmingham, said Wednesday that 98 per cent of all building has come to a standstill.

"Except for a few scattered jobs, there is nothing going on," City Building Inspector James B. Bates told The Eccentric.

Scores of union members journeyed to and from the headquarters on Woodward avenue throughout the week as they reported and were dispatched on picket duty in various parts of the county. Wednesday, two of them were on the main street outside the Strand door shop, next to The Eccentric office, and picketed for about half an hour in protest against painting inside the building. Pickets were soon withdrawn, however.

Birmingham Fruit Co., which started putting in a new store front last week, was caught by the strike and how plywood panels take the place of the removed glass, and a sign, "Business as Usual" reminded passers-by of similar signs in bombed London.

Buildings valued at $136,400 were started in Birmingham in March and $109,565 in April, for a total of $248,965. Other homes started in February and earlier atmosphere are not included in this estimate.

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Want Birmingham to Aid Birmingham

NEW YORK, N.Y.—Madeleine Carroll has today agreed to become "godmother" to Birmingham, England, in a new scheme sponsored by Adopt-A-Town Committee, 527 Fifth Avenue, New York, whereby well-known British men and women now in America become godfathers and godmothers to towns in England with which they have been associated.

Miss Carroll was born in West Bromwich, a few miles from Birmingham, was educated in Birmingham, graduated from Birmingham University, and still has many friends there.

Some funds have already been sent to Birmingham from Adopt-A-Town Committee, Inc. for which the Lord Mayor has sent sincere thanks, at the same time appealing for more help for this town, where air-raids have caused so much distress.

Through the Namesake Towns Division of Adopt-A-Town Committee, all American towns with the name of Birmingham are being asked to make a special drive for funds to help their sister city. All persons and firms with the name of Birmingham, and the largest firms in the various towns of Birmingham are also included in this appeal for aid for British townsfolk with whom they have a sentimental link.

Alan Joslyn Named President of Players

Alan W. Joslyn was elected president of the Village Players in the annual business meeting of the group held last night at the Playhouse. He succeeds Warren Pease, Jr. New members elected to the Board of Directors were Mrs. Inez Asper, Charles D. McCall, and Mrs. Donald S. Bell. Continuing in office are Dr. J. F. Hollister and Clark Pardee. Except for the treasurer, Edward S. Reid, the directors will elect the other officers. George M. Dewley was named an honorary member.

Victor and Bluebird Records. Now reasonces weekly. Leonard Electric, 142 W. Maple. ADv.—17.