

Community House Classes Announced

New classes in ceramics, gardening, silver, painting and clothing will begin next Monday, April 10, at the Community House it was announced this week by Mrs. Velma Foley, House director.

Edith Foster will instruct the eight-week ceramics course on Mondays at 1:30 p.m. and at 8 o'clock in the evening. Both are two-hour sessions.

A five-week course in gardening will be conducted by Alice Burlingame every Monday evening from eight until 10 o'clock.

Three classes in silver every Wednesday for the next ten weeks will be under the direction of Thelma Anderson. Hours for these courses are: 9 a.m. to 12 noon, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. to 10 p.m.

Maurice Licht will instruct two painting sessions. The eight-week course will meet both Wednesday and Thursday nights from eight until 10 o'clock. Another painting class, meeting on Thursday nights at the same time, will be directed by Paul Pillel.

The clothing class, meeting for eight weeks on Tuesdays from 1-3:30 p.m. will be instructed by Mary Woodworth.

A nominal fee will be charged for each class.



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Easter Week Plans Announced by "Y"

Starting with the Tre Ore service at the First Methodist church where seven members of the Wolverine Hi-Y and other youth of the Birmingham churches will observe Easter week.

Saturday morning is the annual Easter egg hunt to be held in the First Baptist church gym if the weather is clear. A box of 360 chocolate Easter eggs will be given Y members who find and turn in colored cards.

The boy or girl with the greatest number will receive a prize as will those who finish second and third.

Colored trapezoidal films and comic cartoons will be shown for all who participate. Starting time is 10:00 a.m.

MONDAY THERE will be horseback riding. The group will leave the "Y" office at 1:30 p.m. and return about 4:30 p.m. Tuesday they will visit the General Motors truck and coach plant.

Wednesday World Series films will be shown in the First Baptist church gym, with a travelogue and cartoons also on the program.

Thursday is tournament day, with a round-robin basketball tournament among the Gray-Y clubs and a ping pong tournament for those interested in that sport.

On Friday, members of the Wolverine Hi-Y chapter will attend the Oliver Boys conference at Fort Harro. Two of these boys will be sponsored by the Birmingham Rotary club and two by the Birmingham Kiwanis.

The regular Saturday morning program of the Rinkydinks will be held April 15.

ALL Y MEMBERS are invited to attend one or all of the events listed in the "Bye" which is being sent to all friends of the Birmingham YMCA. Visitors are invited to attend where activities permit their participation.

Men's Club Speaker

Joseph P. Dodge, president of the Detroit Bank who has just recently returned from Japan, will speak to the Men's Club of Christ Church Cranbrook on Monday, April 10. A seven o'clock dinner will precede the address and all men in the Birmingham area whether members of Christ Church or not, are invited to attend. Reservations may be made by calling the church office.

Going Abroad Sunday

Leland Bartholomew, son of Mr. and Mrs. E. Bartholomew of Yarmouth road, a senior in the school of music at the University of Michigan, will be one of the 75 members of the Scandinavian Orchestra taking off by plane this Sunday for Copenhagen. The group, which will be abroad for six weeks, has scheduled numerous concerts. Bartholomew plays the French horn.

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Social Briefs

Gathering at the Harold A. Welch Suffolk road residence for a family dinner on Easter will be their son and daughter-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Harold A. Welch, Jr. of Washington boulevard and their son, Harold H. and the youngest's great-grandmother, Mrs. John M. Welch of Detroit.

Mrs. Albert J. Seriven of Hawthorne road has on Easter home from Hamilton, Ohio, where she visited with a former Birmingham resident, Mrs. Herbert Suter, Jr. for a week.

Dr. and Mrs. Kenneth Sproule of Yorkshire road and their children, Joanie and Kenneth are leaving tomorrow for a week's visit in Chicago.

Mr. and Mrs. Earl Bartholomew have returned to their home on Yarmouth road after vacationing for five weeks in California. En route back to Birmingham, they stopped off in San Antonio, Texas, and New Orleans, La.

Ralph Dunbar, son of Mrs. R. M. Dunbar of Chester street arrived home yesterday for his spring vacation from Ohio University.

Ruth Shain Class Topic "Germany"

A report on the "Chances of Democracy in Germany" will be given by Mrs. Charles Boyd of Pleasant Ridge, a member of the state board of AAUW, at the April 11 meeting of the Ruth Shain International Affairs Class. Each class, which begins promptly at 10:00 a.m. each Tuesday in the Community House, is open to the public.

A running comment with information from the State Department. Conference will be given by Mrs. Shain.

Two reports, Mrs. Shain announced, coming up are on Africa and on amending the United Nations Charter. The final meeting will be held on May 2.

WITH THE Collegians

Miss Iris Leja, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Allan Leja of Graceland road, will be the featured speaker at the Delta Pi sorority at the University of Michigan.

John Bones has been named house manager of Psi Upsilon fraternity at the Michigan State College. His brother, Bill, was elected to Sigma Delta Chi, honorary chapter of the Community House.

The Glimet Club, an organization for upper classmen, they are the sons of Mr. and Mrs. L. B. Bones of North Adams road.

Ralph Dodge of Chester street, a student at Ohio University, was elected to the Men's Union Planning Board, an organization which schedules all men's activities on the campus.

Preside at Tea

Mrs. Charles Hummel and Mrs. Janet T. Michel presided at the tea table at the Monday afternoon meeting of the Holy Name Altar Society in the Community House. An Easter motif of green and white was carried out for the affair.

Investigation (Continued from Page One)

established with improvements," stated Haack.

"I ALSO EXPECT in the future, to have the tax roll available for inspection by the public early in February of each year. This should provide sufficient time for the city commission to review their current values. The Board of Review, under law, will meet on March 15, 1950, for final public inspection."

In view of the board of review's assessment by city law, the per foot footage of the base rate in the business section from their original 1947 assessment was \$900, it is not yet known what any individual taxpayer may do to seek such relief could be sought through 1) court action, which would hold up the entire tax roll, or 2) by calling in the State Tax Commission, which would act only on types of property as the petitioner or petitioners.

MONDAY'S CLOSING of the tax roll by the board brought to close three weeks of meetings between the board and a group of 38 owners of business property. Edwin Gage, of Berwyn road, acted as chairman of the group, while W. C. Allen, former city commissioner, served as council.

Monday night Allen appeared before the city commission and summarized his part in bringing to the board and the assessor the grievances of the business property owners, whose 1950 land assessments had been increased from 10 to 20 percent.

He pointed out that these property owners had been given only two to three days notice of the tremendous assessment increases, and that they had gotten together hastily to ascertain from the assessor and the board of review all the facts that brought about such increases.

ALLEN EMPHASIZED the fact that the business group sought to work in co-operation with assessor Haack and reviewing officials, Fred C. Fox and Chad M. Richey, and that several meetings were necessary to obtain that information.

He reviewed for the commission the general details of the meetings and stressed points affecting values which he urged the commission to consider, were of vital importance in determining practical land values.

Allen concluded his talk with the commission by offering not only his own services, but those of the business group, for future use by the assessor in maintaining an equitable up-to-date tax roll.

In response to Allen's remarks, commissioner Milton F. Mallerer pointed out that the assessor and board of review operate under state tax laws, and that he did not know how the commission could be held responsible for the acts of these tax officials.

AT THAT POINT George R. Averill, publisher of The Eclectic, suggested that the commission, being the only elected representatives of the people in city affairs, are responsible for the administrative operation of all city offices, including the assessor.

"It is true that the assessor and board of review operate under state tax laws, but you commissioners levy our taxes and spend them on city operations," stated Averill.

"Therefore, it is not your responsibility to seek the assessor's office is staffed with enough help to make it unnecessary to delay, for three years, the spreading of increased tax assessments upon business, or any other type, of local property."

"Tax assessing and tax collecting is a regular part of the city's operations, and citizens have a right to expect that these duties will be performed with a maximum of efficiency."

Mallerer agreed with this premise.

IN A WRITTEN report to the commission (the first time such a document ever was received on such a subject), the board of review commented on the operations of the assessor's office. The report suggested more help for the assessor, perhaps a junior engineer to handle mathematical details and computations relative to improved property values.

The difficulties of the board for 1950 were largely occasioned by the fact that business property in Birmingham had been under assessed for too long a time, and the corrections made the year, therefore, even though justified, were too great a correction to permit a complete explanation of the reasons therefor," the report said.

Another portion of the Board's report to the commission said: "Because of the pressure of work in the assessor's office, it has been impracticable to take that portion of the roll that was most in need of adjustment each year, and to correct it accordingly, thus resulting in a correction in one year for the accumulation of errors over the past several years."

DURING THE meetings between the assessing officials and the business group over the past three years, some antagonism and heat was developed in the verbal exchange of ideas by both sides.

The assessor, however, stated that the board in its report to the commission when it said, in part: "It soon became apparent to the assessor, however, that the petitioners, through counsel, pursued this intricate (referring to the efforts of counsel Allen to learn how Haack arrived at valuations) in an unreasonable and irrational manner and with complete disregard of their expressed desire, with which the board was entirely in accord, to discuss the entire question amicably and in a reasonable manner."

"The petitioners were represented by counsel who was well versed in court room technique and legal procedures with which the board was unfamiliar, and at such time as the interrogation as to the propriety of commission, completely biased and harassing inquisition of the city assessor by the petitioners and their attorney."

Gage Makes Statement

Yesterday morning Gage, representing the city commission, before the Board of Review's official report to the city commission, issued the following statement:

"THE GROUP of approximately 35 Birmingham taxpayers which organized soon after the proposed assessment roll was issued, and the public on March 10 had as their objectives:

"The obtaining from the City Assessor the basis upon which he determined cash value of all types of vacant and improved property in Birmingham."

"The requesting of the City Assessor and the Board of Review to take necessary action to bring about equal and fair assessments on all types of property so that unreasoned rises in business or residential property assessments could be corrected."

"In this group's endeavor to accomplish its aims, it was met with a lack of complete cooperation and open-mindedness on the part of the Assessor and the Board of Review. A lack of complete cooperation to substantiate exorbitant rises in business property land assessments."

"THE ASSESSOR and the Board of Review endeavored to substantiate values by citing sales which in most instances were proven to be so inaccurate in their amount that to very key sales presented by the Assessor turned out upon examination to be almost twice the actual price of the property."

"In addition to the above, this group was shocked to find that, in the report of the Board of Review to the Commission of the City of Birmingham dated March 31, 1950, that the Board of Review stated that they made changes in assessments on the basis of information submitted by the owners."

"How then can they justify the assessing of a building addition which they were shown to cost approximately \$18,000 on a basis of \$23,000?"

"THE BOARD of Review also stated that the group appeared before them to protest specifically retail merchandising property. This group was interested in, protected and proved inequalities and irregularities in all types of property—business and residential, vacant and improved."

"The Board further stated that the assessing standards have been constant for some considerable time. They then say that since assessments have not changed in many years, therefore, raised up to 700% only seem large."

"Why could the City have been deprived of this income for past years?"

"THE BOARD unfairly criticized this group for taking less than two weeks to study and analyze the assessment procedures in the City of Birmingham, whereas the Board of Review has spent twelve months of study, were still unable to substantiate or justify raises which were made."

"The Board inferred that this group pursued its questioning of the City Assessor in an unreasonable manner when, after considerable time, the City Assessor was answering specific questions relative to properties where he had increased land assessments many times over the past several years. Amount to the fact that he had made his assessments just because he could not reasonably explain this year's assessment changes."

"The Board further stated that there were fundamental differences among the protesting group. This statement is as un sound as the assessment."

"The Board of Review acted not as a review body but as a group of assessors defending their errors with mythical reasoning."

"THE WHOLE spirit of the Board's report to the commission inferred that, when individual taxpayers as a group endeavor to determine from the Assessor and the Board how assessments were arrived at and how they were justified, these taxpayers are doing something wrong and should sit back and agree with any assessment, no matter how unjustifiable or inequitable."

"The Board suggests now that the Assessor needs help. The Assessor has stated many times that he needs no help. What has he been doing for three years?"

"The Board further suggests that this basis for assessments be made available to the taxpayers in the future. Why do they say they cannot reasonably explain this year's assessment changes?"

"IN CONCLUSION, this group believes that it is the duty of every resident and businessman in the City of Birmingham to do everything possible to insure that hereafter properties, both real and personal, in the City of Birmingham are assessed on an equitable basis so as to induce the future growth of Birmingham, and so that in years to come the situation does not continue where business properties get hit one year, residential the next and perhaps multiple dwelling or residential vacant properties the following year, and so on, and so on, opposed to a sound method of assessments which would keep equitable and justifiable assessments on the assessment roll every year."

"A son, Stephen Powell was born on March 25 to Mr. and Mrs. William F. Robinson of Graceland road. Mrs. Robinson is the former Betty G. Powell."

Mr. and Mrs. George William Averill of Thomas street, announced the birth of a daughter on April 5 at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital.

Mary Beresford Becomes Bride

Before an altar banked with white stock and Easter lilies, Miss Mary Beresford and Helmut Lux, clerk von Lichtenfeld were united in marriage Tuesday evening in Christ Church Cranbrook by the Rev. Robert L. DeWitt.

The couple, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James A. Beresford of Lone Pine road and the son of Mr. Karl von Lichtenfeld of Vienna, Austria, and the late Mr. Lichtenfeld, will sail for South Africa where they will meet the bride's mother.

Given in marriage by her father, the bride was given in candles, lighted Duchess satin of the early Victorian period. The fitted bodice featured diminutive buttons and

a turn-over collar. The sleeves were long and traditionally pointed, and the fully gathered skirt swept into a wide, circular train. A princess cap held her full-length veil of deep ivory hairloom. Beluga lace and she carried a bouquet of white hydrangeas and ivy.

Miss Virginia Ann Beresford was her sister's honor attendant in white embroidered organza over turquoise tulle and she wore yellow carnations in her hair to match her bouquet.

Miss Martha Ellen Booth, the bride's cousin, served as flower girl in white embroidered organza over yellow. Her headpiece and flowers were also yellow carnations.

Acting as best man was John Booth, a cousin, a brother, and ushering were cousins of the bride, David G. Booth, Stephen F. Booth, James T. Beresford and William T. Beresford.

A reception followed the nuptials in the Beresford home.

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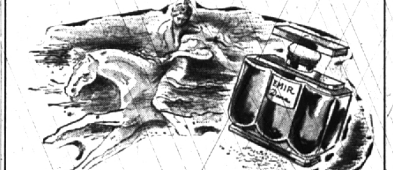
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