

Wish New City Merry Christmas With Gift of Tree

The City of Lathrup Village has received its first official gift, a Christmas tree. Members of the Detroit common council, in wishing the new city a Merry Christmas and prosperity in the new year, sent along a 20-foot evergreen complete with lights from the city's department of parks and recreation.

The tree has been erected in front of the Lathrup townsite realty building, across from Annie Lathrup school.

Lathrup councilmen, present for the occasion, appointed Councilman Kathryn Petersen to head a Christmas program committee to celebrate the lighting of the city's first Christmas tree. Wednesday night, Dec. 23, at 7:45 p.m., Miss Petersen was informed that members of Lathrup Girl Scout troops would help in the program.

Clerk-Treasurer Named In Lathrup

Florence Bennett, acting Lathrup city clerk, was appointed clerk-treasurer Monday night by councilmen.

Council members took the "acting" status of her clerk's position and added the treasurer's job to her duties when it was discovered that under the charter the city could not hire an acting treasurer.

Ladies' Wallets Stolen

Detective Sgt. Merin Holmquist, of the Birmingham police department, warns that women employees in local stores and offices should be cautious where they leave their purses while they are on the job. He reports that wallets were taken during working hours Friday from the handbags of two lady employees at the board of education offices in Hill school.

THE COMMUTER'S WIFE

Santa Claus Story Still A Difficult Parental Puzzle

By HELEN BRUNSON
Special Writer for The Birmingham Eccentric

Most adults agree that Christmas is primarily for the children. And through the Little Ones' pleasure we try to recapture some of the pure delight that was Christmas.

We recall giant Christmas trees laden with gifts, "pieces" spoken at Sunday School programs—the rising early and creeping down stairs, to find that special doll-bed or nurses' outfit or sled we'd seen in a store window only a few weeks before. Santa had brought it.

And most of us get particular delight from telling our Little Ones the Santa Claus story. And yet there lingers with each of us a small hurt—the memory of the day when we discovered that the story was a myth.

We recall our dismay and, in some cases, our resentment that our cherished dream had vanished.

AND SO we wonder how we can prevent this hurt for our own children. Some parents minimize the Santa Claus story by emphasizing more and more the religious story instead. And they compare the gift-giving in the family with that of the wise men who brought presents to the Christ Child.

Other fathers and mothers say that Santa Claus is only a fairy-tale—a delightful one, of course—then go ahead with having the children plan gifts for each other and in getting presents for them.

BY FAR the majority of us, though, perpetuate the Santa Claus legend as is, enjoying every moment of it, with the older children conspiring to keep it going for the fun of the smaller ones.

But, we do so with a little feeling of fear that each Christmas will be the last for the fairy tale, and that someone will burst the bubble for the wondering little minds that so delight in it.

IN 1897 a little girl in New York asked the question, "Is there a Santa Claus?" of the New York Sun. And in reply there came the editorial answer we've all read so many times. And yet somehow the real question must still have remained unanswered in small Virginia O'Hanlon's mind after she heard the editorial. For the Sun's answer was one meant for an adult—one that shows our still-lingering desire for such things as fairies and Santa Clauses to be real.

And so we parents will continue to hear the question—and still grope for the right answer, and for a way to ease the hurt when the Santa Claus story at last meets with reality.



Helen Brunson

'Farewell Service' For Doctor, Family

The world-famous "Burma Surgeon" will soon have a partner in service. Dr. Gordon Seagrave, whose book described his battle against disease in Burma, will be joined by Dr. Norman B. Abell and his family shortly after the first of the year.

Now completing his training at the Florence Crittenton hospital in Detroit, Dr. Abell and his wife will be guests of the First Baptist church Dec. 30, when a special "farewell service" will be held at 7:30 p.m.

The two doctors are not strangers, for Dr. Seagrave was a classmate of Dr. Abell's father at Denison university in Ohio, and best man at his wedding.

"I've met Dr. Seagrave several times," the young medico says, "and have corresponded with him since he returned to eastern Burma

near the Red China border as a medical missionary."

DR. ABELL was named to his post in Burma by the American Baptist Foreign Mission society. He will establish and maintain a 40-bed hospital, care center for over 200,000 natives in the western section of Burma. He will also be the hospital's only practicing dentist.

"The average Burmese lives only 25 years," he said. "Chief ailments of the area are dysentery, malaria, typhoid fever and other conditions. Our hospital will be in a village of about 500 persons. It will be the only one in a radius of 200 miles. Considering the poverty of the region, our work in Burma will be a great challenge to both me and my wife."

The Rev. Emil Kontz, pastor of the host church, will introduce Dr. and Mrs. Abell at the service, open to the public.

"Dr. Abell is a native of Cincinnati," Mr. Kontz said, "and is now completing some specialized preparation in Detroit. He will take a brief course at the Berkley Baptist divinity school before flying to Burma."

Mrs. Abell, a native of Gary, and their two children, will join him there later.

"SHE IS ALSO a Denison graduate and is the daughter of a Baptist minister. She will head a school to be established at the mission center along with the hospital."

"Dr. Abell, like Dr. Seagrave, is asking medical friends to help in securing medical and surgical equipment and supplies for the new hospital. Native labor, he tells us, will help with the construction. Basic facilities and equipment will be supplied by the Baptist missionary society, but he will have many other needs to be met from other sources."

Mr. Kontz said the service would be followed by a social hour to give the people of Birmingham a chance to meet "this courageous young couple."

Nursery care will be provided for small children.



DR. AND MRS. NORMAN ABELL AND CHILDREN
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SHOPPING CROWDS AND Christmas traffic combine each year to choke the intersections in downtown Birmingham, and for the past several years Lt. Henry Timm, of the Birmingham police department has donated the use of his public address system to help bring order out of the resultant chaos. Lt. Timm is shown here looking down on the intersection of Maple and Woodward from the office of Myron E. Snyder in the Cunningham drug store. When traffic gets heavy, Timm or another police officer gets on the microphone and, through a loud speaker over the street, directs the flow of autos and pedestrians. In periods of light traffic the loud-speaker gives out with Christmas carols from the record player. (Eccentric Staff Photo)

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