

Getting Too Close for Comfort



HORSE SENSE AND NONSENSE

BY ALICE E. MORGAN

The youngsters were waiting the other evening because men in state and federal offices had "taken all the fun away" by banning firecrackers. Uncle Abner had been telling them about the way he used to celebrate the Fourth, and they practically were green with envy. The parents were glaring at the old gentleman and he knew he'd talked himself into a corner and had better talk himself out—fast.

Franklin Is Second Southfield Area to Incorporate

Last week the residents of Franklin Village, by an overwhelming vote, approved their new charter and completed the final step in the process of becoming a village. Thus they divorce themselves from official controls by Southfield township, and from now on carve out their own municipal destiny.

incorporating the whole of Southfield Township into one city. So they legally have incorporated their respective areas. By so doing they are privileged to enact necessary local ordinances to develop and control further the type of community they want.

MANY YEARS AGO Birmingham, then the largest concentration of population in Bloomfield township, voted to incorporate as a village, later as a city. These changes in the status of an area of population are performed under the Michigan Home Rule Act. This legislative statute was created because of the need of a state to recognize the right of people in an area to set up the proper machinery of self-government in order to bring about for themselves the kind of municipal environment desired, and to be paid for by the property owners and citizens of specific areas.

BUT IT DOESN'T HOLD, in our opinion, for a large area like all of Southfield township, with its scattered concentrations of population, its present large areas of vacant lands. It is, after all, fundamental within the framework of American tradition, that small communities were and are the backbone of substantial and solid citizenry. People who live in them are brought close to the problems of government, become participants in finding answers to community problems . . . and thus become more competent to engage in wrestling with the problems of their State and nation.

IN THE CASES OF both Lathrup and Franklin Villages, their respective residents came to believe that they wanted to protect and maintain the type of communities they already had developed. They did not want to become a mere part of a larger subdivision of government, such as has been proposed by the idea of

So we congratulate the citizens of our nearby new Franklin Village, just as we did those who live in Lathrup Village. May you be able to launch your brand new local "Ship of State" on quiet and untroubled waters; may you chart your course toward the harbors of that quiet and friendly environment that already you have developed, and be able to maintain it for yourselves and your posterity!

School District Responds

For the third time in five years, voters of the Birmingham school district have endorsed their board's request for funds with which to build additional school facilities. The Eccentric does not know of another similar community in the nation which has rallied behind the educational standards of its children as has the Birmingham school district. More than ten million dollars is a whale of a lot of money for a school district our size to have to spend in five years.

applaud the wisdom of the district residents. Too, it is to be recalled that the surrounding school districts in recent years also have endorsed appreciable building programs. But Birmingham's district has been hit harder than the others by increasing population, therefore has had to move into a considerably larger program. THE SEVERAL school boards in this area are to be highly commended for their vigilance in thus protecting and preserving high educational standards. The electors in these districts deserve equally high praise for responding with the necessary financing.

Large Cities to Get Smaller?

The de-centralization of American industry, to overcome the ability of A and H-Bombs to destroy large areas, is being advanced by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. Social scientists long have argued that the concentration of too much population in any city brings about many uncontrollable evils. But modern industry, proceeding on mass production ideas, has

proved that things can be produced more cheaply in large industrial centers. Now the fear of war's ability to destroy large areas in one blast will eventually change the concentration of industry . . . and who knows but what in a generation or two nations no longer will boast of their "biggest cities" . . . for the cities will have decreased in size as industry scatters itself all over each nation.

Happenings of Long Ago

Bits of News Gleaned From Old Files Of The Eccentric—The Items That Make Up The Historical Background Of The Birmingham Of Today.

50 YEARS AGO June 24, 1904 "After an absence of nearly five months from mother, home and ham sandwiches, Miss Carrie E. Mitchell is home again from Kinka, Mo., for the summer vacation."

"At about 8:15 last Sunday night Mrs. Mary Hurley, a poor demoted woman about 45 years old was picked up by John Laidlaw and wife, from the roadside near the residence of Miss Sarah Stevens, about a mile north of town and she was brought to John O'Connell's restaurant by the good samaritans. Supervisor Foster was notified and with Dr. Shaw examined the woman. After calling up police headquarters they were requested to send her to Detroit on the 10 o'clock car and a policeman would meet her and take her to her home on Bellevue avenue. Had walked from Detroit and was completely tired out."

"That genial Captain M. O. Bigelow is home from West Point for the summer vacation. The minute he struck town he became crestfallen for he remembered that he had left his favorite fish pole in New York. The telegraph wires were immediately put in commission and now Mort wears a smile that reaches clear across his face."

A 21-pound howitzer cannon, a relic of the civil war, has been received from Fort Gaines, Ala., and will be mounted on the lawn at the high school.

30 YEARS AGO June 20, 1924 At the final Chapel meeting for the year, the Friday before commencement week in the high school, awards were made by the faculty to the pupils who, through the two semesters, carried the highest averages. Miss Mildred Green who has received no mark below A, which is the highest attainable mark, for the entire year was awarded the Trophy Cup.

The first lot of new boulevard lights which has been under construction for five weeks was turned on for the first time Monday evening by the Detroit Edison company.

When the Pacific fleet paid hom-

age at San Pedro, to the three officers and 45 men who fell in line of duty Thursday, June 12 in Turret No. 2 of the Battleship Mississippi, they paid homage to one of Birmingham's sons, Frederick Graham Ewer, 19 year old son of Mr. and Mrs. Malcolm Graham Ewer, who on May 20, 1904 was among the first victims to be taken from his post of duty after the accident.

The new electrically driven turbine the mills last week is now operating satisfactorily according to reports from manager Starr. The steam pumps haven't been needed since the completion of the well.

15 YEARS AGO June 22, 1939 William M. Smith was elected president of the newly formed Junior Chamber of Commerce at its meeting June 16 at the Community House.

Mr. and Mrs. Victor I. Peck of Ferriday avenue are receiving congratulations on the birth of a daughter, Carol Susan, born Saturday morning at Highland Park General hospital.

Thomas Randall Navin, Jr., son of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas R. Navin, 452 Southfield road, valedictorian of his class at Baldwin high school in 1936, was graduated summa cum laude from Kenyon college on June 19. He completed the college course in three years.

After a slow start the Baldwin track team made a fine finish by taking the class B Detroit Metro trophy and a silver medal from the Metropolitan Championship held last Friday in Detroit. A large gold medal trophy and a silver medal were added to the trophy case.

Patricia Kennedy, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. C. F. Kennedy, 844 Bates, and John Rosso, whose parents are Mr. and Mrs. John H. Rosso, 644 Pierce street, were chosen from the 9A class as the boy and girl who have been outstanding in their contribution to the school during their junior high career, by the Barnum Student Council.

Want ads cannot be accepted after 5 p.m. each Tuesday.

ONE THING OR ANOTHER

By George Wm. Averill

Because he closed his door before retiring the night of June 13, Lawrence W. Cross is alive today. That is the conviction of Birmingham's Fire Chief Vern W. Griffith. "I am convinced that the three victims were dead some time before the fire was reported and the fire department responded," Griffith said. He was referring to the tragic fire which took the lives of Mrs. Thomas Cross and her two sons, Larry and Danny.

AS RECONSTRUCTED by Griffith, the fire smoldered in the downstairs den for more than an hour before the house burst into flame. The smoldering fire—resulting either from a cigarette or a short-circuited TV set—began to build up heat and poisonous gases. Finally the heated gases reached the point where the smoldering fire set off a flash fire. Such a fire is one which seems to "explode" into, being in many places at once.

The mild "explosion" broke downstairs windows, awoke the neighbors across the street who turned in the alarm, disturbed Cross in an upstairs rear bedroom, and pushed smoke under his door. Cross was rescued by firemen immediately upon their arrival some minutes later. But he suffered from so much smoke and heat that it was not known for a number of hours how he had fared. In a 3 a.m. statement to Griffith at the hospital, Cross told how he awoke, smelled smoke, and went to his bedroom door. When he opened it, he said he saw the flames "rushing up the stairs and into the other bedrooms."

HE SLAMMED THE DOOR and began seeking another way out. "Did you see or hear any of the others?" was Griffith's next question.

"No, I didn't—and don't tell me what happened—I know," declared Cross. IT WAS A TRAGEDY for the family involved, and an intense emotional experience for the many hundreds who got out of bed that night and went to watch rescue and firefighting efforts. Many spectators at first were extremely critical of what they thought the circumstances to be that night. But I am happy to report many of the persons have made it a point to get facts to compare with their opinions and emotions—and have discovered the facts are far different from their impressions. [Some people had some mighty wrong ideas including this outlandish one: That it took the fire department 40 minutes to arrive on the scene. (FACT—the firemen were there in no more than six minutes after the alarm was called in.)

IF THE RESCUE and search for survivors had taken place on the front side of the house, there probably would have been little fuss raised about how that fire was handled. Instead, everything for the first 10 minutes was concentrated at the rear of the residence—and the spectators of course couldn't see through the house—only the northeast downstairs room which was filled with flame, and no water was put on it immediately. It may be reassuring to remember that in that crowd not one person who was fairly familiar with firefighting and rescue operations, has come forward with any criticism of the Birmingham firemen's handling of that tragedy. Should a similar family disaster take place in the future, it is hoped that no on-lookers will permit themselves to be deceived by appearances. There can be "Men At Work" even though you can't see them.

POTTER Moving & Storage Co. 136 Brownell Phone MI 4-4612. Includes an illustration of a dog and a truck.

Fresh Off the Press! Michigan Bell's new Address Telephone DIRECTORY covering South Oakland County presented in quick reference form, accurate—easy to use. Includes MICHIGAN BELL TELEPHONE COMPANY logo.

Feed Unexpected Guests Like Royalty... it's easy with an ELECTRIC home freezer. SEE YOUR DEALER. Includes an illustration of a woman and a man with a dog, and a list of foods that can be frozen.

From The Eccentric's Point of View . . .

It was the late FDR who, when talking about the then growing national debt, said: " . . . after all, we only owe it to ourselves. . . . After that pattern of economic philosophy he and Harry S. Truman operated their administrations. Eisenhower thinks otherwise . . . he believes that such a debt is not only an obligation, but one to be paid as soon as possible.

The U. S. Treasury Dept. says the life of an average dollar bill is six months. (Those were the good, old days!)

It is agreed among botanists that the ordinary dandelion is one of Nature's most perfect flowers. Much as some of us love Nature, we'd be glad to settle for orchids.

Who but a cynic could ever have written this paragraph, which we recently came upon: "Most men never bring the boss home to dinner . . . because she's already there?"

Mary Pickford, screen actress of the Twenties: "Success is a whip to beat yourself with to become better."

Wilson M. Compton, spokesman for the U. S. Chamber of Commerce: "The production of electric power from nuclear fission should be financed, developed and operated by private industry."

Bernard M. Baruch, retiring industrialist: "Citizens are mistaken when they argue against universal military training or readiness to mobilize because these things infringe on the freedom for which we are fighting."

Lady Nancy Astor, Virginia-born first woman member of the British Parliament, who recently celebrated her 75th birthday: "Older people must not look back. They must take life day by day."

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