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Nature, like individuals, tend to let
out their spirits to late toward the
negative, if the environment of ma-
terial prosperity surrounds them too
long. It is through adversity that
the deeper facets of the soul are
isolated, thus to sparkle.

PLAY IT SAFE

**Clean Your Furnace
Before Cold Weather**

The summer season is the best time to have your furnace checked and cleaned ready for the fall and winter heating season.

Primarily because more damage can be done to a furnace, or heating system, when the equipment is not running, than during the winter season when it is being used.

This is because there is no heat in the unit and the draft, which normally passes through the fire box, drops a residue from condensation. This water changes into acid after laying in ashes or soot and will, in time, eat through smoke pipes and other thin metal.

FOR THAT REASON the furnace burning solid fuels such as coal, wood, etc., should be cleaned as early as possible to remove ashes and soot to stop this acid action. Then too, the furnace maintenance men have more time to do a better job for you during the summer season.

If you own a gas furnace, check with the gas company about the necessity of having it cleaned. In most cases the pilot light, which is left on the year around, stops this condensation from forming and it is only necessary to oil the motors on the fans.

Play It Safe! Have your heating unit checked during the summer. Have the fan and burner motors properly serviced, for they are one of the most important parts of an automatic furnace.

Prepared as a public service by members of the BIRMINGHAM FIRE DEPT.

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The Birmingham Eccentric

SECTION 3
Thursday, September 2, 1954

Birmingham Background

• Local History in Story and Picture •
As Compiled and Written by RUTH ANNE SILBAR



JOHN HANNA'S STORE (AT RIGHT) WAS SAFECRACKERS' FAVORITE
Photo from collection of Donald Hanna, John's son, now of Ann Arbor

**John Hanna's Safes Never
Were Safe from Burglars**

Safes in Birmingham seemed to be irresistible to burglars and safes of John Hanna especially.

His strong box was visited so often that safe blowing got to be a chronic condition and John said he was going to approach a large safe manufacturing company with a proposition to buy safes by the dozen.

One October day in 1909 when Hanna was postmaster and also in the general store business on the southwest corner of the main intersection, he said to his friend, Almeron Whitehead, "Let's see, Whitey, ain't it about time some one cleaned up on us?"

And they did—or tried to—with in 24 hours. Announcement was made next day of the annual evening of another of John Hanna's safes.

ON THAT morning, the large double door safe in John Hanna's store was found blown open. It was not known then (and never was) how many were engaged in the attempt, but they did plenty of damage and only secured \$5 in change which was outside of the burglar proof chest which they had failed to open.

Had they gotten into it, they would have found only a few post office blanks and supplies of no use to them.

The safe was worked, the south-west back window was blown out and a chair and some goods damaged by the explosion.

ENTRANCE TO the store was obtained by raising a back window, crawling into the cellarway and

heavy sledge hammer, a brace and steel drill and two heavy chisels—all used in their night's work.

SHERIFF HARRIS was down first thing in the morning making observations and "looking it up." He interviewed all who said they heard the noise.

The first was Henry Snicek who lived on the northwest corner of Pierce and Martin street, the closest to the post office. Henry said the first explosion occurred at 4 a.m. and the second at 4:30.

Down at Eugene Smith's on East Main, Master Park Smith had a bad toothache and the whole family was up. They heard the explosions 10-15 minutes apart and so did their guests, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Parks, who stayed there that night.

Gene and Fred wanted to come to investigate, but their wives objected so strongly, they gave up the idea.

IRVING BAILEY heard the noise, too, and remarked to his sleeping wife, "Somebody's safe is blown up," and went back to sleep again.

Mrs. Charles Mudge over on Middle street (Hamilton) said she heard the explosion, it was so heavy, it shook the house.

While other folks throughout the village heard the explosion, no one saw the bold bad men.

In spite of Sheriff Harris' "looking it up", the safe blowers were never discovered.

**Ronald K. Evans
Retires After 34
Years With GM**

Retirement of Ronald K. Evans, 31825 Evergreen, Beverly Hills, executive vice president and director of General Motors, was announced this week by GM President Harlow H. Curtis.

Evans' retirement, effective Tuesday (Aug. 31), winds up a career of 34 years with General Motors. He also is retiring from membership on GM's Operations Policy and Administration committees.

He has been executive vice president of General Motors, with supervision over non-automotive operating divisions, since August, 1950. Previously he served 14 years as vice president and group executive in charge of the engine divisions.

His GM career began in 1920 when he joined the Remy Electric Company of Anderson, Ind.

TWELVE YEARS of foreign service which made Evans one of General Motors' leading experts on the company's overseas operations began in 1924 when he joined the General Motors Overseas Division and was sent to Australia as field representative.

In 1926, he went to London to join GM Overseas Operations staff. Later that year he was made regional director for Europe and in February, 1927, he was elected a vice president of the General Motors Overseas Operations Division.

He became managing director of Vauxhall Motors Limited in England in 1929 and in 1930 he was named general manager of Adam Opel A. G. in Germany. He held the latter position until his appointment as GM vice president in 1936.

**Christ Church,
Cranbrook Gardens
Open Labor Day**

Although the museums of Cranbrook Academy of Art and Cranbrook Institute of Science will be closed Labor Day, September 6, Christ Church, Cranbrook, and the Gardens of Cranbrook House will be open to visitors.

Christ Church, notable for its frescoes, stained glass, wood and stone sculptures, and 62-bell carillon, is open to the public daily from 9 to 5 except during services.

The Gardens of Cranbrook House, 40 landscaped acres surrounding the home of the late Mr. and Mrs. George G. Booth, founders of the Cranbrook Institutions, will also be open Labor Day from 2:30 to 5:30 p.m. and on Saturday and Sunday afternoons through October.

MARK WESSEL

Concert pianist, composer, lecturer and teacher will accept pupils at his new Orchard Lake Studio Home, 3515 Old Indian Trail, in Birmingham by appointment.

Phone FE 4-5666

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Cranbrook Group Completes Study Of State's "Sinks"

The first known scientific study of animal and plant life in and around Michigan's picturesque "sink holes" has recently been completed by a group of Cranbrook Institute of Science specialists.

Long objects of tourist attraction, these limestone sinks are naturally formed pits varying in depth from a few feet to well over a hundred feet.

Temperatures at the bottom of the deeper holes were found to be 20 degrees lower than at the surface, with very little variation from night to day. This temperature difference, along with other factors, was found to have a marked effect on the types of life in the pits, particularly plants.

The exploring party consisted of Dr. Morton T. Hill and Walter P. Niekirk, both of Cranbrook Institute of Science, and Peter Hill, graduate student in science at the University of Michigan. Within

several months, after a tabulation and analysis of their findings, they will publish a complete report.

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