

'round the towns news

The Birmingham Eccentric

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Post Offices Are Guideposts to Franklin's Past

Mail Office Has Existed In Village Since 1828

By NITA HARD

Unlike many suburban communities that have spawned as a developer's dream, Franklin Village has had substance and history as a town long before incorporation three years ago put it on the map.

Nothing emphasizes this more than the fact that Franklin has had its own post office since 1828—when James Monroe was president of the United States and John McLean was postmaster general.

Back in the 1800's when Franklin had three distilleries, two hotels and a surprising number of business enterprises, Ebenezer Raynale, (great grand-father to Dr. George Raynale of Birmingham) had a general store on the corner of Franklin road and Wellington—where the Stanley Fay family lives now.

RAYNALE was commissioned to dispatch the mail in 1828—when there was any—and was issued a cancellation stamp bearing the town's name.

Records are a little hazy and it's not too clear when Benjamin Coder became the second postmaster and Abner (later) succeeded him, moving postal operations across the street where King also dealt in general merchandise, just north of where the Schoeffel real estate office is today.

Somewhere along in 1890 George Bingham came to work for Rust and they became partners. Later Bingham married Alice Rust and was commissioned as Franklin's fourth postmaster.

FOLLOWING the death of Alice a year later, Bingham married Clara Cox and they built another store, (now the Franklin Food shop) and had three children of whom Arnold and Florence still live in Franklin on Vincennes.

In 1909 Bingham sold his store and the fine big brick house, today occupied by the Robert Kerr family) to John Currin who continued the general merchandise business and received deliveries of mail twice a week from the outside world. His 800 Norman, lives on Captains Lane.

When William (Bill) Jones came to work for Currin there were 32 rented boxes and gross receipts were about \$800.00 a year. Jones became post master in 1932.

SINCE 1938, Franklin's Post office has been a separate building shared with a dry cleaning firm a little further north on Franklin road and it has 455 rented boxes and does a \$38,000 business annually.

Jones says the rural character of the mail has changed considerably. They no longer get shipments of baby storks, and farm implements as in the "old days."

With so many executives living in the area, magazines and circulators flood the mails, along with occasional baby alligators.

An expansion program is gradually taking place to provide an additional 150 more boxes and Jones figures there is about a 25% increase in business each year for which he must prepare.

WHEN ASKED about his peevishness in dealing with the Franklin public, Jones said, "People who don't trouble to learn their lock combinations. We always have a new crop of youngsters who can hardly see above the window and

Lathrup Postmaster Applications Sought

LATHRUP—Applicants for anyone who would like to become postmaster in Lathrup, will be taken in Pontiac until Sept. 24, the U.S. Civil Service Commission announced this week.

The job now held by acting postmaster David B. Redwood, pays \$4,620 annually. Competitors must have at least one year's experience, must have lived in Lathrup for one year, must be between the ages of 18 and 70, and must pass a written test.

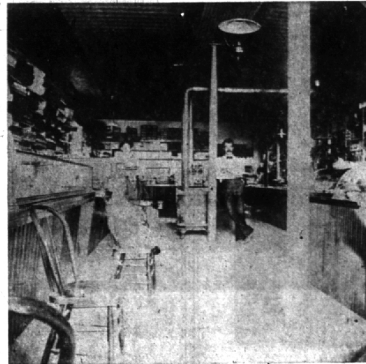
Redwood, who did not take the first civil service exam for the post, said he will apply this time.

Kiwanis Picnic

SOUTHFIELD—The annual picnic of the Southfield Kiwanis Club will be held Sunday at the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Grimes, 23300 Eleven Mile road.

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Bingham's Store

This is the inside of Franklin Food store as it looked when George Bingham (leaning on post) ran the store and the village postoffice around the turn of the century. Positive identification of the boy in chair and the man behind the boy (barely visible) was not obtained.



Rust's General Store

This is the Abner Rust store which was third postmaster and general store proprietor just north of Schoeffel real estate office (background) on Franklin road. It was here that Rust held office as the town's north.



The Morning Rush

Bill Jones (right), Franklin postmaster, and Dan Brown sort morning mail in the community's small but busy post office on Franklin road.



Cowboy Hats in Fashion This Week

Cowboy hats will be in style Saturday at Franklin's Western Roundup and Barbecue, and to make sure everyone is sporting the right headgear, members of the sponsoring organization, the Franklin Community Association, held a hat sale last Saturday from the back of an old wagon. In there being (or selling as the case may be) are: (bottom row, left to right) Linda Ramsey, Bob Kerr,

Betsy Ramsey, Brian Ramsey, Pam Kerr, (on wheel) Mrs. Earl Ramsey who is on the children's games committee, and Tommy Kerr. Second row: Dick Barnard, who is Roundup co-chairman with Orland Ellis, Bill Premo, Teb Barnard, Cindy Roberts, and Roger Fraser. (See Round details inside this section.)

Daylight Thief Hits Lathrup For 3rd Time

LATHRUP—Daylight burglars struck for the third time in as many weeks as they took \$143 from a San Quentin avenue home while the residents worked in the yard, according to Lieutenant Edmund Flannery.

The thief of thieves took the money from three purses in the home of R. Justin Stodart, 18810 San Quentin, Flannery said.

Flannery asked Lathrup residents to watch for any suspicious persons who might be walking or driving through the neighborhood.

METHOD of operation is for the thief to come to the opposite side of the home from where the homeowner is working outside.

Flannery said he believed that more than one area housewife may have seen a strange man or youth in their home who explained his being there by asking directions, or for water or for some other innocent evasion.

If so, Flannery asked that these incidents be reported so police can have a description of the thief.

"Call police first," said Flannery. He commended a man who investigated strange noises or happenings before calling the police only give the prowler a chance to escape, he added.

Lathrup Considers Tax Hike

Propose More City Workers

LATHRUP—Addition of two or three city employees as proposed in a letter by the city's administrator and budget committee could cause one or more of the following to happen, city council decided.

- 1) Residents, by vote, would have to raise the city's tax limitation, now at 7 1/2 mills.
2) A charge for some services, such as rubbish collection, now offered free, would have to be instituted. Or
3) Assessments of property in the city would have to be raised to produce more taxes under the 7 1/2 mill limit.

COUNCIL, tabled the letter until Monday's study meeting to which they have invited Veld Blue, one of those who participated in the service study.

The plan as advanced calls for use of \$7,596 in the city's Evergreen interceptor sewer fund. The sewer money would be paid back out of the general fund when needed.

The \$7,596 would pay for a second fulltime police officer to fill in the unpatrolled periods not now covered by the city's fulltime officer and volunteers.

THE PLAN also calls for hiring a third maintenance man whose (See LATHRUP, Page 2-E)

May Test CD Sirens Saturday

SOUTHFIELD—If you hear sirens Saturday about 12:45 p.m. don't worry about an air raid or tornado. Local civil defense officials will be testing the nine sirens installed recently, if they are all connected by Saturday.

The signal, if there is one, will also signify that the Franklin Western Roundup and Barbecue parade is about to begin according to Mrs. Mary Hershey, civil defense co-director.



They're a First

Bobby (left), Peter (center) and Judy (right), children of Mr. and Mrs. Vincent F. Johnson of Halyard road, are believed to be the first set of triplets enrolled in the history of the Birmingham school system. The 5-year-olds were born Easter Sunday of 1952. They're shown trying out toy telephones in the Walnut Lake school kindergarten room.

B'ham Schools' 1st Triplets Enrolled at Walnut Lake

By MARIAN PATRICK "There is a First Time for Everything", or so goes the old saying.

This saying became a reality when the Birmingham School system enrolled their first set of triplets, Judith, Peter and Robert Johnson.

Their parents, Mr. and Mrs. Vincent F. Johnson, of Halyard road, had no idea when the little triplets arrived on Easter Sun-

day, 1952, that they would change the records of an entire school system, but they did just that when they entered the kindergarten at the Walnut Lake School.

Judith's identity will provide no problem for their teacher, Mrs. Harriett Masters, but the little identicals, Peter and Robert, may prove a bit more confusing.

There are three other children in the Johnson family, Paul, 14, Patty, 8, and David, eight months.

Desert Nomad Hops Out of His Element

By ANNE YOUNG

Anyone lose a kangaroo rat? This small gnawing animal that leaps like a kangaroo, using its long tail and powerful hind legs, took the first splash to initiate the Erwin Meloche's of the Erwin Meloche's on Stelmarr drive.

Fortunately, the newly painted pool had not been filled, but the Saturday rain provided ample water for the visitors dip in the deep end of the pool.

The experience must have been rather dispiriting, as this animal does not drink water and lives in dry places where other creatures would die of thirst.

silky fur. A single leap may cover six feet or more. The Meloche youngsters discovered the half-drowned rat struggling to get out of the pool. Meloche rescued the exhausted creature and immediately its unusual features provoked neighborhood interest and curiosity.

NO ONE CAN say for sure from whence came this desert native or how it got to Michigan.

It's only a theory—but since some of the swimming pool equipment was shipped from California, the kangaroo rat may have been a stow-away in one of the shipping crates.

My Neighbors cartoon strip with a dog and a cat. Text: "Don't just stand there! Hurry back and buy \$15 more groceries before creeping inflation makes them cost \$17!"

The United States-Korean cease-fire armistice was signed July 27, 1953.