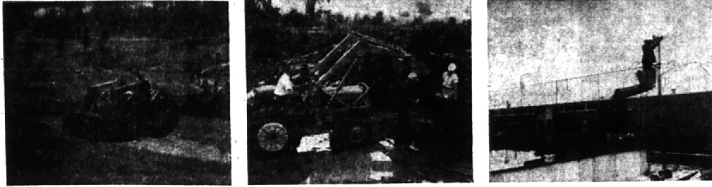


Ingenuity Works — In Birmingham



Summer—You can thank Art Fitch for that tough sand trap at Springdale. He was enlarging it when picture was taken.



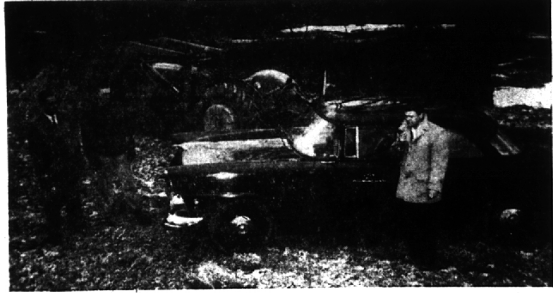
Fall—Diseased elms are sawed for burning by James Gosdy and William Diem. William Sutton's tractor holds up logs.



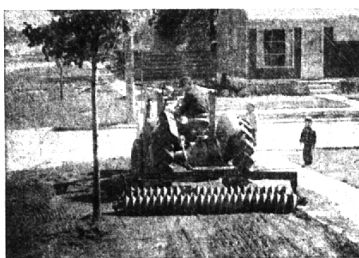
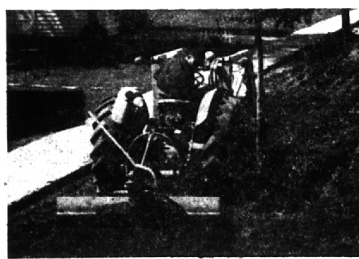
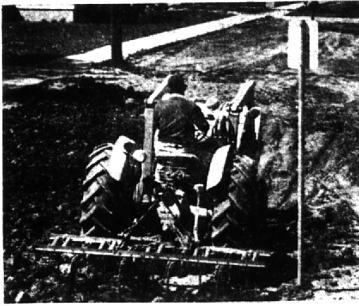
Spring—City care for 25,000 trees. Don Songer and Ken Worde plant one in hole newly dug by Sherwood Pretznov.

Winter—Eton park's ice rink is always a busy place. Ralph Shead adjusts lights, assisted by Sherwood Pretznov and Harvey Rasch.

Three Steps to New Lawn Ripping - Leveling - Packing



Charles W. Gale (left) heads a 22-man crew which maintains Birmingham's park system. Versatile equipment directed by radio, being used by assistant Harvey Rasch, eases their jobs.



Top—Floyd Corey (on tractor) and Jesse Potter move their small self-propelled mowers on a tip-bed trailer. The mowers can simply be driven into the trailer. The tractor also pulls bleachers on wheels to sporting events.

Bottom—Christmas trees make excellent chips for nursery mulching. Truckloads of them are used on city property, but the material is also available to Birmingham householders.



So you think you have gardening problems? Consider the job of the Birmingham department of forestry and parks, largely responsible for keeping everything looking trim around our city except for our own lawns.

Birmingham contains four and one-half square miles, and inside that area are the many parks and recreation areas which set our city apart from most communities of comparable size. We have 300 acres of city property devoted to sports and peaceful tree-shaded resting spots.

We have 31 baseball diamonds, a 38-acre golf course for city residents; there is an archery range, a ski-sled run, five ice rinks, the police department pistol range, a cemetery, a beautiful city-owned lake.

We have five public parking lots; we raise trees in three city-owned nurseries. We enjoy the color and comfort from 25,000 city-maintained trees of almost every variety which can be grown in Michigan. We have a river which occasionally rumpages through our city.

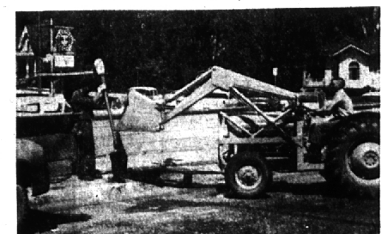
THE MAINTENANCE of this property, which we enjoy and appreciate but rarely think twice about, is under the watchful eyes and skilled hands of Charles W. Gale, superintendent of forestry and parks, assistant Harvey Roth and their resourceful crew of 21 men. Their jobs, as indicated by the pictures on this page, do not begin and end in the summer time.

In fact, they never end at all. Their problem is to do all the things which need doing, and give them the right priority so that the city keeps its attractive appearance year around. Theirs is a task which thrives on ingenuity and puts their imagination to practical tests. The equipment they selected has a lot of bearing on their ability to keep Birmingham pleasant for us. Working on a limited budget, Gale's men use tools and equipment which will give them the widest possible service at the lowest purchase and upkeep costs.

YOU MIGHT THINK that the

Top—Using their tractor-mounted loader as a crane, William Diem (on tractor) and Sherwood Pretznov pull a parking meter out of the ground preparatory to its relocation.

Bottom—Using the down-pressure of the loader and its bucket's sharp edge to "bite" into the hard-packed earth of a driveway, Sherwood Pretznov prepares the way along Eton for heavy road construction equipment.



crane to handle heavy and awkward tree stumps and logs. Jams in the River Rouge can be pulled apart with this versatile rig, or heavy water mains or fire hydrants can be moved.

Following a safety motto of never lift when hydraulic "muscles" can do it for you, the men in the department let the tractor's loader bucket pick up and carry heavy sacks of fertilizer, and drums of spray for the city's weed control and mosquito abatement programs.

The loader's sharp edge is used to "peel" hard-packed ground, to cut paths. And by using the bottom of the bucket as a pile-driver, stakes are driven to hold rubbish containers upright in our parks or to put fencing around hazardous areas. The same equipment compact piles of discarded cans for destruction by burning.

IF YOU'VE DUG a hole for a fence post or to plant a tree or shrub, imagine (with a wince) what is involved for the department which has 800 nursery trees for new plantings and replacement. But in Gale's operation, no backbreaking digging needs to be done. A tractor-mounted auger, powered by the tractor's own engine, digs the holes. To minimize on clipping grass by hand or machine around trees, the ground is covered with the Christmas-tree mulch, and that obtained from 1,100 trees which are trimmed annually by the department.

In a city of our size and character, the city's active sports fans have lots of different interests and insist upon the facilities being kept up to "par." Springdale park golf course went under the park department's management three years ago and is kept carefully maintained, although short cuts have been found to reduce the maintenance time from its former 8,000 man-hours down to 7,000 man-hours a year.

But for overhead tree surgery work, for painting and for installing special lights or sound systems at sporting events, the department's men much prefer to use the loader bucket as a safe elevator than to climb wobbly or slippery ladders.

EQUIPPED WITH glorified "fella's" tools, the loader acts as a

THE NEWLY-BUILT archery range was constructed at a total cost, not including land, of \$300. To keep the 31 baseball diamonds in shape requires that each one receives constant maintenance during the playing season.

The park's artificial ice rink provides healthful exercise for skaters, but the department's tractor operators also have to be nimble to get their maintenance work done between skating periods. Snow must be removed, using tractor-mounted rotary brooms, scraping blades and the loader. Then a heavy plunger-pulled behind the tractor, levels the ice to a 3-inch thickness over the rink's plastic pipes which keep it refrigerated.

To make it easier to enjoy the new ski-sled run, steps to its top have been carved out of the hillside with a blade attached to the rear of the ubiquitous tractor.

You might think that the "picnic" season is of relatively short duration, but getting ready for it is a wintertime chore for the Department's force.

PARK BENCHES are set up before spring; posts used for anchoring trash baskets are replaced with the tractor's auger, and the playground equipment is staked down to be safe and ready for the year's first adventurous youngster.

To a particular group of people in our area, the ingenuity of the forestry and parks department is of special interest. Those people designed much of the equipment being used in unusual ways in our city, and in recognition of the versatility of Gale's operations and the "team" approach which his men use to get tough maintenance jobs done, efficiently, the tractor and implement division of Ford Motor Co. will feature the department's operations in an eight-page booklet which it will distribute to most city governments next month.

Nearly 50 scenes from Birmingham, including those on this page, will appear in the September issue of "American City and Public Works" magazines under Ford sponsorship.

To expect this world to provide one with economic security without one making the effort to somehow, honestly, earn and deserve it, is to fix one's hope upon "the end of the rainbow." Even if one inherits financial security, he must exercise his mind and judgment in the effort to retain this status for there are many pitfalls along Golden Avenue.

The Birmingham Eccentric
BIRMINGHAM, MICHIGAN
Thursday, August 14, 1958
SECTION B

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