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DOWN TO EARTH Colorful Custom Has Practical Aspects

By ALICE WESSELS BURLINGAME
Special Writer for The Birmingham Eccentric

It is interesting to hear about the traditions of such countries and recently Jean Sharley of the Detroit Free Press told me about a custom coming from England as told to her by her English partner, the Frank Sharleys, who live part of the year in St. Ives and near Detroit.

Children in the rural part of England frequently have flower seeds in their pocket and when they walk to school they scatter them along the roadside with the result that the rural roads are very colorful.

Also as train travel is used often due to lack of automotive transportation the passengers toss seeds out the windows for a colorful railroad bed.

CLICK, CLICK, can't you hear my brain work, trying to apply the idea to my experiences with patients.

At Pontiac State Hospital, there are hundreds of confined patients who go for a walk with a staff member. You see these people plodding along.

If these patients could be given packets of seeds to scatter along the back of the car or wide roads along the property perhaps the interest and color created could encourage a spring step and can't you just see them scattering seeds to live along to pick the flowers, experiencing the joy we Mrs. Burlingame all do when we pick a bouquet, especially if you have planted the seed.

This same idea would be adaptable to lifetime women workers at the Detroit House of Correction who give a terrific response to the field of cooperation which they have their own gardens to beautify. Paths in their fields could be made beautiful by the simple scattering of seeds to the way the story is told by Jean Sharley.

RECENTLY I have enjoyed talking with Genevieve Maxwell from Warrington Road who lives in Lebanon. This area in the Near East is similar to Los Angeles with its mountains, sea, desert and need for irrigation.

The climate is also like the valleys in Chile and New Zealand. From Dec. 15 to April 15 it is possible to ski in the mountainous area in powdery snow a 6 foot depth. In the beginning of December, the spring begins in the lowlands with frequent frosts to worry the citrus growers. At Christmas time they use apple blossoms for trimming.

Mrs. Maxwell reports that most of the fruit trees are dwarf and the nursery stock comes from the United States, Italy and France. The land is very rich but needs some fertilizer. The people of this land are basically agricultural and always welcome new ideas.

SHE HAS as her hobby the collection of pressed (herb) plants and from Switzerland, Italy, Austria, Roumania and France she has Edelweiss, this perennial herb likes lime soil. It is a tufted, woolly plant about four to 12 inches high.

It will grow in the United States in full sun, in a rock arrangement and if the soil is alkali it will even respond to indoor pot culture in a sunny window. The most attractive part of the plant is the star-like cluster of woolly leaves, the flowers are small and yellow.

A love of skiing brought Mrs. Maxwell back for a long visit to the United States as the first press delegate to the 1956 winter Olympics at Squaw Valley for the Lebanese team, representing the Daily Star.

One of the joys of skiing on the snow-covered slopes in her adopted area is the beauty created by the 400 famous Cedars of Lebanon.

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New Stamp Machine Switch Cancels Mailers' Frustration

By LES LANGLOIS
City Editor

Frustrated Birmingham mailers are back to normal and so is the Birmingham Post Office's stubborn stamp machine since the replacement of its electronic part known as a "micro switch" after a five-week delay.

Although the switch didn't make it for the holiday rush of Christmas mailers, it arrived Jan. 4 in time to get the three and four center off to a good New Year.

"The machine is finally working," said Birmingham Postmaster Rollie Reese, "but that's not saying how long it's going to last."

THE WORK-OUT PART which controls the number of stamps released from the machine, went on

the fritz seven weeks ago when Reese first reported its failure to the Detroit repair unit.

And Reese did what he could to pacify disappointed stamp buyers by putting up a clean sheet of paper for frustrated purchasers' choice remarks when one sheet was filled. "People like to express themselves," said Reese.

The Detroit repair unit explained the delay as being a result of a directive stating that parts for the newer type machines be obtained directly from a central government supply depot.

ALTHOUGH THE DETROIT office stocked parts for the older stamp machines, there wasn't much of a demand for the new Stamp

master parts. That is, not until the Birmingham stamper gave out.

"The thing that grips me," said Reese, "is as long as we have such a delicate machine, the parts should be available for repairs with some rapidity."

THE SWITCH ARRIVED in Detroit on a Saturday and was installed on a Wednesday. "The repair service is good when you've got the part, but it took a month to get it," he said.

Want ads cannot be accepted after 3 p.m. each Tuesday.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Classes for adults in the continuing education program of the Birmingham Public Schools begin January 23, 1961. Registration will be accepted at the Board of Education Building, Chester and Martin Streets, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. beginning Monday, January 9.

- Choose from an offering of thirty-three interesting classes in the regular program.
- Fundamentals of Drawing, Oil Painting, Water Color Painting, Interior Decorating, Photography, Organ, Investment Guidance, Contract Bridge I, Contract Bridge II, Basic Economics, Effective Speaking, Numerical Arithmetic, Radio and Hi-Fi, Notehand, Typing, Beginning Sewing, Intermediate Sewing, Cake Decorating, Catering Tips, Italian, Beginning French, Intermediate French, Advanced French, Beginning Spanish, Spanish for Travelers, Unfinished Business of Growing Up, Understanding Your Child, Your Income Tax, Round Dancing, Ballroom Dancing, Western Square Dancing with the Jarman's (Intermediate), Western Square Dancing with the Gracey's (Advanced).

Three additional classes offered in Liberal Arts in cooperation with Michigan State University: Normal Personality II, Human Relations I, and Lore of the Stars.

Register early to insure space in the course of your choice. For further information call MI 4-9300; Ext. 69.

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