Student Visits Birmingham's 'Adopted Daughters'

EDITOR'S NOTE: Harry Altick, 22, graduated from Birmingham High School in 1957 and from Dartmouth College last June. This past summer he attended Oslo International Summer School. The son of Mr. and Mrs. Harry J. Altick, 1018 Kennesaw, Birmingham, he will leave soon for a position with an investment banking firm in San Francisco.

By HARRY ALTICK
Special Writer

A land of enchanted islands, majestic mountain peaks, sparkling fjords; this is Norway. "The way north," a viking land relatively small in area though its length stretches for a distance of several thousand miles, from the sun bathed beaches of the south to the land of the midnight sun, a summer vacation paradise at a latitude campareable with that of Alaska.

This is the country I have visited for the last two summers, a country I have learned to love as the Norwegians love it; one of the most idyllic tourist spots in the world and yet a place almost entirely overlooked by American tourists.

NORWAY IS THE homeland of Birmingham's recent American Field Service students. The first student, Marit Maaren, attended Birmingham High School during the 1957-58 session while another Norwegian girl, Jorunn Petterson, attended Seaholm High School this last school year.

During the course of my summer in Norway, I was fortunate to visit both of these AFS students and can now bring back to all of you the best wishes of our friends in Norway.

THE MAAREN FAMILY lives in Sandefjord, a whaling town on the southeast coast. Sandefjord is one of southern Norway's most pleasant ports. The road to Sandefjord winds over rolling hills and along a lovely fjord, lined with enticing beaches.

From Marty's house (Marty was Marit's Birmingham nickname) one has a lovely view of the small town, the harbor with its great whaling boats and the surrounding hills and forests.

The hospitality of the Norwegian people is wonderful and the Maarens outdo all others with their kindness. During my stay, we took many excursions to the nearby countryside. One lovely Sunday was spent on a rock island in the fjord. The Maarens brought a picnic lunch along and the entire family and I picnicked, sunbathed and swam while scores of sailboats darted in and out of the myriad of islands dotting the fjord.

Another wonderful weekend was spent at a retreat owned by a friend of "papa" Maaren. This beautiful hunting lodge could be approached only by traveling miles over a private lumber trail and then rowing for several kilometers across an isolated inland lake.

During the few days we stayed here, the entire family occupied

Marit Maaren (left) with Harry Altick and Kay Mabley of Birmingham. Kay was visiting the Maaren family in Norway.

themselves with fishing, berry picking and all the outdoor activities which Norwegians love so well.

Every morning my little "Norwegian brother" (the Maaren's youngest son) and I would row out to the fishing nets to retrieve the morning catch. The speckled trout we always found in the nets would turn any fisherman green with envy.

WHEN I FINALLY parted with the Maarens, there were tears in my eyes for I felt as if I was leaving my second home. However, I was also happy because my anticipated trip to beautiful northern Norway, the land of the Laplanders and the midnight sun. I did make this very trip at the end of the summer, first hitchhiking from Oslo to Bergen, then traveling by boat from Bergen to the very top of Norway and finally hitchhiking the entire route back to Oslo.

It was on my way back from Lapland that I visited Tromso, viking capital of the north and home of last year's Seaholm High School's American Field Service student, Jorunn Petterson.

THERE IS QUITE a contrast between Northern and Southern Norway. The southern area is the most populated section, with Oslo as its capital (Oslo being the legal capital of all of Norway). Many Norwegians from the south spend their entire lives without ever having seen the northern part of their country.

However, the north Norwegians are fiercely proud of their part of the country and often resent the casual indifference typifying the southern attitude toward the north. Tromso is the center of influence of these northerners, and they glow with pride when they speak of the "Tromso boys", men like Amundsen, the Arctic explorer and many others who have held prominent places in world history.

TROMSO IS ONE of the world's most beautiful cities. Built on an island, it is connected to the mainland by a magnificent concrete bridge, the largest of its kind in northern Europe.

The Petterson's house is located on a hill overlooking the city and the fjord. Interestingly enough, this whaling port is the northern facsimile of Sandefjord, the Maaren's home, and both families have unique views of the surrounding countryside.

The Sunday I stayed with the Petterson's was one of the most glorious days of my life. We left their house early in the morning and hiked down the hill and into the town. As we walked along the main street, we encountered many stuffed polar bears set in front of various shops. They served as reminders of the arctic hunting expeditions which use Tromso as their base port.

WE THEN CROSSED the magnificent concrete span linking Tromso with the mainland and hiked to the base of a magnificent mountain range located less than a mile from the heart of the city. From here we took a telecabin lift to the top of the first line of abrupt cliffs and then began the ascent of the upper range.

Below us, Tromso sparkled like a jewel against the dark blue fjord. Behind the city was another range of mountains separated from the main island by a second fjord which wound its way toward the open sea.

There is nothing more exhilarating than natural scenery like this! Never can one feel so close to the heavens then when standing on a mountain top and gazing upon the majesty of inspiring natural beauty.

WE CONTINUED our hiking and then picnicked near a glistening pocket of summer snow. On our return trip, we wound our way through a lovely valley, picking blueberries at every opportunity.

We arrived home tired, tan, blue from our efforts at berry picking and filled with a renewed love for beautiful Norway.

JORUNN IS NOW beginning her last year in the Norwegian High School. The senior year in Norway is a crazy time, when the students pulling all the tricks that rambunctious youth can conceive of. It is an expression of that extraordinary burst of energy before the transition to the world of the University or the office.

The school year is consumated by a trip to Copenhagen, the Tromso equivalent of Seaholm's "Washington Trip." This is a gay time for everyone. The fun-loving Danish are tickled by the antics of the red-capped Norwegian students and the students are fascinated with the beautiful and exciting "Paris of the North."

WHEN I LEFT Tromso, I couldn't help reflecting on the wonderful life of these people and the beautiful country in which they live, Sandefjord and Tromso, two little towns, one north, one south, both Norwegian, both the home of a Birmingham AFS student.

How fortunate we are to have had these wonderful girls with us, to see our way of life in Birmingham. How wonderful it is to see Birmingham's adopted daughters again, in their own home, in Norway.

TV 'Newsign' Transmits From S'field

A new traveling message "Newsign" that can transmit instantaneous news flashes direct from the newsroom of WXYZ-TV in Southfield to downtown Detroit viewers is in operation on the front of the Detroit Bank and Trust building.

Bank president Raymond T. Perring, of Bloomfield Hills, John F. Pival, president of WXYZ, Inc., and Charles H. Hewitt, executive vice president of the bank, gathered to start the sign's operation by giving the starting signal over a radio telephone located in a WXYZ-TV operations unit in front of the bank.

Commenting on the 80 foot sign, Pival said, "We are pleased to cooperate with Detroit Bank and Trust in bringing this new service to the downtown Detroit Area."

Perring added, "We hope that in some small measure this "Newsign," the only one in the Detroit area, will help to make the downtown Detroit community a more exciting and interesting place in which to shop and work."

News messages appearing on the sign will travel through 14 miles of telephone cable from WXYZ-TV's studios to the sign, and along more than 90 miles of wire within the sign that connect a Scan-O-Mat machine with 1,120 individual lights.

A subscription to The Eccentric brings you the community's top news events 52 times a year.

NATURE NOW

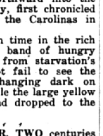
By Lydia King Frehse
Special Writer for The Birmingham Eccentric

Rare Papaw Tree Found in Mich.

One of the rare and curious trees of the southern portion of our lower peninsula is the papaw. The Spanish explorer DeSoto, pushing his way northward into the Mississippi valley, first chronicled its presence in the Carolinas in the year 1541.

It was autumn time in the rich river flats. The band of hungry men, never far from starvation's threat, could not fail to see the ripened fruits hanging dark on the branches while the large yellow leaves curled and dropped to the ground.

THEREAFTER, TWO centuries passed while the papaw was shared only by hungry animals and red men. We hear no more of it until 1743 when the English naturalist, Mark Catesby, after a collecting trip to Virginia and Carolina delineated it in his "Natural History of Carolina".



Mrs. Frehse

We first tasted the fruit of the papaw in the Ozark hill country where it grew in dense thickets along the flats of the Merrimac river. Together with the persimmon it is much relished by the opossum, grey squirrel and raccoon. The hill folk, ever dependent on the bounty of the wild, make both a pudding and a kind of preserve from both of these odd fruits.

NOW AS THEN, the river flats of the Missisippi are the chosen home of the papaw. It reaches into the eastern and northern states only as an understory tree where it is forced into the shade by its competitors.

Most often it attains only shrub-like proportions forming dense thickets along river bottoms and streams.

HOWEVER, ON a recent field trip to Bloomor State Park No. 8, we found an unusual grove of the papaw which harbors trees 30 feet high and some six to eight inches in diameter.

We came away with one of the fruits which is shaped like a stubby banana. This we are ripening (for old-time's sake) on the ledge of the back porch.

When picked it was green but now it is soft to the touch and yellowing. When is reaches a wrinkled brown, it will be palatable for one who is accustomed to its odd flavor. The flesh will then be custard-like and interspersed with shiny seeds, flat and brown, somewhat resembling those of a watermelon but larger and more oblong in shape.

THE PAPAW (Asimina triloba) is a member of the only genus of the great custard-apple family to be found outside the tropics. Several species which are small shrubs are found in the southern parts of North America.

The entire tree has an exotic look borrowed from its tropical relatives. Its flowers first green, then brown and finally a dark winy color, appear in April. They are borne on short hairy stems attached to the twig, back of the leaves.

THERE ARE SIX petals which give the appearance of three because they are arranged in two rows within each other. The effect reminds one of a two-inch edition of the wild ginger flower.

The leaves are oboviate-lancelot in shape. They are among the largest in our North American silva, sometimes reaching a length of 12 inches. As you read these lines they will have turned a clear yellow, blending with the mellowest of autumn tones. In winter the tree can be identified by its long buds, brown and hairy.

HEREABOUTS, THE papaw has no practical value since its wood is soft and we have no need to eat of its strange fruits.

But the Indians employed its strong inner bark for making fiber cloth, fish nets and lines for stringing fish. Its fruits were a part of their autumn feasts.

DOWN TO EARTH

Local Homes Provide Garden Study Sources

By ALICE WESSELS BURLINGAME
Special Writer for The Birmingham Eccentric

"Everybody in town" has gone by the Lloyd Coveney home at 1052 West Lincoln, and admired the landscape treatment of the home. The clever design of the driveway allows for guest parking on a busy street and the high brick walled patio with wrought iron doors is quite picturesque.

The home was studied by the garden design class from the Community House and after entering the beautiful iron gate they discovered a garden requiring a minimum amount of maintenance. It was truly a green garden, displaying a textured picture created by a collection of flowering shrub material and evergreens. At the base of the trees and shrubs, appropriate ground cover for light exposure was planted.

Mrs. Burlingame

At the rear of the property was a wooden deck allowing the owners to walk out at a high elevation and look over the valley with the stream meandering through it. At a lower level was a large flowering crab. Around it for a diameter of about 25 feet was an inviting patio made by laying hard natural colored brick in a circle.

AS THE VISITORS strolled through the garden, they realized how the designer of the property had a conception of space use and plant habits. At the entrance on Lincoln, masses of Andora Junipers hold a steep bank from erosion. They do not call for mowing care but always maintain a disciplined profile. Here is a stunning home designed and placed graciously on a narrow lot.

Next door is the home of the Lewis Dibbles which we have reported on before. Several new innovations, per usual, placed by Gladys Dibble, a talented artist, assured us of new details to study.

Prize winning garden sculptoring was placed in important locations. There is a modern interpretation of St. Francis on a pedestal with Autumn Clematis and a mass of small white flowers growing around the base.

EACH ROOM IN the home, which snuggles into the steep hillside, has its own patio garden with the flowers and plants specifically selected from a view inside toward the outside to conform with the inside color scheme as well as the mature lines of the plant which will complement the room. The master bedroom has some Japanese detail and, of course, a Japanese garden has been executed to tie into the exotic room.

Since a previous visit, there has been an enlargement of the dining room. A deck has been constructed to afford the Dibbles a view over their valley of several hundred feet where the flowering trees, evergreens, have been selected to play their role in the symphony of season coloring.

As each room has its patio, the question is often asked: "Which patio will we eat on for this meal?" The Dibble home and grounds are always a pace setter for those in the area who participate in the arts as well as ornamental home gardening.

RECENTLY OUR competing columnist, Jack Ball said: "A hot, dry summer will mean a poor bulb crop next year." According to the extent of our local rains for 1961, we should have a bountiful crop of bulb flowers for 1962. Ball also stated that bulbs on the east side of a structure are best because of enjoying afternoon shade. Bulbs prefer neutral to alkaline soil for the best results.

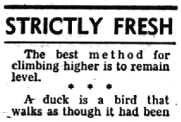
Don't get too busy with your pruning shears as you can cut off all of next spring's flowers. While all of your summer's backnaches are fresh in your mind, maybe you should cut down on details which call for too much maintenance. "Easy Does It" can be your motto for your garden.

STRICTLY FRESH

The best method for climbing higher is to remain level.

* * *

A duck is a bird that walks as though it had been



riding a horse all day.

* * *

When talking with a friend, the only thing worse than his looking at his watch is his holding it up to his ear to see if it hasn't stopped.

* * *

No one is too big to be courteous, but many people are too little.

Michigan's first automobile manufacturing company, the Olds Motor Vehicle Works, was started in Lansing in 1897.

WEEKLY VISIT

He Has a Lot of 'Drive'

By IRMA N. DAVIS
Staff Writer

"Everyone thinks we're the bad guys," commented Robert Finder with a grin to contradict his "complaint."

Finder is the used car sales manager at the Harold Turner automobile dealership on S. Woodward, Birmingham.

"The the other night when 'Racket Squad' was on television," Finder continued. "The program must have been about used car salesmen because we sure got the calls after that—you know, people calling to rib us.

"Actually, you should see some of the cars we get occasionally—all doped up. We sure couldn't sell them to people here."

RIBBING OR NOT, Finder says he likes his job and wouldn't change his field.

"I like selling and I've always been in used car sales," except for working a year at GM Diesel. That's where I met my wife, Betty."

Finder is a friendly man with a quick sense of humor who insists he is "a dull guy."

He doesn't fit his own description.

He has a ready fund of anecdotes related to his job and an even larger store of facts about the used car business. He and the five salesmen who work in the used car lot at the local dealership sell about "175" units a month."

"THAT'S WHY we're as fond of characters who ask to take the car they're looking at for a short spin. We've had them bring the car back hours later, full of packages. The 'spin' turned into a shopping tour."

He said the absence of such a car from the lot, sometimes all day, might mean the loss of a sale.

Finder's duties involve not only supervision of sales but wholesaling cars to other dealers, arranging for reconditioning of units and, among other things, the appraisal of cars taken in on trade.

"The new car salesmen hate us one day, love us the next," he laughingly commented.

FATHER OF TWO daughters, Finder lives in Cambridge Village.

ROBERT FINDER

He likes to hunt and play golf and said he had watched one of his salesmen, Walter Dakesian, make a "hole-in-one" on the course at Springdale in August.

He and his wife enjoy sulky races and when he finds time, he takes his family swimming or to a ball game.

His hours are from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. six days a week, except on Wednesdays and Saturdays when the dealership does not have evening hours. Friday is his day off.

He has had customers from all parts of the country and "not too long ago we shipped to Norway. We've sold several cars to missionaries in India and Africa."

THE USED CAR manager chuckled as he recalled the "case of the two ministers."

"We'd taken in a car from a Methodist minister here in Birmingham and wholesaled it, with some others, to a dealer in Tennessee. He re-wholesaled it to another dealer and the car went through a whole series of deals like that. It was finaly bought by another Methodist minister, somewhere in the South.

"Well, to make a long story short, the southern midister traced the title back and called the minister here. They compared notes and it turned out the car had less mileage on it than when it left Birmingham. Someone sure turned that speedometer back."

"Of course it wasn't us" Finder quickly added.

NOW IN A reminiscent mood, he told of a reconditioning job on a youngster's jalopy.

"That was the 'Mau Mau Muncher.' At least, that's what the kid had painted on the side. He'd torched it to lower the frame. Cost us $75 to fix it up again. The kid that bought it from us was back in the next day for something and, you know what? He'd torched it all over again."

Finder turned to his assistant, Roy Ammell, whom he labels "the best used car salesman in the state."

"Remember the FBI, Roy?"

"YEAH, THEY found some dynamite caps in a car we sold and came in to check it out. The caps were concealed in the trunk lining. There's always something going on in this business," Ammell said.

"By gosh, there really is, when you come to think of it," Finder agreed.

Michigan Facts

The 1960 Michigan Highway Needs Study reports Michigan is going to have to spend $11 billion during the next 20 years to build new highways, rebuild many existing ones and maintain them.

There are more than 8,000 bridges on Michigan's highway system. The Highway Needs Study reports all but 1,000 of these spans will need to be replaced or modernized by 1980 at a cost of $1.5 billion.

The 1960 Michigan Highway Needs Study reports construction costs of new state highways range from $100,000 per mile for two-lane rural sections to $15 million per mile for an eight-lane freeway in downtown Detroit.

The second oldest continuously maintained parish in the United States is St. Anne's in Cadillac, Michigan, founded in 1701.

Nearly half of all the Great Lakes ports handling a million or more tons of cargo annually are in Michigan.

My Neighbors

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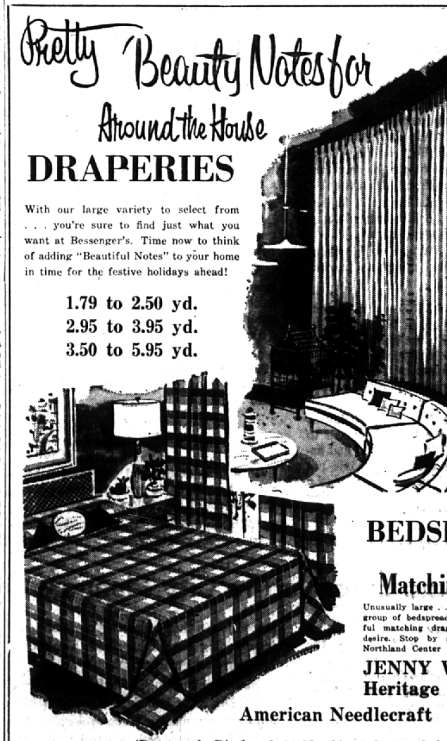

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