

THE BIRMINGHAM ECCENTRIC, BIRMINGHAM, MICHIGAN  
May 10, 1962 SECTION D

## Seven Homes Opened For Annual Visitors

By WALLY FROMHART  
Arts Editor

A tour of seven old and new homes in the Birmingham-Bloomfield area will be conducted for the benefit of the Oakland County Planned Parenthood League Tuesday, May 15 from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. The tour will begin at the home of Mrs. Mikka Ikonen, in downtown Birmingham, and conclude at the home of Dr. and Mrs. Herman J. Linn, on Long Lake in Bloomfield Hills.

Other homes included in the tour are owned by Mr. and Mrs. R. Jamison Williams, 1023 Yarrow; Mr. and Mrs. Fred J. Alpert, 1200 Ardmore Dr., Bloomfield Hills; Mr. and Mrs. E. Wright Yount, 591 Rudgate Rd., Bloomfield Hills; Mr. and Mrs. Ernest A. Jones, 990 Cranbrook Rd., Bloomfield Hills; and Mr. and Mrs. Fred W. Sauer, 1415 Epping Lane, Bloomfield Hills.

THE FIFTH building visited, the Yamasaki-designed Unitarian Church, will include serving of a sandwich luncheon.

Mrs. Glenn Wilson, of Birmingham, is chairman of the tour. Also on the committee are Mrs. Fraser R. Pomeroy, Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Marshall Fredericks, Mrs. Archie Crowley, Mrs. Palmer B. Sutton, and Mrs. Harold Chalk.

Miss Ikonen's home on 425 Hanna is a contemporary, ground-level penthouse design on a fenced-in 40 foot lot. Exquisite art works decorate the interior, including paintings by local artists. Completing the art collection are works of Russian icons, a 16th century Chinese Buddha, and family treasures brought from Russia.

THE WILLIAMS' home, designed by D. Allen Wright, had a new wing added recently of contemporary design by Clifford Wright. This addition, containing beams and railings that match the original structure, is entered through a sunken entrance with stone retaining wall set off by flagstone paving.

An informal atmosphere, exemplified by European and American antiques, old family treasures and art objects from Europe and the Orient, and an antique gun collection, characterize the Fred Alpert home. Built along Grecian Revival lines, it has an expansive two-level lawn leading down to a swimming pool.

A feeling of lightness and space is felt when stepping into the E. Wright Yount house. A conscious effort to combine indoor and outdoor living effects has been made, illustrated by large sliding glass

panels in the living room which convert it into a screened porch when drawn back.

A STRIKING contrast of the old and new creates an interesting study in the home of the Ernest Jones'. Its huge living room combines Old English effects of wooden ceiling beams with the modern element of an elaborate, modern High Fidelity system. The old house has a complete area designated solely as the children's section.

The Fred Sanders' home stands in Georgian staidness on a rolling terrace. It is decorated in Early American furnishing except for the recently remodeled (1961) kitchen done in completely modern decor.

William Kessler designed the contemporary home of Dr. Linn. Ideally located on lakefront property, it takes full advantage of the view with glass walls and bright sun decks. A studio in the home's lower level serves as a studio for Dr. Linn's metal sculpturing.

## Local Women Handle Belafonte Tickets

Two local women will handle Birmingham-area ticket sales for the Harry Belafonte show at the Fisher Theater May 22.

Mrs. A. J. Levin, 7420 Franklin Rd., Bloomfield Township, will distribute tickets in the Franklin area. Mrs. Paul Rich, 3188 Erie Drive, Orchard Lake, will handle the northwestern area.

Both women are part of the tri-county ticket campaign organized by the Merrill-Palmer Alumni Association of Metropolitan Detroit.

## M. Goldberg Talks At Southfield High

Miran Goldberg of New York will speak at 8 p.m. May 10 at Southfield High School. Her subject will be "The Gifted Child and the Science and Art Camp."

The speaker is professor of education in Teachers' College at Columbia University and education consultant for Science and Art Camp Inc., a unit of which will open this summer in Oak Park.

## Wonnbergers Prepare Greek Theatre for Another Season

"All the world's a stage," wrote Shakespeare. And so it must seem to Carl and Annetta Wonnberger, hectic getting ready between the final school play in May and the mid-June opening of the summer theatre work.

Founders of the Cranbrook Summer Theatre school in 1941, the Wonnbergers have, over the years, produced, written, performed, and directed plays as well as having taught dramatics.

Coming to Cranbrook in 1959 as head of the English department, Wonnberger has also served as drama coach until this year.

"It has been a terrific school," says Mrs. Wonnberger, co-director of the summer theatre, and an English teacher at Wayne during the year.

"THE SCHOOL has grown steadily and it has been increasingly hectoring ready between the final school play in May and the mid-June opening of the summer school. That's why Carl reluctantly gave up drama during the Wonnbergers' summer holidays."

Until 1941 the Wonnbergers had been spending their summers working in summer stock throughout the east. For five years, they were on the faculty of the Rice Playhouse on Martha's Vineyard. With travel restricted at the outbreak of war, the Wonnbergers decided to bring the "mountain to the summer theatre, and open a theatre school right at Cranbrook."

Assisted by the Booth family, the year.

ANNOUNCEMENTS were sent calling for students between the ages of 10-14. 25 students enrolled. "None," recalls Carl Wonnberger, "were between 10-14."

Today there are over 100 students — (20-25 being recipients of scholarships) and 26 instructors. Students are divided into 4 age groups: 9-11 juniors, 12-14 intermediates, 14-16 young seniors, and 16 through college age — seniors.

Classes are held outdoors each morning. The time is divided between instruction and rehearsal of a weekly play by each group. Final plays are given for the public at the end of the season.

THERE ARE two performances with rotating casts, so that each student has the experience of varied roles.

For the Juniors, it is usually an extravagant musical production, with original music written by Wonnberger. The seniors present three final plays — a comedy, a serious drama, and a musical, again written in part or whole by Wonnberger.

Two new courses have been added to the program this year — a theatre arts laboratory for dramatic teachers to be taught by Mrs. Wonnberger, and a credit course for high school and college students.

Many of their students have gone on to professional theatre work. "But," emphasized both of the Wonnbergers, "our training is not just for serious drama students."

"OUR MAIN concern," says Mrs. Wonnberger, "is to bring out the talent in each child." "We're thrilled with the success of those who do go on, but it is just as important to us to watch a shy student develop poise and assurance."

Carl Wonnberger added — "The discipline of dramatic training prepares students for meeting the public on stage and anywhere else." Deeply satisfied with their work in the past, the Wonnbergers are as excited at the prospect of a new summer, as they were 20 years ago.



Things are very peaceful at Cranbrook's Greek Theater now, as evidenced by Mrs. Annetta Wonnberger standing by the barely rippling pool. Come summer, however, the grounds will be buzzing with activity as the Cranbrook Summer Theater gets into full swing. Mrs. Wonnberger, co-director of the theater with husband Carl, will obviously prefer the activity to the solitude. She has for the past 30 years.



## 'Auntie' Flips Her Wig

Rising rapidly in popularity throughout the nation's fashion circles is the wearing of wigs as a method of instant change in hair styles. In the production of "Auntie Mame," to be staged May 4, 5, 11, 12 and 13 by the Birmingham Village Players, "Mame" (the lead played by Patsy Slaven) must change hair styles nine times, and each time it is done by substituting a different wig.

Above, Birmingham make-up man Gerald David puts the finishing touches on Auntie's coiffure. Wigs, said David, are affixed to a band placed around tightly-combed hair. The other lead character in the forthcoming production, Patrick Dennis, is played by Rusty Banes as a boy, and Dale Willie as a young man.

## Nothing Bubbles Over Quite Like Auntie Mame and Cast

Reviewed by Jerry Hays

The ever-effervescent "Auntie Mame" and her entourage have moved into the Village Players for two weeks. Let's hope they can keep her confined to the premises while she's in town—or Jacobson's will be selling rollerskates C.O.D. Agnes Gooch will be leading the Planned Parenthood Tour, and Auntie Mame will be building an orphanage in Greece Pointe.

This delightful tidbit of nonsense is based on the novel by Patrick Dennis. As a play, it breaks every rule of good small theatre production. It requires a huge cast, hundreds of costume changes, and twenty-two scenes.

In return, it offers the most alluring, improbable set of characters assembled on the American stage since "Arsenic and Old Lace."

THE VILLAGE Players meet this first problem with much success. They have assembled a cast of forty-six players, who obviously took great pleasure in their roles.

Rusty Banes, as the young Patrick, turned in a fine acting job. It is a difficult job to play yourself on the stage. This youth is to be commended; he made young Patrick a likeable and lively child without once falling into the trap of being the imp or the too-sweet-to-be-true.

Chris Jaynes, as Agnes Gooch, was Agnes. If ever there was an unrepentant bubble in this world, Chris Jaynes studied it and made it speak in her every movement, tone and line.

AND, OF COURSE, there was that woman called Mame. How Patsy Slaven had any energy left to entertain us as the vivacious Auntie Mame between all those costume changes, I'll never know. She covered that stage like she had taken home a pair of those May roller-skates.

If her Mame was less flamboyant than some, it gained by being warmer, more believable and womanly than most. She provided a Mame a bloom with grace, and

mixed with the right amount of horseradish to be fun.

SPECIAL MENTION among this large cast also should go to Mark Parrell, John Mitchell, Elenore Pritchard, Deke James, Ben Benson, and Dale Winnie for fine character portrayals. Not to forget Liz Byrne, Kay Hollister and Lawton Taber, who played the "all too" Upon family—to the last restriction.

The costumes and sets were carried out with the same zest right down to Agnes Gooch's orthopedic shoe. But this also proved to be the Village Players' downfall. The sets are too good, too elaborate, and the costume changes too varied to allow quick scene changes. "Auntie Mame" is a play made up of many short vignettes that should move quickly one into the other.

IF THE PLAY is allowed to drag by the many scene changes, it loses much of its gaiety. They have thought too big—unnecessarily so, since this excellent cast could carry the play with success in a much simpler setting and would have been aided by the increased tempo of the faster scene changes.

Just the same, I suggest you take a cushion down to the Village Players' theatre this week end and put some fun in your life with a fine "Mame" and her zany friends.

## Local Best Sellers

FICTION  
Ship of Fools—Katherine Anne Porter  
Franny and Zooey—J. D. Salinger  
Devil Water—Anya Seton

NON-FICTION  
The Rothschilds—Frederic Morton  
Guns of August—Barbara Tuchman  
Six Crises—Richard Nixon

## Potpourri

by ROBIN BAHR  
Arts Editor



Birmingham is knee deep in theatrics right now. St. Dunstan's has started rehearsing their final play of the year—"Look Homeward Angel"—to be given June 8, 9, 15 and 16 in the outdoor Greek Theatre at Cranbrook.

The play is based on Thomas Wolfe's famous novel about his family and boyhood in Asheville, Tennessee. The prodigious and deeply moving story was beautifully adapted for the stage by Ketti Frings in 1958, winning the Pulitzer prize and the New York Drama critics award for that year.

THE VILLAGE Players opened last Friday with "Auntie Mame." "Mame" is an exotic and wacky female character created by Patrick Dennis in a novel.

Mame becomes "Auntie" when she finds herself suddenly in charge of a 13-year-old nephew. The nephew, Patrick, happily and surprisingly survives Mame's hot beat, slightly crazy, but highly entertaining tutelage. Rosalind Russell played Mame on Broadway and in the movies.

THE FINAL and most ambitious theatre event in sight is the community wide musical, "The Bloomingham Newcomers", just getting underway. Sponsored by the Bloomfield Art Association the musical will be the featured event of the Birmingham Arts Festival June 21-24. St. Dunstan's and The Village Players are co-operating in the execution of the play. Tryouts are open to everyone in the community.

More than 100 people have come to the first two tryouts at the Community House. Hopefully, more will come to the third and last tryout at the Community House Saturday, May 12, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

WRITTEN BY Dean Coffin as a sequel to "The Bloomingham Eccentrics," the play is a take off on suburbia and its endless organizations. Mrs. Charles Himeloch has written wonderful music. One of the best songs is "Clubs of Birmingham," that doesn't leave anyone out.

This is a tremendous undertaking pulling together people and organizations into one huge community event. And it is "THE" opportunity for anyone with a streak of ham to get in on the act.

The play will be held in the Geodesic dome—to be erected at the Birmingham Art Center this year instead of Shain Park.

(See POTPOURRI, 3-D)

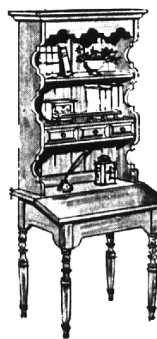


## Dances with Severo

Judith Rau of Bloomfield Hills and Monte Barnes of Detroit will appear in "Fiesta," a Latin-American ballet set to Morton Gould's "Latin-American Symphonette." Tickets available Ford Auditorium, Marwell's Northland, Grinnell's Downtown (see page two for story).

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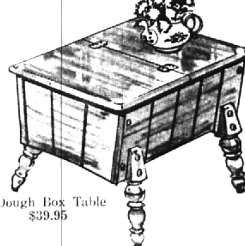
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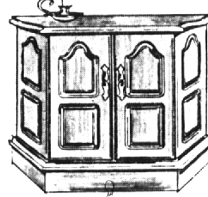
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