

Thom to Paint History of Michigan

Local artist Robert (Bob) A. Thom has been commissioned by Michigan Bell Telephone Co. to portray Michigan's history in a series of original oil paintings.

Thom, who resides at 6160 Surrey, Bloomfield Township, gained an international reputation for his series of paintings depicting the history of pharmacy and medicine for Parke Davis & Co.

His new paintings will span the ages from the era of mastodons to the wonder of the Mackinac Bridge.

Thom, who has also gained a reputation as a painstaking researcher, is collaborating in his present research with a noted Michigan historian to insure the historical accuracy of his painting.

Serving as historical consultant is Prof. F. Clever Bald, director of the Michigan Historical Collections at the University of Michigan and author of "Michigan in Four Centuries."

WILLIAM M. Day, Michigan Bell president, said the company plans to display the paintings throughout the state at schools,

libraries, museums, art exhibitions and public ceremonies.

"We believe this series of paintings will serve as an important educational contribution to the state," Day said. "We believe it is something that is wanted and needed, and we think it will be of lasting value to all of Michigan."

The Michigan Bell series of paintings will be done in the same colorful, realistic style that won Thom international recognition for the Parke Davis series.

Significant events out of Michigan's past and present will be portrayed by Thom. Each canvas will be accompanied by a text written by Dr. Bald.

THOM'S PAINTINGS will be produced at the rate of about six a year until the chronology is completed. Thom will exhibit the paintings as soon as enough are done to make a representative and educational display.

The first canvas in the series will recall the era of some 11,000 years ago of mastodons and glaciers in Michigan. Other canvases will trace Michigan's history through the era of the Indian,

fur traders, massacres, logging, mining, farming, and automobile manufacturing.

Lewis Beeson, executive secretary of the Michigan Historical Commission, has hailed the project as one long needed to portray the eventful history of Michigan for young and old alike.

"ONLY THROUGH the efforts of a diligent historian and the medium of a talented artist can people actually see the growth of a great state and its achievements evolving from a period long before the camera was invented," Beeson said.

Detailed research for the project has been under way by both Thom and Dr. Bald since early this year.

"We are pleased Mr. Thom and Dr. Bald found it possible to accept this assignment," Day said, "because we think it's an important one, both historically and educationally."

Day said Michigan Bell had been interested in undertaking the project because of the company's "close identity with the growth and development of Michigan."

THOM, FOUNDING president of the Bloomfield Art Association, has long been active in civic and cultural affairs in the Birmingham-Bloomfield area.

He is serving his second consecutive term as president of The Community House and is president of the Birmingham Rotary Club. He is active in the Birmingham Citizens Action Committee and other civic groups.

He is one of the founders of the Birmingham arts council. A native of Grand Rapids, Thom attended the Institute of Fine Arts in Columbus, O.; spent several years in the art departments of the Detroit Edison Co. and the Chevrolet Division of General Motors before starting his own commercial art studio in Detroit.

He sold the studio when commissioned by Parke Davis & Co. to paint the now famous "A History of Pharmacy in Pictures" and "A History of Medicine in Pictures."

Each series consists of 40 paintings. Authorities have called them the most authentic, extensive and comprehensive ever executed in behalf of the two professions.



ARTIST ROBERT A. THOM (left) and historical consultant Prof. F. Clever Bald view an early map of Michigan as part of research for a new series of paintings by Thom to depict the state's history.



ROYAL OAK INDUSTRIALIST JIM ROBBINS
Considers use of his airfield as part-time drag strip.

Ask Airfield Use As a Drag Strip

By LARRY EVOE
City Editor

The Birmingham area may soon have a drag strip. Royal Oak industrialist Jim Robbins told The Eclectic this week that he has been approached by a group of young people with the possibility of building a drag strip on his private airfield at 14 Mile Road and Stephenson, Troy.

For the past several months authorities in various communities along Woodward Ave. have been cracking down on teen-age racers on the street.

Several police chiefs, including those in Birmingham, Bloomfield Hills and Bloomfield Township, have agreed that a drag strip could be helpful in eliminating speeding on Woodward, but all expressed concern about the cost of the strip and the lack of land available in this area for such a project.

ROBBINS' WHOSE firm is a manufacturer of auto seat belts, said he was trying to work up an arrangement whereby the teens would be able to race on his 5,500-foot runway instead of Woodward.

"I have always been extremely interested in young fellows and their problems," Robbins said. "They have the urge to speed and have to satisfy this craving either on Woodward or some other street."

"I'm dedicated to safety," Robbins said. "If using my field will get the kids off the street it's a worthwhile project."

Long interested in auto racing, Robbins has had cars representing his firm in the Indianapolis 500 race for the last 16 years.

THREE DETROIT youths trying to form a drag strip as a commercial operation under the name of Royal-Quarter Dragway, Inc., have contacted Robbins about the possible use of his airfield.

They are Larry Barnes, president, Vaughan Leteznie and Dale Nary.

They plan to present their proposition to the Troy City Commission. Barnes said if all details can be worked out the strip would be opened in the spring.

The Royal in their firm's name stands for the Royal Oak area and the Quarter represents the quarter-mile needed for drag racing.

Preliminary plans call for the installation of timing equipment, five portable seals for about 4,000 people and lights.

The light towers must be portable so as not to interfere with the normal operation of the airfield.

City Officials Discuss Hills Zoning Proposal

By DICK ZEMMIN
Members of the Bloomfield Hills City Commission met in joint session with the city's planning commission and board of appeals Tuesday to discuss the proposed zoning ordinance.

The five-hour-long discussion period was terminated by the commission as a "very worthwhile meeting," although the city commission took no action on the proposed plan.

Commissioner David W. Lee said that the planning commission explained the reasons for the proposed changes in rezoning parts of the city.

"We WENT over the entire proposal and straightened out the misunderstandings, vague definitions and language of the text," Lee said.

"The city commissioners now understand the document better, and are in a position to take a stand on it," Lee said.

Lee said that there are certain areas that still have to be agreed upon and that a special meeting of the city commission is needed to discuss them.

"Then, when we decide on our position, we can have a public hearing to acquaint the citizens with the proposed changes," Lee said.

At the commission's regular monthly meeting Tuesday night, the members denied a request from the Bloomfield Open Hunt that the city build sewers for a proposed subdivision on land the Hunt Club is selling to a buyer.

"We recognize our responsibility to build sewers, but we need estimates for all practical purposes," Lee said.

When the Maples and Eagles start bumping heads tomorrow night on Seaholm's field, the EML title likely will be resting on the outcome.

Although Baseball (3-0) is presently perched atop the league, the Wildcats have yet to meet either Ferndale or Seaholm.

\$173,000 Goal Set for Area Torch Drive

See editorial, Page 1-B

The Birmingham-Bloomfield-Franklin region has been assigned a quota of \$173,076 to raise in the 1963 torch drive.

The quota was given Mrs. Robert N. Green, Pontiac, regional chairman, by Oakland County Chairman Mrs. William Purcell, Huntington Woods.

Mrs. Green and her door-to-door solicitors are to obtain \$84,878 in contributions from residences. Another \$77,951 is to come from advance gifts.

Ten teams of community business collectors headed by Clarence W. Kraft of Mutual Benefit Life Insurance and David W. Logan of David Logan and Sons are division chairmen to obtain \$10,247 from business establishments.

THE QUOTAS by communities are: Birmingham, \$51,234; Bloomfield Hills, \$73,726; Bloomfield Village, \$5,645; Oakdale, \$11,114; \$9,854; Wing Lake, \$4,806; Franklin, \$6,248; Beverly Hills, \$7,789; and other parts of the region \$4,180.

Divisional chairmen for the house-to-house canvass are Mrs. Robert Saffell, 572 Madison, with (See GOAL, 2-A)

Move to Curb Telegraph Accidents

By DAVE PHILPO
Township Editor

Two new moves to further reduce left-turn accidents on Telegraph Road in Bloomfield Township have been announced by the state highway department and local police.

Within three weeks, left turns will be prohibited from southbound Telegraph onto Lincoln Road (14 1/2 Mile Road). This has been one of the worst intersections for left-turn accidents in recent years, considering its status as a minor road.

State Traffic Engineer Sam Levine also announced that a contract has been let for a protected left-turn lane at 14 Mile Road and Telegraph. This is the last of the major intersections on Telegraph in the township to be equipped with protected left-turn lanes.

Completion date of the project will probably be in the spring, Levine said.

Robbins believes the squeal tires "is music to their ears." "I feel this type of facility is needed in this area and I'm agreeable to trying to help get it started," he said.

who has six miles of Telegraph within his jurisdiction, feels that the individual motorist is the one who must contribute to accident prevention, if the program is to succeed.

"One major cause of left-turn accidents in the township is the fact that drivers don't use their indicators soon enough," he said. "Many wait until they are ready to make their turns—then it's too late."

Denkhe pointed out that motorists planning to make left turns should use the indicators when they go over the crest of a hill to give drivers behind fair warning.

ISSUING violations alone will not solve the problem, he added. "Tickets are not going to stop a driver from following too close. Also, many persons play games at intersections and try to beat the amber light. This is purely a judgment thing on the part of the police officers."

A new radar unit, recently purchased by the township, has already reduced incidents of speeding along Telegraph.

"The psychological effect, knowing that we are equipped with radar—I think that hinders motorists from speeding more than the machine itself," Denkhe said.

USE OF the unit is seen by Denkhe as a major reason why the September accident rate in the township dropped 25 per cent over last year.

"It only stands to reason that if the radar helps to reduce speed, it will also cut down on accidents," he said.

More accidents happen at the Maple-Telegraph intersection than at any other location in the township. Most are caused by left turns from Maple onto Telegraph.

There are no protected left-turn lanes on Maple, and this is complicated by a heavy volume of traffic using the shopping centers located on the four corners of the intersection.

Special turning devices—such as a cloverleaf—are impractical because of cost and lack of space in which to install them.

ACCORDING to Denkhe, a delayed traffic signal might be the answer, but it could cause additional congestion on the intersection.

The state tarnished the reputation of the Maple-Telegraph intersection as the worst in Michigan for accidents, when in 1959 it installed protected left-turn lanes on Telegraph.

Now it does not even rank in the top 10.

City Clerk to Act As Administrator

LATHRAP—City Clerk Stephen Lathrap was appointed acting city administrator Monday night by the council during the absence of Jety commission.

Stone, who will attend the City Managers Association convention, Sunday through Thursday, in Denver Colo., is scheduled to resume his duties Oct. 21.

Name Library At College for B'ham Man

HUGH A. WHITE

A new library was inaugurated in the name of a Birmingham resident at Spring Arbor College, Spring Arbor, Mich., Friday.

The new \$230,000 Hugh A. White Library was named for the chairman of the board of trustees of the college, who lives at 4800 Avondale.

White has been a trustee for 33 years and chairman of the board for 10 years.

College authorities said that White, a former student at Spring Arbor, was completely unaware of the honor bestowed upon him until the announcement was made Friday (See LIBRARY, 4-A)

GAME COULD DECIDE TITLE

Seaholm Needs 'Super' Effort Against Ferndale

By DICK ZEMMIN
Sports Editor

There may be seven Eastern Michigan League games on Birmingham Seaholm's schedule, but for all practical purposes, it could be shortened to one—the Ferndale encounter.

When the Maples and Eagles start bumping heads tomorrow night on Seaholm's field, the EML title likely will be resting on the outcome.

Although Baseball (3-0) is presently perched atop the league, the Wildcats have yet to meet either Ferndale or Seaholm.

It is, of course, possible that Roseville could upset the Eagles League, but the Maples (2-0-1), they beat Ferndale last year

when they weren't an EML member. But the odds are against it happening.

A victory tomorrow night won't be easy. Ferndale comes to Birmingham ranked in sixth place in the state and has a quarterback, Bob Super, who fits his name perfectly.

SUPER, a sensation as a sophomore last year, has been tabbed for all-state honors. The star quarterback has had tremendous success through the air this season, hitting tall ends Bruce Rowman and Bob Faland consistently.

The Maples' defensive backfield will have their hands full trying to stop the Ferndale passing attack.

Seaholm will depend heavily on the running of halfback Ken (See SEAHOLM, 2-A)

County to Study Spotlight Problem

By SAVILLA SLOAN
Special Writer

The overall problem of what governmental unit—local, county or school—should pay for installation and maintenance of a traffic light erected solely for the protection of school children was carried to the Road and Bridges Committee of the Oakland County Board of Supervisors on Friday.

It resulted in a proposed study of the problem by Oakland County, Mac MacPhee, chairman of the roads and bridges committee, appointed a subcommittee to investigate all aspects of the problem and to recommend where the costs properly belong. The committee is to report by Nov. 15.

The roads and bridges committee serves as an advisory body to the Oakland County Board of Supervisors.

Serving on the subcommittee are Edward Cheys of White Lake; Homer Case, Bloomfield Township; Charles Edwards, Madison Heights; and Robert Osgood, county traffic engineer.

A SPECIFIC example of the problem involved the installation of a traffic signal on Orchard Lake Road in front of Whitfield School was brought before the committee by the school PTA president, Mrs. Donald Johnson.

The light is presently operated during the school period in the morning, at noon and in the afternoon. It was installed in the 1940's after a school child was killed on Orchard Lake Road.

Mrs. Johnson told the committee that continued operation of the light was necessary for the safety of the children, but that neither Oakland County, Bloomfield Township or the Pontiac School District were willing to pay the \$350 a year cost of its maintenance and operation.

THE STATE has been paying for operation of the light, according to county road officials, as this section of Orchard Lake Road is a state road. However, it will be turned over to the county for operation as a primary county road within the next few months, they stated.

Paul Van Roekel, county highway engineer, explained to the committee that the county's policy has been to pay neither for installation nor operation for traffic lights installed for pedestrian purposes.

MRS. JOHNSON also asked if

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Lake Village May Seek City Status

A citizen's committee formed to determine whether the Village of Orchard Lake should seek city status will meet tomorrow night to move its recommendation.

The committee, headed by Sylvester Leach, consists of 36 local residents. It was appointed a second ago by the village commissioners.

THE GROUP has investigated the advantages and disadvantages of village vs. city government and the tax costs involved. It has also sought to determine the will of the majority of community residents in the matter.

The Village of Orchard Lake was incorporated in 1928. Its present population is 1,127. It lies in West Bloomfield Township in the area immediately surrounding the state road, Orchard Lake.

Should the committee recommend its incorporation as a city, the next step would be a vote on the proposal by residents.

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