



Teller Lois Steele of Birmingham and David Barry, Jr., Manu- facturers vice president in charge of branch offices, discuss the robbery. She faced the bandit's gun.

## Armed Bandit Robs Area Bank; Twp. Police, FB Seeking Clues

By LARRY EVOE  
City Editor

Bloomfield Township Police and FBI agents sifted through meager clues Wednesday in an effort to find the armed bandit who robbed the Maple and Telegraph branch of Manufacturers National Bank of \$3,173 Tuesday afternoon.

The tall, neat-appearing bandit walked into the bank shortly after 2 p.m. and ordered teller Lois Steele of Birmingham to hand over the money. He pointed a gun at Miss Steele.

After grabbing the money, he whirled and walked quickly out of the side door of the bank and escaped in a late model convertible.

MISS STEELE, 33, described the

bandit as being tall and husky. "He had dark, well-groomed hair," she said, "and was wearing a trench coat. I noticed when he grabbed the money his hands were big."

When Miss Steele reacted slowly to the bandit's demands for the cash, he reached over the counter and scooped up a handful of bills.

"When he saw that they were only ones, he threw them down and said 'give me your 10's and 20's,'" Miss Steele related.

THE TELLER'S counter is more than four and a half feet high, and the drawer is set back from the counter's ledge. A person would have to be well over six feet tall to reach into the drawer.

Miss Steele was unable to see what the robber did with the money as he turned to leave the bank.

As he went out the door, Miss

Steele turned to a nearby teller and told her she's been held up and to sound the alarm.

Miss Mary Thibideau, 23, of Walnut Lake, was in the cage next to Miss Steele's sorting mail when the bandit entered the bank.

"He came in the door facing W. Maple Road," she said. "He walked over to the counter where customers fill out bank forms and stood watching Lois's cage."

"He must have stood there for about five minutes, I guess. I thought he was filling out a deposit slip."

MISS THIBIDEAU said the bandit then walked over to window number five with a piece of paper in his hand and spoke in a pleasant, low voice to Miss Steele.

"I could hear him say, 'stand back' and I saw Lois move back a couple of steps."

"He was a big guy; when Lois

didn't move fast enough he reached over the top of the window and grabbed the money out of the drawer."

Although she could not see the bandit, Miss Thibideau said she was afraid to sound the alarm because someone might have been injured.

"I was trying to get a good picture of his description in my mind," she said.

AS THE bandit walked hurriedly out the side door, he passed the desk of Miss Janet Davies, 24, of Royal Oak, the bank's receptionist and safety vault clerk.

Miss Davies was talking to another customer as the bandit passed within two feet of her. She said she didn't pay too much attention to the man except for the fact he seemed to be in a rush.

"I noticed a commotion over at Lois' window and got up to see what was the matter and someone

yelled we'd been held up and to call the police," she said.

"As I picked up the phone I looked out the window and saw two cars leaving the parking lot almost together."

SHE SAID at first she thought the autos were going to collide but the late model convertible headed out of the driveway and raced west on Maple.

The car is believed to be a 1962 or '63 Buick with a white body and black top.

Bloomfield Township officers Donald Corey and Robert Bloom were patrolling at Telegraph and Walnut Lake, about three miles away, when they received the alarm.

IN LESS than four minutes, the officers arrived at the bank. Meanwhile, the alert was sounded on the (See BANDIT, 4-A)



Teller's view of where robber stood. Alarm button (arrow) can be seen under drawer.

## Board Reaches Tentative Ruling On Boundaries

The Birmingham Board of Education is one step closer today to a decision which would establish secondary school boundaries for an interim four- or five-year period.

Following its fifth "extensive study" session on Saturday, alternatives were further narrowed so that the board has reached tentative agreement on most of the remaining details of the plan.

"We have decided to announce our tentative decision at this time," stated Mrs. Kathryn Loomis, board president, "so that our citizens will have every possible opportunity to study it before the board acts officially at its next regular meeting, on Tuesday, March 26."

The study session followed a meeting on March 14 with representatives from the Hagen, Westchester, Bloomfield Village and Valley Woods (north of 14 Mile Road) areas. Each group presented its ideas to the board.

## Olympic Pool, Gym Set in 'Y' Changes

An Olympic-size swimming pool and a 54 by 80-foot gymnasium will be among improvements to be made at the Birmingham YMCA as a result of the United YMCA Capital Campaign this spring, K. Stanley Pratt, chairman of the "Y" Board of Management, reported this week.

Minimum needs of the Birmingham "Y," he said, will cost \$80,000.

The Birmingham YMCA campaign will be one phase of the United YMCA Capital Campaign, according to John F. Langer, chairman of the executive committee of the YMCA of Metropolitan Detroit.

He reported that the overall needs of the 13 branches, two camps and other operations total \$7,223,262.

LANGS SAID this will be the first time in 38 years that the YMCA has independently sought funds from the public. The last fund-raising effort was in 1925 and resulted in contributions of more than \$5,500,000 for the rehabilitation of the city.

(See POOL, 2-A)



Commissioner Main — Uncle Sam pays 75 per cent of the plan's cost.

## Constitution: Adopt It, Says Romney

Gov. George Romney returned to his home grounds last Thursday night, the first official visit since he took office, and talked about something close to his heart—the proposed new constitution.

The governor was the featured speaker at a Republican Party rally at the Community House, geared to seeking victory for the 10 GOP nominees in the April 1 election and the adoption of the new constitution.

Romney and the state candidates split their time between the Community House and a northwest Detroit restaurant. They began with half the group at each place and then shifted spots mid-way through the evening.

ALMOST 300 party supporters in the Birmingham-Bloomfield area heard the governor say he was proud to be a Republican and (See ROMNEY, 4-A)

## Commissioners Explain CBDD Plan to Residents

By LARRY EVOE  
City Editor

Birmingham city commissioners took the Central Business District Development Plan and Comprehensive Plan to the people Monday night.

The commissioners devoted over an hour and a half of their agenda to explaining and answering questions about Birmingham's future.

An overflow crowd of more than 150 persons jammed the Municipal Building's second floor commission room and spilled out into the hallway.

The meeting to which the "general public" was invited had been scheduled by the commission after it was reported that the status of the residents might be in doubt.

AT THE March 4 commission meeting, a candidate for commissioner in the April 1 city election—David F. Breck of 928 Clark—asked that a committee be named to represent residents at any future meetings on the CBDD Plan.

The commission that night set the date of March 18 for a presentation of the plan to the residents. It was felt among some residents that since a businessmen's committee had been formed in 1959 to study the CBDD program it was only fair to also have a property owner's group.

Commissioners rejected this idea because they felt "we represent the residents."

MAYOR FLORENCE H. Willeit, who has only two more commission meetings before he retires, opened the discussion Monday night with a brief history of the CBDD Plan.

She noted that more than 18 months ago when the plan was first presented to the commission public hearings were held in The Commu-

nity House (because of its large capacity) and very few residents bothered to attend.

Mrs. Willeit emphasized that the plan involved the entire city and not just the downtown area. She explained that there were two plans the commission was studying—the CBDD and the Comprehensive Plan.

(Actually the CBDD Plan is only part of the Master, or Comprehensive, Plan.)

"HOWEVER, IT must be understood the CBDD Plan is only a guide," she said.

Because of the new interest stirred up in the plan, the commission thought it would be valuable to call a joint meeting of the various city organizations. It was held Feb. 14.

The meeting was called by the commission after the Birmingham Plan Board asked them to implement the CBDD Plan as soon as possible.

She added that the commission "was concerned about spending money (the residents)" and therefore decided to call this week's meeting.

Although several steps such as the Chester St. widening and the proposed new parking lot in the southwest quadrant have already been taken, Mrs. Willeit noted that the plan was "still in the early stages and had a long way to go."



IN PRESENTING the plan, City Planner William W. Brown said it is "for the people of Birmingham," for a regrowth of the city.

He said the core of a city (the downtown area) must remain strong. "If it decays, the decay will spread to the residential areas."

A good commercial base must be maintained," Brownfield said; "otherwise the residents must take up the slack."

A reduction in the tax base could result in a decline in services, Brownfield said.

He also emphasized that the CBDD Plan was only part of the over-all Comprehensive Plan.

UNDER THE plan, Brownfield said, there was no enlargement of the city limits. The boundaries of it would remain the same.

"The proposed peripheral route will be constructed on existing right-of-way."

(See RESIDENTS, 4-A)

Commissioner Renfrew — "We counsel and value the plan board's advice."



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## Residents Speak Out On Proposed Bus Law

By SAVILLA SLOAN  
Special Writer

Recent action taken by the Birmingham Hills School Board as to the proposed "Fair Bus" law was both criticized and defended by residents of the school district attending the school board meeting Tuesday night.

In addition to listening to the hour-long debate, the board handled several matters pending before it.

THE BOARD discarded the possibility of establishing a smoking area for high school students having parental permission to smoke, after receiving legal opinion from school attorney Stratton Brown that such an area would be contrary to state law.

School Supt. Eugene Johnson was authorized to enter into negotiations to obtain a special education classroom for the district. It would serve children who can learn, but have been unable to do so in a regular classroom.

THE DEBATE on the school board's position opposing the proposed Senate Bill 1144 proceeded in an orderly fashion, later praised by board president Charles Bowers.

(In answer to a question from a resident Birmingham city commissioner Monday night, decided the proposed school bus law was purely a "school district matter" and took no position on the issue.)

(See BUS LAW, 4-A)



L. R. Gare—Overseer of the Birmingham-Bloomfield area.

## Dick Gare: He's the Boss Manager Supervises City Government

This is the final article in a series The Eccentric has been presenting on the various departments in the city of Birmingham. It deals with the duties of the city manager.

This series of articles started in the issue of Oct. 4, 1962. All departments have now been covered.

By LARRY EVOE  
City Editor

The city manager is Birmingham's chief administrative officer. He is chosen by the city commission and serves at its will. It is his responsibility to see that the desires and wishes of the commission are properly carried out.

The manager is directly responsible to the commission for the day-to-day operation of the city of Birmingham.

L. R. (DICK) GARE has been Birmingham city manager since 1957. Gare, a veteran of city government, served as director of

public works and city engineer in Birmingham before becoming manager.

A civil engineering graduate of the University of Michigan, Gare began his governmental service in 1925. He was assistant city engineer in Detroit for 17 years before becoming city engineer in Ecorse.

Birmingham adopted the village manager form of government in 1918. When the city incorporated in 1923, the position of city manager was created.

The manager is responsible for the efficient operation of all departments in the city. He must be a citizen of the United States and is chosen solely on the basis of his fitness to perform the duties of the manager's office.

He is required to be present at all commission meetings and is entitled to be present at all meetings of its committees.

THE MANAGER may take part

in all discussions but has no vote on any issue decided upon by the commission. He may be appointed by the commission to serve in any other city office except the clerk, treasurer, assessor or health officer.

With the advice and consent of the commission, the manager may appoint a city attorney, an engineer, a fire and police chief and provide for their powers and duties.

Generally, any city employee lower than a department head is hired and fired by the manager without the consent of the commission. Promotions are usually made from within a department whenever it is possible.

The manager is responsible for the preparing of reports requested by the commission. He may also bring in reports to the commissioners on his own.

MANY TIMES reports are prepared by the department heads and merely countersigned by the manager. The manager often makes (See GARE, 2-A)

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