

Birmingham Quadrille Club: It's Strictly for the Squares

By EVELINE OEN
Arts Editor

A few "squares" have been circulating in these parts for many years—and it's hard even for the old-time dancers to tell just when they began.

Mr. and Mrs. Emerson Brown of 5520 Brookdale, Birmingham, were charter members of the Quadrille Club (and the only ones who still are members).

Brown recalled that the organization had its beginnings back in the '20's when a group of young couples from this area used to go up to a dance hall near Oxbow Lake to dance.

"THEY HAD AN orchestra that could play some dancing music and they'd always do a couple for us," said Brown. "Clarence and Mel Davey (of Birmingham) did the calling. That was the actual starting of the Quadrille Club."

"We organized soon thereafter at the Springdale Golf Club clubhouse," said Brown. "We had pot lucks and would have an orchestra come in for us when we had square dances."

THEN THE clubhouse burned, so the group moved to a church near 13 1/2 Mile and Rochester roads; this was during the depression. They continued to bring "lunches."

There, however, the club was nearly undone by the government.

"We never knew how many were coming," explained Brown, "so we would count heads as we went down to the basement for intermission refreshments. Then we would figure out how much was needed to cover expense of the orchestra and assess each couple accordingly."

THE BLOW came when the government made them "cough up" 10 per cent of this assessment for all previous get-togethers.

"That just about ruined us," said Brown.

"We found out that if you charged more than \$10 per couple, you had to pay the tax. The cost came to \$15 per couple, so we figured out that we could charge \$7.50 per person and not owe anything to the government," recalled Brown. (This arrangement has persisted to the present day; membership is still on an individual basis.)

THE GROUP then shifted its base of operations to The Community House—being one of the first clubs to use its facilities.

Meetings are held there on the second Friday of each month, explained Edgar Thorne of 6209 Dakota Circle, Birmingham, president of the club. There are about 120 members (60 couple).

All don't come each month. The average is somewhere between 10 and 14 couples for each session, said Thorne.

NON-MEMBERS can come to meetings only if they are guests of members (and then usually only

once) or if they contact the president in advance. Otherwise, the group has no way of knowing how many will be there, explained Thorne.

"Routine meetings" generally run from 9 p.m. through midnight, with a refreshment break about

10:30 p.m.

The women fix and bring coffee, sandwiches and cake. Twice a year—at Christmas and in May—they have dinner-dances.

"Dancing nowadays is done to records, instead of a live orchestra, and the group has a regular caller."

ATTIRE IS casual rather than strictly Western; in square dancing, no "specialties" in square dancing.

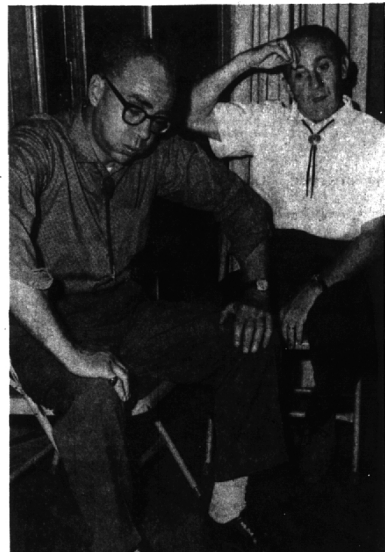
Past president Robert Lorenzen of 176 Catalpa, Birmingham, says, "A beginner can have just as much fun as I can. He shouldn't have any problem learning or adapting."



"A RIGHT TO YOUR PARTNER": BRUCE EMMERT AND MRS. ROBERT LORENZEN.



"LEFT HANDS IN TO FORM A STAR . . ."



"PHEW!" IT'S REST TIME FOR ROBERT LORENZEN (LEFT) AND EDGAR THORNE.

ART FOR ART'S SAKE Put Pictures in Focus Through Child's Eyes

By CAROLYN HALL

Take your children to an art show? Impossible. They would be noisy, busy and bothersome.

Why not? Art shows are for people and children are people too. How do you start?

"What does this painting say to you?" is a good question to ask your child. He may look puzzled. "I don't hear anything."

The artist speaks without words. If he spoke in his own verbal language, only the people from his country could understand him. He is speaking in forms and colors on paint and canvas.

FRENCH ARTIST Edgar Degas' paintings of ballet girls say, "See how lovely these dancers are. They live in a magic world of music and make believe. I have painted them softly, like characters in a story."

Dutch painter Vincent van Gogh's paintings of cypress trees say "How wild the world is! These trees are alive in the wind. This scene is exciting so I have painted the trees violently. I feel this way."

Anyone who looks at these master artists' works can feel what they are saying, even though one is French and one Dutch.

"IT DOESN'T say anything," your child might decide after studying a painting.

He may be right. Some feelings are too hard to put into words. Some paintings do not try to say much. Paintings that say "See how red this red is" or "How empty the world is" or "I am mixed up" are vague.

And some paintings fail to say what the artist hoped for. These are the hardest to look at. The viewer keeps wondering "Is something wrong with that painting or with me?"

BE PREPARED before you and your children arrive at the show. "Let's see if we can find a happy painting" makes them eager to see what they can find. "Let's find a sad one too. Or maybe there will be a nervous one." (You'll be amazed at how well this works.)

What began as a game to keep the kids in line becomes a revelation on how well they know feelings.

An artist can have no better audience than children. The young ones like pictures that give them a feeling or tell them something. And children do not know by traditional standards what they are supposed to like. Adults have seen a great deal of art in magazines, stores and homes, much of it ordinary. It is harder for them to like a different, new idea.

WHEN YOU LISTEN to what your child says about the paintings, have him explain his silly statements too. Sometimes this is an embarrassed way of saying what he feels.

Throw away the tip-toe-around-the-masterpieces attitude that numbs often cause. You don't have to like every painting, like some people or foods, these works do

not appeal to your taste or ideas. Try to figure out what the painter has to say, respect his right to say it and move on to something you like better.

MOST GALLERIES welcome children (except in herds or untended). Many gallery directors' most treasured anecdotes tell of children's reactions to their exhibitions.

One kindergarten teacher, on advice of the gallery director, brought several children with her to help select a picture for their room. To her surprise they chose a gay, mad, modern one instead of a landscape. Five-year-olds see the world in bright colors and simple shapes and leave details to older years.

ANOTHER GALLERY owner is still touched by the sheer delight of a blind child "seeing" Epstein's textured sculpture with his hands.

The museum art classes take the children on tours of different types and styles of work for inspiration. The budding artists really respond. They are sedate on portrait tours, carried away by battle scenes—and

(See PICTURES, 4-D)



Folk Music

Last Saturday's first hootenanny held at the Birmingham YMCA, 400 E. Lincoln, brought more than 175 folk song addicts of all ages to listen to and to join in with the music as about a dozen groups performed. The hootenannies will be a regular Saturday night feature beginning at 7:30 p.m. at the Y. There is an admission charge.

FROM THE BOOKCASE:

Book Views Saarinen's Art

ERNO SAARINEN by Allan Temko, in the "Makers of Contemporary Architecture" series (George Braziller, 1962; New York, N. Y.: 128 pp., 124 illustrations, \$12.50).

Reviewed by EDWARD X. TUTTLE, AIA, Architect

As a nation we own roughly 800 billion dollars worth of buildings. They are approximately one-half of our total tangible wealth.

It should not seem surprising, furthermore, that construction is our largest industry. Despite our intimate involvement with buildings, however, and despite the size of the industry, the number of people who are interested in architecture is small, the number sensitive to architecture is still smaller, and the number who can pretend to an understanding of architecture is minuscule.

CONSIDERING the materialistic and spiritual impact of architecture our widespread indifference to it is unfortunate.

Architecture is too important to be left solely to architects, and just now it is also too esoteric for the average man and woman to regulate successfully. What are we to do?

Some competent coverage of architecture in junior high school art courses would help in time. Perhaps an "Architectural Aid Society" is called for, or free "out-clinet clinics." Even harping on slogans might help. For example: "See Your Architect Twice a Decade."

UNTIL SUCH sapient solutions are effected, interim substitutes must be found.

Besides keeping an eye out for the few works of great architecture in our cities and countryside, one can read such books as Allan Temko's "Erno Saarinen."

Unfortunately the book is aimed at the minority of readers: those who have already studied at least a bit about the subject of architecture; it was not written to evoke interest in those who have heretofore displayed none.

NEVERTHELESS the book is not too obscure for the educated reader or even for the general reader provided he has some interest in the subject to begin with.

The reader should realize that our society has not yet settled upon its architectural objectives. Individuals concerned with such things have to work out their own beliefs. Consequently many sets of partially-contradictory opinions are current.

THIS BOOK may be slightly

difficult because Temko is not explicit about his own premises. It will not, however, be too difficult (as I have said), because Temko's basic convictions can be inferred from an attempt is made to discover them.

A virtue of "Erno Saarinen," and the best reason for reviewing it here, is that thousands of people in the Birmingham-Bloomfield area either knew Saarinen personally, or felt a kind of personal relationship to him through knowing one of his relatives, employees, or acquaintances.

AS A RESULT it may be hoped that many will read the book because they are interested in the man, and will end up discovering not only something about the man's

work but also about architecture in general.

A certain amount of nonsense almost invariably crops up in any discussion of art. This book includes quite a lot about Saarinen's art and also a certain amount of nonsense, but admirably little of the latter.

IN 59 PAGES of text, closely keyed to 134 photographs, Temko argues that Saarinen's early buildings were often poor, and his later buildings usually only semi-successful, but that shortly before his death in 1961 he had indubitably become a genius.

This thesis is sufficiently persuasive to instill in the reader an abstract but still painful feeling that Saarinen's death was a loss not only something about the man's

Cranbrook's Theater Plans Mystery, Comedy

Senior students of the Cranbrook Summer Theater School will give an Agatha Christie mystery, "The Mousetrap," on Tuesday and Wednesday, at 8:15 p.m. in Cranbrook's Greek Theatre on Lone Pine Road.

They will also do a comedy "The Little Dog Laughed" by Vera and Ken Turley on August 2 and 3. The mystery lies in the identification of the murderer among a group of strangers stranded in a boarding house during a snowstorm. Virginia Wanger and Bill Thygeson portray a newly married couple, both of whom are suspected, resulting in a nearly ruined marriage. Playing the part of the spinster with a curious background is Kirklyn Hill.

TED FISHER appears as an architect who seems better equipped to be a chef, Chuck Lambert as a strange little man who claims his car has overturned in a snowdrift, and Eric Hoberg as a retired major.

Linda Frank is a feminine jurist who makes life miserable for everyone.

Into their midst comes a policeman, traveling on skis, played by Paul Le Vegus.

"The Little Dog Laughed" is a comedy about a girl, just home from college where she has studied enough psychology to make her believe she can analyze and reshape the lives of her family.

In the cast are Debbie Gordon, Mary Jane Hilder, Pam Bowen, Cynthia Cahn, Brad Bloetscher, Scott Boyer, John Bullington, Fred Purdy, Greg Willingham, Glen Larsen and Donna Bell. Also are Cory Beneker, Catherine Hilton, Robin Montbach, Chris Dodrill, Cynthia Nash, Nancy Schreiber, Jan Wallace, Patti Ball, Jill Bouton and James Terlecki.

Tickets are available at the gate, at Grinnells or by calling Mr. Wonnberger at Cranbrook.

Festival Lingers On

The Bloomfield Art Association is continuing to show many of the paintings, sculptures and crafts from the festival exhibition until August 18. As usual, gallery hours are 2 to 5 p.m. daily except Monday.

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