

# The Birmingham Eccentric

1878

Section C Public and Private Education and Public Utilities

1953

## Log Cabin Near Woodward Was City's First School

General public education has been recognized as a function of the state since the Northwest Ordinance of 1787 which declared, "Religion, Morality and Knowledge, being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools of education shall forever be encouraged."

The grant of a section from each township to each state to be sold for school purposes, laid the foundations of the trust fund for public education. It is the interest upon this trust fund, called the Primary Fund, which is distributed each year as a part of the primary subsidy to local education.

Birmingham, however, recognized the need for public education while Michigan was yet a territory. A log school house was erected in 1822 on the farm of Dr. Ziba Swan on the plains near Quarton road and Woodward avenue with Harvey Parke as teacher.

**CAPTAIN PARKE** in his recollections written in 1876, said, "Early in the year I received the place of teacher in the school on Swan's Plains, where in February, I resigned my place to Dr. Ezra Parke, my brother, that I might procure the promised contract to survey."

This was not a public school, but was supported by subscriptions per capita of pupils. Captain Parke's term began in December 1822 and continued until February, 1823, when his brother took over and Captain Parke left for Ohio to procure a contract for government surveying.

No school districts in the township were inaugurated or defined until 1834, when this was done in conformity to the provisions of an act approved in 1833 which made it obligatory upon townships to elect three commissioners of common schools whose duties should be to lay off the township into school districts and to establish them in numerical order.

IN 1834, a district school was

opened in the old log house of John Hamilton at Hamilton and Woodward avenues. Hamilton had just then completed his frame dwelling and the old log house which was in the rear of the new home, was devoted to school purposes. Rev. Lemuel M. Partridge was the teacher in the winter of 1834-35.

Before a year passed, a frame building was erected on the northwest corner of what are now Chester and West Maple avenues—the second public school in Birmingham.

A small book containing the school records from 1838 to 1855, stated, "Resolved, that each scholar furnish a half cord of good wood at the request of the Director fitted for the stove and Corded up at the school house."

Also, "Aforesaid officers of the district, to-wit, Raynor and Baldwin, employed Wellington Willetts Teacher—see agreement—by which agreement said Willetts was employed to teach said school for five months for the sum of fourteen dollars a month."

IN 1855 a red brick school house (later the bricks were painted yellow) was erected on the north side of West Maple where Southfield deadends. Its use as a school house was discontinued and it was converted into a residence upon the completion of Hill school in 1869. Mr. Harry Allen had the building torn down in 1927, to build his present home on the site.

About the year 1860, Rev. S. N. Hill, pastor of the Presbyterian church, established a private school—an academy of higher learning—in the village.

The "Old Academy," as it was known, was a frame building originally built by Roswell T. Merrill for the manufacturing of threshing machines. It was located at the southwest corner of Pierce and W. Maple, the present site of Shain's Drug store.

**THIS SCHOOL** was discontinued after the War between the States, about the time the Hill school (a public school and named after Rev. Hill) was built and occupied in 1869. The old academy building was destroyed by fire in 1871.

The new Hill school at the southwest corner of Chester and Martin streets took up the higher grade of work previously done by the Academy, as a high school was established on the upper floors of the new building.

According to "A History of Oakland County, 1817-1877", the Hill school was considered "really an ornament and a credit to the village. Its cost including site was \$14,000." David Bemis was the first principal and there were four other teachers. The tuition at that time was \$5 a term and there were three terms in the year.

IN 1877 the salary of the principal was \$800 a year and that of the assistants, \$7 per week. Formerly "these salaries were higher, that of the principal having been \$1200 a year, but in conformity to the universal necessity and custom of retrenchment, they were reduced to the amounts above stated, said the "Oakland County History."

Chapel exercises were started in 1880. At that time all students would assemble in one room to hear a Chapter from the Bible read, repeat the Lord's prayer, sing hymns and sometimes hear declamations or dialogues by the students.

"Religion, morality and knowledge being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged".

—Michigan State Constitution.

In keeping with the conviction, acquired through centuries of mankind's struggles to emerge from barbarism into its best visions of personal freedom, security, orderly government, and general culture, the early settlers of this Birmingham area supported the accepted educational pattern of society. Since those early days of a single schoolroom, the school systems of Birmingham and Bloomfield Hills have grown into a stature that measures up to the best of modern educational systems, both from a physical and teaching program.

Too, into the area also has come the world-famous preparatory schools for boys and girls in Bloomfield Hills, the Cranbrook and Kingswood schools. Allied with them are other cultural Cranbrook organizations, details of which are set forth on other sections of this Anniversary Edition.

tem is found in the development of the Holy

Another phase of the local educational system and St. Mary's parochial schools, providing educational opportunities for the Catholic youth of this area.

**THE FIRST** class was graduated in 1880 and had one member, Edward Bodine. By 1890 the enrollment had increased to 317 of whom 94 were in the high school and six teachers were employed. W. G. Cook was superintendent and a well organized high school course was presented.

In 1894 C. F. Waldo became superintendent and for the first time the school was approved by the University of Michigan which approval has been continuous ever since.

The annual school census of 1905 showed 364 pupils; in 1910, it was 435. By 1913, the Hill building, though enlarged, no longer could

accommodate both grade and high school children and the Barnum building was erected to care for an increase in grade pupils. In 1915, the school census showed 616 pupils.

IN 1918 Baldwin high school was erected to provide for the growing numbers of older students and to give facilities for the added vocational subjects in the curriculum. By this time, the teaching force had increased to 24 and student enrollment was 738.

Baldwin high school was made possible by a gift from Martha (Continued on Page 15)

### School Supt. In 1904 Also Taught Class

In the school year of 1904-05, A. E. Bellis was the superintendent of Hill school—the one and only public school in Birmingham. Besides his duties of superintendent, Mr. Bellis taught science and math.

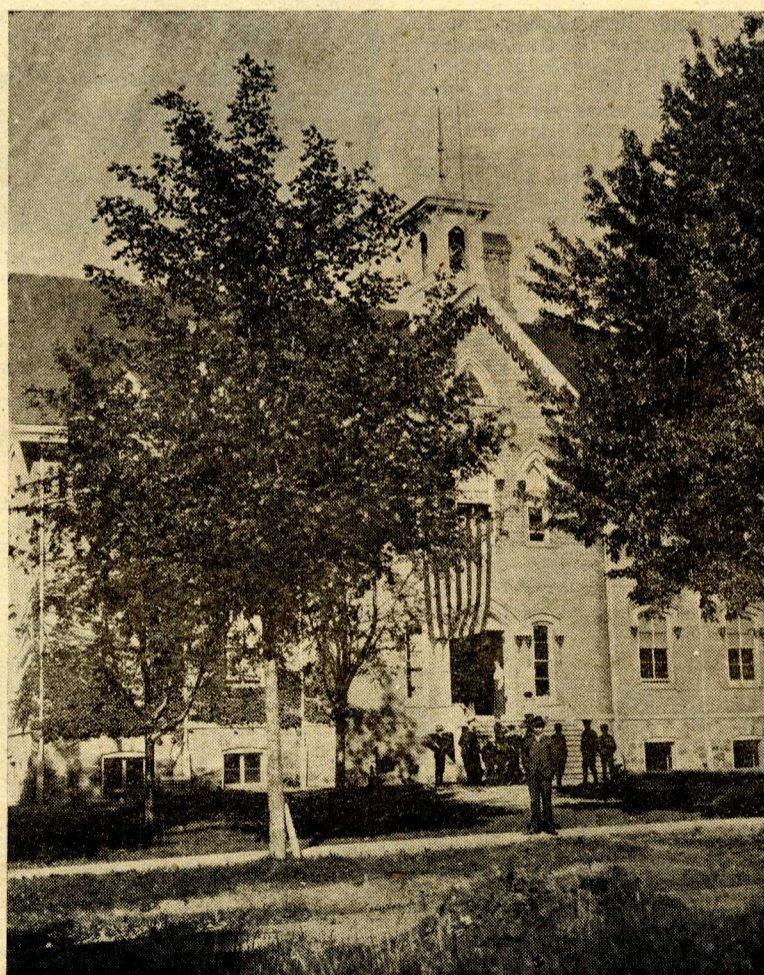
The school could boast of a "preceptress" in the person of Ethel Traphagen who also taught Latin and German. Kate McGraw was the instructor of biology, English and history while Margaret E. Murphy was the high school assistant and 8th grade teacher.

The elementary grades were housed in the same building on the first floor. The teachers and the grades they taught were: Mabel Koontz, 6-7 grades; Ella M. Leepa, 4-5 grades; Margaret Pepper, 2-3 grades and Mable Croft, 1st grade. Mary Hulbert taught kindergarten, music and drawing.

J. Allen Bigelow was president of the school board that year. Other board members were J. Bert Peabody, W. E. McClellan, A. S. Adams and John H. Snow.

**THERE WERE** three terms in the school year. Tuition for the high school was \$6 for the first term and \$5 for each of the remaining two terms. Eighth grade tuition was a dollar cheaper and for grades below the eighth, the tuition rates for the three terms were \$4, \$3, \$3 respectively.

It was in this year that the west side addition was added to the Hill school.



**B'HAM'S FIRST REAL 'SCHOOL HOUSE'**  
Hill School now is the main administration bldg.

## PTA Council Believed Founded Back in 1920

Although the early records of the Birmingham PTA Council have been destroyed, the date of its organization is fixed at 1920. Hill, Adams and Baldwin schools were the original three member units.

The first project undertaken by the young organization was the serving of milk during recess periods. Shortly thereafter a study was made of the need for playground equipment and a petition presented to the Board of Education in 1921. The petition resulted in swings and slides being furnished for the elementary schools.

Also prominent among early undertakings was the sponsorship of the first really active and successful Boy Scout troop in Birmingham in 1923. The Council financed the cost of maintaining the troop and bought the scoutmaster's uniform by selling papers and magazines.

In 1926 an extensive campaign for free text books was carried on, with the Board of Education agreeing to provide them in the fall of 1927.

**THE PRESENT** PTA Council reflects the growth of the school population of the area with eleven member units. Membership includes an executive committee of PTA presidents, together with delegates from each member unit's PTA and the principal of each school. The superintendent of schools completes the list.

The full Council holds five regu-

lar meetings each school year, one meeting in each of the months of September, October, February, March and April.

The PTA Council was formed to give member associations an opportunity for conference and cooperation.

In addition to providing programs of general interest, the Council undertakes to keep the public informed on school needs and programs.

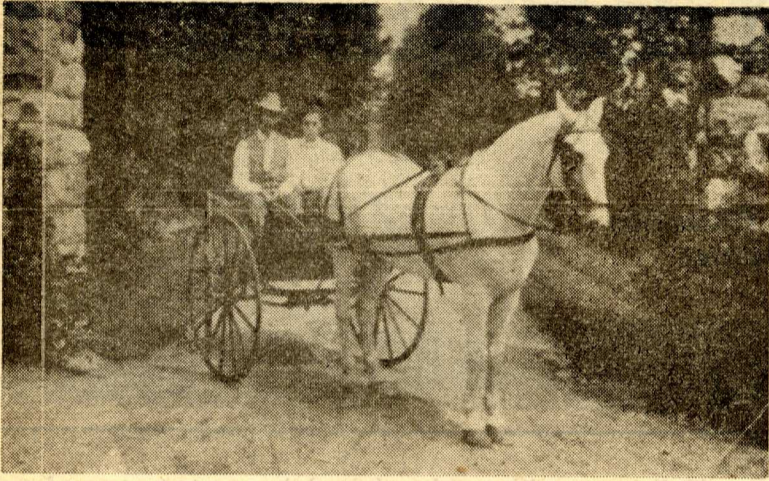
In the fall of 1952, the Council published a brochure showing the growth of the school population and the resulting need for an adequate building program.

**1953 MEMBER** units include Adams school, Baldwin, Barnum, Birmingham High School, Bloomfield Village, Franklin, Holy Name, Pierce, Quarton, Torry and Walnut Lake.

### Just What He Wanted

In the old days, Carboic Salve was used for just about everything. One day a Birmingham citizen went into Frank Hagerman's drug store and asked for Diabolical salve. Without comment or hesitation, Mr. Hagerman pulled out a box of Carboic salve—just what the customer wanted.

# Cranbrook, Too, Looks Far Back As It Moves Forward



"CRANBROOK, A.D. 1904," said these gateposts, erected by George G. Booth soon after he acquired the farmlands that became his estate and eventually a cultural center. This early entrance road had long served as a shortcut from the north to Morris' Mill, where Lone Pine and Cranbrook roads now intersect. With Mr. Booth behind "Dick" was his oldest son, James.

## Cultural Center Once a Thriving Business Place

The name Cranbrook is almost as distinctive in the tapestry of local history as is that of The Birmingham Eccentric.

It came out of Old England, where it was firm-fixed to "the capital of the weald of Kent" in Queen Elizabeth's day, though its origin (perhaps "crane brook") is lost in the mists of the past. But its application to a hill-and-dale section of Bloomfield township opened a new era, and ultimately gave a new significance to the word.

The new era was the period of transition of an agricultural region into one of country estates, influenced by the spectacular growth of Michigan's metropolis. It saw, too, a change of Birmingham from a rural trading center to a residential suburb, as farming became the hobby of a few and the business of almost none; and the farm population dwindled to a negligible statistic.

FOR HALF a century (which means for two-thirds of the long life of The Eccentric), Cranbrook has from time to time figured in the headlines of the local press and, latterly, the newspapers and periodicals of state and nation. Its span of life under its present name is three-fifths that of the City of Birmingham, and more than half of the period of Michigan's statehood.

It had its place of prominence, however, long before it was "discovered" by George G. Booth in 1902 and acquired, two years later, for development as a homesite in the country.

Not all of it was in the public eye—just that part at the southeastern corner, at Lone Pine and what is now Cranbrook Road, where a branch of the Rouge is shadowed by Brookside School Cranbrook.

IT WASN'T as a cultural center that it had a reputation in pioneer days, but rather as a promising place of industry and commerce. Early settlers turned calculating eyes on any source of waterpower, and the Rouge valley was one; hence the mill race, still functioning, and the splashing water-wheel—a modern replacement of a primitive utility.

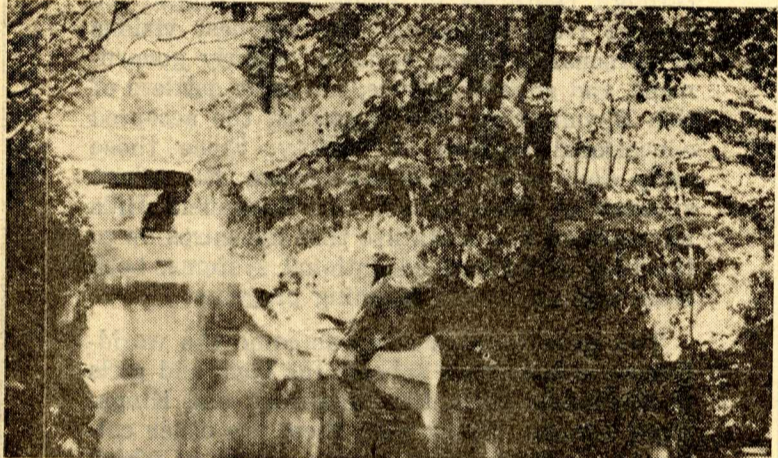
Here it was that William Morris earned his firm place in the history of the countryside. He and others came from the East in 1819 to "take up land," which could be had from the government at \$2 an acre, on time.

On land immediately to the north, he sowed the first wheat in what is now Bloomfield township. In the early 1820's he and Amara Bagley, who pioneered at Bloomfield Center (then Bagley's Corners), acquired the first-settled portion of Cranbrook, and in 1828 Morris established a gristmill, exactly where Brookside School now stands.

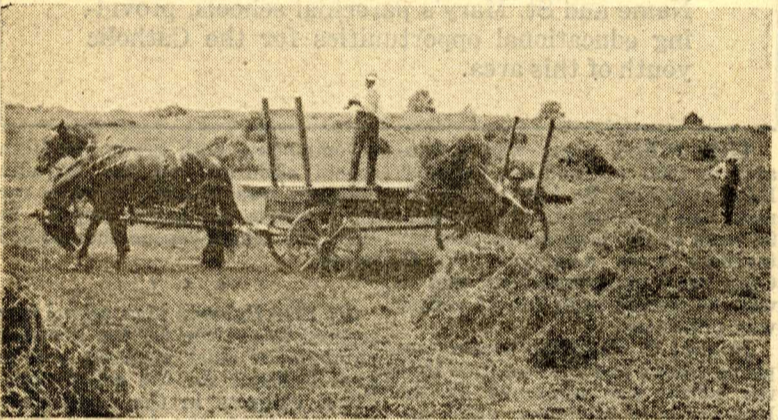
LESS IS OF record regarding the distillery which he and Benjamin Morris (presumably his brother) (Continued on Page Five)



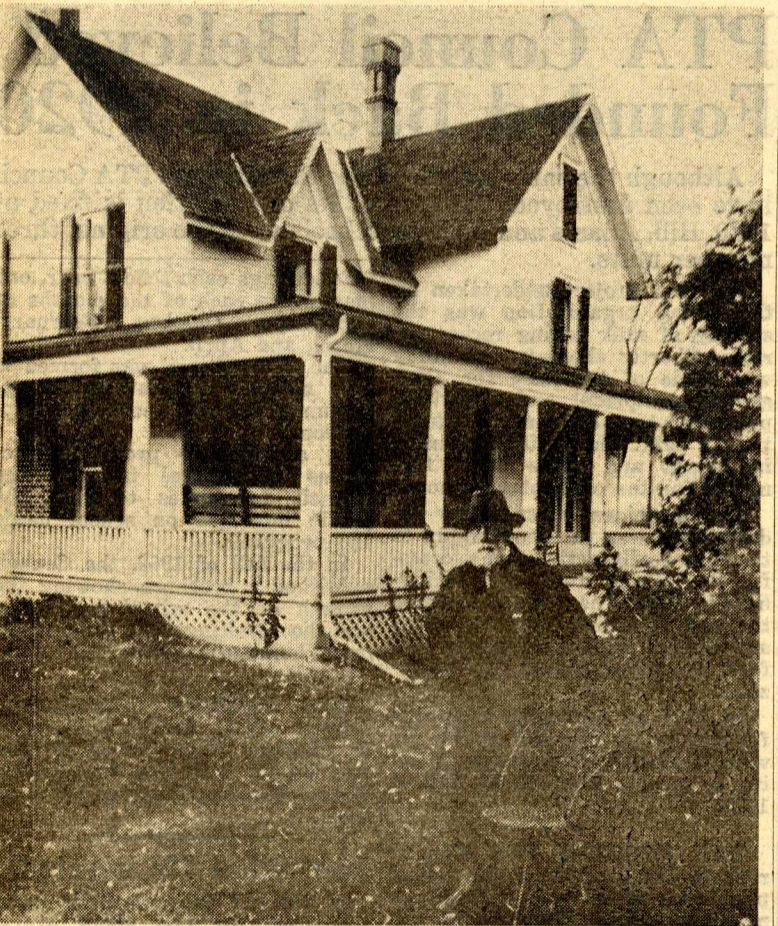
GEORGE G. BOOTH (1864-1949) and ELLEN S. BOOTH (1893-1948), who developed Cranbrook and were the donors of the six Cranbrook Institutions, photographed in their home June 1, 1947—the 60th anniversary of their marriage in the Church of the Epiphany, Detroit. Each lived to be 84. All of their five children survive.



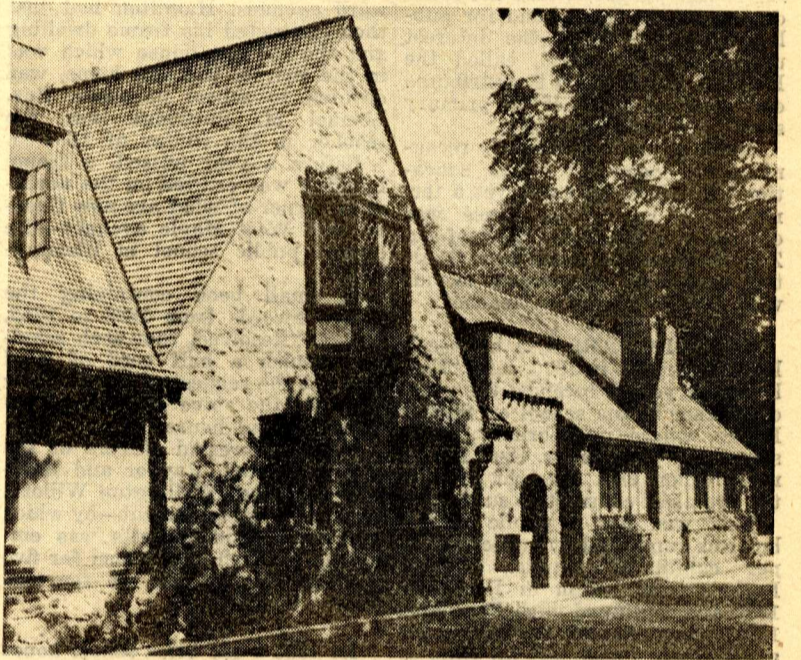
THE MILLRACE that diverted the impounded headwaters of the Rouge River to the grist-mill where Brookside School Cranbrook now stands. It was an idyllic, tanglewood waterway in the early 1900s when Mr. Booth took his daughter Grace in a canoe to the millpond (the present Cranbrook Lake), passing under the rustic bridge where Mrs. Booth stood.



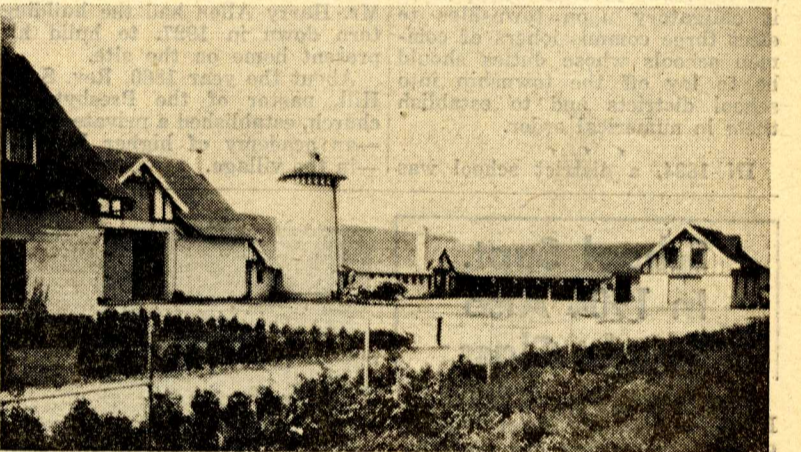
HAYING ON SUNSET HILL before Cranbrook Academy of Art and Cranbrook Institute of Science, which now flank it, were even dreamed of. Largely impoverished and rundown when purchased by Mr. Booth, the Alexander farm was unprofitable for agricultural purposes but a challenge to the new owner's genius for landscaping. At one time this hilltop was the contemplated site of Cranbrook House.



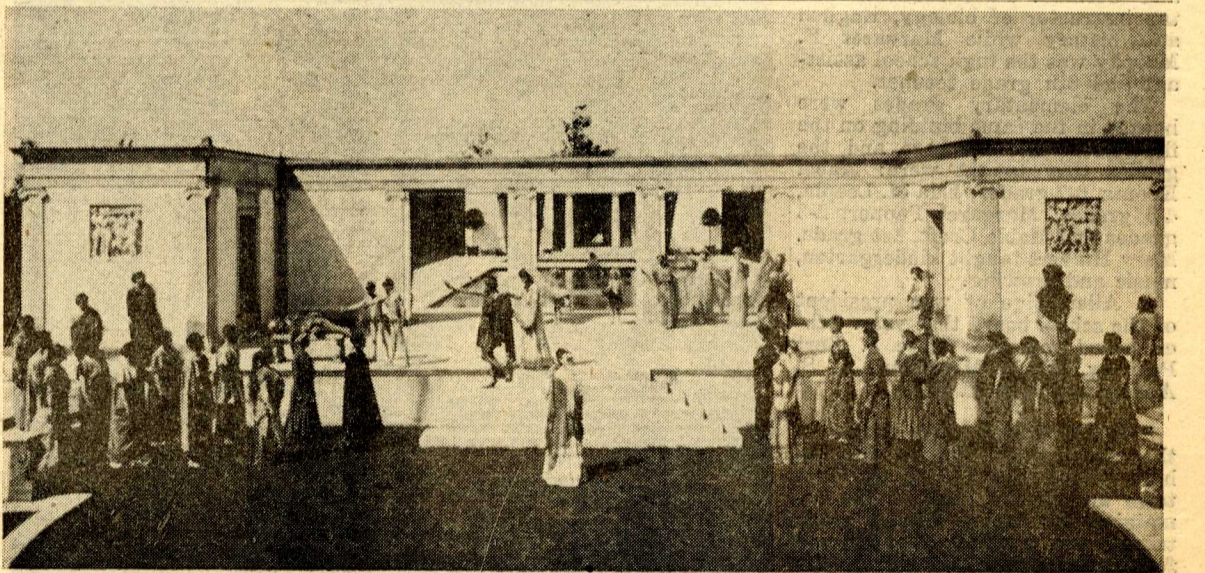
"THE COTTAGE" was the summer home of the Booths from 1904 to 1908, when Cranbrook House was occupied. Unkempt and dreary, without veranda, the interior unfinished and the exterior unpainted, it had served Samuel Alexander's family since its construction in 1886, after the old Morris house burned. Henry Wood Booth, father of George C., stands in the foreground. He and his wife resided at "the Cottage" from 1908 until their deaths, and it was demolished in 1930.



THE MEETING HOUSE, "Mother of Cranbrook Institutions," was constructed in 1918 to serve a variety of community needs. Here pious Henry Wood Booth and others conducted religious services and Sunday school, and neighborhood children in the elementary grades were taught. It occupies the site of Morris's Mill (built in 1828 and burned about 1894), and is a part of Brookside School Cranbrook.

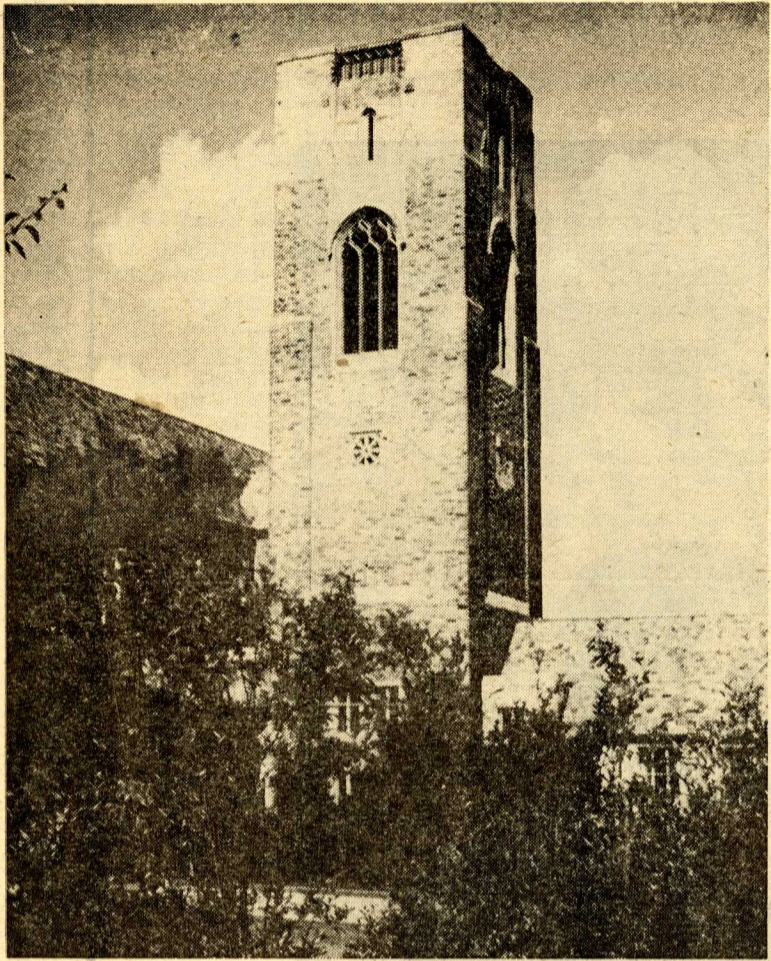


"FROM BARNYARD TO SCHOOLYARD": Cranbrook School in embryo. When Eliel Saarinen came to Cranbrook in 1925, he was commissioned to prepare plans for the conversion of a fairly new but disused group of farm buildings into a boys' school. Eventually, however, the old buildings were wrecked and a wholly new school constructed whose Academic Building is reminiscent of the dairy.

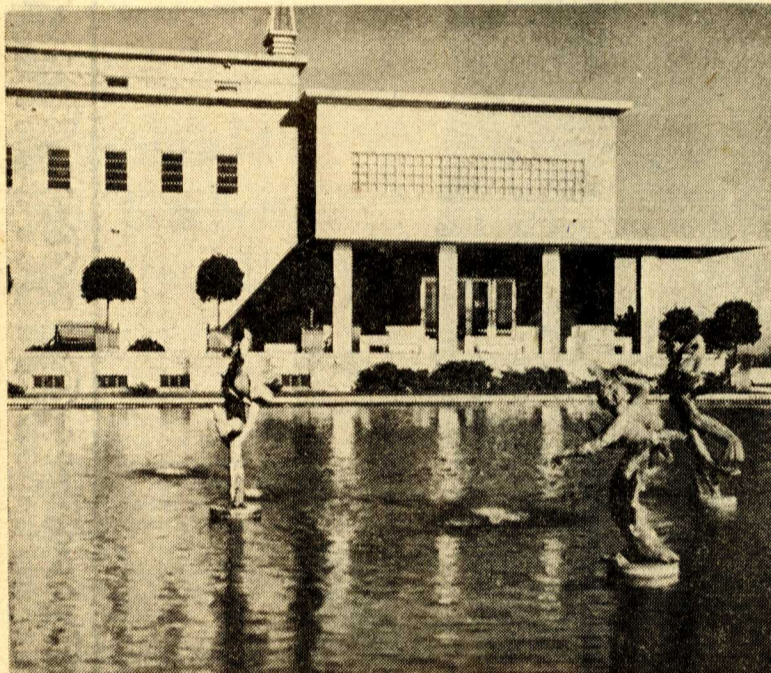


THE GREEK THEATRE, approached from a gate on Lone Pine beside St. Dunstan's Playhouse, antedates Cranbrook's educational institutions and church. First used in 1915, it was dedicated in 1916 with a series of productions of "The Cranbrook Masque," written by Sidney Coe Howard and enacted by a cast of more than a hundred amateur and professional players, including Constance Binney, Irving Pichel and Sam Hume. It has been used for 11 seasons by Cranbrook Summer School of the Theatre.

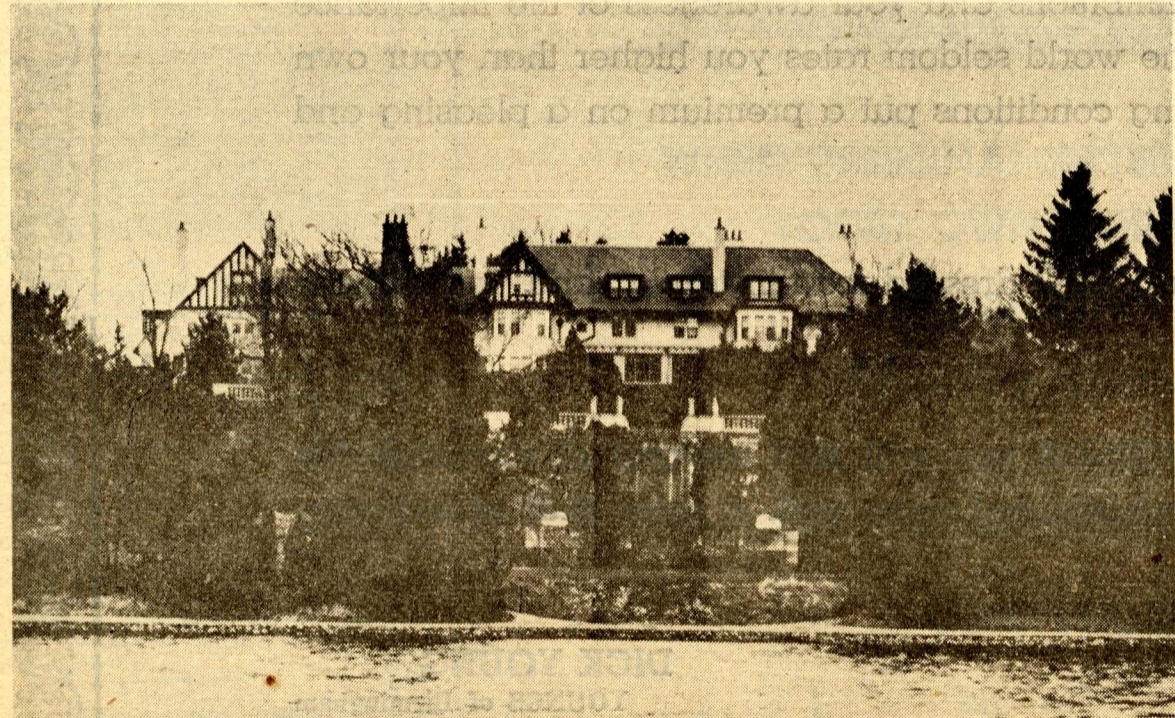
# Community Need Gave Rise to Six Noted Institutions



THE BELFRY OF CHRIST CHURCH CRANBROOK houses a carillon of 62 bells, covering four complete chromatic octaves and ranging in weight from 14 to 9,408 pounds. This Episcopal edifice had its origin in the Meeting House in 1925 and was consecrated in 1928. It serves surrounding communities as well as Bloomfield Hills and Cranbrook. Its sculptures, stained glass, paintings, tapestries, wood-carvings and other adornments represent the art of every century from the 12th to the 20th.



CRANBROOK INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE was an afterthought in the expanding project of the donors, but is famed for the excellence of its natural science exhibits, its researches, its publications and its popular lectures. A modest first home, speedily outgrown, was replaced in 1938 by an impressive building which receives as many as 56,000 visitors a year, from near and far, including many school groups. Observatory demonstrations are arranged from time to time for amateur star-gazers.



CRANBROOK HOUSE was for 40 years the dwelling of Mr. and Mrs. George G. Booth, who pioneered in the development of Bloomfield Hills as a residential suburb of Detroit. The central unit was completed in 1908; its extensive wings were planned and constructed in 1917-18. By gift, it is now the property of The Cranbrook Foundation and is a unifying center of frequent cultural and social events. Tours of its attractive formal and informal gardens are held twice weekly, from May through October, for the benefit of the scholarship funds of Cranbrook and Kingswood schools and under the sponsorship of their alumni.

## Each Shaping Its Own Destiny as Donors Wished

"What shall become of Cranbrook when we no longer need it?"

This was a question often put to themselves and to each other by George G. and Ellen S. Booth, in the years when they were developing their impressive country estate in Bloomfield Hills.

There never was any doubt in their minds that the rolling lands and winding water courses which they were beautifying would be put to some public use; but how? As a park? How else?

The answer was today's six Cranbrook Institutions, meeting needs and desires, of the community, they hoped, and discharging in part their indebtedness to a state in which they had prospered.

Once the objective was defined, the founders gave the remaining two-thirds of their long years at Cranbrook to the tremendous project. They lived to see it as complete as such a project ever is, and far-famed.

WHEN MR. BOOTH purchased what he called Samuel Alexander's "hard-scrabble farm" in 1904, Birmingham had a population of 1,252, and Cranbrook's was no more than the small Alexander family and a hired hand or two.

When the Cranbrook Jubilee was held last fall, Cranbrook had a population of 1,258, counting students, faculties and staffs. Of these, 614 were in residence and 644 lived elsewhere.

It was a vaster enterprise than ever the donors anticipated. Complex too, and confusing, judging by the errors people make—even those closely identified with its activities—in speaking and writing of Cranbrook.

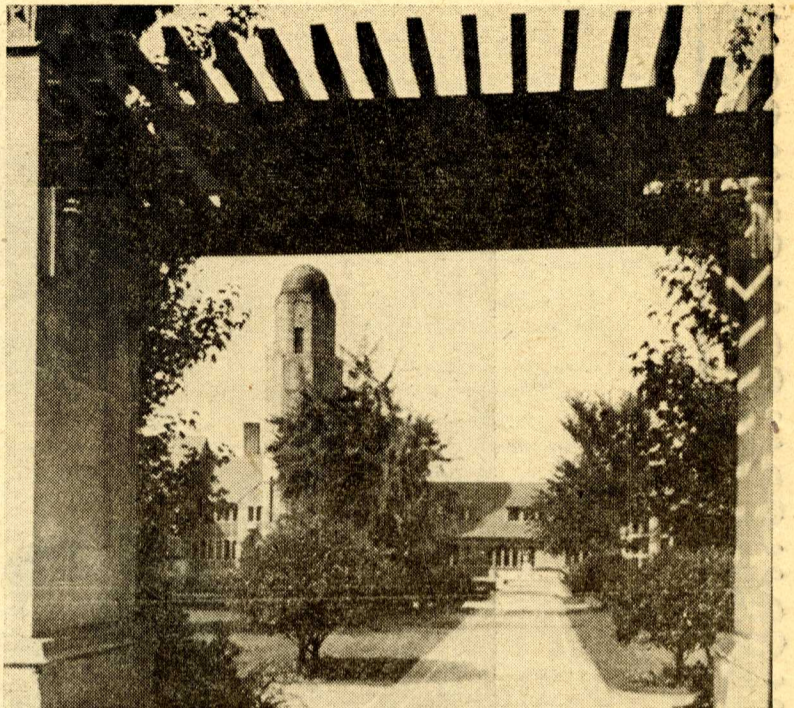
THIS IS BECAUSE so few comprehend that, in line with Mr. Booth's firm intention, the several institutions have their own identities; their own endowments, property rights and management; their own self-determined policies and procedures, influenced only by the purposes expressed in each trust indenture. Their unity is of the spirit, expressed in voluntary co-operation.

Commonest of errors is the thought that The Cranbrook Foundation is a centralized, over-all authority; or that it comprises all of the institutions, as a university comprises its various divisions under a single board and president.

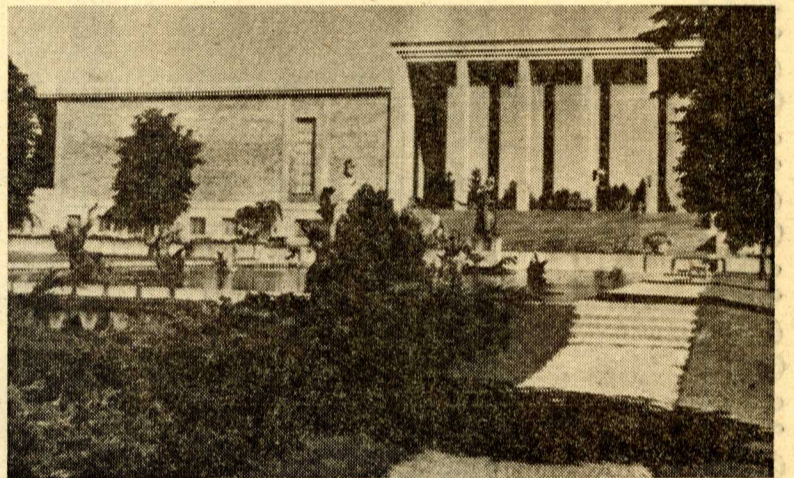
In fact, three of the six institutions already had been established and were masters of their own destinies before the Foundation was created, Nov. 28, 1927.

THE FOUNDERS were aware at that time that they might not live to see all of their undertakings ac-

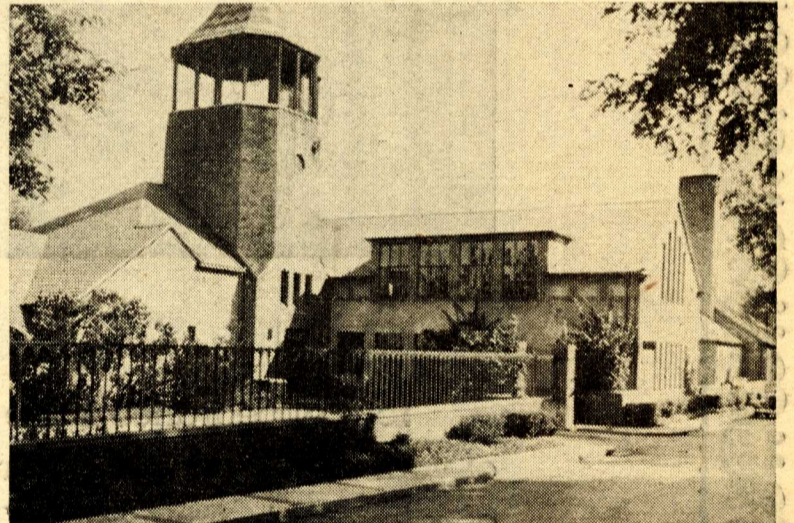
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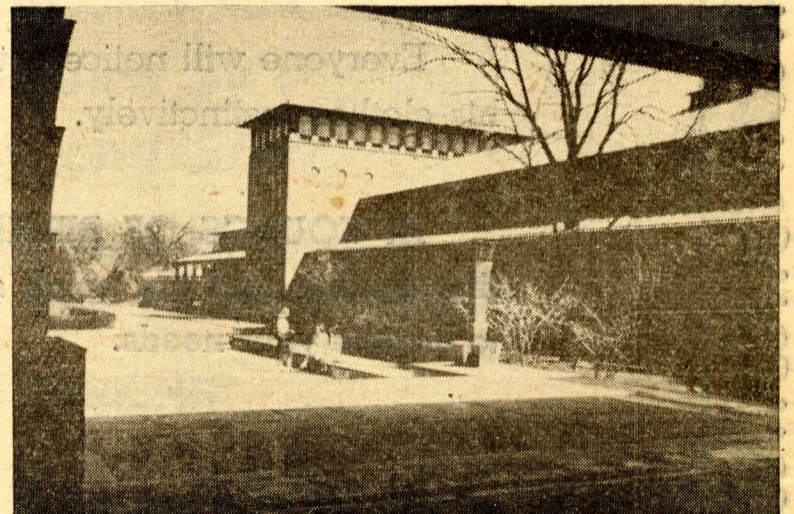
CRANBROOK SCHOOL has enrolled 1,600 boys from 44 states and 16 foreign countries since its doors opened in 1927, of whom one-fourth have received scholarship assistance. Its alumni have scattered widely in this and 11 other lands for higher education and pursuit of their careers. Its buildings, the first major achievement of Eliel Saarinen in America, won for him the gold medal of the authoritative Architectural League of New York. It occupies 90 of Cranbrook's 300 acres.



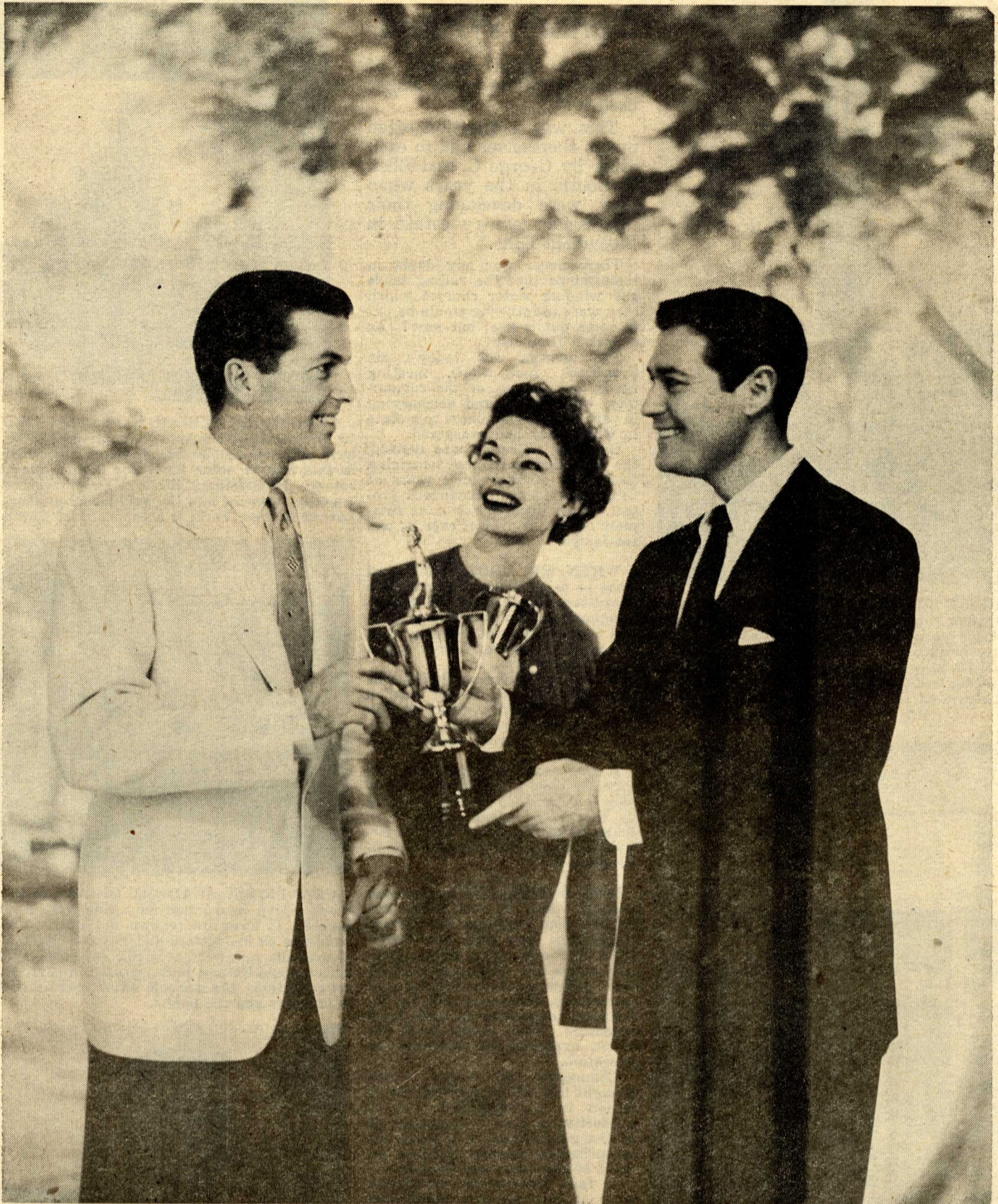
CRANBROOK ACADEMY OF ART is the only institution at Cranbrook giving instruction on a collegiate level and authorized to grant degrees. It owes its renown not only to the eminence of artists in residence as instructors and the accomplishments of its graduates, but also to the resources available to its advanced students, including the museum and library, here pictured in part. In addition to its permanent art collections, the museum offers special exhibitions of current interest to students and the public.



BROOKSIDE SCHOOL CRANBROOK, oldest of the six Cranbrook Institutions, has the youngest student body, starting with the junior kindergarten and ending with the sixth grade. The charm of its interior is matched for its 200 boys and girls by the attractions of the brook which once powered Morris's Mill and gave the school its name. The donors' son, Henry S. Booth, was the architect of the enlarged school.



KINGSWOOD SCHOOL CRANBROOK is the only institution whose campus borders on Cranbrook Lake, and it hides from the casual visitor a cherished view across the water to Cranbrook House. Social and recreational facilities are shared frequently with the boys of Cranbrook School. While preparing girls for the colleges of their choice, it also offers excellent instruction in drawing, painting, ceramics and weaving.



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YOUNGS of Birmingham

# Clues to Early Annexations Come from Eccentric's Files

Birmingham's school district now comprises an area of 22 square miles. When the district first was organized in 1834, it was small enough in area (as were all other school districts) to permit a child to walk to school even during the winter months.

The growth and development of the Birmingham school district, No. 1 fractional, before 1908 is difficult to determine because early records of the district were not kept. In the county school superintendent's office, no records prior to 1908 are available.

Indications of Birmingham's first school district consolidation came from the files of The Birmingham Eccentric, dated 1881:

"School district No. 5, or Snow's district, was dissolved by a majority of the resident taxpayers at a meeting Sept. 19, 1881 and it is the wish of several of the Town Liners to become united to this district thereby enjoying the great advantages offered by the Birmingham High School.

"A petition has been presented to the joint board of inspectors, signed by a number of tax payers, praying to be attached to school district No. 1 fractional of Bloomfield, Troy and Southfield."

LATER: "The school house, stove, a lot of stove pipe, a quantity of stove wood and all the appurtenances belonging to school district fractional No. 5 of Bloomfield and Troy will be sold at auction on the premises."

And again later: "Birmingham Union School has enrolled twice as many foreign students (Ed. note: They are now called tuition students) as any other Union school in Oakland county except at the county seat. There are respectively 38 and 26 foreign pupils in the high school and grammar departments.

"Recently, there has been considerable territory set into this

district. This will make the district more wealthy and will tend to lessen somewhat the number of foreign pupils in the lower grades."

WILLIAM J. EMERSON, present superintendent of county schools, stated that very little consolidation of school districts in the county was effected before 1917. His records show that Southfield No. 3 fractional (Pierce) was annexed to the Birmingham school district in 1944 and Southfield No. 1 fractional (Franklin) was annexed in 1945.

A part of the Bloomfield Village school district south of Quarton road was annexed in 1946. This school district, according to county records of 1908 show that at that time, the district (then called the Gilbert Lake district) had 35 pupils in a one-room school house, taught by Aggie Harbison whose salary was \$270 for a school term of nine months.

BIRMINGHAM'S school district, according to the 1908 records, was an area of 8½ square miles. There

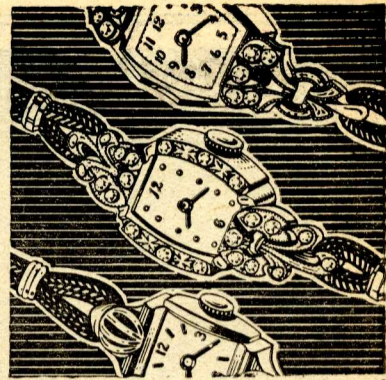
was only one school, the Union school house (now called Hill school).

A. E. Bellis was superintendent of schools at a salary of \$1,200 a year. Twelve teachers instructed the school's 327 pupils enrolled. The average teacher's salary in 1908 in Birmingham was \$450 a year.

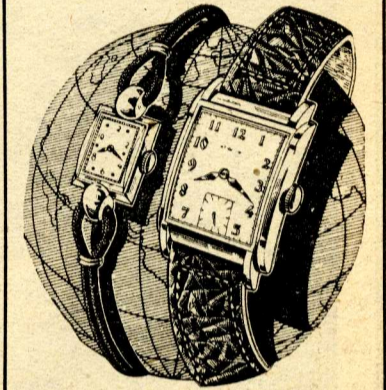
Birmingham's school district was further enlarged in 1946 by the annexation of Southfield No. 1 (Pierce) and in 1947, the school district of Walnut Lake was annexed.

THERE NOW ARE 10 schools in the Birmingham school district with more than 6,000 pupils enrolled. Sixteen school and Greyhound busses are used to transport students, quite a bit different than in 1881 when a Miss Jennie Worth attended school "riding from home and back on horseback."

The development of modern transportation and good roads has enabled the school districts to consolidate. A broader curriculum, embracing specialized classes providing for richer educational opportunities along with efficiency, has spurred the desire of school districts toward consolidation.



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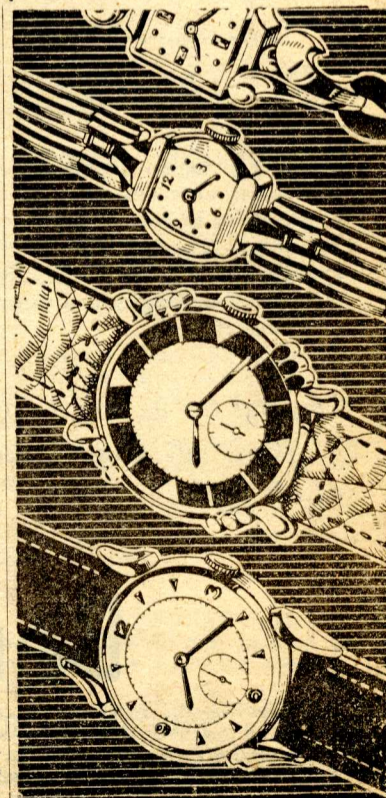
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# Cranbrook, Too, Looks Far Back As It Moves Forward

(Continued from Page Two)

er) set up to utilize what was known as "mill offal." It continued in operation until 1850.

And, too, there developed at the "mill corners" a blacksmith shop, a small cooperage, a quite extensive "pot and pearl ash plant" and a general store.

In time, the thriving hamlet, like others of its kind, languished and all but disappeared. It was bypassed when the railroad from Detroit was extended in 1839 to Birmingham and eventually to Pontiac, and the station-stops and termini became the fixed centers of trade and manufacturing.

SOMEHOW, the mill survived both economically and as a landmark. In 1847 when Rep. Thomas McGraw presented a minority report to the legislature recommend-

ing Bloomfield Center as the permanent state capital, proponents of Lansing asked where it was.

"Three-fourths of a mile north of Morris's Mill," was his apparently adequate answer. Under its later names, "Old Mud Mill" and "Stiff's Flouring Mill," it operated until about 1894, when it burned.

Morris lived in a house, rather pretentious for its day, situated on a wooded slope a few rods north of the water wheel, and overlooking the mill race and valley. He was sheriff of the first court in Oakland County, which was presided over by Judge Bagley, his wife's father.

AMONG THE outbuildings of his farm, and under his supervision, was a crude structure serving as the county's poor house in early days. It was demolished in 1905 after Mr. Booth had come into ownership.

It was from Samuel Alexander and his wife Kezia that Mr. Booth bought the property. The Alexanders had occupied the old Morris dwelling until it burned, July 4, 1886.

Bits of exposed stonework at the well-site, and a depression where the cellar of the house had been, are still discernible; and one likes to think that the rosebushes, narcissi, orange day lilies and other flowers in the vicinity of what is now called Evergreen Grove survived from the gardens of the Morris era.

TOO LITTLE is of record regarding Samuel Alexander. At East Lansing, it is recorded that he attended Michigan Agricultural College in 1860-61, leaving to become a member of Co. G, Third Michigan Volunteer Infantry, and that in the following year he was

transferred to the Topographical Dept. of the Third Army Corps.

He is identified further as having been "a teacher, farmer and fruit grower in Birmingham." What is more certain from the writings of Mr. Booth is that he made a rather poor fist of husbandry, and that he was ineffectual in his larger purposes as a naturalist, among them the rearing of trout.

In his later years he lived in Ann Arbor, dying in 1917. His only child, an unmarried daughter, died more recently.

IT WAS A sadly run-down property which Mr. Booth bought in 1904. The house that Alexander built and occupied for 18 years after the Morris place burned had never been completed, and much had to be done to make it habitable, even as a summer cottage.

Extensive pear-orchards bore scantily; vineyards had deteriorated and fields yielded meager crops of wheat, corn, rye and hay. The mill pond which was to become Cranbrook Lake had been emptied a decade earlier when the dam had washed out, and mill race and brook were silted heavily.

Yet the Detroit publisher saw in the property what he sought: a chance to create a country home with something of the loveliness of the environs of his ancestral village, Cranbrook, in the south of England; the birthplace of his father.

TO THE HUNDRED acres acquired from the Alexanders, Mr. Booth soon added 60 acres of abutting land and proceeded with a work of transformation that challenged all subsequent migrants to Bloomfield Hills.

That transformation began with the rehabilitation of the property as a home, and its effective if unprofitable operation as a farm. It terminated with the development of one of the nation's—indeed the world's—most noteworthy educational centers, occupying some 300 acres and surpassing in beauty its enchanting Old World prototype.

When the Booths first picnicked on their newly-owned homestead, the countryside was still one of tilled and pastured fields and casual woodlots. It was reached from Detroit by electric "interurbans" and primitive "motor cars" over a narrow, unpaved, rutted, dusty road which was maintained after a fashion out of fees collected at three toll gates north of the city.

THE PIONEER commuters carried an elaborate kit of tools with which to make repairs to their often balky motors and fragile tires; and they took it for granted that each round trip would be marked by some misadventure.

They lived to see transportation a problem only because of the volume of traffic on one of the world's busiest and best arterial highways.

upon great artists, several of whom, notably the sculptor Carl Milles, remained in residence at the Academy of Art, of which Saarinen was the first head.

Numerous buildings at Cranbrook bear the names of men who made significant contributions to the history of Cranbrook: churchmen, educators, architects, artists, even craftsmen. But no institution, no building, has been named for either of the donors. That is as they wished.

# Six Noted Institutions Serve Need

(Continued from Page Three)

complished, since they were then in their middle sixties.

So the Foundation had as its purpose to insure the completion of projects already begun, and the harmonious development of those still in the planning stage. Actually, Mr. and Mrs. Booth lived to be 84.

The lifetime accumulations which Mr. Booth poured into the Foundation, and the generous contributions of Mrs. Booth, have been largely expended, but a modest residue, unequal to the demands upon it, remains in the hands of the trustees. They also hold title to Cranbrook House and surrounding grounds (44 of the total of about 300 acres).

THE FOUNDATION is empowered to operate institutions, but it has preferred to surrender this permissive function to other and likewise self-perpetuating boards. It can also exhaust its resources and go out of existence.

Its personnel provides technical and professional services and the management of major utilities, the expense of which is shared by the benefited institutions.

Manifestations of Cranbrook's community spirit go back to the beginning. The ink was hardly dry on the deed to the Alexander farm before the first religious services were conducted there.

Henry Wood Booth (father of George G.) who wrote, spoke and labored prodigiously in the field of religion, conducted Sunday school in a tent on a hill-top, attended by 15 local folk and a Detroitier. It was a pious interlude in a picnic week-end, but it forecast the future, for such simple devotions became fairly common, even in Cranbrook House.

IN 1918 the obvious need of a place of worship was met by the construction of "The Meeting House," at the old millsite at Lone Pine and Cranbrook roads. The quaint and charming structure also served for civic assemblages, week-day classes, and even Saturday night movies.

It became, and still is, a part of Brookside School, and it housed Christ Church in its mission days and during the construction of its permanent home.

In the earlier days, however, it was usually Henry Wood Booth, though sometimes ministers invited from Birmingham and Detroit, who conducted services.

SENTIMENT IS deeply attached to The Meeting House as "the mother of Cranbrook Institutions". But an even earlier creation for community service and cultural outlet was the Greek Theatre. Completed in 1915, it was formally dedicated in 1916 with several productions of "The Cranbrook Masque," written for the occasion by Sidney Coe Howard. Since then it has been used for a great variety of purposes.

Schooling for little children of the neighborhood was a factor in the shaping of Cranbrook's future. For want of convenient and adequate facilities, the Booths participated prominently in the organization of Bloomfield Hills Seminary at Lone Pine and Woodward, giving the land and meeting most of the cost of buildings. It had 60 pupils when it closed during the first World War.

IN 1922, Brookside was born in The Meeting House, to which extensive addition had to be made by 1929. Ten years later substantial reconstruction and further enlargement occurred. The school now enrolls 200 children in junior and senior kindergartens and the first six grades, all day students.

Christ Church Cranbrook (Episcopal) came into being in 1925, but not until Sept. 29, 1928, when its edifice was consecrated, did it vacate The Meeting House.

To the original church, a porch was subsequently added and, in 1939, a large wing. Notable are its 62-bell carillon and its ecclesiastical art, representing every century after the eleventh.

CRANBROOK SCHOOL was originally conceived as a small secondary school for boys, attached to the church. But it developed independently before the construction of its imposing buildings was begun.

Founded in 1926, it opened its doors in 1927, and last fall observed its silver anniversary. It can accommodate 200 resident and 100 day students, from the seventh to the twelfth grade, inclusive.

Kingswood School Cranbrook, whose program for girls parallels that of the school for boys, was the first institution established by the Foundation. Its opening year (1930-31) was spent in Brookside's enlarged quarters while its own home overlooking Cranbrook Lake was being finished. It has a capacity of 250 students, 80 in residence.

CRANBROOK ACADEMY of Art, which expresses Mr. Booth's intense interest in architecture and all the arts, is the only degree-granting institution at Cranbrook. Informally, its instructional program dates back to the 1920s; but in 1942 the Academy was formally organized under a separate board and chartered by the state.

Artists have come from all parts of the country and at least 25 foreign lands for its advanced training in sculpture, painting, design, weaving, ceramics, metal-smithing, and architecture, the latter on a post-graduate basis. Its museum, popular with the public, and its library are notable.

Cranbrook Institute of Science, youngest of the six institutions, was established in 1930 to promote instruction and research in the natural sciences. It has a membership but not a student body.

ITS MUSEUM exhibits are known for their interest and excellence, and attract more than 50,000 visitors annually. Its publications, study groups, observatory demonstrations, lectures, motion pictures and field trips are extremely popular.

Mr. Booth would have been reluctant to see this much written without mention of the geniuses of architecture who created its monumental buildings; and quick to protest mention that The Meeting House and Brookside were the architectural conceptions of himself and his son Henry S.

He brought to the creation of the cultural center Albert Kahn (Cranbrook House), Marcus R. Burrows (the Greek theatre), Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue Associates (Christ Church) and Eliel Saarinen (Cranbrook and Kingswood schools, the Art Academy and the Institute of Science).

FOR THE adornment of their buildings and grounds he drew



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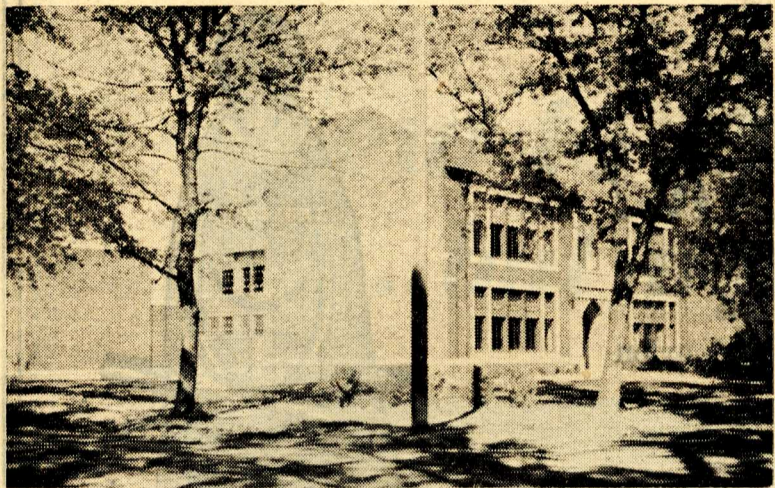
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SERVES PARISH CHILDREN IN FIRST 8 GRADES  
\$425,000 addition dedicated in November, 1950

## Holy Name School Has 600 Students

Construction of the school for Holy Name parish was the first concern of pastor Rev. William W. Ryan after the dedication of Holy Name church in 1922.

At this time the parish included Bloomfield Hills as well as Birmingham, and a large and rapidly expanding number of school-age children were within parish boundaries.

### Consolidation Led to Troy Teachers' Club

The Troy Township Teachers' Club was organized in the spring of 1948 when the school districts in the township first were consolidated.

Formed to provide a place to discuss common problems, and exchange ideas, the Troy Teachers' Club utilizes its meetings to inform members about the various educational committees and activities in Oakland County and the state.

Meetings are held on alternate months. During the year various social events are held, and an annual party is given for the school board, administration and school employees.

MRS LILLIAN ANDERSON was the group's first president. After two years, Mrs. Anderson was succeeded by Mrs. Gladys Muselman, with Miss Earla Smith serving as third president.

Boyd Larson heads the current slate, with Mrs. Gladys Bradford, vice-president; Mrs. Lucy Purnell, secretary; and Mrs. Zyra Smith, treasurer.

Recent activities of the group include the awarding of a trophy to the outstanding high school senior at graduation. Among the future projects is a fund-raising campaign for scholarship aid for a senior desiring further education.

### Walnut Lake PTA Is One of B'ham District's Newest

The Walnut Lake PTA is a comparatively new organization having been formed September 24, 1946, although the school dates back to a one room building at the corner of Lone Pine and Middlebelt roads.

Parker Rockwell of Putnam drive served as first president of the PTA which met then as now, the second Monday of each month during the school year. From 74 members the group has grown to include a membership of 105.

Originally the school served all the grades through the eighth. With its incorporation into the Birmingham school district the number was reduced to six grades.

Highlight of the PTA year is the school fair held annually in May.

CURRENT PRESIDENT Edson Stevens is assisted by John Nahabedian, vice-president; Mrs. Don Brown, Frank Sweet, Mrs. Reginald Smith, Keith Symon, Miss Marjorie Votey, Miss Nola Peasley, Mrs. Harold Jones, Mrs. Roland Walton, Mrs. Edson Stevens, Mrs. George Osterbeck, James Roberts and Mrs. C. M. Heller.

Plans were drawn for a building which would accommodate the expected parish growth in the near future and which would be arranged on the property so that additions could be easily made when needed.

Construction was completed in the fall of 1928 with an adjacent convent for the teaching staff finished earlier in the summer.

Holy Name school, then as now, has been directed by the nuns of the Order of Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, from Monroe, Mich.

PLANS FOR further expansion were blocked by the stock market crash of 1929, the depression, and the division of the parish with the formation of St. Hugo of the Hills.

A tremendous increase in the parish followed the war years, and in the spring of 1950, Holy Name school facilities were greatly expanded as part of a building program marking the parish's 25th anniversary.

Finished and dedicated by Edward Cardinal Mooney in November, 1950, was a \$425,000 school addition which housed six hundred pupils.

The added facilities included a large auditorium with a public address system, to be used for athletic contests, gym classes, some church services, dances for young people, and parish affairs.

Also added were eight classrooms, a music room, library, lockerrooms and showers for both boys and girls, an office for the principal, check room and an infirmary.

TEN SISTERS and five lay teachers now conduct classes. Mrs. Perry Fremont, physical director, and Gilbert Gervais, choirmaster and organist, were added to the staff in January, 1953.

In the spring of 1952, Sister Mary Colette, IHM, mother superior at Holy Name school for the previous five years, left and was replaced that fall by Sister Praxides, IHM. Sister Colette is now serving in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

The school, as are all parish activities, is under the direction of Holy Name's pastor, Monsignor Carroll F. Deady, who also holds the post of superintendent of the parochial schools of the Detroit archdiocese.

### Harmonious Interests Expressed in 1878

Birmingham had adult education classes way back when—only they weren't called by that name then.

In 1878, about 75 members of a "singing school" met once a week on Monday evenings, 7 o'clock, at the Presbyterian church.

A Prof. Webster was the instructor and it was claimed that he offered the best of instruction. He was experienced in the art of teaching singing for he had been with Prof. Pease at Ypsilanti for four years.

The tuition was 75c for a term of 16 weeks.

# School Supt., Mayor Comment On Eccentric's Anniversary

BIRMINGHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
BIRMINGHAM, MICHIGAN

DWIGHT B. IRELAND  
SUPERINTENDENT

February 24, 1953

Mr. George R. Averill, Publisher  
The Birmingham Eccentric  
North Woodward Avenue  
Birmingham, Michigan

Dear Mr. Averill:

On this seventy-five anniversary of the Birmingham Eccentric I should like to express the deep appreciation of the members of the Board of Education, the administrative staff, and the faculty for the role it has played in interpreting the public schools and their operation to the citizens of this community.

Your editorial policy has challenged, clarified and stimulated the thinking of our local people. It has aroused them from complacency and encouraged their support of constructive plans and policies which have contributed to the high type of residential community we all enjoy.

It is only through an aroused public opinion that democracy can function. I trust that you and your staff will continue to fulfill this role as successfully in the years that are ahead as you have in the past.

Sincerely,  
*Dwight B. Ireland*  
Superintendent of Schools

DBI:d

## City of Birmingham

151 Martin St.  
BIRMINGHAM, MICH.

Office of  
MAYOR

February 20, 1953

Mr. George R. Averill, Editor  
The Birmingham Eccentric  
220 North Woodward Avenue  
Birmingham, Michigan

Dear Mr. Averill:

There is probably no single thing that plays a more important part in the lives and affairs of the community than the newspaper which serves it. In a community such as Birmingham, with thousands of citizens unserved by a daily paper primarily concerned with local matters, the weekly paper's roll is increasingly important. Without this means of public discussion of the pros and cons of municipal affairs, and without this means of disseminating information of importance to our citizens we would have a pretty difficult time of maintaining any semblance of a truly representative government.

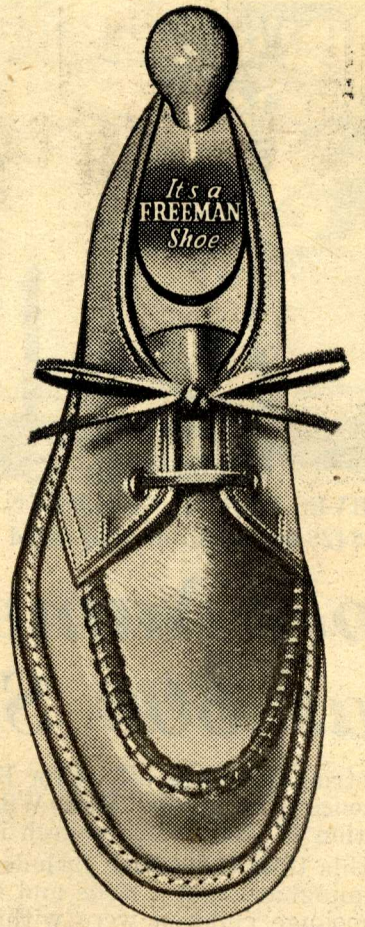
Those of us who have been actively concerned with city affairs have come to regard the Birmingham Eccentric as an integral part of the community rather than an enterprise carried on as a private endeavor. Birmingham citizens can indeed be thankful for the leadership provided and the community interest evidenced by your publication. May they continue to enjoy for another seventy-five years the same service that you and your paper have rendered.

Yours very truly,  
*Jan A. Beier*  
Dean G. Beier  
Mayor

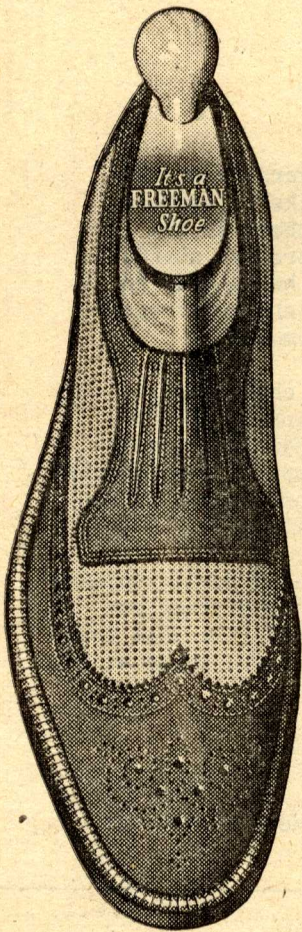
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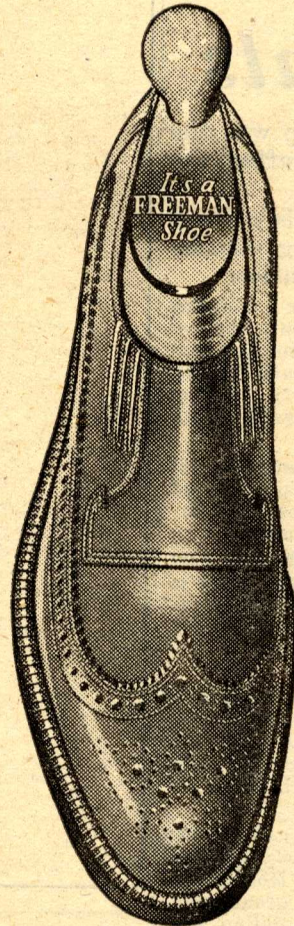
Saddle Tan Two Eyelet  
Moccasin Toe Blucher  
Oxford



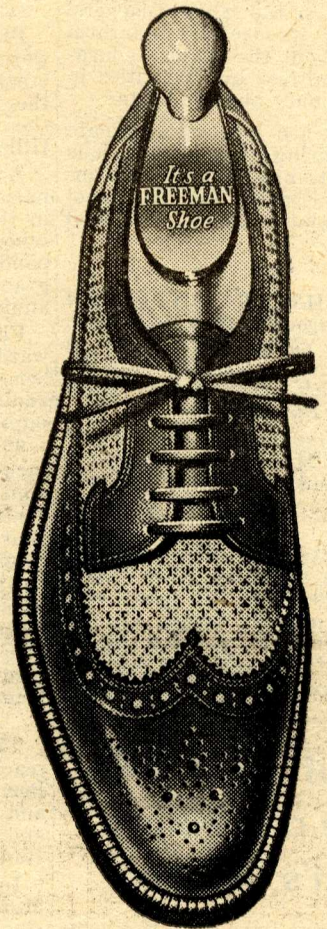
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Brown and Black



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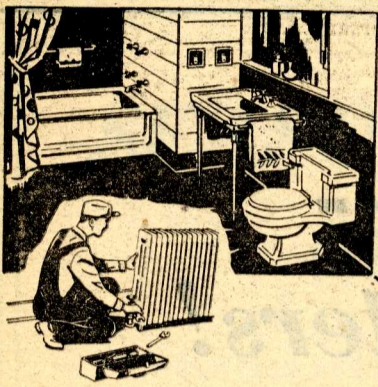
While we are congratulating The Eccentric on its completion of 75 Years in this splendid Birmingham-Bloomfield area, we point with pride to the fact that while our store here is new, many customers of the community are among our oldest and most treasured. Many who now live here, patronized our first store in Detroit 30 years ago. For that reason we feel very much at home here and are pleased to have opened this new store in Birmingham where old and new customers alike can select from our fine stock of distinctive clothing and accessories for men and young men.

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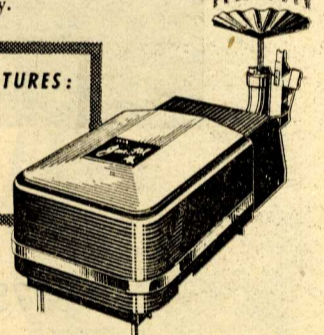
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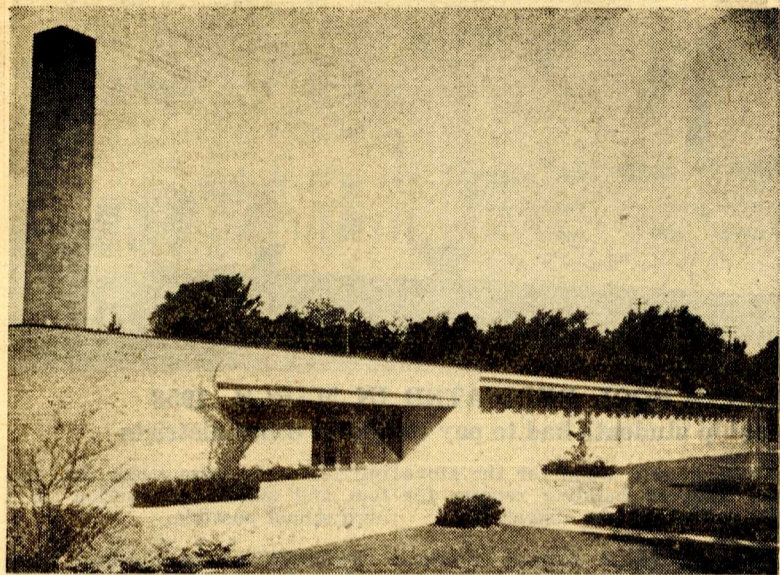
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HILLS HIGH SCHOOL ERECTED IN 1932  
Seventeen years later more classrooms were added

## Public School Built In Hills 103 Yrs. Ago

Public education within the Bloomfield Hills school district had its birth about 1850 when a small one-room frame school was built on what is presently the southeast corner of West Long Lake road and Woodward.

Later the building was moved to the northwest corner of the intersection.

The 24 by 32-foot frame structure was furnished with seats and desks hewn from rough logs.

Richard Vaughan, Pat Knight and Fen Weston comprised the first school board. It is believed that Weston served as the district's first administrative head.

The district at first included the center 4½ sections of the present City of Bloomfield Hills.

School enrollment increased slowly and it wasn't until the turn of the century that school board members determined the need for larger facilities.

In 1900 the brick school on East Long Lake road was constructed. The building now houses an architectural firm.

TWO-THIRDS of the \$2,800 cost of the building was paid by Charles Stinchfield, a newcomer to Bloomfield township who recognized the residential possibilities of the area. He became administrator of the Whitney estate and assessments from the property financed the school building.

Costs were held almost entirely to materials as residents volunteered their labor for the project. Three workers on the building were Milo Lowes and his son, Clarence, who did the carpentry work and John Leach laid the stone and brick.

In the late 'teens, a partition was constructed through the one large room and another teacher added to care for larger enrollments.

AGAIN IN the 1920's, the school became overcrowded and a store was rented in the building on the southeast corner of the Woodward-East Long Lake intersection that now houses the Kingsley Inn. A third teacher then was employed.

Need for a larger school site became more apparent but every site selected met with opposition from property owners living adjacent to the sites.

Perry Vaughan offered to sell 17 acres from his farm on Vaughan road to the school district (the present site of the Vaughan school) and 10 acres directly south of this property.

BOARD MEMBERS refused this offer, claiming that the property was too far from Bloomfield Center.

W. T. Barbour also offered a site about 300 feet south of the brick school, but this offer, too, was turned down.

Throughout the 1920's the school board investigated nine proposed sites and refused to condemn the property each time because of the objections raised by nearby property owners.

About 1930 Judson Bradway, then owner of the Vaughan farm, sold the originally offered 17 acres to George Booth. Booth, two years later, suggested that he would give the north 6½ acres of this parcel to the school board if certain building restrictions on the land would be waived.

THE BOARD finally accepted the land and waived the restrictions.

The school board had collected \$40,000 over the site-seeking years

## Several Private Schools Once Operated Here

There were several private school enterprises in the village of Birmingham. Extricated from the must and dust of antiquity, some of them can be placed and their teachers named.

Perhaps the most famous and well-known of the old private schools was the one established about 1860 by Rev. S. N. Hill. It was called The Academy and was a school for higher learning. School classes were held in rooms on the second floor of the long frame building which stood on the southwest corner of West Maple and Pierce streets.

The building faced east on Pierce street. Rev. Hill conducted this school for three years, employing two other teachers.

THE ACADEMY afterwards was conducted by Mr. Albert Jennings and still later by S. R. Winchell. The Academy was discontinued about the time the Hill public school was erected in 1869.

Beyond the hardware store of Hugh Irving on the west side of Woodward near the corner of Willets street was another private school. It was a small brown frame building and was used as a school house during the period of 1855-65.

It was a private school for primary education and, according to George Mitchell who attended school there, was taught by a succession of teachers: Mrs. Jane Willits Hunt, Mrs. J. C. K. Crooks, Mattie Baldwin and a Miss Beardslee.

When the school disbanded, the building later became the cooper-shop of Samuel Patrick.

DURING THE early part of the 1860's, James R. Corson, Sr. started a private school for boys which supplemented the public school. It was held in his home on West Maple street, across from St. James Episcopal church, where Hilly Acres now is located.

Mattie Baldwin, early in her long career of teaching, also had a private school for girls at one time which was held in the Baldwin home on the north side of West Maple avenue near Baldwin school.

## Southfield PTA Council Guides Work of 7 Units

The Southfield Area Council of Parent-Teacher Associations was organized February 8, 1949. Primary motives for the group's existence were to better coordinate the activities of the seven local units in the school district, and to further the aims and ideals of PTA.

Elected as the first officers were Mrs. G. H. Shinaver, president; Mrs. Leiv Larson, vice-president; and Mrs. William Merrihew, secretary-treasurer.

Among the group's most successful early activities were the radio broadcast which still is produced monthly, and the "pre-school roundup" which prepares hundreds of children each year for their entrance into school life.

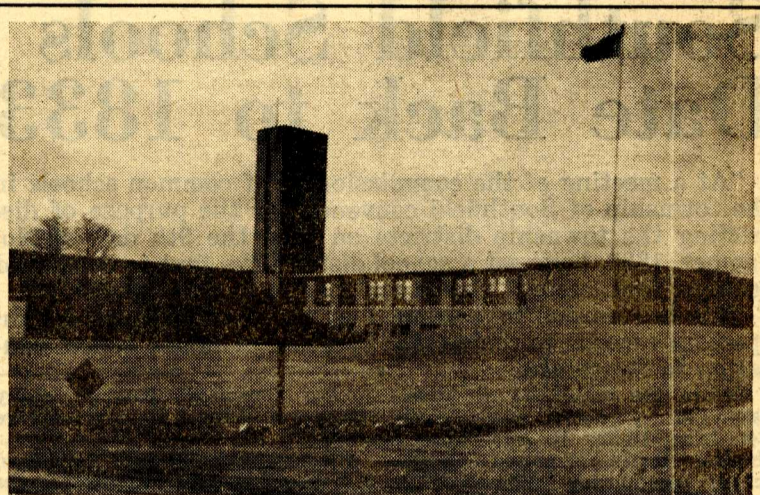
The council was helpful in organizing local units in both the Lathrup and Magnolia schools, and doing the preliminary planning for the Parent-Teacher-Student Association in the Southfield high school. The latter group is among the pioneers in this type of organization.

THE COUNCIL has sponsored various services through the years, the T.B. X-ray unit, an annual school of instruction for local unit leaders, eye-testing in the schools, plays, a fair, and a number of other educational, recreational and money-raising projects.

The council has sponsored Founders' Day celebrations as its February meetings of the past three years, bringing speakers and arranging for a program representative of the entire community.

THE COUNCIL feels its activities have resulted in the various units recognizing like problems and purposes. The growth of school plants to meet the increasing educational need has been a major concern of the council which continues to back the efforts of the school board in that direction.

Current officials are Mrs. Holly Taggart, president; Mrs. Grant Mann and Mrs. Harold Simms, vice-presidents; Mrs. David J. Clark, secretary; Mrs. Warren Reid, treasurer; and Mrs. Rigby Leighton, historian.



St. Hugo Country Day School, located on the corner of Opdyke and Hickory Grove roads in Bloomfield Hills, serves St. Hugo of the Hills parish, and was constructed about 12 years ago as the gift of the late Walter O. Briggs.

The brick building houses seven classrooms, gym, library, cafeteria, and library. A staff of eight sisters of the Order of the Sisters Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary teaches a student body of 275 students in eight grades. Sister Mary David, IHM, is the current principal.

Athletic directors supervise the gym activities which include football, baseball, and boys' and girls' basketball teams. St. Hugo's is the headquarters of two girl scout Brownie troops.

## B'ham Teachers' Club Has Fourfold Purpose

The Birmingham Teachers' Club was organized in 1929 with a fourfold purpose: to secure for its members the social, intellectual and professional benefits to be derived from organized efforts; to keep the public informed of educational activities and problems of the public schools; to exalt the profession of teaching and to add to its prestige and influence in the community; and to cooperate with the social service activities of the community.

First officers were headed by La-Relda Forest, president; Ethel Waterman, vice-president; and Merlynn Smiley, secretary.

Among those who had encouraged the group's formation were Clarence Vliet, then superintendent of schools, Melvin C. Hart, Baldwin high school principal, and Magdalene Frederick, Quarton school principal.

In earlier years, these same individuals had arranged for teachers to gather in the old Community House for evenings of bridge. From this early spirit of cooperation the Birmingham Teachers' Club grew.

Early programs included dinners, speeches, dancing, games, and picnics.

THE DEPRESSION years found the teachers being paid "five dollars weekly and promises to pay, called 'script'." Salaries had been cut from 40 to 50% and the school year lasted only eight months.

For mutual assistance during the difficult years, the Teachers' Club formed its own credit union and made small loans available at low interest rates.

William F. Toothacher was an enthusiastic worker, as was F. Morse Cooke who served as treasurer for the first five years. From a capital investment of \$45, the Credit Union has grown to a total of \$40,525 in stock outstanding. Loans made during the past year totaled \$35,000.

FOR SEVERAL years the Teachers' Club sponsored benefit bridge parties with proceeds going to shoes for needy children. They have also supported the Community Hallowe'en party, the summer recreation program, the Birmingham scholarship fund, the Community House Roll Call, and the Community Council.

They have promoted adult education by sponsoring public lectures on mental health, travel, education, school legislation, and international affairs.

Contributions have been made to the Finnish Relief Fund, the National War and Peace Fund, the Overseas Teachers' Relief Fund, American Red Cross, and the Crippled Children's Fund.

During American Education Week, the club brings the school program to public attention by means of displays in store windows, and special home and school bulletins.

IN RECENT years the Teachers' Club has obtained health and accident insurance for school employees and has worked with the superintendent of schools and the board of education on professional problems which include in-service training, salary schedule, and a professional library.

The professional problems committee, with the cooperation of school superintendent Dwight B. Ireland, is now formulating the "personnel policy" which will be submitted to the board of education for final approval.

The September picnic for teachers, their families, and members of the board of education, has been an annual event for many years. The "wake-up breakfast" started in 1937 when Edith Roach was club president, is held on the first day of school, and the farewell luncheon is traditionally held on the last day of the school year.

BUSINESS meetings, often highlighted by a speaker, are held monthly with a short coffee session at the close of the evening.

This year Wilfred Hinze of Adams school is the presiding officer.

## Now the Cat Nose Better

A small sunfish was kept in a large glass jar of water in the Birmingham postoffice in 1883. He became very tame eating from the hand of postmaster J. Allen Bigelow.

One day a cat, also a pet of the office, had the temerity to get upon the edge of the jar and take a drink of water. While in the act of lapping up the water, the sunfish caught her by the nose, much to the surprise of the cat.

Pussy, not to be beaten in that way, however, soon got up and tried it again.

WHEN THE FISH came up, the cat captured it and jumped down on the floor with the fish in her mouth.

Postmaster Bigelow put the fish back in the jar and it was thereafter noticed that whenever Pussy wanted a drink, the fish went down to the bottom of the jar and stayed there.

# Southfield Schools Date Back to 1833

"At a meeting of the commissioners of common schools in the township of Southfield convened for the purpose of districting the township districts on this, the 9th day of November, 1833, have set a school district No. first to consist of sections first, second, eleven and twelve of this township."

This is recorded in Volume 1 of the Southfield School Inspectors records to denote the creation of public school education in Southfield.

Before the statehood of Michigan—120 years ago—George Beardslee, Henry S. Babcock and Herman Custle comprised the first school commission and acted to provide education for children living in the northeast corner of the township.

In the same month school Inspectors Ammos Davis, and William Martin met to form a joint school district of Southfield and Bloomfield to be district number two. In 1834 districts two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, and nine were added with C. P. Rust, B. Fuller, Jr., and J. Blindbury acting as commissioners.

District 10 and fractional six were included in 1836 and 1837.

THROUGHOUT the early days

of the Southfield districts, many changes in district boundaries were made.

First annual report of the Board of School Inspectors appears in the record of 1838 when 275 students were recorded from six out of the then 11 districts.

A report of studies covered included reading, arithmetic, spelling, grammar and geography.

First financial report, entered in 1839, showed that the entire system serving 280 students received \$109.59 in tax monies.

The school year varied in each of the districts with a range of between 2½ to seven months of school per year.

Again according to record, the first chairman of the school board was John Jeffery who was appoint-

ed head of the school inspectors in 1837.

CRITICISM against the early school system revealed that in some districts school laws were poorly understood, discipline of students depended solely on the individual teacher, and there was little interest taken in the schools.

In district seven, poor attendance was attributed to two factors. Many of the children did not own proper shoes and clothing to attend schools, but equally as great a hindrance was the family's failure to meet the school taxes.

Inspectors complained that the districts varied too greatly in teaching methods, textbooks and school law practices.

In 1842, \$51 paid the teacher's

salary, bought wood for the stove and financed building repairs for the entire year in district six.

SOUTHFIELD formed a fractional district with Farmington in 1843 and by 1844 there were 13 teachers employed in the system.

Although no records are available, it is believed that the first school was a log structure in Franklin, built in 1838 with Sophie Gotie the first teacher.

Weaknesses of the district system continued until 1947 when Southfield residents voted to consolidate the 11 districts into a single unit.

For years prior to this date, avid promoters of consolidation worked to convince people in each school district of the worthiness of join-

ing forces to strengthen the system and make construction of a high school possible.

STUDENTS graduating from various grade schools were sent out of the township for secondary schooling. At first these pupils were enrolled at Royal Oak high and later at Highland Park.

Grade schools were crowded but were not able to financially cope with a building program.

When consolidation once was realized, two districts had already aligned themselves with other systems. Franklin joined the Birmingham district and Parker entered Royal Oak.

Opponents of the joint action sought to have the election disallowed and also challenged a later vote naming the first consolidated school board.

TWO YEARS went by before a ruling from the Michigan Supreme Court held both elections valid and the newly-formed school district found itself even farther behind when they began to act under the new organization.

First board members were Mark Rehbine, Fred Leonard, Kenneth Thompson, Liev Larson and Will Oliver.

They selected present School Superintendent Glen Schoenhals as the district's first administrative head, and embarked on a school expansion program later in 1949.

Voters approved a \$1,300,000 bond issue to finance construction of a township high school and other elementary school additions.

THE COMPLETED high school, just recently dedicated, has cost residents \$1,732,000 but is complete in every respect.

Before consolidation, the Southfield schools numbered 2,081 students enrolled. The present figure is slightly over 3,800.

The district includes nine elementary schools and one high school. Elementary schools are John Grace, Brace, Angling road, East Southfield, Southfield Number 10, Magnolia, Lathrup, Brooks and McKinley.

Present School board members are Fred Leonhard, president; Mark W. Rehbine, secretary; Will J. Oliver, treasurer; Liev Larson and William Mikulas, trustees.

## Bloomfield Twp. Had a Library— But Where Was It?

Bloomfield township in the 1870's had a library. Where the library was housed cannot now be determined, but there is strong possibility that it was housed in the Union school house (Hill school).

It is known however, that in 1876, there were 1213 volumes in the township library said to be "of the choicest selections, containing the masterpieces of biography, science, history and romance."

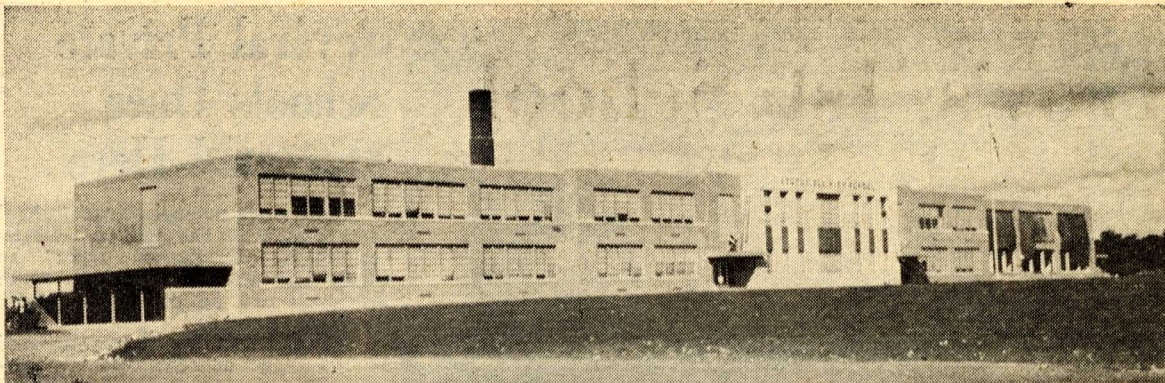
According to a public statement in 1881, only 382 of these books remained. Valuable sets were broken up, it was reported, and again whole sets of a dozen volumes were missing. Of books like Bancroft's History of the United States, only two of the ten volumes were left.

THERE WAS probably a book belonging to the township library in nearly half the homes in the township, claimed Bloomfield officials who in 1883 were trying to put the library on a working basis and located the missing books.

They could not have been successful in their venture, for no one, as yet, among our oldest citizens can remember the Bloomfield township library.

## Fishing Was Fine

In July 1878, J. Allen Bigelow, a member of the Birmingham and Wing Lake Fishing Club, claimed the year's prize offered by the club to the fisherman who got the biggest fish. Bigelow had caught a 7 pound 2 ounce pickerel in Wing Lake.



NEW \$1,732,000 HIGH SCHOOL DEDICATED IN MARCH, 1953  
Before its erection, township students had to pay tuition to other districts

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# Troy's 1st School Was Built in 1825

Little is known of either private or public education in the early days of Troy township, but records do disclose that a public school was built east of Crooks and north of E. Long Lake roads in about 1825 and William Morse was one of the first teachers.

Ten years later a private school was conducted by the Rev. Algernon S. Hollister, rector of St. John's Episcopal church, at Troy Corners. Drawing pupils from not only the local area, but as far as Detroit and other cities, the school enrollment stood as high as 50 at times.

The success of this school continued after Rev. Hollister left and the Rev. S. N. Hill took over the instruction. The school closed about 1855.

Troy was not divided into school districts until 1833, although a school board had been elected in 1831.

First board members were Clement Pearsall, Erastus Crispy, Thaddeus Thompson, S. V. R. Trowbridge and Willard Daniels.

IN 1833, seven whole and six fractional districts were named for school purposes. According to the "History of Oakland County", the earliest teachers were Rosina Preston, Zlypha Phelps, Augustus C. Baldwin, Emily Gillet, Arabella Keys, Henry I. Pearsall, Silas Eaton, Truman Johnson, Sherman Pearsall and Cyrus Smith.

Log school-houses were built in each of the districts that were not already served by a school. Many of these buildings were destroyed by fire and were later replaced with brick or stone structures.

The first Troy Corners school-houses burned one after another until a brick building was constructed 1/2 mile west of the Corners.

Before the erection of schools, private teachers held classes wherever they could find an empty room or an abandoned cabin.

FREQUENT CHANGES in the various district's boundaries were

## 26 Southfield Twp. Teachers Form Own Group

The Southfield Education Association is an outgrowth of the former Southfield Teachers' Club which was formed in 1945.

In 1945 all the Southfield township schools were administered as single districts, and the teachers in the area felt the need for a common professional organization.

Representatives from each of the nine schools formed a committee under the chairmanship of Edith Burke, then principal at the Angling road school.

AS THE RESULT of the work done by this organizational committee, the Southfield Township Teachers' Club was formed on May 10, 1945, when twenty-six teachers of the area met at Southfield-10 school and elected officers.

Persis McKinnon, then as now a teacher at Southfield-10, was the group's first president, with the membership varying from 20 to 30 during the early years.

Monthly meetings alternated between afternoon and dinner sessions. Professional problems usually were the topics and outside speakers frequently were invited to appear before the group.

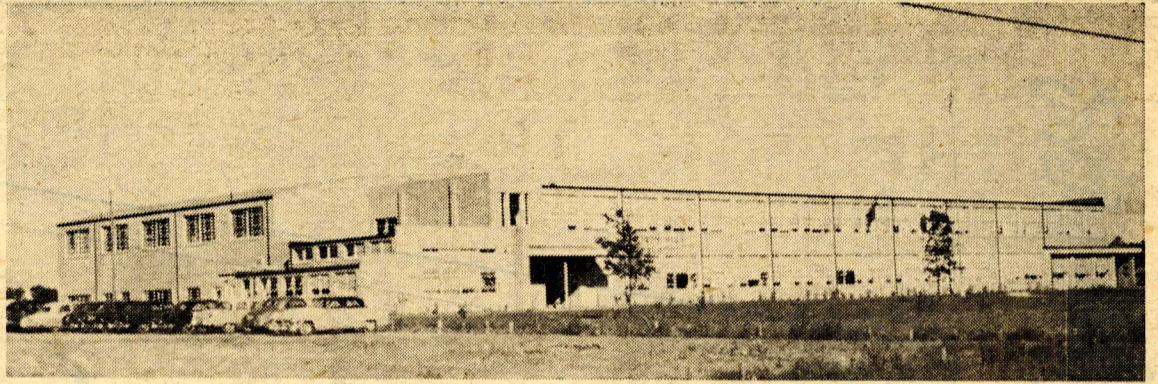
When the school districts were consolidated in 1947, the Teachers' Club continued to function without change.

SINCE CONSOLIDATION, the school enrollment expanded rapidly and the faculties grew to over 130 in 1952, compared to 54 in 1947. This enlargement enabled the Southfield Club to reorganize and consolidate into a district of the Michigan Education Association in 1952.

Serving as the first officers of the reorganized group, now called the Southfield Education Association, are Joe Dunham, president; Louise Ward, vice-president; Helene Eastman, treasurer; Vera Rehbine, secretary; and William Adcock, delegate to the regional council of the MEA.

### The One Bright Spot

It was of special importance when James O. Beattie erected a substantial lamp in front of his livery stable on West Maple in the days when the village of Birmingham had few street lights. His lamp made a bright spot in the otherwise dark walk to the depot.



TOWNSHIP GOT FIRST HIGH SCHOOL IN 1949 AFTER SECOND VOTE  
Passed in 1948, district's consolidation also had to be resubmitted

May, 1953

BIRMINGHAM ECCENTRIC  
75th Anniversary Edition

Page 13

IN AUGUST 1948, township residents approved consolidation and a board of education was elected, with no more than one member elected from any one district.

Early efforts to gain a bond issue for construction of a high school to serve the entire district failed, but a subsequent election in 1949 passed a \$600,000 bond issue for the purchase of a site and construction of the school.

The school was built on Livornois road and north of Sixteen Mile road and was opened in September, 1951.

Stuart K. Baker, present super-

intendent of Troy schools, was named the district's first head, coming from the top post of the Big Beaver district where he had served for 19 years.

PRESENT BOARD of education members are Frank Costello, president; Lee F. McComb, secretary; Gerald J. Baril, treasurer; and Elmer Lowe and Russell A. Robertson, trustees.

The school district, which now includes nearly 25 square miles in area, serves over 2,200 students in both elementary and high school grades.

## Felicitations to The Birmingham Eccentric On Its Seventy-Fifth Anniversary



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In serving its readers it provides them with timely news of the things that mean a great deal to them, and an awareness of "what's going on" in the world and in their own communities. This public service performed by The Eccentric is indispensable to all of us, as fellow citizens of the same communities.

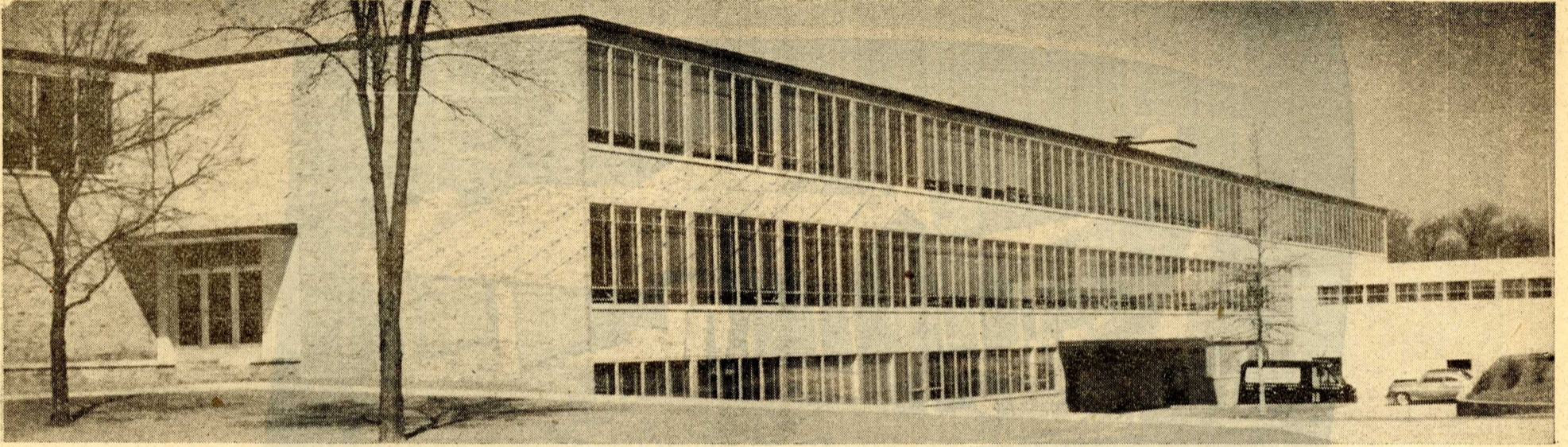
We at Consumers, public servants providing for the comfort and convenience of the same people The Eccentric serves so well, feel a personal pride therefore in saying, on this diamond anniversary,

***"Happy Birthday!"***

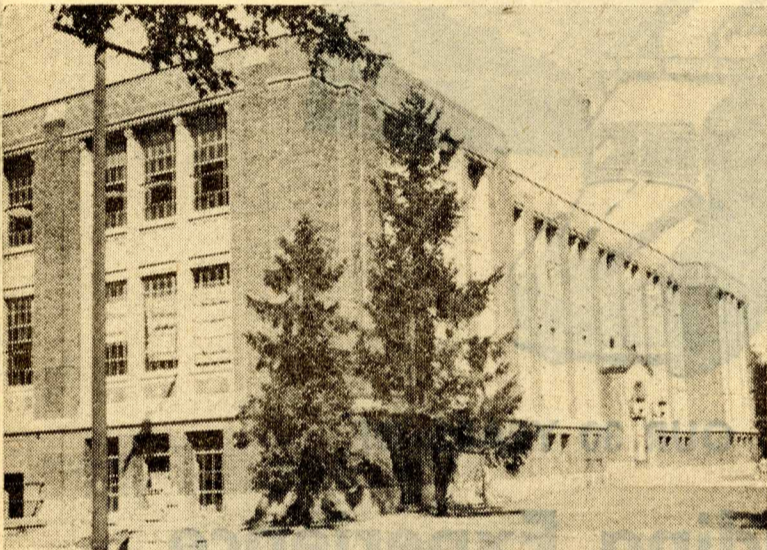
**CONSUMERS POWER COMPANY**



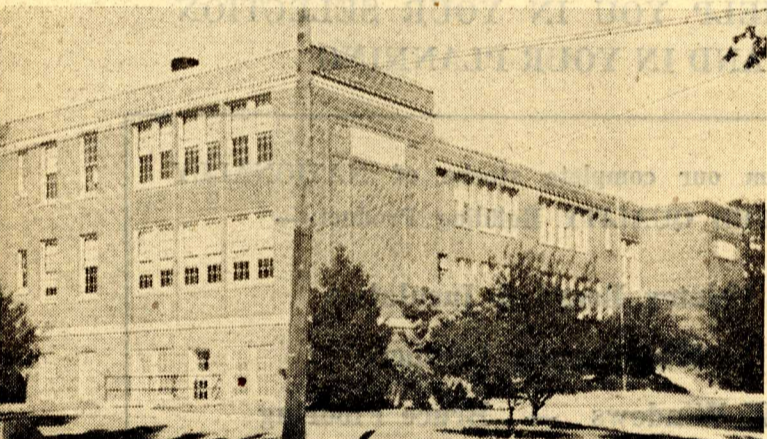
# Birmingham District's Nine Public Schools



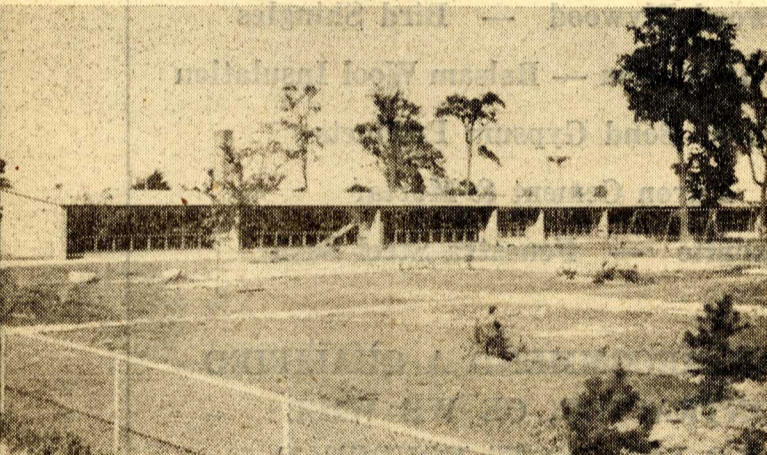
**BIRMINGHAM SCHOOL DISTRICT'S MODERN \$2,000,000 HIGH SCHOOL AT CORNER OF LINCOLN AND CRANBROOK ROADS**  
Completed in February, 1952, more than 1,200 students in grades 9-12 now attend classes here



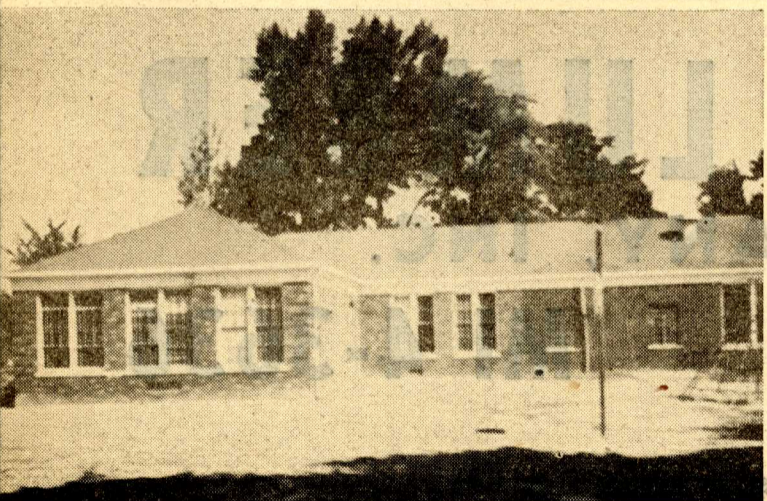
**BALDWIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**  
Served as city's high school until 1952



**ADAMS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**  
Attended by students from city's northeast area



**TORRY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**  
Constructed in 1950 to serve southeast pupils



**WALNUT LAKE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**  
Became part of district in 1947 annexation

## School District

(Continued from Page One)

Baldwin who died in 1913 and who devised "all the balance and residue of my estate to go toward the construction of a public school in Birmingham, Michigan, which said school shall install and maintain an auditorium and at least two free public baths, one for men and one for women . . . said public school is to be named the Baldwin school."

AT THIS TIME under the direction of School Supt. Clarence Vliet, the junior high school "6-3-3" plan was begun and the entire course of study reorganized. The 6-3-3 plan (which the school system at the present time has been forced to discontinue) was a plan whereby a student spent the first six grades in an elementary school, the 7-8-9th grades in the junior high school and the 10-11-12th grades in the high school.

Physical education, domestic science, instruction in art and music, manual training and other lines of work were introduced in the new Baldwin high school and immediately became popular with the students.

The next four elementary schools were built in quick succession: Adams, in 1921, when the number of pupils in the school system reached 1,063; Pierce in 1924, with a total school census of 1,700; Barnum was enlarged in 1924 and Quarton school built in 1927 when the number of school pupils in the city reached 2,800.

ADAMS WAS enlarged in 1925 and Barnum again in 1929. Holy Name parochial school was built in 1928.

By 1930, Birmingham schools had a capacity of 3,330 and an enrollment of 2,661. This was sufficient for a few years, but the population of the city jumped from 9,539 in 1930 to 11,196 in 1940 and 15,370 in 1950 necessitating new school construction. The schools were overcrowded again.

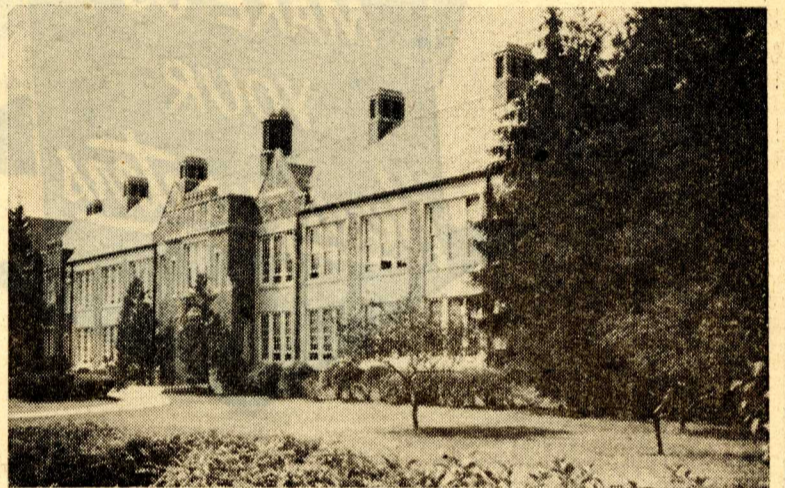
Pierce was enlarged in 1948 and 1950. Holy Name parochial school was enlarged in 1950.

A new architecturally up-to-date elementary school, Torry, was built in 1950 and the ultra-modern high school was completed in February 1952, permitting Baldwin to be used as an elementary school.

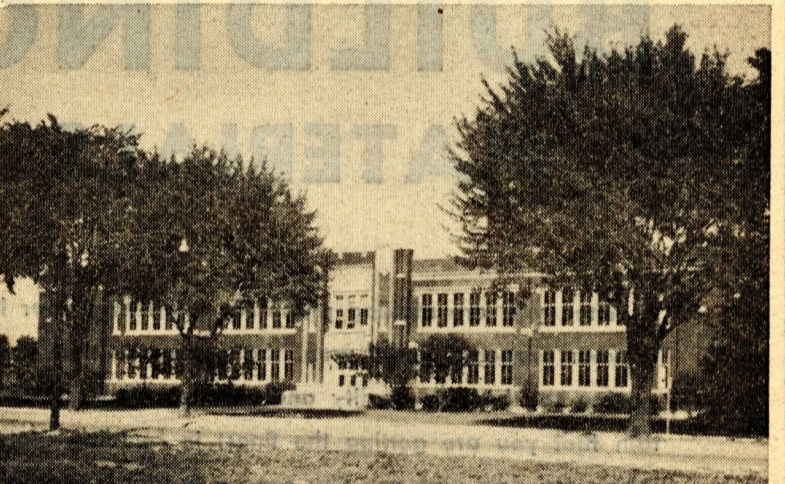
SCHOOL CENSUS figures continue to rise with the onrush of new residents into school district. At the beginning of the 1952 school term, 5,808 pupils were enrolled in the district's schools and 187 members of the teaching and administrative staff were employed.

In November 1952, the taxpayers of the school district approved a \$3,300,000 bond issue for the construction of new schools, additions and sites. The Board of Education is going forward with plans on enlarging Torry school and the building of two new elementary schools in the school district. Barnum again will be enlarged and an addition to the Quarton school also is planned.

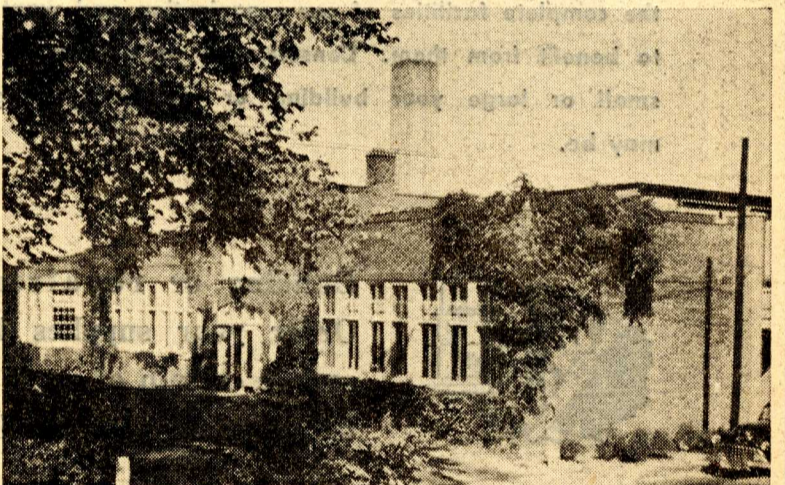
The Birmingham schools are not only approved by the University of Michigan but also by the North Central Association of Colleges. The Birmingham school system has long been ranked among the top schools of the state and every year a high percentage of the graduating class go on to some institution of higher learning.



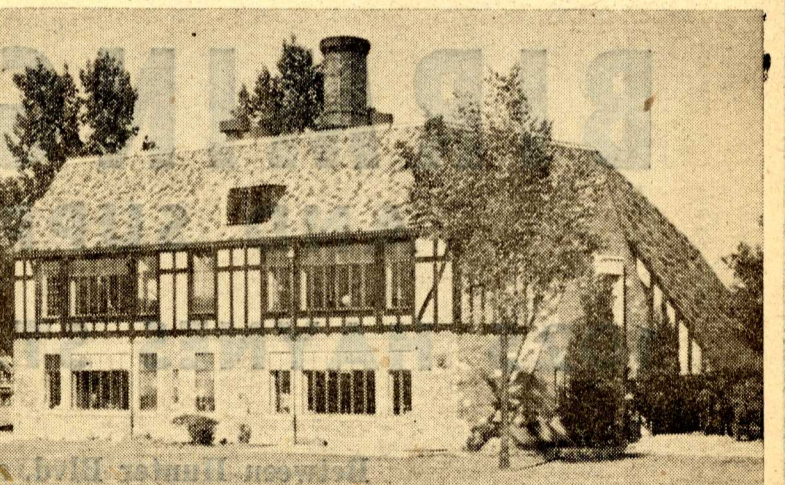
**QUARTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**  
Provides facilities for students in northwest city



**PIERCE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**  
Serving SW area, it has seen two bldg. additions



**FRANKLIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**  
Annexed to B'ham district in 1945



**BLOOMFIELD VILLAGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**  
In 1946, this was annexed to B'ham district



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