

The Birmingham Eccentric

1878

Section
May 1953

E

Social and Service Groups
and Clubs, Organizations
serving the public interest.

1953

Civic-Minded Women Originated Community House

Thirty years ago the weak pulse of a growing village, now the heart of a prosperous community of over 20,000 residents. This is the story of the Birmingham Community House—the house with a heart and the “Heart of Birmingham.”

Reverend Charles H. McCurdy, former rector of St. James Episcopal Church, once said that “all of our modern movements of philanthropy, which shed a luster over many a dark spot in our civilization, had their origin in the church.” Birmingham’s Community House at Bates and Townsend, which celebrates its 30th birthday in 1953, is no exception.

In 1920 a small group of Birmingham women residents had listened for years to the complaint that their village had no recreational center and no community meeting place.

Reverend McCurdy, rector of St. James at the time, also discovered that only one woman out of five in his parish was active in church affairs. Along with the women residents, Rev. McCurdy decided that what Birmingham needed was a community meeting place.

On the corner of West Maple and Bates was a forgotten and unused frame house that the originators of the first community house decided would make a suitable home for this new village project.

BY RUMMAGE sales, fairs and bazaars, the League of St. James’ Women raised \$3,500 to be used in remodeling what was soon to be Birmingham’s first community house.

On April 28, 1923, the house was dedicated. Those women who were most instrumental in founding this new community project constituted the first seven-woman board of directors.

The first board consisted of: Chairman Mrs. Frank Miller, Mrs. Arthur Hartwell, Mrs. John H. Marlotte, Mrs. William C. Harris, Mrs. Albert Peters, Mrs. George T. Hendrie and Mrs. Charles J. Shain.

Starting as a membership organization, the Community House grew in popularity with the citizens of Birmingham.

THE HOUSE was used as a luncheon club for business girls, meeting place for Camp Fire Girls and Bluebirds, the Civic League of Women, a young girls club, and a play day for boys. It also contained a useful and complete information file. Boy Scouts streamed in and out of the House 37 times during the year.

Some townspeople were slow in using the varied House facilities. They had to be convinced that the House had been separated from the church and that it was a place for everyone—a non-sectarian, non-partisan and non-exclusive community home, where all were welcome.

FIRST COMMUNITY House hostess was Miss Mary Martin, who served from 1923 to 1925. She was succeeded by Miss Mary Clark Griffith, who remained until 1931, or about a year after the new Community House was opened.

Other hostesses and the years they served were Mrs. Hope Lewis (1931-32), Mrs. Edith Wall (1932-36), Miss Judith Lally (1937-44), Miss Fay Jasman (1944-45), Miss Amy Wild (1945-46).

A Wealth of Effort

In every progressive community there are numerous groups and organizations of men and women, boys and girls, their dedicated efforts being to improve both themselves and the place in which they live.

Birmingham and vicinity is noted for the variety of such groups and organizations. Some of them came into being to develop the cultural facets of their members; others labor to participate in various philanthropic programs . . . to bring into the lives of others aid and assistance, whatever their needs may be.

Herewith is presented the names and something of the activities of most of these local groups and organizations.

Hostess today is Mrs. Carleton H. Isley, who succeeded Miss Wild. First annual maintenance cost was estimated at \$1,500. A benefit garden party was held at the Bloomfield Hills estate of the George Hendries, clearing over \$700 toward the sum. Similar benefits were held in the following summers to support this worthy project.

One reason for the “large” maintenance cost was that once smoke and soot spread throughout the House one morning, because young people’s Charleston dancing

the night before had collapsed the furnace pipes!

THE TOWN soon was convinced that it had started a worthwhile project because the building was much used. A new and larger house soon was dreamed of by many residents.

It was not long before this dream became a reality. A community Roll Call, a method used to this day, was adopted in 1924 by the Board of Directors as a means to raise funds to support the present House and to soon construct a new home

to house the increasing community activities.

Campaign for funds for the new House had been carried on from 1926-28. Over 1,000 small and larger neighborhood meetings were held to interest citizens in the idea of a new Community House.

BY GIFTS of \$500 or \$1000 each, ten or eleven citizens had acquired the necessary land for the future House at the northwest corner of Bates and Townsend streets. At the premiere of the present Birmingham Theatre, a benefit for the proposed House, Mrs. Charles Shain’s speech about the hoped-for new building was climaxed by her receiving a \$1,000 check from a Bloomfield Hills resident.

Under Mrs. Shain’s chairmanship, 200 women worked to raise the necessary \$125,000. More than \$115,000 was raised in cash and pledges from residents of Birmingham and neighboring communities who hoped for a new House.

In a heavy downpour on April 28, 1929, the corner-stone for the new building was laid. The ceremony speech was read by the late Dr. Marquis of Christ Church Cranbrook.

AMONG THOSE present at the ceremony were Mr. and Mrs. Henry Ford who rarely made public appearances.

Housewarming in the new Community House was held on March 17, 1930, with from 5,000 to 7,000 people attending.

During the depression days, the new Community House somehow managed to be kept open to serve the Birmingham community. A \$10,000 mortgage was negotiated but it took months to do so.

There had to be salary cuts for
(Continued on Page 7)



Roll Call In Twenties

A group of prominent workers in the May 14-26 (1928) Community House fund-raising drive pose before the large sign at Maple and Woodward avenues when the first half of the \$125,000 quota was passed. The following year the present Community House was built.

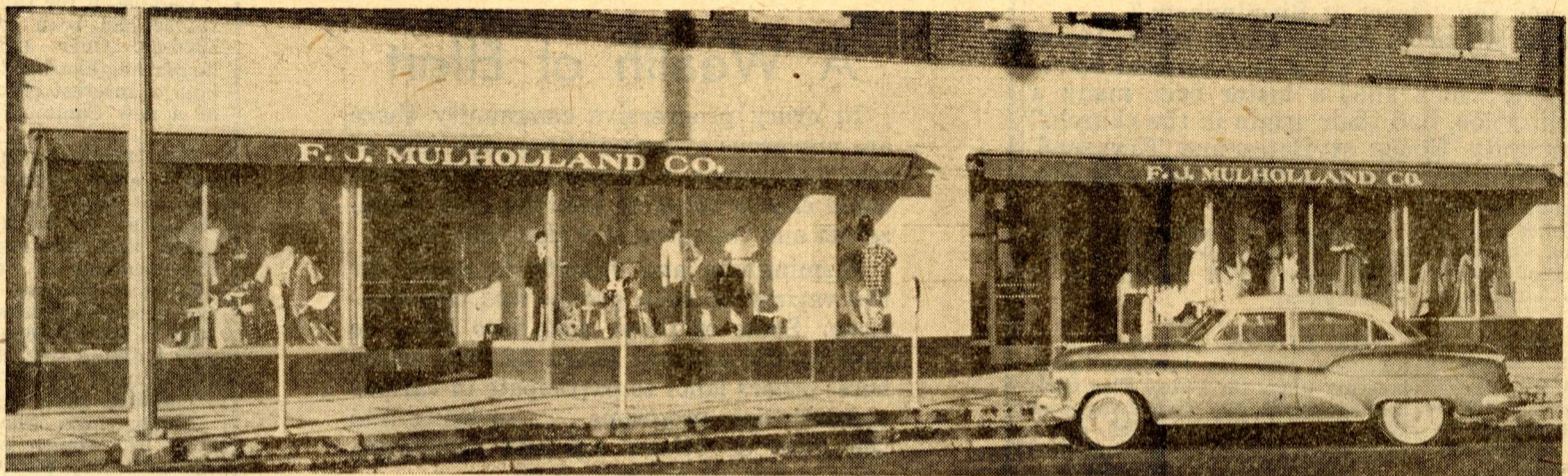


FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Mrs. C. R. Wilson,* general chairman of the drive; Miss Mary Clark Griffith,* resident hostess; Mrs. W. G. Lerchen,* Mrs. Frank Schuell,* Mrs. Robert Traub, Miss Sarah Sly,* Mrs. William Harris, Mrs. George T. Hendrie, Mrs. Frederick Dickinson, Mrs. A. J. Stahelin, Mrs. Jay Walsh, Mrs. Frederick Holt,* Mrs. R. H. Mann and Mrs. Charles J. Shain.
(*deceased)



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B'ham Women's Club City's First Ladies' Group

The Birmingham Woman's Club has the distinction of being the oldest organization for women in Birmingham.

It was founded in 1890 under the leadership of Mrs. Augusta Marsh, wife of the Presbyterian minister then serving that church. This was at a time when the population of the village was about one thousand.

The first meetings of the group of 10 charter members were held in the Presbyterian Manse at the corner of West Maple and Bates which is now part of the Post Office grounds.

This building was later used as the first home of the Community House when that association was organized in 1923 and once more the Literary Club held its meetings under this same roof, for a few years, until the completion of the Baldwin Public Library. This then became the permanent meeting place of the club.

MRS. MARSH was the first president of the club and the second was Mrs. W. D. Clizbe.

The club was organized for cultural purposes and study of world

conditions of that time. The programs of those early years list varied topics of discussion, indicating a very broad and serious line of study by the members who were called upon to write at least two papers a year on the chosen subjects.

The interests of the group gradually broadened as the club became affiliated with the Michigan State Federation of Women's Clubs in 1899 and with the Oakland County Federation in 1903 and with the Detroit Federation in 1919.

Lathrup Women's Club Born of School Needs

Early in February 1939, Mrs. Earl Doig invited some of her neighbors to tea. They discussed the idea of starting a mothers' club which would provide many needed items for the Lathrup school in Southfield township, and called a meeting for the mothers of school children for February 15 at the Lathrup school.

In the meantime other women in the area became interested and, at the first session, the Lathrup Townsite Woman's Club was organized.

Mrs. Doig was named president, with Mrs. Howard Stock, vice-president; Mrs. Lee Baker, secretary; and Mrs. John Scolaro, treasurer.

The 86 charter members decided that obtaining needed school equipment would be the first order of business, and that meetings would be held monthly with four members serving as hostesses.

DURING THE first four years of the organization's history, over \$1,150 was raised for school equipment. Other early activities included the formation of a reading club and a junior activities department.

A girl scout troop was formed,

dancing classes started, and a Red Cross unit organized. The annual project of Christmas baskets for needy families was undertaken and a program of social activities carried on.

In May, 1942, the group felt it had outgrown the original constitution and a new constitution and set of by-laws drawn up.

Aims of the organization were broadened to include not only the school but all activities of Lathrup townsite.

During the war years the club raised money for hospitalized veterans, overseas packages, Veteran Rehabilitation Center, and the Ida Hibbard Fund for the purchase of artificial limbs for war wounded. Over \$4,000 was raised for service aid.

IN MARCH, 1948, the group joined the Detroit Federation of Women's Clubs and two years later, at its eleventh anniversary celebration in 1950, changed the title of the organization to the Lathrup Women's Club.

The club, which now numbers over 300 members, meets monthly at "The House in the Woods", the former residence of Louise Lathrup.

FROM ITS founding, the club has probably taken a more active interest in village affairs than any other woman's organization; due in part to the influence of Miss Martha Baldwin, who was a charter member and, until her death in 1915, a most active and energetic member.

She was untiring in her efforts to improve conditions in the village of Birmingham. She brought her ideas and suggestions to the Literary Society and, through its loyal support and cooperation, many town improvements were realized.

The list of committees always included one on "Town Improvement". Through the efforts of this committee, many projects were undertaken and much was definitely accomplished in the improvement of local parks, campaign for cleaner streets, an active interest in affairs of the Oakland County House, many years prior to the erection of the present buildings.

AN URGENT campaign was waged for the establishment of a waiting room for passengers of the interurban line, then operating between Detroit and Pontiac.

In 1909 the following typical resolution was passed at one of the meetings:

"Resolved that the Woman's Literary Club request the Village Board through their Committee appointed to confer with the D.U.R., to ask the following:

"A waiting room
"A smoke consumer at the Power House

"A stop to the noise from the exhaust at Power House

"One fare to our Cemetery and return

"Working men's tickets at certain hours and within certain limits."

WHEN WOMEN became voters, schools of instruction were supervised by members of the Literary Club.

The original name of Ladies' Literary Society was changed in 1920 to Woman's Literary Club and in 1934 was changed to Birmingham Woman's Club, as it is known today.

For 30 years the meetings were held weekly on Tuesday afternoons from September until June. For many years the meetings were held at the homes of members until the

membership grew from the original 10 to 30 and then to 50, when it became necessary to have a larger meeting place.

During its early years, the Club was a center of social activity. Records show that the organization was responsible for an annual reception for the school teachers; for Washington and Lincoln banquets, Pioneer Day when the oldest residents were guests, and many other social affairs. There was always a Christmas party for the County House inmates.

FINANCIAL AID was given to many causes during those early years. The club contributed \$100 annually for many years to the Baldwin Scholarship Fund, a generous donation each year to the Red Cross and, during the war years, this was greatly increased.

One item shows the expenditure of \$75 for equipment placed in the park at the corner of West Maple and Southfield, which was donated to the village by Miss Martha Baldwin. There was a day set when the members of the club gathered there and gave the grounds a good cleaning.

The money for these contributions was earned by some form of entertainment, pageant or play given by the club, usually with local talent.

Continuing this policy through the years, the club has contributed annually to some specific cause, besides which \$100 is included in each budget for charitable purposes.

AMONG OTHER contributions to various causes, the club recently provided furnishings for the Oakland County Juvenile Detention. Included were gayly colored bed spreads and equipment for the recreation room. \$400 was given towards their Camp Oakland and \$100 was given to the new Y.M.C.A. building in Birmingham.

The Library has been remembered with gifts and a memorial plan is in operation by which books are placed in the library in memory of deceased club members.

The current year's objective is the purchasing of equipment for use in the Sister Kenny Polio Center. The Club also is assisting the State Federation in its project for the future establishment in Michigan of a Girl's Town.

IN 1915, a new plan was introduced as an experiment and has become a permanent feature of the club. The membership was divided into four departments—originally, the art, household economics, poetry and world's work departments.

The departments are now under the titles of fine arts, American home, literature and juniors.

The former world's work department is now affiliated with the Ruth Shain Class on International Relations. This class is sponsored jointly with the AAUW and meets Tuesday mornings.

One general meeting of the entire membership was held the first Tuesday of each month and the departments met the third Tuesday.

The Birmingham Woman's Club now has a membership of 180, which includes a junior department that was sponsored in 1946 and has developed into a vigorous addition to the senior organization.

The Golden Jubilee year of the Club was celebrated in 1940 with appropriate programs during that time.

The present officers of the Birmingham Woman's Club are: President, Mrs. Paul C. Grant; vice presidents, Mrs. Carl Rice and Mrs. Floyd Franklin; recording secretary, Mrs. Charles James; corresponding secretary, Mrs. George Ward; treasurer, Mrs. Norman Porter.

4 Women Launched B'ham AAUW On Oct. 16, 1920

The Birmingham branch of the American Association of University Women has grown from four women in 1920 to a present membership of more than 350.

Its activities are all-encompassing, including study groups on child care, creative writing, drama, book study, children's theater and puppeteering.

A notice in an Eccentric of 1920 resulted in a meeting of sixteen women on October 16 at the home of Mrs. Charles J. Shain. Aim of the new organization was uniting the college women of the vicinity for educational, civic and social programs, as well as union with the national association's work.

ORIGINAL MEETINGS were held semi-monthly in the homes of members. An early project was the obtaining of the services of a visiting nurse for the city. Funds were raised by a style show sponsored by the AAUW, with local senior high girls as their guests. The show has become an annual event.

The annual booksale, now a prominent Birmingham tradition, began in 1927. The "Saturday Club", formed in 1925, provided a play class for children from 8 to 10 years old, with facilities including clay modeling, leather and metal craft, sewing, knitting, simple woodwork, dramatics, games and singing.

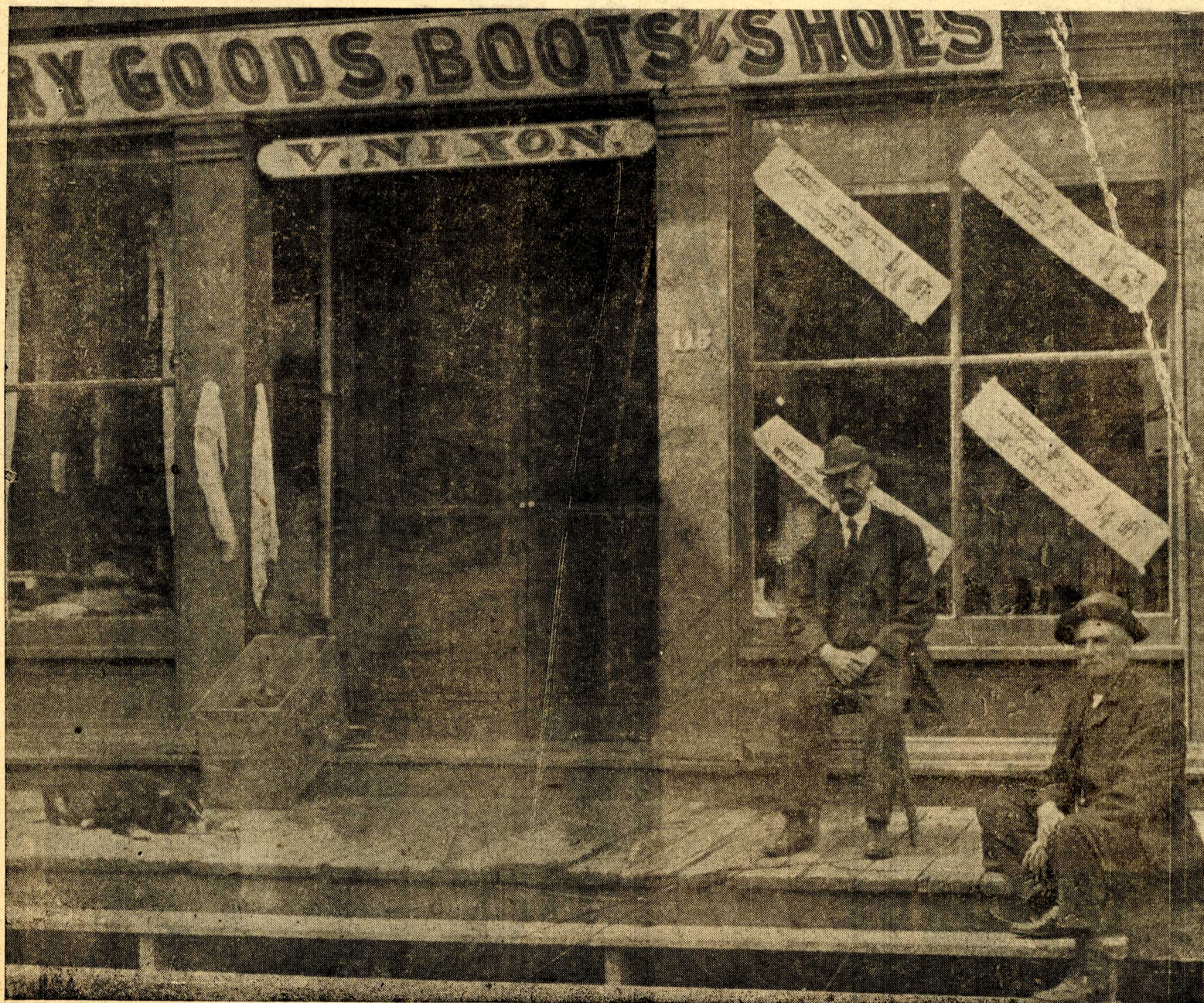
INSTRUMENTAL in the development of the association was its first and four-time president, Mrs. Charles J. Shain, now a life member.

Mrs. Shain has gained a wide reputation in the field of international relations, having conducted an AAUW sponsored class in international relations at the Community House for 34 consecutive years. She was among the founders of the Women's International Education Council in Detroit, and in 1925 helped to form a new women's discussion group which later became the Detroit branch of the Foreign Policy Association.

Mrs. Shain was twice a national delegate to the International AAUW meetings in Paris, 1922, and Toronto, 1947.

Two AAUW members, Mrs. L. B. Sappington and Mrs. Alec B. Parrie, are on the Board of Education.

PRESENT OFFICERS include Mrs. Kenneth Swartwood, president; Mrs. Burley Laurimore, first vice-president; Mrs. F. J. Finkenauer, Jr., second vice-president; Mrs. N. C. Talmage, recording secretary; Mrs. W. F. Royer; Mrs. Charles Shaw, treasurer; and Mrs. E. W. McCaul, program chairman. A monthly luncheon meeting presents prominent speakers in various fields.



"YOU CAN GET IT AT NIXON'S" was the by-word in Birmingham years ago. The Volney Nixon store was on the west side of S. Woodward, approximately where the McBride

hardware now stands. Mr. Nixon (in chair) is shown with Samuel Mills, known as "the best cooper that ever lived in this vicinity."

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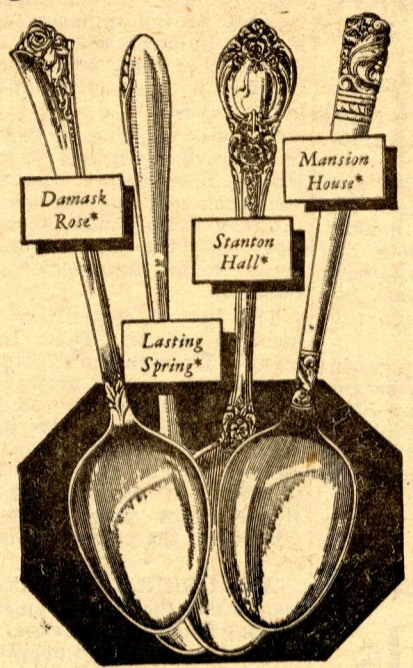
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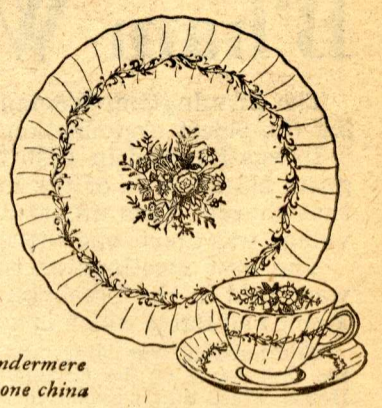
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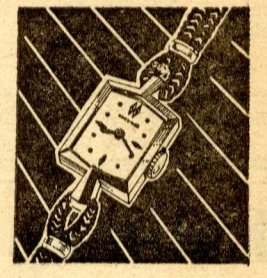
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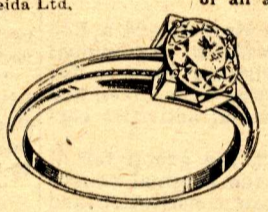
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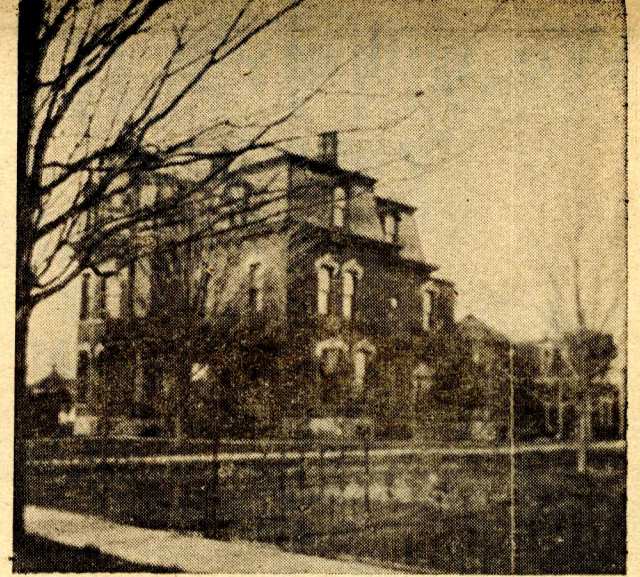
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From Cow To Customer
In 1 Day



Meeting Places For Masons

B'HAM MASONS' first hall was old Jennings building, second from the corner in photo at left. At right is present home, former Ford residence (photo taken about 1898).



Masonic Lodge Chartered Here 102 Years Ago

Just as Masonry is one of the oldest crafts and organizations in the world, so is it one of the oldest groups in Birmingham.

It began here in 1849 when William Brown and an interested group of local men petitioned the Grand Lodge of Michigan for a charter.

The petition was at first refused because several Masons, then members of Pontiac Lodge No. 21, signed the petition.

It was reasoned that, should the petition be granted, these men would be members of both lodges, a practice frowned upon in the early days. The affected members promised to drop out of the Pontiac group and a dispensation or provisional charter was granted.

On Thursday evening, April 25, 1850, Birmingham Lodge No. 44, under dispensation, held its first meeting, choosing for their gathering place the upstairs of the Jennings building, a modest country town structure on North Saginaw street.

THE SITE of the building was destined to become a part of Wilson's Drug store as Saginaw street and the country town passed to Woodward avenue and the present Birmingham.

The Jennings building was the second structure north of the corner of Maple and Woodward avenues on the west side of the street. It had four double recessed doors with glass two-thirds of the way down and wood panels below, which opened with china knobs, into the tailor shops of Mr. Jennings and John Bodine—after one had climbed several wooden steps.

The "upstairs" of stores at that time were simply upstairs. In most cases there was little finish or an attractive appearance. Probably the plain word "hall" describes as well as any the appearance of the space used for these first meetings.

IN 1850, store owners in small towns did not figure a financial return per cubic foot for their store—they used the first floor for their own purposes, while the second floor was simply there if any one wished to use it.

The group of men who met that spring evening did so with the firm determination to establish and maintain the order and principles of a Masonic Lodge in Birmingham. William Brown was elected master; Friend Belding, senior warden and Scriba Blakeslee, junior warden. Roswell T. Merrill, Peter Dox, George W. Merrill and Dr. Ebenezer Raynale were the members to attend that first meeting.

William McKellop claimed the honor of being the first to apply for a degree conferred by this lodge. On July 18, 1850, Hugh McCurdy, who is described as "probably the most illustrious son of Birmingham No. 44" petitioned the new lodge for membership.

WHEN THE lodge was founded, the annual dues were 25 cents, with a \$10 fee covering all initiatory expenses.

The charter which lifted "No. 44" from the dispensation class into that of a regularly chartered lodge was granted on June 9, 1851 with 28 members recorded.

The men who lived in town walked to their meeting along narrow paths except in front of the few stores, where there were board walks. There was not a street light in town and the few unpretentious stores were set well back from the unpaved street.

Village institutions or services such as a library, water works or sewage disposal were not even anticipated at this early date.

Farms surrounded the little village, whose extent reached Willets street on the north, Brown street on the south, the old Grand Trunk right of way (now Hunter boulevard) on the east, and Chester street on the west.

THE MAIN ROAD, Saginaw street, was just passable and there were no parking ordinances, the only limitation being to find suitable hitching posts for one's "rig" which an occasional storekeeper had provided to attract trade.

The store next to the tailor shop and lodge rooms, located on the corner of what is now Maple and Woodward avenue, at that time faced directly on Woodward avenue and was in line with the tailor shop.

This accentuated more than ever the main street idea in the village. The first quarters of the Masons were definitely in the "heart of the business section."

SOON AFTER receiving its charter, lodge members apparently became convinced that their meeting place might collapse.

The Jennings building was very old and Alanson Partridge, Grand Master of the lodge in 1881, is reported to have said that the lodge moved to other quarters because the men were afraid the Jennings building would fall down.

This accounts for the fact that meetings were not held there after 1851 and also for the early estab-

The following 28 men were charter members of Birmingham's Masonic Lodge No. 44: Douglas Keyes, John H. Dewey, Hugh McCurdy, Peter Rouse, Beverly Beardslee, James M. Hunt, John Nugent, Alanson Partridge, Harvey Lee, John Walton, Eli Blair, Samuel Blair, Ebenezer Martin, Simon Case, Ebenezer Raynale, Peter Dox, Josephus Young, William Brown, Scriba Blakeslee, Roswell T. Merrill, Friend Belding, Calvin Perin, George W. Merrill, Joseph Parks, William McKellop, Norman Gray, Cornelius Brayman and J. H. Johnson.

lishment of a more or less permanent lodge room in the Hunt building.

Here on the approximate site of McBride's Hardware today the Masons gathered until 1872, meeting in rooms over the general store. This building later was moved to Gray Court, cut in half and today is two dwelling units.

BECAUSE THE customers in the first floor general store could hear the ritualistic work, the lodge hired James B. Hunt, then a boy in his 'teens, to practice his snare drum in the store on meeting nights, drowning out the voices from above.

Hunt later became a member of the lodge, motivated perhaps by an inner longing to find out what his drumming had kept him from hearing as a young boy.

It was in 1872 that Capt. J. Allen Bigelow, a member of the lodge, planned the construction of a new business block at the southwest corner of Pierce and Maple. Lodge members agreed to pay the cost, \$1,750, for the addition of a second floor for which they received a 99-year lease.

FOR EXACTLY 50 years they remained in this place. For 50 years the narrow, steep stairway on the Pierce street side resounded to the ascent of many eager Masons. One quick turn in the stairs brought them to the anteroom, the preparatory room and the Tyler's room.

The big hall was rather bare and barn-like, to be sure, with a very high ceiling. Around the walls above the moulding, Wes Faint painted a series of allegorical figures, meaningful to Masons, figures which with the passing years became so dim and dingy as to hide any resemblance to their original intent.

One large wood stove near the Tyler's room and a wood box filled with heavy chunks of good oak and hickory kept the hall in some degree of comfort.

THE MASTER'S chair at the extreme front, the Junior and Senior Warden's Stands at left and right, the altar in the center and an old Melodion, presented by Dr. Ebenezer Raynale, completed the main articles of furniture.

The lodge was called to order on Dec. 23, 1873 at 4 o'clock to dedicate its new meeting place—an event highlighted by the attendance of many state notables. Alanson Partridge, then Wor-

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BIRMINGHAM ECCENTRIC
75th Anniversary Edition

shipful Master of Birmingham Lodge No. 44, presided. The Most Worshipful Master of Michigan, Hugh McCurdy, officiated at the dedication ceremony and delivered the public address later at the Methodist Church to an audience of 600.

IT IS RELATED that the Bible used on this occasion was loaned by Mrs. Cardelia James, wife of Squire James of Merrill street. The old Bible of the lodge was then being rebound.

Some of the lodge's most active and successful years were spent in this location—now the site of Shain's Drug store.

A Masonic Temple association was formed in 1918 which resulted in the purchase of the present home at the corner of Forest and Woodward at a price of about \$14,000.

This property has, in past years, played a different role in the life of Birmingham than the one it now has. Built in 1878 by Frank Ford, Birmingham banker, it was constructed with red brick made by Edwin Starr of Royal Oak and was laid by William Robinson of Brown street, Birmingham, whose wages were \$1 a day. Its original cost was about \$4,000. The 18-room house was not completed until 1878 when Mr. Ford and his family moved in.

THEY OCCUPIED the premises until 1893, when Ford's daughter and son-in-law, J. Bert Peabody, came into possession of the home which was their residence until 1912.

After its sale then, it passed through a number of hands until acquired by Birmingham Lodge No. 44.

A few years later in 1922, a building committee composed of P. W. Parmenter, Homer G. Leonard and Harold H. Corson were authorized to have plans drawn and to proceed with the work of remodeling the old house.

In May 1923, the present building was dedicated by the officers of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the State of Michigan.

Interesting sidelights on the growth and advancement of the village and city are revealed in the old records of the lodge. An item in 1857 showed a payment of \$9.41 for 34 pounds of candles, but in 1865 progress entered the picture and a bill was presented for five oil lamps.

THE MASONS reached forth helping hands both to their own members and those of other lodges.

In 1877 a bill of 75 cents was paid for "an indigent brother" while in 1885 they contributed \$10 to the relief fund raised at the time of the Galveston, Tex. flood.

Members of the lodge became so proficient in their ritualistic work that they were invited to confer work in other lodges in their home state and in Ohio.

Through the years, the lodge has played its part in the general affairs of the community.

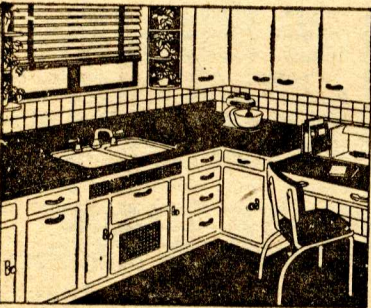
In 1953, the lodge has 491 members.

Officers are Raymond J. Green, Worshipful Master; John B. MacKay, Senior Warden; Fred Little, Junior Warden; W. Lyle Bones, secretary; Ernest E. Morrow (Past Master), Treasurer; John D. Pound, Senior deacon; David Masterton, Junior deacon; Alexander Busby, Marshal; Harold E. Latham, Tiler; William W. Jones, (Past Master), Chaplain; and Stewards Richard Broxton, Charles W. Elder, William Barr, and J. Parker Eckerson.

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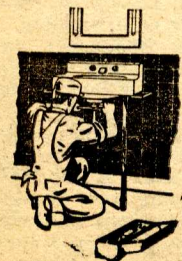


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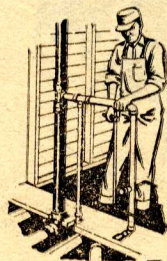
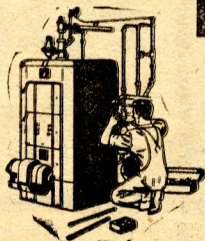
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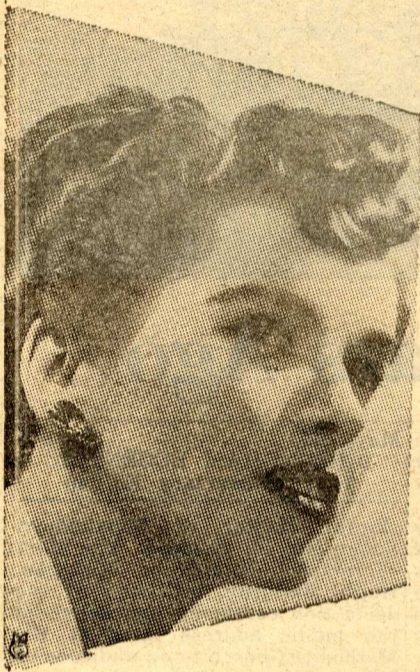
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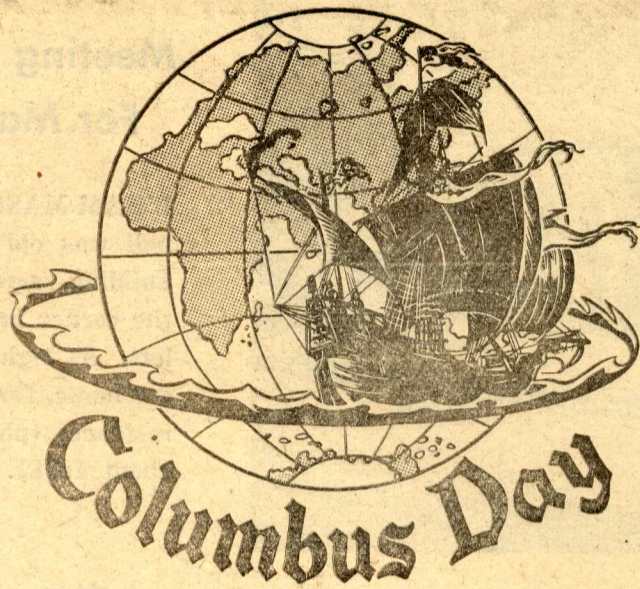
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Soroptimists Aim to Serve Community

The Soroptimist Club of Birmingham is the local unit of Soroptimist International Association. Sponsored by the Soroptimist Club of Detroit, it is a classified service club for women with membership limited to executives, owners, partners, managers, or officers of established businesses, professions or government services.

"Soroptimist" is formed from two Latin words; soror, sister; and optimo, best, and is inscribed on the club plaque which hangs in the Birmingham Community House beside other service club emblems.

Formally installed October 1, 1935, at a banquet at Devon Gables, the local club's charter bears the signatures of 16 women with Vida McGiffin as the first president.

Of the original membership, three charter members still hold active classifications—Gertrude Arnold of Arnold Studies, Mrs. Gladys Heinze of the U. S. Post Office Dept., and Mrs. Laura Turner of Devon Gables.

Prior to World War II, all meetings were held at Devon Gables. Today meetings are held twice a month at the Community House preceded by a dinner, with social gatherings once a month at various places.

CARRYING OUT its main objective of service to the community, the Soroptimist Club of Birmingham has steadily enlarged its scope during the years. Projects have included dental aid to needy women, making of layettes, donations to the Crippled Children's Fund and to the Oakland County Infirmary during the depression era.

Two hospital beds with bedding have been donated to the Community House for the use of any local resident needing them. An electro-phrenic respirator for use in the treatment of polio has been given to the Sister Kenny Polio Center in Oakland County.

Since the deaths of two club members, Laura Shroeder and Mrs. Doris Thompson, the club has made yearly monetary contributions to cancer research.

A grant in memory of the late Dr. John H. Gordon has been made to the soon-to-be-erected South Oakland Hospital.

IN THE FIELD of extension, the local group has sponsored clubs in Mt. Clemens and Pontiac. In January, 1951, the Soroptimist Club of Rochester was chartered with sustaining member, Mrs. Kathleen Pinter, as organizational director.

The Venture Club of Birmingham, a group of young employed professional and business girls, was founded under the direction of Mrs. Nina Noble.

Other club activities have included hostessing the Midwestern regional conference at Devon Gables and the Hotel Tuller several years ago.

The president and two delegates regularly attend spring and fall conferences throughout the mid-west, with delegate Bess Wright attending the biennium convention at Washington, D. C., in July, 1952.

TODAY'S TWENTY-NINE members are interested in working toward the International Soroptimist theme, "Working For the World We Want" through right spiritual values, education, service to the community and cooperation in industry.

Present officers include Edith Foster, president; Irene Hanley, first vice-president; Bess Wright, second vice-president; Mary Dewey, recording secretary; Mabel Sorenson, corresponding secretary; and Marion Hawkins, treasurer.

Birmingham Men Served On County's 1st Jury

On July 17, 1820, the first Oakland county court was assembled with Hon. William Thompson as chief justice and David Bronson and Amasa Bagely as associates.

William Morris had been appointed sheriff and Sidney Dole, a son-in-law of Dr. Ziba Swan, was clerk of the court.

The grand jury of the county court consisted of 17 members including from this area: Elijah Willets, Dr. Ziba Swan, John Hamilton, Elisha Hunter, Ezra Baldwin, Asa Castle, Elijah S. Fish, Henry O. Bronson and James Graham.

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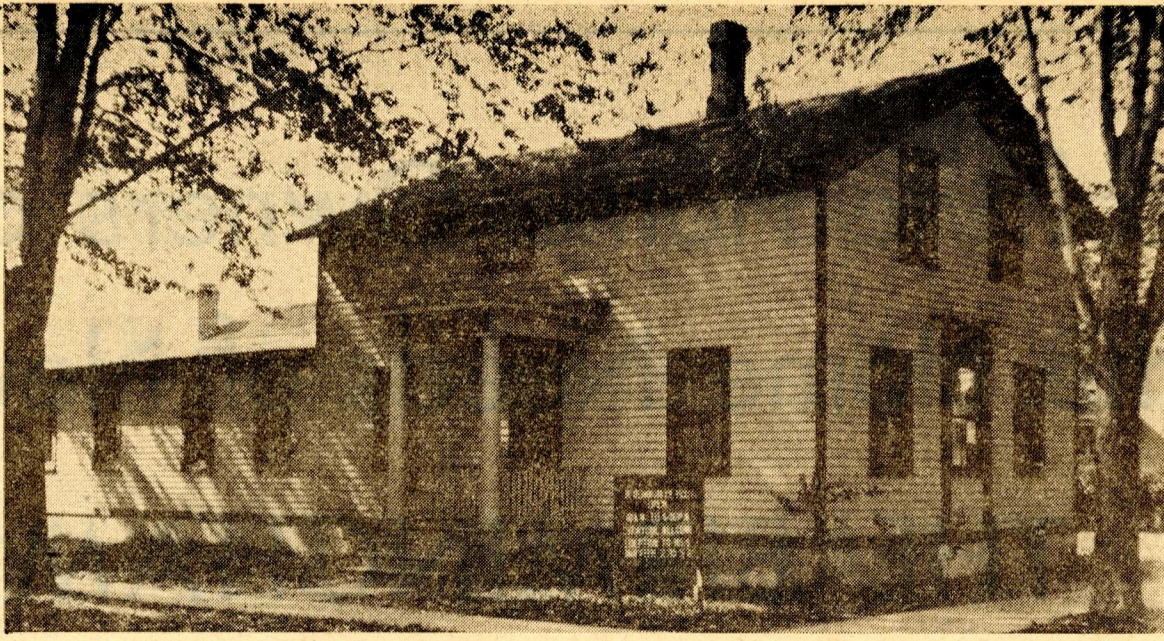
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May, 1953 Page 7
BIRMINGHAM ECCENTRIC
75th Anniversary Edition

City's First Civic House

(Continued from Page 1)

the staff and the welfare load at the House was heavy. A thrift shop was opened, where old clothing was reconditioned and sold to the needy, bringing some income to the House, and rendering an urgent community service.

AN ATTEMPT proved unsuccessful to have the Community House excused from paying taxes like other charitable and educational institutions were exempt from. Added to this, the House found it owed over \$2,500 for accrued sales taxes which it had failed to pay on the many meals being served at the House.

Through the years, the new Community House continued to grow in serving the Birmingham area until it has reached its present level of community service development well qualifying it as the "Heart of Birmingham."

Women once dominated the board of directors for the House, but the men of Birmingham since 1930 have taken a very active part in its growth. The board now consists of 15 members, eight women and seven men.

THE ANNUAL Roll Call continues to be the main source of revenue in keeping the House fit. Contributions, registered on a huge thermometer each year, pay for operational expenditures. Any surplus pays for additional features the board believes would make the House more livable and comfortable for the many people who use the numerous facilities.

During World War II, the many organizations which met regularly at the House were joined by numerous groups which aided in the war effort. A blood donor bank, air raid wardens, motor corps, nurses aide, Red Cross and Civilian Defense groups met regularly during the duration of the war.

TODAY THE Community House is famous for the many activities and organizations that use it and the services it offers to the residents of Birmingham.

In 1952 370 different groups held 3,041 meetings at the House with an attendance of 160,493.

Included in the list were such organizations as the Birmingham Community Council, University of Michigan Alumni, Lions Club, Kiwanis Club, Birmingham Moms

This frame building, which used to be at the southwest corner of Maple and Bates streets, was Birmingham's first community meeting place between 1923 and 1930.

Club, Birmingham Junior League, Exchange Club and the Birmingham YMCA . . . and many others.

An employment bureau was started at the House in 1925 and today it is considered by many as one of its most helpful features. The bureau provides part or full-time workers for domestic or business work, free of charge to the prospective employees.

MOST POPULAR among the younger set that uses the House is the Ranch Room or "Teen Canteen." It serves as a meeting place for junior high and high school students after school and on weekends.

The room is entirely maintained by the teenage set and in 1952 alone, 13,000 teen-agers held 331 meetings in the Ranch Room.

The House attracts both young

and old for the youth and adult education programs offered. "Leisure time" classes in bridge instruction, ceramics, clothing, making of hooked rugs, jewelry and silver work, painting and square dancing have proved to be some of the most popular activities of the House.

There were 35,996 meals served at the House in 1952 and 617 luncheons, teas, banquets and dinner groups. Thursday nights at the Community House is family dinner night.

All meals at the House are served at cost, one of the few activities which is not expense-free.

Today the Community House is operated by the Birmingham Community House Association as a community project, unlike the membership organization it started out as.

'Sickroom Cupboard' Aids Those in Need

Often spoken of as "The Heart of Birmingham", the Community House really does have a heart. It has been proven a friend in need to many in the area through the services of its Sickroom Supply Cupboard.

Mrs. R. H. Mann and Mrs. E. G. Hatch, attending a Red Cross convention back in the depression years of the early 1930s, brought the idea back from Scotsdale, Pa., a mining town whose family aid plan included medical supplies for any emergency.

The idea was eagerly accepted in Birmingham and the nucleus of the present Cupboard was quickly formed.

A SERIES of parties furnished funds to purchase bedding, hospital gowns, sickroom utensils and thermometers, and the Cupboard was in business.

Neighbor talking to neighbor spread the word and more and more called on the Cupboard for help in time of illness and injury.

It was not long before the residents of Birmingham began calling on the Community House, laden with gifts for the Cupboard. More linens were donated. Crutches were donated and clubs and organizations began taking an interest in it.

Larger gifts began to come in—hospital beds and wheel chairs. And always, the demand was just a little ahead of the supply. Al-

ways, it seemed, there were people in the area who had had some misfortune which sent them to the Community House for help.

ALTHOUGH the Cupboard is often pretty empty, there is no time limit set on any of the supplies borrowed from it. The only restriction placed on the borrower is that he sign a card, so the Community House can keep track of the supplies and get them back as quickly as possible for the benefit of some other unfortunate.

Many borrowers, according to the Community House staff, not only return the items they have had, but bring along others which had to be purchased and no longer are needed.

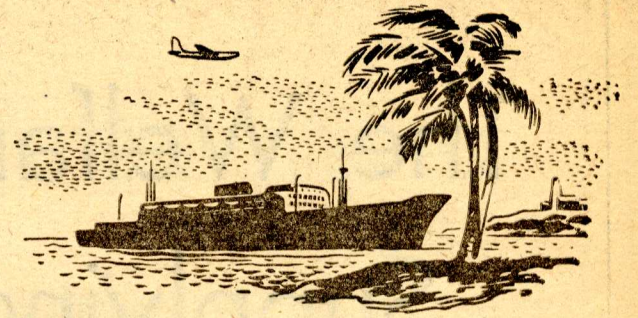
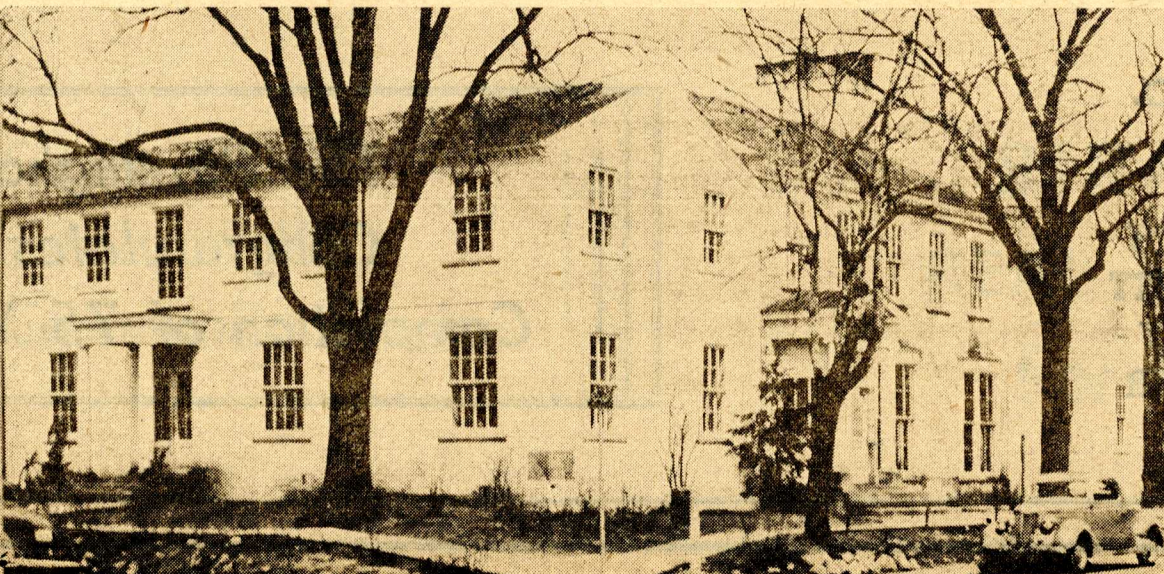
The visiting nurse, whose calls are taken at the Community House, has been responsible for many learning of this particular service.

SHE TOO, has been responsible for many of the gifts received there—her patients turn their purchases over to the Cupboard after their own recoveries are complete.

And so it goes. "The Heart of Birmingham" extends a helping hand to anyone. In return, the help of many comes back to the Community House, a lasting "thank you" for "services rendered" or a friendly gesture from some Birmingham person or club, anxious to help his neighbor over a rough spot.

Opened on March 17, 1930, the Present Birmingham Community House at Bates and Townsend streets is aptly called "the house with a heart—the heart of Birmingham".

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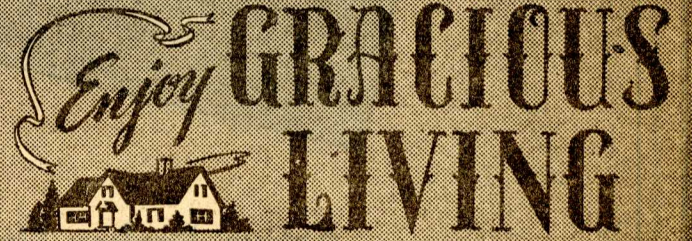
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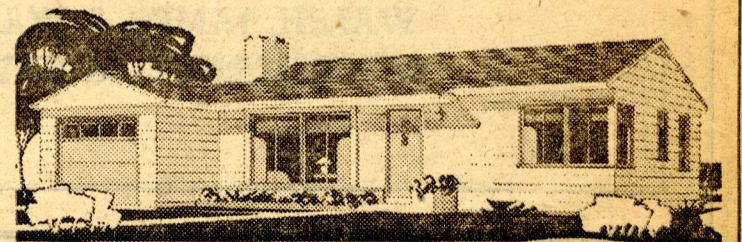
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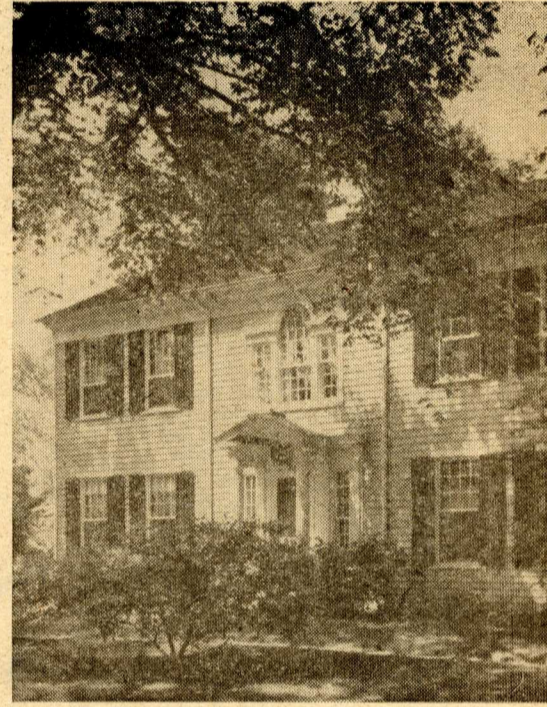
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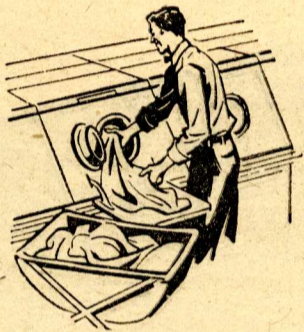
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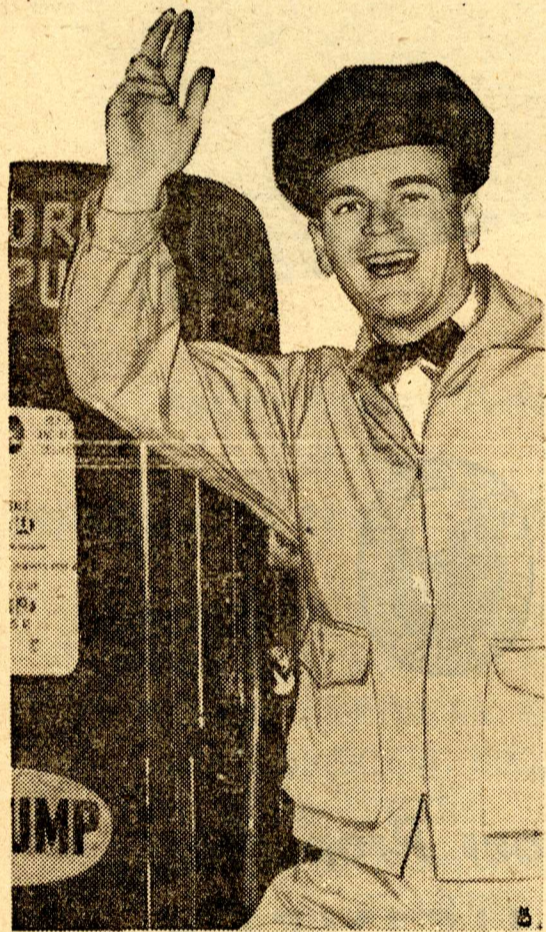
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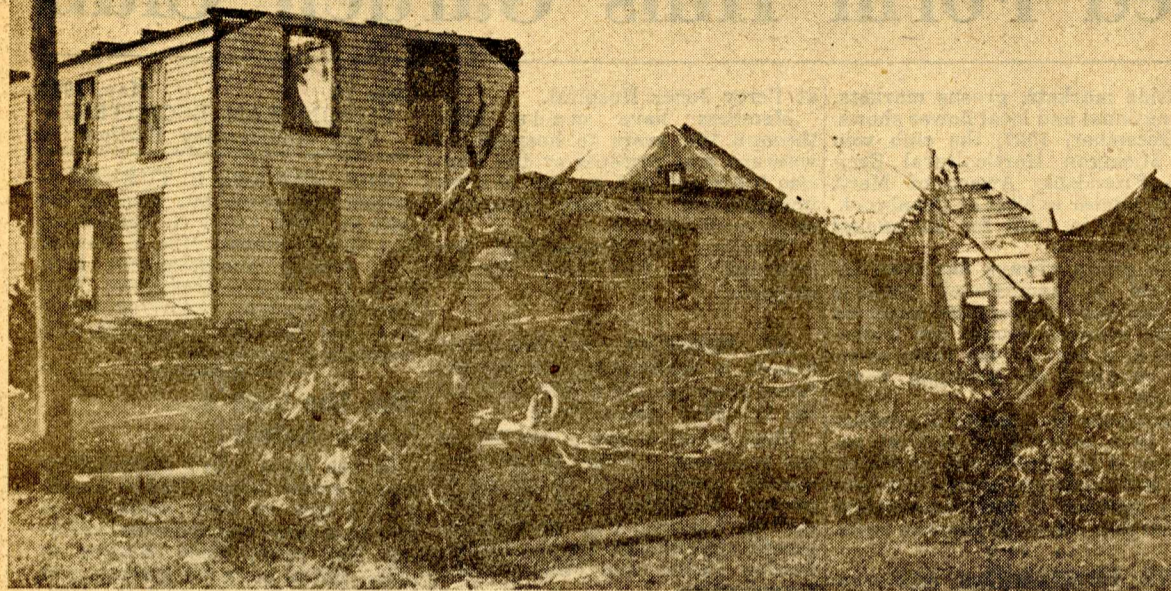
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TWISTER PEELED ROOF FROM HOME ON COOLIDGE ROAD, TROY TWP.
Red Cross assisted several victims of June 10, 1939 disaster

City Has Played Vital Role in Red Cross Work

Almost since the inception of the Oakland County Chapter of the American Red Cross in 1917, Birmingham has played an important part in its activities.

As the clouds of war spread across the world in 1917, women met in small groups throughout the Birmingham area to roll bandages and perform whatever other tasks could be done at home to make easier the life of the fighting man.

At that time these were simply groups of women with sympathy and compassion for the young men in army camps and overseas. They were not, at that time, a part of the National Red Cross Organization.

Their union with the national group did not officially take place until 1924, when Dr. E. A. Christian of the Pontiac State hospital was named general chairman.

The fact that they had not previously been organized made little difference—these workers noticed little change in their activities.

No one paid much attention to records and the like. They were interested in one thing—offering a helping hand to someone—anyone—in trouble.

THEIR WORK went on, mildly enough until the depression years brought about more and more appeals for help. The Red Cross responded whenever possible, but faced its first really big task in 1933.

The Oakland chapter received one entire carload of cotton material to be made up into garments for depression victims.

The call for volunteers went out of Pontiac. Birmingham women jumped at the chance to help.

Volunteers flocked to Christ Church Cranbrook where workroom facilities were made available. Others worked in their homes and while the pile of unfinished material rapidly dwindled, the stock of finished garments grew and grew.

SKIRTS, shirts, dresses, children's clothes and undergarments were made and sent to families throughout the nation. The Birmingham members of the American Red Cross had met their first big job and, in short order, had completed it.

Six years later another challenge came their way when disaster struck in their immediate neighborhood.

This came when a high velocity wind storm ripped through the area early one morning, leaving several Troy township families without homes.

Members of the Birmingham Red Cross stepped in. Dozens of volunteers surveyed the needs of the families. They found them homes with local families, in schools and churches until their own dwellings could be rebuilt or repaired.

THEY SUPPLIED the victims with food and clothing and medical service where needed.

It was done quickly and without fuss. Little did that group of volunteers think that within two years they would face the greatest task their organization had ever taken on. They had no inkling that, in December 1941, Jap planes would launch their attack on Pearl Harbor.

Birmingham's Red Cross volunteers quickly recovered from the initial shock, and in only a few days were well on the way toward marshalling their forces for the job ahead.

AS NURSES answered the call to staff military hospitals at home and abroad, the Red Cross trained Gray Ladies and Nurses Aides to help handle the demand in civilian hospitals. These women took over many of the tasks which called for trained persons, but not the technical know-how of the registered nurse.

The Red Cross provided the largest corps of trained first aid workers in history as the country prepared itself against the possibility of an attack at home.

In January, 1942, Harry Hoey, now headmaster at Cranbrook, and Mrs. R. K. Cunningham and Mrs. John Blanchard, faced the problem of lining up donors for whole blood to stock blood banks, to be processed into plasma and to meet other medical demands.

BEFORE THE month was up, the first blood bank was held at Cran-

brook Institute of Science.

Working at top speed the committee pushed the program, and the following year recorded 16,000 pints of blood donated.

But first aid, hospital help and blood did not end their World War II work. There was more to be done, and Birmingham took up its share of the burden.

They recruited women for the camp and hospital volunteer service. They donated such things as radios, record players, games, books and other small items "from home" for servicemen in these places, even before Mrs. Walter Appel was named to head this activity.

With Mrs. C. Theron VanDusen as her assistant, Mrs. Appel supervised the recruiting and training of 6,548 women in the county for this one service alone.

MRS. E. P. TURNER of Southfield township headed the group working with the families of servicemen. It was this group which helped solve the problems arising from separation of families, its corresponding worry and lean army paychecks, as well as those which came when mothers went into factories, stores and offices to take the jobs left vacant as men joined the armed forces.

Mrs. T. W. Eustis, who served a total of 11 years as home service chairman, took over the job for the county of trying to relay information to families from servicemen overseas. This group worked especially hard getting communications to and from men in enemy prison camps.

It was Mrs. R. M. Knox who arranged to have the families of the prisoners-of-war meet, exchange information and discuss mutual problems.

THE "PRODUCTION" and motor services divisions zoomed until more than 5,000 volunteers were working night and day.

Workers made bandages and items of clothing for the children of military men. They drove thousands of miles making deliveries, setting up blood banks, supplying help to those in need, staffing canteens in the area, planning entertainment for men stationed at nearby bases and a hundred other tasks.

There was no slacking off when the war ended. Many of the men still were hospitalized, still needing the special attentions which came from the Red Cross.

BIRMINGHAM women, such as Mrs. Sheldon Noble, Mrs. Bradlee Pruden, Mrs. Ferd M. Broock and others, found their duties increasing. Mrs. Pruden has been given a wider program to head for the county, Mrs. Broock has become field consultant for the midwestern area.

Mrs. Karl Bailey headed a program of teaching homemakers how to prepare nutritious menus at a time when food prices were at an all-time high.

Others continued to help at under-staffed hospitals. They continued entertainment programs for the men at military bases and in military hospitals.

They continued their blood bank program, sewing sessions and working with the National Chapter, keeping a backlog of funds available for disaster calls.

THE WOMEN of the Birmingham Red Cross, whether their country is at war or not, have never had any trouble in finding plenty to do. They work here in their own community, they work in the county and they work in the national picture, doing their bit to provide a little more than the bare necessities of life for those in need.

From 1917 to 1953, and on into the future, these women and others like them, have kept and will keep Birmingham well to the top of the list for jobs well done.

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Late Mrs. Ford Helped Form Hills Garden Club

The Bloomfield Hills branch of the Woman's National Farm and Garden Association was organized in July, 1929, by the late Mrs. W. G. Thompson and her friend of many years, the late Mrs. Henry Ford, who was president of the national organization.

The Fox and Hounds was the site of the first meeting, with Mrs. Ford presiding. Mrs. Manley D. Davis was named to head the new group, assisted by Mrs. W. D. Thompson, first vice-president; Miss Sarah Sly, second vice-president; Mrs. Henry S. Booth, secretary; Mrs. Frank Shuell, corresponding secretary; and Mrs. Walter Morley, treasurer.

Shortly after this first meeting, Mrs. Davis resigned due to illness in her family, and Mrs. Thompson took over the duties of president.

The first club roster listed 70 charter members. Their motive in founding the Bloomfield Hills branch was to cooperate with the National Farm and Garden Association on a local level and to carry out its aims.

OBJECTIVES OF THE group then, as now, include the stimulation of an interest in and a love of country life, cooperation with federal and state agencies for the

improvement of rural conditions, and assistance of rural and urban women in a realization of their interdependence and mutual problems.

Farm and Garden strives to help women through scholarships and expert advice to the best training in agriculture, horticulture and related professions, and to develop opportunities for women so trained.

The group furnishes its members with all possible opportunities for the marketing of farm and garden products and handiwork, and offers opportunities for the exchange of ideas.

Early meetings of the Bloomfield Hills branch were held monthly in the homes of members as they have been through the years, with an occasional gathering at Christ Church Cranbrook. For this reason membership is limited to 150 active members.

THE BLOOMFIELD CLUB has been active in such projects as

roadside markets, greens markets, and national and local flower shows. In December, 1937, the club won the Michigan Horticultural Society's Friendship Award of Merit for its winter exhibit at Cranbrook, and again in 1938 for its annual flower show.

The group always has been interested in educational projects and has been among the sponsors of the summer course for housekeepers, a part of the farm women's program at Michigan State College.

Each year they grant a scholarship to a student of natural resources at the University of Michigan, and sends one or two teachers every summer to the conservation scholarship school at Higgins Lake.

THE BRANCH has sponsored the planting of trees in public places and has taken over the planting at the Vaughan School in the Hills. In the spring of 1952, a plaque was erected there, honoring the charter members.

During the World War II, the club donated \$500 to the Greenhouse Project at Fort Custer and assisted with the Fernery therapy

at Percy Jones Hospital. Members have made gifts through the years to hospitalized veterans and patients at the Pontiac Infirmary and, as part of their international relations program, send seeds abroad.

"Pennies for Friendship" are collected to further foreign projects.

AT PRESENT the Bloomfield branch is participating in the national program for a memorial for the late Mrs. Henry Ford.

Since its organization, the branch has continued to bring to the community, speakers on all phases of garden activities, and members each spring open their gardens for benefit pilgrimages for the Detroit Garden Center and other worthy organizations.

Periodically the club sponsors flower arrangement classes by various authorities.

Two parties have become traditional with the club: the picnic each year in a member's garden followed by a garden tour, and the annual potluck dinner each Christmas at Christ Church Cranbrook.

MRS. EDWARD P. TURNER is current club president. Sharing the slate are Mrs. Leroy G. Vandever, first vice-president; Mrs. J. Hawley Otis, second vice-president; Mrs. Fred C. Jeynes, treasurer; Mrs. Paro M. Thomas, recording secretary; and Mrs. Karl Richards, corresponding secretary.

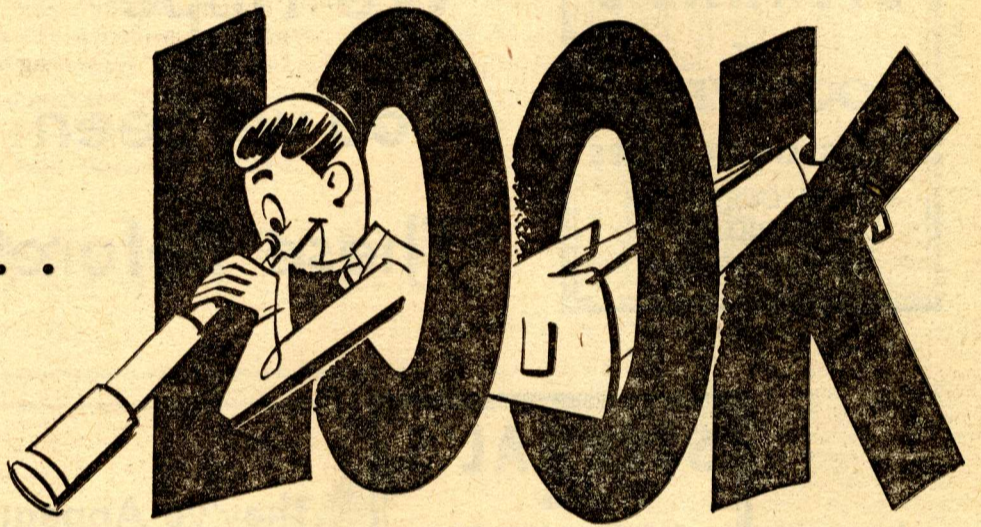
Ma, the Cow's Loose Again!

In the days when Birmingham was a small village, many people kept a cow on their premises as well as a horse and the usual chickens. The cows, when allowed to roam, ruined so many gardens and flower beds that Samuel C. Mills, Birmingham's village marshal in 1878, had to do something about it.

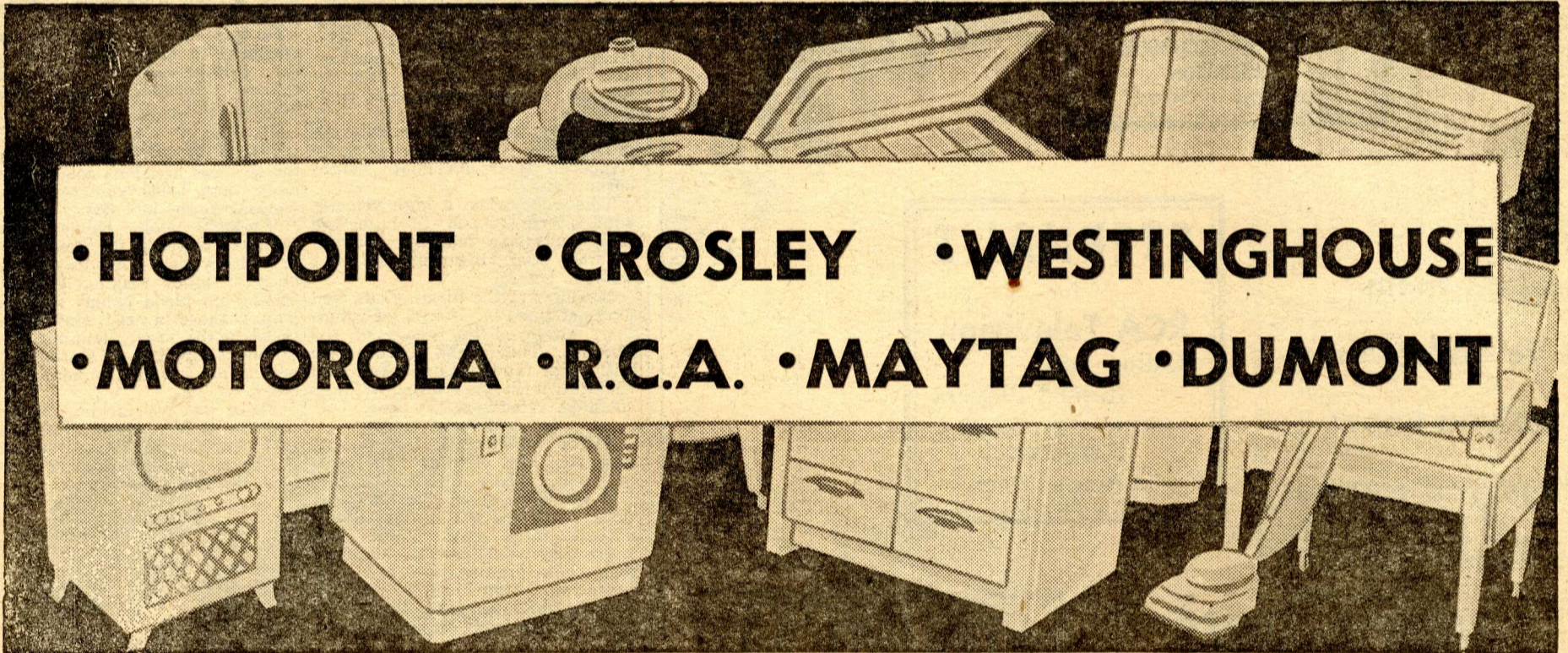
A warning, therefore, was published in The Birmingham Eccentric "informing those of this town who keep cows, that said cows must not be allowed to run nights or they will be found impounded in the morning."

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Pardon us if we point with pride at the famous names for which we're authorized dealers. Twenty years of selling appliances has shown us that Birmingham wants these great products, and justifiably. They save all around, in original cost, in maintenance, in year after year of faithful performance, in effort when using them, in cost of operation, in fact in every way. We're very conscious of the importance of service and take a back seat to no one in our effort to provide the quickest at lowest cost. See us before you buy, you'll be the happier for it.



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Pythian Chapter Organized Here By 45 Members

Temple 94, of the Pythian Sisters, ladies' auxiliary of the Knights of Pythias, Lodge 149, was organized December 18, 1911, with 45 charter members.

Three of these first members, Mrs. J. A. Wendorph, Mrs. Mio Parks and Mrs. Hazel E. Lawler, a past grand chief of Michigan, still are members of the Temple.

First presiding officer was Mrs. Stanley Todd. Early meetings were held on the second floor of the building at 183 N. Woodward, and later on the second floor of the Birmingham Theater building on S. Woodward.

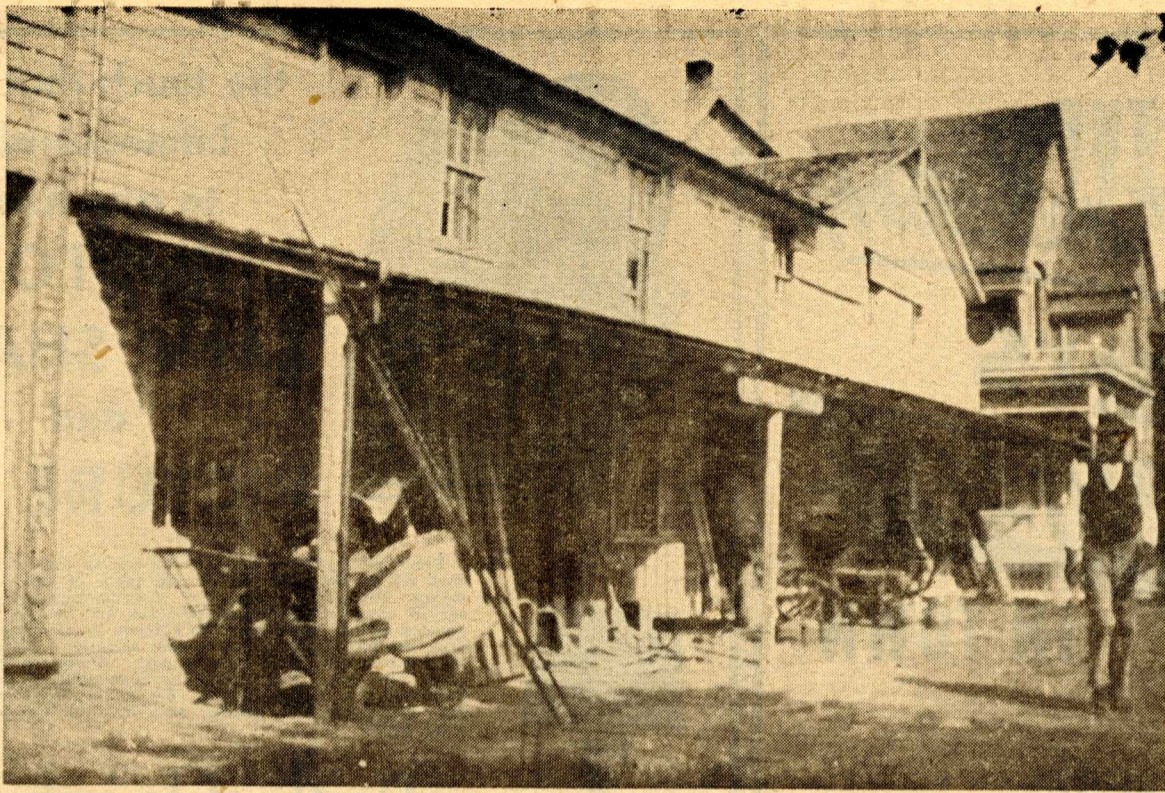
The days of the depression of the 1930's found the temple holding its meetings in the homes of members. The eighty member group now gathers twice a month at the Birmingham Community House.

TOUCHSTONE of the Pythians is friendship, teaching its members to be interested in public affairs, to work for the social betterment of their community, and cherish the qualities of loyalty and respect for law.

Temple 94 has contributed largely to veterans' organizations, furnished two hospital beds at the Community House, and raised money for cancer and polio research.

In December, 1936, Temple 94 celebrated its silver anniversary, and in December, 1951, marked the fortieth year of its founding.

ROBERTA DAVIDSON, most excellent chief, heads the present slate of officers. Others are Dorothy Walker, excellent senior; Edith Follman, excellent junior; Daisy Gowans, manager; Evelyn Latham, secretary; Edith Adams, treasurer; Kathleen Ling, protector; Elsie McKee, guard; and Ilau Mattice, past chief.



A FAR CRY FROM THE BIRMINGHAM OF TODAY, this picture is of the Hugh Irving Hardware store known 75 years ago as "the largest store in town." Displaying its stock inside and outside, the store was prepared to satisfy nearly every need. The shopper could buy a plow or a bottle of patent medicine; bird seed or a gas stove; a wheelbarrow or a new hair spring for a cherished watch along with a multitude of other items too numerous to mention. The store was located at 205 N. Woodward approximately where the Huston hardware stands today and, according to the vertical sign at the left, right next door to The Eccentric office. The gentleman at the extreme right was Charley Brush, former school teacher here.

Southfield Legion's 1st Meeting Held in Florist Shop

Southfield post 407 of the American Legion held its first meeting in 1944 in a 10 Mile road florist's shop. Oscar Cook was named first commander of the post. Other original officers were Fordon A. Niles and William D. Wissert, present post adjutant.

From 15 members and a small

rented building, the post has now grown to 80 members and permanent home, the Southfield Township Veterans Memorial Home of the American Legion, situated at 26541 West 12 Mile road.

PRESENT OFFICERS include

Thomas J. Martin, commander; Martin Poff, Sr., and George Martin, Jr., vice-commanders; William Wissert, Donald Brown, David Haight, Louis Oleksiak and Alex Anderson.

Activities include post meetings, parties, dances, and teen-age programs.

Walnut Lake Women's Club 5 Years Old

Early in February, 1948, every woman in the Walnut Lake area received a telephone call from Mrs. Richard McKay requesting their presence at the Walnut Lake school in order to form a club.

At that time there were few social activities for local women and no community organization to fill this lack.

From the February 12, 1948 meeting grew the Walnut Lake Women's Club, chartered with 36 members whose aim was to promote friendship along with civic projects.

The fledgling organization held its first meetings at Walnut Lake school. Mrs. Eleanor Osterback was elected president, with Mrs. Don Harrison, vice-president; and Mrs. Parker Rockwell, secretary and treasurer.

THE PRESENT CLUB roster lists 50 members, with Kay Rockwell, president; Pauline Heller, vice-president; Dorothy Phelps, secretary; Jean Sutton, treasurer; Charlotte Snyder, corresponding secretary; and Evelyn Martin, membership chairman.

Regular monthly meetings are held the first Tuesday evening of each month at West Bloomfield Township Hall. Discussion of a timely topic is followed by a social hour, with membership divided into units comprising gardening, bridge, ceramics, sewing, needlework, knitting, and physical education.

The club has been instrumental in securing bus service to the area, and the construction of uniform mail-box supports.

IT HAS sponsored clean-up drives and property owner participation in planting flowering shrubs. The club takes an active interest in social welfare through CARE and local services, and awards two Girl Scout Camperships annually.

The club sponsors an annual Harvest Supper and Dinner, bridge luncheon, and the Community Sing around the Christmas tree which the club purchased and had planted on the school grounds.

By means of several money-making projects yearly, a building fund is being accumulated for a community house to serve the club and other organizations.

1st Eastern Star Members Met By Lamplight

An original charter hanging in the chapter room of the Masonic Temple, 327 South Woodward avenue, is a constant reminder to Birmingham members of the Order of the Eastern Star of its inception fifty-five years ago.

The first meeting place was a room above the Whitehead and Mitchell general store, now the site of Shain's drug store. At that time, December 22, 1897, the room heated with a large round stove and lighted with kerosene lamps.

Presiding over the infant chapter was first matron, the late Mrs. Emma Tibbils, with Isaac N. Baker as patron. On December 10, 1902, the chapter joined in the formation of the Oakland County Association of the Order of the Eastern Star. Today 21 chapters with approximately 6,000 members represent the county OES.

THE BIRMINGHAM OES moved its meetings to the Masonic Temple, its present home, in 1922. Five years ago the chapter celebrated its Golden Anniversary with a jubilee banquet and initiation, having as their guests the grand officers of the state and many older members of the chapter.

Present were 32 living Past Matrons and Mrs. Hattie Todd, oldest in years of membership having joined in 1899. Mrs. Todd served as Matron of the chapter in 1904.

Since its formation the chapter has held its regular meetings the first Wednesday of each month. Current officers include Worthy Matron Mrs. Isaac Kidd, Worthy Patron O. Darwin Hillman, Mrs. E. E. Puls, Mrs. J. Parker Eckersten, Mrs. Edwin Minks, Miss Blanche Brooks, Mrs. David Masterton, Mrs. R. V. York and Mrs. William Jones.

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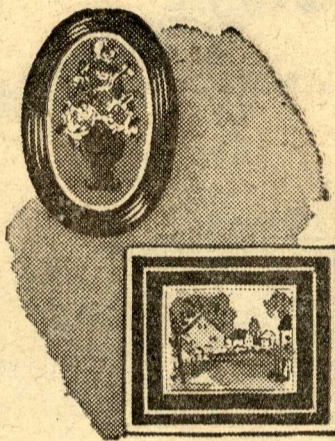
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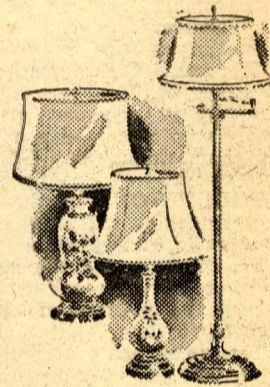


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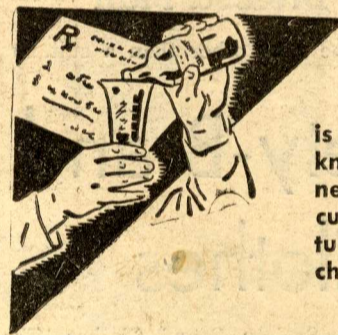
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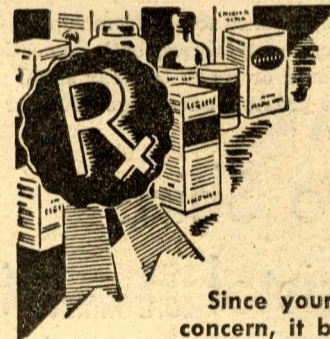
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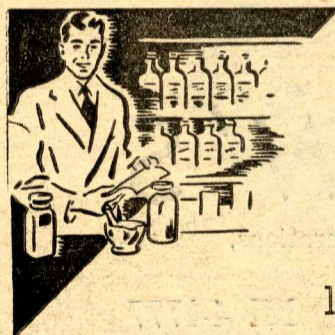
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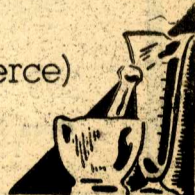


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'Mattie' Baldwin Played Big Role in Village Life

Beloved and respected in the little village of Birmingham during her lifetime, Martha Baldwin still is remembered by present day citizens as one of the unique and prominent characters that played an important part in the cultural growth of the city.

"Mattie", as she was familiarly known, was interested in the civic development of her home town and was influential in the formation of many civic societies and associations.

It was Martha Baldwin who started a movement to place the hitching posts in Birmingham far enough from the walk so horses could not nip the flowers from the ladies' hats. This grew into the Village Improvement Society which was founded in 1884 and still was in existence after her death in 1913.

She is perhaps best known for the founding of the Library Association in 1867. The present Birmingham public library, which resulted from the efforts of the society, is named in her honor, as a tribute to one who had done so much in its interest.

BALDWIN SCHOOL, erected in 1918, was made possible by a fund established by Martha Baldwin's will. The park at Southfield and W. Maple avenues, which bears her name, was a gift to the city.

Every phase of civic development interested the energetic Mattie. She was the organizer of the Greenwood Cemetery Association and was influential in establishing the city's waterworks system in 1895.

She instituted the Ladies' Liter-

ary Club in Birmingham and was a member of the organization until her death.



MARTHA BALDWIN

To each of these interests, Miss Baldwin devoted no small amount of her time and money with the result that she was loved by all Birmingham.

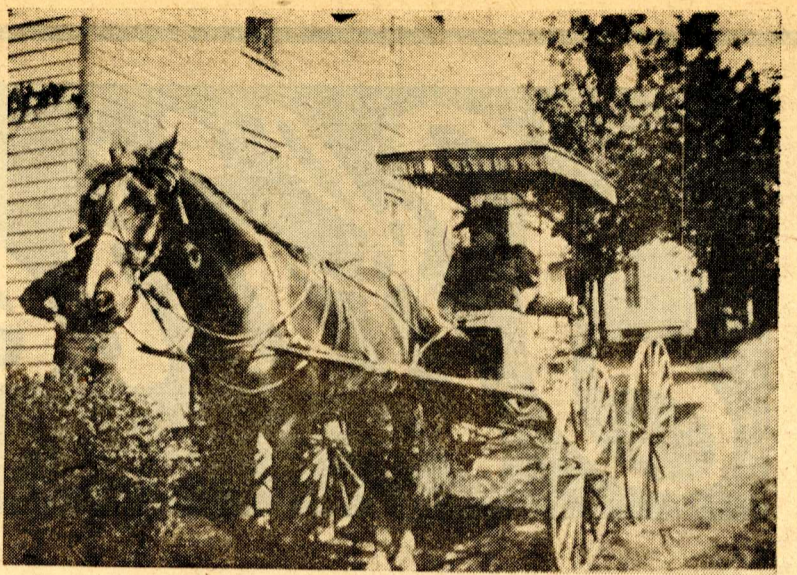
SHE HAD BEEN a teacher for more than 30 years, 25 of them in Detroit where she served as principal of the Norvell school until her retirement on pension in 1897.

Before teaching in Detroit, Miss Baldwin taught in the Old Academy in Birmingham, one of the famous educational institutions of the state in its day. She also had a private school for girls in her home and taught things that were then considered far advanced for that era. Martha Baldwin was widely known and honored throughout the state for her advanced and positive views on the rights of women, for she was an ardent suffragist and active in the campaign for suffrage in Michigan.

MATTIE'S CREED called for a scrupulously clean village and she was often seen riding around in her carriage with a sharp eye alert for means of further beautifying village property. It was no unusual sight to see her dismount from the carriage, pick up a tin can or paper and throw it into the back of the vehicle and drive on.

She was instrumental in influencing the town board to pass several ordinances relative to the enhancement of the village's natural beauty.

Through her efforts, it was a



MATTIE PAUSES TO TALK WITH VILLAGE RESIDENT
Her horse and buggy was a familiar scene

violation of law to tie a horse to a shade tree because it might injure the bark of the tree. Mattie once had a Methodist preacher arrested for such an offense.

DISCOVERING that residents were particularly careless about throwing waste papers into the streets, she had large wire baskets placed about the town as receptacles.

To further assure immaculate cleanliness, she hired "Paddy" Wilson, the cemetery sexton, as general clean-up man.

Born on a farm north of Birmingham in 1840, she was the daughter of Edwin and Aurilla Baldwin. Her father was one of the original settlers of this area, having come here from Vermont

and purchasing his land from the government in 1821. Both of her parents were descended from Revolutionary stock.

Birmingham owes much to Miss Martha Baldwin for her unflinching interest and efforts in years gone by to make this a fine community.

International Relations Class Founded in 1919

For thirty-four years, the Ruth Shain Class in International Affairs has been meeting weekly, first at the Old Community House and, since 1929, in its new counterpart.

Founded in 1919 by Mrs. Charles U. Shain, still its president and class director, the class draws an average of sixty-eight to its sessions which are open to all interested persons.

In addition to Birmingham, the class roster included members from Pontiac, Holly, Waterford, Walled Lake, Pleasant Ridge, Royal Oak, Ferndale and Detroit.

Sponsored jointly by the Birmingham branch of the American Association of University Women and the Birmingham Women's Club, the class serves as an international committee for both these groups and is so listed on their calendars.

FROM A GROUP of twelve in 1919, the alumnae roster now numbers six hundred, all of whom are invited to attend the class' annual May reunion at which a noted speaker is presented.

By means of panels, reports, roundtable discussions, and lectures by international experts, throughout the years the class has studied and analyzed the role of foreign affairs, striving to come to a better understanding of world problems.

A partial list of topics covered over the years reads like a chronology of the turbulent Twentieth Century—German reparations after World War I, the abandoning of the gold standard, the rise and fall of European dictatorships, and now the atomic bomb and the struggle against communism.

THE CLASS HAS been guided and directed throughout the years by its founder, Mrs. Shain. Long active in Birmingham civic projects, Mrs. Shain has striven for thirty-four years to bring the women of the area an outlet for their interest in the affairs of state and nations.

Her hope is to provide an "opportunity for an exchange of opinions and viewpoints," maintaining that "democratic expression is the keystone of government."

Mrs. George Green is current secretary and treasurer of the class which meets from October through June.

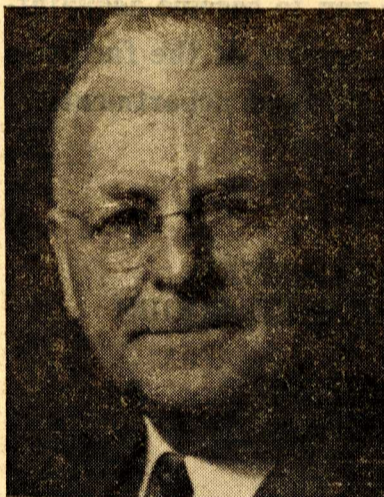
He Must Have Been All Puckered Out

A Birmingham man, on a day's visit in the big city, went to a Detroit druggist and got some medicine. Somehow the druggist made a mistake. When the Birmingham man got home, he took a dose of his medicine, but what he got was a dose of alum.

Commented The Birmingham Eccentric (1878): "They've been trying to pull the pucker out of him with a stump puller for the past week."

50th Anniversary

While we're congratulating The Eccentric on its seventy-fifth anniversary, we'd like to take a few bows on our own achievement of finishing Fifty Years in the hardware business. We've enjoyed our years of pleasant business relations in Birmingham immensely. We've tried to be fair and square in all of our dealings with the public and as long as we remain in business we shall continue to give true value and courteous service. These are the things on which we have built our business.



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who buy food on this basis down through
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will continue to serve them in the future
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