

# Personality Preview

UNUSUAL STORIES  
about USUAL PEOPLE

By ANNA TAMARRI

Paul Downing's a "rare bird. We know he doesn't mind being characterized thus because birds are his world. To state a few statistics to prove the point, Mr. Downing is one of 2,000 men and women in the United States and Canada who are registered bird-banders and one among the 150 persons in Illinois.

Mr. Downing does not catch birds to band them for identification in races; he bands them for the sake of science, to determine where birds travel, how long they live, what manner of life they lead, and to fix the migratory routes of certain species. An aluminum band, bearing a serial number and instructions to notify the Biological Survey of the Department of Agriculture, is made to encircle the leg of the bird. The records of bird-banders are kept in Washington, where the place and date of banding may be ascertained when banded birds are found.

The Downing station, which is always kept free of predatory animals, is not the only base from which operations take place. The Downings have banded over 70 different species of their feathered friends from various points in Highland Park and vicinity.

There is a lull now as the local birds are nesting, while the migratory birds have gone, Mr. Downing points out. His present banding includes nestlings, barn swallows in particular. The long-distance record in the history of Downing banding belongs to two barn swallows, caught this year in the same garage for the second time, after they had flown to South America.

Although his specialization is barn swallows, having banded about 75 of them this spring, as many as 18 in a day, Mr. Downing thinks cardinals fun too. In one winter he has banded as many as 25 of this species with 12 in the back yard at once. All in all, 2,000 birds have been recorded by him this year.

The English sparrow is the only bird which he does not band because it is a pest, although the starling may soon be added to the same category. "Highland Park is particularly blessed with birds," says Mr. Downing, who is happy to have such a locale in which to work.

With his remarkable memory for case histories, this Highland Park bird-bander recalls the first homing experiment conducted by the late William I. Lyon in which a "repeater," or bird that came back day after day, sent from Waukegan to Zion in a shoebox, returned in two hours. It was sent to Chicago, the same spring to Northern Wisconsin, and finally to New Orleans. Each time it returned. In ten days it made a return trip from Denver, in 12 from Toronto; eventually was shot coming through Michigan.

One of the most interesting things about this bird-banding, declares Mr. Downing, is to have been at it long enough to recognize old-timers coming back, blue jays, juncos, robins, and cardinals. This year he caught an adult Baltimore oriole

which was banded by him in the spring of 1936 and returned again the spring of 1937. This rather dispels the common notion that bird-banding is cruel, or as Mr. Downing states, "It is not at all destructive. Bird-banders do all they can to protect birds and to cause them to increase and multiply. The wearing of a band by wild birds is no more harmful than in the case of caged canaries." Mrs. Downing puts it aptly, "It's like wearing a wrist watch."

Some lazy birds make a nuisance of themselves, they like it so well, as the one which was caught in the Downings' yard, released, and found in their trap at a friend's house around the corner, all within several minutes. The "bum" liked it.

Traps used to catch the birds are all hand-made, of various types, a wire chimney funnel, a glass-case affair hanging on a line, a tree box, and a ground trap. Most of them are simple boxes made out of hardware cloth, varying with the birds to be attracted. The birds as a rule step on a treadle, and the door drops behind them.

Typical of Mr. Downing's intense interest in bird-banding is his expressed wish that readers of this article forget about him but to remember always to report dead birds found banded. Several million banded birds are now flying the airways, and only through the reports of the recoveries of birds with these bands will the work of banding be of value to the Biological Survey, which makes a study of the distribution and migration of North American birds.

Mr. Downing, who has banded over 4,000 birds, can trace the dawning of his interest back to a lecture in banding given by the late Mr. Lyon, the first man in this territory involved in the hobby, who recorded 100,000 birds. Mr. Downing, who resides at 835 Waukegan avenue, is the organizer of the William I. Lyon Bird-banding council, named in memory of the pioneer's work, and also acts as president of the group.

## Enrollment Larger Than Former Years at H. P. Playground

Community response to organized playground activities as presented by the Park Board of Highland Park is evidenced by the rapidly increasing enrollment and attendance on the playgrounds maintained by the Park Board. The enrollment this year to date is much higher than in former years at this date.

The playgrounds offer the children attending a varied program of activities at all times supervised by members of the playground staff. In addition to the regular playground activities the children are taken to the beaches three times each week where they are given swimming lessons by members of the staff and the life guards on the beach.

All children living in the com-

munity are urged to take part in this community playground program. There is no charge for any of these activities as it is a project maintained by the Park Board for the benefit of the residents of the community and made successful only with the cooperation of the parents and children of the community.

Further information may be had by calling the Park Board office, Highland Park 2763, or by visiting one of the playgrounds and inquiring of one of the instructors there. The activities program for the week of July 3 is as follows:

Monday morning, July 3—Story hour and handicrafts at Lincoln, Ravinia and Sunset.

Monday afternoon, July 3—Swimming at Central and Roger Williams beaches.

Tuesday, July 4—No program—holiday.

Wednesday morning, July 5—Swimming lessons at Central and Roger Williams.

Wednesday afternoon, July 5—General program at Sunset, Lincoln, Ravinia, and Port Clinton.

Thursday morning, July 6—Baseball—Ravinia at Port Clinton, Lincoln at Sunset. General program at Lincoln and Ravinia.

Thursday afternoon, July 6—Tournament programs at Sunset, Lincoln and Ravinia.

Friday morning, July 7—Swimming lessons at Central and Roger Williams beach.

Friday afternoon, July 7—General program at Sunset, Lincoln, Ravinia, and Port Clinton.

## Hon. Thomas E. Gill to Address Memorial Service of 40 and 8

On Friday evening, June 30th, at 8 p.m., Voiture 604, 40 & 8, will hold its annual memorial service for Legionnaires who have departed this life during the past year. This is the first occasion the memorial service will be open to the public. It will be held in the Circuit Court room in the Court House in Waukegan.

At the same service a flag will be presented for use in the Circuit Court room in lieu of the present flag, which has through a quarter century of service presided over the Hall of Justice.

There will be massed colors of all posts and auxiliary units in the county, and various leaders in Legion and public life have been invited to attend. The Hon. Thomas E. Gill of Rockford, recently elected to the Circuit bench of this district, will be the principal speaker on this occasion. Those who have heard Judge Gill in patriotic addresses pronounce him one of the best in this State. Dr. John L. Zimmermann of Antioch, Chef de Gare of Voiture 604, will preside during the ceremony.

The committee in charge of arrangements consists of George S. McGaughey, chairman; Jack Meyers, George Groat and William Seymour, district commander.

## Ahem...

Add to civic improvement list—the hamburger stand on First street... just what the village needs, eh what... Mrs. A. L. Gall is planning a trip to Washington, D.C., and is not interested in taking in the New York fair... the Galls, by the way, now own the red brick house across the street from their home... Talk about doing the best with what Providence gives us... lightning felled a tree... the owner carved a chair out of the stump that remained...

Funny how few fathers know their children's ages... just ask the census-taker... some names encountered rarely are Nira... Apha... Rosebud... Cordius... Noelle... Jaunice... Ugo... Beresath... Maren... Exotic... Nida... Anastasia... Geneva... Woodrow... Gunter... Nice to be different...

The Bruce E. Bruce dance studio at Adams and Wabash transfer station furnishes entertainment while one waits for the North Shore... Have you heard about "Alexander Graham 'Cracker' Bell"... How many of us were aware that there was an ordinance prohibiting the sale of fireworks in Highland Park last year... The former Mrs. Moore of Groveland avenue at home in Chicago... Miss Minnie Wall seen visiting in the city... Have you heard that Elm place school is the only grammar school in the United States to have an observatory... you have...

Up and coming Paul Engle's "Corn," his latest book of poetry, is due at the lib any day... he's the only American, Rhodes scholar too, to have rowed on an Oxford team... hobnobs with Robert Frost... Wonder when the Community House is going to come through, or has it fallen through?... The Bah'ai temple will be finished in a year or so...

Scotch the rumor that Wayne A. Thomas, Oak Terrace principal, has built a home in Bartlett's subdivision... Eddie Nolan is in China waters... The Alfred L. Prices, once of Lake Forest, live at 1014 North St. Johns... no, we didn't look in the new telephone book... Helen Titman doing graduate work at the Art Institute... Another "I told you so" is coming to Winston

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Churchill now that Tienan is such a sore spot... he said in 1933, "We have abandoned the arms embargo now. We have not the advantage of the high morality which the Foreign Secretary (Sir John Simon) preached to us, and we shall have to pay for it considerably in after-years, if, as may well be the case, some special intimacy should grow up in trade matters in that part of the world between Japan and Germany."... prophetic, no less...

Let's play games after that serious outbreak... what is the only living relative of the giraffe? What's the difference between rosin and resin? Is allspice a combination of spices? Enough is enough. Kick yourself if you didn't see Hack Wilson and Bob O'Farrell umpire the Boosters-Chicago Firemen game last Sunday... add the Jack Benny celebrities... all in all there's sight-seeing a-plenty to be had...

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