

Thornhill and District News

"The Liberal" is always pleased to publish items of interest contributed by its readers in the Thornhill area. . . . Our representative in Thornhill is Mrs. Margaret McLean, who may be reached by phoning AV. 5-2331.

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First Founded In 1914

Thornhill Horticultural Society Long Record Of Community Service

by Doris M. FitzGerald

"We are wanted at the Simpsons' for a meeting this evening," Mr. Arthur Thompson told his wife one day in the early spring of 1914. Mrs. Thompson recalls that they were a little vague about the purpose of the gathering when they walked up the hill, after supper, to the big red brick house, north of the present Thornhill Baptist Church. This house, incidentally, had been Arthur Thompson's boyhood home. His father, Robert, genial proprietor of the stage coach running between Richmond Hill and Toronto, for a quarter of a century, bought it about 1880, after it ceased to function as a hotel. The family lived there, and the horses and coaches were kept in the stable and driving sheds, until the Metropolitan Radial Railway put an end to this form of transportation. Then the Thompsons took up farming on the other side of Yonge Street, and the house was eventually sold in 1907 to Mr. Francis Simpson, owner of a large grocery store on Yonge Street, below Bloor, in Toronto.

Assembled with Mr. and Mrs. Simpson and their daughter Mary on this occasion were Mr. A. W. Galbraith, Mr. David James, Mr. R. A. Nisbit, and Mr. and Mrs. J. Arthur Thompson, and their sister-in-law Mrs. Robert Thompson. Alexander W. Galbraith who lived in Newtonbrook, was an Ontario Government photographer, one of whose hobbies was trying to obtain a perfect picture of every kind of tree. His "Trees We Should Know" published in 1946 is now a standard reference book. R. A. Nisbit and Nisbit and Auld, a Toronto wholesale drygoods firm, had remodelled the white house standing back from Yonge, at Elgin St. David James, a farmer on the east side of Yonge, had earlier been active as Councilor, and Reeve of Markham Township. Mrs. Robert Thompson was a great granddaughter of Crown Grantee Nicholas Cober, upon a corner of whose farm the Langstaff School was built.

As Edna McGregor, Mrs. Arthur Thompson came to Thornhill in 1905 to teach in the little red brick school on Jane St., and marriage made her a permanent resident of the village. Alert, and bright and proud of her eighty one years. Mrs. Thompson is now the only remaining member of the group who organized the Thornhill and District Horticultural Society. A long time Director, she has ceased to attend meetings, but continues to take a keen interest in the Society which for 45 years has done so much to promote good gardening and village beautification, and

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and as the Society continued to grow the annual prizegiving and supper were combined and held in November, and became known as the Horticultural Banquet. During the 1930s and 40s these affairs were held in the Lawrence Memorial Hall (now Thornhill Baptist Church), the scene, also, of many District Horticultural meetings.

Members catered for the banquets and great attention was given to decorations, favors, and the program of entertainment, so it is small wonder that eventually it became impossible to seat all those who wished to attend (tickets \$1.00). The banquets were discontinued and coffee sandwiches and cake served at the prizegivings. Some of the speakers at those dinners were Andy Clarke, of Neighbourny News, Kate Aiken, Harry "Red" Foster, L. M. Montgomery, Dr. Christie, former Principal of O.A.C. and John F. Clarke, Government Lecturer on Horticulture.

Prize-winners of that period, still active in the society include the Misses Agnes and Marguerite Boyle, Miss Hazel Welsh, Mrs. C. P. Johns, Mr. Joseph Tesson, Mr. and Mrs. Percy Bone, Mr. and Mrs. B. A. Heslop, Mrs. H. Mizen, Mrs. E. Leubsky, Mrs. C. Campbell and Mrs. T. E. Pherrill.

Besides enjoying many interesting and informative talks by well known specialists in gardening, nature study and flower arranging, members of the Thornhill Society have received invaluable help and encouragement from fellow members for whom horticulture is a business as well as a pleasure. Among them are Florist Joe Wayne who has greenhouses on Cummer Ave., Jack Watson, gardener at Leitchcroft, Phil Delf who is with the landscaping dept. of the Ontario Highways, Ernie Kohler and Percy Bone, Mr. Kohler, Swiss born watchmaker, turned gardener, came to Thornhill in 1938 to work for Mr. George McCullagh. When Mr. McCullagh died and the estate was sold to Dr. Shouldice, he stayed on in charge of the Shouldice Surgery greenhouses. He has served a number of terms as Director and President and been responsible for many good programs. He and Percy Bone have been called the Santa Clauses of the Society. Mr. Bone is a shining example of an amateur whose hobby has carried him far. He did not become aware of his affinity for flowers until he was

a young business man, and a friend gave him a couple packets of seed, which he planted out enthusiastically, at the family cottage at Lake Simcoe, and forgot about them until they began to bloom. The following year he planted more seeds, and soon began to exhibit at the Flower Show at the C.N.E. where he was sweepstakes winner for 10 years. Since moving to Thornhill and joining the Thornhill Horticultural Society about 30 years ago Mr. Bone has progressed from president of Thornhill H.C. to president of Ont. Horticultural Association to Director of Can. National Exhibition and chairman of the Flower Building at the C.N.E. His duties have taken him all over Ontario to lecture judge at flower shows, and demonstrate the making of floral arrangements at which he has become adept. In his own garden he specializes in growing Pacific Hybrid delphiniums. The delphinium incidentally has been adopted as the emblem of the Thornhill Society. Mrs. Bone has been a Director of T & D H S for many years, and co-convenor with Mrs. B. A. Heslop of the plant sales. Sharing the family interest, their son Arthur is now 1st vice president.

After the second world war many new residents moved in and recently opened subdivisions. They had to start gardens from scratch on former farm land, and for the record, have achieved wonders. However lawns, trees and shrubs have been their prime consideration, and this has made a difference to the flower shows. Commenting on the change Mr. Roland Healey, Show convenor for four years, who recently retired as Secretary, said that competitive classes which used to call for six varieties of a flower, or four of a potted plant, now ask for only two or three specimens of one kind of flower, or for one potted plant.

Old fashioned gardens with a profusion of flowers, like the Heslops for instance, like the Heavens fever and fever. Home owners are more likely to buy plants than grow them from seed, and though they invest in good stock they do not have enough flowers for cutting. As a result there has been an increasing emphasis on decorative arrangements which only require a few blooms.

The original landscaping ground Thornhill and Langstaff Public Schools was done by T & D H S, and the Society also planted many trees in the community park shortly after it was purchased in 1939. In more recent years beautification committees sparked by R. C. Poulter and Allan Sumner have been responsible for landscaping the Thornhill Swimming pool and the pond on Centre St., and for the island plantings of petunias on Yonge St. During the presidency of Mr.

Poulter in 1954 the Junior Horticultural Society was revived under the direction of Mrs. G. A. Crutcher, Mrs. Ruth Banks and Harold Gribble. The 38 young members were enthusiastic, but had too many other outside interests and the branch lasted only a year.

Two years ago the popular annual dinner was resumed as a combined Christmas party and prize giving, but members no longer prepare and serve the meal.

The nineteen presidents who guided this estimable society through years of depression and prosperity were: R. A. Nisbit, A. W. Galbraith, Rev. S. A. Lawrence, Rev. J. W. McDonald, J. E. Francis, W. Moyle, R. Simpson, H. Nuttall, N. J. Smellie, Rev. J. H. Sparling, Percy Bone (1934-38), 1943-46), J. A. Thompson, Ernest Kohler, W. L. Burke, F. J. Maw, Phillip Delf, R. C. Poulter, T. E. Pherrill, and Mrs. James Bridges. Now in her third term, Marjorie Bridges is the first woman to be elected President of T & D H S. A splendid gardener she has been a resident of the village since 1951.

Miss Mary Simpson the first secretary treasurer held office for a long period. She was followed by Miss Elizabeth Wilson for six years. Mrs. T. E. Pherrill (Lucille Dean) put in two terms totalling seven years, and Ervan McKean and Miss Winnifred Simpson also served for some time. Others who assumed the often onerous duties were Mr. W. R. Howard, Mr. C. McGuire, Mrs. L. G. Riley, Mrs. Norman James, Mr. Roland Healey and the present secy-treas, Mrs. C. Fletcher.

For a while in the 1950s there was a separate treasurer and Dr. Albert B. Scott, Mrs. W. J. W. Lennox and Mrs. C. Fletcher held this post. Officers for 1960 are Past Pres. T. E. Pherrill; Pres. Mrs. Jane Bridges; 1st vice pres. Arthur Bone; 2nd vice pres. Allan Sumner; secy-treas. Mrs. C. Fletcher; Librarian R. A. Hayes; Director S. A. Turpenney, Mrs. E. P. Boyden, H. S. Harrison, R. C. Poulter, R. H. Whately, Allan Foster, Mrs. R. E. Briggs, Mrs. W. B. Svenningsson, Miss Muriel Dean, Charles Williamson.

Despite soaring prices the annual fee for this garden lovers' club has remained a modest \$1.00 for more than 40 years. It entitles member to participate in seed shows each year attend many interesting, and often illustrated, talks on Horticulture, and to make use of the Society's library of garden books and pamphlets. Free options of annuals or perennials are given in the spring, and bargains in plants and roots are to be found at the sales. For those prepared to go farther afield there are meetings, conventions and garden tours galore. Meetings are held on the third Tuesday evening of each month in Thornhill Public School. "Visitors are always most welcome," said Mrs. Bridges. "We are anxious for them to see what we are doing, and hope that some will become interested enough to want to join the Thornhill and District Horticultural Society."

THORNLEA

Correspondent: Mrs. B. Lepkey Phone AV. 5-3489

The monthly meeting of Thornlea Home and School was postponed a week to enable members to participate in the joint meeting held at the Thornhill High School on February 16.

The York-Simcoe Home and School Council's annual meeting will be held at Wrixon Hall, Richmond Hill on March 4. Mr. Harold Simpson is guest speaker. School News: Thornlea hockey teams have been busy again this week. The senior team played Ross Doan on Tuesday, February 16, but lost 2-0.

The Junior All Stars won over Powell Road 2-1 on Thursday, February 19.

Mr. Evan's room had a successful candy sale on Friday. Other grades were the eager customers. Birthday greetings to Susan Rivers who celebrated her 13th birthday on February 13, by entertaining about 20 of her school friends at a party at her home.

We are glad to know Clifford Rivers has fully recovered from his recent appendectomy. Friday's snow and windstorm left many people stranded on the highways as well as the sideroads. One of these unfortunate people was Mr. S. Lusher of No. 7 Highway, who left his home as usual to deliver papers at 2:30 Friday afternoon and didn't arrive home until 4 a.m. Saturday morning. Usual time for delivery is about 1 1/2 hours. His car stalled at Steeles and Don Mills and Mr. Lusher had to wait all this time for a taxi to be able to get through and finally bring him home. Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. C. Moore on the birth of a son on Sunday, February 21, at Brier Bush Hospital, Stouffville. Mrs. E. Moore was the former Doreen Palmer.

Silver Linings

by Elizabeth Kelson

Ever had your whole day spoiled because somebody was angry and out of sorts? You woke up in the morning thinking what a good old world it was. You felt like singing and had a good warm feeling toward everybody. Then something happened to disturb this happy state of affairs. Somebody became angry with you over some trifle or criticised you unfairly. Suddenly the world didn't seem bright anymore. There was a choke where the song had been and you caught yourself wishing that the ill-tempered one would go somewhere else to vent his spleen.

Suppose you did get your wish? Would the sun seem as bright to you as it did earlier, and would you feel like singing and turning a bright face to the world? Watch out! Miserable attitudes are as catching as measles. Suppose you've already caught the disease? You're not feeling too happy yourself, so it galls you to see a happy smile on somebody else's face. You decide that they have no right to be happy if you're not. You find fault. You belittle. You grumble. Nothing very much. Just enough to strike a sour note in some one's day. It's a vicious circle.

It's rather mean, when you think about it, to encourage somebody to trade a smile for a frown. It is a rare person who can remain serene and untroubled with negative forces surging about him or her. It's hard for people to keep their perspective when they receive black looks and innuendos instead of encouraging words and smiles.

A car needs oil to keep it running smoothly. The machinery of life needs oil too. Allow me to recommend the oil of kindness. No sand, please!

Thornhill Notes

Thornhill Horticultural Society
Beautiful coloured slides taken by the President, Mrs. J. A. Bridges and her husband on their recent trip to the West Coast were the highlight of the February meeting of the Thornhill Horticultural Society, at Thornhill Public School on Tuesday, February 16th.

Mr. and Mrs. Bridges covered 8,000 miles on the four week trip last fall. Some of their most interesting shots were of Lake Tahoe on the Nevada-California border. This lake is on an elevation of 6,000 feet above sea level and is the largest lake at that level. From there they travelled to Salt Lake City and stayed at a 320 room hotel, almost a village in itself. The Temple Square at Salt Lake City was most impressive and the slides showed the beautiful rose beds and fruit trees with which it is planted. Despite the strike at the Birmingham copper mine, they were taken on a tour of the place, the largest open cut mine in the world, and the slides taken there showed up the unusual colour of the ground - a silver gray with copper tones.

The slides of Muirwood National Park near San Francisco showed the Pacific redwoods, the tallest of the redwoods, while shots taken in Mariposa Grove, Yosemite National Park showed redwoods which, although not as tall, were of larger girth. This latter park, is the oldest State park and was inaugurated by Lincoln. Other beautiful slides were shown taken in Disneyland, at Las Vegas and Reno. Shots taken in California were of the beautiful geraniums which grow almost wild there and are used in place of grass in some cities. The Bridges trip also took them to three canyons, the Bryce Canyon with its huge red rocks outlined against the bright blue sky, and the Zion Canyon with its huge rocks. Both these canyons are in Southern Nevada. They are reached by the Grand Canyon at the middle of October and were in time to get several breathtaking shots of the golden aspen trees on the north rim of the canyon.

Following this magnificent display, the group was further treated to some spectacular colour slides taken by Mr. E. Kohler in the Shouldice Surgery Gardens at Thornhill. These were particularly interesting because Mr. Kohler was able to name all the annuals for home planting. Some of the slides were taken following the recent ice storm and these were particularly beautiful, although sad in their detail of the destruction of the trees. Mr. R. Healy thanked Mrs. Bridges and Mr. Kohler for the kindness in showing their slides. The meeting was further enlivened by a plant draw, as a result of which 12 to 20 people went home with lovely new house plants.

Thornhill Baptist Church
The monthly meeting of the Women's Missionary Society of Thornhill Baptist Church was held on Wednesday, February 3rd at 8 p.m. at the home of Miss Gladys Steven in Unionville. Mrs. J. Martin presided over the meeting. Special prayers for workers in mission fields were given by Mrs. H. E. Lam and Mrs. E. Twine. Miss Steven then gave a most interesting talk on "Africa on the March." Mrs. J. Martin closed the meeting with prayer. A social hour followed with delicious refreshments served by the Social Committee. The next meeting will be held on March 2nd at the home of Mrs. Howard Wilson, Woodward Avenue, Highland Park, and will include a sale of home made cookies.

The Women's Auxiliary of Thornhill Baptist Church held their regular monthly meeting at the home of Mrs. W. McGowan, Cavalier Crescent, Thornhill on Tuesday, February 16th at 8 p.m. with 32 ladies present. The President, Mrs. W. McGowan presided and opened the meeting with a prayer, followed by a brief business session. The South Group, under the leadership of Mrs. W. Reburn were in charge of the program. The Devotional Period was conducted by Mrs. H. E. Lam and a delightful Valentine program followed. Refreshments brought to a close a very enjoyable evening. The March meeting will be held at the home of Mrs. Cliff Wilson, Thornheights Rd.

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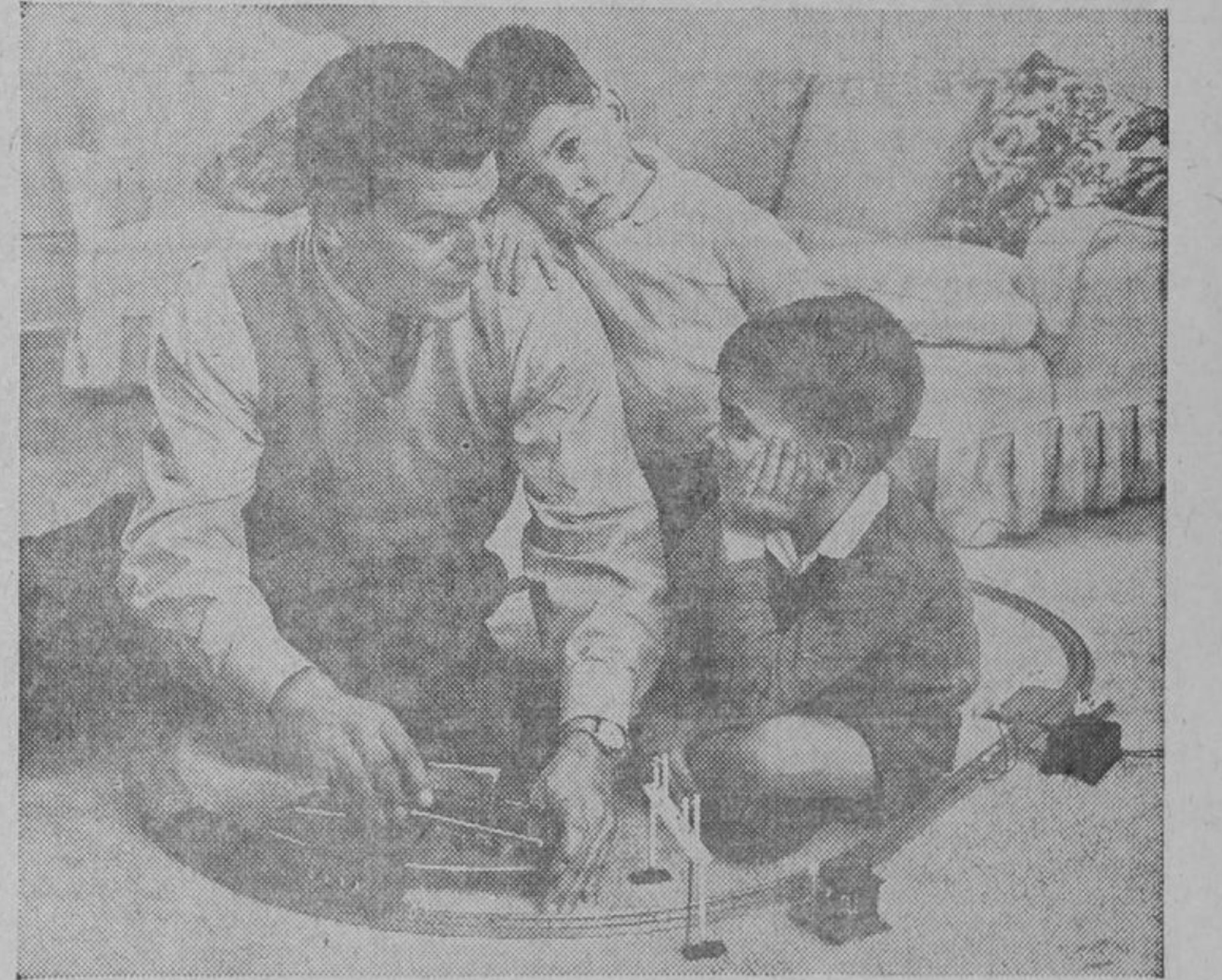
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