

Neighbors

Edwards' Dave Mackie— Carving 'Frigamajigs' and more

When he was 10 years old, Dave Mackie built three wooden birdhouses, each approximately 16 inches square. He sold the lot for \$1.00 and thought this was "the end of hard times."

Although there were still plenty of hard times ahead, Dave was, and still is, an excellent wood-carver. His small shed with the old stand-up stove crackling is

overflowing with his craft. Outside the shed is a scaled-down version of the old SS No. 27, the school which he and his father before him attended. A peek through the windows reveals rows of wooden desks and benches all carefully hand-crafted.

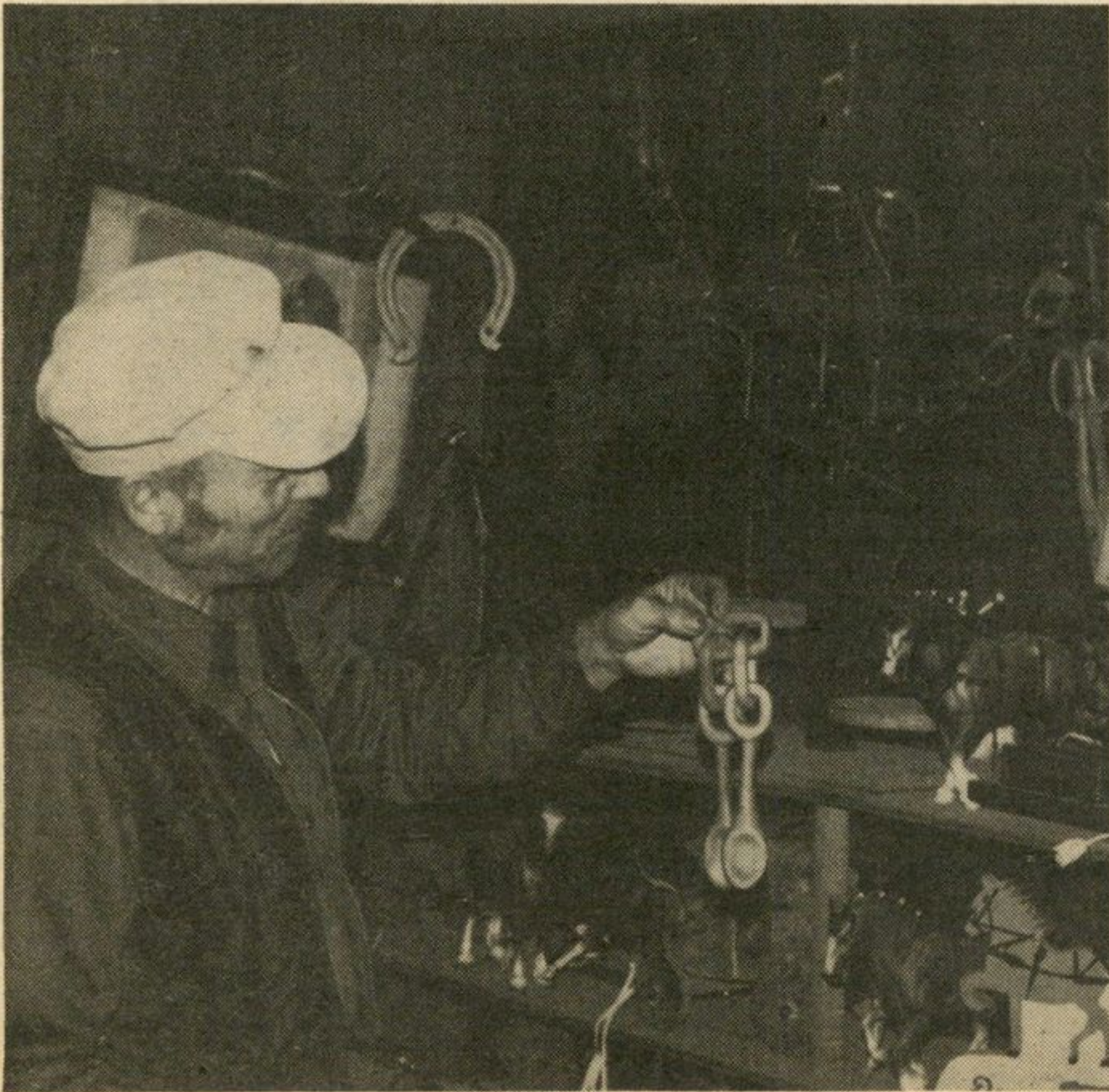
Next to this is a replica of a barn, complete with flooring, hinged doors, a little carrier, and a

roof that lifts up for a better look at the interior.

Inside his shed, shelves and hooks along the walls hold miniature replicas of old horse-drawn hay wagons, flat beds, snow-removal wagons, seeders and tillers, as well as assorted farm implements and tools such as pliers, hammers, scissors, axes, rifles, — all carved out of wood. There are various lengths of wood-carved chains; each link separate and moveable, all hewn from one solid piece of bass.

Dave Mackie's hands are never idle. When the weather is bad or he has a quiet evening, or perhaps when he's presiding over one of his exhibits at a local fair, his hands are always carving something. He has various objects with moveable parts or simple figures carved inside a cage-like shape — a carving within a carving. When asked what these beautifully crafted puzzles were called, the answer was "Oh, just frigamajigs!"

While he was always a bit of a 'whittler' even as a boy, it was a simple act of precaution that launched Dave's wood-carving hobby. A 'young lad,' he was driving one of the local roads at night and saw something on the pavement—a piece of broken wood with four small rubber wheels attached. Rather than throw it away, he put it in the trunk of his car and kept it. It was



Dave Mackie with carved love spoons (Suzanne Veh Photo)

to become his first wood-carving, a intricate team-drawn wagon.

Dave works mostly with bass wood, preferring its softness, resilience, and pliability over most other light woods.

One of his most cherished items is a small horse, that his father carved with a simple jack-knife 85 years ago.

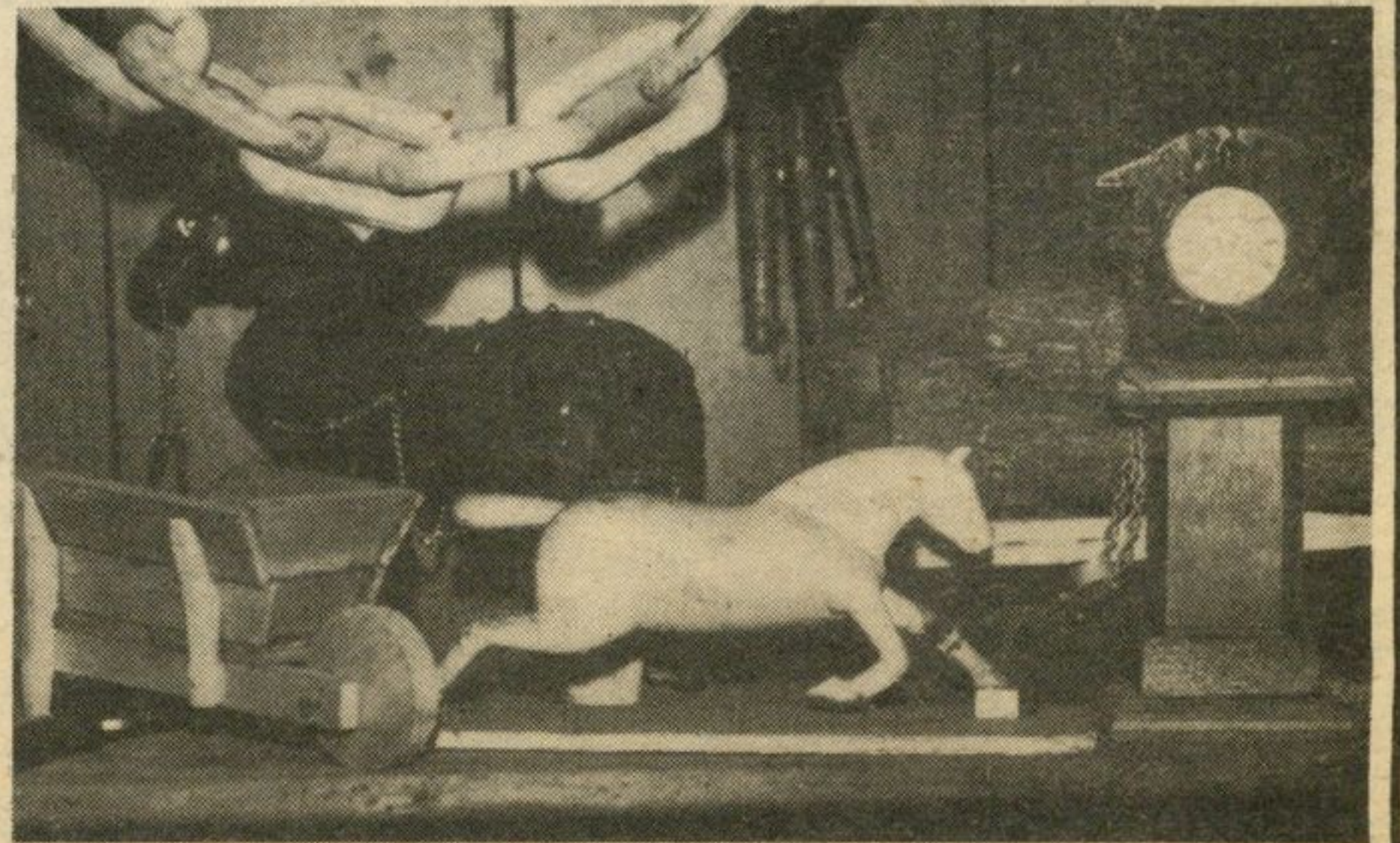
Although Mr. Mackie does most of his carving as a hobby, his work has not gone unnoticed. He has exhibited at various local fairs over the years and about five years ago, when he had a display at the former Navy Base in Kenmore, a representative from Ottawa's National Museum of Man saw it and asked to see more of his work. The result was that the Museum bought 26 pieces of his work for exhibit purposes. Among the pieces they chose was his original project — the wagon on the rubber wheels. His youngest son, about 10 at the time, was so upset at the thought of losing the wagon that he hid it and the Museum never did get it. It still sits — as it should — on a shelf in Dave Mackie's shed.

Another unusual object hanging on the wall was two spoons

linked together by about eight inches of chain, again all carved from one piece of wood. These, were 'love spoons.' Many years ago, if a couple were interested in each other seriously, they were put to the test of eating from the same bowl with spoons linked together. If they could get through the meal without mishaps or argument, they supposedly were able to pass the test of marriage together. Hence the old term "spooning."

Aside from his carving, Dave also does some repair work; a fact that a seatless antique rocker in the corner attested to. The Mackie's are long-time residents of Edwards, having bought their farm there 18 years ago. Dave and his wife Marg have four children, two still at home and two married. This Christmas he made wooden sleigh for their first granddaughter. He enjoys taking local cubs, scouts and Sunday school groups out for free sleigh rides. His sleigh is pulled by two of his six big Clydesdales—horses being another special interest of his.

A man of many talents, Dave Mackie has also composed a number of poems over the years. Look for his poem on this page.



A Clue You're Growing Old

There are lots of modern gadgets,
They're advertised and then
sold.
There's some designed to keep
you young,
And some to warm the old.
I'm not referring to a blanket,
All wired and lined with foam.
You just plug it in, and start to
grin,
Then the heat is hitting home.
But where is the old home-made
quilt,
That used to keep out the cold;
Let's face it, you guys, don't tell
any lies,
I guess we're all getting old.
We do not figure we're getting
old,
But those quilts have aged no
doubt;
The heat that they once kept in,
Has finally all got out.
So don't be surprised, if the cook
rolls her eyes,
And says, an electric blanket is
a must;

Says I with a grin, "I know the
heats thin,
But we'll get you a blanket or
bust."
So to the Centre we make our
way,
A blanket to invest.
The clerk took a look at the cook
and me,
And she figured out the rest.
She said, "we have some for
young folks,
And some for middle-aged
too."
So we picked out one for "Old
Folks,"
Says I, "I guess that will do."
So now we have ready-made heat
in the bunk.
I don't think there's any excuse,
Unless, the Hydro wants to try us
once more,
And deliberately turns off the
juice.

Dave Mackie
Edwards

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