



# The NEW BERN MIRROR

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Whenever anyone mentions overcoming a handicap, Billy Arthur pops up in our mind. This diminutive ex-New Bernian not only surmounted the obstacle of being just 36 inches tall, he capitalized on it to good advantage.

Some of the world's wee people end up in carnivals or hide their chagrin behind the grease-paint mask of a circus clown. Billy, by sharp contrast, thumbed his nose at an unkind Fate and asked no quarter in earning his bread at man-sized undertakings.

In the highly competitive field of newspapering, you're strictly on your own. Fellow reporters are much too busy meeting deadlines to worry about the guy struggling at the next typewriter. Editors can't fill up their pages with promises, excuses or an alibi.

Billy knew that from the moment he first faced a blank piece of paper, and racked his brain for ideas. Readers are prone to believe that writing comes easy for some of us. Good writing never does, and that's what Billy, even as the rest of us, aspired to.

Here, on the ill-fated New Bern Tribune, he gained the experience that enabled him to establish and maintain a successful newspaper at Jacksonville. Billy was smart enough to get a head start in the early boom days of Camp Lejeune, and smart enough to keep pace.

For reasons satisfactory to himself, he later sold his paper and moved to Chapel Hill, where he still writes and still eats regularly. While at Jacksonville, he got himself elected to the legislature, and after bowing out of office, became reading clerk for the House.

Billy may not have the reach to pick apples off even the lowest hanging limb, but in every other way he measures up. That's all that counts. His legs, short though they are, reach the ground, and the tallest Silm Jim in captivity can claim no more than this. It's not the length of your lower extremities, but the footprints you can make on the sands of time that gives you rank among mortals and the right to look God in the face without shame.

As a friend of Billy's, we like best his keen sense of humor. He knows many a yarn that's good for a belly laugh, and some of them we wouldn't think of printing. Not unless we planned to leave town on the next plane.

One of his better pranks, while he was a University of North Carolina cheerleader, had Ellis Fysal, an All-Southern footballer as the victim. Fysal, incidentally, is a brother of Mrs. Albert Jowdy, Sr., of New Bern.

Ellis had played a particularly good game on one occasion. In fact, he was responsible for most of the key tackles in a bruising battle from which the Tar Heels emerged victorious.

Chapel Hill's most popular photographer snapped a flock of pictures during the game, and Billy knew that Ellis would want a collection of these photographs as a keepsake of his best college performance.

Billy managed to get to the photographs before Ellis showed up, and removed every single picture in which Fysal was shown making a tackle or throwing a block. He left for Ellis to see the comparatively few pictures in which Ellis had been blocked out, bowled over, or had his nose buried in the dirt.

Fysal ripped and roared like a wounded lion, when he couldn't find anything worthy of preserving for posterity. Billy let him blow his stack until he was limp with exhaustion, then let him in on the secret.

That's Billy Arthur for you—a great little guy.



**BETH EXTENDS GREETINGS** — New Bern's own Beth Lansche has the honor of greeting this year's Miss America, Mary Ann Mobley, when she arrives for a visit at famed Cypress Gardens in Florida. Gracious and charming, the local youngster made history three months ago by qualifying as a full-fledged member of the world renowned Cypress Gardens ski team just two days after she arrived for

a try-out. Beth gained necessary experience earlier at Trent Pines here. "She has won the respect of everyone with her skiing and modeling ability," says Ed Pickard of the popular resort, "and we are all delighted to have her with us." As for Beth's reaction, she told The Mirror that "they're wonderful, kind and considerate, and just as nice as our folks back home."

## Year Is Faced with Optimism By Most Folks in These Parts

New Bernians in general are embarking on this new year of 1959 with a feeling of cautious optimism. On the home front they expect the good things to outweigh the bad, but on the international scene they are less sure.

Local business men are looking for no resounding boom, but holiday sales held up well, and there is little reason to fear a lull in cash register ringing during coming months.

Farmers had a good year, thanks to favorable weather conditions, especially the heavy percentage of farmers who depend upon tobacco as a chief source of income.

National experts are predicting an increase in cigarette smoking, the cancer scare notwithstanding, and weather closely comparable to last summer's during the coming season would be a boost to agriculture hereabouts, and resultingly to all phases of the economic life in New Bern and Craven county.

Politically, this predominantly Democratic region is naturally happy over the decline of Republican strength in Washington. The average New Bernian who concerns himself about such matters is convinced that the chances are excellent for election of a Democrat in the next Presidential election.

This despite the fact that even the most seasoned politician in these parts admits he doesn't have the faintest idea of just whom his party will nominate. For that matter, few have decided notions as to the Republican standard bearer.

Right or wrong, they feel that Nelson Rockefeller stands a 50-50 chance of nosing out Vice-President Richard M. Nixon for the nomina-

tion. Nothing immediately foreseeable on the local political scene for 1959 is expected to create as much com-

ment as the resignation in the waning weeks of 1958 of City Manager Craig L. Barnhardt.

Barnhardt's departure from office had been rumored from time to time for many months, but when the rumor evolved into fact it came with a measure of surprise. There was mixed reaction to the news.

New Bern's hopes for additional industry don't appear too bright at this writing. Sale of Bate Lumber Company in the last days of 1958 generated little enthusiasm. Most citizens assumed a wait and see attitude, but whatever the Bate sale develops into, residents are wishfully thinking in terms of factories to supplement our admitted historic assets.

Speaking of the potential gold that might be mined from our golden past, this is a year of unequalled opportunity. Official opening of Tryon Palace is counted on to attract an influx of tourist dollars.

Some New Bernians are skeptical about the Palace as a major attraction, but if it should fail to click as a show place there would be keen disappointment felt by the average person here.

Concentration on promotion of the Palace, important though it is, will be ill advised if it obscures the urgent need to complete preparation for a nationally recognized observance of our 250th anniversary in 1960.

The Palace is going to figure conspicuously in the celebration, (Continued on Page 2)



**INCLUDE ME IN**—"Let me at it," this black bird seems to be saying, as he seeks landing room on a feeder that Photographer Billy Benners set up for this exclusive Mirror portrait of some of his fine feathered friends. All New Bernians have expressed the same sentiments as they forge full speed ahead into the year that lies before them.