

New Bern Public Library

# The NEW BERN MIRROR

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Because April Fools Day comes on Sunday this year, most New Bern pranksters will be at something of a disadvantage. Aside from the bad taste involved in public horseplay on the Sabbath, there are obstacles.

Stores and offices will be closed, so there'll be no opportunity to bid business associates. With school out until Monday morning, local youngsters face the same predicament. However, in the privacy of family circles, the usual nonsense associated with the first day of April will prevail.

Ordinarily, the so-called practical joker impresses us as being more of a sadist than a humorist, and for a year-round thing we want no part of him. Even on April Fools Day, we prefer to take him in small doses.

Still, being a bit silly on one day out of three hundred and sixty five isn't such a bad idea. Assuming, of course, that all of us are quite sensible the other three hundred and sixty four days.

You've probably noticed, as we have, that New Bernians worth knowing are those who not only enjoy laughing at the other fellow, but get a bang out of laughing at themselves. Nothing can keep your feet on the ground, and your head properly deflated, like poking fun at the silly quirks that bob up in your own personality.

That's one of the advantages of being born in a big family. You have to learn, at an early age, that no one is going to put you on a high and mighty pedestal, or even take you seriously when you become overly awed at your own importance.

There's no telling where Democracy is headed, but unless we're badly mistaken it got its start, before Independence Hall, at the family dinner table. Good manners may be lacking, and to some extent impractical, but you learn a great deal about adjusting yourself to live and get along with others.

Humor isn't exclusively American, however, here in New Bern and the rest of the nation we have a brand that is different from any tom-foolery you'll find in foreign surroundings.

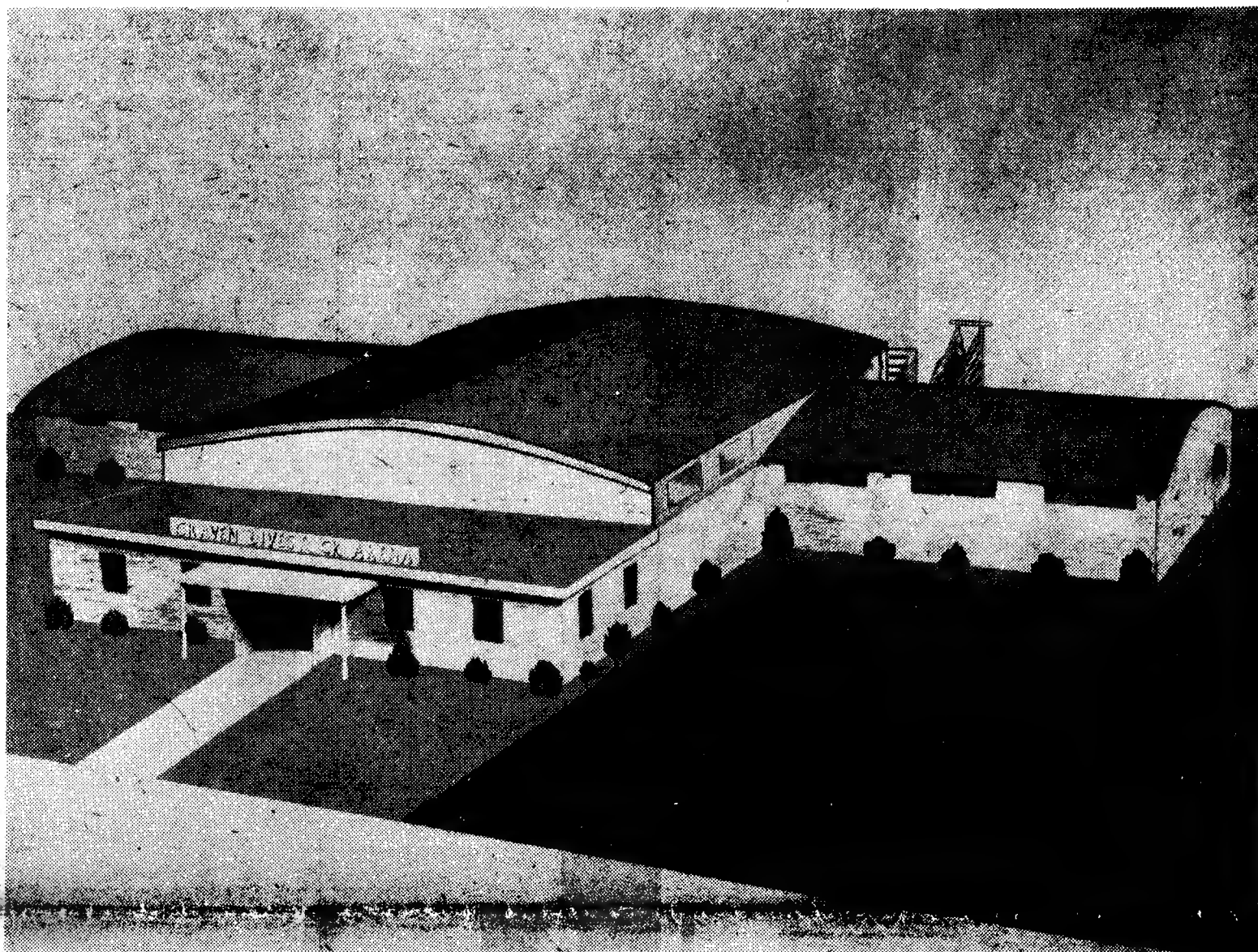
Sometimes it gets rather threadbare, but by and large a whimsical sort of philosophy serves our needs when the going is rough. Circus clowns aren't the only mortals who occasionally hide their disappointments, fears and sorrows behind false jocularity.

God, in His wisdom, endowed us with laughter. It's good for the soul, and few things are more depressing to the human spirit than the grim faced individual who feels that looking like a paid mourner at a double funeral is proof abundant of deep religious faith.

Somewhere in the Bible we are told to make a joyful noise and serve the Lord with gladness. No one in his right mind would interpret this advice as meaning that we should desecrate a sanctuary by turning handsprings while the parson is preaching his sermon, or wisecracking during Communion. But away from the church, in the daily walks of life, we can best serve God by serving Him cheerfully.

Nothing revealed to us in the Scripture indicates that the Man of Galilee was devoid of a sense of humor. If the full truth could be known by earthly mortals, He probably smiled broadly or even laughed far oftener than we would imagine.

And, when He reminded His listeners that they should be as little children in seeking the Kingdom, it might well have been that  
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**IN THE FUTURE**—Pictured here is a scale model of the Craven Agricultural Arena, a project of the Craven Livestock Development Association. When erected it will provide over 10,000 square feet of usable space. Members of

the Association lament the fact that \$1,300,000 worth of hogs are imported into North Carolina each week for Tar Heel tables. They want these pigs grown at home, in counties like Craven.—Photo by Billy Benners.



**AS IT USED TO BE**—Now that everybody has agreed to let Broad Street remain Broad Street (if only in name) we are happy to publish this rare photograph of the thoroughfare as it looked in the long ago. The camera was

clicked, facing the river a block away, at the intersection of Broad and Craven. Any New Bernian who remembers this scene has been around for quite a spell.