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The NEW BERN

MIRROR

WEEKLY
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CAROLINA
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THE
Looking
Glass

VOLUME 6

NEW BERN, N. C., FRIDAY, MAY 17, 1963

NUMBER 7

So far as we know, the folks who compile television ratings on a supposedly national scale never get around to sampling the opinion of a New Bern viewer, or any other viewer in our area.

As a matter of fact the Nielsen system, regarded as the gospel by the TV industry, bases its findings on only 1,200 American homes out of 47,000,000. To take such a skimpy survey seriously is as ridiculous as trying to milk a cow while wearing boxing gloves.

Making these ratings all the more inaccurate and inconclusive is the practice of ruling out of the final percentages those persons who say they are listening to no program. If this isn't figured in the statistics, the surveys are worse than worthless.

For example, if 20 out of 25 families looking at television at a given time are watching the same program, a survey can say that 80 percent of the nation's television audience is turned to this particular show. Actually, 50 percent, 60 percent, or 70 percent of the nation's television audience may not have their sets on.

It could be that these set owners want no part of the program in progress. Others may care for it, but are busy doing something else. Whatever the reason, how can anyone conducting a survey assume that the people who aren't looking at television have exactly the same opinion—percentage wise—that actual viewers have?

Although there's less than no chance that our opinion will ever be sought by the survey makers, they're making a mistake when they include us in their statistics for this or that program. Television's potential is limitless, but the quality of its productions is overwhelmingly poor.

If the industry really wants to make a survey that means something, it ought to take its head out of the sand and discover just how many Americans are looking at TV less and less.

One of several programs with a fairly large audience here in New Bern is NBC's "Today Show". Particularly interested in its excellent news coverage, local citizens enjoy it on a catch-as-catch-can basis, while gulping breakfast and rushing to get off to work.

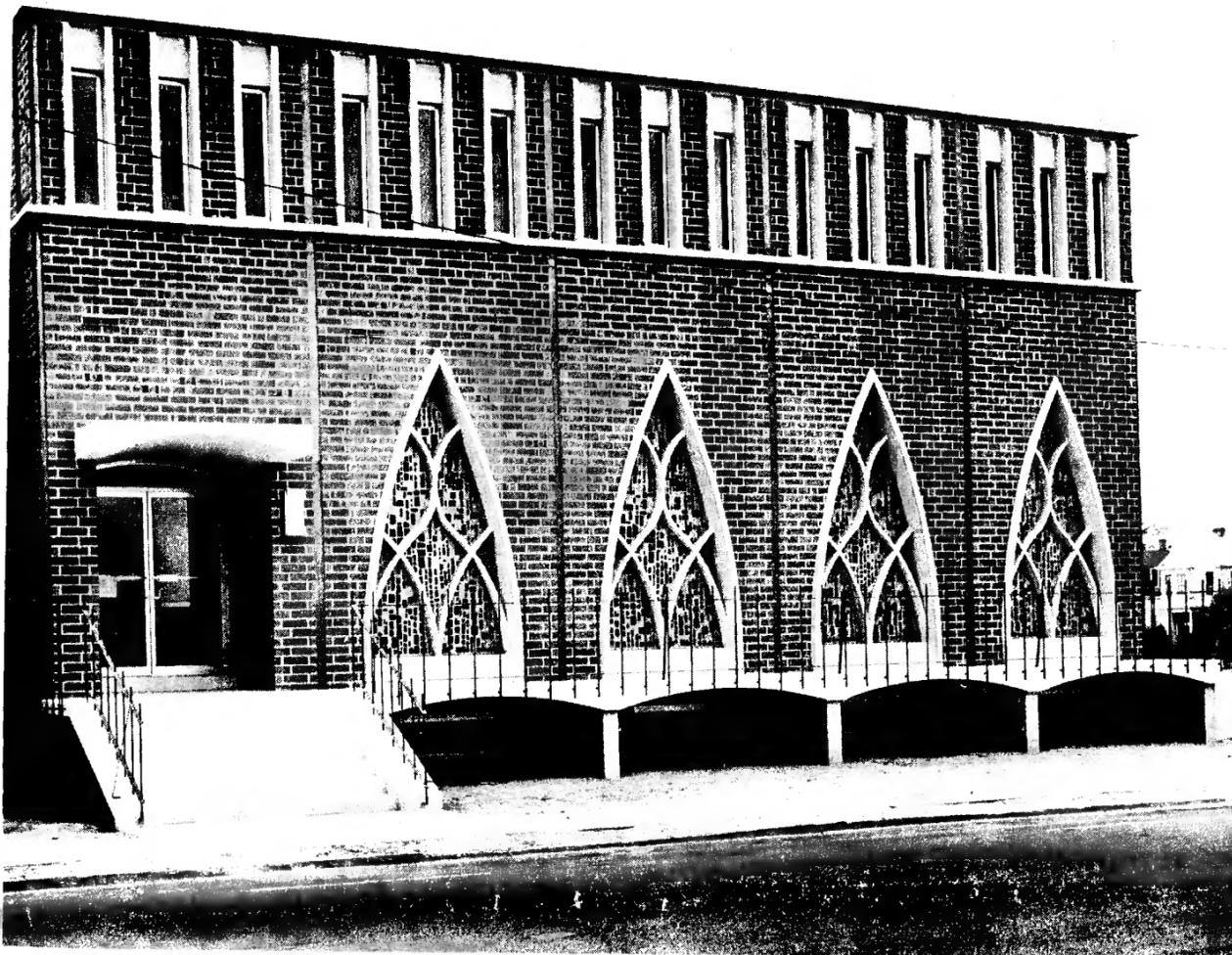
Last Monday one of the features was a recitation of "Casey At The Bat" that included an excerpt from DeWolfe Hopper's recorded rendition. For many years, until his death in 1935, the famous actor presented the poem thousands of times in his inimitable manner.

We've always felt that the late Dr. Charles L. (Casey) Blackman, a Wilson chiropractor, was just as good as Hopper in bringing the lines of the classic to life before intrigued audiences.

Shortly before his death, Dr. Blackman recited the poem in an early edition of the annual Yuletide Revue here. Handsome and melodramatic (he once had a walk-on part in a John Barrymore play) the white-haired former coach gave an unforgettable performance.

Active in Masonic circles, Blackman was a member of the New Bern Scottish Rite

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IN HIS NAME—New Bern's First Baptist Church dedicates its new Educational Building Sunday. A quarter of a million dollar investment, the structure provides a chapel, fellowship hall, kitchen, four nurseries, two beginners departments, three primary departments,

two junior departments, and an intermediate department. See it Sunday, from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m., whatever your faith may be, and rejoice in this addition to the city's religious life.—Photo by Billy Benners.



DINNER IS SERVED—This lovely room, with its exquisite fireplace and beautifully appointed table, is one of the sights remembered by thousands of tourists from 50 States and many foreign countries who visit

Tryon Palace. North Carolina school children, who come by the bus load, are as enthusiastic as their elders when they view the splendor of an authentic restoration that is internationally famous.