



### The best of friends

The monkey may appear to be a little stand-offish, but really he is the life and soul of this party which Janet Hazelman is taking for morning exercise near her Sussex home.

## ANCIENT SCHOOL IN NORTHUMBRIA

March 12 is a great day for the Edward VI Grammar School, Morpeth, Northumberland, for it is the 400th anniversary of the granting of its charter. Actually it is even older, for it was founded about 1300 by the seven trade guilds of Morpeth.

The celebrations began this week with a Commemoration Service, and will end on July 16 with a pageant illustrating the school's history.

A great man in its long story

was Dr. William Turner, Dean of Wells, and England's first botanist. He was a pupil of the earlier school, and it was probably due to his influence at the court of Edward VI that the new foundation was granted the confiscated property and endowments of three chantries associated with the Chapel of All Saints at Morpeth.

The Chapel of All Saints remained the home of the school until 1858, when new buildings were erected north of the town.

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## MEN AT WORK IN LONDON ZOO

By Craven Hill, CN Correspondent at Regent's Park

AN unusually large consignment of rhesus monkeys has just been ordered by the Zoo from India.

The animals, travelling ten to a crate, will be leaving Calcutta by air shortly. On arrival, they will be turned loose on Monkey Hill, the large rockwork enclosure behind the Mappin Terraces, which the Zoo plans to reopen at Easter.

Built for apes and monkeys in 1924, Monkey Hill was damaged by a bomb during the war. Since then it has been inhabited only by goats and wallabies.

Workmen have now repaired the enclosure. New tree-trunks, a pool, and a waterfall will be installed shortly, and caves in the interior will be fitted with radiant heat apparatus, as they were when monkeys lived on the hill.

MUCH work has also been in progress in the nearby Aquarium. The staff have just completed a big "overtime" job—a thorough clean-out of the filtration system, the first it has had since the "underwater zoo" first opened in 1924.

The men have been working late each night for three weeks. During that time over 40 tons of sand have been removed and replaced with specially graded quartz from quarries at Leighton Buzzard.

There are four of these filters. Cleaning did not interfere unduly with the maintenance of the Aquarium, as the filters were dealt with in pairs, one pair temporarily taking on the work of four.

The new sand has been laid down on top of thousands of cockle shells, three tons of which the Zoo obtained from Southend.

"Cockle shells are invaluable in helping to maintain the lime content of the water," Mr. H. F. Vinall, the curator, told me.

THE menagerie is again being troubled by feathered gate-crashers.

A number of mallard (wild duck) which, during the winter, have been coming in and settling on the Zoo's waterfowl pond, are trying to become permanent residents. Where they come from, nobody knows; but the royal parks is a good guess.

Anyway, having found themselves in a good billet, with plenty of food, they have decided to stay and nest in the Gardens. And there's the rub.

Recently, keepers have been putting into position a number of nesting barrels intended for the Zoo's own waterfowl—the New Zealand sheld-duck, pochard, and the rest. No sooner were the barrels in position than the mallard began looking them over and taking possession of them.

Several of the barrels have been placed up in the trees especially for the use of such birds as Carolina tree-ducks. Even these are being purloined by mallard, and it seems likely that all the nesting sites will soon be occupied by the squatters.

What does the Zoo propose to do about it? "At the moment we shall do nothing," says Head-keeper H. Jones. "Our own waterfowl will not be needing the barrels just yet, and we hope that the mallard, always early nesters, will hatch off their broods before their homes are wanted by our own birds."

EFFORTS by the menagerie's veterinary staff to help a one-footed Great Skua (largest of the European gulls) have proved unavailing.

The skua (as reported in this column on January 5) had been caught in Huntingdonshire by a gamekeeper, who found that the bird had lost its left foot and the lower part of the leg. It was able to move around only by a combination of awkward hops and short flights.

At the Zoo sanatorium, efforts have since been made to provide the skua with an artificial leg made of plaster. But the bird would have none of it, and kept worrying its false leg with its beak, eventually breaking it.

Now one-footed again, the skua has been returned to an aviary. Fresh attempts to aid it will be made, if and when a more satisfactory false leg can be devised.

## THESE BOYS MAKE THEIR OWN FILMS

Some boys in Birmingham have formed their own film club, and it is proving a great success.

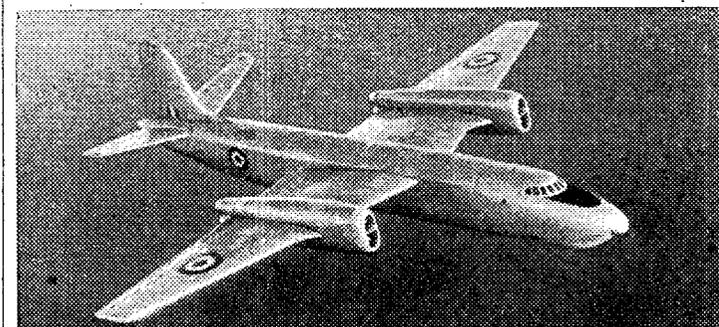
Founded in 1949, it is called Alpha Film Productions, and the president is famous Archie Andrews (by permission of Peter Brough). One of the boys is producer, others are cameramen, actors, technicians, lighting experts, and so on. They have their

own studio—in a garage—and their best-known film so far is World of Boys.

Aspiring film-makers join the club between the ages of 10½ and 17, but only those with sufficient talent can be accepted.

Further information about Alpha Films can be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, 16 Pamela Road, Northfield, Birmingham 31.

## PLANES FOR THE SPOTTER'S NOTEBOOK



9. The Short SA.4

Marking the entry of Short Brothers into the jet-age, the SA/4 was designed to meet R.A.F. requirements for a heavy jet bomber immediately after the war.

This was at a time when many facts concerning swept wings, jet engines, supersonics, and high altitude flight were comparatively unknown quantities. Thus the SA/4, while possessing a high performance, is not particularly unorthodox.

In fact, the only unusual feature externally is the "stacking" of the four Rolls-Royce Avon turbojets, one on top of the other, in the two deep nacelles. The idea of this

was to ease maintenance and allow the speedy installation of more powerful jets as they become available.

At the moment only the prototype SA/4 is flying, but probably the aircraft will soon undergo development as a troop transport.

Carrying a crew of five in a pressurised cabin, the SA/4 is fitted with the latest radar, radio, and de-icing aids, besides many new "secret devices. Top speed is in the region of 550 to 600 m.p.h.

As is the fashion with most modern "heavies," the main under-riage legs each mount four-wheel bogies.

Span: 109 feet; length: 102 feet.