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the village Voice

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Voice: Gin Bridges

JACKIE ROBINSON AT PUBLIC SCHOOL 701

How to Steal Bases:

Jackie Robinson Tells Them It's the 1st Step That Counts

A stocky Jackie Robinson, looking far more like the business executive he is than the baseball star he was, last Thursday morning spoke to the students of P. S. 701, the school for problem children on Greenwich Avenue. He talked in a simple, direct manner, disregarding totally the TV lights that flooded the auditorium.

"I lost my father when I was your age . . . my mother went out to do domestic work. What you did," he told the boys, "could not be half as bad as what I had done."

The assembly began with a color guard of boys executing a military maneuver—a march-in and presentation of the flag—with impressive aplomb despite the presence of a national hero, several VIPs from the Board of Education, and a mass of TV equipment. This was followed by a youngster named Gregory reading the 23rd Psalm.

Standing Ovation

Edward Carpenter, a teacher, introduced the guest speaker, who, he reminded, once greeted him in a crowd. Mr. Robinson received a standing ovation. He promised the audience not to preach, and didn't. The talk was short and earnest. After it was over he took questions from the floor. The first one brought a quick laugh: "How do you steal bases?" "It's the first step that counts," he answered.

Robinson admitted that his first years in baseball were rough. He told about a Southern teammate who ran into a streak of bad luck during a poker game. He got up and announced for Jackie's benefit: "Back home when I want to

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Views and Opinions:

'Fortune' Joins Battle To Close the Square

Despite the fact that an impressive list of professional city planners have given their support to the plan to close Washington Square to traffic, the proposal has been stigmatized as "unrealistic" and "nonsensical" by its detractors. This month, Fortune magazine, one of the country's more hard-headed and influential publications, became the latest partisan to the cause that is supported by so many Villagers.

Fortune gave its blessing to those fighting the battle of the Square in an editorial entitled "The City Eviscerated." Because of the enormous interest in the subject, The Voice is reprinting, below, the portion of the editorial that refers to the embattled park.

'The City Eviscerated'

" . . . In the name of urban renewal and progress, planner Robert Moses is ready to run a four-lane highway smack through the middle of Washington Square. For anyone who likes cities, whether he is a New Yorker or San Franciscan, the fight is well worth watching; in bold relief it shows why the present course of urban renewal has become so disturbing to many citizens.

"Washington Square is one of the finest examples of the kind of amenity that city planning, presumably, is supposed to bring about. Times have changed—only

a few old Georgian houses are left—yet the square is as functional as ever. It is a pleasant oasis for the people who live in the new apartments nearby; it is a fine place for older people to meet and play chess; for children to play in; and for the students of NYU, whose buildings adjoin the square, it is a perfect campus.

OMELETS AND EGGS

"Why, then, cut it in two? To help urban redevelopment, it is said; specifically to help 'Washington Square Village,' a big superblock project abutting on West Broadway just south of the Square. It is a Title I project—that is to say, the taxpayers are footing the difference between the high cost of land and the write-down price offered the private investors. But the investors wanted something more—a Fifth Avenue address—and Moses promised it to

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Voice: Gin Bridges

WASHINGTON SQUARE Outdoor Art Show: PETER HAYWARD, top, took the Grand Prize this year with his oil, "Rainy Sea." He won Grand Prizes twice before, which is about as often as he has entered. The portrait painter, just above, is completing a "sitting" in the street. Below, two artists play chess in a curbside game in front of house on Washington Square North. The show will continue through June 30.

The Night People

by JEAN SHEPHERD

Dig the Folk

Some night when the espresso tastes flat and you tire of hearing third-rate poets shout above fourth-rate jazz groups and you happen to be near a radio, I would suggest you dig a few sounds that are truly closer to the pulse beat of America than anything around today.

Most of the stuff that passes for Americana is as contrived and phony as a class-B English-movie version of Chicago mobsters. It has a dated self-consciousness that would be amusing if it weren't so embarrassing. The average urban "folk"-singer, for example, would be totally unintelligible to a genuine hill-country audience of today. The folksiness they sell to hip-type, guitar-playing, subway-riding, undergrad neo-folk has all the authenticity of an Amsterdam street band playing New Orleans jazz.

The Way It Is

It is pretty hard being a genuine nineteenth-century folk midway through the twentieth century, especially if you live on MacDougal Street and majored in business law at Syracuse U. So what can you dig, man, if you want to really get at the roots of now and feel the way it is? The way it really is. That is, short of picking up a '47 Hudson, a ready broad, and doing the turnpike

scene like. It's tough being beat when you can only wait after office hours and on the two-week vacation. Like it doesn't make it. Ya' dig? Excuse the use of the

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Playground Approved By Planning Commissioner

Plans for a West Village playground moved forward last Wednesday when the City Planning Commission adopted the requisite "map change." The proposed site, bounded by Horatio West 4th, Gansevoort, and Hudson Streets, contains three houses and 27 tenants, who will be evicted. If the project goes through.

They have protested to the Borough President and the Park Department. A number of them in letters to city authorities, have expressed their willingness, however, to give up their apartments to make way for a low-rent housing project.

The final decision on the projected playground is now up to the Board of Estimate,



The Night People

Dig the Folk

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vernacular; sometimes one gets swept away by the sheer emotion of the now and the loveliness of it all.

Getting back to the radio, you'll find some strange and exotic stuff away down at the far end of the dial. Move the pointer away from NYC and QXR some night late and start fishing around between the loud local stations at the high-frequency end of the band. Where the static level is high and the living is not easy. You'll hear more of what America really sounds like today than anything I know. Stuff will come in from tank towns in Tennessee, the Carolinas, Michigan, and Minnesota. Everywhere. I'm not referring to music particularly, but to the whole beat and sound of each station as it jabbars away to the local rednecks. I listened for three hours one night to a station in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, and after a while I had the feeling that I was truly eavesdropping on something I shouldn't have heard.

Into Their Own

TV will never have this flavor, since even local stations all over the country rely on net-produced shows and films with only an occasional local newscast, but radio is today more and more the voice of individuals in specific places as network radio dies and the locals come into their own. The old rules of formality have been

knocked down and the 250-watt-ers are getting less inhibited by the day. One night I monitored a guy doing a play-by-play broadcast of a softball game somewhere in West Virginia, in W. Va. patois, sponsored by a furniture dealer who did his own spots and whose daughter played first base for the strong local nine. Only in America.

It is really a gasser to hear what a local news commentator on a Texas station has to say about the Supreme Court and desegregation. He draws on and on and sounds exactly like twentieth century Texas. He is followed by two guys who play records of people called the Delmore Twins and Granpa Copas. Between discs they hawk plastic Christ statues that glow in the dark in "real-life" color, a pocket Bible with a metal cover guaranteed to protect the heart from bullet wounds and stabbings, a quilt-making kit, plastic ukuleles with instructions "that can be understood even by those who can't read," wallets autographed by Elton Britt, and books for "serious" students of sexology (must be over 21, we trust you). They go on all night in two languages and 150 per cent modulation.

Many Sounds

Man, dig the folk. They have many sounds and different beats and it isn't hard to pick up on some of this Vox Humana. The one thing it is, if nothing else, is authentic. Most local stations work on such narrow budget margins that they can't risk getting out of touch with the listeners. They rarely rely on jazzy (and largely phoney) polls to find out what is being dug by the citizenry; hence what they dish out is pretty close to the main stream. It is all pretty hairy stuff, rich and ripe, but as American as the "folk" can ever get.

Error

A typographical error in last week's Village Voice indicated that the Village Independent Democrats had won 17 per cent of the Democratic votes in their primary fight last fall against Carmine G. De Sapio and Elsie Gleason Mattura for leadership of the First A. D. South. The VID share of the total vote was actually 37 per cent.

Village's Elegant Alley Open to Public to Aid Greenwich House Camp

Greenwich Village's most elegant alley—MacDougal—will be thrown open to the public today (Wednesday) from 4 to 8 p. m. Tickets will be sold at the entrance for \$1. The money will go into the Greenwich House camp fund.

During its 125 years of existence the alley has been, in succession, a dwelling for horses, artists, and the well-to-do. Tickets will admit visitors to some 11 homes. Cocktails and tea will be served. Door prizes will be given out, and the alley will be lined with booths for fortune-telling and games of chance.

Among those on the camp committee are A. Hayne de Yampert, chairman; Mrs. Adrienne Connelly, Jack Fisler, Weir Griffith, Hiland Hall, Dorothy Knight, Mrs. Roger Minton, Esther Morse, Mr. and Mrs. Weston Richardson, Mrs. John Smithers, Mrs. Richard Upton, Marguerite Williams, and Mrs. A. Hayne de Yampert.

Weston Plays in Private For Judson Teen-agers

The gymnasium of Judson Memorial Church rocked with solid music on Monday night when pianist Randy Weston and his jazz group performed a private concert for the teen-agers in the church's community center.

The famous jazz group, which holds forth nightly at the Five Spot Cafe, featured George Joyner, on bass; Charles Persip, drums; Cecil Payne, baritone sax; and Edrees Sulliman, trumpet. Mr. Weston, who gives many benefit performances for teen-age groups, told the young people that he loved playing for teen-agers.

Judson Church Community Center runs a teen-age program for boys and girls in the Greenwich Village area.

Ex-Federal Attorneys Organize for Seymour

A group of Assistant United States Attorneys who have served during the Eisenhower administration last week formed a committee to aid Whitney North Seymour, Jr., in his campaign for election to the State Assembly from the First A. D. Frederic S. Nathan will be their campaign director. Mr. Seymour, a Republican, is himself a former Assistant United State Attorney.

The committee will form a panel of speakers who will be available to discuss with civic and religious groups such problems as civil rights, racketeering, narcotics, and labor legislation on which they worked with Mr. Seymour while serving the federal government.

Council Names Voice Publisher to Post

Edwin Fancher, publisher of The Village Voice, last week was appointed to the Narcotics Committee of the Community Council of Greater New York. Mr. Fancher is chairman of the Greenwich Village Association's committee on narcotics, which brought in a comprehensive report on the subject last month.

WANT POSTERS

The Paperbook Gallery, Sheridan Square, has extended an open invitation to theatres and off-Broadway groups to submit posters to be integrated in the store's decor.



Juster-Cook

ITALY IS TAKING OVER Sullivan Street, nightly, this week in honor of St. Anthony of Padua. The annual 'festa'-street feast—is one of the most colorful events in the city. It begins just below West Houston Street and works its way downtown under cascades of light and past stands piled high with pizzas, salami, and sugared zeppoles. The festa is free unless you develop a hunger, a thirst, or are lured by a game of chance. The festivities, which will continue through Sunday, June 15, begin each evening at 7 and last until midnight.

Crazy Man: Village Poet Publishes Poetry Book

Village poet Jack Micheline, born 1929, is the author of "River of Red Wine," a book of poems recently published by Troubadour Press on Cornelia Street.

The introduction is by Jack Kerouac, who says: "I like the free rhyme, and these sweet lines revive the poetry of open hope in America, by Micheline, the Whitman and Ginsberg know all that live, and me too, and there are so many other great poets swinging nowadays (Burrough, Corso, Steve Tropp I hear, McClure, Duncan Creeley, Whalen, especially Whalen & Snyder, and Anton Rosenberg, I don't know where to turn and I never pretended to be a critic till now) so I quit and abdicate."

NYU Given Property in Washington Sq. Area

New York University last week acquired another property in the Washington Square area. Miss Harriet Mittelstaedt gave the building in which she lives at 86 Washington Place to the university. The four-story structure, located between the Square and Sixth Avenue, is valued at \$65,000.

Miss Mittelstaedt, whose late father studied medicine at NYU, has supported the development program at the University's Medical Center.

NYU will operate the building as a real-estate investment property.

Village Realtor Heads Liberal Business Group

William W. Brill, Village realtor of Cornelia Street, last month was elected chairman of the National Businessmen's Council, a group affiliated with the Americans for Democratic Action. The election took place at the ADA convention in Washington, D. C.

The council was established in 1955 to provide the liberal businessman with a non-partisan organization that speaks for him. Among plans for the future, according to Mr. Brill, is the "launching of an economic newsletter which will show the significance of many key trends and laws from a liberal point of view."

Cocktails for the Square

Glasses will be lifted on Sunday, June 15, from 5 to 8 p. m. to help raise money for the Joint Emergency Committee to Close Washington Square to Traffic. The cocktail party, which is open to anyone who contributes \$5 next Sunday afternoon, will be held at the apartment of Miss Gwen Worth, 63 East 9th Street, 10-D.

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