

## ACROSS THE *Editor's* DESK

**The Picture on the Cover:** There'll be no helter-skelter planting this spring in this couple's garden. No running down to the grocery some warm evening after work to grab a handful of seed packets. For these two know it's fun, and smart, these lusty winter evenings, to plan ahead. By poring over seed and nursery catalogs and *Better Homes & Gardens*, by finding out about new plants and how and where to plant them, they're assuring themselves a garden of which they'll be proud.

▶ ▶ ▶ My good friend and associate Alfred Carl Hottes gave a talk years ago which he called "The Garden's Answer to Our Quest for Happiness." That talk he still makes before large audiences thruout the United States, and I imagine will continue to give for years to come. Those of us of the staff who've heard it think that it lives because it points the way to happiness for all of us in this hurry-up world. Making and tending a garden, however modest, brings us in close contact with Mother Earth, and peace and rest, and glory in growing things. It brings health in exercise which liberates the spirit and quiets and soothes the nervous system. What else, anyway, contributes more to happiness?

▶ ▶ ▶ Moreover, doctors everywhere thruout the land are now joining *Better Homes & Gardens* in prescribing garden-making for good health and the happiness it brings.

Even progressive universities are bringing the message to its communities. At least not long ago one, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina, held a clinic officially named "Finding Health in the Garden Clinic." It was under the sponsorship of Durham's garden club.

It's said that the clinic did much to aid North Carolina people in overcoming some of the ills commonly attributed to the geared-up existence of today.

▶ ▶ ▶ "Look at This Garden Grow," on other pages of this issue, is written and illustrated by a former Chicago police reporter who turned to gardening as an avocation. But the avocation soon became so much more fascinating to him that he made it his vocation. He now lives on ten acres of ground near Chicago, where he and his wife have room to develop their joint hobby of gardening in all its phases. Interest in plants then led to another hobby, color photography, and since then he has traveled over most of the country, taking color pictures of flowers and gardens.

▶ ▶ ▶ In Wellesley, Massachusetts, a movement to abolish round fish bowls, has, I hear, gained momentum. For there has been formed "The Association for Abolition of Round Fish Bowls."

Why all this to-do about the poor fish? Well, Fred Orsinger, director of the bureau of fisheries aquarium, in Washington, has an explanation. He says that he doesn't know if it's a fact, as has been said, that curved bowls make the occupants dizzy physically and lopsided mentally, but he does know that they make him cross-eyed.

As for the fish, psychologists have pointed out that round bowls distort the small, harmless creatures into ferocious denizens of the deep, producing a bad effect on children.

▶ ▶ ▶ To Mrs. Harold A. Hughes, Ft. Wayne, Indiana, goes the ten-dollar bill for the best brickbat letter requested on this page in November. And to all the 456 of you who so generously responded goes my heartfelt thanks. Yours was a grand response. All the letters were splendid. Many of them gave invaluable suggestions. Many were wonderfully comprehensive. Every single one is going to help us immeasurably to make *Better Homes & Gardens* more effectively YOUR magazine. Watch coming issues and you'll see.

▶ ▶ ▶ "Our abstract of title measures the dimensions of our lot in width by depth," Anna Olson, whom you know as editor of the magazine's "It's News to Me!" department, said to me the other day. "But our abstract errs by omission," says Anna. "Narrow tho it is, I've found it has another dimension. I discovered it as I looked the other day from our neighbor's yard back into our own. Our beautiful tree brought my eyes up and up, to focus at its very top. I mused that we own that tree to its crest—that our lot has a third dimension—UP."

In planning your garden for this year, maybe you need a tree or two to give your lot the "up" dimension. Even one, properly placed, would help to give you what I wish for you this month—a **Better Garden in 1938.**

*Editor*

## IN THIS ISSUE

### Better Gardens

Dress Your Home With Plantings . . .	13
Blue Ribbon Annuals for 1938 . . .	16
Roses in Your Garden? . . .	18
Look at This Garden Grow . . .	20
The Old South Lives Again! . . .	24
Meet Some New Garden-Helpers . . .	42
See How to Prune . . .	80
The Diary of a Plain Dirt Gardener . . .	88
A New Mulch—Glass Wool . . .	93
Along the Garden Path . . .	94

### Furnishings for Your Home

Your 1938 Floor-Coverings	
Early American . . .	26
American Empire . . .	27
Eighteenth Century . . .	27
Modern . . .	28
Shopping for Furniture? . . .	29
New Window Shelves for Your Plants . . .	40
Here's an Idea! . . .	58

### Better Foods

SO Good Meals . . .	32
Snacks From the Emergency Shelf . . .	36
Cooks' Round Table:	
Oyster Recipes . . .	37
Pancakes and Waffles . . .	38
Contest (Smart Cooks) . . .	70

### A Number of Things for the Family

Across the Editor's Desk . . .	4
Forecast of Growing Things . . .	7
Our Guarantee to You . . .	8
It's News to Me! . . .	10
Back Talk! . . .	46
Strictly Business . . .	61
The Man Next Door . . .	66
Service Leaflets and Booklets . . .	78

### Building and Remodeling Ideas

Skillful Surgery Restored This Home . . .	30
Why Build for Only NOW? . . .	39
The Question Before the House . . .	56

### How to Manage the Home

All Set for Fun (Table Settings) . . .	34
Mrs. Shultz Visits the Quints . . .	50
Laundry-Closet Remodeling Trick . . .	54
More Table Space . . .	65

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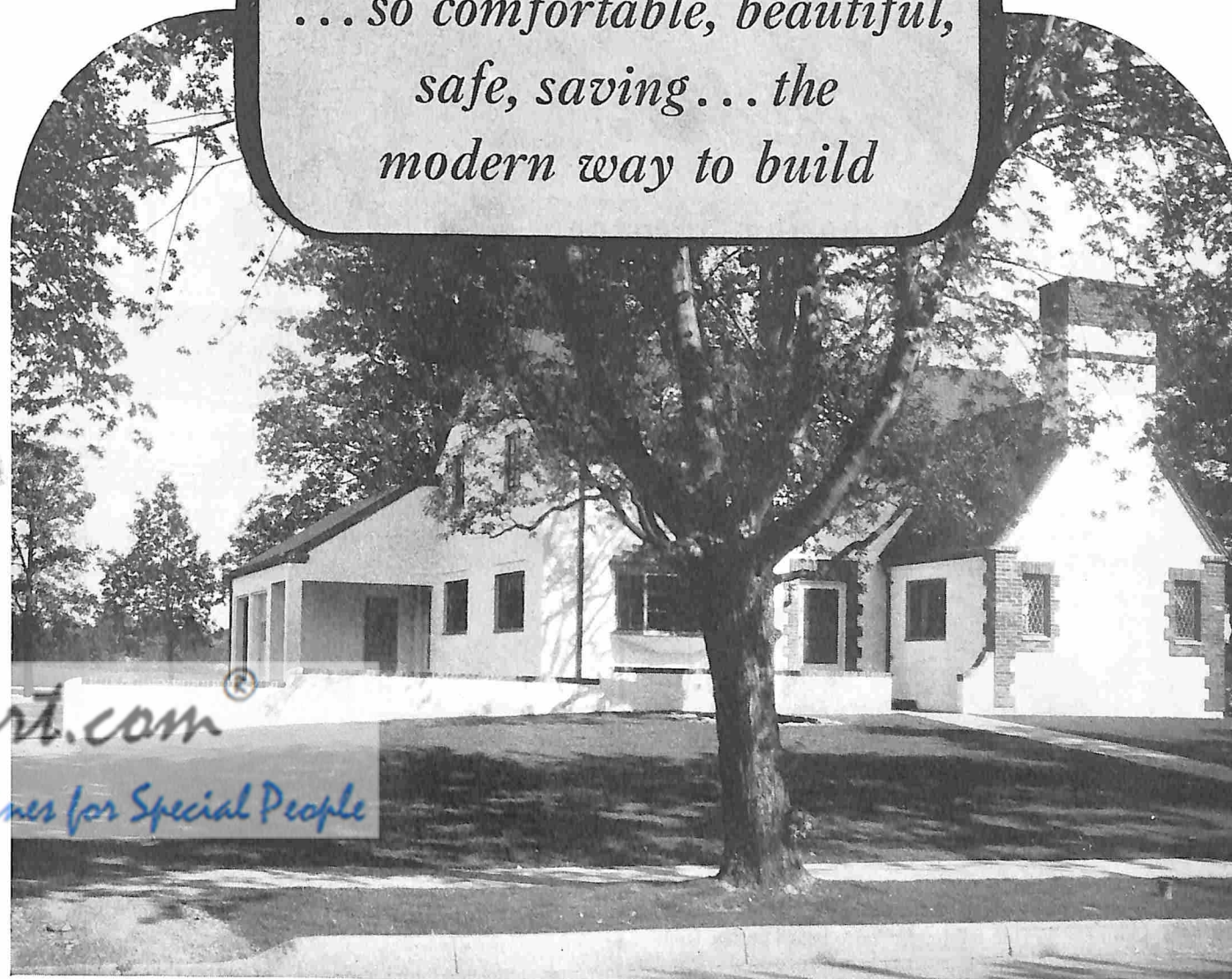
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