

• canterbury causerie •

M.B.E. For Canterbury Man

A Canterbury man, whose initiative and hard work has given the youth of this country an opportunity to enter an annual international trade competition, has been awarded the M.B.E. in the New Years Honours List.

He is 58-year-old Mr. Frederick D. Hill, of Bramley Avenue, Canterbury, founder of the Canterbury Cathedral Craft Centre.

Mr. Hill is the official representative and organiser for Britain for the International Apprentice Competition entered by young people from thirteen countries.

The competition was founded in Spain and was first held in 1951 with only two participating countries, but it was two years later when Mr. Hill, and subsequently Britain, came into the picture.

In 1953 a third international competition was organised and invitations were sent to Portugal, Germany, Morocco, Switzerland, Italy, France and Britain.

Although letters were sent to British organisations, no support was forthcoming.

Mr. Hill's son, Douglas, who was then 17 years old, heard of the competition and was allowed to enter. A guardian was needed and Mr. Hill went driving to Madrid. When he arrived, he discovered there was no British team and his son was the only entrant from this country. His son won his section — woodwork — and received a silver medal from General Franco.

FRIENDLY SPIRIT

"What impressed me most," Mr. Hill told a "Kentish Observer" reporter, "was the comradely spirit between the hundred odd apprentices from all over Europe. It was good to see the understanding between the youth despite the language problem.

"I felt our own country should take part in the competition officially."

A personal visit to the British Embassy in Madrid brought only rebuff, and the advice given to Mr. Hill was

to "play it down" as Spain was then not so popular in Government, or even tourist, circles.

During the next three years Mr. Hill spent much time, effort and expense to lay the foundations of a regular British team in the competition.

In 1956 he was able to collect a team of six British apprentices, making his own selections from the entrance forms he was by then receiving from various parts of the country.

HONOURED BY SPAIN

The next year twelve youths went to the competition. At the competition held in Brussels, the first time it had been held outside Spain, Mr. Hill was awarded the Medal of Youth, by the Spanish Government, for his special efforts and services for the benefit of European youth. In Spain this medal is considered to be the highest award for services for youth.

It was the first time the award had gone to a "foreigner."

During the time he worked for the competition—he is a member of the international organising committee—Mr. Hill did much to start scouting in Spain. Interest has arisen in the badge of the 2nd Canterbury Scout Group, of which Mr. Hill was president, which was displayed on his car. Mr. Hill obtained instructive documents on the scouting movement for the Spanish authorities and as a result a group of the heads of Spanish youth services visited England for ten days during which they studied the movement. A regular exchange

of British and Spanish youth now takes place each year.

Last year's competition—England now sends about 30 entrants—was held in Dublin, Eire, in July.

In October last year Mr. Hill was presented with the Order of Cisneros, by the Spanish authorities, for his work for youth. The medal was presented by Spain's Chief of State.

AMBITION REALISED

Mr. Hill's ambition of Britain becoming a host country to competitors, will be realised in 1965.

The competition covers bricklaying, silversmithing, jewellery, plumbing, and many other trade skills. The judging is done by men who are technical experts in their respective trades.

Mr. Hill's son—he has four daughters—is now a director of Hill Bros. Ltd., who make indicator boards, one of which keeps passengers up-to-date on arrivals and departures at London Airport. He is also a director of the firm.

Born in London, Mr. Hill lived most of his life in Dorset until coming to Canterbury with his wife in 1947. He formerly lived at Harbledown House, Harbledown, and was helped in the Crafts Centre by his children, who are all skilled in certain crafts.

Mr. Hill hopes the competition for which he has worked so hard and long, will become really international. Japan has sent entries and America and Mexico are sending observers with a view to joining.

To the man whose fine work was first recognised by a foreign Government now goes the M.B.E.



Mr. F. D. Hill

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FRIDAY, JANUARY 3, 1964

THE NEW YEAR'S HONOURS LIST

M.B.E. For Canterbury Man

INCLUDED in the New Year's Honours was Mr. Frederick D. Hill (58), of Berry House, 21 Bramley Avenue, Canterbury, who is awarded the M.B.E. for his work as the British Official Representative on the Organising Committee of the International Apprentice Competition.

The competition is governed by the Organising Committee of the International Apprentices' Vocational Training Competition which has its offices in Spain, the country which originated the scheme. The International Organising Committee decides upon various tests and these are not made known to the competitors until the competition begins.

Among the many trades included in the competition—held in many different countries—are joinery, jewellery, plumbing, bricklaying and carpentry. This year it will take place in Portugal. It lasts for a fortnight, the first week being taken up with the competition and the second in cultural visits.



Mr. F. D. Hill

Mr. Hill's association with the competition began in 1953 when his son, Douglas, an apprentice joiner, heard of it and asked whether he could enter.

Mr. Hill discovered that there was no British team and that his son was the only entrant from this country. The Spanish authorities said that he could not be accepted unless he had a guardian, so Mr. Hill took this position.

It was from this small beginning that the British Organising Committee and British teams of 32 strong have arisen.

Mr. Hill was so impressed with the spirit of friendliness among the boys of different nationalities that he felt it would be a good thing for Britain to take part in an official capacity.

On his return from Spain he did not receive a great deal of encouragement from official sources so he wrote to all the large firms, such as Rolls Royce and English Electric. Within two years he organised a team of six boys who competed in the 1956 competition.

By the following year he had contacted the City and Guilds of London Institute, who have taken a great interest in the scheme ever since.

Gradually the number of entrants from this country rose until now teams average about 30 people.

Mr. Hill's ultimate ambition in connection with the competition is shortly to be realised. It has been recognised by the British Government and is to be held in this country for the first time in 1965.

Every year Mr. Hill leads the British team and in October he was awarded the Knight Commander of the Order of Cisneros at Madrid by the Chief of State for Spain. This was in recognition of his work for the youth of Europe.

Another of Mr. Hill's interests is the Scout Movement. For 11 years he has been the chairman of the 2nd Canterbury Scout

Group's Parents' Committee. He is a founder member of the Canterbury branch of the Baden Powell Guild of Old Scouts and a member of the Executive Committee of the Canterbury and District Local Association of Boy Scouts.

Mr. Hill furthered his connections with Spain by his work in endeavouring to establish a Scout Movement there. It is hoped that in the future the Spanish will be affiliated to the World Scout Movement.

Mr. Hill is married with four daughters, one son and three grandchildren. He came to Canterbury in 1947 and founded the Canterbury Cathedral Craft Centre in 1951. His four daughters were employed at the centre. Before moving to Bramley Avenue he and his family lived at Harbledown House.

Mr. Hill is director of four London companies including Hill Bros. (Service) Ltd. and the Graphic Titling Company.

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