

HILD, LILLIAN

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Hungarian Artist-Linguist

86 Hour Day Is

By Dorothy McCardle

THERE WAS A TIME when Hungarian artist-linguist Lillian von Hild, now of Bethesda, wished for a 36-hour day.



McCardle

"But that's much too short for all the living I would like to cram into each day," says Mrs. von Hild. "Nothing less than an 86-hour day will be adequate."

That sets the theme of courage and relish with which this charming and gifted woman has survived the personal disaster of war and total loss of fortune.

Her philosophy of living, acquired during her 50-odd years, gives a distinctive vitality to the classes in sculpture and Spanish which she teaches to adults at two junior high schools and a D. C. recreation center.

"My students are all grown-ups, and I try to convey to them the greatest joy in the world, the joy of learning something new all the time," she says.

Her Wish Now

Her lifetime motto, has been:

"Keep your eyes, your ears, and your heart open, but not your mouth. Keep it shut."

THIS ATTITUDE is invisibly inscribed upon the atmosphere of her classrooms at the Guy Mason Recreation Center and Western Junior High School where she teaches Spanish, and at Kensington Junior High School where she teaches sculpture.

Mrs. von Hild talked last week in the living room of her small cottage just back of the National Institutes of Health—of the past when she and her husband lost all they had in Budapest, of the present when life is beginning again in America, and of the future when she feels fatalistic about Russia and its multi-megaton bombs.

Virtually every item of furniture and decor in her living room has been made by Mrs. von Hild and her husband, Charles, with do-it-yourself resourcefulness. Included are wooden benches along two walls with gaily covered cushions, a home-made wooden-framed sofa with handsomely covered foam rubber pads, a coffee table that is covered with a handsome embroidered (by Mrs. von Hild) runner, but soon will have a ceramic top (also by her).

She designed the bookcases and made the draperies. And all the ceramic ornaments were fired in her two professional kiln in her attic studio.

One that particularly catches the eye is a large plate bearing the von Hild family crest in soft, muted colors. This is all that is left of those great, rich days in Hungary when Charles von Hild was president of his own factory, lived in a fine house in Budapest, had a

summer home 10 miles distant, and when he and his wife flew their own private plane.

IN MARCH, 1944, bombs from American planes leveled von Hild's concrete factory. Their home high on a hill was shot to bits by Russian bullets from the hill opposite. And their little plane was kidnapped by the Soviets, too.

They had nothing left except their courage and a life-time desire to come to the United States. Von Hild had read for years of scientific and engineering progress in America. He wanted to try his own engineering skill here. But it took them 10 years to get here, by way of Argentina where they spent a decade before they finally sighted the Statue of Liberty.

In another year, they will have completed their five years residence to qualify for U. S. citizenship.

Mrs. Von Hild, once an ardent swimmer, skier and writer of children's stories, now devotes herself to language and art. She speaks seven languages, perfected her Spanish during that decade in Argentina. She is a graduate of the Budapest Academy of Fine Arts in sculpture and architecture. Her ceramics are on exhibit here at Garfinckel's, Wood-





By Douglas Chevallier, Staff Photographer

OH, WHAT A BEAUTIFUL MORNIN'—

This has been the theme song of Lillian von Hild before and since she fled from Hungary after World War II. She now teaches language and sculpture in adult

education classes here, and has not let the loss of home and fortune in Budapest diminish her joy in living. She and her husband, Charles, treat their Belgian shepherd, Adore, like a member of the family.

ward & Lothrop's and the Watergate Inn.

BUT THERE ARE still so many more things she wants to learn—time permitting. Despite all she and her husband have suffered at the hands of the Soviets, she still feels none of the apprehension which is driving so many people in America to dig shelters.

"After you have lived through war, you feel fatalistic about it," she says. "You make the most of every precious minute of the day and wish you didn't have to sleep any of the wonderful hours of life away.

"I can honestly say that never in my life have I ever known a moment of boredom."

