

It Looks Like Ferris Wheel but It's Inventor Says No

BY CHRISTOPHER JANUS.

Wheaton youngsters who live near 212 West Seminary street hope it's going to be a ferris wheel, but carnivals never take so long to put ferris wheels up. Housewives say it looks like a rug dryer, but there cannot be many rugs in Wheaton that would need a seventy-foot frame. Scientific-minded passers-by guess atom smasher or device to shoot rockets to the moon.

They're all wrong. Only one person knows what the contraption is and he won't tell. He is Grete Rober and he is building it slowly in his own yard.

"There it is," says the inventor, "and you can make your own guesses. I'm against talking about inventions before they work out. All I'll say is that it has to do with radio. I don't expect to get rich from it, but I'm confident it will help radio."

"Maybe it'll do something about static or comedians," Mr. Grote's interviewer said hopefully.

"It has nothing to do with static," said the young inventor with some dignity. "It is an experiment in the propagation of radio waves."

Rober's mysterious "wheel" is built on the vacant lot next to his home. It actually looks like a large ferris wheel which has been cut in half and mounted on four wheels, each on axles in a cement foundation block, which enable it to be moved cradle fashion north and south. It's about twenty feet wide and seventy feet in diameter. Though an all-wood structure, it looks like steel due to the aluminum paint put on to preserve the wood.

There are no signs so far of aeri-als or other electrical connections to give it the appearance of being used for radio. It looks as if the other half could be built on

a motor attached, seats installed, multi-colored lights arrayed and tickets sold for the next ride. But Rober has bigger things in mind.

The idea came to him after he was graduated from Armour's Institute of Technology and was employed with a radio concern. He drew plans and tried to get some one to build his invention, but the price was prohibitive and he decided to build it himself. Now in his workshop over the family garage he is preparing to put on the finishing touches. Neighbors have watched it grow from four cement blocks to the present curicous structure and every day wonder what is coming next.

When it is actually operating some of Wheaton's citizens may have reason to complain; but Rober has assured the town officials that nothing sensational will happen. At least he hopes not, for he's not quite sure what the outcome of his work will be.

"I hope," he said, "to have this radio propagator finished by the end of the month—that is if I can dodge some of the people who me questions about it."

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