

Modern Victorians say vows over old lace and batiste

By LORAIN McCLISH

Thelma Moreen had completed all of the planning for her daughter's modern wedding, when her future son-in-law spotted a turn-of-the-century dress that caught his fancy at the Farmington Community Center's antique show this summer.

From that point on, all plans were scrapped to bring about a Victorian wedding for the wedding of Marjorie Moreen and Thomas Larga.

The plans are now set after two months of research. The couple received the aid of local antique dealers, plus the talents and properties of the Farmington Players.

Mrs. Moreen said at one point during the planning that she never knew of another mother-of-the-bride who had received so much assistance.

The dresses that the bride and her two bridesmaids will wear were purchased from Mary Farkas, known in antique circles as "Mary the Magpie." She had just purchased them from the Detroit Historical Society.

and put them on display during the center's annual show during the Founders' Festival.

"MARJORIE CAUSED quite a sensation when she tried the dress on after her fiancé said he'd buy it for her if it fit. It wasn't too soon after that that the family bought all three of them and decided to use them for the coming wedding," Mrs. Farkas said.

"It was really a beautiful coincidence that the bride's dress did fit so well because the clothes are so very tiny. And what a thrill for me to know those gorgeous dresses are going to be worn by these gorgeous people."

As for the fit of the dresses, Mrs. Moreen remarked later that the person who first wore the bridal dress "must have had the neck of a chicken."

Hope Nahstol, a member of the Farmington Players and an authority

on costuming, said, "Of all the beautiful clothes we've accumulated for the players, most of the turn-of-the-century clothes are just too small for any of us."

After the sale, Mrs. Farkas set about phoning other antique dealers in the area to help accumulate accessories for the wedding party. "Until I thought of Hope, I knew she would be the one to pull the whole thing together."

THE DRESSES are all batiste with several petticoats, and each demanded much mending.

Patches came from old soft percale handkerchiefs, put in by hand, and covered with ruffles or flounce.

"Hope wouldn't use a sewing machine because the dresses were all hand-made, and she knew just where every snap and hook should or shouldn't be," Mrs. Moreen said.

As mending was done by hand, so

was washing, starching and ironing.

Marjorie Moreen will be the fifth member of her family to wear her great grandmother's veil. Her 1890 gown will be complimented with her great grandmother's amethyst brooch.

Her hat comes from the player's storeroom, perked up with silk ivory flowers and pearls, fashionable for the period.

"We went through boxes and boxes of ribbons and sashes," Mrs. Moreen said, "hunting for the right accents at the barn."

Colored sashes and colored ribbons will be worn around the waists and around the hats of the bride's sister, Rosanna Moreen, and another bridal attendant, Cyd Ayers.

All of the young women's hats came from the players' storeroom, as did the bride's parasol, made of eyelet linen with full flounce.

"DRESSES THE bridesmaids will wear were worn about 1910 or 1915, probably by very affluent young ladies," Mrs. Nahstol said. "When it was necessary to add a lace or ribbon or frill, it was a piece that came from anywhere between 1890 and 1915." Men in the bridal party will wear gray striped pants, cutaways and ascots.

The groom will don a top hat and come immediately after the Sept. 10 ceremony in Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church. Then the party will move over to the Farmington Community Center's turn-of-the-century setting to receive guests.

The living room of the old house will be decorated with potted ferns and palms. Music and food will be fitting to the decor and the era. The couple will stand under a bower when they receive their guests.

"Those clothes were meant to be worn with a flair, and that couple is doing it just exactly right," Mrs. Farkas said.

THE BRIDE is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. V. David Moreen, of 3003 Bescontee, Farmington Hills. The groom is the son of Mrs. Elio Larga, and the late Mr. Larga, of Valparaiso, Ind.

She is a graduate of the University of Indiana. He is a graduate of Valparaiso University, employed with Superior Construction.

They will make their home in Valparaiso, after a wedding trip to Hawaii.



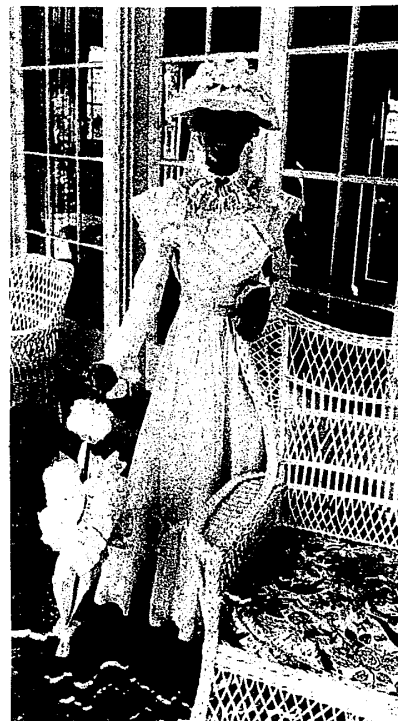
Marjorie Moreen (at left) and her sister Rosanna, who will be her bridesmaid, get into the Victorian spirit with a pose on the Farmington

Community Center lawn, typical of the turn-of-the-century. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)



Thursday, September 8, 1977

(F) 1B



The finest batiste and old lace make up the bride's gown, which was worn for the first time in the early 1890's. All of the clothes and accessories for the turn-of-the-century wedding have been chosen to recreate a Victorian wedding. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)

Braillists tell how it's done at September tea

By LORAIN McCLISH

Braillists who work out of Nardin Park United Methodist Church will show guests the various machines they use, give demonstrations, and tell about their organization and the services they give to the blind at a tea, set for 1 p.m. Sept. 20, in the church, located at Eleven Mile and Middle Belt.

The tea is an orientation session for persons who have already signed up to take braille classes this fall, for those who think they might be interested in taking the study, and for those who want to learn about the group and have something to contribute.

The afternoon session will be conducted by Dee Josaitis, chairman of the local affiliate of the Tri-County Braille Transcribers, and Marjorie Gripe, a braille teacher.

Blind persons are spared the problem of living in a world without the printed word because of the network of volunteer braille transcribing groups across the country, which provide them with free braille books.

In this area, the brailleists come from all walks of life. They include teachers, secretaries, nurses, accountants, photographers, artists, mothers and housewives, and are of both sexes.

"THE ONLY requirement," says Mrs. Josaitis, "is willing hands, a big heart, and a need to make a real contribution to the community."

To the blind, braille means independence and literacy. Their braille materials are provided by volunteers who learn a challenging and very

exacting code, and all requests are filled, free of charge.

Requests that come to the volunteers are for fiction, textbooks, cookbooks, technical manuals, bus schedules, music notations, sewing patterns, insurance policies and mobility maps, to name a few.

After the brailled pages are completed, they are sent to the Braille Book Bindery, in Southfield's Temple Beth-El, which is operated by the temple's sisterhood.

Both groups are affiliates of the tri-county parent group, which acts as a clearing house to avoid duplication.

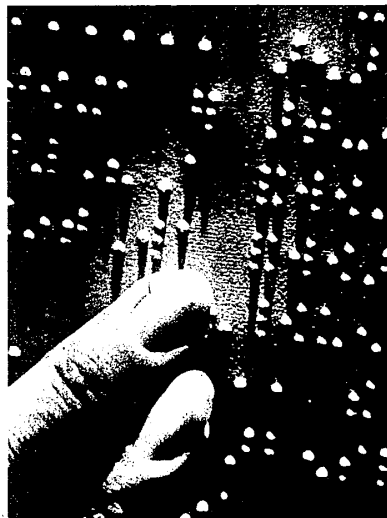
Morning and evening classes for the volunteers will be conducted in Nardin Park church, beginning the week of Oct. 10, and continue through May. Cost for the course is \$20.

THE BRAILLISTS type on braille writers in their own homes and work at their own pace. Each volunteer, after completing the course, must transcribe a 35 page manuscript, which is submitted to the Library of Congress for grading.

Students meeting the required high standards of quality will be given a Certificate of Achievement from the Library of Congress.

After receiving their certification, the volunteer gives whatever amount of time she or he can to the list of requests at hand.

The Nardin Park Braille Transcribers are supported by donations, and through the sale of their Christmas cards, which can be purchased now through December by calling Bonnie Shriver at 476-6997, or Fran Hoetger at 476-4973.



Fingers trace the braille message from the manuscript written by volunteers to furnish the blind with their most vital link to the sighted world. (Staff photo by Harry Mauthe)

Mercy plans mini-retreats

The first mini-retreat of the new season, given for women in Mercy Center, is set for 9:15 a.m. Sept. 16, with the morning theme "Awareness of God in the Now as a Means of Spiritual Growth."

"The purpose of a retreat is not merely to talk about prayer, but to pray," said Jean Peter, program coordinator of the center. "More than a luxury, it is the spiritual space one needs to reflect and pray about what matters in life. The mini-retreats, scheduled for the third Friday morning of each month, hope to provide that spiritual space we need."

The first retreat will be conducted by Sr. Ann Chester and Sr. Frances

Rees. Both are staff members of the Kresge House of Prayer, in Detroit.

Registration is \$2 for the retreat, and may be paid before the retreat begins, or it may be mailed beforehand to Miss Peter, at Mercy Center, 28300 Eleven Mile, Farmington Hills, 48018.

If participants wish to stay for lunch in the center's dining room, the cost is an additional \$1.50. Participants are urged to make registration before the day of the retreat.

The center is located on Eleven Mile, between Middle Belt and Inkster. Guests are asked to use the parking lot adjacent to Gate 4.

Bible school balloons return

By CAROL A. CLAPP

One morning early last month, 70 balloons lifted gently off the ground and soared toward the northeast. Each had a message attached which gave an address, a child's name and a description of why the balloon was being sent.

The address belonged to Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Farmington Hills, and the releasing of the church's Vacation Bible School (VBS) festivities, appropriately known as Balloon Day.

The idea is to see how far the balloons will go, and the note instructs finders of the balloons to return the card with a letter telling where and when it was found, and relating any interesting facts about the finders.

This year, three balloons of the 70 found their way back to the church via the mail. All three were found quite close together in Ontario.

The first to be found was the balloon of 7-year-old Christine Pattinson, 130-miles away at a farm outside of Mossley, on Aug. 4. A man spreading lime on his 90 acres, which he farms strictly with horses, found it at the end of a laneway leading to his back field.

This is the second time Christine has had her balloon returned, and it's only the second year that she has participated in Balloon Day.

The other two balloons were found on Aug. 7, one in a backyard rock garden in Ancaster, a suburb of Hamilton, and the other by a backyard swimming pool in Putnam. Both were shrimmed, a fact which both finders commented upon.

The balloon of 15-year-old Shari

Hunter, an assistant at the VBS, was found by a couple cleaning up their rock garden after a bad storm. It had traveled 185 miles, the farthest of the three to be returned.

The closest of the three was that of Patricia Harjes, a Sunday school and VBS teacher, which was found 125 miles away in the back yard of a family which had just returned from vacation in the Detroit suburb of Westland.

While the father of the family was the finder, the one who wrote the letter returning the balloon was 11-year-old Wendy Howard. In her letter, she talked about her sister Laura, 10, and their dog Duchess, and said Putnam was 15 miles east of London. Since the town wasn't on the map, without that information the VBS people wouldn't have known where it came from.

Compared to last year, this was a disappointing return, according to Betty Burrell, who was in charge of Balloon Day.

Mrs. Burrell said that last year, nine of the 150 balloons sent up returned, and the farthest came from Utica, N.Y., 445 miles away. Of the nine, eight went eastward and were found in a cluster along the New York-Pennsylvania border, and the ninth headed south to Indianapolis, Ind.

"It depends on how much helium you put in them," Mrs. Burrell said. "About half full is just about right."

"If you put too much in, they go too high, and burst without going too far, and if you don't put enough in, they won't even go up to the ceiling after the cards are tied on."

"We ruined about 15 balloons that way this year."