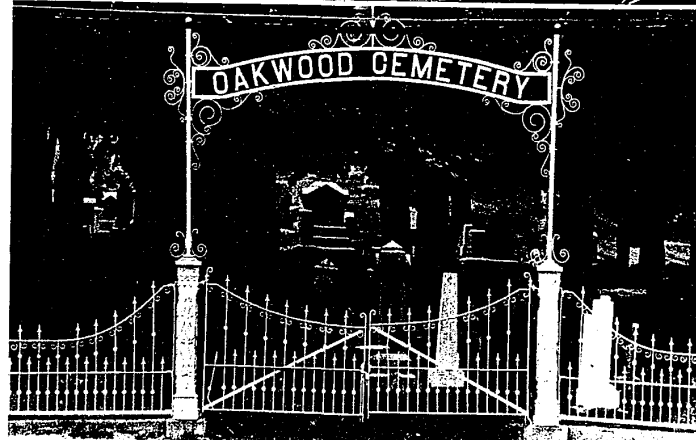


The rose-ferstooned trellis gives this garden gate (left) a festive appearance, while the gate above brings a touch of the old West to this house in Farmington's historical district. The Oakwood Cemetery gate (right) offers some direction as to the destination of the departed souls within. (Staff photos by Harry Mauthe)



Swingers

They get a creak out of life

From Tom Sawyer's white picket number to the legendary peartly entrance to the afterlife, gates have made their presence known throughout history with a resounding creak.

To permit entry or prevent access—that's the ostensible purpose of these garden swingers. Adorned with roses or iron grates, gates, like people, can be frivolously ornamental or starkly utilitarian. Although even a rovince burglar can surmount the casual fence obstacle free of electrical wiring, the garden gate allows entry to the welcome visitor with ease.

And a whimsical touch on these typically oil-free entries are one way homeowners choose to personalize their property. The homeowner who has special regard for the gate may resent the slurs applied to watery gates of recent years, while scorning the security-guarded brick numbers erected to ensure the privacy and continued wealth of luxury apartment dwellers.

The gate fancier also may entertain thoughts of the elite when comparing the individualized gate to the garden variety type—typically the steel-wired structures known as cyclone fences. After all, most puppies learn to dig under the steel fence within a week and a smart racoon can learn to push the latch for crumbs.

It's the gates and fences of past eras that promise the most diversity for the devoted gate gazer.

downtown Farmington will expand the gate student's education. To begin at the Oakwood Cemetery on Grand River north of Shiawassee, you encounter the traditional cemetery fence complete with hinged gates. The knowledgeable Farmington resident will notice a new coat of silvery paint applied by the Boy Scouts of Troop 101.

On through the historical district on Shiawassee, you find a tall swinging gate embellished with summer roses while a quick left turn on Grace allows an encounter with a gate adorned with a wheel motif. A classically turned garden gate is on view on the north side of Shiawassee, west of Farmington Road, while a number of picket fences with the proverbial spheres on top can be found on Oakland, east of Farmington Road.

For a venture in the mundane, numerous, redwood fences with an angle for privacy can be viewed throughout the area, while the stone fence at the Farmington Community Center offers eye appeal.

For those who doubt the historical importance of the gate in history, let's not forget poor Hector of the "Iliad" fame who died at the gates of Troy. The notorious swingers also permitted entry to the Trojan Horse, thus sanctioning its own demise as the Greeks crouched within the wooden gift prepared to level the city.

At the same time, Biblical students must assume that the Jericho gates held firm—it was the wall that came tumbling down.

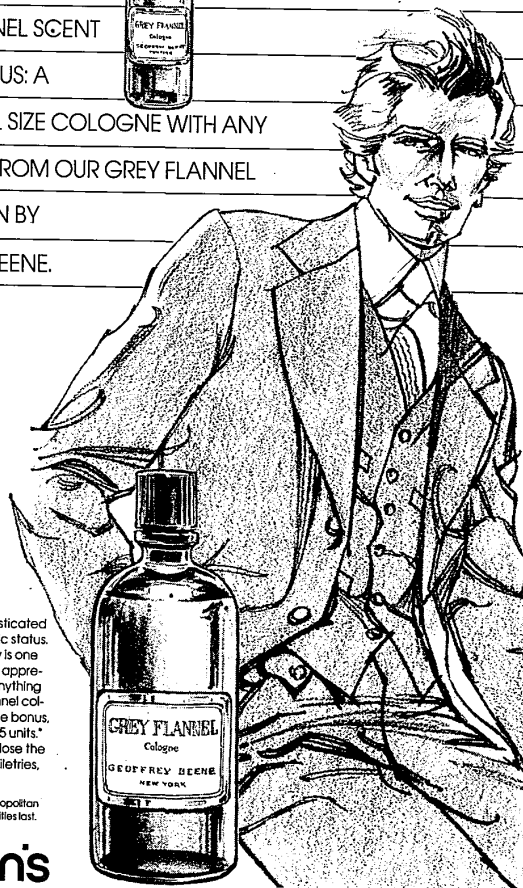
AN AUTO tour around the historical district of



Better than a moat, this cyclone fence has a backup to keep unwelcome visitors out of this Farmington yard. It appears that the

gate, complete with lock and chain, doesn't get much use.

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