

Monday's Commentary

Old photos, memories rekindle flavor of another era

Imagine a time when lighting was considered so new, so affluent that Orchard Lake Road from Farmington to Pontiac became an incandescent corridor.

Imagine a time when Farmington was so small that the phone operators automatically knew the numbers of the town's prominent families.

A Warner family member would only have to pick up the phone and say, "I want to talk to my Uncle Howard" and the operator would correctly connect the two parties.

That's exactly the way Dr. Robert Gaukler remembers the town. Gaukler is the grandson of Fred Warner, the cheese factory owner and three-term governor of Michigan. At that time between 1904-10, the terms lasted for two years, a duration designed to keep the politicians on their campaign toes.

Gaukler's mother, Helen Warner-Gaukler, died Oct. 24 at the age of 90. With her went another part of the era when each small town had its prominent families.

Today families like that are portrayed as either the right people or the rigid enforcers of an oppressive social system. It depends on your station in life.

But no matter who you were, there were some things that remained constant.

IT WAS a time when what was good for business was automatically assumed to be good for the country. Men ran the country and women were expected to run the house and not much else. Women couldn't vote nor were

they expected to be interested in such.

Thus, even after growing up in an extremely political family, Mrs. Gaukler's early memories weren't strongly political. There was no stumping for daddy.

She remembered her father embarking on a whistle stop campaign for public office. And her son still has a photo of a mustachioed Warner sitting next to the portly President Howard Taft.

"It's a marvelous picture. Except the man standing above them looks a little like Hitler and the person sitting in the same row looks like Frankenstein,"

said Gaukler.

Mrs. Gaukler was the youngest daughter of Gov. Warner and his wife, the former Martha M. Davis of Farmington. As a child she had a sweet, round face and blond hair bobbed around her ears.

Those were the years when the family had the first car in town. It was an open car and in the winter it was in-sufferably drafty Gaukler said.

A much better ride in the winter was the family sleigh which was used for those daring excursions into Redford.

THE FAMILY — Helen, her sister Susan Edessa and brothers Howard Malby and Harley Davis — lived in that friendly white house with a cupola on Grand River.

A party at the Warner mansion was sure to exclude liquor in the house because Martha Warner was a teetotaler. And it was sure to include children because Gov. Warner liked them.

He often ran around with the children on the front lawn when a party became too dull, while staid Republican watchers watched from the safety of porch and parlor.

While Mrs. Warner insisted on dry parties, her grandson now doubts if the entire house remained a sterling example of Womans Christian Temperance Union principles.

"Obviously there must have been liquor in the basement or in the upstairs part of the house somewhere. He was in politics. There must have been some drinking," Gaukler said, with a trace of wry humor in his voice.

But Mrs. Warner was a strict WCTU'er and passed it on to her two daughters.

Years later the two daughters would meet on occasion to eat in a nice little tea room where they would quaff a discreet dibonnet. That made up the strict limits of their alcoholic intake.

THEIR MOTHER remained true to her Quaker background.

"Every other Sunday we had dinner with Granny in Farmington. She was a very good cook," Gaukler said. Grandmother Warner stayed with

basic somber colors in her wardrobe — black, navy and gray. Her only jewelry were a string of pearls and diamond chip earrings.

While most of her offspring stayed in Farmington, Mrs. Warner's youngest daughter married Claire Gaukler in 1920 and daringly moved to Pontiac, 15 miles away. Years before the two daughters attended college in the east.

Grandmother Warner retained a few doubts about the innovations civilization was making in the '20s and the '30s.

"It was the height of the Depression and my cousin Bill and I went to the Reford Theater. That time you could get glasses, dishes and china from the theater."

"We took Gram Warner with us. We told her there was a wonderful movie at the theater and we wanted to see it. We begged her."

"We got into her Packard and went to the movie."

FIVE MINUTES after Frankenstein emerged from the burning mill she had us out of the theater and was giving us a lecture on the proper form

of entertainment for young boys," Gaukler said.

In later years, Grandmother Warner would rise at 5 a.m. to tend her garden. But the habit never caught on with Mrs. Gaukler, who preferred a good hand of master point bridge despite her childhood embargo on card playing in the governor's home.

Although she broke from a few family practices, Mrs. Gaukler retained one major family trait. She was a staunch Republican.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt's name was "an anathema in our house," Gaukler said.

His name could be mentioned only in a derogatory sense.

Warner-Gaukler offspring to this day remain somewhat Republican. Those who aren't keep it to themselves.

Mrs. Gaukler herself trusted in the party her father helped form in Michigan. One election year her son asked, "Do you read any political literature?"

"No, why should I?" came his mother's answer.

"Don't you want to be informed?"

"No, you just vote Republican," answered Mrs. Gaukler.



Gov. Fred Warner cracks a big smile for the camera as he's photographed with rotund President Howard Taft. Warner is on the extreme left, front row. Taft is to his right. (Photo courtesy of Dr. Robert Gaukler)



Helen Gaukler remained true to her family's Republican tradition, which was started by her father, Fred Warner.

Botsford beat

Hospital recounts its past

By RUSS TUTTLE

To trace the history of Botsford General Hospital, an osteopathic institution in Farmington Hills, it is necessary to follow a somewhat circuitous path.

During the years commonly referred to as the Great Depression, and for some time after World War II, the metropolitan Detroit area suffered from a lack of hospital beds.

It should not be too surprising, then, to learn that a number of small hospitals were put in the area. Some were profit making (or proprietary), some were non-profit. Some were very good, and some not as good.

One of the excellent non-profit facilities opened in 1944 in response to the obvious need for additional beds was the Ziegler Osteopathic Clinic Hospital. This facility, which initially offered only 25 beds and six bassinets, was created from what had been a small hotel situated on the east side of Livermore, just north of Michigan Ave. in Detroit.

The hospital continues today, but is no longer owned and operated by the Ziegler Osteopathic Hospital, Inc., the original manager. The facility has undergone several expansions and substantial modernization. It is now a 155-bed hospital known as the West Unit of the Osteopathic Hospitals of Detroit, Inc.

In 1950, the Greater Detroit Area Hospital Council and the University of Michigan prepared surveys which indicated that there would be shortly a need for approximately 1,000 additional hospital beds in the area then known as Farmington Township and environs.

THE BOARD of Directors of Ziegler Osteopathic Hospital, Inc. accepted the survey results as a challenge, and began to investigate the feasibility of constructing a new community hospital in the area.

A committee of the board was formed, and was successful in finding a 15-acre plot just north of the Botsford Inn. Plans were then put in place, with

the approval of the Greater Detroit Area Hospital Council, to construct the new hospital.

Ground-breaking was accomplished on June 15, 1953; the corner stone was laid on April 15, 1954; and on January 16, 1955, the new 202-bed Botsford General Hospital was dedicated.

Lenore Romney, wife of then-Governor George Romney, was the principal speaker at the dedication which was attended by many of the community leaders.

The hospital has experienced significant growth. A second patient tower was added in 1972, and Botsford now provides 310 beds and 36 bassinets. The hospital maintains a major teaching affiliation with Michigan State University — College of Osteopathic Medicine, and is recognized nationally as a premier teaching hospital.

Currently 38 physicians are in residency training in 11 specialties and there 28 interns. Thirteen are women.

THERE WERE 170 employees in January, 1965. Today, Botsford provides employment for 1,300 personnel. It will provide a payroll of \$17.3 million, exclusive of the costs of fringe benefits for fiscal year 1980.

As a final word to indicate the commitment of the Botsford administration and board of directors, one should recall that just over two years ago, April 1977, a new structure was added to the hospital service capabilities.

In this structure, a three-story contemporary building located on the west side of the hospital campus, are located physicians' offices, out-patient surgery facilities, out-patient radiology and nuclear medicine.

Also in the center: cardiac stress testing, classrooms for in-service and physician continuing education, classrooms for community education programs and office space for some members of the administration.

There you have it. A small Detroit hospital first opened in 1944 was ultimately translated to the modern, full-service, acute care community hospital we know today as Botsford General Hospital.

From our readers—
Thanks for aid in rain

Editor:

I have just returned from a very hurried shopping bout at the new IGA store at Orchard Lake Road and Ten Mile.

While shopping on this very cold, rainy night, I left my headlights on (it was 5:15.) Naturally my car died.

One young man, collecting the cars saw my plight and could see I was doing everything wrong — pumping the gas pedal, etc. He ran into the store and came out with a young friend, dressed beautifully and attached a jump cable and worked frantically under the hood — all the while coatless and in the rain.

They both worked quite some time using their own gas under the hood with a malfunctioning flashlight.

Finally with "Chip" in the driver's seat, my car started to purr. Beautiful sound.

I offered these fantastic young men a few dollars (wondering whether it would be enough) and they both courteously refused and said they were glad to help. I am 55 and look every bit of it — so their generosity was not because of my beauty.

I told the store manager I would certainly shop there again because they hired such nice young men.

"Chip" came to my rescue and "Butch" offered his car and dirtied his nice shirt. Their mothers must be very proud of them and should be.

PATRICIA RORAI,
Farmington Hills



Mike Scanlon

Pinboys bowl through life

This fall, for the first time since Denny McLain was an up-and-comer, I joined a bowling league. It was hard not to.

In Detroit there are something like 250,000 men, women and children in bowling leagues. It is the bowling capital of the country, which means the word — since your rickshaw fare will skyrocket should you choose to look for a likely looking lane in, say, Hong Kong.

The last time I was in a bowling league it was for boys about 12 to 16 years old and I had the second highest average with something like 156. We bowled at an east side place called the Jefferson Club which at the time just seemed like a crummy bowling alley over a Great Scott! supermarket.

The first lane was over the fruits and vegetable section and when we started rolling at 11 a.m. on Saturdays we used to like to picture the scenes down below as shocked shoppers grabbed for their hearts amid a cloud of flying rutabagas. Bowling, you see, makes a lot of noise and the way we had it figured . . . well, no need to go into that now.

THE JEFFERSON Club did not have automatic pinspotters, which are machines that sift through the rubble left after a bowling ball sweeps down the lane and knocks over some pins. Instead, the Jefferson Club had pinboys.

Why pinboys are called pinboys is something I have wondered ever since. Pinboys, at least at the Jefferson Club, were an average of about 47 years old. You knew that because they all had beards which you could easily spot because none of them

shaved. Why waste good money on razors when there's wine to be bought?

The Lee Iacoccas of the world do not become pinboys, folks. These pinboys were the kind of guys you probably wouldn't care to leave alone in a room with an unlocked can of Slermo.

Some of the other guys in the league did not like these pinboys and thought it was a barrel of fun to roll bowling balls at their skinny legs as they squatted, rearranging pins. I did not do this since I noticed that the pinboys moved the pins off mark for the people who did do this.

INSTEAD, I rolled a dime or a quarter down the alley before the game. The pinboys' generous placement of the pins beamed up my average as a result.

Some years later I read a story in one of the Detroit papers hailing the virtues of the Jefferson Club, the city's last non-automated alley. The pinboys thought their jobs were fine except for people rolling balls at their skinny legs.

Some things never change. But some do. This year I'm bowling at an alley in Melvindale that has 10 lanes and no liquor license, both of which are unusual attributes in today's highly polished, no-spitting-allowed world of modern bowling facilities. Alleys are out.

In this league I have the lowest average. The worst. The bottom.

Progress is not always what it's cracked up to be. Give me a pinboy, a half-dollar and a bottle of Boone's Farm and I could be at the top.

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