



Pat Bordman

## Touring mansion helps compare size

For a child the issue of size can cause some confusing and even frustrating minutes.

A tiny car meant for hand-held races can be mistaken for the full-sized version by the young child unsure of spatial concepts. Placing the model car on the floor and trying to step into it, he repeats, "Me get in, me get in."

The watchful parent, knowing that the 3-inch version of the American Dream couldn't possibly transport anything more than an underfed ant, remarks at how silly that little person is. Actually, the car serves as a clue to the child's confusion over space and his place in the world.

Only gradually will a child establish his own sense of relationship to objects in his environment. Comparisons are important. "How big are you?" and "How big is it?" Can you squeeze through a keyhole? Or can only your imagination do such an acrobatic stunt? Ability to differentiate extremes in size and space takes time.

There is no better place to contrast and compare size than Meadow Brook Hall and Knoke Cottage in Avon Township. The former Wilson Mansion was actually used as a family home, even though it's vastness seems to belie this.

This is a place where both the child's mind and adult's perspective can intersect for it is difficult at both ends of the age spectrum to grasp the extremes seen here.

Meadow Brook Hall, with its 100 rooms, rose garden and fountain stands alongside Knoke Cottage, the 4 1/2-story playhouse built for Frances, one of the Dodge children.

The hall has rooms of many sizes and best of all, hidden staircases and concealed rooms. The questions of which wall has space behind it for such secrets and who can fit the narrow stairwells will make this outing quite an adventure.

The secret places and tiny spaces of Meadow Brook Hall and Knoke

Cottage can be visited September through June from 1-5 p.m. Sundays. For further information call 377-3140. There is a charge.

Patricia Bordman, a freelance writer and photographer, has taught elementary school and conducted workshops and lectures on education. She is a master's degree candidate at Oakland University specializing in early childhood.

Mrs. Bordman welcomes suggestions and comments. Please write her c/o the Observer-Eccentric Newspaper, 36251 Schoolcraft Rd., Livonia 48150.

—R PATRICIA BORDMAN



Meadow Brook Hall in Avon Township is a place where both the child's mind and adult's perspective can intersect. (Staff photo by David Frank)

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Mr. Erickson attended the Roy Vogue School of Interior Design in Chicago and is currently a designer and assistant store manager at Gorman's Troy. Responsible for planning and decorating the store's 103 room settings, Mr. Erickson also designed and set up furniture for the Channel 7 Morning Show. Recently, he completely decorated a Vacation Home display at Northland Shopping Center. With fifteen years of decorating experience, he has written articles on furniture display for the Detroit News and Free Press. Mr. Erickson's services are available to you at Gorman's Troy.  
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