

# Suburban Life

Loraine McClish editor/477-5450



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## Botsford Inn

### Yearlong celebration will mark sesquicentennial anniversary

By Loraine McClish  
staff writer

**F**ARMINGTON HILLS Police Department's new color guard performed its first assignment today by raising an American flag with 25 stars. The handmade flag that will be flying over Botsford Inn throughout the year is a duplicate of one that flew over the stagecoach stop in 1836 and signals the year-long celebration of the inn's 150th anniversary.

Meanwhile, artists and chefs, printers and antique consultants, actors and historians, flower arrangers and committees without number are working toward a dozen dates on the 1986 calendar.

Farmington Hills historian Jean Fox has authored a book, "More Than a Tavern," which will be in print before the merriment is out to mark the occasion. Farmington historian Margaret Walker is gathering information on the inn's antiques to put into a booklet and will head up the guided tours scheduled throughout the year.

Farmington High School students' first effort in their new video training class is a tape of Botsford's history.

Hope Nahstoll is writing a script of the history to be acted out by members of St. Dunstan Players.

Twenty-eight inaugural ball gowns will come out from behind glass cases to go into a historical fashion show.

**BOTSFORD** Innkeeper John Anhut admits to being "overwhelmed by the number of people who were willing to become involved in this because they are enamored of this inn, because they have taken a personal interest in it."

Anhut continued by telling instances where guests would tell him "don't tamper with that — leave it the way it is," or a guest "was upset because we had moved the Christmas carolers to another spot."

"So I knew a lot of residents had a proprietary interest in what we have here, but I just never imagined it would explode to these proportions," he said.

Anhut's explosion started almost two years ago with a letter he sent out asking for some ideas on ways to celebrate the anniversary. As a result, standing committees have been meeting once or twice monthly ever since, working on ideas and plans for 1986.

"We couldn't make a meal on a hearth fire. My chef says it would take a week, so that was one idea that had to go. Another idea was to deliver invitations to one of the balls on horseback. I backed out on that one because of the insurance. But most of the ideas are cemented up now and even some of those snowballed way out of what we suspected," he said.

An example of one of the ideas that snowballed was Fox's book that started out to be a pamphlet and will be issued in hard cover.

"It is not at all academic, not scholarly," Anhut said of "More Than a Tavern."

"It is a delightfully readable bit of history."

**THE GRAND** Sesquicentennial Anniversary Party, the inn's main event of the year, billed as "a grand evening filled with music, laughter and historic surprises" is set for Wednesday, Jan. 8. Proceeds from the party will be given to Botsford Hospital for its Health, Education and Wellness program.

William Clay Ford Jr. will be guest of honor that night, one of a string of about 50 people, notable in business, industry, education, local, state and federal government, who will be involved in some way in the anniversary year.

Tours of Botsford are expected to be announced starting in February.

The Historical Fashion Show, staged as a benefit for Farmington Community Center, is set for March 13.

Guests in vintage clothing will dine on foods prepared from historic recipes and dance the waltz, varsoviene and schottische as Henry Ford's spirit of fun is revived in the Botsford's ballroom May 10.

The photography of Monte Nagler goes on display in June and 80 award-winning Sweet Adelines perform in the courtyard June 16.

The photography of The Hillbilly Snaphooter, Joe Clark, goes up in July. Founders Day at The Botsford is set for July 19 with a parade of Model T automobiles, an ice cream social, barber-shop quartets and banjo music.

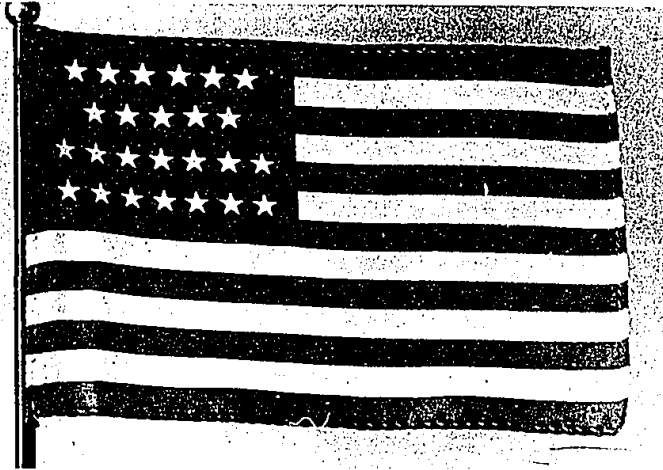
**THE BOTSFORD** Inn invites anniversary celebrants to be guests at an anniversary wedding brunch Aug. 17. To be a guest, just present a copy of the invitation to your wedding, reception or Golden Anniversary party to the Botsford.

Sept. 13 is the date set for the First Ladies Historical Pageant.

The inn hosts the Michigan Historical Society Convention, which is open to all history buffs, Oct. 17 to 19.

In November, Botsford's annual antiques show shares the spotlight with Farmington Garden Club's Standard Flower Show and an art show of work from Farmington Public School students.

Christmas at The Botsford remains Christmas at The Botsford with century old decorations and ornaments spread throughout the stagecoach stop that was once an outpost of civilization in the wilderness.



RICK SMITH/staff photographer

The flag that will fly over Botsford Inn this year is a duplicate of the one that flew over the stagecoach stop 150 years ago.



The picture above was taken in 1980 when Innkeeper John Anhut added an extension to the original stagecoach stop on the far east end of the building. The photo at left shows a sampling of the foods chefs are preparing now from 1836 recipes that will be served the way they were served 150 years ago.



RANDY BORST/staff photographer

Innkeeper John Anhut will open the Edison Suite on Botsford Inn's second floor for guided tours during the anniversary year. The bed was kept exclusively for Thomas Edison when he visited Henry Ford in Fairlane. When it was put up for sale, it was purchased,

along with other pieces from Fairlane, to furnish the inn. The room it stands in was also kept for Edison when he stayed at Botsford, but at that time the room's furnishings were quite Spartan.

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