

Life In Mansion

Her Girlhood Was Like A Fairy Tale



AS IT USED TO BE — This is a picture of what the Luman Goodenough mansion behind the stone wall on Farmington Rd., Farmington, looked like in 1895. In front of the home are Palmer Sherman, who built the house, and his family.



SHOWS ADDITIONS — This recent picture of the Goodenough Mansion shows the additions added to the building by Luman Goodenough. The home has been offered to Farmington to serve as a community center.

By ELIZABETH WISSMAN

Eleanor Goodenough Spicer's life today differs somewhat from the time she was growing up in Farmington's "Mansion Behind the Stone Wall" on Farmington Road.

But she still lives her life surrounded by beauty, the animals she loves, a view of open countryside unobscured by the subdivisions she hates and the priceless reminders of her girlhood.

That girlhood was lived in an era of grace and charm in what is now called the "Luman Goodenough mansion."

The mansion is just over a small hill from Mrs. Spicer's present home, in which she has lived since her marriage in 1935.

MRS. SPICER and her brother and sister have offered their childhood home to Farmington for use as a community center. A Community Center Drive is now in progress to raise funds to operate and support the center.

Asked why her family has offered such a generous gift to the community, the Goodenough daughter says, "It was my father's wish. He loved his home so much that he felt something good should come of it after his death. He had such roots here."

"When I was a girl, there were farms all around here and my father would get up in the middle of the night if a farmer needed help," she adds.

WHEN Luman Goodenough first bought his "mansion" it was a farmhouse, built in the 1860's by Palmer Sherman. At first the Goodenough family just spent their summers in the home, but made it their permanent residence in 1918.

MRS. SPICER remembers, "We were the first family around here to have a telephone and electricity. My father had to buy the phone poles and have them installed himself on a line from Grand River. Our lights always used to flicker because they operated on a battery we kept in the basement."

"My father made so many additions to the original house, porches, cupboards, a library, all sorts of additions."

She goes on, "Every year he'd move the gardens. I used to tell him we should put them on wheels."

THE MANSION'S gardens were famous and were cared for by five gardeners during the summer. Luman Goodenough would get up at 5 a.m. and go out and wander around in them in his bare feet -- he loved them so much.

But father's and daughter's greatest love was for horses. "We would ride every morning," recalls Mrs. Spicer. "We figured out one day that we'd ridden halfway around the world in miles."

"When I went to Miss Newman's school in Detroit and after the long ride home with him at night, we always had a reward waiting for us -- we would go riding."

Offer Tour Of Home

Farmington residents interested in visiting the Goodenough residence, which has been offered to Farmington as a community center, will have an opportunity to do so Sunday, Nov. 24.

Open house will be held at the home from noon to 6 p.m. More than 1,000 persons toured the proposed center during the Founders Festival.

Heirs of Luman Goodenough (Daniel W. Goodenough, Mrs. George Schenck and Mrs. Eleanor G. Spicer) have offered their former home to the people of Farmington if enough money can be raised this year to get the center established. An estimated \$50,000 is needed.

Members of the center campaign committee will be on hand at the open house to answer questions, distribute brochures and guide the tours. Donations may be made at that time or mailed to P.O. Box 145, Farmington, 48024.

MRS. SPICER still loves horses and today keeps three at her home near the mansion.

These keep company with three dogs, three cats and 20 sheep.

Still at home with Mrs. Spicer are her daughter, Elizabeth, 15, and sons, William, 16, and Charles, 20. Daughter Eleanor and son Nicholas are married. Nicholas is a lawyer like his two grandfathers, father and uncle.

Because she has teen-age children, the mother of this family knows that young people need a place in which to meet and do things together. She feels her girlhood home could provide this as a community center.

MEANWHILE, she has grown accustomed to having a constant household of them in her own home.

"It seems that I'm alone in fighting their lack of a place to meet. Parents don't seem to be willing to give of themselves. At Christmas time it's really funny around here. These youngsters are so grateful to me, I'm besieged with candy, perfume and soap. The drug-store where they buy it tries to talk them into something different, but it's always the same," smiles Mrs. Spicer. She should receive a citation for allowing so many young people the run of her beautiful home.

THE HOME'S ROOMS take their beauty from the furniture treasures that have come from the mansion, the touches like a window filled ceiling-high with

plants in odd little jugs, from colors like the blue of an heirloom Chinese oriental on the living room floor, from the personality of countless family photographs, from so many things.

But most of all, the beauty comes from Mrs. Spicer's artist eye which has seen to it that these details are arranged with the harmony and grace with which she grew up in the "Mansion Behind the Stone Wall."



MEMORIES — Eleanor Goodenough Spicer stands before a hunting scene which used to hang in her childhood home, Farmington's "Mansion Behind the Stone Wall," on Farmington Road. The mansion has been offered to Farmington for use as a community center. (Evert photo)

Farmington Community Center BOX SCORE

Needed to Open the Doors: \$60,000.00
Received to Date: \$ 2,762.91
STILL TO GO: \$ 57,237.09

Memberships: \$5 for individual; \$15 for family; \$30 for sustaining; and \$250 for patron. Have you sent in your contribution? Farmington Community Center, P.O. Box 145, Farmington 48024.

SEE SANTA SKY-DIVE* at 11 a.m.

Saturday at **WONDERLAND**

COME!!! SEE!!!

Bambi the Reindeer

Santa has a special treat for all Boys and Girls! Santa brought Bambi and all of his other reindeer with him from the North Pole! Bambi will be at Wonderland starting on November 23.

**STARTING NOV. 23 ALL STORES
WILL BE OPEN EVERY EVENING
UNTIL 9:30**

Watch Santa drop from the clouds from high above Wonderland. Join the festive parade to his enchanting Candy Castle on the Wonderland mall. Santa will lead the way in his own special Snowmobile!

Free Candy Cane for all the good boys and girls, and you can have your picture taken with Santa; a picture you will treasure in the years to come!

Santa will land in the field next to Wonderland.



**WONDERLAND
CENTER**
PLYMOUTH ROAD at MIDDLEBELT



Livonian Bound Over For Trial In Death Of Farmington Woman

A Livonia man accused of negligent homicide in the death of a Farmington motorist standing near her stalled car on Eight Mile pleaded innocent in Livonia Municipal Court Tuesday.

Visiting Judge Dunbar Davis of Plymouth, took testimony and held that the examination produced sufficient evidence for a Wayne County Circuit Court trial. He bound over Juan Miguel Gaminde, 42, of 29610 Grand, Livonia, for trial and continued bond at \$5,000.

THE NEGLIGENT homicide charge was brought by the Livonia Police Department's traffic bureau following an accident in the pre-dawn darkness of Wednesday, Oct. 9, on Eight Mile between Brentwood and Angling. Killed was Mrs. Mary S. Fineran, 56, of 21613 Hamilton, Farmington, formerly a

Bedford resident.

Robert Reuther, an attorney on the Wayne County prosecutor's staff, called to the stand Tuesday in Municipal Court several witnesses, while attorney Milton Lucow defended Gaminde, who did not take the stand.

A Livonia patrolman and an ambulance driver testified that they found the body of Mrs. Fineran in the middle of the two eastbound lanes of Eight Mile between her car, which was hit from behind, and that of Gaminde.

The accident scene, it was testified, was at the bottom of a hill at a bridge over the Rouge River. An earlier police report had indicated that Mrs. Fineran's car had stalled there.

KEY TESTIMONY was taken

from James Kirby, of 32658 Meadowbrook, Livonia, a tool grinder who witnessed the accident.

Kirby said that he was driving east on Eight Mile and that Gaminde, driving in the right hand lane, had passed him. The witness estimated Gaminde's speed at 45 to 50 miles per hour, in an area with a 40-miles-per-hour limit.

Kirby said that visibility in the area of the bridge at the dip in the road was nil. "It was pitch black," he explained on the stand. "I couldn't see anything myself. There were no street lights at all."

Kirby said that the lights on Mrs. Fineran's car were out. "There was only the reflection of the tail lights when his (Gaminde's) car came upon it," Kirby said. "He ran into it. I saw the impact."

The witness said that Gaminde tried to dodge to the left but it was too late. From a diagram made of the accident, it was shown that Gaminde's car stopped in the right-hand lane and Mrs. Fineran's car 50 feet to the front in the left hand lane.

Kirby said that he drove around the two cars, stopped and went to the scene. He said that he found the back end of Mrs. Fineran's car smashed and her body lying behind it.

POLICE HAD classified the accident as pedestrian because Mrs. Fineran apparently was standing behind her car when the impact occurred.

Kirby was asked by Lucow whether as a witness he felt that it was impossible for Gaminde to stop in time in view of lighting conditions. Kirby answered, "Yes."

Schools Get Gift Of Nature Slides

Thanks to a generous donor, Perry J. Reynolds of Detroit, Farmington schools have 300 superior nature slides to supplement their science program.

The gift came about through a request from A. Glenn Blake, of 28390 Bay Tree, who originally considered the slides for use in his Boy Scout activities. He decided they needed much wider usage and brought their presentation to the schools.

Reynolds has been producing the slides for about 10 years as a memorial to his wife. Through her work with the Girl

Scouts, Mrs. Reynolds hoped to instill her love of nature in the younger generation.

Reynolds estimates that with the help of friends, who do much of the photography, he has processed approximately 300,000 slides at a cost to him of \$100,000.

In a letter expressing the district's gratitude, Dr. Rodrick J. Smith, Farmington school superintendent, wrote, "I have personally viewed these slides and I consider them to be of outstanding value and usefulness to our students."