Includes A House

All are reminders of a by-gone era, but for Mrs. Clemens the real treasure is the house itself -- an antique in the strictest sense of the word.

"We're not sure of the house's exact age," she says, "but we do know that it goes back 100 years because of a newspaper clipping telling of Lincoln's assassination that was found in the walls when the house was remodeled."

"We can also tell by the square, hand-made nails and the horse hair found in the plaster and the handsplit lathe," -- common to the Civil War era," she said.

Very little remodeling has been done to the house that once served as a farm building (to store grain) as well as an antique shop before it became Mrs. Clemens' home.

THE HOUSE'S ORIGINAL owner was a Livonia farmer, Martin Frasier, who owned the land as early as 1827. He sold the house and the property to the Clemens family around 1917, according to family records.

"The house was even used as a chicken coop for a while," she smiled

In 1945, her in-laws, Mr. and Mrs. Levi Clemens, (he served as Livonia justice of the peace from approximately 1930-40) remodeled the structure and moved in, allowing Mrs. Clemens and her husband, Don, and their two sons.

David and Don, to move from Detroit into the five-bedroom Dutch Colonia home next door which the elder Clemens had vacated.

That house -- with its three floors, nine-foot ceiling and alcoved fireplace -- is a conversation piece in itself in a community where sterotyped subdivisions abound.

To make the small house more liveable, the Levi Clemens' added a bathroom and fireplace in a den.

NOW MRS. CLEMENS IS the owner and she is surrounded by a beautiful collection of family antiques, implemented with others she has purchased in the last 10 years "when I really began to have a real appreciation or interest" for them.

But her retirement is far from dull.

Her affiliation with the Plymouth and Livonia AAUW, her WSCS at church, senior citizens and the Livonia Historical Society keep her "plenty busy."

And she still finds time to bake a batch of molasses cookies now and then from her grandmother's recipe -- and to garden.

And perhaps to some visitors it's her flower gardens, the abundance of birds and the tall trees that put the finishing touches to the "antique" setting.



AN ANTIQUE SPINNING WHEEL adds a nostalgic note to the front yard of Mrs. Clemens' 100-year-old home. She's shown here with two of her five grandsons who live next door. That's Steve, 10, at the left and Dale, 12 in the center.

