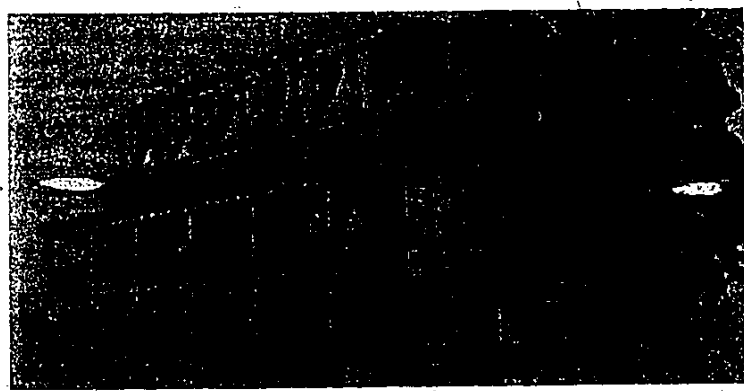




THE VILLAGE MALL, Farmington Road at Grand River, retains the architectural facade of the old Farmington State Bank, later the National Bank of Detroit. (Evert photo)



THE OWEN HOUSE formerly stood on the site where the Village Mall is located. It was a popular lodging stop for travelers in the early days on the long journey from Lansing to Detroit.

Old & New...

By JUDITH BERNE

The Village Mall at the intersection of Farmington Road and Grand River is a good example of retaining the best of the old and shaping it to fit the needs of today.

Housed in the architecture of the old Farmington State Bank on the site of the original Owen House—a stopover for travelers between Lansing and Detroit—the mall offers the comforts of shopping in a covered, temperature-controlled center with a small village atmosphere.

THE FARMINGTON STATE BANK building, dating from 1921, and later occupied by The National Bank of Detroit was vacant for 10 or 12 years, according to Del Cornwell, mall manager and a long-time Farmington resident. "It became an eyesore to the city," Cornwell said.

Making a mall out of the building, and retaining the original architecture, was an idea that grew out of discussions on the most practical use of the building, he reported.

How is the mall doing—one year after its opening?

Cornwell suggests that the individual shopkeepers are the best judge of that question, but maintains that "in general it is doing very well." There are some vacancies,

and there have been some replacements, but that will happen in any mall—large or small.

Customers can park their cars in the lot at the back of the building where in former days travelers would leave their horse and buggies when spending the night at the Owen House.

THE MALL CURRENTLY houses nine stores. Paneled walls, red carpeted floors and background music give a continuity to the mall as a whole, while the individually shaped shops and their distinct wares point up their separate personalities.

On the mall's main floor, where customers of the Farmington State Savings Bank during the 1920s could utilize an adding machine, drinking fountain, scales, cuspidors and other comforts, shoppers now find stores devoted to needle craft, health foods, art supplies, cards and gifts, lingerie and travel.

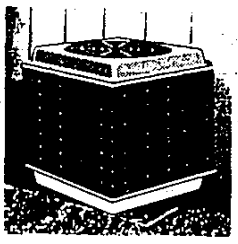
On the floor below are two jewelry shops and an import store. A beauty parlor is in the process of moving in.

"We get an awful lot of people who say that they really enjoy shopping here," Helen Roche, one of the mall's shopowners said. Perhaps, the nice blending of old and new, has something to do with it.

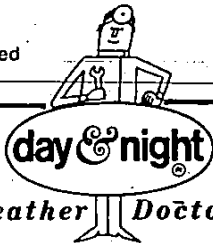
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