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CLEARANCE

They Answered A Want Ad-- And Restored A House

The want ad (in the Observer Newspapers, incidentally) advertised a house for sale to a "young couple who wants to fix up an old farm house."

They were young and needed a house badly. So 36-year-old Don West and his wife, Naomi, 33, answered the ad and bought the 50-year-old frame house at 23724 Warner, Farmington.

"FIX UP AN OLD HOUSE" was putting it mildly, the Wests discovered. It needed a complete renovation.

As an example, Mrs. West recalls that the "weeds were as high as the window sill."

A coincidence helped the Wests decide to take the house. Don remembered the house from the days he was a newsboy.

"I used to deliver papers here and I could remember the side porch entrance to an elegant living room with beamed ceilings and beautiful stone fireplace," he said.

The side porch -- in very dilapidated condition when the Wests bought the house -- was eventually torn down and the French doors were replaced with windows.

But the beamed ceilings are still very much a focal point in the living room. So is the stone fireplace, but even that has been updated.

ENCLOSED GLASS bookcases were torn down and replaced with

open shelves of barn siding. Don also constructed a new mantle, using heavy wood beams.

Three years later -- punctuated with countless headaches and frustrations -- the couple have achieved their goal -- and the dream of every true do-it-yourselfer.

"There were times when I thought I'd go out of my mind," Mrs. West recalls. "We were both so tired and it was more expensive than we planned."

There wasn't a room in the entire two-story structure that didn't need to have something done to it -- except perhaps the upstairs bath where the Wests "lucked out" by finding fairly modern colored bath fixtures.

This year the couple hopes to redecorate that bathroom and also add a patio in the backyard. That should complete the renovation.

A FARMINGTON POSTMAN, West did all the remodeling work himself with an occasional assist from Mrs. West's brother, Monroe Ashley. Advice came from her father who once owned a home improvement company.

Blue-gray aluminum siding has replaced the wood exterior, giving the house the look of a New England-type farm house.

All the windows were

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THE THREE WEST CHILDREN, Shelly, 9, Eva, 7 and four-year-old Chad sit at the dining room table. The dining area, which opens onto a family room, came when West extended the kitchen wall six feet.