

Luxury Estate Far Cry From 1-Room School

By Don Morris

The days of the one-room schoolhouse with the rough pine benches and the pot-bellied wood stove are certainly over.

It was never more obvious than after viewing the luxurious estate just purchased by the North Central Christian College for use as a co-educational junior college.

The estate, located two miles southwest of Rochester, was purchased from Lou R. Maxon, Detroit advertising executive, for a price "estimated in six figures."

G. Wheeler Utley, chairman of the foundation which purchased the property, said the school would be patterned after others now operated in many parts of the country by the Church of Christ.

WILL OPEN IN 1959

Utley added:

"Its purpose will be to furnish a Christian education in accordance with a state-approved curriculum. When eventually expanded into a four-year school, the college will grant accepted arts and science degrees."

He said tentative plans are for approximately 100 students to enter the school in Sept., 1959. Utley said:

"Ample land is available for future classroom and dormitory buildings. We hope to have more than 1,000 students if all our plans materialize."

"We have been planning the school since spring of '54. It will be undenominational and will stress moral and spiritual development."

The 37-acre site has long been known for its elaborately landscaped beauty. It boasts two man-made lakes and the Clinton River.

The main residence, 240 feet by 40 feet, is entirely paneled in wood. The only plastering to be found is in the three-car garage attached to the building.

There are nearly 50 huge cedar-lined closets paneled with wormy-chestnut wood which occupy nearly all the basement. There are also six bathrooms each carpeted wall-to-wall.

SEEK COLLEGE PREXY

Utley, president of Utley Brothers Inc., said the main residence would be used as classrooms until regular buildings can be constructed, after which it will be used as a library.

He said negotiations are now under way for a president of the college who will have a large say in determining the rest of the faculty.

Utley stated that the property sale took nearly a year to complete, and added:

"Rochester was chosen as our preferred location because of its accessibility to the general metropolitan area, its scenic beauty and atmosphere of suburban cordiality."