

Antique house gets new life . . .

By JEANNE BARNES
Home Editor of The News

The Italian villa-style home at 5500 Swiss Avenue, long cited as a landmark in Dallas, this week enters its third phase of life as the home of the Dallas County Medical Auxiliary.

Originally built in 1915 as a home for his young wife and family by the late Panhandle rancher and banker W. J. Lewis, it became the home of banker and investor George N. Aldredge and his family in the early 1920s. It remained so until this year.

Now, it will be dedicated to the use of the Dallas County Medical Auxiliary as a meeting and work center for members' activities and interests.

And as the first special use structure designated in the first Historic District in the city, it will be open to the public for tours.

The designer of the house was Marion Foucher, with Hal Thompson's architectural firm which did a number of the sturdy, still-standing homes on Swiss Ave.

It has a basement for the still-working furnace, a steel-girded foundation and an attic where cedar lined closets were built and where Mrs. Aldredge had draperies and table linens for the house made.

EXTERIOR TRIM and fireplaces are of Caen stone and the entry originally had a black and white marble floor.

Painters were brought from Kansas City, Mo., for the original work on the house. Mrs. Lewis recalls, as well as wreath workers from Chicago to do a wreath of flowers around the original dining room chandelier, both later removed.

Outstanding architecturally in the house is the fine walnut paneling and framing in the entry, dining and living rooms (easily working sliding panel doors divide these from the entry) and up the stairwell.

Floors are being refinished to blend with the paneling and the walls are in an iridescent greenish-rosy-brown tone achieved by use of a thin gauze over the plaster, and then painted.

Behind the living room is a long sun-room which will be dedicated to and maintained by the 30 past presidents of the auxiliary.

Behind the dining room is one of the prettiest rooms in the house, the breakfast or morning room, with the east sun beaming in through a bow window. On the south is the greenhouse built by Mrs. Aldredge to house her famed orchid collection.

A SPACIOUS BUTLER'S pantry connects the dining and breakfast areas to the huge, square kitchen, and like the kitchen, it has marble-topped counters. Because all baking was done from scratch originally, large wood bins are built under one of the counters to store flour and sugar.

The upstairs (or second floor) has a large master bedroom, library, sun-porch and unusually spacious dressing room-bath which the Medical Auxiliary will utilize for its offices and to store its 56 years of records.

The library has extensive bookshelves and a fireplace, now painted cream color.

Original radiators are in the rooms and the huge bath is white tiled (the floor is carpeted over). Mirrored doors are found in the dressing area. There's a fireplace in the bedroom area that has aqua glazed moldings on cream paneling, to pick up color from the chintz fabric used in the rooms.

There are three other bedrooms and two baths planned for the two Lewis' daughters and son and used by the Aldredges' two daughters and son as they grew up, spacious walk-in closets and on the third floor another bath with a footed tub and a bedroom.

These will be used for the special Interests groups the Medical Auxiliary is organizing, to participate in the maintenance

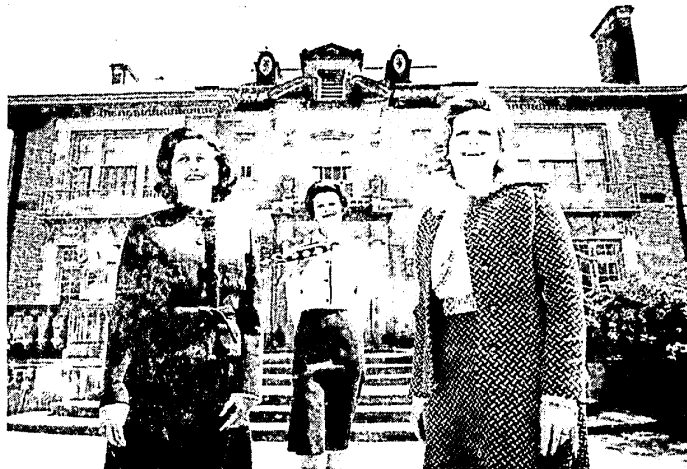
of the house, gardens, needlework, gourmet cooking, etc.

THE FRESH WATER swimming pool installed by the Aldredge family has been filled in and covered and will be used for parking along with an area just behind and a specially-purchased lot farther back on a side street.

The extensive gardens developed by Mrs. Aldredge with their enclosing hedges, borders of blooming iris and other seasonal plants will be maintained and used for special occasions.

Mrs. Aldredge, the former Rena Munger who was a cousin of the family which developed the Swiss and Bryon areas, added a windowless, hurlap-walled room behind the entry for her art gallery, which the Medical Auxiliary will utilize as a board room. It has extensive, specially built lighting which is being renovated.

Donors of the Aldredge House are the family, Betty Aldredge Slater, Dr. George N. Aldredge Jr. and Gertrude Aldredge Shelburne and Rowena Aldredge Herschberger (deceased).



—Dallas News: John Rowles
Proud hostesses of Medical Auxiliary house are, from left, Mmes Michael Kurilec, house chairman; William Barnett, president, and Reuben Adams, former president, who helped with negotiations.

. . . as auxiliary clubhouse

The Women's Auxiliary to the Dallas County Medical Society will dedicate a permanent club house, which also is an historic landmark, in ceremonies at 10:30 a.m. Wednesday.

Located on Swiss Avenue, Aldredge House will become the meeting place for the auxiliary when the new club season opens next fall.

Attending dedication ceremonies Wednesday will be the Aldredge family, Betty Aldredge Slater, Dr. George N. Aldredge Jr. and Gertrude Aldredge Shelburne.

Dr. Elvin W. Ware Jr., president of the Dallas County Medical Society, will make a welcoming statement. Another guest will be Mrs. C. W. Castle, Liberty, president of the Texas auxiliary.

Mrs. William David Barnett is president

of the auxiliary this year. House committee chairman is Mrs. Michael Kurilec. Working with them have been architect Ed Beran, attorney Dr. Robert Taylor and contractor Conway Telford.

The group also has worked with various city committees.

The Medical Auxiliary engages in many activities during the year, and sponsors health projects with civic and community organizations.

For the past 22 years, it has given the Edith Cavell nursing scholarship. Currently there are 17 young women receiving scholarships.

Among the many community activities the women sponsor are a physician speakers' bureau for schools and for the Dallas Police Department's first time drug offender program, the Dallas Re-

gional Science Fair and spot announcements on traffic safety.

Volunteers work with the Special Care School, in the Donor Canteen of the Wadley Blood Center and at Children's Emergency Shelter.

The group is serving as consultant to the Heritage Society in the reconstruction of an early doctor's office at City Park.

Programs for members include education on nutrition, emotional stability and financial security.

Much of the money for redecoration and remodeling of Aldredge House is coming from hostess activities during the national convention of the American Academy of Ophthalmology and Otolaryngology in 1971.

—SHARON COBLER