

Charles House

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Your Experiences:
I am so happy to be able to tell you what part the Charles House played in my life.

There was a neighborhood of poor-to-moderate homes, each holding five to ten children at a conservative estimate. We children in this neighborhood considered the Charles House the center of our social and cultural life, having precedences even over PS 17 or PS 21. Many friends of today are dearest to me because of the shared joys we had at the Charles House.

Story Books

First in my inventory of pleasant memories was the miniature library where my love-of-books was nurtured. These ordinary-looking shelves were for me the gateway to that delightful land of adventure and romance where anything could happen. I remember, with affection, the Queen Harlow series, whose heroine was a smugly virtuous, noble cardboard figure who overcame all temptations with a raised eyebrow and sanctimonious platitudes. She never did anything wrong and I know never depressed her for she never failed at anything.

My inventory would never be complete if I didn't tell you about culture at the Charles House. Oh yes! We children were exposed to Art (capitalized, note) in many forms: The dance, the opera, and vari-

ous handicrafts, primitive things with which we expressed our little spirits.

First the ballet. Oh! What an ungainly, gawky, gangly group of ducklings we were. How we perished and labored for Art. Driven by dreams of fluffy skirts and enchanting satin slippers, we leaped and pirouetted with no regard for life or limb. Not satisfied with endangering the very walls of Charles House, we waddled to living room-in our homes for Art must be served, practice we must, and let the family take cover. I am happy to report, the family lived through this without mishap, and the efforts of our hard-working teachers were not entirely lost.

No indeed! One of our group did for a few years, dance in a traveling troupe. The motley group of ugly ducklings produced one swan, and I'm sure our teachers felt amply repaid. As for me, one of the ducklings, ballet wasn't entirely wasted. I can appreciate the tremendous effort and labor involved to produce one of those airy things of grace and beauty, effortlessly performed by Maria Tallchief or Tamara LeClere.

The Operetta

Another Art form in which I took a small, small part, was the operetta. My duties will can, if pressed enough, sing the major role of the Shoemaker and the Elves. She was the shoemaker in our production, and I think I was elf number two (hammer vigorously with hammer in time to music). The music can always transport me to that nostalgic land of childhood, when the world was a safe and stable place.

I can recall the excitement and urgency of opening night when proud parents sat in the audience and patiently listened



CAKE BAKING — Initiation into the mysteries of cake baking is very popular with the future home-makers who attend the Charles House.

to our high waiving voices while chairs squeaked in courtship and sleep small. Try to complain.

Then there were handicraft classes. What an endless assortment of needles and practical knickknacks were produced in the workshop of Charles House! How lovingly we fashioned wadday presents and Christmas presents for mama and papa. Pot-holders, picture frames (with or without a primitive quite possibly equal to Grandma Moses), terner shelves, plaster saints and plaster fruit (gaily yellow or red or blue), calendars with paper for papa to wipe his wicked razor, inadequate pen-wipers, and on and on. Each of these weird things was graciously accepted by our parents, as they praised our handiwork knowing the love that went into the making of things.

Religion Too

Oh Yes! The Charles House was the focal point of our neighborhood. Our foreign born parents learned English there and were shown the strange new American cookery (not always accepted, but politely listened to); there were the Boy Scouts and the Girl Scouts and Mothers' Clubs.

And most important of all—the religion classes. All the religion I knew in those days was taught me (and many hundreds like me) by a well-

less ageless, dedicated woman who through her immense love of God, day after day, year after year, pointed me to the heavens and the solid pavement, conning the reluctant Christian and urging them into attending religious classes. She prepared me for the great milestones of my life—our first communion and confirmation. She saw that we knew our catechism and that we attended Sunday Mass.

As an adult, too, Charles House has been a point of interest for me. Graduating from a Girl Scout, I became a troop-committee member and finally a Girl Scout leader. When I am able, I am glad to respond to the call of its director for this or that worthy drive. I feel I owe much to Charles House, and can never do enough to aid the staff in all its endeavors.

The foregoing may seem a bit-oh, very, poorly stated and touches only a small part of what the Charles House means to me, for words are poor things to reveal depth of feeling.

Long may the Charles House remain—a beautiful, safe, and perennially cheerful place.

St. Elizabeth Guild Home

By
R. E. L. STURMIVE

When a girl leaves home for the first time, there are always a few pang of homesickness. I was no exception to this general rule.

Upon moving into the St. Elizabeth Guild Home, I felt that I was all alone—no friends, no familiar faces, and even of all my family. It didn't take long to discover that the girls in the house just weren't going to give me a chance to be homesick.

Living in a house with forty-two other girls is quite an experience. Aside from learning the important and delicate art of getting along with others, there is a great deal to be taken from the regulations that are always being laid. From one half hour's listening in on one of these sessions, a person can gain most information regarding the complexities of Rochester than are contained in the Arrow Street Guide.

There is always fellowship at the Guild Home. The supper hour offers a chance for the girls to discuss the day's happenings. The TV lounge affords ample room for conversation. The piano room is a place of relaxation in the form of group singing and experimenting with music. And last but not least there is always an open door along one of the corridors.

The one thing that makes me proud of St. Elizabeth Guild Home is the overall spirit of fellowship. The attitude of tolerance toward the guests and the warm, friendly atmosphere that pervades the house. Everyone here is so helpful in all your problems. If you are late, there is always someone to check you up. If you are excited, there is someone who will share your pleasure. Whenever advice is needed, it is freely given. The complete cooperation of forty-three girls makes for interesting evenings. You learn about different jobs, schools and places here in the city.

Not only are the girls made to feel at home, but their families also are treated as guests. My Mother enjoys spending part of the day with me when she happens to be in the city. Girls appreciate the welcome that is given their parents.

The Guild has all this to offer plus a good many things I haven't mentioned. It certainly lives up to the expression, "A home away from home." I hope I may continue to live at the St. Elizabeth Guild Home for as long as I remain in Rochester.

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