

footprints in history

Top history contest finishers crowned

DETERMINING THE winner proved to be easy. Farmington resident Judith Cook was the only entrant in the first Farmington Footprints in History Contest to answer every question correctly.

Awarding second and third prizes wasn't so easy. They went to Kenneth Hedges of Farmington Hills and

Judith Patton of Farmington. Each answered most of the questions correctly.

Their essay responses were judged to be thoughtful and well-written. Farmington Historical Society members did the judging.

For her efforts, Cook will receive hardbound copies of two local history books:

• "A Farmington Childhood: The Watercolors of Lillian Drake Avery," by Jean M. Fox with John B. Cameron, published by the Farmington Hills Historical Commission in 1985.

• "More Than A Tavern: 150 Years of Botsford Inn," by Jean M. Fox, published by Four Corners Press in 1986.

Second and third prizes will be discover copies of "A Farmington Childhood: The Watercolors of Lillian Drake Avery."

THE CONTEST was designed to spotlight the history of Farmington Township, forerunner of today's cities of Farmington and Farmington Hills. As any true history buff will attest, that history offers lots of cap-

titivating characters and milestone events.

The Farmington Observer sponsors the contest, in cooperation with the Farmington Historical Society.

Even if you didn't enter this year's contest, consider letting us know what you think about it. We'd like your reaction before we decide whether to conduct it annually. Was it too long or too hard? Did it

require too much time to do? Were you confused about where to look for the answers? Do you prefer categories other than those listed in Part A? Or was the contest just right?

Mail your comments to: Farmington Footprints in History Contest, Farmington Observer, 33283 Grand River, Farmington 48024.

—Bob Sklar

A. In this part, answer each question as fully and concisely as possible. List your response on the line beneath each question. If unsure, guess!

People

1. She was a dark-haired beauty who adopted a baby boy. The baby grew up and became the only governor from Farmington in 1904. Who was he? Fred Warner.
2. She grew up in Farmington, married her high school sweetheart and moved to Pontiac. There, she contributed a lot to Michigan history. She documented the Underground Railroad in Farmington in papers she prepared in the 1920s. Who was she? Lillian Drake Avery.
3. After a long trip to the Michigan frontier, she fell off a wagon and died of injuries. She was the

first woman to be buried in Farmington. Who was she? Patience Utley.

Who was the first pioneer woman to come to Farmington and was the mother of the first "white" baby born here? Cynthia Collins.

Who started the Farmington Ladies Literary Society, which was the forerunner of the Farmington Women's Club? She married a Canadian doctor who was traveling through Farmington? Florence Green Moore.

Who was Farmington's first librarian? Mary Kennedy.

Which black woman escaped from slavery in Virginia, then came to Farmington? She lived to be more than 100 years old and was Farmington's first centenarian. Ellen Wilson.

Who was Farmington's school superintendent from 1939 to 1953 and 1948 to 1956? He had a school named after him. O.E. Dunkel.

He was a prosperous downtown businessman around the turn of the century. The 1915 building bearing his name still stands today on Grand River. Who was he? Fred Cook.

Who was Palmer Sherman? A farmer whose home became the original part of the Farmington Community Center.

Who was Ezekiel Web? Farmington's first physician.

Who was Sergius P. Lyn? Farmington's first mortician.

Who was Orrin West? Founder, Botsford Inn.

Who was Leo Gildemeister? Founder, Farmington Roller Mills.

Roads

1. What was Farmington's first main street, where local businesses, crafters and professionals were located in the 1930s? The Detroit Road-Shiawassee.
2. The Detroit United Railway route to Pontiac ran beside this road between 1900 and 1930. People traveled this road to spend time at a resort hotel on a lake by the same name. What is the name

of the road? Orchard Lake Road.

Which road was named by a pioneer family that was important in apple growing in Farmington Township? The name was often misspelled with an extra "a." Halsted Road.

Which road was the main street of North Farmington? There was a milk receiving station, two general stores, a school and a blacksmith shop along this road. Farmington Road.

Northwestern Highway.

Sleepy Hollow was clustered around the first grist mill in Farmington Township on his road. The road was named for a pioneer family. What is the name of the road? Drake Road.

What is the modern name of the Detroit-Howell Plank Road Grand River.

What is the name of the area's first natural beauty road? Howard Road.

What was the previous name of Farmington Road within the village of Farmington? Division Street.

Places

1. Near what intersection was the first tree felled in Farmington on March 8, 1824? Elevea Mile and Power.

2. In what cemetery did the first burial in Farmington take place? East Farmington Cemetery.

3. Near what modern intersection was the first tavern — the Walker, later the Wixom — located? Halsted and Grand River.

4. Where did Henry Ford court his future wife, Clara? Botsford Inn.

5. Where was the first post office located? Farmington Road,

south of Shiawassee.

6. Where was Buckhorn Corners? Twelve Mile and Inkster Road.

7. About 1850, Farmington had a race track. Where was it? Power and Shiawassee.

8. In the great fire of 1872, what area was burned out? North side of Grand River from Farmington Road eastward.

9. Where is the oldest house in the city of Farmington? Carpenter House on Shiawassee.

10. Where was a "centennial tree" planted in 1924? Warner and Shiawassee (yard of Mayer Wells Butterfield).

11. Where did Farmington's War Memorial originally stand? Grand River and Farmington Road.

12. What was the original location of the Universalist Church, which is now on Halsted Road? Warner and Thomas.

13. In which cemetery is Gov. Warner buried? Oakwood Cemetery.

14. What was the name of the historic hotel, widely known for high quality entertainment, that, according to legend, served as a station on the Underground Railroad? Philbrick Tavern.

15. What was the later name of the old Farmington Dairy on Grand River? Himmelspach's Dairy.

16. What did the Potawatomi Indians call the area now known as Clarenceville? Agamaw or Pojama.

Schools

1. Who was Farmington's first schoolmaster? Nathan Power.

2. Who was the first female school teacher? Parley Ann Mead.

3. On what street was the first

school located? Shiawassee.

4. In what year were small local school districts consolidated into Farmington Public Schools? 1944.

5. What school burned down on Christmas Eve about six years ago? Nichols School.

6. What former school was converted into an attractive office building? Bond School.

7. What was another name for the Coleman School, leveled during the building of I-96? Stone School.

8. Where was Thayer School located? Halsted and Nine Mile.

9. What former school was named after a former school superintendent? Harrison High School (Gerald Harrison).

Politics

1. When did Farmington's three-term governor — Gov. Warner — serve in Lansing as chief executive? 1905-11.

2. To what political party did

Warner belong? Republican Party.

3. Farmington Township's last supervisor and Farmington Hills' first mayor were the same man. Who was he? Robert McConnell.

4. Who was Farmington's state representative before Sandy Brotherton? Ray Baker.

5. A Farmington man was chairman of the Oakland County Board

of Supervisors for 16 years during the 1950s and 1960s. Who was he? Delos Hamilla.

6. In 1867, the speaker of the state House of Representatives was from Farmington. This man was also a delegate to the convention that rewrote the state Constitution in 1867, which the voters rejected at the polls — overwhelmingly. Who was he? P.D. Warner.

B. In this part, identify what is requested in the captions to each of these old photographs. Bonus. What year do you think each photo was taken? List your answer below each photo.

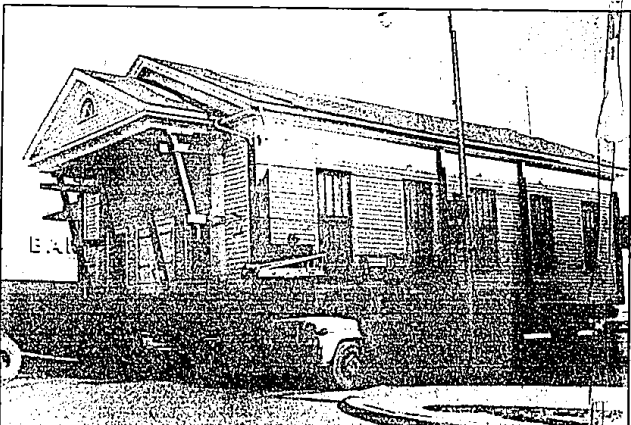


HINT: This man chronicled the activities and events of history during the late 1800s in Farmington. Who was he? Edgar H. Hines (1893).



HINT: This turn-of-the-century photo shows a historic downtown building that's still in use today. Name at least two of the businesses currently housed in this building. Howard's Beauty Supply, Michele Marc's Flowers (1905).

Photos courtesy Farmington Public Library, Farmington Historical Society



HINT: The oldest house of worship in Farmington was moved from the city to a rural setting when this picture was taken in the summer of 1907. What was the name of the church? Universalist Unitarian Church (1907).

C. In this part, the spotlight is on the value of local history. Answer in 150 words or less the following question: What value do you place on having an understanding and an appreciation of local history?

This is the response of first-prize winner Judith Cook of Farmington.

"I have always thought that the value of local history is that it focuses one's attention on the minutiae of the human experience and, by doing so, validates the universality of the nuts and bolts of daily life.

"Through the preservation and examination of the ephemera of everyday living — the letters, diaries, ledgers, dance cards, and family photos of ordinary people — local history reveals more about what was, and still is, important than any treatise on national or world history.

"The almost imperceptible currents of common people's lives

bind us together in a way that the buffeting waves of great global changes cannot.

"What is worth remembering is what local history really celebrates — not just the brash triumphs of the Fred Warners and

the Henry Fords, but also the quiet perseverance of the Patience Utleys and the Parley Ann Meads, who stand for all of us."

This is the response of second-prize winner Kenneth Hedges of Farmington Hills.

"To me, an appreciation of local history means to follow the footprints of those who walked the land I live on, my land and that of my neighbors.

"What did my predecessor feel as he nailed up the fence wire that is still attached to some tree stumps in my yard?

"And what about the interurban? Other than the old station near the power plant, are there any other evidences of the rail system still visible? The importance of the interurban cannot be un-

derestimated. A whole town (Kensington, near the metro park) disappeared off the face of the earth because the railroad bypassed it."

This is the response of third-prize winner Judith Patton of Farmington.

"Farmington is a nice enough town for anyone, but knowing its rich history makes it doubly so.

"As I make my way around town, I feel a thrill realizing that these are the very same places where our city founder lived, worked and played, over 150 years ago!

"I can see the same trees the Indians bent to mark their trails, as the first real residents of Farmington. I can see the same river once used as a grist mill's power source. I can see the homes of the just families who sheltered runaway slaves on their way to freedom. I can see the schools, the churches and the cemeteries, and all fill me with a sense of pride.

"We who call Farmington home have a debt to our ancestors, a duty to ourselves and an obligation to our children to preserve, protect and pass on this rich heritage."