



David Smith, a Farmington High School freshman, displays a pair of knickers that his great-grandfather, Fred Smith, once wore. The exhibit was on display in the media center with other student heritage projects.

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The family name

Students in FHS class trace their ancestry

By Susan Buck
staff writer

What's in a name? A whole lot, according to students in Bruce Brown's ninth grade world history class in Farmington High School, who traced their past through a eight-week genealogical project.

"I've always been interested in my heritage," said Adam Jenovai, who is of Hungarian descent. "This just allowed me to go into it more."

He added that the project prompted him to get involved with a traditional Hungarian dance group.

Brown required students to document where their ancestors came from and what things were going on in their country during that time.

In their reports, students talked about their ancestors' struggles and their livelihoods both in their native country and after they came to America.

Representative samples of clothing, music, food and art were also featured.

After the students put up the project in the school's media center, their parents and grandparents were invited to visit.

NIGEL WHITT, of African descent, said that he could only trace back as far as his great-great-aunt. "Record-keeping was poor because of slavery... you can't find all of your people."

Not being able to trace a specific African country, Whitt chose to concentrate on Nigeria.

Even teacher Brown learned something from Sean Hassell's project. Hassell traced his family to Saba, a small Caribbean island in the Dutch West Indies.

Brown wasn't the only person who hadn't heard of Saba before. But, Hassell had all the proof. Some of his relatives recently visited there and brought back souvenirs.

"There's not a single person yet who's heard of it," Hassell said.

According to Hassell's project, electricity first became available in

Saba in 1963.

Alpa Patel, of Indian descent, didn't have to look far for mementos from India — she, her parents, and brother came to America just 18 months ago.

"We have no ancestors here, we are the first ones," Patel said.

Dr. Alan Prasuhn, a Farmington Hills resident, chairman of the civil engineering department at Lawrence Technological University, knows firsthand where we would all be without bridges, tunnels and other marvels designed and built by civil engineers — up the creek with no paddle and no way across.

Prasuhn is the chairman of the American Society of Civil Engineers Committee on the History and Heritage of American Civil Engineering.

One charge of this committee is to review and recommend civil engineering accomplishments nationally and internationally for recognition.

There are 14 international historical sites and 140 national sites. Among the national sites are four in Michigan, including — besides the Detroit-Windsor Tunnel — the St. Clair Tunnel in Port Huron, the Sault Ste. Marie Hydro-Electric Power Complex, and the Second Street Bridge in Allegan. To be eligible a project must be at least 50 years old.

PRASUHN WILL lead a pilgrimage to England this summer to tour outstanding civil engineering sites, including one that will be honored by the ASCE as an International site.

Heritage Park center has open house

An open house will celebrate the Heritage Park Visitor Center from noon to 5 p.m., Saturday, Nov. 2, and Sunday, Nov. 3.

Farmington Hills residents will be able to tour what was once the Spicer family home and has been renovated as the city's visitor center. Money for the renovation came from state grants and from the special

This tour is co-sponsored by Lawrence Tech's Continuing Education and Professional Development Office and ASCE. The cost of the 11-day tour is \$2,395.

"The Edgystone Lighthouse was constructed on rocks 14 miles at sea 235 years ago," Prasuhn said. "It was a major engineering work for its time. In fact, it was the lighthouse that gave all subsequent lighthouses their characteristic shape."

An ASCE report on the lighthouse, which will be honored with a plaque during a ceremony July 10, credits John Smeaton, "the first individual to identify himself as a civil engineer," for building the lighthouse under difficult conditions in 1756.

The Edgystone Lighthouse was the first masonry tower lighthouse. It stood guard until 1882 when the lighthouse was moved to a park because of erosion of its foundation. "It remains today the supreme symbol of heroic civil engineering achievement," the report said.

In 1993 Prasuhn will return to England to take part in the ceremony to bestow international historic civil engineering landmark recognition on the Thames Tunnel, which was built between 1826 and 1843.

This was the first successful underwater tunnel, and will be honored in the same year that the English Channel Tunnel, linking England and France, is scheduled to open to the public.

"A MAJOR goal of the history and heritage program is to make civil engineers more aware of the past accomplishments of their colleagues," Prasuhn said. "This program has been a very effective means over the last 25 years of also making the public aware of the success of civil engineers."

The 11-day civil engineer landmark tour will visit historical buildings, bridges, cathedrals throughout England and Wales.

Other stops include the beautiful Bodnant Gardens, the Smeaton Drydocks, Thomas Telford's Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, and there will be an exclusive dinner and evening at Cleveland Court in South Wales as invited guests of Lady Elton.

Costs of the tour are based on current airfare and currency exchange rates and may be subject to change. For more information contact Maria Ialacci at 556-0209, Ext. 4050.

White Lake Township Supervisor James Reed will give a presentation

at 1:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. each day of the open house. He will discuss his experiences as caretaker/farmer of the Spicer property in the 1940s-1950s. Hayrides also will be available to the public throughout the day.

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Doctors place great emphasis on the need to keep going with arthritis, but there is a place for rest, even a necessity for it. Resting to bed earlier, and remaining longer in the morning is not the answer. Such a schedule is actually harmful to your joints as prolonged inactivity creates as much pain and stiffness as overuse.

Rapping is the solution. You should, if possible, set aside at least 15 minutes and hopefully as long as an hour so you can sleep during the day. Certainly the fatigue is there, often as much a part of arthritis as painful, swollen joints.

It is the ability to sleep that calls for training, concentration, learning and self control. You need to achieve a state of relaxation sufficient to attain during the day. You require an inner discipline that belies your apparent indifference to the goings on around you.

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