

Early black families remembered

BY RUTH MOEHLMAN
SPECIAL WRITER

Farmington has a long history of religious and ethnic diversity. The Quakers came first. Then from the eastern United States came the Methodist, Baptist and others. Next came German families, followed by many other groups.

Farmington also had a few black families who were part of the community.

Robert Boyd, who has lived all his life in Farmington, remembers the Green family who lived on Nine Mile.

Henry Green was black and Rose Green was white. Henry Green raised pigs and collected garbage for the pigs from the community. He also collected scrap metal.

Henry Green came to the Boyd home to use the telephone because he didn't have one.

"He always paid my mother for the calls," Bob Boyd recalled. Henry Green lived to 80 and is buried in the North Farmington Cemetery next to his wife, who died in 1939.

Nick Spicer, who lived on the family estate on Farmington Road, recalled black children who rode the school bus with him in the late 1940s. The children's parents farmed the former Sarminto property north of the Spicer Estate.

Best remembered

Best remembered of the black Farmington families was the

Wilson-Hull family. Their land on 11 Mile goes back to the 1890s. Wellington or Pet Hullin was remembered by the late Bill Conroy as the high school football hero who helped win many a football game for Farmington High School in the

1920s.

Wellington Hullin was born in 1909. He came to live with his aunt and grandparents in Farmington because the doctor suggested the country for a sickly 4-year-old child. He never went back to live with his family in Detroit.

He was well known in Farmington because he was in the radio-repair and later TV-repair business. He was known in later years as Pete, the TV man.

Pete Hullin's great-grandparents Aaron and Ellen Johnson Wilson were slaves in Virginia.

Ellen Wilson told Lillian Drake Avery of the Oakland County Pioneer and Historical Society about her escape from slavery when, in 1916, Lillian Avery recorded the history of the Underground Railroad in Oakland County.

The Wilsons and three others were escaping in the early 1850s when their owner caught them. Aaron was hit over the head and knocked unconscious.

When he regained consciousness, he grabbed a club and, with the help of the other fugitives, beat the three white men who had captured them to "insensibility." The group then



Photo album: Henry "Hank" Green with his cousin, Harry Norman, tooling around Farmington.

ran away and somehow followed the Underground Railroad and arrived in Farmington, where the Wilsons lived for a short while.

Various accounts tell of Ellen Wilson hiding in corn shocks. They also took her "Missus" saddle horse that helped with the escape.

Because of the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850, they, like many others, felt unsafe in the United States. They went to live in Canada where slavery was outlawed. After three years, they gained Canadian citizenship.

Canada refused to return any escaped slaves.

After the Civil War, the Wilsons returned to Farmington to live. Aaron worked for various farmers. Eventually they had four acres of their own land. They raised their family in Farmington. Ellen Wilson lived to be 100 years old. She died shortly after telling Lillian Avery of her adventures on the Underground Railroad.

Ruth Moehlman is a local historian and author of "Heritage Homes of Farmington."

WEDDINGS & ENGAGEMENTS



CARSWELL-SZUBA

Allan and Jonal Carswell of Farmington Hills announce the engagement of their daughter,

SUMLIN-BEARDSLEY

Mr. and Mrs. John Sumlin of Farmington Hills announce the engagement of their daughter, Tasha, to John Beardsley, son of Lloyd Beardsley of Monroe and Marian Gibbs of Scotts, Mich.

The bride-to-be is a graduate of the University of Memphis with a degree in audiology and speech pathology. She is employed as a speech language pathologist with Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit.

The groom is a graduate of Central Michigan University with a degree in computer science. He is employed as a sys-



tems administrator with Yazaki North America in Canton.

Lenten dinners planned

First Presbyterian Church of Farmington will hold Lenten dinners 6-8 p.m. each Wednesday through Lent beginning with Ash Wednesday, March 8. Easter week's dinner will be on Thursday. Each week there will be a potluck dinner followed by fellowship and a lesson. The church is on the northwest corner of 11 Mile and Farmington roads. Call 474-6170.

JCC fitness rates low

Families can get fit and have fun as members of the Jewish Community Center. Through Feb. 29, membership rates at the JCC are significantly reduced.

Two levels of membership are available. General members may use the pools, tennis courts, squash courts, volleyball and racquetball courts, tracks, gym and Olympic weight room. Health Club members can use the modern fitness center, cross-training equipment, treadmills, Stairmaster, whirlpools, locker rooms with permanent locker, beauty and barber shop and massage. Personal trainers are available at an extra charge. Parents of young children can use the baby-sitting service.

JCC members get discounts on classes and special events, and receive a monthly news-

magazine, Centerline, to inform them of upcoming events, such as SAJE - Seminars for Adult Jewish Enrichment, the Lenore Marwil Jewish Film Festival, the annual Jewish book fair, concerts and lectures.

The JCC has programs for persons with special needs. There are parent and child classes, family holiday celebrations, sports/recreation programs, cultural events, educational programs, activities for teens and classes in dance, theater and the arts. Reduced rates are available at both JCC locations: the D. Dan and Betty Kahn Building in West Bloomfield and the Jimmy Prentiss Morris Building in Oak Park.

For membership information, call the JCC Kahn building at 661-7621 or the JPM building at 967-4030.

NEW VOICES



MONTEFUSCO BABY

Michael and Amy Montefusco of Farmington Hills announce the birth of their son, Jason Michael, Dec. 20, 1999 at Beaumont Hospital. He weighed 9 pounds 8 ounces and was 20 1/2 inches long and has a big brother, Matthew.

Grandparents are Elizabeth Montefusco of Poughkeepsie, N.Y. and Wallace and Betty Sutton of Boynton Beach, Fla.

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Search on: Colonial Car Wash on Nine Mile Flies the Korean War commemorative flag under Old Glory.

Korean War vets sought for honors

BY MARY RODRIGUE
STAFF WRITER
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Veterans of the Korean War era (1950-53) are being sought as the cities of Farmington and Farmington Hills jointly begin an ongoing commemoration of the 50th anniversary of that war.

A committee headed by Jack Card announced the veteran's search on Monday, President's Day.

"Many communities across the nation are participating in a commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Korean War era," said Card. "We are compiling a roster of individuals - men and women - who experienced the Korean War years to record in the Community Library's Hall of Fame Archives."

Wally Christensen, and his wife, Lorraine, active in American Legion Post 346 in Farmington and the local Memorial Day parade organizers, would like to get a group of Korean War era veterans to march together in this year's parade. The veterans need not live in Farmington or Farmington Hills. The parade is scheduled for 10 a.m. Monday, May 29.

"Wally wants as many Korean vets as we can find for the parade," Lorraine Christensen said. "The age group we're targeting would be about 68 to 72 years old."

The celebration will be an

overall community approach, with the public schools, libraries and senior center involved in various capacities. Some of the plans include Korean War veterans speaking to students in the schools as part of a living history program and war era memorabilia in the display case during the month of May in the Farmington Library.

For thanks and honor

The commemorative period officially begins June 25, 2000 - the 50th anniversary of the outbreak of the war - and officially closes Nov. 11, 2003. The idea is to thank and honor these veterans and their families for their service, especially those who lost loved ones, recognize and remember the prisoners of war and those missing in action, and provide the American public with a clearer understanding and appreciation of the lessons, history and legacy of the Korean War.

Also in the works is a musical salute to veterans during the Farmington Musicale's Parade of American Music performance during the annual Festival of the Arts held the last week of April. And on Friday, Nov. 3, during the annual Stars and Stripes celebration sponsored by the Farmington Hills Senior Adult Activities Department in the Coetick Activity Center, the emphasis will be on the Korean War era.

Veterans can call Wally Christensen at (248) 474-8554.

Pageant deadline nears

Deadline for the 27th annual Miss Farmington/Oakland County scholarship pageant is Wednesday, March 1. The contest is open to young women who live or work in Oakland County. This year's theme is "Cruising

the Grand 2000" and is scheduled June 21 at the Civic Theatre in downtown Farmington. To receive an application, or to sponsor a contestant, call Ginny Morris at 471-9042, or Alice Toroyan at 815-0677.



Children's Directory 2000

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