

Going to the Ball...



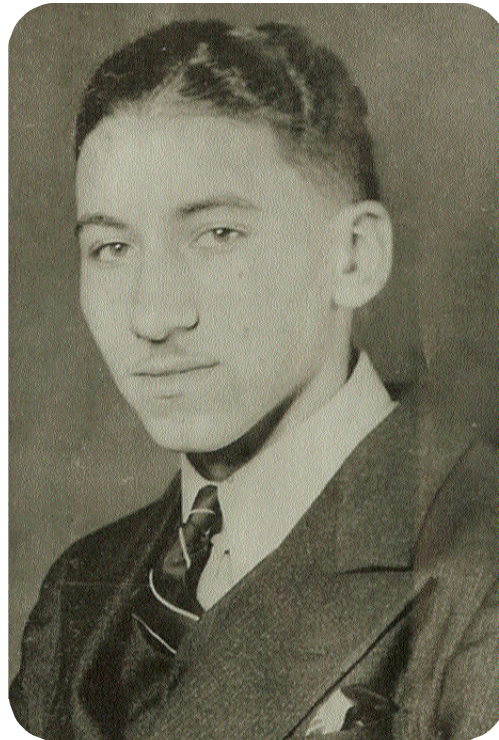
“I remember my first June German Ball. It seems like it was a hundred years ago. The band that came was Cab Calloway, I think. I was only 15 years old and you had to be 18, so my two older sisters dressed me up to make me look like them, and fixed my hair. I had long hair and they balled it up in a big clump back there. Later it was Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Jimmie Lunceford, Blanche Calloway and Earl Hines, Chick Webb.

After I was married, I didn't go to any more of the balls.

—Ethel Howard, 87

“I wore that suit to the June German Ball. It cost me \$22.50. And that's for the jacket, pants and vest. I bought it at R. J. Atkins clothing store. Dan Church did the measuring. That would have been in the '30s. The photo is from 1939. I went to the June German Ball before I was married on June 22, 1940. If I had been married I'd never have been allowed to go.”

— Thomas T. Hodge, Sr., 87



Photos courtesy of Ethel Howard and Thomas Hodge, Sr.; map courtesy of the City of Martinsville's Engineering Department

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WORKING AND PLAYING ON FAYETTE STREET: an exhibit created through the partnership of the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities and the Fayette Area Historical Initiative.

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“The Yellow Jackets”

IN 1958, THE ALBERT HARRIS boys' basketball team took runner-up status in the Group II District IV championships held in Gretna, Virginia, and posed for a team picture.

A FEW YEARS EARLIER, cheerleaders Julia Burgess Knox, class of '55; Lorene “Lottie” King Kimbrough, '57; Minnie Morris, '55; and Dorothy Cosby Martin, '56, gave a smile that turned out to be one for the memory books.

The entertainment value and social benefits created by school athletic programs in American communities everywhere are enjoyed both by the participants and the spectators, pleasures possibly eclipsed only by the remembering. The close associations that bind classmates together through time are the reason for class reunions, including the every-two-year event hosted for the more than 2,000 Albert Harris High School alumni from the graduating classes of 1949 through 1971. In 2004 they met in Washington D.C.



ALBERT HARRIS HIGHSCHOOL organized its first varsity football team in 1948, and the squad posted a respectable 3-3-1 mark for the season. According to the *Martinsville Bulletin's* bicentennial reflection on the past, members that year included (first row, left to right) Coach C. L. Williams, William Hairston, Henry Clay Hairston, Charlie Hairston, Norman Brown, Joseph Hairston, Henry Clay Lytle, Clyde Gravely, Charles Mitchell and Jesse Anglin, Jr.; (second row), George Mullins, Albert Hairston, “Juke” Scales, Ollie Penn, Twyman Eggleston, Colbert Pettie, William Dillard, Joe Hairston, Jesse Hylton, Henry Pettie, Edward Hairston and Assistant Coach Lloyd Saunders.



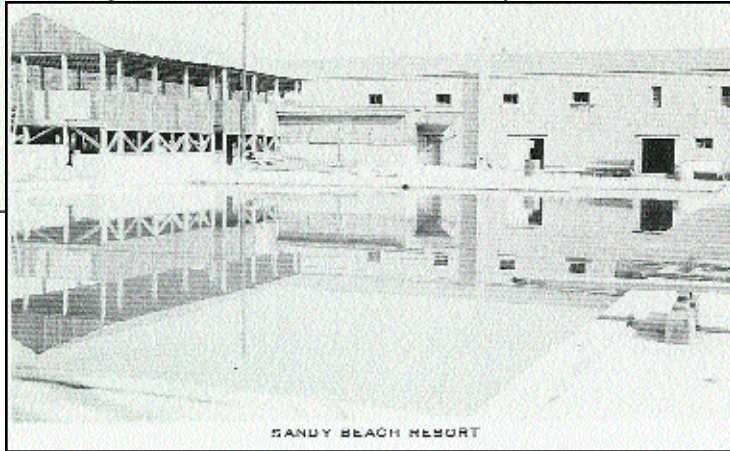
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FAHI thanks the Albert Harris High School National Alumni Association for the use of photos from the display case at the school, currently home to Martinsville City middle school students.

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MIXING WORK & PLAY



Payday came every other Friday for **Alberta Wilson**, who worked at Jobbers Pants No. 3 She especially liked to shop for clothes:

“I had two stores uptown, Globman’s and Kolodny’s. Everybody had new outfits all the time. I didn’t have a lot of responsibility on me. I’d give my mother so much —now, she made sure that you did that because she said you had to learn how to be responsible. Then I bought things for the house and then sometime I would entertain friends, you know, have dinner or some kind of little social gathering.”

Iris Preston Smith, of 415 Fayette Street, learned to cook as a young girl, when her mother Emma took on the task of teaching a neighbor girl whose mother had just died.

The two girls learned to bake bread, and make fresh peach, apple and sweet potato pies. Iris later entered pies in the annual Fairs held just off Fayette Street near Pneumonia Hall.

As a wife and mother raising ten children, she cooked for rotating shifts of DuPont workers in the plant cafeteria, a job she kept for 26 years.

SANDY BEACH resort, located just outside the city limits where Fayette Street becomes Appalachian Drive, or Rt. 57, featured not only a pool and motel but a stage for music concerts. Flood damage from the adjacent Smith River contributed the resort’s demise during the 1970s.



THE BALDWIN PHARMACY was more than a drug store. With its ice cream parlor, booths and jukebox tunes it served as a gathering place for all ages, well-remembered for milkshakes, sodas and toasted ham-and-cheese sandwiches.

Postcard of Sandy Beach courtesy of Douglas L. Stegall; photo of pharmacy courtesy of John P. Bing, M.D.

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Creating Community



Bishop J.C. Richardson, Sr
Mt. Sinai



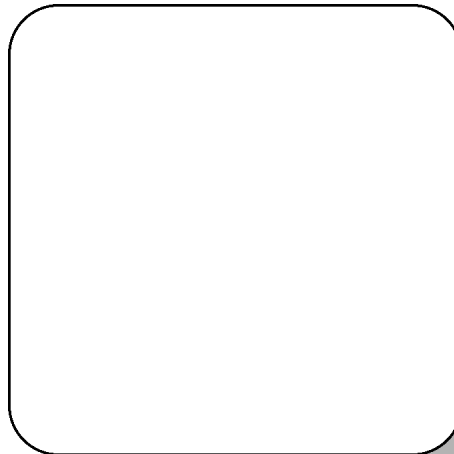
Rev. R.T. and Mrs. Marion G. Anderson
Mt. Zion A.M.E.



Rev. Wm. A. Shackelford
High St. Baptist



William Dyson Hobson
Plant foreman & former Mayor
of Martinsville



Black community leaders in Martinsville during the 20th century could be found in many walks of life, not the least of which were schools and churches.

Lula White Johnson, for example, became the first English department chair

of the new Martinsville High School in 1968 after teaching at Albert Harris High School. A New York state native with an MA from Cornell University, she shared her energies by serving on the boards of the Piedmont Arts Association, Memorial Hospital, Hospice, SafetyNet, the Blue Ridge Public Library, FOCUS and the Salvation Army. A mother and wife, and a member of Grace Presbyterian Church, Delta Sigma Theta, the Links, Estralitas and the Hampton University Alumni Association, she gave of herself year in and year out, and doing so made Martinsville a better place.



WHEN COMMUNITY HOSPITAL opened in 1952, employees of Globman's department store (first row, Al Morris, Mary Earles and Dan Greene) presented the new hospital's Board of Directors with sheets and pillowcases. From left to right they are: the Rev. Hezekiah Morris from High St. Baptist Church, insurance broker Ed Jones, lawyer William Alexander, hospital administrator Rudolph Hairston and Elmer Turner, principal of Albert Harris High School.

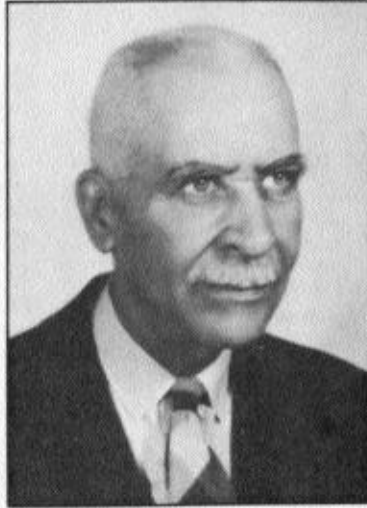


Photos courtesy of the Martinsville Bulletin, Karol Johnson and published church histories; thanks to J.B. Travis for help with photo IDs.

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PORTRAIT OF A FOUNDER



1883-1959

William Cody Spencer was born February, 1883, in the Spencer Community of Henry County, Virginia.

He enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1901 and served in Company C of the 25th Infantry in the Philippines. After discharge, he attended school at what is now Virginia State University in Petersburg, Virginia. He came to Martinsville in February, 1907 and worked as an insurance salesman and was paid \$4.00 per week. He also worked at Virginia Mirror Company for 30 years.

Spencer was active in Church, The Masonic Lodge, Civic League, NAACP, and various clubs. In 1927, Spencer met with some young men at High Street Baptist Church headed by John H. Saunders. He recommended that they continue to save money with a view towards establishing a building and loan association. The sum reached \$300 in July, 1929. Spencer wrote the Articles of Incorporation and the Charter was granted the IMPERIAL BUILDING AND LOAN ASSOCIATION July 16, 1929. The office of the association remained in Spencer's residence at 411 Fayette Street. Spencer served as Secretary/Treasurer-Managing Officer until July, 1959, when his health became impaired. Spencer worked house to house during this 30-year period for practically no salary.

IMPERIAL SAVINGS & LOAN ASSOCIATION now has assets in excess of \$8,000,000.



211 Fayette St.
Martinsville, Va.
638-7545

—advertisement from
the *Martinsville Bulletin*,
October 27, 1991

LOCALLY OWNED and operated, Imperial Savings & Loan is the only African-American owned savings and loan in Virginia. The S&L announced in April it plans to merge with minority-owned First State Bank of Danville, pending approval of all stockholders and members.

The change includes a proposed move from the offices on Fayette Street where it has been since 1980 to a new building at Bridge and Market streets.

This advertisement from the Martinsville Bulletin 200th Anniversary Edition is used with permission of the newspaper and Imperial Savings & Loan President Simone H. Redd.

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WORKING AND PLAYING ON FAYETTE STREET

Without the following, this exhibit would not have been possible. The Virginia Foundation of the Humanities and the Fayette Area Historical Initiative give special thanks to:

Albert Harris High School National Alumni Association, Inc.

Bassett Historical Center

Dr. John P. Bing

Blue Ridge Public Library, Martinsville

Blue Ridge Institute and Museum, Ferrum College

City of Martinsville

FAHI members and volunteers

W. Nelson Gilbert

Harvest Foundation, Martinsville

Ethel Howard

Thomas T. Hodge, Sr.

Karol Johnson

Dr. Mervyn & Virginia King

Library of Virginia, Richmond

Martinsville Bulletin

Martinsville Chamber of Commerce

Martinsville High School Music Department

Beverly Millner

Rudy Murell

National Public Welfare Foundation, Washington D.C.

Prillaman's Market

Jesse "Juke Box" Scales, Niagara Falls, N.Y.

Nic Siler Photographics, Charlottesville

Iris Preston Smith

The Sportman's Club

Douglas L. Stegall

University of Virginia's Alderman Library, Charlottesville

Alberta Wilson

Clyde Williams, Jr.



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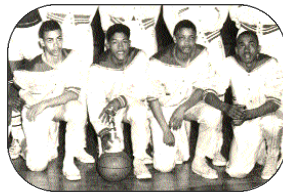
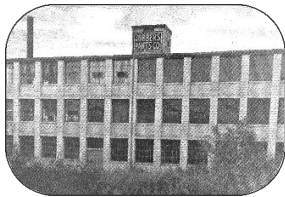
represents the shared memories that light the community's journey as it walks the pathway back into history. By viewing this exhibit, each of you has helped preserve the past. To continue to illuminate the historical interpretation of life along Fayette Street, you may yet make a more unique contribution, if you are among those

- who have owned businesses,
- who have worked and earned a living,
- who have worshiped in historic churches,
- who have attended schools and
- who have laughed and played in times of joy.

Come! Share your stories.

A YEAR FROM NOW in June 2006, a pictorial history of Fayette Street and its surrounding communities will be the focus of another exhibition and publication. If you have not already shared your stories with us, we would really like to hear them.

Come! Share your stories.



The best way to promote the interests of African Americans is “by advocating and working for better schools, better churches, better sanitation, by buying and working farms, by seeing to it that the children are instructed in the schools and taught the importance of the ballot.”

—Dr. Dana O. Baldwin, 1921

from *THE HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN NEGRO*, Virginia edition,
Volume V., A.B. Caldwell Publishing Company, Atlanta, Georgia

Photos courtesy of Naomi Muse, the Albert Harris High School National Alumni Association, Inc, and Jesse Scales.

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