

## Black History Month

Redford Township was a station on the Underground Railroad which spirited slaves to freedom on their way to Canada. Today on the corner of Kinloch and West Six Mile Road stands Good Shephard Lutheran Church. But, in 1833, the house which was built for Ed Wright stood for 123 years before being torn down to clear the way for the church. The house had a tunnel from its basement to Beech Road and the house had false walls inside. Here is a picture of the house taken in June of 1956.



### Celebrate Black History Month around our area

Black History Month is an opportunity for residents to share in a rich cultural heritage that dates back to the early 1800's in this area. Michigan was a refuge to an estimated 5,000 slaves on the Underground Railroad. The code name for Detroit was "midnight," and those seeking freedom stopped at the "midnight" station at the **Second Baptist Church of Detroit**, Detroit's first African American church, for shelter en route to Canada.

Another church and a Michigan registered historic site is the **First Congregational Church of Detroit**. Visitors can learn more at The Underground Railroad Living Museum with the Flight to Freedom program tour at the churches' present site at Woodward and Forest in Detroit's Midtown. Tour participants become "passengers" on the Underground Railroad, escape bounty hunters and are led by a "conductor" to safe houses. Reservations are required for the tour program.

The **Detroit Historic Museum** was refurbished last year and offers the Doorway to Freedom exhibition with documents from the days of the Underground Railroad. The museum is a great place to take youngsters for their first museum experience to enjoy the Olde Streets of Detroit.

The **Detroit Institute of Arts** has one of the most acclaimed collections of African Art in the nation. The museum sits in the heart of Detroit's cultural center is undergoing a major renovation to be completed later this year. The museum remains open for visitors to enjoy works of art from nearly 100 African cultures in addition to its vast collections and special exhibitions.

Visit the **Motown Historical Museum** in Detroit. The museum exhibits trace the roots of Motown's remarkable story and chronicles its impact on 20<sup>th</sup> century popular culture and fascinating collections celebrating the Motown sound.

**Detroit/Ontario Underground Railroad Memorial** was dedicated in the fall of 2001 to honor the involvement of Michigan and Detroit with the Underground Railroad system. Visitors can see these majestic sculptures at Hart Plaza on Detroit's riverfront, and overlooking the Detroit River in Windsor. This public works art project was created by Ed Dwight, a celebrated African American sculptor.

The **Michigan Soldiers and Sailors Monument** was recently relocated to Campus Martius, downtown Detroit's new gathering place. Dedicated in 1872, this monument honors the sacrifices of Michiganders in the U.S. armed forces during the Civil War. There are four allegorical figures on the monument symbolizing Victory, Union, Emancipation and History. The figure representing Emancipation was said to have been inspired by the famous black abolitionist Sojourner Truth. This monument symbolizes the heroic struggle of the people who emancipated themselves and the abolitionist who helped them.

Detroit's **Elmwood Cemetery**, located near downtown Detroit, is the city's oldest burial ground. Tours are offered to see the final resting places of people who made major contributions to the Underground Railroad ;movement including the William Lambert family, the George DeBaptiste family, and fourteen members of the First Michigan Colored Regiment (102<sup>nd</sup> U.S. Colored Troops) buried in the Civil War Plat.

## **Special Events**

Flint Institute of Music on February 16 or 17 for a free African American Heritage Event – Scott Joplin, The Man, The Music. The program begins at 7:30pm

Monroe County's 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Black History Month Blues Series offers a free concert with Blues greats Saffire—The Uppity Blues Women, Cephas & Wiggins, Rich Delgrosso; host by Josh White, Jr., Saturday 3, doors open at 6pm for general admission seating at the La-Z-Boy Center, Meyer Theater in Monroe.