

# Roosevelt Fitzgerald

from page 8



Professor Fitzgerald is director of ethnic studies at University of Nevada-Las Vegas

President of the Las Vegas Colored Progressive Club, responded to the petition. He asked that the city not "segregate a portion of Westside for caucasians only." The NAACP made a similar request. Fortunately, the city did not turn a deaf ear to them. It was faced with choosing between two options — permitting Blacks to remain where they were or permitting them to move to the Westside. From the early days of the McWilliams townsite, that area had not been smiled upon by the city.

frequent "the" restaurants, hotels and casinos they were forced to build their own. P.M. Snyder opened a fountain shop, there was Garrett's barber shop, Hughes grocery store, Johnson's community store, Gilbert Brothers market, the Dollar Market, and others. There were also the Harlem Club, the Cotton Club, the Louisiana Club, Brown Derby, El Rio and the club Alabam. Most of these establishments were located on Jackson, D., Van Buren and F Streets.

doctor, a chiropractor, arrived in early June. Dr. Roy G. DeHay opened his office at 520 Jackson Ave. A housing boom was also underway. A total of 223 new homes on the Clem and Francis Malone property were being built. Those homes were being sold for \$7,500. The Westside was growing, but for all the wrong reasons. It was growing because Las Vegas had chosen to disassociate itself from its Black residents. Numerous other busi-

nesses were initiated on the Westside. Most of them were black owned. In some cases there was duplication but they were necessary. The Black population continued to increase as the 1950s got underway. The second decade of segregation only compounded matters. The city was reluctant to make the necessary improvements. Houses were going up, businesses were going up, but there were dirt streets, little police protection, no street lights, no sidewalks or other services. A whole new generation of Blacks came to know Las Vegas as simply a reminder of the conditions they thought they had left behind in places like Arkansas, Louisiana or Mississippi.

The year 1955 was a turning point for West Las Vegas. The Moulin Rouge, the first of the "integrated" hotels opened. The arrival of Dr. James I. West brought the first Black physician to Las Vegas. He was soon followed by others. These developments helped spearhead the confrontation

which brought about the demise of "Jim Crow" in Las Vegas. The presence of Jim Crow practices were not without cost and the price paid was the perpetuation of a policy of prejudice and privation more ponderous than the populace had presumed. Black businesses had thrived during its heyday. Jackson St. became a center of activity. The Cove Hotel was bursting at the seams. The clubs, however small they might have been, were filled constantly. Blacks who worked on the Strip or downtown could only find outlets for their leisure time in the cafes and restaurants of the Westside. The grocery stores did good business. Most people who lived in the area did not have access to a steady means of transportation and found it convenient to do their shopping in the nearby stores.

All of that began to change in the 1960. Segregation tumbled and with it, so did black businesses. The Black Community, it appears, is being punished for having the audacity to demand integration in 1960.

(To be continued next week)



## Petals of McRoy



## Petals of McRoy

Your Full Service Flower Shop

Weddings, Parties, Etc.

Fresh Flowers

Silks

Plants

Trees

Wedding Rentals

Arch & Baskets

Owner: Freddie McRoy

Manager: JoAnn Johnson

1020 West Owens L.V. Nev. 89102

Phone 702-647-1087

Don't Drink and Drive

SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS

Once again it was not smiled upon.

The 1940s ushered in a period of segregation. For the twenty year period extending up to 1960, a town within a town developed. Transplanted Black businesses appeared on the Westside. It was apartheid — Las Vegas style. Blacks worked at BMI, downtown, the nearly developing Strip, in the military and in private homes. Once they punched out on the block they returned to either Carver Park in Henderson or to the Westside. A few managed to remain downtown.

Black businesses on the Westside were the visual results of segregation. Since Blacks could no longer

The year 1947 was a bumper year for business ventures on the Westside. William Jackson opened a barber shop on the corner of F and Jackson St. Mrs. Mae Harris and Mrs. Florence Elmore, mother and daughter, operated the Sunny Sundry store where they specialized in everything from Sunday dinners to candy, chewing gum, lotions and nylons. Lorenze Watson, a graduate of Edith Collins Beauty School of San Francisco, was busy styling hair at Florence Elmore's Beauty Shop. H. W. Garrett opened an automobile repair shop on Adams Avenue and North E Street along with a Mobil Oil and gas station. The first Black

nesses were initiated on the Westside. Most of them were black owned. In some cases there was duplication but they were necessary. The Black population continued to increase as the 1950s got underway. The second decade of segregation only