

Ethnic/Immigration

As Dayton's economy improved and the myriad factories began hiring in the late 1930s through the 1960s, thousands of people migrated to the metropolitan area looking for work. The majority of the new arrivals were from the rural South, particularly among African-Americans, and from Appalachia. The white Southerners initially tended to settle in the older close-in neighborhoods. No properties related to that community were recorded in this survey. By 1970, white Southerners were moving to the working class suburbs of Huber Heights, Moraine, and unincorporated Northridge in Harrison Township. Although Huber Heights and Harrison Township were represented in the survey, no properties specifically identified with that ethnic group were found.

The African-American population grew exponentially during the mid-20th century. By 1944, Dayton's black population had increased by nearly 50% since the 1940 census (Zumwald 169) Following long-established settlement patterns, African-Americans settled on Dayton's West Side. Three properties were inventoried related to the West Side African-American community.

Constructed in 1939-1940 on the West Side, the **DeSoto Bass Courts** apartment complex (MOT-05369-21) was Dayton's first publicly funded housing project. Partially funded by the federal government, the complex was built by the Dayton Metropolitan Housing Authority. DeSoto Bass Courts was constructed to house young black couples and families who, due to racial discrimination, were not permitted to rent apartments elsewhere in the city.



Desoto Bass Courts ca. 1945
(Historic Photo 15)



DeSoto Bass Courts
Danner and Germantown Streets, Dayton

Howard T. Loritts owned and operated the **Loritts Funeral Home** (MOT-05552-30) for decades until his retirement in 1993. Loritts constructed the present building in 1964 and relocated the funeral home there. He inherited the business from his uncle, the first African-American funeral director in Dayton. Howard Loritts was considered a leader in the city's African-American community.



Loritts Funeral Home
3924 W. Third St., Dayton

In 1948, the Mayo family opened what is believed to be the first black-owned skating rink in Ohio. Located on Dayton's West Side, both the 1948 skating rink and its larger replacement at 4623 Hoover Road, constructed in 1965, were centers for the Dayton metro area's African-American community. The **Hoover Skate Arena** (MOT-05556-32) is an example of African-American entrepreneurs establishing businesses to serve their community during an era when they did not have access to white-owned businesses.



Mark Mayo Sr. and son Harry Mayo in front of
Hoover Skate Arena, date unknown
(Historic Photo 16)



Hoover Skate Arena
4623 Hoover Ave., Dayton