

live. Many were forced to move in with family or friends, already living in the Albina area. The area expanded little by little, pushing towards the St. Johns area and closer to 82<sup>nd</sup> Avenue.

**Post War Years – Moderate gains for Blacks**

Post-war problems caused further friction between whites and blacks. Returning soldiers were hailed as heroes and most felt they shouldn't have to compete with blacks for jobs. Although many returning veterans took advantage of the GI Bill and returned to college, job competition still became fierce. Unemployment among African Americans was on the rise. Earlier in the century, the Taylor vs. Cohn case allowed for discrimination in Oregon based on race. In 1950, the City of Portland's City Council rejected that case in an ordinance that did not allow discrimination "in any public place." Unfortunately a petition brought defeat to the ordinance, leaving "Jim Crow alive and well in Portland." In 1953, with the help of the NAACP, the Taylor vs. Cohn case was permanently overturned, however, open and hostile discrimination continued for a long time.

nied practice of real estate companies only showing homes in certain areas to black families. The *Portland Journal* began doing the same. Banks and real estate companies were feeling the pressure to show homes in white areas and loan money if the black homeowners could demonstrate their ability to pay it back. The "Fair Housing Law" came into play, and slowly African Americans began migrating to the suburbs. As more black families began to enjoy the sprawling suburbs, others left behind in the "old neighborhood" began to feel an economic impact of the transitions. Poor blacks tended to stay behind while more successful ones moved away, creating neighborhoods that felt even more discrimination.

**Schools**

One of the hardest fought battles between the races was that of school segregation. Many whites claimed support of equality but when it came to sending their children to school with black children, they backed down. The Fair Housing Act paved the way for African Americans to move to the suburbs, but few did.

changed. The fight to keep most schools segregated intensified. In 1964, a "pilot relocation assistance project" began. Twenty-five African American families, all of whom lived in the Albina District, were given help to move out of the area. Although the program had a moderate success, prejudice continued to prevail and Portland's white com-

munity fought harder to keep the schools separate. Finally, during the 1970's and 1980's, programs aimed at desegregation were put in place in the Portland School District. Although they were successful, many African American families have chosen to leave their children in predominantly black schools. Under school guidelines

in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, these schools began getting better teachers and programs. School District policies and measures like Ballot Measure 5 spread funds more evenly throughout the district. Although it has not made the system perfect, it has helped us avoid the old trap of a student living in a wealthier area like Lake Oswego getting a better high



Holladay school children modeling knit hats in 1949. (Courtesy of OHS)

Another big step was the anti-mixed marriage law of 1866 being repealed in 1955. Also in the 1950's, a section called "Lower Albina" mostly inhabited by whites began seeing changes. As whites began to move out into the suburbs, homes opened up to African Americans. About this time, *The Oregonian Newspaper* began reporting the long-de-

Putting their children through brutal racism in white classes made a lot of parents and children afraid. The fact that there were not a lot of black families in Portland made the situation "tolerable" in schools that allowed black children. But with the huge influx of African Americans into the Portland area during WWII, the tides

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