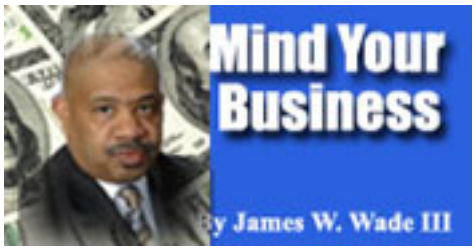

I hope 2013 is a very good year

Happy New Year I hope everyone is starting 2013 off ok and if you made any resolutions you are sticking to them. In response to all the phone calls to my past 2 columns and the memories I had growing up in Cleveland; I decided to talk about the businesses that were around. Now it was no secret that you could dress up on Sunday's and head downtown to possibly have a great dinner at the Forum Cafeteria located at 2050 East Ninth Street, at the corner of Ninth and Euclid right next to the Western Union office. In case you are too young to remember, Medical Mutual takes up that location now.

The place gave you that school dinning feel. The cafeteria had separate work divisions, each with their own management and staff; the Bake Shop, Salads, Kitchen, Pot Wash, Dish Line, Dish Transfer, Serving Line, Cashier. Rarely did employees cross over and work in the other disciplines, although one could work their way up to other positions.

There were two long cafeteria lines where diners queued up and could view and select the items they wanted. Taking a tray and a wrapped table service, you slid it down the chromed rails and moved through first the soups and salads, next entrees, then vegetables, breads and desserts last were beverages. At the end of the line was a cashier who rang up your selections, you paid, and then found a place to sit and enjoy a freshly prepared meal.

After getting full there you could walk around the corner and have a pick of the Hippodrome or Embassy theaters to watch some good Bruce Lee movies, or any Black movie that was out at the time.

The Hippodrome (or the "Hipp" as everyone called it) was built in 1907 and was located at 720 Euclid Avenue next to the Taylor & Sons department store (we know this building now as 668 Euclid. The theater was part of an 11-story office building and had entrances on both Euclid Avenue and Prospect Avenue. Today the area is a parking lot.

The Embassy was right across the street from the Hipp at 709 Euclid Ave., one of downtown Cleveland's last movie theaters.

The Embassy Theater was furnished with air conditioning, gleaming chromium, velvet hangings, and indirect lighting. Seating capacity was 1,200. During the 1970s, it became a showplace for

action-type karate films. Owned by Community Circuit Theaters, the Embassy was closed on 1 Dec. 1977 and razed to make way for the Natl. City Bank building.

Looking around and wondering where all these places went, I realized I even remember going to Jerry Mill's clothing store, The Fly Store (I worked there while in school and summers) or going to Record Rendezvous or Woody's Music Hut.

Places have closed up, but you have to remember the good times at the stores, Giant Tigers (Gaylords), Woolworths, Zayres, Federal's, Uncle Bills, Army and Navy stores where I purchased my first pair of Chuck Taylor's converse's for $10.00.

Another great place I loved was Richmond Brothers who manufactured and sold men's suits, furnishings, and hats, supplying a national network of stores from its 23-acre tailoring plant and offices at 1600 E. 55th St. The firm began in 1879 when Henry Richman moved his manufacturing and wholesale clothing business to Cleveland from Portsmouth, OH.

In 1907 the company took its present form when the founder's sons, Nathan, Charles, and Henry, opened retail outlets selling factory-produced men's clothing directly to customers, the first clothier to do so. All suits were priced at $10 until 1939 when men's furnishings and hats were added to the line.

In 1969 the company was sold to F.W. Woolworth Co. of New York. By the early 1990s the firm had become unprofitable and at the end of 1992 Woolworth closed its Richman unit, including 9 stores in Cleveland and the Distribution Center located at the original plant on E. 55th St.

George Benson had a song called "Everything Must Change" and I guess this is so true. Nothing stays the same, in the Lee Harvard area you could get anything you wanted all in this one area.

West's Fish, Banks, Golden Point, KFC's, Kings Men's Shop, Robert Hall's, Paul Warfields, DK Marshalls and the place to find out everything Carl & Sons Barber Shop on Lee Rd. All the other places except Carl's are closed now.

If you ever watched TV and seen scenes on how Barber Shops are, Carl's is that place for sure. You can go in there and find out anything that happens in Cleveland and around the world even.

Remember Gold Circle's, Peaches Record Stores

Even though I have those memories, new memories are being created everyday for other people. A new Aquarium in the flats opening real soon, Medical Mart, Horseshoe Casino also coming. Maybe we can even see the Cleveland Browns in a Super Bowl in the future.

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