

Residents of “The Farm” (1949-1963)

On the former J.D. Armitage Estate
North Caldwell, NJ

As recalled by Ted Hine in January, 2025

“The Farm” was a term used by neighbors to describe their locality to other in the area. Most had purchased land and built homes on what had formerly been the J.D. Armitage farm (estate) as depicted in the 1928 painting by Lawrence Wilbur. Residents of The Farm became very close friends and regularly socialize together. It became sort of an informal exclusive club or those experiencing the same rural lifestyle. I lived there as a child from 1949 till 1963. It was a great place to grow up. Below is a list of the residents of The Farm during the period I lived there. Most remained lifelong friends of my parents long after my family moved elsewhere.

My apologies to those whose names I’ve forgotten over time or don’t recall quite correctly. Also, for any unintended factual errors.

Kirt and Betty Hine (kids Ted, Greg, Hank)

Kirt designed and developed airplane propellers for Curtiss Wright Corp.

The address was then at 427 Mountain Ave. but now at 11 E. Greenbrook Rd. Built in 1949 in the farm’s former chicken coop, the home was torn down and replaced, I believe in around 1999.

Lawrence (“Bud”) and Helen Wilbur (son’s Richard and Lawrie)

The historic 1775 house now at 9 E. Green Brook Rd.

Bud was a well-known portrait artist whose studio was right behind the historic home.

His son **Richard Wilbur** grew up there and in the 1950’s would become a very famous poet while living as an adult elsewhere.

Helen Pigeon (“Pidge”)

Now at 10 E. Green Brook Rd. (across street from Standford-Stager house)

Helen was an elderly lady who lived alone.

Andrew (Drew) and Nancy Marvel (kids: Chris and Andy)

Today 22 E Green Brook Rd.

Drew founded and ran the Marvel Mfg. Co. on Passaic Ave. near the airport. It manufactured propeller balancers (used much like car tire balancers).

Eugene (Gene) and Mary Williamson (kids Margo, Gail, Jerry).

Now 1 E. Greenbrook Rd. (Corner of Mountain Ave and Greenbrook Rd.).

Gene was retired and well off financially having founded and sold a manufacturing business. He collected vintage cars and in the 1950’s founded a nearby upscale eating establishment named the Two Bridges restaurant. The home was sold 1962 to:

Jim & Rosemary Timpson (kids Anne and Timmy)

Jim was a well-known architect who had designed the home for the Williamsons around 1949 and also designed my parent’s home that year.

Bob and Bar Sullivan (kids Lynn and a son)

Today's 3 E. Greenbrook Rd. The was the old farm dairy building owed and converted by Gene Williamson into a single-family rental home.

Bob was an executive with Sports Illustrated magazine and served in submarines during WWII. Then after a few years rented to:

Stew & Tommy Lockheart (a kid or two)

Stew was another Sports Illustrated employee who had flown jets in the Navy in the early 1950's.

Stu & Sis DeCamp (kids Ralph and Karen)

399 Mountain Ave.

Stu was part of the family owned bus business serving Northern NJ.

Bill and Janie Mueller (pronounced "Miller" - kids Billy and Larry)

Bill was a "Madison Ave." advertising executive / product manager who in the early 1960's handled all the advertising for the ubiquitous Mazola brand of cooking oil for the popular TV show Bonanza. Janie was a daughter of the very famous silent film era actress Irene Rich.

The home was on a gravel driveway extension from the top of Hillcrest Place. Now probably 1 Barnsdale Rd. Their large home was built around 1950 and was of "modern" midcentury design and construction with a flat profile roof. The home has since been torn down and replaced.

Jim and Pedsie Braddock (no kids that I recall).

461 Mountain Ave. (with the tennis court.)

Aubrey and Kit Nash

A retired couple and parents, I believe, of Bar Sullivan (above). Aubrey had been in the greenhouse/flower business before retiring. Liked to paint. Kit was the niece of J.D. Armitage. Likely an address on Meadow Lane.

Swede and Dimp Johnson (kids Susie and Sally). Swede was a local Judge.

Mr. and Mrs. Carswell (retired) & divorced or widowed daughter **Cynthia Draper** (kids Gail and Bruce)

Duplex at 443 Mountain Ave. We referred to this as the Carswell/Johnson house.

Woody and Carlee Walker (kids Alan, Byron, Chris, Darcey)

Today's Walker Park (Greenbrook Rd. at Mountain Ave.)

J.D. Armitage. His mansion's driveway was then off of Greenbrook Rd. but today is at 6 Farmstead Rd. (Later owners of the mansion in the 1950's and early 1960's after J.D. Armitage passed away were the **Buchanans** and then the **Mosses**. I don't recall them being active socially in "The Farm".)