

VINTAGE WILKES

Baltimore isn't just in Maryland anymore

By SKEET WILLINGHAM
Local Historian

Yes, Washington has its “Dublin.” We also have our “Baltimore.” Straddling what for two centuries was called the Raytown Road rolling south out of town toward Little River, Baltimore saw its origin and name as the curtain dropped to end the Civil War.



Today, at the intersection of South Alexander Avenue and Chapman Street, a left turn puts us onto Baltimore Road which past Andrew Drive becomes Lundburg Road trekking southward to the hinterlands of Taliaferro County.

Now, the question of the day: how did a Maryland city become a Washington GA suburb? Almost immediately after the cessation of hostilities in 1865, existing abolitionist societies from the North reached out to those no longer enslaved throughout the South. The Baltimore Relief Society from Maryland sent assistance to Wilkes County helping ease the transition economically and educationally. This organization worked with the Freedmen's Bureau and several New England groups to send teachers from the North establishing schools in Wylieville (now Whitehall area), provide rudimentary health care, spiritual support, and economic guidance.

Unlike Wylieville, where post-War Black ownership was encouraged and supported, the entirety of Baltimore was still owned by planter-era landlords, Robert Toombs and Samuel Barnett chief among them. Thus, Baltimore evolved quite differently from the Black settlement on the Greensboro Road. Baltimore became an enclave for those who were employed in downtown Washington or at properties on or adjacent to today's Robert Toombs and Alexander Avenues. Baltimore is clearly delineated on Thomas Callaway's 1877 Wilkes County map.

By early February 1896 J.D. Colley's Wilkes Land Company began selling off lots, again almost totally to white investors for rental property offered to Black

citizens. Colley was also developing his own property further south on Raytown Road to midwestern farmers at what was called the “Illinois Colony,” shortly after given the name Lundburg for one of its first occupants.

1901 was significant for Baltimore when Bishop Lucius H. Holsey of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church came in August to St. James CME church (established in 1893) to hold District Conference. Bishop Holsey was a monumental figure in Southern religious history, outspoken, opinionated and brilliant. His major address here came at a time when race relations in the South had deteriorated, the threats of white supremacy at their most vicious, and opportunities for Black advancement only a fond memory. Bishop Holsey had turned from cooperationist, frustrated by his white Methodist colleagues, into a full-blown Black nationalist seeking establishment of a separate Black state in Oklahoma or Arizona Territory. The spell-binding Bishop Holsey addressed a huge integrated crowd with his politically charged message.

That same year of 1901, Mount Carmel Baptist, under Rev. Lewis Gary, announced its presence under a brush arbor. Rev. Toombs McLendon led the congregation into its new building on the corner of Faver (named for Washington mayor Luke D. Faver) Avenue and Baltimore Road in 1915. By 1927 Mount Carmel had 131 members and St. James CME 100. In 1883 Toombs McLendon had become only the second Black funeral director in Georgia. Rev. McLendon by 1908 had opened his large ginny operation on his land in Baltimore. The fairgrounds--where Tiger Stadium is today--adjoined the Baltimore community. With the East Georgia fair up and running in the 'Teens, Rev. McLendon organized extensive exhibitions to showcase Black farms and products.

In November 1919 investment lots were sold and new streets opened up. By 1926 the Baltimore School, with Mary Smith as principal, could declare forty students enrolled. Though the stately Mount Carmel Church stands proud, few other early structures, stores or residences, remain today. But the sense of community, identity, and civic involvement is still strong in our Baltimore.



Jackson Chapel and Blackrock has a new phone number which is 1-617-793-8272. Additionally, the worship service time has been changed to 11:00. Worship service is now held in the church as well as virtually.

Send notifications of community events for this column and for the W-W Chamber of Commerce calendar of events to news-reporter.com and washington-wilkesevents@gmail.com or drop them off at the News-Reporter office 23 W. Robert Toombs Ave in Washington.

The Roy L Burns Senior Center Schedule: Monday – BINGO 10 a.m., Wednesday – Exercise 10 a.m., Thursday – BINGO 10 a.m.

The Washington City Council will hold its next regular meeting on Monday, March 14, at 6 p.m. at the Pope Center.

Are you about to turn 65? Need help with Medicare? The Wilkes County Senior Center offers free help through the Georgia Cars State Health Insurance Assistance Program every first Wednesday from 10 am -noon. The next session will be held at the Senior Center on Wednesday, March 3. For additional Medicare counseling services, call 866-522-4464.

If you are new to Washington-Wilkes and have not been visited by the Welcome to Washington Committee, contact them at welcomewashingtonga@gmail.com or 706-678-1019.

Zumba classes will be offered by certified instructor Tiffany Weser on Tuesdays at 6:00p.m. and the first Saturday of each month at 8:30 a.m. at the Curry Colvin Rec Complex Gymnasium, 1962 Rowland York Dr., Lincolnton. Classes are \$5 per class or \$15 per month.

Yard Sale at Roy C. Burns Senior Center, 108 Marshall Rd Monday-Friday 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

The V.F.W. Post 5899 now has a community can recycling cage. Please take all aluminum cans behind the V.F.W. (240 Andrew Drive in Washington) and drop them into the cage for recycling purposes.

New Ford Baptist Church will conduct its annual Family and Friends Day Worship Service and “Great Day of Giving” activities at 10:00 a. m. on Sunday, March 13. Rev. Larry Hill, Pastor of Marks Tabernacle Baptist Church, is the guest preacher and his church family are the special guests of New Ford for this occasion. The entire community is invited to come worship with New Ford on this special annual occasion. A delicious take-out lunch meal will be served.

Seventh week of session with the Georgia General Assembly

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Act, to promote the safe and appropriate use of school-issued technology, whether students are using these devices in the classroom or while learning from home. The Student Technology Protection Act would require each local board of education and charter school governing body to adopt an acceptable-use policy this year that could better prevent and prohibit any school computer or network from accessing obscene materials, child pornography or material that is deemed harmful to minors. The Georgia Department of Education would provide local

school systems with information about contracted providers of technology protection measures, provide guidance and technical assistance to schools and develop guidelines for training school personnel. If the State Board of Education finds that a school has not followed its acceptable-use policy, the board could withhold a portion of state funding allotted for that school. As technology continues to evolve quickly, this bill would ensure that Georgia's public schools have these policies in place and are equipped with the resources they need to protect

children from harmful online content.

Heading into the second half of session, the next couple of weeks will certainly be some of our most demanding as we prepare for the Crossover Day deadline, which is the last day a bill can pass out of one chamber and still be eligible to be signed into law this year. There are still many more important bills that will be taken up before Crossover Day, including the Fiscal Year 2023 budget. I hope to hear from you soon about legislation that is still up for consideration this session.

Book Review

By MORRIS BRANSON
Staff Reprinter

The Wish

By Nicholas Sparks

Published September, 2021

Nicholas Sparks is the author of 22 novels and two non-fiction books, 14 of which have been bestsellers. Many of his books have been turned into movies either on the big screen or TV. His first novel, 1996's *The Notebook*, sold over 105 million copies worldwide and was made into a hit movie.

Maggie, a successful photographer in her thirties, is dying; she has stage IV melanoma. A young man, whom she has hired to help her run the gallery she shares with an avant-guard artist, is determined to make her last Christmas memorable. Over the course of a few weeks, she gradually tells him the story of her

life. It is told in parallel fashion, alternating between the present and the past.

Maggie was 16 years old when she found out she was pregnant after a one-night encounter. She is sent to live with her aunt, a former nun, on a small island in the Outer Banks of North Carolina. The island appears, at first, to have very little to like for a depressed teenage girl. Then a young man, Bryce, is hired to be her tutor. It is he who introduces her to photography which becomes a passion, as well as her livelihood later in life. Their friendship turns into love and they begin to contemplate their futures; Bryce has been accepted

into West Point and Maggie has to return to her life in Seattle (after giving the baby up for adoption.) Their plans for one final goodbye are thwarted when she goes into labor early.

Sparks once again reminds us why he is the undisputed king of romantic fiction. At times he is deliberately manipulative, but even the hardest heart can't help but get emotional as the story progresses. I will say that by page 40 I knew what the plot twist at the end would be, but that didn't stop me from enjoying the book. As a side note, I would bet even money that this will be made into either a feature film or a movie on Lifetime or Hallmark.

Letters Policy

The News-Reporter welcomes letters to the editor on matters of public affairs. It is the policy of this newspaper to be available as a forum for any opinion or point of view concerning issues of general interest.

Letters **must be signed** and must include a valid address and telephone number. However, addresses and phone numbers will not be published unless specifically requested for good reason. Addresses and telephone numbers will be used for verification purposes. Letters may be accepted by email but an original signature is still required on a hard copy.

Names may be withheld from publication upon reasonable request. For example, a fear for one's personal or family safety, a fear for one's job, or a fear of other retaliation may be grounds for withholding a name.

Letters must be limited to **500 words or less** unless specific arrangements for compensation are made in advance with the editor of this newspaper. Letters of more than 500 words may not be considered for publication and may also be edited for length.

No letter writer may have more than two letters published in any 30-day period. **Libelous or unsigned letters will not be considered for publication at all.**

The editor of this newspaper reserves the right to edit all letters for length, clarity, spelling, and grammatical correctness. However, occasionally letters are submitted in which meanings and/or intent are unclear. In such an instance, no editing will be done and the letter will appear verbatim as submitted. Letters deemed “in bad taste” or those dealing with private, personal, or family matters will not be published. Letters presenting unsubstantiated, unverified, or unattributed statements as fact will not be published. Letters deemed to be libelous or potentially libelous will not be considered. **LETTERS ATTEMPTING TO CIRCUMVENT THESE OR OTHER POLICIES OF THIS NEWSPAPER WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED.** The editor further reserves the right to cut off any series of letters dealing with a single subject.

LETTERS FROM OR ENDORSING INDIVIDUAL POLITICAL CANDIDATES OR PARTIES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Priority for publication will be given to letters concerning local issues. Letters should be addressed to: Editor; *The News-Reporter*; P.O. Box 597; Washington, GA 30673.