

# THE HISTORY AND HERITAGE OF THE VILLAGE OF WESLEY CHAPEL



**CELEBRATING 10 YEARS AS A  
NORTH CAROLINA MUNICIPALITY**

**JULY 15, 1998 - JULY 15, 2008**

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

BORN WITHIN SIGHT OF NEWPORT NEWS SHIPBUILDING & DRY DOCK COMPANY IN NEWPORT NEWS, VIRGINIA, **BILL LEE** ENTERED THE FIRM'S APPRENTICE SCHOOL IN 1954. AFTER COMPLETING HIS APPRENTICESHIP, HE ATTENDED COLLEGE ON A SHIPYARD SCHOLARSHIP AND RECEIVED A DEGREE IN MECHANICAL ENGINEERING FROM NORTH CAROLINA STATE UNIVERSITY. RETURNING TO THE SHIPYARD, HE QUALIFIED AS A NUCLEAR TEST ENGINEER AND PARTICIPATED IN THE INITIAL NUCLEAR REFUELING OF THE WORLD'S FIRST NUCLEAR-POWERED AIRCRAFT CARRIER, THE *USS ENTERPRISE (CVN 65)*.

IN 1966 HE JOINED A HANDPICKED TEAM OF DESIGNERS AND ENGINEERS, ENGAGED IN THE ENGINEERING DESIGN OF THE NUCLEAR PROPULSION PLANT FOR THE *USS NIMITZ (CVN-68)* AND NINE MORE SISTER SHIPS. **BILL** CONSIDERS HIS PARTICIPATION IN THAT PROJECT, WHICH LASTED NINE YEARS, TO BE HIS GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT DURING ALMOST THIRTY YEARS AS A SHIPBUILDER. IN PARALLEL WITH THAT EFFORT, HE RECEIVED AN MBA FROM THE COLLEGE OF WILLIAM & MARY IN 1973 AND A PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER'S LICENSE.



*ON NIMITZ SEA TRIALS, 1975*

IN 1984, HE JOINED THE JA JONES CONSTRUCTION COMPANY OF CHARLOTTE, AND LAUNCHED A 'SECOND' CAREER IN ENGINEERING AND CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATED WITH COMMERCIAL NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS AND NUCLEAR WEAPONS FACILITIES. RETIRED SINCE 1998 AND LIVING IN THE UNION COUNTY COMMUNITY OF WESLEY CHAPEL, **BILL** LIKES TO RESEARCH AND WRITE ABOUT SHIPS, SHIPBUILDING AND SHIPBUILDERS. BUT OCCASIONALLY ABOUT LOCAL HISTORY, AS WELL.

## COVER ILLUSTRATION

**ANGELA LUBINECKY**, BACHELOR OF ARTS, WORLD ARTS AND CULTURES (UCLA 1992) HAS BEEN A LIFELONG ARTIST. SHE PURSUED INDEPENDENT STUDIES IN FRANCE, GERMANY AND ENGLAND, PAINTED VIBRANT ABSTRACTS WHILE LIVING IN KENYA, AND NOW CONTINUES HER ART WORK IN WESLEY CHAPEL, NC. **MRS. LUBINECKY** WAS THE WINNER OF THE CHARLOTTE SHOUT POSTER CONTEST (2007), AWARDED BY CHARLOTTE CITY CENTER PARTNERS, INC. MORE RECENTLY HER WORK WAS SELECTED BY HODGES TAYLOR GALLERY, CHARLOTTE, WHO SERVE AS THE LEVINE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL ART CONSULTANT. THE ART IS CURRENTLY PART OF THE HOSPITAL'S PERMANENT COLLECTION.

**ANGELA LUBINECKY** AND HER FAMILY MOVED TO WESLEY CHAPEL IN 2006. SHE SPENDS HER TIME DESIGNING POSTERS, PAINTING CHILDREN'S PORTRAITS AND CREATING COLORFUL ABSTRACTS. IN BETWEEN SHE VOLUNTEERS AT THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHING THE MASTERPIECE MOMENTS PROGRAM, AN ART APPRECIATION CLASS.

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**The History and Heritage of**  
**THE VILLAGE OF WESLEY CHAPEL**  
*A Great Place to Live and Raise a Family*



**Celebrating Ten Years as an  
Incorporated Municipality**

**July 15, 2008**

# THE VILLAGE OF WESLEY CHAPEL

## *A Great Place to Live and Raise a Family*

### *~FOREWORD~*

Although the Village of Wesley Chapel has existed as an incorporated municipality for barely a decade, its origins date back for hundreds of years. The following discourse traces the history and heritage of Wesley Chapel, starting when only Native Americans roamed the rolling countryside of this ever-evolving community.

More importantly, highlighted are some precedents that should serve to instruct and inspire the future growth of the Village. History has a habit of repeating itself. This has already happened in the Wesley Chapel community on several occasions, and undoubtedly will do so again and again.

In many respects, Wesley Chapel is like countless other small towns in our great nation. Religion, education and public service are almost always the cornerstones of such places. A fourth and most important cornerstone is the residents who traditionally give generously, not just monetarily, but also of their time and talents to establish churches, schools and volunteer fire departments.

The history of these institutions in our community, and the caring, proud citizens who created and nurtured Wesley Chapel are a large part of what makes it a great place to live and raise a family.

What follows is a fairly comprehensive 'look back', developed in part to help celebrate ten years of incorporated existence, but more importantly, to provide residents, old and new alike, with a better appreciation of those who have preceded them in the Village of Wesley Chapel.

### *~ The Origins of Union County ~*

What is now Union County was originally inhabited by the Waxhaw Indians. The earliest settlers from Europe brought diseases with them to which the natives had no resistance. In the early eighteenth century, a small pox epidemic decimated the Waxhaw Indian Tribe. About 600 died, and a handful of survivors fled the region to join other tribes.

Around 1750, people from Pennsylvania, Germany and Great Britain started settling the region. The soil in what was to become Union County was well suited for farming. Soon, small communities began to develop throughout the area, which was originally a part of western Mecklenburg and eastern Anson counties.

A further influx of settlers after the Revolution resulted in some legal inconveniences. People had to travel miles by horseback or buggy to either Charlotte or Wadesboro to record deeds, file lawsuits and to deal with county officials. As a result, in 1841 a group of determined citizens petitioned the state General Assembly to form a new county.

In spite of the fact that both Mecklenburg and Anson county officials were amenable, statewide politics delayed things a bit. Partisan squabbling that had nothing to do with the merits of creating a new county resulted in an initial failure of passage of this measure.

Subsequently, the creation of Union County was approved by the General Assembly on December 19, 1842. An area of roughly 643 square miles was carved out, and several townships within the new county were mapped out. The boundaries for Union County that were originally established have remained unchanged for 165 years.

However, that was not the end of the political in-fighting. One party wanted to name the new county for Andrew Jackson, former president and native son of the Waxhaws. The other party wanted to honor Henry Clay, Jackson's political rival. A compromise was eventually accepted, and what is now known as Union County came into existence.

But by that time, the name Wesley Chapel had already been in use for a decade.

### **~ McWhorter Campground and Cemetery – Birthplace of Wesley Chapel ~**

On some unrecorded date in the early 1800s, a rural meeting place, known as The McWhorter Campground, was established on a slight rise overlooking Potter Road South a little over a mile to the south of where Wesley Chapel Road ends at Weddington Road (NC 84), and where Potter Road South now begins. Lack of a suitable water supply at the campground site resulted in a new location being selected some miles away, adjacent to a natural spring at Pleasant Grove Campground, near Mineral Springs.

The abandoned campground provided the site for the first church in Wesley Chapel, and gave the community its name. Now called the Wesley Chapel United Methodist Church, this venerable religious organization dates to 1832. The church itself was named for John Wesley (1703-1791), the founder of Methodism.



In the beginning, it was simply a brush arbor (i.e., a temporary structure made of small tree limbs and branches to provide shelter for outdoor church services). A more permanent sanctuary was later constructed closer to the crossroads, about ¼ mile south of the church's present location.

The former campground has served for over 185 years as a cemetery, starting in 1822, ten years before the church was founded. Originally called the McWhorter Family Cemetery, it was renamed Wesley Chapel Cemetery after the original church building was erected nearby.



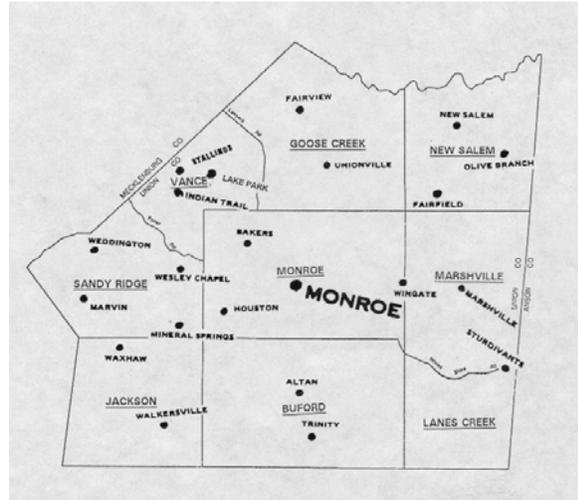
In addition to some noteworthy Greek Revival and Victorian headstones, this site includes some very modest, rough-hewn stone markers.

Burial grounds have always been amongst the most sacred and inviolate reminders of our past. Appropriately, this particular cemetery, which bears the oldest known local usage of the name "Wesley Chapel", is still in use.

Thanks to dedicated church members, a trust fund established years ago and periodically augmented by individual donations, provides the monies necessary to maintain this final resting place.

**~ The Wesley Chapel Vicinity of Sandy Ridge Township ~**

In the early Twentieth Century, an undefined region of Union County was sometimes referred to as the ‘vicinity’ of Wesley Chapel. Most of the Wesley Chapel Vicinity lay within the boundaries of the Sandy Ridge Township, but some people living in the abutting townships of Vance and Monroe also identified themselves as residents of Wesley Chapel.



Today, Union County townships serve primarily as a geographical reference for property reevaluations and census reports for the unincorporated parts of the county.



For decades, farms and farm-related businesses dominated the rolling, wooded, pastoral and peaceful landscape of Sandy Ridge Township. The ‘cash crop’ was cotton. Other crops included corn and ‘small grains’ (i.e., oats, wheat and hay). Every farm had horses, mules, cows, pigs, goats and chickens. In addition, quite often, each farmer and his wife produced a large number of children who helped maintain the farms they later expected to inherit.

The 1900 census for Sandy Ridge TWP contains the following families’ names listed multiple times (and spelled as shown), as well as about twenty more single entries.

- Davis
- Dees
- Fowler
- Hargett
- Hampton
- Houston
- Howie
- Laney
- Moore
- Plyler
- Presley
- Price
- Underwood
- Winchester

Most of these families had several children, as many as eight in one family were tabulated that year. Today, numerous descendants of these families still reside in Wesley Chapel and still contribute to the well-being of the community. Some of their ancestors have also been honored by the names given to several roads both within and near the Village's current corporate limits.

Of all the names listed in the 1900 census, one name -*PRICE*- stands out in particular.

### ~ Price's Mill ~

The Wesley Chapel Vicinity, in the late 1890's was much better known as the community of Price's Mill. The name Wesley Chapel does not even appear on this image, extracted from an 1896 map of Union County. But Price's Mill does, clearly, along with Wardlaw (present-day Weddington) and Poortith (present-day Marvin).



1896 records indicate that the total population of Union County was 21,259, and of that number, the Price's Mill community had forty residents. A member of the Price family was the local magistrate. The location of the Wesley Chapel Methodist Church that year is given as "Price's Mill". A listing of Union County "Manufactories" includes a "Blacksmithing and Wheelwrighting" business at Price's Mill.

Of about two dozen active gold mines in Union County in 1896, the locations of three are recorded as being in Price's Mill. Two of these mines were owned by the Price family. The largest number of businesses listed in the Price's Mill community was in the farming category. Eighteen separate farms are listed, including three owned by the Price family.

Amongst numerous farming-related business enterprises, the Price Family built, owned and operated a grist mill on the banks of a creek that still flows through the Village of Wesley Chapel. Largely unnoticed and unmarked, except on flood control maps, Price Mill Creek originates in Indian Trail, near the Old Monroe Highway.



It generally flows south, roughly paralleling the Waxhaw-Indian Trail Road, and passes under Potter Road. After passing under Weddington Road, just east of Underwood Road, which was once named Price's Mill Pond Road; the creek eventually empties into Twelve Mile Creek, just north of New Town Road.

## ~ Some Price Family Genealogy...Tied to Geography ~

The first prominent members of the Price family to live in this community were Andrew Joseph Price and two older brothers, J. McCollum Price and James Wesley Price. Their ancestors had settled in Union County in 1749, along Richardson Creek in what was then northwest Anson County. Over time and generations, the Price clan spread out and established a number of family farms near Waxhaw and Weddington.

Better known in later years as Joseph or A. J., Andrew Joseph Price was born in Wardlaw (now Weddington) in 1837, three months after his Father's death. He was the youngest of seven children. When he was two, Joseph Price's widowed mother, Elizabeth McCollum Price, married David Phifer and moved to the Wesley Chapel vicinity. David Phifer owned considerable property very near the original Wesley Chapel crossroads, which is adjacent to the present day Wesley Chapel Elementary School.

Joseph Price joined the Confederate Army on his 25<sup>th</sup> birthday and served for almost three years, rising to the rank of Sergeant. Shortly after the war ended, he was paroled in Meridian, Mississippi and then walked 560 miles, arriving home in June 1865 with only fifty cents to his name.

In April 1862, Joseph Price married Emily Jane Howey, who bore him three sons: William Hampton Price, James Newton Price and Joseph Baxter Price. After his first wife passed away in 1870, Joseph Price later married Emily's cousin, Nancy Amelia Howey. They had nine children, which helps explain why the Price name has resonated throughout Union County for decades.

Joseph Price farmed and acquired considerable acreage in the Wesley Chapel area. In 1904, he purchased a home in Weddington so that his younger children could attend Weddington Academy. His three eldest sons, all in their thirties then, were married and raising their own families, and were firmly entrenched in the Wesley Chapel community.

He was a very active member of the Weddington Methodist Church, as he previously had been in the Wesley Chapel Methodist Church. During his lifetime, he also held a great number of Union County public offices, including two terms as County Commissioner and one as chairman. In 1880, he was elected sheriff and served for four years.

A photograph of a handwritten signature on a piece of aged paper. The signature is written in cursive and reads "A. J. Price, Sheriff". The word "Sheriff" is written in a smaller, more formal font to the right of the signature.

He also was a magistrate in the Sandy Ridge Township for a number of years, and presided over several civil marriages. Andrew Joseph Price passed away on June 27, 1911 and is interred in the Weddington church cemetery. In the July 4<sup>th</sup> edition of *The Monroe Journal*, his lengthy obituary had the following, equally lengthy title:

**ANDREW JOSEPH PRICE** – *Something of the Life of This Good Man Who Left His Influence Upon His Country-A Christian Gentleman and a Public Spirited Citizen.*

~ James Newton Price ~



One of the most prosperous residents of Wesley Chapel at the end of the Nineteenth Century was Joseph Price's second-born: James Newton Price (1866-1932). In the latter part of the Nineteenth Century, he controlled a number of agriculture-related businesses and ran one of the largest farms under cultivation in Union County.

His business interests were largely aligned for about a mile and a half on both sides of NC 84, between the original Wesley Chapel crossroads and where Waxhaw-Indian Trail Road crosses NC 84. The extent of his holdings and those of other Price family members is evidenced by a Union County map dated 1907.

By then, the name Wesley Chapel did appear on the map, but the community was still prominently indicated as being "*Price's Mill*". The following fragment of the 1907 map is marked in red as follows:

- P* - Location of Mr. Price's Grist Mill, west of what he called 'the home place'
- S* - Original Siler Presbyterian Church location; near the present-day Fire Department
- W* - Wesley Chapel crossroads; location of the high school and the Methodist Church, as indicated by very faint symbols on this map



The location and wayward path of Price Mill Creek is also indicated on this vintage map. It is represented by the irregular line that vertically bisects this portion of the 1907 map.

Back then, several of the roads in that area were in different locations. For example, the road from Weddington to Monroe meandered about the countryside quite a bit, and changed names, as opposed to the more direct line that Weddington Road presents today.

Over time, James Newton Price and his brothers further expanded their Father's farm holdings and successfully ventured into numerous other farm-related businesses. James Price and Nancy Catherine (Kittie) Winchester were married on July 4, 1888. They had eight children in all, six boys and two girls.

Sometime before 1900, James Price constructed a modest, one-story home on the north side of NC 84, on a small rise overlooking his substantial land holdings. In 1906, he built a much larger Colonial Revival-style home on the same site, after relocating the smaller structure a few hundred feet to the west.

Both of these structures have survived and are still owned by members of the Price family. Both can easily be seen from Weddington Road. The older and smaller structure is occasionally rented. The larger and more imposing structure, shown here, is occupied by Chuck Keels, a direct descendent of James Price. His Mother, Ramona Evelyn Price Keels, was a granddaughter of James and Kittie Price.



Several members of the Price family were born in the two-story home he so often and fondly referred to as “The Price Home Place”. Five generations of the James Price family have now lived in this spacious home. Renovation work on this century-old treasure is currently underway.



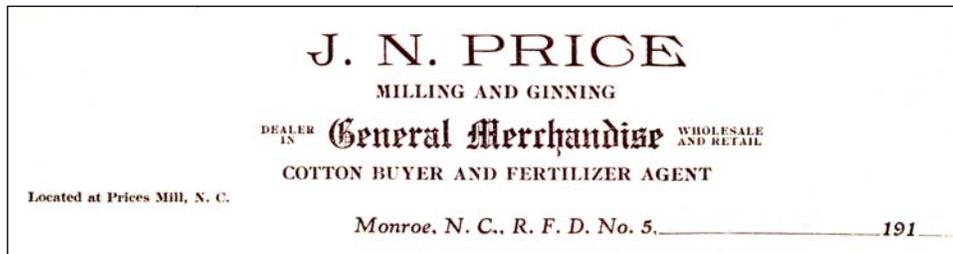
This image was created in the mid-1920s, on the front porch of the Price Home Place, perhaps on a bright sunny Sunday, after they had attended church services at nearby Siler Presbyterian Church. In the middle of those seated is a grandson, flanked by his grandparents. Others in the picture include all six sons, one of two daughters, three daughters-in-law, a son-in-law and two additional grandchildren.

On the south side of NC 84, across from this residence, in what is now an open field, James Price’s expansive enterprises, other than his grist mill for which the area and the creek were named included a cotton gin, a sawmill, two stores, a blacksmith shop, and a numerous farm-related structures.

The cotton gin was a large, two-story wooden building that was located near the smaller of the Price family homes, but on the opposite side of present-day Weddington Road. The cotton gin operated well into the twentieth century, as evidenced by this ‘gin ticket’:

PRICE BROTHERS COTTON GINNERS		GIN TICKET		Bale No. _____	
Mr. _____		Route 5		MONROE, N. C., _____	
Driver on off _____				194__	
Gross Weight _____	lbs.	Lbs. Seed Exchanged _____	sks Meal _____		
Tare Weight _____	lbs.	Lbs. Seed Returned _____			
Seed Cotton _____	lbs.	Lbs. Seed Bought _____	Rate % _____		
Toll _____	lbs.			lbs. Hulls _____	
Net Wt. Seed Cotton _____	lbs.				
Wt. of Bale _____	lbs.	Price _____			
Net Wt. of Seed _____	lbs.	@ \$ _____	per 100 \$ _____		
Ginning Due _____	Paid _____	Weigher _____	Ginning \$ _____		
			Balance \$ _____		
Not responsible for seed or cotton left on yard, platform, or in Gin or Seed House					

The largest commercial structure in that complex was located in front of the Price Home Place, directly across what was then a dirt road. It was a substantial two-story brick building and the largest general store in that vicinity in the early 1900s.



There was even a post office! Officially called the Price's Mill Post Office, it was located almost directly in front of the smaller Price house, on the south side of Weddington Road in a small wooden building either built or modified for that purpose.

Joseph Price served as the first postmaster from October 4, 1875 until December 22, 1880. Two members of the Davis family, who lived nearby, then served in this capacity until March 4, 1892, when James Newton Price was appointed to that post. This post office, like a number of others in Union County, was shut down in 1903 when consolidation with the Monroe Post Office occurred.

Near the original Wesley Chapel crossroads, one of James Price's sons ran another store. Known as the Carr Price Grocery Store, it was once located about where a line of trees presently marks the western boundary of the school property. The road in front of the store, which is now part of Weddington Road, was then called Route 6, but dead-ended a short distance to the west.

James Price's youngest brother, Joseph Baxter Price was a life-long farmer in this area and owned acreage near the crossroads, on the east side of Potter Road South. On a curve of Route 6, roughly located at the southwest corner of the present-day crossroads, once sat another store that was owned and operated by Joseph Baxter Price's son, Henry Lawson Price. James Price's older brother, William Hampton Price became a physician, and practiced and lived in Monroe Township, near Stouts.

Time and progress have erased all signs of the numerous commercial structures that once dominated the landscape of the Price's Mill community. The Price family farming interests and grist mill operation are nicely represented and remembered by this symbolic arrangement of a well-used plow and millstones; saved when the grist mill was torn down.



This simple tribute to the past is located in the yard of the Price Home Place.

Most of the earlier homes in this area have disappeared. A few have been restored. Others, like the Houston family home, Ca. 1810 and shown here, sit empty and forlorn near the Wesley Chapel Road-Gold Mine Road round a bout.



In addition, many of the original roads in this area have been relocated, over time, or even abandoned as new roads have been carved out of the farmland.

The Price farm complex included a “waterworks and light plant”. The waterworks was probably a storage system supplied from wells. The light plant was most likely a “Delco” System; i.e., a 32-volt electrical generating system often used by farmers before rural electrification came to Union County. Delco Systems typically consisted of a small one-cylinder gasoline engine, coupled to a dynamo (generator, in modern-day parlance). Electricity was generated at 32V DC and stored in a bank of sixteen-two volt batteries. The output of this kind of limited electrical system was devoted primarily to illumination.

Progress has transformed large tracts of Price-owned and adjacent land into the new ‘cash crop’ of Wesley Chapel; i.e., housing developments. The Price property and adjoining properties where generations of Price children and their friends once played now provide hundreds of habitats for the Villagers that live in such subdivisions as Price Mill, Lindenwood, Black Stone, Wesley Oaks, Quintessa and Heather Glen.

James Price passed away at age 66 in a Monroe hospital on September 21, 1932. Funeral services at his home in Wesley Chapel were conducted by Reverend Hunneycutt, pastor of Siler Presbyterian Church, where James Price had been a member and had previously served as an Elder. Mr. Price was interred in a family plot in the Weddington Methodist Church graveyard, alongside his wife, who had passed away several years earlier.

His Last Will & Testament directed that his property be evenly split between his direct descendents, which included a granddaughter, their oldest daughter’s only child, whom Kittie and James Price had raised after their daughter passed away at age eighteen. The land he left behind totaled over 750 acres; largely located on both sides of NC 84, between the crossroads, but also extending some distance beyond the two crossroads.

Curiously, one son was also granted “two mules and one wagon, of his selection”, the only mention of livestock in the will. Another son was bequeathed the brick store building and one-third interest in the Price Brothers cotton gin. A third son was given the property known as the “David Phifer Old Place”, home of A. J. Price’s Stepfather.

All of the children were given equal shares in James Price’s interest in “a telephone line from the home place to Monroe”. The 1909 Monroe Telephone Company’s subscribers’ list includes a single telephone number-**168**-for Price’s Mill.

~ Wesley Chapel United Methodist Church ~

The original, modest wooden edifice of the Wesley Chapel Methodist Church, located between the church's current location and the cemetery, also served, at times, as an informal school. There were no schoolbooks; the pupils were taught to read using only the Bible.



This building was completely destroyed by fire on the night of April 1, 1878. Arson was suspected and the trustees of the church, who included A. Joseph Price and his older brother, J. McCollum Price, offered a reward of \$100-no small sum in 1878-for "evidence that will lead to the detection and conviction of the incendiary". If the fire was deliberately set, apparently no one was ever apprehended.

In 1879, J. McCollum Price and his wife donated two acres of land to the church, near where Chambwood Road intersects with Potter Road South. This donation came accompanied with some very specific guidelines. The two acres were restricted for use as the site for a Southern Methodist Church. If not utilized for that purpose, then the land was required to be returned to the Price family.

A replacement church building was erected on this land, on the west side of Potter Road south and between the church's present location and the school. The building was completely paid for through contributions before completion. Dedication of the church building, described as "a handsome and commodious building 30 x 45 feet and well finished, inside and out", took place on Sunday, May 18, 1879. The services were attended by 400 people on what was reportedly an oppressively warm day. Reverend J. E. King, a Baptist minister from Monroe was credited with being both architect and builder.

This building remained in use until the spring of 1924 when the church expanded to meet the needs of a larger congregation. A third sanctuary, the building that is currently in use, was built nearby and much closer to the school than its predecessor structure. This third church edifice, still in use, initially cost \$6,000 to construct.

In 1968, The Methodist Church united with the Evangelical United Brethren. As a result, Methodist churches throughout America added the word "United" to their titles, and this place of worship then became Wesley Chapel United Methodist Church.

Not only was there a name change, but there was also another location change in store for the church building some twenty years later. This church building's original site was so close to the school campus that some outlying school structures were located to either side of the church. In 1988 Union County education officials announced that the school might have to be closed because of a lack of room for a much-needed further expansion.

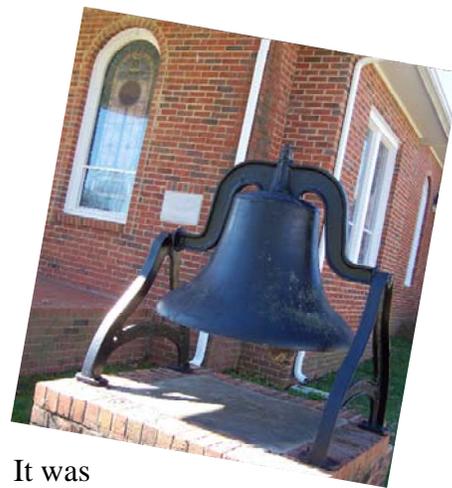
In a cooperative and mutually beneficial effort, church and school officials worked out a creative plan to move the church building 500 feet further south, along Potter Road South, to its present location. The school got more land, and the church was compensated by the county for the moving expenses. The relocation took place on June 29, 1988. What originally cost \$6,000 to build cost \$66,000 dollars to move, some 64 years later.



The original façade had to be removed to facilitate the move, and shortly after being relocated, the structure's brickwork was replaced and the present front porch added. But the church's original fellowship hall could not be easily moved and had to be demolished.



On Sunday, September 4, 1988, services were held for the first time in the relocated sanctuary. In October of that same year, work was begun on the present-day Fellowship Hall, which is the current public meeting place of the Village of Wesley Chapel.



The church bell that once sat on a concrete slab at the original building site was also moved. It was placed at ground level on a brick platform that matched the church's new façade. It is located near the sanctuary's main entrance, adjacent to the building's cornerstone that commemorates all three of the Wesley Chapel United Methodist Church's buildings.

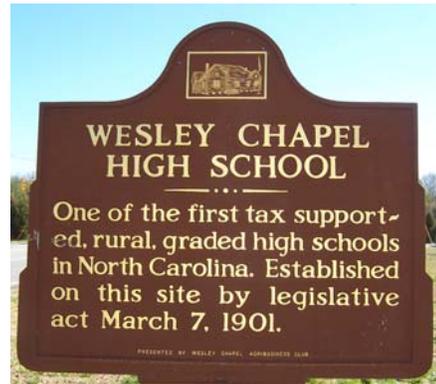
## ~ The Schools of Wesley Chapel ~

In addition to being a community leader and a successful farmer and businessman, James Price also served in the North Carolina General Assembly for four terms. Amongst other legislation, he introduced a bill that established the first rural graded school in the state. As a result, the Wesley Chapel High School was established in 1901.

James Price and his cousin, Henry Lawson Price (who later became a state Senator) were named in that enabling legislation as founding members of the Wesley Chapel School District Board of Trustees. That legal instrument also empowered the trustees to sell “the old Davis school lot and the buildings situated thereon...on the Price’s Mill Road...and the proceeds of said sale shall be applied to the erection of a school building...”

The initial land needed for the school is believed to have been purchased by Joseph Price and deeded to the school in 1902. Additional acreage was donated in 1906 by Henry L. Price and his wife, who lived directly in front of the school. For a number of years, students got water from a spring behind that house.

This marker, on NC 84 a few yards from the crossroads, commemorates this accomplishment. In addition, Wesley Chapel School became the first accredited rural high school in Union County and one of the first in North Carolina.



The first built-for-purpose Wesley Chapel school building was a framed structure, constructed in 1900 on the present school site by the men of the community who “voluntarily gave labor and lumber”. Most often referred to as a high school, it also served as a place of instruction for elementary grades. It faced what is now Potter Road South. The road was named for General Potter of England, who carved out that road around 1775 as part of a Charleston to Charlotte route.

Originally, what is now Potter Road South was a mostly unpaved road that ran from Mineral Springs (once called “Potter” and alternatively “Potter’s Crossing”) to a point past the crossroads. From there it took a sharp left turn to the west and continued along the path of the present-day Potter Road.



The completed building had three classrooms and three teachers, one for primary grades, one for intermediate grades and one for high school subjects. There was also a large room used for assemblies, and occasionally as an additional classroom. The first Principal, Bruce Craven, was employed on January 16, 1902 for a period of four months, with a salary of \$30 per month.

In addition to a salary, he was provided a place to live, adjacent to the school. His residence was an expansion of a former one-room school. Another building, called “The Teacherage” provided housing for the teachers. This wooden structure was later dubbed “The Dormitory”, because it was also used for some period of time to provide housing for boarding students who lived outside the Wesley Chapel School District.

The beginning of the Twentieth Century was a time of great growth in the state’s educational system. Then-Governor Charles Aycock, who had previously been school superintendent in Wayne County, was a strong advocate for improving the state’s school system. He eventually became known as “The Education Governor”.

Association with the Price family and an appreciation for what had been accomplished in Wesley Chapel resulted in Governor Aycock speaking at the high school’s first commencement. According to a newspaper clipping: “The crowd was so large they had to move out of doors so all could hear the famous governor”. Later in his life, James Price made further beneficial contributions to his community, and also served as a member of the Union County School Board for two terms.

High school students also came from graded or “Free Schools”. Usually they were fairly primitive, wooden, one-room schools that had one teacher. Students ranged from five to 21 years of age, and often the older students would help teach. School sessions lasted for four months during the winter. The rest of year, the children helped work the farms.



Typical is the Davis School, which once sat across NC 84 from Siler Presbyterian Church. In the late 1800s, the student body and their sole teacher posed outside. They all appear to be wearing their Sunday-Go-To-Church clothing for the occasion, no doubt at the insistence of their Mothers.

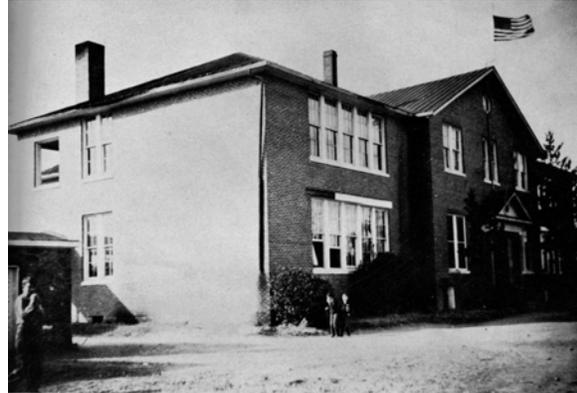
The group was dominated by children named Price (14), followed by lesser numbers of Moores, Dees, Plylers, Presleys and Winchesters.

In 1906, the trustees of the Wesley Chapel Methodist Church agreed to sell a portion of church-owned land adjacent to the high school to the school district. Members of the extended Price family were trustees of both organizations involved. The Wesley Chapel School District acquired this land from the church for the token sum of \$10.

A few years later, in 1911, the school property and all the buildings upon it were sold to the Union County Board of Education for \$1,000. Those proceeds presumably were utilized to retire Wesley Chapel School District debt . In 1931, the state started to take over management and financing of all public schools, and by 1933 the Wesley Chapel School District had been fully incorporated into Union County’s school system.

In 1922, the residents of the then-unincorporated Wesley Chapel community voted upon themselves a special tax of fifty cents on each one hundred dollars of property valuation and further authorized the issuance of \$20,000 in district bonds for the erection of a brick two-story school building. That was a significant financial burden, indeed!

A two-story brick building was erected in 1923. It had ten classrooms, auditorium, library and a “well-equipped laboratory which qualifies us to teach four sciences”.



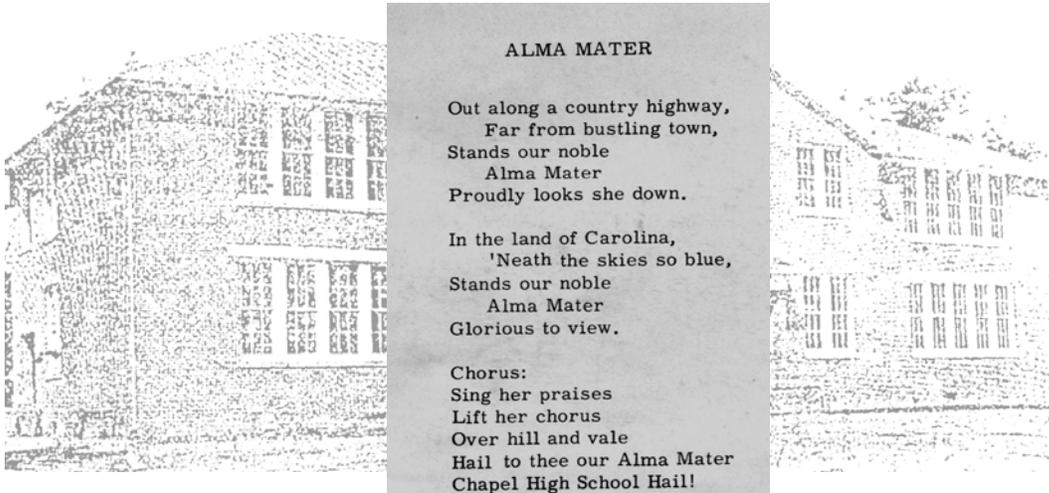
The auditorium was on the second floor, a practice that was common in schools in the early part of the Twentieth Century. This imposing addition to the community once stood about where the administration building of the current school is located.

Around 1939, during the Great Depression recovery, a four-room annex was constructed just south of the high school to serve as a grammar school. This work was performed by the Civilian Conservation Corps, a quasi-military Federal work relief program started in 1933 to provide jobs to the unemployed. The Corps provided meaningful work for thousands of young men, who built many projects throughout the country.

In later years, a cafeteria and an agriculture education (Ag-Ed) building were added; both built of wood. Salvaged wood from other buildings in Union County was put to good reuse, and local citizens contributed their time and talent to cooperatively construct these additions. These structures stood in the area now occupied by the school’s gymnasium and adjacent parking lot. In 1946, because all high schools in North Carolina were required that year to add a twelfth grade, there was no WCHS graduating class.

A fire, which was discovered at 2 AM by a passerby on Saturday, January 26, 1951 completely destroyed the two-story building. There was little that could be done by dismayed citizens but watch. The Monroe Fire Department sent help and managed to save the four-room annex, which, fortunately, was connected to the main building by a breezeway. Following the fire, high school classes were held in the ‘Ag-Ed’ building, the ‘Teacherage/Dormitory’ and even in the nearby Methodist church as the rubble was cleared away to make room for another Wesley Chapel School.

Commencement exercises for the Class of 1951 were held in the sanctuary of Siler Presbyterian Church. Repeating what had occurred fifty years prior, at the high school’s first graduation exercises in 1901, the then-current Governor of North Carolina, Kerr Scott, honored the community by attending and presenting the commencement address. Appropriately, he was the houseguest of James Newton Price’s son, Page Price, who owned and occupied the Price ‘old home place’ at that time. Page Price’s son, Jerry, was in the graduating class. Graduation exercises that year were undoubtedly bittersweet, memorable and emotional for those assembled as they sang their Alma Mater...



In 1952, the destroyed high school building was replaced by a modern, one-story structure, which is a part of the current-day elementary school. This structure served the community as a high school until 1961, when Sun Valley High School was completed.

Put to good use as a K-5 elementary school, the original building, shown here, has undergone numerous additions and renovations, including a substantial expansion of its facilities in 1989 that cost \$2.9 million, following the church's relocation. In later years, mobile classrooms had to be employed to augment the permanent physical plant.



Fire struck the Wesley Chapel school campus once again on March 19, 1966. The wooden vocational agricultural building caught fire in the afternoon and burned quickly and fiercely. Firefighting units from several nearby communities managed to keep the blaze from spreading to the nearby wooden cafeteria building. After 1961, when the high school closed, the "Ag-Ed" building had been utilized only occasionally for farm club meetings. Like so many others, the cause of that fire was never determined.

Between 1990 and 2007, the school's census varied drastically, from a low of 400 to a high of 1,150. During that same period of time, the student body was essentially halved two different times when new schools in neighboring communities were opened. But as the community continues to expand in population, much of the influx is school-age children, so the school is once more experiencing significant growth. To help eliminate as many mobile classrooms as possible, additions to this educational complex are underway.

The portion of Potter Road South that is in front of the school was once a part of NC 84, before that main artery between Weddington and Monroe was realigned. It was not paved until the late 1930s.

The entrance to the school that is on Potter Road South is flanked by twin stone obelisks, roughly ten feet tall that are constructed of native stone. They were also built by the Civilian Conservation Corps, and must have been one of the more modest of such Federal Government-sponsored activities.



These monuments are similar to other stone structures in Union County, dating to 1930 and before. Embedded in the left-hand monument is a plaque denoting the founding of the Wesley Chapel Methodist Church on 1832. On the right, a matching plaque indicates the year when this location's original high school was authorized.

### **~ Siler Presbyterian Church ~**

Roughly a mile and a half west of what was once commonly referred to as the Wesley Chapel crossroads is the intersection of Weddington Road and Waxhaw-Indian Trail Road. On the northeast corner of this crossroads is the Siler Presbyterian Church, which dates to 1919.

This church was organized on October 29, 1895 by twenty-nine Charter Members and named in honor of the Reverend J. W. Siler, who at the time was the pastor at Providence Presbyterian Church on Route 16 in Mecklenburg County. For two years prior to the establishment of the new church, Reverend Siler had held regular services under an improvised arbor in the Wesley Chapel community.



A weather-boarded, gable-roofed house of worship was constructed after the church was organized at a site one-quarter of a mile south of the NC 84 intersection with Waxhaw-Indian Trail Road. The land was donated by Minor Evan Plyler and his wife, who lived across the road and were members of the initial congregation. The original building site was adjacent to the church cemetery, which is located just north of the Wesley Chapel Volunteer Fire Department. Reverend Siler served as the first pastor of his namesake church for two years.

When the congregation outgrew its first sanctuary, the ever-generous James N. Price, who was also a church member, donated land on the northeast corner of the intersection of Weddington and Waxhaw-Indian Trail Roads to facilitate future growth of the church, and to provide a site suitable for a larger building and possible further expansions.

Male parishioners undertook moving the original church building to this newly acquired property. They used horsepower and logs placed one after another in front of the building; moving it a few feet at a time. This task took longer than expected, and by the next Sunday, the sanctuary was still 'in transit'. Undeterred, the congregation simply worshiped in the building where it sat alongside the road, jacked up and resting on logs!

Eventually, the building reached its destination, and was set up some distance north of the intersection, where it remained until the present sanctuary was completed. William Henry Belk, Union County native, devout Presbyterian, and the founder of the Belk Department Store chain, donated the cost of brick to help the enlarged congregation construct a more substantial building.



In 1917 this Gothic Revival-inspired church was laid in Flemish Bond by church members under the guidance of a brick mason. The structure was completed in 1919. The exterior and interior of this edifice remain essentially unaltered.

The original building was moved again, to a location further behind the present church structure. It was put to use as a Community Building before being demolished. After a year of use, structural concerns prompted the removal of the church bell from the tower. This heavy bell is now located at ground level, near the building's northwest corner.

Over time, additional structures have been added to the church complex, one of which was originally the home of one of James Price's sons. In 1981, this former residence and eleven and one-half acres of land were purchased by the church from the descendants of James Price. It was renovated and served for two-plus decades as the church office. Following completion of a large, two-story Christian Education Building, the venerable wooden structure known as the old Price House was demolished around 2004. Part of the land that was acquired in 1981 became the present-day Siler Recreation Park.

As a part of the church's centennial celebration in 1995, long-time church members provided some poignant memories. They recalled seven levels of Sunday School, from Beginner to Adult. They reminisced about Vacation Bible School being held in the non-air conditioned building in the hottest part of the summer, or so it seemed.



Before a central heating system was installed in the 50's, they remembered two pot-bellied, coal-burning stoves, located near the pulpit. Since these stoves did not adequately heat the building in the winter, everyone that could sat close to the front for warmth.

For many members, local romances led to marriages and children's baptisms, and renewals of vows decades later. There were ice cream suppers, with cones of homemade ice cream that cost five cents. Dinner on the grounds, so typical of southern church life in rural America, often served as the culmination of congregational homecomings.

## ~ Wesley Chapel Volunteer Fire Department ~

Before 1975, like most rural communities, the Wesley Chapel Vicinity had to depend on its citizens' largely unorganized and severely limited resources, augmented by neighboring Fire Departments to combat the threat of fire or natural-occurring disasters. In most cases, whenever a structure caught fire, about all they could do was to prevent the spread of fire to nearby properties.

That all changed when the Wesley Chapel Volunteer Fire Department was created and established at the present location on Waxhaw-Indian Trail Road. James S. Laney was the community's leader and main organizer of this effort, and he served as President of the organization until his death.

Two acres of land were leased to the fledgling organization by R. Avery Plyler for a token fee (believed to have been one dollar per year). In parallel, a number of fund raising events were held in the community, and door-to-door solicitations were made, seeking individual five dollar donations; the predecessor to the present annual fire tax that is collected by Union County on behalf of the WCVFD.

During 1975, a metal building was erected, which is identified in fire department parlance as Station 26, WCVFD. One of the community leaders, "Red" Moore, owned a Monroe-based construction company, and he generously provided a great deal of the material required at cost...or perhaps even below cost.

As is commonplace in rural communities, the first three pieces of fire apparatus acquired for this fledgling operation were used equipment. The department's initial cadre of volunteers was eighteen men.



A second, smaller station (Number 31) was located in Marvin. That facility was replaced in 2004 by this modern and much larger building, which is located in Marvin on New Town Road.



The Wesley Chapel Volunteer Fire Department services an area that includes Wesley Chapel, Marvin, most of Weddington, portions of Indian Trail and some unincorporated areas in Union County.

These stations are currently manned by over fifty volunteers, typical of fire service in rural America. However, reflecting the growth in and around Wesley Chapel, part-time paid firefighters are now on duty at both stations during the daylight hours when many volunteers are miles away at work.

Funding for these operations is derived from the annual fire tax collected by the County on behalf of the Wesley Chapel Fire district, individual donations often generously provided in addition to an annual fund drive, and two BBQs that are held each year.

Other activities include another American tradition that is universally enjoyed by visitors and hosts alike: children's visits to the fire stations.



The Wesley Chapel Fire District has the smallest fire tax in Union County. But it also has over four billion dollars of property to protect within its assigned area of operation. Last year, the department responded to 1,359 emergency calls. That's an average of over 3.7 calls per each twenty-four hour period; many of which are answered by local citizens who leave their homes and business places to serve their community.

In addition to fighting fires, the department also responds to traffic accidents involving injury and health-related emergencies. In fact, more calls of that variety are received each year than fire calls. In addition to having several EMT-certified members of its own, the WCVFD also leases out one of the four apparatus bays at Station 31 to Union County to serve as a base of operations for an EMT vehicle.

Plans are well underway to replace the existing 33 year-old building on Waxhaw-Indian Trail Road with a modern, larger and much more capable facility expressly designed to meet the community's needs for years to come. This major addition to Wesley Chapel is expected to go into service in late 2009.

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**There is no community calling more noble, nor more potentially rife with risk, than that of a citizen-volunteer in the fire service.**



**On August 11, 2007, Wesley Chapel Volunteer Fire Department Firefighter and USN Veteran TODD W. HAGE, 43, died in the line of duty.**

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### ~ A Threat of Annexation ~

The unincorporated area of Union County known as Wesley Chapel saw relatively little growth, except for individual home construction, a few subdivisions, some continuation of existing farming activities and a handful of modest commercial businesses until the second half of the twentieth century. However, by 1995, rapid and expanding growth in Western Union County was approaching and even encroaching on the Wesley Chapel Vicinity from several sides.

Numerous residents of Charlotte, seeking to escape high taxes, choking traffic and overcrowded schools, fled eastward, where developers gladly served their needs by building numerous, large subdivisions. Nearby communities like Weddington, Stallings and Indian Trail grew rapidly, as did the need for a host of services in those communities. One of these nearby towns sought to expand its tax base by involuntarily annexing portions of Wesley Chapel.

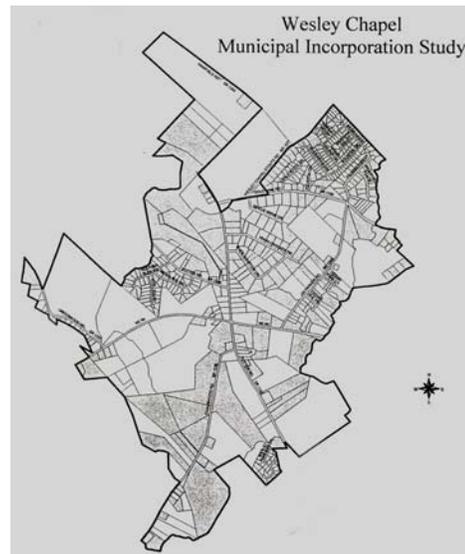
Following the examples of community cooperation and innovation of the past, a small group of determined residents sought a better solution. They first self-funded a lawsuit to enjoin the pending annexation. Then they determined that the Wesley Chapel community could incorporate as an independent municipality. That way, not only would their taxes remain low, but they could retain their community's respected and historic name, and have a direct hand in managing the rapid growth affecting their part of Union County.

### ~ Wesley Chapel – Incorporated Municipality ~

Donations and volunteer services were solicited in order to present a compelling case of need to the State Legislature. In parallel with that effort, many hours were spent by a relatively few dedicated individuals talking to their neighbors and explaining the benefit of voluntary participation in the creation of a new incorporated entity.

Dedicated volunteers, called Neighborhood Captains, went door-to-door. They solicited donations to the cause and gathered signatures to a petition that was necessary for presentation to the state's General Assembly. As an indication of their success, while they were required to obtain signatures from at least 15% percent of the total number of registered voters in the area of potential incorporation, they actually acquired almost 52%.

With scant legal experience, they studied the state's requirements and submitted a very comprehensive incorporation request for legislative approval on May 1, 1998. Their grass-roots efforts resulted in a somewhat irregular boundary, as evidenced by this original map of the Village of Wesley Chapel.



State Senator Aaron Plyler, representing Union County, guided an incorporation bill through the state senate, where it passed by a 50-0 vote. Bill Purcell, another state senator, assisted in attaining this key move towards success. Representative Fern Shubert of Union County introduced the measure in the House chamber, where it quickly received a near-unanimous vote of approval.

After almost three years of hard work, and following approval at the state level, the Village of Wesley Chapel became a legal entity on July 15, 1998. Appropriately enough, in addition to the original slate of council members, who were appointed by the state legislature, the three elected officials who helped ‘make it happen’ were present that day.



But that’s not the end of the Wesley Chapel story; it is but the beginning.

When created, the Village included an area of approximately 2,500 acres, with a population of 1,100. Thanks to a series of voluntary annexations and a large influx of new residents, those numbers grew to over 5,000 acres and 4,569 residents by 2006.

Obviously, many people agreed with the Village’s motto:

**~ A Great Place to Live and Raise a Family ~**

The visionaries who devoted so much time and money in order to realize this accomplishment were led both before and after incorporation by the Village’s first Mayor, Albert W. Black. The first business meeting took place on August 10, 1998 in the Fellowship Hall of Wesley Chapel United Methodist Church, following the swearing in of the council.



Union County native G. C. “Red” Moore had been a strong proponent of incorporation, a supporter of the local fire department and a leader in that church. Thanks to his initiative, the church offered use of the Fellowship Hall’s facilities for a very modest fee. A very good thing, indeed, for the Village’s only assets then were a handful of participants and a small amount of donated funds left over from the legal process.

One of the very first matters facing the new government was a request from a subdivision adjacent to the Village desirous of becoming a part of the brand-new municipality. There were many more such petitions soon to follow, plus a myriad of additional tasks that had to be accomplished in order to make Wesley Chapel’s government a viable entity.

Funding of all this activity was an immediate priority. The new government set an annual tax of two cents per hundred dollars of property evaluation, and applied for the Village's share of state sales tax revenues. Setting up the procedures to obtain franchise taxes from various utilities fell the lot of a small yet enthusiastic all-volunteer group.

By June of 1999, matters had proceeded to the point where the Village leaders felt that they needed more public input. A survey was created and sent out to the slightly less than 800 Village property owners of record at that time. Survey results included considerable consensus as to what was important to the residents:

- Preserve Rural/Small Town Atmosphere
- Manage Rate of Growth
- Maintain Low Tax Rate

Undaunted by the multiple tasks they faced, that same small and selfless group set forth to develop a set of zoning and subdivision ordinances. They knew that growth was inevitable, and they were determined to provide a means of control.

Again, with a minimum of outside assistance, months of dedicated and unpaid labor resulted in the creation of an initial body of regulations on August 22, 2000, plus the establishment of a Planning Board and a Board of Adjustment. Implementation of these regulations allowed the Village to become the provider of various licenses and permits within Wesley Chapel, and to collect fees for their issuance.

In parallel, a considerable amount of land mass was added to the Village through more voluntary annexation, largely west and south of the NC 84/Waxhaw-Indian Trail crossroads. Consequently, in a very short period of time, less than three years, the Village expanded to greatly increase its population, and become more than twice its original size, resulting in a very irregular border.



## ~ Controlling Growth ~

Controlling growth in the Village quickly became the principal challenge. Like in any rapidly growing community, change coupled with a demand for services, both governmental and commercial, has often been contentious. Nevertheless, growth often provides unanticipated opportunity. The most visible example is the ongoing commercial development that now largely dominates the NC 84/Waxhaw-Indian Trail crossroads.

What started out to be a commercial development on unincorporated Union County land adjacent to this crossroads, but located just outside the Village's boundaries, quickly became of major interest to the residents of Wesley Chapel. When residents in that immediate area attended an informational meeting hosted by the group planning to put a shopping center on the south side of NC 84, the citizens made it abundantly clear that an up-scale development included a premier grocery store, was desired. The owner of the land, Morris Newell, and the developer, Aston Properties, responded.

However, their revised plan had complications.

Although the land had been previously zoned commercial by Union County, the desired grocery store chain would only agree to locate there if beer and wine could be sold. Since such sales are not allowed in unincorporated areas of Union County, the developers proposed that the property in question be voluntarily annexed by Wesley Chapel, providing that a requested referendum vote turn out favorably.

On March 13, 2001, Mr. Newell offered to donate six acres of land to the Village following passage of the requested referendum, and after the proposed annexation took place. Legal timing constraints delayed the vote until early December of 2002 because of a prior, albeit unsuccessful, referendum on this same topic. Nevertheless, approval for the sale of beer and wine passed easily, and shortly thereafter, the Village acquired the six acres of land at no cost to the taxpayers.

From that point on, construction and infrastructure improvements moved forward rapidly, and the first phase of The Village Commons at Wesley Chapel opened in July of 2004.

Significant additional commercial development at the crossroads is currently underway, including acreage on the northwest corner of the crossroads.



Understandably, not everyone has agreed with all of the actions taken, to date. At times, meetings and public hearings have been, shall we say, long, loud and 'very interesting'!

Democracy at work.

### **~ A Changing of the Guard ~**

A huge increase in population over the past decade has not only brought to the Village new challenges, but a number of enthusiastic citizens eager to participate in the further development of the community. At the same time, some of the original community leaders moved away, and others turned their attentions to pressing personal matters. The reins of governmental control were effectively turned over as a result of elections in 2005 and 2007 to the council members currently in office.

Guidance for future activities was again sought from the community's populace in 2007, as had been done previously in 1999. Assistance in formulating a comprehensive resident survey and analyzing the results were provided by urban planning experts at UNCC. The results of this latest survey were presented to the community's elected officials in late 2007 for use in formulating plans for the Village's future.

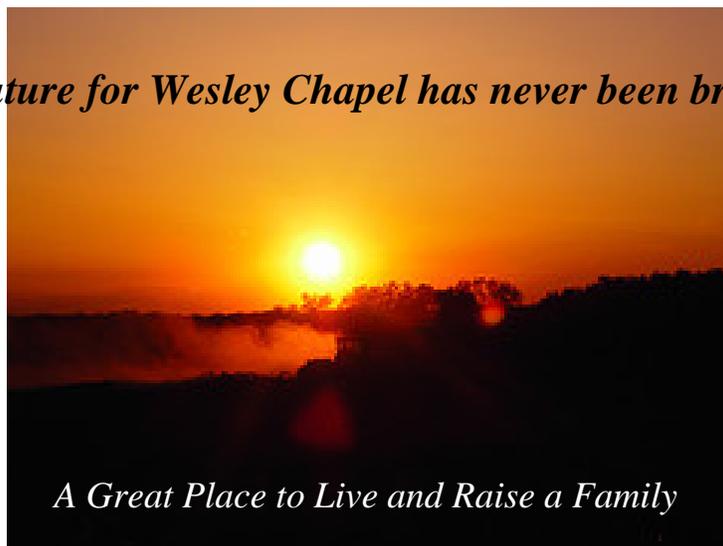
### **~ Looking Back – Moving Forward ~**

For over 175 years, the name Wesley Chapel has denoted an integral, an important and an independent part of Union County. The precedence's of the past, when it comes to such things as self-reliance, self-determination and self-governance are now on the verge of entering a second decade as an incorporated entity. Nevertheless, the community cornerstones of church, school and fire department remain firmly in place. But there's an all-important fourth cornerstone.

That fourth and most important cornerstone is the citizens of Wesley Chapel, who are rapidly growing in numbers and, collectively, growing younger with each passing year. Be they Union County born and bred, people who moved here years ago to enjoy the rural atmosphere, or very new arrivals, all have a large stake in the future of The Village of Wesley Chapel.

Much has been accomplished in the last decade. Much remains to be done, of course, as it always seems to be in America.

***The future for Wesley Chapel has never been brighter.***



*A Great Place to Live and Raise a Family*

~ *POSTSCRIPT* ~

Each year, the population of Wesley Chapel gets larger...and younger. Subdivisions and commercial development are replacing crops and cows, to a significant extent. As 'old-timers' fade away, here as elsewhere, so do their memories and word-pictures.

It is incumbent on the residents of the Village to retain and appreciate what has preceded them and, hopefully, to be inspired and humbled by the lessons of generosity, innovation, self-determination and volunteer service that such community leaders as James Price have left behind.

*And to remember the sacrifice of our fallen firefighter.*



On this, the tenth anniversary of incorporation, it is certainly appropriate to pause and celebrate all that has been accomplished in a relatively few years. The Village of Wesley Chapel, as an incorporated municipality, has enjoyed a period of remarkable growth and development, notwithstanding the trials and tribulations that always seem to accompany such activities.

Make no mistake, democracy can be, and often is, a messy business. In that regard, the Village of Wesley Chapel is about as small town, all-American feisty as it gets!

At this point in the history of Wesley Chapel, it perhaps is more appropriate than ever to remember this often-stated, but always apt quotation:

*Let the Past be Prologue to the Future*



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## Illustration Sources

Courtesy of The Village of Wesley Chapel, Union County Public Library System, Union County Heritage Room, Wesley Chapel Elementary School, Siler Presbyterian Church, Wesley Chapel Volunteer Fire Department, Dora Boyce, Jibby Keels, Julie Hampton Ganis, Aston Properties and Bill Lee.

## Acknowledgements and Disclaimers

Several individuals, most of whom are life-long residents of our community, provided warm and endearing insights about their ancestors and the conditions in which they lived decades ago in this community. The names of these invaluable contributors are included in this document's bibliography. If I left anyone out, that was purely unintentional.

The Village as we know it today extends geographically well past the oldest part of this community (i.e., areas in close proximity to the original Wesley Chapel crossroads). I chose to concentrate on the areas of greatest historical significance, and no slight was intended with respect to other neighborhoods within the current boundaries of the Village.

In addition, it rapidly became apparent to me that it would be impossible to use all of the great personal stories so candidly retold during the course of my personal discovery of our community's history. In fact, some are probably better left untold!

Inevitably, a few instances of conflicting or non-verifiable data were discovered. This was anticipated; quite often, the passing of information from generation to generation becomes diluted and even distorted by later unintentional, albeit 'assumptive' editing. In such cases, I relied on documents and stories that appeared to be the most plausible version of such inconsistencies.

Nevertheless, I apologize in advance if I have misunderstood or further misconstrued any historical fact, or just plain missed finding or mentioning someone, some family or something important to the heritage of Wesley Chapel. I have a good excuse:

*Those who came before us were far too busy making history to record all of it.*

*Bill Lee*

Village Resident since 1999





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