

WASHBURN'S

General Store & Community

Open 9am-4:30pm Monday-Saturday, except Wed

828.245.4129 or www.WashburnStore.com

2426 Bostic Sunshine Hwy
Bostic, North Carolina 28018

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Backroads Traveling By Judy Ausley

Everytime I drive along the old Sunshine Highway through the Rutherford County countryside, I am reminded of flowers. Perhaps, it is the sunshine, the Golden Valley as it is called by locals, but mostly, because of the rolling hills and pastures filled with grazing animals.

It is one of the most historic parts of Rutherford County and it sparkles whether it be in the hot summer's heat or in the chilled days of autumn and winter.

One of the most notable landmarks along the way is the old E.N. Washburn Store owned and operated by the Edward Washburn family for four generations.

The store, built in 1813, is the oldest family-owned business in Rutherford County.

It is a place where you can buy everything from a tack to old fashioned wash board just like grandma toiled over, to churns, horse collars, feed and seed, hoop cheese, old fashioned stick candy, [pickling] jars like granny used, apple peeler, Bib overalls and much, much more!

Snuff, chewing tobacco and Geritol too, I bet!

It is a place where once you leave, after a friendly visit with Ed Washburn, you won't need that dose of medicine.

I stopped in the other day, just as Ed, who is recovering from heart surgery, was trying to close to go home, but the people just kept on coming in and the phone kept ringing.

"The doctor says I have got to slow down, but I just don't see how," the friendly Washburn said, as he bagged a customer's goods.

I often tell him how my parents were running a grocery store in Florida when I was born. And, I often say that is what draws me to old country stores.

Ed said since I liked that store environment so much, I should come work for him.

Maybe so, I thought. But, you know, I would rather keep on doing what I am doing writing about places along the back roads like Washburn's Store.

In the 1800's before the store, the place was known as Washburn Station, a stagecoach stop for folks traveling to Lincoln County and other foothill destinations.

Just imagine riding in a horse-drawn stagecoach down Sunshine Highway before it was paved. Women in capes and black hats tied under the chin. Men in snug pants held in place at the waist with sturdy suspenders.

It is beautiful today, but I can imagine the beauty of those early times. What a time it must have been.

The residing Ed Washburn has heard those stories all his life. And, he can recite the history with all dates correct and in place.

It is folks like Ed Washburn that makes what I do so interesting. Without those people, I would not have Backroad Traveling, because I can always find something to write about in the old store on the country backroads in this area.

And, for sure E.N. Washburn's Store is a place to make a good day trip that the entire family, kids and dad, too, will enjoy. The trip and a step back into another day is bound to make you feel better.