

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

FEATURED ARTICLE IN *THE SHELBY STAR*

November 1996

Washburn Rich with Picturesque Beauty

Fall's sweet serenity has beautifully surrounded the Washburn community in the rural Rutherford County countryside.

The trees along Old Sunshine Highway and Bostic Road in northwest Rutherford County are brightly decorated with yellows, reds and oranges.

One Saturday afternoon recently, it was business as usual at Washburn Store, established in 1913. Busier this time of the year, travelers stop here to visit one of the area's oldest and most historic landmarks. The community was founded more than 150 years ago. On this afternoon, Ed Washburn was doing what his family has done for generations, making bologna sandwiches and serving coffee as he manned the store with the help of his grandchildren.

In between helping customers, Washburn chatted with the travelers and answered questions about the historic community that his family has been part of since the early 1800s. He says [that] it makes him happy when his grandchildren spend time with him and help around the store.

"I am just delighted they are interest in the store and come up here to spend time with me," Washburn said.

As he talked, visitors and "leaf watchers" browsed through many antiques, country clothes and memorabilia Washburn has in the traditional hardware/general mercantile store.

The old store has passed through many generations of Washburns.

In 1904, Edgar Nollie Washburn, Ed Washburn's father, took over the store and built the brick building in 1938 that the younger Washburn runs the store in today.

In 1915, Edgar Washburn completed the stately family home that sits under the massive oaks and magnolia trees across from the store.

It is a true picture of antebellum south.

Edgar Washburn later went into the funeral business, a trade still practiced by Ed Washburn today.

Ed Washburn and wife Catherine operate the store much like in the old days.

Catherine Washburn is there faithfully at 7:30 every morning with a cup of coffee and ham biscuits for regulars. Many Washburn residents gather there daily for goodies and to catch up on local news.

The old red barn surrounded by a traditional white fence next to the store is a picture typical of a Norman Rockwell painting.

In the early days, Washburn Store was a stopover for lonely travelers on their way East.

In those pioneering days, Washburn {boasted} its own tavern, blacksmith shop and casket-maker. The First Washburn Store {no longer standing} was filled with supplies of every description for surviving in the country. It was a place often visited by traders and settlers working their way to towns like Lincolnton, Shelby and Rutherfordton from the North Carolina ports.

The first school, erected with logs was built in 1885. Children attended school there for years.

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At the former school location, Washburn Community Center now stands, built in 1952.

The community center is the center of social activity in the community, Ed Washburn said.

Washburn is still a rural community of large farms cattle and cows, horses and retired folks who have “fallen in love” with this part of the rural South.

Washburn is halfway between the town of Bostic and the Sunshine community on the Old Sunshine Highway off Highway 74 west of Shelby.