

Marker

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Principal Albert Anderson, who the Anderson Center at Winston-Salem State University is named after.

During the marker ceremony, Mayor Pro Tem Vivian Burke, East Ward City Council Member Derwin Montgomery, who represents the area, and Northwest Ward City Council Member Jeff MacIntosh also spoke.

"We have a wonderful story in this area," said Burke remarking about the distinguished community members that have lived in Reynoldstown.

Despite its proud history, some houses in the area are in need of repair. Montgomery said the neighborhood is included in the \$4 million TURN (Transforming Urban Residential Neighborhoods) program that was a part of the city bond that passed last year. The new program provides neighborhood groups with

up to \$45,000 per residential property for infrastructure improvements. He said that this will help preserve the historic buildings in Reynoldstown.

"There's a need again for the investment in the neighborhood today," he said.

Former resident James Grace spoke and fondly reminisced about growing up in the neighborhood with eight brothers and sisters. He recalled attending Atkins High School, walking downtown to the movie theater, and going to house parties in the various other black neighborhoods in the city.

"We had everything, at least we thought we had everything," he said.

Caroline Henry has resided in Reynoldstown for 62 years. She said she's well known because her father, Willie Henry, owned a grocery store that was located just across Cameron Avenue from where the marker was dedicated. He ran the store until he died in 1965 and it



The Reynoldstown historic marker sits on the corner of Eighth Street and Cameron Avenue.

Photo by Todd Luck

was torn down a few years later. There's now a street where the store once stood,

but a small portion of the brick store wall still remains on the roadside.

She said the neighborhood has more renters now and some of the houses

need fixing up, but it's still a place she's proud to call home.

Family

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Wilson's female friend and caretaker whom he lived with, "Ms. Sarah" (The Chronicle is withholding her last name), she was told that a social worker for the Forsyth County Department of Social Services (FCDSS) had come by their home (the worker's second visit), and had asked to take Wilson out to dinner. They never returned, and when Sarah finally heard from the social worker again, she was told that "an assessment" was being done on Wilson, and that his family would be unable to see him until FCDSS determined when and where.

It is important to remember that Sarah called Sandra Jackson, Napoleon Wilson's cousin (Jackson had always referred to him as her "uncle") to inform her of his disappearance, because in that same August 23, 2005 letter from the hospital psychiatrist to the Clerk's Office, not only did he state that Wilson's "caretaker" (Sarah) had been since contacted about what medication he was on for his diagnosed dementia, but at the end of the letter, the doctor states categorically that, "There are no known family members to [become Wilson's guardian of person]," which wasn't true, and could have been easily corrected by just asking Wilson's caretaker.

That doctor's letter of assessment would become the basis for declaring Napoleon Wilson incompetent, appointing FSDSS guardian of person, and later, the Clerk's Office justification for not allowing Sandra Jackson to have any say before it happened.

In an interview with The Chronicle, Ms. Jackson insists that not only did Sarah contact her, but that Jackson then contacted the social worker and was told that Napoleon was taken out of Sarah's home "... for his safety."

"I asked her what she meant by her statement and what she was indicating, and what that had to do with me or the family not knowing what occurred for him to be alienated and not to be able to see him," Jackson said. "[The social worker] stated, we would be notified and that was it."

Sarah the caretaker was notified, but not Sandra Jackson, of a Sept. 15th, 2005 special proceeding (or hearing) on guardianship for Mr. Wilson. (Ms. Jackson had mistakenly told The Chronicle that she had accompanied "Ms. Sarah" to the Hall of Justice for that hearing, confusing it for another. Jackson was not there though Sarah was, but neither Ms. Jackson, nor any other direct family member of Napoleon Wilson was ever notified by the Clerk's Office).

At that hearing, Mr. Wilson was declared incompetent, though the Clerk's order by Assistant



The photo shows Napoleon Wilson in a hospital bed. He couldn't eat at this time.

from Sandra Jackson

Clerk Theresa Hinshaw is not file-stamped, making it legally invalid.

Even though she had been taking care of Napoleon for years, Sarah was not appointed guardian. Instead, Hinshaw issued an order appointing FCDSS as Mr. Wilson's guardian of person, "... to have the custody, care and control ..." But that order was not file-stamped either, meaning that it too was legally invalid.

Two extraordinary court orders issued by Asst. Clerk Hinshaw, forever changing the life of Napoleon Wilson and neither, The Chronicle has determined, had the force of law.

The estate guardianship over Mr. Wilson's property and assets apparently went to attorney Bryan C. Thompson, who was present at the Sept. 15, 2005 hearing. His name has appeared in literally every case The Chronicle has investigated thus far in its probe of the Forsyth Clerk of Court's Office, as has Ms. Hinshaw's.

However, a newly certified copy of Napoleon Wilson's file, obtained from the Clerk's Office on November 13 bearing the Forsyth County Superior Court seal and signature of a current assistant clerk, reveals none of the certified documents from that file showing attorney Thompson either applying to be estate guardian, or being appointed such by the Clerk's Office.

And yet, Thompson's name is on the file jacket as estate guardian, and he is known to have subsequently handled Mr. Wilson's business affairs.

According to state law and established North

Carolina Rules of Procedure, if no record of an officially entered file-stamped court order exists, then nothing that atty Thompson allegedly did in handling Napoleon Wilson's property and assets as estate guardian was legally valid.

Mr. Wilson was being held in an all-white assisted living facility, paid for with his assets and sale of his property. Jackson said that his family was denied access to him for at least three months, and when she and Sarah finally did get to see him, Wilson's condition was poor.

"We [were] told we could visit [for] one hour after signing in," she recalls. "Napoleon cried when he saw us and told us they had been shocking him, and why did he need an ankle bracelet like he was a prisoner. He also indicated they told him he killed his wife. He replied she died of breast cancer."

On subsequent visits, Jackson took pictures of a big gash on Napoleon's forehead, bruises on his arms and legs, and also took pictures of dramatic weight loss resulting from Wilson not eating because the medicine he was forced to take so irritated his throat. His rib cage protruded when he would lie down.

As indicated before, the facility was virtually all white, thus making Mr. Wilson feel extremely isolated and lonely, Ms. Jackson said.

"As I walked down the hall a white lady approached me and told me she heard my uncle hollering and what was going on down there," Jackson recalls from another visit. "I replied I didn't know but I would find out and see from Napoleon."

"On a subsequent visit ... I noticed people (more than seven) piled on one another and when I went to sign in with Ms. Sarah I was told we need to get off the premises and we couldn't see Napoleon Wilson. When I returned again to visit two or three days later is when I discovered it was Napoleon that had several people on top of him indicating he was

trying to escape the facility."

Jackson complained bitterly to Bryan Thompson and community leaders, including a Forsyth County commissioner, but nothing changed. On Dec. 5, 2005, she petitioned to have FCDSS removed as guardian, and have herself appointed as "a successor."

On her petition, Jackson wrote that "Mr.

Wilson should be with family who is willing to be there for him and in [an] environment that is familiar to him." She also made it clear that she was "... not aware" of the previous hearing.

Jackson's cousin in Pasadena, Calif., Romane Wilson-Toure, also wrote a letter of endorsement to the Clerk's Office, saying how her Uncle Napoleon "is really quite lucid," and only has a "memory that fails him from time to time."

Saying that her uncle "needs to be free," Wilson-Toure endorses Sandra Jackson as guardian, calling her "... the family angel."

"I wholeheartedly trust Sandra's judgment ...," Wilson-Toure wrote.

However, on January 11, 2006, Asst. Clerk Hinshaw issued an order denying Jackson's petition, saying there were "no grounds to remove ..." FCDSS as guardian.

That order was not file-stamped, also making it legally invalid, even though the initial appointment had no force of law in the first place.

Napoleon Wilson remained in the state's custody until he died, his assets virtually gone two years later.

In Part three, a tape recording documents how Sandra Jackson fought to have her cousin returned to his family, and why court officials assured her that it would never happen without a fight.

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