

## **Historic Hickory Ridge:**

One of the original land grants in this area was to Greenberry Ridgely & Richard Davis; they named their patent "Hickory Ridge". Their 418 acres basically included all of what today is downtown Highland – the area in and around the intersection of current routes 108 and 216.<sup>(1)</sup> The acreage primarily extended along both sides of Highland Road. The beautiful brick house that still stands on the property was built in 1749 and was in the Ridgely family until 1877 when Samuel Hopkins bought it. Mr. Hopkins changed the name of the estate to "Whitehall", after his family's home in southern Anne Arundel County near Annapolis.

It was during this era that, as the late Senator Jim Clark, Jr. related, "Highland was also special because it had a Grange Hall<sup>(2)</sup> that was used for plays and dances. It was at one of these dances that James Clark, my father, met my mother, Alda Hopkins, whom he later married at White Hall in 1912. White Hall, where my mother was raised . . . dates back to 1749 when it was called Hickory Ridge."<sup>(3)</sup> Mrs. Alda Hopkins herself became a very prominent person in Howard County and founded the Howard County Historical Society.

The Hopkins held a Highland horse show for several years; and the Highland baseball team played at its field on "The Bluegrass" across Highland Road from "Hickory Ridge - Whitehall". In 1909 this team was undefeated.<sup>(4)</sup>

The Hopkins Methodist Church on Highland Road is located on land donated by Samuel and Gerald Hopkins in 1884, for a school/ church for the use of people from Highland and Clarksville. The original church burned down in 1901; the new church built by the members is still standing and in use today.

"Whitehall" stayed in the Hopkins family for 75 years. It then was sold to the Adams family. "Whitehall" changed hands again, going to Mr. and Mrs. Henry H. Owens, who then restored the original name, "Hickory Ridge".<sup>(5)</sup>

Today, "Hickory Ridge" is maintained as a private horse farm. They raise thoroughbred race horses and Hickory Ridge Farm has bred, produced and raced numerous Stakes winners under the local Highland "banner". Their beautiful fields along Highland Road with the romping mares and foals and the lovely blossoming cherry trees in the springtime are a wonderful living example of what life was and an environment that symbolizes what Highland wants to continue to offer its residents and visitors.

<sup>(1)</sup> Dr. Caleb Dorsey's 1968 Land Grant Map.

<sup>(2)</sup> The Grange Hall still stands, somewhat reduced in size, and serves as the present home of the Highland Feed & Seed Store on Route 108.

<sup>(3)</sup> This quote is from *Howard's Roads To The Past*, pg. 62, by Senator Jim Clark, Jr. who died August 18, 2006. Senator Clark, a former Maryland Senate president, was a life long advocate of farmland preservation. He and his cousins (former residents of Hickory Ridge) share memories of growing up there and of earlier days in Highland on a video "Highland, Maryland – An Oral History", (see GHCA).

<sup>(4)</sup> *History of Highland*, by Kendall Gambrill, pg. 32.

<sup>(5)</sup> *A Trip into the Past of Historical District V* by Clarksville Middle School, Grade 8 G/T Social Studies; pg. 92.