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**“The Little House That Stood”**

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Easy to remember the date since it's my birthday and what may have saved my life. I was at my office, fully engrossed in my work when my cell phone rang just before 7:00 pm. My neighbor said “This is embarrassing – I have a cake with your name on it and you're not here!” I left quickly! The next morning when I got in behind police lines, trees uprooted, power lines down, etc. to retrieve half million or so in checks I HOPED were still there, I discovered shards of glass, roofing material, etc literally embedded in the wall behind where I had been sitting about 5 to 8 minutes before the tornado...

Originally a home built in the 1950's by Brent and Mary Ellen Barbour, it was used after the 70's as offices for doctors, lawyers, and other businesses. I acquired the small office of less than 1,000 square feet in 1998 and restored it including moldings, original fireplace, and special architectural features. After the tornado, I had the opportunity to expand and restore it again!

The story of the Bible that flew in from “God only knows where” is our most inspiring story. Nicknamed “The Little House That Stood” because at least the 4 walls were standing, many press conferences were held in our parking lot here at “Ground Zero.” As Title Professionals operated out of my late friend, Irene Davis's home on Ellenwood Dr, we returned daily to sort through the rubble. At the bottom of 3 to 4 feet of debris I found a tattered Bible. Thinking it must be very old, perhaps a beloved family Bible with many markings and highlighting, I put it in the only safe place I knew—the fireplace mantle—with a mental note I must find this Mackie Jenkins whose name was inscribed in '84. Reporters were everywhere looking for stories. Since you're not at your best rooting through debris, my face must have reflected that when a television reporter knocked on my door. He put his hand up and said “I'm sorry. I won't bring the film crew in but I heard you found a Bible and I'd like to see it.” He held it reverently and said “Have you checked the bookmark?” As he opened it, he exclaimed “Do you know what Ezra Chapter 3 is about?” I resisted the temptation to say I was absent that day in Sunday School. Opening the Bible to the bookmarked page, we were in awe to discover at the top “Rebuilding of the Temple.” Two years later we heard from Mr Jenkins, of Culpepper, VA. No it wasn't held aloft and dropped here, he was working a construction site down 301 and this was his well-used “work Bible” from 1994, not 1894!

The whole town has indeed been REBUILDING and it's truly a miracle from God that we've rebuilt buildings and didn't have tremendous loss of human life. The Bible is now secured in a case prominently displayed these past 10 years.

TODAY

The restoration of “The Little House That Stood” is now home to expanded Title Professionals office and 4 commercial/residential suites. It was featured on the Maryland House and Garden Pilgrimage tour in 2004. A charming cottage garden anchoring the old and new sections is also a respite for employees and residents alike. Though tripled in size, it retains its original charm and, as viewed from La Grange Avenue, many remark you can't tell it's an addition! With the expansion of Centennial Street, it sits at the corner of Centennial and La Grange—just a stone's throw from the “new” La Plata Town Hall.