

## The One & Only TOM'S GARGAGE

Tom's Garage located in the city of Westfield, North Carolina, the only African American auto repair shop in this section of Surry County. The garage was opened in 1960's. His father, Ashby Lowe, helped Him build it. Julia, his youngest daughter, described it as red tin building.

Dad enjoyed working on all types of cars. His Motto: " NO CREDIT, I'M BROKE"; with this motto many customers came, and dad would go buy the parts needed to repair cars, and believed on his faith that people would pay him. Dad believed that customers needed transportation for families to get to church. He worked on any type of cars domestic and foreign. His daughter, named after her father, Tommie, remember going with him to pick up parts at Gilley's in Pilot Mountain. She said Dad would get her favorites, chocolate milk, nabs and moon pie.

As I would come home from school. I remember him working on cars, and late into the night. Dad even drove the school bus for Ridge Westfield Elementary School. Dad had only girls so, he decided that I would be the one to learn somethings about cars. He taught me how to check the oil in the cars and where the distributor cap was. This comes in handy now!

With only a fifth grade education, he increased his ability to read by reading the Bible. With a gift from God, he was able to figure out what was wrong with any car. He used his senses to determine what was broken with the car. He enjoyed working on automobiles. He had a gift for fixing things especially cars. He rebuilt motors, oil changes, gaskets and installed new motors. Nothing was too difficult for him! His bubbling personality drew black and white clientele. If he had begun his business in the seventies, I think he would have been more successful. He patronized the business in his community to promote his own. Dad had three daughters, who loved to see him work on cars. We will be eternally grateful for the Love that he shared in the Westfield Community and other areas.

Written by La-Shene Lowe

