

## Madeline (James) and William “Mickey” Lamb

Madeline James grew up in Howard County. Her parents, Ruth and Albert James, moved from Tennessee and were the county's first Bahá'ís. The county began gradually desegregating its schools in 1961, and Madeline was the first African American student at Waterloo Junior High School. Her parents were teachers and active in civil rights related to school integration (The Harriet Tubman High School, the last all-black school, was closed in 1965). In 1966, Madeline's mother became the first black person to serve on the Howard County School Board. Madeline and William first met in 1962 in South Carolina at a Bahá'í Summer School. A few years later they became better acquainted attending Bahá'í youth meetings and conferences in the Washington, DC area and eventually began dating. Since the Bahá'í Faith encourages unity of all races, there was no taboo against them to date.

In many ways, 1968 was the year that changed the world. The Vietnam War was at its height of fury. President Lyndon Johnson had presided over passage of the Civil Rights Act (1964) and the Voting Rights Act (1965). But the nation, in 1968, was moving toward two societies, black and white — separate and unequal. In April, Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated and in June Robert F. Kennedy was, as well. The Lambs' wedding fell halfway between those two momentous events.

Madeline and William were married on May 11, 1968, at Slayton House in Wilde Lake — the first wedding in the first community center built in Columbia. It was the first interracial marriage in Columbia, following the passage of the 1967 Supreme Court decision outlawing state anti-miscegenation laws. They moved into Columbia's first apartment complex, the Bryant Gardens in Wilde Lake. Several other interracial couples also lived in Bryant Gardens, but all of them were married prior to moving to Howard County.

In 1971, the Lambs purchased their home in Columbia and have lived in the same house (enlarged by two additions) ever since. We have two daughters, a son-in-law who's a doctor for the Ravens, and a six-year-old grandson. Madeline worked for the Rouse Company and William for a management consulting company until retirement. They enjoy participating in Bahá'í activities, volunteer work and community activities here in Howard County.

