

Brentsville Neighbors



Information About Brentsville
Shared Among Neighbors

October 2007



Welcome Neighbor!

This is a very special issue for us – the start of the third year! Looking back over the past 24 issues we believe our objective is on track – providing information about Brentsville to our Brentsville Neighbors. To each of you who have helped make this possible, our most sincere THANK YOU!

Last month we talked about the goldenrod. This month there are pictures of a number of different insects that feed on the goldenrod nectar. Some of these are very pretty, including the harmful locust borer. The Mydas fly is interesting in that it mimics the dangerous spider wasp so it will be much safer.

Another historic location you may find of interest is the Bristoe Station Battlefield Heritage Park. The Grand Opening Ceremony will commence at 2:00pm on Friday, 12 October. Though all have not confirmed yet speakers are to include Congressman Tom Davis, PWC BOCS Chairman Corey Stewart, Brentsville Supervisor Wally Covington, and Civil War Preservation Trust CEO James Lighthizer. Later there will be a talk on “The Unknown Enemy, The Devastating Effect of Contagious Disease on Civil War Camps” followed by tours of the Mississippi and Alabama Cemeteries as well as a Civil War Roundtable. Saturday (13 October) the weekend will include tours and Living History starting with a US Infantry demonstration at 11:00am, Confederate Infantry demonstrations, opposing forces tactical demonstrations, medicine

during the war, artillery “Queen of Battle” and torchlight tours beginning at 5:00pm. Sunday will run from 11:00am until 3:00pm with similar events. You are encouraged to contact David Born, PWC Historic Programs Coordinator at 571-641-0042 or e-mail to dborn@pwcgov.org for additional information.

So, DO YOU KNOW what October is? Well it’s a wonderful time to dig into your old pictures and send us copies for the notebooks (growing every day!) OR (and yes, there are some who keep putting it off) taking a few minutes to write some of your memories of Brentsville. Both are very important and once you do, you’ll be so glad you did!

By the way, if you like the looks of the golf shirts that we are wearing on page 3, you can have one of your own and help us with mailing postage at the same time. We are offering them in men sizes S, M, L, XL for \$35.00; XXL for \$37.00; and XXXL (if available) for \$39.00. If you need it mailed, it is an additional \$5.00 for Priority Mail. The \$8.00 profit will go directly into stamps for mailing the “Neighbors.” The shirts are large for their size, quite heavy, have a pocket, are washable, and have color embroidery that will not fade. Makes a nice Christmas gift too!

Very best wishes,
Nelson & Morgan

This month:

- A Brentsville Building -----pages 2 & 3
- Where Wild Things Live ----- pages 2, 4 & 7
- Brentsville Memories -----pages 5, 6 & 7

**A Brentsville Building
The Home Oscar Carter Built
12304 Bristow Road**

A number of homes in Brentsville are located on property once owned by Solomon B. Spitzer and Richard Donovan (over 231 acres of land plus lots #7 and #8 within the Town of Brentsville) that was held in a partnership until October 18, 1901. At that time, Solomon Spitzer took lots #7 & #8 and all but 77 acres of the property. He lived in a large home on lot #7 that was described in his will as "... a mansion house and known place of residence at Brentsville..." Upon his death on March 12, 1929, his large property holdings were divided among his wife, Mattie M. Spitzer, and his children. His wife got the large home in which they lived and other considerations (WB100/219). At some point after this, the property was conveyed to Irvin and Effie May Cornwell (source document not yet found).

On October 28, 1937, Irvin and Effie May Cornwell sold the property, consisting of 3½ acres, to Wister Robert and Hazel Heflin Stephens who lived here for the rest of their lives (DB100-219). However, on June 27, 1956, the Stephens' sold Oscar and Amy Norine Carter a small parcel consisting of 0.6887 acres located on the corner of Bristow Road and Izaak Walton Drive (DB204-292).

Oscar built his home here around 1960 and lived in the home until his death on May 19, 1993. His will left the home to his widow, Amy Norine Carter (WB76-1134). She continued to live here until Amy J. Carter (daughter of James Welby Carter), now Mrs. Amy J. Munda and her husband Randall Munda, purchased the home from her grandmother on September 27, 1994 (DB2187-177). Mrs. Carter died Friday, March 1, 2002, at Annaburg Manor, Manassas, at age 82 (PN/MJM 03/02/2002 A-4). Amy and Randall continue to reside here.

Where WILD Things Live

The Locust Borer Jimmy R. Galford¹

¹Entomologist, Northeastern Forest Experiment Station, Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Delaware, Ohio. This revision is based on 1970 version by E. H. Wollerman (retired).

The locust borer, *Megacyllene robiniae* (Forst.), is a native insect. Its original range probably coincided with that of its host tree, the black locust, which once grew only along the Allegheny Mountains from Pennsylvania to Georgia and in the Ozark Mountain region.

Black locust grows readily on poor sites and is used extensively in land-reclamation plantings. Its widespread use to reclaim land damaged by farming and strip mining, its use as a shade tree, and its use in reforestation have dispersed the borer with its host tree over most of the United States. The borer is now found from eastern Canada south to the Gulf States and west to Washington, Colorado, and Arizona. The borer attacks only black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia* L.) and its cultivars (horticulturally derived varieties in the genus *Robinia*); the honey locust (*Gleditsia triacanthos* L.) is not affected.

Damage and Signs of Infestation

Borer larvae tunnel into a tree's trunk and branches, weakening the tree and making it susceptible to wind breakage. The damage from borer tunneling and wind breakage often results in deformed trees or clumps of sprout growth.

The most obvious signs of severe borer attack in a stand of black locust are the many dead and broken limbs and the knotty swellings on the trunks.

Depending on the season, symptoms of borer attack vary. In the early spring, at about the time of bud swell, wet spots appear on the bark. These wet spots are the result of young larvae tunneling in the inner bark. In late spring or early summer, white-colored wood dust can be seen on the bark; the dust is pushed out of holes in the bark by the developing larvae, which are boring into the sapwood. By late summer, the larvae burrow into the heartwood, and the boring dust on the bark appears yellow. If the

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A Brentsville Building



**The Home Oscar Carter Built
12304 Bristow Road**



“Daddy ordered me some new mail-order shoes for school but they didn’t come in yet.”

Fred Wolfe



**Morgan and Nelson -- Brentsville
Neighbors!**

Where WILD things live..



Locust Borer



Ailanthus Webworm Moth



American Hover Fly



Blue-Black Spider Wasp



Golden Northern Bumble Bee



Mydas Fly

More pictures from the one-room school reunion

The Queen of the Party!



Verona Craig - almost 102 years old.

A Treasured Heirloom



The quilt Edith (Melvin) Turner made

"Let me think..."



Casper Whetzel

Brentsville Memories of Morgan Earle Breeden

My name is Morgan Earle Breeden, second son of Morgan Henry Breeden*...and Olive Marye (Wolfe) Breeden.* One of my biggest disappointments is knowing that I was not actually born in Brentsville. Not in Virginia either. In fact, while I was born within the United States, it wasn't in any of the states. I was born in Washington, D.C. My dad worked there at the time. But my father was born in Brentsville, as was my mother. They brought me here in 1943, when I was about one year old to our new home that daddy had just finished building. And that was the only home I would ever know. Well, not quite, but more on that later. So for all practical purposes, Brentsville is now and always has been my hometown.

One of my very first memories of Brentsville was a very old house sitting on the hill near the home of Maurice Keys.* I later learned this was the home of Robert Allen Keys* but I don't remember what happened to it. I only vaguely remember it being there. I'm told that Lee Molair* tore it down and used the lumber to build several of the small homes in Brentsville. I also remember the remains of the Snook's Mill on what is now Flory Road. Again, I don't remember what happened to it, only that it was there. I well remember the old Brentsville Store that was located very close to the house to the right, both of which belonged to Robert Hilman Keys.* Between the store and the house there was a space of only about 12 inches (it could have been more but it seemed very small). Later the store was moved to its current location. Grady* and Violet Shoemaker* owned the store and it was the gathering place for almost everyone—young and old alike. There was a wood stove that we would stand by in the winter and I can remember the "old" men playing checkers while sitting on nail kegs. People like John Baker* who always road his horse to town, Ervin Spitzer,* Joe Keys,* Cecil Yancey,* Mr. Bradshaw,* and my Uncle Bennie Breeden.* Mr. Golladay* had a very old car and we boys on our bicycles would "race" him down the road (he didn't like that!).

Mom and Dad were members of the Hatchers Memorial Baptist Church. It was much different on

the inside than it is now. The ceiling was open and extended up about 20 feet (or so it seemed). The openness created an echo and the men strung wire across the room in several places to dampen the echo. I'm not sure it worked. One of the first ministers I can recall was Rev. Getts who was still in ministry school. He ended up being the full-time preacher and drove up from Fairfax (or was it Alexandria?) each Sunday for the service. All of the families took turns providing lunch (dinner as we called it) and you could count on that being a special meal. He must have got really tired of chicken but he never said so.

I think my favorite minister of all times was Mr. Griffith.* To this day I believe him the most Christian-like person I have ever met. And he was like that Monday through Saturday as well as Sunday. He would preach at our church part time. At the time he was living off Orlando Road and he didn't have a car. Sometimes he was given a ride but mostly he would wade across Cedar Run, change clothes in the woods, and walk to church. Time of year didn't much matter to him.

At some point Dad had a falling-out with the general membership and moved our membership to the Valley View Church of the Brethren. It was a little, one-room church located just outside the gate to the cemetery. The preacher from Nokesville would come to Valley View early for a service and then go back to Nokesville for his primary preaching. After a while this got to be a chore and he stopped coming. Most of the people who attended simply moved to the Nokesville church but I think we moved back to Hatchers, informally at least. Membership at our church was too small to have Vacation Bible School every year so we would attend the Presbyterian VBS in the little one-room Union Church. I can remember very well sitting in the mulberry tree just beside the church with the black juice covering my mouth and hands.

By the way, the family (and almost every one else) called me Morgan Earle to prevent confusion with my father. My brothers would make me angry



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by calling me “More Girls” or “Merl” or other less complimentary names. For the longest time I hated the double name but now, well, now it doesn’t seem so bad any more.

Our family was dirt poor. Dad had a few acres of land but never time to do much with it. He was a plumber by trade—not a farmer. He mostly raised bees and sold honey and we normally had a cow or two and a horse. What a horse! Her name was Nelly and she was a draft horse of some kind. Big is an understatement. She could (and normally did) do the work of two horses. We had a two-horse turnover plow that I used to plow the garden and sometimes the field. She would work like the devil but when it was time to go back to the barn (her choice more than yours), it was risky to try stopping her. With you or without you, off she would go! Sometimes dragging the plow with her!! We liked to ride her but she had two standard speeds—slow and slower. If you could get her to run, it was so bouncy you had to hold on with both hands just to stay on top. We never had a saddle that fit so it was always bareback.

My dad loved flowers. While he was working in DC he got to know people so when the Japanese Cherry trees arrived, he was able to get about 12 of them. They were the only ones in Prince William County as far as we knew. He also loved dahlias and tried very hard for many years to develop a new hybrid that would be named for him. He never got what he wanted but people would drive from all over to see his cherry trees blooming in the spring and his dahlias blooming in summer and autumn. I got some of his love for flowers and very much enjoy them still.

One of the highlights of my childhood was the first time I saw a television. Mr. Bradshaw* got one when I was about five (c1947). He invited everyone to come see it and we joined a large room full of guests, each trying to get a good look at the device. It had a little round glass thing that showed the picture. It was truly magic!

Brentsville was too small to have movies and it cost too much to go to Manassas (besides, it was too far to walk). So, Nick Webster* (it was always Nick, even to his children—to this day I have never heard him called Mr. Webster) would set up his projector in the Courthouse and everyone would gather around to watch his movies. He worked for the government making movies of stuff in Africa and Asia and it was very special for us to be able to see them. Sometimes we would go to the Courthouse for a dance. The wooden floor really took a beating but boy, did we have fun!

I enjoyed spending a lot of time in the Webster house. DeLancy and Julie were the “rich” kids and we liked to associate. Mrs. Agnes Webster* and her

mother Mimi* somehow seemed to tolerate us as long as there was no “rough housing” going on. Gil Machen* had his radio room over the kitchen and I would love going up there and looking at all the resistors and capacitors and coils and stuff that made the radio work. Of course I had no idea what they were or how they worked but it was fascinating watching him put the pieces together.

DeLancy and I published a newspaper as kids often do. Ours was the “Weekly Star.” Mrs. Webster was the cartoonist and guiding editor. We did pretty well overall. Never made any money but the circulation got up fairly high at one point, going to foreign countries and all over the USA. The recipients said it was the only way they could really keep up with the Brentsville news.

As kids we were never allowed to call adults by their first name. For the men, it was normally Mister so and so. For the ladies, it was typically Aunt so and so – Aunt Bess (Shoemaker)*, Aunt Becky (Fogle)*, and so forth. One summer day I was pumping water (we had a hand pump) and I saw Mr. John Donovan* coming down the drive. I yelled out to my father, “Hey dad, here comes John.” BIG mistake! After I had my bottom burned really good I got to pump water for the next hour filling up every vessel on the place. Last time I ever did **that**!

It seemed like Brentsville was a good place for kids to grow. Nothing to get into trouble with—at least not big trouble. We spent the summer swimming and fishing; the autumn hunting and cutting firewood; the winter ice skating and sledding; and the spring wishing summer was here. The adults would play cards a lot – they would go from one house to the other – they didn’t gamble but loved them cards. Setback, rummy, bid, canasta, casino—stuff like that.

The boys (there were four of us boys and no girls) were encouraged to work but not forced. I can remember working for Walter Flory* one summer. He was digging ponds for a fish farm. He offered several of us a dollar a day to help (not bad earnings at the time). I can still hear Mr. Flory driving down the road. He always whistled. Never a tune, just a whistle. We use to jokingly call him “Whistler Pete.”

When I was about 12 years old (1954), dad decided to buy Mr. Hedrick’s* house (the Jail) which was much bigger and better than ours. He would have to sell his own land in order to afford the new place and after a year, the land still went unsold. At that point the Hedrick’s noted on the “payment” that it was for R-E-N-T. Dad got real mad and promptly moved back home. I well remember a sign in the front yard of the jail (then occupied by Mr. Hedrick’s daughter) “Suits Us Estates!” I somehow think there was a message in the sign intended for us.

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During High School I worked on the Colvin Farm where we milked 100+ cows twice a day. I would get up around 4am to be in the barn by 5am and worked until school started. After school it was back to the farm until well after dark then home to bed. Not much social life but I had a few dollars in my pocket.

By the middle of the 11th grade I finally concluded that school was not my calling. Billy Whitt (of Aden), Richard Taylor* (of Bradley Forest) and I ended up joining the Navy at the same time. Billy and I were in a "Buddy Program" where we were supposed to stay together for as long as possible. That lasted through "Boot Camp" and then we went our separate ways. It was in "Boot Camp" that I found I was red-green colorblind. I was trying out to be a blimp pilot and you had to tell the difference between green, red, and white lights that changed. The people administering the test got quite a laugh out of my answers. I didn't think it was funny at all! I ended up going to Radioman school in Bainbridge, Md. As it turn out, not a bad choice.

One of my early assignments was Operation Deep-Freeze in 1961. Spending 13 months in the South Pole was quite an experience. Then when I got home I was killing time at Shoemaker's Store and ran into this young kid that use to ride our school bus. Her name was Kay Burdette. A little less than a year later she changed her name to Kay Breeden. We still joke that when we married we were related to about 90% of the people in Brentsville. There were the Keys, Braden, Wright, Wolfe, Eanes, Visger, Shoemaker, Breeden, and Lord only knows what other families that we had ties to somehow.

Brentsville. It's hard to think of the name without it being tied to my life in so many ways. I'm the 4th generation to live there. Kay is the 5th generation. You might say we have roots. Both of our mothers, both of us, our three children and one grandchild have all gone to school in the same building. When we were leaving for an assignment in Guam, the families had a party for us in the Courthouse. When my second daughter, Becky, was married, she wanted it on the Courthouse grounds. It rained that day so she was married in the Courthouse. It was beautiful.

So many people are now gone but so many more are taking their place. By the way, as you have read this, did you see the little asterisk(*) beside those names? They are the ones who have gone — but are not forgotten.

The irony of life is that, by the time you're old enough to know your way around, you're not going anywhere.

tree is heavily infested, the wood dust may accumulate in a ring around the tree's base.

Description

The adult locust borer is a slender, "long-horned" beetle, about three-quarters of an inch (1.9 cm) long, with reddish legs and black antennae. Bright yellow bands encircle its jet-black body. A W-shaped band extends across the elytra, or wing covers. Males and females are similar in appearance.

Mature larvae are white, about 1 inch (2.5 cm) long and one-quarter of an inch (0.6 cm) in diameter. Newly formed pupae are creamy white and about three-quarters of an inch (1.9 cm) long. Both the larval and pupal stages are spent within the tree and are not readily seen.

Life History

The conspicuous, brightly colored adults appear when goldenrod (*Solidago* sp.) is in bloom. (See photo page 4.) Adults are most abundant during September, when they are commonly found feeding on pollen of goldenrod blossoms.

Egg laying occurs from early afternoon until late evening from late August through early October. The females lay eggs prolifically under bark scales, in callus tissue around pruning wounds, in cracks in the bark, and in other hiding places. The eggs are rarely laid where they can be seen.

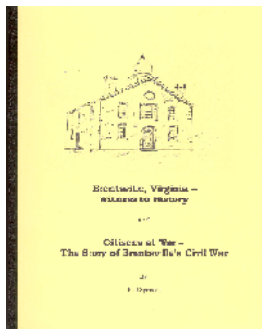
In about a week, the eggs hatch and small, white larvae bore into the inner bark. Each larva makes a small hibernation cell and overwinters there. In the spring when the leaf buds begin to swell, the larvae begin to bore into the woody part of the tree, causing sap to ooze around small holes. Throughout the spring and early summer, the larvae enlarge their tunnels until they are 3 to 4 inches (7.6-10.2 cm) long and about one-quarter of an inch (0.6 cm) in diameter.

By mid-July, most of the larvae have matured and transformed into the pupal stage, which is completed between the end of July and the first 2 weeks of August. Mature beetles emerge from the trees through the openings made by the larvae. The timing of these events in the life history of the locust borer varies in different parts of the country because of differences in climate.

Source: <http://www.na.fs.fed.us/spfo/pubs/fidls/locust/locust.htm>

Brentsville Neighbors

Information About Brentsville
Shared Among Neighbors
Contact us via e-mail on:
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The Paul Spencer booklet "Brentsville, Virginia - Witness to History" is available from "Brentsville Neighbors" for \$5.00 plus \$2.00 if mailed. All proceeds go to the Brentsville Courthouse Fund.

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In GOD we Trust

