

Brentsville Neighbors

Information About Brentsville
Shared Among Neighbors

November 2007

Welcome Neighbor!

While every month is special in some way, November ranks high in importance to many of us for our own individual reasons. For us, it is a combination of Veterans Day on November 11th and Thanksgiving Day on November 22nd. A time to reflect. A time to be thankful. Many of us are veterans of days gone by who very much appreciate the veterans of today. But veteran or not, we all have much for which we are thankful. We each serve in our own way.

And too, we are thankful for our Brentsville neighbors like Joyce Smith, Betty Farmer, Nelson Bradshaw, Bill Wade, Howard Churchill and all of you who are contributing to the preservation of Brentsville's wonderful history as it lives in each of our individual memories.

And many thanks to all those who, like Freddy Wolfe, have taken the time to preserve your memories of Brentsville in a very special way.

To every Brentsville Neighbor we say "Thank You!" You are each very special to us.

Very best wishes,
Nelson & Morgan



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**A Brentsville Building
The Home Walter W. Keys Built
12334 Bristow Road**

On November 27, 1915, Walter Wildman Keys, now just over 22 years 7 months old, purchased a one acre plot of land from Solomon Spitzer along what we now call Bristow Road or Route 619 (DB67/203-204). This is a small portion of the land allotted to Spitzer in the Deed of Partition with Richard Donovan. We are not sure when he built the house, but it was probably prior to June 16, 1920, when Walter married Nettie Rebecca Hensley of Brentsville. So this was their home and not quite two years later, their daughter, Dorothy Sylvia Keys, was born here. She was their only child and would attend school in the Brentsville One-Room School. During January 1937, their home burned to the ground and Walter built another, smaller home on the same lot. Later, Walter and Nettie would divorce and on October 28, 1947, Walter sold his property to James R. and Bessie M. Shoemaker (DB128/177).

On June 22, 1948, just eight months later, the Shoemakers sold the property to Walter C. Sadd (DB132/237-238) who kept it until June 30, 1950, when he and his wife, Mabel, sold it to Walter B. and Edna M. Keyton (DB145/322-323). They lived here until January 7, 1961, when the property was sold to their son, Weldon "Buster" E. Keyton (see his memories in the August 2007 newsletter). This action is recorded in DB265/678-679.

Weldon retained ownership of the property until November 30, 1982, when he, now divorced and not remarried, sold to Walter B. and Ruby Keyton and Richard Lee Keyton

the property as joint tenants (DB1196/282-283).

On June 27, 1984, the Keyton's sold to the Commonwealth of Virginia land containing 0.025 acre with the permanent right and easement to use the additional area shown as being required for the proper construction and maintenance of drainage facilities containing 0.066 acre used to widen Route 619 (DB1279/713-714). The records jump around at this point and we did not find when or where, but the property was transferred to the Bank of New York, as Trustee under the Pooling and Servicing Agreement dated as of November 30, 1995, Series 1995-C, who sold it to Carl and Judy C. Newell (less that conveyed to the Commonwealth of Virginia) on May 13, 1999, as recorded in DB2760/815-817. During 2001 the home was declared uninhabitable and was demolished.

Carl and Judy Newell maintained ownership until April 27, 2004, when they sold it to Jerry R. and Virginia C. Ratcliff in whose name it still remains. It is listed as 0.9750 acre and recorded as Instrument #200404280071646.

The quote of the month is by Jay Leno:

"With hurricanes, tornados, fires out of control, mud slides, flooding, severe thunderstorms tearing up the country from one end to another, and with the threat of bird flu and terrorist attacks, are we sure this is a good time to take God out of the Pledge of Allegiance?"

A Brentsville Building The Home Walter W. Keys Built



Shown here behind Patsy Keys and her father, Cassius Thomas Keys



Photo taken by Helen Keys during January
1937, after the home burned



Walter Wildman Keys
April 16, 1893 - January 4,
1960



Dorothy Sylvia
Keys born here
March 20, 1922



Nelson Bradshaw

Where WILD
things live..



Blue-Black Spider Wasp



David Landis



George Melvin



Johnny Melvin



Paul Ratliff

Brentsville Memories of John F. Wolfe

My name is John F. Wolfe but I have been called Freddy by almost everyone in Brentsville all my life. My parents were Clyde Wynnnett and Emma Lenora (Smith) Wolfe. They would be considered very uneducated. They could read and write but that was about it. We lived off of the land and farmed off of everyone else's property because we didn't have much of our own. I was born in 1932, so if you know anything about after or during the great depression, they were sticky times. But we made it!

I was born in Brentsville about 300 yards from where I now live. I had six brothers and two sisters and I'm the youngest. My oldest sister, Marye Breeden, helped raise me too. That's why I sometimes call her my "second mother." Six

brothers, several different occupations, all in the trades: electricians, stuff like that. I wound up in electronics. The other siblings, one lives just up the road a ways, Gladys Eanes, who was born in the height of the depression. My mother was a very strong Christian churchgoer. My daddy wasn't much of a Christian but he knew how to handle boys. In fact, I might still have a few marks here! But I was the youngest, so I probably got treated better than the rest of them.

I really don't feel sorry for myself living in our old house. We had the necessities of life. We weren't much poorer than the other people living around. The Websters that lived next door were very well off; if we compared our lifestyle to their lifestyle it was quite different. And we worked. Not sunup to sundown, but when you try to make

a living off of farming on other people's property... We had cattle, horses, and we had to grow our own crops – make our own hay. And when we had a break from that we'd go down by Cedar Run and go swimming or go fishing. Fishing's something I still love to do. But no, I didn't feel sorry for myself. Being the last of nine, I had the hand-me-downs as far as clothes were concerned, but I think the majority of

people living in that time lived like we did. In fact, there were very few people in the late 30's and early 40's before WWII who could be considered middle class like we do now.



Brentsville was a very small town. Everybody knew everybody else. There was so little traffic on the road that if you heard a car coming you'd

run outside and see who it was. Now, you have to stand on the road for five minutes before you cross so you don't get run over. But yes, everybody knew everybody else here. My mother was a practical nurse for the area. Anytime someone got sick she'd go over there and help. I don't think she ever did any midwifin' but she helped if you were sick. And it was beautiful, good country living and I still like it. I resent the fact that we're being squeezed in from every direction right now with subdivisions and houses built so close together that you can't get a car between them, but I guess that's the future of the county.

I went to school in the Brentsville one-room schoolhouse for the first five years. I say the first five years—it was one, one, two, three, and

four. I was so good at the first grade the first time that the teacher decided to keep me there for another year! I finished the fourth grade here and then that's when the school was closed. We went to—well, it was called Brentsville District High, but it's now old Nokesville Elementary School. I went there fifth grade through sophomore year. It was during my sophomore year that they decided to make a farmer out of me and I had to take agriculture in order to graduate. And this was primarily an agriculture school. Well, I worked my rear end off growing up and I told them I had no intentions of farming—had no property of my own. So I transferred to Osbourn High School in Manassas. I went to the high school for half days. Then, at the time right after WWII, they opened up a vocational school for veterans. Well, the veterans started slowing down so they opened it up to the public. So I went to half a day of high school then half a day of vocational school. I graduated in 1951. In school I liked mathematics and history but I didn't like the part of history where you had to remember names and dates—I liked events. I liked hunting, I liked fishing. As far as professional sports goes, I'm a professional spectator!

I don't remember too much about the Brentsville School other than going to school there. Nothing significant that would bring back memories. I do remember the school and the back part wasn't on here. It was put on later. The chimney was in the back somewhere and a stovepipe would come almost to the center of the room and that would give us heat. My brother, who was almost six years older than I am, was in charge of getting the wood ready and building the fire for school. We had a good time. The teacher had us broken down into little sections of this one room and she would just go from one to the other and teach us—give us work assignments. It worked out pretty good. It seems like to me—I don't know—this might be an unfair statement—but back in those days, teachers taught. Rather than just monitor the classroom. That might not be a fair statement but that's the way it seems to me. You asked them a question back in those days and they'd take five minutes and answer your question. These days they just tell you to "read

the book and you'll find the answer." That bothers me. It seems back in those days teachers loved to teach.

Growing up in Brentsville we just enjoyed life. We had our chores and if we did them, everything's OK. If we didn't, then our backsides got warmed up. And the chores were not like washing dishes or stuff like that. It was cutting wood, because we heated with wood and feeding the farm animals. We had, on the rest of the property, two horses, a couple of cattle and some pigs to feed. If we got that done then we had the rest of the day, as long as we didn't get in trouble. We worked until the work was done then we played games. We would play, not baseball like they play it now where everyone's got their uniform and all the equipment they need. We might have a bat and a ball and just go play a game. We swam during the summer, we fished.... I don't know why this fishing keeps coming up! My son gave me a hat. It says, "Eat, Sleep and Fish." I'm trying to do it.

Unless it was an emergency, we'd always have Sunday off. And if we went to church, then after church we had time to do anything we wanted to do as long as it was legal and lawful. Sometimes it was just borderline. But nothing fancy. My wife made a statement one time, she comes from a family of 14, she said that the dolls that they got for Christmas, after they got old, they'd just tear the heads off of them and use them as a ball. But we always found a way to do it—hit rocks with a stick. Break windows in the school houses—the courthouses...

I was impressed by some of the intelligence of some of the other people in the community—some of the older people—talking to them. There were a lot of older people in the community and I enjoyed talking to them. I didn't have a "hometown hero."

-- Continued next month --

Where WILD things live..

Blue-Black Spider Wasps Genus Anoplius

The web site Nearctica.com lists something like 48 species of this wasp for North America, making it the largest genus of spider wasp in the U.S.

Identification - Medium-sized black wasps, often with orange abdominal markings. Females typically hunt intently on forest floor, etc., flicking wings. They are hunting for wolf spiders, their favorite prey as food for the young.

Habitat - Varied. Eastern species can be found in deciduous forests.

Season - Late spring to early autumn. Some species have several generations per year starting from late May. Females of *A. tenebrosus* overwinter and can be found as early as April in the southern part of its range.

Food - Adults take nectar. The one featured here is on a golden-rod which is rich in autumn nectar.

Life Cycle - Larvae are provisioned with wolf spiders, funnel web spiders. Many are generalists and will provision with nearly every common family of spider found in North America. At least one species has been recorded taking Daddy Long-legs. Most are fossorial ground nesters, although some will use borings in wood and other crevices.

Remarks - Probably the model for some Mydas flies such as the one shown in our October 2007 newsletter.

Source: <http://bugguide.net>

From the Brentsville Courthouse



State of Virginia, Prince William County to wit:

I William E. Lipscomb, judge of the county court of the said county in the said state, certify that George W.

Tansill who has been elected by the qualified voters of said county, Sheriff of said County for the term of four years commencing on the 1st day of July 1891 Personally appeared before me this day, and qualified as such Sheriff by taking the several oaths prescribed by law, and I further certify that the said George W. Tansill together with John Clark, Thomas L. Selecman, W. W. Kincheloe, and Edwin Nelson his sureties who justified as to his sufficiency, entered into & acknowledged a bond in the penalty of \$15,000 conditioned according to law, which bond will be recorded by the clerk of said court in the book kept for the purpose. Given under my hand this 29th day of June 1891.

Wm. E. Lipscomb

Source: Prince William County Virginia 1890 - 1891 Court Minutes, Copyright Ronald Ray Turner

Flashback

The Journal Messenger, Thursday, December 31, 1953

Brentsville

A congregational meeting was held at the Presbyterian Church Sunday, December 27, preceding the morning service. The meeting was moderated by Rev. Richard Winter of Warrenton. The motion to call Robert Blumer was put before the church by Charles Croushorn. The motion was carried by unanimous vote. Mr. Blumer is a senior at Union Theological Seminary of Richmond. He has been called to be the regular pastor of Brentsville and Greenwich churches. In case he accepts the call, his duties will begin after he graduates in June. Al Simmons, also a senior at Union, conducted the morning services. Mr. Blumer will be back from vacation to preach January 3 at 10 a.m.

Brentsville Neighbors

Information About Brentsville
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Contact us via e-mail on:
MorganBreedon@aol.com

Mark your calendar! The Brentsville Courthouse Historic Centre Christmas Concerts will be held again this year on Saturday, December 8th, 2007, at 5:00 and 6:00pm. Join us for “*Sounds of the Season*” as the Brentsville District High School Chorus performs two concerts in the historic Brentsville Union Church. Snacks and cider will be provided. This is a FREE event. Call 703-365-7895 for more information.

**Brentsville Neighbors
c/o Morgan Breedon
9721 Windy Hill Drive
Nokesville, VA 20181**

In GOD we Trust

