

Brentsville Neighbors



Information About Brentsville
Shared Among Neighbors

May 2008



Welcome Neighbor!

April always seems to be a busy month. We spend time worrying about taxes, mowing the grass for the first time – and the second – and “isn’t it time to do that again?” There are sporting events; deciding what to put in the garden; and a host of other issues. Fortunately this year we had diversions to make Brentsville even more wonderful than it normally is and yes, we know that’s hard to do!

During April 19th and 20th we enjoyed two Civil War reenactment groups who gave excellent presentations. The Black Horse Cavalry got a lot of attention with their mounted drills and the 49th Virginia Infantry gave us a special treat. Under the command of Tony Meadows, they relived the recruiting process in the same courthouse where this happened just before the war. I believe this was very special to them as well as to us. Many thanks to both of these fine organizations for spending time with us in Brentsville.

Another event took place on the 20th that can only be described as remarkable. A mother attended her daughter’s birthday party. What’s so special about that? Well, in this case Lucy Hartman (the daughter) was having her 84th birthday. And her mother, Verona Craig, now 102, attended with a big smile on her face wearing her famous red hat. So how special is that!!

On a more somber note we had a “Tree Planting in Memory of John (Ricky) White” on April 26th. John spent countless hours championing the cause of the Brentsville Historic Site as the PWC Planning Office representative to the Brentsville Courthouse Historic Centre Trust until his untimely death on January 11, 2008. An estimated 60 people attended the ceremony in his honor that was hosted by Craig Gerhart, County

Executive, and featured a number of special guest speakers. A light lunch, tours, and warm social interaction followed.

And finally on April 28th the site hosted approximately 30 home-schooled students with their parents. This event was coordinated by Mrs. Martin Nohe, hosted by Rob Orrison and included many home-school family groups from Eastern Prince William. David Born taught them about making butter by shaking jars of cream and they were given a live demonstration on the making of Hoe Cakes in the cabin by Mike Riley and Dan Purkey. The kids had a blast and we believe the adults did as well.

If you are in town on May 17th, drop by the site for the “Children’s Farm Day at Brentsville.” Kids will learn about skills that were important to everyday life on 19th century farms in Prince William. They will also have an opportunity to learn and interact with some of the animals that could have been found on these early farms. Other activities will include candle dipping, butter making, carding wool, pounding corn and open hearth cooking. A great program for kids of all ages!

Very best wishes,
Nelson and Morgan

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Where W I L D Things Live

Lonicera sempervirens Trumpet or Coral Honeysuckle

Description

Trumpet or Coral honeysuckle is a twining or trailing woody vine that is evergreen or tardily deciduous in mild climates. The smooth leaves are 1-3 in (2.5-7.6 cm) long and arranged opposite each other along the stem. The last two leaves at the ends of new growth are joined at their bases, cup-like around the stem and the showy flowers are in terminal clusters just beyond. The flowers are tube shaped, about 2 in (5.1 cm) long, coral red or bright orange on the outside and yellow on the inside. The fruits are orange red berries, about 0.25 in (0.6 cm) diameter. Numerous cultivars are available commercially including one with bright yellow flowers.

Location

Coral honeysuckle grows wild in open woodlands, roadsides, fence rows and the edges of clearings, from Connecticut to Nebraska, and south to Texas and Florida.

Usage

Coral honeysuckle thrives in containers or in the garden. It is easy to grow, and its flashy flowers will attract ruby-throated hummingbirds and butterflies all summer long. Let it clamber over a fence or give it a trellis of its own. Many gardeners allow coral honeysuckle to climb over shrubs. Unlike its weedy relative, Japanese honeysuckle (*L. japonica*), coral honeysuckle will not spread out of control, and its sparse vines won't strangle your prize shrubs.

Features

Wherever coral honeysuckle grows, ruby-throated hummingbirds and butterflies will find it. Songbirds relish the juicy fruits. This is a spectacular vine that the local wildlife will enjoy as much as you - plant some!

Source: http://www.floridata.com/ref/L/loni_sem.cfm

flashback

BRENTSVILLE

The Children's Day services of the Union Sunday School will be held at 7:30 p. m. Sunday night. Everybody welcome.

The monthly meeting of the Community League will meet at the school house Saturday night at 8 o'clock. All members are urged to attend this meeting.

Mr. James Keys, of Roanoke, is spending a few days with his parents here after attending the Shriners Convention in Washington. He is making the trip in his Nash automobile.

Messrs. John Gary and sons, John and Robert, of Del Ray, visited Mr. and Mrs. Paul Cooksey last Sunday.

Miss Irene Weeks, of Fairfax, visited at the home of Mr. R. H. Keys this week.

Among those who were Washington visitors last week were Mr. and Mrs. D. E. Earhart, Misses Violet Keys and Tracie Spitzer and Messrs. David and Cash Keys and William Varner.

One of the best games ever played on this diamond was fought out between the team from Midland and the home team last Saturday, resulting in a score of 6-5 in favor of Brentsville, in the eleventh inning. Cash Keys pitched his usual good game, never weakening through the eleven innings. The Midland boys played a good game, however, and we hope they will come again. On Saturday our team will cross bats with the fast Nokesville aggregation on the Nokesville diamond. Come out fans, and see a good game.

Mr. Oliver Cornwell and family and Miss Mae Molair of Alexandria, motored out and spent the week-end with Mr. and Mrs. Roy Molair.

Mr. E. W. Cornwell, of Washington, spent the week-end at his home here.

Source: The Manassas Journal, June 15, 1923.



Above: The 49th Va. Infantry preparing to swear in new soldiers

Below: Members of John White's family with "his" tree



Photo by Dorothy Furrow courtesy of Lucy Hartman



Where WILD things live..



Lonicera sempervirens
Coral or Trumpet Honeysuckle
See page 2

Below: Lucy Hartman (front right) celebrates her 84th birthday with her mother, Verona, sisters Dorothy Furrow and Ruth Dotson and brother "Judge" Roy Bean



Above: Prince William Academy Diploma is displayed at the place where it was issued in 1904. Diploma courtesy of Nelson Bradshaw.



Above: The Brentsville baseball team made up entirely of the Keys family.

Below: Mrs. Nohe coordinates a visit of home schooled children to the Brentsville Historic Site



Howard Elgin Counts II Remembers Brentsville

My name is Howard Elgin Counts II. I am the oldest child of Howard Elgin Counts, Sr. and Dolores Lillian (Michel) Counts.

Dad was born on Lucasville Road in Prince William County on August 11, 1925. He was a victim of the depression in that he didn't go too far in school. Instead, he worked helping out on his father's farm. He joined the Coast Guard during WWII and was stationed along the East coast. He met mom in New Orleans where I think they were married. After he was discharged, he came back to the farm where mom was waiting for him. He was a painter by trade, automobiles and house painting. Because of the nature of his work we moved around quite a bit including out of state a couple times.



Mom was born in New Orleans and was adopted at a very young age. I don't know a great deal about her biological parents – she got her name from her adopted family. Mom attended school in New Orleans until she married dad. While dad was in the Coast Guard she came to Prince William and lived on the farm with my grandmother (Minnie Ann (Keys) and grandfather (Troy Elgin Counts). It must have been a shock coming to the country from the big city but she adapted very well. For most of my young life and through high school mom stayed at home, took care of the house, then she decided she wanted to work outside the home and she got a job at one of the department stores in town. After I got married, Mom and Dad moved to Bunnell, Florida, where they lived until dad passed away in 1985. After dad died she stayed in Florida until about 1990 when she moved to Nashville

with my sister. Now she divides her time between the two locations spending the summer in Nashville and most of the winter in Florida.

I was born September 5, 1945, in the Warrenton Hospital. Mom and dad were living at the farm with grandma and granddad at the time. The war was just over when I was born. I had two brothers, Tod Cole (who died as an infant) and Jan Michael. The youngest was my sister, Michel Yvette.

After I started school we moved back and forth between Nokesville and Manassas because dad worked in construction as a painter and followed the work. When I was around eight, dad was working for the government and he had to go to Dover, Delaware for about a year. We were with him there but I didn't care much for it – we didn't have friends and felt lost. After that we came back and continued moving between Nokesville and Manassas. Finally when I was in the 7th grade, dad bought the property from the Kent's (where I live now).

During my school years I had several very close friends – David Parks on Lucasville Road, Howard Johnson on Hensley Road, James Bettis at Lake Jackson and James Payne on Hensley Road were my closest friends all through school. One time Jimmy Payne and I had gone to see a couple of western movies where they circle the wagons to fight off the Indians. We were wondering what those incoming arrows sounded like so we got a wild idea (we were only about 9 years old). We each got behind a log to shoot over each other's head to experience the sound. (It sounded pretty real with the arrows flying past!) Well, Jimmy stuck his head up just about the time

I shot and we realized that was not a good thing for us to be doing so we didn't do that any more! During 1956, Howard Johnson and I were going to the movies to see Love Me Tender (the first Elvis movie). I guess there probably has not been anyone who has come close to Elvis since but at the time all the girls were making a ruckus. We got in line in front of the Stonewall Jackson Hotel just to get a ticket for the first show. After standing in line all that time, the guy in front of us got the last ticket so we didn't get to see the movie—not at that time anyhow.

I never did exceptionally well in school. At best I was an average student. When I was in elementary school I was focused on fighting Indians so I didn't apply myself well. I always did well in math and sometimes in science but I never had any interest in English or spelling so I didn't get good marks but I managed to get by somehow. By the 8th grade, and not having a dislike for school but with other interests, I decided to apply myself to finish school. So I did. When I got into 8th grade the guidance counselor came to class (I was making good grades by then) and got me out. She said that my teacher recommended that I be put into another group where I would do better. I went to the other group, worked as hard as I could, but my grades dropped back to "Cs" and "Ds." All in all I finished school right in the middle of the road, average.

I always enjoyed sports and was better suited for baseball but for some reason I preferred football. I played on the Manassas school football team – running back and defensive end – and enjoyed myself. When I was in high school Cleo Fitzwater was the fastest sprinter in the state. I never went out for track but Cleo and I played on the same football team. During practice sprints I could match him step-for-step but he was about two inches taller than I so he had a quarter-inch longer stride. At the end of 100 yards, he would beat me by a yard and a half but I felt pretty good about that!

I really enjoyed woodworking shop. I took it as one of my elective classes every year simply because I enjoyed it so much. In study hall the teacher would allow us to be dismissed if we had our work caught up so I would go to the shop and get two shop classes but I could only get credit for one.

After school I liked to ride the bicycle a lot. The neighborhood kids would play football and baseball and stuff like that. I went squirrel hunting every chance we got. Dad got me a .410 shotgun for Christmas when I was around 12 years old (I still have it) and when I was 14 I was allowed to go hunting by myself.

When they started building Dulles AP, Uncle Tom Corner (Catherine's husband) had contracts to tear down three houses that were on the Dulles property. So from the time I was around 13 until I went to work for Mr. Coles, I worked helping Uncle Tom tear the houses down, haul the material to McLean, pulled the nails, cleaned the lumber and stacked it. Uncle Tom used that material to build his house in McLean. That is where I spent most of my after school and summer time.

I am sure that there are other experiences, but the first memory of Brentsville that comes to mind is one fall there was going to be a dance at the one-room school – it must have been 1956-57, around Thanksgiving. I remember going to it, danced for the very first time, had a great time listening to the rock and roll music and thinking this was great! I can recall dad used to fish a lot. There probably wasn't anybody in Brentsville who enjoyed fishing more. In the springtime, dad, Gilbert, Roy Bean, Stuart Bradford, and I would go out on Saturday or Sunday mornings. We would be somewhere along the run fishing until we would get hungry. So I would be sent to the store to buy hotdogs, buns, mustard, etc. and by the time I got back they would have a fire going and we would eat lunch together. That was very enjoyable!

--Continued next month--

Brentsville

A Look Back in History
by
Ronald Ray Turner

William Bevier

William D. Bevier's trial in Brentsville had a packed house, mostly with people wanting to see him receive the maximum sentence. Known as a quiet man, Bevier operated a tailor shop above Stryker's Whiskey Shop in the Town of Haymarket. He was involved in ongoing feuds with a couple of his neighbors but most of the bad feeling was confined to Garrett Hulfish and himself.

The Negro Patrols, for reasons not stated, would always go by Bevier's house and shop. On this particular Sunday, September 20, 1857, a large number of Negroes were meeting outside the building that was partially occupied by Bevier. James Mount and Garrett Hulfish, two members of the patrol appointed by the court, went to investigate and disperse them. They found one Negro without a pass who said Mr. Smith had his pass. They handcuffed him, intending to carry him to Grayson who was the nearest magistrate. When they arrived at Grayson's house, he was not at home so they released the prisoner.

Mount and Hulfish then decided they would return to Bevier's to see if the Negroes were still there. This time, however, William Bevier was outside and, seeing them approach, went into his shop and returned with a pistol. He told them he was going to protect his property and the Negroes. Hulfish would later testify in court that Bevier began to threaten them and "used many oaths and my name was mixed up with them." He also said "he would protect his property in spite of Hell and would have me yet before the Devil got him."

Later that Sunday evening, with his wife having gone to a church meeting, Bevier began to drink. He met up with Reuben Lee, a man who would not seem to be on the bright side in later testimony.

Reuben was talked into trading coats with Bevier because apparently Bevier's was easy to recognize. Bevier, according to Lee, had repeatedly during the day threatened to burn Haymarket. Along about dark, Lee went home, not wanting to be a party to what Bevier had been threatening. Later that night, Bevier started to make good on his threat. He didn't set fire to the entire town as was boasted; however, the entire town of Haymarket looked as if it were on fire. Hulfish's hay and wheat stacks were the only things destroyed that night.

When the case came to trial, Eppa Hunton was the prosecuting attorney. The jury was made up of the following: Gideon Warne, A. N. Doane, C. C. Claggett, Walter Keys, Robert G. Maddox, John W. Davis, John H. Austin, Matthew Davis, Edwin W. Latimer, John Read, William Goodwin and Francis Robertson. After a two day trial in which Reuben Lee, G. W. Smith, Garrett Hulfish, James Popkins, James Mount, Thomas Shirley and T. W. Turner had testified for the prosecution and there were no witnesses for the defense, the case concluded. Bevier was returned to the jail while the jury was deliberating. On Tuesday, October 13, 1857, the jury, having finished, had agreed to the guilt. Thomas K. Davis, the sheriff of Prince William County brought Bevier back into court. The jury foreman read the following statement - "We the jury find the prisoner William Bevier guilty of feloniously and maliciously burning stacks of hay and wheat belonging to Garret Hulfish of the value of \$125 and sentence him to three years in Penitentiary of this state. And it is ordered that the Sheriff of this County convey William D. Bevier from the Jail of this court to the Public Jail and Penitentiary house therein to be kept imprisoned, and treated in the manner directed by law."

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IN GOD WE TRUST

**Brentsville Neighbors
c/o Morgan Breeden
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