

# Brentsville Neighbors



Information About Brentsville  
Shared Among Neighbors  
October 2009



Welcome Neighbors,

Year five begins with renewed dedication and expectations. In this issue you will find the first of what we hope will be many parts to the story being written about Verona Counts Bean Craig by her daughter, Dorothy Lee Furrow. We look forward to bringing you this reflection on a memorable life.

The 2009 Brentsville School Reunion was quite a success! Seventeen students were present to chat and reflect on "the way it was." See their picture on page 4. Charles Wright traveled the greatest distance to attend, driving out from Dover, DE to be with his friends and classmates. We believe everyone had a very pleasant time and certainly we look forward to doing it all over again next year.

So many thanks to Sissy Melvin Turner for your wonderful support. And a huge "Thank You!" to Joyce Smith for the donation of a Bible that was presented to the Union Church "... by their friends in Newport, Kentucky." Joyce is very pleased to know the Bible would once again take its place in the Union Church for everyone to see and admire.

Mrs. Martino was also a recent visitor to the log home in which she lived as a child. She well remembers her mother having blue curtains at the windows and a table cloth to

match. She hand crafted both and helped with the installation in the log home which gave it a very warm appearance. Thank you for taking the time to make such a lovely addition.

Pictured on page 3 is one of several raccoons that have been trapped at the Haislip-Hall garden. They have all been relocated to another area and released unharmed. Becky Noonan reports they have a mother and five young who visit her front porch almost nightly to help themselves to the cat food they know is there. She has been able to stand quietly and watch them from a distance of only about three feet. Although they are cute, they are still wild and must be respected as such.

Very best wishes,  
Nelson & Morgan



Oktoberfest

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## Where W I L D Things Live

The raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), sometimes spelled as racoon, and also known colloquially as coon, is a medium-sized mammal native to North America. Their original habitats are deciduous and mixed forests, but due to their adaptability they have extended their range to mountainous areas, coastal marshes, and even urban areas, where some homeowners consider them pests.

The dense underfur, which insulates against cold weather, accounts for almost 90% of its grayish coat. Two of the most distinctive features of the raccoon are its extremely sensitive front paws and facial mask, which are also themes in the mythology of several Native American tribe. Raccoons are omnivorous and usually nocturnal; their diet consists of about 40% invertebrates, 33% plant foods and 27% vertebrates.

Home range sizes vary anywhere from 7.4 acres for females in cities to 19.1 sq mi for males in prairies. After a gestation period of about 65 days, two to five young are born in spring. The kits are subsequently raised by their mother until dispersion in late fall. Although captive raccoons have been known to live over 20 years, their average life expectancy in the wild is only 1.8 to 3.1 years. Hunting and traffic accidents are the two most common causes of death in many areas.

The word raccoon is derived from the Algonquin word *ahrah-koon-em*—other transcriptions exist—which was the pronunciation used by Chief Powhatan and his daughter Pocahontas, meaning “[the] one who rubs, scrubs and scratches with its hands.” The colloquial abbreviation coon is used in words like coonskin for fur clothing and in phrases like old coon as a self-designation of trappers. However, the clipped form is also in use as an ethnic slur.

Head to hindquarters, raccoons measure between 16–28 in, not including the bushy tail which can measure between 7.6–15.9 in, but is usually not much longer than 9.8 in. The shoulder height is between 9–12 in. The body weight of an adult raccoon varies considerably with habitat; it can range from 4–30 lb, but is usually between 7.9–19.8 lb. The smallest specimens are found in Southern Florida, while those near the northern limits of the raccoon’s range tend to be the largest. Males are usually 15 to 20% heavier than females. At the beginning of winter, a raccoon can weigh twice as much as in spring due to its fat storage. It is one of the most variably sized of all mammals. The heaviest recorded wild raccoon weighed 62.6 lb.

The most characteristic physical feature of the raccoon is the area of black fur around the eyes which contrasts sharply with the surrounding white face coloring. This is reminiscent of a “bandit’s mask” and has thus enhanced the animal’s reputation for mischief. The slightly rounded ears are also bordered by white fur. It is assumed that raccoons recognize the facial expression and posture of other members of their species more quickly due to the conspicuous facial coloration and the alternating light and dark rings on the tail. The dark mask may also reduce glare and thus enhance night vision. On other parts of the body, the long and stiff guard hairs, which

## flashback

### MISS COUNTS A BRIDE

#### Early Morning Wedding Solemnized Here Wednesday.

The Methodist parsonage was the scene of a quiet wedding on Wednesday morning at eight o’clock, when Miss Verona Counts, daughter of Mr. John Counts, became the bride of Mr. J. Clyde Bean, son of Mr. and Mrs. J. T. Bean, both of the young people being from the Brentsville neighborhood. The ceremony was witnessed only by immediate members of the two families.

The bride, who is a popular member of the younger set at Brentsville, was becomingly attired in a blue suit with accessories to match.

Immediately after the wedding, the young couple left on train No. 9 for a trip to Roanoke and Russell county, where they will visit relatives and friends for two weeks. Upon their return they will make their home with the parents of the groom.

Courtesy of Dorothy Furrow

shed moisture, are usually colored in shades of gray and, to a lesser extent, brown. The dense underfur, which accounts for almost 90% of the coat, insulates against cold weather and is composed of 0.8–1.2 in long hairs.

The raccoon can stand on its hind legs to examine objects with its front paws. As raccoons have short legs compared to their compact torso, they are usually not able either to run quickly or jump great distances. Their top speed over short distances is 10–15 mph. Raccoons can swim with an average speed of about 3 mph and can stay in the water for several hours. For climbing down a tree headfirst, an unusual ability for a mammal of its size, a raccoon rotates its hind feet so that they are pointing backwards. Raccoons have a dual cooling system to regulate their temperature; that is they are able to both sweat and pant for heat dissipation. Seven of the 13 identified vocal calls are used in communication between the mother and her kits, one of these being the birdlike twittering of newborns.

Only a few studies have been undertaken to determine the mental abilities of raccoons, most of them based on the animal’s sense of touch. In a study in 1908, raccoons were able to open 11 of 13 complex locks in less than 10 tries and had no problems repeating the action when the locks were rearranged or turned upside down. Studies in 1963, 1973, 1975 and 1992 concentrated on raccoon memory and have shown that they can remember the solution to tasks for up to three years.

Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raccoon>



Mrs. Martino (age 91) adjusts the curtains she made for the Haislip-Hall log home where she lived as a young girl. The curtains are very similar to the ones her mother used in this home.



Clyde and Verona Bean on their wedding day, March 21, 1923



Back: (L-R) Red & Lucy Hartman, James & Charles Bean.  
Front: Dorothy & Robert on Clyde's lap;  
Verona holding Ruth and Roy Bean

## Where WILD things live..



*Procyon lotor*  
Raccoon

Three lower photographs courtesy of Dorothy Furrow



Talithia Magdolia Gordon Bean holding her grandson, Robert Horace Bean





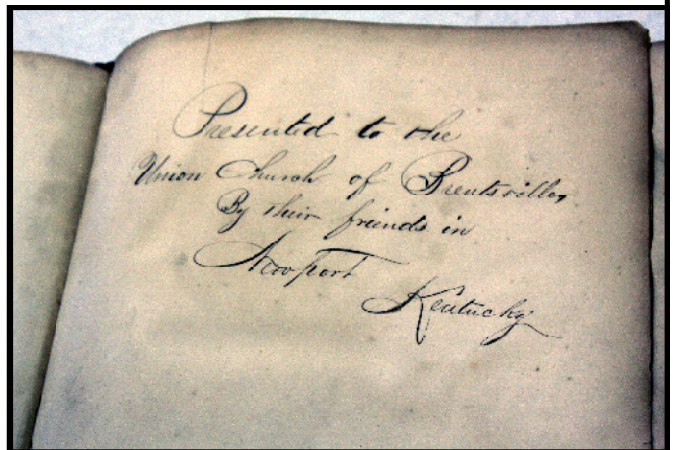
### **Brentsville School 2009 Class Reunion.**

**Back row (L-R)** Frederick Whetzel, Casper Whetzel, Leonard Wright, Raymond Fogle, Edith Turner, David Landis, Nancy Shely, Fred Wolfe, Mildred McIntosh, George Melvin, Frances Duckett, Charles Wright, and Gladys Eanes

**Front row:** Catherine Corner, Nelson Keys, Fay Samsky and Joyce Smith



Rob Orrison looks at the Bible that Joyce Smith donated to the Union Church while Joyce's daughter, Julie looks on.



Inscription inside the Bible donated by Joyce Smith. The Bible was printed in 1874 and will be on display in the Union Church.



# I INHERITED MY MOTHER

By  
**Dorothy Lee (Bean) Furrow**



## The Earlier Times Part 1

My mother, Verona, was born October 27, 1905.

I was born about two o'clock on the morning of Thanksgiving, November 20, 1941 at my grandmother's near Brentsville, Virginia. My father, Jessie Clyde, better known in the neighborhood as Clyde or J.C., belonged to a hunt club in Bath County and was there hunting for the week. He got his first deer the day I was born. I was the sixth child, the oldest being eighteen years older than me, my only sister at that time, Lucy. She became Sis to me and I was forever called Eleanor by her. She wanted my mother, Verona, and Pop to name me Eleanor but instead I was named Dorothy Lee. There were four brothers: Charles Ashby, James Arthur, Roy Freeman and Robert Horace. After me there was one more girl, Ruth Ann. Sis, Ruthie and I always called Robert by his middle name, Horace. Mother said after the second brother Sis always cried when a baby was born because she wanted a sister. She and all the others, including Ruthie spoiled me just a little, but I was a good spoiler.

I was about four years old when Mother and Pop divorced. Mother was given lifetime rights to the big yellow house which was on a farm adjacent to my grandmother's farm. Mother, Ruthie and I lived there alone. Sis was married and Charles and James were in the Navy. Roy and Horace lived with Grandma. There was one night, soon after the divorce I suppose, when there was a noise that scared Mother. She had a car so she carried either Ruthie or me out to the car and then went back in

the house to get the other one; we went to Grandma's for the night. She either never remembered which one she carried out first or was not about to tell when we got older. In any case it bothered Mother forever that she hadn't taken us both out at the same time. We never found out if there actually was anyone in the house. The doors were never locked and, even if they had been, anyone with a skeleton key could have gotten in.

Pop still continued to farm both our and Grandma's farms and Mother raised chickens, pigs, and cattle. All of the cows had names; Curly, Freckles, Boy and Beauty and there was one really big bull called John. There may have been others but those are the ones I remember. Over the years she also had goats, sheep and turkeys. I remember the mail carrier, Mr. Ritter, would bring Mother a crate of baby chickens in the spring that she had ordered from the hatchery in Harrisonburg, Virginia. He would blow the horn as he came up the drive with the biddies. Sometimes there would be a few that hadn't made the trip. Mother sold milk, cream, eggs and in the summer blackberries in order to buy the things which couldn't be raised on the farm. Picking those blackberries was no fun with all the stickers from the vines. Mother would make a blackberry cobbler and often that would be our dinner or supper as it was called then. We'd put cold cream over it and was it ever good!

Mother had a separator she used to separate the cream from the milk. It always amazed me that the cream would come from one spout and the milk

from the other. We never did like that skimmed milk. Mother would let the milk clabber and then she'd make cottage cheese. We didn't have a refrigerator; instead there was an old icebox that had to have a block of ice put in every so often. I know washing that separator up each time must have been a chore with no hot water heater.

Pop planted and harvested corn, wheat and oats which were sold and of course there was always hay to be made on both farms. Roy and Horace were usually there to help. Sometimes Charles and James were around and helped too. I was so proud when I was finally tall enough to reach the gas pedal on the truck so I could 'idle' it along while the hay was being pitched on the back. I thought I was big stuff! Eventually Pop got a hay baler which made it easier on everyone. Pop had the only threshing machine in the area and he would take it to the other farms so their wheat or oats could be threshed. When we had to thresh wheat at home I would get to hold the bags but was never strong enough to tie them up so I would call Horace whenever it was time to take one from the spout. There were two chutes coming down and I'd switch the lever to the other side when a bag got full. I know they could probably have worked much faster without my help, especially when I didn't yell soon enough and the bags would run over. The other farmers would gather at whatever place they were working to help. The families of the farms being worked would furnish a big dinner. I don't recall going to the other farms. I do remember the huge dinners Grandma would fix as everyone would always gather there to eat even when the work was being done there or at Mother's. We children who were not helping with the work would have to wait until the others finished before we could eat. There was always plenty left over. I recall someone would always ask "Is the flag up"? If the answer was "yes" then that meant there was dessert and we'd always save some room for whatever it was.

Every time we went to Grandma's I would always like to see what she had good to eat under the tablecloth that was spread over the dining room table. Grandma was an excellent cook. She had this big wood cook stove which sat just a little crooked in her kitchen. It had a 'warming closet' above the cooking area in which she would put

foods to keep warm until it was time to eat. To the back side of one end of the stove there was a hot water heater. There were pipes running along the back of the stove and there was a reservoir on the side of the stove that somehow heated the water that went into the tank. If there was no fire in the stove there was no hot water for long. I used to so enjoy squeezing into that corner to look out the window toward the chicken house and barn. Grandma did her cooking for the day in the mornings and it was usually dinner time when she was finished, especially if there were men to be fed. After dinner Pop would go out and lie on the grass under the tree at Grandma's and rest. It was always cool in Grandma's house even in the hot weather. She would keep the shades pulled on the side of the house where the sun was shining and the windows closed.

Our house was an old farm house on what is now Lucasville Road. The house was very drafty; when the wind blew the linoleum on the kitchen floor would rise. The kitchen, Mother always said, was at one time the only part of the house that was log. It was over the cellar and seemed to have more drafts. There was a windmill which we used to get water. I can remember when the running water was put in. There was a spring in back of the house down the hill. While the ditches were being dug and pipes laid in the ground we had to carry water from the spring to the house for everything from cooking to doing laundry. We had also used this spring to keep things cold. We had no hot water heater so water had to be heated on the wood stove. I recall the big old wash tubs we'd fill with just enough water for us to be able to lift onto the stove and then we'd finish filling them. It would take hours for it to heat so Mother would get the fire going early in the mornings even in the warm weather. We had a wringer washer and would roll it into the middle of the kitchen floor. Mother would then set up two chairs in back of the washing machine where she would have two tubs of cold water. Always the white clothes would go into the wash first, and then the light colored clothes followed by the darker and finally the dirtiest dark. There was a wringer on the washer that would swing around to the two tubs so we didn't have to hand squeeze the water from the clothes. We would go from one rinse water to the next with



# Brentsville

## A Look Back in History

by  
Ronald Ray Turner

### A Day at the Brentsville Court

Lightning rods have been widely used in Virginia, both on public and private buildings, since colonial times. Some were even installed with a touch of controversy as public buildings in the United States were outfitted with the design, selected by Ben Franklin, over the ones approved by England.

It is not known if the Brentsville Court House had any lightning protection when it was built. However, the county, finally having some extra money after the Civil War, decided it was time to have lightning rods installed. Commissioners were appointed to do a study, advertise for bids and select a contractor. The local firm of Ash, Finch, Wolverton and Company was selected. Both Ash and Finch were well known and had successfully accomplished work for the county in the past. In 1873, this was the only company in Prince William County that had a business license to install lightning rods.

This should have been a small job with little or no complications; however, no one gave the firm a list of dates to work or not to work on this project. Therefore, on a court day in May of 1873, as the court had just started to hear the first case, the noise commenced from the roof of the building. The Commonwealth's Attorney had just started his opening statement and was straining his voice to be heard by the jury, paused and looked at the judge for help. Judge Nicol, whose court had the reputation of being on the quiet side, was in charge. In fact D. W. Whiting, the past editor of the Brentsville newspaper, once said of Nicol that he would not allow any disruption that was not of

his own making. The always controversial Whiting would say in the next edition of the Manassas Gazette "the jury of course could hear nothing even if they had desired to do so, which is doubtful, and the court could hear less. This bedlam of voices and rattling of hammers went on, until patience ceased to be a virtue, when Judge Nicol called out to the Sheriff to stop that Noise."

The sheriff, after some time, was able to get the attention of Finch, who seemed to be the main source of the noise. According to the sheriff, he ordered Finch and the others to exit the roof until court ended. Finch, however, understood the sheriff wanted him and the others to come down for drinks at the tavern. They were at the tavern long enough to have a drink; the sheriff, however, said he would pay for only one drink. Finch, not being happy, ignored the sheriff and went back to work on the roof of the courthouse. Only this time the noise was intentional and much louder than previously. At this time the judge, who even on a good day was not a patient man, ordered the sheriff to produce every worker from the roof. This order presented an unusual dilemma for the sheriff. Finch was perched on the top of the steeple; the sheriff, wanting him down but unable to climb, made the decision to lie to Finch. He said that he had changed his mind and would buy the drinks at the tavern. Instead of returning to the tavern, the sheriff notified Finch he was wanted in court by Judge Nicol. The exact words from the judge and Finch were not published, but Finch was held in contempt of court and 10 dollars was deducted from the job as a fine.

# When WAR Came to Brentsville

HEADQUARTERS CAVALRY CORPS,  
October 12, 1863-11 p.m.

Brigadier-General BUFORD,  
Commanding First Cavalry Division:

GENERAL: You will cover the rear and flank of the trains of the army to-morrow on their march to Centreville by the way of Brentsville. Headquarters to-morrow night will be at Centreville. Send an officer to report your position to-morrow night.

Very respectfully.

A. PLEASANTON.

Major-General, Commanding.

The division remained in camp watching the river and resting until the trains were well under way, and then moved to camp near Warrenton Junction, the trains being near Catlett's and Weaverville.

On the 14th, the rear of the trains was delayed in getting under way and it was several hours before the division was in motion. At Brentsville the trains were found parked, and little disposition to move was displayed by the few quartermasters that I could find, until toward night, when General Warren's firing was seen. The division stood to horse, and during the whole night every effort was made to keep the wagons in motion. Shortly after General Warren's firing had ceased, my pickets were fired into, but no further molestation was offered. During the night General Gregg, with his division, came to my assistance, and remained until it was thought prudent for him to continue his march.

After daylight on the 15th, when the fog had risen and the rear wagon was safely across Broad Run, the division started and marched to the crossing of Cedar Run, followed by a small cavalry force, which was kept at a respectable distance.

After the last of the pontoon train was reported safely across Cedar Run I felt greatly

relieved, but judge of my surprise when I found that the whole of the wagons after a circuitous route, had recrossed to the enemy's side of Cedar Run. In this position the enemy's cavalry made a brisk advance and fortunately struck me, instead of the flank of the trains, which I believe to have been his design. The division immediately gave battle, and held him off until the report came that the last wagon was across Bull Run, and that General Gregg was there also. The day's work was well done and over, and our anxiety at an end.

When the enemy advanced upon me that last time, I supposed he would come with a heavier force than mine and come to have some of the wagons. Every man of the command had made up his mind that there should be no child's play on his part, so when he did appear, with a determined will we went at him and before long drove him back. The Seventeenth Pennsylvania struck him in flank, making him give away, which allowed us to get a strong position, which we held until after night, and until the last wagon was well on the way toward Fairfax Station. Not a single wagon that I could hear of was either destroyed or captured.

The division thus marched on across Bull Run until closed up to the trains, halted in the road, and, in an exhausted state, fell asleep by the roadside till morning, when it moved on and encamped at Brimstone Hill.

I am proud to testify to the good behavior of the division, both officers and men. Throughout the entire movement, they displayed great zeal and bravery, and were ever cheerful amid the hardships endured. The delicate and difficult task of protecting the trains was accomplished with credit, but in doing it, many brave spirits were taken to another world. Our loss was considerable (a recapitulation of which is appended), and if it is any satisfaction to know that the enemy's was greater, we certainly have nothing to complain of.

(Continued on page 9)



(Continued from page 6)

each load. By the time we were finished the last rinse water would be rather dingy. My sister-in law, Betty, put too much bluing in the rinse water one time and all the white clothes turned blue instead of just being brightened as the bluing was supposed to make them. It took many washings to get those whites bright again. We had to hang the clothes on the line to dry. At one time Mother took in washing for a family who lived at Independent Hill and he had about twelve children. There would be times in the winter when the clothes would freeze before we could even get them hung up. Once Mother found a twenty dollar bill in one of the pockets and tried to give it back but Eddie refused to take it. Mother called that her tip. She got paid whatever Eddie would give her depending on the number of pieces there were.

The outhouse was no fun in the winter time and ever so smelly in the warm weather. My brother James was rather crafty when it was time for a new one. A new hole was dug and about every other time a new johnny house was needed and James would build it. He started making them with more than one hole and after he was married and had children he would make one seat lower than the other. Our toilet tissue was most often for the longest time an old Sears and Roebuck catalog, black and white pages being the best. I hated going out there after dark. Mother had a slop jar that we used at night and emptied every day but it was much better than going out in the cold. There was one time after James was married when he was sitting out in the johnny house at night and there was a terrible scream, apparently from a bobcat somewhere down in the woods. He said chills went down his spine and he didn't know whether to stay or pull up his drawers and high tail to the house.

Part 2 continues in November

Aging: Eventually you will reach a point when you stop lying about your age and start bragging about it.

## Reader Feedback

Nelson and Morgan,  
Please know that I appreciate and truly enjoy the information you share about Brentsville and its current and previous residents. I am recently retired after 44 years as a teacher and college administrator and have many fond memories of my childhood days in Brentsville. I am looking forward to the 50<sup>th</sup> class reunion for the BDHS class of 1960 and plan to take time and visit Brentsville on my way to Nokesville. Thanks again and please save the postage by sending my newsletter electronically.

Best Wishes,  
**Terry King**

Congratulations on four years of publishing the newsletter. What a treasure! I sure appreciate receiving it. Thanks too for sending the link to the ghost hunters episode. I enjoyed seeing the jail and court house (and you) a little bit. It was lots of fun!

**Cindy McCachern**

(Continued from page 8)

Between so many officers who behaved well, I cannot make any marked distinction. Williston's and Heaton's battery were in several trying places, and nobly did they stand the test.

At Morton's Ford the division destroyed a large number of entrenching tools, and in the engagement at Germanna, Morton's, Brandy, and Oak Hill, captured 3 commissioned officers and 60 prisoners of war.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JNO. BUFORD,  
Brigadier-General of Volunteers, Commanding.

Lieutenant Colonel C. ROSS SMITH,  
Chief of Staff.

# *Brentsville Neighbors*

Information About Brentsville  
Shared Among Neighbors

Contact us on:  
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IN GOD WE TRUST

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