

Brentsville Neighbors

“Preserving Brentsville’s History”

March 2016

Welcome neighbors,

With our yard full of robins, red-winged blackbirds at the feeder, geese pairing off and bluebirds turning such a beautiful color can spring be far away? Still a tad bit early, I know, but it will not be long now before the wild flowers start popping along the trail behind the courthouse.

Fritz Korzendorfer is now installing the windows (see picture) and bars in the jail. He is building frames to hold the bars in place and then will install the glass (or plastic) behind them to protect the rooms from the weather. Also during March we anticipate he will start on the floors and stairs. A price quote is expected from the contractor doing all the plaster work, which will make things move along a lot faster. Keeping our fingers crossed to have the windows, staircase, and exterior doors (and possibly the downstairs floors) completed by April, with a goal of completing all the flooring and Electrical/Mechanical by the end of August with September being used to clean up the building. Other work is in the queue which we will report on in more detail next month.

March is a quiet month at the site but we are looking forward to the Civil War Encampment with the 49th Virginia/ 3rd ANV Regiment on April 9 & 10. Not too soon to start planning.

Very best wishes,
Kay and Morgan



Fritz installing the iron bars
in the first window.

This month:

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In all fairness we should post at the top of this week's column the grim warning: For Ladies Only, Gentlemen Not Invited. The reason being that last Wednesday we declared a one-woman holiday and

went to Washington to cast an eagle eye on the latest spring styles. On the bus, somewhere around Centerville, I got to thinking about an old letter, one of many found here while remodeling the house. It was in the attic, down between the solid brick partition wall and the hand-split laths, dated June, 1793, and stated that "Your Aunt...is Desirous the girls would rite a few Sheets to acquaint her how the People and Fashions is in Dumfries." That of course was almost a hundred and fifty years ago, and though we no longer look to Dumfries for the latest mode in Easter bonnets, I daresay they were no more curious than some of those to be found on F Street today. I saw one female tottering along on a pair of platform-soled sandals with heels at least four inches tall and tastefully decorated 'fore and after with brass thumbtacks. On top of her head was an object resembling an underdone doughnut that had sprouted feathers; one of these shot straight up like a radio antennae to a height of about a foot. What lay in between these two interesting extremities I did not have time to observe, but remember thinking fascinated, "What a sensation she would cause in BRENTSVILLE!"

For the benefit of those who haven't been on a shopping spree recently, I must regretfully report that the styles are extreme, materials shoddy, and prices SCANDALOUS. There still seems to be a shortage of knitting wool. One department store had a pretty good assortment, but you had to take a ticket and wait your turn like at the meat counter, and the 5 & 10, which carries a good grade of wool had only the basic colors, no off-shades at all. Shoes are every color of the rainbow, and guess what? Grey suede is back, in oxfords and pumps both. It's been years since I've seen a grey suede shoe, and I must say they looked elegant. If our Virginia mud were only grey instead of red, I think I would have broken down and bought a pair.

I didn't look at children's clothing except through the shop windows, but gathered the general impression that it would be cheaper to buy a sewing machine and carve down pappy's old britches for the small fry, rather than attempt to buy new ones at this time. They would only go out and fall in the mud anyway.

Out here, our tastes are mostly simple and utilitarian, running to dungarees, galoshes, and the leather jacket for week-days. On Sundays, you wash your neck, put on a shirt, take off your earmuffs, and tell yourself hopefully that you look quite respectable. But still, I think it's cultural sometimes to go and see how the other half of the world dresses, so now, as I pull on my old moccasins, with a sigh of relief, I can say that I have done my duty in reporting how the "people and fashions is" in Washington.

Well, flu is still with us if Style isn't. Mrs. Bradshaw is nursing a sick infant, and Mrs. Jim Shoemaker an ailing husband. Mr. Bell and Mr. Hedrick have both been laid up again, we are sorry to hear, and Catharine Counts is recovering from flu.

James Bean has left for South Carolina for an extended visit.

Mr. and Mrs. Mont Bradshaw were out Sunday from Washington, and helped Nelson celebrate his birthday.

Mrs. Ben Shoemaker and Mrs. Jim Shoemaker spent Sunday in Warrenton, visiting relatives.

Abraham Conners is ice-bound in the port of Copenhagen, Denmark, according to a letter received recently by his family. There is also a new baby in the Conners family, making a fourth generation.

The Brentsville Home Demonstration Club conducted an all-day furniture clinic at the Courthouse on Monday, and a great deal of constructive work was accomplished.

The Young People's Group met on Friday night at the home of Gill Machen. Cocoa and cookies were served, and the meeting adjourned early in order to attend the movie at the court house. The title was Mickey Rooney in "Hoosier Schoolboy."

Best regards,

Agnes Webster

Source: The Manassas Messenger, March 21, 1947

Where WILD things live...

Thamnophis sauritus sauritus

Common Ribbon Snake

The Common Ribbon Snake is found throughout Virginia in all but the extreme western counties. The genus name "*Thamnophis*" is derived from the Greek words *thamnos* which means "bush" and *ophio* meaning "snake" while the species name "*sauritus*" is derived from the Greek word *sauros* meaning "lizard", referring to the long lizard-like tail. It is sometimes locally called



Little garter snake, saurite snake, slender garter snake, slim garter snake, spotted ribbon-snake, striped water snake, swift garter snake, swift streaked snake, water garter snake, yellow-headed garter snake. The average length is 18-26 inches with the Virginia record being 38.2 inches which may be the National record as well. The species may be rare in parts of its range, particularly on the periphery. Populations of these species have demonstrated a significant declining trend or one is suspected which, if continued, is likely to qualify this species for a higher tier in the foreseeable future. Long-term planning is necessary to stabilize or increase populations.

The adult has a dorsal pattern of three bright yellow stripes on a dark background. The lowermost stripes involve the third and fourth scale rows along both sides of the body. They have a plain yellow or greenish-yellow belly and the body is very slender with the tail comprising more than 1/4 of the total length. Young are about 7 inches at birth and grow to about 36 inches. Juveniles are patterned as adults but are brown with bright yellow or white stripes. The brown dorsal color darkens with age.

The female gives birth to as many as 20 live young in mid to late summer. In Virginia, known birth dates are 29 July and 6 September. Average litter size in Virginia is 6-12. Litter size throughout the range of this species is 3-26. Pregnant females have been documented basking on branches over streams.

The Common Ribbon Snake is a good swimmer and has racer-like

land speed. They are also good climbers and are often found in the small bushes along the waters edge. They are active and nervous and rely on quickness and the optical illusion created by their dorsal stripes to escape predators. If cornered, they will coil momentarily before fleeing. This snake will thrash about when caught, although it will not bite. It is not easy to catch because it swiftly escapes in the grass and brush habitat. Like most other snakes in its family, it will spray musk from glands at the base of the tail and sometimes feces as well. They consume frogs, salamanders, toads, small fish and leeches. All prey is normally swallowed alive.

The maximum known longevity of this species is 10 years and 7 months. Predators include raccoons, otters, mink, herons, king snakes, snapping turtles, bullfrogs, bass and pickerel. The black racer (*Coluber constrictor*) is also a noted predator of this species.

Source: http://www.virginiaherpetologicalsociety.com/reptiles/snakes/snakes_of_virginia.htm

TO EVERYTHING THERE IS A SEASON

By Deanie Eanes

In the Bible, Ecclesiastes 3:1-8, it states *“There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot, a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build, a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance, a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to embrace and a time to refrain, a time to search and a time to give up, a time to keep and a time to throw away, a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak, a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace.”*

I would imagine that everyone who reads this monthly newsletter can relate to every part of this scripture at one time or another in their own experiences in life and may even look forward to other areas of these Bible verses...it's about life. Like nature, we each have different seasons of life that bears good fruit and anger or hurts, and through these seasons we learn to survive. We learn how people react to different phases and seasons of their lives, and we learn that each person has a way of celebrating the joys of their life and mourning the sorrows they face.

Hopefully we are moving from the winter season of cold weather, and short days of sunlight, yet in this season we can see and experience beauty such as the pure white snow. This year we had a bit more than expected, but we survived and I thank



God we did not lose our power. We ate more than we normally eat and probably slept more than usual...for a while I felt like a bear in hibernation. We got a bit of cabin fever and easily got on each other's nerves, but we made it through. Now, we are seeing a little longer daylight, Spring is teasing us with warmer weather and the snow is melting and giving the ground the wetness it needs and the streams have moving water. We look forward to green grass even though we may soon complain about having to cut it so often...and we look forward to the beautiful flowers coming up before Easter.

Days to look forward to in March are: Sunday, March 13th Daylight Savings Time Begins (spring forward 1 hour); March 17th St. Patrick's Day for those who enjoy wearing Green and celebrating Irish traditions; March 25th is Good Friday celebrating the death of Jesus on the Cross for our sins; and Sunday, March 27th we celebrate Easter for His resurrection.



March seems to be a month of celebrations and joy, and I hope you all experience a season of joy.

A Brentsville Citizen of Note

Samuel Eagle Forman

Dr. Samuel Eagle Forman, son of Francis Eagle Forman by his second marriage with Eliza Jane Miller, was born April 29, 1858, in Brentsville, Virginia. Both his parents were natives of Maryland. His early education was at the Wilmington Conference Academy (1886). He graduated at Dickinson College in 1887 with the degree of A. B., and three years later (1890) took the



Dr. Samuel Eagle Forman (2nd from left) with other members of the Dickinson College 50th Class Reunion of the Class of 1887.

degree of A. M. Later (1897), he took the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the Johns Hopkins University, his subjects being History, Political Economy and Jurisprudence. He served as a teacher and principal of high school in Shelton, Connecticut (1889-92); principal, high school, Bristol, Connecticut (1892-93); director of teachers; institutes for Maryland (1898-1900); and was a member of Phi Kappa Psi. He married Carrie Meredith of Galena, Maryland, on April 21, 1898. He was the author of many books and articles including "First Lessons in Civics," "The Life and Writings of Thomas Jefferson," "The Life of Philip Freneau," and others.

In his book "Stories of Useful Inventions," published in 1911, his forward was (in part) as follows:

"In this little book I have given the

history of those inventions which are most useful to man in his daily life. I have told the story of the Match, the Stove, the Lamp, the Forge, the Steam-Engine, the Plow, the Reaper, the Mill, the Loom, the Needle, the House, the Carriage, the Boat, the Clock, the Book, and the Message. From the history of these inventions we learn how man became the master

of the world of nature around him, how he brought fire and air and earth and water under his control and compelled them to do his will and his work. When we trace the growth of these inventions we at the same time trace the course of human progress. These stories, therefore, are stories of human progress; they are chapters in the history of civilization."

His writing style was creative while very easy to read and understand. This book addressed sixteen items, the first being "The Match." Here are the first three paragraphs of that item:

"Did you ever think how great and how many are the blessings of fire? Try to think of a world without fire. Suppose we should wake up some bitter cold morning and find that all the fires in the world were out, and that there was no way of rekindling them; that the art of kindling a fire had been lost. In such a plight we should all soon be shivering with

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
OF

For ACTION

PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY

MANASSAS, VIRGINIA 22110
PHONE 368-9171

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MOTION: DOGGETT
SECOND: MAULLER
RE: BRENTSVILLE COURTHOUSE COMPLEX-TO BE USED AS HISTORICAL-RECREATIONAL CENTER-PARKS & RECREATION TO ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY

RES. NO. 74-36-26
Regular Meeting
April 9, 1974

WHEREAS, there is a continuing effort to have the Brentsville Courthouse Complex serve the area citizens:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Prince William Board of County Supervisors does hereby approve the utilization of the Brentsville Courthouse Complex facilities as a historical-recreational center under the responsibility of the Prince William County Parks & Recreation Office; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that:

- a. The Courthouse Complex Committee will continue to serve as an advisory committee;
- b. Water and parking facilities will continue to be made available to the adjacent Presbyterian Church; and
- c. The center will not be open for public use prior to 1:00 p.m. on Sundays.

VOTE:

AYES: Colgan, Dawson, Doggett, Ferlazzo, Mauller.
NAYS: Winfield.
ABSENT: Turner.

For Information
Historical Commission
Brentsville Courthouse Comm.

... A CERTIFIED COPY ...

Carol Lee Carducci
Clerk to the Board

In Our Town ...

MARRIAGE LICENSE.

VIRGINIA, *James Woodard Woodyard* TO WIT:
 TO ANY PERSON LICENSED TO CELEBRATE MARRIAGES:

You are hereby authorized to join together in the Holy State of Matrimony, according to the rites and ceremonies of your Church, or religious denomination, and the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia,

Henry H. Spittle and
Susan M. Woodyard

Given under my hand, as Clerk of the *County* Court of
Prince William this *22* day of *December* 187*4*
L. A. Davis Clerk.

Certificate to Obtain a Marriage License.

To be annexed to the License, required by Act passed 10th March, 1861.

Time of Marriage, *22 day of December 1874*
 Place of Marriage, *Princeton Va*
 Full names of Parties Married, *Henry H. Spittle & Susan M. Woodyard*
 Age of Husband, *23 - 4 mos*
 Age of Wife, *19*
 Condition of Husband, (widowed or single,) *Single*
 Condition of Wife, (widowed or single,) *do*
 Place of Husband's birth, *Princeton Virginia*
 Place of Wife's birth, *do do do*
 Place of Husband's Residence, *do do do*
 Place of Wife's Residence, *do do do*
 Names of Husband's Parents, *Wm H. & Elizabeth Spittle*
 Names of Wife's Parents, *A. F. Birch and Woodyard*
 Occupation of Husband, *Farmer*

Given under my hand this *22* day of *December* 187*4*
L. A. Davis CLERK.

Ministers Return of Marriage.

I CERTIFY, that on the *24* day of *December* 187*4*, at the *Brides Feather*

under authority of the annexed License.

I united in marriage the above named and described parties,
L. W. Marsh

The Minister celebrating a Marriage is required, within TEN days thereafter, to return the License to the Office of the Clerk who issued the same, with an endorsement thereon of the FACT of such marriage, and of the TIME and PLACE of celebrating the same.

Marriage License issued to Henry H. Spittle and Susan Marion Woodyard which took place in the home of the bride (Arthur Franklin Woodyard, Sr.) on 24 December 1874.

When WAR Came to Brentsville

RICHMOND, VA., March 16, 1862.

General JOSEPH E. JOHNSTON:

GENERAL: Holmes reports that Hooker's division has crossed the Potomac and occupying Dumfries, Occoquan, Evansport, and the Chopawamsic, where crossed by the Telegraph road.

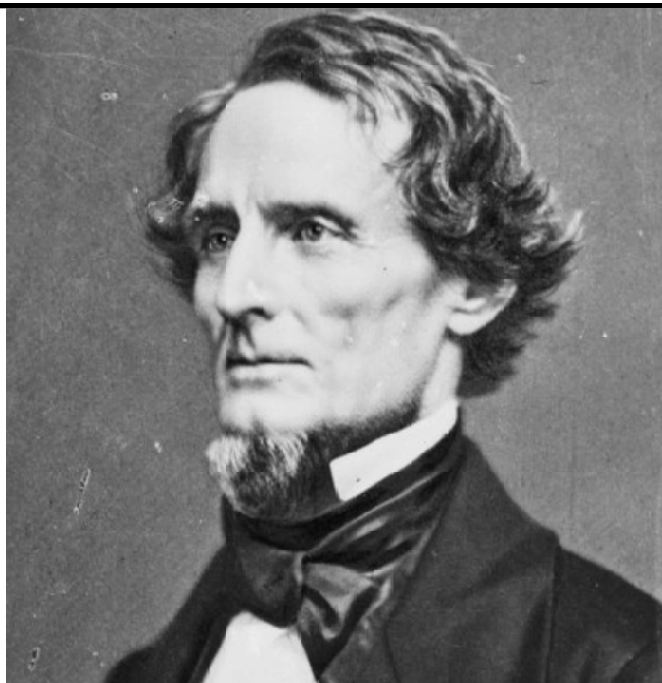
A column from Manassas occupies Brentsville, he thinks. Fredericksburg threatened; wants assistance from you before they reach Fredericksburg.

You alone can determine or direct the movements necessary.

JEFFERSON DAVIS..

Jefferson Finis Davis (June 3, 1808 – December 6, 1889) was an American politician who was a U.S. Representative and Senator from Mississippi, the 23rd U.S. Secretary of War, and the President of the Confederate States of America during the American Civil War. He took personal charge of the Confederate war plans but was unable to find a strategy to defeat the more populous and industrialized Union. His diplomatic efforts failed to gain recognition from any foreign country, and at home, the collapsing Confederate economy forced his government to print more and more paper money to cover the war's expenses, leading to runaway inflation and devaluation of the Confederate dollar.

Davis was born in Kentucky to a moderately prosperous farmer, and grew up on his older brother Joseph's large cotton plantations in Mississippi and Louisiana. Joseph Davis also secured his appointment to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. After graduating, Jefferson Davis served six years as a lieutenant in the U.S. Army. He fought in the Mexican–American War (1846–1848), as the colonel of a volunteer regiment. He served as



the U.S. Secretary of War from 1853 to 1857 under President Franklin Pierce, and as a Democratic U.S. senator from Mississippi. Before the war, he operated a large cotton plantation in Mississippi and owned more than 100 slaves. After the war had ended, he remained a proud apologist for the cause of slavery for which he and the Confederacy had fought.

(Continued on page 9)

Although Davis argued against secession in 1858, he believed that each state was sovereign and had an unquestionable right to secede from the Union.

Davis' first wife, Sarah Knox Taylor, died of malaria after three months of marriage, and he also struggled with recurring bouts of the disease. He was unhealthy for much of his life. At the age of 36 Davis married again, to 18-year-old Varina Howell, a native of Natchez who had been educated in Philadelphia and had some family ties in the North. They had six children. Only two survived him, and only one married and had children.

Many historians attribute the Confederacy's weaknesses to the poor leadership of President Davis. His preoccupation with detail, reluctance to delegate responsibility, lack of popular appeal, feuds with powerful state governors and generals, favoritism toward old friends, inability to get along with people who disagreed with him, neglect of civil matters in favor of military ones, and resistance to public opinion all worked against him. Historians agree he was a much less effective war leader than his Union counterpart Abraham Lincoln. After Davis was captured in 1865, he was accused of treason. He was never tried and was released after two years. While not disgraced, Davis had been displaced in ex-Confederate affection after the war by his leading general, Robert E. Lee. Davis wrote a memoir entitled *The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government*, which he completed in 1881. By the late 1880s, he began to encourage reconciliation, telling Southerners to be loyal to the Union. Ex-Confederates came to appreciate his role in the war, seeing him as a Southern patriot, and he became a hero of the Lost Cause in the post-Reconstruction South.

Source: Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

the cold, for our stoves and furnaces could give us no warmth; we should all soon be hungry, for we could not cook our food; we should all soon be idle, for engines could not draw trains, wheels of factories could not turn, and trade and commerce would come to a standstill; at night we would grope in darkness, for we could use neither lamp nor gas nor electric light. It is easy to see that without fire, whether for light or heat, the life of man would be most wretched.

“There never was a time when the world was without fire, but there was a time when men did not know how to kindle fire; and after they learned how to kindle one, it was a long, long time before they learned how to kindle one easily. In these days we can kindle a fire without any trouble, because we can easily get a match; but we must remember that the match is one of the most wonderful things in the world, and that it took men thousands of years to learn how to make one. Let us learn the history of this familiar little object, the match.

“Fire was first given to man by nature itself. When a forest is set on fire by cinders from a neighboring volcano, or when a tree is set ablaze by a thunderbolt, we may say that nature strikes a match. In the early history of the world, nature had to kindle all the fires, for man by his own effort was unable to produce a spark. The first method, then, of getting fire for use was to light sticks of wood at a flame kindled by nature—by a volcano, perhaps, or by a stroke of lightning. These firebrands were carried to the home and used in kindling the fires there. The fire secured in this way was carefully guarded and was kept burning as long as possible. But the flame, however faithfully watched, would sometimes be extinguished. A sudden gust of wind or a sudden shower would put it out. Then a new firebrand would have to be secured, and this often meant a long journey and a deal of trouble.”

Dr. Forman died in 1941.

Source: The Forman Genealogy and other internet sources.

Brentsville Neighbors

“Preserving Brentsville’s History”

Contact us on:

morganbreeden@aol.com

All back issues on:

<http://www.historicprincewilliam.org/brentsvilleneighbors.html>

IN GOD WE TRUST

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

