

Brentsville Neighbors

Information About Brentsville
Shared Among Neighbors

May 2007



Welcome Neighbor!

It is always sad when there are MEMORIES LOST and during April there were two—Mary Louise (Keys) Bell and Nettie Pearl (Conley) Stanley. Both of these wonderful ladies spent many years in Brentsville and undoubtedly had wonderful memories of their lives here. Could we only have put but a few on paper....

We are eternally grateful for those who have taken the time to preserve your memories for us. It has been said that one individual's memories is a story but the memories of many is the history. Someone once asked why we do this. The answer is simple. Our primary interest is "Brentsville" — people, places, buildings, things, pictures, activities, or whatever. We are on a quest to document a chronology of events that took place in or around Brentsville from current back to the beginning - whenever that might be. This includes newspaper articles, pictures, maps, bills of sale, property titles — you name it and we'll be looking for it. As of now we have about ten notebooks of pictures and some documentation. Hopefully this will grow to 100 books with the help of our many friends and neighbors. It is a community effort. Many of these

pictures are old family photos. Sometimes they show the location of buildings that no longer exist. If you have access to anything that is "Brentsville" and not proprietary, we would very much like to add that to the collection of knowledge. We do not intend to publish a book based on this knowledge. Instead, our intent is to preserve the history of Brentsville as seen through the eyes and minds of those who have lived, worked or simply passed through. Our final objective is to leave this collection of knowledge to a visitor center, perhaps in Brentsville, to help future generations understand the passion so many of us have for this unique little town. Your memories are a very important part of this effort!

So, DID YOU KNOW that May is Better Sleep Month, National Good Car Care Month, National Photo Month, National Salad Month, National Egg Month, National Barbecue Month, Revise Your Work Schedule Month, Date Your Mate Month, National Hamburger Month, and Fungal Infection Awareness Month. These things sound crazy but they really are on the books!

Very best wishes,
Nelson & Morgan

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Featured Brentsville Building

The home Cash Keys built

We must wonder if Solomon Spitzer and Richard Donovan could have imagined the number of homes that would eventually be built on the property they jointly purchased from J.P. Leachman on March 1, 1899 (DB4/50-51). As farmers, their interest must have been more directed toward the growing of crops than the growing of the town of Brentsville. Be that as it may, this is the story of yet one more home that was carved from that property.

Solomon B. Spitzer and his wife, Mattie M. Spitzer, sold an acre of property to Cassius T. Keys on July 28, 1928, for what must have (at the time) seemed like a large amount of money - \$80.00 (DB86/490). The property was located along the main road and was well suited for the construction of a home. So in the year or two following that sale, Cassius, or Cash as he was normally called, along with his wife Helen, built their home. Their daughter, Pat (Keys) Blake, remembers her mother selecting the bricks for their fireplace one by one to ensure it was "just right." (Pat will be telling her story of Brentsville soon we hope!). During the next few years Cash and Helen expanded their property. On April 18, 1930, Catherine and J.M. Keys sold Helen a small parcel that was described as being "51 feet by 19 poles" (DB88/214). This is the same property that Catherine had obtained from John F. Donovan (DB87/156). The following month on May 10, 1930, Ervin S. Spitzer sold another three acres and 10 poles to Helen (DB88/215). And finally, Ervin Spitzer sold another acre to Cash and

Helen on March 31, 1938 (DB100/354). This is where they lived with their two children until January 11, 1944, when Cash and Helen sold their property to Bessie R. Tubbs (DB113/132), a widow.

Bessie didn't keep the property long. Only until October 3, 1945, when she sold it to John Henry Carter and his wife, Rebecca Ann Carter (DB117/108) who lived there with their two sons, Oscar R. Carter and his family and Melvin Leonard (Sparky) Carter. On August 1, 1958, John and Rebecca created a Deed of Trust with The National Bank of Manassas (DB230/403) who would assume ownership after their death. John died December 29, 1960 and Rebecca followed on September 17, 1962. On April 24, 1964, The National Bank of Manassas then sold the property to Louise Baumbach (DB318/73), John and Rebecca's married daughter.

On January 15, 1965, Louise A. Baumbach sold the property to Ray F. Voelkel and his wife, Ruth M. Voelkel (DB346/386). The Voelkel's lived here for many years, finally selling their property to Michael A. Clark on November 11, 1986 (DB1429/377). The following day, November 12, 1986, Michael Clark also purchased the 15 acre lot behind the house to further expand the property (DB1429/377). He owned the property until November 16, 1998, when it was sold to Carl J. Newell and Judy C. Newell (DB2657/1-21). Today the property sits empty awaiting a new owner. It is located at 12330 Bristow Road in Brentsville.



The Home Cash Keys Built

The following pictures courtesy of Pat (Keys) Blake



Cash and Helen Elizabeth Keys building their new home in Brentsville



Home in Brentsville that Cash built during the 1920's



Patsy at the wood pile with her father, Cash. (Joe Keys home in background)



Wood pile beside Cash Keys home



“Remembering You”

Where WILD
things live..



Virginia Bluebells

Mertensia virginica

(See page 7)



Photo taken in 1927:

Front Row: Ella, parents George & Alverta holding Rosa Lee, Robert

Middle Row: Cora, Charles, Hazel

Back Row: Early, Ralph

(Photo courtesy of Robert Beahm)

Brentsville Memories

by

J. Robert Beahm

I am Robert Beahm, fourth son and seventh child of George W. and Annie Alverta (née Early) Beahm. I am a native and longtime resident of Nokesville, but Brentsville holds a special sentimental place in my heart. This article will reveal the reason for that declaration.

In early spring of 1897 I. N. H. Beahm, a minister and educator in the Church of the Brethren, purchased the Courthouse complex at auction for \$508.00. With support from friends he envisioned a secondary church-related school at this location which had served as the county seat into the early 1890s. Having previously served as a college president, I. N. H. was able to assemble a highly qualified faculty. Almost immediately classes were begun with small enrollment as a sort of "test run." Prospects for success were good. The school opened under the name of Prince William Normal and was later chartered as Prince William Academy.

The Court House building was structurally modified to serve as meeting room and classrooms. Changes were made to the jailhouse so that it might serve as a dormitory for women. The 1897-98 school term was declared a success with about sixty students enrolled.



My father (Papa) was a young man who had not completed his secondary schooling, and so his older brother, I. N. H., strongly encouraged him to come to Brentsville in 1897. Annie Alverta Early, daughter of M. G. Early of Nokesville, was also enrolled that same school year. And so it was providential that the young

man and the young lady became acquainted and entered into a courtship. After they completed their schooling Alverta and George were married on February 14, 1900 at her home in Nokesville.

The young couple chose to live in Brentsville and set up housekeeping in a house facing Bristow Road, the second house after Old Church Road once known as the Holsinger Place. To the best of my knowledge Papa worked in some capacity for the school that first year of marriage.

Their first child, Cora Evangeline, was born here February 19, 1901. Shortly thereafter the Beahms bid farewell to Brentsville and moved to the Nokesville area.

* * * fast forward to the early 1920s * * *

Even though Papa farmed for a living, he received additional education and was certified to teach public school in Prince William County. After teaching for a few years in other county schools, he was assigned to Brentsville

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as principal/teacher for the 1923-24 school term. He traveled the six miles from Nokesville to Brentsville on horseback or by buggy. By this time there were seven children in the family. I was three years old. (Sister Rosa Lee was born in 1927.)

In mid-winter of 1923-24 word was received that Mama's sister Mary, living in Pennsylvania, was very sick with pneumonia. Somehow Mama was assigned the chore of nursing Aunt Mary back to health. With Mama in Pennsylvania and my six siblings in public school or teaching, I, Robert, was required to go to school with Papa every day for a week or more. Of course, we always traveled by buggy and most mornings Johnny Mowry ran down his driveway to catch a ride with us. The Mowry farm was the one on Crocket Road now owned by Bobby Caton.

To me, school was boring, but I looked forward to eating lunch with Papa – my sisters made good lunches. During recess the older girls babied me, carried me around and fed me some of their lunches. I don't know their names, but I appreciated their solicitude. And by the way, I took my daily nap on a hard bench that was on the side of the classroom.

One evening as we started home, we stopped at Key's store where Papa gave me a dime to run in and buy a candy bar. Mr. Keys gave me the candy, also a larger coin (nickel) than the dime. When I got in the buggy Papa took the candy and the coin. I insisted that the nice man had given the coin to me as a gift. That elicited a lesson from Papa about money and coin values.

Finally, Mama returned home, Aunt Mary recovered, and I could boast that, like my parents, I had attended school in Brentsville.

~J. Robert Beahm

From the Brentsville Courthouse

Brentsville Trustees vs Hamilton 1825 – 1826

First Installment

We Charles Ewell Jr. and Robert Hamilton do hereby bind & oblige ourselves and our heirs, jointly and severally to pay unto John Gibson jun., John Macrae, John Hooe jun., Benjamin Johnson, James Foster, Charles Hunton and John Leachman. They being a majority of the trustees of the Town of Brentsville the sum of sixteen dollars eighty seven & 1/2 cents on the 7th day of January 1824, it being the first installment of the purchase money of certain lots in said Town sold by said Trustees under an act of the General Assembly of Virginia. Witness, our hands and seals this 7th day of January 1823

Attest J. Hutchinson
\$16.88.1/2

Charles Ewell Jr. (seal)
Robert Hamilton (seal)

Source: Prince William County, Virginia Clerks Loose Papers, Volumn I, 1741 - 1826, by Ron Turner.

As seen on the Internet by Bill Wade

A distraught senior citizen phoned her doctor's office. "Is it true," she wanted to know, "that the medication you prescribed has to be taken for the rest of my life?"

"Yes, I'm afraid so," the doctor told her.

There was a moment of silence before the senior lady replied, "I'm wondering, then, just how serious my condition is because this prescription is marked 'NO REFILLS'."

We were remiss in failing to thank Clyde Breeden and Buster Keyton for their special support. We would also like to thank Robert Beahm for his special contribution this month. And to each of you who have provided your memories and/or helped in any way, we are grateful beyond words.

Where WILD Things Live

Virginia Bluebells

Mertensia virginica

Borage family (Boraginaceae)

Also known as: Virginia-cowslip, Roanoke-bells, lungwort, and oysterleaf.

Description: This native perennial plant is 1–2½' tall, branching occasionally. The central stem is round, hairless, and light green. The alternate leaves are up to 7" long and 3" across. They are light green or greyish green, hairless, with a soft floppy texture. The leaves are ovate-oval or ovate-oblong in shape, with smooth margins, and conspicuous pinnate venation. They usually taper to a winged petiole, although some of the upper leaves are sessile. Some of the upper stems terminate in nodding clusters of light blue flowers. These flowers are about ¾–1" long. The corolla of each flower is tubular, flaring outward toward the 5 shallow lobes like a trumpet. Within the corolla, are 5 white stamens with light brown anthers and a white style that is long and slender. The small greyish green calyx is divided into 5 blunt teeth. While in the bud stage, the flowers are a light purplish pink, but become light blue with maturity. The blooming period occurs from mid- to late spring, and lasts about 3 weeks. The ovary is divided into 4 lobes, which contain the nutlets. The root system consists of a taproot. This plant often forms colonies.

Range & Habitat: This member of the Boraginaceae Family can be found in the northern two-thirds of the U.S. Bull Run Regional Park has the largest stand of native Virginia bluebells on the East Coast. The genus is named for the German botanist Franz Karl Mertens (1764-1831). It is one of our first native wildflowers to bloom, usually from the last of March into early April. Bluebells are ephemeral perennials. This means that shortly after blooming, the foliage begins to die and, by June, they are completely dormant. Habitats include wet to mesic woodlands, especially in semi-shaded floodplain areas along rivers, bluffs, and flower gardens.

Faunal Associations: The flowers are pollinated by long-tongued bees primarily, including honeybees, bumblebees, Anthophorid bees, Mason bees, large Leaf-Cutting bees, and Miner bees; these insects seek nectar and collect pollen. Other visitors of the flowers include hummingbirds, bee flies, butterflies, skippers, and Sphinx moths, including hummingbird moths. This group of visitors seek nectar from the flowers. Small flower flies

may also visit the flowers, however they feed on the pollen and are not effective pollinators.

Comments: It is easy to see why Virginia Bluebells is a favorite woodland wildflower. The pastel colors of the flowers and foliage are soft and soothing. Some plants produce mature flowers that are white or pink. Although they are not a wildlife food source, they are a lovely addition to a native plant garden habitat and a welcome harbinger of warm weather and longer days when they bloom.

Source: <http://www.illinoiswildflowers.info/woodland/plants/bluebells.htm>
<http://www.mounet.com/~jdye/bluebell.html>
<http://www.wrenaissance.com/plants/bluebells.htm>
<http://www.wtopnews.com/?nid=449&sid=608534>

Flashback

Deaths

CARTER, REBECCA ANN

On Monday, September 17, 1962, at Fairfax Hospital, REBECCA ANN CARTER of Brentsville, Va., wife of the late John Henry Carter, and mother of Mrs. Belle R. Robertson of Arlington, Va., Mrs. Louise Baumbach of Alexandria, Va., Mrs. Nellie M. Couch, Arlington, Va., James W. Carter, Vienna, Va., Earnest R. Carter of Arlington, Va., Lloyd E. Carter, Falls Church, Va., John W. Carter, Arlington, Va., Melvin L. Carter, Brentsville, Va., Henry L. Carter, Vienna, Va., and Oscar R. Carter of Brentsville, Va. She also is survived by 21 grandchildren, 41 great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandchild. Friends may call at the Baker Funeral Home, 314 N. West St., Manassas, Va., where funeral services will be held on Thursday, September 20, at 1 p. m. Interment National Memorial Park, Falls Church, Va.

Source: The Washington Post, September 19, 1962, page B4

Brentsville Neighbors

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Shared Among Neighbors
Contact us via e-mail on:
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Please note: We have recently received word of newsletters being damaged in the mail. If you receive your copy damaged or with missing pages, PLEASE let us know and we will replace the copy right away.

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In GOD we Trust

