

Brentsville Neighbors



Information About Brentsville
Shared Among Neighbors
January 2010



Welcome Neighbors,

And a Happy New Year to each of you! In the off chance you have not finalized your resolutions for this year, we have a wonderful suggestion. Why not promise yourself to write just one short story about your memories of Brentsville. Even if you have already done one, you can still do another. Think about it – with over 184 people receiving our newsletter we would be able to include three stories each month for over five years. You know how much you enjoy reading the stories that have already been published. Think how much more enjoyable it would be to have this many more! Okay, so maybe that is a bit unrealistic but still, food for thought.

A subject we hesitate to broach but the question has been asked and deserves an answer.

Q: Are donations to Brentsville Neighbors tax deductible?

A: No. We are not a formal organization that qualifies.

We certainly hope the information we share provides a service through the preservation of local history but that is the extent of it. None of our expenses are shared by the county or any other organization. It is strictly “out of pocket” because we enjoy researching and compiling the contents of each newsletter. Over the past years we have received a number of very kind donations, such as the ones during December from Mrs. Betty Farmer, Mr. & Mrs. David & Nancy Shely and Mrs. Margaret Covington. These gifts are used exclusively for the purchase of stamps and we are very grateful for their help. Thank you!

We are also very grateful to Mr. Bill Wade and Mrs. Michele Hylton for the loan of their scrapbooks. From these we are able to copy many, many wonderful pictures and newspaper clippings that will greatly enhance our collection of Brentsville information. We hope to gain access to even more during the coming year and you will see some of the results in this newsletter from time to time.

Very best wishes,
Nelson & Morgan

This month:

- Where wild Things Live - pages 2 & 3
- Flashback ----- page 2
- Brentsville Memories ----- pages 4 & 5

Circulation: 186 - 61 Electronic

- A Brentsville Building ----- pages 3,7 & 9
- A Brentsville Citizen of Note -- page 6
- When War Came ----- page 8

FLASHBACK

Death of Joseph B. Reid

Joseph B. Reid, of Brentsville, Va., died at Providence Hospital on Friday evening; aged seventy-one years. Mr. Reid was a Confederate veteran, having served in Company H, Fifteenth Virginia Cavalry, throughout the civil war. He represented Prince William County in the legislature in 1887-'88, and had long been in the hotel business. After brief services at the residence of his son, Henry W. Reid, 2 Massachusetts Avenue, Northwest, this morning at 10 o'clock, the remains will be taken to Manassas for the funeral and interment.

Source: The Washington Post, January 22, 1905, pg. 5

BRENTSVILLE JOTTINGS

Samuel Fogle is reported ill of la grippe.

S. P. Fogle is on a business trip to Harrisonburg.

"Kip" Lovelace was called home last week by the illness of his aunt, Mrs. Wright.

Albert Rosebery has moved to the Dr. Corey farm near here, owned by O. T. Martin.

Mrs. Wallace Payne, of Orlean, Fauquier county, is here visiting her daughter, Mrs. F. E. Bell.

John Will Hedrick, who sold his farm here last fall to give possession March 1, is looking for property.

We are pleased to report that Mrs. Wright, who has been seriously ill, is much improved. Dr. Lewis, of Manassas, was in consultation with Dr. Wine on the case.

Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Wine, of Shenandoah county, enroute from a week's trip to Washington, spent several days here with Mr. Wine's brother, Dr. R. E. Wine.

W. Y. Ellicott, who underwent an operation for appendicitis by Dr. Hooe at Sibley hospital on December 18, has returned to his home. We are pleased to note his improved appearance.

Source: The Manassas Democrat, January 13, 1910

Where W I L D Things Live

Ranunculus hispidus Michaux *bristly buttercup*

This perennial wildflower is up to 1' tall; it has a tendency to sprawl with age. It is native to the United States and has its most active growth period in the spring. The stems are light green to pale reddish brown and more or less covered with long spreading hairs. Both basal and alternate leaves are produced; like the stems, their petioles are covered with long spreading hairs. Sometimes, the petioles are as long or longer than the compound blades of the leaves. The leaf blades are usually trifoliate (divided into 3 leaflets). The leaflets are up to 4" long and across and usually cleft into 3 lobes. The upper surface of each leaflet is more or less medium green with scattered appressed hairs, while the lower surface has spreading hairs along the major veins. The upper leaves are smaller in size than the basal leaves and their leaflets often lack lobes. Occasionally, solitary flowers are produced on long hairy stalks. These flowers are about $\frac{3}{4}$ -1" across, consisting of shiny yellow petals with a surface as though they had been waxed, 5 light green sepals, a dense cluster of pale yellowish green pistils, and a ring of numerous stamens with yellow anthers. Toward the center of each flower, the petals become semi-translucent and each petal has several fine lines that function as nectar guides. The sepals are hairy and lanceolate in shape; they are shorter than the petals. The blooming period occurs from mid- to late spring and lasts about a month. The root system is fibrous. This wildflower reproduces by reseeding itself.

Source: <http://www.eol.org/pages/596568>



I. N. H. Beahm
See story on page 6

**Where WILD
things live..**



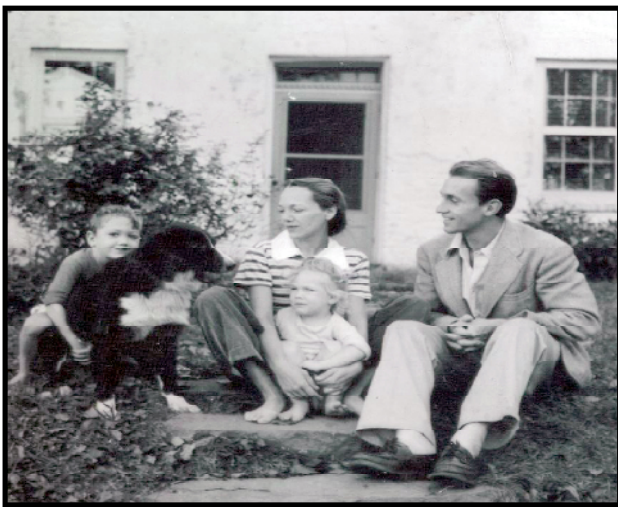
Ranunculus hispidus Michaux
bristly buttercup



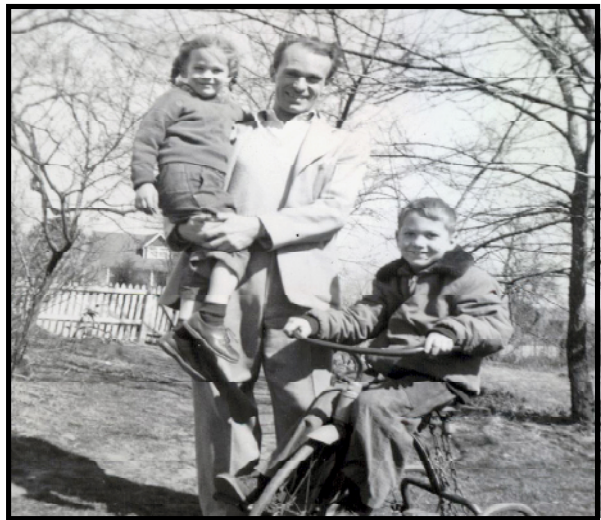
12410 Bristow Road



Julie visiting Nick in the nursing home



Nick and his family on the steps of the White House



Nick with Julie and DeLancey in Brentsville



A fun time at home in Brentsville



A proud father!

Photos this page courtesy of DeLancey and Juliet Webster

Remembering Nicholas Webster

1912 - 2006

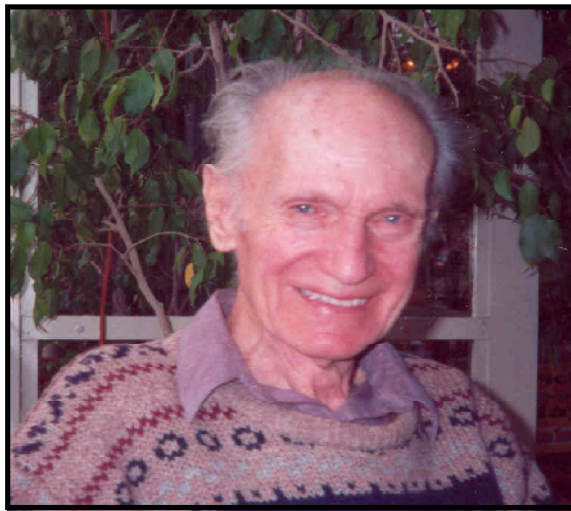
**Director ... Producer ... Writer ... Photographer ...
Cinematographer ... Author ... Husband ... Father**

On Saturday morning, August 12, 2006, at 6:28 a.m. Nicholas Webster, passed away in his sleep in a nursing home in Santa Monica, CA. Though worn down by congestive heart failure, the aftereffects of a stroke, and several bouts of pneumonia, his last days were quiet and peaceful and he was attended variously by his wife Diana, his three children — Julie, Lance, and Cynthia, and a number of caring friends. Julie was with him at the end.

For forty years his documentary film work had a powerful impact on the American psyche — “Walk in My Shoes” awakened network television viewers to the coming civil rights movement; “I Remember” recalled the horrors of Auschwitz; “The Long Childhood of Timmy” sensitized audiences to the plight of mentally retarded children; “The Violent World of Sam Huff” used the wireless mic to bring home the rough and tumble front line of professional football; “Meet Comrade Student” showed Americans why the Russians beat us into space; “The Big Revolving Door” explored why prisoners keep committing crimes and returning to jail.

His career took him around the world many times, in search of caves in Guatemala, acupuncturists in China, the Abominable Snowman in Tibet, and the Pope in the Vatican. He explored the workings of the human brain,

the feminist movement, American’s readiness in the missile age, and the vanishing oyster-men of the Chesapeake Bay. He explored challenges of the Vietnam era draft, big city traffic, and street crime. His early works won international acclaim as he explored problems



of soil conservation, wetlands, water usage, tuberculosis, seizures, and psychiatric illness and treatment. His dramatic work included more than a dozen prime time television programs ranging from Apple’s Way and Bonanza to The Waltons. His feature films included two cult classics: “Gone Are the Days” (aka “Purlie Victorious”) and the 40-year perennial kids

and sci-fi fan favorite “Santa Claus Conquers the Martians.” His docudramas were innovative, and with “Johnny Cash: Ridin’ the Rails — The Great American Train Story” he even invented a genre — the historical docu-musical.

Through a rich and productive 94-year life, he always carried a positive, ‘can do’ philosophy, a cheerful spirit, and a loving heart. Millions were moved and affected by his work. He left this world at peace in the knowledge that he left his family well cared-for and humanity well-served. All who knew him personally will miss him.

Lance Webster

Brentsville

A Citizen of Note

Isaac Newton Harvey Beahm

Isaac N. H. Beahm was born near Goods Mill, Rockingham Co., Va., May 14, 1859. His father was Eld. H. S. Beahm, and his mother Anne Showalter Beahm. He attended public school a few months yearly till he was fifteen. From that time until he was twenty-two he was not in school, but on the opening day of the Spring Term, 1884, he entered Bridgewater College, where he remained till June, 1887, graduating in the Normal English Course. During the next school year he was principal of the Bonsack (Va.) Graded Schools; but at the close of the session at Bonsack in March, 1888, he came to Bridgewater and took charge of the classes in Physiology, Mental Arithmetic, Elocution, Psychology, and Rhetoric in his Alma Mater, where he remained as a teacher till the latter part of May, 1890. At this time Prof. Beahm, on account of what he considered an unjust attitude of the President-elect, E. A. Miller, resigned his position; and in this act he was to his surprise followed by eight of his fellow teachers, without his intentional influence.

Prof. Beahm's Mental Arithmetic Class of '89, which included, among some forty others, G. B. Hershberger, C. P. Harshbarger, R. E. Arnold, L. D. and J. W. Ikenberry, W. J. Compher, Sallie and Ella Bean, Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Pursley, is still spoken of as one of the star classes of the College. During the seven sessions spent in whole or part at Bridgewater, he did his work on the ground of deep

convictions of right and repleteness of joy. Although he has been connected with several schools as both student and teacher, Bridgewater still has his heart as a loyal son. His daily recollections of his old and beneficent teachers, of his fellow instructors, and of the noble young men and women that formed his classes, together with the beauty of the natural surroundings, are esteemed a rich legacy in the archives of imperishable memory.

After leaving Bridgewater, Prof. Beahm taught four years at Daleville, Va. Then he spent two years in evangelistic work for he had become distinguished as a preacher no less than as a teacher. Three years more were busily spent in the Prince William Normal, which he founded at Brentsville, Va. In 1899 his acceptance of the presidency of Lordsburg (Cal.) College was followed by a serious breakdown of health, from which he has scarcely yet recovered; but he has been prevailed upon to undertake the direction of Elizabethtown (Pa.) College of which institution he is now President. His services as a preacher and educational lecturer are widely in demand.

On March 23, 1889, Prof. Beahm married Miss Mary Bucher, of Pennsylvania, who has proved a devoted wife. Four children gladden their home.

Source: Bridgewater College: Its Past and Present--A Tribute of the Alumni, 1905.

A Brentsville Building The Bessie Minor Home

12410 Bristow Road

The property featured this month is fondly called "The Bessie Minor Home" although she was neither the first owner nor the last. She was, however, one of Brentsville's few black residents, a nurse, and a much respected woman. She believed in black education and in her Last Will and Testament left 20% of her real property value to the United Negro College Fund in Washington, D.C.

As of December 2009, this property is owned by Ralph William and Marion Lavern Blevins. The deed identifies it as 9.8 acres although the county tax base shows it as 8.9562 acres. Most likely the difference is the expanded right-of-way taken by the county to do improvements on the road leading to Cedar Run.

The house is described as a two story plus building with all aluminum/vinyl exterior. It was reportedly built in 1901 (needs verification) and has nine rooms, including four bedrooms and three full bathrooms. There are 2,690 square feet of finished living space. Improvements include a 100 SF deck, a garage, one enclosed and two open porches and two storage sheds.

This property, like all others located between Izaak Walton Drive (or the Donovan Road if you prefer) are carved from the Richard Donovan / Solomon B. Spitzer tract which was one of the largest (if not the largest) tracts in the Brentsville proper. When the partnership dissolved, Spitzer held the land on the Northern end and Donovan on the Southern end.

On November 2, 1901, Solomon Spitzer sold just over nine acres of his property along Cedar Run to Ms. Estelle V. Hedgman (not married) with the exception that there will be perpetual right of ingress and egress to Farrows Rock. It is believed that the Hedgman family built their home here and held ownership of the place until after Estelle's death in the 1940's. At the time of her death, Estelle was unmarried, intestate and without issue. One brother, Ashby Hedgman, died before her also unmarried, intestate and without issue. There were three remaining brothers, Willie James, Edward and Dennis but by the time the property was to be sold, Edward and Dennis along with their wives had all died without issue. This left Willie James Hedgman as the sole surviving heir of the property.

It was during the period between Estelle's death and the sale of the property that the house was occupied by Juan Garcia Diaz, locally known as "Puerto Rico." He was actually born in Ponce, Puerto Rico on January 26, 1888, and at some point unknown to us, he migrated to Brentsville where he lived until the sale of this property forced him to move to Manassas. There he lived the remainder of his life, passing on April 12, 1958 and is buried at the Old Sacred Heart Cemetery on Spriggs Road.* His life style was strange to the most of us, living in the same rooms with his goats and chickens. But who are we to judge? He was a highly educated man and very much respected by many who knew him better. He was a master of calligraphy and was called upon by

(Continued on page 9)

When WAR Came to Brentsville

“O U R S.”

Annals of 10th Regiment,

MASSACHUSETTS VOLUNTEERS,

IN THE

REBELLION.

TENTH MASSACHUSETTS INFANTRY 1863

TUESDAY, October 6.— A squad was detailed to go to Brentsville Court-house, after bricks for the General. Brentsville is the shire town of Prince William County, and is about three miles south of Bristow. That the detail did get bricks for the General, the appearance of the Courthouse and clerk's office, both large brick buildings, will testify. With the Court-house, they commenced at the top to get bricks, beginning with the chimneys and working down, while with the clerk's office, they commenced at the bottom and worked up.

The clerk of the county carelessly left all the county records and papers, when he stepped out, and at this date they were in bad condition. The floors of four rooms were covered, fully two feet-deep, with the papers and documents, some of great antiquity. A Company K man found two parchments, one a commission issued to Thomas Frerer, to be captain of a troop

of horse in the Sixth regiment of light dragoons, United States army, signed by John Jay, and issued in the third year of our independence. The other was a certificate of membership of the Cincinnatus Society, to the same Thomas Frerer, and signed by H. Knox, secretary, and George Washington, president. Old deeds were plenty signed by Lord Fairfax and others, granting large tracts of land to different parties; marriage certificates of parties whose grandchildren, if they had any, have long since joined them in the tomb, and the millions of papers that would accumulate in such a place, in two centuries of time. When next they begin to govern Prince William County, it is thought they will have to commence their county records where the war left off, and it is hoped they will appoint a county clerk who will take better care of his papers in future.

Death of a Stranger

A man no more than twenty-three,
Came here to live, so they told me.
A man with no great visible wealth,
Just came alone, with joy of health.
A stranger.

House nor home, he had not one,
But lived alone with only shun.
He worked his crops in moonlight silence,
With never once a word of violence.
Just, a stranger.

Still, wise was he more than I can say
As soon I learned one summer day.
Five languages he could easily write,
With only the aid of candlelight.
This stranger.

He never married, how strange it be,
Although he lived to sixty-three.
All alone with his goats each night,
Just one man in this worldly fight.
A stranger.

Wanton or cruel never once was he.
His kindness was such as men rarely see.
And 'though his clothes were fetid and worn,
Never once did he ever wrongfully scorn,
This stranger.

Then one day he failed to appear
And only then did he call me near.
"A greater land I go to by far,
And leave just one, great friend that you are."
Said, a stranger?

Then soon his eyes closed softly in sleep,
To leave me with just one promise to keep.
Whenever I walk across meadow or field,
Remember that they, without question did yield,
To a stranger.

Only one by his grave that day did stand.
And only one prayer went up from this land.
The sadness I felt once more by his side,
Countless hours I've spent since he died,
Praying, I'm not a stranger.
Morgan

Reader Feedback

Howard told me that you'd sent the latest issue of the newsletter and told me there was an article on Charles Edgar Nicol. I printed it out and was thrilled with all the information you provided. I also learned another source to check!

Thank you so much for the information! And I just want to let you know that I think you're doing a terrific job with the newsletter and trying to keep the area history alive in so many different ways! I wish there were a lot more caring people like you!!!

Sincerely,
Lynn Churchill

(Continued from page 7)

Georgetown University to create their diplomas.

On December 24, 1951, Willie James and his wife, Sallie Hedgman sold the property to Effie and Thornton Blackwell (DB158PG110). The Blackwell's owned the property for just over a year and then sold it to Bessie Smith Minor on January 3, 1953 (DB165PG228) where she lived until her death.

On October 3, 1986, Virginia Minnis and Pearl Smith, Executrix of the Estate of Bessie Woolfolk AKA Bessie Smith Minor sold the property to Barbara A. Reaves (DB1420PG560). Virginia and Pearl were two of Bessie's four sisters and designated as her Executrices in her will (SB58PG1719) with directions to sell her real property in Brentsville. Barbara retained ownership for nearly five years and then sold it to the current owners, Marion Lavern and Ralph William Blevins (DB1812PG308) on June 28, 1991.

*Information courtesy of Ron Turner.

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Information About Brentsville
Shared Among Neighbors

Contact us on:
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IN GOD WE TRUST

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