

Brentsville Neighbors

“Preserving Brentsville’s History”

January 2015

Welcome Neighbors,

Happy New Year!!

We really must start by acknowledging so many people for the wonderful cards we received during the Holidays with your generous support and encouragement. To each of you we say thank you!

Can it be 2015 already? I can well remember being in the 7th grade (1956) with Mrs. D. C. Link as our teacher leading a discussion of what it would be like at the turn of the century. She told us that there would be many changes and that while she would not likely be around to see them, most of us would. She was right on both counts. I think the 21st century will be remembered as the “Age of Information.” Never before has there been so much information available to so many with the advent of the Internet. But unfortunately, much of the information we seek on a local level was destroyed or is missing as a result of that great Civil War and while we celebrate each newly found part of the puzzle we become frustrated in the search for the rest. Still, the search goes on and thanks to those who are helping in this search

we some day hope to unlock a few of the mysteries still remaining. After all, it took 71 years to create the history of Brentsville as the county seat so one should not expect to learn it all in just a few short years.

We received a number of interesting comments about my Christmas story and perhaps our friend and former neighbor, Mary (Pearson) Pumphrey summed them up best: “I enjoyed your story and it brought back many memories of Christmas in Brentsville - from actually going out to cut a tree to shopping at J.C. Rice’s in Manassas on Christmas Eve for gifts. Whatever happened to one or two gifts plus a stocking? Anyway, I thank God for those one and two gifts because they still left room for the real reason to celebrate Christmas with pageants and caroling.”

We look forward to a new and exciting year.

Very best wishes,
Kay and Morgan

This month:

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Since last Wednesday was New Year's and since this column makes an inviolable habit of running at least a week behind schedule, I think the moment has come to review the past year as it concerns Brentsville. Let us look first at the good things, like

the child who wants his dessert before the spinach, then we will be strengthened to face the bad things. Most important single event of 1946, we will all agree, was the safe arrival home of our boys in the Service. When you come to count them up, you are surprised at the number: Earle and Cookie Wolfe, Charles Bean, Johnny Counts, Nelson and Raymond Keys, Sidney Spitzer, Jim and Ben Shoemaker, Frank Smith, Lester Keys, Johnney Biglow, Math Hensley, Boyd Beard, Mont and Murray Bradshaw, Louis Bell, David Landis, Van Pettit, Sparkey Carter, Oscar, Henry, and Melvin Carter, Cecil Yancey, Carroll Conner, Abram Conner, Red Hartman, Frank Eagan, Alfred Breeden, Howard Counts, James Moss, Robert Downs, Ernest Brown, Clarence Burke, Herbert Burke, and Archie Bradford. All safe and sound, and not a name missing; Brentsville has much to be thankful for!

Next most outstanding event, I should say, was the gravelling of our road. And not a moment too soon, either. The late snow-storm would certainly have left us isolated had it not been for the saving layer of unromantic gravel underneath all of that Christmasy-looking white stuff. As it was, we were not cut off from civilization, and even the Bread Truck, which is sometimes inclined to be timid, got through on Wednesday.

One great improvement of the year past was the dividing up of our telephone system into two party lines. By means of this simple device one is enabled to sit back like a lady and let the operator do the work of getting your number. A great improvement over the old crank-and-cuss method. Inasmuch as there are now only half as many conversations to listen to, however, our news will be somewhat curtailed, but what there is of it should be more accurate, as there is less buzzing on the wires.

Much building construction has been going on; Jim Shoemaker's garage is well on the way toward completion, Miss Lily's new house is finished and occupied, the Bradshaws have done a terrific remodeling job, Webster's barn is a Thing of Beauty, Miff Key's house has new Bricktex refinishing, and Joe Keys is adding a room on back. The Kempton's tenant house is wired and plumbed, there is electricity in the old schoolhouse, and electricity and a telephone at Wolfe's, Morris Keys is building a new house, Grady Shoemaker has material for his, and last but not least is the installation of an ice-cream freezer at the Store!

There have been four marriages in Brentsville: Vivian Breeden and Bill Payne, Dean Cordell and Ben Shoemaker,

Virginia Bradshaw and Phil Spencer, and Betty Petersen and John Rollins. We wish them all happiness, and take this occasion to congratulate the lucky bridegrooms!

Babies, of course, must not be neglected; There are two new potential voters in the Brentsville District; Daniel Breeden and Daniel Shoemaker. And while welcoming newcomers to our midst, let us not forget the Newtons, the Kemptons, the Carters, C. W. Wolfrey, Alice Fletcher, and the Nelson Bradshaw's who have returned after so long an absence and should be called RETURNNEES.

And now for the debit side of the ledger. There has been a lot of sickness but only one death. We regret the passing of Mrs. James Brown last summer and renew assurances of sympathy to her family. A few neighbors have also moved away, Mr. May to California, the Storches to New York, Trotts to N. Carolina, and James McIntoshes to Leesburg.

Our Home Demonstration Club is no more, and I for one am grieved to see it go. I suppose people were just too busy to attend, and it died a natural death.

We now arrive at the department known as Projects We Hope Will Be Accomplished In The Year. And first and foremost is the Repair of the Courthouse floor. It is a crying shame that this fine old building, one of the historic landmarks of Prince William County, should be allowed to fall into ruin through sheer indifference. I understand that the School Board has the money but keeps passing the buck to the Courthouse Committee which promptly passes it back. This has been going on for something like four years and meanwhile the termites are getting fatter and the woodwork in the Courthouse thinner by the moment. And everybody says "something should be done" and nobody DOES anything. We intend to keep a watchful eye on the situation through 1947, and if the worse comes to the worst are firmly resolved to write a rousing letter to the D. A. R.'s and THEN watch the fur fly!

The Clyde Wolfe's enjoyed a double-headed celebration on new Year's Eve. Of course the bowing-out of the old year is always cause for a party, but this year the Wolfe's had another reason for being joyful. That evening they turned on electric lights for the first time in the old house.

We feel that this event, coming particularly on the eve of a New Year, is symbolic of the new movement in our County; the first step toward modernization including better health and better schools, is electrification. It means so much these days, and another bright light shining in the countryside is indeed a cause for celebration. We hope there will be many more during this New Year!

With best regards,

Agnes Webster

The Manassas Messenger, January 10, 1947.

Where WILD things live... Wooly Worms and the Weather

Each fall, it's hard not to notice them—little wooly worms crawling across roads, sidewalks, and paths everywhere. Where ever they're going, they seem very determined.



bears, or Isabella tiger moths, each year. One is typically hatched in May, the other in August. Most people don't notice wooly worms in the spring and early summer, but

More than one person has asked what they actually are. Do they stay as they are, or morph into something entirely different in time? And how does a wooly worm forecast the winter weather?

Different species of wooly worms are found all over the world. The ancient Romans used the Latin term *catta pilosa*, literally “hairy cat” to describe them. The term caterpillar traces back to these early descriptions.

The creatures we call wooly worms are in fact caterpillars, so their time spent as a wooly worm is limited. The U.S. is home to at least eight species of hairy caterpillars that are commonly called wooly worms. We are most familiar with the banded wooly bear (or worm), *Pyrrharctia Isabella*. Following the pupal stage, the banded wooly bear emerges in its adult form, the Isabella tiger moth.

Experts estimate around 260 species of tiger moths in North America. Their caterpillars share some degree of hairiness—from a few hairs to being completely covered in hairs, like the wooly worms. Tiger moths get their name from their bright coloration. Their colors are typically some spotted or striped combination of gold and black. Some species also have red, white, and gray colors interspersed as well. The Isabella tiger moth is a dull yellow-orange with some black spotting, and its first pair of legs have bright red-orange segments.

There are two generations of banded wooly

they're around, feeding on various plants and growing. One reason we probably don't notice them is that essentially they're hermits, preferring solitude over socializing. Another tiger moth larva, fall webworm, is far more friendly, and tends to congregate in large populations on their host plants.

It is only in the early autumn that most people notice wooly worms, and they're usually in a big hurry to get somewhere. What's the rush? Each wooly worm is scrambling to find a warm nook or cranny in which to overwinter. Unlike other butterflies or moths, the wooly worm spends the winter as a caterpillar, not a pupa or chrysalis. The hairs covering their bodies are thought to offer some degree of insulation from cold winter temperatures.

When the weather warms in the spring, the banded wooly worm becomes active again. They feed for a short time, then pupate and emerge a few weeks later as adult Isabella tiger moths.

There is a lot of folklore surrounding the banded wooly worm, particularly related to its supposed power to predict upcoming winter weather each fall. The typical banded wooly worm has sections of black hairs at each end, and a section of orange-brown hairs in the center. Legend says that the more black on a banded wooly worm, the more severe the winter will be. Some folks have taken this to an extreme, and noting that there are thirteen segments in a typical banded wooly worm, they argue that each

Memories

by
Dave Button

My first memories of Brentsville (actually Brentsville District Middle/Senior High School) came in the fall of 1968. I was a first year teacher, and could not believe the feeling I got that we, the faculty and community, were just one big family. Everyone was so welcoming. I can remember the Ruritan cook-outs at Mr. Wood's home to welcome the teachers to the community. What was especially interesting to me, a former resident of Fairfax county, was that everyone knew everyone else and/or was related to everyone else. When I was in school, no one shared a last name except with one's siblings; however, at BDHS with all of the cousins, both blood and by marriage, it was an issue that was fun to deal with. I was never exactly sure of how everyone was related until I had been there about 6 years, then I figured it out.

The 11 years I was there with Jim Addington at the helm were wonderful times. Had it not been for him and the BDHS community, I don't think I would have stayed in the education field for 32 years in Prince William County. Now going on 48 years in the education business, having retired from PWC, spent four years in MCPS, and now at NVCC, I can truly say that the Brentsville experience set my professional course for a lifetime.

A School for Brentsville

by
Morgan Breeden

I'm still not sure just when the first public school opened in Brentsville. I do know that the School Board was organized and met in Brentsville in April, 1872, and in July of that same year they established that teachers must instruct six hours per day in the public schools. So it seems clear that the first public school was open and operating prior to 1872. One more bit of information to nail down.

My wife's grandfather, Joseph Keys, attended this school (he probably started first grade around 1900). His son, Nelson, said it was a small one-room wooden structure that was located near the Bradshaw home. Attendance must have been pretty good because by 1906 it was approved to be a high school although this didn't last more than a year or so. We do know that for the 1906-07 school year there were three teachers assigned to this small school: Mr. A. B. Kelly (principal overall), Miss Ella W. Garth (principal elementary) & Miss Nellie S. Duffey (assistant to Miss Garth and music).

Perhaps because the high school designation was lost or perhaps because of a decline in students, by 1909 there was only one teacher, Miss Ella W. Garth who was paid \$30.00 per month. It seems, however, that the school was probably still crowded and the school patrons (parents of the students) were calling on the Brentsville District School Board for a larger, more usable school. This was made apparent in the June 1910 school board minutes where "the first business was the advisability of purchasing two acres of the old court house lot including the building, or some other suitable location for school purposes. After considerable consideration, Mr. George G. Tyler, County Superintendent of Schools being present and aiding by advise, the Chairman appointed M. K. Reading a committee to confer with the county superintendent and others in regard to a suitable lot for school purposes." The following month "the Brentsville District School Board decided to offer \$700 for the old court house and 2 acres of land" which at that time was owned by Dr. William John Bell, a Confederate veteran and retired physician. Thus, on July

8, 1910, it was "Ordered - That Dr. Reading be appointed a committee to inform Dr. Bell of the conditional offer of \$700.00 by this Board for the old Court House and two acres of land at Brentsville for the proposed new school for white children and to report Dr. Bells acceptance or rejection of this offer." In August Dr. Reading reported "that Dr. Bell had refused the conditional offer for \$700.00 for the Court House property" and the school board "ordered that the proposition to buy the old Court house be laid on the table for the present."



Morgan H. Breeden at the Court House
where he attended graded school

Not much seemed to happen for the next several months until February, 1911, when the school board recorded: "After conference with Dr. W. J. Bell with reference to purchase of the old Court House property at Brentsville, it was resolved - Dr. Bell agreeing to the terms that if the proper authorities agree we will purchase for school purposes the old Court House with two acres of land attached including all the furniture & black boards in the said building - except 150 sq. feet of black board already purchased - & will pay for the said property the sum of eight hundred (\$800.00) dollars. It was further agreed that the frame structure attached to the rear of the Court House proper be excepted from the purchase & that Dr. Bell have the

right to remove this structure with the exception of the windows & doors which shall be included with the property purchased." (Take note of the reference to the frame structure which is likely to show up in a future story.)

During March, 1911, Supt. Tyler approved the purchase of the Court House property and it was resolved to consummate sale & get deed to submit to court for approval provided a competent workman could be found to inspect the building & see if the necessary remodeling is feasible." Two months later, "R. H. Davis and J. R. Cooke were appointed a committee to look into the whole situation at Brentsville with regard to securing valid title to the present school property [does this apply to the "old" existing school or the courthouse?], having a competent workman examine

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the Court House property with reference to remodeling that for a school house.”

Finally, during July, 1911, “the Committee appointed to look into the situation at Brentsville with regard to school property reported as follows – (1) That Commonwealth Attorney H. T. Davis had been consulted with reference to status of property there & that he had agreed to attend to all legal matters with regard to securing valid title to property & transferring same, if we wished to sell, free of cost [It seems this is in reference to the “old” existing school property]. (2) That Ira Cannon, a competent workman, had examined C. H. property and reported that two rooms could be repaired and remodeled according to specifications of Board for about \$200.00. (3) That Dr. W. J. Bell had withdrawn his former proposition on C. H. property & had submitted a new proposition to sell the building with 2 acres of land and all slate, desks etc. included for \$900.00.” “It was decided to accept Dr. Bell’s proposition, have the building remodeled & open a two room school in September provided State Board approved plan of building.”

But the State Board did NOT approve. On August 15, 1911, J. R. Cooke, “Clerk reported that State Board had refused to approve plan for building at Brentsville on account of ceilings being too low. Supt. Geo. Tyler was requested to communicate further with State Board on matter.”

By December the Brentsville Patrons were growing restless with what must have seemed like a lack of action. “A request having come from the School Improvement League of Brentsville for a meeting of the Board adjourned to meet at Brentsville Dec. 30th at 2 P.M.” On December 30th, with J. A. Hooker and J. R. Cooke present, “after a conference with some of the citizens & discussion of various suggested sites for a school building, it was deemed inadvisable to proceed with the matter until we can secure better terms on a site than at present offered.”

Again, not much happened until February, 1912, when “R. H. Davis was appointed a committee to look into the situation at Brentsville with a view to obtaining sites for both white & colored schools there & report at next meeting.” The following month he reported “with reference to the Brentsville situation: (1) That he had consulted Ira Canon, builder, with regard to remodeling the old court house for school building & that he had advised taking out upper floor & putting in false ceiling if necessary at any height desired as a perfectly feasible plan for getting greater pitch of ceiling & more light. Committee was continued, and Supt. Tyler was requested to again take the matter up with the State Board about remodeling Court House according to suggested plan.”

During July, 1912, “Mr. J. A. Cannon’s plans for remodeling the court house at Brentsville for a two room school were submitted and with some modifications were adopted. It was resolved to purchase the Court House with two acres of land for \$900.00 and R. H. Davis & J. R. Cooke were appointed a committee to purchase the property and

have it remodeled.” The following month “R. H. Davis reported that I. A. Cannon had agreed to supervise the work of remodeling the C.H. building at Brentsville -- the work to be done by citizens of the community who had subscribed work toward building a school house at Brentsville. It was resolved that we go right on with the work just as soon as title to property can be secured.”

A short time later, “Some question having arisen between Dr. Bell and the School Board about the fencing of the property purchased at Brentsville – it was resolved that the purchase be consummated with the understanding that the Board will have erected a solid board fence between the C.H. building & the Jail building on the line, and an open wire fence on balance of the line, that side provided Dr. Bell furnish posts for same.”

Things moved along pretty fast at this point and by September “it was resolved that Mr. Davis be authorized to dispose of all left-over material from remodeling Brentsville building at best terms obtainable.” Not all work was, or could be, completed with subscription labor so during October “Bills for material & work on Brentsville building from Breedon [Daniel Breedon], Keys, Cornwell & Muddiman Bros were referred back to J. E. Cannon for verification.” This took place in December when “The Clerk reported that bills for material and work on the school building at Brentsviller to the amount of 430.87 [more than twice the original estimate] had been paid after receiving O.K. of J. E. Connor -- supervisor. Chairman Davis reported that acting on the Board’s instructions, he had sold the material left over from remodeling the building at public auction for the sum of \$11.85. Bills were presented from Thos. H. Lion \$10.00 for examining & perfecting title to Brentsville school property purchased from Dr. Bell.” And in March, 1913, a bill from “Hornbaker & Snook, \$6.84 for lumber for Brentsville” was ordered paid.

Finally, in July, 1913, “It was resolved that air ducts & new ventilating stove be put in Brentsville building before the new term opens, and R. H. Davis was appointed a committee of one to see to getting the work done.” “It was resolved that all the schools of the District be opened Wednesday Oct. 1, 1913.”

In preparation for the new school to open Miss Martha Via was appointed principal at \$40.00 per month and Miss Nellie Mayhugh primary teacher at \$35.00 per month. But Miss Mayhugh resigned the position so Miss Mae House was appointed assistant teacher provided she had a proper certificate.

After three years of planning, the Brentsville Graded School serving grades one through seven opened in the old Court House building on October 1, 1913, and served the town until the close of the school year in 1929 when a new, one-room school was opened right next door.

Note: Sections within quotation marks are direct quotes from a collection of Brentsville District School Board Minutes.

When WAR Came to Brentsville

POTOMAC CREEK, January 10, 1863.

Major General J.G. PARKE, Chief of Staff:

SIR: The scouts sent to Brentsville on Thursday have not yet been heard from. Those sent to Catlett's were driven back to the lines, but afterward succeeded in getting out; they have not reported. At daylight yesterday morning I sent Major Chamberlain, with 100 men, from Hartwood to Rappahannock Railroad Bridge, and Lieutenant Walker, with 12 scouts, to watch the fords. At 2 p.m. Walker was reported captured, with his party by a large force of rebels. I at once sent Colonel Sargent, with 500 men, to scour the Telegraph road to Morrisville, and cover the return of Major Chamberlain. About 9 p.m. Walker sent word that he had a brisk skirmish with about 40 rebels, near Grove Church; had lost no men, and afterward pursued his scout to Ely's Ford and toward Kelly's. He returned safely during the night to Hartwood. At 2 o'clock this morning, Major Chamberlain returned. Reports having had a brisk skirmish at Elk Run with superior force of rebels; killed 1, and recaptured a lieutenant and 2 privates of a Michigan regiment which the enemy had taken. The rebels tried to shoot the prisoners when they let them go. Major Chamberlain visited the railroad bridge at dark last night. The railroad is picketed from Bealeton to the bridge. The bridge is not yet completed; stringers and rails wanted. I will send his report as soon as it is finished. There was an infantry guard at the bridge. Colonels Sargent and Walker are out, with 500 men, with instructions to hunt up and capture all the rebels they can. I would like to have about 1,000 more cavalry. I think I could make it disagreeable for the enemy on that flank by keeping a good force constantly in motion. I have 600 picket and 500 out now.

WM. W. AVERELL,
Brigadier-General

William Woods Averell, born November 5, 1832, in Cameron, NY, was a career United States Army officer and a cavalry general in the American Civil War. After the war he was a diplomat and became wealthy by inventing American asphalt pavement.

As a boy he worked as a drugstore clerk in the nearby town of Bath, New York. He graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point in 1855 and was commissioned a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army Mounted Rifles. His early assignments included garrison duty at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri, and the U.S. Army Cavalry School in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. During two years of service in the southwestern United States, he was wounded in action against the Indians in 1859 and was placed on the disabled list until the outbreak of the Civil War.

After the capture of Fort Sumter, Lt. Averell made a risky solo journey across the country to the New Mexico Territory with a message to summon his old mounted rifle regiment back east to join the fighting.

He first saw action at the First Battle of Bull Run while acting as assistant adjutant general to Brig. Gen. Andrew Porter. In August 1861, he was appointed colonel of the 3rd Pennsylvania Cavalry regiment, which he led through the Peninsula Campaign and the Seven Days Battles. Immediately



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after that campaign, on July 6, 1862, he was given command of the 1st Cavalry Brigade in the Army of the Potomac. He missed the Battle of Antietam and most of the Maryland Campaign as he recovered from a bout of malaria that was known at the time as “Chickahominy Fever”. As Confederate Maj. Gen. J.E.B. Stuart’s cavalry rode around the Union Army and raided Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, Averell returned in time to lead his brigade in pursuit. President Abraham Lincoln appointed him a brigadier general of volunteers on September 26, 1862 to rank from that date. Lincoln had to nominate him three times before the U.S. Senate confirmed the appointment on March 11, 1863.

During the Battle of Fredericksburg, Averell commanded the Cavalry Brigade of the Center Grand Division of the Army of the Potomac. He ascended to division command—the 2nd division of the Cavalry Corps—on February 12, 1863. His division fought the first engagement in which Union cavalymen claimed victory against their Confederate counterparts, the Battle of Kelly’s Ford on March 17, 1863. But the 2nd Division’s reputation was diminished as it participated in Maj. Gen. George Stoneman’s fruitless cavalry raid in the Battle of Chancellorsville six weeks later. On May 2, 1863, army commander Maj. Gen. Joseph Hooker relieved Averell of his command due to his slow performance during the raid. Hooker sent an angry telegram to the War Department informing them that Averell “seems to have contented himself between April 29 and May 4 with having marched ... 28 miles, meeting no enemy deserving of the name, and from that point reporting to me for instructions.”

Averell left the Army of the Potomac after his relief at Chancellorsville and fought a series of minor engagements in the Department of West Virginia at the brigade and division level. In November 1863, he conducted what is called Averell’s West Virginia Raid against the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad. He received a brevet promotion to lieutenant colonel in the regular army for the Battle of Droop Mountain in West Virginia on November 6, 1863, and to colonel for actions at Salem, Virginia, on December 15, 1863. In the spring of 1864, he led another cavalry raid toward Saltville but was stopped by Generals John Hunt Morgan and William E. “Grumble” Jones at Cove Gap. Returning to West Virginia, he later commanded a cavalry division under Maj. Gen. David Hunter in his failed raid on Lynchburg.

At a time when Lt. Gen. Jubal Early had invaded Maryland and defeated a series of Union commanders, Averell proved to be the only Union commander to achieve victory against the Confederates in the Shenandoah Valley. He routed Confederate Maj. Gen. Stephen D. Ramseur at the Battle of Rutherford’s (Carter’s) Farm on July 20, inflicting 400 casualties and capturing a four-gun battery, in spite of being significantly outnumbered. When Brig. Gen. John McCausland burned Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, to the ground on July 30, Averell tracked him down at Moorefield,

West Virginia. Using intelligence gathered from his scouts, he routed McCausland in a sunrise attack upon the Confederate camp capturing hundreds of prisoners and another four-gun battery.

During the Valley Campaigns of 1864 against Early, Averell fought under Maj. Gen. Philip Sheridan. He was relieved of command a second time in his career on September 23, 1864, following a dispute with Sheridan about his actions at the Battle of Fisher’s Hill. This incident truly devastated him and he could not hide his misery. A staff officer wrote “I saw General Averell sitting in front of his tent ... He was dreadfully depressed and broken. I believe he started for the rear within a few moments after we left him, and never was employed again during the war.” Averell resigned from the Union Army volunteers and from the U.S. regular army on May 18, 1865.

On July 17, 1866, President Andrew Johnson nominated Averell for appointment to the grades of brevet brigadier general and brevet major general in the regular army, to rank from March 13, 1865, and the U.S. Senate confirmed the appointments on July 23, 1866. The latter appointment was in recognition of Averell’s actions at the Battle of Kelly’s Ford.

Following the Civil War, President Johnson appointed Averell as U.S. consul general to British North America (1866–1869). In 1888, during Grover Cleveland’s presidency, Averell was reinstated in the Army by a special Act of Congress and placed upon the retired list; he was also appointed as Assistant Inspector General of Soldiers Homes (1888-1898).

Averell was also an entrepreneur and an inventor, working in the fields of coal, steel and eventually paving materials. His businesses and his inventions of practical devices provided him with a handsome income. Among his inventions were methods for manufacturing steel castings and insulated electrical cable, but he is best known for his work with asphalt pavement. He had become interested in asphalt as early as 1870, when some experimental pavement, based on the procedures patented by Edward J. DeSmeldt, a Belgian engineer and chemist, was laid in New York City and Newark, New Jersey. Although he observed problems with these installations, he was convinced of the potential of asphalt paving, and, as president of the Grahamite Asphalt Pavement Company, he began studying the existing product and procedures and then experimenting with ways to improve them. Eventually, he developed improved techniques of laying pavement, which led to a patent in 1878 for “Improvement in Asphaltic Pavement.”

Averell was the author of *Ten Years in the Saddle* (1978) and co-author of *History of the Third Pennsylvania Cavalry, 60th Regiment Pennsylvania Volunteers* (1905), both published posthumously.

General Averell died in Bath, New York, and is buried there. In 1976 he was one of the first class of ten inductees for the Steuben County (NY) Hall of Fame.

Source: Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

segment represents one week of winter. Orange segments predict mild weeks, and black ones foretell bad winter weather.

Some also insist that the thickness of the hairs is the predictor—thick hair equals a bad winter, sparse hair a mild one. Another legend says that the direction a wooly worm is found traveling is a hint about the coming winter. If the wooly worm is traveling north, count on a mild winter. If he's headed south, get ready for a long cold winter.

Research has shown repeatedly that the colors or hairs of wooly worms have no bearing on weather the following winter. Larvae hatched from the same clutch of eggs reared under one set of environmental conditions will show a range of hair thickness and colorations, from fully orange to fully black. This variation in a constant environment is a strong argument against wooly worms being able to predict the weather. There is genetic segregation for color and hair thickness present in the wooly worm population. This segregation would make it nearly impossible to visually sort out any environmental influence if it did exist.

Despite the scientific evidence that discredits any super weather predicting power of the wooly worm, people are very passionate about their wooly worms. Several towns in the U.S. have their own wooly worm festivals. Banner Elk, North Carolina hosts an annual festival complete with a wooly worm race. The winner is declared the “official” predictor of winter weather. People come from miles around to participate. Some bring wooly worms they collected themselves, others prefer to buy a wooly worm from one of the “breeders” that brings their best racing stock to the festival. I guess you can sell just about anything! Will wooly worm breeders be far behind? Time will tell.

Source: Written by Jennifer Schultz Nelson, Extension Educator, Horticulture (Illinois), October 15, 2006, and found at <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/dmp/palette/061015.html>

A Caution to the Public

A CERTAIN man, named Balis M' Cuin, stole my Iron-gray Mare, Saddle and Bridle, on the night of the 17th of August, last, and conveyed her to the neighborhood of Brentsville, in Prince William county, which mare I have obtained through the kindness of Mr. Bennet Russell, who was travelling in or near that neighborhood, and recovered the mare. I hereby notify the public that the thief has not been apprehended, as he had traded or sold the mare to his brother, Thomas M' Cuin, and is still running at large.

This Balis M' Cuin assumes fictitious names. He worked on the turnpike, near Newtown, Frederick county, and assumed the name, as well as I recollect, of Johnson, and when in the neighborhood of Berryville, the name of Henry H. Gooddin, so the public can judge for themselves what sort of a man he is. His person is as follows:— He is about 5 feet 10 or 11 inches high; well made, with dark looking hair, sandy beard, and has on the crown of his head a small bald place; he walks very erect and has a down look, but when spoken to is very quick of apprehension. — He is about 38 years of age, and has a wife and one child at Farrowsville, Fauquier county. His occupation is working on a Farm. He says he can make cans or noggins; so he must handle Cooper's tools.

I will give the reward that I offered for him in the first place, which was Fifteen Dollars, if secured in any jail so he can be brought to justice.

WM. G. EONHART.

Clarke County, Va., Dec. 26, 1845.

Source: *The Spirit of Jefferson* (West Virginia), December 26, 1845

Brentsville Neighbors

“Preserving Brentsville’s History”

Contact us on:

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All back issues on:

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

IN GOD WE TRUST

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

