

Brentsville Neighbors



Preserving Brentsville's History November 2012



“A veteran - whether active duty, retired, or national guard or reserve - is someone who, at one point in his or her life, wrote a blank check made payable to “The United States of America”, for an amount of “up to and including my life.”

Welcome Neighbors,

As November comes roaring in, please take a moment from your busy schedule to remember a Veteran. So many of our young men and women are away from home and family doing that which must be done but with little recognition or thanks.

And please exercise your right to vote in the current election. No matter which party you support, your voice should be heard and that is best done by getting out there and casting your vote.

We would like to thank everyone who came out to the rededication of the restored Brentsville schoolhouse. It was a memorable day for many and your support is very much appreciated.

Very best wishes,
Kay & Morgan

Brentsville School Honor Roll

First Grade—Virginia Cornwell, Anna Cornwell, Jean Egan, Charles Bean, Eugene Breeden.

Second Grade—Anna Diehl, David Landies, Helen May, Lucy Bean.

Third Grade—Hazel Counts, Virginia Bradshaw.

Fourth Grade—John Counts, Herbert Burke.

Source: The Manassas Journal, November 5, 1931



This month:

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------|--------------------------------|--------|
| ➤ Flashback | page 2 | ➤ Yes, But it's <u>MY</u> Name | page 6 |
| ➤ Where Wild Things Live | pages 2 & 9 | ➤ When War Came | page 7 |
| ➤ Snippets | page 3 | ➤ Rededication of the School | page 8 |
| ➤ To Build a Jail | pages 4 & 5 | ➤ Reader Feedback | page 9 |

Flashback

BRENTSVILLE

(Mrs. Emma Wolfe, Cor.)

Mrs. Hugh James is spending several days with her husband in Washington.

Master Carl Beard entertained his friends with a Halloween party last Wednesday night.

Mrs. Lillie Keys entertained a group of friends at her home Thursday night.

Pfc. T. S. Newton, of Dahlgren, spent several days with his family this week.

We are glad to report that Mr. Ray Hedrick is home again.

Mrs. Newton and daughter, Patricia Ann, spent Tuesday in Washington.

Mrs. Alfred Breeden and children, of Washington, spent the week-end with Mr. Breeden, who is visiting Mr. Benny Breeden.

Tech. Sgt. Lewis Bell and wife, of Fort Meade, Md., spent the weekend with his parents, Rev. and Mrs. Jesse Bell.

Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Huddle and family, of Falls Church, spent Sunday evening with Mr. and Mrs. Morgan Breeden.

Mr. Montague Bradshaw, of Rockville, Md., visited his father, Mr. Kenny Bradshaw, on Sunday. Another son, Mr. Nelson Bradshaw, has been remodeling his father's home.

Mrs. Joe Storch has moved to New York to join her husband. The Kemptons have bought the Storch farm.

Little Betty Croushorn is out again after being confined for some time.

Source: The Manassas Journal, November 7, 1946

Where WILD things live...



Mycena galericulata

Common Mycena

The fungus was first described scientifically in 1772. The specific epithet *galericulata* is derived from the Latin *galer*, and means "with a small hat." Gray called it the "helmetted high-stool." It is commonly known as the "common bonnet," the "toque mycena," or the "rosy-gill fairy helmet."

The cap of *M. galericulata* is roughly conical when young, and eventually becomes broadly bell-shaped or with a broad umbo that can reach diameters of 0.8—1.6 in. The cap margin is initially somewhat curved inward, but soon evens out or even becomes uplifted, and often splits radially in age. The surface has radial grooves that extend nearly to the center, and feels greasy but not sticky. The color is somewhat buff-brown on the margin, and fades gradually to pale dirty tan to dirty cinnamon-brown. The flesh is thick in the

(Continued on page 9)



Snippets from the County School Board Minutes



County School Board Meeting

Manassas, Virginia, October 10, 1928 (abridged)

Promptly at 10:30 o'clock the Board opened bids for the sale of the Brentsville District Bonds. The Board decided to date bonds November 1, 1928 and to have them mature as follows: beginning 1931 to 1940, inclusive one one thousand (\$1000) dollar bond to mature each year. Beginning 1941 to 1951, inclusive one two thousand (\$2000) dollar bond to mature each year until final payment of all bonds. The bids received were as follows:

Firm	Rate	Premium	Discount
Morris Mather & Co.	5¼	\$501.00	\$309.00
“ “ “	5 par		
Pruden & Co.	5¼ par with accrued interest		
Hanchett Bond Co.	5¼ “		
Ryan Sutherland	5¼	\$111.00	
Wiel Roth & Irving	5¼	\$283.50	
“ “ “	5		\$528.00
Taylor Wilson Co	5		\$1248.00
Magnus & Co.	5¼	\$170.00	
Bohrn Rinehart & Co.	5¼	\$128.00	
“ “ “	5		\$535.00
“ “ “	6	\$1760.00	
Bram Bosworth & Co.	5	\$68.00 Life matured	
Stranahan Harris & Oats	5¼	\$460.00 Life matured	
Drake Jones & Co.	5	\$33.00 Life matured	
National Bank of Manassas	5¼ par		
Peoples National Bank	3 interest on day balance		

After receiving the above bids, the Board went into executive session, considered each bid carefully. The bid of Pruden & Co, Toledo, Ohio of par for 5 % bonds with all expenses of issuing same and accrued interest from date of issue to delivery was found to be the high bid. On motion the Board accepted this bid and awarded the bonds to Pruden & Co., the contract to be subject to the approval of the Commonwealths Attorney. When contract was drawn up, the Commonwealths Attorney advised the Board that it was lawful to insert in the contract a five year anticipation clause. The Board thereupon inserted this clause in the contract. The representative of Prudden & Co. declaring that he did not bid on the bonds with the understanding that the five year anticipation clause would be inserted, declared that his original bid would not stand on that contract, but that his company would give par for 5¼% bonds with the above clause inserted. At this point a member of the Board of Directors of the National Bank of Manassas assured the Board through one of its members that the National Bank would pay par for 5% bonds with the five year anticipation clause inserted. Acting upon this information, the Board reconsidered the former action and rejected all bids.

Promptly at 1:30 P. M., as per the Board's advertisement, bids were opened for the construction of the Brentsville District High School and the one teacher school at Brentsville and were as follows:

King Lumber Co.	\$45345.00
Motley Construction Co.	32900.00
W. L. Brown & Co.	31450.00
On the one teacher school:	
King Lumber Co.	4171.00
Motley Construction Co.	3000.00
W. L. Brown & Co.	4171.00

To Build a Jail

By Morgan Breeden

Part 4a - Lumber Requirements

As one looks at the Brentsville jail it may be assumed that this is a brick building. To be sure, it is normally referred to as that in most of the documents describing the building. But is it, in fact, actually a brick building or is it a wooden structure covered with bricks?

During the restoration process of the jail those of us who were not otherwise trained in such matters are finding out more and more about how the building was actually constructed. We are more familiar with the results from the c1897 modernization that took place when I.N.H. Beahm had the jail converted into a dormitory for the ladies who would attend his Prince William Academy. Or in other words, changed from a jail to a living facility. This process removed the cells (as they were originally built); added windows, doors and a new chimney; removed the old circular stairs to the second floor and replaced it with a modern one; and in general, significantly changed the original structure in ways we would not imagine until the removal of the modern layers exposed some of the original components which have been covered for these many years.

Back to the first question—is this a brick building or a wooden structure covered with bricks? The answer, as we now know it, is a combination of both. The eastern half of the building, the side where the criminal cells were located, were actually built first as a wooden structure which was then covered with bricks. The western half, the side where the jailer lived and where the debtor cells were located above, seems to have been built first with brick and then had wooden components

added to the inside. Why? A matter of security. The bricks used in this construction were most likely made on the site and were not extremely difficult to dig through (more on the bricks later) but the wooden planks used on the criminal cells were another matter.

It has been estimated that as many as 300 logs were required to build the Brentsville jail which presented a small problem. In the 1835 Joseph Martin reference to Brentsville, he wrote: “The wasteful tenure of the Bristoe estate . . . has in a manner cut it off from the benefits of a thriving neighborhood. This tract . . . has been ravaged of all its timber and for the most part ploughed down to be barren by an unmerciful course of cultivation...”⁽¹⁾ With no timber available locally, where would all those logs come from? The truthful answer is we simply do not know but it is very possible they were obtained from the area of the Bull Run Mountains. In Part I of this story we identified a road that ran the length of Prince William that would have provided ample opportunity to move the logs from the mountains to the building site.

Acquiring the wood needed to build the jail was not as simple as running to the nearest lumber yard and have the planks shipped. It was actually a multi-part task that eventually involved many people in the process.

First, the builder needed to determine the requirements. No doubt he spent many hours working out the details of how the timbers would

(Continued on page 5)

be interconnected, the size requirements, and even the type of lumber that would be needed.

Then he would contract out the job of cutting the logs and hauling them to the building site. Most likely he would also specify that the wood must be partially “cured” or dried upon arrival at the building site. This would be followed by transforming the logs into usable timbers through sawing and hewing followed by cutting the mortise and tenons in just the right place. All of this amounting to one or two years of work before the construction actually began.

Let’s consider some of the activities just stated. Determining the requirements, while no simple task, might have actually been the easiest part of the process. After all, the builder would have been very familiar with the process and must have been responsible for the construction of many barns and other structures that employed the same building technique if not the same degree of complexity. How else would he have been selected for this job?

Cutting the timber and delivering it partially cured may have taken a year to accomplish. One didn’t simply cut down a tree and haul it away. The time it would take to cure must be factored in as one of the longest intervals. There were two commonly used methods to accomplish this. One is to cut the tree down, saw it into rough dimensions and stack it to dry. Not an easy task in 1820 because this was a manual process start to finish. So there must be an easier way. And there was—a process called ringing or girdling the tree. The fastest way to kill a large tree is to girdle it. This is done by removing a strip of bark from around the tree that is an inch or two wide, leaving the tree with a bare ring around it all the way down to the wood. Trees move water from the roots to the top along the inner bark, so removing the bark kills everything above the ring. This is normally done in the spring of the year while the tree is moving it’s sap up to the leaves

and new growth. With the water (or sap) supply cut off, the tree continues to use the moisture already contained in the upper bark until it completely dries up – drying the wood in the process.

Ringing or “girdling” a tree was a common practice in the old days for clearing land. In many instances if the land was being used for pasture the tree would later be taken down and the stump left. Often a tract of land cleared in this manner would be termed a “deadening” and would be named for the owner. In the Blue Ridge places such as Comer’s Deadening and Kite’s Deadening obtained their names from this practice.⁽²⁾

By the spring of the following year the trees would be ready to cut or fell, the limbs removed and the logs cut into the appropriate lengths for hauling to the building site. No doubt the Conestoga wagon was used to move these logs. Why? Consider this—a red oak log 18 inches in diameter and 14 feet long (the average size needed for this project) weighs 2,245 pounds green and approximately 2,100 pounds “stump dry.”⁽³⁾ Put another way, an average of one ton per log times 300 logs adds up to just about 300 tons of lumber being moved! If a typical Conestoga wagon carried five to eight tons of freight this would represent as many as 60 loads between the mountains and the building site.

Next month we will consider transforming the logs into usable timbers and cutting the mortise and tenons in just the right place.

Notes:

1. Prince William, The Story of Its Places and Its People, p113.
2. <http://answers.yahoo.com/question/index?qid=20070527105003AAu9j1G>
3. USDA Forest Service Research Note NE-133, 1971

Yes, But It's MY Name

by

Morgan Earle Breeden

I recently received an electronic message with my name spelled Morgan Earl. It looks okay to most, but it's not and there is a story behind the name that makes me smile every time I see my name spelled that way.

I've found that many times the oldest son is given his father's name and designated Junior. That didn't happen in our family. My older brother was named Clyde (after Mom's father) Wesley (after Dad's father). A sign of respect to both families I suppose. Being the second son, I was named Morgan (after my father) Earle (after my mother's older brother). Note the spelling of Earle – it has an “e” on both ends the way it is frequently used as a last name. Frequently but not always.

When I was about 17 years old my Uncle Earle happened upon an old war bond that had been given to him as a child by his grandmother, Lucinda Olive (Lawson) Smith. I don't recall the denomination but I do remember it was fairly small—maybe \$20.00 or less. He had completely forgotten that he had it and so it had lain dormant for these past 35 years or so. After looking it over carefully, Earle decided it was probably no longer any good and was going to toss it out. I convinced him to take it to the bank and have them look at it just to make sure. Since I had a driver's license and he didn't, we took the family car to visit the bank and got quite a surprise. Not only was it still good, it was now worth several hundreds of dollars with the accrued interest.

The bank teller asked for his driver's license to prove he was the person identified on the bond and, as just stated, he didn't have one. No ID, no cash for the bond! Now my mother's father was German through and through which included a temper fast to surface. This seemed to be passed to his sons, Uncle Earle no exception, and the words he used at that point were not for young ears. The teller was kind enough to recommend we go to DMV (across the parking lot at the time) to get him a legitimate ID. So off we go to DMV. I must say, at that time (1959) it was much easier to get a photo ID from DMV than

it is today. I had to sign a statement swearing that I knew who he was and that's all it took for them to issue a photo ID that looked like a driver's permit but didn't allow operation of motorized vehicles.

Back to the bank we went and this time the teller cashed the bond without delay. Well, not only did Uncle Earle not have a driver's license, he didn't have a bank account either and this was much too much money to keep in his pocket. The bank teller was very happy to help him establish a checking account and suggested it would be good to have two names associated with it. Not having a family of his own, Uncle Earle asked me to be on the account with him. Checks were ordered in the names of Earle S. Wolfe and Morgan E. Breeden. When printed they would be sent to my mother's address which is where Uncle Earle spent much of his time. To tide him over, a small amount of cash was kept out to buy a few necessary items—mainly a bit of spirits to celebrate.

A few weeks later the package of checks arrived and Earle anxiously opened them so he could continue to use his money. But wait—the check was printed Earl S. Wolfe—no “e” on the end! Oh the words we heard that day would make a sailor blush. Something to the effect of “If the @#%\$#@# people can't spell my %\$%\$%\$ name right then I'm not going to use their @#%\$#@# checks! It's MY name, by God, and I expect it to be spelled right!” And he never used a single check. The account sat idle until he died on January 14, 1981.

A month or two after his death my mother commented that she had found his checks while cleaning up the area and pointed out that since I was a joint owner, I could get the money. She asked what I planned to do with it and since I didn't immediately know, she suggested that it would certainly come in handy to get her a new set of much needed false teeth. I wonder why I never thought of that? So I closed the account and turned the money over to Mom who promptly got her new teeth. Paid for with a misspelled name.

When WAR Came to Brentsville

MEMORANDUM. HDQRS., CAMP FISHER, November 26, 1861.

Premising that the enemy designs to attack the Evansport batteries by a combined land and river movement, let the first be considered. The attacking column can be regarded as crossing the Occoquan at Colchester, and uniting with a force thrown from Indian Head across the Potomac. With the supplies we have seen gathered there this would be a matter of no difficulty. Occoquan is 10 or 12 miles from Dumfries, and connected by an excellent road, the old Telegraph road, which crossed in that distance the Neabsco at 6 and Powell's Run at 7 miles from Occoquan. Two miles out of Occoquan the main country road branches out to Brentsville. This from Occoquan to the Neabsco is also an excellent road, and would undoubtedly be used by the enemy as his natural direction for the purpose of turning the left flank of the force supporting Dumfries. It is essential that we shall hold with these roads, especially the latter, by which not only the Evansport batteries but Manassas might be turned. To do this effectually, between the two positions on the Neabsco there is a third, which is vital to both. This is at Satowell's farm. The Third Brigade at Dane's farm, the Texas at Kaube's (and little enough there). We must have at least, two regiments to occupy this farm, which is the key-point of the line. A brigade would be better, but perhaps so much is not available. It may reasonably be supposed that the passage of the Occoquan, the march thence to the Neabsco through a strange country, and the forcing of our positions by overwhelming numbers, would occupy more time than daylight at this season. Notice being given of the crossing by the enemy, we ought reasonably to count on twenty-four hours for General Johnston to move by Bacon road (this supposing the main attack to be here). If the enemy had advanced to attack at Dane's farm by that time, Johnston's attack by the route indicated would fall upon his right and rear, and would unquestionably result in his entire annihilation. It is not, however, well to divide General Johnston's army, for at the same time undoubtedly a heavy demonstration, if not a real attack, will be made in front of Centreville. The gain of twenty-four hours, then, is vital to insure it, I must have more troops. To take them from the masteries will not do. Those are required to watch the river, and few enough they are, since they are threatened both above and below and by the fleet.

Can no aid be given from the well-drilled regiments occupying the Peninsula off from Norfolk. If given, it must be given at once. The enemy has one advance. The road from him to us are in capital condition, and pass over a hard, sandy, gravelly soil; ours for supply or for retreat are almost impassable. It should be remembered I have but two batteries.

W. H. C. WHITING,
Brigadier-General, Commanding.

[Indorsement.]

HEADQUARTERS, CENTREVILLE, November 26, 1861.

Respectfully submitted to the War Department. I earnestly recommend that the re-enforcement asked for by Brigadier-General Whiting be sent to him immediately. His force is too small for what it must attempt, and this one is too weak to be further weakened. We must be driven back if the enemy establishes himself near Evansport.

J. E. JOHNSON,
General.

Rededication of the Restored Brentsville Schoolhouse and Alumnae Reunion



Former students of the Brentsville One-Room School: (l-r standing) Freddy Wolfe, Casper Whetzel, Frank Golladay, Lucy (Bean) Hartman, Nancy (Keys) Shelby, Gladys (Wolfe) Eanes, Frances (Keys) Duckett and sitting, Catherine (Counts) Corner.

The Brentsville One-Room School was officially rededicated as the fourth completed building on the historic site. The event was celebrated with the coming together of three organizations, the Prince William County Historic Preservation Foundation, Historic Prince William and the Prince William County Historic Preservation Division who combined resources and talent to create a grand event. There were a large number of visitors also present to celebrate this wonderful occasion.

Mr. Mark Trbovich, President, PWC Historic Preservation Foundation served as the Master of Ceremonies which got underway promptly at 1:00 p.m. with the Presentation of Colors by the Marine Color Guard from Turner Field, Quantico, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. We are very grateful to Sergeant Major Robert W. Breeden for arranging the color guard for this event. His grandmother (Marye Breeden), six uncles and an aunt attended this school.

Following Mark's opening remarks he introduced Mr. Corey A. Stewart, Chairman At-Large, Prince William BOCS and Mr. Wally Covington, Brentsville District Supervisor, Prince William BOCS, each of whom gave very interesting comments. This was followed by Morgan Breeden who recognized the former students that attended the school.

Mr. Trbovich and Mr. Brendon Hanafin, Historic Preservation Division Chief, presented a plaque of appreciation to Mr. Bill Olson whose donation made the restoration possible. The building was then open for school reunion festivities. Ms. Lucy (Bean) Hartman had the honor of cutting the cake.

At 2:30 the Historic Preservation Foundation met in the Union Church for their annual meeting and voting along with a presentation by Mr. Dennis VanDerlaske, "Of Ice and Schoolhouses: A Look at How the Progressive Movement Influenced Local Buildings." The Historic Prince William organization enjoyed their annual picnic during this same time.

(Continued from page 2)

center of the cap and tapers evenly to the margin, and is watery gray, with a cartilage-like texture. The odor and taste are mildly to strongly farinaceous (similar to the smell of freshly ground flour), to radish-like.

Opinions on the edibility of the mushroom vary. One source considers them to have a “delicate flavor and texture,” and suggests that they are good when “stewed gently in their own juice and then seasoned with salt, pepper and butter.” Others list the species as inedible, and notes that they have a “mildly rancid” smell, and with a taste ranging from rancid to farinaceous. Another says “unknown, but not recommended.” At any rate, the species falls into the general category of brownish *Mycenas* that are generally unappetizing as food due to their small size and delicate consistency.

Mycena galericulata is saprobic, and grows on decaying hardwood and softwood sticks, chips, logs, and stumps. It can also grow from submerged wood, which may give it a terrestrial appearance. It typically grows in small clusters or sometimes singly. The fungus fruits from late spring to early winter. It is a very common and widely distributed species, found throughout the entire temperate zone of the Northern Hemisphere. In the United States, it occurs throughout eastern North America and also along the Pacific Coast.

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mycena_galericulata

Shoemaker, Mulholland Given Army Discharges

Sergeant James R. Shoemaker and T-5 Raymond T. Mulholland, both of Manassas, have been discharged from the Army recently. Mulholland was released at Fort Meade, Md.

Shoemaker, who served 11 months and 8 days in the European Theater with the 84th “Rail-Splitters” Division, fought in some of the toughest battles in Germany and received several outstanding awards. He sent home and brought back with him quite a collection of souvenirs from France, Belgium, Holland and Germany.

Source: The Manassas Journal, October 25, 1945

F e e d b a c k

Your articles about the “Conestogas” have been most enlightening. Etymology is one of my hobbies, so I have found it fascinating to learn so many words and phrases have come to us from the “Conestoga era.”

Your school board excerpts should somehow be published for inclusions with Lucy Phinney’s “Yesterday’s Schools.” They add so much to the historical facts she presents. I find it extremely interesting that the oath (in 1928) devotes one entire paragraph to ascertain that the person being sworn has, in no way, been involved in dueling. Surely the oath has been revised since then!

Thanks for your hard work. Please keep educating us.

Elaine Yankey

P.S.—Glad you were able to retrieve the info from your old hard drive. I had a similar experience last summer and was dismayed to realize how much I’ve come to rely on the computer. And I had vowed never to be a part of the “paperless society!” We really haven’t much choice though, do we?!?!

×××××

Had a hard time understanding the letter to Col Marcy ..too vague about whom he was talking about.

Barbara Janay

×××××

Thank you so much. I enjoy reading your newsletter so much!

Linda Jones
Triangle, VA

×××××

Thanks so much for the updates on events, and great job with the last two newsletters, I am really enjoying the bits about the jail at Brentsville! Very informative!

Best Regards,
Andy Banks

Brentsville Neighbors

Preserving Brentsville's History

Contact us on:

morganbreeden@aol.com

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**

