

# Brentsville Neighbors



Preserving Brentsville's History

April 2013

Hug a Friend Day  
April 26th

Titanic Sunk  
April 15, 1912



Welcome Neighbors,

It's April already! Spring has arrived, Easter has come and gone, and our thoughts are shifting to enjoying the wonderful outdoors. But what about the March we just experienced. One never knew whether to wear shorts or a snow suit until you first stuck your foot out the door. In Brentsville we had 3½ inches of snow on March 24<sup>th</sup> and some of you had even more!

Some very successful events have already taken place at the Historic Site this year and there is a promise of many more yet to come. For example, have you ever considered becoming a Certified Tourism Ambassador (CTA)? The Program is a ground-breaking, nationwide certification program that serves to increase tourism by training and inspiring front-line hospitality employees and volunteers to work together to turn every visitor encounter into a positive experience. The CTA Program goes well beyond basic customer service training; it gives participants the opportunity to build upon their knowledge of the local region, enhance their skills in serving customers, increase their awareness of information resources and discover the power of tourism! If you would like to learn more, you are cordially invited to attend one of our social events where you can spend a Spring day learning at the Brentsville Courthouse Historic Center. We'll tour the site and get a history of the Courthouse, sample some country cooking and take a guided walk through the nature trail to see the spring flowers in bloom. This all takes place at the courthouse on April 10<sup>th</sup> from 5 – 7p.m. The event

is free but it is requested you contact Esther Turner in her office at 540.882.4929 or on her cell phone at 703.447.7446 to register. We'd love to have you!

Very best wishes,

Kay and Morgan



H.L. and Sammy Pearson  
at Webster's Pond c1957  
courtesy of Lance Webster

## This month:

- |                          |        |                      |             |
|--------------------------|--------|----------------------|-------------|
| ➤ Flashback              | page 2 | ➤ The Restored Stone | page 5      |
| ➤ Where Wild Things Live | page 2 | ➤ A Citizen of Note  | page 6      |
| ➤ Snippets               | page 3 | ➤ When War Came      | pages 7 & 8 |
| ➤ My Favorite Fur        | page 4 | ➤ Reader Feedback    | page 9      |

# Flashback

## BIRD DAY IN THE SCHOOLS

Next Tuesday, May 4, has been designated as bird day in the public schools throughout Virginia. Every teacher is asked to hold appropriate exercises which will emphasize man's indebtedness to the birds in an esthetic sense as well as in an economic sense. We hope every teacher in old Prince William is preparing a program for the day. If the teacher can create in her pupils a love for our little feathered neighbors she will have accomplished a great work of conservation.

Any man, woman or child who loves the beauties of nature cannot help but love the birds. Their beautiful plumage, their shy but intelligent ways, and their sweet songs appeal to all who love the handiwork of the great God. How beautiful is the early matinal call of the robin to his mate in the springtime! How inspiring the activity and ceaseless energy of the black martin which rules over your bird box every summer! Where is the man who does not stand in awe at the sight of the diminutive humming bird? Yes, birds help to make life better and more worth while. You are not living a complete life if you do not love the birds.

Aside from the esthetic points in their favor, birds long ago provided their great economic value to our race. Of late years, however, numerous investigations have been made, which, as expected, confirmed the fact that bird life is most essential to the farmer. Nearly every bird is a great lover of insects. This is the source of the bird's nitrogenous food; insects are to the bird what meat is to man. The number of insects destroyed each year is prodigious when you take in to account the fact that the potential possibilities of the insect is destroyed the moment the bird swallows it. If you desire to see how really valuable every bird is, write the Department of Agriculture for their recent farmers bulletin on birds.

It is to be hoped, therefore, that the children, and the older people too, will become better acquainted with the birds. Birds do comparatively little harm (there are very few exceptions); they do a most positive good. Humanity's debt to the birds can best be paid by the cessation of shooting and nest-robbing these defenseless little creatures which lighten life's burden by their song, and by their relentless war upon the insect pests which ravage our fair land.

Source: The Manassas Journal, April 30, 1915

## Where WILD things live...



Gerridae is a family of true bugs commonly known as water striders, water bugs, magic bugs, pond skaters, skaters, skimmers, water scooters, water skaters, water skeeters, water skimmers, water skippers, water spiders, or Jesus bugs. One main characteristic that sets gerrids and other true bugs apart from other insects is that the front wing is only half functional. Rather than using it for flight, it acts as a membranous covering and the thickened part is where claws develop. Gerrids have a mouthpart evolved for piercing and sucking and distinguish themselves by having the unique ability to walk on water. As a result, one could likely find water striders present in any pond, river, or lake.

Family Gerridae are physically characterized by having small, hydrophobic microhairs. These are tiny hairs with more than one thousand microhairs per mm. The entire body is covered by these hairpiles, providing the water strider resistance to splashes or drops of water. These hairs repel the water, preventing drops from weighing down the body.

There are a front pair, middle, and back pair of legs. The front legs are shortest and have claws adapted to puncture prey. These claws are not at the end of the leg, but rather halfway through. The middle legs are longer than the first pair and shorter than the last pair and are adapted for propulsion through the water. The hind pair are the longest and are used for spreading weight over a large surface area as well as steering the bug across the surface of the water. From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia



## Snippets from the County School Board Minutes



### TO THE TEACHERS OF PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY

—  
Resolution of the Virginia State Teachers' Association  
Adopted December 1, 1916.

—  
(Miss Lulu D. Metz, President of the Eighth District Virginia State Teachers' Association)

“Resolved, That whereas the facilities of the State institution for tubercular patients at Catawba are in adequate and whereas it is now practically impossible to provide prompt and sufficient treatment for the large number of applicants to that institution; be it

Resolved, That a committee be appointed from this Association with power to act to procure funds for the erection of a pavilion at the Catawba Sanatorium similar to the Nurses' Cottage for the especial purpose of affording proper treatment for those members of our profession who have fallen victims to this disease.”

The above resolution is published for the benefit of those teachers who may not be familiar with this work of the county organization.

The teachers of Prince William county last session responded to the appeal for this work by a contribution of \$160 but the Eighth District of which

Prince William is a unit, has not yet raised a fair quota of the amount needed.

The teachers of the state must raise \$15,000 in order to secure the \$10,000 appropriated by the state for the erection of this pavilion. This sum must be raised by January 1, 1919.

If every teacher in the state will contribute or raise \$2.50, the amount will be secured. There are in Virginia, 35,000 cases of tuberculosis and statistics have shown that there are twenty or more teachers at Catawba every year, and a heavy percentage that die of the disease. The teachers must provide for the unfortunate ones of their profession.

Let them not fail in this so vital a cause. It may mean life itself to some fellow worker who has fallen victim to the disease.

Source: The Manassas Journal,  
November 15, 1918.

# My Favorite Fur

by  
Lucy Hartman

When I was younger I became interested in the home life of the Indians. I especially wondered how their bedding kept them warm. I knew they used skins of buffalo and other large animals and I wanted to try them out for myself. It so happened I knew someone who worked at a slaughter house so I asked if it was possible to buy a skin from a large animal. I was told it was possible so I anxiously waited for a large animal to be brought in.

I was also told this needed to be done in January as at this time of year the hair was firmly anchored to the skin and would not shed as easily. So the waiting began— one night the person stopped by my house with the skin.

I had to salt down the skin to keep it until Saturday when I could take it to The Plains to a taxidermy shop where they would send it off to be cured and tanned. This would take months to complete I was told.

In due time I got the call that the job was done! So off I went to retrieve my fur. When I got there I was told the price of getting it tanned. Did you know they charge by the square inch? I didn't either. The bill came to a little over a \$100.00 plus tax. I paid it gladly. Took my prize home and looked it over carefully. We noticed little

white things at the roots of the hairs that would have been on the shoulders and when I asked I was told the animal had lice and these were nits or louse eggs that are permanently attached.

When I placed it on my bed I was very pleased with the glossy black fur that I could sleep under and never be chilly again. I used it for many years on my bed and the grandchildren really liked to snuggle under the heavy thing.

I think it is time to retire it as it needs to be treated with something to revive the softness of the skin. I am not sure

how I will let it end its life as a useful item. Any ideas- maybe donate it to a museum.





# The Restored Stone

of  
James F. Clark



Whether you consider James F. Clark a villain or a victim of circumstance makes little difference. It is clear that HE believed himself innocent of crime and was prepared to prove it in a court of law. As we all know, he died at the hand of Lucien Fewell before he had that chance.

Clark was buried in his family cemetery, located on grounds now a part of the Quantico Marine Base. His grave, along with those of many other families, was moved to a consolidated area known as Cedar Run Cemetery, located in Prince William but maintained by the Marines.

At some point his head stone was broken and a repair was attempted leaving a most unsatisfactory job. Historian and President of Historic Prince William, Bill Olson, came to the rescue, removing the stone and having it restored at his expense. He then replaced the stone in the Clark Family Lot of Cedar Run.

## IN MEMORIAM JAMES F. CLARK

Died Sept 2, 1872

From a wound received by  
the hands of an assassin

Aged 28 years

Though young in the legal  
profession, yet he attained a  
respectable position at the bar

Generous, noble, spirited and a  
true friend. Loved in life and  
mourned in death by all  
who knew him.

Requiescat en pace

C.L. NEALL  
ALEX. VA

# Citizen of Note

Joseph M. Davis

## ANOTHER VETERAN DEAD

**Joseph M. Davis, Born in Prince William,  
Died in Loudoun  
April 5.**

[Hamilton Enterprise]

On Monday, April 5, following a long illness, Mr. Joseph Madison Davis died at the home of his son-in-law, Mr. Clifton Warner, near Paeonian Spring.

Mr. Davis was born August 10, 1842, in Prince William County. At the early age of 18 he enlisted in the Confederate Army and served nearly four years as a member of the 4th Virginia Cavalry, Company A, under the command of General J. E. B. Stuart. He took part in many noted battles, among them, the first battle of Bull Run, Seven Pines, the Wilderness, and was captured near Fredericksburg. An exchange of prisoners made his term of imprisonment only a few months.

He was soon at the front again and in the battle of Trevillian's Station received a wound which rendered him unfit for active duty during the remainder of the war.

At the second battle of Bull Run his cavalry distinguished itself by making the famous raid that resulted in the capture of General Pope's headquarters, securing papers which showed the plan of manoeuvres of his division of the Northern army.

Shortly after the close of the war, in May 1867, he married Miss Sallie E. R. Glasscock, also of Prince William county. A few months thereafter they moved to this county and settled near Middleburg where they continued to reside and reared a family of six children, all of whom, with his wife, survive.

As a husband, he was devotion pure and simple; as a father, he was indulgent to the last degree always having in mind the welfare of those whom he loved; as a man he was slow in choosing intimate friends, but when the tender chords of his nature were touched by the true and genuine sincerity, you could count him a friend in the highest sense.

He was a consistent member of the Methodist church from his early manhood, and numbered among his many friends a score or more of the ministers of the Baltimore conference.

Source: The Manassas Journal, April 23, 1915

Ms. Newland:	Freddie, how do you spell 'crocodile?'
Freddie:	K-R-O-K-O-D-I-A-L'
Ms. Newland:	No, that's wrong
Freddie:	Maybe it is wrong, but you asked me how I spell it.

# When WAR Came to Brentsville

HDQRS. CAVALRY CORPS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,  
April 24, 1864.

Major-General HUMPHREYS,  
Chief of Staff, Army of the Potomac:

GENERAL: Captain Goddard, one of my aides, has just returned from Grove Church and reports that all the dispositions I notified you of this morning have been made. The regiment at Morrisville has been harassed to some extent by guerrillas, and the party at Grove Church somewhat alarmed. Refugees and negroes report the rebel cavalry are numerous at Fredericksburg, and the country down toward Port Conway as having a large number of the rebel cavalry at their homes. Dismounted men in small parties make their appearance at Spotted Tavern, Hartwood Church, Stafford, and at Brentsville. The party at Grove Church is now 385 men. I think, however, that Morrisville would be a much safer place, and the same ground could be covered by strong scouting parties. Grove Church makes a very tempting bait for a sudden rush with a strong force, and it would require some time to get strong supports to the relief of the party stationed there.

P. H. SHERIDAN,  
Major-General, Commanding.

Philip Henry Sheridan (March 6, 1831 – August 5, 1888) was a career United States Army officer and a Union general in the American Civil War. His career was noted for his rapid rise to major general and his close association with Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant, who transferred Sheridan from command of an infantry division in the Western Theater to lead the Cavalry Corps of the Army of the Potomac in the East. In 1864, he defeated Confederate forces in the Shenandoah Valley and his destruction of the economic infrastructure of the Valley, called "The Burning" by residents, was one of the first uses of scorched earth tactics in the war. In 1865, his cavalry pursued Gen. Robert E. Lee and was instrumental in forcing his surrender at Appomattox.



Sheridan prosecuted the later years of the Indian Wars of the Great Plains. Both as a soldier and private citizen, he was instrumental in the development and protection of Yellowstone National Park. In 1883 Sheridan was appointed general-in-chief of the U.S. Army, and in 1888 he was promoted to the rank of General of the Army during the term of President Grover Cleveland.

Sheridan claimed he was born in Albany, New York, the third child of six by John and Mary Meenagh Sheridan, immigrants from the parish of Killinkere, County Cavan, Ireland. He grew up in Somerset, Ohio. Fully grown, he reached only 5 feet 5 inches tall, a stature that led to the nickname, "Little Phil." Abraham Lincoln described his appearance in a famous anecdote: "A brown, chunky little chap, with a



(Continued from page 7)

long body, short legs, not enough neck to hang him, and such long arms that if his ankles itch he can scratch them without stooping."

Sheridan worked as a boy in town general stores, and eventually as head clerk and bookkeeper for a dry goods store. In 1848, he obtained an appointment to the United States Military Academy from one of his customers, Congressman Thomas Ritchey; Ritchey's first candidate for the appointment was disqualified by failing an examination of mathematics skill and a "poor attitude." In his third year at West Point, Sheridan was suspended for a year for fighting with a classmate, William R. Terrill. The previous day, Sheridan had threatened to run him through with a bayonet in reaction to a perceived insult on the parade ground. He graduated in 1853, 34th in his class of 52 cadets.

Sheridan's actions during the Civil War are documented in many ways so shall be omitted here for the sake of brevity.

On June 3, 1875, Sheridan married Irene Rucker, a daughter of Army Quartermaster General Daniel H. Rucker. She was 22, and he was 44. They had four children: Mary, born in 1876; twin daughters, Irene and Louise, in 1877; and Philip, Jr., in 1880. After the wedding, Sheridan and his wife moved to Washington, D.C. They lived in a house given to them by Chicago citizens in appreciation for Sheridan's protection of the city after the Great Chicago Fire in 1871.

Sheridan served as the ninth president of the National Rifle Association.

Philip Sheridan suffered a series of massive heart attacks two months after sending his memoirs to the publisher. At 57 years of age, hard living and hard campaigning and a lifelong love of good food and drink had taken their toll. Thin in his youth, he had reached over 200 pounds. After his first heart attack, the U.S. Congress quickly passed legislation to promote him to general and

he received the news from a congressional delegation with joy, despite his pain. His family moved him from the heat of Washington and he died of heart failure in his summer cottage in the Nonquitt section of Dartmouth, Massachusetts, on August 5, 1888.

His body was returned to Washington and he was buried on a hillside facing the capital city near Arlington House in Arlington National Cemetery. The sculpture on the marker was executed by English sculptor Samuel James Kitson. The burial helped elevate Arlington to national prominence. His wife Irene never remarried, saying, "I would rather be the widow of Phil Sheridan than the wife of any man living."

Philip Sheridan, Jr., followed in his father's footsteps and graduated near the bottom of the West Point class of 1902. He served as a cavalry officer, a military aide to President Theodore Roosevelt, and in Washington with the general staff. He was promoted to major in 1917 and was also felled by a heart attack, at age 37, in February 1918.



Maj. Gen. Philip Sheridan and his generals in front of Sheridan's tent, 1864.  
Left to right: Henry E. Davies, David McMurtrie Gregg, Sheridan, Wesley Merritt, Alfred Torbert [Kay Breedon's distant cousin], and James H. Wilson.



## F e e d b a c k

What a fantastic newsletter; I look forward to each one. I had no idea Sammy had passed. I am glad he had the opportunity to write such an interesting article and to learn of his life after Brentsville. Reminds me I must get started again, as life is usually taken from us at any unsuspecting moment.

There are still so many folks who could do an article on their memories of our hometown. If you hear from Mary please give her my regards.

Dorothy "Dottie" (Bean) Furrow

><><><><

The article by "Sammy" Pearson was a remarkable treat. Thanks to Mary for getting it to you. He beautifully captured a different era, one we 'older folks' look back on with appreciation for what we had and is lost forever. I was delighted to learn about what an exceptional and inspiring life Sammy had.

Thanks again for all you do to keep our memories alive.

DeLancey (Lance) Webster  
Los Angeles

><><><><

Wow, it sure sounds like all you folks who grew up in Brentsville were so blessed to have grown up there. I LOVE hearing this! I love keeping those sweet memories alive. I think it's so important for our children to see how simple pleasures, a nice family life, and faith in God are enough! We are rich if we have those...

Thank you, Morgan, for keeping the memories alive! You're a blessing to MANY!

Heidi Baumstark

><><><><

As always, I thoroughly enjoyed the March 2013 Brentsville Newsletter. It never ceases to amaze me with all of the information you provide about Brentsville and it's people.

To clarify the information given on Page 8: The engagement ring was given to my great grandmother, Ada Davis, by her husband-to-be, French Davis. It was subsequently given by Ada to my grandfather, P. L. Proffitt, to give to her daughter, Viola. Viola, my grandmother, gave the ring to me to be given to my wife-to-be, Lynn on our engagement. So this is the third generation to enjoy this wonderful ring.

As an aside, it was Viola who scratched her name on the window pane of their home. Thanks to

your generosity, this window has a treasured place in our home.

Please keep up all of your work on behalf of Brentsville.

Howard Churchill

><><><><

Thanks a lot for the email. I was sitting here thinking about how great it would be if, occasionally, the deep waters of the creeks that your friend mentioned would be swimming holes on days that you could tell us about. You could have a couple or so lifeguards volunteering their time for everyone's safety. Something to think about?

Your friend,  
Jim Harvey

><><><><

Appreciate the Brentsville Neighborhood Newsletter; it is informative as always! Especially liked the piece about David "Sam" Pearson and the history of the Balloon Corps. Never realized that there were observer balloons. Great history lesson! Keep up the good work, Morgan.

Mickey Winslow

><><><><

Thank you so much for "Sam's Story". I'm just sorry he didn't get to see it and the comments it's sure to get from readers.

I was thrilled when I received the newsletter in LARGE print. I thought maybe you realized some of us need larger print to read and was ready to send you a big thank you note. Then I received the second email and things got back to normal; but I enjoyed the one copy. Thank you and Kay for all the time and energy you put into this publication for our enjoyment.

Mary (Pearson) Pumphrey

><><><><

I always enjoy reading the Brentsville Neighbors newsletter when it arrives. I especially look forward to reading about the wild things and seeing the beautiful images of them. Although I'm no longer deeply involved with historic preservation in Prince William County, your newsletter keeps me up to date with Brentsville's past and present. Thank you!

Heather Hembrey

# Brentsville Neighbors

## Preserving Brentsville's History

Contact us on:

[morganbreeden@aol.com](mailto: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**

