Brentsville Neighbors

"Preserving Brentsville's History"

June 2014

Welcome Neighbors,

It has finally started to feel like summer. Gardens are planted, kids are swimming, high school graduations are taking place with the young people anxiously looking forward to college and the local "sand lots" are alive with baseball. Life is good!

We were pleased to receive more than 200 visitors to the exhibition auto show who drooled over 21 classic vehicles and were entertained by The Classic Spotlight Band whose music took us back to the days of our youth. What a show it was! Thank you Amy for making it a wonderful day.

Last month we reflected on the love and caring of our mothers while this month we remember so many things about our fathers. To help celebrate this event the Brentsville Courthouse Site will be honoring all fathers with FREE tours on the 14th and 15th from 11 a.m. until 4 p.m. If you have not been to the site lately, this would be a wonderful reason to go.

Baseball is back at Brentsville! On June 28th from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. enjoy baseball as this community has for generations! Watch as Prince William County Firefighters and Police Officers challenge each other in an exciting game of softball to raise funds to support the American Red Cross. See the actual uniform worn by Nelson Keys as a member of the Brentsville Wildcats. Bring your bat and glove to join in a "pick up" game after their charity game. Historic games will also be played throughout the day. Bring a picnic lunch or purchase

hot dogs, peanuts and drinks just like you find at the ballpark. Tours for the historic buildings will be given on the hour. Join the Brentsville community for a day filled with fun and food, and a chance to support an important charity. This program is free but a \$5.00 donation is requested to benefit the American Red Cross.

You are also invited to enjoy a historic Sunday at the Brentsville Union Church on June 29th from 11 a.m. until noon. The Brentsville Union Church was built in the 1870's and served the Brentsville community for over 100 years. Today the country church has been restored and serves as a glimpse into life of the 19th century. Come learn about the practices of faith that were once held here and how important churches were to society and local communities. Program conducted in partnership with Historic Faith Ministries, a non-profit living history organization focusing on Victorian period customs and spirituality. Tours offered after the program for \$5.00. For information on this and all events, please call 703-365-7895. And just in case you don't know, Brentsville Courthouse Historic Centre is located at 12229 Bristow Road (on route 619) in Brentsville. We hope to see you there!

Lastly, we wish to thank George Melvin and Mary Croushorn for their continued support.

Very best wishes, Kay & Morgan

This month:

➤ Letter From Brentsville pages 2 & 9
➤ Where Wild Things Live page 3
➤ The Iron Brigade pages 4 & 5

When WAR Came page 6

My Life in Brentsville page 7
 The Lake Jackson Dam page 8
 Union Church Improvements page 9

Letter From Brentsville



There is a certain grim satisfaction to be extracted, we find, from the performance of one's civic duties, painful though they may be. Now take last Wednesday night for instance. I

was standing at the kitchen sink, without a care in the world, briskly scrubbing the milk pail; humming a merry little tune and sloshing the H. T. H. about from jar to jar, occasionally holding one to the light to admire it's cleanliness, through which the words "one quart Mason" shone with pristine clarity. I could hear the dear little children upstairs in the bathtub, pouring water out on the floor and trying to drown each other, and thought cheerfully to myself that I would dispose of THEM in short order and then retire to the privacy of my boudoir with that new book, to spend a nice quiet evening improving my mind and acquiring historical knowledge about the reign of Charles II and a certain female with the uncommon name of 'Amber'. It was at that juncture that Gill stuck his head in the door and tossed a bombshell into this charming domestic scene.

"Somebody called you up a couple of hours ago," he said, casually; "I think it was Mr. Sonafrank." For a minute I dallied with the notion of pretending that I hadn't heard him, then sighed, "What did HE want? Knowing full well that it would be something that would require exertion on my part; Mr. Sonafrank is a man for whom we have the utmost respect, but he has such a way of getting people to DO things!

"It was about a meeting at the schoolhouse," said Gill, and added, "I must have forgotten to tell you."

"Well, since you forgot it THIS long, you might in all decency have managed to forget it a little longer, "I murmured, glancing at the clock; it was almost quarter to eight. I caught my reflection in the window-glass grimed with honest soil and toil amongst the strawberry beds, hesitated a moment, and was lost! Moral fiber and feminine curiosity triumphed over natural inertia; I dropped the milk utensils and rushed to the telephone, where my worst fears were confirmed – there was still time enough to get to the meeting, if one hurried. Fifteen

minutes later Mrs. Stevens, whom I seemed to have acquired en route, and I were steaming along to Manassas; both of us furtively trying to remove an excess of Prince W. County topsoil from under our fingernails.

We weren't VERY late; they had just reached item two on the list. Item two, as I recall, has something about teacher's salaries,—a subject which, frankly, is beginning to bore me excessively. I think it would be well worth the money just to get a respite from it as a topic of conversation. Everyone else evidently felt the same way, since there was no quibbling, and the Chair passed lightly to Number Three. This had to do with the Sales Tax, the mere mention of which was expected to foment such a disturbance that it was announced it would be left until last, when the women and children could take cover, safe out of range of stray shots and heated language. Number Four dealt with State and Federal control of education, and there was a trifling amount of skirmishing over that. I think the dread word "Communism" was heard to foul the air of the auditorium but we trust it was properly fumigated afterwards so that no contamination would result. (I had just been reading a book about it, so felt Impervious and Superior.)

The gentleman in the front row was answering stray questions referred to him, with a certain air of authority, and I whispered to Mrs. Stevens, "Who is he?" Mrs. Stevens is wonderful; she knows everybody. "Oh that's Mr. Peters," she said. With maidenly modesty, I averted my eyes, then quickly looked again to see if I could detect any evidences of the cloven hoof and the forked tail which, through my limited civic experience, I have come to associate with those who dispense the Wherewithal. He was sitting down, which made observation difficult, but I tell you I looked very closely, and as a good reporter must inform the reading public in general, and Brentsville District P.T.A. in particular, that those rumors about horns are completely unfounded. Several members of the school board were sitting behind us, which made me a little nervous; one never knows what THEY are going to do. But they conducted themselves with perfect propriety. At last item three was reached, and the feminine contingent

WILD things live... Where

Japanese Beetle

Popillia japonica

The beetle species Popillia japonica is commonly known as the Japanese beetle. It is just under ½ inch wide, with iridescent copper-colored elytra and green thorax and head. It is not very

destructive in Japan, where it is controlled by natural predators, but in America it is a serious pest of about 200 species of plants, including rose bushes, grapes, hops, canna, crape myrtles, birch trees, linden trees and others. These insects damage plants by skeletonizing the foliage, that is, consuming only the leaf material between the veins, and may also feed on fruit on the plants if present.

As the name suggests, the Japanese beetle is native

to Japan. The insect was first found in the United States in 1916 in a nursery near Riverton, New Jersey. It is thought the beetle larvae entered the United States in a shipment of iris bulbs prior to 1912, when inspections of commodities entering the country began.

The life cycle of the Japanese beetle is typically one year in most parts of the United States, but this can be extended in cooler climates; for instance, in its native Japan, the beetle's life cycle is two years long as a result of the higher latitudes of the grasslands required for the larval stage. During the larval stage, the white grubs can be identified by their V-shaped raster pattern. They live in lawns and other grasslands, where they eat the roots of grasses. During that stage, it is susceptible to a fatal disease called milky spore disease, caused by a bacterium called milky spore, Paenibacillus (formerly Bacillus) popilliae. The USDA developed this biological control and it is commercially available in powder form for application to lawn areas. Standard applications (low density across a broad area) take from one to five years to establish maximal protection against larval survival (depending on climate),

expanding through the soil through repeated rounds of infection.

It is a clumsy flier, dropping several inches when it hits a wall. Japanese beetle traps

therefore consist of a pair of

crossed walls with a bag or plastic container underneath, and are baited with floral scent, pheromone (a secreted or excreted chemical factor that triggers a social response in members of the same species), or both. However, studies conducted at the University of Kentucky, Eastern Illinois University and by many US extension service branches have shown beetles attracted to traps frequently do not end up in the traps, but

alight on plants in the vicinity, thus causing more damage along the flight path of the beetles and near the trap than may have occurred if the trap were not present. Traps are most effective when spread out over an entire community, and downwind and at the borders (i.e., as far away as possible, particularly upwind), of managed property containing plants being protected. Natural repellents include catnip, chives, garlic, and tansy, as well as the remains of dead beetles, but these methods have limited effectiveness. Additionally, when present in small numbers, the beetles may be manually controlled using a soap-water spray mixture, shaking a plant in the morning hours and disposing of the fallen beetles, or simply picking them off attractions such as rose flowers, since the presence of beetles attracts more beetles to that plant.

Natural predators of the beetle are the anchor bug and the blue-winged wasp.

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The Iron Brigade at Brentsville by Bill Backus

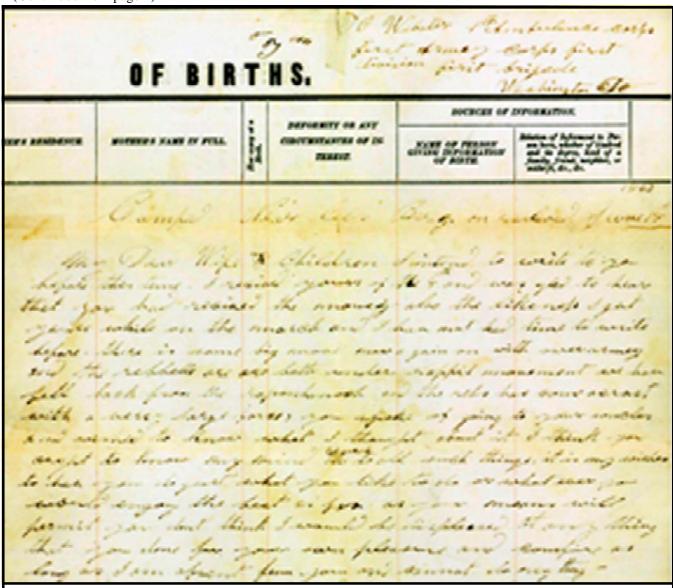
Perhaps the most famous unit to emerge from the American Civil War was the all Mid-Western "Iron Brigade" that fought in the Eastern Theater. While most people associate the Iron Brigade with the battles of Gettysburg, Antietam, and Gainesville, those battles and more only made up a small fraction of the Iron Brigade's war time service. Instead, the majority of their military career was spent either in camp or on the march. During various times during the War, the Iron Brigade visited Brentsville, and on each visit caused more ruin and destruction.

The first time that members of the Iron Brigade visited Brentsville was in the spring of 1862. With the Confederate evacuation of Northern Virginia, Federal troops advanced south from Washington along the Orange and Alexandria Railroad. In April elements of the Federal army, which included the Iron Brigade, had advanced to Bristoe Station, where they were stopped by a heavy snow fall. With the advance temporarily suspended, soldiers became tourists and started to venture east towards Brentsville. A soldier in the 6th Wisconsin wrote of his first impression that Brentsville was "like the generality of county seats in this State, is a 'one-horse' village, consisting of a population of about one hundred and fifty inhabitants. The public buildings, consisting of a Court House and jail look as if they were built in the year one; the dwelling houses are mostly old frames leaning up against each other so as to avoid tumbling down. Modern improvements are unknown to the dilapidated chivalry of Brentsville."

One building that saw extensive damage during this time was the residence of Eppa Hunton, then serving in the 8th Virginia Infantry. A soldier from

Wisconsin noted that the house had been abandoned upon the Confederate retreat and was occupied by one of Hunton's slaves. Entering the house, "I found occupied by a number of soldiers, who were taking it easy upon the handsome sofas chairs and lounges. In the parlor I observed a stalwart Pennsylvania Zouave beating away upon a piano while a dozen others were going it upon a regular 'break down.' In 'my lady's chamber' a squad of soldiers had taken up quarters, where they were cooking and washing. Her handsome mahogany bedstead was holding the elongated forms of four 'horrible Zouaves,' who declared to me that it was a d d splendid sleeping machine. The Colonel's library had been completely stripped of all its books; private papers and letters scattered over the floor; writing desk and book-case partly mashed. It was sad to see this indiscriminate destruction of property and then reflect upon the causes which had produced it." While the Federals proved to be destructive to Brentsville, the enslaved residents of the town realized that the soldier's presence meant their freedom. As one soldier noted "now that they are at liberty to express their sentiments without fear of the lash are 'wide awake,' and appreciate the difference between slavery and freedom." Within a week the snow had melted and the Federals continued their advance south and left Brentsville behind.

The next time that members of the Iron Brigade would visit Brentsville would be in June of 1863 on their march up to Gettysburg and destiny. By this time in the War, enough soldiers had passed through town to create an air of desolation, which the Iron Brigade added to during their brief visit here. Assigned to the immense wagon train



Portion of the Webster letter -- full transcript will be in a future newsletter

that followed any Civil War army, was Timothy Webster of the 24th Michigan. Wishing to write back home to his family, but without paper, Webster described to his wife how he was able to obtain some writing material.

"You may think the is [gwear] mate paper but I thought it would do verry well as it did not cost me any thing we come through a desisted village there was a large court house and some other publick buildings it was a county seat all the reckords and documents of the county for a hundread years was left behind ower boys

volunteerly destroyed them this paper was out of one of the books."

The Iron Brigade, along with other parts of the Federal Army, would pass through Brentsville later in the war, but they would not cause the amount of damage they did in 1862 and 1863. The residents of Brentsville learned that just the passage of a Civil War army could be as destructive as a great battle.

When WAR Came to Brentsville

ANNANDALE, June 20, 1863-7 a. m.

Colonel J. H. TAYLOR, Chief of Staff, Washington, D. C.:

Colonel: Our cavalry returned to Centreville last evening, after visiting Wolf Run, Brentsville, and Manassas Junction. They captured 8 prisoners, among them the lieutenant-colonel who ordered the draft at Brentsville. Colonel Lowell reports all quiet in front. The railroad is in running order beyond Bull Run. Atrain leaves for Manassas this morning. We are on the move to Fairfax and Centreville.

RUFUS KING Brigadier-General Commanding.

Rufus King (January 26 or July 26, 1814 – October 13, 1876) was a newspaper editor, educator, U.S. diplomat, and a Union brigadier general in the American Civil War.

King was born in New York City, New York, the grandson of Rufus King, delegate for Massachusetts to the Continental Congress and Constitutional the Convention. After graduation from Columbia College, where his father, Charles King, served as president, King enrolled in the United States Military Academy at West Point. King graduated near the top of his class, and was appointed to the engineer corps in 1833. He resigned his commission in 1836.

After a short time with the New York and Erie Railroad, King served as the associate editor for two newspapers, the Albany Evening Journal and the Albany Advertiser (1841–45). At this point, he left New York and moved to the Wisconsin

Territory, accomplishing a mixture of politics (member of the 1848 Wisconsin constitutional convention), journalism (part owner of the Milwaukee Sentinel and Gazette), and education (superintendent of schools in Milwaukee and a regent of the University of Wisconsin–Madison). King also organized and played in the first three baseball games played in the state of Wisconsin. The matches were played at the old State Fairgrounds (what is now the Marquette University campus) during the winter of 1859.

King was appointed by President Abraham Lincoln as Minister to the Papal States in 1861. On his way to Rome when the Civil War broke out, he took a leave of absence to join the Army. He was appointed a brigadier general of the Wisconsin militia on April 15, 1861, and of U.S. volunteers on May 17, and was given authorization to raise a Wisconsin regiment. King helped organize what came to be known as the famous Iron Brigade, which he commanded

briefly.

However, before the Iron Brigade saw combat, King was promoted to command of a division (which included the Brigade) in the I Corps of the Army of the Potomac. The Division's first action was in the Second Battle of Bull Run in August 1862, but King had suffered a fit of epilepsy and could not command it. He was replaced by Abner Doubleday.

In December 1862, King served on the court-martial of Maj. Gen. Fitz John Porter for disobedience and cowardice for his actions at Second Bull Run - which King himself had missed.

His epileptic seizures became more frequent, and King was unable to return to active

duty. Finally, in October 1863, King resigned his commission, and took up his ministerial post.

Returning to New York from Rome in 1867, King served for two years as deputy comptroller of customs for the Port of New York, but then retired from public life on account of failing health until he died in 1876. He is buried in Grace Churchyard, Jamaica, New York. King was the father of Rufus King, Jr., of the U.S. Horse Artillery Brigade in the Civil War, and General Charles King of the Philippine-American War.

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia



My Life in Brentsville

by JoAnne Parsons

My name is JoAnne Parsons. I hope everyone is enjoying the outdoors now that winter is finally gone. It was certainly the longest winter I can remember. Anyway, Morgan Breeden has asked me to share my life, while living in Brentsville, so here goes...

I first moved to Brentsville in 1974. It seems so long ago. My dad, Robert Schaeffer, had just built us a new house on Izaak Walton Dr. At that time I was a junior at Osbourn High School and didn't like the idea of going to a new High School. As luck would have it, I soon met Georgie Reeves who was working for his dad (I'll call him Big George Reeves) at the Brentsville Superette. I soon discovered that he was going to Osbourn High School also. He offered to drive my sister Sharon and myself to school. I was happy to have already made a new friend.

I soon made another friend after my father took himself for a walk down Izaak Walton Dr. one day only to return and report that he found me a friend. That friend's name was Kim Best and to this very day she is still one of my very best friends. Who knew that dad was so wise.

I moved out of Brentsville after I graduated to start my own life. I married Lester (Spud) Parsons in 1984 and we bought our first house on Linton Hall Road. We lived there for 22 years.

In 1999 we were fortunate to purchase some land from Lester's cousin, Gaynell Orendorff. It was right next to Cedar Run Creek. To have property near a body of water was a dream we both shared. The land at one time belonged to Lester's Uncle Lloyd and Aunt Sis Keys.

With the sale of our home on Linton Hall Rd. we started to build our new home on Izaak Walton in 2006. While the home was being built we moved into the brick house across from the Brentsville Superette that Lester's mom, Mary Parsons, had previously lived in.

In 2007 we moved into our new home which put me back in Brentsville. It wasn't long before I became a member of Hatcher's Memorial Baptist Church. I instantly felt welcomed by my new church family and they have been such a blessing to me since.

I have many fond memories of Brentsville as a young girl. One that comes to mind is "the log." I liked

it there because the water was always moving, it wasn't that deep and was quite refreshing to swim in during those hot summer days. Another memory is when a group of friends and family had turned the old courthouse into Brentsville's first Haunted House. We did such a good job that I recall several younger kids running out of the building screaming and crying. I caught up with them and reassured them everything was OK and it was only people dressed up in costumes.

I remember also playing pool in the section of the building beside the Brentsville Superette. There was some pretty stiff competition with players like Merle Machen, Steve Moore and Lester was a pretty good player as well. I recall one winter placing a \$20 bet with Steve Moore that he wouldn't jump off the bridge on 619. He jumped in, clothes still on, and I lost that bet. Sometimes on weekends when the weather was nice a group of friends would get together for a game of baseball behind the one-room schoolhouse. Later, after playing ball, we'd grill hot dogs and burgers. What a great time to be young!

I also worked part-time for Big George Reeves at the house beside his store. He had a real estate business there and I'd answer the phone for him. It provided me with some spending money.

Prince William County had at one time used the one-room schoolhouse as a recreation facility for the local youth. There were several things to do there but I always gravitated to the air hockey table. I think there was a Fooze Ball game too.

Since living in our home by the creek I've seen many deer, turkeys, fox, bald eagles, a muskrat, beaver and various types of birds. I remember singing 'I'm in Heaven' one day while floating on a raft in the creek. I think I've turned into one of those Tree Hugger people. I just love living in Brentsville.

I hope you've enjoyed my story and I want to thank Morgan Breeden for his subtle hints to me about writing on my life in Brentsville and for the many, things he does for his love of our little place here on Earth called Brentsville.

Many Blessings and good health to each and every one of you.

JoAnne



The Lake Jackson Dam ---Update---

Dear Lake Jackson neighbors-

I write to you this evening to provide you with an update on the work at the Lake Jackson Dam. I am happy to share with you that the concrete work is now complete, approximately two weeks earlier than expected, and the once hollow dam is now a stable, concrete-filled structure and the toe drains have stopped flowing. The contractor also repaired the undermining that had developed on the downstream side of the dam. This is very exciting news that I know we have all been waiting to hear for quite some time now.

I also wanted to share with you that it has come to our attention that the seal on the dam gate has suffered some pretty extensive damage due to its exposure to the elements. You may know that it was necessary to keep the gate up prior to and during the construction process to minimize the pressure that the lake water put on the upstream face of the dam, and to allow the contractor to do the repair work. This prolonged exposure is now causing the seal to leak, and the seal must be replaced for it to function properly. This work was not part of the original contract and we were unaware that it would be necessary. The County's purchasing office is currently working to establish a contract to have the work performed, and we are hoping that the same contractor who has performed the repairs to-date will also perform the replacement of the gate seal. Unfortunately, the gate seal must be custom fabricated which takes approximately three to four weeks, and then it will take approximately one week to install the new seal. If all goes well, we hope the new gate seal will be installed and the gate will be lowered into place sometime around mid-June. As I have mentioned before, there is always the possibility of severe weather or unforeseen circumstances that create delays, however we will do our best to get the additional work done as soon as possible.

Until the new seal is fabricated and the contractor is ready to install it, County staff will lower the dam gate allowing the lake to fill temporarily. This will help to slow the growth of vegetation and will allow the residents to enjoy use of the lake. Once the heavy rains that we are now experiencing stop, the gate will be lowered into place. When the contractor is ready to install the new seal, the gate will be raised again to allow them to do their work and complete the project. We will do our best to inform the residents when the gate will once again be raised, but it is important to know that we may not have much notice when the contractor is ready to recommence the repair work, and therefore may not be able to give residents much notice. Therefore, we encourage residents to make any necessary preparations and take appropriate precautions for the water level to rise temporarily, and then to recede again for a very short time.

As a reminder, please be aware that residents are not allowed in the fenced area around the dam nor on the dam for safety reasons. Also, it is very important that the workers on-site be allowed to do their work without interruption. Please direct any questions you have to my office and we will be sure to respond as quickly as possible.

Again, thank you for your continued patience throughout this process. As always, I encourage you to contact me or my Chief of Staff, Delain Moyers, at dmoyers@pwcgov.org or (703)792-4621 with any questions and we will respond to you as soon as possible.

Thank you! Marty Nohe Coles District Supervisor decided to brave the horrors of gentlemanly language and remain. Mr. Kirby from Quantico, who apparently had also read a book lately, arose in full battle array to speak upon the sales tax, but was pacified when Mr. (Journal) Johnson pointed out that you suffer less by dribbling your life's blood out in minute drops than you do when some character from the Treasury Department says ominously, "Stand and Deliver, or it's Alcatraz for you, Bud." We are happy to report that there were no casualties, and the meeting broke up with everybody still speaking to everybody else.

Mrs. Stevens drew a long breath of the balmy night air, and smiled with that contented expression seen only on the faces of those leaving a dentist's office or a civic forum. We Seen our duty and we Done it, our consciences were at peace with the world.

Mr. and Mrs. Ermine Wade were guests of Mr. and Mrs. Grady Shoemaker on Sunday.

Mrs. Myrtle Keys' son, David, and brother, Loyd, of Alexandria, were out on Sunday.

Mr. Hubert Michael, and family visited Mr. and Mrs. Irving Spitzer.

Mr. and Mrs. Jim Keys, and Mrs. Isobel keys, were guests of Mrs. Lily keys on Sunday afternoon.

Mary Lou Lipscomb spent the week-end at the Stevens, and Mrs. Steven's father, Mr. George Heslin, of Alexandria, spent the Memorial Day week-end with his family.

Mr. Cash Keys and his new bride spent Sunday in Brentsville visiting friends.

The Bradshaws had a house full over the weekend; Mr. and Mrs. Allen Herring, from Washington, Mr. and Mrs. Murray Bradshaw, from Rockville, Md., and Mrs. Bradshaw's niece, Nancy Frinks. Mrs. Herring's father, Mr. Godfrey, of Nokesville was a guest on Sunday, and also Mrs. Breeden, from Atlantic City.

Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Breeden moved into their new home at Bull Run on Sunday.

Best Regards,

Agnes Webster.

Source: The Manassas Messenger, June 6, 1947

Brentsville Union Church Site Improvements



Since the 1870's, the Brentsville Union Church has provided the residents of Brentsville and Prince William County a place of worship and fellowship. Some residents of Brentsville have been married here and this tradition continues today as a rental facility for the Brentsville Courthouse Historic Centre. In 2006, the Union Church was fully restored and over time minor upgrades have taken place to the building to make it a suitable facility for public programs and wedding rentals. The most recent and most visible improvement took place in late April as a new walkway and ramp were installed around the building. As many of you know, most of the walkways around the site are composed of gravel dust and this has caused some damage to the restored floors and was not always suitable for brides and grooms. The new walkway is made of paver stones and leads from the rear of the building to the front. This new landscaping will make the site use more practical and beautify the landscaping around the Union Church. On your next visit to Brentsville, please check out the improvement and of course, if you are interested in renting out the church for a wedding or function, call the site office at 703-365-7895.

Rob Orrison

Historic Site Operations Supervisor, PWC-HPD

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