SNEED ACRES

MS. CALLIE LILLIE OWEN

9207 OLD SMYRNA ROAD
BRENTWOOD, TN 37027

(615) 373-9370

SNEED ACRES

James Sneed and his wife Bethenia Hardin Perkins Sneed came to Brentwood in 1798 and built Sneed Acres. The family, which has been influential in it's own right, was closely connected with some of Williamson County's most prominent families, including the Hardings, the Hardemans and the Perkins. Sneed Acres is the original log cabin built by James Sneed. The stone chimneys use stepback method of construction. The dining room and kitchen is separated from the house by a dog trot. The house is still occupied by descendants of James Sneed, the builder.

Brentwood Brochure

SNEED ACRES

In 1798 a man by the name of James Sneed and others came to what is now called Brentwood.

James was born in Virginia to Zachriah and Martha Nance Sneed.

A few years before he came to Brentwood, he married Bethenia Harden Perkins. They had twelve children, three of whom built Windy Hill, Brentvale Farm and Foxview, all on Old Smyrna Road.

Bethenia Sneed died at the age of forty two. Then James Sneed married Mary Hunt.

Sneed Acres still stands on the original site on Old Smyrna Road. The old log structure had four rooms with a dog trot between the dining room and the kitchen. This was later covered with weatherboard. Recently the house was completely remodeled and enlarged. It stands as a fond reminder of where James Sneed raised his large family that had a great impact on the community in which they lived.

When he proudly presented himself to General William B. Bate he could scarcely believe his ears when he was told to go home to his mother. When he refused to leave General Bate added insult to injury by telling him he would whip him if he did not mind besides sending him home. "I will come back if you do!" replied the defiant youngster, and in exasperation the general told him he might stay and be the waterboy. He soon received a more dignified place in the ranks and served until the war was over in the 2ND Tennessee Infantry Regiment.

Robert Irvin Moore had a grand scale in mind when he started his house but, unfortunately, he died before it was completed and many of the original plans were changed. The house does not contain a single piece of sawn timber as all the wood was adzed by slaves. When completed the residence boasted twenty-eight rooms including a full basement where the house servants lived. The woodwork is of beautiful bird's-eye maple and part of the original metal roof brought from England as ballast in the hull of a ship is still in place. Mooreland was used as a hospital by both Federal and Confederate armies and after the battle of Nashville Mrs. Moore was overrun with wounded for weeks. A beautiful grove of ash trees surrounding the house was cut down by Yankee soldiers encamped on the premises.

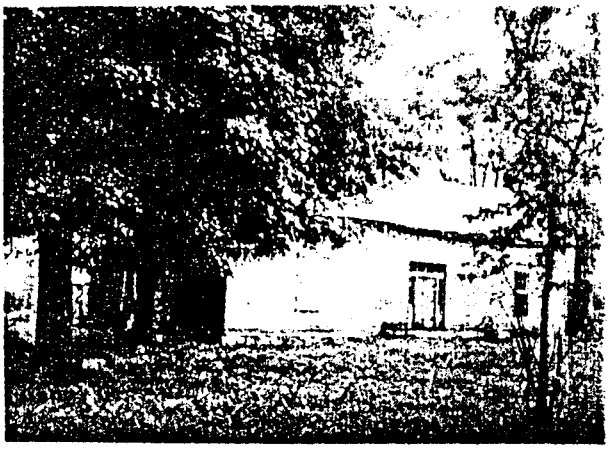
Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Campbell Moore were the parents of six children, three of whom died during their 'second summer', the time so dreaded by parents before the days of sterilization and antibiotics. The three sons who survived —Allan Jones, Hugh, Jr., and Robert Irvin IV—became prominent Williamson Countians. In July of 1944 Mooreland was sold by Allan and Robert Moore who no longer needed such a spacious home. Most of the furnishings were disposed of in a sale which lasted two days. Recently Robert Moore, the last of his family, held another auction which consisted of numerous articles saved from the first breaking up of the old home.

Today, Mooreland is centered in a fast developing section of Williamson County. Serene in its lawn of great trees, it is the object of many admiring glances as motorists hurry along U.S. 31 at Brentwood. It is difficult to say whether it is more beautiful in the dappled shade of daylight or at night with the light gleaming upon its white pillars. Vitally linking the past with the present, Mooreland is to be retained as a gourmet restaurant, a gift shop and tea room in the Brentwood Mall Shopping Center which is to be developed around it.

The Sneed Houses on Old Smyrna Road

Sneed-Acres

The Sneed family, its American heritage dating back to 1635, has played an important role in the development of Williamson County since it came into being. James Sneed came here with his family in 1798 and settled in the present Brentwood area. James (1764-1853) was born to Virginia parents, Zachriah and Martha Nance Sneed. He married Bethenia Harden Perkins (1770-1812), the daughter of Charles and Mary Tate Perkins, and from this union came twelve children.



Sneed Acres, original log cabin built by James Sneed

Coming to Tennessee with James Sneed was his bro and sister-in-law, William and Mary DeLoach Sneed, settled in Davidson County in the area now know Chickering Estates. Also in the party making the long treacherous journey were Bethenia's uncle Thomas Ha Perkins, who built Meeting of the Waters and her bro Nicholas Tate Perkins who lived at Poplar Grove. Am the cousins accompanying their kinsmen was Nich Perkins who established himself at Montpier. Even most casual student of local history will recognize glance these names and be cognizant of the significant they played in shaping the destiny of not only Willia County but Tennessee as well.

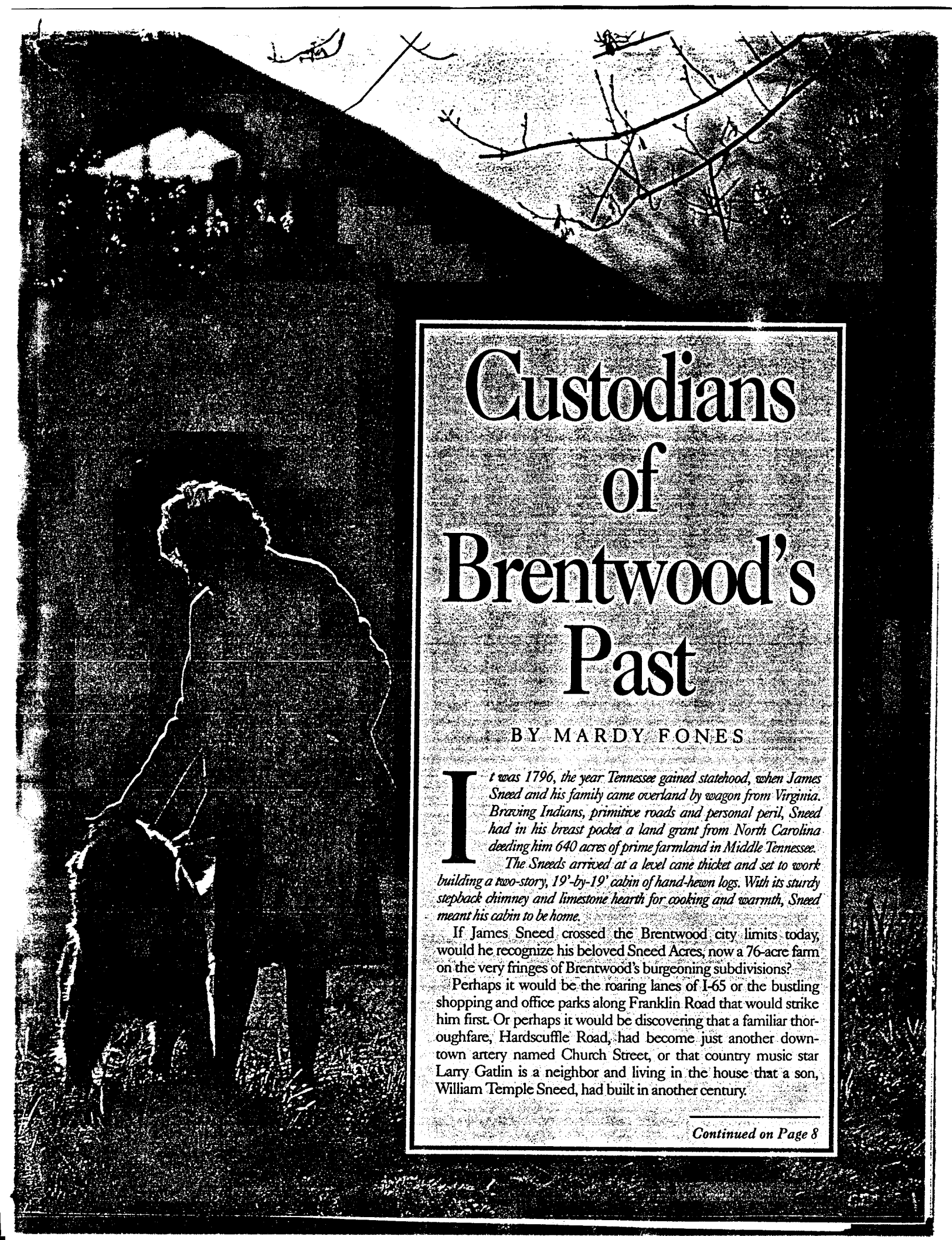
Bethenia Sneed died at the age of forty-two when youngest child was six months old. James Sneed l married Mary (Polly) Hunt (1788-1851), the daug of Henry Hunt. Childless herself, she reared her husba houseful of children with care and devotion. In later y William Temple Sneed named one of his daughters M Hunt.

The original log cabin built by James Sneed when came here still stands on Old Smyrna Road and has b occupied continually since it was built over one-hun and seventy years ago. In building the house he used step-back construction for his stone chimneys. The stout log rooms divided by a hall have been covered weather boarding. The dining room and kitchen separated from the main house by a dogtrot. Wonderf preserved, the house remains in the family owned to by Mrs. G. W. Renegan.

Windy Hill

The eldest child of James and Bethenia Perkins Sn Constantine Perkins Sneed (1790-1864), served Andrew Jackson at New Orleans then returned to T nessee to establish his own home on part of his fath 640 acre grant. Located just west of the pioneer's orig log cabin, the walls of Windy Hill rose from bricks mol of clay dug out of the front yard. There is a low pl just south of Old Smyrna Road which still marks the s where the clay was removed.

In 1825, Major Sneed married Susannah Perl Hardeman (1802-1859) and built this house a few y later. They were the parents of thirteen children, one whom died in infancy.



Custodians of Brentwood's Past

BY MARDY FONES

It was 1796, the year Tennessee gained statehood, when James Sneed and his family came overland by wagon from Virginia. Braving Indians, primitive roads and personal peril, Sneed had in his breast pocket a land grant from North Carolina deeding him 640 acres of prime farmland in Middle Tennessee.

The Sneeds arrived at a level cane thicket and set to work building a two-story, 19'-by-19' cabin of hand-hewn logs. With its sturdy stepback chimney and limestone hearth for cooking and warmth, Sneed meant his cabin to be home.

If James Sneed crossed the Brentwood city limits today, would he recognize his beloved Sneed Acres, now a 76-acre farm on the very fringes of Brentwood's burgeoning subdivisions?

Perhaps it would be the roaring lanes of I-65 or the bustling shopping and office parks along Franklin Road that would strike him first. Or perhaps it would be discovering that a familiar thoroughfare, Hardscuffle Road, had become just another downtown artery named Church Street, or that country music star Larry Gatlin is a neighbor and living in the house that a son, William Temple Sneed, had built in another century.

Continued on Page 8

One treasure of the Sneed Acres legacy is the family Bible, in the household since 1832.

Continued from Page 7

Within a brief walk of Sneed Acres's iron gates are the carefully manicured lawns and split foyer and ranch-style homes of modern suburbs. But just around the curve in the road where the lichen-covered stone fences begin in earnest, his log cabin has been preserved and restored with great reverence and affection by two of his great, great, great, great granddaughters.

"Our father was born on this property and so were we," said Callie Lillie Owen, who with her sister, Mary Sue Owen Reneger, returned to Sneed Acres from the Madison area after nearly 50 years away.

"Our mother and father and grandmother instilled in us that this was home," said Owen, who taught high school home economics in Williamson and Davidson counties. Reneger worked for 50 years as the secretary at the Spring Hill Cemetery which their father managed. Both sisters describe their ages as, "we're adults, senior citizens and old enough to be retired."

The Brentwood of their youth was a tiny community of two small grocery stores, a few homes clustered along Franklin Road and many nearby farms.

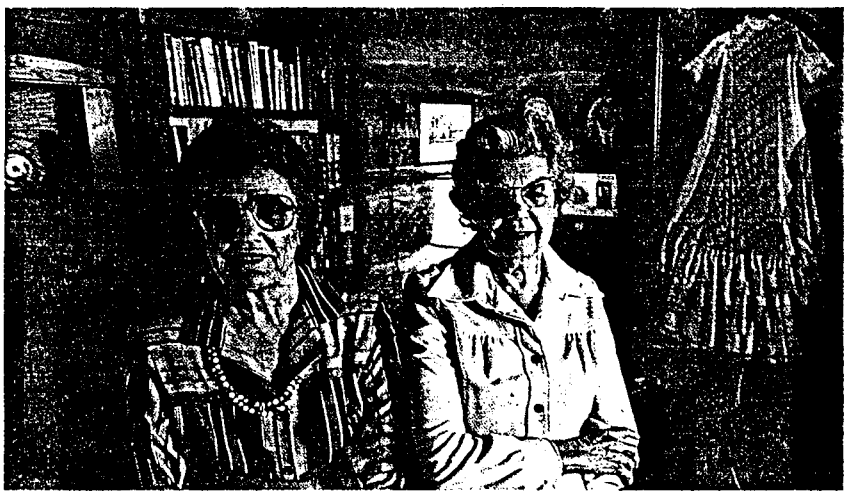
"We went to Lipscomb School when it was just a two-room schoolhouse," said Owen. "We rode in a horse and buggy to get there and had to pay a $5-per-year toll at the intersection by what is now the Dolphin Pool." At the time, the Lipscomb School—now with more than 1,000 students and 40 teachers—had slipped a little. "We only had one teacher for the two rooms."

"Later on," said Reneger, "we took the Intraurban down to Robertson Academy. When we went to Central High School, we would transfer off the Intraurban to a street car for the rest of the ride." The Intraurban was a commuter train that ferried Franklin and Brentwood residents to and from Nashville.

Owen and Reneger balance the changes in the Brentwood community with the security of their life on property held by their family for four generations.

Their home, James Sneed's cabin with several additions, is filled with antiques and family memorabilia as a tribute to generations of family. Nearby, a cemetery holds about 200 family members, plus slaves who worked at Sneed Acres.

"We're proud that our father thought enough of this land," said Owen, "to hand it on to family."



PHOTOS BY DAVID MUDD

Mary Sue Reneger and her sister Callie Lillie Owen were baptized in the gown used by four generations of Sneed heirs.

Mrs. Barker Stamps of Nashville, standing, presides during the unveiling of the historical marker at Sneed Acres.

Historical marker placed at B'wood's Sneed Acres

The Clarendon Chapter of the Colonial Dames of the 17th Century held an unveiling of the Historical Marking of the James Sneed Homestead, Sneed Acres, on Old Smyrna Road in Brentwood on Saturday, September 25.

James Sneed migrated from Virginia with his wife and children in 1798.

The Sneed family settled in the Brentwood area of Williamson County after receiving a North Carolina land grand for 640 acres. James Sneed built three log cabins and one of them is still standing in good condition and used daily by the present owner, Mary Sue Owen Renegar, who is a direct descendant of Samuel Sneed of Staffordshire, England, who came to America in 1635.

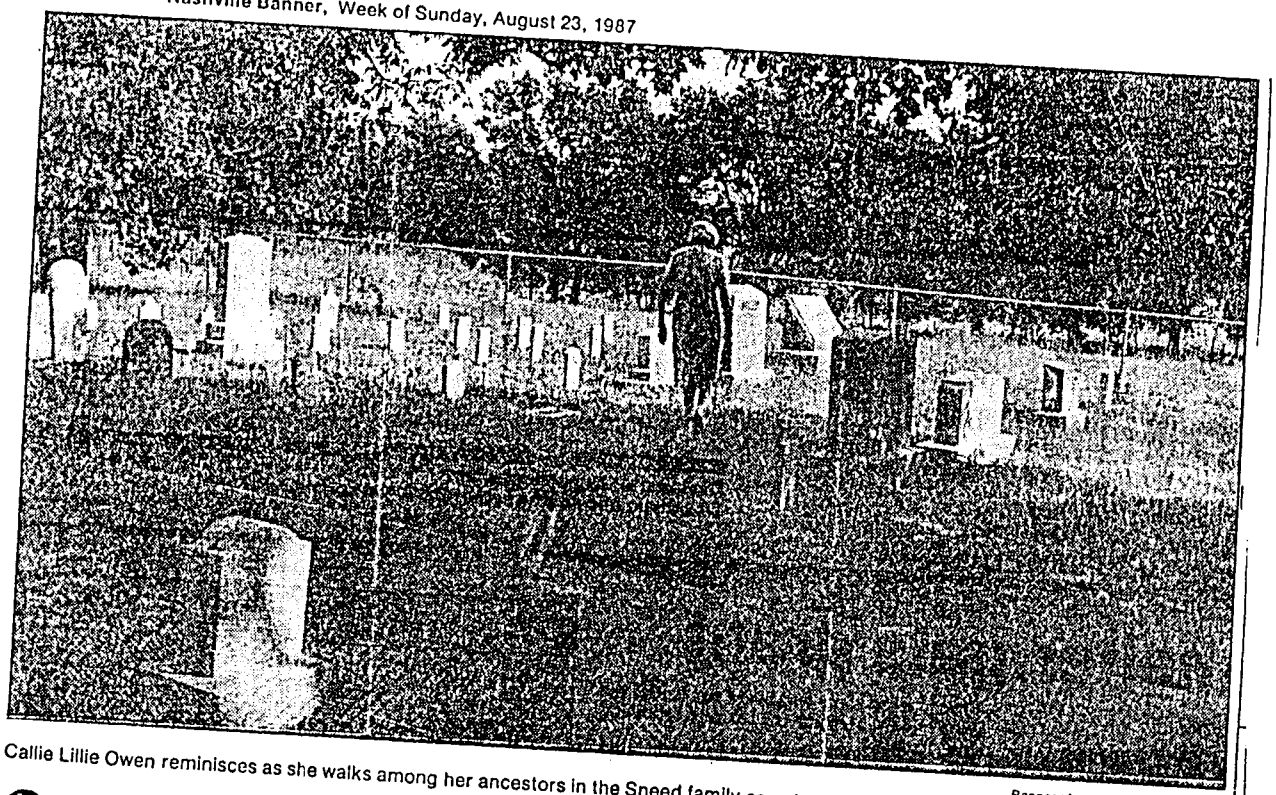
Mrs. Barker Stamps of Nashville, vice-president of the Clarendon Chapter, presided during the ceremony in the absence of the president. Speaker for the program was Bill Owen, a direct descendant of James Sneed, and Robye Owen of Nashville, 7, a ninth generation descendant of James Sneed, unveiled the marker.

The house has the original logs inside but is clapboard outside.

B'wood church in mission

Church of the Advent, Episcopal, on Franklin Road in Brentwood, is joining all Episcopal churches across the state in "Venture in Mission" to welcome new people to the church.

Members are urged to bring guests to Sunday services during October and help them understand the worship service.



Callie Lillie Owen reminisces as she walks among her ancestors in the Sneed family cemetery in Brentwood.

Banner photo by Tonnya Kennedy

Sneed family home stands for history

By Tonnya Kennedy
Banner Staff Writer

BRENTWOOD — Coming home for Mary Sue Renegar and Callie Lillie Owen meant stepping back in history almost 200 years.

For the past 10 years the sisters have lived on the homestead established by their great-great-grandparents, James and Bethenia Sneed, one of Brentwood's founding families.

Originally from Halifax County, Virginia, the Sneeds, settled 640 acres in the Tennessee wilderness after receiving a land grant from North Carolina.

"We got the itching to come back home," said Owen who left the home during the depression 50 years ago.

Time and vandals began to take their toll on the once sturdy structure.

According to Owen, the split-level home originally consisting of three cabins took its present form in the mid 1800's.

Today the log structure is covered with red clapboard and called Sneed Acres.

In 1977 when the women took up residence in the house they replaced the foundation and the dirt and rock between the hand-hewn logs.

During the 1960's the house stood vacant and vandals removed many of the porcelain fixtures and doors, Owen said.

Despite years of neglect, subsequent renovations have transformed the historic log home back to its original splendor.

Wooden floors, baseboards and mantels shine from years of wear.

"We tried to restore it back like it was. We don't have a lot that's expensive, but it means a lot to me," Owen said of her 100-year-old quilts and antique furniture.

To help encourage Sneed traditions, a reunion of the Internationaal Association of the Sneeds has been held annually since 1952. During this year's celebration, a marker was unveiled designating the homestead as a historic landmark. Over 200 Sneed descendents converged on the site for the event.

According to Owen, one can join the association only by being "blood Sneed" or marrying a Sneed.

Those are the same qualifications for being buried in the Sneed cemetery, alongside ancestor James Sneed, located a few hundred yards behind the house.

Three of James Sneed's 12 children built homes on adjacent land.

Brentvale, now owned by Larry Gatlin, was built by William Temple Sneed; Foxview was built by Alexander Ewing Sneed; and Windy Hills was built by Constantine Sneed, great-grandfather of Owen and Renegar.

Ancestors

Sneed sisters remember land .50 an acre

By Lucretia Lawrence
BRENTWOOD JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

Many years have passed since the Sneed family acquired the land that their home occupies.

But the Sneed sisters, Callie Lillie Owen and Mary Sue Renegar, still live in the home on the Sneed farm on Old Smyrna Road.

"The land came into our family in 1797," Renegar said. "We received 640 acres on a land grant from North Carolina.

"That was before Tennessee was even a state. The land was 50 cents an acre."

Owen said that people tell them that they live in an elite part of the state.

"We do have to pay modern-day taxes," she said. "But we wouldn't be living here if it wasn't for the grant and our family getting the land that cheap way back then."

The redwood home is framed by a red picket fence with a stone entrance.

The Sneed sisters lived in the house until they were all in school before moving to Spring Hill.

"Papa had back luck with his stocks and it was the start of the depression," Owen said. "So to feed his wife and four little brats, he took a job at the Spring Hill cemetery, and we all lived there until 1948.

> *'We have all the old furniture throughout the house. Most of it dates back to the early 1800s.'*
>
> **— Callie Lillie Owen**

"The land was sharecropped then. Father had a tenant out here.

"Then the house became run down because it was left vacant for quite sometime after that."

The Sneed sisters decided to move back to the house in 1977.

"Mary Sue and I moved back out here when I retired," Owen said. "There was so much work to be done.

"But people tell us now how much we've done for the place.

"A friend of ours who loved the Sneed family dearly said he used to come out here and just stand in the vacant house. He always said he could feel the presence of our ancestors in the empty house."

Originally, there were three log rooms in the house, and one still remains.

"The one left was built in 1798," Renegar said. "It's a living room or den now.

"We have all old furniture throughout the house. Most of it dates back to the early 1800s."

The house now has four bedrooms and four and a half baths.

The finishing touch to the home is their father's christening dress, from 1881, that adorns one of the walls in the log room.

The Sneed family roots in America extend to Colonial times, when William Sneed, his wife, Joan, and their son, William located in James County, Virginia, in 1635 when the first generation of English settlers migrated to America.

Its grounds are now a modern university, but the old manor house remains on its original site, and the Sneed coat-of-arms is permanently emblazoned above the mantle in the great hall.

In true pioneer spirit, James Sneed and his wife, Betenia Harden Perkins Sneed, brought their family to the Brentwood area in 1798.

The Sneed sisters, Mary Sue Renegar, left, and Callie Lillie Owen, moved back to their home in 1977.

Photo by Lauren Lexa

Mary Sue Renegar (left) and Callie Lillie Owen, the great, great granddaughters of pioneer Brentwood settlers James and Bethenia Sneed, stand before the historical marker erected last week at the Sneed homestead.

Sneed reunion brings pioneer family back to Brentwood

BY LAUREN LEXA / Staff Writer

Close to 200 people, many of whom are descendants of pioneer Brentwood settlers James and Bethenia Sneed, are expected for the Aug. 6-9 reunion of the International Association of Sneeds.

The reunion began in 1952 when five first cousins held a picnic in their ancestor's hometown of Brentwood; they had so much fun that they gathered again the next year.

Since that time, the get-together has been expanded to include all Sneed relatives — not just first cousins and inlaws — and it's held every two years. Every four years it returns to Brentwood.

The highlight of this year's reunion will be the unveiling of an historic marker on Old Smyrna Road in front of the Sneed Acres, the plantation established in 1798 by James Sneed.

Sneed and his wife were living in Halifax County, Va., when he received a land grant from North Carolina for 640 acres in the Tennessee wilderness; the new homestead was built in the midst of a cane thicket.

Three log structures were built originally; the cabin with a family area and an upstairs bedroom for the daughters was centered between the cabin serving as the sons' bedroom and a structure that served as the kitchen, dining room and workroom.

At some later point, one of the cabins was connected by a dogtrot to the central cabin. The home has always remained in the Sneed family, but it is uncertain when the rest of the plantation was built or by whom. Currently James Sneed's great, great granddaughters Mary Sue Renegar and Callie Lillie Owen live in the family place.

The plantation home has an outstanding example of a step-backed chimney construction. Beginning about six inches off the ground, bricks are stacked in levels or "steps" on the three outside walls of the chimney. Such constructions were used to direct the flow of water off the chimney.

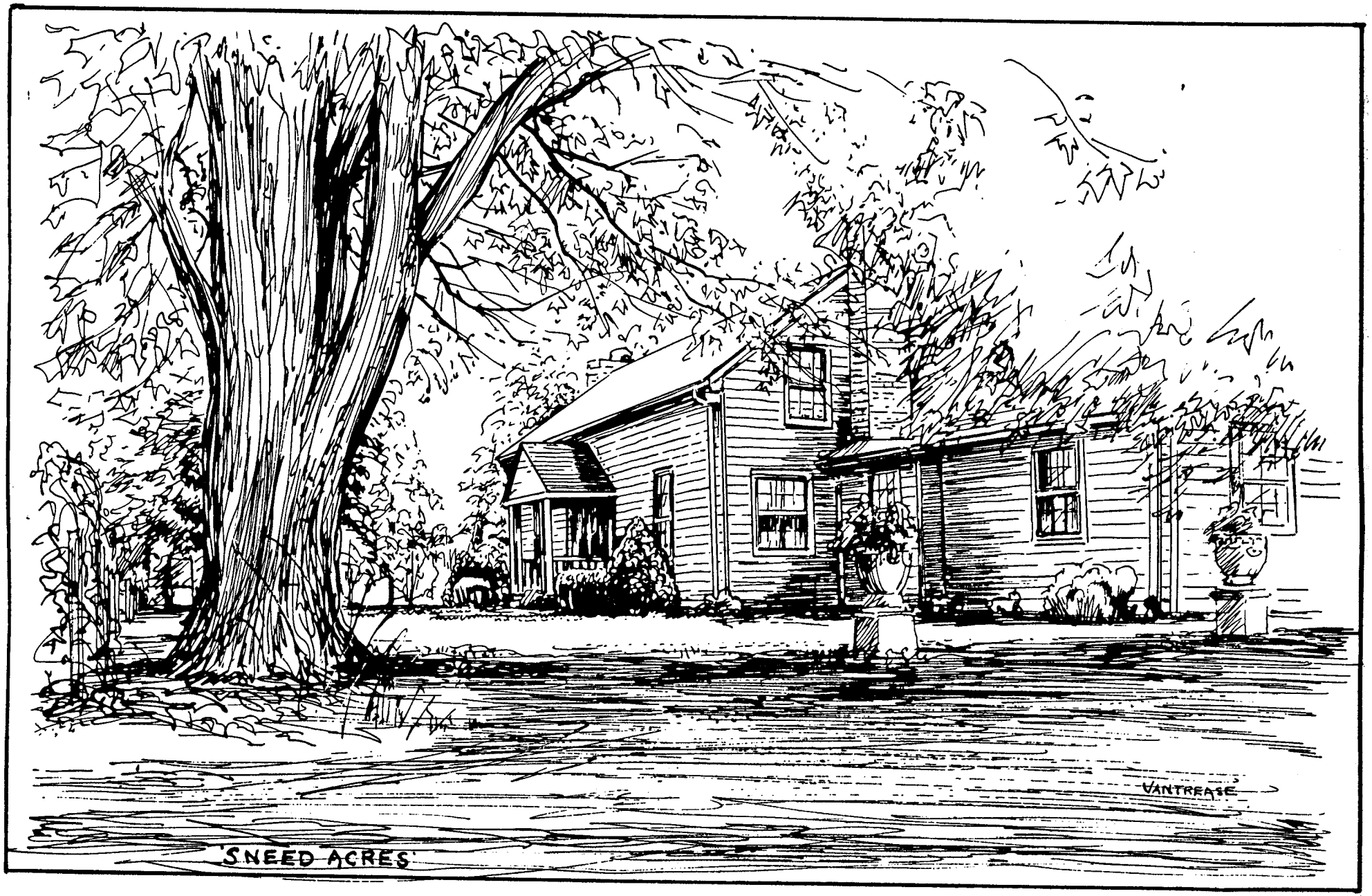
Interior walls had been plastered, papered and painted but have since been restored to their original condition. Once the plaster was removed, the hand-hewed logs were washed down with Lysol and re-chinked; one row was re-chinked with rocks in the cement as a sample of pioneer construction.

The only acquiescences to the modern world made in the log room are well camouflaged — quilts pieced by Mary Moore Sneed Owen, grandmother of Callie Lillie and Mary Sue, cover the woodburning stove and television.

Just as James Sneed's home has always been owned by a descendant, the furnishings have also been kept in the family. The majority of the pieces, ranging from loveseats and tables to a Tiffany lamp, have been handed down through the generations.

James and Bethenia had twelve children, and three built homes on adjacent lands: Brentvale, built by William Temple Sneed and now owned by Larry Gatlin; Foxview built by Alexander Ewing Sneed; and Windy Hills built by Constantine Sneed upon his return from the Battle of New Orleans. Constantine, great grandfather of Callie Lillie and Mary Sue, also fought in the Indian Wars and the Battle of 1812 with Andrew Jackson.

The Sneed family played an important role in the settlement of the Brentwood area. One son surveyed the Tennessee-Alabama railroad charter in 1852 which ran through Brentwood. Another family member, William Giles Harding, built Belle Meade Mansion, and Bethenia's cousin captured Aaron Burr and delivered him to Federal authorities in Washington.


VANTREASE
'SNEED ACRES'

Sneed Acres
9207 Old Smyrna Rd.
Brentwood Tenn. 37027

is a part of a 640 acre Land Grant from N.C. in 1796 to James Sneed.

The original log cabin (one of three) built by James Sneed and family is a bare Thicket, is now inclosed by Red wood weather boards, in the North-East corner of the house.

The house and several acres has been past down five (5) generations to Mary Sue Owen Renegar. She, and her sister Callie Lillie Owen, enjoy living here, and often feel the presence of family members that have departed this world.