

**BRENTVALE FARM**

## **BRENTVALE**

Brentvale was built in the 1930's when logs from two houses were combined into one house. The original log buildings dated back to the 1830's. It was the original home site of William Temple Sneed, seventh child of Brentwood pioneer James Sneed. It was built from huge logs cut on the place. William Joseph Sneed, son of the builder, served with the Confederate army in the Civil War as a physician. After the war he and a Union physician George Hubbard, whom he met during the war, were instrumental in founding Meharry Medical College and Hubbard Hospital, both well known black medical facilities. Today Brentvale is home of Mr. and Mrs. Larry Gatlin.

**Brentwood Brochure**

**BRENTVALE FARM**

The Shwab and Slaughter property, across Smyrna Road, were a part of the original grant, and were the farms of James Sneed's sons Alexander Ewing and William Temple Sneed. The story is told that William Sneed's son, Robert, a doctor in the Confederate Army, was home for a visit and was asleep in the barn loft while his father was milking when Federal officers came looking for him. When questioned, the father satisfied the searchers with the reply, "There is no one here who doesn't belong here."

**REFERENCES:**

Rosalie C. Batson

Windy Hill was constructed over a large basement which was in constant use during the early days and never more so than when Federal soldiers were on the prowl during the war of the 60s. Valuables of all descriptions were concealed in the dim coolness of this underground haven. Even cows and horses were hidden here when enough advance notice was received of a raid. Several times Mrs. Sneed and her daughters mounted their horses and clung determinedly to manes and bridles to prevent being pulled off and the horses stolen. Out of necessity the ladies used any ruse possible to preserve their home and possessions. Since they could not refuse shelter to the wounded of both sides following hostilities, the wide white oak and poplar floors were often stained with the blood of those who could find no space on bed or sofa.



*Windy Hill, built by Constantine Sneed*

When Constantine P. Sneed, Jr. received a wound at Chickamauga which necessitated the amputation of his leg, he sent word home he feared the hurt was mortal. His eldest brother James Hardeman, himself a Confederate soldier, at the risk of his own life set out on a mission for the camp. To every Federal picket who threatened to shoot him for entering their lines he said in quiet desperation that he was trying to reach his brother before he died. Not long after his mission was accomplished death claimed the soldier boy and he was buried in a basket James Hardeman fashioned from planks pulled from the side of an old barn. Unable to support an overwhelming grief, their father died of a broken heart some months later.

Another of the sons, Robert Scales, surveyed the Tennessee-Alabama Railroad which was chartered in 1852. It ran through Brentwood on its way to the Alabama line. Older residents always said the town of Brentwood was known as Cotton Port in the 1830s. After the railroad was laid the old woodburning engines were stopped here to lay on a supply of fuel, and it was referred to as the place "twelve miles south of Nashville where the trains brake for wood." Over the years the expression was corrupted into Brentwood.

Just west of Windy Hill is a spring that attracted Tennessee's first citizens long before the frontiersmen ever

set eyes on it. Many a beast native to the dense forests drank from its waters with the Indians who gladly shared nature's bounty with their wild brothers with never a thought to kill except for food. Today the spring is covered by handworn stones of picturesque beauty.

Between the homes of James and Constantine Sneed lies the family cemetery. Neat and clean, it is the object of veneration from the Sneed descendants the nation over. Its occupants range from the first family pioneers down to the present time.

Windy Hill is in an excellent state of preservation and is owned by Mr. and Mrs. William Puryear.

**Brentvale Farm**

For the site of his home William Temple Sneed (1801-1869) selected a rise north of where the house is presently located and out of enormous logs erected in 1830 a house stout enough to outlast the elements for 145 years.

The seventh child of James and Bethenia Perkins Sneed, he married Elizabeth Guinn Crichlow (1811-1905) in 1831 and became the father of seven children. One of these seven was William Joseph Sneed who later became a prominent physician. While serving in the Confederate army, Dr. Sneed slipped home one night but would not sleep in the house for fear of being captured. Sure enough, the next morning while his father was milking soldiers came and searched the house. Not satisfied with Mrs. Sneed's repeated assertions that her son was not in the home, the Yankees went to the barn and demanded to know if anyone was hiding there. Without looking up from his milk bucket Mr. Sneed replied, "Nobody is here who doesn't belong here," and the soldiers left without ever glancing toward the loft where the young doctor lay deep in the hay.

Somewhere during the closing months of the war, the path of Dr. Sneed crossed that of a Federal officer, Dr. George Whipple Hubbard. Possibly they worked together in a hospital or met on the battlefields at Franklin or Nashville. Each admired the work of the other and each had trained black boys to assist them as orderlies.

Seeing the great need for Negro doctors among the freedmen, Dr. Hubbard conceived the idea of a medical school to fulfil such a purpose. However, money was so



*Brentvale Farm, William Temple Sneed's log home*

scarce in the South for years after the war it was impossible to perfect the plan at that time. It was not until 1875 that Samuel Meharry and his brothers heard of Dr. Hubbard's search for funds to underwrite his dream. In order to repay a favor they had received at the hands of a Negro family, they gave the initial contribution which made the building of the school possible.

Dr. Sneed taught there in its beginning when such philanthropic activities flew in the face of Southern tradition and were exceedingly unpopular. Born of a prominent Southern family, a well known and successful doctor, he continued to share his knowledge and experience as a faculty member of the new institution known today as the Dr. George W. Hubbard Hospital of the Meharry Medical College. Dr. Sneed, along with a few white physicians, through courage, devotion, and generosity, helped to make the school one of the foremost of its kind in America.

William Temple Sneed's home was moved from its knoll to the present location some years ago and was enlarged with logs from another old house. It was bought around 1957 by Mr. and Mrs. Thomas W. Schlater who reside there today.

#### Foxview

Alexander Ewing Sneed (1812-1852) was the youngest of James and Bethenia Perkins Sneed's twelve children. Like his brothers, he built his house on land given him by his father and only a short distance away from the family homestead on Old Smyrna Road.

The house was built about a year after his marriage to Elizabeth Guthrie (1815-1868) in 1834. They were the parents of twelve children, two of whom, Alexander, Jr. and Daniel, were Confederate soldiers.

The Sneed name is prominent in every war in which America has engaged since its inception. The men and women of this family have never lacked in patriotism and family pride—two of the chief elements that have made

this country a world power.

It is interesting to note that Zechariah and Martha Nance Sneed's descendants in Tennessee built their brick homes similar to the old ones left behind in Virginia those who went to Texas followed the same pattern. One of the loveliest is that of Alexander Ewing Sneed owned today by Mrs. George Shwab. Perfectly preserved it is one of the beautiful landmarks in an area rich in history and memories.

## The Mallory House

One of the county's finest early brick homes was that of the Mallory family which stood four miles north of Franklin on the present Mallory Lane. The Mallory family came here from Northampton County, Virginia in 1812. The house was built on land bought by John Mallory from Elizabeth Spenser in October of 1813. This was part of the 320 acres originally granted to Thomas Sharp Spense in 1788 for serving as one of the guards to the commissaries who were laying off the lands allotted to the soldiers and officers of the Continental line of this state.

No more fascinating figure than that of "Big Foot" Spenser has emerged from the legends of Tennessee's early history. Long before the white man made a permanent settlement in Sumner County, Spenser was a Bledsoe's Lick, now Castalian Springs. Cut off from an association with his own race, he survived the perils and loneliness of an Indian-infested wilderness by his skill as a hunter and woodsman seemingly sufficient unto himself.

Scorning even the most elemental comforts, Spenser spent the bitter winter nights far from his campfire or sought the shelter of a hollow sycamore from whos



*Foxview, Alexander Ewing Sneed's house*

## Historic preservation gets boost

# Couples donate Gatlins' log home to city

By Lauren Lexa  
Journal Editor

Two Brentwood couples are helping the city lay a firm foundation of historic preservation through their donation of a two-story log home to the city.

The donation, the second in three weeks, is being made by Larry and Janis Gatlin, in accordance with a contract with Roger and Barbara Mick, who are purchasing the Gatlins' Old Smyrna Road property.

While the Micks wanted to build a new home on the homestead named Brennevale Farms, they did not want the 1800s log home torn down, so the donation of the home was made a part of the sales contract, according to Linda Lynch, Brentwood's community relations director.

The structure, which has two log rooms upstairs and two rooms below, will be dismantled log by log and reassembled at Crockett Park at no charge to the city.

Several weeks ago, the city announced a similar contribution of a historic home and its outbuildings, but these buildings, currently located on Mallory Lane, will be moved and reassembled at the city's expense.

"What we plan to do is re-create in Crockett Park a typical Tennessee homestead, showing its evolution from pioneer days through the 20th century,"

Lynch said.

According to City Commissioner Anne Dunn, who worked extensively with several members of the Brentwood Historic Commission to obtain the Cool Springs Farm House on Mallory, the log home will be a valuable educational tool for area students.

"We anticipate zero maintenance costs; there will be no heating and no lighting. The house will stand strictly as it was in those early days," Dunn said.

Dunn had nothing but words of praise for the Micks' and the Gatlins' decision to see that the house was protected.

"As property owners, they could have gone in and leveled it. There is nothing in our city laws that would have prevented that," she said.

The house will be dismantled by Braxton Dixon and Maryanna McConnell of Heart and Soul contractors; logs will be numbered and reassembled as was, and then the house will be chinked inside and out.

"This will be a great experience for people my age who have never seen this done before, as well as for children," Lynch said. "We plan to do a video of the project and take photographs to show how it was done."

The log home was built in 1830 by William Temple Sneed, the seventh of 12 children of James Sneed, an early Brentwood pioneer who settled the

Old Smyrna Road area in 1789; two of Sneed's other children also built homesteads on Smyrna Road.

According to real estate agent Andy Beasley, the dismantling of the home is scheduled to begin a week from Friday's closing on the property; the home will be reassembled at Crockett Park on or before 60 days, barring inclement weather.

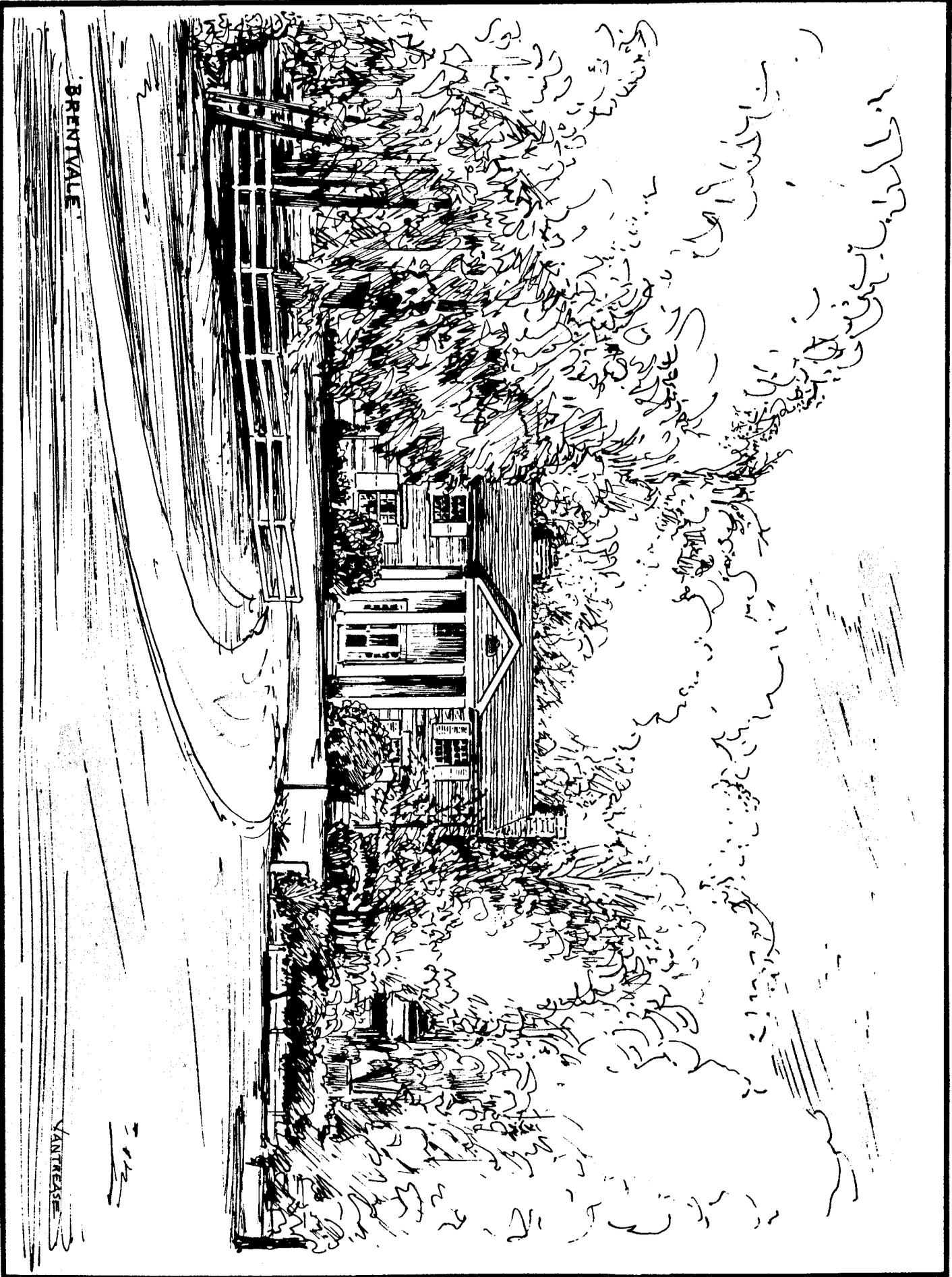
"As city commissioners, we want to really thank everyone involved in this project; we appreciate very much what the Micks and the Gatlins are doing for the city of Brentwood," said City Commissioner Betty Reagan.

"This is a piece of history," added Mayor Joe Sweeney.

While the city commissioners unanimously passed a resolution accepted the donation of the log house, an additional offer from the Gatlins and Micks is still being reviewed by City Manager Mike Walker.

A caboose currently located on the Gatlin property is also being offered to the city for placement at Crockett Park.

"We do have an opportunity to receive a train caboose, but we need to talk about this a little further with the park board," Walker said. "Kids love to climb on trains, but we need to look at it in terms of safety and liability."



BRENTVALE

VANTREASE

1912

Handwritten notes in Arabic script, including the words "بنت بريتا" (Bent Brenta) and "بنت بريتا" (Bent Brenta).

# Gatlins help Brentwood build foundation for preservation

By Lauren Lexa

*Brentwood Journal Editor*

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BRIAN J. SWEENEY  
MAYOR  
DR. JACK FLETCHER  
VICE-MAYOR  
MICHAEL W. WALKER  
CITY MANAGER



## City of Brentwood

COMMISSIONERS  
BRIAN J. SWEENEY  
DR. JACK FLETCHER  
ANNE DUNN  
G. ALEX NOBLE, JR.  
BETTY REAGAN

February 17, 1993

Mr. & Mrs. Larry Gatlin  
c/o Mr. Andy Beasley  
Brentview Realty  
7101 Peach Court  
Brentwood, TN 37027

Dear Janis & Larry:

I am writing on behalf of the City of Brentwood to thank you for your donation of the original log cabin from the Brentvale house. It was a kind and generous gift to the Brentwood community. The cabin will be a constant reminder to the Brentwood citizens of your love for our city and its history.

As you know the cabin will be placed in our new Crockett Park. The City has designated four acres of the park for an historical area. This area is the first thing seen when entering the park. It is the focal point of the 150 acre park and will set the tone for the entire park. Of course the log cabin will play a major role in this historic area.

It is through your generosity that generations of children will be able to have a glimpse of what life was like in the early days in Brentwood. We thank you for giving so much back to our community. You have touched the lives of many through your unselfish gift.

I would also like to thank you for the offer of the train caboose, but due to safety and financial restrictions the City will not be able to accept it.

Sincerely,

Brian Joe Sweeney  
Mayor

## BRENTVALE FARM

Located on Old Smyrna Road is Brentvale Farms. Made from enormous logs in 1830, it is said to be a house stout enough to outlast the elements for 145 years. For the site of this house, William Temple Sneed selected a rise north of where the house is presently located.

William Temple Sneed, seventh son of James and Bethenia Perkins Sneed, married Elizabeth Guinn Grichlow and became the father of seven children. One of these children was William Joseph Sneed, who became a prominent physician. While serving in the confederate army, Dr. Sneed slipped home one night, but would not sleep in the house for fear of being captured. Sure enough, the next morning while his father was milking, soldiers came and searched the house. Not satisfied with Mrs. Sneed's repeated assertions that her son was not in the house, the Yankee soldiers went to the barn and demanded to know if anyone was hiding there. Without looking up from it's bucket, Mr. Sneed replied, "Nobody is here who doesn't belong here." So the soldiers left without even glancing at the loft where the young doctor lay deep in the hay.

The house contains a large basement which saw much use in Civil War days for hiding cows, horses and other valuables from raiders. The house served as a hospital for the wounded from both sides. The white oak and poplar floors were often blood stained from their wounds.

Sadly, the war took it's toll on the Sneeds. Constantine P. Sneed, Jr. received a wound at Chickamauga and had to have his leg cut off. Fearing he was dying he sent word home. His older brother, James Hardeman, risked his wife to reach him shortly before Constantine died. The grief was too much for Constantine Perkins Sneed who died a few months later of a broken heart.

FRANKLIN ROAD  
BRENTWOOD,  
TENNESSEE 37027

The following history of the Buchanan House was obtained from Sam Buchanan, Jr.

Sam Buchanan was in the lumber business. In the early 1920's he began construction on what was to be his pride and joy, the Buchanan House. He spent approximately 3 years constructing the house, leaving the foundation to sit for six months to "settle" before continuing with additional construction. Each building stage of the house was carefully monitored. The house was finished in 1926 when the Buchanan's and their four children moved in.

The home had a secret back staircase that emptied into the breakfast room. The front staircase was one of the most beautiful parts of the home. The treads were made of oak and are still intact. There used to be a beautiful balustrade extending down the staircase that was removed during a later renovation of the home. On the landing there was a storage box where members of the family would sit. Upstairs were 5 bedrooms. Two of Sam Buchanan's daughters shared a room; another sister had her own room, Sam, Jr. his own room, Mr. and Mrs. Buchanan's room and a guest room. The living room was quite large and Mr. Buchanan had to add horse hair to the plaster to give it strength to support the walls of that room. At one time the plaster cracked and had to be redone. Sam Jr., marvelled at the ingenuity of his father in fixing the crack.

The home was always open for friends. The boys played basketball and hockey in the attic and skated in the basement. Mr. and Mrs. Buchanan entertained quite frequently and sometimes never knew how many of their children's friends would be sleeping overnight.

At the end of the driveway is a stone entrance leading to the home. At the time the home was built there was a sulphur spring out back where one would drink to "stir up his system." The water for cooking and drinking was in another area. Even then there were water problems in Brentwood because water had to be hauled by mule from a spring further down the road on what is now the Brentwood Country Club golf course.

After the Buchanan's left the home, it was sold to Mr. Claude Dunn and his wife. They lived in it until she died and shortly afterward it was sold to the City of Brentwood. The city purchased the home in 1980 and on July 22nd, 1980 it opened as the Brentwood Public Library. There were two renovations done after the home was purchased by the city in order to accommodate the needs of the library. In 1986 the Buchanan House was sold to Brentwood United Methodist Church.