

The Bugle



The Bugle, named for the first newspaper in Brentwood
-a publication of the Brentwood Historical Society

OLD FASHIONED SPRING PICNIC AT OWEN PRIMM HOUSE

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The Brentwood Historical Society will host an old fashioned picnic this coming April 10th at Charlie Primm's farm on Moores Lane just west of Wilson Pike. As you may know, Charlie lives in the historic Owen Primm House that lies across the road from the

Boiling Spring Academy at Primm Park.

Actually, April 10th will mark the official grand opening of the Boiling Spring Academy.....

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Academy. To celebrate the occasion, we are planning a special barbeque and picnic for the membership of the Brentwood Historical Society. The general public will be invited to Boiling Spring Academy opening between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. that afternoon. However, a special viewing and picnic will take place for the Brentwood Historical Society membership between



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Brentwood Historical Society
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Brentwood, Tennessee 37024-0788

SPRING PICNIC AND BARBEQUE..... (CONTINUED)

4 p.m. and 6 p.m.

We plan to have a good old fashioned picnic so bring a blanket to enjoy the grounds, or carry along your comfortable lawn chairs. Pack up that camera for those memorable shots of family and friends, as we tour the Boiling Spring Academy and the Owen Primm House. Of course, the prehistoric Fewkes Group Native American Mounds are also on site for your study and enjoyment.

A catered barbeque spread will be served with all the fixings for a delicious evening meal. Also, a tent will be on hand for shelter from sun or rain. Mini-tour buses will take us from Charlie's farm across to the Boiling Spring Academy and Primm Park.

We are requesting a nominal fee of \$5 per person to help cover a portion of the



costs of the event. Please make your check out to the Brentwood Historical Society, and forward it with names of those attending to: Margie Jones, 6020 Wellesley Way, Brentwood TN 37027. This payment should reach Margie by April 1st.

All of us at the Brentwood Historical Society are most excited about this special grand opening of the Boiling Spring Academy. We look forward to seeing you !!



Antebellum slave cabins still stand on Charlie Primm's farm (pictured left) along Moores Lane. Our spring picnic will provide a wonderful variety of historic architecture for those in attendance. The principal residence on the farm, the Owen Primm House (pictured on the front page) and the Boiling Spring Academy (pictured above) highlight the event. Members and their guests may begin arriving at 4 p.m. on April 10th.

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A publication of the Brentwood
Historical Society

A citizen organization of the
City of Brentwood, Brentwood
Historic Commission, dedicated
to the study and preservation of
the City's history and culture.

For information and
membership, contact the
Brentwood Municipal Center at
371-0060, Linda Lynch,
Community Relations Director,
T. Vance Little, City Historian

We're on the web!! Go to:
www.brentwood-tn.org
...click on "history" to find us!

Brentwood Historic Commission

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Linda Lynch, City Staff
Joe Lassus, *Bugle* Editor

Executive Council Redux

The Brentwood Historical Society has passed the torch to a new Executive Council. After years of considerable contributions to the community, the former Council stepped down last year. We are most pleased to announce that a new group has been assembled to resume the work of the Brentwood Historical Society. Many of your friends and neighbors are among the new committee, including Mark Green, Margie Jones, Thom Childress, Julian Wells, Sharon Wnuk, Joe Lassus, and Betsy Crossley. The group is putting together a great year of programs for the membership.

Interpretive Markers (continued)..

A third marker will provide an overview of the Fewkes Group Native American mounds. This important prehistoric site is depicted on the marker, including details of the town center and the various characteristics of the five mounds at this location. Information on the prehistoric layout of the mounds will orient the visitor.

Due to the 1920 expedition, detailed knowledge is available on Mound No. 2. The expedition also provided insights on the other four mounds. Our committee will eventually produce markers for each of the five Native American mounds, presenting visitors with a concise history of the site.

NOLENSVILLE & KNOB GAP SKIRMISHES (CONTINUED)

from the start, Wharton was only providing a delaying action on this day. His cavalrymen would contest Davis' movement through the town of Nolensville during the early afternoon hours, using two batteries of artillery to slow the bluecoats.

As Meyer writes, "Davis' division was now advancing across the better part of a one-mile front, inexorably pushing the enemy skirmishers to the south. Carlin's brigade had leveraged the 8th Texas off the ridge and down into the fields of the John King farm. At the King residence 18 year-old Mary Elizabeth King, just home from college for the Christmas celebration, stood alone at an open window upstairs and watched with a young woman's fascination the unfolding scene beyond...as she watched, an artillery shell exploded some fifty feet away, a piece of its shrapnel striking the kitchen."

It soon became apparent to General Wharton that he could not defend the town, and began considering a move to higher ground to the south. Two miles south lay Knob Gap bisected by the roadway to Triune. It was here that Wharton made another stand in the early evening hours. Failing to receive reinforcements from the Confederate army at Triune, this would again be only a holding action to slow the Union movement. A gallant

stand was provided at Knob Gap, but the overwhelming tide would force them south. Corporal Day of the 101st Ohio wrote, "Summoning up the very last bit of strength we had left, and using part of that to yell with, we charged up the side of the hill, over the stone wall and upon the battery still smoking from the volley intended for our utter destruction, capturing two guns and several prisoners."

Meyer's draft copy has been a pleasure to review, and will eventually be a great addition to our local written history. We will keep the membership informed as to when it may become available.



NEW HISTORICAL INTERPRETIVE MARKERS TO APPEAR AT PRIMM PARK

BY JOE LASSUS

During recent months, a special city committee has been planning the new historical interpretive markers for Primm Park. Linda Lynch has coordinated the project for the City of Brentwood, using graphics consultant Gary Hawkins of Hawkins Partners. You may have already viewed similar interpretive markers that are now placed at the library and along the city trails system.

The committee composed of Dave Bunt, Jim Murphy, Arlene Cooke, and myself have worked on the historical text. We have also assembled appropriate graphics, photographs, and general marker layout ideas for use by Hawkins Partners. Mayor Anne Dunn also assisted the effort with new ideas and detailed historical research on the marker subjects.

One marker highlights the restoration of the Boiling Spring Academy structure. The history of the building's use over the years is detailed in the text, outlining its transition from schoolhouse to

Draft version of the marker at right shows proposed layout of text, photos and graphics in the now traditional interpretive marker employed by the City of Brentwood.

church to tobacco barn. Recent restoration of the academy is also featured on the marker, including the archeological dig beneath the floorboards of the structure.

Another marker will emphasize the 1920's archeological expedition at the Native American mounds known as the Fewkes Group. This historical field study in Brentwood was part of an important transition in the practice of archeology. During this time, archeology evolved from an antiquarian hobby to a true scientific discipline.

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JAMES J. SAYERS HOUSE - PROBABLE CANDIDATE FOR MAJOR RESTORATION

One of the finest examples of antebellum Greek Revival architecture can be found on Split Log Road at the Oman property. The James J. Sayers House is a brick central-passage-plan residence with exquisite Greek Revival detailing throughout. This is one of only a few historic homes in Williamson County which retains its original kitchen breezeway connector. Remarkably, the exterior contains only one minor settlement crack in the masonry.

The house was constructed by James J. Sayers during the 1840's. Sayers and his family prospered in the mid-19th century, and by 1859 Sayers was listed as owning 540 acres. He died in 1865, but his descendants owned the house until 1942.

The James J. Sayers House is typical of the type built in Middle Tennessee by wealthy landowners of the mid-19th century, containing a two-story portico with four Doric-style square columns on the



front façade. The pediment features dentils, and the dentil molding continues along the eaves.

The main entrance has its original double doors, and the interior is in remarkably good shape. Virtually all of the original Greek Revival fireplace mantles and woodwork trim is still in place. The plaster walls have been protected throughout the years by a weather tight roof, even during the years of minimal occupancy.

This historic gem currently sits on a 300-acre tract that is proposed for rezoning and development this year. The developer recognizes the value of the old home, and plans to use it as a center piece of the development. City officials are working closely with the agents to encourage proper restoration of the historic structure.



NOLENSVILLE AND KNOB GAP SKIRMISHES - A STUDY IN PROGRESS

BY JOE LASSUS

Vance Little and I are currently assisting California historian Joe Meyers on his detailed examination of the events leading up to the Battle of Murfreesboro. Meyers' focus is on the movement of Union troops toward the battle site just north of Murfreesboro. His first historical work on this subject details the march of some 5,600 plus Union soldiers through Brentwood and onto a fierce engagement at Nolensville on the day after Christmas 1862.

Meyers' draft account of the events of December 1862 consider the unusual movement of the federal troops from winter quarters. During this bygone era, winter would make most roads muddy and impassable to large numbers of troops and their support supply wagons and artillery. In result, it was common for opposing armies to retire to winter camp until spring. In result, the area Confederates detached a large number of their cavalry to raid behind the Union lines during December. Union General Rosecrans received word of this situation, and felt the time would be right to attack the numerically reduced southern army that was centered at Murfreesboro. Rosecrans decided to move despite the weather and road conditions.

Three wings of federals left Nashville on December 26th with the central unit under Alexander McCook. Of McCook's troops,



one contingent would advance through Brentwood under Union General Jefferson Davis while the left wing proceeded down Nolensville Road under General Philip Sheridan. Davis would have the better time of it that day, marching his five thousand plus men down Edmondson Pike and thence across the present-day Governors Club toward Nolensville. His troops were supported by adequate cavalry that pushed the few hundred Confederate defenders back, arriving near Nolensville and Sunset Roads by early afternoon. Without cavalry, Sheridan was bogged down on Nolensville Road at the Mill Creek crossing where the rebels had burned the bridge.

The defender on this occasion was Confederate General John Wharton, one of the few southern cavalymen still in the area. His 2,200 men were camped just southeast of Nolensville town proper, and included the famed Texas Rangers. Outmanned