The word “fortuitous” in the Standard College Dictionary means, “occurring by chance rather than by design.” The word “fortuitous” is the only way to describe finding the missing half of John Broders broken tombstone. The missing fragment from the tombstone had been proudly displayed by a family for approximately twenty-five years, in their yard in the Walhaven neighborhood, situated behind Franconia Elementary School.

In the October 2007 Franconia Museum newsletter, I wrote a story about the confirmation of a Mosby skirmish at the Broders Farm on July 30, 1864. It was a story that verified the Broders family oral history, concerning a Mosby fight that occurred on their property at Oak Grove. During the skirmish members of the family ran into their house to evade the bullets.

In November 2007, Joanna Knoles just happened to see a copy of the newsletter that fortuitously made its way to the Faith Presbyterian Church, located behind Edison High School. Joanna noticed that it had ghost stories about the Franconia area, so she picked it up and brought it home to read them to her son.

Her husband Scott fortuitously found the newsletter laying about the living room, saw that it had stories concerning the Franconia area, and sat down to browse through it. When he saw the Broders-Mosby article, he immediately recognized the name, and realized that it was the same one annotated on a broken tombstone situated in their side yard.

The tombstone had been left as a Halloween prank in Joanna’s yard almost twenty-five years ago. Joanna was captivated by the tombstone, and not knowing what to do with it; she simply left it displayed in her yard from that moment on.

Later Joanna met Scott Knoles. Ironically, when Scott saw the Broders tombstone he mentioned to her that he also had a gravestone. So I guess you could say that the Broders stone had a significant role in bringing those two together. They have remained together since 1987.

They also told me that when the house next door was up for sale various potential buyers would see the tombstone in their yard, become freaked out, and would leave post haste. However, one potential buyer noticed the tombstone at the Knoles property and saw that it had a form of their own name. The buyer thought it a good omen and purchased the property.

Joanna contacted Jac Walker, told her about the Broders tombstone, and inquired about returning the marker to its rightful place. Jac then asked me to contact Joanna to coordinate the return of the stone.

After various conversations between myself and Joanna I finally met with her and her husband Scott at their house on Sunday afternoon, around 1 pm, on March 2, 2008. Sure enough, on the left side of their yard, under a tree was a broken tombstone that simply read:

John Broders
Feb 7, 1831
Presidents Message ...

From the President’s Corner
Spring 2008

Stop by the Museum and Visit with Us

May marks our one year anniversary of being open to visitors. We encourage you to stop in any Monday, Wednesday or Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Tell a friend, Community Associations, Schools, Troops, Churches and Businesses to visit us and see our local history displays. If you are new to the Franconia Community the Museum provides an excellent opportunity to become familiar with the history of your new community.

Don Hakenson has retired and he alternates Wednesday’s with Jac Walker. Don will be happy to tell you about Civil War events that took place in Franconia. Both he and Jac will help you get started in writing your story of your Franconia remembrances.

A special thank you goes to Delegate Mark Sickles, 43rd District for getting us a $5,000.00 state grant for us for fiscal year 2007 and 2008. We also thank all our supporters for your continued generous support. We are an all volunteer Board and your contributions help us put on our History programs throughout the year.

Check our upcoming events in this issue of the newsletter (plus flyer inserts) and mark your calendars. We look forward to seeing you!!

Sincerely,

Phyllis Walker Ford

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New Friends
Susan Hellman
Joan Boaz
John Wrenn
Suzanne Briar
Charlotte Brown
Theodore Jonas
Marilyn Vinnick

$1,000 + Donations
Sheehy Ford
Lindner Family Foundation

$1,400 Matching Funds
Kaplan, Incorporation
Matching
Paul & Johna Gagnon

New Lifetime Friends
Jefferson Funeral Home

Business Friend
James Rice

Event Sponsors
Sherman Properties
Laurel Grove School
Don Hakenson/Gregg Dudding
Martin & Glass
Pictures were taken of the tombstone under the tree, and photographs were also taken with Joanna and Scott holding the artifact. After documenting the scene, Joanna retrieved a box and the broken tombstone was placed with care into the back seat of my car.

Upon arriving home I contacted Jac Walker for the phone number of Mary Smith, the great granddaughter of John Broders. Acquiring the number I called and asked for Mary. I told her the story about the Knoles family and informed her that I had John Broders’ broken tombstone in my car. I also inquired what she wanted me to do with it. She immediately asked if I could meet her at the Broders Family Cemetery located next to Forestdale Elementary School, off of Elder Avenue.

At approximately 2:25 pm, that day, less than thirty minutes after obtaining the valued treasure from the Knoles family, both pieces of the tombstone were carefully reunited in the Broders Family Cemetery. The memorial now reads:

John Broders  
Feb 7, 1831  
May 5, 1905

Mary Smith was very elated to finally have the top part of her great grandfather’s stone returned to its rightful place. Again, photographs were taken to commemorate the occasion.

When the photography was completed Mary informed me that Virginia’s Broders’ tombstone (John’s wife), had been returned to the family cemetery after I had conducted a Franconia Civil War bus tour at the site in the year 2002. Mary was especially happy and so was I.

The author is greatly moved and honored to be involved in the fortuitous return of both of Mary’s great grandparent’s tombstones to the family cemetery where they truly belong, and hopefully will remain forever.

*Historic preservation is one of the most important missions of the Franconia Museum.*

The Broders, including the Civil War Spy Harrison’s involvement with the family, will be featured in *Franconia Remembers Volume IV* (to be published later this year).
1846 – The site for Sharon Chapel was proposed.

1848 – First Sharon Chapel was a small frame structure built on a parcel of land given by Jacob Froebel, master of nearby Wilton Hill. His daughter, Miss Froebel, established a Saturday school to teach Christian morals and ethics to the young ladies of the surrounding Wilton Woods-Happy Valley area.

1849 – Deed received for Sharon Chapel from John J. and Mary Froebel to Rector of Christ Church et al, bought for $1.00. “For the purpose of burial and of erecting an edifice to be used and occupied as a Protestant Episcopal Church in Communion with the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States of America and for No other purposes. There was a stipulation that if it was not used for this purpose as well as occupied for five years, it would revert to the Frobel’s”

Sharon Chapel has the distinction of being the first mission of the Virginia Theological Seminary (VTS). For 110 years, students from the seminary have ministered to the needs of this rural mission. Sunday services were led by seminarians and attended by people from all denominations.

Tommy Packard and Phillips Brooks, were among the aspiring seminarians who received their early training at Sharon Chapel. Philips Brooks became a famous preacher of the 19th century and was the composer of the carol, “O Little Town of Bethlehem.” It is said that when Mr. Brooks delivered his first sermon at Sharon Chapel, he was so distraught with his own delivery of the sermon that he made a hasty exit by leaping through an open window next to the pulpit, and than ran all the way back to the Seminary.

1862 – Church and graveyard wrecked by “Yankees.” Taken over by squatters who were then thrown out by Yankee soldiers.

1863 – Every tree in Church yard cut down and carried away during snow storm.

1864 – Original chapel was accidentally burned to the ground by Union soldiers stationed at nearby Fort Lyon, erected to defend Alexandria and Washington.

Samuel and Thomas Pulman, ages 9 and 13, were killed on August 6, 1864, when a cannonball with which they were playing exploded. They became the first burials in the cemetery. The words inscribed on the tombstone are as follows: “They have gone to their home in the morning of life/From the world where the rough billow rolls/And though sudden the summons that called them away/In heaven with God rest their souls.”

The second Sharon Chapel was built with scrap lumber salvaged from the barracks of Fort Lyon.

1903 – A third chapel was built.

Note from a letter from The Rev. Louis Bradford on the history of Sharon Chapel. “Until about 1945, Sharon was the only church of any kind in the immediate area. As such it ministered to the community, and was, its center. Most of the children in the neighborhood who were baptized were baptized at Sharon. Sharon had a flourishing Sunday School and Youth Group, nourished by seminary students, but generally speaking, a low church attendance.”

In 1955 Sharon was closed and combined with St. Mark’s. But soon permission was obtained to have a seminary student hold services. Robert Lyles and later William Parish conducted these services. Mr. Ainsworth, a licensed Lay Reader, continued the work.

1959 – Sharon Chapel was made an aided mission of the Diocese of Virginia and was assigned its first full-time minister. This was the first time that Sharon Chapel, in 110 years, had a full-time minister. The Rev. Louis Bradford, served as Rector from 1959-1966. The congregation consisted of twenty-five communicants. The potential for more existed as Happy Valley and its environs evolved from a rural area of small truck farms to suburban homes occupied largely by government workers.
1961 – Sharon Chapel was admitted to the Diocese of Virginia as a Mission Church. Soon the small chapel was inadequate for the needs of the congregation. Following discussions that Sharon was redundant and should be absorbed, or otherwise disposed of – to wit the people of Sharon Chapel refused to accept this and became independent financially of the Diocese.

1963 – The present, fourth church, an A-frame church was built, entirely from the resources of the Parish.

1964 – Palm Sunday, Dedication of the church.

1966 – The Rev. Louis Bradford, the first Vicar and Rector completed his six years of service.

1966 – 1972 The Rev. Sherrod Albritton was Rector. During this period the church attendance was high and in 1969 a second service was added.

1968 – The congregation raised $2,000 to pave the parking lot. One year later, the Diocesan Missionary Society loaned the money to open a much-needed additional access road from Franconia Road.

1971 – Gunnell Hall was built. It is a multipurpose brick building to meet educational and social needs. This was built on the site of the 1903 Chapel which was torn down. The building was named after Mr. Bruce Gunnell, a man devoted to Sharon Chapel, who died in 1996.

1972 – The Rev. Albritton left and there was a brief interim period.

1973 – 1976 The Rev. Richard Shimpfky, Rector. During this time, attendance at Sharon Chapel was at the highest it has ever been before or since. For example the total attendance in 1973 was 13,981, which was five thousand more than the averages of all the years between 1965 and 1996.

1974 – In April of 1974, the Diocesan Council accepted Sharon Chapel’s petition for parish status, and became officially All Saints Episcopal Church, Sharon Chapel.

1975 – Project Sharon brought in clergy from other areas to focus on Christian identity.


1982 – The memorial ash garden was dedicated. Ramp to the church entrance was built by the Youth Group.


1984 – 1990 The Rev. Roger Foote, Rector. (From 1991 profile following Roger Foote’s departure) “For the past seven years, we have benefited from the able, and enabling, ministry of our former Rector. As a result of his leadership and personal example of growing in the faith, our church has a healthy sense of community, a strong lay leadership, a developing spiritual life, an active outreach program to the homeless, and a spark of evangelism.”

1991 – 1992 The Rev. Anne Monahan, Interim Rector. (From 1991 profile, is described as “a full-time, trained interim in place and, together, we are conducting all aspects of parish life in our normally active manner. Overall, we think we’re in pretty good shape, and ready to progress with our spiritual journey.”)


All Saints Episcopal Church, Sharon Chapel is located at 3421 Franconia Road.
Pictured is the world's smallest ride-able bicycle which was documented and published in the Guinness World Book of Records in 1974, and was the official record holder for several years. The bicycle was designed and built by Arthur L. Nalls, Jr. of Franconia, Virginia, who was a Franconia Elementary School student and a graduate of Hayfield Secondary School.

This unique bicycle was on display at the Franconia Museum History Day event on October 27, 2007. Arthur could not be there as he was busy with his hobby and passion, flying one of his vintage planes in an air show. His parents, Arthur, Sr. and Betty Nalls proudly displayed the unique bicycle and scrapbooks, and allowed anyone to try riding it. A few children and adults found it exciting to try and see what a feat it must have been for Art to build, and actually ride this tiny vehicle. His dad said that his son was always designing and drawing as a young teenager. He was not distracted by TV.

The bicycle is made of scrap parts from a washing machine, several bicycles and assorted junk, which he welded together into a sturdy and ride-able bicycle. It measures a bit less than 5 inches tall.

In 1974, while a student at the Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland, Art demonstrated his project to England’s Guinness Book of Records officials. He was instructed to ride a certain distance down a hall and back, which he was able to do.

This achievement was recognized by several television shows including; “I’ve Got a Secret;” “To Tell the Truth;” “David Frost;” and “Geraldo,” where he demonstrated pedaling the tiny bicycle.

Art graduated from the Naval Academy in 1976, and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Marine Corps. In 1979, he was designated a Naval Aviator and received his wings of gold. In 1985, Art was the “one Marine per year” selected for test pilot school. Art served in the Lebanon conflict and in the Persian Gulf. He fortunately survived two crashes. Due to his extraordinary skill in landing his plane that was damaged, he was selected to fly a Sea Harrier, a fighter plane used in close combat. The Harrier takes off and lands vertically.

Since his retirement ten years ago, Colonel Arthur Nalls has pursued his passion for flying which led him to purchase three vintage planes. His latest purchase of a Sea Harrier was a feat in its self.

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Getting approval from FAA and customs, the plane was shipped from England in sections. He is the first private owner of a Harrier in the world. Check out his web site at NallsAviation.com and witness the assembly and restoration of the plane.

On November 20, 2007, Art’s first flight in his Harrier was successful, taking off and landing from a perfect hover at St. Mary’s Regional Airport, Maryland. The next day, a few minutes into his second flight, the ship experienced hydraulic system problems. This forced an emergency landing. In order to get it back to St. Mary’s Airport, Art had the jet hooked to a pickup truck, and with six police car escorts, towed it nearly eight miles. He sat in the cockpit dressed as Santa Claus, and with a “Ho, Ho, Ho” waved to truckers and motorists.

Art has flown in many air shows in his L-39 Albatros, a bright shiny black two-seater. He also owns and flies a 1939 Cub L-4, a plane used for surveillance. He is a member of the Confederate Air Force, a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving and flying antique aircraft.

Art is indeed enjoying an exciting career!!

-- Jacqueline “Jac” Walker

Mark Your Calendars

7th Annual Franconia History Day

November 8, 2008
10 a. m. - 3 p. m.

See Our Fall Newsletter

2008 History Day will held at the Franconia Elementary School
6043 Franconia Road, Franconia, Virginia
(located at the Intersection Of Beulah Street and Franconia Road)
My Memories Of Franconia

by Sharon Taber Breeding

This is an excerpt from the Taber Family Story from the Franconia Museum’s upcoming book “Franconia Remembers, Volume IV”. The book will be published later this year, and will contain Sharon’s complete story.

Ward’s Corner and Fitzgerald’s Store

My friends and I would go along Franconia Road and look in the ditches for pop bottles, which were worth two cents. We would find as many as we could and take them to Ward’s Corner, or to Fitzgerald’s Store to trade for candy. Mr. Fitzgerald would make us clean the bottles before he would take them from us. But at Ward’s Corner, we could cash them in, dirt and all. Densel Webster, who worked in the store, didn’t care how dirty those pop bottles were.

My oldest sister, Sheila Taber, worked at the Sylvia movie theater, at Wards, selling tickets at the ticket booth. Another one of my sisters, Linda Taber, was run over by a car near Ward’s Corner. My older brothers, Richard, Jimmy, and Harry, would go with Ward Plaugher up to Winchester to the apple orchards and pick apples.

Our neighborhood had some peculiar characters. One man I will never forget was Howard Struder. He lived in an old run down gas station on the corner of Oak Wood Road (now Van Dorn Street) and Franconia Roads. He was always hunting and trapping in the woods. He carried a gun in one hand, and a gunny sack slung over his back filled with squirrels and rabbits that he had shot. A pack of hounds were usually at his side. Lots of times he would ride his white mule all around the neighborhood. The older kids would pick on him. He carried a long stick and would try and hit them with it.

I also remember Otis Davis who cleaned up around the store. He walked with a limp. The day Ward’s Corner burned down was an awful time for everyone. We kids ran from Franconia Elementary School all the way to Wards the day it burned.

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Another neighbor was Mr. Frances, who lived at the end of Triplett Lane, way back in the woods. He would wear an old aviator cap and carry a walking stick. He also always wore a pair of black artic buckle up boots. You didn’t mess around his house. There also was another old man who would walk along Franconia Road looking for pop bottles. He carried a cane and sometimes would dress up like a Scotsman, wearing a kilt. He would get upset if the kids found the pop bottles before he did.

Our mailman’s name was Frank, and that is all we knew him by. He had only one hand. His other hand was a two finger hook. The bread man’s name was also Frank. He drove for the Holmes Bread Company. I think he would come through the neighborhood about every two weeks, selling bread and doughnuts. The milkman made his deliveries in the Alexandria Dairy truck. In the summertime, he would give the kids chunks of ice to eat.
Mr. George Fowle, one of Alexandria’s most wealthy and popular citizens, has invited his young friends to join him in a straw ride to Franconia on Tuesday night next on the occasion of a strawberry festival for the benefit of the Episcopal church there.

— The Washington Post, June 4, 1892

The Strawberry Festival at the Franconia Episcopal Church (6107 Franconia Road) continues to this day. The date for this year is May 31st.

— Debbi Wilson

Nationally acclaimed historical Civil War artist John Paul Strain released his new work “The Rose Hill Raid” at the Franconia Museum on 25 August 2007. Although he has produced other historical art, he is most noted for his series of Civil War paintings and prints. His national reputation has been built based on his historic authenticity, and avid collectors prize his limited edition artwork.

While at the Franconia Museum he signed prints and donated a framed archival Museum edition. It is prominently displayed in the Franconia Museum. If you missed the event you still have an opportunity to purchase one. If you are interested in purchasing a print please contact Gregg Dudding at 703-971-4860 or by email wdudding@cox.net. Don’t forget…half of the proceeds of the selling of the prints go directly to the Franconia Museum.
We enjoy hearing from Friends. A letter dated November 10, 2007 from Shirley Brown Zurek as written from her home in Warrenton, Virginia. Shirley grew up in Franconia and made her home here most of her adult years.

TO: Franconia Museum

Dear Jacqueline,

Thank you for sending the “Historic Franconia Legacies.” I find them interesting and inspiring.

I also remember growing up in Franconia and attending the Elementary School. The teachers I most remember are:

Wren Biller Gilkerson
Dorothy Anderson Higham
Nellie Lee Nevitt

With a teacher’s encouragement in 1936, I wrote a poem for my mother, Mrs. Nannie Brown. My parents, Mr. and Mrs. L. Earl Brown, Sr. lived on Beulah Road (now Beulah Street.)

While a student at Mt. Vernon High School in 1940, I won a prize for my poem “The Maple Tree.” The contest was sponsored by The Evening Star. They published school news in a special section.

Please continue to send new issues, and keep up the good work.

Sincerely,
Shirley Brown Zurek

Mother’s Picture
I’m going to paint a picture of you
Mother dear, some day
So I shall not forget you when
You have gone away,
It shall be really wonderful
A masterpiece indeed
And it will help me through my life
The life that I must lead.

I’m going to paint a picture of you
Mother dear, some day
A picture of a hundred things my
Hungry soul can’t say,
A picture of your love and sacrifice for me,
A painting of the angel Mother
You will always be.

Shirley Brown
1936

The Maple Tree
Lovers sat there in the quiet of the day,
Little children romped in glee.
And tiny babies crawled out to play
Under the maple tree.

Grandpa sat and read and smoked,
While Grandma held her sewing bee,
Young people laughed and talked and joked
Under the maple tree.

Sorrow, love, and joy met here.
And all the ways people can be;
Through generations, year after year
Under the maple tree.

Shirley Brown
1940

We would love to hear from you... if you would like to give us your comments or send us a word or two, please contact us by mail or email.

6121 Franconia Road
Franconia, VA 22310
franconiamuseum@yahoo.com
On Saturday, March 22, 2003 over 100 relatives, friends, former students and caregivers gathered at the Springfield Hilton to celebrate Winnie Walker Spencer's 100th Birthday. Winnie was not present for the milestone event, she unfortunately passed away this past February 29th. Jac Walker spoke at the celebration and credited Winnie as the inspiration for writing the family stories recorded in the three “Franconia Remembers” books. Winnie told Jac to “Write it down”, and Jac has recorded many stories that would otherwise be lost to history. The Franconia Museum Board of Directors sincerely thanks Winnie for “getting the ball rolling.” The work goes on, “Franconia Remembers Volume IV” will be published this coming fall. Winnie’s story is presented here, it represents a success story all Franconians can appreciate.

— Jim Cox
For the Board

Winnie Walker Spencer, the daughter of the late Maurice and Georgianna Walker, was born in Franconia, Virginia March 22, 1908. She was the fourth of five children. She grew up on her parent’s thirteen acre farm that had been inherited from her grandparents William and Georgianna Jasper. She attended Laurel Grove Colored School from first thru seventh grade. Her grandparents, William and Georgianna Jasper were freed slaves who deeded one half acre of their land to the Mt. Vernon School district in 1881. They along with their neighbors built the Laurel Grove Colored School, a one-room school so that African Americans in Franconia could be educated. In 1884, The Jasper’s deeded one half acre of land to the Trustees of the Laurel Grove Baptist Church.

Winnie’s parents and grandparents stressed the importance of getting an education to be successful in life. Getting that education was no easy task. She had a short walk to Laurel Grove School for grades one to seven. She had to take the train from Franconia to Washington, D.C. to attend Armstrong High School. She could not let her friends at school know that she did not live in the city. She walked from the train station to school everyday. From High School she went to St. Paul's Normal School, Lawrenceville, Virginia. Then during the summers she went to Virginia State College in Petersburg, Virginia where she earned a B.A. teaching degree. Winnie was 42 years old when she received this degree. She later received her Master's Degree from New York University.

Winnie taught for almost 40 years in elementary schools in Fairfax County and Prince William County. She taught at Woodlawn Colored School on Ft. Belvoir, and at schools in Dumfries, Gum Springs, Vienna, and Bailey’s Cross Roads. She taught in segregated schools during her entire career. In early years, in two room schools with potbelly stoves, she and her students made the fire and often cooked soup or stew for lunch. She and her students endured many hardships. These included second hand books, little or no transportation for “colored” students and little county support for the schools. Parents and teachers provided what was needed so that students could receive a proper education. Winnie visited student’s homes and helped parents fill out administrative forms and other documents required by the County. She had classroom visits by Superintendent W.T. Woodson and Supervisor Emma Moore to oversee her work.

She was a dedicated teacher and wanted the best for not only her students, but their parents as well. Many of her students stayed in contact with her even after they became adults with successful careers.

Winnie was married to Thomas R. Spencer, from Falls Church, Virginia and they lived in Washington, DC. Tom was the “love of her life”. They enjoyed entertaining family and friends, and always had a smile and a laugh, and even a joke or two for all. Tom and Winnie’s brother Dumont worked at Arlington National Cemetery. In May 1955, Tom died while “on the job” at Arlington. He was a World War I veteran entitled to burial at Arlington. Dumont worked with cemetery officials to choose the burial site in section 23, with a view of the Amphitheater and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

After Tom’s death, Winnie decided to come home to Franconia. She contacted Arthur Nalls, a Franconia Home Builder, and gave him a design for her new home. During the building process, she only showed up at inspection times. This was “her dream house, her design”. She had many family dinners, picnics and wonderful fellowships at 6300 Walker Lane. Friends and family enjoyed the gatherings, good food, fun, and laughter.
Claud Ward, a well known radio personality, singer, and advertising man, died of cancer at age 55 at Johns Hopkins Hospital. He and his wife, Pauline, and daughter, Amelita, made their home on Valley View Drive (at the top of the second big hill), in Franconia for many years until his death.

He became “Uncle Bud” when he began broadcasting a national children’s program from Washington, D.C. and the name stuck, so that thousands of persons knew him by no other.

His career as a singer and entertainer began in his native North Carolina when he was only 14 years of age. Possessed of a fine voice, he was employed by the North Carolina State Board of Evangelism, and traveled with its evangelists throughout the country. He and Pauline Pownell, his future wife, studied music at Shenandoah College, in Dayton, Virginia. He was also a voice student at Carnegie Hall in New York City. They were married in 1923, and formed a team. She played the piano and sang, and he sang and did the commentary. The team was intact until his last illness. For a number of years, they traveled throughout the country, singing at revival services with such great evangelists as Billy Sunday, Gipsy Smith, Sr., and Gipsy Smith, Jr. At tent meetings, he sang and Pauline accompanied him on the piano.

In 1933 they began their broadcasts from Washington, D.C. over the Blue and Red networks, operated by the National Broadcasting System (WMAL). Their featured program was the National Children’s Frolic, in which area children performed on an amateur basis. The Franconia School choir performed on the show. Other Franconians who performed included singers Elizabeth Dennis (Fenimore), whose home was across from the Wards; Cora Chitty (King) who was a high school choir member in Washington, D.C.; and Betty Plaugher (Nalls) who played the piano. Cora remembers that the studio was located at 14th & H Street, NW in Washington. Each year they broadcast a special program featuring the children of members of Congress, under the sponsorship of Congressional Women’s Club. Uncle Bud performing on his slide whistle was one of the show’s highlights.

The Wards operated an advertising agency in Alexandria. Uncle Bud was associated with the Alexandria radio station WPIK for his last few years. His last broadcast for the station was his taped coverage of the George Washington Birthday Parade in Alexandria.

Pauline Pownell, born in Keyser, West Virginia, was a concert pianist. Franconia children who sang on the amateur show would go home to practice. The huge living room featured a large grand piano and a huge stone fireplace. The outside structure of their home was also stone. The five (maybe ten) acre tract of land featured a lake which was a big attraction to neighborhood children. The house no longer stands, and the property has been developed.

Pauline was a beautiful brunette, and she wore her hair long in a bun at the nape of her neck. Their only child, Amelita Galli-Curci Pownell Ward (named for an opera soprano,) was also a beautiful brunette, and had a lovely singing voice. After high school graduation at Mount Vernon, she was spotted by a modeling agency. Soon after, she married a photographer at the agency and moved to Hollywood, where she appeared in movies beginning around 1942. The movies are sometimes aired on the classic movie cable stations. She is billed as Amelita or Lita Ward and was an actress in “Clancy Street Boys” (1943) and “Smuggler’s Cove” (1948) with Leo Gorcey, one of the original Dead End Kids. Leo’s on-screen character usually called “Mugs” or “Slip” was famous for his ability to massacre the English language.

Leo and Amelita married and had two children; a son, Leo, Jr. in 1949 and a daughter, Jan in 1951. The marriage ended in divorce in 1956. Leo visited the Franconia home several times and he attended Uncle Bud’s funeral. After her father’s death, Amelita moved.

Continued On Page 14
Claudius “Uncle Bud” Hartfield Ward … continued

back to the Alexandria area near her mother. They are both deceased. Leo Gorcey, Jr., who also has a web link, wrote a biography about his father entitled “Muggsy: The Dead End Kid.” His newest book is “Me and The Dead End Kid.”

Uncle Bud’s funeral services were described as “unique and different.” Always a natural showman, he wanted his death to be dramatic enough to impress on folks the importance and meaning of the hymns used during the service. He sang at his own funeral. He had recorded three hymns on his death bed in the hospital. (Jesus Took My Burden and Left Me With a Song; The Touch of His Hand on Mine; Tell it to Jesus Alone.) Members of the Alexandria Rotary Club, in which he was a member, served as pallbearers. He is interred in the Pownell family cemetery in Keyser, West Virginia.

Uncle Bud was described to be a little man with a big heart. He was remembered by his many friends as the familiar figure with a battered hat, the gaily colored tie and the inevitable cigar. Most of all, he is missed as a quiet thoughtful man underneath—a man whose sense of fairness that never dimmed and whose personal integrity was never compromised.

Uncle Bud was civic minded. He can be seen in many Franconia Museum photos crowning the Queen of the Franconia Volunteer Fire Department’s annual Labor Day parade, officiating in the installation of officers and other Master of Ceremony events. He was the voice and public face of Franconia for many years.

Parts of this document were abstracted from the Evening Star and Alexandria Gazette clippings.

- - Jacqueline “Jac” Walker

Winnie Beatrice Walker Spencer - A Celebration Of Life … continued

Winnie was a member of Ebenezer United Methodist Church, 4th and D Streets SE, Washington, DC. Her Brother Van Dyke and his wife Dorothy were also members of Ebenezer. She was a very active member, singing in the choir, participating in Women’s Day programs, Bible Study and many other activities. She only gave it up when she could no longer drive herself into DC. She remained a member of Ebenezer, attending when she could, but became a regular at Laurel Grove Baptist Church. She could walk to Laurel Grove from her house.

For many years Winnie was called on to be the “Women’s Day” speaker at churches throughout Northern Virginia. She always encouraged listeners to “trust and obey God”.

All of her life, Winnie encouraged young people to “get an education”. If she could help them in any way, she was happy to do so. She was not a shy person, to know her was to accept that she was going to tell you what she thought. She shared her stories of growing up in Franconia, and although there were hard times, they didn’t seem hard because of the love and friendships shared with family and neighbors. She leaves us her passion for staying connected to family, following God’s word and getting wisdom, knowledge and understanding.

She is survived by her niece, Phyllis Walker Ford and her husband Clifton, her nephew, Van Dyke Walker Jr. and wife Beatrice, great nephews, Vandyke Walker III, Matthew Ford, Dumont Walker III; great-great nephew Van Dyke IV and great-great niece Cydne.

— Phyllis Walker Ford, Niece
Tickey Young (age 77) entered “Eternal Life” this Fall. He was buried at his hunting and fishing farm estate (100 acres), in the Young Memorial Cemetery. The cemetery is located at the intersection of Big and Little Stoney Creeks near Woodstock, Virginia, in the Shenandoah Valley.

William, Bill, Tickey Young, or however you remember him, was born in the old Alexandria Hospital on Duke Street. The Young family lived in Del Ray, Alexandria at the time, and later moved to Fairfax County at 5966 Telegraph Road (the house still stands). In 1939 the family moved to Franconia at the intersection of Grovedale Drive and Beulah Road. An office building now stands at the home site. Later, the Young family moved south on Beulah Road, with a mailing address of Route 5, Box 389, Alexandria, Virginia. This move was to a thirty acre farm, which had previously been owned by the Fitzgerald family. They operated the Fitzgerald Grocery in Franconia, located at the intersection of Grovedale Drive and Franconia Road, across from Roger’s Feed Store. The farm is now part of a subdivision located across the street from the Beulah Street 7-11 store.

Tickey graduated from Mount Vernon High School in the class of 1948, and was able to attend his fifty year class reunion at the Belle Haven Country Club on October 24-25, 1998. After graduation, Tickey worked for his father at Young and Son Heating & Air Conditioning Company, before being drafted into the Army in 1951. He served at Fort Meade, Maryland, Fort Knox, Kentucky, and in South Korea. He helped to build the Kempo Airport in Seoul, Korea. Tickey and his younger brother Charles were able to visit one another while stationed in Korea. Charlie had enlisted earlier in the U.S. Marine Corps, and saw extensive combat, making numerous amphibious landing assaults as a Marine Rifleman, on the eastern coast of Korea. All of the Young brothers, Jim, Tickey and Charles, served in the military during the Korean conflict.

Tickey’s marriage to Barbara Tapprich ended in divorce. They had three children; David Charles of Lynchburg, Virginia; William Mark, and Rebecca Lee both of Woodstock, Virginia. His second wife, Vallie Duval Young resides in Stanley, Virginia. He is also survived by two brothers; Jim of Springfield, Virginia; Charlie of Elkton, Virginia; and a sister, JoAnne Graham of Lopez Island, Washington State.

Tickey was associated with the heating and air conditioning industry in the Metropolitan Washington, D. C. area his entire working life. He received numerous awards from the building industry for his drafting, sketching, and mechanical construction skills.

In retirement Tickey purchased a beautiful home in Stanley, Virginia. He collected guns, brewed a large variety of wines, and did extensive wood working projects. However, his most favored activities were hunting and fishing. A large amount of his time was spent at his hunting and fishing farm estate near Woodstock. He often said he had become a “mountain man” in retirement. He loved hunting and fishing and could tell all the associated tales, even if you did not ask to hear them. Tickey taught Hunter Education to thousands of young people throughout the Shenandoah Valley, as part of Virginia’s hunter safety programs. He was also a Mason for most of his adult life.

I believe Tickey would want me, his brother Jim, to acknowledge each of you. So “hello” to his many childhood friends in Franconia, who helped him grow up and to make his early life so enjoyable. These special friends include: Johnny Millstead and family; the Uhler family, Bobby and Peggy; the Cooke family, Jac, Bill, Bob, David, and Bev; Buddy and Betty Nalls; the Flinchum family; the Jones family; the Cole family, Jean; the Flammer family; the Wright family; the Stewart family, Rodney and Jeffrey; the Milton Alexander family, Joe; and all the other wonderful folks.

Tickey would have said in summary, “I had a good life, I did my best, I had a family, and I took good care of my children. I served my country with honor, and I had fun along the way. It was a great adventure, and I thank all of those who helped me along the way, especially those in Franconia. I love my children and I wish all of you the best. It was a great adventure—I look forward to seeing you, but not too soon, as your journey progresses. Bless you.”

Jim “Sonny” Young
703-971-1916

Consider making a contribution to the American Cancer Society or other charity.
At age 52, Mark passed away in his sleep at his home on Valley View Drive in Franconia. He is survived by his devoted wife of over 30 years, Marie Taylor Walker; five children; Andrew, Joseph and his wife Kelly, Benjamin and his wife Soriah, Rebekah and Daniel (Duke) Walker; six grandchildren; Campbell, Jacqueline Bailey, Joseph, Ezra, Omar and Micah Walker. He is also survived by his brothers, Philip and Kenneth and a sister, Pamela Walker; and his parents Donald and Jacqueline Walker, all of Franconia. He is interred at National Memorial Park, Falls Church, Virginia.

A memorial celebration was held at Sovereign Grace Church, Fairfax, Virginia on January 21 where approximately 900 friends and family were in attendance. Mark was an inspiration these past 2 ½ years. Through God’s grace and mercy, Mark demonstrated to everyone his gratitude and his deep love for God. I am deeply grateful to his beloved wife Marie for her love of our son, her devotion and care, especially the past years of his illness 24/7.

A short version of his illness; Mark had a second liver transplant in July 2005 and he came home in June 2006. He continued to be bedridden for 19 months until his death. Although weak in body, he became mighty in spirit. There were many bumps along the way, surviving miraculous obstacles time after time. He was labeled “the comeback kid.”

It is comforting to me, his mother, that Mark enjoyed being a kid growing up in Franconia, something he expressed to me last October. He loved the outdoors, playing basketball and football, bowling on the same team with his dad, riding the boat to Marshall Hall, etc.

Mark showed respect and kindness to everyone, his teachers even during trying times, his peers and his family. We were told that is the way his co-workers at Home Depot were treated. He in return was respected and loved.

Three days before his death, his voice was barely audible. I never will forget his reaction when I told him Joe Gibbs had resigned. Wide eyed and with a loud and distinct voice, he said NO WAY!! He cried.

Mark’s 52 years were fruitful and fulfilling. He served six years in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserves (six months active), completed a four-year carpentry apprenticeship, and his last ten years of work were with Home Depot. While working there he initiated and taught a program of instruction for employees. Of course he was also a loving parent of five children and husband of a loving wife, and active in his church, Sovereign Grace in Fairfax. Although weak in body, he became mighty in spirit.

We are left with many memories and a wonderful growing family to love.

Jac Walker, Mom

Have a memoriam …

please email it to us at franconiamuseum@yahoo.com
Conway Apperson, age 92, passed away at Fairfax Hospital following complications from surgery. He is survived by his beloved wife of 69 years, Helen Ragen Apperson. He is also survived by a daughter, Kristina Prack (David) of Franconia and a son, Thomas Apperson (Jane) of Franconia; three grandchildren; Christopher & Jeffrey Prack, and Jennifer Apperson; and three great-grandchildren; Travis, Cameron and Jamie Prack. His ashes are interred at the Salem United Methodist Church Cemetery in Rhoadesville, Virginia with his parents, Willie Eli and Frances Elizabeth Herndon Apperson.

Conny built his home on Valley View Drive in Franconia in 1952, where he reared his children. In 2006, it became necessary that he and Helen move into assisted living at Braddock Glen in Fairfax, Virginia.

Conny was a master of the woodworking trade. He co-owned Columbia Store Fixtures, Inc. in Washington, D.C., working until his retirement. He loved working with wood, spending many hours in his home shop, trying to ignore the complaints of sawdust. His work is evident in many Franconia homes and churches—furniture, cabinets, grandfather clocks, fireplaces. You name it, he could build anything. I have heard him say he could cover up any mistake or flaw with wood. He had a “secret” formula and method of staining wood, something he shared with very few people. He was most comfortable in his white carpenter overalls.

Conny always spoke fondly of Mr. Bernard who recognized his natural talent when he was a young man. He took Conny under his wing. He became his teacher and lifelong friend, treating him like a son. He taught him well. The Apperson family was included in all of the Bernard family picnics and reunions. When Mr. Bernard retired, he turned his store fixture business over to Conny, which then became Columbia Store Fixtures, Inc.

Conny liked music and he could play the guitar. In his early twenties, before marrying, he performed on the sidewalks of Alexandria with Arthur Godfrey on his ukulele and Buddy Minnick, also on guitar. This was before Arthur Godfrey became well known. He also played catcher on a semi-pro baseball team in Fredericksburg.

Conny was a gentleman who was gracious to everyone, never speaking ill of anyone. He had a ready winsome smile, and a wavy crop of dark hair, which no doubt won over his wife, Helen. They married just three weeks after they met. It lasted 69 years until his death.

-- Jacqueline "Jac" Walker
Friend and Longtime Neighbor, and 2nd or 3rd Cousin (My mother was an Apperson)

Joseph Herbert King (age 75) passed away on February 9, 2008 at his home in Franconia, Virginia.

Joe was preceded in death by his parents, Howard Glenn King and Emma Kathie Higham. He is survived by his wife of nearly 54 years, Nancy Lou (Phillips) King; two sons, Joseph Edward King (Laurie E.) and James Hansford King; daughter, Bonnie Lou King (David Ortiz); sister Diane Glenn Burgess; three grandchildren; Joseph Matthew King, Sarah Elizabeth Newman and Anthena Marie Sandoval; and one great-grandchild, Nadya Lucero Sandoval.

Joe joined the U.S. Navy during the Korean conflict, and served on the USS Macon and the USS Missouri. He worked his entire career in telecommunications in Washington, D.C., hiring on with C&P Telephone Company in 1953. He retired with 36 years of faithful service. His interests included outdoor sports of hunting and fishing and he held a private pilot’s license. He was an avid follower of political and current events. He was also a member of the American Legion and the Sons of Confederate Veterans.

Joseph King is interred at Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Virginia.
A Granddaughter Remembers 1940s – 1950s
by Helen Kearns

I am Helen Elizabeth Gibson Kearns, one of the many grandchildren of Harry and Elsie McGuin. We lived on Oakwood Road, now South Van Dorn Street. Gramma, as I called my grandmother, told me that before it was called Oakwood Road, it was known as Lunt’s Road. I was born December 14, 1938. I began attending Franconia Elementary School in 1945 and can remember every teacher of the seven grades through 1972, which can be another story.

My grandparents met at a church picnic. He was nineteen and she was twenty one when they married. Grampap was a farmer during the day and a railroad man on the R.F.&P. Railroad at night. He worked on the midnight shift 12 p.m.– 8 a.m. To me they were and are the world’s best grandparents!

My first train ride was with Gramma to Alexandria, which was so special to this country girl. I had to black (polish) my shoes before I could go. After she finished her shopping, we would go to Kresges for ice cream at the soda fountain. What a wonderful treat!

Gramma sewed beautiful skirts for me, from pretty printed feed sacks, on her Singer treadle sewing machine. Gramma and I picked berries, tomatoes, and other things from the fields and trees. She made biscuits every day from scratch. I helped gather kindling for the big black wood stove in the kitchen.

I would often tag along when Gramma milked the cow. One time the cow kicked her so hard, she had a black and blue shoulder for a long time. After that she would tie the cow’s legs until she finished milking. I liked helping Gramma churn the milk into butter. Gramma had a big country kitchen where most of the work was done. She put the churn on the big table. I would pull up a chair, and on my knees was able to reach the churn. The churn was made of clear heavy glass with a square bottom and a large round opening on which a top was screwed. The top had a place to grip to keep the churn from moving. When I turned the handle, the paddles on the inside moved. I loved watching the milk turn into butter. Having butter on hot biscuits for supper and on pancakes for breakfast was yummy.

Nobody cooked better than Gramma. On Sundays we usually had fried chicken for dinner. On Saturday, Gramma would chop off the chicken’s head on a block with the ax. She then put the chicken under a bushel basket with a heavy piece of wood on top until it stopped flopping. Then she would dip it into a large bucket of boiling water, so it would be easy to pluck the feathers. After cleaning the chicken, she would give us kids the feet to play with. We had fun making pretty designs in the dirt driveway.

Harry and Elsie McGuin

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In the fall, I helped Gramma gather acorns and dry leaves for the pigs. In winter when it snowed, many of the grandchildren, my cousins, and the neighborhood kids came to Gramma’s to sleigh ride. It was the best hill in the area. If there was no school the next day, we would sleigh until the wee hours of the morning. We would have a big bonfire off to one side at the bottom of the hill.

Grampap was a very special man. He loved kids. He said every time a new baby was born into the family it was worth a million dollars. He was always so good to us kids. Many times he let me tag along when he worked in the fields. He let me ride on the hayrake and the hay truck to the barn. I spent many hours playing in the barn, especially in the hay loft with my friends and cousins, while Grampap worked on his machinery or sharpened his tools.

About once a month, on his way home from working on the railroad, Grampap would stop at Ridgeway’s Store on Telegraph Road, near Duke Street. He would bring us Hostess Cupcakes and soft orange candy, called Circus Peanuts.

Harry and Elsie McGuin

I will always be grateful to God for giving me such precious grandparents. Harry and Elsie Kitson McGuin had ten children and raised eight to adulthood. I never lacked for a playmate. I have forty-seven cousins. We played hide and seek, baseball, hopscotch, tag, board games and lots more. I was a Tom Boy, and I spent many wonderful hours alone roaming the fields and woods on my grandparent’s farm.

What a wonderful life!!!

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