



Historic Franconia Legacies

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Franconia ...

*A
Wonderful
Place
to Call
Home*

World War I Veterans from Franconia Honored on History Day

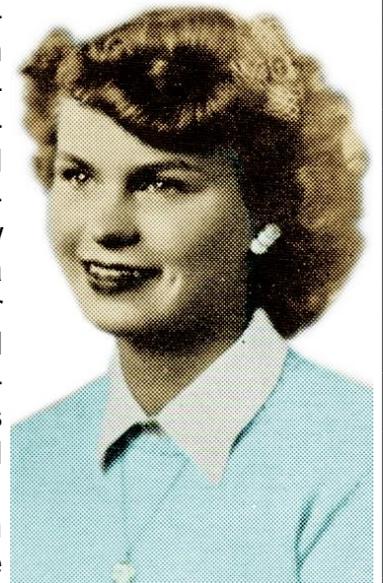


The theme of the Franconia Museum History Day held in November 2018 was the 100th Anniversary of Armistice Day, representing the end of World War I. Several of the men from Franconia who fought in World War I were recognized and honored on History Day, and photos and excerpts from some of their stories are included in this Newsletter. Excerpts and photos from additional stories will be presented in a subsequent issue of our newsletter, Historic Franconia Legacies.

(Read excerpts on Franconia's World War I Veterans beginning on page 4.)

Old Mount Vernon High School Oral History Project: Margaret Rogers Welch Remembers Her High School Days

Margaret Rogers Welch, Class of 1944, was interviewed as part of the Original Mount Vernon High School Oral History Project created to provide information as part of the Virginia Department of Transportation project to expand Route #1, Richmond Highway. Margaret was a member of the first graduating class that had spent all four years at the new school. The original Mount Vernon High School is a major historic resource remaining in the corridor from Alexandria to the Occoquan River. The Oral History Project is part of a program to mitigate impacts to historic resources along the route. Students from Franconia attended Mount Vernon High School during World War II, and up until the late 1950s. They had previously attended Lee Jackson High School in what is now the City of Alexandria. The project was conducted by Cultural Resource Analysis (CRA). Architectural Historian Laura Purvis, MA, conducted the interview at Margaret's home in Franconia. Margaret, a former member of the Franconia Museum Board of Directors, currently serves as one of our Senior Advisors. She is one of a number of people interviewed for the project. The interview with former Lee District Supervisor Joseph Alexander, a 1947 graduate of Mount Vernon, will be excerpted in a subsequent newsletter.



(Read excerpts from Margaret's interview beginning on Page 12.)



President's Message ...



Thanks to the support of its members, the Franconia Museum is working toward establishing scholarship aid to help community high school seniors further their college education in history. Two \$1,000 scholarships will be awarded annually to high school seniors who plan to major in history in college. This scholarship program will be implemented as soon as the program qualifies under Internal Revenue Service non-profit guidelines.

This decision by the Museum Board of Directors has its roots in an action by two women who recognized the importance of education in the 1930s. At that point in time, Franconia had a one-room school house located on what is now Old Franconia Road, near the railroad tracks. Kathie Higham and Maude Simms decided the area needed a new school, and they went to Fairfax to convince the Board of Supervisors. Kathie would give the County land at the corner of Franconia Road and Beulah Road so a school could be built.

Imagine their chagrin when the Board adjourned for lunch---twice---without considering the offer. So, the next time, Kathie and Maude fixed lunch for all and told the Board there was no need to adjourn; they had brought lunch with them! It wasn't long before students began attending the new four-room classroom.

The country was in the midst of a recession, and some students didn't have enough to eat. So, Kathie and Maude began making soup and serving those in need.

That's the kind of dedication that helped make Franconia the great community it is today. It is the Museum's desire and responsibility to see that efforts like that aren't forgotten. You can read about the Higham family and Kathie in Volume II, and the Simms family in Volume III of *Franconia Remembers*, the Museum series of books about area history. They are on sale at the Museum.

Carl Sell

Everyone has a story to tell and we want to hear yours! If you are interested in sharing your stories with us, please email us at franconiamuseum@yahoo.com. We are also looking for artifacts, photos, and maps (gifts or loans) to be used in future exhibits.

*Franconia Museum, Inc. is a 501 (c) (3)
private community based not-for-profit organization.*

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Museum Plans Two Scholarships for Local High School Seniors

The first two scholarships will honor Jacqueline Cooke Walker, who spearheaded the effort 18 years ago to establish the Franconia Museum, and Kathie Shields Higham, who donated the land for a new Franconia Elementary School in the early 1930s. Students from Franconia who are seniors in high school, including homeschoolers, can apply for the scholarships. Information will be available on the Museum's website and at the Museum just as soon as the program is approved.

Jac Walker attended Franconia Elementary and was a member of Mount Vernon High School's first graduating class in 1940. She also worked at Franconia Elementary. Kathie Higham and her neighbor, Maude Simms, went to the Board of Supervisors several times to try to give the land for the new school, but the meeting was adjourned for lunch. So the next time, they brought everyone lunch and made the deal! The Museum is honored to be able to remember Jac and Kathie this way.

These scholarships are being made possible by the support of our members. We hope to add additional scholarships in the future in the names of other Franconians who pioneered education in the area.



Jacqueline Cooke Walker



Kathie Shields Higham

World War I Veterans from Franconia Honored on History Day 2018

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The end of fighting in World War I on November 11, 1918, became known as Armistice Day and is now celebrated on the same day each year to honor all veterans. WWI ended on the "Eleventh Hour of the Eleventh Day of the Eleventh Month." The official end of the war didn't occur until June 28, 1919, when the Treaty of Versailles was adopted.

In recognition of the 100th Anniversary of Armistice Day, the Franconia Museum honored Franconians who participated in the war with a special program on History Day, November 18. Special readings on each soldier and patriotic songs by Charlie Wood and his singers filled the community room of the Franconia Fire House. Following is information and pictures of some of those who were remembered:

CHARLES BERRY FITZGERALD



The logistics involved in moving thousands of troops forward as the American attack began in October 1918 fell on the shoulders of engineers to keep the roads open and mechanics to keep the vehicles moving. These troops marching forward would be log jammed behind any delay. The generals realized they commanded a partially trained army and needed the expertise of men who already had the skills necessary to keep the army rolling.

Private Charles Berry Fitzgerald served as a mechanic during that time. His short stay in France coincided with the American assault over a 98-mile front that pushed the Germans back on their heels, and led to the November 11 Armistice. He had enlisted on May 25, 1919, and sailed for France in late July. He left France on February 23, and was discharged on March 14.

After the war, Lt. Gen. Hunter Liggett, commander of the First Army, wrote about the army's need for skilled mechanics: "A large proportion of the army troops include the skilled mechanics used in commercial industries. An army organization in peace would provide for the proper and efficient classification of these men for military purposes. They are essential in any army in time of war."

Charles Berry Fitzgerald was born September 2, 1891, at Massie's Mill in Nelson County, VA. He was 26 when he enlisted in the army. He had been working at lumber companies and grocery stores, and was classified as a "lumberman" on his enlistment papers. He obviously had some skill as a mechanic, which the army quickly recognized.

When he returned home, Fitzgerald went to work for a lumber company in Rockbridge County, just west of Nelson County. There he met Clara Shields and they were married in Charlottesville, VA, on December 20, 1919. Fitzgerald worked for the A&P food chain, establishing stores in Southwest Virginia and one in nearby Bristol, TN. Charles Berry and Clara had two children, Mary Jane born in December 1921, and Linwood Shields, born in December 1923. Lin served in the army during World War II. They decided to move to Franconia to join family members and open their own store. Thus Fitzgerald's Grocery was born in 1933, on a lot at the corner of Franconia and Grovedale Roads (now occupied by CVS Pharmacy.) The Fitzgeralds lived at the store until building a stone house on Franconia Road in 1948, just east of the store. The store closed in 1972, a victim of the widening of Franconia Road.

Charles Berry Fitzgerald died on July 23, 1978, at the age of 86. Clara died three months later on October 15. They are buried in the Timber Ridge ARP church cemetery in Fairfield, VA, the birthplace of Sam Houston of Texas fame.

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World War I Veterans from Franconia Honored on History Day 2018

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CARROLL NALLS

Although he was a baker when he signed up, Carroll Nalls wound up in the thick of the fighting with the 49th United States army division in France during World War I. Nalls and his 116th Infantry Regiment helped break German resistance in October 1918 and set the stage for the Armistice in November. By the time the Treaty of Versailles was signed on June 28, 1919, ending the war, Carroll was already back in the United States.



The 116th was made up of Virginia National Guard troops, mostly from Alexandria and Fairfax County. At the time he was drafted, Nalls lived in Alexandria, but had grown up in an area just to the south on Telegraph Road, known as Happy Valley. His boyhood home is still there. The 116th is the longest continuous unit serving in the Virginia National Guard, tracing its roots back to 1742. During the Civil War, the unit served as part of the famed Stonewall Brigade for the Confederate Army. It was activated for federal service just prior to World War I.

It was all hands on deck----the butchers, the bakers and candlestick makers joined the infantry----as the Americans launched the attack that pushed the Germans back from the gains they had made just months earlier. After Russia pulled its troops out of action because of a revolution at home, Germany increased its strength in France and made steady gains. America's entry in the war changed all that.

Arriving in France at the end of June, the 116th saw its first action on August 20 and became part of the offensive that led to the end of the fighting. In early October, the 49th and 33rd Divisions won control of the heights east of the Meuse River that led to clearing the Argonne Forest in some of the most bitter fighting of the war. The 116th was in the battle line continuously until the end of October.

Carroll Nalls was 18 when he went to work as an apprentice at Corby Bakery on Lee Street in Alexandria. He had been working various jobs since the age of nine after his mother, Mary Nalls, died. His father, Luther Nalls, first worked as a farmer and later in Public Works for Alexandria. An older sister, Nora, ran the household that included four other children, after her mother died.

After the war, Carroll returned home to Alexandria and his job at the bakery. He began to court a young lady named Mattie Rogers, who lived on Beulah Road in Franconia. They were married on January 29, 1921. They had three children, Gladys, Julia and Arthur (known as Buddy).

Carroll worked as a baker throughout his career, transferring to Washington, DC, when Continental Baking bought out Corby and moved the operation to its main plant. He worked nights, so he volunteered during the day at Franconia Volunteer Fire Department. He was awarded a lifetime membership badge in 1969. Carroll was also a member of the American Legion, and supported the Legion's successful effort to save historic Gadsby's Tavern from ruin in the late 1920s.

Carroll died in 1977 and Mattie in 1997. All three children are now dead after the passing of Julia in October 2018. The entire family spent most of their lives farming on Beulah Road, where their legacy lives on. Grandson Cary and his daughter, Valerie, operate Nalls Produce, a business Carroll and Mattie helped Cary start when he was a young boy. Another grandson, David, operates Nalls Farm Market near Berryville, VA.

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World War I Veterans from Franconia Honored on History Day 2018

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HARVEY BENJAMIN BAGGETT

Private Harvey Benjamin Baggett participated in the gruesome fighting of the All-American breakout from previously lost territory that forced the Germans to ask for an Armistice in early November 1918. He and his comrades spent 22 continuous days and nights under fire beginning October 8 that he called a “living hell on earth.” Then came the fighting in the Argonne Forest from November 1 to November 11 that Baggett called “worse than hell.” The American attack began with a three-hour bombardment of German lines that used more armament than both sides in the entire Civil War. In a letter to his mother, Baggett spoke of an incident where his cousin, Charlie Lloyd, of Franconia was fighting beside him when suddenly there was a loud explosion, and Lloyd was buried beneath the dirt. Baggett wrote that he knew Little Charlie was dead for sure. Then suddenly, Lloyd came digging out from under the dirt, very shaken and scared, but very much alive.

Harvey and the 23rd Infantry, Second Division, arrived in France on August 1, 1918, from Camp Lee, VA. They entered the trenches on September 11 at St. Mihiel and immediately saw action. When the fighting ended and the Armistice began, his unit was at the Meuse River and the Germans were in retreat.

“On November 9, we fought our way through the Meuse hills to north of Metz and here we whipped the damned Kaiser for fair, and made him and the Crown Prince flee to Holland,” Baggett wrote after the war. The fighting ended, but the talks of an official end of the war went on until June 28, 1919, when the Treaty of Versailles was signed at a palace by that name outside Paris. Baggett came home on a medical ship, having suffered severe effects of being gassed, and shell-shocked.

Baggett was born in Fairfax County on January 28, 1888, and grew up on a farm in Accotink, south of Telegraph Road where it now intersects with the Fairfax County Parkway. When he arrived back home after the war in the spring of 1918, everything was gone----the farm, the house, his parents, and the neighboring homes of relatives. They had been forced to leave their homesteads so the massive new Army post which would become known as Fort Belvoir, could be built to aid the war effort.

After about a week, Baggett found his kinfolks living on a large farm they had purchased on Beulah Road where the Moose Lodge is now located. Harvey was a jack-of-all-trades, and he found work as a carpenter, mechanic, and handyman for nearby residents. He was basically self-employed, with a multitude of talents. His reputation spread and the work piled up. He married Lydia “Ethel” King on September 18, 1925, and built a house on five acres of ground his parents had given him. A daughter, Marjorie Ellen, was born December 24, 1926, and a son, Harvey, Jr., was born on June 3, 1929.

Ethel Baggett died of cancer in 1950, and Harvey Sr. died in 1964 after a long bout with Rheumatoid Arthritis that had kept him bedridden for the last 15 years of his life. Harvey Jr., passed away in 2003. Marjorie married Howard Tharpe, a soldier from Front Royal who was stationed at Fort Belvoir, and a short time later, he was sent overseas to fight in World War II. He died in 2000. Marjorie, who was 92 this past Christmas Eve, still lives in the house her father built all those years ago. Her daughter, Judy Tharpe Hutchinson, is the secretary of the Franconia Museum’s Board of Directors.



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World War I Veterans from Franconia Honored on History Day 2018

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CHARLES EDWARD LLOYD

Private Charles Edward Lloyd and his comrades spent 22 continuous days and nights under fire beginning on October 8, 1918, that was described as a “living hell on earth.” Lloyd also participated in the fighting in the Argonne Forest from November 1 to November 11. The American attack began with a three-hour bombardment of German lines that used more armament than both sides in the entire Civil War. During this fighting, there was a series of loud explosions, and Lloyd was buried beneath mounds of dirt from an explosive that hit very close by. It was certain to everyone who was there that “little Charlie” was surely dead. But somehow this small man who was no taller than 5-feet 3-inches, managed to muster up the strength to claw his way up out of the dirt, very frightened, and extremely shaken up, but a survivor of this very close brush with death.



Like his cousin Harvey Baggett, Charlie Lloyd and the Twenty-Third Infantry, Second Division, arrived in France on August 1, 1918, from Camp Lee, VA. They entered the trenches on September 11 at St. Mihiel and immediately saw action. His unit was at the Meuse River when the fighting ended, and the Germans were in retreat.

Lloyd was born on February 28, 1896, in Fairfax County, the son of John Henry Lloyd and Mildred Huntington. He had always worked around the farm until he was sent overseas. On November 14, 1922, he married Cora Virginia Rogers in Fairfax County, VA, and built a small house on an acre of ground Cora’s parents, Franklin and Effie Rogers, had given to the couple.

Charlie and Cora were the parents of six children. Their only daughter, Alberta, was born May 25, 1928, and died 13 days later. They raised five sons -- Edward Marshall Lloyd, born in 1923 and died in 1965; Frederick Nelson Lloyd, born in 1931 and died in 1991; David Leon Lloyd, born in 1934 and died in 1993; Beverly Franklin Lloyd, born in 1936, and died in 1994; and their youngest son, Herbert Carlton Lloyd, born in 1925 and Killed in Action in World War II on December 16, 1944. Charlie was very fortunate to have survived his brush with death in World War I, but he and his family suffered a heartbreaking loss with the death of 19 year old Herbert in World War II.

Charlie and Cora divorced 12 years after the death of their youngest son, and Charlie continued to live in the house he had built, along with his sons Freddie and David, and David’s wife and four children. On April 11, 1961, Charlie went missing, and two days later his lifeless body was found where he had evidently fallen while walking through Fort Belvoir, and had died of exposure to the elements. All six of Charlie’s children, as well as his former wife, Cora, are now deceased.



*Watch for excerpts from additional stories of World War I Veterans from Franconia,
which will be presented in a subsequent newsletter.*

Photos from History Day 2018



Vernon Fitzgerald was surrounded by the beauty of Ann Smolinski (left) and Brittany Fitzgerald at the 2018 Franconia Museum History Day. Ann is the former wife of Vernon's cousin, John Briar. Brittany is married to Vernon's son, Chuck. Vernon wore his grandfather's World War I helmet for History Day. His grandfather, Charles Berry Fitzgerald, served in the Army in 1917-18. He later operated Fitzgerald's Store on Franconia Road. Vernon is the son of Linwood Shields Fitzgerald, one of the founders of the Franconia Museum.



This is the steel helmet worn by Pvt. Harvey Baggett, and the water canteen he carried while he was fighting in France. This helmet and metal water canteen were the type issued to the fighting men in World War I.



World War I Victory Medal—front and back view

Photos from History Day 2018

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The Mount Calvary Singers with Charlie Wood and Terry Lee Ryan provided fabulous musical entertainment on History Day. Left to right, standing in the back, are Kevin Brown, Charlie Wood, Matt Lanham, Byl Walker, Haddie Higham, and Terry Lee Ryan. Friends Linda Redding and Sue Wright are seated in the front.



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Photos from History Day 2018

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Hunter, Lori, and John Untiedt

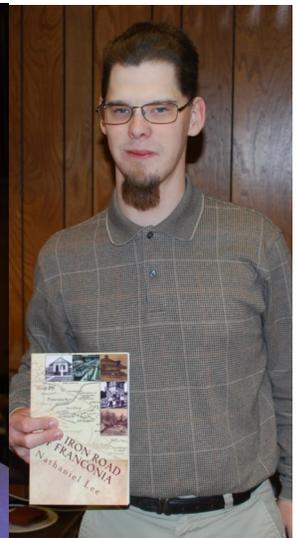
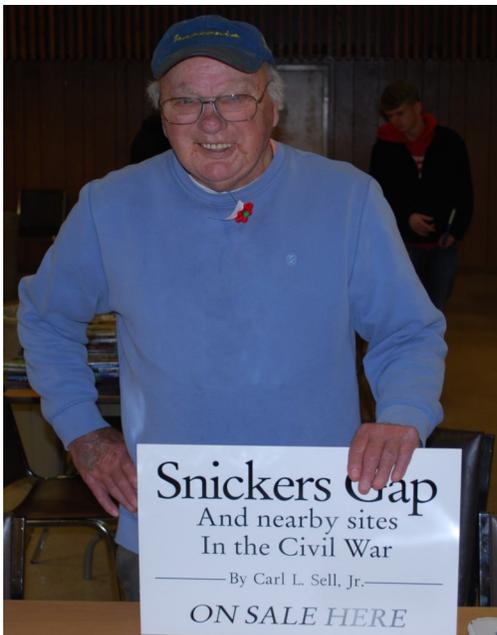
Lester Dove

Connie Beatty moved to Rose Hill in December 1954, when the community first began. She is an active member of the Rose Hill Civic Association, and also the Franconia Museum. She attends History Day, and makes sure Carl Sell, the president of both the RHCA and the Museum, gets his history correct! She also makes great brownies!



Wayne Wakefield

Phyllis Walker-Ford



Jeff Langley and Lynn Haas Gomez

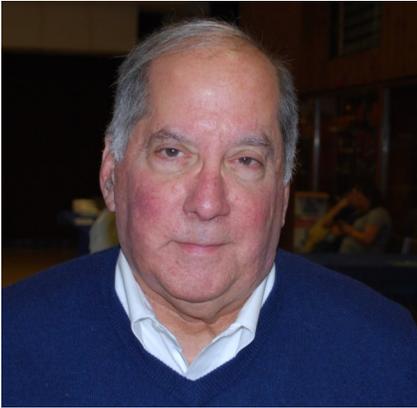
Nathaniel Lee

Carl Sell, President
Franconia Museum Board of Directors

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Photos from History Day 2018

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Steve Sherman



Mary E. Smith



Don Hakenson



The Banks Family



Jane Higham



David Sell



Old Mount Vernon High School Oral History Transcripts

MARGARET ROGERS WELCH

Original Mount Vernon High School (OMVHS) Oral History Project for the Virginia Department of Transportation in February 2019.

Laura Purvis: February 21, 2018. This is Laura Purvis of Cultural Resource Analysts interviewing Margaret Rogers Welch at her home in Franconia, Virginia. She is one of the early graduates of the Original Mount Vernon High School.

Margaret Rogers Welch: My name is Margaret Ellen Rogers Welch, and I was at Mount Vernon High School from 1941 to 1944. We were the first full four-year class that went to Mount Vernon High School.

LP: So tell me a little bit about your earliest memories of the Original Mount Vernon High School and going there.

MRW: Well, it wasn't completely finished when I went there. And, well, it was very exciting because we went, actually, from an elementary school in the seventh grade right in to high school. That was before Fairfax County had the eighth grade. And, it was exciting about changing classes, but there were so many things that we lacked. Like, we lacked a cafeteria. So, we bagged lunch and we ate in our homeroom. And then, we didn't have a gym. So, for PE, we did tumbling in the halls on mats. We went outside, and we walked to Mount Vernon estate several times during the season on the back roads and through the woods. We did all kinds of things of things. We even pulled the weeds, because there was no lawn. I mean, it was so new. And so, our PE was sort of limited because we didn't have a gym. And, our tumbling — we had to do it in between. We had to make sure the classes were going on when we spread the mats down the hall. And, sometimes, when they were running and doing tumblesaults, [sic] somebody would get off a mat and banging into a classroom door. [Rogers Welch laughs] It was just all kinds—it was all kinds of things—well we had a very innovative gym teacher who had us doing all kinds of things just to move the body, you know. So, that's what we took for gym. And, the whole time I was there, we still had no gym, no cafeteria.

LP: How has the high school then changed over time from when there was no cafeteria, there was no gym. Did you ever go back after it had kind of expanded and changed?

MRW: I never did. Isn't that funny? I never did go back to Mount Vernon. I got busy with other things, and I never did go back to the high school because it stayed like that for years. So, I have no idea what it looks like now, except from the outside.

LP: Well, you should come back sometime when you can. We can arrange that. So, tell me a little bit more, you know, just this image of you guys in the hallways doing somersaults and things like that for gym. It is just so wonderful. Tell me a little more about what an average day was like for you at the school.

MRW: Well, we had a homeroom. That's where we ate our lunch. And, well, we had our library time. We had a choir and music. And, but the halls, like I say, were very busy because there was always a gym class going on upstairs. And, the girl that worked in the office—that was before computers—she went bodily from room to room to get the attendance each day. So, she would come down the hall with her pad to go into the classroom to get the attendance and somebody would be doing a tumblesault and one or the other would have to give up. So, it wasn't exactly the idea situation that we had. There were lots of scraps and mishaps. [Both laugh]

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Old Mount Vernon High School Oral History Transcripts

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But, it went on like that. I'm not sure of the year that they built the gym, but it was quite a few years. Well, Fairfax County didn't have any funds to add on to it. But, mostly everything was accomplished in your homeroom. Went back, you always went back to your homeroom for everything. So, that's where we gathered in the morning. That's where we ate our lunch—and, between that and the library.

LP: So you didn't eat lunch outside, it was always in your homeroom?

MRW: Well, unless we were going on a walking field trip and brought our lunch. Sometimes we'd go to Mount Vernon, we'd walk there, and we'd take our lunch. And, we'd do that. So, didn't think of it as fun things, because now we would. But, I mean, this was a chore. This was something that we were doing for gym. And you were getting graded on it. I mean, if you didn't show up that day, you know, you were absent. And, you know, it wasn't exactly a hop, skip, and a jump. It was like a good mile, I guess, or more, through the woods. And, so, we got to the point: Oh, going to Mount Vernon again, you know. [Rogers Welch laughs]

LP: So, did you ever go there for history, or anything, or was—

MRW: Oh, yeah! In elementary school, in the fourth grade, everybody goes to Mount Vernon as a field trip. And then, of course, I took my children there when they were growing up. I've been there many times to the restaurant. Oh, it's not even like the same place.

LP: What has changed? Like, what was that walk like when you were in high school? What do you remember it looking like?

MRW: I just remember going through fields and woods. And, it was like a path they had made. I would be more interested in talking and visiting with my peers than paying attention to what was around me, you know. Now, I would pay attention more to what was around me. But, that was a teenager's version.

LP: How many of you were there that would walk? Like, would it be just one class?

MRW: It would be a whole PE class. Maybe 30. Yeah. And, so, it was: Oh, Mount Vernon again. [Both laugh] We just liked the idea that we were out and about. But, George's home again? [Rogers Welch laughs] But, now buses are lined up all over the place to get in.

LP: So it wasn't crowded at that time? There weren't a lot of people—

MRW: Well, there were a lot of people, but nothing compared to what it is now. [Rogers Welch laughs] We didn't go there really to sight see Mount Vernon. We went for the gym part of it. And, we would go there and then we would turn around and walk back. Because, you know, you only had like fifty minutes or so for your class. But, anyway, it was a fun time really.

LP: What were your other classes like? Did you have the same class at the same time each day, or did it rotate?

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Old Mount Vernon High School Oral History Transcripts

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MRW: Well in Fairfax County, in those days, you had an academic diploma, a commercial diploma, a vocational diploma, and an elective diploma. So, you made your choice. The people that knew they were going to college, when they went to first year high school, they all took academic. And, the people, like me, who knew they were going out in the business world and work; they took commercial. So, everything you took from a sophomore on was connected with business. And, your diploma, when you graduated, had on there commercial, academic, vocational, elective.

Which now, they don't do that. So, that's the way it was. You could go right from graduation, taking a commercial course in Fairfax County in those days, and work right in a business—go right into a business. Because, you took bookkeeping. You took two years of typing, two years of shorthand, two years of bookkeeping, Business Math, Business English. So, you were—it was during the war. So, you were solicited from Fort Belvoir and the Cameron Quartermaster. People were coming after the seniors in the business class. They wanted them to come to work. So, I mean, there was no shortage of jobs in that respect. So, they don't do that, I think, now. I think it is one diploma. I don't know how it is. But, it wasn't distinguished like it was then.

LP: So, were then the vocational degrees oriented towards a trade school and then the—what was the elective?

MRW: The elective. That was just somebody that just slid through on the seat—[Rogers Welch laughs] the best they could. [Pauses and laughs]

LP: That's really interesting that there were four. I didn't know—

MRW: And they had, outside, they taught bricklaying. So the guys learned out to be bricklayers, carpenters, painters. Vocational. So they could go right into a job, you know.

LP: So were there people recruiting them as well? Or was that more for business track?

MRW: I think it was more for the business, really. Like Belvoir and Quartermaster during World War Two, because they were really busy. They had household goods coming in; people coming in. You know, military people coming and going all the time. And, they had recruits coming and going. So, they needed lots of people to work in those two places. So, they were recruiting the business.

LP: So, do you remember on the grounds where they were doing bricklaying, carpentry, and all of that?

MRW: Yeah, it was—they had a little house, I guess that little house is still there, kind of on the back by the side of the building. It was a bungalow.

LP: Was it the Home Economics?

MRW: They had—. It was like a furnished home. It was like a rambler home. It was where the girls—I didn't take Home Ec, unfortunately. I was sorry that I didn't take the Home Ec. But, I couldn't fit it in with all the other subjects. But, the girls would go down there and they learned. They had a home. They had a kitchen, bath, bedroom, everything. And they learned everything about taking care of a home—childcare. I don't know if that home is still here. It was on the grounds.

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Old Mount Vernon High School Oral History Transcripts*...Continued from page 14*

.MRW: I know there were people in baseball and sports and football. And, the girls would be doing basketball and tumbling. We had one girl that she should have been a gymnast. That was before that was real popular. And, she could get to the end of the hall and start running and by the time she got—we'd have like three long mats—and she would do flips and then land on her hands and do tumblesaults on the mats all the way to the end. She was great.

Yeah. I was afraid she was going to crack her head open if she missed that mat, you know. But, you know she was really good. She could stand, you know, on one hand. Balance her whole body, you know. So the rest of us would watch. [Both laugh] Because, nobody could compete with her. [Pause]

LP: So, in addition to the students that you talked to and had amazing gymnastic abilities, were there other people that you remember interacting with a lot—either faculty or students, or people that were really part of that experience being at Mount Vernon?

MRW: Well, my shorthand teacher, Ms. Molly Lehrman. I've got to get my yearbook out. I remember she signed it. She said how many words a minute I could do shorthand. She was a character. [Both laugh] She had dark auburn hair. And, she would sit on her desk, and she would do most of her teaching that way. Sitting at her desk. And, she was very dramatic, very dramatic. And then, my typing teacher was the opposite. There wasn't any drama. And she carried the ruler. And, if you looked at your keys—well, they were supposed to be covered—but if they weren't and you looked—wham. And she took the ruler and smacked your hands. But, you learned from her. You were scared to death. [Both laugh]

But, they were the opposite. They were both in the commercial department. One taught shorthand, and one taught typing. And, you learned. I learned more from the typing teacher because the other one was so dramatic. [Both laugh and pause] And so, but, anyway. I realized when I went to work for the government, and the supervisor—there were two of us that went at the same time. And, the supervisor said: Well, which one is the steno? Which one knows shorthand. And I reluctantly said, "I do." Because I knew I had the glamorous teacher, the drama teacher for the shorthand. And I thought, oh golly. And, I didn't really want to go with steno. But, anyway, that's what I did. I went for the government before even graduating from high school as a stenographer.

And, I wished I had the other teacher so many times. [Both laugh] But, I made out okay. I did fine with the typing. But, a few of the things that I had to transcribe, I said, "No, that's not right, that doesn't make any sense. But, I can't read my own shorthand." But, anyway, it turned out okay. Shorthand wasn't easy. It was like learning a foreign language, you know. It was Pitman and Gregg, two different kinds of shorthand. And so, she was teaching us Gregg. And, the lady that I was working for in the government used Pitman's shorthand. So, she would have all of her notes in her shorthand, and I would have all of my notes in mine. And, we couldn't compare them because they were two different kinds

LP: Oh no.

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MRW: So, I didn't know about the other kind of shorthand until I went to work. And, she was an older lady and she had learned it. But, anyway, I'm glad that I did. I learned a whole lot, you know.

LP: What was life like being a student there? Were there places that you would hang out near the school? How would you get to school each day? You know, those kind of things.

MRW: Well, we rode the school bus. And, I was kind of a nerd, I guess. I was more studious. I was afraid to do things that would cause you to go to the Principal's Office, or devilish things. I would do devilish things now, but I wouldn't do devilish things then. [Pauses and laughs] Because, my mother and father were— my mother didn't drive. And my father said, Well, if you have any trouble with the teachers, you're going to have some trouble with your father when you come home. He said, "You got to go to school. You got to learn, and you respect your teachers." So I was kind of, you know—. And, I did all of my homework. I did everything that I was supposed to do. I didn't go in back of the shop and smoke cigarettes, and skip school, and those kinds of things. Because, to me, you were just going to get in trouble.

But, I had three or four close girlfriends and we managed okay. But, none of us were what you call devilish. There were a few. But, that was a time when they didn't take any stuff off of you. I mean, a couple of times in the Principal's Office, and they kicked you out. And you knew that. So, you know, you straightened up and flew right. You didn't fool around. You wanted to graduate. You wanted to have good grades. You wanted to be able to get a good job. So, that's what most people in the commercial, the ones that took the commercial course, they were more serious minded. But, the ones that took the elective, they were the rascals. That wasn't saying that they weren't smart.

LP: So, where would people gather or hang out?

MRW: Well, we didn't have any places. Because we didn't have any other buildings, other than that Home Ec cottage. They would go down in the back behind the school. Oh, there was always guys smoking, you know, in between classes or something. They would get expelled. I know there was one guy kissing a girl behind the, in the science lab, behind the door when the bell rang. Now, this was in between classes. And, a teacher caught them. The parents had to come in. They were taken off the school bus. They could not ride. They could go to school, but they could not ride the Fairfax County school bus for three weeks. Can you see them doing that today? Parents would really be up in arms. The parents, I think, then, were—they had more respect for what the teachers had to do. And they sort of went along with, to an extent, they went along with things. Times have changed.

LP: Yes, ma'am. Yeah. So, while you were at the school, was it, did it ever feel crowded, was it busy? What did it feel like inside of the building to you?

MRW: Well, it was, everybody was always in a rush when the bell rang going from class to class, you know. You didn't have many people—probably today they stop and talk at their lockers or do something. There wasn't much of that. You didn't want to be late. So there wasn't any places. Like I say, I was a Ms. Goodie-two-shoes. I tried to be on time and not to be late. And to do things that the law said you were supposed to do. [Both laugh] I wasn't the devilish type. But, I wouldn't say that I wouldn't have turned into one later on. But, when I was in school, I wasn't.

LP: So, were there lockers?

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MRW: Yeah, there were lockers. But, anyway. There was more respect shown for teachers. You never called a teacher by their first name. Never thought of that. They were always Ms. or Mr. so-and-so. It was just a given. I just think that there were a lot of parents 25:35 in those days that weren't working, were staying home. Maybe they had more time to spend teaching their kids manners and respect for the teachers. Because, I never saw any kid ever, ever, ever be rude to a teacher.

LP: So, you mentioned that you were working even before you left school. How was that?

MRW: They recruited. This was during the war. They would send out recruits from Fort Belvoir and Cameron Quartermaster Depot, and they were mostly to the commercial students. And, they offered you Saturday jobs if you knew typing, bookkeeping, or filing, or shorthand. Oh, there were lots and lots of girls that went to Belvoir and Quartermaster. And, then you had the opportunity that you could take—. After you graduated, you could take the permanent—. [Pause] What was that test called? It was a government test that everybody had to take if you wanted to work for the government. Well, it is on the tip of my tongue, and I can't think of it. But anyway, it was a very serious test because it was a matter of whether you got permanent status or if you were a temporary person. And, of course, in those days everybody wanted to get permanent status. And, the tests were something like on a Saturday and you had to show up at eight o'clock in the morning. I think they went on until about two or three in the afternoon. And, you were locked in a room with a person who was giving the test with her time watch, and you were scared to death.

Oh, people were fainting. They were getting nauseated and sick because you couldn't leave the room. And, I prayed and prayed. I took all my jewelry off. Anything that would detract me from the test. It was a lot of written test, a lot of questions. And, you had to have an eighty or above to pass. And, if you passed, you got permanent status with the government. But, you had the opportunity to re-take the test.

But, anything below that, you didn't pass. So, I passed by the skin of my teeth the first time I took it. But, I know people that took it like three times.

LP: Right. So, pretty much everyone that you knew in the school that was in your classes, and all of that, their goal was to work for the government?

MRW: Either that or the ones that were going to be professionals. You know, doctors, lawyers, teachers. The ones who took the academic course. Did you ever hear of Judge Bostetter? Martin Van Buren Bostetter was the bankruptcy judge for the eastern part of the state of Virginia in Alexandria. Of course, he's passed now. He was in my graduating class. Martin Van Buren Bostetter Junior. And, at the baccalaureate service and graduation service, we had it in the Reed Theater, because of course we didn't have any gym, auditorium. My mother said, That boy should be a lawyer. Well, that boy became a judge. [Rogers Welch laughs] So our claim to fame was him. When we—Oh, well, we were in the class with Martin Van Buren. [Both laugh] But anyway, he went to UVA, and got his law degree. And, so, we had gals that went to nursing school. They first got their degree, and then they taught nursing after they got their degree. And, then we had, you know, ones that wanted to be teachers. So everybody that wanted to go into that profession took the academic course. So now, none of them typed. None of them did shorthand. So, they would come to us to type up something for them. [Both laugh]

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LP: Really?

MRW: Yeah. It was funny.

LP: Did you ever get any side money off of that?

MRW: No, I didn't. Not when I was going to school. But, I got some side money when I was, not working for the government, but, I was working for another firm. I did some typing for this guy that was getting a degree.

LP: Nice. [Both laugh] So, you mention that you had your graduation at the Reed Theater in Alexandria. So, there weren't any—there wasn't a gym, there wasn't a cafeteria, there weren't any big spaces at the school. So, what was the interior of it like? I mean, what was the light like? What did it feel like being inside the school? Was the tile there at the time?

MRW: Oh yeah, the school was completed. What we had was completely finished. It wasn't like raw cinder blocks. We had finished rooms. We just didn't have enough of them. We had no cafeteria, and we had no shop. No gym. No, well, we did have a library. But, we had to use our homeroom as our lunch room.

I remember this one gal that was so young when she graduated, she was like sixteen and was going to go to work at Belvoir. But she had to be 18 to go. And so, she came back and worked in the school office until she was eighteen, and then she went to work at Belvoir. And she had taken the commercial course. So, she was all ready to go into Belvoir.

But, we had—the classrooms that we had were all finished, you know. They weren't parts of things that weren't finished. We didn't have any computers, of course. We had a mimeograph machine, you know. We had general business, bookkeeping, all these were commercial classes: general business, bookkeeping, business English, business math, shorthand one and two, and typing one and two. So, when you finished with all of those courses, you could go work in an office. You were, you know, qualified.

LP: So, the steps that are out in front of the school now, were they there? All of that landscaping and stuff?

MRW: Yes, in fact, I don't know where that picture is. We've got a picture of our class of '44 sitting on those steps. But see, we had no sidewalks, no grass. It was all in the rough, you know. Because the school was new and they hadn't seeded. Had no lawn. And lots of times for PE we pulled weeds. We did all kinds of things.

LP: Some people have talked about pulling rocks out as, like, that was a version of punishment. Like, if you did something you weren't supposed to, they would have you get rocks out of the back area.

MRW: Well, some of the men PE teachers, I'm sure, did that because, I'm sure, there were plenty rascals. [Both laugh] So, they had their hands full. I didn't—we didn't—do any of that. Our PE teacher, Mrs. Hansborough, she was big in this tumbling. Standing on your head, walking on your hands. You know.

LP: So were students, what were students doing outside studying and classes? Were there dances? You mention sports a little bit. Were there other activities?

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MRW: Well, we had dances every now and then, but they didn't have them—. You know, I lived too far away from the school. And, like I said, I was a Ms. Goodie-two-shoes, so I didn't get involved into anything. Like, a bunch of kids would get into a car and go off to some place and get a hamburger or a Coke or something. I just didn't any of that. And, there was a place in Alexandria called, I think it was called, the Little Tower or something. And, they had these little small hamburgers, and the kids would, you know, go in there and get a coke and a hamburger. Because there weren't too many places in those days for you to—, not like Number One is now every other place is somewhere to get something to eat. We did have a nice barbecue place.

But, it was just a different atmosphere then. It was the war, and the guys were quitting schools. Dropping out of school like flies. Joining the Army. Joining the Marines. Joining the Navy. And so, it was a totally different atmosphere in those years.

LP: So, did rationing affect the school at all?

MRW: We had rationing. I don't recall how much it affected the school. I guess maybe sugar, probably. Then, you dressed up, especially if you were a senior. You wore hose and heels to high school. Who does that now? [Both laugh]

LP: I read where there were even times that they weren't able to get access to hose. But, you guys always had access to hose?

MRW: Yeah. We would use fingernail polish to stop a run. Oh, everything was rationed. But, you know, you just grew up with it and didn't think about it. Didn't even give it a thought. But, it was during the war and, like I said, the guys that were juniors and seniors and at least seventeen—so many of them were joining up. And then, they finished, they got their diplomas after service. A lot of them finished up like that.

So, it was a time when everybody was very patriotic, extremely patriotic. You were doing everything you could do to help the boys. Knitting and making all kinds of things.

LP: Were there efforts at school for knitting different things and doing different projects, or was that mostly in the community?

MRW: You know there may have been, but I can't recall a whole lot of things going on in that respect. I'm sure there must have been things. But, I just remember mainly the boys that quit school and joined. And then we had a couple of girls who said, Well they weren't going to quit, they were going on to get their degree, but they were going overseas. They got their degree in nursing and that they were going to go overseas as soon as they go out of school after they got the degree. So, it was just a different atmosphere then. Everything was different. Everyone was so patriotic. But then you have all of these marches and things going on. And nobody was divided up with this that and the other. Everybody was together for one cause.

LP: So did you attend football games?

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MRW: I attended a few football games. But, see, there again, it was a matter of transportation. I wasn't a real big sports person. I didn't even understand football. But, you had to—the football games would be later than your bus, so you would have to stay afterwards.

LP: So would your dad then come pick you up, or would you get a ride with friends the times that you did go?

MRW: There were a lot of good athletes, you know. A lot of good girls that played basketball.

LP: Do you know where they would practice?

MRW: They didn't have any place to practice, except in the halls as far as I know because we had no gym. I think they got a gym sooner than they got anything else down there. [Pause] We didn't think anything of it going from the seventh grade in elementary school to the first year of high school. I mean, we were overwhelmed. And the fact that we didn't have a gym, it wasn't that big a deal. We didn't have a gym in elementary school, you know. [Both laugh]

LP: What is one thing that you hope people will remember about the high school? If you could tell people in the future one thing that you hope they remember about the school?

MRW: I think that we took pride in the school. As I remember, I don't think, I don't recall vandalism. I mean you were afraid. If you did anything like that, a letter was going straight home to your parents. And your parents were either coming straight there and shelling out the money to pay for it, or you wouldn't be able to go back to school for a while. Things were much, much stricter. Yeah. So, that's the part that I remember. I was afraid to be bad. [Both laugh] But, that was when I was young and naive.

LP: Yeah, yeah. That makes sense.

MRW: But I mean, oh there was plenty rascality [sic] going on because there were plenty of rascals around, you know. [Both laugh]

LP: I think that's one thing that doesn't change.

MRW: No, no. And some of those rascals turned out to be some of the smartest people around.

LP: Right, yeah. True. True. Well, is there anything else you would like to talk about? Anything that we haven't gone over so far?

MRW: I was just trying to think. [Pause] I'm glad that they are preserving the school—that they are not going to tear it down. Because, it was—. I went there from 1941 to 1944. My class was the first class that went all four years. So, it was our high school. It wasn't like we had Lee Jackson and Mount Vernon, or Fairfax and Mount Vernon. I just think it has a certain historical value since it is close to George Washington's home. And, it's got the name Mount Vernon. I just like to see the building preserved. I enjoyed my time there. I really did. I looked forward to going to school. In fact, I hated when I had to miss .

And, I didn't know that I had an admirer in my class until I went to my first ten-year reunion. And, I saw this person. We were both married by then. He told me that he used to—he said, Don't you remember me riding

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my bike up and down Beulah Street? He said, That was when it was Beulah Road. I said, "Well, I didn't pay any attention to that." He said, I rode my bicycle up there just so I could see you. So, I said, "Oh, well I didn't realize that. I'm sorry." [Both laugh]

LP: So, is there anything else you'd like to talk about?

MRW: Well, one thing that I enjoyed was when we had our class rings. I don't know if they still get class rings or not.

LP: Yeah, they do. Yes, ma'am.

MRW: I got—what is the purple stone—is it amethyst? It is an amethyst I guess. It wasn't my birthstone, but it was my father's birthstone. But, it was pretty—lavender.

LP: Oh, okay.

MRW: And, got the green gold with the lavender stone. I didn't have the crest on it. And, everybody took pride in their rings. and, of course, mine unfortunately got lost over the years. But, I know it was a big, big thing when you got to do your pictures and you ordered your ring, you know, and your cap and gown. I just, people were just very serious about it, especially the rings. I enjoyed my four years there. The fact that we didn't have a gym, or a cafeteria, or anything, well, didn't have it, so how could we miss something?

LP: Yeah, didn't even think about it. Yeah.

MRW: The one thing I didn't have an opportunity to take because I took all commercial, was Home Ec. And, so after I got out of high school and went to work, I took a sewing class. I said, "I want to learn how to sew to make clothes." And so, I did. Other girls I knew took it in high school and learned how to do a lot of things. But anyway, it was a war time thing, the whole time we were in high school. The guys were very patriotic. Most of them all finished their education while they were in the service. Some of them didn't make it. The girls were getting married and hiding it, because in Fairfax County you could not go to school if you were married.

LP: Oh really?

MRW: No. What this one gal did, she had her wedding band in her pocket. She had gotten married. And, as soon as she got her diploma, and they shook her hand with the diploma and she was walking across the stage, she took her ring band out and slipped it on her finger. So, by the time she got to the end of the stage, she had her wedding band on. But no, if they found out that you were married, you were out.

LP: Just a different time.

MRW: A different time, yeah. But, I enjoyed it. I really did. I had all good teachers. And, like I say, my father had said, Well if you come home with any bad things, or I hear of any bad things, you are

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going to get bad at home too. I will hear you out first. So, I made sure he didn't hear anything bad. But, it was lots of things going on then, just like it is now. Not as prevalent as you see.

LP: Well, I mean, it's wartime and there's all the pressures of that.

MRW: Yeah, kids are going to be kids. And they were sneaking cigarettes and smoking around behind, then they would catch them and send them home on a suspension. And my cousin, we lived together. My mother raised him. Anyway, he had a girlfriend when, I think, he was a junior, in the science lab. And between classes one time they met, and they were smooching behind the door to the science lab. And, they got suspended. For three days, they couldn't ride the school bus. I mean, they weren't doing anything. But, that was a no. So, anyways, is this going to be put out in some type of a book?

LP: Yes, yes it will be. We're going to have a website. We'll also have some printed materials and things.

MRW: There aren't many of us that went to Old Mount Vernon in the '40s that are around anymore I don't imagine.

LP: Yeah. I have spoken with you and Joe Alexander.

MRW: Yeah. Joe was a couple years, two or three years younger than I.

LP: Yes. He was '47 I think.

MRW: And James Rice, he's still living. He was an attorney, but he's retired. That was Martin Van Buren Bostetter, Jr.'s half-brother. And, where Martin went on to be a judge in my class, James, he would have been about eight or nine years younger when he went to Mount Vernon, and he was—he's retired now from being an attorney in Alexandria. I'm trying to think. And we had one gal, her name was Amelita Ward. Her father was a talent scout, and they lived on Valley View Drive in Franconia. And, he had a radio station. And his daughter, she really was a pretty girl. She looked like Hedy Lamar—I don't know if you know Hedy Lamar the movie star years ago.

LP: Yes, ma'am.

MRW: She's really pretty. And Amelita Ward resembled her. And she played it up, and she went to Lee Jackson. I don't think she went to Mount Vernon. But anyway, she was, she could sing. And she went on to make some movies—they were B rated moves with, I think the Three Stooges [Bowery Boys]. But it was fun because by her dad being in the business, he got her into it. And she went on to Hollywood, and she made . B-rated movies. She never became famous. But, we thought it was great. We'd say, Oh look, there's Amelita. Look at Amelita. She really was a pretty girl, and, she looked so much like Hedy Lamar, the movie star. But anyway, it was a fun time. It really was. It was during the war, and I had two cousins and we would harmonize. I said, we thought we were the Andrews Sisters. [Both laugh]

We would sit on the front porch and harmonize. And, just about all the guys were enlisting in the service of some kind. And, no matter where you went, there were just a whole bunch of soldiers. You know, you went to the beach, there they were, everywhere. So, everybody was just so patriotic in World War Two. It was just so different.

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LP: Yeah, it seems like it was a very different way of thinking about—or it was just experiencing

MRW: Well, we hadn't had anything like that. It was just so new to us, you know. And the rationing of the sugar and the nylons. Anyway, my mother would go to the grocery store and she'd say, and she'd say, Now you get me a five pound bag of sugar. And I said, "Well, what about your five-pound bag of sugar?" And she says, "Well, I'm allowed so many coupons a month. And that will be what I have for the month." But I remember that rationing business, you know.

LP: So you would receive coupons and go redeem them, basically?

MRW: Yeah. And when your coupon was gone, you had to wait until the next time.

LP: Right, right.

MRW: We never had any problem because my mother was a very innovative lady. She knew how to make something out of nothing.

LP: Right, right.

MRW: So, it wasn't any different than it had always been with us. She would take a winter coat of hers, and, I remember, she made me a coat, and hat from that. This was when I was four years old, or five years old. She turned the coat inside out and made the coat, the outside, from the lining. The coat had a, well a self-lining. And, it was in perfect condition. And, she cut out a coat for me when I was little. And a hat that matched. She did her dresses like that. She would take the skirts of her dresses, and she'd make her own pattern. And, she'd make me dresses. In those days, little girls had dresses with, what we would call it, bloomers. And, when I came here from the third grade in Alexandria to Fairfax County, I had little dresses with bloomers. Well, where did that girl come from? What planet did she come from with her bloomers? [Both laugh]

LP: Oh gosh. That wasn't a thing out here?

MRW: Apparently not, and I soon found it out. But, they were made from my mother's dresses. And, the bloomers had elastic with like a little ruffle that would show just below your dress. They made a cute little outfit. But nobody in the third grade here had any, and I went home and I said, "I'm not wearing my bloomer dress anymore." [Rogers Welch laughs] But anyway, Fairfax County Schools, when I came here from Alexandria, was ahead of what I was doing in the same grade in Alexandria.

LP: Really?

MRW: Yeah. It took me a couple of weeks. They were doing multiplication in the third grade, and I had not had it in the third grade in Alexandria. So, I had to catch up. But, anyway, they were nice. They were good times. I wouldn't want to repeat them. [Both laugh] I wouldn't be able to.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

(Additional Old Mount Vernon High School oral history interviews will follow in subsequent Franconia Museum newsletters.)

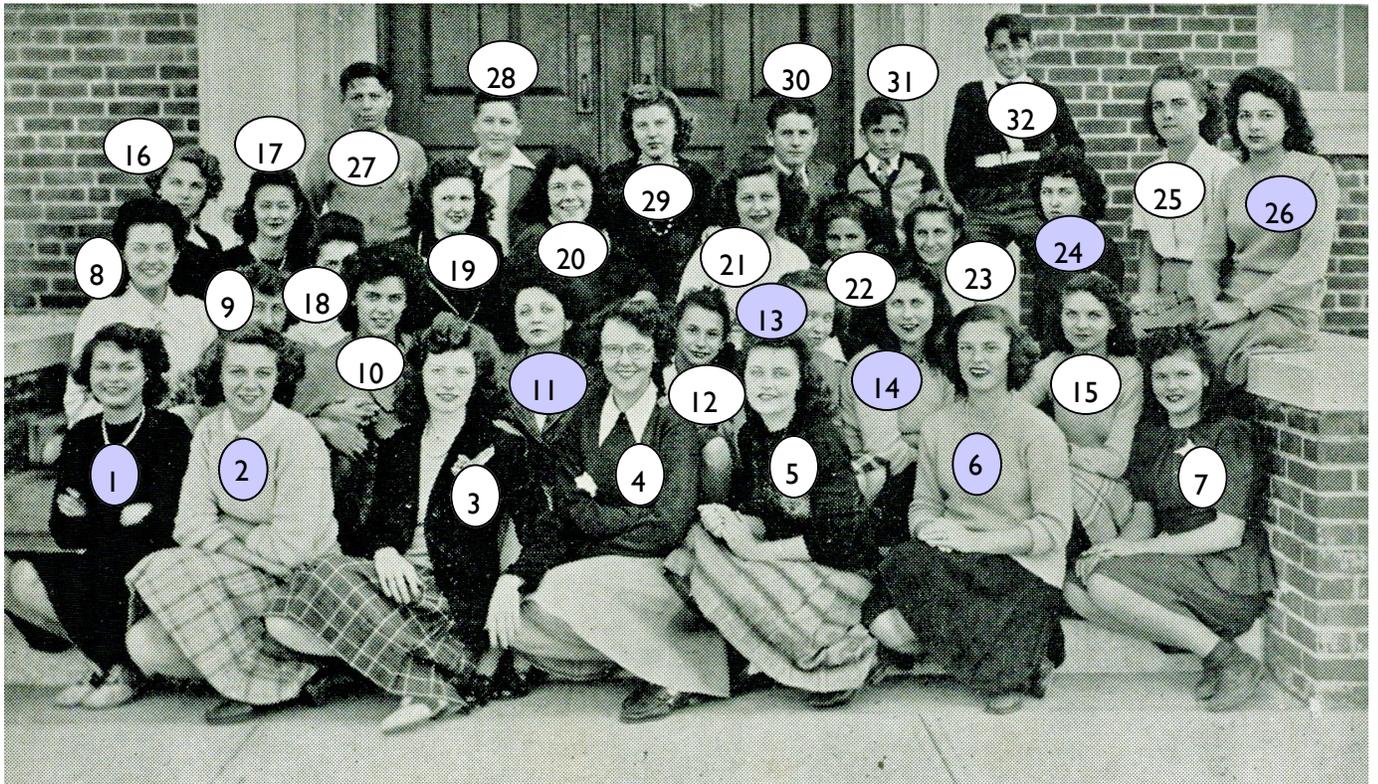
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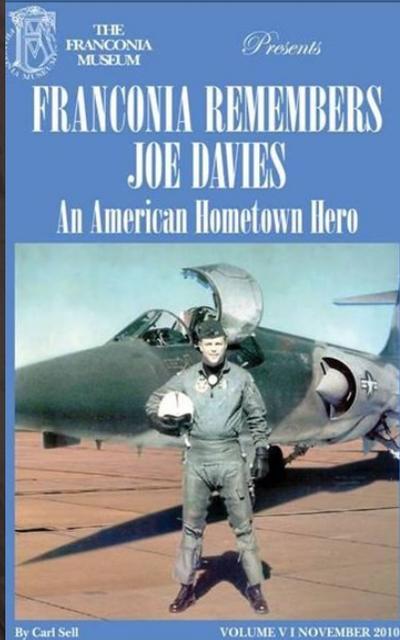
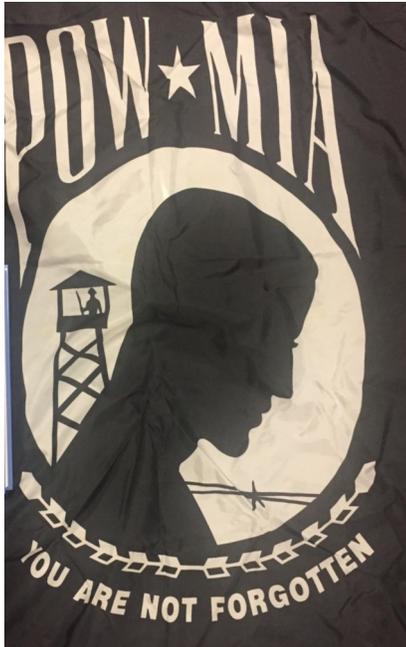
Staff of the 1944 *Surveyor*, the Mount Vernon High School Yearbook

Margaret Rogers (1) says that's her kneeling on the left of the first row in this picture. Miss Molly G. Lehrman (11) was the faculty sponsor. She also taught shorthand, and Margaret was one of her pupils. Margaret has also identified several friends from Springfield and Franconia who made the long bus trip with her each day to the school on Route #1. Those Margaret has identified have the shaded numbers. If you can identify others, or have corrections, please let us know.



(1) Margaret Rogers (2) Josephine Doris Beazley from Franconia (3) Linabel Isabel White
 (6) Jean Duvall (7) Violet Hill (9) Margaret Connie Harvey (11) Miss Molly G. Lehrman
 (13) Edna Evelyn Cleveland (14) Hazel Rebecca Hummer (15) Frances Rogers (16) Helen Wagner
 (17) Janice Payne (18) Mona Jean Morse (20) Anise June Bartlett (24) Alice Montieth
 (26) Iva Marie Maters—her father, Hugo, was one of the organizers of the Franconia Volunteer Fire
 Department, and served as chief in 1938 and 1939 (30) Wiley Lee Barrington

Remembering Joe Davies, Our Hometown Hero



When Peggy Henry Seneker of Aiken, South Carolina, needed information on the whereabouts of Joe Davies' family, she knew where to turn. Peggy's dad had grown up on Telegraph Road, and he knew Joe's father. Peggy was aware of the Franconia Museum, so she looked up the Museum online and made a call.

Davies, an American Air Force Major who went missing during the Vietnam War and has never been recovered, will be inducted into the Annandale High School

Sports Hall of Fame this fall. Joe was a three-sport star at Annandale in the late 1950s. Peggy, also an Annandale graduate, offered to help Mike Jones, the current football coach at Annandale, contact the Davies family.

Within a few hours, Peggy was put in touch with Jason Davies, one of Joe's four sons, and Joe's sister, Cassie Davies Parker. The Museum also provided a copy of its *Franconia Remembers* book entitled "Joe Davies, An American Hometown Hero."

Joe Davies, who grew up in Franconia, is also remembered at the Museum by display of a POW/MIA flag in his honor. Joe and his wife, Shirley Bunch Davies, were childhood sweethearts in Franconia. Shirley now lives in Florida.

Joe's plane went down on May 18, 1968. He was a captain in the United States Air Force who was posthumously promoted to major. The search continues for word of his fate.



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.

***Franconia Museum
6121 Franconia Road, Franconia, VA 22310
franconiamuseum@yahoo.com***

Sonny Wright at the Alamo in Texas



Sonny now lives in Austin, Texas with his son, Danny, and his daughter-in-law, Lisa. They recently took him to visit the historic Alamo in San Antonio, Lisa's hometown. He is wearing his favorite cap recalling his United States Navy service aboard the USS Iowa.

Our own Sonny Wright has moved Deep in The Heart of Texas and is living with his son, Danny, and daughter-in-law Lisa in Austin, the state capital and home to the main campus of the University of Texas. He was hospitalized several times in Richmond and Fredericksburg last year but seems to be thriving with Danny and Lisa in Texas. Lisa came to Virginia and took Sonny home to Texas to recover. Sonny reports he is walking in the neighborhood daily and is happy in Texas.

A long-time Washington Redskins fan, it will no doubt be hard for Sonny to get used to following the Dallas Cowboys and Houston Texans. He says it probably won't happen! Then there are the Texas Rangers and Houston Astros baseball teams, and the Texas Longhorns college football team. Quite a chore for the new cowhand.

Sonny says he likes Texas, particularly the weather and the friendly people. Sonny grew up in Franconia and was a member of the Board of Directors of the Franconia Museum until several years ago. He is now a Senior Advisor, and

even though he is far away, he can be reached by phone when a member of the current Board needs an update from days long ago.

Danny runs a successful painting business and Lisa works in the high tech industry. They have two children, Nicky (21) and Madison (17). Danny graduated from Lee High School in 1976. Lisa grew up in San Antonio, home of the Alamo, and moved to Fort Hunt where she graduated from high school in 1984. They were married in 1992 in Alexandria.

The Alamo is a historic site in Texas famous as part of the then territory's fight for independence from Mexico. All the defenders, including Jim Bowie, were killed after a 20-day siege in 1836. Texas became a separate country several weeks later and was admitted to the United States in 1845.

Drop Sonny a note at 6905 Hanfa Loop, Austin, Texas 78739. He also enjoys talking to old friends. His telephone number is 703-835-4182. The cell phone area code is a constant reminder that Sonny is a Virginian and Franconian at heart!



Both Sides Tour Visits Historic Stony Castle in Poolesville, MD



The Fall 2018 Both Sides Civil War Tour, sponsored by the Franconia Museum, visited historic Stony Castle near Poolesville, MD, as part of its tour of sites identified with Lieutenant Colonel Elijah White, leader of the Confederate Thirty-Fifth Battalion of Virginia Cavalry during the war. White was born at Stony Castle in 1832, just after his parents moved there. The house dates from the early 1800s. Built with stones from a nearby quarry, the house remains part of a large farm owned by Eric Spates, whose grandparents bought the property in 1949. He still farms the 300+ acre estate. Eric is in the burgundy, green, and white checkered shirt on the right-hand side of the first row. He also showed the group the inside of the magnificent structure.

Kneeling in the front are Museum President Carl Sell (left) and Museum Vice President Don Haken-son (right). They flank Museum member Wayne Wakefield. Museum Board member Mary Smith is the third from the left in the first row. Mary has been on all 21 of the Museum's bi-annual tours, which have raised more than \$6,000 to help promote and preserve the history of Franconia.

The Fall 2018 tour also visited the Poolesville Museum, which is located in a historic bank. Because the vault was open, a donation was left behind. Other stops included White's Ford, which was owned by Elijah White during the war, and Montresor, the house in which he and his family lived after the war. The tours concentrate on Civil War sites, with a visit planned to the Shenandoah Valley and Gettysburg in 2019. The spring tour will focus on Confederate General Stonewall Jackson's 1862 campaign in the Valley. The fall tour will follow Union General George Gordon Meade's footsteps to Gettysburg after he took over as commander just days before Gettysburg in 1863.



Memories of Living in Franconia by Lena Mapes

Lena Mapes and her parents and siblings lived in Franconia for many years. They lived in what was the original Franconia School, after it had been remodeled into a home. Lena shared one of her favorite childhood memories with a member of the Franconia Museum Board of Directors, and has given her permission for the Museum to share this delightful memory.

Lena Mapes: *When we lived in Franconia, we would sometimes sneak over to 'Ward's Pond.' I went by myself one sunny afternoon and spread my towel out, and took off my new watch and headed to wade in the water. I looked around to make sure no-one was around, and lo and behold there was a man coming out of the woods! It scared me and I took off running.*

Well, I forgot my watch, and after agonizing over my loss, I found my courage to go the house and confess my trespassing sin and ask if they had found it. They said no, they hadn't found it. I left my phone number, and about three days later I received a phone call asking me to come back to the house. I told my parents and they said I could go, and off I went.

When I got there, they told me that my watch had not been found, but they asked me if I would like a watch they had and were no longer using. I jumped at that and gave an ecstatic YES! They gave me the watch, and I gave them my word I would not trespass on their property again. The watch they gave me was a "Waltham."

I later found out from my brother, Bill, that the man who gave me the watch was Leo Gorcey, an actor from the "Dead End Kids." I couldn't believe it. This is a story I have cherished for years, but had no one to share it with.



Lena Mapes at the time of her adventure at Ward's Pond.



Lena Mapes in 2019.

MUSEUM NOTE: "Uncle" Bud Ward lived on Valley View Drive. He was a local radio personality for station WPIK in Alexandria back when radio was king of the airwaves. He was also the announcer for Franconia VFD events and parades. His daughter, Amelita Ward, a Mount Vernon HS graduate, became an actress and played supporting roles in over 20 films from 1943-49 (sometimes credited as Lita Ward.) In 1949, she married actor Leo Gorcey (Dead End Kids, East End Kids, Bowery Boys, over 90 movies). They had two children, and later divorced in 1956. Leo Gorcey died in 1969, and Amelita Ward McSloy died in 1987. She is buried in Ivy Hill Cemetery in Alexandria, VA.





In Memoriam



JULIA NALLS LEE

February 1, 1926 - October 25, 2018

Julia Nalls Lee was born on February 1, 1926. From the time she was a toddler, not much escaped her notice in Franconia. Read about her memories in Volumes I and VIII of the Franconia Museum's *Franconia Remembers* book series. She recalls the days when Franconia Road and Beulah Road were made of gravel. Beulah Road (before the name was changed to Beulah Street) was very narrow. Julia walked 2.2 miles to school, first to the old Franconia Elementary where Old Franconia Road intersects with the new road), and then to the new school in its present location at the corner of Beulah and Franconia Roads, which has been enlarged four times.



Julia Nalls Lee, Mattie Rogers Nalls, Gladys Nalls Shain

Julia is survived by daughter Julie "Sherry" Wheeler (Harold) and two sons, Robert M. Lee (Beverly) and Richard O. Lee (Kelly). Her husband, Oliver O. Lee, died in 2013. Oliver joined the United States Marine Corps in 1941. He saw combat duty in the Pacific Theatre at Guam and the Marianna Islands, and participated in the landing at Okinawa in 1945. He retired in 1962 as a gunnery sergeant. The Lees had four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Julia and Oliver were married in 1943 while he was on leave. Julia was 17 at the time. She remained in Franconia with her parents, Carroll and Mattie Rogers Nalls. They subsequently built a house on property given to them by their parents. Julia's sister, Gladys, married Frederick Shain, a Navy veteran who also served in the South Pacific during World War II. Their brother, Arthur (Buddy) Nalls, died in 2011. Buddy married Betty Plaugher, daughter of the owners of Ward's Corner, the former commercial landmark on Franconia Road.

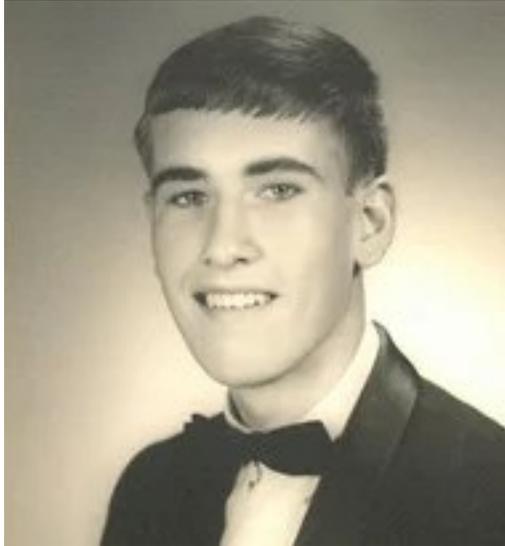
Julia and Gladys' houses stand side by side next to Nalls Produce on what is now Beulah Street. Sherry Wheeler lives in a house right behind the house owned by her mother. Nalls Produce is owned by Cary Nalls, one of Betty and Buddy's three sons.

Oliver Lee was born in Springfield, but moved to Franconia when he was five years old. He is a graduate of the old Lee-Jackson High School in Alexandria. He was a descendant of Revolutionary War hero Lighthorse Harry Lee, who was the father of Robert E. Lee. Julia's father, Carroll Nalls, fought in World War I.

Julia leaves behind a rich history. She had an uncanny ability to bring it to life in conversations, interviews and writings. Fortunately, much of her astounding memory about the history of Franconia is preserved at the Museum.



In Memoriam



Philip Dawn Walker

9/21/1947—2/14/2019

Philip Dawn Walker of Franconia was buried among the heroes at Arlington National Cemetery on April 10, 2019. He passed away on February 14, at the family home on Valley View Drive. Philip served as a member of the United States Marine Corps from 1966 to 1969, including a stint in Vietnam.

Philip is the son of the late Donald and Jac Walker. Jac was one of the founders of the Franconia Museum. Philip is survived by his brother, Kenny Walker; sister, Pam Walker; and sister-in-law Marie Walker. He was predeceased by his brother, Mark Walker, also a member of the Marine Corps. Mark and Marie had five children before he passed away in January 2008. Ken served six years in the United States Navy.

Philip was a 1965 graduate of Edison High School. He attended Franconia Elementary for grades one through seven, Washington Irving Intermediate for eighth grade, and Lee High School for one year before moving to Edison after the school opened in 1962.

Shortly after coming home from military service in 1969, Philip was involved in a serious automobile accident that eventually led to his death. While in Vietnam, he contracted malaria. He also had a hip replacement and suffered a fall on a construction drive that resulted in a steel rod penetrating his thigh. Despite it all, Philip persevered as a rodman, handling steel reinforced walls and floors, just like his father. In fact, Philip and Donald had often worked together.

Philip grew up during a magical time in Franconia. Life centered around his home and its nearby woods, church, schools, and Franconia Volunteer Fire Department. Franconia was uncrowded, but there was fun and adventure everywhere. Philip and his siblings took full advantage of all of it.

Philip achieved the rank of Star scout as a member of Franconia Boy Scout Troop #155. His father was an Assistant Scoutmaster. Philip's awards are on display at the Franconia Museum. You can read more about Philip and the entire Walker family in Volume IV of *Franconia Remembers*, the Museum book series that features the history of Franconia families, organizations and historic sites.



In Memoriam



Rose M. Carpenter 7/19/1944—5/27/2018

Franconia is blessed to have so many residents who contributed to our comfort and enjoyment over the years. We lost one such person last year with the passing of Rose M. Carpenter, who for many years made everyone's life easier and more pleasant at Rose Hill Elementary School. Rose passed away in Fredericksburg on May 27, 2018. Funeral and graveside services were held at National Funeral Home in Falls Church. Rose was born on July 19, 1944.



Rose is survived by her son, Ken, daughter Kim Smith (Chris), and her two grandsons, Mike and Will Smith. At Rose Hill, she was known as "Grandma Rose" and touched the lives of many children, parents and teachers. She worked in the cafeteria and on the custodial staff, as well as handling many other chores around the school.

"She always had a smile and kind words for everyone. She was a light for all of us at Rose Hill, and will be greatly missed."



In Memoriam



Mary Frances Pritchett Kurucz



Mary Frances (Pritchett) Kurucz, 76, of Fredericksburg, VA, passed away peacefully on October 9, 2018.

Mary was preceded in death by her parents Alvin and Bertha Pritchett, and her husband of 58 years, Gary Kurucz. She is survived by her brother Sonny (Sharon), and her five children, Sherri (Willie), Tony (Kristine), Victor, Lance (Wanda), and Troy (Trish) Kurucz. She is also survived by eight grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

Mary, or "Nanny" as she was known to many, lived a life of happiness, and was one of the strongest women we all grew to know and love.

A small intimate service was held at Jefferson Funeral Chapel on Sunday, October 14, 2019.



In Memoriam



KENNETH DALTON CURRY, III 4/4/1956—11/10/2018

If you were struck by Ken Curry's enthusiasm for the Franconia Museum and its programs, you would have thought he had lived here all his life. The same could be said for old Mount Vernon High School, the veterans in our midst and community service in general. You might be surprised to learn that Ken was born in Miami, Florida, graduated from high school in Italy, and college in Mississippi. As a member of the United States Marine Corps and the National Guard, he traveled the world serving his country.

Ken passed away suddenly on November 10, 2018, at the age of 62. In accordance with his wishes, there was no service. We are left to remember fondly his love for his family, friends and community. They asked that people who wished to do so could honor his memory with a donation to the United States Marine Corps Semper Fi Fund (semperfifund.org), or the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society (nmcrs.org) to assist veterans and active military members.

Ken is survived by his wife of 16 years, Denise, who lives nearby in Springfield. He is also survived by his mother, Marilyn, and two sisters, Karen Zumbro (Derek) and Cheryl Kay Curry. Ken retired as a Lieutenant Colonel, the same rank held by his late father, Kenneth D. Curry, Jr.

In addition to the Museum, Ken was an avid supporter of the Springfield American Post #176 and enjoyed helping feed hungry children through Journey Church. His enthusiasm and willingness to pitch in for a good cause was admired by all. Much of his photography work at Museum and Original Mount Vernon High School events remains on display at the Museum.

Ken could usually be found anywhere there was a need. He picked up trash along our roadways and in our parks, and pushed veterans in their wheelchairs at the National World War II Memorial on the Mall in Washington, D.C. When he entered a room full of strangers, he left with scores of friends.

He and Denise enjoyed dinners together at the Springfield Legion Post and their immaculate home. Ken always had time for a new project, either at home or with a near-by neighbor or community organization.



Ken Curry (right) and Bob Young in (almost) matching patriotic shirts at a picnic



In Memoriam

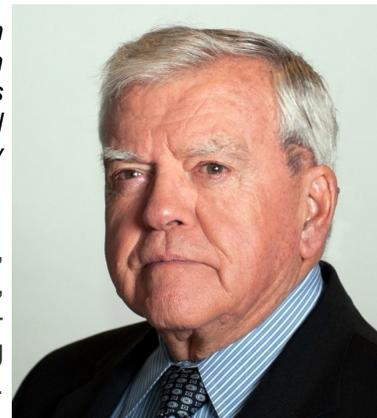


ROY ALLEN GREGORY

2/13/1935 - 4/18/2018

This article was provided by Chip Gregory, who grew up with his family on Cottonwood Drive in Rose Hill. While his dad volunteered for numerous youth sports, church and community organizations, his mom, Mickie, was a tireless worker and officer for the Rose Hill Elementary School PTA. It was a special time in Franconia when it seemed almost everyone was an unpaid community volunteer of some sort or other. (Carl Sell)

Roy Allen Gregory, 83, of Fredericksburg passed away on April 18, 2018. Born on February 13, 1935, Roy was raised in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. He was a graduate of Coughlin High School and attended the University of Virginia. Roy was also a Navy veteran, having served in both the Korean and Vietnam Wars aboard the USS Boston. He was married to Miriam I. Casterline Gregory on March 17, 1959.



Roy worked as a Supervisor in the crew scheduling department of Eastern Air Lines for 32 years, and as a crew scheduler with United Airlines for 11 years. He was a member of Spotswood Baptist Church, where he served as a Deacon.

From 1960 to 1983, Roy and his family lived in Alexandria, Virginia, while he worked for Eastern. As a member of the community, Roy was actively involved in coaching, volunteering, organizing and planning youth and high school sports programs which included football, basketball, baseball, softball, cheering, and swimming. It was through his service to youth athletics that he met and worked with many community volunteers who shared his vision of service for youth sports.

Roy was commissioner of the Lee Franconia Football League, volunteered for Special Olympics, the Salvation Army, the Gideon prison ministry, and the backyard Bible club.



Roy, Chip, and Mickey Gregory

Roy was a beloved husband, a godly example to his children and a proud and loving grandfather. He never met a person he didn't like. Roy's generosity, kind heart and sense of humor will be sorely missed by all who had the pleasure of knowing him.

Survivors include his beloved wife of 59 years, Miriam "Mickey" Gregory; son Roy "Chip" Gregory (Kimberly); daughter Jill Gregory-Mullins (John); and two grandchildren, Thomas Gregory and Andy Mullins. He was preceded in death by his parents, Allan and Dorothy Gregory; and sister Bonnie Lang.



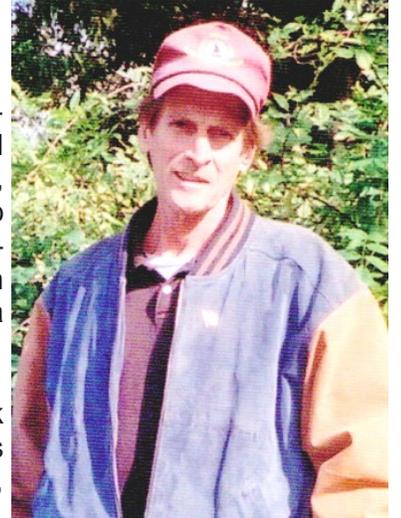
In Memoriam



TIMOTHY C. FREELAND.

2/9/1958—12/6/2018

Timothy (Tim) Freeland passed away on December 6, 2018, in Woodbridge, VA. He was preceded in death by his father, George Marshall Freeland; half-brother, Wayne Marshall Freeland; paternal grandparents, G.B. and Kathleen Freeland; and maternal grandparents, Matt and Cleo Stewardson. Tim is survived by Mary Freeland; daughter Ashley; grandson Drevyn; mother Joyce (Hoellman) Young; sister Cynthia Simpson (George); and loving aunts Janice Beach of Gordonsville, VA, and Barbara Wasson of Okmulkee, OK.



Tim was born February 9, 1958. He attended Hybla Valley and Lynbrook Elementary Schools, Key Intermediate and Lee High School. Most of his early years were spent at the home of his grandparents, the Stewardson's, on Potter's Lane, where his mom and her siblings had grown up.

In 1960, Tim's grandparents bought a 50-acre farm in Orange County and his parents moved into the house in Franconia and lived there for three years. During the summers, Tim stayed on his grandparents' farm, learning a lot from Granddaddy Stewardson. He became a dyed-in-the-wool country boy and "master of a lot." At age 9, he knew how to change the switch on a vacuum cleaner and replace the plumbing apparatus in the bathroom water tank. He became the "man of the house," and Mr. Fix-It. He demonstrated amazing maturity and self-confidence at that age.

Tim had a great love for God and His creation, for our country, the Constitution, and our flag. He was a patriot to the core. During the past two years, the early morning hours were his favorite time of day. He watched squirrels and assorted birds feast and interact just outside the window while he ate breakfast.

Tim had a real compassion for the less fortunate members of our society. Until he became too weak, he would walk into the nearby wooded areas where he also had visited the homeless. It would be good to know just how God is using Tim's (God-given) talents today.

(Editor's note: Tim's mother, Joyce Young, is a member of the Franconia Museum's Board of Directors. She wrote this obituary in her son's honor, when he died following a long illness.)



In Memoriam



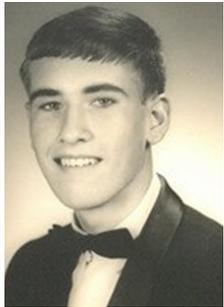
JACK W. HUFFMAN

1/12/1935—12/21/2018

Jack passed away at his home in Alexandria, VA, on Friday, December 21, 2018. He was the beloved husband of the late Ludy Massie Huffman; father of Brian Huffman (Diane), Tony Huffman (Pam), Donna Dixon (Allen) and the late Albert Huffman; brother of Emma Reed, and also survived by 7 grandchildren and 7 great-grandchildren. A memorial service was held on December 27th at Jefferson Funeral Chapel. Interment followed at Mt. Comfort Cemetery.



**IN MEMORIAM
EDISON HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNI**



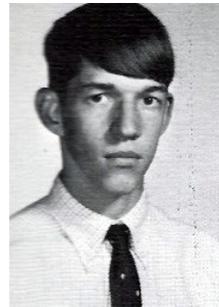
Philip Walker
14 Feb 2019



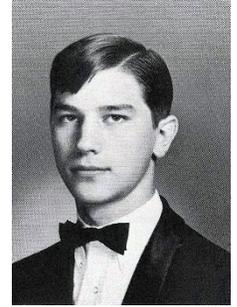
Penny Strait
15 Dec 2018



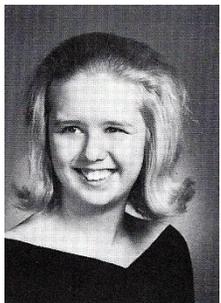
Steve Davenport
8 Nov 2018



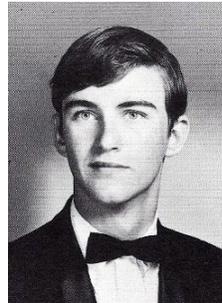
Robert Goll
18 Dec 2018



James Cuddy
19 Nov 2018



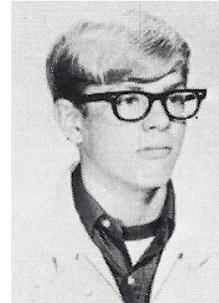
Sharon Lawrence
24 Oct 2018



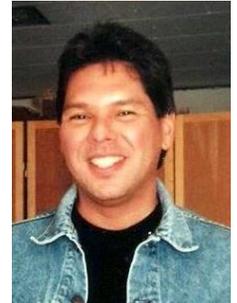
Timothy May
13 Dec 2018



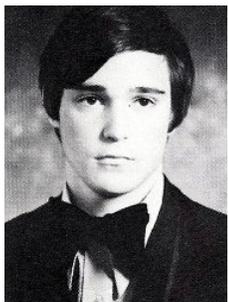
Terry Eldridge
4 Jan 2019



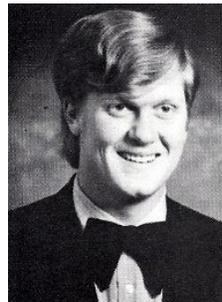
John Kerr



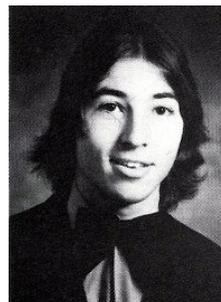
John Feagley
12 Oct 2018



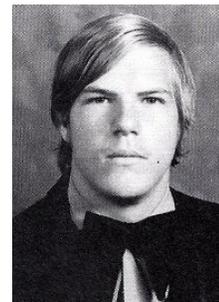
Edward Huck
2 Nov 2018



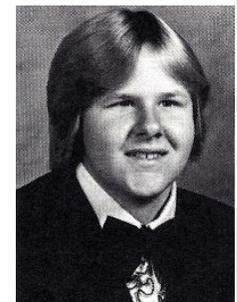
John Johnson
26 Mar 2019



Gary Shu
7 Nov 2018



Scott Dwinelle
14 Dec 2018



Randall Dove
22 Mar 2019



Kathleen Kitts
8 Feb 2019



John Robinson
11 Mar 2019



Steven Shifflett
9 Oct 2018



Linda Vancil
19 Oct 2018



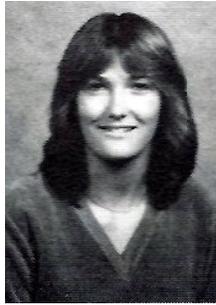
George Barnes
6 Dec 2018



IN MEMORIAM



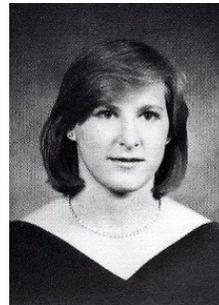
Janet L. Smith
16 Apr 2019



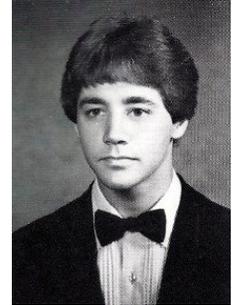
Laura Bunch
19 Nov 2018



Jonathan Harper
17 Nov 2018



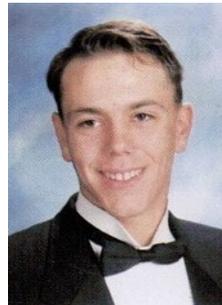
A. Worthington
26 Sept 2018



Brett Overstreet
7 Nov 2018



Lisa Cook
11 Feb 2019



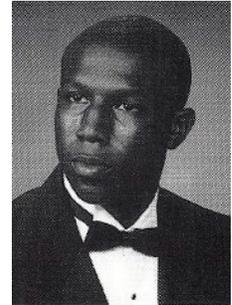
Robt. Alexander
11 Nov 2018



David Castilo
12 Dec 2018



Stephanie Shaw
18 Dec 2018



Sentell Smith
22 Dec 2018



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CLASSES OF 1968, 1969 & 1970

October 18-19, 2019

Springfield Hilton Hotel

Barbara Brant Dent: bbdent@verizon.net 571-213-8196

Alan Goldsmith: aeg4451@aol.com 703-941-4725

**Joyce Tarlosky Scott: joycescottva@verizon.net 703-795-0095
ehs686970reunion@gmail.com**

Information and photos of our dearly departed alumni are provided by Franconia Museum Board of Directors member Jeff Langley. Jeff also maintains a Facebook page of these memorials. Thank you so much, Jeff, for all of your tireless support.



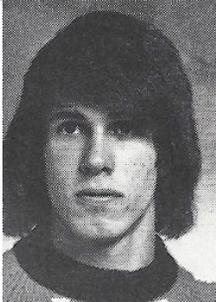
**IN MEMORIAM
HAYFIELD HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNI**



Jane Middlecoff
9 March 2019



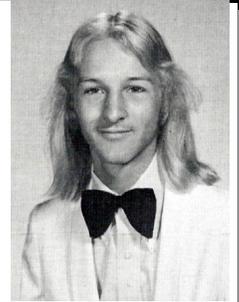
Alice Barbour
25 Dec 2018



Michael Haney
5 Dec 2018



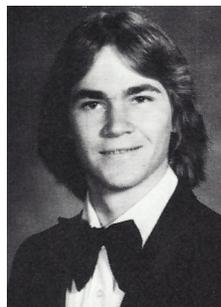
John Emrico
17 Aug 2018



Dale Newville
6 Feb 2019



Wayne White
13 Oct 2018



David Arnold
16 Nov 2018



Lori Jones
2 Nov 2018



Darlene Ford
29 Nov 2018



Edward Crawford
20 Mar 2019



Mark Payne
December 2018



Dameon Hamm
5 Mar 2019



Michael Malo
20 Feb 2019



Sarah Minor
30 Dec 2018



H. Reindorf
12 Mar 2019



Victoria Davis
14 Feb 2019




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Our apologies if we missed your name ... please let us know and we will add you to the next publication!


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THE CRUSH BROTHERS FROM FRANCONIA



The “Crush Brothers” (l to r : Randy Campbell, Charlie Wood, Don Hakenson, and Gary Buzbee) played softball together for over 20 years. They won countless softball championships, including 10 Fort Belvoir tournament championships in 15 seasons.

Volumes I through VIII of the “Franconia Remembers” series are available for purchase in the Museum, and also on our website. Volumes I through VII are currently being sold for \$10 each. Volume VIII, the newest volume, is being sold for \$20. Complete your set at these bargain prices.

*** We Are Open ***

Monday - Tuesday - Wednesday - Saturday

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Contact us at franconiamuseum@yahoo.com

and set up a time with Carl Sell, Don Hakenson, Mary Smith, or one of the other Board Members, and tell them your story of your Franconia remembrances.

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