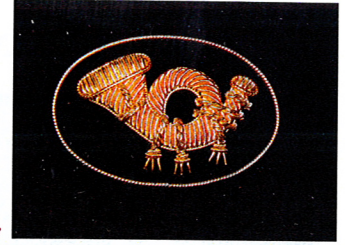


The Bugle

The Bugle, a publication of the Brentwood Historical Society



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LIBERTY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH CELEBRATES 200-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

BY JOE LASSUS

Earlier this month, the Mindermann family and a host of generous supporters held a wonderful celebration of the Liberty United Methodist

Church, and the legacy of Major Green Hill. A church service at the historic church on Liberty Church Road launched the event. Those in attendance then traveled the short distance to Liberty Hill, the former home of the Green Hill family.

There the gathering celebrated the 200-year anniversary of the Western Conference of the Methodist Church...

anniversary of the Western Conference of the Methodist Church, as well as the tremendous efforts of Green Hill in bringing the Methodist Church to Middle Tennessee. Music filled the air at the event as speakers lauded the great occa-



Current congregation of Liberty United Methodist Church



200-YEAR ANNIVERSARY...(CONTINUED)



sion. Everyone enjoyed the delicious barbeque lunch, as well as the tours of the historic Liberty Hill site and the adjoining cemetery. The family cemetery is the site of the shrine to Green Hill's religious efforts on behalf of the Methodist Church in the Liberty community. A permanent marker is placed commemorating the Green Hill contributions to the Methodist Church at this location.

The event was intended to celebrate the very first annual conference of the Methodist Church to be held west of the Alleghenies. In October 1808, Green Hill and the fledgling Liberty Church entertained the

ninth session of the Western Conference of the Methodist Church on the same site—the Liberty Hill homestead of the Green Hill family, now part of Brentwood's Liberty Downs subdivision. In 1808, a week long camp vigil with prayer

meetings, revivals, and people accepting Jesus Christ as their Savior was held. It was called, "The Awakening." People were said to be filled with the Holy Spirit, dancing and singing in joy.

The 1808 conference was presided over by then Bishops William McKendree and Francis Asbury. Vance Little recounts the event in his book, *Granny White and Her Pumpkins and Other Tales of Brentwood*, "The main item on the agenda at the Conference of 1808 was the formulation of a Church policy on slavery. The Church adopted a policy of opposing slavery. It is to be noted that Green Hill himself was then a



Reverend Ed Frieson prior to special services.

slave owner and continued to own slaves until his death in 1826. In his will he said, 'Respecting my colored people whom I now possess, it is my sincere desire that whenever Government shall permit, that they all be liberated for I consider slavery to be unjust and inconsistent with Spirit and Doctrine of the Gospel of Christ. But under present law we are restrained that liberty, therefore, until that desirable event shall take place I dispose of them as follows..."

The early Liberty Methodist Church held its services at the location of the Green Hill residence (Liberty Hill). The original trustees were Green Hill, Joshua Cannon, Benjamin Seawell, Spencer Hill, and Moses Spear. The church did not move to its present location until the 1830's. This historic church is one of the oldest churches in the state, and fostered the formation of other Methodist churches in the Brentwood area, namely the Brentwood United Methodist Church, Johnson Chapel Methodist Church, and the Smyrna Methodist Church which formerly stood on Old Smyrna Road. During the 1800's, the Liberty Methodist Church was the center of the thriving Liberty community, and years later (1900) the Liberty School would be built across the road.



Mindermann homestead on Liberty Hill...

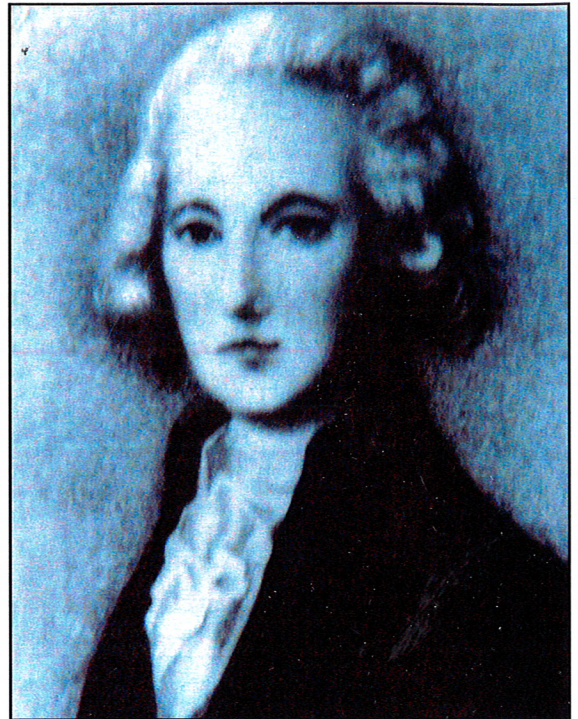
MAJOR GREEN HILL, FOUNDING FATHER OF THE METHODIST CHURCH IN TENNESSE

BY JOE LASSUS

Major Green Hill (1741-1826) is certainly one of Brentwood's most notable pioneer settlers. He and his family established their homestead, Liberty Hill, in what is now the Liberty Downs Subdivision. Green Hill's most notable achievement involved the foundation and spread of the Methodist faith throughout North Carolina and Tennessee.

During the early 1700's, Hill's parents moved from Tidewater Virginia to North Carolina, and raised nine children. Their second son, Green Hill, was named for his father, and traveled to England at an early age to be educated. Young Hill entered public service as a member of the colonial legislature, serving in every North Carolina Provincial Congress while a resident of that state. Other public posts included Justice of the Peace (1778), County Court Clerk (1785), Council of State (1783), and Delegate to the Confederation Congress (1785).

As a member of the North Carolina colonial legislature, Hill voted for American independence (a document known as the Halifax Resolves), four months before the Continental Congress declared it. As State Treasurer (Halifax District) during the Revolutionary War, Green Hill is credited with saving the state treasury from the advancing British Army led by Cornwallis. In 1781, he enlisted as a private in the Con-



Portrait of young Green Hill, Methodist minister

tinental Army, serving twelve months active duty. During his war service he was promoted to Chaplain with the rank of Major.

But Green Hill's greatest achievements were in his service to God. He became a Methodist minister around the age of thirty, shortly before his marriage to Mary Seawell in 1773. There were Methodist societies in eastern North Carolina as early as 1774.

(continued on page 6....)

HISTORIC MARKER PROGRAM SEEKS VOLUNTEERS

BY GIL HUTCHINSON

Historical markers help capture Brentwood's rich history and help preserve the memory of people, places and events that have affected our community over the years. The Marker Program provides recognition of local historic properties through the use of markers typically purchased by the owners of these properties.

The Brentwood Historic Commission, a board of community volunteers, erects and helps maintain markers that recognize sites significant in the City's history. This program is a longstanding tradition with both the Brentwood Historic Commission and the Brentwood Historical Society. Many members have contributed significant effort on the Marker Program through the years.

But many of the original markers have succumbed to the effects of time and weather. There are now fifty-two historic site and cemetery markers currently in place and many of the markers are in need of repair or replacement.

The Commission's Historic Marker Committee is in the process of completing an inventory of historic markers. They will assess the type

and condition of existing markers and encourage new signage where opportunities exist. They will also provide GPS (global positioning system) location information of each marker for a special city map in the future.

The Marker Committee is looking for citizens interested in preserving Brentwood's heritage and who are willing to help with the research, repair and placement of these markers. We would appreciate any amount of time or effort that you could provide to this worthwhile preservation initiative. If you would like to help with this project, please contact Committee Chairman Gil Hutchinson at 372-3558 or by email at sghutch@bellsouth.net.



MAJOR GREEN HILL—CONTINUED

BY JOE LASSUS

The Hill home in Louisburg was well known during the period for Methodist clergy meetings and conferences.

In 1785, twenty preachers from 31 circuits in Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina met in the attic of his Louisburg home, a large room covering the whole upper floor of the residence. The preachers planned the strategy for the future growth of the Methodist Church in the South. Bishops Francis Asbury and Thomas Coke guided the proceedings which were most positive for the church. Only the subject of slavery divided the group, many members objecting to the institution. Mrs. Hill and her family cared for the preachers who slept on the attic floor and in tents on the lawn. Three succeeding Methodist conferences also met at the Green Hill home in 1790, 1791, and 1794.

In the meantime (1786), Green Hill had acquired land in what is now Brentwood, Tennessee. Major Hill consolidated his grant of land for service in the Revolutionary War with property purchased from another soldier (Randolph Humphries). At the advanced age of 50 plus years, Green Hill moved his sizeable family to the wilderness of Middle Tennessee. Reverend Hill was ready now to spread the faith to a new land only then becoming settled by a new generation of

pioneers.

At this time, the area was untamed and subject to Indian attacks. Eight of the family's thirteen offspring made the trip in 1798, staying within the protection of Fort Nashboro until their house could be completed in 1799. That residence no longer exists, however the original foundation still accommodates the old white clapboard home on Glen Ridge Drive.

The stage had been set to foster the spread of the Methodist Church into Middle Tennessee. Again the Green Hill home and plantation would become a central meeting place for those furthering the Methodist faith. The religious traditions that began at Louisburg in North Carolina would be transitioned to Middle Tennessee at Liberty Hill. As mentioned in the previous article, the Liberty Methodist Church would hold its religious services at Liberty Hill during its earliest years. The homestead would also become a central meeting place for Methodist religious camps and meetings. These events were highlighted by the previously noted event of 1808, known as "The Awakening."

The Green Hill Shrine at Liberty Hill is a fitting tribute to one of Brentwood's earliest and most influential residents. His legacy of establishing the Methodist faith in our locale cannot be underestimated.

**The Bugle, a publication of the
Brentwood Historical Society
(editor: Joe Lassus)**

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

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

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

Boiling Spring Academy Open House !

The Brentwood Historic Commission will hold its last scheduled open house of the year on Sunday, October 19th from 2 to 4 p.m. Bring your friends and relatives! Docents are on hand to relate the history of the Academy!

Speaker Series Event Presents Archaeologist Michael Moore October 23rd -Brentwood Library

Mark your calendars now for the next event in the Brentwood Historical Commission speaker series. State Archaeologist Michael C. Moore will speak at the Brentwood Library on Tuesday, October 23rd at 6:30 p.m. in Meeting Room A.

Michael Moore will discuss archeological work at two sites in the Brentwood area. At Coats-Hines the remains of a mastodon were excavated prior to construction activity east of Interstate Hwy 65 in the Cool Springs area. The excavation uncovered evidence of early prehistoric Native Americans butchering this large, elephant-like mammal some 11,500 years ago.

Moore will also speak on the Brentwood Library project that was constructed on top of a late prehistoric Native American town dating about 1400 A.D. Numerous domestic structures and refuse-filled pits, as well as stone-box burials were documented during the construction activity.

Mr. Moore is the Tennessee State Archaeologist, and has worked for the TN Division of Archaeology for 23 years. He was recently appointed Director in April of 2007. He holds a B.S. degree in anthropology from Iowa State University and a M.A. in the field from University of Oklahoma.

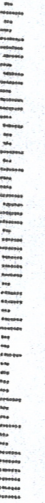
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