



# The Lodger

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NEWSLETTER FOR RESIDENTS AND FRIENDS OF THE LODGE AT OLD TRAIL

## NATURE'S GARDEN

of wildflowers is abloom on Old Trail. A stroll along the walkway behind The Lodge reveals a surprising number of late summer blossoms in a dazzling array of colors.



Here and there among the flowers plumes of tall, slender foxtail grass sway in the breeze.

A few black-eyed Susans linger on the bank long after their companions have departed.



Vibrant colors along the way include those of red clover, blue chicory, morning glory both purple and white, and Queen Anne's lace.



The delicate yellow flowers of partridge peas blanket a section of the bank.



Over on the pond, cattails stand sentinel while a hawk circles overhead, and on the near bank poke weed flaunts its elegant, though poisonous, purple berries.



From season to season, nature's garden brings visions of infinite, ever changing variety.

—Jean Sellers

## RESIDENT FOCUS

Polly Sheets picked out her apartment at The Lodge while dressed in a hard hat before either wall board or stair railings were installed. One of the first residents to move into The Lodge in August 2013, Polly was determined to see the mountain view she hoped for before committing to her new residence on the third floor. The view was an instant winner. She had become attached to the Blue Ridge landscape as a young girl living in Crozet.

Polly's earliest years were spent in Delaplane, Virginia, a tiny community in northern Fauquier County 50 miles west of Washington, D.C. Her father was a dairy farmer and her mother a school teacher. Her mother moved to Crozet to teach in Albemarle County schools after her father's death when Polly was three years old.

A Florence Nightingale of today, Polly acquired a devotion to the welfare of others to which she continues to be dedicated. From the time she was six-years old, Polly knew she wanted to be a nurse. That may have been inspired by an uncle who was a doctor she greatly admired.

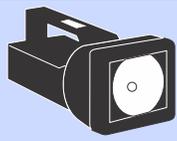
After spending a year at Mary Washington College of the University of Virginia (now University of Mary Washington), she could not resist the call to nursing any longer and enrolled in the nursing program at the University of Virginia. Three years later she donned her RN nurse's cap and went to work at the UVA Hospital.

A patient at the hospital had been through a partial gastrectomy when Polly was assigned to his bedside. At the time doctors thought his stomach condition was brought about by the stress of losing his fiancée in a tragic automobile crash the day before their wedding. When Polly was reassigned to other duty, the patient told her that she would be seeing him again.

True to his word, the patient learned of her whereabouts and found her at her new work



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# STAFFER SPOTLIGHT

His fascination with all things mechanical makes Justin Goolsby and his job at The Lodge a perfect match. As Maintenance Assistant, he enjoys the feeling of accomplishment whether performing routine maintenance chores or tackling a major repair job. He works under the supervision of Maintenance Director James Morris who Justin says has rounded out his knowledge of the tricks of repair.

Having worked at the Farmington Country Club as groundskeeper, Justin joined the staff at The Lodge in 2014 to continue his interest in landscape maintenance. When the opening for the Maintenance Assistant position opened later that year, he jumped at it. In that position, Justin is kept busy touchup painting, fixing damaged drywall, shampooing carpets, and repairing pipes and heating and air conditioning units.

On emergency call at all hours, he was once summoned on a Sunday to remedy a leak that flooded an apartment. Finding the burst pipe and knowing where to shut off the water, Justin set about "cleaning up the mess" that had accumulated three inches of water!

One of his amusing experiences was to get a work order reporting a toilet "that would fart" after flushing. The

resident was correct. "It sounded just like one," said Justin, before he replaced the valve that was causing the annoying sound.

Justin sharpens his mechanical skills by taking on both large and small repairs on his automobile and pickup. He added to his hands-on experience by enrolling in a two-year course on interior and exterior auto body repair. His friends are lucky. Although he doesn't solicit work, he willingly helps friends with repairs when asked.

He stays connected to the outdoors, camping, hiking, swimming, and cutting wood for the woodstove that heats his house, and spends time with family. He lives in the house his parents moved to in Greenwood when he was a teenager.

Justin was born in Charlottesville and spent his early years in nearby Batesville. He attended all three schools that are up the road from The Lodge. Track and field was his favorite extracurricular activity.

The combined experience of James and Justin is reassuring that care of The Lodge infrastructure is in good hands. And if outside contractor help is needed, they know how to oversee their work.



## This and That

**WE KNOW THEY'RE OUT THERE**, but we don't often spot one on Old Trail. Neighbors recently sighted what was initially described as a baby bear, and somewhat later as a young male bear. While exploring several yards, he reportedly climbed fences with ease. According to sources, he was last seen on hole 10 of the golf course. Perhaps he managed to "play through" and find his way home.

**SPECULATION CONTINUES** on what new major grocery store is going to Waynesboro. The developer is mum until all contracts are a certainty. The store will be part of the redevelopment of the Ladd Elementary School site just off I-64 at the interchange with U.S. 340. Could it be a new Kroger? Both existing Kroger stores are old and outdated. Or could it be a Trader Joe's?

told you about will start in September with first beers from a pilot system at local venues, including maybe one in Crozet, in October to "feel out the response."

**YOU MUST SEE TO BELIEVE** the glass-like finish of the copper plated bar at Pro Re Nata microbrewery in Crozet. Seen here, the polished copper is being installed by metal roof specialists. If not already open when you read this, Pro Re Nata's opening is imminent.

**The Lodger**  
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for residents and friends  
of The Lodge at Old Trail.  
  
Jim Clark, editor  
  
Advisory Committee  
Sue Clark  
Jean Sellers  
  
See color edition at  
lodgearoldtrail →  
about the lodge →  
news & press releases

**CONSTRUCTION OF THE MICROBREWERY** in the former Virginia Metalcrafters building we



# The Mountain Camp Nobody Liked

A remote mountain community in the mammoth George Washington National Forest was home to hundreds of men, none of whom wanted to be there. Beginning in 1933 and ending 14 years later, this isolated place in Augusta County a short distance from The Lodge on the other side of the mountain served three different national interests. Largely unknown then, and, except for remnants buried by 70 years of forest growth, there is not much evidence now to remind us of what this incredible place represented.

Thanks to the book by historian Gegory Owen and the documentary by film maker James Overton, our eyes are being opened to this little known piece of Virginia history. Collaborating in the effort, Owen and Overton concentrated on the final chapter of an amazing three-part story. The story began with the construction of a group of semi-permanent buildings known as Camp Sherando.

A project of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), Camp Sherando was constructed by unemployed young men who were provided jobs as part of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal during The Great Depression.

Besides being a public work relief program, the CCC was meant to develop and protect the natural resources of the country. The CCC "boys" housed at Camp Sherando performed that conservation role admirably by damming a mountain stream to create the popular Sherando Lake complex where to this day throngs of recreationists swim, hike, picnic, camp, and hunt. They also helped construct



*Civilian Public Service Story*

*The view of Sherando Lake from CPS Camp 29.*



*The barracks at Camp Sherando shortly before the camp was converted to house prisoners of war.*

parts of the Skyline Drive and Blue Ridge Parkway and reforest areas decimated by loggers.

Although not part of the military, CCC workers were supervised by the U.S. Army and subject to military rules and regulations. That regimentation and the loneliness of the camp were hard on the boys, causing a few to be given dishonorable discharges for desertion, but the others lasted until July 1941 when the camp was closed and most of them enlisted or were drafted to fight in World War II.

The barracks, mess hall, hospital, and recreation hall were moth balled, supposedly on a permanent basis. But after one year, the camp was reopened in 1942 to become Civilian Public Service Camp No. 29. It was there that conscientious objectors who were drafted into the military were assigned. Over 300 conscientious objectors were conscripted to the camp to complete the unfinished Blue Ridge Parkway. Receiving no pay for their services, the men depended on their churches to provide support. Managed by the Church of the Brethren under the direction of the Selective Service, the CPS camp operated for less than two years until the northern sections of the parkway were completed and the men were transferred to another camp.

Again the isolated camp was abandoned, but not for long. When the U.S. Army learned that the former CCC camp was available, it was renamed and hastily reactivated with the installation of barbed wire fences and guard towers. The War Department was engaged in a crash program to house nearly 400,000 German prisoners of war by setting up over 650 camps in 45 states to house them. Named after the small unincorporated community just to the north, Camp Lyndhurst was opened in 1943 when the first German prisoners, all enlisted men and non-commissioned officers, arrived there. The closest facility for captive officers was at Ingleside Resort in Staunton. Cooks at the Woodrow Wilson Army Hospital in Fishersville prepared the meals that were trucked to Camp Lyndhurst.

Understandably, at first the local residents were apprehensive over enemy soldiers being sent here, but over

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## Resident Focus (cont'd)

station. Two years later, Polly and Mack Sheets were married at her mother's house in Crozet.

Mack was raised by his grandparents on a farm in Loves Mill, North Carolina where he joked that North Carolinians changed his surname from the correct German spelling of Sheetz because they couldn't spell. That had to be of some concern because Mack was highly technical, having graduated in engineering from Virginia Tech and being a researcher at the Naval Research Lab in Washington, D.C. for 35 years. His specialty was radio direction finding for tracking submarines. His work earned him the Distinguished Civilian Service Award, the highest award given by the Secretary of Defense to career employees.

His research required him to visit other researchers in Germany, England, and Canada. Polly says she learned to drive just to get him to the train station at wee hours in the morning enroute to distant cities.

The Sheetzes lived in suburban Washington D.C. where their two children were born and raised. Polly found raising their children was a full-time activity, especially since Mack was often away on business trips. Daughter Susan is retired and lives in Lake Monticello and son Clifton is a former emergency department physician at Mary Washington Hospital in Fredericksburg and now runs his own clinic in Fredericksburg. Their families have grown to include Polly's five



*Wedding Day in Crozet.*

grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

The Sheetzes moved into Polly's mother's house in Crozet upon Mack's retirement. He was an avid hiker, sometimes on the trail for up to three days. Polly's hiking was limited to day trips. It was on one of his last hikes that he may have had one of several heart attacks. Fortunately, his doctor son was with him and sought the help needed for assistance.

Mack was also a serious photographer and astronomer. Their bathroom became his dark room and Polly remembers when the family would be awakened in the middle of the night to see meteor showers from chairs he set up in the yard.

It has been 25 years since Mack died. Polly has continued her humanitarian services for families and friends which is so much a part of her life, caring for her sick uncle, mother, husband, her long-time friend Dr. Russell Herring who was also a resident at The Lodge, and others.

For over 20 years, she has been a faithful volunteer for Meals on Wheels, still traveling each Tuesday up to 45 miles to deliver hot meals to incapacitated or elderly people. Every month she joins a group of other knitters to knit prayer shawls for grieving people.

Her vacation travels have taken her to Alaska and Europe. Other trips were to Niagara Falls, the Ozarks, and a number of national parks in the west.

Reorganizing the library at The Lodge has become one of Polly's latest ventures. She and a committee of eight others are planning to stock recently added shelves and reclassify the collection.

Fond of her mountain view and free from worrying about clearing ice and snow from her car parked in the basement garage, Polly says "I'll do almost anything to remain here!"



*Polly in her senior year nurses cap.*

## Mountain Camp (cont'd)

time their presence was accepted and even welcomed. With labor resources depleted by the war effort, prisoners of war provided needed manpower for farmers and orchardists. Groups of prisoners were transported daily to work sites by the local growers, sometimes eating with the farm families they served, despite the rules against fraternization. The prisoners were even credited with saving two million bushels of apples, a bumper crop, from loss in 1944 when 260 POWs were employed to harvest the crop.

Military authorities reasoned it was best to hold war prisoners in the United States away from battlefields where escape would be more threatening. Using a high ground, humanitarian approach, the United States maintained that POWs were not confined for the sake of punishment, but rather to deprive the enemy of further use of its trained resources. No prisoner ever escaped from Camp Lyndhurst.

Prisoners were quickly repatriated after the war, but two of the former prisoners decided to return to the United States under the sponsorship of families they became friendly with. Both settled in Stuarts Draft where they and their families lived for more than 60 years. German-submariner Karl Bauman, one of the two, is featured in Owen's book published in 2006. Bauman died in 2009.

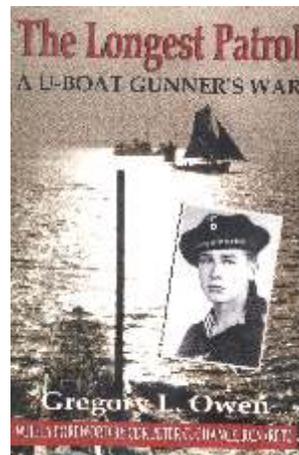
Migrant workers occupied the camp during apple picking season for one or two years after the prisoners left.

The story ends in 1951 when the government determined not to use the camp again. The buildings were auctioned off, disassembled, and removed. The motor pool garage built by the CCC is used for storage by the U.S. Forest Service. The mess hall was reconstructed as a residence near Stuarts Draft.

*A painted window from the chapel at Camp Lyndhurst was one of few objects preserved at the time the camp was dismantled. A prisoner of war had painted the glass in acrylic.*



*Waynesboro Heritage Museum*



*The Longest Patrol, A U-Boat Gunner's War* by Gregory L. Owen is available in paperback from Amazon.com and other booksellers.

The film *In This Land: The Camp Lyndhurst Saga/German Prisoners of War in The Old Dominion* produced by James Overton can be viewed in its entirety at [alphavisionfilms.com](http://alphavisionfilms.com).