

**Written Memories (via email)**

**From: Rita Rogers**

**To: Mary Lipsey**

Tuesday, June 21, 2005

(Ms. Rogers tells of her family's experiences as original residents in the Lake Braddock subdivision.)

Lake Braddock Community written by an "original"!

In January of 1971, we arrived at our new home in Lake Braddock, my husband, just back from Viet Nam and our sons, 2 1/2 and 1 1/2. The house was completed but the yard was mud and dirt! Each time the boys went out to play, boots had to be put on. When the yard was hydroseeded, and all the neighbors kept tabs on whose grass appeared first, we all finally had real grass! As our boys were heading outside one day, they stopped and reminded me they needed to put on their boots! For so long, outside meant boots and mud. For young boys, living here with all the construction equipment around was a dream come true and whenever possible, we'd "visit" the bulldozers, front loaders up close.

There was a true feeling of community - block parties, visits, sharing - of food, recipes and complaints about all the problems a new house generated. Not only were the neighbors friendly, but the local Burke Post Office had two ladies who drove a big car and delivered the mail - and a smile. The Post Office was of course one of the few important buildings in the town, along with a 7-11, a Church and a service station. Burke was a small town then.

We were all prepared for a new school off Lake Braddock Drive; the land was cleared and made ready to build. While all the big machines were there, we (the boys and I) had to check them out. So we walked over with a friend and once again the mud was all around, so much so that the friend got his boot pulled off in the mud! After all this, the bond proposal was defeated, so no school was built.

The boys were little, the new trees were little and the new house felt big. We left in 1974, wishing we could stay and enjoy the lake, the pools, the tennis courts and the neighbors. It wasn't until 1983 that we returned, and the boys were teens. They looked at the house, the big trees and remarked, "The house doesn't look so big!"

The neighborhood had changed some; Olley Lane had gone from being a quiet street to becoming a noisy, traffic-filled cut through street. But many of the neighbors were still here. After some time, we learned that Burke Centre wasn't a shopping mall but another community that had been built during our 9 year absence.

One of the humorous memories was of two beavers walking on the sidewalk across the street! They had been at the lake and must have gone exploring!

Now in 2005, we have a few "original owners" left, but the neighborhood has changed. Fortunately, the friendliness and helpfulness is still present.

It's good that some of these memories of the early years of Lake Braddock will be preserved in this history.

Rita Rogers with help from Bill, Paul and Will

(End of memory)