

## Vienna as “Country”

BC: I remember as a child going to Peony (Paeonian) Springs. It’s not PE-o-nie, it’s pay-OH-nie Springs.

DS: Paeonian. That’s how you say it. Paeonian Springs. My friend used to live there, Johnny Carroll lived there.

BC: That’s where the Russ Farms was, Frank Bart. We came from Washington. We packed a lunch so that we could stop, going all the way up to Leesburg. Leesburg Pike was, I guess, like Cottage Street now. I was a child so I don’t remember. We’d have to stop and picnic on the way up. I think that the road, the infrastructure, has changed everything for Vienna and every place. I know when my kids were at Vienna Elementary, I was on the Board there. They had someone, a town planner, come—from outside the town of Vienna, but Fairfax County. He said that Center Street and 123 would be the absolute center of commerce for Fairfax County. Not that they would have everything, but that it would be the hub of the wheel. I’d love to know if that’s happened, what it’s become. The roads have had probably more of an influence than anything else, and the building, the Baby Boomers needing houses. The Yonas Corporation built small houses, affordable with lots of bedrooms.

VH: Mayor Seeman said when she moved to Vienna that it felt ‘southern’. Do you agree with that?

BC: Ok. Everything has a story! I grew up in Washington. I didn’t know we were below the Mason-Dixon line. I didn’t know North from South. We never talked about it in our home. When I went to New York, they told me I had a Southern accent; when I went to Richmond, I had a Northern from being in New York so much. I really didn’t know. It just felt like country. I didn’t drive. We could take buses and streetcars and cabs in Washington. It got so that when we hit 606 and Route 7 in Herndon, it felt like a steel door went across. We were apart from civilization!

VH: You said that Vienna felt like ‘the country’. (BC: The *country*!) Does it still feel like the country to you?

BC: Oh heavens no. There’s a lot of talk about how people are in and out—how the military only stays three years, then go, and so forth. There is a core in Vienna. David’s (Shelby) sons are still friends with their kindergarten buddies. They’ve grown up together. There are the stable people who are here. The others come and go. You watch your neighbors come and go. But there’s still very much a hometown feel to it. I’ll tell you, a lot of those people live in Lakevale. They grew up there, went to Madison, came back and bought homes there.