

First Baptist Church's Historic Baptismal Site Story

MR: So then, one day, Ted (Thomas) calls me because John Seekus has bought land on Moorefield Road, which bisects Courthouse Road down your ways. Just beyond Nutley Street. The left side had been developed for some time. But the right side was a nice, big, old, white house and just grass and a stream. And every year, you'd see just one Black Angus grazing there. It was being raised for food, fat for food and everything. I didn't really know anything about the place so he told me that that was the Baptismal site for the Church and that in the old days they would go to church and put on robes that they could be baptized in. They'd walk down from the church to where that stream was and they'd be baptized in the water. I guess they could change their clothes at the Carter house there, excuse me. And then they'd walk back to church. And he said that that baptismal site was just part of the historic of the town and everything. The creek was going to be closed in and there's going to be nothing there. We need something to commemorate that site. Ohh, yes. So we go to Charlie, who was all for this. John Seekus, who is a developer in town and who's a big county developer now, it's his property. He's bought it. So we approached John. 'How about you dedicate a little corner of the property for a stone, a marker, to commemorate this? It's really important for the town history.' He was agreeable to it. Ted Thomas, he was really excited. We got another marker in town. Historic Vienna was paying for these bronze things. They don't come cheaply, believe me. So, we had the bronze tablet but we didn't have anything to mount it on. John Seekus had promised, 'You get it, and I will build this.' Well, it's getting on in the fall. It's not exactly concrete weather, and we don't have anything to put it on. So I trudged off to see John Seekus. I said, 'Look. We've got everything. Pretty soon it's going to be too cold to build this. It's frozen, it's really something else.' And I said, 'We need it!' And he said, 'I'll see what I can do.' And he put up the nicest, loveliest stone thing. Anyway, we got this lovely—it's just at the corner of his lawn. I used to drive by at least once a week to make sure no one had put graffiti on it. Because it's *real* close to Courthouse Road. It really is. And, you know, the property owners were appreciating it. One day, I ran into John somewhere around town. And I said, 'Well, it looks like the marker is surviving.' He says, 'Yes, I check it out regularly.' I said, 'Oh, you do! I check it out regularly too!' He said, 'Someday, when my kids are older, I want to take them there and show them this and tell them that I'm proud to be a part of it and they should be too.'