



# Echoes from THE HILL

July 2005



www.vbchfs.org

Sunday, June 26th was a gorgeous day, and many former residents converged on the campus of the Children's Home for the Annual Alumni Celebration. Approximately 150 alumni, children and friends were on hand to enjoy the get together, eat great food, swim, play horseshoes, or just enjoy sitting and talking about the 'good old times.'

Alumni came from far and near, some young, some of them older. Jerry and Brenda Strong came from Helena, Montana. Many came from Virginia and North Carolina, but regardless of where alumni return from, they are *always* welcome at the Children's Home.

After lunch, Ollie Pickral (1951-1967) spoke briefly about a website for alumni that grew up on The Hill; [www.oldkids.org](http://www.oldkids.org). Ollie stressed the importance of letting alumni be aware of this site. Emphasizing the fact that many alumni are not able to attend the reunion and how this website will enable alumni to stay in touch with each other.

Mike Elmore (1976-1984) and Dr. Ector Hamrick, President, Board of Trustees, honored former Executive Director Don Bradley for his 33 years of service to the Home. Elmore spoke of Bradley, who was Elmore's social worker when he came to the Home.

"He played the role of a father for me in that he assisted me in going to college, in getting a car and insurance. Anytime I went in Mr. Bradley's office I felt better when I came out. He treated me with respect. He did the things for me that a father would do," said Elmore. He went on to say he has no regrets about having grown up at the Children's Home.

If you know of other alumni who did not attend, or whose address we do not have, please contact Jodie Terry at (540) 389-2112 or [JodieT@vbchfs.org](mailto:JodieT@vbchfs.org).

The Alumni Committee would appreciate it you would help us place new names on our mailing list for *Echoes from THE HILL*, as well as various other announcements.

A special *THANK YOU* is in order for everyone



*Alumnus Mike Ellmore (left), joined Children's Home Board of Trustees President Dr. Ector Hamrick (right) in presenting Don Bradley (center with a plaque commemorating his 16 years of service as Executive Director of VBCH&FS. Current Executive Director Dr. Stephen Richerson (2nd from right) and former Executive Director Franklin Hough were on hand to congratulate Bradley for his honor.*

who helped with this year's reunion. Don and Joyce Martin (1952-64), Brenda Goff (1955-59), and Buddy and Dolly Grantham (daughter of the late Farm Manager George Yopp) are to be commended for their continuous love of, and dedication to, the Children's Home.



*Alumnus Melvin Crowder rings the bell once more for old time's sake during the 2005 Alumni Reunion.*

**If you would like to help plan the Alumni Reunion for next year, contact Jodie Terry at (540) 389-2112 or [JodieT@vbchfs.org](mailto:JodieT@vbchfs.org).**

*Alumni Update:*  
**Rebecca “Becky” Bledsoe Phillips**  
**(1941-1947)**

Dear Friends,

The year was 1941 in July, when my sister and I came to live at the Sally Carpenter Cottage at the Home. The years we spent there were among the best that I can say I have had. We were so well taken care of and learned so many things. It will always live in my heart.

I’ve been back to visit twice, the last time my daughter and granddaughter took me back for my 70th birthday. It was sad to see our cottage gone and the administration building, but I realize they had to go.

There are so many good memories. I remember Mr. Franklin Hough, Miss Nick, the chapel, the infirmary, and the swimming pool. Our working in the summer time snapping string beans, tomatoes, and picking peaches.

I also got to visit “our church” in town. Dr. Downey was our pastor. He also baptized me. Seeing the school across from the church – my, it was ALL so wonderful.

The Home is always in my thoughts & heart.

Sincerely,

Rebecca “Becky” Bledsoe Phillips

300 10th Street

Delmar, DE 19940



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## *Looking Back...*

The Portsmouth Association Cottage was erected in 1903-04 and occupied June 1, 1904. The construction cost of about \$3,000 was furnished primarily by churches of Portsmouth District Association.

At the time, Portsmouth was smaller than the other cottages, having no upper story, but was neat, convenient and airy. It had one large dormitory sufficient for twenty-four children, a study and recreation

room for winter, two other rooms for matrons, and a reception room besides clothes rooms and baths.

In the basement, there was a children’s play room. The basement had a nice granolithic floor and several large windows that gave light and ventilation. The doll houses and toys and all things necessary for a good time were available with plenty of room for numerous games. This cottage being situated on the slope of a hill, and a view from the east gave it the effect of a two-story building. Miss Annie Carter was the first teacher and Miss Cora Morgan was the first Matron.

