

## *A History of Timberlake*

*By Doug Washington, George Schrader & Bud Coiner*

*The first American to claim title to the land known as Timberlake was probably William Callaway. Callaway and two of his siblings, Richard and Francis, are said to be the first white men to clear land and farm corn on the Otter River. They arrived in 1747, when William was 33 years old, and began to obtain large land grants from His Royal Majesty, King George III. By the year 1750 William had acquired in excess of 15,000 acres, 1600 of which were on "Buffaloe" Creek, the main stream that feeds Timberlake.*

*When Bedford County was formed from Lunenburg in 1754, William Callaway offered 100 acres of land below his mill on Buffalo Creek, to establish the county seat known as New London. William became the first member of the House of Burgesses for the new county, serving with fellow burgess George Washington, Callaway's junior by 18 years. William also became Colonel of the local militia and was responsible for organizing the militia during the French and Indian War.*

*William Callaway died in 1778 at the age of 64. William's wife, Elizabeth, sold a 555 acre tract to Bourne Price that contained the northernmost part of the Timberlake subdivision. The remainder of Timberlake land remained in the Callaway family for ten more years. William Sr.'s eldest son, James inherited his father's wealth and land.*

*In 1788 the Callaways sold most of the Timberlake land in a 500 acre tract, for 750 pounds to lawyer James Penn.*

*This property would be a part of Penn's massive land acquisitions for the*

*next two decades.*

*In 1815, one month after the Battle of New Orleans, the Penns moved south. Fifty-seven years and the Civil War passed. Timberlake land changed hands several more times until John Begg of Scotland, nephew of poet Robert Burns, purchased the land in 1872 for \$8,771.67. The Begg family held the property until 1901, naming the estate "Closeburn Manor."*

*Begg's heirs sold the estate in 1911 to a Russian, Count Andrei de Gurrowski. The count experienced financial hardships and the land was sold and subdivided in 1919. The land changed hands several more times until 1926. From January 2, to July 14, 1926, Edley Craighill and Fred Showalter completed the purchase of 300+ acres to build a lake.*

*Construction was completed within a year. The lake was fed by three major tributaries: Buffalo, Waterlick and Brown's creeks.*

*In 1926 the Timber Lake Corporation was formed by offering 301 shares of stock for \$100.00 per share. By 1929, the community consisted of twenty summer homes, a tavern-lodge, beach, and 9 hole golf course.*

*Economic hard times severely affected the Timber Lake Corporation in the 1930's, and for many years the resort was run by the First National Bank. Eventually in March of 1945, Peaks View Corporation purchased the lake properties at auction for \$15,100, and issued stock.*