Visitors to Aldie sometimes wonder about the tiny house next to the Aldie Garage. The house is the original toll house for the three turnpikes which came together in Aldie, and dates back to at least 1810.

Today the house is the residence of Betsy and Buzzy Carter. Buzzy is the proprietor of the Aldie Garage and the Chief of the Aldie Volunteer Fire Department. It was recently refurbished by John Gulick, another Aldie resident, to become the Carter’s place in town as they transition to their retirement home on the Rappahannock River. The Aldie Garage was originally used to store milk for the nearby dairy farms, prior to shipment east to Alexandria on the Little River Turnpike. Little River was the first turnpike in Virginia (1810); the others which converged on Aldie were the Ashby Gap Turnpike, completed in 1813 with the stone bridges which still exist on Rt 50 near the firehouse; and the Snickersville Turnpike, completed in 1818.

The Carters have deep roots in Aldie, dating back to the early 19th century. Buzzy’s father, Louis Watson Carter, also owned the garage, was a charter member of Aldie VFD, and also served as fire chief.

Ira C Carter, Louis’s father, dealt in dry goods, groceries, hardware, furniture and a variety of merchandise in his two stores in Aldie from the World War I years through the 20’s. Then he became the rural mail carrier for the area, serving boxes from The Plains to Leesburg on two routes for 28 years, while also finding time to run errands for his neighbors and raising a few chickens. Mrs. Ira Carter (“Mammy”), the former Annie Milton Watson, was profiled by the Piedmont Virginian in 1976, recalling being on horseback when the first automobile came into town (“I took off my dress and covered the horse’s head to keep him from bolting.”). She recalled the high waters that would periodically flood the area around Little River. She often spoke of her father, Jacob Watson, who built Aldie Presbyterian Church and many barns in the area.

Fixed firmly in Aldie history is the story of Lucien Carter, Ira’s father, long the miller at Aldie Mill. In November, 1920, he started to make some adjustments to the inside mill wheel after choking the big outside wheel in order to stop the machinery. As the Loudoun Times reported, “suddenly the big wheel commenced to turn and the machinery was thrown into operation. The chock had given way. Mr. Carter was caught in the spokes of the wheel he was adjusting” and he was tragically killed.

The earliest known member of this family to reside in the Aldie area was James Shirley Carter, who died in 1882. A newspaper in Loudoun Museum records his passing: “After long months of languishing, which he bore with the meekness and gentleness of a little child, the weary wheels of life stood still.” The latest members are the children of Mike Carter, son of Buzzy and Betsy, and his wife Susan.

The Carters are one of several families in Aldie who trace their roots back many generations. Aldie is shaped by all of them.