Brighton Area Historical Society
Brighton, Michigan
BrightonAreaHistorical.com

Trail Tales

Volume XXXIII No. 6 | June, 2014

THANK YOU TO THE OVC VOLUNTEERS!

A fantastic Old Village Cemetery volunteer team greeted Brighton's deceased founders and veterans on Saturday, May 3 for the 6th Annual OVC Cleanup! The cemetery looked fantastic and in wonderful shape for Memorial Day.

Over 50 civic minded citizens including many BAHS members brought rakes and loping shears and attacked the broken, fallen branches gripping the ground from the brutal winter. Piles of leaves covered the ground but were no match for the ambitious workers wielding rakes and working the gas powered leaf blowers.

Boy Scout Troop 345 brought parents and youngsters to participate in this civic pride event. Their effort exceeded all previous memories of scouts and parents in action. Fantastic job!

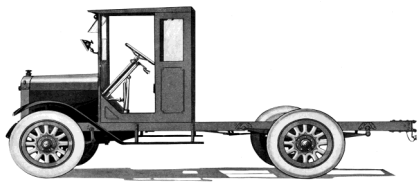
Multiple teams worked on headstones as the BAHS progresses into year two of the Headstone Rehabilitation Program. This team meets on the fourth Monday of each month from June through October. Next work date is June 23 from 9-2pm with a lunch break at noon.

Thank you to the City of Brighton for renting the leaf blowers and providing manpower to operate the city's huge leaf vacuum truck that devoured all the leaves. Special thank you call out to Brighton's Mayor Jim Muzzin and City Manager, Dana Foster for their volunteer modeling of civic pride through their four hours of nonstop work!

Jim Vichich (810-250-7276)
President, Brighton Area Historical Society

LIKE US ON FACEBOOK
at
Brighton Area Historical Society

If your not a member of the Brighton Area Historical Society
See page 3



BRIGHTON'S OWN—GOVE MOTOR CAR COMPANY Story on Page 4

POINTS OF INTEREST:

President's Editorial
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Brighton's Truck Manufacturing Plant
See Page 4

OFFERED BY THE BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The " The Brighton Area" softcover photo-history book $20.00
or
From Settlement to City Brighton, Michigan 1832-1945 Hardcover history book by Carol McMacken $65.00

Available at
Lawrence Autobody
CoBACH Center
Green Oak Township Hall
or by
Calling 810-250-7276

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Thanks and Recognition

Memberships:

FAMILY/INDIV: Caroline and David Kimble, Steve Flowers.

****Welcome to new members, David and Caroline Kimble, Steve Flowers***

Renewing members are what keeps the Society vital.

THANKS:

- Marieanna Bair, Jerry & Carole Damon, Jeanette Johnson, and Jim Vichich for preparing the May newsletter for mailing.
- James and Gloria Clark for their donation to the friends of Lyon School Fund.
- Camp 120, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War, Howell, Michigan for their generous donation of $100 to use in the rebuilding of Old Village Cemetery headstones.
- CoBACH volunteers for May: Nancy Fredenburg, Joe Collins, Hank Winegar, Larry Lawrence, Sheryl Vigmostad, and Jim Vichich.
- Our historical comic tour guide, Tammy Sexton for collecting historical stories and researching information for the Brighton CoRe historical bus trip around the community on July 19.
- Mindy Kinsey, Judy Coebly, Gary Ruetter, and Jim Vichich for their work in setting up the CoBACH display "The Office before Apple"

The Brighton Area Historical Society extends sympathy to the family of member David Bellmard

CoBACH Future Exhibits:
Do you have items to loan?

July "Photo Memories of Early Brighton"
Aug-Sept "From Farm to Table-Food Preserving"
Oct "Silent Film Festival"
Nov-Dec "An Old Time Home Christmas"
Jan-Feb 2015 "Yesteryear Winter in Brighton"

Society Life Members:

John & Deb Armstrong
Tom Archer
Shirley Barton
Donald Black (N.J.)
Marilyn Campbell (IN)
Bernie & Bonnie Corrigan
Nancy Fredenburg
William & Lenore Harris
Betsy & Bob Herbst
Dr. John & Barbara Jacoby (MN)
Larry & Kate Lawrence
Seth & Shannon Lemke (TX)
Carol McMacken
Joyce Powers
Douglas & Carole Rearick
Robert & Pauline Schaffer
Anne Stratigos
Jim & Vicki Vichich

2014 Business / Professional Members:

Acorn Deck Accessories, Inc.
Advance Craft Builders
Fred Bonine, DDS, MSPC
Buckley Jolley Group LLC
Davis Multimedia, Inc.
ERA Griffith Realty
Kimble Appraisal Group, Inc.
Mancuso and Cameron P.C.
Lawrence Autobody **
McCririe & Associates, P.C.
Masonic Lodge No. 247 **
Patrick Financial Group, LLC**
Promess, Inc.**
Refrigeration Research **
Archer Huntley Financial Services **

** Life Members

Dates to Remember

June CoBACH: "The Office Before Apple! Exhibit will feature office equipment and materials seen in offices before computers.

June 5, 12, 19, 26 9am—12nn: Archiving/ Open House at Lyon Schoolhouse. Tour the school or share photos and stories with archivists.

June 23; 9am—2pm: The Headstone Preservation Project Team meets today and the 4th Monday of each month from June 23 through October 27 at the Old Village Cemetery. Your help is needed as we rebuild broken headstones. No experience necessary. You can learn as we work together. Info call Jim at 810 -250-7276

June 1, 4, 8, 11 15, 18, 22, 25 and 29; 5pm—8pm: BAHS hosts at CoBACH Center on Sun. and Wed.

June 25; 6pm: BAHS Board meeting at CoBACH.

June 6, 7, 20, 21; 7:30pm: An Evening with Mary Todd Lincoln presented by the Livingston Players. Held at CoBACH. Tickets $5, at CoBACH or Brighton Chamber of Commerce. Info 810-229-4292.

July 18, 19 and 20: Brighton Community Reunion (CoRe),. This first annual event will celebrate the people and places of our unique community, BRIGHTON. This event is co-sponsored by the Brighton Area Historical Society and the Brighton Alumni Association. A full weekend of events is planned. For information see www.brightoncore.org or call Bev Barton 810-588-4510

July 19: Sign-up for the $10 bus tour around Brighton and Island Lake. Learn about local history and hear amazing stories retold by special comic historian Tammy. This event will last about 1-1/2 hours, departing from CoBACH Center at 4pm and return to the same. This is one of many events of the CoRe weekend. Watch for more information in the Press & Argus and BAHS Trail Tails.

WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS:

June 8; 1—4: Wixom Historical Society Ice Cream Social. wixomhistory@yahoo.com

June 27: Historical Society of Michigan workshop: Managing Historic House Museums hsmichigan.org

June 27-28; Waterloo Area Historical Society: Blacksmith, Soldiers & Log Cabin weekend: www.waterloofarmmuseum.org

Support BAHS: Become a Member or Donate

The BAHS relies on participation of its members and the generosity of its patrons. If you would like to make a donation or become a member, please mail to the address provided on the form below.

Mail check or money order payable to:
Brighton Area Historical Society
P. O. Box 481
Brighton, MI 48116-0481

Name: _____ **Phone:** ( ) —

Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip Code:** _____

E-Mail: _____

How would you prefer to receive Trail Tales: ☐ **Email** ☐ **US mail**
(PLEASE CHECK ONE)

Membership Plan:

☐ **New** ☐ **Renew**

☐ **$2 Student** ☐ **$15 Individual** ☐ **$25 Family**

☐ **$50 Patron** ☐ **$60 Business/Professional** ☐ **$500 Life**

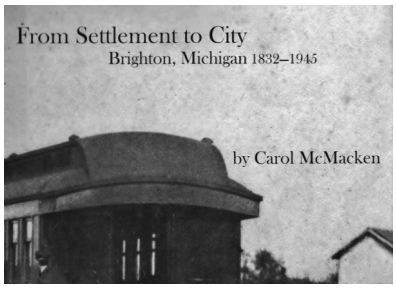
Friend of Lyon School:

☐ **$10** ☐ **$25** ☐ **$50** ☐ **$100** ☐ **$250** ☐ **Other $_____**

BAHS Projects Fund:

☐ **$10** ☐ **$25** ☐ **$50** ☐ **$100** ☐ **$250** ☐ **Other $_____**

The Brighton Area Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) Non-Profit Organization . All donations are tax deductible.



From Settlement to City: Brighton, Michigan 1832-1945
By Carol McMacken
450 plus pages
Over 300 photos
$65.00

Description:

This large volume hardcover book offers the reader an opportunity to gain insight into the chronology of the first one hundred and thirteen years of Brighton's existence. Through text and an extensive-photo collection it is possible to appreciate the effort of the early inhabitants as they endeavored to establish a viable community.

This book can be found at Lawrence Autobody and CoBACH Center or by calling 810-250-7276

We Need Your Help

We are asking our members to step up and get involved. "Can you fill this need?"

Volunteers at CoBACH

Welcome desk, help set up displays, loan of personal items for displays of the early days of Brighton.

Contact Jim Vichich at 810-250-7276

BAHS Leadership

President
Jim Vichich

Vice President
Marieanna Bair

Secretary
Linda Millar

Treasurer
Jerry Damon

Trail Tales Editor
Jerry Damon

Directors
Joe Collins
Nancy Fredenburg
Mindy Kinsey
Larry Lawrence
Thomas Reinke
Tammy Sexton

Education Liaison
Judith Coebly
Sue Skwarski

The BAHS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Please help us fund our mission while also helping yourself with a tax-deductible contribution.

The BAHS accepts monetary support and donations of historical artifacts. Please consider supporting us with your generosity.

BAHS: How to Contact Us or Find Us

If you would like to contact us, please use the following options:

E-Mail:
info@brightonareahistorical.com

Phone:
(810) 250-7276

US Mail:
Brighton Area Historical Society
P. O. Box 481
Brighton, MI 48116-0481

Lyon School
11455 Buno Road, west of Pleasant Valley Road. The 1885 Lyon School is a fully restored, barrier-free one-room schoolhouse and serves as our organization headquarters.

CoBACH Center
202 W. Main Street, in downtown Brighton next to the Millpond. CoBACH is formally known as the City of Brighton, Arts, Culture and History Center. It is located in the historic 1879 two story brick building, also known as the Old Town Hall.

BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P.O. Box 481
Brighton, MI 48116-0481

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BRIGHTON'S TRUCK MANUFACTURING PLANT

Visible at the railroad tracks on Main Street is a white building labeled "Refrigeration Research." It is a local, successful company today. But the building this company occupies was built in 1920 and 1921 specifically for Brighton's first, and last, automobile manufacturing company.

In the late teens and 1920s, dozens of automobile manufacturers existed, all trying to reach dominance, much as the early computer companies did in the 1990s. One of these ambitious manufacturers was the Gove Motor Car Company.

According to early Brighton newspaper articles, advertisements and old Gove company newsletters, the Gove company owners – H.E Gove, and D.H. Gove, president and vice president respectively -- first approached the Brighton Board of Commerce Sept. 3, 1920. Representatives from the company which were initiating plants or had operations in Muskegon and in Reno, Nevada, pointed to evidence that the market for autos and trucks was booming after a tough economic year in 1920. In October, it brought a 2-ton Gove truck for display.

Brighton leaders jumped at the chance to get in on the era's biggest industry, and gamble, and by Sept. 28th approved funds and support for the erection of a new factory located at the prime spot along the railroad near Brighton's business district. The 220-by-80 foot building soon arose on the property.

Meanwhile, Gove started selling stock in the company. A Nov. 3, 1920 ad in the local newspaper read: "Gove Motor Car Company, Brighton, Michigan, Manufacturers of Trucks and Pleasure Cars, Phone 31."

The prospect of having an auto/truck manufacturing facility in Brighton was attractive not only to investors. As work progressed on the building and truck parts started arriving – and a production manager was hired, all in the first months of 1921 – all kinds of economic spin-off companies were organized. Some were auto-related, others were just shops that assumed an economic benefit of a burgeoning auto manufacturing company.

Brighton at the time was ripe for a big jump in industry. The Gove company extolled the generosity of Brighton's residents and businessmen for responding so quickly. By March, 1921, the production manager, a "Mr. Petrie," moved into office space at the new factory and truck parts were being shipped to the Brighton location.

But it wasn't long before things went bad. It isn't clear what happened, but no trucks ever were made at this facility. It was rumored that a couple of vehicles were shipped to Brighton to be used in a promotional event. They were to be driven into Detroit, but both broke down on the journey. In December, 1921, the local paper ran articles about the court-ordered public auction of the assets of a then-bankrupt Gove Motor Car Company. A James D. Scovell of Detroit eventually took possession of the property in June, 1921, after he offered more than an initial bid of $2,500 by William Benham, said to be a Brighton "wool buyer."

It was not until 1928 when Brighton Wood Products opened business that the Gove building was producing products and employing Brighton residents.

(Compiled by Sheryl James from research by Larry Lawrence of newspaper clippings and contact with the Reno Nevada Historical Society Additions/corrections requested. 810-250-7276.)