150 Years of Brighton Village (1867—2017)

The quaint Village of Brighton is quickly approaching its 150 year anniversary. Our city’s legal birthday is March 25, 1867.

Do not be confused with the founding of early Brighton in August 1832 by the Maltby brothers. Our community was known then as Ore Creek due to the mineral content of the stream that rose in Hartland Township, flowed through downtown then joined the Huron River which emptied into Lake Erie. The Ore Creek name was changed to Brighton in the late 1830’s.

Is there any “interest” with the community of Brighton and its surrounding townships to recognize this anniversary? Please don’t be misled by the term “interest”. What I am really trying to determine is if there are people that want to be involved in the planning and implementation of a community event that would takes place in 2017?

Obviously the City of Brighton must be a major player in the planning and implementation of any celebration. The members of the community must also be a major player since hundreds of volunteers will be needed to make any community event possible.

Please contact me with your thoughts or interests.

Jim Vichich (810-250-7276)
President, Brighton Area Historical Society
jvichich@comcast.net

CoBACH Future Exhibit: May “Summer Wheels”

Would you enjoy having some of your memory collections on display with your name as owner of said items at the CoBACH center? People that have already displayed their items have a sense or pride having their items viewed and admired by the patrons of CoBACH.

Do you have any of the following to loan for the May exhibit? Vintage roller skates, inline skates, scooters, skateboards, etc. Contact Mindy Kinsey at 248-660-3964.
Thanks and Recognition

Memberships:

PATRON: Jacquie Armstrong, Robert Johnson, Patrice Starkweather.

INDIV/FAMILIES: Bill & Mary Kay Besso, Pat Burgess, MaryAnn Catrell, Sandra Everett, Tom Reinke, Wallyne Smail, Joyce Terry.

Renewing members indicate others share the society’s goals: preservation, advancement and dissemination of knowledge of the history of the Brighton area.

THANKS:

- Marieanna Bair, Jerry & Carole Damon and Jim Vichich for preparing the March issue of Trail Tales for mailing.
- Sons of the Union Veteran Camp #120 from Howell for their work with the VA in procuring the headstone for John S. Prosser.
- MaryAnn Catrell and Robert Johnson for donations to the society projects with their memberships.
- MaryAnn Catrell, Sandra Everett, and Robert Johnson for donations to the Friends of Lyon School with their memberships.
- To all those sending in address changes.
- The dedicated team of archiving volunteers who meet at the Lyon Schoolhouse every Thursday. Stories and laughter are heard by Jerry Damon, Marianne Bair, Lynn Strong, Lin Millar, Mindy Kinsey, Joe Collins, Larry Lawrence, Sue Garcia and Jim Vichich.
- City Council of Brighton for approving the location of the memorial headstone of Civil War soldier John Sylvan Prosser, who was killed in action at the Battle of the Wilderness in 1864. Headstone will be placed in the Prosser family plot in the Old Village Cemetery in between his mother’s and sister’s headstones.
- BAHS researcher Tammy Sexton whose research located a living Prosser family member and also determined that a headstone for soldier John Prosser did not exist on the battlefield or in Brighton’s Village Cemetery.
- Marieanna Bair, Bert Bair, Judith Coebly, Gary Reutter, Lynn Strong, Emily Beach (Donna & Edith Beach), Lin Millar and Shirley Knight for lending items for the CoBACH display, and Shirley and Judith for setting up the “Apron and Hat” display.
- Judith Coebly and Sue Skwarski for delivering Trail Tales to Brighton Area School board members, administration personnel, PTOs of the several schools and appropriate members of the teaching staff.
- Society Life Members: John & Deb Armstrong, Tom Archer, Paul & Kathryn Bair (Allen) Shirley Barton, Donald & Shari Black (N.J.), Marilyn Campbell (IN), Bernie & Bonnie Corrigan, Jerry & Carole Damon, Nancy Fredenburg, William & Lenore Harris, Betsy & Bob Herbst, Dr. John & Barbara Jacoby (MN), Larry & Kate Lawrence, Seth & Shannon Lemke (TX), Carol McMacken, Richard Park (IL), Bob & Donna Phillips, Joyce Powers, Douglas & Carole Rearick, Robert & Pauline Schaffer, Anne Stratigos, Jim & Vicki Vichich.

2015 Business /Professional Members:

Acorn Deck Accessories, Inc.
Advance Craft Builders
Fred Bonine, DDS, MSPC
Buckley Jolley Group LLC
Clark Eye Center
Davis Multimedia, Inc.
ER Griffith Realty
Kimble Appraisal Group, Inc.
Lindhout Associates**, Mancuso and Cameron P.C.
Lawrence Autobody **
McCrie & Associates, P.C.
Masonic Lodge No. 247 **
Patrick Financial Group, LLC**
Promess, Inc.**
Refrigeration Research**
Archer Huntley Financial Services**
Brighton Veterans Memorial Comm.**
** Life Members

Dates to Remember

April CoBACH Exhibit: “Hats and Aprons, Let’s Top It Off and Tie One On” Sun-Fri: 5-8pm, Sat: 11am—5pm, Mon: Closed

April 1, 2, 5, 8, 9, 12, 15, 16, 19, 22, 23, 26, 29, and 30; 5pm—8pm: BAHS hosts at CoBACH Center on Sunday, Wednesday and Thursday.

April 2, 9, 16, 23, 30; 9am—12nn: Archiving /Open House at Lyon Schoolhouse.

April 22; 6pm: BAHS Board meeting at CoBACH.

April 23; 6:30pm: Spring Cluster Meeting at Lyon Schoolhouse. Semi-annual meeting of local historical societies and libraries. Program: Special 20 minute performance by guest Mark Twain.

May 2; 9am-1pm: Old Village Cemetery 7th Annual Spring Cleanup. Reserve this Saturday and join many community members as they participate in the “Community Civic Pride” event as volunteers prepare veteran and non-veteran gravesites for Memorial Day.

May 25; Memorial Day — Veterans Step Off Parade in downtown Brighton, 10am. Millpond Veterans Memorial Service, 10:30 am.

May 25; 9am—1pm: CoBACH Center-Civil War Display. Two private collections of hand-guns, rifles, uniforms, drums, cannon balls, canteens, etc. Great museum collection in downtown Brighton, before, during and after parade. ONE DAY FREE EXHIBIT!!

June 12, 13 and 19, 20; 7:30 pm: CoBACH Center. Meet the Remarkable Molly Brown! Sponsored by the Livingston Players. Tickets $10. www.livplayers.org, PayPal or credit card.
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: ________________________ State: _______ Zip Code: _________
City: ____________________________

E-Mail: __________________________

How would you prefer to receive Trail Tales: [ ] Email [ ] US mail
(Please check one)

Member of 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.

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 (one day a month), help set up displays, loan of personal items for displays of the early days of Brighton.
Contact Jim Vichich at 810-250-7276

Our Membership Drive Continues
Please consider renewing your membership or becoming a new member.

BAHS Leadership 2015

President
Jim Vichich
Vice President
Marieanna Bair
Secretary
Carole Damon
Treasurer & Trail Tales
Jerry Damon

BAHS Projects Fund:
[ ] $10 [ ] $100 [ ] $100
[ ] $25 [ ] $250 [ ] $250
[ ] $50 [ ] $500 [ ] $500

Friend of Lyon School:
[ ] $10 [ ] $100 [ ] $100
[ ] $25 [ ] $250 [ ] $250
[ ] $50 [ ] $500 [ ] $500

Member of BAHS:

Membership Plan:
[ ] New [ ] $2 Student [ ] $50 Patron
[ ] Renew [ ] $15 Individual [ ] $60 Business/Professional
[ ] $25 Family [ ] $500 Life

Friend of Lyon School:
[ ] $10 [ ] $100 [ ] $100
[ ] $25 [ ] $250 [ ] $250
[ ] $50 [ ] $500 [ ] $500

BAHS Projects Fund:
[ ] $10 [ ] $100 [ ] $100
[ ] $25 [ ] $250 [ ] $250
[ ] $50 [ ] $500 [ ] $500

Other $_______

How would you prefer to receive Trail Tales: [ ] Email [ ] US mail
(Please check one)

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

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

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“THE BRIGHTON AREA RECEIVES MAIL” (Conclusion)

Rural Free Delivery (RFD) in 1896, assured rural residents that mail would be delivered to their mailboxes, rain, snow or shine. However, village residents still had to go to the post office for their mail. A 1905 clipping reads “Post Master Blatchford requests that the calling by telephone to inquire if there is mail, be discontinued as he will not answer that question by phone from this date.”

It was during J. Al Bosworth’s tenure as acting Post Master, December 31, 1954/July 20, 1956, that delivery to city residents was instituted. The first city carrier was Frank Rodriguez. Other, later, carriers included Harry Jensen and Bob Lerchen. By 1972, stamps could be ordered through the carriers. Bosworth was officially appointed as Post Master July 20, 1956, serving until December 28, 1978.

July 1, 1956, Brighton was designated a first class post office. This was taken as evidence of progress and growth in the community. The Zip Code was initiated July 2, 1963. “... use our new zip code #48116...placed after city and state...enabling the post office to speed up delivery.” July 1, 1997, Zip Code #48114 was added. (There was a time when to receive mail only one’s name, city and state were necessary!)

A January 18, 1959 clipping affirmed that the Post Office Department had approved the bid of the Brighton Masonic Lodge to lease quarters for the post office at 315 W. North Street. “The most modern postal equipment available will be installed in the new office.” The dedication, October 24, 1959, invited the public to tour the new facility. Within 20 years enough room to work was at a premium and on July 2, 1980, post office space was expanded “...to accommodate the growth in business caused by growth in this area.” By 1989, customer service was moved to the Brookside Mall on W. Grand River with parcel post, etc., remaining at North Street.

“Post Office looking for a new site to deal with overcrowding” read the October 9, 1991 headline in the Brighton Argus. “We get tied up every day trying to get mail out the door, we need more work space” Postmaster Emil Engel said. A four acre site on the north side of Meijer Drive (Charles Orndorf Drive) next to the Meijer store is proposed. With concerns about traffic congestion, because Meijer Drive was a dead end street at the time, Brighton City government objected to the proposal. However, by July 6, 1992, construction was begun on a building five times larger than the North Street site. September 1, 1993, the new post office is open for business, serving c. 14,000 people. By then there were 27 rural routes and ten city routes. After 39 years with the postal service, Postmaster Engel retired, March 3, 1995.

During the 1930’s a period of national joblessness and financial depression, the Federal Arts program, part of the Works Progress Administration was instituted in 1935. This provided artists with employment painting murals on the walls of post offices, reflecting the history, identity, attributes, etc., of the local community. Large cities with substantial buildings for post offices were often the recipients of such a mural. Small town Brighton was never so favored. A few of these murals remain around the country, but are few and far between.

(Compiled by Marieanna Bair from: newspaper clippings; writings of Bill Pless; “From Settlement to City, Brighton” by Carol McMacken. Additions/corrections requested. 810-229-6402.)

Corrections to the “Brighton Receives Mail” sketches. The December, 2014 issue should have stated “In 1763 Britain’s King George III inaugurated the London Penny Post.” The March, 2015 issue should have stated “Later carriers included ...Ed C. Hyne...” (not his son, Duane). Thanks to observant readers who care to set the record straight.