



# Brighton Area HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BRIGHTON, MICHIGAN

brightonareahistorical.com

COMPLIMENTARY  
COPY

# TRAIL TALES

Volume XXIX No. 11 | November 2010

## Keep The Charm of Brighton Alive



Joyce A. Rogers Business Center - Home of the Chamber of Commerce

The former Mellus Hospital building on East Grand River will become the new home of the Chamber of Commerce (CoC). Future use of the CoC building on Hyne St. remains unknown and its longevity maybe in peril. These two historic structures are attractive and appear in sound shape. The BAHS hopes they will be maintained as part of the downtown community.

Dr. Mellus opened his new building in February 1931, and the hospital closed in March 1957. Located down the hill from the First Presbyterian Church, this classic two-story brick Georgian structure provided the residents of Brighton a modern hospital. The CoC will continue the practice of adaptive reuse in their new location. Adaptive reuse is a

process of retrofitting old buildings for new uses, while allowing old structures to retain their historic integrity.

The Downtown Development Authority (DDA) has purchased the existing CoC building which has been their home for decades. This same practice by the DDA in the past has resulted in new parking lots for downtown visitors. Because of this action, there is a strong likelihood that this structure will be torn down and removed from the downtown landscape.

The George Ratz family lived in that home as their family hardware business flourished on the property at the southeast corner of Hyne and Main Streets. This home was one of the early homes built as the Brighton community expanded west

of Ore Creek. Within the grounds is a "green" pocket park that provides a vibrant manicured appearance with the multitude of various plants. These gardens present a unique setting that helps make our downtown area very desirable. Many a bride and groom have exchanged vows under the trees among the colorful flowers. The volunteers of the Brighton Garden Club have developed and maintained this site for the enjoyment of the community for decades. The BAHS appreciates the Garden Club's hard work and effort and we hope it will continue.

This building has been updated, expanded and the adaptive reuse has maintained a attractive exterior that adds to the diversity of downtown facades. The city doesn't need more parking lots in this vicinity as adjacent public lots on Hyne and Pierce Streets are empty most of the day. This corner property is too pretty and unique and needs to stay as is. This building and its setting enhance our downtown and its beauty gives downtown its diversity. Please don't destroy this integral component of the downtown community. Our town charm attracts visitors and residents and it is enjoyed by all!

Jim Vichich

### Special points of interest:

THE ORIGIN OF BRIGHTON, FOUNDED AS ORE CREEK, CONTINUES IN THIS MONTH'S HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ARTICLE.

SEE PAGE 4

OUR ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR THIS MONTH. IT IS A GOOD OPPORTUNITY TO GET INVOLVED.

SEE PAGE 2

*"The ideal historian goes to the mouth of the tomb, cries: 'Lazarus, come forth!' and sets him that was dead for ages, blinking and passionate, in the sun."*

Austin O'Malley  
(1858-1932)  
Author, *Keystones of Thought*

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## Recent and Future Happenings

### Dates to Remember - November 2010

**Nov 3, 4, 7, 10, 11, 14, 17, 18, 21, 24, 25, 28: 5pm-8pm**

BAHS hosts at CoBACH Center

**Nov 4, 11, 18,: 9am-4pm**

Archiving/Open House at Lyon School

**Nov 11: 6pm**

Tiger Cubs from Stockwell Academy visit Lyon School

**Nov 21: 1pm-4pm**

BAHS Annual General Membership Meeting at Lyon School. Potluck: 1pm-2pm; Election of BAHS Officers and Directors: 2pm-4pm

**Nov 24: 6pm**

BAHS board meeting at CoBACH Center

### Area Organizations

**Nov 4: 7pm**

Using Websites with Tim Bennett. Livingston County Genealogical Society; Latter-day Saints Church, 1041 W. Grand River, Howell.

**Nov 5, 6: 10am-4pm**

Historical Societies of Green Oak Township and South Lyon holiday sale. Witch's Hat Freight House, 300 Dorothy St., South Lyon. (248) 437-9929

**Nov 21: 2pm**

Washtenaw County Historical Society: Women's Suffrage. WashtenawHistory.org

**Dec 4: 2pm-4pm**

South Lyon Historical Society: Cool Yule - visit 19th cent. village. (248) 437-9929

**Dec 4, 5:**

Waterloo Area Historical Society: Christmas on the Farm. [www.waterloofarmmuseum.org](http://www.waterloofarmmuseum.org)

**Dec 11: 1pm-5pm / Dec. 12, 1pm-4pm**

Saline Area Historical Society: Christmas on the Farm. [www.salinehist.org](http://www.salinehist.org)

### Membership Renewal

Over 90% of 2009 members have renewed for 2010. Many of those have already renewed for 2011. That is a remarkable statistic. Special thanks is due to all who have renewed.

If this Trail Tales is marked *Complimentary Copy*, then your dues have not been paid for 2010. Please take time to renew your membership.

With 2011 quickly approaching, we are reviewing all expired memberships that are currently receiving complimentary

copies of Trail Tales. We cannot afford to continue free distribution due to printing and postage costs. As such, all expired memberships from 2009 will be removed from Trail Tales distribution.

### Nominations Committee

The Nominations Committee is preparing a slate of candidates to the BAHS Board of Directors. Each will be uniquely qualified to serve. Their talents and participation will be a great asset as 2011 arrives.

If you would like to nominate yourself or another member for consideration by the Committee, please contact us. Many members are willing to help when the opportunity arrives. This is your opportunity to get involved. Questions? Contact us and get the answers.

Elections will take place at the Annual Membership Meeting on November 21.

### CoBACH Center Exhibits

Many compliments have been received on the exhibit of period clothing at CoBACH; all of which have been provided by local area residents.

You have until the end of November to visit CoBACH Center and see this great exhibit for yourself. After that, we are planning a Christmas exhibit.

## Thanks and Recognition

### Thanks to...

The BAHS recognizes the following people for volunteering their time.

- Bev Barton, Joe Collins, Mike Ewing, Nancy Fredenburg, Larry Lawrence, Tom Reinke, and Jim Vichich: BAHS hosts at CoBACH Center.
- Tom Niemeyer, Hank Winegar, Carol McMacken, Bob Knight, Jim Vichich, Marianna Bair and Mindy Kinsey for help at the Harvest Fest Farmer's Mkt.
- Dick Weaire, Jim Vichich, Mindy Kinsey, Larry Lawrence and Joe Collins for the fine new coat of paint on the Lyon School.
- Judith Coebly, Mindy Kinsey, Shirley Knight, Jeanette Johnson and Vicki Vichich for the assembly of the display of period clothing at CoBACH Center.

- ...to the many who've contributed to the period clothing display at CoBACH.
- Richard & Kathleen McKinnie for a donation to BAHS projects included with their dues.
- Bert Bair, Ida Bair and Jackie Damm and June Kimble for help with the October Trail Tales mailing.

### Memberships

We would like to thank the following members for their annual memberships:

### Patron

- Samuel & Brenda Ochodnick\*

### Family

- Eugene & Judy Dahlin
- Tim Hurst
- Richard & Kathleen McKinnie\*
- Dietrich & Mary Jean Richter (Fraser)

- Sheryl James
- John & Anne Zemke

### 2010 Business / Professional Members

The support of our professional members is deeply appreciated. We encourage you to support these local businesses.

- Advance Craft Home Builders, Inc.
- Archer-Huntley Financial Services\*\*
- Bagger Dave's Restaurant
- Joe Agius/Burroughs Tavern
- Lawrence Autobody\*\*
- Masonic Lodge #247\*\*
- Patrick Financial Group, LLS\*\*
- Promess\*\*
- The Engravers Journal
- Yum Yum Tree

\* Welcome new members

\*\* Special thanks to these Life Members

## 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 visit our web site at [www.brightonareahistorical.com](http://www.brightonareahistorical.com) or mail in the following form below.

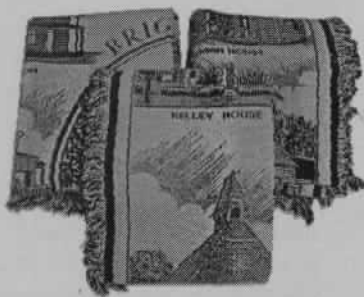
<b>Mail check or money order payable to:</b> Brighton Area Historical Society P. O. Box 481 Brighton, MI 48116-0481	<b>Name:</b> _____ <b>Address:</b> _____ <b>City:</b> _____ <b>State:</b> _____ <b>Zip Code:</b> _____ <b>E-Mail:</b> _____	<b>Phone:</b> (    ) _____	
<b>Membership Plan:</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> New	<input type="checkbox"/> Business	<input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Life	
<input type="checkbox"/> Renewal	<input type="checkbox"/> Personal	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15 Individual	
	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Patron	<input type="checkbox"/> \$2 Student	
	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Family		
<b>Friend of Lyon School:</b>		<b>BAHS Projects Fund:</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> \$10	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100	<input type="checkbox"/> \$10	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100
<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$250	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$250
<input type="checkbox"/> \$50	<input type="checkbox"/> Other \$ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50	<input type="checkbox"/> Other \$ _____

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

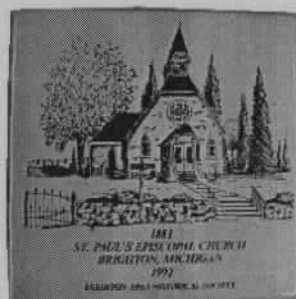
## Holiday Gift Ideas

We have many great items for sale that would make excellent holiday gifts. This includes home décor (pewter items, afghans and pillows, decorative ceramic tiles, etc.), postcards, craft items, and the like. Presented at the right are just a few.

To see our full gift shop offering, please visit our web site at [brightonareahistorical.com](http://brightonareahistorical.com).



The beautiful afghans feature many local historical sites. Available in red, green and blue.



There are twelve different ceramic tiles, each with a different historical building.



This pewter bowl contains a sunken relief impression of the Old Town Hall.

## BAHS Leadership

**President**  
**Jim Vichich**

**Vice President**  
**Marieanna Bair**

**Secretary**  
**Thomas Reinke**

**Treasurer**  
**Mindy Kinsey**

**Directors**  
**Dave Ball**  
**Sue Garcia**  
**Larry Lawrence**

**Education Liaison**  
**Judith Coebly**  
**Sue Skwarski**

**Trail Tales Editor**  
**Dave Ball**

**CoBACH Display Coordinator**  
**Open: Volunteer Needed**

## 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](mailto:info@brightonareahistorical.com)

**Phone:**  
(810) 250-7276

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

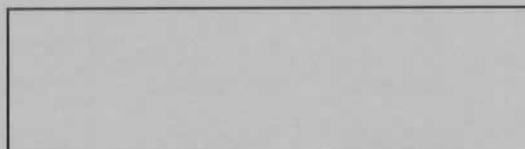
**Lyon School**  
11455 Buno Road, west of Pleasant Valley Road. The 1885 Lyon School is a restored one-room schoolhouse and serves as our headquarters.

**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.

The BAHS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Help us out 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.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



## Ore Creek (Part 4)

The nation's Bicentennial celebration was observed in grand style in the Brighton area, and the millpond on Ore Creek took front and center stage. Local service groups (Brighton Fire Department, Garden Club, Jaycettes, Jr. Women's Club, Kiwanis, Livingston Players, Rotary, Senior Citizens, Women's Club, et al) each put forward an extraordinary effort.

The area west of the millpond and north of the 300 block of W. Main, Millpond Park was the staging area for displays and exhibits of early arts, skills, crafts, games, contests (fishing, stone skipping, frog jumping, tobacco spitting) and clothing fashions.

In the Scout Building (present site of City Hall), one participated in square dances, in addition to the street dances. The Garden Club planted flowers along the edge of the millpond. The Jaycettes held a fashion show there. A bazaar took place in the Millpond Theater hosted by the Livingston Players. The need for better care of the Old Village Cemetery east of the pond became evident.

At 2 pm, July 4, 1976, every local bell was rung for two minutes commemorating the hour on which the Liberty Bell was rung following the announcement of the Declaration of Independence in Philadelphia in 1776.

The Brighton Kiwanis built a gazebo on the east side of the pond. The official Michigan Bicentennial Band, Livingston County's own 5th Regiment Band, inaugurated the first of concerts, which continue to the present day. Their foresight has contributed immensely to the 'friendly community' atmosphere valued by so many.

A carnival, hosted by the Brighton Fire Department, took place in the North Street parking lot, under which Ore Creek flows. The BFD provided a spectacular display of fireworks, which surpassed all expectations. They also organized the hour-long pa-

rade, which proceeded from Church Street, down W. Main past the reviewing stand in front of the Fire Hall at 202 W. Main and the millpond on July 5, 1976.

Throughout the 1990s, volunteers regularly cleaned debris from and around the pond. The Imagination Station, a safety-oriented playground for children was built, by volunteers in 1995, on the west side of the pond. This site is regularly refurbished and enthusiastically enjoyed.

The following year, the Tridge was constructed to give unique access to either side of the pond. The Tridge soon connected to a walkway extending from Main Street to Ore Creek's passage under Grand River on the north.

Although Ore Creek flows for less than a mile in the southeast corner of Genoa Township, a dam built in 1927 by Charles Howell as a Boy Scout reservation formed Brighton Lake. Now constituting a quarter section of water, surrounding residences create a valuable addition to the local economy. Benjamin Blaine, Rev. Wm. Clark, Aaron Kelley, Almon and Maynard Maltby all knew a good creek when they saw it.

*Compiled by Marieanna Bair from the Society's Historic Resource Survey; maps and clippings. Additions/corrections requested. 810/229-6402.*

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

### Web Site Updates

We have been making updates to our web site, including recent BAHS news and more historical articles and maps from our archive. We also now have a Facebook page. In the near future, we will be adding old Brighton area photos and cemetery information. If you haven't visited our web site, recently, now is a good time!