Why Did The Pioneers Come To Michigan?

Among the acts of legislation by the new United States government in 1871, was that which formed the Northwest Territory (Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois and Wisconsin). By 1805, the Territory of Michigan was separated from the Northwest Territory as Ohio, Indiana and Illinois had been earlier. When General Lewis Cass became governor of the Michigan Territory, he resolved to dispose the reports that the land was all swamp and sterile sand, with malaria, aches, chills and fever awaiting the first settlers. He was successful in his endeavor and soon hordes of eager and determined people from the New England and other eastern states made their way into the area we know as Livingston County.

Surprisingly, very few of the original pioneer purchasers of the newly surveyed government land had any previous experience as farmers. Besides those wanting to acquire virgin land for homesteading were many land speculators. Groups of artisans and guilds of various professions pooled finances and sent representatives to purchase thousands of acres to be divided when they would arrive in the early 1830s. One such trusted representative was Richard Lyon who came to Brighton Township.

Besides the lure of profit from the land, a cholera epidemic in the east gave an extra-added impetus to the rush to Michigan. Traveling in flat boats by way of the Erie Canal, over land by wagon train, on horseback and on foot many were anxious to leave the plague behind.

Besides those newly arrived from the Old World, among the settlers were those whose ancestors had been in the New World prior to the American Revolution. Some were descendents of passengers on the Mayflower, landing in Massachusetts in 1620. Those who originally helped build New Amsterdam (New York City) also had descendents who migrated to the Michigan Territory. Included in the trek were artisans, business men, professionals, skilled tradesmen, the clergy, bringing civilization and Christianity to the wilderness. Making a home for their families, land was cleared and fenced, roads and bridges built, schools and churches erected, pain and sorrow endured, separation borne and joys shared. Many present Livingston County residents are descendents of these brave, eager, resourceful, hardworking, determined (stubborn) pioneers.

Compiled and edited by Marianne Bair from writings by the late William Pleas, a descendant of those early pioneers. Additions/connections requested. 810/229-6402.

Congratulations

Following are winners of the Ice Harvesting Coloring Contest:  
• Kindergarten: Sarah Wright  
• 1st Grade: Calleigh Hurley  
• 2nd Grade: Carson Plum  
• 3rd Grade: Ellie Larson  
• 4th Grade: Dakota Hanson-Meier  

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Plank Roads

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Written by Dave Ball, sourced from DNR web site.

Old Village Cemetery: Your Help Is Needed on May 7

The Brighton Area Historical Society is honored to sponsor the 3rd Annual Spring Clean-up of the historic Old Village Cemetery located next to the Millpond. Brighton's many veterans from the U.S. armed services and many of the early community settlers are buried here in Brighton's earliest cemetery that dates from 1838.

The civic pride that is found in quality, family-centered communities is found in our quaint community of Brighton and the surrounding townships. Individuals recognize their civic duty to assist in the common good of a community especially when presented with the need to respect our military heroes.

This spring cleanup will present a fresh face to these beautiful grounds. Areas around headstones will be cleared of debris and encroaching sod. Weed trees and brush will be removed around the perimeter. This work will present a respectful setting for the Memorial Day holiday, where we remember servicemen who died in battle to protect our freedoms. Please dedicate five hours of your time to this important community civic-pride event. Bring your work gloves and garden tools. Work details will be planned, so please contact me if you can attend. Thank you for your help!

Jim Vichich

Volunteers Needed!!!

When: Sat, May 7: 9am-2pm
Where: Old Village Cemetery, in Downtown Brighton behind St. Paul Episcopal Church next to the Millpond.

Park next to the cemetery behind the church and on W St. Paul Street.

What: Bring tools and work gloves. Extra tools will be available. Chainsaws are needed.

Cemetery Tours

At 11:00am on the fourth Saturday of every month, from May through October, there will be one-hour guided tours of the Old Village Cemetery. Tours will start at the new cemetery entrance gate and walkway that is located behind the millpond gazebo. You will learn about many early Brighton area community settlers and military veterans that are buried here. This will also give you a good opportunity to take in the beautiful cemetery grounds.

Tours of the cemetery will also be given before the Sunday Kalamazoo Concerts at 3:45 PM on several select dates. Dates for the Sunday tours will be presented in the near future. Tours are open to all and there is no cost. Registration is not required.

Please join Tammy Sexton as your guide as she presents an enjoyable tour to learn about early Brighton and those unique stories from the past!

Inside this issue:

- Dates to Remember 2
- Recreation & Events 2
- Save Our Shops 3
- Save Our Downtown 3
- Contact Details 3
- Historical Perspectives 3

Preserve, advance and disseminate knowledge of the history of the Brighton area
**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 or mail in the following form below.

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**BAHS Merchandise**

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

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**Thanks and Recognition**

**Member Renewals / New Members**

Thanks to our existing and new members for their annual memberships:

- **Patron**
  - Mango Metzger*
  - Pat Burgess (Fenton)*
  - Jim Delohn
  - Steve Flowers
  - Joanne Harte
  - Bob Johnson*
  - Frank & Monica Ninteman*
  - Hilda Rondeau (CA)*
  - Wallynar Snail
  - Ralph Steinberger
  - Edward Stanlick (VA)*
  - Jim Paul Dzakwski*
  - Welcome new members

**Special thanks to these Life Members**

**Business / Professional Members**

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

- Acorn Deck Accessories Inc.
- Advanca Craft Home Builders
- Archer-Huntley Financial Services**
- Bagger Dave's Restaurant
- Dr. Bonnie Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery
- Susan Doyle, Realtor
- Joe Agius / Burroughs Tavern
- Lawrence Autobody**
- Macau Bistro 327**
- Michigan Commerce Bank
- Patrick Financial Group**

**Area History: The Livingston County Court House**

It used to be called Livingston Centre. Now, it is the city of Howell. It's small, for a city, but still the largest in the county. Howell is halfway between Detroit and the state capital in Lansing.

Howell was also the county seat and the location of the Livingston County Courthouse. The original courthouse was built in 1847. Before that, court was held at the Eagle Tavern, which was also the post office, a grocery store, and the other important county functions. Legend has it, the drunks would be escorted out in the morning to make way for court session.

The first courthouse was constructed of wood. When built, it housed the jail and sheriff's residence, and served as a church for, per the Howell Bicentennial, "all but the Presbyterians who had their own building." It was replaced several times. In 1889, a proposal was submitted to build a new courthouse. By this point a new jail and sheriff's residence had already been constructed. The new building was constructed on the same land as the old, in downtown Howell.

The courthouse, fully restored in 1979, is on the National Register of Historic Places. Excerpt from "My Town Monday: The County Courthouse" by Clair Nefp Dickson.

---

**Dates to Remember**

- April 3, 6, 10, 13, 17, 20, 24, 27: 5pm-8pm BAHS hosts at CoBACH Center.
- April 7, 14, 21, 28: 5pm-4pm Archiving/Open House at Lyon School.
- April 17: 1pm-4pm Open House at Lyon School.
- April 27: 5pm BAHS Board Meeting at CoBACH Center.

**May 7, Saturday: 9am-2pm**

Old Village Cemetery Spring Cleanup. Parking available next to cemetery, along W St. Paul Street, and in public parking lots. Bring tools and work gloves. Extra tools available. Chainsaws are needed.
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• Jim Przylucki
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• Susan Doyle, Realtor
• Joe Agius / Burroughs Tavern
• Lawrence Autobody**
• Macomb Lodge 327**
• Michigan Commerce Bank
• Patrick Financial Group**

Area Organizations
April 7: 7:30pm
Livingston County Genealogical Society, 1001 W. Grand River, Howell. "What you can find in the Carnegie Library Archives"
Northville Historical Society
Call (248) 484-1845 or visit their website (www.nhhsnorthville.org) for more info on the following events:
• April 9: 1-3 pm
• April 12: 7 pm
Northville in the Civil War
• April 13: 7 pm
"Prison Bars & Hospital Beds"

Area Museum
April 17: 2pm
Washinton War Society’s "The Civil War" @ washintonswahistory.org
April 18: 7pm
Wixom Historical Society "Wixom Fire Department" 248-624-4557
April 19: 7:30pm
South Lyon Historical Society "South Lyon in the 40s and 50s" 247-437-9929
April 27: 7:30pm
Salem Area Historical Society "Michigan's Effort in the Civil War" sahseny.org
April 30:
Milford Historical Society "Spring Tea at the Mary Jackson House" 248-685-2691 or www.milfordhistory.org

Promotes**
• Refrigeration Research**
• The Engravers Journal
• Yum Yum Tree
Thanks to...
The BAHS recognizes the following people for volunteering their time:
• Bert Bar, Judith Coeby and Jackie Dam for helping in mailing the March issue of Trail Tales.
• BIG FOQ for their prompt printing of Trail Tales each month.
• Mr. & Mrs. Keith Collins and Marco Metzger for a donation to the BAHS Projects Fund.
• Jim Dohon and Marco Metzger for a donation to the Friends of Lyon School Fund.

• John & Debbie Armstrong for their donation of a scanner.
• Bert Klak of Yum Yum Tree for donating gift certificates to the winners of the Ice Harvesting coloring contest.
• Esther Janss, Vicki Vickich, Marianne Bar, Kristie Unger, Betsy Herbst, Pat Thomas, Shirley Kinsey, Judith Coeby and Shirley Knight for their use of their bridal gowns and items for the display at the CoBACH Center.
• Judith Coeby and Shirley Knight for helping setup the bridal display.
• In Memory of Stephen Boyko – a donation to the Friends of Lyon School Fund from the Pleasant Valley Social Club.

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

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E-Mail: info@brightonareahistorical.com
Phone: (810) 250-7726
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 one-room schoolhouse and serves as our organization headquarters.

CoBACH Center 202 W. Main Street, downtown Brighton next to the Milipond.
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.

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Brighton Area Historical Society - brightonareahistorical.com

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Why Did The Pioneers Come To Michigan?

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