

## Brighton's Past is Key to Our Future



Historic George Ratz House at the corner of Hyne and North faces demolition.

Construction of the Ore Creek Mill for the downtown millpond in the 1830s allowed two vital mills to operate and provide needed resources for the earliest settlers: lumber and flour. This same millpond continues to provide a key setting for recreation to Brighton area families 180 years later.

A recent survey of residents identified Brighton's quaintness as the reason families visit or live here. Classic old buildings, the millpond, family activities and a wide assortment of restaurants are all components of quaintness shared in the survey.

Many home owners in the downtown area take great pride in their early homes. This pride is evident in the continuous efforts to maintain and update their homes, while keeping the classic exterior lines that define their age. These downtown homes preserve the early American im-

age as most homes had a front porch where neighbors would visit and residents would greet people as they walked by.

The Ratz family ran the former Ratz Hardware Store located on Main and Hyne Streets for decades. Their home, on the corner of Hyne and North Streets, most recently held the offices of the Brighton Chamber of Commerce and is now owned by the DDA.

My hope is the Ratz House will be repurposed to maintain its dignified appearance. It's welcoming front porch, flower gardens and well maintained appearance should be ample reason to preserve this early Brighton farmhouse.

Classic early homes in our community are a vital link to the past. The City of Brighton should encourage the continued longevity of this home on this site. However, demolition is what the DDA has planned for the Ratz House. If you

share our commitment to save this historic structure, please contact Dana Foster, City Manager, and tell him you want the Ratz House and its community gardens preserved!

This historic building in our quaint city looks classic in its setting and is of sound construction. It should not be destroyed for sake of a new building or parking lot.

By Jim Vichich, BAHS President

### Save Our History

All across our state, and our nation, physical remnants of our past are lost everyday. They disappear with the fell swoop of demolition and 'progress' or quietly over time via long term neglect. Either way, once a historic place is gone, it cannot be replaced.

Throughout Livingston County, I see scores of historic sites succumbing to neglect or the pressures of development... old barns and farm houses nearing collapse; cemeteries overgrown, their headstones disappearing beneath the soil; old store fronts, office buildings, and industrial sites with signs stating 'build to suit'.

I understand that we cannot save every building, nor would we want to. We need progress, not a museum. However, we must strike a balance as our past is important and worth preserving.

By Dave Ball, Trail Tales Editor

### Special points of interest:

ISLAND LAKE STATE RECREATION AREA PLAYED A SPECIAL ROLE IN THE SPANISH AMERICAN WAR.

SEE PAGE 2

THE STORY OF CIVIL WAR VETERANS BURIED IN OLD VILLAGE CEMETERY CONTINUES IN THIS ISSUE'S HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE.

SEE PAGE 4

*"These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly: it is dear-ness only that gives every thing its value."*

*The American Crisis - No. 1 (December 1776)*

*Thomas Paine  
1737 - 1809*

### Inside this issue:

DATES TO REMEMBER	2
THANKS AND RECOGNITION	2
BAHS GIFT SHOP	3
BAHS LEADERSHIP	3
CONTACT BAHS	3
HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE	4

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## Thanks and Recognition

### Member Renewals / New Members

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

#### Family

- Jack & Joan Allen
- Mary Ann Catrell
- Duane & Thelma Duncan
- Richard E. Hyne\*
- Curt LaLonde\*
- William McCririe
- Norma Jean Pless
- Millie Quinn

### Business / Professional Members

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

- Acorn Deck Accessories Inc.
- Advance Craft Home Builders
- Archer-Huntley Financial Services\*\*
- Bagger Dave's Restaurant
- Davis Multimedia, Inc.\*
- Dr. Bonine Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery
- Susan Doyle, Realtor
- Greater Brighton Area Chamber of Commerce\*
- Hands on Mind and Body Wellness Center\*
- Joe Agius / Burroughs Tavern

- Lawrence Autobody\*\*
- Masonic Lodge #247\*\*
- Michigan Commerce Bank
- Patrick Financial Group\*\*
- Promess\*\*
- Refrigeration Research \*\*
- Yum Yum Tree

\* Welcome new members

\*\* Special thanks to these Life Members

#### Thanks to...

The BAHS recognizes the following people for volunteering their time.

- Bert Bair, Tammy Sexton and Jim Vichich for help with the July Trail Tales mailing.
- John Kristola, Judy & Jerry Kroot, Joan, Dawn and Julia Rapaport for donation in the memory of Shirley Jenks.
- Joe Agius of Burroughs Tavern and Mary Ann Catrell for their donations to the BAHS Project Fund.
- Norma Jean Pless for her donation to the Friends of Lyon School fund.
- George Allen for adding to the archive documentation of John Jones' and Charles & Homer Goucher's service in the Civil War.

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## Date to Remember

**Aug 3, 7, 10, 14, 17, 21, 24, 28, 31: 5pm-8pm**  
BAHS volunteers at CoBACH Center

**Aug 6, 13, 20, 27: 8am-1pm**  
BAHS at Farmers' Market

**Aug 7: 5:45pm**

**Aug 27, Sep 24, Oct 22: 11am**

Old Village Cemetery Tours: Open to the Public and Free of Charge. Meet at OVC entrance gate behind millpond gazebo

**Aug 13: 10am-6pm, Aug 14: 10am-4pm**  
BAHS Booth at Art Festival  
Located at Farmers' Market Parking Lot

**Aug 24: 6pm**

BAHS Board meeting at CoBACH Center

#### Area Organizations

**Aug 6: 11am-1pm**

Michigan Historical Museum in Lansing presents "Drums of the Civil War". Visit [michigan.gov/museum](http://michigan.gov/museum) or (517) 373-3559.

**Aug 13-14:**

Waterloo Area Historical Society presents their Tractor, Truck & Farm Equipment Show. [waterlooareahistoricalociety.com](http://waterlooareahistoricalociety.com)

**Aug 14: 1pm-4pm**

Historic Mill Race Village in Northville presents Model T cars in "Casual Ts". Visit [millracenorthville.org](http://millracenorthville.org) for details.

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## The Spanish American War of 1898 - And It's Impact on Livingston County

Today, Livingston County residents leisurely enjoy hiking, swimming or a family picnic in the beauty of our state parks. Yet, few of us know the significance that Island Lake State Park had for the future of our country.

The spring of 1898 marked the onset of the Spanish American War. Tensions between Spain and the United States had been festering for some time over Cuba's independence from Spain.

The U.S.S. Maine had been dispatched to Havana Harbor to protect American citizens when civil unrest broke out in January 1898. On February 15, a massive explosion sank the Maine in Havana Harbor resulting in the loss of 226 lives, for which the U.S. blamed Spain.

War began on April 21, 1898, with the U.S. naval blockade of Cuba followed by President McKinley issuing calls for

200,000 volunteers. Among those brave volunteers were the men who made up the 31st, 32nd, 33rd, 34th and 35th Michigan Volunteer Infantry.

Michigan Governor Hazen S. Pingree called up the National Guard, but due to federal law, each soldier was required to volunteer individually. Practically all of the members of the National Guard volunteered, in total, over 4,800 men.

The men were mobilized at Camp Eaton; currently Island Lake State Park. In May 1898, the 31st and 32nd Regiments were sent to Chickamauga Park, Georgia, and Tampa, Florida, respectively. The 33rd and the 34th were sent to Camp Alger, near Washington, D.C. The 35th Regiment, the last unit mobilized, was sent to Camp Meade, Pennsylvania.

Camp Eaton was named for former Adjutant General of the Michigan National

Guard, Charles Eaton, who died at his post in 1895. It was Gov. Pingree who commissioned and named the camp, and also lived there with the troops.

Camp Eaton served as the muster-in site for the Michigan National Guard beginning about April 26, 1898. This was also the site of the Michigan National Guard annual encampment in 1900.

Island Lake State Park is located east of US-23 and south of I-96. The park entrance is located on Kensington Road, south of Grand River.

So if you happen to make use of its rolling green acres, you might want to stop and take the time to read the sign erected in honor of the men from Michigan who volunteered and served our country.

*By Genal Pratt, Guest Writer*

*Sources: Burton Historical Collection, Michigan Historical Marker database*

## 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>Phone:</b> (    )    - _____
		<b>Address:</b> _____	
		<b>City:</b> _____	<b>State:</b> _____ <b>Zip Code:</b> _____
		<b>E-Mail:</b> _____	
<b>Membership Plan:</b>		<b>Friend of Lyon School:</b>	<b>BAHS Projects Fund:</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> New	<input type="checkbox"/> Business	<input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Life	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15 Individual
<input type="checkbox"/> Renewal	<input type="checkbox"/> Personal	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Patron	<input type="checkbox"/> \$2 Student
		<input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Family	
		<input type="checkbox"/> \$10	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100
		<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$250
		<input type="checkbox"/> \$50	<input type="checkbox"/> Other \$ _____
		<input type="checkbox"/> \$10	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100
		<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$250
		<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.

## BAHS Merchandise

We have many great items for sale that help us generate much needed funds to carry on our mission.

These include home décor items (pewter items, afghans and pillows, decorative ceramic tiles, etc.), postcards, craft items, and the like.

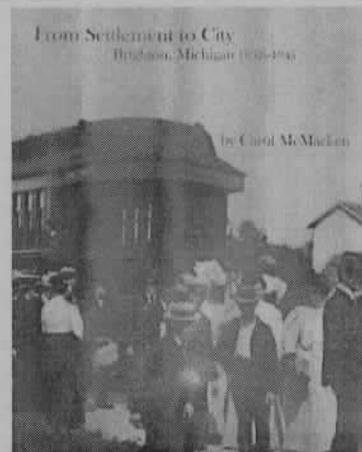
To see our full gift shop offering, please contact us, visit CoBACH Center or the Lyon School, or see our web site.

### From Settlement to City Brighton, Michigan 1832 - 1945

by Carol McMacken  
450+ pages; Over 300 pictures  
**\$65.00**

**Description:** This large volume hardcover book contains a beautifully detailed history of Brighton from its earliest days of wilderness settlement through to the growing community of the mid-1940s.

The book also contains over 300 pictures and illustrations and is a must for any book collection on Michigan and its rich history.



## BAHS Leadership

President  
**Jim Vichich**

Vice President  
**Marieanna Bair**

Secretary  
**Sue Garcia**

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**Mindy Kinsey**

Trail Tales Editor  
**Dave Ball**

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**Thomas Reinke**  
**Tammy Sexton**  
**Dick Weaire**

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](mailto:info@brightonareahistorical.com)

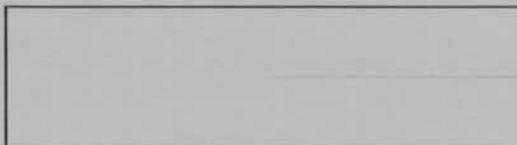
**Phone:**  
(810) 250-7276

**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 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.

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**



## Civil War Veterans Resting At Old Village Cemetery (Part 4)

Austin Goucher, born 1806 in New York, and family arrived from the east in time for the birth of their youngest son, Homer, in 1848. The older children: Charles born 1829, Maria born 1836, and William born 1845, were born in New York as was Austin's wife, Lydia born 1809.

Records indicate Austin and Lydia bought 40 acres in Brighton Township, Section 5, February 19, 1853 and another 40 acres in Section 8, just across the road (McClements) two years later on December 3, 1855. The Gouchers farmed these acres with the usual cattle, horses, etc., to improve their lifestyle and secure an independence for themselves.

Of their children, Charles married Sylvia A. Smith on August 15, 1855, Maria married Laughlin N. Clark in November, 1853, and William married Mary E. Dennison in 1867.

No one in the Brighton area was untouched by the Civil War. However, the Gouchers could be considered as carrying an excessive burden. Charles' wife, Silvia, had died February 23, 1861. At 38 years old and a widower, he gave his child to be cared for by his sister Maria, and enlisted in Hartland in Co. B, 6th Michigan Cavalry Regiment December 31, 1863. During winter quarters in Stevensburg, Virginia, Charles died of disease on February 21, 1864.

Homer was not old enough to enlist, being barely 16 years old in 1864. However, like youngsters everywhere anxious to do their share, he apparently falsified his age and on January 23, 1864, enlisted in his brother's regiment. Homer was captured in Virginia on June 12, 1864, at the Battle of Trevilian Station, having survived nine earlier battles.

Following his capture he was sent to the infamous Andersonville Prison in Georgia. There, after four months of severe privation, he died on October 13, 1864. Sister Maria and her husband raised the orphaned Emma as their own after Charles'

death. Tragically, Emma died in 1872 at just 13 years old.

Nevertheless, in spite of these tragedies, the remaining family members picked up the pieces and continued making a significant contribution to the area. William and his son, Charles C. born January 1870, farmed Austin's property, adding more acres through the years. William's daughter, Clara born 1873, married local boy Charles Tunis. Austin's descendants married local people as late as the 1920s.

For many years, the Gouchers were noted for their musical penchant and abilities. Grace (McClements), the wife of Charles C., accompanied the Brighton Singers. The Goucher Orchestra provided music for the 1917 Brighton High School commencement exercises. Their daughter, Lila (married to Andrew Robertson) was in the Gouchers' Lady Orchestra in 1918, even before graduating from high school in 1925.

Markers, memorializing Austin (died 1874), Lydia (died 1867), Charles (died 1864), Sylvia (died 1861), Emma (died 1872), Homer (died 1864), Maria (died 1904) and Laughlin, her husband (died 1894), can be found in the Old Village Cemetery.

*By Marieanna Bair, BAHS Vice President and Historian*

*Sources: '1880 History of Livingston County' by Ellis; Census records; Bill Pless' writings; 'Old Village Cemetery Transcription' by John and Janice Field; interview with George Allen; 'From Settlement to City, Brighton, Michigan' by Carol McMacken. Additions, corrections are requested. (810) 229-6402.*



### In Memoriam

The Brighton Area Historical Society would like to extend sympathies to the family of :

**Shirley Jenks**

Shirley was a Brighton area resident and member of the BAHS.