

Visit the Beauty of Old Village Cemetery



Members of Rolling Thunder work to winch a fallen tree from the millpond.

Brighton's oldest burial ground, Old Village Cemetery, has the most natural beauty of any of Brighton's cemeteries. Situated on a hill at the edge of the millpond, you can observe the sun glistening on the sparkling water. The canopy of mature hardwoods and conifers create an opening that allows visitors to experience a complete view of downtown.

The Third Annual Spring Clean-up was a tremendous success on Saturday, May 7th. Fifty volunteers from the BAHS, Rolling Thunder and the community had a gorgeous sunny day as they completed the much needed beautification of this 1837 burial ground.

The bank along the waterfront received transplanted day lilies and lilies of the valley. These perennial plantings will reinforce the bank and minimize any erosion of sediments into the millpond. Weed trees on

the bank and a downed tree in the millpond were removed through hard work and group effort. Small burning bush shrubs were planted on the bank and will provide brilliant orange-red color in the fall as they mature.

Leaves were raked throughout the headstone area, while other workers clipped shoots of trees removed in earlier years. These materials filled 80 large composting bags. The headstones lying in the grass were freed of encroaching sod around the edges.

The cemetery gates are open 5am-10pm. Please visit this distinguished site as over 35 veterans of the Civil War and other U.S. wars are buried here. You will be amazed at the natural beauty found within these grounds.

Not surprisingly, few people from Brighton have visited this cemetery as it has been locked

for the past two decades, and only been open to the public in the last year. Old Village Cemetery is definitely another downtown jewel. Enter through the new gate located above the gazebo next to St Paul Episcopal Church for a view that is truly unique!

Jim Vichich



Needed

We are looking for:

- 1930s and 1940s local area phone books.
- Volunteers who can contribute a few hours a month to help with organizing and scanning our archives.
- Photos of area people, buildings and events to copy for our archives.
- Your written memories of the Brighton area.

Donations

One way to acknowledge how much local history means to someone is to make a donation in their name. The BAHS accepts gifts in honorarium as well as memoriam.

A donation, such as this, provides a convenient way for you to celebrate a birthday, anniversary or other special occasion. It can also be a thoughtful remembrance of a person's life.

These donations help support our ongoing mission... to "preserve, advance and disseminate" our local history.

Special points of interest:

LEARN ABOUT THE BEGINNINGS OF LANSING, OUR STATE CAPITAL.

SEE PAGE 2

THIS MONTH'S HISTORY PERSPECTIVE CONTINUES THE STORY OF THE LIVINGSTON VOLUNTEERS, COMPANY I OF MICHIGAN'S FIGHTING FIFTH.

SEE PAGE 4

"I can anticipate no greater calamity for the country than a dissolution of the Union... I shall mourn for my country and for the welfare and progress of mankind. If the Union is dissolved and the Government disrupted, I shall return to my native State and share the miseries of my people, and, save in defense will draw my sword on none."

Robert E. Lee
Letter to his son, G W Custis Lee
23 January 1861

Inside this issue:

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

Thanks and Recognition

Member Renewals / New Members

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

Family

- Carolina DeLuca
- Jonathan Tworck*

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
- Dr. Bonine Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery
- Susan Doyle, Realtor
- Joe Agius / Burroughs Tavern
- Lawrence Autobody**
- Masonic Lodge #247**
- Michigan Commerce Bank
- Patrick Financial Group**
- Promess**
- Refrigeration Research **
- The Engravers Journal
- Yum Yum Tree

* Welcome new members

** Special thanks to these Life Members

Thanks to...

The BAHS recognizes the following people for volunteering their time.

- Our fun-loving archivists including Larry Lawrence, Caren Bierman, Marieanna Bair, Jerry Damon, Sue Garcia, Tammy Sexton, Joe Collins, and Jim Vichich.
- Larry Lawrence for preparing the Military Display at CoBACH Center. This display will be on exhibit until mid-August.

- Larry and Jeff Lawrence, Esther Jarvis, Bert Bair and Phil Gibbon for items featured in the military display.
- Donations in honor of Marieanna Bair's 85th birthday: Ida Bair, Shirley & Bob Knight, Bonnie & Bernie Corrigan, Kathy & Paul Bair, Nancy Fredenburg, Janice & John Fields, Jim & Vicki Vichich, Joe & Bernice Collins, Mindy Kinsey, Judith Coebly and Carol & Mark McMacken.
- Old Village Cemetery cleanup volunteers, especially the large contingent from Rolling Thunder, Michigan Chp 5.
- Dave Ball and Sue Garcia for monthly preparation and editing of Trail Tales.
- Bert Bair, Sue Garcia, June Kimble and Jim Vichich for help with the May Trail Tales mailing.
- Tom Niemeyer, Anne Stratigos and Sue Garcia for delivering the May Trail Tales to local businesses.
- Carolina DeLuca for her donation to the BAHS Projects Fund.
- Bob & Betsy Herbst for donating a Brighton State Bank 'give-away' mending kit.
- Dick Weaire for repairing the Lyon School bench chair and installing the new hangar hardware in the alcove of CoBACH Center.
- Shirley Knight and Mindy Kinsey for the takedown of the wedding dress display.
- Carol McMacken for joining Larry Lawrence, Tammy Sexton and Jim Vichich on a "memories" trip around Island Lake.
- Tammy Sexton for research and program development for upcoming guided tours of Old Village Cemetery.

Date to Remember

Jun 1, 2, 5, 8, 9, 12, 15, 16, 19, 22, 23, 26, 29, 30: 5pm-8pm
BAHS hosts at CoBACH Center

Jun 2, 9, 16, 23, 30: 9am-12nn
Archiving/Open House at Lyon School

Jun 19: 1-4 pm
Lyon One-Room School Open House

Jun 22: 6 pm
BAHS Board Meeting at CoBACH Center

Jun 25, Jul 23, Aug 27, Sep 24: 11am
Jul 10, Jul 31, Aug 7: 5:45pm
Guided Tour of Old Village Cemetery Meet at Gate above Millpond Gazebo
Downtown Brighton, Free Admission

Jul 4: 10am
Independence Day Parade
Main Street, Downtown Brighton

BAHS Military Display - All Wars
All June at CoBACH Center
Tue-Sun: 5pm-8pm
also Sat: 9am-12nn

Area Organizations

May 15: 12:30pm

Jun 5: 1pm

Green Oak Township Historical Society and South Lyon Historical Society are hosting a dinner and auction (silent/live).
Whitmore Lake Rod and Gun Club, 11150 Lemen Road (east of US 23, off M-36).
\$30 at the door; \$25 in advance mail to: Green Oak Township Historical Society, 10789 Silver Lake Road, South Lyon.

Jun 25 & 26:

Blacksmith, Soldier and Log Cabin Weekend at Waterloo Farm Museum.
www.waterloofarmmuseum.org

The Beginnings of Michigan's Capital

In 1836, two brothers from New York returned to Lansing, New York, having recently plotted "Biddle City" in the area of present-day REO Town in Lansing. The land was in a floodplain, useless for a settlement. However, they had a plan to sell it anyways. They told potential buyers that Biddle had an area of 65 blocks, a church and a public square.

Apparently there was interest as sixteen men bought plots in Biddle. But, upon reaching the area, they realized that they

had been taken. Some left, but many stayed and founded Lansing Township, in honor of the former home in New York.

The new settlement remained small, with less than twenty inhabitants until late 1847. This is when state legislators met to pick a new capital, per the Michigan Constitution. The current capital, Detroit, was not easily accessible to most of Michigan. However, it was very accessible to the British in Canada who took advantage of this during the War of 1812 when they

easily captured Detroit. The new location was to be centrally located, and positioned safely within Michigan's interior.

Many cities lobbied to be the capital, including Ann Arbor, Calumet, Jackson, and Marshall. Unable to agree, they chose Lansing, to which many present laughed at when announced. However, within a few years, much activity and development would transform the sleepy hamlet into a thriving city.

Article by Dave Ball, Trail Tales Editor

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.

Mail check or money order payable to:		Name: _____	Phone: () _____
Brighton Area Historical Society		Address: _____	
P. O. Box 481		City: _____	State: _____ Zip Code: _____
Brighton, MI 48116-0481		E-Mail: _____	

Membership Plan:		Friend of Lyon School:		BAHS Projects Fund:	
<input type="checkbox"/> New	<input type="checkbox"/> Business	<input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Life	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15 Individual	<input type="checkbox"/> \$10	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100
<input type="checkbox"/> Renewal	<input type="checkbox"/> Personal	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Patron	<input type="checkbox"/> \$2 Student	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$250
		<input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Family		<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.

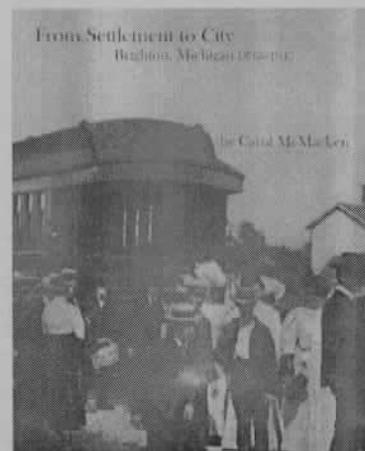
To see our full gift shop offering, please contact us, visit CoBACH Center or the Lyon School, or see our web site.

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	Directors Dave Ball
Vice President Marieanna Bair	Joe Collins
Secretary Sue Garcia	Nancy Fredenburg
Treasurer Mindy Kinsey	Larry Lawrence
	Thomas Reinke
	Tammy Sexton
	Dick Weaire
Trail Tales Editor Dave Ball	Education Liaison Judith Coebly
	Sue Skwarski

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.

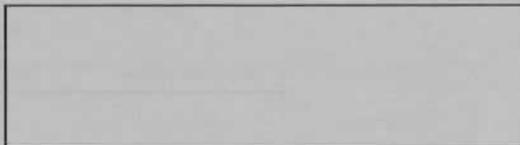
CoBACH Center

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.

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.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Civil War Veterans Resting At Old Village Cemetery (Part 2)

William H. Bigham, 46, enlisted in the Union Army on August 26, 1861. He was among the first 75 recruits to enlist in the 5th Michigan Infantry Regiment Co. I, being formed by Captain John Gilluly of Brighton. The 5th mustered into service on August 27, 1861 for a period of three years. At the time, it was considered unlikely the war would last that long. Since all the recruits came from Livingston County, Company I was known as the *Livingston Company* and the *Livingston Volunteers*.

On September 11, 1861, the Regiment received its regimental flag at Fort Wayne in Detroit and boarded the *Ocean* for Cleveland. They then "... took the cars for Pittsburgh ..." arriving at 9pm on September 12th, where they changed cars arriving in Washington on September 14, 1861. After receiving "... in-different Springfield muskets ...", they bivouacked in Arlington, Virginia. On September 22nd, Co. I advanced several miles nearer the front where they "heard the crack of hostile rifles and the dread whisperings of passing bullets."

Felling timbers and constructing earthworks, the winter was spent in tents in "*Camp Michigan*." April 5, 1862 marked the beginning of the siege of Yorktown; the enemy being defeated after four weeks. Heading to Williamsburg on May 5th, they struggled through rain and mud where the "... thunder of artillery and continual roar of volleys ..." made obvious the war was ahead. Here Captain Gilluly and Co. I lost 26 men killed, wounded and missing.

Bigham participated in the battles of Glendale (June 30, 1862), Malvern Hill (July 1, 1862), Second Manassas (August 30, 1862) and Chantilly (September 1, 1862), among others. He was discharged for disability on September 24, 1862, at which time he returned to Brighton.

William H. Bigham, born in Pennsylvania in 1815, was the eldest of two sons of Robert Bigham Sr., who was born in Ireland in 1789, emigrated to the United States and established himself in

Vermont. It appears Robert Sr., kept heading west as his second son, Robert Jr., was born in Ohio in 1828.

Robert Sr. arrived in the Brighton area in 1833 with his wife, Hannah. Together, they built a two-story log house on the southwest corner of the Grand River Trail and Challis Road. *Call and C*, the original name of their tavern, was later called the *Bigham House*. Many land seekers heading west were glad to see the stopping place, it being the first beyond Power's tavern at Grand River Trail and Spencer Road.

Bigham ("Uncle Robert") is reputed to have helped many pioneers asking information as to the location of good land for settling. He sold farming equipment including plows and ox yokes. At one time, he owned the Eastern House on the north-east corner of Grand River Trail and Main Street.

In the 1870 census, William is living at his father's hotel, and his occupation is a mason. Although 55 years old, he likely found employment in the area. The 1880 census has him living in the household of sister-in-law Malinda (Robert Jr.'s wife), and her family. Malinda appears to be managing the Brighton House for J. C. Case. William H. Bigham died April 26, 1881. His brother, Robert Jr., had died a month earlier. Both are buried in the Old Village Cemetery with their mother, Hannah (born 1792 in Ireland) who died January 13, 1847. Robert Bigham Sr. died in 1876. It is assumed he is buried with the rest of his family.

Compiled by Marieanna Bair from census records; Bill Pless' writings; 1880 History of Livingston County; and Carol McMacken's 'From Settlement to City, Brighton 1832-1945.' Additions, corrections requested. 810-229-6402.



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