



The purpose of the Brighton Area Historical Society is to preserve, advance and disseminate knowledge of the history of the Brighton Area.

The membership is composed of people who feel the above purpose is worthwhile and should be promoted.

BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- . Pres. Marieanna Bair 229-6402.
- . V.P. Gary Cole 227-6116.
- . Sec. Judith Peck 227-6491.
- . Treas. Wally Jollitz 229-9832.

DIRECTORS

- . Bert Bair 229-6402.
- . Chuck Beach 229-9678.
- . Dick Davis 229-8356.
- . Floyd Fuller 231-2415.
- . Mae Schmatke 227-7969.

GENERAL MEETING TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10

The first fall General Meeting of the Society will begin at 6:30 with a pot luck dinner. Bring a dish to pass, your own plates, etc. We'll meet at the Senior Citizen Center, the former Miller School, 850 Spencer Rd. The Society will provide coffee, etc.

Following the pot luck a short business meeting will be held. At 8 p.m. a program on the 1886 Centennial of the Brighton High School will be presented. Margaret Siford and Lyle Powers will bring us up to date on plans and let us know what we can do to become involved with this celebration. Everyone is invited. If you have pictures or other memorabilia from your school days please bring them and share with us.

EDITORIAL

At the heart of the Historical Society is a cadre of caring, working people who feel it is important to the future of the area to become well acquainted with its past.

Besides having the confidence of their convictions they find the gathering, preserving and restoring of the history of the area to be challenging and satisfying. It seems they do not always know the meaning of the word 'impossible.'

It is especially rewarding when the younger members of our community join the Society. A good-sized membership is essential to the success of any organization. Committee chairmen find that calling on members to help with an event results in good participation.

Others in the community are encouraged to join and reap these same benefits.

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MEMBERSHIPS 1985

Since the last issue the following have paid 1985 dues:

- Terry McGowan, Sandy Ransbach, Joan (Pinney) Rice, Franc Stokes, WELCOME

As of this newsletter we have 292 dues paying members. Many people check the various activities on the membership form in which they'd participate. This helps the chairmen of events when they need assistance.

As may have been noted many of our members are from out of town. They often balance their inability to help with projects by purchasing patron dues. Many thanks for your support and the confidence shown.

THANKS...THANKS...THANKS...THANKS

...Ruby Templeton for a 1943 calendar from Navarre's Body Shop. Ruby is looking for "English Garden" china available from Kroger's about 15 years ago.

...Ethel Gebbens for chairing the Society booth at the Brighton Arts Festival.

...Wally Jollitz, Chuck Beach and Bert Bair for chairing the Flea Market

...to those who donated to the flea market and those who bought.

...Colt Park for the Brighton Centennial memorabilia, pre 1900 insurance policies, 1880 Livingston County school district reports, teachers' contracts, etc.

...Domino Pizza for two pizzas delivered to the workers at the Flea Market.

...Virginia Herrmann for the 1941 Detroit News paper picturing the Detroit Parks and Recreation Camp on Euler Road.

...Kim Robertson for her helpful article in a recent Argus publication.

...those who are saying 'yes' when the nominating committee contacts them to serve as directors of the Society.

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ANTIQUÉ SHOW DATE?????

To assure the best results for the effort involved causes the antique show committee to do a lot of research. As soon as the date is known you'll be told.

In the meantime be thinking of antique items you can donate to the Society for its booth. Chairman of the Society booth, Charlene Kull, 227-9393, will get her committee into action as soon as a date is set. Income tax deductible receipts will be given. It is hoped area residents will be willing to donate antique items to this sale; proceeds of which will go to the Society for historic restoration and preservation projects. The Geben's, 227-5375, will store items donated.

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AFGHAN RAFFLE

In May, Helen Hyne won the afghan. She donated it to the Society for a re-raffle.(?) Tickets are available from Board members. Anyone wishing to help sell tickets can contact Clara Healy, 229-9367. The drawing will be November 12, at the Annual Meeting. Maybe you'll be lucky this time.

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HELP...HELP...HELP...HELP...HELP

we need...

...people who want the Society to succeed and make sure it does by their support.

...pictures of Lyons School and other country schools in the area.

...antiques donated to the Society for sale in the Society's booth at the Antique Show.

...people to attend the General Meeting, Tuesday, September 10.

...someone to help set up a local house tour for 1986. (Perhaps during the Folk Arts festival.

...a committee to write a book on the history of the Area.

...a donation of \$40 to pay for the printing of the afghan raffle tickets.

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FLEA MARKET A SUCCESS

Many local residents contributed lots of useable items and many others came to buy. Wally and his committee are to be commended for their hard work. (They are considering another this fall. Be thinking of things to donate.)

Sincere thanks are extended to all who supported this project. Without donors and buyers there would be no Flea Market.

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SENIOR CITIZENS' HUMANITIES PROGRAM

The Brighton Senior Center, Miller Community Center, 850 Spencer Road., is planning an organizational meeting to develop an "Exploring Local History" program, Wednesday, September 25, 9:30-11:30 a.m. The first theme will center on reminiscences of Main Street, Brighton. Dorothy Demorest will be the discussion leader.

Sponsored by the Brighton City Library, Senior Citizens, Community Education and the Historical Society, there will be no fee charged. Come and share your memories.

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TRIVIA ?????

1. In which township does the Livingston County Clerk live?
2. Where is Seim's hill?
3. Why do some people think the Historical Society can get along without them?

## OTHER HISTORICAL SOCIETIES' ACTIVITIES

Green Oak Township Historical Society is sponsoring a tour of local businesses, Tuesday, September 10, 2:20 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. Meet at Care and Concepts, 12500 E. Grand River for a tour, then to Lowry Computer Products, and Kitchen Supplies, Inc., for tours and description of operations.

Milford Historical Society's 1985 Historic Home Tour, Saturday and Sunday, September 20 & 21, will feature 10 sites, a Fine Crafts Festival and Parade of Vintage Cars (over 100) and a tour of the Oak Grove Cemetery, 1845. Home styles include 1899 Queen Anne, Greek Revival, Dutch Colonial, Victorian Gothic, Romanesque Presbyterian Church, and a Sesquicentennial Log Cabin.

Pioneer Memorial Assoc. of Fenton & Mundy Townships will sponsor a Pioneer Day Festival, September 21, 1985, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Included will be a tour of an 1836 frame home, museum building, Bazaar, demonstrations of basket weaving, spinning and hand craft items, with the Fenton Lakes Chapter Sweet Adelines, and the Mid-Michigan Hammer Dulcimer Club providing musical entertainment. Served throughout the day: hot roast Buffalo Burgers, hot dogs, baked beans, doughnuts, coffee and cold drinks. 11429 Main Road just north of Lake Fenton.

Heritage Hill Assoc. of Grand Rapids' hometour will have six homes in the Heritage Hill Historic District October 5&6. One of only two houses in Grand Rapids designed by Frank L. Wright, the Amberg

House, will be the highlight of the tour. Write Heritage Hill, 126 College Se., Grand Rapids, Mi. 49503 (616) 459-8950.

Area Historical Societies to meet Wednesday, October 9, 7 p.m. The Green Oak Township Historical Society will host representatives from about 20 historical societies of Livingston, Washtenaw and Oakland Counties.

The first stop will be the Museum on Kensington Road. Brighton Area Historical Society will have representatives in attendance. Contact a Board member if you'd like to be included.

This semi-annual event has been found to be of great benefit by the exchange of ideas which takes place.

The 111th Annual Meeting of the Michigan Historical Society will be held in Grand Rapids, October 4,5,6. It would be good for the Society to have a representative attend. The Board has decided to pay registration fees. Contact a board member if you're interested in attending.

## TRIVIA ANSWERS

The Blue Lantern was a dance hall on the north side of Island Lake built out over the water in 1921. Following a destructive fire in 1964 the building was razed.

The Brown Hotel was also at Island Lake.

The population of Cambeltown today is about 100.

## BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

New ( ) Renewal ( ) Please send a copy of Society Bylaws ( )

Activities in which I'd like to participate:

- |                              |                                     |                  |                  |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| ( ) Meeting programs         | ( ) Photography                     | ( ) Board Member | ( ) Fund Raising |
| ( ) Interior decoration      | ( ) Genealogy                       | ( ) Publicity    | ( ) Bake Sale    |
| ( ) Help with special events | ( ) Restoration                     | ( ) Research     | ( ) Hospitality  |
| ( ) Newsletter publication   | ( ) Cleaning                        | ( ) Video Taping | ( ) Oral history |
| ( ) Membership committee     | ( ) Other work I'd be willing to do | _____            |                  |

Dues: \$ 8.00 per couple send to Brighton Area Historical Society  
 5.00 per individual P.O. Box 481  
 25.00 patron Brighton, Mi. 48116  
 25.00 business/professional

## THE GRAND RIVER TRAIL (Cont.)

Following an early, centuries old, Indian trail between Detroit and Lansing, (Michigan Village) the Grand River Trail traversed the county through its center, southeast to northwest; the route by which most settlers came to the Brighton Area. Surveyed prior to 1822, prospectors, trappers and homesteaders usually followed the trail by foot or on horseback. Wagons pulled by teams of oxen, would bring the family and its possessions once property was recorded by the purchaser. The felling of trees and pulling of stumps, building of bridges and filling of swamps made possible the use of stage coaches for travel and transport.

The staging business over the Grand River Road (sand, dust, ruts and mud, depending on the weather) between Howell and Detroit about 1838 was begun by Allen C. Weston and continued by Benjamin J. Spring and others. Stagecoaches made remarkably fast time from Detroit to Lansing, the 90 miles traversed in 12 hours; drawn by four to six horses which were changed every 12-15 miles. This resulted in inns and horsebarns being located along the route. The fare was about 7¢ per mile per person. The stage drivers also carried mail at 25¢ - 50¢ per letter. From these small beginnings grew the heavy traffic which afterwards passed over the Plank Road.

By 1852 the Grand River Trail was 'planked' from Detroit to Lansing. This route, built by the Detroit and Howell Plank Road Company (a company of private investors), became an immediate financial success. Toll was charged for the use of the road. Toll gates were built every 5-6 miles. Old maps indicate toll houses at Academy Drive, Challis Road and Ore Creek in Green Oak, Brighton and Genoa Townships.

The importance to Livingston County of this road was second only in importance to that which resulted from the opening of the railroad in 1871. Until that time, the Plank Road was one of the principle throughfares of the state; the means by which farmers' produce was delivered to market and items necessary for surviving the wilderness were transported to the pioneer from the city. This great and continually increasing business over the plank road ceased almost entirely with the opening of the railroad.

Following this diversion of a large part of the travel from the plank roads, it became the policy of the various road companies to remove the planking as it decayed and to fill in with substantial gravel so that by 1880 the entire line was a solidly graded turnpike. While toll was still being extracted, much complaining by the travelers, mostly local at that time, assured the quick demise of the gates. (To be continued. Condensed and edited from A Scrapbook of Michigan Memorabilia by William A. Pless and Livingston County History, 1880.)

BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
P.O. Box 481  
BRIGHTON, MI. 48116

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