BRIGHTON 1907 HOMECOMING

The Brighton Argus, August 28, 1907, reported "The 1907 Homecoming Was The Biggest Time We Ever Had!" & "Friends Who Had Not See Each Other For Years Were Brought Together to Laugh and Weep For Joy".

Visitors arrived each day by railroad, by horse and buggy and by horse and wagon. Many had not been back for years and came from as far as California on the West, New York on the East, and from several states in between.

They reminisced in small groups, at a picnic, at gatherings in churches and at family reunions. The latter were scheduled so visitors could attend other reunions where they had relatives. Residents in the village and surrounding area provided food and lodging for their visiting relatives and friends. Even total strangers were treated in a hospitable manner.

The 'Old Opera House' couldn't begin to hold anywhere near the more than 600 visitors plus the residents who wanted to attend the mass meeting. (This building was located on the east side of Grand River between Main and North Streets. A one story building, with a fine dance floor, in which school plays and commencement activities were held. The big stage had a large canvas curtain which Ansel Townsend, by hand, rolled up and down at the appropriate time.) In addition to a prepared program, several old timers were called upon to recall incidents and events of early days in Brighton.

Among those who spoke was Henry S. Pitch of Chicago, who had been away fifty-seven years. His father built the first frame house in Brighton. (Where the Canopy is now located.) Henry spoke of his boyhood days in the area and of the emotion that came over him when he clasped the hands of the few of his boyhood friends who remained and were in attendance. Henry said, "My mother's death occurred March 4, 1884, and in September, 1884, my father married Julia Hess, of Hamburg, who was a charming and beautiful woman. While I lived with her only four years, she was all that a mother could be to me. In 1890 my father went to California, via the Isthmus of Panama, and died at sea within a few day's sail of San Francisco."

"That summer I lived with a man named Jasper Buck, who had been a cooper in Brighton; and then I lived on a farm near Bogus Lake. The memory of my loneliness and homesickness is still fresh. I cried myself to sleep to music of crickets, tree toads, and Whippoorwills. Next I went to live with my cousin, Adolphus Williams, in Lansing. Spaulding M. Case of Brighton and Ralph Fowler of Fowlerville were members of the Legislature and were instrumental in my appointment by Lieutenant Gov. Wm. M. Fenton, as a messenger in the Senate. (To be cont. Edited from 'A Scrapbook of Michigan Memorabilia' by Wm. Fless with contributions from Jessie McDonnell.)

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TRAIL TALES

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 in worthwhile and should be promoted.

EDITURAL

The Historic Resource Survey of Brighton City being conducted by the Society, will be a valuable tool in planning of future changes. For a preservationist to chain oneself to a bulldozer is not an effective way to preserve the significant architectural and historic characteristics of a structure for the future.

The survey can help develop a more objective perspective of a building or a neighborhood. To remove a building or all decorative evidence of its past is to be avoided when possible. It is agreed very few would wish to go back to living exactly as was done 100 years ago. Inside bathrooms, running water, fire safety standards, electrical facilities, etc., in our homes and work places are very desirable. With proper planning, area structures can be brought into the 20th Century in a gentle manner. Once the surface of a historic building is lost, it can never be retrieved.

(Ed. M. Bair)

1986 MEMBERSHIPS 1986

Since the last newsletter the following can be included as members: Jeannette Bailey, Leon & Marilyn Bonner#, Ula Davis, Mr. & Mrs. Emil Engel, Joe & Bonnie Fennell, Zara & Ken Graham (not Tom as we served in the March newsletter), Lyle & Dorothy Hartman, Barton & Catherine Helmuth, Harold & Esther Jarvis #, Bob & Shirley Knight, Tom & Audrey Leitch, Mary Mathias, Richard & Toni Mullany, Roland & Jane Owen, Chet & Irene Paquette, Mary Lou Partridge, Mary Fearsall, Lora Mawer, Ed & Patricia Sawyer, Steve Sherman, Jim & Penny Szczeczowski, J.M. & Vicki Vichich, Bob & Ruth Watson, Garald & Peg White. # Patron Members. (Cont. on page 2.)