



Grand River Trail

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 is worthwhile and should be promoted.

P.O. Box 481
Vol. VI, No. 4

Brighton, Mi. 48116
April, 1987

BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Pres.	Zara Graham	229-2240
V.P.	Alice Krupa	227-2516
Sec.	Shelagh Klein	229-6571
Treas.	Marieanna Bair	229-6402

DIRECTORS

Rudy Herrmann	229-7923
Mary Mathias	229-6900
Peg Siford	227-6056
Mel Skeman	229-6351
Editor	Marieanna Bair 229-6402

RECAP MARCH GENERAL MEETING

Following the pot luck and short business meeting, into the room came a young lieutenant from Farmington who served in Company F, Seventh Michigan Volunteer Infantry during the Civil War, a.k.a. David Finney of Howell. He spoke of the humorous anecdotes which were antithetic to the tragic terror of the Civil War and its unbelievable bloodshed. All present were reminded that our country almost became two nations.

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Next Board Meeting: 4-2-87, 7 p.m., Old Town Hall. Members welcome.

Next Finance Com. Meeting: 4-13-87, 7 p.m., Old Town Hall. Members welcome.

Next General Meeting: 5-12-87, 6:30 p.m., Miller Community Center. Public welcome.

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POLITICAL NEWS -1847

Michigan legislators, House Speaker, George Washington Peck and Senator Charles P. Bush of Livingston County were members of the "Northern Rangers" which promoted the location of Lansing as the State Capitol in 1847. (Nov/Dec issue Michigan History Magazine.)

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EDITORIAL

Preservation of buildings such as the Old Town Hall and the Lyons School, ensure that the young people of the Area will become aware of the past.

Those passing through or visiting the area will know pride has been taken by the residents of the Area in remembering and preserving its past.

We can have the pleasure and privilege of the actual restoration work. Those who follow will miss out on that but they'll realize we were farsighted enough to preserve a piece of the past for their future.

Residents of the Area have a unique opportunity to join Society members in these preservation projects. Historical continuity is not an ideal - it is an imperative. (Ed. M. Bair)

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MEMBERSHIPS

The following have recently paid 1987 dues:

Patron dues: Jeff & Debbie Hucal, Al & Lois Krausman.

Bus/Prof dues: Citizens' Trust, Emil Engel, Dr. & Mrs. Gerald Whalen.

Couple and Indiv. dues: Alice Anderson, Joe & Irene Ellis, Doris Fay, Lyle & Dorothy Hartman, Clif Heller, Mr. & Mrs. Steve Hucal, Arlene Jacob, Ed & Sherry Nyhus, Mike & Helen Michaels, Mary Pearsall, Elbert Seger, and Alice Wyland.

Many thanks to all. If 87 dues have been paid it will be indicated on the mailing label. If you still have '86' on the label, this year's dues have not been paid.

Within the next month the Membership Chairman will be contacting 1986 members who have not renewed their memberships. Postage (Page 2)

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

...Clayton Epley, Dick Davis, and Dick Wolf for transporting Society items for storage.

...Betty Adams, Eric Astrup, Nancy Hackney, Michael Mooradian, Joe & Toni Mullany, Lee & Aline Tunnel and Dr. Gerald & Eva Whalen for donations to the Preservation and Restoration Fund.

...Elizabeth Bindenagel and Doris Prieskorn for donations to the Lyons School Fund.

...Jack & Ethel Gebben and Ore Creek Mill Quester Chapter for donations to the Old Town Hall Restoration Fund.

...Old Ken Bank for the printing of this newsletter.

...Citizens' Trust, Jarvis Men's Store, Ubers' and the Chamber of Commerce for having Society tiles available for sale.

...American Legion for the new 48 star flag.

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(Memberships - cont. from page 1)

can be saved if you send your dues soon.

Your support is needed in order that the Society may continue with its many projects, all vital to the Area's well-being.

Special thanks to those who become Patron members. Those able to be more active see this as a sign of confidence and are encouraged. (And we need all of that we can get.) As a gift to parents or children, some have purchased memberships.

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BREAKFAST FOR AREA SHAKERS AND MOVERS

Invitations are being sent to Area merchants, business and professional persons to attend a breakfast Wednesday, April 29, 7:30 a.m. at the Brighton Fire Hall. Those attending will hear of the preservation and restoration plans of the Society and will be given an opportunity to suggest ways to raise the funds necessary.

If you haven't received your invitation by the middle of April please contact Zara Graham, 229-2240.

STORAGE FACILITY DONATED

A barn has been offered in which donated articles may be stored until a sale is held. While doing your spring cleaning, keep the Society in mind. A Trash & Treasures sale is being planned. A donation receipt will be given upon request. More information will be coming up.

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

we need...

...donations to the fuel bill at Lyons School.

...people to help with a house tour this summer - organizers, helpers and hosts are needed. Other groups find this to be a good fund raiser.

...people to help with a sale this summer. - chairman, 'gophers', sales persons, etc, are needed.

...a quilt committee to make a quilt for a raffle. It would be good to have the drawing in August during the Folk Art Fair in Brighton.

...people to donate items for an antique sale at the July sidewalk sale in Brighton.

...helpers at the Toy Show and Sale Sunday May 17, at the Miller Community Center.

...people to put together a small book with old time pictures of the Area. The Society has the pictures.

...bakers to respond to the bake sale committee for the June Bake Sale.

...donations to a raffle of Michigan produced products.

To respond to any of the above please contact a board member or the editor.

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TREASURER'S REPORT

2-1-87 TOTAL NET WORTH \$5768.02

RECEIPTS

Dues	\$406.00	
Fund Raising: Spaghetti Supper, 455.; Tiles, 28.; Lyons School Utilities, 10.	493.00	
Interest	25.82	924.82
		\$6692.84

DISBURSEMENTS

Adm.	148.75	
Officers	6.67	
Hist. Pres. & Rest.:		
Lyons School Utilities, etc.	32.31	
Fund Raising: Spaghetti Supper	51.32	239.05

2-28-87 TOTAL NET WORTH \$6453.79

" Ch. Acct. Bal.	\$1158.69	
" Sav. Acct. Bal.	5295.10	\$6453.79

M. Bair, Treas. (For a more detailed report contact the treasurer.)

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Aluminum is better at wrapping food than wrapping houses.

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PIONEER FAMILY SETTLER CERTIFICATE

Did your ancestors settle in Michigan prior to 12-31-1837? If so you are eligible to receive a Michigan Sesquicentennial Pioneer Certificate.

Write the Michigan Genealogical Council, Library of Michigan, P.O. Box 30007, Lansing, 48909 and request the application form and guidelines.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

What's going on in Michigan in connection with the Sesquicentennial? Write Michigan Sesquicentennial Office, Department of State, Lansing 48918 and receive a free book describing the 100's of activities taking place in the state this year.

From one end of the state to the other and back again, all year long, exhibits, programs, events, drama, fairs, sports, music, foods, dance, lectures, agriculture, archeology, history, tours, antique shows, etc., etc. Your whole year can be planned for fun in Michigan. The Society has a copy of this book. Contact the Editor.

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FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

To promote the restoration of the Old Town Hall and continue the restoration of Lyons School, financial response from the Area is vital. The committee is conducting many fund raising events. The outright donations of people who care is an absolute necessity in addition to these efforts. Contributions may be sent the Society at any time.

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OTHER HISTORICAL SOCIETIES

Green Oak Township: Sunday, June 7, the township is also celebrating its sesquicentennial. The Historical Society is planning a full day beginning at 8 a.m. with a pancake breakfast. Music, fashion show of early costumes, muzzle loader groups, picnics and many more activities will keep you occupied all day. It will be held at the Kent Lake Unit of the Island Lake Recreation Area.

Wixom Historical Society is presenting a program of Contra Dancing, the fore-runner of the square dance, Saturday, April 11, 8-11 p.m. at the Wixom City Hall. For \$3.50 you can listen, learn, watch and dance the movements performed decades ago.

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Need publicity for an activity of the Society? Contact Sandy Bansbach, 231-1637, and she'll see it gets into area newspapers and other publicity outlets.

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Have something to include in a future issue of Trail Tales? Drop it in the mail. Others' viewpoints are always welcome. Editor.

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Elbert Seger of Arizona has sent the Society a beautiful picture of his paternal grandmother holding her baby (his father) in 1873. Many thanks Elbert. It is a fine addition to our files.

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Attics save history.

1987 BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM 1987

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

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

Activities in which I'd like to participate:

- () Bake Sale () Hospitality () Oral History () Restoration
- () Board Member () Meeting Programs () Photography () Video Taping
- () Fund Raising () Membership Committee () Publicity () Help with spec. events
- () Genealogy () Newsletter Publication () Research () Other work I'd be

Willing to do _____

Dues: \$25.00 Patron Send to: Brighton Area Historical Society
25.00 Business/professional P.O. Box 481
8.00 per couple
5.00 per individual

THE BRIGHTON AREA AND THE SESQUICENTENNIAL OF MICHIGAN (Cont.)

A large percentage of settlers were farmers planning to use Michigan's virgin lands to make homes as good as those they left in the East. The Erie Canal leg of their journey must have been relatively easy when compared to the crossing of Lake Erie and then the worst part of all, the land passage west of Detroit to Livingston County. Then to find oneself isolated in the ill-lighted room of a floorless, windowless, mud-chinked log cabin, with the days filled with back breaking work and the nights with the howls of the wolves, fearing an Indian visitor at any time; the pioneer often wondered why one would leave the comfort, ease and companionship of friends in the East. Not until 1836 could one count on neighbors in the area.

The early settlers in this southeastern part of the county did not look to the local lumber yard for material to build that first house. (We write first because as soon as possible, houses, built of sawn logs, replaced the crude log cabin.) He began by cutting the abundant trees he found on his property. Logs were notched for walls, which were chinked with mud and chips. A roof of poles and bark or oak shakes provided some protection from the rain and snow. The stick chimney of the fireplace was lined with wet mud in an attempt at fire proofing. If there was a window, oiled paper or greased buckskin was installed instead of glass. Until logs could be split or boards sawed at a mill, a blanket covered the door opening. Furniture consisted of chests brought on the wagon, rope or strings of raw hide supported a mattress tick stuffed with dry leaves of grass, split logs served as bench seats and table tops. The childrens' sleeping quarters were in the loft.

The trees cut for the building of the cabin left spaces for the sun to reach the soil. There corn was planted since the settler could merely dig holes for the seed instead of plowing the land. Within a short span of years, wheat found room on the farmstead and after threshing could be taken to a mill for grinding. The diet of cornmeal or bread was supplemented by the rifle and fishing rod and by collecting wild nuts and berries; a vegetable garden and raising a cow, pigs and chickens. Water was brought from a nearby spring or stream until a well was dug by hand.

In 1836, the influx of settlers caused the population of the County to quadruple. Before long mills were built locally which made the 2-3 day trips to Ann Arbor or Detroit for supplies unnecessary. However lack of food did cause actual suffering. Hon. W. A. Clark spoke to the Pioneer Society in the Centennial year, 1876. "Families... lived for days...on boiled acorns, with fish cooked and eaten without salt or fat of any kind." But the bountiful harvest of 1838 caused this scarcity of food and accompanying high prices to reverse. In fact the abundance of future harvests caused a severe drop in the wheat growers' income. (To be continued. Condensed and edited from: "History of Livingston County, 1880".)

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