



Grand River Trail

TRAIL TALES

Brighton Area Preservation News

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 this purpose is worthwhile and should be promoted.

P.O. Box 481 Brighton, Mi. 48116  
 Vol. VII, No. 6 June, 1988

BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Board of Directors

\* \* \* \*

OFFICERS

Pres.	Rudy Herrmann	229-7923
V.P.	Bcb Richmond	229-6268
Sec.	Shelagh Klein	229-6571
Treas.	Marieanna Bair	229-6402

DIRECTORS

Bill Amrhein	227-7282
Chuck Beach	229-9678
Dick Davis	229-8356
Rae-Lynne Lerner	227-1148
Mel Skeman	229-6351
Editor	Marieanna Bair 229-6402

EDITORIAL

Many members of the Society are people who have lived in the area for many years. There is also a large number who are more recent arrivals. The Society does not differentiate between old timers and newcomers. All have a great deal to contribute; all have the same needs and all have a desire to support the Society in its efforts to fulfill its purpose as stated in the masthead.

We feel this support is based on a deep seated awareness of the sacrifices made by one's predecessors (wether in this area or elsewhere) and a need to gain a sense of permanence and stability that comes with the knowledge of the history of the area.

This sense of permanence and stability can be conveyed to those who follow (no matter where they live) only if the unique historical character of the area is accessible. (Editor: M. Bair)

RECAP MAY 10, GENERAL MEETING

Did you ever fall asleep in the grainbin of a feed store? As a child, born of early settlers in the area, Mary Mathias told of this event and other episodes of growing up in Brighton. An active and inquisitive youngster of the early 1900s, Mary's terrific memory took us back to a less hectic and chaotic time. Thank you Mary, for your captivating recital.

Tuesday, September 20, is the date for the next General Meeting. A pot luck at 6:30 will begin the evening, a short business meeting at 7:30 will be followed by another narration by a Brightonite. Who will it be? Let us know if you would like to take your turn or have someone in mind you'd like to hear. Public invited.

+ + + +

DATES

Finance Comm: June 6, 7 PM.  
 Old Town Hall Rest. Comm: June 7, 21, 7 PM  
 Board Meeting: June 9, 7 PM  
 Above - at the Old Town Hall, 202 W. Main.  
 Lyons School Comm: June 22, 7PM at Lyons School, 11455 Buno Rd.

+ + + +  
 1988 MEMBERSHIPS 1988

Patron: Robert Clark, Norman & Mary Beth Guest (Lewiston).  
Couple/Indiv.: Bob & Marie Carr, Larry & Jean Clark (Milford), Dorothy Roberts Foster (California), Harry & Mary Griffiths Kathryn Hodgkin, Elenor Hornung (Howell), Bruce & Janet Owens, Mary Pearsall.

Sincere thanks to all who have paid 1988 dues. The label on this issue of Trail Tales notes the year for which dues are paid. (If there is no date but you wish to continue receiving the newsletter and demonstrate support for the Society and its goals, please consider some form of membership.)

+ + + +

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

HOME TOUR CONNECTED:

Home owners: Marty & Rae-Lynne Lerner, Mike & Cathy Qualls, Larry & Rita Schlinger and Jim & Penny Szczechowski.

Churches: First Presbyterian, St. Paul's Episcopal and St. George Lutheran.

Tour Chairman: (superb) Rae-Lynne Lerner.

Ticket printers: Citizens Insurance Co.

Guides Chairmen: Ethel Gebben and Ial Fuller.

Guides: A lot of people who did an outstanding job!

Lumber for signs: Pine Lumber.

Sign Painter: Ruth Dolman.

Publicity: Marketeer, Brighton Argus, Station WHMI.

Displaying fliers: Many local merchants.

Flowers: Country Lane, Bloomers, Clores and Four Seasons.

Dried arrangements: Rita Altenberg.

Pre tour tickets: Uber's Drugs, Somewhere in Time, Brighton Chamber of Commerce and Brighton Public Library.

Organizing the lunch at St. George: Connie Zaske.

Runners and 'gofors': Joe & Irene Mike.

Everyone who came and supported all the efforts of this fund raiser.

Old Kent Bank for the printing of Trail Tales.

Chamber of Commerce for their support.

Katherine Hodgkin and Celia Schaffer for their contribution to the Historic Preservation and Restoration Fund.

Quester Plank Road Chapter #236 for their contribution to the Lyons School and Old Town Hall Restoration Funds.

Bake Sale Chair, Jane Tomlinson and clerk for the day, Shelagh Klein.

+ + + +

RESTORATION AND PRESERVATION PROJECTS

LYONS SCHOOL

Interested in the preservation of one of the last one room schools in the state? This committee will meet Wednesday, June 22, 7 p.m. at the school, 11455 Buno Road in Brighton Township. Call Chrmm. Jerry Dilloway, 227-2678 for more information.

OLD TOWN HALL

Painting trim and windows began May 24th. The dinner/dance benefit will be November 5. Plans are proceeding with a raffle; a helicopter ride. Winner will be selected at the September General Meeting. When the date is set for the installation of the bell tower, members will be invited to help apply a paint brush to the tower. Then you can tell your kids how you helped.

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

we need...

...parade participants looking for a good time.

...people to call committee chairmen, willing to help.

...more names for the Signature Quilt.

...Antique & Collectibles Sale and Trash & Treasures Sale donations.

...someone to cut the fabric for the nine-patch quilt.

Contact a board member if you can help.

+ + + +

TREASURER'S REPORT

4-1-88 TOTAL NET WORTH \$33611.13

RECEIPTS

Dues	226.00	
Hist. Pres. & Rest.:		
Old Town Hall	200.	
Lyons School	30.	
Donations	60.	290.00
Misc. & Interest	<u>161.83</u>	<u>677.83</u>
		\$34288.96

DISBURSEMENTS

Adm.	58.70	
Hist. Pres. & Rest.:		
Old Town Hall	16.10	
Lyons School	14.87	
Fund Raising	<u>16.00</u>	<u>46.97</u>
		<u>105.67</u>

4-30-88 TOTAL NET WORTH \$34183.29

" Sav. Acct. Bal. 32449.49

Chk. " " 1733.80

\$34183.29

M. Bair, Treasurer (For a more detailed report please contact the Treasurer.)

+ + + +

SOCIETY'S ENTRY IN JULY 4 PARADE

Members, dressed in vintage clothing, pushing, pulling, riding or carrying an early implement of farming, housekeeping, gardening, etc., are urged to join in our entry in Brighton's annual parade.

Propel or ride a bicycle, wheelbarrow, wagon, cultivator or planter. Carry a milk bucket and stool, kerosene lamp, lunch bucket, buck saw, churn, or blacksmithing or carpenter tools. Jog your creative juices. Include the kids too.

Call Rae-Lynne Lerner, 227-1148 or Marie-anna Bair, 229-6402, if you're coming.

Following the parade the Society will be hosting a hotdog roast at the Lerner's, 623 W Main for parade participants in the Society's entry. (Not a member yet? Join up and join us in the parade.) We had a lot of fun with the home tour; this will be fun too.





## EVOLUTION IN THE BRIGHTON AREA - FROM WILDERNESS TO SUBDIVISIONS

Struggling through the wet area in the south east corner of Genoa Township (at that time the north half of Hamburg Township) around the lake (Lime Lake), it was with relief Henry Earl arrived on higher ground. But what a steep hill to climb! Not only was it higher ground in Section 26, it was very high and very rolling. Henry Earl examined the 160 acres he had purchased from the U.S. government for \$400 in July, 1836.

Henry and his wife, Nancy, lived in Saline, as did Nathaniel and Abigail Carr, who purchased an adjoining 120 acres. Within three years, Carr had acquired Earl's interest and by 1844, the tax records indicate John & Nellie Weichers paid taxes on 233 acres purchased from the Carrs.

The Weichers built a small house (log?) on the very top of the hill on the section line along which most roads were eventually built. To add to the difficulties of life, the well was located at the bottom of the hill for many years. Most settlers did not build on the low ground because of the "Michigan fever" or ague which was prevalent among the settlers. It was thought to be caused and spread by the miasma and vapors of the lakes and low lands.

The Weichers were one of the many German families which early settled in Genoa Township. These diligent pioneers soon felt a need to resume the corporate worship they had known in their homeland. John Weichers is listed as a charter member of the "Evangelical Congregation of St. George in Genoa," organized in 1845.

By 1859, John Weichers was also a merchant, owning a building and business on the southwest corner of Grand River and Main in town. This building was torn down after WW II.

In 1905 Emil Bauer owned the Weichers property which, by then, had a typical farmhouse of two floors with slanting ceilings in the upstairs bedrooms. That same year Henry Webber appeared on the records to be followed within a few months by Henry Herbst and, in turn in 1907, John Herbst. The property was in the Herbst family for almost 80 years. Can one imagine the changes which, until 1986, when Weichers' Hill was made less steep, the huge oak trees along Brighton Road must have had pass beneath them? The settlers' oxen gave way to horses. The Model T could be put into neutral and one could coast all the way around Lime Lake. The advent of electricity created an entirely different world. Presently there is not a cow, sheep, chicken or barn (or the old house) on Weichers' Hill.

Within the past 2-3 years, Rolling Meadows subdivision has made good use of those hills on Brighton Road, west of Bauer Road. When standing on top of Weichers' Hill one sees many fine homes being built for the industrious 1980 settlers of the Brighton area. (Compiled and edited from "Michigan Memorabilia" by Bill Pless; County Register of Deeds Office; conversation with Helen Herbst Rau.)

BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
P.O. Box 481  
Brighton, Mi. 48116

Printed courtesy:  
OLD KENT BANK  
300 W. North Street  
Brighton, Mi. 48116

ADDRESS  
CORRECTION  
REQUESTED