EVOLUTION IN THE BRIGHTON AREA — FROM WILDERNESS TO SUBDIVISIONS

It's Easter morning, 1875: "Dolly" is easily pulling the shiny carriage full of excited children in her best 'bibs and tuckers.' We're on our way to the new church to celebrate the first Easter within its walls — the Wesleyan Methodist Pleasant Valley Church on the northeast corner of Pleasant Valley and Labadie Roads across from the cemetery in Brighton Township.

We've come past the log Lyons School on Bono Road where the children are taught the three Rs. With spring plowing soon to begin the two oldest boys will have to stay home and help Pa. (but they don't really mind.) With the bright oil lamps now available they can study in the evening. Hopefully a frame school can soon be built. The old log cabin, erected in 1842, is small, drafty and not well lighted. (Richard and Martha Lyon donated land for the school 33 years ago.)

"Easy, Dolly," as we drive over a wet spot in the road after crossing the bridge over Mann Creek. Passing through the swampy areas often makes one remember the November day in 1841, when five year old Mortimer Dooyen got lost in the woods and swamps. Altho' his cries were heard, in the early darkness it was impossible to find him. Three days later his body was found. It makes us all the more careful with the little ones even now that forests are cleared and roads laid.

Since that Easter Sunday over 100 years ago, the 160 acres owned by Willard Beach in Section 22 (which was first taken up by Smith Beach from Ontario, New York, in 1833) and that owned by John Hacker in Section 15 (which was taken up by Cyrus Jackson from Wayne, New York, in 1836) has passed through several other hands. In 1958, a plat was prepared by an attorney from Farmington, Percy Guardhouse, who purchased the property from I1 and Madge Dunf and from Bum and Minnie Newman.

He put in the dam that formed the lake and has quieted the stream which rises from the southeast out of Oakland County; supported by overflow from Beach Lake. The undulating land, having been left by the retreating glaciers many centuries ago, today has been tamed by roads on which one finds many beautiful homes. Oak, hickory and walnut stands had been replaced by hayfields, cornfields, pastures and orchards, which, in turn, have given way to those searching for the place they call home — Lake Moraine. (Edited from "First Land Owners, Livingston County" by Milton Chabonneau, "Livingston County History 1880" and assistance from Livingston County Register of Deeds Office.)

**ALICE, NURSEM. SPEAKS AT MARCH MEETING**

Playing Odd or Even, performing school programs at the Rialto Theater on Main Street, eating lunch while sitting in the window wells at the little school were some of her childhood memories.

The construction of the new school on the hill, playing basketball in a cheese box of a gym, ice skating on the mill pond, checking the clock in Ricketts' Jewelry store on the way to school and earning money for the Senior trip during the depression recalled an earlier day in Brighton when the surrounding area was farming country.

Thank you, Alice, for an entertaining time.

May 10, at Lindenhom Elementary School, 1010 State, Mary Mathias will speak of her childhood in Brighton. Hope to see you there too.

**MEETING**

Board — Thursday, April 14, 7 PM.
Finance Committee — Monday, 4, 7 PM.
Old Town Hall Restoration — Monday, April 11 and Monday, April 25, 7 PM.
Lyons School Committee — Wednesday April 20.

**BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

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**JOIN THE BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY TODAY!**

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.

**Grand River Trail**

**TRAIL TALES**

Brighton Area Preservation News

The area has commercial properties which still retain, or have been given, the historical character which helps make it unique. Not much new, especially commercial, construction appears planned to last more than 20 years.

Owners of older homes often try to restore the building's original character by eliminating the remodeling which seemed so proper 20-30 years ago.

A visit to the library and study of architecture and restoration procedures would be of great benefit to those wishing to take advantage of the feeling of stability and security which is present in a building which has been around a while. (M. Bair)

1988 MEMBERSHIPS

Since the last issue dues have been received from the following:

Patrons: Lois Krausman, Tom & Audrey Leith, Richard & Helen Leitz and Joan Pinney-Rice.

Bus/Prof.: Dr. Harry Davis, Keehn Funeral Home and Dr. & Mrs. Gerald Whalen.


362 paid memberships in 1987. Can this good response and show of support for the Society's goals continue in 1988? Many thanks to all for your encouragement.