
Early morning July 4, 1876, finds the neighbors of Lewis Dorr driving past the substantial acreage he owned on the east side of Crooked Lake in Section 22, Genoa Township.

"Papa, I remember Grandpa telling me he knew Herr Dorr already when they lived in Germany." "Ya, many of our friends who have settled in Genoa came, as we did, from the Bessen-Darmstadt locale in the old country." (Many of these early German immigrants who came to the U.S. between 1828-45 were middle class tradesmen, shopkeepers and artisans.)

"Herr Dorr's grandson keeps telling me the first frame house in the township was built by his Opa. Is that right?" "Ya, Lewis was an expert carpenter and joiner. He also was selected to build our church on the land old Richard Behrens donated to the German Society (Evangelical Lutheran St. George's Congregation, Genoa, Michigan) back in '49. Before then the church services and confirmations were held in homes and Dorr's barn at the tavern and store he had on the Grand River Road near your school."

"Papa, let's hurry to get to Brighton in time for the celebration and picnic. The sun is hot here in the surry even with the top on." "Be patient, the horses need a holiday too. We'll be on time for the games and fireworks."

In 1930, a developer by the name of Herndon purchased the old Dorr property intending to develop a golf course. This didn't pan out. Within two years about 100 acres of the land Dorr owned on Crooked Lake was purchased by L. Harold Crandall. The Crandalls built a log cabin on the lake patterned after one promoted by Michigan State University. Thousands of pine trees were planted on the rolling, sandy hills. Following the untimely death of Mrs. Crandall, he decided to develop lots for summer cottages - Crandall's Crooked Lake Heights.

Since then, 1945-66, many beautiful homes, with families enjoying the benefits of rural living and access to a large lake also, are testament to Crandall's love of the area and to the hard working initiative of Lewis Dorr and his neighbors. (Compiled and edited from "1880 History of Livingston County", "Michigan Memorabilia" by Wm. Pless, Livingston County Register of Deeds Office and conversation with Mary (Crandall) Griffith.)

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Dues are the sole income for administration expenses of the Society. All donations (and any left over from administration expenses) are placed in the Historic Preservation and Restoration fund.

Renewals are a demonstration of support of the Society's goals and purposes. A very important aspect of renewals is the moral support given the board and committee members.

The Membership Chairman will be reviewing the list and sending reminder notes soon. A lot of postage (administration expense) can be saved if you check the label on this issue of Trail Tales for the year for which dues have been paid. Renew soon if there is no '88' on the label. Almost 2/3 of the membership have renewed for 1988. That kind of support is encouraging.

[The Editor is taking a leave of absence for two years at the end of 1988. Trail Tales has become a vital communication vehicle to the Society. Someone or several someones will be needed. Contact the editor or a Board Member if you are interested in helping.]

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T R A I L  T A L E S

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.

[Grand River Trail]

E D I T O R I A L

Many changes are taking place in the topography of the Brighton area.

Some change are innovative in the use of existing buildings. Some seem determined to make the area look like another plastic, uninspiring suburb of which there are already too many. Part of the historical character of the area, which is part and parcel of its charm and a reason for its appeal to many, is being destroyed.

Which of the recent constructions are being built to last 100 years? How can a sense of stability be created under such a temporary atmosphere? Will our children be able to point out "That's where I went to school" (or shopped or worked or played)? Can the collective good equal the collective bad which accompanies these changes?

Without any kind of watchdog, such as an historic commission in each of the various townships and the city it won't be long and we'll be as innocuous and forgettable as any other area which has forgotten its past. Historic preservation, guided by a Historic Commission, can be of benefit to residential and commercial owners alike. (M. Bair, Ed.)

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