EARLY Gristmills of the Brighton Area

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Altho' the village was centered, in 1840, on the hill where Spencer Road and Rickett Road intersect the Grand River Trail, "Upper Town", Orson Quackenbush selected vacant land in "Lower Town" to build the Brighton Flouring and Gristmill. The site was located on the north side of W. North Street; a strip about two blocks wide extending north (on the west side of S. West Street). The parcel included the area to be flooded by the millpond, and the high ground now occupied by the Old Town Hall, St. Paul's Episcopal Church and the village cemetery. After securing the plot, water rights also had to be obtained before building the dam. In those days this mill saved farmers a long trip to Woodruff's Mill on Pleasant Valley Road.

Altho' presently the city parking lot, the location was low and marshy ground. Moving dirt with a small slip scraper with one h.p. to construct the dam and spillway and form the raceway ponds north of the mill required considerable time. (It seems likely the lumber for the mill was cut by the Waltho Sawmill just a few hundred feet down stream.) During the years of the mill's operation there were two bridges on W. North Street; one over the stream from the water that turned the water wheel, the other over the water from the spillway. The dam was built on the south side of Main Street.

Quackenbush operated his mill for a few months and then sold the mill, including all the property and rights to Rev. Wm. A. Clark. He died in September, 1841, and his heirs sold the mill back to Quackenbush. However, the Clarkes donated the high ground east of the mill pond as a future site for the Episcopal Church and the Village received the land where the cemetery and the Old Town Hall are now located.

In 1847, Quackenbush sold the mill to Evert Woodruff who, in 1849, sold the Brighton Mill to Lyman Judson, who owned a large farm on Grand River Road, just east of the village limits. Judson enlarged the mill, removed the old breast water wheel and installed a French turbine type of water wheel. In 1856, he sold the mill to Egbert F. Albright and Chester Thomson. (Compiled and edited by Marieanna Bair and William Fless, 1880 History of Livingston County, Corrections and/or additions to this or any other subjects of local history are most welcome by this writer.) "Early Gristmills" to be continued.

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

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

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.

BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Board of Directors

OFFICERS
Pres. Rudy Herrmann 229-7923
V.P. Bob Richmond 229-6268
Sec. Shalagh Klein 229-6571
Treas. Marge White 227-3969

DIRECTORS
Bill Amhein 227-7282
Marieanna Bair 229-6402
Chuck Beers 229-9678
Dick Davis 229-8356
Judy Leith 229-6165
Joe-Lynne Lerner 227-1148
Leota Mason 546-4159
Gary McCririe 229-2191
Finance Comm. Dick Davis 229-8356
Lyons School Herb. L. Warner 229-6504
Old Town Hall Shalagh Klein 229-6571
Penny Szczeczowski editor 229-7324
Cathy Qualls editor 229-8656

General Meeting

The first general meeting of the year was held on January 17. Bill Amhein, a winner in the Old Town Hall raffle, presented his video of the helicopter ride to Detroit and back.

It was enjoyed by all who attended.

The next general meeting will be Tuesday, March 21, at Blodgett School. A potluck at 6:30 will be followed by the general meeting at 7:30. Doris Johnson will give an oral history on her life in Brighton since moving here in 1845. The public is invited to attend.

1989 Membership

The following have paid their dues since the last issue: Business/prof. P.P.O. Ink.

Thanks...Thanks,Thanks to all the people who volunteered for chairmanships:
Ethel Gebben - hospitality
Herb Warren - Lyons School
Audrey Leith - membership
Marian Carney - correspondence
Gary McCarrigie - program
Rae-Lynne Lerner - public relations
Tom Leith - publicity
Bill Amchek for the video
P.D.O. Printing for copying of labels
Old Kent Bank for printing of Trail Tales
Singer Press for printing Lyons School Brochures
Tom Leith and Ethel Gebben for seeing that the newsletters are delivered

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee is the fund-raising arm of the society. This committee coordinates and oversees the various fund-raisers planned by the society throughout the year. These fund-raisers include:

April
- Spaghetti Supper
- Bake Sale, in conjunction with the opening of the Farmers’ Market

May
- Spaghetti Supper

June
- Bake Sale, in conjunction with the annual Dinner Dance

July
- Art Festival

August
- Folk Art Festival
- Antique Sale, in conjunction with the Sidewalk Sale Days

September
- Bake Sale and Trash and Treasure Sale in conjunction with the last day of the Farmers’ Market

October
- Raffle

Lyons School

Lyons School Brochures have been printed compliments of Singer Press. They are being folded for future distribution in February.

Old Town Hall

The Bell Tower is finished and is ready for painting. Contact Shelagh Klein for more information and your offer to help on this committee.

Photographic Inventory Program

Sam Breck of Peaker Services in Green Oak Township has offered a program teaching how to make a photographic inventory of your community. This inventory will become an archival resource and will compliment the Society’s Historic Resources Survey. The program will cover procedure for taking photos including camera angles, time of day, etc.

Help...Help...help

We need: 
...workers for the spaghetti
...workers for the home tour
...finance committee members

Membership (cont.)

Pennala, Marshall & Je’Mel
Perdue, Doris Petersen, Mike & Cindy Qualls, Jerry & Judy Pormann, Ted & Linda Potter, Joan Rice, Andrew & Lila Robertson, Lovisa Seeger, R. Smith, Margaret Squire, Jim & Penny Szczesniowski, Anna Westin, Pat & Marge White, Alice Wilson, Mary Mathias,

Spaghetti Supper

The Spaghetti supper will be held on Friday, April 7 at the Fire Hall. A chairman is needed to coordinate the many jobs that go with the supper. We need volunteers the day before to prepare food. The day of the supper we need people to work in one hour shifts starting at 5:00 to set, clean up, sell tickets. We also need people who can be there at 1:00 to help decorate and set up. Also needed is someone to get the best deal on supplies: lettuce, bread, celery, radishes, carrots, drink mix, etc.

Please call Dick Davis, 229-8356, Shelagh Klein, 229-6571, or Marge White, 227-3968 if you can help with any of the above.

News from Other Chapters

My Queeter Chapter, Ruggles Mill-Milford, is presenting a program on cradles. There is not a great amount of information on this topic available. Would there be any member in the historical society that has collected them or has materials about cradles? We would appreciate any help. Thank you.

Contact: Linda Sturgeon, 655 Burns Rd. Milford, MI 48042

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1969 BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM 1989

NAME: _Phone: _

ADDRESS: 

New ( ) Renewal ( ) Please send a copy of Society Bylaws ( )
Activities in which I'd like to participate: 
( ) Bake Sale ( ) Help with spec. events ( ) Newsletter Pub., etc.
( ) Board Member ( ) Hospitality ( ) Research
( ) Fund Raising ( ) Meeting Programs ( ) Restoration
( ) Genealogy ( ) Membership Committee ( ) Photography
( ) Publicity ( ) Other work I'd be willing to do:

Uses: $25. Patron Send to: 
25. Business/Professional
8. Couple
5. Individual

Brighton Area Historical Society
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Editorial

The Historical Society bonds people with a common interest in the past and strives to preserve the best things for the future. As new co-editors, we would like to commend Marianne Bair for her many contributions to Trail Tales in the past. We will strive to preserve her spirit and enthusiasm in future issues. We are also pleased that Marianne will continue to write the last page of our newsletter. Her interesting adventures into the past help us understand how our town used to be.

We invite suggestions or items you would like to convey in the newsletter. Contact Penny or Cathy and we will try to do our best to put them in.

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