



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. VIII, No. 5 May 1989

BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Board of Directors

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Old Town Hall	Shelagh Klein	229-6571
Penny Szczechowski	editor	229-7324
Cathy Qualls	editor	229-3656

General Meeting

The next general meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 16 at Lindbom Elementary school. The potluck begins at 6:30. Bring a dish to pass and your own table service. Decaf. coffee is furnished and there is hot water for tea. Dress is casual. Everyone is welcome.

The meeting begins at 7:30 followed by a program. The program for the May meeting has not been set as yet.

A Stroll in the Past

The year is 1885. How I love the sound of the church bells. I know Aunt Josephine will soon be here. She promised me that she would teach me needlepoint tomorrow. Maybe she will bake fresh bread and let me help churn butter. I pray that morning will arrive soon.

These are a few of the memories that might be stirred up as you stroll in the past at the second annual historical home tour on Saturday, May 13, from 10:00 until 4:00.

You can just imagine: swinging on the swing in the cool of the shade on the Szczechowski's wraparound porch; elegantly dressed ladies gathering for tea in the Lerner's front parlor; quiet Sunday supper in the Schillinger's dining room; lemonade and croquet in the side yard at the Quall's; a pleasant rest in the warming room at the old Leith home ( being restored by the Camerons); or a Hartman family reunion all gathered at the home on Main Street (which is restored by the Sittaro family).

We hope you will come away from the home tour with a sense of the past and an appreciation for what our forefathers left for us to enjoy.

PLEASE HELP SUPPORT THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY HOME TOUR ON SATURDAY, MAY 13. VISIT THE HOMES AND GET OUT AND ENJOY THE DAY.

Thanks...thanks...thanks...thanks

...for the cost of printing the Trail tails to:

- Old Kent Bank
- Singer Press
- Puritan Machine Co.

...people who worked on the spaghetti supper

...to the following people for donations to the historical society:

- J. Ellis
- E. Hornung
- J. Hucal
- S. Lowry
- Ch. Pless
- D. Prieskorn

... to the six families who have opened their homes for the second annual home tour:

- Lerners, Qualls, Szczechowskis, Sittaros, Schillingers, and Camerons

...all the volunteers who will be giving their time to help make the home tour a success

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BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY/ Treasurer's Report

March 1, 1989	TOTAL NET WORTH	\$38168.99
RECEIPTS		
GENERAL FUND - Dues: 1989	13 @ \$ 5. = 65.	
	9 @ 8. = 72.	
	3 @ 25. = 75.	
1990	1 @ 8. = 8.	\$220.00
HISTORIC PRESERVATION & RESTORATION FUND -		
Finance Comm. Proj.		
Signature Quilt (Blight, Herbst)	30.	
Tile (88)	7.	37.00
Lyons School *		203.00
Interest 2-28-89 Sav. 81.60, chk. 7.10		88.70
Donations (Watson, Schmidt)		4.00
		<u>332.70</u>

DISBURSEMENTS

GENERAL FUND -		
Postage	12.50	
Audit	100.00	
T.T. postage	39.43	151.93
HISTORIC PRESERVATION & RESTORATION FUND -		
Finance Comm. Proj. = tile shpg.		2.40
Lyons Schoot Utilities		10.69
Old Town Hall Dinner/Dance D.J. deposit		75.00
		<u>88.09</u>

GENERAL FUND

HISTORIC PRESERVATION & RESTORATION FUND

Old Town Hall		\$12578.02
Lyons School		1979.92
Finance Comm. Proj.		
Bake Sale	\$1825.44	
Home Tour	767.61	
Post Cards	-158.00	
Raffles	1947.18	
Sales	4568.28	
Signature Quilt	926.00	
Spaghetti Supper	2064.56	
Stationery	555.38	
Tiles	388.28	12884.73
Undesig. Dona, 2525.61; Memor, 220.	2745.61	
Interest	3945.18	6690.79
		<u>38481.67</u>
3-31-89	TOTAL NET WORTH	

Old Town Hall Committee

Shelagh Klein, chairman 229-8494

The Bell Tower is finished and at D.P.W. for painting. A ceremony is planned for Memorial Day. Please check the local newspaper for details.

Bonnie Bean is working with the Downtown Merchants for door prizes to be given away at the Dinner Dance, October 28. More details will follow.

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Promenade the Past - 1989

The Tecumseh Area Historical Society will be having a historical home tour on Saturday May 20, and Sunday, May 21. The hours are 12:00 noon until 6:00 p.m.

There will be 8 homes open for the tour. The Rastus Haskell house ca. 1869; Lucius Lily house, Italianate, ca. 1840; R.S. Moore house, Queen Anne, ca. 1894; Sirrell LeBaron house, Greek Revival, ca. 1847; The Bidwell Building, ca. 1852; J. Roberts house, ranch style, 1966; Judge C.A. Stacy house, Italianate, (renovation in progress) ca. 1857. Advance tickets are \$5.00. Mail orders must be received by May 13. Mail to Tecumseh Area Historical Society

P.O. Box 26, Tecumseh, Mi. 49286  
Ticket sales during the tour will be at the museum only. They are \$6.00.

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Designer Home on Tour

The old Hartman home on Main Street will be on the home tour this year. The Sittaro family has refinished the interior. For the tour, several merchants in town have been working hard decorating different rooms in the house. We want to thank the merchants for helping to make the tour a success. Those who are helping are: E.D. Ewing, Ore Creek Antiques, Somewhere in Time, Memory Lane, Grist Mill, Golden Oak Antiques, Salt Box, Hartland House and Fowlerville Lumber.

FINANCE COMMITTEE - Dick Davis, Chairman 229-8356

The Seventh Annual Spaghetti Supper was a great success! Many thanks to the bakers who donated such wonderful goodies! And to Shirley Ritter for once again preparing the salad and cooking the spaghetti. The Committee is grateful to all the volunteers who helped: Nancy Hackney, Paul and Alene Anderson, and Marieanna Bair for setting up the Fire Hall; to Rudy Herrmann, Rae-Lynne Lerner, Susan Myers, and Burton Davis for welcoming our guests; to Virginia Herrmann, Clara Healy, Alexis Klein, and Alice Newcomb for selling tickets, and to Bob Richmond and Blance Esper for selling tiles. Thanks also to the food servers: Audrey Leith, Bill Amrhein, Leota Mason, Gary McCririe, Hal Potts, and Steve Grove, and to the kitchen help: Jack Smith, Mary Richmond, Penny & Jim Szczechowski, Kathy Grove, Lillian Davis, Marian Carney, Judy Dahlin, Kay Flynn, Shirley Jenks, Michael Cuthbert, Genevieve Kampe, Val Potts, and Ethel Gebben. The Committee also thanks Sefa's Market for donating the spaghetti and half of the lettuce; Shirley Ritter for contributing the rest of the "salad stuff"; and Wendy's for donating the salad bowls and plastic utensils.

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----- 1989 ----- 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. | ( ) Research       |
| ( ) Board Member | ( ) Hospitality            | ( ) Oral History          | ( ) Restoration    |
| ( ) Fund Raising | ( ) Meeting Programs       | ( ) Photography           | ( ) Video Taping   |
| ( ) Genealogy    | ( ) Membership Committee   | ( ) Publicity             | ( ) Other work I'd |

be willing to do: \_\_\_\_\_

Dues: \$25. Patron	Send to:	Brighton Area Historical Society
25. Business/Professional		P.O. Box 481
8. Couple		Brighton, Mi. 48116
5. Individual		

## BLACKSMITHING IN THE BRIGHTON AREA

The first settlers in this area lived in a primitive manner. Any tools they used were brought with them. When axes became dull, plows would break or a horse had thrown a shoe, the need for a blacksmith was acutely obvious.

As one early settler, Mr. Gardner Bird (1833) recalled, after the land was sufficiently cleared to admit of being broken, the plow became a necessity. To have the irons sharpened and repaired as necessary, Bird had to travel 22 miles to Dexter.

The earliest blacksmith in the area was Abram Fralick, who came from Plymouth in 1838. His shop was on the west side of the Grand River Trail between Main and St. Paul's Streets. The shop was built by William Balch as part of a hotel called the Balch House. By 1845 Morris DuBois was smithing in that shop.

Erastus A. Pratt came from Lapeer County in 1844, and followed the vocation of blacksmith in the Village of Brighton for 22 years, during which time he made most of the plow irons used in the surrounding country. His first shop was located on the present day site of the Presbyterian Church. David Thomson came to Brighton in 1843 and shortly after built a foundry on the site. In 1856 he built a brick foundry on the corner of Grand River Trail and North Street.

Many blacksmiths operated in Brighton over the years; too many to list here. At one time there were ten shops in the village. Most of them made wagons, carts, buggies and sleighs. Wheelbarrows, landrollers, "grasshopper" cultivators, spike toothed drags, scythes and grain cradles were built and repaired in addition to shoeing horses and oxen.

Many farmers did their own metal work. Iron was often brought with them since it was not readily available in the wilderness. A crude forge could be devised and tools and equipment made by hand.

Even though living in a dirt floored log cabin the homemaker had need for an oven for baking; andirons to hold the burning logs in the fireplace; iron hooks for holding cooking kettles; skillets, spiders, knives and other cooking utensils.

The corners of a log house were joined in such a manner as to not need nails but hinges, latches, shutter dogs, etc., were made of iron. The farmer needed scythes, sickles, ox yokes, harness fittings, horseshoes and other tools. Construction and logging called for axes, links, peavys, drawknives, crow bars, etc. (To be continued. Compiled and edited by Marieanna Bair from writings of Wm. Pless, Seth B. Jacobs, 1880 History of Livingston County and Foxfire 5)

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