EARLY SAWMILLS OF THE BRIGHTON AREA

Prior to the advent of sawmills in the area lumber, glass, sash, etc., was
brought in by ox teams from Ann Arbor or Detroit. A case in point being that of
Lewis B. Ponds who, in 1832, entered the W4 of the SW4 of Section 32. In 1834
he erected on it a framehouse, said to have been the first in the county and
at that time was regarded as a dwelling of considerable pretension. The timber
with which it was built was drawn from Ann Arbor, a distance of 20 miles,
with ox teams. The family did not move into it until 1837.

Alton's brothers Almon and Maynard Malby arrived in Brighton Township in the
summer of 1832 and Maynard bought 63 acres of land in section 31 (Brighton City),
it was 1834 before the brothers built the dam across Ore Creek in the vicinity
of Third Street. This supplied power for the Malby sawmill. One of their customers
was Chester Hazard of Genoa Township. During the winter of 1836-37, Mr. Hazard
drew whitewood (tulip) tree logs, cut on his own farm, to Malby's mill below
Brighton and had them sawed into lumber. It was principally of this lumber that
the house was built. This was probably the first frame house erected in Genoa.

Aaron H. Kelly, entered 63 acres in Section 6 and 208 acres in Section 7, Brighton
Township, in 1837. He soon built a substantial house and then a sawmill in 1837.
This mill, operated by water power (upper Ore Creek), was known far and wide
in those early days and furnished lumber for many of the first buildings erected
in the county. About the last work done by this pioneer mill was saving a quantity
of planks for the Detroit and Howell Plank Road. Further upstream, in Section 5,
Rev. Wm. A. Clark, by 1839, had also erected a sawmill.

In early spring of 1833, in Brighton Township, Evert (and Ruby) Woodruff entered
160 acres of Section 34, and by the last day of May he and his family took residence
(probably a log cabin). During the summer an earthen dam was built approximately
5 1/2 miles south of the north section line. That fall he built a sawmill by the
dam from which ran a sluice about one mile long. A three story gristmill, with
an undershot wheel, was erected the next year near the end of the sluice. Both
mills were supplied with water power from the stream known generally as Woodruff's
Creek on what is now Pleasant Valley Road about four miles east of town. By
1835, the sawmill was producing lumber for boards to lay two floors in Benjamin
Blain's cabin in the northwest corner of the Township. (This writer has not
learned what happened to the sawmill.) Describing Woodruff's business acumen
and reliability, the 1880 History of Livingston County states: "To Mr. Woodruff
the township is largely a debtor for the enterprise he manifested in the erection
of mills, which aided greatly in its development." (cont. on page 3.)

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

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

BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Board of Directors

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GENERAL MEETING, TUESDAY, JANUARY 17

The first General Meeting of 1989, will be held at the Lindstrom Elementary School,
1010 State St., 7:30 p.m. A pot luck will begin at 6 p.m. The public is invited.
A video of the helicopter ride by the winners of the Old Town Hall Committee
raffle, October 15, will be shown. They took off from Dick and Katy Chrysler's
tennis court after being provided a very nice lunch by the Chrysler's. The afternoon
was perfect for the ride to the Detroit River and back. Bring your friends to
the meeting. They will enjoy the colorful trip also.

DATES TO REMEMBER
Mon. Jan 9, 7 p.m. - Finance Committee.
Thurs. " "7 p.m. - Board Meeting.
Tues. " 17, 6:30 " General Meeting.
Mon. " 23, 7 p.m. - Old Town Hall Comm.
Fri. Apr. 7, Spaghetti Supper.
Sat. May 13, Home Tour.

1989 MEMBERSHIPS

Business/Professional: Bloomers Floral
Design, Brighton Animal Hospital, Brighton-
Howell Appliance Service & Parts, Champ's
Pub, E.R.A. Griffith Realty, E.W. Edwin
Furniture Galleries, Keenin Funeral Home,
Dr. Kim M. Kinsey, Kitchen Suppliers Inc.,
Lovan & Heghey, Refrigeration Research
Rollison Pro Hardware Inc., Zemper Studio
(Howell).

Patron: Elizabeth Bindenagel (S.D.),
Burton & Lillian Davis, Richard Davis,
Mary Ann & Robert Cardella, N.M. Norman
Guest, Kathy Lowry, Steve Lowry, A. Colton
Park, Bob & Mary Richmond, Alice Wilson.

Couple/Indy: Aaron Beard, Joe & Pauline
Chenoweth, Alice Clark, John & Margaret
Dunlevy (Milf.), Blanche Esper, David &
Terri Fisher (Pinnock), Tim & Ray Flynn,
Wm. & Eleanor Garrett, Ellliouise Gibson
(Coomer), Margaret Deaton, David Hackett
(Naple City), Nancy Hackney, John & Marilyn
Homan (PA), Jeff & Debbie Hucal, Carol
King (TX), Shelagh Klein, Harold & Mary
Ann Leitz, Jere & Kay Michaels, Joe &
Irene Mike, Rosemary Moon, James & Judy
Murray (Dexter), Roland, Jane & Scott
Owens, Judith Peck, Doris Petersen,
Charles & Norma Jean Pless (Roscommon),
Tedd R. & Linda Potter, Lyle & Joyce
Powers, Elbert Seger (M), Giovanni &
Suzanne Sittaro, Gerald & Owen Swann,
Don & Alice Wyland.

In recognition of their assistance the
Board of Directors voted to give 1989
memberships to: Brighton Chamber of
Commerce, Brighton Fire Department,
Brighton Lions Club, Citizens Insurance
Company of America, George Moses Co.,
Old Kent Bank and Trustcorp.

The support demonstrated by all those
listed is very encouraging to the Board of
Directors and committee chairmen. To
know others stand behind their efforts is
inspiring.