



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. IX No. 2 February, 1990

Brighton Area Historical Society
Board of Directors
* * * *

Officers

Pres.	Gary McCririe	229-2191
V.P.	Cathy Qualls	229-8656
Sec.	Kathy Grove	229-7876
Treas.	Marge White	227-3968

Directors

Bill Amrhein	227-7282
Marieanna Bair	229-6402
Chuck Beach	229-9678
Rudy Herrmann	229-7923
Audrey Leith	229-6165
Leota Mason	546-4159
Suzanne Sittaro	229-7324
Penny Szczechowski	229-7324

Finance Comm.,

Lyons School, Herb Warner	229-6504
Old Town Hall, Shelagh Davis	229-8494
Editors Penny Szczechowski	229-7324
Cathy Qualls	229-8656

1990 MEMBERSHIPS ARE DUE

By checking the number on the corner of the address label on this issue you can determine if you are up to date with your membership dues.

If you find a "90" on your label, you're all set and we say thanks.

If you find an "89", it would be sincerely appreciated if 1990 dues could be paid soon.

If you find an "88", your support by paying 89 and 90 dues would encourage those actively involved in achieving the goals of the Society; they'd know you stand with them.

If you find no number, it is hoped you will care enough about what the Society is doing and will demonstrate your concern by paying 1990 dues.

Within the next month a review will be made of the Trail Tales mailing list. It seems unfair that members should subsidize those neglectful of their responsibility. Please respond with dues payments so you can continue receiving information about the Society.

The Board of Directors is convinced it is vital to send Trail Tales to everyone who cares, or should care, about the Society's goals. All administration expenses are covered by dues payments. Therefore all donations can go to accomplish the goals of the Society. It is assumed one would want to carry a fair share of the load.

CHANGING ADDRESSES?

When your address changes please inform the Society. It costs .25¢ when the Post Office makes the correction. Thank you.

1990 Patron dues Erv, Jr. & Dorothy Bandkau, Robert Clark, Dick & Shelagh Davis, Robert Gardella, Mary Ann Gardella, Bill & Helen Hyne, Val & Kathy Jacoby (FL.), Steve & Kathy Lowry, Charles & Norma Jean Pless.
1990 Bus./Prof. dues Brighton Animal Hospital,
Indiv./Couple dues Patrick & Josie Arnold, Bob & Ruth Bostedor, Ron & Caryl Carr, Joe & Pauline Chenoweth, Mike Cuthbert, Clayton Epley, Tim & Kay Flynn, Ken & Zara Graham, Elouise Gibson, Katherine Hampton, Jo Hyne, Arlene Jacob, M Royden Jones, Mike & Lindsey Kelleher, Carol King, Carl & Ellen Loerwald, Jeanette Madigan, Mike & Helen Michaels, Margaret Muir, M/M Charles Norris, George Prieskorn, Lucille Prieskorn, Elbert Seger, Richard Smith, Margaret Squire, Gerald & Gwen Swann, Jon & Kim Stoppels.

THANKS - AND HELP

During 1989, the following businesses donated to the printing expense of Trail Tales. The Society is sincerely appreciative.

AAA, Kitchen Suppliers, Old Kent Bank, Puritan Machine Co., Singer Press, Trustcorp.

It costs money to get Trail Tales printed and mailed. Volunteers do all the work of preparation, folding, labeling, mailing and personal distribution.

All Administration expenses of the Society are to be paid from dues received. Trail Tales is sent to members and others who should know in what the Society is involved.

To ensure this practice can continue it is necessary to ask for donations for 1990 toward the expenses involved.

A check to the Society, noting it's for Trail Tales expenses would be a real demonstration of support to all the people giving so much time and energy.

+ + + +

IN MEMORY

In the past year several long time residents of the area and members of the Society have passed away:

Hardee Bethea, Charles Case, Eleanor Davis, Will Hampton, Lyle Hartman, Dan Madigan, Chet Paquette, Frank Seger and Marguerite Wenzel. Sincere sympathies of the Society are extended to their families.

+ + + +

LOOKING FOR OLD 'STUFF'

The January, 1990, issue of Trail Tales included a request for information about the 1909 Brighton Homecoming. Two I.D. pins have surfaced: one for a member, one for a committee person.

Is there other information out there? Surely someone can tell us more about this event. Please call Marieanna Bair, 229-6402.

In that same issue there was also a request for historical information of the area to develop an area historical library. Copies could be made and the original returned. Let Marieanna know what you have.

AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETIES

TO MEET IN BRIGHTON

Historical societies of the area have been meeting informally twice a year for eight years. Brighton will be playing host to this group April 2.

From 7-8 p.m., tours of St. Paul's Episcopal Church will be held. At 8 p.m., the group will meet at the Fellowship Hall for a short program by Sam Breck on the development of rail roads in the area followed by an opportunity for societies to tell of their achievements and warn of disappointments; learning experiences for all. A mutual encouragement gathering. Society members are invited.

+ + + +

ANY OLD REFRIGERATORS?

The Refrigeration Research Museum, 525 N. Fifth Street, could use some 1920s or 30s Copeland, Crosley, Grunow, Majestic or Westinghouse relics. Get in touch with them before putting it in the dump.

+ + + +

EIGHTH ANNUAL SPAGHETTI SUPPER

February 23, 5-7 p.m., at the Brighton Fire Hall, 615 W. Grand River. Park in back. Adults \$5.00 under 12 \$2.00.

Mark this date on your calendar. Your attendance is needed. Bring friends and support the hard working volunteers of this group.

Sponsored by the Finance Committee, all proceeds go to the restoration of the Old Town Hall and Lyons School.

Volunteers are needed for the Spaghetti Supper. Please call Gary McCririe and tell him you can help.

Old Town Hall Restoration Committee
chairman - Shelagh Davis

Doug and Carol Rearick have again contributed very generously to the Old Town Hall Restoration Fund. Thanks to their \$5000 donation, the Committee will be able to purchase the carillon system for the newly restored bell tower. Plans call for early spring installation. We are very grateful to the Rearicks for their thoughtfulness.

We have also received a generous donation from the Organization of Questers, Michigan State. The Questers donated over \$600, which will also be put toward the carillon system, in December.

Nancy Hackney, Blanche Esper, and Dorothy Palarchio, also donated to the Old Town Hall Restoration in December.

We thank all of you for your donations and generosity.

Mark your calendars for the fourth Annual Dinner-Dance, to be held again at the Lakelands Country Club, on October 27. We are encouraging members to dress in historical costume for the Dinner-Dance, if they would like. Remember last year, and how wonderful Dr. Ruth Ann Davis and her husband, Eugene Bell looked in their Civil War clothes. Between now and October, many of us should be able to come up with ideas for historical dress!

* * * * *

Home Tour 1990

The 1990 Brighton Home Tour is coming along very well. We have four homes and two churches already chosen and several more being looked into. If you have any suggestion for a home to be toured, please contact Cathy Qualls who is chairing this committee.

There is going to be an historical display in the upstairs of the Old Town Hall, and possibilities of antique clothing displays, antique automobiles, a Civil War camp set-up, and many other exciting events besides the tour of homes. The next meeting is Scheduled for Feb. 13 at Cathy's home. We would love to have you.

BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM

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		

ELECTRICITY COMES TO BRIGHTON

Brighton's first electric lighting plant was built in 1897 by Carl Conrad. He installed wiring in local homes virtually free of charge to encourage the use of electricity for lighting and operating small appliances. On all but moonlit nights, the streets of downtown Brighton were soon illuminated by arched strings of light bulbs. The Brighton Electric and Power Company provided service only from sundown to midnight, after which time the plant was shut down for the night.

The building that housed this first power plant was used in succeeding years as an activity center for clubs and community groups and also served as a local library for several years. (S. of City Hall, N. of D.&C. Store.)

According to the Detroit Edison Company, the electric plant was incorporated in 1903, under a state law that took effect that year and the name was changed to the Brighton Light and Power Company. By 1915, the Eastern Michigan Edison Company gained controlling interest in the plant through its vice president, Alfred C. Marshall. Later that year, directors of the local utility sold the plant to Eastern Michigan Edison for just under \$20,000, merging, in 1916 with Detroit Edison Co.

Turn-of-the-century Brighton also witnessed a roller skating craze, then sweeping the nation. A rink was built on E. Grand River (E. side, between Main and North Streets), a barn like structure with an excellent, hard maple floor. Having previously been lit with kerosene lamps, electricity was installed in 1910, and at that time was only used for basketball games.

Brighton's first moving pictures were shown at what was, until last year, the Rebecca Hall, 422 W. Main. Admission was .05¢; local girls played piano to accompany the films and others displayed their singing talents during intermissions and reel changes. The town's second theater (opened 4-2-19, mgr. Cliff Roberts), was built at 307 W. Main. The Rialto later became a bowling alley and was finally torn down. (Colt Park Agency is located there now.) A larger movie house (the Washington, mgr. Walter Carmack) was opened later on W. Grand River in the block north of E. St. Paul St. During the Depression years, the business received heavy competition from free movies shown outdoors on the sides of building. These free movies were sponsored by local merchants trying to get people to come downtown and trade.

In the town, schools, churches, businesses, etc., made use of this new invention at the first opportunity. It was the mid 1930s before electrical power was common in the surrounding townships. (Compiled and edited by Marieanna Bair.)

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

