



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. 6 June, 1990

Brighton Area Historical Society
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Lyons School, Herb Warner	229-6504
Old Town Hall, Shelagh Davis	229-8494
Editors-Penny Szczechowski	229-7324
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General Meeting

If you missed our May general meeting, you missed a wonderful talk by Chuck Bidwell on the history of the fire department. After listening to him, we can feel very good about the men and women who are volunteers in service to keeping Brighton safe from fire.

Our next general meeting will be in September on September 11. We do not hold meetings in the summer, but there will be many exciting events and activities so read your Trail Tales for information.

"A Stroll in the Past"

The third annual "Stroll in the Past" was a great success even though the weather did not cooperate. Brighton's annual home tour was enjoyed by many people even though it was cold and rainy.

The five homes, two churches, and the Old Town Hall, which were on the tour were decorated in their finest and presented a wonderful show for the lucky people who ventured out for the day.

A big thank you goes out to all the volunteers who helped make the tour a success. As in any venture, volunteers do make the difference.

A big thank you also goes to the home tour committee for their great work:

Cathy Qualls- chairman,
Penny Szczechowski, Marieanna Bair, Rita Schillinger, Betty Gottschalk, Debbie Oberpeul, Ricci Bandkau, and Shirley Sharp.

* * * * *

Have a wonderful summer. Do something historic. There are many museums within easy driving distance as well as home tours and antique shows.

Membership Committee

Dick and Shelagh Davis
chairmen 229-8494

April 1990 Membership

Patron dues Rae Carmack (California)
Marlene and Pat Fonseca (California)
John & Debra Oberpeul; Marie O'Dell

Business & Professional Dues
Warner's Orchard & Cider Mill

Couple & Individual Dues

Mildred Bender ('91), Jean Bethea,
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Blight, Mrs.
Carleton Chase, Frank & Bernice Cheetham,
Frances Clore, Libby Eisenhardt, Barton
Hellmuth, Betty Herbst, Alice & Phil
Krupa (Suttons Bay), Jack & Jeannette
Linahan, Mary & Fred Messerschmidt,
Tamara Milostan, Dorothy E. Musch,
Betty Polaske, Ed & Connie Sherman,
Margaret Siford, Kyle & Randall Wilson

May 1990 Membership

Patron dues David Beauchamp, Bob &
Tillie Bitten, Lois & Gregory Krausman
(Florida)

Business & Professional Dues
Accu Temp Heating & Air Conditioning, Inc.
Colt Park Agency Inc.

Couple & Individual Dues

David Z. Barton, Mrs. Sydney Clark,
Mr. & Mrs. William R. Franklin (AZ),
Jaime Green, Helen & Tim Hurst, Mr. &
Mrs. R Leitz (Dearborn), Mary Pearsall,
Ray & Linda Potter, Larry & Rita
Schillinger, Karen J. Goss, Cliff &
Shirley Ritter, Mr. & Mrs. Timothy
McMacken, Mr. & Mrs. Mark McMacken,
Don & Alice Wyland

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Finance Committee

Mike Cuthbert - chairman
229-4550

The next meeting will be June 7 at
7:00 at Scranton Middle School.

July Fourth Parade

Troop #350
Dick & Shelagh Davis
chairmen 229-8494

Historical Society members
who would like to march in
the July 4th parade should
call Dick or Shelagh to
sign up. Members may
march individually, as a
group, or be part of the
Antique/Classic Car Parade.

Let us know your plans!

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REMINDER

If you are planning to join
the Historical Society of
Michigan, you need to send
\$15 and your name and address
address to:

Brighton Area Historical
Society
P.O. Box 481

Brighton, Mich. 48116
The insert in last month's
Trail Tales explained this
fund raiser for the society.

This opportunity lasts only
until June 20. If you have
any questions about it, call
Marieanna Bair, 229-6402 or
Penny Szczechowski 229-7324.

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Ann Arbor Area Preservation
Alliance

1990 Second Sunday
Old House Clinic Calendar

June 10 - Brick restoration
by David Houck, master mason
doing restoration work.
July 8 - Foundations by Russell
Payeur, will review prevention
maintenance of older
foundations.

Old Town Hall Committee
Shelagh Davis, chairman, 229-8494

Many thanks to the wonderful volunteers who helped with the display at the Old Town Hall during the third annual Home Tour: To Betty Gottschalk for arranging for the display of the three generations of wedding gowns from the same family (the 1900 wedding dress of Katie McKenna who married John R. Jansen; the 1945 wedding dress of Marie Jansen, who married F. Joseph Reynolds; and the 1970 wedding dress of Mary Beth Reynolds, who married Blaine Michael Warner). Also displayed was the 1927 wedding dress worn by Marie Bremer Welcker O'Dell at her marriage in Howell First Presbyterian Church. Betty also arranged for the loan of the hosiery display, the 1897 petticoat. and the 1920's bathing suit.

Committee members helping with the display were Hal and Val Potts, Gary and Sara McCririe, and Dick and Shelagh Davis. Our thanks, also, to Roberta Estes for making the needlework kits of the Old Town Hall, and to local merchants Cheryl Corbitt (Alterations Unlimited), and Lynn Karty (First Class/Next Generation) for the loan of the dress forms used for the display of the historical dresses. And many thanks to our visitors who gave us some great ideas on restoring the second floor of the Old Town Hall as a museum.

Our appreciation is also extended to Bob and Tillie Bitten, and to Alice E. Sprague, for their generous donations toward the Old Town Hall restoration.

Many, many thanks to Marie O'Dell for donating the \$250.00 for the rental of Lakelands Country Club, for the Dinner-Dance, October 27. The Committee is very grateful and appreciates Marie's generosity.

Plans are progressing for the next stage of the Old Town Hall restoration. We are presently seeking quotes on the balcony reconstruction, and the second floor windows. We hope to start on these two projects very shortly.

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:

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bake Sale | <input type="checkbox"/> Help with spec. events | <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter Pub., etc. | <input type="checkbox"/> Research |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Board Member | <input type="checkbox"/> Hospitality | <input type="checkbox"/> Oral History | <input type="checkbox"/> Restoration |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fund Raising | <input type="checkbox"/> Meeting Programs | <input type="checkbox"/> Photography | <input type="checkbox"/> Video Taping |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Genealogy | <input type="checkbox"/> Membership Committee | <input type="checkbox"/> Publicity | <input type="checkbox"/> Other work I'd |

be willing to do: _____

- Dues: \$25. Patron
25. Business/Professional
8. Couple
5. Individual

Send to:

Brighton Area Historical Society
P.O. Box 481
Brighton, Mi. 48116

EDUCATION IN THE BRIGHTON AREA PRE 1900 (cont.)

In the southwest corner of Brighton Township (now Brighton City) the number of children of school age, 5-20 years, increased from 46 in 1837 to 267 in 1879. A Mr. Jerald and Miss Sophie Olney taught the first school in 1838, in a building on the east corner of E. Grand River and Hope Street. (Varying accounts put the date of construction even earlier, in 1835 by Maynard Maltby.) This building was used until 1847, when it was sold and moved to a lot owned by John Becker, on Fitch (Main) Street west of Grand River. There it was used as a blacksmith shop until 1878, when it was moved to the end of the lot and used as a barn or carriage house until it burned about 40 years ago.

After the first building was sold, a house on E. Main was rented and used for a school until 1850 when a new school of frame construction was built on the northeast corner of Spencer and East Street. As enrollment continued to increase it became necessary to rent vacant stores in the downtown area to accommodate grades 1-4. These rented schoolrooms had been previously occupied by various ventures, including saloons, wool storage, grocery stores, etc., and were in sad states of repair. Naturally, parents of children attending were dissatisfied with such facilities, but those were difficult times and everyone felt it was beyond their means to do much about the situation.

This condition continued through the Civil War Years until the "Union" school was occupied in December, 1868. (Perhaps it received this name in commemoration of the saving of the Union.) This third school building, constructed on Rickett Road (then Ann Arbor Road), was build of brick at the cost of \$10,000 not including the price of the lot which was \$487.50. There were not many furnaces in those days, but this school had one; there was a large register that was usually the "big hole in the floor". The first four grades were in the basement, the next four on the main floor, and the 9th, 10th and 11th grades upstairs. There were six teachers for the school, from which two people graduated in 1887; Mable Wiley and Fanny Holdridge.

To continue education beyond the 8th grade, the parents of children in outlying districts paid a tuition fee for students attending the high school in town. This usually meant that 8 grades would be the limit of a child's education because it was not financially affordable for all. Transportation was by horse and/or buggy. To avoid traveling 5-10 miles twice a day, good weather and bad, required that room and board be found for these children during the week. This was often with a relative and girls often helped pay for their keep by baby sitting and helping with housework. Because of the need for them to help with chores boys usually returned home each night. Following a blizzard farms could be isolated for days until the farmers got together with teams and bob sleighs to 'break' the roads. No county snow plow in those days. (Compiled and Edited by Marieanna Bair. To be continued.)

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