



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. XI No. 11 November, 1990

Brighton Area Historical Society  
Board of Directors

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

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Old Town Hall, Shelagh Davis 229-8494  
Editors-Penny Szczechowski 229-7324  
Cathy Qualls 229-8656

NOVEMBER ANNUAL MEETING

NOVEMBER 13

The Brighton Area Historical Society will hold its annual meeting at 7:30 at Scranton Middle School. A potluck will be held at 6:30. You are invited to bring a dish to pass, and enjoy a bit of fun and good food before the meeting.

Election of Officers will take place at this meeting. Leota Mason has been chosen to head the nomination committee. At this time the following slate has been chosen:

President: Gary McCririe  
Vice President: Cathy Qualls  
Secretary:  
Treasurer: Marge White

Board of Directors:

Marieanna Bair  
Mike Cuthbert  
Rudy Herrman  
Penny Szczechowski

JOE MIKE TO SPEAK AT GENERAL MEETING

November 13

Joe Mike, a local artist, will be presenting a program on "Our Community".

He will talk after the election of officers takes place.

We look forward to hearing his talk and hope to see you there. Bring a friend and enjoy a night of entertainment.

The committee is still looking for a secretary nomination, and more people to serve on the Board of Directors. A complete slate will be presented at the meeting. Nominations will be accepted from the floor at the meeting.

Please come and cast your vote and show support for these officers.

## THE OLD HOUSE LECTURE SERIES

The first Old House lecture series was a huge success. 34 people met on October 2, to learn "What Style is my House". Robert Scheitzer, a professor from Eastern Michigan University, presented the program which featured architecture from all over Michigan. He also identified homes and dates from participants at the lecture.

The next lecture in this series will be held on November 6. Judy Burns will be speaking on "Researching your Home". Judy is a local historian.

Concluding the series on November 27 is Susan Cooper Finney, who will be speaking on Victorian Christmas Tree Decorations. Susan is the exhibit designer and graphic artist at the Michigan Historical Museum.

This lecture series is being presented by the Livingston County Historical Society. The lectures are held at 7:30 p.m. in room L-8 at the Howell High School. Tickets are \$3.00. There are still tickets available. They can be purchased at the door or through the Howell Community Education Office.

A winter series is currently being planned. Information on this new series will be available soon.

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## SANTA CLAUS- A TRADITION

The Plymouth Historical Museum will be having a very special Christmas exhibit this year. From November 14- January 27, 1000 Santa Claus figures from the Petz Collection will be on exhibit.

## ANN ARBOR AREA

### PRESERVATION ALLIANCE

1990 Second Sunday  
Old House Clinic

November 11: Clint Driver will discuss important system and structural issues to be aware of whether you are considering buying an older home or fixing up the one you have.

Tickets are \$4.00. To order: Send a check or money order with a stamped, self-addressed envelope to:

A3Pa  
616 Brooks St.  
Ann Arbor, Mich. 48103

Call Mary Jo Wholihan, 665-2112, for more information.

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### 1991 HOME TOUR COMMITTEE

The 1991 Brighton Area Historical Society Home Tour Committee is being formed. Cathy Qualls, 229-8656, has volunteered to again chair this committee. Cathy is looking for volunteers who are interested in working on this spring fund-raiser.

There is much to do to get ready. There are big jobs and small jobs, and just the perfect job for you if you are willing to help.

At the present time, homes need to be identified. If you have a home in mind that you think would be perfect for the tour, please let Cathy know.

If you are interested in working on this committee, please call Cathy and volunteer your time.

OCTOBER MEMBERSHIP

INDIVIDUAL DUES:

Dick and Shelagh Davis;
Elnora Knaus (Indiana);
Bev and Ted Olson (Pinckney);
Mike and Cathy Qualls

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OLD TOWN HALL RESTORATION
COMMITTEE

Dick & Shelagh Davis, 229-8494

The 4th Annual Dinner-Dance,
scheduled for October 27, was
cancelled due to lack of ticket
sales. The Committee is exploring
ideas for other fund-raisers,
including a brochure of "brief
highlights" of Brighton history,
which is planned for late
winter.

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TILE COMMITTEE

Dick & Shelagh Davis, 229-8494

The 1990 tile is being made, and we
are still planning for December
delivery. Tentative plans call for
the 1990 tile to be a picture of the
old opera house/theatre. If any
member has a picture, please call us

TILE COMMITTEE (cont.)

so we can have a copy made.
We are also considering
the idea of issuing two
tiles per year.

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THE SOCIETY NEEDS YOUR
SUPPORT

PAY MEMBERSHIP DUES

1991 will be here before
long. If you haven't paid
1990 dues, it is hoped that
you will consider paying
both years at the same time.
Check the mailing label for
the date indicating the year
for which dues were paid.

Hard working, volunteer
board members do appreciate
this show of support.

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The Ann Arbor Cobblestone
Farm will hold its
COUNTRY CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION
on Saturday and Sunday,
December 8 and 9.

Marshall holds its
Candlelight Walk Homes Tour
on December 8 and 9 from
4:00-6:00.

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

## IS THERE A DOCTOR IN THE AREA?

As settlers moved to the area in the 1830s and 40s they left behind cultural and educational opportunities, family ties and anyone with any medical training. Maybe that wasn't all bad. The lack of understanding of the human body and the many ills which might befall it allowed horrifying treatments to take place. The fixing of leeches to a wound to get rid of putrified flesh or the letting of blood to combat an illness are sufficient examples for our readers.

The cholera epidemic of the early 1830s ensured that settlers did not linger long in heavily populated areas as Detroit on their journey west. Families had little with which to fight the dreaded plagues. Other terrifying diagnoses included scarlet fever, measles, diphtheria, typhoid, tuberculosis, whooping cough, ague (malaria) all took a heavy toll on the population; especially, it seemed, where many lived in close proximity. Little knowledge of how disease spreads, and lack of sanitary water and facilities often decimated the hapless settlers. Being born and surviving was a major accomplishment.

We hear of the pioneers who lived well past their 80th birthday and might be misled to believe those were the 'good old days.' A short tour of an old cemetery soon dispels that opinion. The numbers of graves of those who never lived to their 5th birthday is disheartening.

These brave people seldom went to seek a doctor but when there were more sick people in the family than well, there was little choice. Dr. Samuel W Pattison, in 1836, located in Fentonville (Fenton) relates, "I was guided to many of these places (in the northern part of the county) through timbered openings by marked trees and often following Indian trails.....During the months of August and September the intermittent and remittent fevers - diseases peculiar to low or flat countries - prevailed to an alarming extent. The well were the exception; whole families were down, many became discouraged and some fled, but it was remarkable that most of these returned to Michigan."

With a doctor several hours horse or buggy ride away, the mother of the family was expected to be able to treat the patient. Researching the remedies used is almost as revolting to the imagination as studying the illnesses. A mixture of lard and turpentine rubbed on the chest treated a chest cold. A mustard plaster or one of hot fried onions in a bag on one's chest was the remedy for more severe congestion. And a caring mother couldn't let her family approach Spring without a dose of castor oil to 'clean out the system.' (By Marieanna Bair. To be continued. The writer hopes that persons with knowledge of medical practitioners in the area, since the turn of the century, will contact her. 229-6402)

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