

IS THERE A DOCTOR IN THE AREA? (Cont.)

The construction of Mellus Hospital in 1931, encouraged more medical practitioners to come to Brighton. Among them were Dr. Archibald McGregor (who acquired the hospital upon the death of Dr. Mellus, 1939), and Dr. Duncan Cameron, both of whom came to Brighton in the mid to late 1930s, and practiced at the hospital. Cameron's office was in the Lee house (just south of the First Presbyterian Church on E. Grand River.) By the early 1940s the McPherson Memorial Hospital in Howell was accepting patients. This helped reduce the pressure on medical facilities in other areas of the county. In the late '50s Dr. McGregor retired and sold the hospital to a Dr. Vann. He developed a rather unsavory reputation (involving abortions, drugs, etc.) and during the mid '60s the hospital was sold to the Presbyterian Church for use as office space and educational facilities. From 1979-1989, the Michigan National Bank had its Brighton offices located there. Its newest owners are Leah Gold Confectioners whose corporate offices, candy making factory and retail sales will be in the building. Dr. McGregor is buried at the Pinckney Cemetery; having died at the age of 57 in 1962.

In 1940, Dr. Olin C. Wilkinson moved to Brighton. The Campbell house at 420 E. Grand River had two front rooms; one served as a waiting room and the other was the treatment room. There he hung out his shingle. The doctor practiced osteopathy, the first such doctor in Brighton. (Dr. Shirtzer in Howell was the only other D.O. in the county. He had not been allowed the use of McPherson Memorial Hospital and had to take surgical, etc., patients to Detroit Osteopathic Hospital.) To help break the ice because people were wary of that unfamiliar method of treatment, and to develop his practice, he usually attended the high school football games and offered his services in the event of an injury. For about 10 years he was the school team physician.

When Dr. Cameron went off to WW II he transferred his practice and office to Dr. Wilkinson with "You can have any of my patients you can keep." (After the war Dr. Cameron developed a practice in Detroit as a surgical specialist.) Dr. Wilkinson practiced at the Lee house until 1950, when he built a clinic on the S.W. corner of E. Grand River and North Street. Dr. William Rice, a boyhood friend of his in Bad Axe, came to Brighton at his urging in 1942 and they developed a joint practice.

In the late 1950s to early 1960s, Dr. Wilkinson served as the mayor of Brighton, resigning because of ill health. Under Mayor Wilkinson the first city manager, Bob Beekner, was hired. For three years, the Doctor, and others, instigated and supported efforts to have the I-96 and US 23 interchange cloverleaf situated near Brighton at the time of the construction of those highways. When the McPherson Community health Center was first opened he was its Chief of Staff. December 21, 1969, Dr. Wilkinson died. He is buried at Fairview Cemetery. Dr. Rice retired in the early 1970s and divides his time between Florida and Bad Axe, Mi. (By Marieanna Bair. To be continued. Anyone with information regarding the subject matter of these articles is urged to contact her, 229-6402, she needs help.)

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