BRIGHTON AREA FARMERS: FROM BEEF TO DAIRY C. 1900 (cont.)

Sixty and more years ago farms had less acreage and a more diversified product. Grains, hay, livestock, beans, potatoes, wool, apples and milk provided the income. The economy of the area was entirely dependent on the 'outside' money farmers earned. It used to be said "If you can't do anything else, farm." However farms are now several hundred acres in size. Most are specialized and the equipment used much more sophisticated and expensive. Whatever his specialty the farmer now must have a good knowledge of chemistry, animal genetics, animal and plant disease, and be an amateur meteorologist. The wisdom required by the financier, agronomist and mechanic is no stranger to a successful farmer. The consideration of diversification into other profit making ventures to create additional income, and soil conservation are also contemplated by today's farmer.

For a dairy farmer bulk milk tanks became the way to go during the 1950s. Discarding the milk cans, which had been in use for over 50 years, Livingston County farmers were installing huge stainless steel containers. The milk now flows directly from the milking machine on the cow into the tanks where it is quickly cooled. The cleanliness of the product is increased since there is no exposure to the air.

The spread of undulant fever (a long-lasting bacterial disease characterized by an undulating, or remittent, fever, profuse perspiration, pain and swelling in the joints and an enlarged spleen; transmitted especially through milk...Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, fifth edition.) has been reduced to an almost non-existent level because of pasteurization and an improved criterion of cleanliness in the dairy process. C. 1940 this disease was wiped out of Livingston County when the county health department and the county government, after persistent lobbying by Fred Catrell, passed an ordinance which required the pasteurization of all milk sold in Howell. (Everyone selling milk sold it in Howell.) Presently all milk products, sold commercially, can be consumed without risk to one's health from undulant fever, rheumatic fever, T.B. etc., because of the strict regulations which must now be observed.

Artificial insemination, practiced by most dairy farmers in the county, also reduces spread of disease which might be present in a barnyard since cows and bulls are not moved from one farm to another for breeding. (Compiled by Marianna Bair. To be concluded next month.)

BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P.O. Box 481
Brighton, MI 48116-0481

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
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DATES TO REMEMBER
**Mar. 5, 9-1 p.m. Community Fair at Brighton School, 850 Spencer.
** 8, 7:30 p.m. General Meeting at Miller
** 12, 11 a.m. Work at Archives.
** 19-20, 1-4 p.m. Quilt Show, Ann Arbor.
** 20, 4-6 p.m. Green oak Township Historical Society General Meeting.
** 27, Michigan Antiquarian Book and Paper Show, Lansing.
** 28, 7:30 p.m. Society Board Meeting.
**Apr. 6, 7:30 Regional Historical Societies meeting, Canton.
*At Old Town Hall, 202 W. Main. Members welcome.
**See related article.

GENERAL MEETING MARCH 8

The Society will meet March 8, 7:30 p.m., at the Miller Intergenerational Center, 850 Spencer Road.

The Michigan Capitol Committee and the Friends of the Capitol, Inc., began the process of restoration of Michigan's historic state capitol building over 10 years ago.

An award-winning video was produced at the beginning of the three-year project which explores the history of the building and why the restoration was important. Rarely-seen historic photos and how the restoration was undertaken are included. Photos and other memorabilia will be available.

The public is welcome. Bring a friend.

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HAPPY 160th BIRTHDAY BRIGHTON!

In 1834 the Maltby brothers built a saw mill on Ore Creek in the vicinity of Third Street. (There was no Third Street at the time, of course.) By 1838 the name of Brighton was recorded in the records for the area in Section 31 of Brighton Township.

In the depths of the Depression a 100th anniversary was celebrated. In 1967 a 100th anniversary observed the chartering of the Village. 1994 marks the 160th anniversary of the Maltby's enterprising efforts.