

MAIN STREET AND GRAND RIVER ARE PAVED!

The next time we drive down Main Street or Grand River try to imagine it's 1920. Yes, there are concrete sidewalks but the road surface is of earth with a little clay, sand and gravel on it. Can one imagine the mud of rainy weather or the dust of dry?

Seventy years ago, January 7, 1924, to be exact, the Brighton Village Council caused a special election for the purpose of issuing \$70,000.00 in bonds for the paving of portions of Grand River and portions of Main Street from Grand River to 7th Street, including storm sewers. Yes, 373; no, 36. Total cost estimated \$84,704.60.

The Brighton State Bank was awarded the handling of \$70,000 in bonds redeemable at the Bank on maturity. Ballew Construction Company was awarded the contract to install the storm sewers. Rennie & Dibble would pave Main Street. February 26, 1924, the Council contracted with Detroit Edison for 'boulevard' lighting to be installed. Livingston Mutual Telephone Company was requested to remove poles from Grand River to 2nd Street.

During the celebration of Brighton's Centennial, 1967, the Argus-Dispatch carried a story about the "Vibrolithic" pavement on Main Street. According to author Reed E. Fletcher, the 'city slicker' convinced the city fathers of the benefits of a vibrolithic pavement over concrete. The pavement was laid in a most impressive manner. After pouring the concrete in the usual way the vibrolithic machine was put to work. It was reportedly a flat platform about 6' wide and twice as long, constructed of 2x12 timbers. Mounted on this platform was an iron frame work which supported a Model T Ford engine with an eccentric fly wheel. This rig was placed on top of the fresh concrete and the engine started. It has a very small muffler which would go off with a roar causing the entire rig to "...shake the living bejabers out of the concrete." Fletcher, a man with a highly developed sense of humore felt the entertainment value provided the villagers by this piece of equipment was well worth the cost of paving Main Street.

The picture shows West Main Street. Rolison Hardware on the left, the Old Town Hall in the distant right.

Other than the above noted article your writer has no other reference to the Vibrolithic machine in connection with the paving of Main Street. It is reported here with tongue in cheek. Perhaps some of our readers can corroborate or elaborate on Fletcher's story. (Marieanna Bair with thanks to Alice Newcomb and E. Reed Fletcher.)



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