

Brighton Area Historical Society Newsletter

P.O. Box 481

Brighton, MI 48116

[HTTP://COMMUNITY.MLIVE.COM/CC/BAHS](http://COMMUNITY.MLIVE.COM/CC/BAHS)

Trail Tales

Preserve, Advance and Disseminate Knowledge of the History of the Brighton Area

April 2002

Vol. XXI No. 4

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WHY/WHAT IS AN HISTORICAL SOCIETY?

An historical society does not have life on its own. It exists because its members believe the success of its mission is essential to ensure the sense of place perceived in the area. It exists because its members are convinced of the value of working together toward the preservation of the history of the community. It exists only because its members are willing to contribute financially and with their time and energy.

In its period of existence the Brighton Area Historical Society has been effective in promoting its mission. The Society has made a contribution to the community because its members are positive of its value in this promotion.

Neighboring communities believe in the same principles. Historic District Committees have been formed and buildings and sites designated as historic and of value - to keep on site and in good repair. These sites are basic to the sense of place area residents perceive.

Present board members are deeply involved and committed to the mission. Five of the seven are employed - their commitment is above and beyond. The history book, fund raising, publicity, newsletter, archiving, Friends of the Lyons School, historic resource survey, oral history, barn survey, speaker bureau, historic site marker program/preservation - are major areas to which their efforts are directed. To be fully functional all of these projects need people to help sustain these programs.



Dates to Remember:

Apr. 11, 18, 25: 1-3 p.m. Archive filing.
810/229-6402 to confirm. Welcome.

*17, 24: 7 p.m. Lyons School
restoration. Wear your working duds.

**22: 7 p.m. Society board meets.
Welcome.

*Lyons School, 11455 Buno Rd., Brighton.

**Brighton Dist. Library, 100 Library Dr.

MEMBERSHIPS

COUPLES/INDIV: George & Muriel Allen (Howell), Bill & Jacque Armstrong, Ron & Cathy Doughty, Doris Fay, Terri Fisher (Fenton), Nancy Fredenburg, Rudy & Virginia Herrmann, Tom & Audrey Leith, Ed & Sherry Nyhus, Greg Park (O.), Rich & Judy Parsons (O3), Tom Reinke (Flrvl), Shirley Ritter, Tom & Bonnie Riutta, Jennifer Scott (gift from Nancy Fredenburg), Jim & Vicki Vichich, Bob & Ruth Watson (Howell), Pat & Marge White.

When committed Society directors note the many membership renewals they are encouraged that others affirm their actions.

Your gift of a membership to someone who may (or should) be interested in the Society's mission would be most appropriate.

Changes of addresses are important notices. The .34¢ postal charge for returned mail is unnecessary. If the date on your mailing label is O2, O3, or higher, that's the year for which dues have been paid. It would be fitting to remit dues or a contribution if "Complementary Copy" is stamped on your newsletter.

THANKS THANKS THANKS

...Bert Bair, June Kimble and Shirley Ritter for their help with the March mailing of Trail Tales.

...Bob Watson for his help with the Society display at the Livingston County Genealogical Society Seminar, April 27.

...Bill & Jacque Armstrong, Tom & Audry Leith and Bob & Ruth Watson for their donations with dues payment.

...Chuck & Janice Beach for their donation to pay for two gallons of paint for the Lyons School Research Center.

...Jim DeJohn, John & Lisa Palermo and Dick Weaire for their continued help at the Lyons School.

...Betsy Rowe of The Nature Preserve, 420 W. Main, for stocking the Society afghans. These are an important fund raiser for the Society.

PRESERVATION/RESTORATION PROJECTS

ARCHIVES: Little by little filing of items of local historical interest is continuing. The day these notebooks and files can be moved into the Historic Resource Center is eagerly awaited. Various types of filing furniture will be necessary.

BRIGHTON HISTORY BOOK: The initial cost when the book goes to the printer will be substantial. Someone is needed to contact potential sponsors. Contact Carol McMacken, 810/231-2957 with your help.

LYONS SCHOOL: The regular work session now is set for Wednesdays at 7 p.m. at the school, 11455 Buno Road, Brighton Township. There is sufficient space arranged for continued restoration of desks and seats. If Wednesday evenings are not good for you call 810/229-6402. Marieanna Bair will fit you in any time convenient. Window moulding material is at the school. Can you measure, saw, hammer? Or serve as a gofer? Welcome.

NEEDED NEEDED NEEDED

...postage stamps. The mailing of minutes each month, paying bills and regular correspondence make for a regular administrative expense. A book or roll of stamps is a fairly easy contribution.

...The case of typing paper donated last year is almost depleted. A contribution of a ream, case or funds will also help with administration expenses.

...A new Society brochure is being developed. If you'd like to give this a try contact a board member.

...an electrician to move an electrical box in the Archives Center at the Lyons School.

...donation for Resource Center paint at \$35.00.

...restoration of a small cast iron stove at the Lyons School.

...an embroiderer to complete the 15 names marked on the Signature Quilt.

...36" wide base cabinets; for the rest room and the archives room at the Lyons School.

BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP/DONATION FORM

P O BOX 481, BRIGHTON MI 48116-0481

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

(Please include Zip + 4 digit)

Send membership card? Yes No New Renewal. Your help is needed with: *Historic Preservation Projects, **Fund Raising Projects, ***Administration of the Society. (Please circle your preference)DUES: \$50.00 Patron \$25.00 Couple \$2.00 Student (K-12, College)
 \$50.00 Bus/Prof. \$15.00 Individual \$500.00 LifeDONATION: \$10.00 \$20.00 \$50.00 \$100.00 \$ Other.

The Society is a 501(c)3 Income Tax Deductible Organization.

*Historic Preservation Projects: Archives, History Book, Historic Resource Survey, Historic Site Marker/Restoration, Lyons School, Oral History/Video, Photography.

**Fund Raising Projects: Bake Sale, Coverletes, Home Tour, Mugs, Needlepoint Kit, Note and Post Cards, Signature Quilt, Special Events, Tote Bags, Pillows.

***Administration of the Society: Board/Officer/Committee Member, Newsletter, Publicity.

FUND RAISING PROJECTS

YOUR SUPPORT IS VITAL

POST CARDS with early local scenes, pkg of 6/\$3.; NOTE PAPER @ \$2.50 pkg; copies of 1875 PLAT MAPS of Brighton, Genoa, Green Oak and Hamburg Townships and a 1915 map of Brighton for \$1. ea; TOTE BAGS @ \$15., NEEDLEPOINT KITS @ \$8. and MUGS @ \$5. all show the Old Town Hall. AFGHANS, red, green or blue, with nine local sites woven in @ \$49. at The Nature Preserve, 420 W. Main.

A new TAPESTRY PILLOW, \$30., depicting the Brighton Railroad depot and train is available. A fine companion to the afghans above. 810/229-9100 to order.

For \$10.00 your signature or that of another of your choice will be embroidered on the SIGNATURE QUILT. A file of signatures of early residents is available. Your donation is an appropriate and simple way to support the Society's activities. This quilt will stay in the Society's archives.

TILES: 13 different local sites are shown on black/white 6" square ceramic tiles. These are all limited editions. Nostalgia Antiques, 116 W. Main, has them in stock at \$8.00 or 3/\$21.00.

WITH OTHER PRESERVATION/RESTORATION ORGANIZATIONS

Can We Save Them? Preserving Historic Properties. Historical Society of Michigan work shop; 1305 Abbott Rd., East Lansing. May 11 - how to approach preservation of historic properties. Buildings at risk; how to obtain historic designation, how to deal with your own. 517/324-1828. Fax: 517/324-4370.

"Schooner in the Sand: Unlocking the Secrets of a Great Lakes Shipwreck." Now thru Aug 18, 2002, Michigan History Museum, Lansing.

Indian Village Home/Garden Tour, June 8, 10-5. 313/922-0911 for \$12. advance tickets.

Wildflowers, perennials, bird feeders, etc., Brighton Garden Club, May 9, 10-4. Brighton Community Center, 555 Brighton St.

Antiques Appraisal Fair, May 11, 10-2, Brighton Community Center, 555 Brighton St. Brighton Rotary, 810/227-0656.

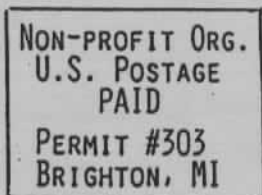
Scottish Research with Dick Doherty, May 2, Livingston County Genealogical Society. Pot luck, 6 p., m., Program, 7 p.m., LDS Church, 1041 W. Grand River, Howell.

Michigan Museums Assoc. Annual Conference, October 22-25, Midland, Mi.

BUSINESS/PROFESSIONAL MEMBERS

Advance Craft Home Builders, Inc.
Brighton Commerce Bank, First Presbyterian Church, Lawrence Autobody.
The support of these local businesses is much appreciated. Give them your consideration, please.

BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P O BOX 481
BRIGHTON MI 48116-0481



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Research of farms listed in a Brighton Argus clipping c. 1900 has been completed. Your editor is offering research of WALNUT RIDGE FARM. The 80 acres are located in two sections in Brighton Township. The forty in Section 15, NW SW, consists of hills of sandy loam. The 40 acres across Van Amburg Road in Section 16, NE SE, were also sandy, with Woodruff Creek at the west end. Close to 10 acres are swamp. Charles Prosser bought the 40 in Section 16, November 5, 1841. (Also several 100 more in the township.) Prosser had come into the area c. 1840. Those in Section 15 were originally purchased from the Federal government by William S. Conely (and wife Eliza) from New York. However they did not move to the area until 1837.

William and his brother, Samuel, were members of a guild in New York. This organization might be considered a union of specialized tradesmen; gilders, artisans, carvers, furniture makers, upholsterers, workers of gold and other ores. They were not farmers. In 1832, a cholera epidemic in New York convinced many members they should move to Michigan Territory for the sake of their families. One of their most incorruptible members, Richard Lyons, was entrusted with nearly \$30,000.00 (this would most likely have been in the form of gold) to go to Livingston County to select and purchase land in their names. Lyons selected over 20,000 acres in Brighton Township for his fellow guild members. Much of this land was bought for speculation. In 1837 six of these investors became permanent residents. Those who moved here lived in log houses until frame structures could be built. Often several new families were housed by those who had been here for a year or two, until trees were felled and log cabins built.

Both Prosser and Conely's pieces were owned by J. Stanfield in 1851. Ellen Wesley, in 1867 and 1868, purchased the two 40 acre chunks. John and Lavina Humphrey are the owners in 1885. On the 1859 atlas a house is indicated in Section 16; a simplified Italianate style, two story with a cupola, set well back from the road. Twin Norway pines grew on the south side of the house with a large black locust about 50' west. To the south and west of the house an orchard of 5-6 acres was planted, the majority of which was a variety of apples and pears. To the north and along the road, black walnut trees stood in stately rows. By 1900, a two story barn was built on the east side of the road.

The 80 acres were purchased by Karl and Anna Seitz, German immigrants, in 1933 (well into the Depression years). Following WW II, small plots were sold to young couples who also wanted the benefits of raising their families in this area. Karl and Anna's children acquired various sized pieces. In 1940 the Seitz's began planting pine and spruce on the sandy loam which resulted in fine stands harkening to the days when the Prossers, Conelys and others came to the area. Residents of an upscale subdivision now receive the benefits of those plantings. (Compiled by Marieanna Bair from memories; early atlases; census records; 1880 History of Livingston County; and "First Landowners of Livingston County" and "Early Landowners and Settlers of Livingston County" by Milton Charboneau. Requests for future research are invited. 810/229-6402.)