

# Brighton Area Historical Society Newsletter

P.O. Box 481

Brighton, MI 48116

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# Trail Tales

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

February 2002

Vol. XXI No. 2

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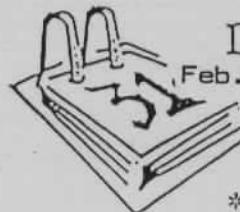
## 2002 - ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL YEAR

A year ago the floor had been nailed down in the Lyons School. Within a month a fine, durable finish had been applied. Soon after, the desks stored in what will be the Archives Center, were getting a necessary cleaning and refinishing. The display cases were washed and set up. By mid July invitations were sent to alumni, and the public, to the dedication of this 116 year old structure. At this time the many contractors and others who had contributed so much to this project, and without whose determination this restoration would have been impossible, were publicly acknowledged.

The organization of a Friends of the Lyons School and the development of the Archives Center are near accomplishment.

But this is 2002! Scheduling of students' visits, continued maintenance and renovation will be spearheaded by the Friends. Financial goals must also be met. Utilities, as everyone knows, are increasingly expensive. The Friends of the Lyons School will benefit from your involvement. Your help in organizing the Archives Center to serve as an easily accessed repository of the area's history will result in a one-of-a-kind source.

The Brighton area is fortunate to host so many willing to be a part of this effort to preserve, advance and disseminate the knowledge of the history of the area. It is important that you be a part of the activities of this organization. Your involvement will confirm the Society is on the right track. And you will be satisfied you helped accomplish this undertaking.



## Dates to Remember:

Feb.\*6, 13, 20, 27, 7 p.m. Lyons School restoration. Wear your working duds.  
7, 14, 21, 28, 1-3 p.m. Archives filing.  
810/229-6402 to confirm. Welcome.

\*\*25, 7 p.m. Society board meeting.  
Welcome.

\*Lyons School, 11455 Buno Road, Brighton.

\*\*Brighton District Library, 100 Library Dr.

## MEMBERSHIPS

**PATRON:** Joe & Pauline Chenoweth, Lyle & Joyce Powers, Doug & Carol Rearick., Horace & Yvonne Taylor.

**COUPLES/INDIV:** John Allen (FL), Bert & Marieanna Bair, Erwin & Dorothy Bandkau, Dan Bierer, Bill, Marianne Comiskey, \*Howell Davis, Libby Eisenhardt, Irene Ellis, Janice Field, Barbara Folkman, Dorothy Foster (CA), Mark & Charlotte Godin, Fred Gruezke, Stephen Leith, John & Ruth Le Patourel, Charles McConnell (SC), Ted & Kay Miller (Rochester), Sherrel Rutter (Det), Bob & Pauline Schaffer, Ed & Connie Sherman, \*Marcia Strong, \*Don Thomas (Mio), Sheryl Vigmostad, Lorry Wagner, Don & Alice Wyland, \*Richard & Lucille Weaire.

\*New members are always most welcome. Renewing members are what keep this organization moving along.

We try to note the correct year of membership on the mailing label. Be sure to contact us if in error. If the date is less than '02', a 'Complementary Copy' note will be added. This is a less expensive reminder than including dues envelopes. Dues support the administrative functions of the Society. Donations support the preservation projects, the reason for our being.

THANKS      THANKS      THANKS

...Bert Bair, Janice Field, Jeanette Johnson and Rosemary Ulmer for help in mailing the January issue of Trail Tales.

...Erv & Dot Bandkau, Libby Eisenhardt, Irene Ellis, Fred Gruezke, Stephen Leith, Charles McConnell, Sherrel Rutter, Ed & Connie Sherman, Marcia Strong and Don Thomas for including donations with their memberships.

...Stan Hester for photos of the Blue Lantern at Island Lake, four 78s of Gene Goldkette's band, and a CD of The Rhythm Boys, 1927-30, with Harry Barris, Bing Crosby and Al Rinker.

...Jack & Judy Whitehead for their donation.

...Lorry Wagner for two signatures on the signature quilt. (cont.)

## PRESERVATION/RESTORATION PROJECTS

**ARCHIVES:** Investigation is ongoing to determine what kinds of filing equipment will work best in the Archives Research Center at the Lyons School. The goal is to select the best at a reasonable price. When a decision is made it will be necessary to raise sufficient funds.

**LYONS SCHOOL:** The walls, ceiling and half the floor are freshly painted. The other half of the floor will soon be also - with thanks to Jim DeJohn and Dick Weaire. Then we'll have to decide the best placement of tables, chairs and cabinets. It's a large area but over the years many artifacts, photos and ephemerae have been donated. We're looking forward to properly archiving them.

Friends of the Lyons School can always use a few more friends. 229-6402.

Sincere sympathies of the Society  
are extended to the  
Family of  
FRED KERSLAKE  
A Society Member

NEEDED      NEEDED      NEEDED

...Restoration of 20th century school maps of Michigan which are on rollers.

...Base cabinets for the rest room and the archives room at the Lyons School, 36" wide.

...people to set up the Society display at the April 20, Livingston County Genealogical Society Seminar.

...people to be considering fund raising projects, i.e. Farmers' Market, Art Fair, bake sales, home tour, etc.

(thanks, cont.) ...Mindy Kinsey and Tom Reinke for serving as Treasurer and Secretary, respectively.

...Brighton Township and Brighton City for their continued support.

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 ONE.)

QUES: ( ) \$50.00 PATRON ( ) \$25.00 COUPLE ( ) \$2.00 STUDENT (K-12, COLLEGE)  
 ( ) \$50.00 BUS/PROF. ( ) \$15.00 INDIVIDUAL ( ) \$500.00 LIFE

DONATION: ( ) \$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 RESTORATION/REGISTRATION/MARKER, LYONS SCHOOL, ORAL HISTORY/VIDEO,  
 PHOTOGRAPHY.

\*\*FUND RAISING PROJECTS: BAKE SALE, COVERLETS, HOME TOUR, MUGS, NEEDLEPOINT KIT,  
 NOTE AND POST CARDS, SIGNATURE QUILT, SPECIAL EVENTS, TOTE BAGS, PILLOW.

\*\*\*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; COPIES OF 1875 PLAT MAPS OF BRIGHTON; GENOA, GREEN OAK AND HAMBURG TOWNSHIPS AND A 1915 MAP OF BRIGHTON FOR \$1.; NEEDLEPOINT KITS \$8. SHOW THE OLD TOWN HALL AS DO MUGS @ \$5. AND TOTE BAGS @ \$15. COVERLETS, RED, GREEN OR BLUE HAVE NINE LOCAL SITES WOVEN IN. \$49. ALL THE ABOVE AT 810/229-6402.

A NEW TAPESTRY PILLOW, \$30., DEPICTING THE BRIGHTON RAILROAD DEPOT AND TRAIN IS AVAILABLE. A FINE COMPANION TO THE COVERLETS ABOVE. 810/229-9100 TO ORDER.

THE SIGNATURE QUILT, ON WHICH ARE EMBROIDERED SIGNATURES FOR A DONATION OF \$10.00, HAS ROOM FOR YOURS. SEND IN YOUR SIGNATURE OR THAT OF A RELATIVE. A FILE OF SIGNATURES OF EARLY RESIDENTS IS AVAILABLE. YOUR DONATION IS AN APPROPRIATE AND SIMPLE WAY TO SUPPORT THE SOCIETY'S ACTIVITIES.

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 ORGANIZATIONS

Livingston County Genealogical Society is presenting its 20th anniversary seminar April 27, 7:30 am. to 3:30 pm. Lake Pointe Manor, 5768 E. Grand River, Howell. Curt B. Witcher, manager, Historical Genealogical Society Allen County Library, Ft. Wayne, IN. Topics will include Doing Effective Research in Libraries; Passenger and Immigration Research; Using Church Records in Genealogy Research; Effective Use of the Allen County Library with an Emphasis on PERSI.

Registration pre 4-14-02 = \$30. post 4-15-02 = \$40 (box lunch included). Checks to LCGS, send to Cindy Grostick, 507 Jones St., Lansing 48912-1717.

Plymouth Historical Society, Feb. 11, grand opening of the Dr. Weldon Petz Lincoln collections. Feb. 16, "A Lincoln Portrait" by Aaron Copeland, with the Plymouth symphony. Feb. 17, Museum Open House with Civil War Re-enactors, museum, more. Mar 2, Tea and a Play "Civil War Women" by Sandra Hanson. Plymouth Museum, 155 S. Main; 734/455-8940.

BUSINESS/PROFESSIONAL MEMBERS

ADVANCE CRAFT HOME BUILDERS, INC., BRIGHTON BAR AND GRILL, BRIGHTON COMMERCE BANK, THE FENCE SPOT, FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, LAWRENCE AUTO BODY, YUM YUM TREE. THESE ARE LOCAL BUSINESSES WHOSE SUPPORT IS MUCH APPRECIATED. GIVE THEM YOUR CONSIDERATION, PLEASE.

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

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#### AREA FARMS C. 1900

Research of local farms and farmers listed in the Brighton Argus, their background and location continues. Mary Christa's HURON VIEW STOCK FARM is this issue's subject. This farm concludes this series. Contact the Editor if you know of more named area farms which weren't on the list, or wish to recommend another subject.

William S. Russell was among the early settlers in Green Oak Township, purchasing the entire NE  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 3. After locating his site, May 6, 1833, a land patent was recorded October 15, 1835. William, born in Massachusetts, 1803, and wife Jane, born in 1817 in Vermont, must have built a house soon after arrival; all five children were born in Michigan, the eldest in 1834. The house may well have been a frame structure, instead of log, since Woodruff's saw mill was within  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile on Pleasant Valley Road.

The Indian Grand River Trail, already deviating from the township line road planned by the U.S. government, traversing through the north portion of his property. During William's time here the Detroit & Howell Plank Road Company constructed the Grand River Road, c. 1850, with planks. A toll gate was installed near the house. William's older brother, Elihu, born 1795 in Massachusetts, lived with William and had the job of 'tending gate'. This involved charging travelers for the number of people, vehicles, cattle, etc., using the Plank Road.

William is given credit for planting lilacs on both sides of the road. Evidence of these is still visible. (These lilacs may be around for a while longer - they are part of the State Island Lake Recreation Area.) It was not unusual for land owners to provide plantings of trees, bushes, etc., for the pleasure and comfort of the slower moving travelers of that day.

After William's death, August 27, 1870 (Jane died 1850, both buried in the Old Village Cemetery), son Francis G. purchased his siblings' portions of the estate and sold (248 acres by now) to Phillip Christa in December, 1875 for \$8000.00

Both Phillip and his wife, Ottila, were born in Bavaria. Their four children were born in the Detroit area. Phillip owned a marble cutting concern there. Sons John and Henry were also marble cutters. (An unverifiable tale is that the Christa's harnessed the power of the Huron River for their cutting.) Young Phillip is a farmer and oldest sibling, Mary, keeps house for them all. However Mary is the owner of the HURON RIVER STOCK FARM by 1902. To be continued. (Compiled by Marieanna Bair from censuses, atlases, a portion of the abstract for the property and Milton Charboneau's First Landowners and First Land Owners and Settlers of Livingston County. Corrections and additions most welcome. 810/229-6402.)