

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

February 2003

Vol. XXII No.2

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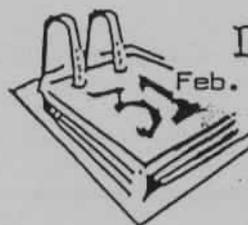
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WHY SAVE OLDER BUILDINGS?

1. Frankly, because they're good to look at. In addition they give our community grace notes of beauty, variety and visual texture. Historic properties contribute to the character of the area - architectural, historical and ecological.
2. Their capacity for reuse is almost infinite. It makes good sense to save them. (And it's sound ecological practice to do so.)
3. Serving as tangible links with history we should save them as a means of maintaining connections with a past we need to remember. A historic building is a product of the cultural heritage of its region, the technology of its period, the skill of its builders and the materials used in its construction.

19th century English critic and social theorist, John Ruskin, said this about architecture: "We may live without her and worship without her, but we cannot remember without her".

Remembering is essential and the task of avoiding amnesia is much easier when we can see the past and touch it and live with it. There is something incredibly powerful about being able to walk into a building and say, "This is where it happened, within these walls, right here." (Prepared from comments by Dwight Young of the National Trust. Marieanna Bair, Editor.)



Dates to Remember:

- Feb. *5, 12, 19, 26: 7 p.m. Lyons School restoration/maintenance continues. You can help.
*6, 13, 20, 27: 1-3 p.m. Archives filing. Welcome. 810/229-6402 to confirm.
*27: 7 p.m. Society board meets. Public welcome.

*Lyons School, 11455 Buno Rd., Brighton.

MEMBERSHIPS

PATRON: Val & Kathy Jacoby (FL), Lyle & Joyce Powers, and Horace & Yvonne Taylor.

COUPLES/INDIV: George & Muriel Allen (Howell), Bob & Diane Assenmacher, Bill & Jackie Armstrong (O4), Bert & Marieanna Bair, Sally Baldwin (Gr. Rapids), Erv & Dorothy Bandkau, Dan & Karen Bierer, Elaine Blight, Bill & Marianne Comiskey, Dr. Harry and Carol Davis, Evelyn Dothager (IL),

Doris Fay, Janice Field, Pat & Marlene Fonseca (AZ), Mark & Charlotte Godin, Fred Gruezke, Bob & Betsy Herbst, Merrill & Ruth Herbst, Bill & Helen Hyne (Chel-sea), Susan Lanning (Livonia), John & Ruth LePatourel, Mark & Carol McMacken, Rudy & Doreen Meffert, Ted & Kay Miller (Rochester), Cleo Moran (South Lyon), Ed & Sherry Nyhus, Greg Park (O), Dan Schmidt, Sherrel Rutter (Detroit), Doris Singer (Gr. Rapids), Dennis & Jomarie Soszynski, Paul & Carol Spangler, Florence Sullivan (FL), Bill & Jane Tomlinson, Arlene Warner (Mlfd), Don & Alice Wyland.

The Society board appreciates the support of the community as evidenced by the membership renewals received. They are encouraged to continue contributing the many volunteer hours to the Society's mission. Financial donations are very welcome. Volunteer hours dedicated to the Society's projects are also very welcome.

If this issue is stamped "Complementary Copy" near your address label you are urged to contribute your fair share of the cost by paying dues for 2003. Every attempt is made to properly record receipts. Contact us if an error has been made and accept our apologies.

THANKS THANKS THANKS

Bob & Diane Assenmacher, Erwin & Dot Bandkau, Dr. Harry & Carol Davis, Pat and Marlene Fonseca, Bob & Betsy Herbst, Merrill & Ruth Herbst, Bob & Shirley Knight, Cleo Moran, Florence Sullivan, Bill & Jane Tomlinson, and Arlene Warner for their extra donations accompanying their dues.

...John & Janice Field for their help in mailing the January issue of Trail Tales. Also for setting the record straight in the Placeway article in the January issue. It was Edgar Crout, not Edward Crout, who married Edna S. Placeway.

PRESERVATION/RESTORATION

ARCHIVES: Properly filing archival material is an ongoing task. Your help is needed Thursday afternoons, 1-3. If another time is better let us know. A copier cartridge for a Canon PC940 copy machine is needed (or funds to purchase, \$130.00 will make over 4000 copies).

HISTORIC RESOURCE SURVEY: Early photos of the area, city or rural, are needed. We can copy them.

LYONS SCHOOL: Desks and chairs are in the process of restoration. We have brushes, gloves and materials. We just need you. Help in paying utility and restoration expenses is welcome. Wednesday evenings, 7 p.m. is work night. Other arrangements can be made if that time is not good for you. Is someone making blue bird houses for the school yard? Or know of early desks we can buy?

N E E D E D

...FARMSTEAD SURVEY PROJECT VOLUNTEERS. 'How to' help is available.

...RAFFLE ITEMS as a fund raiser.

...POSTAGE STAMPS AND BUSINESS ENVELOPES for administration needs.

To participate with any of the projects or needs above, contact 810/229-6402 or any listed on page one.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY SYMPATHIES TO THE FAMILIES OF

Benjamin T.O. Clark
Contributing member of the Society
Native of Brighton,
descendant of very early settlers

and

Francis Nauss Young
Contributing member of the Society
Early resident of the area

...Livingston County Newcomer's Club for donation in response to Brighton history program presented.

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 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 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

POST CARDS with early local scenes, pkg of 6/\$3.; NOTE PAPER @ \$2.50 pkg; MUGS A \$5.; TOTE BAGS @ \$15.; NEEDLEPOINT KITS @ \$8.; all show the Old Town Hall.

PLAT MAPS of Brighton, Genoa, Green Oak and Hamburg Townships, 1875 and a 1915 map of Brighton @ \$1.00. A TAPES-TRY PILLOW, depicting the railroad depot and train @ \$30.00. AFGHANS red, green and blue, with nine local sites woven in @ \$49.00. 810/229-6402 to order any of the above.

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. This quilt will remain 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 and Main Street Cafe 440 W. Main have them in stock. \$8.00 or \$3/\$21.00.

WITH OTHER PRESERVATION/RESTORATION ORGANIZATIONS

Feb. 13, 7:30. Plymouth Historical Society program "Hospitals and House Calls" at the museum, 155 S. Main.

Mar. 13, 7:30. Plymouth Historical Society program "Don't Spit on the Sidewalk" at the Museum, 155 S. Main.

Jan. 11, 10-2. \$20.00. Cobblestone Farm Assoc. - Window Restoration workshop. learn proper repair methods. Pre register. 734-994-2928.

Feb. 8, 10-2. \$10.00 Cobblestone Farm Assoc. Historic Preservation workshop. Pre register. 734/994-2928.

March 16, 2-4 p.m. Green Oak Township Historical Society program "The Pre-History of Green Oak" by Ann Zinn, with slides, etc. 10789 Silver Lake Road, the 1856 Township hall. Info. 248/437-8461 or E-mail JoWilliams46@MSN.com

March 20, 6:30 pot luck, 7:30 Milford Historical Society program "Wreck on the Wabash. United Methodist Church, 1200 Atlantic St.

May 10: Michigan One Room Schoolhouse Assoc. conference. "Back to Our Roots". Greenmead, 20501 Newburgh Rd., Livonia 48152. <<http://www.one-roomschools.org/>> .

BUSINESS/PROFESSIONAL MEMBERS

Advance Craft Home Builders, Inc., Brighton Commerce Bank, First Presbyterian Church, Lawrence Auto-body (03), The Fence Spot, The support of these local businesses is much appreciated. Give them your consideration, please.

BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P O BOX 481
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

DOCTORS FISHER AND BINGHAM ARRIVE IN THE AREA

The arrival of medical doctors to a community helped assure the very early settlers that this enterprise in the wilderness would survive. (The arrival of blacksmiths, millers, sawyers, merchants, saloon and hotel keepers, etc., also helped confirm its staying power.)

Dr. Wilbur Fisher arrived in Ore Creek (Brighton) in 1836 from Ann Arbor. He was the county's first physician. Fisher has his office in Kensington, just east of the county line on the Grand River Trail. In the 1880 History of Livingston County John LaRowe of Livingston Center (Howell) notes his appreciation for not having to go to Oakland or Washtenaw County for medical attention now.

Edward F. Gay, on his way from Ann Arbor to Livingston Center in the fall of 1836, lost the trail but finally arrived at Ben Cushing's hotel on the hill (corner of Grand River/Spencer) in 'Upper Town'. Attempting to follow Ben's directions he met two friends from Ann Arbor along the trail. One was Dr. Fisher to whom Gay had lent a wedding suit for Fisher's marriage to Jane. (It took Gay several more days to reach Livingston Center. Either the trail was very poorly marked or Gay had difficulty in following directions.)

Fisher was joined in 1841, by Dr. Ira Bingham of New York. Bingham's practice continued for 41 years as the primary doctor of the Ore Creek area. A business card reading "Ira W. Bingham and Wilbur Fisher, Physicians and Surgeons" was among those pledging donations to Rev. Jonathon Post who was organizing the first Bible Society in the county, January, 1843.

The 1850 census records Bingham as a boarder at the new hotel and livery (NE corner Grand River/Main) the Brighton House, also built by Ben Cushing. When his brother, Senator Kinsley S. Bingham died, Ira purchased 240 acres from the estate, in Sections 11 and 12 in Green Oak Township.

In addition to his medical practice Bingham found time to serve as Brighton Township School Inspector four terms, Village School Moderator four terms and Livingston County Judge of Probate 1857/1864. Whether asked or not he was always willing to give an opinion. "What are you doing?" he asked a merchant who was destroying a smoothed and marked off circle outside his entrance. "I'm getting rid of these boys playing here." Bingham answered, "If you have to be mean to someone, pick an old man, he'll soon be dead and gone. These boys will outlive you and hate you as long as you live." Ira, who never married, died 1881, is buried, with his brother's family, in the Old Village Cemetery. We've been unable to determine when Dr. Fisher died or where he's buried. (compiled by Marieanna Bair from the 1880 History of Livingston County; 1891 Portrait and Biographical Album; and William Pless' Old Village Cemetery Supplement. Corrections, additions, questions? contact Bair at 810/229-6402.)