THE LYON FAMILY BRAVES THE MICHIGAN WILDERNESS (Part two)

Richard Lyon’s small party, arriving in Brighton Township June 19, 1837, located the cabin William Valentine had built while here the previous year. (WAG, Section 22, Van Amburg Road south from Salts, formerly Skoman Road.) This served as a shelter for all of them. Not long after, when Samuel W. Conely’s family arrived, 82 rested in the log structure. (Sentries up in the loft, the ladies on the first floor.) A few years later the families of William S. Conely and Isaac L. Platt became neighbors in the cabins prepared for them. (Property was along Van Amburg, Buno and Newman Roads.) Today one can see one’s neighbor’s house all too clearly. These pioneers had, at least, two miles of forest separating them in the 1830s.

With the organization of Brighton Township (which included the settlement called Orr Creek) in 1837, the settlers, who were anxious to be self-governing, quickly tended to the business of seeing a governing body. His obvious leadership skills convinced the other township voters that Lyon would best serve as supervisor. Martha helped his win the office again the next year by hosting 400 electors for dinner at the cabin.

By 1842 the several families within approximately one mile radius of Lyon’s property built a log school on land set aside by Richard and Martha. The realization their children’s education was vitally important was ever present even though the parents were struggling to exist. (A ‘reality’ most basic.) The log structure, Lyon School, District #8, served until 1885 when a frame structure was built. The log school also served as a house of worship and as a meeting place for community affairs.

Richard and Martha had six children. Caroline, Sarah and Martha (the latter two married brothers Benjamin and Cyrenius Morgan, respectively) remained in the township. As did Richard Jr., who remained single and taught school, living on the old farm. At the close of his father’s death in 1876, Richard Jr. is a resident of the village. He helped draft the constitution and bylaws of the Brighton Hook and Ladder Co #1, was a charter member and served as secretary. Joining the newly formed Brighton Cornet Band he promoted acquisition of instruments and uniforms. For years their “services were much in demand” having many requests to perform. Sister Elizabeth married James Smith; moving to South Dakota, parenting six sons, William married Abigail Buck and was very instrumental in the “rapid growth and development” of Sioux City, Iowa. The familiar pattern of neighbors marrying is evident. Also some are as adventurous as their parents and have further west. The rush for gold and land, new communities beginning with opportunity for getting in on the “ground floor” drew many. Richard, Sr. died in 1876 and Martha in 1885. Both are buried at Calvary Cemetery. (Compiled by Marilenna Bair from ‘Early Landowners and Settlers’ and obituaries compiled by Milton Charboneau. Also census records and Ellis’ 1880 History of Livingston County. Corrections/additions welcome.)
FUND RAISING PROJECTS

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 in an appropriate and single 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. Nostalgic Antiques, 116 W. Main and Main Street Cafe 440 W Main have them in stock. $8.00 or $3.00/10.

WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

May 8, 10-4: Wildflower Sale, Brighton Garden Club, Brighton Community Church, 290 Main St.
May 9-10, Michigan One Room School House Association Annual Meeting, John W. Porter Hall, EMU Archeology, preservation/restoration techniques. MOPSA, 2201 N Huron, Livonia 48152 for information.
May 17, 11-4: Springletime at the Hentzler Farm, Saline, 15 exhibits areas + planting, plant sale, barn repair, entertainment that won't quit. 735-544-9442.
May 18: Nixon Ice Cream Social, Wixom Historical Museum, Wixom Rd. at Maple.
May 22-24: Green Oak Township Historical Society will tour South Lyon's Moolten House, visit Wixom's Hat Depot, church, school, etc.

MEMBERSHIPS

COUPLES/INDIV: Charles S Janice Beach, Jim DeJohn, Irene Ellis.

Membership renewals and new members are the life blood of this organization. Your demonstration of belief in its mission is an inspiration to others that they might follow your lead.

THANKS THANKS THANKS

...Bert Bair, Ida Bair and John S Janice Field for their help in mailing the April issue of Trail Tales.

...Dick Wealne and Jim DeJohn for their continued maintenance and rehab at the Lyon School.

...Fred Hort, of Olde England Chimney Sweep, for attaching a new rope to the bell at the school; with Dick and Jim's help.

...Melby Middle School for inviting us to present a local history program to the 4th grade. And for inviting us to present a local history program to the 4th grade.

...Jane Brennan for a copy of the fine paper she prepared on rural education which included the Lyon School. (She received an A+ from her instructor.)

...Charter Members of Friends of Lyon School for their support.

...Harold Selow and M Woodcutters of Whitmore Lake for the 4 blue bird and 4 other houses. They will be installed at the School grounds.

...Caroline Deluca for a clipping of an article about an ice cream and candy shop similar to Brighton's Sweet Shop owned by her parents.

...for kind comments on the Society president's selection to the Brighton area's Roll of Honor. This recognition would not be possible without many, many volunteers' support.

...IF THIS ISSUE OF TRAIL TALES IS A 'Complementary Copy' it is coming to you at no charge. The Society believes it important for you to be aware of its mission. This can be fulfilled with your membership or a donation.

ARCHIVES: Compiling and indexing of the area's historical continues. Most every Thursday, 1-3, at the Lyon School, 11495 Buro Road is where this archival work is done; notebooks are being filled and file drawers are being organized. All in the attempt to provide inquirers with information. A number of pictures of an earlier day have been collected. To better document the area's history any photos you might share would be welcome to the collection or to be reprinted. Pictures of people, events, activities, sites, are needed. Also any of businesses, occupations, transportation, recreation, education, etc., would be appropriate. (It is hoped you longer time residents have been recording, one way or another, your memories of life in the area. They are important.)

LYON SCHOOL: The drain tile is thawed, the bell can be rung, the museum continues to be repaired, exterior water fociets are installed in a drain under the water heater, visitors are received, and all's well at the school.

Eagle Scout applicant, Noah Winchel, will be giving the school a new paint job this summer - would like to help.

Any Wednesday, 7-9, will find Dick Wealne and Jim DeJohn attending to maintenance. They can use help any time. Call them.

Joanne Swork has made arrangements for several third grade classes from Hominy Elementary to visit this month. If you or your group would like to visit call us. Much effort has gone into this project; it's there to be used and enjoyed.

NEEDED NEEDED NEEDED

...PEOPLE TO CONDUCT A Society booth at this summer's Farmers' Market.

...Items to be raffled or sold at the Society booth.

...Avery #5361 address labels.

...New steel door to the back entrance of the Lyon School.

...Lumber and workers to install corners delineating property lines at the school.

...Items to tell of the history of the Lyon School and the uses to which the several areas are put. This information will be provided. Call Marianna Bair if you can help. 410-293-6402.
FUND RAISING PROJECTS

POST CARDS with early local scenes, pkg of 25/$1.75; NOTE PAPER @ $2.50 pkg; HUGS A $5.; TOTE BAGS @ $5.; 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 TAMERLY PILLOW, depicting the railroad depot and train @ $30.00. AFFICHES: red, green and blue, with nine local sites woven in @ $45.00. 810/259-6402 to order any of the above.

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May 24-25: Howell City, Colonial Michillinda Inc. Recreation 1763 American Indian attack on the Fort.

BUSINESS/PROFESSIONAL MEMBERS

Lawrence Autobuy, The Fence Spot. The continued support and confidence of these local businesses is much appreciated. Give them your consideration, please.

DONATIONS TO SOCIETY INCOME TAX DEDUCTIBLE

The Brighton Area Historical Society accepts stock as a donation. Donors will receive the income tax deduction when the shares are transferred. Nancy Fremdurn can assist if you have a question regarding this procedure. Reach her at 248/825-2374.

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