

Brighton Area Historical Society Newsletter

P.O. Box 481

Brighton, MI 48116

Trail Tales

July 2004
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Preserve, Advance and Disseminate Knowledge of the History of the Brighton Area

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Since its dedication three years ago the one room Lyon School has been the site for Society meetings and other functions, including elementary students for a day's One room School experience. Programs for scout groups and other organizations have been presented. There is also a small museum and archive facility.

Last year the exterior was painted white and the doors dark plumb. The old well pit has been filled; the double hung windows slide easily. A partial listing of needs on the exterior includes installation of motion detector lights; tuck pointing of the foundation; clearing of vines from the fence; the purchase and placement of a flag pole are in the works. The list goes on.

Interior work includes adding a back to the book case; refinishing desks; cleaning and touching up opera house seats from the Rialto; painting and cleaning windows.

Monthly utility bills and maintenance expenses are due regularly. Volunteer labor is always as welcome as a monetary contribution.

Donations to Lyon School for purchase of materials and/or labor are most helpful. Friends of Lyon School have been generous with financial support. Page 3 denotes a place for renewing annual membership to Friends, and any additional donations. Please become or continue to be a Friend of Lyon School. 810/229-7887 or 810/229-3066.

VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY BICENTENNIAL

The first ever July 4 celebration of Independence Day west of the Mississippi was noted with twice firing the cannon - one at dawn and the other at sunset. Captains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark had camped for the night in "...one of the most butifull Plains I ever Saw, open S butifullly diversified with hills S vallies (cont. p. 3)



Dates to Remember:

- July *8,15,22,29: 1-3 p.m. Archives Filing. Welcome. 810/229-6402 to confirm.
- *14,21,28: 7 p.m. Lyon School. Restoration/maintenance. Welcome.
- *27: 6:30 p.m. Board meeting. Welcome.

*Lyon School, 11455 Buno Rd., Brighton.

MEMBERSHIPS

BUS/PROF: The Fence Spot.

PATRON: Mike and Janet Woodford (05).

FAMILY/INDIV: Joe & Irene Mike (05) and Shirley Ritter (06).

Thanks for support from renewing members. All members should know the membership list is for Society purposes only.

THANKS THANKS THANKS

...Bert Bair, Ida Bair and John & Janice Field for helping with mailing June Trail Tales. The Fields also donated a copy of the 1902 Sears Catalog to the Archives.

...Larry Lawrence and John Sauve for post cards showing local art.

...Betty Kerr for two pencils from 'F.T. Hyne Lumber Co.' c. 1950.

Nancy Fredenburg, Mindy Kinsey and Tom Reinke who helped 'sit' the booth at the dedication of 'Dasein' sculpture.

...Bob Watson for history re: Henry W. Pipp of Pipp/Becker Hardware dealers at 329 W. Main. Also a photo of the Behrens family on the front porch of their brick home, still standing on Herbst Road. c. 1945.

AN HISTORIC DISTRICT ORDINANCE

Following the loss of a local historic resource one often hears "Why wasn't it protected?" "Who let that happen?" The next question should be "What can I do to keep that loss from happening again?"

The answer can be found in the creation of an historic district. Every local legislative body has the power to create an historic district. The impetus must come from the people in the community.

Those who want to protect historic resources (structures, architecture, sites, objects, features or open spaces, etc., with significant historic value) must request, and be prepared to serve, on a study committee to conduct its activities on a continuing basis.

The Michigan Local Historic Districts Act is available from the State Historic Preservation Office at the Historic Center in Lansing. The Brighton Area Historical Society has a copy. Call 810/229-6402 for more information.

PRESERVATION/RESTORATION

ARCHIVES: Newspaper clippings, pictures, genealogical records, abstracts, any thing of paper etc., etc., are very helpful when trying to answer questions the Society receives.

MUSEUM: Recent additions include Plessland Dairy bottles from Dick Weaire. These and other dairy collectibles would make an interesting exhibit. Want to donate or lend yours?

A job for a handy person: repair of the grain cradle in the Society museum. A wood brace is broken, also a cradle arm. It is wired together now and doesn't present an interesting exhibit. The blade feels sharp but is rusting. Help!

NEEDED NEEDED NEEDED

...Art Fair booth helpers; August 14, 15. This in an ideal means by which the Society becomes better known. A lot of interesting folks visit the booth and the weather will be ideal!

...Avery #5351 address labels, a box of 100 sheets = c. \$30. Can be ordered from an office supply or a donation to the Society.

Donation to the average monthly cost of c.\$50.00 postage to mail the newsletter.

SOCIETY BYLAW REVIEW

A review of the Bylaws has been completed. The proposed amendment 'indemnification' clause (described in the June newsletter) was adopted at the recent membership meeting for inclusion into the Bylaws. The complete revised Bylaws will be voted upon at the September 27, meeting. Any member can request a copy from 810/229-6402.

BUSINESS/PROFESSIONAL MEMBERS

Advance Craft Home Builders, The Fence Spot and Lawrence Autobody have renewed for 2004. The continued support and confidence of these local businesses is much appreciated. Give them your consideration, Please. The support of others in the community is most welcome.

BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP/DONATION FORM

P O BOX 481, BRIGHTON MI 48115-0481

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____ (Please include Zip + 4 digit)

Send membership card? Yes No New Renewal

QUES: \$50.00 Patron \$25.00 Couple \$2.00 Student
 \$50.00 Bus/Prof. \$15.00 Individual \$500.00 Life

Be a Friend of Lyon School: \$10.00 \$20.00 \$25.00 other \$ _____

DONATION: \$10.00 \$20.00 \$50.00 \$100.00 other \$ _____

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

FUND RAISING PROJECTS

2004 CALENDAR. Each month shows a date of local and national interest and a site of historical significance from Brighton Area's early days. From the Lee House c. 1840, in Upper Town to the early volunteer Fire Department c. 1870, in Lower Town. This is where St. Paul's c. 1880, and the Cook S Shannon blacksmith shop c. 1871 by the mill pond are located. Henry Herbst and his dairy cart c. 1910, on the north side of W. main are all part of the village scene of the time. Lyon School depicts an effective means of education in 1885. The 1920s saw the construction of the Lincoln Hotel and First National Bank followed shortly with the Dixiegas station. H.P. Mellus built Brighton's first modern hospital in 1931. The really fun place for 'teens was the roller rink at Island Lake. This calendar and other Society items will be available at the Society's Art Fair

booth August 14, 15. Or call 810/229-6402 to order.

NOTE PAPER: pkg \$2.50; MUG \$5.; TOTEBAG \$15.; NEEDLEPOINT KIT \$8., all show the Old Town Hall. POST CARDS with early local scenes, pkg. 5/\$3. TAPESTRY PILLOW depicting the railroad depot and train, \$29.

1875 PLAT MAPS of Brighton, Conway, Genoa, Green Oak, Hamburg, Hartland, Howell, Iosco and Oceola townships and Brighton and Howell cities, \$1. AFGHANS: red, green or blue, woven with nine local sites, \$49.

SIGNATURE QUILT: A \$10. donation will assure your signature is included on this quilt which will remain in the Society's archives.

TILES: 13 local sites on black/white 3"x5" ceramic tiles. All limited editions. Available at Main Street Cafe, 440 W. Main. \$8. or 3/\$21.

(cont. from p. 1) All presenting themselves to the river covered with grass and a few scattered trees, a hansom Creek meandering thro." as Clark's journal records. An extra gill of whiskey commemorated the event.

During the night of July 11-12, Pvt. Alexander Wilard was found asleep at his post. The captains condemned him to 400 lashes, 100 for each of four days. A seemingly severe punishment but an attack by the Sioux could have ended the entire journey.

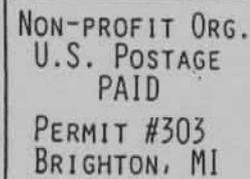
The mouth of the Platt River was reached July 21, 1804. Measurements re: the velocity of the current, the sand it carried into the Missouri, etc. The Platt is described as a mile wide and one inch deep. By the end of July they were already 540 miles up the Missouri. Thus far no contact with the Indians who were hunting buffalo out on the prairie.

WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

Aug. 6, Garden Day at MSU, E. Lansing, by the Dept. of Horticulture. Garden Design, Garden Workshops, tours, etc. \$75.00 includes workshops, keynote key-note speakers, parking, lunch. 517/355-5191 or Email allens@msu.edu.

Oct. 2, "Got Ancestors?!" Family History Seminar at Grand Valley State Univ. Western Michigan Genealogical Society 50th anniversary. 18 speakers. \$45.00 + meals. Register online at gotancestors.com.

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

THE DEAN SETTLEMENT

Abram Dean, and wife Catherine, bought the NW $\frac{1}{4}$, section 29 and the N $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ section 20 in Brighton Township in 1838. Their son, William Henry Harrison, b. 1835 in New York was with them. As was often the case they traveled with friends for mutual support: Timothy Warner, Cyrenus Morgan and E.G. Durfee, among them. The Deans built a home north of present day I-96 on the east side of Flint Road and commenced clearing land for farming. (Flint Road was the road one took to Flint.) The 1859 Brighton Township atlas notes a 'hotel' on the site. At that time the Brighton House (NE corner Grand River/Main Street) was on the stage coach route between Detroit and Lansing. Those heading north might have stayed with the Deans. The area was still a wilderness as testified as follows:

August 21, 22, 1907, hundreds attended the Brighton Homecoming. The two day event included a program in the Opera House (east side Grand River between North and Main) in which several early settlers recalled incidents/events of the Brighton area. The son of Malcom Fitch, who built the first frame house in Brighton, c. 1837, Henry S. Fitch, came from Chicago, having been gone 57 years and spoke of his boyhood days. "In the winter of 1844 and 1845, my father went to Pine Run (Flint) for lumber with a pair of horses and a democrat sleigh, taking me with him." They started back to Brighton about noon. "The snow was deep and the weather cold. There was not a house for many miles. Just before dark we were surrounded by a pack of wolves, one or two on each side of us jumping in the snow. Gradually the number increased and it became dark. There were about twenty of them, and as they were getting very familiar with the horses and too near for comfort, the horses were put into a run, and the last mile from what was known as the Dean Settlement to our house the horses were on a dead run, the wolves keeping close company until within fifty rods of the house." He also recalled that children were not allowed out after dark because of wolves, bears and panthers.

Besides Abram, the years 1835/37 saw several families by the name of Dean, from New York, settling in Brighton, Genoa, Green oak and Hamburg Townships: John b. 1794, PA; Daniel b. c. 1800 England; Joseph b. c. 1800 N.Y.; Daniel b. 1824, N.Y.; Peter b. 1830 N.Y. Family relationships have not been positively identified but often family groups made the journey. Many Deans were farmers, some blacksmiths, millers, cobblers, weavers, etc.

In 'lower town' (the Main Street/Grand River intersection) John Dean built a two story frame tavern (later a blacksmith shop, 115-121 W. Grand River) where Miss Mary B. Pratt taught 'select' school on the second floor c. 1845. (Compiled by Marieanna Bair from census records; 1891 Portrait/Biographic Album; 1880 History of Livingston County; Early Landowners and Settlers and early obituaries compiled by Milton Charbonrau. Additions/corrections appreciated. 810/229-6402.)