



Brighton Area Historical Society Newsletter

P.O. Box 481

Brighton, MI 48116

Trail Tales

Aug. 2005
Vol. XXIV No. 8

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

AREA RESIDENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE PAST

It's not news - the Brighton area (SE¼ Livingston County) is a desirable place in which to live for many reasons, not the least of which is the need for individuals and families to put down roots. The area is a special place that is being threatened with too little opportunity for input into development and restoration decisions. A development in one place does have an effect on the surrounding urban fabric. Destruction, not only of agricultural land and open space but of existing buildings, is often the result of lack of respect for the people that helped build the area in the first place.

A sense of social responsibility often loses out to the ultimate objective of profit. "...for special places to survive, those in control must make concessions to posterity." (James Conway, Editor-in-Chief of Preservation Magazine.)

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VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY BICENTENNIAL

August 1, 1805, desperate to find the Shoshones and their horses, Merriwether Lewis, several men and Sacagawea scouted ahead of William Clark to determine which stream to follow. He then sent a man to Clark, several days behind, to change course. In the process one canoe overturned and two others flooded. Supplies were lost including gun powder, and everything in the medicine box was wet. The arduous task of pulling the canoes along the narrow rapid, rock and shoal filled passage, the cold of the river, injuries sustained, and lack of meat resulted in very low morale in the Corps of Discovery. Pvt. Shannon, sent to hunt, didn't return for several days, and then without meat but the news they were on the right river. Sacagawea recognizes a prominent rock formation which helps boost morale. That was how Clark observed his 35th birthday.

(cont. p.3)



Dates to Remember:

- Aug. *7: 1-4 p.m. Lyon School Open House.
- *11, 18, 25: 1-3 p.m. Archives Filing. Welcome.
810/229-6402 to confirm.
- 13, 14: 10-5. Booth at Art Fair, Main Street.
- *17, 24, 31: 7 p.m. Lyon School maintenance.
You can help.
- *22: 6:30 Society Board meeting. Welcome.
- Sept. 4: 1-4 p.m. Lyon School Open House.

*Lyon School. 11455 Buno Rd.. Brighton.

MEMBERSHIPS

PATRON: *Margo Metzger.

COUPLES/INDIV: Gene & Judy Dahlin, Tom Leith and Randy & Kyle Wilson.

If 'Complementary Copy' is noted on the label area of this issue it is because dues for 2005 have not been paid. The Society wants to send Trail Tales to you but must be responsible to dues paying members. Printing and mailing of the newsletter and administrative expenses are paid from dues receipts. Errors can occur. Please call 810/229-6402 if that is the case. *Welcome to new member Margo Metzger.

THANKS THANKS THANKS

...Bert Bair, John & Janice Field and June Kimble for helping mail the July issue of the newsletter.

...for their donation with dues: Tom Leith, Margo Metzger and Randy & Kyle Wilson.

...Whitney Kimble for 18 slides re: construction of the bank on North St., and street scenes including parades and the mill pond c. 1961-1974.

...Dick Smith for recording memories of his youth in the area, especially time spent at School Lake. (Everyone is encouraged to note their memories to more fully develop the area's history.)

...Willis Wolfe of CA for memories and a family tree.

...George Axtell of AZ for research of Charles W. Axtell, publisher of the 1874 Brighton Citizen.

...Judy Orlando of WA for a picture of her grandmother, Alice Elizabeth Skeman Hicks and the donation to include her name on the Signature Quilt.

...Dick Weaire for attaching a back to the bookcase; will help keep out undesireables.

...Lorraine Haas for a morning with her metal detector to find survey points.

...Bert Bair for mowing to the back lot line.

...Christine Barrera for helping with filing in the archives.

...Tom Leith for his Friends of Lyon School donation.

...OLHSA For donation of two fire proof files. Bert Bair, Jim DeJohn and Jim Vichich for moving them to the Archives.

PRESERVATION/RESTORATION

ARCHIVES: Casters for the fire proof file, which did not have them, were attached to a platform and fastened. Dick Weaire made the platform and with help from Jim DeJohn and Jim Vichich's help set it upright.

LYON SCHOOL: The July 3 Open House was well attended. Thanks to Rosemary Ulmer who helped host. The sign, thanks to Bruce Owens, helped locate the site.

BOOK: 'From Settlement to City' is being very well received. 810/229-6402 or visit Parent-Teacher Tech, 117 E. Grand River, for a copy.

FRIENDS OF LYON SCHOOL TO BE
RECOGNIZED OCTOBER 2, 1-4 p.m.

The Friends is composed of Lyon School Alumni, Lyon School neighbors and others who believe the continued preservation of Lyon School is a valid and worthy project. They believe it is important to: preserve a structure of importance to the community; enable the public to touch a part of local history; enable elementary school children to experience a day of early Michigan education; preserve pictures, maps, documents that refer to the area and provide information to others; provide an archival research facility (files, shelves, etc.); support local research; provide financial support for utility expenses and will receive the society newsletter. Members of Friends of Lyon School serve as fine examples of social responsibility and community preservation.

SOCIETY ART FAIR BOOTH, AUG. 13,14

AT 334 W MAIN NEEDS ATTENDANTS

...people who can smile and greet Art Fair goers. There are no age, membership or residence requirements. The Society booth is a public relations opportunity afforded by the Chamber of Commerce. As the area becomes aware of the Society it will become aware of its preservation/restoration mission and provide support. To schedule the hours you can help call Lucille Weaire, 229-3066 or 229-6402.

HELP HELP HELP

...a tree needs cutting down, weeds pulled and windows washed at the School.
...inventory sale donations.
...business(s) to stock Society sale items.

810/229-6402 For info.

BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP/DONATION FORM

P O BOX 481, BRIGHTON. MI 48116-0481

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

New Renew Send Membership Card yes no (Please include Zip + 4 digit)

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

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 \$\$\$

Book: FROM SETTLEMENT TO CITY - Brighton, MI 1832-1945, by Carol McMacken. Brighton's own history. Almost 500 pages, over 300 pictures. Members, \$60.00. Non-members \$65.00, + shpg. Available at Parent-Teacher Tech, 117 E. Grand River. Or 810/229-6402.

TILES: 6" square, ceramic tiles. 13 local scenes in black/white. \$8.00, 3/\$21.00.

1875 TOWNSHIP PLAT MAPS: Brighton, Conway, Genoa, Green Oak, Hamburg, Hartland, Iosco, Howell and Oceola \$1.00. 1915 city maps of Brighton and Howell.

LYON SCHOOL T-SHIRTS, S/XL \$12.00.

MUGS: \$5.00. NOTE PAPER \$2.50 pkg. TOTE BAG \$15.00. PEWTER PLATE \$35.00 All with the Old Town hall and millpond.

WOVEN AFGHAN \$45.00, red, green, blue with nine local sites.

TAPESTRY PILLOW \$28.00 shows depot and train.

SIGNATURE QUILT \$10.00. Your signature or another's to be embroidered on the quilt to remain in Society archives.

2004 CALENDAR \$5.00 with local scenes.

MORE INFO? 810/229-6402.

(cont. from p. 1)

Lewis again set out to find the pass and the Indians. August 12, 1805, one of his men straddles the headwaters of the Missouri. After crossing the Divide at Lemhi Pass they soon drank of the stream that would become the Columbia. Three Indian women were spotted. Giving them gifts he convinced them to take them to the Indian camp. A Shoshone war party of 60 rode toward them. The women showed the gifts "...and we were all caressed and besmeared with their grease and paint till I was heartily tired of the 'national hug'..." Lewis. He told them of their journey. He learned of the Salmon River and a dismal description of the route; also noted were c. 400 horses.

With the Indian Chief and 30 horses to carry baggage they met Clark down river. In the crowd Sacagawea recognized the chief as her brother, Camehawait. With her help Lewis convinced them to aid their journey; trade would be of benefit in the future. The Indians traded sharply for their horses. However even the castoffs would make future meals. August 18, Lewis' 31st birthday, Clark begins to reconnoiter the Salmon River; it couldn't be as bad as described. It was. More horses would be needed.

Mornings were now frosty. "...we Set out at Sunrise...with out big coats on and our fingers ackd with the cold..." Sgt. Ordway. They were finally on their way to the Snake River and the Columbia.

I have never met or heard of anyone who could out-smart honesty.

- Abe Lincoln

LIFE MEMBERS: Lawrence Autobody and Promess, Inc.

BUSINESS/PROFESSIONAL MEMBERS: Advance Craft Homebuilders, Inc.; William P. Horal, DDS; Carol McCririe S Assoc; and Lindhout Associates.

The support and confidence these companies exhibit is much appreciated. Give them your consideration please. Others in the business/professional community are welcome.

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

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THE CUSHING FAMILY COMES TO STAY

Altho' many who invested in land in the area in the early 1830s bought it sight unseen, John Cushing, a farmer (b. 1783, Nova Scotia) and wife Elizabeth (b. 1787 MA), arrived in Brighton Township c. 1835. With them came sons Benjamin (b. 1814 Canada), William (b. 1819 Canada) and Alonzo (b. 1825 N.Y.). Elizabeth recorded the purchase of 75 acres on May 9, 1835. By February 18, 1840, another 40 acres are hers; land north of Main Street, from Seventh to East Street, and north to Cross Street are in her name. They built a home east of N. First Street, in the area of the city hall.

John meanwhile bought 40 acres in Section 25 in Genoa. (Some Mt. Brighton property and a portion of Worden Lake are located there.) By then the Maltby brothers had the saw mill providing lumber for construction of homes and businesses. Orson Quackenbush's flouring and grist mill was grinding grains for human and animal feed and several blacksmiths and coopers were busy. General stores, harness makers and professionals set up their businesses along the Indian Grand River Trail and Fitch Street. Purchasing land on the Trail made a sound investment. (As is the case today.)

Much land dealing was going on. At \$1.25 an acre those in the east with funds bought thousands of acres on speculation. Within a few years, when taxes weren't paid by far-off original investors, Cushing, Noble, Fitch, Maltby, Quackenbush, etc., were in there with the money; and then they also sold to those still coming. The first two years of Ore Creek's (Brighton) existence seems a frenzy of buying and selling.

William Cushing and Truman Worden, carpenters and joiners, built a house for brother Benjamin. He had married Lovisa and had four children: William B. married and moved to Nebraska; Frances died at 15; Charles F., a Civil War veteran, married Sarah Case; George W. married Addie Cavell, and opened a successful grocery store in 1878 which he later sold to George Conrad in April, 1910.

John's son, Alonzo worked on his father's farm. He fought in the Civil War and died September 11, 1886 in the Soldiers' Home in Grand Rapids.

By 1850 Benjamin owned a hotel-tavern-stage stop on the NE corner of the Trail and Fitch Street. (Fitch, another early settler had property south of Main which ran from Seventh Street to East Street.) Mitchell C. Case was the proprietor. The State Capitol had been moved to Lansing. The Trail is surfaced with wood planks and stagecoaches made daily trips between Detroit and Lansing in 12 hours. The many travelers needed accommodations on that arduous ride. However the hotel served local guests also. The second floor was specially constructed for dancing; the rafters were placed to give the floor a spring. Verandas along the front and side provided cover and shade for the benches placed there. Benjamin died in 1860. In 1892 the hotel was sold to the Stuhrberg brothers. The hotel burned in 1926. (Compiled by Marieanna Bair from census records, atlases, 'From Settlement to City' by Carol McMacken; 'First Landowners', 'Early Landowners and Settlers' and obituaries compiled by Milton Charboneau. Additions/corrections welcome. 810/229-6402.)