THE CUSHING FAMILY COMES TO STAY

Althea many who invested in the area in the early 1830s bought sight unseen, John Cushing, a farmer (b. 1783, Nova Scotia) and wife Elizabeth (b. 1767 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 near N. First Street, in the area of the city hall.

John meanwhile bought 40 acres in Section 25 in Geneseo. (Some Mt. Brighton property and a portion of Warden Lake are located there.) By then the Maltby brothers had their 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 cooper's were busy. General stores, harness makers and professionals set up their businesses along the Indian 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 investors, Cushing, Noble, Fitch, Maltby, Quackenbush, etc., were in trouble with the mortgage; and then they also sold to those still looking. The first two years of Ore Creek's (Brighton) history shows a frenzy of buying and selling.

William Cushing and Truman Warden, carpenters and joiners, built a house for brother Benjamin. He was 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.

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By 1850 Benjamin owned a hotel-tavern-stage stop on the NE corner of the Trail and Fitch Street. (Fitch, another early settler, held 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 wooden 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 quests also. The second floor was especially constructed for dancing; the rafters were placed to give the floor a spring. Venetian along the front and side provided cover and shade for the benches placed there. Benjamin died in 1860. In 1882 the hotel was sold to the Sturhing brothers. The hotel burned in 1926. (Compiled by Marleanna Bair from census records, obituaries, 'From Settlement to City' by Carol McFadden; 'First Landowners, Early Landowners and Settlers' and obituaries compiled by Milton Chereewe. Additional corrections welcome. 810/229-6402.)

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

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It's not news - the Brighton area (SEK Livingston County) is a desirable place in which to live. For many, reasons, 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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(cont. p.3)
MEMBERSHIPS

PRESERVATION/RESTORATION

ARCHIVES: Casters for the five fire proof files, which did not have them when the platform and fastened. Dick Weirre 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 Ulman who helped host. The sign, thanks to Bruce Owers, helped locate the site.

BOOK: 'From Settlement to City' is being very well received. $10.00 Parent-Teacher Tech, 117 E. Grand River, for a copy.

THANKS

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

...For their donation with dues: Tom Leith, Margo Metzger and Randy S. Kyle Wilson.

...Whitney Kibbe for 10 slides reproduction 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 GA for memories and a family tree.

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

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

...Dick Weirre for attaching a back to the bookcase, will help keep out undesirable items.

...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.

...OLMS for donation of two fire proof files.

...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

NAME: ______________________ PHONE: ______________________

ADDRESS:

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

Dues: $500.00 LIFE ( ) $250.00 Couple ( ) $50.00 Patron ( ) $45.00 Individual ( ) $30.00 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

$500.00 $5.00. NOTE PAPER $2.50 pkg. TOTE BAG $15.00, PENTOR PLATE $25.00 All with the Old Town hall and millpond.

WOVEN APRON $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.

I have never met another one could be so out-smart honesty.

-Abe Lincoln

LIFE MEMBERS: Lawrence Autobody and Pharmas, Inc.


The support and confidence these companies exhibit is much appreciated. Give them your consideration and please others in the community.
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TILES: 6 square, ceramic tiles. 13 local scenes in black/white. $8.00, 3/$21.00.


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

DONATION: ( ) $10.00 ( ) $20.00 ( ) $50.00 ( ) $100.00 ( ) Other $__

$500.00 DUES $15.00 ( ) $25.00 ( ) $50.00 ( ) $100.00 ( ) Other $__

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Brighton Area Historical Society Newsletter
P.O. Box 481
Brighton, MI 48116

Aug. 2005
Vol. XXIV No. 8

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Dates to Remember:
Aug. 7: 1-4 p.m. Lyon School Open House.
Aug. 11, 18, 25: 1-3 p.m. Archives Filing. Welcome.
Sept. 4: 1-4 p.m. Lyon School Open House.

Brighton, MI 48116

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