

Brighton Area Historical Society Newsletter

P.O. Box 481

Brighton, MI 48116

Trail Tales

July 2005
Vol. XXIV No. 7

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

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LEAVING OUR 'MARKS'

As the writers of the Declaration of Independence left their mark on all of us, the mark celebrated this month, one must realize we all leave our 'mark'. Perhaps unaware, but marking nevertheless. These marks create our sense of place.

The razing of the old, the destruction of a meadow, a wetland or grove of trees, to be replaced with super stores and acres of paved lots, leave marks also. The reuse, rehabilitation of old structures brings along their 'sense of place' that's been acquired by their existence through the years. Neglect of existing structures by we mark-makers will increase the proliferation of 'For Lease' signs in the very place which holds our 'mark'.

VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY BICENTENNIAL

Before leaving Pittsburg August 31, 1803, Capt. Meriwether Lewis had designed a collapsible boat consisting of an iron frame, which was to have been covered with animal skins. This would have made a light weight vessel riding high on the water. It was designed to carry the bulky items into Shoshone country. Not yet having reached pine country in early July, 1805, from which pitch to seal the seams would have been obtained, he experimented with an ersatz sealant made from charcoal, beeswax and buffalo tallow. After bringing the frame all this distance, and spending a week on its construction, it was a monumental disappointment to have the sealant fail in very rough water. However failure was accepted and the iron frame cached (but not retrieved on the return trip). To make up for this loss, two more large canoes were made from cottonwoods eight miles up the river.

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Dates to Remember:

July * 3: 1-4 p.m. Lyon School Open House.

4: Independence Day.

* 7, 14, 21, 28: 1-3 Archives Filing. Welcome.
CALL 810/229-6402 to confirm.

9: 8-1 p.m. Booth at Brighton Farmers' Market.

*13, 20, 27: 7 p.m. Lyon School maintenance. Help.

*25: 6:30 Society board meeting. Welcome.

Aug * 7: 1-4 Open House at Lyon School Welcome.

*Lyon School, 11455 Buno Road, Brighton Township

MEMBERSHIPS

COUPLES/INDIV: Jim DeJohn, *Wallyne Smail, Bill & Rosemary Ulmer and Willis H. Wolfe (CA).

*Welcome to Wallyne Smail. With each new member the Society becomes more stable and proficient in its dedication to the preservation/restoration mission it has set for itself. Member renewals support the foundation on which this organization can build and grow. Paying of dues is a vital necessity. To promote success warm bodies are also needed. Check out the needs column and the various projects. If the mission of the organization is important you will find some means to help.

THANKS THANKS THANKS

...Ida Bair, John & Janice Field and June Kimble for help in mailing of the June issue of Trail Tales.

.....Judy Marcinkiewicz and Virginia Miller, Questers, for hosting the June 5, Lyon School Open House.

...Tom Reinke and Lucille Weaire for hosting the Society booth at the June 11 Farmers' Market in Brighton.

...Bruce Owens for painting the sign announcing the Lyon School Open House.

...Ann Arbor News, Brighton Argus and WHMI for publicizing the Open House.

...Oakland Livingston Human Services Agency for the two fire proof file cabinets.

...Bert Bair, Jim DeJohn and Jim Vichich for transporting the above files.

...Plank Road Questers and Richard and Barbara Smith for donations to the purchase of a copier for the Archives.

...Willis Wolfe (CA) and Jim DeJohn for their donations to Friends of Lyon School with their dues.

...Carol McCririe & Assoc. for her discount in preparation of a review of Society financial records. Her generosity is much appreciated.

...Charles Axtell (AZ) for the family history. His great grand uncle George W. Axtell is proprietor and editor of The Brighton Citizen in 1874.

PRESERVATION/RESTORATION

ARCHIVES: Researching the Lyon Lake area; Brighton Hospital Chapel; location of John Park's uncle's store on W. Main; one room Plainfield School records; Willis Wolfe's (AZ) and Grace Kay's (TX) local connections. Continuing indexing, filing, and recording area history. Show up at Lyon School each Thursday, 1-3 and you can help. Many photos need sorting. Installed two fire proof files donated by OLSHA. This will help relieve bulging cabinets.

LYON SCHOOL: Need another sign re: Open House for continuous display on the front fence. Next Open House is first Sunday in August, 1-4 p.m.

HISTORY BOOK: 'From Settlement to City - Brighton, Michigan, 1832/1945' has been selling well. Call 810/229-6402 or purchase at Parent-Teacher Tech, 117 E. Grand River. Members = \$60.00, non members = \$65.00. Shpg \$3.00. This book sells itself.

NEEDED NEEDED NEEDED

...Society booth personnel at each 2nd Saturday Farmers' Market. Lucille Weaire, 810/229-3066.

...Annual Art Fair, August 13, 14. Booth helpers needed. 810/229-6402. This is always a fine public relations event for the Society. Many caring fair-goers to meet.

...Donations to the copier fund.

...People, people, people to serve as co-editor or assistant for the newsletter; prepare displays for Open House at the Lyon School; take a position as director or committee chair for a year, i.e. publicity, fair or market booth, organizing a yard sale of items donated as fund raisers, exterior Lyon School window cleaning, etc. 810/229-6402.

....Fix electric light in display case.

...hook up motion detector lights at the school.

(THANKS continued.)

...Bev LaBelle who met with the author of a forthcoming book on the history of Michigan courthouses.

...Parent-Teacher Tech for stocking the Brighton history book.

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

FROM SETTLEMENT TO CITY - Brighton, MI - 1832-1945, by Carol McMacken. Brighton's own history book. Almost 500 pages, over 300 pictures. Members, \$60.00 non members \$65.00 + shpg. Available at Parent-Teacher Tech, 117 E. Grand River.
 TILES: 13 local scenes, black/white 6"x6" ceramic tiles. \$8.00, 3/\$21.00

1875 PLAT MAPS \$1. of Brighton, Conway, Genoa, Green Oak, Hamburg, Hartland, Howell, Iosco and Oceola Townships. 1915 maps of Brighton and Howell cities.

LYON SCHOOL T-SHIRTS \$12. S/XL.

SIGNATURE QUILT \$10. Add your signature or another of your choice to be embroidered on the quilt which will remain in the Society's archives.

MUGS \$5.00. NOTE PAPER PKG \$2.50
 TOTE BAG \$15. PEWTER PLATES \$35. All show the Old Town Hall by the millpond.
 AFGHANS \$49. red, green, blue, woven with nine local sites.
 2004 CALENDAR \$5. with local scenes.
 TAPESTRY PILLOW \$28. with railroad depot and train.

For more information - 810/229-6402

(cont. from p. 1)

July 15, finally finds the Corps underway up the Missouri again, with eight vessels, once more paddling, polling or pulling along from the shore. Lewis records ... "Our trio of pests still invade and obstruct us on all occasions, these are the Musquitoes eye knats and prickly pears." He later wrote of another pest, needle grass "... penetrate our mockersons and leather leggings and give us great pain..." Rattlesnakes were abundant also.

July 19, 1200' perpendicular cliffs force the river into a 100-150' wide, deep funnel. Altho' the current is strong the paddlers must get through since there is no beach for respite along its 5 3/4 mile length; the Gates of the Rocky Mountains.

July 27, the junction of the three rivers which form the Missouri, the Gallatin, the Madison and the Jefferson was reached. Meanwhile Capt. Wm. Clark is on foot desperately searching for the Shoshone and the horses needed to get over the mountains. Sacagawea assures them she recognizes the three forks site; but where are the Shoshone (and their horses)?

WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

July 23: 11-4. Saline Historical Society celebrating the 10th year of the Depot Museum. Many tours, exhibits, activities and ice cream. 734/4290-9621 or burroak50@earthlink.net.

Nothing is more responsible for the good old days than a bad memory.

- Robert Benchley

LIFE MEMBERS: Lawrence Autobody and Promess, Inc.

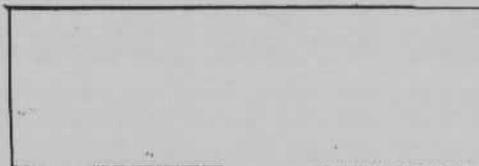
BUSINESS/PROFESSIONAL MEMBERS: Advance Craft Homebuilders, Inc.; William P. Horal, DDS; Carol McCririe S Assoc; and Lindhout Associates.

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
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STEPHEN LEE, GREEN OAK TOWNSHIP'S FIRST SETTLER

In 1830, Stephen Lee, wife Lydia (Emmons), and nine children arrived in Green Oak Township, at that time still a part of Washtenaw County, from New York State. They purchased the E½ NW¼ of Section 20, recorded October 6, 1830. (West side of U.S. 23, from Winans Lake Road north to the Huron River.)

The three sons, Hannibal, b. 1812, Solomon, b. 1813 and Charles, b. 1823, and the female contingent of the family also, put up a log house and cleared several acres which were planted to winter wheat to assure sustenance the next year. (Pioneers brought various supplies with them to tide them over until the crop was harvested.) Game was plentiful as were fish in the nearby Huron.

The following year Lee hosted the Lewis B. Fonda family until they got shelter built, north of the Grand River Trail, east of U.S. 23 (the Ann Arbor Road at that time).

Many firsts can be attributed to the Lees: the first log house in the county and wheat sowed; the first worship service was held in the Lee cabin when an itinerant preacher visited (three families in attendance). Daughter Hannah conducted the first school in a house built by an uncle, a brother of her mother, on the bank of the Huron north of the Lee farm. In 1837, School District 4 was organized and Stephen was hired to build a school on Winans Lake Road and 23, the following year. It was to be a frame, not log, building, 22 x 25, with ten 12-light windows. He built the students' desks and the teacher's which was on a raised platform. The school was to have a brick chimney and a portico at the front entrance. All this for \$250.00. Sadly, the first death occurred in the township when daughter, Eliza, who had married Albert Norton, died March 3, 1833 at age 23; a son survived her. She was buried on family property but at some time was transferred to the Plains (Holden) Cemetery on Maltby Road.

A year later son Hannibal married Mary Hubbard, daughter of a neighbor a few miles north. The double wedding also united her brother with one of Hannibal's sisters. Which sister: perhaps Hannah, Catherine or Elizabeth? Of the other daughters, Sarah Lydia married Carrol Woods and Lucy, a Mr. Brown.

Stephen Lee died December 6, 1868. He is buried in the Plains Cemetery beside Lydia. There is no information as to when she was born or died, only that she was 31 years old. The sons stayed in the area and farmed. Solomon and Charles are with their parents and sister as are sister Sarah and husband, Carrol Wood. Hannibal and Mary are buried in Fairview Cemetery. The other three daughters seem to have left the area.

Many Lees are recorded in county census records. Stephen's connection to them needs more research. However his arrival was the earliest. Perhaps that prompted the other Lees to also head west to Michigan Territory. (Compiled by Marieanna Bair from Ellis' 1880 History of Livingston County; McMacken's From Settlement to City; Yesteryears in Green Oak; census records; obituaries and cemetery transcriptions by Milton Charboneau and John & Janice Field. Additions/corrections welcomed. 810/229-6402.)