DAVID THOMPSON INITIATES BRIGHTON'S FIRST HEAVY INDUSTRY

Born July 22, 1819, in Scotland, David Thompson came to America at age 16. He had previously been employed as a Foundry man. Upon settling in Brighton in 1840, he established one of the first industries in the village. He built a foundry at 300 E. Grand River. Census records state his occupation as a moulder – one who pours molten iron into a sand form. With Olypsus Spencer he replaced it with a brick building on the SE corner of Grand River and North Streets in 1843.

After three years he was the sole owner for the next 35 years. The foundry produced clock parts, plow points and other farm implements for more than 50 years. A vital, indispensable business of the time; named Globe Iron Works it boasted a 10 horse power engine. In the 1959 Business Directory one finds: "O. Thompson, Furnace and Machine Shop." After his death in 1900 the building was removed.

Other newcomers to the area were Lewis Curry and his young wife, Sarah, b. 1819, in New York. Their son, Lewis, b. 1837, is reputed to be the first white child born in what was to become the village; sister Sarah Ann was born in 1842. Not long after her birth her father died.

Neighbor David Thompson and the widow Curry married in 1845. Their home was on a nearby farm on Spencer Road, 6 miles east. He assumed the responsibilities of fatherhood of Sarah's children, raising them as his own. The family grew with the birth of George, 1846, and Ira, 1848. (Both became Foundrymen and Sarah's son, Lewis became a merchant and Sarah Ann married George W. Runion, living in Brighton until her death.)

In the genre' of the obituaries of the time David is "...a unique and central figure in town. He was a man of strong individuality having ideas belonging strictly to himself...He had a mirthful nature which made him a pleasant acquaintance to all who knew him. Sarah's obituary included"...A pioneer in the true sense of the word."

Lewis Curry, Sarah and David Thompson are all buried in the same lot in the Old Village Cemetery as is son Ira. Sarah Runion is buried in Calvary Cemetery; her brother, Lewis, died in Paris. Compiled by Marianna Bair from Old Village Cemetery Supplement by Bill Pless and the transcription by John and Janice Field; the transcription of Calvary Cemetery and obituaries compiled by Milton Charbonneau; census records; From Settlement to City - Brighton, Michigan - 1830-1945 by Carol McMacken. Corrections/ additions most welcome. 810/229-6402.

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

June 2005
Vol. XXIV No. 6

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OCCUPPIES TO LEARN

Each first Sunday of the month, 1-4 p.m., the Lyon School Open House takes place. The 120 year old one room schoolhouse can be visited. One can try out a period desk, peruse a McGuffey reader, even ring the school bell. Photos of early area scenes can be viewed. The new history book and other Society Fund raisers can be purchased.

The Archives Room is open for research.

Only because members of the Society and members of Plank Road Quilters serve as docents can this program of visits to the school be undertaken. Old and young enjoy these visits.

Another opportunity to learn about the Society comes each second Saturday at the Brighton Farmers' Market. Visit the Society booth and become aware of local history and its preservation.

VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY BICENTENNIAL

June 2, 1805. Upon reaching a fork in the Missouri River into which another river empties, Lewis writes "...what astonishes us a little is that the Indians who appear to be so well acquainted with the geography of this country should not have mentioned this river on the rite...if not it be the Missouri."

The men of the Corps were certain the river on the right was the Missouri. Which river to follow? The captains, with 3-6 men, explored in both directions. The characteristics of the waters, the Missouri, fast and clear (as one filled with mountain snow melt) and the other, also fast but turbid - an indication it flowed not from the mountains, convinced them the Missouri was to the left.

(Cont. p.3)

Dates to Remember:
June 8-9,15-23,30: 1-3 p.m. Archives filling. Welcome. 810/229-6402 to confirm.
11: 8-1 p.m. Brighton Farmers' Market.
July 12, 13, 19: 7 p.m. Lyon School, maintenance help.
July 19: 6:30 p.m. Society Board Meeting. Welcome.
July 23: 1-4 Open House at Lyon School.
February 25: 6:30 p.m. Society Board Meeting. Welcome.
July 19: 1-4 Open House at Lyon School.

Lyon School, 11455 Sano Rd. , Brighton.
MENBERSHIPS
BUS/PROF: Wm. P. Horal, DDS
COUPLES/INDIV: Bradley Beal (Howell), Carolina DeLuca (Howell), Jeanette Johnson (GS), Susan L. Walters-Steinacker.

A sincere welcome to the new members Dr. Horal and Susan Walters-Steinacker.

It is good for the Society board members to renew when members renew. They are assured people do care and went to promote the Society's mission.

Purchasers of the Society's history book will be receiving the newsletter for several issues at no charge. Because dues pay administration costs of the Society 'Complementary Copies' can be distributed for a short time only. To develop awareness of the Society's mission and contribute to Society projects it is vital that your membership is received. If this issue has the 'Complementary Copy' stamp it indicates 2005 dues have not been paid. Your support is what enables the volunteer to 'keep the show on the road'. No members, no Society.

THANKS

Heidi Claumitzer, Jeanette Johnson and June Kumble for helping mail the May issue of Trail Tales.

Lucille Wease for presiding at the Society booth at the Farmers' Market in Brighton. Call 229-3086 to offer your help.

Jeanette Johnson for her donation with her dues.

Waldenwood Guest Chapter 669 for their donation when they visited Lyon School.

Elaine Saxton and her sister who served as docents at Lyon School at the May Open House.

Glick and Barbara Salit for a 1947 map of Livingston County. This was long before US 23 and I-86 were even under consideration.

Parent-Teacher Tech, 117 E. Grand River, for stocking 'From Settlement to City - Brighton 1832-1949.'

PRESERVATION/RESTORATION
ARCHIVES: To accommodate the compiling of local printed history a Cannon PASC64 copier has been installed in the archives room. Those who are interested may make a contribution to its purchase cost.

LYON SCHOOL: When school groups visit, the new flag and pole are put to good use. It is inspiring to see Old Glory waving over one of the original manifestations of parents' attempts to educate their children in the wilderness of long ago.

HISTORY BOOK: From Settlement to City - Brighton - 1832-1945, by Carol Mckenne, Brighton's own history book, Almost 500 pages; over 200 pictures. Members $50.00 non members $65.00 + shpg. Available at Parent-Teacher Tech, 117 E. Grand River.

TILES: 13 local scenes, black/white 8"x8" ceramic tiles, $8.00, 3/$21.00

NEEDED NEEDLED NEEDED

...someone to serve as co-editory or assistant for the newsletter.

...people to prepare displays for 1st Sunday of the month open house at the Lyon School, 11455 Buno Road.

...people to take a position as a director or committee chair for a year, i.e. publicity, art fair booth, organizing a yard sale of items donated as fund raisers, exterior window cleaning, etc.

For any of the above contact 810/269-6402.

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 ( ) $12.00 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 Mckenne. Brighton's own history book, Almost 500 pages; over 200 pictures. Members $50.00 non members $65.00 + shpg. Available at Parent-Teacher Tech, 117 E. Grand River.

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For more information - 810/269-6402.

...Continued from p. 1...

They were alone in this conviction. However Lewis records the men "...said very cheerfully that they were ready to follow us at any cost what we thought proper to direct..." Several days later Lewis searched for the best portage route discovered the Falls of the Missouri confirming their decision.

The 17 3/4 mile portage began June 22, 1803. A wagon was made to transport the remaining canoes (two were cached). The men often had to grab at clumps of grass, stumps, etc., to keep their footing. Camps were made at each end of the portage - Lewis at the upper and Clark at the lower. The wagon had often to be repaired, the grizzlies, almost as thick as the mosquitoes, and sudden violent storms made their progress very slow. Would they get over the snow-covered Rockies in time?

Life Members: Lawrence Autobody and Process, Inc.


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

Syrupthes of the Society to the family of JIM ANDERSON

Jim was a Brighton native and a Society member.

The deepest feeling always shows itself in silence.

WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

June 25,26: 9-5, Blacksmith Festival. Waterloo Area Farm Museum, 517/651-4094

June 26: noon-3, Michigan Log Cabin Day, Cobbles Stone Farm, Ann Arbor, 734/354-2928

July 7: 7 p.m., Livingston County Genealogical Society, Cultural Hall, 104 W. Grand River, Howell. Speaker: Helen: research re: St. Augustine Catholic Church and cemetery in Deerfield Twp. Also Info: re: National Register listing.

P.O. Box 1037, Howell 48843-1037.
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