



Brighton Area Historical Society Newsletter

P.O. Box 481

Brighton, MI 48116

Trail Tales

September 2005
Vol. XXIV No. 9

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

SAVING WHAT CANNOT BE REPLACED

In November the Society will be 24 years old. During that time it has worked to preserve the irreplaceable - the memory of the Brighton area - and make it available to others.

Because of generous support and commitment of society members, and others who care about the society's mission, many in the area realize the aesthetic and economical assets of safe guarding older buildings, open space, etc. Many are acknowledging that renovation and adaptation are preferable to demolition. Preservation is one means of retaining the sense of place so important to each of us.

VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY BICENTENNIAL

Starting early September 1, 1805, led by Old Toby, the Corps began the trek over the steep mountains. There followed 14 days of severe lack of food; along with cold, wet snow and rain, mixed in with horses falling off the narrow trail. "Set in to raining hard at dark, so we lay down and slept, wet, hungry and cold." Sgt. Ordway. The lack of food was so severe several colts were killed during the trek. In desperation it was decided Clark and six hunters would go ahead and hunt for food to send back.

The 22nd, Pvt. Reuben Field, from Clark's party, brought dried fish and camas roots from the Nez Perse' Indians they'd met. In their starved condition, the men overate and became violently ill for a week. The Indians considered killing these whites for their weapons and goods. A woman, Watkweis, who'd been treated well by white traders after escaping from the Blackfeet Indians, dissuaded them.

Clark moved the Corps on to make dugouts of pine on the Clearwater River. Finally they're headed downstream - two years after starting up the Missouri.

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Cemeteries/
Archives
810/599-6195



Dates to Remember:

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

*8, 15, 22, 29: 1-3 p.m. Archives filing. Welcome.
810/229-6402 to confirm.

10: 8-1 pm. Booth at Farmers' Market.

*21, 28: 7 p.m. Lyon School maintenance.

You can help.

*24: 8-2 p.m. Harvest Days booth, Main St.

*26: 6:30 Society board meeting. Welcome.

*Lyon School, 11455 Buno Rd., Brighton.

MEMBERSHIPS

LIFE: *William and Lenore Harris.

COUPLES/INDIV.: *Charles E. Axtell (AZ), *Deborah Anthony, *Pam Currey, *Therese Heinonen, *James Hartman, *Lynnett K. Hawkins, Esther Jarvis, Bill & Barbara McCririe, Norma Jean Pless (Roscommon), *Tom & Sue Pound, Dick & Barbara Smith (Howell).

*A sincere welcome to Charles, Deborah, Pam, Therese, Lynnette, James, William & Lenore and Tom & Sue Pound.

The support and confidence expressed by new AND renewing members is received with a sense of sustained progress. It is assumed all members realize their responsibility to the Society and will respond to the best of their ability. The Society has a number of projects underway- there are more which need to be undertaken.

THANKS THANKS THANKS

...Ida Bair and John & Janice Field For their help in preparing the August issue for the mail.

...Esther Jarvis For her donation with dues.

...Norma Jean Pless and Dick and Barbara Smith for their donation to Friends of Lyon School with their dues.

...Bill & Jackie Armstrong, Ann Bolin, Margaret Bowland, Lisa Cave, Cathy Dougherty, Nancy Fredenburg, Mindy Kinsey, Carol McMacken, Bud & Lou Prine, Pauline Schafer, Peg Siford, Anne Stratigos, Jim Vichich and Dick Weaire for fine help at the society booth at the Art Fair.

...Lucille Weaire for scheduling the above at the society booth. Also Cindy Cvenyros for making site arrangements.

...Judy Marcinkowicz for helping embroider signatures on the signature quilt.

...John Park, Flint, for post cards with pictures West Main c. 1900.

...Dr. Harry Davis for photos of the first and second M.E. church buildings.

...Joanne Fuller for 1950-60 Boy Scout memorabilia and two 5x7 photos of Tiny Tots Twirlers from that time.

...Joyce Powers for a sampler and two books relating to country schools.

...Jeanette Johnson and Shirley Maquire for helping host August Open House.

PRESERVATION/RESTORATION

ARCHIVES: With the help of Christine Berrarer material is being transferred into the new files. The Archives can be visited most Thursdays, 1-3. Call 810/229-6402 to confirm or set another date.

LYON SCHOOL: Each month more visitors are received at the Open House, 1-4 pm, each first Sunday. Thanks to the Plank Road Chapter of Questers who help host. September 4, is the next Open House. You can ring the bell too.

HISTORY BOOK: 'From Settlement to City' by Carol McMacken is available at Parent-Teacher Tech, 117 E. Grand River or call 810/229-6402. Carol graciously autographed books at the Fair.

FRIENDS OF LYON SCHOOL RECOGNITION DAY

October 2, 2005, 1-4 p.m.

Friends are those who've made a contribution to the ongoing restoration/preservation of this historic site. Alumni, and others who believe this project has validity will be recognized at the Open House. The project insures this early structure will be protected in order to give others a chance to touch a part of local history. Friends of Lyon School are excellent examples of people who care about the welfare of others and protect the knowledge of the area's past. You can also be a Friend.

The sincere sympathies
of the Society are
extended to the family of

AUDREY LEITH

She was a long-time member
and generous benefactor

NEEDED NEEDED NEEDED

...a tree needs to be cut, weeds pulled and windows washed at the school.

...business(s) to stock Society sale items: coverlets, tiles, pillows, etc.

...helpers for Harvest Days booth September 24, 8-1 p.m.

...people to serve on the board to promote needed projects.

...a coordinator for scheduling students' visits to Lyon School.

810/229-6402 for information

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.

WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

Sept. 10,11: 9-5. 20th Annual Kelly-Fisk Farm Festival, 9180 Highland Rd (1.5 miles west of Williams Lake Rd). 1855 farmhouse, barn and one room school. Rides, crafts, bake sale, dancing, old cars, tractors, apple pie/ice cream, etc.

Sept. 17: Hartland Heritage Day, includes cemetery tour, hay wagon tour, concerts, etc. 810/746-2150 or hartlandareahistory.org.

Sept. 21: Rochester Hills, Preserving Your Past - Caring for Photographs/Documents. \$5.00 248/656-4663 for info.

Oct. 15: Oral History for Michigianians; A Conference. 517/321-1746 or e-mail gwiskemann@org.net

Sept. 24: 10-4 p.m. Wander Washtenaw. Explore the county's historic attractions. 734/662-9092 or E-mail wchs-500@ameritech.net. Fourteen sites.

BUSINESS/PROFESSIONAL MEMBERS

Advance Craft Homebuilders, Inc.
William P. Horal, DDS; **Lawrence Auto-body; Carol McCririe & Associates;
Lindhout Associates; **Promess, Inc.

**LIFE MEMBERS

SIGNATURE QUILT

This quilt has dozens of names embroidered on it. Sending your signature is an easy way to make a donation. From early tax rolls, school and government contracts, etc., copies of early residents' signatures are in Society files i.e. Moon, Galloway, Loch, Van Amburg, etc. The completed quilt will remain in Society archives for occasional display.

"I steer my bark with hope ahead and fear astern. -Thomas Jefferson

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

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G. B. RATZ & SON HARDWARE

C. 1864, Henry Ratz moved his family (three sons and a daughter) from Canada to Michigan coming to Brighton shortly after. Henry, a blacksmith, worked in the Henry Herbst Blacksmith shop. (south side of W. Main, one block east of Hyne St.) In 1874 Henry purchased land from Jacob Euler in Section 14 of Genoa Township: S $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ and the NE $\frac{1}{4}$, a total of 240 acres. The Grand River Trail cuts on a slant through the north edge of the property; the Ratz School is on the north side at the corner of Euler Road. The family fit well into the house Euler built c. 1835. In the 1890s Ratz sold the farm to William Risch and Francis Rhodes and moved into town. There son George B., also worked, as a wagon maker.

William Pipp, carpenter, and John Becker, blacksmith, built a hardware store on the SE corner of Hyne and W. Main soon after Smith & McPerson platted and sold lots west of Ore Creek when the railroad came through Brighton in 1871. The business opened February 14, 1872.

George B. married neighbor Mary Behrens, August 5, 1878. Their first child, George H., b. August 9, 1881, had an eye damaged by a piece of steel when he was three. However, after passing the civil service exam, he worked in the Treasury department in Washington, D.C. After two years he returned to go into business with his father, George B., who had bought the Pipp and Becker hardware store. During a remodeling a verse written by Pipp on the underside of a wide board from the counter was found. Translated from German it read Pipp was just a poor hardworking man who kept his nose out of other peoples' business, enjoyed his food and his liquor, and slept well.

The store was a gathering place for men around the pot-bellied stove, discussing politics, agriculture, weather, taxes and the changes taking place in the area and the country. In the 1930s, probably earlier, youngsters could put on ice skates by the stove prior to skating on the mill pond; or warm up later. Skates were sharpened, straps fixed, skate keys found, etc., at no charge.

WW II veteran stepson Dean Sellman came into the business in 1946. "We modernized it in 1955 but we're still selling the same type of products we did in the old days," he said in an interview in 1972, on the occasion of the store's 100th anniversary. He noted, also, that George H. had the first Ford dealership in Brighton, selling Model Ts like 'hot cakes' in 1917.

In June, 1977, George Schrader assumed ownership. Later a variety of businesses were in the building. When it burned in July, 1999, the 'Music Man' occupied the site. It is being replaced with a larger, two story structure in 2005 and will house CW Interiors. (Compiled by Marieanna Bair from: Census records; and the writings of William Pless, c. 1982. Additions/corrections welcomed. 810/229-6402.)