



Brighton Area Historical Society Newsletter

P.O. Box 481

Brighton, MI 48116

www.brightonareahistorical.com

Trail Tales

August 2006
Vol. XXV No. 8

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

SOCIETY'S SILVER ANNIVERSARY

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Lyon School
Open House
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Organized by Mary Messerschmidt (a new resident) and others who felt local history was not recorded in an accessible manner nor was it properly archived; the Brighton Area historical Society is nearing completion of its 25th year. (And they said it wouldn't last.)

The possible loss of several early structures was an energizing force. Preservation and restoration emerged as a dominant goal. Fund raising became a necessary adjunct. The Chamber of Commerce, Citizen's Bank and Brighton School District, among others, provided early meeting sites. Convinced of the rightness of restoration of the town hall, local government, area businesses, caring individuals and Society members contributed time, muscle and funds. The same is true for preservation/restoration of the Lyon one room school. The restoration of the Old Village Cemetery and its listing on the Michigan Historic Site Register is another example of local support of the Society's mission. The recent publication of a history of Brighton is a superb example of dedication to the principle of respect of a vibrant past to learn from it.

A special commemoration is in the planning stage. Watch for further details.

VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY BICENTENNIAL

By early August, 1806, Captain William Clark had reached the planned rendezvous site, the junction of the Yellowstone and Missouri down which his party had traveled, about a week before Captain Meriwether Lewis arrived.

Notes attached to trees and bushes explained Clark had not found any food but lots of 'musketos', so had proceeded on. August 1, still not meeting Clark, Lewis decided to take a break and also give the men time to make themselves some clothes from the skins of buffalo, deer and antelope. They would also await the arrival of the two men who'd stayed behind to repair (cont. P. 3)



Dates to Remember:

Aug. *3,17,31: 1-3 p.m. Archives filing. Welcome.
Call 810/229-6402 to confirm.

*6: 1-4 p.m. Open House at Lyon School.

12: 10-5, Aug 13: Noon/4 p.m. Art Fair.

Help at Society booth. 229-3066.

*28, 6:30 p.m. Society board meeting. Welcome.

* Lyon School, 11455 Buno Road, Brighton Township.

MEMBERSHIPS

PATRON: *Richard Park (IL).

STUDENT: Cheryl Chidester.

COUPLES/INDIVIDUALS: Steve & Kathy Davis (07) and Rosemary Ulmer.

*Welcome to new member Richard Park. His early family connections run deeply. The support of renewing members is always welcome. The Society is nearing 100% of renewing members.

An effective society consists of more than a capable board. Those receiving this issue are strongly encouraged to return dues or a donation to the Society's efforts.

THANKS THANKS THANKS

...Ida Bair and John & Janice Field for their help with mailing the July Trail Tales.

...The Chamber of Commerce for their continued support.

...Lois Winegar for added information on the Pipp family as noted in the July issue.

...Parent-Teacher Tech, 117 E. Grand River for their continued stocking of the Society's history book.

...Nancy Fredenburg for her continued updating of the Society web site.

...Sue Walters-Steinacker and Tom Reinke for arranging the refinishing exhibit, and Mindy Kinsey and Dick Weaire for serving as greeters.

...Lorry Wagner for a copy of her research of the Lobdell family for Oma L. Rose.

HISTORICAL JOKES

Where was the Declaration of Independence signed? At the bottom!

Why did the pioneers cross the plains in covered wagons? They didn't want to wait 40 years for a train.

Where did the Pilgrims land when they came to America? On their feet.

Was tennis played in ancient Egypt? Yes. You've heard how Joseph served in Pharaoh's court.

RESTORATION/PRESERVATION

ARCHIVES: Research and photo reproduction is available at the archives. Volunteers assist - it is appropriate that a contribution be made to the Society.

HISTORY BOOK: The first printing of 'From Settlement to City - Brighton - 1832-1945' is almost sold out. Parent-Teacher Tech Center, 117 E. Grand River is stocking them for the Society.

LYON SCHOOL: Arrangements are being made for electrical needs updating.

The July 1 Open House encountered poor weather. Those attending saw a furniture refinishing exhibit.

The August 6 Open House will be hosting a classic vehicle show: cars, boats, motorcycles, etc. The Classic Legends Car Club will be there also. Your vehicle is welcome; 11455 Buno Road, Brighton Township. Call Sue 810/229-4483.

ART FAIR BOOTH

August 12 and 13 on Main Street in Brighton. Lucille Weaire 810/229-3066 is scheduling people to attend the Society booth. This is a fine opportunity to promote the Society and a fun way to spend two hours. Two to three people will be scheduled for each period. Call Lucille and offer your help. You'll be glad you did.

DO YOU HAVE BRIGHTON'S HISTORY IN A SHOE BOX OR DRAWER?

Newspaper clippings, memoirs, maps, photos, etc., should be properly preserved for the next generation. Contact the Society, 810/229-6402 to allow the Society the opportunity to enlarge the collection in the Archives. The originals can be returned if you wish.

NEEDED NEEDED NEEDED

...Donations to the Friends of Lyon School for roof repairs needed in the near future.

...A local business to stock tiles, or coverlets, or pewter plates or pillows or post cards or note paper or Lyon School T-shirts.

P O BOX 481, BRIGHTON MI 48116-0481

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NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

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

Dues: () \$500.00 Life () \$25.00 Couple () \$50.00 Bus/Professional
 () \$ 50.00 Patron () \$15.00 Individual () \$ 2.00 Student

Friend of Lyon School: () \$10.00 () \$20.00 () \$25.00 () 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.

NOTE PAPER \$2.50 pkg.

TOTEBAG \$15.00. PEWTER PLATE \$35.00
 All with the Old Town hall and millpond.

WOVEN AFGHAN \$49.00, 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. fr. p. 1) the perogue and canoe that had been cached two years before. Lewis proceeded on August 10, to be joined by them the 12th. On a hunting expedition Lewis' companion accidentally shot him in the buttocks, the bullet exiting from the right thigh. It bled profusely but neither bone nor artery had been hit. At 1 p.m., Lewis and Clark were reunited.

Clark's trip down the Yellowstone was, compared to Lewis' journey, rather uneventful. However he'd mapped the entire trip. Finding no timber to make boats he traveled by pack train. The Crow Indians were aware of the party and stole half the horses one night. Two days later the rest were stolen. August 13, the entire party proceeded on making 86 miles, floating down the Missouri.

August 17, at the Mandan village, Charboneau was paid off for his services. He, Sacagawea and the child, Jean, were bid goodbye. After convincing several of the Indians to visit the 'Great White Father' in Washington all was in readiness to continue the journey. The remainder of the month, while riding the Missouri Missouri downstream they were greeted by Indians who remembered them from 1804.

BUSINESS/PROFESSIONAL MEMBERS

Advance Craft Homebuilders, Inc.; Ameri-Construction; William P. Horal, DDS; **Lawrence Autobody; Livingston County Woodcraft Guild; Matthew Matuszak, DDS, PC.; Carol McCririe & Associates; Lindhout Associates; **Promess, Inc.; The Fence Spot. Be sure to patronize these local, independent sustainers of the Society.

**Life Member

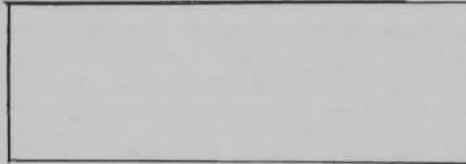
WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

August 20: 2-4 p.m. Green Oak Township Historical Society will hold its 31st annual Green Oak Day. At the 1856 Town Hall on Silver Lake Road, tour exhibits, learn of the history of the building and enjoy an ice cream social.

BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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BENJAMIN BLAINE AND HIS BROTHER MAKE THE MOVE TO MICHIGAN

One of the many who crossed the mountains on the Erie Canal and sailed across Lake Erie, Benjamin, age 26, arrived in 1833. From Detroit he found his way to the cabin of his older brother, Ammon, October 21. Ammon (27) and wife Lucy had arrived a year earlier, and had taken up land in what would later be Green Oak Township, Section 15, August 23, 1832. (The following year, 50 acres on the north side of Silver Lake.) Benjamin was one of eleven children of Joseph and Sarah of Orleans County, New York.

Several years before Livingston County was organized, March 24, 1836, the lower two tiers of townships (of four tiers) were part of Washtenaw County. Benjamin bought 80 acres each in Sections 5 and 6 of what was to be Brighton Township, a total of 160 acres, November 11, 1833. (North side of McClements Road.) Three years later, January 16, 1836, one mile north, he bought 40 more acres in Section 5.

That first winter Benjamin lived with his brother in his log cabin. In 1834, with his friend Seth Bidwell, a small log cabin with a dirt floor, in which they lived for a year or two in Brighton Township was built. Ben, who enjoyed hunting and fishing (a trapper and hunter all his life), kept the food supply in good shape. That first year he's reputed to have bagged 80 deer. (These could be sold/traded to other settlers.) During that period he also worked for Kinsley Bingham and Robert Warden of Green Oak for 1½ years.

In 1838 he returned east, married Emily Watrous, and brought her to the cabin in Michigan. Seven children were born to them in the wilderness. (A daughter, Mary, married a son of friend Seth Bidwell, George Alfred.) A c. 1900 photo shows Ben and Emily's son, James, driving a wagon drawn by oxen on the Grand River Trail. When Brighton Township was organized he served the board as assessor in 1838. November 15, 1854, 80 acres of Hartland Township Section 32 were purchased from the U.S. government. The south c. 20 acres contained a lake now know as Blaine Lake. A cabin was built on the west side of the lake. To arrive at the cabin a two-track lane over the neighbor's property was followed. The story goes that Emily always washed dishes in the lake, the many fish cleaning up the debris. Retrieving a silver fork Emily was bitten by a pike, wounding her hand badly.

Ben is reputed to have been a peculiar fellow known for always going without shoes. When helping put hay in a farmer's barn the snakes, which often were caught up in the hay, would be kicked out by Ben with his bare feet. Late local historian, Bill Pless, suggests that because of Benjamin's extensive travels while trapping, he ascertained the route of the creek with its origins in the very northern edge of Brighton Township; and noticed its high iron content. Pless therefore credits him with naming Ore Creek which flows through Brighton City, exits into Hamburg township, into Ore Lake and finally the Huron River.

A photo c. 1860, includes Thomas, Willmont, Ammon, Benjamin and Joseph Blaine, all of Orleans County, New York. One concludes that at some time these five of seven brothers reunited at least for a photo. Ben 84, Emily 47 and son Truman 29, are buried at Hartland Village Cemetery. (Compiled by Marieanna Bair from 1880 History of Livingston County; Bill Pless writings; censuses; Early Land Owners and Settlers and obituaries compiled by Milton Charboneau. Additions/corrections welcomed. 810/229-6402.)