



# Brighton Area Historical Society Newsletter

P.O. Box 481

Brighton, MI 48116

www.brightonareahistorical.com

## Trail Tales

March 2006  
Vol. XXV No. 3

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

### BIRD FAMILY CEMETERY RESTORED

Application to the Michigan Historic Site Register is being made for the Bird Cemetery on Pleasant Valley Road in Brighton Township. The township board is to be commended for their recognition of the value of identifying local sites; bringing to the fore knowledge of the pioneers who built homes and families in the area. (The Birds resting here were among the first families in Brighton Township.) The iron fence and gate have been restored and an identifying sign placed. A special program will be held when the marker is installed.

These markers make one aware of the history that lies hidden in our community. Why remember? To help understand and interpret the past and what we can learn from it. How it has shaped our lives. History is never completed. One must ask, where do I fit in? We would encourage Brighton and all townships to remember, honor and properly care for the last resting places of these very early settlers.

### VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY BICENTENNIAL

March 20, 1806, the day set for departure from Ft. Clatsop where the Corps lived since December 7, 1805, was one of such strong violent winds the canoes could not be launched.

Altho' all, Capts. Meriwether Lewis and William Clark included, were eager to leave, it was not until 1 p.m. March 23, when the rain ceased. The expedition's appearance as it set out from the Fort down to the Columbia, was a marked contrast from a year ago. They had spent 96% of their trading goods and had 3000 miles to go. The men were still not all well from the lack of proper food and the constant rain over the past 3½ months. Remarkably only one man had died thus far.

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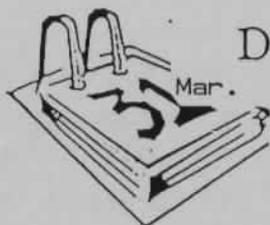
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Plank Road  
Questers #236

Lyon School  
Open House  
810/231-9327



### Dates to Remember:

- Mar. \*9, 16, 23: 1-3 p.m. Archive Filing. Welcome. 810/229-6402 to confirm.
- \*15, 22, 29: 7 p.m. Lyon School maintenance.
- \*22: 10 a.m. Spring cleaning at Lyon School. Welcome.
- \*27: 6:30 p.m. Society board meeting. Welcome.
- Apr. 2: 1-4 p.m. Open House at Lyon School.
- \* Lyon School, 11455 Buno Road, Brighton

## MEMBERSHIPS

BUS/PROF: Advance Craft Home Builders.

PATRON: Bernie & Bonnie Corrigan and Doug & Carol Rearick.

COUPLES/INDIV: Sally Baldwin (Gr.Rap.), Charles & Janice Beach, Steve, & Kathy Davis, Janice Field, Dorothy Foster (CA), Bill Franklin (A2), Merrill Herbst, Shirley Jenks (Howell), Bob & Shirley Knight, Susan Lanning (Liv), Stephen Leith (Jackson), Helen Leitz (Drbrn), Mark & Carol McMacken, Carl Miller (Mllgtn), \*Virginia Miller, Sue Newman (Saline), Ralph & Elizabeth Romano, Paul & Carol Spangler, Florence Sullivan (FL), Bob & Ruth Watson (Howell), Henry & Mary Lou Winegar, and Willis H. Wolfe (CA).

\*Welcome Virginia Miller and thanks to all who have renewed for the year.

How to determine when memberships are due? The year for which dues are paid is noted on the address label. 06 or higher - you're set for 2006. Mailers will stamp 'Complementary Copy' in the return address area if dues have not been paid for the present year. Thanks for noting the stamp. This saves the Society the expense of notification. (The recorder of dues payments is not infallible. Contact the Society if an error has been made.)

## FRIENDS OF LYON SCHOOL 2006

Advance Craft Home Builders, Bernie & Bonnie Corrigan, Bill Franklin (A2), Bob & Shirley Knight, Helen Leitz (Drbrn), Sue Newman (Saline), Ralph & Elizabeth Romano, Florence Sullivan (FL) and Willis Wolfe (CA) 'Friends' funds are dedicated to maintenance of the Lyon School. The annual contribution to 'Friends' helps cover utility expenses, painting, yard mowing, etc., just as at your home.

THANKS      THANKS      THANKS

...Bert Bair, Ida Bair for help in redying the February Trail Tales for mailing.

...John & Janice Field and Anne Straticos for the task of delivering 100s.

...Esther Luttermoser Jarvis for a copy of the Luttermoser family genealogy to the Society archives.

...Bob & Ruth Watson for their donation with their dues.

## PRESERVATION & RESTORATION

ARCHIVES: How to preserve a 100+ year scrapbook in such a manner it can be enjoyed by others? Large size archival sleeves have been ordered. After insertion each page will be reconstructed as a scrapbook and can be safely viewed. Ephemera of local history are being filed for preservation and research. Photos, maps, clippings, abstracts, etc., can be donated or copied to increase the value of these holdings.

LYON SCHOOL: April 2, 1-4 p.m., begins the season of Open House Sundays to visit the School site. Exhibits and Displays, tours of the site, lots of early photos of the area and a chance to ring the old school bell are planned. Susan Walters-Steinacker has a special feature planned for each Sunday this summer. Members of Questers Plank Road Chapter #236 will again help host these 1st Sundays. You are welcome to join in. March 22, 10 a.m. roll up your sleeves and pitch in with spring cleaning at Lyon School. ??? 810/229-6402.

BRIGHTON HISTORY BOOK: Carol McMacken's 'From Settlement to City, Brighton, Michigan - 1832-1945' is a best seller. Available at Parent-Teacher Tech, 117 E. Grand River or 810/229-6402.

ORAL HISTORY: Reservations are being taken for an Oral History workshop later this spring. A team of experienced presenters volunteer their expertise, time and energy. They will be demonstrating comprehensive procedures. Not only 'how to' but technical and legal aspects will be included. Who could be included in the list of those to be interviewed? - veterans, long time residents, various occupations, government, athletes, family, social organizations - all have a story to tell from which much can be learned and new appreciation developed. The public is urged to participate. For more info: 810/229-6402.

## ETERNAL TRUTHS

from Highland Twp Hist. Society

I love cooking with wine. Sometimes I even put it in the food.

Bills travel through the mail at twice the speed of checks.

Men are from Earth. Women are from Earth. Deal with it.

P O BOX 481, BRIGHTON MI 48116-0481

www.brightonareahistorical.com

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.

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It was strenuous work moving up the strong Columbia; rapids and falls had to be portaged. Lack of food was a continual hardship. Many hungry Indians, moving downstream to wait for the salmon run, met them. Everyone was starving. Fortunately these were friendly Indians. The Captains decided not to wait for the salmon. It was imperative they get to the village of the Nez Perce', where horses were being held for them, before the Indians would be leaving to go to the Missouri. The horses would replace the dog meat they'd been eating.

GREEN OAK TOWNSHIP  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

A neighboring historical society will be meeting Sunday, March 19, 2-5 p.m. Pot luck at 2, program at 3 (The Driver Family in Green Oak), tour the 1856 township hall to see the exhibits and the progress on the hall's restoration. Public is most welcome.

BUSINESS/PROFESSIONAL MEMBERS

Advance Craft Homebuilders, Inc.; Ameri-Construction; William P. Horal, DDS; \*\*Lawrence Autobody; 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 Members

STUFF TO DO AT THE MICHIGAN HISTORY CENTER

April 1, 11-3. Explore Michigan's Civil War Battle Flag Collection, their stories and care.

April 18: 5-7 p.m. an exhibit - 'A Soldier's Life'. A free concert by USAF Stellar Brass. RSVP 517/373-0510 or museuminfo@michigan.gov.

Also presenting 'Summer Sizzles' sessions. 5-day camps designed for children 9-12. Also shorter sessions for 13-17 year olds. 517/373-1905 or www.michiganhistory.org.

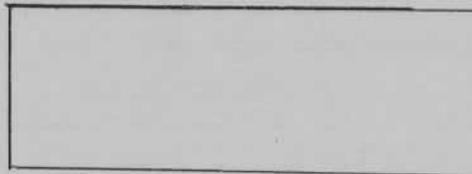
AND AT WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY

April 21-22: Local History Conference. 313/577-4003.

BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
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### THE RUSSELLS AND THE GRAND RIVER ROAD

An Indian Trail, the Grand River Road, that so-familiar highway that traverses Livingston County was the route by which most people pioneering to the county came. Among them were brothers Elihu (b. 1795, MA) and William S. Russell (b. 1808, MA) sons of Nathaniel and Jerusha. The father, b. c. 1775, in Maine urged his five sons (John b. c. 1800, ME, Peter b. 1807 N.Y. and Benjamin b. c. 1808 ME) to head west for a more promising future. This family seems to have moved a lot.

The Erie Canal eased the passage of a family and its needs over the Appalachian Mountains. In the ensuing wild scramble for land, even before moving to Michigan, William S. and Jane in May, 1833, purchased 160 acres, the NE $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 3 in Green Oak Township. Older brother Elihu and Martha came with William in 1835 and bought S $\frac{1}{2}$  of the NW $\frac{1}{4}$  of Section 2, 80 acres which adjoined William's. There is no indication on early maps of a house for Elihu. It would appear the two families lived together. The homestead may have been built with lumber sawn at nearby Woodruff Mill. Elihu's 80 were landlocked. In 1843 he sold this to William. The brothers may have previously known their neighbors; Beach, Murray, Gage, and Briggs before the move. Neighbors in the east often traveled together for mutual support in the unpopulated wilderness. The other brothers settled in other townships. The Huron River watered both brothers' land and the terrain lent itself to farming. William S. is a charter member of the Livingston County Agricultural Society at the time of its origin in 1853.

The Grand River Trail went through the north portion of William's property. June 3, 1851, he signed a quit claim deed to the Detroit and Howell Plank Road Company for the road's construction. The State Capitol was moved from Detroit to Lansing in 1850. Increased travel by foot, horse, buggy, wagon and stagecoach, brought many to pass by the Russell's. Brother Elihu has a job tending the goll gate just west of the house. He is 55. Besides being a successful farmer, Wm. S. is credited with planting lilacs along the south side of the Grand River Trail; some of which are still growing there just west of Woodruff Creek.

William and Jane had five children, all born in Michigan: Marian b. 1834, Francis G. b. 4-13-37, DeWitt Clinton b. 4-1-37, William H. H. b. 11-24-40, and Helen b. 1845. DeWitt enlisted as a private in Michigan's 5th Inf. Reg., and died of disease in Washington 12-4-61. The D.C. Russell GAR Post commemorates him. He, his parents and a brother, Wm. H.H., are buried in the Old Village Cemetery in Brighton. The writer is unable to locate Elihu and Martha's burial site.

William S.' 1870 will, besides the usual list of items to the heirs, instructs that daughter Marian and brother Elihu are to be allowed to live on the homestead as long as needed. In addition, since she had cared for the family after her mother's death in 1850, each sibling was to pay her \$500. The furniture, etc., is hers also, and "Two of the cows are to remain on the farm." After William's death in 1875, siblings, Marian, William H.H. and Helen sold their interests to Francis in 1875. Marian and Helen both marry men from Illinois and move there. (Compiled by Marieanna Bair from census records, 1880 History of Livingston County; William Pless' writings; Early Land Owners and Settlers in Livingston County compiled by Milton Charboneau. Additions/corrections? 810/229-6402.)