ROLLISONS - EARLY RESIDENTS OF LIVINGSTON COUNTY

David M. Rollison, son of John and Rebecca of New Jersey, is recorded in the 1850 census of Livingston County. He was born August 22, 1813. David and wife, Mary, with son Jacob, b. 1835, made the trip to Michigan. In 1868, Henry was born in Michigan, as are third son David and daughter Prudence, b. 1850 and 1852 respectively. They settled in the northern part of Hamburg Township to farm. Prudence married Charles Switzler. In the 1860 census David and Mary are with Prudence.

It is 1880 before other Rollisons are recorded in the census. At that time we find Charles L. Rollison b. January 28, 1852 in Michigan, a son of Lewis b. 1830. Charles may be a nephew of David M.) November 20, 1876, Charles L. and Laura Swartzhout are married. Laura's parents are Goshers and Fanny, members of the Swartzhout families in Hamburg and Putnam Townships. Charles and Laura had two children; Claude L. b. January 18, 1890 and Fannabelle b. December 21, 1890. In 1909 Charles is noted as the owner of a part of eighty six lots in Brighton Village. Liberty Bond sales for Livingston County, during WW I were under his direction. It was a very successful campaign.

Claude L. married Lucy May Pitkin in 1906. Lucy was an accomplished pianist. She provided music, including the wedding march, at the wedding ceremony of Geneva Hilton and Guy E. Pitkin at the home of the bride's parents in the Village, October 21, 1914. Guy was a cousin of Lucy. When Claude and Lucy married he hired her father, David Pitkin a local builder, to construct a Queen Anne style house on lot 319 of the Smith-McGoradden Addition to Brighton. An elevator was installed to avoid having to use stairs to the basement. At some time Claude added a music room to the house. (This land, south of Main, west of Ore Creek was part of a tract purchased by Elijah Pitch in 1835. With the coming of the railroad Hiram Smith bought it and platted it as part of the Addition. After the railroad construction this part of the Village rather quickly developed.) Claude was a businessman in Brighton. In 1911 he and his helpers set up the telephone switch board on the 2nd Floor of the new Brighton State Bank building, on Main Street by the mill pond. In 1914 he resigned from the Brighton Exchange Mutual Telephone Company and purchased Gamble and Lown Hardware on the west side and in 1924 Rollison's Hardware was moved to the east side. In 1914, his Father, Charles J., was the local representative of the International Harvester Company with offices at the store. Son, Merle, was born to them in 1910. He graduated from the Brighton High School with the class of 1928, the last to graduate from the Union School. There were 15 in the class. In the early 1940s he was a member of the Brighton Fire Department. Merle's sister Garret was born on October 9, 1920.

Claude's sister, Fannabelle, married Royal Schoenhals June 17, 1906, and had two daughters, Violet L. and Helen Mae. A brother, LeGrande, b. 1894 died at the age of two. Violet L. married Harold A. Jacobs, and Helen Mae married Francis L. Michaels. Several members of generations of descendants of Charles L. Rollison still live in the area. (Compiled by Marisana Blair: Census Records; Early Land Owners and Settlers and obituaries prepared by Milton Charboneau; From Settlement to City, Brighton, Michigan, 1832-1945 by Carol McMadden and conversations with Kay Michaels. Additions/corrections welcomed. 810/221-6402)

Because of people who not only care about learning and preserving of area history but also participate to the best of their ability, is why the Society has experienced 25 years. Only because of supportive members can the elision of collecting, preservation and dissemination of the history of the area be fulfilled. Among the Society's earliest projects were the preservation/restoration of the Old Town Hall and its inclusion on the Michigan Historical Register. St. Paul Episcopal Church is also listed as is the Old Village Cemetery. Each has its marker. It has been proven that if a worthwhile project is offered local citizens contribute to the expense.

In 1984 the Society accepted the Lyon One room school site on Buno Road from the Brighton Township board for use as a museum and headquarters. It also is on the Register. In 1999 local developers, contractors, members of the Rotary Club and caring people pulled together. The Lyon School now houses local archives, museum and a one room school. It also serves as an early Michigan educational experience for elementary school children. Friends of Lyon School make annual donations to pay for utilities and maintenance. Construction of an early style barn is planned, the archives are expanding, the school program growing, oral histories prepared, the Open House program at the School continues, membership is increasing, newsletter publication continues, careful administration ensures proper papers are filed with the State and IRS, and financial reports are successfully completed regularly. The Public program project has been expanded to serve local organizations. The 2005 Society publication of local history is sold out.

NOW, where do YOU Fit in? November 5, 1-4 p.m., the Annual Meeting will be convened and elections held. To continue the Society mission, members believing this mission is valid and vital, will take their turn on the board. Can't come? Contact a board member with your desire to be a part of the mission. "UNCLE SAM (the Society) WANTS YOU!!! And there'll be refreshments and beverage.

Dates to Remember:
- Oct. 6: 1-4 p.m. Open House at Lyon School.
- Nov. 5: 1-4 p.m. Annual Meeting, elections, refreshments.
- Nov. 26: 8-noon. Society booth at Farmers' Market.
- Dec. 2: 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Christmas Filling. Welcome Call 810/229-6402 to confirm.
- Dec. 21: 8:30 p.m. Society board meeting. Welcome.
- Dec. 21: 1-4 p.m. Open House at Lyon School.
- Lyon School, 11455 Buno Road, Brighton Township.