



## Brighton Area Historical Society Newsletter

P.O. Box 481

Brighton, MI 48116

[www.brightonareahistorical.com](http://www.brightonareahistorical.com)

# Trail Tales

September 2006  
Vol. XXV No. 9

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

SOCIETY'S SILVER ANNIVERSARY, NOVEMBER 5, 2006

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Lyon School  
Open House  
810/231-9327

Sunday, November 5, 1-4 p.m. the Society will host a celebration commemorating the Society's 25 years of preserving, restoring and disseminating the history of the Brighton area. It will be held at the Lyon School, 11455 Buno Road. All former and present members are invited to join in the festivities. Scrap books of activities of the Society will be available and recognition given to those who've contributed to the latest restoration project, the Lyon School. Lots of cake and beverage too.

### VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY BICENTENNIAL

September 1, 1806, the Corps, floating down the Missouri, came upon the same site where they met the Yankton Indians exactly two years earlier. Captain William Clark noted the old flag staff was still standing. Captain Merriwether Lewis' leg wound had healed sufficiently to enable him to walk with ease.

Two days later they met newly licensed traders, from the 'Mackinaw', to trade with the Sioux. Eager inquiries were made of leader James Aird as to the health of the president, their friends, and the country in general. (The last contact had been May, 1804.)

On the 4th they again "proceeded on". Almost every day the Corps is met by another boat going upstream. The major reason for the voyage, opening the land to "further purposes of commerce", was already occurring even before their return. At each settlement along the river their appearance was greeted with salutes of gun shots serving as a welcome home. Familiar sights and faces found the men lending their paddles to the Missouri's downstream current. No time was taken for hunting. The men decided they could "...live very well on the pappaws" which were abundant and easily picked off the shore. September 12, the Corps was met by an upward bound party led by an old friend of Clark's, Robert McClellan, who replenished meager supplies, including (cont. p. 3)



### Dates to Remember:

Sept. \*3: 1-4 p.m. Open House at Lyon School.

\*9, 21: 9-noon. Archives filing. Welcome.  
Call 810/229-6402 to confirm.

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

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

\* Lyon School, 11455 Buno Road, Brighton Township.

## MEMBERSHIPS

COUPLES/INDIV: \*James & Rebecca Calahan (gift from Rebecca Winkle), \*Michael G. Duris (CA), Esther Jarvis, \*Michael & Laura Mitchell, Dick & Mary Jean Richter (Fraser), \*James E. Siford, Sheryl Vigmostad.

\*Welcome to new members the Calahans, Michael, the Mitchells and James.

Thanks also to renewing members. A dedicated Board of Directors can only be effective if support (financial and otherwise) continues. Because it's important that area residents, and others, are aware of the Society many copies of each issue of Trail Tales are distributed to area businesses, professional offices, realtors, etc. It is assumed

regular readers of these complementary copies would want to support the organization by a donation to administrative costs or to its mission (as noted at the top of page 1). If reading the newsletter brings you pleasure be responsible in your support.

THANKS      THANKS      THANKS

...Bert Bair, Ida Bair, and John & Janice Field for helping with mailing August issue of Trail Tales.

...Lucille Weaire for arrangements for the Society booth at the Art Fair.

...Chuck & Janice Beach, Cathy Dougherty, Mindy Kinsey, Carol McMacken, Kay Michael, Bud Prine, Peg Siford, Susan Walters-Steinacker and Hank Winegar for conducting the booth at the Art Fair.

...Jim DeJohn and Jim Vichich who transported, set up and took down the Society booth.

...Brighton Chamber of Commerce for their support and help.

...Esther Jarvis for her donation with her dues.

...Florence Sullivan (FL) and Sheryl Vigmostad for Friends of Lyon School membership.

...Parent-Teacher Tech for stocking the local history book. Their support and cooperation has been great!

Donations are Income Tax deductible.

## PRESERVATION/RESTORATION

ARCHIVES: Documents, photos, books, diaries, maps, journals, etc., etc. are among the many items filed in the Archives Room at the Lyon School. The originals, or copies, of these kinds of materials are most welcome. One hears

horror stories of the dumpster as the final resting place for many pieces of local history. If one is not sure if a piece has value - give the Society a chance to make the determination. Please note the filing date changes.

HISTORY BOOK: The first edition of Carol McMacken's 'From Settlement to City - Brighton - 1832-1945' is sold out. A 2nd edition is planned to be ready for Christmas giving. Reservations are being accepted: Member price, \$60.00, non members \$65.00. Shipping is \$3.00. A check may be sent the Society. Proceeds are designated to the Preservation-Restoration Fund.

LYON SCHOOL: Electrical repairs are being researched. These will include motion detector lights for security and to provide visibility.

OPEN HOUSE AT LYON SCHOOL: Held the first Sunday, 1-4 p.m., give the community an opportunity to visit a one room school. The Archives and museum area are also open. Special events are planned for each day. Many have enjoyed the chance to learn of their community's past.

### ROCKING BEAR SILENT AUCTION

The generosity of Lyon School neighbor Bruce Owens has provided the Society with a hand made rocking black bear. (A bear on rockers.) The right size for a youngster to ride. The Society is holding a 'Silent' auction. Send in your bid amount. If someone outbids you you'll be notified giving you an opportunity to increase your bid. At the November 5, 25th anniversary party, the highest bidder owns the bear.

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. p. 1) whiskey. Clark records the men "...Sung songs untill 11 o'clock at night in the greatest harmony."

Sept. 23, 1806, the bend into the Mississippi took them past the Wood River Camp which they'd left 28 months and 8000 miles ago. By noon, in St. Louis "...we were met by all the village and received a hearty welcome from its inhabitants." (With thanks to our patient readers, the editor has compiled excerpts in the previous 27 issues from: Undaunted Courage by Stephen E. Ambrose and The Journals of Lewis and Clark, edited by Bernard DeVoto.)

## 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 S Associates; Lin-  
dhout Associates; \*\*Promess, Inc.;  
The Fence Spot. Be sure to patronize  
these local, independent sustainers  
of the Society.

\*\*Life Member

## WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

Sept. 16: 10-5 p.m. Hartland Area  
Historical Society Heritage Day.  
Breakfast, voyageurs, music, early  
activities. hartlandareahistory.org

Sept. 16-17: Mill Race Village,  
Northville. 18th annual Victorian  
Festival.

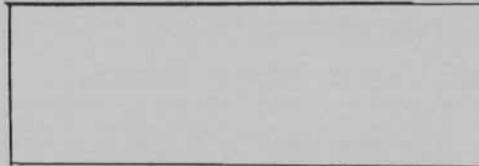
October 8: noon -5 p.m. Waterloo Histori-  
cal Society Pioneer Day at Waterloo Farm  
Museum.

Oct. 14: 7 p.m. Stockbridge Area Genea-  
logical/Historical Society. Tour of Oak-  
lawn Cemetery. stockbridgeareaghs@hotma  
il.com

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#### FITCH STREET/MAIN STREET/ORDNANCE OF 1785

As early as 1785 the Brighton area was under the influence of the Federal Ordinance of that year. This ordinance called for a survey, prior to settlement, of lands north and west of the Ohio River to the Mississippi. These lands were ceded to the U.S. at the end of the Revolutionary War in 1783. It was August, 1794, before the English were finally ousted. The Ordinance provided for townships six miles square which would then be further divided. Surveyors began their work. However it was 1818 before the first public land office opened in Michigan. By 1836 over four million acres had been purchased by settlers (and speculators).

It was into this headlong dash for land (\$1.25 acre), and a future for their families, that Elijah Fitch brought his family. Lack of roads to the land north of Washtenaw County forced many to travel there first. Elijah and his family appear to have landed in Salem Township of Washtenaw County. When they arrived surveys had been done but few government divisions set aside and named. At the time the south two tiers of townships of what became Livingston County were part of Washtenaw. The Ordinance of 1787 detailed the requirements necessary for a county to be formed. In 1835, Wayne, Macomb and Washtenaw Counties were among the several titled counties. Washtenaw's northern border extended to Commerce, Golf Club and Mason Roads, as later known. These two tiers of townships became part of Livingston County when it was formed March 24, 1836.

The 1915 map of Brighton Village notes Fitch Street east of the tracks to the Grand River Trail and Main Street west of the tracks to Seventh. Who was Fitch to be honored in this manner? Elijah Fitch was among the very first to buy land in what became Brighton City. He is recorded as purchasing section 31 of Brighton Township, the NW NW (the NW ¼ of the NW¼) 40 acres, and section 36 of Genoa Township the N½ NE ¼, July 29, 1835, while living in Salem Township, Washtenaw County. Other parcels in the area are also purchased within the next several years.

He is recorded in the census of 1840 with wife Hannah, and six children, four boys, two girls; however no names other than heads of households were included; nor where any were born. However, while in Brighton, he is noted as an early merchant. The 1880 History of Livingston County lists him as a taxpayer in 1844; also his service as school moderator in 1838 and as a Justice of the Peace in 1840. It appears all his land has been sold and the Fitches "...removed from this place" by 1845. (Compiled by Marieanna Bair from census records; 'A Short History of Michigan' by John Kern; Early Landowners and Settlers and First Land owners by Milton Charboneau. Additions, corrections eagerly received. 810/229-6402.)