

# Trail Tales

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

April 2007  
Vol. XXVI No. 4

## CANDIDATE FOR THE LANDFILL?

Why is the destruction of the Western House, one of the last vestiges of Brighton's past, even being considered? Its selection as a notable historic site by the State of Michigan and the National Historic Register is confirmation of its significance. The Western House exhibits a strong expression of the architecture of the period and of the hopes of the area, which came with the construction of the railroad. The symbolism of structures, which have been a part of a community's history, has a cultural value on which a dollar amount cannot be placed. There is an intrinsic value difficult to define, but can be recognized.

Of course, the Western House was built for reasons of commerce. It can still figure in the city's economics. To imply it is of little financial value indicates shortsightedness, and a lack of vision of the future. If it's a matter of wanting living space downtown – there are a number of other structures of less significant historic cultural or architectural value that could be considered. Planners could make a more meaningful contribution and offer a more responsible result by tackling one of these. Their replacement would make a real difference on Main, historically and economically and with less environmental damage. Does Brighton need another 'upscale' empty building?

One must wonder, are any of Brighton's early structures safe from demolition? Not every early Michigan town has such a notable remnant of its early history. Nearby communities, aware of the economic value of an earlier structure, provide appropriate practical and cultural support.

It is not part of the 'green' movement to destroy a useful structure thereby enlarging the landfill with materials intended for a very long life – heavy masonry, solid wood, brass hardware and fixtures which are typically unavailable or unaffordable now. Trashing them is especially profligate. There is an embodied energy in good old structures, which is ecologically and financially valuable. Can there be an argument against sustainable architecture and adaptive use? (140 million tons go into America's landfills each year.) What kind of world do we leave our children?

Area residents, especially city residents, should make their wishes known to the City Council while there may still be time. A few voices in the wilderness may not be enough.

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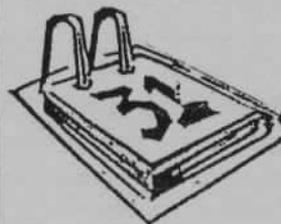
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## **Dates to Remember**

April

\*5, 12, 26, 9-noon:

Archives filing. Your help is needed.  
Call 810/229-6402 to confirm.

20, 21:

Local History Conference – WSU

\*26, 6:30 P.M.

Society Board meets. Welcome.

\*April 30/May 4:

Hornung third grade students visit.

**\*Lyon School, 11455 Buno Rd., Brighton Twp**

## MEMBERSHIPS

PATRON: Ann Baker (TX), Margo Metzger, Rich & Judy Parsons.

COUPLES/INDIV: Dan & Karen Bierer, \*Lee and Sue Garcia, Bill & Helen Hyne (Chelsea), Tom Leith, \*Terry & Charlotte McManus (FL), Greg Park (OH 08), Harold Salow, Jim & Vicki Vichich, Paul W. & Brigitte Weber (FL). \*Welcome to Lee & Sue, Terry & Charlotte.

It is good so many support the Society's mission with membership and donations.

All should know they are welcome to attend board meetings. These are normally held at 6:30 P.M. the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of the month at the Lyon School. The board consists of dedicated people who welcome your backing and knowledge. Your observations can help the Society advance.

If you think an error has been made regarding the year through which your dues are paid (noted on the mailing label), contact a board member.

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### THANKS THANKS THANKS

..... John & Janice Field for help with mailing the March newsletter.

..... Dick Weaire and Jim Vichich for transporting the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of the Society's history book to the Archives.

..... The Mark McMackens for allowing the books to be delivered to them and for putting on the book jackets.

..... Carole Scott for several maps, including two of Hiawatha Beach Development, 1926.

..... Friends of Lyon School, '07, Tom Leith and Harold Salow. Utility bills must be paid. These donations help.

..... Jim Vichich for installing the new shelves in the Archives room.

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## LOCAL HISTORY CONFERENCE, APRIL 20, 21

Will be held at Wayne State University. Subjects to be presented include:

Oral History, Archives, Historical and Genealogical Research, Cultural Institutions – restoration, preservation and revival, Maritime History.

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## PRESERVATION / RESTORATION

ARCHIVES: Three additional sets of shelving have been purchased to increase filing facilities. Anyone wishing to contribute to such a mundane object? Your donation will be appreciated.

HISTORIC RESOURCE SURVEY: Review of the 1960s/70s Brighton Argus brings to light more records of businesses.

LYON SCHOOL: Liaisons Judy Coebly and Sue Skwarski have scheduled five classes of Hornun School 3<sup>rd</sup> graders, April 30/May 4.

HISTORY BOOK: The 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of 'From Settlement to City, Brighton, MI, 1832/1945', is stocked in a corner of the Archives Room. These are available from Parent-Teacher Tech, 117 E. Grand River, or call 810/229-6402. \$60 for members, \$65 for non-members. Shipping is \$4.00.

## SOUTH LYON HISTORICAL SOCIETY HOSTS ROUNDTABLE:

Four of your board members attended the roundtable discussion hosted by the South Lyon Historical Society. Eight organizations were represented. Various means of solving similar challenges were presented. Another meeting is planned for fall.

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### NEEDED NEEDED NEEDED

People interested in:

- ..... serving on the board
- ..... conducting oral histories
- ..... planning a home tour
- ..... hosting a summer pot luck picnic
- ..... filing in the archives
- ..... being a Friend of Lyon School
- ..... contacting local businesses to stock Society tiles, coverlets, pillows, Lyon School T shirts, post cards, tote bags. Contact a board member.

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**2007 BUSINESS / PROFESSIONAL MEMBERS**  
Advance Craft Home Builders; \*\*Lawrence Autobody; \*\*Patrick Financial Group, LLS; \*\*Promess, Inc. You are encouraged to patronize these local, independent sustainers of the Society.

\*\* Life Member

BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP / DONATION FORM

P.O. BOX 481, BRIGHTON MI 48116-0481
www.brightonareahistorical.com

NAME: PHONE:

ADDRESS: (Include Zip and 4 digit)

New ( ) Renew ( ) Send Membership Card yes ( ) no ( )

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 \$

Donation to Society Project Needs : ( ) \$

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, plus shipping. Second edition.

TILES: 6" sq. ceramic tiles, black/white. 13 local scenes. \$8, 3 for \$21.

LYON SCHOOL T-SHIRTS: S / XL - \$12.

TOWNSHIP PLAT MAPS: \$1.00 - 1875 maps of Brighton, Conway, Genoa, Green Oak, Hamburg, Hartland, Iosco, Howell and Oceola. 1915 city maps of Brighton and Howell.

NOTE PAPER: \$2.50/pkg. TOTE BAG: \$15.00
PEWTER PLATE: \$35. All designed with the Old Town Hall and millpond.

WOVEN AFGHAN: \$49 - red, green, blue with nine local sites. Washable.

TAPESTRY PILLOW: \$14 - shows Pere Marquette depot and engine, ca. 1910.

SIGNATURE QUILT: \$10 - Your signature, or another's, to be embroidered on the quilt to remain in Society archives.

2004 CALENDAR: \$4 with local scenes.

For more information, call 810/229-6402

(cont'd from pg. 2)

Reservation deadline is April 13, Friday charge, including lunch - \$32.00. Saturday, including breakfast & lunch - \$22.00. Info. 313/577-4003. Marieanna Bair will be attending. Call 810/229-6402 for a copy of the brochure and/or join her.

WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

April 12, 7:30 P.M. - Plymouth Historical Society 'Annie Oakley and Frank Butler' will be portrayed. www.plymouthhistory.org

April 16, 7:30 P.M. - Wixom Historical Society at City Hall. 'Trollies' program. 248/624-4557

April 21, 4 P.M. - Farmington Historical Society. Historic Road Rally. \$10.00. 248/477-0894.

April 29, 2-6 P.M. - Hamburg Historical Society. 'The Brighton Lady'. Collection of antique buttons. High tea \$12.00 - 810/986-0190 for reservations

May 3, 7 P.M. - Livingston County Genealogical Society. WW I and WW II Draft Registration. At LDS church, 1041 W. Grand River, Howell.

June 2, 10-5 - Historic Indian Village Home/Garden Tour. 313/922-1736 or www.HistoricIndianVillage.org

June 19 - South Lyon Historical Society. Cemetery tour. 248/437-1244 or dfwynings@sbcglobal.com

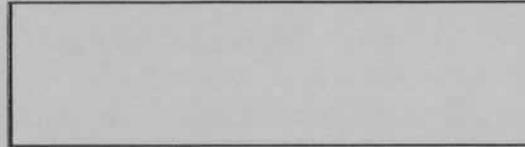
August 15-18 - Genealogy Conference by Federation of Genealogical Societies at Allen County Public Library, Fort Wayne IN. gosborne@brightonlibrary.info or 810/229-6570

November 10 - Michigan Oral History Association. A conference featuring oral historians at the History Center, Lansing. Promoting the preservation of memories. A guide for family histories

BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
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Brighton, MI 48116-0481

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### A BIT ABOUT TWO MARSH FAMILIES

As was true of many early purchasers of land in Michigan, Elijah and Betsey Marsh, born 1802 and 1806 respectively in Massachusetts, bought acreage in Brighton and surrounding townships, even before coming to Michigan. Research shows much land speculation occurring at that time. Two hundred eighty acres were bought and sold in Brighton Township before Elijah and Betsey moved here. They continued this practice of buying land on tax sales, etc. Although not a resident of the county before 1836, he is noted as one of its earliest landowners. He was a peddler. They settled in what would become Brighton Village, but soon moved to the Pleasant Valley area (Brighton Township Sections 11, 12). He and Betsey had seven children. When Elijah died ca. 1859, son Richard J., born 1834, bought out his siblings. It is probable that Elijah was buried in the Marsh cemetery. It was located on Hyne Road at the NW corner of Elijah's farm. Betsey died pre-1870 and was buried there also. The 1860 census shows Richard, his mother and brother, Milo J., living with him in the farmhouse on the south side of Hyne Road. The size of the farm is such that four others are with them, three men and a domestic. (In 1924, when General Motors Corporation bought Richard's farm for its proving ground, those buried in the Marsh Cemetery were moved to the Milford Cemetery. That portion of Hyne Road was close in that period also.)

Several, besides Elijah, by the name of Marsh, also came at an early date. Daniel Marsh, born 1801 New York, was an attorney, among the first who decided to move to the up-and-coming village of Brighton in 1839. He is recorded buying/selling lots in Gales plat in Section 31. The young widow of Maynard Maltby, Sarah Jeffords Maltby, soon caught his eye, and they were married in 1843. Daniel willingly became a second father to Henry, born 1835, and Augusta, born 1837, Maltby. Daniel built a frame home on the SW corner of Ann Arbor Road (Rickett Road) and Grand River Road.

When interviewed by the editor of the 1880 History of Livingston County, "Did you fear the Indians?" Sarah remembered them more as an annoyance. Living on the Grand River Trail, the Indians often passed on their trip from their camp grounds farther west on their way to Detroit to receive their promised allowances.

His abilities as an attorney and knowledge of law caused Daniel to be aware of political developments in the county. Michigan became a state in 1837, the county organized in 1838, and Daniel soon put his talent to good use, serving as Prosecuting Attorney ca. 1843. He was also the township's J.P. in 1860. His name is noted on an 1863 list of professionals in Brighton. When the settlement became a village in March 1867, the first Village Council meeting was held in his home and he was elected to serve as the first Village President. When the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized in 1843, their home was opened to host Sunday School and worship services; there was no church building at the time. It was a time of hard physical labor during which not everyone could take time out to build a school building. As the population outgrew the first school on Grand River, classes were held at various sites in town. The Marshes rented their home for a classroom. Daniel taught in 1847 and 1852. In 1848 he served as Director of the school board and was instrumental in urging construction of the Union School in 1868, just south of their home on Ann Arbor Road. His brother, William, taught a private school. Daniel and Sarah were prominent members of the community. Often when children's parents died or could not care for them, neighbors took them in. The Marshes did the same; the 1850 census records a Rebecca Renn, six, as part of the household. Sarah died January 10, 1882, and Daniel June 2, 1883. Both are buried in the Old Village Cemetery by the millpond. (Compiled by Marieanna Bair from *Early Landowners and Settlers of Livingston County* by Milton Charboneau; census records; *1880 History of Livingston County*; and *From Settlement to City - Brighton, Michigan* by Carol McMacken. Additions, corrections requested. 810/229/6402)