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Brighton Area Historical Society Newsletter
P.O. Box 481
Brighton, MI 48116
www.brightonareahistorical.com

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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 wasting 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, 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 reuse? (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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PRESEVATION / RESTORATION

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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 Patron ( ) $15.00 Individual
( ) $ 20.00 Patron/Professional
( ) $ 2.00 Student

Friend of Lyon School: ( ) $10.00 ( ) $20.00 ( ) $25.00 ( ) Other $__________

Donation to Society Project Needs: ( ) $__________

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Reservation deadline is April 13, Friday charge, including lunch - $32.00. Saturday, including breakfast & lunch - $22.00. Info. 313/577-4003. Mariemont Ball 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 ‘Anne Oakley and Frank Butler’ will be portrayed. www.plymouthhistorical.org
April 16, 7:30 P.M. – Wixom Historical Society at City Hall. ‘Trolls’ program. 248/624-4557
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June 2, 10-8 – Historic Indian Village Home/Garden Tour. 313/925-1756 or www.HistoricIndianVillage.org
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August 15-18 – Genealogy Conference by Federation of Genealogical Societies at Allen County Public Library, Fort Wayne IN. genehome@brightonlibrary.org or 810/229-6579
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NAME: 
ADDRESS: 

New ( ) Renew ( ) (Include Zip and 4 digit)

Dues: ( ) $500.00 Life ( ) $25.00 Couple

( ) $50.00 Patron ( ) $15.00 Individual

( ) $20.00 ( ) $25.00 ( ) Other $ 

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