

February 2007

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Brighton Area Historical Society Newsletter

P.O. Box 481

Brighton, MI 48116

www.brightonareahistorical.com

Trail Tales

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

ONCE IT'S GONE, IT'S GONE!

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The possible demolition of the 1873 Western House (aka Pink Hotel) must make one wonder why. What would be gained? For 134 years the Western House has served as an attractive, appropriate anchor to the west end of Main Street. The classical architecture; the arched four-over-four windows; the cornices; the color of the locally-made brick, etc., contribute to the variety and texture of Main Street. In addition, the fact that it has survived for so long provides a sense of security. Will what takes its place last as long, or half that long? Once it's gone, it's gone.

Early architecture gives one a sense of place. We mark our territories with memories. These memories of territories make our lives richer, our relationships stronger. To keep from losing our sense of place, we need our landmarks. We can walk into the Western House and say, "This is where it happened, right here." It's not necessary to have lived here forever to appreciate this sense of place. Retaining the Western House helps maintain our connection to our past. Once it's gone, it's gone.

Discarding materials intended for a longer life is morally unacceptable. Adding the Western House to the 140 million tons of waste in the U.S. each year is hardly a legacy to leave our grandchildren. Once it's gone, it's gone.

We should be beyond thinking a good, old building has less value than a new one. With today's ingenious technology and creative reconstruction expertise, the Western House can be utilized for today's needs, making the Western House a profitable investment. Once it's gone, it's gone.

We should also be beyond the belief that a property owner can do as one wishes. As a responsible member of a community one owes that community consideration especially if the property is old. Mere legalism doesn't pay that debt. Once it's gone, it's gone.

(cont. p. 3)



Dates to Remember:

Feb. *1, 8, 15, 22: 9-noon. Archives. Your efforts are needed. 229-6402 to confirm.

*19: 6:30 p.m. Society board meets. You are welcome.

26: 7 p.m. Brighton City Hall, Planning Commission meets. Open to public.

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

MEMBERSHIPS

BUS/PROF: Advance Craft Home Builders.

PATRON: Tillie Bitten, Bernie & Bonnie Corrigan, John & Barbara Jacoby (MN), Doug & Carol Rearick and Florence Sullivan (FL).

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For some time the Society has noted on the mailing label on the newsletter the year for which dues have been paid. If an 07, 08 or higher date is noted, dues for that year have been paid. 'Complementary Copy' is stamped if dues have not been received. Thank you for your response. This practice avoids the need of printing a special envelope; an unnecessary expense. New or renewing memberships are the only income to pay administration expenses. Donations pay for the various projects in which the Society is involved. The generosity of those supporting the Society is much appreciated by those responsible for its management.

THANKS THANKS THANKS

...Ida Bair, Judy Coebly and John & Janice Field for help in mailing the newsletter.

...Ellen Hill for the early meeting minutes of the Lyon School Restoration Committee.

...Lawrence J. Murray of The Brighton House for the 23 enlarged pictures of early Brighton. A display is being prepared.

...Judy Coebly and Sue Skwarski for sorting the donated issues of 30+ year old Brighton Argus issues. They will be placed on microfilm. Also for their efforts in promoting the visits of school children to the Lyon School.

...John Curry for his Archives donation.

PRESERVATION/RESTORATION

ARCHIVES: Early Brighton State Bank Financial records have been donated by 5/3 Bank. These are being cleaned and will be shelved. The donated issues of the Brighton Argus have been chronologically sorted prior to microfilming. Archival boxes 22, have been received. Enlarged photos of early Brighton have been donated by Lawrence J. Murray and will be on display with I.D. when possible. Also received are several maps and two books: Bright Michigan Morning and the Life of George Washington from Ruth Munzel.

BRIGHTON'S HISTORY BOOK: Those who've reserved a copy of 'From Settlement to City Brighton, Michigan 1832-1945' will be notified a.s.a.p. Should be any day now.

LYON SCHOOL: Local elementary teachers will have the newsletter distributed to them, encouraging them to reserve a day for their students to experience early Michigan education.

Tiger Cubs from Pack 346, Lindbom School, were hosted one evening. The ringing of the bell was especially popular.

Bill & Jackie Armstrong, Don & Ricci Bandkau, Erv & Dorothy Bandkau, Libby Eisenhardt, Merrill Herbst, Helen Leitz (Drb), Tedd & Linda Potter, Doris Singer (Gr.Rp), Rev. Don Thomas and Willis Wolfe (CA) are 07 members of Friends of Lyon School.

The Sympathies of the Society
are extended to the families of
ED SHERMAN
and
DON WYLAND
Both long time residents
and supporters of the Society

NEEDED NEEDED NEEDED

...members to help guide the Society by serving on the board or as a committee chair.

...an Oral History committee chair.

...a home tour chair.

...a cemetery tour chair.

...a summer picnic chair.

...an exhibit chair.

...a newsletter chair.

...a school desk repair chair.

P O BOX 481, BRIGHTON MI 48116-0481

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ADDRESS _____

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

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, + shpg. Second edition.

TILES: 6" sq, ceramic tiles, black/white. 13 local scenes. \$8.00, 3/\$21.

LYON SCHOOL T-SHIRTS, S/XL \$12.00.

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

NOTE PAPER \$2.50 pkg. TOTE BAG \$15.00, PEWTER PLATE \$35.00. All designed with the Old Town Hall and mill pond.

WOVEN AFGHAN \$49.00, red, green, blue with nine local sites. Washable.

TAPESTRY PILLOW \$14.00, shows Pere Marquette depot and engine c. 1910.

SIGNATURE QUILT \$10.00. Your signature, or another's, to be embroidered on the quilt to remain in Society archives.

2004 CALENDAR \$4.00, with local scenes.

MORE INFO: 810/229-6402

ONCE IT'S GONE, IT'S GONE
(cont. from p. 1)

Each person who feels strongly that there are economic and social benefits to the community with the restoration/rehabilitation of the Western house must speak now. To have the kind of community in which one wants to live, each owes that kind of debt. Once it's gone, it's gone!

BOARD MEETING DATE CHANGED

The board will be in attendance at the Brighton City Planning Commission meeting February 26, as it determines the fate of the Western House.

With your presence also the Commission will be aware of the value you place on its preservation. Whether it matters to you or not, once it's gone, it's gone.

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 _____

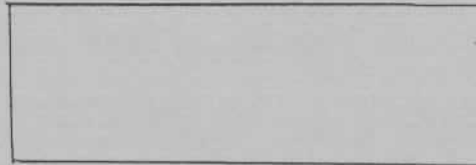
SIGNATURE QUILT

This quilt has dozens of names embroidered on it. Sending your signature is an easy way to make a donation. From early tax rolls, school and government contracts, etc., copies of early residents' signatures are in Society files i.e. Moon, Galloway, Loch, Van Amburg, etc. The completed quilt will remain in Society archives for occasional display.

BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P O BOX 481
BRIGHTON MI 48116-0481

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POWER COMES TO BRIGHTON

Beginning in 1835, many with the surname of Power(s) began making the journey from the east, mainly New York, to buy and settle land in Michigan.

Among them was Robert D. Power and wife, Aleta. They built and operated the first public house in Brighton on Grand River at the southeast corner of the Trail and what would later be named Spencer Road, in 1836.

The structure was considered as "...one of the first steps taken toward giving the place the character of a village." It was probably built of lumber - the Maltby Mill within a mile. By 1843, the public house was sold to B.P. Vealy.

Robert is described as a forceful man and is credited with an 'intuitive shrewdness'. He had an aptness for politics and was reputed as being instrumental in persuading his neighbors in his direction. By 1838, he was elected to serve as county sheriff to which position he dedicated himself until being elected to the Michigan 9th Legislature in 1844. Voters later elected him as director of the Brighton School District in 1851. In addition, land transaction records note a long list of his purchases and sales of properties in the village and surrounding townships.

Robert, born 1801, and Aleta, b. 1817, had three children after arriving in Brighton. Robert died March 24, 1861. William was born in 1836, Georgia, 1839, and Harriet, born May 3, 1854, who died on her 14th birthday in 1868. Georgia married George C. Tomlinson. Their daughter Florida, born in 1855, spent considerable time with her grandmother, Aleta, being counted at her residence in the 1870 census. At this time Aleta is living in town taking in lodgers, one of whom is Dr. Ira Bingham (brother of Gov. Kinsley Bingham), Aleta died in 1905.

William lived in Brighton most of his life serving as Master of the Brighton masonic Lodge in 1878-80 and 1882-1900. He was Justice of the Peace beginning in 1875 and through 1906. He did a bit of traveling - in Central City, Colorado in 1867 and in Bay City, Michigan, 1871. Altho' he'd married he was divorced and lived with his mother. His obituary, he died March 5, 1907, describes him as a loving son caring for his mother.

Robert, Aleta, William and Harriet are resting in the Old Village Cemetery by the mill pond. Other Powers, arriving at that early time, took up land in Deerfield, Hamburg, Marion, Oceola and Tyrone townships. Trees were felled, ground broken, homes built and families grew. (Compiled by Marieanna Bair from writings of William Pless; census records, the 1880 History of Livingston County; Early Land Owners and Settlers, and obituaries copied by Milton Charboneau. Additions/corrections welcome.