

# Trail Tales

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

## SECOND SUNDAYS AT LYON SCHOOL

Programs planned for second Sundays each month at Lyon School in 2008 will provide everyone the opportunity to learn of local history of 50-60 years ago. These programs are presented at no charge. They are a part of the Society's mission – to collect, preserve and disseminate the history of the Brighton area.

Beginning April 13, three/four longer-time residents of the area (Brighton City and surrounding township) will share their memories with our guests and try to answer questions. The year's schedule is not completely filled.

Many of our readers have a variety of memories – life in town, life on the farm, recreation (winter/summer), school days (rural/town), learning to drive, first job, the drive-in, WW II, this community in WW II, mill pond, new highways, when you first came to the area, etc., etc.

We are interested in learning how the community worked. It matters to citizens of today to become aware of how life changes.

Each of us has a story to tell from which all of us can learn. All of you are invited to take part in these programs, either as a listener or a teller. Call Jim Vichich (810/227-4840), Mindy Kinsey (248/684-0340), or any board member to schedule which second Sunday will be most convenient for you to visit and converse with us. Transportation can be provided.

The public is, of course, welcome at each second Sunday.

### EXECUTIVE BOARD

#### President/Editor

Jim Vichich  
810/227-4840  
jvichich@comcast.net

#### Vice President

Susan Walters-  
Steinacker  
810/229-4483

#### Secretary

Thomas Reinke  
313/295-9326

#### Treasurer

Mindy Kinsey  
248/684-0340

### DIRECTORS

John Fillicaro  
810/231-6521

Dick Weaire  
810/360-8113  
dlweaire@comcast.net

### IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT / EDITOR

Marieanna Bair  
810/229-6402

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Questers #236  
Lyon School  
Open House Hosts  
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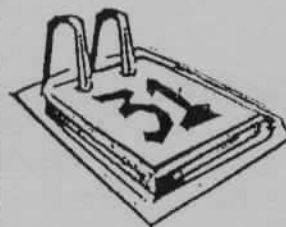
Judith Coebly  
810/229-4608

Sue Skwarski  
810/225-0908

### Dates to Remember

#### March

- \* 6,13,20,27: 9-noon. Work in archive room. 810/229-6402 to confirm. You can help.
- \* 24: 6:30 p.m. Society Board Meeting – You are welcome.



\*Lyon School, 11455 Buno Rd., Brighton Twp.  
A Michigan Registered Historic Site

## MEMBERSHIPS

**PATRON:** John & Barbara Jacoby (FL), Phyllis Kerslake (Gr. Pt. Frm.), Rich & Judy Parsons.

**COUPLES/INDIV:** George & Muriel Allen (Howell), Wayne Baldwin (Gr. Rap.), Bradley Beal (Howell), Margaret Bowland, Mary Catrell, Marianne Comiskey, Ed & Pat Convery, Carolina DeLuca (Howell), Doris Fay, Janice Field, Pat & Marlene Fonseca (AZ), Bill Franklin (AZ), Lynette Hawkins, Don & Shirley Jenks (Howell), Bob & Shirley Knight, Tom Leith, Brenda McCarty, Mark & Carol McMacken, Terry McManus (FL), Nora Miller (Howell), Ruth Munzel (S. Lyon), \*Joan Naylor (OK), Ed & Sherry Nyhus, Roland & Jane Owens, Rich & Judy Parsons, Louis Pettit, Ralph & Elizabeth Roman, Phyllis Schaefer (Fenton), Margaret Siford, \*David & Vicki Sobieski, Bob & Ruth Watson, Dick & Lucille Weaire, John & Phyllis Wenzel, Donna White (AZ), \*James Winchel, Bill & Charmaine Zink.

\*New members: Joan Naylor (OK), David & Vicki Sobieski and James Winchel are very welcome. The Society board is encouraged as members renew. It is aware of its responsibility and strives to live up to expectations. Your participation in a more direct manner is always welcome. This is your society. You assure its existence and future.

## THANKS THANKS THANKS

.....Ida Bair, Judy Coebly, Jackie Damm, and Sue Skwarski for help in mailing February's Trail Tales.

.....Margaret Bowland, Mary Catrell, Barbara Copenhaver, Pat & Marlene Fonseca (AZ) and Dr. John & Barbara Jacoby (MN) for their membership in Friends of Lyon School, 2008.

.....Margaret Bowland, Carolina DeLuca, Bob & Shirley Knight, Brenda McCarty, Bob and Ruth Watson for the extra donation with their dues.

..... Louis Pettit for Robert's Store ad memorabilia.

.....Jim Vichich and Dick Weaire for insulating double-hung windows in the Lyon School to reduce heating expenses.

..... Jim Vichich for his support in presenting public programs.

..... Lee Garcia for a copy of the photo of William M. Power's funeral procession on Grand River in 1907. Power was a past Worshipful Master of Brighton Lodge #247. Power and his father, Robert, are both interred in the Old Village Cemetery.

The Society is a 501(c)3 Income Tax deductible organization. Help out the Society and yourself with a contribution

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## "BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY ? NEVER HEARD OF YOU"

A dependable person is much needed whose responsibility will be contacting the local press, radio, TV, Chamber of Commerce, etc., making them aware of the Society's existence, its projects and programs in 2008.

For the Society to become even more effective in the collection, preservation and dissemination of the area's history, a major enhancement in the amount of publicity distributed must take place.

Present members of the board are deeply involved in various projects: getting a barn on site, keeping the Lyon School intact and in good repair, compiling/filing area history, identifying early photos, choosing the best computer program for archiving, selecting material for public programs, keeping accurate financial records, advocating local historic preservation, compiling a local Historic Resource Survey, promoting the taking of oral histories, supporting the student visits project and properly recognizing the many contributions made by so many supportive members.

Many reading this issue would do a very capable job in this much needed position. This position must be filled by someone who cares and will take the time to do it. Contact 810/227-4840, 248/684-0340 or 810/229-6402 to give this job a try.

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## 2008 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](http://www.brightonareahistorical.com)

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL 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 at Parent-Teacher Tech,  
 117 E. Grand River, Brighton.

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

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

**MEMBERSHIP 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.

For more information, call 810/229-6402

**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.

**March 11: noon** lunch with Rotary Club for induction into Brighton Women's Hall of Fame. Eight women with Brighton connections will be recognized for their substantial contributions to a better life for all of us. Call Joyce Powers, 229-2149 for more information.

**April 4, 5:** Annual Michigan History Conference at Wayne State University in Detroit. Speakers will include Wm. M. Anderson from the Michigan Dept. of History, Arts and Libraries; Sandra Segeser Clark, State Historian, and Jim McConnell, Michigan History Commission. Workshops include Oral History, Automotive History, Historic Preservation, Michigan and the Civil War and Great Lakes Maritime History among many others. Registration is \$25.00 plus meals. A March 28 deadline is noted. Marianne Bair has room for passengers. 810/229-6402. She also has registration forms.

**SOCIETY HOSTING CLUSTER MEETING**

**April 24, 7-9:30:** the Society will host representatives from other societies in the area. Discussion will center on developing publicity and promoting membership. All members of the Society are welcome to offer their suggestions. Refreshments will be served. Call Jim Vichich, 227-4840, if you'd like to provide a cookie and beverage.

**March 27, 7 p.m.:** Hamburg Museum, 7225 Stone. Yankee Air Museum, Rosie the Riveter, etc. 810/986-0190 to register.

**March 18, 7:30 p.m.:** South Lyon Area Historical Society offers "Women Who Changed America". 248/437-9929, 300 Dorothy St.

**March 17:** Wixom Historical Society, Wixom City Hall, 7:30 p.m. "History of the Automobile and Woodward Avenue."

**March 24:** "History of Funerals", 7 Livonia Senior Center, 248/349-5999.

**May 8-10:** Michigan Historic Preservation Network presents "Preserving History, Conserving Energy", Dearborn Inn. Sustainable design for life of buildings and community.

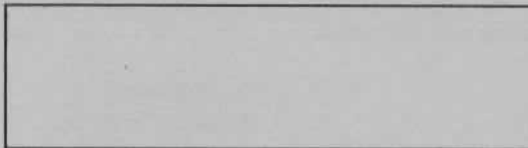
Michigan Women's History Center & Hall of Fame, 213 W. Main, Lansing, 517/484-1880, [www.michiganwomenshalloffame.org](http://www.michiganwomenshalloffame.org). Michigan Female  
 Athlete Keepers exhibit, now through June 27, 2008.

Cityscape: Need photographers. Many changes are taking place regularly. Historic Resource Survey is the means by which records of these changes are recorded.

BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
P.O. Box 481  
Brighton, MI 48116-0481

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### WOODRUFF'S MILL IN BRIGHTON TOWNSHIP

The settlers who came to Michigan Territory in the early 1830s must all be considered entrepreneurs. They came with the intention of staying (in the wilderness), developing a livelihood and assuming all the risks, management, capital and labor. Many came because there was no future for them in the east. The most for which they could hope was that, by dint of hard work, they could keep body and soul together, and even hope to improve their lives.

When Evert Woodruff, b. 1797 in Connecticut, arrived in Detroit in 1832, his wife, 28-year-old Ruby (Albright), b. 1804 in New York, was pregnant with their third child. Egbert, b. 1833, is the first white child born in the township. Today's parent finds it very difficult to imagine Ruby and Evert's life. Eight more children followed, not all of whom live to adulthood. Several are buried in the nearby Woodruff Cemetery. Hard Work soon forces tears to dry. Of those who survived, Frances married K.W. Bingham (son of Kinsley); Anna (a tea ) married George P. Dudley, described as a hero of the Civil War, and Egbert married Hester Wright.

In early spring, 1833, Woodruff selected 160 acres of Section 34 through which a modest stream full of spring melt ran from the north to empty into the Huron River.

They had come by way of the Grand River Trail; at best a two-track trail, at worst marshes and streams to ford. May 31, the family moved into a log cabin. And there they were among great oak trees where earlier great trees had stood for a millennium. The dense forest limited sight to 100'. To assure himself the stream would provide a sufficient supply to run a sawmill, Woodruff followed the stream north. Within a ½ mile, another stream entered from the west (Mann Creek). It also drained a good share of the north and west sides of the township. Woodruff Creek could be followed four miles north. Concern over riparian interests was nonexistent. Michigan was a territory into which the Federal government needed settlers to develop the area's resources.

During that summer, Woodruff built an earthen dam just south of the north section line; the sluice was about a mile long. That fall, the sawmill was built and by spring logs were being turned into lumber for boards to lay floors for upper rooms in Benjamin Blaine's log cabin. It is noted, Woodruff wouldn't cut planks for the first floor (dirt) of settlers' cabins until all had been supplied with lumber for the second floor.

In 1834, Woodruff built a three-story gristmill, with an undershot wheel, near the end of the sluice. The 1880 History of Livingston County notes, "To Mr. Woodruff, the township is largely a debtor for the enterprise he manifested in the erection of mills, which aided greatly in its development."

The building of a mill would entail the help of others; masons, carpenters and those knowledgeable of the architecture involved. His wife's nephew, Egbert Albright, had that knowledge. His father, Amos, had been a millwright in the east (1840, Amos has his mill in Howell) and Evert, a miller in New York, knew how a mill should be built.

In 1847, Evert Woodruff bought the flouring mill in Brighton, from Orson Quackenbush. Two years later he sold it to Lyman Judson. By 1850, Egbert Albright and a cousin, Chester Thompson, were living with Evert and Ruby, working hard to keep up with the demand. Tradition says both men fell in love with Sarah Cornelia Woodruff. Egbert was the lucky one in 1852. A year later, they moved to the village where Egbert and Chester bought the mill from Judson, running it successfully for the next 16 years.

At 73, Evert Woodruff died and is buried in the Old Village Cemetery. One may assume Ruby rests by his side, but available records do not confirm this. (Compiled by Marieanna Bair from census records; a manuscript donated by Colby Thompson of California; 1880 History of Livingston County; Old Village and Woodruff Cemeteries' records. Additions/corrections requested. 810/229-6402)