THE MARTIN FAMILY OF HAMBURG IN 1885

Installment two

Malcolm Boswick is living with his daughter and family, Minnie and Hiram Martin, in Section 4 of Hamburg Township. In 1885, he kept a small diary detailing the hardships, heartbreaks and joyful successes of rural life of the time. The family strives to survive with beginning with a very cold January and much snow.

Spring heralds the arrival of warm weather and the preparation necessary for the crops, to be grown for themselves and their livestock, begins.

May 18 reads “A very warm day. Strong south wind with little dashes of rain. Mr. Mangle’s baby died. Jennie Sexton came for a dress to put on it to bury it. Evening very cool.” This shocking entry is later followed on July 30: “Mr. Mangle died from sumnbroke while working the field. Temperature 80° at 8 p.m.” It had been 90°-102° that week. A day later Hiram and others interrupt the burying of Mary Ann at funeral at the Lutheran Cemetery in Genoa. Mrs. Boswick’s interpolation of life and death is startling to read.

Farmers of the time either brought with them the knowledge of the hard work of the routine of farming or soon learned. The entire family helped with everything from the preparation of the fields, with very little mechanical help, to the final harvest of hay, wheat, corn, potatoes, apples and garden produce. Milk and eggs were usually available as was meat from the livestock raised. Reading the details of caring for the stock and the preparation of food prior to serving at dinner could easily make one weary.

Mrs. Boswick records that beans are planted and sheep were washed, in June, in readiness for shearing. The Martin boys, Wheeler 8, and Smith 5, appear to have overcome the whooping cough, which dogged them all last winter... But little Annie is still not very strong. Mr. & Mrs. Stewart celebrated a 30th anniversary with a big party. A cow dies giving birth, a baby boy is born at Ralph Beermann’s. “Mr. Martin begins the burying— signaling it by cutting off the legs of two hens before 10 o’clock.” The very hot days include very strong winds. Again one notes the neighborly cooperation so vital to each of them with buying and the wheat, corn and bean harvests as these crops ripen. A neighbor brings the first red raspberries and Minnie goes huckleberry picking a few miles west in the huckleberry swamp, and “... new apple pie for dinner.”

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In a week the Howell Fair opens. The bean shells with the machine finally arrive. These beans will be taken to Brighton, perhaps to sell at the Hyle Elevator. An eclipse of the moon is observed by the family. During the year Mrs. Boswick notes meteors, sun dogs and new lights. (To be concluded.)

Compiled by Marianne Bair from a diary loaned by Larry Lawrence; census records; obituaries compiled by Milton Charboneau. Additions, corrections requested. 810/229-6402.
MEMBERSHIPS

PATRON: Margo Metzger

COUPLES/INDIV: Sue Coeby & Gary Reuter, Denise Daddino, Susan D. Foster (CA), Lynnette K. Hawkins, Bill & Helen Hyne (OH), Rudy & Doreen Meffert, Jim Miller, Shirley Ritter (IHw), Harold Salow, Rosemary Ulmer (Whitan IL).

*A sincere welcome to Jim Miller, the most recent new member. New members keep the Society growing, renewing members keep the Society steady. All find multiple volunteer opportunities, many of which are found in these pages.

THANKS THANKS THANKS

...Ida Bair, Judy Coeby, Sue & Jacksawski, and Jim Vichich for their help in mailing the March issue of Trail Tales.

...Ray Towar, Commander of VFW #4257. Arrangements are made to provide sufficient holders and flags for veterans in the Old Village Cemetery, by the millpond, in time for Memorial Day. The Society will take responsibility for placement.

...Mike Kinaschak, Larry Lawrence, John Littlehatch, Brenda Molin, and Jim Vichich for scanning archival material to a disc for preservation and research.

...Susan D. Foster (CA), Phyllis Kenisli (GrP), Margo Metzger, Bob & Ruth Watson (IHw), and Kyle Muller Wilson for their generous donations to the various projects of the Society with their memberships.

John & Barbara Jacoby (MN), Val & Kathy Jacoby (FL), Helen Leitz (Deb), Bill McConnell (Deb), Margo Metzger, Ted & Linda Potter, Harold Salow, and Kyle Muller Wilson for their 2009 membership to Friends of Lyon School.

...Larry Lawrence and Norma Jean Pliss for their significant help with Society archives.

...Larry Lawrence for seeing to the printing of 1915 township atlas maps.

...Sue Garcia and Jim Miller for work on the Historic Resource Survey.

2009 BUSINESS/PROFESSIONAL MEMBERS

Advance Craft Home Builders, Inc., *Lawrence Autobody; *Patrick Financial Group, LLC, and *Promex. Their support is deeply appreciated. You are encouraged to patronize these local, independent supporters of the Society.

*Life Members

SOCIETY PROJECTS

ARCHIVES: Our readers have memories of the area as no one else. A record, of some sort, should be made. The place to begin would be any Thursday a.m. at the Lyon School. You will be able to fill in a lot of blank areas with your memories. Larry Lawrence and Norma Jean Pliss have added much to the indexing of local history. You can help answer the many questions that come up.

HISTORIC RESOURCE SURVEY: New Member, Jim Miller, has taken much interest working with Sue Garcia in preparing histories of local addresses, especially businesses. More researcher(s) are needed in compiling backgrounds for rural property in the area.

LYON SCHOOL: Sue Daniels, and three other members of the Midwest Outdoor Museum Coordinating Council, toured the Lyon School. Their attention to the donation box is much appreciated.

ORAL HISTORY: There are many long-time residents whose memories should be recorded. Procedures are in place to assure both interviewer and interviewee have a mutually enjoyable experience. You can be that interviewer. Interviewees will appreciate someone cared enough to conduct the interview — and you will find you’ve learned a great deal.

NEEDED NEEDED NEEDED

...blue print type file cabinet, for archiving large print, materials.

...hosts for Lyon School open hours each Thursday.

...archive helpers.

...oral historians.

...copies of the 1840, 1850, 1860, 1870, 1880 local censuses and the 1890 Residents of Livingston County: available from the Livingston County Genealogical Society.

...scanners of Society archives.

...workers for the cleanup of the Old Village Cemetery.

Questions regarding any of the above may be referred to 810/227-4840 or 810/229-6402.

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WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

April 19: 1-4, STORYTELLERS DAY AT LYON SCHOOL

Hear folks talk about growing up in the Brighten area. Stories include adventures, entertainment, and more. Program will be shared with friends of the Brighton District Library. Bring used books to donate. Refreshments.

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

BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MEMBERSHIP / DONATION FORM

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

NAME:

PHONE:

ADDRESS:

(E-mail Include Zip and 4 digit)

New: ( ) $50.00 Life Renew: ( ) $25.00 Couple

$50.00 Individual: ( ) $2.00 Student

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

Phone donation to Society Project Needs: ( ) $______

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$5.00 FUND RAISING PROJECTS $5.00

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: 6x6 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, 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.

FEWER PLATE: $35. All designed with the Old Town Hall and millpond.

WOVEN Afghan: $49 - red, green, blue with nine local sites. Washable - Size 4' x 6'.

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.

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 WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS


May 2: Milford Museum opens for the season. www.milfordhistory.org or 248/685-7308.

May 2: Dec.: 11 a.m. Saline Historical Society. Rentschler Farm Museum. 734/944-0442.

May 16: 2 p.m. Saline Historical Society. Steven Mills re: Houses of Washtenaw County. 734/944-0442.
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P.O. BOX 481, BRIGHTON MI 48116-0481
www.brightonareahistorical.com

NAME: ____________________________ PHONE: ____________

ADDRESS: ____________________________ (Include Zip and 4 digit)

New ( ) $500.00 Life ( ) $25.00 Couple ( ) $50.00 Patron
Renew ( ) $500.00 Life ( ) $25.00 Couple ( ) $15.00 Individual
( ) $5.00 Student

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