



COMPLIMENTARY  
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Brighton Area  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
BRIGHTON, MICHIGAN

# TRAIL TALES

Volume XXVIII No. 12 | December 2009

## Opening Day For Visitors At CoBACH Center



Wednesday, November 18th was the first day that the new City of Brighton Arts, Culture and History Center (CoBACH), located in Old Town Hall, was open to the public. While this historic building, which sits next to the Millpond, will always be known as Old Town Hall, most future references will utilize the CoBACH name.

Some of our members have already volunteered to work at the CoBACH. I have not scheduled those volunteers as of yet, since I want to be assured that operational issues have been remedied before the volunteers start work.

If you have not volunteered yet, but would enjoy visiting with museum guests, reading a book or

surfing the web with your laptop during idle time, then this may be an excellent way to help your community. There is no need to leave the first floor, as all facilities are convenient.

We need your help as a volunteer at CoBACH. Positions are available to volunteer for the following time slots: 2pm-5pm or 5pm-8pm. Please contact me if you are interested in getting involved.

Thank you!

Jim Vichich

*Featured in photo: Members of the CoBACH board. Left to right: Phil Gibbon (Brighton Art Guild), Barb Brower (Livingston Players), James Miller (BAHS), Pam Day (Brighton Art Guild), Jim Vichich (BAHS).*

## Election Of 2010 BAHS Board Of Directors

On November 15, the BAHS held the 28<sup>th</sup> annual membership meeting at Lyon School. The elections for the 2010 Board of Directors were held after a tasty potluck luncheon, which included pleasant conversations among friends.

Thanks are given to the 2009 Directors for continuing with their donation of time and energy. We are

fortunate to have these dedicated members who allocate so much of their personal time toward our goals.

I am grateful to our new board members, Sue

Garcia and Larry Lawrence, for choosing to join the board. Their participation will bring new energy and fresh ideas to our group!

### 2010 BAHS Board

President: Jim Vichich  
Vice Pres: Marieanna Bair  
Treasurer: Mindy Kinsey  
Secretary: Tom Reinke

### Directors:

Dave Ball, Jim Miller,  
Larry Lawrence and  
Sue Garcia

### Special points of interest:

LEARN ABOUT THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE BRIGHTON FIRE DEPARTMENT AND THE MANY WAYS THEY HELPED THEIR COMMUNITY.

SEE PAGE 4

IT IS TIME TO RENEW YOUR BAHS MEMBERSHIP. WE NEED YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT.

SEE INSERT

*"History is a guide to navigation in perilous times. History is who we are and why we are the way we are."*

David C. McCullough  
Author of 1776; Winner of two Pulitzer Prizes

### Inside this issue:

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## Recent and Future Happenings

### Dates to remember - December 2009

**Dec 3, 10, 17: 9am-12nn**

Lyon School is open to the public. Archiving will take place. Your help is needed.

**Dec. 13: 1pm-4pm (Sunday)**

Children's open house at Lyon School. Program includes Christmas crafts, a visit with Santa, cookies and hot chocolate.

### Oral History

Each week, older members of the Brighton area die. Their memories of Brighton's earlier days are a valuable historical resource. To preserve this great asset, we have started an oral history project to record their memories.

Help is needed to contact older members to schedule interview. Please contact us if you can help with this project.

### Area Historical Organizations

**Dec 6: 12nn-4pm**

**Cobblestone Farm:** Country Holiday Celebration. [www.cobblestonefarm.org](http://www.cobblestonefarm.org)

**Dec 6: 2pm-5pm**

**Wixom Historical Society:** Museum Wassail Open House. (248) 624-4557.

**Dec 12: 12nn-5pm**

**Saline Area Historical Society:** Christmas at the Rentschler Farm Museum. [www.salinehistory.org](http://www.salinehistory.org)

**Jan 16: 8am-4pm**

**Saline Area Historical Society:** Antique show. [www.salinehistory.org](http://www.salinehistory.org).

**Jan 18: 6:30p**

**Wixom Historical Society:** Pot luck and Barbershop Quartette. (248) 524-4557.

### The Archives

Information of the history of the area from agriculture to businesses, to churches, to education, from government to the military and residential, etc., is being compiled in a retrievable manner.

Your memories, photos, maps, directories, etc., will improve the quality of the Society's archives. These can be copied or donated.

Your assistance in compiling these resources is invaluable. Each Thursday, 9-noon, several members work in the archives at the Lyon School, 11455 Buno Road. You are invited to help.

♦♦♦♦♦

### In Memorial

The BAHS would like to extend sympathies to the family of:

**Donna Smith**

Brighton Area Historical Society member

## Thanks and Recognition

### THANKS TO....

The BAHS recognizes the following people for volunteering their time and energy to support the BAHS.

- Bert Bair, Judith Coebly, Jackie Damm and Sue Skwarski for help in mailing the November issue of Trail Tales.
- Gabrielle Denis Currin for her "My Life on Ore Creek" memoir.
- Nancy Russell Cardle for copies, photos and the interview describing her family home at Island Lake c. 1925.
- Margaret Bowland, Charles & Evelyn O'Donnell and Tedd & Linda Potter for their donation with dues to the Friends of Lyon School fund.
- Libby Eisenhardt, Tom & Ute Niemeyer, Lois Tobias, and the Yum Yum Tree for their donation with dues to BAHS Projects.
- June White for allowing a tour of the Hyne house, built 1904, on Flint Rd.

- John Cord for noting that Lloyd Pearsall (born March 12, 1910) is the oldest living Brighton fire fighter, joining in 1931.

### 2009 Business / Professional Members

The support of our professional members is deeply appreciated. We encourage our members to patronize these local, independent businesses who are sustainers of the BAHS.

- Advance Craft Home Builders, Inc.
- Archer-Huntley Financial Services\*
- Jagielky Bookkeeping
- Lawrence Autobody\*
- Masonic Lodge #247\*
- Patrick Financial Group, LLS\*
- Promess\*
- Yum Yum Tree (New Member!)

\*Special thanks to these Life Members

### Memberships

We would like to thank the following members for their annual memberships:

#### Patron:

- Margaret Bowland
- Emil & Joan Engel
- David Schoewe & Janice Amos

#### Individual

- Bert & Marieanna Bair
- Nancy Russell Cardle (Trenton)\*
- Evelyn Dothager
- Elizabeth Eisenhardt
- Tim Hurst
- Jack & Shirley Jarvis
- John & Deanna Linenberg\*
- Charles W. & Evelyn McConnell
- Tom & Ute Niemeyer
- Roland & Jane Owens
- Iva Louise Pettit
- Ted & Linda Potter
- Margaret Siford
- Lois Tobias (NE)

\*New Member—Welcome!

## Support BAHS - Become a Member or Donate

The BAHS relies on participation of its members and the generosity of its patrons. If you would like to make a donation or become member, please visit our web site at [www.brightonareahistorical.com](http://www.brightonareahistorical.com) or mail in the following form below.

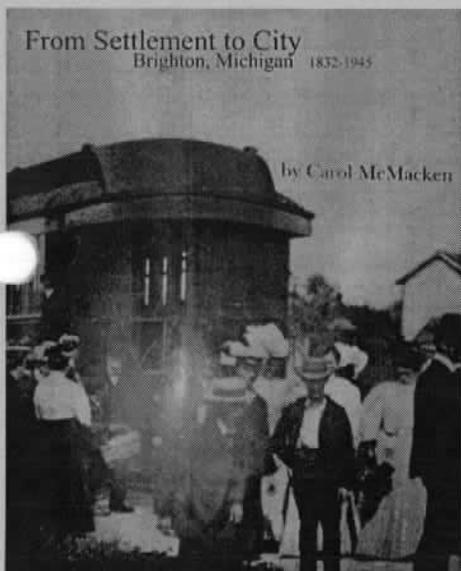
<b>Mail check or money order payable to:</b> Brighton Area Historical Society P. O. Box 481 Brighton, MI 48116-0481		<b>Name:</b> _____	<b>Phone:</b> ( ) _____
		<b>Address:</b> _____	
		<b>City:</b> _____	<b>State:</b> _____ <b>Zip Code:</b> _____
		<b>E-Mail:</b> _____	

<b>Membership Plan:</b>		<b>Friend of Lyon School:</b>		<b>BAHS Projects Fund:</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> New	<input type="checkbox"/> Business	<input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Life	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15 Individual	<input type="checkbox"/> \$10	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100
<input type="checkbox"/> Renewal	<input type="checkbox"/> Personal	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Patron	<input type="checkbox"/> \$2 Student	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$250
		<input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Family		<input type="checkbox"/> \$50	<input type="checkbox"/> Other \$ _____

The Brighton Area Historical Society is a 501(c)3 Tax Deductible Organization

## BAHS Gift Shop



The Brighton Area Historical Society maintains an inventory of commemorative and Brighton history memorabilia for sale as society fund raisers. 100% of all sales proceeds go to fund ongoing organization budget needs of BAHS, including local history projects and Lyon School maintenance.

Our product offering includes BAHS apparel (shirts, hats, etc.), home décor (pewter items, afghans and pillows, decorative ceramic tiles, etc.), postcards, craft items, and the like. To see in detail our full offering, please visit our online gift shop on our web site at [www.brightonareahistorical.com](http://www.brightonareahistorical.com).

### Product Spotlight

**From Settlement to City**  
Brighton, Michigan 1832 - 1945  
by Carol McMacken  
450+ pages  
Over 300 pictures  
**\$65.00**

**Description:** This large volume hardcover book contains a beautifully detailed history of Brighton from its earliest days until the mid-1940s. It also contains over 300 pictures and illustrations. This item is a must for any book collection on Michigan and its rich history.

## BAHS Leadership

<b>Executive Board</b>	Director
President	<b>Dave Ball</b>
<b>Jim Vichich</b>	Director
Vice President	<b>Jim Miller</b>
<b>Susan Walters-Steinacker</b>	Past President
Secretary	<b>Marieanna Bair</b>
<b>Thomas Reinke</b>	Education Liaison
Treasurer	<b>Judith Coebly</b>
<b>Mindy Kinsey</b>	Education Liaison
	<b>Sue Skwarski</b>

## More About BAHS

If you would like to contact us, please use the following options:

**E-Mail:**  
[info@brightonareahistorical.com](mailto:info@brightonareahistorical.com)

**Phone:**  
(810) 250-7276

**US Mail:**  
Brighton Area Historical Society  
P. O. Box 481  
Brighton, MI 48116-0481

The Lyon School is located at 11455 Buno Road west of Pleasant Valley Road.

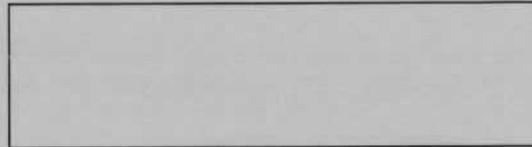
The BAHS is a 501(c)3 tax deductible organization. Help out the BAHS and yourself with a contribution.

The BAHS accepts monetary support and donations of historical artifacts.

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

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## **Historical Perspective: Brighton's Altruistic Fire Department (Part 6)**

Following the donation of property by the Robert Grahams in 1948, a 40'x60' cement block building, located on the south side of 209 W. Main, was constructed by 1950. Members of the Department donated labor equal to half of the \$60,000 cost. The engines and other equipment were on the ground floor with a kitchen and dining room on the lower level. All this was at no charge to the city's tax payers.

In 1951, the Jr. Auxiliary was reorganized. Instruction in the use of ladders, hose lines, first aid and resuscitation (the resuscitator had been purchased previously) were given to 20-40 boys, ages sixteen to twenty years old. In addition, each applicant had to pass the physical. The vision test was the most stringent; through thick smoke, fire and a masonry wall, the fireman must be able to see his civic duty.

Throughout the 1950s, in addition to the many events arranged by the firemen, a fire prevention program was inaugurated and an extension to the rear of the fire hall was built. The purchase of tankers for an improved water supply, in combination with high pressure pumpers, utilized the enlarged fire hall.

1960 brought many improvements in communications between fire dispatch, identification and location of apparatus.

In 1962, the opportunity was seized to purchase land on West Grand River as a site for recreation. Many baseball games were played on Firemen's Field. By 1966, Fireman's Field was outfitted with lights for after dark events.

In October 1965, a Fire Prevention Week parade was sponsored by Farmington, Michigan. Gene Felty, Fred Muller, Leo Sutfin

and Terry Watts brought home a blue ribbon for the oldest and most distant vehicle, the 1936 fire truck.

The city hired Ivan 'Ike' Damon to service the equipment full time on January 13, 1969. He was the first paid member of the department and took great pride in work he'd already been doing. Also, service awards were given to twenty-two volunteer firemen.

The spring of 1969, a very dry one, kept all area fire departments on the run. On March 17, a spark from a passing train near the 700 block of Advance Street set off a blaze. High winds pushed the fire through the Mt. Brighton area and north to I-96. In its path, over 10,000 seedlings, owned by the Michigan Landscape Nursery (located north of Cross Street), were destroyed.

That year, Harold Jarvis Jr. retired after fourteen years as fire chief, having followed his father's term of 1940 - 1954. John Dymond, who joined in 1943, became chief until 1972 followed by Mel Sanch.

New Year's Eve, 1971, will be remembered as the day 431 W. Main (Wolverine Brush) was consumed by fire. Even with the help of about 50 firemen from five departments, it took five hours to bring it under control.

*Compiled by Marieanna Bair from newspaper clippings and 'From Settlement to City-Brighton 1832-1945'. Additions/corrections requested. 810/229-6402.*