

Trail Tales

January 2009
Vol. XXVIII No. 1

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

LOOKING FORWARD TO A WONDERFUL 2009!

The thought of a new season is awe-inspiring. Buds ready to burst, photosynthesis revitalizing the green lawns, flower bulbs exposing their wonderful, vibrant colors and the Society developing new technology to assist others in seeing our great community in its different colors of earlier times.

A new, fresh website is being developed and will be up and running this month. This new website will improve the community's access to historical information found in the Society's archives. Photographs of the past provide interesting views of the Brighton area when the local economy was far less complicated. Stories of local families and businesses allow others to examine the evolution and growth of our community. The real goal is that we must all appreciate while embracing and preserving the local history that bridges those times including those of brick and mortar.

I NEED HELP FROM THE SOCIETY'S MEMBERSHIP! I hope that you are a member because you value the past. The Society needs members to get actively involved now. Please call me and volunteer your time.

Computer scanning of the archives is a laborious task. It is easy, very interesting, with virtually no computer knowledge required, but takes time. It cannot be done without your assistance! I will show you the easy steps in the process, and I will work with you.

The Society is assembling data and completing documentation forms from the State of Michigan so that historical markers can be purchased for the three cemeteries in Brighton Township. The township has approved marker funding, but we need some of your time for helping with this process.

The Society's monthly Board of Directors meetings are scheduled to meet on the fourth Wednesday of each month for 2009. Note this is a change from the past. This will allow greater participation from several board members, whose personal and professional calendars conflicted with the previous schedule. Everyone is welcome at these meetings!

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Jim Vichich

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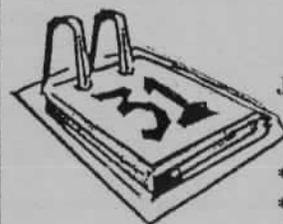
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Dates to Remember

January

| | | |
|-------------|---------|---|
| *8,15,22,29 | 9-noon | Archives at Lyon School. You can help. Call 229-6402 to confirm |
| *8, 22 | 1 pm | Scanning of Society holdings |
| *13, 27 | 9 am | Scanning of Society holdings |
| *28 | 6:30 pm | Society Board Meeting |

**You will be welcomed at any of the above.
Please call 810/229-6402 for more information.**

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

MEMBERSHIPS

PATRON: Bill & Jackie Armstrong and Jere & Kay Michaels.

COUPLES/INDIV: Bert & Marieanna Bair, Sally Baldwin (Gr. Rap.), Dave Ball (Flrvl), Doug Bidwell (FL), Tillie Bitten, Bill & Jackie Damm, Evelyn Dothager, Nancy Fredenburg (Wlld Lk, 2010), Lowell & Sue Garcia, Jeanette Johnson, Susan Lanning (Livonia), Brenda McCarty, Greg Park (OH), Wallyne Small, *David Teasley, Rev. Don Thomas, Jim & Vicki Vichich (2012).

*New member, Dave Teasley, is welcomed. Thanks also to the many renewing members.

A 'Complementary Copy' note near the label on this issue indicates 2009 dues have not been received. The newsletter provides information on Society activities, plans, needs, a bit of local history, a listing of sales items, fund raising and how you can help. It is assumed you would want to play a part in the preservation and restoration of the history of this area.

THANKS THANKS THANKS

..... Ida Bair, Jackie Damm and Sue Garcia for help in mailing the December issue of Trail Tales.

..... Tillie Bitten, Margaret Bowland, Dr. Harry & Carol Davis, Nancy Fredenburg, Shannon & Seth Lemke (Texas) in honor of her grand-parents - Bert & Marieanna Bair, Rev. Don Thomas, Kris & Gary Unger - in honor of her mother - Marieanna Bair

..... Larry Lawrence in memory of "two old friends" - long time Brighton residents Marshall Cooper and Mike Michaels, for donations to School projects.

..... Bill & Jackie Armstrong, Bill & Jackie Damm, Jeanette Johnson, Brenda McCarty and Wallyne Smail for their 2009 memberships in Friends of Lyon School.

..... Parent-Teacher Tech, 117 E. Grand River, for stocking the Brighton History Book.

..... to those who purchased Christmas gifts via the Society.

..... Tom Reinke for his part in the December Lyon School Open House.

..... Whitney Kimble, former V.P. of Brighton State Bank, for his help in determining the archival value of c. 50' of shelf space holding donated early records of the Brighton State Bank.

SOCIETY PROJECTS

ARCHIVES: Downsizing? Moving? A general review of things you've stored? If you run across any local school or church directories, pre-1900 telephone directories, collection of plat maps? Etc.. Etc.? These would be significant additions to the Society Archives. These are important references for genealogical information and for the

HISTORIC RESOURCE SURVEY: Change is constant. It's important to understand that the cultural entities involved are an important part of us and why we continue our journey.

LYON SCHOOL: What a delight it was to host the Society's annual Christmas Open House. Crafts were enjoyed, learning the history of the school, refreshments and, most important of all, Santa was there with "Ho, ho, ho" and gifts..

NEEDED

..... People to help with scanning Society holdings for digital archival.

..... People to donate time to serving on the Society board, help with Open House, Society booths, Lyon School maintenance, chronologically organize files of clippings, etc., review 70s, 80s photos for proper archiving. Contact 810/227-4840 or 810/229-6402 for more information

2009 BUSINESS / PROFESSIONAL MEMBERS

Lawrence Autobody; Patrick Financial Group, LLS; and Promess, Inc.; all Life Members. Their support is deeply appreciated. You are encouraged to patronize these local, independent sustainers of the Society.

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|---|
| <p>The Society is a 501(c)3 Income Tax deductible organization. Help out the Society and yourself with a contribution</p> |
|---|

BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP / DONATION FORM

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

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____ E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

(Include Zip and 4 digit)

New () Renew ()
 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.

TOWNSHIP PLAT MAPS: \$1.00 - 1875 maps of Brighton, Conway, Genoa, Green Oak, Hamburg, Hartland, Iosco, Lowell and Oceola. 1915 city maps of Brighton and Howell.

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 -- Size 48" x 60".

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.

For more information, call 810/229-6402

Listed below are some expressions that were in use in the 18th century and are still commonly used. In some cases the meanings have changed entirely since their inception - in others they have withstood the test of time. [Reprinted from The Essay Spring 2001]

Say What????

By Karen Standard

SCUTTLEBUTT

In today's usage, scuttlebutt is gossip, but it began as a nautical term. Aboard 18th century ships, the drinking water was contained in a barrel, which held 104-140 gallons. This barrel was referred to as a **butt**. A square hole was cut in the upper part of the barrel large enough to allow water to be scooped out in a cup. The process of cutting the hole was called "**scuttlng**". Aboard ship, the scuttled butt was roughly the equivalent of the office cooler where sailors could exchange the latest gossip or rumors.

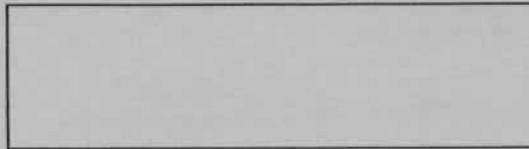
MAD AS A HATTER

This is a colloquial term meaning crazy or very angry. In the 18th century, felt for hats was tanned by the use of mercury compounds. Hat makers in England absorbed traces of mercury into their bodies, which produced mental aberrations - hence the expression, "**mad as a hatter**". (Source: New Scientist, Feb. 5, 1970).

BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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WINTER COMES TO EARLY BRIGHTON

As winter approached, the 19th century farmer in the Brighton area (and often home owners in town) packed straw around the foundation of the farmhouse in an attempt at insulation. The parlor, and other unneeded rooms, were closed in order to conserve the heat provided by the round, pot-bellied stove in the middle of a room (central heating?). This stove usually had isinglass (mica) windows, which at least gave the appearance of warmth from the view of the glowing fire. Second floor bedrooms might have had a grated opening in the floor to receive heat but a variety of bedclothes and coverings were indispensable. One didn't take a glass of water up there – it would be frozen by morning.

The kitchen, often the only room that was warm, held the stove for cooking/baking. This stove usually had a reservoir (that did not fill automatically), which held water pumped from the cistern built under the kitchen floor into which rain water from roof was conducted. The fire box was on the left, the oven in the middle with the reservoir on the right, with a flat, black, iron surface over all providing varying degrees of heat for the iron skillets and pots. Round openings in the flat surface were fitted with lids, which could be removed depending on how much heat was required by the cook. When not used for baking, the open oven door provided a welcome place to warm cold feet or dry wet mittens. The firebox, with its ash pit below, was periodically fed with split wood. Nor did the wood appear automatically. The tree had been cut, sawed into proper lengths, split with an ax and wedge, brought from the woods and piled near the house to keep the wood box full. (Often the task of a young boy.)

In those early agrarian times, as soon as a male child was large enough to work the handle of the water pump, pick up a pail of water, pitch a fork full of hay or walk a freshly plowed furrow planting corn, or potatoes, his spring and fall days at the nearby one-room school were numbered. Not until crops were harvested and stored would the farmer's sons have time to acquire a formal education. To assure the family's survival, every able-bodied person labored during spring and fall (including women wrestling a plow or wielding a sickle). It was often difficult for a youngster, accustomed to being personally responsible for an income-producing task, to sit quietly while being instructed in the three Rs. It was assumed the number of students during the winter term would be increased by several 10-16 year old boys. Male teachers were often hired as they might be more physically able to 'encourage' their students' good behavior; students who'd rather be spending any free time skating, sledding or at a sleigh ride party. In fact, they often found Saturdays occupied with dad along the fence line clearing brush to connect separate fields or cutting trees for firewood.

Deeply snow-drifted roads were not quickly cleared by county plows. Each farmer graded and plowed the road, usually two tracks wide, fronting his property. Often one drove the cutter or sleigh around the drifts through the field. However, to even get to that point, took much prior preparation. The horse had to be corralled, then a harness tossed on its back to be properly fitted before hitching to the cutter. Even though one was properly clothed against the cold, the heated soapstone and a blanket were welcome. Then one might be ready for fun or to make the once-a-week (usually Saturday) shopping trip for needed items: sugar, coffee, flour, boots, dress material, etc. (Certainly not for a box of hamburger helper or frozen entrees.) It was never convenient to 'run into town'. However, one could be assured of no power outages due to wind or ice. Ah, for the good days!

(Compiled by Marieanne Bair from various and sundry clippings, memoirs and journals. Additional memories and experiences solicited. 810/229-6402)