THE MARTIN FAMILY OF HAMBURG IN 1885

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Minnie and Hiram Martin live in Hamburg Township in 1885. Her mother, Malone Boswick, records the events of the year. The last portion of the diary deals with the fall and winter activities of the family and the neighborhood.

October, alto whethered and frosty, is the time when large pumpkins are harvested and winter apples picked. Many of the apples will be sliced and dried to trade for groceries and household necessities with the merchants in Brighton. That October, dried apples sold for $0.30 a pound, butter brings $1-14¢, eggs trade for 12¢ a dozen, land 68¢ a pound, and potatoes are 25¢ a bushel. Wood is $3.00 a cord and pork $4.50–$5.00 per cwt.

"It’s time to go to Brighton to get ... winter clothing for the children." The full school term begins. Every two to three weeks the teacher Miss Boylan, boards with them. A clipping from October 18, 1885, records "... sort of a blizzard Sunday, a quantity of snow fell; a man without an over coat felt like being kicked to death by rabbits."

The ears of corn, piled in the barn, need husking. Hiram finds this a solitary job; many of his neighbors are earning cash as railroad workers. With (Theresa) Phillips' and (Bert) Stewart's help, the corn stalks remaining in the field are cut for fodder for the livestock. Hiram now also, with his team and wagon, goes to work on the railroad for some actual wages. Mrs. Boswick writes, "I have been over to the fence to see the men and teams work on the railroad."

She records that 'socials' are held, and the various births and marriages occurring in the community.

The sheep sheds need repair.

November 18, 1885, is the 10th anniversary that the Martins "... set up their tents at the Depperman Place." Mrs. Boswick's positive demeanor is noted as she describes Thanksgiving Day, "... we ate our bread in peace and our meat in pieces."

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Throughout December, Mrs. Boswick writes of the weather, "I thought the roof would blow off," the progress on the railroad, and that little Annie's health does not improve. School is closed for the winter; the family goes to see the engines and watches the track laying.

Sunday, December 20: "A rather mild day, somewhat cloudy. At sunset the clouds were a beautiful rose color. Dr. Mclenchin came to see Annie. Says she has diabetes. Hiram has gone to Brighton."

December 21: "Two engines in sight on the fields above here ... Annie no better." December 22: the doctor here today. December 23: "Hiram gone to Brighton to see the doctor again. Annie does not get along as we want her to." December 24: "Annie not any better.

Christmas morning: "Our Annie still breathes..... Dear, darling Annie is gone." at 2:15 p.m. Five neighbor women come to aid and comfort the family. Two days later, Annie is laid in the yard near the house next to her little brother. The damp, foggy weather makes it seem "... as if all nature was weeping with us." After a week, the realities of the struggle to survive are again forefront. Stock must be cared for, wood chopped, washing done, clothes made, meals prepared, roads cleared, neighbors visited and helped. Everything changes, everything stays the same.

Compiled by Marianna Bair from a diary loaned by Larry Lawrence; census records; obituaries compiled by Milton Charboneau and newspaper clippings. Additions, corrections requested. 810/229-6402.
SOCIETY PROJECTS

ARCHIVES: With the help of many, local historical information is recorded and filed. You also can join in Thursdays, 9-12, at the Lyon School. Your help is welcome.

HISTORIC RESOURCE SURVEY: Sue Garcia, Larry Lawrence and Jim Miller are compiling records of the area's residential, recreational and commercial sites. Photos of these sites today are needed. This is something you can do.

ORAL HISTORY: Merrill Herbst's memories of rural life have been recorded. Many thanks. Everyone has memories which are of interest to the Society in fulfilling its mission. Your offer to interview, or be interviewed will help this project move along.

LYON SCHOOL: The third Sunday in May (17th) in Plant Exchange Day. Bring yours and take some home. Livingston County Master Gardeners will provide technical advice.

Students from Cornerstone Christian School were hosted for a day in April. Please contact any board member with your interest in helping with any project/event.


hosts for Thursdays when Lyon School is open.

The Society Extends Sincere Sympathy To the family of RUDY HERRMANN A long-time resident of the area and A past president of the Society

2009 BUSINESS / PROFESSIONAL MEMBERS

Advance Craft Home Builders, Inc. *Lawrence Autoboy; *Patrick Financial Group, LLS; and *Proness, Their support is deeply appreciated. You are encouraged to patronize these local, independent sustainers of the Society.

*Life Members

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

WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS


May 16, 17: Greater West Bloomfield Historical Society 'Apple Island Tours'. www.gwblhs.com or 248/682-2279.


MEMBERSHIPS

COUPLE/NDOIV: Tim Bennett (Clio), Carolina DeLuca (Hwu), Don & Shirley Jenks (Hwu), Bob & Shirley Knight, Rich & Judy Parsons, Paul Weber (FL), Henry & Mary Lou Winegar, Willis Wolfe (CA), William Zink.

Those regularly renewing their membership should know they give encouragement to those who also believe the Society's mission is valid. The Society is not a commercial business. The Society's success is the result of many volunteers and contributors. The preservation and dissemination of the history of the Brightons area has much to do with the sense of place enjoyed by the entire community.

Welcome to new board member, Jim Miller.

THANKS THANKS THANKS
.... Marianne Comiskey and Brenda Moline for their help with scanning records, etc.
.... Bert & Sharon Kisak of the Yum Yum Tree (140 W, Main) for stocking post cards of early Brighton scenes.
.... Queater Plank Road Chapter #236 members Heidi Classenitzer, Judy Coblly, Jackie Damum, Jeanette Johnson, Judy Marinskiwiez, Mary Madar, Sue Skwarski, Cathy Small for the annual spring cleaning at Lyon School.
.... Dick Harris for a number of early Arguses from which several items of archival interest were copied.
.... Brighton NC Machine and Shirley Barton for the 12-drawer blue print files for maps and large ephemera.
.... Tim & Leah Thill and Jim Beebe for bringing to the Society's attention and allowing photos of the site of the Woodruff dam in Brighton Township, built c. 1833.
.... Carolina DeLuca, Bob & Shirley Knight, Paul Weber (FL) and Willis Wolfe (CA) for their donations to Society Projects included with their dues.
.... William Zink for joining Friends of Lyon School for 2009.
.... Friends of Brighton Library for holding a book sale at the April Open House at Lyon School.
.... Dave Ball for the fine work in developing the Society web site. Check it out.
.... Those who send notice of address changes.

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BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
MEMBERSHIP / DONATION FORM

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

NAME: __________________________ PHONE: __________________________

ADDRESS: __________________________ (Include Zip and 4 digit)

New ( ) Renew ( )

Dues: ( ) $50.00 Life ( ) $25.00 Couple
( ) $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: ( ) $ ______

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$5.00 FUND RAISING PROJECTS $5.00

BOOK: "From Settlement to City – Brighton MI 1832-1945" by Carol McMonk, 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, Novi, Genoa, Green Oak, Hamburg, Hartland, Irscso, Howell and others. 1915 city maps of Brighton and Howell.

NOTE PAPER: $2.50/pkg. TOTE BAG: $13.00 PEWTER PLATE: $3.5. All designed with the Old Town Hall and millpond.

HOVEN AFGHAN: $49 - red, green, blue with nine local scenes. 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

WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS


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NEW PROJECT SCHEDULED
The Society has determined the Lyon School should be available on a regular basis. To that end -- the school will be open each Thursday, April-November 10-4. Member or not, those who agree this is a natural extension of the Society's mission are welcome to help host. 810/227-4840.
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