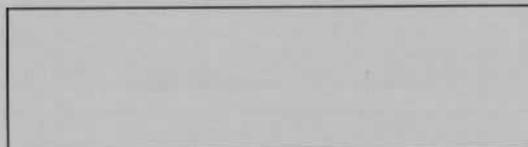


RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Ore Creek (Part 3)

At the time the Village built the trestle bridge on West Main over Ore Creek in 1871, the marsh and water of the pond extended farther west and north, almost to First Street, as shown on early maps. A blacksmith shop at 314 W. Main and a livery at 324 W. Main stood on pilings with water visible between cracks of the floor. Little by little the wetland was replaced with drier soil. When Brighton State Bank was built at 306 W. Main, in 1911, the fill was extended even further.

Pictures from 1910 show a boardwalk and cyclone fence bordering the edge on the north side of W. Main Street, which was lined with weeping willows. A bandstand was built over the water at the edge of the walk. A conduit had replaced the trestle bridge and W. Main transformed from a trail into a dirt road.

By the mid 1920s, the willows are gone, the cyclone fence still protects pedestrians from the bordering pond, and W. Main became a paved thoroughfare.

The 1930s brought financial difficulties to those living along Ore Creek as well as the entire country. However, the courage of those living along this stream, buoyed by the Brighton Fire Department, conducted Independence Day celebrations featuring parades and fireworks over the pond at dusk. Reflections from the water made it twice as memorable. This annual event gave encouragement to people who needed it. Occasional Home Coming festivities near the flowing water bestowed a feeling of faith and hope for the future, as dim as it seemed at times.

Various activities in support of the troops during WWII, such as scrap metal drives, blackout practices, war bond sales, were held on Main Street by the millpond.

In 1953 the Quakenbush mill at the NW corner of W. North Street and S. West Street was still standing when the dam failed. Ore Creek reverted to being a creek again as it coursed

through the town. The trees in the valley on the south side of Main came crashing down. A new dam was constructed on the north side of Main the following year; much of the labor provided by local businessmen and Fire Department members.

To raise funds and encourage shoppers to patronize downtown businesses, the Kiwanis Club, in March 1959, placed four nickel canisters filled with corn as feed for local wild life (i.e.: ducks) along the cyclone fence. This venture was discontinued in 1976, a victim of its own success. The community gained statewide notoriety for the large brace of ducks which occasionally stopped vehicular traffic while crossing Main.

Millpond Park with trees, grass, swings, etc., was established on the west shore of the pond in 1972. On August 6, the Livingston Community Band performed at 3 p.m. at the park.

A more aesthetically pleasing dam was built nearer the tube, through which the stream flows under Main Street, in 1973. The addition of more fill expanded the area for pedestrian comfort and recreation. The cyclone fence was removed. About that same time a concrete walk and seawall were built providing a pleasant path for relaxation and exercise.

Compiled by Marieanna Bair from the BAHS Historic Resource Survey; clippings; Bill Pless' writings and Carol McMacken's book 'From Settlement to City'. Additions/corrections requested. 810/229-6402.

♦♦♦♦♦

In Memorial

The BAHS extends our deepest sympathies to the family of:

Bill and Helen Hyne

Brighton Area Historical Society members
and long time Brighton area residents.