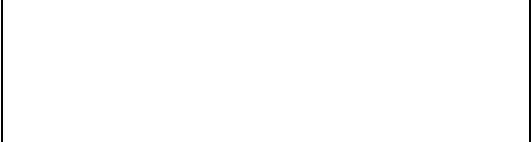


**BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

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**There’s Music In The Air (part 2)**

In 1840, Orson Quackenbush constructed a dam on Ore Creek on the south side of Main Street to capture power for the grist mill he built on the corner of West and North Streets. The water, held back by the dam formed the millpond on the north and south side of Main Street. One forded the stream on foot, horseback, buggy or wagon. Not until 1871, with the arrival of the railroad and resultant commercial growth, was the fording considered an obstacle. Merchants on each side of the creek, and the millpond were eager to be convenient to their customers.

Not long after the formation of the Brighton Peerless Band and the Brighton Cornet Band to commemorate the nation’s centennial, a trestle bridge over Ore Creek was built and edges of the marsh filled in. The trestle bridge was removed c. 1900, the marshy edge of the pond filled further and a board walk constructed.

To take advantage of the ambiance of the millpond area, members of the Brighton bands constructed a band stand about midway between the Town Hall on the east and the livery on the west. W.H.H. Seger, a band member and experienced well driver, supervised. Huge piles were driven into the pond, on which the stand was constructed. About 25 feet square it reached over the water in about the area of the present flag pole. At some time willow trees had been planted. This picturesque view can be seen in an early photo. Another photo, dated October 23, 1909, shows members of the Brighton City Peerless Band on an outing in the ‘band building’ on Maltby Lake. Gathered at a long, well set table, the large drum with the band’s name prominently displayed, are 17 gentlemen. The musicians are not identified, nor has any reference been found to indicate Henry Maltby, on whose farm the site was

located, was ever in the band. It is known Henry was a respected, industrious business man in the city and may likely have hosted the band. Members of the Brighton Band also held a ‘Band Camp regularly at Ore Lake where they practiced, relaxed and ate pot luck suppers.

There was a need to perform on the part of the musicians; there was also a need on the part of the listeners to delight in music played by their friends and neighbors. Regular weekly concerts helped fill that need.

To further satisfy residents’ longing for music, choral groups were also formed, church choirs, school chorales and the “Ye Olde Folkes Concerte” society. This 21 member group of local amateur singers performed this Concerte in 1800 period costumes. The program included “...sacred hymns, tunes, and likewise worldly songs certain of which were sung in ye yeare of our Lord 1800...for ye verie greate delights”. Accompanied by Mrs. Grace Goucher, piano, Agnes Goucher (age 11) violin and Ethel Goucher, cello, the December 6, 1917 program was performed at “...ye Federated Church”. (300 E. Grand River) Many of this group sang together for at least 25 years. A “Brighton Singers” group was formed; a double quartet, providing entertainment well into the 1930s.

**To be continued...**

(Compiled by Marieanna Bair from: writings of Bill Pless; “From Settlement to City,” by Carol McMacken; Historical Society archives; Green Oak Township Historical Society. Additions/ corrections requested. 810-229-6402.)