

**BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

P.O. Box 481  
Brighton, MI 48116-0481

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit #303  
Brighton, MI

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**



---

**A Story About Island Lake — Part 2**

The railroad (1871), the same tracks which pass through Brighton today, made it possible for those desiring entertainment and diversion to reach the station at Island Lake; which already had a reputation for recreational opportunities. Grand River Road was still gravel.

Plat maps of 1875 and 1895 would indicate the land on which the militia had trained was leased by the state from owner Truman Vanderlip with the railroad running through it.

The Board of the Haslette Park Association of Lansing sent a letter September 20, 1894, to its members notifying them of a decision pending; to move their camp ground to Island Lake in Green Oak Township.

Incomplete minutes of the Haslette Park Association note the site had been scouted "...and find it especially suited for our purpose." "...where the truth of Spiritualism might be promulgated and a world of good accomplished." The annual meeting of the organization and the election of officers was scheduled at Island Lake on October 10, 1894. At that meeting, the board recommended the organization of the Island Lake Camp Association. Tickets would be available from the Detroit, Lansing and Northern Railroad to the station at Academy Road. "Bring your lunch basket with you. Ample shelter will be provided in case of need." The letter continues: "Therefore we announce that a new Camp Meeting is to be organized at Island Lake...its meetings to be held the usual season, August of each year, as nearly as we can designate now, commencing with 1895, providing we can get suitable buildings erected, and we think we can. We have secured a lease for 60 years of about 40 acres of the finest land, with all the natural advantages, as well as railroad facilities we could wish." (This was on the west shore of the lake. The final lease was for lesser terms.)

The board also completed arrangements for the purchase of the steamer S.V. Halleck and the sailing yacht, the Hawk, from

Mr. Adam G. Brown, for the transport of Association members upon arrival on the train to cross the lake from the dock on the southeast side to the hotel on the west side, Mr. Brown's Island Lake House. Members arrived from Flint, Lansing, Grand Rapids, Jackson and Detroit, among others, many eager to avail themselves of the opportunity "...to select lots" to be leased for \$5.00 per year on which cottages could be built. Mr. Brown's Island Lake House was a two-story with 49 rooms. The main floor had a "...great reception room, wide halls, large airy dining room for 100 guests and a well equipped kitchen and dairy." In 1898 four bath tubs were installed. The auditorium on the hill north of the hotel could seat 1000 and could be used for dancing. A barn and other out buildings were also constructed.

Statewide advertisement of the Island Lake Camp promoted the dancing, boating, sailing, fishing, etc., to be enjoyed. South of and across the tracks one could be entertained watching the soldiers in the Michigan Militia as they trained.

July 4, 1898, a grand celebration took place at Island Lake with orations, dancing, rowing and excursions around the lake on the Steamer S.V. Halleck. The grand display of fireworks was only excelled by Admiral Dewey's splendid achievements at Manila Harbor. *(To be Continued)*

(Compiled by Marieanna Bair from "From Settlement to City, Brighton, Michigan, 1832-1945" by Carol McMacken and "Yesteryears of Green Oak, 1830-1930"; donated photographs and clippings. Additions/corrections requested 810-229-6402.)