

**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**



---

**Burroughs Farms — Continued**



**The Acquisition:** In the spring of 1927, Burroughs Adding Machine Company started purchasing farmland about 3-1/2 miles west of downtown Brighton, Michigan. The new Burroughs Farms would be about 40 miles from Company headquarters. Eleven farms were eventually purchased. The land records, specifically the descriptions of the land purchased, aren't easy to decipher. They aren't as easy as "bought 10 acres from John Doe." For this reason, it isn't clear just how many acres made up the Farms. Some later publication from the Company put the number of acres somewhere between 580 and 700. The lake frontage on West Crooked Lake, or "Little Crooked Lake" as we knew it, was two-thousand feet.

**The Vision is Realized — the 1927 Season:** The Grand Opening and Dedication of Burroughs Farms took place at 1 o'clock on the afternoon of Saturday, May 28, 1927. It was a bright, sunny day with temperatures in the low 70's. The festivities were attended by more than 500 Burroughs people gathered at the main farmhouse, including my grandfather, DeWitt D. Chapman, and my father, Richard "Dick" Chapman, then a 5-year old. Burroughs President, Standish Backus, gave a speech, which in part

said, "Because it is a Burroughs enterprise, we hope that it will *add to your health and happiness, subtract from your tribulations, multiply your pleasures and divide your worries.*" A new U.S. flag was unfurled on the new flag post located on the lawn of the farmhouse, and the Burroughs Band played *The Star Spangled Banner* to commemorate the occasion.

Following the opening ceremonies, the hundreds in attendance fanned out around the property to get their first look at their new playground. Many hurried to the new picnic grove and its cooking stoves to have their first Farms picnic. Others took to hiking through woods and over hills. Sporting enthusiasts took to the new Gun Club & Archery Range.

The Company wasted no time in transforming the land for the use of the "family." Over the years, the Farms included 2 phenomenal golf courses, a restaurant, a dance hall, a baseball diamond, grandstands where outdoor movies were shown, shuffleboard, rental boats, and 80 rental cottages as well as permanent trailer sites, private cottages, and campgrounds.

For more than 50 years, Burroughs Farms would be a summer home to hundreds of families, truly heaven on earth. I don't believe there was any place like it anywhere else. It lives on vividly in our hearts and our minds, and those of us lucky enough to have called it "home" remain family to one another even 30 years after its closing.

*(Thanks to Beth Chapman Smith for her submission. Beth's grandfather, Dewitt D. Chapman and her father, Richard "Dick" Chapman, both worked for Burroughs Adding Machine Co. Grandfather 1909-1952 and Father 1947-1981. Her grandparents, then parents enjoyed using the Farms. Her parents bought a permanent trailer at the Farms in 1954 and raised all 5 of their children there until it closed in 1985.)*

*See CoBACH Exhibit in July-August featuring Burroughs Farms Memorabilia.*