

10th Annual Old Village Cemetery Spring Cleanup

Saturday, May 5, 2018— 9am-12nn

Join the community for this day of civic volunteerism! Everyone joins together to cleanup Brighton's oldest burial ground (1838) of the winter debris of branches and leaves. We are preparing the burial grounds to look respectful for Memorial Day as (47) veteran grave sites are located here. Among the (45) Civil War and (2) WWII burials you will find the earliest settlers of Brighton. Bring your leaf rake and work gloves as you examine Brighton's outdoor museum of history. You are guaranteed a valued experience as you mingle with your community members and help to provide a respectful setting for our veterans and founders! Enter from the public parking lot behind St. Paul's Church.

Special WWII FREE Presentation — May 20 — 1pm—2:15pm @ CoBACH Center

A B17 Pilot's Odyssey After Crash Landing in German Occupied France And His Attempts to Evade the Enemy.

Learn the amazing story of Lt. Carah and his crew as they struggle for survival after their bomber receives a fatal shot from the Germans and crash lands into the French landscape over run with Germans. This story of survival details his harrowing escape and initial rescue by a French family and the dedicated volunteerism of the patriots with the French Underground as they covertly move him into neutral Switzerland. The intrigue then increases as the Underground moves him back through German occupied France in hopes of reaching Spain and eventually freedom back in the U.S.

This excellent PowerPoint presentation is told by Warren Carah, the son of Lt. Carah. Photos, recovered parts of the bomber and wonderful details provide the story of this airman's struggle to avoid betrayal, capture and death.

CoBACH is the City of Brighton's Art, Cultural and History Center (aka Old Town Hall), located next to the downtown Millpond at 202 W. Main Street.

Jim Vichich, 810.250.7276
President, Brighton Area Historical Society
Jvichich@comcast.net

The Brighton Area Historical Society extends its sympathy to the family of

Emil Engel, Jr.

Emil was a lifetime member of the Society and former Postmaster of Brighton.

EXHIBITS at CoBACH

Sunday—Friday 5—8pm
Saturday 11am—5pm
Closed Monday

CoBACH Display May

Free Exhibit

**"General Motors Proving
Ground"
Featuring old photos and
documents.**

CHECK OUT FACEBOOK

Daily postings regarding
Brighton History.

**Brighton Area Historical
Society**

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

DATES TO REMEMBER	2
THANKS AND RECOGNITION	2
SPONSORSHIP FORM	3
BAHS LEADERSHIP	3
CONTACT BAHS	3
HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE	4

Thanks and Recognition

MEMBERSHIPS:

IND/FAMILY: Lynnette Hawkins (2019), Brenda Ochodnicki, Philip & Jeanne Smith (2019)

PATRON: Dave & Charlene Kull, Marsha Luetjen*

BUS/PROF: Clark Eye Center

SPONSORSHIP: Bronze — Frank & Jo Del Vero*

*Welcome to new members: Frank & Jo Del Vero, Marsha Luetjen

THANKS:

- Brighton's Masonic Lodge, Dan and Anna Oginsky, and City of Brighton for their generous Platinum Level sponsorships.
- Frank and Jo Del Vero for their donation to CoBACH Events along with their 2018 Bronze Sponsorship.
- The CoBACH volunteers who assisted visitors during April: Nancy Fredenburg, Bob Hill, Mindy Kinsey, Bob Knight, Lin Millar, Bob Pettengill, Lynn Strong, Peggy Van Sickle and Jim Vichich.
- The General Motors Proving Ground and the retired staff who are establishing the history of the Proving Ground and sharing these memories with the BAHS for the May GMPG Exhibit at the CoBACH Center.
- Mindy Kinsey and Lynn Strong for their research work at the Proving Ground and compiling photos and documents for the May CoBACH Exhibit.
- Marieanna Bair, Joe Collins, Jerry Damon, Mindy Kinsey, Norma Pless, Lynn Strong and Jim Vichich for preparing the April issue of Trail Tales for mailing.
- Volunteers who helped clean, research, repair and grade the donated jewelry for the April Jewelry Sale at CoBACH: Judith Coebly, Christine Sarazin, Vicki Vichich and Sue Zimmermann.
- Donors of jewelry for the April 28th CoBACH Jewelry Sale: Cathy Achino, David Bair, Marieanna Bair, Sydney Bisoski, Maxine Boyer, Faith Caplin, Maggie Carah, Marlene Carmen, Judith Coebly, Sandy Connor, Sharon Curtis, Carole Damon, Nancy Fredenburg, Deb Gough, Carol Green, Cindy Grove, Laura Hatch, Guinn Heotaky, Helen Hiotaky, Melanie Ilitch, Marlene Jones, Sandy Jones, Carolyn Kerr, Mindy Kinsey, Shirley Kinsey, Shirley Knight, Mary Lezon, Marsha Luetjen, Betty MacLeod, Loretta Murray, Christine Nault, Sophie Paron, Betsy Pike, Stacy Rogers, Cindy Rowlette, Sue Zimmermann and Vicki Vichich.
- Jerry & Carole Damon for their donation of an Apple iPad mini for the Society's use.

Dates to Remember

CoBACH Center Exhibit — FREE!! May: History of the General Motors Proving Ground. Visit the General Motors Proving Ground exhibit featuring old photos, documents and several videos that show the past of the world's largest automotive test facility.

May 2,6,9,13,16,20,23,27,30; Sunday & Wednesday, 5pm—8pm: BAHS Volunteers at CoBACH Center

May 3,10,17,24,31; 9am—12nn: Archiving/Open House at Lyon Schoolhouse. Stop by and visit the 1900s classroom. Closes promptly at 12nn.

May 5; 9am—12nn at Old Village Cemetery: Cleanup of Brighton's oldest cemetery. Bring your gloves and a leaf rake and take in the

history and beauty of downtown's scenic 1838 burial ground..

May 20: 1pm—2:15pm at CoBACH Center: Special WWII FREE Presentation: A B-17 Pilot's Story of Survival.

See Page 1 for additional details on this awesome presentation.

May 23: 6pm at CoBACH Center: BAHS Monthly Board Meeting.

May 28; 9am—1pm at CoBACH Center:

Memorial Day — FREE Civil War Exhibit. Enjoy seeing museum quality memorabilia including uniforms, various rifles, handguns and much more from America's War of Rebellion.

Life — Business — Professional Members

Life Members:

John & Deb Armstrong — Muriel (Jacque) Armstrong — Tom Archer — Paul & Kathryn Bair (Allen) — Marieanna Bair — Shirley Barton Charles & Janice Beach — Donald & Shari Black (N.J.) — Marilyn Campbell (IN) — Jack & Heide Clausnitzer — John & Jenny Conely Bernie & Bonnie Corrigan — Timothy & Giannine Corrigan — Jerry & Carole Damon — Emil Engel — Nancy Fredenburg William & Lenore Harris — Betsy & Bob Herbst — Dr. John & Barbara Jacoby (MN) — Larry & Kate Lawrence — Seth & Shannon Lemke (TX) Carol McMacken — Jere & Kay Michaels — James & Janis Miller — Greg & Pamela Park (OH) — John G. Park & Madeline Kingston-Park Richard Park (IL) — Bob & Donna Phillips — Joyce Powers — Douglas & Carole Rearick — Tom & Bonnie Riutta — Robert & Pauline Schaffer Bruce & Betty Schuman — Anne Stratigos — Jim & Vicki Vichich — Linda (Skeman) Wintermute

Business /Professional Members: (** Indicates Life Members)

Acorn Deck Accessories (2018) — Advance Craft Builders (2018) — Archer Huntley Financial Services ** — Brighton Art Guild (2017) Brighton District Library ** — Brighton Veterans Memorial Comm.** — Buckley-Jolley Real Estate Team (2018) — Clark Eye Center (2018) Concord Mortgage (2018) — Davis Multimedia, Inc. (2018) — Kimble Appraisal Group, Inc.** — Lindhout Associates** — Lawrence Autobody ** Masonic Lodge No. 247 ** — MI Backyard (2018) — Patrick Financial Group, LLC ** — Power House Electric, Inc. (2018) Preview Properties (2018) — Promess, Inc.** — Refrigeration Research ** — Tee-Bone'z Tavern (2018)

2018 Sponsorships

Platinum Level: Brighton Masonic Lodge No. 247 — City of Brighton — Dan & Anna Oginsky

Bronze Level: Frank & Jo Del Vero

Support BAHS: Become a Member or Donate

The BAHS relies on participation of its members and the generosity of its patrons. If you would like to make a donation or become a member, please mail to the address provided on the form below.

Mail check or money order payable to: Brighton Area Historical Society P. O. Box 481 Brighton, MI 48116-0481		Name: _____	Phone: () _____
		Address: _____	
		City: _____	State: _____ Zip Code: _____
		E-Mail: _____	
		How would you prefer to receive Trail Tales: <input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> US mail	
Membership Plan:		Donation to—Check One:	Amount of Donation:
<input type="checkbox"/> New	<input type="checkbox"/> \$2 Student	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Patron	<input type="checkbox"/> \$10 <input type="checkbox"/> \$100
<input type="checkbox"/> Renew	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15 Individual	<input type="checkbox"/> \$60 Business/Professional	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25 <input type="checkbox"/> \$250
	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Family	<input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Life	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50 <input type="checkbox"/> Other \$ _____
		<input type="checkbox"/> Friend of Lyon School	
		<input type="checkbox"/> BAHS CoBACH Events	
		<input type="checkbox"/> Old Village Cemetery Fund	
<small>The Area Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) Non-Profit Organization . All donations are tax deductible.</small>			

BAHS Sponsorship Program

The BAHS sponsorship program has the following levels with the associated annual funding gifts. Sponsors will receive recognition through the Trail Tails newsletter and through sponsorship placards located at the City of Brighton Arts, Culture and History (CoBACH) Center (aka Old Town Hall) and the Lyon One-room Schoolhouse.

Annual Sponsor levels are:

Platinum — \$1,000+; Gold — \$500+; Silver — \$250+; Bronze — \$100+

If you would like to become a sponsor or have a question, please contact:

Jim Vichich, President
Brighton Area Historical Society
810-250-7276 or jvichich@comcast.net

BAHS Leadership 2018

President Jim Vichich	Directors Joe Collins
Vice President Marieanna Bair	Nancy Fredenburg
Secretary Carole Damon	Mindy Kinsey
Treasurer & Trail Tales Editor Jerry Damon	Larry Lawrence
Webmaster Debbie Armstrong	Lin Millar
	Thomas Reinke
	Lynn Strong
	Education Liaison Judith Coebly
	Sue Skwarski

The BAHS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Please help us fund our mission while also helping yourself with a tax-deductible contribution.

The BAHS accepts monetary support and donations of historical artifacts. Please consider supporting us with your generosity.

BAHS: How to Contact Us or Find Us

If you would like to contact us, please use the following options:

E-Mail:
info@brightonareahistorical.com

Phone:
(810) 250-7276

US Mail:
Brighton Area Historical Society
P. O. Box 481
Brighton, MI 48116-0481

Lyon School
11455 Buno Road, west of Pleasant Valley Road. The 1885 Lyon School is a fully restored, barrier-free one-room schoolhouse and serves as our organization headquarters.

CoBACH Center
202 W. Main Street, in downtown Brighton next to the Millpond. CoBACH is formally known as the City of Brighton, Arts, Culture and History Center. It is located in the historic 1879 two story brick building, also known as the Old Town Hall.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



History of the General Motors Proving Grounds (GMPG) — Conclusion

Since the conditions of the roads surrounding the Proving Ground were poor, local roads needed improvements for workers' and visitors' access.

In Brighton Township, the early road (today's Stobart Road), ran on the south side of the GMPG. It was impassable except in summer. Pleasant Valley Road on the west side was a good gravel road, but there was no direct route to get into the Proving Ground. Milford Township had several roads that could provide the needed access, and Milford Township was willing to make needed road improvements for GM.

One road became General Motors Road while the other was Milford Road that ran south to Grand River Avenue. Even though the majority of the land was located in Brighton Township, the Proving Ground became known as General Motors Proving Ground—Milford. This is due to the facility having their major entrance from the Milford side. Not much fuss was given by the Brighton people as they were just glad the Proving Ground was there.

The different divisions of General Motors had their own workspace. Chevrolet, Buick, Cadillac, Oldsmobile, Pontiac and GMC focused on improving safety and functions of the vehicles.

In 1926 GMPG took over as the highest taxpayer in the Brighton Area, surpassing the Brighton Creamery from the year before.

At the first Christmas at GMPG, a Christmas party was given for the families of the employees. Alfred Sloan paid for this out of his pocket. GMPG continued the tradition of Christmas parties through the Depression, even though GM was going through hard times like all other businesses. This practice continued for many decades. It has been said by many that the parties were so wonderful that the people who attended would never forget them.. In speaking with today's older folks that attended as children, they indeed have never forgotten. A frequent comment by many was that some of the gifts that the children received at GMPG were the only gifts they got for Christmas.

Along with the family Christmas parties, summer picnics were held for families while dances were held for the adults. Fishing and sledding on the Proving Ground was allowed by employees and their families.

GMPG was a family of sorts. Because of the guarded work being done on site, the workers were encouraged to be quiet on what testing was being done.

GMPG promoted their sports teams in baseball, golf, bowling, etc. They played other groups in the area, mainly other businesses. Stories and schedules were included in the sports information section in the Brighton Argus every week.

In the 1940's the weather station located at the Proving Ground gave the test drivers the driving conditions and provided weekly weather reports to the Brighton Argus.

The coming of WWII changed a lot at the Proving Ground. First, because of the men going to war, GMPG looked towards the women to fill jobs. In 1942 the first women were hired. Also GMPG was testing many tanks, trucks, munitions, etc. for the War Department. Not just GM products, but those manufactured by Ford, Chrysler, etc. The military was a constant presence at the GMPG. Many clerical workers were needed to keep up with all the reports. GMPG received many awards, including the "E Award" for the excellent work being done for the military.

In 1944, GMPG started a small monthly internal newsletter called "*Grindings*". Social information and reports were given to the employees to keep up on happenings at GMPG and its workers. A printed edition lasted until 2006. It then went online.

In 1946, the workers' union tried to come into the Proving Ground, but never was successful.

In the early 1950's GMPG increased their property, purchasing acreage from their northern property line to Commerce Road. This consisted of the northern part of Section 12 and all of Section 1. In a 1994 report, GMPG grew to 4000+ acres with 132 miles of test roads, 106 buildings and 4000 workers.

(Compiled by Mindy Kinsey from the GM Archives, Brighton Argus and Bill Pless writings.)