

**BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

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**The Town Clock**

Brighton is a community in which a number of local service organizations cooperate; coordinating their talents, goals and interests to the improvement of life in the area.

In 1985, Scott Griffith, Chairman of the Brighton Downtown Development Authority (DDA), had noted the city’s master plan included the addition of a clock on Main Street to improve the appearance of downtown. Other plan possibilities included planter boxes and Victorian-Style street lamps.

Early 1990, the Brighton Council of Service Organizations (Rotary, Lions, Kiwanis, Optimists, Chamber of Commerce, Livingston Women’s Club and Volunteer Firemen’s Organization) determined a clock would be one enhancement which would move Brighton in that direction.

Griffith also noted, “The clock should be a focal point, located around the Old Town Hall near the Mill Pond.” Businessman, George Moses, agreed that an old-fashioned, turn-of-the-century town clock would add a special charm.

It was determined the expense to the city would be mitigated by conducting fundraisers by the service organizations. Among these were a raft race on the mill pond (Rotary Club), cow pie lottery (Kiwanis), carnival donations (volunteer fire fighters), an arts and crafts sale with a pancake breakfast (Lions Club) and a fishing derby (Optimists). Area stores placed donation containers on their counters.

An August 8, 1990 publication was headlined: “Brighton’s New-look-Downtown” announcing the installation of a 12-1/2 foot Victorian clock, in front of the Old Town Hall. Made of cast aluminum it was bolted to a raised concrete block. With three faces, the time could be read easily from any direction on Main Street.

The photo shown includes Dale Harrison of the Kiwanis, Bob Brand and Steve Allen of the Optimists, Lynne Ruppert of Livingston Women’s Club and Wally Jollitz, George Meldrum and Art Brown, president

of the Lions Club. Brown said “There are very few cities where all of the service organizations get together to work on one project.”

However, within six months, the public noted its time-keeping ability was very poor. Occasional attempts through the years to repair the very public clock had no long-term effects.

By mid 2008, both the clock and the Old Town Hall at Main and West Streets were, coincidentally, under repair. A city building official, Jim Rowell, a craftsman in his spare time, worked on the clock. His volunteer work saved the city about \$23,000 according to Matt Modrack, Community Development and Planning Director. Public Services Director Matt Schindewolf had the repair of the Old Town Hall in his care.

In March, 2019, one could still learn how much time there was for yet more fun in downtown Brighton.

(Compiled by Marieanna Bair from clippings. Additions, corrections requested: 810-229-6402.)

