“Brighton’s Pitkin Family”

Brighton was founded in 1832 by Maynard Maltby. It was incorpo-
rated into a village March 25, 1867.

The first cemetery in Brighton known as the “Old Village Ceme-
tery” was plotted in 1853 and recorded at the County Register of
Deeds.

In 1868, the third schoolhouse in Brighton was constructed of
brick and familiarly known as the “Old Union School.” It was built
at a cost just over $10,000. St. Patrick’s Church now owns that
property located on the site of their former elementary school.

The population of Brighton in 1870 numbered 454. Prior to 1870,
the west side of the village was entirely farmland, but in that year
and 1871, the Smith McPherson plot was completed and ready for
the boom, which was expected with the entry of the long awaited
new railroad. With the completion of the railroad, the first train
out of Brighton was July 4, 1871. Residents of the village received
a free ride to Plymouth and back on that day. The first train was a
strictly air conditioned one consisting of a string of flat cars with
plank benches for seats.

In 1875, my great grandfather, David Pitkin purchased lots in the
newly opened Smith McPherson plot and built six homes, one
being his own family home located on the south east corner of
Fourth and Main Streets. That home still stands at 725 W. Main
Street.

The population of Brighton in 1880 was 803.

David and Lucy Pitkin had four sons and two daughters. Son
George owned a drug store in the village. William owned a livery
stable, and later Pitkin Garage. Ernest Pitkin owned the Pitkin Fur-
niture Store, and the funeral business until his death in 1921. The
business was later sold to Emil Keehn.

David Pitkin and members of his family are buried in St. Patrick
Cemetery. It was once divided into two sections. One side for
Catholics, the other side for Protestants.

In May of 1896, the village purchased and plotted what is now the
beautiful Fairview Cemetery located on Flint Road.

(The above information was taken from the book, “A Victory
Homecoming” dated 1946. This story was submitted by Janice
(Pitkin) Beach who is a Charter member and first membership
chairman of the Brighton Area Historical Society. We thank Janice
for submitting this story.)

TO OUR READERS:
If you or your family have been residents of Brighton for a long
time, we would like you to consider submitting a story for publi-
cation on Page 4 of our newsletter. Please send your story to
BAHS, P.O. Box 481, Brighton, MI 48116. Thank you.