

BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. Box 481
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“Brighton’s Pitkin Family”

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

The first cemetery in Brighton known as the “Old Village Cemetery” 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 Furniture 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.)



Pitkin Family Photo, Year taken not known. Top Row, L-R: William, Clarence, Ernest. Middle Row, L-R: George, David (Father), Lucy (LaRue) Mother. Bottom Row, L-R: Sarah Ann, Genevive

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 publication on Page 4 of our newsletter. Please send your story to BAHS, P.O. Box 481, Brighton, MI 48116. Thank you.