

Thank You Brighton Township And Norma Pless!

The preservation of Brighton Township's historic 1885 Lyon One-Room Schoolhouse located on Buno Road was due to one feisty township clerk. Clerk Norma Jean Pless, who was an alumna of the Lyon School pushed the idea for preservation to other board members. The township board was looking for needed revenue at this time because the new township hall was under construction. The old school sat on a nice lot which could have been sold for the construction of a new home to bring money into the township coffers. Norma's vision of a refurbished schoolhouse where local children could visit and learn about life and education in the early days of Brighton was a difficult push. She was able to sell her vision to her colleagues on the township board. The school was donated to the newly formed Brighton Area Historical Society.

The wood frame Lyon Schoolhouse was built in 1885. It replaced an 1842 log school on the same site. This country school served many local families in the vicinity of Buno and Pleasant Valley Roads through 1955.

The school closed in 1955 due to consolidation with the city schools. Lyon School, the old standard of rural education became the Brighton Township Hall in 1961. The new township hall was built about 1983 and thus this old building become an unoccupied liability.

Brighton Township sold the site for one dollar to the Brighton Area Historical Society. It took a decade for the fledgling historical society to raise funds for the refurbishment.

The Brighton Area Historical Society is very grateful to Norma and her colleagues on the Brighton Township Board! A beautiful, barrier-free, refurbished one-room school exists today where local school classes visit during the year and learn about their community and education in an early 1900s interior setting.

You can visit Lyon School, home of the Brighton Area Historical Society every Thursday from 9—12nn. Stop and say hello to volunteer Norma Pless who will be working in the archive room at the back of the school!

Jim Vichich, BAHS President
810.250.7276
Info@BrightonAreaHistorical.com

If you need written confirmation of a contribution you made to the Society during 2021, please contact Jerry Damon at 248-345-4080.

Current CoBACH
Exhibit:
General Motors
Proving Ground

CoBACH HOURS
Tuesday—Friday 5—8pm
Saturday 11—5pm
Sunday 2—5pm
Closed Monday

**Archiving at Lyon School
at Lyon Schoolhouse
Every Thursday
9 to 12nn**

**See Page 2 for
Additional details**

CHECK OUT FACEBOOK

Frequent 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: (Reflect dues paid for year 2022 unless otherwise noted.)

IND/FAMILY: Elaine Blight (2023), Patricia Burgess, Nancy Cardle, Charles & Lois Cheney*, Joe & Bernice Collins, Jim DeJohn, Janice Field, Patricia Franklin, Richard Hyne, Dennis & Maria Littleworth, Brenda McCarty, Larry & Edie Millen, Nora Miller, Frank & Monica Nineteman, Robert & Cathy Padget, Judy Parsons, Scott Selesky, Peggy Van Sickle, Philip & Jeanne Smith, Robert Veik, Paul Weber, Robert Wilkinson, Richard & Doris Young

PATRON: James & Carole Bruhn, James Franklin, Steve & Kate Lowry, Margo Metzger, Margaret Siford, Lois Tobias

BUS/PROF: Preview Properties, Serra Honda-Brighton*

SPONSORSHIPS: Silver: Frank & Josephine Del Vero

***WELCOME new members:** Charles & Lois Cheney, Serra Honda-Brighton

THANK YOU TO OUR MEMBERS WHO HAVE RENEWED THEIR DUES.

Please see the insert or the form on Page 3 if you would like to join, or renew your dues. Through your dues and donations we are able to continue the work of preserving Brighton's history.

THANKS:

- Natalie & Todd Buckley for donations from the sales of Brighton Advertising vintage tee-shirts from Wallflower Mercantile.
- Frank and Josephine Del Vero for their 2022 Silver Sponsorship.

- Jim DeJohn, Patricia Franklin, Dennis & Maria Littleworth, Brenda McCarty for their donations to Friend of Lyon School along with their dues.
- Judy Parsons, Philip and Jeanne Smith for their donations to CoBACH along with their dues.
- Bob and Betsy Herbst, Pleasant Valley Social Club for their donations in memory of Marieanna Bair.
- Richard & Doris Young for their donation to Old Village Cemetery along with their dues.
- David & Mary Miller, Jane Tomlinson for their donations in memory of Charles Beach.
- Steve & Kate Lowry, Margo Metzger, Scott Selesky, Peggy Van Sickle for their donations to the Larry Lawrence Scholarship Fund along with their dues.
- CoBACH volunteers for January: Joe Collins, Nancy Fredenburg, Mindy Kinsey, Tom Reinke, Lynn Strong and Jim Vichich.
- Joe Collins, Nancy Fredenburg, Mindy Kinsey, Pat Smith and Jim Vichich for taking down the holiday display at CoBACH.
- Carole Damon, Mindy Kinsey and Lynn Strong for setting up the current CoBACH display.
- Jerry Damon for his computer assessment skills and wood fabrication talents as the archive room at Lyon School is being updated with additional work stations.
- Jerry & Carole Damon and Jim Vichich for the preparation and mailing of the January Trail Tales newsletter.

Dates to Remember

CoBACH: Days and hours of operation:

Tuesday—Friday 5—8 pm, Saturday 11—5 pm and

Sunday 2—5pm. Masks must be worn.

CURRENT EXHIBIT: January-February: General Motors Proving Ground

FUTURE EXHIBITS: March—April Exhibit: Casual Quilters

May—June: Mills of Brighton

Lyon School Open Dates: February; 3,10,17,24;Thursdays: Archiving work from 9-11:59am. Masks must be worn.

February 23, 2022: Next BAHS Board Meeting at 6PM, CoBACH.

Life — Business — Professional Members

Life Members:

Tom Archer — John & Deb Armstrong — Paul & Kathryn Bair (Allen) — Shirley Barton — Janice Beach — Donald & Shari Black (N.J.)
Marilyn Campbell (IN) — John & Jenny Conely — Edgar L Cord, Ph.D. — Bonnie Corrigan — Timothy & Giannine Corrigan — Jerry & Carole Damon
Bill & Margaret Dixon — Joan Engel — Tony & Beth Ferreyra — Nancy Fredenburg — Stephen & Marilyn Harrington — William & Lenore Harris
Betsy & Bob Herbst — Dr. John & Barbara Jacoby (MN) — Kathy Jacoby (FL) — Claire & Aaron Jusino — Kate Lawrence — Seth & Shannon Lemke (TX)
Ray & Bessie Maltby — Jere & Kay Michaels — James & Janis Miller — Randy & Linda Veno Needham — Greg & Pamela Park (OH)
John G. Park & Madeline Kingston-Park — Richard Park (IL) — Kathy Pearson — David & Marilyn Pettigrove — Bob & Donna Phillips — Joyce Powers
Douglas & Carole Rearick — Brigette Ritsema — Tom & Bonnie Riutta — Robert & Pauline Schaffer — Bruce & Betty Schuman — Carole Scott
Anne Stratigos — Lynn Brady Strong — Jim & Vicki Vichich — Linda (Skeman) Wintermute — Al & Karen Wirth — Alice Wyland

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

Advance Craft Builders (2022) — Archer Huntley Financial Services ** — Brighton Area Women's History Roll of Honor** — Brighton District Library **
Brighton Lions Club (2021) — Brighton Veterans Memorial Comm.** — Buckley-Jolley Group ** — Clark/Tait Eye Center (2021)
Davis Multimedia, Inc. (2021) — Golfview Painting (2022) — Kimble Appraisal Group, Inc.** — Lindhout Associates** — Lawrence Auto Body **
Livingston County Convention Visitors Bureau (2021) — Masonic Lodge No. 247 ** — Michigan Consulting & Environmental (2021)
Neighbors Magazine (2021) — Patrick Financial Group, LLC ** — Power House Electric, Inc. (2022) — Preview Properties (2022) — Promess, Inc.**
Refrigeration Research ** — Serra Honda Brighton (2022) — Tee-Bone'z Tavern (2022)

Sponsorships

Bronze: Carolina DeLuca (2022)

Silver: Frank & Josephine 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: _____	

Membership Plan:		Additional Donation to—Check One:	
<input type="checkbox"/> New	<input type="checkbox"/> \$2 Student	<input type="checkbox"/> Larry Lawrence Scholarship Fund	Amount of Donation:
<input type="checkbox"/> Renew	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15 Individual	<input type="checkbox"/> Friend of Lyon School	<input type="checkbox"/> \$10 <input type="checkbox"/> \$100
<input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Family	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Patron	<input type="checkbox"/> BAHS CoBACH Events	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25 <input type="checkbox"/> \$250
	<input type="checkbox"/> \$60 Business/Professional	<input type="checkbox"/> Old Village Cemetery Fund	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50 <input type="checkbox"/> Other \$ _____
	<input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Life		

The Brighton Area Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) Non-Profit Organization . All donations are tax deductible.

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 2022

President Jim Vichich	Directors Joe Collins
Vice President Nancy Fredenburg	Dr. Caitlyn Perry Dial
Secretary Mindy Kinsey	John Rawcliffe
Treasurer & Trail Tales Editor Jerry Damon	Thomas Reinke
Webmaster Debbie Armstrong	Lynn Strong
	Education Liaison Judith Coebly

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.

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.

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



Following is a story from the April 2018 issue of Trail Tales about the GM Proving Ground. This is the current display at the CoBACH Center next to the Millpond in downtown Brighton. We encourage you to visit the **FREE Exhibit** and see the rest of the story and many photos. Display hours are listed on Page 1 and 2 of this newsletter.

History of the

General Motors Proving Ground (GMPG)

In 1923, Alfred Sloan, chairman of General Motors had an idea. General Motors should develop a testing facility that would be representative of road conditions in real life. One that would be consistent in testing all cars and their components. After investigating different locations, they purchased 1,125 acres in a hilly area in the northeast section of Brighton Township known at "The Bluffs." This is one of the highest locations in Livingston County found in Section 13 and the south portion of Section 12. The property also included part of the western section of Milford Township in Oakland County. The majority of the land was in Brighton Township.

Groundbreaking began with 5.6 miles of test roads where 1.7 miles were concrete and 3.9 miles were gravel. Nearby farmers were hired to work developing the roads on the Proving Ground. Local operators and their trucks were hired to move special gravel from the Brighton train depot to the site. North and South Muir and Bamber Roads were closed in early 1924. GMPG incorporated them into some of their test roads.

The first buildings were started in May 1924 and ready for use in November. These were located on the old David Jackson property on the Brighton side of Labadie Road (the county line road). These included a 60' x 200' garage and a 40' x 100' two-story clubhouse. The Brighton Argus reports in April 1926 "...a massive brick entrance building was built—the gatehouse—for \$10,000. Also a residence for Mr. Kreusser, the Director, was built on the eastern side of the property over the county line." The Argus further stated "GM is a deep significance to Brighton and already employs several Brighton people."

As the roads and buildings were being completed so began the hiring. Management looked towards the local farm boys because "they had strength in body and a good work ethic from being on the farms." (Argus) They were hired as mechanics, test drivers etc. The average pay was 50 cents per hour and some worked 7 days a week. With the influx of workers at the GMPG, an increase of housing was needed. Land needed to be cleared and construction crews were needed to build the homes. The building of homes in the Brighton area further stimulated the local economy. The Argus stated in August 1924: "the proximity of the Proving Grounds to Brighton has already contributed to the profits of Brighton businesses. And will continue if we show our interest."

The story continues... please visit the current display at the CoBACH Center downtown Brighton.

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