

BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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The Musch Family of Brighton, “Max”

The Musch family has deep roots in Livingston County, with Max Musch’s family originally farming just west of Chilson, off King Road in Genoa Township. Dorothy Musch (Smith) grew up on the Smith family farm on Pingree Road in Howell. Both Max and Dorothy were active and dedicated members of their community throughout their lives. Together, they raised three sons—William (1959), Richard (1966), and Robert (1970), all of whom attended Brighton High School.

Max A. Musch married Dorothy Schultz in June 1937 in Howell, Michigan. After her passing in 1941, he married Dorothy E. Smith in December 1945, also in Howell.

Max was a graduate of Brighton County School, after which he attended Capital University in Ohio (a Lutheran-affiliated institution). He later transferred to the University of Michigan, where he earned a degree in Architectural and Civil Engineering. At that time, graduates from Brighton and Howell High Schools were automatically accepted into the University of Michigan.

Max began his career as an architect with a firm in St. Clair Shores, Michigan. A few years later, he returned to the Brighton-Howell area to establish his own architectural design business. Eventually, he accepted a position at General Motors’ Milford Proving Ground, where he worked for 20 plus years. There, Max managed and supervised the drafting department, overseeing the expansion of multiple buildings and the development of the proving ground’s extensive road system. He cherished his time at GM, where he considered his colleagues family, often reminiscing about the lifelong friendships he made, the successful projects he led, and the memorable Christmas parties and open houses GM hosted for employees and their families.

In addition to his work at GM, Max continued to design homes, remodels, and commercial buildings after hours. Over his career, he completed more than 700 projects in the Brighton area. Some of his notable works include Keehn Funeral Home, St. George Lutheran Church, and Shepherd of the Lakes Lutheran Church. One of his earliest designs, the Vina House next to the Methodist Church

on Grand River, stands as a testament to his skill and dedication. The house was originally designed for a local doctor who served the Brighton Hospital, now the Brighton Chamber of Commerce building. A chalk drawing Max made of the Vina House to commemorate his first architectural project is displayed in the house’s lobby to this day.

Max was also deeply involved in local civic life, serving on the zoning and planning boards of Genoa Township, and as a dedicated member of St. George Lutheran Church. In the late 1970s, he was honored to serve as the Grand Marshal of the 4th of July parade. Max passed away in 1988, leaving behind a legacy of architectural excellence, community involvement, and a strong sense of family.

(Thanks to Bob Musch who submitted this story to the Brighton Area Historical Society as well as the Brighton Alumni Association. We will publish the remainder of the story in the next several issues of Trail Tales.)

