



Grand River Trail

TRAIL TALES

Brighton Area Preservation News

The purpose of the Brighton Area Historical Society is to preserve, advance and disseminate knowledge of the history of the Brighton Area.

The membership is composed of people who feel this purpose is worthwhile and should be promoted.

P.O. Box 481
Vol. X No. 4

Brighton, Mi. 48116
April, 1991

BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Editor - Penny Szczechowski	229-7324

SPRING AREA MEETING

The Livingston County Historical Society will hold the spring meeting of the area historical societies on Wednesday, April 17, 1991, at the Livingston County Courthouse, 200 East Grand River in Howell.

A tour of the Depot Museum, 128 Wetmore Street, Howell, will be available from 6:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. The depot was built in 1886 and has artifacts on display from the Livingston County area.

The courthouse will also be open at 6:30 p.m. for tours sponsored by the Historical Advisory Committee. The Livingston County Courthouse was built in 1889.

The area meeting will begin at 8:00 p.m. in the courthouse. Representatives of the area societies will share current activities of their society. A short program on the McPhersons, a historically prominent family in Howell, will be presented.

Everyone is encouraged and invited to attend.

BOARD MEETING SCHEDULED
APRIL 11

The Brighton Area Historical Society has scheduled the next monthly board meeting for Thursday, April 11, at 7:00 p.m. at the Old Town Hall (upstairs).

These meetings are open to the general membership. We would like your ideas and support. We welcome anyone who has something to discuss, introduce, or question to attend our meetings. You are also welcome to simply come and listen to the meeting.

PATRONS: Dr. Robert Chesky;
Dr. Harry Davis and Carol; Pat
and Marlene Fonseca (Calif.);
Louis Krausman (Fla.);

COUPLE/INDIVIDUAL: Jeanette
Bailey; Esther Clark (Howell);
Frances Clore; Don and Ricci
Bandkau; Gary and Ruth Ann Cole;
Hazel Cole; Ken Graham; Rudy and
Virginia Herrmann; Bill and
Helen Hyne (Howell); Audrey
Jacoby; Ina Shannon; Larry and
Rita Schillinger; A.J. and
Helen Southwell; Paul Zurawski;

Many thanks to all who
demonstrate their confidence
in the Society. Without you
there would be no Society.

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OLD HOUSE LECTURE SERIES

The Livingston County Historical
Society Spring lecture series
ends with the April 30 program
titled HERB GARDENS FOR THE
HOME

This program will feature Edith
Salyer who will present a
slide presentation showing
formal and informal gardens
and the plants appropriate for
both. Her talk will include
theme gardens such as culinary,
medicinal, and fragrance.

This program will be held at
Howell High School at 7:30 p.m.
in room L-8.

Tickets are available through
Howell Community Education,
1400 W. Grand River, Howell or
at the door. The cost is \$3.00.

This is an excellent series and
you will enjoy this program if
you are a gardener or if you
are just an admirer.

The Signature Quilt is still in
the works. There is still room
on the quilt for any signatures
you send. It is hoped to
complete this project soon.
Three more names will be added to
the quilt soon.

Send in your signature or that of
another and a check for \$10. The
signature will be embroidered on
the quilt. This quilt will remain
in the Society archives as a
reminder of people who have sent in
their signature and a contribution.
Some have included entire families.
We would encourage others to do so.

Several objectives will be
accomplished by the completion of
this quilt:

- a. The quilt will serve as a
directory of the area at this
time for future reference.
- b. A deceased person will be
memorialized.
- c. The signature will serve as an
honor to your and/or the
people about whom you care.
- d. You will have made a donation
to the goals of the Society.
- e. It will serve as a permanent
record of the contribution.

All proceeds go to the Historic
Preservation and Restoration Fund
which includes restoration work
on the Old Town Hall and the Lyons
School, the historic resource
survey, the oral history project
soon to be undertaken, etc.

Your support is much appreciated.

A check for \$10 for each signature
can be sent to the Society,
P.O. Box 481, Brighton 48116

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OLD TOWN HALL RENOVATION

Phase One of the renovation of the
Old Town Hall continues. You will
soon be seeing signs of construction
inside and outside. Watch for this
important historic work in progress.

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

(ORAL HISTORY PROJECT CONT.)

The Brighton Area Historical Society is beginning an oral history project. The Society hopes to interview and tape local residence who would be willing to share their remembrances of Brighton in bygone days.

Glenn Ruggles, a member of the Michigan Oral History Council presented a program on oral histories to the Novi Historical Society recently. He offered the following advice for societies and individuals who wish to record some of their own family's history:

- * use the best equipment available, you may only get one chance.
- * interview one person at a time
- * set up the recording equipment in a quiet place - background noise may drown out the voice you want to record
- * ask open-ended questions - ask subject to describe a typical day, his participation in an event, how something was done, etc.
- * let the subject do the talking
- * prepare for the interview - get information that is best known by the subject being interviewed

- * get a signed release - it is very important to have a signed permission from the interviewee which allows you to use the recorded interview

The Brighton Historical Society is ready to begin their oral history project as soon as members volunteer to conduct these interviews. Brighton has many interesting people who would give valuable information for our archives.

Call Marieanna Bair, 229-6402 if you are interested in helping with this project.

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SHIPWRECK PROGRAMS

The Michigan Historical Museum is presenting programs on shipwrecks of the late 1800s and early 1900s.

APRIL 14 - SHIPWRECK! the John McGean recounts the sinking of this freighter in Lake Huron in a storm in 1913.

MAY 12 - ALL HANDS WERE SAVED, the sinking of the City of Milwaukee

Call (517) 373-2520 for info.

BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

NEW () RENEWAL ()

ACTIVITIES IN WHICH I WOULD LIKE TO PARTICIPATE

- () BAKE SALE () HELP WITH SPEC. EVENTS () NEWSLETTER () RESEARCH
- () BOARD MEMBER () HOSPITALITY () ORAL HISTORY () RESTORATION
- () FUND RAISING () PROGRAMS () PHOTOGRAPHY () VIDEO TAPING
- () GENEALOGY () MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE () PUBLICITY () OTHER WORK

I WOULD BE WILLING TO DO:

- DUES: \$25. PATRON
- \$25. BUSINESS/PROFESSIONAL
- \$12. COUPLE
- \$ 7. INDIVIDUAL

SEND TO: BRIGHTON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 481
BRIGHTON, MICH. 48116

IS THERE A DOCTOR IN THE AREA? (Cont.)

"His disposition and character were such that, while among us, he made many, many friends who could never forget 'Doc' Brown as he was familiarly known by old and young. He was possessed of a personality that appealed to the masses; his heart was large enough to include all, but the children were his favorites. He could often be seen the center of a group of kids and Doc was apparently as young as any of them." Thus reads a portion of the obituary of Dr. W C. Brown in the October 18, 1919, issue of the local newspaper.

The doctor was a popular fellow in the community; he was active as the manager of the Brighton baseball team and as a member of the old "Ore Creek Fire Department"; postmaster for six years and an active member of many orders and organizations. There are old photographs of him and his son, Irving, who was also a member of the team and the fire department too. Also a photo of his wife and a group of Brighton ladies, all dressed in old fashioned clothing ready to take part in the 1907 Homecoming parade, which the Browns had come from Detroit to attend. (More former Brightonites returned for that homecoming than there were people living in the town at the time.)

The doctor had practiced in Brighton for 23 years except for a few years in South Lyon. In 1903, he had moved to Detroit and practiced until 3-4 days before his death. Dr. Brown is buried in Woodlawn Cemetery, Detroit. Tragically, before the year was out his son, and only child, died at the age of 36 of pneumonia shortly after the death of his child in November.

Years after Dr Brown left Brighton, 1903, as late as 1940, the green window shades in the windows on the second floor of the hardware store where his office was located, still displayed "Office of W. C. Brown, M. D."

The practice of acquiring an education in medicine during the first 3/4 of the 1800s consisted of working with a doctor (who usually had decided for himself that he was a doctor) for a few years and reading whatever medical books were available. There were no controls concerning the setting up of a medical practice. Anyone who wished could call himself a doctor. There was no definition by law of who could practice. Occasionally attempts were made to regulate the medical profession. In 1819 the formation of the Medical Society of Michigan was attempted. However the many who called themselves doctors caused much confusion as to who really could be considered a doctor. Between 1825 and 1851, many amendments were made by the governors and courts of Michigan to the terms of incorporation. (By Marieanna Bair. To be continued. Anyone with information regarding the subject matter of these articles is urged to contact her. 229-6402)

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