



# HISTORIC BRIGHTON NEWS

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CHRIS MANASERI AND MARY JO LANPHEAR

TO PRESENT BRIGHTON SCHOOL PROGRAM AT HISTORIC BRIGHTON MEETING

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 14**

**3 PM**

**‘CAFITORIUM’**

**FRENCH ROAD SCHOOL**

**Christopher B. Manaseri**, superintendent of schools of the Brighton Central School District will present an entertaining view of one-room schoolhouses (Dr. Manaseri’s dissertation subject). This will be followed by a brief history of the public schools in Brighton by **Mary Jo Lanphear**, Town of Brighton Historian.

Dr. Manaseri became the sixth superintendent of the Brighton Central Schools in 2005, succeeding Dr. Henry (Harv) Peris. Dr. Manaseri came to Brighton from the District Superintendency of the Monroe 2-Orleans BOCES. Prior to that he served as superintendent at Wheatland-Chili CSD, 2000 - 2004, and as superintendent in Romulus, in Seneca County, 1993 - 2000. For the seventeen years prior to his first superintendency, Manaseri worked at South Seneca Central schools where he was a teacher, coach, school counselor and secondary principal. He began his teaching career in Batavia in 1975.

Manaseri was a summa cum laude graduate of SUNY Geneseo in 1974, spent a year studying abroad at the University of Nottingham, England, holds two Masters degrees—one from Elmira College and one from Colgate University—earned a Certificate of Advanced Study in educational administration at SUNY Cortland, and earned his Ph.D. in Cultural Foundations of Education at Syracuse University in 2004.

Dr. Manaseri completed his Ph.D. at Syracuse in 2004, in the Cultural Foundations of Education program in the School of Education. He specialized in the history and sociology of education, and conducted fieldwork in the preservation of school history, particularly the one-room schools that were part of schooling during the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century



*This French Road residence morphed from a one room schoolhouse in the year 1949*

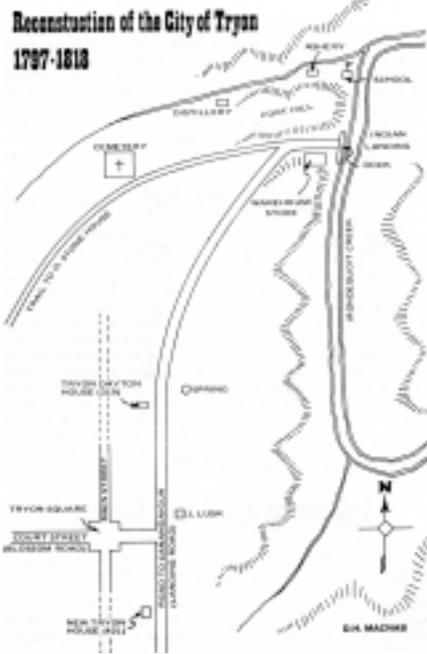
throughout New York State. He has presented numerous slide programs about the work he found so vital and energizing in more than three-dozen locations in the greater Finger Lakes region. Research was conducted 2001-2003. Several area projects, including those in Penfield, Hilton, Wheatland and Honeoye Falls, are included in his work.

**The Brighton Town Board** appointed Mary Jo Lanphear Town Historian in 1986. She soon decided to take a course in local history offered by the Strong Museum. After she had three courses under her belt, her professor asked her why she didn’t decide to matriculate at SUNY Brockport. She did so, and majored in American History, receiving her Masters Degree in 1991.

Mary Jo has been the assistant records management officer of Ontario County since 1992. Her office, as the Town Historian of Brighton, is located in the Brighton Town Hall. It is open on Wednesday afternoons from 3 until 9 PM. Mary Jo will be speaking briefly on some of the history of the public schools in Brighton.

# DOWN MEMORY LANE WITH BRIGHTON SCHOOLS

Reconstruction of the City of Tryon  
1797-1813



Oliver Culver

This map of the reconstruction of Tryon was drawn by Donald McNab, husband of Margaret McNab, Brighton Town historian in the 1960s. The map shows the

school somewhat north of the Indian Landing, near today's Atlantic Avenue. Mrs. McNab described Tryon as a PUD (planned urban development) of the late 18th century.

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The first Brighton School was a log cabin built in 1802 in the short-lived "City" (actually a village, albeit a well-planned one) of Tryon in today's Ellison Park. Oliver Culver, Brighton's first supervisor, who arrived here in 1796, not only helped build the school but also, at the age of 24, attended it.

"In 1802 no school house being nearer than Pittsford, we clubbed together and built a school house of logs and hired a man by the name of Turner who was clerk in the store of Tryon & Company, to teach school. I wanted to go to school, and for my part I got logs to a saw mill and furnished the roof boards."

*Oliver Culver as recounted by Emerson Babcock in "The City of Tryon" p 123 v VII RHSPS*

For his dissertation, Brighton Central Schools Superintendent Chris Manaseri studied one-room schoolhouses throughout the Finger Lakes region from Syracuse and Rochester to the Pennsylvania line. He visited 37 schoolhouses and interviewed 60 people.

During the early 1900s, there were more than 200,000 schoolhouses across the country. In New York state alone there were 10,000 school districts with many having a district range of only about four



The one-room "Little Red Schoolhouse" at Monroe and Highland Avenues, near Gideon Cobb's mansion, was an early Brighton school.



NUMBER NINE SCHOOLHOUSE

One of Brighton's one-room schoolhouses was this one built at the turn of the 19th to 20th century. It was moved to 490 French Road, corner of Edgewood Ave. with desks still nailed to the floor in 1949 and became a private home. Remodels and additions later, it remains a home across the avenue from French Road School.

miles. Then they began to disappear, some as late as the 1950s or '60s. By 2000, there were about 700 school districts with only two functioning one-room schoolhouse remaining. Manseri is quoted as saying he would like to put together a book of schoolhouses and form a state society for the preservation of schoolhouses.

*Source: Henrietta Post article by Bryon Roth, 7 July 2007.*

# DOWN MEMORY LANE WITH BRIGHTON SCHOOLS

## BRIGHTON HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING A DEPRESSION BABY



*"The school of tomorrow" was under construction. when the 1939 Brighton High School yearbook published this rendering.*

By Catherine Zukosky

Today's Brighton High School at 1150 Winton Road South had its beginning ... in a dramatic last-minute rush ... from concept to realization. On December 29, 1938, in an 11<sup>th</sup> hour, 15-minute ceremony, the school board ... braved icy winds to break frozen ground at the site where the building would rise. The board was working against a deadline imposed by the Public Works Administration to begin construction by the end of the year. The PWA, an agency established in the Great Depression as part of President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal was winding down at this time and its commitment was to provide \$270,000 (about 45%) of the \$600,000 cost of the school-building project... with little increase in school taxes.... A bond issue to the district for the balance of the funds would be retired in 1957.

The first act of the drama happened on the night of Dec. 27, when a delegation consisting of the school district's attorney and the project's architect, Charles Carpenter of Carpenter and Barrows, traveled by train to New York City carrying low bids for the building's construction. Earlier that day, 31 bids had been received and studied, and contracts had been let to general contractor Frank Maggio and Brothers for \$355,000. This firm had already received the \$7,300 contract for a garage to house four buses and construction on that had begun. Low bids for

*The account of the history of the present Brighton High School building by Catherine Zukovsky first appeared in the Spring 2003 issue of the Historic Brighton News (v. 4 n. 2.) Reprinted here are excerpts from that article.*

heating, ventilation, plumbing and electrical contracts were also presented. The PWA regional director approved the bids for the general contract and sent a confirming telegram to school officials on December 29. The race had been won and there were smiles all around during the 15-minute ceremony observed by school and town officials, a PWA representative, the architect, and the contractors who were preparing to move machinery to the tract the next day. They foresaw completion of the job by June, 1940.

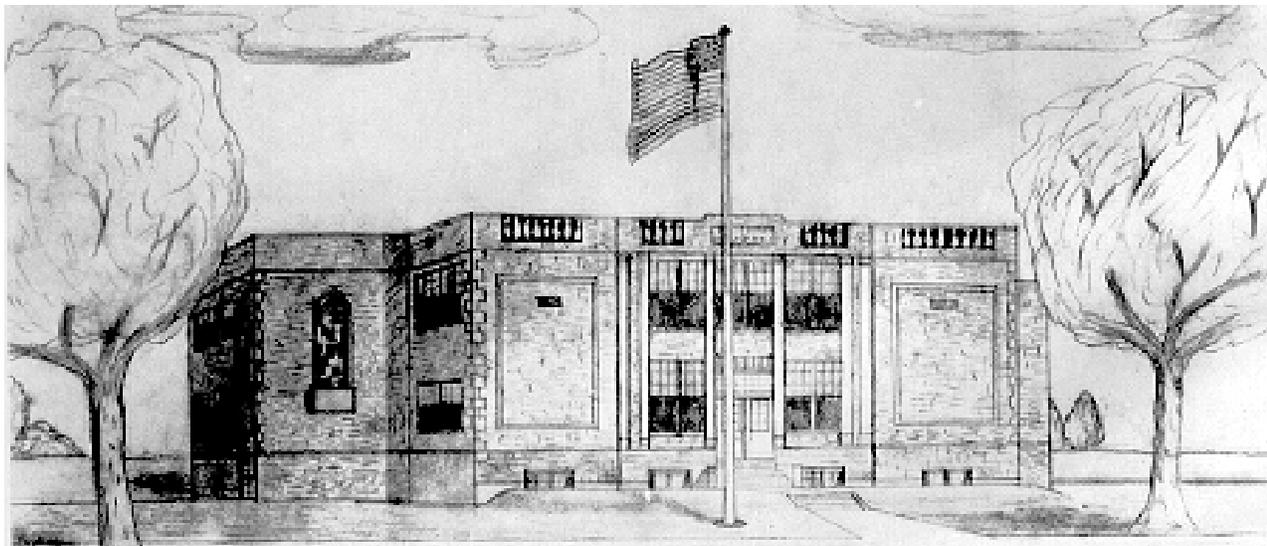
These heroic efforts in the dead of winter were in response to a clear need. Brighton had grown rapidly for two decades as migration to the suburbs was facilitated by the automobile and by public transport. Census figures showed a 1920 population of 3027; by 1930 it was 9065. The early Common School Districts (there were seven in 1920) were authorized to provide elementary education through 6<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Older students sought further education elsewhere. In 1925, amendments to New York State's Central School Law had provided financial incentives for the consolidation of districts. In that year, Brighton's Common District No. 1 with a school at Clover St. and Elmwood Ave. and District No. 8 were melded into Union Free School District No. 1. District No. 8 school was on Monroe Ave. near Cobb's Hill and that district had been annexed into Rochester.

The consolidated district built an eight-room school at the Twelve Corners, now the town's hub. Abner M. Buckland, member of the Brighton pioneer family, previously owned the expanse of land accommodating today's Brighton campus at the Twelve Corners. Clay was dug and bricks formed there from 1830 until the 1920s.

Secondary education had become an expectation and a necessity for the growing community. A ninth grade class was opened in 1928 and the high school program was expanded each year. In 1931, the district received its four-year charter from the state and in June 1932 graduated its first four-year class of 22 students. The school was free to residents of District No. 1 and on a tuition basis to the residents of

*Continued on page 4*

## DOWN MEMORY LANE WITH BRIGHTON SCHOOLS



*The building that is now the Twelve Corners Middle School served as grammar and high school 1926 -1940* the five other Brighton Common School districts. Additions were made to the Twelve Corners building in 1928, 1930 and 1933, but it was overcrowded even before 1940 when the town's population had grown to 13,132.

4 The new high school was nearly complete in June, 1940, enabling the graduating class of that year to conduct ceremonies in its auditorium/gymnasium. This group included some who were the first to go all the way from kindergarten through senior high school at the Twelve Corners. One small kindergarten group met first in the auditorium of the elementary school in 1927, and the class grew year by year to about 90 at graduation. The new high school that could accommodate 850 students opened for instruction in September, 1940 with 550.

The class of 1941, numbering 112, was the first to attend and be graduated from the new building. District superintendent was Aubrey Donley; vice-principal for the high school was Gordon Harris, assisted by 24 faculty. The *Democrat & Chronicle* of 28 December 1938 commented:

"The elaborately planned new school...is expected to be one of the finest in this end of the state. Besides relieving overcrowded conditions, it will provide science laboratories, a modern and increased space for gymnasium, auditorium and shop departments."

When the original plans for the high school building were drawn, the school board anticipated the need for an additional wing. During the war years, Brighton's school population stabilized, then

burgeoned so that by 1949, expansion was a necessity. The high school building containing grades 8 through 12 accommodated 745 students. At the time, it was expected that enrollment would rise steadily until 1963. Instead, enrollment peaked in 1966.

After the addition of the north wing, the school could accommodate 7<sup>th</sup> graders, relieving overcrowding of the elementary school group when a new primary school was erected on Monroe Ave. near the Twelve Corners. Carpenter and Barrows designed a north wing that extended the original neo-classical design. The new facility included 20 classrooms, a swimming pool, and an auditorium. Additional garage facilities were also required. The total cost was estimated at \$1,695,000. Construction was accomplished in 1950.

In the 1950s, the state recommended a centralized school district for the entire town of Brighton. Increasing population pressures and lack of classroom space brought residents to a vote on the issue in May of 1955. The proposal was defeated by a large margin.

Residents outside of District No. 1 then formed a new Union Free District No. 2 and opened several new schools. However, by 1966 the situation was critical. New York State was urging centralization and made it clear that financial aid would be much more generous to a centralized district.. After much debate, Brightonians concluded that this course would be most beneficial to all of the town's children. The merging of Districts No. 1 and No. 2 into

# DOWN MEMORY LANE WITH BRIGHTON SCHOOLS

Brighton Central Schools was effected July 1, 1967. Large administrative changes took place and schools were rearranged to accommodate different age groups. The high school became available to all of Brighton's secondary population and housed only grades 9 through 12.

In response to enhancements to the curriculum and growth in the size and diversity of the school community, the school building underwent a second major addition in 1972 when the senior class numbered 350. A south wing was created to house new cafeterias, a large group room, a media center, and science rooms. Another large group room and shop and music rooms were added to the north wing.

By the early 1980s there were growing concerns about deterioration and the inadequacy of the high school building. Space limitations cramped educational programs, mechanical and electrical systems were antiquated, and asbestos-containing materials required removal. A study group presented several options for the future of the high school, the two main choices being the creation of a new building in a new location or a major renovation of the existing school building and improvements at the Twelve Corners Middle School. The wishes of the community were sought and after an extensive series of discussions the school board in 1985 decided for renovation. This was accomplished during the 1986-87 school year during which high school classes were relocated to the middle school building. Redesign outdoors created a bus loop, added parking space and relocation of the bus garage. Within the building, heating, ventilating, electrical and plumbing systems were replaced, new ceiling and thermal windows were installed. Space was rearranged to promote smoother interior traffic. A three-story addition was created from the central courtyard. Existing materials were preserved and refinished wherever possible. The chief architect was Ted Butcher of SWBR Architects. In the fall of 1987, 358 twelfth-year students reclaimed their *new* Brighton High School.

Since then, the school population has remained relatively stable. The class of 2002 contained 279 young men and women, 93% of whom went on to college. Standardized test scores exceeded mean scores state and nationwide and these scores in-



1969

crease yearly. In 2003, 12<sup>th</sup>-graders numbered 289.

Our brief history of Brighton High School serves as a testament to the community's continuing commitment and involvement in a school system considered to be the town's most important asset. It has long been acknowledged as one of the best in the state and the nation and is a source of pride for all of us.



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1974



1983

# DOWN MEMORY LANE WITH BRIGHTON SCHOOLS



CLOVER STREET SEMINARY  
Mr. and Mrs. Joseph C. Wilson • 1550 Clover Street



*St. Agnes High School, 1954-1982,  
is now a UR alumni center*



*Our Lady of Mercy High School*

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Private schools have played an important role in the life of Brighton. Beginning in 1845, the Clover Street Seminary occupied the property at the northeast corner of Clover Street and Elmwood Avenue. The large old brick house at 1550 Clover Street was the main building. From the first, this school was highly esteemed. It drew its pupils not only from Brighton and Rochester but from other towns and cities in New York, even from several other states and Canada. The first boarding student was the daughter of Thurlow Weed of Albany.

For the day students an omnibus drawn by Indian ponies made regular trips between the school and the Clinton House on Exchange Street. During the snowy months the omnibus was put on runners. There are also records of the occasional use of a packet boat with three horses attached, which followed the Erie Canal from the basin near Exchange Street to a point near the school. In the mid-1860's Miss Celestia Bloss, proprietor of the Clover Street Seminary, sold her school property to the Reverend Thomas Drum, an Episcopal clergyman, who immediately opened a boarding and day school for boys. In 1874 his advertisement described the institution as "a classical and family boarding school for boys in which special attention is given to the formation of correct gentlemanly habits. Terms - \$300 per year". For a time it was highly successful. After ten or fifteen years it became less popular and was ended by a sheriff's sale.

The seminary building has been a private home for more than a century and was for many years the family home of Joseph C. Wilson, founder of the Xerox Corporation.

The Roman Catholic Church established six schools in Brighton. Originally, the three elementary schools were Our Lady of Lourdes, Our Lady Queen of Peace and St. Thomas More. The three high schools were McQuaid Jesuit, Our Lady of Mercy, and St. Agnes. Today there is a K-6 school, Seton Catholic School, at 165 Rhinecliff Drive and Sienna Catholic Academy, a coeducational middle school located behind St. Thomas More Church at 2617 East Avenue.

Brighton acquired its first college-level school in 1954 when the congregation of the Sisters of Mercy established Catherine McAuley College on Blossom Road. Enrollment in this junior college was restricted to members of the congregation, and in 1966 there were seventy-eight students. It closed in 1969.

Monroe Community College moved to its present Brighton campus about 1965 from its first home in Rochester's old East High School.



THE HARLEY SCHOOL  
A Country Day School for Boys and Girls  
Lucius M. Stearns, Director Telephone: Monroe 5530

*The independent private Harley School, chartered in 1924 and pictured here in the 1930s certainly fits the description of country day school. All that seems to be lacking are the barnyard animals.*

# DOWN MEMORY LANE WITH BRIGHTON SCHOOLS



Although it is now part of Brighton Reformed Church, the lintel above the old Indian Landing School still reads "District No. 7."

Sheldon Brayer, president of Historic Brighton, spent eight or nine (he can't remember if there was a kindergarden) happy years as student in the ten-room Indian Landing School when it was located on Landing Road South in a building that is now part of Brighton Reformed Church. It made enough of an impression that he still remembers the names of six of his eight (or nine) teachers.

Students walked home for lunch; Brayer to Greenfield Lane.

Graduates of Indian Landing in 1944 had their choice of attending Brighton High School or Monroe High School in Rochester. (Sheldon's parents chose Monroe because they thought Brighton High School in the 1940s was too much of a "country club.")

Those halcyon days are gone. In July 1954, Indian Landing School (Brighton-Penfield Union Free District 7) was consolidated with the Penfield Central School District and a much larger schoolhouse for about 500 students, K-5, was built.

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Portrait by Moore

ALLENDALE SCHOOL  
A Country Day School for Boys

A place where boys of five years and older can prepare for boarding school and eventually for college in an environment healthy alike for body and mind.  
Applications for next fall should be made as early as possible to the Headmaster, Allen's Creek Road, Brighton Station, Rochester, New York, Telephone Monroe 5003.



Allen Creek School

Just over the Brighton/Pittsford border along Allens Creek Road is the Allendale/Columbia School. In the 1930s Allendale was "a place where boys five years and older can prepare for boarding school and eventually for college." The fact that so many children of Brighton residents did go on to boarding school in the 1930s, 40s, and 50s meant that a second Brighton high school was not needed. Consequently pupils on the outer borders of the town attending Allen Creek School, Indian Landing School, Austin Crittenden School, all within the confines of the town, found difficulty when they reached high school age. Today, Allens Creek the Pittsford Central district, Indian Landing the Penfield district, and Austin Crittenden is in Rush-Henrietta Central. The Wheatland-Chili district also extends into the west section of Brighton, and some pupils from districts bordering the city in the East River Road area, attend school in Rochester.

# HISTORIC BRIGHTON

INVITES YOU TO BECOME  
A **HB** VOLUNTEER

LEARN ABOUT YOUR COMMUNITY  
AND HELP THIS GROWING  
ORGANIZATION

SEVERAL EXCELLENT  
OPPORTUNITIES ARE AVAILABLE

Call Arlene Wright - 442-5313 for more  
details.

## HISTORIC BRIGHTON OFFICERS AND BOARD

Founded 1999 by Arlene Wright

*Sheldon Brayer, President*  
*Janet Hopkin, Secretary*  
*Rome Celli, Treasurer*  
*Arlene A. Wright, Nominating chair*

*Elizabeth Brayer*  
*Leo Dodd*  
*Richard Dollinger*  
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*Monica Gilligan*  
*Sally Harper*  
*Hannelore Heyer*  
*Beth Keigher*  
*Josie Leyens*  
*Ron Richardson*  
*Dee Dee Teegarden*

Call Betsy Brayer at 244-0402 to contribute articles  
or letters

*Mary Jo Lanphear, Town of Brighton Historian*



*The first Brighton school, 1802, was in the "City of Tryon" at the Indian Landing*

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## CORBETT'S GLEN NATURE PARK THREATENED BY NEW DEVELOPMENT!!

### THIS NEW PLAN INVOLVES:

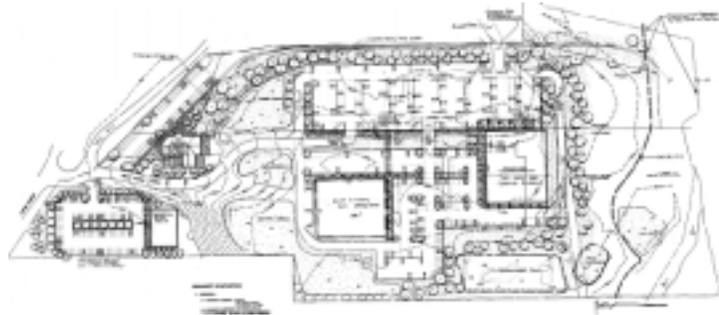
Construction 185 ft. from the postcard falls  
72,000 sq. ft. of new construction  
Over 750 parking spots  
2+ acre, two-story parking structure  
Expansive night lighting, Building on slopes  
Berms protecting neighbors removed  
Within sight of Corbett's Glen Nature Park

### IMPORTANT MEETINGS TO ATTEND:

**Tuesday, Oct 9, 7 pm Brighton Town Hall**  
Brighton invites public input on environmental  
concerns

**Wednesday, Oct, 24, 7:30 pm Brighton Town  
Hall**

Developer presents plan to Planning Board



\* To learn more, visit:  
[www.corbettsglen.org](http://www.corbettsglen.org)

\* E-mail concerns to the Planning  
Board: [planning@penfield.org](mailto:planning@penfield.org)

\* Send your e-mail address so we can  
keep you posted!! Send to:  
[corbetts\\_glen@yahoo.com](mailto:corbetts_glen@yahoo.com)