

HISTORIC BRIGHTON NEWS

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Oliver Culver

Looking toward Brighton's Bicentennial

As 2013 dawns many of us are already thinking about 2014 when Brighton will celebrate its historic bicentennial.

Along with the landmarks, the 19th century houses, the Brighton Cemetery etc. are the pioneer giants of early Brighton. Many relate to Gideon Cobb and so Historic Brighton has celebrated Gideon Cobb Days. But there is also Oliver Culver, first supervisor of Brighton, and the next pages are a tribute to what the illiterate Oliver wrought by helping to build the first school at the Indian Landing. Oliver just wanted to learn to read but the ripples of his efforts echo through the centuries as Brighton schools continue to rate as excellent nationally.

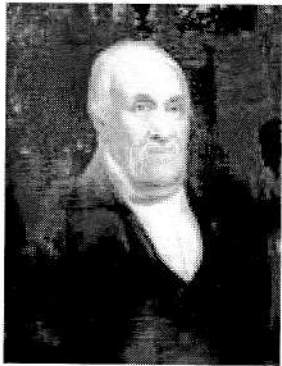
Watch for more Brighton history as we enter the bicentennial era.

"Celebrating our town's history and educating our community about Brighton's past"

www.historicbrighton.org

"We clubbed together [in 1802] and built a school house of logs and hired a man named Turner, who was clerk in the store of Tryon & Co., to teach school. I wanted to go to school, so for my part I got logs to a saw mill and furnished the roof boards."

Oliver Culver



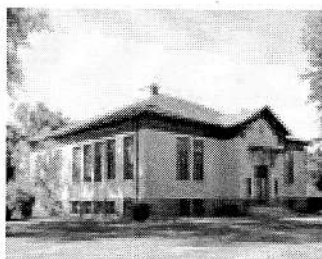
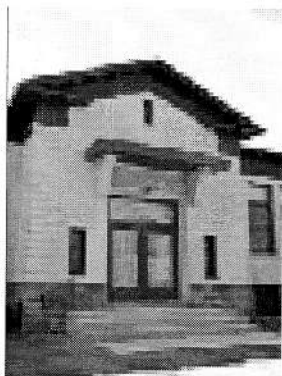
Four Schools at the Indian Landing

Compiled by Mary Jo Lanphear and Elizabeth Brayer

The year was 1802. The five-year-old community of Tryon at the Indian Landing at the headwaters of Irondequoit Bay had no school. The closest one was in Pittsford. So as the 24-year-old Oliver Culver later wrote, "We clubbed together and built a school house of logs and hired a man named Turner, who was clerk in the store of Tryon & Co., to teach school. I wanted to go to school, so for my part I got logs to a saw mill and furnished the roof boards."¹

Culver, a native of Windsor CT, had been a regular visitor to what in 1814 became Brighton. In 1796, at the age of 18, he started walking from Ticonderoga where he was living to Cleveland where a surveying job was waiting. When Culver was delayed in Schenectady waiting for a lake vessel, he wandered on to Irondequoit Bay where, for the month of March 1796 he hunted and fished and spent time with the one settled family in the area of the bay outlet—the Asa Dunbars. Culver and his friends Amos and Sam Spafford continued on to Cleveland and returned to the Indian Landing in the fall. This became the pattern for the next three or four years.

About 1800, Culver found that John and Salmon Tryon had built a store, an ashery, a tavern, as well as tanning, blacksmith, and shoemaking shops. In the spring of 1800 Culver bought 105 acres in Northfield (after 1814 Brighton, and after 1905 Rochester) at \$3 an acre. Settling into the area, he planted wheat, helped to build and run a sawmill, hunted and trapped, and ran the sawmill. It was then that Culver and other families that lived at the Landing became concerned that there was no school closer than Pittsford and built the first landing school.



Brighton School Districts #6 and #7

Mary Jo Lanphear, Town of Brighton Historian, suggests that "after the collapse of the Tryon community and the gradual dispersal of its residents, children in need of education may have attended school in a building on the Kelly farm near the corner of Kelly [now Landing] Road and Kelly Park [now Cloverland Drive.] The Kelly farm school was part of District #6 which included Brighton, Pittsford, and Penfield."

There were ten school districts in the town of Brighton when the large District # 6 was established in 1815 and Allen's Creek School erected on property on which it stands in the present day. Half of the district was in Pittsford and half in Brighton. Later the district would include the Holland Settlement in an area that was formerly Brighton Village but since 1905 has been part of the northeast section of the city.

According to Mary Jo Lanphear, in April of 1870 at a District #6 school board meeting, a committee of residents of the northeast part of Brighton petitioned the board to establish a separate school district north of the Marshfield Parsons estate (now Country Club of Rochester). The vote was close—eighteen-to-sixteen favored the proposal.² By November of 1870 school officials were in negotiation with the heirs of Barnabas Curtis for the purchase of one-half acre of land near the corner of Landing and Penfield Roads for \$175.³ The new Brighton #7 district built a school on the Curtis property but evidently forty years later there was a need for a larger structure. Dryer & Dryer architects were hired for the project which was almost complete when the new building burned in 1910.

Three years later, the district arranged another bond issuance for a building erected in 1914. The fire in

the 1910 building destroyed all school records to that point. The school grew from 109 pupils in 1925 to 160 in 1931.⁴ In 1932 school officials proposed the purchase of land at the corner of Kelly Park and Landing Road for a new school but this was defeated by seventy votes. About this time a four-classroom, frame addition was added to the north side of the cement block school. In 1934 District #7 received its present name, Indian Landing School.

By 1942 there were 314 students with an additional 100 attending high school. A house at 858 Landing Road was purchased to be used as a kindergarten and classroom but it didn't alleviate for long the pressure of a growing school age population. The post-World War II baby boom necessitated the purchase of land at the corner of Landing and Forest Hills Road and the construction of yet another new school. Opened in the spring of 1949 it housed 600 pupils in kindergarten through eighth grade.

With no need for the old building, the district sold it and the surrounding three and one-half acres to Trinity Reformed Church, a congregation established in 1886, formerly located on Scio Street in Rochester. By 1963, the old wooden addition was no longer adequate for worship and plans were drawn up for the present brick church. The old school was renovated to serve as the education wing.⁵

In 1953, Brighton High School would no longer accept students from the outlying districts in Brighton. Faced with the prospect of building a high school or annexing the district to Penfield, the latter option was approved by district residents.

² Orsamus Turner, *Pioneer History of the Phelps & Gorham Purchase*, page 428

³ Henry H. Kingston Jr., "History of Allen's Creek School"

⁴ Monroe County deeds, Liber 240, page 98

⁵ Keople

⁶ Rochester Times-Union, 13 May 1963, page 26

Memories of My Teaching Days at the Kelly Road School*

as told by Miss Frances Corkhill

78 Parce Avenue, Fairport, NY

February 12, 1949

I taught at Brighton No.7 School from 1900 to 1905. When I came in 1900, it was the first year they had two teachers and the day I arrived the school was not ready to open as there was still work to be done on the new room. I had come by train, taking my wheel on the train, then riding my wheel to the school, carrying my grip with me. Most of the children must have known the school was not to open on that day because only one little, skinny tike was there—the first child I met—Jim Tobin, quick and bright. He said, "Oh, it's too bad they didn't let you know and you are all packed up and ready to begin." School opened a week late.

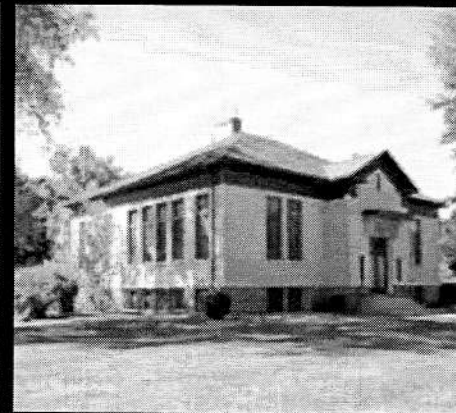
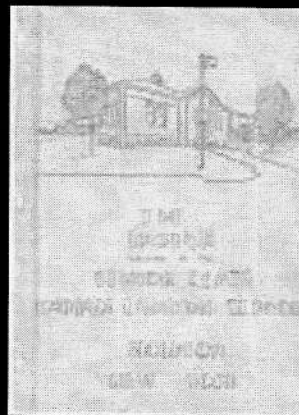
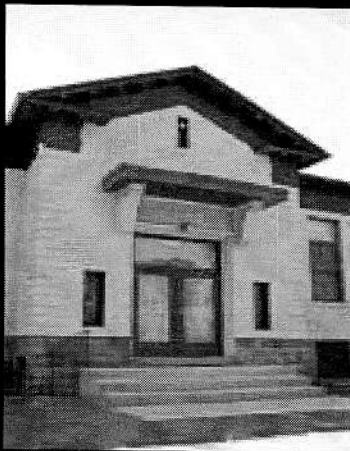
I used to go back and forth by train, taking my bicycle with me and riding it from the train to school, etc., in the early fall and spring months, but in the winter I had to board in the neighborhood. . . .

The other teacher that first year was William Slater; he had the four older grades and I had the four younger with between 40 and 50 pupils. We had four weeks more of school than the older group in the spring, I believe so that the older youngsters could work on the farms. It was all farmland along Penfield Road with houses far apart—and the same along Kelly Road. There were no houses between the railroad and East Avenue along Penfield Road—a very lonesome stretch. There was a nursery there, however, and there were two houses on East Avenue on either corner of Penfield Road.

The schoolhouse was made of clapboards and was light brown in color the year I taught there. . . .

Our school hours were from 9:00 to 12:00 and 1:00 to 4:00. The day started with roll call; the teacher had to keep track of all absences and tardinesses and report them to the truant officer. . . . James A. Harris was school commissioner and used to visit my classes. His position was like what is called district superintendent now but he had all of Monroe County this side of the river, covering nine towns. After roll call, we had reading classes and arithmetic or number work, as we called it. In the afternoon, we had some geography, some language work and spelling and maybe more reading. They were good children.

* Kelly Road is now Landing Road



The cement block school that was built in 1914 and named Indian Landing in 1934, remained the District #7 School until the post-World War II baby boom necessitated the purchase of land at the corner of Landing and Forest Hills Road and the construction of yet another new school. Opened in the spring of 1949 it housed 600 pupils in kindergarten through eighth grade.

The Class of 1944, whose yearbook pages are reproduced on these two pages, was a World War II class—one of the last. The paper used for its pages was inferior and the printing

method was a mimeograph machine. Fortunately the photographs had good Kodak reproduction. Sheldon Brayer was editor-in-chief. Long time Pittsford Town Attorney Jim Reed was class president; This is his yearbook we reproduce here, courtesy of his daughter, Diane Reed Hilbert of Nesconset, NY. An honor roll of former students then serving in far-flung theaters of war covers graduation years 1933 through 1941. Bob Hershey, son of Donald Hershey whose architectural career will be the subject of the January 2013 annual meeting of Historic Brighton, was a member of the class.

The Class of 1944

Note the even length of skirts and Bobby-Sox



"These 29 boys and girls have climbed nine hard rungs on the ladder of knowledge"

[illegible][illegible]

Faculty

The Year Book

This, our own year book, portrays life at Indian Landing School. Its constitution may be somewhat inferior to those of former years because of the difficulty in obtaining materials during a war, but its representation of the work of the Class of 1944 will bring back many happy memories in the years to come.

We wish to give credit to the following people:

Sheldon Brayer, Editor-in-Chief
Joan Quinton, Assistant Editor

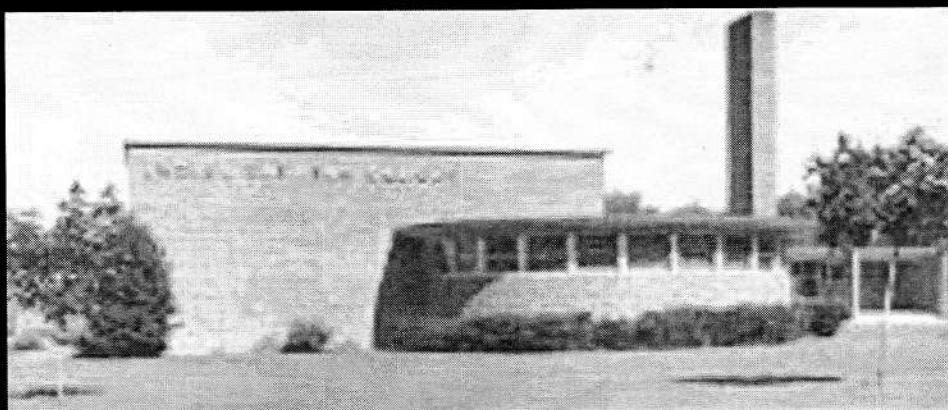
Our Orchestra

Through out the year Miss Ward has directed our little orchestra. Several times we have had opportunities to play with the Allen Creek School orchestra. In future years we hope that the group will increase in size and ability.

Members of the orchestra from the Class of '44 were:
Margaret Potter-Piano, Shirley Horne-Flute, Nancy
Frank-Drum.

Senior girls and boys photographed separately

Opened in the spring of 1949 the present school housed 600 pupils in kindergarten through eighth grade.



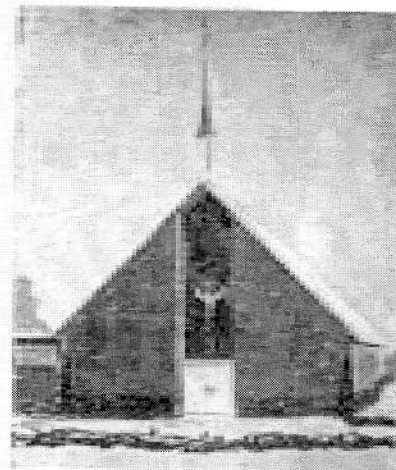
And the old school became a church

26 May 13, 1963



BEFORE REFORMED CHURCH will remodel the former Indian Landing School at left, which it has used

as a sanctuary. Back left classroom and rear the wooden wing, at right the new stone sanctuary.



SANCTUARY—This is an architect's sketch of the new building at the right. It will cost about \$100,000.

New Look at Old Indian Landing School

After the new school opened in 1949, Trinity Reformed Church took over the 1914 building, demolished the wooden addition and built a new sanctuary designed by Carl F. W. Kaelber Jr. with iron steeple by Walter Cassebeer. Clip is from the Brighton Pittsford Post of May 13, 1963.

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These ADALAKE Windows will
PAY FOR THEMSELVES!

Adalake Windows in the new Indian Landing School at Brighton, N.Y., will ultimately pay for themselves by eliminating maintenance costs. They require no painting, no sandblasting, less cleaning, and their smooth, modern good looks and smooth operation will last as long as the building itself.

Adalake Windows have the combination of weatherable, modern design and advanced technical glass that outdoor windows are infamous and always tear-up exposed. Adalake Windows prove warm, cool, quiet, and so much more!

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Manufactured in U.S.A. • 600 WEST 100TH ST. • NEW YORK • CHICAGO

The new school was featured in
ads



1952



8

Senator Kenneth Keating was Brighton's only United States senator. Before becoming a senator, Keating was a congressman in the House of Representatives from Brighton. Here he greets a Girl Scout Troop of mostly students from Indian Landing School (with a few from parochial schools). Keating started the tradition of presenting visitors with a flag that had been flown over the capital; Congressman Frank Horton continued the tradition. The leader was Jean Fulton; the scouts met at her house on Kimbark Rd.

HISTORIC BRIGHTON

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SALON I, II & III Booklets are now available for purchase.

SALON I - Brighton's Country Homes and Their Architects

Features homes designed by Ward Wellington Ward, Claude Bragdon, Gordon & Kaelber,

J. Foster Warner, and Carl Traver.

(Made possible by a grant from the State of New York)



SALON II - The Dryer Collection

Features the designs of Brighton architects Jay Fay, Otis W. Dryer, and Harwood Dryer

SALON III - Brighton's Notable Architects

Leon Stern, James B. Arnold, and Herbert Stern

(Made possible by a grant from the Genesee Country Antique Dealers' Association)



\$10 per copy

Proceeds will go into Historic Brighton's publishing fund

Supply is limited