



HISTORIC BRIGHTON

Newsletter and Journal

Exploring our Town's history and educating our community about Brighton's past.

Volume 24, No. 1

www.historicbrighton.org

Winter 2023

Historic Brighton Winter Event:

“Relatively Speaking” - A Genealogy Class

Historic Brighton welcomes you to a free program presented by **Kory Yerkes** at **2:00 PM** on **Sunday January 29, 2023** at the **Brighton Memorial Library Community Room, 2300 Elmwood Avenue**

“*Relatively Speaking*” - *A Genealogy Class* will help you learn how to use the library and internet resources including Ancestry.com, Heritage Quest, and FamilySearch.org to find long lost relatives. The presentation will include how to access the Democrat & Chronicle database, other historical newspapers of the Rochester Region, and additional resources that are available out in the world. Ms. Yerkes will welcome questions from the audience following the presentation.

About the Speaker: Kory Yerkes is in the Media, Network, and Volunteer Services Manager of the Brighton Library, and is a successful amateur genealogist



Cover Image: Genealogical Tree. . . [No Date Recorded on Shelflist Card] Photograph. <https://www.loc.gov/item/2004667292/>.

A WINTER CELEBRATION IN 1822 - THE STORY OF CHARLOTTE HANFORD

By Mary Jo Lanphear, Town of Brighton Historian

In early February of 1822, Charlotte Hanford received an invitation to a ball. Only sixteen years old, she was visiting her brother, George, at his home in Rochester. George was a coach maker on State Street near Fitzhugh Street. Charlotte and George were the children of Gershom and Sally Hayes Hanford of Kortright in Delaware County.

Charlotte may have been invited to stay with her brother to help with what the 1820 census indicates were six little boys between the ages of five and ten. Charlotte would have been accompanied on her journey by a family member, her young age and the long distance requiring a traveling companion.

The Hanford house in Kortright was a good distance from the Erie Canal - sixty miles from Kortright to Mohawk and fifty miles from Kortright to Fort Plain and St. Johnsville, all Erie Canal ports, but their location on the newly-completed eastern section of the canal would have afforded a shorter and more comfortable trip than a totally overland route. The middle section from the Seneca River near Montezuma to the Genesee River wasn't completed until 1822 so perhaps the western portion of Charlotte's journey was by wagon or stagecoach.

A young woman living among a population of young, energetic men

in a boom town would have received many invitations to social events so it is no wonder that "Miss Hanford's company" was requested at Culver's Assembly-Room in Brighton for a ball on February 22.

Oliver Culver built a large house in the woods near the corner of what is now East Avenue and Culver Road in 1816. According to Claude F. Bragdon the Culver house was originally a tavern. "This fact accounts for some peculiarities of its arrangement and construction; the second floor of the main part being principally given over to one large room, the ball room, which extends the entire length of the front of the house, with nine windows, facing in three directions, and two fireplaces, one on each side of the entrance. The ceiling is high and domed, and the floor sets clear of the joists so as to make it springy for the dancers and to facilitate the execution of 'pigeon-wings' which were a principal feature of old-time dances."¹

The "pigeon wing" mentioned by Bragdon was a dance step that involved jumping into the air while clicking one's heels together, the object being to produce the most clicks before landing. Culver's Assembly-Room was that second-floor ballroom.

The celebration at Oliver Culver's was commemorating the 90th birthday of George Washington. The first

celebration of George Washington's birthday was in 1778 at Valley Forge. Six years later a group of men gathered in New York City for dinner and speeches in honor of Washington. This became a yearly event even though Washington himself had concerns about the celebrations becoming too political so by 1793 they ceased. Even after Washington's death in 1799 there was a sense that his birthday could not be commemorated without political overtones. Before leaving Philadelphia for the District of Columbia, however, Congress adopted a resolution to observe February 22 throughout the country as a day to express popular esteem for the first president. By 1822 and the dedication in New York City of a statue of Washington, February 22 had become a day to give orations and toasts, to illuminate buildings, and to hold grand balls.

Among the young men present at the 1822 Washington's birthday ball at Culver's Tavern was William Tremper Cuyler. Described as handsome in appearance and tall, with auburn hair and blue eyes, he was twenty years old and newly-arrived in Brighton where he operated a carriage works on East Main Street. After a two-year courtship, he married Charlotte Hanford on February 5, 1824. For a few years after his marriage, William Cuyler was in business with his brother-in-law, George Hanford, but in 1830 he decided to purchase a large estate, Woodlands, in Leicester, Livingston

1) Claude F. Bragdon, *Colonial Work in the Genesee Valley* (The Georgian Period, by William Rotch Ware, 1923, Volume 1, p. 37)

Additional sources:

-Ontario County and Monroe County deeds

-U.S. census

-“Architecture in Rochester” in *Rochester Historical Society Volume XI* p. 289.

-*Genealogical and Family History of Southern New York and the Hudson River Valley*, edited by Cuyler Reynolds, 1914.

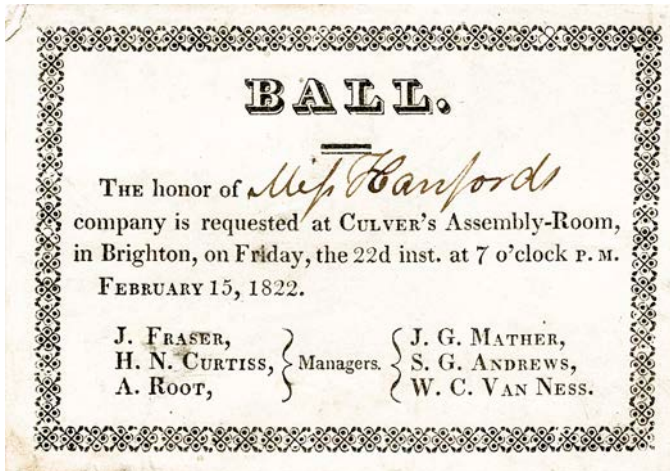
County, selling his Brighton property to George Hanford. The village of Cuylerville in the town of Leicester is his namesake.

William and Charlotte Cuyler had four children between 1824 and 1831. A month after the birth of a daughter,

Charlotte died on April 12, 1831. She was twenty-five years old. William married in 1837 Nancy Bancker Stewart. After Nancy's death in 1848, he married Anna DePeyster Douw. Woodlands burned to the ground in 1857.

The invitation pictured is small, only about three and a half by two and a half inches, but how much history it conveys!

—HB—



Scan of Miss Hanford's invitation to the 1822 celebration of George Washington's birthday, hosted at the Culver Assembly Room, shown at approximately actual size



Historic photo of the Oliver Culver mansion circa 1975, from "Architecture and Architects of Rochester, NY" by Carl and Ann Schmidt

Historic Brighton acknowledges with gratitude:



ARCHIVAL PRINTING &
CUSTOM FRAMING

Rheytchul Kimmel: Preservation Framers/Owner

lumierephoto.com

(585) 461-4447 | @100lumierephoto

100 College Avenue | Rochester, NY 14607

for their generous support and sponsorship of this issue of the Historic Brighton Journal

HISTORIC BRIGHTON IS GRATEFUL FOR THE STEADFAST SUPPORT OF OUR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

**You may join Historic Brighton or renew your membership by going to
www.historicbrighton.org and make your tax-deductible membership donation via PayPal**

**If you wish to pay by check,
our address is:**

**Historic Brighton
P.O. Box 18525
Rochester, NY 14618**

Membership Categories:

Individual/Family \$25	Patron \$50
Club/Organization \$35	Business \$75
Corporate/Newsletter Sponsor \$250	

MERCHANTS OF MONROE - B. FORMAN'S DEPARTMENT STORE

By Ray Tierney III

This installment of the Merchants of Monroe series will feature B. Forman's department store and its expansion into Brighton. Forman's is a very familiar name from Rochester's golden age of department stores and from its role in the development of Midtown Plaza. Their Monroe Avenue location is remembered by many as it was unique within the Forman's chain of 13 stores. There are many things that set Forman's apart from other department stores of the era.

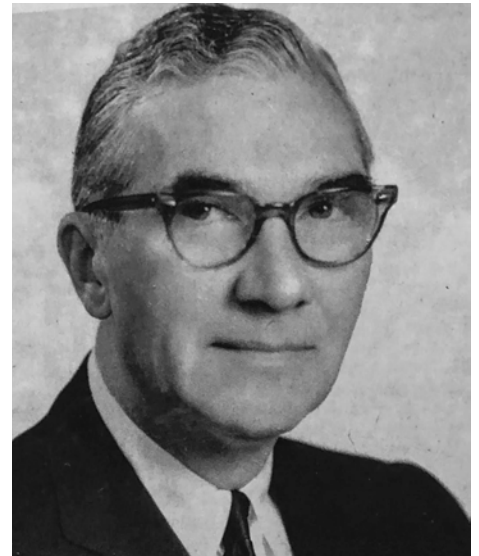
Forman's was opened in 1911 at 50 South Clinton Avenue by Benjamin Forman. It specialized in women's fashion and soon after in 1912 it expanded into what would become part of the footprint of Midtown Plaza 50 years later. The final addition to the store occurred in 1951, after which the company was ready to expand to the suburbs. Upon the passing of founder Benjamin Forman in 1951, the store was taken over by his oldest son John. Soon after, in 1953, John passed leaving control of the store to his younger brother Maurice. That was where the Brighton connection began.

Soon after Maurice assumed control he began to implement a plan to further the Forman's brand. His first expansion store was on Monroe Ave at the southwest corner of Glen Ellen Way and Monroe Avenue. It was a specialty shop catering to young people. The store opened in 1953 in the building now housing Brighton Securities. The store was an extension of the "Young World" shop featured in the flagship store. It was to thrive until 1968 when it was closed upon the opening of the Pittsford Plaza store. That was yet another instance of the pull of the

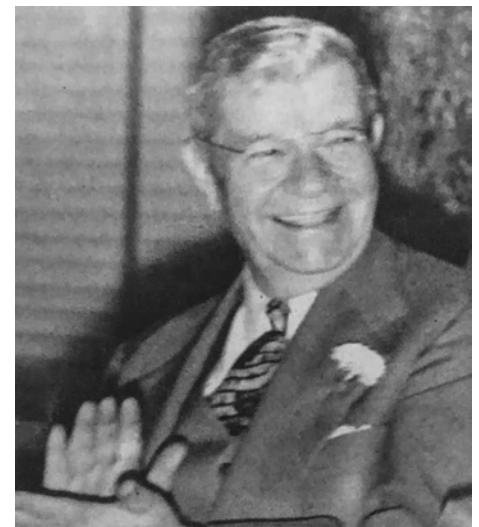
retail juggernaut developing just over the Brighton border on Monroe Avenue. The Brighton-Pittsford Post ran a supplement announcing that latest and largest expansion of the Forman's chain. In that feature were the photos of Benjamin and Maurice that accompany this article (at right).

Both Benjamin and Maurice were Brighton residents and contributed greatly to the community. In 1931, Benjamin did something very important to protect the heritage of Brighton and early Rochester. A road development project threatened the "Council Rock," and it needed to be relocated. The history of the Council Rock dated back to a time when Native Americans, Brighton's first residents, gathered at the rock for their council meetings. It was in the same vicinity that in 1814 the Town of Brighton held its organizational meeting in the still-existing Stone-Tolan House. Knowing of that heritage, Benjamin (who lived across from the Stone Tolan House) had the stone moved from the corner of East Avenue and Clover Street to the front of his house at 2351 East Avenue safely out of harm's way. He was known for his deep interest and charitable giving throughout the community, although he often chose to keep those gifts known only to himself.

While exploring the Democrat & Chronicle newspapers from the 1950s, I discovered B. Forman's connection to Brighton Little League. Forman's sponsored team was featured in the Democrat & Chronicle when they won the championship in 1956. It is so easy to get caught up in items that pique your interest and that's how I came to include Brighton Little



Maurice Forman, from Brighton-Pittsford Post c. 1953



Benjamin Forman, from Brighton-Pittsford Post c. 1953

League in this story. While researching the B. Forman's team, I noticed a name that I recognized. It seems that the brother of one of my "Super Duper" associates (David Sloman) was quite the young ball player. David's brother Jud Sloman, who had starred in the championship game from the year before, was enjoying an even better year in 1957 as evidenced by the included clipping. I decided to send it to my friend Dave so he too could enjoy a blast from the past. Dave Sloman incidentally was the

supervising manager the night of the 12 Corners fire in February of 1974. He messaged me back that I had made his day and that's enough for me to continue being distracted while researching these articles.

Benjamin's entrepreneurship and philanthropic traits very noticeably passed to his son Maurice. He succeeded to the presidency of Forman's at a very critical time. One of his initial tasks was opening their first suburban store on Monroe Ave as noted previously. While exploring Forman's D&C advertisements, I found one of particular note. In a December 4, 1956 Brighton Young World holiday ad, I noticed that the world famous F.A.O. Schwarz toys for girls and boys would be featured at the store. That's especially of interest as 1956 is the year that Macy's would have a "Toys R Us" embedded within their stores. On a lighter and more personal note, my sister Debbie remembers the lollipop tree that greeted children upon entering. The suckers came with loop handles that were a recent safety innovation. She also recalls that my mother especially liked the store because of the wide selection of young girls' clothes and accessories. Mom also liked the convenience of taking my four sisters there rather than going to the downtown store.

Of course the best example of Maurice's entrepreneurship was his role in the 1962 opening of Midtown Plaza. His partnership with his close competitor McCurdy's accomplished something very unique and groundbreaking. Working with the City of Rochester, he and Gilbert McCurdy opened the first indoor urban mall in the country.

Maurice also followed in his father's philanthropic footsteps "quietly"

supporting many local charities. He was very involved with Rochester Institute of Technology and was instrumental in moving the school from its downtown Rochester location to its current campus in Henrietta. In his NY Times obituary it was noted that he was a member of the Federal Reserve Board of NYC. That appointment remains today as one of the most important positions within the U.S. Treasury Department.

Benjamin and Maurice Forman are fitting inclusions into this series of the Merchants of Monroe as the history of their "Young World" store provides us a glimpse into mid 20th Century retailing.

HB

B. Forman Team, Kiwanis Nine Win

The B. Forman team of Brighton Little League won its 14th consecutive game yesterday, defeating Empire Electric, 10 to 1, behind the two-hit pitching of Jud Sloman. Sloman struck out 12 and had two of his team's nine hits.

Kiwanis beat First Federal, 13 to 1, in the only other Little League game of the day. Don & Bob's defeated DuBois Press, 10 to 2, in a Babe Ruth League game.

The B. Formans, playoff champs last year, are undefeated since midseason of 1956. They lost their first seven games last year.

1957 D&C Clipping featuring Forman's team win against Empire Electric

B. Forman Co.
Also at Forman's Young World*, Brighton

world-famous F.A.O. Schwarz
toys for girls and boys

AIRCRAFT CARRIER AND AIRPLANES
Sturdy wooden hull with overhanging natural wooden 26" deck. She can be shoved, pulled, knocked about, yet still be ship-shape!
An F.A.O. Schwarz exclusive for 3 to 6-year-olds. With 6 airplanes. (Page 55, B 10-12) 7.50

CLOWN BEAN BAG BOARD
F. A. O. Schwarz exclusive for 5-year-olds and up. Bean bag game with new clown face painted on 18x28" wooden frame. 6 numbered holes with netted backs to toss bags into. With hinged wooden legs to stand on table or floor to keep board at slant. (Page 42, H 11-4) 9.50

DELUXE PUZZLE CHEST
Perplexing brain teasers to challenge all! Collection of 16 tricks, all with directions! No two puzzles are of same type! Some of metal, others plastic, wood, cardboard. (Page 37, E 3-105) 6.00

PRO HOCKEY GAME
Imported party game takes dexterity and fast reactions to post winning score! Realistically decorated rink (35"x16") set into 4" high wooden frame. Players manipulate knobs to move players. 6 sets of figures. (Page 40, C 42-30) 14.95

THESE TOYS AT FORMAN'S FOURTH FLOOR OR YOUNG WORLD*, BRIGHTON OR ORDER FROM OUR F.A.O. SCHWARZ CATALOG.

Open a charge account now at Forman's
6 months to pay with our P.B.A.* plan

1956 Democrat & Chronicle ad demonstrating the Forman's inclusion of F.A.O. Schwarz toys

Right: Democrat & Chronicle clipping from B. Forman's Little League championship victory in 1956

Below: Although no photos of the Monroe Avenue (Brighton) location can be found at this time, the below image is the original downtown location of B. Forman's department store at 50 Clinton Avenue c. 1930, complete with Christmas decor overhanging the street; Photos from Rochester Public Library collection, but also featured on the Rochester Subway website

Forman Team Wins Brighton Little Crown

Benedict's final inning single scored Slack with the winning run as B. Forman nipped Empires, 3-2, yesterday and annexed the Brighton Town Little League title.

Empire opened the scoring in the third when Hanford doubled home Dvorkin. Mathew's homer in the fourth tied the score and Forman grabbed the lead in this frame as Sloman's single set up another score.

Douglas crossed the plate for Empire in the fifth to tie it up again until Benedict's rap produced the clincher.

B. Forman ended the campaign with a rush after losing seven games as the season got under way. The champs posted a record of 12 wins, 7 losses and a tie.

B. Forman	000	201	3	5	1
Empire	001	010	2	3	1

R. Forman; Norris and Heumann; Empire: Nolte and Heribberger.

OPPONENTS—Jimmy Nolte, left, of the Empires and David Norris of B. Forman were opposing pitchers in yesterday's Brighton Little League final playoff game. B. Formans edged the Empires, 3-2, on Norris' 3-hitter.

22 Ships of Food



TURK'S GARDEN

By Marjorie Searl

Brighton is a town of gardens, but few - perhaps only one - are tributes to the friendship between immigrants who settled here. This beautiful story celebrates Turk Morel, from Turkey, and his friends Rachid and Louise Messalti from Algeria and Rwanda, respectively.

Rachid and Louise own the 7-Eleven at the corner of Elmwood and South Clinton Avenues. How many of us have driven by or stopped there, noticing the unusually beautiful garden that blooms from Spring through Fall, brightening our commute or our carpool route or our errand-running? Have you ever wondered about the story behind the garden? Here is that story, thanks to Turk's wife BJ Mann.

Turk drove a school bus for the First Student bus company. He drove for 15 years, getting up early to make sure that kids got to their schools on time and safely. He developed the pattern of stopping at the 7-Eleven before 5 am, where he greeted all the night and morning people. As the gathering became more of a social occasion, they started gathering at 4:30 AM to have more time to talk and joke. Brighton police, hospital workers and others joined them.

Turk continued the gatherings over summer and school breaks. He brought Gracie, his and BJ's black Labrador, with him after morning walks and she was beloved by all. Turk loved the coffee at the 7-Eleven; thought it was the best in town because it was made fresh so frequently. He admired Rachid, who helped so many, including hiring

homeless people who needed jobs. Turk and Rachid helped an RIT student get to school by giving him a bike. Turk was well-known for his mechanical abilities and would help fix things there (and all over town!), and even worked behind the counter when needed. Rachid and Louise's daughter Djedjiga called Turk her "Papa," and like a good grandpa he drove the outstanding Brighton High School soccer player to soccer practice.

When Rachid's mother died, Turk started the garden by the sidewalk by planting a hibiscus tree. Before that, they planted vegetables and sunflowers together. Some of you may remember seeing vegetables growing there!

Turk Morel was born in 1947 in Samsun, Turkey, and served as an airplane mechanic in the Turkish Air Force. He came to the United States in 1979, where he first lived in a cabin in Campbell, New York before moving to Rochester after he and BJ married. He was an artist, a beekeeper, a builder, a golfer, and a friend to all. He died of a brain tumor on February 27, 2021. During his illness, someone from Rachid and Louise's family visited every single day. The garden they planted together lives on as a symbol of the love of people who began as strangers but who became like family. In BJ's words, "they made people and seeds grow with friendship and love."

"Turk's Garden" was dedicated on August 29, 2021. At the dedication, Rachid's daughter said these words:

"The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away."
— Pablo Picasso
When I first saw this quote my mind went immediately to Turk. He was the epitome of generosity: always eager to help and to give. Today we stand in a garden created in his memory. The vibrant colors of the zinnias, roses and marigold shine as brightly and with as much warmth as his soul once did. While we have taken time to mourn his loss, we must also take the time to celebrate and cherish the wonderful memories he has left us with. May he rest in peace among the angels."

—Djedjiga (Rachid's daughter) age 15, dedication for Turk's Garden ceremony on August 29, 2021

Brighton is most fortunate to have this magnificent and meaningful garden at a busy and otherwise ordinary intersection. Stop by, be sure to watch for the blooms in Springtime and have a cup of coffee with Rachid and Louise in Turk's memory.

—HB—



Additional photos of Turk's Garden may be found on the back cover of this issue.

TURK'S GARDEN

Photos courtesy of BJ Mann

