

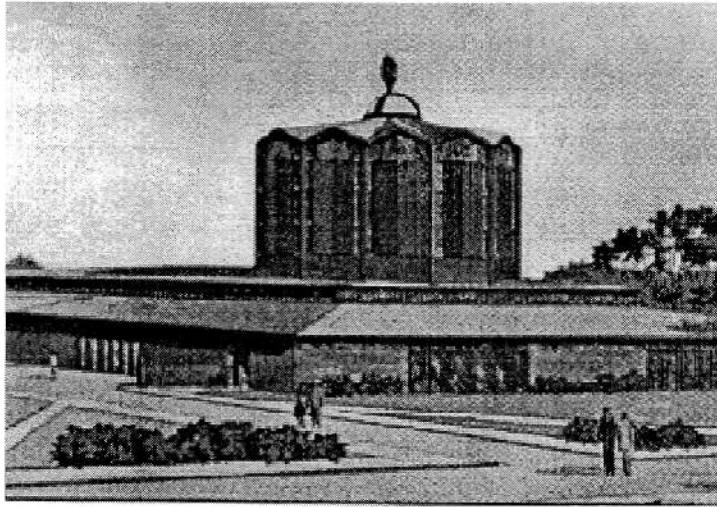
HISTORIC BRIGHTON NEWS

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BRIGHTON'S TEMPLE B'RITH KODESH WAS DESIGNED BY FAMOUS ARCHITECT PIETRO BELLUSCHI



Temple B'rith Kodesh

By Annette Satloff

Situated at 2131 Elmwood Avenue, well back from the noise and traffic of the street, sits Temple B'rith Kodesh. This is the house of worship for Rochester's reform Jewish population. Nationally known architect Pietro Belluschi designed the building. The cornerstone was laid on June 11, 1962 and the congregation transferred out of the old Gibbs Street Temple to the Elmwood Avenue sanctuary on October 18, 1962.

With a large expanse of landscape and lawn preceding it, the Belluschi-designed synagogue sets a restrained and unpretentious silhouette. Pietro Belluschi was the chairman of the department of architecture at MIT when he served as the architect of the TBK building. He was in mid career, having established himself for decades as an important architect in Portland, Oregon. At around the time he was

working at TBK he also designed the Pan American Building in NYC (1963), the Julliard School for Performing Arts, NYC (1963-69), and Portsmouth Abbey, Portsmouth, RI (1957-60)

From Elmwood Avenue, one sees a low, long horizontal roofline and sets of horizontally placed windows. Vertical strips of dark brown wood complete the outside walls. This outline continues around the building and forms the perimeter that houses the offices, library, social hall, museum, religious school, etc. Set inside, as a circle

Continued on page 2

HISTORIC BRIGHTON TO MEET MONDAY, OCTOBER 21

7:00 PM

**Brighton Town Hall
Downstairs Meeting Room**



The Wallace-Schilling house, Clinton Avenue.

Cynthia Howk, architectural research co-ordinator for the Landmark Society of Western New York, is our speaker. Her topic: "**Discover Brighton— 200 Years of Brighton Architecture.**"

Come and learn about the architecture in your backyard. Discover the wealth and variety of architectural styles in our town. Ms. Howk will use slides and information that resulted from her research for the Brighton Historic Preservation Commission. She will include Brighton buildings from the past to the present.

NEW FEATURE: BRIGHTON HISTORY FOR YOUNGER READERS, PAGE 8

TEMPLE B'RITH KODESH *CONTINUED*

in the square, is the most exciting element in the synagogue—the twelve-sided dome looming high above the building. The grandeur of the design is best appreciated inside the sanctuary, where the pews, both ground level and balcony, are located in the space formed from the 65-foot dome.

In Jewish history, the first tabernacle in the wilderness was a “tent of meeting.” It was placed at the center of the encampment, and grouped around that sanctuary in a balanced arrangement were the Twelve Tribes. The TBK dome, therefore, is a link with the very beginnings of Jewish history. An ancient idea in Judaism is that the height of the synagogue evokes an aspiration for a higher level of existence on earth. The sanctuary should soar, but be bound to the earth.

“For Belluschi, the design of a house of worship brought new challenges. Beyond the usual site, budget, and operational requirements, there was the subtler problem of analyzing the typically unarticulated but deeply felt emotional needs of his clients, who came from cultural traditions and religious backgrounds different from his own. The problem was how to reconcile the modernist demand for a new, innovative architecture born of contemporary circumstances, materials, and technology with his congregation’s need for a recognizably familiar and in that sense traditional, building.”¹ Besides his skill as an architect, Belluschi had an enormous skill in addressing first and foremost, the use for which the building was intended. Belluschi created more than 1000 buildings during his working years, many of them ritual places of worship. The design of the tower is also seen in Temple Israel, Swamscott, MA.

Inside the main sanctuary, attention is focused immediately on the ark, which houses the Torah. Created by Louise Kaish, the ark consists of 18 very large bronze panels welded together. Each cast is an artistic interpretation of biblical excerpts. It is in symbolic form the words of patriarchs and prophets in their continuing dialogue with God. She combines the gestured qualities of abstract expressionism with figurative content. There are sharp cuts and deep incisions. Light advances and recedes and hides and reveals wings of angels, the

leaf of a plant, the anguished face. It is a massive work. Louise Kaish received her MFA at Syracuse in 1951 and was only in her thirties when she received the commission to create the *Ark Of Revelation* for the Temple B'rith Kodesh

Located inside TBK is another smaller sanctuary called the Benjamin Goldstein Memorial Chapel. A more intimate space, it is used for religious school services as well as for memorial services. The ark for this sanctuary was designed by Richard E. Filipowsky, at that time a professor of art at MIT. It is made from welded steel. There is a long tradition in Judaism that the sanctuary should be a symbol of the universe. Filipowsky says: “My concept of the ark sculpture can be described as my wish to convey the unfolding firmament, the expanding universe. Its visual character at first glance appears to be one of randomness, yet after long viewing, a subtle order reveals itself.”

The various courtyards and garden wall enclosures provide a softening accent against the strong horizontals and verticals of the buildings. The gardens contain sculptures as well as huge rocks from the Holy Land. The religious school and the recently built Spector building sit to the left of the sanctuary and main building.

At one time, the school and main building were not contiguous. From Elmwood Avenue you now notice an airy yet enclosed pavilion, connecting the two buildings. It is a beautiful space, which houses the Lewis Collection of 200 Chanukiot and menorot. The architectural firm of Dave Hanlon, Canandaigua, designed the connection. It was completed and dedicated in December 2001.

Temple B'rith Kodesh has had a Rochester presence since the early 1800's. Previous to the 1961 site on Elmwood Avenue, the congregation worshiped at a synagogue on Gibbs Street. The building has been demolished. The congregation felt it had outlived its usefulness as it was too small for the growing congregation and its main elements, although beautiful, were dingy and beyond repair.

The history of TBK is also the history of Rochester, where prominent local leaders became national or international figures. Such is the case of Rabbi Philip Bernstein. He was the chief rabbi of

TEMPLE B'RITH KODESH

TBK for 46 years. In December 1974, the University of Rochester inaugurated the Philip S. Bernstein Chair in Judaic Studies. The first holder of the chair, fittingly, was Abraham Karp, long-time rabbi of Rochester's largest conservative congregation, Temple Beth-El. He had been Bernstein's rabbinic colleague for almost two decades, and a leading scholar of American Jewish history.² The Bernstein papers, greatly drawn around World War II and Bernstein's commission as Special Advisor to the U.S. Army on Jewish Affairs, are housed at the University of Rochester, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections. Sophy Bernstein, his widow, died in Rochester quite recently, at the age of 95. She was active in establishing the TBK Museum.

When you come to visit Temple B'rith Kodesh, do not fail to visit the Museum that sits to the right of the portico entrance. It was established more than 45 years ago with gifts from personal collections. It has grown through donations and it is now extensive enough to put on three to four different shows per year. Some of the holdings are unique and the Museum Committee is currently thoroughly researching many objects.

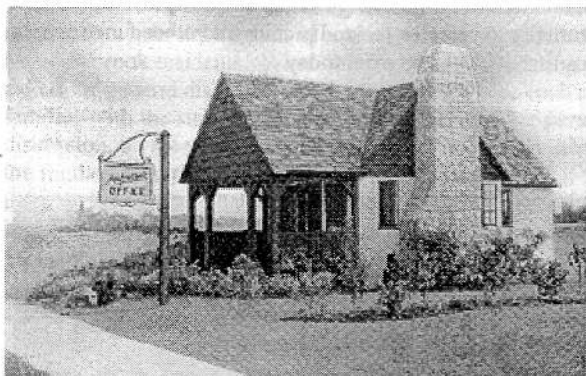
For a tour of the building, call 244-7060 to set up an appointment.

Annette Satloff is Chair of the Temple B'rith Kodesh Museum committee.

¹ *Pietro Belluschi* by Meredith L. Clausen

² *Affirming the Covenant* by Peter Eisenstadt

98 ACRES: THE STORY OF MEADOWBROOK—PART 1



The year 2001 was the 70th anniversary of the Meadowbrook Neighborhood in Brighton. To celebrate that milestone, Robyn Schaefer wrote and compiled a commemorative booklet. This brief excerpt will be followed by more excerpts in future issues of HBN.

By Robyn Schaefer

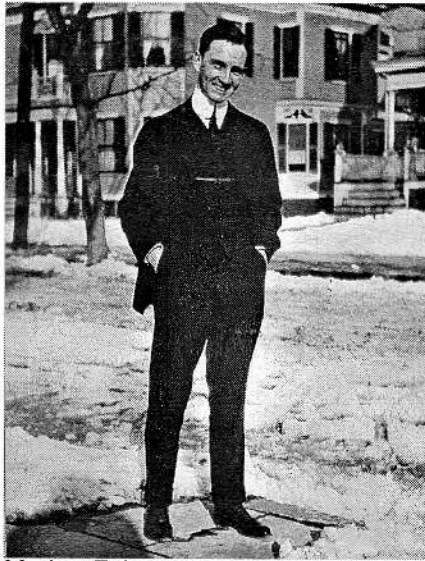
...In an early 1930 aerial photograph of Meadowbrook, one can see two structures that no longer exist. The first, located near the corner of Winton Road and Newton Drive, was the wood-working shop and office of George Long; Mr. Long was the builder of most of the early Meadowbrook's earlier homes. The woodwork for the houses was crafted here. To the right, which was then 15 Newton Drive, was the Meadowbrook Tract office [seen above]. The office was built to resemble one of the

Tudor homes in the area and was attractive in its own right. It was described in the June 1938 Kodak magazine as "a charming bachelor cottage. English style standing on its own landscaped plot, blending perfectly with its surroundings." Here one could find Mr. Dan Fraysier. Mr. Fraysier, who co-coordinated the Meadowbrook homes, was the link between the homeowner and the builder. Any questions the homeowner or homebuilder had were directed to him. He was usually visible throughout the neighborhood, familiarizing himself with new neighbors and the details of the construction of their homes. The only evidence of the tract office (besides the photos) that remains is the fireplace. It is located in the backyard of 475 Newton Place—visible through the overgrowth that conceals it.

In November of 1928, building began on the first houses in Meadowbrook at the eastern end of Avalon Drive and followed northward up Hollywood Ave. The beginnings of this beautiful residential section had a heart-of-the-country appeal to prospective buyers. A visitor to the development once remarked that the houses overlooked a pasturage on one side and an orchard on the other, making it difficult to believe that the center of downtown Rochester was only minutes away by automobile.

Continued on page 7

WAS SOCIAL SECURITY BORN IN BRIGHTON?



Marion Folsom

By Betsy Brayer

UNLIKELY as it seems, the chief architect of the radical new Social Security system developed in the 1930s was not a professor, social worker, or theorist at a New Deal think tank, but a mild-mannered businessman from the state of Georgia and the company called Kodak who lived for many years in Brighton.

The story begins in 1914 when Marion Bayard Folsom was summoned by the dean of the Harvard Business School, from which at age 21 he was about to graduate. (Earlier he had graduated from the University of Georgia at 18.) An interview with George Eastman had been scheduled for the next afternoon at the Hotel Touraine in Boston. The dean was terribly anxious to enlist Eastman's financial support for the business school, which had only been in operation since 1908. Folsom, who up to that moment planned to return to Georgia and enter his father's business, looked up the Eastman Kodak Company in the financial books. "The information was meager, especially when compared with the railroad reports," Folsom recalled in 1968. It was enough to show a prosperous and growing company, but Folsom was surprised to find that Eastman as founder was only listed as treasurer and general manager, not president. Small in comparison with modern corporations it was considered a large concern for 1914 with about 7,000 employees in Rochester and 10,000 worldwide.

In the hotel room the next day, Folsom faced a sixty-year-old "in the prime of health" who told him a little, very little, about the work he wanted Folsom to do and asked very little about the student's courses, interests, or background. But, Folsom recalled, "I was impressed with Mr. Eastman's frank, direct manner and friendly attitude, and with the general brevity of his speech." Folsom himself was a soft-spoken, mild-mannered, almost mousy man of few words and no visible vices. Eastman soon alerted Harvard that "Mr. Folsom has accepted the position I offered him and I shall be glad if you will kindly put in writing what you told me about his record and any information you may have about him." Young Folsom went off to Europe for the summer as planned, but with letters of introduction to the managers of Kodak branches. He started at Kodak in October 1914 at \$100 a month.

Folsom saw little of Eastman for the next three years except for an initial encounter in his "very impressive suite" during which he "suggested I not let it be known he had personally hired me." Folsom honored this agreement until the history of the Harvard Business School was written by a faculty member, divulging "how I was selected for employment by the Kodak firm."

The company Folsom encountered in 1914 was "a simple organization with few titles. The only vice-president was a practicing attorney, Walter S. Hubbell, who was also secretary and general counsel." Top executives handled a wide range of activities with no staffs other than secretaries.

Simple organization notwithstanding, "It was the Kodak Company that formed Folsom," columnist Joseph Alsop concluded in a 1955 article for *The Saturday Evening Post* about the man sometimes called the father of the Social Security system, who was then the new Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare in the Eisenhower Cabinet. Alsop continued: "One must try, therefore, to understand the company in order to understand the man. In particular, one must try to understand the greatest single influence in Folsom's life, George Eastman, whom Folsom to this day always calls 'Mr. Eastman' with a perceptible tone of reverence."

WAS SOCIAL SECURITY BORN IN BRIGHTON?



The Folsom home on Oak Lane in Brighton

During World War I Folsom saw service with the A. E. F., and upon discharge in 1919 was asked to return to Kodak and organize a statistical department. Because undergraduate business schools were being organized in colleges all over the country with few persons with graduate degrees available to teach, he also had offers to join the faculties of Georgia Tech and Emory University. At age 27, he was offered the deanship of a new school at the University of Georgia. But Folsom claimed in 1968 that he "never regretted the decision, although I was sorry to leave the South."

Few corporations had centralized statistical departments but within the year Eastman decided Folsom and his statistics were such a good thing that he invented a title, "probably unique in industry," moved Folsom's office so that it was next to his own, and sent a GE-signed memo around Kodak:

"I have appointed Mr. M. B. Folsom Statistical Secretary to the President, to organize a department in which statistics regarding all phases of the business will be centralized. This department is intended not only to collect statistics for my own use but also to be of assistance to all executives."

Not only was Folsom's job to summarize the voluminous reports Eastman received and to develop monthly graphic charts comparing sales and trends with previous years, but also to chart the attendance at the Eastman Theatre relative to the movie being shown during a particular week, to prepare an organization chart of all the household staff of 900 East Avenue, and if necessary, do battle with Eastman's housekeeper.

In 1921, Rochester and Kodak were hit with a post-war depression. Seebohm Rowntree, British Quaker philanthropist, lectured in Rochester about unemployment insurance. Folsom heard the lecture and discussed it with Eastman who made the extraordinary leap of instructing Folsom to prepare a scheme of private unemployment insurance for Kodak. In the end the plant managers and supervisors objected mightily to the scheme and the depression lifted. But Folsom continued to study the mainly European literature on social welfare, "certainly an odd pastime for a coming young executive," Alsop commented, "until he became one of the handful of American experts in the field."

By the 1920s, workers who started with Kodak in the 1880s and 90s were being pressed to retire. Eastman had strong feelings about "these young jackanapes who want to put Old Bill on the street after forty years" but also strong feelings about pensions being a reward for improvidence and a penalty on self-reliance. "It got so none of us dared mention pension plans to Mr. Eastman," Folsom recalled. "And then a friend of his, whom he couldn't very well throw out of his office, happened to tackle him on the subject." Pretty soon Eastman, who had always held that with good wages and the substantial annual bonus the company had done its part, and it was up to the individual to take care of retirement, asked Folsom to find out what other progressive companies were doing.

The plan Folsom recommended provided for a retirement annuity, life insurance, and total disability benefits. It was inaugurated on 1 January 1929. The purpose, as Eastman wrote in a cover letter,

continued on page 6

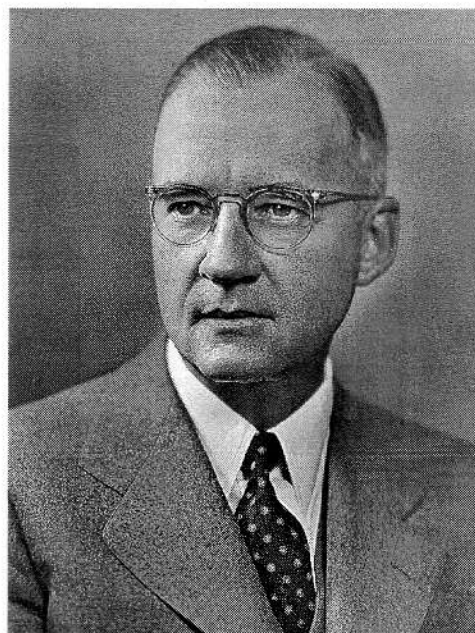
WAS SOCIAL SECURITY BORN IN BRIGHTON?

was “to provide, more liberally and reliably...an income for old age, a proper protection for disability, and life insurance.”

Pension and retirement plans were not unknown in American industry, but they were uncommon. Businessmen tended to regard them as evidence of managerial softheartedness and softheadedness. The Kodak plan, prepared by Folsom, turned out to be fiscally conservative, hailed by the *Atlantic Monthly* as an important advance, and one that withstood the test of time. Soon Folsom was called to testify before the United States Investigation of Unemployment and named to advise the New York State Legislative Committee on Unemployment. In 1930, Kodak and seventeen other Rochester concerns formulated plans for unemployment insurance.

6 Through these pace-setting efforts, Alsop wrote, Folsom became a “pioneer...a leading contributor to a gigantic change in the basic shape of our society.” In 1934 he was called to Washington to help draft the first national old-age insurance bill. “This bill,” Alsop reported in 1955, “became the foundation stone of the vast structures of social security and welfare over which Folsom now presides. He can claim to be the only man who has contributed importantly to every stage of the Social Security System’s growth.” Ruminating in 1968, Folsom said: “I have often wondered how Mr. Eastman would have reacted to Social Security measures.... I am inclined to think his views would have been [that]...as a result of the depression, governmental action was necessary and that the contributory social insurance was far better than relief measures to prevent destitution.” Folsom’s conclusion to his years of close association was that “Mr. Eastman was the only man I ever knew who started out a conservative and ended up a liberal.”

Folsom’s work in federal social security began with his service on the President’s Advisory Council on Economic Security which drafted the original Social Security Act in 1934. He continued to serve on Congressional commissions of 1937-38 and 1948, which worked on revisions of the Social Security Act. He became an organizer in 1942 of



the Committee for Economic Development, composed of businessmen and educators concerned with the maintenance of a healthy economy. From 1944 to 1946 he was staff director for the House Committee on Postwar Economic Policy and Planning. In 1953 he became Under Secretary of the Treasury under Eisenhower (resigning at that point as Kodak treasurer and director) and spent the next two-and-one-half years revising and codifying tax laws (the first total revision of the tax structure in 79 years) and studying old-age and survivors insurance. This last resulted in extension of coverage and liberalization of benefits under the 1954 amendments to the Social Security Act. He also worked on the group life insurance program for federal employees enacted in 1954 (having previously helped to organize a group medical care insurance plan in Rochester). In August 1955 he succeeded Oveta Culp Hobby as the second Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare.

Folsom’s wife Mary, whom he married in 1918, was a member of George Eastman’s *Lobster Quartet*—four young matrons who lunched with him on Saturdays. Every Sunday the Folsoms were mandatory guests at Eastman’s rather alarming musicales and Marion was a captive participant in the high-toned music appreciation course, which

WAS SOCIAL SECURITY BORN IN BRIGHTON?

Eastman decreed for the Chamber of Commerce and virtually required all the city's lesser businessmen to attend each excruciating class. Sometimes, Eastman came to dinner at the Folsoms, first to the modest two-family house they occupied in downtown Rochester, and then to what Alsop described as "the still-modest but considerably pleasanter 'English style' house in the leafy suburb of Brighton."

Folsom's main pleasure with his Brighton home at 106 Oak Lane was a grandiose asparagus bed and his main complaint when he moved to Washington was that, as he told Alsop sadly, "An asparagus bed is a long-term investment. I hate to think about

those weeds. It's darned irritating." After his Washington years, Folsom returned to the Tudor home in Brighton, living there until his death in 1976. Presumably the asparagus then won out over the weeds.



Marion Folsom and President Eisenhower

MEADOWBROOK CONTINUED



Meadowbrook was soon recognized as "the community of better homes," as advertised on a huge sign facing Elmwood Ave. This became Meadowbrook's motto....

The first three houses were sold to Roger P. Leavitt, Lyle Cassan, and Albert Meyers. Everyone of the first homes built was purchased before they were completed in June of 1929. Clearly the vision and enterprise of Meadowbrook's founders was successful. While many original homesteaders worked at Kodak, not everyone did. There was a variety of people and occupations, but the new Meadowbrookers had much in common. Most had young families and an air of excitement at establishing a beautiful new neighborhood in new surroundings. The bonding of new friends and families of-

ten led to impromptu gatherings and eventually to more organized picnics and other functions, becoming neighborhood traditions that continue to exist today.

Next issue: The selling of Meadowbrook.

HISTORIC BRIGHTON

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THE GLACIER RUMBLES THROUGH BRIGHTON 100,000 YEARS AGO



The Council Rock in 1899.

By Betsy Brayer

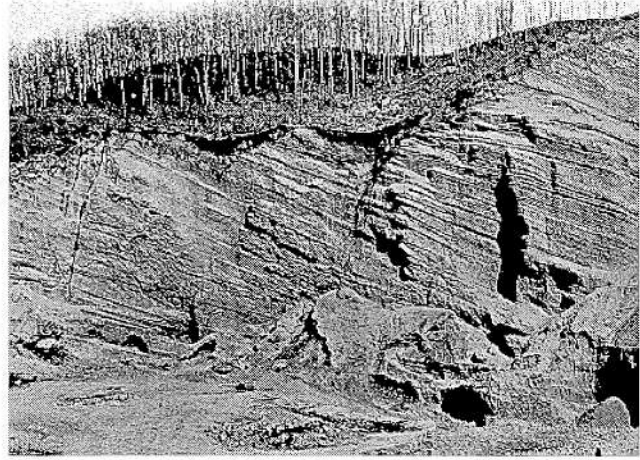
8 TWO HUNDRED MILLION years ago, Brighton was submerged under a great sea that covered much of what are now Canada and the United States, stretching from the Appalachian Mountains to the Rockies. Over the eons, great earthquakes uplifted the sea, which drained, leaving a pre-historic Lake Ontario that was much larger than the present lake. The calcium and magnesium deposits from this ancient sea turned into the limestone that underlies Brighton and most of Monroe County.

One million years ago, a huge river flowed northward, digging out the great Genesee Valley and Irondequoit Bay.

One hundred thousand years ago, the earth became much cooler. Brighton became a land of perpetual snow that never melted, even in summer. The snow accumulated for thousands of years and turned to ice under its own weight—sparkling clear ice that was up to two miles thick and had a blue tint. Brighton was now submerged under a “continental glacier,” such as exists today in Greenland and Antarctica.

Ten thousand years ago, ocean levels had dropped so far that a land bridge developed across the Bering Strait. People began to walk across this land bridge, migrating from Siberia in Asia to Alaska in America. These were the people we now call “Indians” or “Native Americans.”

Ice that thick is not brittle but flows in all directions like silly putty.



Bedded Gravel in Cobb's Hill, looking southeast, 1903. Now concealed.

The glacier was like a giant snowplow: it scooped up boulders and sand in Quebec. When the glacier began to melt during the summer, it deposited debris in Brighton and as far south as Pennsylvania. This went on for thousands of years. One of those “erratic” boulders is the Council Rock on East Ave.

One deposit of sand, gravel and boulders in Mendon blocked the ancient river, forcing it from emptying through Brighton into Irondequoit Bay into finding a new course—the present Genesee River that runs through downtown Rochester.

“Glaciologists”—people who study glaciers—have named glacial deposits moraines, eskers, drumlins, or kettles. A moraine is a cone of sand and gravel formed when a hole in the glacier acted as a funnel. An esker is a long ridge formed by the snowplow action of the glacier. Eskers mark the limit of the last advance of the glacier. A drumlin is a high mound and a kettle is a moraine with a hole in the middle.

Moraines in the Brighton area include Pinnacle Hill and Cobbs Hill. Ridge Rd. in northern Monroe County follows an esker. Boughton Hill in Victor is a drumlin and the Devil's Bathtub in Mendon Ponds Park is a kettle.

Next HBN article for younger readers: “The first inhabitants of Brighton—Algonkian mound builders and the Senecas.”