

The Amos B. Buckland House 1341 Westfall Road

In 1997 the Town of Brighton purchased from the estate of Max Gonsenhauser thirty-two acres of land on Westfall Road to use as parkland. With the farmland came an old brick house of mixed ancestry.

The Buckland family settled in Brighton circa 1815 and purchased land along Westfall and Winton Roads. Finding suitable clay soil, brothers Amos, Abner, and Leonard established a brick works, supplying bricks for many local dwellings and business buildings as well as drain tiles for residential and agricultural use. They also built brick houses for themselves and their families. Abner's house is at 1037 Winton Road South, Leonard's at 1551 Winton Road South, and Amos' at 1341 Westfall Road.

Amos' farmhouse, with its many additions, embodies several architectural styles from 1820 to 1950. Based on structural evidence, the earliest part of the house was built between 1820 and 1830, a story and a half, one-room brick building. Not long after that, Amos added the first and second brick wings to the west side. Circa 1840, he added the large brick Greek Revival west wing. Subsequent owners added the frame east wing in 1885 and the second story about 1915. That final addition is easy to see because grey cement brick was added to the lower red brick part to provide for a full second floor. Sometime in the mid-20th century, the gabled roof was replaced with a hip roof.

This house is important to the history of Brighton because it represents the growth of the town from the settlement period to the modern age. It began as a very small house and grew as the size and the needs of its families increased. It was never a high-style Italianate or Greek Revival - it was always a simple structure that reflected the needs of its owners.

In From 1911 to 1939, the Rochester Orphan Asylum (later the Hillside Home for Children) operated a farm on ninety-two acres of former Buckland property on the south side of Westfall Road and rented an additional fifty-three acres on the north side of the road. The farm produced milk, butter, eggs, meat and vegetables for the children in addition to offering nature education and vocational experiences. At the time that Hillside owned the Buckland Farm, there were 184 children living at the Monroe Avenue facility, visible from the farm.

The modern dairy barn housed twenty Guernsey and Holstein cows that produced 190 quarts of milk a day for the children. Monorail conveyors were used for feeding the cows and disposing of waste. The piggery had concrete floors that could be flushed clean while its occupants were out foraging in the yards and orchards. A stable and a hennery with 100 layers rounded out the livestock housing.

In addition to a three-acre wood lot, there was an orchard with over 700 fruit trees - apple, pear, plum, and quince - many donated by Charles J. Brown, founder of the Brown Brothers Nursery on Winton Road and the Browncroft subdivision in Rochester and Brighton.

In August of 2003 the Brighton Historic Preservation Commission designated the Buckland Farmhouse a local landmark, based on its association with the Buckland family and its connection to Brighton's agricultural and brick-making history.

Today the house's official name is The Brighton Rotary History Center at the Buckland house.

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