

Supervisor's Column
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Brighton Celebrates its Proud History

Two weekends ago, I attended a celebration hosted by the Brighton Beach (New York City) Business Improvement District, in honor of its 20th anniversary. As a diverse ethnic community that's home to many Russians, Brighton Beach made the weekend into a family reunion for all cities, towns and villages that bear the name of "Brighton."

Amid the festivities - which included a street fair with student dance performances, a special parade of flags, honors to New York City Police, attendance by consuls general and other representatives of countries of the former Soviet Union, and U.S. congressional, state and local officials - we had the chance to become acquainted with a contingent from our "twin community" of Brighton, Tennessee. Intrigued by the descriptions of our region's culture, history and geography, our new friends who hailed from Brighton's southern sibling declared they simply must visit our neck of the woods.

The reunion granted us yet another opportunity to maintain our family ties, promote our community's assets and share our diverse history. In 1997, as part of a personal vacation in Great Britain, I traveled to our parent city of Brighton, England, to meet with Mayor Councillor Betty Walshe and tour the city. We exchanged information and ideas about our local governments and the culture of our communities.

Each "Brighton" has a long and proud tradition of civic excellence. Here at home, our history is coming alive with the fast-progressing restoration of the Buckland House at 1341 Westfall Road - the historic anchor of Buckland Park. Dedicated members of Brighton Rotary are picking up their paintbrushes several nights a week - with our

vertically-gifted town attorney, Bill Moehle, who is in charge of painting the ceiling. The Buckland House is scheduled to open in September.

Historic Brighton will hold its annual Gideon Cobb Day festivities on the Buckland Farm property on Friday, June 29 and Saturday, June 30. Gideon Cobb was a pioneer who arrived in Brighton during the early nineteenth century and constructed a kiln to manufacture bricks. Cobb was driven by a fervent desire to build a community – one brick at a time – and to carve a civilization from the wild frontier. A contemporary of the Buckland family – and most likely a business rival – Cobb founded the Rochester Brick and Tile Co., furthering Brighton’s reputation as a bastion of brickmaking, and the brick industry capital of upstate New York for over 100 years.

We envision the Buckland Farm and House as a link to Brighton’s past and a vibrant community gathering place. A generous donation by the Allyn’s Creek Garden Club will enable the Town to plant and maintain lush landscaping for the House, in the colorful American Prairie style typical of nineteenth-century farmsteads. A planned museum within the Buckland House will feature exhibits that open a window onto Town history. We are accepting donations of clothes, photographs and household objects dating from the different stages of the House (1820 to 1920). If you have something to offer, please call our Director of Communications, Melissa Hantman, at 784-5253. In the meantime, let’s take inspiration from the Brighton “family reunion” and make a commitment to re-connect with our own family and friends, as the approaching summer beckons us outdoors.

