



The New Town Crier

Official Newsletter of the Historical Society of Bloomfield



BLOOMFIELD, NEW JERSEY 07003

May 2013

SAVE THE DATE

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, May 28, 2013

BLOOMFIELD CIVIC CENTER

84 Broad Street,
Bloomfield, NJ
8:00 PM

Remembering Bloomfield the Way it Was: 1935–1945

Presented by H. Joseph North & Joseph Barry, Jr.

What was Bloomfield like during the Great Depression and WWII? What did townspeople do for work, for fun, for education? What's changed in the past 70 years or so and what's stayed the same? This excursion down memory lane includes photos and maps from the archives of the Historical Society of Bloomfield.



Bloomfield school children, 1914. Photo courtesy of Bloomfield resident David Petillo. To see more like school photos like this, visit www.hsob.org.

School's out for summer!

Many people assume that summer vacation came about because families and children had to tend to their farms, but this is not the case. Urban schools ran year-round (for example, in 1842 New York City schools were in class for 248 days). Rural schools took the spring off to plant, and the autumn off to harvest (summer is a slow time in agriculture). School reformers in the 19th C. wanted to standardize the school year. Since rural areas had two terms (summer and winter) and urban schools ran year round, a compromise had to be struck. Why summer?

In rural areas, the summer term tended to be taught by girls in their mid to late teens. Schoolmasters, generally older males, taught the winter terms. Because of this, the summer terms were seen as academically weaker. In urban areas, rich families vacationed in the summer, so city schools tried to adjust to the schedules of wealthy families. Heat during the summer months would often become unbearable. Teachers didn't necessarily go to college or get certified, so they would use the summer months to train and get ready for the next year. Finally, doctors believed medically unsound for students to be confined to a classroom year-round.

Therefore, school reformers decided the summer term was the best one to take off. Once summer vacation was invented, a "summer leisure" industry was also created.

Source: NPR

Joseph Barry, Jr., life-long resident of Bloomfield, was born in 1931, attended Brookdale School, graduated from St. Thomas the Apostle School in 1945 and Bloomfield High in 1949. He earned a BSME from Newark College of Engineering and is a U.S. Army veteran of the Korean War. Before retiring, he was the President of McNeil Construction Co. of Newark; he was also a long-time Bloomfield Councilman and retired Bloomfield Township Administrator. Barry is a member of the Board of Trustees of The United Way of Bloomfield, VP of the HSOB and Life Member of The National Society of Professional Engineers.

H. Joseph North, also a life-long resident of Bloomfield, was born in 1932, attended Brookside School, graduated from Sacred Heart School in 1945 and Seton Hall Prep in 1949. He earned a BA from Seton Hall University and a Masters Degree in Public Administration from Fairleigh Dickinson University. He served in the U.S. Army from 1954–1956. He was a Juvenile Probation Officer, Bloomfield Township Clerk (1958–1967) and Bloomfield Township Administrator from 1967 to 1987, when he retired. North was previously a trustee of Bloomfield College, director of American Bank of NJ, President of the NJ Municipal Managers Association, President of the Fifth Quarter Club and the Bloomfield Tennis Players Association.

THE CLARK THREAD COMPANY

By Jean Kuras, President



We're not sure what these kids (and one rather oversized baby, bottom right) are up to, but they do seem to enjoy Clark's "O.N.T." Thread!

The Clark Thread Company had its beginning in Paisley, Scotland. Patrick Clark's invention was to twist cotton yarns together to produce stronger thread, replacing the earlier-used silk.

In 1864, the grandsons of Clark came to America and started a factory in Newark, NJ. After the sewing machine was invented in 1846, a stronger thread was needed. One of the Clark grandsons, George, instead of using three threads as in the past, was able to use six. Sewing machines became more and more popular and, as they required thread of a softer finish than had previously been used for hand sewing, Clark's six core thread was suitable for both hand and machine use. It was known as Clark's "Our New Thread." A member of the Clark family had the happy idea of condensing the words "Our New Thread" to "O.N.T." and the Clark trademark was born.

In 1922, the company purchased property in the Brookdale section of Bloomfield. It was a large tract along the Yantacaw Brook from a few hundred feet north of Bay Avenue to near Watchung Avenue. The mother plant remained in Newark. The Bloomfield site was selected because of the pure water attainable from the stream and springs. In the processing of cotton, wool and silk fibers, great quantities of water were necessary, especially in the art of color dyeing. Bleaching and dyeing of all thread was done in Bloomfield. In cotton sewing threads alone, more than 500 shades were produced in the Bloomfield plant. Since the early 1920s, public use of colored goods increased rapidly due to the developments carried out at the Bloomfield plant.

From 1922 to 1949, Clark's Pond was used as a water reserve for the company. It was only during recent years, since the purchase of the property by The Clark Thread Company, that the pond has been known as "Clark's". During the 1880s and until it was bought by The Clark Thread Company, it was known as "Brownie's Pond."

The Bloomfield plant was enlarged several times. Then, in 1930, Clark's opened a plant in Georgia. In 1947, the Newark plant moved there and in 1949, the Bloomfield plant followed.

The Scientific Glass Company later occupied the land where earlier The Clark Thread Co. stood.

Editor's Note: According to the Friends of Clark's Pond & Third River, the pond was dredged and the dam repaired with Green Acres and Open Space money. There are riparian plantings and a wildflower meadow. Great egrets, kingfishers, double-crested cormorant, great blue herons, green heron, white tailed deer, muskrat and eastern painted turtles have all been seen at Clark's Pond.

THE BANK OF BLOOMFIELD AND OTHER “FREE BANKS”—1837-1863

While there had always been state-chartered banks in the United States, with loss of the Second Bank’s (a National bank) charter, there was a need for more banking.



Consequently, during the period from 1837 to the Civil War, commonly known as the Free Banking Era, states passed “free bank laws,” which allowed banks to operate under a much less onerous charter. While banks were regulated, they were relatively free to enter the business by simply depositing government bonds with state auditors.

As a result of the free banking laws, hundreds of new banks opened their doors, and free bank notes circulated around the country, often at a

discount. The discount on a given bank note varied in part with the distance from the issuing bank and in part with the perceived soundness of the bank.

Over this period, a private institution, known as the Suffolk Bank in New England, took on some of the roles typical of a central bank, such as clearing payments, exchanging notes and disciplining banks that were over-issuing their notes. Also, in response to a rising volume of note and check transactions beginning in the late 1840s, the New York Clearinghouse Association was established in 1853 to provide a way for the city’s banks to exchange notes and checks and settle accounts.



A three-dollar and a one-dollar bank note from the Bank of Bloomfield, both from 1863.

Source: *The Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis*

You must remember this...

If you haven’t already done so, please be sure to renew your 2013 membership. Renewal forms are available at www.hsob.org or can be picked up at the museum or any HSOB meeting. Help keep the Historical Society of Bloomfield strong with your continuing membership!





General Joseph Bloomfield

THE NEW TOWN CRIER

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF
THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OF BLOOMFIELD

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Bloomfield, NJ 07003
Tel: 973-743-8844
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OFFICERS

- Jean Kuras, President
- Joseph Barry, Vice President/
Program
- Mary Shoffner, Corresponding
Secretary/Hospitality
- Jane Bond, Recording Secretary
- Emma-Lou Czarnecki, Treasurer/
Membership
- Dorothy Johnson, Museum Curator

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- Richard Rockwell
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- Ina Campbell

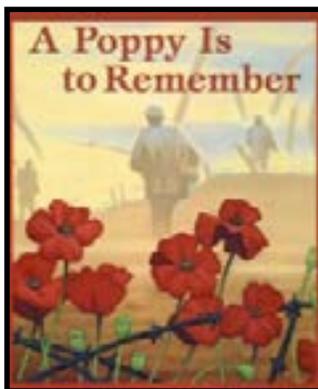
NEWSLETTER STAFF

- Ava Caridad, Editor
- Nicholas D'Angelo, Layout
- Richard Rockwell, Assistant Editor/
Photo Digitizing

The Welcome Mat

A cordial welcome is extended to the following new members of The Historical Society of Bloomfield. We hope to see you at our next meeting:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| Joseph Delaney <i>Bloomfield</i> | Gloria Fulton <i>Bloomfield</i> | Jessica Myers, <i>Glen Ridge, NJ</i> |
| Suzette Faig <i>Glen Ridge, NJ</i> | Ann Hardy <i>Bloomfield</i> | Joseph F. Wannat III <i>Bloomfield</i> |



Parade Volunteers Needed!

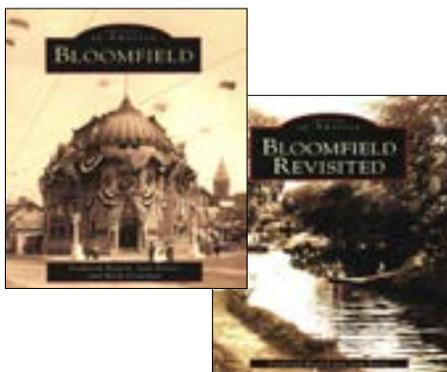
The Historical Society of Bloomfield seeks members and friends to march with us at the Memorial Day Parade on May 27. Adults, children and well-behaved dogs are all welcome to march under the HSOB banner. Show your civic pride and support the HSOB at the same time! For more info, email HSOB1812@gmail.com. PH: (973) 743-8844.

Nominees for Executive Committee for 2013 election

(Election to be held at the October, 2013 Meeting)

| Position | Candidate |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| President | Jean Kuras |
| Vice President/ Program | Joseph Barry, Jr. |
| Treasurer | Emma-Lou Czarnecki |
| Recording Secretary | Anne Carlino |
| Corresponding Secretary | Mary Shoffner |
| Membership | Ava Caridad |
| Curator | Dorothy Johnson |
| Trustees | Ava Caridad |
| | Richard Rockwell |
| | Mary Shoffner |
| | Richard West |

Bloomfield Books for Sale...



The history of Bloomfield leaps off the pages of *Bloomfield and Bloomfield Revisited*, books in two retrospective volumes of illuminating photos and facts, available for purchase at the upcoming May 28 meeting and the HSOB Museum (located on the 3rd floor of the Children's Library, 90 Broad Street. Hours are Wed. 2:00pm-4:30pm, Sat. 10:00am-12:30pm and by appointment. PH: [973] 743-88440). Cost for each book is \$15.99 for HSOB members and \$19.99 for non-members.