

# The Wintonbury Drummer



## *Newsletter of the Wintonbury Historical Society*

*Bloomfield, Connecticut*

*January 2009*

**Next meeting:** February 19, 2009 7:00 p.m.

**Location:** Prosser Library, Community Room, Bloomfield, CT

**Program:** The Bloomfield Trolley, 1909, A Gala Grand Opening

**Speaker:** Fred Hesketh

### *President's Message:*

## Happy 60th Birthday to the Society

With this in mind, progress on getting years of acquisitions into the Library, is beginning to take place. In November three pieces of furniture were taken over; as well as the books and pamphlets which Historian Fred Hesketh felt could serve a purpose to members and friends visiting the Library. Some of the items which have been stored by Fred, have started to come over-and in looking over the boxes, see that these had originally come to the garage, of this officer, when the Southwest District Schools roof was in need of repair.



Past presentations by Historian Fred Hesketh, indicate a well researched story—hope to see you at Prosser on the 19th.

Gardener's All With Spring, there will be seeding, etc. to surround Library/Office. We will welcome any who wish to be part of putting the grounds in shape. This group will also be able to provide an answer as to how and where the bricks (a fund raiser in the works) will be used. If interested please call Fannie

Fannie R Gabriel, President

## This and That

I am sure that I am not the only person who wondered what happened to the Dr. Bestor House. All I knew was that it had been dismantled and taken to Vermont. At the last meeting, member of the Old Bloomfield Cemetery group, Carol Johnson, said, Oh I know who lives there—it's my sister in law, a Dr. Philip Brown has the house put together and now Carol's sister in law (and the doctor) live in it—located in Turbridge—outside of Sharon, Vermont—just about the junction of Routes 91 and 89. After all these years, nice to have some pieces of the puzzle come together

Bloomfield Continuing Education again, has a picture of the Old Farm School, on the cover of their Spring offerings. Thanks to Mike Swan, who is a member of the Adult Education Board of Directors.

Board of the Simsbury Free Library, feted Jean Perrault, recently, for the awards she has received for her valuable piece on Simsbury 1930 Census. Aren't we lucky to have her as a member of our Society.

We are sorry to relate the passing of long time active member Evelyn Fox. As this is being written, the Hartford Courant carried the story of the passing of WHS Board member Representative Faith McMahon. No matter how many meetings she had to attend—she always made it a point to come to our regular and board meetings. Our sympathy to Bill.

As the updating and revision of Over Tunxis Trails progresses, the total loss by fire, January 4th, of the 1758 Capt. Joel Griswold house, graphically tells the sad story of what can happen to historic homes, such a loss!

Kudos to Ralph Schmoll for the series of Bloomfield history articles and trivia questions, and to Angela Hauptman who selected some choice articles, taken from Good Old Days, both having been printed in the Bloomfield Journal right up to the last issue. If you missed them they are reprinted on our website.

An apropos item from the March 7th, 1905 Hartford Courant Rev. H.M. Wolf, Jr., made a stirring address in the Baptist Church Sunday evening—his topic “What is the Matter with Bloomfield?” Obviously it had nothing to do with what I say—is the matter—no paper with local news. Hope something happens... Soon—for a town of 20,000 (plus) we deserve to know what is going on—we all need to let one another know what is happening. Right???????

## Committee Reports

### Membership Committee:

New Members: David & Joan Cooney  
Shirley Damato

Jean Buscarello, Chairman

**Newsletter:** The deadlines for the newsletter, are for material to be received by Fannie. For 2009, the deadlines are: Mar 18, May 20, Aug 19 and Oct 21.

Fannie Gabriel & Janis Langston

**Website Committee:** The website has received a new look and new material is being added. Because of the website WHS continues to receive research requests with regard to historical places and people of Bloomfield. WHS has also received donations of historical items pertinent to Bloomfield because the donor found us via the website.

If you are working on a project and would like to share it with the world, or if you would like to expand the material already available on the site, please contact Winnie Granger, Ralph Schmoll or me and we can make the information available as part of the resources of the Society on its website.

Janis Langston, Webmaster

## BLOOMFIELD TRIVIA QUESTIONS

1. Who was the first pastor of Wintonbury Parish?
2. What year did Connecticut General open its first building in town?
3. What building was torn down to build the Town Hall?
4. What Bloomfield inventor received spiritual messages telling him what to invent?
5. What other towns sent their children to the original Bloomfield High School when it was new?

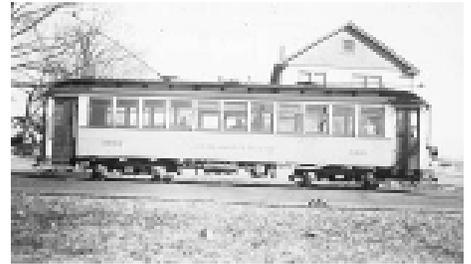
## Our Publications

Wintonbury to Bloomfield (\$16.50), Images: Old Bloomfield (\$20., or to a member \$18.); History of the Bloomfield Catholic Church (\$15); Barnard Genealogy (\$10.); Good Old Days (\$10.); Cook Book (\$7.); Over Tunxis Trails (\$5.); Bicentennial Activities (\$3); Note Paper (8 pk - \$3.); Filley House T shirts (\$12.); Brown Drums and Brown family (\$10.).

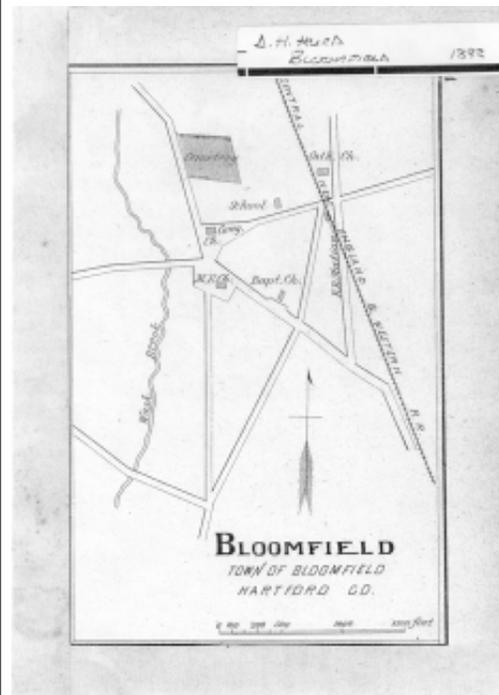
**February 19th Program**  
**Centennial of the Grand Opening of the Bloomfield Trolley**  
**Prosser Library Community Room**  
**Meeting at 7:00 p.m. and Program at 7:30 p.m.**

On a February Saturday in 1909, Bloomfield experienced what Hartford newspapers deemed a "gala affair." WHS Historian Fred Hesketh will explain the reasons for that joyous occasion. Bloomfield was served by cars from Hartford between 1909 and 1929. Plan to attend to hear about the events leading up to the appearance of the first trolley car in Bloomfield Center on the occasion of its centennial.

Please reserve your seat by calling the Prosser Library, 243-9721.



Conn Co. #1565 on Blue Hills Avenue  
Thanks to The Shore Line Trolley Museum



### New Acquisitions

From Bruce Bidwell:

- 1935 photo of the Bicentennial, 1935 photo of parade with Connecticut Governor Cross and Fred Bidwell
- 1903-1994 Diary of Eliot Bidwell

1892 map of Bloomfield Center-from Syd Schulman (shown at the left)

Can you believe, soon we will have a place for these marvelous gifts to be displayed...

### New Publications coming in the Spring

From Fred Hesketh:

**Bloomfield and the Civil War**

From Lucy Woodford Wirsul:

**Not Lost...Gone Before: A History of Latimer Hill Cemetery**

### Leaving A Legacy

The Wintonbury Historical Society is a charitable and non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of historical sites of Bloomfield, and the memory of the ones who created them.

The Society is in dire need of funds or gifts in order to continue the restorations, and preservations in progress. We are therefore, soliciting the commitment of citizens who value the history of Bloomfield now and in the years ahead.

Listed are a few ways to leave a legacy:

1. Set aside a gift in your will to the Society
2. Name the Society as beneficiary of an insurance policy.
3. Remember your loved ones with a gift in their honor.
4. Name the Society as a beneficiary of your IRA or 401K.

There are several other means, just talk with your financial advisor.

Financial Development Committee

## Calendar of Events

2009

Feb 4	WHS Regular Meeting moved to coincide with Prosser Library Meeting
Feb 19	Prosser Library Meeting - Fred Hesketh "100th Anniversary of the Trolley in Bloomfield"
Apr 1	WHS Regular Meeting
TBD	Grand Opening Celebration for the Education Center
May 2	Tag/Bake Sale Old Farm School grounds (rain date May 9)
Jun 3	WHS Annual Meeting with election of Officers and 60th Birthday Party
Jun 27	WHS House and Garden Tour
Sept 9	WHS Regular Meeting
Nov 4	WHS Regular Meeting

Visit the expanded WHS website at: [www.bloomfieldcthistory.org](http://www.bloomfieldcthistory.org)

*Submit articles for The Wintonbury Drummer,  
the Newsletter of the Wintonbury Historical Society of Bloomfield, to:  
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