



The Wintonbury Drummer

Newsletter of the Wintonbury Historical Society

Bloomfield, Connecticut

April, 2017

SAVING THE GHI HOUSE IN BLOOMFIELD

Wednesday, April 5, 2017, 6:00 PM at Prosser Public Library



Ron Marchetti and Dale Bertoldi will give a PowerPoint presentation and talk about the importance of the prefabricated General Houses Industries house in Bloomfield Center that had originally been slated for demolition. The house was dismantled and stored for future restoration by the architecture department at University of Hartford.

Their presentation explores the origin of prefabricated, modular homes in America and how these unique prototype modular houses became available to the public in the 1930s.

Specifically, this presentation explains how one of these rare houses ended up in Bloomfield Center and was still intact last year, yet hidden from plain view! Examine how Ironwood Community Partners, a local non-profit dedicated to preservation, saved and completely dismantled this house after eighty years of its lying incognito only two lots away from Town Hall.

This program is presented by the Wintonbury Historical Society, Ironwood Community Partners and the library. Registration is appreciated. Photo courtesy of Dennis Hubbs.

 **WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5, 2017, 6:00 PM AT PROSSER**

INSIDE THIS ISSUE: Events of January and February, plus upcoming May event: page 2; WHS calendar dates, Board of Directors Highlights, History is Essential: page 3; Apostolic Fellowship Church: pages 4-6; Christ the King Catholic Church, page 6; Tantalizing Bloomfield Street Names: page 7; Flea Market and Bake Sale: page 8.

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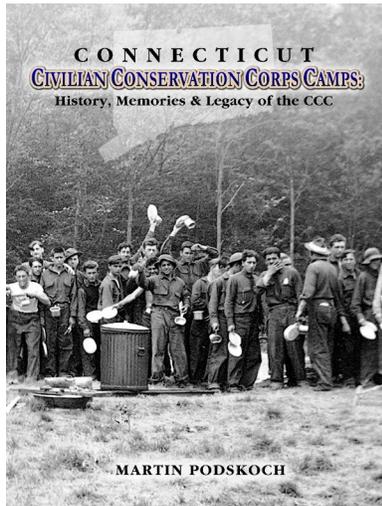
William Weissenburger

Vacancy (2)



Left: Jean Perreault speaking on January 16, 2017, to the Business and Professional Microcomputer Users Group (BPMUG) at First Baptist, 90 North Main St., West Hartford. Jean spoke on internet genealogical research.

Right: The Amherst College Gospel Choir sings on Saturday afternoon, February 4, 2017, at First Congregational Church in Bloomfield. The program was held to celebrate Black History Month and was well-attended, even though it was the first Saturday program sponsored by the Historical Society in recent memory. The Amherst women filled the sanctuary with their heart-felt selections.



Left: On Wednesday, May 3, 2017, Marty Podskoch will speak on his new book, *Connecticut Civilian Conservation Camps: History, Memories and Legacy*. This event cosponsored by Prosser Public Library and the Wintonbury Historical Society, will take place from 6:00 to 7:50 PM. The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) began on March 31, 1933 under President Roosevelt's "New Deal" to relieve the poverty and unemployment of the Depression. The CCC disbanded in 1942 due to the need for men in WW II.

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SAVE THE DATES!

- √ Wednesday, April 5, Program at Prosser Public Library, 6:00 PM: Saving the GHI House in Bloomfield, with Ron Marchetti and Dale Bertoldi (See page 1)
- √ Saturday, April 29: Annual Flea Market and Bake Sale, 8:00 to 3:00, at Old Farm School campus (page 8)
- √ Wednesday, May 3, 6:00 to 7:50 at Prosser: Marty Podskoch on the Civilian Conservation Corps in CT
- √ Sunday, May 21, 3:00 to 5:00: Dedication of the Fannie R. Gabriel History Center, 153 School Street
- √ Sunday, June 4: Celebrate Bloomfield 2017, History Day
- √ Wednesday, June 7, 6:00 to 8:30: WHS potluck supper and annual meeting featuring a program presented by David K. Leff on the Veeder Family and Penwood Park. We hope to be back at Sacred Heart Church this year.

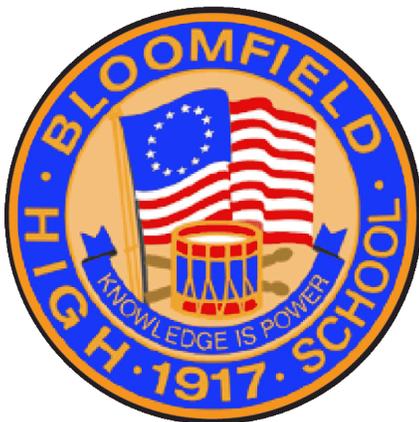


BOARD OF DIRECTORS HIGHLIGHTS

The Board of Directors met on March 22 with ten people present. The Treasurer's Report showed \$7,416 income through the end of February and expenses of \$9,048. Of the latter, the largest elements were the townwide mailing, costing \$4,945 and utilities, costing \$2,163. The checking account balance at the end of the period was \$5,959.

The Board anticipated June's annual meeting by appointing a nominating committee of Ruthanne Marchetti and Bill Weissenburger. A by-laws revision committee, consisting of Bill, Mary Murray, Nick Panke, and Judy Dahlgren-Dechand, set a meeting date of April 3. Plans for the April 29 Flea Market were discussed, and Bill agreed to be general chairperson. The Board confirmed an earlier decision to paint the History Center this spring and to purchase a wheelchair ramp for the Old Farm School.

The Board decided that at the Annual Meeting on June 7, Fred Hesketh will be honored for his service as Historian. Also, the Board set a date of Sunday, May 21, for the renaming of the History Center as The Fannie R. Gabriel History Center. The upcoming weeks will be busy (see above box), and the Society will need many willing hands to help staff events.



Bloomfield High School is one hundred years old this year.

Seven Ways History is Essential, #1

IDENTITY » History nurtures personal identity in an intercultural world. History enables people to discover their own place in the stories of their families, communities, and nation. They learn the stories of the many individuals and groups that have come before them and shaped the world in which they live. There are stories of freedom and equality, injustice and struggle, loss and achievement, and courage and triumph. Through these varied stories, they create systems of personal values that guide their approach to life and relationships with others.

—issued by the History Relevance Campaign, a group of history professionals who met together from 2013 to 2015 to formulate these principles. Participants included the American Association for State and Local History and other national organizations.



CATALOG OF CONGREGATIONS, #10 of a series

Apostolic Fellowship Church, 1153 Blue Hills Avenue

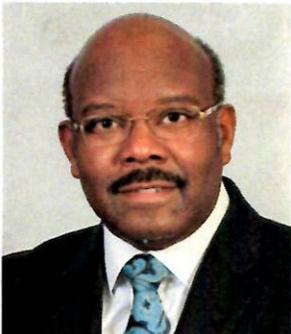
The Apostolic Fellowship Church of Christ Jesus is a Pentecostal church in Bloomfield on the corner of Blue Hills and Wintonbury Avenues. The congregation is twenty-two years old and has been in Bloomfield for twenty of those years. The congregation is multi-cultural, including believers from different ethnicities, cultures, backgrounds and ages. The church leaders treasure the fact that anyone from anywhere can come to the church, learn to love God, and find a home.

The Apostolic Fellowship Church began in May of 1995 in the home of Michael and Janet Geddis, in the town of Newington, Connecticut, where people who were seeking a deeper spiritual experience gathered for prayer and worship services. At that meeting members sang “What A Friend We Have In Jesus” and “Sweet Hour of Prayer,” and everyone prayed. Prayer remains a core value of the congregation. Other core values include Christ-likeness, loving one another, moral integrity, and faithfulness to Christ and the teachings of the Apostles who followed him, as recorded in the Bible.

The congregation soon grew to the point where by June of 1995, the church rented commercial space in Plainville, Connecticut, in order to accommodate the number of members; the Plainville location was a modest space requiring extensive renovations in order to serve as an appropriate place of worship. By August, the members had come together and transformed it into a beautiful chapel, a place where the congregation continued to grow as new members came from Connecticut and Western Massachusetts.



In less than two years the congregation filled the Plainville building. Additionally, Pastor Geddis knew that, for many of the members living in Springfield, the drive to church took an hour. He directed the search for a permanent church home that would be somewhere north of Hartford and south of Bradley International Airport. They discovered a building for sale in Bloomfield. The Bloomfield property, which is the church’s current location, was perfect, lying midway between the Hartford and Springfield areas. It was about a thirty-minute ride from both New Britain and Springfield, the two main cities where the members lived. This 20,000-square foot building that could seat up to 500 people, along with a 5,000-square foot rectory, was nestled on twelve acres of land. But with only fifty adults in the congregation, buying this building seemed to be beyond the congregation’s reach.



Bishop Michael Geddis

Pastor Geddis gathered the church members in the new building and discussed what it would mean to own it. The members agreed to place a bid and move forward. They prayed together and submitted a bid. Miraculously, the Archdiocese of Hartford chose to work with Apostolic Fellowship despite multiple other offers it had received from more established organizations. In July of 1996, the church signed the purchase agreement. The church members had a vision of being a blessing to the Bloomfield area and beyond. Because of this vision and the blessings of God, the members had a mind to give sacrificially. This group of church members, many of whom had modest incomes and resources, raised the required down payment; and the small congregation was able to purchase the current church building.

The church moved into 1153 Blue Hills Avenue in January of 1997, just one year and seven months after that first hymn was sung and prayer was made in a living room in Newington. (continued—>)

Leadership in the Bloomfield church operates through governing boards directing the activities of Men's, Women's, Youth and Christian Education departments. The church offers a number of programs that enhance the quality of the spiritual lives of the members and addresses holistic needs of members and the greater community. The church engages in programs designed to perfect the congregation and develop strong Christian character.

Some of the church ministries bless the broader community. There are financial and health seminars and a Vacation Bible School that is open to children in Bloomfield and other towns. In addition, two other local ministries are conducted by Church members:

- √ Rise and Walk Para-Church Ministry. In 2004, a Bible study began that became a dynamic outreach to men coming out prison in the Springfield area. The work is faithfully nurtured by Deacon Frank Reed, Brother Jimmy Pafumi and their wives, Sister Cynthia Reed and Sister Laurie Pafumi.
- √ Community Bible Classes. Church members conduct Bible studies on the campuses of Westfield State University and the University of Connecticut, along with Bible study on behalf of the Salvation Army on Marshall Street in Hartford.

Michael C. Geddis grew up in a Christian home and is the fourth generation of an Apostolic/Holiness heritage. He was ordained in 1977 and has been active in ministry for forty years. He was employed in the insurance industry for over twenty-three years, primarily in Information Technology. In 1999, he left Citigroup as a Second Vice-president in order to pastor full-time. He holds a Bachelor's degree from Trinity College and a Master's from Yale Divinity School. (continued—>)



PENTECOSTALISM

Bloomfield's Apostolic Fellowship Church is part of the Pentecostal movement within Christianity. Pentecostals are distinguished by their belief that an individual can serve as a conduit for supernatural manifestations. Strong emotion in worship and prayer characterizes their gatherings. Worshipers often raise both hands while singing, pray aloud fervently, and call out words of praise and gratitude. There is also a continual emphasis on upright and moral living.

The movement has its roots in the late 19th century, when it was a reaction to mounting indifference to traditional religion. (Sound familiar?) Around 1901, during a prayer meeting held by Charles Fox Parham in Topeka, Kansas, a woman started speaking aloud in strange, unintelligible sounds. Parham declared that she was speaking in "tongues," as the early Christians had done in Acts, chapter 2. In 1905, when Parham was lecturing in Houston, Texas, a black preacher named William Joseph Seymour was required to listen outside the classroom through a half-opened door. The message was totally convincing to Seymour; and when he moved to Los Angeles the next year, he became a leader of the Apostolic Faith Gospel Mission at 312 Azusa Street, widely acknowledged as the birthplace of the Pentecostal movement.

Pentecostalism is today the most rapidly-growing segment of Christianity. In the USA there are more than twenty million Pentecostals, representing a wide variety of denominations and population groups. The largest Christian communities on the planet, however, are now found in Africa and Latin America, and they are largely Pentecostal.

Many maintain that African-Americans can be credited with much of the movement's success. In fact, there are several theories that say that because the pioneers of Pentecostalism, like Seymour, were from churches rooted in the nineteenth century African-American culture, the religious expressions of Pentecostalism are themselves a reflection of the African religious culture from which black slaves had been wrenched.

References:

"Pentecostalism." *Encyclopædia Britannica. Encyclopædia Online.* Encyclopædia Britannica Inc., 2017. Web. 14 March 2017.

"Pentecostalism." *New World Encyclopedia.* Web. 14 March 2017.

"Oneness Pentecostalism." *Wikipedia.* Web. 14 March 2017

Jenkins, Philip. *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity.* Oxford University Press, 2002.

See also articles in the *Wintonbury Drummer* on the Rehoboth Church of God (June 2015) and St. John's Full Gospel Deliverance Church (June 2016).

Ever since the church's base of operation was established in Bloomfield, its ministry has grown into a robust multi-state ecclesiastical organization headquartered in the Bloomfield church. Pastor Geddis is a now a Bishop, with oversight over a number of churches. Bishop Geddis' oversight includes serving churches that came directly from the Bloomfield ministry as well as fellowshiping with other churches that embrace the Oneness Pentecostal Apostolic doctrine. Churches that came from the Bloomfield ministry include:

- √ The New Hope Apostolic Church in Worcester, MA. In 2002, Pastor Geddis asked his brother, Assistant Pastor Elder Kurt Geddis to begin a Bible study for a family in Worcester who had been baptized in Bloomfield. Other people, who had never heard the truth before, were stirred. That same year, Elder Kurt Geddis was installed as Pastor, serving with his wife, Sister Teresa Geddis, and two sons (Jammie and Marcus).
- √ Glorious Apostolic Church in Henderson, NV. In 2007, Sister Cynthia Peters introduced Pastor Geddis to Elder An'drea Kelley, a young, zealous preacher, filled with the Word of God, but without a shepherd. In 2012, Elder Kelley officially cast his lot with the Apostolic Fellowship Church.
- √ Living Water Apostolic Church. In 2008, the Lord called Elder Lew Robinson to a new work in Waterbury, CT. Supported by his wife, Sister Lana Robinson, and two sons (Daniel and Timothy), it was to become a blessing to those in the greater Waterbury area.

Apostolic Fellowship is an independent church but maintains fellowship with its "daughter" churches and with a circle of others churches from New England and New York and south to Maryland. Each year in the summer, Apostolic Fellowship organizes a "convocation" to which sister churches are invited. This has been held in Richmond, Virginia, and will this year be in Greensboro, North Carolina.

Over these past twenty-two years, the church's continual prayer has been to serve Jesus Christ and his people. The members believe in pressing towards the mark for the high calling of God in Christ. A common church motto is when "we know better, we must do better." Mediocrity is the killer of our God-given potential; and as such, church members strive for excellence in all that they do. They believe that God is excellent in all of His ways, so we should strive to be the same.



Apostolic Fellowship Church
sanctuary

--Thanks to Pastor Michael Geddis for granting an hour-long interview and to Mrs. Leslie Black, church secretary, for writing most of this article. Exterior photos by R. Pierce, others from church files.

Christ the King Catholic Church

In 1959 the Church of Christ the King purchased a ten-acre parcel of at the northwest corner of Blue Hills and Wintonbury Avenues. A Catholic parish since 1949, Christ the King was outgrowing its building on Cottage Grove Road and needed larger quarters. A beautiful new church was dedicated on March 19, 1960. It became a Bloomfield landmark with a colossal cross of aluminum, designed by local architect Edward Bushka, over the main entrance. As the years went on, however, fewer active Catholics made Bloomfield their home. To compensate, Christ the King Church started to cooperate with Sacred Heart Church with joint programs and worship. Finally, in 1996, the Archdiocese voted to merge the two churches and sell the Christ the King building. The last service was on October 12 of that year.

--Taken from *The History of the Catholic Church in Bloomfield, Connecticut* by Frederick A. Hesketh (©2003, Sacred Heart Church Corporation), pp. 119-134.

Tantalizing Bloomfield Street Names

In a recent phone call, a man in Torrington asked me if Dudley Town Road in Bloomfield got its name from Dudleytown, a village that once existed within the town of Cornwall. His question has not yet been answered, but perhaps a reader of *The Drummer* knows about this and will write in. In fact, there are a lot of street names that we don't know the origin of; and that's a perfect reason to get started on some research.

Many names are explainable, for example, Julie Lane and nearby Hiram Lane and Barn Hill Road. The reason these names were chosen was to emphasize the original name this area had when it was opened for housing development. It was called "Farm View" because it was right across Terry Plains Road from one of A. C. Petersen's farms—very much a working dairy farm in the 1950s when these adjacent acres were built up. Our guess is that "Julie" and "Hiram" were thought to be typical rural names and so were applied to two of the three streets of Farm View.



The origins of quite a few Bloomfield street names are obvious. Let's focus only on surnames here to save space. Filley Street, Pinney Road, Wadhams Road, Mills Lane, etc.: these are surnames of local families. Yet there are a lot more streets using surnames that we do not know the origin of. Maybe, with input from readers and additional research, we can solve some of these mysteries. Here is a list for you to work on (surnames only; we'll do first names

Arnold Drive	Garrison Terrace	Mitchell Drive
Boothbay Street	Gilbert Avenue	Mucko Road
Brewer Drive	Gorham Avenue	Muirfield Lane
Cadwell Road	Hall Boulevard	Nelson Drive
Carpenter Lane	Harding Avenue	Nolan Drive
Cobey Road	Hubbard Street	Rockwell Avenue
Cornell Street	Hyde Road	Schuyler Lane
Darby Street	Jackson Road	Scott Drive
Downing Circle	Jolley Drive	Skinner Drive
East Newberry Road	Kent Lane	Stuart Drive
East Pershing Street	Livingstone Road	Sutton Place
Edwards Way	Lyman Circle	Tobey Road
Ellsworth Drive	Merriam Avenue	Walker Lane
Emerson Street	Milburn Lane	Walsh Street

Calling All Bakers!!!

April 29 Flea Market and Bake Sale



Over the years our annual Tag Sale has included a Bake Sale that has been very successful thanks to our generous and experienced WHS bakers and cooks.

We do hope that we can count on you for baked goods again this year!

Please call Libbie Merrow (860 242-1675) or Ruthanne Marchetti (860 944-3144)

if you can help. NOTE: Rain date is May 6.

Thanks a million!



WINTONBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

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