

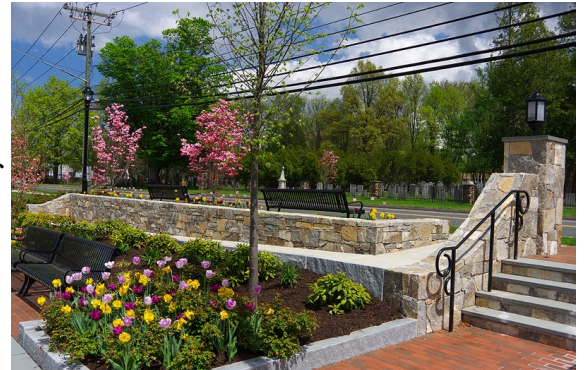


Newsletter of the Wintonbury Historical Society  
Bloomfield, Connecticut                      September, 2017

## SEPTEMBER 6: FEATURING FILLEY PARK!

On Wednesday, September 6, 2017, at 6:00 PM at Prosser Library, Dr. Ralph Schmoll will show his recently-completed video on Filley Park. Chairman Albert Reichin and other representatives of the town's Filley Park Committee will be on hand to talk about the progress of the current reconstruction program.

The park's history goes back more than eighty years. The Bloomfield Village Improvement Association was founded on June 20, 1888; and, in 1910, one of its early presidents, Alfred N. Filley donated about seven acres of woodland along Tunxis Avenue to the town. Other members of the Filley family gave the town additional land during the next twenty years; and in 1930, under the leadership of Frederick C. Bidwell, work began on the construction of what is now Filley Park. The



Filley Park Streetscape  
Dennis Hubbs photo

Village Improvement Association wanted to provide recreational space for town residents and to eliminate an unsightly area which had been the town dump. After a lot of work, the new park was dedicated in the summer of 1938, the fiftieth anniversary of the Association's founding. See *From Wintonbury to Bloomfield*, pages 97-99. See also [www.filleypark.org](http://www.filleypark.org).

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## DIRECTORY

### President

Richard Pierce

### Vice-president

Vacancy

### Treasurer

Judy Dahlgren-Dechand

### Assistant Treasurer

Vacancy

### Secretary

Vacancy

### Historian

Vacancy

### Board of Directors

#### 2018

Homer Guilmartin

Ralph Schmoll

Joan Sullivan

Vacancy (1)

#### 2019

Elizabeth Merrow

William Weissenburger

Vacancy (2)

#### 2020

Winifred Granger

Nicholas Panke

Ruthanne Marchetti

Ron Marchetti

## BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

The Board of Directors met on August 16 with ten people present. Special guest Jody Blankenship, CEO of the Connecticut Historical Society spoke at the beginning of the meeting about his organization and how it has grown. He said that the CHS will be inaugurating an affiliates program this fall. If we were to be an affiliate, we might, for example, host one of their travelling exhibitions.

The Treasurer's report for the 2016-2017 fiscal year was distributed. The FY 2017 report showed \$13,706 income and \$16,625 expenditures. Significant expenses during the year were the town wide mailing (\$5,160), building maintenance and repair (\$2,872), and the event dedicating of the history center to Fannie Gabriel (\$1,667). Utilities for the year cost \$3,820. Dues brought in \$3,200, and donations amounted to an additional \$4,672. Fundraising earned only \$958. While \$4,622 was withdrawn from Vanguard investments to meet expenses, the Vanguard funds increased to \$192,538 from \$189,000 three months earlier. The Board voted to accept the FY 2017 report. It will be printed in the September *Wintonbury Drummer* (see page 8) so that the entire WHS membership can see it. The treasurer also distributed a report for the first month of the current fiscal year, which showed income of \$1,834 and expenses of \$284.

Allison Wilkos of the Prosser Library staff attended her first meeting as Prosser liaison. She announced a digitization project at Prosser in November aimed especially at veterans. We will be able to help with this Saturday project. More details will be announced.

Other discussion focused around the need for additional fundraising and the necessity of filling vacancies in vice-president, secretary, and three directors. A lack of volunteers is preventing us from doing more fundraising, mounting adequate publicity, and even from keeping our buildings clean.

The Board voted to honor Fred Hesketh's years of service as historian by purchasing an engraved paver in the new Filley Park. In other business, there was discussion of doing another town wide mailing this year, but no decision was made.

## *The Wintonbury Drummer*

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## OUR BUSINESS MEMBERS

Bloomfield Garage, 689 Park Avenue  
Caruso's Auto and Body, 36 Tunxis Avenue  
Geissler's Supermarket, 40 Tunxis Avenue  
Sir Speedy Printing, 21 Old Windsor Road  
(And there's room for more!)

# BLOOMFIELD HIGH SCHOOL CELEBRATES 100 YEARS

The centennial of Bloomfield High School will be celebrated this month on September 15 and 16. A large committee, chaired by Jill Naraine, high school vice-principal, met this summer in July and August to plan the celebration.

Festivities will begin with a 7:00 PM Football Game against Rocky Hill on Friday, September 15, with a pre-game tail-gate party to start at 5:00.

On Saturday, September 16, there will be a centennial celebration at the High School from 12:00 noon to 4:00 PM. Various activities are planned, including a dance performance by current students, music by the school band and the choir, maybe an alumni choir, and a D.J. for additional music. The BHS Class of 1960 will be having a class reunion concurrently with the centennial.

Present students will lead the alumni for a tour of the current school, a meeting with Donald Harris, chairman of the Board of Education and former principal, and a number of other activities still in the planning stages, such as a centennial book, food, and gifts and recognition for various alumni, e.g., the oldest, the one who travelled the farthest, families with alumni in three or more generations, etc.

The planning committee has worked on the details and planned the necessary advertising and notifications to assure that former students, including those who are no longer Bloomfield residents, learn of the event. The public schools' website, [www.bloomfieldschools.org](http://www.bloomfieldschools.org), will include information about the event, and email can be sent to [bhs100@blmfld.org](mailto:bhs100@blmfld.org).

The first consolidated Center School for grades 1-9 opened on Jerome Avenue in 1913, but grade 9 was dropped after one year. Most students who wished to continue their education went to high schools in Hartford, East Hartford, or West Hartford. When these other towns stopped accepting new students, Bloomfield had to act. The high school opened with ninth and tenth grades in a few rooms in the Jerome Avenue elementary school in September 1916 when sections of the assembly hall at Center School were partitioned off for high school students. Upper grades were added as needed, and seven students graduated after the first four years. A separate high school was built on Park Avenue in 1929 and replaced in 1956 by the present building.



2017 photo by R. Pierce



BHS in 1957, one year after its opening

WHS Archives photo



Old high school, Park Avenue, 1941

BHS Archives photo

Resources: *Images of America: Bloomfield*, pp. 37-48; *From Wintonbury to Bloomfield*, pp. 169-170.





# CATALOG OF CONGREGATIONS, #12 of a series

## The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1000 Mountain Road

Soon after the organization of the Latter-Day Saints in 1830, Mormon missionaries were sent out seeking converts to the new faith using the then recently published Book of Mormon. In Connecticut, for the next century and more, members and visitors met in homes.

Missionary work for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Connecticut began in 1832, with few converts. In 1838, Wilford Woodruff, future Church President, preached in his hometown of Farmington, Connecticut. He arranged to have a meeting with his family of nonmembers. "Filled with the power of God," Woodruff later wrote, "I stood in the midst of the congregation and preached unto the people in great plainness the gospel of Jesus Christ." Afterward, Woodruff baptized his father, stepmother, sister, and three others. A small congregation was organized in Farmington thereafter. Yet by 1930 church membership in Connecticut was only 198.

As the movement began to grow in the mid-twentieth century, meetings for Bloomfield (Hartford) area membership were moved to the old Hartt School of Music building. In 1952 the first LDS meetinghouse built in New England was dedicated at 1452 Asylum Avenue in Hartford. (A church's building is usually referred to as a meetinghouse, and the room within it where worship takes place is called the chapel.)

Ground-breaking for the new Bloomfield Meeting House at 1000 Mountain Road took place on November 3, 1973. The building was dedicated just 15 months later on June 29, 1975 by Boyd K. Packer, a member of the Church's governing Quorum of Twelve Apostles. (LDS buildings are not dedicated until they are paid for in full.) At that time, local membership of the Church contributed significantly to the labor and materials to complete the building. Today the Bloomfield ward serves members living in Bloomfield, Suffield, Windsor, Windsor Locks, East Granby, Granby, and a small part of Simsbury. The Bloomfield building is referred to as the Hartford Stake Center because statewide gatherings are held in it for the ten Hartford-area congregations which on Sunday meet in their own buildings.

The first Mormon Bishop (congregational pastor) to serve Bloomfield was Glenn A. Black. He was followed by R. Lynn Fisher, D. Lee Tobler, Kent L. Meyers, Jerome Jaccard, David Hatch, David Logie, Gilbert Campbell, Mark W. Everette, Robert J. Bazyk, William Sowa, and David Moss (current bishop). Nearly every active adult member of the Church has a responsibility (known as a "calling"). They also serve voluntarily as called upon by their leaders. They might serve as greeters, Sunday school teachers, music leaders, pianists, organists, youth team coaches, etc. There are as many callings available as there are active members.



Bloomfield Ward Meetinghouse

According to [www.mormon.org/worship](http://www.mormon.org/worship), "Our primary family worship service is called sacrament meeting. It's held in our chapels on Sunday and lasts approximately one hour. You're welcome to come alone or bring your family; children are present in virtually all our congregations. During our services, we sing hymns (hymnbooks are provided). Church members say opening and closing prayers. We partake of the sacrament (communion), which consists of prepared bread and water, blessed and passed to members of the congregation by those we call priests. And we listen to two or more speakers who are usually members of the congregation. You might

be surprised that we don't have just one pastor or preacher. We do have an unpaid bishop who presides over each congregation (called a ward)."

In the Bloomfield meetinghouse, besides the chapel, there is a large multipurpose room (called the cultural hall) with a stage, which may see use as a gymnasium, basketball court, or theater. Other rooms include a library, general offices, classrooms, a nursery, and the Family History Research Center. Two wards meet in this building. Besides the Bloomfield ward, the Hartford 1st Ward (covering Hartford, West Hartford, Wethersfield, New Britain, Newington, and Rocky Hill) also meets here. Worship begins at 9:00 and 11:30 Sunday mornings, and there is education for all ages at 10:10 and 12:10. The two wards alternate the time schedule annually. Attendance will range from 150 to 200 on a Sunday.



Bishop David Moss, center,  
with Counselors (L-R) Jared  
Madden and Neil Oler

Music is an important part of worship services. Every ward has a choir, and there may be soloists and instrumentalists playing piano, organ, or stringed instruments.

Young people find active programs at the Bloomfield ward. The Young Women's program includes Sunday classes and weekday, supplemented by summer girls' camp. Young men also participate in regular classes and activities. Young people's programs are for ages 12-18. For young men, scouting is an important component, learning to live by the Scout Law and the Scout oath and going to summer Scout camp.

Women belong to the Relief Society, a denomination-wide organization that celebrated its 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary in March of this year. Women in the Society increase their self-reliance, enlarge their talents, expand their knowledge, strengthen families, and reach out to those in need. These ministering, leadership, and teaching opportunities strengthen women in their roles in the Church.

Latter Day Saints are well known for their missionaries. Young men 18 to 26 and young women 19 to 26 may apply for unpaid missionary service. In the



Relief Society (L-R): Tina Own,  
pres., Marist Jones, sec'y.,  
Sue Mary Thorgalsen, and  
Matisse Medden, counselors

## Mormons and Genealogy

Genealogy, the study of one's ancestors, or family history, is one of the most popular hobbies in the world. People of all faiths and nationalities enjoy discovering where they come from. For members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, however, learning about one's family history is more than just a casual endeavor. Latter-day Saints believe families can be together after this life. Therefore, it is essential to strengthen relationships with all family members, both those who are alive and those who have died.

Latter-day Saints believe that the eternal joining of families is possible through sacred sealing ceremonies that take place in temples. These temple rites may also be performed by proxy for those who have died. Since 1894, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has dedicated time and resources to collecting and sharing records of genealogical importance. With cooperation from government archives, churches, and libraries, the Church has created the largest collection of family records in the world, with information on more than three billion deceased people. This effort was originally facilitated through the Genealogical Society of Utah and is now known as FamilySearch, a non-profit organization sponsored by the Church.



FamilySearch provides access to information from 100 countries, including birth, marriage, and death records, censuses, probates and wills, land records, and more. These records are made available to the public free of charge through the FamilySearch.org website, the world-renowned Family History Library in Salt Lake City, and through a network of 4,600 local family history centers in 126 countries. (From [www.mormonnewsroom.org](http://www.mormonnewsroom.org))

The Family History Center at 1000 Mountain Road is largely supported by the general offices of the church in Salt Lake City. Patrons pay a nominal fee to rent microfilms of historical records. It is staffed by volunteers, both members of the ward and nonmembers.

past, people from the Bloomfield ward have served in many states and in countries such as Russia, England, Italy, Australia, Korea, and in several countries of South and Central America. At this time missionaries from the Bloomfield ward are in Italy, Nicaragua, San Diego California, and Provo, Utah. One retired sister serves in the Salt Lake City Family History Center. (Mormons commonly call each other “brother” and “sister,” as is customary in other Bloomfield churches we’ve studied.)

One apt testimony comes from Dr. Selena Brooks, WHS member and a teacher at Carmen Arace Middle School, who writes: “I converted to Mormonism over 22 years ago and have always been a member of the Bloomfield Ward. I have served at the local level as president of primary education, nursery leader, Relief Society counselor, primary teacher and Sunday School teacher. There are many other positions for ongoing service which one would expect in an organization that relies on volunteers. At the stake level, I held the position of Relief Society Counselor and Public Relations committee member. I have also served a mission as a BYU-Idaho Pathway Program organizer and recruiter. Our faith is based on service to each other and those in need of Heavenly Father's care.”

Resources: Thanks to Robert J. Bazyk, Director of Public Affairs, Hartford Connecticut Stake, for writing much of this article and supplying photographs. Other sources used were: [www.lds.org](http://www.lds.org), [www.mormon.org/about-us](http://www.mormon.org/about-us), and <https://en.wikipedia.org>.



Dr. Selena Brooks

## Overview of the LDS Church

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (the LDS Church, or more commonly known as the Mormon Church) is considered by its members to be the restoration of the church which Jesus Christ created two thousand years ago. The LDS church was organized by Joseph Smith, Jr. and five of his associates on April 6, 1830 in Fayette, New York. Soon after the organization of the church in 1830, Mormon missionaries were sent out seeking converts to the new faith using the then recently published Book of Mormon, which members of the faith believe to be another testament of Jesus Christ. Mormons believe both the Bible and the Book of Mormon are the word of God. Today the Church is headquartered in Salt Lake City, Utah and has established over 30,000 congregations. Around the world, the Church has over 70,000 full-time missionaries and a membership of nearly 16 million.

Over the last couple of decades the LDS church has contributed two billion dollars in food, medical supplies, clean water assistance, etc. to those in need worldwide. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is ranked by the National Council of Churches as the fourth-largest Christian denomination in the United States.

The LDS Church has a hierarchical organization. At the top are the president and his counselors. Then there are Area presidents. An Area is a large administrative unit. For example, the North America Northeast Area, which includes Connecticut, stretches from Virginia and West Virginia north to Newfoundland and Quebec. Going down from areas, we come to stakes and wards. A stake is a group of wards having at least 3,000 members and a president. (There are three stakes in Connecticut: Hartford, New Haven, and New London.) A ward is a local congregation of at least 300 members under the direction of a bishop, the unpaid leader of a ward. Each ward is also served by at least 15 priests, who are men with assigned roles such as teaching, baptizing, passing the sacrament to worshippers, etc.

The Church has two orders of priests, the Aaronic and the Melchizedek. The former is a preparatory priesthood primarily for men ages 12-18, and the latter is the standard priesthood for adult men. Within the priesthood there are several offices (such as apostle and patriarch) and quorums, the word *quorum* used in the LDS to indicate a group comprised of the same grade of priesthood. This organizational complexity helps bind the wards and stakes into a national and international whole. (continued on next page—>)



(continued from page 6)

The LDS Church is firmly committed to traditional gender roles. Women play significant roles in local congregations, but they are not ordained as clergy. They may, for example, teach classes or organize social, educational, and humanitarian activities. All women belong to the Relief Society, a philanthropic and educational women's organization and an official auxiliary of the LDS Church. It was founded in 1842 and has approximately 7.1 million members in over 188 countries and territories. The Relief Society is often referred to by the church and others as one of the oldest and largest women's organizations in the world.

The LDS Church opened a temple in Farmington last year. Temples are not churches or meetinghouses designated for public weekly worship services, but rather are places of worship open only to the faithful where certain rites of the church must be performed. There are more than 150 temples in the United States and around the world, but this is the only one in Connecticut and one of two in New England. Since the first Mormon congregation in Connecticut was in Farmington in the 1830s, it is an appropriate site for a temple some 180 years later.



The Farmington CT LDS Temple

Online photo

## Leaving a Legacy

The Wintonbury Historical Society is a nonprofit organization dependent on the generosity of people who value history and Bloomfield history in particular. Its mission is to identify, collect, organize, preserve and make accessible historical information about the diverse people, places, institutions and events of Bloomfield, Connecticut.

A larger endowment would put the Society upon a firmer financial foundation. To this end the Society solicits contributions from individuals and businesses. You can make a difference by (1) setting aside a gift in your will to the Society, (2) naming the Society as beneficiary of an insurance policy, (3) remembering loved ones with gifts to the Society in their honor, and (4) naming the Society as beneficiary of an IRA or 401K.



Town Manager Philip Schenck  
At Gabriel History Center dedication, May 21



Bloomfield High School Show Choir  
at Town Green Concert, June 1. Dennis Hubbs photo.

Wintonbury Historical Society  
As of 6/30/17

Windsor Federal Savings Operating Account	
Beginning Balance 7/1/2016	\$ 7,592.36
Plus: Income	\$ 13,706.45
Less: Expenses	\$ (16,624.61)
Ending Balance 6/30/2017	\$ 4,674.20

FY 2017 Income	Actual	Budget to Date	Variance
Dues	\$ 3,200.00	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 200.00
Fundraising	\$ 957.61	\$ 1,000.00	\$ (42.39)
Donations	\$ 4,672.00	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 672.00
Memorials	\$ 100.00	\$ 500.00	\$ (400.00)
Program Support			\$ -
Publications	\$ 146.00	\$ 200.00	\$ (54.00)
Investment Income	\$ 4,621.92	\$ 4,600.00	\$ 21.92
Bank Interest	\$ 8.92		\$ 8.92
Total	\$ 13,706.45	\$ 13,300.00	\$ 406.45

FY 2017 Expenses			
Utilities:			
Electricity	\$ 872.81		
Telephone/Internet	\$ 1,135.49		
Water	\$ 225.03		
Heating Oil	\$ 513.28		
Ct Natural Gas	\$ 1,072.91		
Total Utilities	\$ 3,819.52	\$ 3,600.00	\$ 219.52
USPS Box	\$ 90.00		\$ 90.00
Memberships	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ -
Meeting/Speakers	\$ 510.00	\$ 600.00	\$ (90.00)
Printing	\$ 1,143.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 143.00
Postage	\$ 856.60	\$ 1,000.00	\$ (143.40)
Townwide Mailing	\$ 5,159.51	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 1,159.51
Office/Filing Fee	\$ 348.66	\$ 300.00	\$ 48.66
Fundraising/Advert	\$ 20.00	\$ 100.00	\$ (80.00)
Renaming History Ctr	\$ 1,666.50		\$ 1,666.50
House Committee	\$ 2,871.51	\$ 2,600.00	\$ 271.51
Collections Committee			\$ -
Hist Center Coord	\$ 39.31		\$ 39.31
Total	\$ 16,624.61	\$ 13,300.00	\$ 3,324.61

Assets

Vanguard (Hoff/Barnard)	\$192,537.95	
C. Walker Bequest	\$11,200.07	
C. Barnard Bequest	\$5,518.20	
WFS Checking	\$ 4,674.20	
Petty Cash Account	\$ 50.00	
Total	\$213,980.42	0

## Seven Ways History is Essential, #2

**CRITICAL SKILLS.** History teaches critical 21st century skills and independent thinking. The practice of history teaches research, judgment of the accuracy and reliability of sources, validation of facts, awareness of multiple perspectives and biases, analysis of conflicting evidence, sequencing to discern causes, synthesis to present a coherent interpretation, clear and persuasive written and oral communication, and other skills that have been identified as critical to a successful and productive life in the 21st century.

—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.

### Greetings from Austin White

Austin White, a former Director of WHS, writes, “I would like to send my sincere thanks to the society for allowing me to serve, and I always mention it and Bloomfield’s rich beauty and history whenever I meet preservation professionals.” Austin is beginning his final semester at the University of Vermont, studying for his master’s degree in Historic Preservation. He attended the CT SHPO conference at UCONN in May and was in Harrisburg, PA, all summer working at a collaborative PennDOT/SHPO cultural resource management internship. “SHPO” refers to “State Historic Preservation Officer,” and state officers have an organization, the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers ([www.ncshpo.org](http://www.ncshpo.org)).