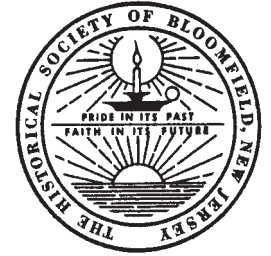




The New Town Crier



Official Newsletter of the Historical Society of Bloomfield
Celebrating Bloomfield's Bicentennial: 1812-2012

BLOOMFIELD, NEW JERSEY 07003

OCTOBER 2011

SAVE THE DATE

NEXT MEETING

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2011

The meeting will be held at

BLOOMFIELD CIVIC CENTER

84 Broad Street, Bloomfield, NJ

8:00 PM

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF EDGAR ALLAN POE

This presentation will take a look at the life of America's favorite troubled soul. The 19th Century poet, fiction writer, editor and literary critic is best known for his tales of mystery and the macabre and was one of the earliest American writers of the short story. He is also considered the inventor of the Detective Story and Science Fiction. Take a look at Poe's troubling childhood and consequently troubled adult life and how they are reflected in his writings. Throughout his life, Poe lived all along the U.S. Eastern Corridor; understand the weird and wonderful America of the 19th Century as Poe knew it, including nearby locations such as Weehawken, The Bronx, Baltimore and Boston.



HAUNTED BLOOMFIELD

Located in Bloomfield Center on the corner of Fremont Street and Austin Place, with its entrance on Franklin Street, is a brownstone Richardson Romanesque structure reputed to be haunted. Originally part of the Westminster Presbyterian Church Complex, it was designed by architect J.F. Capen. The building was erected in 1902 by James N. Jarvie, a local businessman and benefactor of the Bloomfield Theological Seminary, as the Jarvie Memorial Library. It was a tribute to Jarvie's parents, who were among the church's original members.

Now the Westminster Arts Center, the structure contains Bloomfield College's art gallery, Creative Arts & Technology Program, theater, video production facility, audio-visual library, music and art studios, as well as classroom and lecture facilities.

I love that someone is doing a story on the ghost at Westminster. I have searched the internet for a while—since being at the College—and never found anything. All I know are stories that have been passed to me from others on campus. I heard that a TV show was here years ago to look into it and film a ghost story—yet again, I can't locate information on that.

The story told to me was that the ghost is the daughter of the minister from when this was a church. Some say she was pregnant and killed herself from the shame of being a pregnant [unwed] minister's daughter. (Either by hanging herself from the bell tower or jumping: again, it depends on who tells the story.) We were told her name is Julia and my assistant and I actually "talk" to her if we walk into the theater when we are alone.

When I first arrived here in the Fall of 2006, Julia didn't seem pleased that we began having so many events in the theater. She was constantly tampering with the electrical system and causing us problems (at least we blamed our problems on her). I think she finally became accustomed to over 6,000 people walking through her space each year and has calmed down quite a bit. Both myself (and others who have been here alone) swear we have seen something catch our eye to make us turn our head—as if movement was happening. Others have said they hear movement when they've been here alone working on lights for an upcoming show. With all this said, there are those that feel it is simply rumors (including my Tech Director who spends many hours alone here and doesn't believe in her)—but I happen to think all theaters need a ghost and I'm glad we can add a little entertainment to Julia's life.

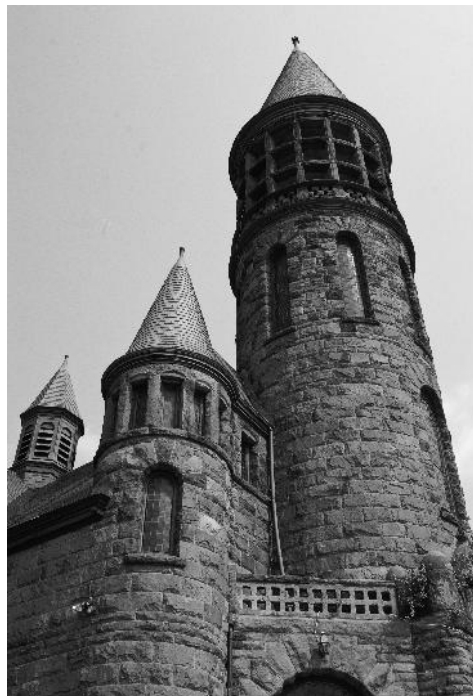


Photo by Tina Caridad

Gregory Allen, Managing Director
Westminster Arts Center
Bloomfield College

WILLIAM BATCHELDER BRADBURY

William Batchelder Bradbury (October 6, 1816–January 7, 1868) was a musician who composed the tune to *Jesus Loves Me* and many other popular hymns, such as *Depth of Mercy, Even Me, He Leadeth Me, Holy Bible Book Divine, Just As I Am, Savior Like a Shepherd Lead Us, The Solid Rock* and *Sweet Hour of Prayer*. All can still be found in hymnbooks and songbooks today.



Bradbury

By 1834, Bradbury was known as an organist and in 1840 began teaching in Brooklyn, NY, where he gained popularity from his free singing-schools and concerts, at which the performers, all children, sometimes numbered 1,000. Beginning in 1841, Bradbury was the organist at the First Baptist Church in New York City. He also worked as a choir director in several Baptist Churches and distinguished himself in his work with children's choirs. About this time, Bradbury began giving free singing classes to children, an idea taken from Lowell Mason. As Mason was an advocate of music in Boston public schools, it was from his example that Bradbury became involved in bringing music into the New York City public school system.

In 1847 he went to Germany and England, where he studied harmony, composition and vocal and instrumental music.

In 1854, he started the Bradbury Piano Company, with his brother, Edward G. Bradbury in New York City.

In 1862, Bradbury found *Jesus Loves Me* in a book in which the words were

spoken as a comforting poem to a dying child. Along with his tune, he added his own chorus: "Yes, Jesus loves me, Yes, Jesus Loves me..." After publication the song became one of the most popular Christian hymns in churches around the world.

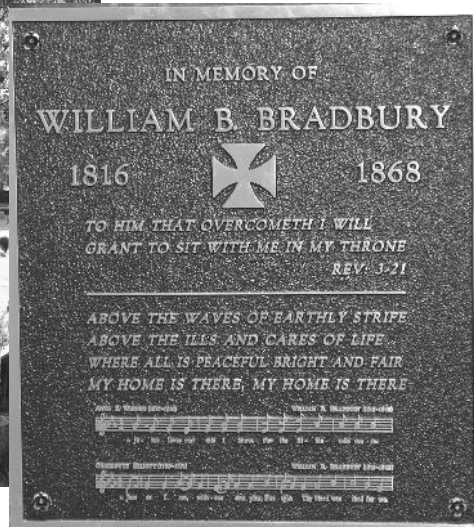
Bradbury prolifically put poems to music, as well as writing several poems himself. He felt that spiritual conditions were declining and wanted some fresh tunes that children would understand and enjoy. He compiled 59 sacred and secular books of children's songs, hymns and his own tunes from 1841 to 1867. At this time several evangelistic teams—such as Dwight Moody and Ira Sankey—used them to introduce gospel singing to the world.

Bradbury is now recognized as one of the pioneers of children's music in the church, as well as public schools, and served as one of the most important contributors to the development of early gospel music hymnody in the U.S.

He died of tuberculosis on Jan. 7, 1868 and was buried in the Bloomfield Cemetery.



Bradbury's grave in the Bloomfield Cemetery. (Photos by Tina Caridad)



Bradbury lived in this Bloomfield house on Newtown Road (now Belleville Avenue) in the mid-19th C. The original portion was built by David Baldwin Jr., and William Batchelder Bradbury was the grandson of Mary Baldwin and John Bradbury; that family connection may be how he came into possession of the house. William Bradbury was active in the First Presbyterian Church, which would have been across the road. (On a side note, the Central Presbyterian Church in Montclair—founded as the Presbyterian Church of West Bloomfield in 1837—also claims him as a native son, parishioner and possible music director. Of course, at that time, there was no Montclair; three months after Bradbury's death in 1868, Montclair broke away from Bloomfield to become its own township, reincorporating as a town in 1894.)

The only original part of the Baldwin house that remains is the present wing to the right. The left-hand side was probable added in the 1850s, possibly by William Bradbury himself. The house appears on a Bloomfield map dated 1820, but the map may very well date from before 1796, as it doesn't include the First Presbyterian Church.

CAN YOU IDENTIFY?

These houses are both on the same street. One looks almost exactly the same today as it did then (except there are a lot more trees now) and one is very different than it looks now.



Hint: Note the level horizontal plane behind the house as if it might be a canal, a highway or a railroad. (Distortion in the photo is because the glass negative is broken).



Hint: Which school can be seen in the background?



General Joseph Bloomfield

THE NEW TOWN CRIER

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF
THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OF BLOOMFIELD

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PHOTO DIGITIZING BY

Richard Rockwell

~ 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:

Tina L. Caridad

Verona, NJ

Carol Humphreys

Bloomfield

Charlotte Humphreys

Lakewood, NJ & Venice, FL

Ruth Marcus,

Bloomfield

Edward Okolovitch

Bloomfield

Frank & Ora Parks

Toms River, NJ

George Renni

Caldwell, N

HOW TO JOIN THE HSOB

The Society welcomes anyone who has an interest in local history and wants to know more about it. Call 973-743-8844 or email info@bloomfieldhistorical.org for more information (membership also makes a great gift!)

Additionally, anyone above the legal voting age who wants to contribute a manuscript is more than welcome. Send manuscripts or story ideas to: info@bloomfieldhistorical.org or mail to HSOB Museum, c/o Bloomfield Public Library, 90 Broad St., Bloomfield, NJ 07003. Please mark submissions *Attention Editor*.



ANTONIN DVORAK AND HIS AMERICAN RESIDENCY

Czech Composer Antonin Dvorak (1841-1904) resided in New York City from 1892-1895 while serving as Director of the National Conservatory of Music of America. Learn more: Nov. 21 at 8pm, 82 Union St., Montclair, NJ. *Presented by The Northern NJ Chapter of The Victorian Society.*

THERE'S A HIGH SCHOOL IN NEW JERSEY

There sure is. As we've been reporting all year, 2011 marks Bloomfield High School's centennial. The Bloomfield Educational Foundation (BEF) celebrated with events that included an annual dinner gala in April that raised over \$30,000 for the BEF, as well as the launch of a commemorative history book reflecting on 100 years at BHS: *There's a High School in New Jersey*. The 112-page book takes a look back at various school activities, students, campus life, sports teams and current events of the past century. As a special English project, every BHS senior was asked to create a title that would be suitable for such a special book. Senior Veronica Burnett penned that title and was awarded a free bid for the senior prom in June.

There's a High School in New Jersey costs \$10 and copies may be purchased at the central office of Bloomfield High School or through the BEF website: www.bloomfielddeducationalfoundation.org. *Information and photo courtesy of BEF.*

Michael Scurman, BEF Chairman, congratulates BHS senior Veronica Burnett, who penned the name of BHS's 100-year history book, *There's a High School in New Jersey*.

