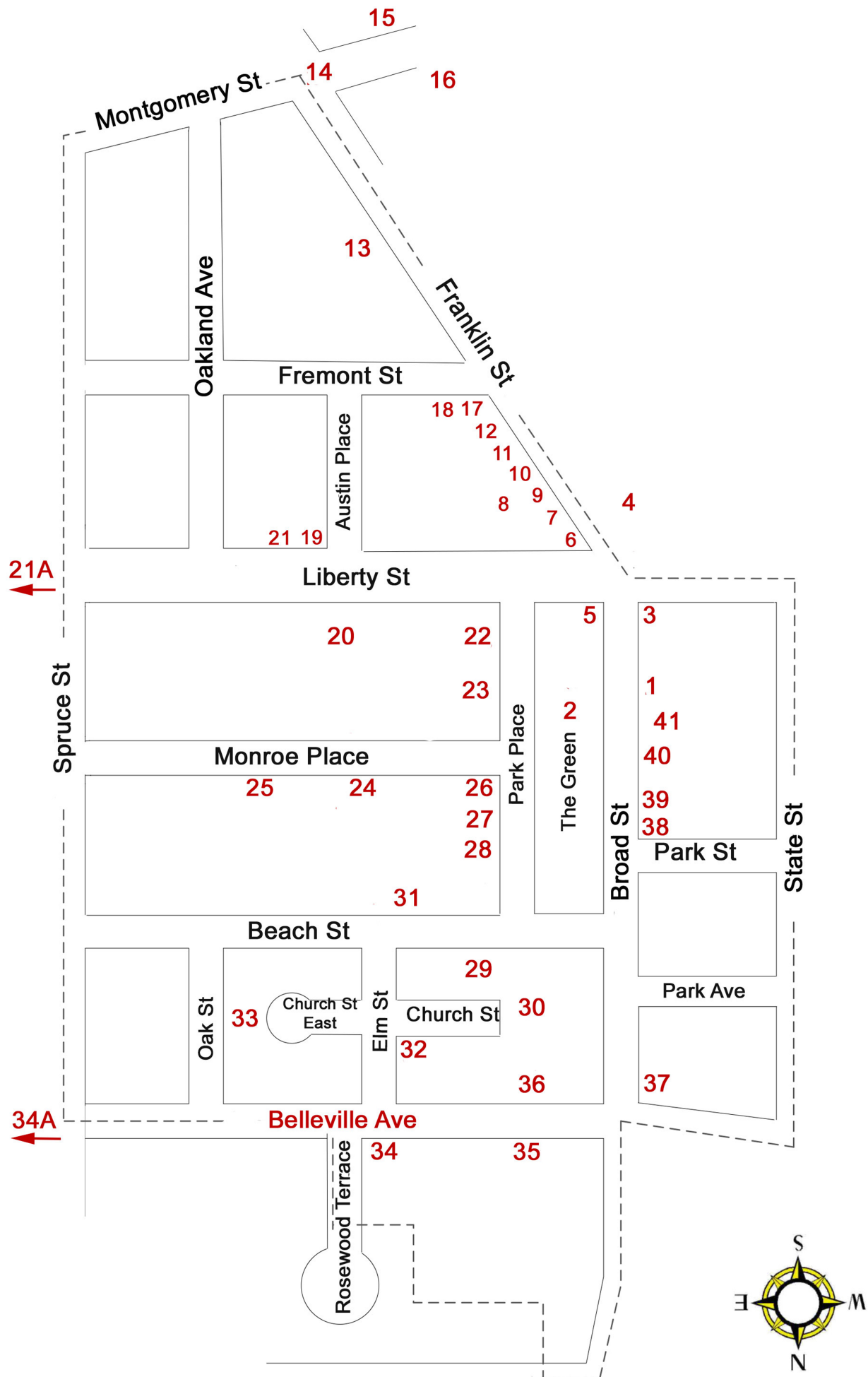




# Walking Tour of the Bloomfield Green Historic District

Historical Society of Bloomfield, 2022





# Walking Tour of the BLOOMFIELD GREEN HISTORIC DISTRICT

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*Starting Point*

**1 84 Broad Street, the Civic Center**

The Civic Center is an important meeting place for the community. It was dedicated on Memorial Day in 1958 to honor all veterans. It has community meeting rooms and currently houses WBMA-TV and a veteran's memorial.



*Directly across Broad Street*

**2 The Green**

The Green was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on April 20, 1978. It was used for training local troops as early as 1775 and as a parade ground. Originally, it was part of the Davis plantation. In 1797, Deacon Joseph Davis sold it for less than \$200.00 deeding it to Bloomfield. It is one of two greens remaining in New Jersey today



*Elm trees on the Green from a 1905 postcard*

*Turn right and walk down Broad Street*

**3 72 Broad Street, Sacred Heart Church**

Sacred Heart Parish officially dates its establishment as July 6, 1878, when Father Joseph Nardiello, its first pastor and founder, celebrated Sunday Mass in Friendship Hall, in the old Bloomfield Hotel at Broad Street and Bloomfield Avenue. By November 17, 1878, a church structure was erected on a plot of land on Bloomfield Avenue and used for worship until the present brick structure, designed by noted architect, Jeremiah O'Rourke, was dedicated in October 1892.

Father Nardiello served as pastor until he died on March 24, 1915. His statue is located next to the Church on Liberty Street.



*Sacred Heart Church at the time of its construction*



*Diagonally across Broad Street in the island between Broad, Franklin and Liberty*

**4 Soldier's and Sailor's Monument**

This monument, located at the corner of Broad and Liberty Streets, was unveiled on June 1, 1912 during the Bloomfield Centennial Celebration. It was designed by Sally James Farham, a well-known sculptress and student of Frederick Remington. The monument is in memory of the Bloomfield citizens who served in the Army and the Navy of the United States. The cost was defrayed by funds raised by Bloomfield schools.



*TIA Collection. HSOB*

*Cross Broad Street to the Green. On the corner of Liberty and Broad Streets*

**5 Joseph Bloomfield Monument**

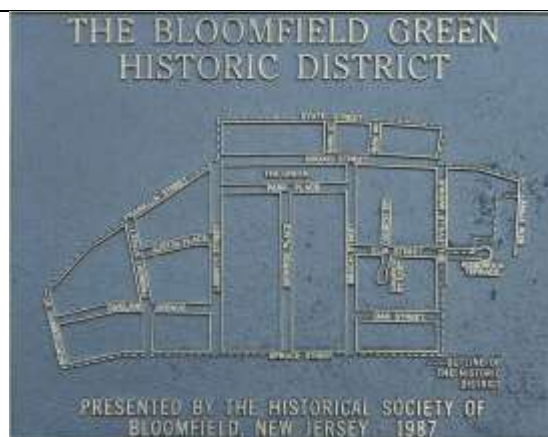
The Major Joseph Bloomfield Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution erected this monument in 1928. It reads, "In honor of Joseph Bloomfield, a Major in the American Revolutionary War 1776 - 1778. He was the Governor of New Jersey from 1801 - 1812, and later a Brigadier General in the War of 1812. The town of Bloomfield was named after General Bloomfield. He delivered an address on this site July 6, 1797."



*Cross Liberty Street to Franklin Street*

**6 Monument of the Bloomfield Green Historic District**

On October 3, 1987 the Historical Society of Bloomfield acknowledged the 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Township of Bloomfield by dedicating this bronze plaque outlining the Bloomfield Green Historic District. The Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on April 20, 1978.



*Hisstoric District plaque on the Green*

*To the right on Franklin Street*

**7 Miles A. Suarez V.F.W. Post 711 Monument**

Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 711 dedicated its all-wars monument. The stone memorial lists 64 conflicts Americans have fought in since 1775. It was erected after a \$10,000 fundraising campaign led by former Mayor John Crecco.

*The building behind the monument at 467 Franklin Street*

**8 Seibert Hall, Bloomfield College**

This building, constructed in 1807, was used by Bloomfield Academy to educate young men for the ministry. It was forced to close 22 years later due to a Smallpox epidemic. It became the German Theological Seminary in 1872. The mansard roof and ten more rooms were added in 1886. The building was named for Dr. George C. Seibert, a distinguished member of the faculty.



*Seibert Hall in the early 1900s. Photo by Rev. Wilson S. Phraner*

*In front of Seibert Hall*

**9 Church Bell from the German Presbyterian Church**

This bell was hung in 1896 in the German Presbyterian Church at the south-east corner of Park Avenue and State Street. For 70 years, it summoned the community to worship. In 1966 the congregation united with the Church on the Green. The bell was placed here in 1979 to commemorate the services of the German congregation to Church, College and Town.

*Continue on Franklin Street past Knox Hall*

**463 and 455 Franklin Street**

Both of these houses were carefully restored by Bloomfield College in 2010.

**10 463 Franklin Street, Richards Hall**



*Voorhees Hall in the early 1900s. Photo by Nathan Russell*

**11 455 Franklin Street, Voorhees Hall**



*Richard's Hall in the early 1900s. Photo by Nathan Russell*

**12 Helen's Manse, 451 Franklin Street**

James Newbegin Jarvie built the manse as a memorial to his wife. It is an excellent Georgian Revival home built in 1914 and was designed by John F. Capen. It is now owned by Bloomfield College and known as **Jarvie Hall**.

*Continue on Franklin Street past Robert Van Fossan Theater (we'll return to this location) and cross Fremont to and continue on Franklin Street*

**13 409 Franklin Street, the Joseph Davis Homestead**

The Bloomfield Steak & Seafood House occupies the "Old Joseph Davis Homestead." It is the oldest pre-revolutionary home in town built in 1673 and played an important role in the American Revolution. George Washington is known to have visited in 1778. General Knox turned it into a hospital. To the left of the entrance, you can see a well. Legend has it that a recuperating British soldier, so pleased at the care he received, built it as a thank you to his hosts. The founders of the Presbyterian Church, known as the Church on the Green and Old First, held the first Bloomfield church service here and the town charter was signed here.



*The Davis Homestead in 1912. Photo by Rev. Wilson S. Phraner*

*Continue on Franklin Street. As you approach the corner of Franklin and Montgomery, you will see two houses on the left that have been carefully preserved by their owners. At the corner of Franklin and Montgomery is the site of*

**14 Old Indian Trail**

At this point you are on the Old Indian Trail or Watsession Indian Trail. Indian tribes used this as their path from the Hudson to points west. Just west of this spot near Washington Street was the Nishuane Indian Trail, which connected the Passaic River with the Indian camps in the Watchung Mountains. George Washington used the trail as the main roadway to Morristown.

*Look to the right on Montgomery Street and you will see*

**15 Town Hall**

The Municipal Building was built in 1927



**16 Post Office**

Built in a style similar to the Municipal building





*Walk back on Franklin Street past the Bloomfield Steak House and cross Freemont Street*

**17 449 Franklin Street, Robert V. Van Fossan Theater**

In 1869 Westminster Church began. It was an offshoot of "Old First" Bloomfield Presbyterian Church on the Green. In 1966 it became part of Bloomfield College and is now the Van Fossen Theater.



*Photo by Nathan Russell*

*Turn right and walk down Fremont Street*

**18 Westminster Hall**

The building adjoining Van Fossan Theater was originally called Jarvie Memorial and was Bloomfield's first public library. It was designed by architect, John F. Capen.



*Continue on Fremont Street and turn left onto Austin Place. On Austin Place, you will pass a number of historic houses that are owned by Bloomfield College that have been preserved by the College.  
When you reach the corner of Austin Place and Liberty Street, to the right*

**19 St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church** celebrated its 120<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2017.

*Straight ahead across Liberty Street*

**20 Parking lot - Former location of Center School**

Also known as Liberty Street School, Center School was constructed in 1890. It was considered one of the finest examples of Queen Anne architecture in a public building in NJ. The building was sold to Bloomfield College, renamed Austin Hall and used for student activities and offices. The building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Sadly, the building burned down in a spectacular fire on October 6, 1979.



*The Center School*

*Make a right onto Liberty Street and walk to*

**21 198 Liberty Street, the Mable Sociables Club**

In 1866 a small group of Bloomfield citizens formed a club called the Mable Sociables. In 1875 the group had grown large enough to build this structure. The club ceased to be in 1892 and the building became a private residence. In 1925 an addition was added and it became the **George Morris School**. The school closed in 1976 and Bloomfield College acquired the building. In 2016, the College preserved the building and incorporated it into the **Center for Technology and Creativity**.



*From Bloomfield Revisted, Branch and Kuras, 2006*

**Alternate Route:** *Morris Canal Greenway. For an extended walk, continue on Liberty Street, cross Spruce Street and walk to JFK Drive, site of*

**21A Morris Canal Monument**

This monument to the Morris Canal was placed by Boy Scouts in 1960. The Morris Canal Greenway follows JFK Drive from Liberty Street north to East Passaic Avenue



*If you took the alternate route, return to Liberty Street and Austin Place.*

*Turn around a walk back on Liberty Street, crossing Austin Place then crossing Liberty Street at the Austin Place crosswalk. Turn left on Liberty Street and walk to Park Place. Turn right onto Park Place*

**22 11 Park Place, Park Place Apartments**

These four story walkups, which were built in 1915, are a good example of the earliest form of the “garden apartment.” Though quite different from the residential structures in the area, these apartments blend well with the overall scale of the Green.



*Apartments at 11 Park Place in 1945.  
Photo by Frederick Branch*

*Continue on Park Place along the Green and on the right, you will come to*

**23 23 Park Place**

Originally Dr. Curtis' house. In 1954, 23 Park Place was conjoined with 17 Park Place, clad with artificial stone and turned into the Park Manor Nursing Home. It was purchased by Bloomfield College and is currently being used as a dormitory.



*The house as it appeared in 1912 decorated for the Centennial. Photo by Rev. Wilson S. Phraner*

*Continue on Park Place to Monroe Place and turn right on Monroe Place*

**24 80 to 34 Monroe Place, Victorian Row**

Built by Joseph P. Hague starting in 1874, these Victorian cottages show the influence of the earlier gothic revival as it appeared in the cottage style. This is particularly evident in the articulated verge boards, the overhanging gables, as well as in the irregular silhouettes and asymmetrical broken masses.



*81 Monroe Place was the photographic studio of Henry Volmer*

*Continue on Monroe Place*

**25 63 Monroe Place, Charles Warren Eaton House**

Eaton, a tonalist and landscape artist, moved to Bloomfield in 1887 to experience a slower-paced life in a more rural setting. He built a home and studio at this address and it looks much the same today as it did when Eaton lived here. He won numerous international awards for his oil paintings of serene landscapes which included Bloomfield scenes of the Morris Canal, Third River and Oakes Pond. Several of his oil paintings are on display in the Bloomfield Public Library and the Museum of the Historical Society of Bloomfield. Eaton died in 1937 and is buried in Bloomfield Cemetery.



*Photo by Charles Warren Eaton*



*Cross Monroe Place and walk back to Park Place. Turn right onto Park Place*

**26 35 Park Place, Dr. Wilson House**

This Queen Anne house is a fine example of a well-preserved Shingle Style. It was built around 1885 and is particularly interesting in its details. The house has been carefully restored by its current owner.

*Continue on Park Place*

**27 41 Park Place, Theodore Ward House**

Built by an early president of the Bloomfield Savings Bank in 1887 and designed by New York architect, Clarence W. Smith. Built at a cost of \$12,000, the building originally had an iron balustrade running across the slate covered roof. It has been recognized by the Society of Architectural Historians for its many merits. The house has been lovingly restored to its original character by the current owners.



*The "before" photo of the house when it was clad in aluminum siding*

*Continue on Park Place to*

**28 53 Park Place, Israel Currie Ward House**

This house was designed by Ward in 1839 as his own residence. It displays fine Georgian Classical symmetry in its window placement, the double-end chimneys, and entranceway. The original barn of this house now belongs to the Edward Griffin Ward House on Beach Street.



*Historical photo of the house taken from the Green*

*Cross Beach Street and walk on the sidewalk towards the Church on the Green. On your right, you will pass the*

**29 Manse and Parish House**

The Manse (white clapboard house at 67 Park Place) was built in 1822 by the Caleb Davis family. It is now the Manse of the Presbyterian Church on the Green.

The Parish House, the small red brick building between the Church and the Manse, was built in 1840. The Parish House was constructed for small devotional meetings and was used by the Young Men's Lyceum which held debates and literary exercises. It was also used as the Town Hall for many years.



*Historical Hand-colored magic lantern slide of the Parish House*

30	<p><b>Bloomfield Presbyterian Church on the Green</b></p> <p>Organized in 1794 the congregation first met in the home of Deacon Joseph Davis, today known as the Bloomfield Steak &amp; Seafood Restaurant (#13). Major Joseph Bloomfield made the first contribution toward a church Building Fund and the parish named the church in his honor. The present building was erected in 1796. It suffered structural damage from the October 2011 earthquake and is currently in the process of being repaired.</p>	 <p><i>Historical hand-colored magic lantern slide of the Church on the Green</i></p>
Turn around and return to Beach Street and turn left to		
31	<p><b>86 Beach Street, Edwin Griffith Ward House</b> (white frame house)</p> <p>This house of 1864 can best be described as simplified Carpenter Gothic. It is in an excellent state of preservation. Its outward appearance, with broad verandas and tall four light windows with louvered shutters harmonizing with the spacious grounds which surround it, make this home the most distinctive Post Civil War period dwelling in the town.</p>	
Continue on Beach Street, then turn left onto Elm Street. Continue on Elm to Church Street and make a left to		
32	<p><b>7 Church Street, former home of Andrew E. Svenson</b></p> <p>Svenson was a well-known children's author and publisher who was born in Belleville in 1910, grew up in Newark and eventually moved to Bloomfield. He wrote under various pseudonyms and shared writing with other authors. He authored or co-authored more than 70 books, including books for the HARDY BOYS, BOBBSEY TWINS, TOM SWIFT and HONEY BUNCH series. He is best known for THE HAPPY HOLLISTERS under the name of Jerry West and THE TOLLIVER FAMILY as Alan Slone. He is the author of "The Bloomfield Story" a play celebrating the Town's Sesquicentennial anniversary. Svenson was a resident of Bloomfield for 25 years. He died on August 21, 1975.</p>	
Walk back to Elm Street and cross to Church Street East to		
33	<p><b>Colonial Village</b></p> <p>The homes in Colonial Village were built in the 1930s on the grounds of the Italianate Style mansion of James Beach mansion (after whom the street was named). Stones from the old Beach Mansion were reused in two of the houses on Church Street East.</p>	
Return to Elm Street, turn right and walk to Belleville Avenue to		
34	<p><b>317 Belleville Avenue, the Edmund H. Davey House</b></p> <p>The house which was threatened with demolition in the 1970s has found new life as offices. Mr. Davey, a wealthy bookbinder and owner of Davey's Mill, built the house in 1856. It is in the Italianate style even though its center hall plan recalls the earlier Federal and Greek Revival periods.</p>	

**Alternate Route:** *Oakeside Bloomfield Cultural Center and Morris Canal Greenway. For an extended walk, continue on Belleville Avenue passing under the railroad trestle and cross Spruce Street. At JFK Drive is the Morris Canal Greenway. Cross JFK Drive and on the corner of Belleville Avenue and JFK Drive is*

**34A 240 Belleville Avenue, Oakeside Bloomfield Cultural Center**

Designed by Charles Granville Jones and built in 1895. The Oakes family owned Oakes Mill which was known for its Oakes Blue – wool that was used in Civil War uniforms. The last Oakes descendant resident donated the house to the town in 1979 and it has been used a cultural center since.



*Oakeside before the addition of the solalrium*

*If you took the alternate route, return to Belleville Avenue at Elm Street.*

*Turn left on Belleville Avenue to*

**35 343 Belleville Avenue, the Bradbury/Baldwin House**

William Batchelder Bradbury, a popular composer of Sunday school music and church hymns, lived in this house in the mid-nineteenth century and was active in the nearby First Presbyterian Church. He composed the tune to “Jesus Loves Me,” and many other popular hymns. He was born in York, Maine in 1816, died in 1868 and is buried in the Bloomfield Cemetery.

The original Baldwin owners could trace their ancestry back to England. David Baldwin was an early settler and charter member of the church on the Green.



*Historical photo from the Nathan Russell Collection shows the house as it looked when Willam Bradbury lived there*

*On your left at the corner of Belleville Avenue and Broad Street is*

**36 155 Broad Street, the School Administration Building**

Although the first school in Bloomfield was built in 1758 at Franklin Street and Willard Avenue, the second school in town was built at this site in 1782 on the Davis Estate. The original log structure was enlarged and replaced many times. Alexander Wilson, a famous Scottish poet and later the father of American ornithology, taught in this school in 1801. In 1849 it became the first official public school in Bloomfield. It was rebuilt in 1871 and housed the original high school from 1872 to 1912. Park Grammar School took over the building from 1913 to 1940. It is currently the Bloomfield Board of Education administration offices.



*The School Administration building as it looked when it was the High School in the early 1900s. From the Nathan Russell Collection*



*Continue to the corner of Broad Street and Belleville Avenue. Across Broad Street is*

**37 160 Broad Street, Bloomfield High School**

Its cornerstone was laid in 1911 and it opened for classes in January of 1913. Beginning in 1923 many additions have been added. Large additions were added on both sides of the building in 2007.

The large purple beech tree in front of the school on the right was planted by the Town Improvement Association in 1919 to honor service men who lost their lives in World War I.



*Photo of the original High School before any of the additions*

*Turn left onto Broad Street past the Church on the Green and you will come to*

**38 120 Broad Street, Park United Methodist Church**

The Park United Methodist Church, founded as a congregation in 1821, is the third oldest religious group in Bloomfield. The beautiful Gothic structure is the third building that has housed the congregation. It was built in 1928, and the adjoining Parish House was erected in 1965 of granite from the same quarry. The first Methodist church of stone was built in 1821 when there were only two other churches in the town – the Presbyterian Church on the Green and the Dutch Reformed Church in Brookdale. An earlier frame structure, built in 1853, stood on this same spot.

*Continue on Broad Street to*

**39 112 Broad Street, Madame Cooke's School**

This house, built in 1836, was the site of the Bloomfield Female Seminary, a school for young ladies. It was called Madame Cooke's School after its distinguished teacher and principal, Harriet B. Cooke. It was a powerful intellectual and religious influence in the community.



*Bloomfield Revisited, Branch and Kuras, 2006*

*Continue to*

**40 90 Broad Street, Bloomfield Public Library**

This building, now the Children's Library, was designed by John F. Capen and opened in March 1927. It was originally the Public Library. It is a Colonial Revival building incorporating elements of Maryland Tidewater architecture of the Federal Period and Roman architecture in the portico. The Library's *Little Theatre* is located in the basement and the Museum of the Historical Society of Bloomfield is on the third floor.

The current Public Library (behind and to the left of the Children's Library) opened in 1967.



*The original Bloomfield Public Library from a 1900s postcard*

*Enter the Children's Library and take the elevator to the third floor ("M" on the elevator panel) to*

**40 Museum of the Historical Society of Bloomfield**

The Museum was an outgrowth of the Sesquicentennial Celebration in 1962. The collection consists of furniture, clothing and accessories, tools, household items, paintings, toys, posters, memorabilia, dioramas, maps, newspapers, postcards, letters, deeds, documents, photographs, books, pamphlets and clippings, and Charles Warren Eaton paintings as well as many other artifacts related to Bloomfield.

Hours are Wed. 2:00pm – 4:30pm all year long;  
Sat. 10:00 am – 12:30 pm from September to  
June; and by appointment.

<http://hsob.org>



*Between the Children's Library and the Civic Center, in front of the Public Library is the*

**41 Armillary on the Library Esplanade**

This impressive metalwork was donated in 1962 by Bloomfield's public and parochial school children, who gave it to the Town to commemorate Bloomfield's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Kennet Lynch, a Bloomfield artisan who began as a Bloomfield blacksmith's apprentice, designed and executed this monument. Eleven years later, in solemn ceremonies the granite monument immediately in front of the Armillary was dedicated to honor the fallen heroes of the Korean and Viet Nam Wars.

Prepared by the Historical Research Committee of the Bloomfield Bicentennial Committee chaired by Dorothy Johnson, October 13, 2012.

The committee members were:

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Updated in 2018 by

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- Maya Lordo, Township of Bloomfield Department of Health & Human Services
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Special acknowledgement is given to the Historical Society of Bloomfield, Environmental Action Group Inc., and Brendon Hughes for information and ideas gleaned from their brochures of previous walking tours.