



# The Town Crier.

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER—THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF BLOOMFIELD



VOLUME I, NUMBER 3

BLOOMFIELD, NEW JERSEY

SEPTEMBER, 1969

## HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM

May 4, 1969 is a day to be remembered by those who attended the opening of the Museum. Mayor Walter J. Davis declared "...for while today we are honoring history, the Historical Society of Bloomfield is, in fact, making it!"

### HAPPENINGS . . . Part I

#### A Date to Keep

On September 29 (Monday) 7 to 9 p.m., The Friends of the Bloomfield Library will inaugurate a new series of "Informals".

#### First Event

In cooperation with the Historical Society of Bloomfield a combination tour of the Library and Museum will be given. The Library Director, Howard Vogt, will personally conduct small groups through the Library facilities, ending at the Museum where Society members will explain the exhibits.

### HAPPENINGS . . . Part II

#### October 2, 1969

The first meeting of the Major Joseph Bloomfield Chapter of the D. A. R. (evening group) will be October 2, 1969, 8 p.m., at the Historical Society Museum.

Miss Helen Hunt, Chairman, will preside at this meeting, assisted by Misses Maybelle Holmes and Harriet Deane, Hostesses.

It promises to be an interesting evening. A tour of the Museum will be conducted by Society members headed by Mrs. Peter Dorn, President. Refreshments will be served immediately following the tour.

### The League of Historical Societies of New Jersey

The Annual Meeting of the League of Historical Societies of New Jersey will be Saturday, September 27, 1969 at Skylands Manor, Ringwood-Sloatsburg Road, Ringwood, New Jersey. Please send reservations to Mrs. Kenneth Hirsch, Box 1, Newfoundland, N.J. 07435, by September 22nd. Reservation and box lunch: \$2.00.

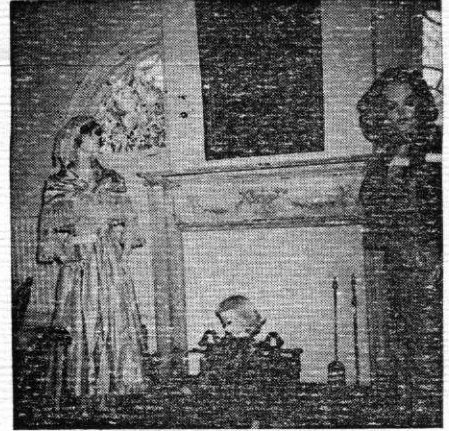
### Mrs. Dorn Named Trustee

Mrs. Peter Dorn, President of the Historical Society of Bloomfield has been named a trustee to the New Jersey State Canal Historical Committee. She attended the first organization meeting of the group at Waterloo.

### HIGHLIGHTS OF OPENING DAY



(left to right) Mayor Walter Davis and Mrs. Peter Dorn  
Background: Mr. & Mrs. John Ambler



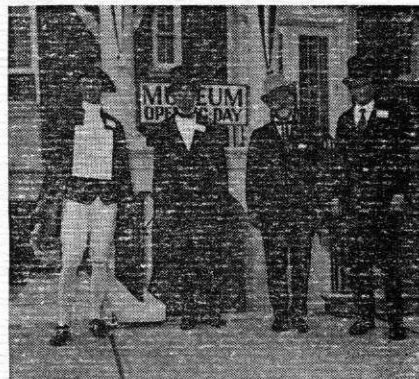
A corner of the Historical Society of Bloomfield Museum



Mrs. Peter Dorn, Howard Vogt, Mrs. Roy E. Sjogren



Mrs. Lillian Ports, Mrs. David Oakes II and the late Mrs. Louis Pangaro



Richard Triemer, Kenneth McCormick, George T. Boyle, Frederick Branch



Miss Judy Ward and Miss Cathy Dillon

### Lost Landmarks — Number Two

## The Residence of Dr. Harry E. Richards

For the past 30 years students attending the Junior High School on Franklin Street have enjoyed the view from what may be the highest natural elevation in Bloomfield, a view that was for almost 90 years the exclusive privilege of the Richards Family. The large colored map now hanging in the Public Library shows every building and property boundary in

town as it was in 1865 and on it this house is shown standing with comparatively few neighbors. It had been built there by the original Harry Richards, a successful Newark businessman, who came out to Bloomfield about 1847. The house is best known, however, as the residence of his son, Dr. Harry Edward Richards, although

—continued on page 2, col. 2



## THE TOWN CRIER

594 Bloomfield Avenue  
Bloomfield, New Jersey 07003

Editor: MARGUERITE M. ELLIOTT  
Associate Editor: WILLIAM M. LITVANY  
Producer and Art Director:  
FREDERICK W. BRANCH

### IN MEMORIAM

The Historical Society of Bloomfield has lost a close friend, Mrs. Louis (Yolanda) Pangaro, former trustee. She entered into eternal rest on July 27, 1969. Our deepest sympathy is extended to her family. She will be missed.

### NEW OFFICERS

The new slate of officers for the coming year will be presented at the September 17th meeting of the Historical Society. They are:

President: MRS. PETER DORN  
1st Vice President: MRS. ROY E. SJOGREN  
2nd Vice President:

FREDERICK W. BRANCH

Recording Secretary:

MISS MARGARET SHERLOCK

Corresponding Secretary:

MRS. DAVID M. ANDREWS, JR.

Treasurer: HAROLD BROTHERHOOD

Curator: MRS. DAVID JOHNSON

#### STANDING COMMITTEE

Program Chairman: THEODORE HOCK

Historian: MARGUERITE ELLIOTT

Publicity: MRS. ROY E. SJOGREN

Librarian: MR. WILLIAM C. DEMMERT

Museum Committee: MRS. E. L. COOMBS

Preservation Officer:

FREDERICK W. BRANCH

#### TRUSTEES

MRS. E. L. COOMBS

MISS MARGUERITE ELLIOTT

MR. WILLIAM LITVANY

DR. DAVID ROBERTS

☞ Mrs. E. L. Coombs will be the speaker for the evening. Her subject will be "The Yantacaw of Essex County". ☞

### ASSOCIATE EDITOR

THE TOWN CRIER takes pleasure in welcoming Trustee William M. Litvany to its staff as our new Associate Editor.

### A SMALL ODDMENT

"Whatnot"? a . . . "What - - - ? The WHATNOT in our Museum is disconcerting to many visitors. What is a Whatnot? The first mention of this comic name occurs in 1808. Whatnots had horizontal divisions forming tiers of shelves for the display of china, brick-a-brac, etc. Today you will find the Whatnot (etagers) being used by home decorators in wicker, in wood, in stainless steel; you will find it in stylings running the gamut of the centuries. Come see our WHATNOT.

## MUSEUM COMMITTEE

Mrs. Elizabeth L. Coombs, Chairman of the Museum Committee, is hoping that members from the Historical Society will volunteer to "Museum-sit" occasionally on Wednesday afternoons (1 to 3 p.m.) to release "regulars"—Margaret Riggin, Betty Coombs, Maryann Dorn and William Demmert. This will free them to perform other duties.

No special knowledge or training is required, just a desire to serve and a liking for people.

The Museum Committee is grateful for recent acquisitions to the Society. These

splendid articles will be displayed on a rotating basis.

The attendance was excellent in the air conditioned Museum during the summer months. The children and adults found the displays very interesting.

The committee is anxious to extend Museum hours. In order to accomplish this, the Society needs volunteers. Interested persons please contact Mrs. Elizabeth Coombs.

When you visit the Museum see the many items for sale.

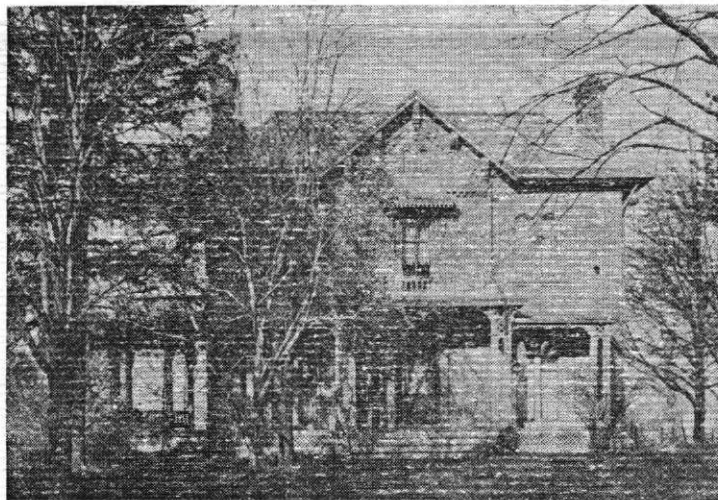
### Lost Landmarks

(continued)

Dr. Richards lived in it for a very short time.

Dr. Richards enjoyed three separate careers in his lifetime (1853-1923); that of physician, lawyer and educator. At his death he was president of Bloomfield Theological Seminary (now Bloomfield College) and Superintendent of the Sunday School of Westminster Church. He also found time to co-found *The Bloomfield Citizen*, an early local newspaper.

Dr. Richards married Miss Helen Louise Van Liew, daughter of Cornelius Van Liew and Sarah Elizabeth (Oakes) Van Liew, in a ceremony at Old First Church on October 29, 1879. A lavish reception followed at the home of Miss Van Liew's Uncle, Thomas Oakes, on Belleville Avenue. The wedding gown worn by Miss Van Liew has been presented to the Historical Society Museum by Mrs. David Oakes II and was displayed in Lipton's



window at the time the Museum was formally opened last May.

The Richards' home was of unusually massive construction even by the standards of its day with ceilings that were originally 14 feet high and later "lowered" to 11 feet 6 inches. Central heating was installed in 1920 and it is said that workmen had to all but blast their way through the solid brick walls to conceal the new plumbing and electrical wiring. Dr. Richards' large collection of books required no less than three rooms of the house be designated as libraries, but there was plenty of room left over for the massive furnishings of the Victorian Period, along with the usual marble mantels, large mirrors and some fine oil paintings.

Mrs. Richards devoted a great deal of her time to civic affairs. She was active in the Town Improvement Association which past and future generations have to thank for, among other things, the development of Watsessing Park in 1916. On Mrs. Richards' death in the mid-1930's the house passed into the possession of her nephew, Alfred Van Liew, who sold it to the Board of Education in 1937 as a site for a Junior High School. It was thought at the time that the use of the property as a part of the educational system of the town would have pleased both Dr. and Mrs. Richards. This is perhaps so, but it is also unfortunate that Bloomfield has lost one of its great houses of the Victorian Era, the number of which grow fewer with the passing years and the so-called march of "progress".

### WELCOME MAT

The Historical Society of Bloomfield welcomes the following new members:

#### BLOOMFIELD:

Mr. Ellis B. Crane

Mr. and Mrs. F. H. Davis, Jr.

Mrs. Eleanor Gerlock

Mrs. William B. Heller

Mr. and Mrs. Paul Hughes

Miss Betty Kingsley

Mr. and Mrs. T. F. Skillman

Dr. Benjamin Wood

#### EAST ORANGE:

Mrs. C. G. Schober

#### GLEN RIDGE:

Robert W. Keller

Mr. and Mrs. Edmund O. Warren

#### NEWARK:

Miss Eleanor M. Bloomfield

#### UPPER MONTCLAIR:

Mrs. Issac D. Shank