



The New Town Crier

Official Newsletter of the Historical Society of Bloomfield



BLOOMFIELD, NEW JERSEY 07003

May 2023

SAVE THE DATE

MAY MEETING

Tuesday, May 23, 2023

7:30 PM

BLOOMFIELD CIVIC CENTER

84 Broad Street, Bloomfield, NJ

Walking the Old Boonton Line:

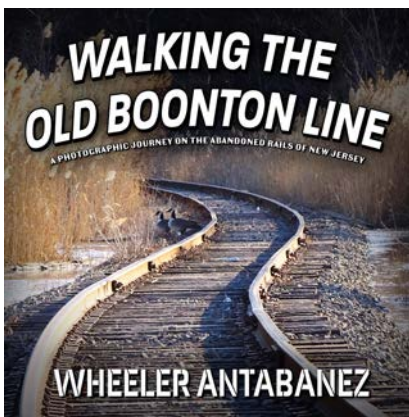
A Live Video Experience

Presented by

Wheeler Antabanez

In 2021, Wheeler Antabanez—author, videographer and intrepid explorer of the abandoned—hiked the now defunct Erie Railroad tracks from Montclair to Jersey City, filming the urban landscape of the soon-to-be Essex-Hudson Greenway. The journey took him through Montclair, Glen Ridge, Bloomfield, Belleville, Newark, Kearny, and Secaucus, ending in Jersey City.

Antabanez will offer live narration over this fascinating film, so if you've ever wanted to be an urban explorer, take this armchair journey with us as tour guide Antabanez ushers us along this forsaken route. His new book, "Walking the Old Boonton Line: A Photographic Journey on the Abandoned Rails of New Jersey," will be available for purchase. This presentation is free and open to the public.



Black-Eyed Susan named official flower of Bloomfield



The Township of Bloomfield and the Bloomfield Beautification Committee announced that the community has officially chosen the Black Eyed Susan as the Townships'

official flower. The flower was popular due to its striking yellow petals and dark center, and was officially named as the official town flower by proclamation of the mayor and council at the April 17 council meeting.

A competition ran Feb–March and offered the choice of the Black Eyed Susan, Cardinal Flower, Phlox and New York Aster, all vetted by the Bloomfield Beautification Committee for qualities of ease-of-growth and care, native, perennial and ability to attract important pollinators such as bees and butterflies. *Editor's Note: Your editor voted for the Cardinal Flower, as its deep red and gray colors resemble the official colors of Bloomfield High School.*

To celebrate, the Beautification Committee will be planting the flower throughout Bloomfield's public gardens. Residents are encouraged to plant them in their own gardens, as well. A limited number of seedlings will be given away to residents on **May 22** at the Committee's annual garden planting in the courtyard outside the Public Library & Civic Center on Broad Street.

SAVE THE DATE

JUNE MEETING

Thursday, June 29, 2023

7:30 PM

**OAKESIDE BLOOMFIELD
CULTURAL CENTER**

240 Belleville Avenue, Bloomfield, NJ

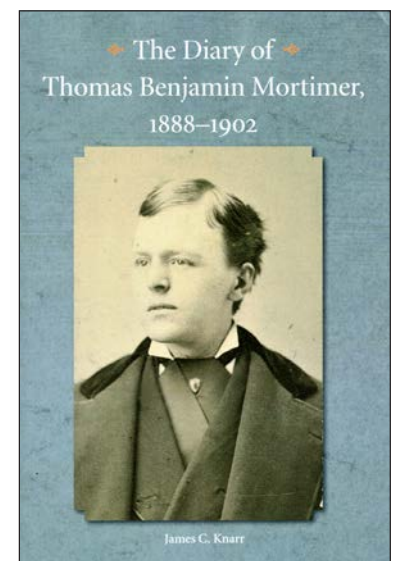
Thomas Mortimer & Gilded Age Workers at

**Bloomfield's Oakes Mill:
1888–1902**

Presented by

**Jay Knarr, descendent of
Thomas Mortimer**

Through an examination of the diary of Blfd. resident Thomas Mortimer (1854–1941), a long-time loom fixer at Oakes Mill, Knarr will offer a glimpse into a working class life of Bloomfield in the 1890s. Parking onsite & on Memorial Park Dr., across Belleville Ave. This presentation is free and open to the public. Mortimer's *Diary* will be available via a small monetary donation to the HSOB.



REMEMBERING CAMP PINELOCK

In December 2022, S. David Phraner published *Camp Pinelock: An Anecdotal History, Candid Observations & Memories Of Camp Pinelock, Once a Unique Bloomfield Girl Scout Camp in Knowlton Township, Warren County, NJ (1946–1961); Offered In Memory of Florence C.C. “Pepper” Phraner, Camp Director; Dedicated to the Historical Society of Bloomfield and the former Bloomfield Girl Scout Council.*



Florence C.C. “Pepper” Phraner, Camp Director, and the author’s mother, during the camp’s formative years.

to read this fascinating, complete history and visit the museum to peruse the photo album and artifacts firsthand. Please send any further Camp Pinelock photos, anecdotes or memories via email to: info@HSOB.org or mail them to our PO Box.

Additional photo on p. 4.

Mr. Phraner was also kind enough to donate a treasure trove—photo scrap book, camp artifacts and three 200-foot reels of 8mm film—to the HSOB Museum.

We thank him for this generous gift.

Camp Pinelock was the Bloomfield Council Girl Scouts’ Summer Camp in Knowlton

Township, Warren County, NJ. It opened in 1947 when Joseph R. Gardener, and his wife Arline, donated 23 acres (a former private summer camp dating back to the 1930s) to the Bloomfield Girl Scout Council in 1946. All the elements of a summer camp were part of that gift: a mess hall, a lake for aquatic activities and a series of units adapted to house girls from young Brownie-age to teen-aged Girl Scouts.

The HSOB invites readers to visit hsob.org/CampPinelock.pdf

“Some may ask, what is the point in recording the history of a Bloomfield institution that expired over 60 years ago? Pinelock helped build the character of the women who are the mothers and grandmothers of today’s women leaders in contemporary society. These leaders passed that Girl Scout and Pinelock character on to the women of today.”— S. David Phraner



Gold-tone charm bracelet; note the sailboat.



July 27, 1947: Brownies Karen Kennedy & Karin Johnson take their dolls on a hayride.



Square dance! 1947



Agnes the cook by the totem pole. 1947



Counselors Bev (or Bea) Roberts (left) and Anne Sciana sit on the running board of the camp's 1938 Ford Panel Truck. 1947



Enjoying watermelon, post foil cooking on the campfire. 1947



One of four "Caravan" cabins. 1947



At left, swimmers on the dock; at right, non-swimmers in a lake enclosure for their own safety. 1947



General Joseph Bloomfield

THE NEW TOWN CRIER

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF
THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OF BLOOMFIELD

90 Broad Street
Bloomfield, NJ 07003

Postal address: PO Box 1074
Bloomfield, NJ 07003-1074
Tel: 973-743-8844
E-mail: info@hsob.org
www.hsob.org

OFFICERS

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This 1954 postcard shows the Camp Pinelock dining hall and lake.

Can You Identify?



Surly teenagers in Bloomfield? Surely not! We actually don't know the provenance of this photo, except that it was found (unmarked) in the collection of the late *Editor Emeritus* Fred Branch, presumably for eventual inclusion in *The New Town Crier*. Anyone with info about the location or people in this long-ago (1920s?) snapshot, please contact the HSOB.

HSOB Trustee Mark Szep presented the Museum with a collection of 15 printed programs distributed at anniversary celebrations for the First Baptist Church of Bloomfield's Sabbath (Sunday) School in 1852. The programs span the years 1869–1927. Also included is a program for the 75th Anniversary of the church's founding from November 1926 and a program for Sunday services on June 19, 1921. The collection is available for museum viewing. *Thank you, Mr. Szep, for this important contribution.*

Museum Acquisitions

