

# BHS NEWSLETTER

B L O O M I N G T O N H I S T O R I C A L S O C I E T Y

## *Notable Bloomington Residents Project is Underway*

### VISIT US!

- Wednesday 1-5 pm
- Thursday 1-8 pm
- Saturday 1-5 pm
- By appointment: call 952-881-4114 to schedule your visit.

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The 20th Anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks led retired newspaper editor Don Heinzman to wonder about Bloomington residents, like Thomas Burnett, Jr., who had made a mark on our nation, state and city.

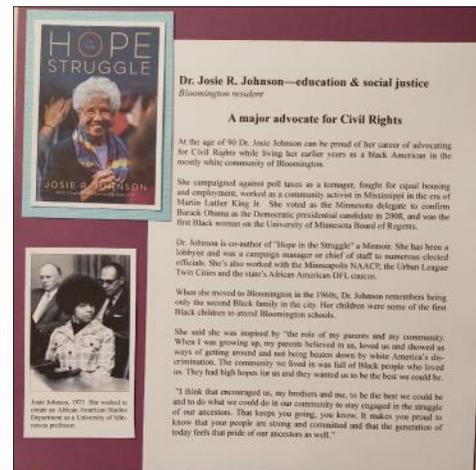
Using popular local social media pages, Don asked for nominations of famous Bloomington residents. The list was a long one.

At first leaning toward well-known professional athletes from Bloomington, the list gradually expanded to include names of people who had made important local impacts in government, education and the arts. Those who lost their lives in military service were also included.

Turning to the Bloomington Historical Society for additional information, Don established a collaboration. The decision was made to focus on people who lived or worked in Bloomington after it became a city in 1961.

A book of short biographies is being created and edited by museum volunteer Jean Bellefeuille. It will be available to the public at the Old Town Hall Museum. Individual pages can be used in future Museum displays or for research.

Don is also arranging for the names to be published in the Bloomington Briefing, a monthly City newsletter.



*Page honoring notable Bloomington resident Dr. Josie Johnson*

Many thanks to the Bloomington residents who nominated people for inclusion. Appreciation also goes to writers who helped compile and write individual biographies.

Finally, we honor the Bloomington residents whose contributions are noted. Their lives serve as a beacon of light, an example of reaching beyond ones self and making a difference in our community and our world.

## *Bloomington Swirlers Square Dancers*

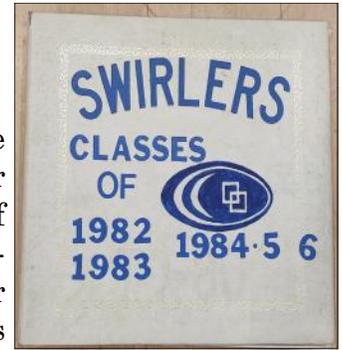
*Twirling and  
Swirling in  
Bloomington  
for over 40  
years.*

For over 40 years, beginning in 1975, the Bloomington Swirlers gathered each September through April to teach and share the art of square dancing. Recently the Bloomington Historical Society received the donation of their large collection of photographs and scrapbooks documenting the organization.

What a fun group this was! Dancing away every holiday, traveling to regional and national dances, camping and picnicking. The group met in various Bloomington schools over the years. Each couple was photographed at their 'graduation' dance. What a wonderful record of the thousands of dancers who stepped through their doors.

Unfortunately, many of the photos had been stored in 'magnetic' photo albums. The slightly sticky pages have proven to be seriously damaging to photos. BHS volunteers have been working to move the photos into archival pages. A generous \$100 donation covered over half the cost of the archival materials needed.

**A reminder: If you have photos still stored in that type of photo album, get busy and move them to a safer storage system.**



## *Upcoming Events*

January is **Membership Renewal** time. Our thanks to all who sent in their 2022 annual memberships in November. A renewal form is on the back page if you still need one. Your membership support is so important right now. As we keep our visitor count low, and hold off on group events while there are still significant health risks, our on-site donations are quite low. Your membership dues and donations will provide for our basic operating expenses until we can be back in full swing again. Please join today!

A **new display** will come to our **Civic Plaza** cabinet in late January and will be up through March. We plan to feature memorabilia from youth organizations that sprang up in Bloomington during the boom years. There are plans to include Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Campfire Girls and 4H. Please stop by and take a look. We welcome you to share your memories of Bloomington youth organizations on our Facebook page.

## RECENT RESEARCH: BLOOMINGTON POSTMASTERS

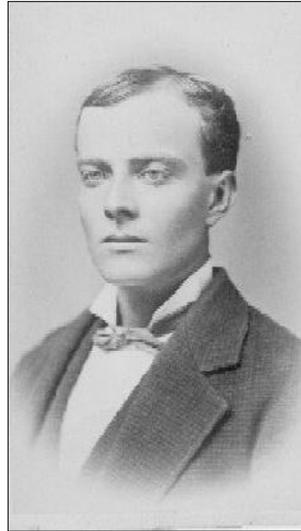
The first Postmaster in Bloomington was Joseph Dean, appointed 29 June 1853. Rueben B. Gibson was appointed in 1855 and served for 10 years. Aaron G. Gillet was next, but only for a year.

In 1866 John Baillif, and later his wife Victorine were Postmasters at the Baillif Store (10200 Old Shakopee Rd.) until 1873. Several short-term Postmasters followed: George Little 1874, Owen Dunbar 1875, Alexander Cumming 1878 and Hector Chadwick 1882. Alfred E. Baillif, son of John, was appointed Postmaster in 1883. He served until the responsibilities were given to the Minneapolis Postmaster in 1903.

Bloomington Ferry had its own post office from 1865 to 1902. Postmasters were Simeon Goodrich 1865, James Brown 1867, Sever Ellingson 1868, and Henry Wigley 1899. The post office was closed in 1902 and was served by the Washburn Postmaster.

There was also a post office in Bloomfield where Alex Schotz was Postmaster from 1884 to 1902 when it went to the Minneapolis Postmaster.

In 1922 a new post office was established in Bloomington —



**Bloomington Postmaster  
from 1883 to 1903  
Alfred Eugene Baillif  
Photo from Ancestry.com**

the Oxboro Post Office. The first Postmaster there was Olive Hornlund. Mrs. Mary A. (Baillif) St. Martin was appointed in 1923 and served for a dozen years.

Several Postmasters followed: William McCutchan 1934, Adelbert Briggs 1935, Chris Hansen 1939, Mrs. Max Ott 1941, Mrs. Mary Cain 1943 and Mrs. Mary Kobs 1944. In 1948 the mail service once again was transferred to the Minneapolis Postmaster.



**Serving as a grocery, general store, post office and first Bloomington telephone exchange, the Baillif Store at Penn and Old Shakopee Road was the hub of the Bloomington community. It was built by brothers Charles and Alfred Baillif in the 1880s. They sold the store in 1947 to Baillif granddaughter Grace St. Martin and her husband Frank Jewson. It became the Bloomington Garden Store operated by Hyman Goldbogen, father of Mike Todd, Hollywood film producer and husband of actress Elizabeth Taylor. The building was destroyed by a fire in 1958.**

**Photo by Del Stelling.**



Photo by Steve Johnson

# BLOOMINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## Old Town Hall Museum

Penn Avenue at Old Shakopee Road

Summer 2021 hours:

Open 1 to 5 pm Wednesdays and Saturdays

Thursdays 1 to 8 pm

### *Mailing address:*

1800 West Old Shakopee Road

Bloomington, Minnesota 55431

Phone: 952-881-4114

Email: bloomitarian@gmail.com

Facebook: BloomingtonMNHistoricalSociety

Founded in 1964, the Bloomington Historical Society is dedicated to the discovery, preservation and dissemination of knowledge about the City of Bloomington.

Our mission is to collect, preserve and hold in the public trust the many artifacts, photographic images, memorabilia and life stories of the people who have lived in Bloomington.

The organization is run entirely by volunteers and we depend entirely upon your donations for our operations, programs and displays. We are grateful for your ongoing support.

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL— 2022

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE/ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

### MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

____ Individual	\$ 30.00
____ Family	\$ 50.00
____ Contributing	\$ 100.00
____ Life	\$ 250.00
____ Patron	\$ 500.00
____ Corporate	\$ 600.00
____ Benefactor	\$1,000.00

Additional donation: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to:  
Bloomington Historical Society

Mail to: Bloomington Historical Society  
1800 West Old Shakopee Road  
Bloomington, MN 55431

Or

Drop off at Old Town Hall Museum  
Wed, Thurs or Sat. 1-5pm

\_\_\_\_ YES, I'd love to volunteer at the Old  
Town Hall Museum. I'm available: (circle)

Tuesday afternoon    Wednesday afternoon

Thursday afternoon    Thursday evening

Saturday afternoon    Other: \_\_\_\_\_