

BHS NEWSLETTER

BLOOMINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY - BLOOMINGTON, MINNESOTA

Annual Meeting and Member Appreciation

VISIT US!

- Tuesday
 - Wednesday
 - Thursday
 - Saturday
- Open 1-5 PM.



The first Sunday in November is the date for the Bloomington Historical Society Annual Meeting as required in our bylaws. This year the Annual meeting will be held on Sunday, November 1st, 2026 at the Old Town Hall beginning at 2:00 PM.

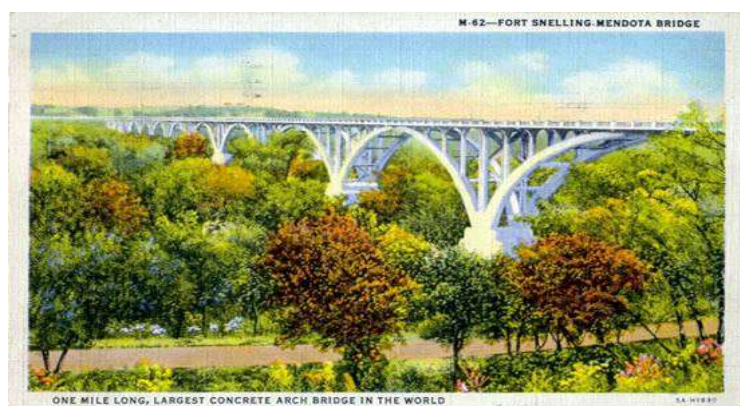
Prior to the business portion of the meeting, we will honor all our volunteers and have a social time to meet the board and mingle with fellow Historical Society members.

Voting for board members takes place at this meeting also. Ballots will be mailed out in advance to members, and can be mailed back to us or brought to this meeting. New members may register at the meeting.

Please join us on November 1, 2026 at 2pm at Old Town Hall.

Mendota Bridge 100th Anniversary

November 8, 2026 is the 100th Anniversary of the opening of the Mendota Bridge. The bridge is dedicated to the Minnesota "Gopher Gunners" National Guard 151st Field Artillery for their service in World War One (WWI). Two men from Bloomington were in the unit: Leigh Harrison and Lee Palmer.



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Paging Through the Past

By Judith Miller, BHS volunteer

Memories are treasure tidbits of time long ago. While many of us remember major historical events shaping our lives like wars and scientific discoveries, fun minutia which adds flavor to our lives is often lost. But what if there was a way to know what Bloomington folks were doing in 1919, what students were studying who got married, the price of corn, the weather, real estate for sale, even poetry written by school children?

You can do this by simply spending afternoons at the Old Town Hall browsing through Bloomington's first newspaper printed long before the first edition of the Bloomington Sun appeared in 1953. The Sun became the Sun Suburbanite, and later the Sun-Current in January of 1994 before merging in 2018 with the Richfield edition.

Bloomington's first Community Service Newsletter was printed via the mimeograph in 1919 with input from the schools. At this time, the majority of Bloomington's one room schools had merged into the Consolidated School on Penn Avenue. The articles were written by students with oversight by the faculty. Most issues included poetry written by a student. The Newsletter was about happenings in Bloomington Schools as well as what was happening in the community.

For example, the school reported in 1919 that students in General Science were learning to make artificial ice, students in English had to buy a dictionary, and the Manual Training Class was learning to make "meat boards" and coat hangers.

The paper also reported the news of the day. Mrs. Moir and her daughter traveled from Los Angeles to Douglas, AZ, an 800-mile journey by auto; 120 of those miles driven in bitter cold, and

ninety-eight miles across the American Desert. And the George Chadwicks had a weekend visitor. In June of 1922, Mrs. Jesse Palmer was selling fifteen acres of meadow land on the river bottoms. Mrs. Tapping was selling ice and Ed Ellingson had ewes for sale.

Browsing through the papers, we learn that in April of 1929, Scarlet Fever was rampant in Bloomington with as many as 135 students absent in January and February as some teachers were absent over a month.

In 1929, the Paper became officially known as the Bloomitarian. The name was chosen by the Chief Administrator and Faculty editor, F. Kuehn. Per Mr. Kuehn the name echoes the "melody of community as well as the school's name". Fourteen issues were written and printed in 1929, at a price of fifty cents per year. It reported the news of the day, happenings in schools, attendance, teacher shortages, financial reports, visitors to the city, marriages, and promoted products like Dr. LeGears Mineralized Tunic Powder, sold by Johnson-Olson Feed Company which was sure to increase milk production and hold the flow longer.

The Bloomitarian was published from September through May of each year until the early 1950s when the Bloomington Sun Newspaper was established. Issues of that newspaper from the 1950s and 1970s are also at the Old Town Hall Museum. Take a break from your cell phones. The volumes of all this fun minutia over a span of many years is yours for the reading.

U p c o m i n g E v e n t s

Saturday, September 19, 2026 2-4 PM

Bells Across America: Celebrate the Constitution

Join our guests the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) as we celebrate a “Bells Across America” Constitution Week Event. Enjoy a short program and then ring the museum’s historic school bell at 3PM.

Friday, October 23, 2026 7:00 PM

Poetry Open Mic

Old Town Hall Poetry Group is hosting an open mic poetry reading event. It is an opportunity to share one or two of your own compositions, or read a piece from your favorite poet. If you prefer not to read, come simply to enjoy the compositions of others, and support our local community of writers. All are welcome!

Sunday, November 1, 2026 2:00 PM

Bloomington Historical Society Annual Meeting and Member Appreciation

Join us at the Old Town Hall Museum for our annual membership meeting. Learn what’s been happening this year at BHS, and have your voice heard on what our future plans should be. Members will vote to elect six members to our Board of Directors, who will serve a two-year term.

Tuesday, November 10, 2026 7:00 PM

More Than a Shipwreck: The Enduring Mystery of the Edmund Fitzgerald

Explore one of the Great Lakes’ biggest unsolved mysteries with author A.L. Padden, the sinking of the Edmund Fitzgerald. Hear about the significance of the Mighty Fitz, the events that led to the giant ore boat going down, the different theories about why it happened, and the ship’s lasting impact on the Great Lakes.

2027 MEMBERSHIP DONATION

Members fund our programs. Join today!
See our website for online giving options.
Memberships follow the calendar year.

NAME _____

PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE/ZIP CODE _____

EMAIL _____

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

_____ Individual \$ 30.00

_____ Family \$ 50.00

Additional donation: \$ _____

Please make checks payable to: _____

Bloomington Historical Society

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

Links for online donations including GiveMN, Venmo and PayPal are on our website under the Donate tab.

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

Tuesday afternoon Wednesday afternoon

Thursday afternoon Saturday afternoon

Other: _____

BLOOMINGTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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, Minnesota.

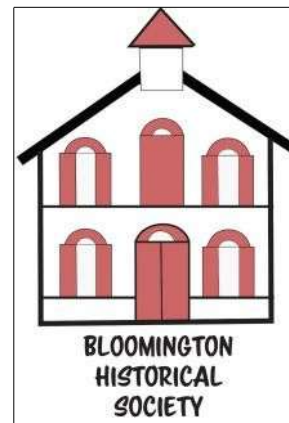
The organization is run entirely by volunteers and we depend entirely upon your donations for our operations, programs and displays. We are grateful for your on-going support.

Old Town Hall Museum

Penn Avenue at Old Shakopee Road

Open Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays
and Saturdays 1 to 5 pm.

Additional open hours by appointment



Bloomington Historical Society
1800 West Old Shakopee Road
Bloomington, Minnesota 55431