Presidental Message
On behalf of the membership, I have three "thank you" messages. Thanks are due to Barbara Vydro and Fred Branch for the New Town Crier, a revival of the Town Crier which started in 1969. It is great to have a newsletter which will again tell of programs, new projects, and interesting facts from our town's past. Our thanks at also due to Fred Branch, Jean Kuras, and Mark Scereuman, the authors of the Arcadia Publisher's book, Bloomfield. They chose the historic pictures and wrote the captions after much research. This book is an important addition to the recorded history of the town. As Lucy Sant Ambrogio becomes our Curator Emeritus, this last "thank you" must cover almost 20 years of appreciation for all her volunteer years. She completed the Museum Certificate Program at Seton Hall University, researched local history and genealogy of local families, and graciously shared her knowledge with all. She was honored at a luncheon on March 22, 2001, where she received citations from Assemblywoman Marion Crecco, from Mayor John Crecco, and from the Historical Society of Bloomfield.

Ira Campbell, President

Notice Of May Meeting
MAY 14, 2001, 8PM
OCEAN GROVE AND THE BLOOMFIELD CONNECTION
Wayne T. Bell, curator of the Historical Society of Ocean Grove, N.J. will be the guest speaker. He will present a slide lecture covering the development of the Ocean Grove Camp Meeting and its 19th century architecture. Mr. Bell is the author of the book Ocean Grove, published by Arcadia, and is now in its second printing. (Note photo below). Light refreshments will follow the meeting. The public is cordially invited. Come and bring a friend.

CIVIC CENTER, 84 BROAD STREET

Cemetery Gate House Restoration
by Barbara Vydro
I first became aware of the deterioration of the exterior of our office building when in 1998 one of the crew presented a section of mortar that he found at the front door. Upon investigation we discovered that it had dropped from the tower—not good! I reported it to David Allen, President of the Board, and George Webster, Chairman of the Grounds Committee, and we all agreed that something major had to be done. Going through our records, I began by contacting the company that re-pointed the building during the 70's and found they were "out of business." After a great deal of investigation, one contractor was highly recommended—but, they only worked on church restorations. I took a chance and called Imhoff Restorations and spoke with David Imhoff (in the process of retiring) and explained what while we are not a church, we are a cemetery that has been here for 200+ years and will continue to be here in perpetuity! His son Scott (now President) came to give me some advice as to possible contractors. One look and I knew he was "hooked." His first comment was that "it was a jewel of a building that had not been treated kindly" (now I knew why the 70's company was out of business).

He explained that Imhoff was booked solid and they couldn't get to it until summer of 1999. He agreed to send a crew to make the tower safe—they took out two arms-length of mortar sections! At the June 1999 Annual Meeting of the Board of Managers the contract to restore the exterior of the building from roof-to-base was unanimously approved. The work began in July 1999 and was completed in November 1999. It included a total inspection and repair of the slate roof, new copper flashings, coated-copper capping of the granite gables, rebuilding the crickets around the base of the tower, practically rebuilding the tower (a good wind would have done substantial damage), removing the "neon red" mortar from the building and the gate columns (at one point I had ten jackhammers in various sections of the building all operating at once, with me inside—talk about an "Excedrin headache") and replacing it with mortar that matched the original color which was found behind the "neon." This work was completed with a triple acid wash that revealed the true beauty of this "jewel."

We are extremely fortunate to have a Board of Managers who accept the responsibility to keep our cemetery—grounds and buildings—in the best possible condition and the means to accomplish this thanks to good management since 1853. Naturally, the exterior problems created interior problems. We are presently in the process of restoring the interior and will report on it in a future issue of "The Town Crier."
The Bloomfield Book: Looking Back

When Fred first suggested the book and invited me on board the project, I reveled in the opportunity to work with someone whose talent and ability I admired. His newsletter for the Historical Society was prize worthy and "Weird New Jersey" delighted everyone. Fred's forthright and steady writing was an inspiration. His enthusiasm was contagious, both of us felt we had to put the project aside for a while. The project was reborn from our recent past.

The problem of where to work was solved with Fred's offer of his dining room table for our base of operations. We began in mid-summer. The museum is air-conditioned and various hours will be arranged.

The welcome mat was rolled out by Star Electric Company and Charms Candy Company.

One of the biggest problems facing the selection committee of the Arcadia Book: "Images of America: Bloomfield" was either the lack of identification of old photographs, and missing or incorrect dates. One of these, The Samuel Moore Fish Market at the corner of Bloomfield Avenue and Washington Street, was labeled 1893, although the view is obviously of a much earlier date.

When Mark first suggested the book and invited me on board the project, I reveled in the opportunity to work with someone whose talent and ability I admired. His newsletter for the Historical Society was prize worthy and "Weird New Jersey" delighted everyone. Though enthusiastic from the start and despite the excitement the book stirred up, both of us felt we had to put the project aside for awhile.

One evening we were sitting at our designated places around the dining room table, waiting for Mark and idly thumbing through some GE memorabilia when Mark arrived and announced with a Guess What: Arcadia wanted the book by early November or would push the publishing date two years away! Could we do it? Talk about having a fire lit under you. This was a blaze, a conflagration.

The wonderful discovery of a flourishing and productive working relationship encouraged us to be completely committed to the project. We soldiered on heroically, sustained by the joy and sense of completion. All is a vivid memory: the furniture, Helen's charming collections in the curio cabinets, pictures on the wall.

Tammy's tail thumped when one of us paused to pet her, stacks of books, pictures, maps and paper on every surface, boxes on the floor to be climbed over and around, coffee time at the table, a peaceful buzz of chat, the quiet street, coming through the open window.

The hours, the weeks went by. The completed work increased and our appreciation produced a whole stream of reactions. The reassuring: Don't worry. It's in this room. We haven't lost it. It's here. It will tum up. The encouraging: We can do better. It's OK, but not quite yet. More searching required. Is it possible to find the date? Who are these people? What was used to be there and what's there now? Who has time to go over and look? With a fast-filling store of ideas and facts and flashes of inspiration, the book began to emerge.

Our little ensemble worked well together. What we managed to achieve will be considered by many and I hope it will be received with satisfaction. Fred's dining room table is cleared now, but the friendship, cordiality, collaboration and solidarity is as firmly in place as it was those months ago.

Jean M. Kuras