



The New Town Crier

Official Newsletter of the Historical Society of Bloomfield



BLOOMFIELD, NEW JERSEY 07003

March 2023

SAVE THE DATE

NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, March 28, 2023

7:30 PM

BLOOMFIELD CIVIC CENTER

84 Broad Street, Bloomfield, NJ

**From Success to Seizure:
The Schering Corp.
of Bloomfield 1937–1942**

Presented by Dean Cole

James Bond in Bloomfield?

On Dec. 9, 1941, U.S. Treasury agents raided the offices of Schering Corp. of Bloomfield, charging the company with anti-trust violations. Most of its management would be fined and dismissed.

By February 1942, Schering, its property and its patents were taken over by the U.S. Alien Property Custodian on the grounds that it was an asset of our new wartime enemy, Nazi Germany.

How is it that such a successful and well-respected Swiss firm could come to be seen as a dangerous threat to the U.S.?

The answer lies with the efforts of a shadowy British Intelligence organization run by a man who would later be the inspiration for Ian Fleming's *James Bond*. He would use secret agents, falsified documents and press manipulation to bring Schering's true identity to the unwanted attention of U.S. authorities.

Success To Seizure



The Schering Corporation of Bloomfield N.J.
1937-1942

A meander down Maolis...

The below newspaper clipping from 80 years ago was contributed by HSOB Membership Chair & Treasurer, John Debold. It was given to him by his brother-in-law Ethan and is believed to come from the Maolis Ave. childhood home of Ethan, Cindi (John's late wife & HSOB's late Treasurer) and family.

From *The Independent Press* — May 7, 1943

Maolis: Strangest of local names

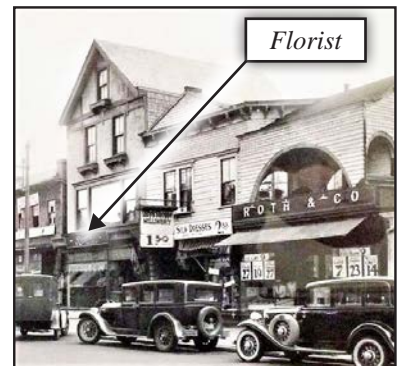
The naming of some of Bloomfield streets has considerable history, but the one that seems exceptionally interesting is the story **John Rassbach** used to tell about the naming of Maolis Avenue. He reported that several college professors who became curious as to the etymology of such a strange looking word, could not run down its origin because it is the name brought into use locally by reversing the name Siloam. Mr. Rassbach states that Siloam was the name that was given a spring in the neighborhood of what is now Maolis and Midland Avenues, Glen Ridge. The name of course comes from the biblical pool of water in Jerusalem fed by the waters of the Gihon and forming part of the ancient water supply system of the city and which was known as Siloam or Siloah. Midland Avenue was once called Cadmus Street and no reason for its change is known.

Editor's Note: Those were probably not dendrology professors trying to figure it out; "Maolis" is indeed a real word, the plural of Maoli—a native Hawaiian banana tree. That Maolis Ave. is named in honor of this tree is very plausible, because nearby Linden and Hawthorne Avenues also have the names of more obscure fruit-bearing trees, perhaps a departure from the traditional "Elm, Maple and Oak" Streets.



According to the Glen Ridge Historical Society, **John Rassbach & Son, Florists** is recorded as the first florist in Essex County. John Rassbach came to the U.S. from Germany in 1853, working on a farm on Orange Rd. In 1862, he bought five acres of land on Midland Avenue for \$1,000, where he built his home, and later built greenhouses along the Maolis Avenue side of his property. The Rassbach's business became so

successful that they also opened a florist shop in Bloomfield Center, on 23 Broad Street. Whether the 1943 article refers to father or son is unclear. Email comments, reveries and banana bread recipes to info@hsob.org—with "Maolis Avenue" in the subject line—or mail to HSOB. *Photo courtesy of the HSOB.*



Remembering the GAY NINETIES

By Richard Rockwell

Bloomfield ain't what it used to be. In 1947, the Gay Nineties Club at 446 Bloomfield Avenue had two floor shows nightly by Will Oakland & his Gay Nineties Revue. The night club also featured dining and dancing.

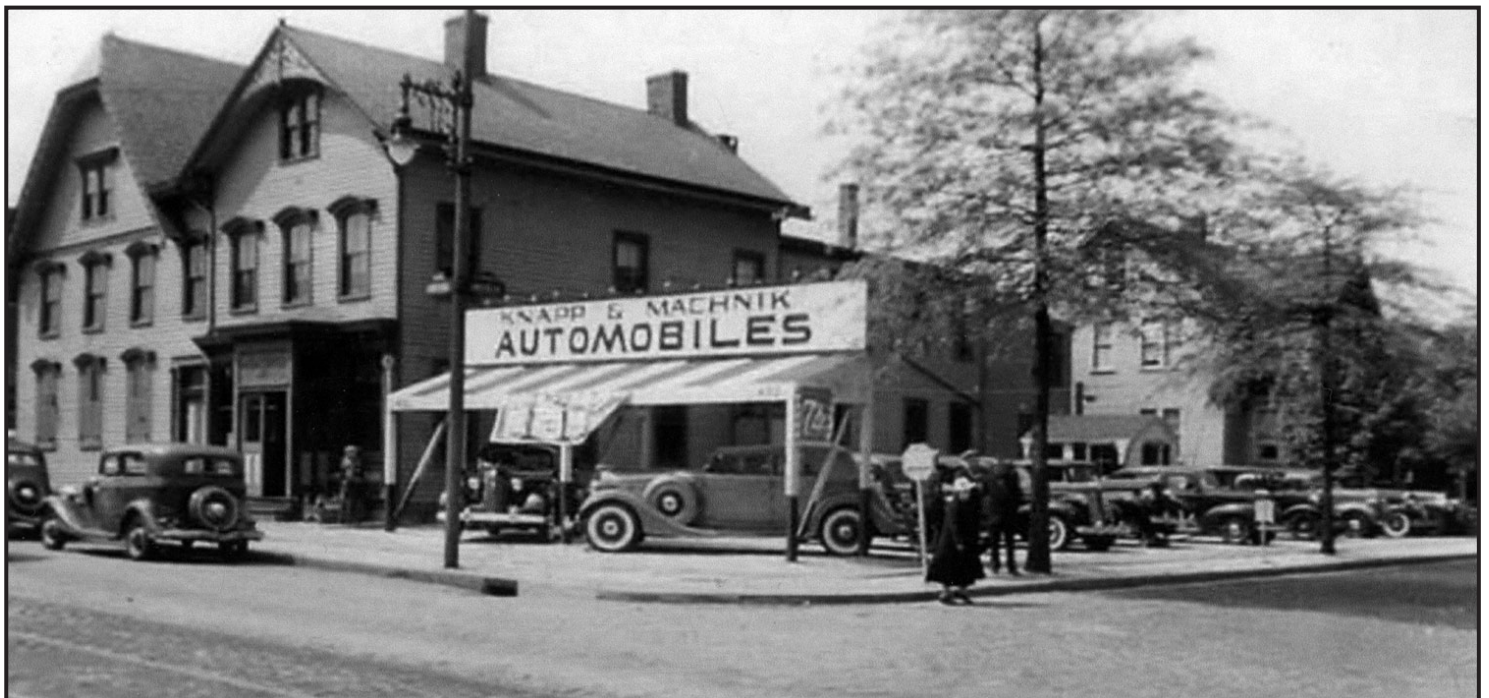


Gay Nineties Club was at 446–448 Bloomfield Avenue from 1947 to 1953. It moved to 426 Bloomfield Avenue where it operated from 1955 to 1971.

Photo: Postcard, private collection of the author



Gay Nineties moved to 426 Bloomfield Avenue in 1954 and featured an outdoor garden.



These two conjoined buildings were originally the Metz Hotel on Bloomfield Avenue, just south of Roosevelt Avenue.
Photo: Private collection of the author



At left, Gay Nineties just before being demolished for the Garden State Parkway.

Below, the demolition in 1954. Note the telephone company building on the left. This is now the exit ramp at GSP northbound Exit 148.

Photos: Bloomfield Revisited, Branch & Kuras, 2006



It became "The Jetty" in the 1970s.



In 2023, this location is Bell Security.
Photo: Google Maps



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

Jean Kuras, *President*
Mark Scurman, *Vice President/Program*
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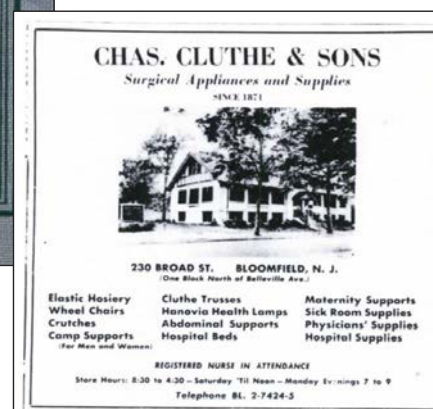
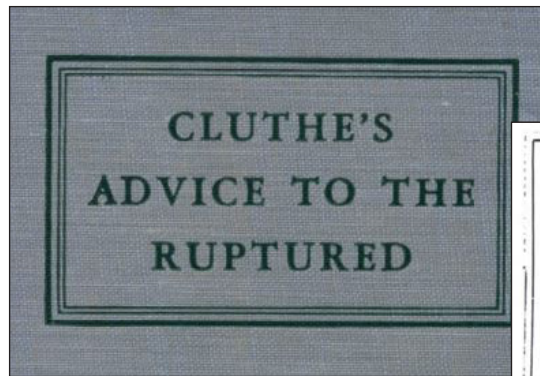


REMINDER!

If you haven't already done so, please be sure to renew your 2023 membership. Visit www.hsob.org to renew your membership online or to download a snail-mailable membership form. A form can also be picked up at the our museum or any HSOB meeting. The HSOB is a non-profit organization, therefore all dues and donations are considered a tax-free contribution. Help keep the Historical Society of Bloomfield strong with your continuing membership!

Museum Acquisitions

HSOB Trustee Mark Szep recently presented a comprehensive collection of information on 230 Broad Street, home of Cluthe Trusses (Charles Cluthe & Sons), including books, advertisements, order forms and original correspondence. This fascinating collection of early 20th Century medical Bloomfieldiana is available for viewing at the HSOB Museum, 90 Broad Street, 3rd Fl. of the Children's Library. Saturday: 10:00am– 12:30pm and by appointment. Thank you, Mr. Szep, for this important contribution.



Welcome Mat

A cordial welcome is extended to the following *new* members of The Historical Society of Bloomfield. We hope to see you at our next meeting:

William Dodge
Calverton, NY

Mary Melvin
Bricktown, NJ

James Y. Duncan
Red Bank, NJ

Louis Zappo
Scotch Plains, NJ

Barbara M. Isacson
Bloomfield