

# Views From The Veranda

*"Bloomfield (and Montclair South End) Through Time"*

Monday, April 16th, 2018 at 7:30pm

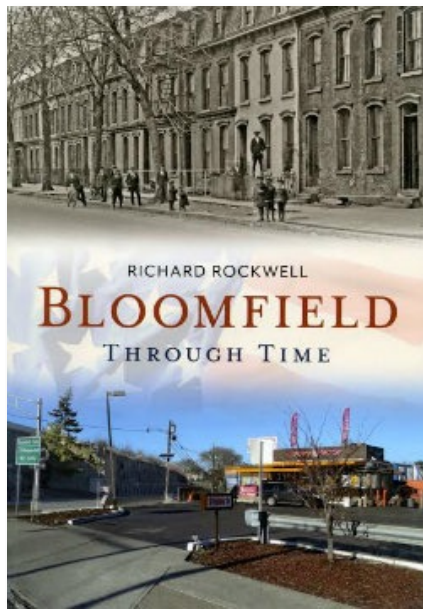
82 Union Street ~ Montclair, NJ



Recently appointed Bloomfield Councilman at-Large, **Richard Rockwell** will discuss his recently published book, ***Bloomfield Through Time***, documenting Bloomfield's turn-of-the-19<sup>th</sup>-century residential architectural patterns, and the building and remodeling trends that influenced the Bloomfield we know today. The book includes rarely seen historic photographs digitally restored from negatives from the Nathan Russell Collection archives at the *Glen Ridge Public Library* juxtaposed with contemporary scenes.

Rich will explain his good fortune in discovering glass plate negatives of vintage images which included houses in Glen Ridge and Montclair, many newly built and offered for sale. The images were taken by Nathan Russell, a Glen Ridge and Bloomfield realtor from 1890-1917. For this presentation Rich will also include 30

rarely-seen Nathan Russell photos of houses in the South End of Montclair taken in the early 1900s. You will have an opportunity to challenge your historic sleuthing skills to see how many of the houses you can identify.

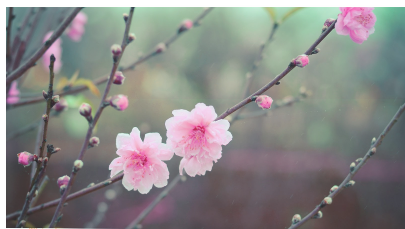


Rich has lived in Montclair and Bloomfield for the past 20 years. He currently lives in Halcyon Park Historic District in Bloomfield and has served on Bloomfield's *Morris Canal Greenway Committee* and regularly leads walking tours of the path of the Morris Canal through Bloomfield. He has also served on the newly-formed *Bloomfield Historic Preservation Commission* and is the Vice President of the *Historical Society of Bloomfield*.

So finish your taxes, and come on out on April 16th at 7:30pm to see how familiar you are with the buildings around town!



*Meetings of The Victorian Society in America, Northern New Jersey Chapter are normally held on the 3rd Monday of the month at 7:30pm at the Montclair Women's Club - 82 Union Street - Montclair, NJ. Meetings are free for members - Non-members \$5 - Yearly membership only \$30! Why not consider joining today or giving a gift membership to a friend? Call Catherine Sullivan at 973-762-6453, or send her your contact info at 9 Vose Avenue Apt 220, South Orange, NJ 07079. If your last name begins with the letters **R, S & T** please bring refreshments to the next meeting. Any questions please contact Christina at 973-744-5916 or email [christinapmayer@gmail.com](mailto:christinapmayer@gmail.com).*



## Greetings from the President

*Dear Members:*

Our March speaker was Dr. Linda Caldwell Epps. She spoke on the migration of the African Americans from the South to the North, specifically Newark, in search of the opportunities for a better life. Her presentation was based on oral histories she had personally collected.

Even though they were no longer slaves after the Civil War, the Jim Crow laws and the low wages of share cropping kept them impoverished in the South. The jobs and school opportunities in the North held promise for a better future.

One of the predicaments she related was that the loss of cheap labor by the Southern land owners was bankrupting their agricultural economy. The land owners would then try to prevent the African Americans from migrating. Mail would be intercepted and any train tickets or money sent to families by those already in the North were confiscated. One family who had saved money beforehand, escaped by pretending to leave for a Sunday church service, then sneaking out of town instead. They were able to get on the train a few miles away.

We are very thankful that our annual silent auction at our March meeting raised \$250 for the National Summer School Scholarship Fund.

Next month our speaker will be Richard Rockwell on the early architecture of Montclair and Bloomfield.

There are still spaces available for the May bus trip to Winterthur. Contact Alice Gibson at 973-747-2794. Our May preservation meeting will feature a private home in Caldwell. The June Garden Party will be held at a very exceptional place.



*-Jane*



**Victorian Tea and Concert - 1pm, Sunday, April 8th** at the **Oakeside Bloomfield Cultural Center**, 240 Belleville Avenue in Bloomfield, NJ. Enjoy finger sandwiches, tea cakes and cookies beautifully presented in the period living room, followed by a tour of the historic home. "An Afternoon of Song" will be presented in the solarium. \$32/person; reservations required by calling 973-429-0960.



**Genealogy Presentation - Monday, April 9th at 7pm**, at the **Roseland Public Library**, 20 Roseland Avenue in Roseland, NJ. Expert Anthony Lauriano will show you how to navigate the federal census, ship manifests, as well as birth, marriage, and death records to research your family's history. RSVP at 973-226-8636.

**Victorian Tea at Lambert Castle - April 27th, 28th, & 29th, noon or 3pm** seatings, 3 Valley Road in Paterson, NJ. A perfect afternoon tea catered by Sally Lund's Tea House and music by the Four Old Parts. \$45/guest; reserved seating only by calling 973-247-0085 or visiting [www.lambertcastle.org](http://www.lambertcastle.org).

**Essex County Cherry Blossom Festival - April 7-15, 2018 - Branch Brook Park.** Visit [www.essexcountynj.org](http://www.essexcountynj.org) for details on the many events planned: bike race, 10K run, Family Day, Bloomfest, bus tours etc.

## In the Limelight: George Scharf Jr. 1820~1895

George Scharf Junior was the Secretary and Director of the *National Portrait Gallery* in London, housing a collection of portraits of historically important and famous British people. It was the first portrait gallery in the world when it opened in 1856. The remainder of his life was given to the care of that institution.

The son of a British grocer's daughter and an immigrant German artist, George worked as a drawing instructor, art lecturer and a sketching artist. Scharf cobbled together a living through the mid 1850's this way. In 1852, he was elected to the *Society of Antiquaries* and began to build his reputation as an expert on British portraits. It was through this society that Scharf met Lord Stanhope, the man who eventually hired him as Secretary of the newly established Portrait Gallery.



Through good luck and hard work, George Scharf had become associated with titled members of British society, spending time at their country estates and homes, initially as a cataloguer and arranger of portraits in the stately homes. He relished the opportunity to meet and dine with these families, recording every visit and nearly every menu in his diary.

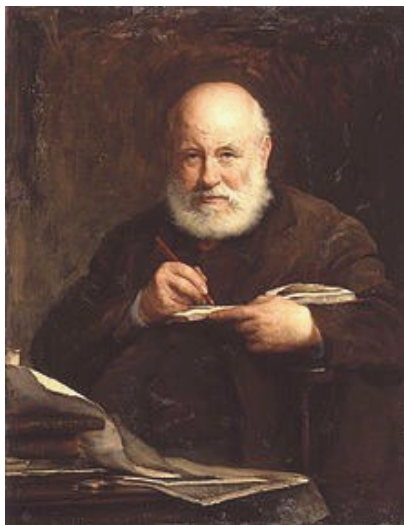
Lord Stanhope arranged for George Scharf to be presented at court on February 23, 1859. Scharf had been hired to work at the *National Portrait Gallery* in 1857, a position that included lodgings in the gallery building. In 1859 he catalogued the artwork at Blenheim Palace, a monumental English country house and principal residence of the Dukes of Marlborough. In 1861, Prince Albert himself consulted Scharf about portraits at Windsor Castle.

At the 1857 Art Treasures exhibition in Manchester (including 16,000 works), Scharf had won acclaim for presenting artworks chronologically, so visitors could compare contemporary painters from different European Schools. George Scharf had advanced from advertising his drawing lessons in the *London Times* to being featured in art stories in the English press.

In time, Scharf became friendly with several prominent British families, attending celebrations such as the coming of age party of Lord Mahon, Stanhope's son, in 1859. George would sketch rooms, artwork, clothing and children during these visits, often gifting the works to his aristocratic patrons. For a man of such humble origins, George Scharf had indeed come a long way.

In their book, *Love Among the Archives*, authors Helena Michie and Robyn Warhol examine Scharf's private life. In all likelihood George Jr. was homosexual, judging from a close reading of his diaries and correspondence. Homosexuality was illegal at the time and discretion and secrecy were critical for gay men of this era. George Scharf led a rich personal life, hosting elaborate dinners that mirrored those of his wealthy patrons. His coterie of men friends was a source of fun, company and, later in life, elder care.

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The book details Scharf's early struggles with money, balancing debt with travel expenses needed to cultivate relations with his clientele. His love of friends and good food resulted at times in a web of borrowing and gifts of money to and from close associates. In his position as Secretary of the *National Portrait Gallery*, Scharf finally attained a measure of financial success, able to take art cataloging commissions even as he did his job of building the Gallery's portrait

collection, a position he held for almost forty years..

Scharf acquired an unrivaled knowledge of all matter relating to historic portraiture and was the author of many learned essays on the subject. In 1895, not long before his death, George Scharf was knighted by Queen Victoria. Sir George died on April 19, 1895.

*by Eve-Oppenheim-Allen*



Ambassador Lily Hsu from Taiwan, purchased a limited edition, signed and numbered giclée of "Manhattan Skyline", after Lynn Vergano's presentation at the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office (Taiwanese Consulate) in New York City - February, 2018.



**THE VICTORIAN  
SOCIETY IN AMERICA**

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*Chapter*

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[www.victoriansannj.org](http://www.victoriansannj.org)

*The VSANNj is part of the  
only national non-profit  
organization committed to  
historic preservation,  
protection, understanding,  
education, and enjoyment of  
our nineteenth century  
heritage.*

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82 Union Street is  
handicap accessible