

HISTORY OF BLOOMINGTON UTAH

Voices from yesterday whisper through the red hills of Washington County. Under mesquite bush or hidden in tamaracks along the banks of the Rio Virgin, an adobe wall or other remnants of civilization are stark reminders of those who struggled to tame the desert. In the not-so-distant past, Bloomington was a home town to Southern Utahns.

The Indians were the first inhabitants of Bloomington. They camped all over the area of the present Bloomington Country Club according to Elsie L. Carpenter. She said, "They would go out south during the summer and gather things and then spend the winter in their camp at Bloomington." There is much evidence of their having been here by the petroglyphs in the area.

Joseph Horne, and a small party, was sent to establish a cotton farm on the south of the Virgin River in January 1858, four years before St. George was settled. That area, now known as the Ranches, was then called Heberville after LDS leader Heber C. Kimball. In the first year of the settlements, after completion of a dam, the little company harvested 575 pounds of ginned cotton and 160 gallons of molasses. In November, they delivered it to the tithing office in Salt Lake City and stayed there until the first of April when they returned to Dixie. The second year they also planted corn and sugar cane. It was a year of frequent storms which weakened the dam and destroyed part of the irrigation ditch. By the end of the second year, Heberville was temporarily abandoned. Six years later, in the winter of 1863, Pres. Erastus Snow advised the reoccupation of Heberville as a co-operative farming company but it lasted only four years and was again abandoned.

The family of William H. Carpenter, a member of the Mormon Battalion, was sent to the Dixie Mission in 1861 and was the first to live on the north side of the river. They put their covered wagon up on stilts, in the area of the Manzanita Chapel, with a ladder to climb up, and called it "The Air Castle". They lived in their wagon until they got their home built. The Carpenter sons built homes in the same area. That settlement was called Jamestown. They raised cotton, made molasses, and carried on a broom-making industry. The cooper did well making barrels for the molasses as every family had a barrel of molasses to take care of their need for something sweet. They spent hours in the broom-corn fields harvesting the sticky, itchy stalks which were transported to an area in St. George where the best brooms in Utah were assembled. William H. Carpenter learned broom-making in his native east and the broom-making business was the main cash producer for Bloomington. Later, The Broom Shop, as they called it, was established at the first home built, where the fire station now stands. Both Elsie Larson Carpenter and her daughter Eliza can remember going through the fields, when the stalks had matured, and breaking the stalks so the brush would hang down even. Elsie said, "Brooms were traded to stores and peddled for cash. Why, they shipped brooms from Bloomington as far away as Lund, Nevada." Store owners would give an allowance on any broom or broom handle returned when buying a new one. The handles were sanded down, repainted and reused.

In 1870, William H. Carpenter, David H. Cannon, and Harrison Pearce and son John D.L. Pearce made a small ditch and led the water to a small piece of land.

Elsie Larson Carpenter remembered her father telling the story of how Joseph Carpenter surveyed the ditch. "They couldn't get a surveyor quick enough so Joseph, who was some kind of genius, took a bottle and broke it and made a surveying instrument out of it. When the real surveyor came, he said the ditch was perfect and didn't change a thing." Their first year of farming yielded little success. "At the end of the year they figured everything up and found they had made little more than one dollar for every eight hours of work." After that first year, Cannon and the Pearces sold their interests to Carpenter.

In the early 1870's, Lars Larson, a stone mason, and his son, Lars James Larson, were sent down to work on the temple. He and his sons stayed, built homes in Jamestown, our present Gardens area, and farmed. Lars built a substantial rock house, approximately 18 by 30 feet in dimension, not far from the present day Manzanita LDS Chapel.

In 1874, President Young changed the name of Heberville to Price City and instituted the United Order under the name of Price City United Order.

When the area north of the river was surveyed in 1875, Joseph W. "Joe" Carpenter, a printer, changed the town's name to Bloomington. Joe printed the first newspaper in 1883, "The Union and Village Echo". Bloomington had no formal organization of its own; education and religious activities took place across the river because there were more children in Price City.

Wm. S. "Uncle Billy" Carpenter, son of Joe, delivered mail to the Apex Copper Mine on Utah hill and would pick up eggs, poultry, fruit, and vegetables in Bloomington to sell at the mine.

Alfred A. Carpenter, an adopted son of William H., was assistant presiding elder in the Bloomington Branch of the LDS church. He was good looking, had a beautiful tenor voice, and owned a span of perfectly matched black horses. He was Postmaster for twenty-two years, in the broom business, made molasses, and shipped peaches to Chicago. Elsie Larson Carpenter said, "The only employment available in the area was domestic help; so, I decided I might just as well marry Alfred and work for him as he needed someone to take care of his four year old daughter, Emma." Alfred married Elsie Larson 30 June 1909 in the St. George temple. Elsie was assistant postmaster and took care of the Post Office while Albert made brooms. All mail going over the mountain to Bunkerville, and other towns of that area, had to be stamped in the Bloomington Post Office. Elsie said their seven year old daughter, Carol, was the area's first known polio victim in 1933. Two neighbor boys, across the street, contracted the disease. Both survived but were left crippled. Malaria became a big problem when the river was low and there was a serious measles epidemic which took the lives of quite a number of children.

Now
SNA
River
In the mid 1870's, William Atkin and his sons established a one family village at Atkinville, six or seven miles below St. George on the Virgin River, where they built up a flourishing livestock business. They had a park with cottonwood trees, a place for picnicking, and a lake for swimming, boating, and fishing. This was a popular place for the people of St. George, Bloomington, and Price. In the winter, William cut the ice on his pond and stored the large, sawed blocks between layers of straw and chaff in a cave which they hollowed

out of a cliff near the pond. They sold the ice to the people of St. George who used it to make ice cream and lemonade. LDS President Wilford Woodruff spent part of his time eluding the U.S. Marshals at the Atkin home where they had fixed up a room for his comfort and when necessary, he hid in the reeds in their pond.

The Price Ward was organized 18 January 1879 with Robert Gardner, Bishop. It included the LDS families from Price City and Bloomington. Church leaders from St. George came out about once a month and brought a wagon load of their children with them. They loved to come out because the Bloomington families always had a big chicken dinner for them. Tithing was paid in produce - butter, eggs, wheat, corn, etc. Little money was to be found among these good saints but they faithfully took the Lord's tenth of what they had to the old tithing house. That building at 17 N. Main St. in St. George later became the Quality Bakery and was at one time Lynne Clark's Photo Studio; today it houses Enjoy Wear. The two things most important to these early pioneers, their families and their church, would have been hard to separate. The church, to them, was not something apart from life, it was life.

In the spring of 1879, Lars James Larson built a new house in Bloomington. The home was built where the Bloomington firehouse now stands. He also built the foundation of the Bloomington Schoolhouse and the foundation is all that remains today of the once handsome building.

The farmers of Bloomington and Price were pestered continually by the floods that became increasingly serious during the 1880's. In 1884, Bishop Nephi R. Fawcett of Price reported that the Virgin River had been "on a rampage" for two months, tearing out dams and washing away some of the best lands with their growing crops.

At the turn of the century there were quite a few homes being built in Bloomington. When a house was built, everybody in town turned up to help. It was not a money-making project but rather a chance for neighbors to get together.

Bloomington was one of the area's larger communities boasting a branch library and a Post Office with daily mail, by buggy, from St. George. Price, a twin city across the Virgin River, was a good-sized community too, having about ten families. For several decades, Bloomington & Price City boasted two dozen families.

In 1904, the Price City Ward, with Nephi R. Fawcett, Bishop, was disorganized and the remaining members moved to the Bloomington branch. Members at Bloomington were finally transferred to the St. George West Ward.

When interviewed in 1976, Zelda Larson, Isadore's youngest sister, remembered when Wally and Isadore Blake's home was built in 1908. Zelda was an inquisitive youngster of seven who made a point of visiting them often, which was not hard to do because she lived just a half a block away. She remembered how proud they all were because, for that day, it was really a nice house. "The old church building across the river at Price City was torn down and the rock used to build the house. At that time Price City disappeared forever. Dode Worthen laid up the rock work, a true work of art. The black rock foundation

Blake
Farm
road

was eighteen inches thick. Brig. Carpenter did the carpentry work in it, including the designs over the door frames and mantle piece. The rest of the building was a family and community effort. It only cost ten dollars to shingle the house. Wally and Isadore lived on the homestead working hard, rearing their family, and knowing the joys and trials of pioneer life. Finally they traded the homestead for the James S. Jones home in St. George."

For the next several years, the Joneses lived in the little rock house and farmed the approximately twenty acres. The Joneses added a long, screened porch along the east end of the house. Chester Jones planted fig trees but before the trees produced, James and Alice traded the place for a dry farm at Mt. Trumbull, Arizona.

Albert and Rhoda McCain arrived in Bloomington, from Arizona, to live on the old homestead. They were hard-working, courageous people who had helped settle communities in three states. They found a peaceful settlement here where they learned to know and love their neighbors, the Carpenters and the two Larson families. The old homestead rang with laughter. Two grandsons, Robert and Arthur Cromwell, grew up there. Later, a granddaughter, Very Snyder, joined them. The three children rode one horse to school in St. George, sometimes taking turns and occasionally all three riding together. In the summertime, from one to two dozen grandchildren joyously came to live with their grandma and grandpa. Beds were no problem as they slept on the floors, or preferably, out under the pomegranate bushes with a quilt and a pillow. Much of the time it was too hot for even a sheet over them and nothing stopped them from simply stretching out on the grass after a long day of work and play.

The children played along the ditches, in the hay fields, and around the corrals. There were acres of open space, on the hill above the ditch, which were a child's paradise. There was an old crumbled-down house with no roof which they loved to play around and chase the squirrels that lived there. Marie Iverson Waite, a granddaughter wrote, "There were a lot of wild burros and donkeys roaming the country down along the river. Many times, Robert, Arthur, some of the neighbor boys and sometimes we girls would go down on horses, round up some of them, and drive them home to a corral. The boys would then have a great time riding them. They would sometimes dare us into trying it. After everyone had been bucked off several times, the burros would be turned loose to rest up for our next wild west show. We had many a race across the river on horses, most of us riding bareback. There was one old horse that usually laid down in the water when we crossed. Whoever was on him could plan on a good dunking, but we, as well as the horse, enjoyed it."

The fig trees, planted by the Joneses, and the many fruit trees now yielded lovely crops. Rhoda, a small, frail woman who never weighed over ninety pounds, no longer worked in the fields but had her own fenced garden and plants around the house that she irrigated and took care of. She grew vine peaches, okra, herbs, asparagus and watermelons. She always had sales at Mathis Market in St. George for her garden produce as well as eggs, butter and cheese she made. In addition to selling her wares in town, she also sold to neighbors, usually being paid in other goods or grain for her chickens. They were almost self-sustaining. They had their own milk, butter, eggs and meat in addition to their fruit and vegetables which Rhoda dried or canned for the winter ahead. They did buy sugar and salt and a few other items. Rhoda made her own lye and soap.

Rhoda had an incubator and would sometimes hatch out as many as one hundred little chicks at a time. They also raised several pigs each year and Albert cured the hams and bacon. They ground the rest of the meat into sausage. They also made their own head cheese and liver hash. To make head cheese, she scraped everything she could get out of the head, ears, tongue and feet of the animal. After cleaning it thoroughly, she cooked it and pressed it into nice blocks or rounds of head cheese. It was sliced off and used like cold luncheon meats.

Down under the old granary, a few steps from the kitchen door, Rhoda kept her canned goods and pans of cold milk protected by a screen door which kept out flies. When the cream had risen to the top of the milk, it was skimmed off and made into delicious, rich butter which she churned regularly.

Albert had to haul all their culinary water from St. George. There were no live springs and the river water was unpalatable, tasting of sulphur from the hot springs twenty miles further up the river. He built a heavy stand, in front of their gate, between two large cottonwood trees where he kept two large barrels of water. When the water got low, he put the barrels on the wagon and took them to town where he filled them from a tap. He had to do this about twice a week. When he returned from town, the barrels were unloaded onto the platform, which was the same height as the bed of the wagon. They used a short rubber hose to draw the water out, by the bucketful, as it was needed. They would run all their errands in town on the days they went in to get water.

Albert, with Robert and Arthur helping, kept busy farming. He always had a saddle horse or two. They raised their own hay, grain, sugar cane and corn. He even grew broom-corn and helped Alfred Carpenter harvest his broom-corn and make it into brooms. Once Alfred's wife, Elsie, needed a new broom and sent one of her children to get one. They sent her a broom with a refinished handle. This was not at all satisfactory with Elsie and she returned the broom with the message that she did not want a broom with a slivery handle.

Albert was known by his grandchildren as fun-loving and witty. He enjoyed teasing them and making up opportunities was his specialty. They were active in the little branch of the LDS Church in Bloomington where Albert was Presiding Elder for some time. They spent their evenings pulling taffy or listening to their grandfather read from the family Bible and they always knelt in family prayer around the big, rough-hewn kitchen table before retiring. The McCains finally moved to St. George to spend their last years surrounded by loved ones.

Elsie Victoria Larson Carpenter (9/22/1889-11/11/1991), daughter of Lars James Larson, was a Bloomington resident at the turn of the century and one of the last to leave Bloomington. She well remembered living there. Being interested in the history of Bloomington, I interviewed Elsie about 1976. Here are some of her recollections.

"The Indians would go out in the rocks and form a big circle then start hollering and banging things and move in, herding the rabbits and quail and anything else into a small circle so they could catch them. They were always friendly and often brought pine nuts to exchange for fresh fruit, flour or other staples. When the irrigation ditches filled up with silt and sand, they had to be dug out by hard manual labor. Sometimes the Indians helped with that chore."

"When I was five, my mother would stand me on a big box so I could help scrub the clothes in the tub. One day a scary old Indian they called Toab came and started watching me wash the clothes. I was scared. He walked up and threw his handkerchief in the water and didn't say anything, just watched. I quickly washed it and gave it back and he walked off waving it in the air to dry. The Indians were always coming to trade a hatfull of pine nuts for a few peaches."

"My father had a large peach orchard and we dried peaches on long scaffolds. Long before we were old enough to go to school, Willard (her brother) and I would dry peaches all day. We each had our own scaffold. The fruit was weighed as it dried and we were paid by our father. I had earned enough money, by the time I was six years old, to pay for my first Primer, slate, chalk & pencils."

"In the orchard, we grew grapes, melons, raspberries, cherries, apricots, pomegranates, pears and currants. When the mail came, it was delivered by buggy from St. George three times a week, we ran for it and then went to the melon patch to look at the catalogs and eat the sweet, juicy melons. I don't believe I've ever tasted melons like the ones that used to grow in Bloomington."

The children in Bloomington rode a mustang pony to school, across the river, and as many as could get on rode. Elsie said she always rode the neck. When the girls reached the age of eight, they took turns as school custodian and one of the boys stayed each night to chop wood for the next day. When Elsie took her turn as custodian, she'd wait down on the river bank for her brother, Willard, to come and get her. It was a long wait because he couldn't come until he finished his chores. "Some nights I'd sit there on the bank of the River with the rush of water going by in front of me and I could hear coyotes howling upriver and downriver and owls hooting in the trees behind me. It was a scary feeling for a little girl."

Elsie carried her lunch to school and would go down to the river to get a drink. Drinking water for the two communities had to be hauled in barrels from St. George and the people in Price didn't take kindly to the Bloomington kids drinking their water; so, they drank from the river.

Activities involving the two communities took place in Bloomington every summer. The folks in Price would come across the river for the 4th and 24th of July or for whatever reason because there was shade in Bloomington; they had lots of trees.

When Bloomington grew larger than Price, Larson petitioned the school board to move the school across the river. At the town meeting, when the idea was first suggested, a Price City resident advised "throw him in the river". The decision was made in favor of Bloomington however and the broom factory, in the area of our present day fire station, was selected as the site for the school. Edna Cragun was Bloomington's first school teacher. There was always competition between the two communities and those feelings heightened after the school was relocated. Elsie said, "I was only eight years old when the Bloomington-Price City "war" was taking place. I had freckles and wore my red hair in four braids. One day, on the school ground, I went to battle with Price Hutchings, also eight years old with red hair and freckles. By the time afternoon was over, my braids were out but his mouth was bloodied. We finally quit fighting, not because anything had been decided but because we were too tired to continue. No one tried to stop us. It was like everyone in town needed that fight to clear the air."

Elsie's family became part of the silkworm industry when it flourished in Dixie. They had a long row of mulberry trees. Elsie and Willard were in the trees all day long gathering mulberry limbs as the silkworms had to be fed every four hours. As they broke the limbs, they dreamed of getting rich. She said that was what kept them going from early morning until late at night. The silkworms were kept on scaffolds in two large front rooms of their home. Elsie and Willard planned to use their share of the promised silkworm money to furnish their rooms. Then, the war ended; the bottom fell out of the silkworm market and shattered their dreams.

When there was still some snow on Utah Hill, the children from Bloomington would go there and get snow to make ice cream.

It was a great day in Bloomington when the schoolhouse there was completed. Elsie remembers, "It had hardwood floors and we were excited to have our own schoolhouse." The building became the social center for the dozen or so families that remained in Bloomington until the early 1930's. They went to church, had dances, put on plays, held social gatherings, and went to school there. Elsie's daughter, Eliza Carpenter Jones, who was born 24 January 1911, said, "I remember there being fifteen to twenty kids in school. There was a stove in the middle of the room and it was a comfortable place." Eliza, in her early twenties, was the last person to teach school there. About 1926 the school district began busing Bloomington children to St. George for school. That was when the families began moving out of Bloomington. Alfred Carpenter, his wife Elsie, their daughter Eliza, and the rest of their family were the last to leave.

Elsie described living in Bloomington as "work and worry" but said it was fun living there.

By 1930, only four families remained in Bloomington and they were gone by the 1950's. For many years there were farming operations in Bloomington and the Larsons continued to irrigate land and graze cattle there. No one actually lived there until Eliza Carpenter and her husband, LaVon Jones, built a home and moved back in 1952. They remained until 1970 when their land was purchased by the developers of modern-day Bloomington.

Eliza Carpenter Jones, when interviewed for the St. George Magazine, shared some of her fond memories. She recalled the following.

"There were mighty cattle drives from the Arizona Strip to Modena. The herds crossed the Virgin River at Price and came up the main street of Bloomington. The cowboys knew they were welcome to refresh themselves with fruit from the big orchard. Those were exciting days, but one came near being tragic. We played in the street as we tended the smaller children - marbles, jacks, prisoner's base, even matchbox wagons pulled by horned toads, with caterpillars for cattle and ants for coyotes. We were so busy playing one day that we did not hear the cattle until they were crossing the irrigation ditch at the end of the street. We dashed for safety to L.J. Larson's fenced lawn. Turning to watch the herd pass, we froze with horror. Lester Carpenter, a babe too young to walk, was sitting alone in the middle of the street right in the path of the oncoming herd. His four year old sister, Elva, was the first to move. She was over the fence like a cat, snatched up the baby, ran back, rolled him under the fence and was over it again right past the nose of an old cow stretched out to smell her as she climbed. It was the quickest, bravest act I have ever seen."

"Days began early in our homes, with a breakfast of cereal and milk or fruit. The wives put up lunches for their husbands and sent them off to work in the fields or on the canal. The house was tidied and the mothers gathered up what food was left and the children and congregated at one home. They prepared a community lunch for the women and children."

"Dishes were cleared away and the children went out to play while the mothers visited, sewed carpets, made quilts, mended feed sacks, dried fruit or whatever needed doing. Afternoons were much like our modern Relief Society meetings."

"The girls played dollhouse and tended babies; the boys made miniature farms on the bank of the irrigation canal. One afternoon the girls decided to visit the boys and see what they were making. The boys resented the intrusion and chased them back to the house. Elsie Larson stooped as they ran and picked up a small, sharp bone (called a "bony horse") that they used as a plaything. She hit Arthur Fawcett in the head and cut his scalp. The blood flowed freely; she thought she had killed him! She ran into the currant bushes where she sat, white and trembling, wondering if she would be hanged or shot. Aunt Lizzie Carpenter found her there and called to her mother, 'Lenie, here she is, and she's scared to death!'"

"Summer holidays were celebrated in the big fruit orchard in the Bloomington gardens. A platform was built and decorated with red, white and blue bunting. There were songs, speeches, and poetry. L.J. Larson was usually asked to recite the Declaration of Independence, which he could do by heart; a real gala occasion. One year the young ladies decided to decorate with roses. They gathered the blooms early in the morning and left them standing in tubs of water in the cool shade. Just before the program, they went to arrange the bouquets. To their disappointment, they found that the chickens had eaten all the petals."

"One Fourth of July, Price and Bloomington were not on speaking terms because of differences over the removal of the school. John Stringham and Brigham Carpenter, costumed in big sunbonnets, riding a small buckboard with a huge banner saying, Let 'er go, Galligher!, crossed the river and rode up and down the streets of Price City. It's a wonder they weren't scalped!"

"Winter holidays were celebrated at Price or Bloomington schools with a community dinner, Christmas tree or whatever, followed by a program and dancing. Usually the school children presented a drama. One year they were joined by a traveler named Sawyer, who wished Santa would bring a haystack for his horse. When the presents were distributed, there was a miniature haystack with a rosy red apple on top. It was made by Martin Larson and was a duplicate of the real thing waiting outside. At these affairs, Brigham Carpenter, a left-handed fiddler, stirred up lively dance tunes."

"Once or twice a year the school and community would climb the big bluff, north and west of the valley, for a day's outing and picnic. Even in her seventy-ninth year, our little Swiss grandmother, Maria Awshlemann Carpenter, accompanied us. Spurning all help, she climbed up and down on her own two feet."

"In my young days, the L.D.S. Church was advocating Home Evenings. The young people would congregate at one or another of the homes and spend the evening playing parlour games, singing, popping corn or making molasses candy with lots of almonds. A religious topic or lesson was usually presented."

"Bloomington houses were made with window sills, because the rock walls were so thick. They were dressed with crisp white curtains and filled with red and white geraniums. The walls were usually papered, the floors golden, scrubbed pine, or covered with homemade carpets. They were kept clean and neat."

"In the summer, our rock homes, while cool in the daytime, were like ovens at night. We escaped the heat by spreading our quilts on the willow sheds. This put us up in the cool breeze, under the stars, and above the mosquitos who feasted on the cattle below. Families would converse from shed to shed until they fell asleep. At dawn they would be awakened by the crowing of the cocks in the barnyards."

"Alfred A. Carpenter gave the school a baseball diamond near the broom shop. Here we would build fires in the evenings and play 'Run Sheep, Run,' or 'Alle, Alle, All Out, Come in Free.' We had glorious fun times there."

After the pioneers left and before the modern-day development began, Bloomington was known as a great place for a picnic or an even better place to take your girl on a moonlit night. Many modern-day southern Utahns remember outings as children on the massive rocks near the cliffs, explorations for Indian writings, or dune bugging across the sagebrush. The buildings disappeared and little of the town, which was clustered mostly in the area of the present-day Manzanita Chapel, fire station, and gardens area, remains today. There is the restored Wallace Blake home and the weakening remains of the Ern Larson home across the street to the south and slightly east.

Modern Bloomington got its start when three brothers, who had formed a Utah partnership called The Johnson Land Co., were investing heavily in ranches and land throughout the West and became interested in the area. In Aug. 1966, the Johnson Land Company purchased 700 acres of Utah's most fertile ground from David Heaton. The property was on the north side of the Virgin River where today lies the Bloomington Country Club.

Because of the climate, the soil, and the water rights, the ground was initially purchased for farming. The California Packing Company needed carrots which could be harvested simultaneously with peas, so they could package fresh sliced carrots & peas. Clark Ivory, who had found the farm for the Johnsons and engineered the transaction, was commissioned to organize the water system and supervise the farm.

While actually farming the property, Clark Ivory was frequently interrupted by people seeking homesites or acreage in the Bloomington Valley. The active interest in the land, demonstrated by so many people, ignited his imagination; he immediately expressed his feelings to the Johnsons, and the land changed from a farm to a development.

Ellis Ivory, Clark's son, and Roger Boyer, a graduate of Harvard Business School, organized Ivory & Boyer Company, chartered in the spring of 1967. They were the exclusive marketing agents for the Bloomington project. Their research showed that I-15, adjoining the property on the south of the river, and the first off-ramp in the state of Utah for the north-bound lane, was on the property. Las Vegas, therefore, would be close (approx. 115 mi.) as would Brian Head (75 mi.), Lake Powell (130 mi.), Lake Mead (100 mi.), Zion Canyon (30 mi.), Snow Canyon, Cedar Breaks, and other recreational areas. St. George,

3 mi. north of Bloomington, was hosting more tourist traffic than Salt Lake City. Many new homes were being built in St. George and the Red Hills Golf Course was full during the winter; so, more land was purchased for a total of 1300 acres. In the fall of 1967, a subdivision of five acre lots with irrigation rights was being considered. An irrigation expert, who was an amateur golf course architect, came to bid on the irrigation system and was the first to suggest a golf course at Bloomington.

Bloomington's promoters had promised to have Bill Casper at the ground breaking ceremonies for the golf course. He was participating in the PGA Open in San Antonio and was to fly to Denver and Salt Lake City after that tournament and then fly on to St. George Monday morning, 22 July 1968. He missed his connection in Denver and the panic-stricken Bloomington promoters finally got a lear jet, from somewhere in Ohio, to pick him up and fly him directly to St. George. Bill was the leading money winner in 1967 & 1968. As he was driving balls from No. 1 tee, he commented, "The alfalfa patches on this Bloomington site remind me of the rough I have been battling all week at San Antonio." Casper owned a lot there facing the course in the vicinity of the second and third fairways. Wm. H. "Bill" Neff was the architect for the Bloomington Golf Course.

The first area open for sale, in modern Bloomington, was Ranches #1. Those one acre parcels sold for \$3,000. The only guarantee accompanying the purchase was a six inch gravel road. Sewer, water, utilities, golf course and country club were in no way guaranteed. The total recreational club concept had not been planned but was born as an answer to the latent demand created by people's desires to escape urban congestion and crowded recreational facilities. Bloomington has succeeded for many reasons, but primarily because water, recreation, land, and utilities have been supplied to meet demand.

Because of the success of Bloomington and the speed of development, financing became necessary and Continental Mortgage Investors (C.M.I.) was approached to invest in the Bloomington project. C.M.I. is the largest mortgage investment trust, as well as the largest lender to recreational developments, in the U.S. They came west to research the Bloomington Project, the Johnson Land Company, and Ivory & Boyer. It was concluded that, to secure the financing, the Johnsons and Ivory & Boyer, Co. would have to establish a more permanent relationship. In December 1968, the Johnson Land Company and Ivory & Boyer Co. merged into a corporation called Terracor. The principle owners in this corporation were Frank Johnson, Glendon Johnson, Clifton Johnson, Ellis Ivory, and Roger Boyer. Terracor is a privately held Utah Corporation. The whole area was thoroughly planned and five salesmen hired. They thought they would do well if they sold sixteen lots a month. They sold fifty-eight lots the first week and within a year all of the approximately fourteen hundred lots were sold.

"Terracor's first objective was to create a success. Bloomington was the credentials of Terracor; therefore, it was important that it succeed and that the people who purchased in Bloomington were satisfied. They believed that cities were built for cars, industry, and money; Bloomington is a city created for people. Their second objective, intricately related with the first, was to create a total environment heretofore unavailable, to combine the activities and recreation facilities of a town and country life, with the beauty and peace of a rural community. It was Terracor's goal that the people in Bloomington have the widest possible opportunity to use their full potential of mind and body. They would have a community for all ages and for all kinds of people.

A community with freedom from anxiety connected with personal uncontrollable change in environment and governmental structure. It would not be a city for cars or industry but a city for people."

The first families moved into modern Bloomington in the summer of 1969. At that time, all who lived to the north of the Virgin River attended church in the 2nd Ward in St. George and all who lived to the south attended the 8th Ward. The first home completed was that of Roger Boyer at 3066 Wesley Powell Dr. This was followed by those of

	Rex Jackson	3088 Sugar Leo Rd.	
	LeRoi Merrill	355 Sugar Leo Rd.	
	Frank Johnson	194 Sugar Leo Rd.	
	Orson Brown	3244 Three Bars Rd.	
	Ellis Ivory	1204 Wesley Powell Dr.	
Club Manager -	Parley Peterson	3396 Wesley Powell Dr.	
	Bob Sears	3026 Wesley Powell Dr.	
Golf Pros. -	Craig & Kean Ridd	lived at 3448 Moqui Dr.	
Greens Keeper -	Gene Schneider	lived at 3218 Fairway Dr.	
	LaVell Goodwin	1343 Nelson Cir.	Spring 1970
	Dean Larson	3162 Swaps Rd.	1970
	Neal C. Capel	3538 Sugar Leo Rd.	Jan 1971
	Jack Bradley	1297 Palmer Cir.	Feb 1971
	Frank Barton	1288 Nicklaus Cir.	Mar 1971
	Arthur Hamel	3420 Comanche Rd.	Mar 1971

Nile Harbertson, club manager, Terry Monson, golf pro, and Jeff Morby, property site manager, all bachelors, came in 1970, 1971, and 1972 respectively. Jean Cruickshank and Carolyn Reinbold invested in property in July 1971 and actually moved here a year later. Other early residents of the Country Club Townhouses were:

Ralph Atkins (fall 1970)	#914	Jim Kimball (Sales Mgr.)	#946
Jeron "Jerry" Jones	#918	Harold Griffin	#952
Alan Coombs	#934	Ray Taylor (Oct 1971)	#992
Dave Willden	#942		

Rex Jackson installed the water lines, sewer, roads, and swimming pool. He ran the later line from 700 S. in St. George to the Ranches area in 1968. There was no bridge across the river. The only access to the north side of the river was by the back road from town. Rex made a rock crossing of the river about where the bridge is today. The Man O' War Bridge was dedicated 29 November 1969. Le-Roi Merrill built some of the first homes in Bloomington. The club house had been started when LaVell Goodwin came to build it. He also built several of the townhomes.

Jim Ward, Civil Engineer, was building the dam in Gunlock and became the General Manager for Terracor. He lived at 3056 Sugar Leo Rd. Les Stoker, Architect, was working in St. George and moved to 3448 Moqui Dr. in 1970 when the Ridd twins left the area.

Terracor built the first two houses in the Gardens: 909 Manzanita Road, where the Fernleys live today, was first occupied by Bishop Douglas B. Nielson and his family, and 927 Pecan Circle, the home of Dan and Anna Marie Nevot, was originally lived in by the Malstroms, Doug Nielson's aunt and uncle. Bee and Woody Wood moved here in June 1970 and lived in their trailer while their home at 910 Mariposa Circle was being completed. The Max Anderson home at 912 Gardenia Circle was being built at the same time. The Brent Little family moved

here in April 1971, the Earl Strongs in 1972 as well as the John Johnsons, the Gullicksons, and the Woodward. The Jim Thorleys arrived in the late summer 1972 and the Bill Lambs in 1973.

The 11th Ward, which included all of Bloomington and everyone south of 400 So. and west of Main Street in St. George, was formed 11 June 1972 with 570 members. James N. Ward, who had been 2nd Counselor in the 8th Ward Bishopric, was made Bishop with Vance Davenport, 1st Counselor, and Orwin Gubler, 2nd Counselor. We continued to hold our meetings in the 2nd & 8th Ward Chapel on Main Street in St. George. On 10 September, the Relief Society was organized with Lucy S. Capel, President; Betty Wright, 1st Counselor; Helen E. Cruickshank, 2nd Counselor; and Carolyn Reinbold, Secretary-Treasurer. One year later this ward had almost 800 members. Jim Ward moved and on 9 September 1973, Douglas B. Nielson was sustained Bishop with Orwin Gubler, 1st Counselor; and Newel Jackson 2nd Counselor. Newel Jackson moved in March 1974 and Gail Maxwell was sustained 2nd Counselor.

When I moved to Utah's Dixie, it was known as the place "where the summer sun spends the winter". The motels in St. George would give you a free room if the sun didn't shine sometime during the day. I don't think they lost much money. It was really nice to be living in a place with beautiful skies, clean air, and moderate temperatures.

Those of us who moved here in the early 1970's had to travel through Santa Clara and over Utah Hill to go anywhere south. I-15 was not open but was being worked on. Our homes would be shaken and the windows rattled many times a day by the blasting in the gorge. The ribbon was cut and I-15 was finally opened, through the Virgin River Gorge, 14 December 1973. We were told that section of highway cost \$1 million per mile to build. It certainly is a beautiful drive and is not only shorter but a much safer route to Littlefield and points south.

The 11th Ward was dissolved 31 March 1974, less than two years after it was formed, and the Bloomington Ward was created with 380 members. The people who lived in town went back into the 2nd and 8th Wards. The 11th Ward Bishopric continued as the Bloomington Ward Bishopric. The Bloomington Ward Relief Society was organized 16 April 1974 with Betty Wright, President; Bonnie Ball, 1st Counselor; Armanell Francom, 2nd Counselor; and Pat Gwen Keele, Secretary. Property was purchased in May 1974 for a Bloomington chapel. Ground breaking ceremonies for the Manzanita Chapel were held 30 August 1975; construction commenced 20 October 1975 with Warren Hannig the contractor.

People seem to have the idea that it doesn't snow in Dixie. Well, 1 January 1973 we had six inches of snow that remained on the ground for some time because it got down to four degrees on the 4th; then, on 1 January 1974 we had about five inches of snow. Jean and I drove into St. George to church 29 December 1974 and were very much surprised to see snow on the ground and children making snowmen; there had been no snow at Bloomington.

In the mid 1970s, those of us who lived here were surprised one day to see sheep being herded along Bloomington Drive South. It happened in early December when the Larson's BLM use permit started and again when it ended about late May. The sheep belonged to LeRoy Larson (son of Lars James Larson) and his son Sam who now lived in Bloomington. The sheep were pastured on Kanarra Mtn. in the summer, moved to Enterprise in the fall, and herded to spend the winter

west of Shivwits Rd. in Bloomington on BLM land. There were about 500 sheep. They were brought in to the lambing corrals, in SW Bloomington, to have their lambs in the spring (about 700 lambs), before being taken back to summer pasture. As they drove them down Bloomington Drive South, one or two sheep would stray and the golfers would get excited when they would find a stray sheep on the golf course.

Ray Taylor was instrumental in getting a fire truck and volunteer fire department set up when we were threatened with high insurance rates. The Bloomington Fire and Security Station was dedicated 17 August 1974. Until that time our security officer stayed in a trailer on Bloomington Drive South. Max Anderson was the first Chief of the Bloomington Fire Department.

It seemed the Virgin River still had to act up once in a while. Those of us living in Bloomington were alerted 29 July 1975 that there was an eighteen foot wall of water coming out of Zion Park and headed our way. Several of us went over by the club house to watch the river rise. The water came up to within a foot or two of the floor of the Man O'War Bridge and washed away the southern approach to the bridge but did no further damage.

We had our first house fire in November 1975 when the Van Der Wel's home at 2680 Los Padres burned. They were a German couple who had just spent their life's savings on the home to retire in. They had made an appointment with an insurance agent but hadn't seen him when the fire took their home. When they went the next morning to see if they could salvage anything, the only thing that hadn't been burned was their genealogy which was in a cardboard box under the bed. The Ward rebuilt their home at no cost to them. Those members who could work did so, others donated money.

Gail Maxwell was called to the High Council and Garold "Bill" Lamb was sustained 2nd Counselor in the Bishopric 1 December 1974. On that same day, the Relief Society got a new Presidency - LaRue Goodwin, President; Mary Ahlroth, 1st Counselor; Joyce Sevy, 2nd Counselor; and Gwen Keele remained Secretary. Vonda Larson replaced Mary Ahlroth as 1st Counselor 9 May 1976. Bill Lamb moved and John Dean was sustained 2nd Counselor in the Bishopric 19 September 1976. Gwen Keele was released as Relief Society Secretary on 19 December 1976 and Dorothy Cordon was sustained. Dorothy was replaced by Marjorie Van Gilder in June 1977.

The Bloomington chapel on Manzanita Road was completed the first of December 1976; we held our first meetings there 12 December 1976, Bloomington Ward Conference day. The Bishop announced at that time that the chapel would be paid for with the pledges that had been made. The ward members were responsible for doing the excavation, painting, on-site concrete work, putting in the sprinkler system, landscaping and carrying out the final clean-up with LeRoi Merrill building coordinator for volunteer labor. The members made craft items to sell, sold stationery, etc. to raise money for the building fund. The Elders' Quorum, Ralph Atkin, President, built the house at 3367 Aztec Road and when they sold the house to Kent Garrett, they donated the money to the building fund. The Neal C. Capels had a \$50./person, catered, oriental dinner to which ward members were invited with proceeds going to the building fund. Everyone did their share.

At the end of 1976, there were 144 families and 572 members in the Bloomington LDS Ward with 271 homes built there.

The dedicatory service for the Manzanita Chapel was held 26 June 1977 with Elder Richard J. Marshall, Regional Representative, Presiding. The Dedicatory Prayer was given by Kenneth R. Metcalf, President of the St. George Stake.

The Bloomington Ward was divided 29 January 1978 into the Bloomington First Ward with 352 members and the Bloomington Second Ward with 374 members.

29 January 1979 we had three inches of snow. It snowed again the 31st and we set a snowfall record of fourteen inches February 1st. The snow stayed on the ground until the middle of February.

The Bloomington Third Ward was created 23 March 1980 with Jack Suttlemyre, Bishop; Robert Peirce, 1st Counselor; Rick Miles, 2nd Counselor; and James Moore, Executive Secretary.

Bloomington had an increasing number of young children and it was obvious we needed a school. Our elite stables, which weren't being used very much, were torn down and a new Bloomington Elementary School was built on the grounds with the arena area, where we had Little Britches Rodeos, turned into a playground. The formal dedication of the school was held 15 August 1985. There were 441 students enrolled. At the end of April 1994 there were 835 students.

A Bloomington 4th Ward was created 18 February 1985 with Jeff Morby, Bishop; John Larson, 1st Counselor; Les Stoker, 2nd Counselor; Leo Daley, Executive Secretary; and John Callister, Clerk.

The Washington County Water Conservancy District decided to dam Quail Creek to make a reservoir and help control the waters of the Virgin River. Work on the dam commenced in April 1982; the dam was completed in April 1985 and dedicated 20 September 1985.

Groundbreaking, for a new Bloomington Chapel & Stake Center, on the corner of Brigham and Young Streets, was held 25 June 1986. By 1987, the four wards in Bloomington had 2,050 members. On 5 July 1987, the area was divided into six wards. The Bloomington Utah Stake was organized 6 March 1988 with Steven H. Peterson, President; Patric R. Lewis, First Counselor; H. Clark Christensen, Second Counselor; Wayne M. Hepworth, Executive Secretary; and John W. Callister, Stake Clerk. Members of the First, Second, and Fifth Wards met in the new Stake Center while the Third, Fourth, and Sixth Wards met in the Manzanita Chapel. President Peterson said, "I feel a swelling in my heart of humility, gratitude, and love toward our Lord & Savior, Jesus Christ, to those who have preceded us, and to each of you. What a tremendous blessing it is for each of us to live in such a peaceful and beautiful community. May this land be blessed with the stamina of the early pioneers who had the foresight to carry out their dreams."

On 24 June 1988, the Bloomington Utah Stake Center was dedicated. Pres. Steven H. Peterson gave the Dedicatory Prayer. The Bloomington stake was reorganized and now included eleven wards; six Bloomington Wards, the Mesquite First, Second, & Third Wards, and the Bunkerville First & Second Wards. This included the areas of Littlefield and Beaver Dam with a total membership of 4,637. It was a unique stake in that it included three states and two time zones.

Earliest residents of B'ton

Wm. H. Carpenter
Lars Larson
Fawcett
Blake
Stringham
Jones
McCain

Wm. H. CARPENTER &
2nd wife Momora SHEFFIELD (d. 1916)
1. Wm. S. Carpenter md Elizabeth HODGES
2. Mora "Mo" Carpenter md Nephi FAWCETT
3. Brigham Carpenter md Effie STRINGHAM
4. Rhoda (adopted Indian) md Thos. SHAMP
5. Alfred A. Carpenter 1872 (adopted)
md (1) Eliza Ann HOLYOAK
a. Emma "Dixie" b. 8 May 1904
(2) Elsie Victoria LARSON 22 Sep 1889
(3) Mary AESCHLAMANN
a. Agnes - died age 18
b. Esther - died at birth

Wm. S. CARPENTER & Elizabeth HODGES
(moved to Idaho)

1. Jenny md RADFORD
2. Mora md SCOTT
3. Wm.-UNMD
4. Esther
5. Lavina
6. Albert (moved to Idaho)
7. Beth
8. Frank-UNMD

Nephi FAWCETT & Ruth ORCHARD of Price

1. William "Will" md Ida WOLFENSTEIN
2. Albert "Bert" md MILNE
3. Susan md Joseph ATKIN
4. Louella md Joseph WILKINSON
5. Fred (twin) md Genevieve HAIL
6. Jed md Nina BURGESS

2nd wife Mora CARPENTER

1. Arthur md Margaret Madge LARSON
2. Fern md Lyle HOWELLS
3. Marie md GRAYBILL
4. Della md Ray HOWELLS
5. Melvin md STRATTON

Joseph W. CARPENTER & 1st Wife
Annie Burdett RANDALL

1. Annie May md John STRINGHAM
2. Leah md Joe HODGES
3. Louisa "Louie" md Paul ZAMALLO
4. Ethel md DAVIS
5. Edgar
6. Delbert

James S. JONES & Alice LaFEVRE

1. Chester md Nola ISOM
2. LaFave (f) md Vivian LEANY
3. Eddie md (1) Reva WOOD
(2) Thelia
4. Myron md Helen HAMMOND
5. Georgie md Lela SMITH
6. Manola (f) md Eddie CLUFF
7. Esther md Wendell PICKERING

John S. "Jack" STRINGHAM & wife
Annie May CARPENTER

1. Earl md Hattie WEAVER
2. Nathaniel md Georgia WADSWORTH
3. Ammon md Verlate EDWARDS
4. Kate
5. Bertha
6. Annie
7. Effie md Gene CLARK
8. Isabel md Ermal STRATTON

Albert McCain & wife Rhoda

1. Artie md Snyder GIFFORD
2. Belle md James HIATT
3. Mary md CROMWELL
4. Leoma md Victor IVERSON
5. Harold - UNMD died in 20's
6. Archie md (1) June
(2) Lela

Alfred CARPENTER & Elsie V. LARSON

1. Emma "Dixie" b. 1904 (step dau)
md Frank O. MORTENSEN
2. Eliza b. 24 Jan 1911 B'ton
md LaVon JONES
3. Elva b. 25 Dec 1912 B'ton
md Claude BRACKEN
4. Lester James b. 7 Jun 1916 B'ton - UNMD
5. Virginia b. 6 Sep 1918 B'ton
md Raymond Truman CANNON
6. Pearl b. 10 Nov 1921 B'ton
md Merle Elgin MORRIS
7. Carol 27 Dec 1924- 4 Oct 1933 B'ton
8. Ralph Louis b. 26 Oct 1926 B'ton
md (1) Carla IVERSON
(2) Helen HARTLEY
9. Alfred Karl b. 28 Jul 1929 St. George
md Maxine ROTZ

Willard LARSON md Emma BOOTH
1. Willard Donald b. 8 Feb 1916
d. 16 Mar 1994
2. Joyce md BLACK
3. Ruland
4. Curtis McKay
5. Arnold
6. Clayton

Williard Donald LARSON &
Virginia Agnes SMITH

1. Edward James md Donna
2. Stanley Phil md Darleen
3. Rickie Dee
4. Pamela Sue md Gerald BELL
5. Inf dau
6. Inf dau
7. Inf dau
8. Inf dau

New Year's Eve, 1988, about midnight, the residents of Bloomington were alerted that the Quail Creek Dam had broken and Bloomington was being evacuated. The dam had leaked from the beginning and they had been "watching" it. Areas on both sides of the river were flooded, the approach to the Man O' War Bridge was again washed out, and there was considerable damage to about twenty-six homes. Members of the involved wards immediately volunteered to help clean up the homes that were flooded with mud and water. The River Road bridge between Bloomington Hills and town was washed away. The I-15 bridge just south of St. George was closed and all I-15 traffic was routed through Santa Clara and over Utah Hill. The Man O' War bridge in Bloomington was closed; so, the people living in the Bloomington Ranches, and Bloomington Hills, were stranded and could not get into town for a few days until the I-15 bridge was deemed safe.

In November 1990, the Bloomington 7th Ward was created with Dean Christensen, Bishop; Gayle Carter, 1st Counselor; Eddie Edwards, 2nd Counselor; Don Goold, Executive Secretary; and Clifford Rice, Clerk.

2 September 1992, at 4:26 a.m., we were awakened by violent shaking and a loud noise. A 5.9 earthquake, with an epicenter five miles SE of St. George on the Washington Fault, had hit. Most of the quake's destructive energy was spent near Springdale where roads were closed and houses destroyed. There was scattered damage in St. George, Green Valley and around but the only evidence of the quake in my home was some crooked pictures on the wall.

Bloomington had its second residential fire in Aug 1993 when two of the Country Club Townhomes were destroyed. The fire started in #3403 and spread to #3401; luckily the fire department was able to contain it to those two units.

Ground was broken on 25 September 1993 for a third Bloomington Chapel on Mulberry Drive to be the meeting place for the Bloomington 4th & 7th Wards.

A Bloomington 8th Ward was formed 6 February 1994 with Kim Talbot, Bishop; Wayne Liston, First Counselor; Robert Simmons, Second Counselor; Jay Lane, Executive Secretary; Richard Hutchins, Clerk. There were now 5,051 members in the Bloomington Utah Stake.

Mesquite, Bunkerville, and the Littlefield area now had enough members to have a stake of their own; so, on 13 February 1994 the Mesquite Nevada Stake was formed. They were part of the Bloomington Stake for five years and eight months. At the end of April 1994, the Bloomington Utah Stake had 2,933 members and there were 1,409 residences in Bloomington.

Members of the Bloomington 4th & 7th Wards met in the new Mulberry Chapel for the first time, 31 July 1994. The Mulberry Chapel was dedicated 16 October 1994 with President Steven H. Peterson giving the dedicatory prayer.

There are few around now who remember the way it was in Bloomington at the turn of the century but there are a lot who will remember life here as it is today. Bloomington has re-emerged as an exclusive community wrapped around a golf course. Today, Bloomington is one of the west's better-known small retirement communities and has received recognition for its quality. Bloomington, with its distinct lifestyle, frequently referred to as Utah's Palm Springs, has left its mark on the county and the state.