

Union County Across the Centuries

Where New Jersey History Began

HISTORIC SITES



Parsonage of St. John's Church, Elizabeth, 1696



Union County
We're Connected to You!

A Service of the
Union County Board of
Chosen Freeholders

CONTENTS

WELCOME TO UNION COUNTY

MAP 27-28

BERKELEY HEIGHTS

Deserted Village of Feltville / Glenside Park 1

Littell-Lord Farmstead 2

CLARK

Dr. William Robinson Plantation-Museum 3

CRANFORD

Crane-Phillips House Museum 4

ELIZABETH

Boxwood Hall State Historic Site 5

First Presbyterian Church / Snyder Academy 6

Nathaniel Bonnell Homestead & Belcher-Ogden Mansion 7

St. John's Parsonage 8

FANWOOD

Historic Fanwood Train Station Museum 9

GARWOOD 10

HILLSIDE

Evergreen Cemetery 11

Woodruff House/Eaton Store Museum 12

KENILWORTH

Oswald J. Nitschke House 13

LINDEN 14

MOUNTAINSIDE

Deacon Andrew Hetfield House 15

NEW PROVIDENCE

Salt Box Museum 16

PLAINFIELD

Drake House Museum 17

Plainfield Meetinghouse 18

RAHWAY

Merchants and Drovers Tavern 19

Rahway School for Colored Children /

African-American History & Heritage Center 20

Union County Performing Arts Center 21

ROSELLE

Abraham Clark Memorial House 22

ROSELLE PARK	
Roselle Park Museum	23
SCOTCH PLAINS	
Ash Brook Reservation Monument & Historic Trail	24
The Elizabeth and Gershom Frazee House	25
Osborn Cannonball House	26
The Shady Rest & Country Club	29
SPRINGFIELD	
Cannon Ball House	30
SUMMIT	
Carter House	31
Reeves-Reed Arboretum	32
Summit Playhouse	33
Twin Maples	34
UNION	
Caldwell Parsonage	35
Connecticut Farms Church	36
Liberty Hall Museum	37
WESTFIELD	
Miller-Cory House Museum	38
Reeve History & Cultural Resource Center	39
WINFIELD PARK	40
AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY WAR BATTLES	
Skirmishes and Raids at Elizabeth	41
Battle of Short Hills	42
Battle of Connecticut Farms	43
Battle of Springfield	44
Washington-Rochambeau National Historic Trail	45
UNION COUNTY MEDAL OF HONOR MEMORIAL	46-48
THEMATIC CLUSTERS	
• Early Aristocracy	49
• Farm Life	50
• Revolutionary Front Lines	51
• Commerce & Industry	52
• Victorian Resorts & Suburbs	53-54
VISIT HISTORIC SITES VIA MASS TRANSIT	55-57
HIKE THRU HISTORY	58

Union County Welcomes You

On behalf of our nearly 550,000 residents, the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders welcomes you to our home. In this densely populated region, it can be challenging, to “see” our history, but it is here. This guide will help you find it, and enjoy it.

This region was home to the Lenni Lenape, who fished and sowed the verdant land. Early European colonists cleared vast woodlands for their farms. In time, this became a center of industry. Long before the use of electricity, the power of rivers and brooks was harnessed to drive mills and factories.

Union County invites you to explore our many historic sites, museums, and trails, to learn about our rich history — one that reflects the evolution of America itself, from our colonial past to the modern era. In addition to the sites which Union County maintains, most of our 21 communities have their own local historic museums. Visiting hours vary, so checking ahead is recommended.

Every year, on the third weekend in October, Union County hosts ***Four Centuries in a Weekend***, when all historic sites are open. All are invited to the celebration—two days of learning and fun.

Bring the kids to the Deserted Village to play colonial games and drink freshly pressed cider. Or, visit the Boudinot Mansion in Elizabeth, where a young Alexander Hamilton once lived, and where George Washington once dined, en route to his inauguration as the first President of the United States.

Some sites are accessible via mass transit. See directions on pages 55–57 of this guide. For avid hikers, Union County has several history trails, ranging from a half-mile to 13 miles.

Whether you begin your explorations in “Elizabethtown,” New Jersey’s first English-speaking settlement, or you make your way to the Merchants & Drovers Tavern in Rahway — where weary travelers of yore rested for the night and shared a pint or two...or you stroll the gardens of Summit’s Reeves-Reed Arboretum... your adventure can begin just about anywhere in Union County.

Enjoy!



Let Your Tour Begin!

Hear Union County's stories of evolution and growth, as told through 34 historic structures built in the 17th, 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries. Whether an early mansion or a farmhouse, business establishment or cemetery, these sites together illustrate history — from revolutionary fervor, to farm life, Victorian elegance, early medical care, and even a one-stop-shopping store.

Our historic sites display important collections of fine and decorative arts, furniture, farm implements, toys, and documents. Most sites are preserved in their original locations although were moved, saving them for future generations.

Thematic clusters of sites, grouped by historic era, provide the context for the presentation of four centuries of Union County history. Each cluster reflects life and events during a particular era. Pages 49-54 present these clusters, with an icon representing each era. Some sites appear in more than one cluster, since buildings were altered over the centuries to meet changing needs and styles.

Early Aristocracy • Farm Life
Revolutionary Front Lines • Commerce & Industry
Victorian Resorts & Suburbs

Each site is denoted by a number within a black circle.
See the map to locate them.

BERKELEY HEIGHTS



① DESERTED VILLAGE OF FELTVILLE / GLENDSIDE PARK

Cataract Hollow Road

This 1845 village was built by New York businessman David Felt. Today, it contains ten buildings and the archaeological remains of a community once populated, in part, by European immigrants. At its height, Feltville included a school, a church/general store, and a factory on the Blue Brook, while rows of cottages housed workers and their families.

David Felt sold Feltville in 1860. After several subsequent failed enterprises, it was reborn in 1882 as Glenside Park, a summer resort. Adirondack porches transformed the workers' houses into vacation cottages enjoyed by city dwellers. Suburbanization led to the resort's closure in 1916. Today, the Deserted Village is nestled in the Watchung Reservation, Union County's 2,142-acre nature preserve.

*Listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places
Operated by Union County Department of Parks and Recreation*

Featuring:

- Interpretive signage throughout (installed in 2017)
- Revolutionary War period cemetery
- Restored church/store building houses interpretive exhibits
- Restored Masker's Barn carriage house, circa 1882

Year-Round Hours: Grounds open dawn to dusk;
Visitor Center: Saturdays, Sundays and holidays, noon – 5pm

For Directions, History, Events: ucnj.org/dv or call
(908) 464-0145



BERKELEY HEIGHTS

2 LITTELL-LORD FARMSTEAD

31 Horseshoe Road



A pastoral site comprising a 19th-century Gothic cottage, stone springhouse, summer kitchen, Osage orange trees and a pond, provides the setting for the Littell-Lord House. This charming rural complex is a rare reminder of Union County's agricultural past. The property was built circa 1760 by Andrew Littell, a farmer and weaver. Although Andrew died in 1790, the property remained in the Littell family's ownership until 1817, when it went through a succession of owners until the Lord family purchased the farm in 1867. These later owners, including the Lord family, constructed several additions to the house.

The first floor features an Empire-Victorian parlor and a 19th-century kitchen. A staircase leads to an enlarged second floor, once a small loft. Upstairs is a child's room containing antique toys and a Victorian bedroom with cottage furniture. The central portion of what is now the Farmhouse Museum was built in 1760. It is believed that the original house consisted of three rooms on the first floor and an open loft above. Andrew, his wife Mary and their seven children resided in this house.

*Listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places
Operated by the Historical Society of Berkeley Heights*

Featuring:

- Hands-on replicas of 19th-century toys
- Last remaining stone springhouse in Union County
- Pump house & Corncrib



For Hours: <https://sites.google.com/site/hsofbh/>



3 DR. WILLIAM ROBINSON PLANTATION MUSEUM

593 Madison Hill Road

A rare example of 17th-century architecture in New Jersey, this post-medieval English-style house was built circa 1690. A medicine room reflects the profession of Dr. William Robinson, one of the few physicians in East New Jersey at this time. He practiced Physick, a popular form of healing using plants and herbs, and also performed Chirurgery (surgery).

Unusual architectural features abound here, including wide floorboards and a 20-inch-wide summer beam. The hall, with its large fireplace, is complete with period furnishings. A box-like winder staircase leads to the second floor, where Dr. Robinson's maps and last will are displayed.

*Listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places
Operated by the Clark Historical Society*

Featuring:

- Medicine room and related items
- Original wood-peg rafters and gunstock posts
- Indian mortar stone, corn crib and old stepping stone
- Milk wagon from 1912
- Antique hand tools and farm tools on display
- Garrison roof overhang
- Basement filled with artifacts
- Museum souvenir and gift shop

For Hours: www.DrRobinsonMuseum.org or call (732) 340-1571



CRANFORD

4 CRANE-PHILLIPS HOUSE MUSEUM

124 North Union Avenue



This American Civil War veteran's cottage stands next to the Rahway River, near the 18th-century river crossing of "Crane's Ford." The house is an outstanding example of Andrew Jackson Downing architecture, and is dressed in its original 1870s Victorian colors.

This museum offers a rare glimpse of the modest life of a veteran's family during the Victorian era of opulence. Permanent and changing exhibits display items from the Cranford Historical Society's collections of clothing, tools, and other objects of local history.

The house has been named to "Save America's Treasures" by the White House and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. It is among only 27 such sites in New Jersey, and is the only "American Treasure" in Union County.

The library and archives of the Cranford Historical Society are located in its headquarters at Hanson House, nearby at 38 Springfield Avenue.

*Listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places
Operated by the Cranford Historical Society*

For Hours: cranfordhistoricalsociety.com or call (908) 276-0082



ELIZABETH



5 BOXWOOD HALL STATE HISTORIC SITE

Boudinot Mansion

1073 East Jersey Street

Elias Boudinot, a prominent American statesman of the late 18th and early 19th centuries, purchased this handsome Georgian house in 1772. Boudinot served briefly as President of the United States under the Articles of Confederation.

During Boudinot's residency, young Alexander Hamilton lived at Boxwood Hall for several months while attending school in Elizabethtown. In 1789, George Washington dined here with Boudinot and a committee of Congressmen while en route to his inauguration in New York City. In 1795, the house was sold to Jonathan Dayton, a signer of the Constitution. He also served as Speaker of the House of Representatives and then as a member of the US Senate. In 1824, Dayton hosted the Marquis de Lafayette, a French aristocrat who served with distinction in the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War. The house would witness several more chapters in its storied history, for a time serving as a girls' school then as a retirement home for women.

*Listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places,
National Historic Landmark*

*Operated as Boxwood Hall State Historic Site, NJ DEP, Division of
Parks and Forestry*

Featuring:

- Take a "trip through time" with Boxwood Hall's 250-year-old history
- Small exhibit about local history

For Hours: (908) 282-7617



ELIZABETH

6 FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ELIZABETH & SNYDER ACADEMY

42 Broad Street



“Old First” dates back to Elizabethtown’s beginnings. The original building was the meeting house for public affairs on weekdays and a house of worship on Sundays. The first colonial Governor, Phillip Carteret, maintained his office there, and the first meeting of the New Jersey legislature was held there in 1668. The British burned the early buildings in 1780. The present-day sanctuary opened a decade later, with a new steeple installed in 2008.

Snyder Academy is adjacent to the First Presbyterian Church. The original building opened in 1767 as a classical school known as The Academy, at which Aaron Burr and Alexander Hamilton were students. Burned during a 1779 British raid, The Academy was rebuilt and reopened in 1787 and closed in 1834. Rebuilt again in 1863 and in 1917, it has been used for a parish house, offices and Sunday school. A substantial donation from the Harold B. and Dorothy A. Snyder Foundation funded a major renovation, complete with a 250-seat theater, commercial kitchen and art studio.

*Listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places
Operated by the Old First Historic Trust*

Featuring:

- New Jersey’s most historic burial ground, with more than 2,100 gravesites spanning four centuries, including graves of Jonathan Dickinson (founder of Princeton University), and the “Fighting Parson,” Rev. James Caldwell and his wife (both killed during the Revolutionary War)

For Hours: snyderacademy.org or call (908) 353-2131.
Also on Facebook & Twitter @SnyderAcademy



ELIZABETH



7 NATHANIEL BONNELL HOMESTEAD & BELCHER-OGDEN MANSION

1045 & 1046 East Jersey Street

The Nathaniel Bonnell Homestead (1682) and the Belcher-Ogden Mansion anchor “the corner that history made.” The Belcher Ogden Mansion originally housed the family of John Ogden in the mid-18th century. About 1751, the royal Governor of New Jersey, Jonathan Belcher, relocated the center of colonial government from Burlington on the Delaware to Elizabeth. He bought the Ogden residence and lived there until his death in 1757. During that time, Belcher strongly supported the creation of a school that would become Princeton University. The school’s first president, Rev. Jonathan Dickinson and his successor, the distinguished Protestant minister, Rev. Jonathan Edwards, both visited Belcher at his residence.

In 1758 William Peartree Smith, a close friend of New Jersey’s first governor, William Livingston — and himself a member of NJ’s Committee of Correspondence — took ownership of the house. In 1778 his daughter Catherine married Elisha Boudinot, sister of Elias Boudinot, President of the Continental Congress. Alexander Hamilton served as Master of Ceremonies on that occasion and welcomed distinguished guests including George Washington and the Marquis de Lafayette.

Featuring:

- Hand-cut post-and-beam construction with unusual Flemish bond brick style, the result of expansions made by its first three owners

*Listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places,
National Historic Landmark*

For Hours: Daytime: (908) 581-7555; Evening: (908) 591-1893



ELIZABETH

ST. JOHN'S PARSONAGE The Andrew Hampton Homestead --- 633 Pearl Street



Edwin F. Hatfield and Samuel A. Clark, traditionally recognized in the 19th century as authorities in the early history of the Elizabeth area, both credit Andrew Hampton (Hamton) as the original owner-builder of this building.

The earliest house on this site on the banks of the Elizabeth River was built in 1696 or 1697, probably by Andrew Hampton. The present-day structure of the Homestead-Parsonage is a well restored example of a Federal-style building. Portions of this house served as the parsonage to St. John's Episcopal Church, in Elizabeth, from 1750 to 1875.

The Andrew Hampton Homestead – St. John's Parsonage is an invaluable reminder of an earlier time. It is a significant part of the religious and secular history of Elizabeth and, indeed, in the history of Union County and New Jersey.

The St. John's Parsonage building is now occupied by the Union County Office of Cultural and Heritage Affairs, Department of Parks and Recreation. It is a prime example of adaptive reuse of a historic structure.

Listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places.

For Hours: ucnj.org/cultural or call (908) 558-2550

FANWOOD



8 HISTORIC FANWOOD TRAIN STATION MUSEUM

230 North Avenue

In 1874 the right of way to the Central Railroad of New Jersey was moved from present day Midway Avenue to its current location. This Victorian Gothic structure was built and used as a railroad station until 1965.

The Station is an excellent example of frame Victorian Gothic architecture. It is the oldest remaining railroad station in Union County. The museum houses artifacts documenting the Borough's historic ties to the Central Railroad of New Jersey, and its land development company that constructed some of the Victorian and Queen Anne homes in the Fanwood Park Historic District.

*Listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places
Operated by the Fanwood Historic Preservation Commission,
Fanwood Park Historical District*

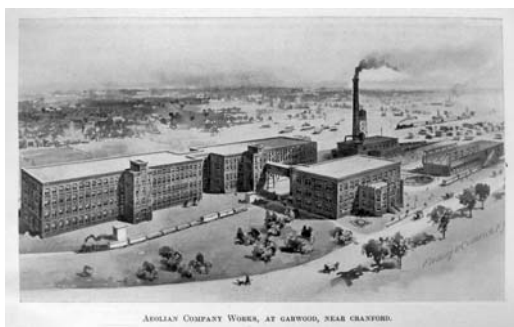
Featuring:

- The borough's first ballot box, area maps, and archival photographs
- Memorabilia and records from the Fanwood Volunteer Fire Company
- Historic pot-bellied stove
- Archival documents available for research including complete census data on Fanwood from 1880, 1900, 1910, 1920 and 1930; plus books and magazines on historic preservation

For Hours: fanwoodnj.org or call (908) 322-8236



GARWOOD



In the 1890s, John R. Maxwell, a former president of the Jersey Central Railroad, acquired large tracts of land in Cranford and Westfield, and then formed the Garwood Land and Improvement Company. Samuel Garwood was the first president of the Land Company.

Nearly 75 homes were built. Most housed the workers of Hall Signal Company and the Hercules Tube works (famous for producing bicycle tubing). By the early 20th century, Garwood was gaining its own identity as the industrial center of Union County. Hall and Hercules were joined by Aeolian Organ, Thatcher Furnace, and other large factories.

Cranford and Westfield were expected to provide services to the businesses and residents, but the two towns argued over who was responsible for fire protection, roads and schools. Fire protection was so uncertain the Aeolian Company organized its own department.

With sentiment growing that the people would fare better on their own, residents and the Land Company, led by Frank Morse, opted to break away from Cranford and Westfield. The 400 citizens of Garwood were creating one of state's smallest municipalities, only seven-tenths of a square mile. Cranford strongly opposed the move, taking its protest to the state Legislature.

The effort failed, with Garwood officially incorporated on February 25, 1903. The borough's newly found independence was celebrated with bonfires and fireworks, along with the Aeolian band playing on the schoolhouse steps.

HILLSIDE



9 **EVERGREEN CEMETERY** 1137 North Broad Street

In 1853, as small church graveyards became crowded, Evergreen Cemetery was created as a rural, interdenominational burial ground. Its picturesque landscape, designed to preserve the natural terrain and existing trees, reflects a romantic, Victorian view of death.

Today, the cemetery's expansive park-like grounds double as a nature preserve. Mausoleums and more than 10,000 monuments make Evergreen a virtual museum of funerary art. Special sections, such as the area devoted to Civil War soldiers, illustrate historical and social developments in American history. Drive past the Dayton Avenue entrance to see the English Tudor Chapel, designed in 1932 by Elizabeth architect, C. Godfrey Poggi.

A self-guided tour booklet can be picked up at Woodruff House—Eaton Store Museum or online at ucnj.org/evergreen

*Listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places
Operated by Evergreen Cemetery Trustees*

Featuring:

- 300-year-old white oak and copper beech trees
- Graves of early Union County pioneers
- Graves of well-known writers, including Stephen Crane, Mary Mapes Dodge and Edward Stratemeyer
- Largest Civil War Veterans section in Union County, and 100-pound Parrott Guns
- Historic Hebrew burial plot, and areas devoted to ethnic groups, including a Gypsy section

For Hours: www.woodruffhouse.org or
call (908) 352-7940 or (908) 353-8828
Tours also available by appointment.



HILLSIDE

10 WOODRUFF HOUSE EATON STORE MUSEUM

111 Conant Street



The Woodruff House was built in 1735 on land granted to John Woodruff in 1666. The first floor is furnished with circa-1800 antiques, including memorabilia from the Earl and Lyon families.

The house consists of the original 1735 section, an addition from 1790, and the 1900 Eaton Store. The restored Eaton Store illustrates a vast difference between a neighborhood store of the early 1900s and a supermarket of today. The shop today houses the original counter, a coffee grinder and gas lamp. The shelves are stocked with hundreds of products from long ago.

The property, originally an apple orchard, now has a reproduction post and beam barn with various items on display; old farm equipment, a two-seater privy, water pump, well, and archival center.

The Phil Rizzuto All Sports Museum houses a collection of memorabilia from Hillside resident and Baseball Hall of Famer, the late Phil Rizzuto, along with some memorabilia from other Hillside sports figures.

*Listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places
Operated by the Hillside Historical Society*

Featuring:

- Phil Rizzuto Museum

For Hours: www.woodruffhouse.org or call (908) 353-8828



KENILWORTH



11

OSWALD J. NITSCHKE HOUSE

49 South 21st Street

The Nitschke House (circa 1880) is one of Kenilworth's original wood-frame, clapboard farmhouses, and represents the architectural style typical of homes built in the area during the 1800s. The house is named for one of Kenilworth's pioneers, Oswald J. Nitschke, who owned the home and resided there in the early 1900s. He advocated the 1907 incorporation of Kenilworth and was elected to the first Council, serving for more than seven years.

A three-term mayor, Nitschke was responsible for development of the unique 120-foot-wide Boulevard and its extension through the Union County Park System. The Kenilworth Historical Society has restored the house and transformed it into a "living history" museum and cultural center.

*Listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places
Operated by the Kenilworth Historical Society*

Featuring:

- Tour of recently restored Nitschke House, furnished in the late 19th-century and early 20th-century periods
- Teaching garden with heirloom flowers, herbs and more
- Wheelchair accessibility by elevator

For Hours: kenilworthhistoricalsociety.org or call (908) 276-9090



LINDEN

During World War II, the General Motors plant was converted into an assembly line for the FM Wildcat, an improved version of the F4F Wildcat



As America was thrust into World War II, the nation's manufacturing industries faced uncertainty as the U.S. government assessed which industries would be necessary in claiming vital raw materials.

Linden's General Motors plant was a facility facing a shutdown. The materials used for the automobiles it produced were needed for building machines for the U.S. military and its allies. With a large workforce in danger of being unemployed, GM paired with Grumman Aircraft Corporation in January 1942 to form Eastern Aircraft.

The Linden GM plant was retrofitted to build the Navy's F4F "Wildcat" plane; while across the street, construction began on an airport to test the aircrafts being produced. On August 31, 1942, Linden Airport hosted a first test of a "Wildcat" produced at the plant. The next day, the plane was flown in front of the entire plant's personnel.

More than 3,500 Wildcats were produced in Linden, and the Wildcat was an integral part of American WWII aerial combat in the Pacific.

MOUNTAINSIDE



12 DEACON ANDREW HETFIELD HOUSE Constitution Plaza

Originally constructed by Deacon Andrew Hetfield, circa 1760, this house was expanded in stages to meet the needs of the Hetfield family during their 186-year occupancy. By 1830, a simple colonial farmhouse had been transformed into a center-hall Georgian residence. Also known as the “Dutch Oven House,” this building has been moved twice, first to protect it from a Route 22 widening.

Used for a brief time as a tea room and antiques shop, the house was once rented to MacKinlay Kantor, author of the Civil War novel, *Andersonville*. The structure was saved from demolition in 1985, when it was moved a second time to another part of the original Hetfield property.

Since the house’s move in 1985 from Route 22 to its present location, the house has been owned by the Borough of Mountainside and maintained by the Mountainside Historic Restoration Committee for use as a museum and a meeting place for Mountainside residents.

*Listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places
Operated by the Mountainside Restoration Committee*

Featuring:

- 19th-century Victorian-era bay window
- Recreated colonial kitchen
- Victorian parlor furnished with antiques

For Hours: mountainsidehistory.org or call (908) 789-9420



NEW PROVIDENCE

13 **SALT BOX MUSEUM** 1350 Springfield Avenue



When two houses constructed at different locations during the 1840s were joined in the mid-19th century, the building, now known as the Salt Box Museum, was created. The house's shape, with its steep, sloping rear roof, resembles the box in which salt used to be stored.

In 1967, the entire house was moved across Springfield Avenue to its present site. Today, the first floor is furnished to represent a typical New Jersey farmhouse of the mid-19th century. The Mason Room at the New Providence Library, 377 Elkwood Avenue, houses the Society's collection of rare documents, maps, photographs and oral history tapes.

Operated by the New Providence Historical Society

Featuring:

- 1840s furnishings
- Dresses of the 1800s and 1900s
- Hand-woven coverlet
- Brewster clock
- Copper lustre tea set
- Hay wagon on lawn with farm equipment

For Hours: newprovidencehistorical.com or call (908) 665-1034



PLAINFIELD



14 **DRAKE HOUSE MUSEUM**

602 West Front Street

The Nathaniel Drake House was built in 1746 by Isaac Drake as a home for his son, Nathaniel. Today, it is a city-owned public museum operated by the Historical Society of Plainfield.

Nestled beneath the towers and slate roof is the original farmhouse once used as George Washington's headquarters during the Battle of the Short Hills, in June 1777. The Drake sons, Abraham, Cornelius, and Isaac, served in the Essex and Somerset Counties' militia. Caesar, the family's freed slave, was a wagoner with the Continental forces.

In 1864, John S. Harberger, president of the Manhattan Co. (now Chase Bank), enlarged and embellished the house in the Victorian style, making it his summer home during Plainfield's development as a commuter suburb. Period rooms here portray both the farm life of the Drakes and the suburban life of the Harbergers. Significant American paintings, folk art, period furniture and decorative pieces make this site a museum of both history and art.

*Listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places
Operated by the Historical Society of Plainfield*

Featuring:

- 7' x 9' Civil War painting by Julian Scott
- The opulent Harberger Library
- Exhibit Gallery
- Period rooms - Colonial and Victorian eras

For Hours: (908) 755-5831; drakehouseplainfieldnj.org or drakehouseplainfieldnj@gmail.com



PLAINFIELD

15 PLAINFIELD MEETINGHOUSE 225 Watchung Avenue



The Quaker Meeting itself dates back to 1686 at Perth Amboy, with four meetinghouses built before it as Europeans moved inland from the coast. This is the New Plainfield Meetinghouse, built in 1788.

The forty years preceding this meetinghouse's construction had been difficult for local Friends (Quakers). The Meeting had addressed the issue of slavery, requiring members to either free their slaves with the promise of continued support, or to leave the fellowship — which some did.

Originally, the meetinghouse was set on three acres. The street in front was called "Peace Street." It was "The New Plainfield Meetinghouse," and the town that grew up around it took the name.

This venerable building, with the exception of a portion of one end damaged by fire and repaired in 1873, and the substitution of slate in place of the shingle roof in 1922, looks much the same as when it was built. Inside, the massive timbers are richly browned by the mellowing hand of time, yet still clearly show the marks of implements used by the original woodworkers. The benches, built by individual families from a common template, are still in use, though with the addition of cushions, which were not a part of the original plans. Electric lights have replaced the old oil lamps that swung from the beams, and the long-used wood-burning stoves are now gone.

For Hours: fgcquaker.org/cloud/rahway-and-plainfield-friends-meeting or call (908) 757-5736





16 MERCHANTS AND DROVERS TAVERN 1632 St. Georges Avenue

As a tavern and stagecoach stop, this early 19th-century hotel was the scene of auctions, public meetings, elections, business transactions, entertainment, horse breeding and a host of other activities. The handsome Federal-style inn contains a taproom, two parlors, 12 bedrooms, and a kitchen wing with a working fireplace.

Originally a house and store, the 1790s structure was adapted to tavern use in 1798. A circa-1820 addition created the imposing building that stands today, its four stories making it a rare example of an early public house.

The smaller, mid-18th-century Terrill Tavern was moved to the property in the 1970s, where it now stands as the museum shop.

*Listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places
Owned and operated by the Merchants and Drovers Tavern
Museum Association*

Featuring:

- Restored early 19th-century hotel
- Period rooms furnished with antiques
- First-person accounts of the early 1800s
- Exhibits about tavern life and stagecoach transportation
- Tavern yard restoration

For Hours: merchantsanddrovers.org or call (732) 381-0441



RAHWAY

17 **RAHWAY SCHOOL
FOR COLORED CHILDREN
& THE AFRICAN-
AMERICAN HISTORY
& HERITAGE CENTER**

261 Central Avenue



Construction began on the one-room school house in 1844, on the property of Jacob R. Shotwell, a former Vice President of RSI Bank. The primary funding, support and oversight for the school came from the Society of Friends (Quakers), who had a history of supporting persons of color. The Friends paid the school's expenses and the salary of Miss Martha (Matilda) Putnam, who served as both teacher and principal.

The school had an average enrollment of 35 students, and eventually received financial support from state public education funds. In 1882, the school was integrated, and by the mid 1880s, it closed.

In the years that followed, Ms. Lucy H. Eddy, a local philanthropist from the neighborhood established the "Rahway School for Colored Children Trust Fund" that helped to preserve books and artifacts left from the school. These items are currently being stored at the Rahway Library, but will serve as the basis for the restoration and the holdings of the newly envisioned African-American History and Heritage Center of Rahway, NJ.

This site is sponsored by the Ebenezer AME Church. However, it is currently not open to the public.

For further info: ebenezeramechurch.com or call (732) 382-0541



RAHWAY



18 **UNION COUNTY
PERFORMING ARTS
CENTER**
1601 Irving Street

This classic Vaudeville house opened as the Rahway Theater on October 16, 1928 and featured a magnificent Wurlitzer pipe organ. This organ was the catalyst for the preservation effort from which the 1,300-seat Arts Center emerged. Carefully restored to its golden age of grandeur, the Arts Center is a monument to an age gone by.

The Rahway Theatre organ's 600+ pipes were installed in two lofts on both sides of the proscenium to heighten the sound. During WWII, many organs were scrapped, their metal donated to the war effort. This organ miraculously survived the arrival of sound movies and continues to be used for concerts and movies. Once one of almost 1,000 theater organs in New Jersey, it is now one of 11.

The Union County Performing Arts Center is a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation operating in the historic Rahway Theatre. Enjoying a prime location in Union County, UCPAC is dedicated to making this landmark theatre your choice for the performing arts — for education, inspiration and entertainment. This historic landmark is the cornerstone of the Rahway Arts District.

*Listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places
Operated by the Union County Performing Arts Center, Inc.*

Featuring:

- Historic marquee with 2,500 lights
- Restored orchestra pit
- 9-foot chandelier with over 500 lights
- The "Biggest Little Wurlitzer" organ

For Hours: ucpac.org or call Admin. Office: (732) 499-0441 or Box Office: (732) 499-8226. Tours available by appointment.



ROSELLE

19 ABRAHAM CLARK MEMORIAL HOUSE 101 West Ninth Avenue



Abraham Clark boldly demonstrated his support of the Revolution as a New Jersey signer of the Declaration of Independence. He was born in what is now Roselle on February 15, 1726 — the only child of Thomas Clark. He became a surveyor and studied common law. Clark and his wife Sarah raised ten children in their farmhouse, built in 1705.

The house burned in 1900, but a replica was constructed in 1941. The original house stood a short distance from the current site on what is now Crane Street, near Wheatsheaf Road, which was known as Springfield Road in Colonial times. The design of the house was based on old photographs and existing known facts from later owners and residents. The lot on which it stands was donated to the Abraham Clark Chapter of Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) by Mr. William M. Crane, and was a part of the original Clark Farm in the 18th century.

The Office of New Jersey State Society of the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) is located here.

Operated by the Sons of the American Revolution

Featuring:

- Life and times of Abraham Clark, and history of Roselle
- Archives of the NJ State Society of the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR)

For Hours: Call (732) 221-7211 or (908) 245-1777.

Tours by appointment.



ROSELLE PARK



20 **ROSELLE PARK
MUSEUM**
9 West Grant Avenue

The Roselle Park Museum displays photographs, documents and memorabilia related to the history of Roselle Park, and offers changing exhibits of topical interest. The borough was shaped by the railroad, and by the 1860s, the station along the Central Railroad of New Jersey had become the nucleus of a small village.

In 1883, the Charles Stone Store on Westfield Avenue became the first store in the world lighted by Edison's incandescent lamp. Industrial development along the railroad corridor included the Marconi Wireless Telegraph Company of America, established in 1912, which manufactured much of the wireless equipment used in World War I. RCA's radio station WDY, housed in Roselle Park's Marconi facility, became one of the earliest licensed broadcasting stations in the United States.

The earliest recorded borough residents were the Williams family of Connecticut, who built a home and farm on the road to the West Fields. At that time there were three dirt roads, possibly old Indian trails, winding through the area. One was the road to the West Fields, the second Galloping Hill Road, and the third started with Union Road and ran diagonally in a northwest direction through Five Points to Springfield. During the Revolutionary War, soldiers marched up Galloping Hill Road on their way to the Battle of Springfield. The Hospital Oak, on the corner of Westfield Avenue and Colonial Road marked the location of a field hospital where wounded soldiers were treated.

Operated by the Roselle Park Historical Society

For Hours: roselleparkhistoricalsociety.org or call (908) 245-1776



SCOTCH PLAINS

21 ASH BROOK RESERVATION

Battle of the Short Hills Monument

1210 Raritan Road

Historic Trail

1776 Raritan Road



*Battle of the Short Hills Monument at
the entrance to Ash Brook Golf Course*

Ash Brook swamp, part of Union County's Ash Brook Reservation, was but one of many locations where British and Colonial forces fought on a brutally hot June 26, 1777. This running battle dragged on over 12 miles, stretching from Metuchen to a pass through the Watchung Mountains that came to be called "Bloody Gap."

The British hoped that if they feigned a departure from New Jersey, they would lure the Continental Forces down from the Watchung Mountains, defeat them, and finally end the Revolutionary War. The plan didn't succeed, even though Washington's troops of less than 6,000 were vastly outnumbered by a combined British and Hessian force numbering about 12,000.

After the initial confrontation in Metuchen, the Colonial militia dropped back across what is now Edison and Scotch Plains, and then retreated through the swamp in an effort to slow the British by causing their cannons to get bogged down in the soft earth. (Although portions of the swamp were drained decades ago, it is one of few locations along the battle route never fully developed.) From the swamp, the retreat continued north to the safety of the Watchung Mountains through a pass near Seeley's Pond.

Featuring:

- A nature trail leads into the swamp, allowing hikers to see firsthand the conditions that troops faced. Some wet areas remain, giving visitors a sense of why American troops lured the British through this area to slow their advance. The trailhead is at the rear of UCVTS. For more information about the trail: www.ucnj.org/trails



SCOTCH PLAINS



22

THE ELIZABETH AND GERSHOM FRAZEE HOUSE

1451 Raritan Road

The Frazee House is a Revolutionary War period farmstead built in the typical and rare style of eighteenth-century Anglo-Dutch architecture. It sits in Scotch Plains at Two Bridges, near the intersection of Raritan and Terrill Roads, west of Ash Swamp. It is a Union County landmark due to its sheer survival for more than 230 years, and due to the tale of Elizabeth “Aunt Betty” Frazee’s legendary confrontation with British General Cornwallis during the Battle of the Short Hills in June of 1777.

“Aunt Betty” was baking bread for the Continental Army when the British approached from Ash Swamp, smelled the delicious aroma of baking bread and demanded the loaves. “Aunt Betty” refused, stating she would only give the bread in fear, not love. The British general and his troops marched on, but not before plundering the farm and taking tools and supplies.

The most modern use of the house was as the business operation of the Terry-Lou Zoo on the 6-acre property from the 1970s through 1996. The Fanwood-Scotch Plains Rotary Club committed to the restoration of the Historic Frazee House in 2004. The Rotary Club, along with the Township of Scotch Plains, hopes to turn the house and adjoining acres into a resource for the community, further distinguishing New Jersey as a key site in the American Revolution.

*Listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places
Operated by the Fanwood-Scotch Plains Rotary Frazee House Inc.*

For Hours: Frazeehouse.org. Closed for renovations.



SCOTCH PLAINS

23

OSBORN CANNONBALL HOUSE

1840 Front Street



This small white clapboard house was an eyewitness to history. Built in the early 1700s, both British and Continental troops marched past its front door during the Revolutionary War while the Swift-Sure stage raced past on its way from New York to Philadelphia in the early 1800s. The house takes its name from the cannonball that struck it during a Revolutionary War skirmish.

The original owners, Jonathan and Abigail Osborn, raised thirteen children in this snug home. Jonathan was an inn-keeper, farmer and tailor. His tavern was farther west on Front Street near Terrill Road.

While the house has a certain “Williamsburg” feel, with its arbor and formal gardens, inside, four furnished rooms appointed with colonial and early 19th-century furnishings will delight the visitor. A parlor reflects Victorian tastes. The careful construction of the house is typical of the early period-wooden pegs rather than iron nails, plaster made of crushed oyster shells strengthened with animal hair, low ceilings and doors, and brick filled walls.

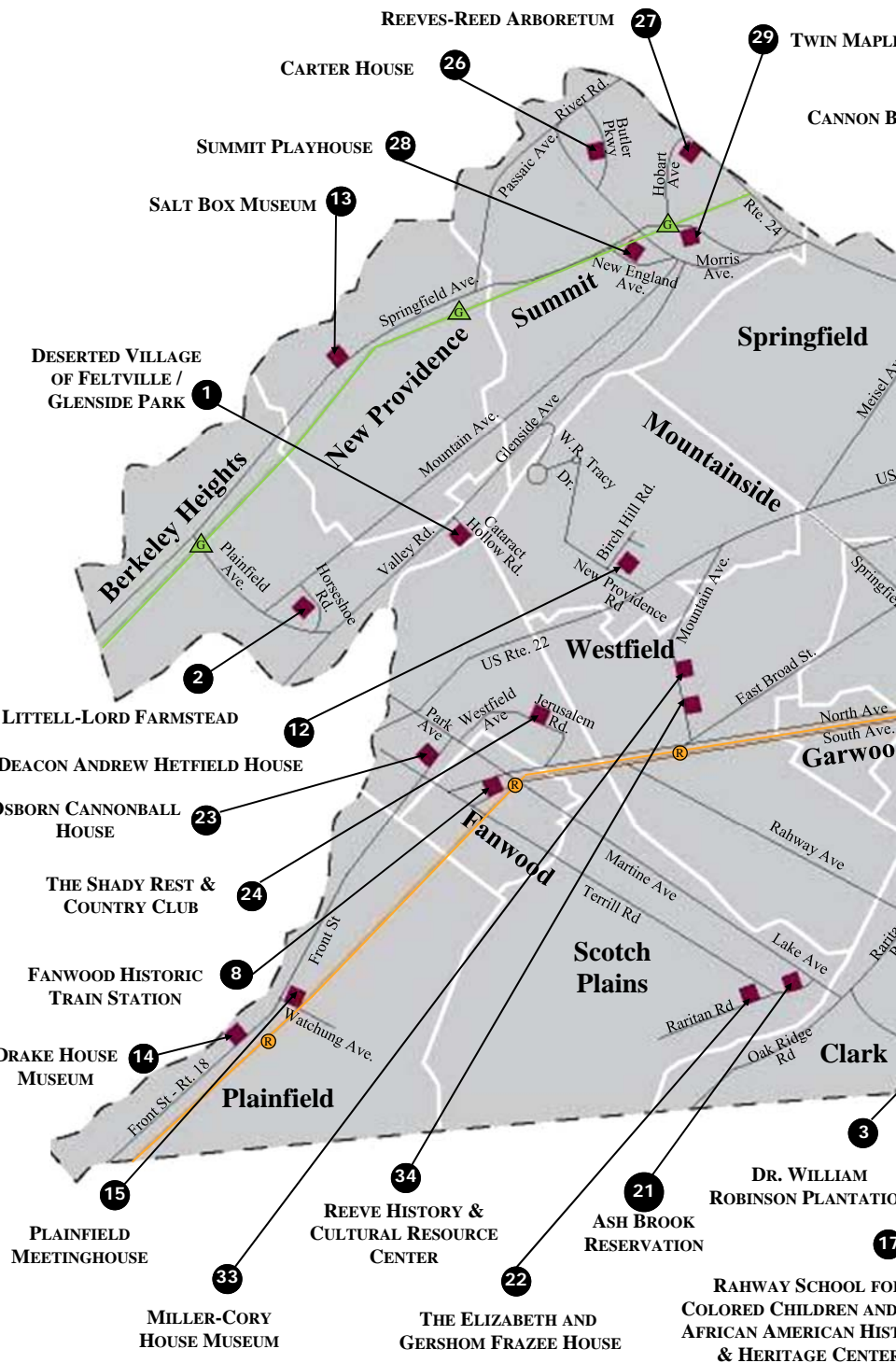
Operated by the Historical Society of Scotch Plains and Fanwood

Featuring:

- Formal gardens
- Newly renovated building with rooms painted in period colors
- Picture rail in the Victorian Room displays antique paintings, hair wreaths and samplers
- Changing exhibits of period clothing

For Hours: historicalsocietyspfnj.org or call weekdays (908) 322-6700 (Ext. 230) and weekends (908) 757-1885.







Raritan Valley Line Stops



Northeast Corridor Stops

SCOTCH PLAINS



24

THE SHADY REST & COUNTRY CLUB

820 Jerusalem Road

The Shady Rest was the first African-American-owned golf and country club in the United States. It was also the home course to the first American-born professional golfer ever to play the U.S. Open, John Matthew Shippen (1879–1968).

In the mid-1700s, the Ephraim Tucker Farmhouse was built on a thirty-one-acre plot of rural landscape just outside of Westfield. In the early 1800s, John Locey purchased this property. It later became the George B. Osborn Tavern. In the late 1800s, the property was sold to the Westfield Golf Club and converted to a 9-hole golf course, with the main farmhouse serving as the clubhouse.

During this time, a close-knit community of African Americans lived on both sides of the golf course. These residents created a path across the golf course to visit friends and relatives living in the area. During this time of segregation, African Americans were not allowed membership at this white country club.

In 1921, a group of prominent African-American investors known as the Progressive Realty Company, Inc., purchased the former Westfield Golf Club and created the Shady Rest Golf and Country Club. This club was established to provide recreation and entertainment for all ages. Activities included golf, tennis, horseback riding, skeet shooting, and a dining room, where club members hosted famous people such as W.E.B. DuBois, Count Basie, Billie Holiday, Ella Fitzgerald, Althea Gibson and others.

Operated by the Township of Scotch Plains, with tours provided by the Preserve Shady Rest Committee

For Hours & Tours by Appointment: 908-322-6700, Recreation Department, <http://preserveshadyrest.org> & preserveshadyrest@gmail.com



SPRINGFIELD

25 CANNON BALL HOUSE

126 Morris Avenue



On June 23, 1780, the British mounted yet another major offensive to break through the American defenses. Their goal: Morristown, to crush Gen. Washington's army once and for all. Headquartered on Staten Island, the British and Hessian troops ferried across the Arthur Kill to Elizabethtown and made their way west.

But the resistance they met in Springfield proved too great. They turned back but were so furious with their failure, they pillaged and burned whatever they could. During the Battle of Springfield the house was used as a field hospital, which likely saved it from being burned by the retreating British.

The Cannon Ball House, now home to the Springfield Historical Society, is one of only four houses in Springfield not destroyed that day. Seven of the eight rooms in this house are open to the public. The first documented owner of the house was Dr. Jonathan Dayton, uncle to the signer of the U.S. Constitution, for whom the township's high school is named. Dayton died in 1778, leaving his wife and children to run the household. It's believed his widow, Keturah Dayton, then established a tavern in the home to support the family.

*Listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places
Operated by the Springfield Historical Society*

Featuring:

- An exhibit of furniture and artifacts including 18th- and 19th-century household items
- Relics of the Battle of Springfield including the cannonball that lodged in the wall of the house on June 23, 1780

For Hours: springfieldhistoricalsociety.webs.com or
call (973) 912-4464



SUMMIT



26 **CARTER HOUSE** 90 Butler Parkway

The city's oldest known structure, the original portion of the Carter House was built in 1741 by farmer Benjamin Carter and moved to its current location in 1986 to save it from demolition. The front Dutch door of the East Jersey cottage is original, as are many of the wood planks that comprise the first story floor. Legend has it they were ballast from Europe in the early 1700s.

A Colonial kitchen features an enormous hearth outfitted with period cooking implements, while the nearby library reflects the style of late Victorian times. Nearly 1,000 volumes that focus on Summit and New Jersey history and local authors are available. Furniture in the dining room dates to the mid-1800s, and The Summit Room boasts displays of local memorabilia, souvenirs and ephemera. The May Room contains the archives of the Summit Historical Society. Collections document Summit's early development as a summer resort and commuter suburb.

Featuring:

- The museum's new garage serves as a permanent home for Chemical Engine No. 1, owned by the Summit Fire Department since the vehicle rolled off the assembly line in 1923.
- Hanging in the Carter House library is "Trout Fishing on the Delaware," by noted Hudson River School painter Worthington Whittredge, who called Summit home for many decades.

Operated by the Summit Historical Society

For Hours: (908) 277-1747, www.summithistoricalsociety.org or summithistoricalsociety@gmail.com



SUMMIT

27

REEVES-REED ARBORETUM

165 Hobart Avenue



Celebrating more than 40 years as a historic public garden and education resource, Reeves-Reed Arboretum (RRA) engages, educates and enriches the public through horticulture and environmental education, and the care and utilization of the gardens and estate. The only arboretum in Union County, RRA is a member of the American Association of Museums and the American Public Gardens Association.

RRA is a living museum which features historic Wisner House and several outbuildings on 13.5 acres of pastoral lawns, woodland trails, a glacial bowl and historic gardens. The buildings include: galleries for cultural exhibits; classroom/workshop space for children's and adult education programs in the historic carriage house; a visitors center with interactive touch-screen panels; and a library housing an extensive collection of historic documents, photos and books.

*Listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places
Voted "Best Garden in New Jersey" by NJ Family.
Operated by Reeves-Reed Arboretum*

Featuring:

- Historic gardens and woodland hiking trails
- The garden library exhibits a collection of historic photos, videos and a collection of gardening books
- Art installations on the grounds and in the Wisner House Gallery
- Programs and tours for adults and children
- Beacon Fire Station monument along a historic wildflower path



For Hours: reeves-reedarboretum.org or
call (908) 273-8787

SUMMIT



28

SUMMIT PLAYHOUSE

10 New England Avenue

Summit became a desirable commuter city and grew as new residents built lavish homes after the Civil War. The Summit Library Association, incorporated in 1874, kept its books in various locations, including a doctor's office and a store, until George Manley offered a site for the library.

Residents donated \$3,720 to build the Richardsonian Romanesque structure designed by Arthur Jennings. The library opened in 1891 and moved to a more spacious building in 1911.

In 1918, the empty library building was leased for \$1/year to the Dramatic Club (later incorporated as The Playhouse Association), which was formed as a relief organization during WWI. In 1960, Playhouse co-founder and benefactor, Marjorie Cranstoun Jefferson donated funds that added a 120-seat auditorium to the original building. What had been the library is now the stage. Mrs. Jefferson directed more than 130 plays during her career at the Playhouse.

Operated by The Playhouse Association

Featuring:

- Jack Manley Rose mural
- Metropolitan Opera House water fountain
- Mrs. Jefferson's portrait
- Cast photos from 1918 to present

For Hours: summitplayhouse.org or call (908) 273-2192



SUMMIT

29 **TWIN MAPLES** **214 Springfield Avenue**



Twin Maples is a fine example of the suburban estates built in the Summit area from 1880 to 1920. This Colonial Revival–style structure built in 1908 was designed by Alfred F. Norris, a well-known New York and Montclair architect.

Erected with the finest materials and details of its time, its appearance resembles the White House in Washington, DC. The house remained privately owned until 1949, when it was purchased by the Fortnightly Club of Summit, a charity dedicated to community service and outreach, celebrating its 125th anniversary in 2018.

Gustav Amsink, reputedly the “wealthiest citizen of Summit,” was the first owner of Twin Maples. In 1918, it was purchased by Mr. and Mrs. Frederic N. Collins. Mr. Collins was known in downtown Manhattan as the “Sugar King” for his importing of sugar from the Caribbean. The Collins entertained extensively until Frederick’s death in 1947. Mrs. Collins sold Twin Maples to The Fortnightly Club two years later.

*Listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places
Operated by the Fortnightly Club of Summit, Inc.*

Featuring:

- Open string staircase
- Wood-burning fireplace
- Steinway piano dating to 1907

For Hours: twinmaplessummit.org or call (908) 273-0301



UNION



30

CALDWELL
PARSONAGE

909 Caldwell Avenue

On June 7, 1780, after the Battle of Connecticut Farms, retreating British and Hessian Troops passed this parsonage. A shot was fired through a bedroom window, and Hannah Caldwell, the wife of Rev. James Caldwell, fell dead. Was it a mistake? Or, was it murder — an attempt to punish “the Fighting Parson” of the NJ militia and the Continental Army?

The British burned the parsonage, the Connecticut Farms Presbyterian Church, and other buildings in the area. The parsonage was rebuilt two years later on its original foundation. An artist’s interpretation of Mrs. Caldwell’s death appears on the official Seal of Union County.

Today, the Parsonage displays furniture, clothing, personal belongings and other items relating to the families who established Connecticut Farms (incorporated as the Township of Union in 1808). Artifacts on display date from the 18th century to the early 20th century.

*Listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places
Operated by the Union Township Historical Society*

Featuring:

- Painting of the June 7, 1780 Battle of Connecticut Farms
- “The American Revolution as a Presbyterian Revolution” Exhibit

For Hours: unionnjhistory.com or call (908) 687-7977



THE CONNECTICUT FARMS CHURCH

888 Stuyvesant Avenue



The First Presbyterian Congregation of Connecticut Farms was established in 1730, when the townspeople built “the little church on the hill,” and named it after the town. The original building was the weekday meeting house for public affairs, and a house of worship on Sundays. The British burned the church down in 1780, during the Battle of Connecticut Farms.

Rev. Caldwell moved his family into the Connecticut Farms manse, empty at that time, for greater safety. This is where his wife, Hannah Caldwell, was shot through a window in the manse, during the battle, in June 1780.

The rebuilding of the “Meeting House of Connecticut Farms” began in 1783. The church roof was raised on October 11, 1784. Work was completed by 1788 in the same location as the first church, with the new building built in stone. The Presbyterian Church of Connecticut Farms has been and continues to be a strong presence in the Township of Union, and is home to a vibrant congregation.

Listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places

Featuring:

- Historic building dating from 1780
- Historic cemetery dating to 1732 (final resting place of Elizabeth’s first mayor and several Revolutionary War soldiers)

For Hours: ctfarms.org or call (908) 688-3164



UNION



32

LIBERTY HALL MUSEUM

1003 Morris Avenue

In 1760, when lawyer William Livingston was planning to build a country home, he bought 120 acres in what was then sleepy bucolic Elizabethtown, just across the river from his New York home. For the next 12 years, Livingston developed the extensive grounds, gardens and orchards and oversaw the building of a beautiful fourteen-room Georgian-style home known as Liberty Hall.

Liberty Hall Museum at Kean University chronicles more than 240 years of American history at this former residence of William Livingston, New Jersey's first elected governor and a signer of the Constitution.

Eventually expanded into the exquisite 50-room Victorian mansion you see today, the museum houses extensive collections of furniture, ceramics, textiles, toys and tools owned by seven generations of the Livingston and Kean families. Descendants resided here at Liberty Hall until 1995.

*Listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places
Operated by the Liberty Hall Museum, Inc.*

Featuring:

- Beautiful furnishings and fashions from nearly every period in American history
- 23 acres of formal gardens, beautiful grounds and farmland
- Fire House Museum

For Hours: kean.edu/libertyhall or call (908) 527-0400



WESTFIELD

33

MILLER-CORY HOUSE MUSEUM

614 Mountain Avenue



Eighteenth-century outbuildings, and the herb and kitchen gardens create a colonial atmosphere at the Miller-Cory House, where interactive tours engage the imagination of children and adults. Built circa 1740, the small, tidy and authentically furnished farmhouse stands on its original site along the “road to the mountains.”

Visitors are introduced to colonial skills and practices, as costumed interpreters recreate the daily chores and seasonal farm work of rural life in the West Fields, circa 1740–1820. In spring and fall, there are open hearth cooking demonstrations .

In 1740, Samuel Miller built a clapboard farmhouse for his bride, Sabra Clark, in the West Fields of Elizabeth Town along an Indian trail. The family owned about 100 acres of land, stretching to what is now downtown Westfield. In his will, Samuel left to his widow “the privilege of my two middle rooms and the chambers over them, privilege to go up in said chambers through the other rooms, and the privilege of one quarter of cellar and to go in and out of same when and with what she pleases.” In 1784, Joseph Cory purchased the house and it remained in the Cory family for another 137 years.

Listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places and a site on the New Jersey Women’s Heritage Trail. Operated by the Miller-Cory House Museum Volunteers

Featuring:

- Corn crib, necessary, and well house
- Museum shop

For Hours: millercoryhouse.org or call (908) 232-1776



WESTFIELD



34

REEVE HISTORY & CULTURAL RESOURCE CENTER

314 Mountain Avenue

The Reeve History & Cultural Resource Center is a fully restored Victorian Italianate home originally built in 1872, and is home to the Westfield Historical Society.

The house was the residence of the Stitt family (who owned the Westfield Hotel) until 1898, and later the home of the Reeve family, from 1906 to 2001. William Reeve served Westfield through a variety of local projects, including the establishment of the YMCA and the creation of Mindowaskin Park in 1918.

This Victorian house now serves the community as a historical resource center for Westfield, as well as an exhibit center for special events throughout the year. A future educational facility, which will also house the Westfield Historical Society archives, is in the funding stage and will provide for a museum and educational facility, allowing the community to learn more about Westfield's rich historic legacy.

*Listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places
Operated by the Westfield Historical Society*

Featuring:

- Period Victorian antiques and fixtures throughout the home
- Historical exhibits about life in the West Fields of Elizabethtown
- The Claire Brownell Memorial Garden
- The Garden Club of Westfield Garden
- Eagle Scout Garden projects (patio, pathways, steps, benches)
- Girl Scout Award projects (perennial garden and memorial garden)

For Hours: westfieldhistoricalsociety.org or
call (908) 654-1794



WINFIELD PARK

*Aerial view of
Winfield in 1952*



At just .17 square miles, Winfield is the smallest Union County municipality. In 1940, Congress allocated funds for construction of federal housing developments for workers employed in war-related activities. A tract of land along the Rahway River was purchased for such a development. Early residents of Winfield were families of members of Union Local No. 16 of the Kearny Shipyards.

Planning meetings were held in Newark to develop the concept of cooperative housing and the ideals of the community. With the influx of defense workers to the area, housing was at a premium, and houses were quickly erected. Construction began in June 1941. The first fifty families moved into their new homes in November 1941 followed by 85 more families on Dec. 1, 1941, just days before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.

The first residents found themselves without water, electricity or gas. The roofs, covered in tar paper, leaked, and cellar flooding was common. Streets were unpaved and sidewalks consisted of two-by-fours laid end to end. The project soon found itself the subject of a Senate investigation led by Sen. Harry Truman. The contractor Clifford T. McEvoy of Newark, was indicted and eventually found guilty.

Even before the building problems were solved, citizens petitioned the New Jersey Legislature to designate Winfield as a separate township, so that essential services could be provided. On August 1, 1941, the measure was approved over the governor's veto. The small township was named after General Winfield Scott, a prominent mid-19th-century resident of Elizabeth.



William Alexander, Lord Sterling, a brother-in-law of New Jersey's first state governor, William Livingston, was placed in charge of the Elizabethtown troops. Engraving from Benson J. Lossing's

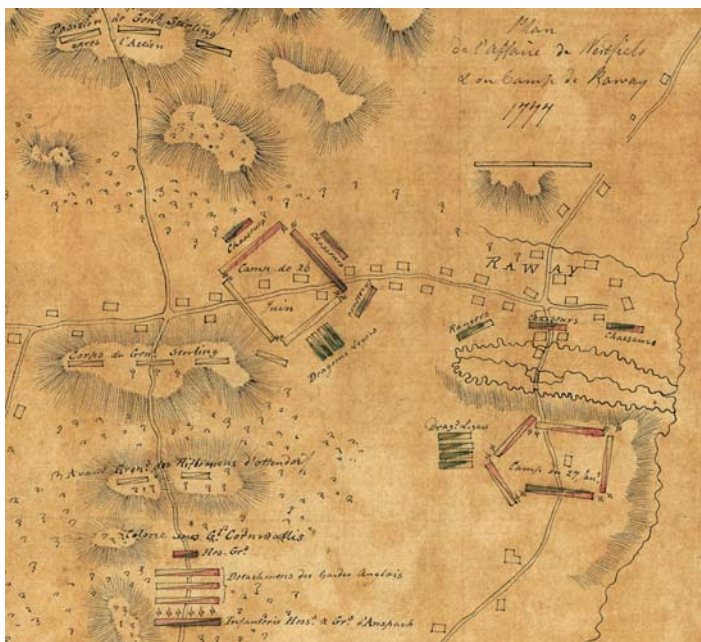
The Pictorial Field-Book of the Revolution

Skirmishes & Raids at Elizabeth

1776 – 1782

From 1776 to 1782, Elizabethtown experienced approximately seventy-five raids, skirmishes, or battles crucial to the struggle for independence. Hessian Brigadier General Knyphausen had settled in a defensive position at Elizabethtown Point, while his advance forces carried the fight. During a raid on January 25, 1780, the First Presbyterian Church was burned. The raid was led by Cornelius Hetfield, a Staten Island Tory originally from Elizabethtown, whose father was an Elder of the church.

For two weeks, Elizabeth was a virtual no-man's-land, the scene of almost daily skirmishes. The situation was an open invitation to plunder. The British and Hessians indulged themselves in an orgy of looting. Knyphausen burned the town, withdrew to the Point, and crossed to Staten Island on a pontoon bridge.



Portion of a map drawn by a Hessian officer, showing battle positions

Battle of the Short Hills

June 26, 1777

On the plains below the Watchungs, General Washington's Continental forces of fewer than 6,000 men fought a running battle with combined British and Hessian Troops numbering nearly 12,000 on June 26, 1777. British General William Howe, feigning a retreat, sought to lure the colonial forces to the lowlands and crush them.

What started in Metuchen would soon make its way to the Ash Swamp, where delaying tactics gave Washington's troops and local militia enough time to return to the safety of the Watchungs. Ash Brook is now one of the stops along the new Battle of the Short Hills Historic Trail.

Learn more at ucnj.org/trails.



An original painting by Township of Union artist Larry Felder depicts the Battle of Connecticut Farms.

Battle of Connecticut Farms

June 7, 1780

At the Battle of Connecticut Farms, Hessian General Wilhelm Von Knyphausen's force of 5,000 landed at De Hart's Point, near Elizabethtown, and marched toward Morristown. The soldiers met resistance from regulars and militia under Colonel Elias Dayton and General Lafayette at Connecticut Farms, which included parts of current-day Union and Kenilworth, 2½ miles southeast of Springfield.

Colonel Dayton's regiments were joined by the rest of the New Jersey Brigade and General William Maxwell. Behind a deep ravine, just southeast of the Presbyterian meetinghouse, Maxwell deployed his troops. As militiamen continued to pour in individually and in small groups, Maxwell assigned Brigade Major Aaron Ogden to organize them into an effective unit.

Maxwell's men, reinforced by the militia, made a stand, beating back repeated assaults. As the main body of Knyphausen's army joined the advance column, more and more men were thrown against the Americans. For nearly three hours, the men of the New Jersey Brigade stood firm against the onslaught; but finally, in danger of being outflanked, Maxwell was forced to withdraw.

During the fighting, Hannah Caldwell, wife of Reverend James Caldwell, was slain. The settlement was pillaged and burned. Dwellings, barns, and even the Presbyterian Church, were left in ashes. Knyphausen withdrew to De Hart's Point on the night of June 8–9, to entrench. American losses totaled 15 killed and 40 wounded.



*Original painting, "Give 'em Watts Boys,"
by John Ward Dunsmore*

Battle of Springfield

June 23, 1780

Fighting at the Battle of Connecticut Farms reached the edge of the Rahway River border with Springfield. Two weeks later, on June 23, the 6,000 British troops again crossed the water, marched through the ruins of Connecticut Farms, and faced the 1,500 Americans waiting on the Springfield side of the river.

Confrontations occurred along the Rahway, from the bridge at Morris Avenue to Vauxhall. During several hours of intense fighting, the British and Hessians pushed into the village of Springfield, and north into the center of Millburn, before being forced to retreat.

During the battle, the Americans were running out of wadding to load their muskets. Rev. James Caldwell distributed Watts hymnals from the First Presbyterian Church to the troops, crying, "Give 'em Watts, boys!" As the British retreated, they again burned buildings in the village, including the church. One house (now the Cannon Ball House), struck by an American cannonball, was among the few left standing.

The little-known Battle of Springfield has great significance as the final confrontation between the American and Crown forces in the northern colonies. Convinced the war was lost here, the British forces marched southward to Yorktown.



*A section of the French map of the route to Yorktown, 1782
Geography and Map Division, Library of Congress*

Washington-Rochambeau National Historic Trail 1781

The Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail was created by an act of Congress in 2009. It marks the contribution made by the French that finally enabled the Colonial Army to defeat the British and win independence for the American Colonies. The Trail runs from Rhode Island to Virginia, passing through Union County from Summit to Scotch Plains.

French General Jean Baptiste Donatien de Vimeur arrived in Narragansett Bay, off Rhode Island, in July 1780 with an army of 450 officers and 5,300 men. Their arrival was just in time. In the fall of 1780, with the war well into its fourth year, the Continental Army was running on faith, hope, and promises — short of men, weapons, food, clothing, and money. This combination of Rochambeau's and Washington's forces culminated 15 months later in the victory at Yorktown.

This historic trail marks the 680-mile route taken by Washington and Rochambeau to and from the siege of Yorktown. In New Jersey, this Historic Trail follows roads that have existed since the 18th century.

In Union County, the first NJ county to mark this trail, the route includes: Raritan Road and Lamberts Mill Road in Scotch Plains; W. Broad Street in Westfield; Mountain Avenue in Westfield, Mountainside and Springfield; Morris Avenue in Springfield; and Morris Turnpike in Summit.

Learn more at <http://www.nps.gov/waro/index.htm>.

Union County Medal of Honor Memorial

Union County Courthouse

2 South Broad Street, Elizabeth (*Elizabethtown Plaza & Rahway Avenue*)



*Descriptions from the Congressional Medal of Honor Society
www.cmoHS.org*

CIVIL WAR

William Brant, Jr., Elizabeth
1842 – 1898

1st Lieutenant, Company B, 1st
New Jersey Veteran Battalion

Location: Third Battle of Petersburg,
Virginia, Apr. 3, 1865

Citation: Capture of battle flag of
46th North Carolina (C.S.A.)

James Madison Drake, Elizabeth
1837 – 1915

Second Lieutenant, Company D,
9th NJ Infantry, US Army

Location: Bermuda Hundred
Campaign - Battle of Port Walthall
Junction, Virginia, May 6, 1864

Citation: Commanded the skirmish
line in the advance and held his
position all day and during the night.

Rufus King, Jr., Elizabeth
1838 – 1900

1st Lieutenant, 4th US Artillery
Regiment, US Army

Location: Battle of White Oak
Swamp (Seven Days Battle;
Peninsula Campaign)

Citation: This officer, when his
captain was wounded, succeeded to
the command of two batteries while
engaged against a superior force of
the enemy and fought his guns most
gallantly until compelled to retire.

Julian A. Scott, Plainfield
1837 – 1901

Drummer, Company E, 3rd Vermont
Infantry, US Army

Location: Battle of Lee's Mill
(Battle of Yorktown), Apr. 16, 1862

Citation: Crossed the creek under a
terrific fire of musketry several times
to assist in bringing off the wounded.

Union County Medal of Honor Memorial

CIVIL WAR (cont'd)

John Williams, II, Elizabethtown
1828 – unknown

Boatswain's Mate, USS Mohican,
US Navy

Location: Battle Port Royal, South
Carolina, Nov. 7, 1861

Citation: Captain of an 11-inch gun
aboard the U.S.S. Mohican during
action of the main squadron of ships
against the heavily defended Forts
Beauregard and Walker on Hilton
Head, and against ships of the
Confederate Fleet. Cool and
courageous at his battle station,
Williams maintained steady fire
against the enemy while under the
fort batteries during a 4-hour
engagement which resulted in
silencing the batteries of the forts
and in the rout of the rebel steamers.

INDIAN CAMPAIGNS

Theodore F. Smith,
(**Theodore Schmidt**), Rahway
1852 – 1925

Private, Company G, US Calvary,
US Army

Location: Chiricahua Mountains,
Arizona, Oct. 20, 1869

Citation: Gallantry in action

WORLD WAR I

Alan Louis Eggers, Summit
1895 – 1968

Sergeant, United States Army

Thomas E. O'Shea, Summit
1895 – 1918

Corporal, US Army/Machine
Gun Company, 107th Infantry,
27th Division

Location: Near Le Catelet, France,
Sep. 29, 1918

Citation: Sgt. Eggers, Sgt. Latham
and Cpl. O'Shea, upon hearing a call
for help from an American tank 30
yards away, left their shelter and
started toward the tank under heavy
German machine-gun fire and trench
mortars. In crossing the fire-swept
area, O'Shea was mortally wounded,
but his companions went on, rescued
a wounded officer, and assisted two
wounded soldiers to cover in a
nearby trench. Sgt. Eggers and
Sgt. Latham then returned to the
tank in the face of the violent fire,
dismounted a Hotchkiss gun, and
took it back, keeping back the
enemy and later bringing it, with
the wounded men, back to our lines
under cover of darkness.

Union County Medal of Honor Memorial

WORLD WAR I

Fred W. Stockham, Union

1881 – 1918

Gunnery Sergeant, 2nd Division,
American Expeditionary Forces,
96th Company, 2nd Battalion, 6th
Regiment, US Marine Corp.

Location: Bois-de-Belleau, France,
Jun. 13-14, 1918

Citation: During an intense enemy bombardment with high explosive and gas shells which wounded or killed many members of the Company G, upon noticing that the gas mask of a wounded comrade was shot away, Stockham removed his own gas mask without hesitation and insisted on giving it to the wounded man, well knowing that the effects of the gas would be fatal to himself.

He continued with undaunted courage and valor to direct and assist in the evacuation of the wounded, until he himself collapsed from the effects of gas, dying as a result thereof a few days later. His courageous conduct saved the lives of many of his wounded comrades .

VIETNAM WAR

Charles Joseph Watters, Cranford

1927 – 1967

Chaplain (Major), Company A,
173rd Support Battalion, 173rd
Airborne Brigade, US Army

Location: Near Dak To Province,
Republic of Vietnam, Nov. 19, 1967

Citation: For conspicuous gallantry and risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty during a battle.

Chaplain Watters was moving with a company when it engaged a heavily armed enemy battalion. As the battle raged and casualties mounted, Chaplain Watters, with complete disregard for his safety, rushed forward to the line. Unarmed and completely exposed, he moved among, as well as in front of the advancing troops, giving aid to the wounded, assisting in their evacuation, giving words of encouragement, and administering the last rites to the dying. Watters exposed himself to both friendly and enemy fire in order to recover two wounded soldiers.

Later, when the battalion was forced to pull back, Watters saw wounded soldiers lying outside the newly formed perimeter. Without hesitation and ignoring attempts to restrain him, he left the perimeter three times in the face of small arms, automatic weapons, and mortar fire, to carry and assist injured troopers to safety. Watters was mortally wounded giving aid to the wounded.

Early Aristocracy

1663 – 1812



THE English government encouraged settlement of the new country. Many families who had already emigrated to Long Island and Connecticut, moved to Elizabethtown. Experienced in the hard work of clearing land for houses and fields, they sought self-government and freedom in religious matters.

By the mid-1700s, Elizabethtown had grown into a prosperous community of 800 inhabitants. New houses and additions to existing ones met the demands of the growing population.

Statesmen, leaders of the emerging nation, and their families enjoyed life on estates in large homes surrounded by gardens, and apple and peach orchards. Elizabethtown was connected to larger cities by ferry service. Stagecoaches made stops in Elizabethtown during regular trips between New York and Philadelphia.

Learn about the birth of our nation, and glimpse the aristocratic way of life by visiting:

- 5 Boxwood Hall
- 6 First Presbyterian Church
- 7 Nathaniel Bonnell Homestead & Belcher-Ogden Mansion
- 15 Plainfield Meetinghouse
- 31 The Connecticut Farms Church
- 32 Liberty Hall

Farm Life

1686 – 1840



WHILE the city life of Elizabethtown flourished, life in outlying areas was largely agricultural. More than 40,000 acres of farmland were tended by 150 families.

Life on the farms was demanding on all members of a family, with taxing work and chores for the head of the household, very young children, and everyone in between. Together with African and Indian slaves, indentured servants, and immigrants, these locals produced every necessity of life, including shelter, food, and clothing — while caring for their land, crops and livestock.

Step inside these authentic farmhouses to experience the challenges and rewards of life on an 18th-century farmstead:

- ③ Dr. William Robinson Plantation-Museum
- ⑦ Nathaniel Bonnell Homestead & Belcher-Ogden Mansion
- ⑩ Woodruff House/Eaton Store Museum
- ⑬ Salt Box Museum
- ⑫ The Elizabeth and Gershom Frazee House
- ⑫ Carter House
- ⑬ Miller-Cory House Museum

Revolutionary Front Line

1763 – 1783



EVERYDAY life was interrupted by skirmishes and battles between British and Colonial troops fighting for independence from England. New Jersey was a key battleground of the American Revolution, with more major battles fought here than in any other colony. The countryside was ravaged, as both British and Colonial troops sought food for their men and horses. The daily lives of Elizabethtown residents were filled with anguish.

The population was divided on the issues of the conflict. In some cases, men within a single family fought against each other, and neighbor fought against neighbor. Driven by a desire for freedom, many men left their farms and families to join the militia. Loyalists (“Tories”) sided with the King, and some enlisted to fight against the rebellion. Some went to live on Staten Island, a Loyalist refuge.

The battles of Connecticut Farms (now Union) and Springfield, occurring in June 1780, were a last attempt by the British to re-establish authority in New Jersey. Due to their defensive tactics, Colonial troops and local militia halted the British, making the Battle of Springfield the last major engagement fought in the northern colonies. Learn more about this troubled time in our history by visiting:

- 14 Drake House Museum
- 19 Abraham Clark House
- 21 Ash Brook Reservation (The Battle of the Short Hills)
- 23 Osborn Cannonball House
- 25 Cannon Ball House
- 30 Caldwell Parsonage
- 31 The Connecticut Farms Church

Commerce & Industry

1820 – 1928



AS city life in Elizabethtown hummed, stagecoaches made regular trips in the early 1800s along the King's Highway (now St. Georges Ave.) and the Old York Road (Rte. 28) to outlying rural areas. The Stage House Inn in Scotch Plains (still an operating tavern) and Rahway's Merchants & Drovers Tavern were centers for business transactions, elections, public meetings, and entertainment.

The Elizabethtown area became a major manufacturing center and transportation corridor, due to the proximity to New York and Philadelphia. Industries developed near water and rail to facilitate the movement of goods to major markets.

With the first railroad charter in 1830, the economic life of the county was greatly affected. Three major railroads ran through the county, opening farmland to development. Horse-driven wagons and stagecoaches gave way to steam locomotives, accelerating the growth of towns and cities.

The development of Hillside, Roselle Park, Kenilworth, Rahway and Linden grew in the late 1800s, as industry attracted workers. New housing was built to accommodate the growing number of new workers and their families.

Understand more about the early impact of Union County's industry, trade and residential housing by visiting:

- 1 Deserted Village of Feltville / Glenside Park
- 8 Historic Fanwood Train Station Museum
- 10 Woodruff House/Eaton Store
- 11 Oswald J. Nitschke House
- 16 Merchants and Drovers Tavern
- 18 Union County Performing Arts Center
- 20 Roselle Park Museum

Victorian Resorts & Suburbs

1837 – 1920



RAPID industrial growth in the first half of the 19th century gave wealth and leisure time to an emerging managerial class. Victorians idealized the rural life, and city dwellers looked to the hills and farms of New Jersey for vacation accommodations.

In the 1880s, residents of New York City boarded trains to Plainfield, where they were guests at the city's five resort hotels. Executives of the Central Railroad Company of New Jersey saw the opportunity for development and promoted housing subdivisions in Plainfield, Fanwood, Westfield, Cranford, Roselle and Roselle Park. Summertime vacationers became year-round residents with 22 daily trains carrying them to and from the city.

Watchung Mountain communities, served by the Morris and Essex railroads, were especially attractive vacation destinations. Summit's lavish hotels catered to affluent visitors and, a short distance away, Glenside Park offered a rustic retreat. Eventually, many of these vacationers built substantial houses in the "Hill City," and a suburban community was born.

The long reign of Britain's Queen Victoria influenced all facets of life and culture throughout the Western world. The classical ideal gave way to the romantic. The picturesque and the complex replaced simplicity and balance. Passion, grandeur, and lack of restraint were expressed in art, architecture and landscapes.

Victorian architecture included a number of styles, each experiencing a brief period of popularity during the 44 years of Queen Victoria's reign.

Victorian Resorts & Suburbs (cont'd)

Garden and cemetery planning was also influenced by the Victorian aesthetic. Park-like cemeteries contained a variety of stones and monuments, often decorated with statues and other sculptural embellishments.

To learn more about the Victorian era, visit:

- ❶ Deserted Village of Feltville-Glenside Park
- ❷ Littell-Lord Farmstead
- ❹ Crane-Phillips House Museum
- ❸ Evergreen Cemetery
- ❷ Deacon Andrew Hetfield House
- ❶⁄₄ Drake House Museum
- ❶⁷⁄₈ Rahway School for Colored Children /
The African-American History & Heritage Center
- ❶⁴⁄₁₀ The Shady Rest & Country Club
- ❶²⁷⁄₁₀ Reeves-Reed Arboretum
- ❶²⁸⁄₁₀ Summit Playhouse
- ❶²⁹⁄₁₀ Twin Maples
- ❶³⁴⁄₁₀ Reeve History & Cultural Resource Center

Visit Historic Sites via Mass Transit

In the mood for a walk or bike ride on a beautiful day? Some of Union County's historic sites are within easy walking distance of NJ Transit rail stations. The (#) below refers to site numbers in this book. For those wishing to cycle from a train station, be sure to check with NJ Transit's guidelines for bringing bikes aboard the trains. Union County Parks (ucnj.org/parks) is also rolling out routes for cyclists to visit several historic sites along a 10–12 mile ride.

Raritan Valley Line

Long before the Raritan Valley Line, there was the Central Railroad of New Jersey. From stations across Union County, from Plainfield to Elizabeth, it was possible to board a train to Chicago, or from Jersey City, to board a ferry to New York City. The CNJ is long gone, however some of the historic sites along the route remain, and you can ride the train to visit some of them.

Details about these sites are found in the front of this book, and at ucnj.org/4C. Most sites are staffed by volunteers, so call in advance to ensure the site will be open for your visit.

From the Raritan Valley Line, train stops near sites include these:

- **Fanwood:** (8) Historic Fanwood Train Station, 230 North Ave. The Victorian Gothic train station is on the westbound side.
- **Westfield:** From the train station, walk north through downtown. Then, walk along Mountain Ave., past the iconic white Presbyterian Church to (34) Reeve House, home of the Westfield Historical Society, located at 314 Mountain Ave. Continue to (33) the Miller-Cory House Museum, at 614 Mountain Ave.
- **Cranford:** (4) Crane-Phillips House Museum, 124 North Union Ave. This American Civil War veteran's cottage stands next to the Rahway River, a short walk northeast from the train station.
- **Roselle Park:** (20) Roselle Park Museum, 9 West Grant Ave. Walk south on Chestnut St. to the borough's downtown, to find the Roselle Park Museum. A little further, on Westfield Ave., was the Charles E. Stone store, the first store in the world illuminated by Edison's incandescent lamp.

- **Union:** (32) Liberty Hall Museum, 1003 Morris Ave. The train stops at Kean University. Walk across Morris Ave. to Liberty Hall, built on the eve of the American Revolution and home to William Livingston, a signer of the Constitution. (This site is also a 1-mile walk from North Elizabeth station on the Northeast Corridor Line. See details below.)

Morristown Line & Gladstone Branch

The Morristown Line, formerly part of the old Erie Lackawanna Railroad, intersects with NJ Transit's Gladstone Branch in Summit, where there are two sites within a half-mile of the downtown station:

- **Summit:** (28) Summit Playhouse, 10 New England Ave. Just west of the station, the Summit Library Association kept its books in various locations until residents donated \$3,720 to build the Richardsonian, a Romanesque structure designed by Arthur Jennings.
- **Summit:** (29) Twin Maples, 214 Springfield Ave. Just east of the station is Twin Maples, with a style evoking the White house. This suburban estate typifies the grand homes built in the Summit area from 1880 to 1920. And if you have your walking shoes, Reeves-Reed Arboretum, at 165 Hobart Ave., is just under a mile from the train station.

Northeast Corridor/North Jersey Coast Lines

The Northeast Corridor, once the proud domain of the Pennsylvania Railroad, is now the main line between New York City and Trenton, while the Coast Line takes travelers to the Jersey Shore. All trains stop in Elizabeth, but only some stop in North Elizabeth, so be sure to check before boarding.

From the Elizabeth station, in the heart of the downtown, there are three sites within a half-mile of the station:

- **Elizabeth:** (6) First Presbyterian Church of Elizabeth & Snyder Academy, 42 Broad St. Exit the station onto Broad St., and walk north to 42 Broad.
- **Elizabeth:** (5) Boxwood Hall State Historic Site, 1073 East Jersey St. & (7) Nathaniel Bonnell Homestead & Belcher-Ogden Mansion, 1045 & 1046 East Jersey St. Exit First Presbyterian to left. Turn right onto E. Jersey St., and follow it to 1073 E. Jersey, then 1045 & 1046 East Jersey St.

(cont'd)

These two significant sites are a mile-plus walk from North Elizabeth station. Be sure to check the train schedule at njtransit.com, because not all trains stop at North Elizabeth:

- **North Elizabeth:** (9) Evergreen Cemetery, 1137 N. Broad St., Hillside (1853 interdenominational burial ground with mausoleums and more than 10,000 monuments — a virtual museum of funerary art). From the No. Elizabeth station, head west on North Ave. for 3/10 mile, then turn right onto Cross Ave. Head north for a half-mile, then bear left onto Lower Rd. Turn left onto North Broad St. The cemetery entrance is on your right.
- **North Elizabeth:** (10) Woodruff House-Eaton Store Museum, 111 Conant St., Hillside. The Woodruff House was built in 1735 while Eaton Store dates back to 1900. From the station, head west on North Ave. for 6/10-mile and turn right onto Salem Avenue. Go 4/10-mile and turn left onto Conant Street. House is 200-feet on your right.. If you are so inclined, the Liberty Hall Museum is a mile-walk from here. As you exit, turn right onto Conant Street and take the next left onto Westminster Avenue. Walk four blocks to Wilder Street and go right. This will take you through the rear entrance of Kean University's graduate school campus, and across the bridge to Liberty Hall.

From Rahway station, there are three historic sites of note:

- **Rahway:** (18) Union County Performing Arts Center, 1601 Irving St. Turn right onto Broad St., then walk along Irving St.
- **Rahway:** (17) Rahway School For Colored Children / the African American History & Heritage Center, 261 Central Ave. Head west on West Milton Ave. Turn right on Esterbrook Ave, go 2/10-mile and turn right onto Central. Site is across the street on your left.
- **Rahway:** (16) Merchants & Drovers Tavern, 1632 St. Georges Ave., one mile from the station. Head west on West Milton to Broad St., and turn right. Then turn left onto Campbell St., and go to Central Ave. Turn right, then and go left onto Hamilton St., passing the Arts Center. Stay on Hamilton for a ½-mile, and then turn right onto St. Georges. The Tavern is two blocks ahead on your left.

Hike thru History



Looking for a new way to experience history? Hike **the Battle of the Short Hills Historic Trail**, which follows the route of the 1777 Revolutionary War battle, from Metuchen to the Deserted Village in the Watchung Reservation.

Along the way, perhaps stop at the Ash Brook Reservation, where American troops drew the British into a swamp to slow their opponents' advance. Continue through Scotch Plains, where one can stop at the Osborn Cannonball House. Continue up into the Watchung Reservation, to the overlook at "Bloody Gap."

This trail also leads into the **Watchung Reservation History Trail (WRHT)**, a 6-mile trail that tells the history of Union County's 2,200-acre Reservation, from pre-Revolutionary times to the present day. Maps of the WRHT are available at kiosks on the trail. For a virtual guide, visit www.ucnj.org/wrht.

For a brief, leisurely walk through history, consider **Elizabeth at the Crossroads**, a self-guided tour through midtown Elizabeth, formerly a colonial capital. Plans are underway to create a longer version of this route, including stops marking the British invasion of 1780, that culminated in the battles of Connecticut Farms and Springfield.

For more information about these and other history trails in Union County, visit: www.ucnj.org/trails.

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