



TBR
TBR ARCHITECTS, LLC
ARCHITECTURE & HISTORIC PRESERVATION

1/4 mile = 5 minute walk

North



This project has been accomplished with generous financial assistance from the New Jersey Historic Trust through the 2013 Discover NJ History License Plate Heritage Tourism Grant Program. This walking tour brochure references previous research efforts including the "Montclair Historic Central Business District: Cultural Resources Survey," prepared by

Mary B. Dierickx in 1999, the 1996 Self-Guided Walking Tour brochure prepared by the Montclair Historic Preservation Commission and an undated Montclair "Architectural Treasure Hunt Map," prepared by Building Blocks Workshops. Barton Ross of TBR Architects, LLC prepared this brochure with assistance from Janice Talley, Director of Planning and Luther Flurry, Executive Director of the Montclair Center BID.

History

Montclair was founded by Azariah Crane in 1694. Known as Cranetown, it remained a small, pastoral agricultural village with English and Dutch architectural precedents for the next 100 years. The Old Road was laid out in 1705 along parts of present day Glenridge Avenue, Church Street and Clarendon Avenue running from Newark up and over the First Mountain at Crane's Gap. George Washington's Continental Army was encamped on the slopes of Montclair for three weeks in October 1780 near present day Valley Road and Clarendon Avenue. The James Howe or "Slave" House (1775) and the Old Stagecoach House (1767) are the only remnants in the area that survive from that period. With the construction of the Newark and Pompton Turnpike (present day Bloomfield Avenue) in 1806, the sleepy village became a commercial center, allowing the establishment of several mills and other small industries. Around the intersection of the Turnpike and the Old Road (now known as Six Corners) the nucleus of the town grew. Church Street was named after the large Presbyterian Church, which dominated the corner with Bloomfield Avenue before being removed to allow for construction of the Hinck Building in 1921.



Architecture

The majority of the buildings in Montclair Center were constructed as commercial structures with brick, stone, cast stone or terra cotta facades. The buildings are typically 1-3 stories high with flat roofs. The few surviving frame structures have peaked roofs. The tops are emphasized by the use of design elements such as cornices, parapets, mansards and balustrades. The facades are divided by trim and other detailing such as recesses and panels that add texture and life to the walls. Almost all buildings are built to the property line, with very few setbacks. Most were built directly abutting each other using a common, or party wall construction. Street lighting began in Montclair on October 1, 1873, when 111 gas lamps were placed on the principal corners of the downtown. The later fuel stations and parking lots are intrusions in this otherwise uniform streetscape.

The architecturally eclectic mix of downtown buildings we see today were largely built between 1885 and 1937, and reflect the town's period as a prosperous commuter suburb. The buildings are mixed-use with ground floor retail storefronts divided into bays. There is generally a bulkhead, plate glass window, and a transom. The doors are centered or to one side with a base and transom similar to the glassfront. The wall or blade signs are at the transom level and the shed awnings span one single bay, not several. Historically most awnings were retractable, not fixed in place. The windows have at least two panes per opening. They were often mullioned creating multiple panes. The doors and windows have simplified revival trim or surround detailing, even on the later mid-century Moderne style structures.

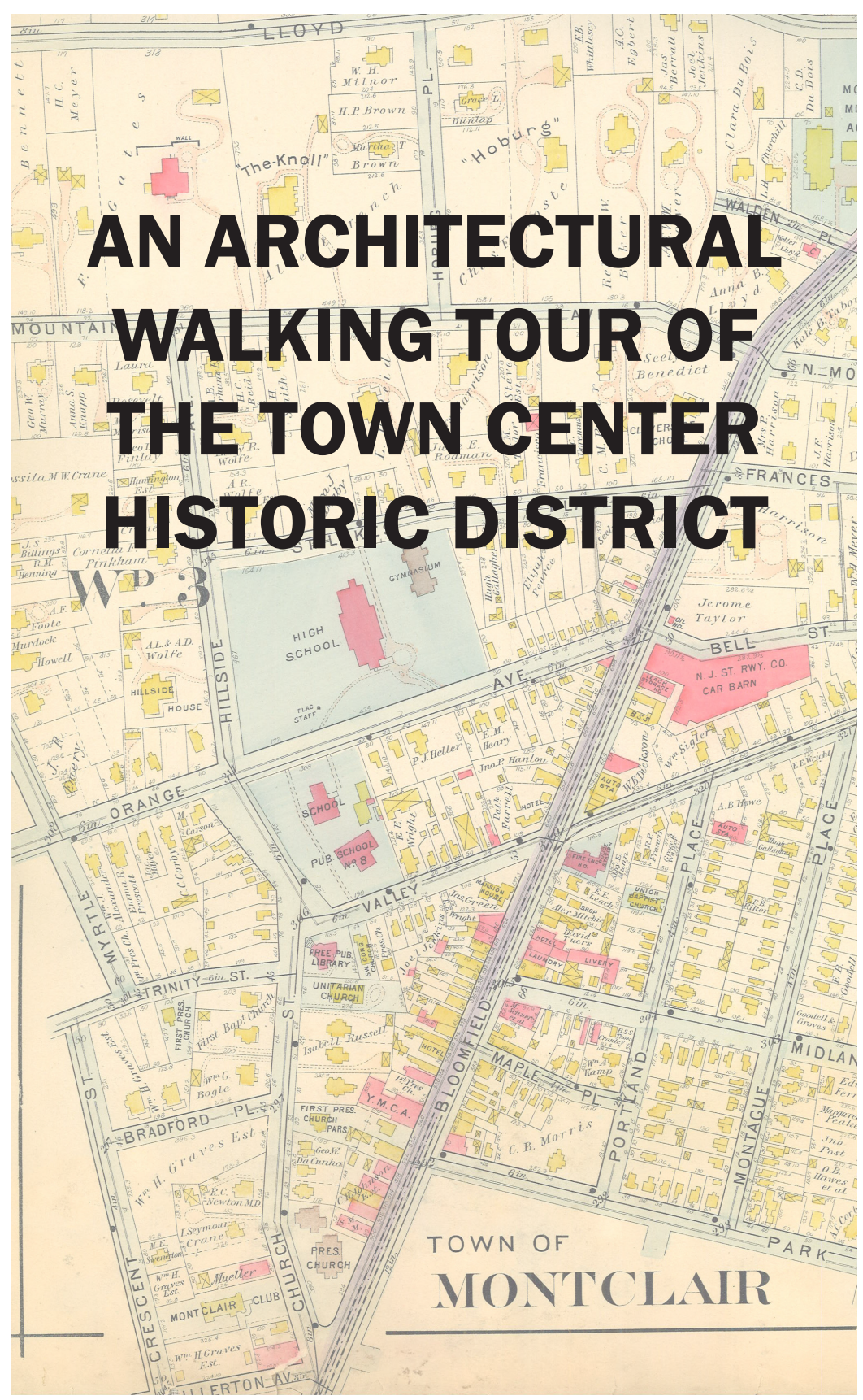
Acknowledgements

Walking is the #1 activity for getting the recommended amount of daily physical activity. Walking with friends and colleagues helps you to stay motivated and to continue walking as a life-long health behavior. Join a Walking Group Today!



Montclair Historical Society
MontclairHistorical.org

Made Possible by Montclair Center BID
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For more information about the Township's historic preservation efforts contact:
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1. INCHQUIN PROPERTIES (1930), 18-22 Church Street, *Art Deco Style*, Eight-bay building with 2-story central entrance. Carved vertical lines terminating in a stepped motif are the predominant architectural decoration style with bronze detailing around the fenestration.



2. HINCK BUILDING (1921), 31 Church Street, *Mission Style*, Architect: William Lehmann, Significant example of the mission style adapted for commercial use, unique in Montclair and the state. The complex fills an important corner site at the town center. Site of the Clairidge Theater, one of three silent movie theaters built during 1921 in downtown Montclair. This is the former site of the First Presbyterian Church, an early landmark. Lehmann's drawings are at the New Jersey Historical Society in Newark.



3. HALL BUILDING (1925), 40-46 Church Street, *Collegiate Gothic Style*, Architect: Holmes & Von Schmid, Handsome dark red brick commercial building with concrete round arched entrances, a continuous stone balustrade and leaded glass window panes. There is a 2-story octagonal turret to the west and two Gothic oriel windows.

4. CLARIDGE APARTMENTS (1925), 39-51 Church Street,

Renaissance Revival Style, Six-story corner apartment and mixed-use building with commercial space at the street level. The lofty architecture employs buff-colored bricks with extensive use of terra cotta for the architectural details.

5. WEDGEWOOD BUILDING (1926), 22 South Park Street, Architect: Frank Grad Associates, This block-long commercial building of granite and glazed terra cotta provided unity and permanence to the block, The central portion once housed the Montclair Post Office.

6. CHRIST CHURCH (1911), 68 Church Street, *Romanesque Revival Style*, Architect: Pilcher & Tachau, Former First Baptist Church. A careful choice of materials and a delicacy of carving mark this fortress-like building. The chapel window at the southwest corner is attributed to the famed Tiffany Studios. The addition facing Trinity Place was completed in 1928 under the direction of architect Dwight James Blaum.

7. UNITARIAN CHURCH (1905), 67 Church Street, *Shingle/Craftsman Style*, Architect: W. Leslie Walker, The cottage quality of this building marks an interesting contrast to the more formal Romanesque style Christ Church across the street.



8. CARNEGIE LIBRARY (1904), Church Street and Valley Road Circle, *Prairie Style*, Architect: John G. Howard, Andrew Carnegie donated \$40,500 for the construction of Montclair's first purpose-built free public library. Designed by a prominent California Architect, it is one of the few Prairie style buildings in Montclair. (Original site of #19)

9. OLD PRIMARY SCHOOL (1860), 22 Valley Road, *Italianate Style*, Montclair Board of Education Building. The oldest extant school building in Montclair, it was built because of the need for better schools to accommodate the increased school population resulting from the completion of the commuter railroad in 1856.



10. FIRST PRIMARY SCHOOL (1878), 49 Orange Road, *Vernacular/Early Classical Revival Style*, The second oldest school building still standing in the Township was built to meet the needs of a community which almost doubled in population during the 1870s thanks to the advent of the Montclair and Greenwood Lake Railway founded by Julius Pratt.

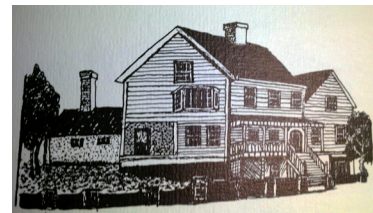


11. ISRAEL CRANE HOUSE (1796), 110 Orange Road, *Federal & Greek Revival Styles*, Israel "King" Crane, proprietor of Montclair's first store, important local citizen, builder of the "Turnpike," and owner of mills and other early industry built a large Federal style house on Glenridge Avenue in 1796. The home was extensively documented by the Historic American Buildings Survey in 1937 and was moved to the Montclair Historical Society in 1965. It features a working detached colonial kitchen.

12. HILLSIDE SQUARE (1926), 8 Hillside Avenue, *Georgian Revival Style*, Architect: Charles Faulkner, Built as First Church of Christ Scientist, this warm-colored granite building with graceful spire was widely published upon completion. It recently underwent an extensive renovation for conversion to office spaces and received numerous state and local awards for adaptive reuse.

13. HILLSIDE SCHOOL (1909), 54 Orange Road, *Neoclassical Style*, Architect: Starrett & Van Vleck, The large scale of this building are in marked contrast to the early 19th century former school buildings located across the street. This was Montclair's first high school.

14. MONTCLAIR ART MUSEUM (1914), 3 South Mountain Avenue, *Neoclassical Style*, Architect: Robert Randolph Ross, Classical ornament and delicate relief distinguish this impressive building. The museum was a natural outgrowth of the flourishing Montclair Art Colony, which existed in town at the end of the 19th century. A 25,000 SF wing was added in 2000.



15. OLD STAGECOACH HOUSE (1767), 764 Bloomfield Avenue, *English Colonial Style*, Horses were rumored to have been quartered in the cellar while weary travelers along the early "Turnpike" dined above. A clue to an even earlier origin of the house is the 5-1/2 foot high doorway in the old parlor to the right of the hall.



16. CENTROVERDE (2014), Bordered by Orange, Bloomfield, and Valley Roads, Architect: Lessard Design, This former site of Sears and DCH Auto Group was redeveloped into a six-story mixed-use building with green architectural features. Across Valley Road, Joseph Munn built the West Bloomfield Hotel in the early 1800s, which eventually became the Mansion House Hotel and finally a Beaux Arts silent movie theater in the early 1920s. It was demolished for a municipal parking lot.



17. POLICE HEADQUARTERS/OLD MUNICIPAL BUILDING (1913), 647 Bloomfield Avenue, *Classical Revival Style with Beaux Arts Elements*, Architect: Otto F. Semsch, Portions of the building are late 19th century and were skillfully integrated into the 1913 facade. This has always been an important corner in the town. The Montclair Hook & Ladder Company, formed in 1882, was headquartered in the earlier building (see photo at left).

18. NANN'S FLOWERS (1924), 605-609 Bloomfield Avenue, *Classical Revival Commercial Style*, A well designed, marbled example of early twentieth century commercial architecture. It is distinctive in the central business district for its parapet urns and foliated stonework.

19. MUNN'S TAVERN (1802), 17 Valley Road (behind municipal parking lot), *Dutch Federal Style*, This early tavern was a significant Cranetown landmark and remains one of Montclair's most important existing structures. It was originally located on the site of the Carnegie Library (#8), and served as the town's first tavern, first post office and later as its first public library. The wood building was extensively documented by the Historic American Buildings Survey in 1937 and moved to its current site behind the Valley Road Covenant Church in 1899 to avoid demolition. It later served as rectory offices.



20. CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (1921), 46 Park Street, *Georgian Revival Style*, Architect: Shreve, Lamb & Harmon with Carrere & Hastings, This nationally significant church designed by famed architectural firms has a characteristic red brick Flemish bond facade, classical formal portico supported by Doric columns and a towering octagonal spire.



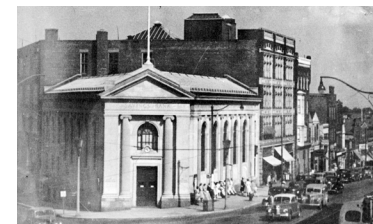
21. LOUIS HARRIS BUILDING (1903), 537-539 Bloomfield Avenue, *Commercial Style*, 3-story design consists of a classical façade of brick, limestone, and terra cotta, with decorative stone rosettes and a handsome cornice. The business was founded in 1875 by a German immigrant, Louis Harris, with the slogan, "A Montclair business for Montclair residents operated by Montclair people." One storefront retains its original copper paneled sign letters.



22. BANK OF MONTCLAIR (1923), 491 Bloomfield Avenue, *Commercial Georgian Revival with Federal elements*, Architect: Thomas M. James Co., One of the handsome bank buildings clustered near the Six Corners crossroads and designed by a well known New York architectural firm. It was originally capped with an impressive balustrade.

23. MONTCLAIR TRUST CO. (1900), 483 Bloomfield Avenue, *Beaux Arts Commercial Style*, Architect: Van Vleck & Goldsmith, Superior example of the Beaux Arts commercial style classicism in architecture. Dr. Goldwin Goldsmith was a noted architect and educator.

24. AMERICAN NATIONAL BANK (1914), 475 Bloomfield Avenue, *Neoclassical Style*, Architect: York & Sawyer, The New York City based architects were acclaimed for their many impressive limestone bank building designs. The interior of this corner building was faithfully renovated by Chase Bank using original light fixtures and period bank floor furniture.



25. HAMPTON HOUSE (1890), 467-469 Bloomfield Avenue, *Late 19th Century Commercial Style with Art Moderne facade added in 1946*, In early Cranetown days Peter Doremus opened the village's first dry goods store on this site. Peter's son Philip built a second store in 1853, and constructed the present masonry building on the site in 1890 (see photo at left). The old roof is still visible behind the post-World War II Art Deco facade.

26. MONTCLAIR SAVINGS BANK (1924), 441 Bloomfield Avenue, *Neoclassical Style*, One of several classically inspired bank buildings constructed in downtown during the early 1900s. This is the third building on this trapezoidal corner site. The High Victorian Gothic styled Morris Building was built in 1878, demolished in 1923 and housed the first Montclair Savings Bank, the earliest bank organized in town. It replaced an even earlier wooden hardware store.

27. MADISON BUILDING (1912), 427-429 Bloomfield Avenue, *Beaux Arts Revival Style*, Architect: Van Vleck & Goldsmith, The four-story Madison Building was the first building in Montclair equipped with an elevator and features a spectacular skylit central atrium. The heavy masonry structure opened its doors in 1924 and currently houses office space.



28. CRAWFORD BLOCK (1892), 295 Bloomfield Avenue, *Late 19th Commercial with Queen Anne and Romanesque elements*, Architect: Jesse H. Lockwood, This eclectic style building is without peer in Montclair and was an effective solution to a difficult corner site. Noted and sketched by John Nolen in his 1909 Master Plan.



29. D.L.&W. RAILROAD STATION (1913), 291 Bloomfield Avenue, *Beaux Arts Style*, Architect: William Hill Botsford, Once called the "handsomest and best arranged suburban railroad terminal in the United States," it replaced two earlier train stations ill-equipped to serve as the gateway to this prosperous railroad suburb. However, the architect never saw his building completed as he tragically lost his life in the Titanic disaster of 1912. The building was adapted for use as a shopping center in the 1980s.



30. MULLEN'S LIVERY (1884), 290-292 Bloomfield Avenue, Architect: Jesse H. Lockwood, The low-pitched roof and jerkinhead gable contribute to the distinctive architecture of this early horse-drawn taxi stable purposely built across the street from the town's first train station.



31. WELLMONT THEATER (1921), 398-408 Bloomfield Avenue, *Georgian Revival Style*, Architects: Reilly & Hall, Originally conceived for live theater productions, the Wellmont was outfitted with one of the largest stages in the metropolitan area at the time. During the early years, some of the greatest stars of the age performed at the theater including Tom Mix, Jackie Coogan, Richard Barthelmess and Charlie Chaplin. The building also featured an ample proscenium, dressing rooms for actors and actresses and a large orchestra pit which later accompanied silent films.

32. MASSMAN BUILDING (1909), 416-418 Bloomfield Avenue, *Classical Revival Style*, This storefront was for many years the home of Massman Florists, who according to newspaper accounts had, "entire charge of the floral arrangements for the wedding of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Alva Edison." The wooden back of the building dates from 1870. This portion of Bloomfield Avenue has a number of late 19th/early 20th century commercial buildings, often with traces of earlier frame buildings evident behind newer facades.



33. THE CRANE BLOCK (1889), 460 Bloomfield Avenue, *Italianate Commercial Style*, One of the finest examples of late 19th century commercial buildings in Montclair. This 3-story Italianate masonry building is trapezoidal in plan and was enlarged in the early 20th century.