

The West Allendale Avenue Business District

The Allendale Hotel, right, and the Braun flat-iron building, below, 111 W. Allendale Ave., were not mentioned in the Bergen County Historic Sites Survey. Neither were three homes at 2, 64 and 67 W. Allendale that have been converted for commercial use as Van Houten Real Estate, Tennis Advantage and the Allendale Bar & Grill.



photos by Marsha Stoltz



Part V

Marsha Stoltz

ALLENDALE — The West Allendale Avenue business district is a comparatively new development in local architectural history. Most of it sprang up north and east of the railroad station in the early 1900's.

The East/West Allendale Avenue route — including what is now Cottage Place — is among the oldest settlement roads in the Borough. But it was the southwest or New York-bound side of the railroad tracks which developed first as a collection point for locally grown produce headed for city markets. This area, deemed the Railroad District in the County Historic Sites Survey, will be the subject of Part 6 in this series.

What helped change the north side of the tracks was the vacationer and

commuter traffic which stepped off the trains there with increasing frequency after the station was completed in 1850. The north side became even more important when the interurban trolley connected Allendale with Paterson and Suffern, N.Y., around 1912. Now merely a shortcut path and powerline easement, the trolley line made farming Allendale into a residential community.

The county highlights this development by recognizing three West Allendale buildings, two of them private homes. The public library's Girl Scout list of pre-1900 buildings cites two additional businesses and two more private residences. Apparently no one considers the Borough's first library at One W. Allendale Ave. or the Braun flat-iron

office building at 111 W. Allendale Ave. worth mentioning at all.

Both groups seem to agree on the importance of the Van Houten-Yeomans house at 209 W. Allendale Ave. According to the county survey, the vernacular Federal structure was probably built around 1835 by Paul Van Houten. About 1867, his daughter married John L. Yeomans, another long-term resident. "Its current plan represents continuous use and expansion of an early-19th century vernacular farmhouse," the county survey notes.

Moving northeast across the trolley tracks, we come to what is now Citizens First National Bank of New Jersey at 88 W. Allendale Ave. The former First National Bank of Allendale was built in the

Renaissance Revival style popular in the 1925 era. Richard J. Christopher, who established the coal and lumber business across the tracks at 55 Park Ave. in 1905, served as its first president from 1925 until his death in 1957. "Only its modest and compact design make it a less-typical example of contemporary bank buildings," the survey notes.

The county survey cites the home at 44 W. Allendale Ave. as "a significant example of residential architecture interpreted after the Downingsque influence became popular in the mid-19th century." The survey speculates that the structure was originally a farmhouse, possibly built around 1876 by the Joseph Mallinson Family.

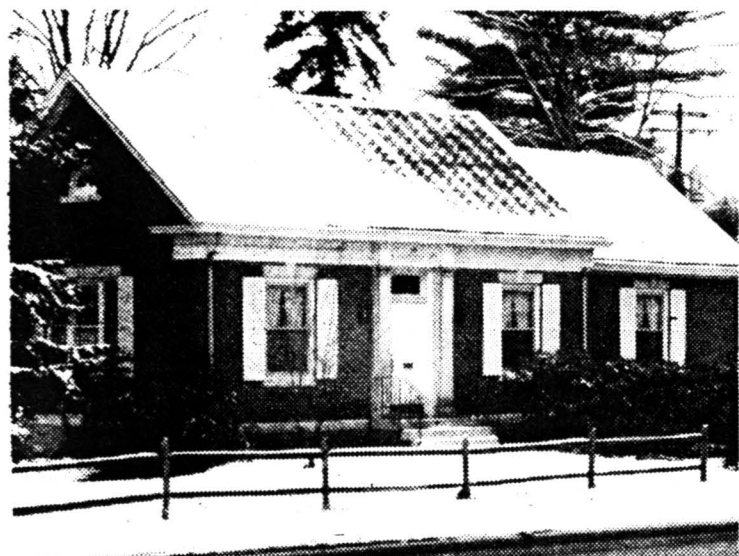
(Next: The Railroad District)

County List

Date Built	Address
1876	44 W. Allendale Ave.
1925	88 W. Allendale Ave.
1867	209 W. Allendale Ave.

Girl Scout List

Date Built	Address
1880	2 W. Allendale Ave.
1895	44 W. Allendale Ave.
1875	64 W. Allendale Ave.
1870	93 W. Allendale Ave.
1895	128 W. Allendale Ave.
1870	209 W. Allendale Ave.



The original Allendale Library, One West Allendale Ave., also went unmentioned in the county survey.



The C.P. Morgan Plumbing and Heating Company looked out on the trolley tracks from 111 W. Allendale Ave., shortly after it was completed in 1911. Courtesy Stiles Thomas

As with East Allendale Avenue, the County Survey of Historic Sites for Allendale is almost as interesting for what it leaves out as what it includes about the buildings along West Allendale Avenue.

The Allendale Hotel, 128 W. Allendale Ave., is probably the most obviously absent structure in this area. Completed in 1870 and now owned by John Dixon, there is some debate as to how much of the original structure remains. It was apparently the debate about the presence of the original structure that led to its omission.

Mr. Dixon's son, William, says the hotel was originally the seasonal residence of farmworkers who helped make the area famous for its produce. The hotel housed the Allendale Bar and Grill until after World War II, and was apparently a favorite hangout for baseball great Babe Ruth.

The Dixons are completing a renovation of the structure which has included aluminum siding and partial removal of a structurally-unsound tower. Such renovations, according to the county's Elise Baranowski, reduce its architectural significance.

Similarly unmentioned is the Braun flat-iron building, built by the town's first fire chief in 1911 as still stated in a plaque over the front door. The triangular white building now houses the Stiles Thomas insurance agency. A second look at this building in November won from Ms. Baranowski the concession that it

might in fact be worth including in the survey.

The original Lee Memorial Library was opened at 1 W. Allendale Ave. in 1926 and remained there until it moved to new Borough Hall quarters in 1980. The building now houses Norton Joyce and Co., accountants.

Across the street at Two W. Allendale Ave. is a converted house now used by Van Houten Realtors. Richard Van Houten, whose family contributions reach far back into local history, says he believes the house was originally built by the Mallinson Family. It came into possession of an oil company, which tried unsuccessfully to put a gas station there during World War II. After remaining vacant, it was purchased and converted by Mr. Van Houten in 1953. He believes the house is "well over 100 years old," but has no firm confirmation on construction dates.

Robert McNally runs Tennis Advantage out of a yellow Queen Anne home with fish scale detail at 64 W. Allendale Ave. The former two-family home was converted to business use after the town rezoned the area commercial some 10 years ago. He purchased the home from a Mrs. Berger, whose family he believes owned not only the house but other property between this home and the bank. His attempts to research the history of the home were unfruitful.

Also unmentioned is the 1915 Gautelli building at 114 W. Allendale Ave. which houses the Allendale Florist.