

# Welcome to Morris County

The Morris County Board of Chosen Freeholders and the Morris County Heritage Commission invite you to use these brochures to discover the towns and villages of Morris County.

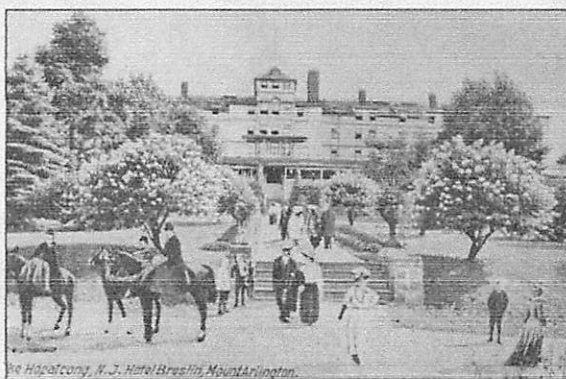
Until the late 17th century, American Indians of the Lenape tribe were the only inhabitants of this area. Dutch and English settlements began around 1685. The distinctive Dutch stone farmhouses of Pequannock and the clapboard East Jersey cottages of the English settlement at Whippany represent the earliest architecture in Morris County.

Morristown became the military capital of the Revolutionary War when Washington's army encamped there for the winter of 1777 and again during the winter of 1779-80. Morris County's iron mines provided ore for local furnaces, which produced cannon and shot for the Continental troops. The newly built mansion of Jacob Ford, Jr., became Washington's headquarters.

Completion of the Morris Turnpike in 1804, the Morris Canal in 1831, and the Morris and Essex Railroad in 1837 ushered in a century of growth for rural, sparsely-settled Morris County. Early architecture changed slowly, but by the 1850s, Gothic Revival, Italianate, and other Romantic Revival styles had become popular. By the late 19th century, the now familiar front-gabled workers' houses abounded in industrial towns such as Boonton and Dover.

In the 1890s wealthy New Yorkers discovered Morris County, and the Gilded Age began. Working farms became estates, and elegant mansions—some inspired by British manors and castles—changed the landscape around Morristown. Development proceeded steadily but slowly until the post-war boom of the 1940s, when housing developments proliferated, creating affordable new houses.

By the late 1990s the thriving county was an economic magnet on the edge of the metropolitan region, a center for small and large corporations and associated residential development. Yet much of Morris County has retained its traditional charm, and many of its historic neighborhoods remain almost unchanged.



The Breslin Hotel, named after James Henry Breslin, president of the Lake Hopatcong Hotel Company. The hotel (later known as the Alamac) was destroyed by fire in 1948.

# Mount Arlington

In Mount Arlington, earth, water, and sky come together to form the picturesque landscape that has drawn people to this area since the time of the Indians. Here travelers came to the wooded hills surrounding the sparkling waters of Lake Hopatcong, the main focal point of this tranquil scene.

Europeans first arrived here in the early 18th century. Some came to mine iron ore or to work in the many forges built here. Local histories tell of a group of Rogerenes, a non-conformist Protestant sect from Connecticut, who may have been here in the first decades of the 18th century.

During the 1750s, iron forge owner Garret Rapalje harnessed water power for his operations by building a dam at the southern tip of Lake Hopatcong in an area known as Brookland or Brooklyn. About 75 years later the Morris Canal Company bought the property. The company created a canal reservoir in 1827 by linking the lake with a body of water to the north called Little Pond; it also enlarged the dam.

The local iron mines thrived, thanks to the Morris Canal, which provided mine owners a way to ship ore to Pennsylvania markets. But in 1882 the discovery of cheap high quality ore in Minnesota led to a steep decline in local iron production.

New opportunities arose when the Central Railroad of New Jersey commenced regular passenger service to Lake Hopatcong in 1882. City dwellers began traveling to the lake for recreation. A group of New York investors including James W. Breslin, Henry Altenbrand, and Robert Dunlap saw the potential for developing the area. During 1885 and 1886 they formed the Lake Hopatcong Land and Improvement Company and the Lake Hopatcong Hotel Company. The developers built hotels, piers, wharfs, docks, boat houses, and private homes. The new neighborhood of elegant summer "cottages" became known as Breslin Park.

By 1890, members of the community had created the Lake Hopatcong Protection and Improvement Association. Leaving Roxbury Township, which had included their neighborhood, they successfully established Mount Arlington as an independent municipality on Hopatcong's east shore. The community elected Wall Street broker Howard P. Frothingham as its first mayor after the new municipality incorporated on November 1, 1890.

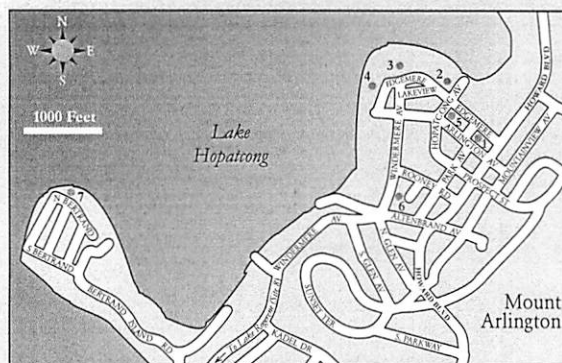
By the early twentieth century, Mount Arlington had become a popular vacation resort. During the boom years of the 1920s, new restaurants, stores, dance halls, and even a speakeasy or two opened. Visitors could attend jazz concerts at various hotels, see vaudeville acts in one of the pavilions, or visit an amusement park. Popular events included beauty pageants, boat races, water carnivals, and theme parties.

Mount Arlington's glory days ended with the coming of the Great Depression in 1929. While many businesses stayed open, others closed permanently. Following World War II, Mount Arlington continued as a vacation area typical of lakeside resorts in New Jersey. But as new highways provided residents commuter access, the borough evolved into a year-round community by the 1970s.

Today the hotels are gone. Even the popular amusement park at Bertrand Island finally closed in 1983. Despite changes over the years, many stately old homes remain that remind us of the borough's colorful past.

# Historic Highlights of Mount Arlington

**T**he community of Mount Arlington was established in a sparsely settled section of Roxbury Township in the 1880s. It was primarily a summer resort when incorporated as a separate borough in 1890. By that time vacationers had begun coming here by train to escape the noise and pollution of the cities. The elegant summer homes they built still stand in the borough's North Park Historic District. This brochure features seven of the District's 15 sites as well as the Lake Rogerene site in the southern part of the borough. During your visit, please remember to respect the privacy of the homeowners.



## 1 ST. PETER'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH 50 Edgemere Avenue

This Romanesque inspired rubble stone church was dedicated on September 2, 1888, during a ceremony featuring New Jersey's governor Robert S. Green as a guest speaker. Built on land donated by the resort developers, this house of worship was originally conceived as a non-denominational church known as the Union Protestant Chapel. Here both vacationers and residents attended services. The Mt. Arlington Park Association, which owned title to the church, donated the structure to the Episcopal Diocese of Newark in 1894. The church, renamed St. Peter's, is still an active congregation.



## 2 CRABTREE COTTAGE 33 Edgemere Avenue

Described as mischievous, unpredictable, impulsive, and eccentric, Lotta Crabtree, the cigar-smoking actress, born in 1847, garnered much attention as a popular, nationally known celebrity whose career spanned the 1860s through the early 1890s. On stage Lotta conveyed a sense of playfulness and spontaneity, often ad-libbing her lines. Off stage she was known for her kindness and generosity. Her exuberant and eccentric personality is expressed in her house, called Attol Tryst. Noted architect Frank Furness designed the structure in a flamboyant sprawling Shingle Queen Anne style. The 1886 house and its owner attracted many people to the area during Lake Hopatcong's great resort years. Today it remains a major focal point of the Mount Arlington North Park Historic District.



## 3 HIMPLER HOUSE 13 Edgemere Avenue

Architectural historians acknowledge German emigre Francis J. Himpler for the exceptionally fine German Gothic churches that he designed for major cities throughout the Midwest. Himpler eventually settled in Hoboken, New Jersey, where he created the architectural plans for City Hall, St. Mary's Hospital, and Sacred Heart Academy. He called his circa-1889 Mount Arlington cottage "Mira Lacum" or "view of the lake," since every window overlooks the water. Exhibiting design elements borrowed from architect Frank Furness, the ashlar stone house conveys a solid, masculine appearance. It remains one of the borough's most impressive structures.



## 4 ROBERT DUNLAP HOUSE 7 Edgemere Avenue

Robert Dunlap was president of Dunlap & Company hat manufacturers, which operated stores in New York, Philadelphia, and Chicago. He also served as treasurer of the Lake Hopatcong Hotel Company. Dunlap did much to build the local community. He contributed to the construction of the first borough hall, a library, and St. Peter's Episcopal Church. Dunlap's Queen Anne style house, built in 1886, is among the earliest structures in the borough's Historic District. The house derives its character from contrasting windows, broken roof lines, and a one-story open porch.



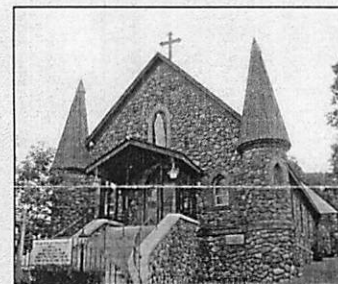
## 5 CATHERINE WALSH COTTAGE 14 Hopatcong Avenue

Catherine Farrell Walsh of Brooklyn, New York, is considered one of the original founders of Mount Arlington. Her son, Thomas Walsh (1871-1928), an acknowledged literary figure, was described by a biographer as "one of the finest poetic talents" of his generation. As a scholar of Spanish and Latin American culture, Thomas compiled the monumental *Hispanic Anthology*, in which he translated the entire body of Spanish lyrical poetry from the earliest period to the present. He also wrote original poems, many inspired by religious themes. Walsh spent most summers at his mother's circa-1886 Queen Anne style summer house. Today the structure is among the best restored homes in the district.



## 6 OUR LADY OF THE LAKE CHURCH Windermere Avenue

This fieldstone church replaced an earlier clapboard structure in 1914. The parish started after the Hotel Breslin opened in June, 1887. The hotel management applied to Bishop W.M. Wigger of Newark to "secure the ministrations of a clergyman for the Catholic guests and servants of the establishment." The Lake Hopatcong Land and Improvement Company donated about an acre of property for the construction of the church. Non-Catholics of the community provided two-thirds of the \$1,200 collected to help defray building costs. The church, located on Summit Street, was completed in 1889. Parish members originally included German and Irish immigrants.



## 7 LAKE HOPATCONG YACHT CLUB North Bertrand Road

The Lake Hopatcong Yacht Club was established at Mount Arlington in 1905. Construction of the current building started in 1909. The logs used in building the structure were cut at Woodport, made into rafts, and floated down the lake. Noted New York architect Lewis Frederick Pilcher designed the Colonial Revival structure, incorporating elements of the Prairie style pioneered by Frank Lloyd Wright. The club sponsored boat races, concerts, vaudeville shows, movies, water carnivals, and other leisure activities. Today the Yacht Club still holds regattas. The clubhouse remains the last link to Mount Arlington's past as a grand resort area.

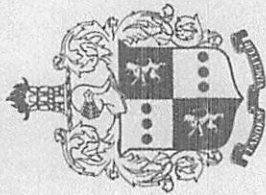


## 8 LAKE ROGERENE COMMUNITY Orben Drive, Lake Rogerene

The name of this former summer community honors dissenters from New London, Connecticut, persecuted for following the religious teachings of John Rogers (1648-1721). A group of Rogerenes settled eastward of Schooley's Mountain in 1734, but the sect was short-lived. Their rejection of formal church organization and their habit of working on Sundays (believing that all days are equally holy) annoyed other Christians. In a 1914 county history, a respected local doctor concluded that the Rogerenes came here at a very early date. Within the next two decades, the former Mountain Pond was renamed Lake Rogerene.

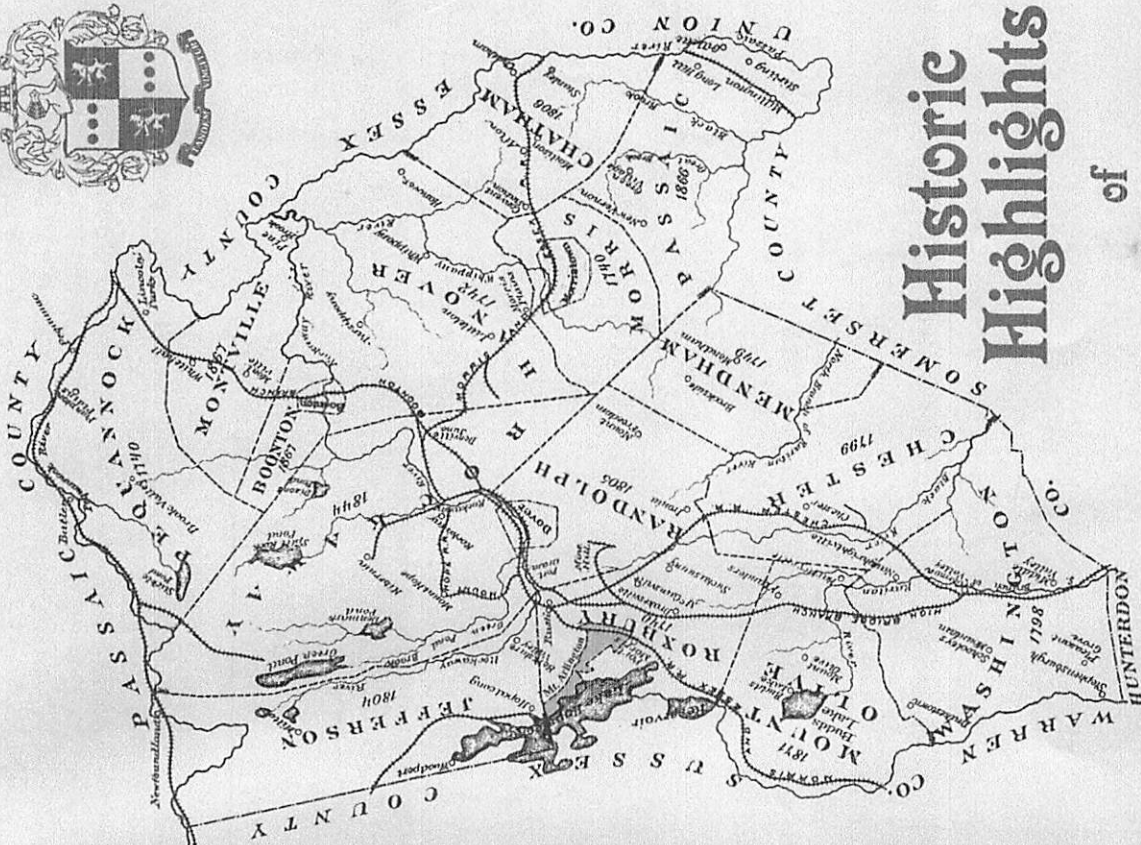






# Historic Highlights of Mount Arlington

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The **MORRIS COUNTY HERITAGE COMMISSION** promotes public interest in local history through its historical markers program, historic sites surveys of the 39 Morris County municipalities, *Highlights of History* slide show, *Historic Highlights* tour brochures, and various publications. Please call or write to the Commission for further information about Morris County's historic sites, or check our web page at [www.co.morris.nj.us/Heritage](http://www.co.morris.nj.us/Heritage).

## HISTORIC HIGHLIGHTS OF MOUNT ARLINGTON

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