



3 Colonia Country Club

Off of the Middlesex-Essex Turnpike, now known as Colonia Boulevard, stands the Colonia Country Club, an important landmark around which much of the early community was based. The club is over a hundred years old, and is the 13th oldest golf club in New Jersey.

When, in 1897, Edward G. Cone and Edward Savage became interested in golf, they gathered together a few others who also shared an appreciation for the pastime, and a year later purchased fifty acres of farmland from the Adamses. Twelve and a half acres of the fifty were designated for the golf course, the remaining thirty-eight acres having been deemed unsuitable due to their location south of the railroad. The course was designed by a famous Scottish architect named Thomas Benkelow. Over a thousand courses can be attributed to Benkelow, who designed more than any other architect in history, and in 1899 he laid out nine holes at Colonia. The course was expanded to eighteen holes in 1923 by Robert White, following the acquisition of fifty-three acres of land on the west side of New Dover Road.

Along with the original fifty acres of land purchased for the purpose of creating a golf course, the Adams' house, built in 1852, was also acquired and became the members' clubhouse. This residence was in use until 1966, at which time the clubhouse was moved to its present location. Between 2001 and 2002 it underwent renovations expanding its size to 20,000 square feet, during which the ceiling was raised and extended out, and an executive meeting room was installed.

The club was officially founded in 1898 by its first directors, including Edward Savage, Edward G. Cone, and Frank Pattison from Colonia. In 1901 the club applied for membership to the U.S. Golf Association. Some of the amenities that the club is in possession of today include a driving range, putting green, half-way house, and an Olympic sized swimming pool. It is still host to a variety of functions, and remains a focal point of the community.



4 Colonia Inn

The house at 477 Colonia Boulevard has gone through several transformations, including that from private residence to public road house and back again. The original part of the house—which appears as an addition towards the side and back—is believed to have been built in 1774, with the first addition in 1906. Former residents of the home include Laura Jean Libby and her father, Dr. Libby. Laura Jean was the author of serial love stories that ran in the New York Ledger and other local papers, with such titles as "When His Love Grew Cold," and "Lovers Once but Strangers Now." Born in 1862, she is believed to have begun writing sometime between the ages of fourteen and twenty, and moved to New York City to continue her career, which spanned three decades and resulted in over 80 published novels.

The house was turned into a roadhouse called the Colonia Inn by a later owner, and acquired local popularity for its chicken dinners. After being restored to a personal residence, the house was modified several times, at one point having as many as nineteen rooms. Today it remains a private home.



5 Bridesmaid House (Hedges Home)

The Hedges Home, more commonly referred to as the Bridesmaid House, stands at the corner of Colonia Boulevard and Kent—now New Dover—Road. The Cones invited many of their friends and society acquaintances into the neighborhood, as is exemplified here. This house was constructed by a bridesmaid of Helen Cone sometime in 1912, as a part of the early "Colony" that Helen's husband, Ed Cone, had developed. A nearby home, the Hull house, was built around the same time by another of Mrs. Cone's bridesmaids. This is the white stucco house with French influences located at 550 New Dover Road.

By encouraging their friends to build in Colonia and become a part of the Colony, the Cones were able to effectively select the inhabitants of the community and influence the atmosphere around which it grew.



6 Kinnekort

Located on the corner of New Dover Road and Colonia Boulevard, the Dutch Colonial house known as Kinnekort (or Kennekort) was built by Edward K. Cone, the name having come from a surname on his mother's side of the family. Edward Cone was the fourth child and only son of the Cone family, who occupied the residence known as "The Trees." A respected member of the New York financial firm E.A. Pierce & Co., as well as the president of the Cotton Exchange, Cone was also a prominent figure in Colonia. He became the driving force behind the development of The Colony, first buying all the available land between Belair, the house owned by the Savage family, and Middlesex Avenue. From this he chose the location for Kinnekort, and in 1904 Cone brought his wife Helen, the daughter of Edward S. Savage of Belair, to live with him there.

Kinnekort served as more than just a family residence during this time. Every Sunday morning before church, Helen would gather the local children and hold Sunday School there. The Cones were known for their hospitality, frequently hosting dinners and other social events for the community. One such event was a carnival that was held in the garden, referred to as "A Midsummer Night's Dream." Originally for the benefit of a club in Rahway that burned down—the Ilderon Outing and Tennis Club—the event was moved to Kinnekort, and is said to have been attended by the entire Colony.

The Cones also employed a school teacher to privately instruct their three daughters. The young woman's name was Miss Edmunds, a trained kindergarten teacher who came each day from New York City. Soon other children from Colonia, as well as some from Rahway, came to attend the lessons, and Kinnekort became known as the first local school, eventually growing to such an extent that it had to be moved into the garage. From the children attending Kinnekort for school was formed the first Girl Scout troop in Colonia, with Miss Edmunds as the leader. They were called the Pine Cone Troop, and started a scout movement in the area, becoming Troop 1 of the Rahway Girl Scouts Council.

Kinnekort played a major part in laying the foundation for the community's strong sense of unity. The house itself was once an important social focal point of The Colony, and stands today as a tangible memory of that time, and of the family that so heavily influenced the shape of the neighborhood around them.



The "13 Miles to Newark" Marker stood for many years at the northwest corner of Colonia Boulevard and New Dover Road. It was engraved and placed there or more after Newark was named in 1666.

Julie Cohen, Research Consultant  
Mayor John E. McCormac

Photo 6, historic postcard 12 & Colony Plan courtesy of Colonia History Club  
Historic photos 3 courtesy of Woodbridge Public Library  
Photo 2 courtesy of Zirpolo family

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Historical map of the Colonia area showing streets and landmarks.

The origins of Colonia date back to the mid seventeenth century, with the arrival of its first settlers from Newbury, Massachusetts. An initial participant in the division of Woodbridge Township from the Elizabethtown Purchase in 1666 was Daniel Pierce, who moved his family into Colonia as the town's first settlers. A year later, in the spring of 1667, two more families from Newbury joined him: the Bishops and the Jacques. Around 1685 the Robinson family also settled in Colonia, and together these four families held over two thousand acres of land. The area was previously known as Houghtenville from at least 1850, until it was renamed Colonia in 1894 by the Cones.

A unique part of Colonia is the "Colony," a planned community that was first formed in the 1890s through the work and development of several businessmen from New York, and through the dedication and sense of unity among its residents grew to acquire its present place within the township. The making of modern Colonia is partly due to the work of several families in the Colony, without whom the town would likely not have progressed into the community that it is today. The Cone, Savage, and Pattison families were all residents of Colonia whose influence and commitment had immense impact on the creation and history of the community.

As Houghtenville, the area was originally comprised of farm and woodland, and the early community was one of agriculture and country life. It was country charm that first attracted the Cones, a family from New York. Following their arrival came the idea for a small planned neighborhood of large country homes distributed around a central golf course and clubhouse. The Cones invited their city friends to become a part of this neighborhood, the Colony, by advertising Colonia as an ideal place of beauty and relaxation that was within an easy commuting distance to their businesses in New York City. The Cones' only son, Edward, further developed the area by using this idea to draw others to the community. In 1920, Edward published a pamphlet on the attractions of life in Colonia, enticing the readers with the promise of "every modern convenience—excepting trolley cars—combined with the pleasure of living in real country and not a crowded suburb."

Today, of course, Colonia has grown beyond its association with simple country life and into a thriving town inhabited by over 17,000 residents. Although not the only neighborhood within Colonia, the Colony began as its heart, and still shapes the public perception of this section of Woodbridge Township. Colonia as a whole continues to be regarded as a prosperous and attractive community within the township with a close connection to its past, as is evidenced by the historic houses and landmarks that have been preserved and passed down into the present day.



1 Bishop Grist & Sawmill / First Colonia Library / Historic Triangle

The original location of the mill is believed to have been behind the site of the first Colonia Library, and a grinding wheel from the late seventeenth century can still be seen on land by the corner of Chain O' Hills Road and New Dover Road. The mill belonged to John Bishop, Sr., and his son, John Bishop, Jr., who together held five hundred and forty seven acres of land, extending from the south branch of the Rahway River, now known as Succor Brook, and approaching the first Colonia Library. The Bishops came to Colonia from Newbury, Massachusetts in the spring of 1667, and are considered to be some of the town's first settlers.

John Bishop built the mill on the southern branch of the Rahway—then called Rahawak—River sometime in the early 1680s, and was admitted as a Freeholder of the township in 1682 due to its construction. It was the second grist mill to have been built in this area of the United States, the first being that which Jonathan Dunham of Woodbridge had erected in 1670. A landing was added to Bishop's mill in 1686 for the purpose of receiving boats and for the shipping out of goods, such as hay, grain, and meal, for sale.

Just in front of the mill site stands what is now the Merrill Park Baseball League Club House, formerly the original Colonia Library. The existence of this first library can be credited to a woman named Margaret Soule, whose husband, Dr. Robert Soule, was the head of orthopedic work at St. Elizabeth Hospital. Margaret is said to have gone around the neighborhood delivering books that she had selected to lend out. At first the books were kept in her own home, until the time came when space for them ran out, at which point they were moved to a hallway in the Colonia School, and from there to the Community Center. Margaret continued to deliver the books herself from each location, until Mary Pattison and her son, Maynicke, drew up a plan for a library, using the land on which four portable schoolrooms stood, and sent it to Dr. Albee for

approval. The estimated cost for the building was \$5,000, but the final cost was \$25,000. The building was completed in three years, and opened on Mother's Day in 1939. Unfortunately, Margaret Soule did not live to see its completion, but remains the inspiration behind its construction.

Opposite the former library and grist mill is a small triangle, formed where two historical Indian trails cross—these trails are known now as the roads of New Dover and Chain O' Hills. A plan for a "scout rest" was thought up by Dr. Albee, which would involve a few historic stones from the old mill to be placed at the triangle, but ultimately the idea fell through.

The overlap of these sites is evidence of Colonia's ability to continuously evolve and build upon itself without losing sight of its past. The history of the community lingers today in the present incarnations of roads and buildings that mark older locations and allow us to revisit earlier times.



2 Babbling Brook

Babbling Brook is the name of the picturesque property at 335 New Dover Road. Built as a part of Colonia's Colony in 1925 for Lyle Burrows Reeb, the red brick home stands on over three acres of land that borders the golf course. Following the Reeb's, the house was occupied by the Carims family, and since the early 1960s, by the Zirpolo family. Walter Zirpolo, the father of the current owner, was mayor of Woodbridge from 1962 until 1967.

The name Babbling Brook reflects the charm and beauty of the house, which includes a brook, two ponds, a greenhouse, wild garden, and even a waterfall and fishpond. Today it is known for its wonderful gardens, and is a part of the Garden Conservancy program. One day a year the gardens are opened to allow guests inside to explore, attracting enthusiasts regardless of the season.

The charming beauty of this house and its lovely gardens exemplify the kind of atmosphere that originally enticed prospective residents to The Colony.



Chartered 1669

Historic Tour of

# WOODBIDGE

Volume III

Colonia: The Colony



Compiled by the

Woodbridge Township Historic Preservation Commission

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7 House of Four Winds

The first house to be built on the land developed by the Cones known as "The Colony," the House of Four Winds was purchased by Frank and Mary Pattison. It is the Pattisons, and Mary in particular, who contribute most of the historical significance that is associated with this house. Mary Pattison was born in Brooklyn in 1869 to Diantha Fitch and George William Hart, and spent her childhood in New Brunswick and then Metuchen before marrying Frank Pattison in 1893. Frank, who studied electrical engineering at Rutgers University, was originally from New York City, and the couple spent a short while there while Frank worked alongside his brother Charles as a Consulting Engineer. In 1908, two years after the birth of their second child, the family moved again, this time to Colonia.

Both Frank and Mary Pattison were supporters of the Progressive Party—an early twentieth century movement dedicated to humanitarian causes, women's rights among them. Mary served on its committee in 1912, and became involved in various other organizations dedicated to women's suffrage throughout her lifetime. She was the president of the New Jersey Federation of Women's Clubs, and in June of 1910 opened a State Housekeeping Experiment Station in the building next door to her home, called the "Maisonette," which still stands beside the main house. The purpose of the experiment station was to alleviate the many and various domestic burdens traditionally encountered by women during that time. To counter the strain of endless housework the women tested different sources of energy, such as electric motors, to power some household appliances. Mary believed that the same principles behind the management of work through the progression of science that existed in the world of industry could be applied to the realm which the traditional woman at that time inhabited. To compensate for the increased workload women faced due to the decline of servants, who had begun to seek other professions, and the higher cost of living, a main objective of the experiment station was to discover the best method of performing a task in the shortest amount of time, and with the least amount of labor required.

In 1949 Mary Pattison wrote a book on Colonia, the earliest written history of the town, entitled Colonia Yesterday.



8 Devonshire

Number 2 Devon Road is the address of Devonshire, a house built during the first World War, in 1917. The first owners were a couple originally from Rahway, Will and Eva Rollinson, who were looking to build a house in their home town. They were persuaded, however, by Ed Cone to choose for their new home a location in Colonia instead. They moved into the residence in the summer of 1918, and held a house warming party, during which the name "Devonshire"—literally, a farm on Devon—was selected by way of a contest amongst the guests.

The Rollinsons were well received in the community, and Devonshire became host to annual New Year's Eve dances for members of the Colony. Will, who was born in New York City, moved to Rahway when his grandfather became the minister of its First Baptist Church. Eva was born in Rahway, and could trace her family there dating back to 1630. The couple moved to Devonshire with their three children, a daughter and two sons, as well as a farmer and his wife who lived in a little house on the farm. They brought with them horses, cows, pigs, chickens, and other livestock, and even had their own automobile and chauffeur.

The Rollinsons eventually gave up farming, however, after a series of events that began when their barn was caught in a terrible fire. The animals inside were saved, but the barn itself burned to the ground. After this, in 1923, Colonia was zoned against farm animals. These restrictions, coupled with the fact that their children had all married and moved away, lessening the need for produce, led to the couple's decision to retire from their life of farming and focus on the more social activities of the community.

Devonshire remains standing today, attractively nestled among the trees on Devon Road, an elegant reminder of Colonia's past.



9 Anderegg Home

The origins of what is known as the Anderegg home date back to an early owner of the Cone homestead "The Trees," James Hora, who built this house for one of his five daughters. He went on to build a house for each of his remaining daughters, and is said to have done the same for his two sons in another town.

The home has also been referred to as the Van Wyck farmhouse, after its early owners, formerly of New York. William Van Wyck, who acquired the nickname "Uncle Bill" by the community, gained the adoration of the local children during picking times on the farm, at which time the boys—and sometimes the girls—of the town volunteered to gather tomatoes and beans, and after which were treated by William to ice cream in the market.

After the Van Wycks, the house passed through various families, including the Holtons, the Morgans, the Stuarts, the Andereggs, and the Pecks.



10 The Trees

Still standing at 374 New Dover Road, "The Trees" was the name given to this house, which dates back to pre-Revolutionary times, and is rumored to have been the target of a British raid for supplies. Much smaller at the time it was originally built, it was expanded to twice its size by an early owner—a man named James Hora who was in possession of considerable wealth, as well as eight children. The house was then owned by a gentleman by the name of H. S. Moore, and eventually passed into the hands of the Cone family.

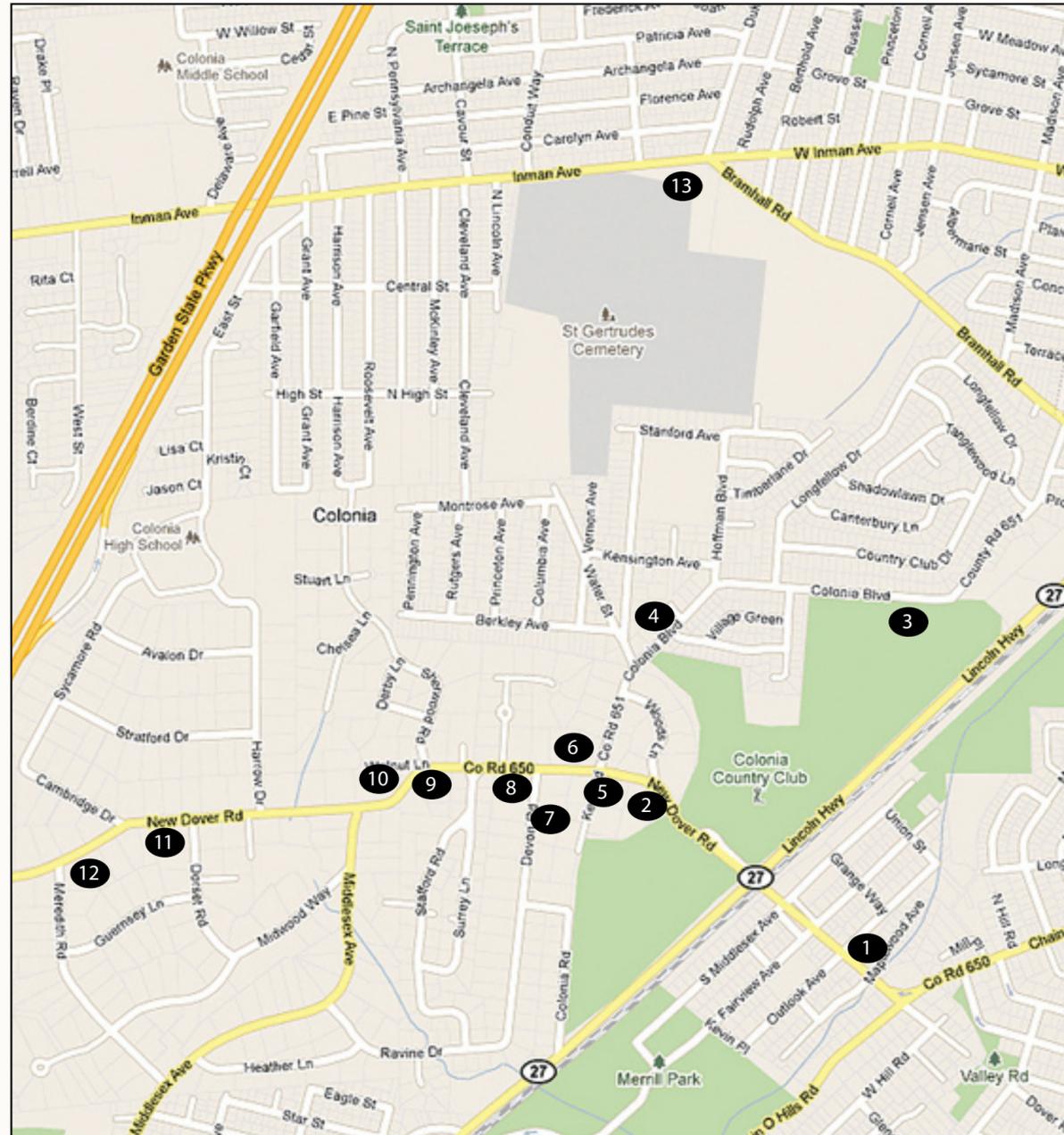
The Cones left their New York City brown stone and came to Colonia in search of a place that would allow them the luxury of the quieter countryside while still remaining close to the city and its society. They found what they were looking for, and in 1890 purchased the sixty-five acre property known as The Trees. The family consisted of Edward G. Cone, who had retired from business in New York, his wife, an ailing woman who died a short while later in 1894, and their four children: Kate, Elizabeth, Grace, and Edward.

The Cone family had a large amount of influence in the development of the community, but perhaps the most important detail that is attributed to them is their involvement in changing the name of the area to Colonia. Formerly called "Houghtenville" after another resident—a farmer named Mr. Houghten—the Cones decided that the name was ill-suited to the community. The middle daughter, Elizabeth, went so far as to liken the sound of it to that of hungry dogs. The current name of Colonia was then selected from a map and, as it was considered more pleasing to the idea of the community that the Cones envisioned, they worked to persuade the Pennsylvania Railroad Company—whose station in the town officially carried the name of Houtenville—to accept the change as well.

It was in this house that the Cone family was introduced to Colonia, the first step that would lead to The Colony's future, and an important part of the community's history as a whole.



## Woodbridge Township Historic Preservation Commission Tour Map of Historic Sites



11 Hauxhurst House

At 407 New Dover Road is the Hauxhurst House, which dates back to at least 1796, and was named for N. Hauxhurst, who owned the house from 1874 to 1890. Afterwards the house passed into the hands of Garrett Du Bois of Plainfield. Two features that remain from the original house are an old fireplace and Dutch oven of earlier times, linking the home to its long-standing history.

Between the years of 1918 and 1919, the edge of the land where the house is located was occupied by the massive army hospital that had been constructed for service during WWI. Although it is unclear what the exact purpose served by the Hauxhurst house was during this time, it is speculated that it was used by one of the several organizations that functioned in collaboration with the hospital. Among these organizations was The Mercy Committee, a group formed by local women and chaired by Mrs. Charles Freeman of the Freeman Estate. During the year of the hospital's existence, the committee used a cottage on the estate named The Mercy House, where relatives of the wounded soldiers were offered a place to visit and even given meals for a moderate cost. It has also been suggested is that the house was used for social gatherings and other events. Dr. Albee, in his book A Surgeon's Fight To Rebuild Men, mentions a Red Cross House, where dances were frequently hosted in order to provide patients with newly fitted artificial legs the opportunity to learn to wear them.

After the war, the Hauxhurst house served as the Red Cross Headquarters, making it an important landmark in the community. At one time it was also used for the Watchung Hunt Club, and included a private race track on the Freeman Estate. It remains standing today near the scattered remnants of the hospital, and is a privately owned residence once again.



12 U.S. General Hospital No. 3

The Old Army Hospital—officially known as General Hospital No. 3—opened in June of 1918 and closed in October of 1919. Although only active for a little over one year, the hospital covered 200 acres and was composed of 110 barracks-style buildings, offering 2,000 beds

for U.S. soldiers. In addition to the general surgery the hospital grew to include departments for neurology, anesthesia, orthopedics, and X-rays. There was also a central heating plant, a fire department, a swimming pool, a telephone service with eighty extensions, and an artificial limb manufacturing service. The land on which the hospital was built was a part of the original 300 acre property belonging to Charles D. Freeman, leased to the U.S. government for one dollar per year. Freeman willingly offered his estate and land because he could not serve in the military himself due to his age.



13 St. Gertrude Cemetery House

At the corner of Bramhall Road and Inman Avenue is the St. Gertrude Cemetery House, a lasting reminder of Colonia's early roots in agricultural life. Prior to the cemetery's creation in 1933, the house belonged to a tenant farmer by the name of Rocco Terzella. Before Mr. Terzella's tenancy in 1876 it was occupied by a man named J.P. Smith Jr., but the name of the original owner and the date that the house was first constructed remain unknown.

The property itself was sold to the Diocese of Newark by a Gertrude McConnell of Jersey City. This is not the Gertrude, however, for which the cemetery is named. The name comes instead from a 13th century Benedictine nun known as "Gertrude the Great."

The cemetery, which is now over 136 acres, was opened by Roman Catholic Bishop Thomas Joseph Walsh, who also oversaw the final construction of the Sacred Heart Cathedral in Newark. Catholicism was, in fact, one of the later religions to come to Colonia. The early settlers initially brought Presbyterianism with them in the 1660s, and the Quakers followed soon after in the late 1680s. Methodism arrived during the first half of the 19th century, with Judaism appearing in the beginning to mid 1900s. Although the first Catholic parish was established during 1814 in Trenton, the religion did not take hold in Colonia until 1913. At this time, Irish employees of Charles Freeman threatened to quit if he did not provide church services. Freeman contacted the Diocese headquarters in Trenton, and the first Mass in Colonia was held in a caretaker's cottage on his estate.

The Catholic population has grown over the years in correlation with the influx of European immigrants arriving in Colonia. Today, this former farmhouse is occupied by the offices of the St Gertrude's Cemetery.

"In one respect Colonia is unique. With all the essentials of a first-class suburb, it is unspoiled by any cheap or dilapidated structures, such as often mar the vicinity of a railway station. Free from all such, it is ready for the best and highest development, with no saloons or nuisances; no political rings; no franchises given away; nothing old or inferior, but all new, fresh, modern, and as good as capital, taste and sound judgment can provide."  
From Edward K. Cone's 1920 brochure promoting Colonia