The years by themselves do not make a place historic, but the 75th anniversary of a town is an historic occasion. It is an opportunity to commemorate the past and celebrate the present.

Men of character have engineered Mountainside’s independence, citizens of character have given color to its history. We have not focused on individuals, but have presented a kaleidoscope of many events and many people.
119 Years Later . . .

the spirit of independence came to

Mountainside

For a century after Westfield separated from Elizabethtown in 1794, Mountainside (as we know it) was merely a section in the northern part of Westfield Township. Many taxpayers living in this rural area were dissatisfied with their treatment by the township. They felt remote from the benefits supposedly received from taxes paid to the Village of Westfield. A mass meeting was held on July 16th of 1895 and a resolution of independence was drafted:
Whereas, the Township of Westfield contains an area of about twelve square miles in the Southern half of which the village of Westfield containing less than two square miles is situated, and

Whereas, the Northern section of the Township has been for years and is now taxed for the maintenance of a fire department and lighting of streets in the village and

Whereas, there has never been a public light, and the fire department has never served in the Northern part of the Township, and

Whereas, the Township Committee have now begun to construct a sewer in the village, for the cost of which they propose to bond the Township, and

Whereas, the Westfield Village Fire Department, the Westfield Village street lights, the Westfield Village sewer and other Westfield Village improvements never have been and never can be of any advantage to us whatever, and

Whereas, the Township Committee have turned a deaf ear to our strenuous protests against the injustice of compelling us to pay for improvements in a village remote from our section, therefore be it

Resolved, that we sanction and approve the action of the self-constituted Committee who have thus far had the matter in charge and who now report favorably upon the feasibility and constitutionality of a separate government for ourselves.

Resolved, that we proceed according to the statute made and provided, to organize a Borough in the Northern part of Westfield Township, to contain not more than four square miles, to include Locust Grove, Branch Mills, and Baltusrol, said Borough to be known as the "Borough of Mountainside," and further be it

Resolved, that a committee of three be appointed, representing Locust Grove, Branch Mills and Baltusrol, to carry these resolutions into effect.

A committee of three was appointed: William Miller, Charles Badgley and Joseph W. Cory, representing respectively Branch Mills, Baltusrol and Locust Grove.

The committee appointed at the July 16th meeting took steps to carry these resolutions into effect. Under the direction of counsel an accurate description of the proposed Borough of Mountainside was made, and the requisite signatures were obtained to a petition for an election to determine whether the proposed borough should be incorporated. The petition was granted, and the day set for the election. Sixty people
signed the petition for the proposed Borough of Mountainside, and they represented more than half the realty within its limits.

The following is excerpted from the pamphlet, published by the Committee of three, setting forth their grievances against Westfield:

Let it be clearly understood that we do not want to shirk the payment of a dollar of our just taxes. We want to pay every cent we rightly owe. Let it be clearly understood that we do not object to improvements in the village of Westfield. Let the village have her sewer, her street lights, her fire department, her water supply, her parks and any other improvements that she wants or thinks she wants. But let her pay for them herself. We are miles away from her, where her improvements can never reach; they will never benefit us to the amount of one cent. The drain on us for her village improvements has continued too long, and the time for putting an end to it has come.

The Westfield villagers tell us that they are sorry to have to compel us to pay for their local improvements, but that they must have them to hold their own against neighboring towns which are competing with theirs for population, and that they can raise the money only by bonding the whole Township. They mean to clap a mortgage on our farms and use our money to boom their village lots. This leaves us no alternative. They have driven us to form the Borough of Mountainside.

OUR TAXES heretofore, though not intolerable, have been high enough. The tenants have a hard time to scrape the rent together and make a bare living. If they are compelled to pay higher taxes, levied to boom the lots of a distant village, they will be driven from their homes. The action of the Town Committee tends to bring about this result. Why is it that men will do in a corporate capacity what they would scorn to do as private individuals? This scheme to fasten a mortgage on our farms for village improvements is morally indefensible. Such acts foster the pestilent brood of tramps, Coxeysites and anarchists with which our country is infested. When town officials set such an example, the depredations on our farms by minor offenders must be expected. Such acts by those who profess to believe in the golden rule bring the Christian religion into contempt and keep honest thinking men away from our churches.

THE TROLLEY seems to be a subject foreign to the matter that we have on hand, but to a charming but practically inaccessible suburban district, within 20 miles of the great and growing metropolis, it is the question of the day. Now, those who control this Township have their interests centered within the limits of the village of Westfield. They mean to develop those interests and to make use of the outlying districts of the town to develop them. They will never permit an electric road to pass through our section if they can prevent it, because they believe that it would draw population away from them and toward
us. With an electric road through our Borough from Plainfield to Newark, at any hour, for a nickel we could make the trip to or from Newark, one of our largest cities, where every kind of goods can be had, and where a dollar will go much farther than in Westfield. Of course, the Westfield villagers oppose the trolley. They want not only to tax us for their local improvements, but also to make us deal in their shops.

THE COST OF RUNNING OUR BOROUGH should be light. What should we have to pay for beyond what we pay for now? Of course, we should have to pay the State and County taxes the same as we do now, and we should have to pay the salaries of our Borough officers as we now pay the salaries of the Township officers. Our officers would have little to do and should serve for the honor of the position and nominal sum. There would be no other considerable expense than that of keeping our roads in repair. We pay the Town for that now, and the condition of the roads is not only disgraceful but dangerous. We could have good roads with what we now pay for village lights, fire department and hydrants.

THE DEBT OF THE WESTFIELD TOWNSHIP for sewers and other improvements which are useless to us, will soon be so great it will be impossible to free ourselves. From our mountain side we can see communities which have become bankrupt through the craze for extravagant city improvements and the inordinate haste to get rich at someone else's expense. We do not want to look down upon another bankrupt town. If we must, we need not form a part of it unless we choose; but our choice must be made now.

HOME RULE, the foundation of good government, is impossible for us so long as we remain part of a Township governed by three men representing only a village several miles distant from and several hundred feet lower than a large part of our Township; a village ambitious for city improvements beyond its means, improvements which could never reach us, but for which we should have to pay. The wants of the Westfield village are not our wants. We do not want a $50,000 town hall, but if the Town Committee determines to build one, we shall have to pay for it if we remain in the Township. The prospect for our section, as an outlying village appendage, is hopeless. We can secure home rule, and consequently good government, in only one way - by the formation of the borough.

The Committee has so far performed the duties for which it was appointed, and the opportunity is now presented to the voters of the proposed Borough to defend their rights. Remember, that to everyone of you, this is a matter of dollars and cents; but do not forget that it is more than this. A principle is at stake. We deny the right to tax a farm for city improvements miles away from it. We deny the right to tax wild woodland for a sewer which a sewer never can reach. Our fathers would not submit to unjust taxation. They asked for redress, but were treated as the Town Committee of Westfield treats us. They were compelled to declare their independence. They fought for it and they won it. You have declared your independence. Vote for it and you will win."
Because of its unchanging facade, one of the most easily recognized Mountainside landmarks is its Borough Hall on Route 22. The site was purchased in 1908; construction followed, and the first Council meeting held there was on January 1, 1910. In addition to housing the offices involved in governmental services, Borough Hall has also been used for meetings of civic and patriotic organizations.

A fire in 1957 damaged part of Borough Hall. In September of that year Council passed a resolution authorizing repair of the damage and two months later approved an addition to the rear of the building. A nonstructural but nevertheless tangible improvement was made to Borough Hall in July 1960, when Mountainside became one of the first communities in the area to install air conditioning in its
municipal building. Although the summer heat was alleviated, winter drafts remained a problem; to help insulate the large first floor office, interior paneling was installed in 1969. In 1964, because of the inadequacy of Borough Hall, Council meetings were moved to Echobrook School and are presently held at Beechwood School.

A mayor and six councilmen, elected at bipartisan elections from any of the five districts in the Borough, form Mountainside's governing body. The mayor is elected for a two-year term, the councilmen for three, with two elected each year.

Fourteen standing committees, set up by the Mayor-Council legislative body, cover the various facets of Borough government, including public works, assessment and collection of taxes, recreation, laws and rules, and public assistance. In addition to a chairman of each committee, who is appointed by the mayor with confirmation by the Council, three councilmen serve on each committee.

The Council meets on the third Tuesday of each month and meetings are open to the public and the press.

**POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Law and order in the new Borough was a one-man job from 1895 until 1934 when Council passed an ordinance creating the Mountainside Police Department. The first regular chief of police was hired at an annual salary of $1,400 and in 1942 the department was expanded to four patrolmen. Radio equipment and a teletype were in effective use by 1944.

The department has the responsibility for the safety of the citizens and property of the Borough. It also has to cope with the increasing number of automobiles and trucks saturating Route 22.

The present Police Department has grown to a strength of nineteen men. Serving with the chief of police are two lieutenants, six sergeants, and ten patrolmen.

**FIRE DEPARTMENT**

The Mountainside Volunteer Fire Department was established in May of 1910. The firemen served the rural community of 400 citizens as a true bucket brigade for its first
five years. In December of 1916 steep hills and low temperatures prevented volunteers from reaching the scene of a fire with their new “horse-drawn” engine. Both 70-gallon water tanks carried by the engine had frozen solid. The firemen had motorized transportation by 1918. Equipment has been steadily updated through fund-raising activities. In 1960 it became necessary to retire a 1940 Mack truck which could no longer make the long pull up Summit Road. The department now had two trucks; a high pressure pumper was added in 1963. A chief’s car has been purchased with moneys collected from the annual fund drive. The latest addition has been a pumper powered with a diesel engine.

In 1922 the Borough of Mountainside assumed a portion of the cost of maintaining the Fire Department. In July 1944 a commercial garage was purchased by the Borough and presented to the firemen to be remodeled and used as a home for Mountainside Engine Company No. 1.

The number of volunteers has grown from a mere handful to approximately 40 men. The volunteers annually elect their own officers: a chief and two assistants. The chief in turn appoints two captains and two lieutenants.

The firemen inspect public buildings regularly in accordance with Mountainside’s fire prevention ordinance and answer more than 100 alarms a year.

WATER AND SEWAGE

The town’s natural location on the side of a mountain enhances its picturesque quality, and at the same time presents a unique water problem. The minutes of the Council meetings are filled with years of coping with low water pressure, sanitary sewers, catch basins, and storm sewers, all of which might seem less than exciting in summarizing a history of a town. During the 1940’s the expansion of the Borough, with its continuous building projects and unsettled ground conditions, caused problems with the existing septic tanks. The Mayor and Council on December 12, 1950 passed the first of many resolutions regarding sewers. Work on the sanitary sewer system went on, with the encouraging news in 1959 that with the completion of sewer contracts 12 and 13, ninety percent of the Borough would be “sewered.” By the end of
1969 construction of storm drains had been completed in half the Borough with the remainder in the planning stage.

In 1952 water pressure in the upper parts of Mountainside was very poor. In the evenings no water was forthcoming for washing or sanitary purposes. However, in February of 1960, the Plainfield-Union Water Company drilled a hole 300 feet deep on Central Avenue. Pure, clean water was found which would supplement supplies to neighboring areas. In May of that same year, the local paper reported that Mountainside was a prolific source of water. A new well on Bristol Road was reported to be capable of bringing in more than 3,000 gallons per day.

SHADE TREE COMMISSION

Mountainside has taken a number of steps to assure its continued greenness. In December 1958 two ordinances were passed: one established the Shade Tree Commission; the second provided for the planting, control, protection and improvement of shade trees and shrubbery in the parks, along the highways, and in public places. Building contractors and developers were required to plant trees as they completed new houses.
Postal service in the Borough was started with one man in one room near the present site of the Trailside Museum, and was known as the Baltusrol Post Office. Because of snowbound conditions in 1889, the post office was moved to the intersection of Mountain and Springfield, both dirt roads at that time. But between 1912 and 1958 all Mountainside mail was processed from Westfield under Rural Free Delivery.

Back in 1948 the United States Post Office requested that properties be systematically numbered so that more efficient delivery could be provided. It suggested that all streets running parallel to Route 29 be numbered at 1000 at the Springfield line and upward to the Scotch Plains line. Houses running north from the highway were to start at 200.

A storm of protest broke out over the proposed numbering plan, the residents insisting that the high numbers made Mountainside seem a large town rather than the small village it is. A modified plan was adopted in October 1948.

As early as 1949 the Council passed the first of many resolutions requesting the Postmaster General to consider the establishment of a post office in Mountainside. Resolutions were also drafted to the postmaster of Westfield in 1953, and finally to Congress in 1957.

Due to the efforts of our Congressional representatives, the post office was at last opened in November 1958 in the Architects' Display Building on Route 22; in October 1959 it moved to temporary quarters in the Trucktor Building. Finally, in December 1960 the Post Office Department accepted a bid to provide a new building for the Mountainside Post Office to be located on its present site, 300 feet in from Mountain Avenue on Sherwood Parkway. It is officially a substation of the Westfield Post Office.
ADDED ATTRACTIONS

MOUNTAINSIDE COMMUNITY POOL

The idea of providing this relatively small community with a municipal pool was born in 1964. The dream was realized with the opening of the Mountainside Community Pool in 1966. The initial membership of 800 families enjoyed the use of three separate areas within the pool complex. There is a wading pool for the younger children, with a diving tank and an olympic-size pool for the more accomplished swimmer. A picnic area and refreshment stand were added in the following year.

Group lessons in swimming, diving, Red Cross life saving, and synchronized swimming are taught during the morning hours. A competitive swimming and diving program stresses sportsmanship, responsibility, and promotes physical fitness.

Adjacent to the pool are busy tennis, volley-ball, and basketball courts. Pool parties for teen-agers and adults have become a regular part of the Mountainside summer scene.
RESCUE SQUAD

A converted hearse answered a total of eight service calls in 1939, Rescue Squad's first year. By 1940 volunteers were responding to calls in their first real ambulance, a second-hand 1936 Packard. Another first for the Squad was the arrival of a "Cadillac Meteor", the most modern and completely-equipped ambulance in Union County in 1948. A third ambulance, purchased in 1956, was soon housed in quarters more appropriate than the hastily-converted garage behind Borough Hall. On January 1, 1959 a model of the new headquarters was presented to the public; and in April of 1960 construction at the present location on Route 22, between New Providence Road and Echobrook School, was completed. Through the years there has been a steady rise in the number of calls received by the Rescue Squad. In 1960 volunteers handled 227 calls. Within the first half of 1970, 228 emergencies have been answered.

New ambulances were purchased in 1962 and 1966. The decade of the 70's has begun with many innovations. Long-range planning for additional equipment has been initiated to comply with the new Highway Safety Act, specifying standards for rescue squad equipment. A defibrillator to aid heart-attack victims has been placed in service. A plan, enabling two-way radio communication with the nearest hospital and providing direct contact with doctors while en route, has been approved. The recently amended by-laws enable new members to serve within three months of recruitment instead of the previous six months. Volunteers are adults who live or work in the Borough. A cadet corps of young men 18 to 21 has been formed and together with regular volunteers they are trained intensively in first-aid techniques.

CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Children's Specialized Hospital was devoted to the care of underprivileged youngsters who were sponsored by the Tribune Fresh Air Fund of New York. It provided each child with a two-week "country visit" during the summer months. The original name, "Children's Country Home" expressed
exactly what was planned at that time. But in 1895 the first sick child was admitted, and in 1898 the first physically-handicapped children arrived from the New York Orthopaedic Hospital. In 1896 the home moved from the “Levi Cory House” to its present ten-acre site on New Providence Road.

In 1923 year-round care of 50 physically-handicapped children was undertaken. In October of that year a public school program was instituted for the young patients. The school has grown from a single class in 1923 to three classes which serve handicapped children whose physical disabilities prevent them from attending regular public school.

Growth and expansion of the hospital continued. The years 1942-1956 were devoted to convalescent care of young polio patients from all over the world. The advent of the highly effective Salk Vaccine enabled the hospital to again offer more diversified care. With a wider variety of physical disabilities to consider, the medical staff was greatly broadened from 1957 to 1960. On November 4, 1962, the name was officially changed to “Children’s Specialized Hospital” which accurately expressed the institution’s purposes.

CIVIL DEFENSE

Following World War II a program of civil defense was organized in the Borough. There were 70 air raid wardens at that time. When the air raid siren was tested the results were unsatisfactory; tests of a firehorn and a newly-purchased locomotive whistle were also failures. Finally, three mobile units, mounted on cars, sounded from one end of the Borough to the other.

Pamphlets were distributed to residents describing what to do in the event of attack. Fallout shelters were suggested and many families did, in fact, build and stock them. It was even proposed that tunnels could be bored into the mountains and stored with canned goods. The fever of civil defense increased after the launching of Sputnik. Mountainside was for a time the site of a Nike Missile Base which was eventually inactivated.

There is still a Civil Defense Council in 1970, but the emphasis has changed - hoarding supplies and digging into mountains is no defense at all.
THE THREE R's, PLUS

"The people of Mountainside have always taken a deep interest in the cause of education... a grammar school is not only an important factor in the building up of a community, it is necessary for its future... 'What kind of school have you?' is one of the first questions put by those who, attracted by the great natural resources of Mountainside would be desirable citizens of the Borough... if parents who care for the education of their young cannot obtain good schools for them... they are apt to move to more civilized parts."  

Maclaurin's Leaflet on Education 1897

This quotation from a leaflet distributed to the citizens of Mountainside in 1897, urging them to separate from the Westfield School System and establish their own public schools, sounded a familiar theme that has echoed and re-echoed in the ensuing 75 years.

In 1904, when the Board of Education finally separated from Westfield, Mountainside was the official possessor of one red brick schoolhouse, called the Mountainside Grammar School, with two classrooms, two smaller rooms, two teachers with a combined salary of $1,000, an estimated budget of $1,163, and 50 students.

The Mountainside Grammar School was remodeled in 1924, and two classrooms, two lavatories and a furnace were added at the cost of $33,000. But it took two attempts in 1930 before voters approved the purchase of one and a half acres of land adjoining the old schoolhouse. It took an additional five years, a PWA grant from Washington and three attempts before Mountainside taxpayers approved the $87,273 to build the new school adjacent to the red brick schoolhouse. These two buildings, at the juncture of Route 22 and New Providence Road, are now known as the Echobrook School. Within a few years a storeroom and the old play space in the basement became a lunch room and two additional classrooms, respectively.

By 1945 Echobrook School had twelve rooms: nine regular classrooms, two manual arts rooms for boys and girls, one library, and a combination auditorium and gymnasium.
There was also a medical room, and a remedial reading room in the old building, a principal's office, a Board of Education room, and a teachers' room in the new building. The school budget was $49,047, teachers' salaries were $32,529, and 170 children attended classes.

Twenty-two acres were purchased on Central Avenue in 1950 at $1,000 per acre, and the voters approved $350,000 for a one-story building with eight classrooms for 250 pupils. There was also a multi-purpose room, kitchen, teachers' room, principal's office, and library space in the front entrance hall. A new architectural feature was that each classroom had an outer door leading to the play area.

This was the simple beginning of Deerfield School. With three additions in 1957, 1963, and 1968, and two portable classrooms, it is now a large complex with a separate elementary school for grades K-5 and a middle school for grades 6, 7 and 8. Today, at least 700 children stream in and out of its many entrances and exits.

By the late 1950's, Mountainside's population had exploded. In 1957 the school enrollment was 914 and the Board of Education recognized the need for an elementary school in the area west of New Providence Road. There was great controversy over its size, cost, and location. The first referendum was defeated. The architects went back to the
drawing board, and by eliminating some classrooms and other features the cost was reduced. In 1959 the voters approved the building of Beechwood School on Woodacres Drive. The paint had hardly dried when an addition was built. Sad to say but the cost of this addition, added to the cost of the revised building, came to more than the original referendum the voters turned down.

Echobrook School is still functioning for about 125 children in grades K-5. The age of the buildings, the noise and dirt from traffic on Route 22 has made it increasingly difficult to administer a modern educational program. Since 1962 the Board of Education has been exploring ways to phase out Echobrook School. Its old-fashioned warmth and small size, plus the fact that it is the only school on the south side of the highway has been a rallying point for many who would like to see Echobrook maintained. The Board is making a concerted effort to update Echobrook School. Physical improvements are proposed in the heating and ventilation. The library is being expanded to become a learning materials center. A wide variety of audio-visual equipment will implement an individualized learning program.

Despite the pressures of a growing population (approximately 1,260 pupils) and intensified building programs over the past ten years, the school administration has added special services and expanded and enriched the curriculum. Supplementing the basic program are art, vocal and instrumental music, physical education, home economics and industrial arts. A drug education program is part of the
health and science curriculum, and a sex education program is part of the science and physical education curriculum. Specialists, such as guidance counselor, psychologist, social worker, learning disabilities specialist, remedial reading teachers, language arts coordinator and speech therapist further strengthen educational policies. All the schools have libraries which are learning materials centers, staffed by professional librarians. Until 1970 the Board of Education also administered a regular public school education program at the Children’s Specialized Hospital for 26 multi-handicapped children.

A summer school program started in 1962 for residents and non-residents. That first year the fee was $1.00 per day per course, and 166 children attended. The 1970 summer session, offering both remedial and enrichment courses, enrolled 386 children, taught by a staff of 43.

Over the years, succeeding Boards of Education have tried to balance the cost of meeting the children’s educational needs with the willingness of the Mountainside taxpayers to underwrite it. (The budget has grown from $49,047 in 1945 to $1,440,442 in 1969.) The struggle for quality education has been occasionally marked by spirited campaigns for seats on the Board of Education, budgets that have been voted down, referenda that have been defeated and educational issues that have temporarily divided the town.

UNION COUNTY REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

Secondary education, of course, is a deep concern to Mountainside residents. In the early days of the Borough, Mountainside children attended Westfield High School, but they have been part of the Union County Regional High School System since 1936.

The towns of Mountainside, Berkeley Heights, Garwood, Kenilworth, Springfield, and Clark comprise the Regional System. There are four schools; Arthur L. Johnson in Clark, Governor Livingston in Berkeley Heights, David Brearley in Kenilworth, and Jonathan Dayton in Springfield. When the Regional Board of Education was considering the location for what is now Governor Livingston the people of Mountainside
turned down the opportunity to have it built in town. Mountainside has considered Governor Livingston as its “home” school since it opened in 1960.

For the past few years the uneven rate of growth in the six towns has created problems for the Regional Board of Education. They have developed a comprehensive building and remodeling plan that would also include the redistribution of some students. Two referenda presented to the voters have been defeated. The Board is trying to maintain the basic philosophy of the regional system and still satisfy the residents of the six towns.

PARENT—TEACHER ASSOCIATION

Our local chapter of the Parent Teacher Association adheres to the purpose and objectives of the National Congress of Parent Teacher Associations to become fully informed about their school program, and to take an active interest in school affairs without attempting to direct administrative policies of the school.

In keeping with these aims, the Mountainside P.T.A. has sponsored such diverse projects as a hot soup program, a course in 1949 entitled, “Sex Education and the Health of your Child,” and Back to School Night. Among current activities are “Youth Theater,” the annual luncheon for the teachers, Kindergarten Round-up and the Fair, which is probably the most anticipated event in Mountainside.
A gently curving road leads down to a handsome low-slung building that has been the home of the Free Public Library since 1968.

It is a marked contrast from its first home in Borough Hall in 1934 with donated books, a few shelves and a bookcase purchased from a thrift shop for $15. A Saturday morning story hour held in a trustee's home grew to include nature walks and bird study.

In 1936 the library moved to a converted classroom in the old Echobrook building and then down to the basement in 1949, where it eventually occupied three rooms. There it remained until it moved to its present location.

The library was not municipally supported and financing was sporadic in the Thirties. Funds were raised by a 25-cent membership fee, chow mein dinners and card parties. The Works Progress Administration assisted by paying the librarian's salary. One year the Borough Council gave the
library $100, the Board of Education donated $50, and for a number of years it was included in the Community Fund budget.

Help was also sporadic. There was a stream of librarians and even the trustees contributed man hours. In 1940 the library closed for a short period because even this uncertain help was unavailable. At that time the library had 8,000 books, of which only 100 were new!

In 1941 when the average daily circulation was 25 books, the Board of Trustees requested the Borough to allocate funds for book purchases and to pay a librarian's salary (which by 1949 was $600 per year.) This arrangement did continue until 1961, when voters approved a public referendum that transferred the responsibility of operating the library to the municipality.

There were 2500 of the latest books in 1945, as well as some magazines and reference materials. New books formerly on a pay shelf were catalogued for the seven-day shelf at no charge. Library hours were Monday - Friday, 2-5 p.m., and evenings 7-9 p.m.

In 1949 school service to the upper grades began, as well as a story hour for the lower grades. When Deerfield originally opened, the public library offered to provide library service, and by 1959 every class in all three schools had a regularly-scheduled library period. An assistant librarian was hired when it was estimated that 44% of the library's time was devoted to school service. The Board of Education began to develop a school-administered library program, and since 1961 the public library has concentrated completely on serving the public.

As long ago as 1956 the Library Board of Trustees discussed the possibility of having its own building. During the next few years a number of civic organizations made generous contributions and on the 25th anniversary of the founding of the library, the Friends of the Library sponsored a card party that raised $700.

With voter approval, construction on the new library started in 1966 and the dedication was held February 12, 1968. The library has been the recipient of many gifts from organizations and individuals. It has 14,000 square feet with space for 45,000 volumes.

There are book collections for children, young adults and adults. A reading and browsing section has 80 periodicals, two
local and two national newspapers. A music room has two stereo players, each with four earphones and a collection of over 900 records.

An attractive and well-appointed meeting room is available to the community. The room is equipped with a stereo and a 16 mm film projector and has become the showcase for numerous exhibits and displays.

The library now has a collection of over 24,000 books with an average daily circulation of 360 and almost 5,000 registered library members. From one salaried librarian and volunteers, the library in 1970 has a librarian-director and assistant, a reference librarian and a part-time children's librarian. The general staff includes three clerks, four pages, three volunteers and a proctor for evening supervision when school begins in the fall.

There is a pre-school story hour during the school year, a vacation reading club in the summer. Puppet shows and other special features will also become a part of the library program. There will also be increased service to high school students and around-the-clock reference service will be available.

These are just a few ways the library is enlarging the scope of its services to the community.

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**At Your Service**

It would take less than a minute and a blink of the eye to drive through Mountainside Center... but for the shopper who does not want to face acres of cement and an impersonal atmosphere, Mountainside Center offers a variety of shops in informal neighborly surroundings.

The butcher, the baker, the candlestick maker are virtually all here. Within walking distance of each other are shoemaker, tailor, barber, drug store, bakery, delicatessen, small supermarkets, luncheonette, real estate and insurance offices, card shop, beauty parlors, gas stations, hardware store, tavern, antique shop, gift shop, liquor store, banks and ice cream parlor.
ON THE SEVENTH DAY

One is simple shingle and stone, another is Georgian red brick, and a third is strikingly modern.

All three are churches in Mountainside that have an important role in the life of many of our residents.

MOUNTAINSIDE UNION CHAPEL

In 1821 citizens of Mountainside and Westfield became interested in the new concept of a Sunday School. Classes were started in a private home and later moved to the Bee-hive School House. In 1879 the school was reorganized as the Locust Grove Union Sunday School. A donation of land in 1893 initiated the building program and the present church was completed in 1901. Additions to this building were made in the early 1900's, in 1948, and in 1958.

In 1908 the first pastor was hired (at a salary of $6 a month!) and the name was changed to Mountainside Union Chapel. Active church groups are the Missionary Society, Pioneer Girls, Ladies Aid Society and the Vacation Bible School.
Uniquely situated on an “island” on Route 22, the Chapel now faces an uncertain future because of State plans for widening the highway.

COMMUNITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The Community Presbyterian Church of Mountainside was founded in 1954 as a result of a survey indicating a desire for another Protestant church in the community. Services were held in Deerfield School until an anonymous gift of the four and one half acre site on Deer Path provided the location for the church building which was completed in 1956. In 1960 a new addition for the Christian Education program was completed. The church membership has grown from 205 in 1954 to 638 in 1970.

Auxiliary organizations include the Women’s Association, Couples Club, Hearts and Hands (for children) and Vacation Bible School. The church also sponsors a Boy Scout troop and a Cub Scout pack. There is a week-day nursery school for four-year olds that is state accredited and non-denominational.

OUR LADY OF LOURDES

Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church became a parish in 1958, holding services in Deerfield School through 1960. Prior to this, Catholic families attended the Mission of St. James which also met in Deerfield. The present church, located on Central Avenue, was built in 1961 and included classrooms and an auditorium. The first Mass was celebrated on July 23 of that year.

In September 1961 four classrooms were opened to children in grades 1-4. An additional grade was opened each successive year until the parochial school comprised eight grades.

The Rosary Society, the Holy Name Society, the Catholic Youth Organization, and the Christian Family Movement are some of the social and religious groups active in the church.
MEETINGS,

MEETINGS,

MEETINGS

Streets and driveways lined with cars, parking lots filled to capacity proclaim another meeting in progress.

The Newcomers' Club extends a welcoming hand to all women who are new in the community. The club was a part of the Westfield Y until 1954 when it became a Borough organization that now meets at the Mountainside Inn. While the membership period in Newcomers is normally two years, in 1963 some members not wishing to disband formed the Foothills Club.

Neighborhood groups - Sunny Slope, Concord Estates, Pembrook, Sherwood Forest and Birch Hill Civic Associations - have been formed to lobby for improvements of storm drains, sewers, street lighting, zoning, water pressure, house numbering, snow removal. They have also opposed a jetport and high-rise apartments. In 1969 the Committee to Preserve Mountainside was formed to fight a proposed interchange at New Providence Road and Route 22.

National organizations are well represented with branches or chapters in the Borough. The patriotic groups, American Legion's Blue Star Post, the Blue Star Auxiliary and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, uphold the tradition of serving the community and country. Fraternal and business organizations such as Elks, Kiwanis and Rotary attract Mountainside men.
interested in civic service. These groups award scholarships, sponsor Little League teams and support other community endeavors.

The Mountainside Women’s Club offers a wide variety of activities in small departments of the parent organization. This club, organized in 1956 and federated in 1958, offers scholarships and financial assistance to other community organizations.

The Mountainside Branch of the American Association of University Women, organized in 1959, has developed a program to enable college women to continue their own intellectual growth, to further the advancement of women and to insure the continuing quality of higher education.

The League of Women Voters promotes political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government. Partisan politics is supported by the local Democratic and Republican Clubs.

“Keep America Beautiful” was not a new slogan to the Mountainside, Mountain Trail and Blue Star Garden Clubs. Flower shows, bouquets for teachers on the first day of school, Christmas wreaths in public buildings, landscaping at the new library are all evidence of their talent.

The Mountainside Music Association, starting as a PTA committee, became a separate club in 1960. Since that time the MMA has presented a biennial show or revue, with members writing, singing, dancing and directing. This group has contributed musical instruments to the Borough schools, equipment to the public library, provided scholarships to music students and sponsored classes in dance and art.

The Opera Theater Guild was formed in 1965 for the purpose of instilling a greater love for the arts, in particular, opera. To encourage an appreciation of this art form at an early age, the guild sponsors performances for students.

In 1964 civic-minded women started a Youth Employment Service, whereby young people could obtain employment. The Borough Council provided desk space and telephone service at Borough Hall. Babysitting, lawn mowing, window washing, ironing, dusting, typing and other services are offered by local teenagers.

The need for planned activities for children’s leisure hours has been met in many ways, from “Teen High Time” socials sponsored by the Civic Council in 1955, to the dances, movies, pool parties and summer playground activities sponsored by
the Recreation Commission today. Swimming, tennis, golf lessons and ski trips are offered for a small fee. Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, baseball and softball round out the recreation program.

The Senior Citizens of Mountainside meet regularly at the library to enjoy social activities, plan trips and participate in community projects.

The Mountainside Historical Society was organized in 1958 for the purpose of “encouraging interest in the history of the Borough of Mountainside, uncovering new information relative to said history, compiling factual records which would be of interest to succeeding generations, and preserving and protecting historical edifices and monuments in the Borough of Mountainside”. The Society has been instrumental, through recommendations to the Planning Board, in preserving at least two homes in the Borough: the house presently used as offices of a local realtor and the former Rumpf home on Route 22.

COMMUNITY FUND

To supplement the financial needs of community organizations, the proposed budget for the Community Fund in 1947 was $2,708. The goal set for 1970 is $21,000 with substantial support this year earmarked for the Rescue Squad.
Perhaps one of Mountainside's most appealing features is its location on the gently-sloping side of the Watchung Mountains. The Borough's approximately four square miles was described in 1925 as largely farm and mountain land. We have been able to retain many of these features because of the role of the Union County Park Commission. It was started in 1921 to provide a county park system which would make available a greater range and scope of recreational facilities for more people than could be provided by the efforts of a single community.

During the 1920's a number of Mountainside families sold, donated, exchanged or gave through condemnation 830 acres of their town to the Union County Park Commission. This land was to be used with 1,117 acres from four neighboring communities along the northern border of Mountainside to form the Watchung Reservation, the largest park in the county system.

In 1923 Mountainside residents helped the Union County Park System develop the 130 acres along its southern boundary into Echo Lake Park. Its name was derived from the echo which resounded from the 50-foot slope on the country club side of the lake.
Children come to feed the wild ducks, and to frolic on the playground. Families enjoy picnic and boating facilities. Skating and coasting are attractions in the winter.

There is a picturesque waterwheel adjoining the kiosk near the dam. A natural amphitheatre nearby was the scene in 1928 of a county-wide pageant that traced Union County’s history. In 1970 the words of William Shakespeare echoing through the park entertained capacity audiences.

TRAILSIDE MUSEUM IN WATCHUNG RESERVATION

In 1941 the Park Commission opened Trailside Museum in the Watchung Reservation. From a single room containing a few animal exhibits, it has grown to several thousand permanent exhibits and more than 50 species of live animals.

A broad program includes adult nature study, children’s nature hour, and environmental and conservation programs. There is also a planetarium program presented on Sunday afternoons and Wednesday evenings.

The Trailside Museum Association sponsors stimulating Sunday programs on nature and travel, exhibits of flowers, art and handicraft, and a wide range of hobby shows.

Man-made Surprise Lake was acquired by the Park Commission in 1928. Once a popular spot for swimming, it is now mainly used for boating and fishing.

Another favorite spot is the observation tower which affords those willing to climb its many steps a panoramic view of Union County.

Woods and fields hold an appeal that cannot be found in formal parks. Rye grass grown in fall and winter and soybeans in summer months encouraged park deer to feed in the western section of the reservation rather than in planted areas. Dogwood blossoms and autumn foliage make the area popular. Hundreds of rhododendron have been planted to form a display garden in the Loop area that will be the most complete of its kind in the Northeastern United States.

The Museum’s efforts to make the public aware of the natural world has led a million people to follow the Reservation’s trails.
From a dirt road in the 1800's to a divided highway today, Route 22 has been a major influence on the Mountainside way of life. During the 19th century, Mountain Avenue was an unpaved road; later a macadam surface was laid. The first concrete highway appeared around 1918 and Route 29 became a dual highway in the Thirties. Today, as Route 22, it is a multi-lane state highway, which serves as a major connector between New York and Pennsylvania. With its growth and expansion have come the problems of heavily-trafficked roads: noise and air pollution, high accident rate and traffic congestion. Paradoxically, the road that divides our community physically has served to unite the citizens in their attempts to cope with its problems.

Efforts of Borough residents have resulted in the lowering of speed limits for all vehicles, elimination of islands, and relocation of bus stops. The corner of New Providence Road was recognized as a special problem by both state and local officials. In 1953 a traffic light was installed, and in 1958 plans for a pedestrian overpass were initiated which, since completion, has provided the only safe path linking both sides of the town.
To honor the men and women who served in the Armed Forces during World War II, miles of dogwood were planted by the Garden Clubs of New Jersey. This particular section, set aside as Blue Star Drive, is a lovely sight in the spring.

In 1969 the Borough became aware of State Highway Department plans for a major overpass and cloverleaf in Mountainside, and a committee was formed to evaluate these plans. The Committee to Preserve Mountainside felt that although some traffic problems would be alleviated, this plan would sunder the town, causing dislocation to industrial, residential and municipal areas. The Committee and Council are seeking satisfactory alternatives.

They Also Serve

The 1915 edition of The Industrial Directory of New Jersey described the Borough as follows: "A residential community: no desire for manufacturing."

A 1970 industrial directory would say that Mountainside has a wide variety of light industry centered along Route 22 and in well-zoned, attractive parks. Diners offering quick snacks, well-established restaurants with fine reputations, a chair caner, dog breeder, florist, nurseryman and service stations give just a random sampling of the scope of business enterprises that serve not only Mountainside but a trade attracted from surrounding areas.
In the thirty years from 1900 to 1930, the population of Mountainside tripled to 965; in the next twenty years, it more than doubled. In the following decade, from 1950 to 1960, the population tripled once again to total 6,307. Even during the last ten years the number of residents increased 20%. The increase from sixty freeholders, who petitioned in the summer of 1895 for the organization of the Borough, to the approximately 8,000 men, women, and children living here today is a result not only of 75 years of population growth, but also a combination of factors attracting people to the Borough.
MOUNTAINSIDE IS . . .

Route 22
A view from the water tower
Turtles at Trailside
Slurpy cups
The community pool
Little League parades
Meetings, meetings, meetings
Goldfish from the PTA Fair
"Once Upon a Party"
The Diamond Jubilee

We are greatly indebted to all who offered encouragement and assistance.