

# Bergen Square History

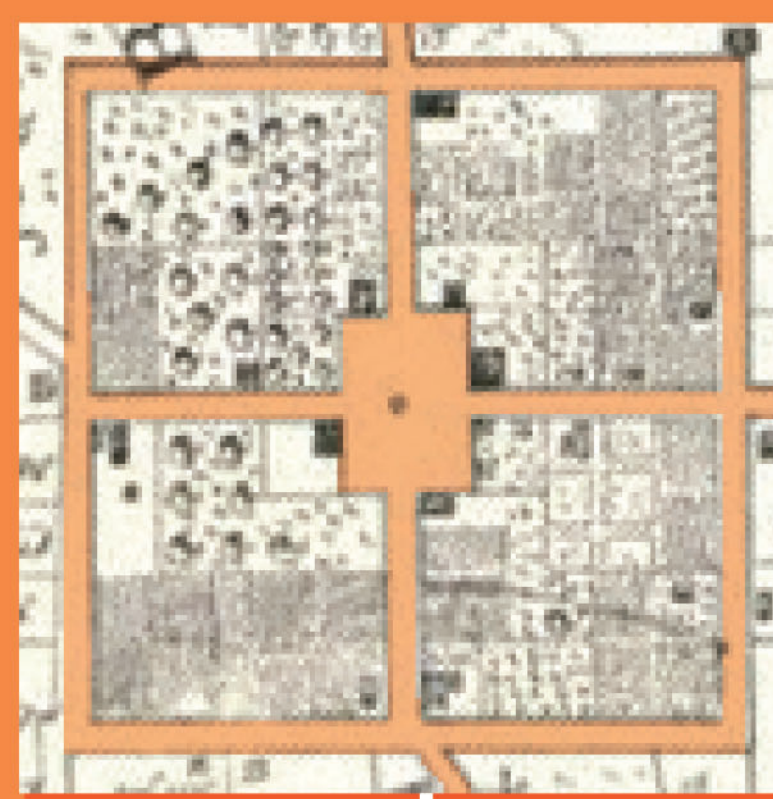
*Est. 1660*

Bergen Square was established in 1660 as the village of Bergen on land long-utilized by the Lenni Lenape Native American people. It was the first urban square established in the colonies and is the oldest continuously inhabited European settlement in New Jersey. Streets like Vroom, Newkirk, and Van Reyden were named for prominent families that lived in Bergen Square during the period of establishment.



c.1700

This early map shows routes to and from Bergen Square as well as the original location of the community's Church.



1841

The well located within the center of Bergen Square provided water for residents and livestock. Some homes and agricultural plots can be seen in and outside of Bergen Square.



1882

This map identifies the Van Wagenen property, the school site, the current location of Old Bergen Church, and various graveyards still preserved today.



1928

This map depicts the cable car lines that previously passed through and stopped at Bergen Square. Small dead-end alleys are located within each quadrant of the square and have remained open.

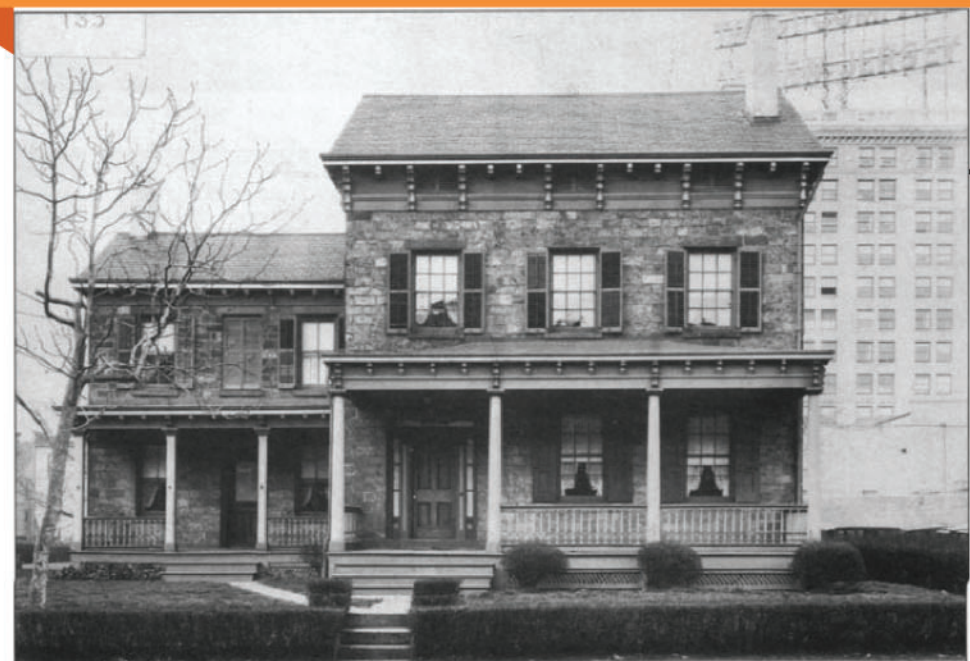
## Peter Stuyvesant



c. 1913

Peter Stuyvesant, Director-General of New Netherland is often credited as the founder of modern day Bergen Square and the historic Bergen Township. A statue of Peter Stuyvesant "Pegleg Pete" was previously located in Bergen Square in front of the school. The statue is now located in the Hudson County Community College Park between Sip Ave. and Newkirk St.

## Apple Tree House



c. 1945

The Van Wagenen Homestead, nicknamed "The Apple Tree House" reopened its doors in October 2017 after a long restoration and renovation process sponsored by the City. The building now houses a museum, educational center, and Cultural Affairs office. On one of the original lots inside of Bergen Square, the Van Wagenen family purchased the property in 1688. Legend has it that General George Washington and Major General Marquis de Lafayette met here under an apple tree during the American Revolutionary War. After the Van Wagenen family sold the house in the 1940s, it became Quinn's Funeral Parlor owned and operated by Lawrence and Mary Quinn.

## The Center



c. 1850



c. 1945

These views looking north in the center of Bergen Square show the transition of the Square over time. Where family homesteads and livestock dominated in 1850s, businesses, institutions, and automobiles prevailed by the 1930s.

## Old Bergen Church

1681-1773 1773-1841



The Old Bergen Church is the oldest continuous congregation in the state of New Jersey. Old Bergen Church located at the intersection of Bergen Ave. and Highland Ave. was built in 1841. Prior to the construction of the structure that still stands today, smaller churches had been constructed on the corner of Bergen Ave. and Vroom St.

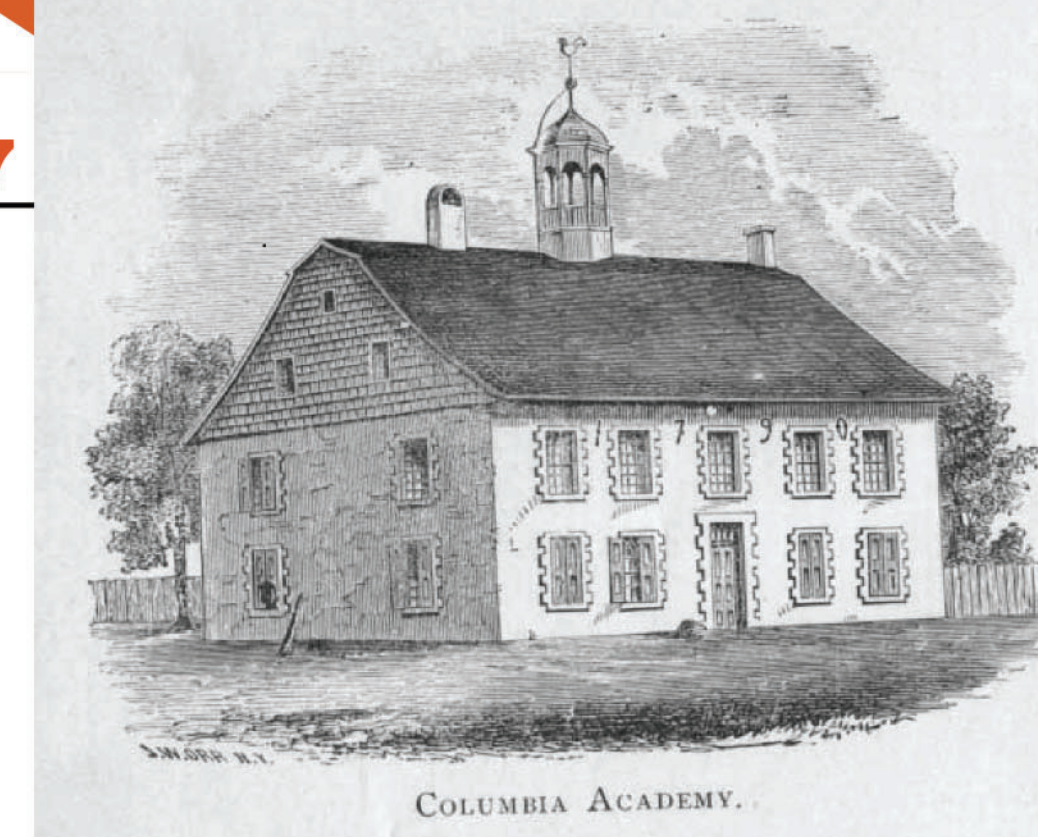
## The Stockade



Bergen was fortified by a spiked wooden stockade with gates on each side. This fort was created to protect the Dutch settlers from the Native Americans. Settlers lived within the fort and established farms outside of the fort.

## Public School

1790-1857



c.1910



The site of P.S.11, The Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School (dedicated in 1969) has a long history as an educational institution. While the size and architecture of the school has changed over time, this is the site of the oldest continuously-operated public schoolhouse in the Americas. A school has been located on this corner since the 1660s.

## 880 Bergen

Odd Fellows Building, Jersey City, N. J.



c. 1920



c. 1935

The taller building shown above was The First National Bank is a prominent example of the history of banking in Journal Square. The Odd Fellows Building is the smaller, three story building shown in both images. This building was where a social group called the Independent Order of Odd Fellows gathered. This social group was established in England in 1819 and an outpost was established in Bergen Square. Cable cars were used to run through Bergen Square and were removed following the rise of the automobile.

