

Arnold Avenue's Historic Buildings

The quaint shopping district takes you back in time.



The Todd Building (center), circa 1950, when Jimmy Dooros' "Candy Kitchen" restaurant was at the location. Note the unique design and detail of the building's face. Today, it is home to Stuart Katz's "Gold Fever—Catch It." Katz used this photo to guide his 2013 restoration and renovation.

Petula Clark sang in the mid-1960s, "Things will be great when you're downtown...everything's waiting for you." And for visitors to Point Pleasant Beach's downtown, things have been waiting for them for over a century. Arnold Avenue, one of the main thoroughfares and centerpiece of this charming Jersey Shore town, is also home to its historic shopping district. Named after Captain John Arnold, a local land owner who built the road in the late 1800s, the eyes of Arnold Avenue have seen it all, from parades and homecomings to devastating fires and many a resurgence of business.

One building filled with history, at 636 Arnold Avenue, is the current home of Gold Fever—Catch It. Known through time as the Todd Building, the structure was originally built as a residence by William Todd for his family. Tragedy struck in March 1906, when a devastating fire reduced the Todd house, along with several neighboring structures, to ruins.

After the home was rebuilt, it remained a residence until 1916, when the Lakewood and Coast Electric Company moved in. Then,

according to local historian Jerry Woolley, JCP&L purchased the company in 1925 and was headquartered there for several years.

In the 1940s, the building took on a new identity as local proprietor Jimmy Dooros transformed it into the Candy Kitchen restaurant. The Candy Kitchen was a popular place to go during the 40s and 50s, and was known for making their own ice cream and candy while music from

the jukebox filled the air with songs of the day.

Between the Candy Kitchen days and the early 2000s, a number of businesses came and went at the site, including the Mud Hut in the 1970s and Provident Bank, which served its customers for many years before relocating to its present location on Laurel Avenue.

Current owner Stuart Katz pur-

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The Gottlieb Building, circa 1909.



Jill M. Ocone

The Todd Building, October 31, 2012, two days after Superstorm Sandy. Damage from the storm included cracked cement and Gold Fever's sign nearly blowing off the building.



Jill M. Ocone

The Todd Building, January 2014, newly restored and renovated.



Jill M. Ocone

The Gottlieb Building, 2014. Today, the building is home to two boutique stores, Recycled Fashion and Magnolia Lane.

Source: Jerry Woolley



Left: Arnold Hall (on the corner of Arnold and River Avenues) and the Gottleib Building (next door, to the left), circa 1912.

Below: Arnold Hall, 2014. Today, the building is home to Lynne's Fashions.

chased the building from the bank in 2002. Katz's Gold Fever moved from its Bay Avenue location and officially opened on April 15, 2003.

Frequent visitors to Arnold Avenue may notice a new look to Gold Fever's façade. After suffering damage from Superstorm Sandy in October 2012, Katz decided not only to repair the damage, but also to completely renovate the building's exterior, making it more like its 1940s appearance.

"I wanted to include the big arches and columns, similar to the building's original look," said Katz. While the design mirrors the 1940s look of the building, Katz also included some modern touches, such as the larger stack stones and rocks along the bottom portion.

"Since the building is right in the middle of town, I want it to welcome visitors," Katz said. With the renovations complete, Katz is hopeful that the rejuvenation of Arnold Avenue will continue and that other owners will consider updating their exteriors in the future.

Another Arnold Avenue building standing strong since the late 1800s is the Gottleib Building. Located at 641 Arnold, the building currently contains two boutique stores, Recycled Fashion and Magnolia Lane. The brick structure was the location of Gottleib's Department Store for over eighty years and looks almost

the same as it did over one hundred years ago. The local post office, after burning down in the Great Fire of 1906, moved into the building and served the public there till 1917, when its workload became too big for the site.

Right next door, at the corner of Arnold and River Avenues, is the original Arnold Hall. Built in 1899 and still standing, the historic building is also a survivor of the 1906 fire. Several well-known and successful businesses have called 637 Arnold home, including Johnson's

Pharmacy (for over fifty years) and McLaughlin's Sporting Goods. Currently, Lynne's Fashions is at the location site.

The quaint Arnold Avenue shopping district is rich with history and has numerous other historic buildings to enjoy while shopping there. Although the popular ice cream and soda fountains days of Johnson's Pharmacy and the Candy Kitchen are gone, if you listen carefully, you might just hear a quiet tune from yesteryear's songs floating in the wind.

—Jill M. Ocone



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