

19. The Free Public Library & Cultural Center of Bayonne, 697 Avenue C

This is one of the most strikingly beautiful buildings in Bayonne and perhaps in all of New Jersey. The original structure was designed in 1903 in the then popular Beaux Arts style by the award-winning architect Edward L. Tilton. The building has been enlarged twice such that the only remaining portion of the original facade is the east wall containing the main entrance.

Tilton returned as architect to design the first expansion of the building in 1914. The needs of the growing city required a second expansion by 1929. Architect Charles Shilowitz paid homage to Tilton by creating a wraparound of north, west, and south wings with a colonnaded courtyard at the east, all in harmony with the style of the original structure. The magnificent result is even more astounding since it was completed in the middle of the Great Depression.

The remodeling of the library after a Memorial Day, 1959 fire provided the classical building with a more modern, flexible interior ready to serve the ever-growing information needs of the community.

The courtyard was dedicated as the Mary Griffith Peters Sculpture Garden in honor of a former library director, and it contains Christopher Columbus (1980) by Domenico Mazzone, Marie Skłodowska Curie (1986) by Andrzej Pitynski, and the Holocaust Memorial Gates (1988) by Karl Ciesluk.

26. Stephen R. Gregg Bayonne Park, Kennedy Boulevard from 39th through 50th Streets

The Hudson County Parks Commission hired architect Charles N. Lowrie circa 1916 to turn a wooded area and some adjacent Newark Bay oyster beds into one of Bayonne's most beautiful resources.

Lowrie created a magnificent landscape with sweeping hills for winter sledding, a pond for skating, a shady valley for summer barbecues, and an elegant classical gazebo where brides are often photographed. The children's playground, refurbished in 1996, continues to occupy and delight the youngsters of the community.

The portion of the park between Kennedy Boulevard and Avenue B is home to two important pieces of sculpture: The Hiker (1912) by Allen G. Newman and the Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument (1914) by Anton Schaaf. These monuments commemorate respectively the military of the Spanish American War and the Civil War. The park itself has been named in honor of Lt. Stephen R. Gregg, the first of Bayonne's two Congressional Medal of Honor recipients.