

Ben Avon's History

Incorporated as a town on January 9, 1892, Ben Avon has a long and storied history. The name Ben Avon was proposed by resident James C. Lewis who thought the area reminded him of a hamlet near his birthplace in England. The name Ben Avon when translated by the Scots means, "Hill by the water."

The present Ben Avon Municipal Building was built in 1920 for municipal purposes. Until that time, the Borough Council had met at Ben Avon Elementary School. The Borough began with five members, and by 1904 had increased to seven members. By 1906 twenty-eight streets had been laid out in the borough. Since then only a few streets have been added.

Growing populations in the early 1900's required the building of schools. First was a two-story four-room brick school at the corner of Dickson and Sturgeon finished in the fall of 1893. A high school building was built in 1912. In 1938, the Avonworth Union School District was formed, becoming the first union school district in the state. Made up of the communities of Ben Avon, Ben Avon Heights, Emsworth, and Kilbuck Township, and later Ohio Township, it dropped Union from the name in 1970 and became as it is known today, [Avonworth School District](#).

At the time of World War I, there were three churches in Ben Avon, each in a newly constructed building. Ben Avon Presbyterian Church was at Church and Perrysville. Ben Avon United Presbyterian (later Woodland U.P.) was at Dickson and Woodland. Ben Avon Methodist Church was on Breeding Avenue. In 1987, the two Presbyterian churches consolidated into Community Presbyterian Church of Ben Avon. Soon afterwards, the Methodist church closed its doors.

Since its incorporation in 1892, Ben Avon has grown steadily, with the largest number of residents in 1970 with 2,713. Numerous additions and changes have made Ben Avon more accessible to Pittsburgh. The addition of the Ohio River Boulevard in 1930 made for a scenic drive through Avalon and Bellevue. The road was not connected in Pittsburgh until some sixty years later. The additions of Rts. 79 and 279 have made Pittsburgh very accessible to Ben Avon residents through Camp Horne Road.

Today, Ben Avon is as vibrant as ever, populated by a few businesses, and over 2,000 residents who are dedicated to preserving the storied past of Ben Avon through organizations such as the [Avon Club](#) and the [Avonworth Area Historical Association](#).

[View PDF](#)