

AN ARCHITECTURAL TOUR THROUGH THE TOWN OF YARMOUTH



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STYLES OF ARCHITECTURE IN YARMOUTH

CAPE COD STYLE – early 1700s to present

The house is a story and a half tall. With a full house, there are two windows on either side of door; three-quarter house there are two windows on one side and one window on other side of door; half house has two windows on one side of door. Earliest house have windows which touch eaves. By 1800, windows are moving down from eaves, up to three feet by 1830. Capes were often altered or built into Colonial,

Georgian, Federal and Greek Revival styles. Often contain many additions or ells. Dormers on second floor were almost always later addition. There are great Cape Cod houses throughout Yarmouth. The name, Cape Cod house, was coined by Timothy Dwight while travelling through Yarmouth Port.



GEORGIAN STYLE – 1720s to Revolutionary War

A simple 1-2 story box, 2 rooms deep, using strict symmetry. Windows are usually symmetrical across the front. The paneled front door is centered. If a single chimney, it is behind front door. Many times, there are paired chimneys and frequently there is dentil molding along the eaves. These houses tried to imitate the more elaborate homes being built in England and the style is named for King George (there were three Georges in a row in 1700s). 450 Old Kings Highway (formerly the Squire Doane tavern), is a good example.

FEDERAL STYLE – End of Revolutionary War to 1820s

Higher ceilings than earlier houses. Hip or gable roof. Delicate ornamentation with tall slim pilasters beside doorway. Window lights over doorway are often fan-shaped. Symmetrical elements of architecture and often has paired chimneys at both ends of building. In other towns, many Federal

buildings have gable ends composed solely of brick (called “brick enders”). Yarmouth has only one brick ender, at 15 Pleasant Street in South Yarmouth. 441 Old King’s Highway is a typical Federal building.

GREEK REVIVAL STYLE – 1820s to Civil War

Gable end of house faces street with triangular pediment which often contains an unusual window. Temple like with porches or porticos, usually with columns. When columns not used, large vertical pilasters used. Windows and glass panes much larger than earlier styles; first floor windows often floor to ceiling, even triple hung. Many houses along Old King’s Highway have Greek Revival characteristics. Parnassus Book Store at 220 Old King’s Highway is a good example.

Temple style has columns which run two full stories and support a gable end pediment. Wood often made to look like stonework of early Greek temples. The former Sears Hotel at 4 Summer Street, Yarmouth Port, is an outstanding example.

GOTHIC REVIVAL STYLE – 1830s to 1870s

Also known as “Gingerbread” or carpenter gothic. Usually has pointed arch windows and doors. Barge boards under eaves highly cut with intricate patterns. Original paint colors were often earth tones. The best known example is the Optimist Café which originally was the Frederick Howes’ house at 134 Old King’s Highway. Many of the cottages at the Yarmouth Camp Ground off

of Willow Street near Route 6 are Gothic Revival. The Yarmouth Port Library is a good example of pure Gothic architecture.

SECOND EMPIRE / MANSARD STYLE 1860s -1880s

The French influence during this time is most easily recognized by the roof, having the upper story blended with a flattened hip roof, which is double pitched. Dormers often exist in the steep portion of the roof. The Colonial House Inn at 277 Old King's Highway was converted into a Mansard. 138 Old King's Highway was built as a Mansard.



QUEEN ANNE STYLE – 1870s – World War 1

Upper stories are shingled with various patterns. It may include towers or turrets with stained glass and ornamental porches. 120 Old King's Highway is Queen Anne style except for the Gothic roof. Sandyside is also Queen Anne style. This is the style most frequently referred to as Victorian.

SHINGLE STYLE 1880s – 1910

Roofs are long and low, with the building shingled. Some part may be asymmetrical. The Catholic Chapel on Summer Street has some of these characteristics, coupled with Romanesque.

CRAFTSMAN BUNGALOW STYLE – 1900 – World War 2

Broad overhanging roof with large front porch. The gable end is toward the street. The plans, or the entire building, could be purchased from Sears Roebuck as well as many other companies. Magazines carried these plans and houses could be built for as little as \$500. Many have been modified greatly.

370 styles of houses could be purchased from Sears Roebuck between 1908 and 1940. These included a Dutch Gambrel two story house. The building was frequently built with the gable ends parallel to the street. Sun porches could be added. The common bungalow was the most common style, followed by the Dutch colonial. Over 100,000 houses were sold.

MODERN STYLES

Post –World War 2 houses started with the basic ranch style, front to back splits, and garrisons. Then styles turned to Cape houses and more recently houses called “McMansions.”

OTHER ARCHITECTURAL ITEMS:

Beverly Jog – house on corner of Wharf Lane – 84 OKH



Brickender –(mentioned in Federal Style)
Bowed roof (Winslow Crocker house has one)

Sheds which were originally part of Elisha Doane's ropewalk -404 Main; house on corner Old Church & Damaris.

Combination houses – Cape to Greek Revival (381 Old King's Highway); Cape to Mansard/French Second Empire (123 Old Main Street).

Moved houses (Crocker's store) – corner of Willow and OKH – from Nantucket. Many houses in Yarmouth have been moved.

Windows – Didn't start making glass in large sizes until 1840s to 60s. Allowed windows to be larger, which established the scale of a building, making it bigger.