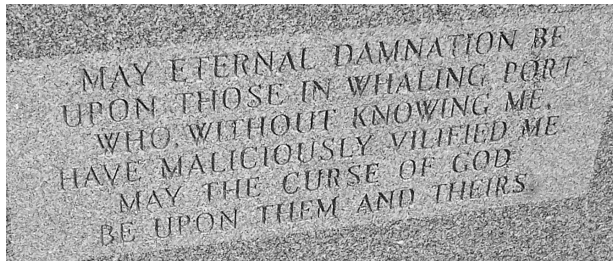


GHOSTS, MYTHS, AND LEGENDS SELF-GUIDED TOUR OF YARMOUTH

Created by the Historical Society of Old Yarmouth



Curse on modern gravestone at Ancient Cemetery

Many of the locations on this tour are private property. Please respect the property owner's privacy and rights.

THE CHAPTER HOUSE INN – 277 Old King's

Highway – Route 6A – Yarmouth Port -

A tour must begin at this building, as it has the most ghosts of any building on Cape Cod. In the main house, there is a room where some guests report having heard a baby crying. At least one baby died here in past centuries. In another room, a rocking chair sometimes turns during the night to face a blank wall. That blank wall used to have a window in it. In the attached carriage house, the sound of a boy crying is sometimes heard. One stable boy reportedly hanged himself there. A letter to the innkeeper in 2006 says it all.

“Dear Mr. Perna, Recently we stayed at your inn. We only lasted 2 nights due to the ghosts that bothered us.... The staff and you are very nice, and the food was excellent, but I would never stay there again or recommend this inn to anyone unless they loved ghosts.”

Just west of the Compass Rose Inn is the Yarmouth Port Common. In the 1930s, resident Ella Bray wrote in her book, “All Around The Common” that every house but one near this Common had ghosts. The book encouraged Historical Society members to start collecting ghost stories from Yarmouth.

1 STRAWBERRY LANE – Ella Bray's grandfather lived here. The ghosts here are unidentified. Is one her grandfather looking for pond that was filled in when the Common was created?

8 STRAWBERRY LANE – The Edward Gorey museum. Gorey never mentioned ghosts, but did note that his cats would freeze and stare at an unseen object entering the room. Gorey's writings were frequently tied to the occult. Gorey won a “Tony” for scenery and costumes in “Dracula.”

11 STRAWBERRY LANE – Capt. Bangs Hallet House – 3 different ghosts – 1) lights and heat turned down-attributed to frugal ways of wife Anna Hallet; 2) footsteps and doors open and close– attributed to Thomas Thacher, former storeowner, looking for the store that was cut from front of house after he died and was moved to where Parnassus Bookstore presently is, then to 39 Summer Street; 3) furniture and items moved by unknown spirit.

17 STRAWBERRY LANE – Ghosts appear during carpentry work, attributed to Ira Ryder, 19th century carpenter who signed his work. When work is done well, warmth returns to area being reconstructed. Some guests prefer not sleeping in front bedrooms.

28 STRAWBERRY LANE – Doors open, ghosts of Indigenous Peoples seen, flowers floating in air above bed when sleeping.

SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH

Many 19th century Yarmouth residents followed the custom of the day by attending séances in private homes in the village. The Swedenborgian Church helped fill this need for Yarmouth, as the founder of the church, Emanuel Swedenborg, claimed to have the ability to communicate with the dead. Some have viewed him as the father of the Spiritualist Movement. Carpenter Ira Ryder also worked here.

256 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY – Lights flicker when walls were wallpapered; stopped when wall were painted; glasses fall off shelves, but don't break. [West on Old King's Highway (OKH)]

OLD YARMOUTH INN- 223 OKH - A tavern since the 1690s, lore has it that Goody Hallet, the poor lass who fell in love with the pirate Black Sam Bellamy, father of her child, was a tavern maid here. She was later a well known witch on the lower Cape. She rode finback whale “Long Tom” and tried to lure vessels to run aground. The inn owners have had wineglasses fall and break from a supposedly secure rack, as well as ashtrays sliding along the bar after being stacked. (back when smoking was allowed) [West to 176]

176 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY – Captain Gorham and his wife, Harriet Barber, had a baby die. 20th century owners of the home, unaware of this history, told one of Gorham's descendants about hearing a baby crying, and seeing a baby hovering over a bed. [West to right on Wharf Lane]

57 WHARF LANE

Elisha Doane mirror came here with owners – Doane was a friend of Captain Ed Hallet who lived here - connection with 450 OKH. – Ghost from 20th century illegal distillery during prohibition. [Can take scenic way back to OKH – follow Thacher Shore Road west to Mill – turn right over bridge to Keveney back to 6A Turn left east – 2nd house on left is Gorham house – many ghosts from early shore-whaling days]

LIBERTY HILL INN – 77 OKH – Leg found in wall during reconstruction early 1970s. Site of liberty pole during Revolutionary War. [East on OKH]

OPTIMIST CAFE – 134 Old Kings Highway – Footsteps, lights turned on, some have heard clanking chains (connection to the Underground Railroad?)

THE INN ON MAIN–186 OKH – “The Crook’ Jaw Inn” named for enchanted whale of Ichabod Paddock fame. Whale could only be killed using silver harpoon.

361 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY

'Jesu Joy of Man's Desiring' played on an organ - only women can hear it. No organ present in house.

371 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY – Captain's wife appeared after renovation returned kitchen to original location. She liked having kitchen back in its original location. Not seen since.

381 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY – Carpenter Ira Ryder worked here – Ghosts during reconstruction – Also a disabled captain? Only upper part of his body appears. Footsteps heard in halls, doors heard opening and closing, lights turned on and off.

398 – OLD KING'S HIGHWAY – Sounds of baby crying. Spirits presence felt even today.

404 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY – Flaked house brought from Plymouth – ghosts from former location? Former owners named ghost "Sarah."

418 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY – See lady in pink, sickly captain, tools go missing. Lady is named Phoebe.

[East on OKH to Center St.]

1 CENTER STREET – Woman in white appears, especially at top of stairs.

[Continue down Center St.]

15 CENTER STREET – Lights turned on and off, chairs rearranged.

ANCIENT CEMETERY – Southeast corner has no gravestones – are these ghosts looking for ancestors moved here and buried without markers? Graves moved by infamous Town Meeting of 1826. Gravestone from 1980s has curse written on it (not far from maintenance shed).

[Continue down Center to Bass Hole/Gray's Beach]

BASS HOLE – Death of Viking here in AD1000. June 22 is Mid-Summer's Eve. On that day, vessels that have sunk or burn continue back to port – This was Yarmouth's port until 1820s.

[Return up Center, left on Old Church Street]

32 OLD CHURCH STREET – Built by one armed Civil War veteran – After later occupant's wife died, noises and disturbances when house not clean – Good smells emanate from rooms when cleaned.

YARMOUTH COMMON - Site of two early Congregational Churches – Red-headed woman ghost seen prowling.

450 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY (corner Playground and OKH) –Plate on wall placed on floor, not broken. Early owner Captain Bearse causing this to happen? [East on OKH]

485 OLD KING'S HIGHWAY – Distinct smell of cigar smoke when no one smoking – Sound of Model T driving away.

[East on OKH to right on Weir; continue on Great Western]

DEB'S HILL – Condominiums in general location where a mystic named Deb lived circa the late 1800s. "Cape Cod Magazine" wrote about her in 1915.

[Back to OKH – then east toward Dennis]

WITCH OF HOCKANOM - Lived on hill behind Fiddler's Green (before King's Way)- Named Aunt Sophie Ann Kelley Chase. Stopped going to school because knew lessons before they were taught. She could tell you great details about places she never had visited. Could easily control town bully!

[West on OKH to Union Street (blinking light) – turn south to South Yarmouth – Cross Rte 28 to Old Main Street]

321 OLD MAIN STREET – Home of Thomas Greenough, reputed to be Elisha Nauhaught – Whittier wrote poem about him. Found and returned bag of gold coins; Devil had snakes attack him for this, Nauhaught bit off snake's head when it curled around his neck and this act defeated devil. Greenough Pond named for him.

CULTURAL CENTER OF CAPE COD – Mary Dunn born at this location. Later moved to Barnstable. Some thought her to be a witch when she lived on Mary Dunn Road near enchanted forest. Many incorrect stories about her because of earlier

resident of area – Lizzie Blatchford, who was known as witch Lisa Tower Hill

[Turn left on Union, before Cultural Center]

323 UNION STREET – Concealment shoe found in wall – Used these to ward off spirits, witches, and ghosts.

[Return to Old Main, turn left]

188 OLD MAIN – Site of infirmary for Indigenous Peoples during smallpox epidemic – House called "Crooked House." Doctor who lived here supposedly was ghost who lived in shed with dog. Children in 1930s and 40s used to run to get past this house. It burned down in 1984. Modern house occupies site.

THE SIMPKINS SCHOOL- Reported to have a ghost in the attic. Story may have been started by early principal Dyke Quackenbush in 1930s to stop school children from going up there.

[Continue to South Street, left, past Smugglers Beach to Run Pond Road. Right on Run Pond to first intersection]

CASA MADRID SPEAKEASY – Famous speakeasy during Prohibition. Mayor Curley from Boston visited here – many stories of illegal liquor and State Police raids. Perhaps Smuggler's Beach got its name due to proximity to this location.

[Back to Route 28, west to traffic light at Chamber of Commerce building, left onto Berry Avenue to end]

6 NEW HAMPSHIRE AVE – Formerly the Red Rose Inn – It was obvious to many of the guests that original owner Rose had never given up her feelings of ownership. Several "regulars" admit to having seen a ghost in the hallway near the bathrooms. Others have felt a "presence." All believe it was Rose, although no one ever stated whether she was wearing one of her hats. She had a favorite table overlooking Englewood Beach. She liked to watch children play on beach. Side window was place where they could buy snacks.

Tour ends at this point – if you hunger for more information, try a Yarmouth restaurant and ask them if they've ever had a ghost at their establishment!