Look Up, Tidewater Virginia

Walking Tours of 3 Towns in the Old Dominion

A Walking Tour of Norfolk, Virginia
from walkthetown.com

Few American cities have been as repeatedly shaped by war as Norfolk.

During the American Revolution the town, that had been incorporated in 1705 and granted a Royal charter as a borough in 1736, was a Loyalist stronghold mostly concerned with keeping its trade routes to England filled. This didn't prevent the British from shelling the city in 1776. When eight hours of bombing ended almost two-thirds of the city was in flames. Local patriots destroyed the remaining buildings for strategic reasons.

British warships returned in the War of 1812 and again attacked the bustling port that had rebuilt in the previous 30 years. This time batteries at Fort Norfolk and Fort Nelson repulsed the invaders. Half a century later the War between the States brought a new series of disasters. After Virginia departed the Union, departing Federal troops burned the navy yard in Portsmouth. The ironclad CSS Virginia gained the Confederacy's greatest naval victory when it sank the USS Cumberland and Congress on March 8, 1862, in Hampton Roads. When the Virginia set sail the next morning it was with the full expectation of finishing the destruction of the wooden Union fleet. Instead, it met the USS Monitor, another ironclad. People gathered on shore to watch the battle that would forever change naval warfare. After three hours, the Virginia retired, the battle a draw. Two months later, in May 1862, Mayor William Lamb surrendered Norfolk to General John E. Wood and Union forces. The city would remain under martial law for the duration of the war.

In 1907 the city staged the 300th birthday of the founding of Jamestown and during the exposition high-ranking naval officers agreed that the site was ideal for a permanent naval base. During World War I there were 34,000 enlisted men on the base. Eventually Naval Station Norfolk became the largest naval base in the world. The military remains the largest employer in Virginia's second-largest city (behind neighboring Virginia Beach).

As a nod to the entwinement of the city's fortunes with its military past our walking tour will begin at a monument to Norfolk's brief stay in the Confederate States of America...

1. **Confederate Monument**
   opposite Commercial Park at East Main Street and Commercial Place

This towering pedestal of white Vermont granite is surmounted by the bronze figure of a Confederate soldier, sculpted by William Couper. The pedestal was erected in 1889 on this center lot of the original town of Norfolk, but the monument was not completed until 1907 when more funds became available.

WALK NORTH THROUGH COMMERCIAL PARK TO PLUME STREET AND TURN LEFT.

2. **U.S. Post Office and Courts Building**
   235 East Plume Street at Bank Street

This rare Neo-Palladian Revival Style building from 1898 would be more at home on the streets of Europe than in a southern U.S. city. While similar to the Neoclassical style popular for early 20th century municipal buildings rusticated stonework, engaged entrance pavilion, and interior arcades suggest the influences of the Palladian school. The architects were James Wyatt and William Nolting of Baltimore. After the federal government moved up Granby Street in 1934 the building was transferred to the city which used it as City Hall from 1937 until 1965. After decades as a private office building the Main Branch of the Norfolk Public Library, organized in 1870, moved here.

TURH RIGHT AND WALK NORHT ON BANK STREET ONE BLOCK TO EAST CITY HALL AVENUE. TURN LEFT.

3. Monticello Arcade
   200 block of East City Hall Avenue

The Greek concept of a protected, enclosed trading area began in America in Providence, Rhode Island in 1828 and became popular in downtowns across America. Percy S. Stephenson, who dabbled as an attorney, real estate agent and auctioneer built Norfolk's version in 1907. The three-story Beaux Arts building of the Ionic order is faced with polychromed terra-cotta. The Monticello Arcade thrived into the 1940s and after a 1980s restoration is one of only two shopping arcades standing in Virginia.

TURN RIGHT ON MONTICELLO AVENUE AND AFTER ONE BLOCK TURN LEFT ON TAZEWELL STREET.

4. Wells Theatre
   110 East Tazewell Street

Jake Wells was the player-manger of the Richmond Colts baseball team in the 1890s. During the off-season in 1898 Wells was shopping downtown for equipment in a store in the former Opera House. Intrigued by its history, before he left Wells was out of the baseball business and in the vaudeville business. He renovated the theater and by January 1899 was welcoming the day's top performers to Richmond.

Two years later Wells was in Norfolk with the Granby Theatre. With his brother Otto, Wells would eventually operate 42 theaters in nine states - the largest theater circuit   outside New York City. The Beaux Arts namesake Wells theatre came online as the flagship playhouse in 1913. The ornate Wells Theatre sported 1,650 seats with 12 boxes and three balconies. The Wells brothers sold their theater interests in 1926. Jake Wells left town for Hendersonville, North Carolina where he committed suicide the following year and after winning two minor league baseball pennants with the Norfolk Tars Otto Wells died of a heart attack at the age of 66 in 1940. The Wells Theatre, since restored to its 1913 splendor, is home to the nationally recognized Virginia Stage Company.

5.   Virginia Bank and Trust Building
**   101 Granby Street**

This four-story Beaux Arts building was erected in 1908-09 on plans by Baltimore architects Wyatt and Notting. The site had previously been occupied by the Atlantic Hotel that had been destroyed by fire. Notable for its parade of massive fluted Ionic columns, the structure was hailed as "one of the finest bank buildings in the state by the Ledger-Dispatch. The Virginia Bank and Trust Company was founded in 1902 at the center of Norfolk's emerging financial district. The building was subsequently the home of various banks until it was acquired by Donald S. Lewis in 1977 who set up the Auslew Gallery that evolved into the Tidewater's leading art gallery. While the interior was re-adapted the exterior remained intact as one of the area's few classically designed structures.

6.   Norfolk Customhouse
**   Main Street at Granby Street**

The Customs Collection District of Norfolk and Portsmouth was one of the first 59 collection districts established on July 31, 1789. The customs inspectors occupied at least six earlier buildings before the first dedicated customhouse was built in 1819. It would eventually be converted into a Federal prison during the Civil War, after which it was burned. It was replaced by this stone temple that was completed in 1859, designed by Ammi B. Young, the first supervising architect for the United States Treasury Department. Young oversaw the development of more than 70 government buildings across the country, including the customhouses in Richmond and Petersburg. The Corinthian capitals of the portico and the columns of the interior are of cast iron. Until 1900 all the Federal agencies in the city were located under this roof. The United States Customs Service lost many of its historic customhouses and when this building dodged demolition in the late 20th century it became the oldest extant building constructed for and continuously occupied by the Customs Service until it was replaced in 2000.

7. **Town Point Park**
   120 West Main Street

Town Point Park is what emerged after the Norfolk waterfront cylcled through urbna renewal in the 1970s. The park recently received an $11 million facelift. It plays host to over 100 days of free special events each year. You can relax on one of the park's 87 benches.

8. *USS Wisconsin*/**Nauticus**
   One Waterside Drive

This maritime-themed science museum on the downtown Norfolk waterfront features hands-on-exhibits and the Hampton Roads Naval Museum. Berthed at Nauticus, the Battleship *Wisconsin* is one of the largest and last battleships ever built by the U.S. Navy. Commissioned in the Philadelphia Naval Yard in 1943, the *Wisconsin* earned five battle stars for her World War II service and one for the Korean War. The ship also received the Navy Unit Commendation for service during the first Gulf War.

9. Allmand-Archer House
   ### 327 Duke Street

This two-story Georgian-style house wrapped in corner quoins was constructed in the 1790s for Matthew Hervey, a shipping merchant. The front of the brick house was stuccoed and scored to resemble more elegant ashlar stone. Harrison Allmand bought the property in 1802 and offered the house to the United States military as a headquarters during the War of 1812. The house acquired its Greek Revival doorway and heavy window lintels during the mid-19th century as it passed into the Archer family through marriage.

TURN LEFT ON FREEMASON STREET.

10. James W. Hunter House
   ### 240 West Freemason Street

The blocks around Freemason Street were the first to be developed outside the boundaries of the original fifty acres of the Colonial town. In 1850 the City's first gas lamps were installed along Freemason Street as the neighborhood evolved into one of Norfolk's finest residential enclaves. Now designated a Historic district, West Freemason Street retains its cobblestone paving, granite curbs, cast iron fences and brick sidewalks.

James Wilson Hunter, a prominent Norfolk merchant and banker, retained Boston architect W.P. Wentworth to design a new town house for his family on Freemason Street. Wentworth created a compact Richardsonian Romanesque style building with such hallmarks of the style as rough-cut stone, prominent entrance arch, arched windows in goups of three and side tower. The three Hunter children never married and all lived out their lives in this house; when the last daughter died in the 1960s the family home became a house museum.

TURN AND RETRACE YOUR STEPS ON FREEMASON STREET, WALKING EAST, AWAY FROM THE WATER.

11. Taylor-Whittle House
227 West Freemason Street at Duke Street

Norfolk once boasted many brick Federal-style houses constructed in the bustling days after the American Revolution. Most are gone today but this one that survives is one of the finest standing in the country. The site was confiscated from Tory sympathizers after the battle for Independence. The origins of the early 1790s house are murky but Norfolk merchant and mayor, John Cowper, was living here by 1802 when he sold it to Richard Taylor, an English importer. His descendants lived here until the early 1970s when the house was added to the National Register of Historic Places.

12. Epworth United Methodist Church
124 W. Freemason Street at Bousch Street

The Epworth congregation broke away from Cumberland Street Church in 1850 and established themselves as the Granby Street Methodist Church on the second floor of a building on the corner of Granby and Freemason streets. In 1894 the church laid the cornerstone for its new church here to be constructed on plans by Norfolk architects John Edwin Ruthven Carpenter and John Kevan Peebles who drew heavily on the work of Henry Hobson Richardson, the most influential architect of the late 19th century. Highlighted by brawny, rough-cut stone and multi-chromatic materials the church is the only Richardsonian Romanesque building in the Tidewater region. Upon its dedication on January 19, 1896 the congregation adopted the name Epworth from the boyhood home of John Wesley, the founder of Methodism.

TURN LEFT ON GRANBY STREET.

13. Granby Theater
   421 Granby Street

The grand opening for this exuberant vaudeville and motion picture house took place on February 21, 1916. The Granby thrived until television and the development of suburban malls drained American downtowns in the 1960s. The closing of the theater doors in 1987 marked both the end of an era and the final days of the old building's life as a movie house. For nearly two decades, the Granby sat, empty and forgotten, until recently when this lovely building was painstakingly restored to its original splendor.

WALK ACROSS 9TH STREET ONTO FRANKLIN STREET.

14. US Post Office and Courthouse
   600 Granby Street

Here is Norfolk's only prominent public building executed in the Art Deco style, designed by local architect Benjamin F. Mitchell. The four-story gray limestone building, rising in tiers, is highlighted by carved geometric bands. The stripped-down classicism of the Art Deco style was a favorite for government buildings during the Depression. The impetus for the new post office, completed in 1934, was an "8-fold" increase in local mail volume.

TURN RIGHT ON BUTE STREET.

15. **Norfolk Scope Arena**
     201 East Brambleton Avenue at Monticello Avenue

Opened in 1971, Norfolk Scope is the host to a wide variety of events, including Ringling Bros and Barnum and Bailey Circus, conventions, concerts and family shows. Scope is also the home of the Norfolk Admirals of the American Hockey League.

TURN RIGHT ON MONTICELLO AVENUE AND TURN LEFT ON CHARLOTTE STREET. TURN RIGHT ON BANK STREET.

16. **Norfolk Academy**
     420 Bank Street at east Charlotte Street

Norfolk Academy was created on November 12, 1728. After several incarnations, in 1840 the Trustees determined to build a new schoolhouse and famed architect Thomas U. Walter was retained to provide a design. Walter modeled his building after the Temple of Theseus in Athens, Greece, with six beautiful Doric columns at the entrance to the east and west porticos. During the 1855 yellow fever epidemic it was used temporarily as Norfolk's Post Office. The building also housed Norfolk's first public library. The Academy moved on in the 20th century and sold the building to the City; the school continues today and the building has served as a court, a Naval headquarters and Chamber of Commerce office since.

17. Freemason Street Baptist Church
400 East Freemason Street at Bank Street

Founded in May of 1848 with 77 charter members, the congregation has spent over 150 years in this magnificent Gothic Revival church designed by Thomas U. Walter, best known for his work on the United States Capitol in Washington, D.C. Normally at home with the columns and domes of classical designs, here Walter outfitted this landmark church with buttresses and pinnacles for Norfolk's most prominent Baptist congregation. It was the tallest building in Norfolk until its original steeple was toppled in a storm in 1879; the replacement was much more modest in height.

18. Moses Myers House
Freemason and Bank streets

Moses Myers came to Norfolk from New York City at the age of 34 in 1787 and became of the town's richest merchant princes. He built this distinguished Federal town house in 1792, one of the first brick buildings to appear on Norfolk streets after the destruction of the the town during the Revolution. The house was added on to through the years as Myers became superintendent of the Norfolk branch of the Bank of Richmond and accepted diplomatic positions in Europe. The addition containing the octagonal end dining room, considered one of the finest rooms of its period in the country. The Marquis de Lafayette, James Monroe, Stephen Decatur, Henry Clay and President Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft all dined here. The house remained in the Myers family until 1931.

TURN LEFT ON FREEMASON STREET.

19. Willoughby-Baylor House
601 East Freemason Street

Captain William Willoughby built this brick house in 1794 on ancestral family land. He was a descendant of Captain Thomas Willougby who received a Royal grant of 200 acres here in 1636. Fifty of those acres became the town of Norfolk in 1682. The brick house slid into disrepair after it was sold out of the Willoughby-Baylor family in 1890 and faced the wrecking ball for years until it was rescued by the Historic Norfolk Foundation in 1964. It was restored to its 1790s appearance and stands as an early middle class Norfolk home in contrast to the upper crust Moses Myers House across the way.

TURN RIGHT ON ST. PAUL'S BOULEVARD.

20. St. Paul's Church
201 St. Paul's Boulevard and City Hall Avenue

In Colonial Virginia, Norfolk was the largest and most prosperous town in America's dominant colony. As the Revolution brewed elsewhere the ruling merchant class in Norfolk was more concerned with business than politics. After being driven from the capital in Williamsburg in 1775 John Murray, 4th Earl of Dunmore, relocated his Royal government in Norfolk.

In December 1775, after skirmishing at Great Bridge, it became apparent that Dunmore would not be able to hold the town in the face of growing Patriot pressure. The Loyalists boarded ships from the Royal Navy and anchored offshore. Ongoing negotiations with rebel leaders to allow foraging in Norfolk proved fruitless and Dunmore announced he was going to shell the city.

Before dawn on January 1, 1776, the bombardment began. As waterfront warehouses burned, the intractable rebel militia set fire to prominent Tory homes in spiteful retribution. The conflagration soon became so widespread that Patriot militia decided to destroy the entire town to prevent its use by the British. When Dunmore moved back to Norfolk he built provisional barracks but soon

departed. The city would not revive until after the Revolution.

Built in 1739 on the site of an earlier 1641 church known as the "Chapel of Ease," St. Paul's is Norfolk's oldest building and only structure to survive the British destruction of the city on New Year's Day, 1776 - albeit with only its walls standing. The old building was repaired and reconsecrated as St. Paul's Episcopal Church in 1832. A cannonball fired by Lord Dunmore of the British fleet remains lodged in the southeastern wall.

TURN RIGHT ON EAST CITY HALL AVENUE.

21. MacArthur Memorial
      422 City Hall Avenue

After Norfolk became an independent city in 1845 work got under way to build a home for the new government. Portsmouth architect William Singleton, then practicing in St. Louis, designed the Classical Revival building, getting an assist on the dome from Philadelphian Thomas Ustick Walter who designed the dome for the United States Capitol. Mayor and Confederate major William Wilson Lamb stood on these steps on May 10, 1862 and surrendered the city to Union forces in the Civil War after which there was an elaborate flag raising of "Old Glory." The Federal force of 6,000 landed under Major General John E. Wood, with President Abraham Lincoln and key cabinet members watching the movement from a ship in the harbor.

The city offices were relocated in 1918 and the building carried on as a courthouse until 1960. After General Douglas MacArthur chose Norfolk - the city of his mother's birth and childhood - as his final resting place the city offered to reconfigure the former city hall as a memorial to the United States' youngest major general and Supreme Commander of Allied Forces in the Pacific during World War II. Restored and remodeled, the building contains nine museum galleries whose contents reflect the general's fifty years of military service. Douglas MacArthur died in 1964 and was interred in a sunken marble crypt in the building's rotunda.

TURN LEFT AND MAKE YOUR WAY BACK THROUGH MARKET SQUARE AND COMMERCIAL PARK BACK TO THE TOUR STARTING POINT.

A Walking Tour of Portsmouth, Virginia
from walkthetown.com

After a series of Indian attacks in the 1670s planters and settlers led by 29-year old Nathaniel Bacon rose up against Virginia Colonial Governor William Berkeley for his refusal to retaliate. Bacon's Rebellion was eventually squashed. Property of the participants was seized by the Crown and 20 conspirators hanged. Among them was Captain William Carver who owned a plantation along the brackish waters of the Elizabeth River. Carver's confiscated land was granted in 1716 to Colonel William Crawford who in 1750 "laid out a parcel of land into one hundred and twenty-two lots, commodious streets, places for a courthouse, market and public landings. He named the place Portsmouth and presented it to Norfolk County.

Portsmouth has a long history as a port town. Scotsman Andrew Sprowle founded the Gosport Shipyard adjacent to Portsmouth in 1767. The British government, recognizing the value of the enterprise, soon took over the yard as a repair station and appointed Sprowle as navy agent. The yard, renamed the Norfolk Naval Shipyard after the Civil War, would grow into one of the world's largest and dominate the economy of the city. During World War II, more than 40,000 workers were employed in the shipyard.

Today Portsmouth boasts the largest concentration of antique houses between Alexandria and Charleston, South Carolina but before we delve into the square mile that has come to be known as the Olde Towne Historic District we will start at that famous shipyard...
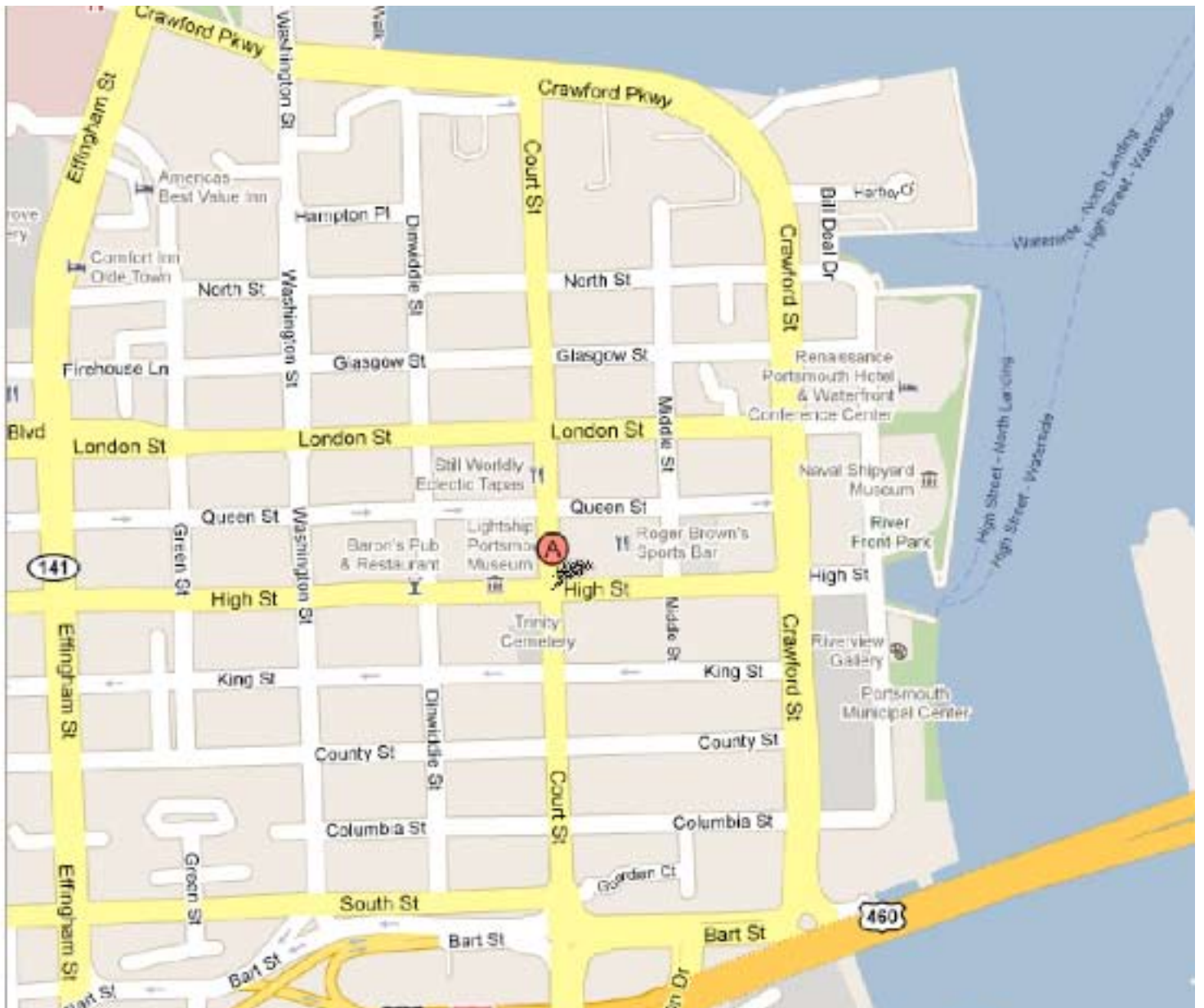
1. *Lightship Portsmouth*
    Water and London streets

The U.S. Lightship Service was started in 1820 with ships' masts outfitted with lights to serve as portable navigation aids. This lightship was put into service in 1915 and guided ships through the dangerous shoals off the coasts of Virginia, Delaware and Massachusetts for 48 years. In 1964, she was retired to Portsmouth and renamed according to the custom of naming lightships after the site where they are stationed. Now a National Historic Landmark ad museum, the ship's quarters are fitted out realistically and filled with fascinating artifacts, uniforms, photographs, models, and more.

WALK SOUTH ALONG THE WATERFRONT (THE WATER IS ON YOUR LEFT).

2. **Naval Shipyard Museum**
    2 High Street

Founded in 1767 as the Gosport Shipyard, this became one of America's oldest and largest naval shipyards. During the Revolutionary War, the shipyard was described by the British as "the most considerable one in America" and as a testament to its importance it was burned three times. The Virginia militia took control of the naval yard on April 20, 1861. The fleeing federal force destroyed war material worth five million dollars in their retreat. The Confederates salvaged what they could, including a steam frigate that had burned to the waterline, the *USS Merrimack*. Raised into a drydock - the country;s first and still and in use - the *Merrimack* was repaired and emerged a year later as the world's first ironclad warship, the *CSS Virginia*. Other historic ships built here include the the nation's first battleship, the *Texas* and the nation's first aircraft carrier, the *Langley*. At its peak during World War II, the yard employed nearly 43,000 workers.

WALK OUT OF RIVERFRONT PARK ONTO HIGH STREET AND BEGIN WALKING AWAY FROM THE WATER.

3. **Virginia Sports Hall of Fame**
    206 High Street

The Virginia Sports Hall of Fame was founded in 1966 by J. Herbert Simpson after returning from a trip to Texas where he had seen the Lone Star State's hall of fame. The first members were enshrined in 1972 and five years later the Hall moved into a new home at Court and High Street in space donated by the city of Portsmouth. In 2005, the Hall opened this 35,000 square-foot facility.

TURN LEFT AT COURT STREET AND STAY ON THE EAST SIDE OF THE STREET.

4. **Bangel Law Building**
    505 Court Street

A.A. Bangel began his law practice in 1915; this office building with a French Second Empire clock tower poking out of a masonry frame was constructed in 1949.

5. **First Presbyterian Church**
    515 Court Street

This is the third church for the congregation that was organized. Its predecessors were each destroyed by fire. The Presbyterians moved here in 1871 and needed to rebuild this church in 1877 after a January fire. A complete make-over that included a new slate roof and exterior stucco took place in 1994.

6.   Portsmouth Public Library
601 Court Street

This Colonial Revival brick building was constructed by the federal government in 1909 as a post office. In 1963 it was outfitted to house the public library. The city's first library was organized in 1914 in a small room behind the Courthouse with books donated by the Seaboard Air Line Railroad and the YMCA. Blacks were not allowed to check out books in Portsmouth until 1945 when a separate library was established for their use. The two collections merged when this building opened.

CROSS THE STREET AND TURN RIGHT, HEADING BACK TOWARDS HIGH STREET.

7.   Trinity Episcopal Church
500 Court Street at High Street

This church was built on one of the four corner lots that Colonel William Crawford gave for public buildings in 1750. The brick building with tan stucco was completed in 1762 and has had remodelings over the years. The bell, which cracked while pealing the celebratory news of the British surrender in the Revolution, was also recast. The churchyard was the first public burying ground in the town and is the final resting place of several city fathers dating to 1763.

8.   Confederate Monument
Town Square; High and Court streets

The plain shaft of North Carolina granite stands 56 feet high and is surrounded by four sentinels representing the Confederate Navy, Army, Cavalry and Artillery. The shaft was finished in 1881, the statues were later additions. A single star on the face of the capstone faces south.

**9.   Courthouse Galleries Museum
       420 High Street at Court Street**

The first courthouse for Norfolk County, erected 1691-93, stood on land later part of Norfolk City, was burned by the British in 1776, and was rebuilt between 1784 and 1788. In 1801-03 a courthouse was built in Portsmouth on this, the third site. This brick building, with broad stone steps leading to a shallow, four-columned portico, was erected between 1844 and 1846. Architects Willoughby G. Butler & William B. Singleton contributed the Greek Revival design. It now houses the Courthouse Galleries featuring contemporary and traditional art from around the world.

**10.   Commodore Theatre
       421 High Street**

Portsmouth native William Stanley "Bunkie" Wilder caught the movie bug at an early age while working the lobby of the Granby Theater in Norfolk and the Orpheum in his hometown. He opened his first theater in 1928 when he built the Norfolk and went on to develop a chain of movie houses. The Commodore, built in the streamlined Art Deco style by Baltimore architect John J. Zink and named for Commodore James Barron, commander of the Chesapeake during the War of 1812, who is buried in the churchyard next door, became his flagship theater when it opened on November 14, 1945. On the bill the first night was She Wouldn't Say Yes, a romantic comedy starring Rosalind Russell as a self-assured doctor whose world gets turned upside down when she meets an impulsive comic strip author. The Commodore showed motion pictures and hosted community stage presentations until 1975, when it closed for twelve years.

In 1987, Fred Schoenfeld acquired the theatre and spent two and a half years restoring the nautically-themed movie house. He re-opened the Commodore on December 21, 1989 as a first-run movie theatre with full-service dining—the first such cinema-eatery in the United States.

11. Governor Dinwiddie Hotel
506 Dinwiddie Street at High Street

This seven-story guest house opened in 1945 as the Hotel Portsmouth. President Truman is believed to have stayed here during a visit to the shipyard. In the 1950s the name was changed to the Hotel Governor Dinwiddie to honor the Colonial Governor of Virginia; four Dinwiddie descendants were present at the renaming ceremony. After the 1960s it became a low-income apartment facility and suffered through a decade of vacancy until it was renovated in 2005.

12. St. Paul's Roman Catholic Church
518 High Street

St. Paul's was the first Catholic congregation in Portsmouth, comprised of French and Irish immigrants. Their first church was raised between 1811 and 1815. After fires and expansions to accommodate a growing membership this is St. Paul's fifth house of worship, completed in 1905 on designs by John Kevan Peebles.

RETRACE YOUR STEPS TO DINWIDDIE STREET AND TURN LEFT.

13. Monumental United Methodist Church
450 Dinwiddie Street

This is the third house of worship for the congregation that was founded in 1772, one of the oldest Methodist churches in Virginia. The first building was constructed in 1775 at the corner of South

and Effington streets; this core of this brick and stucco church dates to 1831. Richmond architect Albert Lawrence West used the foundation of the building that had burned in 1864 to create this Victorian Gothic church. The two-part central tower soars 186 feet.

14. **Niemeyer/Robertson House**
     448 Dinwiddie Street

Looking to cash in on the 1849 California Gold Rush from their homes in Portsmouth, a group of businessmen led by Henry Victor Niemeyer set out to pre-fabricate houses for the exploding West Coast population. The pieces for their four-story kit houses were cut, numbered, crated and shipped around South America's Cape Horn en route to San Francisco. The ready-to-assemble houses sold well until an earthquake caused many to separate at the seams. Three of the houses, including this one owned by Niemeyer's sister and her family, had not yet been shipped to California when the earthquake hit and were sold and erected in Portsmouth.

TURN RIGHT ON QUEEN STREET.

15. **Grice House**
     450 Court Street at Queen Street

This building was constructed as two attached identical houses by George W. Grice, first elected mayor of the independent City of Portsmouth in 1856 for his two daughters. When the Civil War came to Portsmouth, the basement and the first floor of the house was used as a surgical theater - treating wounded Union soldiers. In the 20th century it spent time as the home of the city's Catholic Club.

16. Court Street Baptist Church
447 Court Street at Queen Street

Established in 1789, the Portsmouth and Norfolk Baptist Church served as the first Baptist congregation in South Hampton Roads. The name was changed in 1791 to Portsmouth Baptist Church and again in 1855 to its current name, Court Street Baptist Church. This Romanesque Revival-style church is the third building to occupy the site and contains the cornerstone of the previous building.

TURN LEFT ON COURT STREET.

17. Armistead House
southeast corner of North Street and Court Street

This brick house was constructed in 1894 for Bank of Portsmouth president Beverly Arthur Armistead. It is an interpretation of the Romanesque style of legendary architect Henry Hobson Richardson, displaying such trademarks as stout, powerful arches, multiple materials and a rounded corner turret. The home was later used by the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks Lodge 82 and since 1975 has served as the imaginary manor home of local television horror movie host, Doctor Madblood.

TURN RIGHT ON NORTH STREET.

18. Hill House
221 North Street

Sea captain John Thompson built this four-story English basement home in the early 1800s. His nephew John Thompson Hill and his wife, son and five daughters became the primary residents. The Hill family lived here until 1962 altering the house only minimally. Today a house museum, it is furnished entirely with original family belongings.

19. 218 North Street

This exuberant Victorian-era house is notable for its gracefully curving porch, plaster wreaths and garlands and stained glass on the upper floor windows.

20. Grice-Neely House
202 North Street

With the wrought-iron balcony and graceful stairs, this 1820s house brings a splash of New Orleans to Portsmouth. In the mid-1960s it was the first house to be historically restored in Olde Towne.

RETRACE YOUR STEPS TO MIDDLE STREET AND TURN LEFT.

21. Macon House
350 Middle Street at North Street

William H. Wilson opened the Macon Hotel along North Street in 1855 as a resort hotel. Access to the guest rooms came through his 1830s brick house on the corner. During the Civil War the spacious hotel was used as a barracks and a hospital; regimental numbers carved into the woodwork are still visible in some of the rooms today as the Macon Hotel lives on as three apartment buildings.

22. 355 Middle Street

This is an excellent example of an English basement-style house, built around 1795 and scarcely altered in its 200+ year life. The house still retains its fire badge in the center of the basement posts indicating a contributor to the local volunteer fire department and the owner's eligibility to have his house saved in case of a fire.

23. Nash-Gill House
370 Middle Street

This splendid Gothic Revival frame house was built by Jack Nash in 1880. In 1894 the property was sold to Franklin Gill for $6,700.

24. Ball Nivson House
417 Middle Street

This 1780s house displays a sloping dormer roof that typified what was called a "tax dodger" house in the Virginia Colony to get around paying steep English taxes on two-story houses. Built by John Nivison, it originally stood on the corner of Crawford and Glasgow streets before being moved to this site in 1869 when it was acquired by the Ball family.

25. Odd Fellows Lodge
414 Middle Street

This imposing building began life in 1838 as a two-story Greek Revival school and lodge for the Odd Fellows. in 1910 when it was sold to be converted into residential apartments a third floor was added, not to the top but squeezed in the middle so as to retain the original temple-like appearance. The columns are brick swathed in stucco and the window lintels are granite.

TURN LEFT ON LONDON STREET.

26. Cassell-McRae House
108 London Street
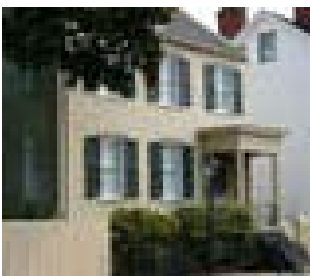
This three-bay town home of Dutch origins with a steeply gabled roof was constructed in the 1820s by Captain John W. McRae. It features stone lintels over the windows and a graceful fanlight over the entrance door. McRae is thought to have been lost at sea shortly after the house was completed.

CONTINUE A FEW STEPS MORE ON LONDON STREET TO THE TOUR STARTING POINT ON THE PORTSMOUTH WATERFRONT.

A Walking Tour of Williamsburg, Virginia
## from walkthetown.com

Today nearly every schoolchildren knows the town of Williamsburg. That that is the case is due not so much to the great history that happened here but to the vision of one man - William Archer Rutherfoord Goodwin.

To be sure, Williamsburg, which served as capital of Virginia from 1699 to 1780, saw its share of notable events, most significantly the fiery rhetoric in the Virginia Capitol by Patrick Henry and brush-ups during the Revolutionary War and Civil War. But after the capital shuffled off to Richmond in 1780 the town led a mostly somnambulant existence for a century and a half.

William Goodwin, then 33 years of age, arrived in Williamsburg in 1903 to become pastor of the Bruton Parish Church. Goodwin was struck by the number of still-standing 18th century buildings in his new community and was inspired to restore his church in time for the 300th anniversary of the establishment of the Episcopal Church in America at Jamestown in 1907.
And then Goodwin left to minister to a church in Rochester, New York.

He returned to Bruton Parish in 1923 and was dismayed at the changes that had occurred to Williamsburg in his absence - the deterioration and loss of the antique buildings was rampant. In his mind Dr. Goodwin hatched a scheme not just to save and restore a building here and there but to bring its 18th century appearance back to Williamsburg. He found perhaps the best ally in the country to pull off such an audacious plan - John D. Rockefeller, Jr., son of the founder of Standard Oil. With the Rockefeller money they founded Colonial Williamsburg and created a 301-acre Historic Area. Some 459 buildings were torn down, 91 of the Colonial period rebuilt, 67 restored and a new shopping center in Colonial style was provided.

Today, Colonial Williamsburg is Virginia's largest tourist attraction and we will begin right at its center, on a green space that was framed by catalpa trees where Americans first enjoyed stage plays, an area whose restoration was targeted as one of Colonial Williamsburg's first restorations...
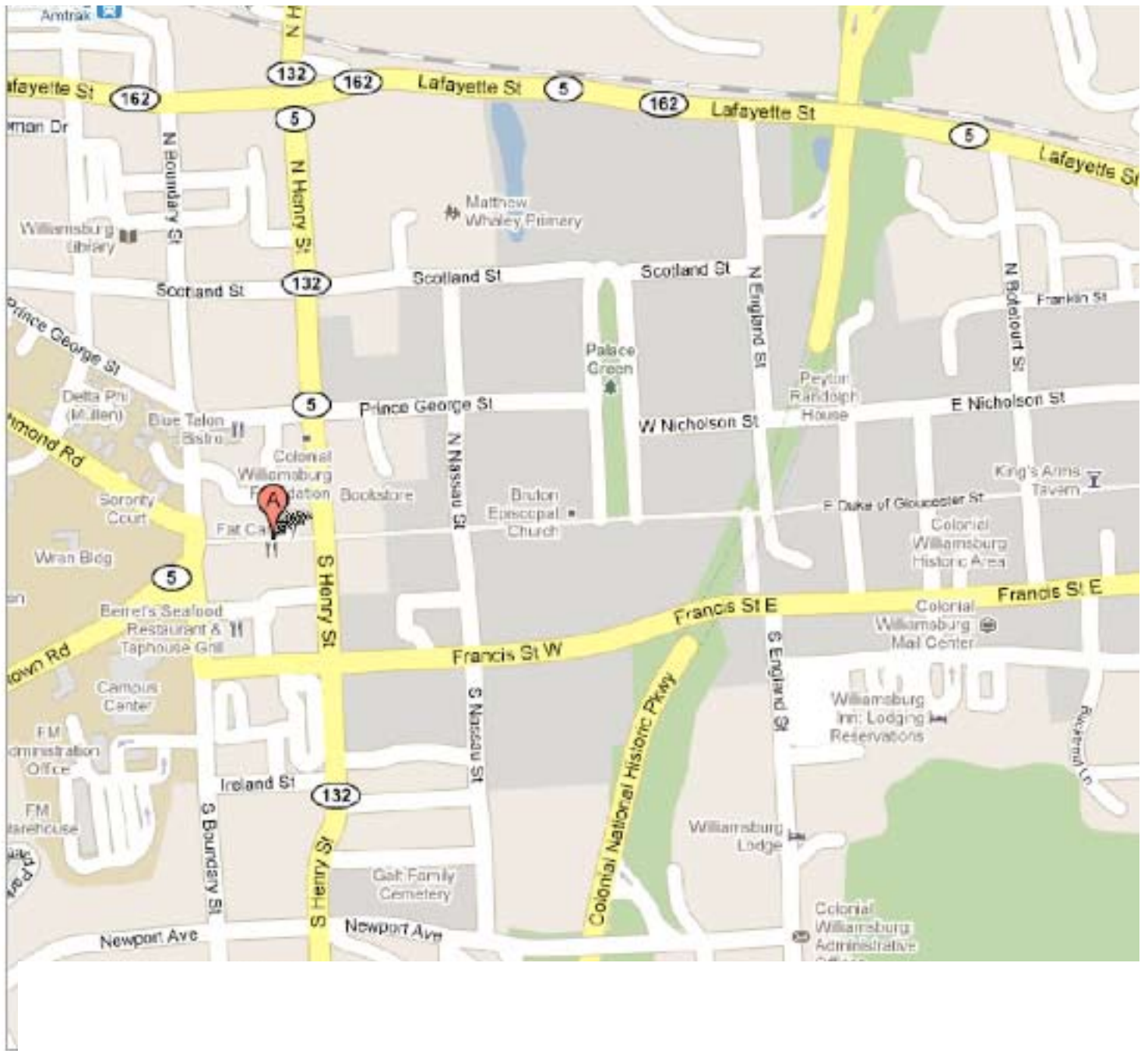
1.   Governor's Palace
north end of Palace Green

This is another reconstruction; the original 1722 building was consumed by fire while being used as a military hospital for soldiers wounded at Yorktown. Lord Dunmore was the last of seven Royal governors to occupy the official executive residence before fleeing in 1775. it also served as the executive mansion for the Commonwealth's first two governors: Patrick Henry and Thomas Jefferson, until the state capital was moved inland to Richmond in 1780. The Georgian-style palace rises two full stories to a denticulated cornice beneath a steep and many-dormered hip roof, surmounted by a balustraded platform and a tall lantern cupola rising in two stages between multiple chimneys. The palace gardens and dependencies have also been faithfully reproduced.

2.   St. George Tucker House
Nicholson Street at Palace Green

Bermuda-born St. George Tucker, a Revolutionary War officer and later a judge, acquired three lots on the Palace Green in 1788 from Edmund Randolph for the sum of £100. His new property included William Levingston's home and the theater that he operated, the first in America. Tucker moved the wooden Levingston house to its current location where it grew through the years to handle the growing brood of Tucker children - nine by his two wives and five stepchildren. With such a family it is appropriate that the first Christmas tree in Williamsburg was displayed at the house in 1842. Tucker descendants lived here until 1993.

3. Peyton Randolph House
   Nicholson Street at North England Street

One of the oldest original houses in Williamsburg, the original part of the buidlign was the west wing, constructed about 1715 by William Robertson. Sir John Randolph purchased Robertson's house in 1721 and three years later built what was to become the east wing of the house when it was reconstructed by Colonial Williamsburg in 1938. Sir John's son, Peyton, who would be Speaker of Virginia's House of Burgesses in the inflammatory years prior to the Revolution and president of the First continental Congress, built the central core of the house in 1751.

4. Booker Tenement
   north side of Nicholson Street

Here is an antique house that has not received the Colonial Williamsburg treatment. The frame house was built about 1825 and is credited to Richard Booker, a carpenter and town constable. It has been stabilized and preserved but not restored.

5. Public Gaol
   north side of Nicholson Street

The Virginia General Assembly dictated that a "substantial brick prison" be constructed shortly after it decreed that Williamsburg would be the Colonial capital. Part of the jail was ready for use by 1704, debtors' cells were added in 1711. The most celebrated guests of the colony were 15 henchmen of the pirate Blackbeard, captured in 1718. They were confined here until their hanging.

The Gaol became a county facility in 1780 and, much modified over the years, served until 1910. The restored building, with part of its thick walls still original, was dedicated in 1936.

6.   **Secretary's Office**
      Blair Street and Duke of Gloucester Street on north side of Capitol

This single story Georgian brick building stands as the oldest archival structure in America, thrust into use after the Capitol went up in flames in 1747. The Public Records Office was ready the next year, constructed at a cost of £367. Its records were removed to Richmond with the capital in 1780. The building did duty afterwards as a school and was modified into a residence.

7.   **Colonial Capitol**
      east end of Duke of Gloucester Street

This checkerboard brick building of light-colored stretchers and glazed headers is a reconstruction of the first capitol, built on the original foundations of the "best and most commodious pile" in Colonial America. This was the original meeting place for the House of Burgesses, Virginia's Colonial legislature, and constructed between 1701 and 1705. It burned on January 30, 1747. By 1753 a second building was on the site, which lasted until it too perished in a fire in 1832. it was in that building that Patrick Henry introduced the Stamp Act Resolutions of May 29, 1765, declaring that, "if this be treason, make the most of it." The course toward Revolution had been set. Restoration began in 1929.

8. Raleigh Tavern
     north side of Duke of Gloucester Street, east of Botetourt Street

Less than a block from the Capitol the Raleigh Tavern, established in 1717 and named for Sir Walter Raleigh, became a natural meeting place for burgesses and politically inclined Virginians to debate the merits of independence. George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and Patrick Henry were all known to express opinions in this public house. The building was reconstructed after a fire destroyed it in 1859. A bust of namesake Raleigh greets patrons from a perch in the broken pediment over the doorway.

9. Wetherburn's Tavern
     south side of Duke of Gloucester Street, east of Botetourt Street

This is an original clapboard building, expanded to its present size after 1751 and restored to that appearance. Henry Wetherburn had operated the Raleigh Tavern across the street before taking over this establishment, which appealed to a distinguished clientele, in 1738.

10. Magazine & Guardhouse
      south side of Duke of Gloucester Street at England Street

This octagonal powder magazine in Market Square was constructed in 1715 with brick walls nearly two feet thick. On the morning of April 21, 1775, the citizens of Williamsburg awoke to discover that during the night Lord Dunmore had secretly removed all the gunpowder from the public magazine. Patrick Henry organized a march by the Hanover County militia to confront Dunmore

and have the powder replaced. An outraged Dunmore finally agreed to reimburse the virginia treasury, but he kept the powder. The brick wall, a restoration, was added in 1755 during alarms in the French and Indian War and was disassembled in 1855.

11. Courthouse
Market Square on Duke of Gloucester Street

This one-story brick courthouse is the town's third, with the first case tried here in 1771. Benjamin Waller read Declaration of Independence from the steps of courthouse - steps that had been imported from England in 1772. The building was used by the local government for more than 160 years.

It looks as if the court's cantilevered portico is lacking columns. For whatever reason, the original building did not include them. After a fire in 1911 gutted the building columns were indeed added when the court was rebuilt. But when it was appropriated by Colonial Williamsburg and restored to its 18th century appearance the columns were again dispatched.

12. Geddy House
southeast corner of Palace Green and Duke of Gloucester Street

James Geddy, a silversmith, constructed this frame building around 1762 to serve as his home and his workshop - a typical arrangement found on 18th century Williamsburg streets. Much of the original L-shaped structure remains, although it picked up a few fashionable 19th century alterations on its exterior.

13. Bruton Parish Episcopal Church
331 West Duke of Gloucester Street at Palace Green

The church and state were one under the Church of England in the colony of Virginia when the mellow red brick Bruton Parish Church was raised in 1712-1715 to replace an earlier church on this spot. Bruton Parish was created in 1674 through the union of two earlier parishes. Above the cornice of the square tower rises a two-tiered octagonal steeple. This is the oldest Episcopal church of uninterrupted use in America.

The churchyard has been the Bruton Parish ground since the 17th century. In addition to the gravestones, there are hundreds of unmarked burials since only the wealthy cold afford the remembrance of a stone marker imported from England. Bruton Parish boasts one of the finest collections of table tombs - the large, raised stones that are symbols of family power - in the United States.

14. Kimball Theatre
428 West Duke of Gloucester Street, Merchant Square

Thanks to an open-air stage for performances by the Williamsburg Company of Comedians in 1716 on the Palace Green called the Play Booth Theater, Williamsburg lays claim to being the birthplace of the American theater. When Colonial Williamsburg was being developed in the 1930s this 600-seat theater was built to be the "center stage" for the new Merchants Square. John D. Rockefeller Jr.'s film distribution company, RKO, picked up the construction tab for the Williamsburg Theatre. It was one of the first movie houses in the country to be air-conditioned when it opened in 1933. Rockefeller was a regular patron and the back row was reserved for him. With a $3.5 million donation by Bill and Gretchen Kimball the stage was renovated in 2001 and today hosts films, live shows and musical concerts.

CONTINUE STRAIGHT ACROSS BOUNDARY STREET ONTO THE CAMPUS OF WILLIAM & MARY. THE BUILDING DIRECTLY IN FRONT OF YOU IS...

15. Wren Building
College of William and Mary

William and Mary is the second oldest college in the United States, behind only Harvard, and this is the oldest academic structure still in use in the country. The building was erected beginning in 1695, perhaps based on plans by Sir Christopher Wren, the Royal architect who rebuilt London after the Great Fire of 1666. Although his involvement is disputed 300 years later, if Wren did design the College Building, as it is formally known, it is his only building in America.

The building burned in 1705, 1859 and 1862 and was rebuilt each time and when a restoration was undertaken in 1928 the original walls were still intact. The sandy pink brick of the long rectangular mass is set in courses of Flemish and English bond. A steep hip roof above two full stories is pierced by 12 dormers and surmounted by a plain cupola between two huge chimneys near the ends.

TO YOUR RIGHT IS...

16. President's House
College of William Mary

This five-bay Georgian house with a steeply hipped roof house pierced by dormers brought a symmetrical completion to the original campus of the College of William and Mary when it was completed in 1733. Every college president, save one, has resided in this house. During the American Revolution, British General Cornwallis occupied the house briefly in 1781, and later that year French soldiers camping in the area burned the President's house by accident; King Louis XVI picked up the bill for the repairs.

TO YOUR LEFT IS...

17. Brafferton Building
College of William and Mary

William and Mary's 1693 charter included a commitment to train young Native Americans as Christian clergymen and missionaries to their people. Investment income from a £4,000 fund from the estate of English natural philosopher Robert Boyle (the Yorkshire manor of Brafferton) was earmarked for an endowment in 1697 and this squarish Georgian brick building was constructed in 1723 to house the Indian School. There were seldom more than a handful of students, however, and the school was shuttered in 1779. Of the three original college buildings, it is the only one never to have been burned.

TURN AN LEAVE WILLIAM & MARY AND RETRACE YOUR STEPS ON DUKE OF GLOUCESTER STREET. AT PALACE GREEN TURN LEFT.

18. Wythe House
west side of Palace Green, south of Prince George Street

This two-story Georgian brick house laid in Flemish bond, was built around 1750 and occupied by George Wythe, a former clerk of the House of Burgesses and ardent patriot. Wythe as a brilliant thinker and signer of the Declaration of Independence, but his greatest fame came after the Revolution, when he gained acclaim as the first professor of law at an American college. A roster of his students who rose to national prominence include Thomas Jefferson, James Monroe, John Marshall and Henry Clay. Wythe lived into his 80th year when he was poisoned by a grandnephew in 1806. The murderer escaped conviction, however, when the testimony of the only witness was considered invalid in the courts. The witness was black, to whom the rights fought for in the Revolution did not extend. The house is believed to have been designed in the mid-1750s by Wythe's father-in-law, the surveyor, builder, and planter Richard Taliaferro.

YOU HAVE NOW RETURNED TO THE TOUR STARTING POINT ON PALACE GREEN.

Recognizing Early American Architecture:

Postmedieval English Colonial (1600-1700)
* steeply pitched, side-gabled roof
* small casement windows with many small panes (restored often)
* massive chimney
* vertical board (batten) door
* little o rno eave overhang, no cornice detailing
* one room deep

Dutch Colonial (1625-1840)
* side-gamberled roof
* usually one story
* batten door, most divided into upper and lower halves
* little or no eave overhang

French Colonial (1700-1830)
* steeply pitched roof, either hipped or side-gabled
* one story
* tall, narrow door and window openings
* doors and wndows typically divided vertically into pairs
* walls of stucco (over half-timbered frame)

Spanish Colonial (1660-1850)
* low-piched or flat roof
* normally one story
* few small windows
* multiple external doors
* walls very thick in stucco over adobe brick or rubble stone
* long, narrow porches opening to courtyards

Georgian (1700-1780)
* windows with double-hung sashes, typically nine or twelve small panes per sash; windows are
never in adjacent pairs
* paneled door, normally with decorative crown (most oftne pedimented but at times broken-
pedimented) and supportedby decorative pilasters
* row of small rectangular panes beneath door crown
* cornice usually emphasized with tooth-like dentils or other decorative molding
* windows typically five-ranked and symmetrically balanced with cneter door; less commonly three-
ranked or seven-ranked

Adamesque (Federal) (1780-1820)
* windows with double-hung sashes, typically six small panes per sash; windows are never in adjacent pairs
* semi-circular or eliptical fanlight over paneled door, typically accompanied by sidelights, elaborated crown and surround, and/or extended as small entry porch
* cornice usually emphasized with tooth-like dentils or other decorative molding
* windows typically five-ranked and symmetrically balanced with cneter door; less commonly three-ranked or seven-ranked
* while similar to Georgian, features are often "lighter"

Greek Revival (1825-1860)
* gabled or hipped roof of low pitch
* entry porch or full-width porch supported by square or round, prominent columns
    - Doric: plain capitals
    - Ionic: capitals with scroll-like spirals
    - Corinthian: capitals shaped like inverted bells decorated with leaves
* narrow line of transom and sidelights around door, usually incorporated into elaborate door surround
* cornice lines emphasized with wide, divided band of trim

Recognizing Victorian Architecture:

General Victorian Features (1840-1910)
* roof ornaments
* bay (protruding) windows
* three-part Palladian (rounded in middle) windows
* gingerbread porch trim

Gothic Revival Style (1835-1875)
* high-pitched center gables
* pointed arch windows and doors
* pendants and finials extending from roof

Italianate Style (1840-1885)
* brackets under roof cornices
* cupolas on the roof
* narrow, square porch posts with chamfered corners
* tall, slender windows

Second Empire Style (1855-1885)
* mansard roof, concave or convex, with dormer windows on steep lower slope
* molded cornices bound lower roof slope above and below
* eaves normally with decorative brackets below

Stick Style (1860-1890)
*stick-like bracketing on porches, often diagonal or curving
* stick-like grid on wall surfaces
* Jerkin-Head (cut-off triangular) roofs and dormers
* pent (or shed) roofs on dormers, porches and bays
* decorative trusses in gables; often steeply pitched gross gables
* wooden wall cladding (boards or shingles)

Queen Anne Style (1880-1910)
* asymmetrical facade
* patterned shingles
* turned porch posts and trim
* corner towers and turrets
* wraparound porch
* steeply pitched, irregular roofline

Shingle Style (1880-1900)
* shingled walls without interruption at corners
* multi-level eaves above asymmetrical facade
* extensive porches
* walls and roofs covered with continuous wood shingles

Richardsonian Romanesque (1880-1900)
* based ont he innovative designs of Boston architect Henry Hobson Richardson
* round topped arches over windows, porch supports or entrance
* most have towers, usually round with conical roofs
* always masonry walls, usually with rough-faced, squared stonework
* facade usually asymmetrical

Recognizing 20th century Architecture:

Colonial Revival (1885 and beyond)
* accentuated front door with fanlights and sidelights
* symmetrical facade around centered entrance
* windows with double-hung sashes
* large dormers
* round, smooth porch columns, often clustered

Neoclassical (1895-1950)
* facade dominated by full-length porch supported by classical columns, typically Ionic or Corinthian
* facade shows symmetrically balanced windows and center door
* revivals may have curved porticos, two-story entrances, paired or tripled windows and/or bays not seen on originals
* often very large

Tudor (1890 -1940)
* massive chimneys, commonly crowned by decorative chimney pots
* facade dominated by one or more prominent cross gables, usually steeply perched
* decorative half-timbering often present
* steeply pitched roof, usually side-gabled
* tall, narrow windows, commonly in multiple groups with multi-pane glazing
* walls of brick, stone, wood, stucco or in combination

French Chateauesque (1890-1930)
* busy roof line with many vertical elements (spires, pinnacles, turrets, gables, shaped chimneys)
* steeply pitched hipped roof
* multiple dormers, usually wall dormers extending through cornice line
* walls of masonry, usually stone

Beaux Arts (1890-1930)
* wall surfaces with decorative garlands, floral patterns or shields
* masonry walls, usually of light-colored stone
* facade with corner quoins and columns, oftne paired with Ionic or Corinthian capitals
* first story typically rusticated (stonework) with exaggerated joints
* facade symmetrical

Spanish Mission Style (1890-1930)
* shaped Mission dormer or roof parapet
* porch roofs supported by large square piers, commonly arched above
* commonly with red tile roof covering
* widely overhanging eaves, usually open
* wall surface usually smooth stucco

Pueblo Revival (1910-present)
* flat roof with parapeted wall above
* stucco wall surface, usually earth-toned
* projecting wooden roof beams (vigas)
* wall and roof parapet with irregular, rounded edges
* unpainted wood porch columns - maybe just tree trunks
* tile or brick floors

Prairie Style (1900-1920)
* low-pitched roof with widely overhanging eaves
* two stories with one-story porches or wings
* massive square porch supports
* detail emphasizing horizontal lines
* hipped roofs are more common than end or side gables
* one of few indigenous American styles developed by Chicago architects Louis Sullivan and Frank
Lloyd Wright and built only during first two decades of century

Craftsman (1905-1930)
* low-pitched gabled roof with wide, unenclosed eave overhang
* roof rafters usually exposed
* porches supported by square columns
* decorative braces or false beams under gables
* columns frequently continue to ground level without a break at porch level
* generally one or one-and-a-half stories

Art Deco (1920-1940)
* zigzags and other geometric and stylized motifs
* towers and other vertical projections
* smooth stucco wall surface
* decorative motifs: geometric floral; chevron with lozenge; reding and fluting, often around doors
and windows; sunrise pattern

<u>Art Moderne (1920-1940)</u>
* streamline, curved corners
* smooth stucco wall surface
* asymmetrical facade
* flat roof, usally with ledge at roof line
* horizontal grooves, lines, balustrades
* windows can turn corners and can be roundly shaped
* glass-block windows or sections of the wall

<u>International (1925-present)</u>
* no decorative detailing at doors or windows
* smooth, unornamental wall surface
* asymmetrical facade
* flat roof, usually without ledge at roof line
* windows usually metal casements set flush with outer walls