

Heritage in your Hand

Historic District Sea Captain's Homes
and Mercantile Heritage Walk



Yarmouth • Acadian Shores
NOVA SCOTIA



Harrison Newman-Jardine - Elevated Pictures

DOWNTOWN YARMOUTH'S

streetscape is award-winning public art with a purpose, tapping into the region's most important industry – lobster fishing. Take a selfie, snag a kitchen-party chair to catch up with a friend, or simply step into the shade and rest for a while.

LET'S GET SOCIAL

Share your pictures from the tour with us!
Use the hashtag **#VisitYAS** or tag **@visityas**



yarmouthandacadianshores.com



Assistance provided by Yarmouth County Historical Society

Pjilasi, Bienvenue & Welcome

HISTORIC BUILDINGS are among the most tangible examples of a community's history and culture. Heritage homes in Yarmouth showcase a remarkable range of details, individuality, character, and craftsmanship. These distinctive features add interest, identity, and variety to neighbourhoods. When a building's architecture, materials, and historical character are preserved, the story of the home endures.

On your walking tour, you'll pass by nearly 200 homes, many of which were built or belonged to Sea Captains and Ship Owners. These historic homes and Yarmouth's downtown architecture are a testament to the wealth accumulated during the booming shipbuilding era.

If you would like to learn more about our region, please visit our website: yarmouthandacadianshores.com. If you're interested in discovering more about the homes you'll see on today's tour, you can visit the **Yarmouth County Historic Museum & Archives** (stop no. 18) or check out Yarmouth's Historic Home Registry online at: townofyarmouth.ca.

WHAT TO EXPECT



Time Required

Minimum: 1 hour

Maximum: 4.5 hours

(including stops at Museums & Points of Interest)



Distance

2.5 miles or 4 kilometres



Take a tour of historic Yarmouth, Nova Scotia

- 1 Killam Bros. Shipping Office & The Harbourfront Museum (90 Water St.)
- 2 Oldest Brick Mercantile (328 Main St.)
- 3 Brick Commercial Blocks (296 Main St.)
- 4 Yarmouth Hotel (266 Main St.)
- 5 Former Salvation Army Building (257 Main St.)
- 6 Murray Manor (225 Main St.)
- 7 Rev. John Moody House (17 Forest St.)
- 8 BMO Manager's Residence (22 Forest St.)
- 9 Victorian Eclectic Style (64 William St.)
- 10 Holy Trinity Church (61 William St.)
- 11 Hugh Cann House (56 William St.)
- 12 Gothic Revival Home (57 William St.)
- 13 St. Ambrose Cathedral (45 Albert St.)
- 14 Corner of Forest and Park (44 Forest St.)
- 15 Bishop's Residence (53 Park St.)
- 16 23 Clements Street
- 17 Collins Street (21, 23 & 25)
- 18 Yarmouth County Museum (22 Collins St.)
- 19 17 Collins Street
- 20 Pelton-Fuller House (22 Collins St.)
- 21 Queen Anne Revival Home (15 Collins St.)
- 22 Corner of Collins & Willow (11-16 Collins St.)
- 23 Lovitt Houses (10, 12 & 14 Parade St.)
- 24 The Firefighters' Museum of Nova Scotia (451 Main St.)
- 25 W.L. Sweeney Fisheries Museum (112 Water St.)
- 26 Frost Park (405 Main St.)
- 27 West Side of Main Street (361 Main St.)
- 28 Land's End Art & Culture Centre (341 Main St.)



LEGEND

- Museum
- Heritage Home
- Public Park
- Current or Former Church
- Commercial Buildings
- Public Parking Available
- Town Murals & Street Art



The Town of Yarmouth Mural Grant Program provides funding to award a limited number of grants for mural art projects in downtown Yarmouth.

1 Killam Bros. Shipping Office & The Harbourfront Museum



The Killam family's story begins in 1788, when John Killam built his first schooner. Over five generations, they played a leading role in the region's marine trade: sailing ships, chandleries, marine insurance, and coal. This Colonial Revival building, built around 1835, became part of Thomas Killam's global shipping empire. The wharf once stretched 50,000 square feet, housing coal sheds, warehouses, and offices before the Killam Brothers closed their doors in 1991 after 203 years of operation. Today it opens seasonally as The Harbourfront Museum.

2 Oldest Brick Mercantile

Main Street is lined with brick commercial buildings that date back to the 19th century. 328 Main St., built from 1855–1856 by entrepreneurs John Young and L. E. Baker, is the oldest brick mercantile building in western Nova Scotia. Across the street at number 329 stands our only Dutch-style gable front, an Italianate building from around 1865 that served as a drugstore for nearly 100 years.

3 Brick Commercial Blocks



Farther south along Main St., look for the brick commercial blocks built in 1892, complete with a decorated cornice and a stone lion's head in the upper facade. Don't miss 296 Main St., a Queen Anne style building featuring a prominent eight-sided corner tower cantilevered above a recessed entrance. A widely recognized local landmark, it still bears its original decorative molded labels, designed to shed rainwater.

4 Yarmouth Hotel



Built in 1865–1866 for R. Balfour Brown, this Italianate style building is still popularly known as the Yarmouth Hotel, though today it hosts shops and apartments. The building's most prominent feature is its large three-storey bay, which includes a large Scottish dormer. At ground level, the rounded arch entrance is flanked by brick columns and decorative brackets.

5 Salvation Army Building

259 Main St. was built in 1906 as the Salvation Army Citadel. The building is designed in the Italianate style, with three storeys in front and a two-storey section in back. Its next-door neighbour to the south, 255 Main St., served as an American Consulate from 1903 to the mid-1920s. The Salvation Army thrift store relocated to 287 Main St. and the Lumberjack's Daughter store now resides there.

6 Murray Manor



Built around 1845 for one of the town's first barristers, Murray Manor is a fine example of Regency Gothic style. Look closely at the pointed windows on the ground level and the small second storey windows built close to the floor. Known as kneeling, praying, or belly windows, they're a charming and rarely seen architectural detail.

7 Rev. John Moody House



Built in 1855 for Reverend John Moody, the Rector of Holy Trinity Parish, the house at 17 Forest Street remained in the Moody family for over 120 years. This 1½-storey Gothic Revival home is built of wood with a clapboard exterior. In 1962, the house was rescued from demolition by being moved from its original location off Cumberland Street to where it now stands.

8 BMO Manager's Residence



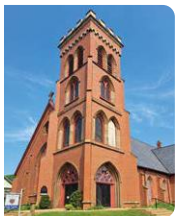
The story of 22 Forest St. starts with a bang — literally. On June 19th, 1903, workmen detonating dynamite in the new cellar hurled a stone three blocks through a neighbouring roof. The house was commissioned by Thomas Van Buskirk Bingay, the first manager of the Yarmouth Bank of Montreal, who later sold it to the Bank as a manager's residence. Designed in the American Shingle style, the home features shingle cladding, a wide verandah, and a roofline of intersecting cross gables.

9 Victorian Eclectic Style



This 2-storey Colonial Revival house was built in 1897 for John Murray Lawson, the publisher and editor of the Yarmouth Herald. His house is L-shaped with a shallow cross-gabled section in the back. Notice the recessed Gothic arches under the gables, the finely carved columns supporting the second-storey balcony, the spindlework balustrades, and the spiral woodwork patterns that crown the front-facing gable.

10 Holy Trinity Church



Holy Trinity is the fourth Anglican Church built in the town, designed in the early English Gothic style and inspired by the great medieval cathedrals of Europe. Construction began in 1866 and the church was consecrated six years later. Shaped like a cruciform and heavily buttressed, each of its massive stained glass windows depicts a specific scene. Check with the parish secretary in the church hall to go inside.

11 Hugh Cann House

The Queen Anne Revival style house at 56 William St. was built in 1855 by ship owner Hugh Cann as a gift to his niece. Like many large homes of its generation, the house has since been divided into apartments while retaining its historic character. Its steeply pitched hip roof is capped by a pair of decorative off-center chimneys. On the ground floor, you can see a cutaway bay window, as well as a charming veranda with square columns.

12 Gothic Revival Home



One of our finest Gothic Revival homes, 57 William St. was built in 1877 by Robert Eakins as one of two identical houses, as gifts for his son and daughter. From its steeply pitched gable roof and ornate verge-boards to its triangular windows and double

entry door, the home is rich in architectural detail. Its twin was lost to fire in 1992, making 57 William a singular and cherished presence in the neighbourhood.

13 St. Ambrose Cathedral



St. Ambrose Cathedral is the heart of the local Roman Catholic diocese. Built in 1889, this Romanesque church features brick construction with an ashlar foundation and sandstone trim. The symmetrical facade has five arched entrance doors and mostly stained glass windows. In the 20th century, the cathedral underwent significant renovations, doubling in length from 75 to 150 feet, with a bell tower added to the central front gable.

14 Corner of Forest and Park

The intersection of Forest and Park St. offers a wonderful snapshot of local architecture across several styles. Number 41 is a fine Second Empire example from 1880, featuring round-headed dormers with finials and elaborate trim on the front tower. Next door, 39 Forest St. was built in 1889 for Master Mariner John E. Murphy and features a cupola, also known as a widow's walk. Across the street, number 42 dates from 1888–89 in a simple Queen Anne Revival style with a wraparound veranda, while number 44, built around 1876, is a neat example of Gothic Revival.

15 Bishop's Residence



Built in 1892 for local merchant Levi Wyman, 53 Park St. once served as the Catholic diocese bishop's residence. A beautiful example of Queen Anne Revival style, the home features a steeply pitched roof, ornate wood carvings, and a stained glass window on the north side. The main windows are all trimmed with decorative wooden designs and entablatures, including an elaborate owl motif around the Palladian staircase window.

16 23 Clements Street



"Keeping up with the Joneses" is an impulse as old as humanity, and local sea captains and shipowners were no exception. Built from 1882 to 1885, the house is Greek Revival in design with Queen Anne Revival influences. Notice the tower-shaped veranda roof and elaborate woodwork. When new, the panels under the windows would have featured decorative wood designs, though like many details in this coastal town, they likely fell victim to the salt air over time.

17 Collins Street (21, 23 & 25)



This architect-designed 1892 Queen Anne Revival house was built entirely of Nova Scotia cedar, featuring a variety of shingle treatments and window sizes, including a lead crystal Palladian window and several stained glass accents. Farther down on the left, numbers 21, 23, and 25 are worth a closer look. The flat sections of their rooflines mark where widow's walks once stood, removed over time as maintenance costs mounted, though their impressions on the houses remain.

18 Yarmouth County Museum & Archives



This monumental Gothic granite building was built in 1892 as the Congregational Tabernacle Church and has served as the Yarmouth County Museum since 1967. Inside, discover the third-largest collection of ship portraits in Canada, a massive lighthouse lens, and a mysterious stone believed to be either a Viking artifact or an elaborate hoax. The striking Palladian window dominates the exterior, while the vaulted interior roof was partially constructed from trusses salvaged from the old Tusket River bridge. The original construction cost? A whopping \$15,000.

19 17 Collins Street



Built from 1893 to 1895 for a local pharmacist, this Queen Anne Revival house is unique in the region for bringing all the classic Victorian flourishes to brick and stone. One of its later owners was King George VI, in whose name it served from 1942 to 1946 as a residence for the newly formed Canadian Women's Army Corps. After the war, it operated as a public library and museum for nearly 30 years.

20 Pelton-Fuller House



Built between 1890 and 1895 by local merchant Edward B. Cann, the Pelton-Fuller House at 20 Collins St. is a Queen Anne Revival gem, with each dormer reflecting a distinct style. Now open to visitors as a museum, guided tours can be arranged through the Yarmouth County Museum & Archives next door or by calling (902) 742-5539.

21 Queen Anne Revival Home



Built in 1894 for Anne Spinney following the death of her first husband, this Queen Anne Revival home at 15 Collins St. features two distinct bays topped with pedimented false gables, a three-sided front bay, and a Tiffany-style stained glass window. The widow's walk, now finished with a railing, was originally built with a pointed section.

22 Corner of Collins & Willow



The intersection of Collins and Willow Streets offers four striking examples of architectural styles spanning half a century. Number 14 is a New England Colonial from around 1845, with a symmetrical five-bay facade and twelve-pane double-hung windows. Number 16, built in 1875 in the Second Empire style, features a unique tower with a rounded window on each side. Number 13, also from around 1875, is Italianate in style, and both 13 and 16 have since been carefully divided into apartments. Finally, number 11 is a Gothic Revival house built around 1835 for master mariner George Ryerson.

23 Lovitt Houses



Numbers 10, 12, and 14 Parade St. were all built for the Lovitt family during the height of the Age of Sail. Number 10, built in 1862 in the Georgian style by John W. Lovitt for his son Captain John Lovitt, had its tower added later in 1891. Number 12, built in 1874 in the Italianate style, is worth a close look for its ropelike carved corner mouldings and portholes in the frieze band. That same year, Lovitt built number 14 for his widow so she could live near her children. Primarily Greek Revival in style, the house also carries Gothic Revival and Italianate touches.

24 The Firefighters' Museum of Nova Scotia



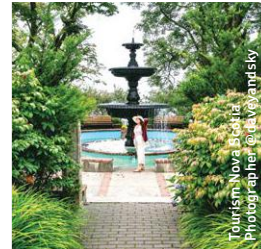
In a province where most houses are built from wood, firefighters have a long and storied history. Step inside this museum and you'll find nearly every type of fire engine ever used in Nova Scotia, from hand-drawn and horse-drawn steamers to motorized machines, alongside plenty of firefighting memorabilia. Originally built as a garage in 1915, the building itself is worth a look, reflecting an intriguing marriage of form and function that might best be described as "Italianate industrial."

25 W.L. Sweeney Fisheries Museum



Many of the region's greatest families and fortunes owe their existence to the marine industry. Throughout much of the 20th century, Laurence Sweeney was a legend as a fishing entrepreneur, small in stature but a giant in business. At the W. L. Sweeney Fisheries Museum on the second floor of 112 Water St., an interactive reconstruction of a seven-building shipping wharf brings the local fishery to life. Climb aboard a fishing boat complete with galley, sleeping quarters, and wheelhouse, or explore a mid-century carpentry and machine shop. The building itself dates to 1909, originally constructed as a foundry and machine works for the Burrell-Johnson Iron Co., specialists in marine hardware who also crafted beautifully ornate stoves.

26 Frost Park



Frost Park sits on the site of one of the area's first burial grounds, first used in 1766. As the town grew, the centrally located cemetery was closed in 1865 and eventually transformed into Victoria Park, though many of the original graves remain hidden beneath the surrounding streets to this day. In 1958, the park was renamed in honour of Sydney Frost, a President of the Bank of Nova Scotia and World War I veteran. With its compass-rose observation deck overlooking the harbour, locally crafted wrought-iron fence, and massive shady trees, it's a wonderful spot to stop and relax.

27 West Side of Main Street



Glance across to number 361 before exploring the west side, marked with an 1895 plaque. It was built for George Lovitt, nephew of John W. Lovitt from step 18, whose initials appear in the date stones on the corner window posts.

On the west side, number 352 is a Greek Revival building from around 1862, home to the Yarmouth Wool Shoppe for over 60 years. Number 346, known as "Mechanics Block," is an Italianate style building from the early 1870s. Number 340, built in 1891 in the Classical Revival style, once stood three storeys with a recessed entrance before modifications in the 1920s. Finally, number 334 is an Italianate building with segmentally arched windows and corbelled cornices, built in 1865–66 for leading shipowner and merchant John Killam Ryerson.

28 Land's End Art & Culture Centre



Built in 1912–1913 and designed by Montreal architect Kenneth G. Rea, 341 Main St. began its life as the Yarmouth branch of the Royal Bank of Canada. The two-storey Victorian Commercial building features a granite base, concrete foundation, and ornate terra cotta mouldings—a striking presence on Main Street that has stood the test of time.

Today, the building is home to the Land's End Arts & Culture Centre, a vibrant community space celebrating local arts and culture. A beautiful example of historic preservation giving new purpose to a cherished piece of the streetscape.