

## HERITAGE WALK – CHESHIRE TOWN CENTER

Walk slowly, feel the presence of the people who lived in these houses and walked these same streets in the 1700s and 1800s. They made Cheshire a lively village that was full of activity and interest...

1. THE HITCHCOCK-PHILLIPS HOUSE (1785), 43 Church Dr. Classical Georgian. Built by merchant Rufus Hitchcock. Passed down to his daughter and then to his granddaughter, who married Andrew W. Phillips, a teacher at the Episcopal (now Cheshire) Academy. Family occupied the house until 1903. In the 1930s, bought by the Academy for a boys' dormitory. Since 1972, the house has been owned by the town and home to the Cheshire Historical Society.

2. WHITING HOUSE, 77 Church Dr. The Rev. Joseph Whiting, who was the first pastor of the 1826 church next door, built this Greek Revival house sometime between 1831-36. Arthur Sherriff, Academy headmaster, 1937-66, lived here for many years. Sold to the church in 1969.

3. FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH (1826) Federal, designed by architect David Hoadley. The building has had many additions and renovations. The church was founded in 1724 in a small building at the corner of Lanyon Drive and South Main Street. A second, larger meeting house was erected in 1736 on the east side of the green, close to the street. As the congregation continued to grow, the present, still-larger meeting house was built in 1826. It is set further back from South Main Street and approached by a curved drive.

**Town Clock:** Julia Humiston donated the money to the town for a handsome, Seth Thomas clock. Because there was no place for it in the Town Hall, the clock was placed in the steeple of the Congregational Church. Winding and repairs to the clock are paid from a fund left by Miss Humiston and managed by three trustees.

### 4. South Side of the Green:

1796 Dr. Cornwall built a house here, later occupied by Dr. Shelton's medical office and a tavern.

1850-1892 Munson/Wallace Hotel (burned to the ground in 1892)

1907 Trolley barns

1912 -1913 Present Federal Revival parsonage of Congregational Church, 85 Church Dr.

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5. ABIJAH BEACH TAVERN (1750), 137 S. Main St. Federal / gambrel roof. Built to be a tavern; nine fireplaces and a ballroom on the top floor where large parties and dances were held. Now home of Dr. Michael Gaudio family.

6. RUSSELL COOKE HOUSE (1801), 163 S. Main St. This narrow, gambrel-roofed house was built as a residence on a 1½ acre lot, with a store in the rear. In 1850, William Horton converted the store to a tavern. Later the house became a hotel. Now the law offices of Robert Sweeney, who also owns the Cornwall House next door.

7. CORNWALL HOUSE (1807), 195 S. Main St. An 18th c. house was torn down to make way for this large, federal-design home built by Dr. Thomas T. Cornwall, known for his treatment of cancer. He added a wing in 1816 as a sanatorium for his patients. His son, Edward, was very prominent in public affairs, both church and town, serving as a justice of the peace, town clerk and in the General Assembly. It now houses offices, including the Cheshire Chamber of Commerce.

8. FOOTE HOUSE (1767), 219 S. Main St. Colonial/gambrel roof. Renovated as a bank in 1973, then further renovated in 2010 by present owner BCI Financial Corp. It was built by the Rev. John Foot, second pastor of the Congregational Church and was also the home of his son, Samuel Augustus Foot, a U. S. Senator and Governor of Connecticut in 1834. Rev. Foot's grandson, Adm. Andrew Hull Foote (he added an "e") grew up in the house. Adm. Foote was a famous naval hero during the Civil War. He died of wounds in 1863. His name is in large letters on the base of the Civil War Monument on the church green.

*Cross South Main Street at the traffic light (corner of Cornwall Ave.)*

9. SQUIRE BEACH HOUSE (1762), 200 S. Main St. Now the office of Sally Bowman Real Estate, this twice-converted, gambrel-roofed house used to face South Main Street where Old Towne Road is now. (Note similarity to Foote House.) It was moved to its present location when Old Towne Road was constructed in 1980s. Originally built by Samuel Beach, who graduated from Yale and practiced law in Cheshire. He served in the State Legislature and represented Cheshire in its bid to separate from Wallingford in 1780.

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*Proceed past the next block of stores*

KEELER HOUSE, 168 South Main Street (1875)

This Italianate-style residence was built by George Keeler, a tinsmith, who also owned and operated a stove shop and warehouse next door. Once a stately home, it was converted into apartments and now awaits renovation. After heavy snow in winter 2011, the shop structure was deemed unsafe and was demolished.

*Cross Wallingford Road, one of the oldest roads in town. It was a main route for the first settlers.*

10. CHESHIRE TOWN HALL (1867) Late Greek Revival. Cost \$8,000. The hall opened Jan 1, 1868 with a gala New Year's Ball. For many years it was the center of Cheshire's social life. In 1913, the building was expanded to add quarters for the Fire Department and a Telephone Company office (moved out in 1934). The Fire Department remained until 1954, when a new firehouse/police station was built, and the space was taken over by town offices. In 1989, Town Hall was enlarged again with a major addition, including a new main entrance at the "rear" of the building.

*11. The **Horse Block** (in front of Town Hall) was brought here from Prospect in the early 1800s by some energetic young Cheshire boys to serve as a "mounting block" for those attending services at the Second Meeting House – directly across the street.*

*12. **Town War Memorial** (next to Town Hall) Erected in 1990. Walk in to see the names on the memorial wall and the magnificent old sycamore tree, one of the oldest trees in Cheshire.*

*Cross South Main Street at pedestrian cross-walk near corner. Use care.*

13. CHURCH GREEN AND CIVIL WAR MONUMENT The 20-foot high granite shaft was erected in 1866. It pays homage to the 126 service men from Cheshire who served in the Civil War. In addition, Admiral Foote and President Abraham Lincoln are specifically commemorated.

14. BRADLEY HOUSE (1875), 25 Church Dr. Moses Bradley built this Victorian house with distinctive Gothic lines. It replaced a Cape Cod which burned in 1875. The original house was purchased in 1781 by Eliakim Hitchcock, a silversmith and father of Rufus Hitchcock, who built the house at 43 Church Dr. on land deeded from his father. There was an outbuilding Eliakim used as a silversmith shop. Today the house is owned by Mrs. Kalliopi Podaras.

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# Cheshire Historical Society Heritage Walk – Town Center

