

Court-Chemeketa Residential Historic District: A Self-Guided Walking Tour

This 1.75 walking tour begins at the Willamette Heritage Center (1313 Mill St SE). NOTE: A virtual tour with 2014 photographs can be found at <https://shineonsalem.org> under the topic Walking Tours. As you go through the virtual tour photo album on your computer or mobile device, you may see the information is incomplete. Tap the caption to get the whole description.

Guide for Walkers

Leave WHC property by side entrance to the right as you look at the museum, leave the parking lot. Walk east to 14th Street. Turn left. Cross Ferry and then State Street. Continue to Court Street. Turn left at church and walk to barrier at 13th Street. The first house described on the tour, and two others to its right, are across the street.

1309 Court Street (Italianate, c.1870)

James Joseph constructed this cottage. The Gray family (Charles to Jennie) who purchased the house in 1885 originally owned the property and built the Gray Building downtown. The family lived there until 1904.

1337 Court Street (Craftsman, c. 1906)

The Constable House replaces an earlier dwelling, built on the lot in the 1870s. It may incorporate elements of the original dwelling probably built by James Joseph. That house was sold to Charles O. and Sarah E. Constable for \$1,650 in 1902.

1363 Court Street (Queen Anne/Eastlake, c.1895)

Archibald Crosby built this house at 14th and Mission streets. From 1927 to 1967, it was owned and occupied by Carmelita Barquist, a popular high school biology teacher. Roy and Hazel Patton moved the house to this location in 1989 when overpass built.

Cross Court Street and 14th Street. Walk along right side with even numbered houses. "Look left" will indicate individual odd-numbered tour houses across Court Street.

1410 Court Street (Craftsman Bungalow, 1914)

Walter Buchner (grew hops and established a feed store and mill) owned the house. Sold 1942, split into apts. ~ firebomb in 1992 killed two persons. Restored by neighbors.

1420 Court Street (Bungalow, 1917)

The East family occupied the East-Millett house until 1944 when they sold it to Russell Millett. The family still owned the residence in 1986. The house is virtually unchanged.

1440 Court Street (Colonial Revival, 1906)

Rev. Heber A. Ketchum whose family lived here until 1917 when they sold it to Henry and Ada Crawford. Mr. Crawford played a prominent role in developing the cannery and flax industries in Willamette Valley, was president of the Chamber of Commerce, Miles Linen Mill, and served as Postmaster when “new” post office built (post office building moved and is now Gatke Hall at Willamette University).

1456 Court Street (Craftsman, 1909)

Jefferson Pooler built the Lewis and Ila Griffith House, and the one next to it at 1474 Court Street. Charles K. Spaulding purchased both houses in 1910 as wedding gifts to his daughters (Ila Griffith and Beulah Mills) The grandson of Ila, Dr. John S. Griffith resided there all his life.

Look left for an odd-numbered house

1467 Court Street (Colonial Revival, c.1895)

John C. and Kate Dalrymple Griffith built this residence on land that originally belonged to her father in the 1890s. Kate, as a widow, lived there until 1944.

1474 Court Street (Craftsman, 1909)

The Roy and Beulah Mills House was purchased for the couple by her father, C. K. Spaulding, as a wedding gift. The Mills family lived there until 1943.

1496 Court Street (American Foursquare, Craftsman, 1909)

The Emma Holmes house was built by M. Harding and sold to Emma Holmes. Later residents were S.S. and Emma East as well as Charles

Sprague and his wife. Both couples rented it while their houses were built. The Kapphahns who built the house behind it owned the house from 1919 to 1943.

1498 Court Street (Colonial Bungalow, 1925)

Earnest and "Lillis" Kapphahn bought the land in 1919, but the house was not built until 1925. The widow lived there with her two children, Pearl and Willard, who were clerks at the family-owned Peter Pan Confectionery.

Cross 15th Street.

1518 Court Street (Originally a Rural Gothic house of the 1870s, it was moved to this location from Court and Capitol St. after 1914)

In 1934, Ronald and Priscilla Frizzell purchased the house from his father and redesigned it in the Georgian style to approximate a drawing of the Raoul Walsh estate in California. It was featured in the March 1934 American Home Magazine.

Look left for next two odd-numbered houses.

1517 Court Street, 248 15th Street (both Queen Anne/Eastlake, 1892)

Architect Charles H. Burggraf designed the Ashby-Durbin House in 1892. Originally owned by Howard Ashby, it was sold to Frank Durbin in 1898. In 1927 the Durbins divided their lot, selling this house to Thomas Roen who lived here until 1944. Clara Patterson purchased the carriage house and remodeled it as a residence.

1577 Court Street (Colonial, 1928)

The Anderson House was the home of William and Nora Anderson. He was the owner of a prominent downtown sporting goods store (now restored to its original appearance as the Electric Building on Liberty Street). She was a local philanthropist in whose honor the Anderson room is named in the Salem Public Library.

1596-98 Court Street (Vernacular, c. 1875)

The Robertson-McLaughlin House. In 1918 J. N. and Mariah Robertson bought this house that they had previously rented. In 1940 their daughter

Grace married Russell McLaughlin. She lived there until her death in 1982, the family having occupied the house for 64 years. Directly behind it is the Spayd cottage (Queen Anne, c.1905) that stood where the Anderson House is now.

Cross 16th Street. In the next block, look left for one house.

1625 Court Street (English Cottage, c.1930)

The Scott House is one of the variations of this style in residential architecture that was popular 1910-1935. This picturesque home of William and Gertrude Scott until 1950, is a reminder of arts and literature in the period when it was built.

1658 Court Street (Rural Gothic, c.1860)

The Alvin Waller House is the earliest home now in the district. Moved twice, it was the home of Alvin Waller, a pioneer Methodist minister and supporter of the school that became Willamette University. He raised funds and oversaw construction of the First Methodist Church. Present owners Bonnie and Roger Hull remodeled the house in 1982.

1674 Court Street (originally a bungalow)

Remodeled for Muriel Steeves Morse in c.1928 for herself and disabled husband by her parents who built next door on the corner. The Morse family occupied it until his death in 1955.

1694 Court St. (Dutch Colonial, 1926)

B. L. and Sarah Steeves built this residence. The lawn and trees of this beautiful house were lost when 17th Street was widened in the 1960's. It continued to be owned by the family into the second generation.

Walk to the right around the corner.

165 17th Street (Colonial Revival/Craftsman, c. 1895)

The Oregon Supreme Court is now on the site once occupied by the Schramm House. It was moved here from Waverly Place in about 1916 and occupied by the Weller family from that date until 1942. Sold to Alfred and Lucille Schramm, it was modernized by the prominent Oregon architect, Pietro Belluschi. The family occupied it until 1989.

Back on Court Street, cross 17th Street.

1726 Court Street (Craftsman, 1910)

Walter and Nettie Miller Spaulding occupied the third of the Spaulding purchases, this residence. He died in 1943, but she continued to live there until about 1981. In June of 1932 it was the scene of the marriage of Linus Pauling (the future double Nobel Laureate -- Chemistry and Peace) and Ava Helen Miller, a relative of Mrs. Spaulding.

Look left for next house.

1759 Court Street (Vernacular Queen Anne, c.1895)

The Wiggins House at 1759 Court Street was sold to Robert Wiggins in 1903. His son Fred, who ran a farm implement store and who sold the first automobile in Salem, married Myra Albert Wiggins, of the pioneer Holman family. She became an internationally known artist and photographer. A Wiggins niece lived there until 1972.

Cross 18th Street

210 18th Street (Colonial, 1926)

This house was originally the manse of the First Presbyterian Church. The first pastor to occupy the house (1921-25) was the Rev. Ward Willis Long and his wife, Evangeline. Their daughter was born there. It was moved to this address in 1960 when the church was relocated because of the expansion of the North Capitol Mall.

1820 Court Street (Queen Anne, c.1890)

David Simpson built the Third Simpson Cottage. He and his wife Julia owned the entire parcel bounded by Court, 18th, State and Mill Streets. They built this cottage and two others (#64 and #65) soon after the Queen Anne Addition was laid out in 1889. Their own home was located at 18th and State. These cottages were sold soon after their construction and have changed owners many times.

Return to 17th Street. Church is on the corner.

270 17th Street (Gothic Revival, 1894)

The Chemeketa Street Evangelical Church conducted services in this sanctuary until 1929. Used by the Salem Mennonite and LDS Reorganized churches, it became vacant in the 1970's. #90 was the church parsonage. After 1989, the church interior was remodeled and now serves as a residence.

Back on 17th, cross and turn right to Chemeketa Street.

1724 Chemeketa Street (Ornamental Concrete Block House, c.1908)

Built by (?) C. E. Stone, in 1911 sold it to William Leach for \$4500.

Chemeketa Street is interesting for the irregularity of the property line: some having another lot behind the house facing the street, others having Mill Creek at their back door.

Walkers will now "Look right" to see odd-numbered houses.

Look right to see the next four houses

1699 Chemeketa Street (1925)

The Little Gem Grocery, formerly in front of this residence, is now relocated at A. C. Gilbert Discovery Village. It was bought by neighbors, restored and moved to Water Street in the 1990s.

1661 Chemeketa Street (Craftsman bungalow, 1913).

The Henry House was built by Worth W. and Effie M. Henry. They sold the house to Frank E. and Ida Brown in 1919. There is another lot between the house and the creek.

Out of sight

1643 Chemeketa (modern, built after District established)

Charming one-story cottage built for George and Frankie Bell. There is a beautiful garden leading down to Mill Creek.

1623 Chemeketa Street (Vernacular Queen Anne, 1902)

The Joseph Schindler House, 1623 Chemeketa Street was built for this German immigrant who had arrived in Salem in 1878 knowing no English.

He became a successful blacksmith. With his family of wife Mary (Alma) and two children, he lived here until 1926 and owned the property until 1930.

Cross 16th Street.

1568 Chemeketa Street (Colonial Revival, 1904)

The Elizabeth Watt House replaced an earlier structure whose original carriage house stands on the southeast corner of the lot. After Miss Watt's death in 1925, the property passed to her heirs. The house came into possession of Garland E. Hollowell in 1936. He lived in the house for 31 years and was known for his beautiful lawn and garden.

Look right for next two houses

1547 Chemeketa Street (Craftsman, 1910)

The Abrams house is an example of a residence with the creek directly behind the structure. One of the several houses in the district built by Jefferson Pooler, the builder occupied it until 1920. Carle and Myrtle Abrams purchased it in 1924. They built the bridge connecting the house to its "back yard." This family lived in the house until 1972.

1525 Chemeketa Street, English Cottage, 1920)

The Pooler-Moore house built and occupied by Jefferson Pooler. His widow sold to Wallace W. and Mabel Moore. He died in 1937, house sold next year to daughter and son-in-law Gardiner Knapp, civic leader. Sold in 1959.

Cross 15th Street.

1490 Chemeketa Street (Queen Anne/Eastlake, 1892)

The James and Flora Watt House at stands on land originally owned by James Watt's father, Joseph, whose holdings had been subdivided in 1871. In 1887, James Watt acquired from his family this lot. The house built for \$2500 in 1892.

Turn right at 14th Street and walk to second house.

360 14th Street (Colonial Georgian, 1923)

Dr. Harvey Clements owned the Clements House and the property remained in the family until 1945. It is now remodeled for Willamette University student housing. Note: the first bridge crossing Mill Creek was constructed here in the earliest days of settlement. The pioneer Holman family lived here in their log cabin in the early 1840s.

Turn back to Chemeketa Street and cross.

1440 Chemeketa Street (Vernacular, c.1881)

The Graham Cottage is a modified example of the West Coast Hipped Roof Cottage. Moved to its present site in 1905 by Dr. William Byrd when he moved his own house to the property, it had originally been built and owned by Ethan A. Graham, a carpenter. His wife Mary sold the property to Dr. Byrd.

Around the corner on 14th Street:

296 14th Street (Queen Anne/Eastlake, 1887)

The last house on our tour is the Collins-Byrd House, built in another location by George Collins a brick manufacturer and first Warden of the Oregon State Penitentiary. A few years later Dr. William H. Byrd who moved the house bought it. He gave it to his son Clarence in 1921 as a wedding present. His daughter Winifred Byrd became an internationally acclaimed musician. A granddaughter, Martha Byrd Blau lived in the house for many years. Later owned by Eleanor Miller, long-time leader in NEN activities.

Continue on 14th to Court Street. Cross and return to Willamette Heritage Center.

The creation of this walk, our first, was inspired by three residents of Court Street:

Bonnie and Roger Hull. They wrote the successful 1987 National Register Nomination for this neighborhood. In 2002, soon after I made my home in Salem, this document introduced me to Salem history. That led to the idea of promoting an interest in preserving community heritage by creating walks along Salem's historical residential streets. For 20 years they have continued to make generous contributions to our research.

John Griffith. As a life-long resident of Court Street and third generation of a prominent Salem family, John shared with us many charming stories about his growing up in this neighborhood, events of significance in Salem and colorful local personalities he had known. It is remarkable that John lived all his 90 years in the Court Street house where he was born. He was a cherished friend and his death in 2018 left an absence still felt in our lives.

