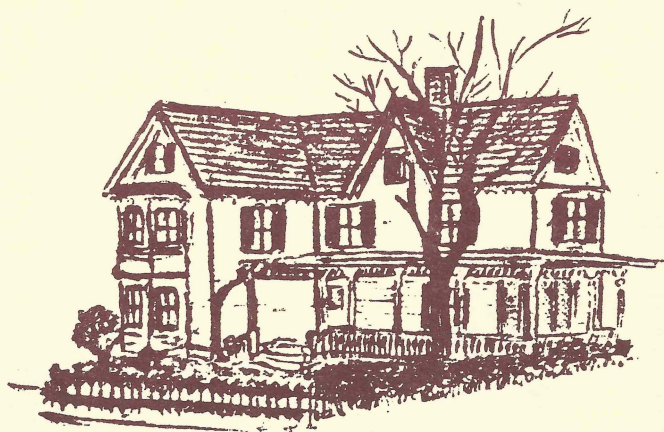
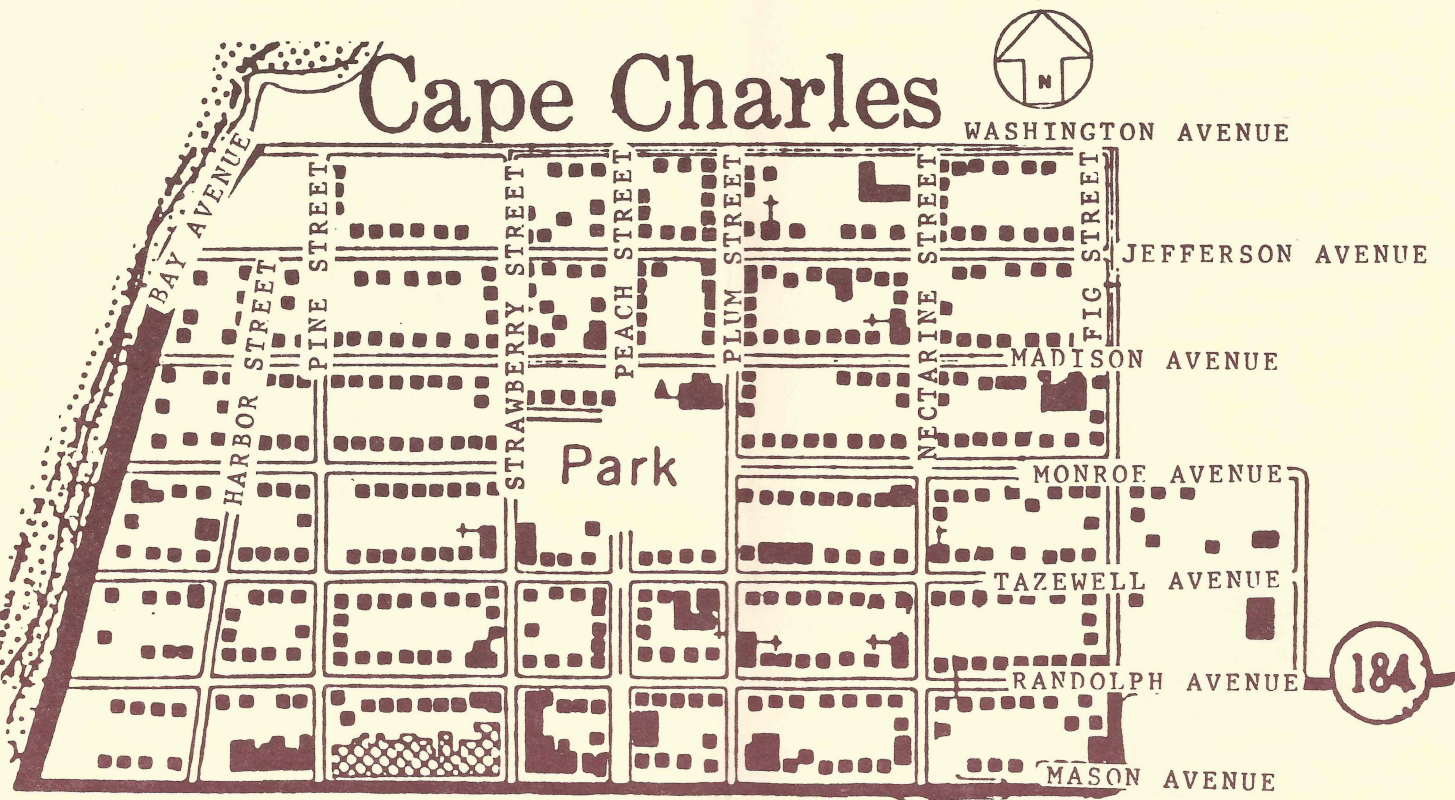


A Walking Tour
of
Historic Cape Charles, Virginia



237 Randolph Avenue

Funded by the
Virginia Foundation for the
Humanities and Public Policy
and Sponsored by the
Cape Charles Historical Society



HISTORY OF CAPE CHARLES

The Town of Cape Charles, named for the near-by Cape at the North side of the Chesapeake Bay celebrated the centennial of its incorporation on March 1, 1986. Laid out by William Bauman, a Civil Engineer from Washington, D.C., the town was built on land recently purchased by William L. Scott of Erie, Pennsylvania. Scott had bought three parcels of land, Old Plantation, New Quarter, and King's Creek Plantation, a total of over two thousand acres, from Ella and Sallie Tazewell, Norfolk descendents of the Tazewell family. Approximately 136 acres were evenly divided in 644 lots. Records at the Northampton County Courthouse show that the first lot was sold in January 1884.

Scott had chosen the area, which became the Town of Cape Charles, but was then unnamed and undeveloped, as the southern terminus of the New York, Philadelphia, and Norfolk Railroad, which he co-owned with Alexander J. Cassatt. The tracks of the railroad were run down the center of the Eastern Shore and ended in Cape Charles. Passengers and freight cars were loaded on to steamboats and barges for transport across the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay to Old Point Comfort and Norfolk. Many new towns sprung up along the railroad line, but

Cape Charles was by far the largest and most important; besides the passenger and freight terminals, the machine and repair shops for the line were also located there.

Cape Charles grew rapidly from its founding through the first quarter of the Twentieth century, and the majority of historic structure surviving today were largely completed by the 1930's. In 1911 with Sea Cottage Addition, thirty-eight acres along the Bay were drained and filled, giving the town another ninety-seven building lots. Growth was planned and orderly, yet rapid and intensive. It was this expansion that was responsible for the town's present appearance. Filled with turn-of-the-century houses and fine old commercial buildings, it is a treasure trove of both vernacular and architect designed structures.

The community has come to recognize these structures as a major resource, and has made their preservation and restoration a major objective of the town's future development. Currently underway is research that will result in the nomination of Cape Charles for inclusion on the Virginia Landmarks Register and subsequently the National Register of Historic Places.

We request that you respect the privacy of the home owners.

1 North-East Corner of Mason Ave. and Strawberry St.

Unusual for its unaltered 2nd floor Italiante windows, this building has housed Savage's Drugstore since 1926.

2 200 Block of Mason Ave.

The many handsome buildings on Mason Avenue attest to Cape Charles' position as the commercial center and the largest town in Northampton County.



200 Mason Avenue Northampton

3 North-East Corner of Mason Ave. and Pine St.

A veritable temple of finance, this Beaux-Arts bank was built around 1921, and may have been designed by the Baltimore firm of Wyatt and Nolting.

4 North-West Corner of Mason Ave. and Pine St.

Built in 1907 in the Romanesque style, this was a bank before the one across Pine Street was constructed. Its rounded arches and heavy details give it charm and dignity.

5 Corner of Mason Ave. and Bay Ave.

From the cupola atop the former Northampton Hotel is an expansive view of the Bay. Built around the turn of the century, it became a hotel in the 1930's.

6 Bay Ave. at the end of Randolph St.

The Pavilion was built in 1922 to house entertainment for the Boardwalk. (See the back cover for illustration.)

7 9 Tazewell Ave., "Seagate"

In the Colonial Revival style popular from the 1880's through the 1920's, this large house was built by the Dixon family (unrelated to Thomas Dixon, jr., of Honeysuckle Lodge). It is soon to become a Bed and Breakfast.

8 305, 307, 309, and 311 Harbor St.

Unique in Cape Charles is this brick, four unit row house laid in Flemish bond.

9 300 Bay Ave.

Designed c.1910 by Norfolk architect Diehl, for the Jack Moore family, this large Colonial Revival is typical of some of the more substantial Sea Cottage Addition houses that were built on more than one lot.

10 205 Jefferson Ave.

This is one of several houses in Cape Charles which have been positively identified as "Sears" houses. From 1908 to 1940, Sears Roebuck and Co. marketed ready to assemble house kits. Although undocumented, 8 Monroe Avenue is similar to those available by mail from Sears.

11 North-West Corner of Tazewell Ave. and Strawberry St.

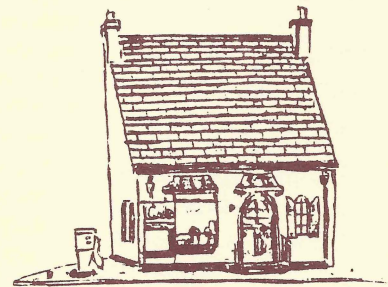
The First Presbyterian Church of Cape Charles moved to this then new Gothic Revival Church in 1926.

12 North-West Corner of Randolph Ave. and St.

The U.S. Post Office, built in 1932 is a fine example of the Colonial Revival style adapted for public use.

13 237 Randolph Ave.

This Gothic Revival vernacular house has been lovingly restored. Of special note is its cast iron fence. (See front cover.)



John's Union Oil Service Station

14 North-East Corner of Mason Ave. and Peach St.

This service station was built in the 1930's by the Pure Oil Co., in a Colonial "domestic style". Similar examples were built all over America, but few remain.

15 North-East Corner of Mason Ave. and Plum St.

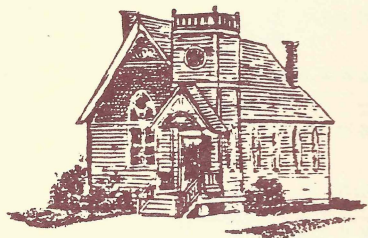
The 1930 Art Deco style Cape Charles Municipal Building houses the Fire Dept., organized in 1888, the Police Dept., and municipal offices.

16 North-East Corner of Randolph Ave. and Plum St.

The Cape Charles Baptist Church was built in 1902. Originally all of wood, it was veneered in brick. Its shingled bell tower with Stick Style roof and cross supports are typical elements of that style, which was popular in America in the 1880's.

17 South-West Corner of Tazewell Ave. and Plum St.

Built in 1893 as Centenary Methodist Episcopal Church, South, this brick and shingled Queen Anne church is now home to Trinity United Methodist Church.



Northampton County Memorial Library

18 South-East Corner of Tazewell Ave. and Plum St.

The Northampton County Memorial Library, dedicated on May 27, 1927 to the memory of local men who died in World War I, was the first memorial library in Virginia. It occupies a 1901 building that was formerly the Presbyterian Church.



St. Charles Roman Catholic Church

19 North-West Corner of Randolph Ave. and Nectarine St.

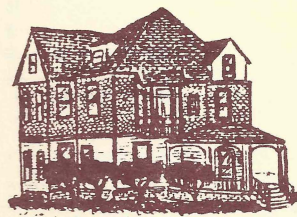
St. Charles Roman Catholic Church was the Eastern Shore. It was organized in 1886 and in 1888 the sanctuary was constructed. The adjacent rectory was built in 1893, and the former Catholic School, behind the Church, in 1898.

20 Eastside of 100 block of Fig St.

Built for the Wilson family, owners of the town's hardware and department stores. This large house and grounds were outside the town boundaries when built.

21 629 Tazewell Ave.

From 1900 to 1956 the home of the current railroad superintendent, "Honeysuckle Lodge" was from 1894-96 the home to Thomas Dixon, jr. Dixon was a famous New York minister who moved his family to Cape Charles to escape the unhealthy conditions of the city though he continued to commute to his pulpit every week. In 1905 he wrote *The Clansman* on which the D.W. Griffith 1915 motion picture, "The Birth of a Nation" was based.



611 Tazewell Avenue

22 611 Tazewell Ave.

Displaying elements of both the Stick and Shingle Styles, this shingle and clapboard house was built in 1895 by bachelor R.H. Nicholas, the superintendent of the N.Y.P.N. Railroad. It is now a Bed and Breakfast named Henrietta's Cottage.

23 North-East Corner of Tazewell Ave. and Nectarine St.

Emmanuel Episcopal Church was built in 1893 in the English Gothic Revival style. Its red brick surface, square tower and flared eaves are reminiscent of an English parish church.

24 644 Monroe Ave.

Built c.1924 for the Kellogg family, the parapeted gable roof distinguishes this Colonial Revival house.

25 635 and 637 Monroe Ave.

Now a duplex, this is the oldest remaining school building in Cape Charles. Built in the 1890's as a two room school, the front gable side was added shortly thereafter.

26 North-West Corner of Madison Ave. And Nectarine St.

This charming 1901, white frame building is the First Baptist Church of Cape Charles. It is very similar to St. Stephen's Church and may have been built from the same plans.

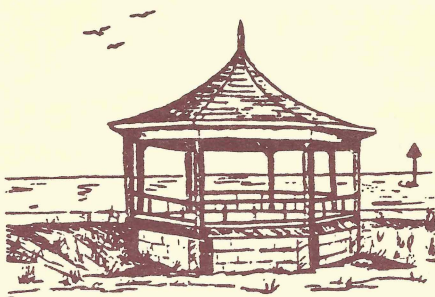
27 North side of 500 block of Jefferson Ave.

St. Stephen's African Methodist Episcopal Church, built in 1885 as the first Bethany Methodist Church, is the oldest church structure in Cape Charles. St. Stephen's purchased it in 1889, and it was moved to this location in 1912.

Cape Charles is located 70 miles south of the VA-MD state line, near the tip of Delmarva peninsula. From the North, take U.S. 13 southward. Turn right (West) at State Road 184 and go 2 miles to Cape Charles. From the South, take U.S. 13 across the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel. At the first traffic light, approximately 10 miles north of the Bay, turn left (West) on to State Road 184 and go 2 miles to Cape Charles.

This brochure was prepared by Pat Spriggs with the assistance of Betsy Fahlman.

Linda Neville did the drawing of Pavilion. All other drawings are by Troy Lewis.



Pavilion

Cape Charles' Chesapeake Bay beach has a boardwalk and Pavilion. There are two marinas for boaters; King's Creek Marina (ph. 331-2058) and Cape Charles Harbor of Refuge (ph. 331-3789) Henrietta's Cottage (ph. 331-4133) is a recently opened Bed and Breakfast. The Seagate (ph. 331-2206) will open the summer of 1988. Several charter fishing boats operate out of Cape Charles.

Contact

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