

## *Architecture on Mackinac Island*

With few exceptions, Mackinac Island's buildings are constructed of wood and at least eleven are built of logs, most with clapboard siding. There is also an active history of building over existing buildings as well as moving buildings around on the Island which lends to each building's history of place. Styles found on Mackinac Island span three centuries and include Native American, French Rustic, Military, Colonial, Victorian, Carpenter Gothic, Greek Revival, Colonial Revival, Classical Revival, Shingle Style, Arts & Craft and American Foursquare.

Current building efforts are watched carefully on the Island as we strive to adhere to strict guidelines. Grand Hotel and other turn of the century buildings seek to preserve the Island's architecture by working with companies who often use guidelines set forth by those of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

In part and because of the Island's architectural importance, the United States of America considers the entire Island as a National Historic Landmark.

## *Native American*

Known as the Anishnaabe, Ojibwe or Chippewa, prior to the coming of the Europeans, they moved according to a season-tapping for maple syrup and fishing in the spring, fishing and planting during the summer, harvesting wild rice in the fall and hunting, trapping and fishing during winter. Homes needed to be portable and the lightweight birch bark or wiigwaas was perfect to create a wiigiwam.

Women were responsible for gathering and building the wiigiwams. Mackinac State Historic Parks built a replica of a Birch Bark Chapel in Marquette Park to show us what Mackinac's Native Peoples used as a dwelling...and to remind us of the conversion program of the French Jesuit explorers.

## *French Rustic*

Built ca.1780, the McGulpin House on Fort & Market streets is a one story log house of piece-sur-piece construction with a steeply pitched gable roof in the northern rustic French Colonial style. This is the only known example of northern French Rustic architecture found outside of France and the shores of Northeastern Canada that we are aware of at this time.

## *Military*

Fort Mackinac is an example of Islamic military architecture interpreted by Europeans on American soil. Islamic thought and architecture came to Europe via the crusades during the medieval era. Instead of using wood for military fortifications, the Islamic architects used stone or brick made from local materials in order to withstand fire. The French and Spanish crusaders brought this idea to the west after their extensive travels through the Islamic world. Fort Mackinac's walls reflect this influence while at the highest point on the Island, Fort Holmes reflects British Military architecture as it is completely made of wood and as a result has burned and been rebuilt several times.

## *Federalist*

Mission Church was built in the 1820's and is like much of Eastern America's architecture, the Federal (or Federalist) style comes from England. The Adams, two British brothers adapted the Georgian style by adding swags, garlands and other quietly delicate details to their new style. In the American colonies, settlers were looking for a distinctively American identity and the Federalist style fit the bill.

## *Colonial*

The Indian Dormitory was built in 1838 as a result of the Treaty of Washington negotiated by Indian Agent Henry Schoolcraft as a place for the local tribal members to receive payments from the Great White Father. Schoolcraft designed the building and had it built by local craftsman in the east coast colonial style. However, the Indians refused to sleep in the building. During the

20th century it was used as the Mackinac Island Public School and later became a part of the Mackinac State Park system. Newly restored, today is the home of the Richard and Jane Manoogian Mackinac Island Art Museum to showcase the state parks collection of art and decorative collectibles in addition to contemporary art by living Mackinac Island artists.

## *Greek Revival*

Architectural features include a gable, front wings, full height classical portico and eared architraves. Ste Anne's Church Rectory, Harbourview Inn and Haan's 1830 Inn are excellent examples of a Greek Revival home. The later two were both built on the foundations of a fur trader's cabin. Harbourview Inn was built for fur trading pioneer Madame LaFramboise by her son-in-law Colonel Benjamin Pierce and was home to the Island's first school. Haan's 1830 Inn was built for Colonel Preston who was stationed at Fort Mackinac and was also the Island's first mayor.

## *Victorian Era*

The term Victorian is not an architectural style but an era from 1840-1900 encompassing many styles. Gothic Revival, Carpenter Gothic, Stick Style, Shingle Style, Italianate, Second Empire, Romanesque and Queen Anne are all Victorian era styles. Examples of Victorian era architecture are plentiful on Mackinac Island. Early buildings include the Island House Hotel and Lake View Hotel. Stick style may be found gracing Bay View Bed & Breakfast and many cottages on the East Bluff while Queen Anne style holds sway at the cottage Brigadoon and on the West Bluff.

## *Carpenter Gothic*

Small Point Bed & Breakfast is the only remaining example of Carpenter Gothic architecture downtown. Built in 1882, it was moved to its current site in the 1950's when construction began on the Mission Point Theater. The term Gothic was considered derogatory by Renaissance revival critics who scorned its lack of conformity to the architectural standards of classic

Greece and Rome. Gothic architecture was dominant in France and the western half of Europe in the 12th through the middle of the 16th centuries. During the Victorian era, the Gothic style made a comeback as a favored cottage style.

### *Stick Style*

Angular and austere, the plainer Stick Style couldn't compete with Victorian tastes, especially the fancy Queen Anne style. As a result, there are few stick style homes left in America. Lucky for us, Mackinac Island probably has more stick style homes than high style Victorian era buildings, but no one is counting. Excellent examples of Stick style are the Verandah at Harbourview B&B, Pine Cottage, Bogan Lane Inn and the Inn on Mackinac.

### *Shingle Style*

This is a prevalent style on the Island and may be seen at the Governors Summer Residence, Anne Cottage, the Mackinac Island Yacht Club and downtown on the west end of the boardwalk. Many of the homeowners during the turn of the 19th century worked with architects to create their own interpretation of Victorian era architecture which led to many of the beautiful cottages having many styles combined to create their dream homes. The Shingle Style also conveyed a sense of the house as continuous volume. This effect—of the building as an envelope of space, rather than a great mass, was enhanced by the visual tautness of the flat shingled surfaces, the horizontal shape of many shingle style houses, and the emphasis on horizontal continuity, both in exterior details and in the flow of spaces within the houses.

### *Tudor Revival Style*

The elaborate Inn at Stonecliffe was the Island's largest summer estate. Situated on over 150 acres it has a commanding view of the straits of Mackinac from high atop the cliffs on the end of the Island's West Bluff. It is the only example of Tudor Revival Architecture on Mackinac and was built for Michael Cudahy of County Kilkenny, Ireland who emigrated with his family to the

United States in 1849. With his brother John Cudahy and Philip Armour they started a meat-packing business in Milwaukee and revolutionized the meat industry by introducing summer curing under refrigeration.

The mansion was designed by famed society architect Frederick Perkins (also designed the Governor's Summer Residence and The Pines) who studied at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris. Tudor Revival homes became a sign wealth in the early 20th century. The style originated in Old England and the revival style mimics but does not duplicate Medieval construction techniques. Perkins created a 2 1/2 story Tudor Revival frame house with decorative half timbering, steeply pitched cross gable roof, battered rubblestone tower, an exterior combined of stucco, brick, stone and wood with varied window shapes with a clover motif to give the mansion a relaxed yet stately appearance.

The MRA operated here in their early days and built the adjacent condos as a ski area. Today's Woods Restaurant was the former amusement lounge for Cudahy and his family. The estate was split in the late 1980's and Wood's Golf Course was constructed on the back acreage. Today the mansion is now known as the Inn at Stonecliffe and is a very popular estate hotel.

### *Colonial Revival*

Some architectural historians say that Colonial Revival is a Victorian style; others believe that the Colonial Revival style marked the end of the Victorian period in architecture. The Colonial Revival style is based loosely on Federal and Georgian house styles, and a clear reaction against excessively elaborate Victorian Queen Anne architecture. Eventually, the simple, symmetrical Colonial Revival style became incorporated into the Foursquare. Mackinac Island examples included Chateau Lorraine, Cloghaun Bed & Breakfast and the Post War Bungalow house styles in the Mission District.

# Mackinac Island

*Self Guided Architectural Walking Tour*

*300 Years of*

*American Architecture*

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