

Exploring House Colors at Kidzfest with PHW



A Special Edition of Preservation of Historic Winchester's Newsletter

National Preservation Month 2016

Volume 39, No. 2

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Thanks for stopping by the Preservation of Historic Winchester (PHW) booth at Kidzfest 2016. We love our local buildings and their unique histories, and their exterior colors can have a huge impact on how we experience and enjoy their finely-crafted details. If you can't stay with us and color a house today, please take this newsletter, share it with your family, and enjoy!

Federal Style—1780-1820

Early Americans were influenced by English building trends even after the Revolutionary War severed our colonial ties to England. American builders took inspiration from Robert Adams, an English architect who reinterpreted classical Roman motifs. One of the common traits of a Federal building is an entryway surrounded by a fanlight over the door.



Reid-White House, Lexington, VA
Artwork Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs
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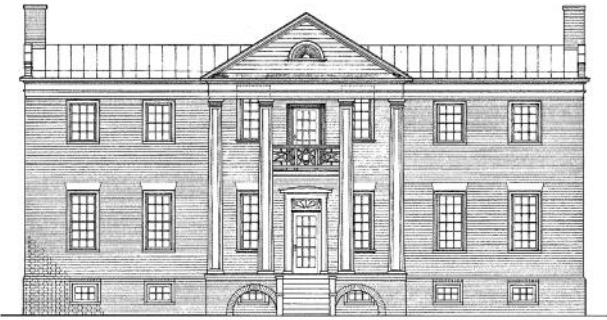
Historic Colors

Body: Natural brick or limestone; for wood siding pastel shades of light yellows, creamy beiges, bluish grays, blues, greens, off-whites.

Trim: Lighter tones than siding in off whites, creams, pale yellows, buffs, restrained blues.

Shutters: Rich greens, dark reds, deep browns, blacks, creamy off-whites.

Greek Revival Style—1820-1845



Belmont, Charlottesville, VA

Artwork Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, HABS, Reproduction number HABS VA,2-CHAR,20- (sheet 5 of 12)

As the United States solidified its democratic spirit, American architects looked toward Greece, the birthplace of democracy, for architectural inspiration. The idea was to create the impression of a Greek temple. If the setting allowed, a grand portico with a pedimented (triangular) roof supported by columns would complete the look. The traditional white body and green shutter combination remained an American favorite long after the style itself faded.

Historic Colors

Body: White to mimic the look of marble; less commonly pale yellows, light blue grays, buffs, green grays, smoky grays.

Trim: White, or for nonwhite houses gray blues, olive greens, buff, evergreens.

Shutters: Bottle greens, chrome greens, vivid greens.

Gothic Revival Style—1840-1865



Artwork from Specimen Book of One Hundred Architectural Designs by A.J. Bicknell & Co., 1879.

Architects rebelled against the stark white and restrained forms of Greek Revival as romanticism pervaded the arts and literature. Andrew Jackson Downing almost singlehandedly popularized Gothic Revival style with his book Cottage Residences. Downing, a horticulturist, believed a building should harmonize with its surroundings in design and color. The style is an idealized version of a medieval cottage, fanciful and enchanting, decorated with “gingerbread” trim to make it almost storybook-like in appearance.

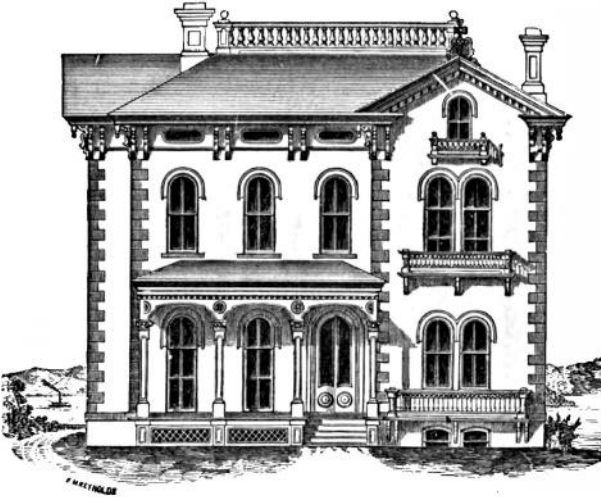
Historic Colors

Body: Fawns, warm grays, smoky grays, straw colors, rose beiges, chocolate browns, and pinks.

Trim: Same color as the body but in a contrasting shade, or creamy off whites.

Shutters: Warm browns, reddish browns, deep forest greens.

Italianate Style—1860-1885



Artwork from Specimen Book of One Hundred Architectural Designs by A.J. Bicknell & Co., 1879.

Italianate style was modeled on Italian Renaissance villas. It is typified by round arched windows with large panes of glass, low hipped roofs, often a projecting bay, and the most identifiable feature, scroll sawn brackets decorating the porches and eaves. Because of the common usage of brackets for decoration, it is sometimes called the Bracketed style.

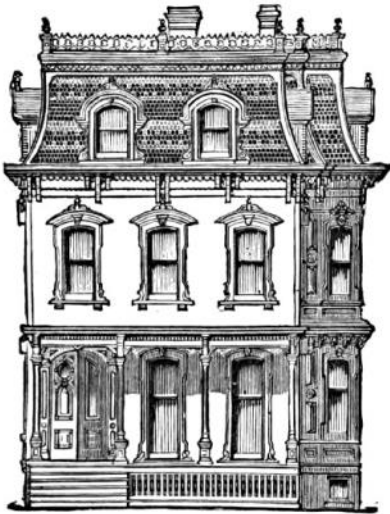
Historic Colors

Body: Earth browns, stone grays, yellow ochres, peachy tans, moss greens, yellows, grayish greens, terra-cotta reds, dark browns, blue grays.

Trim: Creamy off white, beiges, evergreens, deep browns, dark olive greens, or a darker/lighter shade of the body color.

Shutters: Warm browns, deep forest greens, reddish browns.

Second Empire Style—1860-1880



Artwork from Specimen Book of One Hundred Architectural Designs by A.J. Bicknell & Co., 1879.

The cosmopolitan buildings constructed in Paris during the reign of Napoleon III (1852-70) were distinctive because of their roofs. Francois Mansart, a French architect, created this unusual roof shape to add an extra upper story in the building. The decoration is similar to that of the Italianate style but often with shingle roof patterns and numerous porches and verandas.

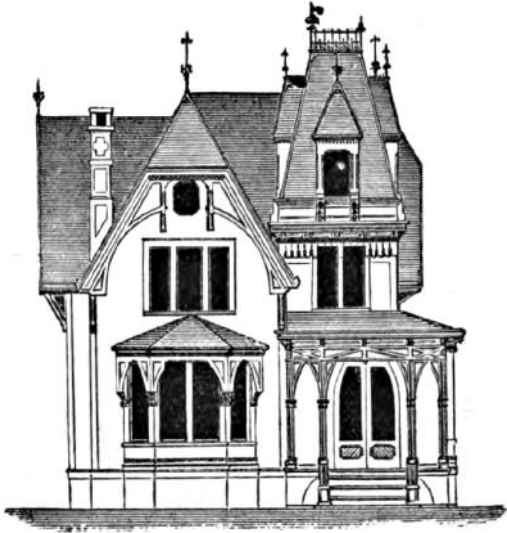
Historic Colors

Body: Maroons, warm red browns, blue grays, dark terra-cotta reds, chocolate browns, olive greens, evergreens, sage greens, dark golden ochres, burnt oranges, yellowish beiges, soft tans.

Trim: Evergreens, light chocolates, whites, beiges, creams, yellows to contrast with the body.

Shutters: Slate grays, green blacks, dark browns.

Queen Anne Style—1874-1900



Artwork from Specimen Book of One Hundred Architectural Designs by A.J. Bicknell & Co., 1879.

The American Queen Anne style fuses a wide range of picturesque details to create houses that are eclectic, extravagant, and asymmetrical in a loose reinterpretation of English architecture during the reign of Queen Anne (1702-14). Rambling porches, towers, and bays create an irregular silhouette; multiple colors, shapes, and building materials emphasize the unconventional style.

Historic Colors

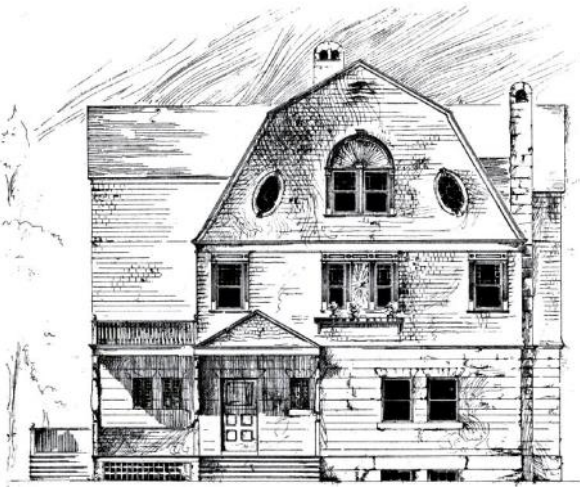
Body: Warm brick reds, buttercup yellows, sandy taupes, olive greens, fawns, deep greenish yellow-ochres, gray greens, soft yellows, muted grays, bluish

bottle greens, dark browns, sage greens.

Trim: Maroons, medium chocolate browns, slate grays, umber browns, evergreens, rich tans, chrome yellows, sage greens, sap greens, burnt siennas.

Shutters: Evergreens, dark reds, tans, dark blues.

Shingle Style—1880-1900



Artwork from American Cottages by William T. Comstock, 1883

The Shingle style was made popular by the New England school of architecture which produced seaside cottages. Shingle style eschewed the highly ornamented patterns found in Queen Anne style. Combined with a renewed interest in the shingled surfaces of colonial buildings following America's 1876 celebration of the country's Centennial, Shingle style could be considered a middle ground between the extravagant Queen Anne and the restrained Classical Revival styles from the same period.

Historic Colors

Body: Weathered or stained shingles, green grays, earth browns, silver grays, moss greens.

Trim: Whites, creamy ivories.

Colonial Revival Styles—1890-1950



Artwork from [Book of Plans](#) by Chicago House Wrecking Co., 1913.

The Colonial Revival spans a number of styles related to and inspired by the early colonial settlers of America, popularized by America's Centennial celebration in 1876. Substyles include Dutch Colonial, Georgian Revival and Federal Revival. The Revivalist styles are eclectic mixes of various elements from early American buildings, often in an exaggerated and anachronistic form.

Historic Colors

Similar to Federal Style colors, or

Body: Whites, pale yellows, soft buffs, muted terra-cotta reds, pale olives, medium grays.

Trim: Whites, creamy ivories.

Tudor Revival Style—1910-1930



This subset of the revival styles is an imitation of the simple, rustic English Tudor architecture (1485–1603) that would have been familiar to the very earliest English colonists of America. The style typically features steeply pitched roofs, half-timbering, small multi-paned windows, large and prominent chimneys, jettied (overhanging) second floors, and wood shingle roofs.

Historic Colors

Body: White or cream stucco with dark brown wood timbering historically, sometimes grays or browns.

Trim: Dark brown or darker gray, natural stone or brick left unpainted. The trim is historically always darker than the body.

Craftsman or Bungalow Style—1890-1930



Artwork from Book of Plans, by Chicago House Wrecking Co., 1913.

Craftsman style was the predominant form of smaller houses built across the country during this period. The style originated with brothers Charles Sumner Greene and Henry Mather Greene in Pasadena, California. They drew inspiration from the English Arts and Crafts movement and oriental wooden architecture. They valued showing the manual skill of construction workers, most often demonstrated by exposing the ends of rafters and using large triangular braces and

stick work in the gables.

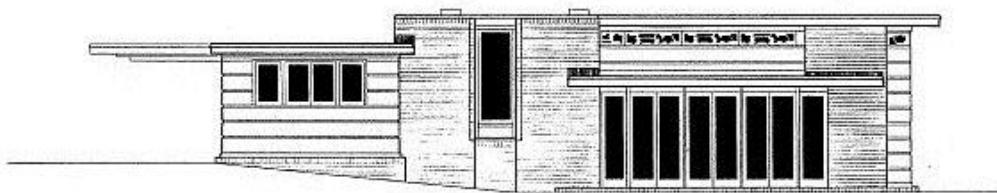
Historic Colors

Body: Yellows, ochres, lighter browns, sage greens, sometimes pale grays.

Trim: Deeper oranges, browns, golds, greens, or grays, sometimes lighter reds; roofs often red-brown to mimic clay tiles.

Prairie Style—1900-1920

The Prairie style was developed by a group of Chicago architects known as the Prairie School. The landmark examples are concentrated in the large Midwestern cities, with vernacular copies replicated across the country through architectural pattern books.



Pope-Leighey House, Falls Church/Fairfax County, VA
Artwork Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, HABS, Reproduction number HABS VA,30-FALCH,2- (sheet 4 of 9)

Horizontal banded wall patterns and rows of windows emphasize a low, horizontal profile, while the roofs can resemble those of pagodas.

Historic Colors

Body: Yellows, ochres, lighter browns, sage greens, sometimes pale grays.

Trim: Deeper oranges, browns, golds, greens, or grays, sometimes lighter reds; roofs often red-brown to dark brown.

Other Styles

There are many other styles of architecture with individual characteristics, including:

- ◆ Romanesque Revival
- ◆ Beaux Arts
- ◆ Spanish Eclectic
- ◆ Exotic Revival Styles
- ◆ Neoclassical Revival
- ◆ Art Deco
- ◆ Streamline Moderne
- ◆ International
- ◆ And potentially endless combinations of styles in transitional forms and vernacular interpretations.

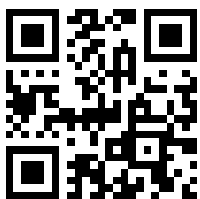
If you want to learn more, we suggest finding a copy of [A Field Guide to American Houses](#) by Virginia and Lee McAlester, which will help you to identify key hallmarks of the various architectural styles. You may also want to visit www.oldhouses.com/styleguide/ and realtormag.realtor.org/home-and-design/guide-residential-styles for brief online overviews and pictorial guides on style identification.

Up to date scholarship on historic colors is a little harder to find, but [Old House Colors](#) by Lawrence Schwin III is a good place to start. For an online source, be sure to check out “Historic Paint Colors” by Hugh Howard at www.bobvila.com/articles/2240-historic-paint-colors/ for color examples of popular hues like chrome yellow and Prussian blue.

About Us

Preservation of Historic Winchester, Inc. (PHW) is a non-profit organization founded in 1964 dedicated to preserving the history and architecture of Winchester, Virginia. PHW hosts the Holiday House Tour, special lectures and workshops, membership events, a quarterly printed newsletter. We also maintain a non-circulating library relevant to local history and architecture.

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Preservation
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Hexagon House ♦ 530 Amherst St. ♦ Winchester, VA 22601

NEWS

Preservation Month 2016

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A NOTE ON HISTORIC COLOR SUGGESTIONS

There are many ways to approach exterior colors for a building. No way is inherently correct, but the appropriateness of the approach and our perception of how nice it looks will vary in different settings and as colors rise and fall in popularity. Three common approaches are:

1. Recreation of colors in the vividness they were at the time they were originally applied to the building.
2. Use of colors in more muted tones to mimic the appearance the paint has been left to weather for many years.
3. Finding colors which harmonize with the personality of the owner, the building style, and the surrounding neighborhood.

Why not try coloring the same building style a few different ways to see how the colors bring out or obscure details on the house?

ARE YOU A PHW MEMBER?



Preservation of Historic Winchester, Inc., is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting Winchester's architectural heritage. PHW depends on income from membership and contributions to achieve its goals.

All contributions above membership are tax deductible.

Join today by completing this form and returning it to
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