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A Walk Through
**Historic
Marblehead**

**A self-guided Walking Tour
of Old Town Marblehead**



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A Walk Through Historic Marblehead

Photographs are referenced throughout the tour by letter. Most photos appear on page 2.

Start your walking tour at **Abbot Hall** on Washington Square (A). The building is the seat of Marblehead's town government, and houses one of the country's most

famous paintings, *The Spirit of '76* by Archibald Willard. Many artifacts of Marblehead's history are on display, including the original deed to Marblehead from the Nanapashemet tribe of Native Americans, dated 1684. A gift shop operated by the Marblehead Historical Commission is open year-round, 10 a.m.–noon, 1–4 p.m. from mid-May through



Abbot Hall

the winter holidays.

Abbot Hall is open year-round. Summer hours from July 1–October 31 are: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 8:00am–5:00pm, Wednesday from 7:30am–7:30pm, Saturday from 10:00am–5:00pm and Sunday from 11:00am–5:00pm. From November 1–June 30, call the Selectmen's office for hours at 781-631-0000.

As you leave Abbot Hall by the Washington Street entrance, turn right going down the hill. On the left you will see three privately-owned houses (numbers 187 (C), 185 and 181) built during the mid-18th century by members of the Lee and Hooper families—successful ship owners and merchants.

The fine example of late Georgian-style architecture at **185 Washington Street** (B) features a wood facade built to resemble stone blocks. The back portion of the house was built around 1743, and the front part some years later. After 1771, it was the home of Col. William Raymond Lee, a nephew of Col. Jeremiah Lee and a captain in Glover's Regiment, which played a significant role in the American Revolution. His daughter married John Pulling, who assisted in hanging the lantern in Old North Church in Boston for Paul Revere on the night of the famous rides.

At the bottom of the hill at 161 Washington Street is the **Jeremiah Lee Mansion** (D). The house is considered to be one of the finest examples of Georgian architecture in America. Its wood facade was originally and is once again

sand-painted to look like stone.

Built in 1768 by Colonel Lee, a wealthy merchant and distinguished patriot, it is a superb example of pre-Revolutionary gentry living, with outstanding furniture and decorative objects of the period, original wallpapers, and some of the most elaborate interior woodwork carving in America. Rich mahogany paneling from the West Indies and fine ceramics, glass and hand-painted wallpaper from England were brought to America in Lee's and other merchants' ships. Guided tours.

The Jeremiah Lee Mansion is owned by the **Marblehead Museum & Historical Society**, and is open June–October, Tuesday–Saturday 10am–4pm; closed Sunday and Monday. Special exhibits at the Museum's galleries across the street at 170 Washington Street highlight specific aspects of the collections. Research archives and galleries open year-round, Tuesday–Friday, 10am–4pm.

Diagonally across the street on Hooper Street is the **King Hooper Mansion** (I), once the home of Robert Hooper, merchant prince and ship owner. He was known as "King" because of his fair dealings and generosity to the town. The older part of the building was constructed in 1728, and the pine-paneled rooms clearly reflect their age. The Georgian front rooms were added after 1745, and their ornamentation and elegance form an interesting contrast to the older rooms. The home also contains a wine cellar, cozy cellar kitchen, and a third floor ballroom. **The Marblehead Arts Association** owns the building and uses the lovely surroundings for art exhibits throughout the year. The building and a gift shop with members' wares are open Tuesday–Saturday, 10am–4pm; Sunday 1–5pm.

When leaving the Hooper home, turn left and follow Hooper Street to Union Street. At this corner is the Georgian-style **Lafayette House** (E). Legend has it that General Lafayette's carriage was too large to pass by the house when he visited Marblehead in 1824, so the corner of the house was removed. Actually, the corner was built that way for a retail shop entrance. This was also the first mansion of Col. Jeremiah Lee and his family (1751–68) for more than twice as long as they lived in their larger grand mansion.

Follow Union Street to Water Street toward the **Boston Yacht Club**, which began operating in Marblehead in 1902, one of the oldest yachting clubs in the country.

Continue on to Front Street and **Crocker Park**. From the park you will enjoy a magnificent view of Marblehead Harbor. Rest rooms and benches are available.



185 Washington Street



Spirit of '76



Glover Square



187 Washington Street



The Lafayette House



Fort Sewall



Jeremiah Lee Mansion



Hearth and Eagle House



King Hooper Mansion

As you continue down Front Street, you will find the **State Street Wharf**, the town's public landing since the mid-1600s. Benches and rest rooms are available.

Beyond this point on Front Street is **Glover Square** (G), named for the Revolutionary War hero General John Glover. For two years, while a Colonel, he led the country's first regiment of military mariners (precursors of the Marines), which was comprised of nearly 600 Marblehead fishermen and seamen. Under his leadership, they rowed General Washington and his army across the Delaware River, and also ferried a larger force of 9,000 men, oxen, and cannon across the East River in New York after the Battle of Long Island.

At the end of Front Street and at the entrance to Marblehead Harbor is **Fort Sewall** (H), first established in the mid-1600s. Originally rough earthen barriers constructed by the town against sudden attacks from the sea by the French, the grounds were improved in 1742 and then housed Revolutionary and later garrisons. Some underground barracks still exist.

During the War of 1812, the frigate Constitution sought shelter from pursuing British men o' war off Marblehead's waters. Marblehead seamen in the Constitution's crew and the intimidating guns and cannon on Fort Sewall made the escape possible.

From the Fort, walk back towards town on Front



7 Franklin Street

1715 and enlarged in 1750, it was later owned by the captain in command of Fort Sewall during the War of 1812. The soldiers of his regiment were billeted there, and made the shutters that are still on the building.

At 7 Franklin Street (J) stands the home of Parson John Barnard, minister of the First Church (now First Church of Christ) for over 50 years in the early 18th century, who helped the men of Marblehead increase the town's foreign trade. The house was built c. 1727 and enlarged later in the 18th century.

Follow Franklin Street and turn left on Washington Street. On the right is Reverend Barnard's church, now referred to locally as **Old North Church** (K).

Founded in 1635, the church (or meeting house) was originally located on Old Burial Hill. The building at 41 Washington Street was constructed in 1824 after fire destroyed the first two meeting houses.

The beautiful codfish weather vane on the steeple is made of gilded copper, and is 52 inches long. It is believed to have been made about 1700, although the artisan is not known.

On the opposite side of the street stands 44 Washington Street (L), former home of Elbridge Gerry, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, Governor of



44 Washington Street



Old North Church

Massachusetts, and Vice President of the United States.

At 65 Washington Street (M) is the house of Captain Samuel Russell Trevett, leader of the Marblehead Company at the Battle of Bunker Hill in 1775.

Directly ahead in Market Square

is the **Old Town House** (N). It was built in 1727, pre-dating Boston's Faneuil Hall, and has been used as an official town building ever since. It was the departure point for volunteers for all wars from the French & Indian War (1754–63) through the 19th century.

Two blocks past the Town House on Washington Street, turn right on Summer Street. Just up the hill is **St. Michael's Church** (O), the second oldest Episcopal church still standing in the U.S., built in 1714, originally



Old Town House

with a tall steeple. The church interior contains fine artifacts donated by English benefactors, including a 1732 brass chandelier and a period altarpiece. When news of the Declaration of Independence reached Marblehead, patriots broke into this citadel of Toryism, removed the royal coat-of-arms from above the altar, and rang the church's old English bell until it cracked. The bell was later recast by Paul Revere, and is still in use. A businessman and important town benefactor, John Hooper, helped to restore the church in 1832. Later additions include Victorian stained-glass windows and fine pipe organs.

Back on Washington Street, the second house past Summer Street is a brick house called "the Brick Path." It was the meeting place of the Tories, or Loyalists, who did not favor war with Britain in the 1770s. Not many Colonial houses in New England were built of brick, due in part to concerns about damp weather.

We hope you enjoyed the tour. Stop in at the Lee Mansion (June–Oct.), or the Hooper Mansion, both just a block away. Also take time to enjoy Marblehead's many shops and restaurants!



65 Washington Street



St. Michael's Church

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