

walking tour



The Hampton Pinckney Historic District

Celebrating Two Centuries of Greenville's History, written by Robert Benedict

Although the Hampton-Pinckney Historic District was Greenville's first trolley car neighborhood, and is largely known for its concentration of residential Victorian and Craftsman architecture, it also has a long history dating back to antebellum Greenville. It is a neighborhood that possesses historical significance with its association with the family of the "Father of Greenville," Vardy McBee.

In 1815, Vardy McBee purchased 11,028 acres from Lemuel Alston, including Alston's home on Prospect Hill that is now the site of the Greenville Water System. McBee was a true philanthropist and he is largely responsible for the transformation of Greenville from a small frontier village into a growing textile community of the South. By 1836 Vardy McBee had personally relocated to Greenville from Lincolnton, North Carolina.

His home on Prospect Hill enabled him to oversee his extensive land holdings along the Reedy River including all of what is now the Hampton-Pinckney District.

By the 1840's, McBee began conveying parcels of his land to family members. The first such conveyance was approximately 12 acres in the 1840's to William Pinkney (without the 'c') McBee. As a result the neighborhood began with the McBee family and what is now 21 Pinckney Street (see below). However, it is also significant for its role as a trolley car neighborhood.

By 1881, the Richmond and Danville Railroad had established a street railway system with mules pulling passengers and freight cars on lines that ran between terminals on Augusta and West Washington Street. This eventually led to the trolley car system for Greenville that was founded in 1899 and first operated on Jan. 1, 1901.

Tracks were installed on Main Street, College Street, Buncombe Street, North Street and Pendleton Street. The first line ran up West Washington Street from the Southern Railroad depot to Main Street. The lines also served Poe Mill, Woodside Mill, Monaghan Mill and even San Souci Country Club, which was the Greenville Country Club.

Hampton Pinckney really emerged at this time since the trolley car lines were only one block away, and it was during the late 1800s and early 1900s that most of the homes were built. Accordingly, the dominant architectural styles are Queen Anne and Craftsman with some Gothic Revival, Colonial Revival, Italianate, and even Prairie.

Like most urban neighborhoods, Hampton Pinckney had fallen into disrepair following WWII and began a period of decline until the mid to late 1970's.

According to Miss Helen Ragsdale who still lives in the same house on Hampton Avenue that her father bought from Senator Donaldson in 1907, Hampton Avenue was a "street of widows." All of the men had died, and the children had grown up and left, leaving a group of elderly women behind.

But things started turning around in the 1970's and the neighborhood was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on December 12, 1977. Today the Hampton Pinckney Historic District is a distinctive neighborhood representing Greenville's most significant residential and architectural resources.

Hampton Pinckney Tour of Homes

1. 308 Hampton Avenue

– Gallivan House: Built in 1904-1905 by James Gallivan, an engineer. 2½ stories with Prairie-style characteristics. Octagonal bays, gable with Palladian windows, bracketed cornices and brick quoins. In 1960 the Knights of Columbus acquired the house. The vacant lot adjacent to the Gallivan House is a magnificent garden and is also owned by the current owners.

2. 309 Hampton House

– J.M. Greer House: Constructed in 1894 by J.M. Geer and sold in 1898 to G. Heyward Mahon, a former mayor of Greenville. The Geer-Mahon is architecturally significant as an excellent example of the Queen Anne architecture style. The most prominent feature is the home's turret capped with a pressed-metal, conical roof. Several rehabilitations have recaptured much of the original character including the removal of asbestos shingles that covered the exterior of the house. Current owners Sarah and Dr. Eric Dellinger recently replicated much of the original spindle work on the front porch that recapturing its original appearance. The Dellinger's have also carefully restored the homes interior bringing back the original Victorian character that reflects the grandeur of this elegant house.



3. 313 Hampton Avenue – Lipscomb House: Built in 1897 with Queen Anne characteristics.

4. 310 Hampton Avenue: 1912 distinctive craftsman style; home that, according to several sources, was moved to this location. Note the projecting gable that forms a porch with tapered pillars. The gables have post and beam bargeboards.

5. 314 Hampton Avenue – Landrum House: Built in 1874 by Chevis Montgomery Landrum and Melinda Penelope McBee. Rather eclectic house with Ionic columns grouped in three's. Distinctive motif in the gable dormer. When the Landrums first moved here they lived in the "honeymoon cottage" in the backyard while the house was being finished. Also note the servants quarters house in the rear yard.

6. 318 Hampton Avenue – Moran House: Built in 1916. Architectural features include distinctive transom windows and exposed rafters.

7. 317 Hampton Avenue – Morgan-James House: Built in 1895 in the Eastlake Style. Note the wrap-around porch with turned posts and gazebo. Decorative bargeboards and had a very decorative paint scheme when built. It was a boarding house before being bought and restored.

8. 320 Hampton Avenue: Built around 1890, note the three-quarter wraparound porch and Tuscan columns. Other noteworthy details include turned balusters and Palladian window motifs.

9. 321 Hampton Avenue – Ragsdale House: Built in 1890 and bought by Helen Ragsdale's father from T. Q. Donaldson. Donaldson was a former state senator who built several homes on the south side of Hampton Avenue. The Ragsdale house is a fine example of Queen Anne architecture with fish-scale shingles in the gables, corbelled chimney caps, and decorative eave brackets.

10. 322 Hampton Avenue: Constructed around 1920 by the Briggs family who lived next door. Single-story brick house.

11. 326 Hampton Avenue – Briggs House: Built around 1905 by Henry Briggs, husband of Lula McBee, a granddaughter of Vardry McBee. Prairie-style characteristics with distinctive leaded and stain glass windows, brick quoins, and bracketed cornices. The interior has gas chandeliers and interior shutters especially designed for the house that operate on tracks and are spring loaded. Henry Briggs was a Mayor of Greenville, and William Jennings Bryan, who ran for President, visited the house once.

12. 402 Hampton Avenue – F.B. McBee House: The Frank Butler McBee House is a classic example of Greek revival architecture. While the construction date of the two-story home is unknown, it was likely built before 1860. The house boasts a prominent front gable with dentils and decorative brackets. The interior has unusual six-inch wide hearty pine floorboards and a side-facing staircase with hand-carved banister, an architectural feature more commonly seen in Lowcountry homes. This house features the symmetry typical of Greek revival style and has a wraparound porch with pillars. The front door has a transom and sidelights and the unusual staircase contains an original architectural niche.

13. 325 Hampton Avenue - Associate Reformed Church: Constructed in 1919, this distinctive masonry church had several congregations in recent years and has been recently acquired for the purpose of rehabilitation into upscale condominiums.

14. 405 Hampton Avenue – Frank Galloway House: Constructed circa 1917, this 2½-story masonry residence features a large segmental pediment and arched openings at the porch. The central door is accented with a stone surround and quoins.

15. 408 Hampton Avenue – Walker-Monroe House: Constructed circa 1920 with distinctive Arts and Crafts detailing such as brick piers and tapered wood pillars with the front porch.

16. 409 Hampton Avenue – Chiles House: This distinctive 1925 bungalow has significant Craftsman detailing with a front porch featuring brick piers, tapered brick pillars, and brick parapet.

17. 411 Hampton Avenue – Bailey House: Constructed in 1890 by Rev. Thomas Bailey, a former missionary and secretary of the SC Baptist Convention. Built in the Queen Anne style, the Bailey House features turned balusters on both levels of the front porch, two over two windows and fish-scale shingles in the roof gables.

18. 415 Hampton Avenue – Matoon Presbyterian Church: Built in 1888, Matoon is one of Greenville's oldest African-American churches. The church also had a school for many years that was located on the lower floor. Note the distinctive window hood molding and buttresses with stone weathering.

19. 412 Hampton Avenue – Lineberger House: This Queen Anne "Gable Ell" cottage was built circa 1900 and features projecting roof gables and two over two windows.

20. 414 Hampton Avenue: Like its next-door neighbors, this Queen Anne "Gable Ell" cottage was also constructed circa 1900. Victorian detailing including the spindled frieze spanning the façade, decorative brackets, turned posts and balusters.

21. 416 Hampton Avenue: Also constructed around 1900, this Queen Anne cottage has a distinctive front door with Haliante detailing framed with a transom. Also designed in a "Gable Ell" plan with a prominent central hall.

22. 38 Pinckney Street: Originally located on Hampton Avenue, this house was built around 1910 and moved to present location around 1915. According to former residents of the neighborhood, the original owner got into a dispute with his next-door neighbor and had the house divided into two sections and moved on logs one block. Queen Anne cottage commonly called a "Gable Ell." Note the steep pitched hip roof with paired columns. The house has a large central hall with transom and sidelights accenting the front door.

23. 36 Pinckney Street – Glover House: Built around 1915, and the same family owned both 38 and 36 Pinckney Street for about 40 years. Craftsman style architecture; note the leaded glass transoms and sidelights and large tapered pillars, curved roof and large porch. The large porches are characteristic of homes built during this time and the residents spend most evenings socializing with friends and neighbors by relaxing on their porches and entertaining.

24. 37 Pinckney Street – Central Baptist Church: The sanctuary was built in 1904 and it is one of 4 churches in the neighborhood. It has been expanded twice, but the original design is Gothic Revival. Note the castellated tower with tall buttresses, Gothic arched windows and stepped parapets. There was a house located where the gym is located today.

25. 31 Pinckney Street – Lipscomb House: Built around 1905, this 2-story house closely resembles a house on Hillcrest Drive. The owners actually moved to Hillcrest Drive and built essentially the same house (but Mrs. Lipscomb thought Hillcrest was too far out in the country, so they moved back). Note the fan-lights over the front door and wings.

26. 29 Pinckney Street – Dr. Anderson House: Built circa 1913 with a clapboard and shingle exterior. 2½ stories with Tuscan columns, a central pediment, and a handsome Palladian window in the gable.

27. 34 Pinckney Street – C.O. Hobbs House: Built in 1905 in a Foursquare design with a wraparound porch and porte corche. Note the tapered paneled pillars and large front porch.

28. 27 Pinckney Street: Built around 1913. Note the hipped roof, wraparound porch and a projecting gable with modillions.

29. 28 Pinckney Street: Built around 1905 was enlarged in 1919 by Jameson and McKoy. Converted into apartments in 1950 and remodeled.

30. 26 Pinckney Street – Paul Hayne Houston House: Built around 1904 and is a very distinct Queen Anne style home with Victorian detailing emphasizing the one-story porch.

31. 23 Pinckney Street: Built around 1915, this house features tapered pillars and brick piers that span the front façade. Note that Tuscan columns flank the front door.

32. 21 Pinckney Street – W.P. McBee House: While the year of construction is unknown, the William Pinckney McBee House is probably the oldest in the neighborhood. The National Historic Register of Historic Places dates it from 1834, but W.P. McBee would have been only 14 years old then. Yet this is likely the "house near Butler" to which he brought his wife after their marriage in 1846, since Hampton Avenue and Pinckney Street did not extend past Lloyd to Butler. Originally constructed in the Greek revival style, elements of the Victorian and Arts and Crafts styles were added. The current owners converted an upstairs room into a master bath and renovated the kitchen.

33. 22 Pinckney Street – Gallivan (Dan J.) House: Built in 1905 and is believed to be one of several homes in the neighborhood constructed by Mr. Robert Landrum Huskey, a general superintendent for Gallivan Construction Co. Note the exterior shingles this denotes the Shingle Style Design that was much more common up north and these shingles were actually shipped from Connecticut. The house has 10-foot ceilings, marble fireplaces, chair railing and crown molding throughout. It has a large screened porch across the back of the house. An iron gate with "sunflower" designs leads to a courtyard with a garden divided into two sections - one is formal and one is informal. Originally owned by Mr. and Mrs. Dan Gallivan, then Mr. and Mrs. Harold Gallivan. Later Mr. Harold Gallivan died and Mrs. Gallivan remarried Dr. W.S. Fewell.

34. 20 Pinckney Street: Built in 1909 by Mrs. T.A. Walker. Note the large wraparound porch, Tuscan columns, and denticulated cornice.

35. 18 Pinckney Street – O.P. Earle House: Built circa 1908 in the Colonial Revival style with a Dutch Gambrell roof and Tuscan columns on the front porch, the house remained in the Earle family until the 1960s. It has served as a boarding house and the office of a local advertising agency. It was renovated in the late 1970s and again in 2003, when the current owners made extensive restorations, including updating the electrical and plumbing systems. The oak flooring in the front half of the first floor, the crown and picture molding in many rooms, and the downstairs bathtub are all original.

36. 14 Pinckney Street – Wells House: Built around 1905 in a Foursquare design. Note the scrolled brackets under the cornice, the porte corche, and the large porch.

37. 17 Pinckney Street – Rickman House: Built in 1908, one of the best examples of Queen Anne architecture in Greenville. 2½ stories with wraparound porch and a gazebo with a tent roof. Paired porch columns and paneled chimneys. Note the stone foundation and piers (called “rusticated”). Also note the projecting gambrels this was finally possible in the late 1880’s with balloon frame construction instead of timber frame construction. Everything became more elaborate with better detailing led to Queen Anne exuberance.

38. 11 Pinckney Street: Built in 1907 and designed by H. Lee Meader. Note the double-leaf doorway with a transom and prominent bay windows.

39. 9 Pinckney Street – Serrine House: Built in 1905. There were a number of homes designed and built by J.E. Serrine in Greenville. Serrine was one of South Carolina’s best-known architects and designed numerous textile mills, schools, hospitals, etc. 1½ stories with a hipped roof, prominent gable dormers, and distinctive stucco exterior.

40. 7 Pinckney Street: Built in 1904-05. Two story Queen Anne with Tuscan porch columns.

41. 12 Pinckney Street: Built around 1900, this 2-story Queen Anne has been a boarding house in recent decades and is currently undergoing an extensive rehabilitation into a single-family residence.

42. 10 Pinckney Street – Whitmire-McGee House: Built in 1913 as a duplex for Miss Elizabeth Whitmire By Samuel Lowery, a neighbor. After Miss Whitmire’s death, the house was purchased by Mrs. Sophie Meares and then later by Mr. R.L. McGee whose parents lived there for forty-one years. Present owners are Mr. and Mrs. Miles Adair who bought in 1978. Stick Style architecture built on a 16-inch granite foundation. Has four porches and note the small second floor balcony. The house has forty-one windows and 26 doors. The downstairs woodwork is mahogany and upstairs is pine. The house has 6 fireplaces with one being freestanding, perhaps used a warming area for houseplants in the winter.

43. 6 Pinckney Street: Built around 1920, note the large Tuscan columns and distinctive brickwork.

44. 213 Butler Street – Louis Burdell Houston House: Built in 1904 by Louis Burdell Houston for his new bride, this resembles a house in Brevard. Very unique with a large semi-circular porch, slate Hip roof and a prominent pediment over the front door. L.B. Houston died in 1947 and Mrs. Houston married Dr. James Anderson who lived on Pinckney Street.e?).