

TOUR

LARAMIE & ALBANY COUNTY, WYOMING

HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL TREASURES

OF THE GEM CITY OF THE PLAINS



WE HAVE AN
APP FOR THAT!



TOUR

LARAMIE & ALBANY COUNTY, WYOMING

WELCOME!

Once upon a time, kings and queens embarked upon royal tours to visit the distant corners of their realm. Today we invite you to walk no more than a few short blocks to meet Laramie’s special brand of “royalty” – magnificent Victorian, Queen Anne, and Tudor homes, the crown jewels of our town’s rich architectural heritage. Each of our three tours combines a variety of these and other architectural styles but has a unique flavor all its own.

From its beginning, Laramie was a railroad town, and, like other “Hell-on-Wheels” towns, its early history was violent and spectacular. Named for a French trapper, Jacques LaRamie, it was also one of the few end-of-the-tracks encampments along the route that survived.

The rails came through in May of 1868; within two weeks, 400 town lots had been sold and 7- x 9-foot shanties of boards, logs, ties, and canvas huddled near the tracks. Among the first arrivals were gamblers, prostitutes, speculators, a few honest citizens – and many who preyed on them. Frontier justice was swift and effective, however, and by October, citizen vigilantes had lynched four suspected criminals. Others took the hint and moved on.

The Union Pacific built shops and a roundhouse in Laramie City, providing a payroll. Before long, a public school, three churches and a national bank were open. By 1890, the town boasted an electric light plant, rolling mills, soda works, planing mills, a brewery, flour mill, glassworks, brick kilns, stone quarries, a railroad tie treatment plant, and a soap factory. Its public buildings included a courthouse, city hall, territorial prison, and various mercantile establishments that served its burgeoning population of 6,388. The tents and shanties were soon replaced by a variety of small and medium-sized folk houses, and several elaborate Victorian homes.

These turbulent early years of the Gem City of the Plains (a nickname bestowed in the early 1870s by the publisher of a local newspaper) left a colorful legacy that continues to attract visitors to Laramie’s historic downtown, its museums, and those same Victorian homes, many of which are now listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

We hope you have fun while walking on these tours that take you to some of our most architecturally historic homes. Some are prominently located on busy streets where passing traffic rarely slows to admire their splendor; others are wonderful old gems on quiet neighborhood streets, their outstanding architectural elements sometimes obscured by century-old trees. Each site has been carefully researched and selected for special mention in this guide, but along the way, you’re sure to discover many other hidden architectural treasures that enhance the quality of life in our community.

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VICTORIAN JEWELS AND OTHER GEMS

TOUR 1

Length: 10 blocks long; two optional detours add about 5 blocks

The tour begins on the northeast corner of 6th Street and Iverson and showcases over 100 years of growth and development from high-style **Victorians** to modest single-family homes.



Iverson Mansion

Tim Chesnut

6th Street and Iverson

Begin the tour at the northeast corner where the 1892 Iverson Mansion takes up the entire block between 6th and 7th Streets. This house was an early “trophy home” built by Laramie pioneers, Edward and Jane Iverson, immigrants from England. They arrived in Laramie on one of the first passenger trains to town on May 10, 1868. Mr. Iverson had gubernatorial aspirations and hoped to make this the new governor’s residence, but lost the election. A brilliant businessman, financier (some say an expert in sharp practices!) and renowned

philanthropist, Edward made a fortune through banking and real estate investment in Laramie. Before he died at the ripe old age of 97 he gave the house to the Episcopal Diocese of Wyoming, which operated it as a girls’ boarding school until 1958, after which it stood vacant and was nearly razed for a grocery store. A citizens’ campaign raised the funds to buy the house and it became the home of the Laramie Plains Museum in 1972.

Architect Walter E. Ware designed the mansion in a transitional style between the highly ornate and asymmetrical **Queen Anne Victorian** and the later **Richardsonian Romanesque**. The **Queen Anne** features are the asymmetry, the ornate decorations, the large front porch, and the variety of siding materials used. **Richardsonian** details are the rough-faced ashlar first story of cut stone, and the round arches over the west tower windows. Trained as a draftsman in Omaha, Ware was hired by the Union Pacific Railroad to draw plans for shops and other structures. In addition to the Iverson Mansion, he designed Old Main on the University campus, the house at 812 Grand Avenue (Tour 2 below), and a few other residences in Laramie. The builder was Frank Cook, who also built the Lehman Mansion at 618 Grand Avenue (Tour 2).

6th Street north from Iverson to Fremont

Opposite the Iverson Mansion, on the west side of 6th Street, are four buildings that represent architectural styles common between the early 1900s and 1920s.

The Stratford Apartments, on the northwest corner and facing Iverson, exemplify the **Tudor Revival** style. The **half-timbers** applied to brick, stucco, or stone walls are one of the hallmarks of this style, which was popular in the 1920s. **Clipped gables** are another common feature. Wilbur Hitchcock, one of Laramie’s most prolific and well-known architects, designed this building. (See his biography on Page 40.)

The Stratford Annex at 116 6th is also in this style. It is an older

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house, probably built around 1900, and once stood where the Apartments are currently located. Hitchcock later redesigned it and applied the **Tudor half-timbers**.

The **Craftsman**-style house at 112 6th, also designed by Wilbur Hitchcock, was built about 1912 for Mrs. Margaret E. Grow, the adopted daughter and only child of Edward and Jane Ivinson. Exposed roof brackets are a common feature of the Craftsman style.

The **Folk L-Gable** house at 100 6th, was built about 1892, the same year as the Ivinson Mansion, but has been heavily modified over the years.

Two late-19th century houses flank 6th Street on the north side of University: **607 University**, on the northeast corner, is an **Italianate** house, built about 1900 and made of stone. The stucco cladding was added after 1950. 152 6th, on the northwest corner, is a **Queen Anne** style house, built about 1892; its **gambrel** roof (“barn roof”) is somewhat unusual for

Queen Anne houses in Laramie.

Continue north on 6th to Fremont. On the west side of the street are several more examples of turn-of-the-century housing.

154 6th – Folk Front-Gable, probably built around 1900. These **Folk Houses** did not require an architect because the style was



164 N. 6th

Larry Ostresh

known by every carpenter of the day.

156 6th – “Shotgun” style, a type of **Folk Front-Gable**, built about 1892. The name derives from the fact that all of the doors are aligned so that a shot fired through the front door of the house will exit through the back door leaving everything inside untouched – except perhaps the inhabitant!

160 6th and 164 6th - two nearly identical **Folk Victorian** houses built about 1892. The arches over the front windows of these two buildings are from the original Episcopal Church in Laramie.

520 Fremont (southwest corner of 6th and Fremont) – **Folk Side-Gable cottage**, built 1900 or earlier. A similar cottage is across the street at **521 Fremont**.

Most of the east side of 6th Street between University and Fremont features *Bath Row*. Nearly the entire block is made up of eight stone **Shotgun cottages** in a row, though only the three southernmost have retained the original masonry. The remaining five show more recent modifications, such as stucco covering the stonework and the addition of porches. Theodore Bath, the proprietor of a local hotel, built Bath Row in 1883 to rent to employees of the Union Pacific Railroad; they are among the oldest rental properties in Laramie.



Bath Row, 157 & 159 6th

Larry Ostresh

155, 157 and 159 6th – these three stone-sided buildings are enrolled on the **National Register of Historic Places**. The two in the photograph have been joined, demonstrating that a listing on the **National Register** does not necessarily limit changes to old homes as long as certain requirements are met. For example, it was necessary for the stonework of the **hyphen** joining the two buildings to be different from the original stone, making the modern adaptation obvious.

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The northernmost of the Bath Row houses, on the southeast corner of 6th and Fremont, is joined at the rear to a much larger and more modern structure which faces Fremont. The stone foundation is a clue to the 1883 vintage of this Bath Row **cottage**.



603 Fremont

Larry Ostresh

Fremont, from 6th to 8th Street

603 Fremont is an example of the **Folk Pyramid** style, and was built prior to 1900. The porch and shutters which give it a **Colonial Revival** appearance were added in the 1940s, as was the bay window. Emil Therkildsen, an early owner, was a Sheriff of Albany County; around 1907, he hid a prisoner in the cellar to avoid a lynching, then spirited him to Cheyenne in the middle of the night.



"Snowbird" – 615 Fremont

Larry Ostresh

615 Fremont – Note the ornament at the peak of the **dormer** on this **Four-Square** style house. A type of **finial**, its purpose may be structural as well as decorative – it adds strength to a weak point on the roof. Known locally as "snowbirds"

(regardless of their shape – many are ball-shaped) they were once common, but are now a bit of vanishing Americana. There are twenty or so houses on our tours that still retain this touch of whimsy – it's fun to spot them.

Continue east on Fremont to 8th Street. These two blocks show a mixture of older and newer residential buildings, ranging from single-family homes to a brick apartment complex that is home to many University of Wyoming students.



803 Fremont

Larry Ostresh

Stop at 8th and Fremont and note the house at 803 Fremont on the northeast corner. An example of a **Four-square**, it also exhibits many details of the **Colonial Revival** style, including the front porch supported by slender columns and a symmetrical façade with balanced windows and a central door.

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804 Fremont

Tim Chesnut

804 Fremont (southeast corner) was designed by Eliot and Clinton Hitchcock in 1960 as a practicum house for UW students in Home Economics; a pre-school was in the basement. Originally named the Verna Hitchcock House, it has been renamed the Bim Kendall House, and has been expanded and remodeled. Now the home of the Haub School of Environment and Natural Resources, it has achieved LEED “gold” certification for energy efficiency and sustainable design, one of the few such buildings in Laramie.

8th Street from Fremont to University

156 8th – Walk south on 8th to see this excellent example of **Tudor Revival** architecture, built in 1936. The builder owned a local brickyard and used slag bricks to create the unusual façade. The fence uses the same brick – or perhaps re-uses it, a drunk driver having leveled its first incarnation.

University from 8th to 9th Street

809 University – This brick **Bungalow** has several features such as the **Tudor arch** over the entryway that give it a **Tudor Revival** appearance. It also has a “Mother-in-Law house” in back on the same lot. The name derives from early zoning laws, which forbade auxiliary dwellings on the same lot unless occupied by members of the same family as the principal residence. The next house east also has a Mother-in-Law.



819 University

Tim Chesnut

At **819 University** stands a **Folk Victorian** built in 1910 as the home for the family of Sayer Hansen, an early Laramie rancher. Later it served as the Delta Phi Sigma sorority house until Annie Moore operated it as a boarding house from 1937 to 1948. The house was remodeled in 1981 when it received its colorful color scheme and, until recently, was operated as a bed and breakfast. The ornamentation at the peaks of the roof gables is typical of many **Folk Victorian** homes.

*[Optional detour (one and one-half blocks north): The **Tudor Revival** house at 262 9th, built 1926, was designed by and served as the residence of Wilbur Hitchcock.]*

9th Street from University to Ivinson

Turn right on 9th Street. From this spot, on the east side of 9th and partially hidden by the trees, you can see Old Main, the first building on the University of Wyoming campus. Built in 1887, it is enrolled on the **National Register of Historic Places**.

*[Optional detour, one block east): The **Colonial Revival** house at 210 10th was the first house that Wilbur Hitchcock designed in Laramie (1909). “Sheridan WY architect Dale Buckingham designed the sympathetic addition to the west after UW bought the house.”]*

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Ivinson from 9th to 6th Street

Pause on the corner of 9th Street and Ivinson. Wilbur Hitchcock designed all three of the buildings here. The apartments on the southeast corner are **Tudor Revivals** and evoke the mood of an English manor. Those on the southwest corner exemplify **Colonial Revival** architecture, with motifs – gables similar to ones on Grecian temples – that are common to the type. And the dwelling at **819 Ivinson**, a Hitchcock remodel, exhibits a prominent columned entryway also typical of **Colonial Revival** houses. Step back and note the roof of the original house peaking up in the center of the remodeled roof.



819 Ivinson

Tim Chesnut

Head west on Ivinson. The 800 and 700 blocks of Ivinson contain homes and apartment houses in a rich variety of architectural styles. These, along with the mature landscaping, make it one of Laramie's most charming and interesting neighborhoods.



805 Ivinson

Tim Chesnut

805 Ivinson – A **Queen Ann** cottage, built in the early 1890s. The **Roman arched** window and rough-faced **ashlar** foundation give it a **Richardsonian Romanesque** flavor. Walk a few feet up the alley to the east to see the exquisite “eyebrow dormer” on the roof. Next door at **803 Ivinson**, another Hitchcock design has the decorative **half-timbers** and steeply pitched roof typical of the **Tudor Revival** style.

The 700 block features housing styles that span almost 60 years and were inspired by traditions from California to New England, and from the foggy British Isles to sunny Spain and Italy. It includes three Wilbur Hitchcock designs.

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719 Ivinson

Tim Chesnut

715 and 719 Ivinson – Here are two Hitchcock-designed **Craftsman** houses, both built about 1910. Charles Sumner Greene and Henry Mather Greene, brothers, launched the style in Pasadena, California, about 1903. Over the next few years, it swept throughout the country.

718 Ivinson – The Conley house, built in 1888. John D. Conley was a member of the first faculty at the University of Wyoming and taught Natural Philosophy, Calligraphy, Geology, Chemistry, Drawing, Agricultural Geology, and Farm Accounts. (Teaching six to eight courses per semester was not uncommon in the early years of the University!) This **Stick Victorian** structure has been restored and is enrolled on the **National Register of Historic Places**. The **half-timbers** in the front gable are suggestive of the **Tudor Revival** style, but because they are applied over boards rather than stucco, brick or stone, they are actually indicative of the earlier **Stick** style. The simplicity of the roof implies that this house could also be considered an example of the **Folk Victorian** style. The **Stick** style is more common in New England than elsewhere in the United States.

709 Ivinson – Note the main entryway of these **Tudor Revival** apartments built in 1929. The brickwork and the door itself are excellent examples of a **Tudor Arch**. The style mimics those in vogue in England in the 14th to 16th centuries.

710 Ivinson – A **Spanish Eclectic** apartment building, built in 1937.

703 Ivinson – The Meldrum house, built about 1888. In 1889-90, John Meldrum served as the last Territorial Secretary of Wyoming, and for a few months as the first Secretary of State. The house went through several owners, eventually coming into the possession of the Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church which hired Hitchcock to remodel both the Church around the corner on 7th Street and the parsonage at **703 Ivinson** in the **Tudor Revival** style. The remodel erased the Meldrum house's **Victorian** character.

700 Ivinson – The Dunn house, built in 1878 by Alonzo Dunn, mayor of Laramie from 1881 to 1883. Later, he was also a Justice of the Peace, Probate Judge, City Treasurer, and County



718 Ivinson

Tim Chesnut

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Treasurer. It is **Italianate** in style, with a truncated **hipped** roof (note the **balustrade**, or faux “widow’s walk” on top) and hood molding around the tall, narrow windows. It is one of the few buildings of this style remaining in the state of Wyoming. The enclosed porch with wood siding is a later addition.

This returns us to the Laramie Plains Museum and ends the tour.

QUEEN ANNES AND COMMON FOLKS

TOUR 2

Length: 14 blocks

The tour begins at the southeast corner of 7th Street and Grand Avenue and highlights some fine 19th century **Queen Anne** and **Folk Houses**, as well as early churches and schools.

Grand Avenue from 7th to 10th Street

Walk east from the southeast corner of Grand Avenue and 7th Street.

709 & 715 Grand – Both were built in the 1890s with **half-timbers** applied over clapboard siding, reminiscent of the **Stick** style. The brick building at **719 Grand**, now Myers Apartments, dates from 1886. Note its semi-circular **Roman arch** window and surrounding brick.

Continue to the 800 block of Grand.



812 Grand

Tim Chesnut

812 Grand – Walter E. Ware, the architect of the Iverson Mansion and Old Main on the University campus designed this **Queen Anne** for the Constantine P. Arnold family in 1890. The family was well established in Laramie society during the town’s early years; Thurmond Arnold, head of the “Trust Busters” during the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration, was born in the house in 1891.

815 Grand – Nellis E. Corthell, a New Yorker who came to Laramie in the early 1880s and became a prominent attorney, built this **Folk Cross-Gable** house in 1887. Probably to the annoyance of Mrs. Corthell, it was completed the same day he moved into new law offices and the day their oldest son was born. His descendents still own and live in the house. Nellis founded one of the oldest extant law practices in the state; his daughter Gladys married Wilbur Hitchcock.

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Continue east on Grand. The three brick houses at 916 Grand, 914 Grand and just around the corner at 302 10th are more examples of the **Tudor Revival** style. Built in 1929, their steeply **gabled** roofs, asymmetrical entries, and small arched windows next to the door are typical of the style.



310 10th

Larry Ostresh

10th Street from Grand Avenue south to Garfield

310 10th - This charmer is one of the oldest houses in Laramie and an excellent example of **Gothic Revival** architecture. (Other names are “Carpenter Gothic”, “Steamboat Gothic”, and “Gingerbread House”.) Typical elements include **gables** decorated with **verge boards** and **finials**. Local grocery store owner Peter J. Holt built it sometime before 1872, and originally it faced Grand. Wilbur Knight bought it in 1901; he died in 1903, his wife Emma became Dean of Women at the University, and Knight Hall is her namesake. Their son Sam, a famous professor of geology at UW, bought the house in 1919 and turned it on its foundation to its present location.

Continue south to Garfield.

318 10th - Once home to Grace Hebard, creator of the Hebard Collection housed at the UW American Heritage Center, this **Folk Victorian** house has small circular windows called **oculi** (singular **oculus**) at the sides and bottom of the front **gable**. A similar house, without the oculi, is across the street at 400 10th.



1015 Garfield

Larry Ostresh

Garfield from 10th to 11th Street

Turn left on Garfield, passing two **Cape Cod** houses at 1012 and 1015, both built in the mid-1950s. The **Cape Cod** style is a type of **Colonial Revival** and was common from 1930 to 1960.

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402 11th

Tim Chesnut

402 11th - Be sure to pause for this **Folk Victorian** house. Extensively remodeled in the late 1980s, it incorporates many **Victorian** architectural details, including a front porch with tongue-in-groove paneling and a rear upper story porch or “widow’s walk”. The house was built in 1920; the other three houses on this corner, a **Craftsman** and two **Bungalows**, were built a few years earlier.

Aven Nelson, for whom a building on the University campus is named, built the **Cross Gable** at 1100 Garfield.

11th from Garfield to Custer

Turn right on 11th and continue to its intersection with Custer, passing another **Craftsman** and three more **Bungalows** on the way.



420 11th

Tim Chesnut

The house at 420 11th was built in 1895 and was extensively remodeled in the 1980s. The remodeling included a wrap-around porch, some **gables**, and an addition at the rear. The symmetry and the tall tower above the front door give it a **Gothic Revival** appearance, while the porch is **Free Classic**, a style that features slender porch support columns reminiscent of classical Greek architecture.

419 11th - Note the brackets under the eaves of this **Cross Gabled** house, a nod to the **Craftsman** style which was coming into vogue in 1909 when it was built.



501 11th

Larry Ostresh

501 11th (southeast corner) - Here’s a **Bungalow** that epitomizes a very common style of house built in Laramie in the 1910s and 1920s. It is essentially rectangular with the narrow side facing the street and has a low-pitched roof with a substantial enclosed overhang. However, unlike a typical **Bungalow**, it lacks a full-width porch.

Custer from 11th to 9th Street

Turn right on Custer and enjoy an entire block featuring a number of **Bungalows** and **Period Revival cottages**. Of special interest is the **Bungalow** at 1010 Custer, a home where Wilbur Hitchcock’s parents lived after joining their son in Laramie.

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501 10th

Tim Chesnut



502 10th

Tim Chesnut

501 10th - This attractive **Clipped Gable** house, built in 1920, is reminiscent of an English country **cottage**. Directly across the street at 502 10th, is a house built in 2004, its **Colonial Revival** style contrasting with its 21st century construction technology. The dainty **Folk L-Gable** house at 418 10th dates from 1885.



903 Custer

Larry Ostresh

909 Custer - This house was built in 1920; its tower gives it the look of a **Queen Anne**, a style that had generally disappeared by 1910. The awnings in the tower, added in 2003, enhance its **Victorian** charm.

As you pass old Whiting School on your left (corner of 9th and Custer), note the **Tudor arch** over the west-facing entrance. Also, note the decorative fan under the peak of the **gable** of the house at 903 Custer.

Right on 9th Street, from Custer to Garfield

The house at 415 9th, is a blend of the **Queen Anne** and **Prairie** styles and was built in 1916; further along is a **Folk Victorian** dwelling at 406 9th with decorative gingerbread under the **gable**.



319 8th Street

Tim Chesnut

Left on Garfield from 9th to 6th Street

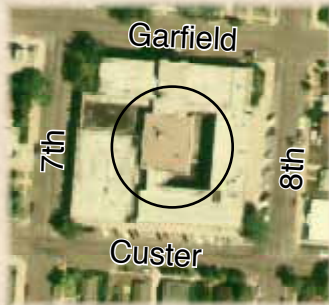
319 8th - The stone masonry is typical of western architecture, with the wooden veranda extending across the entire front of the building. The house was built in 1886 by Noah and Jane Wallis who, with their children, ranched in the Laramie

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area; a daughter, Martha, lived in the house until her death in 1971. Martha kept a beautiful garden and had a piano which was the envy of many in town – nice gardens and fine musical instruments were rarities in Laramie’s rowdy early days! Gardening in Laramie can be more heartbreaking than golf as a recreational activity, but many of us try all the same.

715 Garfield – Across the street is an example of a **Craftsman** constructed in 1912, built of brick and incorporating some **Tudor** details such as the decorative **half-timbers** applied over stucco. It is the only residence remaining on this block, the others having been removed to permit construction of the Albany County Public Library.



Civic Center, 1878 core

Between 7th and 8th stands the imposing Laramie Civic Center, the core of which was once the East Side School. Built in 1878, this core is the oldest school still standing in Wyoming; the first additions were built in 1928, when the building became the high school. Both the core and 1928 additions are enrolled on the **National Register**. The auditorium has 6 large murals painted in 1930 by Florence E. Ware, daughter of Walter E. Ware, architect of the Ivinson Mansion (see page 3) and granddaughter of a pioneer Laramie couple. Two of her murals are 19 feet high. The building was used as a public school until 1979 and now houses offices and a Head-Start pre-school. Note the **Tudor arches** over the entryway and some of the windows.



618 Garfield

Larry Ostresh

The white structure at **618 Garfield** was built in 1892 as the Swedish Mission Church, and originally was wood-framed and somewhat smaller. It was re-modeled in 1925. More recently, it was the Berean Baptist Church, and is currently the Islamic Center, home to a Muslim community in Laramie. The decorative corner buttresses, **Gothic arches**, and thick-walled, square, flat-topped tower give it a fortress-like quality. The general symmetry adds to its solid, eternal appearance, an expression of worship in itself, making it one of the most attractive buildings in town. The Reverend Alfred Nelson, whose name appears in the cement walk, was pastor of this church from 1925 to 1935. His name appears on numerous cement sidewalks which he helped to lay around town.

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320 7th

Larry Ostresh

A **Free Classic** is at 320 7th - note the stone foundation and diminutive balustrade near the central chimney. At 609 Garfield is a **Craftsman** designed by Wilbur Hitchcock.

The church on the corner of 6th and Garfield was built in 1890. The congregation was organized in 1887 as the German Evangelical Lutheran St. Paul's Church. Note the hood molds over the **Gothic arched** windows and door, and the cornerstone on the northeast corner of the original building: "St. Paulus Kirche". It is enrolled on the **National Register** and is now the United Church of Christ.

400 6th - The Finrock House, across the street, is a **Folk Cross-Gable**. The large front wrap-around porch is **Free Classic**, the shutters **Colonial Revival**. Dr. John H. Finrock, "county physician," built the house in 1892. One of Wyoming's first doctors, he is mentioned several times in the Frontier Index, a "newspaper on wheels" that followed the Union Pacific as tracks were laid across Nebraska and Wyoming from 1865 to 1868. Finrock came to this area in 1863 to serve as assistant surgeon at Fort Halleck, 60 miles northwest. He moved to Laramie in 1868 and was the town's first doctor; he also served as mayor for several terms and was a member of the first Board of Trustees for the University of Wyoming.

6th Street from Garfield to Grand Avenue

Turn right on 6th Street. Two **Four-Squares** built in the early 1900s, but in rather different styles, are on the west side of the street.



6th and Grand

Tim Chesnut

6th Street and Grand Avenue - A **Gothic Church**, built in 1906 and 1907, sits at the corner. It was formerly the Union Presbyterian and is now the home of a different congregation. The vestibule windows under the steeple have lovely gradational colored prisms, best seen from the inside.

On the northwest corner of Grand and 6th Street, we see the County Courthouse. The design, begun by Wilbur Hitchcock just prior to his death, was finished by his assistant William Dubois and is similar to Engineering Hall on the University of Wyoming campus, another of Hitchcock's. Up to the late 1940s, the sheriff's wife cooked for the prisoners, who were housed on the top floor of the courthouse until the 1990s. East of the Courthouse is a commercial structure typical of the 1960s that replaced eight large **Victorian** homes when it was built; it stands in sharp contrast to the late 19th century homes throughout the adjacent neighborhoods.

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Grand Avenue from 6th to 7th Street

612 Grand Avenue – Here is a fine **Craftsman** designed by Wilbur Hitchcock. Next door at **618 Grand** is an excellent example of **Queen Anne** architecture, the Lehman Mansion. Edward J. Lehman, a prominent Laramie clothier, and wife Pauline had the house built in 1892 by Frank Cook, who also built the Ivinson Mansion. It incorporates ornate **manufactured decorations**, probably ordered from mail-order houses such as Sears & Roebuck. This mansion has been recently restored and is enrolled on the **National Register**.

This completes Tour 2.



Cooper House

Larry Ostresh

GRAND FINALE

TOUR 3

Length: 10 blocks; an optional detour adds one block

The tour begins at the southwest corner of 15th Street and Grand Avenue – one of Laramie’s busiest intersections – and proceeds through a neighborhood noted for its **Period Revivals**, stately **Tudors**, **Craftsmen**, and a sprinkling of other styles.

Dominating the intersection on the northwest corner is the outstanding Cooper House, built in 1921 and designed by Wilbur Hitchcock for Richard and Barbara Cooper, heirs to the estate of Arthur F.T. Cooper, a wealthy English rancher who settled in Albany County. Ernest Hemingway visited here and may have based the Macomber in his short story, *The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber*, on Col. and Mrs. Richard Cooper, Arthur’s son and daughter in law. The house is an example of the **Spanish Eclectic** style, the height of fashion in Palm Beach, Florida, where the Coopers were frequent visitors at the time the house was commissioned. All structural wood, including the beams and columns used in the arbor, is cypress imported from Europe. Barbara Cooper was a great gardener and helped popularize geraniums in Laramie in the 1920s.

15th Street, south from Grand Avenue to Custer

The Alpha Gamma Rho fraternity house, on the southwest corner of 15th and Grand, was built in 1941 for Henry Neale Roach in the **International** style. Roach, a civil engineer and two-term Albany County Surveyor, lived in the house until his death in 1967. He donated it to the Laramie Plains Museum, which later sold it in order to help purchase the Ivinson Mansion. The flat roof, corner windows, and generally unadorned walls are typical of the **International** style – the bay window is not. While common for commercial and institutional buildings built from 1930 through 1980 – the Coe Library building on campus is an example – the **International** style is rare for private homes.

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1500 Grand

Larry Ostresh

1500 Grand Avenue – This wonderful example of a **Federal Revival** house was designed by Wilbur Hitchcock. The **Federal** style is a sub-category of **Colonial Revival** and rare for Laramie. The symmetry and accentuated front door supported by **pilasters** with a **pediment** befitting a Grecian temple suggest the **Colonial Revival** style based on either **Georgian** or **Federal** roots. The semi-circular fanlight over the door, rather than a row of rectangular windows, and the **parapeted gables** define it as **Federal**.

318 15th Street – This house was originally designed by architect Fredric H. Porter of Cheyenne in 1922 for prominent Laramie lawyer, Thurmond Arnold and his wife. They sold it when Arnold went on to fame in Washington D.C. as head of the “Trust Busters” in FDR’s administration. The house started out as a perfect example of the **Cape Cod** style home, with symmetrical façade, fan light over the door, green shingle roof and white siding (see photo, next page). Subsequent owners have greatly changed its appearance, illustrating how architectural styles are often altered. Now we would call it a **Folk House** style, since it is no longer true to the **Cape Cod**



401 15th

Tim Chesnut

At **401 15th** is a **Colonial Revival** built in 1923. Theodore J. and Helen Bishop Dunnewald purchased it in 1934. T.J. Dunnewald was a soil scientist with the University of Wyoming from 1925 to 1951. Helen Dunnewald was dean of women at UW from 1925 until 1931 when the Depression-era state legislature requested that all married women be dropped from the payroll. The roof **dormers** have been added since 1990. Across the street at **1420 Garfield** is a nice example of a **Craftsman**. Continue south, and then turn right on Custer.



318 S. 15th Street in 1975

Judy Knight

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1415 Custer

Tim Chesnut

Custer west from 15th to 13th Street

1415 Custer is an impressive **Art Moderne** style house built in the 1930s. The flat-roofed cubical shape, rounded corners, smooth brick with contrasting yellow and mauve colors creating a frieze effect, and the spiral staircase projecting from the front with a door on the side, are all characteristics of this style.

1406 Custer is a two-story **Cape Cod cottage**, built in 1923. At the northwest corner of 14th and Custer is another **Craftsman** style house, built in 1920.



1219 Custer

Tim Chesnut



1300 Custer

Tim Chesnut

At the corner of 13th and Custer are four dwellings that illustrate some of the variations of early 20th century housing. The two on the north side of the street are in the **Craftsman** style. The low-pitched **gable** roof with wide eaves, exposed rafters (1301 Custer) and/or roof brackets (1219 Custer) are hallmarks of the style; porches supported by large square, often tapered, columns are also typical. Two “classic” **Bungalows** are on the south side (1300 & 1222 Custer). Both are rectangular, deeper than they are wide, with low pitched, widely overhanging **hipped** roofs and full width porches. The one at 1300 Custer has a stone foundation and was built in 1910; its attractive thin porch supports are more typical of **Colonial Revival** styling than **Bungalow**, and may not be original. **Bungalows** are often considered a variety of the **Craftsman** style.

13th Street north from Custer to Ivinson

Turn right on 13th Street and go one block to Garfield. A spectacular **Tudor Revival** is on the northeast corner at 321 13th. Designed by Wilbur Hitchcock shortly before his death in 1930, it was built in 1931 and was one of his last designs. Walk a few feet east to note the brick arch over the walkway to the back yard.

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[Optional detour: Two houses east is another **Tudor** that Hitchcock designed (1315 Garfield). Some consider this to be his finest. Note the **Tudor arch** of the door and brick surround, the asymmetrical vestibule with a small arched niche and the **V** on the massive stepped chimney. A decorative window, similar to the niche, is near the apex of the main **façade**. At this point, retrace your steps to 13th and Garfield, then turn north (right).]

Continue north on 13th to Grand Avenue

313 13th - This **Bungalow** was built in 1929 - its **gabled** porch and patterned brick along the foundation show the influence of the prevailing **Tudor Revival** styling. The two **Tudor** houses on the west side of 13th (314 & 304 3rd) were built in the mid-1930s. Two more **Tudors** flank 13th Street at its intersection with Grand Avenue.

13th Street north from Grand Avenue to Ivinson

Cross Grand Avenue and go north one block to Ivinson. This is the main entrance to the University of Wyoming. Knight Hall, completed in 1941 as a dormitory for women, is on the northwest corner. It was the first work on campus of William Dubois, successor to Wilbur Hitchcock as University architect.



1306 Ivinson

Tim Chesnut

Ivinson east from 13th to 14th Street

1306 Ivinson - This attractive **Tudor** served as the UW president's home from the 1950s until the early 1990s. In the 1960s the house had the only outdoor residential swimming pool in Laramie, but it was filled in after about eight years. Across the street is Coe Library, the main UW library, built in the **International** style in 1958. "It has been expanded and remodeled recently in the latest iterations of modern international architecture, featuring curved lines, open floor plan and large areas of glass."



1316 Ivinson

Tim Chesnut

1316 Ivinson - Further east is a fine **Tudor**, built in 1929 and designed by Wilbur Hitchcock for his brother-in-law, M. E. Corthell. Hitchcock and Corthell were both fascinated with concrete and wanted to build a poured concrete house with built-in sofas and beds so that everything could be stripped and hosed down to clean house. Mrs. Corthell intervened forcefully and only the shell of the house is poured concrete. The outer supports of the arches on either side contain storage space for skis and garden equipment.

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214 14th – Alumni House

Tim Chesnut

14th Street south from Ivinson to Grand Avenue

Turn right at 14th and walk by the UW Alumni House. This is one of the most outstanding examples of **Tudor Revival** architecture in Laramie, with rubble stonework and “**half-timbers**” made of brick. It was built in 1929; William Dubois and F.W. Ambrose were the architects. Dubois was Wilbur Hitchcock’s assistant and may in fact have designed some of the buildings attributed to Hitchcock. When the UW Alumni Association took it over, they built a very **sympathetic** reception hall on the north side and replaced the original red curved tile roof. The house was for many years the residence of the Forbes family, prominent Laramie bankers and businessmen.



1320 Grand

Tim Chesnut

Grand Avenue east from 14th to 15th Street

As you look south across Grand Avenue from 14th Street, note a few more fine **Period Revival** houses. The Heywood Apartments on the southwest corner (1320 Grand) were built in 1925 in the **Italian Renaissance** style; the faux “tower” and the diminutive windows flanking the upper story of the east wall evoke a Mediterranean quality. The residence on the southeast corner (1400 Grand) is emphatically **Tudor** with brick “**half-timbers**” and stone trim on the entryway. It was built in 1941, the youngest structure on the block. The **Dutch Colonial Revival** house at 1404 Grand, built in 1923, is a style easily identified by its **gambrel** roof. Another **Tudor**, complete with a **Tudor arch** door in a handsome casing and built in 1926, is at 1410 Grand. To its east is an asymmetrical **Colonial Revival** built in 1923.

This returns you to 15th and Grand and completes the tour.

Why do we study and honor these houses? Houses are the most common and the most intimate features of our man-made environment. They provide not just shelter and comfort, but are a reflection of the different ways we look at the world and our place in it, as well as the availability of materials and technology during different periods. Each style suggests a date: If you see a large number of **Queen Anne** houses in a neighborhood, it was probably built in the late 1800s; a plethora of **Tudor Revivals** suggests the 1920s.

But perhaps the best reason for studying house styles is simply that it is fun!

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GLOSSARY

Adapted from Virginia and Lee McAlaster, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1992. (Published June 12, 1984; reprinted seven times; ninth printing, October 1992.) Housing style dates are national averages.

Art Moderne (1920-1940). Smooth wall surface with horizontal lines, often with rounded corners; flat roof; asymmetrical **façade**.

Ashlar – stone which has been cut into squares or rectangles for building, but which still retains a rough surface.

Balustrade – a railing.

Bungalow (1910-1925). Smaller houses, generally one or one and one half stories, often with a four room plan in the main part of the house. One of the most common house types from the 1910s and 1920s, but still built in Laramie in the 1930s. They are often considered a type of **Craftsman**, but we have treated them separately on our tours. The houses we have classified as Bungalow have these characteristics: They are rectangular, with the narrow side facing the street; low-pitched roof with wide overhanging enclosed eaves; usually a **hipped** roof, but some have **gables**; commonly a **dormer** faces the street; full or almost full length front porches; porch supported by square columns, often tapered (battered). Bungalows originated in India – the word itself means “Bengali”; it is somewhat ironic that a tropical style should be so common on the Wyoming high plains.

Cape Cod (1920-1955). A type of **Colonial Revival**. One or one and one half story **side-gable** house with a small roof overhang, often with front facing **dormers**.

Clipped gable – a roof with a sloping end that cuts off a **gable**.

Colonial Revival (1880-1955). Based on 18th century American buildings, common characteristics of this style include roof ridges parallel to the street; **hipped**, **gable**, or **gambrel** roof; symmetrical **façade**; prominent entryway, often with a classical Greek **pediment**.

Cottage – a single story small house.

Craftsman (1905-1930). Style which was an outgrowth of the Arts and Crafts movement and rejected **Victorian** ornateness in favor of simplicity. It features low-pitched roofs (usually **gable**, but occasionally **hipped**), exposed rafters, decorative braces under the eaves, and porches with tapered square columns. Many buildings have **dormer** windows, roofs with curved tips, or **Tudor** style **half-timbering**. The smaller, simpler Craftsman houses are often known as **bungalows**, but we have separately classified these styles for our tours.

Cross gable – two intersecting **gable** roofs at right angles to each other so that the floor plan forms a cross.

Dormer – a window projecting from the slope of a roof.

Dutch Colonial Revival (1880-1955). A sub-type of **Colonial Revival**. Emphasis on front door with **pediment** supported by columns or **pilasters**; **façade** usually symmetrical; **Gambrel** roof.

Façade – the front or main elevation of a building.

Federal Revival (1880-1955). A sub-type of **Colonial Revival**. Emphasis on front door with **pediment** supported by columns or **pilasters**; **façade** usually symmetrical; moderate roof slope; has semi-circular or elliptical fanlight above the front door.

Finial – a decorative element atop a **gable**.

Folk House – A house built by the owner, or by carpenters or contractors hired by the owner, without use of an architect hired for the specific project.

Folk Cross-Gable (1850-1890). One or two story **Folk House** with **cross gables**.

Folk Front-Gable (1850-1890). One or two stories, one room wide, two rooms deep; the **Shotgun** house is a type of Front-Gable. The roof line is at right angles to the main entrance.

Folk L-Gable (1850-1890). One or two stories; two intersecting **gable** roofs at right angles to each other so that the floor plan forms an L.

Folk Side-Gable (1850-1890). One story; two rooms wide, one room deep; also called “Hall & parlor”. The roof line is parallel to the main entrance.

Folk Pyramid (1850-1890). One story, two rooms wide, two rooms deep; roof is a pyramid.

Folk Victorian (1870-1910). A **Folk House** with **Victorian** details such as spindlework or jigsaw-cut trim. “Spindlework” is wood turned on a lathe; it has a circular cross section and is commonly used for porch supports, railings, or decoration.

Four-square (1900-1920). This is a cube-shaped two story house with a **hipped** or **pyramidal** roof, usually containing a centrally placed **dormer**. Often there is a wide one story front porch. This style gains its name from its interior plan, consisting of four roughly square rooms on each floor. A sub-type of the **Prairie** style.

Free Classic (1890-1910). A sub-type of the Queen Anne style. It features Doric (Classical Greek) porch columns, often grouped in twos or threes; may have other classical details; similar to the **Colonial Revival** style, but with the irregular plan of the **Queen Anne**.

Gable – the triangularly shaped area enclosed by two sloped roof surfaces.

Gambrel roof – a barn-like roof.

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Georgian Revival (1880-1955). The most common sub-type of **Colonial Revival**. Emphasis on front door with **pediment** supported by columns or **pilasters**; **façade** usually symmetrical; moderate roof slope. Lacks the **Gambrel** roof of the **Dutch Colonial Revival** and the elliptical fanlight of the **Federal Revival**.

Gothic arch – a pointed arch.

Gothic Revival (1840-1885). This house type is easily recognized by its steeply pitched **gable** roof and **dormers**. It often has decorative scroll-cut woodwork along the **gables** and eaves.

Half-timbers – a form of construction dating from the medieval period and using wood framing with intervening spaces filled with masonry. All half-timbers in Laramie are decorative and not structural.

Hipped roof – consists of four sloped surfaces that meet in a ridge line.

Hyphen – a connection between two larger structures.

International (1925 to present). Flat roof flush with walls; metal casement windows flush with walls, often in ribbons; corner windows; no ornaments on walls; asymmetrical.

Italian Renaissance (1890-1935). Low-pitched **hipped** roof, often tiled; upper-story windows smaller than windows below; entrance accented with classical columns or **pilasters**.

Italianate (1840-1885). This style is characterized by a low-pitched, **hipped** roof, overhanging eaves, bracketed cornices, and tall windows capped by slightly arched window heads.

Manufactured decorations – wooden decorations which were made in a factory and ordered from catalogs. Most of the **Victorian** “lace” and shingles found in Wyoming were manufactured.

National Register of Historic Places – a nationwide listing of buildings at least 50 years old which have a unique connection to the past. While listing does not automatically bring funding or protection, it can aid historic restoration and adaptation.

Parapet – a low wall along a roof or **gable**.

Period Revival – in the 1920s and 1930s, it was fashionable to build houses in one of a variety of styles based on the architecture of different historic periods. These styles included **Tudor**, **Colonial**, **Italian Renaissance**, and **Spanish Eclectic**. The first two were by far the most common in Laramie.

Pediment – a triangular **gable** atop columns or **pilasters** as a major part of a **façade** or entryway.

Pilaster – a column which projects from and is attached to a wall, as opposed to standing independently.

Prairie (1900-1920). Style typified by low-pitched hipped roof with wide overhang; horizontal lines emphasized on eaves, cornices, and **façade**.

Pyramidal – a roof of four sloped surfaces that meet in a point.

Queen Anne (1880-1910). This style is often characterized by an asymmetrical **façade**, **manufactured decorations**, tall chimneys with decorative brickwork, stained glass windows, and decorative shingle patterns on exterior wall surfaces. The wide variety of building materials, textures, and colors adds to the character of this style.

Roman arch – a semi-circular arch.

Richardsonian Romanesque (1880-1900). Rough faced, rectangular **ashlar** stonework walls; **Roman arches**; towers; often asymmetrical. Rare in Laramie, although Old Main on the UW campus and the first floor of the Ivinson Mansion show the influence of this style. Named for Henry Hobson Richardson, the preeminent American architect of the 19th Century. Richardson’s westernmost creation, and perhaps his last, is the Ames Monument, twenty miles east of Laramie.

Shotgun (1880-1930). A sub-type of the **Folk Front-gable** with all interior and exterior doors aligned.

Spanish eclectic (1915-1925). Flat roof with **parapeted** walls; tile covered shed roofs above entryways or windows; wall surface usually stucco; usually asymmetrical.

Stick (1860-1890). **Gabled** roof with steeply pitched **cross gables**. Wood walls with raised boards in horizontal, vertical, or diagonal patterns.

Sympathetic – an addition that blends in well with the original structure.

Tudor arch – a flattened pointed arch.

Tudor Revival (1890-1940). One of the **Period Revival** styles common in the 1920s and 1930s. Based on European buildings from the late medieval period, common features include a steeply pitched roof, a roofline parallel to the street but with a **cross gable** facing the front, **half-timbering**, tall narrow windows with multiple panes, and massive chimneys.

Verge board – a board, often decorated in **Victorian** styling, running under the eave and **gable**.

Victorian (1860-1900). Buildings associated with the Victorian era. In Laramie, they were built from 1868 to about 1910. They include a variety of forms and styles, most of which made use of **manufactured decorations**. Larger buildings often had complex, asymmetrical forms.

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WILBUR HITCHCOCK



*Wilbur Hitchcock, ca. 1925
Hitchcock family photo*

Wilbur Arthur Hitchcock designed over 300 houses and buildings for Laramie. He was born in 1886 in Springfield, South Dakota, and moved here in 1908, working as a carpenter while attending the University of Wyoming. After receiving a B.S. degree in 1912, Wilbur was a civil engineering instructor, then Assistant Professor and University architect. In the early 1920s he drew the plans and created a scale model of the campus with the major buildings facing the open space now known as Prexy's

Pasture. After a leave of absence in 1922 he returned to design the university library (now the Aven Nelson Building), Engineering Hall, and McWhinnie Hall, then collaborated with William Dubois of Cheyenne on Half-Acre Gymnasium.

For the next few years, Hitchcock worked as a private contract architect and designed several of the houses featured in our tours, as well as the Albany County Courthouse, Laramie High School (now the Civic Center), Ivinson Home for Aged Ladies, Nellie Isles School, Whiting School, and the stunning Cooper Mansion.

In 1914 Wilbur married Gladys Corthell and they had four children. Sadly, she died in 1925 from surgery complications. Wilbur married Verna Johannesen in 1930, but tragically, on their honeymoon, he died from injuries received in a car accident. Verna came to Laramie and helped raise the children, becoming a well-loved member of the extended family and teaching domestic science at UW. Two of Wilbur's sons, Eliot and Clinton, became architects and continued their father's work designing buildings on campus and homes in Laramie.

Today his designs enhance the Gem City of the Plains with the indelible gleam of enduring elegance we proudly call...

"A Hitchcock!"