

A SELF-GUIDED WALK PAST CRANFORD'S ARCHITECTURE – RAHWAY RIVER

Total distance: 2 miles

BY THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD
Photos by Patrick Lynch and Ricky Barry, Boy Scout Troop 80

This walking tour takes you past several of the many different architectural styles represented in Cranford. It begins and ends in Cranford's business district and takes you up and down the streets bordering the Rahway River as it weaves through town.

		<i>Distance</i>
<i>Start at the corner of North Ave and N. Union Ave. Walk 2 blocks on N. Union Ave past the stores to Springfield Ave.</i>		
1	 <p>The First Presbyterian Church, built in 1893 on the corner of <u>N. Union and Springfield Avenues</u>, is Richardsonian in style. The Roman arch, the long and rounded windows, and the closed-in arcade, are all Richardson Romanesque hallmarks. Another is the soaring, imposing tower. The style is usually connected with large public buildings to achieve a massive and dramatic effect, and the buildings are usually textured stone, like this, sometimes two or three different types.</p>	Start to Church – 2/10 mi
<i>Make a left on Springfield Ave and walk one block to Miln St. Make a left on Miln St and walk one block to Alden St. Make a right on Alden St and walk one block to Holly St. Turn right on Holly St and walk down the block.</i>		
2	 <p>The townhouse is descended from turn of the century workers' housing. The townhouse, represented by <u>214 Holly Street</u>, provides basic housing for mobile people. As the tracts of land grew smaller and as people focused less on the traditional homestead, there was less emphasis on the actual dwelling. A management company or an off-site caretaker do the maintenance tasks traditionally done by the owner.</p>	Church to 214 Holly – 4/10 mi
<i>Make a left on Springfield Ave and pause on the bridge overlooking the Rahway River.</i>		
3	 <p>At the turn of the 20th Century Cranford was known as the Venice of New Jersey. <u>The Rahway River</u> drew more and more people from the city. The annual summer river carnivals, begun in the 1880s, were more popular than ever. Frank Lent, the architect responsible for many Cranford houses, described one such outing in 1904, "The crowd throngs the banks and bridges. The bands play their sweetest strains and the procession of beautiful and fantastically decorated boats, peopled by Cranford's prettiest girls and their swains, glide in mysterious array."</p>	214 Holly to River – 1/10 mi
<i>Continue walking in the same direction until you get to the tennis courts and look across the street.</i>		

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4		The bungalow was one of the most popular styles of the early 1930's. The name is taken from a Hindustani word meaning “belonging to Bengal” and was adopted by the British in India to refer to the local low houses surrounded by verandas. A sample of a bungalow can be seen on this house at <u>300 Springfield Avenue.</u> Real bungalows have only one story and always have a porch. Bungalows are one of the several styles known by the umbrella term “Comfortable Houses”, designed for the rising middle class in the 1930's.	River to 300 Springfield – 50 ft
<i>Continue on Springfield Ave, make a left on Central Ave, and walk down the block.</i>			
5		The Moore House at <u>22 Central Avenue,</u> built in 1862, has a steeply pitched roof called a Mansard roof after François Mansard, a 17 th century French architect. The Mansard roof was used by French architects during the time of France's Second Empire which gave its name to its buildings, and was the first architectural style influenced by contemporary fashion, as opposed to an interpretation of a style from the past. The most important attribute is undoubtedly the roof, but there are others such as the floral design called a cornice board which is just underneath the overhang, and the lintels which are the projections over the windows.	300 Springfield to 22 Central – 2/10 mi
<i>Continue in the same direction and walk to the end of Central Ave. Make a right onto Eastman Ave. Go two blocks and make a right on Pittsfield St.</i>			
6		Built in 1920, this Colonial Revival house at <u>20 Pittsfield Street</u> exhibits a simple, yet classic architecture that many Cranford residents will find familiar. Hallmarks of Colonial Revival include the rounded pattern dormer windows and the fanlight and sidelight windows around the front door. The windows are Federal-style six over six panes of glass.	22 Central to 20 Pittsfield – 3/10 mi
<i>Backtrack and go back to Eastman St on Pittsfield St. Continue past Eastman to Orchard St. Make a left on Orchard.</i>			
7		This house at <u>222 Orchard Street</u> was built in the height of the '20s, and is known as Stockbrokers' Tudor. The Tudor Revival is one of the easiest styles to spot with the half timbers sunk into the façade. Its inspiration goes back past Henry VIII and the other Tudor kings of the 1500s, to the late Medieval period. Typically, Tudor Revival windows are the casement type, with the small diamonds which we see here. This timber doorway, is also a feature, as is the second story overhang, reminiscent of middle-age European cities where second floors of houses jut out over the sidewalks.	20 Pittsfield to 222 Orchard – 2/10 mi
<i>Continue in the same direction down Orchard to Holly St. Make a left on Holly St.</i>			
8		This house at <u>9 Holly Street</u> is a Foursquare. The roof lines, in particular the porch and bay window, look almost flat. This house seems a lot lower to the ground than its two and a half stories would indicate.	222 Orchard to 9 Holly – 2/10 mi

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<i>Continue in the same direction on Holly St.</i>			
9		<p>This house at 16 Holly Street is also a Foursquare. But the traditional Foursquare boxiness is modified with the built-in tower, octagonal porch, and outsized dormer, making it closer to the Prairie style. Even more important are the exaggerated roof lines and the widely overhanging eaves. This is in keeping with the prevalent idea of the style that buildings should harmonize with the landscape, not stick up out of it.</p>	9 to 16 Holly – 50 ft
<i>Continue in the same direction on Holly St and cross Eastman Ave.</i>			
10		<p>This house at 103 Holly Street, like the First Presbyterian Church, is Richardsonian. The arch is pure Richardson Romanesque, right down to the textured stone. Note the wooden shingles. Shingles become very important to style in the late 1800s; so much so that eventually they split off from the Queen Anne style to form their own movement, the Shingle Style.</p>	16 to 103 Holly – 1/10 mi
11		<p>This is one of the finest examples of Shingle Style architecture in our area. 105 Holly Street, while preserving the notion of asymmetry introduces an idea very important to Shingle Style, emphasizing the back to nature aspects of architecture. Here we see no indication of machine work, no decoration on walls, windows, or porches - instead, there are the shingles. Porches have either unadorned wooden posts, shingle posts, Romanesque arches like next door, or fieldstone like here.</p>	103 to 105 Holly – next door
<i>Walk back to Eastman Ave and make a left onto Eastman Ave. Walk to North Ave. Make a left on North Ave.</i>			
12		<p>In the Midwest, miles and miles of prairie inspired Frank Lloyd Wright to come up with a whole new style of architecture, Prairie Style. Here in the Cranford Railroad Station the horizontal harmony is so complete, that the station blends right into the long, low lines of the land bank behind it, which blends right into the long, low lines of the platform roof. The station was built by the government-funded Works Project Administration during the Depression in the 1930's.</p>	105 Holly to end – 2/10 mi
<i>Continue walking down North Ave to N Union Ave back to start of tour.</i>			
TOTAL DISTANCE		1.9 mi	

Descriptions of structures based on "A Cruise Through Cranford's Architecture", 1988

About the Cranford Historic Preservation Advisory Board (HPAB) - HPAB was established in 1993 by the Township of Cranford. Our goal is to maintain Cranford's unique character while recognizing the homeowners' right to create a home reflecting their style. Our mission is to aid in the preservation of Cranford's architectural heritage through documentation of significant structures, education of the public as to the value of preservation, and advice to the Township on laws and activities impacting preservation. For more information or to contact us go to visit www.preservecranford.com or call Maureen Strazdon at 908-347-9970.

A SELF-GUIDED WALK PAST CRANFORD'S ARCHITECTURE – RAHWAY RIVER - MAP

