As they toiled to carve out farms, establish trading posts and cut down forests, the first white inhabitants of Fidalgo and Guemes islands had more pressing concerns than the architectural style of their dwellings. Their log cabins and planked homes were simple, practical and handmade.

Then, suddenly, with the boom of 1890-91, architecture came to Anacortes. Spurred by the dream of making Anacortes a transcontinental railroad terminus, new residents arrived in droves, wanting to be in on the ground floor. By the end of 1891, the boom had burst. Construction nearly stopped, but Anacortes was left with a glorious collection of Gilded Age buildings. When the city recovered, homeowners wanted homes in simpler new styles – American Foursquare and Craftsman.

The history of Anacortes architecture has followed the same boom-bust pattern over the past 127 years, with eras of prosperity punctuated by regional or national downturns. Each downturn saw the end of one era of architectural styles and each recovery brought new styles. The cycle continues today, as we recover from recession and begin to see homes being built with styles that look “new” to us.

This exhibit traces architectural styles as they, and the city, have evolved over the years, from the optimistic statements made by the grand Queen Annes of the city’s first boosters, to the first truly modern planned development in the community, Skyline.
Architecture came to Anacortes with the boom of 1890-91. As the dream of making Anacortes a transcontinental railroad terminus caught fire, newcomers arrived in droves, wanting to be in on the ground floor of the "New York of the West." These grandiose dreams perfectly suited flashy Victorian-era architecture.

The boom-time promoters of Anacortes expected to create nothing less than a first-class city and J.C. Jepson, a noted architect in Anacortes, designed the Goodwin-Benedict-Havekost Building in 1890 and set up shop there. Some of Jepson's grand structures, now gone, included the Semar Block and the Columbian School. He also designed several fine residences here by 1891, including Mayor F.V. Hogan's iconic Queen Anne home at 1613 7th Street and the equally elaborate J.M. Moore home at 32nd and M (lost to fire in 1928). The Queen Anne style, in particular, perfectly reflected the excesses and exuberance of the boom days. By the early 1890s, beautiful Queen Anne homes were found in several parts of town, particularly Old Town, Cap Sante and along 32nd Street. Many are still standing, but only one or two still show their original glory. It was a brief golden age – construction of the most elaborate Queen Anne houses almost entirely stopped with the collapse of the boom and the national Panic of 1893. By the time the national depression ended in the late 1890s, preferences had turned to simpler American Foursquare and Craftsman styles.

In Anacortes, Queen Anne cottages remained popular through the 1910s. Smaller, much simplified – yet quite charming – versions of the grand homes, they often include elements of the true Queen Anne style, such as wraparound porches, turned posts, decorated gables, spindles and decorative brackets.

Distinctive American Queen Anne Elements

- Asymmetrical facades
- Two or three stories, projecting upper floors
- Dramatic front-facing gables
- Complex intersecting gabled or hipped roofs
- Decorative chimneys
- Wooden or slate roofs
- Overhanging eaves
- Round, square, or polygonal towers
- Shaped and Dutch gables
- Classical columns
- Wrapped porches or verandas
- Second-story porches or balconies
- Pedimented porches
- Large 1:1 windows, upper panes often edged with leaded or colored glass
- Multiple types of applied ornamentation: Carved balustrades, spindle-work and varied wall textures such as patterned wood shingles, terra cotta tiles, relief panels, flat crests, brackets, and wooden dentils.

The 1892 F.V. Hogan House is one of the grandest expressions of Queen Anne style in Old Town Anacortes. Despite alterations to the windows, its overall form, massing and decorative detail remain largely intact.

Queen Anne Cottages
Other Victorian Era Styles

In American architecture, “Late Victorian” refers not to a style but to an era — 1860-1910 — which includes the latter years of Queen Victoria’s reign (plus a few more years). In the architectural history of Anacortes, the era really starts with the 1890-91 boom.

When people think of a Victorian house, a glamorous Queen Anne “painted lady” is probably the first image that comes to mind. But Queen Anne architecture is only part of the picture. While all Queen Anne houses are Victorian, not all Victorian houses are Queen Annes.

Two styles that appear frequently in Anacortes are Queen Anne Cottages (which can be seen in the panel to your right) and Folk Victorian homes (see several examples at left and below). These are smaller, much simplified versions of the grand homes.

In Anacortes, the vast majority of Victorians homes are vernacular and don’t fit into a specific style. Designed by future occupants or contractors rather than architects, vernacular homes may combine features from various styles or may come from floor plans passed from generation to generation with little change. Typically quite plain, they were built primarily to provide shelter, with less concern for architectural fashion.

Possibly the most visible vernacular house type in Anacortes is the “gable-front-and-wing” form (examples are shown at right). Such a house started as a narrow, front-gabled building, usually more than one story. When the owner needed more room, a wing was added at a right angle. A front porch usually fills the gap between the two sections. A few homes are slender gabled structures, but a wing was never added.

Other styles from the Victorian era are not common in Anacortes (although the city had its bold, Romanesque style Columbian School and a Second Empire-inspired store). However, the city does have a few homes and businesses that show influences of the Italianate style (below). This early Victorian style, inspired by Italian Renaissance architecture, was common in San Francisco.

Italianate Style

The most recognizable feature in Anacortes’ Italianate-inspired homes are the prominent (and painted) bracketed cornices under the eaves (see photo at top left). Other elements include two-story floor plans, tall narrow (sometimes paired) windows, low-pitched hipped roofs, wide overhanging eaves, and front porches with pilaster supports.

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The American Foursquare home came to Anacortes in the late Victorian period and remained popular through the early 1930s. This streamlined yet elegant style perfectly fit the era of quiet prosperity enjoyed by the community following its recovery from the financial turmoil of the early 1890s.

The American Foursquare is a subtype of the Prairie School style popularized by Frank Lloyd Wright and Walter Burley Griffin, but it also includes some elements of Craftsman homes (and can be considered a transition to that style).

Even the grandest Foursquare homes are distinguished by the simplicity of their hand-crafted woodwork and by the lack of the kind of ornate elements that had been lavished on earlier Victorian homes.

The square floor plan made these homes easy to mass produce. The hipped roof was highly economical, because long pieces of wood were needed in its construction and the roof could be assembled largely from scraps.

The simplest incarnation of the American Foursquare, the Workingman’s Foursquare, is extremely common in Anacortes. These basic, one-story dwellings were built for working-class inhabitants, which, in Anacortes, typically meant cannery and mill workers. Often built without glass, they can be completed as a full or transitional style based on the American Foursquare.

Available by mail order from Sears and Alladin, Foursquare home kits were a sensation across the country, known by a host of nicknames such as cornbelt cube, two-story pyramid, prairie box, and money-saving square.

Few Foursquare homes are structurally altered, although many have additions at the rear to accommodate larger kitchens. Functional for today’s needs, they maintain usable interior space and are simple to maintain.

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Craftsman style was influential by Frank Lloyd Wright’s Prairie School architecture and was part of the Arts and Crafts movement. Simple lines and the use of natural materials such as wood and stone made Craftsman homes an understandable elegance that homeowners found refreshing after the flamboyant Victorian era.

The most elaborate Craftsman homes were gracious and grand, with gleaming woodwork: built-in nooks, window seats, bookshelves, and china cabinets. Hand-hewn beam fixtures were common. For those with lesser means, smaller, simpler Craftsman bungalows provided comfortable and highly respectable homes. Like the American Foursquare, they were popular as kit homes.

Most Craftsman homes are one or one and one-half stories, although a few are two full stories. They have low-pitched roofs, usually gabled. Craftsman homes have porches, which may cover all or only part of the house front. Porch roofs are often supported by battered (tapered) columns. These supporting porch columns or pedestals frequently extend down to ground level.

Design elements include exposed rafters, wide, often unenclosed eaves, decorative beams or braces under gables, and roof dormers. The complex woodwork and use of exposed elements such as piers, joints and rafters emphasize the security and stability of the structure.

Construction of these hand-crafted and richly appointed homes stopped (at least on a large scale) with the advent of the Great Depression.
Small Homes for Hard Times

Minimal Traditional

Home construction in Anacortes during the Great Depression followed the same pattern the city saw after the collapse of the housing bubble in 2008: Few people could afford new homes, so until times improved, few homes were built.

To help turn things around, President Franklin Roosevelt and the federal government launched New Deal efforts to restart the economy, including the National Housing Act of 1934. This act established the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and codified policy for privately built homes, reshaping the character of American housing in the process. The act incorporated advances in zoning, subdivision regulation, prefabrication and standardization, and, perhaps most significantly, revolutionized home financing (and loosened up credit) by insuring privately issued home loans for up to 80 percent of the property value. Small dwellings that met FHA standards became known as “FHA minimum houses.”

Roosevelt Cottages

In Anacortes, the housing market didn’t really heat up until construction began on the Whidbey Island Naval Air Station in 1941-1942. The project created an economic and population boom in Anacortes—the first since the 1929 crash.

As the city closest to the base, Anacortes struggled to provide housing for contractors and base personnel (Oak Harbor’s population was only 376 in 1940). In Anacortes, a Housing Authority project of about 50 units was built at 23rd and M, and tiny two-bedroom Roosevelt Cottages for Depression-era Cottages sprang up across town, especially in Old Town and at the city’s South End, closer to the Navy base. With a square footprint and hipped roof, these cottages were similar to the Workingman’s Foursquare of previous decades, with modern refinements.

During and after the war, FHA-qualified Minimal Traditional-style homes became the dominant home style across the United States (until the Ranch Style swept the country in the early 1950s). Minimal Traditional, was a smaller, simpler version of the styles of the 1920s, especially Tudor Revival, with scaled down built-in cabinetry. Roofs were hipped or gabled, with small eaves. Clad in locally available materials, they had small porches or stoops, and asymmetrical designs. A new feature: The kitchen, with new appliances, faced the street.

This was the last generation of homes without attached garages. Until the 1950s, people walked, took public transportation or shared rides to work or shop. A car sat on the street or alley or in a detached garage—it did not have a room of its own.

Although they had few frills, Minimal Traditional homes were attractive, had comfortable floor plans and were well-constructed—perfect starter homes for the millions of veterans coming home from World War II. With GI Bill and an FHA loan, these veterans were able to purchase these homes with little or no down payment.

H

Roosevelt Cottages

Tudor Revival

The Tudor Revival Style, which was inspired by simple and rustic English cottages and country homes, appeared in about 1920 as part of the move away from gaudy Victorian styles.

This traditional medieval building style became very popular in the 1920s, then faded by the end of the 1930s. While there are not many in Anacortes, the ones we have are charming.

A second Tudor revival period occurred in the 1970s and ’80s.

Tudor Revival Characteristics

- Tudor pitched and/or pointed front doors or doorways.
- Elaborate doors with small or no windows.
- Steeply pitched roofs, usually down to first floor ceiling level, with multiple gables.
- Decorative brick or stone
decorations.
- Large, prominent chimneys with decorative brick or stone.
- Roofing of asphalt, shingles, slate, or tile; also may include a thatched roof.
- Windows often paired on three or more with patterned glazing.
- Thematically styled dormers are typical although double hip is also found.
- Sometimes even with shingles roof or eave with brick/stone trim.
New Homes for a Modern World

Modern Style architecture includes homes built from the end of World War II to the early 1970s. Modern style houses generally have low-pitched gabled or hipped roofs, minimal front porches, and few decorative features. Where most earlier house styles were oriented with the long axis of the house extending from front to side, Modern house typically have the long axis from side to side. This was also, in part, to the development of new suburban communities with larger residential lots. In Anacortes and elsewhere, subdivision plats were no longer designed on a grid. Before long garages moved to the front of the house, and the use of alleys was abandoned.

Although this style may be more common by a desert hillside or golf course in Palm Springs, Anacortes has quite a few good examples. Perhaps the most striking Modern Style is Mid-Century Modern. With large or innovatively placed windows and sliding glass doors, the style incorporates nature into structures by capturing views and natural light. Other key attributes of the style include geometric windows and sliding glass doors.

Several architectural styles grew out under the umbrella of the Modern Style Movement: Mid-Century Modern, Minimal Traditional, Ranch, Shed. In Anacortes, Minimal Traditional and Ranch Style are the most common (and are discussed on other panels). Historically uncommon in Anacortes, Contemporary Style has had a lively revival in recent years, particularly in the new Channel Landing development near Ship Harbor. Anacortes also has a large minority of Shed style homes; a style that stayed popular for four decades – and Fidalgo Island has a few examples of A-Frame and Shed styles.

Mid-Century Modern

Perhaps the most striking Modern Style is Mid-Century Modern. With large or innovatively placed windows and sliding glass doors, the style incorporates nature into structures by capturing views and natural light. Other key attributes of the style include geometric windows and sliding glass doors. Larger spans of exposed post-and-beam structure made possible by new construction technology and building materials such as glue laminated lumber, plywood, and insulated beam structure and flat roofs. Changes in elevation: Split Level homes tend to have the large view windows typical of other Modern Style homes. Perhaps the most striking Modern Style is Mid Century Modern. With large or innovatively placed windows and sliding glass doors, the style incorporates nature into structures by capturing views and natural light. Other key attributes of the style include geometric windows and sliding glass doors.

Changes in elevation: Split Level homes tend to have the large view windows typical of other Modern Style homes. Perhaps the most striking Modern Style is Mid Century Modern. With large or innovatively placed windows and sliding glass doors, the style incorporates nature into structures by capturing views and natural light. Other key attributes of the style include geometric windows and sliding glass doors.

Split-Level Style

Some say the Split-Level Style was inspired by the Prairie Style architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright; others say it emerged as a two-story variation of the Ranch Style. In any case, the style emerged in the United States in the 1930s and in Anacortes by 1955. Also called Split and Bungalow (or Tri-Level if there is a third level), the style is characterized by entryway on one side of the house typically accessed from car-bay. This design has the garage at street level, and living spaces around it or man caves on one side of the house underneath an upper floor (see above). They often have multiple outdoor views and access points (or Tri-Level if there is a third level), the style is characterized by an entrance between the two stories, with a small split foyer and short staircases leading up or down (see below). Perfect for a growing family (and for sloping lots) the versatile and comfortable Split Level Style staying power, with houses constructed in the United States in the 1930s and in Anacortes by 1955. Also called Split and Bungalow (or Tri-Level if there is a third level), the style is characterized by an entrance between the two stories, with a small split foyer and short staircases leading up or down (see below). Perfect for a growing family (and for sloping lots) the versatile and comfortable Split Level Style staying power, with houses constructed in the United States in the 1930s and in Anacortes by 1955. Also called Split and Bungalow (or Tri-Level if there is a third level), the style is characterized by an entrance between the two stories, with a small split foyer and short staircases leading up or down (see below). Perfect for a growing family (and for sloping lots) the versatile and comfortable Split Level Style staying power, with houses constructed in the United States in the 1930s and in Anacortes by 1955. Also called Split and Bungalow (or Tri-Level if there is a third level), the style is characterized by an entrance between the two stories, with a small split foyer and short staircases leading up or down (see below). Perfect for a growing family (and for sloping lots) the versatile and comfortable Split Level Style staying power, with houses constructed in the United States in the 1930s and in Anacortes by 1955. Also called Split and Bungalow (or Tri-Level if there is a third level), the style is characterized by an entrance between the two stories, with a small split foyer and short staircases leading up or down (see below).
Refinery Ranch Boom

In 1953, one of the biggest booms in Anacortes history was set off when Shell Oil Co. announced its decision to build a refinery at March Point. In 1954, with contractors and Shell employees arriving in large numbers to build the plant, the city experienced a housing crunch similar to the one during World War II. The community even revived the use of its wartime Housing Authority units to meet the need.

While smaller contractors built new homes all over the city, large contractors recognized the opportunity, and the city saw its first modern suburban-style subdivisions. The first (recorded in August 1954) was View Acres by Maillian Inc. on M Avenue and 26th to 29th streets. View Acres also can boast another first – its street ends on 27th and 28th appear to be the city’s earliest cul-de-sacs. Maillian completed several houses on 28th Street in 1954, but it took several years to build all 13 homes in View Acres’ two phases.

The biggest builder of the era was Modern Homes of Seattle, which, in September 1954, announced plans for its 66-home Broadview subdivision, between 38th and 40th streets near Mount Erie Elementary. The sites sold out so quickly that by May 1955 the company launched a second subdivision at 22nd and H – the 135-home Island View Park. Both neighborhoods filled fast with the families of refinery workers.

Modern Homes’ subdivisions were the first to break out of the box – the square grids of Anacortes’ old plat system. New streets were curved to follow the contours of the land, and the use of alleys was abandoned. Lots were made long and narrow to accommodate two- and three-bedroom Ranch Style ramblers – the rage of the era – with their attached one-car garages and driveways right in front.

Other refinery-era developments of note were Albert Balch’s View Ridge off Oakes Avenue (20 units planned between Hartford and Jackson avenues), Linton Construction’s 26-home Brookfield Park (on 36th and 37th streets and H Avenue), and the 32-lot Mountain View Park addition at the top of R Avenue near St. Mary’s. These projects included homes with Mid-Century Modern flair, many with three or four bedrooms.

**Typical Ranch Style elements**
- Wide, spreading foyer
- Atriums and arches
- Attached garages
- Wide, sweeping eaves
- Minimal ornamentation
- Large picture windows, sliding glass doors
- Quality construction with natural materials

Island View Park

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Below: View Acres addition, 1954

Typical Ranch Style elements

- Wide, sprawling form
- Asymmetrical facades
- Attached garages
- Wide, overflowing eaves
- Minimal ornamentation
- Large picture windows, sliding glass doors
- Quality construction with natural materials

Island View Park

Preserving Our Built Heritage

Anacortes House History & Plaque Program

Owners who have completed house histories have receive plaques from the Anacortes Historic Preservation Board as part of its Anacortes House History & Plaque Program.

**404 2nd St., Morris Belle Curtis House**

Melville and Allen Curtis (brothers of Anacortes’ namesake Annie Curti), gave this lot to Melville’s oldest daughter, Morris “Morn” Belle Curtis. The Queen Anne style house was completed by 1903, shortly after Morris’s marriage to Henry Schmidt.

**1605 6th St., Former Offices of Apex Cannery**

This Classic Revival structure was the Apex Fish Cannery office by 1913. After Apex moved to Alaska in the 1930s, the tiny building became colorful character Harry Smith’s “museum.” Later, fisherman Bill Lowman moved it across the street and converted it into a home.

**1306 2nd St., Harry Dodge House**

This Classic Revival Style house was built c. 1909-10. Harry Dodge, owner of a jewelry and optical store, purchased the land in 1903, but there is no evidence of the home until 1910. It was sold to Frank and Clara Bonach in 1917.

**1506 12th St., Peter & Celia Beffa House**

This small simple vernacular cottage with Craftsman details is cross gabled. It was built c. 1908 by Peter and Celia Beffa, who occupied the house until its sale to Fred and Margaret Fulton in July 1915. Peter Beffa was a wood block printer.

**1319 6th St., Sidney & Stella Beard House**

This house at 1319 6th St. was built c. 1917, and there were several owners prior to its occupation by Sidney and Stella Beard. Beard worked at Anacortes Lumber and Box Co.

**1411 8th St., William and Alice Johnson House**

This Traditional Colonial Revival style home at 1411 8th St. was built c. 1905-06 by engineer W.W. Johnson. The house was later sold to Harri J. and Mary E. Palmer.

**1219 10th St., Charles & Desiree Brinck House**

This house at 1219 10th St. was built in 1913 by Charles Julian Brinck, a tallyman and shipping clerk at Anacortes Lumber and Box Co. and his wife Desiree, a nurse.

**1708 8th St., Dr. George & Georgia Smith House**

The front of the Simmonds House looks much like it did when it was built.

**1719 10th St., Olaf & Marie Howick House**

Olaf and Marie Howick, the original owners this Classical Revival style home, bought the land in 1911 and lived there by 1913-14. It was the first home in the 1700 block of 10th Street. He was the proprietor of Howick and Toreen (also known as the Heidelberg), a saloon on Commercial Avenue.

**1514 12th St., William & Emma Hurd House**

This home at 1514 12th Street was built in 1910. Because of many alterations, it is difficult to identify its type, but it may be Classic Revival design.

**701 K Ave., William and Beatrice Lowman House**

This state-of-the-art home was completed in 1907 for cannery owner Will Lowman. It had 17 rooms, hot and cold water in every bedroom, electric lights, and thermostatic heating. The second floor was expanded in 1914, and a greenhouse and covered driveway added. It was converted into apartments and porches enclosed. Cement siding was installed in 1950, but otherwise the building is original in shape and size.

**1111 5th St., Rhoda Davidson House**

The house at 1111 5th St., a Workingman’s Four-square, was probably built prior to 1905, possibly 1903. A simple structure, has features that make it unique: a pedimentable porch, tapered columns, turned balusters, transom light over the door and exposed rafters. The first property owner, recorded in 1903, was Rhoda Davidson, wife of William Endley Davidson.

**1809 8th St., Abe and Pearl Simmonds House**

The composite Tudor, built in 1927 by Abe and Pearl Simmonds, stands uphill from street level on land initially owned by Frank V. Hogan, the first mayor of Anacortes. The original front steps were replaced with a wood deck. Otherwise, the front of the Simmonds House looks much like it did when it was built.

**1803 9th St., Eliza Blackinton Wilson House**

The house at 1803 9th St., a hip roofed Craftsman bungalow, was built c. 1905-06. Edwin A. Wilson, a second hand store merchant, quietly claimed the lots to his wife Eliza Blackinton Wilson. The deed stated that she would use proceeds from her late brother’s insurance to build a dwelling there.

**1412 10th St., Emma Luella Howard House**

This Transitional Colonial Revival style was home of Emma Luella Howard, Anacortes’ first librarian. The land was purchased in 1903 by Luella’s mother, Emma Cadmus Hud. The home was built by 1906, when Josiah G. Hard bought it. Luella (and her mother) took residency in 1913 when the Howards separated. She lived here until she sold it to Ada Carter in May 1943.

**1213 10th St., Lena Storme House**

This Workingman’s Foursquare house was built c. 1906-07 by William H. Waters, who apparently never lived in it. In 1910, its occupant was Lena Storme, an immigrant from Norway and former teacher of Martin Storme. She raised six children in Anacortes.

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Anacortes Register of Historic Places

- Anacortes Carnegie Library, 1305 8th St.
- Causland Memorial Park, 8th Street & M Ave.
- Great Northern Depot, R Ave. & 7th St.
- W.T. Preston (Snagboat), R Ave. & 7th St.
- Wilson Hotel, 804 Commercial Ave.

(We also have a list of state and national registers)

- Judd House, 1719 9th St.
- Lowman House, 1502 8th St.
- Fraternal Order of Eagles, Anacortes Arm #249, 901 7th St. (Also on the State Register).

National and State Historic Registers

- California Fruit Store, 909 5th St.
- Curtis Wharf, E Ave. & 2nd St. (now pilings)
- La Merced Schooner (breakwater) 3022 Oakes Ave.
- Marine Supply & Hardware Complex, 202 - 218 Commercial Ave. and 1009 2nd St.
- Semar Block, 501 Q Ave. (now a parking lot)

The Anacortes Preservation Board, established in 2000, is composed of five Anacortes residents who believe that old buildings are among our city’s most valuable assets. The board is the city’s primary resource in matters of historic planning and preservation, and works to raise community awareness of Anacortes’ historic resources.

The primary responsibility of the board is to encourage conservation of the city’s historic resources by creating and maintaining an Anacortes Register of Historic Places and, in an advisory capacity, reviewing proposed changes to register properties and properties listed on the state’s Historic Property Inventory. Other activities include the House History and Plaque Program, the development of interpretive panels, the compilation of the Historic Inventory Database of properties, and the recognition of significant contributors to city history through Preservation Awards.

The Historic Preservation Board meets at 4 p.m. every second Tuesday in the Anacortes Museum’s Research Library (via the downstairs M Avenue entrance).
Paul Revere Williams (1894-1980) was the first African-American member of the American Institute of Architects. Inducted in 1923, he was recently (and posthumously) honored with the 2017 AIA Gold Medal for his significant and influential body of work. Eight of his works have been named to the National Register of Historic Places. Williams worked primarily in Southern California, and the Cap Sante home he designed for the Barrick family is one of only two known structures of his design in Washington State.

Born in a vibrant, multi-ethnic Los Angeles in 1894, Williams lost both parents by age 4. Raised by a foster mother who encouraged his creativity, he graduated in 1912 from L.A.’s Polytechnic High School and, despite discouragement from a school counselor, embarked on his career in 1914. Over more than 50 years, he broke barriers while working on nearly 3,000 buildings, including the iconic Theme Building at Los Angeles International Airport (right), and many schools, churches and public buildings. He designed homes for numerous Hollywood celebrities, including Frank Sinatra, Lucille Ball and Tyrone Power. According to the Los Angeles Times: “If you have a picture in your mind of Southern California in the 1950s and early 1960s, you are quite likely picturing a building created by Paul Williams.”

Deborah Brackstone of the Paul Revere Williams Project said he put clients at ease. “Williams’ great people skills, refined taste and ability were his most powerful weapons against racial prejudice. His hundreds of clients valued his ability over any discomfort concerning race,” she wrote. One of his signature techniques was to render drawings upside down so that white clients could look at them from across the table rather than seated next to him. Beverly Hills realtor Crosby Doe called him “the Jackie Robinson of architecture.”

“If I allow the fact that I am a Negro to checkmate my will to do, now, I will inevitably form the habit of being defeated,” Williams stated.

Architect Paul Revere Williams may have never visited Anacortes, but he left a lasting monument – a spectacular Tudor Revival home of his design.

The 3,700 sq. ft. home at 201 E. Park Drive was built in 1928 for wealthy California transplant Luther Barrick. The Anacortes American reported that the house cost $20,000 – five to ten times more than the “less pretentious” houses built in town that year: “With the well-appointed surroundings, it is now one of Anacortes’ most beautiful homes.”

Washington State Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) lists the home as the Thomas Morrison residence, and notes that it is Tudor Revival in style, with typical characteristics – a steeply pitched gable roof, prominent chimney, small-paned windows, and imitation half-timbering. Williams used oak and pine for flooring, ceiling details and a large mantel, and he added his signature spiral staircase. DAHP calls the home one of the finest examples of Arts and Crafts architecture in the city, “enhanced by the masterful integration of the structure with the site.”

In 1928, Williams designed a second Tudor style house with similar features for Los Angeles developer William Howden, and he designed another home for Barrick in California in 1934.

But sadly, absolute proof that 201 East Park Drive was designed by Williams was lost when his archives – stored at a bank in Watts – were destroyed by fire during civil unrest in 1992 following the Rodney King verdict.
Daring to be Different

This space is dedicated to those houses we know and love, but which don’t fit into one of the major architectural trends of Anacortes history. These are designed or decorated by owners with a passion — and no fear of standing out.

Above are several homes with design elements that have turned them into perfect settings for fairytales. Isn’t it easy to picture them with dragons, princesses, flying carpets or little wooden boys?

To the left, are some homes that broke out of the box decades ago, and in many ways are still ahead of their time — round, square and even boat-shaped.

And at right are two early homes that had style of their own, even way back when. If these homes could talk, what stories would they tell?
Identification of Queen Anne Features

1. Asymmetrical facades
2. Two or three stories; projecting upper floors
3. Dominant front-facing gables
4. Complex intersecting gabled or hipped roofs
5. Decorative chimneys
6. Wooden or slate roofs
7. Overhanging eaves
8. Round, square, or polygonal towers
9. Shaped and Dutch gables
10. Wraparound porches or verandas
11. Second-story porches or balconies
12. Pedimented porches
13. Large 1:1 windows, upper panes often edged with leaded or colored glass
14. Multiple types of applied ornamentation: carved balustrades; spindle work; and varied wall textures such as patterned wood shingles, terra cotta tiles, relief panels, roof cresting, brackets, and wooden dentils.