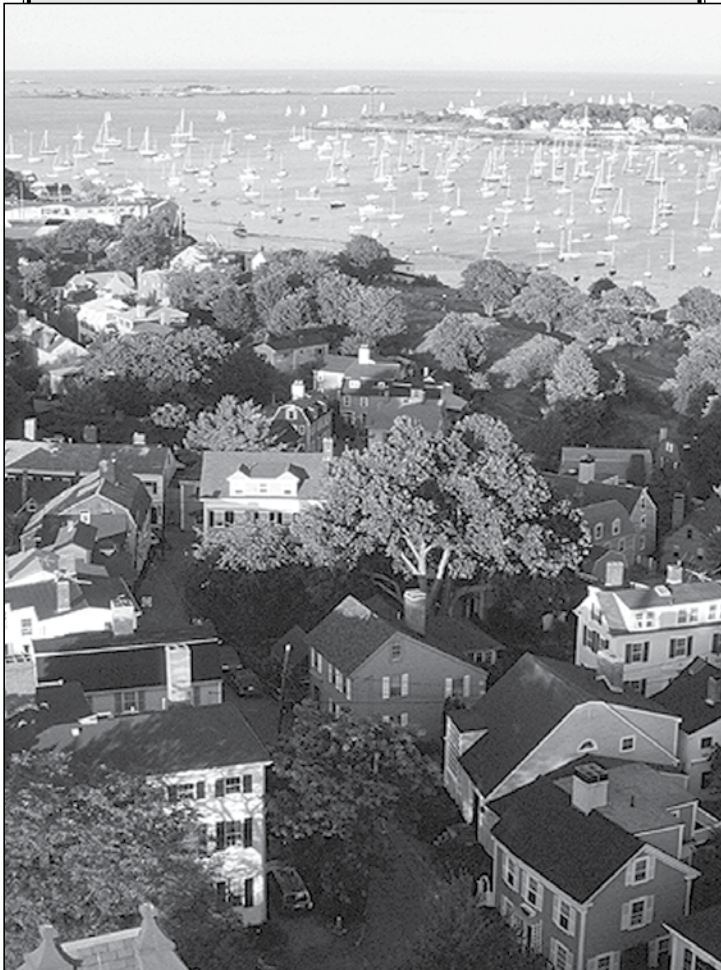


# A Walk Through Historic Marblehead

A self-guided Walking Tour  
of Downtown Marblehead



**Marblehead**  
*Chamber of Commerce*  
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**Marblehead  
Historical Commission**

MarbleheadHistory.org

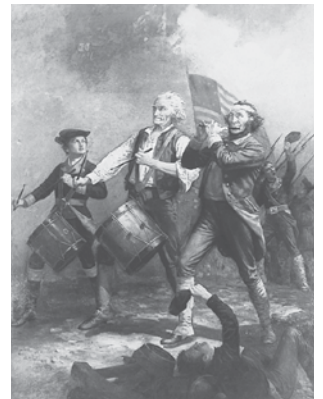
**Start your walking tour** at **Abbot Hall** on Washington Square **1**. The building was constructed in 1876, and is the seat of Marblehead's town government. In it, many artifacts of Marblehead's history are displayed in several areas, maintained by the **Marblehead Historical Commission**.



Abbot Hall

In the large **Selectmen's Room**, a focal point is **The Spirit of '76** painting by Archibald Willard. Nearby is the original deed to Marblehead from an Algonquian tribe of Native Americans, dated 1684. Above that is a bust sculpture of **Elbridge Gerry**, who was a Revolutionary Patriot statesman, signer of the Declaration of Independence, Governor of Massachusetts in 1810, and United States Vice President under James Madison during the three-year War of 1812.

Another historical painting among several there depicts the **Crossing of the Delaware River** in December 1776 during the American Revolution for the surprise attack on Trenton, NJ, which turned the tide of the war. The crossing was orchestrated by Marblehead's military regiment of several hundred men from a town of just over 900 families, under the command of Colonel, later General, John Glover. The Marblehead mariners manned the boats that carried George Washington's Continental Army across the ice-choked river, and their tenacity and endurance made the difficult crossing possible, throughout Christmas night in 1776, in lashing sleet, and back again after the battle, with prisoners. Remarkably, there were no American casualties in that entire engagement.



The Spirit of '76

A portrait of the Marblehead Regiment's commander, **Colonel John Glover**, portrays him after he was promoted to General in early 1777. He served through the entire seven years of the Revolution. Glover's fine Georgian-style home can be seen later on this tour.

Another portrait shows **Joseph Story**, who was appointed to the United States Supreme Court in 1811 when he was only 32 years old. To this day, he is still the youngest ever appointed. He served for 34 years, until his death in 1845, and helped write much of early America's important maritime admiralty law.

Also inside Abbot Hall are historically themed **murals** from America's WPA project in the 1930s, which helped put unemployed artists to work after the Great Depression. A **Maritime History Museum Room** shows the town's seafaring and naval heritage over nearly 400 years.

Abbot Hall is open year-round. Summer hours (Memorial Day through October): Mon., Tues., Thurs., 8-5; Fri. 8-12:30; Wed. 8-6; Sat. 10-4; Sun. 11-5. Closed most weekends November-May.

The Maritime History Museum Room and a **gift shop** are generally open Mon.-Thurs. 10-4, Fri. 10-1, Memorial Day through Christmas and some weekends.

For further information, visit **Marblehead.org** and click on **Marblehead Historical Commission** under the online heading **Visiting & Town History**.





Samuel Lee & R. Hooper Houses



Robert Hooper / William R. Lee House

a major, then a colonel, in Glover's Regiment, which played a significant role in the American Revolution.



Jeremiah Lee Mansion  
Open to public seasonally

At the bottom of the hill at 161 Washington Street is the **Jeremiah Lee Mansion 4**. The house is considered to be one of the finest examples of Georgian architecture in America. Its wood facade is "rusticated" and was originally sand-painted to look and feel like stone.

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



King Hooper Mansion  
Open to the public

As you leave Abbot Hall by the Washington Street entrance, turn right going down the hill. On the left you will see three privately-owned houses (numbers 185, 183 **2** and 181) built during the mid-18th century by members of the Lee and Hooper families—successful ship owners and merchants.

The house at **185 Washington Street 3** is a fine example of late Georgian-style architecture. It features a "rusticated" wood facade built to resemble stone blocks. The back portion of the house was built around 1743, and the front part some years later. After 1771, it was the home of Colonel William Raymond Lee, a nephew of Colonel Jeremiah Lee and

he visited Marblehead in 1824, so the corner of the house was removed. Actually, the corner was built that way for a retail shop entrance. This was also the first home of Col. Jeremiah Lee and his family for 17 years (1751–68)—more than twice as long as they lived in grand style in their larger new mansion, which you already saw.

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The Jeremiah Lee Mansion has been owned by the **Marblehead Museum & Historical Society** since 1909, and is open June–October, Tuesday–Saturday 10am–4pm; closed Sunday and Monday.

Special exhibits at the Museum's galleries across the street at 170 Washington Street highlight specific aspects of the collections. The galleries and research archives are open year-round, Tuesday–Friday, 10am–4pm, and some Saturdays.



J. Palmer / Colonel Jeremiah Lee  
("Lafayette") House

Diagonally across the street on Hooper Street is the **King Hooper Mansion 5** once the home of Robert Hooper, merchant prince and ship owner. He was known as "King" because of his wealth and his fair dealings and generosity to the town. The older part of the building was constructed in 1728, and its pine-paneled rooms clearly reflect their early date. The Georgian front rooms were added after 1747, and their ornamentation and elegance form an interesting contrast to the older rooms. The home also contains a wine cellar, cozy cellar kitchen, and a third floor ballroom. **The Marblehead Arts Association** owns the building and uses the lovely surroundings for art exhibits throughout the year. The building, its art galleries and a gift shop with members' artworks for sale are open Tuesday–Saturday 10am–4pm, Sunday 1–5pm.



Boston Yacht Club

When leaving the Hooper home, turn left and follow Hooper Street to Union Street. At this corner is a very fine Georgian-style house **6**. Legend has it that the carriage of the Marquis de Lafayette, a Revolutionary War general and a favorite aid to General George Washington, was too large to pass by the house when



Crocker Park

he visited Marblehead in 1824, so the corner of the house was removed. Actually, the corner was built that way for a retail shop entrance. This was also the first home of Col. Jeremiah Lee and his family for 17 years (1751–68)—more than twice as long as they lived in grand style in their larger new mansion, which you already saw.

Follow Union Street to Water Street and down toward the **Boston Yacht Club, 7** one of the oldest yachting clubs in the country, which began operating in Marblehead in 1902.

Continue on to Front Street and **Crocker Park 8**. From the park you will enjoy a magnificent view of Marblehead Harbor. Rest rooms and benches are available.



State Street Wharf / Town Landing

As you continue down Front Street, you will find the **State Street Wharf 9** the town's public landing since the mid-1600s. Benches and seasonal rest rooms are available.

Beyond the Front Street wharves is **Glover Square 10** named for the Revolutionary War hero



Glover Square & General John Glover House

10

they had ferried a larger force of 9,000 men, oxen, and cannon across the East River in New York after the Battle of Long Island.

At the end of Front Street and at the entrance to Marblehead Harbor is **Fort Sewall 11**



11

Fort Sewall

In 1814, during the War of 1812, the frigate USS Constitution sought shelter in Marblehead's harbor from two pursuing British men o' war. Marblehead seamen in the Constitution's crew and the intimidating guns and cannon on Fort Sewall made the escape possible. The fort was named after Marblehead attorney Samuel Sewall, who was a state and U.S. congressman, then served on the Massachusetts Supreme Court 1800–14 and was Chief Justice in 1814.



12

Thomas Gerry House

Built in 1715 for merchant Thomas Gerry, it was later the home of one of his granddaughters and her husband, Frederick Conklin, an infantry captain, who housed officers in command of Fort Sewall during the War of 1812. The shutters on the house were made by soldiers at the fort at that time.



13

Reverend John Barnard House

General John Glover. For a year and a half, while a Colonel, he led the country's first regiment of military mariners (precursors of the Marines), which was comprised of nearly 600 Marblehead fishermen and seamen. Under his leadership, they rowed General Washington and his army across the Delaware River. Four months earlier,

first established in 1644. Originally rough earthen barriers constructed by the town against sudden attacks from the sea by the French, the grounds were improved in 1742 and then housed Revolutionary and later garrisons. Some underground chambers still exist.

From the Fort, walk back towards town on Front Street, turning right on Franklin Street. At **30 Franklin Street 12** is a house made famous in a historical novel set in Marblehead by Anya Seton, called *The Hearth and Eagle*.

At **7 Franklin Street 13** stands the home of Parson John Barnard, minister of the First Church (now First Church of Christ) for over 50 years in the early 1700s, who encouraged the men of Marblehead to resume the town's foreign trade. The house was built c.1717. His church, built in 1695,



14

Old North Church

originally stood opposite his house until a new church was built a block away in 1824 (#14 below).

Follow Franklin Street and turn left on Washington Street. On the right is the First Church's third edifice, now referred to locally as **Old North Church 14**. Founded in 1635, the church (or meeting house) was originally located on Old Burial Hill. The building at 41 Washington Street was constructed of rough granite in 1824. A new cut stone facade was added in 1886.

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



15

Elbridge Gerry House

On the opposite side of the street stands **44 Washington Street 15** childhood home (later enlarged) of Elbridge Gerry, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, Governor of Massachusetts, and Vice President of the United States in 1813–14, during the War of 1812, under fourth president James Madison.

At **65 Washington Street 16** is the house of Captain Samuel Russell Trevett, leader of an artillery company at the Battle of Bunker Hill in 1775. A fine early house, it was built in 1715.



16

Russell Trevett / Capt. Samuel R. Trevett House

Directly ahead in Market Square is the **Old Town House 17**. It was built in 1727–29, pre-dating Boston's Faneuil Hall, and has been used as an official town building ever since. It was the departure point for volunteers for all wars from the French & Indian War (1754–63) through the 1800s.

One block past the Town House is Pleasant Street, with buildings mainly from the 1800s. It leads to where the town's largest shoe factories were located in the mid- to late-1800s, in an area that suffered two major fires, in 1877 and 1888.

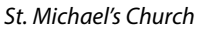


17

Old Town House

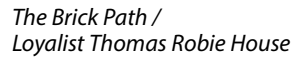
Two blocks past the Town House on Washington Street, turn right on Summer Street. Just up the hill is **St. Michael's Church 18** the second oldest Episcopal church still standing in the U.S., built in 1714, originally with a tall steeple that had to be taken down in 1793. The church interior contains fine artifacts donated by English





from 1975 by the C.B. Fisk organ company, built within the older historic wooden organ structure that had been made in 1833 by the renowned early organ makers E. & G. Hook of Salem.

Back on Washington Street, the second house past Summer Street is a brick residence called **"the Brick Path"** 19.



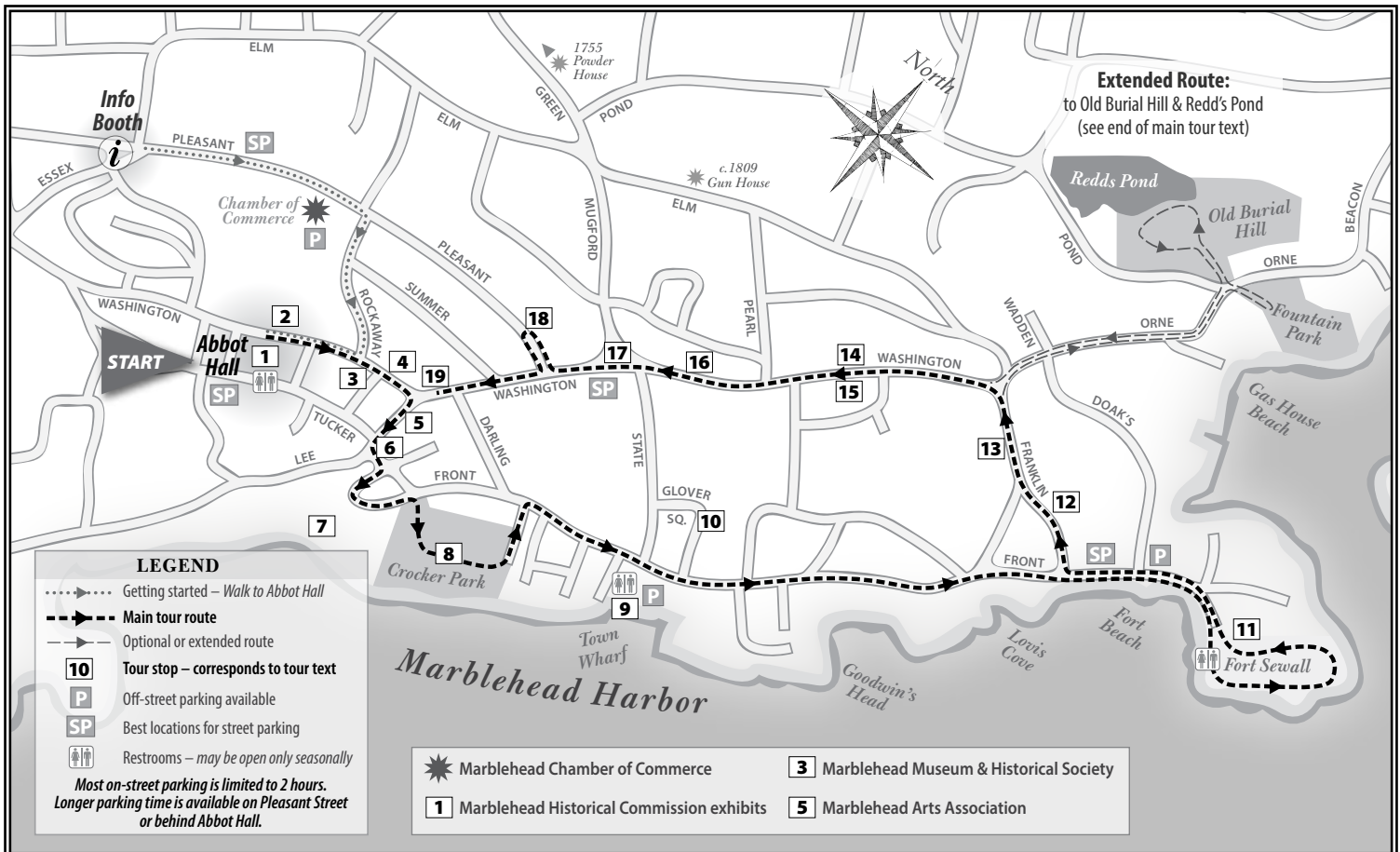
probably originally had shop windows and a door at the street level, facing the street.

**To return to Abbot Hall**, where the tour began, continue walking and turn right up the hill one block. **To return to the Chamber office or info booth or Pleasant Street**, walk past the Lee Mansion and then turn right, following Rockaway Street one block to Pleasant Street.

## EXTENDED TOUR

**Old Burial Hill** is the town's early burying ground, with some significant stone grave markers. A memorial obelisk lists 65 men and boys lost in a great 'gale' or hurricane on the North Atlantic Grand Banks in September 1846 that left 43 widows and 155 fatherless children, and ended fishing as Marblehead's principal industry. A covered gazebo with

benches looks out toward Cape Ann and the Atlantic Ocean. **Redd's Pond** lies beyond, named for the only Marblehead resident to be hanged during the Salem witchcraft trials in 1692. Formerly a water source for fire-fighting, it is the site of historic fire hand-tub competitions and popular model sailboat races some Sundays.



***Stop in at the Lee Mansion (June–October) or Hooper Mansion, both just a block away.***

MarbleheadMuseum.org • MarbleheadArts.org

***Also take time to enjoy Marblehead's harbor and many shops and restaurants!***

Tour concept by Elizabeth McKinnon.  
Written by Elizabeth McKinnon,  
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Photography by Leslie Gould and  
Judy Anderson, except as noted.