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Enjoy your town;

Take a stroll with Queen Anne

by Margie Landis

Lovely spring days beckon one to the outdoors. In these times of high gasoline prices and concern about getting adequate excercise, the city or town dweller has a wealth of outside entertainment just a few steps away. Take a walk around town and notice what you have missed seeing all these years notably the architecture of the houses in town.

Although there is a whole host of architectural styles (as well as all kinds of items of daily life) to which we give the generalized appelation "Victorian", there is one particular type which was widely built in the United States. It was introduced at the Philadelphia Exposition of 1876that great fair which marked the first hundred years of our 'country's existence. Oddly enough, it was called "Queen Anne" for England's queen who reigned from 1702 to 1714. Amalgamated into it were many elements of architectural styles from Elizabethan and Jacobean to Classical. This style was all but rampant here in the mid-atlantic states. It was American; it was individualistic; and it could be afforded by those of moderate means as well as the wealthy.

The facade was usually

assymmetrical with peaks or

turrets or randomly placed dormers adding interest to the roofline. Some homes were built of clapboardothers of brick or masonry or a combination of all three. Many had sections which were covered with ornamen tal shingles. (The invention of the bandsaw made them easy and cheap to manufacture, and they soon became a very popular item to be employed by the architect and builder.) One such ornamental shingle in frequent use was applied to resemble fish scales. Another resembled feathers. There was frequent use of bay windows. One builder went so far as to recommend these areas as being an ideal place to which to "banish smelly smokers". Porches and balconies were also often found on Queen Anne Homes. Windows with a border of small panes and occasionally stained-glass windows or those with elaborate etchings were found. Some of the smaller details, such as finials to top off turrets or small decorative garlands, swags or urns, dentils or brackets, were elements which harkened back to the classical style. The end product came to be known as "Victorian gingerbread".

Many of these homes became "white elephants" in the earlier years of this century until the escalating cost of home construction



made these former "dregs on the market" ideal for large family dwellings or for conversion to apartments.

Queen Anne was an eclectic style which lends itself easily to all sorts of adaptive reuse. There are now a number of examples of Queen Anne architecture which have been reclaimed (i.e. aluminum siding removed and painted to accent their original attractive and decorative aspects). Few styles of architecture lend themselves better to individual expression of the owner's tastes in color.

A walk through town (just about any town in this area) can reveal a great many fine examples of Queen Anne architecture. To a number of us, it may be reminiscent of "Grandma's house"—the typical structure of smalltown America as seen on the picture postcard.

(If you are fortunate enough to own a Queen Anne home and would like advice on any facet of rennovation or restoration of it, the Information Center of the Marietta Restoration Associates, located at 36 West Market Street in

Marietta, is open every Saturday from 11:00 am to

1:00 pm. This center is open to the public free of charge.)



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