

Hawthorne 101 and Photo Hunt

Presented by the Witch City Writers



Enduring Hawthorne by searching for the details that inspired the novel

THE BOOK

The House of the Seven Gables

Written by Nathaniel Hawthorne in 1851

The tale of a house cursed through the centuries by a man who was hanged for witchcraft—a house haunted by the ghosts of its dead and the terror of its living inhabitants. The blighted house controls the fates of four Pyncheons: Hepzibah, an elderly recluse; Clifford, her delicate brother; Phoebe, their young country cousin; and Jaffrey, a devil incarnate whose greedy quest for secret wealth is marked by murder and terrible vengeance from a restless grave.

Hawthorne's works are imbued with a mixture of the actual and the imaginary, and *The House of the Seven Gables* is an enduring example. The puritanical Colonel Pyncheon is the embodiment of Hawthorne's own great grandfather, a judge at the Salem witch trials; the gloomy, gabled house typifies his own depressing home. It is this masterful blending of the spiritual and symbolic that allows Hawthorne's haunted house to stand firm where many a weaker one has fallen.

THE HOUSE

The main structure on the grounds of The House of the Seven Gables is the Turner-Ingersoll Mansion. Built in 1668 by Salem ship owner John Turner, the mansion remained in the Turner family until 1782, when it was sold to the Ingersoll family.

Nathaniel Hawthorne was the cousin of the second Ingersoll owner, Susanna. He spent summers visiting Susanna at the oceanside property, sparking the idea for his novel *The House of the Seven Gables*.

What you may *not* know is that the mansion itself didn't originally look quite like how it was described in the book. As time went on, however, the curators at the historic site began to make adaptations to the house so that it would appear close to how Hawthorne described it.

YOUR CHALLENGE

Can you locate architectural features and landmarks described by Hawthorne? Use the list on the following page to test your scavenger hunt skills. With details from *The House of the Seven Gables* as your guide, see how many items you can find.

****Be sure to start by reading the guidelines at the top of the page!****

GABLES GROUNDS PHOTO HUNT

THE RULES

- Take a clear photo of as many items as you can find from the list below.
- All items are visible from OUTDOOR, PUBLIC AREAS and can be easily photographed.
- Stay on pathways and do NOT walk on flower beds.
- Do not climb on anything.
- **Most important:** Please RESPECT THIS HISTORIC PROPERTY, OTHER GUESTS, AND OTHER EVENTS IN PROGRESS.

√	ITEM TO FIND	DESCRIPTION
	A chimney	In Hawthorne's day, there was "a huge, clustered chimney in the midst" of the gables. Now there are multiple.
	Bell	Hepzibah's shop door had a small bell on it to alert her of customers entering. Can you find a bell—of any size?
	Lattice windows	The windows of the Gables are described in the book as having "many lattices, with their small, diamond-shaped panes."
	2nd story overhang	The second story of the building projects out over the base. Hawthorne described it as throwing "a shadowy and thoughtful gloom into the lower rooms."
	Carved wooden ornaments	Can you find the carved ornaments of wood "affixed under the jutting stories"?
	Sundial	One way of telling time in Hawthorne's day was with a sundial.
	Green moss	Find moss growing on a building.
	Arbor	Phoebe and Clifford liked to spend time under the arbor.
	Shop door	Hepzibah opened a shop in chapter 2. Find the shop door, which was "divided horizontally in the midst, and with a window for its upper segment."
	Gable	In the opening line of the novel, Hawthorne describes "a rusty wooden house, with seven acutely peaked gables." Take a picture of one.
	Rosebush	From her bedroom window, Phoebe could see a tall white rosebush.
	Silver and china	Hepzibah had silver spoons and a china tea set. You can snap a pic of silver, china, or porcelain.
	A well	In the book, people were warned not to drink from Maule's well.
	Compass	Also in the opening line, Hawthorne described the gables as "facing towards various points of the compass." Can you find a compass?
	The ghost	Bonus if you see and photograph a ghost!

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Project Gutenberg: Read the classics online (for free), including *The House of the Seven Gables*.
www.gutenberg.org/ebooks

The Witch City Writers: Local writers workshopping, writing, and having fun.
www.meetup.com/Witch-City-Writers-Group