



Victorian Summer

The Historic Houses of Belle Haven Park, Greenwich, Connecticut

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- At the height of the Gilded Age, America's wealthiest summered in luxury in Newport, Southampton, Tuxedo Park, and Belle Haven. This is the story of Belle Haven Park
- A record of some of Belle Haven's most illustrious homes and their evolution throughout the years

At the height of the Gilded Age, America's wealthiest families began to build luxurious summer cottages away from the grit and grime of New York, Boston, and Philadelphia in idyllic locales such as, Newport, Southampton, Tuxedo Park, and Lenox. Another place the new American aristocracy settled was in the peninsula of Belle Haven, Connecticut. *The New York Times* called it, "the flower garden of Greenwich, and, indeed, of the whole Connecticut shore". *Victorian Summer: The Historic Houses of Belle Haven Park, Greenwich, Connecticut* focuses on the first great flowering of Belle Haven, from 1884-1929 – a period where the Gilded Age's most renowned architects designed masterpieces in many styles, all for the movers and shakers of the day. Each chapter tells the story of a house, an architect, and the predominant owner. While some of these houses are, sadly, gone or unrecognisably changed, this book does the job of visually preserving them in their original glory.

Matthew Bernard moved, with his family, from California to Belle Haven in 1974. Always intrigued by residential architecture, he was fascinated by the stylistic idiosyncrasies of the home that his parents bought in Belle Haven, a waterfront Association in Greenwich, CT. Investigating the history of the house and its architectural heritage evolved into a thirty-year odyssey. What started as a self-styled research project evolved and expanded over the years into an exploration of the architectural heritage of the entire neighbourhood and its early history as a Gilded Age summer resort for affluent social titans of the Victorian Era.