



This Barrington bungalow on West Main Street is the office of State Farm Insurance Agent Amber Nelson-Wolfe.

THE CRAFTSMAN BUNGALOW

THE HINDUSTANI WORD “BENGALA” translates to bungalow—homes with wide-shaded porches that were favored by the British Raj in India. Later they became plain brick dwellings found in the British Isles, and as monotonous post-war tract housing in the United States. They crossed the Great Plains, and emerged as sprawling log ranches, built from local timber. One-story dwellings, plain or fancy, spread the world over.

The height of their popularity came in the early 20th century when brothers Charles and Henry Greene collaborated in Pasadena, California, to give the Craftsman Bungalow a place in architectural history.

Hallmarks of the Craftsman Bungalow were low-pitched gable roofs, with wide overhangs to shield the rooms within from the sun. Exposed rafters usually extended out from the house with their ends sometimes cut-to-profile for decorative purposes. Dormers were usually in the front, with a gable or occasionally a low shed roof.

A distinctive decorative element was the triangular brace that projected from the face of the front gable of the roof. Suggesting an extension of the rafters, they were mostly decorative.

Quintessential to the American Bungalow design was its wide front porches, a historical derivative of the bengalas. Short, square upper posts rested on massive piers or solid porch railings. Materials ranged from stone, brick, concrete block, stucco, clapboard, to shingle. As bungalows with Craftsman-style features became ubiquitous, building materials were adapted to regional conditions.

At their height of popularity, bungalow kits were being sold through mail order. Sears, Roebuck, and Company’s catalogues started selling plans in 1895, but it was the Aladdin Company of Bay City, Michigan, that started to offer complete bungalow kits in 1905. Over 55 of the Sears homes have been identified in Barrington neighborhoods, including Sears’ Crescent and Sheridan models, representing the Greene Brothers style. The popularity of building the Craftsman Bungalow lasted until the late 1920s. [U](#)