

208 South Main Street



Robert Nelson, Jr. House, November 1998

Form No.	341
Town	Sherborn
Address	208 South Main Street
Assessor's #	13/16
USGS Quad	Medfield
Historic Name	Robert Nelson, Jr. House
Uses: Present	Residence
Original	Residence
Constructed	1954
Source	First owner
Style/Form	Colonial Revival
Architect/Builder	Royal Barry Wills
Exterior Material:	
Foundation	Concrete
Wall/Trim	Wood shingle; brick
Roof	Asphalt shingle
Outbuildings	Stone wall
Alterations	Breezeway and garage added, 1957; living room (south) wing, 1960; driveway paved, 1962
Condition	Excellent
Moved	No
Acreage	2.63 acres
Setting	On state highway
Film Roll/Negative	Roll 3
Recorded by	Sanford Johnson, May 1999

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The Colonial Revival style house at 208 South Main Street is a well-preserved example of mid-century domestic architecture. The two-story, side-gambrel, five by two-bay form is expanded at both sides by single-story ells, the northerly of which contains a two-bay garage. A massive whitewashed brick chimney marks the center of the roofline with a second tall narrow example which expands at its base to form the entire south (left) end wall. Windows are 12/12 double-hung sash set very close to the eave. The center entry has a Classical surround with pilasters. Ornament is sparse with Colonial sensibility deriving from the rhythmic openings, wood shingle cladding and the brick south end wall.

A stone wall separates the well-maintained house from busy South Main Street.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Land for the house at 208 South Main Street was in use as pasture in 1939. The house was built in 1954 according to correspondence from the first owners, Robert and Marianne Nelson, who retained Royal Barry Wills as the designer. Mr. Wills' associate Merton Barrows oversaw construction. They occupied the house in 1954 and later added the breezeway and attached garage. Mr. Nelson was an employee of Fenwal, Tracerlab and Raytheon from the time of construction until he left Sherborn in 1964.

Residential construction in the Cape Cod style was common response to demand for housing beginning in the 1920s and lasting beyond mid-century, particularly in increasingly suburban Sherborn. The town was ahead of many in attracting homeowners who commuted to regional employment centers such as Medfield, Framingham and Boston.

The foundation of a former school house is on southeast corner of lot.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and REFERENCES

- 1939 W.P.A. map of Sherborn.
- Tax valuations.
- Assessor files.
- Files of former owners, the Nelsons, including architects' plans.