

Blockbuster Traditional Homes 2020

| Address: | Category: | Link for Podcast: | Description: | Disclaimer: |
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| 67 Central St, Somerville, MA | Scrip Tour of the all-time decorated homes in Somerville ! See podcast for voice tour | https://soundcloud.com/user-969385470/illuminations-to-ur-script?si=f6fe20ef531f4eb0b26a00119b5059aa&utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing | <p>Left on Central At #67 [on left, just after you turn] note the dazzling light show on the left. We call this the "Legs and Lights" house because of the fabulous retro leg lamp in the very top window. Va va voom!</p> <p>The owner of this house explains that a leg lamp like this was featured prominently in the movie, A Christmas Story. "I always wanted a lamp like this," he says, "but they were too expensive. But then a few years ago, my daughter bought one for me. New last year is all the lights leading up to this top window — now all lights lead to the leg!"</p> <p>This homeowner says he had to hang 80 hooks before hanging the lights. The whole display took over 15 hours to install. "I do it because I want people to enjoy it," he says.</p> <p>Coming up on your right is the Somerville Museum, which is currently hosting a wonderful show this winter of the work of Davide Campbell, entitled "The Art of Observation." Often the museum exhibits are supported by a grant from the Somerville Arts Council. If you are an artist or have ideas for a cultural project, definitely check out the Arts Council website to learn more about our grant program.</p> | Disclaimer: The podcast and addresses are from 2020 and might not all be 100% active homes for 2022 |
| 45 Avon St, Somerville, MA | Scrip Tour of the all-time decorated homes in Somerville ! See podcast for voice tour | https://soundcloud.com/user-969385470/illuminations-to-ur-script?si=f6fe20ef531f4eb0b26a00119b5059aa&utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing | <p>Left on Avon [first bit of Avon is a bit dark so here's some material] Speaking of different religions, just a stone's throw from here at 42 Benton Road, there is a festive 8-foot high illuminated dreidel! So we encourage you to check that out when you're next out and about.</p> <p>On this lower stretch of Avon Street you'll see a lovely gathering of decorated houses. It's interesting how you often see clusters like this around the city. The decorating spirit is apparently infectious!</p> <p>As we approach Summer Street, note the house on the left (corner of Avon St.), which is the home of former Somerville Mayor Dorothy Kelly Gay (mayor from 1999 to 2003). Check out the towering candy cane. That's a lot of sugar.</p> | Disclaimer: The podcast and addresses are from 2020 and might not all be 100% active homes for 2022 |
| 17 Concord Ave, Somerville, MA | Scrip Tour of the all-time decorated homes in Somerville ! See podcast for voice tour | https://soundcloud.com/user-969385470/illuminations-to-ur-script?si=f6fe20ef531f4eb0b26a00119b5059aa&utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing | <p>Hard Right on Concord Ave (at light) Right here at by the lights, you'll notice a brightly colored mural. This was painted by a Nepali artist named Imagine this past year. It's part of the Arts Council's ongoing mural project; for some other recent murals that are part of this project, head down the lower Broadway in East Somerville. This past year the idea was to have international artists to reflect the city's diversity.</p> <p>Shortly, we will be arriving at Concord Square, (as it is known by many nearby residents), which was dedicated by the City to the Portuguese community in 2004. You will now see a plaque next to the "Concord Square" sign that reads, "Praca Portuguesa" or "Plaza Portuguesa." Many of the families who decorate so brightly for the holidays hail from Portugal and the Azores – so it makes sense that this part of town is particularly bright! You'll note that many of the displays in this part of town feature crèches, or manger scenes.</p> | Disclaimer: The podcast and addresses are from 2020 and might not all be 100% active homes for 2022 |
| 93 Newton St, Somerville, MA | Scrip Tour of the all-time decorated homes in Somerville ! See podcast for voice tour | https://soundcloud.com/user-969385470/illuminations-to-ur-script?si=f6fe20ef531f4eb0b26a00119b5059aa&utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing | | Disclaimer: The podcast and addresses are from 2020 and might not all be 100% active homes for 2022 |

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| 53 Springfield St, Somerville, MA | Scrip Tour of the all-time decorated homes in Somerville ! See podcast for voice tour | https://soundcloud.com/user-969385470/illuminations-to-ur-script?si=f6fe20ef531f4eb0b26a00119b5059aa&utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing | <p>#53 Springfield (light display on left with crèche) This is the home of the Carvalhos. One son lives upstairs, and another lives in the house on the right. Since the 1960s, they've been setting up the crèche here. Now the duty of setting up the crèche has fallen to Jerry, the son upstairs, who was born in this house over fifty years ago.</p> <p>Jerry reports that the people who stop by while he's putting up the display inspire him to keep the tradition going. He says: "People make pilgrimages to see the display. They tell me about how their grandparents used to decorate; I think seeing me putting up decorations triggers pleasant memories for them. That, in turn, is a good feeling for me.</p> <p>He continues, "this is a very different from our Halloween display, which is pretty wacked-out. We go from body parts to a crèche—people joke that we go from one extreme to another!" One recent Halloween, Jerry was chasing his daughter down the street with a chainsaw as part of the family's Halloween festivities. Unfortunately he fell and scraped his elbow. He says, "people thought the blood on my arm was part of the act, but it was real!"</p> | Disclaimer: The podcast and addresses are from 2020 and might not all be 100% active homes for 2022 |
| 49 Springfield St, Somerville, MA | Scrip Tour of the all-time decorated homes in Somerville ! See podcast for voice tour | https://soundcloud.com/user-969385470/illuminations-to-ur-script?si=f6fe20ef531f4eb0b26a00119b5059aa&utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing | | Disclaimer: The podcast and addresses are from 2020 and might not all be 100% active homes for 2022 |
| 6 Houghton St, Somerville, MA | Scrip Tour of the all-time decorated homes in Somerville ! See podcast for voice tour | https://soundcloud.com/user-969385470/illuminations-to-ur-script?si=f6fe20ef531f4eb0b26a00119b5059aa&utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing | <p>Left on Houghton (don't miss this street, first left after the Carvalho's house)</p> <p>[Toward the end on the right] This (6 Houghton) is where the Moreira's live. They began decorating in 1972. After visiting Manuel's family in Portugal and seeing the beautiful interior displays of Christmas villages there, they have been adding to their indoor display. These days, Mary Moreira sets up a Christmas village that takes up half the living room. The Arts Council's book, "Somerville City of Lights" features photos and cultural information about these interior holiday decorations.</p> | Disclaimer: The podcast and addresses are from 2020 and might not all be 100% active homes for 2022 |

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| <p>21 Brook St, Somerville, MA</p> | <p>Scrip Tour of the all-time decorated homes in Somerville ! See podcast for voice tour</p> | <p>https://soundcloud.com/user-969385470/illuminations-to-ur-script?si=f6fe20ef531f4eb0b26a00119b5059aa&utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing</p> | <p>Right on Brooks</p> <p>Patrick Salvato and his family live at #25, which is on the left. Patrick is of Irish and Italian descent. Born on St. Patrick's Day, his parents had little choice but to call him Patrick. This lifetime Somervillian also decorates for Easter, Halloween and Thanksgiving. He says he likes to "go nuts." His blow-up pumpkin with Dracula and a ghost was a real head-turner this past Halloween and attracted so many kids he went through 16 bags of candy. Patrick's mom and brother live across the street at #28 (also decorated, on the right). As his mom is now in a wheelchair, Patrick says she likes to be able to see his house lit up from out her window. Patrick also reports that he and his neighbors get a little competitive. It's a race to see who can get up decorations first. A few years ago, there was a competition and Patrick won a trophy for the best house on the block. He says, "maybe I'm weird and I drive my wife a little crazy, but I love decorating like this – and I'm obsessed with blinking lights."</p> | <p>Disclaimer: The podcast and addresses are from 2020 and might not all be 100% active homes for 2022</p> |
| <p>10 Otis St, Somerville, MA</p> | <p>Scrip Tour of the all-time decorated homes in Somerville ! See podcast for voice tour</p> | <p>https://soundcloud.com/user-969385470/illuminations-to-ur-script?si=f6fe20ef531f4eb0b26a00119b5059aa&utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing</p> | <p>Go across Cross St. to Otis St. (have trolley stop for a few minutes at this location)</p> <p>John Ragno decorates not one house on this street, but three! He lives in #12 on the left here and his FIVE daughters live in the two homes next to him and across the street. John's Italian heritage has influenced his home that features a manger, while his two daughters prefer the Snoopy and Disney characters. John started his annual tradition in the 70s for his grandchildren. Before moving to Otis Street, his own father decorated the interior of their rental home in East Cambridge. The materials for all three homes are stored in the basement and in the sheds out back.</p> <p>It takes John roughly 36 hours to decorate all three houses. He says, "It's harder when you're older to get excited for Christmas, but decorating my house and daughters' homes really puts me in the Christmas spirit and it also gets my grandchildren excited for the holiday."</p> <p>We spoke with a woman who rents an apartment in one of the Ragno homes recently. She said that she loves the display but that every time a trolley comes by, her dog goes nuts barking.</p> | <p>Disclaimer: The podcast and addresses are from 2020 and might not all be 100% active homes for 2022</p> |
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| <p>166 Central St, Somerville, MA</p> | <p>Scrip Tour of the all-time decorated homes in Somerville ! See podcast for voice tour</p> | <p>https://soundcloud.com/user-969385470/illuminations-to-ur-script?si=f6fe20ef531f4eb0b26a00119b5059aa&utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing</p> | <p>Left on Central</p> <p>On our left [#201] is Temple B'nai Brith, the oldest temple in Somerville, founded in 1903 by immigrants from Eastern Europe. They had originally settled in Boston and Chelsea, and began moving further north and west. The hand-carved ark in the Sanctuary is one of the oldest in New England. It came from a temple in Boston's North End that was razed in 1920.</p> <p>#172 on the right is the home of former Congressman Michael Capuano, a born and raised Somervillian who served as mayor of Somerville from 1990-1999.</p> <p>(have trolley stop at Rigiones house for a few minutes)</p> <p>#166 on the right is the home of the Rigiones, who have lived in Somerville since the mid-1960s. Lenny Rigione has been handcrafting this festive array of wooden Christmas decorations since the 1970s. He manufactures them in his basement "Santa's workshop" at such a prolific clip, there's simply not enough room for them all within his display. This year he told us he estimates at least 50% of his decorations are still in his basement!</p> <p>Lenny used to follow patterns but these days he simply borrows ideas he sees in Christmas cards or wrapping paper and adapts them to full-scale pieces. All the moving statues are ingeniously generated with \$15 windshield wiper motors.</p> <p>New decorations this year include Jack, from the Night Before Christmas [Jack is the long skinny character], and a 5-foot Grinch, alongside Lucy Loo, with her dog.</p> <p>"This for me is a hobby," says Lenny who learned his woodworking skills back in high school. "I don't think of myself as an 'artiste.' I'm not like Van Gogh, although I may be just as cuckoo."</p> <p>This year Lenny has been working with a "bum knee" as he puts it, but luckily he has some elf help in the form of his children and son-in-law. But at the age of 78, bum-knee and all, he's still going up and down ladders to hang his display. We thank you Lenny for your hard work and artistry!</p> | <p>Disclaimer: The podcast and addresses are from 2020 and might not all be 100% active homes for 2022</p> |
| <p>7 Robinson St, Somerville, MA</p> | <p>Scrip Tour of the all-time decorated homes in Somerville ! See podcast for voice tour</p> | <p>https://soundcloud.com/user-969385470/illuminations-to-ur-script?si=f6fe20ef531f4eb0b26a00119b5059aa&utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing</p> | <p>Next right on Robinson.</p> <p>(have trolley stop at DiRusso house for a few minutes)</p> <p>This house gets more blinding each year and is one of the city's megawatt blockbusters! Angelo DiRusso lives here and has been decorating for almost 50 years. Angelo tells us that the old-timey Santa heads are from the late 1960s. "They've held up well," he says. "Better than the new stuff." Angelo adds to his collection each year. The angel pig and towering giraffe are newer additions. There's also a Santa's workshop on the side. This display is assembled over the course of three weekends. Angelo is happy that his decorating seems to have spurred on his neighbors. This corner, and now much of Robinson Street is now one of the brightest blocks in Somerville!</p> | <p>Disclaimer: The podcast and addresses are from 2020 and might not all be 100% active homes for 2022</p> |

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| <p>24 Robinson St, Somerville, MA</p> | <p>Scrip Tour of the all-time decorated homes in Somerville ! See podcast for voice tour</p> | <p>https://soundcloud.com/user-969385470/illuminations-tour-script?si=f6fe20ef531f4eb0b26a00119b5059aa&utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing</p> | <p>Again pause in front of blockbuster house.</p> <p>Right on Central</p> <p>To the right is the Rogers Foam Corporation, which used to be the Derby Desk company that made roll-top desks. It now also houses 100 artists and is called Vernon Street Studios. Vernon Street just held their own open studios, but you can also check out this great building during Somerville Open Studios, held during the first weekend in May.</p> | <p>Disclaimer: The podcast and addresses are from 2020 and might not all be 100% active homes for 2022</p> |
| <p>Somerville City Hall, Somerville, MA</p> | <p>Scrip Tour of the all-time decorated homes in Somerville ! See podcast for voice tour</p> | <p>https://soundcloud.com/user-969385470/illuminations-tour-script?si=f6fe20ef531f4eb0b26a00119b5059aa&utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing</p> | <p>Right on Highland Ave.</p> <p>On behalf of Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone and the Somerville Arts Council, I/we would like to welcome you to the 24nd Annual Illuminations Tour.</p> <p>We hope you will enjoy our tour of the City's holiday light decorations! During the tour, we'll also give you a little history lesson and share some fun facts about Somerville.</p> <p>As you can see, Mayor Curtatone takes great pride in decorating the city's concourse Every year the DPW crew is kept busy, decking the concourse and the city's major thoroughfares and squares with more wreaths and lights than the year before!</p> <p>Last year, the City of Somerville began the construction of a new high school at the same site of the existing Somerville High School. It is expected to be completed in the Spring of 2021.</p> <p>If you're struggling to find an exciting new show to watch this season, we'd recommend the live feed of the construction on the high school that you can watch at go.somervillema.gov/highschool/.</p> <p>Right now, we are at the site of former revolutionary war fortifications, which has now become the city's civic center -- City Hall, Somerville High School, and the first Somerville Public Library. The library was founded in 1914 -- thanks to donations from philanthropists like Andrew Carnegie, and proceeds of fees collected for dog licenses.</p> | <p>Disclaimer: The podcast and addresses are from 2020 and might not all be 100% active homes for 2022</p> |