



# Re-imagining the Bradford House



## The History

- Four generations lived in the house (160 years).
- Donated to DRHS in 1968.
- **Mass. & National Registries of Historic Places** since 1978.
- Four siblings built homes in Duxbury that still stand:
  - DRHS **Bradford House** (Tremont St, 1808)
  - the **Gamaliel Bradford House** (Tremont St, 1807);
  - the **Daniel Bradford House** (Harrison St, 1808);
  - DRHS **King Caesar House**, Jerusha Bradford Weston (King Caesar Rd, 1809).
- Historical Context: in 1808, Thomas Jefferson was President and the Napoleonic Wars raged. European navies were seizing US goods and merchantmen.

## The Family

- Family descended from **Pilgrim Wm. Bradford**.
- Prominent members of Duxbury society.
- **Sarah Hickling Bradford** supervised initial planning stages of the house while her husband **Capt. Gershom Bradford** was held captive by the French.
- The house was owned, maintained, and operated by women throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> c.
- All four Bradford daughters raised in the house were accomplished women.
- **Charlotte Bradford's Civil War nursing career was exemplary**: a nurse on transport ships and major DC hospitals; mentored by famous Dorthea Dix; installed as the Matron for the Home for Wives and Mothers, an incredible and historical placement. She left complete diaries of her Civil War experiences (DRHS Archives). Charlotte Bradford's grave is in Mayflower cemetery; only a handful of women have a G.A.R. Veteran's Medal on their grave.

## The Community

- Family was active in many **social movements**: anti-slavery/abolitionism, temperance, vegetarianism and alternative medicine.
- Their first cousin, **Sarah Alden Bradford Ripley** was the aunt of **Ralph Waldo Emerson** and a scholar in her own right, tying the family to the causes of **Transcendentalism**.
- Another cousin, George Bradford was a resident and teacher at the **experimental utopian community, Brook Farm** in Roxbury, Mass.
- The Bradford home frequently hosted staunch abolitionists such as **C. Lenox Remond, Abby Kelley Foster, Charles C. Burleigh** and **Sallie Holley**.

## The House

- **Parlor & hallway paint is ORIGINAL** to the 1808 construction, **very rare**. Known of in no other house in the area.
- **Architecturally significant** elements: house is on original footprint; original moldings, fireplaces, doors, windows, stair railings and landing. 10ft diameter cistern in the basement, a truly modernizing feature when it was installed around 1808.
- House still on its original 10 acre plot; **the house and land have never been divided**.
- Family preserved 1,000s of personal items and documents, making them **one of the best-documented families in Duxbury's history**.
- A valuable historical resource: preeminent furniture expert **Brock Jobe** sought Boston-made furniture in the house & featured it in **Four Centuries of Massachusetts Furniture**, a collaboration with the **Museum of Fine Arts, Winterthur Museum**, and the **Peabody Essex Museum**; PhD from **Univ. of Delaware** used Elizabeth Bradford's hand-made wheel chair to supplement her research in early American disabilities.
- **Dozens of researchers access the Bradford papers at the Drew Archives every year.**

# The Bradford House Project:

## A Campaign to Re-Imagine our Hidden Gem!



**The Mission:** The Duxbury Rural & Historical Society is embarking on a multi-year project to preserve the structural integrity of the Bradford House and to re-invigorate the house and family history. We intend to offer new exhibits, facilities and stimulating programs that will engage the public, be more varied/ inclusive and will appeal to characteristics of Duxbury today, including:

- ✓ Intellectual Curiosity
- ✓ Political and Social Activism
- ✓ Patriotism
- ✓ Devotion to Family
- ✓ Community Spirit
- ✓ Historic Preservation

### Initial Project Expenditures, \$72,000:

- Architectural Assessment
- Paint Analysis, interior & exterior
- Paint Interpretation, parlor & hall
- Branding/Printing, promotional materials
- Archaeological examination of basement

**INITIAL PROJECTS COMPLETED!**

Duxbury Community Preservation Funds  
Mass Cultural Council Felicia Fund  
DRHS Operating Budget

### Phase 1: Structural & Imminent Condition Repairs, \$175,000:

- Address first floor structural support
- New wood roof beams
- New 30-year asphalt roof
- Rubber roof on back extension
- New copper step flashings at chimneys
- New seamless copper downspouts
- Replace rotted corner posts on building
- Replace rotted sills at various areas
- Paint trim, gutters & siding replaced

**PH 1 REPAIRS COMPLETED!**

DRHS Capital Commitment

### Phase 2: Construction Phase, \$427,000:

- Repoint exposed granite and brick foundations on original house
- Repair brick as needed on gable ends
- Full restoration of 30 double hung windows, 4 triangle (gable end) windows, and 2 basement sashes
- Copper head flashings at 34 windows and 2 doors
- Full replacement of 36 shutters, operable hardware and copper caps
- Paint exterior of entire main house & ell
- Remodel museum's bathroom; provide additional handicap accessibility
- Exhibit and safety lighting

### Phase 3: Additional Costs, \$228,000:

- Landscaping
- Interior paint/removal of old wall papers
- Exhibition design
- Exhibition fabrication
- Endowment for Additional Operating Costs

**Total Project Budget: \$902,000**