

The Akin House Through the Ages

“A little house with a big story to tell.”

– Anne W. “Pete” Baker, Architectural Historian, Consultant for Akin House

Akin House Project Restoration Phase III

January 2015

Preserving our Heritage *from the Foundation Up*

dhpt.org

The Akin House Through the Ages



Photograph by Fred Palmer, ca. 1905, courtesy of NBWM/ODHS, included in *Houses of Old Dartmouth*. Henry Worth, local historian, partnered with Palmer to produce, 1909. Worth also wrote *The History of Padan-Aram* which covers the early settlers such as the Akins.

The Akin House Through the Ages

In 1921, the Akin House becomes part of film history. It was featured in Elmer Clifton's silent film, *Down to the Sea in Ships*, which premiered in New Bedford in 1922.

Film stills show east side of the house and property.



The Akin House Through the Ages



The Akin House ca. 1930s, photos by Manuel Goulart, after barn and outbuilding were demolished and before a garage was built.
[NBWM/ODHS collection]

The Akin House Through the Ages



The abandoned Akin House, 2001—the 21st century love story begins.

The Akin House Through the Ages



Photo by Tim Sylvia.

The Akin House, 2003, property taken over by WHALE with \$185,000 purchase price through Dartmouth's Community Preservation Act. Akin House Project Phase I begins.

The Akin House Through the Ages

condition photos before Phase I



The Akin House Through the Ages



The Akin House Through the Ages

Akin House Preservation Phase I

- May 1, 2003: The purchase of the Akin House with $\frac{3}{4}$ acre lot was approved by Town Meeting for \$185,000.
- WHALE estimated about \$350,000 for the total conservation & preservation project costs—to be raised through other funding sources.
- WHALE raised enough funds to spend about \$140,000 toward the house's restoration.
- September 25, 2006: WHALE made presentation to Select Board on project status and to repurpose the property as cultural heritage center.

The Akin House Through the Ages

Akin House Preservation Phase I

Summer beam repair—from thisto this.



before

Rotted Top Plate Repaired

after

The Akin House Through the Ages

Akin House Preservation Phase I



The Akin House, 2006

The Akin House Through the Ages

- March 2008: By mutual agreement, the WHALE board deeded the property to the Town before the work was completed.
- May 2008: The Dartmouth Heritage Preservation Trust [DHPT], a 501(c)3 formed in March 2007, took over the stewardship of the property by leasing it from the Town's Historical Commission.
- The goals were to carry on the preservation and restoration work.
- Plans for the property: a cultural heritage center and educational facility.

The Akin House Through the Ages



The Akin House, November 2008

The Akin House Through the Ages

Akin House Preservation Phase II (2008)

**Preserving Our Heritage
*from the Foundation Up***

“The first step in restoring a house, just as in building a new house, begins with the foundation.”

Antique Houses, Their Construction and Restoration, Edward P. Friedland, Dutton Studio Books, 1990.

The Akin House Through the Ages

Akin House Preservation Phase II (2008)

- Spring 2008: Performed emergency stabilization of the structure with temporary jacks to prevent east wall from collapsing due to **deteriorating foundations.**
- October 21, 2008: DHPT granted \$195,000 in CPA historic preservation funds for Phase II.
- Preservation architect [Joe Booth] conducted a comprehensive review of the existing conditions of the building to make recommendations for its restoration, continuing Phase I.

The Akin House Through the Ages

Akin House Preservation Phase II (2009-10)

- Added permanent steel posts in the cellar and first floor in strategic locations to redistribute weight load of the house.
- Added new oak beams and sills installed at various intervals in between original joists and girts to strengthen the old construction.
- Restored floor framing on first and second floors; installed new wide board pine flooring on first floor and part of the second level.
- Restored badly deteriorated stone foundations and center chimney in the cellar using 18th C. masonry techniques and mortar formulation. East elevation retaining wall removed, stones used for rebuild and others saved for access ramp and landscaping.
- Restored and repaired original/older windows, in some cases using bits and pieces from damaged windows to build a complete window.
- Rebuilt the cellar entryway pavilion on the east side.
- Installed new gutters and downspouts.

The Akin House Through the Ages

Akin House Preservation Phase II



The Akin House Through the Ages

Akin House Preservation Phase II

Summer Beam



After Phase I



After Phase II

Summer Beam: The largest timber of a house into which the joists are framed. Summers were used to break the span between walls by running at right angles to the joists. [Friedland]

The Akin House Through the Ages

Akin House Preservation Phase II



The Akin House Through the Ages

Three Summers of Archaeology



2008



2007



2009

Directed by Dr. Christina Hodge, Harvard Peabody Museum of Ethnology & Anthropology, with UMASS-D summer students and volunteers, permits by Massachusetts Historical Commission. Collection of reports and artifacts stored at UMass-Dartmouth library archives.

The Akin House Through the Ages

Dartmouth Heritage Day, May 2010



DHPT gets ready for visitors.

On display, collection of cellar finds uncovered during Phase II.



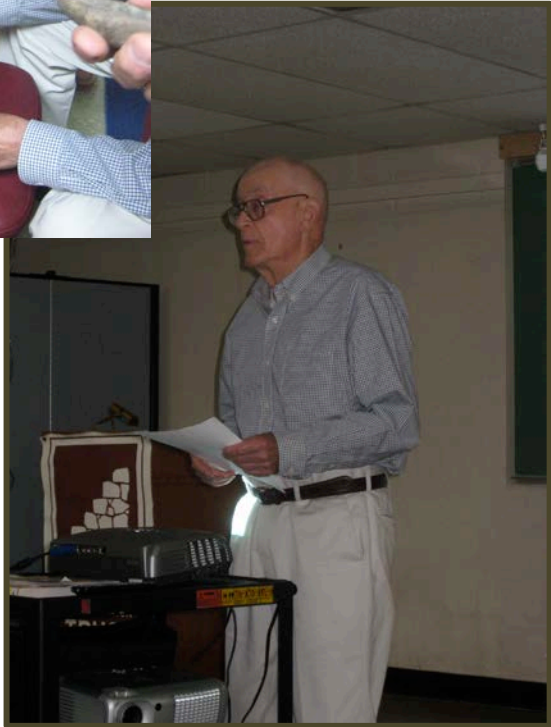
The Akin House Through the Ages



The Akin House, Christmas 2011

The Akin House Through the Ages

Partnerships



Programs with Massachusetts Archaeological Society, Summer 2012

The Akin House Through the Ages

Partnerships



DHPT in collaboration with the Massachusetts Archaeological Society and Audubon group.

Program with Allen's Pond Audubon at Stone Barn, Summer 2013

The Akin House Through the Ages

Partnerships



December 8, 2013: DHPT with Dartmouth Historical & Arts Society at the Schoolhouse to host local historians to review collections in preparation for Dartmouth 350.

The Akin House Through the Ages

Partnerships for Dartmouth 350



The Akin House Through the Ages

Partnerships for Dartmouth 350



DHPT and
Dartmouth
Historical & Arts
Society
Exhibition:
Experience
Your Heritage



The Akin House Through the Ages Partnerships



Celebrating completion of eight unit plans for Living History Programming for the Akin House, April 2014, by future teachers of elementary education. Business Plan for Cultural Heritage Center developed by RWU business students for 2015.

Roger Williams University's Community Partnerships Center

The Akin House Through the Ages

Akin Restoration Project Phase III

In compliance with Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Historic Treatment of Properties

First Floor Interior—conserve, restore, and repair to preserve and retain as much of the significant features and elements as possible. Includes:

Repair and repoint three fireplaces, hearths, and mantels
(will not be functional)

Conserve, restore, and repair the various finishes in the rooms

Install structural glass floor system over existing opening to the cellar to view cellar

Widen doorways to provide ADA-required access

The Akin House Through the Ages

Akin Restoration Project Phase III

Second Floor Interior—Stabilization and repairs (north side) Includes:

Strengthen the roof to address temporary repairs made in December 2013 to avoid roof collapse on a more permanent basis

Replace rotting floor boards and joists, not addressed in Phase I or II

Partial installation of 12-inch ship lath white pine flooring, retain open space for viewing from first floor

Note: Overall stability and safety of the building requires additional and adequate structural systems to handle the weight of the roof which imposes pressure on structure from the top down. Phase I work compromised the roof by spacing the rafters too far apart.

The Akin House Through the Ages

Akin Restoration Project Phase III

Heating, lighting, safety alarms, other utilities

Necessary for our “study house” and the visitor experience

Upgrade and enhance electrical power for lighting and life safety, including improved fire alarms and exit signage.

Install a small gas-powered heating system.

Install standard energy-efficient museum-quality lighting to showcase features and finishes of the interior and didactic displays.

Property has town water and town sewer. Restrooms will be located in the proposed visitor center. In the interim, port-o-johns available as needed.

The Akin House Through the Ages

Akin Restoration Project Phase III

Provide barrier-free access to the east elevation rear entrance, to become primary entrance

Universal access: must be ADA compliant

Dartmouth street entrance will be used as an emergency exit only

A heritage appropriate stone ramp will be constructed

Create a level pathway from access ramp to Rockland Street
[ramp will eventually connect to proposed visitor center]

Important: a safe and secure visitor experience must be provided to and from the Akin House for tours, programs, and events.

The Akin House Through the Ages

Akin Restoration Project Phase III

Rebuild and repair the historic stone wall on Rockland Street

Open access to rear of the property, and close off access to the corner of Dartmouth & Rockland Streets

Create off-street parking for a limited number of spaces to supplement on-street parking on Rockland Street, only allowed on the length of the property boundary.

From street or property, must have level pathway to the Akin House [later, to the proposed visitor center]

The Akin House Through the Ages

Akin Restoration Project Phase III

Estimated Budget [preliminary] (based upon prevailing wage)

A. Architectural Fees **\$28,471.08**

B. Construction Costs

Excavation & Compaction	\$	1,762.00
Site Improvements		55,846.00
Masonry (three fireplaces)		30,000.00
Rough Carpentry		1,632.00
Finish Carpentry		5,952.00
Cabinetwork		1,194.00
Sealants & Caulking		10,000.00
Doors & Frames		3,018.00
Flooring		11,239.00
Painting		4,700.00
Heating system		12,500.00
Electrical		25,120.00

Subtotal of B. \$162,963.00

The Akin House Through the Ages

Akin Restoration Project Phase III

Estimated Budget [preliminary] (based upon prevailing wage)

C. Design Contingency **\$16,296.00**

D. General Contractor Administrative Costs

General Conditions \$ 25,324.00

Overhead (5%) 8,963.00

Profit (10%) 17,926.00

Bond (2.5%) 5,787.00

[Permits (assume fees are waived)]

Subtotal of D. \$74,296.00

TOTAL Estimated Project Costs: \$265,730.08

The Akin House Through the Ages

The Future: Akin House Cultural Heritage Center & Educational Facility

