

November 2003

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**Bradstreet Restoration Project:
saving an 1860 landmark in Searsport**

On December 11, 2002, a chimney fire caused major damage to a 142-year-old sea captain's house on Route 1 in Searsport owned by Mark and Linda Bradstreet.

More than 50 firefighters from Searsport, Stockton Springs, Prospect, Belmont, Waldo, Morrill, Frankfort, and Belfast worked to save the 13-room home, which also housed the Bradstreets' antique business, Down East Auctions and Antiques.

The fire destroyed most of the attic and damaged the upper story walls and rafters. Smoke and water damage was extensive throughout the structure.

In early January, workers from Keith Trembley Builders, Inc., began the process of restoring the building, which was built in 1860 by sea captain Phineas Griffin.

"We wanted to save as much of the historical part of the house as possible," said Linda. "We felt like we were the caretakers of a piece of history."

The goal was to rebuild the house the same way it would have been done in

1860, except using modern tools and construction methods.

For example, where lath-and-plaster walls had to be replaced, the plasterer, Barry

Crawford, used blue board and three coats of plaster.

"This new method accomplished the same smooth plaster finish at a lower cost," says Jon Gaudet, the Trembley
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Mark and Linda Bradstreet's 13-room house in Searsport was built in 1860 by sea captain Phineas Griffin.



The fire, on Dec. 11, 2002, made the front page of the Bangor Daily News.



KEITH TREMBLEY BUILDER, INC.'S NEW PORTLAND DIVISION—From left: Carolle Omheis, Mitigation Estimator; Larry Olivier, Production Manager; Stacey Goodwin, Division Manager; Moe Newland, Estimator. Not present for photo: Joyce Perry, Estimator.



The attic: before (above left) and after (above right).

Owner's Corner: Best holiday wishes

The holiday season is upon us. It's a very busy time for all of us, but it can also be a very rewarding time of year. I hope all of our employees and our past and future clients have the opportunity to spend time with their families and friends over the holidays. They are, after all, the most important parts of our lives. I wish you all the best of health in the coming year.



Keith Trembley
Owner

God Bless,
Keith Trembley

Our Values

Below is a list of values that our company as a whole supports and exercises each and every day:

Commitment
Honesty
Initiative
Integrity
Respect
Empathy
Dependability

Our Customer Pledge

You are entitled to be treated with friendliness, honesty, courtesy, and respect. You will receive full value for your money and a good buy at a fair price. You are entitled to prompt, courteous, and knowledgeable answers to your questions. We strive to treat you exactly as we want to be treated when we are someone else's customers. We will work hard to assure that you are proud of your investment in your home, and that your satisfaction is our main concern

Our Customers Write

Dear Jon [Gaudet],

We are writing you to thank you for all your help and expertise after our home and business were destroyed by fire on Dec. 11, 2002. The extensive damage from the fire, smoke and water was very overwhelming for us. You sat down with us each week and went over everything we needed to know. You kept us informed and updated as decisions or changes had to be made. We appreciated your time and energy you put in coordinating contractors and attending to the job site, our home. You heard us and preserved the parts of our 1860 home we wanted to save, especially the wooden floors, staircases, doors and parlor ceiling paper, all original to our historic home. Thank you.

We are pleased with the results of all the construction and restoration that has been done. We are grateful for the timely fashion in which it was done, allowing us to move back into our home in July. We have now settled back in and it feels good. Thank you.

We also want a special thank you to

Kelly Gaudet, your wife and assistant in coordinating and communicating with us. We appreciate when you were unavailable due to the nature of your job, she would meet with us and keep us updated and informed.

Finally, the Searsport Historical Society toured our home last evening [Nov. 11], about 40 in attendance. They were very impressed with the work of Keith Trembley Builders and commented favorably on all that was done here. Thank You.

Sincerely,
Mark and Linda Bradstreet

Dear Dave [Mitchell],

We are writing you to thank you for all the work you did on our home after it caught fire last Dec. 11, 2002. It was a difficult process for us to go through, but with you on the site each and every day to communicate with us made it easier. Thank you. If we had a need, such as saving our floors and staircase, you and your crew went to work and preserved them by covering them with pressboard.

Paul Davis Restoration: Bradstreet restoration project

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estimator who supervised the project. "Besides, there just aren't very many craftsmen out there who do lath and plaster work any more."

One of the centerpieces of the project was the restoration of the parlor, where the ceiling was decorated with 1860 French wallpaper.

Hans Plessner of Morrill was able to save the entire ceiling,

except for two borders, which were damaged beyond repair by smoke and water. Those borders were hand painted.

(Continued on next page)



This fireplace looks like marble, but it's actually hand-painted slate.

We deeply appreciated that before the demolition started. The demolition was hard for us, but we have never seen such hard workers as your crew. It was more hopeful for us as we saw the rebuilding starting. We watched every day as you laid the attic floor and put the house under roof in the most frigid of temperatures. From there you managed and oversaw each sub-contractor while at the same time rebuilding. This you did from start to finish, even coming back after we had moved back in for some finishing touches. Dave, we really appreciated every thing you did and we thank you sincerely.

Finally, but of the utmost importance to us, is the mural you uncovered while removing wallpaper in one of our rooms. You did such a wonderful job uncovering it so as not to do any damage to it. Thank you! Your being so careful has given us a new old treasure to keep forever. It will always be a part of our home and we are grateful to you. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Mark and Linda Bradstreet

Paul Davis Restoration: Bradstreet restoration project

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Vintage wallpaper was ordered from California to replace water-damaged wall coverings in the parlor. In keeping with the Maine theme, the paper for the lower border was called "Fiddleheads."

There were some other accommodations in the project, Jon said.

"Prior to the fire, most of the floors in the house were painted and carpeted," he said. "The Bradstreets preferred to leave the wood floors."

Don Dickel of Winterport did most of the floors and did a "fantastic job," Jon said.

He said Dickel did a particularly fine job in saving the dining room floor, which had alternating light and dark boards (chestnut and walnut), reminiscent of a ship's cabin's floor.

"The dining room floor was under four inches of water after the fire," Jon said. "Dickel pulled up the original boards, took them back to his shop and re-milled them, and then re-installed the boards back in the dining room. They fit perfectly."

Mark Bradstreet did the floor for the shop area himself, taking pumpkin pine flooring from part of the attic and re-installing it in the downstairs shop. The pine boards had been scorched by the flames but were still usable after being planed.

The project yielded a few surprises. The biggest came when lead carpenter Dave Mitchell and his crew



The parlor ceiling before restoration.

started removing the smoke-damaged wallpaper in the yellow room. Underneath, covering one entire wall and wrapping around to part of another, was a mural—apparently a view of old Searsport—that was painted around 1960 by Norma Rubin. Dave carefully took down the wallpaper and saved the mural.

Linda Bradstreet said the restoration crews did an excellent job, but singled out estimator Jon Gaudet for particular praise.

Jon met with the Bradstreets every week on Wednesday to discuss
(Please turn to back page)



Hans Plessner was able to save the wallpaper on the parlor ceiling, which dates back to 1860.



Lead carpenter Dave Mitchell found this mural when he was removing the smoke-damaged wallpaper in the yellow room. It was painted around 1960 by Norma Rubin.



Don Dickel restored the chestnut and walnut floor in the dining room.



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Bradstreet project

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everything that was happening on the project.

"The process remained open and communicative," Mrs. Bradstreet explained. "None of this would have come to fruition if Jon hadn't coordinated it all and made sure everything happened."

As the project moved forward, the Bradstreets took the opportunity to make several improvements and additions at their own expense, including installation of a granite countertop and a custom-arched brick hearth in the kitchen, a cherry floor in the kitchen to match the finish of the cabinets, and tile floors in the bathrooms. The Bradstreets also paid for several upgrades to fireplaces and chimneys to bring them up to today's fire codes.

The Bradstreets moved back into their home on July 22. The restoration project has been completed,



but there a still a few things they'd like to do, including installing a captain's tower, which was taken from another sea captain's house 30 years ago.

Mrs. Bradstreet says that when the house was built in 1860, it did not have a tower, probably because it had a full view of the ocean, there being no trees or shrubs in the field leading to the shoreline. If shrubbery had blocked the view in 1860, Captain Griffin would have built a tower, she said.



The upstairs hallway after restoration. Inset above: the hallway before restoration.