



**PILGRIM SOCIETY &  
PILGRIM HALL MUSEUM**  
75 Court Street, Plymouth, MA 02360  
508-746-1620; [www.pilgrimhallmuseum.org](http://www.pilgrimhallmuseum.org)



## **NEWS RELEASE**

January 25, 2016

**For Immediate Release**

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### **“Dwelling House and Meeting House: Plymouth Colony Architecture, 1620-1720” - A New Exhibition at Pilgrim Hall Museum, February 13<sup>th</sup> – September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2016. Sponsored by Cordage Commerce Center.**

The Pilgrim Society & Pilgrim Hall Museum announces a new special exhibition, “Dwelling House and Meeting House: Plymouth Colony Architecture, 1620-1720,” sponsored by Cordage Commerce Center, and on view beginning Saturday, February 13<sup>th</sup>. The exhibit examines the craftsmanship of early Plymouth architecture through images, drawings, and objects related to buildings erected during Plymouth Colony’s first hundred years. This period in New England architectural history is known as First Period. Few First Period Plymouth Colony buildings exist today in their original state. Most of these early houses were destroyed or demolished over time, and the scant survivors have often been greatly altered. Though the physical evidence of this lost history is scattered and incomplete, the exhibition painstakingly rebuilds a picture of what a typical English house or meetinghouse looked like in Plymouth Colony before 1720, and sheds new light on a central condition of daily life in the past: housing.

Plymouth’s early families built a range of house types included early cottages, hall-and-parlor homes, salt boxes with lean-to, and the familiar styles of the “Cape” and the “Colonial” house that continued to enjoy popularity through the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Meetinghouses were very plain, often cheaply built, and surprisingly small, as demonstrated in the two remaining First Period examples in southeastern Massachusetts. The exhibition encompasses a broad geographic scope of First Period architecture, from the Old Colony area of Plymouth, Barnstable, and Bristol Counties in Massachusetts, to Rhode Island towns along the Eastern shore of Narragansett Bay.

The centerpiece of the exhibit is a full-sized reproduction 17<sup>th</sup> century timber-framed room, with a summer beam of solid oak weighing in at nearly 1,000 pounds, and an authentically decorated ceiling. This massive timber-frame structure recreates the context and feeling of being inside the architecture of Plymouth’s long vanished past. Original architectural objects from Pilgrim Hall Museum and other collections will be displayed, including window panes and sashes, curious architectural fragments, metal hardware, a plethora of nails, archaeological materials, and bricks. A selection of historical photographs and images visually evoke the region’s lost builtscapes. In addition, rare documents will be on view, including an original building contract from 1697 that

reveals how the construction of a home was negotiated in the period, and details the methods and materials used.

Pilgrim Hall Museum will host a special exhibit preview of ““Dwelling House and Meeting House” on Friday, February 12<sup>th</sup>, from 5 to 7 p.m. This is also the official welcome reception for new Executive Director, Dr. Donna Curtin – members of the public are invited. Please RSVP to [development@pilgrimhallmuseum.org](mailto:development@pilgrimhallmuseum.org) if you plan to attend.

Pilgrim Hall Museum’s exhibit is generously sponsored by Cordage Commerce Center.

The exhibition will be on display in the PIDC gallery at Pilgrim Hall Museum from February 12<sup>th</sup> through September 30<sup>th</sup>. Those who wish to set up a special group tour of the exhibition should contact Kathy Murphy, Group Tour Coordinator, at 508-746-1620 x.4. For more information about the exhibition in general, contact Director Donna Curtin at 508-746-1620 x.2.

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Pilgrim Hall Museum is located at 75 Court Street (Route 3A), Plymouth, Massachusetts 02360.

**Information:** 508-746-1620; Web site: [www.pilgrimhallmuseum.org](http://www.pilgrimhallmuseum.org)

**Hours:** 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. 7 days a week. The Museum is closed the month of January, early February and Christmas Day, but open every other holiday including Thanksgiving.

**Admission:** Adults \$10.00; seniors (62+) \$8.00; Children \$6.00; Families (2 adults with 2 children) \$25.00. Residents of Plymouth, Massachusetts are admitted free.