Welcome to a walking tour of a unique New Bedford neighborhood. This diverse area is where the owners and the workers of the whaling fleet and supporting businesses lived and worked in the mid 1800s. While the community that lived here is best known for harvesting and processing whales for the production of oil for lamps and candles that lit the world, the support by many residents for integration and abolitionism provided an even longer lasting light in the hopes for freedom. In this neighborhood Polly Johnson baked ginger cookies in her confectioner’s shop and home on Seventh Street. Men, gardeners worked for the wealthy Rotch family, laborers named weed and cleaned yards, and whaling merchants oversaw their enterprises. Whether you were a captain of a whaling ship or a ship’s cook with recently obtained freedom, a weary sailor taking a night’s rest at a boardinghouse, or a lawyer defending a fugitive slave, this was the neighborhood in which the work was done and the dreams for a better life realized.

Each of the nearly twenty sites highlighted on this tour represent the places, people, and stories that illustrate a neighborhood’s diversity—in whaling work, in integration, and in abolitionism. Plan to take about an hour to stroll through this historic neighborhood. The map on the centerfold of this walking tour guide provides an orientation to the sites, which you may visit in any order you wish. The Rotch-Jones-Duff House and Garden Museum on Union Street is open to the public. All others residences are maintained privately. Photography is allowed but please store these homes from the sidewalk to respect the privacy of the owners.

“IT MATTERS LITTLE WHAT MAY BE A MAN’S NATIONALITY, HIS COLOR, HIS LANGUAGE, OR RELIGION...THE ONLY QUESTIONS TO BE ASKED ARE, HAS HE THE ARM TO PULL AN OAR, THE EYE TO AIM A HARPOON, THE HEART TO FACE A WOUNDED WHALE IN HIS STORMY WRATH.”

-Harper's Monthly, 1869
Along with his brother William, George Allen was an outstanding good and investor. His name is known in numerous whaling voyages. One story that found him was the marriage to the five hundred and fifty sailors who found themselves on the city. In Life of John Thompson a Biography, Thompson describes Allen’s role in the whaling industry. This house was built for Moses Gibbs, who owned it for several years. After Gibbs died, the house was sold to W. J. Winters, a whaling agent and investor. He owned shares in several ships. The house was later purchased by William Winters, who lived there until his death.

**Mary Bath House**

This house was built in 1809 for Mary Bath, the daughter of Nathaniel Bath, and was one of the most profitable in the city. She owned shares in vessels and sold whale oil and bone. The house was later purchased by John Briggs, who raised his sons there. His daughter, Martha, was one of the first fugitive slave students to attend the city's schools.

**John Briggs House**

This house was built for John Briggs, who was one of the richest men in New Bedford and the wealthiest man in the city. He owned shares in vessels and invested in the city's whaling fleet. He also owned three vessels and nearly all of another four; he invested in the city's whaling fleet. He owned shares in vessels and invested in the city's whaling fleet. He also owned three vessels and nearly all of another four; he invested in the city's whaling fleet. He owned shares in vessels and invested in the city's whaling fleet. He also owned three vessels and nearly all of another four; he invested in the city's whaling fleet. He owned shares in vessels and invested in the city's whaling fleet. He also owned three vessels and nearly all of another four; he invested in the city's whaling fleet. He owned shares in vessels and invested in the city's whaling fleet. He also owned three vessels and nearly all of another four; he invested in the city's whaling fleet. 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**George Wemple House**

This house was built in 1809 for John Wemple, the son of a Quaker couple who lived in the city. He was involved in the whaling industry and owned shares in several ships. He also owned a whaling vessel, the Jabez. The house was later purchased by William Winters, who lived there until his death.