On The Cutting Edge of History
Hidden Treasures
The Richardson Parsonage
Dinner in a Country Village
Meet Our New Ox Team
Christmas by Candlelight 2015

a m e m b e r m a g a z i n e t h a t k e e p s y o u c o m i n g b a c k
An Eventful 2015 Season at Old Sturbridge Village

It has been an active season at the Village...months of dry weather in the summer and fall provided many beautiful days for visitors to enjoy the museum. Inaugural events such as our craft beer festival attracted a new audience that delighted in sampling local brews while enjoying toe-tapping bluegrass music and New England artisans.

A field-to-table celebration featured food demonstrations by area chefs and displays of Village-grown fruits, as well as outstanding examples of homegrown produce.

Beginning in January, the museum will be open to the public only on weekends until the start of February school vacation week, allowing Village staff much-needed time to accomplish important planning and maintenance tasks, as well as receive training. Also watch for new members-only events this winter.

I am looking forward to our expanded celebration of Thanksgiving, a holiday that was greatly important to 19th-century New Englanders. I also eagerly anticipate our new Winter Market, with dozens of juried crafters offering their unique handmade works for sale on Thanksgiving weekend. Our annual Christmas by Candlelight program in December, which has become a cherished tradition for many, will feature several enhancements including a nightly tree lighting ceremony.

With more than 60,000 historic objects in our collection, it is hard to pick a few favorites. In this issue of the Visitor, our Curatorial Fellow has done just that.

Thousands of visitors greeted the many baby animals that were born at the Village this spring. Among those new additions are Tom and Sid, a pair of oxen in training. On pages 16-17, Dave Hruska, Coordinator of Agriculture, gives a fascinating account of how he trains them for farm work.

Village Historian Tom Kelleher shares the incredible story of the Richardson “Parsonage” and how the building has evolved over the years. Many visitors today have come to know this building through the immersive Dinner in a Country Village program, which is deliciously described in this issue. If you have not yet participated in this culinary event, make a reservation for one of the many dinners this winter.

Thank you for your unwavering support and participation; I look forward to welcoming you to the 1830s this winter.

NEW WINTER HOURS FOR 2016

From January 4 through February 14, 2016, Old Sturbridge Village will only be open to visitors on Saturdays and Sundays. However, the Village will open daily for the winter school vacation week, February 15-19. The Village operating hours vary seasonally; visit our website at www.osv.org for details.
Welcome to the FALL/WINTER EDITION of our VISITOR magazine. We hope that you will learn new things and visit the Village soon.

In This Issue:

4 Dexter–Russell Knives: On the Cutting Edge of History
7 Hidden Treasures: Objects from the Material Cultural Collection
10 The Historic Buildings of Old Sturbridge Village: The Richardson “Parsonage”
13 Dinner in a Country Village
14 Staff Profile: Bruce Craven
16 Meet Tom and Sid: Our New Ox Team
18 Christmas by Candlelight 2015
19 Nativity Scene at Christmas by Candlelight is a Labor of Love
21 Vaillancourt Santa 2015
22 It’s the Simple Things: Giving Opportunities
23 Winter Events
If you lived in the early 1800s, your neighborhood blacksmith certainly could hammer out an old file or a piece of broken saw blade into a usable knife. Hopefully he did not damage the steel in the process by working it at too high or low a temperature. Hopefully he got it hard enough to stay sharp for a while, but not so brittle that it snapped when dropped or slightly bent. And since he did not have the equipment to polish it to a mirror finish, his blade, while perhaps functional, looked somewhat crude and was difficult to keep clean.

Of course a blade alone is not a knife. Someone had to make a handle for it that was comfortable in the hand and securely attach it to the blade. While such a knife would cut, it may have felt heavy and chunky, or conversely, less substantial than preferred. It may well have felt a bit awkward somehow, and using it may have left you quickly fatigued. Since your blacksmith was a generalist and not a full-time cutler, the occasional knife he may have been called on to make lacked that fine attention to details that distinguished a sharp strip of steel from a piece of precision cutlery. Besides, since American craftsmen tended to be among the best paid in the world, that knife was likely no bargain.

For all those reasons, if you wanted a good knife in the early 1800s, you usually went to a country store and bought one made in Sheffield, England. The English had the best steel, the most skilled and highly specialized craftsmen and well-organized manufacturing systems and distribution networks that produced an almost endless variety of styles at affordable prices. Quite simply, English tools were the best available. The word “Sheffield” or the distinctive, registered marks of Sheffield cutlers stamped onto a blade guaranteed quality.

However, ruinous trade embargoes in the first decades of the 1800s and a naval blockade in the War of 1812 cut off foreign trade. Thereafter New Englanders began to look more to themselves to supply the nation with the needed tools and textiles no longer flooding in from England. In 1818 a young man from Shrewsbury, Massachusetts named Henry Harrington decided to prove that Americans could compete with the well-established Sheffield firms. Trained to make knives, the slim and wiry 21-year-old built a small 14’ x 16’ workshop and forge on Cady Brook in the Brookside section of Southbridge, Massachusetts. Harrington realized that quality, not mechanization, was the secret to success in the edged tool business. In his small shop, he began making knives, razors, scalpels and a variety of precision cutting tools that soon earned a reputation for taking and holding a keen edge. Surviving examples of his work are often as shiny and polished today as the day he made them. Consciously proud of America’s flourishing democracy and optimistic of his own success, he proudly stamped his work, “Henry Harrington, Cutler to the People,” and often added an American eagle. To ensure high quality, Harrington still made his blades out of imported English “cast” steel, the best available at that time.

With his business barely begun, Henry married Maria Oaks, and they moved into a house beside his workshop. There they raised a large family, including several sons who followed in Henry’s footsteps and became knife makers. In the 1830s the Harrington shop only kept Henry and one other man busy. Even by the mid-1850s the workforce numbered but five craftsmen. But Harrington was full of ideas and energy –
designing, making and patenting innovative firearms that he tried to sell to the U.S. Army. While his gun business never took off, Harrington’s cutlery business steadily grew and prospered, building a strong reputation for high quality knives, including surgical tools. Son Theodore began his own company in 1848, branching out into making knives and shaves for shoemakers. When Henry Harrington died in 1876, another son, Dexter, took over Henry’s knife-making business.

In 1884 Dexter Harrington introduced his namesake “Dexter” brand of knives, one of the company’s most popular product lines for over a century. The reputation of Harrington kitchen and chefs’ knives soon became unrivaled, and the company’s core products. When Dexter’s own son Charles became a partner in 1891, the firm was renamed D. Harrington and Son. As the business grew, it moved to a three story wooden factory on Marcy Street, close to the center of Southbridge. In the early 1900s Charles sold the business to another prominent local family, the Wells, whose principal business was the American Optical Corporation. (Later members of the Wells family also founded Old Sturbridge Village.) By the early 1930s Harrington Cutlery employed about 50 men.

Southbridge became home to other knife-making companies in the 19th-century as well. Isaac P. Hyde founded Hyde Manufacturing in 1870. Members of the Richard family, who had learned the trade from Hyde, set up two separate factories of their own on Elm Street. Today, Hyde’s company is a leading producer of industrial cutting blades.

Other craftsman and entrepreneurs throughout New England also turned to domestic manufacturing, seeking their fortunes by supplying the growing demands of the young nation. Many failed, but one notable success story was that of John Russell of Greenfield, Massachusetts. Russell was a businessman, not a working craftsman, although he had some training in his youth as a metal worker. He invested whatever of his own money that he could in cotton, which was in great demand at home and abroad by a growing textile industry. After making it through two seasons of financial losses, cotton profits skyrocketed. By 1830 Russell had amassed a fortune, and at the age of only 33 he retired and got married.

While on a visit home to Greenfield in 1833, Russell was captivated by a description he read of the Sheffield cutlery business and decided to begin manufacturing tools. He bought land, built and equipped a water-powered factory, and by early 1834 was making high quality chisels and axes. By year’s end the factory was also producing butcher’s knives, which soon became the main product line. Russell’s brother Francis and then
other investors, most notably Henry Clapp, joined the firm, allowing the company to expand and erect a new factory, the Green River Works. High wages attracted skilled craftsman, including English immigrants with knife-making experience. The incorporation of water-powered machines allowed for mass production. Tens of thousands of these Green River Knives were shipped to the Western frontier, where they enjoyed an almost legendary reputation for high quality. Barlow-style pocket knives proved another popular and iconic product for the company. By 1865 the company employed 400 workers, adding a hundred more by 1870.

Fires and the desire for a larger factory with greater water power led to a move to Turner’s Falls on the Connecticut River in 1870, although the brand name “Green River Knife Works” was retained. The relocation revealed a chronic problem with the Russell Company: over-expansion. It was never able to take advantage of the full capacity of the massive Turner’s Falls factory complex. The company also put too much reliance on the reputation of the Green River Knife and was slow to expand into other lines when its sales declined. Unreliable water power and economic downturns only exacerbated these problems. In 1920 it was taken over by the Turner’s Falls Power and Electric Company. When the Great Depression hit, it left the chronically cash-poor Russell Company and its 250 employees in a very precarious position.

With the Great Depression at its worst, in early 1933 the Harrington Company, run by close Wells family associate Ira Mosher, bought the larger but struggling Russell Green River Knife Works. Within five years the newly merged Russell-Harrington Corporation had abandoned both its factories for the new plant on River Street in Southbridge that it still occupies today. In 1968 Hyde Manufacturing acquired Russell-Harrington, which was renamed Dexter-Russell in 2001 in order to put its most well-known brand names front and center. Today, the traditions of quality and variety begun by Henry Harrington and John Russell have made Dexter-Russell the largest manufacturer of professional cutlery in the United States. Not a bad legacy for the skilled Henry Harrington, “Cutler to the People” and John Russell, the business savvy entrepreneur of Greenfield.

Through December, be sure to see knives and other treasures from the Dexter-Russell collection and some rarely-exhibited pieces from our own collection on display in the Old Sturbridge Village Visitor Center and the Bullard Tavern.
Hidden Treasures:
Objects from the Material Culture Collection

Shelley Cathcart, Curatorial Fellow at Old Sturbridge Village

Old Sturbridge Village’s material culture collection contains approximately 60,000 historic objects, the majority of which are normally inaccessible to the general public and held in four primary storage areas across the museum campus. The collection encompasses an array of objects, from agricultural tools to writing implements and Windsor chairs to parasols, spanning from about 1790 to 1840. At a given moment approximately ten percent of these objects are on view in the museum’s historic buildings and exhibit spaces. The ten objects featured here are a sneak peek into the vast array of everyday artifacts that form Old Sturbridge Village’s permanent collection.

1 Wheelchair
This wheelchair offers a glimpse into the life of the disabled in rural 19th-century New England. Demonstrating Yankee resourcefulness, this painted Windsor armchair was converted into a wheelchair, and the legs were cut down to adapt the additional three wheels.

2 Card Table
This Federal style card table speaks to leisure activities in post-Revolutionary War America. Card playing in the early 19th century was a common activity that penetrated all levels of society as a form of enjoyment.¹ When not used for gaming, the table could also be used against a wall or as a tea table. With a delicate, rectilinear outline and sophisticated inlay, this card table is related to designs popularized by English designer Thomas Sheraton, one of the most well-known taste makers in the Federal Period. A subtle serpentine skirt, intricate checkboard inlay and the elegant reeded and tapered legs make this table a fine example of Federal period craftsmanship and the Sheraton style.

3 Reading Glass in Case
A.B. Wells and J. Cheney Wells, two of the founders of Old Sturbridge Village, made their fortune in the optical business with The American Optical Company of Southbridge.
This reading glass represents only a small portion of historic eyeglasses in the collection. Seen as evidence of old age or weakness, eyeglasses in the 18th and 19th centuries were worn only when necessary. Popularized at the end of the 18th century, reading glasses were usually stowed away in a case of tortoise shell, mother-of-pearl or richly colored enamel so when not worn the reading glasses were a fashionable accessory.

4 Violin
This country violin or “fiddle” was made by Harry Harrington of Southbridge in 1855. Possibly an embellishment of truth, a note accompanies the violin implying that Harrington constructed the violin with hemlock from a tree struck by lightning and an old chest of drawers. The ambient sound of the country violin fostered a culture of entertainment for the early 19th-century New Englander. As an object for enjoyment, the instrument’s tune was celebrated by women and men alike no matter their social status, age, gender or race.

5 Looking Glass
This Queen Anne style looking glass (ca. 1710) was made in England. The frame is painted black and adorned with gilt whimsical decoration of figures, pagoda-like structures and flowers. Even though the frame is the most striking feature, the most impressive is the original glass formed in two sheets, a luxury for the time period.

6 Gown
Acknowledging the habitual change in fashions, this gown fuses the elongated, columnar shape of the early 19th century and alludes to the emergence of large sleeves and a dropped waist characteristic of the 1830s. Effectively demonstrating the fad for printed textiles, the gown is printed in an all over undulating floral stripe pattern in vibrant shades of purple, yellow, blue and green. The maker recognized the latest trends filtering from Paris and New York through fashion publications and accentuated those with the availability of machine-printed textiles via the latest technological innovations. Probably purchased from a local store, the machine-printed textile garment was made and worn in Sturbridge and passed down in the donor’s family.
Needlework Picture
Overseen by headmistresses at their schools, young girls mastered the skill of pictorial embroideries.\(^4\) Illuminating the intricate needlework and abilities of a young lady, *Hope* was created by the able hands of Sarah Hodges in 1814. Inscribed below the picture on a black èglomisé (reverse-painted) mat is “Sarah Hodges/1814,” with four stylized floral motifs in the corners and a gilt border surrounding the image. The reverse features a paper label of Peter Grinnell & Son, Providence, who sold gilt and mahogany framed looking glasses.

Sign
In the early 19th century, signs such as this one were situated outside a shop to inform any potential customers of the services inside, just like today. This rectangular trade sign emblazoned with the name “E.Edson/Cabinet Maker & Painter,” is probably from the shop of Eliphalet Edson, a painter and cabinetmaker in Yarmouth, Massachusetts. His typical forms consisted mainly of stands, desks, bedsteads, clock cases and other case furniture.\(^5\)

Teapot
Designed to resemble silver or pewter, this English lusterware teapot was probably crafted in the elaborate workshops and kilns of Staffordshire, England. The silver-like appearance was created using an oxide of platinum. Appealing to the developing middle-class consumer abroad, lusterware was a more affordable alternative to solid silver.

Battersea Box
A utilitarian and sentimental form, this small, hinged enamel box is commonly known as a Battersea box. With an exterior decorated in a radiant royal blue, this small box was likely made in South Staffordshire or Birmingham, England.\(^6\) The most striking feature is the saying on the cover, “Let your lov/like mine be/lasting.” Probably intended for a secret lover or newfound romantic interest, the box was presumably kept as a token of affection. However, containers like this were typically used as snuff boxes and held smokeless tobacco.

---

he colonial lean-to style Richardson house, now on the Old Sturbridge Village Common, appears on the daily map-guide as the “Parsonage” because since 1975 the Village has interpreted it as the home of a Congregational minister and his family. Like most of the buildings at the Village, it was relocated to the museum. While many details of its history are unknown, it is known that it was not built anywhere near a common, and it was never actually a parsonage. In its current guise, however, it has proven an effective teaching tool to inform our guests about life in early New England.

With a center chimney, two full stories in front and one in the back, and a long, pitched roof sloping down the back, modern architectural historians typically call this style of home a “saltbox house” due to its resemblance to that common early kitchen container with a sloped lid. The Richardson farmhouse was intentionally built in the saltbox style sometime in the mid- to late-1700s in neighboring East Brookfield, Massachusetts. In the 19th century, it changed hands several times, until the Underwood family purchased it in 1881. By 1893 its original hearths and chimney were replaced by a much smaller chimney, presumably for a stove of some kind. In the early 20th century even that was removed, and the whole house received a coat of white paint.

In 1939 the first house added to what was then called Old Quinebaug Village was the Stephen Fitch house from Willimantic, Connecticut. The next year the Richardson farmhouse followed. Museum staff member George Watson, an assistant to A. B. Wells, bought it from the Underwood family in 1940 for $100. After years of relative neglect and multiple uses, including as a greenhouse, chicken coop, ice house and farm storage building, it was in poor condition. Its brick hearths were long gone, and one wall sagged considerably. Village carpenters took it apart piece by piece, trucking its beams and whatever could be salvaged to the museum.

Since very little of the original interior survived, here at the Village the building’s interior was restored in a somewhat conjectural manner, with most of the woodwork either recreated or salvaged from other 18th century structures. Finding red paint below the white on the exterior of the house prompted the restored structure to be painted red with white trim. The two downstairs rooms in front were decorated and furnished as late 18th/early 19th-century parlor based on the desire of the Village’s founder and his staff to display certain antiques. The result was doubtless much more lavish than the home had ever known historically. The upstairs bedchambers were furnished according to the

By Tom Kelleher, Historian and Curator of Mechanical Arts
same criteria, although stenciled wall decoration in one room echoed the original free-hand and stenciled wall treatments in that chamber that had not survived relocation. A.B. Wells dictated that the back of the house, which had originally been divided up into a kitchen, bedroom, buttery and workshop, be made into one large room in which to display antiques, or hold business meetings as the need arose. A back stairway was installed for a purely practical reason: modern public safety codes required a second means of egress in the event of an emergency. Wells had a massive reproduction fireplace installed, incongruously copied from a 17th-century example at the Sleeper estate in Gloucester, Massachusetts. A.B. Wells knew what he liked but had never seriously studied history or historic material culture.

Like all exhibits at Old Sturbridge Village, the Richardson house has been periodically redecorated, rearranged and reinterpreted as advancing scholarship and changing museum needs allow us to refine our understanding of early New England society and material culture, and improve our presentation of both. Other modifications were made for more practical reasons. For example, in 1968 the house received new interior paint and decoration, and radiant electric heating elements were installed, hidden in the ceilings of the three first-floor rooms.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the Village dramatically ramped up its efforts to use costumed interpreters to bring early New England to life. After considerable research, thought and deliberation, in 1975 the home was reinterpreted in hopes of illuminating how the families of aspiring professionals, an increasingly important component of center village communities, lived. Working under a National Endowment for the Humanities grant, intern Liz Cohen coordinated the transformation of the Solomon Richardson house into the Old Sturbridge Village Parsonage. The scenario would henceforth portray the house as the rented dwelling of a young Congregationalist minister and his family. Already an older home by the 1830s, the time period interpreted in the Village, its decorations and furnishings would reflect the efforts of the fictitious minister’s family to update it and make it into a comfortable and fashionable home suiting their changing needs and tastes. One parlor was transformed into the minister’s study, and the other became a room in which the imaginary minister and his wife could dine entertain, and host various meetings of parishioners. The chamber over the study was reinterpreted as a bedroom for the family’s series of guests, such as travelling...
ministerial colleagues, and the other as the bedroom of the pastor, his wife and their youngest child. The scenario showed the unfinished garret as not only a catch-all storage space, but where the other children in the family slept. By the early 1980s, visitors could take a half-hour morning tour of the house, with costumed historians playing the roles of the minister and his family. In the afternoons guests could explore the house at their leisure, with the costumed staff no longer in role but free to answer questions and interpret the house from a modern perspective.

Improvements and changes continued as research advanced, circumstances required and funding permitted. In 1980 the home received new ceilings, reproduction wallpapers and fresh paint on the interior woodwork to repair damage caused by failure of the heating panels. Even more extensive work was done in 1984, with decayed sills and the kitchen floor replaced, more authentic beaded wallboards installed in the kitchen and more interior repainting. The cavernous 17th-century kitchen fireplace that had long been used to display antique cookware was replaced by a more historically appropriate working hearth and bake oven. This allowed for regular cooking demonstrations. Along with the home’s carefully researched kitchen garden, it allowed staff to present how the diet of a family that was not farming but was more exposed to the wider world might differ from the rural norm portrayed at the Freeman farmhouse. The back stairs were reconfigured and subtly illuminated to make them safer to use. Owing to the growing popularity of the Dinner in a Country Village program in the Parsonage, a small modern kitchen with a sink, refrigerator and dishwasher was tucked discreetly behind those stairs. Wallpapers that are more authentic were applied in the parlor and study chamber in 1986. In 1988 the exterior front and sides of the house were painted white to better reflect the growing love of classical architecture in the early 19th century, especially in center villages, a fashion trend called “the whitening of New England.” The rear of the house was left red as an example of Yankee frugality while still bowing to the dictates of fashion.

Other repairs, redecorations and interpretive refinements have continued through the years to preserve this historic structure and improve its effectiveness as a teaching tool. Interpretive signs were added to each room in 2011. More practically, ice damage that winter demanded a new roof for the house in 2012, along with fresh paint and a new plaster ceiling for the kitchen. In 2014, the study and entrance hall were updated with fresh paint in lighter stone colors to better demonstrate how the home may have looked in the 1830s. That same year we intensified the human presence in the house to ensure more active daily demonstrations of cooking, sewing and other domestic tasks.

Over the last seven decades millions of people have visited the Richardson farmhouse, and in the process encountered early New England fashions and foodways, domestic chores and amusements, discussing with the costumed staff topics ranging from 19th-century religion to social reforms, gardening practices to beliefs about child-rearing and much more. Although no one has lived in the Richardson house for a long, long time, it remains remarkably full of life and life-long learning.
It is said that you can learn a great deal about a culture by experiencing its cuisine. The same is true when you want to learn about another time in history; an immersive experience like Dinner in a Country Village at Old Sturbridge Village provides just such an opportunity. During this unique and popular program, limited to 14 guests per evening, participants prepare a wonderful meal over the hearth and in a brick oven, following authentic “receipts” – the word then used for what we now call recipes.

This special evening begins when a costumed historian greets guests at the Visitor Center and leads them by the light of a Village-made tin lantern to the Parsonage. There, two more costumed interpreters provide a cheerful welcome in the parlor, warmed by a glowing fire, as they prepare for the evening. Guests don aprons and are encouraged to roll up their sleeves as dinner preparations begin.

Some members of the group prepare mulled cider and pounded cheese, while others begin work at the vegetable, pastry or meat tables. Knowledgeable interpreters provide vital background about cooking and food customs of the 19th century as the guests quickly get to work peeling and cutting seasonal vegetables, or trussing and seasoning the chicken. The tin oven is set up in front of the fireplace, and the chicken actually begins to cook. The cider and cheese are ready first, thus providing an appetizer for everyone working on the rest of the meal.

When the meal is fully prepared, guests set the table with period appropriate cloths, napkins, dishes and tableware. With the soft glow of candlelight from the table and sconces on the wall, everyone enjoys a hearty and authentic meal prepared with their own labor. The first course is soup, which is served family style, followed by a main course of delicious roast chicken and root vegetables. The hosts talk about proper 19th-century etiquette, which included eating from a knife rather than a fork, and popular recipes of the day.

After dinner, guests move back to the parlor to savor hot chocolate and floating island – a cake served on a bed of sweetened whipped cream. Lively conversation ensues as everyone marvels at the great effort that was involved in putting on a multi-course meal in days gone by.

The Dinner in a Country Village program is offered on Saturdays from January through March, 2016; space is limited to 14 participants at each session, register today at www.osv.org/event/dinner-in-a-country-village.

DINNER IN A COUNTRY VILLAGE
MENU FOR 2015-2016

Pounded Cheese on Common Crackers
Fricassee of Parsnips
Butter Biscuits

Mulled Cider
Roasted Carrots
Apple Pie with Cheddar Cheese

Gourd Soup
Scots Collops
Sparkling Cider

Stewed Red Cabbage
Roasted Stuffed Chicken
Floating Island

Scots Collops can be found online at www.osv.org

RECEIPTS (RECIPES)
from 19th-century cookbooks

VISITOR FALL/WINTER 2015
ince he began at Old Sturbridge Village in July of 1978, Bruce Craven has held a variety of roles: working as a costume interpreter, supervising the agriculture program, planning exhibitions and caring for collections. In his most recent role as exhibit specialist, Bruce has been responsible for designing the Village’s exhibitions – building platforms and custom cases and contriving ingenious, budget-friendly solutions for displaying collections objects. Over the past 38 years, Bruce has left an indelible mark on the museum and his coworkers. Bruce retired in August 2015, but offered some reflections on his long, successful career before embarking on a new chapter in life.

Q: When did you first come to the Village and what was your first job?
Bruce: I was hired in July of 1978 as an interpreter. My very first station was a daily rotation between the Law Office, Thompson Bank and Bullard Tavern. We were so busy with two or three thousand visitors a day that we needed a staff member to direct visitors to various eating options. Within a week or so, I was trained for the Freeman Farm. My very first day on the farm we brought in ten loads of hay using two teams of oxen. The temperature was in the 90s, and I wasn’t used to doing field work. I remember thinking, “if every day is like this, I’m not going to last long.”

Q: What are some of your most memorable moments?
Bruce: Gosh, that is hard to say. Most have to do with my years working at the Freeman Farm. Summers were spent haying, and everyone was eager to work hard and took pride in what they had accomplished at the end of the day. The smell of the freshly mown hay was heady. By summer’s end we had hay crammed to the rafters in the barn, as well as huge haystacks outside. Letting visitors milk a cow is one example of living history at its purest, best form. Where else could you get that kind of experience? There were lines of people, young and old, waiting their turn. It was a trip down memory lane for some of the older ones. What was most rewarding as an interpreter was watching the reactions of young children, standing next to a 1,000-pound animal. The real magic happened when, with gentle coaching to help ease their trepidation, they would wrap their small fingers around a teat and see a stream of milk go into the wooden bucket. Proud parents would join in the excitement and invariably say, “that’s where milk comes from!” It’s been 15 years since I’ve done that, but the memories are still as fresh and moving as if it was yesterday. I’d like to think that the young children were equally touched.

Q: What has been your favorite thing about working at the Village?
Bruce: Working with such a crazy cast of characters across all departments has been great. The Village is an amalgamation of museum, classroom, theatre and circus with all the juggling that goes on to make sure things run smoothly. I’ve had the opportunity to work with so many creative, artistic individuals, each with something unique to offer. It’s not about the money, but the reward and satisfaction of doing something meaningful. At the risk of sounding trite, we are a tight-knit family, woven together to make our Village come alive. In addition to costumed interpreters, there are dedicated behind-the-scenes employees, many starting their work day when most of us are still asleep. We all work together so that the curtain can go up for “show time” at 9:30 am.
**Q:** What has kept you at the Village for so many years?

**Bruce:** Again, a large part of it is working with people you care about. Another is developing expertise, whether it is knowledge or hand-skills. For the 22 years I worked in costume, I spoke with tens of thousands of people, and one of the highest rewards for me was a sincere “thank you” from a visitor, often followed by “I learned something new today.” Visitors like to see the process of work, whether it is cooking at the Freeman Farm, turning a lump of clay into a pot, or hammering heated iron into an ox shoe. Farming is all about process dictated by nature’s seasons, so my job was easy. Every month gave me something different to do and talk about. It also didn’t hurt to be around sheep, pigs and cows, especially in the spring with cute newborns. In my 15 years of working in the curatorial department, it has been a pleasure to put our great collection of artifacts on display for people to see. I have also enjoyed reproducing items from our collection for use in the Small House, Parsonage, Fitch House, Salem Towne House and KidStory.

**Q:** What advice would you give someone just starting a museum career?

**Bruce:** Making money isn’t everything. Sure, you have to pay the bills, but it is more important to do something that gives meaning to your life and to the lives of others. Learning about the past is important; it may sound corny, but there is value in paying homage to those who have gone before you.

**Q:** What are the biggest challenges that you’ve faced?

**Bruce:** I guess one of my biggest challenges is coping with my perfectionist nature. Nagging in the recesses of my brain is an inner parental voice that still echoes the old refrain, “If it is worth doing at all, it is worth doing it well.” It has come in handy designing and building exhibits or displays. In the planning stages, I am so methodical that it might drive most people crazy. Once I’ve figured out a plan, I’m off and running. Becoming the Lead Interpreter for the Freeman Farm was a challenge as well. Raised in the suburbs of northern New Jersey, I was a true greenhorn. There was so much history to learn and so many skills to master.

**Q:** What is your favorite object in the collection?

**Bruce:** Schoolgirl art – samplers, silk on silk embroidery, pen and ink drawings and watercolors – created by students in academies are charming and have great appeal to me. My favorites are the hand-drawn and hand-colored maps (ca. 1800) by Mehitable Sumner (age 14 or 15) at Mrs. Butler’s Academy in Hingham, MA. Completed with pen and ink, they are expertly drawn with nary a spill or blob, and the detail is extraordinary. For whimsy, I’d pick the bird cage fish bowl (ca. 1810-20), where there is a perch for a bird inside a globular fish bowl; the fish could swim in circles around the bird.

**Q:** What exhibit was the most fun to design?

**Bruce:** For large exhibits, I’d have to say Delightfully Designed: The Furniture and Life of Nathan Lombard (2014). It was largely a loan exhibit with objects coming from other museums and private donors. I didn’t want furniture stuck in corners. I wanted the various tables and chests of drawers, along with a secretary, clock and fire screen to be able to look across at each other. Better yet, to imagine them talking to one another after hours when the lights were dim; after all, it was a reunion of pieces made in the same shop over 200 years ago. A small exhibit of mouse traps (November 2011) was just plain fun!
I would like to introduce you to Tom and Sid, the two new bull calves born June 3rd on the Freeman Farm. These two young cattle have just begun the path toward becoming a team of oxen here at Old Sturbridge Village. The title of ox is not a birthright, but something earned over four years of patient training and work. Training for Tom and Sid began in August, when the calves were exactly two months old.

Selection of calves for training begins at birth when they are immediately judged on health, size and conformation. Ideal candidates for oxen will be broad shouldered, deep chested and have strong legs that are neither too straight, (known as “post legged”) nor too bent (which is called “sickle hocked”). Feet should point straight ahead and not to the outsides or insides, being “cow hocked” or “pigeon toed,” respectively. Strong legs are a must as they will be the team’s livelihood, propelling them, their yoke and all the plows, carts, logs and other implements and objects they will be asked to pull. Cattle with good conformation have fewer joint problems and tend toward better health and longer lifespans.

The next step in training oxen is matching a team. This is easy to do with full grown animals, but training already grown steers is difficult, sometimes dangerous work. Teaching calves is easier and safer, and produces the most disciplined and tractable adults. However, it requires some guesswork and careful feeding when young to raise two matched oxen. Tom and Sid have the characteristics traditionally sought by New England teamsters. They are both sired by the same bull, and their mothers are closely related and of similar conformation themselves. Such a closely shared bloodline predictably gives closely matched oxen — if care is taken in their feeding to ensure both receive the same nutrition and opportunity for growth.

Good names are essential for any team. They should be short, one or two syllables and not sound like any of the command words you intend to use. With this model in mind, Tom and Sid were chosen for our newest calves. Their namesake is the 19th-century painter Thomas Sidney Cooper, sometimes called Cow Cooper after his most common subject matter. He is one of the most celebrated animal painters of his era, and his work filled a demand originating from progressive movements in agriculture advocating improved breeds of livestock. The first and most famous of these improved breeds was the Shorthorn or Durham cattle, not coincidentally this is the breed of our young Tom and Sid.

Cattle are highly social animals that instinctively develop and maintain hierarchies in their herd. They will incorporate people into that pecking order, and our first duty is to place ourselves at the top. The calves are fed by our staff and handled individually every day. Reliance on humans soon develops into familiarity and trust. A rope halter gives us a measure of control as they are next taught to follow our lead. Young calves have little patience and tire easily, so early training sessions must be kept to fifteen or twenty minutes.

The first commands are “come up” to get going and “whoa” to stop. These are practiced every day until the
calves reliably start and stop on command. The second set of commands learned are “gee” and “haw” for right and left turns. A road or path is easy for the young bulls to follow, and calling out the appropriate word when turns are encountered soon conditions them to turning on command. The last of the basic commands is “back.” Going in reverse is rarely done by free cattle and almost never for more than the step or two necessary to turn around. The team, who cannot see behind themselves, must trust their trainer, who needs plenty of patience to teach what is arguably the most challenging of early commands.

When the team is ready, they are introduced to the yoke. The yoke is comprised of one large, curved piece of wood that sits on their shoulders, a u-shaped bow to secure each animal in his position, a clip to secure each bow and a staple, which suspends a ring from the center of the yoke. This ring is where anything the team will pull is hitched. Learning to pull is still two or more months away for Tom and Sid. The two are still new to the yoke and must master the initial commands before more advanced lessons.

Even with a good grasp of the basics, walking in the yoke brings its own set of challenges. The trainer must choose which will become the nigh ox, on the left next to the driver, and which will be the off ox, on the right. There are a tremendous number or reasons to choose one way or another, but it is often the team’s personality which help choose for you. It may be an eager calf who needs restraint, a reluctant one who needs constant encouragement or a troublemaker who must be under constant supervision. In our case, Sid has shown himself to be eager to go and Tom somewhat reluctant, so Sid is on the outside, or off side, and Tom is in the nigh spot.

These oxen-in-training must learn to coordinate their movements so they work as a team instead of against one another. Here their names become important, as the teamster often must address a specific animal to keep him abreast of his partner without falling behind, running ahead or crowding. Preventing bad habits now will make future training easier. Once a team is introduced to working and pulling, what was an unsightly lack of coordination becomes a serious issue if one refuses to shoulder his share of the load. Without any specific instruction from their teamster, a well-coordinated team will walk in step, matching their gait as they learn on their own how to move most efficiently.

Training will continue throughout the lives of our new team. As they master each step, more commands and combinations of commands will be taught. Work will be introduced, steadily increasing in difficulty and duration as Tom and Sid build their strength, endurance and patience. In the span of four years they will have fully matured and be ready to assume their place as working oxen and ready to plow our fields, skid logs, haul cartloads of hay, and everything required to meet the needs of a 19th-century farm.

For more highlights on the oxen team, go to: https://www.youtube.com/OldSturbridgeVillage
Now in its thirteenth year, *Christmas by Candlelight* has become a beloved tradition at Old Sturbridge Village, adored by members and visitors alike. This year, staff will transform the Village into a winter wonderland like never before, with new programs and attractions. Of course, cherished favorites will still make an appearance, such as horse-drawn sleigh rides, carolers, yule logs, gingerbread houses, mistletoe and sugar plums!

An exciting addition this year is a giant Christmas tree to adorn the Village Common, with a nightly lighting ceremony. We will display the incredible Nativity Scene (profiled on pages 19-20) in the Friends Meeting House, with theatrical lighting and heating, so guests may linger as they marvel at the intricate and heartwarming scene. It is there as well that a costumed interpreter will offer the nightly reading of the Nativity Story.

While strolling through the candlelit Village, guests may join in a Christmas Carol sing-along, learn a period dance, listen to a musical performance and learn about holiday traditions of old.

The Village’s annual Gingerbread House Contest will be back, with dozens of hand-made gingerbread houses on display. Visitors may vote for their favorite.

Another new event this year is a Holiday Feast at Bullard Tavern, offered each evening of *Christmas by Candlelight* at 4:15, 6:00 and 8:00 pm. Enjoy a holiday buffet with live carolers and a cash bar before or after your tour of *Christmas by Candlelight*. Tickets for the feast are $39.95 for adults, $19.95 for youths and children under 5 are Free. Purchase admission to *Christmas by Candlelight* separately.

A special dinner and concert on December 10th features the music of Blackstone Valley Bluegrass, Rick Lang, Karen Wilber, Amy Gallatin and Roger Williams. Enjoy festive cocktails and fine dining in the Oliver Wight Tavern prior to attending the concert at the Center Meetinghouse. Tickets are $50 for Members or $60 for non-members; call 508-347-0362 to reserve a space, or sign up at www.osv.org.

Make *Christmas by Candlelight* part of your family’s holiday tradition!

---

**Winter Market**

**November 27-29 (Thanksgiving Weekend)**

Just in time for holiday shopping, staff will convert the Village’s Museum Education building into a fantastic Winter Market with dozens of juried craft vendors offering the finest hand-made items for the special people on your list. Select from diverse creations including pottery, paper goods, candles, soaps, gourmet pet treats, glasswork, textiles, gourmet foods, artisan jewelry and gorgeous home accessories. Do not miss a pop-up shop of Village-made pottery, tin, fudge and cookies.

**FREE for OSV Members**

**INCLUDED with General Admission to the museum for non-members**

**$5 per Person** to attend the Winter Market only
From the tender age of 15, Tom Casey Hopkins began a fascination with nativity scenes—the popular miniature depictions of the birth of Jesus. In 1968, when Tom’s family made regular trips to Old Sturbridge Village, there was a private home about a half-mile from the entrance to the Village where a kind gentleman had converted his basement into an elaborate display of small plastic figurines depicting Bethlehem at the time of Jesus’ birth. Though inspired by the landscape of Tuscany, each vignette interpreted different parts of the Biblical narrative—the annunciation, the greeting of Mary and Elizabeth, the shepherds tending their flocks, with an Italianate flair. As Tom remembers, “this guy was meticulous, dressing the human figures in real cloth, and arranging the buildings with special lighting and landscaping.” The owner did not have set hours or charge a fee to enter. He simply answered the door when people rang the bell and happily introduced guests to his enchanted nativity display. It was an annual Christmas pilgrimage for the Casey family that Tom remembers vividly.

When this long-time neighbor of the Village moved away, his display went with him. While Tom was disappointed, he knew that it would be up to him to carry on the tradition of portraying the nativity story in miniature. Tom began collecting Fontanini pieces, saving his allowance for investing in new pieces. However, when it came to displaying this scene at Old Sturbridge Village, which began about 13 years ago, Tom soon realized that the ceramic miniature buildings were too heavy and too delicate to move around so frequently.

Having worked at Old Sturbridge Village for a time, Tom got to know another employee who taught him how to carve Styrofoam, which was done at the time for modeling Santa’s Workshop. This gave him the idea of recreating the nativity scene in Styrofoam—a much lighter, portable material that he could now fashion with his own imagination.

While inspired by the Fontanini buildings, Tom soon came up with his own ideas for recreating a 19th-century nativity scene set in New England with
portrayals of the daily life of the residents and their world, with the story of Jesus’ birth set among them. He created a shoemaker’s shop, a blacksmith, a glass blower and more, as he tried to imagine how 19th-century Americans might have thought about Bethlehem and its environs. Though the pieces still have an Italianate motif, with tile-like roofs and stucco on half-timbered buildings, they are a hybrid with pre-industrial 19th-century New England themes. Tom spent 30 hours a week for a period of six months to design, carve and paint the miniature buildings and accessories, which include exotic animals and 20 breeds of dogs. Today, there are more than 500 individual pieces in the display.

“The nativity is geared for children, and they really get a kick out of it,” Tom says, “though adults too are moved by it, some even to the point of tearing up with joy.” One of those adults is Old Sturbridge Village’s Board President, Richard “Dick” Schulze, who takes great pride in leading guests, with a flashlight, through a tour of the elaborate scene each night.

While Tom handled the artistic and creative direction, it is thanks to Tom’s husband Darrel, who had a 24-year career in the US Army as an Electronic Warfare Intercept Equipment Repair Technician, that many of the pieces in the miniature village are animated. A grist mill spins its wheel, a cat chases a mouse around a circle and of course the pieces are carefully illuminated.

Now residents of Westminster, Mass., Tom and Darrel faithfully bring the nativity scene to life each year, transporting the pieces from storage in their home and setting them up at Old Sturbridge Village over two days. Both Tom and Darrel serve as volunteers at the Village, lending their voices to the Village Singers and demonstrating folk dances with the Village Dancers.

For the first time this year, the Village will display the nativity scene in the Friends Meeting House, giving the display greater prominence.
Through a collaboration with Vaillancourt Folk Art, based in Sutton, Massachusetts, Old Sturbridge Village is pleased to release the fifth in our series of unique, chalkware Vaillancourt Santa figurines. Created exclusively for the Village from vintage European chocolate moulds, these heirloom pieces honor the tradition of Old Sturbridge Village’s Annual Gala, one of the museum’s largest and most important annual fundraising events.

Considered one of the last “Made in America” Christmas studios, Vaillancourt was founded in 1984 and instills the same values and philosophies in their work as Old Sturbridge Village. Available nationally – from department stores and museum gift shops to small mom and pop shoppes and catalogs – Vaillancourt Folk Art creates chalkware figurines cast from vintage moulds and hand paints them with attention to quality and detail.

This year’s Vaillancourt Santa depicts the Oliver Wight House from the Village’s own Old Sturbridge Inn and Reeder Family Lodges. While Vaillancourt Folk Art products can be found nationwide, Old Sturbridge Village’s Fifth Santa Figurine is only available through the Village. Order your Santa today at www.osvgala.org or by contacting us at gala@osv.org.

$180.00* Per Figurine | $192.00 With Shipping

“I’ve made a ’sketch transfer’ to be used each time it is painted to keep the Oliver Wight House and its setting true to proportions, and I hand paint the building on every piece. The back side [of the Santa] features the Rufus Porter wall mural, which is original to the house, where I have taken the ’style’ of Rufus Porter and winterized the scene and changed the buildings to [mimic] antique German toys [...] of the time period. This entire scene will be hand painted each time.”

– JUDI VAILLANCOURT, VAILLANCOURT CRAFTSMAN
Horticulture & Agriculture
Old Sturbridge Village’s farms and gardens feature more than 300 heirloom plant varieties and more than 70 heritage breed animals. Each highlight the practices and styles of early 19th-century plant and animal husbandry in New England. Found throughout the Village, our agriculture and horticulture programs require resources and staff in order to maintain their interpretive quality.

Current Needs:
- Center Village bulb revitalization: $2,500
- Herb Garden plant identification tag replacement: $3,000
- Ox cart and cannon carriage wheels: $3,500
- Towne Garden arbor repair: $5,000
- Dairy supplies: $10,000
- Animal feed: $17,000
- Wood fencing: $18,000

Donations of any size are welcome.

New Piggery for the Village
Donated to Old Sturbridge Village in 2014 by Overseer Gary Galonek and his wife Beckie, the Allen Piggery is slated to be erected at the Village in 2016. This building will be the first historic structure added to the museum’s landscape since the 1980s and will bring with it many opportunities for our agricultural program to grow. Help the Village make this exciting new addition in 2016. Total Project Cost: $50,000

Donations of any size are welcome.

Histric Crafts & Trades
One of the Village’s enduring themes is our historic crafts and trades program. From training our staff in historic trades to interpreting their craft with visitors or leading workshops for the general public, this commitment is truly the centerpiece of the Village. Your support of this program is critical.

Current Needs:
- Two barrels, two kegs and two kettles: $1,400
- Bookbinding supplies: $1,500
- Shoe Shop supplies: $2,500
- Materials to weave a carpet for the Fenno House: $3,500
- Textile Reproduction: $4,000
- Tin Shop supplies: $4,500
- Blacksmith Shop supplies and new bellows: $6,000
- Pottery Shop supplies: $7,500

Donations of any size are welcome.

College Intern Program
For the past decade Old Sturbridge Village has grown its college intern program into a robust program which hosts up to 20 interns from across the country each summer. Our interns choose from a variety of disciplines, including costume interpretation, education, agriculture, horticulture, curatorial and marketing. With an investment in this program, the Village will begin offering $1,500 stipends and free housing to each intern beginning next summer.

Underwrite an intern: $1,500 per intern

For more information on how you can support Old Sturbridge Village programs, contact us at 508-347-0294 or development@osv.org.
Winter Events at Old Sturbridge Village

Village Membership allows you to attend most events for free or at a reduced cost.

Winter Market
November 27-29 (Thanksgiving Weekend)
The 1st Annual Winter Market arrives just in time for holiday shopping, featuring the exquisite works of more than 25 selected artisans.

Winter Work and Play
January 23-24
Learn how to cut ice with vintage 19th-century tools, go sledding on reproduction 1830s sleds, make snow statues, enjoy a horse-drawn sleigh ride, all snow-permitting of course.

Celtic Concert
March 12
Celebrate the week of St. Patrick’s Day with this concert featuring the music of Full Gael with Irish-themed food for sale.

Christmas by Candlelight
December 4-6, 11-13 and 18-20
Members enjoy reduced pricing for this cherished holiday tradition which provides a nostalgic and heartwarming escape from the frenzy of modern celebrations. Tickets at www.osv.org

WinterFest
February 13-21
Learn how to process raw chocolate for Valentine’s Day, celebrate President’s Day with a Washington’s Birthday Ball and see a magnificent sleigh rally.

Gardeners’ Symposium
April 2
An information-packed, day-long workshop with guest horticulturists and Village garden experts, sure to improve your ‘green thumb.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Sunday, January 17
Celebrate this civil rights leader’s birthday with special programming about slavery in New England prior to the American Civil War. Learn about the early beginnings of the abolitionist movement.

Maple Days
Weekends in March
See the entire sugar-making process as the sap again begins to flow in New England’s famed sugar maples, and learn why maple sugar was more commonly used than maple syrup.

Family Farm Fest
April 16-24
Celebrate the arrival of spring with the newest baby animals, participate in farm Olympics and marvel at visiting teams of oxen.

Visit our website for full details. www.osv.org
MEMBERS’ SHOPPING NIGHTS

December 4 - 6 | 4:00 - 9:00 pm

The Gift Shops at Old Sturbridge Village invite Members and guests for special nights of shopping. OSV Members receive 25% OFF their purchases on December 4 - 6. Enjoy free cookies, hot mulled cider and a food sampling station of the Shops’ most popular gourmet items. Members also receive FREE gift-wrapping of their shop purchases. The Miner Grant store will sell gingerbread in addition to regularly offered baked goods and holiday items. In addition, when visiting the Gift Shop at the Oliver Wight Tavern on December 4-6, each Member will receive one FREE raffle ticket and an additional ticket for every $10 spent at the Village Gift Shops. One raffle winner will receive a selection of Village-made items.