Spring Flowers
New Lambs and Wool Days
Miniature Furniture for Children
Facelifts and Facebook
Summer Camp at OSV
What a difference a year makes... Thank back with me for a moment to the time last year: the stock market plummeted to its lowest point in the “Great Recession”, the nation’s banks, carmakers and insurance giants were on the brink of failure and begging for bailouts; people were panicking about the safety of their homes and savings — and Old Sturbridge Village was beginning its best year in decades.

In a frightening year when so many organizations were closing their eyes, holding their breath and just hoping to hold on, we just closed OSV’s fiscal year in the black! For the first time in a decade, Old Sturbridge Village closed its books with an operating surplus, rather than a deficit, and we couldn’t have done it without the support of our donors, visitors and Members like you.

Here are the details: revenue was up for the year, driven largely by an increase in fund-raising. Expenses were down by about $800,000, thanks to the cost-reduction plan we adopted just over one year ago. The net improvement for the year was more than $1 million, an astounding turnaround achieved in just one year — resulting in an operating surplus, which we will reinvest into much-needed maintenance, repair and other improvements to the museum and its programs.

How did we do it? We had to be nimble: we had to act quickly and take some bold and risky steps to avert disaster during the unprecedented global economic downturn. In order to protect our interpreters and front-line staff, we eliminated several management positions and other directors volunteered to take salary cuts – in some cases, as high as 20 percent. Some employees trimmed their hours, and everyone agreed to forego the Village’s contribution to their retirement accounts.

But even these sacrifices were not enough. After reviewing attendance trends, we decided to shorten our winter hours by one day each week, closing on Tuesdays as well as Mondays between November and April. And we made the radical decision to put all of our resources toward our evening Christmas programs – closing during the daytime in December, and opening at night during the first three weekends of the month.

We took a gamble, and it worked. With your support, nearly 7,000 people attended the 2009 Christmas by Candlelight events, double the prior year’s attendance. This helped us improve our financial position by $50,000 during the Christmas events alone. Through the summer Ride the Wave Challenge and our end-of-year campaign, Members helped us raise just over $1.7 million for the OSV Annual Fund – a $400,000 increase over the previous year.

As we begin 2010, we want to continue to provide an affordable, educational and entertaining experience for Member families. And we are also looking for ways to add value to your membership – an example is the recent reproduction of Dog Days for Members. On behalf of our entire staff and board of trustees, I want to thank all of our Members for making 2009 the best year in decades for the Village.

And looking ahead, let us all keep this in mind – if we can achieve more than a $1 million turnaround in just one year, and close our books in the black for the first time in a decade during the worst economy in 70 years, we can accomplish anything together.
Four Reasons to Plant a Garden This Year

It wasn’t so long ago that almost every home had a garden.

Growing our own food was a necessity, not a pastime. Today, we can shop the local supermarket for whatever we need, whenever we need it. It doesn’t matter if tomatoes or a single row of green beans, with just a few pots of tomato plants in this country. Even if you start off of moderate gardening. Essentially, both of my parents were by my side. These experiences I will treasure forever. Soon I hope to pass these gardening traditions on to my own daughters.

If you think about it, many of us take matters out of the hands of others. And we were all heard about the heart-healthy benefits of aerobic exercises like hoeing, raking and even aerobics, running and spending quality time with our families. Home gardening, tides each and every one of these goals – and then some!

Consider my top four reasons why having a garden should be on your agenda in 2010.

Grow safe, healthy food at home.

According to studies, women can burn up to 300 calories, men nearly 400 from a single hour of moderate gardening. In fact, 1830s, different family members had their distinct chores, but everyone benefitted from fresh air and agricultural-based labor. Many gardening tasks, such as hoeing, planting and even mowing the lawn, can burn calories over at least a 20-minute period. Could the same thing happen with other fruits and vegetables? It did. Remember the ban on certain types of tomatoes? More than a thousand people became ill with salmonella, and the same is true for these zucchini. Why not take matters out of the hands of others and put them back into your own? Why not think of OSV and its kitchen gardens attached to Village households? Why not plant your own vegetable garden? If you don’t want to go all the way back to the 1830s, think of this as an opportunity for a modern-day Victory Garden. During World War II, it is estimated that 20 million home gardeners produced nearly 40 percent of the fresh vegetables consumers in this country. Even if you start off with just a few pots of tomato plants or a single row of green beans, chances are you will enjoy more flavor and peace of mind than with food from the grocery store.

Garden for health and wellness.

Garden to add beauty to your surroundings.

Why not attend our free Members-only “Garden Tyme” programs on held on the third Saturday of each month? Upcoming topics include:

April 17 Getting the Garden Ready
Learn how to prepare soil and garden beds.

May 15 “Try This, I’ve Heard It Really Works”
Find out if the hype about herbal healing is really true.

May 20 Free Tomato Plant Give-Away at OSV
Visit OSV on May 20 and get a free heirloom variety tomato plant – one per family while supplies last.

June 19 The Language of the Garden
Learn about colorful plant names like Johnny Jump-Up, Love-in-a-mist and Call-me-to-yo-to, and the basics of botanical Latin names.

July 17 Garden Pests and Problems
See how early 20th-century techniques can remedy insect and animal pests and problems in the vegetable garden.

August 21 Extending the Local Harvest
Discover how to make your garden last with late-season crops, storing squash, beans and root vegetables.

OSV SPRING 2009

So many of my early memories revolve around the garden. I remember waiting impatiently for the weather to break each spring so that Mom and I could plant flower beds. Then we’d mark the end of the school year by going strawberry picking. Dad was involved too, especially with the vegetable garden. I remember him by his side picking bright red quarts of red, juicy yellow string beans and glossy green cucumbers. When Dad retired and I gardened more seriously, both of my parent were by my side. These experiences I will treasure forever. Soon I hope to pass these gardening traditions on to my own daughters.

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It’s in the Bath

All of the wool hats, scarves and mittens worn by Old Sturbridge Village staff members are hand-knit using hand-dyed wool. Throughout the summer, OSV historians demonstrate the dyeing process, using natural dyes available in the 1830s. Many visitors are surprised to see what rich and vibrant colors can be produced using the old-time process.


At OSV
Spring Means Newborn Lambs and Wool Days

Nothing symbolizes the coming of spring quite like the arrival of newborn lambs at Old Sturbridge Village. Each year around a dozen lambs are born to the ewes in our Freeman and Towne flocks, usually during April and May—just in time to be crowd-pleasers during April School Vacation Week and the busy field trip season. This year is no exception, with two newborns already here and many more lambs expected.

Farmers in the Sturbridge area once ran flocks of 20–60 Merino sheep, which were imported from Spain in about 1810. Noted for the fineness of their wool, they were much in demand in the emerging textile industry, which paid twice as much for a Merino fleece. Unfortunately, this old-time Merino breed no longer exists. The modern Merino sheep has been improved several times over, and no longer resembles the earlier Merino, which had a three-pound fleece.

In searching for a breed to recreate the look of the early Merino, Village historians found a native sheep in Florida that had many of the old-time characteristics, including the look, fineness and average weight of the fleece. Now the basis for the sheep flock at Old Sturbridge Village, this “Gulf Coast Native” is a heritage breed descended from sheep brought by Spaniards to the U.S. Gulf Coast in the 1500s, and closely resembles the 19th-century Merino breed commonly found on New England farms in the 1830s.

Sometimes sheep farmers in the early 1800s had to deal with the care of lambs rejected by their mothers. An 1813 manual on sheep care noted that Merino ewes often made bad mothers, both from “want of milk and from neglect of their lambs.” The manual recommended confining the mother and her lamb together, holding the ewe while the lamb nurses, hoping that eventually it would be accepted.

The alternative was to feed milk to the lamb by hand unless a foster mother could be found. A lamb raised by hand is called a “cosset lamb,” and probably Mary’s little lamb from the famous poem, whose “fleece was white as snow” was tame because it was being raised by hand.

As the weather warms, the Old Sturbridge Village adult sheep are shorn during our “Wool Days” celebration over Memorial Day weekend. Their fleece is soft, and the lanolin in the wool is great for the hands. In fact, shearing is one of the few tasks in the farmer’s year that will actually improve the condition of his hands.

Wool Days visitors can try their hands at picking and carding wool and forming it into rolls. They can also practice weaving. Village interpreters demonstrate spinning with wool, weaving woolen fabric, knitting with woolen yarn dyed with natural dyes and carding wool at the Village’s own historic water-powered carding mill.

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The origins of “O.K.” are obscure, even controverted. Over the years editors have added or widely circulated “good stories” instead of solid research to explain how “O.K.” came to be. Many began as playful conceits meant to amuse, but later others to them seriously.

Others were “reverse etymology”—inventing a plausible story after the fact instead of finding the historic origin. Over time, many took these explanations as definitive fact. Clearly, by the 1820s “O.K.” was accepted as anaffirmative expression in the American South and West; by 1840 it was known throughout the country. Most explanations of “o.k.” origins are quite fanciful. One unlikely legend states the young colonial governor who came from Aus Cayes, in Haiti. Hence the best of anything was soon dubbed “O.K.”

Another story has it coming from the French “au pas ou au dock,” referring to cotton approved for loading in New Orleans. Some say telegraphers used it to mean “message received” or “open key,” i.e., “ready to receive.” But the first telegraph message was sent in 1844, “O.K.” was in common usage. It is unlikely that “O.K.” stood for the initials of US Army biscuit supplier O. Reed, or those of freight agent Obediah Kelly, who stamped his bills on shipping documents.

Also unlikely is that “O.K.” came from the Greek “Olla Kalla” for “all good” or the Ulster Scots “Ough, aye!” Baron Von Stuben, the German-American patriot, did use “O.K.” as a Choctaw Indian word. One tale has it that when Slav-ized in many stories about the origin of “O.K.”, the abbreviation of the legal term “ordered to record.” Regardless, Democrats used “O.K.” to promote Jackson’s re-election as president, and the Whig tried to turn against Jackson, trotting out the “oll’ korrect” tale as fact in Whig newspapers like The Massachusetts Spy. Some cite the “oll’ korrect” story as the origin of “O.K.”. My opinion is that “O.K.” was already in use, and the “oll’ korrect” story popularized it.

Democratic President Martin’s “Old Kinderhook” Van Buren used “O.K.” to his advantage, e.g., the O.K. Club of Van Buren supporters in the 1840 election. (Some mistakenly cite Van Buren as the origin of the expression) The Whigs then used “O.K.” puns to mock Van Buren and his duenna fiscal policies, e.g., “Out of Cash, Out of Office!”

Democrats responded in 1841 when an Illinois congressman taunted the Whigs as bemusing the “Orril Kalamity” of the Democratic’s Independent Treasury. Journalists and Hammermeister carried O.K. puns into the 20th century with “Do you think the President would have said ‘O.K.’ to Van Buren and his disasters?”

Some linguists trace “okay” to Central African languages speaking the Wolof language, in which no-soy-is the expressive form of lay, meaning “yes.” (Other Wolof words used today are: “jery,” “banana,” and “yam.”) Other African languages have affirms similar to “O.K.” — Liberian “Dahblo” and the “Oke” of the Gullah people. So Andrew Jackson didn’t “hear ‘o.k.” from an Indian, maybe he heard it from one of his slaves.

The most likely origin of “o.k.” seems to be the Choctaw word oklaha, okla, or oke, meaning “it is so.” Thus the newer spelling “okay” is closer to the original than the Americanized initials “O.K.”, which have engendered so much fun through the years. “O.K.”, OK, is also spelled “okay.”

President Andrew Jackson plays prominently in many stories about the origins of “O.K.” Some say Jackson, in his days as an Indian-fighter, popularized the use of okla, a Choctaw Indian word. One tale has it coming to Jackson, by a Choctaw chief Patsaludada. Others trace “o.k.” back to the Indians without help from Andrew Jackson. Some say it is short for “Oke Kookeha,” a Choctaw Indian chief in the Black Hawk-War of the 1830s, who signed his treaties “O.K.”

Comes writer Sebo Smith has his fictional character Major Jack Downin relate the invented tale of Jackson, a notoriously poor spellor, using “O.K.” as an abbreviation for “o.k. correct,” i.e., “all correct.” Others said Jackson (a lawyer and judge) made a common westerner’s mistake by substituting “O.K.” for “O.K.”, the abbreviation of the legal term “ordered to record.”

A flash in the pan! For as long as there have been flintlock muskets (from the late 1600s), there have been problems with having a “flash in the pan.” A flintlock works this way: black powder is placed in both the gun barrel (behind the musket ball) and in a small pan that is part of the “lock,” when this trigger is pushed, friction between a piece of flint (stone) and steel produces a spark, igniting the powder in the pan, which in turn ignites the powder in the barrel. Sometimes, however, the primer ignites without detonating the main charge. The primer is in the pan and is in a flintlock— but not in a flint! Nowadays, we label almost anything that begins in a flintlock manner but ends quickly as failure. “flash in the pan.”

You can usually see a real flash in the pan during musket firing demonstrations and “tank shoot” campouts at the Virginia State Parks.

Why We Say It

Blowing off steam in the early days of railroading (the 1830s), there was always plenty of danger and excitement. If the train operators didn’t get the fire in the engine hot enough, the train would go nowhere, but if they built it up too much steam, or if they tried to heat up the boiler, the smoke and water were too high, things could happen—like boiler explosions! Without a safety valve, the engine had only one way to keep a steam-up jumpslock from exploding from—by letting off (or “overflowing” it) excess steam is loud and racy enough. Nowadays we use this phrase to describe people who when they are really colorful, as if by blowing off some steam they keep themselves from explosive actions.

Wet behind the ears

The expression can be traced back to barn-raisers—or nature—and the fact that many barn-burning animals are still wet. [Here you’ve] seen all forms of baby calf or kitten being licked after birth by its mother? The last time to dry is usually the spot that the barnsided the calf. So, say someone— even an adult—is new or something we use the more descriptive phrase “still wet behind the ears.”

To bark up the wrong tree

In early America, and wherever hunting was practiced for almost any listener can tell when a fiddle is out of tune. Sometimes the winner took home the day’s most valuable prize. At other times, the winner was truly an accomplishment! Sometimes the winner catching a greased pig. Running down the pig was almost anything that begins in a flashy manner but go nowhere, but if they built up too much steam, or if they tried to heat up the boiler, the smoke and water were too high, things could happen—like boiler explosions! Without a safety valve, the engine had only one way to keep a steam-up jumpslock from exploding from—by letting off (or “overflowing” it) excess steam is loud and racy enough. Nowadays we use this phrase to describe people who when they are really colorful, as if by blowing off some steam they keep themselves from explosive actions.

Lock, stock and barrel

You might think this expression was derived from things in a country store—the stock that they sell, a lock to keep all secrets and a barrel to hold such things as molasses, but actually it refers to three things needed to make a gun: the metal barrel (of which the bullet or ball travels), the stock (or wooden support for the gun) which in turn ignites the powder, making smoke and noise and the stock that they sell, a lock to keep it all together, and a barrel. This expression has to do with things in a country store—the lock and stock, which is the basis of the phrase that “fits the bill.”}[3]

Anyway, “lock, stock and barrel” really means “the whole shebang” or “the whole works,” or completion of whatever you’re doing. In other words, it’s “the whole deal.” And that’s the truth—lock, stock and barrel.

Raining cats and dogs

It’s really pouring down. A good downpour of rain may refer to the fact that hard rain sometimes brings loud thunder and lightning—the southwestern version of a “lock, stock, and barrel.” But Charles Earle Funk, in “How’s the Wether?” credits 19th-century Irish writer Jonathan Swift with first using this colorful phrase in print in 1739, adapting it from an earlier set of “raining” dogs and polis.cn
Miniature Furniture: Made for Salesmen or Children?

Turn into any Antiques Roadshow broadcast and you’re likely to see someone offering for appraisal a small piece of furniture described as a “salesman’s sample.” Beautifully crafted furniture on such a small scale? Were these really just sales samples?

Old Sturbridge Village currently has some of the best examples of this genre on display in the Visitor Center adjacent to the Convenient & Fashionable: Furniture of Inland Massachusetts 1790–1840 exhibit. OSV historians confirm that the diminutive furniture forms in this exhibit were actually made for children and are scaled-down replicas of adult furniture of the period. In contrast to harsh earlier attitudes about childhood, 18th-century parents began to value children’s play as the key to successful learning, rather than as a sinful and idle pursuit.

This new parental attitude led to the production of furniture that encouraged imitation of adult activities, such as “taking tea” and writing letters. Some small-scale furniture was crafted for children to sit in and use; other small-sized furniture allowed children to practice adult customs with their dolls.

Most scholars now agree that finely crafted small-scale furniture pieces were usually purchased or commissioned by parents for their own children. Therefore, the term “salesman’s sample” or “cabinetmaker’s sample” is a misnomer. We are fortunate, indeed, that these exquisite examples of small furniture have survived.

Yesterday’s Jewels
A gift of lustreware brings sparkle to the Village collection

I
expensive iridescence – this stunning combination of beauty and affordability made lustreware pottery widely popular with American consumers in the early 1800s, mesmerizing the middle class with its sensibly priced splendor.

An impressive collection of lustreware from the first half of the 19th century is currently on display through May 16 in the Old Sturbridge Village Visitor Center, the gift of long-time lustreware collectors Robert Sharrer and Tom Russell of Woodbridge, Connecticut.

The ancient technique of applying a thin metallic overglaze finish to pottery or porcelain gained renewed popularity in the 1800s thanks to pottery makers in the Staffordshire, Leeds and Yorkshire areas of England, who exported their wares to the American market.

First developed by Islamic potters in the 9th century, the technique was also popular in Italy and Spain in the 14th century. Applying a copper glaze to clay produced a sheen similar to a rich, lustrous gold. When platinum was used in the glaze, a mirror-like surface resulted, giving the appearance of costly silver.

Creams pitchers and tea sets were the most common forms of lustreware. Large pitchers with transfer-printed commemorative scenes or sayings were popular. A piece from the OSV display carries this nautical verse: From Rocks and Sands/ And Every Ill/ May God Preserve/ The Sailor Still.

Lustreware plaques, many with religious sayings, were hung on walls as spiritual reminders and decorations.

Just like today, people in the 19th century wanted to treat themselves to something new and special. Something as simple as a lustre pitcher or plaque adorning one’s parlor lent an element of grace and refinement, and a measured glint of pride.

“Let the wealthy and great
Ball in splendor and state,
I envy them not I declare it,
I eat my own Lamb
My own chicken and Ham,
I shave my own face and I wear it!
I have launs, I have bowes
I have fruites, I have Flowers,
The lark is my morning damore.
So my jelly boys now
Here’s God speed the plough,
Long life and success to the farmer.”

A poem from a lustreware pitcher

Clockwise from top left: This exquisite mahogany and tiger maple chest of drawers (circa 1835) seems massive until seen to scale with OSV Exhibit Specialist Bruce Craven; doll cradle circa 1825; child’s Windsor chair, circa 1830; child’s empire-style chest of drawers, circa 1835.

Apoem from alustreware pitcher
Paint historian Brian Powell used polarized light microscopy to determine the precise paint color used in the 1820s. Results showed that the woodwork had gone through several layers of paint in various shades of green. The second layer—a bright green with a clear glaze—will be reproduced to reflect the 1820s aesthetic.

“The space will be more colorful and vibrant than before, reflecting new research on early decorative techniques,” says Ed Hood, vice president for museum programs at OSV. “Curators today are more willing to recreate the glossy finishes of the early 19th century, and visitors are often surprised to see just how bold and bright the original colors were.”

The new wallpaper is a reproduction based on a fragment found in the OSV collection. The paper was originally found in a home in Sutton, Massachusetts, built in 1794 by Lazarus LeBaron. The pattern, called “Arabesque Pigeons,” is an example of an American-made paper based upon a well-known French pattern. Old Sturbridge Village commissioned Adelphi Paper Hangings of Sharon Springs, New York, to reproduce the paper using an historically accurate block printed process. The company has also done work for OSV in the past, as well as for the Smithsonian Institution and the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

Printed wallpaper for interior decoration can be traced back as far as the 15th century in Europe, and came into high fashion in the 18th century, with surprisingly bold, vibrant colors and intricate designs.

For the floor, a painted “oil” cloth is being custom-made, based upon fragments of a circa 1780 block-printed floor cloth documented by Davis. “Floor cloths were a practical choice for homeowners of the period because they are quite durable and could be easily washed and repainted as needed,” Davis says.

For the stairs, a hand-woven wool carpet runner was woven by noted textile historian Rabbit Goody, based on a Venetian strip runner from the OSV collection dating to 1800–1840. Goody has provided textiles for historic sites like Mount Vernon, and she created dress and shawl fabrics for Abigail Adams as portrayed in the HBO miniseries “John Adams.”

The Salem Towne House, which was moved to OSV in 1952, was built in Chatham, Massachusetts, in 1796 by a skilled country builder using illustrations from the 1792 American edition of William Pain’s Practical Builder, a guidebook of designs for English carpenters.

The hipped-roof house, with its elegant doorway, windows, moldings and careful architectural detailing, is typical of 18th-century rural opulence. Soon, the foyer will again reflect the tastes of its well-to-do original owners.

The foyer of the fanciest house in the Village is getting a facelift. After millions of footsteps over the years, it’s no surprise that the entry hall needed a bit of work. The project is being funded by a generous donation from Gertrude Wells Brennan, a descendant of OSV founder J. Cheney Wells.

Based on meticulous research, the renovation will include a new floor covering, stair runner, reproduction wallpaper and new paint. Consulting conservator and former OSV crafts-person Marylou Davis, of Woodstock, Connecticut, is coordinating state-of-the-art techniques to ensure historical accuracy.

A. Interpreter Clarence Burley and visitors in the old Towne House foyer.
B. The “new” OSV wallpaper, based on a 1794 pattern called “Arabesque Pigeons.”
C. Custom-painted floor cloth based on a 1780 block print.
D. Hand-woven carpet runner based on one in the OSV collection circa 1800–1840.
E. An Adelphi Paper Hangings artist paints the OSV pattern, but in a different color scheme.

Facing photo and painting photo: Jason Frank Rothenberg; as seen in the Sept. 2009 issue of Martha Stewart Living® magazine
or children, school vacation always passes by in a flash. For parents, it can be an endless struggle to keep kids from spending too much time on computers, television, cell phones and video games.

The search for stimulating alternatives can be daunting. To help, Old Sturbridge Village has expanded its day camp offerings to include new topics and more flexible schedules. Parents can now choose from one-day, two-day or five-day sessions in traditional Discovery Camps, and new Exploration Camps during April school vacation weeks and during summer vacation.

In five-day Discovery Camp, children ages 6–17 dress in period costumes and take on the roles of real Sturbridge residents in the 1830s. They learn to cook over the open hearth, make old-fashioned crafts, learn 19th-century dances, tour the Village and interact with historians in costume. New this year is “Militia Camp,” where kids learn militia customs and traditions and enjoy camping, cooking and fife music.

The new OSV Exploration Camp offers two- and five-day non-costumed adventures for children 6–14, including “I Dig History” sessions focusing on archaeology. Campers will learn the skills of an archaeologist and unearth “artifacts” at a representational dig site.

Add-on features include box lunches, as well as morning and afternoon extended day care. OSV Members get price discounts on each camp session, and those who “refer a friend” get an additional 10 percent savings.

OSV Offers More Day Camp Choices

A history lesson kids never forget!

What can you learn from a broken plate?

Find out at “I Dig History”

“...the absolute highlight of the summer...”

“The program has gotten better and better each year.”

“A sense of history that extends beyond the boring battle and treaty dates that my daughter has to learn at school...”

“...they ALWAYS come home with stories.”

“I have never seen her so animated as she is when she talks about her experiences at camp.”

“...a WONDERFUL experience...”

“Alexander loves the OSV Camp, and it is the first activity we plan every summer.”

“It has given her such a rich experience and fostered a true love for OSV. It has helped her develop a deep respect for history.”

“Good old-fashioned fun.”

For those who want to enjoy an extended adventure at the museum, Old Sturbridge Village has just introduced Hop into History Overnights —“sleepovers” for ages 6–12, especially designed for scouts, schools and other youth groups from 36 up to 100 participants.

The program includes two-day museum admission and an overnight experience in the Museum Education building from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 a.m. with an evening snack, continental breakfast and a range of hands-on studios and activities.

The search for stimulating alternatives can be daunting. To help, Old Sturbridge Village has expanded its day camp offerings to include new topics and more flexible schedules. Parents can now choose from one-day, two-day or five-day sessions in traditional Discovery Camps, and new Exploration Camps during April school vacation weeks and during summer vacation.

In five-day Discovery Camp, children ages 6–17 dress in period costumes and take on the roles of real Sturbridge residents in the 1830s. They learn to cook over the open hearth, make old-fashioned crafts, learn 19th-century dances, tour the Village and interact with historians in costume. New this year is “Militia Camp,” where kids learn militia customs and traditions and enjoy camping, cooking and fife music.

The new OSV Exploration Camp offers two- and five-day non-costumed adventures for children 6–14, including “I Dig History” sessions focusing on archaeology. Campers will learn the skills of an archaeologist and unearth “artifacts” at a representational dig site.

Add-on features include box lunches, as well as morning and afternoon extended day care. OSV Members get price discounts on each camp session, and those who “refer a friend” get an additional 10 percent savings.

OSV Offers More Day Camp Choices

A history lesson kids never forget!

What can you learn from a broken plate?

Find out at “I Dig History”

“...the absolute highlight of the summer...”

“The program has gotten better and better each year.”

“A sense of history that extends beyond the boring battle and treaty dates that my daughter has to learn at school...”

“...they ALWAYS come home with stories.”

“I have never seen her so animated as she is when she talks about her experiences at camp.”

“...a WONDERFUL experience...”

“Alexander loves the OSV Camp, and it is the first activity we plan every summer.”

“It has given her such a rich experience and fostered a true love for OSV. It has helped her develop a deep respect for history.”

“Good old-fashioned fun.”

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Studies may include hearth cooking, decorative arts, weaving, working with an historic printing press and more. Games include period indoor and outdoor games (weather permitting), such as Hoops, Graces, Battledore & Shuttlecock, Jacob’s Ladder, Nuns-Moons-Morris, and Fox and Geese.

Groups of 36 or more can request an “exclusive sleepover”; those with fewer than the 36-person minimum can join with other groups interested in an overnight. Upcoming open registration dates for small groups are April 17, May 1 and May 22.

register at www.osv.org or call 1-800-733-1830.

For details and online registration for all OSV Camps, go to www.osv.org or call 1-800-733-1830.

OSV SPRING 2010

A Night at the Museum

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register at www.osv.org or call 1-800-733-1830.
In the past a blacksmith’s work was familiar to every villager, and today we still use phrases that began in the blacksmith’s shop.

Strike While the Iron is Hot

Act quickly before the opportunity is lost

Too Many Irons in the Fire

Doing too many things at once

osv spring 2010

Forging a Lasting Bond: Four generations of Edlin family blacksmiths

Not many people today can claim a blacksmith in even one generation of their family tree, let alone four. But the Edlin family of Hubbardston, Massachusetts, isn’t your ordinary family. Working with metal is a passion they’ve passed down through at least four generations to Eli Edlin, now an intern in the Old Sturbridge Village blacksmith shop.

Eli’s father, Fred Edlin, traces his blacksmithing heritage to his father, Charlie, now 94, and also to his late grandfather, Swedish immigrant Charles Edlin, who began blacksmithing in Worcester, Mass., in the 1880s. Charles later founded Edlin & Son Blacksmithing in the city, which Fred still runs today with part-time help from sons Eli, 19, and Tyler, 26, and daughter Jenny, 22 — blacksmiths all.

Speaking no English, nine-year-old Charles Edlin stepped off the boat from Sweden in 1880 with a note pinned to his shirt asking for help getting to Worcester, which at the time was Massachusetts’ metalworking mecca.

“Back then, there were 11 blacksmiths on Commercial Street alone,” recalls Charlie, who began working in the family shop for $5 a week at the height of the Great Depression in 1934.

“Worcester had a machine shop on every corner, ten to twelve wire mills, a dozen wooden mills and textile shops, and three shoe manufacturers. It was a true industrial center. In those days, people used to say, ‘If you can’t get a job in Worcester, you can’t get a job anywhere.’”

In the Edlin shop today, Fred still uses some of the same equipment his father and grandfather used more than 70 years ago. Although most of the shop’s work now is industrial machining, welding and repair work, Fred still loves the craftsmanship of traditional blacksmithing.

“What fascinates me are the historical aspects of the trade,” says Fred, who joined Old Sturbridge Village almost 40 years ago. “I love making anything found in late 18th- and early 19th-century homes – latches, cranes, andirons and all the cooking stuff. Just give me a good old 18th-century boot scraper, let me copy it, and I’m happy.”

As for Eli, he’s learning a lot at the OSV forge under the direction of interpreter Rob Lyon – making nails and hooks, working the bellows and wielding the sledgehammer as a “striker” for the other blacksmiths.

Working a piece of metal with a striker as a two-man team helps the work go much faster. “You have to be quick or the metal will cool,” Eli notes. “Once the metal cools to a dull red color, you really can’t work it. Having a striker also helps with pieces that are too large for the smith to hold and work by himself.”

A senior at Quabbin Regional High School, Eli finished coursework early, allowing him to spend a semester as an OSV intern. “My friends think it’s neat, but they’re jealous that I’m out of school doing something I enjoy every day.”

As for hammering hot metal in a high-collared shirt, waistcoat and kerchief, Eli finds the fashion of the day surprisingly comfortable, although bending over in the high-waisted trousers took some getting used to. “The corduroys are great, and I really love the loose-fitting shirt.”

Recently, Eli spent a day mastering the making of period nails, not an easy task for an apprentice. “At the end of the day, all my nails were usable, but not perfect – except one. I made one perfect nail – and it’s a perfect memento of my internship at OSV.”
Hands-on help for the Village

Country Bank has been a supporter of Old Sturbridge Village for three decades, and while the bank truly does give hands-on help to Old Sturbridge Village and its visitors, it doesn’t end with just giving a check.

Paul Scully, president and CEO of Country Bank, his staff, and others go above and beyond to help the event succeed. They put up signs, sell tickets and even dress in scary costumes to add to the spooky spirit of the event. “Country Bank’s staff definitely isn’t afraid to get their hands dirty – every year they help us carve more than 1,000 jack-o’-lanterns to illuminate the Village,” notes Aaron McGarry, OSV director of corporate development. “We simply (couldn’t) do it without them.”

Country Bank’s roots go back almost to the time period portrayed by Old Sturbridge Village. Founded in 1850, Country Bank is now one of the largest community banks in the United States, with more than $1 billion in assets. Headquartered in Ware, Massachusetts, the bank has 14 branches, and serves the towns of Brimfield, Belchertown, Charlton, Leicester, Ludlow, Palmer, Paxton, West Brookfield and Williamstown and surrounding communities.

For Old Sturbridge Village President and CEO Jim Donahue, having Country Bank on board is a boon for three reasons: “They understand finances, they understand the community and after more than 30 years of support, they understand the Village. We couldn’t ask for a better partner.”

Country Bank President and CEO Paul Scully

A

ld Sturbridge Members offer us that the best part of being a Member is sharing their enjoyment of the Village with others who feel the same way. Now, thanks to technology, Members can connect with other OSV supporters 24/7.

The new meeting place is the Old Sturbridge Village Facebook fan page. For many, the Facebook page is the quickest way to get updates and reminders about what’s happening at the Village – and the best way to talk to and get tips from other Members.

The OSV Facebook page was started by Boston-area visitor Jen Deaderick, who enjoyed field trips to OSV as a child. “The page was born out of a chance chat with a computer student I was teaching at the New England Institute of Art,” Deaderick recalls. “We both had fond memories of OSV. Facebook had just started up their website – and it was the perfect way to share those memories.”

It’s FREE!

To participate, all you need is an active Facebook account.

To go to our OSV Facebook page: www.facebook.com/OSV

Become a Fan

BECOME A FAN.
or your very first trip together as a married couple, nothing can compare with a romantic ride in a classic carriage. That’s why Old Sturbridge Village has enhanced its wedding “fleet” with the acquisition of two stylish “vis-à-vis” carriages—one black and one white. The name comes from the French, meaning “face-to-face,” because the carriages have two facing seats.

Couples can opt for a spin around the Common on the way to their reception at either the Bullard or Oliver Wight Taverns, or they can choose a more leisurely—and romantic—trip through the OSV countryside to savor the first few minutes of their future together.

Although not historical reproductions, the two carriages are similar to those made by Amish carriage makers and used commercially in downtown settings like Boston’s Faneuil Hall area and New York’s Central Park. The carriages have convertible tops and leaf spring suspensions. (Nineteenth-century models had leather strap suspensions similar to the OSV stagecoach.)

Just as the romance of a carriage ride endures even in today’s automotive age, so do many terms related to horse-drawn conveyances. Consider: cabriolet gave us the term “cab,” and coupe, phaeton, brougham and landau were all carriage names later adopted by the automotive industry.

“A Real “Sweet” Ride…
Carriage acquisitions enhance OSV wedding experience

“Love and marriage, love and marriage
Go together like a horse and carriage.”
For times and details on all upcoming events at OSV, please call 1-800-SEE-1830 or visit www.osv.org.

Independence Day
Evening Fireworks
Celebrate America’s birthday in grand 1830s style; march in the citizen’s parade, listen to fife and drum music, enjoy a picnic on the Common and a reading of the Declaration of Independence. The Village re-opens at 6 p.m. for more games, music and magic, capped off by the region’s most spectacular fireworks display.

Music & Art Weekend
June 19–20
Enjoy the sounds and sights of 1830s music and dance. Watch artists at work, have your silhouette made, learn a new song or dance and much more.

Evening at the Kiln – June 19
See the massive 24 foot tall OSV brick kiln light up the sky as the potters fire a year’s worth of redware pottery.

Wool Days at OSV
Memorial Day Weekend, May 29–31
See the Village sheep get their annual “haircuts,” and see how the wool is processed, washed, sheared, scoured, carded, dyed, spinning and weaving. Help OSV kick off the summer with 1830s English and French & English games of war.

Take a Closer Look
May 8 – Drummers’ Call
June 12 – Going to Town
Go behind the scenes with a Village expert during these monthly Members-only programs. Learn about martial music in May, and in June learn about artifacts that inspired renovations to the Towne House entry.

Mother’s Day
May 9
Treat mom to a special Mother’s Day Brunch at the Oliver Wight Tavern, followed by a visit to the Village — all moms get FREE admission.

School Vacation Weeks
April 17–25
Come see the newborn spring lambs and keep the kids busy with hands-on activities, performances and entertainment. Celebrate Patriots Day, April 19, with a musket-firing demo and drill with the Sturbridge militia.

Wool Days at OSV
Montreal Day Weekend, May 29–31
See the Village sheep get their annual “haircuts,” and see how the wool is processed, washed, sheared, scoured, carded, dyed, spinning and weaving. Help OSV kick off the summer with 1830s English and French & English games of war.

Dear Mother
visit OSV because

learn, hike, dance, sniff, feel, remember, laugh, eat, imagine...

it’s Fun

Museum Hours
Open year-round, hours vary seasonally

April 3 through October 29
Open Daily 9:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.

October 30 through November 30
Open Wednesday - Sunday
9:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.

December 1 - 19, Evenings only
Friday - Sunday, 4:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Gift Shop Open Daily:
Mon. - Thurs., 10 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Fri. - Sun., 10 a.m. - 9:30 p.m.

Dec. 20 - 25, Museum closed
Gift Shop open 10 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Closed Christmas Day, Dec. 25

Dec. 26 - Jan. 2
Museum open daily, 9:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Jan. 3 - April 1, 2011
Open Wed. - Sun., 9:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Exceptions:
Open Mon., Jan. 17 (holiday)
Open. Feb. 21 - 22 (school vacation)
April 2, 2011: Summer hours begin
Museum open daily 9:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.

1.800.SEE.1830
www.osv.org