Visitor

Tomato History
The Furniture of Nathan Lombard
Weddings at OSV
Historic Fences

Spring Cleaning 1830s-Style
Antique Cars and Carriages
Umbrellas!
Tom Brokaw Visits OSV
Planning a Strategy for the Future
A message from President and CEO Jim Donahue

Under Donna’s leadership, our Board of Trustees has actively been working on a strategic plan that will help us to grow and improve our programs for interpretation, education, and collections. In the planning meetings, Trustees met with staff members from each department to hear their hopes and dreams for the future. Several key principles are emerging, among them:

- Costumed interpreters are essential to the museum’s mission, and we must work hard to expand this staff in the future.
- Our collection has tremendous educational value, and we need to increase the number of artifacts on display in our galleries and throughout the Village.
- The museum’s education programs creatively inspire young minds to love history, and we should think more globally to reach students from near and far.

With help from our management team, the Board is setting measurable objectives for expanding our staff, bringing more of the collection out of storage and increasing the number of schools that participate in the museum’s education programs. The Board is also determined to ensure that those who love working at the Village and who bring history to life for our daily visitors can afford to do so by receiving market-rate wages.

Your help and support have been critical to the museum during the five years that I have been president. Together, we have accomplished a great deal. As we prepare to take the Village—strongly and boldly—into the future, I hope that we can count on you for your continued partnership—as a Member, a supporter and a friend.

President and CEO
Jim Donahue
his Old Sturbridge Village will celebrate the life of local cabinetmaker Nathan Lombard (1777–1847) with an exhibit, Delightfully Designed—The Furniture and Life of Nathan Lombard, opening October 19. The Village is one of 11 institutions that are part of Four Centuries of Massachusetts Furniture, a year-long collaborative project to celebrate furniture making through exhibits and programming. Lombard’s story is an important one for OSV to tell; the acclaimed cabinetmaker spent his life in this region. He was born in Brimfield in 1777, married in Sturbridge in 1802, and settled to Sutton in 1805. Our exhibit will represent the largest reunion of Nathan Lombard’s furniture since it left his workshop in the early 1800s. Many of these pieces are from private collections and are rarely on public view. Others are on loan from museums and will travel great distances to be part of the festivities.

Born a farmer’s son, Lombard was in some ways, a very “ordinary” man—but his furniture is anything but ordinary. Lombard’s mastery of intricate inlay—the embedding of thin wood veneers into a solid surface—makes him stand out among his peers.

Charismatic eagles, elaborate vines, and floral motifs decorate his pieces. Veins on leaves and petals on flowers are executed with exquisite detail. Carved, curving details seem effortlessly sculpted. Even as a curator, I admit to often questioning “how did he do that?” when I stand before a piece of Lombard furniture.

Lombard also had a refined eye for proportion and balance. One only need look at the seven-foot-tall desk-with-bookcase owned by the Winterthur Museum, with its carved top pediment and imposing presence, to realize that Lombard’s level of craftsmanship was unlike most of his contemporaries in rural Massachusetts. This stunning piece, on loan to us from Winterthur, will be a highlight of OSV’s exhibit.

Happily, Old Sturbridge Village recently acquired two important pieces of furniture crafted by Nathan Lombard—a chest of drawers and a rare drop-leaf table—and we will unveil them at this fall’s exhibit. The purchase was made possible thanks to the support of the OSV Board of Trustees and financial contributions from a dozen friends of the Village.

OSV is also fortunate to own numerous artifacts that relate to Lombard and the intermingling of his business and family life. One example is the 1826 friendship album of Brimfield resident Harriot Janes that contains entries from many of Lombard’s pieces and cousins, including Mary Allen, daughter of Ezra Allen.
Americans today love tomatoes. From apartment dwellers to home owners, from seasoned gardeners to beginners, nearly everyone grows them. But Old Sturbridge Village gardeners will tell you that in the 1830s tomatoes were new and unfamiliar to many New Englanders, who did not care for them at all!

People found the acid taste and smell of tomatoes to be disagreeable, and they were uncertain how to prepare them. Susan Blunt shares this childhood recollection of what was apparently common public opinion regarding the tomato: “It was three years before we could eat one. Mother prepared them in different ways... she made a pie which we could not eat, so she gave it to the pigs, and they refused to eat it; we decided they were good for nothing... the vines would stain and smell disagreeably.” —The Reminiscences of Susan Blunt, Manchester Historical Society, Manchester, NH (1913)

Some even questioned the tomato’s healthfulness. William A. Alcott wrote in 1838: “No one, it is believed, regards it as very nutritious; and it belongs, like the mushroom and the potato, to a family of plants, some of the members of which are extremely poisonous. Some people are even injured, more or less, by the acid of the tomato.” —The Young Housekeeper, or Thoughts on Food and Cookery, Boston

Why was the tomato so slow to catch on in New England? One reason is that it belongs to the Solanaceae plant family, which includes the highly toxic deadly Nightshade—adequate grounds for suspicion! And although tomatoes were common in the diets of the French, Italians and Spanish, they were not part of traditional English/American foodways in the way that potatoes already were—perhaps because potatoes were easy to grow in cool climates.

Cultivating tomatoes was difficult for the average 19th-century New England gardener; unlike peas or carrots, tomato seeds could not be started in the ground with the guarantee of a harvest. Today we take for granted that tomato transplants are available at every nursery, grocery store, or big-box chain in time for Memorial Day planting. If that doesn’t suit our fancy, we can, with the aid of supplemental light and bottom heat, grow our own seedlings. In the 1830s, unless you were equipped with a hot bed, getting a jump start on the growing season was challenging. Dim light next to the warm fireplace or a bright but chilly windowsill were not the best options for producing healthy plants.

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So, how did the tomato finally catch on to become today’s number one homegrown vegetable? It was publicized as a medicine! “Extract of Tomato” was a common ingredient in early 19th-century patent medicines, and by the 1830s tomato pills were recommended to treat nearly every malady known to man. Physicians of the day even endorsed tomatoes as a preferable substitute for calomel, a purgative made of mercury that was popular at the time. To reflect this part of the tomato’s history, the OSV Herb Garden includes the tomato among the medicinal plants.

As people became more acquainted with the tomato, it began to gain admiration. In 1847 author Robert Buist observed, “There is no vegetable in the catalogue that has obtained such popularity in so short a period... In 1828-9 it was almost detested; in ten years more every variety of pill and panacea was ‘extract of Tomato’... It is on every table from July to October... it is brought to the table in an infinite variety of forms.” —The Family Kitchen Gardener.

In The Tomato in America, author Andrew E. Smith wrote, “No other fruit or vegetable could boast such a wide array of uses,” noting that tomatoes were made into sauces, soups, salads, side dishes, ketchups, relishes, pastries, pies, tarts, marmalades, jams, jellies, desserts, and other sweets.

Today, tomato-based salsa is one of the fastest growing food products, surpassing even tomato ketchup thanks to the culinary influence of Hispanic immigrants. And Smith predicts that more influences are sure to come from other tomato-eating cultures: “The Cinderella-like, rags-to-riches story of the tomato in America has not ended.”

By Roberta McQuaid, Staff Horticulturist

OSV Tomato Giveaway
Saturday, May 18, 11:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.
Mark your calendars for the Fourth Annual Old Sturbridge Village Heirloom Tomato Giveaway and Plant Sale, Saturday, OSV visitors will receive free heirloom tomato plants, cultivated at the Village (one per family while supplies last). Learn more about the rich history of this popular fruit with special programs throughout the day.
Details: www.osv.org; 800-SEE-1830.
with its classic Center Meetinghouse, antique homes, herbloom gardens, and 200 acres of beautiful countryside, Old Sturbridge Village is an increasingly popular setting for couples who want a romantic and memorable place to say “I do.” Last year, the Village hosted 38 weddings, each one unique in its own way. As gifts for her bridesmaids, one bride ordered customized Village-made redware plates. Another couple chose to have a bonfire on the Common—complete with a period musician…and s’mores!

“Couples love to envision the Village as their own,” notes Alexis Conte, OSV sales director. “And, that’s exactly what we ask them to do. There’s so much versatility on the property—the gardens, barns, meetinghouse, and taverns all allow our couples to truly create their own perfect day. They’re looking for something different, and they seek out the Village because we offer so much more than traditional hotel and restaurant venues.”

Popular spots for outdoor ceremonies at the Village include the Herb Garden and the Salem Towne House ornamental garden as well as the Common. Indoor ceremonies are held in the Center Meetinghouse, Parsonage Barn, and Bullard Tavern. Couples may choose to have their dinner reception in the Bullard or Oliver Wight Tavern.

For wedding photos, couples take full advantage of the many picturesque settings at the Village. And, to savor the first few moments of their future together, many choose to take a romantic horse-drawn carriage ride through the Village. The horse-drawn carryall is also used to transport guests to and from the festivities within the Village.

Charlene Price and her husband, Cory, had a perfect day for their October 2012 wedding at the Village, and they exchanged vows in front of the large stone fireplace at the Bullard Tavern. “We chose OSV for its warmth, beauty, natural simplicity, and intimate atmosphere,” Price notes. “Picking a venue like OSV helps because it offers multiple options for a ceremony and reception. Having everything all in one place puts any bride at ease—especially those planning their weddings from out of state.”

Realizing the needs of today’s couples, OSV offers four all-inclusive wedding packages and also provides a preferred vendor list to make planning even easier. The reopening of the Inn at Old Sturbridge Village, complete with shuttle transportation for wedding guests, will also be an added benefit. From the candlelit pathways to the sounds of the antique organ, Old Sturbridge Village is here to help today’s couples create a day they will remember for years to come!
he wooden and stone fences that border the pastures and edge the front yards of houses in Old Sturbridge Village are much more than picturesque artifacts. They’re rich sources of information about history, geography, and agricultural practices. You also can learn a little about 19th-century sociology by observing the various styles of fences here.

Fences were important to villages and farm communities, as they delineated property lines and prevented livestock from munching on neighbors’ crops, according to Ed Hood, OSV vice president. He notes that the Village’s reconstruction of a stone-walled Town Pound is typical of those built in agricultural communities in the mid-19th century. Stray animals were held and cared for until they were claimed by their owners, who had to pay a fine.

Good Fences
Picturesque — and practical
By Margaret LeRoux

You can see authentically reconstructed post-and-rail fencing at the Freeman Farm.

By the time much of the land was cleared, wood was at a premium; New England farmers couldn’t afford to waste it on fencing. The rocky soil of the region offered an abundant source of alternative material; in fact, stones in the field were a continual source of aggravation. Farmers dumped them into piles and topped the fieldstones with rails mounted on stone supports to fence their pastures.

Why the need for the wood rails? At the time, Massachusetts law required that fences be at least four feet high “and in good repair.” Most remnants of stone fences still standing today are only three feet high or less, as the wooden toppers have long since rotted away. Visitors to OSV can see a relic stone fence on the hillside as they stroll the woodland walk. This fence once delineated the border of a pasture.

Building stone fences required brute strength and quite often the assistance of livestock to haul boulders from the field to the fence line. It was frequently an early spring project, as the frozen ground made the process easier. Farmers hitched a team of oxen to a wooden sledge, rocks were rolled onto it and the animals pulled the stone boat from the center to the field’s edge. This process is seasonally re-enacted with a recreated stone boat and the village’s pair of oxen.

Farmers tossed their stones into piles. Some, however, were meticulous about the placement of the rocks. Laying them “one over two and two over one” was the standard for the well-built stone fence. The two styles also describe the types of stone fence remnants found throughout New England: thrown and laid.

The appearance of a farm’s fence—at least the part visible from the road—became important as the “improvement movement” took hold in the mid-19th century, promoting efficiency and sound agricultural practices.

As towns and villages grew prosperous, decorative fencing began to appear. A picket fence like the one bordering the kitchen garden at the Freeman Farm and the elaborate lattice-style fence in front of the Salem town house were status symbols in their day. Fencing pastures dramatically changed with the invention of barbed wire. Often described as the “thorny fence,” it provided farmers a faster and more durable way to contain their livestock. Farmers welcomed the advance; they didn’t mourn the aesthetic loss.

Hood says 19th-century farmers would probably be perplexed by the interest today in preserving and recreating their fencing techniques. “They didn’t build fences to create picturesque landscapes,” he said. “They simply built fences with whatever material was available at the time.”
Spring Cleaning
Never more necessary than in early New England!
By Ann Lindblad

When you think about “spring cleaning,” consider what farm wives faced in the early 19th century. By the time spring arrived in early New England, most houses were really dirty. As author Old Sturbridge Village Trustee Jane Nylander notes in Our Own Song Fireside, soot covered almost every surface, the result of constant fires in the hearth and evenings lit by candlelight. Floors and carpets were often badly stained—first by dirt tracked in with winter ice and snow and then by mud tracked in during the spring thaw. Carrying vast amounts of firewood inside brought with it a mess of bark and wood chips, and fireplace downdrafts scattered ashes around the room.

Winter vegetables were beginning to rot in the root cellar, and winter woolens wore for weeks without washings began to smell a bit “ripe.” The winter’s accumulation of fat had to be made into soap before it turned rancid and foul smelling. Laundering clothes inside and drying them outside or in the kitchen during freezing weather was a troublesome task, and by spring the household sheets, shirts, and linens were badly yellowed. No wonder the author of one advice book noted that “spring is particularly the time for house cleaning and bleaching linen.”

Many women in early New England equated cleanliness with moral purity, but the daily activities of a large household at a time when few people had running water made it difficult to keep up. As Nylander observes, “Strong odors were generated by the fires and cooking at the fireplace, processing milk and making cheese in the buttery, burning tallow candles, using chamber pots, piling dirty laundry in baskets, and warm water; some people hung infants’ diapers to dry on kitchen clotheslines without washing them; and no one used deodorant.”

No matter how daunting the task seems to us today, the stalwart women of early New England seemed up to the challenge, using techniques that can seem a bit strange to us today. Those well-used kitchen floors, usually unfinished, were scoured with sand, and afterward a thin layer of clean sand was sometimes found beneath the floorboards.

As part of spring cleaning, expensive upholstery was often slip-covered to protect it from dirt and perspiration.

Battling Bugs
Doing battle with insects was a constant concern in early households when the weather warmed. Few households had window screens before the mid-1800s, and both barnyards and carriage houses attracted flies. “Living near barnyard animals and their manure would increase the amount of bugs a housewife had to deal with,” Nylander explains.

The Family Receipts book made the problem sound like war, and predicted after readers used its remedies, “the enemy will be found slain in heaps, bying by hundreds, and fifties, before the following morning.” Flies were so pervasive that in 1826 The New England Farmer proposed introducing bats into kitchens on purpose to devour the flies!

Flies “Cold green tea very strong, and sweetened with brown sugar will attract the flies and destroy them.”

— The Housebook, 1843

Cockroaches “Let every cockroach found on the stairs be immediately killed; another remedy for cock-maches is to boil the roots of the pokeberry plant till quite dissolved in the water, and then mix it with insolanes, and set it about in old saucers.”

— The Housebook, 1843

Sweeping “Damp tea-leaves should always be used, whether in sweeping carpets or boards, as they lay the dust, which would otherwise fly over the furniture, and again settle on the floor.”

— Housekeepers Book, 1838

Ceilings and Walls “Wrap old towels round the bristles of the broom and sweep carefully and lightly the ceiling and paper; then with a flannel or sponge and soap and water wash all the paint well, and as fast as one person wets, let another follow with linen rags, and wipe the paint perfectly dry.”

— Housekeepers Book, 1838

Dusting “Cotton more readily picks up the dust than pure linen. But an old silk handkerchief is the best of all dusters.”

— Housekeepers Book, 1838

Moths “Brush all your woodens, and pack them away in a dark place covered with linen. Pepper, red cedar chips, tobacco—indeed almost any strong spicy smell—is good to keep moths out of your chests and drawers. But nothing is so good as camphor.”

— The American Fugal Housewife, 1833

Mosquitoes “Take a few hot coals in a shovel or chaffing dish, and burn some brown sugar in your bedrooms and parlors, and you effectively destroy the musquetoe for the night.”

— New England Farmer, 1831

Flies go in the angled opening at the left, reassured by light coming through the triangular glass window. A bag is tied over the chimney at the top to catch the critters as they try to escape.
Old Sturbridge Village celebrates two forms of antique transportation with an array of vintage vehicles, starting with the museum’s Antique Car Rally on Saturday, June 1, followed by its Antique Horse-Drawn Carriage Rally on Sunday, June 2. Each rally is set for 11:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m., and the highlight of both events will be a grand procession of the antique vehicles (cars at 3:30 p.m. on Saturday; carriages at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday).

The vehicles will parade around the OSV Common, through the countryside, and over the Village’s historic covered bridge. Nearly 100 antique cars and carriages will be on display during the weekend. Old Sturbridge Village offers free second-day admission within 10 days, so visitors who pay to attend the Antique Car Rally may attend the Antique Carriage Rally for free. For more information, call 800-SEE-1830 or visit www.osv.org.

See a two-minute video of the OSV Antique Carriage Rally. Scan this code with your mobile device to watch the video.
Indeed, the word umbrella literally means “a little shade”.

Visitors are sometimes surprised to see our costumed staff using umbrellas to ward off spring rain. When one sees something very familiar and thus modern-looking in an otherwise alien world, that thing seems out of place; it must somehow be wrong. But umbrellas were as right as rain in the 1830s! Indeed, umbrellas go back to at least 1200 BC, when they were carried by Egyptian nobles as badges of rank and as protection from the sun. Throughout the ancient and medieval worlds, they protected pagan emperors, popes, kings, queens, and other important personages.

Umbrellas began to become fashionable for the less exalted in the 1600s and 1700s, first in continental Europe, and then in England and America. Initially they attracted the usual disparaging commentary that “new” fashion trifles generally incur. Philadelphia Edward Shippen imported an umbrella to America in 1738. Two years later a lady in Windsor, Connecticut, also began sporting one from the West Indies. Newspaper advertisements for umbrellas appear in Boston by 1762. In 1768 wood-turner Isaac Greenwood advertised a variety of umbrellas in a range of prices. He even offered parts and patterns for those “whose Ingenuity, Leisure and Economy leads them to make their own...” At least two other Bostonians also advertised both umbrellas and “do-it-yourself-kits” that year.

Umbrellas can shield the user from sun or rain (think beach umbrella). Along with parasols, they protected fair skin from the sun to maintain the beautiful pale complexion so desired throughout the 19th century. Indeed, the word umbrella literally means “a little shade” (from the Italian diminutive of the Latin word for shade, umbra). Parasol also ultimately comes from Latin, by way of French; parapet is to ward off, and jofei (soll) means sun.) Initially the two words were used interchangeably. Only in the late 1700s did umbrellas come to be more associated with rain protection and parasols with warding off the sun.

By the 1790s umbrellas were losing their association with elite fashion and effeminacy. All classes carried them in the 19th century, although how universal their use was is impossible to say. A good number of them appear in the probate records of 1830s Sturbridge, however, ranging in value from 20 cents to 84 cents. Storekeeper Asa Knight sold a new one in October 1836 for an even dollar...about a day’s pay for a working man.

Better umbrellas were covered with silk and cheaper ones with linen or cotton. These fabrics were sometimes oiled to increase their water-repellency. The frames were whalebone, or cane in the cheapest models, with brass tips. By the 1830s many incorporated imported English steel stretchers and domestic wire, both of which were sometimes varnished to look like more costly brass. Handles were wood, antler, ivory, or bone. Most had wooden shafts, although there were less popular models with patented telescoping tubular metal shafts. Then as now, umbrellas were somewhat delicate. In the less affluent America of 180 years ago, broken umbrellas were not just discarded. Several people made a business out of buying up old ones to repair and recover for resale. By the 1830s many were made throughout New England. Small-scale shops and factories existed in Worcester, Northampton, and other Massachusetts towns. William S. Knowlton made them in Southbridge, just down the road from Sturbridge. Hingham and Boston were home to larger factories. The Hingham Umbrella and Parasol Manufactory, for example, produced 16,000 units in 1832. Its 10 male employees were paid a dollar a day, and its 15 female workers made half a dollar daily. Presumably the men assembled the handles and frames, while the ladies sewed the covers.

Umbrellas were not the sole protection from wet that people had in the 1830s. In a light rain, wool garments work fairly well. Greasing shoes can help them repel water, and last longer, too. Hats and bonnets, in all but a downpour, are in a sense, small umbrellas without handles! Hatters commonly stiffened felt hats with shellac, which also added to the natural water-repellency of the fibers. Some hats, especially popular with sailors, were made for foul weather with a covering of painted canvas. Finally, in the 1830s some garments were made waterproof with natural rubber from the Indies, especially Brazil (i.e., Indian rubber). In 1836 Asa Knight sold three “India rubber hats” and at least one pair of “India rubber shoes.” While not uncommon, rubber goods in the 1830s had some serious drawbacks. Besides being expensive, the natural rubber became hard and brittle in winter, and sticky soft in the summer. It was not until the 1840s that Charles Goodyear used sulfur and heat to make the stable “vulcanized” rubber with which we are familiar.
Tom Brokaw

Receives 2013 "Ken Burns Lifetime Achievement Award"

Brokaw's book, *The Greatest Generation*, is one of the most popular nonfiction books of the 20th century, and Burns told the audience, "I could not have made our film *The War* on the Second World War had Tom not written his book. People were not prepared to speak about it and were going to their graves with their stories, but suddenly they felt compelled to do it. I think he should be given a medal for helping to release this extraordinary energy, this outpouring of pure, personal history."

"Tom knows and he really cares about history—rare for most journalists today. He knows in his bones history's medicinal effect—that the search for meaning in seemingly distant past events actually heals the searcher and his audience," Burns said.

On the "Greatest Generation"

"The great war was won because America got involved. And the young men and women who responded to the call had had their formative years shaped by a Great Depression, a decade of deprivation, sacrifice and common cause. And when they came home from that war, there was a great idea awaiting them, the great idea of the G.I. Bill, and they took full advantage and it transformed our society and gave us the lives that we have today."

"The question that historians will ask is, 'Will this privileged place called America in the 21st century remember the lessons and the sacrifice of the 20th century?'"
P hilip Pettinelli thoroughly understands the role of a community institution. For the past 40 years, he has been associated with Southbridge Savings Bank; it’s where he started his career in banking as a teller in 1972, rising through the ranks to the presidency 20 years later. Under his leadership, the bank has been a strong supporter of charitable giving with a local focus. Southbridge Savings Bank has provided annual support to OSV for 40 years. “We are part of the fiber of the community,” Pettinelli said. “We feel a responsibility to support local groups; we care about organizations like the Village and the local hospital, and whether the Little League has baseball uniforms.” As he looks toward retirement—his successor will take over the bank leadership in May 2014—Pettinelli and his wife, Jeanine, plan on spending winters on the west coast of Florida. Plenty of golf and a few woodworking projects are in the future, he said. After 42 years of dealing with the rigor of the financial industry, “I’m looking forward to having to deal with tough decisions like where to go for lunch,” Pettinelli concluded.

If your company would like to support OSV through our corporate membership program, please call 508-347-0250 or e-mail hwelch@osv.org.

Donor Gifts: “The Lifeblood of the Village”

O ld Sturbridge Village Trustee John Kucharski has a clear vision for the Village’s fundraising future and, as chair of the Village’s Development Committee, he is putting it into action. Kucharski retired as chairman and CEO of the engineering firm EG&G, and now shares his fundraising expertise with the Village. As an engineer, he has a special interest in the Village time period. “A lot was happening in manufacturing, but it doesn’t get a lot of coverage in schools.” Since most donors give through the OSV Annual Fund, Kucharski has streamlined the process by trimming the number of Federated Society “giving circles,” moving up Annual Fund appeals, and starting a donor pledge system. Now, all Federated Society donors will become automatic OSV Members, and as in past, Federals are honored at celebratory dinner each June at the Oliver Wight Tavern. Under the pledge system, donors have more time to plan their giving, and moving Annual Fund appeals earlier will be easier for everyone. “Before, year-end appeals came during the holiday season and results were a guessing game,” Kucharski noted. Today, Kucharski and his wife, Marilyn, herself a former OSV Trustee, enjoy bringing their grandchildren to OSV. It’s important to keep future generations involved with the Village,” he said.

For Kucharski, donor gifts are vital to OSV. “Donations are the lifeblood of the Village—we cannot survive without them,” Kucharski said. “Our overhead costs aren’t covered by admission fees alone.” Since most donors give through the OSV Annual Fund, Kucharski has streamlined the process by trimming the number of Federated Society “giving circles,” moving up Annual Fund appeals, and starting a donor pledge system. Now, all Federated Society donors will become automatic OSV Members, and as in past, Federals are honored at celebratory dinner each June at the Oliver Wight Tavern. Under the pledge system, donors have more time to plan their giving, and moving Annual Fund appeals earlier will be easier for everyone. “Before, year-end appeals came during the holiday season and results were a guessing game,” Kucharski noted. Today, Kucharski and his wife, Marilyn, herself a former OSV Trustee, enjoy bringing their grandchildren to OSV. It’s important to keep future generations involved with the Village,” he said.

Phil Eckert first visited Old Sturbridge Village in the mid-1970s when he was a recent college graduate in theatre. “I remember thinking it was a giant stage set,” he said. “After three exhibits I went straight to the personnel office.” His first job was working in the Visitor Center; he also did lighting and set design for presentations. Phil remembers running the projector for a history film by a college student named Ken Burns. “Looking back on it, you could see then what would become his signature style,” he said.

Phil left the Village after a few years, moving to Washington, D.C. where he took courses on gold leaf restoration at the Smithsonian. One of the projects he worked on was refinishing gilded chairs for the White House.

After a stint at the historic Phillipsburg Manor in Tarrytown, New York, Phil returned to OSV in 1981. Since then, he’s had a variety of responsibilities. But it’s as lead interpreter and proprietor of the Tin Shop that Phil has found his most comfortable niche.

“I seem to be able to catch on to how you make things, and I’ve always loved history,” Phil noted. “I love to share the experience of what life was like for ordinary people living in the mid-19th century.” Phil especially enjoys interpreting for children and student groups. “The most frequently asked question from children is, ‘Do you live here?’ he said, “and everyone wants to know where the tin comes from.”

“Timers” in the mid-19th century used sheets imported from Wales; the tin was mined in Cornwall, England. Today, the material used by Phil and his staff of eight is manufactured in Pennsylvania. A favorite program of Phil’s involves working with special-needs students from a school in Sturbridge. “We have them for five sessions in the Tin Shop,” he explained. “Most of them are very anxious, but once they get involved with the work they just bloom.”

Another of Phil’s niches is leading the museums firearms program. “I grew up watching Davy Crockett on TV and was hooked on the flintlock rifle,” he said. He organizes the annual Muster Day, recreating the annual gathering of the village militia to march and practice battle techniques.

“We present guns in their historic context,” Phil explained. “It helps people understand the role firearms played in the life of the Village.” After more than 30 years as an historical interpreter at OSV, Phil notes that the visitors’ experience today is better than ever. “We offer an intimate, practical, and accessible experience of history,” he said.
For times and details on all upcoming events at OSV, please call 1-800-SEE-1830 or visit www.osv.org.

April Vacation Week
April 13–21
Spend some time outdoors when the kids are out of school. Baby farm animals, spring blossoms, hands-on activities, and Patriot’s Day activities (April 15) are highlights of the school vacation week at the Village. Or sign the kids up for two-, three-, or five-day Discovery Adventure programs.

Dog Days—April 6–7
OSV Members can bring their leashed dogs to explore the Village and countryside. (Registration papers required; see osv.org for full details.)

Member Quilt Challenge
April 20
Quilters of all levels are invited to participate in the 2013 OSV Quilt Challenge. Register by April 20.

Discovery Adventures!
for ages 6–17
April 15–19, and June 24–August 16
Give your children a history lesson they’ll never forget. Discovery Adventurers dress in 1830s costumes; Militia participants learn marching, drilling, camping, cooking, and fife music. Exploration Adventurers learn about woodland traditions.

Mother’s Day
May 12
Moms get our respect and admiration all year long, but on this day they also get free admission! Help us celebrate mothers of today and the 1830s and learn what has changed (and what hasn’t) in parenting over the centuries.

Great Tomato Plant Giveaway
May 18
Stop by for a free heirloom tomato plant (while supplies last), pick up other heirloom vegetable and flower seeds for your garden, and learn a few tried-and-true gardening tips while you’re here.

Antique Car Rally—June 1
Antique Carriage Rally—June 2
Old-fashioned transportation is highlighted all weekend with pre-1946 automobiles on Saturday and antique horse-drawn carriages on Sunday. They’ll be on display on the Common throughout the day, culminating in a Grand Procession around the Village.

Muster Day—June 8
In the 1830s the civilian militia gathered annually to train and drill. Watch us recreate their activities and the townwide celebration that accompanied it.

Music & Art Weekend
June 15–16
Early New Englanders worked hard in their farms, homes, and trades, but they also made time for art and music. Find out about 19th-century singing, dancing, painting, and silhouette cutting.

For times and details on all upcoming events at OSV, please call 1-800-SEE-1830 or visit www.osv.org.

Discovery Adventures!
for ages 6–17
April 15–19, and June 24–August 16
Give your children a history lesson they’ll never forget. Discovery Adventurers dress in 1830s costumes; Militia participants learn marching, drilling, camping, cooking, and fife music. Exploration Adventurers learn about woodland traditions.

Distinguished Speaker Series—April 25
Hear Boston Globe sports columnist Dan Shaughnessy discuss his new book Francona: The Red Sox Years, which he co-authored with former Red Sox manager Terry Francona, who led the team to two World Series victories. Cash bar and baseball-themed snacks. Sponsored by SpencerBANK

Reminder...
Corporate Leadership Breakfast in May
Join the leaders of Central Massachusetts’s business community for a panel discussion and networking. Open to Corporate Members only—details to follow.

George Washington Wells Society Members
Please join us for the annual Federalist Dinner on Friday, June 7. Invitations will be mailed.

If you would like to attend these events contact Barbara Welsh at 508-347-0250 or bwelsh@osv.org.
MUSEUM HOURS

Open year-round, hours vary seasonally:

Open daily, April through October

Open Tuesday–Sunday, November through March

Open select evenings only in December

Open all Monday holidays

800-SEE-1830

Visit www.osv.org

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