Redcoats & Rebels: 10 Years

Lodging Reopens at OSV

Independence Cake for July 4th

Baseball: Doubleday Didn’t Do It

Renewing the Freeman Farm Garden
ike many big ideas, the Old Sturbridge Village: Redcoats & Rebels event had humble beginnings. Back in August 2003, the OSV program staff was looking for new ways to use the Village for social events and decided to try something new. Their idea was to teach visitors about America’s military history by inviting reenactors to OSV for a weekend. It was a good idea that has grown even better over time—with profound benefits for the Village.

What started as a small gathering of units that first year has grown into a premier event: Redcoats & Rebels, now the largest Civil War era event in New England and one that Yankee magazine has named a “Best in New England Top Event.” Read more about Redcoats on page 4.

This year marks the 10th anniversary of Redcoats & Rebels, which now brings nearly 7,000 visitors and 1,000 reenactors to the Village each year with far-reaching results. We gain a tremendous amount of positive publicity and news coverage through Redcoats; the event attracts members, donors, and benefactors of the Village; it generates substantial admissions revenue that we use to support our education, curatorial, and interpretive programs.

For those attending Redcoats, the impact has also been widespread. Many visitors make this a must-see annual event and have turned it into a family tradition. The same is true for many of the reenactors. As Snow Minutemen Captain Bob Stokes notes, “We are proud to have participated in every Redcoats & Rebels since the start. We would not miss it!”

**In This Issue:**

2 A Big Idea That Started Small: A Message from President and CEO Jim Donahue

3 Remembering Jack Larkin

4 Redcoats & Rebels: Celebrating 10 Years

6 Set for Summer 2013: Opening Old Sturbridge Inn and Reeder Family Lodge

8 Sylvester Graham: Ahead of his time? Or just quirky?

10 Independence Cake: To “Feed and Awe” the Multitudes

12 Baseball: Drabday Didn’t Do It

14 Furniture, Fellows, and Flashlights: A Centennial Update

16 Give It a Rest!

18 Revisiting the Freeman Farm Garden

18 Employee Profile: A Conversation with Deb Knight

19 Discovery Adventurers: Then and Now

20 Development Update: Planting the Field of Flags; Saving Our Sawmill

21 New Look for Old Sturbridge Village

21 $5 Fridays: Sponsored by Southbridge Credit Union

22 Upcoming Events

**Volume LIII, No. 2 Summer 2013**

**On the Cover:** Theodore Wiegand with Old Glory

**Welcome** to the SUMMER EDITION of our VISITOR magazine. We hope that you will learn new things and come to visit the Village soon. There is always something fun to do at Old Sturbridge Village.

**Members Enjoy:**

• Free admission to Old Sturbridge Village

• 10% discount on guest admission

• 25% discount on lunch and dinner

• Free admission for children and seniors

• Members-only rates for many of the Village’s special programs

**Membership Benefits:**

• Periodic newsletters, brochures, and updates online

• Membership Department: e-mail membership@osv.org, or call 800-SEE-1830.

**Summer 2013**

**The Old Sturbridge Village community is saddened by the loss of longtime chief historian John W. “Jack” Larkin, of Warren, Massachusetts, who passed away March 29 at age 69 after a nine-month battle with pancreatic cancer. Larkin spent nearly 40 years at the Village, beginning in 1971 and ending in 2009 with his retirement as chief historian and museum scholar emeritus.

Former Old Sturbridge Village President Crawford Lincoln remembered Larkin as witty, learned, humble, self-effacing, and “a true scholar,” adding that the Village was blessed by his vision, enthusiasm and learning. “He was a great person to work with.”

Ed Hood, OSV vice president, called Larkin the “face of history” at the Village. “Everyone really enjoyed Jack; he was a great person to work with.”

Former Old Sturbridge Village President Crawford Lincoln remembered Larkin as witty, learned, humble, self-effacing, and “a true scholar,” adding that the Village was blessed by his vision, enthusiasm and learning.

Larkin authored many books, most recently Where ‘Iv Hived: Celebrating America’s Workers and the Nation They Built, 1800s-1910, and for many years taught the Clark University seminar “Exploring Early American History at Old Sturbridge Village.”

He leaves his wife of 42 years, Barbara Bauman Larkin, two sons, and five grandchildren. A mentor to generations of young historians, scholars, and interpreters, Jack leaves a legacy that will be remembered by those in the Old Sturbridge Village community and beyond.
Grenadiers were the “shock and awe” troops of the British Army. Large, imposing men were recruited for these units, and they wore helmets with tall, bushy bearskin plumes to appear even bigger and more fearsome. They also carried swords.

Why do British uniform trousers have baggy seats? Soldiers need the extra room when they drop to one knee to aim and fire. Otherwise their pant seams would split!

There were more uniforms than just “Redcoats” and “Bluecoats” in the Revolution. Some British units wore yellow, others white, some wore blue coats trimmed with red, and other coats were trimmed in green. Others wore plaid knee-high socks, and some French and Colonial units dressed in white. Many reenactors confess to choosing to portray British soldiers because of the fancier uniforms.

Forget history books with boring dates and dry facts. One of the best ways to learn about the Revolutionary War is to talk to a military reenactor. Most have meticulously researched the Revolutionary War history of the actual units they portray. These amateur historians can tell you what it feels like to fire a musket or cannon, what the food tasted like, what it sounds like in battle, and how hot the uniforms were. And they know lots of interesting, little-known facts about military life when our country was young. Consider:

- Grenadiers were the “shock and awe” troops of the British Army. Large, imposing men were recruited for these units, and they wore helmets with tall, bushy bearskin plumes to appear even bigger and more fearsome. They also carried swords.
- Why do British uniform trousers have baggy seats? Soldiers need the extra room when they drop to one knee to aim and fire. Otherwise their pant seams would split!
- There were more uniforms than just “Redcoats” and “Bluecoats” in the Revolution. Some British units wore yellow, others white, some wore blue coats trimmed with red, and other coats were trimmed in green. Others wore plaid knee-high socks, and some French and Colonial units dressed in white. Many reenactors confess to choosing to portray British soldiers because of the fancier uniforms.

Enthusiastic history experts—

Soldiers eat, sleep, live, and breathe Revolutionary War lifestyle.

Redcoats & Rebels

Celebrating 10 Years

Each year during the first weekend in August, nearly 7,000 visitors and 1,000 historic reenactors converge on Old Sturbridge Village for what many people view as the highlight of the year—Redcoats & Rebels, now the largest military reenactment in New England.

This year’s event, set for August 3-4, marks the 10th anniversary of OSV’s Redcoats & Rebels, which has been named a “Best in New England Top Event” by Yankee magazine, and is considered a premier event in the reenactment community. It is also a favorite of many OSV visitors and Members because the Village is filled with people in historic costumes, teems with activity, and truly seems to come alive as a real New England town of the time period.

Highlights of the two-day event are the realistic mock battles and skirmishes fought between the Colonial and British troops and their allies. Visitors can also see cannon demonstrations, marching and drilling, fifers and drummers, and what life was really like for the soldiers in camp. On Saturday night, August 3, the Village stays open until 8 p.m. for “Twilight Encampment” to give visitors a chance to mingle and talk with soldiers around their campfires.

With 200 acres, no streetlights, and no traffic noise or other modern distractions, the Village is a perfect setting for a large reenactment like this. The British units and their allies pitch their tents on the Common, and the Colonial troops and allied are billeted throughout the countryside. For visitors, a walk through the Village becomes a walk through Revolutionary War history as they can talk one on one with the reenactors and learn about each military unit’s role in the conflict.

Reenactors are living history experts—

Soldiers eat, sleep, live, and breathe Revolutionary War lifestyle.

Forgotten history books with boring dates and dry facts. One of the best ways to learn about the Revolutionary War is to talk to a military reenactor. Most have meticulously researched the Revolutionary War history of the actual units they portray. These amateur historians can tell you what it feels like to fire a musket or cannon, what the food tasted like, what it sounds like in battle, and how hot the uniforms were. And they know lots of interesting, little-known facts about military life when our country was young. Consider:

- Grenadiers were the “shock and awe” troops of the British Army. Large, imposing men were recruited for these units, and they wore helmets with tall, bushy bearskin plumes to appear even bigger and more fearsome. They also carried swords.
- Why do British uniform trousers have baggy seats? Soldiers need the extra room when they drop to one knee to aim and fire. Otherwise their pant seams would split!
- There were more uniforms than just “Redcoats” and “Bluecoats” in the Revolution. Some British units wore yellow, others white, some wore blue coats trimmed with red, and other coats were trimmed in green. Others wore plaid knee-high socks, and some French and Colonial units dressed in white. Many reenactors confess to choosing to portray British soldiers because of the fancier uniforms.

Redcoats & Rebels

Celebrating 10 Years
one of the most visible signs of the Old Sturbridge Village turnaround is the summer reopening of overnight and vacation lodging at the Village. Closed since 2005, the historic Oliver Wight House and adjacent lodging units will re-open under the name Old Sturbridge Inn and Reeder Family Lodges. The project is made possible thanks to the generosity of OSV Trustee Robert W. (Bob) Reeder III and his wife, Lorraine, of Bedford, New York, who are underwriting the cost of renovation and initial operation of the property.

The property includes 39 lodging units and the historic 10-room Oliver Wight House, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Olive Wight House was originally built in 1789 for cabinetmaker Oliver Wight and his wife, Harmony, with whom he had seven children. The house sits on its original site, and its age, architectural integrity, and distinctive style qualified it for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places in 1982.

The house features rare original wall murals dating to the 1830s that are most likely the work of Rufus Porter, a New England folk artist widely known for his wall paintings. Old Sturbridge Village co-founder Albert B. Wells bought the property from Wight descendants in 1937 a year after acquiring the adjacent David Wight farm, on which Old Sturbridge Village was built.

In the Village’s early years, the Oliver Wight House served as an administrative office and a sales room for surplus antiques culled from the museum’s collection. In the 1950s and ’60s, the house served as the Old Sturbridge Village Lodge and was the centerpiece of the original OSV Lodges and Motor Court, which became the Liberty Cup Motel in 1962. The entire complex was closed as a cost-saving measure in 2005.

The restoration of the inn and lodges has returned them to their former glory, preserving them for many generations to come, and adding a welcome new dimension to the Old Sturbridge Village experience.

About the Oliver Wight House and Lodges

Located on the south side of Route 20 near the present-day OSV entrance, the Oliver Wight House was constructed in 1789 for Oliver Wight, whose brother, David, settled an adjacent farm on the property that is now Old Sturbridge Village. The house sits on its original site, and its age, architectural integrity, and distinctive style qualified it for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places in 1982.

The house features rare original wall murals dating to the 1830s that are most likely the work of Rufus Porter, a New England folk artist widely known for his wall paintings. Old Sturbridge Village co-founder Albert B. Wells bought the property from Wight descendants in 1937 a year after acquiring the adjacent David Wight farm, on which Old Sturbridge Village was built.

In the Village’s early years, the Oliver Wight House served as an administrative office and a sales room for surplus antiques culled from the museum’s collection. In the 1950s and ’60s, the house served as the Old Sturbridge Village Lodge and was the centerpiece of the original OSV Lodges and Motor Court, which became the Liberty Cup Motel in 1962. The entire complex was closed as a cost-saving measure in 2005.

The restoration of the inn and lodges has returned them to their former glory, preserving them for many generations to come, and adding a welcome new dimension to the Old Sturbridge Village experience.

Inn and Lodges Renovation by the Numbers

The work to ready the Old Sturbridge Inn and Reeder Family Lodges in time for the summer season has been daunting—and rewarding. The finished facility will include: free wireless Internet, flat-screen cable TVs, free continental breakfast, free parking, in-ground pool, and playground.

Special thanks go to all involved in the project: Brad King, OSV vice president of campus operations, directed construction and renovation crews. Decoration and design work was supervised by donor Lorraine Reeder; OSV Trustees Jane Nylander and Ann Marie Argitis; Deb Friedman, OSV vice president of public program; and Renée Chambers, OSV chief of staff. Here are just a few of the many things included in the project’s scope:

- 4,693 staff hours used in the renovation
- 888 square yards of carpet installed
- 168 windows replaced
- 95 doors painted
- 353 gallons of paint used
- 56 sinks and faucets installed
- 39 granite countertops installed

Old Sturbridge Village President and CEO Jim Donahue termed the Reeders’ gift “transformational,” and said the reopening of the lodging facilities will help grow attendance—especially among families and guests attending evening programs and special events. Lorraine Reeder added, “Our family has wonderful memories of visiting OSV and staying in the lodges with extended family and friends. The unique style of the buildings offers the perfect blend of family togetherness and private space.”

By Rebecca Brall, Collections Manager

Among the most important features of the Oliver Wight House are its original wall murals, attributed to Rufus Porter (1792-1884), an itinerant painter who traveled throughout New England painting distinctive murals. Those in the Oliver Wight House are believed to be the westernmost examples of Porter’s work.

The stately home, originally built in 1789 for cabinetmaker Oliver Wight and his wife, Harmony, was purchased by Ebenezer Howard, another cabinetmaker, in 1815. Howard likely commissioned the murals between 1830 and 1835. Although priceless today, Porter described his landscape scenery in an 1822 newspaper ad as costing “less than the ordinary expense (sic) of papering.”

The painstaking work to revitalize the murals was done by planter restoration expert David Ottinger and Linda Lefko, historic decorative painter and advisor to the Rufus Porter Museum in Bridgton, Maine.

Old Sturbridge Village would like to thank the Felicia Fund for generously supporting the restoration of these important murals.
By Tom Kelleher, Curator of Mechanical Arts

Social reformer, author, and fiery orator Sylvester Graham inspired thousands in the 1830s to eat better and live healthier. Long before fast-food “super-sizing,” Graham “scientifically proved” that people should consume fewer calories. Eat less fat, meat, and sugar, he said, and more fresh fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Salt, alcohol, caffeine, and overwork were bad; eight hours of sleep, fresh air, filtered water, and regular exercise were good. Okay, you say, so this is news? It was in the 1830s.

Graham believed his diet prevented disease. He insisted that sex, even in marriage, was bad for the health. All baths should be cold; spices were poisons; coffee and tea were dangerous “narcotics.” If one must eat meat, one should always eat it raw. Often called “Doctor” Graham, he lacked medical training and called physicians “licensed quacks.”

Graham’s strident beliefs inspired devotion in some, and scornful derision from many. Hundreds of dedicated “Grahamites” followed his instructions, while Ralph Waldo Emerson derisively dubbed him “the prophet of brown bread and pumpkins.”

Born in West Suffield, Connecticut in 1794, Graham was the youngest of 17 children. His father died two years later, and Graham’s mother spent the rest of her life in and out of insane asylums. Young Sylvester was bounced around from one relative to another. A sickly, unhappy, and nervous child, he grew to be hypersensitive and critical.

Although untrained in medicine, Graham next lectured at Amherst Academy to become a minister; but was soon expelled for assaulting a woman. Although he was the innocent victim of a prank by classmates who disliked his prickly personality, he suffered a nervous breakdown. Upon recovery, he married his nurse, used her dowry for private tutors, and was eventually ordained. But he alienated his congregation by preaching only temperance, and lost his job.

Although untrained in medicine, Graham next lectured on human physiology, teaching that Americans’ many health problems were due to wolffing down large quantities of rich, spicy foods washed down with copious amounts of alcohol and caffeinated drinks.

Graham got his “big break” in 1832 when a cholera epidemic came to America. He advocated a sparse, bland, vegetarian diet to combat disease, and asked if a Grahamite had ever died of cholera. Critics could not find one. He became a popular lecturer and author, and an equally popular subject of satire and ridicule. He founded the American Physiological Society, which declared that the Graham diet could cure cancer and tuberculosis. Grahamite hotels and boardinghouses sprang up, along with a Graham magazine. Some colleges offered “Graham tables” in their dining halls. Oberlin College even fired a professor for using pepper! But some students called the bland food “swill, slosh, and dishwater.”

Despite his powerfully worded books and fiery speeches, Graham’s wife, Sarah, preferred rich foods and drinking gin. Did they fight about it? No; publicly an unyielding lion, Graham privately acquiesced, sheepishly noting in his diary, “Mother says it must be so.”

In his mid-40s, the overworked Graham semiretired to Northampton, Massachusetts, and grew more eccentric, roaming the streets in his dressing gown and slippers, and returning from swims wrapped only in a sheet. Never truly healthy, Graham died at 57 after abandoning his own diet and trying alcohol, meat, and hot baths in final desperate attempts to recover. Gin-drinking Widow Graham lived for 17 more years.

Graham egotistically predicted that his disciples would tear down his house, saving its bricks as sacred relics, but his home stands today, housing a restaurant called Sylvester’s that serves plenty of meat, cheese, butter, white bread, and other foods condemned by Graham.

The Graham Cracker: Not Graham’s Idea

If you’re serving up s’mores around the campfire this summer, you don’t have Sylvester Graham to thank. Contrary to popular belief, he did not invent the Graham cracker, and would not approve of what we call Graham crackers today, since they are full of sugar, fat, spice, and chemical leavening. The Graham cracker gets its name from being baked with whole wheat flour, also known as “Graham flour.”

Some sources claim that Graham “invented” the cracker in a sugarless, fat-free version in 1829, but that is simply when he began promoting plain whole wheat bread in lectures. Graham’s 1837, A Treatise on Bread and Bread-making makes no mention of cracker recipes. In fact, recipes for “Graham Crackers” per se only appeared in the 1850s, after Graham was dead.

Most likely, the Graham cracker was derived from a whole wheat cracker “receipt” that editor David Cambell of the Graham Journal (in which Sylvester had no direct involvement) stole from a period cookbook and reprinted on June 20, 1837:

Sweet Crackers—One tea-cup of coarse wheaten meal, one of sour milk or buttermilk, three fourths of a tea-cup of sugar, half a teaspoonful of pearlash (baking soda); made hard, rolled thin, and well baked.

So next time you bite into a s’more—that delicious combination of toasted marshmallow and melted milk chocolate sandwiched between Graham crackers—think about what a taste treat Sylvester Graham missed!
To “Feed and Awe” the Multitudes on the Fourth of July:

Independence Cake

By Ryan Beckman
Assistant Coordinator for Women’s Crafts

In America’s early days, the most revered holiday was Independence Day—a day that started with prayers and was followed by musket and cannon fire on the common. Some townsfolk took part in processions and others gave Boasting toasts “to the founders of the country” at the local tavern.

But the day’s highlight was certainly the food, which included comestibles such as ham, cold tongue, pickles, roast beef, chicken salad, plum pudding, an abundance of pies and fresh fruit, and other cold dishes. There were also a multitude of cakes to be enjoyed at tables set outside in the fresh air if the weather allowed.

Christopher Columbus Baldwin, lawyer and librarian for the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, Massachusetts, described a July 4th feast in his diary in 1830:

“A favorite cake was Independence Cake, a resplendent fruitcake with icing and, if following the “receipt” (recipe) to the letter, decorated with a crown of boxwood and gold leaf Amelia Simmons’ opulent Independence Cake receipt from her 1796 book, American Cookery, befits the pomp and splendor surrounding this most important holiday:

Twenty pound flour, 15 pound sugar, 10 pound butter, 4 dozen eggs, one quart wine, one quart brandy, 1 ounce nutmeg, cinnamon, cloves, mace, of each three ounces, two pound citron, currant and raisins 5 pounds each, 1 quart yeast; when baked, frost with loaf sugar; dress with box and gold leaf.

This is a cake to feed and awe the multitudes. The 20 pounds of flour Miss Simmons refers to indicates that multiple cakes are to be made for a large gathering of people. This cake is also awe inspiring due to the sheer quantity of expensive ingredients, not counting the gold leaf!

Loaf sugar, the most refined of sugars, was the most expensive. Imported white flour had to be purchased, as wheat was hard to grow in New England. Raisins had the seeds still inside of them—there were no seedless grapes—and had to be “stoned” with a sharp knife or small hands. The abundance of imported spices and the amount of foreign liquors added to the cake also points to its decadence.

This cake is also time-consuming. Made much like its English fruitcake ancestors, it is leavened with a slurry of wild yeast known as “emptins” from the bottom of a beer or cider keg. The wild yeast meant that a “sponge” needed to be set with some flour, emptins, and sugar to give the yeast several hours to activate. By the next morrow, if the butter had risen and was full of holes like a sea sponge, the rest of the ingredients were added The whole dough was then kneaded and left to rise for several hours until it doubled in size. Then the dough was divided and placed into round eight- or nine-inch cake pans and baked in the bake oven for about an hour. To make the entire receipt was a whole day’s work!

Dedicating this much time, money, and energy to such a fine cake was one way women could certainly honor the legacy of the founding fathers and celebrate the growth and success of the new nation.

Independence Cake Receipt (Modern translation)

Makes one large cake or two small cakes:

3 ½ cups flour
1 ½ cups white sugar
½ cup butter
3 eggs beaten to a froth
¼ cup brandy
¼ cup white port
¼ cup citron
½ cup raisins
½ cup dried Zante currants
A pinch of nutmeg and cloves
½ teaspoon each cinnamon and mace
1 teaspoon modern yeast, dissolved in 5 tablespoons warm water and one tablespoon flour and sugar each, ½ teaspoon of salt all mixed together to form “emptins” (liquid yeast of the 19th century, from beer or cider keg)

• Soak raisins and currants in brandy/wine mix for at least an hour (4 hours max) at room temperature.
• Rub butter into flour first and then add the spices.
• Next add the sugar, citron, raisins and currants, and brandy/wine mixture.
• Add eggs and liquid yeast last.
• Knead mix slightly to incorporate ingredients. Add a dusting of flour if too runny. Should be slightly sticky (like biscuit dough).
• Let rise for 30 minutes to an hour in a warm room before baking in a greased cake pan.
• Preheat oven to 350°F.
• Bake for 45 minutes to an hour, until a knife inserted in the middle of the cake comes out clean.
• When cool, frost with your favorite white icing.
any things were invented in the 1830s, including photography (1839), the telegraph (1837), and the electric motor (1831). Legend also has it that a young army officer named Abner Doubleday invented the game of baseball in his native Cooperstown, New York, in 1839. That bit of historical trivia, however, has no basis in truth.

Not only were soldiers playing baseball at Valley Forge long before Doubleday was born, but in England the game was enjoyed since at least the 1740s. In 1824, college student Henry Wadsworth Longfellow played constantly in his leisure hours. While the rules have changed through the years (there was no designated hitter in 1830!), boys and often girls in early New England definitely played a game they called “base ball” (two words), which would be readily recognizable today.

The sport went by many names in early America, including goal ball, round ball, town ball, and baste ball. Some just called it “ball” or “base.” Without a national organization to dictate rules, the game differed slightly from one town to the next. Like pick-up games today, the rules also changed from one game to the next depending on the number of players and the field being used. The game, however, was based on the old English schoolboy game of rounders. For his Book of Sports (Boston, 1834), author Robin Carver merely copied verbatim the rules for rounders printed a few years before in Englishman William Clarke’s The Boy’s Own Book. The game was played on a diamond with stones or posts 12 to 20 yards apart, using a leather-covered ball of yarn wrapped around a bit of cork. Two leaders chose up sides, but there were no set numbers of players or regular fielding positions aside from someone to “feed” the ball to the batter and someone to catch. A player spit on one side of the paddle used to hit the ball, and leaders from each team called “wet” or “dry.” The bat was tossed up, and the team that correctly picked how it would land could decide who got “first innings.”

With increasing urbanization and leisure time in the 1820s to the 1840s, some grown men began to organize teams to play the game of their youth. By the 1850s, these social ball clubs were found in most cities and many larger towns. During the Civil War, soldiers on both sides played baseball between battles, further spreading knowledge of the game. By the end of the 1860s, the game had grown so popular that some players were actually paid to join a team, and professional baseball was born.

So how did the myth that Abner Doubleday invented baseball get started? In 1888, sporting goods mogul Albert G. Spalding took his own Chicago baseball club and a National League all-star team on a promotional world tour. At an 1889 banquet celebrating their return, the National League president, filled with Yankee pride, declared that baseball was an American game, not descended from English rounders—a sentiment echoed by the patriotic crowd.

In 1905, a National League committee was appointed to investigate baseball’s origins. Members did not examine any documentary evidence, and in 1907, based solely on the memory of elderly Abner Graves, they declared that Civil War hero Doubleday invented baseball in Cooperstown, New York, in 1839. In fact, Doubleday was not even in Cooperstown in 1839—he was then a cadet at West Point. Doubleday himself never claimed to have invented the game, and baseball was not mentioned in Doubleday’s 1893 obituary. The Doubleday myth really took off in the 1930s when the major leagues wanted to promote baseball’s supposed centennial and start a ball of fame.

Eager for tourist dollars, both Cooperstown and the state of New York officially endorsed the myth … and the rest is bad history! As for Abner Doubleday, don’t feel sorry for him. Although he did not invent baseball, he earned a place in history as the first U.S. soldier to fire a shot in the Civil War (at Fort Sumter), and eventually retired from the army as a famous general.

A “feeder” tossed the ball “gently” to batters, who were out if they missed three times. After a hit, batters ran the bases clockwise.

Runners were out if they were hit with a thrown ball between bases, called “soaking” or “burning” the runner.

Batters were out if their hit ball was caught. Some teams allowed the ball to be caught on one bounce.

A “tally” was scored each time a runner crossed home.

All players on a batting team had to be put out before the fielding team could have its “innings.”

Winners sometimes were decided by which team first reached 21 tallies, or 100 tallies, or by which team had the highest score after each had a chance to bat.

(Opposite top) Playing Ball on Petersham Common (circa 1835) depicts a baseball game on the Petersham, Massachusetts Common in about 1840 and was painted by Charles Frederick Basset (1813–1925) from his memories of watching the game as a boy. Collection of the Petersham Historical Society.

(Opposite center) Abner Doubleday

(Left) Old-fashioned “base ball” is played every day in the summer at Old Sturbridge Village.
With more than 50,000 early New England objects under our care, the curatorial department has been busy over the course of the past year conducting an extensive inventory of our collection. Rolling up our sleeves, bringing out our flashlights, and putting on our white gloves, we set out to inspect each object in our collection.

In January, the entire curatorial staff spent two weeks in an “all-hands-on-deck” examination of our 1,500-piece furniture collection. Each piece was assessed and cleaned, and the object’s file was updated. This was no small task given that our furniture storage racks are four tiers high! With new, stronger lighting and a measure of careful looking, we were able to uncover about a dozen inscriptions, markings, and signatures that were previously unknown.

This ongoing work is part of a greater project to update our Curatorial Collections Plan. The finished plan will outline the strengths and weaknesses in our collection. It will ensure that we, as curators of a nationally significant museum, respect the origins of our collections while guiding future decisions for using, caring for, and adding to the collection. Creating this “snapshot” of the collection is not an easy task; a collections plan is formed only after a thorough, orderly survey of the entire collection.

The monumental task of surveying our collection was made possible by the addition of Anne McBride to our staff for the past year as our Decorative Arts Trust intern. Anne helped lead the assessment of the collection, reviewing more than 20,000 objects and making an appreciable dent in our efforts to lay our hands on each of the thousands of pieces in the collection. Anne also spent part of the year researching objects, assisting with grant writing, and installing several case exhibits. Our department will miss Anne greatly as both a friend and colleague, and we wish her well as she starts upon her museum career.

Anne’s internship at OSV was supported by funding from the Decorative Arts Trust, a national organization dedicated to the study, enjoyment, and preservation of the decorative arts. The group also organizes symposia and study trips, provides continuing education and research stipends for museum professionals, and promotes the field of decorative arts through newsletters and publications.

The Decorative Arts Trust is funding another OSV Collections Building, which houses most of the Village’s 50,000 historic artifacts. Frank issued a $10,000 challenge pledge to update the building if OSV could raise $15,000 as well. Improvements to the building’s climate control and security systems are needed to protect the treasures inside.

Thanks to Trustee John Frank of Pomfret, Connecticut, for leading the campaign to upgrade the OSV Collections Building, which houses most of the Village’s 50,000 historic artifacts. Frank issued a $10,000 challenge pledge to update the building if OSV could raise $15,000 as well. Improvements to the building’s climate control and security systems are needed to protect the treasures inside.

To date, 57 supporters have answered the “John Frank Challenge,” donating $22,000 and bringing the total amount raised to $32,000. The Jewett Construction Company, Inc. of Raymond, New Hampshire, has also pledged in-kind support, and work will begin this summer.

We continue to work on our upcoming exhibit on Nathan Lombard, which opens October 19, 2013, and is part of the Four Centuries of Massachusetts Furniture collaboration involving 11 institutions. The Nathan Lombard chest of drawers and drop-leaf table recently acquired by OSV have arrived home and are now tucked into furniture storage until their debut next fall. We were thrilled to see the table arrive, fresh from conservation.

Skilled conservator Melissa Carr stayed true to our desire that the pieces benefit from light cleaning, but their wear patterns still be visible. The results are remarkable. The chest still retains a darker patina around the drawer pulls, where generations of users grabbed the brasses to open the drawers. Yet the light cleaning of the surface helps the inlay pop as was Lombard’s original intent. Likewise, the table had a large water stain trapped in a top modern layer of finish. Once removed, not only did the stain vanish, but the true patina of the wood shines through. These two pieces are ready for the spotlight this fall.

Our newly acquired Nathan Lombard table (circa 1805) before conservation, with a very imposing stain visible on one of the leaves. After treatment, the table’s rich cherry color shines through and the stain is virtually gone.

Delightfully Designed—The Furniture and Life of Nathan Lombard

Protecting Our Historical Collections

The monumental task of surveying our collection was made possible by the addition of Anne McBride to our staff for the past year as our Decorative Arts Trust intern. Anne helped lead the assessment of the collection, reviewing more than 20,000 objects and making an appreciable dent in our efforts to lay our hands on each of the thousands of pieces in the collection.

Anne also spent part of the year researching objects, assisting with grant writing, and installing several case exhibits. Our department will miss Anne greatly as both a friend and colleague, and we wish her well as she starts upon her museum career.

Anne’s internship at OSV was supported by funding from the Decorative Arts Trust, a national organization dedicated to the study, enjoyment, and preservation of the decorative arts. The group also organizes symposia and study trips, provides continuing education and research stipends for museum professionals, and promotes the field of decorative arts through newsletters and publications.

The Decorative Arts Trust is funding another OSV Collections Building, which houses most of the Village’s 50,000 historic artifacts. Frank issued a $10,000 challenge pledge to update the building if OSV could raise $15,000 as well. Improvements to the building’s climate control and security systems are needed to protect the treasures inside.

To date, 57 supporters have answered the “John Frank Challenge,” donating $22,000 and bringing the total amount raised to $32,000. The Jewett Construction Company, Inc. of Raymond, New Hampshire, has also pledged in-kind support, and work will begin this summer. Thanks to all who made this possible!

If you would like to support our collections and exhibits, e-mail clsood@osv.org or call 508-347-0300.

Delightfully Designed—The Furniture and Life of Nathan Lombard

Protecting Our Historical Collections

The monumental task of surveying our collection was made possible by the addition of Anne McBride to our staff for the past year as our Decorative Arts Trust intern. Anne helped lead the assessment of the collection, reviewing more than 20,000 objects and making an appreciable dent in our efforts to lay our hands on each of the thousands of pieces in the collection.

Anne also spent part of the year researching objects, assisting with grant writing, and installing several case exhibits. Our department will miss Anne greatly as both a friend and colleague, and we wish her well as she starts upon her museum career.

Anne’s internship at OSV was supported by funding from the Decorative Arts Trust, a national organization dedicated to the study, enjoyment, and preservation of the decorative arts. The group also organizes symposia and study trips, provides continuing education and research stipends for museum professionals, and promotes the field of decorative arts through newsletters and publications.

The Decorative Arts Trust is funding another OSV Collections Building, which houses most of the Village’s 50,000 historic artifacts. Frank issued a $10,000 challenge pledge to update the building if OSV could raise $15,000 as well. Improvements to the building’s climate control and security systems are needed to protect the treasures inside.

To date, 57 supporters have answered the “John Frank Challenge,” donating $22,000 and bringing the total amount raised to $32,000. The Jewett Construction Company, Inc. of Raymond, New Hampshire, has also pledged in-kind support, and work will begin this summer. Thanks to all who made this possible!

If you would like to support our collections and exhibits, e-mail clsood@osv.org or call 508-347-0300.
Give It a Rest!  
Renewing the Freeman Farm Garden

By Tom Morehouse, OSV Volunteer

A fter more than 40 years of growing heirloom vegetables, our Freeman Farm kitchen garden was tired and needed a rest. Despite applying cow manure and lime (19th-century practices), the harvests were growing smaller. The quality and quantity of produce had been dropping for five years, especially brassica (turnip, rutabaga, radish, etc.) Weed growth (primarily galiwnso, pig weed, purslane) was hard to control. Leaf-eating insects were devouring bean, potato, turnip, rutabaga, and other crops. We decided to combine 21st-century soil analysis with 19th-century soil improvement techniques:

**Analyze plants and soil:** Testing by the Soil and Plant Pathology Lab at the University of Connecticut showed a soil pH of 7.5 (slightly alkaline; quite high for vegetables), substantial un-decomposed cow manure, and boron deficiency in brassica crops, which had experienced a severe decline. Although the soil had a healthy boron content, the high pH prevented at "green manure," then broadcast and harrowed in peas. Peas are legumes, which harvest nitrogen from the air and store the nitrogen in root nodules. Nineteenth-century farmers knew that legumes added “azote,” an old word for nitrogen.

**Research 19th-century soil improvement:** Using Samuel Deane’s *The New England Farmer* (1822), particularly “Change of Crops” and “Rotation of Crops”, Thomas Fessenden’s *The Complete Farmer and Rural Economist* (1857), particularly “Manures,” “Ploughing,” and “Soil”, and John Nicholson’s *The Farmer’s Assistant* (1814), we implemented the following plan to improve soil fertility and reduce insects and disease.

Instead of planting the Freeman kitchen garden in 2011-2012, we decided to let it rest and renew the soil. To supply Village kitchens, we planted a new garden at the nearby Bisby House field.

**Fall 2011:** After the Freeman garden harvest, we plowed and harrowed. Nineteenth-century farmers often “let the pigs run” in the garden, to eat any remaining growth. We harrowed in two pounds sulfur to each 100 square feet to increase soil acidity (lower pH). Manuring with sulfur was a common 19th-century practice. We planted (broadcast) and harrowed rye seed (secale cereale). Rye serves as a cover crop during winter and inhibits germination of other plant seeds (allelopathy) during the spring, substantially reducing weed growth. Eliminating vegetable crops for an entire year greatly reduces insect growth. Insect eggs in the soil hatch, but find none of the preferred vegetable matter as food, so they don’t thrive and don’t reproduce. An added benefit is the reduction of fungi and other disease, as the “host” plants are no longer present.

**Spring 2012:** We plowed in the rye (milk stage), so it enriched the soil as a “green manure,” then broadcast and harrowed in peas. Peas are legumes, which harvest nitrogen from the air and store the nitrogen in root nodules. Nineteenth-century farmers knew that legumes added “azote,” an old word for nitrogen.

**Late summer 2012:** We chopped, plowed, and harrowed in peas while still in flower. This stops their growth and keeps the nitrogen in the soil. We harrowed once more before planting another crop of rye in early fall. Due to the high pH of soil and presence of un-decomposed cow manure, no lime or cow manure was added.

**Fall 2012:** We repeated the soil analysis, and test results brought good news: the pH had returned to a more desirable 6.5. Soil texture was substantially lightened as the previous year’s cow manure had decomposed, and weed seed content was reduced.

**Tips from the 1857 The New American Gardener by Thomas Fessenden**

**January:** Gather your bean poles and pea rods. Too many gardeners wait until March to sow the principal hardy garden crops, so they may be established before the heat and drought of summer. Keep all crops free of weeds, and garden soils.

**February:** Carry manure to where it will be needed later. Heap it up, do not spread it out. Attack garden insects by sprinkling soap suds, wood ash, turpentine, walnut oil over them decoctions of tobacco, elder, soap suds, wood ash, terpentine, walnut leaves, etc.

**March:** Let your swine run in orchards, to keep all weeds down. Let your ducks have constant employment as vermin pickers.

**April:** Sow the principal hardy garden crops, so they may be established before the heat and drought of summer. Carry manure to where it will be needed later.

**May:** Attack garden insects by sprinkling soap suds, wood ash, terpentine, walnut oil over them decoctions of tobacco, elder, soap suds, wood ash, terpentine, walnut leaves, etc.

**June:** Let your ducks have constant employment as vermin pickers. Let garden insects be controlled by the natural enemies such as ladybug bugs, spiders, and birds. Let your swine run in orchards, to keep all weeds down.

**July:** Let your swine run in orchards, to keep all weeds down. Protect fruit against wasps, by hanging up phials of sugared water, in which many of the tiny deprecators will be caught.

**August:** Keep all crops free of weeds, using hoe where safe, otherwise make claw hoes of your hands, and weed nippers of your thumb and forefingers.

**September:** Protect fruit against wasps, by hanging up phials of sugared water, in which many of the tiny deprecators will be caught.

**October:** Cabbage sow in September for late spring use should be transplanted into their sheltered winter beds.

**November:** Sow seed of rhubarb, parsnip, skirret, and other slow growing vegetables, so they will grow vigorously in spring.

**December:** Every ten days, examine fruit you have stored, and remove what you feel has become tainted.

Pleased by the results, we decided to repeat the sequence for one more year. New England farmers have known these techniques for centuries. To improve your garden, feel, smell, and taste the soil, and observe what’s growing well. This helps determine the soil’s “sweet” (alkaline) or “sour” (acidic) qualities. Change crops to reduce insect problems. Let the soil rest for a year or two, and cut weeds before they drop seed. These are natural and effective ways to improve field and garden soils.

We use many old techniques on the farms and gardens at Old Sturbridge Village. Come visit and learn!
Earning to knit when she was about 10 years old was the start of Debra Knight’s lifelong love of textiles and the craft of making them into clothing.

“I credit my mother, who taught me how to knit,” said Debra, “though I didn’t perfect my technique until I came to Old Sturbridge Village.”

Debra did a high school internship at the Village in 1985, worked summers during college, and returned to the Village after graduating from Hartwick College in Oneonta, New York.

As lead interpreter of textiles, Debra’s work in the late spring centers around preparing the wool of freshly sheared sheep for spinning into yarn for knitting and weaving. The process starts on Memorial Day weekend, after the ewes have given birth in March and April.

“If the shearing is done well, you can see the whole outline of the sheep in the wool that’s clumped from them,” said Debra. The best wool for spinning comes from the sides and shoulders, she added. “It’s longer and has a soft crimp.”

Debra supervises the process of “picking” wool—pulling apart the fibers to break up accumulated dirt—and “scouring”—soaking the wool in hot water and ammonia to clean it. She points out that on farms in the 19th century, ammonia was made from the fermented contents of chamber pots!

Visitors often ask why the wool doesn’t shrink since we’re soaking it in hot water,” Debra said. “We soak it, but we don’t boil the wool!” Afterward, the wool is drained in a woven basket, rinsed in cool water, and then spun in a square of cotton cloth. “We actually swing it around,” she notes. The centrifugal force pulls water from the wool. After being spread out to further dry, the clean, fluffy wool goes to the carding mill to be brushed and detangled for spinning.

Debra points out that by the 1830s, with the abundance of mills in the area, most farm wives were able to buy woolen material rather than go through the time-consuming procedure of washing, spinning, and weaving their own cloth.

Women would gather to knit or sew—chores that allowed social interactions.

“Girls and women spent part of almost every afternoon on handwork. Though a chore, it was shared work, and gave them the opportunity to spend time with others,” she explains.

In spinning and weaving demonstrations and workshops, Debra enjoys helping visitors make the connection to their own past. “Seeing us at work often jog memories,” she says. “People frequently tell us stories about their grandmother’s loom, and other visitors recall their own past working in New England textile factories.”
Planting a Field of Flags
Funding Free Military Visits

Tradition is a word synonymous with Old Sturbridge Village. While we represent many traditions of the 1800s, it is rewarding to see a new idea become a tradition, too. Launched in 2010, our Field of Flags program provides free admission to OSV for active duty and retired military personnel and their families. Extending free admission through our Field of Flags program is one way we can honor the sacrifices of our military families—and provide a special family outing.

Since this program has become so popular and is important to so many, we have become a Blue Star Museum for 2013. A national program, Blue Star Museums offer free admission for all active duty military members, National Guard and Reserve military personnel, and their families from Memorial Day through Labor Day. While we are proud to be associated with the Blue Star Program, OSV has taken the extra step to expand our program year-round, and to include retired military personnel.

Our goal is to plant 5,000 American-made flags in front of the Visitor Center this year. For every gift of $25, we will add one American flag to the field, and each flag will sponsor a trip to OSV for a military family. Your gift will add another flag to the field, open the doors to OSV, and give the recognition and respect our military families deserve.

New Look for Old Sturbridge Village Website

After months of planning, the Old Sturbridge Village website—www.osv.org—has received a fresh new look and improved functionality. The new website was designed to make it easier for OSV Members and guests to find the information they need about Village programs and events.

The new site uses “responsive web design,” which makes it easier to view the website not only on desktop computer monitors, but also on smartphones and other mobile devices.

Other improvements include bigger, bolder images, new OSV videos, online donation and ticket purchase, and a better search function. You can make online reservations at the newly renovated Old Sturbridge Inn and Reeder Family Lodges, and schedule “reminder” e-mails for upcoming events of interest.

Old Sturbridge Village is grateful to OSV Trustee Robert W. (Bob) Reeder III and his wife, Lorraine, of Bedford, New York, who funded the project, and thanks go to Trustee Dick Schulze and Lorraine Reeder for participating in the planning process.

The web developer is Gravity Switch of Northampton, Massachusetts; OSV project manager is Kate Brandt, coordinator of marketing and communications; and OSV Art Director Dorreen St. John developed the design along with the Gravity Switch team.

Many Old Sturbridge Village staff members contributed. Thank you to all involved.

$5 Fridays Sponsored by Southbridge Credit Union

On three special Fridays this summer, the admission price to Old Sturbridge Village will be just $5 thanks to the generosity of Southbridge Credit Union, which has donated $10,000 to make the price break possible. The Southbridge Credit Union $5 Fridays are set for June 28, July 26, and August 23 and on these days all adults, seniors, and youth 5-17 will receive $5 admission (children 2 and under are free).

“Sponsoring these $5 Fridays at OSV is one way Southbridge Credit Union can give back to the community, help to offset today’s high gas prices, and to make the Village more accessible for families on a budget,” said Jeff Davenport, president of SCU.

Southbridge Credit Union, which is celebrating its 75th anniversary this year, has 13,000 members, 55 employees, and offices in Sturbridge, Auburn, and Southbridge, Massachusetts, including a student-operated branch at Southbridge High School.
Upcoming Events

Summer Comes Alive in the Village

Fire & Ice Day, July 20
Firefighters get half-price admission to the Village for this old-fashioned fireman’s muster. See vintage hand-pump fire trucks, enjoy bucket brigades and pumping contests, and cool off with 19th-century ice-cream making demonstrations.

Independence Day Celebration Evening Fireworks, July 4
Tickets on sale now!
Patriotic fun helps highlight the day—join a citizen’s parade, sign your “John Hancock” on a Declaration of Independence and enjoy music and games. The Village reopens for a separate evening celebration with juggling, magic, music, and more, capped off by a spectacular 30-minute fireworks display over the countryside.

Redcoats & Rebels, August 3-4
Twilight Encampment, August 3
Now in its 10th year, this event is the largest military reenactment in New England. More than 800 soldiers portray Colonial and British troops and their allies, with mock battles, and lots of musket, cannon, and artillery demonstrations, fife and drum music, and more.

Redcoats & Rebels video—scan with a mobile device to view.

Textile Weekend, August 17-18
Period clothing is the focus of this weekend. Learn about ready-made clothing and take a tour entitled Trimmed to Taste to explore how accessories and finishing touches were an important part of early 19th-century fashion.

Textile Weekend video—scan with a mobile device to view.

Family Fun Days, August 31-September 2
Before summer winds down and before school starts again, come to the Village for some old-fashioned fun over Labor Day weekend. Play games, make crafts, launch toy fire-balloons, and see our craftsmen at work.

Family Fun Days video—scan with a mobile device to view.

Harvest Party, September 21
Enjoy a crisp fall evening at Old Sturbridge Village with live music, hayrides, storytelling, bonfires, barn dancing, and an evening kite flying. See sparks fly as the Village fires up its kiln for its annual firing of Village-made pottery.

Harvest Party video—scan with a mobile device to view.

Agricultural Exhibition, September 14-15
Experience an old-fashioned agricultural fair complete with demonstrations of early New England farm equipment and displays of Village-grown heirloom vegetables. Learn to plow with the Village oxen and use a corn shelling machine.

Agricultural Exhibition video—scan with a mobile device to view.

Apple Days, October 3-4
Sponsored by Harvard Pilgrim Health Care
The apple harvest is a highlight of the New England autumn. Learn about nearly forgotten but delicious apple varieties, help pick apples 1830s style, and see how apple cider was made in our ox-powered cider mill.

Four Centuries of Massachusetts Furniture: The Furniture of Nathan Lombard, Exhibit Opening, October 18
Collectors’ Forum: October 19
See a stunning collection of furniture crafted by cabinetmaker Nathan Lombard (1777-1847), known for his intricate inlays. Included are Lombard furniture pieces on loan from the Winterthur Museum and private collectors, and OSV’s two newly acquired Lombard pieces.

OSV Overseers’ Speaker Series, October 3
Meet early American music historian David Hildebrand, director of the Colonial Music Institute, and learn about the creation of the national anthem and how music and poetry became musical expressions of patriotism during and after the War of 1812.

Treats and Tricks, October 25
A special evening of scary—but-safe fun! Trick or treat inside our “haunted Village” and enjoy family-friendly entertainment, including juggling, magic, and puppet shows.

Mark your calendar for the OSV Gala, September 14
For times and details on all upcoming events at OSV, please call 1-800-550-1830.

For times and details on all upcoming events at OSV, please call 1-800-550-1830.
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

Discovery Adventures at OSV June 24–August 16