



OLD STURBRIDGE VILLAGE

Sturbridge, Massachusetts

MAKE HISTORY!  WWW.OSV.ORG

WELCOME!

Thank you for becoming a member of the Old Sturbridge Village family. Enclosed you will find more information about your membership, upcoming events, and benefits offered to our members.

Your membership allows you to enjoy unlimited free daytime admission. To speed your admittance to the Village, please have your membership card and photo identification ready when you arrive and look for the **MEMBERS ONLY LINE**.

We will provide you with a **MEMBERSHIP CARD** annually that includes the expiration date and your Member Since date. Each member adult on the membership will receive a card which we will mail within a week of your membership transaction. If your card is lost or stolen, please notify us upon arrival.

Our members receive discounted rates on many evening programs, daytime programs and special events. To qualify for these great member savings opportunities on our web site and save time on all online Village transactions, please **REGISTER ONLINE**.

We encourage you to **PROVIDE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS**. In order to allocate more of your membership donation into programming, research and restoration, we send almost all of our communications to our members via email, with the exception of our Members magazine, the Old Sturbridge Village *Visitor* magazine.



SUMMARY OF BENEFITS

- ☞ Unlimited daytime admission (Special ticketed events do not apply)
- ☞ 25% discount on guest admissions
- ☞ 10% discount on purchase of gift memberships (Sale items do not apply)
- ☞ 10% discount at all Museum Gift Shops
- ☞ 10% discount on food services at the Village (Alcoholic beverages and special events do not apply)
- ☞ Annual Members Recognition event: Friends' Day – September 30, 2017
- ☞ Free monthly Members-only programs
- ☞ Member rates on fee-based programs and special events
- ☞ Discounted rooms at the Old Sturbridge Inn and Reeder Family Lodges
- ☞ Discounts at other partner living history museums (*See page 9*)
- ☞ Enjoy the Village with your dog on special Member-only Dog Days
- ☞ Exclusive Member-only events and specials throughout the year
- ☞ A subscription to the Old Sturbridge Village *Visitor* magazine
- ☞ Periodic e-mails, newsletters and updates on OSV happenings

CATEGORIES AND RENEWAL RATES

Individual Membership	\$65 for 1 year
<i>(Admission for one adult)</i>	
Individual Plus One Membership	\$90 for 1 year
<i>(Admission for one adult and one guest each visit)</i>	
Dual Membership	\$90 for 1 year
<i>(Admission for two adults)</i>	
Family Membership	\$105 for 1 year
<i>(Two adults living at the same address and their children/grandchildren under the age of 18)</i>	
Family Plus One Membership	\$130 for 1 year
<i>(Two adults living at the same address and their children/grandchildren under the age of 18, plus admission for one guest each visit)</i>	

Union 61 School District Resident Memberships

Residents of Sturbridge, Brimfield, Brookfield, Holland, or Wales may take \$20.00 off their purchase of a Membership to Old Sturbridge Village by presenting proof of residency at the Visitor Center.

Military Memberships

All active duty and career retired military can purchase a half-price Membership to Old Sturbridge Village at the Visitor Center with a Military ID.

Sustainable Memberships

All Membership categories are available for automatic renewal, including Union 61 Memberships. Please contact us to make your membership sustainable.

ABOUT YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Free Admission: Enjoy unlimited FREE **daytime** admission during your membership period, excluding special ticketed events. To speed your admission through any ticketing station on your visit, please have your Membership Card and photo ID ready when you arrive. Your Membership Card is not transferable to anyone other than those names on the card. We'll notify you in advance when it is time for you to renew.

Guest Admission Privileges: You may bring guests to Old Sturbridge Village at 25% off the regular admission rates. All of your guests may return for a second visit within 10 days at no extra charge simply by having their admission tickets validated at the Visitor Center or Museum Gift Shop prior to leaving.

Shopping Discounts: You will receive a 10% discount on purchases at all museum gift shops (Sorry, excludes sale items). Other promotional discounts, such as Member Shopping Nights in December, are also offered.

Food Discounts: Members receive a 10% discount on food purchases at Old Sturbridge Village. (Sorry, discount does not apply to alcoholic beverages or special dining events.)

Lodging Discounts: Members always receive a discount when they book a room at the Old Sturbridge Inn and Reeder Family Lodges. Room rates start as low as \$99 per night, depending on the season.

Gift Memberships: Purchase a membership for a friend or family member and receive 10% off the regular membership price. During the holidays, this benefit doubles to 20%!

Dog Days: Bring your dog on designated Dog Days throughout the year. More details are included in this booklet.

Member-Only Events and Recognition: Throughout the year, enjoy special activities and events open to Village members only, such as Friends' Day in the fall. More details for Garden Thyme are included in this booklet, and other events will be announced throughout the year.

Special Pricing on Special Events: Receive discounted tickets or early priority purchasing for many special events throughout the year, such as *The Sleepy Hollow Experience* and *Christmas by Candlelight*.

Old Sturbridge Village Publications and Communications: You will receive our Members magazine, the Old Sturbridge *Visitor*, as well as newsletters via email. Please provide us your email address for this purpose and notify us if you change your email address at any time.

Discounts at Partner Living History Museums: Receive a discount on admission with your Old Sturbridge Village member card. Please reference the list of museums on page 9 in this booklet for details.

DOG POLICY

Old Sturbridge Village extends to OSV members the privilege of bringing their dog to the Village during select days in January, February, March, April and November.

Dates for 2017 "Dog Days" are:

January 7 & 8, 14 & 15, 21 & 22, 28 & 29

February 10 & 17

March 4 & 5, 11 & 12, 18 & 19, 25 & 26

April 1 & 2

May 20 & 21

June 17 & 18

July 15 & 16

August 19 & 20

September 16 & 17

October 21 & 22

November 4 & 5

In order to be eligible to participate in Dog Days at Old Sturbridge Village, the following policy will be enforced:

- Owner of the dog must be a member of Old Sturbridge Village. "Guest" dogs are not eligible. Entrance to the Village is extended to dogs only, no other animals.
- Owner/member must show valid paper dog license as well as proof of rabies vaccination upon arrival at the Visitor Center.
- Dogs are to be kept on a leash and under control at all times while on Old Sturbridge Village property.
- Dogs are to be accompanied by owner/member at all times. Dogs cannot be tied and left unaccompanied.
- Dogs are not allowed inside of any exhibit building, food service building, and gift shop or in the Playground area.
- For the safety of other visitors as well as other animals, please keep dogs away from livestock including cattle, pigs, sheep, chickens, turkeys as well as horses that are pulling the carryall and stagecoach.
- A plastic bag will be issued to every owner/member upon arrival at the Visitor Center to clean up after their dog while on Old Sturbridge Village property.
- Any violation of this policy will be reported to Old Sturbridge Village Security who may ask the owner/member to leave with their dog.

GARDEN THYME - 2017

January 21, 2017 – New Years’ Resolutions – Garden Style Become a better weeder and a more efficient waterer by working smarter, not harder! Learn about labor saving materials and devices such as soaker hoses, scuffle hoes, and gluten meal. With this knowledge under your belt your garden may just be the best ever in 2017.

February 18, 2017 – Tools of the Trade for Successful Seed Starting Are grow lights really necessary? How about heat mats? The catalogs offer quite an array of products for home gardeners who wish to start their own transplants. Come to this workshop and learn what tools you really need for successful seed starting.

March 18, 2017 – Garden Planning 101 Planning for your garden season begins with garden mapping! Start your season off right by learning tips and tricks for mapping our your gardens, proper placement of plants, and other tools to help you start the season organized.

April 15, 2017 – Grow your Soil Start your growing season from the ground up by exploring and comparing the soil management practices of today with the 1830s, and share your own soil management techniques!

May 20, 2017 – Honey Bees Beekeeping is something that benefits all gardeners; still most do not keep bees. This was true in the 1830’s, it is true in 2017. Learn that starting and keeping a hive is not as daunting as it might seem, and the benefits are great!

June 17, 2017 – Wild Greens: Woodland and Field Plants of the 1830s Discover 1830s applications of woodland and field plants in diet and medicine. Practice skills in plant identification and botany while exploring personal accounts of 1830s families who utilized both cultivated and wild plants.

July 15, 2017 - Potatoes Come learn a brief history of potatoes as a crop, what variety is grown at Old Sturbridge Village and why, as well as how to store them overwinter. Following the talk, visit the Freeman Kitchen to learn how the ladies of the house would utilize potatoes in their everyday cooking and baking.

August 13, 2017 – Root Cellars, Then and Now The root cellar was an integral part of the 19th century home that is making a comeback in the 21st century. Learn how root cellars work and some suggestions to bring modern equivalents into your home to preserve your garden harvest.

September 16, 2017 – The Autumn Queen: Dahlias Glorious blooms extend late into the garden season and are true show stoppers at agricultural fairs both in the 19th century and today. Come discuss dahlia culture, staking, planting, and tuber care for years of elegant enjoyment.

October 21, 2017 – Back to the Roots Root vegetables were among the most important crops for 19th century families. Learn the history behind popular “esculent roots” and tips and tricks for growing, preserving, and seed saving root vegetables.

November 18, 2017 – Cooking with Cucurbits Harvest brings an abundance of squash, gourds, and pumpkins—but what to do with your bounty? Learn about 1830s preservation, storage techniques, and favorite squash “receipts” and share your favorite family squash recipes with other OSV members.

EARLY HISTORY OF OLD STURBRIDGE VILLAGE

In the early nineteenth century the land on which Old Sturbridge Village now stands was David Wight's prosperous farm, including sawmill, gristmill, and well-situated millpond. In earlier years the land had been wild and rough--the hill behind the Meetinghouse had once been called Pogus Mountain, known principally as the home of bears, wolves, and wildcats. Still earlier, at the end of the last Ice Age, the great glaciers had shaped and scoured the landscape, leaving ponds, boulders, and subtler traces that Village archaeologists would find much later.

But to understand the Village's beginnings as a museum we must go forward in time from the 1830s almost a century, to the 1920s--years of prosperity, technological triumphs, and social experimentation. Telephones, automobiles, electricity, and motion pictures were changing American life along with flappers, jazz, and Prohibition.

One of the era's stories of industrial success was the American Optical Company of Southbridge, Massachusetts. George Washington Wells had started with a modest central Massachusetts "spectacle shop" in the late 1840s and built it into a major firm by the turn of the century. His three sons--Channing M., Albert B., and J. Cheney Wells -- followed him into the business. All three inherited the family's New England ethic of hard work and became successful owner-executives in a fast-growing, technically complex industry. They also developed in their different ways a passion for collecting that would ultimately result in the founding of Old Sturbridge Village.

One decisive moment came on a rainy day in Vermont in 1926. A.B. Wells (as he was almost always called), unable to play golf with three of his friends, accompanied them instead on an expedition in search of "antiques." He had dabbled in collecting before, but that afternoon he became "hooked" on the ordinary objects of New England's past--"my primitives" as he often called them. From that day on he would fit his passionate concern for them into the busy life of a prominent industrialist.

A.B.'s collecting was a reflection of the man himself, enormously energetic and almost omnivorous. Having specialized in the manufacturing side of his business, he loved things that had been handmade in the New England countryside, things that were simple and rustic rather than ornate and urbane. If they were ingenious in design, unusual in appearance, or even bizarre, so much the better. Thus he delighted in wooden bowls and painted country furniture, scythes and hay rakes, redware pots and butter churns--but also a mouse trap with a guillotine-like double deadfall, an example of Wood's Patented Portable Washing Machine, and devices for breaking cheese curd and crushing apples.

J. Cheney Wells (usually called Cheney), took up collecting as well. Reserved, precise, and methodical, he found an interest to match his temperament and began to amass a significant collection of early American clocks and timepieces. In the 1920s, many of them came to adorn the American Optical Company's executive offices.

Channing Wells, the oldest of the brothers and long-time company president, excelled in sales, marketing, and skilled negotiation. He collected as well, particularly enjoying fine furniture, but his interests often took him in directions different from those of his brothers. However, he remained a knowledgeable and sympathetic advisor, and he and his children played a role in all family ventures.

They may not have known it at the beginning, but the Wells brothers were following a path that would lead to the creation of a major American museum. Interestingly, the same course was also being taken by members of other prominent American industrial families in the 1920s and 1930s. John D. Rockefeller Jr.

(Colonial Williamsburg), Henry Ford (Greenfield Village), and Henry Francis DuPont (Winterthur), among others, had become serious collectors and preservers of the American past. These individuals were very different, as were their collections and museums. But they shared more than wealth and prominence.

Each was concerned with preserving and cherishing pieces of the past against the powerful currents of change in early twentieth-century America, currents so powerful that it seemed they might carry away everything old. In their demanding business life the Wells brothers could find little time for sentiment or for tradition for its own sake. But avocationally, they sought to preserve the handcrafted artifacts of a vanishing past.

For A. B. Wells, the late twenties through the mid-thirties were "filled with collecting energies." The collection grew almost daily. At first it meant the addition of extra rooms to his large Southbridge home; finally the overflow crowded the family out completely and they moved to Walker Pond in Sturbridge.

By the early 1930s there were more than 45 rooms full of New England "primitives" in the Southbridge house, and the question of what to do with this extraordinary profusion of ordinary things could no longer be avoided. The collection had become too significant not to be shared with the public.

As A.B.'s son George Wells put it, they "were too big and too numerous to be simply one man's hobby."

In 1935 A.B., along with his brothers, other members of the family, and trusted associates, incorporated the Wells Historical Museum. A nonprofit educational corporation, the Museum took title to the collections and became responsible for their care and public display.

In July of 1936 there was a gathering of the Museum's trustees--really a Wells family council--to determine its future course. A.B. had a proposal in mind and he began the meeting with it: the Museum would move a number of typical early New England buildings to the extensive family-owned site on Main Street in Southbridge, arrange them in a horseshoe shape around a common, and use them as galleries to display the collections. But this plan was immediately "knocked ... full of holes" by George, who had a very different notion in mind. "He pointed out," A.B. recalled, "that the historical value of the things I'd been collecting was tremendous, provided that it could be put to proper usage.... He suggested that to make this material valuable it would be necessary to have a village, a live village, one with different shops operating ... it was essential to have water power. George had proposed "a revolutionary idea." It took the others "off their feet" but quickly won their support. J. Cheney Wells offered to add his clocks and other collections to A.B.'s and to help "in every way I can to develop a village along the lines that George suggests."

No one had ever accused a member of the Wells family of wasting time. Within a week they had purchased David Wight's old farm in Sturbridge, a tract of some 153 acres. The site was judged perfect for realizing the new conception; it had sloping meadows, wooded hillsides and, as noted earlier, a fine location for waterpower along the Quinebaug River. They began site development work for the "live village" and a few months later hired Malcolm Watkins as the museum's first curator to begin the formidable task of classifying and cataloging a collection already numbering in the tens of thousands.

To encompass these newly defined purposes, the Wells Historical Museum gave way to a new organization, first called the Quinebaug Village Corporation, it was established to: "operate a model village wherein shall be exhibited and carried on for the educational benefit of the public specimens and reproductions of New England architecture and antiquities, the arts, crafts, trades, and callings commonly practiced in and about New England villages prior to the period of industrial expansion....".

Making allowances for six decades of change in terminology, this very early statement still fits comfortably with the defining purposes of Old Sturbridge Village as they are carried out today.

As they developed the guiding vision for their Village, the Wells family relied on their strong sense of the look and feel of the New England countryside, rejecting plans and proposals that seemed too formal or citified. They asked the eminent New England landscape architect Arthur Shurcliff to help them lay out a country landscape that matched their vision. Thus the Village came to be defined by unpaved country roads, clapboarded rural houses, barns and shops, and craftsmen busy at their tasks--a look that it still retains.

Landscaping and construction work progressed in 1937 and 1938, but in late September "the great hurricane" washed away much of two years' visible progress and felled thousands of trees. Undaunted, the staff dug out, rebuilt, and piled up acres of "hurricane lumber" that would be used in future museum construction.

By 1941, some of the Village's familiar landmarks were in place: the Fitch House, the Miner Grant Store, and the Richardson House (now the Parsonage) were on the Common, and the Gristmill, a largely reconstructed building housing early machinery, was in operation on the Millpond. But December brought the attack on Pearl Harbor, and the coming of the Second World War brought museum construction, like most other civilian activities, virtually to a halt for the duration.

In 1945, active leadership of the museum effort passed into the hands of the next generation. The brothers of the Wells "triumvirate" were all in their seventies, and their sons were engaged with American Optical or pursuing other business concerns. At A.B.'s urging his daughter-in-law Ruth Wells, George B.'s wife, became Acting Director of the Village, moving the construction work forward with renewed energy. In 1946, Quinebaug Village, with the approval of town selectmen became Old Sturbridge Village, and in May of that year it was decided to prepare the museum to open to visitors.

Like other members of the Wells family, Ruth Wells did not seek attention or claim credit--but, as an early staff member who knew her well recalled, "she had the tenacity and the drive and the administrative sense to get the Village rolling...." She propelled the Village to Opening Day on June 8, 1946. Admission was \$1 per person. Eighty-one visitors toured the Village, driving their cars around the grounds. The Village staff of 25 included craftspeople, office personnel, and hosts and hostesses in the Village's earliest versions of period costume. Visitors could see and hear New England craftsmen at their work in a variety of shops, look at fine examples of rural New England architecture, enjoy a comprehensive exhibition of the Wells collections--and watch grain being ground by waterpower at the Gristmill on David Wight's millpond.

After more than 65 years, the Village is a very different place in many ways. It has been expanded and refined. It reaches nearly half a million visitors annually compared to the 5,170 of 1946. As the Village has sharpened its concern with historical authenticity, many parts of its landscape now much more closely resemble that of David Wight's 1830s farm.

The Village was launched successfully into the unknown of the postwar years by men and women who wanted to make the New England past relevant to their own times and present it for the future. Today the Village faces the challenges of a new century and a new millennium. The "information superhighway" and rapid social and economic changes are carrying us away from the nineteenth century at breakneck speed. But the pace of change makes the Village's mission more important than ever as the museum begins its second half century committed to preservation, education, interpretation, and the sheer enjoyment of history. The "live village" has become a national treasure, whose story is of enduring importance to America's collective memory.

For more information about the Village's history, go to www.osv.org.

PARTNER LIVING HISTORY MUSEUMS

Old Sturbridge Village members can receive a discount at other outdoor living history museums across the United States. Just show your valid OSV Membership Card at any one of these museums to receive a discount on admission. These offers are subject to change without notice – please call ahead to the museum to confirm!

Canterbury Shaker Village

Canterbury, NH
603-783-9511
www.shakers.org

George Ranch Historical

Fort Bend Museum
Richmond, TX
281-343-0218
www.georgeranch.org

Mystic Seaport Museum

Mystic, CT
888-973-2767
www.mysticseaport.org

Colonial Williamsburg

Williamsburg, VA
800-HISTORY
757-447-8679
www.history.org

Hancock Shaker Village

Pittsfield, MA
800-817-1137
413-443-0188
Hancockshakervillage.org

Plimoth Plantation

Plymouth, MA
508-746-1622
www.plimoth.org

Conner Prairie

Fishers, IN
800-966-1836
Or 317-776-6000
www.connerprairie.org

Historic Deerfield

Deerfield, MA
413-775-7214
www.historic-deerfield.org

Strawberry Banke

Portsmouth, NH
603-433-1100
www.strawberrybanke.org

Historic New England

(formerly SPNEA)
Various sites throughout
New England
617-227-3956
www.historicnewengland.org

Genessee Country Village

Mumford, NY
585-538-6822
www.gcv.org

Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer

Grand Island, NE
308-385-5316
www.stuhrmuseum.org

Mashantucket Pequot Museum & Research Center

Mashantucket, CT
860-396-6800
www.pequotmuseum.org

TO CONTACT OSV

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