Old Sturbridge Academy
Holmes Family Papers
Home Gardeners Exhibit
The Charlotte’s Web Experience
Honoring Our Friends
Apprenticeships
It Takes a Village
Travel and Transportation
Looking forward to spring with new events and member programs

Jim Donahue, President and CEO

Friends, it has been a cold winter in Massachusetts, and everyone at Old Sturbridge Village is looking forward to the warmth of spring and summer. The fall and winter have been busy as we prepare for the start of another season at the museum.

As you will read in this issue, a lot has been happening, including the opening of Old Sturbridge Academy Charter Public School. The Academy is a transformational and innovative educational option for some of the most vulnerable students in the region. The students are learning by doing and experiencing the Village on a regular basis. Recently, a group of students participated in a focus group about their experience so far, and the thing they enjoy most about their school is the time they spend in the museum working with Interpreters and Museum Educators.

Apprenticeships were an essential part of learning a trade in the early 19th century, and I am pleased to announce that we have established a new program to promote the preservation of historic trades through the Straker Internship in Historic Trades. We are grateful to Mr. Straker for investing in the museum and the next generation of craftspeople.

This year marks the 70th anniversary of membership at the Village and the 60th anniversary of Friends’ Day! To celebrate, we are moving Friends’ Day to Saturday, May 19th to capture the beautiful spring weather at the Village. Our members have had a tremendous influence on the museum, and I hope you enjoy reading and learning more about the history of our day to say “thank you” to all of you.

We are always looking ahead at Old Sturbridge Village, but it is also important to look back and remember friends and family who have affected our lives. January was a difficult month for many of us at the museum as we mourned the passing of a wonderful person, friend, and Trustee, Joan McGrath. You will find a tribute to her within this issue.

Thank you for all that you do for Old Sturbridge Village, and I hope that you enjoy this issue of The Visitor. We are looking forward to seeing everyone for Friends’ Day on May 19.

Sincerely,

Jim Donahue
OSV President and CEO

We hope to see you at Friends’ Day on its new date: May 19, 2018
Welcome to the SPRING/SUMMER edition of our VISITOR magazine. We hope you will learn new things and visit the Village soon.

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**YEARLY MEMBERSHIP**

$65 for Individual
$90 for Individual Plus One and Dual
$105 for Family
$130 for Family Plus One

Family membership benefits are extended to two adults living at the same address and any children or grandchildren under the age of 18. Individual Plus One includes a complimentary guest admission with each visit. Dual membership is for two adults living at the same address. Family Plus One includes two adults, one guest, and any children/grandchildren under 18.

**MEMBERS ENJOY**

- Free, unlimited daytime admission
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- Discounts at partner living history museums
- Free members-only programs
- Annual members recognition event
- Advance notice of Village programs and events
- Member rates for select fee-based events
- Member rates at the Old Sturbridge Inn and Reeder Family Lodges
- Periodic emails, newsletters and updates on Village happenings
- Members-only Dog Days
- Members-only events

To join, subscribe or provide a change of address, write the Membership Department, email membership@osv.org or call 508-347-0294.
A Unique Partnership: Old Sturbridge Village & Old Sturbridge Academy

The opening of Old Sturbridge Academy in the fall of 2017 had a significant effect on Old Sturbridge Village – not just physically with the addition of a new building on campus – but programmatically and ideologically. Old Sturbridge Village has been providing educational programs to schools throughout New England for years, welcoming 55,000 students on field trips every year. However, the launch of the Academy challenged Village educators in a new and exciting way. The school’s curriculum was designed from the start to incorporate regular visits to the Village into student schedules, putting the museum and its resources at the center of student education.

This concept is revolutionary – few other schools or museums are in a partnership of this kind where students use museum resources weekly or daily. The Village Education Department collaborated with the school’s teachers as well as EL Education, the school’s curriculum design partner, to create Learning Through Experience (LTE) – a weekly, hour-long program that ties classroom learning standards to hands-on activities throughout the museum. This new program was funded thanks to the generosity of several foundation funders, including the Scripps Family Fund for Education and the Arts, as well as the United Way of Southbridge, Sturbridge, and Charlton.

Learning Through Experience is unique because it builds out-of-classroom museum trips into students’ schedules on a regular basis, strengthening connections to subject areas covered in the classroom. The program is led by costumed interpreters, museum educators, and members of the curatorial staff for an hour every week. Students participate in hands-on lessons related to their classroom content, while teachers at the Academy use this scheduled time to hold professional development and staff meetings.

Throughout the school year, Academy students will experience a total of 35 customized programs that run weekly for about an hour. The entire Old Sturbridge Village campus is the setting for each LTE. Some weeks students will be exploring the trails and waterways, other weeks they will go behind the scenes into the workspaces not typically viewed by the public, and many weeks they will be working in and around the historic village and museum.

Each class of Academy students is paired with two LTE Museum Educators who work with the class for the duration of the school year. This model provides consistency and helps build strong relationships and solid foundations of learning. In addition, depending on the theme for the week, students work with a variety of expert OSV staff members from across the institution, including historic interpreters, carpenters, and curators.

The LTES are about innovation and provide us with a unique opportunity to use the Village resources in new and exciting ways. The goal for this program is to create a new model of museum education programs that are sustainable and deeply-rooted in classroom learning standards, rather than simply one-time memorable experiences in an entertaining setting. These programs will make
This Year’s LTE Units

**Unit 1: Meet My Museum**

We kicked off the year with unit where all students and classroom teachers rotated through activities to get acquainted with their museum campus and be introduced to all that Old Sturbridge Village has to offer. Students met the Village staff and animals, explored the land and trail system and visited the historic buildings and collection-focused exhibits on a multi-week adventure. Activities included close looking and drawing in the Clock Gallery, an Ox-cart ride around the Village Common, marbling paper in the Museum Education building, an imaginary meal in the Parsonage, and leaf identification on the Woodland Walk.

**Unit 2: Materials**

Starting in December, each grade had its own special material to focus on for the 7-week unit. Kindergartners spent their time learning about wood, first graders fiber, second graders clay, and third graders metal. This unit began with a classroom lab featuring science experiments where students tested the properties of their material and recorded observations. Favorite experiments included weighing different types of wood using a digital scale, observing how natural and synthetic fibers respond to being soaked in water, and testing the magnetic properties of various metals. All students created projects for this unit including wooden toy trains, woven bookmarks, clay sculptures, and a classroom “quilt” made of punched tin squares.

**Unit 3: Food**

This unit started in March and is all about food! Similar to the Materials unit, each grade is focusing on a different food group and classes will participate in activities about where food comes from and how it is processed, prepared, and eaten both today and in the past. Students will visit the historic and modern commercial kitchens throughout the Village and work together to preserve and cook historic and modern recipes.

**Unit 4: Growing**

Coming up in May, students will explore fields, forests, greenhouses, and gardens in the final unit covering plants and growing! Old Sturbridge Village’s historic gardens and farms are the perfect environment for students to study plants and growing cycles.

greater use of the vast knowledge and resources present at the Village, including museum collections, interpreters and educators, and historic homes. The built-in audience of the Old Sturbridge Academy students and teachers allows us to pilot and test a variety of new programs for the school audience that will later be adapted for a broader school audience.

We believe that museums and cultural organizations have an important place in the field of education, and this partnership with Old Sturbridge Academy has provided the necessary push to place the Village in the center of this conversation. We look forward to the exiting future of education at the Village!
This past year several interns helped to clean and organize the Village’s Research Library, uncovering some interesting finds from the collection. The Library holds more than 35,000 volumes, including textbooks, periodicals, maps, diaries, account books, letters, and other historical documents. Many stories are hidden in these pages, revealing the tales of early New England families.

Simmons College student Susan Creighton (MLIS candidate, Dec. 2018) focused her time in December of 2017 on the Holmes Family Papers, consisting of almost 2.5 cubic feet of materials and over 1100 individual items. This collection hadn’t been organized in many years and tells the narrative of the Holmes Family, who lived in central Massachusetts primarily in 1810-1885.

The documents include personal family letters, filled with news of family events like births and marriages, illnesses and wartime concerns of the Civil War. There are business letters between the Holmes brothers, particularly about Edwin Holmes’s new burglar alarm business (one of the first of its kind). Other papers are town records of employment – Holmes family jobs included postmaster, tax collector, member of a new school board, and church membership secretary.

This vast collection of notes and documents paints an interesting picture of family and business life in central Massachusetts in the 19th century, and even provides a glimpse into social happenings such as the development of a new high school in West Boylston, Massachusetts. These types of records provide the basis for the Interpretation program here at the Village, and are important to preserving the history of local families and businesses. ♦

Tax Notice for Thomas Holmes, West Boylston, MA, December 25, 1822. 2002.5.3.2.2

Photograph of Janette Holmes with note that she worked on the attached lace before she was married (October 20, 1852). It is unknown who pinned the materials together on green felt. 2002.5.4.1.142
Letter from John Holmes (Londonderry) to his brother Thomas Holmes (West Boylston) April 17, 1837, discusses the health of the family, news of family member, and inquiries of goods. 2002.5.1.1.10

2002.5.1.1.268 Letterhead of Edwin Holmes Burglar Alarm Telegraph

2002.5.2.1.5A U.S. Patent signed by Edmund Burke issued to Thomas Cole and John Littlefield who “have invented a new and useful improvement in the machine for winnowing grain,” January 1849

For more Curatorial Programming and Events go to the Village’s website, www.osv.org

This summer our curators will explore Fashion and Textiles in a series in partnership with MassFashion.
Agricultural fairs were increasingly popular in 19th-century New England, with communities and agricultural societies hosting annual fairs awarding premiums for cattle, sheep, vegetable crops, textiles, plowing matches, and more. These fairs not only offered farmers the opportunity to advertise their successes in livestock, crop yield, and all things agricultural, but also the chance to share ideas and techniques for the improvement of agriculture within the community. At Old Sturbridge Village we continue a part of this tradition with our annual Home Gardener’s Exhibit.

With spring fast approaching, it is time to think about what should go in the garden for harvest this fall. Mark your calendars and join OSV gardeners in celebrating the 2018 growing season on October 6 – 8 at the 2018 Home Gardener’s Exhibit. Enter to display your crop of 19th-century New England herbs, flowers and vegetables, and get a chance to talk with OSV horticulturists about the season. Be sure to stop by the OSV gift shop this spring to pick from a wide selection of heirloom seeds that are eligible for entry into the Home Gardener’s Exhibit. Information is available on the event page at www.osv.org/event/home-gardeners-exhibit along with the registration form, flowers, herbs, vegetables, and classes in which entries are accepted!

Pre Registration for this event is due October 1, 2018, and entries will also be accepted on site. Start planting today!
SOME PIG! This summer Old Sturbridge Village and Brian Clowdus Experiences bring the beloved story of Charlotte’s Web to life with a live musical production based on the classic and beloved tale by E.B. White. This production is a reinvented version of the story, set in a timeless New England era that honors the 1830s but with modern license to breathe fresh air into the story! Follow Charlotte, Wilbur, and all their barnyard friends in a 6-person cast of singer/musician storytellers set within a farm scene. Audience members will sit amongst the cows and pigs while working farmers and oxen stroll past, adding the experiential elements of Old Sturbridge Village’s daily workings and traditions!
This year celebrates the 70th anniversary of the membership program at Old Sturbridge Village. Since its inception it has been a central component of the Village. The first issue of the Village Courier, on July 29, 1948, outlined the plan for the Friends: “The organization is the outgrowth of a circle of friends closely interested in the Village’s Craft and Educational Programs.” The various membership plans were priced as follows: “Life, $100.00; Contributing, $25.00; Sustaining, $10.00; Annual, $2.00; and Family, $4.00.”

The article touted the benefits of the membership: “In return for their yearly memberships, the Friends of Old Sturbridge Village are issued membership cards for each season that they join. Their membership tickets entitle them to visit the Village as often as they like during the time the Village is open.” In 1961, after being open for only 15 years, the Village celebrated its 3,000th membership with the Oppenheimer Family, who “felt, as do many of our visitors, there was far too much to see and absorb in one trip, and wishing to return for summer outings and further examination, found a family membership a welcome economy.”

Enthusiasm for the Village grew, and the 5,000th member was inducted in 1962. Today we track memberships by household rather than by the individual, and in 2018 the Village happily boasts 6,000 yearly member households.

Over the years, Village Friends have lent their time and expertise by participating in symposia, donating objects to our historic collections, and devoting their time to projects around the Village. One memorable instance was in 1982 when Senior Curator Jane Nylander asked members for assistance in knitting woolen accessories and received almost 100 scarves, mittens, and gloves. She claimed “Most of our knitters are Friends.”

To honor the benevolent dedication of Friends, in 1958 – just 10 years after formally adopting a membership program – the Village established a day to commemorate its members. On May 19, 2018 the Village will continue this tradition by celebrating its 60th Annual Friends’ Day. Over the years, Friends’ Day has featured a variety of activities, including craft demonstrations, kiln firings, workshops, exhibition previews and lectures, building tours, dances on the Common, and marches throughout the Village.

Members’ reflections on their time spent at the Village have been highlighted before in various issues of the *Visitor*. One poignant message is from the Summer 1961 issue:

“...Being a friend makes my visits to Old Sturbridge so much more personal and meaningful that I derive more from my membership than does the Village.

Among my favorite spots in the Village are the Pliny Freeman Farm, the Solomon Richardson House, and the Pottery Shop. Of course I can never leave the Village without some chicken pot pie at the Tavern and a bag of Mrs. Allen’s cookies. Whenever I have visitors from out of state one of the first places we visit is Old Sturbridge Village. Sometimes they disagree with me about the most memorable exhibitions, but they always agree with me about the chicken pot pie and Mrs. Allen’s cookies. Yours Truly, Walter S. Wilcox New Britain, Conn.”

Comments like this make our staff that much more excited to share their passion for history and make our dedication to serving the public a pleasure. A.B. and J. Cheney Wells – along with Ruth, George, C. Malcolm and scores of other individuals involved in the Museum from the early days – would be thankful for your continuous support of the Village and their vision. As the Museum charges towards its 75th anniversary in 2021 we are ever more appreciative to all of our Visitors from 1946 to 2018, because all of you are integral to the Village’s success.

On behalf of the staff at Old Sturbridge Village, we hope you will join us for Friends’ Day on Saturday, May 19th to celebrate you — and to enjoy a Joe Frogger or two! 🍗

**ENDNOTES**

1. Doris D. Wood, *Old Sturbridge Village: A Chronicle* (1959), 46, 50-52. This unpublished manuscript is an account by Doris D. Wood outlining the history of Old Sturbridge Village based on primary source documents and interviews with the Wells family from 1946 to 1958.
April

**Garden Symposium** | April 7
Discover the secrets and benefits of seed saving and preservation of heirloom flowers and vegetables. Enjoy a day with special guest garden experts and lunch.

**Family Farm Fest | Patriots Day** | School Vacation Week | April 14-15, 16, 21-22
Lambs, cattle, goats, Oh my! Celebrate spring and the arrival of baby animals. Meet lambs, chickens, cattle, and more up-close and learn about the many responsibilities associated with raising animals in the 1830s. Participate in hands-on and interactive activities throughout the Village, along with family-friendly performances and entertainment. Featured activities include Farm Yard Games, musical performances, and an interpreter portraying Laura Ingalls Wilder of “Little House on the Prairie” fame. On Monday, April 16, celebrate Patriots Day activities at the Village, including military drills and musket demonstrations.

May

**Mother’s Day** | Sunday, May 13
Family events are planned throughout the day, including demonstrations of cooking for children, hands-on crafts, and performances. Visit with 19th-century midwife Lucy Tucker and Lydia Maria Child, author of The Mother’s Book. Regular exhibits, such as the tinner, potter, and blacksmith, will focus their craft on items for families and children. Mothers receive free admission to Old Sturbridge Village on Mother’s Day.

**Friends’ Day** | May 19
A day for Village members to participate in hands-on activities, behind-the-scenes tours, and a luncheon; watch for separate mailing.

**Wool Days** | May 26-28 | Memorial Day Weekend
The sheep get their yearly “haircuts” during Memorial Day weekend. Visitors can watch the farmers shear the sheep and then watch costumed historians demonstrate the entire wool textile process, from cleaning and carding the wool, to spinning yarn, to knitting. Guests can also meet all the animals at the village, including lambs, chickens, and calves. Other demonstrations and exhibits include hearth cooking, printing, coopering, blacksmithing, and so much more!

June

**Movin’ Through History: A Celebration of Vintage Vehicles** | June 9-10
When Old Sturbridge Village first opened in 1946, it wasn’t just a walking Village — it was a driving Village. On this weekend the Village salutes its early heritage with an annual antique car rally featuring more than 100 automobiles from 1946 and earlier, and other means of transportation.
**Father’s Day | June 17**
Free admission for all Dads on this special day, with talks and tours related to fatherhood in the 19th century, and grilled foods available for purchase—bring a picnic!

**July**

**Independence Day Celebration | July 4**
Come celebrate the best July 4th in history with old-fashioned, patriotic family fun! The festivities will include opportunities to take part in the citizens’ parade, march with the militia, participate in a pie-eating contest, and play 19th century baseball or Farm Yard Games. Visitors will be in awe as costumed historians fire a replica cannon. Guests can also learn 19th-century dances and listen to special performances on the Common. There will be a barbeque in the Village for guests to purchase or guests can bring their own picnic. Also don’t miss the inspirational Naturalization Ceremony at noon on the Common.

**CHEERS! A Craft Beer & Roots Music Festival | July 21**
Our wildly popular event returns, now during summer! Historic interpreters present 19th-century craft demonstrations, while dozens of craft brewers from throughout New England serve samples of their finest, small-batch, mouth-watering beers and hard ciders in a spectacular beer garden with exciting musical guests.

**August**

**Redcoats and Rebels | August 4-5**
Don’t miss this cherished annual event, the largest military re-enactment in New England with nearly 1,000 soldiers portraying British, Irish, Spanish, Scottish, French and Colonial troops. This event transforms the Village into a military camp from the time of the War for Independence, as it was known in early New England. Come see what it was like for those who fought to win America’s freedoms. On Saturday evening, take advantage of extended hours to stroll through the military outposts at Twilight Encampments.

**Textile Weekend | August 18-19**
Costumed interpreters will celebrate 19th-century needlework and ornamental fiber arts. Activities will focus on a variety of historical sewing and textile techniques: weaving, embroidering, knitting, netting, yarn sewing, and crocheting, which was a new fashion in needlework in the 1830s. Visitors can try their hand at textile crafts and help to knit and crochet scarves for American soldiers.

**Announcing the Distinguished Speaker Series**

Each evening a reception begins at 6:00 pm followed by a lecture at 7:00 pm.
Tickets: $10 for OSV Members | $12 for non-members.

- **April 5** Sydney Chaffee, America’s 2017 Teacher of the Year
- **April 26** Ed Lodi, author, “The Angel of Hadley: A Legend of King Philip’s War”
- **May 10** Michael Tougias, author, “Above & Beyond: JFK and the U-2 Pilots during the Cuban Missile Crisis”

For details and to reserve a space, visit our website.
Apprenticeship in Early 19th-Century New England

Tom Kelleher, Historian and Curator of Mechanical Arts

The family was the basic unit of society in early New England. Very young boys and girls alike were in the charge of their mother and older sisters, but once they were old enough to be of real help children learned to be adults by “following on,” or working with their same-gender parent or older siblings. If parents wished an older child to learn skills that they themselves did not possess, the child was apprenticesed out to a person who could make use of the labor of a child of a particular age and gender. In exchange for work, the child was educated and cared for in the family of a master or mistress with the desired skills and knowledge.

Apprenticeships were also how early America typically provided for orphans. Town officers called Overseers of the Poor found suitable families willing to take in parentless children, and signed indenture contracts. In fact, the majority of surviving apprentice indentures from the late 1700s and early 1800s provided for the care and rearing of minor orphans, preserved in government records. Most boys in these contracts were to be trained in “husbandry” (farming) and girls in “housewifery,” the most common occupations in early America. Occasionally other common trades like blacksmithing or shoemaking were mentioned.

Be it farmer, housewife, tradesman, tradeswoman, or even professional, 18th and early 19th century Yankees didn’t learn job skills in schools but rather by working with experienced practitioners. Although there were a few law and medical schools by the early 1800s, even most doctors and lawyers did not learn their professions in classrooms, but by working with older practitioners. In some trades such as house carpentry or seamanship, observant and ambitious men could work their way up from poorly paid, low-skill “entry level” jobs into better paying skilled positions. Older adults would learn new skills through apprenticeship, like farmer Henry Jenkins of Andover, Massachusetts, who took up part-time blacksmithing at 33 years of age. Likewise in 1849 Hannah Cody promised to work for Zenas Sawyer of Dover, New Hampshire for a year “at the usual rate of payment” as his other employees received, providing that he taught her how to be a weaver.

Unlike in Europe, America had no long-standing medieval guild system to regulate trades or the terms of apprenticeship. Surviving American apprenticeship agreements rarely stipulate a specific span of time to be served, and no “masterpieces,” a hallmark of the European guild system, were required of American artisans. In America, all that was required to be a master craftsman was enough skill to attract customers and the financial means to set up a shop of one’s own. Americans kept the vocabulary of Master (an independent craftsman), Journeyman (literally a man paid by the day, from “jour,” the French word for “day”), and Apprentice (for a youth learning the trade), but abandoned strict European rules and restrictions.

After the social turmoil of the American Revolution, and the economic growth of the 1790s and beyond, apprenticeship began to lose its social and economic functions as family control declined in favor of the individual. The progression of the Industrial Revolution also brought increased division of labor – breaking production down into discreet tasks performed by separate individuals – which reduced prices for consumers but also made work dull and repetitive and undermined the positions of skilled workers. With more cash in circulation than ever before, and more diverse work opportunities, many teenage boys were lured by cash...
wages on farms or in factories; in semi-skilled trades like production shoemaking; working on railroads, canals, or highways driving freight wagons and stagecoaches; in the building trades; or clerking in a store.

Unfortunately, many entrepreneurial employers in the 19th century also started to use “apprenticeships” to exploit child labor rather than train young tradesmen for successful independent careers. This practice often left apprentices and their families confused, disappointed, angry and resentful. In the early 1840s, apprentice cabinetmaker Edward Jenner Carpenter in Greenfield, Massachusetts, learned his trade well enough to be set to work making “secretaries” (a desk and bookcase combination) and bureaus, over and over again, for sale through a store to anonymous customers. On Tuesday, June 11, 1844, about halfway through his four year and four month apprenticeship, he wrote about his frustration in his diary: “…I began another cheap butternut Secretary [sic] this morning [. .I]t is Bureaus & Secratary all the time [. .] I have worked on them about a year & I begin to think it is about time to learn to make something else.”

The home and the workplace continued to grow apart in the 1800s. Employers sought young workers in greater number but absolved themselves of moral responsibility for employees outside of the workplace. At first Masters began to pay cash allowances in lieu of providing clothing for apprentices. Apprentices were next banished from the Master’s home and table, and made responsible for finding their own room and board, receiving modest cash allowances for those expenses. Some employers withheld critical skills until the end of an apprenticeship to keep their employees from leaving, and many began to dock wages for absence, wastefulness, or underproduction. Increasingly, cash was the ruling factor in the workplace.

In sum, by the 1830s young American men and women had much wider opportunities than ever before – in manufacturing, commerce, transportation, agriculture, and education. Facing greater choice also meant making difficult, life-altering decisions as they entered adulthood. The old rules of life, including those of colonial-era apprenticeships, no longer applied, and many 19th century adolescents faced confusion and uncertainty as well as opportunities and challenges as they sought the ways and means to build secure and successful futures in a time of great social flux and economic change.

Today, this 18th and 19th century system of apprenticeships is portrayed at Old Sturbridge Village throughout the homes, trade shops, and businesses. Employees, volunteers, and interns at the Village use the apprenticeship model to pass on the knowledge needed to showcase work and daily life of the 1830s. Every summer, new interns and volunteers partner with seasoned staff members to gradually learn skills in farming, blacksmithing, tin work, cooking, sewing and weaving, printing, and much more.

This year, thanks to a generous donor, the Village will be investing even more resources into the historic trades by starting a new intern program. The Straker Internship in Historic Trades will fund interns dedicated to the historic trades, apprenticed to work alongside OSV’s master craftsmen and women. This exciting program will continue the Village’s work to preserve the skills and knowledge of the past, portraying early American life to visitors across the nation.

In Memoriam

The Village community is composed of many individuals – people who give their time, gifts, and talents to make OSV a vibrant cultural resource to the nation. Every member of this community is a valuable part of the fabric of this organization and all that Old Sturbridge Village is able to accomplish. We are deeply saddened by the loss of the following members of our community who passed away in the past year.

(*) Denotes membership in the George Washington Wells Society, which recognizes donors who have remembered the Village in their estate plans.

Former OSV Staff
Shirley Bednarcyk
Jacob Bowen
Eleanor Davol
Beatrice E. Frew
Catherine Knight

OSV Trustees
Joan M. McGrath

OSV Honorary Trustees
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Catherine T. Novick
Melinda Ramsby
Michael J. Rosen
Summer Segal
Celeste C. Simmons
Robert E. Tee
Mary Ann Valinski
Richard C. Valinski
Albert B. Wells

Please contact the Development Office at 508-347-0294 or at development@osv.org if we inadvertently left someone off this list.
Remembering Joan McGrath

Jim Donahue, President and CEO

It is with a broken heart that I share the news that Joan McGrath, longtime Chairman of the Overseers and member of the Village Board of Trustees, passed away after a brief and very rare illness in January 2018. Joan’s enthusiasm for the Village, the community, her family, and friends is deeply missed by all of us.

I was especially close with Joan. In fact, she and her husband Rich were one of the first couples I met when I arrived at the museum in the summer of 2007. The Overseer Chairman at that time, Ann Marie Argitis, invited me to dinner at her house on Big Alum Lake to meet a couple she thought would be great to involve in the Village. How right she was! It wasn’t long after that dinner that Joan was helping with logistics on our first Gala Committee. After making that event such a success, Joan accepted my invitation to become an Overseer - eventually chairing the Gala herself. Through the family business, McGrath Insurance, Rich and Joan became generous corporate members of the Village - and as a member of the Historical Society for Early American Decoration, Joan helped to facilitate our partnership with them.

When I asked Joan to chair the Overseers, I promised her she would only have to do it for a year. Four years later, she had led the development of the Overseers’ Distinguished Speaker Series and encouraged residents of Sturbridge to become members of the Village to support its future in the town. In 2017 she was elected to the Village’s Board of Trustees - a position she took very seriously. She would always email me after the Board meetings to say how much she enjoyed them and how much respect she had for all of the Trustees. She loved the Village, and did everything she could to support us. Even when she was in the hospital, she was texting me that she was promoting membership to a technician who lived nearby and was running her tests. Even in distress, she said, she still had her Village hat on.

I have the privilege of working with a lot of terrific people at the Village. Joan was one the best, and her untimely death has shaken all of us on the Board. As an Honorary Trustee and friend said, “She was, quite simply, a beautiful human being.”

Joan and Rich McGrath, their daughter Erin, and son Sean, with composer John Williams and filmmaker Ken Burns at his 2013 Speaker Series talk.
It Takes A Village
A Thank You To Our Volunteers

Since the 1990s Old Sturbridge Village has called upon skilled volunteers to work in many departments across the museum, assisting staff with daily programs and events. As a non-profit, the Village has always been grateful for the hundreds of people who donate their time, skills, and knowledge to bolster our team of year-round staff. Records from the nineties show that volunteers helped out at an Information Desk at the Visitor Center, worked as Greeters to answer questions or give orientation to large tour buses, and even helped out with the Friday Night Movie program that used to run in the theatre. Many volunteer positions from the early years sound familiar: working in costume in the Village, helping out “DEPP” (Department of Education and Public Programs) or “RCL” (Research, Collections, and Library), or even making crafts at the Visitor Center during special events.

In the nineties the program had only 50 volunteers, but today over 220 people give their time and talents to help make Old Sturbridge Village an amazing museum and historic resource. Our volunteers have different backgrounds and life experiences – bringing a host of skills and knowledge to the Village. The ways our volunteers help out seem endless, from maintaining the historic collections and the research library, working in costume, assisting with fundraising and events, planting and maintaining the herb garden and greenhouse, participating in militia programs, helping with Homeschool Days, Scout Days, and Discovery Adventures, dancing or singing for special events, knitting and repairing costumes, participating in Christmas by Candlelight, and so much more.

Three decades after the program started we are ever grateful for the wonderful people who volunteer across the Village. Meet some of our current volunteers below, and be sure to say “Hi” if you see them around the Village!

**Rick Predella**
Rick is a resident of Sturbridge and was recruited as an Overseer by friend and Board of Trustee member Joan McGrath. Rick has always had a love for American history. Recently retired, Rick volunteers one day a week to interpret life as a farmer in the 1830s. “I love working on the farm!” he says. “I get to talk with people from all over the world, but my favorite thing about interpreting is watching the children run up to the farm to see the animals.” As an Overseer, Rick has served on the Gala Committee and is a new member of the Speaker Series Committee. In his spare time, Rick enjoys spending time with his seven grandchildren and is an avid pilot – you can see him pictured with granddaughter Elliana on the Freeman Farm.

**John and Diane Engle**
John and Diane Engle have been involved at the Village for many years, volunteering as costumed interpreters. Both started at the Village in 2010 after they retired, helping out with special events and eventually moving to costume. Diane works in the households and foodways programs, moving primarily among Bixby House, Fitch House, and the Freeman Farm. She has fond memories of bringing her grandkids to the Village and watching them grow captivated by the blacksmith shop. You’ll find John at the Sawmill or working on pottery production, and even helping out as one of Santa’s elves at Christmas by Candlelight. One of his favorite memories was interacting with a young boy who came to the Sawmill with his father, and ended up staying for hours asking questions about engineering and the mechanics of the mill. Both John and Diane agree that the most rewarding part is interacting with visitors, helping to share their love of history, and finding ways to connect the 1830s to a modern audience. John remembers visiting in the 1950s when the “bake shop was in the Cottage.” Their whole family loves to be at the Village – grandsons Alex and Tim have gone to Discovery Adventures summer camp at the Village (pictured). John and Diane feel that volunteering at OSV has allowed...
Edie Kirk
Edie Kirk joined the Development Office this year as a volunteer – helping staff with the numerous mailings and communications that are part of the fundraising and membership program. She lived in Woodstock CT in high school and visited OSV with family and friends. After college and marriage, she moved to Sturbridge and often brought her children to “the Village.” She and her family have lived in several states and countries, but she and her husband Dave returned to New England in 2017. In her professional career Edie worked extensively in Development and Advancement with nonprofit health care organizations and colleges so she understands the labor intensive tasks that are a part of every Development program – and is happy to help out at the Village.

Luis Valentin
Luis began as a volunteer in the Interpretation Department this past year after being inspired by a conversation with interpreters out at Fenno Barn. “As an artist I always feel a connection while visiting the Village,” he explained, “and one day I was having a conversation with the interpreters dyeing wool and I just knew I wanted to do what they were doing. Three weeks later I was in training. I love history, the creative process and interacting with people and I’m able to get an opportunity to fulfill these passions on one single canvas, Old Sturbridge Village!” Luis says he loves to learn about history and be part of the group that makes the Village come to life. It is exciting to “capture the visitors’ curiosity and interest - the most challenging and fun being the children who visit.” Outside of the Village Luis follows his creativity through painting, playing the guitar, travelling, and of course photography. His latest project is a photography blog documenting his time at the Village – find him at mysturbridgevillage.com. When he’s not in costume he works as a Patient Advocate at the Charter Oak Health Center in Hartford, CT, working with the underserved community by providing support for their health and social needs.

Elizabeth Williams
Elizabeth ‘Bobbie’ Williams began volunteering for the Village in 2009 and has completed 2400 volunteer hours to date – a truly impressive achievement. She has worked in many departments, including throughout the gardens, Small House, in the dance troupe, and currently the Research Library. She is always ready to jump in on any project, and the curatorial staff says she has been crucial to helping organize and maintain the library. The Research Library Manager Amy Hietala said that “her energy, sense of humor, and dedication are second to none!” In her spare time, Bobbie enjoys gardening, crafts, and reading. She lives with her husband, Jim, and their mini dachshund.

Joyce Rivers
Joyce Rivers joined the Village as a volunteer 2006 when she donated slides of 18th and 19th century samplers (embroidery or cross-stitch samples) to OSV and offered to put them into our database. She continued to help with curatorial work and eventually moved on to other tasks such as cleaning, helping with exhibitions and seasonal exhibit changes, inventorying – “the list was endless!” She is currently helping again with the curatorial database, working on the important task of maintaining collections records. Joyce says that her time volunteering at the Village has kept her in touch with the decorative arts, which have been important to her for over forty years. She was also a docent at the Winterthur Museum Garden in Delaware, and ran an antique business with her husband for almost twenty years. Recently she was asked to become an Overseer and is completing her second year in that role. In her life outside the village, Joyce spends time with family and friends, and enjoys reading and travelling.

To learn more about volunteering at OSV, contact us at volunteer@osv.org, or (508) 347-0302. Open volunteer positions can be found online at www.osv.org/content/volunteer-opportunities.
Highways and Byways: TRAVEL AND TRANSPORTATION IN 19TH-CENTURY NEW ENGLAND

Shelley Cathcart, Assistant Curator

In his inaugural address on March 4, 1817, President James Monroe called for development of our country’s roads and canals:

“Other interests of high importance will claim attention, among which the improvement of our country by roads and canals... holds a distinguished place. By thus facilitating the intercourse between the States we shall add much to the convenience and comfort of our fellow-citizens... and we shall shorten distances, and, by making each part more accessible to and dependent on the other, we shall bind the Union more closely together. Nature has done so much for us by intersecting the country with so many great rivers, bays, and lakes, approaching from distant points so near to each other, that the inducement to complete the work seems to be peculiarly strong.”

Monroe shared a national desire to link the states through the country’s vast network of rivers, streams, and other bodies of water, as well as overcoming boundaries like mountain ranges. In 19th century America, it took months to travel long distances and it was largely impossible to transmit ideas quickly through the subpar network of roads. While some 19th century Americans could travel by wagon, chaise, stagecoach, steamboat, canal boat, and train, most rural Americans still traveled by foot or on horseback. Financing new transportation routes was a continuing debate, at the national, state, and local levels. It was clear that thoroughfares – whether on land or sea – would stimulate the movement of transmitting goods, ideas, and people faster and more efficiently.

One answer to Monroe’s call for connectivity was improving inland waterways. Canals were vital to connecting the interior of the country to port cities like Boston, Providence, and Portsmouth. Frances Milton Trollope comments on these canal systems in America: “What greatly increases the interest of this spectacle is the wonderful facility for internal commerce, furnished by the rivers, lakes, and canals, which tread the country in every direction, producing a rapidity of progress in all commercial and agricultural speculation altogether unequaled.” By 1825 the Erie Canal was fully operational and ran 363 miles from Albany to Buffalo. New England opened the Blackstone Canal, which linked Worcester – a burgeoning industrial hub – to Rhode Island’s Narragansett Bay, for a short time from 1828 to 1848.

Men and women, families and children, took advantage of the new systems of transit by venturing off to different cities, states, and countries to explore, learn, and admire scenery, culture, and people. The rich took luxury trips such as “nuptial journeys” or doctor-prescribed trips to cure illnesses. The increasing availability of travel made it accessible even to the lower classes, who often wrote about their trips in journals or letters. Traveling from Boston to New Hampshire with her parents, Caroline Fitch notes in her travel diary on September 6, 1836: “Having never been on a railroad before I was awake to every new sensation.”

The transportation revolution was spurred by...
American’s overwhelming need to move west, especially with the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. With advances in transportation and communication, a family in Massachusetts could easily contact relatives in Ohio and even visit them frequently via canal or train. Several members of the Freeman family moved west to Ohio, including the family of Samuel Freeman in 1825, Pliny Freeman, Jr. in 1829, and others as late as the 1850s.

As always, progress was riddled with new risks and inconveniences. Dirt roads were often impassable because of mud, snow, or ice, or water, and potholes. Frances Milton Trollope commented on the hazards of travel: “The wagons and carts are built with great strength, which is indeed necessary, from the roads they often have to encounter.”

The well-traveled Timothy Dwight warned about the perils of Rhode Island turnpikes: “The road after leaving Providence lay for two or three miles […] then became stony, and ill, or rather not at all, repaired. After dragging uneasily over several tedious miles, we came to a road, tolerably well made; which lasted, though not without several interruptions, ten or twelve miles.”

Francis H. Underwood reminisces about the roads of western Massachusetts in his book Quabbin: The Story of a Small Town with Outlooks Upon Puritan Life (1893). He criticizes the contrast between eastern and western Massachusetts towns, saying of Quabbin: “its roads furnished all the facilities for discomfort,” with “projecting points and edges of underlying ledges” giving “a series of shocks to each vehicle.”

Other unpleasantness and even danger faced 19th century travelers. A woman from the Davis family in West Boylston, Massachusetts, reported in her diary: “Heard news that Mr. Daniel Hemmingway of Holden was robbed by two men as he was returning home from Boston… was knocked down and robbed of a watch and 2 pocket books containing several bank notes and other securities.” Meanwhile, of lesser severity, John Burnap reports on his travel by steamship to his uncle upon his arrival in San Francisco on October 14, 1852: “We had a pleasant time with the exception of a little sea sickness which was not quote agreeable, but it was soon over with.”

Some New Englanders resented the increasing ease of travel, such as Lydia Maria Child, who condemns the activity in her book, The American Frugal Housewife.
Child denounces the luxury: “There is one kind of extravagance rapidly increasing in this country, which, in its effects on our purses and our habits, is one of the worst kinds of extravagance; I mean the rage for travelling. The good old home habits of our ancestors are breaking up – it will be well if our virtue and our freedom do not follow them!”

In the 19th century, America grew in land mass and population with the assistance of new technological innovations and expansive networks of travel. New methods of transport continue to be developed in the 21st century. Even Old Sturbridge Village has connections with transportation. For the first years of operation, Village guests were allowed to drive their cars into the museum, right up to the front of historic buildings. By 1949 it was decided cars were no longer a suitable means to transport within the Village, and instead staff developed a “slow motion” vehicle to alleviate the “bad effects and bad publicity of ‘museum feet’” – the carryall. Visitors can still ride the carryall throughout the Village, although a roof and side walls have been added since the original model. Other interpreted modes of transportation include the stagecoach, sleigh, and ox cart. Our Museum Collection contains several other historic vehicles that showcase how New Englanders traveled in the early 19th century, including ox carts, wagons, chaises, pleasure wagons, sleighs, hearse, stage coaches and even an early firefighting cart.

To honor these discoveries, the Village is celebrating the means of travel from bygone days – specifically the time period before the Village opened its doors in 1946. For two days in June, Model T’s, wagons, stagecoaches, early bicycles, and more will be on show during the transportation festival for our visitors to learn how people traveled before the Village opened in 1946. We hope you join us on June 9-10 for Movin’ Through History: A Celebration of Vintage Vehicles!”

2018
HOURS OF OPERATION

February 17 – May 25
Open Wed. – Sun. | 9:30 am – 4:00 pm

Also Open
Mon. – Tues. | Feb. 19 – 20
9:30 am – 4:00 pm | Feb. Break
Mon. – Tues. | Apr. 16 – 17
9:30 am – 4:00 pm | Apr. Break

May 26 – September 3
Open Wed. – Sun. | 9:30 am – 5:00 pm

Also Open
Mon. May 2 | Memorial Day
9:30 am – 5:00 pm
Mon. – Tues. | July 2 – 3
9:30 am – 5:00 pm
Mon. Sept. 3 | Labor Day
9:30 am – 5:00 pm

Extended Hours
Beer Festival | Sat. | July 21
12:00 pm – 8:00 pm

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