

## The Fenno House

Old Sturbridge Village • Sturbridge, Massachusetts

### Project Details

**Scope:** Historic Home, 1,100 sq  
**Budget:** \$123,200

### Project Team

**Project Development:** Edward Krent,  
Kirstin Gamble, Edward Malouf  
**Exhibit Design:** Edward Krent, Edward Malouf  
**Detail Design:** Edward Malouf  
**Art Direction:** Edward Malouf  
**Graphic Design:** Jennifer Arrington,  
Carolyn Decillo  
**Construction:** Arthur J. Stevens Woodworking

In a home whose wood is dated to 1725 at Old Sturbridge Village, a recreated mid 19th century village, Mr. Malouf designed an interactive exhibit in which visitors experience the labor, care, ingenuity, and what may appear to be magic that enabled early 19th century women and children to create dazzling textile patterns without electric power. Visitors can touch the cotton, wool, flax and silk fibers used in domestic textile production; practice weaving techniques; observe loom operation; and even design their own quilts. The exhibit guides visitors through the space as well as the complexities required to transform nature's raw materials into garments and bolts of salable fabric.



### From Farm to Factory

Working in a factory was very different than working at home. At home, you spun and wove in between your other chores. You were surrounded by the sounds of the farm and the countryside, and much of your life was guided by the changing of the seasons.



Factories were loud. Bells and clocks ruled your time rather than the rising and setting of the sun. You stood in one place working on one task all day. And, unlike the farm, the factory paid in cash.

Some people preferred one environment to the other; some had no choice. Either way, where and how Americans worked was beginning to change.

*Weaving cloth at home*

*A shuttle is used to carry thread across the loom when weaving.*

*Water-powered looms at a factory from History of the Cotton Manufacture in Great Britain by Edward Baines, 1835*



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The exhibit we designed to display the extensive 19th century quilt collection is gentle on the artifacts and easily changeable by the staff.



When the loom room is unstaffed, an interactive audio program provides visitors with a very different weaving experience: a sound recording from the looms at Boot Mill in Lowell, MA.



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The exhibit enables visitors to touch the four materials used in home textile production—cotton, flax, wool, and silk.



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Photographs we designed specifically for the exhibit instruct visitors in the process of wool carding.



# Carding

Carding is the brushing and untangling of wool fibers to prepare them for spinning. Carding takes enormous amounts of time and was a burden on many women's lives. Most people were happy to let carding mills take this work.

**A Coat in 30 Days**

Days	Task
1	1 day Shearing
2	1 day Shearing
3	1 day Shearing
4	1 day Shearing
5	1 day Shearing
6	1 day Shearing
7	1 day Shearing
8	1 day Shearing
9	9 days Carding
10	1 day Spinning
11	1 day Spinning
12	1 day Spinning
13	1 day Spinning
14	1 day Spinning
15	1 day Spinning
16	1 day Spinning
17	1 day Spinning
18	1 day Spinning
19	1 day Spinning
20	1 day Spinning
21	1 day Spinning
22	1 day Spinning
23	1 day Spinning
24	1 day Spinning
25	1 day Spinning
26	1 day Spinning
27	1 day Spinning
28	1 day Spinning
29	1 day Spinning
30	1 day Spinning

**In 1792**, fifteen-year old Elizabeth Fuller spent part of nine days brushing debris and tangles from wool until she had carded enough to make a coat for her father.

Water-powered carding machines prepared wool for spinning and saved a lot of time.