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Loom and Spindle

The Mill Museum Newsletter

November 2025

Chronicle 2025 Awards

The **Windham Textile & History Museum** received top honors in the Museum/Gallery category of the Willimantic *Chronicle's* [2025 Readers' Choice Awards!](#) Jamie Eves won second place Local Hero (after the Willimantic PD)! These awards recognize hard work and dedication, and are especially meaningful coming from Chronicle readers.



Permanent Exhibit Opens

We are excited to announce that **our new permanent exhibit, *Thread City: The Rise and Fall of the Connecticut Textile Industry*, will officially open to the public 11/29!** We are planning an **opening reception for the exhibit the following, Sunday 12/7 at 1pm.** This will give you an opportunity to hear from Jamie Eves, curator of the exhibit, about what it means! In five bays created using new movable wall panels in the Museum's renovated and repainted Bev York Room (which also features new track lighting, easing visibility and movement throughout), *Thread City* depicts the course of the local textile industry through important periods of history.



Halloween



This **Halloween** was livelier than ever on Willimantic's Main Street! **Museum executive director Aaron Skarzenski and historian Jamie Eves** handed out candy to festive trick-or-treaters in costume.

Annual Meeting

The Windham History and Textile Museum held its annual meeting on November 13 in Dugan Hall. The meeting was brief and all members of the board and officers were reelected:

- **President:** Dawn Bakke
- **Vice President:** Michael Mahony
- **Secretary:** Vacant
- **Treasurer:** Claire Lary
- Corey Krohn
- Sandra McAlduff
- Robert Asher
- Megan Starbird

Welcome New Senior Curator

We are pleased to **welcome Quinlan Kearney as new Senior Curator**. He is taking over for Jamie, who is stepping down following the completion of our newest permanent exhibit. From Quinlan: "I've been volunteering in the Mill Museum's archives for two years now, while on track to get my BA in History from ECSU and soon my MS in Library Science and Archive Management. It's

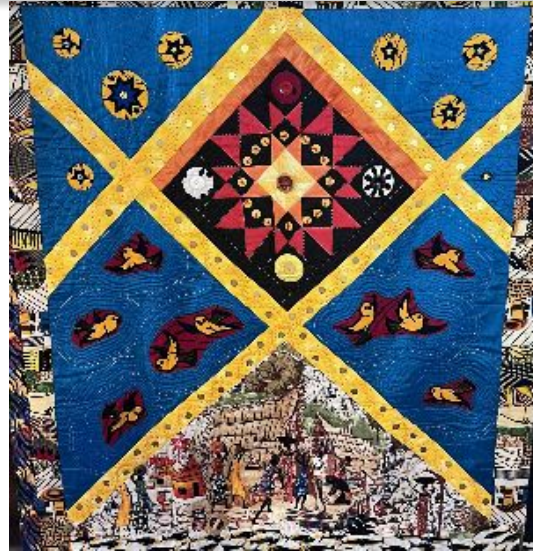
a difference here. It would be impossible for me to replace Jamie Eves as curator, nor would I wish to, but with his initial guidance and the support of everyone else at the museum I know we can continue to create a fun and educational space for our community.”



Sisters in Stitches

Contradictions Of Freedom Part II

There's still time to see the Museum's major exhibition, ***Contradictions Of Freedom Part II***, open through Saturday, December 6. The Windham NAACP co-sponsored the show, featuring over 20 quilts made by [Sisters in Stitches Joined by the Cloth](#). The Massachusetts-based (with Connecticut ties, too) New England guild has for nearly 30 years been unique in preserving the centuries-old art, history, culture, and traditions of African American quilting. Their widely-shown work celebrates the artists' personal stories, connecting them to each other and future generations. Addressing the complexities of freedom in Colonial America, the exhibit recognizes and honors guild members' Ancestors and their collective histories in America. It coincides with the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution, and three quilts depict African American involvement in the Revolution. Also available is the quilters' own [Sisters In Stitches cookbook](#) with family recipes, photos and stories, and Quilt Codes that may have played a role in the Underground Railroad. The quilt show shares the Bev York exhibition hall with the Museum's new permanent exhibit, Thread City.



Contradictions Of Freedom Part II runs through Saturday, December 6. Don't miss the history embodied in these stunning, vibrantly-colored works of art!

Quilting at the Museum



On October 25, Museum visitors were treated to quilter, weaver (and former student of Peggy Church!), and Museum member Donna McLaughlin showcasing her talent and expertise in a live quilting demonstration.

In addition, Museum Lead Educator Emma Welty has created an interactive craft for visitors to make paper quilt squares they can take home or join together in a collaborative Museum paper quilt.



Quilting around Connecticut:

Farther afield is [Fairfield University quilt exhibition, *Stitching Time*](#), Fairfield University Art Museum, Walsh Gallery, 1073 North Benson Road, Fairfield, CT. These 12 quilts by men incarcerated in the Louisiana State Penitentiary (aka Angola Prison) and accompanying interviews tell the story of the quilt creators, often forgotten in discussions of US criminal justice system history, working in a unique inside/outside collaboration. Also displayed is *Give Me Life*, works by women artists now or previously incarcerated at maximum security state prison, York Correctional Institution, Niantic, CT. Courtesy of Community Partners in Action (CPA), working within the criminal justice system for 150 years, since 1875. Their Prison Arts Program began in 1978, one of the longest-running such projects in the US.

EdJohnetta Miller

Stay tuned for an upcoming article on renowned Hartford fiber artist, EdJohnetta Miller (shown here with her daughter Ayisha, helping Norwich's Otis Library celebrate the civil rights work of sisters Sarah and Mary Harris). Miller's quilt artwork has been widely exhibited, including at Canterbury's Prudence Crandall Museum, the site where in 1832 Sarah Harris, who was African American, asked principal Crandall, who was white, to admit her to the all-girls' school. This act paved the way for future students of color, as well as major Supreme Court decisions on education, like *Brown v. Board of Education*.



Bobbin' Around the Museum and Community...

Events at the Museum and the Community

Spinning Bee, 4th Saturday of every month (November 22, 2025), 10am-1pm; Mill Museum Dugan Hall, 157-B Union St., Willimantic. Park on Union St. or Main St. museum parking lot: Master spinner and weaver Peggy Church leads this free monthly drop-in event for spinners of all levels, whether you're a wannabe or an expert! Attendees are also welcome to bring long-abandoned or new pieces of knitting or crochet, or other crafts projects.



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**Stitching Circle, 1st Sunday of every month (December 7, 2025), 2-4pm; Bev York Room:** Looking for a community with which to stitch? Have an unfinished needlework project you've been meaning to pick up? Ready to start a new needlecraft project and need some inspiration? Beginners and all skill levels welcome. Join us! Open to all Museum visitors with regular admission; members always free! Bring your own project, or if you don't have one to work on, we have materials, tools, and kits available in the Museum gift shop!

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Wrapping Fundraiser in cooperation with the [Willimantic Lions Club!](#) The fundraiser will run December 14-24, 2025 at Eastbrook Mall, Storrs/Mansfield (on route 195, north of Willimantic), where volunteers will wrap presents for the community 12-6pm (12/14-12/19), and 10am-8pm (12/20-12/24). We accept donations for gift wrap! We are also happy to accept any donations of gift wrap, boxes, or bows to assist in this fundraiser. Whether you are shopping at the

mall or have purchased gifts elsewhere and need help with wrapping, stop by our table!

If you have time December 14-24, please reach out via email to volunteering@millmuseum.org to sign up for slots. It's a wonderful opportunity to help the community, the museum, and to meet staff and other museum volunteers!



The Holiday giving season is now upon us; a perfect time to visit and help support local community businesses! Unique Willimantic shops include the [Willimantic Food Co-op's](#) visiting vendor tables; Main Street's [Swift Waters Artisans' Cooperative](#), [Spiral Arts Ceramics](#), the [Kerri Quirk gallery](#), and more. Also, [Artists' Open Studios of Northeastern Connecticut](#) runs Thanksgiving weekend, November 28-30, and the following weekend, December 6-7. See artists and their work in their studios, featuring the Museum's own spinning/weaving master, Peggy Church.



Museum memberships also make great gifts!

Happy Thanksgiving!

Get Woven into the Fabric of Our Museum

You don't have to live in Willimantic or Windham to support the Mill Museum. We're a REGIONAL museum, so folks throughout eastern Connecticut and beyond can learn about the vital role the mills and the people who worked in them played in shaping the area's history. If you've already become a member, THANK YOU! If not, please consider joining our ranks.

Annual Membership Levels:

Tier		Benefits
Student	\$15	Membership newsletter access, Member pricing for events
Individual	\$30	2 guest passes, 10% discount at the gift shop, Membership newsletter access, Early event registration, Member pricing for events, 10% off rental space 1x per year
Family	\$60	Covers household of up to 4 people, 2 guest passes, 10% discount at the gift shop, Membership newsletter access, Early event registration, Member pricing for events, 10% off rental space 1x per year
Premium	\$100	4 guest passes, 20% discount at the gift shop, Membership newsletter access, Early event registration, Member pricing for events, 10% off rental space 2x per year

Windham Textile & History Museum
 411 Main Street, Willimantic, CT 06226
 Make checks out to: WTHM

Go to <https://millmuseum.org/join-membership/> and join today or increase your level of membership. Your involvement may be one more thread in a growing



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