

# Loom & Spindle



## Windham Textile & History Museum

### *The Mill Museum*

*July 2021*

## MILL MUSEUM WELCOMES NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

No matter if you say, “Willkommen!”  
“Bienvenue!” “Witaj!” “Dobro pozhalovat’!”  
“Bienvenidos!” or just plain “Welcome,” the Mill  
Museum is ready to open its doors and its heart  
to Kira Holmes, our new executive director.  
Actually, Kira is an old friend of the Museum,  
having served for a decade in various roles,  
ranging from vice president on its Board of  
Directors; to curating exhibits, to volunteering in  
the archives, to chairing committees, to  
managing the very successful Snow Ball - one of  
the Museum’s main fundraising projects. She  
has worked closely over the years with Dr. Jamie  
Eves, who served as executive director from  
2011, and who inspired her in the field when she  
took one of his history classes at Eastern Connecticut State University.



Since receiving her MA in Public History from Central Connecticut State University, Kira has gained experience in museum work at the Mystic Seaport Museum, the Killingly Historical and Genealogical Society, the Connecticut Science Center, the New Britain Industrial Museum, the Milford Historical Society, the Stanley Whitman House, the Prudence Crandall Museum, and the Springfield Preservation Trust. But she doesn’t just live in the past; she’s tech-savvy and logistics-oriented as well – and she’s fully aware that museums must live in the present and plan for the FUTURE!

According to Mill Museum President Dawn Bakke, who chaired the hiring committee, there were other strong applicants for the position of executive director, which made the selection difficult. Kira stood out, Bakke said, because of her years of dedication to the

Mill Museum, her strong knowledge of its history and offerings, and her broad experience in the varied aspects of public history and museum management.

Kira looks forward to working with everyone at the Mill Museum in her new role. “I’ve been part of the Mill Museum since 2011,” she noted in her recent interview. “I’ve always loved its welcoming and engaging attitude. I want to extend that approach to an even wider audience through both interpersonal connections and technological means.” It sounds like she’s headed in the right direction to meet the future head-on! Good luck, Kira.

---



The Mill Museum is participating in an initiative that will allow children in Connecticut to visit museums throughout the state free of charge during the upcoming summer months. Under the initiative, all Connecticut children (18 and under) plus one accompanying adult can visit any of the state’s participating museums free of charge from July 1 to September 6. This program will be supported by a \$15 million investment from the state’s federal recovery funds to participating museums. We encourage you to make your visit to The Mill Museum a family event. We will be open Fridays in July from noon to 4 p.m. We will resume full regular hours in August and will then be open Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Come see what we have to offer!

---

# BOBBIN' ABOUT

## Upcoming Events

We're starting to swing into summer at the Mill Museum, and there are new things to see and do. The Museum itself will be open Fridays in July from noon to 4 p.m. with the exhibit we had to close prematurely: *Unlacing the Corset, Unleashing the Vote*. We will resume full regular hours in August and will then be open Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Stop in, enjoy the exhibit, and visit our unique gift shop.

During July and August, the Museum welcomes children (18 and under) free with one accompanying adult.

Sun. July 4 by 11:30	<b>36<sup>th</sup> Annual WILI Boom Box Parade</b> Begins at noon at Jillson Square, Main St. in Willimantic. It's the largest parade of its kind in the world! Look for an international flag contingent from the Mill Museum, honoring the workers from many countries who worked at the mills throughout the region. Or, if you would like to participate and <u>carry</u> a flag, join the parade line up at Jillson Square between 11:00 and 11:30 a.m. as an immigrant mill worker and carry one of the flags we'll provide – or bring your own!
Sun. July 11 2:00 p.m.	<b>Walking Tour: "Down Sodom."</b> Meet at the Mill Museum, 411 Main St., Willimantic. Learn about the attitude of many of the established farmers and middle-class folks toward those of the newly arrived working class from the estimable and personable Dr. Jamie Eves. \$10 adults.
Wed. July 14 6-8 p.m.	<b>Croquet in Heritage Park.</b> Main St. (Rte. 66) opposite the Museum, Willimantic. Family activity - beginners welcome. Learn to play this lawn game which was very popular in the Victorian Era. Donations welcome.
Sat., July 17 10 a.m.	<b>Walking Tour: "The American Thread Company."</b> Meet at the Mill Museum, 411 Main St., Willimantic. This company was once the largest manufactory in Connecticut, giving Willimantic the moniker "Thread City." Led by the always fascinating Bev York. \$10 adults.
Wed. July 21 6:30-8 p.m.	<b>Reception for Retiring Director Jamie Eves</b> Mill Museum parking lot, 411 Main St., Willimantic. The public is invited.
Sat. July 24 10. to 1	<b>Drop-in Spinning Bee</b> Dugan Hall on Union St. next to the Mill Museum, 411 Main St., Willimantic. Stop by and bring your wheel. Vaccinations required. All skill levels and visitors are welcome. Free admission.
Fun Fact: July 25	<b>National Thread the Needle Day</b> You can take that literally and celebrate by actually pushing some thread through the eye of a sewing needle, or by trying the yoga pose of that name, also known as <i>para balasana</i> . The pose brings the body to a kneeling position with both hands on the floor (table pose). Slide the left hand all the way to the right beneath the body. The head and shoulder should rest comfortably on the floor, creating a slight twist in the spine. ( <a href="http://www.NationalDayCalendar.com">www.NationalDayCalendar.com</a> )
Sat. July 31 10 a.m.	<b>Walking Tour: Victorian Architecture of Windham Road</b> Meet at the Mill Museum, 411 Main St., Willimantic. Queen Victoria reigned from June 20, 1837 until her death on January 22, 1901. Education Director Bev York shares insights about some of the architecture of that fascinating period. \$10 adults.

## LOOMING AHEAD

August: The Crazy Quilt Book Sale. A presentation and book evaluation followed by a multi-day sale with lots of literary finds. (This is your last chance to donate books to the sale. Email themillmuseum@gmail.com to arrange drop off or pick up. No encyclopedias, Bibles or cassettes, please.)

October: **Nightmare on Main**. Be prepared to be VERY AFRAID as you face your fears. Theme this year:

### *Phobia: The Faces of Fear*

Those everyday things that bring even the strongest among us to our knees. Don't miss it!

---

## BROWSING WITH BETTY

Meet Betty. She has quietly resided at the Mill Museum for many years, but now that the quarantine has ended, she's going out and about. Like all of us, she is thrilled to be rediscovering downtown Willimantic. Recently Betty visited the Willimantic Library which has resumed a full open schedule. Here, Head Librarian Dan Paquette is shown helping Betty select a good book!

Follow Betty on her travels throughout the area in upcoming months. You may spot her in some surprising places!



## Get Woven into the Fabric of Our Museum

Don't forget to tell your friends about 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 joined, tell a friend! Their involvement may be one more thread in a growing tapestry of history.

- Members receive via email our now MONTHLY newsletter, *Loom and Spindle*. If you don't have email, we will "snail mail" you a paper copy. That means you will receive timely notice of all the Museum's programs and events.
- Members receive free admission to the Museum, library, exhibits, and special events, and a one-hour access to staff time for personal research.
- Patrons receive invitations to private, advance showings of exhibits; free personal tours; and three hours of staff time for personal research.
- All members have fun. (Really!)

### Membership Levels:

Cotton (individual) membership, \$25

Wool (family) membership, \$50

Silk (patron) membership, \$100

Please Mail to: Windham Textile & History Museum

411 Main Street, Willimantic, CT 06226

Make checks out to: WTHM

Or pay via PayPal on our website, [www.millmuseum.org](http://www.millmuseum.org)