



## Fairfield Museum

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[www.fairfieldhistory.org](http://www.fairfieldhistory.org)

### **A Short History of the Fairfield Museum's Ogden House and its Preservation**

Ogden House is a unique, historically significant structure that has benefited from a multi-year plan of well-researched and careful restoration. Built in 1740 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places (#79002651), it is among the oldest residences open to the public in Fairfield County, CT. Ogden House is owned by the Fairfield Museum and History Center which oversees its preservation and public use, ensuring its present and future relevance to our community.

The house is an exceptional survivor of a mid-18th century farmhouse that withstood the burning of Fairfield by the British in 1779, and today provides important insight into the Ogden family's and the Town's role in the American Revolution. Located in a fertile agricultural valley on land that was once extensively farmed, and built from local timber and fieldstone, the farmhouse remained in the Ogden family for 125 years after its construction. After changing hands several times through the 19th century, the property was extensively restored to its original 18th-century configuration by private owners in the 1930-40s and donated to the Fairfield Museum in 1974.

At the time of the property's donation, it was known that Ogden House had undergone an extensive renovation in the 1930-1940's. Photo documentation and restoration notes by the previous owner--American antiques and material culture expert Mary Allis--are now in the Museum's archive and indicate that the earlier renovation succeeded in removing exterior and interior features that had been added to the property in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Subsequent studies have confirmed that much of the original 18th -century fabric was successfully preserved during the 1930s renovation.

In 2007, Fairfield Museum conducted a thorough condition assessment of the house with preservation architect David Scott Parker. Based on the findings of that report, a multi-year preservation and stewardship plan was put in place, and the Fairfield Museum obtained a 2008 grant from the CT State Historic Preservation Office, as well as support from private donors, to restore the property's chimney to its original 18th-century configuration, replace its historic roof, and upgrade heating and dehumidification systems. In 2016, Fairfield Museum was awarded a grant from the 1772 Foundation in cooperation with Preservation Connecticut to re-build nine windows, and in 2025 an additional grant from the 1772 Foundation help fund upgrades to the building's fire detection system.

Ogden House and its gardens are a showpiece for 18th-century colonial domestic life that offers visitors a unique opportunity to explore both colonial agricultural home life and the impact of the American Revolution on Fairfield, CT. Fairfield Museum partners with the Fairfield Garden Club to maintain an extensive interpretive garden where students and visitors learn the history and uses of local native plants, environmental sustainability, and local food ways.