



# The Friends & Neighbors of Putnam Memorial State Park



*"Connecticut's Valley Forge"*

## November 2011 NewsLetter

Bethel/Redding CT

### A Turn Of The Century Idea – *The Winter Walk*

The last couple of years of the 1900's were spent in organizing the Friends of Putnam Park, getting our non-profit status set-up, by-laws written and an accounting system set-up. Not particularly fun stuff. Then we formed committees which would come up with ideas on what our group could do to promote the park and the educational goals we set up in our charter. The park was already being used for military reenactments. We wanted to develop an annual program just for school kids. We wanted to have a Colonial Craftsman Program, we knew we had to develop park maps and a walking tour for the public that visited our park, signage that would tell the visitor just what happened at the various historic sites throughout the park. We had more lists of projects and committees than you could shake a stick at!



A terrific park tour at an unusual time of year.

Then, the History Committee put forth an idea on conducting an annual park history tour at the same time of year when the actual 1778 army troops came to Redding ... in the first week of December. The vast majority of park visitors come to our park in the warm weather months. December is cold. Maybe even snow. Would anybody come, we asked ourselves? We tried it and it met with a big success. Out of the last decade, we had to cancel only once to due to a raging (and dangerous) snow storm. One of the best walks was the first one. Snow dumped around 4 or 5 inches on the park the night before. The tour day was bright and sunny, and the walk was through the snow. Historian, Dan Cruson has planned the walks as well as led them. Not only is Dan the expert on the park's history, he has also conducted ten years of archaeological excavations at the park, that have revealed a ton of information. What better person to lead the tour?



The 1st Winter Walk ... 4 " of snow



Displays



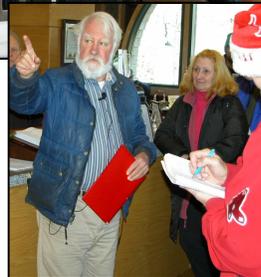
President Stetler



The tour ends up back at the Visitor Center for hot drinks and good eats.

Walk assembles at the Visitor Center. Starts at 11:00AM

Dan Cruson begins tour inside The Visitor Center



Up the ramparts



The 1922 Museum is a stop along the tour.



The first structure erected in 1888.



Troops accompany the walk.



Soldiers read excerpts from actual 1778-79 diaries





# Putnam Memorial State Park

"Connecticut's Valley Forge"



## The Annual Winter Walk Saturday, December 3rd

- \* Tour leaves from Visitor Center at 11:00am
- \* Visitor Center will open at 10:00am

Learn about the History of the Park & the  
Revolutionary War Camps at Redding, Connecticut



**Special guests this year - See last page !!**

The Winter Walk is led by Dan Cruson, a local author, historian and the park's archaeologist. Dan's knowledge of the park's history is vast and each year he shares new findings on this site from his actively digging excavations at the park for the past ten years. Dan will talk about the various digs. The 5th Connecticut Regiment will be present and read journal entries from actual diaries of soldiers that were stationed in Redding 233 years ago.

Visit [www.putnampark.org](http://www.putnampark.org) for full details.

**Fun!**



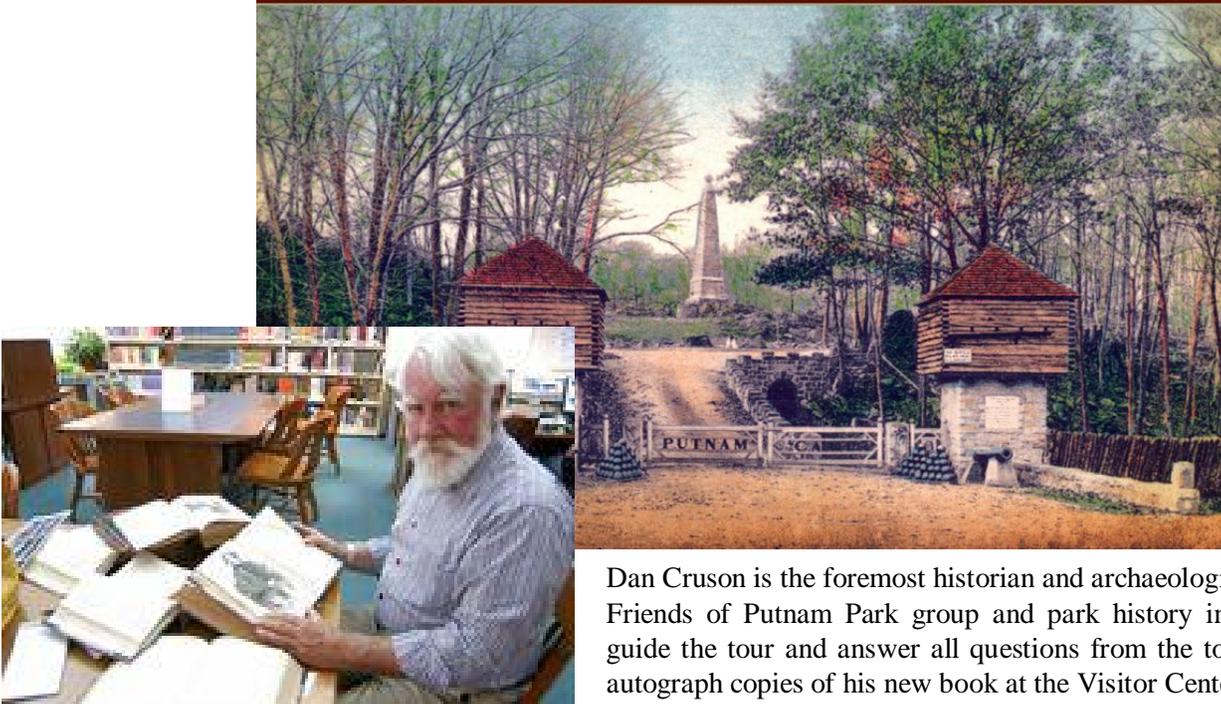
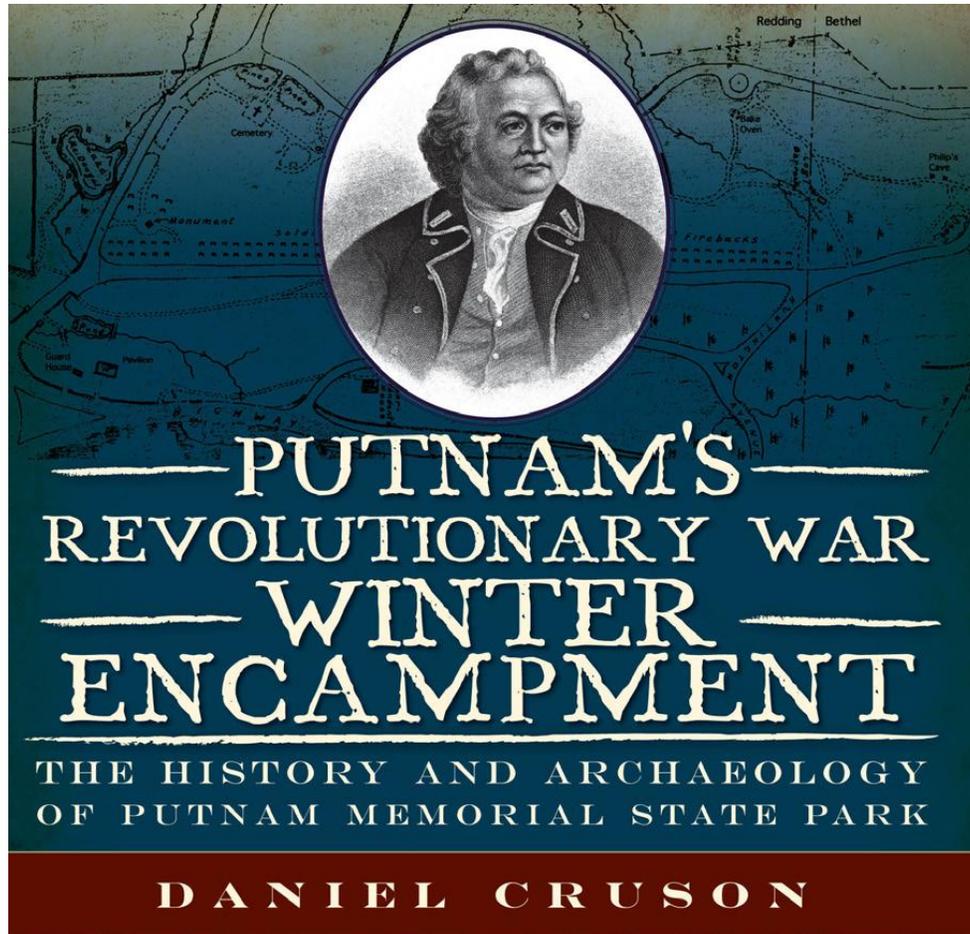
**Free!**

Putnam Memorial State Park, Redding, Connecticut  
Corner of Route 107 & Route 58

Sponsored by the (FANS) of Putnam Memorial State Park in Cooperation with the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

## Cruson's New Book Introduced at Winter Walk

Charles Burr Todd was the Redding Historian and prolific writer back in the 1880's. He was one of the key driving forces to push through the creation of Putnam Park as an overlay of the old 1778 army camp. He wrote a tour guide of the park back in the 1880's and another in the early 1900's. Not since then has there been a definitive history of the Continental Army Camp or of the creation of the memorial park – until now. Historian Dan Cruson has written a book carefully describing both phases of camp/park. The new book will be on sale at the Visitor Center at a book signing immediately following this year's Winter Walk.



Dan Cruson is the foremost historian and archaeologist representing the Friends of Putnam Park group and park history in general. Dan will guide the tour and answer all questions from the tour group; then, will autograph copies of his new book at the Visitor Center.

## November 2011 FANs Meeting

To contact us:  
[fansofputnampark@att.net](mailto:fansofputnampark@att.net)



The November meeting was held at the visitor center on Monday, November 14, 2011.

### *Notes from the prez ...*

1. **President's Welcome** – Scott Stetler
2. **Treasurer's Report:** TG Henderson reviewed balances .
3. **Park update:** Nate , reported that more than 100 trees went down in the freak Halloween Snow Storm. His crew is busy clearing the debris. The restoration of the officer's quarters/magazine has been approved by Hartford. Funding is being sought.
4. **Lake Cleaning-** Nate reports that the permits are all approved for the Lake cleaning. The clean up of the storm damage has put off the cleaning process until Spring.
5. **Putam Oil Painting** -A local restoration company has been located and the painting of Putnam is going to be taken to them for a preliminary review
6. **Dan Cruson's Book** – Dan's books are in and ready for sale at the December Winter Walk.

## Special Guests at Winter Walk



Commissioner Daniel Esty

### DEEP Commissioner Daniel Esty -



Daniel C. Esty is the Commissioner of the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), the state agency with primary responsibility for protecting Connecticut's energy, environment, natural resources, and wildlife and for maintaining Connecticut's state parks and forests.

Prior to joining the CT DEEP, Commissioner Esty was the Hillhouse Professor of Environmental Law and Policy at Yale University. He held faculty appointments in both Yale's Environmental Law Schools. He also served as the Director of the Yale Center for Environmental Policy and Law, and the Center for Business & Environment at Yale.



Natalie Ketcham  
1<sup>st</sup> Selectman of  
Redding, CT



Matt Knickerbocker,  
1<sup>st</sup> Selectman of  
Bethel, CT

Both Natalie and Matt are to be congratulated for the landslide elections back into office in their respective towns. Putnam Park lies in both the towns of Redding and Bethel.

**All three guests will address the December Winter Walk gathering  
prior to the tour at 10:30 AM**

There is **no monthly Meeting in December**, so join us

 **at 10:00AM** at the **Visitor Center** On **December 3<sup>rd</sup>**

For the annual ***December Winter Walk***