

May 2004 News Letter

1893 Pavilion

DEP State Parks Division Issues May 17th Press Release

Major renovations to begin at historic Putnam State Park. Will include conversion of the 1893 Pavilion into a year-round Visitor Center with exhibit space for park programs.

Highly Respected Historical Restoration Company Will Head-up Project.



KRONENBERGER & SONS RESTORATION, INC

Kronenberger & Sons not only specializes in returning historic structures to period accuracy, they also excel at enriching them with present-day viability for adaptive re-use.

Main items in the Project:

1. Retrofit 1893 Pavilion into a Visitor Center.
2. New visitor parking at main entrance.
3. Renovate Main Entrance area.
4. Refurbish and move Old Put statue.
5. Reconfigure Rts. 58/107 intersection.



↑ Pavilion in 1907. Note cupola skylights, and windows in the second floor gable.

Pavilion today before conversion. Building will be stripped down to post and beam frame, and then reconstructed to contain climate control insulation, thermal windows, and all utilities.



Watch monthly News Letters for progress updates.

North Gate

Park Ranger Andy Sullivan and his crew erecting a new gate at the north entrance.

The main entrance to the historic side of the park will be closed soon for the duration of the construction project. Entrance to the park will be through the North Gate up Rt. 58. The park crew is erecting a new gate and sign. Please use caution when using this gate as it is very narrow.



Archaeological Dig – Cont.

Last fall's annual dig led by Dan Cruson and Kathleen von Jena got hit with snow and freezing cold in November. The excavation area was covered with snow and then froze before they could close up the site. That's why you've seen the archaeological duo at the site for the last few weekends. They are finishing up the dig which is taking place at the north end of the enlisted men's row. The team, which utilizes Cruson's anthropology students from Joel Barlow High, has been conducting digs for over six years. Many of the artifacts unearthed can be seen in the park museum.



Dan Cruson and Kathleen von Jena are working around the hearth area of an enlisted men's hut. There were 116 huts each holding 12 soldiers.

Living History Week For Area Schools

Yellow school buses swarm to Putnam Park in the last week of May each year to transport hundreds of school kids to the Living History Program. The program is headed up by Nancy Cowles and her handpicked crew who coordinate the program with area schools. Joan Leveille, Laurie Kommritz, Rosemary Payne along with FANs president Jeanine Herman have aided Nancy in perfecting the educational program which is keyed in with the local school Colonial period curriculums.

The program is four days long. Kids from 8 school systems arrived at the park at appointed times. Their groups rotate to different "stations" every 20 minutes. Each station is manned by experts and crafts persons who lecture and demonstrate different aspects of the Revolutionary War or Colonial period. The re-enactors include: an Army surgeon, a whitesmith, a tinsmith, military historians, an expert in 18th century toys & games, a colonial chef, and a historian who demonstrates the Brown Bess musket and talks about *My Brother Sam is Dead*.



Jim Freebairn, a whitesmith, demonstrates making lead musket balls.



Todd Gerlander from the Putnam's Own Militia Regiment lectures on Revolutionary War history.



Nancy Cowles, in the trench coat, stands with re-enactor Gail Santo. Nancy commands the program.



The FAN's Sales Department. Rosemary Payne, left, and Joan Leveille peddle musket balls to T-shirts.



Laurie Kommritz demonstrates open fire cooking to hungry students.

Old Put To Ride Off

The statue of Anna Hyatt Huntington's *Putnam's Escape From Horseneck* is slated to ride off into the sunset at least temporarily for a much needed restoration. The statue has resided at the main park entrance since it's dedication in 1969.

When it returns, at the completion of the park project, it will be relocated closer to the new park visitor center.



May FAN's Meeting



The May 2004 meeting of the Friends group was held on Monday, May 8th at the Redding Town Hall.

Discussion was limited to two main topics:

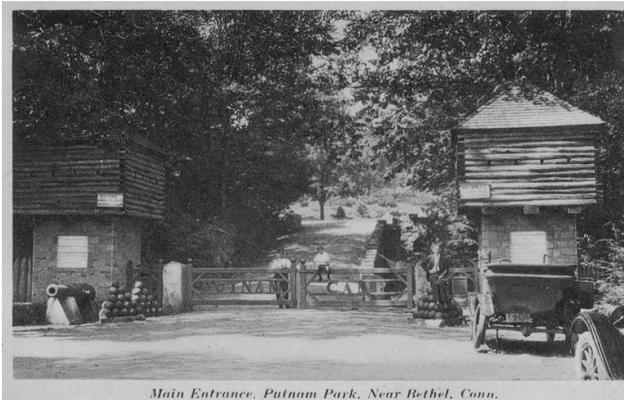
1. The upcoming Living History Week for school children was recapped by project head Nancy Cowles. The main park entrance closing was delayed, therefore, it could be utilized by the hundreds of kids. Last minute supplies were discussed, and the time lapse between station rotations were on the list of Nancy's concerns.
2. The commencement of the 1893 Pavilion Project was imminent. The Kronenberger Restoration Company project and supply trailers were due in the next week or so. The park rangers have scheduled the work to start on the North Entrance, which will be the temporary passage for the next year. The grass and earth will be cleared and replaced with crushed run to make a more durable road surface.



Next Meetings

How about taking a spin over to the park this weekend? Over 225 years of history lie just beyond these gates.

Stop by and watch the Pavilion and Main Entrance project this summer.



Better yet, come and help us create history at the next monthly meetings at the Redding Town Hall..... 7:00pm Monday's June 14th and July 12th.