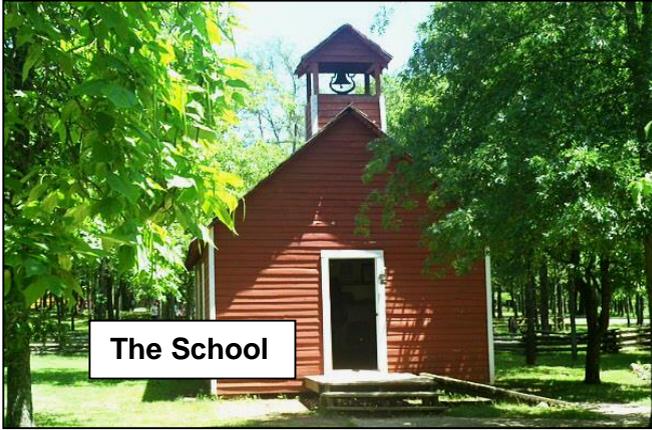


May 2006 NewsLetter

Living History School Days – 2006



The School



The Teach



The Bus



Where American History Happened!

The school program that allows the teacher to take the kids out of the classroom to the place where Revolutionary War history actually happened. The Friends & Neighbors of Putnam Park conducted their fifth annual Living History School Days program at the park from Monday May 15th to Friday, May 19th. Fifth, sixth and seventh grade students from schools across Fairfield County were bused in for an educational experience that was dovetailed into their school's history curriculum.

The Friends group brought in colonial era reenactors and craftsmen to demonstrate their specialties for the school groups. The students were divided into groups of approximately 25, and were instructed to rotate to the next assigned station. A half dozen "stations" were placed in the park. Each craftsperson was one station. At the sound of a loud fog horn every 20 minutes, the groups rotated to the next craftsperson. The tour included a stop at the park museum where each group participated in "Scavenger Hunt". The Friends group put through over three hundred students each day of the five day program.

The Stations



Dan Cruson, Head FAN's Historian.



Bob Young, the Apothecary. Herbs, potions and salves.



Skip Kern, the Blacksmith. Nails, hooks, and screws.



Jim Freebairn, the Whitesmith Musket balls and sundials.



Lori Kommritz, Colonial Cook. Delicious meals on the open fire.



Jack Ciotti, Army Surgeon. Makes you stay healthy!



Rosemary Payne, Park Museum Scavenger Hunt. Kids have to think!

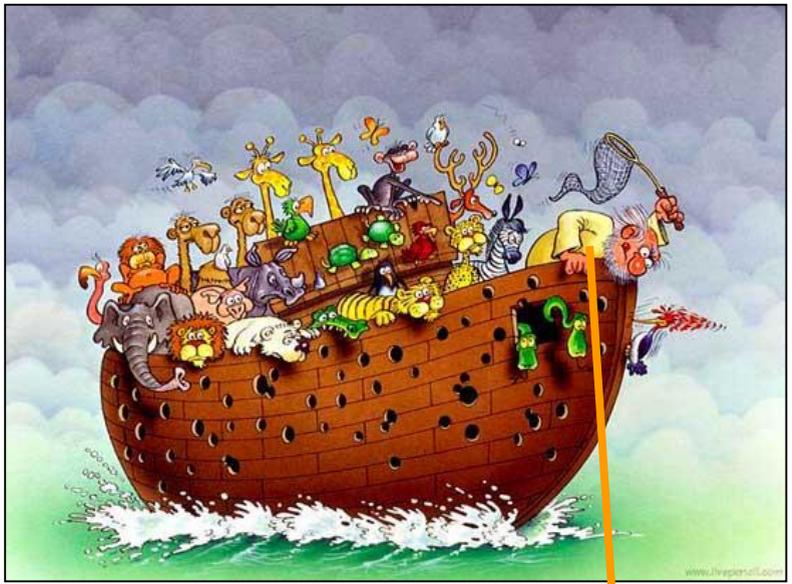


Schuyler Merritt, FANs Gift Shop Keeper.

And the Lord said to Noah



*“There's gonna be a floody floody
.....Get my children out of the muddy muddy
.....You're gonna build an arky arky ...”*



The smithy kept his post and hammered and twisted out hooks and nails. The damp students withstood the weather with true grit.



And the rains came ...



Our colonial craftsmen are sticklers for authenticity in dress and equipment, but our musket ball maker admitted to having an eight handicap!



Lori, our resident Colonial Cook, needs a wooden spoon with a 12 ft. long handle so she can stir the pot while keeping dry under the canopy.



Soggy herbs and wet pills did not slow down the apothecary one single bit during his informative demonstrations.



One of the built-in breaks on the rotation schedule was for lunch. Here students sit on the wall overlooking Lake Putnam. Peanut butter and jelly are good even if a bit damp.



GORTON'S OF GLOUCESTER sent down two of their able bodied seamen to man the Company Store! Buzz Merritt and Harry Gibson on duty at the FANs Gift Shop which was again a big success this year.



Sun Hats \$9
Hats \$6
Tee Shirts \$10
Books \$7
M. Brother Sam \$7
Young Patriot \$9

FANs School Days Director – Nancy Cowles



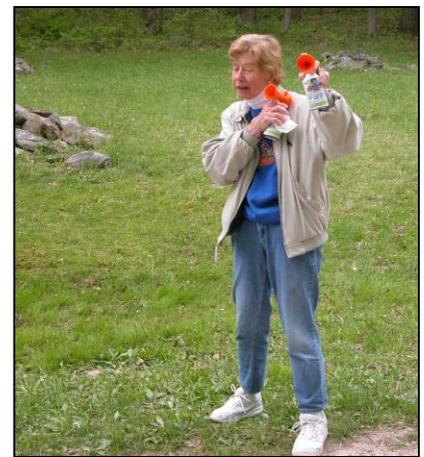
Nancy Cowles, first person in front foreground, watches the first convoy of buses unload the students. Nancy will then direct the teachers.

Nancy Cowles is the driving force behind Living History School Days. A retired teacher herself, Nancy starts ten months out to plan each year's School Days. She sends out the brochures and reservation forms in the fall of each year. The event is "sold out" before Christmas. Then School Days Information Kits are sent out or personally delivered to each participating school. The kits contain the history of the army encampment at what is now Putnam park. The teachers can then give an orientation about the park which dovetails into the school's curriculum.

When the schools are locked in and dates reserved, Nancy then gets commitments from the reenactors and craftsperson's who will demonstrate their specialties during the weeklong event in May. Then, she begins lining up FANs volunteers and DEP Park personnel to assist in making the event go as planned. Hats off to Nancy for another great School Days! Also, to all the volunteers who made the event happen.



The horn that echoed through the Little River Valley.



Stations are rotated every 20 minutes by the director's air horn.



Nancy at the bottom of the ramp giving last minute instructions

Museum Goings On



Scavenger Hunt at the Museum



Rosemary Payne is the head of the annual scavenger hunt which makes the kids look for clues amongst the museum artifacts.



Col. Kline, museum guide, fire marshal, kids counter, and guard keeps an iron grip on his museum. Do not be the 26th person in line.



Head FANs Historian, Dan Cruson, explains information on the artifacts in the cases. After thirty years of teaching.... he really connects.



Schuyler Merritt is the Head of the Company store. The store staff ended up with another record year.



Park Ranger Andy Sullivan directed bus convoy traffic all week. Good job, Andy.

April FAN's Meeting



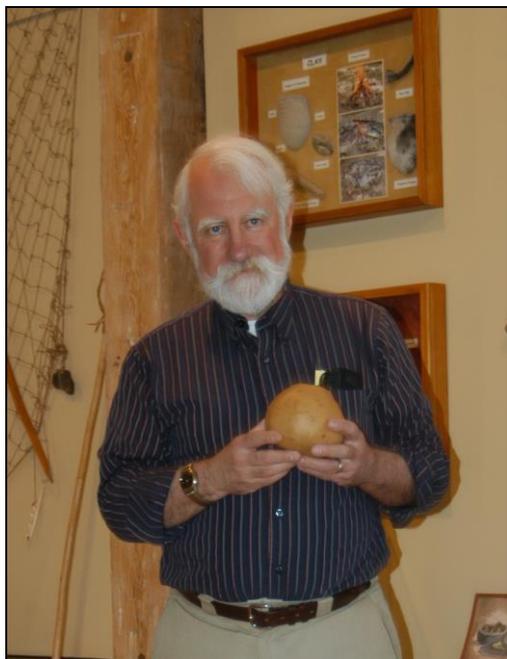
The May meeting of the Friends group was held on Tuesday May 9th at the park Visitor Center.

Discussions held included:

1. Rosemary Payne covered the current Treasurer's Report
2. Nancy Cowles recapped the status of this month's *Living History School Days* program. May 15th thru 19th. Volunteers' assignments were finalized, times and dates confirmed.
3. The entire group spent the duration of the meeting preparing items to be sold at FANs gift shop at the *School Days* event; stringing ribbons on the park medallions, bagging pewter sundials and buttons. The merchandising inventory is ready for the event.
4. Special recognition goes to our resident Whitesmith, Jim Freebairn, who has spent the past winter mass producing pewter musket balls, sundials, medallions, and uniform buttons for our company store. We all know that Jim deserves a raise!



New Pond Farm Series



Dan Cruson

Prehistoric Redding - A Four Part Lecture Series presented by Dan Cruson

1. **The Geological Prehistory and the Process of Archaeology – April 25th , 2006**
2. **The First Inhabitants of Redding and their Hunting-Gathering Successors. May 9th ,2006**
3. **The Woodland Indians: The Indians as You Think You Know Them. May 23rd , 2006**
4. **The Indians Meet Europeans: Disaster and Its Aftermath. June 6, 2006**

Dan Cruson has been giving a four part lecture series on Prehistoric Redding up until the time of the Europeans. The series is being held at New Pond Farm lecture hall on Tuesday mornings at 10:30 AM. \$10 fee.



The next FAN's Meeting will be on **Tuesday Evening June 13th** at the new **Visitor Center** at Putnam Park. The meeting will start at **7:00pm**.