

February 2005 News Letter

Let There Be Light

The original museum at Putnam Park was in the second floor of the 1893 Pavilion, which is currently undergoing a restorative reconstruction. It will become the park Visitor Center. The first museum in the pavilion had no electricity, no heat and no plumbing; not a particularly good environment to display valuable artifacts from the past. In 1921 state funded the construction of the Colonial Museum, which sits atop a knoll overlooking Lake Putnam. The building is faced with stone and is two stories in height, plus a cellar. Underneath the stone veneer is a building constructed of concrete. Walls, ceilings and floors; indestructible. The artifacts now had heat and electricity and very poor lighting.

The Friends group teamed up with the park staff and purchased modern track lighting for the dimly lit museum. Park Supervisor Nathan Hale and his crew just finished installation of eight tracks for the lights. These sets of lights now illuminate the display cases and interior in brilliant fashion. All of the lights can be directionally positioned. Each of the tracks required holes drilled through the concrete ceiling. A tough job, but with terrific results!



The Colonial Museum at Putnam Park. The building was built in 1921, and replaced the original museum in the pavilion.



Park crew installs track lights in Colonial Museum.



One of the many educational presentations for students during the annual Living History Week each spring.



November FAN's Meeting

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



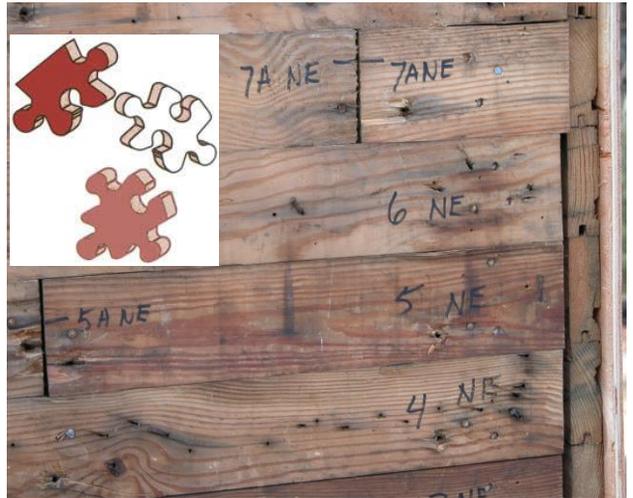
Discussions held included:

1. Approval of lighting fixtures and installation for the park museum.
2. Update of the many construction projects at the park..
3. Membership and dues letters, mailing lists, and other sources for the annual mailing of letters.
4. Nathan Hale reported that funding has come through for new signs at the park. A committee will be formed to decide which signs should be made.
5. The museum and park gates were closed for the winter on Nov. 15th.

Pavilion Puzzle Pieces Marked

When Kronenberger & Sons dismantled the pavilion earlier this fall they marked all the pieces of the puzzle, knowing that they would soon be putting it back together again.

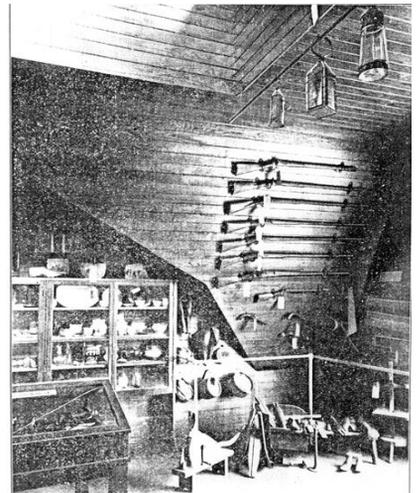
Some of the pieces were damaged over the many years, and had to be replicated. They took meticulous measurements and hand crafted many of the new posts and beams. All wood and siding that was still useable will go back into the reconstruction of the building.



First Museum

The first park museum dated back to the 1890's, long before the current park museum was built in 1921. The location? in the second floor of the 1893 Pavilion.

Many of the Revolutionary War era artifacts at the camp were unearthed during the process of creating the park. Other items from the era were donated by area residents. The photo at the right was taken in the pavilion museum. Note some of the display cases in the left foreground. These were made in Bethel, and are the same ones displaying artifacts in today's park museum.



The Pavilion-Visitor Center

The walls and gables were erected on the pavilion. Re-construction of the building is literally like putting a jigsaw puzzle back together. All pieces were marked and stored for reassembly. Many new pieces had to be replicated exactly like the original so they would fit together.

The crew is currently erecting the interior beams and supporting structure so the roof can then be started. Getting under-roof is a main objective right now so the craftsmen can work under cover through the winter.

The interior of the new structure will look just like the old building with the post and beams and old siding exposed.



November 2004. Finding the right sections to go back into reconstruction.



November 2004. Erecting the beams and supports in preparation of adding the second floor and the roof.

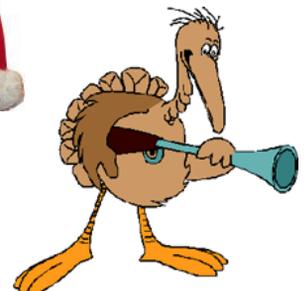


November 2004. The pavilion, like the mythical phoenix, is coming back to life.

Next Meeting

(No December Meeting)

The next FAN's Meeting will be on Monday Evening **January 10th** at the Redding Town Hall. The meeting will start at **7:00pm**. Please come and join with us in the planning of events and projects at Putnam Park.



Happy Thanksgiving

