



July 1991

# STOW-INFO

Newsletter of the Stow Historical Society

## JOINT POTLUCK PICNIC SET FOR WEDNESDAY, JULY 31

A triple treat is in store for Historical Society members on Wednesday, July 31, at 5 p.m. at a potluck picnic at the home of Dorothy and Emily Perkins on Gleasondale Road. The setting of the Perkins' home overlooking the Assabet River is most appropriate to the evening's program.

Members of the Stow Conservation Trust will join with the Historical Society members in the event, and the Trust will sponsor canoeing on the Assabet in conjunction with the picnic. Canoes may be launched from the Perkins meadow or from the Cox Street pig farm. The Conservation Trust is interested in sponsoring canoe trips on various waterways in Stow.

The evening will culminate in a slide-tape show on the Assabet River. The slides were taken in 1976 for the Bicentennial by Dorothy Perkins and Chris Musello and set to the poem, "The Assabet Brook and River" written in the 1800's by John Randall. The slides recently came to light in going through materials in the society's collection, and this is a first-time viewing of the program. Stan Sherman has put the show on tape for the society.

The picnic will start about 6 p.m., and members of both organizations are asked to bring casseroles, salads or desserts. Members also should bring chairs or blankets. Beverages, eating utensils and paper products will be provided. In the event of rain, the picnic will be held in the Perkins' barn. If you have questions, call Barbara Sipler, president of the Historical Society, at 897-5996.

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**QUESTION: WHEN IS STOW HISTORY TAUGHT IN THE LOCAL SCHOOLS?**

**ANSWER: IN THE THIRD GRADE.**

Third graders and their teachers at Pompositticut School have a great deal of enthusiasm for local history thanks to the Stow History Kit developed in 1976 as the town celebrated the Bicentennial of our country.

The kit, developed with grant money under the direction of Martha Perkins, contains materials and information to assist teachers in making local history come alive.

One of the features of the kit is a series of booklets about a day in the life of three 8-year-old boys: Ephraim Hapgood who lived in the 1700's, Charlie Gleason, in the 1800's, and Bernard Fletcher, who is part of the 1900's.

Ask any third grader what young boys did in the good old days, and they can tell you the stories of Ephraim, Charlie and Bernard. And



not only that, but they also can tell you where they lived. Their homes are still here: Ephraim lived in the present home of the Risings on Treaty Elm Lane; Charlie, in the Perkins house in Gleasondale, and Bernard, in the present Hartley home across from the Fire Station. Illustrations in the booklets, drawn by local artists, help the children identify the homes, and there are reports of students taking their parents around town to see these homes.

Third grade teachers Hugh Mill, Carol Pensa, and Martha MacDonald have a great deal of praise for the help they receive from parents, craftspeople and members of the Stow Historical Society in helping the children develop a sense of history and the town. Each year a parent coordinator assists the teachers in setting up talks, demonstrations and hands-on-experiences. This year's coordinator was Linda Hathaway-Smart.

Guest speakers this year, many of them repeat visitors, included: Jack Head, Minutemen; Jody Newman, stenciling; Richard Martin, farming and tools; Carol Anthony, Indians; Virginia Hatch, growing up in Stow; Lydia Holmes, pewter craft; Sarah Axtman, spinning; Laura Orsatti, quilts.

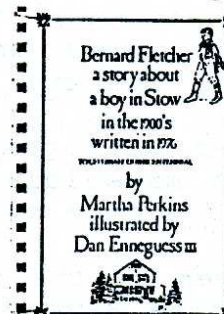
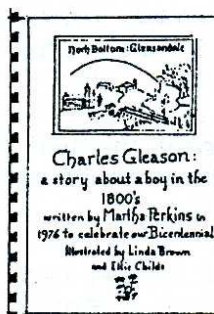
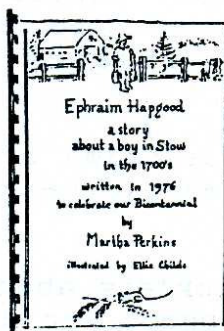
At an Activity Day, organized by "Schoolmarm" Maureen Barila, many parents helped students with hands-on activities including wool carding, stenciling, quill pens, map reading. The parents included Loretta Tolwinski, Jane Hernon, Ann Sadler, Suzanne Abatsis, Lana Harrington and Linda Hathaway-Smart.

At the Colonial Luncheon Day, chaired by Carol Zarrow, students and their mothers prepared a meal of rum tum tiddy and gingerbread.

The three teachers report that students look forward to the Stow History unit each year, and they credit Nancy Kyle, long-time Pompo teacher now retired, with getting the History Kit firmly established in the third grade curriculum.

The unit starts in early spring with the visual presentation, "Stow, a Story." This slide/video production, available at Randall Library, is the work of Bob Johnson, Arnie Buckman and Stan Sherman. The students end the unit with a trip to Sturbridge Village.

Members of the Stow Historical Society are invited to take part in the programs, and are most welcome as audience for the presentations. Opportunities also exist each year to help prepare materials for the units.



Stories about a day-in-the-life of three 8-year-olds:  
Ephraim, Charles and Bernard