

News from the Stow Historical Society

*A newsletter for all friends of Stow history.
Please feel free to pass it along to others who
might be interested!*

March 3, 2014

A Day Never Known Before!

“Wednesday, April the 19, 1775, was a day never known in New England before—a civil war is begun in this province.”

That’s the entry in the diary of Stow’s John Gates for that day—239 years ago. Did he have any idea that this disturbance in Concord, practically in his backyard, would turn into a history changing event—the American Revolution? Gates’ diary is one of the treasures in Stow’s historical collection that gives a picture of life at that time. And living in a very small town, Gates would have known that the Stow Minutemen had marched into Concord that day.



Doolittle Print of the British Army in Concord

Sign up Now

**“A Day Never Known Before!”
With the Stow Minutemen**

**Pot Luck Supper
Stow Historical Society
6:30 p.m. Friday, April 4
Old Town Hall**

Reservations may be made with Dorothy
Sonnichsen at [978-897-3344](tel:978-897-3344) or
dorthe@comcast.net.

The Public is Invited!

Gates, who kept the diary from 1755 to 1789, would have been familiar with the Minutemen who trained regularly on the Stow Lower Common. Minutemen were to be ready to serve “on the shortest notice,” and apparently were well-organized, well-trained and well-led.

Today everyone is familiar with the annual march on Patriots’ Day into Concord from



Patriots’ Day 2012

Stow and surrounding towns, but there's so much more to the story of the Minutemen.

The Stow Historical Society has invited the Stow Minutemen to fill in that story at a pot luck dinner on Friday, April 4, at Town Hall at 6:30 p.m. The public is invited. The Stow Minutemen are led by Captain Bob Stokes, who along with his family joined the group 22 years ago. Bob tells how his family joined because his older son, Mike, wanted to do the march to Concord. At six, he made it all the way to Concord (over ten miles) and did the two-mile parade as well. Both Bob and his wife, Linda, agree that it was a wonderful way to raise two sons, who both gained a deep understanding of our country and its origins through living history. Unsurprisingly, Mike has grown up to become a history teacher. Bob, a retired actuary, is researching the genealogies of the Minutemen and will share some tidbits with you.



The Sudbury Fife & Drum Muster 2013

tools have counterparts in surgery today. There will also be a display of various period muskets and schooling materials, demonstration of lace making, weaving, and toys and games and historical documents and prints. These include reproduction Doolittle prints, which are based on sketches by Ralph Earl and first-hand accounts taken by Amos Doolittle days after the battles of Lexington, Concord and Battle Road and printed shortly thereafter, using copperplate engraving.



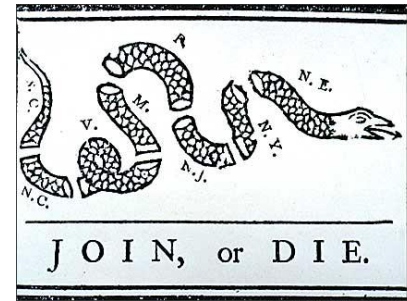
Old Sturbridge Village Rebels & Redcoats 2007

Also, Gates' diary will be on display for public viewing.

Snippets of Colonial History:

- ❖ Did you know that 80 towns voted to support independence before the Continental Congress did in 1776? The first known town to do so was Worcester, Massachusetts in October, 1774.

- ❖ Stow Town Meeting voted for independence on July 1, 1776. The vote is recorded in the Town Meeting records in the town archives.
- ❖ Did you know that the physicians were frequently University educated but were much more likely to kill you than surgeons, who usually learned their trade as apprentices? If you fell and had a compound fracture, a visit to the surgeon increased your odds of survival from almost 0 to 50 percent. How would he accomplish this?
- ❖ Today few think of our Revolutionary War as a Civil War. Why would Gates have said that a civil war has begun? For the same reason Paul Revere would never have said, “The British are Coming.”
- ❖ Did you know that the famous Revolutionary cartoon “Join or Die” was first created by Benjamin Franklin in 1754!
- ❖ During the Revolution, 35–40 percent of the colonists were patriots, 15-20 percent were loyalists and the rest were fence sitters. Where would you have sided?
- ❖ Loyalists were snubbed, ostracized and threatened; some fled to Boston and later Canada. Some in the greater Concord area had housed and assisted Gage's spies.



Come and find out the answers to these questions and learn much more. Bring your own questions!

NEW GIFT FOR MUSEUM

A gift of an antique wooden harness box manufactured by the C.D. Fletcher Box Shop has been given to the Stow Historical Museum at Randall Library. The large box, made during World War I, was used to ship artillery harnesses manufactured in Concord for Czarist Russia. The box was donated by Tom Tobin of Maynard in memory of his uncle, Henry Patterson. The Box Shop, now torn down, was on Box Mill Rd. next to Elizabeth Brook, on a site which had been home of gristmills and sawmills for 250 years. C.D. Fletcher operated the Shop, starting in 1909, making boxes of many different types. Tom's mother, Mary Elizabeth Patterson, lived across the road from the mill. Her house also was razed.



THIRD GRADE DELVES INTO STOW HISTORY IN ANNUAL PROGRAM

In January third graders at Center School were given a look at 17th Century Stow in a history lesson presented by Marilyn Zavorski of the Stow Historical Society. Each year the society is invited to explore Stow's history with this age group. Zavorski, former teacher and avid history buff, worked with four classrooms examining interactions of Pilgrims, Puritans and Native Americans, using a visual presentation to make the history



Marilyn Zavorski with third graders

come alive. The lecturer was able to glean some materials from the Stow Town Vault to give students a clearer understanding of the world of 1600's compared to the 21st Century. In the spring, a second program for the same students will be presented at Town Hall on "Stow, Changing and Growing."



Third graders work on understanding the 17th century world.

STOW WEST SCHOOL GEARS UP FOR SUMMER PROGRAMS

Once again the Stow West School Committee is making plans for its annual summer program at the beautiful little schoolhouse on Harvard Rd. Three programs will be offered including Back to School Day, Oral History Day, and the Historical Reenactor presentation. Each year the programs draw enthusiastic audiences. Last year's reenactor was Katie Green as Mary Rowlandson. She was very convincing in her portrayal of life during her captivity with Indians during King Philip's War. Serving on the committee are: Karen Gray, Linda Stokes, Mike Busch, and Marilyn Zavorski.



Katie Green as Mary Rowlandson