

The Dill's Tavern Chronicle

July 2008

www.dillstavern.org

Northern York County Historical and Preservation Society, 35 Greenbrier Lane, Dillsburg, PA 17019 Ph. 717- 502-1440



Purpose: To promote and encourage the study, collection, and preservation of the historical heritage of the Northern York County area.

Can Yah dig it? These 2nd. Graders Did!

I found pieces of pottery, glass, wire, china, coal, and redware. Have you yourself found animal bones? Pascal

I found a piece of horse shoe. How many years have you been working there? Sophia

I found a modern piece of duct tape. Joshua



I had fun digging for artifacts. Do you know what the circle thing is? Oakley

I wish we could stay longer but we couldn't. Logan

I found a lot of pottery. Jessica

While some kids go to the cellar and Dig, other kids go outside and Sieve. After the Dig each student sent a wonderful Thank You Note Enjoy the event through there written words.

Dear Mrs. Klase, Thank you for inviting me

I found china and it was a very shiny piece of a plate. Jared
I found an oyster shell and I also found horse hair. KateLynn
I found-fancy paper-might have-been used for wall paper. Hannah
Have any of the presidents been in Dill Tavern? Kyra
I enjoyed sieving out artifacts, discovering what it is and what people used it for. Peter
I found pieces of redware when I was sieving through the dirt. I found a piece of redware at my house. Grant
I enjoyed everything - I would like to visit again. Kathryn
I enjoyed seeing how the beds were. Melissa
I enjoyed laying in an old bed. Timothy



I wanted to know how many years you worked there because you are great at telling how people lived back then. Lauryn
And one little person summed up the happiness and success of the day for all of the kids with:
....And my mom didnt even get mad for getting dirty. Kaidyn

The Dillsburg Elementary Second Grade classes of Mrs. Wonders, Mrs. Barlup, Mrs. Conley and Mrs. Yohn took a walking field trip to Dill's Tavern on two lovely days in May. The students came to use skills learned from the archaeology unit studied last fall. Each class was divided into two groups for the tasks of diggers and screeners - at halftime, they switched tasks. The site was the excavation of the basement under the 1819 kitchen. The goal is to uncover the solid dirt floor of what is suspected to be the coldcellar storage area so 1 foot of dirt and debris needs to be hauled out. With much enthusiasm and sharp eyes the students filled trays with charnds. Some of the finds were quite exciting as over two hundred year old pieces of pearlware and painted redware and a clay pipe stem were located. The children really helped move along the project of screening soil that's been tumbled into the basement with every ground moving project through the years. Thank you Second Grade Students !

Another group came this spring to help at the site. Middle school- aged girls from Dillsburg Cadette Troup 519 came one evening to tour the Tavern before digging and screening. Parents and girls worked several hours at the basement site filling trays with pieces of china and pottery, buttons and old nails. It's a pleasure to have these young people bring their enthusiastic labors to help at the project.



The Tavern Fence

Clair Zeiders and I have been busy trying to upgrade the front of Dills Tavern. The fence is a reproduction of the fence seen in an early photo shown above. I spent hours peering at the photo, trying to figure out how the fence was built. We used locust posts and sunk them three feet into the ground. When we dug the fence post next to the front walk, (right side walking in), we discovered a second well. It is probably the 1794 well and when we dropped a weighted string into it, we found it to be 16 feet deep with 8 feet water. We only made a small hole in the side of the well with a digging iron, so it was easy to close up that hole and let the well sit until the day comes when we can open it up and do archeological work.

The locust fence posts were mortised to receive the white oak rails. The boards on the bottom of the fence are mahogany. We try to use materials that are highly resistant to rot and weathering in general. All the wood components of the fence are coated with clear penetrating epoxy sealer (CPES). This seals the wood and acts as a great primer. George Wentz, a local purveyor of fine antique architectural elements, sold us 260 original white pine pickets. They have the exact profile as the ones in the old photo. These weathered pickets were individually soaked in a trough of CPES. Now they look old and weathered, but they are as sound as new material. When the pickets are all soaked. They will get two coats of white oil paint. It may be a while until they are all painted and are installed on the fence. The gates will be built in the weeks to come.

The fence we copied in the photo is probably a civil war era fence. It does have the character of an earlier fence. I like the idea that it is a fence that actually was in front of the tavern and not a design we just made up. Why the boards on the bottom? I don't know. It is not uncommon to see such boards on an early fence. Eventually, simple rail fences will continue on along the side walk in both directions, just like in the old photo. I think the fence will add a great early 19th Century look to the tavern.

Offered by Sam McKinney

The Tavern Committee:

Bob Eichelberger-Chairman, Mervin Ice, Larry Klase, Joanne Klase, Connie Trostle, and Greg Wonders

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