

Colonial Life Depicted on Westford Common Sunday

By GORDON B. SEAVEY

WESTFORD — Martial music of days long gone will pour over the Common this Sunday (July 24) when Westford Minutemen present a family day honoring the birth of Lt. Col. John Robinson, the community's Revolutionary hero.

Colonial crafts will be continually demonstrated from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. and will include a gunsmith, carpenter, tinsmith and other craftsmen in Colonial costumes, plying their trades of a couple of centuries ago.

And for the women there will be chair caning, candle-making, spinning and weaving, needlework and scrimshaw, the engraving of small objects such as shells and ivory.

Using the J. V. Fletcher Library as well as the hall of the First Parish Church, a play and also films from Williamsburg will be presented all during the family day.

The sketch written by Mrs. Virginia Kimball for the Bicentennial will be re-enacted. Entitled "A Day for Doughnuts" it covers an anecdote in the life of the Robinson family when father left hurriedly for the skirmish at North Bridge, Concord, on April 19, 1775. Curtain time is 2:45.

The historical films were carefully researched and produced at Colonial Williamsburg. One depicts the making of guns from the pouring of the metals to finishing stocks and carriages, the other is Colonial music played on instruments of that period. They will be shown at 1, 2, 3:30 and 4:30.

The Historical Society will have a bake sale and the Book and Thimble Club of the First

Parish will serve refreshments, some of which will be concocted from old recipes.

The Minutemen will put on their own demonstrations and drills, including fife and drum parades. There will be athletic events for the children.

The man in whose memory the program is being offered was born in Topsfield in 1735, coincidentally on July 24. Robinson was nearly thirty before he married. He brought his bride, Hulda Perley, a niece of General Israel Putnam, the great American patriot and soldier, to Westford in 1764 to farmlands which now comprise the locations of Westford Academy and the Robinson School.

Robinson had a superb physique and had attained the rank of lieutenant colonel in the local militia, part of a regiment of Minutemen commanded by Col. William Prescott of Pepperell.

When the call came from Concord and Lexington, Robinson quickly departed but before mounting his horse his farewell to his wife was a request to "call up the girls and hired servant and cook all the provisions they could and send it by the 14 year old lad on horseback to Concord."

According to his great, great granddaughter, Olive Ann Prescott, who wrote in 1896, "the boy took a goodly supply of substantial food that would bear a quick horseback ride. A bushel of doughnuts had an honorable place in that out-door lunch in Concord." This story is the theme of the play to be presented in the parish hall.

Lt. Herbert Sallet of 28 No. Hill Rd. heads the committee arranging the family day program.



WESTFORD MINUTEMEN, who are honoring the town's Revolutionary hero, Col. John Robinson, this Sunday, conduct services at his grave in West Cemetery. They are, l to r, Historian Allister F. MacDougall, William Stone, Rober D. Mell and Captain Theodore W. Engle. (G.B. Seavey photo)



WESTFORD MINUTEMEN PLAN FAMILY DAY in honor of town's Revolutionary hero, John Robinson, on July 24, 242 years after his birth. Drilling on the Common is this detachment (left to right) led by Lt. Col. Elwin Bagley with David Day, Alan Carlson, Richard Rothwell and James Whitlock. (G. B. Seavey photo)