

Colonial Life Re-enacted on Westford Common Saturday

By GORDON SEAVEY

WESTFORD — Musket fire, martial music, costumed dancers and old-time crafts will mingle with the sounds of country living as the Westford Minutemen again present a family day honoring the birth of Colonel John Robinson, the community's Revolutionary hero, this Saturday.

These events will take place on historic Westford Common, also in the parish hall of the First Parish Church United and the J.V. Fletcher Library which face the triangle.

All during the day, Colonial crafts will be demonstrated, from 10 to 5. Plying their trades will be a gunsmith, carpenter, tinsmith, blacksmith and wheelwright, wood carver, potter and silversmith.

Minuteman Allister F. MacDougall will have on display some of his most interesting farming tools of the past.

The ladies, in costume, will demonstrate rug braiding and hooking, candlemaking, spinning and weaving, needlework, quilting and scrimshaw, the engraving of small objects such as shells and ivory. There will on exhibit samples of primitive, quilling, theorem and tole paintings.

Local Minutemen will give musket demonstrations from 10 to 11. Concord Minutemen will present a program of early music from 11 to noon. Then, representatives from the National Park Service at Lexington will present a unique feature, two views of the skirmish at North Bridge. One dressed in the colorful British uniform of the Colonial Days.

Bushel of Doughnuts

The sketch written for the Bicentennial by Mrs. Virginia Kimball will be re-enacted in the parish hall at one. Young director of the play is Lynne Whitlock, an Academy sophomore, who will have seven others in the cast from ages 9 to 15.

Entitled "A Day for Doughnuts" it covers an anecdote in the life of the Robinson family when father, upon receiving a startling message from Lexington that the British were on the way to Concord, left hurriedly without waiting for the 130 Westford men who were to follow in the early morning hours of April 19, 1775.

Before mounting his horse, the farewell to his wife was a request to "call up the girls and hired servant and cook all

the provisions you could ... and send them 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-of-doors lunch in Concord." This is the theme of the sketch which starts at one.

Colonial Dancers

Minutemen and their partners from Dedham, in costume, will perform old-time dancing to the familiar tunes of the time. This will be on the common at 2 and again at 3.

At the J.V. Fletcher Library there will be a special display of Colonel Robinson artifacts, including the 2 oz. tin mug which he carried all through the Revolution. "Twice filled" with rum was part of each soldier's rations. Visitors here will also have an opportunity to see the current display of old documents, broadsides, handbills and 19th century tax scales which are presently cased in glass in the basement floor. Here, a few Bicentennial plaques and the History of Westford will be on sale.



Col. John Robinson Homestead, which burned in 1937. From a painting by Olive O'Reilly.

Historical films, carefully researched and produced at Colonial Williamsburg, will be shown here at 11 on the coopers' craft, the art of making barrels, tubs and casks; at

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3 45, basket making and blacksmithing

The Historical Society will have a bake sale. The Book and Thumble Club of the First Church will serve refreshments, including mulled cider, doughnuts and pound cake all made in the old-fashioned manner.

Athletic events are planned for the youngsters.

Robinson Day

Known as 'Colonel John Robinson Day' a similar event last year drew hundreds to the center of this old Colonial town established in 1729 and which will soon observe its 250th birthday. Robinson was born July 24, 1735, and attained the rank of lieutenant colonel in the local militia, part of a regiment of Minutemen commanded by Colonel William Prescott at Bunker Hill.

Herbert Sallet of 29 North Hill Rd. again heads the committee arranging the family day program honoring Robinson. Others are Elwin Bagley, Theodore W. Engle, George Shepherd and Donald Sousa.

Rain date will be Sunday.