

# THE PAINTED PONY

**CHECK  
OUT**  
THE 13TH ANNUAL  
BENEFIT HORSE SHOW

SPRING 2009

## Riddle *Me* This

Growing up in New York State gave me endless exposure to nature, wild animals and beautiful vistas; however, as a teenager, I wanted to be closer to a city – any city! - live in a warmer climate, a drier climate, near the ocean or in the Netherlands; in short, anywhere but home. As an adult though, I've gained an appreciation for my native land and can honestly celebrate it. The Farmers' Museum's new exhibition for 2009 follows two fictional New York kids on a journey not unlike my own.

*Wild Times! A New York Animal Road Trip* is the story of Lulu and her brother Max. The duo was given a list of riddles by their parents. The answer to each riddle is a New York State animal. They must answer the riddles, find the animals, and finally find where all of these diverse animals can be found in one place. Along the way, they discover that New York has a wonderful menagerie of animals within its borders – wild and domestic, rare and ubiquitous.

### Here are a few of the animals Lulu and Max discover:

#### Scallop

Peconic Bay, Long Island once produced 1/3 of the scallops harvested in the United States. In the 1980s the scallop population was decimated by an algae bloom known as the "brown tide." Harvest totals went from 270,000 pounds per year to a mere 250 pounds per year. Today most bay scallops enjoyed in the United States arrive frozen from China. Thankfully, volunteers are working toward repopulating Peconic Bay by raising baby scallops in fish tanks and releasing them into the Bay when they are large enough to survive.



#### Did you know...

- The scallop is the official New York State shell.
- Scallops have a row of blue eyes along the edges of their shells that detect changes in light.

#### Mule:

Mules are a cross between a male donkey and a female horse. They are smart, strong and can work for a long time with little food or water. As draft and pack animals, mules have worked on colonial farms, travelled with the US army and helped build and transport goods along the Erie Canal. The most famous mule, Sal, was memorialized in "Low Bridge," a song about travel along the canal in New York State.

#### Did you know...

- 62,000 mules were sent to Europe along with American troops during World War I.
- Idaho Gem, born in 2003, was the first clone of a hybrid animal. Researchers at the University of Idaho and Utah State University worked together on this project.



#### Beaver

Europeans had already greatly reduced their own beaver populations when trappers began exporting pelts from North America. New York State's original colonial settlers, the Dutch, chose to colonize the Hudson Valley primarily to increase their fur trade prospects. So many beavers were killed for their pelts that by the 19th-century there were no longer enough beavers in New York and trappers moved further west. The beaver population in New York has finally recovered, but nearly two centuries passed without a beaver sighting in Manhattan.

*Wild Times*   
A New York Animal  
Road Trip



Although Winter is still in the forecast as I write this, we are looking forward to Spring, the opening of the new exhibition, *Wild Times! A New York Animal Road Trip*, and the beginning of an exciting season here

in Cooperstown! With Spring also comes the arrival of our seasonal staff and volunteers, the heart and soul of the museum experience. Almost 250 people commit over 10,000 hours of their time to greet visitors, work on The Museum's farmstead, help staff our special events, and generally lend a helping hand. Our volunteers range in experience from a dedicated crew of teens who learn to interpret our craft shops as part of the Young Interpreters Program, to expert engineers, seasoned farmers, and skilled artists who contribute their talents to The Museum. I cannot tell you how much we appreciate all that they do for us, and look forward to their arrival!

Volunteers contribute in many ways. They help us stretch our resources to expand the amount of programming available to visitors and are a corps of goodwill ambassadors in the community. An example of this came in a recent letter from a young man who had volunteered as a Young Interpreter. He said, "Since my experience at the museum our family has visited several other living history museums. An interesting observation we have all made is that while some of these facilities had more space, buildings and more plaques; which resulted in a far less enjoyable and meaningful experience. We realized all the more what a wonderful asset our community has in The Farmers' Museum!"

In uncertain times like these it is important that the museum focus on its core mission and reach out to new audiences for the future. Early this May the museum will host over 350 young Head Start students and their families from throughout Otsego County in a day of learning, activities, and fun. This innovative program is a unique collaboration between the museum and the community to ensure that all children in the county experience seeing a blacksmith work at the forge, get a chance to milk Buttercup the cow, and ride The Empire State Carousel.

The Museum's mission -- "Cultivating an understanding of the rural heritage that has shaped our land, communities and American culture" -- guides staff and volunteers to present an experience that is equal parts learning and fun. I hope you will join me at The Farmers' Museum to enjoy our 2009 season!

JANE FORBES CLARK  
Chairman

## Dr. Jackson's Office Undergoes a Restoration



Photo by Frank Forte

The Farmers' Museum is fortunate to have in its possession a 19th-century physicians' office; it is one of only three known to exist in New York State. Structures with this background are considered extremely rare. They were even a rarity in their own time, since most doctors worked out of their homes and traveled to see

patients. A doctor's office was mainly used for preparation, record keeping and storage, all of which could easily be done within the confines of the doctor's residence. This particular office was originally half its current size and was built in Westford, NY, in a Greek Revival style, circa 1820. The structure was first used by Dr. John Jackson, Jr.

Dr. Jackson's office is currently in the middle of a major renovation. The work in progress includes restoring the interior and exterior components of the building, painting, adding an access ramp on the back of the office, and developing an exhibit on 19th-century medicine and the doctor's role in the community.

The interior restoration of the building will give visitors a more authentic experience. The front portion of the building will represent a sparsely furnished rural physician's office, similar to the way Dr. Elhanan Jackson, the second physician to practice there, may have used the space. The back room, actually added in the 1870s by a third practicing physician, will house an exhibition highlighting objects from The Farmers' Museum's medical collection.

Once completed, visitors will glimpse a physician's office that is almost indistinguishable from one of the rare few that existed in some 1840s Central New York villages.

The doctor's office exhibit will help visitors learn what treatment options were available for common illnesses in the mid 19th-century and also answer questions such as:

- What was it like to be sick and request a visit from the local doctor in 1840?
- What was it like to be a patient?
- Who were the patients?
- How did rural families treat illness in the 1840s?

The Farmers' Museum was awarded funding from The 1772 Foundation toward restoration of Dr. Jackson's Office. Cost estimates for the restoration exceed the amount of the grant substantially, and thankfully, one of our Pioneer Society members, Dr. Robert Lancey, volunteered to lead a local campaign to help raise additional funds to supplement the project.

Dr. Jackson's office is set to reopen on Fourth of July weekend. Be sure to step inside during a visit to The Farmers' Museum. \*

## A Blacksmith *with* a plan...



Blacksmith Steven Kellogg in his workshop at The Farmers' Museum. Photo by Todd Kenyon.

Steven Kellogg has only been with the Farmers' Museum for approximately a year now, but since his first day he has brought a brilliant spark of creativity to the job. Originally from Dexter NY, Steven, a political scientist and historian, whose interest in blacksmithing led him to seek out training and attend blacksmithing conferences, found his way to the museum in 2008 after hearing about the job opening through the "blacksmith grapevine."

Always open to new ideas and creative ways to share his craft, Steven was approached by Wayne and Marianne Coursen with a plan - to blend the art of blacksmithing with the age old pursuit of woodworking. The idea was to create an object on the farm, utilizing both art forms that would culminate as an example for future workshops and interpretations. The end

product would be a 19th-century sled.

The prototype will take over two months to build but will provide a roadmap pointing out pitfalls that could occur along the way. The procedure will use authentic 19th-century tools and techniques. Some parts will be pre-made to easily demonstrate to students the technique used to produce them. The idea is to use a process that is clear but exacting - hopefully creating an enjoyable experience for all involved.

Not entirely bound to the ways of the past, Steven is documenting the creation of the sled utilizing photos and video in order to compile an instructional DVD. This will allow students to create the sled on their own if they cannot attend a workshop. It will illustrate the entire process, from forging the parts through the complete assembly.

Steve hopes to see the sled project used during Candlelight Evening at The Farmers' Museum, where it could become part of a seasonal interpretive discussion.

You can find Steve fanning his coals at The Farmers' Museum throughout the season or keep track of Steve's doings on his blog: [RuralBlacksmith.blogspot.com](http://RuralBlacksmith.blogspot.com). \*

## The 13th Annual Benefit Horse Show and Luncheon

The Farmers' Museum is saddling up for its next benefit horse show. Now in its 13th year, the show offers equestrians the opportunity to test their horsemanship skills with a range of classes from beginner through open riders on the museum's beautiful show grounds located on River Road, just outside the village of Cooperstown. We will once again hold an Equestrian Clinic prior to the show on Saturday, June 6. Riders of all levels and abilities will have an opportunity to advance their skills with instruction from knowledgeable hunter/jumper trainers in this one-day clinic. Overnight stabling off-site and a discount on entry fees is available for registrants who will be participating in the clinic and the show. There will be four sessions offered, with the first beginning at 9 am. Scholarship opportunities are available for the clinic.



Photo by Kathleen Duncan

On Sunday, June 7, The Farmers' Museum Benefit Horse Show will kick-off at 9 am, rain or shine. Classes include open beginner hunter, special hunter, adult hunter, and open hunter under saddle and over fences. The equitation division includes open, adult, junior, beginner, and walk-trot classes. There will also be a lead line class and the Cooperstown Good Hands equitation class for junior riders. Five championships will be awarded as well as three trophies.

Once again, the Annual Patrons' Luncheon will be offered at noon. Individuals taking part will enjoy a delicious luncheon, coupled with ringside seating under the tent, as well as morning coffee and pastries. You can make reservations for the luncheon by contacting Emily Daunis at (607) 547-1524.

Sponsorships and underwriting opportunities are still available; please call Emily Daunis at (607) 547-1524 or e-mail her at [horseshow@nysha.org](mailto:horseshow@nysha.org)

For a prize list or more information about The Farmers' Museum Benefit Horse Show, please contact The Farmers' Museum at (607) 547-1450 or visit us online at [www.farmersmuseum.org](http://www.farmersmuseum.org). \*

## Everything Old *Is* New Again

**Pharmaceuticals: a progressive industry, dependent on cutting-edge technology and the discovery of heretofore unknown, unfamiliar, or unidentified substances and properties. Correct? Not so if you ask Patrick MacGregor, supervisor of Dr. Thrall's Pharmacy at The Farmers' Museum, who has made a 16-year study of pharmaceutical practices in the mid-19th-century.**

According to the book *Practical Pharmacy*, by Francis Mohr, Ph.D., circa 1845, grinding dry herbs should be done in an area separate from where liquids are boiled and distilled. Both processes are critical to the pharmacy operation, but require disparate environmental conditions. This indispensable book includes not only information on making medications, but also thorough illustrations for producing the equipment needed to run a pharmacy during that time. "The Dispensary," says Dr. Mohr, "is the most essential and important apartment in the establishment, that in which the Pharmaceutist must contemplate spending a great part of his time, and where he hopes to be often actively engaged in the bustle of business." Mohr's instructions go on to include the preferred shape of the building, the critical amount of sunlight, where the entrance to the shop should be located in relation to the pharmacist's house and the street, and how to achieve climate control for the production of medicinals. To protect the dry herbs from the moisture caused by distillation procedures, I have opened a "powdering room" on the north side of the pharmacy building. This is one of many steps I've taken inspired by research from this one small volume.

*Practical Pharmacy* was originally published in Prussia in 1845 and reissued in England and then in the United States in 1851 and became the model for the type of pharmacy practices I interpret at the museum. That said, there were competing schools of thought about medicine, and *Practical Pharmacy* is a reference for the kind of service provided by Dr. Thrall. At the doctor's office next door,

the prevailing views about disease and treatment may have

been considerably different, which is why a village may easily have supported both businesses.

In making Thrall's Pharmacy an accurate representation of the period, I am conscious of the modern context that visitors bring to their experience. By the 1840s the basis of many familiar modern chemical preparations were in use, and I exploit these connections to enrich the visitor experience. The *Cyclopedia of 6000 Practical Receipts* is my source for information on the white willow tree, Latin name *salix*, from which we get chemical silicone and which was used as an analgesic. In the late 19th-century silicone became known as aspirin thanks to branding by the Bayer Company. I have also encountered examples of historic uses for the chemicals isolated from belladonna, Latin name *atropa*, and foxglove, among others. From belladonna we derive atropine, a chemical known by patients who have their pupils dilated. Foxglove yields the medicine *digitalis*, which is used for strengthening and regulating heartbeat.

The next time you are walking through the village crossroads, stop by Dr. Thrall's Pharmacy to see the powdering room setup and new preparations and techniques added to our interpretation. You might be surprised to find that what is old is new again! \*



Dr. Thrall's Pharmacy at the Farmers' Museum. Photo by Todd Kenyon.

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## Riddle *Me* This FROM COVER

### Did you know?

- Beaver fur was primarily processed into felt to make hats. The hats had water repellent qualities, just like the beaver it came from.
- Thanks to the fur trade, John Jacob Astor was the richest man in America when he died in 1848.

I learned a lot about the animals of our state in developing this exhibition, and by the end of their journey, Lulu and Max discovered all 11 animals they set out to find. However, after going around and around New York, they still weren't able to solve their final riddle, but you can. This summer, have some Wild Times! with your family as you discover where all of these animals can be found it one place. \*

— Erin Crissman