

# Seven Generations Charter School and the 1803 House

Written by Alison Saeger Panik, September 2014

The 1803 House has provided many authentic learning experiences for the fifth graders at Seven Generations Charter School. The 1803 House's Janice Stavrou and Richard Farmer have worked with fifth grade teachers, Alison Saeger Panik and Brook Graves, to develop hands-on learning experiences to coordinate with their Seven Generations Ago unit. In this unit, students investigate what was happening in the settlement of Emmaus "seven generations ago," especially focusing on interdependence and why and how colonial communities were founded and grew.

Seven Generations students learned about the history of the 1803 House and Jacob Ehrenhardt's contribution of land and leadership for the village of Emmaus. The house served as a model of colonial era architecture and a place to investigate the materials, textiles and tools of the times. Students learned about weaving and observed an antique loom. They participated in colonial cooking and made their own stew, biscuits and butter over the fire in the fireplace in the 1803 House kitchen. And the students also dipped candles in a kettle over a fire in the front yard as part of a colonial candle-making workshop. These experiences were connected with classroom learning, historical fiction reading and writing and a colonial settlement they built and "lived in" themselves in the classroom. And the fun and learning continues.



Alison Saeger Panik, an 1803 House Board member and her fifth grade students were surprised in early May while weeding the 1803 House Herb Garden. Representatives from a local radio station arrived to present her with the WLEV Apple for the **Teacher Award!** Alison was nominated for the award by one of her students' parents. It was a very special moment in the backyard of the 1803 House!