

# Seneca School students delve into past

By Judith Beaudet Reed

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SENECA — In January of 2002, Seneca School students (kindergarten through eighth grade) embarked upon an ambitious local history project that would carry on into succeeding years.

Seneca, Ore., exists because of its creation as a company town for Hines Lumber Co. in 1930.

Students began their project with this historical focus and began their research, using a wide variety of resources. They pored over the city of Seneca's and the Forest Service's collection of maps and old photos, and invited local historians, Dennis Smith of John Day and Martin Morisette of Post, to share their photos and information. In the computer lab, they explored [www.oregongreengold.com](http://www.oregongreengold.com), a Web site devoted to Oregon's logging history.

Walking field trips around Seneca and farther out into the railroad area of the shops and logging spurs gave a very real sense of "place" to the project. Students were able to identify where things used to be and what still remains. An overall perspective was achieved with the help of field trips to Camp One, the precursor to Seneca, and to the museum in Burns and the mill in Hines, accompanied by Joanna Corson, the last secretary of the Hines Lumber Co.

In spring 2002, the students had their first opportunity to display this wealth of knowledge. Artist in Residence Carol Poppenga guided the students in the cre-

ation of an historical mural painted on a school wall.

To broaden their knowledge base, students also interviewed people who had once worked for Hines or lived at Seneca during those historic times. All students had input to the questionnaire that was used to guide the interviews. Multi-grade teams with a teacher-moderator met with guests to ask questions and take notes. The teams then worked together to clarify information, write rough drafts, and then write final drafts. The teacher was then responsible for compiling the students' work into a "ready-to-publish" copy.

During the 2002-2003 school year, students have continued the interview process with new guests, and have mailed questionnaires to those too far away to come to Seneca.

The long-range goal for completed interviews is a final compilation in book form and on CD. In addition, all students are involved in mapping projects. Students in grades 5-8 are developing a detailed historical site map of Seneca in the 1930s, while grades K-4 are building a three-dimensional model.

Through the generosity and support of Martin Morisette of Post, completed portions of this history project can be viewed on his Web site, [www.oregongreengold.com](http://www.oregongreengold.com)

For those who have memories about Camp One days, call Seneca School at 542-2542.