



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact:  
Laura Roberts  
203-259-1598

**Programs commemorating National American Indian Heritage Month at the  
Fairfield Museum and History Center**

FAIRFIELD, CT (October 29, 2007) The Fairfield Museum and History Center is offering two programs in commemoration of National American Indian Heritage Month in November.

The museum proudly presents former Bridgeport historian, Charles Brilvitch, who will discuss his book, *A History of Connecticut's Golden Hill Paugussett Tribe* on Thursday, November 8 at 7:00pm. In his book, Brilvitch passionately chronicles the Paugussett tribe's struggles and fascinating history, and traces their traditions and ongoing determination to preserve an irreplaceable and vanishing culture. Mr. Brilvitch will sign copies of his book following the discussion. The event is free, but pre-registration is suggested.

On Saturday, November 10 at 1:00pm, Vicki Welch, Native American genealogist will present a lecture, **New England Native American Genealogy**. The lecture, generously sponsored by the Connecticut Ancestry Society, will focus on strategies and resources for researching your Native American ancestors. The lecture is free, and pre-registration is suggested. Ms. Welch is the author of several books and related articles including, "The Keys to the Shackles" about an African American – Native American family in the Fall 2001 issue of *Connecticut History*. She recently published the book "And They Were Related, Too." Robert Forbes, Ph.D., Lecturer in History at Yale University wrote of the book, "In particular, Welch's book illustrates the manifold ties in southern New England among Native Americans and Africans and Europeans of many backgrounds. It is hard to imagine that anyone could arrive at the end of this book still believing that there is such a thing as *race*; but the reality and centrality of *ancestry* shines forth as a gleaming flame. To read this book is to come to understand that family is the most important thing, and that it encompasses everything."

In the Fairfield Museum and History Center's new exhibit, *Landscape of Change*, a brief history of the area's native populations is featured. During the Late Woodland period, Uncowas, Sasquas, Maxumux, and Pequonnock—subdivisions of the Paugussett

Indians—inhabited the coastal areas, locating their villages of wigwams along the inland waterways. By the time English colonists arrived as settlers, the Paugussett villages in



the lower Housatonic River Valley were small and scattered due to diseases, or had been condensed into a few.

The 'Great Swamp Fight' that took place in Southport in July of 1637, was the setting for the final, violent episode in the saga of the Pequot Indians who lived in southeastern Connecticut. Pequots had fled that area to get away from the English and their allies. During that fight, the English killed nearly all the Pequot men, and took their women and children to be enslaved by other Indians and the Massachusetts Bay colonists.

The Fairfield Museum and History Center is at 370 Beach Road, behind Town Hall, in Fairfield, CT. Regular museum hours are Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Thursdays to 6 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays from noon to 4 p.m. The research library is closed Mondays. Daily admission is \$5 for adults, \$3 for students (6 to 22 years of age with identification), and free for museum members and children age 5 and younger. For additional information, visit [www.fairfieldhs.org](http://www.fairfieldhs.org) or call 203-259-1598.

Attached photo:

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