

Meet Laura Ingalls Wilder Melanie Stringer, Historian/Interpreter

Melanie Stringer is a New England-based historian specializing in American Social History, with a particular focus on the daily lives, education, and occupational opportunities of women and children during the period of American Settlement to c.1960. Her interest in history began early, sparked when she learned to read using Laura Ingalls Wilder's "Little House" series of books. From that time to the present, she has sustained her interest in Wilder, bolstered by lifelong intensive study of American Regional Literature, Westward Expansion, Women's and Children's History, and Educational History. She has continuously endeavored to relate these subjects to the historical and socio-political context within which Wilder lived and wrote.

Melanie holds a BA in American Literature and History from Plymouth State University, Plymouth, New Hampshire. A charter member of the 501(c)3 nonprofit Laura Ingalls Wilder Legacy and Research Association (LIWLRA), Melanie serves on the Board of that organization, which sponsors the bi-annual LauraPalooza academic conference, of which she is also Co-Chair. Owner of Dakota Yankee Research, LLC, Melanie is pursuing a Master of Liberal Arts in Museum Studies with a certification in Nonprofit Management while undertaking research into the Ingalls and Wilder families' New England ancestry. This research is in preparation for Melanie's first book-length publication, and is the primary basis for her Meet Laura Ingalls Wilder living history presentations.

Utilizing primary and secondary source documentation, Melanie designs educational history programs that connect Wilder's experiences to the modern day. She travels extensively around the United States, presenting programs in the persona of Laura Ingalls Wilder as a young wife, mother, and farmwoman, circa 1898. Programs feature a highly interactive "visit" with Mrs. Wilder, in an unscripted interpretation of Wilder's experiences, framed within the larger context of American History. The intent of all Meet Laura presentations is to offer a glimpse into the "real" Laura Ingalls Wilder--an ordinary American--whose writing deserves consideration and distinction as a lasting contribution to the understanding of America's unique cultural heritage.

In addition to her Meet Laura Ingalls Wilder programs, Melanie offers tutorials in living history and interpretation best practices and consultations in nonprofit management and business strategy to individuals and professional staff at small house museums and historical societies around the United States.

For further information on Melanie's programs and research, please visit:

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