HERITAGE BREED CHICKENS AT STRAWBERRY BANKE

Strawbery Banke Museum’s heritage breed chickens welcome you!

During World War Two, in the 1940s, the American diet was limited by the strict rationing system enforced by the Federal government. The scarcity of foods like meat and canned fruits and vegetables encouraged citizens to produce their own food.

Residents of Puddle Dock including Leslie Clough grew vegetables in Victory Gardens and raised chickens to feed their families and conserve food for the war effort. Clough, who worked at Abbot Store as a young man during the war, raised his own chickens and sold their eggs at the corner store throughout the 1940s.

In May 2015, Strawbery Banke reintroduced chickens to the neighborhood where they were once a familiar sight. This reconstructed coop is based on Leslie Clough’s chicken coop, as documented in photographs. Leslie’s coop was located closer to Puddle Dock, near the current day cooper shop. The hens at the Museum are two different heritage breeds of chickens, very popular with American farmers. The red hens are Rhode Island Red and the black hens are Australorps.

Originally bred in Adamsville, RI, a village which is part of Little Compton, RI. The Rhode Island Red become famous as champion egg-layers of 5–7 brown eggs a week.

The Australorps are also superb egg-layers. In 1922–23, a team of six Australorps hens set a world record by laying 1,857 eggs over 365 consecutive days.

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