



Historical performers explain how life was for Missourians of the past at the 47th Heritage Festival on Saturday at Nifong Park. The festival also featured arts and crafts vendors, music, family activities, food and more.

Heritage Festival takes visitors back in time

BY BEN HUGHES • Missourian

Community members took a walk back in time Saturday at the annual Heritage Festival and Craft Show in Nifong Park. As guests stepped off the shuttle at the Boone County History and Culture Center, they were greeted with the sights, smells and sounds of 18th century Missouri.

Since the late '70s, Columbia Parks and Recreation has hosted the festival as a way to bring history, arts and music to the community. Attractions include music and performances on two stages, traditional artisan demonstrations, handmade craft vendors, food trucks and a "Fun for Young'uns" kids area.

Melaina Drissel brought her 3-year-old daughter to the festival for the first time. Drissel said she first brought her older sons, but after seven years, she returned with her daughter.

"I knew she would just love the whole experience of seeing things from elements of history, and the music and kettle corn," Drissel said.

After walking around the festival, Drissel said she was surprised to hear what her daughter liked most about the festival.

"I expected her to like and be drawn to sparkly things and toys," she said. "When we stopped at different booths, she'll say 'I

like the people at that booth, and how they were so nice to us."

Throughout the park, historical reenactors and performers were dressed as 1800s Missourians, demonstrating life from centuries ago. Costumes included pioneers, Native Americans, artisans and craftsmen.

Michelle Tucker and her family dressed up as part of the Mountain Man Camp. After marrying into the family, Tucker decided to join them as a reenactor five years ago to teach people about Native American culture and crafts.

"They're all really passionate about it," Tucker said. "I like coming out here, being with my family. Good family times out here."

On Sunday, there will be a wide range of performers and activities. Some of the main performers include magician Gerry Tritz, Latin Caribbean folk dancers Grupo Atlantico, the Cherry and Jerry Ragtime duo and more.

Other activities include a cricket demonstration at 10 a.m. and a visit from the Humane Society with adoptable dogs.

The festival is open to the public from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. A shuttle service will run between Columbia Sports Fieldhouse and Nifong Park due to limited parking near the festival.



Janice Katambwa and Mathias Hrellner, 7, perform a retelling of "The Magic Tree" at the Heritage Festival on Saturday at Nifong Park. The festival hosted two stages for music and dance performers.



Doug Edwards weaves a chair seat at the Heritage Festival on Saturday. Edwards runs a business repairing wicker chair seats and has been a vendor at the festival for over a decade. "There's a lot of things here people can pick up and learn about," he said.



Amelia Boone, 4, plays a Game of Graces with a historic performer at the Heritage Festival. The festival features many historical artisans and performers, as well as interactive activities to teach about life in the past.



Vickie Chroedee selects a tomato from a farmers market stand at the 47th Heritage Festival on Saturday at Nifong Park. The festival features vendors selling handmade crafts, art, jewelry, decor and more.