

Lee

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School is a major fundraiser for Mill preservation efforts. Melpine School is a vintage, one-room schoolhouse located near the mill.

The celebration is held in conjunction with the local Buckskinners Rendezvous, where crafts and skills of the American fur-trading era of the 1840s are displayed.

"I thought the 1837 period in this area was a time when a lot of fur trading was going on with the American Indians," said Bierman. "And I thought more information from that era would add interest to the event."

Bierman, 61, learned more about Wildcat Den area history from the first volume of the "History of Davenport and Scott County Iowa."

The 1910 book, written and compiled by Harry Downer, highlights the significant ties between Muscatine and Scott counties, citing the works of historian Willard Barrows.

Downer included the writings of former Muscatine

resident Suel Foster, who described a 1836 walking tour of the land which was part of the Black Hawk Purchase.

Foster said the city of Iowa extended six miles along the shores of the Mississippi River.

"This town (of Iowa,) was laid out by Capt. Robert E. Lee and William Gordon," wrote Foster, who also noted that Lee was mayor of that city.

Albert Lea, for whom the city of Albert Lea, Minn., was named, also stopped at Iowa.

"The town of Iowa caught the fancy of (U.S. Army) Lt. Albert M. Lea, who investigated the Black Hawk purchase for the government," wrote Downer.

Lea's 1836 report states, "Should the seat of the future government of Iowa be located on the Mississippi, it will probably be fixed at Iowa (the city,) owing to the central position and commercial advantage of the place."

Bierman said the "History of Davenport and Scott County Iowa," adds more color to the character of Ben Nye, the first settler of Muscatine County and builder of the Pine Creek

DETAILS

Heritage Day

When: 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Saturday, Sept. 18

Admission: Free

Details: Activities for all ages, including hands-on crafting experiences. Food service on the grounds.

Buckskinners' Rendezvous

Where: Wildcat Den State Park, upper picnic area

When: Friday-Sunday, Sept. 17-19

Admission: Free

Shuttle service

There will be free shuttle service between areas in the park.

Online

Learn more about the Pine Creek Grist Mill at <http://www.pinecreekgrist-mill.com/>

Grist Mill.

"Benjamin Nye landed at the Mouth of Pine, (the city of Iowa,) in 1834, had a store and owned the town with Major William Gordon," wrote Downer.

Bierman said he hopes sharing this information as Heritage Day and the Buckskinners Rendezvous draws near adds interest for both events.