

Historians create traveling trunk to commemora

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On May 14, 1804, Merriweather Lewis and William Clark embarked on a military expedition to explore the area west of the Mississippi and establish a route for travel and commerce to the Pacific Ocean.

The expedition team of about 30 people, consisting of a number of soldiers guides, interpreters and an Indian woman named Sacajawea, spent the next two years traveling the waterways of America and documenting everything they saw, heard, touched and tasted along the way.

Their collections and discoveries are still teaching us about early America.

Part of the Lewis and Clark journey brought the pair through the Boone's Lick area, traveling past Boonville on the Missouri River and camping for two nights in Brunswick.

Now with the 200th anniversary of the journey a little more than a year away, groups across the country are working hard to bring the history of the expedition alive.

"This will be one of the largest recreated historical events in history," said Mike Duncan, a former museum director.

Duncan and his wife Mary, sit on the education committee for the Manitou Bluff Chapter of the Lewis and Clark Foundation.

The group came up with the idea of creating a wooden trunk and filling it with items that Lewis and Clark would have either taken with them or found along the way while traveling through Missouri.

Many plant and animal species west of the Mississippi were completely unknown before the journey.

"At that time the coyote and the red fox only existed west of the Mississippi," said Duncan.

Authentic fur pelts of each animal are included in the trunk.

The contents of the trunk is based largely on curriculum developed by the national Lewis and Clark Heritage Foundation.

The curriculum is divided into different subject areas and includes lesson plans and an activity guide for each area.

When choosing items to be included in the trunk, the group selected materials to correspond and support the curriculum, such as a spyglass, hand-carved models of the



boats used in the expedition, fire starting kits, sugar cones, sinew, and dolls dressed in hand-sewn period dress.

The trunk also includes a map of the journey created by Winky Friedrichs, samples of local flora and fauna and much more.

The result is a self contained Lewis and Clark demo that is now available for loan to school districts.

Thanks to a grant covering the cost of some of the materials, and

many long volunteer hours, two trunks have been completed and several more are planned.

"Our goal is to have a trunk in every county from Hermann to Lexington," said Mary Duncan.

The group is hoping for assistance from benefactors to help speed the production of more trunks. Those could be used long after the 200th

anniversary celebration.

Part of the motivation for the trunk was endless requests the organization receives from teachers for information on Lewis and Clark.

"They are just starved for information on the subject," said former teacher Mary Riddle.

Realizing that most educators don't have the time or resources to