

Fulton County Historical Society, Inc
37 E 375 N, Rochester IN 46975
574-223-4436 Museum open Monday - Saturday 9 to 5
Web page: www.fultoncountyhistory.org E-mail: fchs@rtcol.com

Invitation to School Tour Day at the Trail of Courage Living History Festival Sept. 18, 2026

This is the 27th YEAR for the Trail of Courage School tour day! It is available mainly for 4th graders and their teachers and chaperones. For the one day only - Friday Sept. 18, 9:00 to 2:00, you can bring your students to visit educational programs by re-enactors and historians and American Indians. There will be about 30 different programs, each lasting approximately 20 minutes. Students will go to a new program site on the hour and half hour, allowing 10 minutes to get from one place to another. A map will be given to each group leader. **Please be sure that you have an adult for every 6 children. They need to have control over the ones they are supervising.**

It is important that the groups be kept together and not scattered all over, running from one place to another. **Chaperones and teachers need to be in control**, so that the children will learn from the programs and historic demonstrations they see.

**Cost will be \$5 per student and \$5 per adult. Bus drivers get in free.
Candle Dipping \$1.00 each.**

YOU WILL NEED TO BRING A SACK LUNCH TO EAT. NO FOOD VENDORS WILL BE OPEN ON FRIDAY. THERE ARE PICNIC TABLES IN THE WOODS. Please put your trash in bags so we can gather them up easily for the dumpster.

Historic vendors will be open Friday to allow children to purchase items of the pre-1840 time period such as necklaces, furs, beads, wooden frontier toys, flutes, etc. Items are not real expensive that are geared for the children. Prices range from \$2.00 on up.

The programs will include. (subject to change)

1. **Steve Kirkpatrick** – wood carving
2. **Ben Hoover** – Blacksmith
3. **Kyle Hoover** – Ropemaking
4. **Bruce Eltzroth/ Dana Farmer** – Old time toys
5. **Mike Allen** – Spinning
6. **Me-to-cin-yah Village** – Mountain man tug-o-war
7. **Genot Picor** – **Life of a voyageur** – on stage
8. **Sonny Ledford** – Cherokee history
9. **Denny & Kim Setnor & others** – Native American
10. **Tim Pearson, Robert Wolfe & others** – Blacksmithing
11. **Chuck Hileman**, – Muzzleloading safety & shooting demo
12. **Ida Kennedy** – Gourds
13. **Christine Rankin/ Holly Swartz** – Quill & Ink, Butter Churning
14. **Margo Moore** – Travois Dog
15. **Candle Dipping** – cost \$1.00
16. **Clock Works Clown**

(SEE YELLOW PAGE TO SIGN UP)

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School Tour - Reservation for Trail of Courage

School _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Teachers/ Chaperones _____

Date we will attend: (circle one) Friday School Tour Day Sat. Festival Sunday Festival

Note: Bring your own lunches on Friday – no food served.

Time we will arrive: _____

Number of children age 5 and under coming free _____

Number of school (not college) students at \$5 each coming: _____

Number of adults (\$5 each) coming : _____

Number Candle Dipping at \$1.00 each _____

Total amount enclosed: \$ _____ **Payable to: Fulton Co. Hist. Society**

Admission: \$5 per student, \$5 per adult, bus driver free, children 5 and under free.

Pick up your tickets at the museum. Then while the bus is taking you back (1/2 mile) to the Trail of Courage Admissions gate, pass out the tickets to each person so each can turn it in as he/she goes through the gate. After unloading, the bus is to be taken north of the row reserved for buses on high ground near the Round Barn Museum. That way in case of rain, the bus will not get stuck. Point out this Bus Row to the students as you go by it, so they will know where the bus is parked. On Friday, the buses can park in rows nearer to the Admissions Gate as there will be no other public allowed. But on Sat. & Sun., there will be lots of cars and the buses must park in the Bus Rows.

If you do not send money ahead, please call us so we can have your tickets counted out. Collect the money and have one person pay all the tickets together. Then pass out the tickets away from the Admissions Gate so you do not block the entrance for others.

Things available at the Trail of Courage Sat. & Sun. foods and drinks, many interesting trade items such as necklaces, pioneer and Indian clothes, candles you can dip yourself, Mountain Man Tug of War, stage programs with first person stories, etc. Saturday & Sunday you can also visit the Fulton County Museum, Round Barn Museum, and Living History Village called Loyal that portrays 1900-1925. Friday is strictly for school programs at the Trail of Courage area by the river and in the woods.

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Living History Festival Teaches Frontier Indiana History Aided by a Grant from the Indiana Arts Commission – 2026 News

The Trail of Courage Living History Festival brings you authentic history of frontier Indiana! Bring your students to see Indian dances, pioneer dances and period music on two stages, traditional crafts, military camps of early America, canoes rides on the Tippecanoe River, foods cooked over wood fires. It is so educational that many teachers give students extra credit if they attend.

Forty-four families of Potawatomi moved from Kansas to the Citizen Potawatomi Reservation in Indian Territory (Oklahoma) in 1872. Among them were the Bourassa, Pearls, and Bergerons to name a few.

Storytellers tell authentic Ojibway, Cherokee and Potawatomi legends. Colonial children's games and songs will be taught. Fulton County Boy Scouts offer candle dipping.

You are invited to bring groups of students to the 50th annual Trail of Courage Living History Festival Sept. 19-20, held on the Fulton County Museum grounds on New U.S. 31 four miles north of Rochester, just north of the Tippecanoe River. This is a big event attended by nearly 2,000 participants in historic clothes. The audience ranges from 12,000 to 18,000.

Living history is a wonderful teaching tool. It makes history come alive, with real people acting the part. Children and adults of all ages find themselves immersed in the colorful pageantry of a pre-1840 event, and loving every minute of it!

History becomes a living thing to be experienced: **TASTE** the foods cooked over wood fires: , Turkey & Noodles, buffalo burgers - ummmn! **SMELL** food cooking over 300 campfires in the historic camps: French & Indian War, Voyageur, Revolutionary War, War of 1812, Western Fur Trade, Plains Indian teepees, Woodland Indian wigwams, and 1832 Chippeway Village, the first white settlement in Fulton County. You can actually send mail at the Chippeway Village post office! And it has post cards depicting the Trail of Courage.

HEAR the period music, pioneer and Indian dancing, shouts of the militia, crack of the muzzle-loading guns, the tapping of the blacksmith's hammer! **SEE** the demonstrations of traditional crafts: pewter casting, weaving, basketry, flintknapping, and more. **FEEL** lamb's wool, raccoon's fur, and much more. **LEARN** history the fun way!

Special group rate is \$5 per student, regardless of age, when they come on a school bus, and \$10 for accompanying adults on Sat. & Sun. The bus driver is admitted free. Use the enclosed form to make group reservations. Special price only for Friday School Tour day is \$5 per student. Note higher price for Sat. & Sun. \$10.00 adult ages 12 and up.

Foods available Saturday and Sunday only. To give students an idea of how much to bring for eating, this is the cost of some of the foods: Apple Dumpling \$7.00, buffalo burger \$7.00, Turkey & noodles \$6.00, Vegetable Stew and ham & beans & cornbread \$4.00, drinks (coffee, lemonade, cider, sassafras tea, grape juice, etc.) \$1.00. All are foods eaten in the pre-1840 period of our nation's history. Traders offer authentic items that children love to buy, such as necklaces, wooden toys, coonskin caps, etc. And much cheaper than Mickey World! You will find the Trail of Courage is affordable to everyone! We even offer free admission to those who will come and work a four-hour shift. Call us!

Grant received from the Indiana Arts Commission to help bring musicians and artesian to the festival.

PLEASE XEROX THIS NOTICE and give to other teachers

NEWS FROM FULTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

37 E 375 N

ROCHESTER IN 46975

PHONE 574-223-4436 E-MAIL: fchs@rtcol.com

Website: www.fultoncountyhistory.org

Trail of Courage celebrates 50th year Sept. 19-20, 2026

The excitement and adventure of Frontier Indiana comes alive at the 50th annual Trail of Courage Living History Festival Sept. 19-20 at Rochester, Indiana. Since 1976 it has been a place where history is depicted, where you can trace the very footsteps of history, and have a good time doing it. Over 1,000 people in historic outfits participate.

Frontier Indiana comes alive with foods cooked over wood fires, period music and dance, traditional crafts, historic camps and trading, canoe rides on the river, and much more. It is produced by the Fulton County Historical Society. This event combines genealogy of the Potawatomi Indians and the settlers who lived in Fulton County and northern Indiana in the early 1800s with rendezvous events, period music and dance on two stages, canoe rides on the Tippecanoe River.

The Trail of Courage will be held at the FCHS grounds four miles north of Rochester on US 31 and Tippecanoe River. Admission is \$10 for adults, \$5 for children (6 through 11), and free ages 5 and under. Hours are Sat. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sun. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

New performances in dance area

The public is invited to join Sonny Ledford, Cherokee Ambassador in the Indian dance area 1 p.m. to 2:00 p.m., Also new this year we will have River Valley Colonials and 42nd Royal highlanders doing a field demonstration while playing music. We will also have a oxen team doing demo Indian dances will take place this again this year .

The Trail of Courage includes historic encampments representing the French & Indian War, Voyageurs, Revolutionary War, War of 1812, Western Fur Trade, Plains Indians teepees, and Woodland Indian wigwams. A re-created Miami Village includes wigwams and lifeways demonstrations, such as making cattail mats.

Another re-creation is of Chippeway Village, which had the first trading post, post office and village in Fulton County in 1832. Food purveyors and traditional craftsmen set up in wooden booths. Craftsmen also sell pre-1840 trade goods from blankets and in historic merchant tents, offering a variety of items from clothing and jewelry to knives and candles, everything needed to live in frontier days.

Fun frontier activities for all

Canoe rides, muzzle loading shooting and tomahawk throwing contests, and a Mountain Man Tug of War add to the frontier activities. Local Boy Scouts offer candle dipping to all children.

Two stages with frontier music and dance present programs from 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and 10:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday. Since the early 1980s FCHS has received grants from the Indiana Arts Commission/ National Endowment for the Arts to help pay for musicians and dancers. This year they include River Valley Colonials Fife & Drum Corp, Aztec dancers, Danny Russel as Daniel Boone, Genot Picor – storyteller; Mark and Liza Woolever, Anderson Marching Highlanders, Sonny Ledford – Cherokee Ambassador; and 42nd Royal Highlanders.

This year's grant is for \$4,000 which is about half of the approximately \$15,500 cost of the performers. Sponsorships and or donations to match the grant are required by the Indiana Arts Commission and can be mailed to FCHS, 37 E 375 N, Rochester, IN 46975.

Many volunteers provide programs such as Margo Moore's dog pulling travois, and Mark & Molly Gropp – bagpipes.

Both Catholic and Protestant worship services are held at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday. Father Denny Kinderman, Chicago, has celebrated Mass for over 10 years at the Hillside Amphitheater. Todd Wilson, Rochester, will lead the Protestant service at the Chippeway Village stage.

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P. 2 Trail of Courage

Outdoor foods taste so good!

Pioneer foods are cooked over wood fires. Visitors can feast on buffalo burgers, Apple dumplings, Turkey Legs and Beignet, Scottish meat pies, pulled pork, turkey and noodles, ham and beans, vegetable stew, Elk Chili, potato chips cooked in big iron kettles, pork chops, corn on the cob, apple sausage, and more, including ice cream, one of George Washington's favorite treats. Local clubs cook and serve these historic foods to fund their projects: Rotary, American Cherokee Confederacy, Knights of Columbus, Masonic Lodge; and Fulton County Historical Society. Mark Gropp family brings homemade fudge. Five Friends biscuits & sausage gravy until 10 a.m. and again this year the Masonic Lodge will be doing pancakes and sausage. Many people come to the festival just for the delicious food!

The grounds are handicapped accessible. Free tram rides are available to bring people from the museum and Living History Village at the north end of the grounds. The museum and village are open with hosts and free admission.

Volunteers can earn free admission to the Trail of Courage by working half a day. To volunteer or for more information, call the museum at 574-223-4436. Free parking is provided on FCHS grounds. Many benches are available to sit and rest. For further details: www.fultoncountyhistory.org and www.potawatomi-tda.org.

Living history taught by real people living as history.

The primary purpose of the Trail of Courage is to educate the public, to preserve and promote an accurate picture of life in frontier Indiana, as well as other areas and time periods of North American history. Real people in historic clothing, real food cooked over wood fires, real fun

The festival is based on local history, before the Potawatomi Indians were marched west on the forced removal known as the Trail of Death. The Potawatomi were marched down Rochester's Main Street Sept. 5, 1838, on their way to Kansas, a journey of 660 miles that took them 10 weeks and cost them 42 lives. Since 1976 this festival has honored the American Indians and shown life before the removal. When Indiana became a state in 1816, northern Indiana was still Potawatomi Territory.