



Face of Fillmore

By Sherry Shepard
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Before I begin, I want to make it clear that this is not an advertisement, it is an observation, and one that I enjoyed very much.

Sometimes I like to look around the Face of Fillmore and imagine what our pioneer forefathers are thinking of the changes we have made to the community they started over 150 years ago.

One event I am sure they would appreciate is the Old Capitol Arts and Living History Festival held the second weekend of September. It appears to be the missing link between their days and ours.

The event is fast becoming the most well-attended and successful get together in Fillmore and last year more than 10,000 people took advantage of the great times in the park.

This year nearly 1000 of them will be fourth graders from schools close by and some distance away. Schools from Millard, Juab, Gunnison, Salina, Beaver, Marysville, and Snake Valley. These students will be in attendance for a few hours of stepping back into the past. As the Territorial Statehouse bells chime, the groups and their guides move from station to station, learning something new in each. Not every group has time to visit them all, but the students get a great feel for what life was all about "back then".

What is there to learn? The blacksmith shop is a favorite, fire building without matches, trapping, and assorted other skills needed to live the pioneer life. A session in old time music techniques, the bird show, and many others.

The festival is planned and carried out about by volunteers with Abe Johnson and Doug Jolley in charge. Others on the committee includes a long list of volunteers who are dedicated to making this event a success, along with support from Millard County, Fillmore City and several businesses.

The Arts Festival began 19 years ago as an art fair in Delta but was moved the following year to Fillmore because of its proximity to I-15 and tourists. The art show is still an important part of the festival. Several booths displaying the works of local artists are set up east of the Territorial Statehouse, as well as craft booths. A wide variety food booths extend around the north side the building with an entertainment stage there. Other entertainment is found in the new pavilion on the south side of the block.

At locations around the park, you will find such people as Willie the Clown who is an amazing



entertainer at over 90 years of age.

At regular intervals, a Civil War era cannon is fired in the center of the celebration. More guns are on display in the Pod, ranging in age from pre-civil war to the present. Complete with guides to tell you their history and answer your questions.

Wagon rides, stagecoach and covered wagon ride are available of everyone on First South.

Indian dancers from the Shoshone Tribe in Nevada are a colorful and entertaining group. Evening entertainment includes a group from Peru, Los Hermanos de los Andes, who have sung with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir and the ever popular Bar "D" Wranglers.

A favorite of the young people is the giant Lincoln logs. I watched as youth from a wide range of ages joined together to build amazing two story forts. Our six year old granddaughter from across the state was helping upper middle school age boys from



Fillmore carry the logs and put them in place. Normally, these combinations of young people wouldn't have anything in common, but building a fort seemed to be the common denominator. Interestingly, last year one of the Shoshone youth was seen at the top of the fort in full costume, helping the "settlers" build the fort.

Being the people watcher that I am, you'll find me this year sitting the shade by the log fort under construction, drinking something cold and wet and eating chow mein and orange chicken. I am sure our pioneer forefathers would have approved of that too.