THE AMERICAN FRONTIER

Lindenwood University preserves frontier site while expanding educational opportunities.
By Liese Hutchison

Why does a university purchase an historic home and re-created frontier village? The answer is simple, notes Dennis Spellmann, president, Lindenwood University. "It ties in with Lindenwood, because our founders were very involved in the area during this time," he states. Founded in 1827 by Mary Sibley and her husband, Major George Sibley, Lindenwood stresses a strong values education.

The university purchased the home and property last year. "This fits in with our mission and our emphasis on entrepreneurism, citizenship, independence and hard work," Spellmann states. "What we're trying to do is educate the whole person based on American values and culture. We think tying in our courses and program with the Boone Home helps students succeed in the frontier of the new century."

Above: The historic Daniel Boone Home was purchased by Lindenwood University last year.
Spellmann notes that Boone's pioneering spirit and his ideals of independence, integrity and responsibility lend themselves to higher education. The university has opened the National Center for the Study of American Culture and Values at the site. Courses that are currently being offered or that are proposed include:

- Native American Crafts
- Interpretive Storytelling
- Historic Renovation
- Art History
- History of the Frontier
- Frontier Writers
- The Frontier Culture.

Spellmann envisions students preserving crafts such as fabric art, woodworking and blacksmithing. In the historic renovation program, students hew logs and restore buildings from the early 1800s. In addition, students and faculty are creating an arboretum on the 860 acres with indigenous species. All non-native species are being eliminated. The arboretum will house a nature walk and will offer field experiences for students in natural sciences.

The university is also planning an amphitheater for summer concerts, a conference center, apple orchard, popcorn field and sheep farm. "We'll have students shear the sheep, spin the wool and turn it into fabric art," Spellmann says. "We want to be a conservator of these skills so people from all around the world can come here and learn."

Above: Lindenwood University is tying in some of their courses with the history, culture and values of American life during the time of Daniel Boone.
Accounting, marketing and business students will also be involved in running and promoting the property. The computer science students are putting the historic buildings on Computer-Aided Design (CAD) systems. "I'm still trying to figure out a way to get the chemistry program involved in this," Spellmann ponders.

Currently, the site receives 50,000 visitors a year. Lindenwood plans to add 40,000 area school children to that number for hands-on history classes.

Spellmann notes that other universities may own an historic home or site, but no other universities' programs are as comprehensive as Lindenwood's with its center on American culture, arboretum, historic village, amphitheater, nature trails, conference center and restoration area.

"Columbus of the Woods"

George Caleb Bingham, an acclaimed frontier painter, depicted Daniel Boone as an explorer opening up the American frontier in his painting "Columbus of the Woods."

Boone (1734-1820), one of the original settlers into the wilds of Kentucky, moved west to Missouri in 1799 when Kentucky became a state and wanted to tax its landowners. Boone, notes Carolynn Whetzel, director of the Daniel Boone Bicentennial Committee, was granted vast amounts of land due to his pioneering efforts to settle Kentucky. Unable to pay the taxes, he followed one of his sons, Daniel Morgan Boone, to Matson, Mo.

It wasn't just Boone and his extended family that moved. Hearing that he was exploring a new frontier, others followed Boone to Missouri. The Boone women arrived via canoe, but most of the Boone men walked from Kentucky, herding their live stock. The trip took six weeks. Not wanting to cross two rivers, the Boone family walked up to Alton to cross the Mississippi. This crossing and trail along the Missouri to Boone's new home was followed for decades by other explorers, including Lewis and Clark in 1804.

"Daniel Boone, along with his children and grandchildren, played a significant role in westward expansion that is not readily recognized in Missouri," Whetzel states. She says his influence is considerable, because he established the first trail west through Missouri, people
followed him here, and he became an icon in his own time.

After his arrival, Boone lived with Daniel Morgan and the duo had side-by-side land grants. His daughter, Jemima Boone Callaway, lived in Marthasville, Mo., and that's where Boone and his wife Rebecca eventually spent most of their time. In 1813, Rebecca died in her daughter's home. Around that time, Boone's other son, Nathan, began building a home in St. Charles county in the Femme Osage Valley. Boone did spend time there with Nathan and died in the home in 1820. That home is what is now known as the Historic Daniel Boone Home and is in Defiance, Mo.

Boone and his sons operated a salt lick in Boonville, which is west of Columbia, Mo. Nathan followed his father's pioneering ways and opened the overland trail straight west, instead of following the Missouri River, from St. Charles to Boonville, saving considerable time for frontier travelers.

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**Boonesfield Village**

In addition to the preservation of the Historic Daniel Boone Home, the 860-acre complex is also home to Boonesfield Village. This village houses historic structures from the Boone era.

*Currently located in Boonesfield Village, are a:*

- Schoolhouse (circa1831)
- Milliner's Shop (circa 1840)
- Woodworker's Shop (circa 1837)
- Peace Chapel (circa 1840)
- Stake House from (1828 and 1840)

*Structures under construction, renovation and anticipated to be added to Boonesfield Village by 2002 are:*

- The Sappington/Dressel House (circa 1812)
- Flanders Callaway House (circa 1812)
- Newton Howell Log House (circa 1814)
- Sash Lumber Sawmill (circa 1815)
- Borgmann Animal Driven Mill (circa 1840)
- Fritz Von Der Bruegel Store (circa 1830)
- Phillip Creamer House (circa 1820)
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