

MORMON PIONEER NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA (MPNHA)

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in partnership with



Scandinavian Heritage Festival, Spring City Heritage Day highlight Mormon pioneer heritage in Sanpete County

EPHRAIM—The city of Ephraim in the center of the Mormon Pioneer National Heritage area was first settled by Scandinavian pioneers.

Spring City, about 12 miles north of Ephraim, was settled by Mormon pioneers from various backgrounds, including people from the eastern United States, England and Scandinavia. The town is considered one of the best-preserved Mormon colonies in the West and has been designated as a National Historic District.

Every year during Memorial Day weekend, the area becomes an epicenter for historical commemoration as Ephraim stages the Scandinavian Heritage Festival and Spring City observes its Heritage Day.

The Scandinavian Heritage Festival kicks off Friday, May 25 with the free Scandinavian Heritage Conference at the Huntsman Library auditorium at Snow College.

This year the conference features a presentation by Neal Cox focusing on the history of the Ephraim Enterprise, the town's historic community newspaper, and research by David Mackey about the history of Ephraim and Sanpete County (as chronicled in his books "Rattlesnakes and Axeheads" and "Temple Light and Train Tracks."

On Friday evening, festival-goers can enjoy authentic Scandinavian food at a smorgasbord dinner at the Greenwood Student Center at Snow College, followed by fireworks at a nearby park.

On Saturday, May 26, early risers can start their day at the traditional Lions Club aebleskivers (traditional Danish pancakes) breakfast. More active folk can get their game on with the 5K and 10K fun runs. Later, families and individuals can participate in Vike-on-a-Bike races with four courses of progressive difficulty ranging from "family" to "sport."



Several families with roots in Ephraim have made it a yearly tradition to dress up as Vikings and take part in the Scandinavian Festival. Pictured here is Ned "Lars" Larsen (at right) with his son-in-law Daniel "Sven" Galloway.

And what's a festival without a parade? Entries in the annual parade will include floats from local businesses decked out as Viking ships, the 2017 Sanpete County Sweetheart and Junior Princess Rodeo Royalty, Vike-on-a-Bike entrants riding decorated bikes and classic cars from what is known as the "Original Side-By-Side Car Show."

Along the parade route, several Viking hordes (people in Viking costumes) will lay in wait to intimidate (or at least have their photos taken with) unsuspecting tourists.

The popular historic bus tour will take visitors to view historic sites, buildings and homes that capture some of the early history of the town and its Scandinavian settlers.

Other highlights of the festival include demonstrations and displays by the Pioneer Heritage Company, entertainment by a variety of artists including Peter Breinholt, a crafter's village, a quilt show, bingo at the senior center, and kids activities and crafts, along with close to 100 booths that feature craft vendors and food of every description.

Spring City Heritage Day will be centered at the restored Spring City School, now known as the Old School Community Center. The 119-year-old school, which was restored through nearly a 40-year community effort, is one of the most ornate buildings in Central Utah.



Festival-goers can enjoy aebleskivers, traditional Danish pancakes, at the Lions Club breakfast.



At the Scandinavian Festival, members of the Pioneer Heritage Company demonstrate what life was like for the early settlers of Ephraim, along with sharing Scandinavian games and music, singing and dancing from the Old Country.

At the Old School Community Center, visitors may purchase tickets for tours of the exteriors and interiors of about a dozen restored homes and buildings built in the late 1800s and early 1900s.

Breakfast will be served at the park behind the school from 8-10 a.m. for \$7.50 per plate. A food truck roundup will be held from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. outside the Old School, with offerings ranging from Thai food to pizza.

Throughout the day, an art and antiques show and sale will be held inside the Old School, culminating in the annual Art Squared auction of 1-foot-square paintings by some of the nationally and regionally known artists who live in Spring City, including Lee Bennion, Susan Gallacher, M'Lisa Paulsen, Doug Freyer, Kathleen Peterson, Cassandra Paarlson, Lynn Farrar and Ken Baxter.

To get to Ephraim, take I-15 south to the second Nephi exit (Exit 225). At the exit turn left and follow S.R. 132 through Fountain Green and Moroni to U.S. 89. At U.S. 89 turn right and follow the highway about 5 miles into Ephraim.

To get to Spring City, take the same route, except when you get to U.S. 89, turn left heading north. Follow the highway about 8 miles to the Spring City turnoff.

For more information about the Scandinavian Heritage Festival visit www.scandinavianfestival.org. For information about Spring City Heritage Day, visit www.friendsofhistoricspringcity.org.

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The Mormon Pioneer National Heritage Area includes 400 miles of glorious scenic byways, a vast array of wildlife, the best of western living, cattle and sheep ranches, and colorful mountain vistas, all within a trip on Utah Heritage Highway 89.