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Tipton-Haynes State Historic Site Brings Area Heritage to Life

JOHNSON CITY, Tenn.—One of two of the first state owned historical sites, Tipton-Haynes Historic Site, located in Johnson City, is a live exhibit of the area’s history, dating back to the colonial era. Through its educational programs, annual events and interactive tours, the Tipton-Haynes Historic Site is preserving the history of the area, as well as providing locals and visitors with an educational experience.

“Tipton-Haynes is one of the major pieces of early history in the area, and the organization has really created a unique experience for visitors. The tours showcase the evolution of the area and brings heritage to life by creating an interactive experience,” said Brenda Whitson, executive director of the Johnson City Convention and Visitors Bureau.

The Tipton-Haynes historic site, the original home of Colonel John Tipton, who served in the Revolutionary War, consists of 11 buildings dating from the colonial settlement to the Civil War era. Tipton’s original home, as well as the smokehouse, pigsty, joiner’s shop, still house, springhouse, log barn and corncrib, still occupy the property and showcase the heritage of the area. Tipton is also buried in the cemetery. The site was later purchased by Landon Carter

Haynes, a Confederate senator, and also includes the home of George Haynes, a Haynes family slave.

“Tipton-Haynes has an incredible depth of history, from the Native Americans of the Woodland Period to the Civil War. It is a significant part of Johnson City’s early history,” said Penny McLaughlin, executive director of the Tipton-Haynes historic site. “Visitors will get to experience three distinct architectural styles on the property that reflect the families that lived and expanded the property.”

The Tipton-Haynes site is also home to a cave that, according to legend, Daniel Boone stayed in, as well as hosting Native Americans. The cave has also produced artifacts, including a Dire wolf tooth from the Pleistocene Age.

The Tipton-Haynes Museum and Education Center includes a library, used for local research, archives showcasing early Tennessee history, as well as historical backgrounds covering the Tipton and Haynes families and a museum store. The center also houses an education and reception space. Plans for a permanent exhibit featuring the site’s extensive history are underway.

Educational programs also play a large role in the Tipton-Haynes programming schedule. The Summers Past History Program, designed for children ages six to 12, is a summer camp that creates interactive history and education through games, crafts, storytelling, archaeology, music and cave activities. The Junior Board program allows for students ages 14 to 18 to take on leadership roles in the non-profit community and gain real world experience.

The Heritage Adventure creates interactive learning and educational activities for children grades first to eighth and is designed to coordinate with school curriculum. Students participate in activities that range from papermaking, weaving, natural dyeing, cave exploration and scavenger hunts. The Girl Scout Patch uses activities to educate Girl Scout participants about the Civil War and Colonial historical significance of the area and using art as a historical preservation method.

In addition to the educational programs, Tipton-Haynes also hosts annual events such as sorghum making and Stories from the Pumpkin Patch. During the month of December, Visions of Christmas 1861 celebrates a Civil War Christmas with the Haynes family, and Andre Michaux

Day, a French botanist and friend of John Tipton's, is an outdoor celebration, focusing on nature and the native plants of the site.

“Tipton-Haynes incorporates a lot of diversity and uniqueness into the events, and group tours will be adjusted for each group, especially for young children, to put things in context for each person,” said McLaughlin. “Our site really believes in what we do and wants to make the early history of the area better known to everyone.”

Tipton-Haynes Historic Site is listed on the National Registry of Historic Places. For more information, please visit www.tipton-haynes.org, or call (423) 926-3631.

Johnson City is located in Northeast Tennessee and is the fourth largest metropolitan city in the state. Set in a region known as America's First Frontier, Johnson City is “Where the Pioneer Spirit Began”—a historically significant and culturally rich community surrounded by an abundance of unspoiled natural beauty. Johnson City has a history, which dates back more than 200 years, and its culture embraces individual creativity and encourages innovation through expression. The area is world-renowned for its modern and traditional Appalachian and bluegrass music, art and cuisine, and outdoor recreation for the whole family throughout all four seasons. For more information on Johnson City, please visit www.visitjohnsoncitytn.com or call (423) 461-8000 or (800) 852-3392.

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