

Homestead Study Guide

Your students will experience life in the 1880s with our self-guided Homestead Tour, which begins just inside the gates of Silver Dollar City.

McHaffie's Pioneer Homestead

See an authentic, working 1880s homestead, garden and barn, complete with animals! Levy Casey built the bedroom/parlor side of the McHaffie Homestead in 1843. The kitchen was added in 1844. Andrew and Amanda McHaffie (Levy's daughter) inherited the cabin not long after that and raised their family there. Most families could only ever hope for a single room dwelling. This two-room "saddleback" style home was very rare.

The cabin was originally located on Swan Creek in Taney County Missouri. Donated by Opal McHaffie Parnell, the cabin was disassembled log by log and moved to Silver Dollar City where it was rebuilt. The cabin was in place on the Town Square when the park opened to the public on May 1, 1960.

In the kitchen area, you'll most likely find breakfast, lunch and dinner cooking on the 1891 stove. This stove was a very expensive luxury. Priced at \$19.95, this was a major purchase for families that may have only earned \$50 per year! **Hear interesting stories and folklore about early Ozark like at the Homestead during Storytelling with Aunt Judy!**

Since there was no electricity for radios or televisions, folks made their own entertainment. On special occasions, neighbors would gather together for music, singing and dancing! Join the **Homestead Pickers** on the front porch of the Homestead for a sampling of traditional folk music. Check the daily show schedule for show times.

Shingle Saw

Near McHaffie's Homestead you'll find rare and very old pieces of machinery... an authentic 1915 J.S. Case Steam Tractor which powers a Bremen Horizontal Shingle Saw over 100 years old!

Horses and mules were still widely used to clear land and perform heavy work, but tractors like this began a mechanical revolution. Powered by steam, these tractors provided muscle for the timber and farming industries that were vital to the region. Every piece of wood was used, nothing was wasted. Even the shavings were placed around homesteads to repel insects and spiders. **Today, watch scheduled demonstrations of shingle production, or watch as skilled craftsmen construct a variety of bird and bat houses out of cedar boards made with this saw.**

Log Hewing

Visit with Mark Edwards, Silver Dollar City's very own log hewer. He'll tell you how a tree is selected to cut, and explain the techniques used to hew it flat, notch it on each end, and then set it in place. Mark demonstrates the same dovetail notch technique used when the McHaffie Homestead was built in 1843. **See the actual construction of log structures that are used on our properties.**

Birdle's Cabin

Once the home of Ozarkian Birdle Mannon, this cabin built in Brownbranch, Missouri in 1916 now resides near the McHaffie's Homestead. For close to 90 years, Birdle lived in this authentic 2-room cabin (from 1916 until her passing in 1999) with no electricity, plumbing or running water. **Experience the simplicity of the life of an Ozark pioneer as you follow in the footsteps of Birdle.**

Oak Trail Schoolhouse #3

During the pioneer days, all classes were held in one room, with one teacher. Most children only went to school until 2nd or 3rd grade, then began working to provide food and clothing for their family. The number of pupils attending school varied from 6 to 40, or more. Students were seated by grade with the younger children in the front and the older children in the back of the room. The most common subjects of study were reading, penmanship, arithmetic, history and geography. Students would memorize the recite their lessons daily to the teacher. **Come on it, have a seat and talk to our Schoolmarm about education in the 1800s. Watch out for her tricky questions!**

Students would often have to walk great distances to attend school and therefore brought their lunches from home in a basket or lard pail. Lunch might consist of whatever could be found around the homestead like molasses, lard and sugar sandwiches, cold pancakes left over from the day's breakfast, hard-boiled eggs or half-baked potatoes. Students often warmed their lunches on the school's potbellied stove, which was also used as the only source of heat during harsh winter months.

Wilderness Church

Our authentic country church is a vintage log chapel originally built in 1849 along Bear Creek. Churches were often considered to be the center of social activity in the 1800s, where neighbors would join together for traditional meetings and picnics on the grounds. The tree that stood where the church is now was hand-carved into the pulpit by Lester Vining. The pulpit is now over 200 years old. **Experience the warmth of the Wilderness Church.**

Swinging Bridge

Swinging bridges literally served as “the bridge to civilization” in many communities, giving pedestrians access to town especially when the river was high. Also known as suspension bridges, the decking or platform hangs from 2 thick overhead wire cables and the weight is carried horizontally to the far ends as you move across the bridge. Swinging bridges were often used versus pier bridges in the 1880s because they required less money and fewer supplies to build, and they presented less of an obstruction to river users. This was especially helpful in mining towns where the river was heavily used.

General Store

End your tour in Silver Dollar City’s General Store. A treat for families in the 1880s, and the town’s hot spot, general stores were filled with everything you would need or want. From tools and fabric to food and supplies, the general store was your family’s one-stop shop.

Since money was tight for many Ozark families, the store owner would often allow patrons to barter for products. General stores played an important role in communities, acting as the local bank, post office, telegraph office and supply store... if you couldn’t find what you needed in the store, they would order it in from the big city!