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For immediate release

Museum celebrates Independence Day with old-time 'anvil shoot'

NORRIS, Tenn.: Visitors to the Museum of Appalachia, a Smithsonian Affiliate Museum, will celebrate July 4th with the explosion of sound that pioneers heard thunder through the hills when they celebrated Independence Day.

In those days, local blacksmiths would "shoot the anvil" to celebrate the nation's Independence, Christmas, and even Davy Crockett's election to the U.S. Congress.

Now, shooting the 175 pound anvil, an almost lost tradition, has come to be a highlight of the Museum's annual July 4th Celebration. Folks as far as 15 miles away have reported hearing the blast, and certainly everyone gathered for the excitement, feels the earth shake under their feet.

Along with a big boom several times during the day, there will be patriotic ceremonies, a flag waving procession led by bagpiper Jesse McCrary, Longhunter camp stories, Appalachian music, and an array of historic demonstrations.

At 2pm, a bell-ringing ceremony led by the Anderson County Chapter of the Sons of the Revolution will occur, joining in the National Bell Ringing Ceremony as over 10,000 bells across the country are rung in unison. Thirteen youngsters will be selected from the audience to ring the bell in honor of the thirteen original colonies.

The Liberty Pole raising, organized by the Tennesseans for Living History, at 2:15pm will commemorate a Colonial American practice signifying dissatisfaction with the English government. It illustrates the spirit of liberty among colonists in the early days of the War for Independence.

Wander the Museum's Village and see demonstrations of "Betsy Ross" sewing our nation's first flag, in addition to spinning, weaving, blacksmithing, woodcarving, sassafras tea brewing and cedar rail splitting.

Enjoy tasty summertime treats; grilled hamburgers and hot dogs, hand-churned ice cream, cool lemonade, homemade cakes and cookies.

The Museum is open from 9am to 6pm, with special July 4th activities from 10am-3:00pm. The extensive village-farm complex includes dozens of historic log structures, display buildings filled with authentic Appalachian artifacts, gardens surrounded by split rail fences, and farm animals, all in a traditional setting. The Hall of Fame offers a portrait of the Appalachian people, both famous and not-so-famous—and these exhibits may be enjoyed in air-conditioned comfort.

Admission is charged; it's free for Museum members. Memberships provide a year of visits, and, as an official affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution, the Museum of Appalachia provides Smithsonian memberships in conjunction with its own program.

The Shop at the Museum of Appalachia features handiwork from Appalachian artisans, books authored by regional writers and unique "Made in America" gifts. The Museum's quaint restaurant offers hot country style lunches, fresh-from-the-garden vegetables, and mouth-watering home-made desserts. Facilities are available for weddings, reunions, meetings and other events.

The Museum is a non-profit organization. Its mission is to preserve Appalachian artifacts and to instill in the community—regionally, nationally, and internationally—a greater knowledge of and appreciation for the Appalachian heritage.

The Museum is located 16 miles north of Knoxville, one mile east of I-75, Exit 122. For more information, call 865-494-7680, or visit www.museumofappalachia.org.

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