

Faussett Days to flow into Silverton again

The annual fest stands as an ode to living history

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SILVERTON — On July 8 and 9, the Friends of Silver Falls and Silver Falls State Park will host their annual Historic Al Faussett Days at the South Falls Lodge and Historic Area.

The event is in honor of Al Faussett who, in 1928, braved the 177-foot South Falls in an canoe stuffed with inner-tubes — and lived to talk about it. Almost 80 years later, Faussett is still celebrated as a local daredevil among Silvertonians.

According to Friends of Silver Falls Administrator Carol Vanderwall, Faussett Days act as a way for the community to learn through living history, with wool spinning, baskets for sale and on display, old-time fiddlers, Dutch-oven biscuits with home-churned butter and even homemade pies.

“It’s a lot of fun,” Vanderwall said, who participated in her first Faussett Days in 2005. “Last year, we even had clothing for kids to dress up in,” she said. “Everyone had a lot of fun. I’m very excited for this year.”

Visitors to the park can also partake in canoe races — miniature canoe races, that is. The miniature boats will be on sale for \$1, and the canoes will race down the falls at 3 p.m. both Saturday and Sunday. All proceeds from the day (boats and sales of other goods) will go toward the Friends of Silver Falls, a nonprofit organization aimed at supporting the educational and interpretive opportunities in Silver Falls State Park.

Another aspect not to be missed at this year’s Faussett Days is the tale’s recounting by Faussett’s grandson Mike Faussett.

Faussett was quite the daredevil beyond his feats at Silver Falls, according to John Long’s collection of true whitewater river stories, “The Liquid Locomotive.” In 1929, Faussett rode the same canvas boat he used for Silver Falls to ride down the 212-foot Shoshone Falls on the Snake River, 45 feet higher than Niagara Falls. He rode down those falls in front of a crowd of 5,000, and emerged from the waters with only a broken hand.

“Back in the 1920s, it was a big time of daredevils,” Vanderwall said of Faussett’s need for that adrenaline rush. “People actually used to push wrecked cars over Silver Falls, but that was before it was a park or anything.”

Faussett Days will take place Saturday and Sunday, July 8 and 9, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Silver Falls State Park. While the event is free, admission to the park is \$3 per car.