



Loachapoka: The hidden gem holding Pioneer Park + an annual folk fair



BY ELLA WALTON · LAST UPDATED JUNE 26, 2025

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Just a 12-minute drive down the road from Auburn sits a town of only 162 residents.

Loachapoka may be small in comparison to its popular neighbor, yet its history is just as rich. With over 50 years of celebrating 'Syrup Sopping Day,' the local museum's fall folk fair is one you won't want to miss.

Here's a quick rundown:

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- Population: 162 (2023)
- Established: 1796
- Incorporated: 1910, 1926 + 1974
- Current Mayor: Ricky Holder

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A deep-rooted history

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In 1796, the earliest known Creek village surrounding the town was established. The name 'Loachapoka' can be translated as "live."

The first white settler, named Ball, arrived in 1800 following. "Ball's Fork," as the town name closely related to the creek, was located on a stagecoach



route that stretched from Montgomery County all the way into Tallapoosa County.

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The Western Railroad of Alabama didn't reach Loachapoka until nearly a decade later in 1845.

Local businesses included: sawmills, grist mills, shops + a trade center (now housing the Lee County Historical Museum). During the Civil War, Loachapoka raised three regiments of men to fight. In 1864, Gen. Lovell Rousseau and his troops raided the town, burned/damaged the train depot + damaged its tracks.

The need for reconstruction was a point of immense difficulty for the town. As a result, its population dropped significantly.

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Pioneer Park, a museum made up of nine historical structures, is on a mission to preserve the heritage + traditions of Lee County. The park is founded + run by the Lee County Historical Society.

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- **Location:** 6500 Sta
- **Museum hours:** W
 - **Second Satur**



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On the second Saturday of each month, historical reenactors visit the museum. Blacksmiths can be seen working the forges, spinners + weavers make textiles, + gardeners tend to the historical gardens. Crafts are scheduled throughout the day, while a meal is prepared either outdoors or in the fireplace.

The park's exhibits include:

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- The Old Trade Center
- The Ruth Purdy Speake Cabin
- The Taylor Whatley Building
- The Blacksmith Shop
- Dr. McLain's Office
- The Loachapoka Gin Office
- The Cook House
- A reconstruction of the Loachapoka Jail
- The Bernard-Newell Log House.

Annual Syrup Soppin' folk fair

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Pioneer Park Loachapoka

about a year ago



Cmon out y'all! Gorgeous day to stroll around and get your fill of sweet potato biscuits or Brunswick stew- homemade here!



+4

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For over 50 years, the grounds of Pioneer Park have welcomed roughly 10,000 visitors to enjoy Lee County Historical Society's Syrup Soppin' folk fair.

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- **Date:** Sat., October 25, 2025 | Runs from 8AM to about 3PM
 - Rain date: Sunday, October 26, 2025
- **Location:** 6500 Stage Road, Loachapoka AL 36865

A day at the fair typically entails:

- Live music
- Reenactments
- Historical displays
- Arts + craft vendors
- Food vendors
- Historical demonstrations

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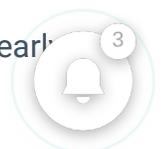


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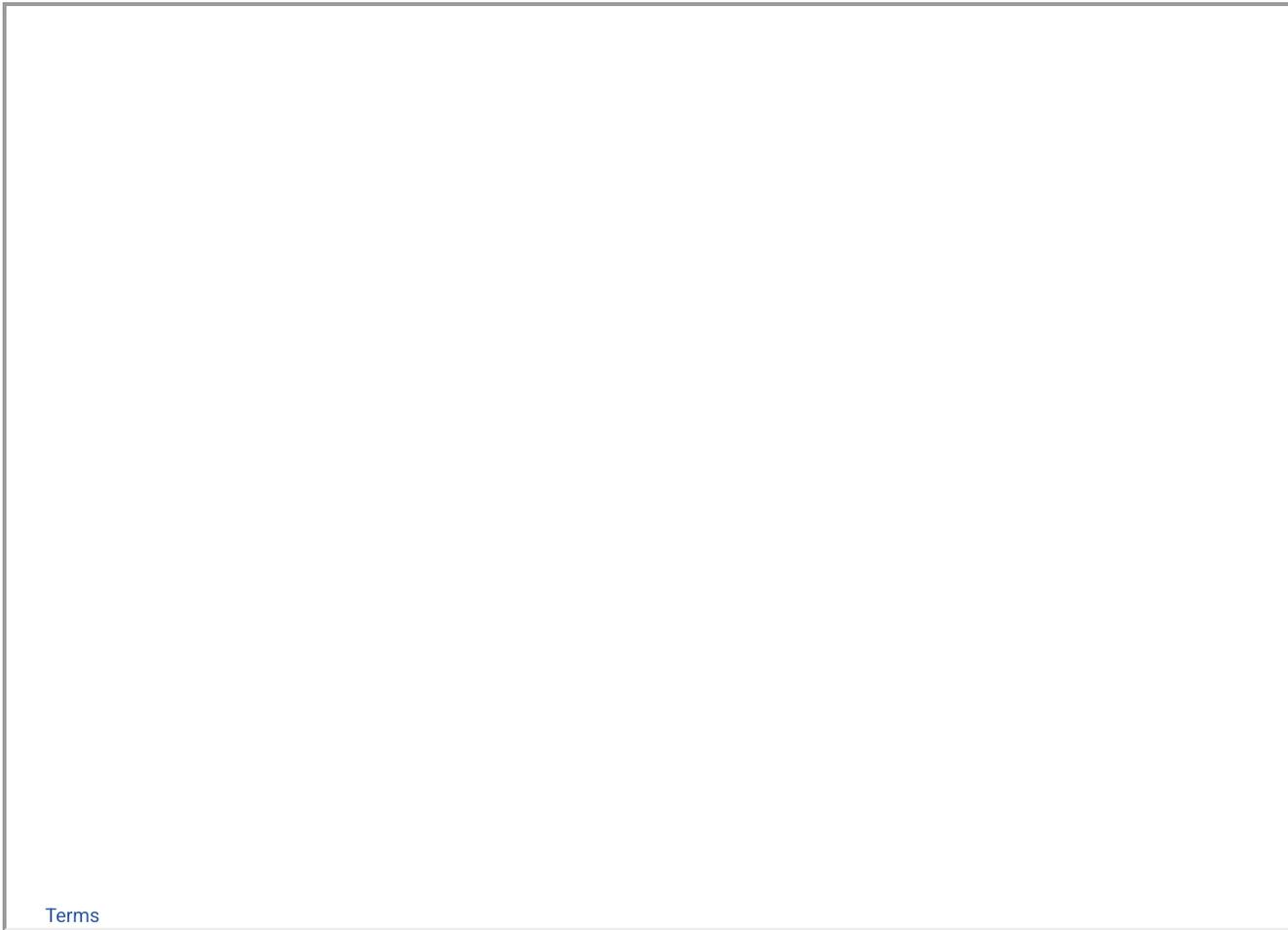
Although the fair official
to be the first in line to p

advised to arrive early
out.



Some of the festival food-favorites are:

- Sweet potato + sausage biscuits
- Sweet potato fritters (rolled in cinnamon + sugar)
- Fried pies
- Boiled peanuts
- Polish sausages



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Ella Walton

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