

## PRAIRIE GROVE BATTLEFIELD STATE PARK

Prairie Grove Battlefield has been nationally recognized as one of the most intact Civil War sites. The ridge and fields look much as they did at the time of the battle on December 7, 1862. Visitors to Prairie Grove Battlefield State Park can see important places on the battlefield and gain insight into the effect of the Civil War on the people of the Arkansas Ozarks.

The park was started by the United Daughters of the Confederacy in 1908 as a place for Civil War veteran reunions. Today, the park preserves an important part of the historic battlefield and has a unique collection of buildings depicting life in the region before, during, and after the Civil War.

The museum in Hindman Hall and self-guided walking and driving tours give visitors an understanding of the Battle of Prairie Grove, while the interpretive emphasis in the Ozark village focuses on the effect of war on Ozark life.

### THE BATTLE OF PRAIRIE GROVE

On December 7, 1862, a Confederate Army under Major General Thomas C. Hindman engaged the Union divisions of Brigadier Generals Francis J. Herron and James G. Blunt near Prairie Grove Church. Hindman's original plan to strike Blunt, isolated at Cane Hill, Arkansas, was foiled by the timely arrival of two Union divisions under Herron.

Hindman bypassed Blunt at Cane Hill on the morning of December 7, 1862, and marched to meet Herron. The two armies collided at Prairie Grove. Hindman's men took a defensive position on a ridge overlooking the Illinois River. The Battle began with an artillery duel which opened the way for a Union attack. Between noon and 2 p.m. two Union charges met with bloody repulse.

The battered Union forces were reinforced about 2:30 p.m. by Blunt's arrival on the battlefield. The fighting spread westward, with savage attack and counter attack until darkness ended the fighting. The Confederate Army retreated southward during the night as its ammunition was nearly exhausted.

Prairie Grove marked the last major Civil War engagement in northwest Arkansas. Never again would a southern army attempt to use the area as an avenue of invasion to Missouri.

### INTERPRETIVE SERVICES

**Programs** ♦ Audiovisual programs, musket demonstrations, and other educational activities are available. Guided tours through the historic Latta and Morrow houses are scheduled daily. Schools and other groups should schedule in advance of their visit.

**Walking Tour** ♦ The one mile **Battlefield Trail** offers an opportunity to stand where the fiercest fighting took place near the Borden House. Wayside exhibit panels provide information about the battle from the point of view of officers, enlisted men, and a civilian. A free self-guiding brochure is available.

**Driving Tour** ♦ The park contains over 800 acres of the 3,000 acre battlefield. Visitors view important locations on the battlefield outside the park on the five mile self-guided drive. A free brochure is available at Hindman Hall as well as a low cost audio CD.

**Special Events** ♦ Prairie Grove offers a variety of unique special events. The Clothesline Fair, held Labor Day weekend, is an arts and crafts festival sponsored by State Parks, the Prairie Grove Lion's Club and the Arts Center of the Ozarks. The reenactment of the Battle of Prairie Grove takes place on the first full weekend in December each even-numbered year. Men from re-activated Civil War units gather to demonstrate battle tactics as well as the lifestyle of the common Civil War soldier. The Memorial Day Tribute features a free concert, living history programs, and an appropriate speech honoring the men and women who died protecting our nation. Check with the park for exact dates on all special events and programs.

### FACILITIES

**Battlefield Museum and Visitor Center** ♦ Hindman Hall, built as a memorial to Confederate General Thomas C. Hindman, functions as the park Visitor Center. You'll find an audiovisual program and exhibits describing the park and the battle of Prairie Grove.

**Latta Barn** ♦ Equipped with a kitchen and dining area plus basic cooking and eating utensils, the Latta Barn may be rented for group meetings and family gatherings of up to 100 people.

**Picnicking** ♦ Tree-shaded tables, grills, and barbecue pit, plus a rental picnic pavilion provide a peaceful location for family outings. A playground, water, electricity and rest rooms conveniently adjoin the picnic area.

### LOCATION

From Interstate 540 in Fayetteville, travel west on U.S. 62 just 8 miles to the park (located on the eastern edge of Prairie Grove).

### HOURS OF OPERATION

**Park** ♦ Open 8 a.m. to an hour after sunset (year-round)

**Battlefield Museum** ♦ Open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (year-round)

Closed Thanksgiving, noon December 24 through Christmas Day, and New Year's Day

**For further information on park programs, reservations, or events, contact:**

**Prairie Grove Battlefield State Park**  
P.O. Box 306  
506 East Douglas  
Prairie Grove, AR 72753  
Telephone: (479) 846-2990  
e-mail: [prairiegrove@arkansas.com](mailto:prairiegrove@arkansas.com)

**NOTICE: To preserve scenic beauty and ecology, fences and warning signs have not been installed in some park locations. Caution and supervision of your children are required while visiting these areas.**

For further information on Arkansas's other fine state parks, contact:

Arkansas State Parks  
One Capitol Mall, 4A-900  
Little Rock, AR 72201  
Telephone: (501) 682-1191  
[www.ArkansasStateParks.com](http://www.ArkansasStateParks.com)



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DEPARTMENT OF PARKS & TOURISM