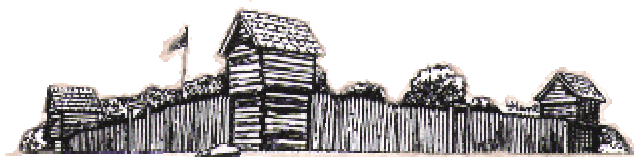




WELCOME TO PRICKETTS FORT!



Pricketts Fort State Park is a day-use historical and recreational park, located just north of Fairmont, West Virginia. The original fort was built at the confluence of Pricketts Creek and the Monongahela River in 1774, and provided a place of refuge from Native American attack for early settlers to the area. Now a state park, the site also includes the Job Prickett House that was built around 1859 and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Both the reconstructed fort and the restored Prickett House are open for public tours from mid-April through October, with a living history style interpretation. School groups receive special attention and educational materials are available to schools upon request. Visitors enjoy seeing costumed artisans at work. These historical interpreters also serve as guides who provide information and answer questions. A dozen or more special events are conducted annually.

Other recreational facilities at Pricketts Fort include picnic areas, fishing, and a boat-launching ramp. A Visitor Center includes a museum shop and exhibits on historical and archeological artifacts. The Pricketts Fort Memorial Foundation, under long-term contract with the State of West Virginia, manages the Visitor Center, the historical interpretation program, and all special events.

THE FORT

The Fort covers a 110 by 110 foot square, with 12-foot-high log walls and blockhouses at each corner. Lining the weathered stockade walls are 14 tiny cabins, some with earthen floors. A meetinghouse and a storehouse fill the common. When the threat of Native American uprisings occurred, up to 80 families from the surrounding countryside would hurry to the Fort. They would stay as long as the threat existed, from days to weeks. "Forting up" was simply tolerated by settlers. Life in the cramped quarters could be unpleasant, but such sacrifices were necessary for survival on the dangerous frontier of the late 1700s. Today's Fort still speaks eloquently of that life and time.

THE JOB PRICKETT HOUSE

Just south of the Fort stands the Job Prickett House, built in 1859 by the great-grandson of Capt. Jacob Prickett, for whom the Fort was named. The difference between the 18th century historical reconstruction and the original 19th century house illustrates the development of an increasingly civilized lifestyle and the availability of mass-produced furnishings through an 85-year span of time. The house is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and contains antiques originally used there by the Prickett family.



THE VISITOR CENTER

Pricketts Fort's major program is the historical interpretation program. The visitor usually begins in the Visitor Center for an introduction and orientation, as well as exhibits that set the stage for the visit to the Fort and Prickett House. The tour requires a ticket, which is also purchased at the Visitor Center.

INTERPRETIVE PROGRAM

As one approaches the Fort, a costumed interpreter will begin the tour, outlining the variety of activities available that particular day. Often these include demonstrations of hearth cooking, weaving, spinning, blacksmithing, and the construction of muzzle-loading firearms. Sometimes, basketry, music, or militia activities are available. Visitors are encouraged to ask questions, moving throughout the Fort at their own pace. At the Job Prickett House, the mid-19th century lifestyle of the local farming family is presented, featuring several hundred antiques and artifacts that either were in the house in its early days, or are similar to those that were.

RECREATION

Scenic, pastoral Pricketts Fort State Park offers a variety of recreational opportunities to visitors. Picnic tables are available and various concerts and performing arts are presented in a 400-seat amphitheater during the summer. All can enjoy Pricketts Creek and Bay and the Monongahela River with boating facilities including a launching ramp and trailer parking. Fish are plentiful and bass tournaments are held in season. For hiking enthusiasts, the Pricketts Fort Nature Trail has 25 interpretive stations to help introduce guests to the flora and fauna of north central West Virginia. A Guide to the Pricketts Fort Nature Trail, developed by Fairmont State College, is available to assist interested hikers. The McTrail, a converted rail trail, affords additional hiking for walkers, joggers and cyclists.

SPECIAL EVENTS

A busy schedule of special events is presented at the park throughout the year and impromptu events are occasionally offered. Please contact the Pricketts Fort Memorial Foundation for more information.