

# Battle of Pilot Knob State Historic Site

President Charles T. Cadenbach



PO Box 509  
Pilot Knob, MO 63663

September 15, 2023

Dear Re-enactor:

Friends of Fort Davidson and the Missouri Division of State Parks are pleased to present the re-enactment at the Battle of Pilot State Historic Site, in Pilot Knob, Mo., on Sept. 28-29, 2024. We cordially invite you to participate in the 2024 event.

The re-creation of the Battle of Pilot Knob will take place at the original battlefield sites and the preserved earthwork fort of this important Sept. 1864, battle. The goal is to provide participants with an authentic and memorable living history experience. In an effort to present as accurate a portrayal of the battle as possible, only authentically uniformed and equipped reenactors will be allowed on the field and in the military encampments.

The sponsors of this event will endeavor to make all participants feel welcome by providing firewood, straw, water, and sanitary facilities. Good hay will also be available for the horses of cavalry re-enactors. Other amenities might be available depending on funding.

Battle of Pilot Knob State Historic Site is located in the southeast corner of the state at Pilot Knob, Mo., off Highway 21 on Highway 221 in Iron County. The visitor center at the site contains exhibits that interpret the battle, and a disabled cannon left behind on Shepherd Mountain by Confederate gunners.

The registration packet is on the website at [www.battleofpilotknob.org](http://www.battleofpilotknob.org). To register your unit, please complete and return the enclosed form by Aug. 1, 2024, to: Terry Cadenbach, 14350 County Road 8450, Rolla, MO 65401. (573 368-0949). If you have any questions or require additional information, please call Brian Bethel, site administrator, Battle of Pilot Knob State Historic Site at (573) 546-3454. Units and individual re-enactors may register also by checking out the information online at <http://www.battleofpilotknob.org/reenactment.html> , printing it out and following the printed instructions.

Sincerely,

Charles T. Cadenbach  
President

## PILOT KNOB LIVING HISTORY- RE-ENACTMENT WEEKEND SEPTEMBER 28-29 2024

“There Never Was A Prettier Place To Die” and there never has been a prettier place to re-enact a famous Missouri Civil War battle than Battle of Pilot Knob State Historic Site. Nestled in the beautiful Arcadia Valley, this popular historic site is home of the original earthwork fort which was the centerpiece of the Sept 1864, Battle of Pilot Knob.

Friends of Fort Davidson is pleased to announce the 2024 Battle of Pilot Knob reenactment weekend at Battle of Pilot Knob State Historic Site. As it has been in past years, Pilot Knob is a re-enactor’s event, and one of the few that you can re-enact on the core battlefield. The sponsors care about you and are working to provide you with what we hope will be an exceptional experience.

What follows is an effort to provide you with everything you need to know to enjoy the Pilot Knob weekend. Full amenities will be provided. We sincerely hope you will feel like the important history resource that you are.

**REGISTRATION** – If you are interested in participation in this historic event, please fill out the enclosed information/registration form as promptly as you can. Registration packets should be mailed to: Terry Cadenbach, 14350 County Road 8450, Rolla, MO 65401. If you have questions or need additional packets, maps or whatever, do not hesitate to write/call Brian Bethel, Site Administrator, Battle of Pilot Knob State Historic Site, P.O. Box 509, Pilot Knob, MO 63663, (573)546-3454.

**BASIC GUIDELINES** – This event is specifically designed for the serious, authentic living historian. MCWRA safety rules will be strictly enforced. An officer’s meeting will be held at 8 a.m. on both Saturday and Sunday mornings in the auditorium of the Visitor’s Center. **Attendance at the officer’s meeting is mandatory for all unit commanders to cover scenarios and safety.** Unit commanders are responsible for ensuring that every single participant in their unit is familiar with the safety rules. To protect re-enactors and spectators, violators of any safety rules may be removed immediately from Fort Davidson State Historic Site.

In order to provide the most professional and meaningful experience for the visiting public and your fellow re-enactors, please make sure you can justify what you bring to the event. Authenticity guidelines are attached to help you tailor your impression to look as much like those who fought at Pilot Knob as possible. It goes without saying that modern eyeglasses, wristwatches, penny-roll cartridges, Zouave rifles, aluminum or graniteware cooking gear, and modern jewelry are not authentic.

Expect the military camps to be set up in regimental fashion and be run in an orderly manner

Arrival may begin on the Wednesday before the re-enactment. Late arrivals on Friday are asked to be as quiet and courteous as possible when setting up. On Saturday night, quiet hours will be in effect in camp from midnight until reveille. If you must party late, do it out of hearing of the camps. Though both camps will have a full-time provost, all participants are expected to act in such a manner as to be a credit to themselves and their uniforms.

**CAVALRY –USDA TRAVEL PAPERS** (out of state horses only) **AND COGGINS PAPERS** can be inspected by uniformed agents of the Missouri Department of Agriculture or by event organizers.

### **CAVALRY BOUNTY: \$25/PER HORSE THAT PARTICIPATES IN THE EVENT EACH DAY**

**ARTILLERY** – Historically, two guns were operated outside the fort. These were 3-inch ordnance rifles of Lt. Simonton’s section. The other guns will be placed in the fort on or near the earthworks where they were originally located. They will have to be staked and roped to the parapet, as were the originals, so come prepared. There simply isn’t room for more guns in the fort. Price only brought 12 with him on the raid and only three are known to have operated during the battle (two atop Shepherd Mountain and one in the creek near the gap). Preference will be given to 57” wheel guns. **CASH BOUNTY OF \$125 WILL BE SUPPLIED THROUGH PRIVATE DONATIONS TO THE ARTILLERY UNITS FOR EACH OF THE FIRST 18 GUNS REGISTERED.**

## **CHECKS TO CAVALRY & ARTILLERY WILL NOT BE ISSUED UNTIL SUNDAY AFTER THE EVENT. PISTOL CAPS TO MOUNTED & INFANTRY SOLDIERS ISSUED ON SUNDAY AFTER OFFICER'S MEETING.**

**WEATHER AND INSECTS** – Summer weather breaks in September. Daytime temperatures run to 90 degrees. Nights can be cool, going to the low 40s. It has been known to rain as well, but then that is historically correct. Insects have never been a problem, but you can expect a few mosquitoes. There also will be ticks if you hike in the woods.

**CAMPING** – All camping will be in the authentic Union, Confederate or refugee camping. You are encouraged to bring your own poles and stakes with you. Due to space limitation, there is no modern camping area. The best we can do is to allow you to stay with your vehicles in the re-enactors parking area, but this area is graveled and not suitable for tents.

**PETS - The rules of the MCWRA regarding pets in camp will be strictly enforced!**

**PARKING** – There is ample parking for re-enactors approximately 300 yards from the campsites.

**REGISTRATION** – Please check in on arrival. A registration table will be kept open until 8 a.m. on Saturday. You may pick up directions and schedules at check-in. Musket cap issues will be made at officer's call. Any caps, powder, fuses and/or bounties distributed to re-enactors are supplied through gifts by private contributors.

**AMENITIES** – There are restaurants and food concessions nearby. **Additionally, straw, firewood, water, sanitary facilities and good hay will be provided. A cash bounty for artillery units and percussion caps will be provided through private donation.**

**FIREWOOD** - The Missouri Department of Natural Resources requests that visitors to the state park system not bring firewood with them from outside Missouri. This restriction has been put in place to avoid infestation by damaging non-native pests, such as the emerald ash borer. Firewood is readily available at this re-enactment and visitors are encouraged to obtain it on arrival. If firewood is brought in from another state, it should all be burned and not left behind on departure.

**FOR THE FAMILY** – Besides the many activities available in Pilot Knob, there is much to see and do in the area. Just a few miles from Pilot Knob are Elephant Rocks, Johnson Shut-Ins, St. Joe, and Taum Sauk Mountain state parks. Both are great for kids and adults.

## **COSTUMING GUIDELINES**

**U.S. Infantry:** The 14<sup>th</sup> Iowa is described as having black hats and Springfield rifles. There are also references to shelter halves. Beyond that we speculate. Mixed uniform articles are common in photos of late-war western troops. For that reason, we will not require exact uniformity of dress among individuals other than the following: three-band weapon, standard leather gear, sky-blue trousers, brogans, blanket roll and a black hat in good condition. Those participants with a frock coat and Hardee hat are encouraged to wear them. Please limit hat decorations to the cord and bugle, though undecorated hats are possibly more authentic. Pistols should only be carried by officers and the color sergeant.

**U.S. Cavalry:** Both shell jackets and sack coats are authentic. Some men wore caps while others wore the hat. There is a reference to one man having his hat cord cut in two by a Confederate bullet. They had sabers and standard horse gear. They had not yet been issued greatcoats for some reason and so wore their blankets over their shoulders. Companies I and K of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Missouri State Militia (MSM) Cavalry wore artillery uniforms with red piping until the end of the war because they were originally formed as artillery units. The 3<sup>rd</sup> MSM had an assortment of weapons including: numerous Starr Double Action Revolvers, Savage Figure 8 Navy Revolvers, Colt Revolving Rifles, and at least one Wesson Rifle.

**U.S. Artillery:** Both sacks and shells are appropriate. There are references to artillery firing pistols. In the interest of uniformity, men wishing to portray Battery H, 2<sup>nd</sup> MO Lt. Artillery, should wear the jacket as first choice. Battery H was armed with 3-inch ordnance rifles.

**Confederates:** Price's force consisted of cavalry and artillery. The cavalry, with the possible exception of Shelby's men (who were not at Pilot Knob) were in reality mounted infantry. Please discard your standard cavalry impression. With the exception of some officers, this cavalry did not have sabers or bright yellow trimmed uniforms. The standard weapon was the three-band Enfield rifle-musket, and although many other types of weapons were in use, including seized Springfields, civilian rifles and shot guns. Few re-enactors have civilian weapons that will qualify as authentic. Austrian Lorenz rifles are currently being replicated and were used in this battle. The Lorenz was most likely the .54 caliber three band, with possibly some .58 caliber weapons captured from Union troops in the mix.. For that reason, be prepared to use your verifiable military weapon.

By the time Price's force had reached Fredericktown, they had done some hard marching, particularly through the mountains of Arkansas. The men were gaunt and dirty. The condition of their clothing was bad and many men replaced their rags at the expense of the citizenry along the way. Discipline was so bad in some of the regiments that looting became widespread. Most men in Price's army were clad in civilian clothing by the time of Pilot Knob.

The exception was Cabell's Brigade, which stood out on the battlefield as being the only ones "wearing the grey." What this meant exactly is open to interpretation. That Cabell's men had remnants is undeniable; perhaps they had saved them in their saddlebags for just such an occasion.

The other correct impression is, ironically, a complete Federal uniform. The entire advance of Marmaduke's Division was clad in blue as they descended Shepherd Mountain to attack the 14<sup>th</sup> Iowa on the 27<sup>th</sup>. Price's men had captured several supply trains on their way up and many Confederates wore the blue throughout the latter part of Price's Campaign. More than 100 men later regretted it as they were shot after being captured at the Battle of Mine Creek, Kansas, when Price's army was broken up.

Additional details. Confederates should consider including the following:

Many men wore blankets over their shoulders in place of greatcoats they didn't have. Many men wore simple leggings made from strips of cloth wrapped around the leg from the knee down. Trousers didn't last long when riding through brush without them. The cloth strips used to tie the leggings were often soaked in Kerosene to ward off ticks and chiggers.

There was doubtless much standard leather gear in use, but many men had to use homemade pouches to carry caps and cartridges. Others simply filled their pockets. In the absence of canteens, men used bottles with string slings.

Many men were not mounted, so the absence of horses is authentic. Fighting by both sides at Pilot Knob was almost all done dismounted.

**Flags:** There is ample evidence that the Missouri Confederate Flag (with Cross) and the 2<sup>nd</sup> National Flag flew over this battle. It is also likely that 12 or 13 star First National and Missouri State Guard flags flew over this field. However, recent research (in old *Confederate Veteran* magazines) suggests that at least one square battle flag could have been flown here. Gen. Cabell, as a Virginia Quartermaster, played a part in the original design. His wife made the battle flag for a cousin and that flew in the Trans-Mississippi as early as fall 1862. Since he personally disliked the designs of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Nationals, it would most likely be appropriate for a square battle flag of the Arm of Northern Virginia to lead "Cabell's brigade" in his charges.

In conclusion, units or brigades that work together should attempt a uniform impression within their own groups. Whether you should choose to dress in grey, or as civilian-clad troops is up to you.

Headgear should consist of some sort of hat, felt or straw. The forage cap is inappropriate, unless it's Federal issue. Groups wearing gray, but with unusual or distinctive headgear or trim, should attempt to conform to the dress of the rest of their battalion.

**C.S. Artillery:** It must be assumed that the condition of the men in the batteries could not be much different than the rest of Price's army. Plain dress is most appropriate.

**Sutlers:** Authentic sutlers are welcome and there is a fee. However, all authentic sutlers must pre-register! For a registration form and guidelines, go to [www.battleofpilotknob.org](http://www.battleofpilotknob.org). Space is restricted to registered sutlers only. Sutlers will be located near the arts & crafts vendors. Sutlers who are also re-enactors must picket their horses in the cavalry area. Modern vendors will have a separate area away from sutlers.

**Civilian Impressions for the Battle of Pilot Knob:** Many civilians were present in Pilot Knob and Ironton, Mo., before, during and after the battle. They lived on local farms, kept stores and businesses in town, or were connected with the iron mines or the Iron Mountain Railroad, which terminated in Pilot Knob. Because of the close proximity to St. Louis by rail, soldier's wives and families were frequent visitors. Rail service made possible the presence of a wide variety of civilians – peddlers, sutlers, Christian Commission, Western Sanitary Commission, Ladies' Union Aid Societies, etc. Because 1864 was an important election year, one could expect to find politicians canvassing for votes. Civilians with horses must picket them in the cavalry area.

Many area residents were pro-Union and had provided men for the 47<sup>th</sup> Missouri Volunteer Infantry, which had been organized in Pilot Knob between Aug. 22, and Sept. 11, 1864. More than 200 civilians were present in the fort at the time of battle including 100 African-Americans and approximately 100 white males. Six companies of the 47<sup>th</sup> fought in Fort Davidson and many of their families joined the subsequent Federal retreat rather than be left with the rebels.

There were many Southern sympathizers in the surrounding countryside who grew bold as rumors of Price's impending advance reached them. Many boasted openly to the pro-Union neighbors that they would get even once the rebels were in power. Such talk had made the pro-Union population apprehensive and fearful by Sept. 26, when Price's advance guard suddenly appeared from Fredericktown. In the days that followed, the Southern sympathizers suffered nearly as greatly as their Unionist neighbors – their crops appropriated, horses stolen and men impressed into the Confederate service.

Re-creation of civilian life in Pilot Knob provides many opportunities for the civilian impression because of the wide variety of activities that revolved around the community, the mines, the railroad and military camps.

**Tableaux and Period Entertainment:** While the details still need to be worked out, there will be some period entertainment provided during the event.

**Concert and Ball** – Saturday night a concert and ball will be held. Ladies and gentlemen should bring appropriate attire for a period ball. During an intermission for the band, the fort will be evacuated and blown up.

**NOTE:** There are other events being held prior to the re-enactment, including a Civil War band performing on Friday night. Please consult event flyers and our website for that information.

<http://www.battleofpilotknob.org/reenactment.html>

or the Division of State Parks website

<https://mostateparks.com/park/battle-pilot-knob-state-historic-site>

**BATTLE OF PILOT KNOB REENACTMENT WEEKEND**  
**Battle of Pilot Knob State Historic Site**  
**Pilot Knob, Missouri**  
**September 28-29, 2024**

UNIT NAME \_\_\_\_\_ U.S. \_\_\_\_ C.S. \_\_\_\_

COMMANDER OR CONTACT PERSON (if Unit)

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

CELL PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ OTHER PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

**I and/or my unit will participate in the Battle of Pilot Knob reenactment weekend,  
September 28-29, 2024.**

**I will have:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Infantry**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **Mounted Cavalry**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **Artillery**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **Type** \_\_\_\_\_ **Number**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **Ladies' Organization**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **Costumed Dependents**

**Please return form by AUGUST 1, 2024 to:**  
**Terry Cadenbach**  
**14350 County Road 8450**  
**Rolla, MO 65401**

Please attach list of all participants. If you have any questions or require additional information, please call:

Brian Bethel, Site Administrator, Battle of Pilot Knob SHS, (573) 546-3454.

## UNIT PARTICIPANTS

You must attach a list of unit member names but can use other forms to do so.