



### **HISTORY: 1866-1868**

Named for a popular Union general killed in the Civil War, Fort Phil Kearny was established at the forks of Big and Little Piney Creeks by Col. Henry B. Carrington of the 18<sup>th</sup> U.S. Infantry in July 1866.

The mission of the fort and two other posts along the Bozeman Trail, Forts Reno and C.F. Smith, was three-fold: to protect travelers on the Trail; to prevent intertribal warfare between Native Americans in the area; and to draw attention of Indian forces opposed to Euro-American westward expansion away from the transcontinental railroad construction corridor to the south.

All three Bozeman Trail forts were stockade fortifications, with Fort Phil Kearny being the largest. Enclosing 17 acres, the fort wall was 8 feet high, 1,496 feet in length, and tapered in width from 600 feet on the north to 240 feet on the south. More than 4,000 logs were used to erect the stockade, while over 606,000 feet of lumber and 130,000 bricks were produced in 1867 alone for the extensive building construction.

During its two-year existence, Fort Phil Kearny was the focal point of a violent war between the U.S. Army and the Sioux, Cheyenne and Arapaho Indians opposed to intrusions into the last great

hunting grounds on the Northern Plains. Besides the Fetterman and Wagon Box battles, many smaller fights took place in the area.

By 1868, the Union Pacific Railroad had reached a point to the west where travelers could bypass the Bozeman Trail forts' expensive liabilities. In the Treaty of 1868, the United States agreed to close the forts and the trail. Fort Phil Kearny was abandoned by the Army in early August 1868, and burned soon afterwards by the Cheyenne.

In 1963, Fort Phil Kearny was designated a National Historic Landmark. Today, portions of the fort site and the Fetterman and Wagon Box battlefields are included within the Fort Phil Kearny State Historic Site boundaries.

### **CONNOR BATTLEFIELD**

Connor Battlefield State Historic Site is located in Ranchester, Wyoming off I-90. This stretch of riverbottom land was the site of the Battle of Tongue River between the Army and Arapaho tribe. It was the single most important military engagement of the Powder River Expedition of 1865, and caused the Arapaho to ally with the Sioux and Cheyenne at the Fetterman Fight a year later. The park provides historic interpretation, a playground, picnic areas, overnight camping and fishing access.

### **LOCATION**

From I-90, take exit 44.

### **SITE RULES**

- No overnight Camping available.
- Removal of artifacts or natural resources is prohibited.
- Do not discharge firearms.
- Please leash pets.
- Please don't pick plants or flowers.
- Please use available receptacles for litter.
- Consult site staff for state parks regulations.



### **BOZEMAN TRAIL DAYS**

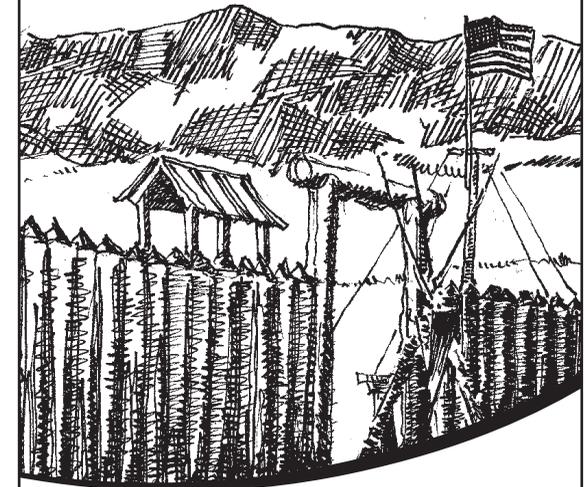
Friday, Saturday and Sunday annually, during the third week of June For more information: write Fort Phil Kearny/ Bozeman Trail Association P.O. Box 5013, Sheridan, WY 82801, or phone Fort Phil Kearny Historic Site: 307-684-7687 or 307-684-7629

### **JOIN THE FORT PHIL KEARNY/ BOZEMAN TRAIL ASSOCIATION**

Mail \$15 for individuals and \$25 for families along with your name, address and phone number to FPK/BTA, P.O. box 5013, Sheridan, WY 82801. Membership entitles you to newsletters and a discount on books.

WYOMING STATE PARKS, HISTORIC SITES & TRAILS

# Fort Phil Kearny Historic Site



Fort Phil Kearny State Historic Site is a National Historic Landmark located between Sheridan and Buffalo, as well as the Bozeman Trail Sites, including the Fetterman & Wagon Box Battle Sites.

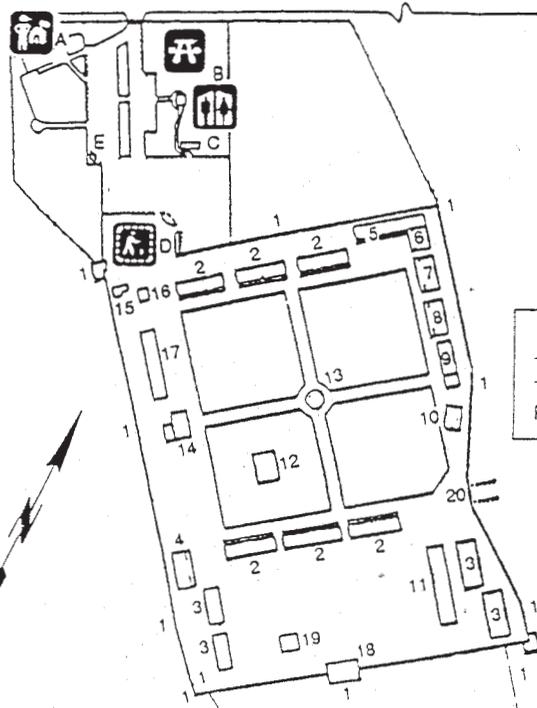
## **ARTS. PARKS. HISTORY.**

Wyoming State Parks & Cultural Resources

*Fort Phil Kearny State Historic Site is administered by the Division of State Parks and Historic Sites, Wyoming Department of State Parks and Cultural Resources. <http://wyoparks.state.wy.us/>*

**Present Structures**

- A. Visitor Center
- B. Exterior Restrooms
- C. CCC Cabin (employees only)
- D. Interpretive Circle
- E. Native American Memorial



**What Used to Be Where**

- 1. Stockade perimeter (marked w/orange flags)
- 2. Barracks
- 3. Warehouse
- 4. Temporary Hospital
- 5. Permanent Hospital
- 6. Bakery
- 7. Band Barracks
- 8. Sutler Store
- 9. Post Headquarters
- 10. Guard House
- 11. Laundry Quarters
- 12. Powder Magazine
- 13. Original Flagpole
- 14. Commander's Quarters
- 15. Post Chapel
- 16. Surgeon's Quarters
- 17. Officers' Quarters
- 18. Quartermaster's Office
- 19. Saddle Shop
- 20. Main Gate (red flag with white flags on exterior of the two openings)

NOTICE:  
Removal of artifacts is forbidden.

Private Property

**Fort Phil Kearny State Historic Site**

- HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE
- HISTORIC/INTERPRETIVE TRAIL
- PARK HEADQUARTERS
- RESTROOMS
- PICNIC AREA
- PAVED ROAD
- GRAVEL ROAD

MILEAGE FROM FORT  
To Wagon Box ..... 5 miles  
To Fetterman Fight Site ..... 5 miles  
Round trip ..... 15 miles



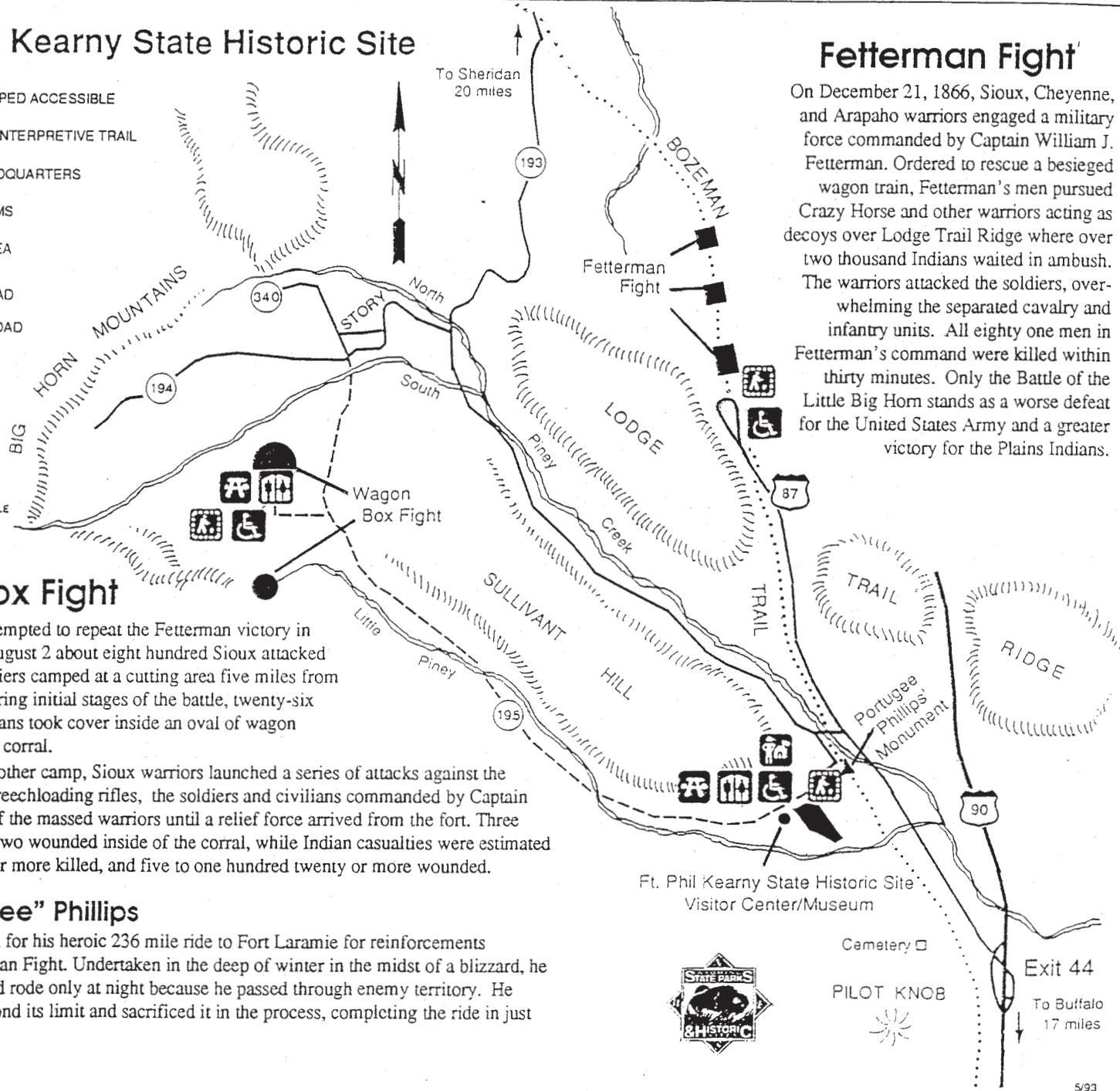
**Wagon Box Fight**

Indian forces attempted to repeat the Fetterman victory in Summer 1867. On August 2 about eight hundred Sioux attacked woodcutters and soldiers camped at a cutting area five miles from Fort Phil Kearny. During initial stages of the battle, twenty-six soldiers and six civilians took cover inside an oval of wagon boxes used as a stock corral.

After burning another camp, Sioux warriors launched a series of attacks against the corral. Armed with breechloading rifles, the soldiers and civilians commanded by Captain James Powell held off the massed warriors until a relief force arrived from the fort. Three men were killed and two wounded inside of the corral, while Indian casualties were estimated at from five to sixty or more killed, and five to one hundred twenty or more wounded.

**John "Portugee" Phillips**

Phillips is known for his heroic 236 mile ride to Fort Laramie for reinforcements following the Fetterman Fight. Undertaken in the deep of winter in the midst of a blizzard, he hid during the day and rode only at night because he passed through enemy territory. He pushed his horse beyond its limit and sacrificed it in the process, completing the ride in just four days.



**Fetterman Fight**

On December 21, 1866, Sioux, Cheyenne, and Arapaho warriors engaged a military force commanded by Captain William J. Fetterman. Ordered to rescue a besieged wagon train, Fetterman's men pursued Crazy Horse and other warriors acting as decoys over Lodge Trail Ridge where over two thousand Indians waited in ambush. The warriors attacked the soldiers, overwhelming the separated cavalry and infantry units. All eighty one men in Fetterman's command were killed within thirty minutes. Only the Battle of the Little Big Horn stands as a worse defeat for the United States Army and a greater victory for the Plains Indians.

Ft. Phil Kearny State Historic Site  
Visitor Center/Museum



Cametary □  
PILOT KNOB

Exit 44  
To Buffalo 17 miles