

PARKIN ARCHEOLOGICAL STATE PARK

A NATIVE AMERICAN VILLAGE

The 17-acre Parkin site on the St. Francis River was occupied by Native Americans from A.D. 1000 to 1550. It was surrounded by a moat and a log palisade wall for protection. Agricultural fields (for growing corn, beans, and other crops) were located outside the moat. A large platform mound, on the bank of the river, remains.

The site is important for understanding the history and prehistory of northeast Arkansas. There were once many archeological sites similar to Parkin throughout this region, but careless digging and modern agricultural practices have destroyed almost all of these. The Parkin site is unique because it has been protected from destruction. While there has been some careless digging by looters in the past, the site is the best-preserved village site of this time period in the region.

The Parkin site was designated as a **National Historic Landmark** by the U.S. National Park Service, one of only ten such sites in Arkansas. It is also listed on the **National Register of Historic Places**. These designations emphasize the site's importance.

THE DE SOTO EXPEDITION

The Parkin site is also important because many scholars believe it is the Native American village of Casqui, visited by the expedition of Hernando de Soto in the summer of 1541. The four written accounts of this expedition are important sources of information about the Native American groups living in the southeastern United States when the first Europeans arrived.

The de Soto expedition, which traveled around what is now Arkansas for two years (1541-1543), had a profound effect on the natives. Diseases, such as smallpox and influenza, accidentally introduced by the Spaniards resulted in numerous deaths, wiping out entire villages in some cases. Spanish demands for food, language interpreters, and equipment bearers led to clashes between the explorers and natives in many parts of the Southeast. Many of these clashes are described in the expedition accounts.

The encounter at Casqui was one of the few friendly contacts recorded between the de Soto expedition and American Indians. When the expedition arrived in the

area, the chief and many residents of Casqui walked over a mile from the village at Parkin to greet de Soto. They invited the Spaniards to stay in the town, but the explorers chose to make camp outside of the village. After listening to a religious speech by de Soto, the chief and a number of villagers were baptized as Christians, and helped the Spaniards erect a large wooden cross on top of the mound.

THE SAWDUST HILL COMMUNITY

In the early 1900s, a sawmill was established at the Parkin site by the *Northern Ohio Cooperage and Lumber Company*. Some of the mill workers built houses and lived next to the factory. Sawdust from the mill was dumped into the moat around the Native American village site. The area became known as Sawdust Hill. The sawmill operated at the site until the Great Depression.

PARKIN ARCHEOLOGICAL RESEARCH STATION

In conjunction with the founding of the State Park, a Research Station has been established at Parkin by the Arkansas Archeological Survey. Station archeologists are conducting long-term excavations and research at the site, providing visitors with a unique opportunity to see how we learn about the past.

Visitors can watch research in progress, and see firsthand the results of careful excavation and laboratory analysis. Archeology can tell us much about the site and its inhabitants that we could not know otherwise. As research continues, we will learn more about the original residents of Parkin and their encounter with Spanish explorers.

We invite you to join us in this process of discovery.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Open: Tuesday - Saturday: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Sunday: 12 - 5 p.m.
Closed: Mondays (except Monday holidays),
Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve,
Christmas Day and New Year's Day

The Visitor Center includes an auditorium, exhibit area, gift shop, and archeological laboratory.

Interpretive staff offer audiovisual programs, site tours, workshops, events, educational programs, and other activities.

Day Use Facilities ♦ Picnic tables and grills are available by the playground. A covered pavilion with a group grill and rest rooms are also located in this area. The pavilion is available for rent year round. Call or come by the visitor center to reserve the pavilion.

Access to site through visitor center only during hours of operation.

Volunteers have the opportunity to participate in site excavations and research. Advance registration required.

Schools and groups may request programs to meet specific interests. Groups should schedule programs well in advance. By scheduling programs at least one week in advance, groups of 15 or more will receive a reduced fee. Bona-fide school groups also receive a reduced fee with reservations made at least one week in advance.

LOCATION

Parkin Archeological State Park is on the north edge of the city of Parkin at the junction of Highway 64 and 184. Parkin is 12 miles north of Interstate 40 on Highway 75, 23 miles west of Interstate 55 on Highway 64.

For further information on park hours, fees, contact:

Parkin Archeological State Park
P.O. Box 1110
Parkin, AR 72373-1110
Telephone: (870) 755-2500
e-mail: parkin@arkansas.com

For information on this and 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

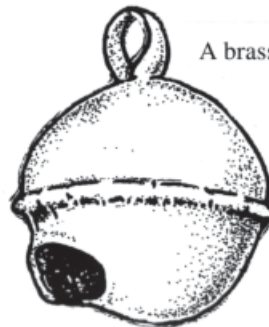
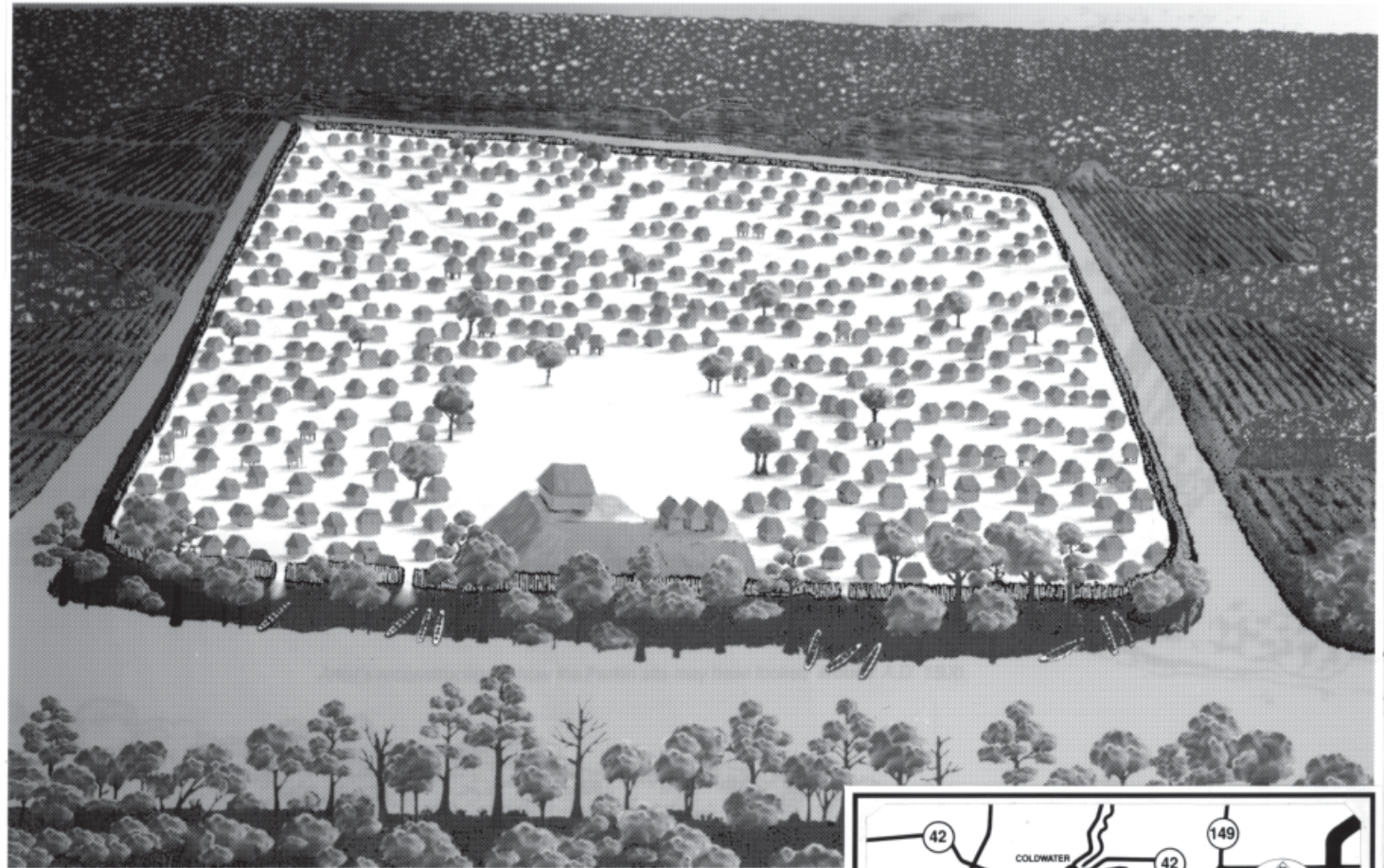
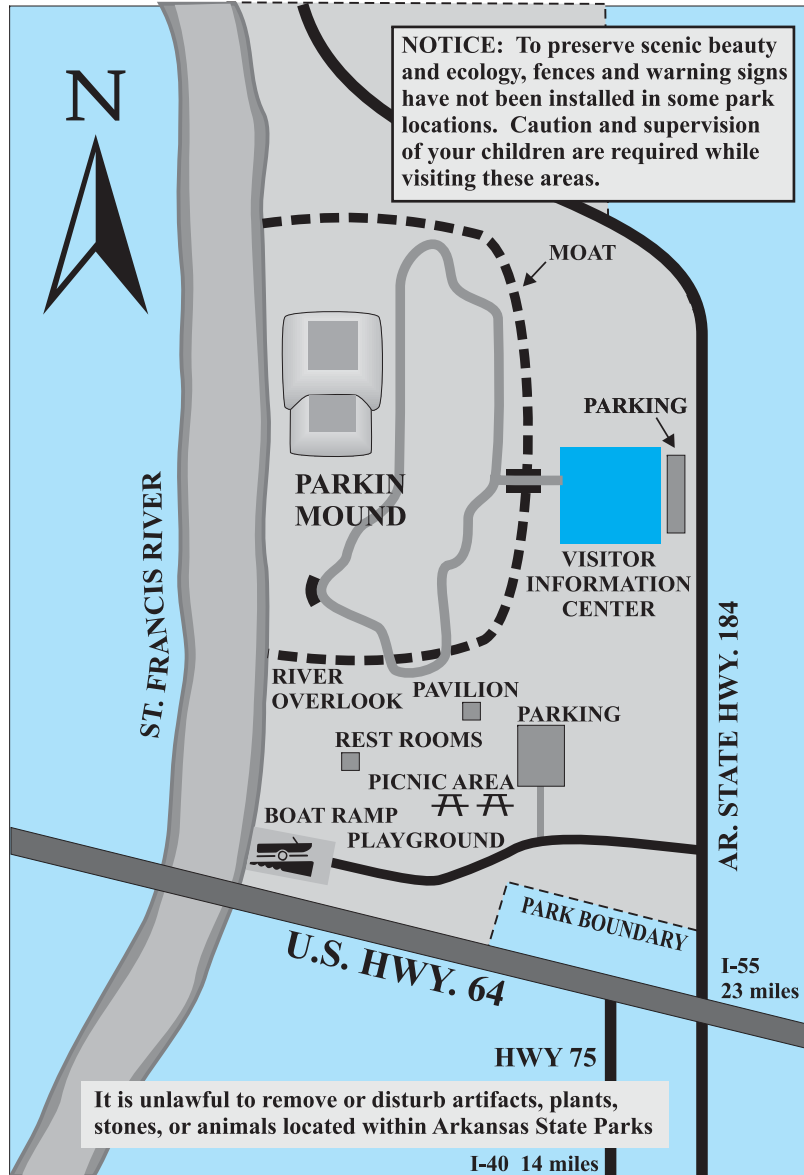


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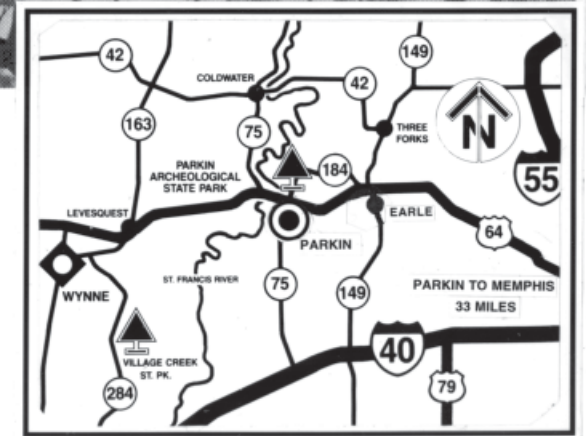


PARKIN ARCHEOLOGICAL STATE PARK



A brass bell from Parkin, probably brought by de Soto.

THE PAST SHOULD BE FOREVER



It is unlawful to remove or disturb artifacts, plants, stones, or animals located within Arkansas State Parks



EXPLORE THE BEAUTY & HISTORY OF ARKANSAS!