

Camping and Outdoor Promotion

April 2018 Feature: Guard Quarters – Hidden National Historic Place



Approximately 3.75 miles up Provo Canyon lay Guard Quarters (a little known and hidden National Historic place.) The Guard Quarters in Provo Canyon was one of three fortifications built in Utah during what was called the “Utah War”, a bloodless conflict between the United States Government and the LDS Church (1857 – 1858.) At the end of the “Utah War” the Guard Quarters was used as a lookout post for Native American activity, especially during the Black Hawk Indian War of 1868. After 1868, the Guard Quarters was no longer used or manned. The site is located on the north side of the canyon and a couple hundred feet above the Provo River. It is slightly northwest of Bridal Vial Falls. Access to the site is via a gravel road, which can provide an excellent low-impact learning experience and enjoyable adventures for all levels of Scouting (Cubs, Webelo’s, and all ages of Boy Scouts). It is easily reachable from anywhere in Orem.



Directions:



From 800 North and Provo Canyon Road, use the left lane to take the U.S. 189 Ramp onto US-189, then follow the signs to Bridal Vial Falls, and Nunns Park. Take the first left just past the entrance to Nunns Park. **Caution:** Traffic can be heavy at times at this entrance. After parking, pass through the gate and hike approximately a quarter mile to where the road intersects with another road at the next gate. Turn right at the gate and proceed up the road for approximately another quarter mile. This portion of the trail is steep. However, if you take your time it is doable by all levels of Scouts. Guard Quarter’s is located to the left of the road where it levels out before continuing upward.

Parking and Camping:

Public parking is limited at the entrance. The road is closed to all motor vehicles to protect the environment and water shed. Parking is not allowed on the state and county roads into leading and bordering the the entrance. However, there is additional parking at nearby Bridal Vial Falls. **NOTE:** For safety it is highly suggested that Scouts and Scouters be dropped off at the entrance and then go and park at Bridal Vial Falls, and upon returning pick up the vehicle first, and then come and pick up the Scouts and Scouters. There are plenty of camping sites in the hills surrounding the area of Guard Quarters. This place is frequent by hunters during deer and elk season.

Site Features:

The remnants of the stone foundation of the Guard Quarters can still be seen. The site is designated by an old wooden sign on a stake reading "Guard Quarters 1858. Restrooms are not available at the site. There is also no evidence of any firepit, so this is a good opportunity to practice "Leave No Trace" by using backpacking stoves ONLY! Guard Quarters overlooks the floor of Provo Canyon and can provide some spectacular views and photo opportunities. The site can be accessed during the year; however, caution should be used during hunting season and winter months.

Cub and Boy Scout Requirement Opportunities:

Several rank requirements can be passed off within the park some of which include:

Wolf – "Call of the Wild" and "Paws on the Path"!

Bear - "Bear Necessities", "Fur, Feathers, and Ferns", "Paws for Action". and "Bear Picnic Basket"!

Webelo – "Stronger, Faster, Higher", Webelos Walkabout", "Outdoorsman", "Castaway", "Earth Rocks", "Into the Wild", and "Into the Woods"!

Tenderfoot – Camping and Outdoor Ethics: 1a, 1b, 1c. Cooking: 2a, 2b, 2c. First Aid and Nature: 4b, 4c, 4d. Hiking: 5a, 5 b, 5c. Citizenship 7b.

Second Class – Camping and Outdoor Ethics: 1a, 1b, 1c. Cooking and Tools: 2a, 2d, 2e. Navigation: 3a, 3c, 3d. Nature: 4. First Aid and Emergency Preparedness: 6c, 6d. Citizenship: 8e.

First Class – Camping and Outdoor Ethics: 1b. Cooking: 2a, 2b, 2c, 2d, 2e. Tools: 3d. Navigation: 4b. Nature: 5a, 5b, 5c, 5d. Citizenship: 9b, 9c, 9d.

Merit Badges – Archaeology, Mammal Study, and Nature!

In addition, there are also plenty of service opportunities available.



Eagle Scout Project Idea:

It is hoped that every Scout will someday seek the rank of Eagle! We should all be being alert for any possible Eagle Scout projects while on an activity! One such project could be: To create a permanent National Historic marker commemorating Guard Quarters and its historical significance to the state of Utah.

Winter Camping Tip:

Always pack an extra pair of socks. Wear these socks at night in your sleeping bag and allow the pair that you have worn during the day to air out and dry. Your feet will be very grateful and you will feel warmer.

Please take this page and either begin or add to your personal Camping/Outing Resource Guide!

