

**Thanks for Visiting and  
Come Back Soon!**



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## **Forest Park Museum**

### **Guide to Exhibits**



### **Museum Hours**

May 1 – October 31  
Monday – Friday 8:00-4:30  
Weekends and Holidays 1:00-4:30  
Year Round by Appointment

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## Our History and Mission

Forest Park Museum was originally developed in the 1940s by Eugene Hastie, a local farmer, historian, and author. Mr. Hastie was a private collector of objects from Dallas County's past and when local residents heard about his collection, they often donated objects of their own. In 1953, Mr. Hastie opened his museum to the public, so that others might see and learn from his large collection.



Dallas County Conservation purchased this five acre museum and arboretum in 1966 and has added an additional 12 acres of re-established prairie and wildflowers. Our arboretum features close to 100 species of mostly native trees and shrubs.

### Our Mission:

- To promote and preserve the health and general welfare of the people.
- To encourage the orderly development and conservation of natural, historical, and cultural resources in Dallas County.
- To cultivate good citizenship through environmental education by providing natural, historical, cultural, and recreational programs to the public.
- To plan, acquire, develop, maintain, and make available to the inhabitants of the county, public parks, preserves, parkways, playgrounds, recreation centers, county forests, wildlife, and other conservation areas.

## Nature Areas

### The Victorian Garden



Before you leave, make sure to take a few minutes to relax and enjoy our Victorian Garden. Our garden has a variety of old-fashioned roses, numerous herbs, and other flowers and plants native to Dallas County,

including Hostas, Hollyhocks, Lily of the Valley, and prairie flowers. This scenic setting is an excellent place for a picnic!

### Nature Trails

If you want an outdoor adventure, take a nature hike on our trails. Our trails wind through our natural prairie, with its prairie grasses and flowers, and back into the forest. Look for animal tracks, listen to the running creek, and enjoy the sights and sounds of the prairie that used to cover much of this part of Iowa.

## The Scale House: The Studio of William J. Wagner



The Scale House was originally located in Dallas Center and was used during the late 1800s to measure grain. Through the years it fell out of use and in the 1970s the artist and famous historic preservation architect Bill Wagner saved it from destruction by

moving it to his home and incorporating it into his house as a studio. Inside Bill's artwork and awards decorate the walls and his conservationist spirit lives on.

## The Alton Schoolhouse

The Alton one-room Schoolhouse was located in Alton, Iowa, northeast of Perry and was in use from 1867-1961. It was used by multiple generations of families of farmers and railroad workers living in the Spring Valley area. Almost all of the objects inside are from the original Alton School.



## The Windmill

This windmill was originally located in Des Moines and was manufactured by the A.Y. McDonald Co. It was used to power a water pump like the one displayed here. This water pump was patented in 1924 and was originally located in Cedar Rapids.



## Museum Grounds

### Points of Interest

#### Exhibits

Visitors Center  
Hastie Hall  
Baldwin Hall  
Grabenhorst Log Cabin  
Scale House  
Alton School House

#### Nature Areas

Victorian Garden  
Nature Trails

#### Other Areas

Windmill  
Picnic Area

While we have interactive exhibits specifically designed to allow visitors to learn by doing and touching, please do not handle, touch, or stand on our other exhibits.



## Visitor's Center: Home to the Museum Staff, Native American Collection, Gun Collection, and the Reptile Habitat

### Native American Artifact Collection

This collection of Native American artifacts was donated by Ethel and James Twombly and includes a variety of authentic artifacts and reproductions.

Notable among these is the collection of Native American stone tools from Texas, Oklahoma, and Arkansas, several reproductions of Native American ceremonial rattles and tools, an oxen vertebra with a projectile point embedded in it, and a small child's bow and arrows.



### Native American Projectile Point Collection

Along the walls of the Visitors Center you will find numerous sets of framed and mounted projectile points, more commonly called arrowheads. These points are also part of the Native American Artifact Collection donated by the Twomblys.

These points are mainly from Texas, Oklahoma and Arkansas. Most of these points would have been used as spear or atlatl (spear throwers) points, and only the smallest points are truly arrowheads. Unique among this collection is the large assortment of obsidian points and animal effigies found mounted on the tan frame.

### The Stereoscope (Interactive)

The Stereoscope is located just past the shoemaker's shop. It was one of many parlor games in the 1890s that early residents used to pass the time in their homes. Visitors are encouraged to take a look through this early version of the Viewfinder!



### Rural Mail Delivery

While a mail carrier such as this doesn't belong to the pioneer age, this carrier and exhibit represent the "pioneering" efforts in early rural mail delivery during the 1890s.

## Historical Buildings

### Grabenhorst Family Cabin: A Family Home from the 1800's



This log cabin was originally located northeast of Ogden and belonged to the Grabenhorst family during the 1800s. Stop inside to go back in time and see the furniture and household goods of the 1800s and learn about the Grabenhorst family! The items displayed are authentic for the time period and include a large 1860s stove, a rope bed, butter churns, and a porcelain wash bin.

## Help Wanted: A Look at Early Dallas County Occupations

This exhibit features some common occupations of the early residents of Dallas County. The Woodworker's shop, includes some early hand tools used in working wood and a boring machine from a Redfield mill that was used to bore holes in wood.



A doctor's office shows how different early medicine was from what we have today. The doctor's tools are all on display, including a dental chair, a dental drill, and an alligator skin bag.



The general store sells a little bit of everything. Here you will see a variety of objects, including an early coffee grinder and a music box.

Many of the objects you see in the Shoemaker's shop were used by John Hall, a shoemaker and repairer who lived in Minburn during the early 1900s. Historical shoe makers sometimes made animal harnesses, so a large harness sewing machine and a collection of harnesses and saddles are displayed here as well.

## Gun Collection

This collection was also donated by the Twombles and is made up of 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century military rifles and pistols. Many of these were used during the First World War.



Also in the case are other military memorabilia, including a German WWI

Sabre, tools for loading rifles, and a WWII Broom-handle Mauser donated by Warren Allen Smith.

## Reptile and Amphibian Habitat (Interactive)

While you are in the Visitors Center, check out our collection of live snakes and amphibians. We currently have a Fox Snake, Milk Snake, Bull Snake, and a Tiger Salamander.

Interactive Exhibit: If you ask one of the museum staff, and if the animals are willing, we can let one out of its cage so you can see it up close and pet it.



## Hastie Hall:

### Dallas County's history from the 1800s to the 20<sup>th</sup> century

#### Des Moines Valley Railroad

In 1869, the Des Moines Valley Railroad went through Dallas County, which brought more people to Dallas County and increased the populations of such nearby cities as Waukee, Dallas Center, Minburn, and Perry.

Included in this display are objects from Perry's former train depot and other railroad tools and memorabilia.

#### 20<sup>th</sup> Century Prosperity: A Victorian Parlor

This display shows a Victorian parlor, complete with Victorian furniture and other household items from this period.



Among these objects, visitors will find several early vacuum cleaners, a gas stove, and an early Frigidaire electric refrigerator from 1927.

#### Domestic Skills: Textiles and Machinery (Interactive)

This display ties in with the on-going quilt exhibit in Baldwin Hall. Here you will find several quilts, sewing machines and looms.

Interactive Exhibit: Experience quilting yourself by adding some stitches to the Butter Quilt on the quilting loom!



## Baldwin Hall:

### The Lives and Occupations of Dallas County's Early Pioneers and Residents

#### Early Pioneers: The Journey

This exhibit features the photographs and belongings of Dallas County's early pioneers. Along the wall near the entrance are additional photos of early pioneers and pioneer life.



The wagon displayed on your left is a farm wagon that was used during pioneer journeys west. This type of wagon is smaller than the Conestoga Wagon in Hastie Hall but since farm wagons were less expensive, more pioneers used them.

#### Down on the Farm: A Pioneer Farm (Interactive)

This display features the stories of early pioneers and one of the main pioneer occupations: farming. Displayed here are pioneer stories, a plow, and handmade tools.



Interactive Exhibit: Although pioneer children kept busy by helping their family on the farm, they still had some playtime. On the table are some examples of the games pioneer children played. Experience the life of a pioneer child and have some fun!

## Henry Nelson and the Dynamo



Henry Nelson was a Dallas County inventor and featured here is his Dynamo. Encased in black Walnut, the Dynamo is still a mystery, but most believe it was intended to generate electricity.

Around the Dynamo are Nelson's other inventions and tools, including an Arthritis machine, Electric Light, and his workbench.

## Transportation Exhibit

This area shows the changes in transportation over the years. See the evolution of license plates and cars, including a Horse Drawn Buggy and a 1924 Model T Ford.



In the center of this exhibit you will find a rare map of Dallas County from 1883, which includes the names and farmsteads of early landowners and farmers.

## Gun and Powderhorn Exhibit

Early in its history, Perry had its own gun manufacturing plant and before you is the first double trigger shotgun produced in Perry. The gun dates to the 1870s and was made by Joseph Kautzky.



Around the gun are powderhorns, which were used to reload rifles and horns such as these were owned by every gun owner in the United States

during the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. These horns were donated by James Twombly, who made and decorated some of them himself.

Hastie Hall

## Childhood: The Toy Collection (Interactive)

This display features toys from the late 1800s to the early 1900s. Here you will find cast iron toys such as banks and a train, a peddle car, and doll collection from 1900-1980.



Interactive Exhibit: Next to the dolls is a table piled with toys that children in Dallas County

would have played with during the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Explore your inner child with some playtime!

## Winter Time

The ice industry played an important part in Dallas County history. Every winter, ice was cut from the Raccoon River and stored in ice houses.

This exhibit displays objects from the ice industry, such as an ice box and ice tongs, along with other wintertime items such as a horse-drawn sleigh and ice skates.

## Family Farms: A Historic Barn

The barn before you is actually composed of 3 historic buildings from Dallas County – a hog house from Woodward and 2 barns from Perry.



In the barn is a variety of tools and equipment commonly found in historic barns, including a walking plow, incubator, and cream separator.

Hastie Hall

## The Hand Corn Picking Wagon

This wagon dates to 1910 and would have been pulled by horses. People walked along side of it, picking corn by hand and throwing it into the wagon. The wagon could hold 60 bushels of corn and its high backboard kept corn from flying over the wagon.



Around the wagon are other agricultural artifacts, including corn planters and a seed sifter.

## Conestoga Wagon (Interactive)



The Conestoga Wagon was used as a freight wagon during the 1700s and is originally from Pennsylvania. Wagons like this were pulled by 6 to 8 oxen, horses, or mules, and could hold up to 5 tons. Around the wagon, there are also displays featuring early Iowa pioneers, mills, and a collection of local historical barbed wire.

Interactive Exhibit: Hey Girls! Just past the wagon is a box of dresses sitting on a bench. Take off your shoes, put one on, and feel what its like to be a pioneer girl!

## Small Town and Rural Business

This exhibit features examples of local historical businesses and includes 3 main sections. The first is a radio display, including radios from a variety of companies. There are also a number of radios that were refurbished by William Stuber of Woodward.



Hastie Hall

The second section displays a number of objects from the laundry industry. Notable are early washing machines, manufactured by Perry's former Globe Manufacturing Co. A collection of irons also depicts the transition from the earliest sad irons to current electric irons.

The last section is a grocery and butcher shop. Here you will find a number of objects used by grocers and butchers, including a butcher's block and cash register.

## Peanut and Popcorn Stand

This exhibit features a popcorn stand that was a staple in Perry from 1912 to 1969. It was run by Mrs. Vern Council and was located on the corner of 2<sup>nd</sup> and Willis. The popcorn stand located there today is based on this stand.



## Blacksmith Shop (Interactive)

Blacksmiths were very important in the early history of Dallas County. Blacksmiths made horseshoes, fixed wagon wheels, and made ice skates. The exhibit features many tools commonly found in blacksmith shops.



Interactive Exhibit: The exhibit has two interactive elements.

Push the button in the shop to hear the sounds of a blacksmith shop and lift up the plaques to learn which historical tools you use today in your home.

Hastie Hall