



Entertainment for your mind.

The Putnam Museum of History and Natural Science is a not-for-profit educational organization located in Davenport, Iowa. The Museum was founded in 1867 and is one of the oldest museums west of the Mississippi River. It is accredited by the American Association of Museums. The Putnam's mission is to collect and preserve objects and natural science specimens and to provide educational and enriching experiences through interpretive exhibits and museum programming.

The Putnam Museum was founded in 1867 as the Davenport Academy of Natural Sciences. This early focus is still evident in the natural science collections, many of which date from the days of the Academy. In 1927, the Davenport Academy of Sciences ("natural" had been dropped earlier) became the Davenport Public Museum. Later the "public" was eliminated, more closely reflecting the private funding and operation of the institution. In 1974, the Museum took on the Putnam name to honor the family which had supported it during its founding years.

The Collections

With a collection of over 170,000 objects and specimens, the Putnam is one of the most comprehensive museums in the state, preserving a record of cultural and natural heritage for a broad region of eastern Iowa and western Illinois as well as worldwide materials collected by residents of the Quad Cities.

Regional History Collection

The Regional History Collection reflects the social, cultural, economic and political heritage of the Quad Cities. It includes over 19,000 objects ranging from the personal items of community founder, Antoine LeClaire, to a computer terminal from the Quad City Times that had the first fully computerized news room. The Archives and Photograph Collection also document the region's growth and development, immigration and family life.

The Social History Collection contains objects related to individuals and family life, social organizations, ethnic groups and immigration including family and community celebrations, household and recreational material, tools and equipment, costumes and accessories, and items related to the activities and purpose of social, fraternal and volunteer organizations. Particular emphasis is placed on items that illustrate changing roles and lifestyles within the family and community and social issues and movements.

The Cultural History Collection contains objects relating to religion, arts and crafts, education, and organizations and movements related to these subjects.

The Economic History Collection includes objects used and made by local agriculture, service and manufacturing businesses including businesses that began in the Quad Cities as well as national and international corporations which are significant local employers such as the Arsenal, Alcoa, JI Case, Caterpillar, etc.

The Political History Collection contains objects representing issues and people related to government and the political process. The McGreevey Collection documents presidential campaigns from the 1930s to the early 1980s.

The Archives consists of manuscripts relating to the above collections with a particular concentration in local businesses, organizations and some families. The archives include a strong concentration in 19th century materials. The following collections are listed as significant, or typical, examples of the manuscript collection.

- Antoine LeClaire -- founder of Davenport and LeClaire, IA, fur trader and interpreter at Fort Armstrong and businessman. Dates; 1812-1870s, predominately 1830-1860
- Hall family – pioneer family; father Israel Hall was a Davenport cabinetmaker; son Lt. George F. Hall served with the Second Iowa Infantry during the Civil War. Dates: 1840-1900, predominately 1850-1880
- Judge James Grant – local lawyer involved in railroading and land cases, served in the Iowa Territorial and State Legislatures. Dates: predominately 1843-1887.
- Brettun and Black Store – located in Hampton, IL, includes daily record books and correspondence with suppliers and customers. Dates: 1840s-1900
- The Putnam-Duncan Family – correspondence related to the family of Illinois governor Joseph Duncan and his daughter Mary Louisa Duncan Putnam and her family. Dates: 1820s-1920, predominately 1860-1900
- The Muhs Family – from Comanche, IA; Capt. Henry Muhs served with Company 'A', 8th Iowa Volunteer Infantry during the Civil War. Dora Winifred Elizabeth Muhs, a physical therapist, and Henry Clair Muhs, 603 Engineers, served in World War I. Dates: 1860s, 1918-1919
- Eagle Signal Company – manufactured traffic signal and industrial timers. Dates: 1944-1988
- Davenport Turner Collection – records, programs and other items related to this German-American social and cultural organization. Dates: predominately 1880-1920.

The Photograph Collection consists of approximately 65,000 historic photographs including local scenes, social activities and businesses. Significant concentrations include:

- 5,000 steamboat photographs collected by Davenport Judge W. R. Maines and riverboat Captain Walter Blair. These images date predominately from the 1870s to the 1930s and focus on the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers but include other inland waterways as well.
- 40,000 portraits in the Free Photography Studio Collection. These portraits document local individuals and families and date from about 1915 to 1950. Note: Portraits taken by the Free Studio after 1950 were acquired by the Davenport Public Library Special Collections.
- Bawden Brothers Collection consists of the work of these Davenport commercial photographers hired by local businesses to produce photographs for documentation and promotional purposes. Businesses represented including Voss Washing Machines, Brammer Mfg. Co., Crescent Macaroni & Cracker Co., Bettendorf Co., Port Byron [IL] Lime Assoc. Dates: 1845-1970, predominately 1920-1940
- Sunderbruch Collection consists of the work of Davenport commercial photographer Richard K. Sunderbruch. This collection documentation and promotional shots of businesses as well as a significant number of Quad Cities aerial views, especially Davenport and Bettendorf, from the early 1960s. Dates: 1935-1970
- Ficke/Davidson Collection consists of photographs related to Charles A. Ficke, his wife Frances (Fannie) nee Davidson, and their extended family. Collection includes individual and group portraits, photos of the Ficke and Davidson family homes as well as Ficke family's world wide travel. Dates: 1770-1945, predominately 1870-1920

- Davenport Street Scene Collection depicts business and street views in Davenport's downtown from about 1940-1965.

Anthropology Collection

The Archaeology Collection represents cultural objects and artifacts produced by prehistoric cultures and the early phases of contemporary civilizations world wide. The collection includes:

- Neolithic materials from Western Europe and North Africa
- The Central and South American collection focuses on pre-Columbian materials from Mexico, Central America and Peru including Aztec, Toltec and Nazca materials
- Native American materials with an emphasis on the Mississippi Valley Middle Woodland and Mississippian Periods and Southwestern pottery
- The Egyptian Collection consists of two complete mummies, jewelry (rings, bracelets, amulets, scarabs), statuettes including ushabtis, vessels, and other miscellaneous items. A majority of these items date from the 18th (1550-1300 B. C.) to 26th (664-525 B. C.) Dynasty.
- Classical Civilizations Collection includes Greek funerary statues, architectural fragments, and vessels dating from 700 B. C. - 4th century B. C., and Roman vessels, architectural fragments, jewelry and a significant set of glass bottles dating between 1st century - 3rd century A. D. The collection also includes a small number of similar Phoenecian and Etruscan pieces.

Ethnology Collection

The Ethnology Collection contains cultural materials not recovered through archaeological methods that document the post-contact heritage of the United States and, to a lesser extent, objects from contemporary world cultures that serve to document the diversity of human patterns of behavior. The largest concentrations of materials are from the United States and Asia but also includes objects from Africa, New Guinea and the South Pacific, and Europe.

- The Native American Collection consists of a variety of objects which represent over fifty Native American peoples with an emphasis in Alaskan, Plains, Southwestern and Woodland tribes. Most of these objects are "authentic", but some large collections are considered to be "tourist art". Included within the Native American Collection are baskets, jewelry, clothing, arrows, ornaments, ceremonial and sacred objects, and vessels.
- The Asian Collection represents predominately Chinese and Japanese cultures. The Chinese Collection consists of armor, weapons, statues, jewelry, household equipment and clothing. The collection also contains watercolors dating to the Sung Dynasty (960-1279) and the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). The Japanese Collection consists of armor, weapons, household items, clothing, musical instruments, a Shinto shrine, and a friendship doll (Miss Hokkaido) and accessories. There are also lithographs, stencils, and wood block prints dating from 1720-1912. A majority of the Japanese Collection is from the Tokugawa period (1603-1877) to the Meiji period (1868-1912). Additional material from Korea and Vietnam mainly consists of clothing accessories and miscellaneous household items.

Natural Science Collections

The natural science collection includes a wide variety of material collected around the world, with a concentration on eastern Iowa and western Illinois. Some collections were acquired by

the Davenport Academy of Sciences and so date from the 1800s or early 1900s. Some type specimens are included in the collection.

The Geology Collection contains rock and mineral specimens that relate to the geological history of eastern Iowa and western Illinois.

The Paleontology Collection contains invertebrate, vertebrate and floral specimens in fossilized forms that relate to the geology and natural history of the Midwest.

- The Invertebrate Paleontology Collection places strong emphasis on mid-Paleozoic material from Iowa & Illinois and includes comparative material from Indiana, Ohio, Michigan, and New York.
- The Paleobotany Collection possesses a substantial Mazon Creek component as well as a smaller Pennsylvanian component from the surrounding area.

The Biology Collection includes floral and faunal specimens representing eastern Iowa and western Illinois, and, to a lesser extent, other regions worldwide.

- Vertebrates
 - Mammals - Collection types include mounted specimens, study skins and skeletal remains from Iowa & Illinois, other Upper Midwest states and Africa
 - birds: include mounted specimens, study skins, skeletal remains, eggs and nests from Iowa & Illinois, Japan, Mexico, and Central & South America
 - small collection of reptiles & amphibians, most from the Quad Cities' region
 - Small collection of fish, most from the Mississippi River and Quad Cities' area. The collection also includes a small number of marine fishes.
- Invertebrates
 - Entomology - large, uncataloged collection of insects, spiders, etc., the majority from Iowa & Illinois
 - marine Invertebrates - shells & coral, etc.
 - freshwater invertebrates, with an emphasis on mollusks
- Botany:
 - The Herbaria consists of two collections. The Barnes Herbarium contains an estimated 20,000 sheets of local flora. The Clinton Herbarium contains an estimated 12,000 sheets of flora from outside the immediate IA-IL region.
 - The General Botany Collection consists of wood samples, fruits, nuts, & seed pods, etc.