

Our History

The Museum of World Treasures was founded by Dr. Jon and Lorna Kardatzke and opened its doors for the first time on April 22, 2001 at the Garvey Center in downtown Wichita, Kansas. Dr. Jon, a local retired physician, had a strong passion for collecting artifacts of many periods in history, from prehistory to ancient civilizations, all the way into current American pop culture!

About two years after the museum's opening – due to tremendous growth – the museum relocated the Farm & Art Market. We are very happy to be an important part of Old Town in a location that shows Wichita's growth and progress. We now house over 30 collector's items and the Museum itself owns around 50% of artifacts. Artifacts are constantly being researched and examined by experts and exhibits are on a rotating basis of renovation. In 2012, the Museum renovated and reopened four exhibits.

The Museum of World Treasures is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) Kansas corporation. We rely solely on admissions, museum store revenue, and charitable donations and contributions. Tax deductible donations go directly to support the Museum's many educational programs. We give guided tours and present educational programming to groups of all ages and partner with local charities and other educational institutions. Our Museum is constantly changing and growing.

Just a few of the highlights of our Museum's exhibits include:

Tyrannosaurus rex “Ivan:”

- found in South Dakota in 2005 by an amateur paleontologist team led by Alan Komrosky on farmer Ivan McGee's land.
- skeletal structure approximately 60-65% actual fossil, remainder cast material
- arguably, the most complete tail of all T.rex specimens on display
- named “Ivan” for the farmer who claimed there were no dinosaurs on his land. The team only dug around 5' to find Ivan.
- subadult, approximately 18 years

Daspletosaurus “Cutie:”

- named by Dr. Thomas Carr (Carthage College), paleontologist specializing in Tyrannosaurs. Sub-adult, 13yo at time of death.
- ancestor of T. rex; approximately 10-12 million years older
- One of the most complete specimens in the intermediate size category of Daspletosaurus.

Our fossil display is currently the only one in the world to display these distant cousins next to each other, which provides an invaluable tool for paleontologists to study the two species next to each other.

Tylosaur “Logan”

- Found in Logan County, Kansas.

Not technically a dinosaur, but a mosasaur. Mosasaurs are most closely related to modern day Komodo Dragons.

- Swallowed their prey whole, evident from extra joint in jaw.
- Air breathers, lived near the surface and dove to search for food
- Used its tail to swim like an alligator.

Xiphactinus adux (Bulldog Fish)

-Found West of Hays, Kansas.

Large bony fish swallowed large live prey, leading to internal bleeding and death. Many specimens have been found with whole prey specimens inside abdominal cavity.

In prehistoric times, Kansas was a large ocean. We are pleased to display fossils that represent our state's unique fossil history.

Form and Function: Making a Living in the Cenozoic is our new fossil exhibit on creatures that lived after the extinction of the dinosaurs. Interesting specimens include Kansas-found mammoth parts, Green River formation fish, and strange mammal fossils.

Ancient Egypt (3,100-30 BC)

Ancient Egypt as we know it is known as "pharaonic Egypt" which began with the first pharaoh, King Menes (a.k.a. Narmer) approximately 3,100 BC. Menes was responsible for uniting Upper and Lower Egypt.

Our **mummies** are named *Baka* and *Braided Hair Lady*. They have been studied extensively while in our Museum by several prominent Egyptologists and the Braided Hair Lady was part of Emory University's study of nine mummies. Reports from Emory are available. While we do not know exactly who these women were, they offer us a distinct snapshot of what life was like 3,000+ years ago.

The Sistrum was a musical instrument used to ward off evil spirits. A kind of rattle, the instrument was the favorite of Hathor, the goddess of love and music. Her head is on our Sistrum.

Faience Jewelry: bright blue and green ceramic material that was highly prized by the Egyptians. Made out of ground quartz, lime, natron, and water. It seems faience was seen as protection or good luck and everything from faience statues to mosaics to jewelry have been found.

Egyptian Coffins: Our beautiful coffins covered in hieroglyphs reveal an intimate look at funerary practices in Ancient Egypt. Our collection also includes mummified animals, hieroglyph panels, and representations of gods and goddesses.

Shrunken Head: Our expert was confused about our head. He thought it might be a tourist piece, but after examining it he found it to be authentic. He thought it was strange that this shrunken head has facial hair, no piercings, and a short hair cut. Most likely this person was European (perhaps a missionary? Perhaps an explorer?).

Trophy Head: We noticed one big characteristic of this head when redesigning this exhibit. He does not smell good! Our expert believes he was a trophy head that was most likely strung from a belt of the warrior who thought the head would give him more power.

We, like every Museum dealing with antiquities, are constantly researching and verifying our artifacts. In this exhibit, we are proud to display things that are replicas to inform the public of the challenges faced by Museums, collectors, and lovers of history. When it comes to replicas, we do our best to make sure the public knows we are doing everything possible to give them a correct interpretation of items.

Buddha figures: Our newest renovated exhibit displays 2-ton Buddha figures and religious sculptures from China, India, and Indonesia. They are displayed in the correct order as if they were in a Buddhist temple.

2nd floor:

On the 2nd floor, we prominently feature documents from royal figures around the world. The royalty exhibit is scheduled to be renovated in 2014.

1843 Declaration of Independence:

This stunning copy of the Declaration of Independence is a recent donation. It is made from the copper plate made from the original Declaration. The size, paper, and wording are identical except for our copy is newer and much easier to read.

President's Hall:

We feature the signature of every United States President. Also featured is Abraham Lincoln's personal cane, personal letters from Presidents, official government documentation, and more. All documents are now facsimiles which protects the original for future generations.

World Wars I & II, Vietnam, Korean, Civil War:

All have their own unique exhibits. Notable artifacts include a Nazi flag with American soldiers' signatures and an incredible story, World War II uniforms including a Russian women's uniform and heated uniforms, a water-cooled machine gun from World War I, one of General Ulysses S. Grant's cigars from Appomattox Court House, and much more.

3rd floor:

Romancing the West:

Another newly renovated exhibit features a working replica of a Gatling gun, Gen. George Custer's long underwear, and several interactives that dispel the myth of the "wild" West.

The third floor features small exhibits on American pop culture, historic authors, and athletes.

There is also a rotating gallery that college students curate on a yearly basis.

If you plan on letting the children visit the Children's Activity Center, please encourage them to clean up after themselves.

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