

## *Iowa Ag History Collections—South Central*

This resource includes information from historical societies and organizations from South Central Iowa that have reported research or museum collections related to Iowa's agricultural history. In addition to contact, accessibility information, and onsite materials, our partners shared their organizations specific regional focuses, time periods with strength, and other thematic intersections. This is not a comprehensive list of all Iowa history organizations throughout the state, but rather a list of those who have chosen to share information at this time. All partners have been listed alphabetically.

This bibliography was compiled in August 2022 by Diane Corsones.

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### **Decatur County Historical Society**

*21875 Pleasanton Rd, Leon Iowa 50144*

[http://iagenweb.org/decatur/Hist\\_Soc/Decatur\\_Hist\\_Society.html](http://iagenweb.org/decatur/Hist_Soc/Decatur_Hist_Society.html)

Currently undergoing renovation (fall 2022). The library and historical documents are available by appointment; artifacts being stored for renovations.

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**Regional Focus:** Decatur County

**Time Period Focus:** 1900–present

**Thematic Intersections:** none specified

**Types of Archival Materials:** Trade Literature, Farm Organization Records, Personal/Family Collections, Atlases and Soil Maps, Cookbooks, Farm Directories, Institutional Histories/Scrapbooks

When the remodeling is complete, DCHS will have records of many organizations in our county such as Garden Clubs, Women's Organizations, etc. They will also have a great deal of local school system records dating back to 1900.

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## **Grinnell Historical Museum Society**

*1125 Broad Street, PO Box 254, Grinnell, IA 50112*  
<https://www.grinnellhistoricalmuseum.org/index.html>  
Open Regular Hours, Some Larger Items Offsite

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**Regional Focus:** Poweshiek County

**Time Period Focus:** 1870s–mid-20th Century

**Thematic Intersections:** none specified

**Types of Archival Materials:** Trade Literature, Personal/Family Collections, Atlases and Soil Maps, Cookbooks, Farm Directories, Institutional Histories/Scrapbooks

**Types of Artifacts:** Machinery/Implements and Equipment, Tools

We have a Randolph Header, a harvesting implement, that was manufactured in Grinnell between 1883 and 1890. It was pulled by horses from behind the threshing mechanism. This was unique as it allowed the threshing mechanism to enter the field first, and not the horses pulling the equipment. Over 10,000 headers were made in Grinnell and transported to farms all over the world. We don't have storage or display room to display the Header, but we are developing a campaign to fund a space for a permanent display.

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## **Johnston (Station) Historical Society**

*6161 Northglenn Dr, Johnston, IA 50131*  
<http://www.johnstoniowahistorical.org/about/about-us.htm>  
Open by Appointment

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**Regional Focus:** City of Johnston

**Time Period Focus:** 1900–1980

**Thematic Intersections:** none specified

**Types of Archival Materials:** Trade Literature, Posters, Broadsides, or other Paper Signage, Personal/Family Collections

Society specifically holds information relating to Henry Wallace and Pioneer Hybrids.

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**Johnston Public Library**

*6700 Merle Hay Road, Johnston, IA 50131*

<https://www.johnstonlibrary.com/>

Open Regular Hours — Some Titles May be Checked Out, Some Can Only be Viewed Onsite

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**Regional Focus:** Polk County, Statewide

**Time Period Focus:** 1944– 2000

**Thematic Intersections:** Political History, Cultural History, Immigration History

**Types of Archival Materials:** Trade Literature, History of Agriculture in Iowa, Some Pioneer Hi-Bred Produced Documents

A modest local history collection includes approximately 300 titles with 20 related specifically to Iowa agriculture.

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**Liberty Hall Historic Site**

*1138 W Main St, Lamoni, IA 50140*

<http://personal.graceland.edu/~libhall/>

Open Regular Hours

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**Regional Focus:** Lamoni, Decatur County and Spurrier School (Decatur County #2)

**Time Period Focus:** 1870–1906

**Thematic Intersections:** Political History, Cultural History, Immigration History, Religious History

**Types of Archival Materials:** Personal/Family Collections, Oral Histories, Institutional Histories/Scrapbooks, School Records

**Types of Artifacts:** Machinery/Implements and Equipment, Buildings, Structures, and Other Objects on the Landscape, Victorian Era middle class artifacts and one-room rural school

The mission of Liberty Hall Historic Site is to preserve the home of Joseph Smith III and to share his life story and work in the context of his family, Lamoni community, the Victorian Era and the Community of Christ—and to preserve Spurrier School and share the story of Iowa's common school system and educational practices c. 1870–1906.

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**Living History Farms Foundation**

*11121 Hickman Rd, Urbandale, IA 50322*

<https://www.lhf.org/>

Touring is available May through October, Tuesday through Saturday from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm.  
November through April offers classes, dinners, and enrichments for schools.

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**Regional Focus:** Statewide, Midwest-wide

**Time Period Focus:** 1700–1920, 1800s–1900s strongest

**Thematic Intersections:** Cultural History, Immigration History, Indigenous History, Labor History

**Types of Archival Materials:** Trade Literature, Posters, Broadsides, or other Paper Signage, Personal/Family Collections, Cookbooks, Maps, building blueprints, organization history. We currently do not have oral histories, but in the next five years plan to develop an archive for such information to collect stories from our visitors and staff.

**Types of Artifacts:** Machinery/Implements and Equipment, Tools, Buildings, Structures, and Other Objects on the Landscape

Almost 90% of the collection is accessible to the public during the general touring season, for the other 10% it is available by appointment for researchers or interested public. A portion of the collection is also accessible online, with regular additions throughout the year. The goal is to add an additional 500 records to our online access each year. Living History Farms' collection contains tractors, cars, textiles dating to the early 1800s, home goods, books, newspapers, advertisements, children's toys, store goods, funerary preparation tools, trades tools, and furniture. Interested parties are also able to email or call the curator for further information about the collection. Currently working on a large digitization project to be completed in 3–5 years

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**Madison County Historical Society**  
*815 South 2nd Ave, Winterset, IA 50273*  
<https://www.historyonthehill.org/>  
Open Regular Hours or by Appointment

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**Regional Focus:** Madison County

**Time Period Focus:** 1850s–1960s

**Thematic Intersections:** Cultural History

**Types of Archival Materials:** Trade Literature, Farm Organization Records, Farm Periodicals, Posters, Broadside, or other Paper Signage, Personal/Family Collections, Atlases and Soil Maps, Deeds, Cookbooks, Farm Directories, Institutional Histories/Scrapbooks

**Types of Artifacts:** Machinery/Implements and Equipment, Tools, Buildings, Structures, and Other Objects on the Landscape

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**Mahaska County Historical Society**  
*2211 Nelson Lane, Oskaloosa, IA 52577*  
<https://nelsonpioneer.org/>

Open Regular Hours, Appointments Required for Collection Items Not on Display

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**Regional Focus:** Mahaska County

**Time Period Focus:** 1840–1960; Pioneer Era and Early Mechanization Strongest

**Thematic Intersections:** Cultural History, Religious History

**Types of Archival Materials:** Farm Organization Records, Personal/Family Collections, Atlases and Soil Maps, Deeds, Farm Directories, Institutional Histories/Scrapbooks

**Types of Artifacts:** Machinery/Implements and Equipment, Tools, Buildings, Structures, and Other Objects on the Landscape

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The Historical Society is currently in the process of inventorying the collection.

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**Monroe County Historical Society Museum**

*114 A Avenue East, Albia, IA 52531*

<https://www.facebook.com/MonroeCountyIowaMuseum/>

Open Regular Hours or By Appointment

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**Regional Focus:** Monroe County, but most agriculture exhibits general to Iowa

**Time Period Focus:** late 1800s–present

**Thematic Intersections:** none specified

**Types of Archival Materials:** Plat Maps from 1896, periodically

**Types of Artifacts:** Machinery/Implements and Equipment, and Tools. We also have a log cabin-type structure that was used as a pig house.

Visitors welcome!

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