

The Fort Museum

The Fort Museum and Fort Trading Post are the first and finest attractions highlighting the history of northwest Iowa.

The museum recalls the community's beginnings as an army post built in 1850 along the river valley and includes its rich historical background as the community continued to grow.

A replica Civil War militia fort houses collections from Fort Dodge's past.

Within the stockade is the sutler store, the blockhouse, the adjutant's office and the Company E barracks. Inside the walls of the buildings are exhibits of period furniture, pioneer, Native American and military collections as well as exhibits relating to the town's gypsum history. Visitors can learn about one of the country's greatest hoaxes, the Cardiff Giant.

Just a short stroll from the fort stockade lies Front Street, a set of original and replica buildings including an 1855 log home, a small-town jail, one-room school house, print shop, blacksmith shop, general store, chapel, livery stable, cabinet shop, drugstore and tin-smith shop. Original fixtures and artifacts fill each one of the structures.

The Trading Post serves as the Fort's gift shop and features books, T-shirts, crafts and souvenirs.

The museum is open daily from mid-April through October. Doors open Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sundays from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Children under the age of five are admitted free, cost for adults is \$6 and students are admitted for \$3.

The Fort Museum is also the site of the community's annual Frontier Days celebration held the first weekend in June.

Located adjacent to the Fort Museum is the Opera House, a 5,500-square-foot facility available for business meetings, conferences, banquets, company parties and wedding receptions.

The Fort Museum is one quarter mile east of the intersection of U.S. Highway 169 and Iowa Highway 20.

