

Before You Get Here

In order to make our visit here as productive as possible we have put together a few tips for teachers. These are just suggestions that teachers on previous tours felt helped the trip to Iron Hill Museum move smoothly.

The day before:

- Go over the weather for the next day and talk to the students about what they should wear for the day. Some teachers have sent a note home to parents or even made it a homework assignment! Remember you will be walking outside so no fancy clothes or open-toed shoes. It should be okay to get the clothes dirty (although we will try our best for it not to happen).
- Discuss what things they will find in the museum and what they should be on the look out for when they get here.

The morning of the trip:

- Break the students into groups before getting on the bus. Students should be in two or three groups depending on the number of students (if your tour has a very large group check with the museum staff beforehand to know how many groups can be accommodated). When students are broken into groups before getting to the museum there is less confusion and less time wasted. Each group should have at least one chaperone, two or three is even better.
- Before boarding the bus students should be encouraged to use the restroom in school. Iron Hill Museum does have a bathroom but it is very small and can only hold one person at a time.
- If the students will be shopping, many teachers have found it useful to keep the students' money in individual envelopes with them, or to give each student their own money but inside envelopes with their name on them. Shopping usually occurs right at the end of a tour.
- If your group is running late, please inform the staff as soon as possible. Many times the schedule can be reworked so that you don't lose any time, but without knowing you are running late we might not be able to accommodate the change and will have to stick to the original time frame. **Please call us at 302-368-5703.**
- Teachers have dealt with lunches in several fashions. Many find the most effective way is to keep them on the bus or place them in boxes and bring them inside the museum. We do not recommend leaving them outside on the picnic tables while the students take their tours.

Rules of the Museum

Teachers, before bringing students here you may want to go over a few of the rules of our museum. All of these rules will be reviewed again by the Educators that meet the class on arrival to the museum.

1. There are many things in the museum that can be touched, but there are some that cannot. Please do not touch anything unless the Educator has told you that it is okay.
2. Our museum is very small and sometimes the groups can be very large, therefore we ask that students pay close attention to the Educator, do not run or yell within the museum, and always raise their hands if they have a question or want to say something to the group.
3. You will be spending some time outdoors, so make sure you dress appropriately for the weather.
4. For outdoor hikes, leave all nature where it was found, i.e. sticks, rocks, etc. The Educator is always the line leader—please do not run or walk ahead of him/her.
5. Please use the restroom before arriving at the museum. The museum does have a restroom but it is very small and can only fit one person at a time.

FYI....

Here are some common questions you might want to share with the student before getting to the museum.

1. Do we have animals at the museum?

YES! But most of them are stuffed (we do have a frog, a tarantula and hissing cockroaches that are alive). Our stuffed animals used to be alive once but for various reasons died and were stuffed by a **taxidermist**. You might also see animals outside on the trail behind the museum. It is very important to remember not to touch the animals inside the museum or outside on the trail.

2. Was Iron Hill Museum always a museum?

No, the building once housed a one room African American schoolhouse built by Pierre S. du Pont in the 1920s. Du Pont built 91 schools all over Delaware for African Americans, and Iron Hill was number 82. Iron Hill School became a museum in the 1960s when the Delaware Academy of Science bought the building and turned it into a Natural History Museum.

3. Why is it called Iron Hill Museum?

Iron Hill Museum gets its name from the fact that the surrounding area used to contain **iron ore**. In fact, the trail behind the museum encircles a giant pit where a lot of iron mining took place. Unlike what we see on TV, where miners would go down in long shafts to dig for coal or diamonds, iron mining happened in giant pits. Iron miners were looking for iron ore that ran in **veins** throughout the area. Once they found a vein of iron ore they would dig down in the earth to collect as much as they could. As you walk on our trail you might see small pits also, these are called test pits and they are where miners dug out a little dirt to see if there was a vein there.

4. What kind of things will we see inside the museum?

The museum houses collections of wildlife that can be found around Delaware, exhibits about iron mining, Native American life, and minerals and rocks from Delaware and around the world. We even have fluorescent minerals that glow!

5. Is there a gift store?

Yes, there is a small gift shop that has a variety of things that will help you remember your trip to the museum. Many things are priced from \$0.50 to \$4.00. You could take home an arrowhead or maybe a mineral of your very own.

6. Is there a place to eat lunch?

Yes, we have picnic tables outside on the museums property.