

Northern Kentucky Views Presents:

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## Baker-Hunt Foundation

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# Baker-Hunt Foundation

Williams' Natural History Collection, Covington, Kentucky

THE Williams Natural History Collection now housed in the new Baker-Hunt Foundation museum building, 613 Sandford Street, is rich in insect life. For many years Archie J. Williams, director of the museum has roamed the earth in search of these rare and beautiful insects. Many wonderful facts have been collected concerning their secrets and habits.

Thousands of specimens are on display or in storage cases for study. They represent types from every part of the world. A large collection is devoted to the orders and families of North America and especially the State of Kentucky. Most of these insects are not open to public display and are guarded with utmost care, being reserved only for the inspection and use of the scientist or student.

All of us come in contact with insects. They are a great populous world of mostly unseen creatures that number in the hundreds of thousands. Some are capable of carrying deadly infections and disease. Others cause enormous losses to plants or forest. However, many render aid to man in making war on the other insects or the means of fertilizing our plants and flowers. The Rafinesque Entomology Club named in honor of Kentucky's famous scientist has devoted many hours in the study of insect life in our State, as well as all the natural wonders of the hills and streams.

This collection of natural history was formed in 1915 after years of study and collecting by Archie J. Williams, Covington artist and naturalist. It is perhaps the first

organized museum in the State. In 1920 it was organized as the Williams Natural History Museum and housed in Latonia, Covington, Kentucky. The purpose of this museum and fourfold. First: To collect and publicly exhibit objects of natural science that are native of Kentucky and North America. Second: To develop an interest in nature and cultivate a desire to explore and protect the natural wonders of our State and country. Third: To provide means of research, exploring, lectures and the identifying of all natural science phases that give charm to those who derive pleasure from communing with the hills and nature. Fourth: To acquaint visitor and friends by publications with the authors, naturalist and artist that are eminent because of their appreciation of what nature has produced.

## Margaretta W. Hunt, 1845-1930

Culmination of a life-long ambition to establish a cultural center in Northern Kentucky is seen in the Baker-Hunt Foundation, Covington, made possible through the generosity of Mrs. Margaretta W. Hunt, pioneer resident of Kenton County. It will stand as a memorial to Mrs. Hunt, one of Covington's most philanthropic and beloved citizens . . . a center of art, literature, science and a mecca for Kentucky's young students. Mrs. Hunt was intensely interested in organization to perpetuate the best traditions of the State. Her generous endowment makes possible our new museum building, with its native flower

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gardens, its shops and laboratories. Here, scientific research is to be fostered, and here educational and cultural development is to be made and all those things which go to build up a finer and deeper understanding of the arts and sciences are to be encouraged . . . those typical American qualities that have in so many instances of our Nation's history characterized the sons and daughters of Kentucky.

Thousands of specimens are in storage or on display. The exhibits are treated not as specimens, but each display and phase a separate and distinct chapter in the story of modern science. These chapters selected open off the main central hall of the museum as follows: Botany, invertebrate and vertebrate zoology, marine life, insects, geology, shells, palentology and anthropology.

Special hikes, lectures and exhibits are given by the Williams Natural History Society. The society is divided into many departments. Crafts and arts are encouraged in the Poor Richard Craft Guild, inspired by the medieval craftsman. Workers in metal, wood and leather, printing and literature, and the fine arts. The Isaac Shelby Historical Club encourages the pioneer Indian crafts, pioneer history, Indian ceremonies and the collecting of data and documents relating to Kentucky. Each group of science is treated as a club of young people such as the Shaler Geology Club and the Rafinesque Entomolgy Club. The foundation sponsors the oldest scout troop in Kentucky, here in the old home on Daniel Carter Beard. During the past twenty years hundreds of boys have been connected with this famous Boy Scout Troop, Covington 6.

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