

# Pencil Sharpener Museum

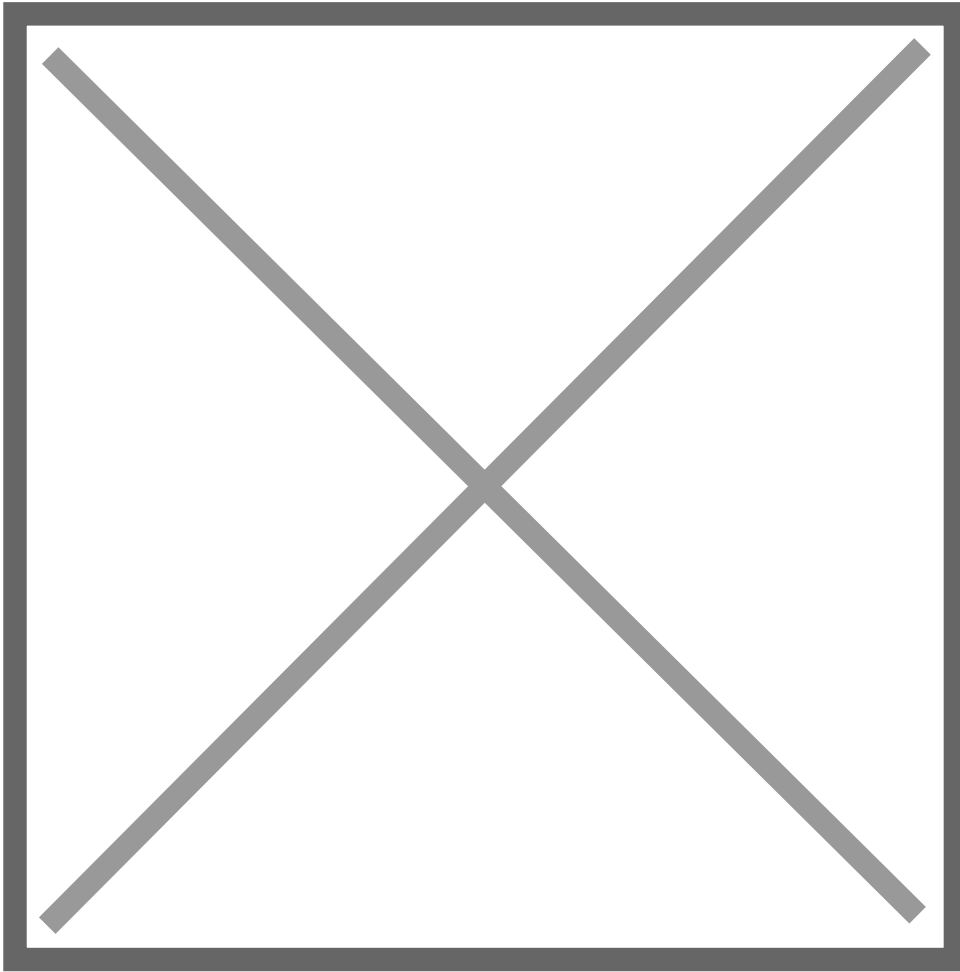
Pencil Sharpener Museum

Stop by the Hocking Hills Regional Welcome Center and visit one of the more unique museums you will see, the Paul A. Johnson Pencil Sharpener Museum. Reverend Paul Johnson began his collection more than 20 years ago. This amazing collection of more than 3,400 pencil sharpeners has been featured in national magazines and is reputed to be the largest collection in America. We recently added the collection of Frank Parades. Together the two collections are estimated to have about 5000 Pencil Sharpeners.

<https://www.explorehockinghills.com/things-to-do/arts-museums/museums/pencil-sharpener-museum/>

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## Paul A. Johnson's Pencil Sharpener Museum



Welcome to the Paul A. Johnson Pencil Sharpener Museum

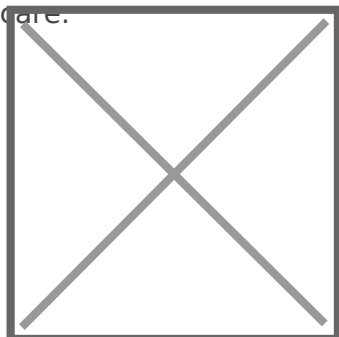
Step into one of Hocking Hills' most delightful surprises, the Paul A. Johnson Pencil Sharpener Museum. What began as a thoughtful retirement gift turned into a lifelong passion and a museum unlike any other.

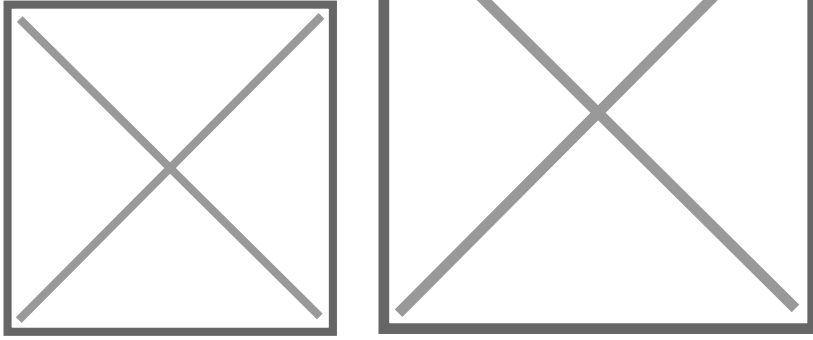
### A Hobby Takes Shape

When Paul Johnson retired in 1988, his wife Charlotte encouraged him to find a hobby. She gifted him a few car-shaped pencil sharpeners and suggested he start a collection representing different modes of transportation. That small gesture sparked an unexpected fascination, one that eventually led to a collection spanning thousands of sharpeners from across the globe.

### A Growing Passion

Paul's collection began with just a handful of pieces, but it quickly grew. Over time, he amassed 1,700 unique pencil sharpeners crafted from metal, wood, glass, and plastic. By the time of his passing in 2010, Paul had lovingly collected 3,450 sharpeners, all arranged and displayed with care.





## Preserving the Legacy

Following Paul's passing, Charlotte made a generous decision—to relocate the museum and entire collection to the Hocking Hills Regional Welcome Center so that more people could enjoy Paul's remarkable hobby. The move was no small feat:

- ○ ○ Each shelf was numbered
- Every sharpener was photographed in its place
- Every item was boxed, labeled, and transported with care

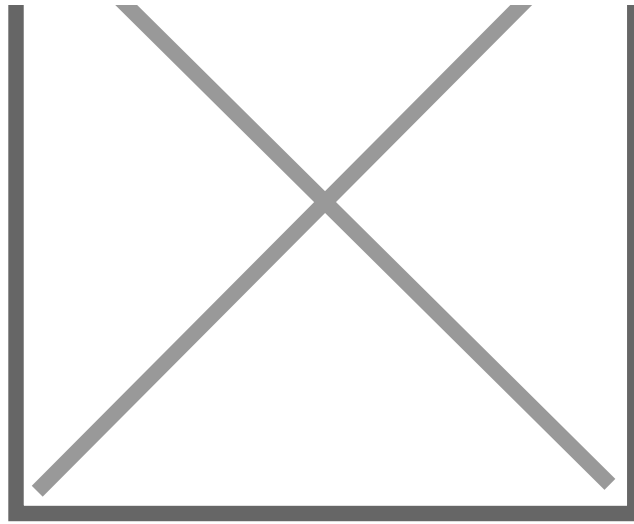
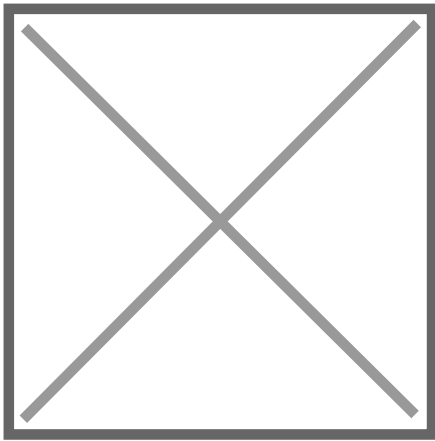
The museum structure itself was moved via flatbed truck and set on a carefully prepared timber foundation. Visitors watched in awe as this quirky piece of history found its new home.

## Honoring the Original Arrangement

Once at the Welcome Center, the collection was restored to Paul's exact specifications. Thanks to detailed photographs, every sharpener returned to its original spot. Paul had thoughtfully grouped his pieces into themes like Animals, Holidays, Food, Games, History, Space, and Zodiac Symbols, turning the exhibit into a visual storybook of eras and ideas.

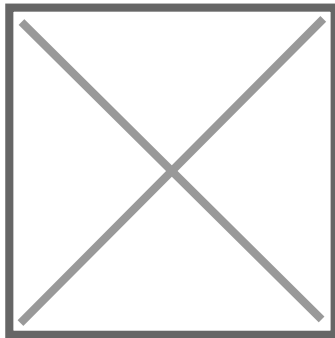
## A Museum Reimagined

In 2022, the original shed that housed Paul's collection was replaced with a modern, fully accessible display space. The Grand Reopening took place in January 2024. Today, the collection is protected in museum-quality cases, allowing visitors to view each sharpener up close while preserving their delicate features.



### An Unexpected Addition

That same year, the museum's story grew even richer with the arrival of a second extraordinary collection, gifted by the family of Frank Parades of Tampa, Florida. Frank's contribution brought the total to an estimated 5,000 pencil sharpeners, forming one of the most extensive public displays in the country.

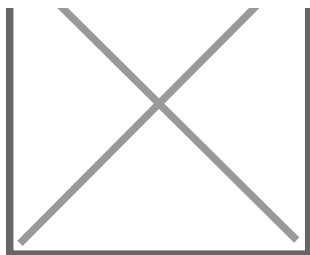


### About Frank Parades

A passionate antique collector and car restorer, Frank loved sharing his 1913 Ford Model T and 1930 Ford Model A at shows across the Southeast. It was during a flea market visit for car parts that Frank discovered his first die-cast pencil sharpeners, beginning a hobby that would span continents and decades.

After retirement, Frank expanded his collection through global friendships with fellow collectors in the Netherlands, Asia, and across the U.S. West Coast. His sharpeners became his souvenirs—ranging from everyday die-cast models to rare antiques dating back to the early 1800s.

### A Global Collection of Ingenuity



Frank was captivated by the craftsmanship of early pencil sharpeners, which

evolved from sandpaper and blade models to hand-crank mechanisms. Many of his pieces came from Valencia, Spain, where the Play-Me brand produced functional, intricately designed sharpeners.

Among Frank's most prized possessions were rare models from EMB Marti, famed for their elaborate detail and precision. Collectors often pay over \$100 for these vintage treasures, each one a tiny marvel of design.

Like Paul, Frank had an eye for detail—recognizing the subtle differences that make each sharpener special. No duplicates, no fillers—just thousands of tiny, unique works of art.



In late 2022, Frank's wife, Stephanie Parades, discovered the Paul

A. Johnson Pencil Sharpener Museum. Knowing instantly it was the perfect home for Frank's legacy, she generously donated his 1,500-piece collection to be displayed alongside Paul's.

"His eyes would light up with every new sharpener. Sharing that same wonder with others is the best way to honor him."— Stephanie Parades

#### A Tribute to Passion and Play

Together, the Paul Johnson and Frank Parades collections represent far more than novelty. They celebrate a shared joy in collecting, a love for storytelling through objects, and the beauty of finding wonder in the everyday.

Whether you're a serious collector, a history lover, or just curious about the unexpected, the Paul A. Johnson Pencil Sharpener Museum offers a one-of-a-kind experience in the heart of Hocking Hills.

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