

# Guide to the Putnam Park Records, 1896-2015

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## Overview of the Collection

**Repository:**

Special Collections & Archives  
McIntyre Library  
University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire  
P.O. Box 4004  
105 Garfield Ave.  
Eau Claire, WI 54702 - 4004  
(715) 836-2739  
<https://library.uwec.edu/archives/>

**Reference Code:** USGZE AS117

**Accession Number:** 87-62; 12-028

**Collection Number:** Archives Series 117

**Creators:**

Wisconsin State University, Eau Claire. Office of the President.  
University of Wisconsin--Eau Claire. Putnam Park Commission.  
University of Wisconsin--Eau Claire. Putnam Park Committee.  
University of Wisconsin--Eau Claire. Putnam Park Management Committee.

**Title:** Putnam Park Records

**Dates:** 1896-2015

**Quantity:** 1.0 linear foot (2 1/2 archives boxes)

**Location of Collection:** D5/2c

**Languages:** Collection materials are in English.

**Summary:** Principally minutes of the Putnam Park Commission and its predecessors which advise University officials on the use of Putnam Park, a local nature preserve. Originally the property of lumberman Henry C. Putnam, Putnam Park was donated to the City of Eau Claire in 1909, and to the University in 1957. Shortly thereafter William R. Davies established the Putnam Park Management Committee to advise the President and the Long Range Planning Committee on the use of the nature preserve. It has undergone several name changes over the years but the duties remain unchanged to the present.

## Biographical / Historical Note

Henry C. Putnam was born in New York in 1832. As a young man he studied engineering and spent much of the 1850s working for railroads in several states, including Wisconsin. He came to Eau Claire in May of 1857 with a capital of \$2,000, and soon thereafter began surveying and investing in nearby pine lands. In 1876, he started the Chippewa Valley bank as an auxiliary of his large timber business. Like many large business owners of his day, Putnam engaged in various other business ventures, including the Eau Claire Railroad Company. By 1880 he was worth over half a million dollars. In 1885 he visited several European countries to learn their reforestation methods. Putnam died in 1912.

Putnam Park is a 230-acre natural area owned by UW-Eau Claire. Most of the park is forested, although there is a small marsh area at the eastern end of the park and a small prairie area at the western end. Most of the park's land was donated to the city of Eau Claire in 1909 by Henry C. Putnam, who wished to see the land remain in its natural state and serve as a botanical laboratory and park in perpetuity. Over the years smaller tracts of land have been added to the original tract donated by Mr. Putnam. Ownership of the park was transferred from the city to the university in 1957. About half of Putnam Park is designated a Wisconsin State Natural Area.

## Content Description

Series One includes Minutes of Putnam Park committee and Putnam Park Commission, newspaper articles, correspondence from university officials and staff, minor publications related to park, and maps. In addition, the series includes a 1967 legal opinion on Putnam Park land use, several brochures relating to the park and a mimeographed copy of the 1909 deed.

Also included are land development documents, highway 37 bridge documents, Putnam Park surveys, scientific and natural area reports, erosion and restoration documents, encroachment documents, Putnam Park Trail documents, invasive species and diseases documents, general concerns and maintenance documents, beaver control documents, memorials and signs documents, and Putnam Park photographs.

## Administrative Information

**Acquisition Information:** Transferred to the University Archives by the Office of the Chancellor in or before October 1986. .017 linear feet of additional material added in October 1986. .04 linear feet of additional material added in March 2012. Additional (number of boxes) from Terry Classen in November 2017.

**Access Restrictions:** Collection is open to the public.

**Use Restrictions:** Researchers are responsible for using in accordance with 17 U.S.C. This collection is available for transfer through the Area Research Center Network. Contact Special Collections & Archives for more information.

**Preferred Citation:** Putnam Park Records, 1896-2015. AS 117. Special Collections & Archives. McIntyre Library. University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire. Eau Claire, WI.

**Processing Note:** Processed by Alex Snyder in March 2012. Additional material added by Erin Hall in November 2019.

**Arrangement:** Flat arrangement.

OCLC #: 15219278

## Subjects

**Personal Names:** A. James Engel, Chester Olson, Cornelius Weber, D.L. Rosenau, David Crowe, David Donnellan, Dennis Danielson, Douglas Weiford, Dr. Foote, Dr. Klink, George Vuicich, H.C. Putnam, Henry Kolka, Hilda Carter, James Bollinger, James Fisher, Jocelyn Reidinger, John Gerbereich, Leonard Haas, Lester Emans, Lester Hunt, Marcus Fay, Marie Evans, Mr. Benson, Mr. Haight, Mr. Jann, Mrs. Reidinger, N.E. Hanshus, Paul Blanchard, R.G. Fossland, Ralph Owen, Richard Hibbard, Richard Jann, Robert Lee, Ted Wahl, Thomas Barland, Thomas Hoehn, Victor Wahl, W.R. Davies, Will Fante.

**Corporate Names:** Putnam Park Committee, Putnam Park Commission.

**Subject Terms:** Putnam Park, Dutch Elm's Disease, Highway 37.

**Geographical Terms:** Putnam Park, Eau Claire.

## Detailed List of Contents

Series 1

Dates: 1896-2015

Extent: 1.0 linear foot (2 1/2 archives boxes)

| Container         | Contents   | Dates         |
|-------------------|--|---------------|
| Box/Folder<br>1/1 | Copy of Putnam Park quit claim deed.   | 1909          |
| Box/Folder<br>1/2 | Putnam Park Committee minutes and related correspondence and documents   | 1957-<br>1964 |
| Box/Folder<br>1/3 | Miscellaneous correspondence to and from President W.R. Davies   | 1957-<br>1966 |
| Box/Folder<br>1/4 | Correspondence to and from Dr. David Crowe, a former Eau Claire biology professor, regarding Dutch Elm's Disease, a plan to extend Highway 37 through Putnam Park, and other park management issues. Also included in this folder is | 1957-<br>1966 |

|                   |  |   |
|-------------------|--|---|
|                   | a letter to Crowe from Ralph Owen and a small map of Putnam Park                     |   |
| Box/Folder<br>1/5 | Legal opinion on Putnam Park land use: "Review and Analysis of Putnam Park Land Use" | 1967  |
| Box/Folder<br>1/6 | Park trail guides and park rededication programs                                     | 1976  |
| Box/Folder<br>1/7 | Meeting minutes and documents related to Putnam Park Commission.                     | 1974-<br>1977                                     |
| Box/Folder<br>1/8 | Newspaper clippings related to Putnam Park   | 1957-<br>1976                                     |
| Box/Folder<br>2/1 | Putnam Park Commission meeting minutes   | 1994-<br>1999                                     |
| Box/Folder<br>2/2 | Putnam Park Commission meeting minutes   | 1959-<br>1967,<br>1973-<br>1994                   |
| Box/Folder<br>2/3 | Land development documents   | 1948-<br>1963,<br>1978-<br>1979,<br>1980-<br>1999 |
| Box/Folder<br>2/4 | Putnam Park Drive documents  | 1959-<br>2015                                     |
| Box/Folder<br>2/5 | Highway 37 Bridge documents  | 1965-<br>2006                                     |

|                   |  |                                 |
|-------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| Box/Folder<br>3/1 | Putnam Park surveys  | 1896-<br>2013                   |
| Box/Folder<br>3/2 | Scientific and natural area reports                              | 1976,<br>1994                   |
| Box/Folder<br>3/3 | Erosion and restoration documents                                | 1970-<br>1982                   |
| Box/Folder<br>3/4 | Putnam Park State Natural Area of Conservation<br>correspondence | 1993-<br>1998                   |
| Box/Folder<br>3/5 | Putnam Park encroachment documents                               | 1968-<br>1982,<br>1995-<br>2015 |
| Box/Folder<br>3/6 | Putnam Park Trail documents                                      | 1976,<br>2003-<br>2013          |
| Box/Folder<br>3/7 | Invasive species and diseases documents                          | 1966-<br>2014                   |
| Box/Folder<br>3/8 | General concerns and maintenance documents                       | 1954-<br>1986,<br>1996-<br>2013 |
| Box/Folder<br>3/9 | Beaver control documents   | 1965-<br>2003                   |

|                    |                               |               |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|---------------|
| Box/Folder<br>3/10 | Memorials and signs documents | 1971-<br>1994 |
| Box/Folder<br>3/11 | Putnam Park photographs       | No date       |