

Genealogy Resources at Sacramento Public Library

Who are we?

The Sacramento Public Library was originally established as a subscription library in 1857. It was transferred over to the City of Sacramento to become a free public library in 1879. Currently we have 28 locations and serve the County of Sacramento and the Cities of Citrus Heights, Galt, Isleton, Elk Grove, Rancho Cordova, and Sacramento.

How can you contact us?

- Visit our website at www.saclibrary.org.
- For basic questions about the library, library programs and resources, and accounts, contact customer service at **916-264-2920** or email contact@saclibrary.org.
- For reference questions, genealogy questions, or obituary requests, email contact@saclibrary.org or use our **Contact Us** page at www.saclibrary.org/About-Us/Contact-Us
- Visit our Central Library at 828 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

Do you need a library card to use our services?

- You don't need a library card to ask a reference question or request an obituary.
- You don't need a library card to visit our Genealogy Collection or the Sacramento Room.
- You do need a library card to check out materials; however, materials in our Genealogy Collection and in the Sacramento Room are for library use only and may not be checked out.
- You do need a library card or eCard to use many of our online resources, such as our Sacramento Bee online archives. You must visit us in-person to get a library card or eCard.

Our Genealogy Collection

About the Collection

- Specialized reference collection to support family history research.
- Focuses primarily on United States source and research materials, with an emphasis on California.
- Located on the 2nd floor of the Central Library at 828 I Street in Sacramento.
- More than 4000 items including books, periodicals, newsletters, and vertical files.
- The majority of the items were donated by the Genealogical Association of Sacramento on June 29, 2016.
- All materials are non-circulating and are to be used at the Central Library only.
- Available whenever the Central Library is open.
- Most items are in our online catalog.

The Sacramento Room

Also located on the 2nd floor of our Central Library, the Sacramento Room houses the special collections of the Sacramento Public Library with a primary focus on Sacramento and California history. Hours are Tuesday – Thursday & Saturday, 1 – 6 pm.

Of particular interest to Genealogists

- Sacramento Directories back to 1851
- Local Phonebooks
- School Yearbooks
- Digital Collections and Sanborn Maps

<https://www.saclibrary.org/Education/History/The-Sacramento-Room>

Monthly Online Genealogy Programs

About our Monthly Genealogy Programs

- Cover a wide variety of genealogical subjects
- Presented by genealogy experts
- Hosted by Dave Munger, our genealogy librarian
- Presented online via Zoom
- Scheduled for the 3rd or 4th Saturday of each month from 1 – 2:30 pm
- Register to attend via the Events Program Calendar on our website:

www.saclibrary.org

Schedule for 2024

Jan 27	<i>Mexican Civil Registration: A Deep Dive</i> – Lisa Medina
Feb 24	<i>Online Maps, Atlases, and Gazetteers for Genealogy</i> – James M. Baker
Mar 23	<i>Genealogical Resources at the Center for Sacramento History</i> – Kim Hayden
Apr 27	<i>Shakin' Out the Smiths: Researching Common Surnames</i> – Nancy Calhoun
May 18	<i>30 Records that Document Female Ancestors</i> – Gena Philibert-Ortega
Jun 22	<i>Sacramento FamilySearch Center: Fun, Easy, & Free</i> – Philip Walton Horner
July 27	<i>Double Dating: Understanding the Calendar Change</i> – Pamela Bell Dallas
Aug 24	<i>Mexican Church Records</i> – Lisa Medina
Sep 21	<i>Genealogical Legacy of the California Gold Rush</i> – Jacqi Stevens
Oct 26	<i>Architectural Ancestry: A Course in House History</i> – Jill Morelli
Nov 16	<i>Bagging a Live One: Finding Living People</i> – Mary Kircher Roddy, CG
Dec 14	<i>What Did Daddy Do? Locating Family Members in Old Business Records, Part 1</i> – Madeline Yanov

Newspaper Archives

Sacramento Bee Online/Newsbank

- Searchable! On our website!
- 1857-2017: Digitized scans of original paper
- 2017-Current: Complete digital editions
- 1984-Current: Text only of articles written by Bee staff
- 2006-2019: Blogs
- 2010-Current: Web Edition articles

Other Newspaper Archives on our Website

- **Newspapers.com California Edition**
- **New York Times**
 - Archives available via TimesMachine
(scroll to bottom of NY Times page for link)

Newspapers on Microfilm

- **Sacramento Bee** (1857-2015)
- **Sacramento Union** (1851-January 1994)
- Other local papers on microfilm
 - **Sacramento Transcript** (1850-1851)
 - **Daily Democratic State Journal** (1852-1857)
 - **Galt Herald** (1912-current)
 - **Sacramento Observer** (1963-2009)
 - **Elk Grove Citizen** (1909-2008)
 - **Folsom Telegraph** (1873-1882)
 - And more!
- Available on 3rd floor of Central Library
- Microfilm readers available

Genealogy Databases

- **Ancestry Library Edition** (Available in library only—any branch)
- **Heritage Quest** (Available online with library card or eCard)
Subset of Ancestry. Includes U.S. and Canada census records, city directories, military records, U.S. Indian Census Rolls, U.S. Freedman's Bank Record (1861-1875), U.S. wills and probate records.
- **American Ancestors** (Available at Central Library only)
New England Historic Genealogical Society's collection of civic and church records, newspapers, military and court records, tax and voter lists, diaries, published genealogies, and more.

Obituary Searches

When we receive an obituary request

- We search Ancestry for U.S. Social Security Death Index or California Death Index records to confirm date of death and get additional information such as date and place of birth, mother's maiden name, last residence, etc.
- Find-A-Grave records can be very helpful. (www.findagrave.com)
- The two local newspapers of record that we search for obituaries are the Sacramento Bee and the Sacramento Union. We now have the entire run of the Sacramento Bee online (1857-Present). We do not have the Sacramento Union online; however, we have the entire run of the Sacramento Union on microfilm (1851-1994).

Online Sacramento Bee Search

- We search the Sacramento Bee first because searching online is much easier and quicker than searching on microfilm.
- I use keywords to search for an obituary, funeral notice, or death notice. This can be simple if the name is distinctive or more difficult if the name is common.
- Narrowing the date range searched is helpful.
- I sometimes serendipitously find additional news items about the deceased, which I like to pass on to the requesting patron.

Microfilm Sacramento Union Search

- If we don't find the obituary in the Sacramento Bee, we'll search the Sacramento Union.
- We need an accurate date of death to do a microfilm search.
- We search through two weeks following the date of death.
- It's important to know where in the paper obituaries, death notices, and funeral notices are found to minimize search time.
 - Obituaries usually have their own section.
 - Death and funeral notices are often in the classified ads section.
 - Regular news articles pertaining to the death may be found also.
- The California Digital Newspaper Collection (cdnc.ucr.edu) is a free, searchable online source for a partial run of the Sacramento Union (1851-1922).