

Sexton & Clerk's Guide To Genealogists . . . That's Not My Job!
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Sources of Genealogical Information

- Family stories
- Governmental records
- Newspapers and other published accounts
- Cemeteries
- Other sources

Biases and Misinformation

- Michigan tradition of record keeping beginning in 1860s
- Michigan newspapers and other publications beginning in 1830s
- Stories shaped by biases, memory, and competing versions
- Cemeteries dependent on record keeping, grave upkeep, wishes of the deceased, and preferences of the living

Be Kind to Genealogists

- Think of your work as an extension of the Pure Michigan Campaign (90% genealogists travel)
- Genealogy is one of the fastest growing hobbies and you can be an ambassador for your community
- You may learn more information about your community
- You may meet some long lost family

Numerous Free Sites and Resources

Michigan Specific Sites

General Sites with Michigan Information

Vital Records and Non-Electronic Resources

Kalamazoo Specific Sites

Sources at College and University Libraries

Situations and Scenarios

Questions and Discussion

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WMU Archives

Kalamazoo, MI 49008-5307

General Websites

Cyndi's List <http://www.cyndislist.com/>

A comprehensive, categorized & cross-referenced list of links that point you to genealogical research sites online. Many of these are paid sites but there are also free sites. There are also many sites with free information on how to conduct certain types of genealogical research.

Find a Grave [findagrave.com] A resource for finding the final resting place of family, friends, and 'famous' individuals. With millions of names and photos, it is an invaluable tool for the genealogist and family history buff. Find A Grave memorials can contain rich content including photos, biographies and dates.

FamilySearch [<https://familysearch.org/>] One of the most popular genealogical resources in the world. The site is sponsored by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and is free and available to the public. Since launching in May 1999, more than 150 million people have visited FamilySearch.org to learn more about their family heritage.

HeritageQuest Online

<http://www.galesupport.com/migeoipcheck/migeoipcheck-proq.php?database=HERITAGE>
Genealogy/History/Biography. Full text and indexing. Includes all of the images, and extensive indexing, from the 1790 - 1940 U.S. federal censuses; more than 28,000 digitized book titles, including early family histories and local histories; more than 250 primary-source documents such as tax lists, city directories, probate records and more. PERSI, Revolutionary War Pension and Bounty Land Warrant Application Files, the Freedman's Bank Records, and the U.S. Serial Set Private Relief Actions, Memorials and Petitions are included. Michigan residents or Michigan library access only. This is also available through many public and college libraries.

Michigan Sites

Seeking Michigan [<http://seekingmichigan.org/>] Includes death records and collections ranging from pre-statehood to the late 1960s, and these include letters, diaries, photographs, postcards, and video. This site is especially good for the death records and naturalization indexes.

Cemeteries <http://libraryofmichigan.state.mi.us/MichiganCemeteries/search.aspx> The Michigan Cemetery Sources web site represents a compilation of published cemetery transcriptions located at the Library of Michigan and links to Michigan cemetery websites. This database also identifies the location of over 3,700 cemeteries in Michigan. It is NOT intended to include a list of personal names.

Michigan Naturalization Indexes

<http://libraryofmichigan.state.mi.us/MichiganCemeteries/search.aspx>

Newspapers <http://michigan.veridiansoftware.com/> Site at Central Michigan University with numerous Michigan newspapers.

Michigan County Histories [<http://www.hti.umich.edu/m/micounty/>]

The Michigan County Histories collection is a collaborative effort of Michigan's Council of Library Directors. The collection includes over 800 histories dating from 1866 to 1926.

MIGenWeb <http://www.migenweb.net/> Indexes and materials vary from county to county. This is the general site for Michigan.

Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections

This 40 volume set focuses on events, people, and families of early Michigan. The information was prepared for annual meetings of the Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society. The scanned volumes may be found in a couple of locations. See below.

American Memory [<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/index.html>] is a digital project of the Library of Congress and its partners. The volumes were digitized for the Pioneering the Upper Midwest: Books from Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin, ca. 1820-1910 project. Scanned and html formats. 9 volumes were digitized.

University of Michigan Digital Library. [<http://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/t/text/text-idx?page=home>] The format is a scanned copy. 40 volumes were digitized. It was done for the "Making of America" digital collection. The collection currently contains approximately 10,000 books and 50,000 journal articles with 19th century imprints.

General Sites With Michigan Information

Google Books [<https://books.google.com/>]

Contains many county histories and other materials. Open access for many pre-1923 materials.

Google Newspapers [<https://news.google.com/newspapers>]

Hundreds of newspapers of various runs from around the U.S.

Ancestor Hunt Newspapers [<http://www.theancestorhunt.com/newspapers.html>]

Good source of information about newspapers and availability on free and fee websites.

Vital Records (Birth, Marriage, Death, Divorce)

Most of these will be available through county clerks. Here is a list of Michigan County Clerks and contact information. <http://seekingmichigan.org/about/county-clerks>

Resources – Genealogy Research – Non-Electronic – Look for in a public library

See the site for a list of public libraries. Look for “local history” or “genealogy” services.
<http://www.publiclibraries.com/michigan.htmf>

City directories and directories for other Michigan communities

Maps, plat for many Michigan counties

Newspaper Clip Files.

Books and other materials

Kalamazoo Sites

Kalamazoo Genealogy [<http://www.kalamazoogenealogy.org/>]

Includes cemetery, yearbook, and county clerk information.

Kalamazoo Valley Genealogical Society [<http://www.mikvgs.org/>]

This site has many indexed records, some of which are located at the Western Michigan University Archives and Regional History Collections, including: Farmers’ Mutual Insurance Company Applications; Charleston Township Women Electors, 1917-1936; Kalamazoo County “Poor Farm” Burials. Truesdale Funeral Home, 1942-1946.

Kalamazoo Gazette Index [<http://www.kpl.gov>]

Only local news is indexed. The Kalamazoo Public Library has an online index for the Gazette as a part of its catalog. Indexed by subjects and personal names since 1972. Pull the drop-down menu to Local Indexes and Community Information before searching.

Access These Through College or University Libraries

Many full text resources are marketed to college and university libraries as research packages. These resources may contain valuable genealogical information. A few of the more popular and relevant databases are listed below. Not all public or private college/university libraries subscribe to these. Most college and university libraries also have policies about non-student use. For those reasons, do the following BEFORE visiting a college or university library.

Call ahead and determine if the library has this particular database.

Find out policies for non-college or university users.

Bring a thumb drive in case you cannot email or print.

Find out where to park.

America's historical newspapers: including Early American newspapers, Series 1, 6 and 7, 1690-1922. Newspapers from New England and many Michigan newspapers. Full text of selected years of Kalamazoo Gazette. Western Michigan University, Central Michigan University,

Ancestry Library Edition

Several wide-ranging collections of information for conducting genealogical and local history research. Includes: digitized images of the United States Federal Census from 1790 forward, U.S. immigration collection, Birth, marriage and death records (SSDI), U.K. census collection; Military records, and many more. Many public libraries also subscribe to this database.

Historical Newspapers

Search all of these newspapers at once or individually for full-text articles in this index. Includes historical African American newspapers. Atlanta Constitution (1868 - 1939), Atlanta Daily World (1931-2003), The Chicago Defender (1905 - 1975), Chicago Tribune (1849 - 1986), Christian Science Monitor (1908 - 1995), Detroit Free Press (-1923) Los Angeles Sentinel (1934-2005), Los Angeles Times (1881 - 1986), New York Amsterdam News (1922-1993), The New York Times (1851 - 2005), Pittsburgh Courier (1911-2002) The Wall Street Journal (1889 - 1991), The Washington Post (1877 - 1992). The Detroit Free Press, Chicago Tribune and Chicago Defender often have news stories about Southwestern Michigan.

American Periodical Series

Contains over 1,100 periodicals that first began publishing between 1740 and 1900, including special interest and general magazines, literary and professional journals, children's and women's magazines, and more. This site has a full run of the *Michigan Farmer*.

African American Newspapers, 1827-1998

Full text images of articles from 281 African American newspapers like the Augusta Chronicle (1792-1922), Bay City Times (1890-1922), and New York Commercial Advertiser (1797-1876). The African American Newspapers, 1827-1998 package is included as a module for the America's Historical Newspapers database and is cross-searchable with that product.
