

Guelph Public Library

Family History — Getting Started

Prior to your first visit to the Library, research your family history by interviewing other family members, and by tracking down family records. Some sources that often provide information are photographs, scrap-books, school yearbooks, letters, and official documents such as marriage licenses, birth certificates, deeds, and wills.

The novice, or the first-time genealogist, should also look at 'how-to' guides available in print, CD-ROM, and over the WWW. There are many excellent guidebooks, all very current in the library system. One of the more interesting is Sharon Carmack's *Guide to Discovering Your Female Ancestors* (929.1082 CAR).

One of the most important uses of a genealogy guide book is that it provides a source of best practices for genealogical research. For example, always keep a detailed record of your search. Mark down the names of the institutions where you obtained information, what collections they were held in, any reference or call numbers, and page numbers. Starting your research on the right path will save more than just time and money later on.

A good guide book will also tell you what you need to answer certain questions, where to get that information, and how to access the material. Know all your options!

Library Resources for Genealogy

A number of miscellaneous resources gathered by the Library over the years include: City & County directories and telephone directories; local newspapers dating back to the 1840s – the Guelph Mercury Centennial Edition, published July 20, 1970 is of particular interest for the biographies of early residents; published family histories; school yearbooks, including Guelph Collegiate Vocational Institute, 1925-1989. **ASK** at the Information Desk for help with these materials.

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Local Histories

Local histories contain historical information and dates about many of Guelph's early citizens.

Allan, D. *About Guelph; Its Early Days and Later*. Guelph: the author, 1939. **971.343 All**

Burrows, C. Acton. *Annals of the Town of Guelph, 1827-1877*. Guelph: Herald Steam Printing, 1877. **971. 34 B 94**

Byerly, A. E. *The Beginnings of Things in Wellington and Waterloo Counties*. Guelph: Guelph Publishing Company, 1935 **917.134 BYE**

Coulman, D. E. *Guelph: Take a Look at Us! Cheltenham*: Boston Mills Press, 1976 **971.343 Cou**

Johnson, Leo A. *History of Guelph 1827-1927*. Guelph: Guelph Historical Society, 1977 **971.343 Joh**

Stewart, R. A. M. *Picture History of Guelph*. Guelph: R. Stewart, 1976 & 1978 **971.343 Ste**

Historical Guelph: The Royal City, the Journal of the Guelph Historical Society. **971.343 His**

Tweedsmuir Histories: Local histories compiled by Women's Institute members. There are 14 covering a geographic area from Morriston to Fergus and Eden Mills to Breslau (**On microfilm**).

Genealogy Publications

The Library holdings include a large collection of genealogical publications that range from descriptions of records housed in various archival institutions to transcriptions of popular genealogical sources. For example, the Library has:

Checklist of Parish registers, 1986 **CA1 AK 31-86C36**

Passenger and Immigration Lists Index. **929.373 PAS**

Index to the 1871 Census of Ontario **929.371338 IND**

Municipal Records

Assessment rolls : document basic information about an individuals property, including land and building value, residence or business, religion, age, number of people living on the property, and occupation. (**dates covered - 1852-1853, 1855-1899, 1901-1939, 1941-1963, 1966**)

Collectors rolls : document basic information about an individuals property, including land and building value, residence or business, religion, age, number of people living on the property, occupation, and additional information on tax payments and arrears. (**dates covered - 1878, 1885-1888, 1891-1939**)

Land Records

The Library provides access to Crown Land Records through a microfiche index arranged by surname and township. The Crown Land Records Index is provided by the Archives of Ontario, and covers the following record sources:

- RG 1, Series C-1-3 Crown Land Registers for Fiats and Warrants
- RG 1, Series C-1-4 Locations Registers 1790-1901
- F 61 Peter Robinson Papers
- F 129 Canada Company Sale & Lease files 1780-1920
- Period covered for above records is c.1780s to 1920.

The Land Records Index is on microfiche.

A further source for land records are the County Atlases, which reproduce cartographic land records. However, they are not comprehensive, and it is difficult to date some of the contents.

Non-civil Vital Statistics

The non-civil vital statistics holdings consist of non-governmental records relating to births, marriages, and deaths in Guelph and Wellington County.

For the City of Guelph there are plot records (transcriptions of office records associated with burials) and monumental inscriptions (transcriptions of words that appear on the gravestones in cemeteries) for Woodlawn Cemetery, as well as indexes and inscriptions for the Catholic cemeteries. There are also indexes and transcriptions for a number of other cemeteries in Wellington County.

The Library also holds an index to and transcriptions of burial records for the Tovel Funeral Home, which was located in Guelph.

Also available are births, deaths, and marriage notices and transcriptions compiled from the Guelph Herald 1850-1851, and the Guelph Evening Mercury 1864-1879.

Vital Statistics

Civil vital statistics are official government records for births, deaths and marriages. The Library has a current index for the following years: Births (1869-1905), Marriages (1869-1920), and Deaths (1869-1930).

*The Archives of Ontario has an outstanding online guide for using vital statistics in genealogical research. These guides should be read by every genealogist interested in Ontario government records!

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Census Records

The Library holds the following census returns on microfilm:

- Gore District: 1818-1845
- Wellington County – 1851, 1861, and 1881 (Town & Township of Guelph are missing for 1851)
- All of Ontario 1871, 1891, 1901

The census returns for Guelph and Guelph Township are not available for 1851.

Census returns of 1851, 1861, 1871, 1881, 1891 and 1901 list each person individually, generally with age, sex, country or province of birth, religion, racial or ethnic origin, occupation, marital status and education details.

Census records created after 1901 have been microfilmed and are in the custody of Statistics Canada. Inquiries can be directed to:

*Statistics Canada
Access to Information and Privacy Office
25B R. H. Coats Building
Tunney's Pasture
OTTAWA, ON, K1A 0T6*

We're online at:
www.library.guelph.on.ca

Ontario Genealogical Society

The Waterloo-Wellington Branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society also makes a significant amount of its research and many of its books available in the Library for reference purposes. The Genealogical Society also maintains and updates the Ontario Cemetery Finding Aid on a dedicated computer.

An OGS package with complimentary genealogy and membership information is available, ask staff for more information.



Inter-Library Loan

Microfilm not held at the Guelph Public Library can be obtained from National Archives of Canada and the Archives of Ontario if available in the microfilm loan programs. Inter-library loan requests are subject to a \$2.00 administrative fee.
