

## LOCAL HISTORY FAQs

### Do you have old newspapers?

Yes. We have over a dozen Albany newspapers, including the entire run of the *Albany Times Union*, on microfilm. These reels can be viewed any time the Washington Avenue Branch is open.

### Do you look up obituaries or newspaper articles?

While we don't offer an obituary or local newspaper article retrieval service for out-of-town researchers, we can guide you to the information you are seeking from Albany newspapers. Please contact us for details: [localhistory@albanypubliclibrary.org](mailto:localhistory@albanypubliclibrary.org) or (518) 427-4300 ext. 0303.

### Do you accept local history donations?

Yes. We are particularly interested in:

- Albany maps
- Albany postcards
- Books about Albany History
- Albany organizational pamphlets and materials.

Before bringing in your donation, please contact the local history librarian at (518) 427-4300 ext. 0303 or [localhistory@albanypubliclibrary.org](mailto:localhistory@albanypubliclibrary.org).

### Can I view materials from the local history room when the room is closed?

If you know a specific item you are interested in viewing, we can retrieve it from the Local History Room and allow you to view it in the first floor reference area of our Washington Avenue Branch. Please contact us before visiting via email [localhistory@albanypubliclibrary.org](mailto:localhistory@albanypubliclibrary.org) or phone (518) 427-4300 ext. 0303 so we can have your materials ready for you.

- **Albany City Directories 1813 to 1950:** can be retrieved when the Local History Room is closed (inquire at Reference Desk)
- **Albany City Directories from 1950 to the present:** can be accessed any time the Washington Avenue Branch is open (inquire at Reference Desk)
- **Newspapers on microfilm:** can be accessed anytime the Washington Avenue Branch is open (inquire at Reference Desk)

### **Do you have photos or information about my Albany house?**

While most of the materials/records needed to conduct an Albany house or building history are located at the Albany County Hall of Records, we have some materials that can assist you.

- **Photograph Collection:** We have hundreds of photos of Albany houses, residential street scenes, downtown street scenes, and commercial buildings. These images have been digitized and can be viewed through our library's New York Heritage Collection
- **Albany City Directories from 1813 to the present:** These yearly volumes can provide valuable information about Albany residents, such as occupations and work location. The initial listing of an address in these volumes can also serve as a rough estimate of when a residence was built. Albany City Directories from 1914 to the present contain street directories, which allow you to look up an address and find its resident(s)

### **Do you have birth, marriage, or death records?**

No. Birth and death records are not kept at the Albany Public Library. New York State did not require communities to keep official records until the 1870s. Prior to that time these records were kept only in churches. For information about how to obtain a birth or death certificate, please see:

- [Birth and Death Record Information Provided by the City of Albany](#)
- [Birth and Death Record Information from the New York State Department of Health](#)

Marriage licenses and records are not kept at the Albany Public Library. These records are kept on file where the original marriage license was obtained. Each town, city, or village keeps their own records. In Albany, the Albany County Hall of Records keeps marriage records from 1870-1954. Please see:

- [Marriage Record Information from the Albany County Hall of Records](#)
- [Marriage Record Information from the New York State Department of Health](#)