

---

---

# PRIMARY RESOURCE GUIDE •FOR• OMAHA HISTORY

A list of free, online resources available  
for teachers, students, and the public  
to use to uncover and share the history of  
Omaha's people, places, businesses, and events.

---

---

*A John Savage photograph of the old Omaha City Hall on the northeast corner of 18th and Farnam Streets.  
From The Durham Museum Archives.*

# MULTI-USE SOURCES

## OFFERING PHOTOGRAPHS, NEWSPAPERS AND OTHER MATERIALS.

### Omaha Public Library

<https://omahalibrary.org/resource-center>

The Omaha Public Library's Resource Center provides a central online space for numerous resources for historical research. Below are some highlighted places to explore. To access you must have an Omaha Public Library card, which is free for Douglas County residents.

- **The Omaha World-Herald Newspaper Archives** 1878 to Present (Resource Center Home > Omaha World-Herald Current & Historical)
- **The Omaha Star Newspaper Archives** 1938 to 2011 (Resource Center Home > Omaha Star Digital Archive)
- **The Catholic Voice, The True Voice and Our Sunday Visitor 1903-2018** Digital archive of the official publication of the Archdiocese of Omaha, the Catholic community encompassing the 23 counties of northeastern Nebraska. (Resource Center Home > Genealogy > The Catholic Voice, The True Voice and Our Sunday Visitor)
- **Newspapers.com** Access to digitized newspapers across the country.
- **Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps** Shows the homes and buildings in a community by block. Great tool to help date buildings and show an areas growth. Available for all of Nebraska and Iowa. (Resource Center Home > Genealogy > Fire Insurance Maps Online)
- **MyHeritage Library Edition** database, free with a library card or for any Nebraska resident using their drivers license or state ID. Includes birth, death and marriage records from 48 countries, the complete U.S. and U.K. censuses, immigration, military and tombstone records and more than 3 billion family tree profiles. (Resource Center Home > Genealogy > MyHeritage Library Edition)
- Access to **Omaha water permits** that may reveal when a building was first connected to the city water supply. An in-progress index is available at <https://omahalibrary.org/research-your-house-history/> or in person at the Genealogy & Local History Center.
- **Historical Images and Artifacts** from the Omaha Public Libraries Collection. <https://omahalibrary.org/resources-reference-materials>
- In their special collections, accessed in person, they also have an extensive Omaha restaurant menu collection and Trans-Mississippi Exposition collection.

### City of Omaha Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission (LHPC)

<https://landmark.cityofomaha.org>

The Omaha LHPC website includes:

- National Register of Historic Places and Local Landmarks nominations providing well-researched and documented history of Omaha's buildings and historic districts.
- Collections of historic postcards, early architectural building plans and photographs taken of Omaha in the 1970s and 1980s.
- Reconnaissance Surveys of Omaha neighborhoods.
- Biographies of local and prominent architects and information on architectural styles throughout the city of Omaha.

---

### Making Invisible Histories Visible (MIHV)

<https://www.ops.org/InvisibleHistory>

Student projects containing oral interviews and primary artifacts sharing Omaha's diverse history. Projects include accompanying lesson plans.

---

## OTHER OMAHA PHOTOGRAPH SITES

### Durham Photo Archives:

<https://durhammuseum.org/exhibits-collections/photo-archive>

The Durham Museum's Photo Archive contains more than 1 million images spanning from the 1860s to the 1990s. Teachers can receive digitized copies of photographs for educational purposes at NO COST!

### Douglas County Historical Society Collections

<http://www.douglascohistory.org/collection>

The collection ranges from genealogical and family papers to business and organizational records to items such as clothing, decorative arts, photographs, postcards, sheet music and



menus. Also included is a wealth of published material, including books, pamphlets, and bound newspapers and newspaper clipping files. Keeper of Douglas Counties birth, death, marriage and naturalization records.

### **History Nebraska (Nebraska State Historical Society)**

<https://nebraska.access.preservica.com>

A search under "Omaha" results in more than 14,000 digitized images.

### **National Archives Catalog**

<https://catalog.archives.gov>

A search of Omaha shows more than 35,000 images.

### **Library of Congress**

<https://www.loc.gov/photos/collections/> > Search Omaha

Almost 2,000 prints of Omaha all downloadable and usable at no cost.

---

## **OTHER OMAHA AND NEBRASKA NEWSPAPER RESOURCES**

<https://nebnewspapers.unl.edu>

The Library of Congress through its Chronicling America Newspapers program has been digitizing newspapers and providing access to them online. The University of Nebraska at Lincoln is the digitizer for Nebraska, and their site has everything they have on Chronicling America but also some additional ones (that did not fall into the Chronicling America parameters) and longer issue ranges in some cases.

### **Omaha Newspapers Include:**

#### **Omaha Bee**

Published between 1872 and 1922.

<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn99021999>

#### **Omaha Monitor**

A weekly newspaper from 1915-1928 and continued under the title until sometime in 1929. For most of its existence, it described itself as a "National weekly newspaper devoted to the interests of colored Americans."

<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/00225879/>

#### **The Omaha Guide**

Published weekly by the Associated Negro Press between 1932 and 1958, featuring a mix of local and national news on African Americans.

<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn93062828/>

#### **The American – John C. Thompson**

A weekly newspaper from 1891-1891 with themes of Nativism and Anti-Catholicism.

<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/2017270212/>

#### **Pokrok Západu,**

A weekly Czech newspaper published between 1871 and 1920

<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045348/>

#### **Tägliche Omaha Tribüne,**

German newspaper published between 1912 and 1926.

<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045652/>

---

## **OTHER BUILDING RESEARCH RESOURCES**

### **Douglas-Omaha Geographic Information Systems**

[www.dogis.org](http://www.dogis.org)

Search a property to get a link to the accessors site that shows when property was built, additional name, lot and block, section, township and range (which comes in handy to find original deeds and abstracts. Click on the Historic Preservation filter on the left-hand side to show all Nationally Registered properties and historic districts then head to the LHPC site <https://landmark.cityofomaha.org/> to look up the nomination. Also has a button that shows you historic aerial pictures of the area from 1938 through now. Great to show how areas have changed over the years.

### **Douglas County Engineer and Douglas County Register of Deeds**

<https://www.dcengineer.org/land-survey-records>

<https://dcregisterofdeeds.org/home>

Using the properties section, township and range can look up survey records (gained at [www.dogis.org](http://www.dogis.org)) original deeds and abstracts.

### **Bureau of Land Management**

<https://gloreCORDS.blm.gov>

Access to more than five million Federal land title records issued between 1788 and the present. Includes images of land patents, survey plats and field notes and land status records.



# OTHER GENERAL RESOURCES

## Dundee Neighborhood Building Permits

The City of Omaha unfortunately destroyed Omaha's building permits in 2006. Permits for the Dundee neighborhood did survive (they were working on their historic nomination at the time) and are available through the neighborhood association website.

<https://dundee-memorialpark.org/dundee-historical-permit-files>

## Nebraska Architects and the Buildings they Designed

[http://www.e-nebraskahistory.org/index.php?title=Place\\_Makers\\_of\\_Nebraska:\\_The\\_Architects](http://www.e-nebraskahistory.org/index.php?title=Place_Makers_of_Nebraska:_The_Architects)

## Census Records up to 1950

Census records provide where a person lived, occupation, place of birth and family members and others living at the address.

You can access census records through:

**Ancestry.com** Set up a free account and have access to 1940 and 1950 census information at no cost. Other years are free using Omaha Public Library computers.

**MyHeritage Library Edition** and **FamilySearch.org** provide free access. You can access through the Omaha Public Library>Resources>Genealogy.

## HathiTrust

<https://www.hathitrust.org>

The HathiTrust is a partnership of almost 100 institutions working together to digitize library and archival collections, and they have made over 5 million books freely available online.

## United States Census Bureau

<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/sis.html>

Using real-world Census Bureau statistics to create materials for K-12 students. Explore this site for engaging resources and activities in social studies, math, English, geography, sociology and more. Can target both Omaha and Nebraska statistics.

## Google Books

<https://books.google.com>

Google Books offers a free portal to books (and magazines). Google has now digitized over 15 million books, but only those prior to the copyright boundary of 1923 can be viewed in their entirety. Google Books provides partial views of many books published after 1923.

## Internet Archive - Text Archive

<https://archive.org/details/texts>

Type Omaha in the search bar. More than 4,000 results. Large historic book and pamphlet portal that contains over six million works and features special collections such as Project Gutenberg, the Million Books Project, the Children's Library, American Libraries, Canadian Libraries, and the Community Books Collection. Great place to find digitized Omaha history books from the late 1880s to the early 1900s.

## Digital Public Library

<https://dp.la>

Type Omaha in search bar. More than 10,000 results. Discover 44,449,790 images, texts, videos, and sounds from across the United States. Includes Primary resource packet.



Making Invisible Histories Visible

Compiled by Kristine Gerber, Program Director,  
Making Invisible Histories Visible Program through Omaha Public Schools.  
[Kristine.Gerber@ops.org](mailto:Kristine.Gerber@ops.org)