

House History Research Guide

The following is a brief guide of resources for property research.

Do not limit your research to looking for information just by an address. Every building has a history. Who built the structure? Did a well-known family live in the house? What was its function? Was it a business? Did the building have a name? These questions may lead you to additional information about a structure.

VIRGINIA ROOM RESOURCES

Roanoke City Directories: 1888-present. Salem is included beginning in 1923.

Roanoke/Salem city phone books: 1916-2008.

Virginia Business Directories: Several volumes from 1880s-1910s.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps: 1898, 1903, 1907, 1919, and 1955 are available in print. Salem Public Library provides access to 'Digital Sanborn Maps', which includes various years and localities in Virginia. It can be accessed at:
<https://saalemva.gov/Departments/Salem-Public-Library/Library-Databases>

Photographs: virginiaroom.org/digital

Please note that there are very few historic photos of homes. Try searching the database for street names, neighborhoods, churches, schools, businesses, and/or landmarks that would have existed in the area of a specific address.

Roanoke Valley Multiple Listings Service Index, 1989-1999:
<http://www.virginiaroom.org/digital/admin/items/show/5829>

Old Southwest House History Files: More than 800 addresses in Old Southwest.

Vertical Files Index: Primarily newspaper clippings files, containing information on a multitude of Roanoke and Virginia topics.
<http://www.virginiaroom.org/digital/document/Vertical%20Files>

Surname Files Index: This index includes hundreds of surname and biographical files.
<http://www.virginiaroom.org/digital/document/SurnameFiles>

Index to Biographical Sketches: An index to biographical information on hundreds of individuals from a variety of Virginia Room sources.

Virginia Historic Garden Week Homes Index: Index to homes from Roanoke, Salem, and the surrounding areas profiled in *Historic Garden Week in Virginia, 1938-2010*. <http://www.virginiaroom.org/digital/document/HomesIndex>

Roanoker Magazine Index: Index includes references to articles on homes, neighborhoods, businesses, etc.
<http://www.virginiaroom.org/digital/document/RoanokerMagazineIndex.pdf>

Books

City of Roanoke. *Residential Pattern Book for the City of Roanoke Planning/Building and Development.* (VREF 352.793 R311)

Coulson, Darlene. *Reconnaissance Survey of Architectural and Historical Resources in the Town of Vinton: Roanoke County, Virginia.* (VREF 975.5792 C832r)

Daily, Waifa Al-, et. al. *Hurt Part Studio Project.* (VREF 307.3362 D143h)

Harris, Nelson. *Greater Raleigh Court: A History of Wasena, Norwich, Virginia Heights, and Raleigh Court.* (VREF 975.5791 H242g)

Heller, George R. *A Narrative for the Proposed Historic Preservation District H-2: Patton-Gilmer-Wells Avenues Northeast and Wells Avenue Northwest.*

Hollins College. *Roanoke Architecture.* (VREF 724.9 H726R)

Houck, Maurcia. *If These Walls Could Talk: An Easy Guide to Tracking Your House's Genealogy.* (VREF 728.37 H812I)

Light, Sally. *House Histories: A Guide to Tracing the Genealogy of Your Home.* (VREF 917.55 L626H)

Long, John D. *South of Main: A History of the Water Street Community of Salem.* (VREF 975.5793 L852s)

Prillaman, Helen. *A Place Apart: A Brief History of the Early Williamson Road and North Roanoke Valley Residents and Places.* (VREF 975.5791 P934p)

Pulice, Michael J. *Nineteenth Century Brick Architecture in the Roanoke Valley and Beyond: Discovering the True Legacies of the Deyerle Builders.* (VREF 720.9755 P966n)

Richert, Joel. *In Retrospect: The Old Southwest Neighborhood, Roanoke, Virginia.* (VREF 711.58 R399i)

Virginia Department of Historic Resources. *Historic Architectural Survey of the Belmont Neighborhood, Roanoke, VA.* (VREF 720.9755792 H55H)

Wells, John E. and Robert W. Dalton. *The Virginia Architects: 1835-1955.* (VREF 927.2 W462V)

Whitwell, W.L. and Lee Windborne. *The Architectural Heritage of the Roanoke Valley*. (VREF 720.9755792 W619A)

City of Roanoke Resources

City of Roanoke Geographic Information System: <https://gisre.roanokeva.gov/iss/>

This site provides access to real estate assessment and mapping information. You can view, create, and print maps and, search and view tax parcel data. Find your property using the search tools on the left sidebar. If you receive multiple search results, double-click on the correct option. In the **Property** tab that appears at the bottom of the screen, choose **Deed Cards**. The Deed Cards provide names of property owners, purchase dates and more. They are useful to clarify changes in street names and numbers.

Neighborhood Plans

Available at: <https://www.roanokeva.gov/1096/Neighborhood-Area-Plans>

Internet Resources

Virginia Department of Historic Resources

Virginia Department of Historic Resources: How to Research Historic Property
https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/pdf_files/HowtoResearchHistoricProperty_2013.pdf

Search for Virginia Landmarks and National Register of Historic Places by locality:
<https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/historic-registers/>

Library of Virginia

Virginia Historical Inventory Project:
Roanoke - <https://tinyurl.com/kwr9pvm7>

Could your home be a Sears Modern Home or from another kit home manufacturer popular in the early to mid-twentieth century? Check out the links below for information on kit homes.

<https://searshomes.org/index.php/2011/06/06/is-my-house-a-sears-house/comment-page-1/>

A Guide to Kit Homes: https://inspectapedia.com/Design/Kit_Houses.php