

PCI Webinar with Miriam Kahn

City Directories – Uncovering Clues About Your Community

Thursday, October 18th from 2:00 – 3:00 pm Eastern

Competency: Public Services Competencies

Sub-Category: Demonstrates ability to meet information seeking needs of users

Genealogists are a special breed--and their appetite for information sometimes feels endless. No reference is too obscure, no tombstone too faded. Join us to learn about an often-overlooked resource to use when gathering information for family or local histories--city directories. These directories help patrons locate information about people, organizations, and neighborhoods between the census decades and after 1940.

- Explore the wealth of information in city directories
- Access city directories online and in print
- Utilize directories to understand growth of cities and communities
- Supplement census information with city directory entries
- Compile House Histories

Today, many of these resources are online. Even so, we'll look at examples of paper and digital city directories to uncover clues about the past and present including how neighborhoods changed, who else lived in a house, when streets changed their names, and even tricks to determine when a spouse died.

Miriam Kahn ~ Biography

MBK CONSULTING was founded by Miriam Kahn, MLS, MA, PhD in 1991. Her company specializes in providing consulting and educational services to libraries, archives, historical societies, museums and other cultural institutions.

In 1992, Miriam began teaching workshops in Library & Information Science at Kent State University. These workshops continue to be popular today and include Genealogy & Local History Research Methods, Accessing Government Documents: Print & On-Line.

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Suggested resources:

Articles

- Barrow, William “A Brief History of City Directory Maps.” For NOBS 1999 <http://web.ulib.csuohio.edu/speccoll/maps/cdc.html>
- “City Directories and Newspapers: Windows on the Past.” <http://rwguide.rootsweb.ancestry.com/lesson20.htm> (Accessed July 15, 2013).
- “City Directories: From FamilySearch Wiki.” https://www.familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/City_Directories (Accessed July 15, 2013).
- Dollarhide, William. “Old City Directories – Before the Internet.” *GenealogyBlog* (Sept 10, 2012): <http://www.genealogyblog.com/?p=21631>
- “It’s in the Directory.” Florida Memory Blog (Dec 21, 2015) <https://www.floridamemory.com/blog/2015/12/21/its-in-the-directory/>
- Smith, Juliana. “Anatomy of a City Directory.” *24-7 Family History Circle* (Ancestry.com) 7 Dec 2008 <http://blogs.ancestry.com/circle/?p=3106>

Online Resources for City Directories

- Ancestry <http://www.ancestry.com>
- HathiTrust <http://www.hathitrust.org>
- Internet Archive <http://archive.org>
- Fold3 (none for Florida) - https://www.fold3.com/title_58/city_directories_cleveland/ (most require a subscription or library card with access)

Through Public Libraries in Florida

- Memory Projects and local history pages <https://www.floridamemory.com/>
- FL Dept. State: Division of Library and Information Services. City Directories <https://dos.myflorida.com/library-archives/research/explore-our-resources/city-directories/>
- Miami - Dade County City Directories (LDS Genealogy) a list of extant directories and holding institutions <https://ldsgenealogy.com/FL/Miami-Dade-County-City-Directories.htm> and <https://ldsgenealogy.com/FL/City-Directories.htm>