

## Mid-Century Modern genealogy St. Louis research after 1940

Sources offering genealogical information for the 19th and early 20th centuries are relatively common in print or microfilm formats in libraries, or digitally online. The Special Collections Department is receiving more and more requests related to mid-20th century research, however.

Sources for this period can be a challenge to find. The 1940 U.S. Census is the latest for which records are open, and privacy laws otherwise limit access to more recent personal information. Nevertheless, sources do exist that satisfy some, if not all, queries for information during this period. The following list focuses on post-1940 sources for St. Louis genealogical and historical information held by the Special Collections Department, along with a few tips for finding information elsewhere.

### Vital information (births, marriages, deaths)

#### Civil records of birth

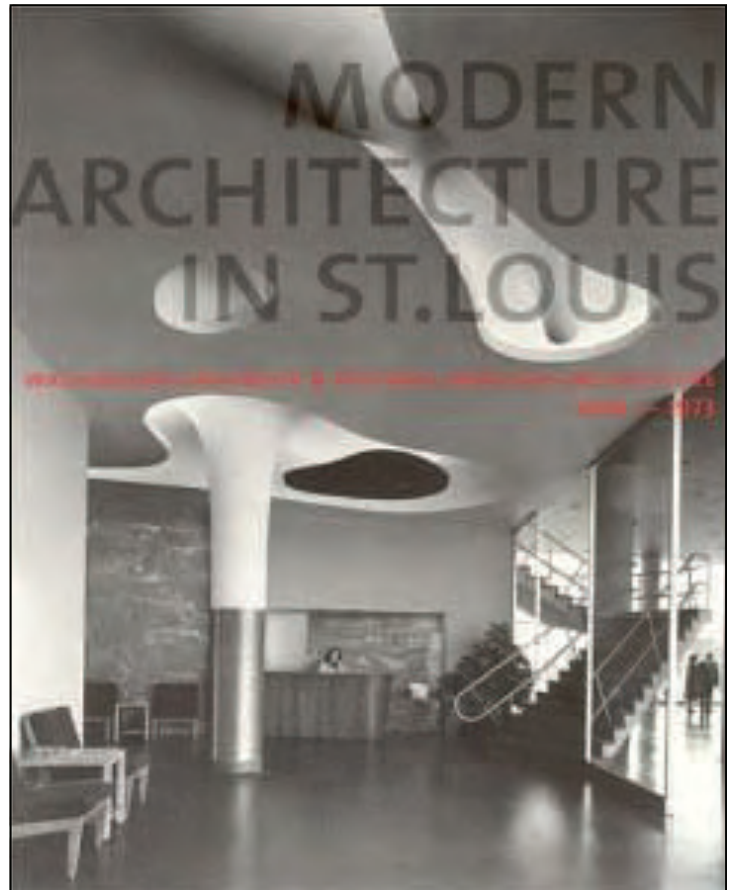
Birth records are closed after 1910 and only available through official state agencies. Contact the [State of Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services](http://tinyurl.com/7zlfbk) <<http://tinyurl.com/7zlfbk>>. [The St. Louis City Recorder of Deeds Office](http://tinyurl.com/otwyzr9) <<http://tinyurl.com/otwyzr9>> can provide official copies of birth certificates issued in any Missouri county.

#### Civil records of marriage (microfilm)

- St. Louis City, 1806 – 1965 (includes St. Louis County up to 1876)
- St. Louis County, 1877 – 1980.

#### Civil records of death

Missouri death certificates from 1910 through the year that records are 50 years old (1963 at this writing) are online at the [Missouri Secretary of State's website](http://tinyurl.com/) <<http://tinyurl.com/>



Whether researching 20th-century genealogy or subjects such as St. Louis architecture, the Special Collections Department can help. The book “Modern Architecture in St. Louis: Washington University and Postwar American Architecture, 1948-1973,” is on the shelf at call no. R 728.9778 M689.

Records less than 50 years old must be requested from the state of Missouri or the St. Louis City Recorder of Deeds (see information under “birth records,” above).

#### Coroner's records (microfilm)

Besides date of death and place of burial, coroner's records can give details of a person's life. Coroner's records are usually only created in cases where the death was unusual or suspicious. The department has St. Louis County Coroner's Records, 1940 – 1990. CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

**Saturday  
March 8, 10:00 a.m.**



**Saint Louis  
Genealogical Society**

*General Meeting:*

**MISSOURI  
PENITENTIARY  
RECORDS**

**at St. Louis County Library**

*Free and open to the public*

Did an ancestor “abandon the family” or just “disappear”? If that ancestor was actually a resident of the Missouri State Penitentiary, his or her information might be in microfilms of Missouri Penitentiary records at SLCL.

**Headquarters Auditorium**



St. Louis County **Library**



Program sites are accessible. Upon two weeks' notice, accommodations will be made for persons with disabilities. Call 314-994-3300, [www.slcl.org](http://www.slcl.org)

**Probate, wills, guardianship (microfilm)**

- St. Louis City Guardianship Case File Indexes, 1890 – 2006
- St. Louis County Probate Court, Guardianship Case Files, 1877 – 1983
- St. Louis County Probate Case Files, 1958 – 1966
- St. Louis County Probate Court records—Guardians and Curators (Minors), 1925 – 1973
- St. Louis County Probate Records, 1804 – 1971
- St. Louis County Wills, 1877 – 1969 (index available for 1878 – 1976)

**Funeral home records (microfilm)**

The library has some St. Louis funeral home records on microfilm covering the period after 1940. [See the library's website for a list with date coverage](http://tinyurl.com/ogggavr) <<http://tinyurl.com/ogggavr>>.

**PastPorts** is published monthly by the St. Louis County Library Special Collections Department, located on Tier 5 of the Headquarters location.

[Current and past issues can be downloaded from the web](http://www.slcl.org/pastports) <<http://www.slcl.org/pastports>>.

**Contact the Special Collections Department**

Special Collections Department  
St. Louis County Library  
1640 S. Lindbergh Blvd  
St. Louis, MO 63131

Phone: 314-994-3300, ext. 2070

Email: [scollections@slcl.org](mailto:scollections@slcl.org)

Website: <http://www.slcl.org>

**Tours**

Tours of the Special Collections Department are conducted on the first Wednesday and third Saturday of the month at 10:30 a.m. No registration is required. Group tours are gladly arranged with advance notice by calling the Special Collections Department at 314-994-3300, ext. 2070.

**Cemetery records (microfilm and electronic)**

Four volumes of burial indexes created by the St. Louis Genealogical Society are available on public PCs in the Special Collections Department. Indexes cover burials in almost all St. Louis City and County cemeteries into the 21st Century and include at least the name of the deceased, the burial date, and the cemetery where buried. The department also has many cemetery records on microfilm. [See the listing on the library's website for more holdings](http://tinyurl.com/n7dcjp9) <<http://tinyurl.com/n7dcjp9>>.

**Church records (microfilm)**

Church records are an excellent source of birth (baptism), marriage and death information, as well as other data.

**■ CATHOLIC CHURCH RECORDS**

The department has all records of parishes in the Archdiocese of St. Louis that have been made available on microfilm. Records usually include baptisms up to about 1930 (later records are restricted by the archdiocese). Marriage, first communions, confirmations, and death records are generally included up to 1993.

**■ PROTESTANT CHURCH RECORDS**

Department holdings include the records for many St. Louis-area Lutheran and United Church of Christ (UCC) congregations. Records commonly include baptisms, confirmations, marriages, and deaths. Coverage varies depending on when the records were filmed and what was made available for filming. See the library's website for [list of holdings for Lutheran](http://tinyurl.com/a8xkqsv) <<http://tinyurl.com/a8xkqsv>> and [UCC](http://tinyurl.com/atmkxfr) <<http://tinyurl.com/atmkxfr>> congregations.

The department also has records on microfilm for a number of other Protestant congregations covering the period under discussion:

- Centenary Methodist Church, St. Louis, 1871 – 1969
- Kirkwood Methodist Church, 1869 – 1965
- Lewis Memorial Methodist Church, Crescent, St. Louis County, Missouri, 1893-1968
- Second Baptist Church, Clayton and McKnight Roads, St. Louis, 1827-1953

- Westminster Presbyterian Church, St. Louis, 1954 – 2006

### Other sources

#### School yearbooks (print)

The Special Collections Department has yearbooks for many St. Louis City and County educational institutions. [See the list on the library's website](http://tinyurl.com/nb3o483) <<http://tinyurl.com/nb3o483>>.

#### Newspapers (microfilm and electronic)

Newspapers are an exceptional source of personal and historical information. The following is a list of newspapers

and indexes available in the Special Collections Department in various formats. [A complete list of newspapers on microfilm is available on the library's website](#) <<http://tinyurl.com/kn65v4n>>

#### ■ DAILY NEWSPAPERS

- St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 1874 – present
- St. Louis Globe-Democrat, 1853 – 1986
- St. Louis Star-Times, Jan. 1, 1910 – March 31, 1950

#### ■ AFRICAN AMERICAN NEWSPAPERS

- St. Louis American, July 14, 1949, Sept. 8, 1949 – December 1994, and July 1995 to date.

## THIS MONTH IN SAINT LOUIS HISTORY

### March 1877

## The Great Divorce

Following the Civil War, city business leaders began to resent statutes passed by the Missouri legislature that empowered county government and increased the tax burden on citizens. A special board of freeholders proposed to expand the city boundaries (city limits at the time reached just beyond Grand Boulevard), separate the city entirely from the county, and create a city home-rule charter. The new boundary would more than triple the city's area, taking in Forest Park, Carondelet and O'Fallon Parks. Opposition came from rural interests and ward politicians, but the scheme was put to a vote on Aug. 22, 1876. Citizens defeated the measure by a narrow margin, with those outside of city limits overwhelmingly vetoing the measure. Separatists took the results to court, however. After more than 5,000 ballots were disqualified, the measure passed by a margin of only 1,253 votes, and the city was declared independent on March 5, 1877. Despite numerous attempts to reunite the city and county beginning in the 1880s, the Great Divorce remains in effect.

### For further reading

Titles available in the Special Collections Department. Call number locations follow each title.



Cassella, William N., Jr. City-county separation: the "Great Divorce" of 1876. *The Bulletin* (Missouri Historical Society) 15 (January 1959): 85 ff.

R 977.8 G259.1.

Cohn, Robert A. Relations between the City of St. Louis and St. Louis County leading to the "Great Divorce of 1876." *The History and Growth of St. Louis, Missouri*, 6th ed. Clayton, Mo. 1974.

R 977.865 C678H.

Murphy, Kevin. The great city-county divide." *Webster-Kirkwood Times*. 16 Aug. 2013. Available at <<http://www.websterkirkwoodtimes.com>>.

O'Neil, Tim. St. Louis' split from county provoked a bitter fight. *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* 23 Aug. 2009: B5.

Primm, James Neal. City-county separation. *Lion of the Valley: St. Louis, Missouri*. Boulder, Col.: Pruett Publishing Company, 1981. 316-317, 320-321, 323-325, 506, 508. R 977.866 P953L.

Scharf, J. Thomas. *History of Saint Louis City and County*. Philadelphia: Louis H. Everts & Co., 1883. Volume 1. 710. R 977.866 S311H.

Simmons, David J. A pauper's palace and the Poor House odyssey. *The Society of Architectural Historians, Missouri Valley Chapter Newsletter* 20 (Spring 2014): 1 ff. R 977.865 S678N.

- St. Louis Argus, Jan. 1, 1915 – Dec. 1942; Dec. 1945 – Dec. 1962; 1965 – 1966; 1986 – 1997.

#### ■ NEIGHBORHOOD AND COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS

- Baden News Press, June 16, 1948 – Dec. 29, 1964
- Central West End, Oct. 3, 1984 – Dec. 29, 1991
- Clayton Citizen, Jan. 3, 1979 – Dec. 31, 1989
- Naborhood Link News, June 6, 1930 – Dec. 30, 1969
- Neighborhood News: Free "shopper" newspapers issued in various local editions for various dates, 1932 – 1970
- St. Louis Bugle, Nov 18, 1945 – December 30, 1972
- St. Louis Countian, Sept.8, 1951 – Sept. 28, 1985
- St. Louis County Watchman-Advocate, 1885 – 1985
- Webster-Kirkwood Journal, 1991
- West Citizen Journal, Jan. 1, 1986 – Dec. 31, 1989
- West County Citizen, Jan. 3, 1979 – Dec. 25, 1985
- West County Journal, Jan. 1, 1986 – Dec. 29, 1991

#### ■ BUSINESS AND LEGAL NEWSPAPERS

- St. Louis Business Journal, Sept. 21, 1998 – Sept. 12, 2002
- St. Louis Daily Record, Oct. 16, 1890 - Sept. 28, 1985 (legal news)

### Newspaper indexes

#### ■ PRINT INDEXES

The following indexes do not include obituaries, except in cases of notable people.

- Index to St. Louis Newspapers, 1975 – 1979. R 070 I38. Includes the St. Louis Argus, St. Louis Post-Dispatch, St. Louis Globe-Democrat, and St. Louis Sentinel newspapers.
- St. Louis Post-Dispatch Index, 1980 – 2011. R 070 I38. Some years are in closed stacks—ask a librarian for assistance.

#### Online newspaper indexes

##### [St. Louis Globe-Democrat Clipping Files Index](http://tinyurl.com/nv5c23w)

<<http://tinyurl.com/nv5c23w>>. An index created by the

Mercantile Library to the Globe-Democrat clipping file (morgue) developed for internal use of the newspaper's staff. The index can be searched by name or subject and covers the period from approximately 1930 until the paper's demise in 1986. Obituaries are generally not included except for notable people.

##### [St. Louis Post-Dispatch Obituary Index](http://tinyurl.com/d2rrqxn)

<<http://tinyurl.com/d2rrqxn>>. Created by the St. Louis (City) Public Library, this index currently covers the years 1880-1930, 1942-1945, 1960-1969, and 1992-2011.

##### [St. Louis Sun Obituary Index](http://tinyurl.com/ovtx4so) <<http://tinyurl.com/ovtx4so>>.

The St. Louis Sun, founded by former employees of the defunct St. Louis Globe-Democrat, was published from Sept. 25, 1989 to April 25, 1990. Copies of obituaries may be requested from the Special Collections Department.

### Periodicals (print)

- Greater St. Louis Magazine, 1968 – 1969. R 977.865 G786
- Prom Magazine, 1947 – 1973. R 977.865 P965
- St. Louis Commerce, 1975 – 1987. R 330.9778 S145
- St. Louis Lutheran, 1947 – 1980, 1999 – 2000. Ask a librarian for assistance. [For a list of feature articles published 1983 – 2004 \(with gaps\), see the list on the library's website](#) <<http://tinyurl.com/lqyn99j>>.
- St. Louis Magazine, 1992 – 2013. R 977.866 S1453
- St. Louisan, 1972 – 1977. R 977.866 S145

### City directories and telephone book (microfilm and print)

City directories include separate listings by name and address. Information commonly includes the name of the head of household, address, occupation, and place of employment.

- St. Louis City Directories: 1940 – present, with gaps.
- St. Louis County Directories: 1941 – present, with gaps.
- St. Louis Telephone Directories (city and county, white and yellow pages, print only): 1968 – present with gaps

## CLASSES

Classes are free and open to the public, but registration is required. ☎ Call (314) 994-3300 to register. Space is limited.

### ☎ Genealogical research: getting the most out of the Special Collections Department

Wednesday, March 5, 2 p.m.

Headquarters East Room

Larry Franke, instructor

Registration is now open.

### ☎ Introduction to Fold3 and HeritageQuest

Tuesday, March 18, 2 p.m.

Headquarters Computer Lab

Larry Franke, instructor

Registration is now open.

### ☎ Newspapers in history and genealogy

Wednesday, March 26, 2 p.m.

Headquarters Computer Lab

Larry Franke, instructor

Registration is now open.

### ☎ Introduction to Ancestry Library Edition

Wednesday, April 9, 2 p.m.

Headquarters Computer Lab

Larry Franke, instructor

Registration opens March 12.

### ☎ Genealogical Research: Getting the Most out of the Special Collections Department

Tuesday, April 15, 2 p.m.

Headquarters East Room

Larry Franke, instructor

Registration opens March 18

## Property records (print and microfiche)

- St. Louis County Atlas, 1974. A print set including a plat map and a name index to properties with tax valuation.
- St. Louis County Property Records, 2000 (microfiche). Includes property description and tax valuations.

## Published histories

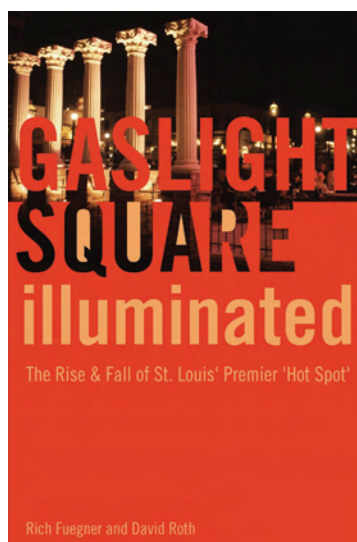
Written histories of many St. Louis City and County neighborhoods, communities, religious institutions, and social organizations are available in print in the Special Collections Department. [Surname indexes to many are available on the library's website](http://tinyurl.com/ne2wdz6) <<http://tinyurl.com/ne2wdz6>>.

The department also has published materials for a variety of subjects related to St. Louis history, including transportation, architecture, business, sports, crime, and politics.

Check [the library's online catalog](http://webpac.slcl.org) <<http://webpac.slcl.org>> or ask a librarian for assistance.

## Local history files

The Special Collections Department maintains files of uncataloged materials relating to St. Louis history, institutions, professions, events, and other subjects of local interest. Items include newspaper clippings, booklets, pamphlets, brochures, and other materials.



The Special Collections Department has histories of local communities and neighborhoods, such as this one about the St. Louis entertainment district known as Gaslight Square.

### **Gaslight Square Illuminated**

By Rick Fuegner and David Roth  
Virginia Publishing, 2010  
R 977.866 F953G.

## NEW IN THE SPECIAL COLLECTIONS DEPARTMENT

### New book list is now on the web!



Beginning with this issue of PastPorts, a list of new genealogy and local history books received during the previous month will appear on the [library's web-site](#) and be accessible through a web link. The list will no longer be published in the newsletter. View the list by clicking on

the graphic, above, or by typing the URL into your browser: <<http://webpac.slcl.org/search~S32?/ftlist^bib30,1,0,34/mode=2>>. Books with call numbers not beginning with "R" are listed in Dewey Decimal order first, followed by those with call numbers beginning with "R."

Book titles can be selected from the online list and emailed, printed, or saved to a file. An additional feature for library

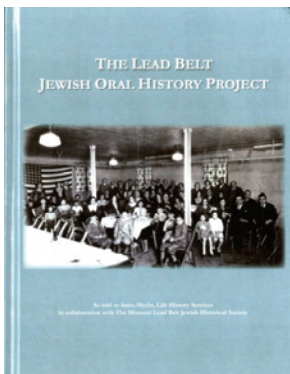
card holders is the ability to login to their library accounts and save titles to a customized list.

A "New Genealogy and Local History" link is also posted on the online catalog main page, as follows:

- [Online catalog](http://webpac.slcl.org) <<http://webpac.slcl.org>> (link is at bottom of the page)
- [Online classic catalog](http://webpac.slcl.org/screens/mainmenuclassic.html) <<http://webpac.slcl.org/screens/mainmenuclassic.html>> (link is on right side of page)

Links to new book lists for other subjects are also listed.

For more information about viewing the new book list, exporting records, or saving items to a customized list, call (314) 994-3300 or ask a librarian when visiting any St. Louis County Library branch.



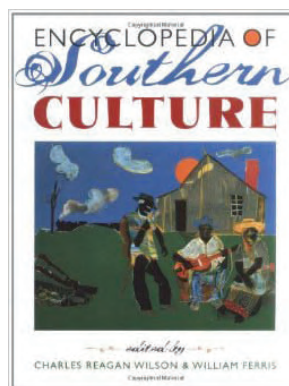
### The Lead Belt Jewish Oral History Project by Anita Hecht

**Life History Services, 2012;  
175 pp. R 977.8 L434 and  
circulating copy**

Anita Hecht collected oral histories of the descendents of Jews who settled in the southern Missouri lead-mining district, known as the "lead belt." When the St. Joseph Lead Company opened a mine in the early part of the 20th century, it drew miners from all over the Midwest. Jewish immigrants living in St. Louis moved to the area to establish grocery, dry goods and hardware stores.

Hecht interviewed nine narrators that remain from the Jewish community of the southern Missouri lead mining belt. "Their stories reflect both a large tale of the Jewish immigrant experience in the rural Midwestern United States, and

their particular tales of family journeys, connections, adherence to Jewish tradition and family values, and assimilation to life in the New World." The stories are generously interspersed with photos of families, their businesses, and the surrounding community. St. Louis readers will recognize many family names mentioned in this book.— *SC Staff*



### The Encyclopedia of Southern Culture

Charles Reagan Wilson & William Ferris, eds.

**University of North Carolina Press, 1989; 1634 pp.  
R 975 E56**

The Encyclopedia of Southern Culture is "the first attempt ever" notes U.S. News & World Report, "to describe every aspect of a region's life and thought, the impact of its history and policies, its music and literature, its manners and myths, even the iced tea that washes down its catfish and cornbread."

## EVENTS

Events are sponsored by St. Louis County Library and are free and open to the public.

### MARCH

#### St. Louis Genealogical Society General Meeting

Saturday, March 8, 10 a.m.

Headquarters Auditorium

"Missouri Penitentiary Records at St. Louis County Library," Ruth Ann Hager, speaker.

### APRIL

#### StLGS African American Special Interest Group

Saturday, April 5, 11:00 a.m.

Headquarters East Room

"Making Sense of Probate Files"

#### StLGS German Special Interest Group

Wednesday, April 9, 7 p.m.

Headquarters Auditorium

"Woman in a Dress," Gloria R. Perry, speaker

#### StLGS Irish Special Interest Group

Tuesday, April 22, 7 p.m.

Headquarters Auditorium

"Early Irish History Through Irish Eyes," Gabrielle Woeltje, speaker

### MAY

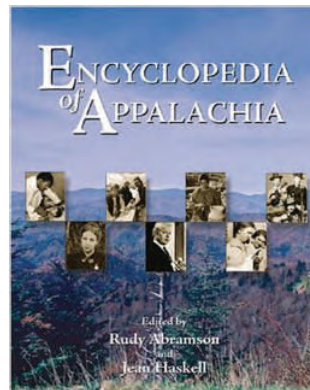
#### St. Louis Genealogical Society General Meeting

Tuesday, May 13, 7 p.m.

Headquarters Auditorium

"A Shape in Time and Space: Tracking the Necked Discoid Gravemarker," Michael McNerney, speaker

To foster a deeper understanding of the South's cultural patterns, the editors have organized this reference book around twenty-four thematic sections, including history, religion, folklore, language, art and architecture, recreation, politics, the mythic South, urbanization, literature, music, violence, law, and media. The life experiences of southerners are discussed in sections on black life, ethnic life, and women's life. Throughout, the broad goal is to identify the forces that have supported either the reality or the illusion of the southern way of life -- people, places, ideas, institutions, events, symbols, rituals, and values. The Encyclopedia of Southern Culture was developed by the Center for the Study of Southern Culture at the University of Mississippi. Contributors to the volume include historians, literary critics, sociologists, anthropologists, geographers, linguists, theologians, folklorists, architects, ecologists, lawyers, university presidents, newspaper reporters, magazine writers, and novelists. — *Publisher's website*



### Encyclopedia of Appalachia

Rudy Abramson and Jean Haskell, eds.

University of Tennessee Press, 2006; 1832 pp.  
R 974 E56

The Encyclopedia details subjects traditionally associated with Appalachia—folklore, handcrafts, mountain music, foods, and coal mining—but goes far beyond regional stereotypes to treat such wide-ranging topics as the aerospace industry, Native American foodways, ethnic diversity in the coalfields, education reform, linguistic variation, and the contested notion of what it means to be Appalachian, both inside and outside the region. Researched and developed by the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services at East Tennessee State University, this 1,860-page compendium includes all thirteen states that constitute the northern, central, and southern subregions of Appalachia—from New York to Mississippi. With thorough, detailed, yet accessible entries on everything from Adventists to zinc mining, the Encyclopedia of Appalachia is an indispensable one-stop guide to all things Appalachian.—*Publisher's website*