

For the records

Researching military air squadrons and air groups

The History and Genealogy Department has expanded the resources available for those researching military aviation histories. As researchers discover ancestors and other individuals who served in the military, many develop new research questions regarding their military service. Details involving the people, places, and events are often the basis of these new research questions. The following resource suggestions, research tips, and examples will help those researching aviation squadrons and air groups.

Getting Started

There are many different approaches to researching squadrons. One of the most common ways is to begin searching for books about specific squadrons. Searching the [library catalog](http://webpac.slcl.org) <webpac.slcl.org> is one way to begin putting together a list of resources. The library catalog is a great source for locating the new materials in the History and Genealogy collection.

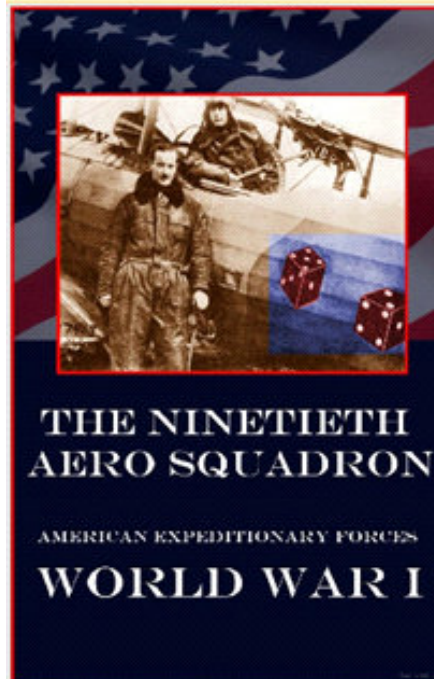
Squadron Histories

Depending on how much information you already have about an individual or group, you can start by searching broadly for historical overviews of events during specific time-periods, or search for a specific squadron or air group. You should also consider what type of content you would like to find. For example, are you searching for lists of names, photographs of

aircrafts or individuals, or journal entries describing the day-to-day occurrences of a squadron? Considering your research goals is important for finding the resources that are most relevant for your research needs. Additionally, the methods you use may change throughout the research process as different questions emerge and new information is discovered.

Once you have determined your research questions and goals, the next step is to begin browsing or searching collections for

relevant resources. However, just searching the library catalog with the keyword “squadrons” will not return all of the books pertaining to squadrons and air groups in the library’s collection. You can take additional steps to help improve search results. For example, the sidebar on the next page lists some authors of books on squadron histories in the History and Genealogy collection. Searching the catalog with the authors’ names will bring up any works the library currently has for that author.



The majority of the books in the History and Genealogy book collection focus on World War II Air Force squadrons, however there are some that cover other time periods and branches including the Navy

and Marine Corps. In addition to the list of authors, a bibliography appears at the end of the article. Books include photographs, personal stories, and detailed histories about the experiences of those who served with the squadrons.

Those researching ancestors who served in WWI or those with an interest in researching the early days of aviation should consult, *The Ninetieth Aero Squadron, American Expeditionary Forces: A History of its Activities during the World War; from its Formation to its Return to the United States* by Leland M. Carver. The 90th Aero Squadron was a

United States Army Air Service unit that took part in operations on the Western Front during WWI.

Another squadron that was part of the American Expeditionary Forces during WWI was the 50th Aero Squadron. This squadron served in France between 1918 and 1919. To learn more about the American Expeditionary forces and the squadrons that formed the group, consult Daniel P. Morse’s book, *The 50th Aero Squadron: Being the Log and Operations of the Squadron While with the American Expeditionary Force in France, 1918–1919*.

While many of these books are secondary sources, authors such as George A. Larson interviewed members of the

squadrons they wrote about for first-hand accounts. The squadron members Larson interviewed also provided him with valuable primary source information for his book, *The 54th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron*. Some of the information the squadron members provided was classified and was first made public when published in Larson’s book in 2017.

Online database resources

Researchers can find other sources of information about specific squadrons on the Fold3 database. The military aviation collections on Fold3 date back to World War I. One of the most comprehensive sources of information for the American Expeditionary Forces in World War I is Gorrell’s *History of the AEF Air Service*. The Chief of the Air Service, Maj. Gen Mason Patrick, asked Col. Edgar S. Gorrell, the Assistant Chief of Staff of the Air Service, to put together all of the information he could find that supported the need for Army aeronautics. Section E of Gorrell’s *History of the AEF Air Service* includes 27 volumes of Squadron Histories.

In addition to the section on squadron histories, Fold3 describes the series as “282 bound volumes of historical narratives, reports, photographs, and other records that document administrative, technical, and tactical activities of the Air Service in the American Expeditionary Forces.” For additional information, researchers can also download the National Archives 25-page descriptive pamphlet for the publication. A link to the descriptive pamphlet is included on Fold3’s description page for the publication.

Researchers searching for resources on Naval Aviation history will find the Navy Cruise Books, 1918–2009 on Fold3 a useful collection for finding squadron rosters, photographs, and operational details about missions during a specific time-period. The cruise books are listed in the collection by the name and number of the ship. Cruise books are similar to yearbooks in that they list the squadrons and personnel who served aboard a particular ship during a specific year.

For additional resources on WWII squadrons and air groups, researchers will find several unit histories for both fighter and bomber squadrons. To view the unit histories that are available on Fold3, start by selecting “browse” from the top menu of the home page. Then filter the results by selecting “WWII”.

Authors of squadron histories held by the History & Genealogy Department

Albertson, Bill	Jackson, Daniel
Bates, Jack E.	Jones, Jay
Blake, Steve	Karolevitz, Robert F.
Bowman, Martin W.	Kolln, Jeff
Brett, Jeffrey	Kuhl, George C.
Camp, Robert Jr.	Lambert, John W.
Carey, Alan C.	Larson, George A.
Carver, Joseph	Mackay, Ron
Carver, Leland M.	Maguire, Jon A.
Cook, Lee	Malayney, Norman
Cora, Paul B.	Marshall, Bill
Dameron, J. David	Mays, Terry M.
Dewez, Luc (Luce)	McLaren, David R.
Fairfield, Terry A.	Miller, Kent D.
Ferguson, S.W.	Morse, Daniel P.
Freeman, Roger A.	Sandall, Howard J.
Gamble, Bruce	Segal, Jules F.
Glines, Carroll V.	Speer, Frank
Haulman, Daniel L.	Stanaway, John
Hill, Mike	Watts, Perry
Homan, Lynn M.	Wilson, Paul
Hutchinson, James Lee	Woerpel, Don
Hutton, Stephen McKenzie	Wolf, William

Scroll down to the bottom of the list to find the unit histories. The units are listed by their group number (“Unit History-358th Fighter Group,” for example). Thousands of WWII era US Air Force photos are also on the Fold3 database. These photographs consist of aircraft, equipment, air-races, and military personnel. Another valuable resource for researching WWII squadrons is the reference book titled, *Combat Squadrons of the Air Force WWII*. The book includes every active Air Force squadron during WWII.



After locating resources about a specific squadron or air group, researchers can then enhance their research to learn more about the life and experiences of individuals in the squadrons. Personal journals and diaries, such as Bill Albertson’s book, *I Flew With Hell’s Angels: Thirty-six Combat Missions in a B-17 ‘Flying Fortress’, 1944–1945*, provide great insight into the lives of the pilots and air crew.

The History and Genealogy department continues to add new books to the collection, and some of these new additions will expand the resources available to cover more eras of military aviation. Check the library catalog <webpac.slcl.org> frequently for new additions.

Online databases, such as Fold3, also frequently add new digital collections. The Fold3 database <<https://www.slcl.org/content/fold3>> and many others are available at all library branches and can be accessed remotely by St. Louis County Library cardholders living in the St. Louis metropolitan area. A full list of genealogy databases offered by the library is available online <<https://bit.ly/3kMN3rx>>.

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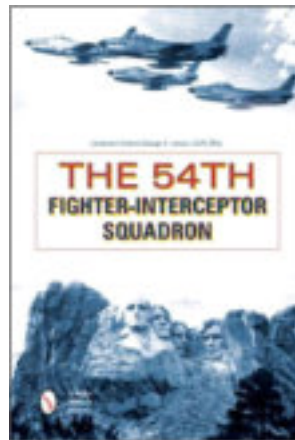
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Say “cheese!”

Photo identification websites

A family may often inherit unidentified photographs and wonder who the subjects of the photographs are. Other times, you may be in the possession of a photograph whose subject is identifiable but are unsure how to get it into the hands of a family member that would cherish it. Or, you would be thrilled at the prospect of seeing an ancestor’s face that you know by name only.

Dead Fred

There are sites dedicated to assisting these endeavors. One is [Dead Fred](https://deadfred.com), <https://deadfred.com> a self-described genealogy photo archive. Dead Fred refers to the German emperor Frederick III. Founder Joe Bott’s great-great-grandfather lived during Frederick’s reign, and he named the site as a way of honoring them both.

On Dead Fred, you can submit a photo with all the identifying information you may have such as name, age, and location. This can be done either digitally or through the U.S. Postal Service. Physical photographs are considered donations and will not be returned. If you see a photo that you recognize as a relative and would like to obtain it, you may

contact the submitter unless they have requested anonymity. If the photo belongs to Dead Fred, you will need to show proof of your relationship, and if no other family member comes forward within a 6-month period, Dead Fred will send you the photo. Likewise, if you are in possession of photos that you no longer wish to keep, you may donate them to Dead Fred, where they may benefit others.



Dead Fred offers several ways to search. You may look for a surname, a location, a photographer, or even search photos contained within a yearbook (which they refer to as an annual). There is also a “Mysteries” category for photos with little or no identifying information.

Ancestors Lost and Found

Another site with a similar focus is [Ancestors Lost & Found](https://bit.ly/2QjtH3c) <https://bit.ly/2QjtH3c>. Its scope is not limited solely to photographs but also includes family memorabilia and Bibles. Users can post information on items they may have found or are seeking. With the help of these sites, a family reunion of a different sort may be in your future.

Live History & Genealogy classes via Zoom webinar

Classes are free and open to the public. Registration is required. [Register online](https://www.slcl.org/events) <<https://www.slcl.org/events>> or call 314-994-3300. Classes will be conducted over Zoom webinar. Times listed are Central Daylight Savings Time.

Saturday, May 22, 2:00 p.m.

Finding Ancestors in U.S. Census Records

Census records are a basic and essential source for genealogical research in the U.S. Learn how to search census records effectively using Ancestry Library Edition and other electronic databases | [Register](#)

Tuesday, May 25, 6:30 p.m.

Of Non-Noble Lineage: Deutsches Geschlechterbuch as a German Genealogical Source

The 221 volumes of *Deutsches Geschlechterbuch* offer genealogical information for thousands of non-noble German families. Their standardized format makes using them possible for the non-German speaker. | [Register](#)

Wednesday, June 2, 6:30 p.m.

Exploring the Ancestry Library Edition Database

The Ancestry Library Edition Database is a powerful tool for genealogical research. Find out how to take advantage of Ancestry's capabilities in your research | [Register](#)

Monday, June 7, 6:30 p.m.

Library Skills for Genealogical Research

Libraries offer essential tools for researching your ancestry. Learn how to search online library catalogs, obtain materials from distant libraries, locate periodical articles, and use the library's in-house guides. Prerequisite: Who Were my Ancestors? Beginning Genealogical Research class or previous research experience. | [Register](#)

LIBRARY HOLIDAY CLOSING

Monday, May 31

Memorial Day

Monday, July 5

Independence Day Observed

Saturday, June 26, 2:00 p.m.

Exploring Fold3 and HeritageQuest Databases

Fold3 and HeritageQuest offer a variety of records for genealogical research, and they can be used free at home with a valid St. Louis County Library card. Find out how to search for your ancestors in census records, city directories, genealogy books, and government documents. | [Register](#)

Tuesday, June 29, 6:30 p.m.

Finding Your Ancestors in Church Records

Church records are valuable sources of genealogical information. Learn about the kinds of records congregations created, where to find them, and how they can help you in your research. | [Register](#)

H&G Virtual Classroom

View recorded class videos free and on demand at the [History & Genealogy Virtual Classroom](https://www.slcl.org/genealogy/virtual-classroom) <<https://www.slcl.org/genealogy/virtual-classroom>>.

St. Louis Genealogical Society Programs

StLGS meetings are free and open to the public, but registration is required. [Visit the St. Louis Genealogical Society website for registration information](https://stlgs.org) <<https://stlgs.org>>. Meetings will be conducted using Zoom.

Saturday, June 12, 10:00 a.m.

StLGS General Membership Meeting

The Lamps of Experience are Dim: Missourians in the Women's Army Corps of WWII

Explore the creation of the Women's Army Corps and the experiences of women in the U.S. Army during World War II. Although the presentation focuses on Missouri women, the issues they faced are the same that affected all women who served during this time period. Speaker: Mary Stansfield

Wednesday, June 16, 7:00 p.m.

StLGS German Special Interest Group

German Settlement in Missouri

Americans arrived before Missouri Statehood. In the 19th century, German immigrants poured into the State, altering the population and keeping Missouri in the Union. Explore counties with the largest influx. Speaker: Carol Whitton,

Of note

History & Genealogy Department expands opening hours

History & Genealogy is now open 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday and 9:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m. on Saturday by appointment. Researchers can make an appointment for the day, arrive any time during opening hours and stay until closing. Masks are recommended, and patrons are asked to keep safe social distance while in the library. [Appointments can be made online](https://bit.ly/33VUeqM) <https://bit.ly/33VUeqM> or by calling the library at 314-994-3300 and speaking to a customer service representative. .

St. Louis organizations recognized at NGS SLAM! Idea Showcase

St. Louis Genealogical Society was one of three top award winners at the 2021 National Genealogical Society [SLAM! Idea Showcase](https://bit.ly/3eXUZfZ) <https://bit.ly/3eXUZfZ>. The society's project to digitize records of religious organizations was its award-winning submission. St. Louis Public Library's submission, "Rooted in Inclusion: Forgoing the Family Tree Model" received honorable mention.

The SLAM! Idea Showcase is a program to foster idea sharing and collegiality among genealogy information providers. All 31 projects submitted to the Showcase event can be viewed on the NGS [YouTube channel](https://bit.ly/2S82QaW) <https://bit.ly/2S82QaW>.

PastPorts is published by History & Genealogy at St. Louis County Library, located on Tier 5 of Library Headquarters.

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

Contact us:

History & Genealogy
St. Louis County Library
1640 S. Lindbergh Blvd.
St. Louis, MO 63131

314-994-3300
genealogy@slcl.org
www.slcl.org/genealogy

History & Genealogy services

The following H&G services are free and available to researchers who are unable to visit the library.

Lookup service

H&G can provide photocopies, prints, or digital scans of many library materials from indexed sources or when given a specific citation:

- Up to 30 pages from one book or one article from a journal issue. Staff can also photocopy or scan tables of contents and index pages.
- Microfilmed records—A list of microfilm available in the H&G collection can be [viewed online](https://bit.ly/3jrqrw3j) <https://bit.ly/3jrqrw3j>.
- Print outs from database records if patrons cannot access the database at home.

Please use the [online lookup request form](https://bit.ly/2UQXJKE) <https://bit.ly/2UQXJKE> to submit requests.

Print collection

More than 27,000 books in the collection can be checked out. The entire collection is included in the library's [online catalog](http://webpac.slcl.org) <http://webpac.slcl.org>. Books with call numbers that do not begin with "R" are available to check out. Patrons can request books online or by calling 314-994-3300.

Research guidance

H&G staff members can provide research assistance by phone.

Book-a-Genealogist

Researchers encountering brick-walls or who would like assistance in developing a plan to achieve specific research goals can schedule a phone consultation with an H&G staff member. Requests can be made using the online [Book-a-Genealogist form](https://bit.ly/3fQbB0r) <https://bit.ly/3fQbB0r>.

Database access

Many library databases can be used at home by St. Louis County Library card holders living in the metropolitan area. The Ancestry Library Edition database, normally restricted to in-library use, can be accessed remotely on a temporary basis. [View the list of genealogical databases on the library's website](https://bit.ly/37GRBtF) <https://bit.ly/37GRBtF>.

For more information, please contact the History & Genealogy Department at 314-994-3300 or genealogy@slcl.org.