

Spotlight on genealogical research facilities

A series of articles about places to do research

Los Angeles Central Library

630 West Fifth Street, Los Angeles

Hours: Sunday-Monday-Closed; Tuesday & Thursday, 10 am–8 pm; Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, 10 am–5:30 pm.

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Web site: <http://www.lapl.org/central/history.html>

by Aaron L. Day

In 2005, the California State Genealogical Alliance, (CSGA) began documenting libraries around the state, bringing to light these wonderful genealogy collections. It was in 2005 that I submitted the first article to this series. The article was entitled “Start a Genealogy Collection at Your Local Library,” and focused on the Long Beach Public Library.

At the time, I was vice president of two organizations that had started genealogical collections at the main library—The Questing Heirs Genealogical Society, and The African-American Heritage Society of Long Beach.

Through the years, I have also done a tremendous amount of research at various Los Angeles libraries. There is the Central Library, and 72 branch libraries. I believe the Richard J. Riordan Central Library is one of the top public libraries for genealogists in the United States.

Rick Crume is a contributing editor for *Family Tree Magazine* and in the October 2002 issue he listed the Los Angeles Public Library as one of the “TOP 10 Public Libraries to Research Your Roots.” In selecting these libraries, Mr. Crume took five factors into consideration: collection size, geographic scope, census records, special collections, and accessibility.

The Genealogy and Local History Collection at Los Angeles Central Library is the largest on the west coast. The department has over 200,000 titles in its collections, and approximately 45,000 of these are classified as genealogy with over 10,000 genealogies.

There are over 80,000 maps, 2,000 atlases, 1,000 gazetteers and over 1,000 books supporting the study of maps and mapping. The map collection at Central Library is one of the largest in American public libraries.

The Library Collections include:

Census Records
 City Directories
 Family Histories
 Heraldry and Coats of Arms
 How-to-books
 Immigration Records
 Local Histories
 Maps
 Military Records
 Name Books
 Newspapers
 Obituaries
 Online Databases
 Periodicals
 Telephone Directories
 Vital Records

During the past decade I have taken numerous groups to the Central Library in Los Angeles for tours, genealogical research, and classes. I must thank retired Senior History/Genealogy Librarian, Michael Kirley, for his many years of assistance to me. I have done a tremendous amount of personal genealogical research at the library. I spent many hours there as I researched, documented, and prepared my latest book for publication, *DNA To Africa: The Search Continues*. Several popular databases are available through the Central Library. These are the two that I used while researching my family history.

(1). Ancestry Library Edition - This database may be accessed from any Los Angeles Public Library Branch and the Central Library.

(2). Heritage Quest Online – This database may also be accessed from your home computer via the web. (A Los Angeles Public Library Card is required). This is a collec-

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tion of genealogical research materials for tracing family history and American culture.

Research guides have been prepared by the History and Genealogy staff in order to help you in conducting research on popular topics, such as: Census Tract Maps, Genealogy, Obituaries in Los Angeles County, Vital Records, etc. Photographs are available for viewing by appointment only. There are History and Genealogy staff members available in order to assist, and there is also a reference librarian available to give more detailed direction.

The library benefits tremendously from its "Friends" groups and the "Library Foundation of Los Angeles." These groups generously fund many projects including:

The ALOUD Central Library speaker series, programs for children, teens, and adults, exhibitions, lectures, readings, performances, discussions, and other cultural programming. Volunteer members of the Friends of the Los Angeles Public Library are available to assist with group tours. Organized genealogical societies that wish to schedule tours, should contact Cindy McNaughton at (213) 228-7402.

The Los Angeles Central Library is accessible year round, it has onsite technology and there are plenty of workspaces available.

(Note: See Author Spotlight on page 2 for some of the books that have been written by Aaron.)

Family History Day and the Root Cellar Library

The 12th annual Family History Day at the California State Archives will be held Saturday, October 9, 2010, 8:30am to 4pm. This fun and informative day will include docents in period clothing; over twenty classes, from beginning genealogy, to internet resources and specialized research topics; classes in the Preservation Lab to see how to preserve family papers; research in the Root Cellar Library; and tours of the Archives to learn about the historical documents held there.

Admission is free and open to the public. No registration required. The State Archives is located at 1020 "O" Street, Downtown Sacramento. Details are available at <http://fhd2010.blogspot.com>.

The Family History Day is sponsored by the California State Archives, Root Cellar – Sacramento Genealogical Society, and Genealogical and Historical Council of Sacramento Valley.

Root Cellar-Sacramento Genealogical Society would like to introduce Sammie Hudgens, Root Cellar Librarian. The Library will be open for browsing and research at Family History Day at the California State Archives. Sammie and library docents will be on-hand to orient and assist visitors.

Sammie Hudgens has devoted many years to the growth and development of the Root Cellar Library. Her efforts speak for themselves; the Library is a treasure trove for family history researchers, for Root Cellar members and visitors alike. The library contains over

5,000 volumes from nearly every state and many countries. There are more than 150 books on California alone, including the 1890 Great Registers for the whole state. The CD collection is well over 150 and counting. The online catalog is a helpful tool for locating the title or topic of interest to you.

Sammie is currently overseeing the inventory of an extensive genealogical collection recently donated to Root Cellar by the Dorothy Williams estate. The collection portends to be a wonderful addition to the library.

The library is maintained by Root Cellar – Sacramento Genealogical Society and is housed at the California State Archives on the 4th floor, the same location where Family History Day will be held. Be sure to come into the library and browse awhile!

Santa Clara County Archives Cuts Hours

Budget reductions have resulted in a cut to the hours that the Santa Clara County Archives is open. The new hours are Monday and Wednesday from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. On Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, it is open by appointment only from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

The archives is located at 1875 Senter Road in San José. The telephone number is (408) 792-1895, and the website can be found at <http://archives.sccgov.org>. An online index and description of its holdings can be found at the website of the Online Archives of California at <http://www.oac.cdlib.org>.