

# ***County Websites: An Overlooked Resource***

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**Note: Not every “county website” is a genealogy site and not every county has a website; even non-genealogy county sites can be worth checking as often there is history included as well as people to contact for information or assistance.**

## **Ways to find county genealogy websites:**

Google the county name, state, and “genealogy” (e.g., Los Angeles, California, genealogy)

Go to <[www.Linkpendium.com](http://www.Linkpendium.com)> and click on “Localities, USA” and follow directions from there

Go to <[www.Cyndislist.com](http://www.Cyndislist.com)>, go to “Categories,” then to “United States Index” and scroll to desired state, then click on “counties” option and scroll to desired county

Go to <<http://usgenweb.org>> and select state from index along left margin;

from state site (these are separately maintained so each is unique), locate county search option

Go to <<http://stevemorse.org/census/counties.html>> and follow directions

## **To identify county if it is not known**

Go to <<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/>> and scroll down to “Research Templates”

(in the left column at the bottom, as of this writing, Jan. 2013); select “United States” to get a “search” box; enter city and state to search for the county

Most state websites (on USgenweb) offer a map of the state, identifying each county; many also provide information re: county formation date and the county from which it was created

## **Note: county websites are operated by volunteers . . . keep this in mind**

If you send something to be posted, know that it may take a long time for that to actually occur.

Generally the webmasters or site coordinators are not available to do county lookups: many do not live in the county in question.

Read all the information about how the site is operated before emailing the coordinator.

Check the “last updated” date (usually at the bottom of each page) to determine if it is an active site.

## **Always bookmark your families’ county sites to return and check on what has been added, corrected, or changed!**

Sometimes the changed sections or newly added material is clearly marked, but not always.

### **Items often found on county websites**

- photos and postcard images
- newspaper articles
- atlases, gazetteers, and maps
- churches, fraternal organizations, and schools (types of records varies)
- asylums, homes, institutions, and hospitals
- cemetery records (some with photos of headstones, some with locations, some with epitaphs)
- military records
- information on local businesses (past and present)
- census records (federal, state, and/or local)
- biographies of selected county residents (from varied sources)
- queries, lookup helps, and local “angels” to assist
- contacts for advice
- city directories
- county histories
- links to local libraries, historical societies, funeral homes, and more
- resource list for various local repositories
- locations & hours of operation for court houses, libraries, historical societies, and more
- surname searches – with contacts for others searching your family names
- indexes for vital records, directories, and more
- actual vital records transcriptions
- addresses to write for more information
- local genealogical societies
- landmarks
- general “helps” to do genealogy, including forms, links to other genealogy sites, etc.
- tutorials

**County website coordinators are frequently looking for help with information . . .** consider helping out by sending in photos you have of the area, historical data you have on your family’s life in the county, and any other information that might help other researchers (always email the site coordinator before sending materials, however).

**Consider joining an email “list” of folks who are researching “your” county** (RootsWeb hosts a number of these but some county sites have their own).

**County websites can be invaluable . . . even if you think you have tried everywhere to find that elusive ancestor, if you have not checked the county website, you may have missed a fabulous resource. Best wishes on your roots pursuits!**