



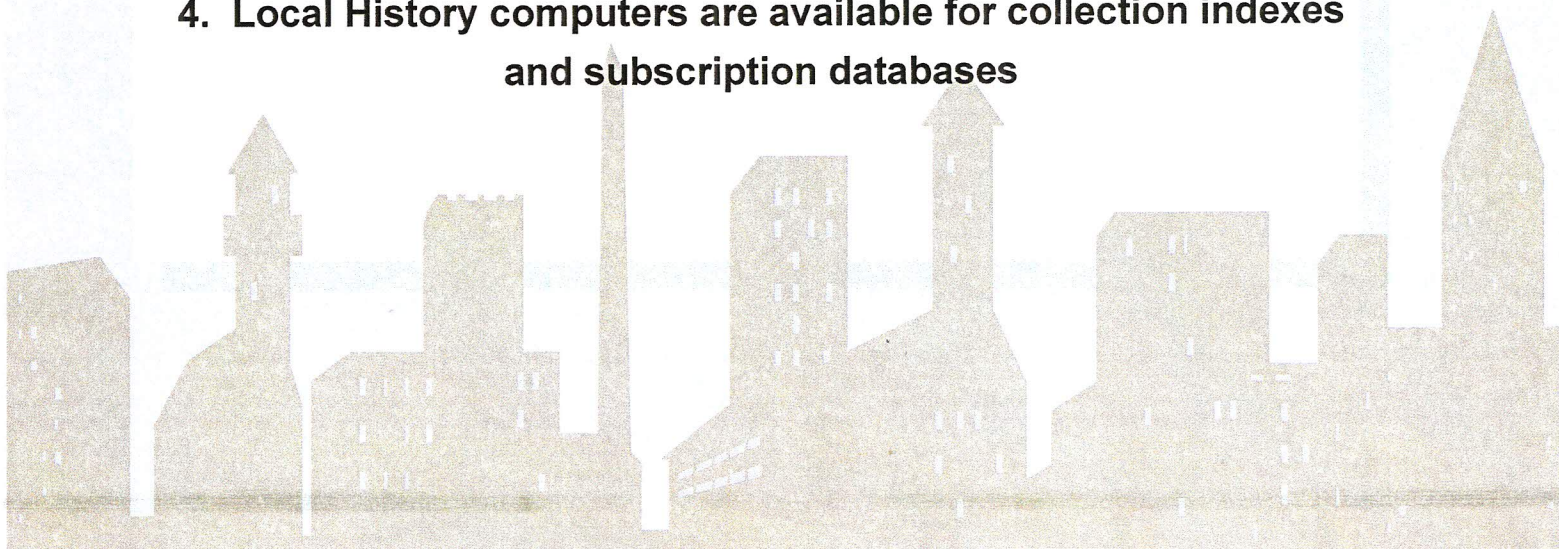
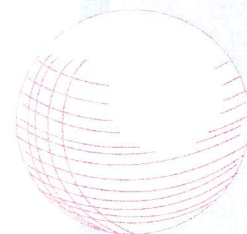
# First Search Tips

## Before Your Visit...

1. Prepare your notes in "quick reference" format such as family group sheets or create a research "to-do" list
2. Consult online catalogs & indexes to the collection
3. Familiarize yourself with the scope of the collection by reading through Collection Overview pamphlet & collection descriptions

## When You Arrive...

1. Use the Local History Master Index (LHMI) as a "Quick Search" for your family names or topic of research
2. Consult family & local history vertical files (indexed in Surname Listings notebook & LHMI)
3. Seek assistance by briefly stating your research objective
4. Local History computers are available for collection indexes and subscription databases



# Southwest Michigan Obituary Index

This obituary index is a work in progress and contains over 116,000 entries dating from Southwest Michigan's earliest history through the year 2008. Obituaries included pertain to residents of the Michigan counties of Allegan, Berrien, Cass, Kalamazoo and Van Buren. They have been taken from a variety of resources including newspapers, published biographies, funeral records, etc. The index includes the first and last name of the decedent, the issue date of the newspaper, a code representing the source, and a page number. The page number corresponds to the hard copy of the obituary. This page number is needed to order copies. The source code table is as follows:

HP - Herald-Palladium, Benton Harbor  
CL - Courier-Leader, Paw Paw  
BCR - Berrien County Record, Buchanan  
MN - Marcellus News, Marcellus  
ACN - Allegan County News, Allegan  
CE - Commercial Express, Saugatuck  
NBT - New Buffalo Times, New Buffalo  
SBT - South Bend Tribune, South Bend, Indiana  
KG - Kalamazoo Gazette, Kalamazoo  
DR - Decatur Republican, Decatur  
TCR - Tri-City Record, Watervliet  
NDS - Niles Daily Star, Niles  
UE - Union Enterprise, Plainwell  
DDN - Dowagiac Daily News, Dowagiac  
SHT - South Haven Tribune, South Haven  
CV - Cassopolis Vigilant, Cassopolis  
FC - Funeral Home Card  
BA - Bangor Advance, Bangor  
HDS - Hartford Day Spring, Hartford  
BL - Bloomingdale Leader, Bloomingdale  
EA - Edwardsburg Argus, Edwardsburg  
GN - Gobles News, Gobles  
LL - Lawton Leader, Lawton  
LT - Lawrence Times, Lawrence  
MPC - Michigan Pioneer Collection  
SE - Schoolcraft Express, Schoolcraft  
SMU - Southwest Michigan University, Dowagiac  
Surname Card - Private submission  
WMU - Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo

**To search the index and to order copies visit:  
<http://www.vbrgs.org/ObituaryIndex.html>**





# Family Group Record

Prepared By \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to Preparer \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Ancestral Chart # \_\_\_\_\_ Family Unit # \_\_\_\_\_

Husband		Occupation(s)			Religion
Date—Day, Month, Year		City	County	State or Country	
Born					
Christened					Name of Church
Married					Name of Church
Died					Cause of Death
Buried		Cem/Place			Date Will Written/Proved
Father	Other Wives				
Mother					

Wife maiden name		Occupation(s)			Religion
Date—Day, Month, Year		City	County	State or Country	
Born					
Christened					Name of Church
Died					Cause of Death
Buried		Cem/Place			Date Will Written/Proved
Father	Other Husbands				
Mother					

•	Sex MF	Children Given Names	Birth			Birthplace			Date of first marriage/Place		Date of Death/Cause			Computer I.D. #
			Day	Month	Year	City	County	St./Ctry.	Name of Spouse		City	County	State/Country	
		1												
		2												
		3												
		4												
		5												
		6												
		7												
		8												
		9												
		10												
		11												
		12												

# Five-Generation Ancestor Chart

Chart # \_\_\_\_

1 on this chart = \_\_\_\_ on chart # \_\_\_\_

The chart is a tree structure starting from a single box labeled '1' on the left. It branches out to boxes '2' and '3', which then further branch into boxes '4', '5', '6', and '7'. These boxes then branch into boxes '8' through '15', which finally branch into boxes '16' through '31'. Each box contains three horizontal lines for recording 'BIRTH DATE AND PLACE', 'MARRIAGE DATE AND PLACE', and 'DEATH DATE AND PLACE'. Boxes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, and 31 also include a small square box on the right side for a checkmark or reference. Box 16 has a label 'SEE CHART #' above it.

# Ahnentafel Table for No. 1 \_\_\_\_\_

Double a person's number to find the father. Double the number and add 1 to find the mother.

Paternal Line	Maternal Line
Parents	
2	3
Grandparents	
4	6
5	7
Great-Grandparents	
8	12
9	13
10	14
11	15
Great-Great-Grandparents	
16	24
17	25
18	26
19	27
20	28
21	29
22	30
23	31
Great-Great-Great-Grandparents	
32	48
33	49
34	50
35	51
36	52
37	53
38	54
39	55
40	56
41	57
42	58
43	59
44	60
45	61
46	62
47	63

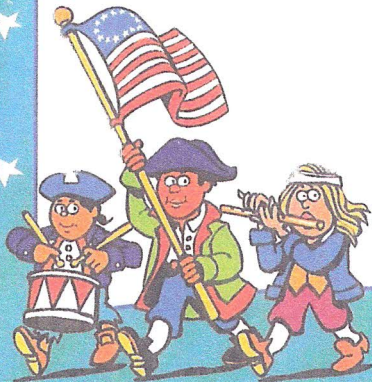
Ahnentafel Chart for No. 1 \_\_\_\_\_ continued

Paternal Line	Maternal Line
Great-Great-Great-Great-Grandparents	
64	96
65	97
66	98
67	99
68	100
69	101
70	102
71	103
72	104
73	105
74	106
75	107
76	108
77	109
78	110
79	111
80	112
81	113
82	114
83	115
84	116
85	117
86	118
87	119
88	120
89	121
90	122
91	123
92	124
93	125
94	126
95	127

# RESEARCH YOUR ANCESTORS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Inquire about the Van Buren District Library Microfilm Loan Program through the Family History Center, Salt Lake City, Utah - the largest genealogical collection in the world. Research millions of records from the United States and around the World without leaving Van Buren County.

For information call Toni Benson at (269)423-4771.



## OTHER RESOURCES

Vertical file materials in three categories: Family, SW Michigan Locality, and General Michigan.

SW Michigan Obituary Project (Allegan, Berrien, Cass, Kalamazoo & Van Buren counties) - numbering around 250,000 items, the collection is being made digital. To search the master index and view ordering instructions visit: [www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~mivanbur/SWMIObitIndex/SWMIObit.htm](http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~mivanbur/SWMIObitIndex/SWMIObit.htm). Patrons may also visit and retrieve items personally.

Photograph collection numbering in the thousands. An index is available online: [www.vbrgs.org](http://www.vbrgs.org). Print copies may be provided upon request.

**Bess Britton Michigan One-Room Schoolhouse Collection.** A statewide archive including photos, reminiscences, report cards, histories, etc. regarding 4,500 Michigan's early rural schools. To search index by school name or location, visit: [www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~mivanbur/MichiganSchools.htm](http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~mivanbur/MichiganSchools.htm). Every-name index at the library.

Southwest Military Registry & Southwest Michigan Pioneer Certificate Project – sponsored by the Van Buren Regional Genealogical Society. Includes applications with support documentation for SW Michigan's earliest pioneers and their descendants and information about area veterans from the American Revolution to present day. For more information visit the society's website.

Yearbook, City & Telephone Directory Collection – Collected for all areas of SW Michigan. List of volumes list at: [www.vbrgs.org](http://www.vbrgs.org).

## MICROFILM LOAN PROGRAM

The Van Buren District Library is a licensed microfilm loan site the Family History Center (FHC), Salt Lake City, UT. Patrons may borrow microfilm from the Family History Center, Salt Lake City, for a small rental fee, then view and make copies from the film in the Local History room anytime during the 30-day loan period. To search the FHC catalog, visit [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org).

## LOCAL HISTORY COMPUTERS

Access **Ancestry Library Edition, American Ancestors**, and several other genealogical databases and websites using the Local History computers. Search the collection's databases including the Local History Master Index, SW Michigan Obituary Collection and Bess Britton Michigan One-Room Schoolhouse Collection. A CD-Rom collection is also available.

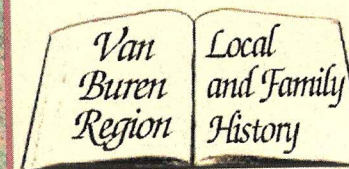
## WHEN YOU VISIT

Researchers must register at the circulation desk on each day's visit, any time during the library's regular business hours. Assistance is provided part-time by staff and volunteers. Visitors to the facility who may need assistance are encouraged to call ahead to check availability of personnel.

Photocopying is permitted, but digital cameras and scanners are prohibited.

Brief requests for information may be addressed to Local History via telephone, e-mail or mail. For more extensive research, a list of private area researchers may be provided upon request.

# Local History & Genealogy



## VAN BUREN DISTRICT LIBRARY

200 NORTH PHELPS ST.  
DECATUR, MI 49045  
(269)423-4771  
[www.vbdl.org](http://www.vbdl.org)  
[lochist@vbdl.org](mailto:lochist@vbdl.org)

Hours:  
Monday thru Thursday  
9-8 (Summer 9-7)  
Friday 9-5  
Saturday 9-3

The Van Buren District Library (VBDL) consists of seven libraries in the communities of Bangor, Bloomingdale, Covert, Gobles, Lawrence, Mattawan and Decatur. The Webster Memorial Library in Decatur serves as the district headquarters and houses the regional Local History & Genealogy collection.

## LOAN POLICY

Most materials in the Local History room do not circulate and may not be requested via inter-library loan. Reference materials may be loaned to any VBDL branch for **In-House Use**. Photocopies are permitted within copyright law.

Some general Michigan books and genealogical "how-to" books may be checked out by any district library patron or requested through the Michigan Electronic Library (MEL), [www.mel.org](http://www.mel.org).

## MICROFILM

Categories of Southwest Michigan microfilm (counties of Allegan, Berrien, Cass, Kalamazoo, St. Joseph & Van Buren):

- Vital Records
- Court Records (divorce, chancery, etc.)
- Naturalization
- Wills & Probate
- Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps
- WWI Draft Registration Cards
- Deeds, Mortgages & Assessment Rolls
- Plat Books & Atlases

Newspapers for the following communities:

Bangor	Lawton
Bloomingdale	Hartford
Cassopolis	Marcellus

Covert	Buchanan
Decatur	Lawrence
Gobles	Niles
Paw Paw	Berrien Springs
South Haven	Allegan
Coloma	Watervliet
Dowagiac	Cassopolis

Microfilm reader/printers are available for patron use, including a digital scanner. Use of printers should be limited to 15 minutes when other researchers are waiting.

## BOOKS & PERIODICALS

County histories, gazetteers & directories, plat books, town/village histories, school records/histories, family histories, scrapbooks, vital records, cemetery transcriptions, census indexes, tax records, church records/histories, biographies, yearbooks, and black, native American and ethnic histories, Van Buren County and many other Michigan counties.

General Michigan; history, architecture, gazetteers, maps, colleges, railroads, vocational, organizations, native American, black, ethnic, Great Lakes, state facilities, biography.

## GIFTS & DONATIONS

Many of the materials housed in the Local History Room have been provided by donation. Gifts of Southwest Michigan or Michigan books, photos, manuscripts, clippings, scrapbooks, yearbooks, directories and other related materials are encouraged to both enhance the collection and to provide a repository for items of local historical value. Contact the library for more information regarding its collection policies.

## LOCAL HISTORY MASTER INDEX (LHMI)

The Local History Master Index is a finding aid for the collection and provides every-name indexes to hundreds of items including cemeteries, vital records, local & family histories, manuscripts, photographs and more. The searchable database indexes personal & non-personal names and provides source information and page numbers. With entries numbering around 900,000 from 355 sources, this index provides researchers with a quick way to locate names, thus saving precious research time. Database may be used at the library.

## VAN BUREN REGIONAL GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

In cooperation with the library, the Van Buren Regional Genealogical Society (VBRGS), organized in 1987, houses its entire collection of books, periodicals, photos, microfilm, vertical files and manuscript material in the local history collection for patron use. VBRGS is an active family/local history group that serves a regional area including the Michigan counties of: Allegan, Berrien, Cass, Kalamazoo, St. Joseph, and Van Buren. Meetings are held the fourth Monday of each month. Contact: VBRGS, P.O. Box 143, Decatur, Michigan 49045, or visit [www.vbrgs.org](http://www.vbrgs.org) to search their online catalog of holdings, and obtain membership information.

## SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN GENEALOGY & LOCAL HISTORY BLOG

[www.vanburendistrict.blogspot.com](http://www.vanburendistrict.blogspot.com)

Visit the  
Local History Room  
at the  
Van Buren District Library  
for items about the history of  
Van Buren County, such as:

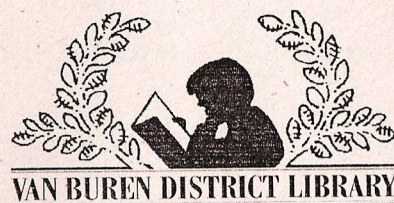
Birth, marriage, and  
death certificates  
Census enumerations  
Area newspaper  
microfilm and clippings  
Books relating to  
Van Buren County  
and its adjacent counties  
School records  
Photographs  
Family histories and files

The Local History Room is also  
the home of the  
Van Buren Regional  
Genealogical Society.  
It is an ideal research facility for:

School reports  
Genealogy research  
Local History



Your contributions of original or  
copied materials are most welcome.



M I C H I G A N  
O N E - R O O M  
S C H O O L H O U S E  
C O L L E C T I O N

## A UNIQUE COLLECTION

The Van Buren District Library is proud to feature the Bess Britton Michigan One-Room Schoolhouse collection as part of its regional Local History collection.

The collection was donated in early 2000 by Bess Britton, of Decatur Township. It includes information on about 2500 one-room schoolhouses in Michigan. Included are photos, personal reminiscences, biographies, report cards, teacher certificates, newspaper and magazine items, and much more.



## THE BESS BRITTON MICHIGAN ONE-ROOM SCHOOLHOUSE COLLECTION

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### A LIFE'S WORK

A charter member of the Michigan One-Room Schoolhouse association, Mrs. Britton spent over 12 years writing letters, making phone calls, and visiting schoolhouses to compile the collection.

Her gift to the library has been featured in several newspapers and genealogical quarterlies.

## DONATIONS WELCOME

The library welcomes any information about Michigan's rural schoolhouses, in copied or original form. Materials are archived and catalogued within the collection.

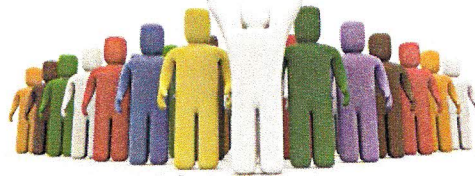
### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

A master index is available online at the library's website:  
*<http://woodlands.lib.mi.us/van/britton.htm>* Visit the Local History Room or call for further information:

Van Buren District Library  
Attn: Local History  
200 N. Phelps Street  
Decatur, MI 49045  
(269) 423-4771

Southwest  
Michigan  
Genealogy  
&  
Local History  
Blog

**BLOG**



[www.vanburendistrict.blog](http://www.vanburendistrict.blog)

[spot.com](http://spot.com)

Sign up for your free  
subscription!

## **PUBLICATIONS**

Request a list of our current publications or view the listing online. New items are announced in our quarterly as they are published.

## **QUERIES**

Members are encouraged to submit queries for publication in the Van Buren Echoes. Please attach a separate page and make queries brief and clear. You may also submit queries via e-mail to: [kestcar\\_65@msn.com](mailto:kestcar_65@msn.com). Members may submit unlimited free queries and all should pertain to southwest Michigan genealogical/local history research. Queries from non-members will be accepted with a fee.

## **PROJECTS**

### Library Collection (catalog online)

- a. books, periodicals, photos, manuscripts, family histories, vertical files (surname, subject & location)
- b. digital obituary/clipping collection – over 250,000 items

### Projects in Progress

- a. vital records indexing
- b. cemetery readings
- c. private & special collections

- d. inventory of local records
- e. *Van Buren County in WWII*

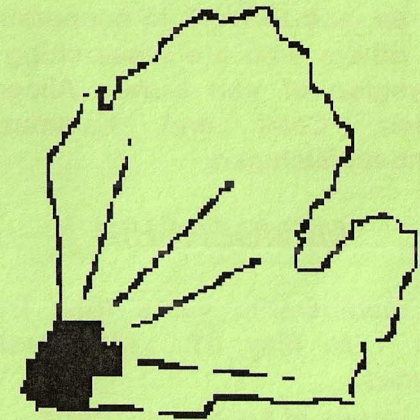
## **SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN PIONEER CERTIFICATE PROJECT**

Pioneer certificates are awarded for documented lineages in Allegan, Berrien, Cass, Kalamazoo and Van Buren Counties on four levels, i.e., pioneer, founder, settler, builder. Application & instructions may be downloaded from the website or requested by mail. Completed applications & proofs are added to project archives and an index published online.

## **SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN MILITARY REGISTRY**

The Military Registry is a project to collect information on any man or woman who provided any form of military service, U.S or foreign, and who resided in one or more of the counties of Allegan, Berrien, Cass, Kalamazoo or Van Buren at any time during their life. Submissions are free and are maintained in the project archives. An index is published online.

# **VAN BUREN REGIONAL GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY**



Center of Family/Local History  
in Southwest Michigan

[www.vbrgs.org](http://www.vbrgs.org)

Research & preservation for the  
counties of:

**ALLEGAN            KALAMAZOO**  
**CASS                BERRIEN**  
**VAN BUREN**

## PURPOSE

The goal of the Van Buren Regional Genealogical Society is to promote the study of genealogy/local history, to provide opportunities for instruction in effective research methods, to encourage the collection, compilation and preservation of family/local history records, and to work in cooperation with others who are researching in the region of Van Buren, Allegan, Berrien, Cass and Kalamazoo Counties, Michigan.

## MEMBERSHIP

The membership years runs from June 1 to May 31. Membership includes:

- 4 issues of society quarterly
- Unlimited free query placement
- Notification of VBRGS publication sales and special projects
- Free monthly programs
- VBRGS e-mail list serve (VBRGS-L@rootsweb.com)

## ACTIVITIES

The Van Buren Regional Genealogical Society meets the fourth Monday evening of each month at the Webster Memorial

Library, Decatur, or at other pre-determined sites. A variety of speakers and topics are the focus of the programs along with a brief business meeting. Audience participation and sharing is encouraged. Guests are welcome. Special workshops, seminars and projects are also scheduled periodically. Meeting notices are published in area newspapers.

## VAN BUREN ECHOES

The *Van Buren Echoes* is a quarterly publication provided to all members and placed with select historical institutions and libraries. It features queries, pedigree charts, gleanings from regional sources, special interest items, columns, internet news, anecdotes, book reviews, and publications notices. It is indexed annually. Publication began in 1987. Back issues are available.

## RESEARCH

A list of area researchers is available upon request. Please include a SASE. VBRGS is not responsible for any individual researcher, but will supply names and addresses as a courtesy to its members. This list is updated periodically.

# PLEASE JOIN US!!!

Mail this portion of the brochure and your check or money order made payable to:

Van Buren Regional  
Genealogical Society  
P.O. Box 143, Decatur, MI 49045

Please check one:

- \_\_\_ Individual \$17.00
- \_\_\_ Family \$20
- \_\_\_ Out-of-USA \$23
- \_\_\_ Sponsor \$25
- \_\_\_ Life \$250
- \_\_\_ Collection Develop  
(any amount)

E-mail address:

Yes, I would like to receive the society quarterly as an e-mail attachment (please check box if applies)

Your name and address:

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## Search for Names & Topics

The Local History Master

Index (LHMI) is the researcher's first search tool when researching South-west Michigan family & local history, combining hundreds of indexes from materials pertaining to Van Buren, Allegan, Berrien, Cass, Kalamazoo and St. Joseph counties.

\*Complete bibliographic record

\*Search by name, source or date

\*Quickly form a research plan

\*Locate obscure information



**VAN BUREN DISTRICT LIBRARY**

## Expect to find...

- \*\*Cemeteries
- \*\*Vital Records
- \*\*Plat Books
- \*\*Local Histories
- \*\*Biographies
- \*\*Photographs
- \*\*Family Files
- \*\*Family Histories
- \*\*Newspapers
- \*\*Yearbooks
- \*\*Businesses & Landmarks

**VAN BUREN DISTRICT LIBRARY**

**200 North Phelps Street  
Decatur, MI 49045**

**Phone: (269)423-4771**

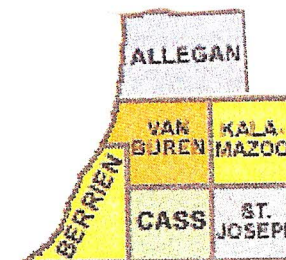
**Fax: (269)423-8373**

**E-mail: lochist@vbdl.org**

VAN BUREN DISTRICT LIBRARY

# Local History Master Index

Quick Search Tool



**(269)423-4771**

## Local History Master Index

Make the Local History Master Index your first search tool when conducting Southwest Michigan local & family history research, quickly pointing you to the records you need, and some that may be unexpected

With over 860,000 records from 355 sources, and more being added daily, the LHMI may be accessed in the Local History Department of the Van Buren District Library.

**Like to help? Contact us  
about becoming a Local History  
volunteer indexer.**

**Each listing includes:** ⇒ **Last Name**

⇒ **First Name**

⇒ **Page**

⇒ **Date**

⇒ **Complete bibliographic record**

⇒ **Location**

The screenshot shows a web application window titled "Local History Master Index". At the top, there are search fields for "Last Name" (Woodman), "First Name" (Anna L.), "Page", and "Date" (1887 - 1944). A "Source" field contains the number 199. Below these fields are buttons for "SEARCH" (with a subtext "Place cursor in field you wish to search"), "Next Record", and "Previous Record". A "Find Next" button is also present. The main content area displays a "Sample Entry" with the following details:

- Title:** Cuddeback Cemetery [Cemetery Records of Van Buren County, Michigan : Paw Paw Township, Volume 2]
- Author:** (empty field)
- Source #:** 199
- Description:** Van Buren Regional Genealogical Society, Decatur, MI, c1995; 132p., maps
- Call Number:** GS 929.3 Van
- Location:** Cemetery Records

**VAN BUREN DISTRICT LIBRARY**

**200 North Phelps Street  
Decatur, MI 49045**

**Phone: (269)423-4771  
Fax: (269)423-8373  
E-mail: lochist@vbdl.org**

# Van Buren District Library Local History Collection Quick Facts

## **COLLECTION OVERVIEW**

The Van Buren District Library (VBDL) Local History Collection consists of books, microfilm, family/locality vertical files, photographs, manuscript materials, periodicals, CD-roms, audio/visual items and special collections. The Van Buren Regional Genealogical Society (VBRGS) maintains a portion of the collection and also provides volunteer staff support.

The Local History Collection is regional with a focus on the Michigan counties of Allegan, Berrien, Cass, Kalamazoo, St. Joseph & Van Buren. The collection is also rich in general Michigan, New England, and general genealogy resources.

The VBDL maintains an online catalog where searches of the library collection may be made by title, subject, and author from its website at [www.vbdl.org](http://www.vbdl.org). VBRGS maintains a catalogue of it's holdings at [www.vbrgs.org/CatalogOfTheVBRGS.html](http://www.vbrgs.org/CatalogOfTheVBRGS.html).

Most books in the Local History Collection do not circulate, but photocopying is permitted (15 cents per page). Copyright laws do apply. There are three microfilm readers including a digital scanner (25 cents per copy). Scanners and digital cameras are prohibited.

Researchers must register at the circulation desk on each day's visit. Access to the collection is granted anytime during the library's regular business hours. Please do not re-shelve or re-file materials. Items should be placed on the shelving cart at the Local History desk or may be left on the research tables. This is done for statistical purposes as well as accuracy in shelving.

The Local History Librarian is responsible for the maintenance and development of the collection and is also available to answer reference questions. Donation of materials to the collection that meet collection criteria are encouraged and should be received and approved by the Local History Librarian.

## **FIRST SEARCH TIPS**

The Local History Collection includes many helpful indexes and guides to assist in the location of materials, and should be consulted first:

- Local History Master Index - a large database that indexes hundreds of resources from the collection including family files and photographs
- Southwest Michigan Obituary Index & Digitized Images
- Bess Britton Michigan One-Room Schoolhouse Collection
- Southwest Michigan Yearbooks and Annuals
- Southwest Michigan City, County & Telephone Directories
- Southwest Michigan Military Registry
- Southwest Michigan Pioneer Certificate Collection
- Manuscript Collections

NOTE – The first three indexes may be searched on the Local History computers. Others indexes are available in notebooks in the research area and are also available at [www.rootsweb.com/~mivanbur/Mivanbur.html](http://www.rootsweb.com/~mivanbur/Mivanbur.html)

## **NEWSPAPERS**

The following newspapers are included in the microfilm collection:

- ❖ Allegan Journal & Gazette (Allegan) 1856-1898
- ❖ Bangor Advance (Bangor) 1875-1983
- ❖ Berrien County Record (Buchanan) 1869-1935
- ❖ Berrien Springs Journeal Era (Berrien Springs) - various years
- ❖ Bloomingdale Leader (Bloomingdale) 1881-1943
- ❖ Cass County Republican (Cassopolis) 1860-1864
- ❖ Cassopolis Vigilant (Cassopolis) 1872-1919
- ❖ Coloma Courier (Coloma) 1889-1934
- ❖ Covert Times (Covert) 1952-1953

- ❖ Decatur Republican (Decatur) 1861-2000
- ❖ Dowagiac Daily News (Dowagiac) 1897-1929
- ❖ Gobles News (Gobles) 1905-1979
- ❖ Hartford Day Spring (Hartford) 1871-1972
- ❖ Lawrence Times (Lawrence) 1875-1961
- ❖ Lawton Leader (Lawton) 1887-1968
- ❖ Marcellus News (Marcellus) 1887-1979
- ❖ Niles Daily Star (Niles) 1891-1980  
(incomplete)
- ❖ Otsego Union (Otsego) 1867-1934
- ❖ Paw Paw Courier-Leader & other titles (Paw Paw)  
1853-present
- ❖ South Haven Daily Tribune (South Haven) 1907-1980
- ❖ Watervliet Record (Watervliet) 1890-1934

### **SPECIAL COLLECTIONS**

- Picture File - Photos of individuals, scenes, structures, etc.
- Obituaries - Clipped obituaries as old as 1850's years to present day; also included are birth & marriage announcements, anniversaries and miscellaneous - indexed and digitized
- Vertical File - Family Files; Michigan Files – arranged by location & subject
- Manuscript Collection - housed in storage. Inquire at Local History reference desk.
- Yearbooks and Annuals - High School, College, Trade, Middle School and Elementary School; numbering about 1,200 volumes
- Directories - Telephone books, city and county directories; about 350 volumes

### **VITAL RECORDS**

- Van Buren County
  - Death Records 1867-1998 (microfilm & book)
  - Marriage Records 1836-1954, Indexes 1836-1997 (microfilm & book)

- Birth Records, 1867-1916, Indexes 1867-1934  
(book)
- Allegan County
  - Death Records 1867-1996, Index 1867-1998  
(microfilm)
  - Marriage Records 1835-1951, Indexes 1835-1998  
(microfilm)
  - Birth Records 1867-1913, Indexes 1867-1933  
(microfilm)
- Berrien County
  - Death Records 1867-1967, Indexes 1867-1994  
(microfilm)
  - Marriage Records 1831-1950, Indexes 1831-1994  
(microfilm)
  - Birth Records 1867-1913, Indexes 1867-1948  
(microfilm)
- Cass County
  - Death Records 1867-July 2005, Indexes 1867-July  
2005 (microfilm)
  - Marriage Records 1830-1911, Indexes 1830-1994  
(microfilm)
  - Birth Records 1867-1910, Indexes 1867-1977  
(microfilm)
- Kalamazoo County
  - Death Records 1867-1951, Indexes 1867-1997  
(microfilm)
  - Marriage Records 1831-1951, Indexes 1831-1975  
(microfilm)
  - Birth Records 1867-1903, Indexes 1867-1977  
(microfilm & book)
- St. Joseph County
  - Death Records 1867-1929, Indexes 1867-1981  
(microfilm)
  - Marriage Records Index, 1832-1970

## CENSUS

- ✓ United States Federal Census 1790, 1820-1930
  - Michigan counties, Allegan, Berrien,  
Cass, Kalamazoo, St. Joseph & Van Buren

- 1850, 1860 & 1870 – entire State of Michigan
- 1790 – portions of New England
- Michigan 1850-1880 Mortality Schedules
- 1890 Veterans Schedule – portions of Michigan
- Miscellaneous
- Michigan State & Special Census
- Van Buren County 1845
- Allegan County 1894
- Kalamazoo County 1884 & 1894
- St. Joseph County 1845

NOTE – available print census indexes are in book form and are shelved together. Federal census may also be searched and viewed using Ancestry Library Edition on any library computer.

### **OTHER MICROFILM**

- ✓ Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps
- ✓ Land Records, Deeds & Indexes
- ✓ Tax & Assessment Records
- ✓ Military Discharge Papers & Burials
- ✓ Divorce Cases
- ✓ Court Records
- ✓ Probate & Wills
- ✓ Naturalizations
- ✓ WWI Draft Registration Cards
- ✓ Plat Books & Atlases

### **FAMILY HISTORY CENTER MICROFILM**









#### **LOAN PROGRAM**

In addition to the library's regular interlibrary loan service, the VBDL is also a licensed microfilm loan center for the Family History Library (FHL) of Salt Lake City, Utah. Patrons may order microfilm for a 30-day period to be viewed in the library. The FHL has over three million reels of film in their collection and are more records every month. The microfilm loan program enables researchers to access records from around the world. Contact VBDL for

fee information or questions. To view what is available for loan, visit the FHL website at [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org) and click on Library Catalog to search by title, subject, author or locality.

## **LOCAL HISTORY COMPUTERS**

There are two computers in the local history department where registered patrons may use the following resources:

-  **Ancestry Library Edition**
-  **American Ancestors (NEHGS)**
-  **Heritage Quest**
-  **Other Select Free Genealogical Websites**
-  **Local History Master Index**
-  **Bess Britton Michigan One-Room Schoolhouse Index**
-  **Southwest Michigan Obituary Collection**
-  **Genealogy CD's Collection**

Computers are limited to the above uses and are not available for general internet use or word processing. Public internet terminals are available in the main library.

## **RESEARCH REQUESTS**

Brief requests for information may be addressed to the Local History librarian via telephone, e-mail or mail. For more extensive research needs, a list of area researchers may be provided upon request.

Those planning to visit who may need research assistance are encourage to telephone or write in advance to check on the availability of local history personnel.

Van Buren District Library, 200 North Phelps Street, Decatur, MI 49045

Telephone (269)423-4771; Fax (269)423-8373

Local History e-mail, [lochist@vbdl.org](mailto:lochist@vbdl.org)

Hours - Monday thru Thursday, 9-9

Friday 9-5, Saturday 9-3

[www.vbdl.org](http://www.vbdl.org), [www.vanburendistrict.blogspot.com](http://www.vanburendistrict.blogspot.com)