



RESEARCHING THE HISTORY OF YOUR HOME

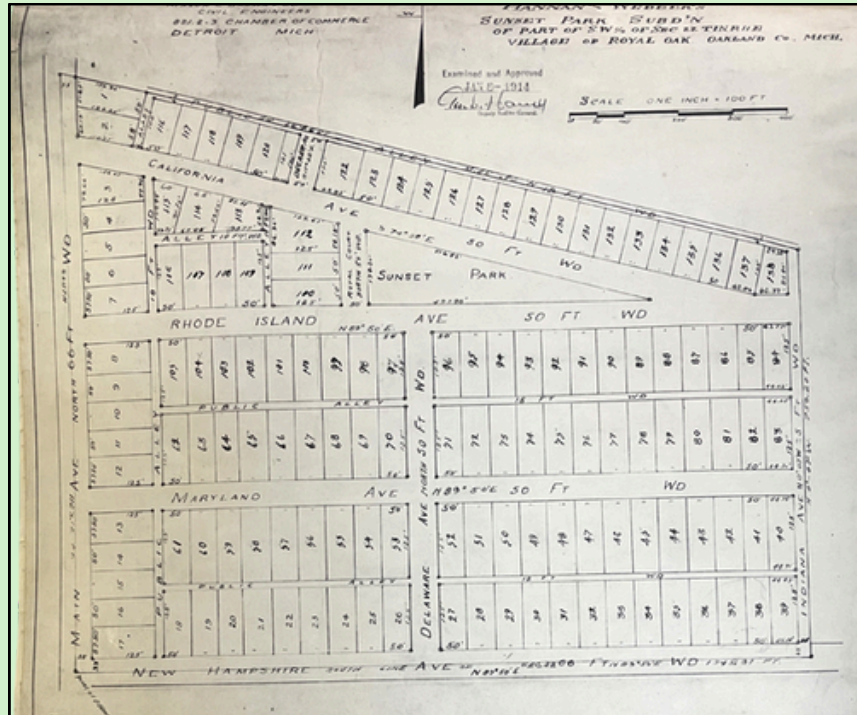
ROYAL OAK HISTORICAL MUSEUM

Curator: Johanna Schurrer
curator@royaloakhistoricalsociety.org

Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays: 1-4 p.m.
1411 W. Webster Rd., Royal Oak, MI
48073

RoyalOakHistoricalSociety.com

PUBLISHED SOURCES



City Directories: You can search by owner's name or street address. Some at ROHS, Royal Oak Public Library, Ferndale Area District Library and some are on [Ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com).

Plat Maps/Atlases (1857, 1872, 1896, 1908, 1916): ROHS has copies - you can also find them at: www.ocphs.org/maps-and-map-resources/.

County Histories: ROHS has Durant's 1877 History of Oakland County. Others can be found at: quod.lib.umich.edu/m/micounty/.

Subdivision Plat Maps: ROHS has hard-bound copies of them. The originals are held at the Oakland County Register of Deeds.

Newspaper archives: The *Royal Oak Tribune* and *Birmingham Eccentric* have online archives available at: roptribune.org/ and archive.btpl.org/?dir=Bloomfield-Birmingham%20Eccentric%20Newspaper.

KIT HOMES



Aladdin Company of Bay City manufactured kit homes, and some were built in Royal Oak. You can view them on at:

<https://royaloakhistoricalsociety.com/royal-oaks-kit-houses>.

The Clarke Historical Library at Central Michigan has the entire collection of Aladdin Company records if you want to do further research.

You can also view the catalogs at:

www.cmich.edu/library/clarke/ResearchResources/Michigan_Material_Local/Bay_City_Aladdin_Co/Pages/default.aspx.

Sears Modern Homes Catalogues: www.searshouses.com

The Library of Congress offers a general home history research guide:

<https://guides.loc.gov/house-history>.

MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS

Received of Mr. *Hermon Castle* *Greenfield, Mass. 21st* *1857*
\$22.92
 Taxes for the year 1856, on the following described property, in Town No. *One* South,
 Range No. Eleven East.

SUBDIVISION OF SECTIONS.	SEC.	NO. OF ACRES.	VALUE, \$	VALUE OF PERSONAL ESTATE.	STATE, COUNTY AND TOWN TAX.		ROAD TAX.		SCHOOL TAX.		TOTAL.	
					Dolls.	Cents.	Dolls.	Cents.	Dolls.	Cents.	Dolls.	Cents.
<i>E of Sec 36 on T. 6 E</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>89</i>	<i>4450</i>		<i>16</i>	<i>91</i>			<i>6</i>	<i>01</i>		
											<i>22</i>	<i>92</i>

Various documents including the following may contain information to help you in your research.

- Diaries, ledgers, account books
- Deeds, mortgages, indentures, abstract titles
- Architectural drawings
- Construction receipts/invoices
- Correspondence
- Photographs

Architectural Records: If you can determine the architect, you might be able to find records of the firm. Usually these are in university or state archives. The Archives of Michigan does have the collection of AIA Michigan. These records consist of administrative, membership files, publications, photographs, slides, and news clippings on numerous architects who worked in Michigan from 1893 onward.

GOVERNMENT RECORDS

Oakland County Register of Deeds: You can search a variety of ways (the clerks will help you) – including by the lot and subdivision number, by the acreage (ie: SW ¼ of Section 15), and by grantor and grantee indexes. You have to make an appointment to view the grantor/grantee indexes, deed books, and microfilm as these are in Records Retention.

Bureau of Land Management Records: This site includes land patents from the government, as well as changes in ownership and more:
glorerecords.blm.gov/default.aspx.

Deeds, mortgages, indentures: These are usually kept by the homeowner. ROHS only has documents that have been donated.

Abstract of Title: A property abstract is a summary of the transactions associated with a particular parcel of land, usually going back to the original purchase from the government. These are also usually kept by the homeowner and can be very bulky for a historical organization to retain. ROHS has a small collection and there is a finding aid arranged by lot and subdivision number.

Land patents and certificates issued by the State of Michigan: Michigan's Surveyor Field Notes can be found at michigan.access.preservica.com/surveyor-field-notebooks/ and the survey maps at michigan.access.preservica.com/surveyor-maps/.

Assessor's permit cards: These are available at ROHS for many (not all) residences in the City of Royal Oak.

Tax assessment records: Available at ROPL and at Oakland University. ROHS only has 1928 records.

GOVERNMENT RECORDS



Rural Property Inventories:

michiganology.org/stories/its-in-the-cards/

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for the City of Royal Oak: ROHS has a hard copy of the 1931 map. The earliest one is 1916 and is available at the Library of Congress.

You can see it at:

loc.gov/collections/sanborn-maps/?fa=location:michigan.

Municipal/local government city and township assessor's office:

bsaonline.com/?uid=1652

LEARN MORE FROM ROHS



The Royal Oak Historical Society (ROHS) has many opportunities for interaction with the Royal Oak community and beyond. This research guide, while not an exhaustive list of sources, is just one of the resources ROHS has to offer.

- Speakers Series: Second Friday of each month
- Ongoing exhibits all year, along with refreshed display cases and collections
- Rotating exhibits throughout the year, including exhibits on loan
- Host fourth- and fifth-grade children from Royal Oak Schools annually
- Guided tours



ROYAL OAK
HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Museum