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The Lapeer District Library serves 60,000 residents throughout Lapeer County. The Lapeer District Library and the Family Literacy Center are partners for literacy.

*Patrons residing in Lapeer District Library's legal service area have full access to digital material. Those patrons out of the legal service area have limited digital access. A description of LDL's legal service area may be found at www.library.lapeer.org

Locations

Marguerite deAngeli (Main Branch)

921 West Nepessing Street, Lapeer, MI 48446
Phone: 810-664-6971 Fax: 810-664-5581
Monday -Thursday 9-8, Friday & Saturday 9-5,
Sunday 1-5 (Closed Sundays in Summer)

Clifford Branch

9530 Main Street, Clifford, MI 48727
Phone: 989-761-7393 Fax: 989-761-7541
Monday 2-7, Wednesday 11-4, Thursday 2-7

Columbiaville Branch

4718 First Street, Columbiaville, MI 48421
Phone: 810-793-6100 Fax: 810-793-6243
Monday, Wednesday & Friday 10-6

Elba Branch

5508 Davison Road, Lapeer, MI 48446
Phone: 810-653-7200 Fax: 810-653-4267
Tuesday 11-5, Thursday 1-7

Hadley Branch

3556 Hadley Road, Hadley, MI 48440
Phone: 810-797-4101 Fax: 810-797-2912
Monday & Wednesday 10-6,
Tuesday & Thursday 11-7, Saturday 9-2

Metamora Branch

4018 Oak Street, Metamora, MI 48455
Phone: 810-678-2991 Fax: 810-678-3253
Monday & Friday 9-4, Wednesday & Thursday 10-6

Otter Lake Branch

6361 Detroit Street, Otter Lake, MI 48464
Phone: 810-793-6300 Fax: 810-793-7040
Monday 10-4, Tuesday 10-6, Thursday 1-6

www.library.lapeer.org

Genealogy of a House

Lapeer County Edition

- Architecture
- Maps •Surveys
- Histories •Records
- More...



William Peter's Mansion, Columbiaville, circa 1910

Information Provided by:



Where your story begins.

February 2025

•Start Here

Architecture

Looking at the style of your house and construction techniques and materials may help you narrow down the years in which your house may have been built. For examples of historical houses built in Michigan check out these books at the deAngeli Library:

- Architecture in Michigan* by Wayne Andrews (720.9774 An)
- A Field Guide to American Houses* by Virginia & Lee McAlester (728.0973 Mca)
- Great Architecture of Michigan* by John Gallagher (720.9774 Gal)

Books available at other libraries:

- Identifying American Architecture* by John J.G. Blumenson
- Buildings of Michigan* by Kathryn Bishop Eckert

Word of Mouth

Neighbors may know some of the previous owners and other history of your house, such as when additions or other work may have been done. You should try to verify any information you learn this way because our memories aren't always accurate. However, you may learn enough to steer you in the right direction.

Register of Deeds

This county official is charged with keeping track of who owns property. Start your search by typing in your name or the name of the seller of the house. From there you should be able to find out who sold the house to that person, for how much and when until you have created a chain of ownership. You will also find a legal description of the property which can be used to search for more information. Search Lapeer County Register of Deeds Office online at:

[https://www.lapeercounty.org/landweb.dll/\\$/](https://www.lapeercounty.org/landweb.dll/$/)

You may login as a guest. If you need more information you may contact the Deeds office at:

(810) 667-2011.

•Maps & Surveys

Platt Books & Atlases

Plat books are maps that document ownership. The **deAngeli library** has Lapeer County plat maps from 1874, 1921, 1937, and 1966 to present. The **Lapeer County Genealogical Society** and the **Register of Deeds Office** have additional plat maps. You can also get subdivision plat maps online at:

<https://www.michigan.gov/lara/bureau-list/bcc/sections/land-survey/subdivisions/subdivisions>

You can view Lapeer County Atlases for the years 1874, 1893, 1906, and 1921 using the (search terms Lapeer County Atlas) at: <https://www.hathitrust.org/> Click on "full view" to see atlas you want.

Land Patents

The Bureau of Land Management maintains more than 9 million historic land documents (survey plats, field notes, homestead patents, military warrants, and railroad grants) that were among the very first land records to result from the Land Ordinance of 1785, which authorized the transfer of public lands to private individuals. These records are available for viewing online at:

www.glorecords.blm.gov/search/default.aspx

Rural Property Inventory

In the 1930s the federal Works Progress Administration surveyed rural properties in Michigan and other states. The surveys included all buildings types (barns, etc.), construction date, materials, condition, electrification, plumbing, dimensions, cubic feet and woodlot, forest or crop types present on the property. RPIs for Lapeer County cover the years 1936 to 1942. These are available at the **Archives of Michigan (517) 373-3559**.

Fire Insurance Maps

These are one of the best sources of information about older buildings. Called "Sanborn" maps they show actual structural information such as exterior type, shingle type, etc. They are viewable at **the Archives of Michigan in Lansing at (517) 373-3559** and online at: <https://www.loc.gov/collections/sanborn-maps/?fa=location%3Amichigan%7Clocation%3Alapeer>

•Histories & Records

Local Newspapers

If your house is historic or has had a fire or some other event there might be an article about it in the local paper. **DeAngeli library** has Lapeer County papers for most years on microfilm. They are not indexed so only look here if you have some dates to give you a place to start.

Property Tax Records

For homes built before 1960, tax records may help you find a clue as to when a building was constructed. These records do not indicate when a building was built. Tax records that show a sudden increase in value indicate that some construction has taken place. Contact **your township hall** for tax records and assessed values.

County Histories

Common in the 19th century, County histories solicited paid subscriptions and sometimes included a biographical statement, a portrait, and a picture of a residence. DeAngeli Library has several copies of the **History of Lapeer County (977.442 Hi)** and it is available for viewing online at: <https://www.hathitrust.org/>

Historical Houses

Lapeer county has 26 buildings on the National Register of Historical Places. You can view these online at: <http://www.nationalregisterofhistoricplaces.com/mi/Lapeer/state.html>

City Directories

City Directories are usually arranged by street address and offer information regarding names and sometimes vocations of those who lived in a house in year's past. City directories and gazetteers can be viewed at the **Library of Michigan (517) 373-1300**. The **deAngeli Library** also has some Lapeer County city directories from 1927 to present.

Good Luck!

Looking for the history of your house is like a treasure hunt so you will need plenty of good luck! Please call the reference desk at **deAngeli Library at (810) 664-6971** if you have questions regarding this publication.