

Local history research guide

How to research local history

Me pēhea te rangahau kōrero tuku iho ā-rohe

Are you researching a local place, organisation, person or historic Auckland event?

To help with your research, your Auckland Libraries membership gives you access to the:

- [library catalogue](#)
- [online resources](#)
- [research services](#)
- [heritage collections](#).

Follow our local history research guide to help you find the information you're looking for.

Researching well-known people

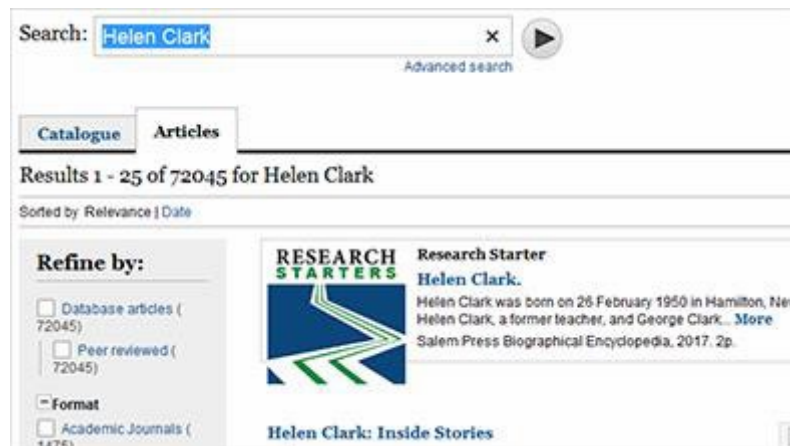
Te rangahau tāngata rongonui

Are you researching an Aucklander or a local public figure? Here are some pointers to help you get started.

Search the library catalogue

If you are researching a well-known person, there is likely to be variety of resources available in the library catalogue.

After entering your search word or phrase, you will see a Catalogue tab and an Articles tab. On the Articles tab, many well-known subjects will have a Research Starter. This contains a short biography with a list of other resources you can look up.



On the 'Refine by' menu, tick or untick filters to limit or expand your search.

Browse online resources

As a library member, you can access a variety of databases and reference materials. Most of these resources have a search function. Some allow you to limit or expand your search.

For researching people, try these online resources:

[Combined Research Databases](#)

Local and family history databases, including 1881 electoral rolls, Index Auckland, Auckland Area passenger arrivals, and cemetery records.

[Bush Index](#)

Auckland City Council History Index covering Auckland local government from 1871 to 1970 and local government clippings from 1973 to 1996.

[Biography in context](#)

A database of biographical information on people throughout history.

[Literature Resource Center](#)

Information on literary figures from different time periods.

[Research in context](#)

A research resource for intermediate school students covering a wide range of well-known people.

Ask an expert

As your research progresses, you may need to:

- [contact a research librarian to ask a question](#)
- come and see one of our specialist research librarians at [Research Central](#), [Research South](#), [Research North](#), [Research West](#) or [Heritage Collections](#).

Find out more about our [research services](#).

Auckland heritage institutions

Within Auckland, there are a number of other heritage institutions that may be able to help with your local history research.

- [Auckland Council archives](#) - cemetery records, Auckland Council staff records, registers and licences issued by Auckland Council
- [Auckland War Memorial Museum](#) - exhibitions on New Zealand history, natural history and military history, and pre-eminent Māori and Pacific collections
- [Archives New Zealand](#) - New Zealand government archives and national treasures
- [NZ History Federation](#) - lists museums and historical societies

Researching places in Auckland

Te rangahau wāhi o Tāmaki Makaurau

Do you want to know the history of your street, suburb, community, local church or school? Looking for information on a building or public place? Here's how you can find the information you're looking for.

Search the library catalogue

Start by searching the [library catalogue](#). After entering your search word or phrase, you will see a Catalogue tab and an Articles tab.

To limit or expand your search results, tick or untick boxes in the Refine by section.

The image shows a library search interface. On the left is a 'Refine by' sidebar with two sections: 'Format' and 'Location'. Under 'Format', there are checkboxes for Book (391), Magazine (45), Map (35), Newspaper (29), and Video (15), with a 'more >' link. Under 'Location', there are checkboxes for Albany Village (3) and Art Gallery Research. On the right, two search results are displayed. The first is for 'HOWICK', a book by the Howick Historical Society (Howick, N.Z.) from 1967, available at Central Auckland Research (995.723 H7:H8) plus 4 more items. The second result is 'Howick [cartographic materi...]', a map from 1975, available at Corporate Library Central.

Items for library use

Many local history items are reference only. You will need to visit the library or research centre that holds these items.

Browse online resources

When researching the history of a place or building, try these online databases:

[Index Auckland: local history, arts and music](#)

Local history references from Auckland newspapers and journals.

[Local History Online](#)

A collection of oral histories, newspapers, images and archives for Auckland's North Shore, West Auckland and Rodney.

[Footprints](#)

Images, drawings and printed material relating to South Auckland and North Waikato areas from the 1870s to present day.

[Manukau's Journey – a Manakau timeline](#)

A detailed chronology of significant events from the history of South Auckland.

[Auckland street names guide](#)

Street names in the former districts of the wider Auckland region, their origins and name changes.

[Auckland Crown Grants](#)

Search for the original purchasers of the land in the Auckland central business district, section and lot numbers, area, and year, from 1850 to 1859.

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Each research centre has a unique collection and areas of speciality. They hold historical NZ Government publications, manuscripts, maps, ephemera and oral history resources.

Find out more about our [research services](#).

Some community libraries also have significant local history collections such as the [East Coast Bays Library](#), [Birkenhead Library](#), and [Pukekohe Library](#).

Auckland heritage institutions

There are heritage institutions that hold collections and resources that may be useful to your research:

- [Auckland War Memorial Museum](#) - exhibitions on New Zealand history, natural history and military history, and pre-eminent Māori and Pacific collections
- [Archives New Zealand](#) - New Zealand government archives and national treasures
- [NZ History Federation](#) - lists museums and historical societies.

You can also check out [Auckland Council archives](#) to find:

- early maps of Auckland
- historic district plans
- former district and city council records
- building and property records
- rating and valuation records.

Researching businesses and organisations

Te rangahau pakihi, rōpū whakahaere hoki

Are you looking for information on a business, church, school or club? Need historical news about a local organisation? Check out these tips.

Search the library catalogue

Enter your search query on the [library catalogue](#).

Results are listed on the Catalogue tab and Articles tab. You might find it helpful to sort the catalogue results either by Relevance, Date or Title. Click on your preferred option and tick or untick boxes in the Refine by menu to limit or expand your results.



Browse online resources

When researching companies and organisations, try these online resources:

[Index Auckland: local history, arts and music](#)

Local history references from Auckland newspapers and journals.

[New Zealand Card Index](#)

Local and national newspapers, New Zealand periodicals, books and scrapbooks from the 1950s to 1996.

[Bush Index](#)

Auckland City Council History Index covering Auckland local government from 1871 to 1970 and local government clippings from 1973 to 1996.

[NZX Company Research](#)

Information on New Zealand's listed and delisted companies including financials, announcements, and annual reports.

[Knowledge Basket – New Zealand Index](#)

Indexed abstracts to business information including sources, dates and bibliographic information from 1800 to the current day.

[Knowledge Basket Newztext](#)

Key news and business publication articles, Radio New Zealand newswire, and New Zealand Herald classifieds from 1960 to current day.

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Council archives

[Auckland Council archives](#) has business records relating to building and property, and health information records of business that were inspected or reported to local health authorities.

Researching historic events

Te rangahau kaupapa whakahaere o nehe

Are you looking for information about a historic event? Here are some sources to help you out.

Search the library catalogue

If you are researching a historic event, there is likely to be variety of resources available in the [library catalogue](#).

After entering your search word or phrase, you will see a Catalogue tab and an Articles tab. Article results on a well-known event will most likely display a Research Starter. This

contains a short history of the event and contains a list of bibliography materials you can look up as well.



Browse online resources

These are some of the online resources that can help you with your historic event research.

[The Treaty of Waitangi Collection](#)

Academic content on the Treaty including previously out-of-print works.

[Index Auckland: local history, arts and music](#)

Local history references from Auckland newspapers and journals.

[World history in context](#)

Information on events, periods and cultural trends and other research topics.

[Ephemera Index](#)

Cards, posters, tickets, programmes, brochures and flyers from all over Auckland from the 1840s to present.

[Heritage Images](#)

A rich and diverse database of historical images and maps.

Newspaper and magazine archives

To access digital archives, go to [Family and local history online resources](#). Under All resources, select Newspapers.

While some newspapers and magazines are digitised and can be found on [Papers Past](#) , those that aren't digitised can be viewed on microfilm at our research centres.

These include copies of the New Zealand Herald, Auckland Star, New Zealand Truth, Auckland Weekly News, and New Zealand Women's Weekly. Ask your local research librarian for assistance if you're unfamiliar with using microfilm.

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View online exhibitions

There are [Auckland Council online exhibitions](#) that commemorate major Auckland and New Zealand events. This includes a World War I exhibition and Timeline of Auckland Mayors Exhibition.

Donate your research

Te koha mai i tō rangahau

Feel free to share the results of your research with us.

Your materials and findings might be of help to future researchers. Contact your local [research centre](#).

