



Researching Your Home's History

If only walls could talk—sometimes they can. If you live in an older home, you've probably wondered when it was built, what it looked like in the past and who may have lived there before you. Researching the history of your home can answer these questions. You may have to do some considerable detective work, but you will have a lot of fun uncovering some interesting facts along the way. You may learn how people lived in the past and your community evolved. The history you uncover will contribute to the understanding of our local history and culture. The results of this research can make your home more personal and help you make informed decisions about how to undertake renovations.

Research Tips:

- * Look closely at the home itself—exposed rafters in the attic, bricks in the basement, dates or stamps left by the builder or on door hinges. Check out layers of paint or wallpapers.
- * Be your own archaeologist. Dig in the garden or yard for glass bottles, pieces of tile, or children's toys, etc. Items that can tell you a lot about who lived in the house and when.
- * Talk to people in the neighborhood. Someone might be able to remember if any changes have been made over time.
- * Learn the history of the area. How old is the city or neighborhood you live in. How close is your home to the City Town-square?
- * Explore the neighborhood. Are there other older homes similar to yours.
- * Research land and property records. A simple deed search can tell you who owned the property and when. Tax records can tell you how the property has changed over time. Sanborn fire maps which can date back as far as the 19th or 20th centuries and show the footprint of your home and layout of the neighborhood are available to view at the History Branch or some city record offices.
- * The **Cleveland Bradley County Public Library History Branch and Archives** is located at 833 N. Ocoee Street. Their resources also include photographs, census records, maps and city directories that may help with more details on your home's previous occupants and their story.