

Best Websites and Apps for Finding Local History

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Genealogy is the study of our ancestors. If we are to truly study them – to truly know them – we have to understand where they lived. Environment impacts us and it impacted our ancestors. Delving into the local history of where our ancestors lived isn't a nicety. It's a necessity.

Technology makes it easier than ever to survey the area. Here are some of the best websites and apps for finding local history.

HistoryPin

Website: historypin.com

Apps: iOS and Android apps no longer supported; focusing on making the website responsive for mobile devices.

HistoryPin allows users to pin photos and scanned documents to a geocoded map. Pins can be arranged into collections based on theme. Examples of collections:

- [First World War Centenary](#)
- [City of Richmond \(British Columbia\) Archives](#)
- [Historic New England Collection](#)
- [Curating the City: People and Places in Lancaster, PA](#)
- [Northwest Ohio Veterans' Oral History Project](#)



Collections are collaborative, making them perfect for group projects. (How about making a collection where cousins add photos of the people and places in your family tree?)

Users can leave comments on photos.

WhatWasThere

Website: WhatWasThere.com

App: [Available for iOS](#)

Upload photos to pin to Google Maps for a then-and-now experience. Heavily integrated with Google Street View.

The iOS app allows you to view the "then" photos around your location. It's a do-it-yourself virtual reality tour!



Clio

Website: theclio.com

App: [Available for iOS and Android](#)

Named for the Greek muse of history, Clio is like a virtual library of historic events and places for a given area. It relies less on geo-tagged photos than HistoryPin and WhatWasThere and more on text added by users. (You must be a registered user to add or edit entries.)

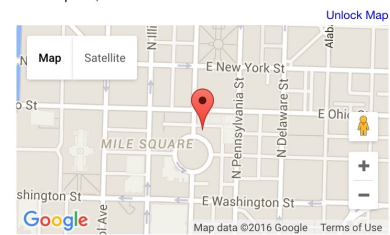
Can search by place name (e.g., Faneuil Hall, rather than 1 Faneuil Hall Square, Boston.)

Entries often contain links to related websites.

Christ Church Cathedral

Historic Sites, Monuments, Landmarks, and Public Art

125 Monument Circle
Indianapolis, IN 46204



Christ Church Cathedral is the oldest building still standing on Monument Circle, dating to 1857, and one of the oldest in the whole city. It's actually the second church on this spot. This building replaced the original 1838 church. There used to be five churches on Monument Circle, but this is the only one left. This church almost didn't survive either. It faced significant challenges as the city expanded and its parishioners moved further out. And the prime parcel was heavily sought for other, more intense uses. Even back in the 19th century, the next door Columbia Club secured an

FieldTrip

App available on iOS and Android through fieldtripper.com

When you allow the app to access your location, it will send you notifications when you are near a historic site. You can also search for historic sites in any given area.

There are several different categories of interests you can choose to receive notifications about:

- Architecture
- Historic Places & Events
- Lifestyle
- Foods, Drink & Fun



- Cool & Unique
- Art & Museums

Many of the entries in the Historic Places & Events category are provided from Arcadia Publishing.

Instagram

Website: [instagram.com](https://www.instagram.com)

Apps available on iOS and Android

Instagram isn't just for food photos! Follow your favorite libraries, archives, museums, and societies for a look at local and regional history.

Also follow hashtags such as #ghostsigns #historicphotos and the hashtags for your area.

State and Local Memory Projects

Many state and local historical societies have started "memory projects" or "digital scrapbooks." Be sure to look for these in the areas you're interested in.

Examples include:

- [Toledo's Attic](#)
- [Indiana Memory](#)
- [Florida Memory](#)

