

The San Mateo County Historical Association Archives Reading Room is open by appointment on Sunday from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. and Tuesday & Friday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Please email archives@historysmc.org or call 650.299.0104 and ask for the Archivist to schedule an appointment. Appointments must be scheduled at least 2 days prior to visit.

When arriving at the History Museum, let the staff person at the front desk know you have an appointment to visit the Archives. You will be asked to place bags, outerwear, umbrellas, and laptop or camera cases in designated areas either at the front entryway or in the Reading Room. Please bring a photo ID.

At the History Museum:

- Wear a mask at all times covering nose and mouth when inside the History Museum and the Reading Room. Nitrile gloves will be provided in the Reading Room for visitor use.
- Place bags, outerwear, laptop cases, camera bags, umbrellas, and other personal effects in designated areas.
- Researchers will be asked to show ID and sign the Archives logbook upon arrival in the Reading Room.
- Materials that are **OK** to bring to the Reading Room:
 - Pencils
 - Notebooks
 - Phones
 - Laptops
- Materials that are **NOT ALLOWED** in the Reading Room:
 - Food and beverages
 - Pens, markers, or highlighters
 - hand sanitizer, lotions, or any type of liquid

Searching the Archive Catalog:

- Due to COVID-19, the archivist will pull materials in advance that match the topic of study.
- Visitors may review records on SMCHA's online collection site:
<https://historysmc.pastperfectonline.com/>
Let the Archivist know the catalog number and general description of the item you would like to see in advance of your visit. Please note that records are continually being added to the site. Most materials may only be listed in the onsite card catalog.
- Researchers will have access to the Archives card catalog during their visit. The majority of materials are available on site and can be pulled during the visit.

When Using Research Material:

- Wear nitrile gloves at all times unless instructed to use an alternative method. Nitrile gloves will be available in the Reading Room for visitor use.
- Review one item at a time. Materials will be held at the front counter for trade-off.

San Mateo County Historical Association
Archival Research Procedures
Revised October 9, 2020

- Do not remove documents from protective sleeves or try to rearrange the materials, even if they appear to be out of order.
- Handle materials carefully. Do not force open books or use pressure that will damage bindings. Researchers may not back-roll, back-fold, or try to smooth out creases in records to open and flatten them.
- Keep materials flat on the table, i.e. do not handle or read in mid-air, place on a chair, one's lap, etc.
- Do not place anything on top of materials or write on notepaper placed on top of materials. Do not lean, or otherwise put pressure on records or their containers.
- Use one item at a time. If looking through a box with multiple folders, remove one folder at a time and mark the place of the folder (Archivist will provide placeholders).

Phones and Laptops:

- Place phones on silent or vibrate mode. Exit the Reading Room to make or receive calls.
- Charge devices before arriving at the Reading Room.
- Make sure that any cords are not draped over collection materials while in use.

Photography:

- Researchers may use phones or handheld cameras to take photos of collection material for **personal research use only**. Photographs may not be published, distributed, or posted online without prior permission of the San Mateo County Historical Association.
- Use of flash photography is strictly prohibited.
- Tripods are not allowed.
- Do not stand on chairs or tables while photographing materials.
- Handheld scanners, scanning wands or pens, or any imaging device that rests or comes into contact with archival materials are prohibited.
- Do not remove items from protective enclosures for photography. Check with the Archivist to see if they can remove the item for you. This may or may not be possible depending on the type of material or its condition.

Reproductions:

- Due to COVID-19, PDF scans will be made available in lieu of onsite photocopies.
- During the visit, researchers can fill out a copy form noting the catalog number and page number(s) of material to be scanned. The requested PDF file will be sent by email following the visit. Limit of 10 free pages per visit. After 10 pages, the charge will be \$0.25 per page made through our online payment system.
- Restrictions may be imposed for bound volumes, oversize sheets, or fragile items (including blueprints). Some records may also be subject to copyright or donor restrictions that prohibit reproduction.
- *The researcher assumes full responsibility for conforming to the laws of libel, privacy, and copyright which may be involved in their use of archival materials.*
- For high resolution digital scans, please check with the Archivist on our reproduction rates.