



Rock Island County Historical Society

**822 11th Avenue
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Phone: (309) 764-8590**

Hours: 9:00 - 4:00 Wednesday—Saturday

E-mail: richs@richs.cc

How do I research the files at Rock Island County Historical Society?

Tip #1 Ask for help. Volunteers are available to serve the public.

Major resources at RICHS: newspapers, clippings and essays, cemetery books, city directories, yearbooks, maps, and photos

The Rock Island County Historical Society is focused on the people and events of Rock Island County. Larger topics such as the Civil War, the world wars, rivers, the Corp of Engineers, and national events are covered with a focus on how these topics impacted Rock Island County and its residents.

The county records up to 1960 (not the actual certificates) for the recorded births, deaths, and marriages are in searchable files on the computers available to the public. The records are available through the county clerk's office for a fee but may be requested online.

Books of cemetery readings for nearly every cemetery in the county will give birth dates, death dates as well as the date the obituary was published in the newspaper.

Newspapers are available in print form and microfilm dating from 1850's. Patrons are invited to photograph materials using a smart phone or the staff will assist. These photos can be printed at RICHS or emailed to the patron.

City directories are valuable resources when searching. RICHS collection dates back to 1854. These books usually tell who lived at each address and their occupation. Phone books can give interesting information about businesses and their location.

Census records are available through

ancestry.com. RICHS has access to these files through 1940. A related resource is newspapers.com, also available at RICHS. Both local papers participate in this project.

The filing cabinets full of articles are searchable using the card catalogue. There are thousands of items filed by township and subcategories. Some knowledge of the township where an event happened is useful, but not required. The staff can help if that becomes necessary.

What is available online?

Tip #2 Some time searching on the webpage may help focus your search.

RICHS webpage (www.richs.cc) has a list of databases available for online searching. One of the most used is the photo collection. It is a keyword search. By entering a last name, or any noun, the computer will share a list of photos having that word in the description section of the record. Usually, patrons send an email requesting a copy of the photo or they can come to RICHS prepared with a list of pictures to view.

Is there a fee to use the files?

Contrary to what the name might imply, RICHS is a private, not for profit organization. A \$5 user fee or donation is requested since the facility is funded through member donations.

Copies are 25 cents per page.