



OVERVIEW

The City of Chelsea has a long and interesting history, from the original settlement in 1624 to major fires in 1908 and 1973, to a state-imposed receivership in 1991. In 1970, the library instituted Historical Archives as a depository for any resources relating to Chelsea's history. The archives have served as a resource to many students, scholars, teachers, historians, city officials, and city residents to familiarize themselves with important moments and topics relating to Chelsea. This quick guide has been developed by library staff to assist as a resource to individuals doing research in our reference archives.



CHELSEA PUBLIC LIBRARY REFERENCE ARCHIVES

The Chelsea Public Library staff has compiled a list of the commonly researched topics in our historical archives. Information on each topic has been reproduced and placed in individual loose-leaf binders. We possess information in the form of clippings from local and national newspapers, magazine and journal articles, photographs, government publications, and original research. New material is added continuously.

Chelsea History Topics of Interest

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Abridged History of Chelsea • Articles about Chelsea (1970-1971; 1980-89; 1990-92; 1993-1994; 1995; 1996; 1997-1998; 1999-2002; 2003-Present) • Battle of Chelsea Creek, (Vol. 1, 2, 3) • Blizzard of 1978 • Burning of Chelsea by Pratt • Burning of Chelsea 1973 • Chelsea: All American City 1998 • Chelsea: All American City 2014 • Chelsea Fire 1908 • Chelsea Fire 1973 • Chelsea Health Needs Assessment • Chelsea Naval Hospital • Chelsea Receivership Documents • Chelsea's Role in World War II • City of Chelsea by Gillespie • Community Profile 1993 • Corruption Probe • Daughters and Sons of Chelsea – Group information on second and third-generation Chelsea people • Demographics & Statistical Profile of Chelsea • Drugs in Chelsea 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garden Cemetery • Grueby Poetry • Hispanics in Chelsea • History of Chelsea by Chamberlain • Intimate City by Kopf • John Ruiz, Heavyweight Boxer • Lewis Latimer, Scientist • Low Art Tiles • Mystic River (Tobin) Bridge • New Immigrants to Chelsea 1970 – 1996 • Plan for Hispanics in Chelsea • Receivership • Representative Richard A. Voke (<i>House Majority Leader</i>) • Senator Thomas F. Birmingham (<i>Senate President</i>) • Seven Generations by Pratt • Shipbuilding in Chelsea • Shaping Education for the Twenty-First Century • Soldier's Home History (<i>Vol. 1,2</i>) • Some History of Chelsea Creek by the Chelsea Historic Society • Spice Mill on the Marsh • State Register of Historic Places 2000 • Survey of Industrial Sites
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ACCESSING OUR REFERENCE ARCHIVES

Chelsea Public Library patrons are welcome to access our reference archives during regular business hours from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM. The archives are closed to the public during evening hours unless otherwise arranged with the library. Individuals are limited to the examination of one piece of material at a time. Removal of materials from the archives to another part of the library for photocopying is done with the assistance of a librarian. The library reserves the right to limit the number of personal belongings that a user may take into the archives, such as briefcases, backpacks, long coats, etc. To gain entrance to the archives patrons must provide valid identification and register in the visitor's log.

Location

The Chelsea Historical Archives is located on the lower level of the library next to the Children's Department. The Chelsea Public Library has two different entrances. Our main entrance is accessible through the front on Broadway and our wheelchair-accessible entrance is located on the side through Marlboro Street.

Research, Photocopying, & Circulation of Materials

The library has a photocopy machine available for copying materials. Patrons must consult with a librarian to remove materials from the archives for photocopying. It is the responsibility of the patron to ensure that copyright laws are observed. This library has a microfilm reader for newspapers found only on microfilm. Printing fees apply.


Fee Schedule

Patrons are welcome to utilize our reference archives free of charge. Extended archive research by a staff member is available for \$10 per hour for a maximum of two hours. The library is happy to assist with research and answer general questions relating to Chelsea's history on a limited basis. No materials from the archives are permitted to leave the building. There are no exceptions to this rule. The library has a photocopy machine available for copying materials. Patrons must consult with a librarian to remove materials from the archives for photocopying. It is the responsibility of the patron to ensure that copyright laws are observed.

DIFFERENT ARCHIVE TYPES

The Chelsea Public Library has different types of historical archives that might interest you in the form of books, atlases, city directories, city maps, Board of Aldermen Meeting Minutes, School Committee Minutes, Municipal Budgets, Newspapers, Microfilm, City Ordinances, Telephone Directories, Videocassettes, and Yearbooks from Chelsea High School.

Books on the History of Chelsea

 Organized in alphabetical order by author.

- Anti Antin, Mary. *The Promised Land: By Mary Antin*. Houghton, Mifflin and Co., 1969.
- Ayer, Eleanor H. *Lewis Latimer: Creating Bright Ideas*. Raintree Steck-Vaughn, 1997.
- Baldwin, Thomas W. *Vital Records of Chelsea, Massachusetts, to the Year 1850*. Wright & Potter Printing Co., 1976.
- Brown, Gerard W. *Postcard History Series Chelsea*. Arcadia, 2004.
- Candal, Cara. *Partnering for Progress: Boston University and the Chelsea Public School Partnership*, 2009.
- Chamberlain, Mellen. *A Documentary History of Chelsea: Including the Boston Precincts of Winnisimmet, Rumney Marsh, and Pullen Point, 1624-1824*. Vol. 1 & 2, University Press, 1908.

- Clarke, Margaret Harriman. *Chelsea in the 20th Century*. Arcadia, 2004.
- Clarke, Margaret Harriman. *Chelsea: Images of America*. Arcadia, 1998.
- Demeter, Andrew. *Chelsea Clock: The First Hundred Years*. Demeter Publications, 2014.
- Dumont, Matthew P. *Treating the Poor: A Personal Sojourn through the Rise and Fall of Community Mental Health*. Dymphna Press, 1994.
- Fay, Frank B., and William Howell Reed. *War Papers of Frank B. Fay: With Reminiscences of Service in the Camps and Hospitals of the Army of the Potomac, 1861-1865*. University Publications of America, 1994.
- Gillespie, Charles Bancroft. *The City of Chelsea*. Chelsea Gazette, 1898.
- George, Denise. *Johnny Cornflakes: A Story about Loving the Unloved*. Christian Focus, 2010.
- Halloran, Bob. *Breakdown: A Season of Gang Warfare, High School Football, and the Coach Who Police the Streets*. Lyon Press, 2010.
- Hoar, Jay S. *New England's Last Civil War Veterans*. Seacliff Press, 1976.
- Jarmak, Arnie and Resnek, Joshua. *Turbulent Years in Chelsea: Life in the 70's and 80's*. History Press, 2020.
- Jones, Laura. *Flames of Chelsea 1908*. AuthorHouse, 2014.
- Kopf, Edward J. *The Intimate City: A Study of Urban Social Order, Chelsea, Massachusetts, 1906-1915*. University Microfilms, Inc., 1974.
- McKay, Robert D. *The Battle of Chelsea Creek: Second Armed Conflict of the American Revolution*. Chelsea Evening Record, 1928.
- Nason, George Warren. *History and Complete Roster of the Massachusetts Regiments: Minute Men of '61 who Responded to the First Call of President Abraham Lincoln, April 15, 1861, to Defend the Flag and Constitution of the United States, and Biographical Sketches of Minute Men of Massachusetts*. United States, Smith & McCance, 1910.
- Norman, Winifred Latimer, and Patterson Lily. *Lewis Latimer: Scientist*. Chelsea House Publishers, 1994.
- Pennington, Richard. *Low Art Tile*. Richard Pennington, 2010.
- Pratt, Briggs Priscilla Lorena. *Phinehas Pratt's Descendants: With Narratives and Biographies, 1622-1980*. P.L.P. Briggs, 1980.
- Pratt, Walter Merriam. *Seven Generations: A Story of Prattville and Chelsea*. Filmed by the Genealogical Society of Utah, 1989.
- Pratt, Walter Merriam. *The Burning of Chelsea*. Sampson Publishing Company, 1908.
- Pratt, Walter Merriam. *Seven Generations: A Story of Prattville and Chelsea*. Privately Printed, 1930.
- Pratt, Walter Merriam. *The Burning of Chelsea*. Sampson Publishing Co., 1908.
- Shiefman, Vicky. *Goodbye to the Trees*. Macmillan, 1993.
- Trask, John W. *The United States Marine Hospital, Port of Boston: Massachusetts's Oldest Hospital*. 1939.

Atlases (Including Revere & Winthrop) 1874, 1886, 1896, 1911, & 1914

The historical archives host large bound volumes showing detailed street maps, ownership of property, square footage of lots, and configuration of buildings on logs.

City Directories

Library patrons can access original copies of city directories from 1847 to 1995 at our archives room and in microfilm form from 1847 to 1933 at the library's adult reference room. These provide great insights such as names, addresses, and occupations of adult residents over the age of 18.

City Maps

Through the historical archives, patrons can gain access to original copies of street city maps for the following years: 1943, 1960, 1965, 1970, 1972, 1973, 1986, and road atlas for 1954 and 1987.

Chelsea City Records

- **Board of Aldermen Meeting Minutes** (1976 – 1991).
- **Chelsea School Committee Meeting Minutes** (1968 – 1991, & 1997).
- **Monographs** (1954, 1965, 1970, 1972, 1973, 1980, 1983, 1984, & 1990-1997).
- **Municipal Budgets** 1973 – 1998 (adopted operating budgets of city departments).
- **City of Chelsea Ordinances** (1739 – 1883, 1902, 1909, 1928, 1929, 1952, 1974, & 1995)

Newspapers

- **Chelsea Gazette**
 - April 1886 – August 1941 (available in microfilm form).
- **Chelsea Record**
 - 1925 – 1997 (available in microfilm form).
 - 1939 – 1968 (available in original bound volumes).
 - 1996 – present (original copies available).
- **Chelsea Telegraph & Pioneer**
 - January 1855 – December 1906 (available in microfilm form).
- **Chelsea Weekly News**
 - June 1976 – April 1990 (available in microfilm).

Telephone Directories

Our historical archives contain telephone directories for the north suburban Boston area from 1978 to the present.

Videocassettes

- **Conflagration | 1973 Fire** – Produced by the Defense Civil Preparedness Agency
- **Chelsea in Receivership | Broadcast on 60 Minutes** – May 1, 1994.
- **Chelsea Leaves Receivership | 1Broadcast on Chronicle** – May 6, 1995.