

CALIFORNIA STATE LIBRARY

CALIFORNIA HISTORY SECTION

RESEARCH GUIDES

ORANGE COUNTY HISTORY



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California History Section

900 N Street Room 200

9:30-4 Monday-Friday

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Separated from Los Angeles and organized as an independent county in 1889, Orange County had an estimated population of 3,185,968 people as of 2018. Typically known for Disneyland, Knott’s Berry Farm and its many amazing beaches, this region is also home to historic missions, historic sites described by Spanish explorers or American whalers and early land grants. Given this rich past, it isn’t surprising that it also boasts a number of different historical societies and historic preservation organizations. If you are looking for exciting local history resources in the [California History Section's](#) rich collections, then check out what we have for this county!

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ENJOY YOUR RESEARCH!

DIGITIZED RESOURCES

Can't come to the library just yet? No worries! There are a number of online resources you can explore related to Orange County!



[Digitized Publications](#)

A few years ago we digitized some of our more fragile publications. You can now see documents related to Orange County on Internet Archive!



URL: <https://archive.org/>

Type in Search Box: (Orange County) AND collection:(californiastatelibrary)

Select Option: "Search Full Text of Books"



[Digitized Images](#)

We have scanned and digitized a portion of our extensive photograph collection, including images related to Orange County. You can see them on Calisphere!



URL: <https://calisphere.org/institution/51/items/>

Type in Search Box: ("Orange County")

DIGITIZED RESOURCES



[California State Association of Counties](#)

Like Wikipedia but locally grown, this government website will provide basic information about Orange County.



URL: <http://www.counties.org/county-websites-profile-information>



[County Website](#)

Want to learn about what Orange County residents have to say for themselves? Check out the county government's website!



URL: <http://www.ocgov.com/>

GENERAL RESEARCH TIPS

While many of our materials are online, even more are only in hard-copy. You can use the following resources to learn about our Orange County resources.



Catalog

If you are looking for Orange County materials, your best source is our [catalog](#). You can do a general search on the catalog but also be sure to check out our specialized resources on page 8 of this research guide!



URL: https://csl.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/search?vid=01CSL_INST:CSL&lang=en&sortby=rank

Type in Subject Box: (Orange County)



California Information File II

Sometimes the catalog doesn't provide as much detail as you might like. This is why we created the California Information File II, successor to the analog California Information File I. In this resource, you can find indexing to individual articles, as well as Orange County deeds, restaurant menus, pamphlets and more!



URL: http://dbs.library.ca.gov/dbtext_html/QueryCalinfo.htm

Type in Search Box:

1. Orange
2. Name of a city in Orange County

GENERAL RESEARCH TIPS



The screenshot shows a search form titled "City and County Directories". It includes a search instruction: "Enter one or more search terms. The more terms you enter, the fewer results you will get. To search for a range of years, type a colon between the years, e.g., 1940-1950." The form has several input fields: "County", "City", "Year", "Title", "Author", "Publisher", and "Material type". Each field has a small "GO" button next to it. At the bottom, there is a "Submit Query" button and a "Help" icon.

City Directories

Looking for a person? How about the history of a location? You can trace this information and more via our city directories! See what we have by checking our specialized database.



URL: http://dbs.library.ca.gov/dbtext_html/QueryCityDir.htm

Type in Search Box:

1. Orange
2. Name of a city in Orange County



The screenshot shows a search form titled "Telephone Directories". It includes a search instruction: "Type in the city or county. If you get too many results, add the year to your search." The form has several input fields: "Location-White Pages", "Location-Yellow Pages", "Year", and "Material type". Each field has a small "GO" button next to it. At the bottom, there is a "Submit Query" button and a "Help" icon.

Telephone Books

Are you not finding what you need in our city directory collection? No worries, you might find it in our telephone book collection. See what we have by checking our phone book database.



URL: http://dbs.library.ca.gov/dbtext_html/QueryPhonebk.htm

Type in Search Box:

1. Orange
2. Name of a city in Orange County

ON-SITE RESEARCH RESOURCES

Our collection predates computers and so do some of our access points! If you are in the library, be sure to check the following analog files for leads on more resources.



California Information File

In the library? Check the California Information File before you do anything else! This file indexes over 130 years of California articles, books, and manuscript collections from all 58 counties.



Subject Headings: Counties: Orange



Map File

Looking for a Orange county map? Our map file is a great place to start. We have a wide variety of maps, including Sanborn fire insurance maps. Some of our maps cover settlement patterns and even natural history.



Subject Headings: Counties: Orange



Photographic File

Sometimes a picture is worth a 1000 words and not all of our pictures are online. To check the rest of the collection search our picture file card catalog.



Subject Headings: Counties: Orange

OTHER ON-SITE RESOURCES

Despite our best efforts, some of our resources defy complete description. We suggest that you ask a librarian about Orange county information contained in the following resources.



Vertical Files

Our massive collection of vertical files covers a wide variety of topics including individual counties. You can check them for pamphlets, certificates and even posters related to organizations, individuals, and area histories.



Subject Headings: Counties: Orange



Postcard Files

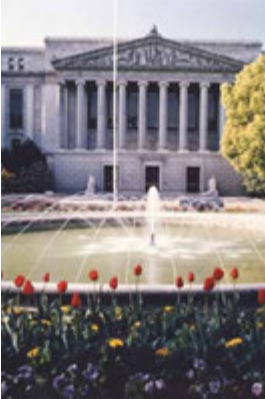
Separate from our photo collection, our postcard collection contains a number of images related to Orange County. Most are not online.



Subject Headings: Orange County

OTHER PLACES TO LOOK

Of course, the California History Section doesn't have everything, so we suggest that in addition to looking at our collections, you contact the following organizations



Other California State Library Sections

[Government Publications Section](#)
[Witkin Law Library](#)
[Sutro Library](#)
[General Information](#)



URLs:

- <http://www.library.ca.gov/government-publications/>
- <http://www.library.ca.gov/law/>
- <http://www.library.ca.gov/sutro/>
- <https://www.library.ca.gov/services>



Other Organizations

[Orange County Clerk](#)
[Orange County Archives](#)
[Orange County Historical Society](#)
[Orange County Public Library](#)
[Orange County Parks: Historic Sites](#)



URLs:

- <http://www.ocgov.com/gov/clerk/>
- <http://www.ocarchives.com/>
- <http://www.orangecountyhistory.org/wp/>
- <http://www.ocpl.org/>
- <http://www.ocparks.com/historic>



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Hours: 9:30-4 Monday-Friday

This guide is also available online at:
<https://www.library.ca.gov/california-history/research-guides/>