



## Table of Contents

### Step 1:

#### Historic Building Survey

### Step 2:

#### Architectural Style

### Step 3:

#### Corona City Directories

### Step 4:

#### Land Records

### Step 5:

#### Clipping Files, Books & Manuscript Collections

### Step 6:

#### Photograph & Slide Collections

### Step 7:

#### Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps

### Step 8:

#### Indexes & Databases

### Step 9:

#### Newspapers

## A guide to local history resources for Researching the History of a Home

What makes a house or property historically significant? There are a number of elements to consider. The National Register of Historic Places identified the following criteria for historically significant buildings, structures, sites and objects:

- A. That are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B. That are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- C. That embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. That have yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

The detailed research required to document a property's history can take a long time, especially if it is combined with other work and responsibilities. Without proper understanding of the important resources and methods of data collection, it can take much longer. The purpose of this guide is to introduce the beginner to some basic sources for the collection of data about a property.

## Step 1: Historic Building Survey

The first thing to do is check the Historic Building Survey to see whether your house has already been documented. This seven volume survey can be found in the Library's Heritage Room, it is organized by street & address. The houses reviewed and researched were constructed prior to World War II, and the survey identifies the architectural style and other elements that make the building historically significant.

## Step 2: Architectural Style

Note the type of building materials used & how the house was built. Check doors, windows, roof, walls and other architectural details. Keep an eye out for original materials. A good reference for determining architectural style: *Design Guidelines for Historic Buildings* by the City of Corona Planning Department (at the Heritage Room Desk), *A Field Guide to American Houses* by McAlester (HR 917.3 MCA), *The Elements of Style* by Calloway & Cromley (HR 721 ELE) & *Riverside County Historic Resources Survey Manual & Architectural Style Guide* by Warner (HR 720.9794 WAR).

## Step 3: Corona City Directories

The Heritage Room has a collection of city directories that can identify who lived in your house, the individual's occupation and other details are available. The Heritage Room's collection of city directories (HR 910.25) includes the following: 1924, 1927, 1939, 1941, 1944, 1951, 1953, 1955/56, 1958/59, 1961, 1963, 1967, 1983, 1984, 1986, 1988-1991, 1993-2000, 2002, and 2004-2011.

## Step 4: Land Records

Assessment Rolls for Corona from 1896, 1897, 1904, 1913-1941 are available in the Heritage Room. The records are organized in alphabetical order by land owner, but the lot & block are listed for each piece of land as well. If you are attempting to locate property owner through the lot & block numbers it is possible through this resource. Though this process is time consuming, patrons can check each entry in the roll against the lot & block information for their house which would then provide the information about the property owner. Another option is a title search with the [Riverside County Recorder's Office](#). Both the Assessment Rolls & the Recorder's Office records will indicate construction through dramatic increases noted in the property improvement's column and/or an increase in the selling price of the property. The [Bureau of Land Management](#) also holds general land office records such as Land Patents, Land Status Records, Survey Plats and Field Notes. BLM's collection of Field Notes date back to 1810, while their collection of Federal land title records are available from 1820 to the present.

- » Riverside County Recorder's Office: <http://riverside.asrclkrec.com/>
- » Bureau of Land Management: <http://www.glorerecords.blm.gov/>

## Step 5: Clipping Files, Books & Manuscript Collection

When you know the names of owners, occupants, architect and/or builder the Heritage Room has a collection of newspaper clippings, books and manuscripts that may provide further information. The newspaper clippings include biographical & informational files about a variety of subjects such as residences, agriculture and transportation. Mug books and yearbooks for the Corona area contain images and information about the community and residents. Also search *The History of Riverside County, California* by Holmes (HR 979.497 HOL) for biographical information about early settlers, the Ware Manuscript Collection has detailed information about the history of Corona & many of its residents.

## Step 6: Photograph & Slide Collections

The photograph & slide collections found in the Library's Heritage Room include images from the 1800s through the present. Images of your house, street and residents can be found here. The images may provide additional information about how the house originally looked, those who occupied the home and how the area developed over time. The collection can only be viewed in the Heritage Room, the photographs and slides are organized by subject with dates and other information contained on the Description Sheet that accompanies each image. **Corona Heritage Online** is also available from home or a library computer. Images from our slide and photograph collections are available, this online resource only includes a small percentage of our images.

» Corona Heritage Online: <https://history.coronapubliclibrary.org>

## Step 7: Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps

The Sanborn Maps can provide information about structural material used to construct a building, zoning information, layout of lots & blocks, the original layout of the building. By comparing the maps from different years, you can establish an approximate date of construction and can determine when and what types of changes have been made to the building and surrounding property. A collection of Sanborn Maps are available in the Heritage Room. On microfilm our collection includes: South Riverside 1891, 1895; Corona 1900, 1907, 1928 (Norco is included), and 1942 [[a complete list of other cities included on the microfilm is available](#)]. In print or bound copies include: Corona 1911, 1928 (with revisions made in 1936, 1939, 1942, 1951, 1953); 1928 (with revisions made in 1951, 1953 & 1960). The print editions all include Norco.

» Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps (HR Collection): <https://www.coronaca.gov/Home/ShowDocument?id=4200>

## Step 8: Indexes & Databases (print & online sources)

The Sunnyslope Cemetery Records are available in the Heritage Room. Dates of death & birth, cause of death and location in the cemetery are useful when researching the life of someone who once resided in your house. In addition to the cemetery index, census data is available online through databases such as [Family Search](#) & [Ancestry.com](#). Family Search is a free database available from home. The library subscribes to Ancestry Library Edition which is only available from within the library. Census information can help identify those who lived in a building, their occupation and family members & borders living in the residence. At this time the U.S. Census Bureau has released census images from 1790 - 1930, the 1940 Census was released on April 2, 2012 and is available from Family Search & Ancestry.com. Ancestry Library Edition also contains the California Death Index (1940 - 1997) and the Social Security Death Index (1950 - present). On microfilm the Heritage Room has copies of the California Death Index that cover 1905 through 1939. Once a resident has been identified the date of death obtained from the indexes gives the researcher a specific time frame in which to search for an obituary in the Library's Newspaper Collection.

» Family Search: <https://familysearch.org/>

**Step 9: Newspapers**

If you know the approximate date when your house was built, but have not been able to identify the builder or architect a search through the *South Riverside Bee*, *Corona Courier*, *Corona Daily Independent*, *Corona-Norco Independent* or *Riverside Press-Enterprise* might yield some results. Also, if you have the date of death for anyone who lived in the house obituaries can be located in the newspaper collection. Obituaries often yield a great deal of information about the person and their family which can be useful in establishing the historical significance your house. **Corona Newspaper Archive** is an online, full-text searchable database with copies of the *South Riverside Bee*, *Corona Courier*, *Corona Daily Independent*, *Corona-Norco Independent* and the *Norco Beacon* from 1887-1977. The database is available in the Library on the 1st floor. In addition to this the newspaper collection is on microfilm and can be requested at the Adult Information Desk on the first floor of the library.

The microfilm copies of the local newspapers include the following dates:

*South Riverside Bee*, June 2, 1887 - June 20, 1896;

*Corona Courier*, January 6, 1900 - April 29, 1938;

*Corona Daily Independent*, August 24, 1906 - April 30, 1983;

*Corona-Norco Independent*, May 1983 - December 19, 2003;

*Riverside Press-Enterprise*, July 15, 1979 - April 30, 1990, January 1, 2000 -

December 31, 2000; January 1, 2007 - June 30, 2009