

 Learning about your house …

Finding information about your house can be difficult and even old houses do not always have much information available about them. The library is a great resource for learning about who might have previously lived in your house. If your house is of specific historical interest (either through a famous resident or an interesting architectural feature) the library may hold additional information.

**Who lived in my house?**

***Title Deeds:***

Your deeds are your best primary source of information about your house. Deeds should contain information on who lived in the house (but not necessarily who owned it), any house name changes and the boundaries of the property.

If you do not have a copy of your deeds then the Greffe should be able to help you obtain them. You can contact the Greffe on 01481 225277.

***Censuses:***

A census provides information about the occupiers of the house (not necessarily the owner), the ages of the residents, their occupations and their relationship to the head of the household. It will also tell you where the residents were born. The library holds censuses as far back as 1841 and every ten years after up until 1921.

***Livres de Perchage:***

Guernsey’s complex system of land-holding required meticulous record-keeping to ensure that the lord or the monarch was not deprived of their rightful dues. A detailed account of the land held by each tenant and sub-tenant was recorded in a Livre de Perchage for each fief. The land area of an individual tenancy would be listed as well as the nature of the property, for example, be it a dwelling, a garden, outbuildings or meadows. Understanding the information contained in a *Livre* can be difficult, aside from being written in French the format is often confusing to navigate. The library contains numerous *Livres de Perchage* should you wish to study them.

**Who owned my house?**

If you want to know who actually owned your house (as opposed to who was living there) or whether or not any extensions have been made to your house then you need to contact the Cadastre. The Cadastre maintains the only indexed register of property ownership in Guernsey with some records dating back to 1912. You can contact the Cadastre on 01481 221239.

**Which fief is my house in?**

Like Normandy, Guernsey was divided up into areas known as “fiefs” (pronounced fee-EFFS). The Normans adopted the fief system as an effective method of organising the collection of revenue and the administration of justice. You can find out which fief your house is in by using the ***States Corporate Digimap System*** accessible on one of our computer terminals.

**Other information**

Houses of particular historic or architectural interest map appear in some of the library’s books on Guernsey houses;

Cooper, T. – ***Mansion, Manor & Merchant Houses: Guernsey architecture and social heritage*.** Guernsey: Blue Ormer Publishing, 2018 [LOC 728.8 COO]

The Guernsey Society - ***The Guernsey Farmhouse***. Guernsey: Toucan Press, 1978 [LOC 728.6 GUE]

McCormack, J. – ***Channel Island Houses***. Guernsey: J. McCormack, 2015 [LOC 728.3 MAC] – a detailed study of many of the island’s older houses that appear on the 1787 Duke of Richmond map.

🔑 ***Houses of Guernsey*** - held in the staff area this scrapbook contains newspaper cuttings about certain old local houses.

***Quarterly Reviews of the Guernsey Society*** – A periodical filled with local interest topics that occasionally covers certain buildings. Searchable in the Priaulx Digital Archive.

*Almanacks & directories* – if your house used to be used as premises for a business you may find trade adverts in one of our old almanacks. We have copies dating back as far as 1812. Some of the later directories have street listings and can also be useful for trying to work out who lived in your house in between census years.

*Priaulx Library website articles* **-** Try searching our website (www.priaulxlibrary.co.uk) for any articles that might mention your house.

***Houses in St. Peter Port:***

***Buildings in the Town and Parish of St Peter Port***. The National Trust of Guernsey, 1975 [LOC 720 BRE]

***Kelly’s Directory*** – These directories have a useful street by street guide of residences and businesses in St. Peter Port.

Hocart, R. - **“The Building of the New Town”.** *La Société Guernesiaise Transactions, 1992* – p.342

Hugo, G.W.J.L. – ***Guernsey As It Used to Be***. Guernsey: Guernsey Star & Gazette Co., Ltd, 1933 [LOC 940 HUG] – an account of town in the latter half of the 19th Century with details of businesses and occupants.

***Houses in other parishes:***

Wylie, D. – ***The Vale: 800 Years of a Guernsey Parish***. Guernsey: Ink Ltd., 2005 [LOC 940.09 VAL]

Wylie, D. – ***Castel Parish Past and Present***. Guernsey: Herald, 2010 [LOC 940.09 CAS] – p.106

Collas, V. - **“Some Vale Houses and Families”.** *La Société Guernesiaise Transactions, 1960* – p.60, discusses La Roque Balan, Paradis, Le Grane Tertre, Les Roques Barrées, La Maison de Bas & Le Maresquet.

Priaulx, T.F. - **“Le Messurier Houses in the Western Parishes”.** *La Société Guernesiaise Transactions, 1951* – p.145, article discussing specific houses owned by the Le Messuriers between the 1300s and 1800s.

**Historic Maps**

The library has copies of a number of historic maps of the island and of St. Peter Port. Older houses may appear on some of these. These maps are also accessible on the ***States Corporate Digimap System*** accessible on one of our computer terminals.

***Maps of Guernsey:***

Ordnance Survey from 1898 with revised copies made in 1938, 1963 and 1979.

Duke of Richmond Map dating to 1787.

***Maps of St. Peter Port:***

The library holds maps of St. Peter Port from 1832, 1843 and 1873.

**Images of your house**

***Carel Toms:***

Toms, C. – ***St Peter Port: People & Places***. Chichester: Phillimore & Co. Ltd, 2003 [LOC 940 TOM] – Historic photos of St. Peter Port arranged street by street.

Toms, C. – ***Reflections of Guernsey’s Past***. Guernsey: Guernsey Press Co. Ltd, 1995 [LOC 940 TOM] – Aside from historic photos from various parishes contains an illustrated guide to features on some 19th century Guernsey cottages.

The library has copies of a number of other Carel Toms photographic books which contain historic images (including many of houses).

***Priaulx Digital Image Archive:***

Try searching our digital image archive for pictures of your house or neighbourhood.

**Information about your parish**

De Garis, M. – ***St. Pierre du Bois: The story of a Guernsey parish and its people***. 1996 [LOC 940.09 DEG]

Cox, G.S. – ***St Peter Port: 1680 – 1830***. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1999 [LOC 940.253 COX]

Wylie, D. – ***The Vale: 800 Years of a Guernsey Parish***. Guernsey: Ink Ltd., 2005 [LOC 940.09 VAL]

Wylie, D. – ***Castel Parish Past and Present***. Guernsey: Herald, 2010 [LOC 940.09 CAS] – p.106

***The Parish of St. Martin’s***. Guernsey: Mackenzie and Le Patourel, 1897 [LOC 940.09 STR]

**Place Names**

Lenfestey, H. – ***Guernsey Place Names***. Weybridge: RobertPenberthy Publishing, 2014 [LOC 910.3 LEN]

Howlett, C.J. – ***Guernsey Street & Road Names: History of the Parishes & their Folklore***. Guernsey: Guernsey Herald Limited, 1983 [LOC 910.31 HOW] – meanings & folk lore connected to particular roads.