



PORTLAND PARKS & RECREATION

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Portland Archives, A2010-003

HISTORICAL TREE RESEARCH GUIDE

Locating Trees in Historical Records in the City of Portland

2017



Historical Tree Research Guide: Locating Trees in Historical Records in the City of Portland

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Cover photo:

Group of Campfire Girls Planting a Tree in the Albina Neighborhood, 1962.
City of Portland Archives, A2010-003.

Top photo:

The Kiser Photograph Company captured the freshly planted street trees in the Eastmoreland Neighborhood circa 1915. The trees on Bybee Avenue were planted before the homes were built.
Image from Oregon Historical Society Digital Collections, bb000306.

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Portland Parks & Recreation

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Commissioner Amanda Fritz
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Introduction:

Why research the history of a tree?

Discovering a tree's history presents a completely new way to value this resource, and might even help garner support for its preservation. If you want people to care for trees, you need them to first care about them. A well-researched tree will help foster a deeper sense of place, establishing a physical, living anchor in your community that reflects the neighborhood's varied history. In many cases, historical trees are the oldest living artifacts of our neighborhoods. Knowing an area's trees and history provides an understanding of complex lessons from our past and helps us make well informed decisions about the future.

The following historical research guide will help you dig into the records of the past and unlock the history of a tree, or grove of trees. Today, just like in the past, individuals have planted trees for many reasons—maybe it was for a memorial, a special occasion, a gift, etc. Over time, trees mature and often live well beyond the people who planted them. Without documentation, the initial significance of that tree becomes harder to uncover and might even be lost.

In many ways, researching a tree mirrors methods used in researching a home or building, with the exception that few in the past ever made direct records for trees. You will have to look in multiple places to piece the puzzle together and craft a story—either a rediscovery of the tree's original significance, or a new way of interpreting the history you find. In sum, there is always a history behind a tree—you just need to find it.

This guide is not a comprehensive resource. The steps and types of records provided here are merely recommendations and you do not have to take each one of these steps to produce a good history. Often, information from a couple of sources is enough to start. The methods below are just a suggestion; the possibilities are limitless.

History is based on primary sources of evidence. Documents, records, photographs, reports, newspaper clippings, and personal correspondence all are useful to historians because they are snapshots of the past. You will be looking to see if those snapshots captured your tree in them.

PLANT STREET TREES

MAPLES, ELMS, HORSE CHESTNUTS,
CATALPAS, BIRCHES, MOUNTAIN ASH

Nothing adds more to fine home districts than well-selected Street Trees. They add grace and charm to the finest architecture, hide bare or open places, keep dust out, and give finishing touches to the City Beautiful. I offer best varieties of trees, in large sizes, that will give immediate effects, at from 75c to \$1.50 each, according to size.

**75c
TO
\$1.50
EACH**

IN MY OWN NURSERIES
near Durham and Tualatin, and on Columbia boulevard,
near the Vancouver carline, I grow an immense assortment of
RHODODENDRONS, KALMIAS OR MOUNTAIN LAUREL,
AZALEAS, CAMELLIAS, HOLLY, OREGON GRAPE
Also other broad-leaf Evergreens, as well as Flowering
Shrubs, such as
LILACS, SNOWBALLS, SPIREAS
HYDRANGEAS, WEIGELIAS, DEUTZIAS

ROSES! My stock of Roses is unequalled; quality the very best; prices the lowest.
Perennial Plants, Vines and Creepers, Fruit and Nut Trees
and Vines in Full Assortment.

I am not merely a dealer, but
THE LARGEST GROWER
in the Northwest of Hardy Or-
namental Nursery Stock.

FREE MY DESCRIPTIVE BOOKLET
"TREES, SHRUBS, VINES
AND PLANTS,"
the result of 27 years' experi-
ence in growing Nursery Stock
right here in Portland. Mailed
on Request.

A 1913 *Oregonian* nursery advertisement demonstrates the aesthetic reasons people planted street trees.

A Few Considerations for Historical Research

- **Be patient, historical research takes lots of time:** Since you are the detective, you will have to sift through lots of different sources and records.
- **Stay focused:** Contrary to popular belief, even in the past people lived in an information age. Do not be overwhelmed by boxes and boxes of records. Develop narrow research questions to keep you interested and not astounded by the enormity of historical records.
- **Be open to revise your initial ideas:** If you find evidence that an often-told story isn't true, do not get discouraged. This actually makes for a better history as you can use evidence to challenge a previously accepted idea.
- **Don't reinvent the wheel:** Do your background research to see if others have already researched aspects of your topic. Build on their work.
- **Don't be shy, ask questions:** This is one of the most important lessons. Librarians, archivists, neighbors, and community members all possess knowledge that can greatly help you save time and headache. When you reach a roadblock, ask around. You will likely get further along than trying to do it all yourself.
- **Have fun and be sure to share your tree history:** You don't have to write a book but find a way to share your research. A photo and caption, a scrapbook, community exhibit, neighborhood tour, scavenger hunt, or social media post all are easy and innovative ways to share your new knowledge. It will inspire others and help foster a greater sense of place in your neighborhood.

Before Starting your Research

Before any research project begins, it's helpful to sketch out some research questions. You are not bound to them for the duration of your research, but they will be helpful to narrow your scope. Here are some basic beginning questions:

How old is this tree? What records support the age?

- Who planted the tree and when?
- When did this species/ variety become popular; are there others of similar size and type?
Is there a connection?
- Are you interested in researching one tree on a property, or how your tree fit into a larger context; be that of the city, state, nation, or world?

If you are looking to find the history of multiple trees on a single property, the questions and methods will be very similar. Researching multiple trees over multiple properties becomes a far more complex process. For example, tracing the historic plantings in the Laurelhurst Neighborhood will reveal many trees planted by the developers. But not all of these trees are still living, and there could be seemingly old trees planted decades later to replace the original tree.

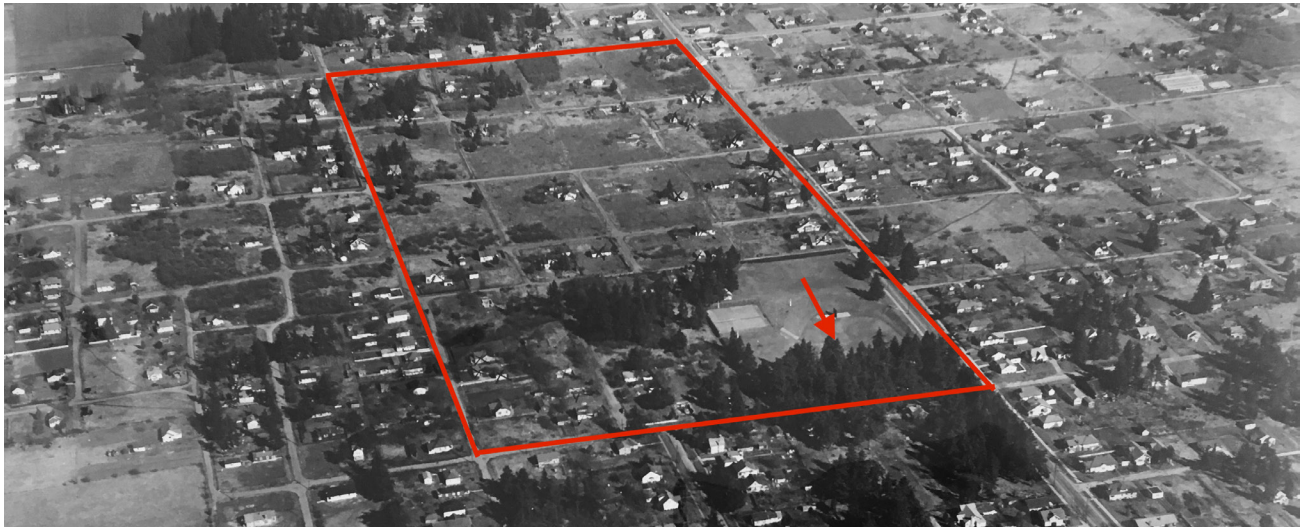
Remember, landscapes are constantly changing, and if you find evidence of this in a record it is just as exciting. Do not be discouraged, just try and focus on tracing one tree and one property at a time as you build a chronology.

Don't Have a Tree to Research?

What if you do not have a specific tree to research? If you can narrow your interest you can still do historical research.

If you are interested the tallest trees in your neighborhood: [Portland State University's Canopy Analytics Tool](#) uses recent LiDAR data to map trees over 50' in height. In addition to finding the tallest trees in your neighborhood, you can use the map's filter to sort trees' distance from buildings, ownership (private/public), type (conifer/deciduous), and urban heat island impact. This is a wonderful resource if you are still looking for a tree to research.

For researchers looking for a particular type of tree, for example the largest beech tree in the city, [Urban Forestry's Tree Inventory Project](#) has mapped all street trees in the City of Portland. You can download data for individual neighborhoods or the entire city. Using Excel or ArcGIS, you can search for unusual and large street trees and get their exact locations.



Canopy Analytics located the tallest tree in Lents Park, which also appears on this 1948 photo of the park. Lents park and school 1948, City of Portland Archives, A2001-045.932.

What kind of tree do you have?

This guide won't help you answer this question, but there are plenty of sources which will. Visit these links to see tree photos and descriptions and learn about growth forms and preferred site conditions. Also consider attending an Urban Forestry sponsored tree identification training or other public event.

- [Oregon State University Landscape Plant Database](#)
- [Friends of Trees Tree Database](#)
- [More Tree Species References](#)

Start with a Simple Web Search

You do not have to start from scratch. Begin your research by conducting a simple web search. You might encounter a blog or newspaper article that discusses the very tree you are researching, just make sure you credit the author for their work. Consider searching for the tree name and the closest street intersection, or if it's particularly rare, search for the tree name and the neighborhood name. For example, a search might include "Silver Linden" and "Piedmont neighborhood" or "Silver Linden" and "Piedmont."

What could the search uncover?

[A short history of Silver Lindens in Peninsula Park by Portland State University Student Taylor E. Rose](#)



Oregon Historic Sites Database

The Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) maintains the [Oregon Historic Sites Database](#) of historic properties and documentation files, many of which already have plenty of documentary evidence that might be helpful. Use their search engine or the clickable map to focus in on a particular property. Although focused on homes, National Register of Historic Places nominations and Portland Local Historic Landmark inventory forms often mention the landscaping and trees. The bibliographies and narratives can also help hone in your research.



What could the search uncover?

[Portland Garden Club's National Register form confirmed that Heritage Tree #159, a Katsura at the Portland Garden Club, was likely planted by the landscape architects Elizabeth Lord and Edith Schryver in 1954.](#)

Far left: Edith Schryver and Elizabeth Lord, 1929, image courtesy of Lord and Schriver Conservancy. Left: Katsura tree at Portland Garden Club in 2014.

Local Neighborhood Histories

To get a sense of the neighborhood's overall history and development before you dig too deep into the archives, ask a librarian or start looking for any published histories at [Multnomah County Library](#). The Oregon State Historic Preservation Office offers a fine bibliography of publications related to Oregon's county histories, including [Multnomah County](#). The City of [Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability](#) also offers a list of excellent resources including an extensive [bibliography of Portland history](#).



What could the search uncover?

With background information, you'll have a better sense of how your neighborhood developed. The possibilities will be endless. For example, the Roseway Neighborhood's linear arboretum along NE 72nd Avenue has undergone many rounds of replanting. George Denfeld's neighborhood history discusses one round of replanting in c. 1955.

"The parkway to Prescott Street was a dumping place for old tires, broken glass and other junk including the refuse from a few war gardens grown in the park. This improvement had been attempted in the past and we were told it couldn't be done.

I called Wendell Walker, who also lived on 72nd Avenue and asked him to take a petition on one side of 72nd and I would take the other side. This petition asked for the beautification of the parkway with trees, grass and roses. All the residents were happy to sign... Mayor Peterson responded that there was \$50,000 in the fund. The bill passed unanimously and we had our first victory."

— George A. Denfeld, *Groceries: Barrels to Scanners and Personal History* (1982)

Conduct an Interview with Community Members

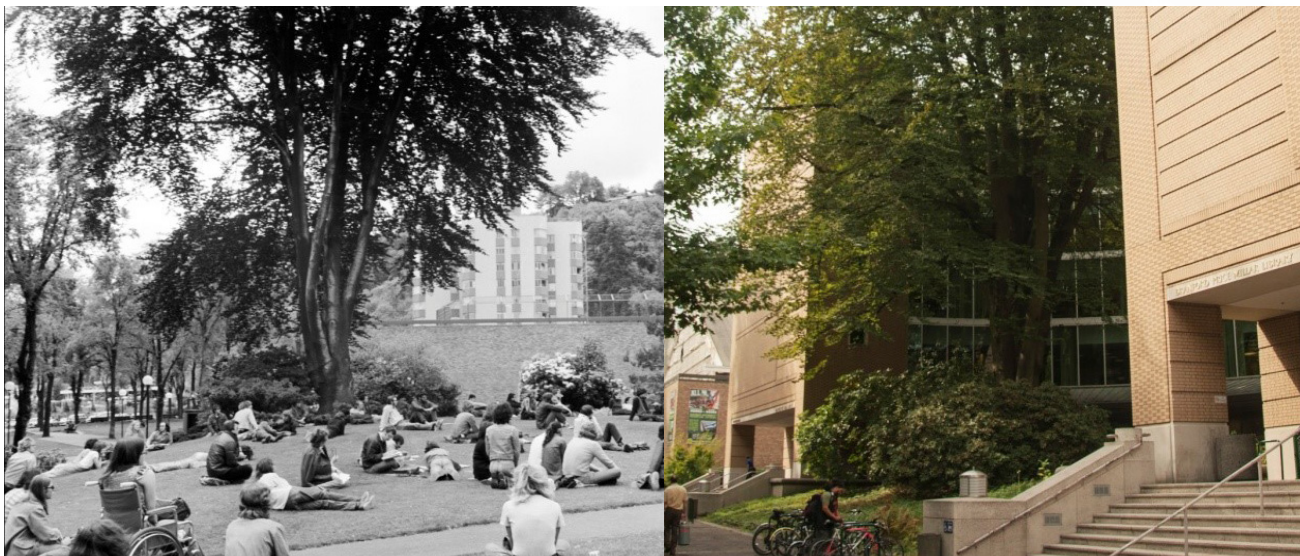
By far the most rewarding research and archival sources for tree history are located in family photo albums and the memories of your neighbors. Think about your own photo albums or your relatives, they record personal details like no other kind of source. If you want to interview neighbors, you will need to equip yourself with a smile, notepad, a digital recorder, and start asking around. Often just asking someone for their experience or memory of a particular tree will brighten their day. You will be surprised to see how many people will have a story to tell and you'll both learn more about the neighborhood and each other's unique history in the city. Interviews are more informal, shorter, and ask specific questions for specific research goals. Oral Histories differ because can last for hours and be conducted in several visits over weeks and months. Additionally, they need transcription and archiving. Learn more about [Oral History](#) in general and the [standards and guidelines in Oregon](#). It's probably best to start with a simple interview.

A few things to consider when interviewing community members:

- **Always introduce yourself and be polite:** You're asking for their time and you are seeking their knowledge, experiences, and memories. They don't have to help you, so being polite goes a long way.
- **Consider sending them a letter before you stop by:** Send along your initial research questions. I.E. "Do you know how long XXYY tree has been here?" or "Do you have any stories about this tree?"
- **Respect your neighbor's time and privacy:** Only knock on doors during reasonable hours. Offer your phone number, and address; call ahead if you can
- **Bring a list of your questions for you and your neighbor:** In case they remember something later or want to reach out again.
- **If you want to record the interview, get permission first:** Make sure you let them know who you are, why you want to interview them, and what you intend to do with the interview. You should treat their words as if they were in print and subject to copyright.
- **Be open minded:** If their memory contradicts something you might know, do not correct them, rather, note it and save it for later. Interviews and oral histories both focus on how someone remembers, not necessarily exactly how things happened.
- **Save all your notes, questions, and recorder files:** You have uncovered a treasure trove of rich information. Consider donating it to a library or historical society.
- **Follow up after:** Conclude your interview with a thank you, and invite them to contact you in the future. Follow up with a thank you card and send them the final research you uncover. You might have made a new friend.

What could the search uncover?

Interviewing Portland architect George Crandall, a designer of the Portland State University Library, revealed that he incorporated Heritage Tree #54 (a European Copper Beech) in the first initial design of the library's expansion.



Left: Copper beech tree at PSU Library, June 1975, image courtesy of University Archives, Portland State University.
Right: Copper beech as of 2015, image by Dave Hedberg.

What could the search uncover?

Interviewing property owner Jim Driscoll not only revealed his family's long history of tree planting on his great grandfather's historic Dosch Estate, but the larger significance of the trees to the state of Oregon's horticultural industry. After several interviews, Jim further revealed his own family photo album that documents the trees even before Henry E. Dosch built the home.



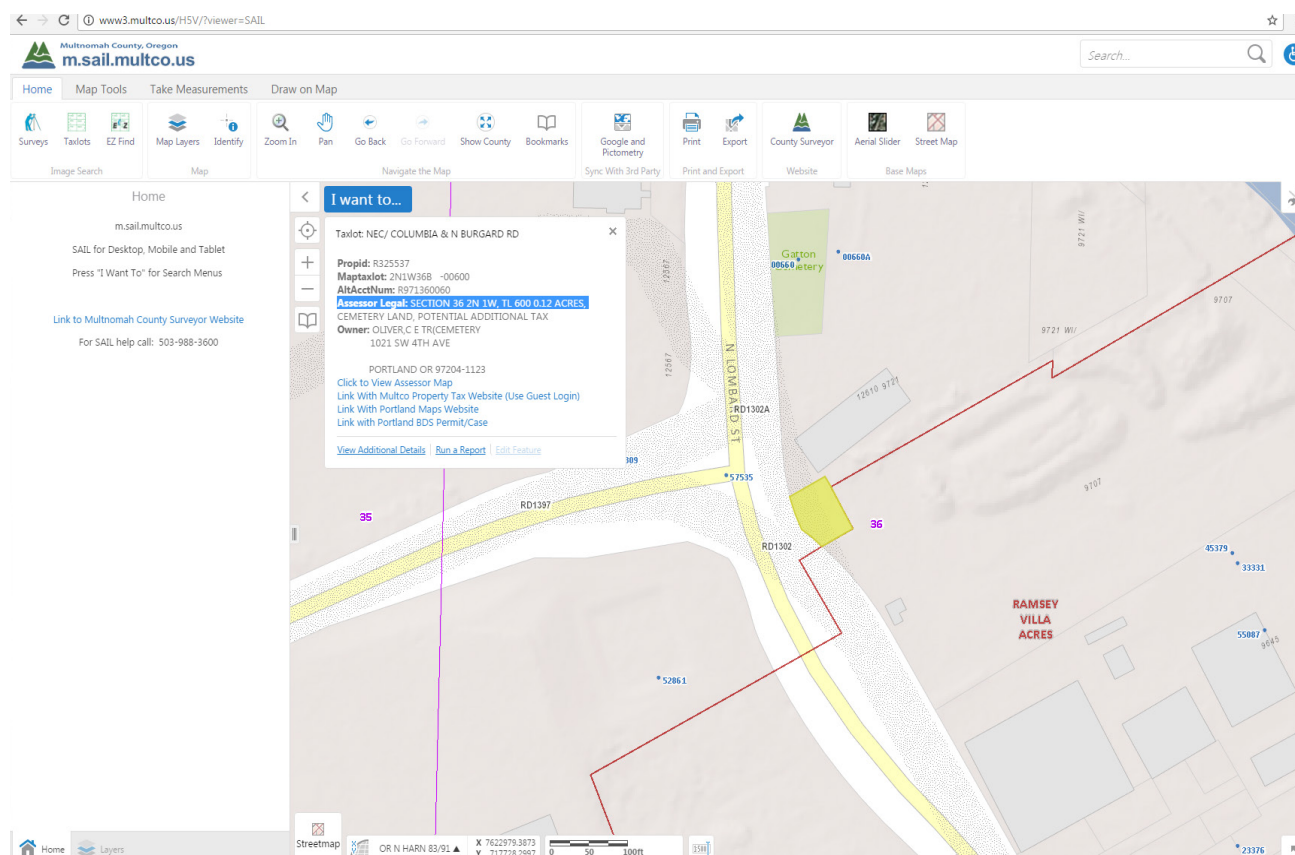
Left: Jim Driscoll's family photo album captured several current Heritage Trees. Right: Henry E. Dosch's "Villa Eichenhof" boasts many historically significant trees, nine of which are Heritage Trees.

Researching Property Records

Once you have the background history covered, you can use property records to learn more about the specifics of the parcel. Land records will tell who built the property, when, and how many times it has been sold. You can use the names and dates to help answer who might have planted the tree (or at least whose property it was on) and when that might have happened. Additionally, you can search the owner's name and develop a short biographical sketch of their life.

Obtaining the Legal Description

While most of us use a postal address to find each other's homes, street names and addresses can change over time. If you want to find out who lived in a house when it was first built, you will need the property's legal description. Instead of a postal address, a legal description uses the Section, Township, and Range plus the tax lot number and tax addition. Use the web-based Multnomah County Survey and Assessment Image Locator (SAIL) to find the legal description for the property by zooming in on it and using the "identify" tool. Take a note of the information. A legal description on SAIL would look something like this: SECTION 36 2N 1W, TL 600 0.12 ACRES



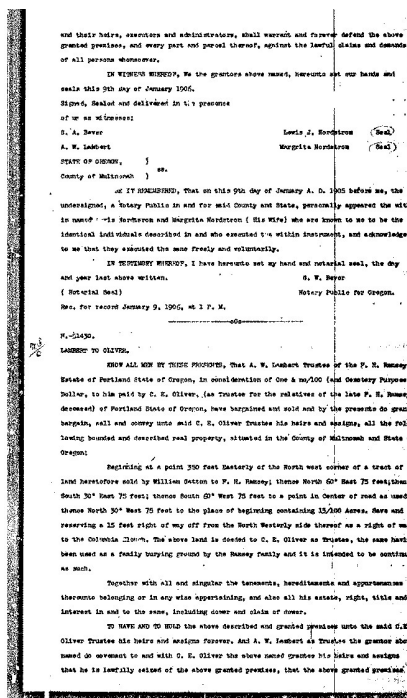
Use the Multnomah County SAIL map to find the property you are researching. Jot down the legal description and property ID.

Property Chain of Title

After exploring the records in SAIL, you can start to develop a line of title (a chain of title owners to the property all the way to the beginning). However, if your property dates back before 1990, you will need to visit the [Multnomah County Records Office](#) at 501 SE Hawthorne Blvd. Suite 175 Portland, OR 97214 and do much of this work in person. With your legal description, you can begin to piece together the line of title for your property using Deed Records, Tax Block Books, and property abstracts. Use the tax assessor's page to note the last warrantee deed. You will then have to look through the recorder's indexes and trace each owner back to the original.

What could the search uncover?

With a copy of the deed, it was clear that this parcel and the large Western redcedar on it are a memorial to St. Johns pioneer [Fred Ramsey](#). After cross-referencing the names, an interesting biography of Fred Ramsey confirms the story. When Ramsey died, he left the property to a friend A.W. Lambert, who had no living heirs.



MULTNOMAH COUNTY, OREGON PROPERTY RECORDS		Property Information					
Property Information	Tax Summary	Assessment History	Improvement Information	Parcel Search	Search Results	Printable Summary	Logout
Search Results for R325537				Pay Now			
Owner Name OLIVER, C E TR (CEMETERY)		Property ID Number R325537					
Owner Address 1021 SW 4TH AVE PORTLAND, OR 97204-1123		Site Address NEC COLUMBIA & N BURGARD RD PORTLAND, OR 97203					
Alternate Account Number R971360000		Neighborhood C600					
Map Tax Lot 2N1W368-00600		Levy Code Area - Taxing Districts 201 - EAST OF WILLAMETTE RIVER					
Portland Maps Click to Open Map		Information on Ordering Copies Click to Open Order Form					
Property Description				Exemption			
(14) BURIAL GROUNDS, CREM				Expiration Date			
Tax Roll Description SECTION 36 2N 1W, TL 600 0.12 ACRES, CEMETERY LAND, POTENTIAL ADDITIONAL TAX				Map Number 362N1W			
Parcel				Account Status			
				A - Active			
Property Use UE - CEMETERY/MAUSOLEUM				Year Built 0.12			
Related Accounts				Linked Accounts			
Split/Merge Account				Split/Merge Account Message			
Special Account Information							
Sales Information							
Deed	Grantor (Seller)	Grantee (Buyer)	Instrument	Date	Consideration Amount		
DEED	LAMBERT, A W TR	OLIVER, C E TR (CEMETERY)	8P03490239	01/09/06	\$0		
2017 Land Information (Unedited and Uncertified)							
ID	Type	Acres	Sq Ft				
L1	REC - RECREATION LAND	0.12	5227				
INFORMATION SUBJECT TO DISCLAIMER - SEE HOME PAGE							
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Note: This is some of the most tedious work in historical research, one search can take multiple days. However, it has the rewarding potential to pin down a name and date for your subject property like no other.

Portland Address Conversions

You will not be able to retrieve all the property's records searching a current address. Since Portland has expanded and incorporated several cities over its history, many properties will have old and new numberings. In 1933, the City of Portland established a uniform numbering system and the five-quadrant (NE, N, NW, SW, SE) system for all Portland addresses. Consult the Directory of Street and Name Changes (pictured left) at the Multnomah County Library. This will come in handy later on if you go searching for historic photographs or other records. Portland's Bureau of Planning and Sustainability has a great List of Portland Street Name Changes that you can reference to understand how the address numbers and street names might have changed over time.

HAMULET AVENUE NOW NORTHEAST HAMULET STREET			
NORTH SIDE		SOUTH SIDE	
OLD NO.	NEW	OLD	NEW
269	2417		
4220	2505		
423	2517	818	2614
424	2606	816	2626
4240	2617	828	2646
4250	2617		
4260	2617		
4268	2645	830	2704
	2703	844	2734
4304	2717		
4344	2717	860	2814
	2827	862	2826
4420	2837		
4426	2847		
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Historical Maps

Historical maps contain fascinating detail to how your area might have changed (or stayed the same), as well as other rich details like early homesteads, specific buildings, trails, roads, infrastructure, and sometimes trees!



Cadastral Surveys

The Bureau of Land Management's [Land Status and Cadastral Survey Records](#) can easily be accessed online. You will want to use information from your legal description to search for the specific township and range. These records also contain the surveyor's notes. Additionally, the City of Portland's Bureau of Planning and Sustainability has curated many [historic maps](#) of Portland that can assist your research.

What could the search uncover?

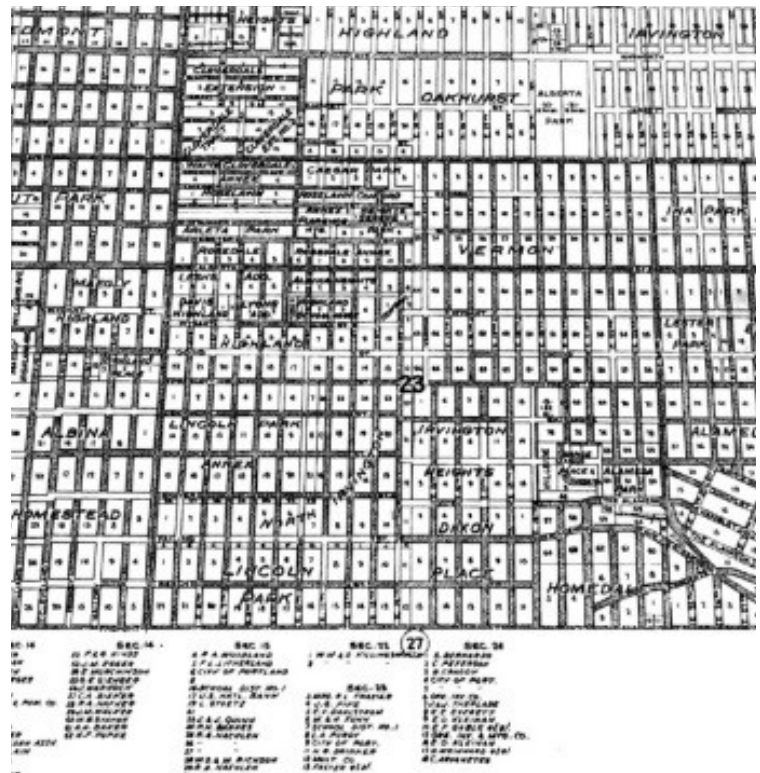
An 1852 cadastral survey shows the composition of the presettlement forest as well as the some early homesteaders and the ravages of a forest fire.

Metsker Maps

The Metsker Map Company produced a series of atlases that sometimes contain certain property owner's names or building patterns. Additionally, these maps contain other interesting info that might be useful, like redevelopment or property line changes, in researching your tree. Multnomah County Library has three different years of [Metsker Atlases for Multnomah County](#).

What could the search uncover?

A 1927 Metsker Atlas for N and NE Portland not only provides the names of all the neighborhood additions, but the names of some of the larger property owners, some of which might correlate to older trees.



Sandborn Maps

The Sanborn Fire Insurance Company produced multiple volumes of these maps for cities across the country. The company also updated these maps periodically and they are a great way to see changes to a particular parcel. You can view them in person at [Oregon Historical Society, City of Portland Archives and Records Center](#), or alternatively, [online through Multnomah County Library](#) with your library card.



What could the search uncover?

A Sanborn map from 1920 shows the lot where heritage tree #35, a Black Walnut was planted in circa 1870 in front of the Jacob Kamm Estate. When cross referenced with a 1880s photo, the juvenile tree appears in front of the home!

Upper: Heritage Tree #35 and its neighboring trees in 2016. Lower: The Kamm house and gardens in 1892. Looking northwest down Fourteenth Avenue. Note the small trees along the fence. The final in the right corner is likely Heritage Tree #35. City of Portland Archives, A2004-002.3180

Photographs



Corner of NE 15th Ave and Fremont Street looking north, City of Portland Archives, (ZC 4309), A2011-013, 1963.

Historical photographs demonstrate change in ways documents simply cannot. One can spend hours studying all the details captured in a photograph. Dispersed in many different archival institutions, here are a few suggestions on how to find a historical photograph of your tree. Rarely will a tree be tagged in a photograph, so you will be required to study the background of photos pertaining to a property, region, or general area.

Photographs at City of Portland Archives

The [helpful staff at City of Portland Archives and Records Center](#) can assist you, however, before you make a trip try using [e-files](#), their online collections catalog. In some instances, some photos will be available to view online. While online searches are convenient, there are by far more photographs in the archive than are digitized.

Public Works Photographs

Public works photographs can be useful in studying the background for trees. Repaving projects, sewer constructions, and road intersection studies were frequently photographed and can be searched several ways. Often, one can simply search for the general intersection and find records this way. For an extra thrill, take a snapshot with your phone or camera or get a copy and return to the location to see what has changed.



What could the search uncover?

This Giant Sequoia on NE Stanton and NE 70th already looks tall in this 1969 photo documenting the completed street paving project. Compare the photo today and we see how many trees have been planted since then, and how many remain.

NE Stanton Street at NE 70th Ave., Sept. 22, 1969, City of Portland Archives, A2012-005.

Variance Records

Variance records focus on specific properties and often contain numerous images of a specific property. These records often relate to a property owner requesting a variance to a particular code, but trees are often found in the background.



What could the search uncover?

Looking through some variance records for a home on NE Stanton shows the existing (and non-existent) street trees in 1965. In a public presentation to the Roseway Tree Team, the man who grew up in this house was present and actually identified the car as his first!

NE Stanton Street west of NE 70th Ave., City of Portland Archives, (VZ 37-65), A2011-013.



Photo Albums

Albums of both personal and public agencies contain photos that you can study for trees. In each case, it is best to consult with the archivist to help you save time. It is sometimes a challenge to find the exact location, and you will be lucky when the location is included in the photograph.

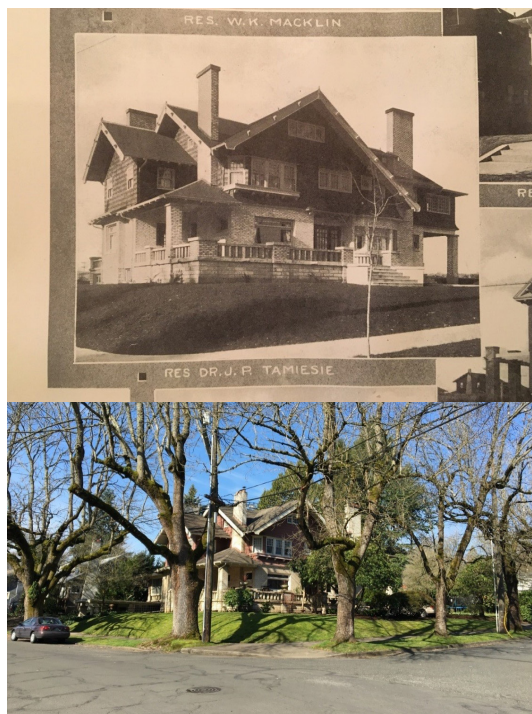
What could the search uncover?

This 1932 report of Works Progress Administration projects not only describes some tree planting and removal, but has plenty of historic photos of trees in front of houses. Here are trees in front of houses near NE 60th and Fremont.

Image caption: Crew digging trenches for sewer repair at NE 42nd Street from Klickitat to Fremont Ave., 1932, City of Portland Archives, A2000-025.265.

Historical Documents

If you know the names or old addresses of the property you can try searching historical documents for any additional context. Say you discover the name of the first resident in the house. You can plug that name into a search to learn more about the person.



Ephemera

Ephemera consists of brochures, broadsides, leaflets, and other materials that are published but not like books and newspapers. These items can also be very useful, but be sure to ask an archivist if you have any trouble.

What could your search uncover?

Photos in a 1916 sales booklet entitled “Laurelhurst and its Park” not only includes photos of freshly planted trees in front of their owner’s homes, but also discusses the rational for planting large trees in wide spaces.

Image caption: (Above) Dr. J.R. Tamiesie’s home and freshly planted ash trees on the corner of SE Ankeny Street and Floral Pl, 1916, Laurelhurst and its Park. (Below) The home and ash trees as of Feb. 2016, image by Dave Hedberg.

Historical Newspapers

Your property might be covered in the pages of the Historical Oregonian, which can be searched online through Multnomah County Library. Additionally, the Oregon Historic Newspapers project has other historic newspapers that are digitally available and keyword searchable. Lastly, most archives have other local papers on old-fashioned microfilm, but they are not as easily searchable

What could the search uncover?

A simple search for “Albina” and “Tree Planting” in the Historical Oregonian uncovered a history of local African-American neighbors planting flowering cherries in Albina.

Albina Group To Plant Trees

The Albina Neighborhood Improvement Committee announced Wednesday it will begin a tree planting program in January.

Tree program subcommittee chairman the Rev. F. J. Crear said “we face several difficulties with existing trees such as roots breaking up sidewalks, trees weakened by the recent storm and trees infested with virus and fungus diseases.”

Flowering cherry, incense cedar, Oriental maple, tulip trees and dogwoods will be among species planted by residents of Albina.

City Directories

City directories, like *Polks*, are a great way to find advertisements or other info on a property or a little about someone who lived there. You will likely need both the current and old address, or the name of a historic property resident.

What could the search uncover?

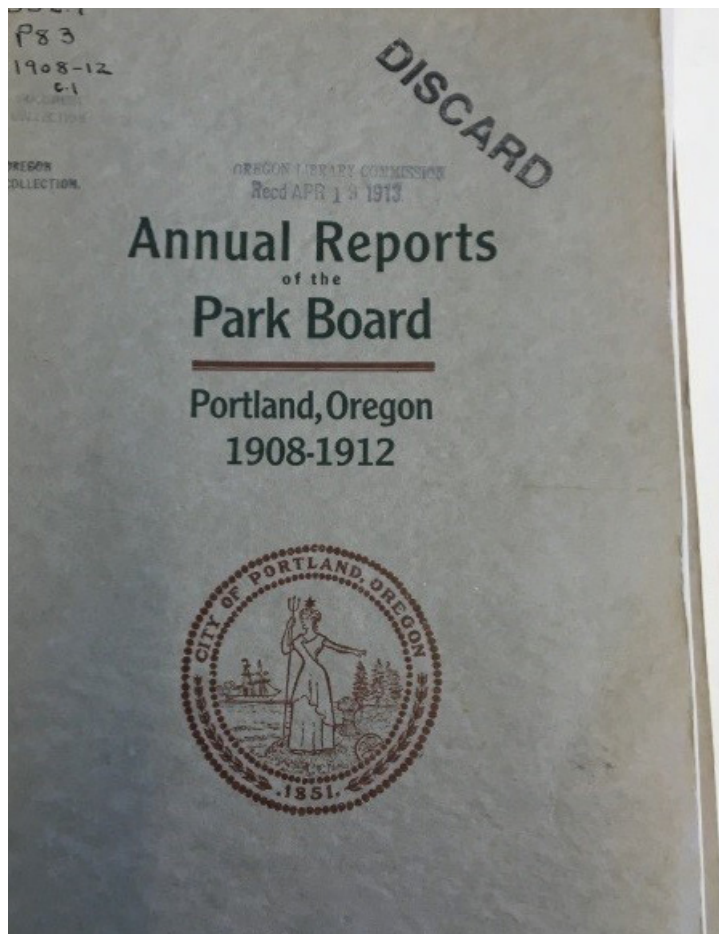
A 1910 Polks Portland (Oregon) City Directory lists the address and advertisement for the Miller Bros. Seed Company, founded by the sons of pioneer nurseryman Henry Miller who was made famous for importing the Italian Prune.

E P.
Miller Jesse S, filer, bds Nor Pac Hotel.
Miller John, baker, rms 5 Water.
Miller John, rms N 9th, s e cor D.
Miller John, lab, bds Willamette Hotel.
Miller John, lab, res Marquam's Gulch w of S 6th.

**BORTHWICK, BATTY & CO.,
REAL ESTATE AND LOANS,
No. 2 Washington St.**
Buy and sell city lots, improved and vacant, desirable for business or residence; also, acres in large or small tracts. Call on us if you have anything to sell, or if you want to buy. WE DEAL IN BARGAINS.

TREES - Fruit, Shade and O
MILLER BROS., 209 Second
[29]

Miller Milton M, d
Kleemann, bds E
Miller Nannie E (w
Jefferson.
Miller Nathaniel, la
same.
Miller Otto A, n
Works, rms 322 1
Miller Peter, carp, 1
Miller Peter, lab,
House.
Miller Peter, rock
Works.
Miller Philip, clk
bds Revere Hous
Miller Priscilla (w
s Caruthers 1 w c
Miller Richard B
44 Morrison.
Miller Robert S, re



Official Records and Documents

Official records and documents can be useful in researching a particular tree. It is best to think broad and narrow your search as you go. Be sure to ask a librarian or archivist for help along the way.

What could the search uncover?

The 1908 – 1912 Annual Reports of the Park Board includes several sections that deal with the planting of trees in Portland neighborhoods and parks. It's a great document for understanding why people at this time wanted to plant trees.

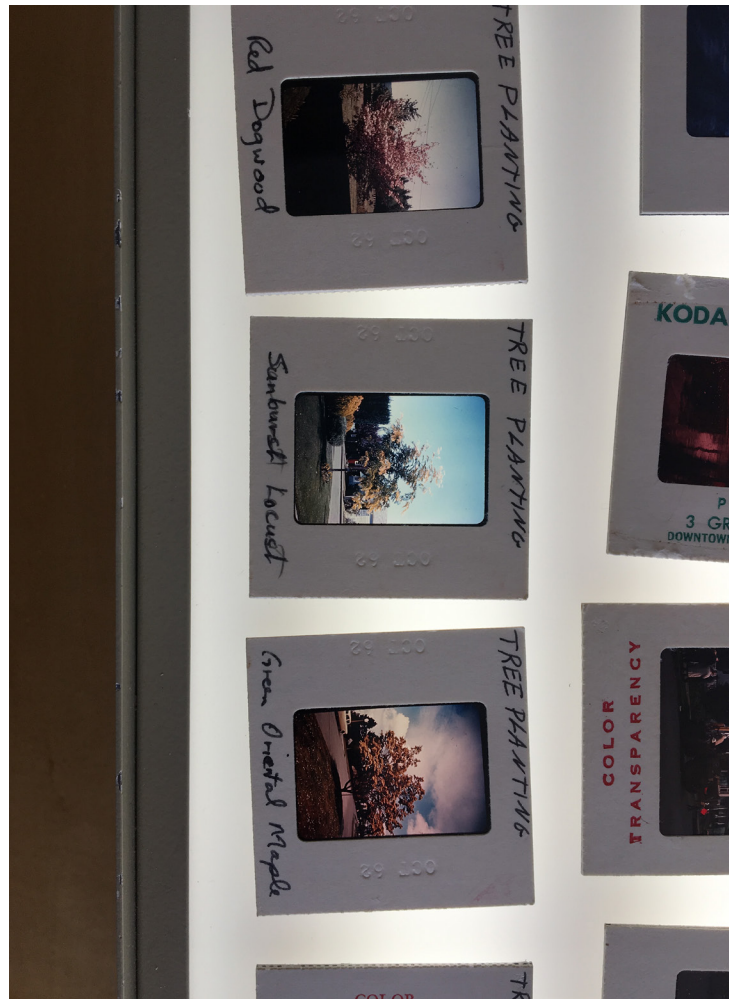
The Logistics of Visiting Archives

Heading to the Archives or Library

Research is an ongoing process. Your digital searches at best only scratch the surface of what awaits in the archive. Once you have exhausted your digital searches and online databases, consider making a trip into [Oregon Historical Society Research Library](#) and [City of Portland Archives and Records Center](#). Archives are not like regular libraries. You work with archivists whom pull materials for you. Do not be shy, ask questions and be patient.

Other Archives

Most archival institutions have online catalogues, and most have only a small portion of their collections digitized. In general, browse online first and then contact the archivist if you would like to investigate in person. Contacting before you go may save you time and energy. In addition to visiting [City of Portland Archives and Records Center](#) you should also browse the [Oregon Historical Society Research Library's catalogue](#) and consider a visit. Their digital collections are also a great source for Portland images. [Oregon State Archives](#) also contains excellent records, which you can begin to search online. Lastly, [university archives](#) and [other private and institutional archives](#) might be helpful. It is always best to ask for help and check the hours before you make a special trip!



When permitted, a digital camera can be useful in your visit to the archives. Be sure to check with the institution's rules first.

Conclusion:

Seeing the Forest for the People and Trees

You will explore a variety of subjects and themes in researching a tree, but do not forget that trees and people are always connected in some way. By investigating the history of a tree you will discover a great deal about the history of your community and environment. With your research you have the ability to help people care about something in a way they might not have considered. Remember, if you want people to care for trees, you need them to first care about them. History reminds us that people have cared for the trees we enjoy today, your history can help garner support to preserve, maintain, and grow the urban forest.

Share your work with others! No history is useful to society if kept in secret. Consider nominating your tree as a [Portland Heritage Tree](#), create a brochure, curate a walk, make a podcast, develop a blog, or add your work to the [Canopy Story](#) project. If you need inspiration explore the student tree history projects at [Portland State University's Department of History](#). Whatever you decide to do, be sure that your hard work gives credit to those whose ideas you have referenced and that it is open and sharable.



Like many neighborhoods, the homes in Irvington went in before the trees. Trees graced these large planting strips not soon after this photo was taken in 1905. City of Portland Archives, A2004-002.629.

Resources for your Continued Research

Property Records

Oregon Historic Sites
Database
[HeritageData.prd.state.or.us/
historic](http://HeritageData.prd.state.or.us/historic)

Portland Maps
PortlandMaps.com

Multnomah County
Recorder's Office
501 SE Hawthorne Boulevard,
Suite 175, Portland
[Multco.us/recording/public-
records-access](http://Multco.us/recording/public-records-access)

Historic maps,
newspapers, and
research tools

Multnomah County Library
MultcoLib.org/research-tools

Bureau of Land Management
Historic Survey Maps
BLM.gov/or/gis

City of Portland Historic
Resources
Bureau of Planning Services
[PortlandOregon.gov/
tps/39750](http://PortlandOregon.gov/tps/39750)

City of Portland
Neighborhood Involvement
Historic neighborhoods
[PortlandOregon.gov/
oni/38585](http://PortlandOregon.gov/oni/38585)

Historic Oregon Newspapers

University of Oregon
Libraries
OregonNews.uoregon.edu

City of Portland Bureau of
Planning and Sustainability,
History of Portland
& Oregon: A Selected
Bibliography
[PortlandOregon.gov/bps/
article/146372](http://PortlandOregon.gov/bps/article/146372)

Local Archives

City of Portland Archives
and Records Center
1800 SW 6th Ave, Suite 550
Portland, OR 97201
(503) 865-4100
[PortlandOnline.com/
auditor/index.cfm?c=26978](http://PortlandOnline.com/auditor/index.cfm?c=26978)

Multnomah County Archives
By Appointment Only
1620 SE 190th Avenue
Portland OR 97233
records@multco.us
503-988-3741
Archives.multco.us/

Portland Public Schools
By Appointment Only
501 N. Dixon,
Portland, OR 97227
503-916-3860, ext 9.
[PPS.net/records-
management](http://PPS.net/records-management)

Oregon Historical Society
Davies Family Research
Library
1200 SW Park Ave, 4th
Floor
Portland, OR 97205
503-306-5240
[OHS.org/research-and-
library/](http://OHS.org/research-and-library/)

How to Guides

Laura Schmidt,
Using Archives: A Guide to
Effective Research
[www2.archivists.org/sites/all/
files/UsingArchives_Final.
pdf](http://www2.archivists.org/sites/all/files/UsingArchives_Final.pdf)

Other helpful resources

Architectural Heritage
Center
701 SE Grand Avenue,
Portland
503-231-7264
VisitAHC.org/

Oregon Encyclopedia
A Free Resource on All
Things Oregon
OregonEncyclopedia.org/

Genealogical Forum of
Oregon, Inc.
1505 SE Gideon, Portland
503-963-1932
GFO.org/