



The German Society of Pennsylvania
611 Spring Garden Street
Philadelphia, PA 19123

(telephone) 215-627-2332
(fax) 215-627-5297
www.germansociety.org

librarian@germansociety.org

Genealogical Resources at the Joseph P. Horner Memorial Library

The German Society of Pennsylvania's Horner Library contains a wealth of materials related to the history of German immigration to colonial America and the United States, and all aspects of German-American life, from its beginning through the present. Although genealogical research is not a specific focus of the collections, the library has many works that may be helpful to genealogical researchers.

The library is open to the general public Mondays and Tuesdays, 10 am to 4 pm. You do not have to be a member of the German Society in order to use the library, or to request photocopies. First-time users are asked to fill out a registration form and show a valid photo ID.

The library's homepage: www.germansociety.org/library.html
contains a link to the online catalog: <http://gsp.library.net/>

* **Searching in the online catalog.** Published works (and, occasionally, manuscript collections) that may be useful in genealogical research can be located in the online catalog by performing the following searches:

"subject"	"contains" °	church history
"subject"	"contains"	family
"subject"	"begins with"	genealogies
"subject"	"contains"	genealogy
"subject"	"begins with" / "contains"	german americans genealogy
"subject"	"contains"	german americans biography
"subject"	"contains"	german americans history
"subject"	"begins with"	immigrants
"subject"	"contains"	immigration
"subject"	"begins with"	names, personal

For two monograph series in German-American genealogy (over 30 pamphlets), search:

"author"	"begins with"	Smith, Clifford Neal
----------	---------------	----------------------

° Note: *Changing the drop-down window from "begins with" (default) to "contains" will bring up a wider variety of subject headings; when using "contains," the words do not need to appear in sequence. A general keyword search for terms anywhere in the record is structured as: "anything" "contains" [search terms].*

- * **Genealogical reference section.** Most of the library's holdings of published works with a genealogical orientation have been gathered together in a Reference section of the library, where patrons can browse. Books located in this section have a call number beginning with "Ref."
- * **The German Society of Pennsylvania *Agentur* records** contain biographical information about German-born individuals who applied to the Society for charitable aid, or for assistance seeking employment, with the most detailed records dating from 1869 to 1900. The finding aid for this collection is available in the library, and can be downloaded as a pdf file on the library's homepage, under manuscript collections: <http://www.germansociety.org/manuscripts.html>
- * **German-American newspapers on microfilm.** The library's holdings include long runs of the following German-language newspapers in Philadelphia (late 19th to early 20th century), which can be viewed on the microfilm reader in the library reading room: *Der Demokrat*; *Philadelphia Freie Presse*; *Philadelphia Sonntagsjournal*; and *Philadelphia Tageblatt*. These newspapers contain brief death announcements, usually including date and possibly time or circumstances of death; age at death; and address of residence, where relatives and friends of the deceased are invited to gather. A larger, boxed announcement might include more details about the deceased, or a poem. The newspapers also contain brief anecdotal news reports about happenings in the city, including deaths, injuries, crimes, and business openings. They carry many advertisements for businesses, as well as theater performances, concerts, and other events; and notices about meetings of German-American associations. Sometimes festivals, balls, or theater performances will be covered in a longer article that gives details about the program; names of participants; and, in the case of major events, possibly transcripts of speeches.

For details about the library's holdings of the above newspapers, see under "Philadelphia," on the newspaper wiki page of the German North-American Resources Partnership (GNARP), which can be found by googling the title: "German-Language Newspaper Access in North America."

- * **German Society of Pennsylvania membership.** The following older history of the German Society, published in 1917, contains, at the back, detailed biographies of prominent members throughout the Society's history, along with a comprehensive alphabetical membership list that includes all members from the founding, in 1764, through 1916, listed with year of election:
Seidensticker, Oswald, and Max Heinrici. *Geschichte der Deutschen Gesellschaft von Pennsylvanien: 1764-1917*. Philadelphia, Pa.: Graf & Breuninger, 1917.
(This book is accessible and fully searchable on google books; the Society also has extra copies available.) In the German Society of Pennsylvania records, the minutes of the meeting at which the individual was elected as a member may include such details as address and occupation.
- * **German American Collection.** Holdings include publications related to many societies and organizations. Such materials can be found with the following searches in the online catalog:

“subject”	“contains”	german americans societies
“subject”	“contains”	german american societies
“subject”	“contains”	german american women societies
“subject”	“contains”	jews societies

Souvenir programs of anniversary events, which usually include details about participants, a history of the group, and photographs of members and locales, can be found with the search:

“subject”	“begins with”	souvenir programs
-----------	---------------	-------------------

More generally, publications or manuscript collections that contain membership lists of German-American organizations can be found with the search:

“subject”	“begins with”	membership lists
-----------	---------------	------------------

The library also has among its manuscript holdings the records of many German-American organizations (only a portion of these are cataloged), which may include handwritten minute books, often with ephemera laid in; these can be found with the search:

“subject”	“begins with”	minute books
-----------	---------------	--------------

* **Journals for German-American studies.** Among the library’s many holdings of periodicals relevant to German-American history and culture, the following titles, which are shelved in the library reading room, open to browsing, may prove useful in genealogical research:

- . *American-German Review* (National Carl Schurz Association): vol. 1 (1934) – vol. 33 (1967); obituaries are separately listed in indices to some volumes.
- . *Americana Germanica / German American Annals*: vol. 1 (1897) – vol. 17 (1919)
- . *Der deutsche Pionier* (Cincinnati, Ohio): vol. 1 (1869) – vol. 16 (1885)
- . *Mitteilungen des deutschen Pionier-Vereins zu Philadelphia*: issues 1-26 (1906-1912) [cataloged in German-American Collection]
- . *The Pennsylvania German* (Lebanon, Pa.): vol. 1 (1900) – vol. 15 (1914)
- . *The first one hundred years: an index of publications of The Pennsylvania German Society (1891-1990), including the yearbooks of The Pennsylvania German Folklore Society 1936-1966*, compiled by Earl C. Haag. Includes, as Appendices III and IV, indices to: “Biographical and genealogical material on Society members”; and “Portraits of Society Members”
- . *Proceedings of the Pennsylvania German Society*: vol. 1 (1891) – vol. 53 (1948)
- . *Pennsylvania German Society publications (Annual volume series)*: vol. 1 (1968) – vol. 9; vol. 13-16; vol. 19; vol. 21-23; vol. 34; vol. 43; vol. 35-36; vol. 39; vol. 42 (2008)
- . *Yearbook of the Pennsylvania German Folklore Society*: vol. 1 (1936) – vol. 28 (1966)
- . *The Pennsylvania magazine of history and biography* (Historical Society of Pennsylvania): vol. 1 (1877) – vol. 29 (1905)