

## Norwalk Public Library Local History Collection

Norwalk Public Library's Local History Collection materials are now located in the former Computer Lab on the first floor of the Main Library building, located opposite the non-fiction DVD shelves.

Included are all book titles cataloged with the subject heading "Local History Collection", copies of city directories not available on microfilm (1961-1992), Norwalk property map books and several oversized titles. A large file cabinet contains clipping files, pamphlets and ceased periodical runs of local interest. The room also has a computer workstation and scanner.

Microfilm of the "Hour," city directories 1882-1960, census and vital records remain in the regular Reference area, along with microfilm reader/printers. High school and community college yearbooks are retrieved by the librarian.

Treasures of Connecticut Libraries Collection - Type 'Norwalk' in the search box to view the pictures of the Norwalk Library & South Norwalk Library that have been added to this digitization project. More items will be added over the next two years.

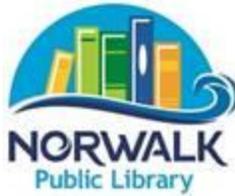
[Local History Collection at the Norwalk Library \(pdf\)](#)

Local History Collection Room Procedure

The room is locked - Please ask librarian for access. Rules:

1. Please hang coats/outerwear in the room behind the Reference Desk.
2. Please lock purses, briefcases and bags in the black file cabinet in the room.
3. Please sign in, with name, date and time and leave an ID with the librarian.
4. Please do not reshelv books and papers; leave them on the tables.
5. Please notify the librarian when you leave.

Local genealogy - - Suggestions for patrons from our resources - in approximate order of importance



**Local History resources in the Norwalk Public Library and other Norwalk institutions. Norwalk Public Library - Main Library, 1 Belden Avenue, Norwalk  
[www.norwalklib.org](http://www.norwalklib.org)**

### **Books**

Local History Collection - Over 200 reference titles covering Norwalk and the surrounding towns which constituted the original colonial settlement as well as towns to which many Norwalk settlers emigrated in the 18th century. The subject heading "Local History Collection" will identify all cataloged items shelved in this location. Loose-leaf binders shelved at the beginning of the collection contain photocopied record extractions and articles which may assist patrons. Also, city directories, 1961-1992, the years for which microfilm is not available; Norwalk Hour 300th anniversary issue (bound original newspaper, Aug 7, 1951) - can be digitally photographed; Norwalk Street property listing books (SpecPrint) - current and some back years; Pictorial Norwalk, 1939 (oversized book).

**Circulating** - General genealogical titles, how-to guides and some family histories - 929 headings.

Reference - State and regional family compilations, directories and specialized how-to guides - R 929 headings.

#### **Microfilm**

Norwalk vital records from 1848 to ca. 1900 - earlier vital records were recorded within land record volumes. These have been extracted and published in the Barbour Collection and Ricker Compilation (CD Rom) series. The originals are archived at the Town Clerk's office.

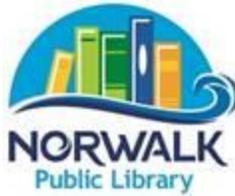
The Norwalk "Hour" (newspaper) from 1895 to the present

Norwalk city directories 1882-1960

U.S. Census 1790-1930 for Norwalk, Fairfield Co. & CT (partial)

Hale Headstone Collection (cemeteries) for Norwalk (1934)

Marriage and death transcriptions from newspapers - mid 19th-century



### **Online**

Norwalk "Hour" index / vital records - 5/1983 - present  
Social Security Death Index (ca. 1963- ) - <http://ssdi.rootsweb.com>  
Databases, free in-house and to CT library card-holders via [www.iconn.org](http://www.iconn.org):  
Historical New York Times (1851-2003) - (Norwalk cards only)  
Historical Hartford Courant (1764-1922)  
U.S. Census 1790-1930 - scanned, partially indexed, via HeritageQuest

### **CD-ROM**

Ricker Compilation of Connecticut Vital Records [to ca. 1850] - (can be used on the Local History Collection PC). This database incorporates the Barbour Collection of Connecticut vital records in one alphabetized list, along with selected cemetery listings and previously published books of town vital records.

File cabinet in Local History Collection

Newspaper clipping, maps, pamphlet publications of local historical interest including the Norwalk Islands, clippings about Long Island Sound lighthouses, Revolutionary War and NPL library history.

"Mark", [filed under County Magazine] - weekly/biweekly newspaper, 8/1954 - 3/1966  
- & other publications

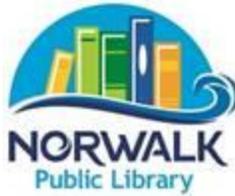
### **DVD, Video**

Search keywords "Dolly Curtis Norwalk" - DVD

"Survival of a small city: a new documentary" [South Norwalk], 1987-VHS

File Cabinets near Circulating Literature (800s)

2-year file of selected municipal documents; Norwalk business and non-profit institution files



### **Closed Stacks**

Original copies (2 for most years) of city directories, 1890/91-1992. Volumes for 1920 and 1943-44 were not published. Patrons should be directed to the microfilm for these years, which, reproduced from the Library of Congress collection, begin in 1882. The Norwalk Museum and Town Clerk's office hold copies of the 1874/75 city directory edition.

Cross-reference and telephone directories from 1981.

Atlas of Fairfield County (several maps missing)

Norwalk Museum - 41 South Main Street, South Norwalk

The museum houses a collection of former municipal records, the archival collection of the former Lockwood House and many artifacts of local interest which are regularly exhibited. Access to archival records is granted by appointment with the curator. The museum is owned and operated by the City of Norwalk.

[www.norwalkct.org/norwalkmuseum/index.htm](http://www.norwalkct.org/norwalkmuseum/index.htm)

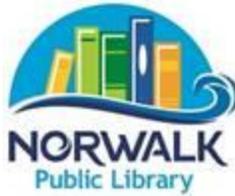
Norwalk Historical Society - 2 East Wall Street, Norwalk

A membership organization which promotes the preservation and enjoyment of the city's past history. The museum complex offers frequent programs, exhibits and has publications available for sale. For further information, contact the executive director. [www.norwalkhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.norwalkhistoricalsociety.org)

Town Clerk, City of Norwalk - 125 East Avenue, Norwalk, Room 102

The town clerk's office records and preserves vital records of the city. Books recording deaths, marriages (and births to 1898) are available for public consultation in the Land Records room. There are bound indexes to births 1848-1898, burials from 1924 through 1989 (with gaps) and "removals" (burials elsewhere) from 1909-1950, as well as a set of published city directories (1874/5, 1880s-1980s). A volume of burial records, 1885-1920 is available from the staff. Records of births within the last one hundred years are confidential according to state law and are available from the clerk only to those permitted to access them.

[www.norwalkct.org/CityDept/twnclk.asp](http://www.norwalkct.org/CityDept/twnclk.asp)



**Local genealogy** - - Suggestions for patrons from our resources - in approximate order of importance

“Norwalk” (1896) [R974.6 SEL] by Charles Selleck - focuses on the founding families of Norwalk and their descendants up to the date of publication. The “Blue” bound copy includes an index. Anecdotal in style, it does not claim to have a comprehensive list of descendants. The author had access to personal reminiscences, correspondence and Bible records that may not exist today.

“History and Genealogy of the Families of Old Fairfield,” or “Families of Old Fairfield” (1930) [R929.37469 HIS] - by Donald Lines Jacobus - Comprehensive and researched from original vital and probate records. He includes Norwalk families up to about 1700. Many colonial pioneer families migrated from town to town so the regional focus of this multi-volume work can be valuable for researchers.

“Barbour index of Connecticut town vital records,” [R929.3746 BAR, volumes for Norwalk and adjacent towns in lower Fairfield County] Births, marriage and deaths were extracted from town record books to about 1850. Norwalk first included areas now comprising all or part of New Canaan, Westport, Wilton and Darien. It must be noted that town vital records are not complete, especially during the Revolutionary War period and early 19th century. Also, for Norwalk, most early church records until about 1807 were lost.

“Ricker compilation of Vital Records of Early Connecticut” [R929.3746 RIC] a CD comprising the Barbour and other vital records for the entire state, up to about 1850, alphabetized in a single index - searchable and browsable, for use on LHC or Reference Center PCs. Has the limitation of Barbour records, as noted above.

“Hall’s Norwalk Records” or, “Ancient historical records of Norwalk, Connecticut” [R974.6 HAL], by Edwin Hall (1847). Transcribed town records include an indexed section of vital records arranged by family. As above, note that vital records are not complete.

Narrative histories of Norwalk and other portions of Fairfield County offer specific information and insights to the family historian:

“History of Fairfield County” [R974.69 WIL] by Lynn Wilson offers an overall history of the region up to the 1920s.

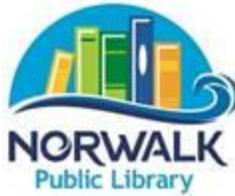
“Norwalk after 250 years,” [R974.69 NOR] offers much in historic, social and economic specifics to 1901, though without an index.

“Romance of Norwalk” [R974.6 DAN] by Elsie Danenberg is a detailed history up to 1929 written in a popular style, indexed.

“Norwalk: Being a historical account of that Connecticut town” [R974.693 RAY] by Deborah W. Ray and Gloria P. Stewart, 1979 is a professionally authored history brought up to the 1950s, with footnotes, bibliography and index.

A loose-leaf binder labeled “Supplement to the Local History Collection,” prepared by our staff, placed at the front of the Local History Collection includes:

Bibliography and sources for Connecticut records  
Norwalk Museum holdings



CT marriages and deaths 1792-1837

Headstones of Silvermine Cemetery (New Canaan)

Deaths (1890-1896) and marriages (1890-1891) from Norwalk City directories

First Congregational Church - list of members 1807-1851

Some baptisms and marriages 1742-1746, Fairfield County Anglican churches

In adjacent binders:

-Articles relating to Norwalk genealogies copied from published journals

-Selections from Sanborn Map images of Norwalk and South Norwalk, 1896-1922.

Our Local History Collection includes histories of other area towns and individual family histories, most of which include descents for many of the early local families.

Migration patterns from Norwalk in colonial towns frequently led north (Wilton, Ridgefield), west (New York State, Newark, NJ) and south (Long Island, NY)

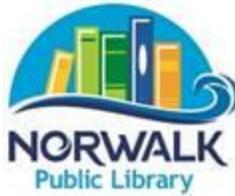
For later Norwalk connections, we have the Norwalk vital records from 1848 through ca. 1904 on microfilm. These are microfilmed from originals at the city hall so for this period it is unnecessary examine the locally-held records. Guides to the coverage on each reel are included in the film cabinet drawers adjacent to the Information Desk.

We have microfilm of Norwalk city directories from 1882-1960. Directories from 1961-1992 are located in the LHC and in Closed Stacks. Directories from 1891-1896 and from 1924-1979 include death notices for adult residents.

We have the "Hour" daily newspaper on microfilm from 1895 to the present, with a few gaps where no copies have survived to be filmed. While a general index to the newspaper is available only between May 1983 and recent years - online via our web page - vital record extractions for Norwalk were published monthly in the newspaper from about 1903 until at least 1940. These notices can lead to a published obituary or a request to the town clerk for a death or marriage record. In Connecticut, birth records are restricted to direct descendants or genealogists for a period of 100 years from their creation. A single issue of the "Hour," Aug. 7, 1951, prepared for the town's 300th anniversary, has a wealth of historical articles. It is on microfilm and was photocopied as a "scrapbook" [974.69 NOR]. We also own a bound volume of the original newspaper but the paper is brittle so access to this should be restricted to persons who want to take digital photographs of articles.

We have "Norwalk Cemeteries," [R929.5 CAR] a 1945 compilation of headstone inscriptions by Lester Card as well as "Hale Collection of Cemetery Headstones" (1934) on microfilm covering Norwalk. The latter is indexed and includes Catholic and Jewish cemeteries not copied by Card.

Two microfilm reels cover Mr. Card's transcription of marriages in Norwalk to 1875 from newspaper notices and marriages and deaths from the Norwalk Gazette from 1810-1855 as well as a probate index covering 1648-1757 for Norwalk.



## General genealogy

United States census records are available free online at HeritageQuest, via [www.iconn.org](http://www.iconn.org) (with a library card) from 1790 through 1930 (the 1890 schedules were destroyed). On this database, some years are indexed by head of household [1880 has an every-name index] but images of the entire censuses are fully browsable. The 1930 listings include only a few states. Also available at HeritageQuest are scanned and searchable texts of many traditional (out of copyright) genealogy and local history texts as well as an index to genealogy periodicals (PERSI). If a periodical article of interest cannot be located nearby or obtained via Interlibrary Loan, a copy can be obtained from Allen County Public Library of Indiana (for a fee), with links to the index website. Other offerings from [iconn.org](http://iconn.org) include both contemporary and historical newspaper articles. All [iconn.org](http://iconn.org) users can access the Historical Hartford Courant (1764-1922) and Norwalk residents can also access the Historical New York Times (1851-2003)

The library also has microfilmed images of the same censuses which cover Norwalk and all or part of Connecticut and Fairfield County, depending on the census year. Guides to the coverage of each reel are included in the film cabinet drawer. Print index volumes in Local History Collection [R317.46 CON] cover 1790-1870 censuses for Connecticut.

Online sources, such as <http://worldconnect.rootsweb.com> and Ancestral File and IGI at [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org) should be used with caution. If no source citations are given, it may be difficult to verify if data is accurate. The Social Security Death Index, <http://ssdi.rootsweb.com>, can be helpful in finding a death date and place for persons who have died since ca. 1963. The free search portion of [www.usa-people-search.com](http://www.usa-people-search.com) lists names, ages and likely towns of residence for individuals. Further data is available for a fee, though no guarantee is made of its accuracy or relevance. [www.pipl.com](http://www.pipl.com) has a similar premise, linked to so-called "hidden web" data. [www.cyndislist.com](http://www.cyndislist.com) consists of links to websites for almost any online genealogical source. Links can lead to information via surname, location, ethnic research or any topic.

An increasing number of scanned and indexed records can be found online at [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com). This subscription site is not available at the Norwalk Public Library but the Ancestry Library Edition can be used at libraries which do subscribe, including Bridgeport, Danbury, Greenwich, Hamden, Monroe, New Canaan, Pequot, and the Connecticut State Library in Hartford. Personal subscriptions to the Ancestry databases are available by subscription, details on their website.

Our circulating collection has a number of books and some CDs on how to undertake a genealogical search, from beginning to advanced, from colonial to ethnic ancestries. The general call number area is 929.1 A catalog search under "genealogy" will list most of our titles.