



Department of Records
& Information Services

NYC Announces Free On-Line Access to Historical Vital Records

Historical Vital Records

A screenshot of the 'Historical Vital Records' search interface. The interface is split into two main sections: 'Browse' on the left and 'Search' on the right. The 'Browse' section has a 'Certificate Type' dropdown set to 'ALL', a 'Borough' dropdown set to 'ALL', and a 'Year Range' slider set to '1855 to 1949'. A 'Browse' button is at the bottom. The 'Search' section has a 'Certificate Number' input field, a 'Certificate Type*' dropdown set to 'Birth Certificate', a 'Certificate Number*' input field containing '#####', a 'Borough' dropdown set to 'Kings (Brooklyn)', and a 'Year' input field containing '####'. A 'Search' button is at the bottom. A small note at the bottom of the search section reads: 'Not sure where to start? Read our *search tips* for finding vital records.' The background of the interface is a dark blue with faint, handwritten-style text.

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NEW YORK— The NYC Department of Records & Information Services today announced free access to more than 9.3 million historical vital records on their website. The new online [vital records](#) platform lets visitors search and view historical New York City records of birth (1866-1909), death (1862-1948), and marriage (1866-1949). High-quality copies can be downloaded and printed from the site at no charge.

“These historical records will not only serve as an essential resource for family historians across the country and around the world but will allow everyday New Yorkers to learn more about their personal history and explore their roots,” said **New York City Mayor Eric Adams**. “My administration is committed to expanding access to city resources and providing New Yorkers with the information they need.”

“We are grateful to Mayor Adams and his administration for supporting the final phase of our multi-year project to digitize and publish online one of the largest and most important genealogy collections in the world. In 2013, we started digitizing the collection and despite the challenges of the COVID pandemic, our in-house team of developers has built a robust platform that will enable patrons to easily search, view, and download the records,” said **Pauline Toole, Commissioner, Department of Records & Information Services**.

“Congratulations to the Municipal Archives on this important achievement and for using the innovative tools that deliver high-quality images of these records to researchers. Providing online access will enable all kinds of researchers, worldwide, to explore a tremendously important collection of records,” said **New York State Archivist Thomas J. Ruller**.

“I am delighted that Mayor Eric Adams and his administration have expanded access to historical records preserved at the Municipal Archives by digitizing and publishing millions of records online. It is appropriate that during Sunshine Week, which supports transparent government, the Department of Records & Information Services will make records held in the Archive accessible to so many,” said **Council Member Gale A. Brewer (D-06)**.

“The unveiling of NYC’s Municipal Archives new website, with early vital records available to the public, may be one of the most exciting announcements in the last decade that will positively affect family history researchers all over the U.S. for decades to come,” said **Terry Koch-Bostic, Chair, Education Committee for National Genealogical Society and head of the New York Chapter for the Association of Professional Genealogists**.

“The Historical Vital Records project is an absolute game-changer for those tracing New Yorkers. This unprecedented free access to birth, marriage, and death records will help millions discover their New York heritage. On behalf of the NYG&B, thank you to all those involved in making these records accessible and available,” said **D. Joshua Taylor, President, New York Genealogical and Biographical Society**.

“The Municipal Archives connects us to our past in so many ways. With this amazing platform we continue our mission to open up the Archives and provide more convenient access to all. This treasure trove of information will be invaluable to those families searching for their New York City roots. I applaud the vision of Commissioner Toole and I thank the staff of the Department of Records & Information Services for all of their diligence in making this vision a reality. And I thank Mayor Adams for his leadership and commitment to opening up government for all communities,” said **Marco Carrion, Chairman, Municipal Archives Reference and Research Advisory Board**.

“Bravo, and thank you! I could never have fleshed out the bygone Harlem figure of my biography, *Boss of the Grips*, without obtaining various birth, death, or marriage certificates from the Municipal Archives. Thankfully, the digitization of such crucial records will now spare lots of researchers from unavoidably fruitless transit hours and fares,” said **Eric K. Washington, author, *Boss of the Grips: The Life of James H. Williams and the Red Caps of Grand Central Terminal***.

"This is fantastic news - by making historical vital records searchable and available free online, the NYC Department of Records has created a major new resource for genealogists throughout New York, and across the United States, which contributes greatly to the democratization of family history research," said **Philip Sutton, Librarian III - Instruction and Outreach, The New York Public Library's Irma and Paul Milstein Division of United States History, Local History and Genealogy.**

"We congratulate our friends at the New York City Department of Records and Information Services in launching their new, free Historical Vital Records database online. New York records are always some of the most sought-after US collections for those seeking to connect with their ancestors. There will be generations of family history researchers who will benefit from your wonderful collections," said **Manuel Sanhueza, FamilySearch International, Field Relations Manager, Canada - US Northeast.**

"Congratulations and huge thanks to NYC DORIS for creating this phenomenal database. It's a magnificent gift to the world!" said **Leslie Corn, Fellow, New York Genealogical and Biographical Society.**

"So many people have a New York connection and at long last, now they will have a more direct and convenient way to discover it," said **Roger Joslyn, Fellow, New York Genealogical and Biographical Society.**

The Municipal Archives is one of the largest repositories of government records in North America. The world-class collections span four centuries and include historical records of all three branches of New York City municipal government—executive, legislative, and judicial.

Municipal Archives highlights include 9.3 million historical vital records, more than 2 million still images and thousands of hours of film and video footage, 400 years of legislative and mayoral documents, and the most comprehensive collection of records pertaining to the administration of criminal justice in the English-speaking world. Documentation of the city's infrastructure include the exquisitely detailed drawings of the Brooklyn Bridge and Central Park, two of the greatest public works achievements of the 19th century. The Archives online gallery provides research access to all digitized [holdings](#) .

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