

Genealogical Collection Research Guide
Fort Myers Regional Library
Bonita Springs Public Library
Dec. 15, 2015

Mission Statement

The purpose of the Fort Myers Regional Library genealogy collection is to promote the preservation of family history by:

1. Encouraging patrons of all nationalities and cultures to explore their heritage and celebrate their own place in history.
2. Supporting educational and networking activities with local and regional historical and genealogical societies to develop enthusiasm for family research.
3. Making national and international genealogical and historical resources available to all patrons through the continued expansion, updating, and usage of the collection of print, microform, electronic databases and other resources as technology advances.
4. Continuing to partner with the Lee County Genealogical Society for programming and educational projects of interest to southwest Florida's genealogical community.

Hours of Operation

The Lee County Library System offers two collection options for genealogical research:

1. Fort Myers Regional Library (primary collection)
 - The Fort Myers Regional Library is located in its new facility at 2450 First St. in downtown Fort Myers. The genealogy collection is housed in its own separate section of the second floor adult services area. The hours of operation are 9 a.m.-8 p.m. Monday-Wednesday; 9 a.m.-6 p.m. Thursday; and 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Friday and Saturday.
2. Bonita Springs Public Library (secondary collection)
 - The Bonita Springs Public Library is located at 26876 Pine Ave. in Bonita Springs. Its hours of operation are 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday-Wednesday; 9 a.m.-6 p.m. Thursday; and 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Friday and Saturday.

Questions concerning collection holdings or research services at either branch should be directed to Bryan Mulcahy. His contact information is located below. The Lee County Genealogical Society has taken over maintenance of the Bonita Springs Genealogy Club website. The new link for information is <http://lcsfl.org/cpage.php?pt=163>.

Bryan L. Mulcahy
Reference Librarian
Fort Myers Regional Library
2450 First Street
Fort Myers, FL 33901
Telephone: 239-533-4626
Fax: 239-485-1160
Email: bmulcahy@leegov.com

The Fort Myers Regional Library and the Bonita Springs Public Library genealogy collections are utilized by patrons from throughout the Southwest Florida region, and visitors from all 50 states, Europe and the British Isles. The staff serves patrons via in-house visits and electronic queries. The Fort Myers Regional Library maintains the largest genealogy and local history collection in Southwest Florida.

Collections at both branches are accessible during normal business hours. Due to staff and time constraints, comprehensive research assistance cannot be provided at either location. Patrons seeking assistance beyond directional information must make an appointment either with the genealogy librarian or visit the library on a day when one of the genealogy volunteers is available.

Most of the library volunteers are members of the Lee County Genealogical Society. The library highly encourages genealogy researchers to join one or both local genealogical societies in Lee County for research assistance and other genealogy-related services. The Bonita Springs Genealogy Club handles research assistance requests for their library branch. Please contact Bryan Mulcahy for further information. The Lee County Genealogical Society's website is <http://www.lcgsfl.org>. The Lee County Genealogical Society is the larger of the two groups and offers a full range of genealogical and educational services, and also maintains the website for the Bonita Springs Genealogy Club at <http://lcgsfl.org/cpage.php?pt=163>.

Patrons may contact Mr. Mulcahy by telephone, letter or email (bmulcahy@leegov.com). Mr. Mulcahy is familiar with the contents of both the Fort Myers and Bonita Springs genealogy collections. He can also discuss the resources held by various private genealogists, as well as the resources and services offered by local genealogical and historical societies within the states of Florida, Georgia, New York City and Salt Lake City.

Mr. Mulcahy also presents programs on a wide variety of topics pertaining to genealogical research. Information about genealogical programs can be found on the Lee County Library System website at <https://www.leegov.com/library/services/genealogy>.

All genealogy programs conducted by the library system are held at Fort Myers Regional Library. Flyers announcing upcoming programs are posted in the genealogy area bulletin board at the Fort Myers branch and on the public information boards at all other branches. All programs are free and open to the public but registration is required.

Patrons seeking answers to queries or advice on how to begin genealogical research may contact Bryan Mulcahy. All mailed queries must be accompanied by a business size stamped self-addressed envelope capable of holding standard size (8 ½ x 11) paper. To facilitate the appointment process, we recommend contacting Mr. Mulcahy at least three to five days before your visit via email or telephone and provide some date and time options that work for your schedule. Based on the options provided, Mr. Mulcahy, or one of our genealogy volunteers will contact you with a date and time confirmation. You may contact Mr. Mulcahy in the following manner:

Bryan L. Mulcahy
Reference Librarian
Fort Myers Regional Library
2450 First Street
Fort Myers, Florida 33901
Telephone: 239-533-4626
Fax: 239-485-1160
Email: bmulcahy@leegov.com

Collection Scope

The Fort Myers Regional Library genealogy collection contains materials from all 50 states, and 41 foreign countries. The genealogy collection in the Bonita Springs Public Library houses materials from 20

states east of the Mississippi River, Canada, the British Isles and northwestern Europe. This area includes the Atlantic Seaboard, southern Border States and the upper Midwest.

The primary focus of the Fort Myers Regional Library collection is states east of the Mississippi River, Canada, the British Isles, and the northwestern tier of Europe. This focus also applies to the majority of databases, books, and periodicals found on Ancestry Library Edition and Heritage Quest databases. Both databases may be accessed on the library home page <https://www.leegov.com/library/services/genealogy>.

Both Heritage Quest and Ancestry Library Edition may be accessed from any branch of the Lee County Library System. Heritage Quest also can be accessed from home provided users have a valid Lee County Library card. The library version of Fold3 database link is only available to patrons at the Fort Myers Regional Library. No access is available at branch facilities. Patrons with wireless laptops can access the library databases at all branches of the Lee County Library System with the exception of the library version of Fold3.

Collection Contents and Material Types

The Fort Myers Regional Library collection consists of the following holdings:

1. Print titles: 10,630 book titles.
2. Fort Myers *News-Press* (1884-present): 1,151 rolls of microfilm.
3. *New York Times* (September 1851-present): 3,887 rolls of microfilm.
4. Florida State Census of 1885: 13 rolls of microfilm.
5. Florida Federal Census 1830-1920: 100 rolls of microfilm.
6. New England Historical and Genealogical Register v.1-80: 27 rolls of microfilm, including an index.
7. Castle Garden (New York) Passenger Lists, June-December 1869: 10 rolls of microfilm.
8. International Genealogical Index – 1978 Microfiche Edition: 6,000 microfiche.
9. Fort Myers *News-Press* Necrology Index – Compiled by the Lee County Genealogical Society: over 8,000 index cards.
10. Genealogy and Local History Vertical File Cabinets: 1,000-plus items. These cabinets contain newspaper clippings, documents and manuscripts, covering Southwest Florida and topics of genealogical interest worldwide.

The genealogy collection at the Bonita Springs Library houses materials from 20 states east of the Mississippi River, Canada, the British Isles and northwestern Europe. This area includes the Atlantic Seaboard, southern border states and the upper Midwest. The Bonita Springs collection consists of over 1,300 books and over 100 rolls of microfilm covering the 1850-1860 censuses for various mid-Atlantic States. The Bonita Springs Genealogy Collection includes a vertical file contains around 20 individual files containing genealogical and historical materials that are unique to the Bonita Springs community. Many of these items are unavailable anywhere else.

Most of the genealogical materials in both collections are considered secondary sources and facilitate additional research in primary source records. Our indexes and secondary sources provide information on requesting official records from courthouses or agencies that have jurisdiction over public access.

Examples of materials available for research at both branches include:

1. Indexes to primary source records:
 - a. Land records
 - b. Vital records (births, marriages, divorces, and death records)
 - c. Military service and pension records

- d. Township, city and state records (tax, voters registers, licenses)
2. Bibliographies of holdings in genealogical research institutions in the U.S. and Europe.
3. Published family histories.
4. Historical Maps and Gazetteers for most states east of the Mississippi River, Canada, the British Isles, Europe (Western and Eastern) and Russia.
5. Personal narratives of historical events.
6. Selected genealogical periodicals.
7. Self-help books on specific genealogical research topics.
8. Approximately 140 different research guides and outlines on a wide variety of topics of interest to genealogists at all levels of expertise.
9. Information for contacting family associations, genealogical/historical societies, organizations, and repositories, both local and worldwide.
10. Subscription databases: Ancestry Library Edition and Heritage Quest. Both databases are available at every branch within the Lee County Library System. Heritage Quest is available via remote access from home provided the user has a valid Lee County Library card.

The secondary resources in both genealogical collections provide researchers with the contact information necessary to access primary records and documents from the jurisdiction where their ancestors resided. The information usually includes the fee structure, forms (which can be photocopied), and necessary address, fax or telephone information needed to process the request. The library can also borrow genealogical materials from other libraries nationwide via our Inter-Library Loan Department. Further details on Inter-Library Loan will be discussed later in this study guide.

Patrons may view a copy of the genealogy collection shelf list on the Lee County Genealogical Society website <http://www.lcgsfl.org/libraryRecords.php> or visit the Reference Desk at Fort Myers Regional Library. Currently there is no shelf list for the Bonita Springs Public Library genealogical collection. Patrons are advised to contact Bryan L. Mulcahy with queries concerning the holdings at Bonita Springs Public Library.

Collection Organization

The Fort Myers Regional Library genealogical collection is organized in five sections:

1. **General Collection:** This section is found at the beginning of the genealogy aisle located to the right of the genealogy reference desk. Items in the general collection include the following:
 - a. Bibliographies (very useful for inter-library loan information)
 - b. "How-to" books on genealogical research (general and regional)
 - c. Directories that list genealogical and historical society's worldwide
 - d. Family histories
 - e. General U.S. records
 - (1) Bounty land grants
 - (2) Immigration and naturalization records
 - (3) Military service records and pension applications
 - (4) Land/taxation records
 - f. Indexes to public and private library or repository holdings
 - g. Lineage books for organizations such as the D.A.R. (Daughters of the American Revolution) and periodical indexes for genealogical periodicals.
2. **International Collection:** This section contains genealogical materials that are specific to an individual country. Currently, there are materials covering 48 nations in Europe, Asia, Africa, Middle East, Australia/New Zealand and Caribbean. The name of each country has been abbreviated on a

color-coded dot, which is attached to the spine of every book. The books are then shelved in alphabetical order by country name and in Dewey Decimal order within each country. The library's international materials include the following subjects:

- a. Governmental structure
 - b. Historical events
 - c. Immigration and migration within the country
 - d. Passenger lists of ships departing from the British Isles or Europe for America, Canada or other destinations
 - e. Name and place guides
 - f. Surname directories for a specific area.
3. **State Materials:** Materials in this section include records that are unique to a specific state. Currently, materials for all 50 states and the District of Columbia are part of the collection. Most of the materials focus on states east of the Mississippi River. Items in this area include the following:
- a. Bibliographical holdings for libraries or repositories within a given state
 - b. Church records
 - c. Collected biographies or family sketches
 - d. County histories
 - e. Court and judicial records, including indexes to many probate files
 - f. State and county land, tax and property records. *Note: In previous eras, property did not necessarily mean ownership of any land.*

Like the International Collection, each state is identified by a color-coded dot on the spine of every book. The state postal abbreviation appears on the dot and the books are shelved in Dewey Decimal order within each state.

4. **Microfilm/Fiche:** These materials are located in the black cabinet behind the scanner located near the windows facing Cornog Plaza. The two exceptions are the *New York Times* and the *Fort Myers News-Press*. These items are located in the microfilm room adjacent to Adult Reference. The library's holdings include:
- a. Florida Census Microfilm, 1830-1930
To determine when a Florida county was created, consult Everton's ***Handy Book For Genealogists***. It is shelved in the genealogy collection under the following Dewey Decimal Call Number: **Genealogy Ref. 929.1 Eve**. This reference provides a brief description of the record-keeping history and development of each county. It also contains contact information for the current courthouse, as well as when the county was created and the name of the "parent" county.
 - b. Florida State Census 1885
 - c. *The New England Historical Genealogical Register* on microfilm contains 26 rolls covering 1847-1982, including an index for all rolls during this time period.
 - d. Miscellaneous 1850 census data for Kentucky, Georgia, Virginia, and one roll of 1870 census data for Marion County, Iowa. The Bonita Springs Public Library also has an incomplete but larger run of the 1850 census on microfilm that focuses on the mid-Atlantic, New England and some of the "upper tier" Southern States.
 - e. Postal Returns – Fort Myers, Florida 1850-1857.
 - f. Records of the United States Army Continental Commands – 1821-1920, Surgeons' Reports
 - g. Records of the United States Adjutant General's Office – 1780-1917, Letters from Fort Denaud
 - h. Genealogy of the Cleveland and Cleavland Families (three volumes)
 - i. New York Times: 1851 to present

- j. Fort Myers News-Press: Nov. 22, 1884, to present
5. **International Genealogical Index (1978 edition)**
The Fort Myers Regional Library has the 1978 edition of the IGI on microfiche. Due to space considerations, this set has been temporarily moved to the reference work area. Please contact Bryan Mulcahy or see one of our volunteer staff for access. This set is still useful for historical purposes, but the current update is available on the *FamilySearch* website at <http://familysearch.org>.
6. **Genealogy Research Study Guides:** There are over 150 genealogical research study guides covering a variety of subjects to assist researchers who do not have time to read an entire book. Patrons may photocopy these study guides at a cost of 10 cents per page. A subject listing is available on the genealogy home page of the Lee County Library System website at <https://www.leegov.com/library/adults/genealogy>. **NOTE: These study guides are meant to serve as an overview or outline for patrons using the genealogy collection at Fort Myers Regional Library. The compiler emphasizes that the information contained in these study guides should not serve as a substitute for taking the time to read one of the books or articles cited in the bibliography, or attend lectures given by the subject specialists cited as authors.**

The Bonita Springs Public Library genealogical collection is organized in four sections:

1. **General Collection:** This section is found at the beginning of the genealogy aisle located to the right of the circulation desk. Items in the general collection include the following:

- a. Bibliographies (very useful for inter-library loan information)
- b. How-to books on genealogical research
- c. Directories that list genealogical and historical societies worldwide
- d. Family histories
- e. General United States records
 - (1) Bounty land grants
 - (2) Immigration and naturalization records and indexes
 - (3) Military service records and pensions
 - (4) Land/taxation records
- f. Indexes to public and private library or repository holdings
- g. Lineage books for organizations such as the D.A.R. (Daughters of the American Revolution) and indexes for various genealogical periodicals.

2. **International Collection:** This section contains genealogical materials that are specific to an individual country. Currently, there are materials covering Canada, the British Isles and northwestern Europe. The name of each country has been written on a color-coded dot, which is attached to the spine of every book. The books are then shelved in alphabetical order by country and in Dewey Decimal order within each country. International materials deal with the following subjects:

- a. Governmental structure
- b. Historical events
- c. Immigration and migration within the country Passenger lists of ships departing from the British Isles or Europe for America, Canada, or other destinations
- d. Name and place guides
- e. Surname directories

3. **State Materials:** Materials in this section include records that are unique to a specific state. Currently, there are materials for the 20 states encompassing the Atlantic Seaboard, Southern

Border and upper Midwestern states. Items in this area include the following:

- a. Bibliographic holdings for libraries or repositories within a given state
- b. Church records
- c. Selected biographies or family sketches
- d. County histories
- e. Court and judicial records, including indexes to many probate files
- f. State and county land, tax and property records. **Note: In previous eras, property did not necessarily mean ownership of any land.**

4. **Microfilm/Fiche:** The Bonita Springs collection has an incomplete but sizeable run of the 1850-1860 census on microfilm that focuses on the mid-Atlantic, New England and some of the “upper tier” southern states.

Like materials shelved the international collection, each state collection is identified by a color-coded dot on the spine of every book. The state postal abbreviation is written on each dot and the books are shelved in Dewey Decimal order within each state.

Genealogical Periodicals

Since most genealogical periodicals are now available online through a number of genealogical websites such as Ancestry, Heritage Quest and Family Search, the library has reduced the number of genealogical periodicals housed in the collections. Access to articles in these databases is via PERSI which is part of the Heritage Quest database.

PERSI, the genealogical periodical index operated by Allen County Public Library in Fort Wayne, Indiana, enables patrons to obtain photocopies of articles pertaining to specific areas of research. Patrons may order copies of the articles by following the instructions and filling out the order sheet provided by Allen County Public Library. Patrons also may request these articles using our inter-library loan service so long as they can locate the exact citation. The library’s collection also includes various print sources that contain subject references to periodicals which may allow staff to locate the periodical citation. Genealogical periodicals in the library’s collection usually consist of those containing the actual article.

Most of the periodicals in the genealogy collections at both library locations are state or country-specific. They are shelved within each state according to the Dewey Decimal number on the spine of the book. Periodicals that are specific to a state are shelved with the “State Materials” section.

Listed below are several examples of genealogy periodicals in the collections:

1. *Connecticut Nutmegger*(Connecticut)
2. *Mayflower Quarterly* (Massachusetts)
3. *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*
4. *New York Genealogical and Biographical Record* (New York)
5. *North Carolina Genealogical Journal* (North Carolina)
6. *Tyler’s Historical & Genealogical Magazine* (Virginia)

Research Assistance

For patrons needing research assistance, the Fort Myers Regional Library has one librarian and several volunteers from the Lee County Genealogical Society who are experienced genealogists. For further

information, you may contact Bryan L. Mulcahy at bmulcahy@leegov.com, via telephone at 239-533-4626 or by contacting the Lee County Genealogical Society via their website at <http://www.lcgsfl.org>.

The Bonita Springs collection is strictly self-service. Patrons requiring assistance are urged to contact the Bonita Springs Genealogical Club which meets at the Bonita Springs Public Library on the second Thursday of each month at 10 a.m. or by contacting Bryan Mulcahy at Fort Myers Regional Library.

The local genealogical societies can provide assistance to their members who seek specialized genealogical research assistance. Many beginning genealogists find the best assistance by joining one or both societies. The Fort Myers Regional Library accepts research queries and photocopy requests from patrons by telephone, fax, postal mail or email. Queries received by mail must be accompanied by a business size stamped self-addressed envelope. Queries by email or fax will also require an SASE be sent to the library unless the sender is satisfied with an electronic response.

So that the library may answer genealogical queries or refer you to an agency that can help, patrons must be able to furnish the following information:

1. Full name of the ancestor
2. County of residence or where the event took place
3. Years when the family resided in the given locality
4. Exact dates of events being researched.

If detailed assistance is needed, two options are available:

1. Call or email Bryan L. Mulcahy (bmulcahy@leegov.com) at the Fort Myers Regional Library for an appointment.
2. Contact the Lee County Genealogical Society 239-549-9625. NOTE: The Bonita Springs Library does not currently accept mail or email genealogical queries. Those received are referred to the librarian at Fort Myers Regional Library.

Genealogical queries sent by mail should be addressed as follows:

Fort Myers Regional Library
Attention: Bryan L. Mulcahy, Reference Librarian
2450 First Street
Fort Myers, FL 33901
Telephone: 239-533-4626
Fax: 239-485-1160
Email: bmulcahy@leegov.com

Research Tips for Patrons

1. ***General “How-To” Materials:***

If you are just beginning your research, you may want to check out a general “how-to” genealogy book. A small collection of genealogy books is located in the 929.1 section of Adult Nonfiction. These books are part of the circulating collection and are available for check out. If Fort Myers is not the branch library you normally use, you may request these items from any branch, and they will be sent via inter-department mail to a branch library that is convenient for you.

2. ***Examine all books concerning the given country, state, or subject area you are researching:***

Most of the genealogy materials are included in the library catalog. A separate shelf list containing all of the Fort Myers Library genealogy materials is available at the Adult Reference Desk or online at the website for the Lee County Genealogical Society: <http://www.lcgsfl.org>.

3. **Join one or more of the local Genealogical Societies**

Lee County has two genealogical societies.

- a. The Lee County Genealogical Society meets the third Thursday of each month at Wesley Memorial United Methodist Church, 4141 Deleon St. in Fort Myers. They offer assistance for beginners, special interest groups and other related research assistance.
 - b. The Bonita Springs Genealogy Club meets on the second Thursday of each month at the Bonita Springs Public Library. For further information, please visit their website link at <http://lcsfl.org/cpage.php?pt=163>.
4. **Consult Periodicals:** Genealogical periodicals are not just collections of stories or magazine articles that you find in general reading matter. Many genealogical periodicals such as *New England Historical and Genealogical Society Quarterly*, *New York Genealogical and Biographical Record* and the *Connecticut Nutmegger* contain vast amounts of research pertaining to vital records, probate records, family histories, land records, military and pension records, church and Bible records, as well as queries and book reviews. Queries can be worth their weight in gold to researchers.
5. **Research Guide Information Sheets:** There are over 150 genealogical research guides covering a variety of subjects to assist researchers who do not have time to read an entire book. These guides are stored in binders in the genealogy area. Patrons may photocopy these study guides at a cost of 10 cents per page. A limited number of basic beginner's study guides are available for free. **NOTE: These study guides are meant to serve as an overview or outline for patrons using the genealogy collection at Fort Myers Regional Library. The compiler emphasizes that the information contained in these study guides should not serve as a substitute for taking the time to read one of the books or articles cited in the bibliography, or attend lectures given by the subject specialists cited as authors.**

ILL (Inter-library Loan) Services

Many of the library's genealogy books contain references to more detailed primary and secondary sources. These source materials may not be available in the Lee County Library System and may only be available at university or genealogy libraries. The Lee County Library System participates in the nationwide resource-lending program known as Inter-library Loan. This makes it possible for researchers to obtain either photocopies or books from other institutions.

Due to recent budget and staffing cuts, the library system has had to modify certain long-standing procedures which are also applicable in most library systems throughout the country. ILL services are subject to the following criteria:

1. Historically, there has not been a charge for this service. However, due to the increasing number of libraries that are charging the library system for borrowing privileges, staff is required to ask patrons if they are willing to pay fees for this service.
2. Fees would only be assessed if the lending institution imposes a fee on our library system. The library will call the patron prior to ordering the book if this situation arises.
3. If the patron states that they do not want to pay any fee, we will attempt to borrow the item but limit the search ONLY to institutions that do not charge fees.
4. We can only accept one ILL request per day.
5. Since many ILL materials come from private or academic libraries, there is usually a two to six week waiting period. Please note that during the Christmas holiday season, most academic and

some smaller public libraries close from the middle of December through New Years. This usually impacts ILL requests submitted during this time period.

6. Please be advised that we cannot borrow National Archives and Family History Library microfilm through normal ILL. In the case of the Family History Library, the Fort Myers Regional Library is a borrowing affiliate but patrons must register with Family Search and designate the Fort Myers Regional Library as the viewing library. This will be covered in greater detail in the next section of this study guide. For information on National Archives procedures, please visit their website at <http://www.archives.gov/research/genealogy/> for more information.

When requesting photocopies from genealogical periodicals, patrons MUST supply the exact citation and volume number, page number, and date of publication. This is emphasized because many institutional libraries will not process requests that do not have the page number or volume number.

On a case-by-case basis, some of the genealogical reference materials from the Fort Myers Regional Library may be loaned to various branches in the Lee County Library System for “in-house” use only. “In-House” use is limited to five to seven days and is restricted due to the demand for use. Lending of these materials is done at the discretion of the genealogy librarian and photocopies of indexes or specific pages may be furnished in lieu of the book. For more information on this matter, please contact Bryan L. Mulcahy at 239-533-4626 or via email at bmulcahy@leegov.com.

As of July 31, 2009, the National Archives has suspended their microfilm lending program. Patrons can purchase microfilm or see other options at their website <http://www.archives.gov/research/genealogy/index.html>. Access to virtually all federal census data is available on Ancestry Library Edition and Heritage Quest. For other subjects, the National Archives site offers a listing of all the relevant microfilm rolls and inventory numbers. At this point, researchers have two options:

1. Check with a library in the vicinity to see if they have purchased any of the microfilm.
2. Check the Family History Library Catalog at <http://familysearch.org> to see if the same information is available in their holdings.
3. Visit the National Archives website at <http://www.archives.gov/research/genealogy/> for further options.

Family Search Library Affiliate Services

The Fort Myers Regional Library is a full service partner with the Family History Library in Salt Lake City as a Family Search Affiliate Library, and it is the only current affiliate serving Lee and Collier counties. This privilege enables us to provide access to the microfilmed holdings of the Family History Library in Salt Lake City which houses the largest genealogical library in the world. Through the Family Search Affiliate Libraries, they make many of their holdings available in microform to genealogy researchers on a loan basis, for a small processing fee.

Patrons will be able to access most genealogical materials in microfilm or fiche formats. However, there are some limitations which we must abide by in terms of access:

1. The library is unable to borrow any materials in print format.
2. Space limitations prevent us from retaining microfilms indefinitely as was the case previously with Family History Centers operating in Naples, Fort Myers and Port Charlotte.

The process for ordering microfilm from the FamilySearch website and having it sent to the Fort Myers Regional Library is discussed below. Patrons must initiate the order process online, via any location with an Internet connection, and then select one of the libraries or Family History Centers to which they wish the microform to be sent. The Fort Myers Regional Library is the designated library affiliate for Lee and Collier counties.

A researcher's first step is to visit the Family History Library Catalog, available at <http://familysearch.org/> to select the microform they wish to order. The film ordering website is <http://familysearch.org/films>. There, individuals must create a personal account and select the preferred Affiliate Library or Family History Center where the films they order will be sent. Payment is made using a credit or debit card or PayPal. Researchers are encouraged to download the User's Guide available at this site because it provides step-by-step guidelines for placing an order. For those wishing help in selecting and ordering films, genealogy assistance will continue to be available at the Fort Myers Regional Library by calling or emailing Bryan L. Mulcahy at 239-533-4626 or bmulcahy@leegov.com for an appointment. Feel free to contact us with any additional questions or comments.

Frequently Asked Questions

The LDS Church has the largest genealogical library in the world. Through the Family History Centers and Family Search Affiliate Libraries, they make many of their holdings available in microform to genealogy researchers on a loan basis, for a small processing fee.

1. Do I need to be a member of the LDS Church to order microform?

No. The LDS Church makes their library materials and online databases available to everyone, regardless of religious affiliation.

2. Can I order microform by email or phone?

No. According to the new Family Search guidelines, you must personally place your order online, and prepay using a credit or debit card or Pay Pal. Visit <http://familysearch.org/films> to register and place an order. Patrons are strongly encouraged to read the Microfilm Use Agreement.

3. Can I order the microforms at a library?

Patrons can order microforms using library computers, following the instructions in #2 above.

4. Will someone be available to help me with microform orders?

A genealogy volunteer at the Fort Myers Regional Library is available by appointment to help patrons with ordering, but patrons must place their own online orders.

5. Can the microform be sent to another library?

When patrons first register on the Family Search site, they must select a Family History Center or Library Affiliate where they want their order delivered. Fort Myers Regional Library is the only option in Lee and Collier counties.

6. What is the cost to rent microfilm and microfiche?

Due to the increase in the price of raw microfilm stock and the decreasing availability of this product on the market, and higher costs to ship microfilm, it has become necessary for Family Search to increase the price of film loans in family history centers. On Feb. 15, 2012 the following prices went into effect for film loans in the United States and Canada, and they are still current as of Jan. 8, 2015:

Short-term film loan	\$7.50	Extended film loan	\$18.75
Short-term film loan renewal	\$7.50	Microfiche loan	\$4.75

7. How do I pay for an order?

Under the new Family Search Online Ordering guidelines, payment must be made by credit or debit card or Pay Pal.

8. Do I have to pay when I place the order?

Yes. Payment must be made online before the order can be processed.

9. Do I need a Lee County library card to order microforms?

No.

10. After I order the microform, how long will it be before I receive it?

It may take an average of two to three weeks to receive microform materials after they are ordered.

12. How will I know when the microform is available for me to use?

Family Search will notify you by email when the microform material is available at the designated Library Affiliate or Family History Center.

13. Where do I pick up the microform?

Microform materials will be delivered to the Library Affiliate or Family History Center that you selected at the time the order was placed.

14. How long can I keep microform(s)?

Orders will be held for your use at the Fort Myers Regional Library Reference

Desk for approximately 90 days before microfilm must be either returned or renewed.

Microfiche is loaned for an indefinite period and will be retained by the Fort Myers Regional Library.

15. What if I'm not finished with the film by the date it's due?

Microfilm on Short-Term Loan may be renewed up to two times at a cost of \$7.50 per renewal.

16. What if I order the wrong microform?

While the library is happy to assist, you are ultimately responsible for the selection of microform(s) ordered. Under Family Search Online Ordering guidelines, the rental fee will not be reimbursed if the microform does not contain the hoped-for information.

Additional borrowing locations are listed below:

1. L.D.S. Family History Affiliate Libraries

Elsie Quirk Public Library

100 West Dearborn Street

Englewood, FL

Phone (941) 861-1210

Hours: 9 a.m.-8 p.m. Monday; 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday

2. Mid-County Regional Library

2050 Forrest Nelson Boulevard

Port Charlotte, FL 33952

Library Administration Office: **941-766-7323**

Circulation: **941-613-3160**

Reference: **941- 613-3166**

Youth Services: **941-613-3170**

Hours: 10 a.m.-7 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday;

10 a.m.-5 p.m. Friday and Saturday;

Sunday - Closed

Compiled by Reference Librarian Bryan L. Mulcahy, Fort Myers Regional Library