

# INDIANA COUNTY HISTORIAN PROGRAM GUIDE

WORKING TO IMPROVE HISTORICAL COMMUNICATION IN INDIANA

**WE DO  
HISTORY.**  
INDIANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

[www.indianahistory.org](http://www.indianahistory.org)



[www.in.gov/history](http://www.in.gov/history)

*This edition of the County Historian Guide was updated in 2020.*

*This County Historian Guide is intended to serve as a source of reference for county historians. If you have any questions, please contact Local History Services at (317) 233-8913 or [localhistoryservices@indianahistory.org](mailto:localhistoryservices@indianahistory.org).*

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## HISTORY OF THE COUNTY HISTORIAN PROGRAM

*In 1981, through an effort to improve the historical communication network in the state, the Indiana Historical Society and the Indiana Historical Bureau established the Indiana County Historian Program. Local historical organizations in each county nominated county historians to renewable, two-year terms.*

*In 1998, the program initiated a process to make the renewable county historian position three years in duration. The Indiana Historical Society and the Indiana Historical Bureau appoint the nominees as official county historians.*

## PROGRAM CONTACTS AND SPONSOR INFORMATION



**Indiana Historical Society (IHS)**  
Local History Services Department  
450 W. Ohio Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46202-3299  
[www.indianahistory.org/LHS](http://www.indianahistory.org/LHS)

*The Indiana Historical Society is a **private, nonprofit organization.***

### Contacts:

Jeannette Rooney  
Assistant Director, Local History Services  
(317) 233-8913  
[jrooney@indianahistory.org](mailto:jrooney@indianahistory.org)

Tamara Hemmerlein  
Director, Local History Services  
(317) 234-0170  
[themmerlein@indianahistory.org](mailto:themmerlein@indianahistory.org)



**Indiana Historical Bureau (IHB)**  
Division of the Indiana State Library  
140 N. Senate Avenue, Room 130  
Indianapolis, IN 46204  
[www.in.gov/history](http://www.in.gov/history)

*The Indiana Historical Bureau is a part of a **state agency** and administers the **Historical Marker Program.***

### Contact:

Dr. Michella M. Marino  
Deputy Director, Indiana Historical Bureau  
(317) 233-8940  
[mmarino@library.IN.gov](mailto:mmarino@library.IN.gov)

## COUNTY HISTORIAN JOB DESCRIPTION

### Purpose

County historians serve as volunteers appointed by the Indiana Historical Society (IHS) and Indiana Historical Bureau (IHB) to promote local history in their counties, connect individuals and groups with history resources, promote collaboration between local history organizations, and maintain connections with the Indiana Historical Society and Indiana Historical Bureau.

The position of county historian is a voluntary, working position. No funds are available for salary or expenses.

### Responsibilities

- Respond in a timely manner to inquiries from individuals and organizations and connect them with the appropriate resources.\*
- Conduct historical research as needed for any projects the county historian wishes to undertake, or upon request by the IHS or IHB.
- Maintain connections with all historical entities in the county and encourage cooperation between these organizations.
- Maintain contact with the IHS and IHB and respond to any requests for information.
- Keep records of county historian work, including tracking contacts, submitting reports as requested, and responding to the annual county historian survey.
- Attend county historian training opportunities and meetings.
- Monitor and report the condition of markers for the IHB and encourage the marking of worthy sites; promote historical marker dedications.
- Provide input to the county records commission and the Indiana State Archives to assure the proper disposition of local public records and notify the Indiana State Archives regarding illegal destruction of public records.
- Maintain a personal handbook of information about statewide and local history resources. County historians should pass along their handbooks to successors.
- Notify the IHS Local History Services department of any newly-formed or closed historical organizations in their county, as well as any changes in contact information.
- Other duties as required.

In addition to the responsibilities listed above, the county historian may also engage in other activities that interest them and meet needs in the community.

*\*Fulfilling research requests for the public is not required of county historians but may be carried out at their discretion.*

### Qualifications

- Well-acquainted with and interested in the county and its history.
- Available for contact.
- Willing to communicate via email.\*\*
- Able to travel within the county.

- Willing to devote time and effort to learning new methods, technologies, and sources of information.
- Courteous, professional, and personable when dealing with the public, as well as dependable and punctual.

*\*\*If the county historian does not have an email address, the IHS Local History Services department can help them to set up an account.*

### **Term of Appointment**

County historians are appointed to 3-year terms, and may be reappointed to additional terms. If for some reason a county historian cannot complete their term, they may retire at any time.

If a county historian is appointed to fill a position vacated mid-term by a previous county historian, the new county historian will fill the remainder of the current term and then be eligible for re-nomination for a new 3-year term.

### **Time Commitment**

The amount of time a county historian will spend in their work varies greatly depending on the activities in which they choose to participate. At minimum, a county historian should plan to spend at least one hour or more per week dedicated to county historian work.

### **Support**

County historians have access to training, annual meetings, a guidebook, and the following resources:

- Stationery, business cards, and address labels.
- A county historian name badge.
- Contact tracking sheet.
- The County Historian Update monthly e-newsletter.

A mentor will be assigned to each newly appointed county historian. In addition, staff at the IHS and IHB are available for questions and assistance.

### **Benefits**

- Complimentary membership to the Indiana Historical Society for the duration of the county historian appointment.
- Network with county historians across the state.
- Updates on history resources and news.
- Connections with statewide heritage organizations.

Thank you for your dedication to supporting local history!

## STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

### **Commitment**

County historians should take seriously their commitment to their work and should be reliable, arriving on time for meetings, responding promptly to inquiries, and fulfilling all responsibilities.

### **Professionalism**

As representatives of the IHS and IHB, county historians should conduct themselves at all times in a manner that reflects positively on the County Historian Program.

### **Customer Service**

All county historians should interact with the public in a friendly and courteous manner and should work towards maintaining positive and amicable relationships with all historical entities.

### **Non-Discrimination**

Discrimination is any negative action or attitude directed toward someone because of certain characteristics and **will not be tolerated under any circumstance**. These characteristics may include, but are not necessarily limited to race, gender, age, religion, ethnicity or national origin, disability or medical condition, gender identity or sexual orientation.

### **When a Problem Arises**

If a problem arises and the county historian is unable to resolve it with the party involved, the county historian should contact the IHS Local History Services department or the IHB to discuss the issue. (See page 2 for contact information)



## CODE OF ETHICS

### Trust and Integrity

County historians occupy a position of trust in their communities and should practice their work with integrity, following these guidelines:

- **Avoid plagiarism and copyright infringement:** Document and acknowledge all sources, and accurately represent the findings of colleagues. Do not use photos, images, or other forms of intellectual property without appropriate permissions, unless they are in the public domain.
- **Do not fabricate evidence:** Honor the integrity of the historical record and do not invent, alter, ignore, remove or destroy evidence of any kind.
- **Do not misrepresent credentials:** Represent all professional qualifications accurately and fully.
- **Consider multiple perspectives:** No single account can tell the whole story, so multiple – and sometimes conflicting – accounts should always be considered in the pursuit of history. Be culturally inclusive in all historical practices.
- **Have a point of view but be aware of personal biases:** When forming conclusions, follow sound historical methods, correctly represent sources, and do not omit evidence that opposes personal interpretations.

### Navigating Sensitive Issues

Although the pursuit and study of history prompts critical dialogue, county historians must navigate sensitive issues with care and avoid inflaming dialogue, antagonism, and disparagement. This would include offering political opinions or commentary while acting within their official capacity.

### Avoiding Conflicts of Interest

County historians should avoid situations in which they or organizations with which they are associated could be compromised and avoid any action that may create even the appearance of impropriety.

- County historians shall not give any certificate, statement, or appraisal as to the monetary value of historical materials. (Refer individuals making such requests to the American Society of Appraisers - [www.appraisers.org](http://www.appraisers.org))
- County historians should not use their position to promote their personal collecting activities. When collecting historical items similar to those collected by local historical organizations or the IHS, county historians should consider the needs of those organizations.
- County historians should recuse themselves from any situation in which a conflict of interest or the appearance thereof arises; for example, review of work or awarding of prizes to anyone with whom the county historian has a personal connection.

#### Sources:

The National Council on Public History's *Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct*

([www.ncph.org/about/governance-committees/code-of-ethics-and-professional-conduct/](http://www.ncph.org/about/governance-committees/code-of-ethics-and-professional-conduct/))

The American Historical Association's *Statement on Standards of Professional Conduct*

([www.historians.org/jobs-and-professional-development/statements-standards-and-guidelines-of-the-discipline](http://www.historians.org/jobs-and-professional-development/statements-standards-and-guidelines-of-the-discipline))

## APPOINTMENT AND RETIREMENT PROCEDURES

### County Historian Terms

County historians are appointed to 3-year terms and are eligible for renomination at the end of their term. Each county is set on a fixed election cycle so that approximately 30 counties come up for renomination each year. If a county historian retires mid-term, the new county historian will serve the remainder of the existing term and then be eligible for renomination at the end of that term.

### Nomination

Upon the retirement of a county historian, the IHS Local History Services department will seek nominations for a new county historian. Each local history organization and public library in that county will receive a letter and nomination form, and ideally, these organizations will work together or create a joint nominating committee to select one person to nominate for the position. Required forms for nomination of a new county historian must include a completed nomination form and a resume for the nominee.

Once the nomination form and resume are received by the IHS Local History Services department, they will be reviewed jointly by the IHS and IHB, and recommendations will be made regarding appointment. If the nominee is approved, they will be sent a letter inviting them to become county historian. Once they accept, they will be officially appointed.

### Multiple nominations for a single position

If multiple candidates are nominated for a county historian position, the IHS Local History Services department and the IHB will select the county historian, taking into account the qualifications submitted by the nominating organizations.

### New Appointment

When the nomination process is complete and the appointment is official, new county historians will receive a packet of materials and information, including letterhead, envelopes, return address labels, business cards, a lapel pin, nametag, certificate of appointment, a copy of this guide, and an informational survey requesting more information about the county historian and their interests. The county historian will receive separate information regarding their IHS membership.

The county historian's contact information will be listed on the IHS website ([www.indianahistory.org/across-indiana/hometown-resources/find-who-you-need-by-county](http://www.indianahistory.org/across-indiana/hometown-resources/find-who-you-need-by-county)), and they will be signed up to receive the monthly county historian e-newsletter, *The Update* (see page 9 for details).

Notification of the new county historian appointment will be sent to local history organizations, libraries, county commissioners, county council, and the mayor or town council of the county seat.

### Reappointment

At the end of the current 3-year term cycle, county historians will be eligible for renomination. In the autumn preceding the end of the term, the IHS Local History Services department will contact the county historians who are up for renomination to ask whether they are willing to serve another term if reappointed or wish to retire.

If a county historian seeks reappointment, the IHS Local History Services department will contact each local historical society and public library in that county and notify them that the county historian will serve another term if reappointed and request a renomination. Local organizations are instructed to work together to renominate, and only nominate a new county historian if they can provide justifiable cause to remove the current county historian. Once renominations have been received, the county historian will be appointed to a new 3-year term.

### **Retirement**

If a county historian is unable to complete his or her term, they should contact the IHS Local History Services department to notify of their retirement. The county historian will then be retired from the position effective immediately, and the local history organizations and libraries in the county will be contacted to begin the new appointment process (see above for details).

### **County Historian Emeritus**

If a county historian has served at least one full 3-year term and wishes to retire but still be involved with local history, they may request to become county historian emeritus in their county. The IHS and IHB may also move a county historian to emeritus status at their discretion.

The retiring county historian should make the request to become an emeritus to the IHS Local History Services department when they give notice of their retirement. County historian emeriti will be appointed at the discretion of the IHS and IHB. County historian emeriti will not receive complimentary IHS membership and will not be listed on the website but will continue to receive The Update e-newsletter and may attend county historian meetings. There are no term limits for county historian emeriti.

### **ASSOCIATE COUNTY HISTORIANS**

A county historian may, at their discretion, assign associate county historians to assist in the work of local history. While of great service and assistance, these associates are not officially appointed, should not be called Indiana County Historians, and their contact information won't be listed on the IHS website; however, they may receive the County Historian Update e-newsletter and can attend county historian meetings. For more information or to assign an associate in your county, contact IHS Local History Services.

### **COUNTY HISTORIAN MENTORS**

Current county historians who have served at least one 3-year term may request to become mentors to newly appointed county historians from different counties. Mentors are assigned at the discretion of the IHS and IHB and can serve to answer any questions an incoming county historian might have and offer guidance regarding the work of county historians. When a county historian is first appointed, they will be provided with the contact information of their mentor and introduced to them via email. County historian mentorship is intended to provide a system of support for incoming county historians and strengthen ties between historians statewide.

## COUNTY HISTORIAN RESOURCES

### Materials

When appointed, county historians will receive the following resources:

- Nametag and lapel pin
- Business cards
- Letterhead, blank envelopes and return address labels
- Contact tracking sheets

If you run out of any of the above, please contact the IHS Local History Services department (see contact information on page 2) to receive a refill of these materials.

### Indiana Historical Society Membership

County historians will receive a complimentary membership to the IHS for the duration of their appointment. Once appointed, you will receive information regarding your new membership.

### E-Newsletters

THE UPDATE county historian e-newsletter is written and circulated to county historians on the first day of each month. The e-newsletter will arrive at the email address you provided to the IHS Local History Services department. The main purpose is to share news relative to the County Historian Program, workshop and program opportunities around the state, stories about county historians and the various projects they undertake, and other resources. County historians are encouraged to submit announcements about their work as well as notes of interest relative to their activities.

COMMUNIQUE ONLINE is a weekly e-newsletter available free of charge from the IHS Local History Services department. It contains up-to-date news of current resources and happenings in the field, programs and events occurring in Indiana's local heritage organizations, and other news and updates. Subscription is free. To subscribe, email [col@indianahistory.org](mailto:col@indianahistory.org) requesting to be added to the mailing list.

COLLECTIONS ADVISOR is a monthly e-newsletter available free of charge from the IHS Local History Services department that contains articles, tips and stories related to collections management and care. To subscribe, email [collectionsadvisor@indianahistory.org](mailto:collectionsadvisor@indianahistory.org) requesting to be added to the mailing list.

THE INDIANA HISTORICAL BUREAU PRIMARY SOURCE is a quarterly e-newsletter from the IHB. It contains articles and information about activities around the state. Subscription is free and open to anyone with an email account. To subscribe, email [IHB@library.in.gov](mailto:IHB@library.in.gov) requesting to be added to the mailing list.

### County Historian Facebook Group

County historians may join the private county historian Facebook group, which is available for county historians to share resources and news. Email the IHS Local History Services department to join.

### Lending Resource Center

The IHS Local History Services department maintains the Lending Resource Center to loan books, leaflets, and videos on a range of topics of interest to historical societies, libraries, genealogical groups, and others. Visit <https://indianahistory.org/across-indiana/local-history-services/online-resources/> for more information about available materials and instructions to borrow items.

## GETTING STARTED CHECKLIST

If you are getting started as a newly-appointed county historian, you can use this checklist to begin to organize your work.

- Read the County Historian Program Guide.
- Plan to attend county historian training in person or online.
- Start a calendar to keep track of meetings and important dates.
- Save your contact tracking sheets to your computer or print out copies to begin tracking contacts.
- If possible, get in touch with the former county historian in your county to obtain any notes, handbook, advice, and other information to help you in your work.
- Contact your assigned mentor for advice on getting started.
- Connect with each historical organization and library in your county to get to know who the appropriate contacts are for each location and where the local history repositories are kept for various resources.
- Begin to compile a personal handbook about local and statewide history resources (or add to an existing handbook if you received one from your predecessor).
- Plan to attend meetings at local history organizations, and/or serve on boards or committees.
- Learn where the historical markers are in your county and check on their condition.
- Join the county historian Facebook group, if desired.

## SAMPLE COUNTY HISTORIAN ACTIVITIES

The following are examples of activities county historians have undertaken in their locales. These examples are by no means required, but rather are provided to give new county historians ideas of possible projects which may need attention in their own counties. In many cases, these activities can be carried out through collaboration with local history organizations.

### Programs

- Guide a tour, such as a downtown walking tour, a lost landmarks tour, a bus tour, or a cemetery walk.
- Lead a book discussion on a historical work.
- Organize a game program or trivia night using historical questions about the county.
- Hold a program about a famous (or infamous) event or person in your county's history.
- Give a workshop to adults or create a special session for children about researching historical topics in the county, or about conducting genealogy.
- Cooperate with the local school system to give an in-class presentation about conducting research on relatives in other countries in conjunction with students' studies on cultures or ethnicity.
- Offer a session on conducting genealogy in a cemetery. Show participants what information gravestones provide and how to correlate that information with records in the courthouse.

### Publications and Social Media

- Write a weekly/monthly column for your local newspaper.
- Start a new county historian Facebook page, or contribute to the Facebook page(s) of local history organization(s).
- Feature people, sites, or events in your county that are significant but may have been overlooked or forgotten. Conduct some research on a local historical myth and help separate fact and fiction by proving or disproving it.
- Submit topic ideas to the Indiana Historical Bureau for inclusion in the blog, newsletter, almanac, and/or social media.

### Records

- Connect with local history organizations and libraries to assist in carrying out needed projects, such as:
  - Read through old newspapers and abstract the obituaries, citing the papers and their dates.
  - Compile information from early tax lists into a single document.
  - Create an alphabetical index for your county census records.
  - Move delicate records to acid-free folders and archival containers.
  - Copy on acid-free paper deed, birth, marriage, and death records. Create indexes for these records if none exist.
  - Compile the records for the veterans in your county who served in the military.
  - Transcribe diaries.
- Make a list of the locations of all cemeteries in your county and where records, reference and county history books, and newspapers are stored.

## **Cemeteries**

- Identify an abandoned cemetery and find a local group to maintain the site.
- Survey your township/county cemeteries and compile the information on the gravestones into a single document. Update the information 5 or 10 years later.
- Make and update maps of the county cemeteries. Create an index of where all individuals are buried.

## **Miscellaneous**

- Judge National History Day in Indiana projects at competitions taking place in your county or region.
- Identify a historic building worth saving and raise money for its restoration.
- Write letters of support for historic preservation grants.
- Update Wikipedia pages pertaining to your county's history with correct information.
- Encourage local groups to write their histories.
- Work with a senior-level Girl or Boy Scout troop on a preservation or indexing project of county records.
- Ask local citizens to write their memories for a newspaper series.
- Conduct oral histories with local citizens.

## **TRAINING AND MEETINGS**

### **Workshops and Webinars**

County historians receive training through regional workshops covering historical research, writing, available resources, communication, and current issues in the history field. Dates and locations for these workshops will be announced when scheduled. Webinars covering these topics will also be made available.

### **The Annual Roundtable**

Each spring, an annual meeting of county historians is held in Indianapolis. The meeting offers a mix of presentations on topics such as historical research or current issues in the field, as well as the opportunity for county historians to share their recent activities and ask questions of one another to help further their work. The annual roundtable is a great time to share, connect with other historians, and learn about what is happening statewide. Invitations for the roundtable go out approximately one month in advance of the roundtable, and RSVPs are required.

### **Regional Meetings**

In the autumn, local small group county historian meetings are held around the state. In 2020, the fall training workshops will replace the regional meetings, but regional meetings will resume again in the future. These meetings will serve three purposes: better meet county historians' needs, solidify IHS and IHB-county historian relationships, and encourage closer relationships among neighboring county historians themselves.

### **Other Training Opportunities**

The IHS Local History Services department offers regular training opportunities for museums and heritage organizations, and county historians are welcome to register at the member rate.



## RECORDING COUNTY HISTORIAN CONTACTS

It is important that county historians keep track of the contacts they make through their county historian activities. This is important information that will be requested on the annual survey (see page 17 for details) and is used to help support the County Historian Program.

County historians should track the number of people whom they help via email, phone, in-person, or mail, and they should include in their count the individuals they refer to other people for assistance. Keeping track of contacts can be as simple as recording basic numbers in the weekly tracking log (see page 16). For more detailed records (recommended), county historians can also use the weekly contact sheet (see page 15).

These forms are also available in a digital format and in a spreadsheet; contact the IHS Local History Services department for the digital files. County historians may, of course, devise their own system for record-keeping.

# COUNTY HISTORIAN WEEKLY DETAILED CONTACT SHEET

Week: \_\_\_\_\_

## INDIVIDUAL CONTACTS

Date	Name	Reason for Inquiry; Notes	Type of Inquiry <i>(History, Genealogy, Other)</i>	Contact Type <i>(Email, Phone, In-Person, or Mail)</i>

## PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

Date	Program/Activity Description and Notes	# of Attendees <i>(if applicable)</i>

COUNTY HISTORIAN WEEKLY LOG

Week (date range) <i>Example: Jan. 1-7</i>	# EMAIL contacts	# PHONE contacts	# IN-PERSON contacts	# VIRTUAL contacts	# MAIL contacts	# PROGRAM attendees	TOTAL CONTACTS	Hours spent this week
TOTALS:								

## **SURVEYS AND REPORTS**

### **Annual Survey**

The annual survey is sent to county historians early each year and allows the IHS and IHB to keep a record of how county historians spend their time and to determine how their roles and responsibilities in the community change over time. The report records the amount of time county historians spend in their position each year, how that time is spent, and the resources available to them. Although many county historians are staff members or volunteers of historical organizations, they are asked to consider when answering the survey only those activities in which they participate specifically in their roles as county historians.

In addition to creating a record of historians' activities, the survey allows the IHS and IHB to determine how they can better meet the needs of the county historians through programming, correspondence, and advertisement of county historians' services. Finally, it allows the staff to determine if the County Historian Program is meeting its goals.

### **Biannual Report**

Mid-year, county historians will be asked to complete a short report summarizing their major activities over the past 6 months and provide updated contact information for the history entities in their county. This information will help the IHS and IHB to stay informed of the work of county historians statewide and update records on local history organizations.

## INDIANA STATEWIDE ORGANIZATIONS QUICK REFERENCE

Find a directory of current Indiana county historians and history organizations here:

[www.indianahistory.org/across-indiana/hometown-resources/find-who-you-need-by-county](http://www.indianahistory.org/across-indiana/hometown-resources/find-who-you-need-by-county)

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### Indiana Archives and Records Administration (State Agency)

[www.in.gov/iara](http://www.in.gov/iara)

Manages the **Indiana State Archives**, along with Records and Forms Management and the State Imaging and Microfilm Laboratory; also find information on the Oversight Committee on Public Records and the Indiana State Historic Records Advisory Board.

- ⇒ Indiana records for marriages, births and deaths, adoptions, naturalization, military, court, department of correction, land, government, and other topics – [www.in.gov/iara/3197.htm](http://www.in.gov/iara/3197.htm)
  - ⇒ Conservation Lab provides on-site disaster assistance and training – [www.in.gov/iara/2354.htm](http://www.in.gov/iara/2354.htm)
  - ⇒ Records Retention Schedules – [www.in.gov/iara/3266.htm](http://www.in.gov/iara/3266.htm)
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### Indiana Arts Commission (State Agency)

[www.in.gov/arts](http://www.in.gov/arts)

Provides leadership for & public stewardship of artistic resources for Indiana's citizens and communities.

- ⇒ Arts education resources – [www.in.gov/arts/2507.htm](http://www.in.gov/arts/2507.htm)
  - ⇒ Community services and grants – [www.in.gov/arts/2346.htm](http://www.in.gov/arts/2346.htm)
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### Indiana Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology (State Agency)

[www.in.gov/dnr/historic](http://www.in.gov/dnr/historic)

An office of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources that promotes the conservation of Indiana's cultural resources.

- ⇒ SHAARD Database (State Historic Architectural and Archaeological Research Database) and Structures Map – [www.in.gov/dnr/historic/4505.htm](http://www.in.gov/dnr/historic/4505.htm)
  - ⇒ Cemetery resources, including the cemetery sign initiative, historic cemetery marker directory, laws regarding cemeteries, and more – [www.in.gov/dnr/historic/2807.htm](http://www.in.gov/dnr/historic/2807.htm)
  - ⇒ Help with National and State Register listings – [www.in.gov/dnr/historic/3654.htm](http://www.in.gov/dnr/historic/3654.htm)
  - ⇒ Archaeology resources and training – [www.in.gov/dnr/historic/2809.htm](http://www.in.gov/dnr/historic/2809.htm)
  - ⇒ Underground Railroad resources – [www.in.gov/dnr/historic/2798.htm](http://www.in.gov/dnr/historic/2798.htm)
  - ⇒ Historic Theater Initiative – [www.in.gov/dnr/historic/2803.htm](http://www.in.gov/dnr/historic/2803.htm)
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### Indiana Historical Bureau (Division of the Indiana State Library, a State Agency)

[www.in.gov/history](http://www.in.gov/history)

Co-sponsors the County Historian Program. Provides publications, programs, and other opportunities for Indiana citizens of all ages to learn and teach about the history of their communities, the state of Indiana, and their relationships to the nation and the world.

- ⇒ Indiana Historical Markers program – [www.in.gov/history/markers.htm](http://www.in.gov/history/markers.htm)
  - ⇒ Indiana History Blog – <https://blog.history.in.gov>
  - ⇒ Talking Hoosier History podcast – <https://blog.history.in.gov/talking-hoosier-history>
  - ⇒ Indiana Almanac – [www.in.gov/history/4369.htm](http://www.in.gov/history/4369.htm)
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### Indiana Historical Society (Nonprofit Organization)

[www.indianahistory.org](http://www.indianahistory.org)

IHS is headquartered in the Eugene and Marilyn Glick Indiana History Center and holds one of the largest archival repositories of manuscript, printed and visual materials on the history of Indiana and the Old Northwest.

- ⇒ Local History Services department: manages the County Historian program and provides resources and training for heritage organizations – [www.indianahistory.org/LHS](http://www.indianahistory.org/LHS)
- ⇒ Heritage Support Grants, made possible by Lilly Endowment Inc. – [www.indianahistory.org/grants](http://www.indianahistory.org/grants)
- ⇒ Online Collections: search digitized images, letters, books, and more – [www.indianahistory.org/explore/our-collections](http://www.indianahistory.org/explore/our-collections)
- ⇒ Online Family History Resources – <https://indianahistory.org/research/family-history/family-history-online-resources>
- ⇒ Conservation resources and consultations – [www.indianahistory.org/research/conservation](http://www.indianahistory.org/research/conservation)

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### Indiana Humanities (Nonprofit Organization)

[www.indianahumanities.org](http://www.indianahumanities.org)

Dedicated to promoting the public humanities in Indiana.

- ⇒ Indiana Women’s Suffrage Centennial – [www.indianasuffrage100.org](http://www.indianasuffrage100.org)
- ⇒ Grants for programs – [www.indianahumanities.org/about-grants](http://www.indianahumanities.org/about-grants)
- ⇒ Indiana Authors Awards – [www.indianahumanities.org/programs/indiana-authors-awards](http://www.indianahumanities.org/programs/indiana-authors-awards)
- ⇒ Novel Conversations free statewide lending library – [www.indianahumanities.org/programs/novel-conversations](http://www.indianahumanities.org/programs/novel-conversations)

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### Indiana Landmarks (Nonprofit Organization)

[www.indianalandmarks.org](http://www.indianalandmarks.org)

Helps reimagine, rescue, and revive meaningful places and works towards historic preservation statewide.

- ⇒ Regional offices – [www.indianalandmarks.org/news/in-your-area](http://www.indianalandmarks.org/news/in-your-area)
- ⇒ Grants and loans – [www.indianalandmarks.org/resources/grants-and-loans](http://www.indianalandmarks.org/resources/grants-and-loans)
- ⇒ Indiana Preservation Directory – [www.indianalandmarks.org/resources/indiana-preservation-directory](http://www.indianalandmarks.org/resources/indiana-preservation-directory)
- ⇒ Preservation guides and advice – [www.indianalandmarks.org/resources/preservation-advice](http://www.indianalandmarks.org/resources/preservation-advice)
- ⇒ Historic house style guides – [www.indianalandmarks.org/historic-houses](http://www.indianalandmarks.org/historic-houses)

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### Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (State Agency)

[www.in.gov/ocra](http://www.in.gov/ocra)

Works with Indiana communities to build relevant and economically thriving places where people want to live, work and grow.

- ⇒ Community liaisons located throughout the state – [www.in.gov/ocra/2330.htm](http://www.in.gov/ocra/2330.htm)
- ⇒ Quick Impact Placebased Grant – [www.in.gov/ocra/quippgrant.htm](http://www.in.gov/ocra/quippgrant.htm)

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## Indiana State Historic Sites (Managed by the Indiana State Museum, a State Agency)

[www.indianamuseum.org/historic-sites](http://www.indianamuseum.org/historic-sites)

The Indiana State Museum and Historic Sites system spans the state with 12 locations.

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## Indiana State Library (State Agency)

[www.in.gov/library](http://www.in.gov/library)

Serves Indiana residents, leads and supports the library community and preserves Indiana history. Holds one of the broadest collections of material about the State of Indiana and its people, places and events.

- ⇒ Find collections by county – [www.in.gov/library/4609.htm](http://www.in.gov/library/4609.htm)
- ⇒ Genealogy collections – [www.in.gov/library/genealogy.htm](http://www.in.gov/library/genealogy.htm)
- ⇒ Hoosier State Chronicles, Indiana’s digital historic newspapers – <https://newspapers.library.in.gov>
- ⇒ Indiana Memory, a portal to statewide digital collections – <https://digital.library.in.gov/>
- ⇒ The Indiana collection – [www.in.gov/library/indiana.htm](http://www.in.gov/library/indiana.htm)
- ⇒ Federal Depository Library Program – [www.in.gov/library/feddeposit.htm](http://www.in.gov/library/feddeposit.htm)
- ⇒ Preservation and conservation services – [www.in.gov/library/preservation.htm](http://www.in.gov/library/preservation.htm)
- ⇒ State documents – [www.in.gov/library/4067.htm](http://www.in.gov/library/4067.htm)
- ⇒ Online resources – [www.in.gov/library/databases.htm](http://www.in.gov/library/databases.htm)

## RESEARCH AND HISTORY RESOURCES BY TOPIC

The resources listed below are intended to serve as a general guideline and might not be fully comprehensive. For specific questions, please contact the IHS Local History Services department ([www.indianahistory.org/LHS](http://www.indianahistory.org/LHS)) or the Indiana Historical Bureau ([www.in.gov/history](http://www.in.gov/history)).

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### Appraisals

*National*     **American Society of Appraisers** – a searchable list of appraisers by state.  
[www.appraisers.org/find-an-appraiser](http://www.appraisers.org/find-an-appraiser)

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### Archives and Public Records

*Indiana*     **Indiana Archives and Records Administration** – a state agency that manages the Indiana State Archives; also find information on the Oversight Committee on Public Records and the Indiana State Historic Records Advisory Board.  
[www.in.gov/iara](http://www.in.gov/iara)

**Society of Indiana Archivists** – a nonprofit organization of archivists, researchers, and others who are involved with archival collections.  
[www.inarchivists.org](http://www.inarchivists.org)

*National*     **The National Archives** – a government agency that holds the documents and materials created in the course of business conducted by the United States Federal government.  
[www.archives.gov](http://www.archives.gov)

**Society of American Archivists** – a national professional association dedicated to the needs and interests of archives and archivists.  
[www.archivists.org](http://www.archivists.org)

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### Building Preservation and Historic Sites

*Indiana*     **Indiana Landmarks** – a nonprofit organization that works towards historic preservation statewide; find a regional office at [www.indianalandmarks.org/news/in-your-area](http://www.indianalandmarks.org/news/in-your-area).  
[www.indianalandmarks.org](http://www.indianalandmarks.org)

**Indiana State Museum** – a state agency that manages the Indiana State Historic Sites.  
[www.indianamuseum.org/historic-sites](http://www.indianamuseum.org/historic-sites)

**Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology (DHPA)** – an office of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (a state agency) that promotes the conservation of Indiana's cultural resources.  
[www.in.gov/dnr/historic](http://www.in.gov/dnr/historic)



SHAARD Database – the State Historic Architectural and Archaeological Research Database and Structures Map, managed by the DHPA.

[www.in.gov/dnr/historic/4505.htm](http://www.in.gov/dnr/historic/4505.htm)

*National* **Advisory Council on Historic Preservation** – a government agency that shares information about the Section 106 Federal Preservation review process, and offers preservation programs, training and more.

[www.achp.gov](http://www.achp.gov)

**National Center for Preservation Technology and Training** – run by the National Park Service, the NCPTT offers grants, training, programs, and resources.

[www.ncptt.nps.gov](http://www.ncptt.nps.gov)

**National Register of Historic Places** – run by the National Park Service, see the official list, guidelines, and how to list a property.

[www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister](http://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister)

**National Trust for Historic Preservation** – a privately funded nonprofit organization, the national trust offers resources, training, and funding.

[www.savingplaces.org](http://www.savingplaces.org)

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## Cemeteries

*Indiana* **Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology (DHPA)** – an office of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (a state agency), find cemetery resources, including the cemetery sign initiative, historic cemetery marker directory, laws regarding cemeteries, and more

[www.in.gov/dnr/historic/2807.htm](http://www.in.gov/dnr/historic/2807.htm)

SHAARD Database – find comprehensive listings using the State Historic Architectural and Archaeological Research Database and Structures Map, managed by the DHPA.

[www.in.gov/dnr/historic/4505.htm](http://www.in.gov/dnr/historic/4505.htm)

**Indiana State Library** – find a cemetery using the Cemetery Locator File.

[https://statelib.lib.in.us/cemetery/cemetery\\_search.asp](https://statelib.lib.in.us/cemetery/cemetery_search.asp)

*National* **Association for Gravestone Studies** – an international organization that is interested in grave markers of all periods and styles.

[www.gravestonestudies.org](http://www.gravestonestudies.org)

**Find a Grave** – search or browse cemeteries and grave records around the world.

[www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com)

**Saving Graves** – a site dedicated to the protection, restoration, and preservation of endangered cemeteries worldwide.

[www.savinggraves.net](http://www.savinggraves.net)

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## Collections Preservation

*Indiana*     **Indiana Historical Society** – a nonprofit organization:  
– the Local History Services department offers collections care site visits, resources and more. [www.indianahistory.org/LHS](http://www.indianahistory.org/LHS)  
– the Conservation department offers consultations, resources, and more.  
[www.indianahistory.org/research/conservation](http://www.indianahistory.org/research/conservation)

*National*     **American Institute for Conservation** – a nonprofit that offers resources, funding, and more.  
[www.culturalheritage.org](http://www.culturalheritage.org)

**Conservation Center for Art and Historical Artifacts** – a nonprofit, full-service facility with experts who do conservation treatments and provide resources and education.  
[www.ccaha.org](http://www.ccaha.org)

**Library of Congress** – see detailed resources about preservation, find a conservator, and ask questions.  
[www.loc.gov/preservation](http://www.loc.gov/preservation)

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## Diversity, Equity, Access, and Inclusion (DEAI)

*Indiana*     **Indiana Arts Commission** – has adopted community engagement and IDEA as principles to support our values and funding imperatives and address structural inequalities.  
[www.in.gov/arts/2516.htm](http://www.in.gov/arts/2516.htm)

**Indiana Civil Rights Commission** – enforces the Indiana civil rights laws and provides education and services to the public.  
[www.in.gov/icrc](http://www.in.gov/icrc)

*National*     **American Alliance of Museums** – highlights diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion in museums.  
[www.aam-us.org/programs/diversity-equity-accessibility-and-inclusion](http://www.aam-us.org/programs/diversity-equity-accessibility-and-inclusion)

**The Inclusive Historian’s Handbook** – this online dynamic reference resource provides concrete examples of how to make history work more relevant.  
[www.inclusivehistorian.com](http://www.inclusivehistorian.com)

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## Folklore

*National*     **American Folklife Center** – part of the Library of Congress, find an archive, resources, and more.  
[www.loc.gov/folklife](http://www.loc.gov/folklife)

**American Folklore Society** – a nationwide membership organization. [www.afsnet.org](http://www.afsnet.org)

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## Funding Sources (also check with local community foundations)

- Indiana*      **Indiana Historical Society** – Heritage Support Grants for Indiana heritage organizations, made possible by Lilly Endowment Inc.  
[www.indianahistory.org/grants](http://www.indianahistory.org/grants)
- Indiana Arts Commission** – grants for Arts in the Park and Historic Sites, and programs.  
[www.in.gov/arts](http://www.in.gov/arts)
- Indiana Humanities** – grants for humanities-related programs.  
[www.indianahumanities.org/about-grants](http://www.indianahumanities.org/about-grants)
- Indiana Landmarks** – grants and loans for preservation projects.  
[www.indianalandmarks.org/resources/grants-and-loans](http://www.indianalandmarks.org/resources/grants-and-loans)
- Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs** – grants for communities.  
[www.in.gov/ocra](http://www.in.gov/ocra)
- National*      **Grants.gov** – the main portal for all Federal grants, including those from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, National Endowment for the Humanities, National Archives, and National Park Service.  
[www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov)

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## Genealogy

- Indiana*      **Genealogy Center, Allen Co. Public Library** – one of the largest research collections available, incorporating records from around the world.  
[www.genealogycenter.org](http://www.genealogycenter.org)
- Indiana Genealogical Society** – a membership organization, lists county genealogists, resources, and more.  
[www.indgensoc.org](http://www.indgensoc.org)
- Indiana Historical Society** – publishes *THG: Connections* and holds larger works of primary source indexes.  
[www.indianahistory.org/research/family-history/family-history-online-resources](http://www.indianahistory.org/research/family-history/family-history-online-resources)
- Indiana State Library** – holds one of the largest collections of family history information in the Midwest.  
[www.in.gov/library/genealogy.htm](http://www.in.gov/library/genealogy.htm)
- National*      **National Genealogical Society** – a membership organization with resources and more.  
[www.ngsgenealogy.org](http://www.ngsgenealogy.org)

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## Historical Markers

*Indiana*      **Indiana Historical Bureau** – a Division of the Indiana State Library, manages the Indiana Historical Marker program.  
[www.in.gov/history/markers/3819.htm](http://www.in.gov/history/markers/3819.htm)

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## History and Research

*Indiana*      **Indiana Archives and Records Administration** – a State Agency, manages the Indiana State Archives.  
[www.in.gov/iara](http://www.in.gov/iara)

**Indiana Association of Historians** – brings together educators, scholars, genealogists, archivists, public historians, librarians and the interested public in pursuit of history.  
[www.in.gov/history/iah](http://www.in.gov/history/iah)

**Indiana Historical Bureau** – a Division of the Indiana State Library, manages the Indiana Historical Marker program and provides marker files, a history blog and podcast.  
[www.in.gov/history/markers/3819.htm](http://www.in.gov/history/markers/3819.htm)

**Indiana Historical Society** – holds one of the largest archival repositories of manuscript, printed and visual materials on the history of Indiana and the Old Northwest.  
[www.indianahistory.org](http://www.indianahistory.org)

**Indiana State Library** – holds one of the broadest collections of material about the State of Indiana and its people, places and events.  
[www.in.gov/library](http://www.in.gov/library)

*National*      **American Association for State and Local History** – a professional association for history-doers, with resources, training, and more.  
[www.aaslh.org](http://www.aaslh.org)

**American Historical Association** – a nonprofit membership organization that promotes history education, professional work of historians, and the critical role of historical thinking in public life.  
[www.historians.org](http://www.historians.org)

**The Inclusive Historian's Handbook** – this online dynamic reference resource provides concrete examples of how to make history work more relevant.  
[www.inclusivehistorian.com](http://www.inclusivehistorian.com)

**Library of Congress** – largest library in the world, and the main research arm of the U.S. Congress and the home of the U.S. Copyright Office.  
[www.loc.gov](http://www.loc.gov)

**The National Archives** – a government agency that holds the documents and materials created in the course of business conducted by the United States Federal government.  
[www.archives.gov](http://www.archives.gov)

**National Council on Public History** – a membership association dedicated to making the past useful in the present and to encouraging collaboration between historians and their publics.  
[www.ncph.org](http://www.ncph.org)

**Organization of American Historians** – a nonprofit membership organization dedicated to the teaching and studying of American history  
[www.oah.org](http://www.oah.org)

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## Museum and Historical Society Resources

*Indiana*      **Indiana Historical Society, Local History Services** – training, resources, and funding for local heritage organizations in Indiana.  
[www.indianahistory.org/LHS](http://www.indianahistory.org/LHS)

**Indiana Humanities** – resources and funding for humanities projects and organizations.  
[www.indianahumanities.org](http://www.indianahumanities.org)

*National*      **American Alliance of Museums** – provides strong support, standards of excellence, knowledge sharing, and professional networks for museums.  
[www.aam-us.org](http://www.aam-us.org)

**American Association for State and Local History** – a professional association for history-doers, with resources, training, and more.  
[www.aaslh.org](http://www.aaslh.org)

**Association for Living History, Farm and Agricultural Museums** – a membership organization for individuals and organizations involved in the collection, preservation or interpretation of material culture, traditional skills and historical processes.  
[www.alhfam.org](http://www.alhfam.org)

**Association of Midwest Museums** – connects museums across the eight-state region of the Midwest.  
[www.midwestmuseums.org](http://www.midwestmuseums.org)

**Institute of Museum and Library Services** – a Federal Agency to advance, support, and empower America's museums, libraries, and related organizations through grantmaking, research, and policy development.  
[www.imls.gov](http://www.imls.gov)

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## Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA)

*Indiana* **Indiana Archaeology Mandates & Laws** – the DHPA's Archaeology Team administers programs for protecting and preserving Indiana's prehistoric and historic archaeological sites and the valuable information that they contain.

[www.in.gov/dnr/historic/2833.htm](http://www.in.gov/dnr/historic/2833.htm)

**Indiana Native American Indian Affairs Commission** – studies and makes recommendations to appropriate federal, state and local governmental agencies in areas of concern to our state's Native and non-Native people.

[www.in.gov/inaiac](http://www.in.gov/inaiac)

*National* **Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act** – Federal law has provided for the repatriation and disposition of certain Native American human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, and objects of cultural patrimony.

[www.nps.gov/subjects/nagpra](http://www.nps.gov/subjects/nagpra)

**Association on American Indian Affairs** – the oldest non-profit serving Indian Country protecting sovereignty, preserving culture, educating youth and building capacity.

[www.indian-affairs.org](http://www.indian-affairs.org)

**National Congress of American Indians** – serves the broad interests of tribal governments and communities. Contains a tribal directory.

[www.ncai.org](http://www.ncai.org)

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## Newspapers

*Indiana* **Hoosier State Chronicles** - Indiana's Digital Historic Newspaper, operated by the Indiana State Library.

<https://newspapers.library.in.gov>

*National* **Chronicling America** – from the Library of Congress, newspaper pages from 1789-1963.

<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov>

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## Oral History

*Indiana* **Indiana Legislative Oral History Initiative** – This is an ongoing collection of oral history interviews with former state legislators, all of which will be available in an online archive by late 2020.

[www.in.gov/history/4465.htm](http://www.in.gov/history/4465.htm)

**Indiana State Library Oral History Collection** – The collection contains oral histories from Indiana in the 1970s and early 1980s, as well as donated interviews from other local historians and historical societies throughout the state.

[www.in.gov/library/2527.htm](http://www.in.gov/library/2527.htm)

**Institute for Local and Oral History, IU Southeast** – promotes the study and practice of local and oral history.

[www.ius.edu/local-oral-history](http://www.ius.edu/local-oral-history)

*National*

**Oral History Association** – a membership organization for people committed to the value of oral history.

[www.oralhistory.org](http://www.oralhistory.org)

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **Who do I contact if I have a question about the county historian program?**

Contact the Indiana Historical Society Local History Services Department at (317)234-0170 or [localhistoryservices@indianahistory.org](mailto:localhistoryservices@indianahistory.org).

### **How do I find out who the county historian is for a particular county?**

A directory of county historians is maintained by Local History Services and can be found at [www.indianahistory.org/across-indiana/hometown-resources/find-who-you-need-by-county](http://www.indianahistory.org/across-indiana/hometown-resources/find-who-you-need-by-county).

### **Who are the county historians?**

Anyone who is well acquainted with the county and its history, able to travel in the county, available for contact and interested in local history. County historians are full-time teachers, dry cleaners, attorneys, librarians, farmers, history professors, stay-at-home parents and retired citizens. While some county historians have advanced degrees in history, the majority are high school graduates or have bachelor's degrees in subjects unrelated to history.

### **How are county historians chosen?**

Local historical organizations in each county nominate county historians to renewable three-year terms. The Indiana Historical Society and the Indiana Historical Bureau appoint the nominees as official county historians.

### **Are county historians paid?**

No. County historians are volunteers and receive no compensation for their work. However, county historians can charge their patrons for postage or time spent researching the answer to a query. When responding to a request initially, county historians should make sure any fee expectations are fully explained. At a minimum, county historians are expected to reply to a request for help with a list of resources available in the area which may include paid researchers (including the county historian, if desired). Clients can then make informed decisions about how they would like to proceed with their request. Many county historians are affiliated with organizations that provide various forms of support, such as postage, use of a computer or office space. Requests and circumstances may vary for each county historian, and no specific guideline fits all situations.

### **May county historians initiate other programs to meet historical needs in their communities?**

Absolutely! County historians are encouraged to take stock of the historical needs in their counties and address them as they develop. Examples of projects county historians have begun are cemetery restoration and mapping, fund-raising for restoration of historical buildings, indexing records, compiling and indexing obituaries from old newspapers, offering genealogy or cemetery restoration workshops, and partnering with schools for programs on history, genealogy or ethnic studies.