How to Search for Built History Outside of Edmonton

To find information on a house in a rural area or small town, begin with a homestead search. This will provide details such as when the land was first settled and point to the first dwelling built on the homesteaded land. Contact or visit the Provincial Archives of Alberta to learn more about how you can use the fee-based service for a homestead search or do this research yourself from home. Many of the pre-1930 homestead applications are available digitally through the website archive.org. You can also learn more about the western land grant system through Library and Archives Canada's (LAC) website: https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/ eng/discover/land/land-grants-western-canada-1870-1930/ Pages/land-grants-western-canada.aspx. Please note that any files on LAC's database (for example, microfilm C-6018) are not available at the Provincial Archives of Alberta, only through LAC.

It is also possible to discover the subsequent owners of the property by requesting a historical title search from Land Titles:

Edmonton
Land Titles Office
John E. Brownlee Building
10365–97 Street
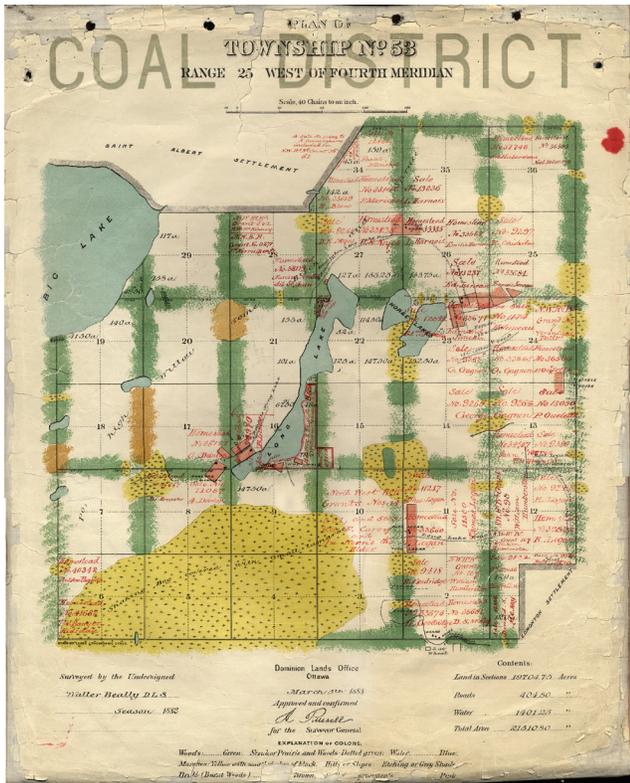Edmonton, Alberta   T5J 3W7
PHONE 780-427-2742 | EMAIL lto@gov.ab.ca

Calgary
Alberta Government Services Building
710–4 Avenue S.W.
Calgary, Alberta   T2P 0K3
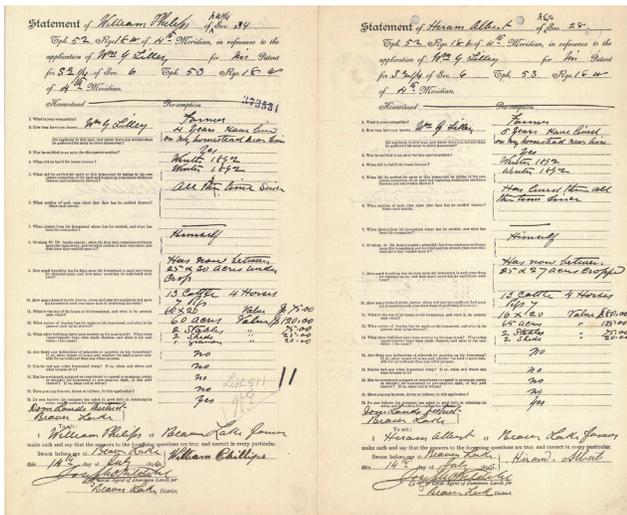PHONE 403-297-6511 | EMAIL lto@gov.ab.ca

A.6276
First House of Jos. L'Heuruex Family, Beaumont

- **The Provincial Archives of Alberta (PAA) holds assessment rolls for some towns, counties, municipal districts and improvement districts.** Assessment dates and shifts in assessed value can help indicate information such as the date a home was initially built on the property and any new construction that followed. These rolls are typically arranged by legal land description and provide information of the property's ownership and assessed value. Assessment roles for a property can be located by using information such as the municipal district or improvement district at the time the assessment was completed. To determine if the Provincial Archives of Alberta holds records for a specific town, county, municipal district or improvement district, search online through the PAA's online catalogue for the place name. Any available assessment rolls can be accessed in the Sandra Thomson Reading Room during regular hours of retrieval. The level of complexity of each request varies. Consider speaking with an archivist in advance of your visit.

PAA GR2004.214.12
Township Map

PAA 1976.131.6

- The Provincial Archives of Alberta Reference Library holds approximately 1,500 published local and community histories from across Alberta. These may include photographs of the community and information on the people who lived there. Published histories can be especially helpful in finding information on a property if the names of the former occupants are known.

- The Provincial Archives of Alberta holds house plans for several communities in Alberta including Camrose, Lamont, Seba Beach, Vegreville and Wetaskiwin. Ask the Reference Desk for assistance with the on-site finding aid.

- The Provincial Archives of Alberta holds *Henderson's Directories* for several cities in Alberta such as Edmonton, Calgary, Grande Prairie, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Camrose and Red Deer. These directories, which were published annually, provide information regarding the occupant of a house (for example, names, occupations and whether the house was owned or rented). These directories do not usually list the spouse or children of the owner or occupant unless they held paid employment.

- Fire insurance plans were published for various Alberta communities between 1899 and 1972. These plans can provide information on the size of a building, the construction materials and what a building was used for. To search this resource, see the Alberta Fire Insurance Plans finding aid in the Sandra Thomson Reading Room.

contact us for more information
T 780-427-1750 | E paa@gov.ab.ca