Michigan Genealogy Research

Michigan is comprised of an Upper Peninsula and Lower Peninsula, with shoreline longer than every other state except Alaska. The peninsulas are surrounded by the Great Lakes: Lake Michigan, Lake Superior, Lake Erie, Lake Huron and Lake Ontario, the largest freshwater lakes in the world.

Early Native American Inhabitants

The name Michigan is derived from a Chippewan Indian word "Michigana" meaning "great or large lake".

These tribes and bands of American Indians have lived in Michigan:

Chippewa
Delaware
Fox
Huron - see Wyandot
Kickapoo
Menominee
Miami
Neutrals
Noquet
Ojibwe
Ottawa
Potawatomi
Sauk
Winnebago
Wyandot

Links to State Recognized Native American Tribes, sorted by state:

- http://www.firstpeople.us/FP-Html-Links/state-recognized-tribes-in- usa-by-state.html
- http://www.accessgenealogy.com/native/michigan/index.htm
- http://www.nmu.edu/sites/DrupalUpperPeninsulaStudies/files/UserFiles/Files/Pre-Drupal/SiteSections/UPHistory/HeritageHistory/NativeAmericanAndFrenchSettlementPatterns.pdf

Find information about current Michigan Tribal Government at http://www.michigan.gov/som/0,4669,7-192-29701_41909---,00.html.

Early European Settlement

1668: Sault Ste. Marie, the oldest community in Michigan, was founded by the French.
1701: Detroit was founded.
1763: The British took possession of the area but discouraged settlers.
1763: (June 4,) A game of Lacrosse was played by two large teams of Indians outside Fort Michilimackinac at what is now Mackinaw City, Michigan. When English troops manning the fort gathered to watch the game, Indians retrieved their concealed weapons and attacked, slaughtering all occupants and burning the fort.
1787: Michigan became part of the U.S. Northwest Territory, but the British still controlled Detroit and Mackinac.
1796: The British withdrew from their remaining posts, including Detroit.
1800: The area became part of the Indiana Territory.
1805: (January 11,) Congress created Michigan Territory.
1812: Fort Dearborn massacre - whites driven out of Lake Michigan region by Native Americans.
1818–1832: Settlement was encouraged by the establishment of steamship operation on the Great Lakes from Buffalo to Detroit in 1818, by the completion of the Erie Canal to Buffalo in 1825, and by completion of the Chicago Road linking Detroit to Chicago in 1832.

1833: Treaty of Chicago between the native tribes and the U.S. Government
1835: As a result of the Toledo War with Ohio, Michigan lost land along its southern border to Ohio and gained the Upper Peninsula.
1837: (January 26,) Michigan became a state.
1842: Treaty – Native Americans surrendered all property rights in the state.
1861–1865: 90,000 men served the Union in the Civil War. 14,000 of them died in the war.

Michigan Birth, Marriage, and Death Records

FamilySearch.org and *Ancestry.com* have indexes of some years of Michigan births, marriages, and deaths.
Index of Delta County birth records 1867 - 1914 - *https://deltacountymi.org/birth-records/*
Index of Delta County death records 1867 - 2010 - *https://deltacountymi.org/death-records/*
Index of Delta County marriage records 1862 - 2014 - *https://deltacountymi.org/marriage-records/*

Obtain a copy of a **vital record** from the **County Clerk's Office** of the county in which the event occurred.
In 1867 the state required counties to begin forwarding vital records to the Secretary of State's Office.
Obtain a copy of a **vital record 1867 to the present** from the **State of Michigan Vital Records Office** - http://www.michigan.gov/mdch/0,4612,7-132-4645---,00.html.
Note: More marriage information is usually found on a **marriage license application** or the **marriage register** than on a **marriage certificate**.

Other Sources of Birth, Marriage and Death Information:

Church Records
Newspaper Announcements/Obituaries
Funeral Home/Cemetery Records
Military Records
Censuses
Family Bible Records

Michigan Genealogical/Historical Repositories and Archives

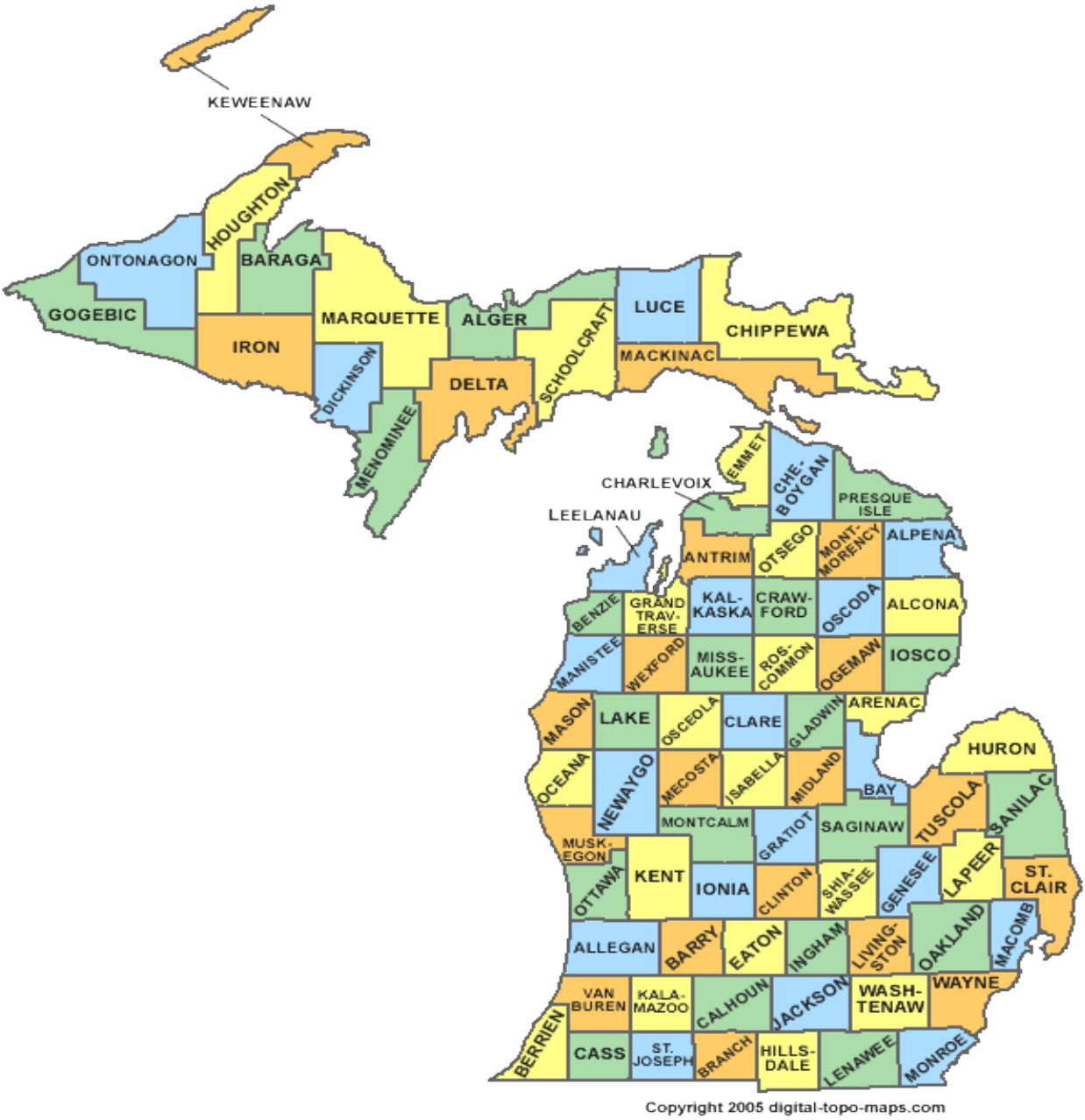
Library of Michigan and the Archives of Michigan
Finnish American Heritage Center – indexes and links – www.finlandia.edu/genealogy.html
French-Canadian Heritage Society of Michigan
Hope College of Holland, Michigan Joint Archives – www.jointarchives.org/
Houghton–Keweenaw County Genealogical Society
Irish Genealogical Society of Michigan - http://miigsm.org/
Jewish Genealogical Society of Michigan – http://jgsmi.org
Lansing Area African American Genealogical Society – www.laaags.org
Michigan Oral History Association – read online transcriptions of interviews – www.michiganoha.org
Polish Genealogical Society of Michigan – databases of baptisms, burials - http://www.pgsm.org

Michigan Migration Routes

Erie Canal · Lake Erie · Lake Huron · Lake Michigan · Lake Superior · Soo Locks · Detroit-Chicago Road · Detroit-Vincennes Road · Ft. Gratiot Road · Grand River Road · Great Trail or Great Path · La Plaissance Bay Road · Lake Shore Path or Lake Trail · Maumee-Jonesville Road · Monroe Road · Saginaw Road · Sauk Trail · Tennessee, Ohio and Great Lakes Trail · Vincennes-Indianapolis-Detroit Road · Erie-Kalamazoo Railroad

Routes in the Central Plains States -
http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~tqpeiffer/Documents/Ancestral%20Migration%20Archives/Migration%20Webpage%20Folder/Central%20Plains%20States%20Routes.htm

Michigan Counties



The Atlas of Historical County Boundaries – Interactive maps and text covering the historical boundaries, names, organization, and attachments of every county, extinct county and unsuccessful county proposal from the creation of the first county through December 31, 2000. - http://publications.newberry.org/ahcbp/index.html

Michigan Genealogy Research Websites

NOTE: Look for the *GenWeb* or *Genealogy Trails* of any county in which your ancestors lived.

Alpena County - **George N. Fletcher Public Library:** two indexes of the Alpena County 1900 U.S. federal census; 16 Alpena city directories; index of naturalizations; indexes of obituaries; index of Alpena Catholic Church records - http://www.alpenalibrary.org/?q=node/19
Delta County **-** index of county birth records 1867 - 1914 - https://deltacountymi.org/birth-records/
Delta County – index of county death records 1867 - 2010 - https://deltacountymi.org/death-records/
Delta County - index of county marriage records 1862 - 2014 - https://deltacountymi.org/marriage-records/
Detroit Area Funeral Cards – PDF index of funeral cards dated 1924 to 1999 – most are of people with Italian surnames who lived in the Detroit area - https://miitaliangs.weebly.com/funeral-cards.html
Extraction from the 1894 Michigan State Census – lists veterans of Civil War living in Michigan - http://www.accessgenealogy.com/michigan/1894_state_census.htm
Finnish American Heritage Center – genealogy indexes and links – www.finlandia.edu/genealogy.html
*Grand Haven, Ottowa County, MI***: Loutit District Library** - Ottowa and Kent County Atlases; obituaries; local birth, marriage and death indexes; five cemetery databases - http://loutitlibrary.org/history-genealogy
Grosse Pointe, MI, Obituaries – index of obituaries in Grosse Pointe newspapers 1939 to 2106 – click link to digitized newspaper to read the obituary - http://digitize.gp.lib.mi.us/digitize/databases/obitindex/index.html
Houghton-Keweenaw County Genealogical Society – online databases – http://www.hkcgs.org/
Michigan Society, Sons of the American Revolution Indexes – indexes of applicants, ancestors - http://michigan.gov/libraryofmichigan/0,2351,7-160-50206_26719_47283---,00.html
Michigan Biographical Index – Search surname index of biographies – links to books containing the biographies and purchase information - http://www.michlist.com/
Michiganology.org –state censuses, death records, plat maps, oral histories, photographs, property descriptions, Civil War records, newspaper indexes, naturalization records coming – https://michiganology.org/
Newspapers/Oral History - *Petosky, MI*: click on Research to read newspapers from 1874 through 2001, an ongoing project - http://www.gwood.us/
Online County Histories - http://www.learnwebskills.com/family/countyhistories1.htm#il
Menominee County Genealogy – click the *Genealogy* link for indexes of *Menominee County Journal* obituaries 1893 – 2016, of genealogical articles in Marinette, Menominee and Peshtigo newspapers 1871 – 2016, Riverside Cemetery burials and more - https://spiespubliclibrary.org/robert-g-shaw-genealogy-history-indexes/
Polish Genealogical Society of Michigan – few baptisms, burials – www.pgsm.org/
The Making of Modern Michigan - search family papers, oral histories, photographs - http://mmm.lib.msu.edu/
Western Michigan Genealogical Society – indexes of marriages, deaths, obits, - order copies for small fee- http://www.wmgs.org/

Michigan African American Research

Access Genealogy – links by state to websites of African American genealogy, cemeteries, and censuses
AfricaMap – track the slave trade with historical overlays and geographical data - http://worldmap.harvard.edu/africamap/
AfriGeneas – slave records, death and marriage records, censuses, surnames – chat or send messages to other researchers - http://afrigeneas.com/
International African American Museum - African American funeral programs, obituaries, marriage records, photos, historical documents and family histories – military records of the U.S. Colored Troops are currently being digitized - https://cfh.iaamuseum.org/records/
Last Seen: Finding Family After Slavery - search thousands of "Information Wanted" advertisements taken out by former slaves in all states searching for family members lost by sale, flight, or enlistment – the collection currently includes newspapers from 1853 to 1911 - http://www.informationwanted.org/
Slave Voyages - the *Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database* documents vessels along the Atlantic slave routes from 1514 to 1866; *Intra-American Slave Trade Database* documents vessels traveling between the Atlantic and Pacific ports ranging from the United States to Brazil; the *African Names Database* gives names, ages, possible origins of slaves liberated from captured slave ships between 1808 and 1862 - https://www.slavevoyages.org/

Michigan Cemetery Research

Alma, Gratiot County, MI: **Riverside Cemetery** - indexes of burials and a cemetery map, information drawn from sexton's records, some quite detailed - https://www.ci.alma.mi.us/1/307/cemetery_record.asp
Alpena and Alcona County Cemeteries - indexes of burials in 11 Alpena County cemeteries as well as 2 cemeteries in Alcona County - - http://www.alpenalibrary.org/?q=node/19
Clinton Township, Macomb County, MI: lists of burials in **All Saints Cemetery, The Preserve, Guardian Angel Cemetery, Mt. Elliott Cemetery, Mt. Olivet Cemetery,** and **Resurrection Cemetery** – click on *Genealogy* to search - http://www.mtelliott.com/
Emmett County, MI: **Greenwood Cemetery –** click on Research, then on Genealogical Research – search or view alphabetical list of burial records, bios, obituaries of people buried in Greenwood – http://www.gwood.us/
Holland, MI: **Pilgrim Home and Graafschap Cemeteries** – link to a burials database and to cemetery maps - http://www.cityofholland.com/parksandcemeteries/cemeteries
Menominee County, MI: **Riverside Cemetery** – index of Riverside Cemetery Burial Records - https://spiespubliclibrary.org/robert-g-shaw-genealogy-history-indexes/

Michigan Military Research

Grand Army of the Republic Records Project – developing database - histories of posts, reports of officers and members if available, search by state - http://suvcw.org/garrecords/
War of 1812 Pensioners in Michigan – search theindex - http://www.genealogycenter.info/search_michigan1812.php

Michigan Native American Research

Carlisle Indian School Digital Resource Center – student records, cemetery information, much related to one of the Sioux tribes - http://carlisleindian.dickinson.edu/
First People - Links to State Recognized Tribes, sorted by state - http://www.firstpeople.us/FP-Html-Links/state-recognized-tribes-in-usa-by-state.html
Native American Tribes of Michigan - http://www.native-languages.org/michigan.htm

Michigan Newspaper Research

Digital Michigan Newspaper Portal - a directory of digitized newspapers available online at free and pay websites - https://www.cmich.edu/library/clarke/Pages/Michigan-Digital-Newspaper-Portal.aspx
Digital Michigan Newspapers – search or browse 50 newspapers - https://digmichnews.cmich.edu/ **Emmett County and Petrosky Newspapers –** click on Research, then on Newspaper Research – search by year or view growing list of newspaper pages from 1940 to 2016 - http://www.gwood.us/
Kalkaska County Library - newspaper archive covers February 27, 1879, through October 3, 2012 - http://history.kalkaskalibrary.org/
Michigan Online Historical Newspapers – names of newspapers, links to websites with images of newspaper pages - https://sites.google.com/site/onlinenewspapersite/Home/usa/mi
Grosse Pointe, MI, Newspapers – read newspaper pages Grosse Pointe News 1940 – present; Grosse Pointe Review 1930 – 1952; Grosse Pointe Civic News 1923 – 1934 - http://digitize.gp.lib.mi.us/

Information on these pages is compiled from information in:

- *FamilySearch.org* Wiki - Family Tree Magazine
- *The Weekly Genealogist, NEHGS; Genealogy Gems from the Allen County Public Library*
- *Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter*
- *Online Military Indexes and Records* - https://www.militaryindexes.com/index.html
- Family Tree Magazine