



## Albuquerque Area House History Checklist

Special Collections Library  
423 Central NE 87102 505.848.1376  
[www.abqlibrary.org](http://www.abqlibrary.org)



### Chain of Title Research

Establishing the successive transfers of title will provide clues and open other avenues of research.

1. You'll need a legal description of the property (Section Township or Range) for rural property or a subdivision/addition name, lot and block number in a city. This description will be on your deed, or you can contact your county appraiser for this information.
2. Next, look at deed indexes. These can be found in Bernalillo County Clerk's office. Although not comprehensive, the Bernalillo County Abstract and Title Collection from 1880–1950 is available at Special Collections.
3. Having checked the indexes, you can now access the deeds for lists of grantees, grantors, legal description, date and amount paid.

Now that your focus has narrowed somewhat, understanding who owned the land and when, you'll still need to consult other resources to discover more information.

*Bernalillo County Abstract and Title Collection:*

[http://abqlibrary.org/additionsandsubdivisions/linked\\_boxes\\_test#s-lg-box-wrapper-17631060](http://abqlibrary.org/additionsandsubdivisions/linked_boxes_test#s-lg-box-wrapper-17631060).

*Bernalillo County Clerk, Public Records:*

<http://www.bernco.gov/clerk/request-records-overview.aspx>



### Tax Assessment Rolls

Valuation increases or decreases over short periods of time can indicate new construction or addition to a house. Check with either the county clerk or county treasurer for access to these records. Bernalillo County Tax Assessment Assessor rolls from 1884-1912 can be found on microform in the Genealogy Center at the Main Library.

*978.961 Tax*

*Bernalillo County Tax Assessment Roll [microform]. Bernalillo County (N.M.). County Assessor.*



## **Building Permits**

For new buildings or additions, the owner, address, type of structure, date constructed, and details of construction are often listed in the building permit. City or County planning and/zoning offices are the best place to go for these. Some other resources:

*Newspaper Archive Library Edition: <https://0-access-newspaperarchive-com.albuq.cabq.gov/>*

*978.961 Progress*

*ABQ Progress. Albuquerque National Trust & Savings Bank.*

*<http://abqlibrary.org/abqprogress>*

*352 Building*

*Building Permits by Street Name: 1913 to 1937,*

*Albuquerque, NM: Index, Special Collections*



## **Records of Architects and Real Estate Appraisers**

If you have the name of architects or real estate appraisers you can look them up. Blueprints created by architects are rare but useful if you can find them. Check with state and local historical societies as well as university schools of architecture and architects organizations. Search Rocky Mountain Online Archive for collections about various local architects.

*Rocky Mountain Online Archive <https://rmoa.unm.edu/index.php>*



## **Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps**

Sanborn Fire Insurance maps are available online and offer periodically updated information on Albuquerque (1891-1957) and other New Mexico communities. While these maps can be valuable to house historians, they often only show houses in the industrial areas in towns. They were created intermittently and are not available for every town for every year.

*Digital Sanborn Maps 1867-1970. ProQuest: <http://0-sanborn.umi.com.albuq.cabq.gov/splash.html>*



## Plats and Maps

If searching for a home within the city limits, check for original plats. These may include representations of houses. The County Clerk will have plats for cities. Various maps and photographs may be available (including aerial maps).

*Bernalillo County, Maps & Plats: <http://www.bernco.gov/clerk/maps-plats.aspx>*

*City of Albuquerque, Planning Department, Geographic Information Systems (GIS): <https://www.cabq.gov/gis/advanced-map-viewer>*



## Photographs

Photos can be great sources of information both on the exterior and interior of your house. Albuquerque Museum, The Menaul Historical Library, and NM Digital Collection are excellent sources for photographs. Albuquerque Progress is also a great source of photographs from 1934-1965.

*Albuquerque Museum: <http://www.cabq.gov/culturalservices/albuquerque-museum>*

*Menaul Historical Society: <http://menaulhistoricallibrary.org/>*

*New Mexico Digital Collections: <http://econtent.unm.edu/>*



## Newspapers

Search for detailed description of the construction of a residence over several issues. You'll need to narrow construction and renovation dates to a window of time to do an effective online search in Newspaper Archive, Chronicling America, NewsBank or a print or microform search in early New Mexico newspapers. A search by addition or subdivision name can also yield useful results.

*Links to online, print, and microform newspaper archives: <http://abqlibrary.org/genealogy/nmnewspapers>*



## City Directories

Directories are often invaluable for house historians in pinning down a construction date by looking for the first date the address appears in the directory. City directories are usually taken bi-annually, if not every year, and list address, occupation and head of household. Albuquerque directories are available at Special Collections and the Genealogy Center.

*Albuquerque Phone Books and City Directories: <http://abqlibrary.org/c.php?g=238583&p=1586071>*



## Court and Estate Records

Court records can help reconstruct the sale of property and the contents of a house. Estate records can be found at the Bernalillo County Probate Court.

*Bernalillo County Probate Court: <http://www.bernco.gov/probate-court/>*



## Physical Examination/Material Culture

What does the physical appearance suggest about your house's history? Are additions apparent? How was it constructed? Does it blend in or stand out in relation to other houses in the area? Links to house architecture/history?

*729.309789 Warren 1995  
New Mexico style: a sourcebook of traditional architectural details /  
Nancy Hunter Warren.*

*978.961 Historic  
Historic houses in the DNA: Albuquerque's Downtown Neighborhoods Association / book layout, design and photography by Chan Graham.*



## Oral Histories

Don't discount talking to neighbors, previous owners, and others who might provide information about your house. Inquire about additions, floods, fire damage. You may also hear some fun stories to round out your house history.



## **Manuscript Material (Letters, Diaries)**

Although hard to come by, if you do have access to any letters, diaries or other manuscripts written by former owners or people who visited the house or the area, this can provide information about the construction, early appearance and furnishings in the house. The Rocky Mountain online archive may lead you collections that help illuminate the personal histories behind the property history.

*Rocky Mountain Online Archive <https://rmoa.unm.edu/index.php>*



## **Site Files**

Check local historical societies' files for historic homes. These files may include photos, news clippings, building inventories, etc. If your house is on the state or national register, access to the nomination and supporting documents will be on that site.

*Historical Society of New Mexico <http://www.hsnm.org/historic-plaques/>*

*Links and resources for various historical and genealogical societies  
<http://www.hsnm.org/historical-and-society-links-and-resources/>*

*Neighborhood Histories/Documents <http://abqlibrary.org/localhistory/houseandbuilding>*

*New Mexico Historic Preservation Division  
<http://www.nmhistoricpreservation.org/programs/registers.html>*