Welcome!

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) is pleased to present this educational series of lectures on how to do family research.

As one of the nation’s premier genealogy institutions, it is our mission to inform the public about National Archives’ holdings that relate to family history and to make those records available to you.
About the Lecture Series

These lectures will demonstrate how to use records from the 1950 Census and other federal resources for genealogical research. Our presenters include experts from the National Archives and Records Administration and the U.S. Census Bureau. Sessions are intended for beginners to experienced family historians – all are welcome!
Join the conversation!

Participate with the presenters and other family historians during a session’s premiere.

Live Chat on YouTube
Log in and type your questions and comments.

Join us at @USNatArchives on Twitter #GenieSeries2022
After the broadcast, the video presentation and handout will remain available.
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<td>March 2</td>
<td>Overview of What's on the 1950 Census</td>
<td>Claire Kluskens - Genealogy/Census Subject Matter Expert and digital projects archivist National Archives in Washington, DC</td>
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<td>March 16</td>
<td>Mapping the 1950 Census: Census Enumeration District Maps at the National Archives</td>
<td>Brandi Oswald - Supervisory archivist, Cartographic Branch National Archives at College Park, MD</td>
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<td>March 30</td>
<td>The 1950 Census Website: Design, Development, and Features to Expect</td>
<td>Michael L. Knight - Web Branch Chief , Office of Innovation (Digital Engagement Division) National Archives at College Park, MD</td>
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<td>April 27</td>
<td>The Story of the 1950 Census P8 Indian Reservation Schedule</td>
<td>Cody White - Native American-Related Records Subject Matter Expert and archivist National Archives at Denver, CO</td>
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<td>May 11</td>
<td>1 p.m.</td>
<td>From Parchments to Printouts: History of the Census from 1790 to 1950</td>
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<td>May 18</td>
<td>1 p.m.</td>
<td>History of Census Records and the National Archives</td>
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<td>May 25</td>
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<td>Historic Census Bureau Sources for Filipino, Guamanian and Chamorro, American Samoan, and Native Hawaiian Research</td>
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Mapping the 1950 Census: Census Enumeration District Maps at the National Archives

A census enumeration district was an area that could be covered by a single enumerator, or census taker, in one census period. Enumeration districts varied in size from several city blocks in densely populated urban areas to an entire county in sparsely populated rural areas. This presentation will focus on locating and using census enumeration district maps, with an emphasis on maps from the 1950 census.
Brandi Oswald is a supervisory archivist in the Cartographic Branch at the National Archives at College Park, MD. She started with the National Archives in 2015 as an archives technician and joined the Cartographic Branch in 2016. Brandi holds a masters of arts degree in public history from West Virginia University and a bachelors of arts degree in history and anthropology from Heidelberg University.
Mapping the 1950 Census:
Census Enumeration District Maps
at the National Archives

Brandi Oswald
March 16, 2022
What is a Census Enumeration District?

- Enumeration district (ED)- an area that could be covered by a single enumerator (census taker) in one census period (2-4 weeks)
- Beginning in 1930, EDs were identified by a two-part number consisting of a prefix (county or city designator) and a suffix (district number). Example: 103-4665 or 32-37
- ED boundaries defined by counties, cities, townships, wards, roads, railroads, waterways, large properties (parks, cemeteries, prisons)
  - EDs stay within political boundaries, such as county and city limits
- ED boundaries and numbers often change from one census to another

NAID 214451610
Enumeration District Example – Urban Areas

1950 ED Map of Manhattan, New York

NAID 24267411
Enumeration District Example – Smaller Urban Areas

1950 Census ED Map for Dennison, Ohio
NAID 29904542

1950 Census ED Map Central Falls, Rhode Island
NAID 176246298
Enumeration District Examples – Rural Areas

1950 ED Map of Brown County, SD

NAID 40038055
Enumeration District Examples – Bronxville, NY

1940 and 1950 Census ED Map of Bronxville, NY

NAID 5835867

NAID 24737299
Why are Enumeration Districts Helpful to Researchers?

- The census is organized by enumeration district (ED)
- Knowing where a person lived and the ED number for that area can help narrow down a search
  - Name indexes are often inaccurate
  - Names may have been misspelled by the census enumerator
  - Many individuals in the same city with common names
- Knowing the ED number also allows a researcher to look up who lived at a specific location without needing to first know a name
Enumeration District Maps

- ED maps can be used to locate the ED number for a specific location
- ED maps were created by the Census Bureau using base maps
  - Examples: soil survey maps, state, city or county government maps, chamber of commerce maps, highway maps, commercial maps, and many others
- Base maps were annotated using colored pencils or crayons to show enumeration district numbers and boundaries

A portion of the 1950 Census ED Map of Findlay, Ohio showing annotations [NAID 26128446](https://www.archives.gov/research/census/maps/districts/findlay-ohio-1950)
Base Map Example – Sanitary Survey Map

1950 Census ED Map of Sylvania, GA
Base map is a sanitary survey map
NAID 12008050
1950 Census ED Map of Rockport, MA
Base maps lists local points of interest
NAID 12171745
Base Map Example – General Highway Map

1950 ED Map of Lewis County, WV
NAID 75639258
Enumeration District Maps

- Map annotations include the two-part ED number consisting of a prefix (city or county identifier) and suffix (district identifier)
  - Example from Findlay, OH map is 32-30
  - Sometimes had an additional alpha suffix (example 57-130A) but this is typically not shown on maps
- On city maps, the prefix may not be written out for every ED
  - Prefix is included on first page or in map legend
  - Prefix for large cities is different from surrounding county
- Be sure to note the complete two-part number when researching
Example: EDs in Large Cities

1950 ED Map of Chicago, Cook County, IL
Sheet 1 of 23
NAID 12031579

Note city prefix is 103
Example: EDs with County Prefix

1950 Census ED Maps for Maywood, Cook County, IL
NAID 12013493
Note county prefix is 16
Why Else are ED Maps Useful?

- Show what an area looked like around the time of the census
- Provide additional context
- Source for maps of counties, cities, towns, or other areas
- Can show local landmarks, structures, property owners, businesses, cemeteries, roads, railroads, other features
Example Showing Local Landmarks

1950 Census ED Map for Kingsford, MI
“Home of the Ford Plant in Northern Michigan”
NAID 16684792
Example Showing Property Owners

1950 Census ED Map for Rockford, Ohio

NAID 26421395
Limitations of ED Maps

- Maps may have condition issues that obscure information
- Base maps may be out of date
- Base maps may be planning maps that show roads or features never built
- Maps often do not show individual streets, especially in rural areas
- Smaller cities may not have their own map if they have fewer than 5 EDs
- Compiled maps sometimes contain inaccurate information or typos
Limitations of ED Maps – Older Maps

1950 Census ED Map of Ely, Iowa
Base map dates from 1906

NAID 12008237
Limitations of ED Maps – Lack of Detail
Changes to Enumeration Districts

• Some planned EDs were subdivided when populations proved to be larger than expected and needed more enumerators to complete the census
  • Split EDs are denoted by an alpha-suffix (261-1A, 261-1B)
  • ED maps do not typically show split EDs
  • ED descriptions list split EDs
1950 Census recruited teachers to serve as enumerators

High teacher participation in Fort Worth allowed for EDs to be subdivided into smaller sections

1950 ED Map of Fort Worth, TX (1 of 5)
Map shows original EDs
NAID 48302387
Fort Worth: A Special Case of Split Eds (continued)

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<tr>
<th>1950 E.D.</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION OF ENUMERATION DISTRICT</th>
<th>1960</th>
<th>Dwellings</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Farms (Approx.)</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>261-94</td>
<td>Ft. Worth city - That part of Ward 8 (Tract 30 - part) in Justice Precinct 1 Bounded by W. Rosedale 6th Ave. W. Magnolia 8th Ave. This E.D. consists of the following blocks: 25 26 27</td>
<td>62.4</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>261-95</td>
<td>Ft. Worth city - That part of Ward 8 (Tract 30 - part) in Justice Precinct 1 Bounded by W. Magnolia S. Lake W. Myrtle 8th Ave. This E.D. consists of the following blocks: 50 51 52 53</td>
<td>64.2</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>57</td>
<td></td>
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How to Locate and Access Census ED Maps

- ED maps are held by the Cartographic Branch, National Archives at College Park, MD
- Most 1940 and 1950 maps are available through the National Archives Catalog
- RG 29, Enumeration District and Related Maps, 1880 – 1990 (NAID 821491)
- Use “Search within this series” option to search for a specific census year and/or location
How to Access Census ED Maps

Search Example: 1950 Hancock County, Ohio
1950 Census Enumeration District Maps - Ohio (OH) - Hancock County - Findlay - ED 32-12 to 42
How to Access Census ED Maps – 1930 and earlier

• Some 1900–1930 maps are available through the National Archives Catalog, but the majority have not been digitized.

• Paper maps may be viewed in person in the Cartographic Research Room at the National Archives at College Park.

• Not all counties have maps for each pre-1940 censuses.

• **PI 103 Preliminary Inventory of Cartographic Records of the Bureau of the Census** lists county coverage by year.
Enumeration District Descriptions

- Census Bureau also produced written ED descriptions
- 1950 written descriptions will be available in the National Archives Catalog soon
  - [RG 29, Enumeration District Descriptions, 1850 – 1950, NAID 721175](#)
• Enumeration District Maps and Enumeration District Descriptions will also be available through NARA’s 1950 Census website

• Additional information and tips for searching ED maps and descriptions are available on the National Archives website: [www.archives.gov/research/census/1950/finding-aids](http://www.archives.gov/research/census/1950/finding-aids)
Feedback

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Please take a minute to complete a short evaluation. Your comments help us maintain the quality of our services and plan future programs.

Thank you!

Event Evaluation:

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Email questions to carto@nara.gov

Video recordings of lectures and downloadable handouts will remain online at www.archives.gov/calendar/genealogy-series/2022
Educational resources on how to access and do research using U.S. federal government records held at the National Archives and Records Administration.

Know Your Records

www.archives.gov/calendar/know-your-records

Videos and Handouts on YouTube
Thank You
Genealogy
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Questions & Answers in Chat

Please stay if you have questions.

Although this concludes the video portion of the broadcast, we will continue to take your questions in chat for another 10 minutes.