Contra Costa County History Center

Located in downtown Martinez at 724 Escobar Street, the History Center houses the archives of the Contra Costa County Historical Society. Unlike a museum with artifacts, the Center has textual records such as court and early county records, photos, maps, letters, personal papers of local politicians such as Sheriff Veale, business records, and more. Some of the collection has been indexed and a search can be done on their website. A more extensive search can be done on their computers at the Center.

The strengths of the collection are:

- Original naturalization records for Contra Costa County
- Property tax records from 1852 to about 1900
- Probate packets
- Contra Costa Gazette is digitized from 1860 to 1900
- Thousands of photos and maps from all around the county

The library contains most of the books ever published about the county, obituary clippings, subject files for each town in the county, and a biography file. It is always a good idea when visiting a library or archive to ask about their vertical files or clipping files. These are often one-of-a-kind items.

The Center also have a great bookstore, selling most books available concerning Contra Costa County history and natural history. You can see a sampling here: [http://cocohistory.ecrater.com/](http://cocohistory.ecrater.com/).

Hours are Tuesday through Thursday, 9-4, and the third Saturday, 10-2. The Center can be reached at (925) 229-1042, or by email at info@cocohistory.com. Website: [http://cocohistory.org/index.html](http://cocohistory.org/index.html).

**Biography: Lisa Gorrell**

Lisa Gorrell has researched her family for more than twenty years. Besides U.S. Southern and Mid-western states, she researches German, Irish, English, and Swedish families. She actively volunteers with the Contra Costa Historical Society board, California Genealogical Society, Contra research trip to Salt Lake City. She enjoys giving presentations and writing about family on her two blogs.