

San Jose Historical Mercury News Archive (1884-1922)
Outline for Public Internet Class
Santa Clara City Library Technology Center, August 29, 2013

Getting to San Jose Historical Mercury News Archive from the Library's homepage:

1. Start at the Santa Clara City Library homepage: <http://www.library.santaclaraca.gov/>
2. Click on the tab **Electronic Resources** to get to the Library's Electronic Resources webpage. Click on the link Databases by Subject
3. Under the **Newspapers** category, click on the link to: San Jose Mercury and Evening News Archive (1884-1922)
4. If you are using a computer from outside of the Library you will get a Dialog box that says 'Connect to Newsbank Resources' and asking you to enter your Santa Clara City Library card number. Enter your card number and click on the Log In tab.
5. You will get to the San Jose Mercury and Evening News Archives.

Looking at the San Jose Historical Mercury News Archive homepage, note these features:

1. Search: box (and Full Text pull down box which can be changed to Headline)
2. Dates and Eras tab (includes ability to set up a Custom Date Range)
3. Article Type tab (can check specific types of articles, News/Opinion, Marriage notice, Death notice, etc.)
4. Newspaper Titles Tab (allows you to choose either Evening News or San Jose Mercury News for browsing or reading a particular day's newspaper)

Search: opportunities

1. Basic (or Keyword) Search (enter any word or a "phrase in quotes")
2. Advanced Searching (utilize the Add Search Field, specify which word or phrase should be in headline, and/or which in the full text of an article, plus you can specify if you want the words linked by the terms AND, OR, NOT)
3. Advanced Searching with Wildcards (? = single character substitute; * =substitute for a string of up to five letters)
4. Advanced Searching with Proximity Operators ADJ[x] and NEAR[x] (ADJ3 = words must be within 3 letters of each other in order listed; NEAR10 = words must be within 10 letters of each other but can be in any order)
5. Advanced Searching with Term Nesting (group words or terms inside parentheses and combine the term groups with AND, OR, NOT or proximity operators; e.g. The Alameda AND (San Jose OR Santa Clara); (Harris NEAR10 Lass) AND ("Real Estate" OR "Santa Clara")

Looking at your Results Options

1. View article
2. View full page
3. Yellow highlight feature
4. Multiple pieces or pages to some articles (look for yellow arrow)

Printing

1. Printer Friendly
2. PDF format
3. Other option, emailing or downloading

Troubleshooting

1. Too many articles (shift from full text to headline or add more terms)
2. Too few articles (eliminate some search terms or try wildcards)
3. No articles (re-think your search strategy, try wildcards)
4. Search terms not highlighted in article (may be multiple page article, may be misinterpreting letters)
5. Making accommodations for the most frequently misinterpreted characters: a,o,e,r,i,n and ss read as ff

Always ask yourself a few questions or do some analysis based on your reading of local history before formulating your search. For example:

1. What is your topic and what keywords are most likely to appear in articles about that topic? Think about old-fashioned terminology and synonyms.
2. What are the variations on the name of the person you are searching for? Do you know initials, full name, honorific terms that might have preceded name, Judge, Rev., Dr.? Does name have an 'ei' combination that can be misspelled as 'ie'; does name have double ss than can be misinterpreted as a double ff or a Z than can be read as an L? Does name have a hyphen or apostrophe? How can I use wildcard or proximity features to get around this?
3. Do you know approximately when the event you are researching occurred? Will it help to put in a custom date range?
4. If searching for a house or building, do you know its specific address or street it was located on and who might have been living in the house?
5. If searching for articles on specific races or ethnic groups, do you know which churches, fraternal organizations or clubs, parades, festivals and districts or towns they were associated with? Think of words once commonly used in newspapers for various races, such as Colored or Negroes for African-Americans or Orientals for Asians.