

McHenry Library and Library of Congress websites) show building footprints, construction materials, and other useful details.

**Photographs.** The Capitola Historical Museum has many historic photos, mostly of the village area. The McHenry Library at UCSC has the best collection of aerial photos. Covello & Covello Photography in Santa Cruz sells low altitude aerial photographs of Capitola, mostly from the middle 1900s.

**Deeds.** The County Records Office has these. You can research the chain of title yourself or you can hire a title company to do it for you.



Capitola Beach, circa 1910

## Books

The following are some general and specialized books on Capitola History.

*Capitola* by Carolyn Swift, 2013. Historic photographs and detailed captions tell the story of the town.

*Historic Context Statement for the City of Capitola* by Carolyn Swift, 2004. Arranged by subject, it also includes a chronology and a list of city council members from 1949 to 2002.

*A Companion to Capitola* by Frank Perry, 2018. An alphabetical list of people, places, events, etc. with sources.

*Santa Cruz County Place Names: A Geographical Dictionary* by Donald Thomas Clark, 2008.

Covers the entire county, including Capitola. For the origin of the town's name, however, see one of the more recent books.

*Venetian Court, Est. 1874, Capitola's Unique and Charming Seaside Resort* by Melanie Shaffer Freitas, 2013. Short history of this local landmark.

*By The Sea: A History of The Capitola Begonia Festival* by Carolyn Swift, 1992. A detailed history of the famous festival up to 1992.

*The Grand Hotel Capitola* by Gordon van Zuiden and Carolyn Swift, 2007. Lavishly illustrated with old photos.

*Seventy Five Years: The Little Church on Depot Hill (1899-1974)* by Alvin D. Wilder, Jr., 1974.

History of Capitola's St. John the Baptist Episcopal Church.

*Santa Cruz County History Journal*. Published by the Santa Cruz Museum of Art & History since 1994. Some issues have included articles on mid-county topics, including Capitola.

For a more complete list of books, see *A Companion to Capitola* or the *Historic Context Statement*.

For more information on some of these topics, see *Every Structure Tells A Story: How to Research the History of Property in Santa Cruz County*. This book is available in libraries and as a pdf on the Santa Cruz Museum of Art & History website. Although additional resources have become available since it was published in 1990, it is still the best resource on this subject.



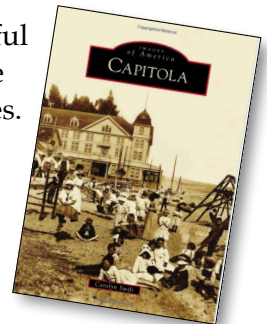
## Digging into Capitola History

### A Short Guide

Prepared by the  
Capitola Historical Museum, 2020

Capitola is a small town with a big history. Founded in 1874, it is the oldest seaside resort on the California Coast. It became an incorporated city in 1949 and today has a population of about 10,000. Besides tourism, other industries have included fishing, flowers, poultry, sugar, and fruit. In the early days, redwood lumber from the nearby hills was shipped at Capitola.

At the Capitola Historical Museum, visitors frequently ask how to research people, places, or events from Capitola's past. This short guide summarizes some of the principal resources useful in historical research. These are mostly general resources. This list does not include resources of a specialized nature, such as biographies of individuals or resources on specific industries.



## Institutions

The following have collections useful in Capitola research. Some of the collections are only accessible by appointment.

**Capitola Historical Museum**, 410 Capitola Avenue, Capitola. The museum's collection includes historical artifacts, photographs, scrapbooks, clippings, books, postcards, maps, and various other memorabilia including the Capitola Begonia Festival archives. Items not on display are available by appointment.

**Santa Cruz Museum of Art & History**, 705 Front Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060. The museum's collections are extensive and include photographs, newspaper clippings, maps, old telephone books, old business directories, school yearbooks, books, postcards, scrapbooks, maps, incorporation papers, etc. The website ([archives.santacruzmah.org](http://archives.santacruzmah.org)) has finding aids for many of the collections, which are available by appointment. The group called **Researchers Anonymous** meets monthly and is open to anyone doing research on local history. There are lectures, field trips, and round table discussions (an opportunity to ask questions of other researchers and share discoveries). Website: [researchersanonymous.weebly.com](http://researchersanonymous.weebly.com)

**Santa Cruz Public Library**, 224 Church Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060. The library's collections on local history are among the most complete in the county and continue to expand. They include books, old newspapers, telephone books, business directories, clipping files, maps, photographs, and postcards. The latter three collections are on the library website ([santacruzpl.org](http://santacruzpl.org)). The website also includes newspaper indexes and articles about local

history. [Ancestry.com](http://Ancestry.com) is available for free from within the library. With a library card, one can access old newspapers and census records from home via the library website.

**McHenry Library, University of California, Santa Cruz.** The library, and especially its Special Collections and Archives, has vast collections pertaining to Santa Cruz County history, including Capitola. These include newspapers on microfilm, maps, photographs, postcards, books, and various other collections. The Hihn-Younger Archive has the papers of F. A. Hihn, Capitola's pioneer developer. The Leon Rowland card file is another important resource. Check website for hours and parking information: [library.ucsc.edu](http://library.ucsc.edu).

**The Capitola Branch Library**, 2005 Wharf Road, Capitola, has books on local history and is part of the Santa Cruz Public Library System. Materials from other branches are available through interlibrary loan. (This branch scheduled to re-open in 2020.)



Capitola Hotel and streetcar, circa 1910

## Resources

**Newspapers.** Old newspapers contain a wealth of historical information and many are available on microfilm at the Cabrillo College Library, the Santa Cruz Public Library, and the McHenry Library at UCSC. Especially valuable

are the *Santa Cruz Sentinel* (1856-present), *Santa Cruz Surf* (1883-1919), *Santa Cruz Evening News* (1907-1941), *Central County News* (1962-1970), and *Green Sheet and Cabrillo Times* (1970-1986). Some of these were indexed by volunteers and that index is on the Santa Cruz Public Library website. The *Sentinel* and *Evening News* have been digitized and are accessible and fully searchable online. They can be accessed for a fee through [newspapers.com](http://newspapers.com) or at no charge via the Santa Cruz Public Library website (must have library card).

**Census Records.** Census records for Santa Cruz County are available from 1850 to 1940 (records are kept sealed for 72 years). They vary as to the information included, but typically include age, occupation, education, location of residence, members of household, etc. Available free online to Santa Cruz Public Library card holders via the library website and the link to *Heritage Quest*.

**Directories.** These were published annually through much of the 20th century and list both people and businesses. These and telephone books are very useful in tracking the locations and movements of people and businesses. Some are online; libraries have microfilm and hard copies.

**Telephone Books.** Both the Santa Cruz Museum of Art & History and the Santa Cruz Public Library have fairly complete collections of phone books from the early 1900s to the present.

**Maps.** There are many kinds of maps, and they can be valuable sources of information. Some show roads, parcel boundaries, and even property ownership. Sanborn Fire Insurance maps for Capitola Village (available on the