The Reference and Local History Library is on the first floor of the Grimsby Central Library building.
Are you interested in Local History?

The Local History collection has a wide range of resources available to help you with your research at whatever level you choose. All items in the collection are arranged by place followed by subject.

The geographical areas covered are the historic County of Lincolnshire from the Humber to the Wash prior to 1974, the County of Humberside and the area covered by North East Lincolnshire Council.

Local history is part of the fabric of our community and the collection consists of information covering many different aspects of daily life: transport, geography, health, social life, religion, natural history, economics and population.

Staff are available to give advice about the collection and to offer guidance with your research.

Newspapers

Local newspapers are available to view on microfilm and coverage for this area dates from 1793 to the present day. Titles include the Lincoln, Rutland and Stamford Mercury, the Grimsby Free Press, Grimsby News and Grimsby Telegraph.

You can book a machine in advance to view the historical newspapers by telephoning the Reference Library. (See contact details).

The newspaper cuttings collection held in the Local History room consists of many different subject areas including people, churches, schools, streets and entertainment.

Posters and handbills

A collection on microfilm of items printed by William Skelton of Grimsby between 1824 and 1861. The collection portrays the social history of the town and includes notices of elections, regattas, religious meetings, auctions and social occasions.
North East Lincolnshire Council
Public Library Service

Local Historical Photograph Collection

The Local History Collection is a collection of nearly 100,000 images of Grimsby, Cleethorpes and surrounding area including many rural Lincolnshire villages. It includes approximately 17,000 images put together by Bill Hallgarth dating from the 19th and 20th centuries.

The collection is constantly developing and reflects the history and experiences of local people and local ways of life.

The Library offers a photographic reproduction service. If you would like more information about this service please contact the Grimsby Reference Library on (01472) 323603/323635. The Library sells a range of local historical postcards depicting scenes of days gone by in Grimsby and Cleethorpes. These can be bought from Grimsby Reference Library - black and white cards cost 25p and colour cards cost 35p.
Maps

The Library houses a large collection of historical maps dating back to the 18th century. In addition to these we have Ordnance Survey maps in a variety of scales dating from 1886/1887 to the present day.

Pre and post enclosure maps for many villages in the area also form part of the collection. They show the original boundaries of settlements before Ordnance Survey maps were produced to a constant scale in the 1880s.

Information about the local fishing industry

A broad range of material covering the birth of the fishing industry in Grimsby through to its status as the world’s leading fishing port and subsequent decline.

Resources include:
- Photographs of local trawlers, the docks and life at sea
- Newspaper cuttings about trawlers, trawler owners, businesses, disputes, welfare and the docks in general
- Books
- Information about the Dock Tower

Ruhleben Collection

The Ruhleben collection documents the history of a First World War prisoner of war camp in Germany. Thousands of British civilians were interned in Ruhleben between 1914 and 1918. This unique collection gives a detailed description of what life was like in the camp and consists of:
- Printed publications
- Camp magazine 1915 – 1917
- Poems
- Diary extracts
- Postcards
- Camp illustrations

Ephemera

A large and varied collection including pamphlets, posters, theatre and sporting programmes, play bills, election leaflets, souvenir booklets and newsletters.