

## Library 101

### Haven't Been to a Library in a While?

As a special collections library, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania is home to approximately 600,000 printed materials and over 21 million manuscript and graphic items. These collections span over 350 years of American history from its 17th-century origins to the contributions of its most recent immigrants. Researchers visit our library to view original documents they will not find anywhere else and our collection includes notable items such as the first two handwritten drafts of the Constitution and the first photograph taken in North America. Unlike public libraries, HSP is not a circulating library. This means that researchers cannot check-out materials and must view them on-site instead. This document is a guide for researchers of all levels to gain a greater sense of how the HSP library operates and to learn how to more successfully conduct research here.

### Researching Before You Visit

We highly recommend browsing our collection online before your visit to HSP to help streamline your research, although preliminary research is absolutely *not* required before coming to the library. Our online catalog can be found on the HSP homepage under *Collections*, *Catalogues & Research Tools*, and *Discover (HSP's Online Catalog)*. This catalog allows users to search and browse materials according to title, author, or topic. It is useful to bring print outs of your findings to show our Reference Librarians. You are also welcome to bring in other documents to aid your research at HSP. If you need to bring any original documents of your own to aid in your research, such as family photographs or journals, please discuss this with staff at the front desk before entering the library.

To find our online catalogue, Discover from the HSP home page, first see *Collections* then *Catalogues and Research Tools*.



The screenshot shows the Historical Society of Pennsylvania website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links: [Become a Member](#), [Donate](#), [Shop](#), [Plan Your Visit](#), and [Need Research?](#). Below this is a main navigation bar with tabs: [Collections](#) (highlighted), [History Online](#), [Publications](#), [Education](#), and a search bar. The [Collections](#) dropdown menu is open, showing options: [About Our Collections](#), [Catalogs & Research Tools](#) (highlighted), [Greenfield Center for 20th-Century History](#), [Library Services](#), [Other Local Repositories](#), [Preserving the Records of the Bank of North America](#), [Members Only Databases](#), [Reading Room Databases](#), and [Finding Aids](#). A [Find Out More](#) link is at the bottom of the menu. To the right of the menu, there is a featured article titled "Historical Society of PENNSYLVANIA LEGACIES" with a butterfly image and the text "Science Technology in the Keystone State".

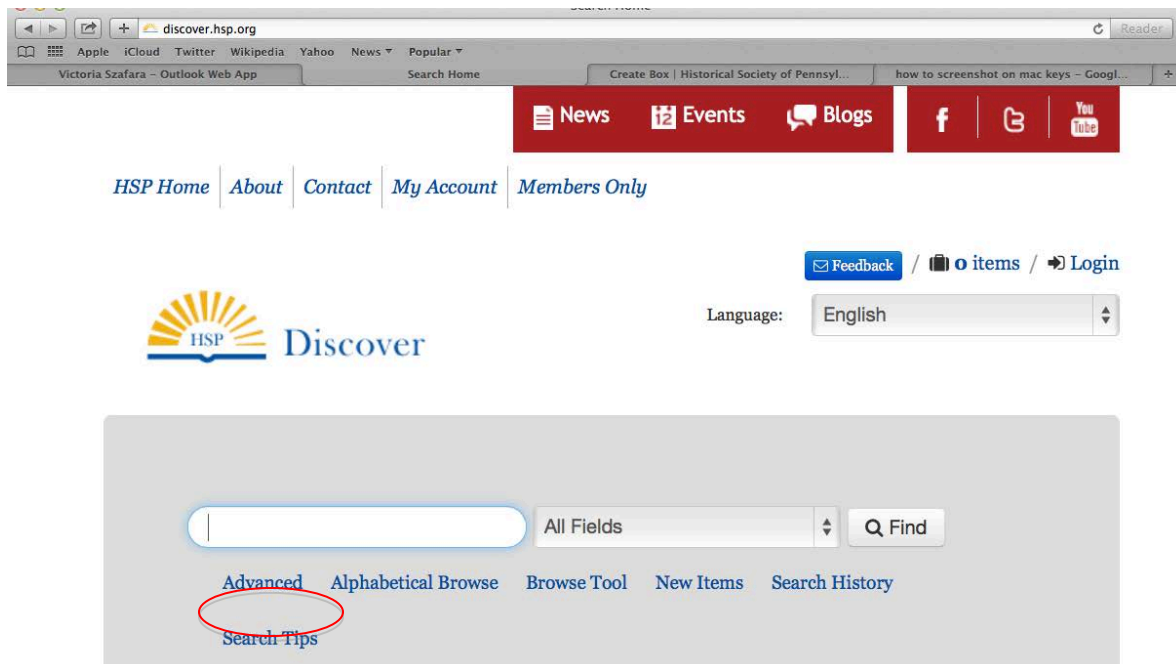
## Meeting with a Librarian

When first entering the library, we recommend stopping at the Reference Desk to speak with one of our Librarians, regardless of your research skill-level or experience. Our Librarians can help orient you to our library- explaining how to fill out call slips, showing you the location of our open stacks, and aiding in online searches. Intimately familiar with many of our collections, our librarians can also frequently suggest related materials you may not find easily on your own. The reference librarian can often help the researcher develop a personal strategy for their research. They can also determine if HSP does not have a particular type of item and direct you to other institutions that may house research materials relevant to your research.

## How to Use Discover

Our online catalog, Discover, can be found at: <http://discover.hsp.org/> . Below are tips for effectively using Discover to search for items:

1. Using quotes when searching for a phrase will produce results that contain exactly that phrase. For example, a search for "*Philadelphia cookbook*" will produce results that contain exactly that phrase in their entry whereas a search for *Philadelphia cookbook* will produce a much larger list of items relating to Philadelphia and cookbooks in general, somewhere in their online information. Cookbooks from outside Philadelphia would appear in this list.
2. If you're searching for genealogy or family history records, an effective way to search is to type in the family surname followed by "family." Entering a surname alone into a search will open the search to materials outside genealogy. For example, searching "Smith" will not only yield items on the Smith family of Long Island, but also the book *Atlantic City* by Walter B. Smith. Searching "Smith family" in quotations will limit results to records containing genealogical or family history information.
3. Entering more information in a search does not necessarily yield better results. If after entering in a search phrase, you are met with too many sources and want to narrow your results, there are a few things you can do.
  - Let's say you've searched the catalog for "Civil War daily life" and are met with too many results. Try using the Boolean operator "AND" to narrow your search. Boolean operators are used to connect two search terms, either to broaden or narrow the results. Examples of using "AND" in this way include: "'Civil War' AND Medicine" or "'Civil War' AND Education." Structuring your search this way will only yield results related to those two topics.
  - The word "NOT" will work the same way in the search engine, eliminating results within certain topics. A search for "'Civil War' NOT Medicine" will produce a list of Civil War items specifically not dealing with Medicine.
  - If the first phrase you search does not give you as many results as you would like, use "OR" the same way as "AND" or "NOT" to search for multiple terms. Also be sure to try different spellings of the same search term.
4. For other helpful suggestions on how to search for an item, click the "Search Tips Link" on our online Discover page. In addition, when you click on an item in Discover, we encourage you to also click on "Description," for possible further information. All of our manuscript collections have at least a brief description on Discover.



## Searching the Card Catalog

Although much of HSP's collection can be searched through our online catalog, the physical card catalog in our library is a valuable resource for finding records of items that have not been added to our online catalogue. The manuscript card catalog (PC1) is especially useful when you have a specific historical figure in mind, as most of it is organized alphabetically by family name. You can also search according to county name and subject (only a small part of this catalogue is indexed by subject). Information in the card catalog is usually quite detailed in some senses, such as providing exact dates of correspondences or the main topic of specific letters. This system may seem outdated, but using the card catalog in tandem with the online catalog and finding aids is often a profitable method of research. See the card catalogue handouts (located inside the library) for descriptions of graphics, map, fire insurance, and other card catalogues.

## Finding Aids

If you are looking to research manuscripts, we have created numerous of finding aids providing background information on the collection, both topically and chronologically. These aids usually include a list of the contents of boxes and often folders in a collection. Most of these finding aids are on the HSP website. They may also be found at the Library Reference Desk on-site along with additional hardbound finding aids not available online. We also urge researchers to reference the card catalog, as descriptions of specific items are not necessarily in Discover. Not all of our collections will have finding aids to accompany them, but for those that do, the referencing of the finding aid will help in your research.

## Filling out a Call Slip

Although we do have open book stacks in our library, where researchers are welcome to pull books off the shelves and browse at their leisure, the vast majority of our collection is kept in closed stacks. To retrieve these items you will need to fill out a call slip, which can be found in various places around the library, including the Reference Desk. Below is an example of a completed call slip (with necessary portions filled out in red) alongside the item's online record in Discover:

TO BE FILLED IN BY RESEARCHER — PLEASE USE PENCIL — PRESS FIRMLY

### Call Slip

Date: March 25, 2015

Name (print): Steve Smith

Seat # 5

**Directions:**

- Complete one form per item or book.
- Choose a seat in the Restricted Use Area.
- Call slips may be submitted in groups of three.

**Guidelines:**

- Examine one item at a time.
- After all items are examined and returned, additional call slips may be submitted.
- All materials must remain in the Restricted Use Area.

**Call # or Collection Name and #**

Penrose Collection Medium.

**Description/Title and Author**

Italian Market (Philadelphia, Pa.), Joseph V. Labolito

**Date of Document or Publication**

1991

**Case # / Box # / Volume # / Page # (as applicable)**

Box 24

Staff Use Only

**Location:**

Time Submitted:	Time Retrieved:	Time Returned:	Photocopy Out:	ON HOLD:
Initials:	Initials:	Initials:	Photocopy In:	ON SEARCH:

discover.hsp.org/Record/marc-165365

[★ Cite this](#)
[✉ Text this](#)
[✉ Email this](#)
[📄 Export Record](#)
[➕ Add to List](#)

## Italian Market (Philadelphia, Pa.)

Images of shops in the Italian Market (S. 9th St.), with their proprietors, incl. Tony Anastasio Produce, Anastasi Seafood Co., and Frank's Choice Meats.

<b>Main Author:</b>	Labolito, Joseph V.
<b>Format:</b>	Book
<b>Language:</b>	English
<b>Published:</b>	1991
<b>Subjects and Genres:</b>	Frank's Choice Meats (Philadelphia, Pa.) Tony Anastasio Produce (Philadelphia, Pa.) Anastasi Seafood Company (Philadelphia, Pa.) Seafood shops. Food enterprises. Butchers. Philadelphia (Pa.) > Streets > 9th St.

**Tags:** No Tags, Be the first to tag this record! ➕ Add Tag

Holdings

Description

Comments

Staff View

## Closed Stacks (call slip needed)

**Call Number:** Penrose Collection Medium. Box 24, Folder 2

Please be as thorough as you can when filling out all fields of call slips.

At the top right corner of the call slip there is a space to list a seat number. Researchers are required to view closed stack items in the Restricted Section of the Library. Each seat in this section has a number that can be found painted in white on the edge of the table. This is the seat number to list on your call slip.

Once you hand in your requests to a Librarian, you are not required to stay in your seat and wait; you are free to browse the open stacks while your materials are retrieved. Because of the large number of items housed in the HSP collection, it will usually take about thirty minutes for an item to be paged. Incomplete call slips delay this process further.

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## Restricted Use Section and Open Stacks

When you enter our Reading Room, you will see a large desk in the front of the room staffed by our librarians. It is here where you can take your completed call slips. Researchers may hand-in a maximum of three call slips at once and may view one item at a time at their seat in the Restricted Section. We operate this way so as to keep the materials organized. When you return one item to the Library Desk, the librarian will give you another item you had requested. You may also submit more call slips for additional items at this time.

Our open stacks consist of three rooms where you are able to pull materials freely. The shelves lining the reading room include the types of reference materials that would be found in any major resource library, including but not limited to dictionaries, encyclopedias, and indexes. Our Family History Room houses genealogical materials for Surnames A-R. S-Z materials can be found in the abutting Pennsylvania Room. As its name implies, this room holds research materials specific to the state of Pennsylvania; these are located on low shelves in the center of the room and are organized according to county. This room also houses materials dealing with other Mid-Atlantic States, arranged first by state and by county.



## Photographs and Photocopies

Researchers are welcome to take photographs of HSP materials at no charge. The photographs must be taken without flash and used only for research purposes. We will ask that you place the white slip below in the margin of your photograph:

 Historical Society of Pennsylvania	<p>This photograph is made only for research purposes or to share non-commercially. For all other purposes, contact Rights and Reproductions at <a href="mailto:rnr@hsp.org">rnr@hsp.org</a> 215-732-6200 x233 web: <a href="http://digitallibrary.hsp.org">http://digitallibrary.hsp.org</a></p>	 NO FLASH	<p>Material may be protected by copyright law (Title 17 U.S. Code). Commercial usage rights are not granted for this image.</p> <p><b>PLACE THIS CARD IN ALL PHOTOGRAPHS</b></p>
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Photocopies of materials can be made by our librarians at the cost of \$0.50 a page. The time it takes to complete your request depends upon staff availability. Large copy orders or copies from large-scale volumes may take longer to produce, although smaller orders are usually completed



the same day. If your order is not ready before you leave the library, HSP will mail the copies to you when they are completed and include the cost of postage in the fee for your order.

To have photocopies made, you will need to fill out a copy request form. A completed form follows alongside the item's online record:

Call #		Title/Date/Name	Pages to be Copied	Total Amount Due
Penrose Collection Medium. Box 24. Folder 2		Italian Market, 1991, Joseph V. Labolito	1,2,3	

## Italian Market (Philadelphia, Pa.)

Images of shops in the Italian Market (S. 9th St.), with their proprietors, incl. Tony Anastasio Produce, Anastasi Seafood Co., and Frank's Choice Meats.

Main Author:	Labolito, Joseph V.
Format:	Book
Language:	English
Published:	1991
Subjects and Genres:	Frank's Choice Meats (Philadelphia, Pa.) Tony Anastasio Produce (Philadelphia, Pa.) Anastasi Seafood Company (Philadelphia, Pa.) Seafood shops. Food enterprises. Butchers. Philadelphia (Pa.) > Streets > 9th St.

Tags: No Tags, Be the first to tag this record! [Add Tag](#)

Holdings Description Comments Staff View

## Closed Stacks (call slip needed)

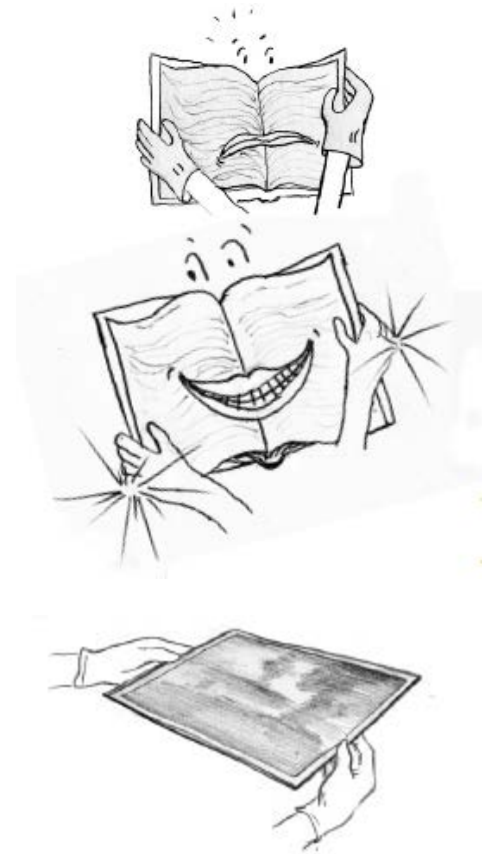
Call Number: Penrose Collection Medium. Box 24, Folder 2

You can leave this part blank. Either our librarians will fill in an amount, or the Front Desk staff will count the number of copies when you come to pay.

## Document Handling

Help us preserve our collection and keep the following tips in mind when handling historical documents. An expanded *Document Handling Guide* is available in-person at HSP and on our website.

- **Paper Documents and Bound Volumes** should be handled with clean dry hands. No gloves. The best practice is to wash hands with soap and water and dry them thoroughly before working with paper-based materials.
- **Photographs** should *always* be handled with gloves. Ask for a pair at the restricted desk. The library is happy to provide these for you.
- While conducting your research remember how old these documents are. Be gentle with them. Haste makes waste. Take your time.
- No gum or candy is allowed in the Reading Room.
- Use pencils only, non-mechanical preferred.



## Overall Helpful Tips

Understand that research takes time. Sometimes you will be able to find what you are looking for right away, while other times you may have to be patient when looking through collections. Remember, diligence is often rewarded. Whatever the case may be, our staff is here to help in whatever way possible, so do not hesitate to ask any questions you have. Good luck!