Website Help

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Using the Portola Valley Archives Website

Welcome

Welcome to the Portola Valley Historic Resources Group digital archives. This site lets you explore local history and contribute your own materials to help preserve it for future generations.

This page explains how to find items, view them, and submit your own contributions.

What You Can Do on This Site

As a public user, you can:

- Search for historical items
- Browse by Collections (groups of related items)
- Browse by Keywords (topics and themes)
- View photos, documents, audio, and video
- Submit your own items to the archives, with or without creating an account

All public submissions are reviewed before they appear on the site.

Finding Items: Search and Browse

There are several ways to explore the archives. You can use whichever feels easiest.

Search Box

The search box looks for words in titles, descriptions, names, and other information.

You can enter a name, a place, or a topic, then press Enter or click the search button.

Search Tips (Wildcards)

You can use special characters to match different word forms:

- * matches many characters. Example: farm* finds farm, farms, farming, farmhouse
- ? matches one character. Example: colo?r finds color and colour

Browse by Collections

Collections are groups of related items such as family collections, organization records, photo collections, or event collections.

To browse collections:

- Choose Collections from the menu.
- Click a collection name to see everything inside it.
- Click any item to view details and media.

Advanced Search

Advanced Search lets you search specific fields, combine multiple search rules, and limit results to certain collections or item types.

This is useful when you get too many results from simple search or want to narrow results step by step.

Viewing Item Pages and Media

Each item has its own page with a title, description, details, and one or more attached media files.

Media Viewer Controls

Photos and documents open in a built-in viewer. Depending on the file, you may see buttons to zoom, fit to screen, rotate, or reset the view.

If a document has multiple pages, you can move between pages using arrows or page numbers.

Adding to the Archives (Submitting Items)

You can contribute photos, documents, and other historical materials using the Add to our archives page.

You may submit with an account or anonymously without signing in.

What You Can Submit

You can upload photos, scanned documents, audio, or video files.

You will also be asked to provide information such as what the item shows, dates, and people or places involved.

The more information you provide, the easier it is for others to find and understand your item.

What Happens After You Submit

After submission:

- Your item goes into a review area.
- Volunteers or staff check the information and files.
- They may add keywords or move the item into a collection.
- Once approved, the item appears on the public site.

Further Help/ Reporting Problems

If you have trouble using the site or notice a problem, please use the site contact form or reach out to the Portola Valley Historic Resources Group directly.

Helpful things to mention include what you were trying to do, what went wrong, and the page you were on.