

Houghton Historical Room Policy and Procedures

The Houghton Historical Room is a resource of material that chronicles and preserves Littleton's local history and genealogy. The room was named in honor of Williams Stevens Houghton, who established the Reuben Hoar Library in 1877, and Gertrude Houghton, who was a generous supporter of the library. The Houghton Historical room is located on the ground floor.

Use

All patrons are encouraged to visit the Houghton Historical Room to perform historical or genealogical research. Because many of the items in the collection are fragile or irreplaceable, care and consideration must be exercised in their use. With this in mind, the following procedures must be followed:

1. The Houghton Historical Room is open to the public during regular library hours.
2. Patrons wanting to use the Houghton Historical Room must check in with a librarian at the Circulation Desk to be granted access.
3. No pens are permitted for taking notes when using Historical Room resources. Pencils are available at the main desk.
4. No food or drink is permitted in the Houghton Historical Room.
5. Patrons are asked to leave the materials they have used on the table in the Houghton Historical Room so that staff members can reshelve items in the proper place and keep track of the number of items used.
6. Photocopying of some of the local history collection is permitted as long as the copying is in compliance with federal copyright laws. In many cases, we have supplied a "use" copy of the original document. Researchers must ask before photocopying anything from the Houghton Historical collection. The copy machine is located across from the circulation desk on the main floor near the window.
7. The Library has a microfilm machine available for public use. If requested, basic instructions for use will be given. Reels must be rewound and returned to the correct box after use. Patrons with their own reels of census data, etc. are allowed to use the microfilm reader. Please check with the staff to schedule time.
8. The Archives of the Reuben Hoar Library and of the Friends of the Reuben Hoar Library are in storage. Researchers must request the items they wish to use. Finding aids are available in the Houghton Historical Room.

Letters and email inquiries on genealogy, local history, house surveys, and so forth will be answered when staff time permits. Photocopying charges may apply. Because historical research is detailed and can be complicated, often in-person research is most appropriate. Staff may therefore request that a patron come in person or employ a professional researcher. Where appropriate, questions may be referred to the Littleton Historical Society.

Scope of the Collection

The Reuben Hoar Library will collect the following for the Houghton Historical Room:

- materials dealing with the history of Littleton
- materials written or produced by Littleton residents about the town of Littleton, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and other New England locales.
- manuscripts and genealogies of families whose members have lived in Littleton
- materials which may assist genealogy researchers determine whether the subjects of their research lived in Littleton
- historic and contemporary maps of Littleton
- vital records of Massachusetts towns, especially those surrounding Littleton
- microfilm and physical copies of the Littleton Independent newspaper
- archives of the Reuben Hoar Library
- archives of the Friends of the Reuben Hoar Library

Other Massachusetts and New England history and genealogy materials will be made available online.

Donations of artifacts, artwork and furniture for the Houghton Historical Room are subject to the Collection Development policy.

Approved by
Reuben Hoar Library Trustees
September 12, 2024