



# Searching For Florida Ancestors?

## Leslie Michele Derrough recommends online resources available at the State Library and Archives

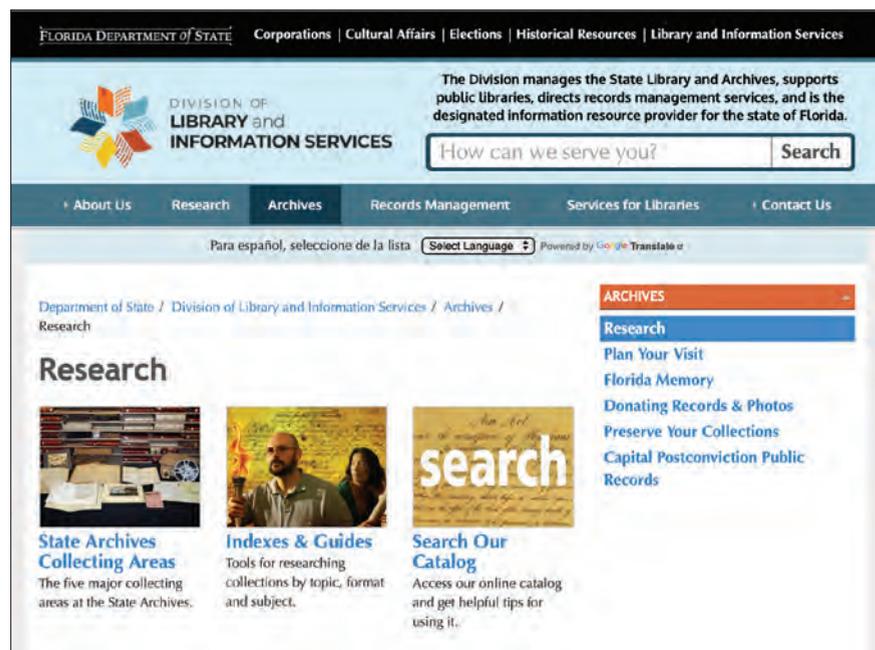
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**A**UTHOR JOHN GRISHAM ONCE SAID, “THERE ARE SO MANY colorful characters in Florida”. If you happen to have Floridians in your ancestry, then this quote may ring true for you. Florida is certainly a beautiful state, always sunny and bright and brimming with excitement. But it can harbor some very interesting, and dangerous, attributes; everything from weather to nature to some of those “colorful characters” Grisham so happily described. So if you are on the hunt for more information about your own former resident of the Sunshine State, your first stop has to be the State Library and Archives of Florida.

buildings for a while, their online portals were wide open. “We have significantly increased the number of online presentations we provide to organizations interested in how our historical records collections can assist them in their business or personal endeavors,” State Archivist Beth Golding told *Internet Genealogy* in regards to how they have been handling the pandemic. “Staff at the State Archives of Florida are passionate about and dedicated to our mission of making historical records available as broadly as possible, and they find creative and innovative ways to make that happen.”

To get started, visit their website, [floridamemory.com](http://floridamemory.com). This is the first stone on the path to possibly finding an ancestor within their collection. Easy to recognize tabs allow you to visit sections of photographs, historical records, maps, audio and video material, exhibits and more. From there, you have dozens of sub-folders to start researching within.

Since I have no Floridian ancestors, I picked something at random. From Historical Records, I clicked on Early Auto Registrations, 1905-1917. You can search by surname, county or car company. This is actually pretty neat, a nice little ingredient to help in forming who your ancestor was by the cars they bought. For instance, a Jay Moss of Lakeland, Florida, registered a motorcycle from the



The homepage of the State Library and Archives of Florida, <https://dos.myflorida.com/library-archives/archives>.

Located in Tallahassee, the Florida Archives was established in 1967 and their records are exemplary. Whether you are looking for documents, photographs, muster rolls, Native American information or a plethora of other facts about your ancestor, they have all that in abundance. And the good thing is that you can visit them online.

Covid-19 changed us in 2020. It changed our lives and how we do things. But one good thing it did give those of us who are wondering about our lineage, was more time to research. Although places such as libraries, archives and research centers had suspended foot traffic into their