

1. *The structure must have been built seventy-five years ago from the date of application.*

2. *Copies of deeds from courthouse from original to present if possible: Copies of deeds from purchase back as far as possible to establish who owned the house originally, at least the earliest known owner.*

A title search of your property is imperative and must be done before any other research. Begin with yourself. You know how you obtained the property. You are the grantee. The party who sold you the house is the grantor. To find out who they bought it from, check the grantee index at the Register of Deeds office under their name.

Historical information to look for:

- Deed book information (attach chain of title)
  - Brunswick County Register of Deeds / On-Line Records
    - <https://brunswick-live.inttek.net>
  - Login after solving math problem
  - Most useful is Legacy Indexes (Vendee=Grantee / Vendor=Grantor)
  - Gives you deed book page
  - Go back and select Book / Page Direct
    - Select Instrument type desired  
Combined Real Property
    - Input Book # and Page #
    - Perform Search
    - View Image
- Census (NCLIVE with library card)
- Bill Reeves Chronologies
- Access to newspapers.com and ancestors.com can find additional information about owners.

The building will be named when possible for the original builder, then owner or resident. Other owners or residents may be added if they occupied the building for 40% of its life, if they made significant architectural changes to the building, or if they are deemed to have been more important to the history of the city.

There are a few pitfalls of deed research to be aware of:

- Deeds trace property, not houses. You may trace the property back, but it does not mean that a house was there. Often the legal terms, tenements and hereditaments thereon, can be found in the deed. This only means that if there are buildings on the property they are included in the transaction. It does not mean that buildings are definitely there.
- You may have a long list of property owners, but that does not mean that they lived on the property. Many houses were built as rental property.
- Some people owned so much property that they take up many pages in the grantor/grantee indices. Sometimes you run into trustees' names,

usually lawyers, who handled the property for many clients. It is difficult to discern which property is yours. If the date or lot number is given in the index it will help you narrow down which deed is yours, but often they are not listed in the index.

- Old deeds are usually handwritten and difficult to read. Prior to 1868, North Carolina practiced English common law, which is quite different from our current code system. Do not try to transfer common law terms and practices into current ones. A copy of Black's Law Dictionary will help you understand the legal terms.