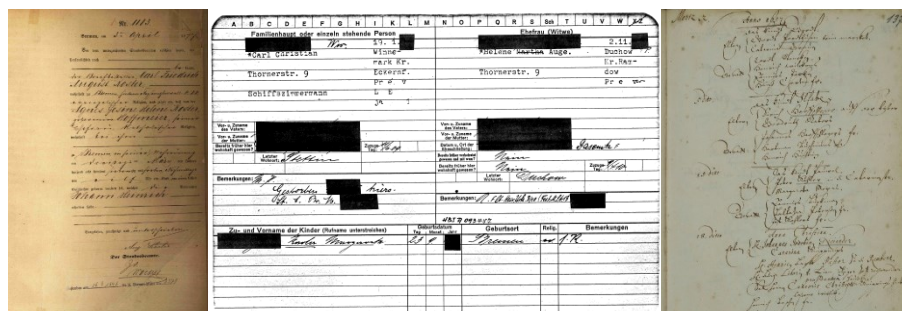
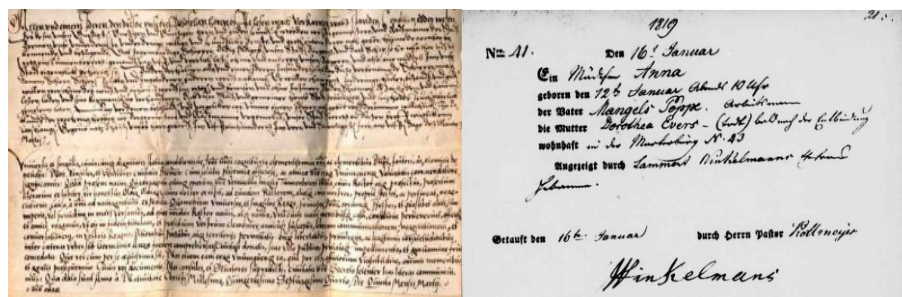


GUIDE TO FAMILY HISTORY IN THE BREMEN STATE ARCHIVES

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also online at:

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Introduction

The search for one's own roots is becoming increasingly popular. The question of "Where do I actually come from?" or "Who were my ancestors and how did they live?" awakens our curiosity. The science involved is known as "genealogy" or "family history". The search for one's own origins is exciting and diverse but sometimes also time-consuming and requires a lot of patience. This is because the answers to the many individual questions have to be put together piece by piece from various sources.

Practically anything can be a genealogical source - archival sources as well as the documents in your own attic, your grandfather's stories, your aunt's Super 8 film or your own memories. As a first step, it is therefore advisable to write down your own knowledge, interview living relatives and structure the results, e.g. by entering them into a genealogy software.

At some point, however, there inevitably comes a point where research in archival sources becomes unavoidable. While genealogy concentrates on a specific topic, more precisely on individuals or families ([pertinence principle](#)), tracing them through their life stories and utilising all available sources from different contexts, archives take a different approach. On the one hand, they usually concentrate on a specific district, i.e. a specific area. For example, the Bremen State Archive is responsible for the city of Bremen, but not for the municipal records of Delmenhorst or Bremerhaven. In addition, modern archives usually organise documents according to their context of origin ([provenance principle](#)) and not according to specific topics.

The purpose of this guide is to provide you with information about some of the genealogically relevant holdings of the Bremen State Archives and tips for further research. The subject areas are briefly introduced and links to additional information, e.g. the finding aids in our archive catalogue "Arcinsys", are provided.

DIE MAUS - Society for Family History in Bremen

The first point of contact for family research in Bremen is ["DIE MAUS Gesellschaft für Familienforschung e.V., Bremen"](#). Founded in 1924, the society offers a wide range of assistance and contacts on genealogical topics and has a nationwide and international network.

At the heart of the MAUS are its [online databases](#), whereby a distinction must be made between genealogical databases (especially local family registers) and indexing projects. Since February 2025, a [meta search](#) has enabled comprehensive research across various indexing databases, currently via the different types of civil status registers 1810-1994. In addition, the association has an extensive library, its own collections and card indexes, scans and copies of sources and - last but not least - the wealth of experience of over 1,000 members and 100 years of genealogical research.

DIE MAUS also maintains an internal [mailing list](#) and a public [Facebook group](#) and organises regular presentations and get-togethers.



Local family registers („Ortsfamilienbücher“)

Ortsfamilienbücher (OFB) are genealogical secondary sources that compile information from various sources on persons from a specific place. The central point of reference is the nuclear family, whereby references are given to other linked nuclear families (e.g. of ancestors or children).

The Bremen local family registers have been available online for several years on the central platform for German-language OFBs at [Compgen](#). For Bremen these are:

[Bremen and Vegesack](#)

[Bremen-Arbergen](#)

[Bremen-Blumenthal \(Protestant\)](#)

[Bremen-Blumenthal \(catholic\)](#)

[Grambke-Büren](#)

[Bremen-Grohn](#)

[Bremen-Hemelingen](#)

[Bremen-Huchting](#)

[Lesum and Bramstedt](#)

[Bremen-Mahndorf](#)

[Bremerhaven](#)

But even in the pre-digital age, there were efforts to present local genealogical results organised by families. One result, for example, is the [Ortssippenbuch Seehausen](#), but there are also other [mapping projects](#) from the Bremen region in the MAUS workrooms.

Civil status registers („Personenstandsregister“ since 1874/76)

The registry offices were established in the German Reich on 1 January 1876 and in Prussia on 1 October 1874 and have been responsible for recording births, marriages and deaths ever since. Since the [new Civil Status Act](#) came into force on 1 January 2009, the Bremen State Archives are to keep the older registers for the city of Bremen (including Bremen-North), the former municipalities of the state area and the former Prussian municipalities in the fond [4.60/5 "Civil Status Registers"](#). These are in detail:

- Birth register older than 110 years
- Marriage register older than 80 years
- Death register older than 30 years

The archived volumes of the municipality of Bremerhaven are kept by the Bremerhaven [City Archives](#).

The registers of births, marriages and deaths are generally kept annually. The entries are made chronologically according to the date of registration and are numbered consecutively (register numbers). Please note that the date of the civil records may differ from the date of birth or death. Particularly in the case of war-related deaths, a registration may have been made years later.

The registry office in whose district the birth, marriage or death occurred is always responsible for registration. This means that the place of residence and the place of death do not have to be the same. An exception is made for war deaths, which could also be notarised at a registry office in the last registered place of residence. Notes in the margins of the respective register entries may provide information on other persons.

Due to [incorporations, mergers or the establishment of new registry offices](#) and the high mobility of the population, it was often difficult to trace a family through Bremen's civil status registers in the past. Since 2009, the civil status registers have therefore been scanned by the State Archives as part of a [joint project](#) and the persons appearing in them have been recorded by the MAUS in an indexing project so that they can be easily researched via a database. Only those directly "affected" by an entry are recorded, i.e. the children in the case of births, the spouses in the case of marriages and the deceased in the case of deaths, but not the other "participants" such as parents or witnesses. And this is how you can proceed with your search:

1. On the [MAUS website](#), click on „Datensammlungen“ in the header.
2. Select the item ["Personenstandsregister ab 1874/76"](#) in the section that opens.
3. Select the corresponding database for [births \("Geburten"\)](#), [marriages \("Heiraten"\)](#) and [deaths \("Sterbefälle"\)](#).
4. Enter the desired surname in the search slot or select it from the alphabetical list. If the spelling is uncertain, an underscore _ can be used as a placeholder for a single character or a percent sign % as a placeholder for any number of characters. This can be useful as "ß", „ä“, „ö“ and „ü“ are treated as independent characters and a search for "ß", for example, will not return any hits with "ss". Names hidden in others such as "Meyer" in "Müller called Meyer" can also be found in this way. Incidentally, truncation takes place automatically at the end of the entry. For births, you can also click on the "Name Mutter" column header with a green background to display all children of mothers with this maiden name; for marriages and deaths, you can click on "Geburtsname" to display all persons with this maiden name. A link to the column headers "Name, Vorname" (family name, given name), "Jahr" (year) or "Standesamt" (registry office), sorts the results list accordingly; a further click

reverses the sorting. For births, the mothers' maiden names can also be clicked on, which filters the results list so that only children of mothers with the corresponding birth name are displayed.



The screenshot shows the website 'DIE MAUS' with a navigation bar including 'DIE MAUS', 'KOOPERATIONEN', 'AKTUELLES', 'FORSCHUNG', 'DATENSAMMLUNG', 'BIBLIOTHEK', and 'INTERNES'. Below the navigation bar is a red header with 'Datenammlung', 'Personenstandsregister', and 'Sterbefälle'. The main content area is titled 'Personenstandsregister Bremen Sterbefälle' and 'Namensindex'. It shows a search result for 'Janda' with 6 entries. The results are displayed in a table with columns: Name, Vorname, Geburtsname, Jahr, and Standesamt. The results are as follows:

Name, Vorname	Geburtsname	Jahr	Standesamt
Janda, Adelheid	Hausner	1967	Bremen-Vegesack
Janda, Elfriede	Kolata	1971	Bremen-Mitte
Janda, Else Elfriede	Heisig	1974	Bremen-Mitte
Janda, Gotthard Berthold		1980	Bremen-Nord
Janda, Josef		1979	Bremen-Nord
Janda, Minna Berta Emma	Weißborn	1957	Bremen-Vegesack

On the right side, there is a sidebar titled 'DATENSAMMLUNG' with a list of categories: 'Personenstandsregister' (highlighted), 'Zivilstandsregister', 'Stammtafeln', 'Kirchenbücher', 'Familienkundliche Sammlungen', 'Friedhöfe', 'Testamentsbücher', 'Einwohnerverzeichnisse', 'Militär', and 'Meierbriefe'.

- The person you are looking for can now be selected from the results list. A results screen appears with detailed information on the register entry. Keep the register number in mind and then click on the signature.

Personenstandsregister Bremen Sterbefälle

Namensindex

[Eine Seite zurück](#)

Name:	Janda
Weitere Namen:	
Vorname:	Adelheid
Geburtsname:	Hausner
Geburtsdatum:	
Sterbedatum:	
Bemerkung:	22.12.1967, geb. 02.10.1894 in Manostirara bei Sereth/Rumänien, kath.
Angaben zur Quelle	
Registernummer:	787
Sammelnummer:	
Bandnummer:	1
Jahr:	1967
Quelle:	Sterberegister
Amt:	StA Bremen-Vegesack
Digitalisiert online:	ja
Signatur mit Link zu Arcinsys:	StAB 4.60/5-4989

- You will now jump to the detail page of the corresponding source in the "Arcinsys" archive catalogue and will be given some information about it.

Arcinsys Navigator Suche | Merklisse | Beantragen | Nutzen Anmelden ▾ Hilfe

Niedersachsen Bremen

Archive in Niedersachsen und Bremen
Staatsarchiv Bremen
4.60/5 Personenstandsregister

Gliederung
1 Heutiger Standesamtsbezirk Bremen-Mitte
2 Heutiger Standesamtsbezirk Bremen-Nord
2.1 Standesamt Vegesack bzw. Bremen-Vegesack
2.1.1 Geburten
2.1.2 Heiraten
2.1.3 Sterbefälle
2.1.4 Namensverzeichnisse
2.2 Ehemals preußische Standesämter aus dem Gebiet des heutigen Stadtbezirk Bremen-Nord
2.3 Standesamt Bremen-Nord
2.4 Übergreifende Namensverzeichnisse (digital)
3 Übergreifende Namensverzeichnisse (Zentralkarte)

STAB 4.60/5 4989 Kontext anzeigen

Drucken | Verlinken | Versenden | Verbessern

Beschreibung - Repräsentationen

Alle Digitalisate anzeigen...
Digitalisate öffnen

Beschreibung: Verzeichnung

Identifikation

Titel	Standesamt Bremen-Vegesack, Sterberegister 1967
Laufzeit	1967

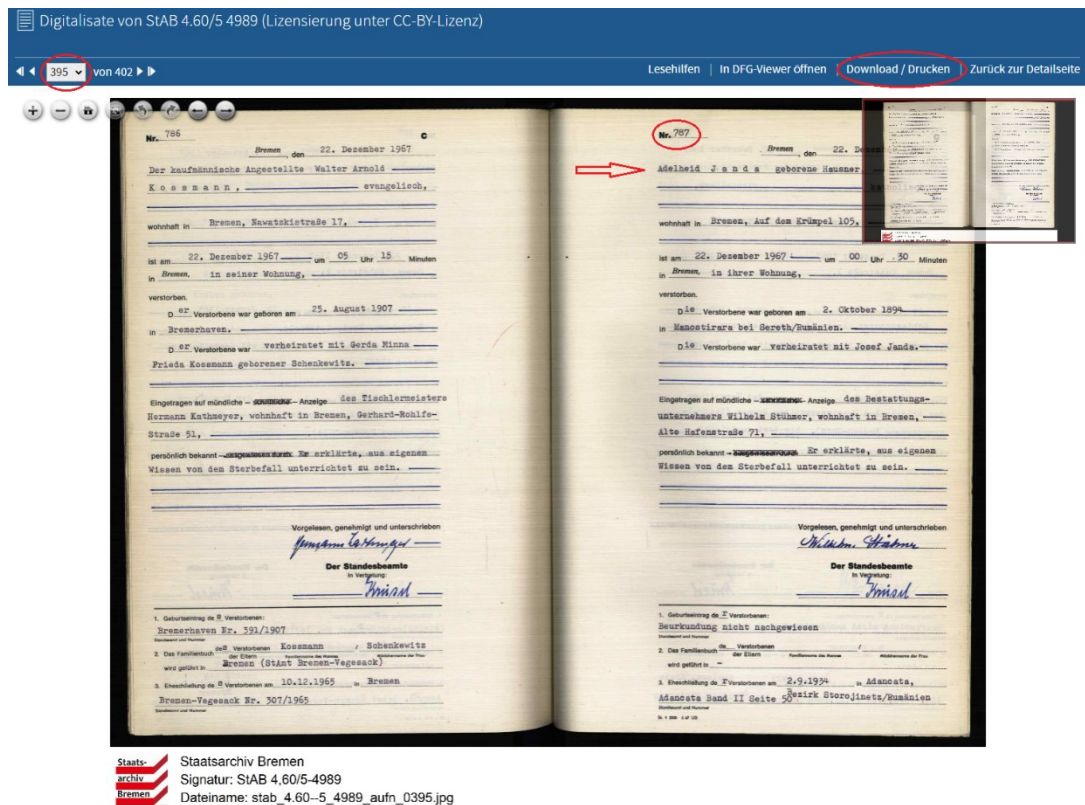
Ergänzungen

Klassifikation Teil B	1772
-----------------------	------

Repräsentationen

Aktion	Typ	Bezeichnung	Zugang	Info
Detailseite	Original	A		
Detailseite	Nutzungsdigitalisat	A		

7. Clicking on a preview image takes you to the scans and you now have to navigate to the correct entry. Here are a few tips: Check which page you are currently on and which tab number the displayed entry has. If you subtract the current register number from the register number you are looking for, you will know how many entries you need to skip ahead to. In the example, you are looking for no. 787 and have landed on scan no. 3 with the first click, which shows register numbers 2 and 3. There are therefore 784 entries up to register entry 787. As there are often two entries on one scan for births and deaths, you need to skip ahead 392 scans, i.e. to scan 395. The quickest way to do this is to enter the scan number you are looking for in the white field embedded in the blue header and confirm with Enter. This may not always take you straight to the right page, but it will definitely bring you much closer. In the example it fits exactly:



8. You can save the entry found using the „Download/Print“ button, print it out or save the link accordingly.

Since February 2025, the data collection "Civil status registers from 1874/76" has also been connected to the comprehensive [MAUS metasearch](#).

Attention:

It can happen that a volume comprises several years or even that different types of registers are summarised in one volume. This is shown on the details page in Arcinsys and requires a little more creativity to find the right scan. For example, if you are looking for a birth in 1909 and the volume covers 1907-1909, it is best to click on the back third of the scans, see if the year matches and then scroll/calculate your way to the correct entry

During the Second World War, there were some emergency hospitals in the surrounding area of Bremen (e.g. in the Rotenburg area) due to the bombing raids. If a death entry for a person in this period cannot be found, the neighbouring archives could therefore be a further research approach.

Further information on the civil status registers can be found in the [foreword of the fond's finding aid](#), information on the individual registry offices is displayed by clicking

on the corresponding detail page in the structure of the fonds, e.g. [here](#) for the Borgfeld registry office.

If you notice any errors in the scans or indexing, please let us know. Simply write to us: viktor.pordzik@staatsarchiv.bremen.de We will collect and check the correction requests and implement them at the end of the quarter.

Duplicates

Secondary registers of civil status are organised in [fond 4.13/3](#), but are not yet recorded due to the complete preservation of the first register. As a rule, they contain significantly fewer marginal notes than the first registers.

Supplementary files on civil status

Before a civil status entry was created, corresponding applications had to be submitted to the registry office and, if necessary, evidence had to be provided. The documents compiled in this way were documented in so-called „Sammelakten“ or „Belegakten“ (supplementary files). Such files were often kept at the registry office, especially for marriages and deaths, and were handed over to the archives after the deadlines mentioned above.

In the Bremen State Archives, these sources are listed in [fond 4.60/6](#) and are largely organised according to the register numbers of the civil status entries. If you know the registry office, year and register number, you can find the correct archival file within the fond 4.60/6 and order it for inspection to our reading room. With the exception of the supplementary files for death records 1950-1990, the collection has not yet been scanned. In Bremen there are also two special cases in which there are only supplementary files but no register entries.

Special case of foreigners

If children of residents of the city of Bremen were born outside the area of responsibility of the Bremen registry office, or if such persons married or died outside, the corresponding notifications were filed in supplementary files at the Bremen(-Mitte) registry office. These are indexed via the MAUS index to the civil status registers and can be ordered for inspection in the reading room.

Some of these foreign files contain fascinating correspondence with foreign authorities and consulates, e.g. in China or Latin America.

Special case of death declarations

The same applies to [death declarations](#) for which there are no death records in Bremen. They are also recorded, although the recorded year of the death declaration can sometimes differ considerably from the year of the presumed but unrecorded death. These are mainly the "Ausschlussurteile als Todeserklärung" from the period 1880-1939.

Divorce files

Divorce proceedings from the original Bremen area can be found from 1924 onwards in fonds 4.44/2 "Landgericht Bremen – Zivilkammer", [chapter 04. "Familiensachen"](#). The entire fond is currently still blocked for use due to processing reasons.

Divorces and judgements of nullity from the Lesum registry office 1915-1939 can also be found in [fond 4.60/6](#).

Older civil status registers („Zivilstandsregister“ 1810/11-1875)

These records another speciality of Bremen, which were created in the course of the [French annexation of Bremen](#) and its surroundings in 1810/11 and the accompanying introduction of the Code Civil. They are a direct predecessor of the all German civil status registers and, like these, include entries on births, marriages and deaths (as well as banns/proclamations) and were kept for the entire population across all religious denominations. After the liberation in 1813, the states of Bremen and Lübeck as well as the areas on the left bank of the river Rhine decided to retain the civil registers, while they were abolished in the rest of the emerging German Confederation, for example in the Prussian (before 1866 Hanoverian) municipalities in Bremen-North, Arbergen, Hemelingen and Mahndorf, which were incorporated in 1939.

The civil status registers are recorded in the Bremen State Archives in [fond 4.60/3](#), have already been completely scanned except for the proclamations these scans are available online.

[The indexing of the civil status registers](#) of Bremen's urban and rural areas and the formerly independent city of Vegesack by the MAUS has been completed, is available online and linked to Arcinsys.

Since February 2025, the "Civil register 1811 - 1875" data collection has also been connected to the comprehensive [MAUS metasearch](#).

Duplicates

The Bremen State Archives also hold duplicates of civil status records, but these are not yet catalogued. A separate collection has not yet been formed.

Supplementary files

Analogue to the civil status records, there are also supplementary files for the Zivilstandsregister, which are also assigned to [fond 4.60/3](#) but are yet largely unindexed.

Family sheets („Stammtafeln“) of the registry offices (1824-1933)

Another Bremen speciality are the so-called „Stammtafeln“. Introduced in 1824 at the suggestion of senator Dr Heinrich Lampe (1773-1825), they contain centralised information on nuclear families in a similar way to the „Ortsfamilienbücher“. They can be found in the Bremen State Archives in fond [4.60/7 "Stammtafeln der bremischen Zivilstands- und Standesämter"](#), are scanned and can be viewed online.

Originally, the idea was to create family sheets ex officio for every new entry on births, marriages or deaths in the civil register or to supplement existing ones. However, this complex procedure was only fully implemented in the first half of 1824, when 1,080 sheets were created. A further 4,292 (up to no. 5,372) followed until 1833, and then a further 3,827 (up to no. 9,199) until 1878, the vast majority at the request of private individuals. In the last period from the end of 1878 to 1933, another 6,929 family sheets (up to no. 16,128) followed, now exclusively on request. It can therefore be stated that there are by no means family sheets for all families living in

Bremen between 1824 and 1933. The 16,128 genealogical tables of the described main series for Bremen (city) are already [indexed](#) by the MAUS and linked to Arcinsys.

In addition, there is a parallel series for the years 1869-1872 for Bremen-Stadt and also genealogical tables for Vegesack (1859-1926) and for the towns in the rural area (1877-1933).

Further information can be found in the [foreword of the fond's finding aid](#) and the essay "[Über einst in Bremen amtlich erstellte Familienstammtafeln](#)" by Dr Heinrich von Spreckelsen, originally published in the „Zeitschrift für Niederdeutsche Familienkunde“ 1992/4, pp. 188-196.

Parish registers (since 1581)

The parish registers are the most important genealogical source, especially for the period before the introduction of the civil registry offices in 1810/1811. They document baptisms, marriages and (rarely in Bremen in the early days) burials. The Bremen tradition begins in 1581 with a baptismal register of the parish of St Ansgarii.

In the 1920s and 1930s, the oldest parish records were brought together in the State Archives (now fond [6.18/20 "Kirchenbücher"](#)) to enable them to be used in a centralised location. The more recent ones remained with the parishes and are now largely available on microfilm in the [Landeskirchliches Archiv der Bremischen Evangelischen Kirche](#). Some of the Catholic church registers were transferred to the archives of the dioceses of Hildesheim (for Bremen-North) and Osnabrück (for Bremen-City) and can be viewed via the Catholic parish register portal [Matricula](#). The Lower Saxony State Archives in Stade also hold duplicates of some parish registers from Bremen-North.

With the introduction of civil status in Bremen in 1810/1811, abridged copies of the parish registers from 1750 onwards were made. In the further course of the 19th century, the archive also made copies of most of the older church registers, which were transferred to the civil status office in 1875 and, together with the copies created in 1810/1811, were finally transferred to the State Archives in 1945, where they are now kept in fond [4.60/4 "Zivilstandsamt - Auszüge und Abschriften aus Kirchenbüchern"](#)

In order to maintain an overview of this confusing situation, a [comprehensive parish register spreadsheet](#) was created, independent of the storage location. The parish registers in the State Archives were digitised from microfilm in 2023/24. In summer 2024, the first scans began to be placed online at Arcinsys and are now being successively added to. In the future, they will also be made available on Matricula and the Protestant parish register portal [Archion](#).

The parish registers have not yet been digitally indexed, but many are indexed by purely alphabetical or chronological-alphabetical hand or machine written name indexes. Until 1906, the Protestant parishes responsible for the respective streets are listed in the street section of the [Bremischen Adressbuchs](#) (city directory).

Supplements to the church registers

In the early days of Bremen's church records, registers of marriages and burials are missing, especially in the city parishes.

„Trauungskollekten“ (fund raising at marriages)

The so-called „Trauungskollekten“ can be used to reconstruct the marriages. These were monetary donations for the poor, which had to be collected during wedding banquets from 1658 onwards and were recorded in the deaconries' account books with the name of the person making the donation (usually the bridegroom). The MAUS has analysed the account books in this regard and recorded over 21,000 names in a [database](#).

„Beerdigungsrechnungen“ (funeral bills)

Similarly, information on burials can be found in church accounts preserved in the council archives (2-P.1.u.2.b.... and [2-T.4. ...](#)) and the modern holdings of individual churches ([6.18/...](#)). The MAUS contains bound extracts of the corresponding account book pages and a card index.

Cemetery documents

„Leichenbücher“ (1875-1975)

Until the beginning of the 19th century, burials mainly took place in the church cemeteries of the parishes. The cemeteries in front of the Doventor (until 1875/1917) and Herdentor (until 1875/1903), which were opened during the French period (1811-1813), and the Buntentor cemetery in the Neustadt, which was opened in 1822, were the first municipal cemeteries. The Riensberg and Walle cemeteries followed in 1875 to replace the two closed cemeteries in the old town. Later, Woltmershausen (1890), Hastedt (1900), Gröpelingen (1902), Osterholz (1920), Huchting (1934) and Huckelriede (1956) were added, as well as Hemelingen (1904), Mahndorf (1930), Neu-Aumund (1928) and the Blumenthal forest cemetery (1966) in the areas incorporated in 1939. In addition, numerous church cemeteries existed and continue to exist.

The municipal cemeteries had been managed by an „Leichenbestatter“ (undertaker) since 1875, who was given the title of „Friedhofsinspektor“ (cemetery inspector) in 1879. In 1922, the „Friedhofsinspektion“ was renamed the „Friedhofsamt“ (cemetery office). In 1931, the „Friedhofsamt“ was merged with the „Gartenamt“ to form the „Garten- und Friedhofsamt“, which was renamed the „Gartenbauamt“ in 1942. In 1995, it was transformed into a municipal enterprise and was now called „Stadtgrün Bremen“. On 14 June 2010, „Stadtgrün Bremen“ and „Bremer Entsorgungsbetriebe“ finally merged to form the ["Umweltbetrieb Bremen"](#). The originals of the "Leichenbücher", i.e. lists of cremations and burials and the register of burial sites, which began in 1875, are still kept there.

In a project started in 2006/2007, the MAUS recorded these sources up to 1975 in a [database](#). In addition to recording the exact place of death, the next of kin, the grave site and the burial class, which provides information about the social status, the database offers further added value compared to the civil status death database. For example, it also includes people who died outside Bremen but were transferred here for burial. In addition, all other persons who lie in the same grave are listed for each hit, which can provide interesting insights into family relationships. But beware: children under the age of three could be buried with any non-related deceased person and gravesites could be re-occupied, so the same grave site does not necessarily indicate a family connection.

In the Maus there is a disorganised and presumably incomplete collection of CDs with scans of the original mortuary registers. In the Bremen State Archives in fond [4.134/1 "Gartenbauamt Bremen, Grabstellenkartei, Sterberegister, Einäscherungsregister \(Reproduktionen\)"](#) there are also 6 boxes with microfilms/microfiches of the grave index, death registers (burials and cremations) including Bremen-Nord 1957-1985 and cremation registers 1976-1985. The fond is not catalogued and not yet accessible to the public.

Gravestone database

In 2006 the MAUS began a [project](#) for the photographic and database-supported recording of gravestones in cemeteries which was by now expanded nationwide. Numerous [cemeteries in Bremen](#) are included. It is possible to search individual cemeteries or the entire database for a surname and in many cases, in addition to the recorded data, an image of the grave site is also provided. However, you have to be aware that the data is only a snapshot at the time the photo was taken. For example, the Bremen-Grohn cemetery was photographed in 2006 and the database went online in 2011. However, deaths from 2007 are not included.

War graves

In 2021, the State Archives took over inventories of the burials of war victims in Bremen's cemeteries from the Umweltbetrieb Bremen, which were formed into the new fond [4.134/2 „Friedhofsverwaltung, Akten und Amtsbücher“](#), but are not yet publicly accessible.

Inhabitant card file („Einwohnermeldekartei“ 1931-1978)

From the second half of the 19th century at the latest, registers of people moving in and out of towns were kept in the German Reich. Bremen started this documentations in 1885. As a result of the changeover to a card index system in 1931, the older registration records were destroyed. The surviving records in the [Bremerhaven city archives](#) or in neighbouring [Delmenhorst](#) provide an insight into what these may once have looked like.

The same applies to the later incorporated areas in Bremen-Nord and Hemelingen, whose surviving registration records only begin with the year of incorporation in 1939. At the end of the 1970s, the changeover to a computerised system took place, so

that the analogue registration card index of the Bremen State Archives (fonds [4.82/1](#) "[Verwaltungspolizei - Einwohnermeldekartei](#)") only records persons who were resident in Bremen in the period 1931/39-1978/79 and were older than 14 at that time. The card of a person was closed when he or she died, moved away or, in the case of women, got married (the data was then transferred to the card of the husband). In addition to central vital data on the persons recorded, numerous other details such as other family members, occupations, religious affiliations and residential addresses (some dating back to the 19th century) can often be found, making the collection an important genealogical source.

For data protection reasons, access is only possible via employees of the State Archives and is [subject to a fee](#) (19.83 Euros per quarter of an hour – even if unsuccessful!)

For information from the electronic registration file from 1978-79 onwards, please contact the [Bürgeramt Bremen](#).

House sheets ("Hausbücher")

In addition to the „Eindwohnermeldekartei“, which is organised alphabetically or phonetically by person, there are also house sheets kept by the local authorities from the 1930s onwards. These show the owners for each address as well as all moves in and out up to around 1995 in tabular form. For residents who were still living at the respective address when the house sheets were closed around 1995, inhabitants cards with information up to this date can be found. Access to this yet unrecorded fond is again only possible by employees of the State Archives and is subject to a fee.

Wills and certificates of inheritance (1599-1920)

For the period 1599-1899, the fonds [2-Qq. "Justice and Courts"](#) contain so-called „Testamentsbücher“, which contain copies of testamentary dispositions from the period mentioned. In some of them, complex family relationships and insights into the material possessions of the persons concerned can be found, so that a vivid picture of the living conditions at that time can be drawn. All „Testamentsbücher“ have already been digitised and can also be searched via a [MAUS database](#) linked to Arcinsys.

In July 2020, the State Archives took over the subsequent testamentary records up to 1920, which were assigned to the fonds [4.75/12 „Amtsgericht Bremen – Nachlassgericht“](#), but have not yet been catalogued in detail. Some of them are accessible via registers or card indexes.

Declarations of death (1880-1983)

As a rule, the death of a person is certified by the registry office. In the case of missing persons, death cannot be proven and therefore no death certificate can be issued. However, the longer the person remains missing, the greater the presumption of death. In such cases, a court declaration of death can be applied for, e.g. for the purpose of applying for a certificate of inheritance or remarriage of the spouse. With the declaration of death, it is presumed that the person concerned died at the time specified therein. The local court at the last place of residence of the missing person is always responsible for a declaration procedure; if this was outside the western

occupation zones after the Second World War, the local court at the applicant's place of residence could also be responsible. The fond [4.75/12 „Amtsgericht Bremen – Nachlassgericht“](#) contain 9,479 death declaration files from the period 1880-1983. In addition to eight collective files on "Ausschlussurteilen als Todeserklärung" from the period 1880-1939, the fond includes a large number of individual case files, the vast majority of which are victims of National Socialism, missing soldiers from the Second World War and victims of flight and expulsion.

If a person has been declared dead by a German court or the death and time of death have been established, there should also be an entry in the [book of death declarations](#) kept by the „Standesamt I“ in Berlin from 1938 to 2009 or in the collection of decisions from 2009 onwards.

Some of the "Ausschlussurteilen als Todeserklärung" from the period 1880-1939 were recorded in the [death collection files of the Bremen-Mitte registry office](#) and can be researched via the corresponding MAUS database.

City directories („Adressbücher“ 1794-2002)

The Bremen city directories were published between 1794 and 2002. The main components were generally

- the list of authorities
- the register of residents
- the business directory since 1798
- the street directory since 1815

Authorities also include other public, ecclesiastical and private organisations. An alphabetical directory of companies has only existed since 1980.

The addresses of Vegesack are listed separately from 1848 to 1940, as are the addresses of the Bremen rural area from 1884 to 1942. The addresses of Bremerhaven (excluding Geestemünde, Lehe and Wulsdorf) are also listed from 1848 to 1903. The areas in Bremen-North, Hemelingen, Arbergen and Mahndorf, which were incorporated in 1939, had separate directories before the incorporation.

The directories never recorded all the inhabitants. Initially, it was only supposed to contain "scholars, merchants, shopkeepers, manufacturers etc.", but in fact it was only about 10% of the population. From around 1825 onwards, the heads of households were probably included. It was not until 1980 that wives were also included.

As a rule, the address books should reflect the status at the end of the previous year. If special supplement booklets were published, which was particularly the case between 1860 and 1918, the reference date for them was usually 1 July.

The address books from 1794 to 1980 can be viewed online in the [digital collections of the "Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Bremen"](#). The city directories from 1981 to 2002 are available in bound form in the reading room of the Bremen State Archives.

Bremen daily newspapers

Daily newspapers can provide many interesting insights into your own family history. In addition to family announcements of births/baptisms, marriages, deaths/funerals and anniversaries, newspaper articles, for example about school graduations or club activities, can paint a vivid picture of the lives of your ancestors. The Bremen newspapers are almost completely documented in the Bremen State Archives, although they are mainly to be used on microfilm. The most important Bremen daily newspaper, the Weser-Kurier, operates a [digital newspaper archive](#) together with the other newspapers of the publishing house "Bremer Tageszeitungen AG", in which, for example, all issues of the Weser-Kurier from 1945 onwards are available scanned and can be used in full-text searchable form. Subscribers receive free access, and access is also possible via the reading room of the State Archives.

The newspapers of the aforementioned publishing house also operate a joint, free [database of obituaries](#) from recent years; the „Verein für Computergenealogie ([CompGen](#)) e. V.“ (Association for Computer Genealogy) operates a [database of family announcements](#) in which entries from the following Bremen newspapers have been recorded:

Newspaper	Recording period
Weser-Kurier/Kurier am Sonntag/Die Norddeutsche	Not saved
Weser Courier	october 2014
Courier on Sunday	January 2003 until December 2018
The North German	September 1960 until May 2013
The BLV	October 1959 until April 2019
Bremen News	February 2014
Parish newsletter Vegesack	December 2007 until December 2013
Parish newsletter Alt-Aumund	December 2011 until December 2013
Parish newsletter Aumund	December 2007 until December 2013
Parish newsletter St Christophorus, Aumund	December 2002 to December 2007
The community mirror	May 2019

Last but not least, the MAUS has digitally recorded [family announcements in the „Bremer Wöchentliche Nachrichten“ 1796 - 1811](#) in a project.

In the post-war period, information on births, marriages and deaths was published weekly in the Weser-Kurier under the heading "Aus dem Bremer Standesamt," "Die Standesämter berichten" and similar. For births, the date of birth, surname, first name and occupation of the father, surname and first name of the mother as well as the home address (but not the first name of the child) were published; for marriages, the date, names and occupations of the spouses (initially only of the husband) as well as the home address; for deaths, the date as well as the name, occupation and home address of the deceased. The publications were presumably subject to approval and therefore not complete. They were discontinued around 1991.

Genealogical collections

In addition to the genealogically valuable documents created in an official context, the State Archives and later also the MAUS itself created genealogical collections.

Genealogical collections („Graue Mappen“)

The collection in the MAUS room consists of materials compiled after 1945 on the history of certain families („Graue Mappen“ = grey folders), which were later combined into one collection with the collection of the genealogist Johann Ültzen-Barkhausen („Blaue Mappen“ = blue folders), which was compiled according to a

similar principle. The complete list of all existing folders can be found in fond [8](#) „[Familiengeschichtliche Materialien - graue Mappen](#)“ of the State Archives. The folders already recorded and all the names they contain are indexed via a [MAUS database](#), which is being continuously expanded.

Genealogical collection of the State Archives

Fonds [9.G "Genealogical Collection"](#) contains genealogical papers on the history of individual families and localities

Genealogical collections in the council archive

Section [IV.5. Genealogische Sammlungen](#) of State Archives fonds [2-P.1](#)

„[Quellensammlungen und Geschichtsforschung](#)“ contains further genealogical collections from the period up to around 1875, including the work " [Familiarum Bremensium Stemmata](#) " by Hermann von Post and the "Geschlechterregister alter und neuer bremischer Familien („[Das Goldene Buch](#)" = the golden book) by Christian Abraham Heineken. Both works and the corresponding indexes of names can already be viewed online as scans.



Further guidelines in the Bremen State Archives (in planning)

- Topic: Personnel files
- Topic: Jews
- Topic: Compensation (compensation files/reparation files)
- Topic: Denazification (files)
- Topic: Emigrants and emigration sources in the Bremen State Archives
- Topic: Shipping and ship sources in the Bremen State Archives
- Topic: Poor relief centres, foundations for charitable purposes and the like
- Topic: Guardianships and trusteeships (over natural persons)
- Topic: Properties and houses
- Topic: Military historical sources in the Bremen State Archives
- Topic: Citizenship and nationality

Further sources in other archives

Since, depending on the individual family history, theoretically every archive and every source can be of genealogical relevance, only a few collections and projects of supra-regional interest can be mentioned here.

Map of the name distribution

A [digital map](#) developed by CompGen makes it possible to display the distribution of a particular surname in the years 1890 (within the borders of Germany before 1918 on the basis of [casualty lists from the First World War](#)) and 1996 (on the basis of the telephone directory at that time). Particularly in the case of rare surnames, this can provide interesting insights into possible regions of origin of the family

Grave search of the Volksbund

The Volksbund Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge e. V. (German War Graves Commission) has set itself the task of recovering the mortal remains of soldiers (especially from the Second World War) and maintaining the corresponding war gravesites. It maintains a [database](#) in which around 5.4 million war dead are recorded.

Standesamt I of Berlin

[Standesamt I of Berlin](#) (Registry office no. 1) holds, among other things, civil status registers of German consular missions abroad, many registers from the former eastern territories and territories occupied by Germany during the Second World War, registers of notarised deaths of Germans abroad and collections of [death declarations](#). Once the relevant deadlines have expired, these records are transferred to the [Berlin State Archives](#).

„Bundesarchiv“ (Federal Archives)

The „Bundesarchiv“ with its various locations hold a wide range of supra-regional personal documents. At the Berlin site, for example, information can be obtained about both the persecuted and the perpetrators [of National Socialist tyranny](#), while the Bayreuth site holds information about those affected by [flight and expulsion](#).