



Chapters of the Midwestern Region Project
Midwestern Region Historical Commission

GETTING STARTED GUIDE

for Chapter Historians



Introduction

This guide walks you step by step through your role in the **Chapters of the Midwestern Region Project** — a regional effort to preserve and showcase each chapter's history. Your work will support both a chapter board for your chapter and a dedicated page on the MWR Historical Commission website. **Each chapter board is built from four components:**

- Historically significant **photos** representing different periods, including early, middle, and recent photos: charter members, service projects, chapter photos, prominent members, and social events.
- A brief **chapter history** of 120–140 words.
- **Chapter details** and **logo**.
- A QR code linking to your chapter's page on the MWRHC website.

Follow the steps below to get started. We would like chapters to begin reviewing or submitting their information this summer. Chapters will submit their information using a form on the MWR Historical Commission Website. The first submission checkpoint is in October 2026, ahead of the Leadership Meeting in Cleveland. **Chapters with boards completed for prior year conventions should review and update their website content, adding photos and updating content as necessary.**

Step 1: Confirm Your Chapter Information

Before you gather materials, verify the core facts about your chapter, including:

- **Charter Date**
- **Chapter Key**
- **Chapter Seat** — city and state (plus the college or university name for College chapters)
- **District**
- **Website URL** or **social media handle**
- **Chapter Logo** — high resolution, square dimensions (ex. 1000px x 1000px)

Step 2: Gather and Prepare the Source Files

Draft your short history and photos before logging into the website. This makes the upload process fast and accurate.

A. Create the Chapter History document

Prepare a single document (for example, MWR – [Chapter Name].docx) organized into four sections:

Section I — Chapter Details (the information confirmed in Step 1)

Section II — Short chapter history (120–140 words)

Section III — Photos and captions (a description and year for each photo)

Section IV — Comprehensive long chapter history (if available)

B. Prepare the Photos

- Save each photo as a separate, high-resolution file in JPG or PNG format.
- Target a size of at least 1,500 pixels wide for optimal clarity.
- Name each file with your chapter name, a short description and year to align it with its caption.

Examples:

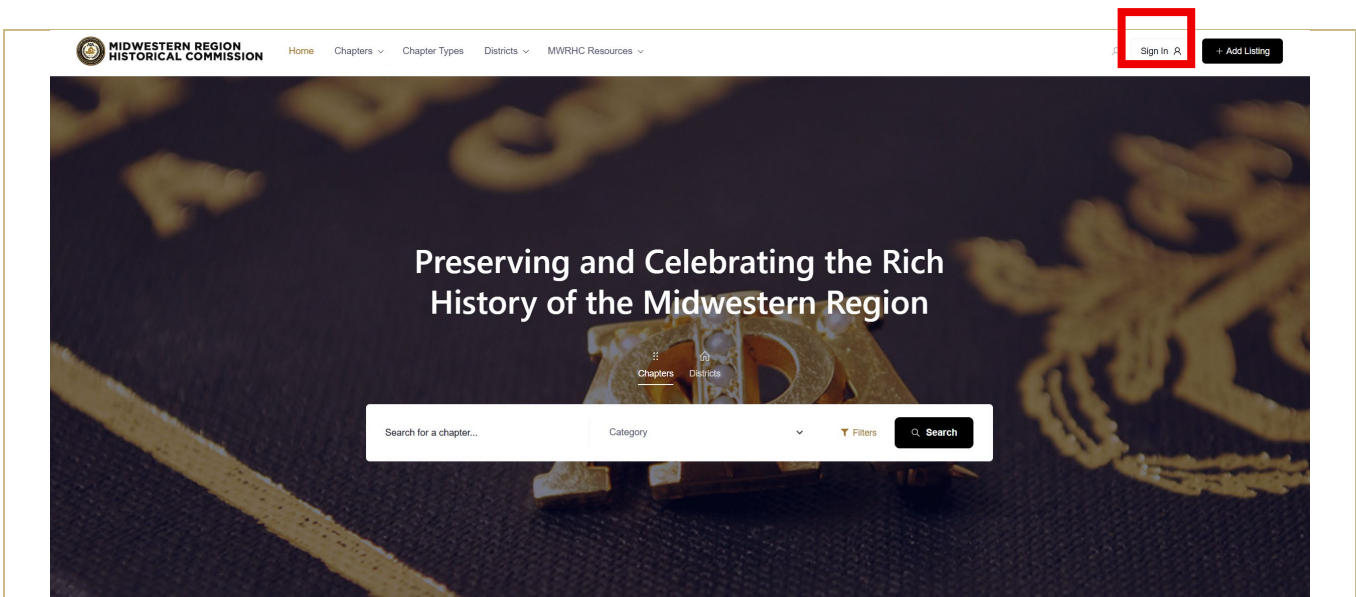
- *Gamma Lambda - Charter members, 1920.jpg*
- *Gamma Lambda - Alpha House, 1939.jpg*
- *Gamma Lambda - Chapter Photo, 1958.jpg*
- *Gamma Lambda - Chapter Picnic, 1982.jpg*
- *Gamma Lambda - Chapter of the Year, 2015.jpg*
- *Gamma Lambda - Fall Line, 2024.jpg*

Important: PDFs and files containing multiple images will not display on the website. Each photo must be an individual image file in JPG or PNG format.

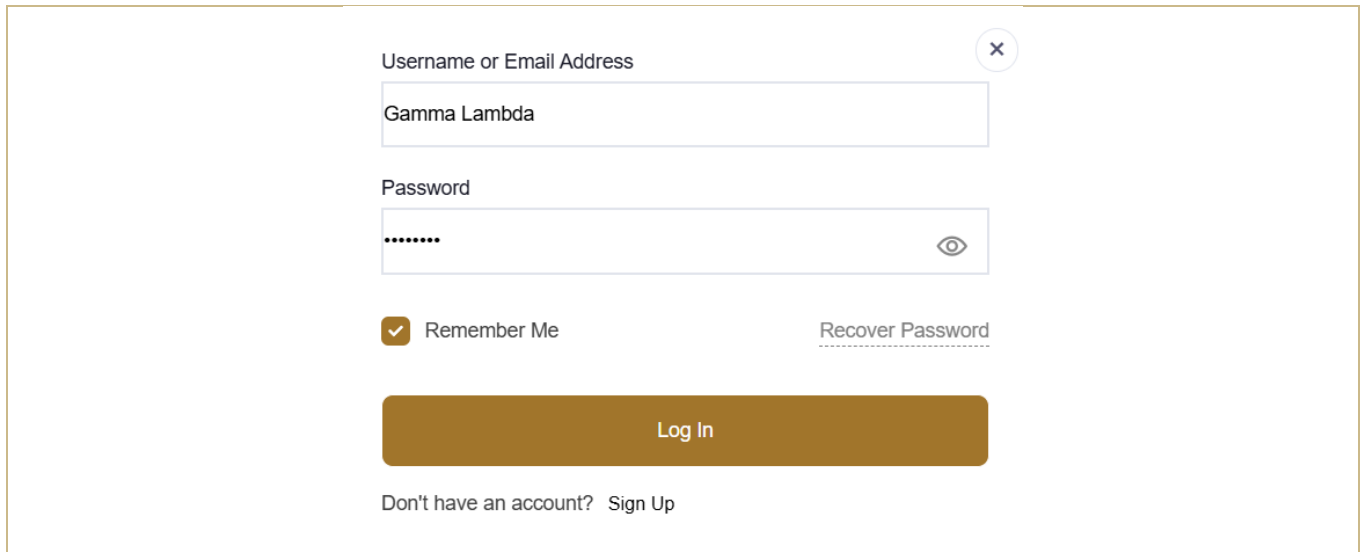
Step 3: Sign In to the MWR Historical Commission Website

Website: <https://MWRHistoricalcommission.org>

1. Go to the website. Before you begin, take some time to browse some of the completed chapters.
2. Click the **Sign In** button.
3. Enter your **Chapter Name** and **Password**.
4. After a successful login, click the **icon** (in the spot where “Sign In” appeared) to open the admin menu.
5. Click **My Listing**.
6. Click **Edit** to open your chapter listing for editing.



The MWRHC website homepage — click Sign In to begin.



Username or Email Address

Gamma Lambda

Password

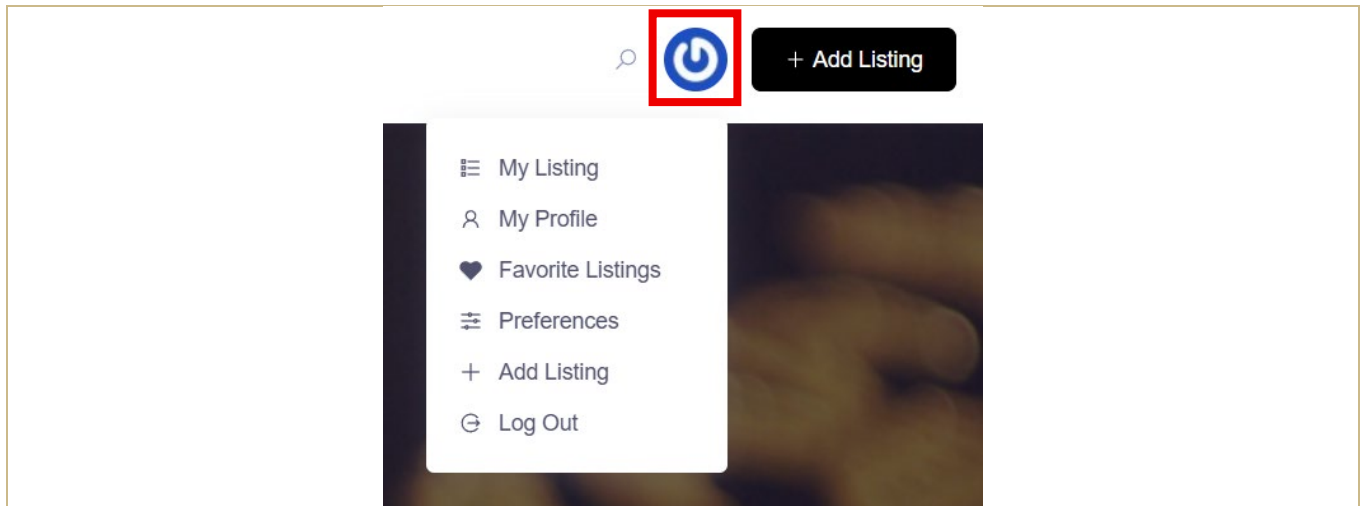
.....

☒ Remember Me [Recover Password](#)

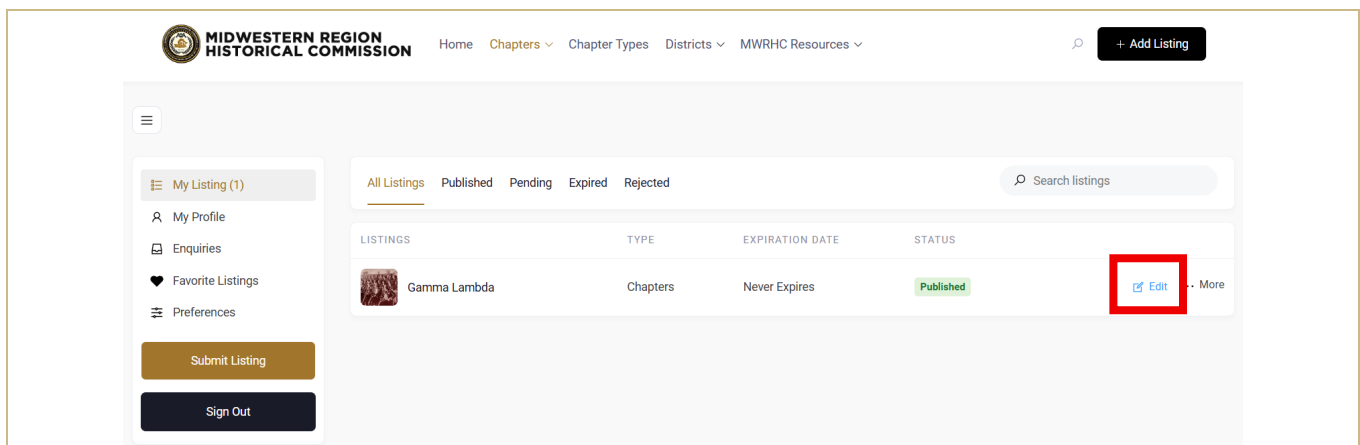
Log In

Don't have an account? [Sign Up](#)

Enter your Chapter Name and Password on the sign-in screen.



After signing in, use the account icon to open the admin menu and select My Listing.



The image shows the MWRHC homepage with the account icon (a blue power button) highlighted with a red box. A dropdown menu is open, showing options: My Listing, My Profile, Favorite Listings, Preferences, Add Listing, and Log Out. The 'My Listing' option is highlighted.

Midwestern Region Historical Commission

Home Chapters Chapter Types Districts MWRHC Resources

+ Add Listing

My Listing (1)

My Profile

Enquiries

Favorite Listings

Preferences

Submit Listing

Sign Out

All Listings Published Pending Expired Rejected

Search listings

LISTINGS	TYPE	EXPIRATION DATE	STATUS	
 Gamma Lambda	Chapters	Never Expires	Published	Edit More

Click Edit to open your chapter listing.

Step 4: Complete Your Chapter Listing

Work through each section of the listing form.

About the Chapter

- Confirm the **Chapter Name** and **Chapter Type** are correct.
- Copy and paste the **Full Chapter History** (your long history) into the field; format the text as necessary. This narrative will display on the website.
NOTE: If your long chapter history is not available, just use the short chapter history. It can be expanded later.
- Copy and paste the **Short Chapter History** (120–140 words); format the text as necessary. This narrative will be displayed on the chapter board.

The screenshot shows the 'About the Chapter' form in the MWRHC Chapter Historian system. The form is divided into three main sections: Chapter Name, Chapter Type, and Full Chapter History. The Chapter Name field contains 'Gamma Lambda'. The Chapter Type dropdown menu is set to 'Alumni'. The Full Chapter History field is a rich text editor containing the following text: 'The Gamma Lambda Chapter was chartered in 1919 by thirteen men who were influential in the Detroit community. Their chapter seat is Detroit Michigan. The Detroit community at that time was populated with many successful Alpha brothers, many of whom had matriculated through the University of Michigan, earning undergraduate and graduate degrees in medicine and law. On account of the close proximity of Detroit and Epsilon Chapter in Ann Arbor, many brothers set up their practices and settled down with families in our fair city. As a result, the city could boast of an unofficial chapter prior to its installation.'

About the Chapter — confirm chapter name and type, then paste your full and short chapter history.

Chapter Details

- Confirm the **Chapter Type**, **Chapter Key**, and **Chapter Seat** are correct.
- Confirm the **District** and **Charter Date** are correct.

MIDWESTERN REGION HISTORICAL COMMISSION Home Chapters Chapter Types Districts MWRHC Resources + Add Listing

About the Chapter

Chapter Details

Location

Chapter Primary Contact

Social Networks

Media

Finish

Short Chapter History:

Gamma Lambda was chartered on March 22, 1919 by thirteen men who were influential in the Detroit community. Their chapter members continue to actively support the uplift of African Americans in the city through various social and civic programs. Gamma Lambda is the third oldest Alumni chapter and one of the largest chapters in the fraternity, boasting a membership of over 300 brothers. On May 15, 1939, the chapter purchased their current fraternity house in the Brush Park neighborhood of Detroit. In recognition of its historic significance, the Alpha House was added to the State of Michigan Historic Registry in 1977 and the National Register of Historic Places in 2011. It remains the oldest and largest

Include the short chapter history (120-140 words) for the display board.

Chapter Details

Chapter Type:
Alumni

Chapter Key:
103

Chapter Key for Sort:
103

Chapter Seat (City):
Detroit

Chapter Details — verify chapter type, key, seat, district, and charter date.

Location

- Confirm the **Location** shows the correct State.
- For the **Address**, enter the chapter address (chapter house, city, college/university, etc.).

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About the Chapter

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Finish

District:
Michigan

Charter Date:
March 22, 1919
Enter as Month Day, Year (ex. December 4, 1906)

Location

Location:
Michigan

Address:
Alpha Phi Alpha (Gamma Lambda Chapter), 293, Eliot Street, Brush Park, Midtown, Deti

Location — confirm the state and enter the chapter address.

Chapter Primary Contact

- Enter contact information for the Chapter Historian or President.
- Enter the Chapter Website URL.

Social Networks

- Select the appropriate social media channel, then copy and paste the URL for each chapter account.

The screenshot shows the MWRHC Chapter Historian form. The top navigation bar includes the MWRHC logo, the text 'MIDWESTERN REGION HISTORICAL COMMISSION', and links for Home, Chapters, Chapter Types, Districts, and MWRHC Resources. A '+ Add Listing' button is in the top right. On the left, a sidebar menu lists: About the Chapter, Chapter Details, Location, Chapter Primary Contact, Social Networks, Media, and Finish. The main content area has two sections: 'Chapter Primary Contact' and 'Social Networks'. The 'Chapter Primary Contact' section has fields for Full Name (Brian Williams), Email (bwilliams@detroitalphas.org), Phone (3133300277), and Website (https://detroitalphas.org). The 'Social Networks' section has fields for Facebook (https://www.facebook.com/Detr...) and X (https://x.com/detroitalphas06).

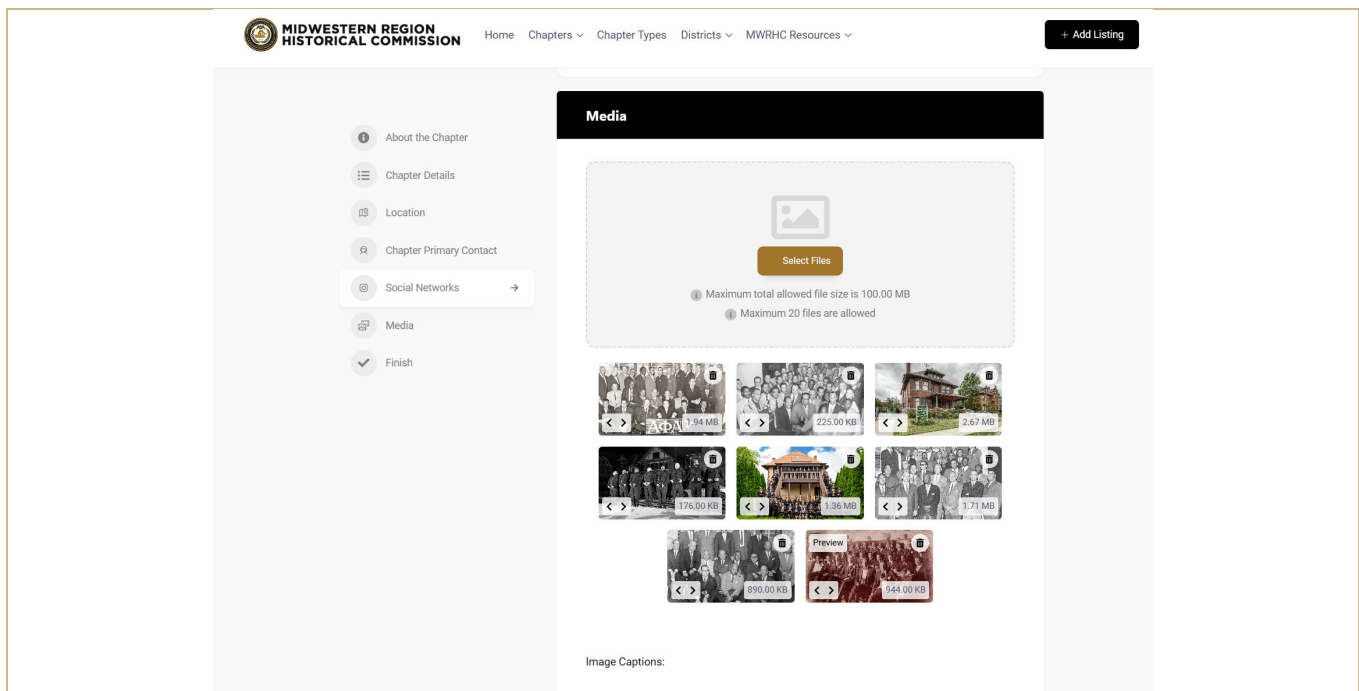
Primary Contact and Social Networks — add contact info, website, and social media links.

Step 5: Upload Photos and Captions

Add the Photos (Media section)

- Under Media, click **Select Files**.
- Add 7 or more photos representing early, middle, and recent periods of your chapter.
- Upload only individual JPG or PNG files at the highest resolution available.

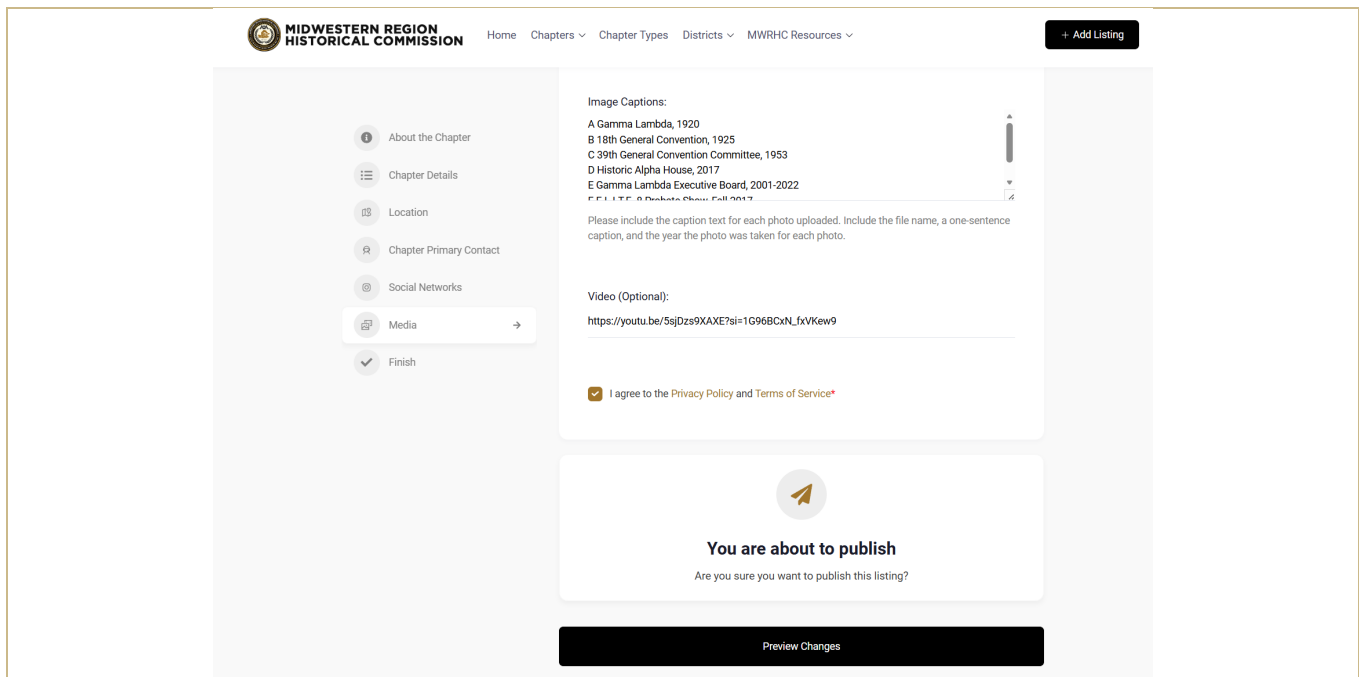
Tip: *If you find that your images didn't upload when you saved the page, you may need to load 3–4 photos at a time, save, then load more. Use file names and years to help align each photo with its caption.*



Media section — select and upload individual photo files.

Add Captions and Save

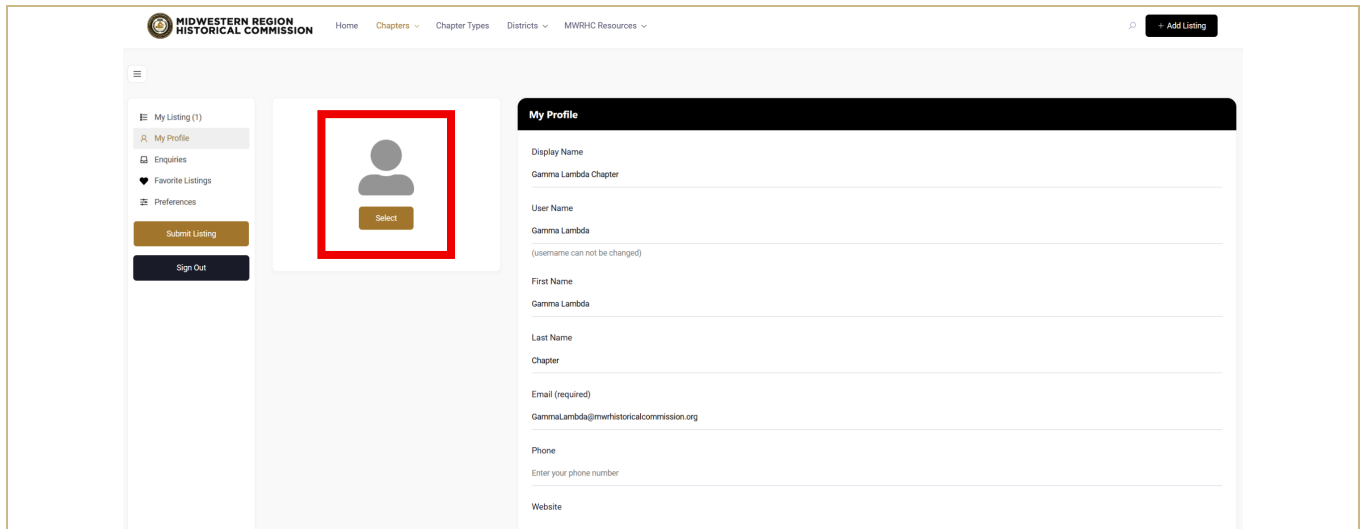
7. Enter the **Image Caption** for each image file so the Commission can match each file to the correct caption.
8. Check the box to agree to the **Privacy Policy** and **Terms of Service**.
9. Click **Preview Changes** to upload the images and save the page.



Add a caption for each photo, agree to the Privacy Policy and Terms of Service, then click Preview Changes.

Step 6: Upload Your Chapter Logo

- Click the **icon** (where “Sign In” was) to open the admin menu.
- Click **My Profile**.
- Click **Select**, then choose your chapter logo. The logo should be square and in the highest resolution available.
- Scroll to the bottom of the screen and click **Save Changes**.



My Profile — select and upload your chapter logo, then click Save Changes.

What Happens Next

- The MWR Historical Commission will use your Short Chapter History, photos, captions, and logo to build your chapter board.
- The QR code on the board will link to your chapter's page on the MWRHC website.
- You can return to the website to make updates to your chapter's page at any time as new material becomes available.

How You Can Help

- Update your chapter contacts (e.g., Chapter President and Chapter Historian) if out of date, and send them to the shared mailbox: MWRHistoricalCommission@gmail.com
- Gather and upload your short chapter history (120–140 words), image files, captions, and logo to the website.
- Keep researching your chapter — locate additional photos and expand your full chapter history over time.
- Submit your information by the first checkpoint: October 2026, ahead of the Leadership Meeting in Cleveland. **The sooner the better.**

Appendix A — Research Resources

Reference sources for historical information

Issuu — Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.: <https://issuu.com/apa1906network>

The Crisis: <https://onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu/webbin/serial?id=crisisnaacp>

Chronicling America (Historic American Newspapers): <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/>

Newspapers by Ancestry (subscription/free trial): <https://www.newspapers.com/>

Fold3 by Ancestry (subscription/free trial): <https://www.fold3.com/>

Google Books — Ebony Magazine Archive: <https://books.google.com/books?id=RNcDAAAAMBAJ>

HathiTrust (guest account required): <https://www.hathitrust.org/>

Howard University Digital Collections: https://dh.howard.edu/digi_collect/

BlackPast: <https://www.blackpast.org/>

Local and regional archives

Tip: Search local museums, libraries, historical societies, and universities for your city.

Detroit Historical Society: <https://detroithistorical.wordpress.com/>

Walter P. Reuther Library: <http://archives.wayne.edu/>

University of Michigan, Bentley Historical Library: <https://bentley.umich.edu/research/catalogs-databases/>

Detroit Public Library Digital Collections: <https://digitalcollections.detroitpubliclibrary.org>

Cleveland Public Library: <https://cpl.org/newspaper-articles/>

Western Reserve Historical Society Research Library: <https://wrhs.org>

Finding historical photos

- Chapter social media & website: Start with Instagram, Facebook, and your chapter website for recent and historical photos. Save and caption each image. Look for group photos, early chapter photos, line photos, awards and achievements, community service, and events.
- College yearbooks: College chapters should check whether their college or university has an online yearbook archive, or visit e-yearbook.com. Search from around the chapter's charter date. Caption each photo with the year and the name of the yearbook.
- The SPHINX Magazine: Issuu hosts digitized Fraternity publications, including The Sphinx and select General Convention programs (<https://issuu.com/apa1906network>). Search Google using: Issuu Sphinx “your chapter name” (e.g., Issuu Sphinx “Gamma Lambda”).

Appendix B — Board Component Examples

Example of a Short History (120–140 words) — Gamma Lambda Chapter

Gamma Lambda Chapter was chartered on March 22, 1919 by thirteen men who were influential in the Detroit community. Their chapter members continue to actively support the uplift of African Americans in the city through various social and civic programs. Gamma Lambda is the third oldest Alumni chapter and one of the largest chapters in the fraternity, boasting a membership of over 300 brothers. On May 15, 1939, the chapter purchased their current fraternity house in the Brush Park neighborhood of Detroit. In recognition of its historic significance, the Alpha House was added to the State of Michigan Historic Registry in 1977 and the National Register of Historic Places in 2021. It remains the oldest and longest continually owned Alpha House in the fraternity.

Example of a Short History (120–140 words) — Theta Chapter

Theta Chapter was chartered in 1910 by six medical students in Chicago. It is the first multi-campus chapter of the fraternity, starting as a state-wide chapter in Illinois. The chapter was installed by Brother George Ellison of Epsilon Chapter. Theta Chapter was host to the 1915 General Convention when Jewel Henry Arthur Callis, who was then a member of Theta, became the only Jewel to be elected General President of the fraternity. In 1935, Theta purchased a house which would become the National Headquarters in 1953. In recent years, Theta has continued its tradition of excellence, winning Midwestern College Chapter of the Year and, later in 2022, International College Brother of the Year.

Photo categories to collect

Early historical photos — charter-era group photos, early members, chapter houses



Later historical photos — mid-century group photos, lines, events



Contemporary photos — recent group photos, awards, service, and social events



Questions and Support

For help or to submit updated contacts, email the Midwestern Region Historical Commission at MWRHistoricalCommission@gmail.com.

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