

**DEATHS IN BUFFALO AND ERIE COUNTY:  
SELECTED SOURCES IN THE GROSVENOR ROOM**



**KEY**

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| *           | = Oversized book                                  |
| Buffalo     | = In Buffalo collection in Grosvenor Room         |
| GRO         | = In Grosvenor Room                               |
| Non-Fiction | = In General Non-Fiction Collection               |
| Ref.        | = On Reference Shelf                              |
| RFDK        | = At Reference Desk                               |
| STACKS      | = Shelved in Closed Stacks, ask staff to retrieve |
| WNYGS       | = In Western NY Genealogical Society Collection   |

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## INTRODUCTION

This guide includes a variety of sources that might help you find your ancestor's date of death, which can then help you find an obituary or death certificate.

No comprehensive obituary index or database or one single source lists everyone who died in the Buffalo area. Instead, there are multiple sources, including newspaper indexes, compiled indexes, and published lists, with small or large numbers of names. Almost everything listed in this handout will be found in the Grosvenor Room.

Keep in mind that there is no guarantee that a death notice or obituary exists. Many deaths went unrecorded, especially in the years before New York State had a vital records law (1880). There is no law that requires that a death notice or obituary be published. See also: <http://www.buffalolib.org/content/grosvenor/guides-publications#13>

This guide does not list our church records, many of which include the deaths of parishioners. For church records see the separate guide, *Church Records in Microfilm and Print*. See also these free handouts, which may be useful for your search:

- Cemetery Records for Erie County NY in the Grosvenor Room
- Church Records in Microfilm and Print
- Military History and Records
- Death Notices and Obituaries: Where to Look in Buffalo & Erie County Newspapers
- Vital Records in the Grosvenor Room
- Miscellaneous Genealogical Records in the Grosvenor Room

Shelf locations are always subject to change. See staff for assistance in locating material.

For other helpful research guides see <http://www.buffalolib.org/content/grosvenor/guides-publications>

| GENERAL "HOW-TO" GUIDES   | NOTES  |
|---|--|
| GRO Ref. CS16 .B55 1991<br>Billingsley, Carolyn Earle<br><b>How to Get the Most out of Death Certificates</b><br>Conway, AZ: Research Associates, ©1991 | How to find a death certificate, what to do if you cannot find a death certificate, how to interpret everything that appears on a death certificate, and more. |
| GRO Ref. CT214 .J3<br>Jarboe, Betty M.<br><b>Obituaries: A Guide to Sources</b><br>Boston, MA: G.K. Hall, 1982  | A guide to card files and published lists that existed before the computer era.  |
| GRO E169.1 .H94 2000<br>Hume, Janice<br><b>Obituaries in American Culture</b><br>Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, ©2000                    | A history of how the American obituary developed and changed over time.  |

| BOOKS WITH LISTS OF DEATHS          |  |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| Dates                               | Title & Call Number  | Notes  |
| <b>Early 1800's to early 1900's</b> | GRO Ref. F118 .F56, 2 vols.<br>Foley, Janet W.<br><b>Early Settlers of New York State</b><br>Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Co. Inc. ©1993   | Includes some cemetery records and gravestone transcriptions. Has a strong focus on Western New York.                  |
| <b>1807-1870</b>                    | WNYGS 974.7 ER Lan Cla<br>Clark, James<br><b>A Record of Deaths in the Town of Lancaster...1807-1870</b>   |  |
| <b>1810-1854</b>                    | GRO Military Ref. *F127 .E6 M42<br>Merrow, Leta S.<br><b>A List of Revolutionary War Soldiers' Graves Located in Erie County New York</b><br>[Hamburg, NY]: Abigail Fillmore Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, 1989       | While no Revolutionary War battles were fought here, some Revolutionary War veterans eventually settled and died here. |
| <b>1811</b>                         | Buffalo *F129 .B8 M25<br><b>Marriages and Deaths Compiled from Buffalo Gazette: Published 1811 in Village of Buffalo, Niagara County (now Erie Co.), New York...</b><br>Buffalo, NY: Abigail Fillmore Chapter N.S.D.A.R., date unknown | A 44 page manuscript of names from 1811.   |
| <b>1811-1880</b>                    | GRO Ref. *F127 .E6 E76<br>Reamy, Bill and Martha, comp.<br><b>Erie County, New York Obituaries as Found in the Files of the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society</b><br>Westminster, MD: Willow Bend Books, 2000, ©1992          | Covers 1811-1880. Gives date of death but not the newspaper where the obituary might be found.                         |
| <b>1817-1902</b>                    | WNYGS 974.7 ER Chu Cra<br>Cramer, Robert A., comp.<br><b>Buffalo Baptist Association Excerpts from the Minutes 1817-1902 of Deaths</b>   | Includes Baptist churches in towns outside of Buffalo  |

| <b>BOOKS WITH LISTS OF DEATHS</b> |  |   |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| <b>1819-1820</b>                  | Buffalo *F118 .M6<br><b>Miscellaneous Cemetery Inscriptions and Records in New York State</b><br>[Buffalo, NY: Abigail Fillmore Chapter N.S.D.A.R., 1931]  | Includes 8 pages of marriages and deaths published in the <i>Niagara Journal</i> , 1819-1820  |
| <b>1825-1883</b>                  | Buffalo F129 .C72 B8 1992, pp. 235-237<br>Briggs, Erasmus<br><b>History of the Original Town of Concord: Being the Present Towns of Concord, Collins, N. Collins and Sardinia, Erie County, New York</b><br>Camden, ME: Picton Press, ©1992 [reprint]  | Originally published in 1883. Includes "List of Persons Who Have Met an Accidental Death by Drowning or Otherwise in the Town of Concord," 1825-1883.   |
| <b>1840-1901</b>                  | Buffalo F129 .E85 J2, pp. 269-281<br>Jackman, Warren<br><b>History of the Town of Elma, Erie County, N.Y. 1620-1901</b><br>Buffalo, NY: G. M. Hausauer & Son, 1902   | List deaths of 400 residents  |
| <b>1847-1886</b>                  | GRO *CS68 .C262<br><b>Rev. Campbell's Record Book: Marriages and Funerals</b><br>[Buffalo, NY?] C.J. McCabe, 1970  | Records date from 1847 to 1886. Names are from CT, MA, OH, PA, VT, RI, and NY. Includes a few marriages and funerals from the south towns of Erie County. We do not know what denomination Rev. Campbell was or where he lived. |
| <b>1850</b>                       | GRO Census Index Table *F129 .B8 U6<br>Work Progress Administration, 1939-1940, comp.<br><b>Index of the 1850 Census, Buffalo, Erie County, New York</b><br>[S.l., s.n.], 1940   | See Addenda for deaths recorded in the 1850 Census  |
| <b>Ca.1850-1950</b>               | GRO RFDK F127.E6 B57 2011 (Guide #38)<br><b>Births, Deaths, and Marriages Found in Select Buffalo and Erie County Publications</b><br>Buffalo, NY: B&ECPL, 2011<br><a href="http://www.buffalolib.org/content/grosvenor/guides-publications#13">http://www.buffalolib.org/content/grosvenor/guides-publications#13</a> | Includes death listings listed in select Buffalo and Erie County publications. Family member names, place of residence, and place of death are included if listed in the publication.   |
| <b>1858-1968</b>                  | GRO *CT213 .N47 (on microfilm cabinets)<br><b>The New York Times Obituaries Index</b><br>New York: New York Times, 1970  | Covers the years 1858-1968. Includes prominent Buffalonians.  |
| <b>1863</b>                       | GRO Ref. *F127 .E6 J49<br>Jewitt, Joyce S.<br><b>Some Deaths in Erie County, N.Y., 1863</b><br>Hamburg, NY: Joyce S. Jewitt, ©1984   |   |
| <b>Late 1800s- Early 2000s</b>    | GRO Ref. F127 .E6 I43 2011, 3 vols<br>Wernicki, Jan<br><b>Index of Select Deaths from Western NY Newspapers</b><br>Buffalo, NY: Jan Wernicki, 2000-2011  | Includes date the item appeared in a newspaper and the type of article. See also <a href="http://www.BuffaloNYdeaths.com">www.BuffaloNYdeaths.com</a>   |
| <b>1880-2004</b>                  | WNYGS 974.7 ERI Buffalo ind<br>Wernicki, Janice, comp.<br><b>Index to Select Death Notices from Buffalo Area Newspapers—over 5,600 from 1880-2004</b><br>Janice Wernicki, © 2000-2005  | Provides citations for death notices and obituaries from the <i>Buffalo News</i> and <i>Courier Express</i> .   |
| <b>1881-1956</b>                  | Buffalo HV8378 .B9 A1 1881-1956<br>Buffalo Police Department<br><b>Annual Report</b><br>[title, publishers vary]   | Reports published in these years contain narrative descriptions of every homicide in Buffalo, including names of victims and suspects.  |

| <b>BOOKS WITH LISTS OF DEATHS</b> |   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| <b>1882-1892</b>                  | GRO RFDK *F129 .B853 S44 1997<br>Seegal, Steven, comp.<br><b>A Necrology Excerpted and Organized from the Buffalo City Directories, 1882-1892</b><br>Buffalo, NY: Buffalo and Erie County Public Library, 1997<br>Online: <a href="http://www.buffalolib.org/content/grosvenor/guides-publications#13">http://www.buffalolib.org/content/grosvenor/guides-publications#13</a> | GRO Ref. Desk also has a copy of this necrology. In the Desk copy is an addenda of various necrologies found in the Local History Scrapbooks, vols. 5-8.  |
| <b>1884-1928</b>                  | Buffalo F129 .B8 B89<br>Buffalo Historical Society<br><b>Annual Report of the Board of Managers...</b><br>Buffalo, NY: The Society  | Published annually from 1884 to 1928. Includes names of prominent citizens who died the previous year. Indexed in the <i>Local History File</i> .   |
| <b>1885-1997</b>                  | Buffalo TH9505 .B8 A1<br>Buffalo (N.Y.) Fire Dept<br><b>Annual Report</b><br>Buffalo, NY: [various printers]  | From 1885 to 1997, almost every volume lists firefighters who died that year, both on the job or from natural causes. From 1989 to 1997, there is a list of civilian fire deaths by address. No civilian names are given. Our collection is missing some years. |
| <b>1886-1898</b>                  | Scrapbook F129.B8 O25<br><b>[Obituary Scrapbook: 1886-1898]</b> v. 1-2<br>Compiled by Eliza Dutton Clarke   | Mostly prominent people and Clarke's family, (188 names) indexed in the LHF and also with the scrapbook copies. Death notices & obituary articles.  |
| <b>1887-1901</b>                  | Buffalo F129 .B8 B71<br><b>Album and Year Book</b><br>Buffalo, NY: Buffalo Express  | Published annually from 1887 to 1901; title varies. Includes names and sometimes pictures of prominent citizens who died the previous year. Indexed in the <i>Local History File</i> .  |
| <b>1890-1963</b>                  | STACKS Non-Circulating HV8699 .U5 B68<br>Bowers, William J.<br><b>Executions in America</b><br>Lexington, MA: Lexington Books [1974]  | See pp. 296-319 for names of individuals executed in NY State from 1890-1963. Includes 43 names from Erie County.   |
| <b>1899- 50 years ago</b>         | GRO Desk Ref. #34<br><b>Stephan-Burns Funeral Home Records</b><br>Buffalo, NY: Buffalo and Erie County Public Library, 2008<br><br>A Black Rock area funeral home   | Contains name, date of death, address, place of birth, age, birth date, and burial place. Privacy regulations restrict to 50 years before present.<br><b>Ask for this title at the Information Desk in the Grosvenor Room.</b>                                  |
| <b>1904-1973</b>                  | Buffalo *F129 .B8 A195 1904-1973<br><b>Social Register, Buffalo</b><br>New York: Social Register Association  | Each volume includes a page listing "society" men and women who died the previous year.   |
| <b>1914-1919</b>                  | Buffalo D570.85 .N51 B9 L2<br><b>Lafayette High School of Buffalo, NY in the World War 1914-1919</b><br>Buffalo, NY: Baker, Jones, Hausauer Inc. [1920?]  | Lists Lafayette alumni who lost their lives in World War I.   |
| <b>1914-1919</b>                  | GRO Ref. *F129 .B8 S97<br>Sweeney, Daniel J.<br><b>History of Buffalo and Erie County 1914-1919</b><br>[Buffalo, ©1920]   | Includes Buffalo-area World War I casualties.   |

| <b>BOOKS WITH LISTS OF DEATHS</b> |   |  |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|
| <b>1918-1922</b>                  | GRO Desk Ref. #26<br>Pearson, JoAnn, comp.<br><b>The Arrow: Marriages and Deaths as Reported in the Pierce Arrow Newsletter, 1918-1922</b><br>Compiled Sept. 2001   | Includes deaths of employees and relatives.<br><br><b>Ask for this title at the Information Desk in the Grosvenor Room.</b>  |
| <b>192?-2002</b>                  | GRO F129 .B89 N4126 2002 (Reference Desk, Guide #50)<br>The Buffalo Genealogical Society of the African Diaspora<br><b>Index and Introduction to the Microfilmed Buffalo African-American Funeral Program and Obituary Collection, Volume 1</b><br>Buffalo, NY: The Society, 2002 | Lists the name, birth year and death year. Only one entry is a death in the 1920s, most are from the 1980s-1990s. Also includes a list of records microfilmed by the Society and available for research at the North Jefferson Branch. |
| <b>1923-1932</b>                  | Buffalo F129 .B8 E52, May 1923-March 1932<br><b>Ellicott Square Magazine</b><br>Buffalo, Ellicott Square Co.  | Includes occasional obituaries of tenants and employees of the building.   |
| <b>1932-1972</b>                  | Buffalo AY67 .B9 N4 1932-1972<br><b>Buffalo Evening News Almanac and Fact Book</b><br>Buffalo, NY: Buffalo Evening News   | Includes deaths of prominent Buffalonians. See <i>Chronology, Deaths, or Necrology</i> in the index to find the appropriate pages in each edition. Some years have a separate sports necrology.  |
| <b>1939-1945</b>                  | Ref. F129 .B8 B695<br><b>Buffalo and Vicinity Heroes Who Gave Lives for Nation</b><br>Buffalo, NY: Buffalo Courier-Express, 1945  | Names of World War II casualties   |
| <b>1939-1945</b>                  | Buffalo AY67 .B9 N4 1947<br>Buffalo Evening News Almanac and Fact Book<br><b>Names of Buffalo and Western New York Residents Who Gave Their Lives in the Service in World War II</b><br>Buffalo, NY: Buffalo Evening News, 1947   |  |
| <b>1940-1945</b>                  | GRO Desk Ref. #15<br><b>The Bellringer, a Selected Index, Dec. 1940-1945</b><br>Compiled 2002   | A brief list of deaths of employees and relatives at Bell Aircraft Corp.<br><br><b>Ask for this title at the Information Desk in the Grosvenor Room.</b>   |
| <b>1943-1944</b>                  | GRO Desk Ref. #28<br><b>The Curtiss Wright-er, a Selected Index, 1943-1944</b><br>Compiled Dec 2001   | Includes deaths of Curtiss-Wright employees and their relatives and those who died in service.<br><br><b>Ask for this title at the Information Desk in the Grosvenor Room.</b>   |
| <b>1959-1973</b>                  | Buffalo *F127 .E6 K28 2004<br>Kavanagh, Patrick Brian, comp.<br><b>In Remembrance of: Vietnam War Casualties of Western New York</b><br>New York: [2004]  | Photocopies of newspaper clippings and short biographies taken from Internet resources   |
| <b>1969-1978</b>                  | GRO *CT213 .N472 1980 [on microfilm cabinets]<br><b>The New York Times Obituaries Index II, 1969-1978</b><br>New York: New York Times, 1980   | Covers the years 1969-1978. Includes prominent Buffalonians.   |
| <b>1983-1996</b>                  | GRO Ref. *AI3 .W4 1983-1996<br><b>Western New York Index</b><br>[Buffalo, NY: The Library]  | A name section at the end of each volume includes obituaries. GRO's set is shelved just behind the Ref desk.   |

## BOOKS WITH LISTS OF DEATHS

|           |  |  |
|-----------|--|--|
| 1998-1999 | Buffalo *F127 .E6 D44 1999<br>Kulp, Suzanne, comp.<br><b>Index to All of 1998 and 1999 (through Sept. 23) Death Notices, Obituaries and Reports of Deaths as Appeared in the Buffalo News, Buffalo, NY</b><br>Orchard Park, NY: Suzanne Kulp, [1999] |  |
|-----------|--|--|

## CARD FILES

**Local History File:** A card index to local newspapers and periodicals; includes citations to articles about people, places, events, and organizations in the Buffalo area. The most thorough coverage is from 1930-1982, with fewer entries for earlier and later dates. It includes obituaries, but smaller, classified style death notices are rare. The *Local History File* is continued by the *Western New York Index* (see *Books*, above). The *Local History File* may also lead you to an obituary in one of our scrapbooks. Search by your ancestor's name (Last name, First name) to find an obituary.

Also try these headings if they are applicable to your ancestor:

*Accidents*

*Automobiles. Accidents*

*Deaths*

*Drowning*

*Explosions*

*Fires*



*Murders*

*Railroads. Accidents*

**Vital Index of Early Western New York Families:** A card file maintained by the Western New York Genealogical Society (WNYGS), which cites names found in their collection and in records held elsewhere. Mostly 1800s.

## DATABASES

<http://www.buffalolib.org/content/research>

| Name  | Description   | Access   |
|---|---|--|
|  | Includes the Social Security Death Index (SSDI). Offers collections of death records from all over the US but none that specifically focus on Buffalo or Erie County. Mortality census schedules are available for 1850-1880. A Prospect Lawn Cemetery (Hamburg, NY) record <i>index</i> 1850-1950 is included. | Available for walk-in users at every public library in Erie County. No at-home use.  |
|  | The Book Collection includes family and local histories which may list death dates. Revolutionary War pension files will often list soldier death dates in widow's pensions. Memorials are included in the U.S. Serial Set. Freedman's Bank Records may include a death certificate in rare cases.              | Available for walk-in users at every public library in Erie County. Also available from home with a valid Buffalo and Erie County Public Library card. Sign in at address above. |

## NEWSPAPERS

Most of our local newspaper collection is on microfilm

If you know the exact, or approximate, date of death, you can browse the microfilm for the days or weeks following the death.

Printing: black & white and is 20 cents (10 cents on newer machines) per 8.5 x 11 page.

Saving: 5 digital microfilm machines allow images to be saved to your flash/jump drive.

The major Buffalo daily newspapers listed below are usually good places to start your search. Around the late 19th and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, there were also many smaller publications, including newspapers directed to various ethnic groups and foreign language readers. See our newspaper guides and timeline for these titles: <http://www.buffalolib.org/content/grosvenor/guides-publications#newspapers>

For more information on searching for death notices see our *Death Notice and Obituary* guide: <http://www.buffalolib.org/content/grosvenor/guides-publications#13>

\*\*See also "Selected Websites" on the following page for more newspaper searching options.\*\*

### **Grosvenor Room Staff can help you locate the following on microfilm:**

- *Buffalo (Evening) News* on Microfilm, 1881 to present

- *(Buffalo) Courier Express* on Microfilm, 1926-1982

Where else to look: When the *Courier-Express* folded in 1982, its archives went to the Butler Library at **Buffalo State College**. According to the archive inventory, there are local and national obituaries from 1956-1982 in their collection.

- *Buffalo News* Death Notices on Microfilm, 1962-1976  
The Western New York Genealogical Society (WNYGS) has special microfilms of the death notices from the *Buffalo News* from 1962 to 1976.

### **Buffalo News Database**, obituaries from 1989 to present

<http://www.buffalolib.org/content/research>

Full-text of articles from the *Buffalo News*, 1989 to the present. It includes obituaries, which are narrative articles about someone of prominence. It does not include death notices, which are considered classified ads and give only basic facts about the deceased and the funeral or burial. The *Buffalo News* database also does not include pictures or advertisements.

For use at any BECPL branch and at home. Articles may be printed for \$.10 per page and emailed.

### **Buffalo News web site**, death notices from 1997 to present

<http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/buffalonews/>

Not to be confused with the *Buffalo News* database is the Buffalo News commercial website, which anyone may access on the internet. It has an archive of death notices from Sept. 11, 1997 to the present.



| <b>PERIODICALS</b>   |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <b>Western New York Genealogical Society Journal - GRO F118 .W46A</b>  |   |  |
| The society's journal dates back to 1974 and includes many Erie County record transcriptions. Here are some select Erie Co. indexing projects that have been featured: |   |  |
| <b>DATE RANGE</b>  | <b>WNYGS JOURNAL ARTICLE</b>                                    | <b>DATES PUBLISHED</b>                             |
| 1800 - 1880  | Erie County Surrogate Index, 1800 - 1900                        | 9/1997 – 3/1999; 9/1999 - 3/2000; 12/2005 - 3/2008 |
| 1808 - 1870  | A Record of Deaths in the Town of Lancaster                     | A - C, 6/1991; C - P, 9/1991; R - Z, 12/1991       |
| 1824 - 1878  | Erie County Deaths from Universalist Sources                    | A - C, 12/2000; D - Z, 3/2001;                     |
| 1833 - 1869  | Necrology of our Early Settlers                                 | A - K, 9/1999; L - Y, 12/1999                      |
| 1878 - 1902  | Index to the Erie County Medical Examiners Records, 1878 - 1902 | 9/2007 - 9/2013, 3/2014, 6/2014                    |

| <b>SCRAPBOOKS</b>  | <b>NOTES</b>   |
|--|--|
| The Buffalo scrapbooks in GRO were compiled roughly from 1900 to 1960, and are comprised largely of local newspaper clippings and ephemera. All are indexed in the <i>Local History File</i> . The following volumes are of particular interest to obituary researchers: |  |
| GRO *F129 .B8 B58<br><b>Scrap-book of Local Obituary Notices and Biographical Sketches 1861-1864</b><br>[1921?]  | Mostly Civil War casualties  |
| GRO *F129 .B8 B692414 v.10, pp. 158-171<br><b>Buffalo Military Affairs</b>   | Vietnam War casualties from Western New York published on May 30, 1968   |
| GRO *F129 .B8 B69265<br><b>Local Biographies</b>   | There are about 100 volumes in this set, which includes obituaries of prominent residents. All are indexed in the <i>Local History File</i> .                                  |
| GRO *F129 .B8 B6928, vols.5-8<br><b>Local History</b><br>[1901-1908, 1925-1926, 1928, 1941, 1944]  | Various necrologies are scattered throughout these volumes. A list was appended to the GRO Ref. Desk copy of the <i>Necrology</i> by Steven Seegal (see <i>Books</i> , above). |

| <b>SELECTED WEBSITES</b>  | <b>NOTES</b>   |
|---|--|
| <a href="http://www.ci.buffalo.ny.us/Home/City_Departments/City_Clerk/">http://www.ci.buffalo.ny.us/Home/City_Departments/City_Clerk/</a><br><b>City of Buffalo Death Records</b>                     | Instructions and downloadable form for requesting vital records from Buffalo's City Hall. Click on genealogy records or vital records links. |
| <a href="http://www.wnygs.org/erie-vr.html">http://www.wnygs.org/erie-vr.html</a><br><b>First Vital Statistics Records, Erie County</b>   | Gives the dates of the earliest known vital records, for every town and village in Erie Co.  |
| <a href="http://www.elections.erie.gov/public-officials-2/#PublicOfficials">http://www.elections.erie.gov/public-officials-2/#PublicOfficials</a><br><b>Erie County Directory of Public Officials</b> | Gives names, addresses, and contact information for every town and village clerk in Erie County.   |
| <a href="https://familysearch.org/search/collection/1680846">https://familysearch.org/search/collection/1680846</a><br><b>Family Search – New York State Deaths and Burials</b>                       | Includes over 700,000 deaths from 1795-1952.   |
| <a href="https://familysearch.org/search/collection/1920234">https://familysearch.org/search/collection/1920234</a><br><b>FamilySearch – New York Probate Records</b>                                 | Includes thousands of estate papers and wills for Erie Co. as well as many other New York State locations.                                   |
| <a href="http://www.findagrave.com/">http://www.findagrave.com/</a><br><b>Find a grave</b>  | Millions of transcribed cemetery markers, searchable by name and location.   |

| SELECTED WEBSITES   | NOTES  |
|---|--|
| <a href="http://www.forest-lawn.com/genealogy/locate-a-loved-one">http://www.forest-lawn.com/genealogy/locate-a-loved-one</a><br><b>Forest Lawn Cemetery, Buffalo, NY</b>   | Online cemetery records for the Forest Lawn Group of Cemeteries, including St. Matthew's in West Seneca, Lakeside in Hamburg, Williamsville Cemetery, as well as Buffalo Cremation.  |
| <a href="http://www.fultonhistory.com">http://www.fultonhistory.com</a><br><b>Fulton History – Newspapers</b>   | Millions of pages of New York State newspapers including some from Buffalo and Erie County.  |
| <a href="http://www.buffalonydeaths.com/">http://www.buffalonydeaths.com/</a><br><b>Index to Select Death Notices, 1872-2011*</b>   | *Not comprehensive, includes many individuals listed in Buffalo newspaper death notices. A useful search box is near bottom of main page.  |
| <a href="http://www.legacy.com">www.legacy.com</a><br><b>Legacy.com</b>   | Searchable newspaper obituaries. Not always full text.   |
| <a href="https://archive.org/details/nydeathindex">https://archive.org/details/nydeathindex</a><br><b>New York State Death Index, 1880-1956</b>   | Free access to the scanned index through the Internet Archive and Reclaim the Records. NYC is not included. Buffalo, Albany, and Yonkers are not included until 1914. <a href="http://www.reclaimtherecords.org/">www.reclaimtherecords.org/</a> |
| <a href="https://health.data.ny.gov/Health/Genealogical-Research-Death-Index-Beginning-1957/vafa-pf2s">https://health.data.ny.gov/Health/Genealogical-Research-Death-Index-Beginning-1957/vafa-pf2s</a><br><b>New York State Death Index, 1957-50 years ago</b> | An index of New York State deaths which occurred from 1957 to 50 years ago. New York City is not included.   |
| <a href="http://www.health.state.ny.us/vital_records/death.htm">http://www.health.state.ny.us/vital_records/death.htm</a><br><b>New York State Department of Health: Death Certificates</b>   | Instructions and downloadable forms. Death certificates may be ordered by telephone, mail, fax, or online.   |
| <a href="http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~obituary/">http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~obituary/</a><br><b>Obituary Daily Times</b>  | A daily index of published obituaries. It is distributed freely, and usually has over 2,500 entries a day from all over North America.   |
| <a href="http://www.deathindexes.com/newyork/">http://www.deathindexes.com/newyork/</a><br><b>Online New York Death Records, Indexes &amp; Obituaries</b>   | Offers links to websites with names and dates of people who died in New York State.  |
| <a href="http://www.sampubco.com/">http://www.sampubco.com/</a><br><b>SAMPUBCO</b>  | Free indexes to numerous New York State wills and estate papers.   |
| <a href="https://familysearch.org/search/collection/1202535">https://familysearch.org/search/collection/1202535</a><br><b>U.S. Social Security Death Index (SSDI)</b>   | Free database of over 80 million Americans who died from 1936 until 2 years ago.   |

| VERTICAL FILES  |
|---|
| Vertical files are loose articles and pamphlets collected in folders. The following folders have some lists of war casualties. Additional obituaries are filed by occupation (Authors, Architects, etc.). |
| <i>Civil War</i><br><i>Middle East Wars and Western New York</i><br><i>War of 1812</i>  |

## VITAL RECORDS INDEX FOR NY STATE

The Buffalo and Erie County Public Library is a designated repository for New York State Vital Records Index on microfiche. There is a 50-year privacy restriction, which means that the index does not include deaths that occurred less than 50 years ago. An additional year of the index is added as it becomes available from the NY State Archives.

New York State Department of Health laws require us to ask for a B&ECPL library card or a picture ID from each researcher. Printing copies from the index is not permitted. Researchers may use one fiche at a time.

This index gives names and dates of death. To get a copy of the actual death certificate, you must contact the Department of Health in Albany or the city/town in which the death occurred. The Library does not have any actual death certificates, but librarians can help you find addresses for the appropriate offices that do.

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| 1881 to 1913            | Microfiche includes all of New York State <u>except</u> Albany, Buffalo, New York City, and Yonkers                       |
| 1914 to fifty years ago | Microfiche includes all of New York State <u>including</u> Albany, Buffalo, and Yonkers, but still excludes New York City |

## THE ONLINE CATALOG OF THE BECPL

<http://www.buffalolib.org/vufind/>

Search the catalog for books, magazines, CDs, videos, maps, and manuscripts owned by the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library. It includes the Grosvenor Room, all departments in the Central Library, and every town and branch library. Access at the web address above.

To find sources in our collection beyond those listed in this guide, try these **Subject** searches:

BUFFALO N Y GENEALOGY  
DEATH NOTICES NEW YORK STATE BUFFALO  
DEATH NOTICES NEW YORK STATE ERIE COUNTY  
ERIE COUNTY N Y GENEALOGY  
OBITUARIES INDEXES  
OBITUARIES NEW YORK STATE ERIE COUNTY  
OBITUARIES NEW YORK STATE WESTERN  
REGISTERS OF BIRTHS ETC NEW YORK STATE BUFFALO  
REGISTERS OF BIRTHS ETC NEW YORK STATE ERIE COUNTY

## WHAT ABOUT CORONER'S RECORDS?

**Erie County Medical Examiner's Office has coroner's records from 1882 – present.**

Reports are not open to the public. Copies are available to the next of kin. In order to obtain records write to the following address supplying as much information identifying information as possible about the deceased (i.e. name, age, where lived, etc.) and details of their death. Staff time is limited for this type of research, so the turn-around time will depend on staff workload.

Erie County Medical Examiner's Office  
501 Kensington Ave.  
Buffalo, NY 14214  
(716)-961-7591

## WHAT ABOUT CORONER'S RECORDS?

### Buffalo History Museum

The museum's research library has microfilmed coroner's records from October 1878 – January 1902.

1 Museum Court  
Buffalo, NY 14216-3199  
library@buffalohistory.org  
716.873.9644 x 306

<http://www.buffalohistory.org/Learn/Research-Library.aspx>

### Proceedings of the Board of Supervisors of Erie County – Buffalo F127 .E6 S82

Brief details of inquests can be found in many early volumes of the proceedings (abt.1878-1920). Details often include name of deceased, coroner, where deceased was found or where s/he was from, items found with deceased, when deceased was found, family members or other individuals associated with the deceased. To find the coroner's reports in the proceedings look in the index under Coroners or Medical Examiner.

### Western New York Genealogical Society Journal – GRO F118 .W46A; GRO current periodical shelving

The Society has indexed Erie County Medical Examiner's records from 1878-1902 in their journal. The record transcriptions begin in the September 2007 issue. Information abstracted includes name, age, nativity, residence, date of death, book and page number.

## WHAT ABOUT FUNERAL HOME RECORDS?

The Grosvenor Room only has records of the **Stephan-Burns Funeral Home (See Books With Lists of Deaths, p. 5)**. Other funeral homes should be contacted directly for the whereabouts of records. For those that no longer exist, check Buffalo City directories and *Local History File* to determine when the funeral home went out of business.

According to the Erie-Niagara Funeral Directors Association (<http://www.enfda.org/index.html>), there are four things that could happen to the records when a funeral home closes:

1. They could go to a nearby mortuary
2. They could go to the local historical society
3. They could remain in the family who operated the original funeral home
4. They could be discarded

## WHERE ELSE CAN I LOOK UP DEATHS?

### Buffalo History Museum's Research Library

1 Museum Court  
Buffalo, NY 14216-3199  
library@buffalohistory.org  
716.873.9644 x 306

<http://buffalohistory.org/Learn/Research-Library.aspx>

Hours: Wednesday through Saturday, 1 PM to 5 PM

## NOTES

Has in index to obituaries in newspapers, alphabetical by last name. For the 1800s, death notices are included. For the 1900s, only actual obituaries are listed.

\$ Museum admission for non-members. Free for members and high school students with a valid ID card. Children under 9 are not admitted to the Library.

| WHERE ELSE CAN I LOOK UP DEATHS?  | NOTES   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Butler Library</b><br/> Archives and Special Collections<br/> Buffalo State College<br/> 1300 Elmwood Avenue<br/> Buffalo, NY 14222<br/> (716) 878-6308<br/> Hours: Monday through Friday, 8 AM to 4 PM<br/> <a href="http://bsclib01.buffalostate.edu/library/archives/">http://bsclib01.buffalostate.edu/library/archives/</a></p>  | <p>Has local and national obituaries from 1956-1982 in the <i>Courier-Express</i> collection. Appointments are necessary.</p>   |
| <p><b>City of Buffalo Inactive Records Center</b><br/> 85 River Rock Drive, Suite 301<br/> Buffalo, NY 14207<br/> (716) 874-6401, (716) 570-8721<br/> Hours: Monday through Friday, 9 AM to 4 PM<br/> <a href="http://www.city-buffalo.com/Home/City_Departments/City_Clerk/RecordsManagement">http://www.city-buffalo.com/Home/City_Departments/City_Clerk/RecordsManagement</a></p> | <p>Has an index of City of Buffalo deaths, 1852-1944, on CD-ROM. Walk-ins are welcome but researchers should call ahead to be sure the office is staffed before arriving.</p>   |
| <p><b>Erie County Surrogate's Court Record Room</b><br/> 92 Franklin Street (Erie County Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor)<br/> Buffalo, New York 14202<br/> (716)-845-2560<br/> Hours: Monday through Friday, 9 AM to 5 PM<br/> <a href="http://www.nycourts.gov/courts/8jd/erie/surrogates/genealogy.shtml">http://www.nycourts.gov/courts/8jd/erie/surrogates/genealogy.shtml</a></p>    | <p>This office has an index of its estate records. Estate records older than 1973 are stored off-site and will take 3 or more days to retrieve.</p> <p>The office carries wills of deceased persons and trust documents, petitions for probate, administration, judicial settlement, and guardianship, and other documents.</p> |