

Obituary Index Search Tips

Basic Search

- A Last Name is not required but is highly recommended.
- If the person has no last name, such as "Sister Mary Patrice," enter "Unknown" or "Unk."
- A first name is optional.
- A date is optional.

EXAMPLE: You wish to search for Jane Campbell's obituary. Enter the last name of "Campbell." Enter the first name of "Jane." If you do not know when Jane Campbell died, leave the date field blank. Select the number of results per page that you wish to view from the drop down menu. Click "Search." Wait for results. Upon completion of searching the Database, you will possibly find a result set of one or more matches. The first result set provided the individual's name and date of publication for article entries that match the search criteria. To learn the details for that article, click on the underlined name. This will open a pop-up window which itemizes the type of article, individual's name, name of newspaper that published the article, date of publication (not the date of the event), and any further details that were abstracted. If you do not get the desired results or there are too many possibilities for Jane Campbell, modify your basic search or try the advanced search. Remember, an obituary for a woman was commonly recorded under her husband's name. Men sometimes used initials instead of their first name. For example, John C. Campbell may have been recorded as J. C. Campbell. Infants and children may have been recorded only as "child/infant/son/daughter of." In this case, enter the last name and leave the first name field blank or try "Unk" or "Unknown" as your search term.

Advanced Search

- A Last Name is not required but is recommended.
- If the person has no last name, such as "Sister Mary Patrice," enter "Unknown" or "Unk."
- A first name is optional.
- A date is optional.

Advanced Search has the addition of more search fields and greater variety within those fields. Last names and Maiden Names can be searched by exact spelling, partial matches, soundex matches, or with a wild card. First and middle names can be searched by exact spelling or beginning letters. Years can be searched by exact year, with a +/-1 degree of variation, or by an entire decade.

EXAMPLE: You wish to search for John Christie's obituary. Enter the Last Name of "Christie." From the drop down menu after the last name, you can select "Exact, Partial, Soundex, or Wild Card." This same set of choices is also operational for the Maiden Name field. If you use "Exact," only the Christie spelling will be searched. If you use

"Partial," and enter "Christ," all last names containing that combination of letters anywhere in the word will be searched (i.e. Christie, Christy, Gilchrist, etc.) If you use "Soundex," all "Soundex" possibilities will be searched. If you want to use "Wild Card" replace any letters with an asterisk (*) and all possibilities will be searched. For example, if you enter Christ*, the search will result in any surname beginning with Christ and ending in any letter combination (Christie, Christy, Christley, Christianson, etc.) The asterisk may be placed anywhere in the word. For example, entering Chr*st will result in any surname variations with letter combinations changing in the middle of the name (Chriest, Christ, Chroust).

Enter the First Name of "John." From the drop down menu after the first name, you can select "Exact Match" or "Begins With." Exact Match will return results with exact spelling. "Begins With" will return all given names that begin with a letter or set of letters. Searching "Begins With" with only the letter "J" will yield the most results, including initials (J B, J C, James, Jack, Jennifer, John, Joseph), while searching "Begins With" with a partial name, such as "Jo," will return a narrower field (John, John C, Jonathan, Joseph).

The Title Search field offers choices from its drop down menu. This field is helpful if you are searching for a physician, for example, but have no other information except a last name.

The Maiden Name field can be useful when searching for female individuals with an unknown married name.

The Year of Death and Year of Birth also offer several options through the drop down menus. "Exact," means the exact year of the event. If you're not absolutely sure of the year, you can use the "+/- 1" option to return results on either immediate side of a given year. To use the "Decade" field, enter a year, and the search will return results for the decade containing that year. For example, searching "1886" and using the "Decade" field will return all results within the years 1880-1889 for the criteria being searched.

If you do not obtain the desired results or there are too many possibilities, keep modifying your search.