OBITUARY & DEATH NOTICE RESOURCES

MILWAUKEE PUBLIC LIBRARY

The reference resources described below are available for use in locating death notices and obituaries. An obituary is a news article about a person written by a reporter. A death notice is a paid ad, usually placed by the funeral home.

Except as indicated below, there are no general indexes to either The Milwaukee Journal or the Milwaukee Sentinel. Materials are located in the Frank P. Zeidler Humanities Room or the Periodicals Department.

Frank P. Zeidler Humanities Room

Subject Catalog of the Library of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, R016.973-W811. This multi-volume set is the source to use to see if the obituary of a prominent Wisconsinite can be found in the Wisconsin Necrology (1846-1968), R929.3 W811, a microfilmed set of obituaries located at the Periodicals Service Desk. The citation provides the column and page number for each name.

Index to Deaths Reported in The Wisconsin Jewish Chronicle, 1921-1996, compiled by Manning M. Bookstaff, R929.3-B726I. Available at the desk. The Library’s holdings of this newspaper begin with September 23rd, 1938. The newspaper is available at the Periodicals Service Desk.

Death Notices/Obits, 1930’s(?) – June 30, 1992: Surname Index, compiled by the Milwaukee County Genealogical Society, R929.3-M662DE. Available at the desk. This two-volume work is an alphabetical list of surnames found in the Death Notices/Obits, 1930’s(?) – June 30, 1992 microfilm (R929.3-M662D), located at the Periodicals Service Desk.

Obituaries, Milwaukee Journal/Milwaukee Sentinel, 1958-1988, R929.3-O13. A collection of obituaries of prominent people clipped from these newspapers. There is a volume for each year from 1958 through 1988. The Milwaukee Sentinel clippings start in 1958. The Milwaukee Journal clippings start in 1971. The clippings are in date order. There is an index at the back of each volume as well as a separate three-volume cumulative index.

Milwaukee Area Necrology, 1992-1998, compiled by Manning M. Bookstaff, R929.3-B726. Available at the desk. An index to names appearing in death notices, obituaries, and advertisements memorializing the deceased. There is one volume for each year. Newspapers checked were The Milwaukee Journal, Milwaukee Sentinel, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, The Italian Times, and The Wisconsin Jewish Chronicle.

Milwaukee's German Newspapers: An Index of Death Notices and Related Items, 1844-1930, compiled by Gary Rebholz, R929.377595 R291. Available at the desk. This multi-volume work indexes death notices from Milwaukee German-language newspapers. Many German newspapers are available at the Periodicals Service Desk.

The Milwaukee Journal Newspaper Index, 1915-1917, R071.7595 M6675. Available at the desk. This resource indexes articles, obituaries and death notices. The newspaper is available at the Periodicals Service Desk.

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Periodicals Department

The Milwaukee Public Library owns many English and foreign-language newspapers, but most are not indexed.

Milwaukee Sentinel Index, 1837 - 1890
This is an alphabetical card catalog index to the newspaper. This is an excellent source for death notices and obituaries. There is also a microfilm copy of this index at the Periodicals Service Desk.

Wisconsin Necrology (Microfilm), R929.3-W811.
This microfilm, kept at the Periodicals Service Desk, contains obituaries of prominent Wisconsin residents from throughout the State for the years 1846-1968. The obituaries were taken from newspapers statewide. The names are included in the Subject Catalog of the Library of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin (R016.973 -W811) shelved in the Frank P. Zeidler Humanities Room. The index provides the column and page number for each name.

Death Notices/Obits, 1930’s(?) – June 30, 1992, (Microfilm), R929.3-M662D.
Includes death notices and obituaries clipped by Milwaukee County Genealogical Society members from The Milwaukee Journal and Milwaukee Sentinel. Also includes some notices and obituaries collected from other newspapers.


The Italian Times (Print)
Death notices from 1992-1998 are indexed in the Milwaukee Area Necrology (R929.3 B726), compiled by Manning M. Bookstaff (R929.3-B726). This index is kept at the desk in the Frank P. Zeidler Humanities Room.

The Wisconsin Jewish Chronicle (Print and Microfilm)
Death notices from 1992-1998 are indexed in the Milwaukee Area Necrology (R929.3-B726). Death notices from 1921-1996 are indexed in the Index to Deaths Reported in the Wisconsin Jewish Chronicle (R929.3-B761). Manning M. Bookstaff compiled both titles. These indexes are kept at the desk in the Frank P. Zeidler Humanities Room.

Kuryer Polski (Print and Microfilm)
Death notices from 1900-1935 from the first American Polish-language daily newspaper (1888-1962) are indexed in the Kuryer Polski Indexing Project that can be searched in the Polish Genealogical Society of America website, http://www.pgsa.org.