



Birth, Marriage, and Death Records

A Research Guide

Birth Records

Indiana counties began recording births in 1882. However, record keeping was sporadic until 1907 when stricter laws were enacted. The State of Indiana began keeping birth records in October 1907.

The Local History & Genealogy collection includes the WPA Index to Births for Delaware County 1882-1920. We also provide access to birth records via [AncestryLibrary.com](https://www.ancestry.com).

If a birth record cannot be located, you could use other sources, such as federal census records to narrow down a birth date. For example, the 1900 federal census includes the month and the year a person was born. All available federal census records for the entire country, are available online via [AncestryLibrary.com](https://www.ancestry.com). You can access this database at any Muncie Public Library computer lab.

If a person was born before birth records were kept, you could possibly verify a birth date by a death record, a cemetery or funeral home record, an obituary, or a marriage application. Copies of original birth records for Delaware County may be obtained from the Health Department's [Vital Records Division](#).

Birth records can also be obtained from the [Indiana State Department of Health](#).

Marriage Records

Carnegie Library is unique in that we house the original marriage books from the Delaware County Clerk's Office from 1827-1996.

We also have indexes to Delaware County Marriages from 1827-1996. Marriage applications, which began in 1905 in Delaware County, contain the most information of genealogical value. Some of the items listed on the record are parents' names, birth dates, addresses, and occupations of the bride and groom.

Marriage records prior to 1905 contain only the names of the bride and groom and the date. Marriage records from 1827-1957 are available on microfilm.

Marriage records can also be found online via [AncestryLibrary.com](https://www.ancestry.com) and [FamilySearch.org](https://www.familysearch.org).

Death Records

Indiana counties began recording deaths in 1882. Copies of original death records for Delaware County may be obtained from the Health Department's [Vital Records Division](#). However, we have several other resources that will help find death information.

The Local History & Genealogy collection includes the WPA Index to Deaths for Delaware County 1882-1920. We also provide access to death records via [AncestryLibrary.com](#).

If a death record cannot be located, other sources may provide death information.

Obituary Index

Carnegie Library has a one-of-a-kind obituary card index that contains entries from 1943-2001. Most of these indexes are now available via our [Muncie/Delaware County Digital Resource Library](#), and new entries are added to the online database daily. There is an earlier card index for newspapers 1837-1942, but please note that obituaries are rarely found in newspapers prior to the early 1900s. Early death notices are spread throughout the newspaper. Obituary sections do not appear in Muncie newspapers until the late 1950s. Muncie newspapers are available on microfilm at the Carnegie Library. If an obituary does not appear in our index, you can find death dates via the Social Security Death Index, funeral home records, cemetery records, etc. You may also find more recent death dates on the [Muncie Star Press](#) online article archives.

Funeral Home Records

Carnegie Library has records from local funeral homes online via the [Muncie/Delaware County Digital Resource Library](#). The bulk of the records in this database are from the Meeks, Parson, and Faulkner mortuaries in Muncie.

Funeral home records may contain the cause of death, the cemetery in which the person was buried, parents' names, an obituary, and perhaps even a copy of the death certificate.

Cemetery Indexes

Our collection includes cemetery indexes for most Delaware County cemeteries. We have an online database of records from [Beech Grove Cemetery](#) available via the [Muncie/Delaware County Digital Resource Library](#).

The Beech Grove Cemetery index contains over 42,000 entries. The cemetery opened in 1841, but records date back to 1828 as some remains from older cemeteries were re-interred at Beech Grove. New records are added to the database as they become available to the library.

Social Security Death Index

The Social Security Death Index contains death dates for persons of which a death benefit was claimed. The database contains deaths from the mid 1960s to present. This resource is available online via [AncestryLibrary.com](#).

Please note that the release of the Master Death File by the Social Security Administration is designed to prevent fraud and identity theft. For further information go to: <http://usgovinfo.about.com/cs/consumer/a/deathmaster.htm>