

I N T R O D U C T I O N

CURRY COUNTY NEW MEXICO ABSTRACTS OF OBITUARIES 1912-2005

RECENT OBITUARIES ARE LISTED AT LEGACY.COM
<http://www.legacy.com/cnjonline/Obituaries.asp>

INTRODUCTION TO THE OBITUARY ABSTRACT INDEX

TO OBTAIN A COPY OF AN OBITUARY:

Photocopies of obituaries from 1990 to 2006 can be found at the Family History Library of Salt Lake City, Utah as well as at the Clovis-Carver Public Library, 701 N. Main St., Clovis, NM 88101 Also email: library@cityofclovis.org

Staff members are willing to assist you.

Yearbooks with full obituaries are on microfilm (below) at the Family History Library and can be loaned to your local Family History Center. A simpler alternative is to email the Clovis-Carver Public Library and request that the obituary you request (1990-2005) be photocopied and emailed to you: library@cityofclovis.org

Use the same email address to request a lookup of the newspaper's earlier obituaries.

YEAR	FILM NUMBER & ITEM NUMBER	DGS NUMBER
1990 & 1991	1598351 items 1 & 2	7951389
1992	1598338 item 8	8129953
1993 & 1994	1598350 items 11 & 12	7857381
1995	1598374 item 1	
1996	1598493 item 3	7950011
1997	2056002 item 12	
1998	2056080 item 2	8701106
1999	1425446 item 3	7842496
2000	1440352 item 6	8690137
2001	1440635 item 8	8690133
2002	1440698 item 1	
2003	1573623 item 5	7951851
2004 1/1-5/18	1574108 item 2	7952029
2004 5/19-12/31	1574109	

FORMAT

Please keep in mind that the reference date is not the date of death, but the date the obituary, or death notice that appeared in the paper. Sometimes the notice is simply a "Card of Thanks" in the advertising section. Occasionally a probate notice will be noted, in lieu of a death notice.

The small "p" or "p*" refers to "pioneer," meaning a pioneer of Curry County. MIA or M.I.A. refers to "Missing in Action" during the war. KIA or K.I.A. refers to "Killed in Action" during the war. If a record has 2 exact entries, check to see if two separate newspaper items mention that individual. Variations in spelling may have occurred in different editions of the newspaper.

Because of computer limitations there was no way to reflect the exact age of deceased infants, therefore all children that died under the age of two, even if stillborn, were listed as "1" year of age.

Be sure to check all possible spellings of the surname you are researching. There were some instances where a name was spelled differently in two different editions of the newspaper.

Occasionally the sex of an individual could not be determined from the obituary or death notice. All others were identified with MR for a male, MS or MRS or MISS for females.

If you are sure the person you are seeking died in the Clovis area and is not listed in the index, consult the original newspapers on microfilm. (They are housed at the Clovis-Carver Public Library, Clovis, New Mexico, also at the University of New Mexico Zimmerman Library, Albuquerque, NM and at the New Mexico State University library in Las Cruces, NM) It is possible that we may have missed him/her. Some of the originals were difficult to read.

POPULATION of Clovis/Curry County:

In 1910 it was 3,255
In 1920 it was 4,904
In 1930 it was 8,027
In 1940 it was 10,065
In 1950 it was 17,318
In 1960 it was 23,713
In 1970 it was 28,495
In 1980 it was 31,194
In 1990 it was 42,207
In 2000 it was 45,044

From 1996 to 1997, the county's population decreased 2.3%. Two other eastern New Mexico counties also showed a decrease in population during the same period. However, the state of New Mexico's population rose from 1.515 million people in 1990 to 1.729 million in 1997. The state's population showed a decrease during the year 1998.

In 1925 a New Mexico state health bulletin reported that 13% of New Mexico babies died before their first birthday (see NJ Sep. 3, 1925).

On January 1, 1931 there had been reported 195 deaths and 474 births during the previous year. (See News Journal for Jan. 1, 1931.)

Birth and death data published for 1954: There were 848 births, 176 deaths; in 1955 there were 962 births and 166 deaths.

NOTABLE:

The Clovis News was begun in 1907 and ran weekly. The Clovis Journal was started in 1909 and it ran weekly. The papers were published daily, for about six months, then weeklies were published until 1929 when the two papers merged into the Clovis News-Journal.

In June 1953 there was an Oldtimers Registration in which 325 people registered (see June 5, 1953).

In the March 21, 1999 edition of the paper an article was written about the Floyd community's recognition of citizens and service men. Biographical material is included.

CEMETERIES:

Lawn Haven Cemetery, located on east Llano Estacado Blvd. was started in March of 1950.

The Clovis Mission Garden of Memories, originally known as the Clovis Cemetery, was established in 1908. The first person buried there was a man named Nichols. The land (on west 7th St.) is on a corner of the claim which was homesteaded by C. M. Steed. Charles V. Steed owned and operated the cemetery until his death in 1938. The Steed Mortuary was the first in Clovis, begun when the city was started. (See News Journal of May 30, 1947, full text: "Cemetery Was Started in 1908: "Some of the history of the Clovis Cemetery was furnished to the News-Journal by Mrs. Mae Davidson Westfall, who recalls that it was established in 1908, and that the first person buried there was a man named Nichols.

"The cemetery land, she says, is on a corner of the claim which was homesteaded by C. M. Steed, now a resident of Dalhart, Texas. Charles V. Steed owned and operated the cemetery until his death nine years ago. The Steed Mortuary was the first in Clovis, begun when the city was started. Mr. Steed first had his mortuary equipment in the rear of his real estate office. Mr. Steed was concerned about beautifying the cemetery and had plans for improvements underway at the time of his death. It was he who first planned to drill a well so that irrigation would be available for care of grass, flowers, shrubs and trees. The well has since been drilled and now supplies moisture to keep the cemetery green.

"After Mr. Steed's death, his widow, Mrs. Una Steed, continued to operate the cemetery until Jan. 1, 1916. Realizing that Clovis was growing into a city and aware of the need for further improvements which she felt would create too large a responsibility for her, Mrs. Steed sold the cemetery to Albert Bruce,

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Llano Cemetery in Amarillo. Mr. Bruce already has made many improvements, and plans even more extensive beautification in the future.)"

The Johnson Funeral Home functioned for many years, but we have been unable to obtain their records.

Blacktower Cemetery - On Feb. 8, 1961 an article was published entitled "Blacktower Cemetery Being Defaced."

OUTLYING COMMUNITIES:

In Sept. 1925 the following Curry County communities were noted in regards to county fair plans (see Sep. 10, 1925): Center, Blacktower, Pleasant Hill, Prairie View, Grier, St. Vrain, Prairie Valley, Deep Lake, Echols Hill, Claud, Concord, West Chapel, Ruth, Frio, Grady, Bellview, Boney, Melrose, Texico, Fairfield, Hollene.

The history of Melrose was published in a 50th Anniversary issue dated August 16, 1956.

The Hollene Community women produced a Friendship Quilt in 1930. The list of names thereon identifies persons alive and living in that community in 1930. (See Hollene Community Friendship Quilt in the Family History Library Catalog.)

Also see Cemetery Records of Roosevelt County produced by the El Portal chapter of the D.A.R., as well as History of Causey, New Mexico Area and Its Pioneers by Laurence L. Little, Portales, NM.

OTHER SOURCES TO CONSULT:

State and Local Resources ON-SITE at the Clovis Branch Family History Center, 2800 Lore St., Clovis, NM (call numbers are in parenthesis):

New Mexico:

- ___Historical Encyclopedia of New Mexico (NM 550; NM 560)
- ___Cemetery Records of Southern New Mexico (6017973)
- ___Directory of Churches and Religious Institutions in New Mexico (6051186)
- ___Place Names of New Mexico (NM 202; NM 540)
- ___Historical Records Survey of New Mexico (6051288)
- ___Handy Genealogical Guide to New Mexico (6051310)
- ___New Mexico Newspapers (6046704)
- ___Territorial Press of New Mexico (NM 580)
- ___Index of New Mexico Death Certificates 1889-1934 (1991645;1991646)
- ___Funerals & Marriages in Texas and New Mexico (6046814)
- ___Guide to Public Vital Records in New Mexico (6051288)
- ___Federal Census Records for New Mexico (entire territory/state) 1850 thru 1930
- ___New Mexico D.A.R. Lineage Book (NM 540)

Curry County:

- ___High Plains Historical Foundation Book (NM 011; NM 660; NM 150)
- ___Curry County Cemeteries (NM011)
- ___Texico Cemetery Records (NM 070)

Church Records:

- ___Baptist: 1st Baptist Church of Clovis (NM 590)
- ___Catholic: Sacred Heart (0016753)
 - Our Lady of Guadalupe (0016752)
- ___LDS: History of the Clovis Ward (NM 050)
- ___Directories (telephone) for Clovis and Portales (various years)
- ___Obituary Index of the Clovis News Journal 1912-1999
- ___Obituaries of the Clovis News Journal 1990 - 1999
- ___Curry County Marriage Records 1909 - 1920 (NM 012;13;16;17)
- ___Bulletins of the Curry County Genealogical Society (NM 014)
- ___Index to Records of Muffley Funeral Home and Sherwood Mortuary 1964-1997, Clovis, Curry County, New Mexico, by Wanda Dunn
- ___Index to Records of Steed-Todd Funeral Home 1908-1999, Clovis, Curry County, New Mexico, by Wanda Dunn

Roosevelt County:

- ___History of Causey, Roosevelt Co.NM, including cemetery records (NM 650)
- ___Roosevelt County 1910 census (NM 650)
- ___Various personal biographies of or by local people (see BIO listings)
- ___Vital Records of Rio Arriba, San Miguel and Santa Fe counties (see catalog)

The Portales Public Library has microfilm copies of the Portales newspaper beginning with March 21, 1903 through current issues. There are approximately 40 reels of microfilm which are housed in their genealogy room.

HISTORY OF THE OBITUARY ABSTRACT INDEX

In 1992 the Curry County Genealogical Society undertook the copying of obituaries from the city's only newspaper, the Clovis News-Journal. This project was under the direction of Dotty Willmon. She suggested that we photocopy and index each year's obituaries as published by the newspaper beginning with 1990.

In 1993 the project was turned over to E.C. Shaeffer, director of the Clovis Branch Family History Center. Working with an all-volunteer staff, Shaeffer organized the obituary index extraction project which resulted in an index with approximately 50,000 entries, dating from 1912 through 2005. The Clovis Carver Public Library graciously loaned microfilms of the News-Journal to the Clovis Branch Family History Center for the project between 1993 and 1999, so that each and every newspaper publication was fully read by the volunteers. Deaths, obituaries, Cards of Thanks, a few probate notices and other notifications of reported deaths were extracted. It was not until the late 1970's that published obituaries were placed in a column. Earlier editions of the paper contained death notices that were scattered throughout the paper, which made finding them more difficult and far more time-consuming. The earliest microfilm available was for 1912.

The original database, designed by Tim Carlson, included the following fields: last name, first name, middle name (later this field was used for maiden names and/or marital status), day, month and year of the published reference and finally the deceased person's age, if given.

The volunteers included: Clarence Ampey, Ruth Ampey, Kara Broderick, Bill Brower, Harold Cutler, Wanda Dunn, Diana Elliott, Gladys Enders, Dorothy Floyd, Brandon Forste, Wanda Forste, Johnny Jacobs, Linda Kennedy, Don McAlavy, Ella Michael, Clara Nelson, Jean Norris, Helen Nutt, Kory Olsen, Edna Pollard, Ellen Richter, Madelyn Wilcock, Gladys Williamson and several missionaries of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints including Elders Bourne, James, Hall, Openshaw, Watts and Winn.