

DOCUMENTING OBITUARIES
FEARRINGTON GENEALOGY GROUP
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NOTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS
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1. Learn where to properly place obituaries in your software. Possibilities include a facts section, a memories section or in the notes section. Examine what the output looks like in reports to decide what works best for you.
2. Transcribe or copy-and-paste the entire obituary into your database. You can also scan an image of the obituary.
3. Provide the proper source and citation details according to genealogical guidelines. The citation should include the complete obituary.
4. Record all names, dates and places provided in the obituary including nicknames as alternate names. Record residences for living people. Record other facts such as religion, military or occupations.
5. If relationships are not clear, you can enter “unlinked” people in your database with notes for later linking to a family. Example “Adam Smith is an unlinked grandchild of Betty Smith Anderson”.
6. Use derived dates and places as placeholders until better sources are found. For example, you can usually assume that the parents of the deceased person were married before the deceased persons birth and they possibly lived where the deceased person was born; and you can estimate marriage dates from how long a couple have been married.
7. Use date modifiers (bef, abt, aft.) to provide estimated dates.
8. Use both the newspaper obituaries and funeral home obituaries as sources. Details may differ. Funeral homes may give spouse names when the newspaper lists only direct relatives; names and dates may be more complete on the funeral home sites.
9. Check Find-A-Grave or other cemetery databases for “pre-deceased” people to find birth, death, and burial details.

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