Funeral Home Records and Their Value in Genealogical Research, Part I

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Few detective novels would be complete without a description of the hero or heroine poking around a cemetery in search of clues to a mystery. If you decide to unravel mysteries of your own, such as those encountered in writing your family history, you will probably poke around a few cemeteries and many other places. Funeral homes are one of many locations genealogists find helpful in conducting a search.

Tracing your family history involves discovering information about your ancestors from many sources. The goal is to find records that give information to identify specific relatives and certify a family relationship.

Primary sources that document family relationships include civil records from such government offices such as those of the Clerk of Court or the Health Department. The office responsible for these records will need certain information to conduct a search. The full name of the relative, date of the vital event, place where the event occurred, your relationship and purpose for needing the information will be the main considerations of the official who will determine if a search can be conducted.

Requirements vary as to how specific the information must be before an agency will conduct a search. In Florida, a search can be costly if you cannot provide the State Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services Office with a specific date. You will be charged a fee for each five years searched.

Funeral home records can provide help in two ways. First, specific dates from funeral home records can be used in meeting the information request criteria of government offices. Second, funeral home records can be used in lieu of government records when responses to requests for information indicate no record exists at a public agency. Funeral home information can provide leads to other sources of information such as cemetery records and markers, obituaries, and church records. Often these sources give additional information about the ancestor you are searching and also about other family members, thus adding more to the picture you are composing of your family genealogy.

Florida funeral home records date back to the late 1800s in some instances. Records may be retained by the original owner after the sale of a business. If not, the records may be maintained by successive owners. Funeral home information is more complete after the 1930s and 1940s in Florida.

Use the same guidelines when corresponding with funeral home directors as those previously mentioned when writing to government bureaus. Write in simple language and be specific. Contact the public library for telephone directories of the locality in which the relative’s death occurred or request a funeral home directory compiled by state associations and the National Funeral Directors Association of the United States. A letter to the State Funeral Home Association in the state where you are searching should prove helpful as well.
The following list of Florida funeral homes should prove valuable as a tool in searching your family genealogy in Florida. Most funeral directors are receptive to the needs of persons making inquiries about their relatives and express a willingness to provide assistance useful to a genealogical search. This assistance is considered vital in tracing a family history and certifying family relationships. Comments by directors are added as needed to further assist you with your search.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FUNERAL HOME</th>
<th>COUNTY</th>
<th>DATE RECORDS BEGIN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Huggins-Copeland Funeral Home</td>
<td>ALACHUA</td>
<td>January 1, 1970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.O. Box 1305 - Gainesville, FL 32601</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnson-Hayes Funeral Home</td>
<td>1926 (old records from 1926 to 1943 are limited; from 1943 to the present records are good)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.O. Box 1248</td>
<td>1926</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gainesville, FL 32601</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Williams-Thomas Funeral Home</td>
<td>1929 (earlier records were destroyed in a fire)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.O. Box 1290 - Gainesville, FL 32601</td>
<td></td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>BAKER</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John M. Brinkley Mortician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.O. Box 491 - MacClenny, FL 32603</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BAY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Smith Funeral Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>505 N. MacArthur Ave. - Panama City, FL 32401</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>BREVARD</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wylie-Baxley Funeral Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.O. Box 428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cocoa, FL 32922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brevard Funeral Home South</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1001 S. Hickory St. - Melbourne, FL 32901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davis Funeral Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 E. Brevard Dr. - Melbourne, FL 32935</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith Funeral Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.O. Box 1497 - Titusville, FL 32780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BROWARD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kraeer Funeral Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>217 E. Hillsboro Blvd. - Deerfield Beach, FL 33441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Funeral Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4343 N. Federal Hwy. - Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairchild Funeral Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>299 N. Federal Hwy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fannin Funeral Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>326 E. Las Olas Blvd. - Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennings Funeral Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3904 W. Commercial Blvd. - Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan-Thomas Funeral Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5110 N. Federal Hwy. - Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33308</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kahs Funeral Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2505 N. Dixie Hwy. - Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kraeer Funeral Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4061 N. Federal Hwy. - Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boyd’s Funeral Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6400 Hollywood Blvd. - Hollywood, FL 33021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fred Hunter Funeral Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.O. Box 6969 - Hollywood, FL 33021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panciera Memorial Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4200 Hollywood Blvd. - Hollywood, FL 33021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wadlington-Brown-Cooper Funeral Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>140 S. Dixie Hwy. - Hollywood, FL 33020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wintter Funeral Chapel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1050 N. Federal Hwy. - Hollywood, FL 33020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T. M. Ralph Plantation Funeral Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7001 N.W. 4th St. - Plantation, FL 33313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kraeer Funeral Home</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1199 N. 36th St. E. - Pompano Beach, FL 33064

Kraeer Funeral Home 1952
200 N. Federal Hwy. - Pompano Beach, FL 33062

Stitely Funeral Home 1963
6107 Hallandale Blvd. - West Hollywood, FL 33023

CALHOUN

Adams Funeral Home 1976
1115 Hwy. 71 North - Blountstown, FL 32424

Blountstown Chapel 1978
707 Preston Ave. - Blountstown, FL 32424

CHARLOTTE

Kays Funeral Home April 25, 1959
P.O. Box 2056 - Port Charlotte, FL 33950

Kays-Ponger Funeral Home January 6, 1945
619 E. Marion Ave. - Punta Gorda, FL 33950

CITRUS

Strickland Funeral Home February 1962
P.O. Box 398 - Crystal River, FL 32629

Hooper Funeral Home 1946
P.O. Box 305 - Inverness, FL 32650

CLAY

Helm Funeral Home September 18, 1961
P.O. Box 445 - Green Cove Springs, FL 32043

Westberry Griffis Rivermead Funeral Home July 1, 1965
950 Park Ave. - Orange Park, FL 32073

COLLIER

Brister Funeral Home October 20, 1968
707 N. Hwy. 29 - Immokalee, FL 33934

Earl G. Hodges Funeral Chapel August 10, 1962
3520 Tamiami Trail - Naples, FL 33940

Pittman Funeral Home 1954
6th Ave. - Naples, FL 33940

Pittman Funeral Home 1974
Tamiami Trail - E. Naples, FL

COLUMBIA

Biggs-Wilson Funeral Home 1902 (partial to present)
P.O. Box 846 - Lake City, FL 32055

DADE

Carl F. Slade Funeral Home October 1955
800 Palm Avenue - Hialeah, FL 33010

Lowe-Hanks Funeral Home June 1, 1963
151 East Okeechobee Road - Hialeah, FL 33010

Branam Funeral Home 1949
809 North Krome Avenue - Homestead, FL 33030

Bennett-Ulm Funeral Home September 17, 1964
15201 Northwest 7th Avenue - Miami, FL 33169

Bess Memorial Mortuaries 1906
10936 N.E. 6th Avenue - Miami, FL 33161

Brake-Saunders Funeral Home January 1, 1959
4100 N.W. 7th Street - Miami, FL 33126

Lithgow Funeral Center Late 1940s
15501 W. Dixie Highway - N. Miami, FL 33161

Lithgow Funeral Center Late 1940s
485 N.E. 54th Street - Miami, FL 33137

Lithgow Funeral Center Late 1940s
3232 Coral Way - Miami, FL 33129

Lithgow Funeral Center Late 1940s
8080 S.W. 67th Avenue - South Miami, FL 33173

Lithgow Funeral Center Late 1940s
17475 N.W. 27th Avenue  
Carol City (Opa Locka), FL 33056  

Reid-Lowe Funeral Home  
2360 N.W. 36th Street - Miami, FL 33142  

December 1958  

Stanfill Funeral Home  
10545 S. Dixie Highway - Miami, FL 33156  

1956  

Van Orsdel Mortuary  
3333 N.E. 2nd Avenue - Miami, FL 33137  

1924  

Newman Funeral Home  
1333 Dade Blvd. - Miami Beach, FL 33139  

Early 1940s  

Riverside Memorial Chapel  
1920 Alton Road - Miami, FL 33139  

Records kept for 7 years  

Walsh-Wood Funeral Home  
7140 Abbott Avenue - Miami Beach, FL 33141  

May 1950  

Alligood-Carroll Funeral Home  
17300 S. Dixie Highway - Perrine, FL 33157  

Late 1965  

DE SOTO  

Robarts-Grady Funeral Home  
P.O. Box 47 - Arcadia, FL 33821  

1936  

DIXIE  

Richard P. Gooding Funeral Home  
P.O. Box 307 - Cross City, FL 32628  

Mid 1930s Early 1940s  

DUVAL  

Corey-Kerlin Funeral Home  
1426 Rowe Avenue - Jacksonville, FL 32208  

August 20, 1963  

George H. Hewell and Son Funeral Homes  
4747 Main Street - Jacksonville, FL 32206  

April 4, 1934  

Giddens-Griffith Funeral Home  
1129 S. Edgewood Avenue - Jacksonville, FL 32050  

Early 1930s  

Giddens-Griffith Funeral Home  

Early 1930s
1701 Beach Blvd. - Jacksonville, FL 32250

Giddens-Griffith Funeral Home
6940 Atlantic - Jacksonville, FL 32211

Giddens-Griffith Funeral Home
4607 Lexington - Jacksonville, FL

Hardage & Sons, Estes-Krauss Funeral Home
517 Park Street - Jacksonville, FL 32204

Hardage & Sons, Estes-Krauss Funeral Home
415 Hendricks Avenue - Jacksonville, FL 32207

Hardage & Sons, Estes-Krauss Funeral Home
Arlington Road - Jacksonville, FL

Hardage & Sons, Estes-Krauss Funeral Home
Blanding Blvd. - Jacksonville, FL

Peeples Northwoods Funeral Home
2220 Soutel Drive - Jacksonville, FL 32208

Robert M. Naugle Mortuary
P.O. Box 5067 - Jacksonville, FL 32207

ESCAMBIA

Fisher-Pou Funeral Home
P.O. Box 809 - Pensacola, FL 32502

McNefl-Keyes Funeral Home
1380 N. Palafox Street - Pensacola, FL 32501

Waters & Hibbert Funeral Home
P.O. Box 667 - Pensacola, FL 32502

FRANKLIN

R. L. Rilley Funeral Home
P.O. Box 576 - Carrabelle, FL 32322

GADSDEN

Adams Funeral Home
P.O. Box 581 - Quincy, FL 32351

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Morgan-McClellan Funeral Home
P.O. Box 528 - Quincy, FL 32351

Smith-Morgan Funeral Home
P.O. Box 36 - Chattahoochie, FL 32324

HARDEE

Coker Funeral Home
P.O. Box 545
Wauchula, FL 33873
Some records back to 1925; becoming more accurate in 1930s

HERNANDO

Brewer Memorial Funeral Home
P.O. Box 216 - Brooksville, FL 33512

Turner Home for Funerals
504 E. Jefferson - Brooksville, FL 33512
November 1959

HIGHLANDS

Stephenson-Smith Funeral Home
P.O. Box 1466 - Avon Park, FL 33825
1921

Stephenson Funeral Home
P.O. Box 193 - Sebring, FL 33870
1925

Warren Funeral Home
February
P.O. Box 166 - Sebring, FL 33870
1950

HILLSBOROUGH

Stowers Funeral Home
401 E. Brandon Blvd. - Brandon, FL 33511
January 1961

Colonial Funeral Home
P.O. Box 1148 - Plant City, FL 33566
1918 to 1936 are not complete; 1936 to present complete

Lewers Shannon Funeral Home
308 E. College Ave. - Ruskin, FL 33570
June 1959

F. T. Blount Company
5101 Nebraska Ave. - Tampa, FL 33603
1917
Curry Funeral Home 1957
605 S. MacDill Ave. - Tampa, FL 33609

Duval Funeral Home 1951
3806 Nebraska Ave. - Tampa, FL 33603

Jennings Funeral Home Dec. 8, 1954
6900 Nebraska Ave. - Tampa, FL 33604

Marsicano Funeral Home November 1956
4040 Henderson Blvd. - Tampa, FL 33609

J. L. Reed & Son 1887
3410 Henderson Blvd. - Tampa, FL

B. Marion Reed Company Funeral Homes 1917
258 Plant Ave. - Tampa, FL 33606

Roel & Curry Funeral Home 1977
4730 N. Armenia Ave. - Tampa, FL 33603

Snipes Funeral Home 1968
6718 N. Armenia Ave. - Tampa, FL 33604

(MORE TO FOLLOW IN THE NEXT ISSUE.)