Death Records: Focus on New York

Phyllis Kramer, VP, Education, JewishGen.org

Death Information Web Sites:
1. All States:  http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/w2w.htm
2. Best Overall Site (online info by state)  http://www.deathindexes.com
3. All States: Ancestry.com (use card catalog)
   a. Familysearch.org (by state)Catalog at  https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/search
   b. For State Files: Go to Search, then select state from Map

4. New York Indexes and Documents:
   b. N.Y. Dept. of Health: https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/services/death-certificates.page
   c. NYS: http://www.health.state.ny.us/vital_records/genealogy.htm 8 month wait; $22.
   d. NY, Westchester County: http://www.westchestergov.com/wcarchives (marriage, naturalization)
   e. NJ: https://www.newjerseydeathindex.com/?mc_cid=2ac35ecaf2&mc_eid=dad6fbb436

5. Reclaim the Records Indexes at https://archive.org/details/reclaimtherecords
   a. New York State Births 1881-1942, Deaths 1880-1956; Marriages 1881-1952
   b. New York City marriage licenses index: 1908-1972 (images), 1950-2017 (searchable index)
   c. Buffalo, New York: deaths 1852-1944
   d. New Jersey Birth 1901-1903, Marriage 1901-2016, Death 1901-2017

6. Miscellaneous Sites
   a. Causes: Old Medical Terms: http://www.antiquusmorbus.com
   b. TB: https://jcrs.library.du.edu/jcrs/#/dashboard/advancedSearch and JewishGen’s USA database
   c. Real Estate: http://www.brbrpub.com/
   d. Names: www.jewishgen.org/databases/Givennames/
   g. NYS Unclaimed Funds: https://www.osc.state.ny.us/ouf/index.htm

7. Social Security Death Index
   a. Easy to Use: https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1202535
   a. Ancestry.com: Social Security Death Index and Social Security Claims Index

8. Cemeteries:
   b. JewishGen’s JOWBR: www.jewishgen.org/databases/cemetery/
   c. NYC Cemeteries online: https://kehilalinks.jewishgen.org/krosno/NYCEM.htm
   d. NYC cemetery maps & list of landsmanshaften: http://www.jgsny.org/
   f. Reading Tombstones: http://www.jewishgen.org/InfoFiles/tombstones.html
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i. Tombstone Abbreviations: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Hebrew_abbreviations

g. Military graves,
   i. Veterans Affairs at https://gravelocator.cem.va.gov/index.html,
   ii. the American Battle Monuments Commission (service members buried overseas) at http://www.abmc.gov/home.php, and the
   iii. War Graves Photographic Project at http://www.twgpp.org/

9. Newspapers and Obituaries
   a. List of Newspapers on each website: http://www.theancestorhunt.com/blog/new-york-online-historical-newspapers-summary1#.XNhi8Y5Kg2w
   b. New York State: http://nyshistoricnewspapers.org/ Easy to Use; highlights hits
   c. Google “newspaper + your city or town”
   f. Ancestry.com has obituary collection with 128M records. Go to search, then card catalog, then state
   h. Rootsweb Obituary Daily Times: https://sites.rootsweb.com/~obituary/
   j. Proquest historical major US Newspapers: try university libraries, FAU, your local library.
   k. Ancestry.com. Historical Newspapers, Birth, Marriage, & Death Announcements, 1851-2003:
   l. Specific Newspaper Localities:
      i. TNYS History Project at http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/nysnp, some thru interlibrary loan

10. Probate:
   b. Ancestry has digitized and Indexed FamilySearch microfilms for all counties 1658-1999
   c. LDS FamilySearch Catalog (put in state, city and see if probate file exists)
      https://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog/search
   d. Index Cards for Brooklyn/Queens through 1950s: https://www.familysearch.org/search/collection/1920234

Tips and Techniques:
   e. Never stop at the index (indexers can be wrong)
   f. View and save the original document; Label image with SurnameGiven date type of document
   g. Use soundex or wildcards (*) whenever possible, as names morphed
   h. Use Google for answers on how to do or where to find!