

Connect Your Family Using Find-A-Grave

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Don't you love finding relatives without having to order lots of records or read through microfilm records? The find-a-grave website is one such place to easily find names and dates for your family. Many times, tombstone images will be attached to the memorial, and if you are really lucky you might find a photo of the person, death record, or even an obituary clipping.

There are many ways to use the find-a-grave website to find your family. The two ways I use most often are searching by (1) your ancestor's name or by (2) the cemetery.

Tips for searching by your ancestor's name

- Make sure you are on the **Memorial** tab
- Start with the given name, surname, and burial state
- If there are too many hits, narrow by adding death year and / or county of burial
- Browse until you find your person

Tips for searching by the cemetery name / location

- Click on the **Cemetery** button at the top
- Type in the name of the cemetery and at least the state
- Click on the applicable cemetery
- Type in the given name or surname or partials on each
- Scroll until you find your person

But what if I don't find them? Make sure to search by name variations for your person (or partial names, maiden names, initials, and nicknames) or alternate names for the cemetery. Search by the surname only or the surname with just the first letter of the given name plus the death year +/- 2 years. You can also search within the specific cemetery if you know where they are buried. This type of search will allow you to leave off the surname (if you want) and just search by the given name or partial letters of the given name.

If you still can't find them, then you'll need to use other records to help you identify where they are buried. Try calling the cemetery office and see if they have any record of your person. Interment records list everyone in the cemetery regardless of whether they have a tombstone. Funeral home records, death records, obituaries, or grave registration cards (military) may also help you identify where your person is buried.

Once you identify the cemetery, make sure to check and see who else is buried in the same plot. Family members often were buried together, and you may find other family members if you search by plot instead of just by name.

I Found Them, but They Don't Have a Memorial on Find-A-Grave

There are two ways to create a new memorial: by adding it on the home page or by adding a new memorial once you are in a specific cemetery. It's generally easier to add a person to a specific cemetery than to create a new memorial from the button on the home page.

Adding new memorials on the home page works better for cremations, those buried or lost at sea, bodies donated for medical science, or those lost at war. They no longer allow you to add a person with unknown burial details.

To create a new memorial

- Go to the specific cemetery
- Search to make sure they aren't already there under a misspelling, initials, etc.
- Click "Add a Memorial"
- Type in the person's details
- Click Add Memorial

Once the memorial is created you can make changes to it by clicking the EDIT button.

Making Changes to Memorials You Maintain

For memorials you maintain, you can make changes anytime by clicking EDIT, then making the applicable change and clicking SAVE CHANGES. This includes linking the person to their spouse and / or parents or adding biographical details.

For changing the burial location click the brown CHANGE BURIAL DETAILS and type in the correct cemetery name and select it from the list. Then click SAVE CHANGES.

Adding Photos

If you have a photo of the person's tombstone that you or a family member took, or you have permission to post a photo from a family member or friend, you can add it to their Find-A-Grave memorial. You can not take a photo from another site and add it to Find-A-Grave unless it is a photo you took yourself, and you own the copyright to it.

To add a new photo - click on ADD PHOTOS. You can then upload photos up to 8 MB in size. Each contributor can add a max of 5 photos per memorial. A memorial can have a max of 20 photos from all contributors, but a sponsor can add an additional 10 for a max of 30 photos.

If there is no photo added - click on the "Request Photo". Make sure if it is a large cemetery you provide details on where it is within the cemetery. If you don't know where they are buried within the cemetery, call the cemetery office and ask. If you don't get a quick response for your photo request, you can always ask the cemetery if they will take a photo and if they give permission for you to load it to the site.

Making Changes to Existing Memorials You Don't Maintain

If you find a memorial on Find-A-Grave that would benefit from an update or link to family members, suggest a correction:

- Go to the person's page
- Click SUGGESTED EDITS
- Type in the change
- Click SAVE CHANGES

Make sure if you are going to add the spouse and / or parents - add their memorial numbers all at once or you will have to wait until the change is made before you can suggest another change to the family member links.

If you make a mistake after you submit it, or you find another family member you want to add and you don't want to wait for the approval:

- Click on the pencil icon (Suggested Edits)
- Click on the tab – Suggestions I've Sent
- Find the entry and then click CANCEL on the far right
- You can then go back to the person's memorial page and submit a different edit

Keep in mind people do not have to make the changes you suggest and sometimes will respond with a decline for correction. Sometimes using the "Suggest Other Corrections" can speed up the process especially if you explain why the change should be made. Make sure you click the "Send me a copy of this email" to document your change and the reason why you suggested it. If you know your information is correct and can back it up by solid evidence, it might be easier to have the memorial transferred to you instead of just submitting the change. If they refuse, contact Find-A-Grave and have them help. Some people will not make any changes unless it is on the tombstone, even if you have proof to back up your claim. It is easier to just have them transfer the memorial to you and fix it yourself.

Those maintaining the memorials have up to 21 days to respond to a suggested edit if it is not declined, or it will be sent to Find-A-Grave's editing queue for processing. Be patient, Some people receive many requests and don't always check their account everyday. If have concerns contact Find-A-Grave directly at edit@findagrave.com and they will review your request.

Connecting Children to Parents

To link families together - it must be done by adding parents to a child's memorial:

- Go to the child's memorial page
- Click SUGGESTED EDITS
- Type in the father's and mother's memorial numbers in the Family Members section

Duplicate Memorials

Sometimes you will find more than one memorial for the same person. If the people are in different cemeteries, then it is not considered a duplicate memorial because they might be buried in one cemetery with a tombstone but have a memorial marker in another – thus two different tombstones.

Duplicate memorials are when you have one person in the **same** cemetery twice. This could occur because one person's entry is under a nickname or initials and the person creating the new memorial did not realize they were already in the collection. Sometimes duplicates occur because family members disagree on the facts and a different contributor creates a new memorial because of it. Often one memorial has the tombstone photo and the other does not.

Regardless, if you find a duplicate memorial for the same person, you should fix it:

- Find the duplicate memorial and write down the memorial ID
- Go to the person's other memorial page
- Click the SUGGESTED EDITS
- Click REPORT DUPLICATE
- Type in the duplicate memorial ID into the box and click CONTINUE

Find-A-Grave will then go through and compare the two memorials. They usually keep the memorial that was created first, unless you provide a valid reason why they should not.

Having a Memorial Transferred to You

You can have memorials up to four generations transferred to you. This includes your spouse, siblings, parents, children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, grandparents, and great-grandparents. Other people may also be related to the person and if they are a closer connection, they do not have to transfer the memorial.

To request a memorial transfer:

- You will need your number on your profile page.
- Go to the person's memorial you want transferred to you
- Click on SUGGESTED EDITS
- Make the necessary change and click SAVE SUGGESTIONS

Memorial for those recently deceased

For memorials of recently deceased, Find-A-Grave asks the contributor if they are a close relative. If they are not a close relative, information on the deceased is limited for the first three months after the death date. If they are a close relative, then they can choose to manage the memorial and make their relationship public or private.