



TOWN OF CLAYTON COMMUNICATION & OUTREACH

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CLAYTON LIBRARY MAKES FAMILY HISTORY EASIER TO EXPLORE

CLAYTON, NC – Every family has a story, and the Hocutt-Ellington Memorial Library now makes uncovering those stories easier.

The library's new obituary index allows researchers to search local death notices online, saving hours of work while revealing valuable details about ancestors. Whether individuals are just beginning their genealogical journey or filling in missing pieces, this resource makes tracing family roots faster and more accessible.

Interest in genealogy has grown as more people explore their heritage. Online DNA kits, ancestry websites, and family history research have sparked curiosity about where families come from and what experiences shaped them. Many discover rich and sometimes surprising histories, and the library's obituary index provides a convenient way to explore these stories from anywhere.

The index draws from a wide range of sources collected over the past year, including local funeral records, donated historical collections, and the library's vertical files. Notable contributions include the John Barnes Collection, the Virginia Satterfield Collection, and Hodges Funeral Home records from the 1950s and 1960s. Researchers can find details such as full names, ages, burial locations, and in some cases, spouses - information that can bring family histories to life.

"Before, finding an obituary meant digging through newspapers, courthouse records, or even family Bibles," said Library Associate Pam Taylor. "Now, with just a few clicks, researchers can access a wealth of information from the comfort of home. It is a real time saver for anyone exploring family history."

The obituary index represents more than a year of careful work by library staff. By compiling and organizing these records into a searchable online tool, the library has simplified access to Clayton's history and made it easier to trace family connections without the labor-intensive process of reviewing microfilm or physical archives.

"Our obituary index is a living project. It continues to grow as we add new obituaries and previously uncollected records, giving researchers more opportunities to discover family connections," said Taylor.

The Hocutt-Ellington Memorial Library's obituary index is just one of many ways the library supports exploration of Clayton's past. To access the index and other genealogy resources, visit claytonlibrarync.org and click on Local History Collection under the Resources tab.



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Photos 1 & 2 – Library's obituary index available at claytonlibrarync.org