

## Glamorgan Record Office

### ~THE GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE INDEXES~

#### HOW TO USE THE GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE INDEXES

##### What are the General Register Office (St. Catherine's House) Indexes?

These are alphabetical personal-name indexes to all the births, deaths and marriages registered in England and Wales since civil registration started on 1 July 1837. They **used to be known as the St Catherine's House Index** because the office of the General Registrar in London was in a government building called **St Catherine's House**. They were compiled every three months from 1837-1983 for each category - birth, death or marriage - and the resulting alphabetical series of quarterly volumes was labelled with the year and the name of the last month in each quarter - March, June, September and December. Since 1984 the index (still in three sections) has been compiled annually with each entry showing the month and year in which the birth, death or marriage took place.

##### Where can I use them?

The indexes can be used by the general public in the Searchroom of the Family Records Centre at 1 Myddleton Street, London EC1. In recent years, however, they have been reproduced on microfilm and microfiche and copies of them have been purchased by libraries and record offices all over the world.

The **Glamorgan Record Office** has purchased a complete set of the indexes [*birth, deaths and marriages*] on microfiche for the years **1837-2001**. Other sets kept locally in south Wales are at Gwent Record Office in Cwmbran, Newport (Gwent) Reference Library, Bridgend Library, the West Glamorgan Archive Service in Swansea and the Family History Centre at the Church of the Latter Day Saints (Mormon) in Rhiwbina, Cardiff.

##### How do I use the indexes at the Glamorgan Record Office?

The indexes at the Glamorgan Record Office are kept in the **Copy Searchroom**. To use them, you will need the use of a microfiche reader, which should be reserved in advance (a charge of 50p per half hour is made for the use of the machine). On arrival in the copy searchroom you will be given a microfiche reader number and set of marker cards colour-coded to your machine and bearing the machine number. These cards must be used to mark the place of any fiche removed from the cabinets and will assist you in returning fiche to the correct position after use.

##### How do I find the fiche I want to look at?

The microfiche are contained in three cabinets, one for births, one for marriages and one for deaths. The member of staff on duty will show you the position of these cabinets in the room. When you open any of the three cabinets you will find the fiche arranged in the same way, that is

- (a) **by year** - with divider cards marked with the year date and
- (b) within each year (to the end of 1983) - **by quarter** headed March, June, September and December.

At the top of each fiche you will find information set out in the following form:

General Register Office	BIRTHS	March qtr	1839	AAR-BAR	131
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This tells you the category (birth, death and marriage), the quarter and year, the surnames covered by the individual fiche (by showing the first three letters of the first and last surname on the fiche) and the serial number of the fiche itself.

**When replacing fiche in the cabinets please make sure that these serial numbers run in order. A fiche put back in the wrong place is effectively lost!**

From 1984, the index (still in three separate sections for births, deaths and marriages) forms a single alphabetical sequence for each year.

### **What will the index tell me?**

The indexes show surnames and Christian names arranged alphabetically, the name of the registration district where the birth, death or marriage was recorded and a reference number made up of a volume and page number. ***The reference numbers relate to entries in the registers of the Registrar General in London; they have no meaning to the local registrar of the district shown.***

Additional information appears on the indexes as follows:

The **Birth** indexes from the September Quarter of 1911 onwards also contain the maiden surname of the mother.

The **Marriage** indexes from the March Quarter of 1912 onwards also show the surname of the second party to the marriage alongside the name and surname of the other party.

The **Death** indexes from the March Quarter of 1866 to the March Quarter of 1969 show the age at death. From the June Quarter of 1969 onwards the deceased's date of birth is shown.

**Once you have found the entry on the index you can apply for a copy of the birth, death or marriage certificate.**

## **HOW TO OBTAIN COPIES OF BIRTH, MARRIAGE AND DEATH CERTIFICATES**

### **1. From the Local Superintendent Registrar**

Each Local Superintendent Registrar holds records of all the births and deaths and some of the marriages registered since 1 July 1837 **for the area now covered by his local district.**

If you are sure of the place in which an event occurred, and have a fairly precise date, you should be able to obtain a copy of a birth or death certificate, and in some cases a marriage certificate, from the local Superintendent Registrar's Office.

If you are unsure of the place where the event occurred, or do not know the date within a year or two, you will need to consult the General Register Office index of births, deaths and marriages. This index is available on microfiche in the Glamorgan Record Office. Entries on the index give the district and quarter and year of the registration; this information will enable you to apply to the relevant local Superintendent Registrar for a copy of the certificate.

The fee charged by local Superintendent Registrars for issuing the copy certificate is £7

## 2. From the General Register Office by post

Certificates may be ordered either by post from the General Register Office at the following address:

General Register Office,  
P.O. Box 2,  
Southport,  
PR8 2JD

or via the internet at [www.gro.gov.uk](http://www.gro.gov.uk). Their email address for enquiries is:

[certificate.services@ons.gov.uk](mailto:certificate.services@ons.gov.uk)

There is a phone number for general enquiries and ordering certificates by credit card. This is staffed from 8.00am to 8.00pm Monday to Friday and 9.00am to 4.00pm on Saturday.

**Tel. 0845 603 7788**

The fee for issuing a certificate, when a precise reference from the General Register Office index is given, is £8.50. (£7.00 on-line at [www.gro.gov.uk](http://www.gro.gov.uk) if you have the full reference)

Certificates may also be requested without a precise reference being given. In this case the fee is £11.50, and General Register Office staff will search the indexes for you; however, the search is limited to a 3 year period and may not be attempted for commonly-occurring surnames.

## REGISTER OFFICES IN SOUTH WALES

Each of the new unitary local authorities forms a Superintendent Registrar's district. They hold the records relating to all the births and deaths, and some of the marriages registered since 1<sup>st</sup> July 1837.

These new Registrar's Districts do not correspond with the districts which formally existed, and which appear on the General Register Office index, even where the names have remained the same. It may, therefore, be advisable to contact the Registrar in advance to find out if they hold the certificates for the area you are interested in.

The following list contains all the current local Registrars in south Wales with useful information needed when applying for a copy certificate. The cost of each certificate is £7

### **Bridgend County Borough**

Council Offices, Bridgend, CF31 4AR  
Make cheques payable to: 'B.C.B.C.'

Tel: 01656 642200

### **Caerphilly County Borough**

Penallta House, Tredomen Park  
Ystrad Mynach, Hengoed,  
CF82 7PG

Tel: 01443 863478

Make cheques payable to 'Superintendent Registrar'

### **Cardiff County Council**

48 Park Place, Cardiff, CF10 3LU

Tel: 029 2087 1690

Make cheques payable to 'Superintendent Registrar'

### **Merthyr Tydfil County Borough**

Ground Floor, Castle House, Glebeland Street,  
Merthyr Tydfil, CF47 8AT

Tel: 01685 723318

Make cheques payable to 'Merthyr Tydfil C.B.C.' & enclose a S.A.E.

**Neath Port Talbot County Borough**

119 London Road, Neath, SA11 1HL  
Make cheques payable to 'Superintendent Registrar'

Tel: 01639 760020

**Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough**

Courthouse Street, Pontypridd, CF37 1LJ  
Make cheques payable to 'Superintendent Registrar'

Tel: 01443 486869

**City and County of Swansea**

County Hall, Oystermouth Road, Swansea,  
SA1 3SN  
Make cheques payable to 'Superintendent Registrar'

Tel: 01792 636188

**Vale of Glamorgan County Borough**

Civic Offices, Holton Road, Barry, CF63 4RU  
Make cheques payable to 'Superintendent Registrar'

Tel: 01446 709490

**Former County of Glamorgan**

Gower – office closed and moved to Swansea or Neath  
*Pontardawe – office closed and moved to Swansea or Neath*

**Former County of Gwent**

Bedwellty – office closed and moved to Blaenau Gwent  
Chepstow – office closed and moved to Monmouth

**Register Offices in south west Wales****Blaenau Gwent County Borough**

The Grove, Church Street, Tredegar,  
NP22 3DS  
Make cheques payable to 'Superintendent Registrar'

Tel: 01495 722305

**Monmouthshire County Council**

Registry Office, Coed Glas, Firs Road,  
Abergavenny, NP7 5LE  
Make cheques payable to 'Monmouthshire C.C.'

Tel: 01873 735435

**Newport County Borough**

8 Gold Tops, Newport, NP20 4PH  
Make cheques payable to 'Newport City Council'

Tel: 01633 265547 or 262330

**Torfaen County Borough**

Hanbury Road, Pontypool, NP4 6YG  
Make cheques payable to 'Superintendent Registrar'

Tel: 01495 762937

**Carmarthenshire**

**Llandovery & Llandeilo**  
**Newcastle Emlyn**  
**Narberth**

offices closed and moved to Carmarthen  
office closed and moved to Cardiganshire south  
office closed and moved to Haverfordwest

**Carmarthenshire County Council**

Parc Myrddin, Richmond Terrace,  
Carmarthen, SA31 1DS  
Make cheques payable to 'Superintendent Registrar'

Tel: 01267 228210/1

**Llanelli Register Office**

County Council Offices, Swansea Road  
Llanelli, SA15 3DJ  
Make cheques payable to 'C.C.C.'

Tel: 01554 774088

**Pembrokeshire****Pembrokeshire County Council**

Tower Hill, Haverfordwest, SA61 1SS  
Make cheques payable to 'Pembrokeshire County Council'

Tel: 01437 762579

**South Pembrokeshire Register Office**

East Back, Pembroke, SA71 4HL  
Make cheques payable to 'Pembrokeshire County Council'

Tel: 01646 682432

**Ceredigion****Cardiganshire South**

Glyncoed Chambers, Priory Street,  
Cardigan, SA43 1BX  
Make cheques payable to 'Ceredigion County Council'

Tel: 01239 612684

**USEFUL WEBSITE ADDRESSES**

For researchers who are not able to visit a record office or library to consult the General Register Office indexes for England and Wales there are now two websites that may be of help.

[www.freebmd.org.uk/](http://www.freebmd.org.uk/) is a site run by volunteers who are inputting the indexes onto a searchable database. It is incomplete but registration years covered are between 1837-1910

[www.1837online.com](http://www.1837online.com) is a pay as you view service of indexes 1837-2001.