

Family History Research

Find and Connect was established to help Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants understand more about their past and about the historical context of child welfare in Australia. We assist people who spent time in an orphanage, children's homes or foster care in Australia.

We cannot directly assist with family history research.

Historical Child Welfare Records

If your ancestor or relative encountered the child welfare system, for example was in an institution, in out-of-home or foster care, or was adopted, most state archives provide guides on searching the welfare records they hold:

[NSW historical child welfare records information](#)

[Victorian historical child welfare records information](#)

[Tasmanian historical child welfare records information](#)

[QLD historical child welfare records information](#) (schools, hospitals and orphanages in the one guide)

[SA historical child welfare records information](#)

[ACT Finding Aid Child Welfare Policy Records \(pdf\)](#)

The [WA State Records Office](#) and [NT Library and Archives](#) hold records but do not have a finding aid or guide.

The Council for Australasian Archives and Records Authorities has published [a guide to accessing Child Migrant records \(pdf\)](#) held by commonwealth and state archives.

Researching Aboriginal Family History

Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS)

The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies ([AIATSIS](#)) in Canberra holds a unique collection of records including film, photographs, video and audio recordings and the world's largest compilation of printed materials and other resources relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The collection can be [searched online](#).

The [Archives of the South Australian Museum](#) holds a wide range of records valuable for genealogical searching for people with Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage. The Museum holds the [Tindale collection](#) which includes genealogies, information cards, photographs, maps and other information about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Australia.

Some states also have Aboriginal Family History Research Units, which may be helpful in your search.

National

Guides: [National Archives of Australia guide: Finding Records relating to First Australians](#)
[National Library of Australia First Australians family history](#)
[AIATSIS family history guide](#)

NSW

Guide: [State Library First Nations Family History Research Guide](#)
Records access services: [Aboriginal Affairs NSW Family Records Service](#) provides access to records about Aboriginal people created by the NSW government

NT

Guide: [Aboriginal family history searching guide \(pdf\)](#)

Qld

Guide: [State Library Who's your mob guide](#)
Records access services: [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family history](#) (provides access to records about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people created by the Qld government)

SA

Guide: [State Library of SA Aboriginal Family History guide](#)
Records access services: [SA Museum Aboriginal family history unit](#) (provides access to records held by the SA Museum Archives)
[State Records SA Aboriginal Access Service](#) (provides access to records about Aboriginal people held by State Records SA)

Victoria

Guide: State Library [Victorian Aboriginal family history](#)
Records access services: [Koorie Records Unit at the Public Record Office Victoria](#) (provides access to records about Aboriginal people held by the Public Record Office Victoria)
[Koorie Heritage Trust Family History Service](#)

Tasmania

Guide: [State Library and Archives of Tasmania guide to Tasmanian Aboriginal people](#)
Records access services: [Tasmanian Information and Research Service](#)

WA

Guide: [State Library Aboriginal family history guide](#)
Records access services: [Aboriginal family history unit](#) (provides access to records created by the WA government, and some private collections)

Researching Family History

The National Library (NLA)

The NLA has developed a comprehensive resource section for researching family histories, including guides, information and relevant links. You can find it here: <https://www.library.gov.au/research/family-history>

Other useful resources

Genealogical Societies & Historical Societies – online databases, library resources and valuable advice

Directories – commercially published volumes listing primary occupant of residences and businesses – useful for locating where people lived and who their neighbours were

Electoral Rolls – current Commonwealth and state rolls are searchable online at the electoral office in each capital city. Past rolls in hard copy or on microfiche are accessible in state libraries

Land Titles records offices – for researching house and land ownership

Council Archives – assessment books, local government records, maps, plans, photos, oral histories

Government and Police Gazettes – information about government institutions, Acts and Regulations, employees, criminal activities, absconding, inquests, missing persons

School Records – admission records, yearbooks, newsletters, photographs

Church and Parish Records – baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, church newsletters, photos

University Archives – University archives may hold records relating to family history and child welfare as well as business records, local history information and university information

Newspapers – Family and personal notices, court proceedings, parliamentary reports, articles about child welfare institutions

Cemetery and burial records – Information about locations of graves, markers and burials

Paid Services

Some people might choose to hire the services of a family history expert. The [Society of Australian Genealogists](#) and the [National Archives of Australia](#) have lists of professional research agents and genealogists who can be employed to search for records or visit archives on your behalf.

There are also family history websites that you can search for family history information. You can take out a subscription or many public libraries allow free access to subscription sites.

- [Ancestry](#)
- [Find my Past](#)
- [Family Search](#)
- [My Heritage](#)

You can view this page online by visiting <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/finding-family/family-history-research/>