



This is a guide to assist support service staff searching for records and family of clients. Researching records for clients can include locating and applying for institutional and/or foster care records as well as family history research.

### WHERE TO START

Write down anything your client already knows (names, places, dates if you have them) and then try to fill in the gaps. Draw up a family tree by hand or using an online family tree maker. Use a table to create a chronology for your client. For example:

| Date        | What happened & where | Names of people involved            | Sources   | Notes & Further research   |
|-------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| 3 June 1965 | Born Geraldton, WA    | Name of client<br>Name of parent(s) | Birth certificate<br>Birth notice <i>West Australian</i> 5 June 1965, p. 54 | Father born SA, mother WA. Apply for birth certificates.<br>Birth notice mentions sister – find out about her. |

If you get stuck, think laterally and try to get to the piece of information you are seeking by coming at it from other angles.

### WHERE TO SEARCH

#### VITAL RECORDS -BIRTHS, DEATHS AND MARRIAGES (BDM)

Each state/territory has a Registrar of BDM. Some sites allow for historical searching. Websites have information about availability, restrictions and how to apply for records. Certificates provide information about family members including names, places where family lived, ages and occupations.

Other places to search for BDM information include:

- Genealogical societies (often have searchable indexes or online databases for members)
- Newspaper family notices – more information under newspapers below
- BDM published registers in state/territory Libraries
- Church, Mission & Parish registers (including baptism registers)
- Online death and funeral indexes such as:
  - Ryerson Index of Newspaper death notices (National) <http://www.ryersonindex.org>
  - Savill Index of Advertiser Funeral Notices – (South Australia only) <http://www.slsa.sa.gov.au/fh/savill>

#### CEMETERY AND BURIAL RECORDS

There are a number of online search options for finding cemetery records and burial places. Two of the most useful are:

- Cemetery Records – Australia (CoraWeb) <http://www.coraweb.com.au/categories/cemeteries>
- Australian Cemeteries <http://www.australiancemeteries.com.au>

Both websites provide links to cemetery records across Australia. Lone graves and unregistered deaths have been indexed in a number of states/territories. Search for these and other indexes via local genealogical societies and/or websites run by professional genealogists/historians. Also use newspaper family notices. Think laterally – information about a death or funeral in a newspaper can lead you to the Funeral Director, cemetery, burial place and family members.



### NEWSPAPERS AND THE WONDERS OF TROVE

Trove is a website managed by the National Library of Australia. It brings together searchable content from libraries, museums, archives and other research organizations. For a list of newspapers available online on Trove, see [About Digitised Newspapers and more](http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/about) [<http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/about>]

Use keyword searching to find information. Remember to use “quote marks” to search for phrases or names and conjunctions like AND to search for “a name” AND “something else” at the same time.

### STATE LIBRARIES & STATE ARCHIVES

Each state and territory has its own repository for state/territory government records where documents created by state departments are held. These can include records related to children in state care, education records, hospital records and many others. You can find most of these archives by googling State Archives or State Records and the name of the state/territory. Most state archive websites allow for searching of their holdings by keyword, and have links to finding aids and fact sheets. All have contact detail for reference enquiries. Although state repositories store the records, if they are restricted, applications for access need to be made via the current responsible department.

### THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF AUSTRALIA (NAA)

The National Archives of Australia holds records created by the Commonwealth government. There are branches of the NAA in each state and territory. Records related to Aboriginal Affairs, Immigration (including child migrants), military service and records related to the Northern Territory while it was under Commonwealth control may be of value in research for Care Leavers. The NAA search engine [RecordSearch](http://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRRetrieve/Interface/ListingReports/ItemsListing.aspx) [<http://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRRetrieve/Interface/ListingReports/ItemsListing.aspx>], allows for keyword searching of the collection. Some records have been digitized and are available to view online. Others will require an application for access.

### STATE LIBRARIES

State Libraries hold both published and unpublished records. Published books can provide background information which can be useful in providing historical context. They also hold archival records donated by organizations and individuals. Some care providers have donated their collections to state libraries. As with archives, libraries allow keyword searching of their holdings, provide fact sheets and allow for reference inquiries. You can usually find an Ask Us or Ask a Librarian link on their home page.

### THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF AUSTRALIA (NLA)

The National Library of Australia in Canberra holds records of national significance. It has large manuscript, photographic and oral history collections. The latter includes interviews from the Bringing Them Home Oral History Project and the Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants Oral History Project. Many of these interviews can be listened to and searched by keyword on-line. Oral History, manuscript material and other collection items can all be searched for via the general catalogue. The vast majority of archival records, however, need to be viewed in the Reading Room and the Library.

### 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 electoral offices. 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 etc.
- **Church and Parish records** - baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, church newsletters, photos.
- **Noel Butlin Archives** - pastoral, business and association records.



### 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 via the online search engine Mura. AIATSIS also provides excellent family history searching fact sheets on their website:

<http://aiatsis.gov.au/research/finding-your-family>

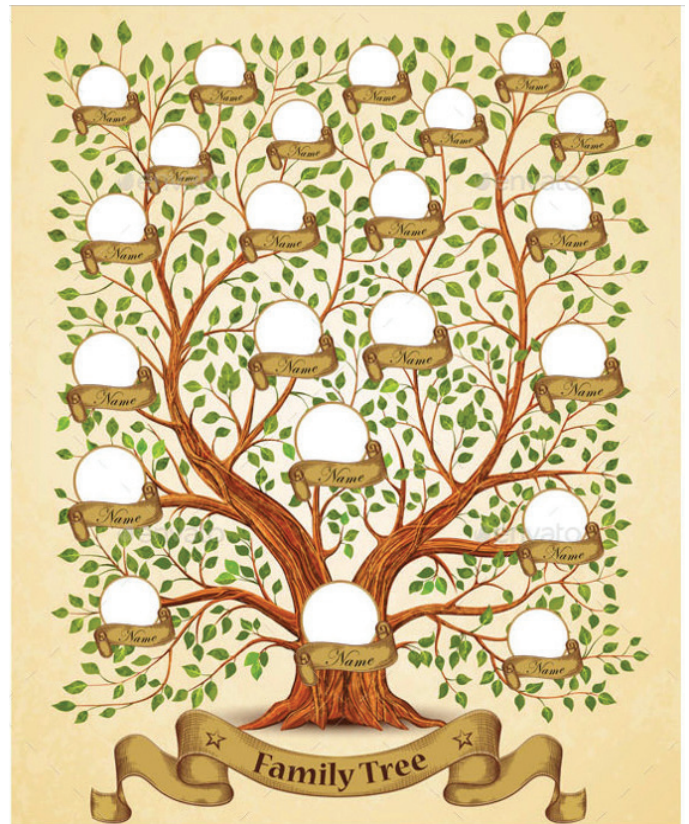
#### SOUTH AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM

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.

### PAID SUBSCRIPTION FAMILY SEARCHING

Many libraries allow free access to subscription sites. Ancestry – popular family searching website and family tree maker.

- Ancestry  
<http://www.ancestry.com.au>  
A popular family searching website and family tree maker, Ancestry can be used to search Australian, UK and World records including electoral rolls and BDM indexes. Through Ancestry you can make contact with others researching the same families.
- Find my Past  
<http://www.findmypast.com.au>
- Family Search  
<https://familysearch.org>
- My Heritage  
<https://www.myheritage.com>
- World Vital Records  
<http://www.worldvitalrecords.com>



### FINDING LIVING RELATIVES

- **White Pages & Telephone directories** – for current addresses and phone numbers – can also be used for locating past addresses
- **Newspapers** – some have a Can you help? section or you can also write a Letter to the Editor.
- **Social media** including as Facebook and LinkedIn
- **Professional registers and networks** – for doctors, teachers and other professionals
- **Outreach letters** – once potential relatives have been located an outreach letter can be sent. It is essential that making contact with living relatives is handled ethically and with confidentiality on both sides, for clients and for relatives.