



AIATSIS

AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF ABORIGINAL
AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STUDIES

Family History Unit

Freecall: 1800 352 553

Fax: 02 6261 4287

Email: familyhistory@aiatsis.gov.au

Where to get help – Australian Capital Territory

Organisations in each state and territory can help with your Indigenous family history research. There are also a number of national organisations and non-government websites that support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family history.

- **Libraries** hold a range of material that is useful for family history, including books, indexes, original manuscripts and photos. Many larger libraries have special family history librarians who can help you with your research. Most libraries have online research guides to help you understand their collections.
- **Archives** hold original records, created by government agencies, private organisations or individuals. Archives are different from libraries, and you will need help from an archivist to locate and access records.
- **Indigenous family history services** are provided by state and territory governments to assist you in accessing records and personal information about yourself and your ancestors held in government archives.
- **Link-Up organisations** provide services to members of the Stolen Generations and their families. These include researching family and personal records, finding family members, organising reunions and providing holistic support and counselling.
- **Organisations for adoptees and Care Leavers** (and their families) can help you find information about your personal and family history and connect you with family. They also provide counselling and support services.
- **Family history community projects and organisations** offer practical help in researching your family history. Some are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander focused. They may have library collections, computers, online resources and provide training courses and workshops.

Before you make contact

Before approaching organisations put together any information you already have about your family. Names, dates and places are good starting points for them to help you with your research.

See Family history sources to find out more.



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

The AIATSIS Family History Unit can help people researching their Indigenous family history. The AIATSIS Finding Your Family website is an online resource with a focus on helping people to learn how to do Indigenous family history research. AIATSIS offers an Australia-wide service. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Biographical Index enables you to do an online name search of some of the material in the collection. AIATSIS cannot compile family trees or help you to confirm Aboriginality, but they can offer you advice on how to begin this work yourself

51 Lawson Crescent, Acton ACT 2601

GPO Box 553, Canberra ACT 2601

Ph: 02 6246 1111

Freecall: 1800 352 553

Fax: 02 6261 4285

Email: familyhistory@aiatsis.gov.au

Web: www.aiatsis.gov.au/research/finding-your-family

ArchivesACT

ArchivesACT provides access to ACT government records, including records about divorce, child welfare, cemeteries, schools and housing. Access to records is by appointment only, so you need to contact the archives first. Records relating to the area that is now the ACT are also held by State Records NSW and by the National Archives of Australia.

GPO Box 158, Canberra ACT 2601

Ph: 02 6207 5726

Fax: 02 6207 5835

Email: archives@act.gov.au

Web: www.archives.act.gov.au

Office of Regulatory Services – Births, Deaths and Marriages

Access Canberra is a central hub for many services including the registration of births, deaths, marriages, changes of name and recording changes of sex in the ACT. There are a number of service centres in different suburbs of Canberra but it is probably best to contact the BDM section of Access Canberra online or by phone first. You can apply for copies of records for family history purposes and ask them to search their index for you. The cost of BDM records varies from state to state but is normally \$30 to \$50 per certificate.

Note: records prior to 1930 were registered in the New South Wales Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages.

GPO Box 158, Canberra City ACT 2601

Ph: 13 22 81 Access Canberra

Email: bdm@act.gov.au

Web: https://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/app/answers/detail/a_id/2113

ACT Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs

The ACT Government undertook an extensive genealogy project with the ACT Aboriginal community during 2010-2012 to compile a comprehensive genealogical database. This project was called the Our Kin, Our Country genealogy project. The database documents more than 5000 individuals and includes a collection of some 2000 primary source records. For information about this database contact the Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs.

Level 3, 11 Moore Street, Canberra ACT 2601

Ph: 02 6207 9784

Email: oatsia@act.gov.au

Web: www.communityservices.act.gov.au/atsia

2012 report about the project:

www.communityservices.act.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0005/394385/CSD_GSR_web.pdf

(Our Kin Our Country)

Find & Connect Support Service ACT

Find & Connect assists people who grew up in orphanages, children's homes, institutions and foster homes. Find & Connect can help you obtain your personal records and where possible trace your history and understand why you were placed into care. The service also provides personalised counselling and support.

15 Napier Close, Deakin ACT 2600

Free call: 1800 16 11 09

Ph: 02 6122 7100

Web: www.findandconnect.gov.au

Post Adoption Resource Centre – Benevolent Society

The Benevolent Society's Post Adoption Resource Centre provides information, counselling and support to people affected by adoption in New South Wales and the ACT.

Suite 253, Level 5, 7–11 The Avenue, Hurstville NSW 1481

Free Call 1800 236 762.

Ph: 02 9504 6788

Email: parc@bensoc.asn.au

Web: <https://www.benevolent.org.au/services/post-adoption-services>

ACT Heritage Library

The ACT Heritage Library collects, preserves, promotes and provides access to materials that record the lives of the people of Canberra. Their collections include books, journals, newspapers, archival and manuscript records, oral histories, photographs, maps, plans and reports. These resources include materials related to the history of Aboriginal people of the ACT and to general family history.

Level 1, Woden Library, Corner Corinna and Furzer Streets, Phillip ACT 2606

GPO Box 158, Canberra City ACT 2601

Ph: 02 6207 5163

Email: act.heritage.library@act.gov.au

Web: www.library.act.gov.au/find/history

Canberra and District Historical Society Inc.

The Canberra and District Historical Society encourages the study of the history of Canberra and district. It holds activities such as lectures and excursions, provides research services and maintains a resource centre with books, periodicals, maps, photographs and extensive and unique files of newspaper cuttings.

Curtin Shopping Centre

PO Box 315, Curtin ACT 2605

Ph: 02 6281 2929

Email: admin@canberrahistory.org.au

Web: www.canberrahistory.org.au

National Library of Australia

The National Library collects and makes available material of national significance about Australia and Australians. It holds books, manuscripts, newspapers, photographs and oral histories that could be useful in researching your family. Some of these resources, such as photographs and newspapers, can be viewed online via Trove. Other material, such as some oral histories can be access via the Library website. The library has a family history collection and staff who you can help you to locate material.

Parkes Place, Canberra ACT 2600

Ph: 02 6262 1111

Fax: 02 6257 1703

Ask a Librarian (online contact form): www.nla.gov.au/askalibrarian

Web: www.nla.gov.au/research-guides/family-history

www.nla.gov.au/what-we-collect/indigenous

Australian War Memorial

Indigenous people have served in every military conflict that Australia has been involved in since the Boer War (1899–1902). Military records are a rich source of information about the men and women who served in the armed forces, and they can also provide information about family members..

Treloar Crescent, Campbell ACT 2612

Ph: 02 6243 4211

Fax: (02) 6243 4325

Email: info@awm.gov.au

Web: www.awm.gov.au

Researching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander defence force service:

<https://www.awm.gov.au/articles/indigenous-service/researching> and

<https://www.awm.gov.au/articles/encyclopedia/indigenous>

Researching a person– learn more about how to research your family member’s military service.

<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/understanding-the-memorials-collection/researching-a-person>

Research guides for Indigenous family history

Research guides provide comprehensive information for people doing family history research. They often include an outline of the history of colonisation and Aboriginal protection/welfare legislation, linking these to the records that were created about Indigenous people.

Books published by AIATSIS

- Penny Taylor, *Telling it like it is: A guide to making Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history*, AIATSIS, 1992
- Diane Smith and Boronia Halstead, *Lookin for your mob: A guide to tracing Aboriginal family trees*, Aboriginal Studies Press, 1990.

Online guides

- Our Kin Our Country (ACT Aboriginal Genealogy Project)
www.communityservices.act.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0005/394385/CSD_GSR_web.pdf

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people – National Archives of Australia: www.naa.gov.au/collection/a-z/aboriginal-people.aspx

Websites

The Centre for Indigenous Family History Studies (CIFHS) website is a name searchable archive of a selection of mainly government documents relevant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. The site is updated with new records continuously. Many of the documents contain offensive language. www.cifhs.com.

In order to do a name search in the documents on this website you need to type the following into google - site:www.cifhs.com – followed by the name you are searching for in quotation marks, such as “John Smith”.

General family history resources

Local family history groups, local history societies and local libraries are valuable sources of information and resources. They can often put you in contact with people who have a good knowledge of the local history of a town or area. Many also have local studies collections with books, newspapers, family histories, photographs and manuscripts.

The Heraldry and Genealogy Society of Canberra Inc.

Also known as Family History ACT, the society offers assistance to people who want to trace their family history. Volunteers provide genealogy advice and run regular workshops, seminars and talks. The society has a comprehensive family history library and is a great place to start if you are new to family history research.

Cook Community Hub, 41 Templeton Street, Cook ACT 2614
PO Box 152, Jamison Centre, ACT 2614
Ph: 02 6251 7004

Contact form: https://familyhistoryact.org.au/contact_new/

Web: <https://familyhistoryact.org.au/>

Find local libraries

You can use Australian Libraries Gateway – Find a Library website - www.nla.gov.au/apps/libraries - to locate libraries in your region with family history and local history collections. Under location select your state or territory and under library type select ‘Local/Family history’. You can also browse using the map.

Family history research websites

- CoraWeb: a comprehensive, categorised and cross-referenced list of links and useful advice about tracing your family history (Australia)
<http://www.coraweb.com.au/>
- Ancestry – Help & Advice: general family history advice, as well as information about using Ancestry’s paid services (Australia)
<https://www.ancestry.com.au/> Remember that many libraries have subscriptions which you can use on site for free.
- Cyndi’s List: a comprehensive, categorised and cross-referenced list of links that point you to genealogical research sites online (Australia)
<https://www.cyndislist.com/australia/>
- FamilySearch Learning Center: articles and short online courses put together by the largest genealogical organisation in the world (USA)
https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Main_Page

Find family history and historical societies

- CoraWeb – Genealogy, Family History and Historical Societies
www.coraweb.com.au/categories/family-history-and-historical-societies
- The Federation of Australian Historical Societies - <https://www.history.org.au/>
- Cape Banks Family History Society – Australian Family History Societies
www.capebanks.org.au/australian-family-history-societies/

Society of Australian Genealogists

The Society of Australian Genealogists provide assistance to people who want to trace their family history. Volunteers give genealogy advice, run workshops and deliver talks on different family history related subjects. The society has a family history library and manuscript collection located in Sydney which may have resources related to the ACT.

Research Centre: ‘Richmond Villa’, 120 Kent Street, Sydney NSW 2000

Ph: 02 9247 3953

Email: info@sag.org.au

Web: www.sag.org.au