



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 – Victoria

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, access to 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 for more information.



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

State Library of Victoria

The State Library of Victoria has a significant collection of books and manuscript material relating to Aboriginal people, as well as many family history resources including genealogy books, indexes, databases, microform collections. Family history librarians are available to help you get started with your research. Many resources and guides are also available online.

328 Swanston Street, Melbourne VIC 3000

Ph: 03 8664 7000

Ask a librarian: <https://www.slv.vic.gov.au/interact-us/ask-librarian>

Web: www.slv.vic.gov.au/explore/family-history-resources (Family history)

guides.slv.vic.gov.au/aboriginalfamilyhistory (Aboriginal family history research guide)

Public Record Office Victoria – Koorie Records Unit

Government records about Victorian Aboriginal people covering the period from the 1830s to the 1970s are held by the Public Record Office Victoria. These records were primarily created by the Aboriginal Protectorate and the Board for the Protection of Aborigines and their successors.

The Koorie Records Unit at the Public Record Office Victoria promotes awareness about Aboriginal records created by governments in Victoria and improves access to records for the Aboriginal community. The unit helps researchers to access records about Aboriginal people in Public Record Office Victoria's collection as well as in the collection of the National Archives of Australia's Melbourne office.

Victorian Archives Centre, 99 Shiel Street, North Melbourne VIC 3051

PO Box 2100, North Melbourne VIC 3051

Free call: 1800 657 452

Ph: 03 03 9348 5600

Fax: 03 9348 5656

Email: koorie.records@prov.vic.gov.au

Online form: prov.altarama.com/ref100.aspx

Web: <https://prov.vic.gov.au/index.php/koorie-services>

Aboriginal Victorians Family History guide - www.prov.vic.gov.au/explore-collection/explore-topic/aboriginal-victorians-1830s-1970s/aboriginal-victorians-family

Births, Deaths and Marriages Victoria

Births, Deaths and Marriages Victoria has records of birth, death and marriage in Victoria from 1853, as well as some earlier church records. You can search and access historical birth, death and marriage records online. The cost of BDM records varies from state to state but is normally \$30 to \$50 per certificate.

The Koori Access Team at Births, Deaths and Marriages Victoria can help you apply and pay for Victorian birth, death and marriage certificates if you are a Koori, Australian Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and you hold a pension concession card or health care card.

Ground floor, 595 Collins Street, Melbourne VIC 3001

GPO Box 4332, Melbourne VIC 3001

Free call: 1300 369 367 (General and family history inquiries)

Ph: 03 9613 5103 (Koori Access Team)

Contact BDM: <https://www.bdm.vic.gov.au/contact-us>

Web: <https://www.bdm.vic.gov.au/research-and-family-history/search-your-family-history>
(Family history)

<https://www.bdm.vic.gov.au/koori-services> (Koori services)
BDMIndigenousAccess@justice.vic.gov.au (Koori Access Team)

Link-Up Victoria

Link-Up Victoria supports and assists Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who were separated from their families, communities, culture and land under past government legislation and who were adopted, placed in foster care or in an institution. Link-Up conducts research, assists with accessing records and traces family. They also organise reunions and provide counselling for Stolen Generations.

PO Box 191 Preston Post Office, Preston VIC 3072

Address: 48 Mary Street, Preston VIC 3072

Free call: 1800 OUR MOB (1800 687 662)

Ph: 03 7002 3700

Fax: 03 9484 5403

Email: linkup@vacca.org

Web: www.linkupvictoria.org.au

Koorie Heritage Trust Family History Service

The Koorie Heritage Trust's Family History Service provides confidential client-based genealogy research to members of the Stolen Generations, Koories in custody and members of the Koorie community. The service has built an extensive confidential database of Koorie family trees and genealogy information to assist Koorie clients searching for family, cultural and historical knowledge.

Levels 1 and 3, The Yarra Building, Federation Square, Cnr Flinders & Swanston Streets, Melbourne VIC 3000

Ph: 03 8662 6300

Email: familyhistory@korieheritagetrust.com

Web: <http://korieheritagetrust.com.au/korie-family-history-service/>

Find & Connect Support Services Victoria – Open Place

The Find & Connect support service in Victoria is called Open Place. It supports people who grew up in orphanages, children's homes, institutions and foster homes. It can help you obtain your personal records and trace your history as well as providing counselling and other services.

Suite 1/8 Bromham Place, Richmond VIC 3121

Free call: 1800 16 11 09 or 1800 779 379

Ph: 03 9421 6162

Email: info@openplace.org.au

Web: www.openplace.org.au (Open Place)
www.findandconnect.gov.au (Find & Connect)

Department of Health and Human Services – Family Information Networks and Discovery

Family Information Networks and Discovery (FIND) provides access to information about past adoptions that are connected to Victoria. FIND also helps family members to make contact with each other. They also support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people affected by adoption, wardship or other family separation

50 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne VIC 3000

PO Box 588 Collins Street West Melbourne VIC 3000

Free call: 1800 130 225

Email: findduty@dhs.vic.gov.au

Web: <https://services.dhhs.vic.gov.au/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-family-records>

VANISH – Victorian Adoption Network for Information and Self Help

VANISH helps people with their search for relatives from whom they have been separated from by adoption, state wardship and donor conception. They provide support and guidance throughout the search and contact process.

1st Floor, 50 Howard Street, North Melbourne VIC 3051

PO Box 112, Carlton South VIC 3053

Free call: 1300 VANISH (1300 826 474)

Ph: 03 9328 8611

Fax: 03 9329 6527

Email: info@vanish.org.au

Web: vanish.org.au

National Archives of Australia (Melbourne)

The National Archives of Australia holds many government records about Indigenous Australians from Victoria, dating from the 1860s to the 1970s. The Bringing Them Home name index can help you find information about Indigenous family members in National Archives records. The index is not available for the public to search, but an archivist will do a search for you. Specialised help with accessing records in the National Archives' Melbourne office is available from the Koorie Records Unit at the Public Record Office Victoria (see above).

Victorian Archives Centre, 99 Shiel Street, North Melbourne VIC 3051

PO Box 8005, Burwood Heights VIC 3151

Ph: 03 9348 5600

Fax: 03 9348 5628

Email: archives@naa.gov.au

Ask a question about records: <http://www.naa.gov.au/collection/askquestion/index.aspx>

Web: www.naa.gov.au/collection/a-z/aboriginal-people.aspx (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people)

www.naa.gov.au/collection/family-history (Family history)

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 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 accessed via the Library website. The library has a family history collection and staff 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

- Aboriginal people and family history – State Library of Victoria: guides.slv.vic.gov.au/aboriginalfamilyhistory
- walata tyamateetj: A guide to government records about Aboriginal people in Victoria: <https://prov.vic.gov.au/walata-tyamateetj-research-guide>

- Finding your mob: Researching Aboriginal family history at the Victorian Archives Centre
<https://prov.vic.gov.au/finding-your-mob>
- Finding your story: Resource manual to the records of the Stolen Generations in Victoria: <https://www.prov.vic.gov.au/koorie-services/finding-your-story>
- 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 documents on this website you need to type the following into google - [site:www.cifhs.com](http://www.cifhs.com) – followed by the name you are searching for in quotation marks, such as “John Smith”.

General family history organisations

Family history groups, local history societies and local libraries

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.

Find local libraries

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

Genealogical Society of Victoria

The Genealogical Society of Victoria provides family history advice and expertise. It has a reference library in central Melbourne providing access to family history records for Victoria, Australia, New Zealand, Britain and other countries.

Level 6/85 Queen Street, Melbourne VIC 3000

Ph: 03 9662 4455

Email: gsv@gsv.gov.au

Web: www.gsv.org.au

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/