

TRACING YOUR FAMILY HISTORY

A guide to the resources available in the library to help you with researching the history of your family.



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Community Heritage Librarian

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Introduction

Tracing your family tree and recording your family history is one of the world's most popular pastimes. This is Moonee Valley Libraries' guide to some of the resources available through the library and online. You can use these tools to create an interesting, engaging family history.

This guide covers several resources. The primary focus is on Ancestry Library Edition and Findmypast, two online resources which can be accessed for free at any of Moonee Valley Libraries' five library branches. It also offers some tips about beginning and recording your research, as well as a number of other resources to use when researching your family history.

Tips before you start

The following tips are guidelines for anyone beginning their research.

1. Start with yourself and work backwards.
2. Record what you know. Use one of the many free family history charts to record what you know about your family tree.
3. Talk to your relatives and collect copies of family photographs, diaries, letters, and other documents.
4. Search Birth, Death, and Marriage records (often known as "BDMs"). Ancestry Library Edition and Findmypast can help you find these. Both online resources are available at all Moonee Valley Libraries.
5. Explore further. Search electoral rolls, directories, cemeteries, Government Gazettes and Armed Services Records for further details. Ancestry Library Edition and Findmypast can help you find these too.
6. Record information and its sources so you or someone else can locate it again.
7. Make copies of original documents and take these with you when visiting libraries, Local History Societies, or other venues. That way if you lose documents, you will still have the originals.

Ancestry vs Findmypast

Much of this guide is about two important databases that you can use for family history research, Ancestry Library Edition and Findmypast. What are the differences between these two resources?

They are similar, and a lot of records can be found in either database, but many records will only be in one or the other. Very generally, Ancestry Library Edition has broader coverage with records from all around the world while Findmypast seems to have better coverage of some records from the Australia and the Pacific, and it is perhaps better than Ancestry when it comes to military records from the UK. This information, as well as your own personal preference for which database you find easier to use, may determine where you search first. If you don't find what you are after in one it is well worth trying the other, and of course it can be useful to cross-reference the two.

Remember as well that online databases can change, due to copyright or business decisions. This makes it extra important that you record what you find as you find it - sometimes when you come back a week later, that all important record is no longer there!

Ancestry Library Edition

Ancestry Library edition has millions of records from all over the world including record collections from Canada, Europe, and Australia. It has many records from the United States and the United Kingdom, including census, church, court, and immigration records. Ancestry is useful for those seeking to access indexes to Birth, Death, and Marriage records from Australia and overseas. It is available for use at any of the PCs within our libraries.

Ancestry Learning

The Ancestry website has an excellent learning centre that will give you many tips for searching your family tree. You can find it [here](#).

Searching in Ancestry

By default, Ancestry searches for the exact spelling of your search, *as well as* phonetic matches and similar spellings. This will give you the widest results. You can limit your search to exact spellings by selecting the Exact button.

Names may have been shortened, so you may find records listing Meg or Rita for Margaret and Jack for John. Also, some names were commonly abbreviated e.g. Henry (Hy), George (Geo), John (Jno). A Google search will bring up a list of common name abbreviations. The online dictionary Wiktionary has a list for some [here](#).

If a search for a specific name does not give you any results, try broadening your search. Conversely, if a broad search brings too many results try narrowing your search. In many families, individuals were known by a second given name so try reversing names, for example Martin Daniel Pianta instead of Daniel Martin Pianta.

You can do a simple search from the Ancestry home page or include more detail with 'Show more options'. This is illustrated in the image below.

The image shows the Ancestry search interface. At the top, the word "Search" is centered. Below it, there are several input fields and options:

- First & Middle Name(s)** and **Last Name** input fields.
- Place your ancestor might have lived** input field (City, County, State, Country) and **Birth Year** input field with a calendar icon.
- Search** button and **Show fewer options** link.
- Match all terms exactly** checkbox.
- Add event:** Birth, Marriage, Death, Lived In, Any Event, More (dropdown).
- Add family member:** Father, Mother, Sibling, Spouse, Child.
- Keyword** input field (Occupation, street address, etc.).
- Gender** dropdown menu (currently set to "-- Select --").
- Race/Nationality** input field.
- Four checked checkboxes: **Historical Records**, **Stories & Publications**, **Family Trees**, and **Photos & Maps**.
- Search** and **Clear search** buttons.

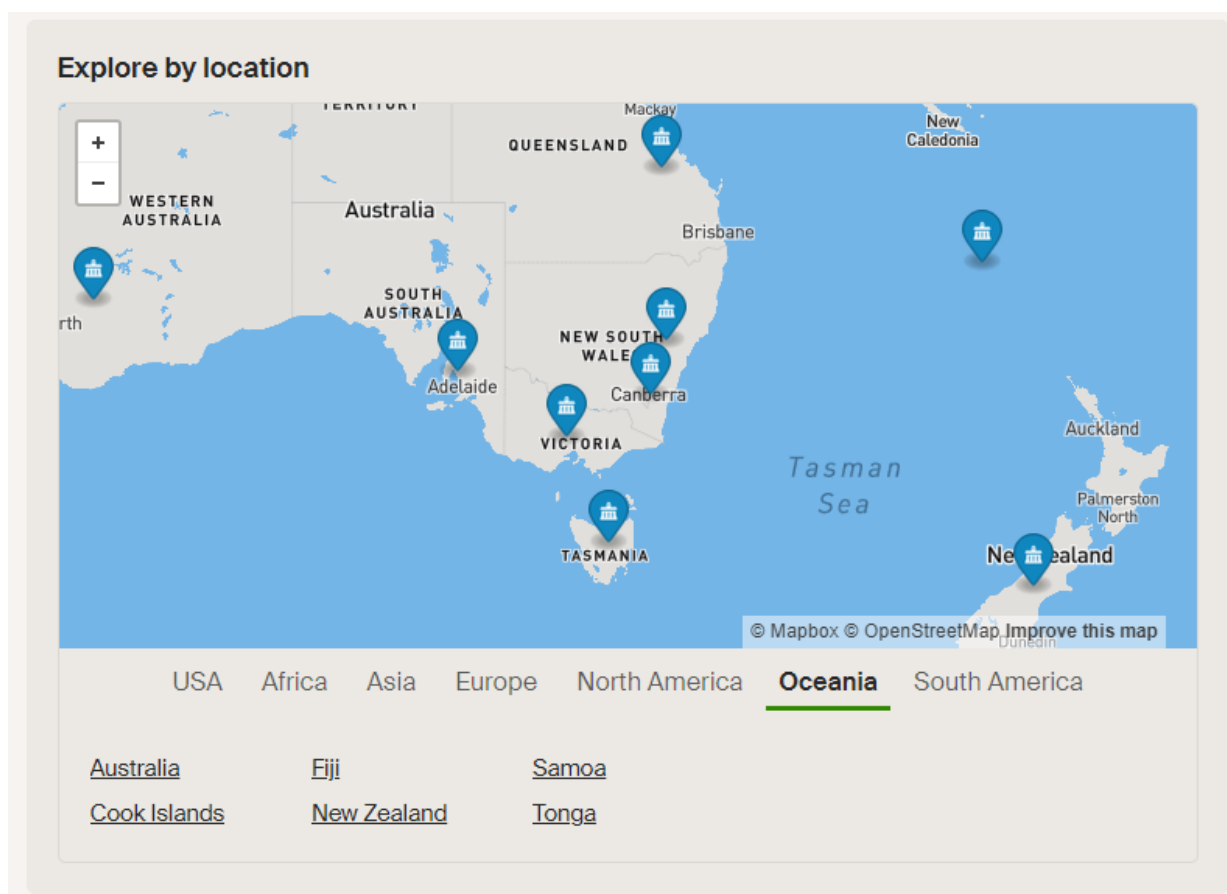
On the right side, there is a section titled **Explore by collection** with a **View all** button. Below this, there are several categories of records with links to explore them:

- Birth, marriage & death**
 - Birth, Baptism & christening
 - Marriage & divorce
 - Death, burial, cemetery & obituaries
- Census & voter lists**
 - U.S. Federal Census Collection
 - UK Census Collection
 - Canadian Census Collection
 - More...
- Immigration & travel**
 - Passenger lists
 - Citizenship & naturalization records
 - Border crossings & passports
 - More...
- Military**
 - Draft, enlistment and service
 - Casualties
 - Soldier, veteran & prisoner rolls & lists
 - More...

You can add as much detail as you have regarding place, dates, gender, etc. You'll also notice that it gives you options that allow for variation or uncertainty. For example, you can include dates up to 10 years either side, and whether name spelling matches exactly or not.

The image shows two search filter sections. The first is for 'Birth Year' with the value '1843' and a dropdown menu open showing options: 'Exact to...' (checked), 'this year' (selected), '+/-1 year', '+/-2 years', '+/-5 years', and '+/-10 years'. The second is for 'Last Name' with the value 'shaw' and a dropdown menu open showing options: 'Exact and...' (checked), 'Sounds like', 'Similar', and 'Soundex'. A link 'About these settings' is visible at the bottom of the second dropdown.

Below this is a section that allows you to **Explore by location**. This will arrange record collections by geographic location. This can be useful if you want to see what collections are held for given places, for example, Victoria-specific collections.



Ancestry has many of these collections and you can narrow your search to specific ones. However, if you are looking for a particular person or family, it may be more useful to do a broad name search first to get many hits, and *then* refine by collection, location, or record date on the next screen (as illustrated below). Selecting one of these allows for further refinement, and you can combine them as well (e.g., selecting Oceania AND 1800).

All results for William Shaw

Your search 1-20 of 764,587 Browse by collection

William Shaw Broad Exact

Apply

Filters

- > Census & voter lists 100,000+
- > Birth, marriage & death 200,000+
- > Military 40,000+
- > Immigration & emigration 10,000+
- > Newspapers & periodicals 179
- > Pictures 11
- > Stories, memories & histories 1,141
- > Maps, atlases & gazetteers 9
- > Directories & member lists 100,000+
- > Court, land, wills & financial 40,000+
- > Dictionaries, encyclopedias & reference 585
- > Family trees

Record location

- > North America 400,000+
- > Europe 200,000+
- > Oceania 30,000+
- > Asia 1,158
- > Africa 1,010
- > South America 147

Record date

- > 1500 474
- > 1600 3,551
- > 1700 10,000+
- > 1800 200,000+
- > 1900 400,000+
- > 2000 20,000+

To get better results, add more information such as Birth Info, Death Info and Location—even a guess will help. [Edit your search](#) or [learn more](#)

U.S., Departing Passenger and Crew Lists, 1914-1966 Passenger lists View	Name: William Shaw [William Shaw] Departure: 30 Apr 1954 New York, New York, USA
Pennsylvania, U.S., Arriving Passenger and Crew Lists, 1798-1962 Passenger lists View	Name: William Wm Shaw Birth: abt 1877 Departure: Queenstown, Ireland Arrival: 12 Nov 1900 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA
Boston, Massachusetts, U.S., Book Indexes to Passenger Lists, 1899-1940 Passenger lists View	Name: Mr William Shaw [Mr William Shaw] Arrival: 29 Aug 1907 Boston, Massachusetts, Massachusetts, United States
Boston, Massachusetts, U.S., Book Indexes to Passenger Lists, 1899-1940 Passenger lists View	Name: Mr William Shaw [Mr William Shaw] Arrival: 29 Aug 1907 Boston, Massachusetts, Massachusetts, United States
Australian Convict Transportation Registers - Other Fleets & Ships, 1791-1868 Passenger lists View	Name: William Shaw [William Shaw] Civil: 8 May 1837 Old Bailey, London, England Departure: 4 Oct 1837 Residence: Tasmania (Van Diemen's Land)
Pennsylvania, U.S., Federal Naturalization Records, 1795-1931 Citizenship records	Name: William Shaw [Wm Shaw] Birth: Ireland

Collections →

Location →

Date →

Using Wildcards in Ancestry search

Wildcards are useful search tools when you are searching for names with alternative spellings, or names that may have been transcribed incorrectly.

An asterisk * represents zero or more characters.

A question mark ? represents a single character.

Wildcards can be used in the following ways:

- as the first letter, such as *son or ?atthew
- either the first or last character must be a non-wildcard character. For example, Han* and *son are okay, but not *anso*
- names must contain at least three non-wildcard characters (letters). For example, Ha*n is okay, but not Ha*

Try using wildcards to broaden your searches for elusive family members. For example, a search for Jan* Pianta brings up Jane, Janice, and Janet.

Advanced Search

If you know details of other family members, you may find adding more Options to your search will bring you more relevant results. You can add an Event you may know, such as marriage or death and/or the name of a family member. Keep in mind the type of record you are looking for though – knowing the name of a spouse is little help in finding a birth record.

This example is looking for Patrick Reidy with a mother of Anne Carney. Patrick and Anne Carney are spelled differently in many records, so wildcards were used to find as many as possible.

First & Middle Name(s) Exact...

Last Name Exact...

Place your ancestor might have lived Exact to...

Birth Year Match all terms exactly

Search Show fewer options ^

Add event: Birth Marriage Death Lived In Any Event More v

Any Event Exact to...

Add family member: Father Mother Sibling Spouse Child

Mother Exact

Last Name Exact

Keyword

Gender Exact

Race/Nationality

Historical Records Family Trees

Stories & Publications Photos & Maps

Search **Clear search**

NAME: Jane Reidy
MOTHER: Ann Carney
FATHER: Patk Reidy
BIRTH: abt 1875
DEATH: 1896 - Ballarat, Victoria

NAME: Elizth Ann Eddy
MOTHER: Anne Carney
FATHER: Patrick Reidy
BIRTH: abt 1879
DEATH: 1942 - Ballarat, Victoria

NAME: Margaret Ellen Tooher
MOTHER: Ann Carney
FATHER: Patrick Reidy
BIRTH: abt 1878
DEATH: 1969 - Ivanhoe, Victoria

NAME: Patk Stephen Reidy
MOTHER: Unknown Ann
FATHER: Patk Reidy
BIRTH: abt 1870
DEATH: 1938 - Yville, Victoria

When you find the document you are looking for, Ancestry allows you to send it to your email. Look for the send Document link. This will also send a PDF of the document, such as a census record, that you can keep and link to your family tree records. The 'print' link will generate a printer-friendly version of the page.

[Print](#)

William Shaw

in the Australian Convict Transportation Registers – Other Fleets & Ships, 1791-1868



Detail	Source
Name:	William Shaw [Willaim Shaw]
Vessel:	Neptune
Convicted Date:	8 May 1837
Voyage Date:	4 Oct 1837
Colony:	Tasmania (Van Diemen's Land)
Place of Conviction:	Old Bailey, London, England

Send Your Find Home!

Enter your email address and we will send you a link to your personalized Discovery Page where you can view and download all of the great finds you make while here.

Send document

We value your privacy. [Read our Privacy Statement](#)

Findmypast

Findmypast currently has over 135 million records from across the world. It has partnerships with government record holders in Australia, Ireland, Britain, as well as The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (the largest genealogical organisation in the world).

The records are diverse and are a valuable source of information for family and local historians.

For example, you can use electoral rolls to find information about addresses, household members and their occupations, and land and surveys from Government Gazettes may list details of land purchases, values or even the crops planted. It may be possible to find elusive Birth, Death and Marriage information from church and cemetery records and education and school records. Findmypast also has many military records of particular interest to those researching UK ancestors.

Moonee Valley Libraries has subscribed to four “seats” of access. This means that four is the maximum number of people who can use the website at any one time.


Unfortunately, some records are not available through the library edition. These will show in your search results, but attempting to access them will display a message: “Sorry, this record is inaccessible”. Please let us know if you find this is happening frequently.

Searching Findmypast

Use these tips and tricks when searching Findmypast.

- Make sure the 'variants' check box is ticked on first and last names.
- Be less specific with place names, try searching for a town or county rather than a full address. Keep in mind that boundaries may have changed.
- Since the spellings of names may have changed, try using wildcards to search for variants. For example, searching for How* would show results with How, Howes and Hows.

Australian Electoral Rolls

 **Australia Electoral Rolls**
Electoral rolls are Australia's census substitute and are an extremely useful genealogy tool for local, family, and social historians. Discover your ancestor in the electoral rolls from Australia.
[Learn more](#) [Search tips](#) [Useful links](#) [All record sets](#)

Search for Person Address

Who
 Name variants ⓘ Name variants ⓘ

All fields are optional ✕

When
 ⓘ ⓘ

Occupation

Place [Browse Place](#)

Sub-district [Browse Sub-district](#)

District [Browse District](#)

State [Browse State](#)

Street

Other household member
 Name variants ⓘ Name variants ⓘ

Findmypast has a strong collection of Australian Electoral Rolls, although the size, type (whether transcripts or images), and accessibility varies from state-to-state. For instance, the Victorian rolls are not able to be searched, but others can. More information on Victorian Electoral Rolls specifically can be found via the State Library of Victoria [here](#).

Rolls will often give you an address, occupation and perhaps list other members of the same family.

1423	McKechnie, Elizabeth, Bush Paddock, Fairymead, domestic duties, 25 Sep., 1910, F
1424	McKechnie, George, Bush Paddock, Fairymead, missionary, 29 Sep., 1910, M
1425	McKell, Atchison, South Kolan, labourer, 3 Oct., 1911, M
1426	McKell, Kate, South Kolan, domestic duties, 3 Oct., 1911, F

Image from Queensland electoral roll

1939 Register

Recently added to Findmypast is the 1939 Register - 41 million lives recorded in one day at the outbreak of World War II in the UK. The register includes the ages and occupation of residents, and links to maps showing the location of residences. You can search individuals, but you can also browse by household and the map. Note that records of people under 100 years who are still alive will not be shown.

Example Search of the 1939 Register:

Who lived in *your* house in 1939?

41 Million lives recorded in England & Wales at the outbreak of the Second World War.
The official home of the 1939 Register

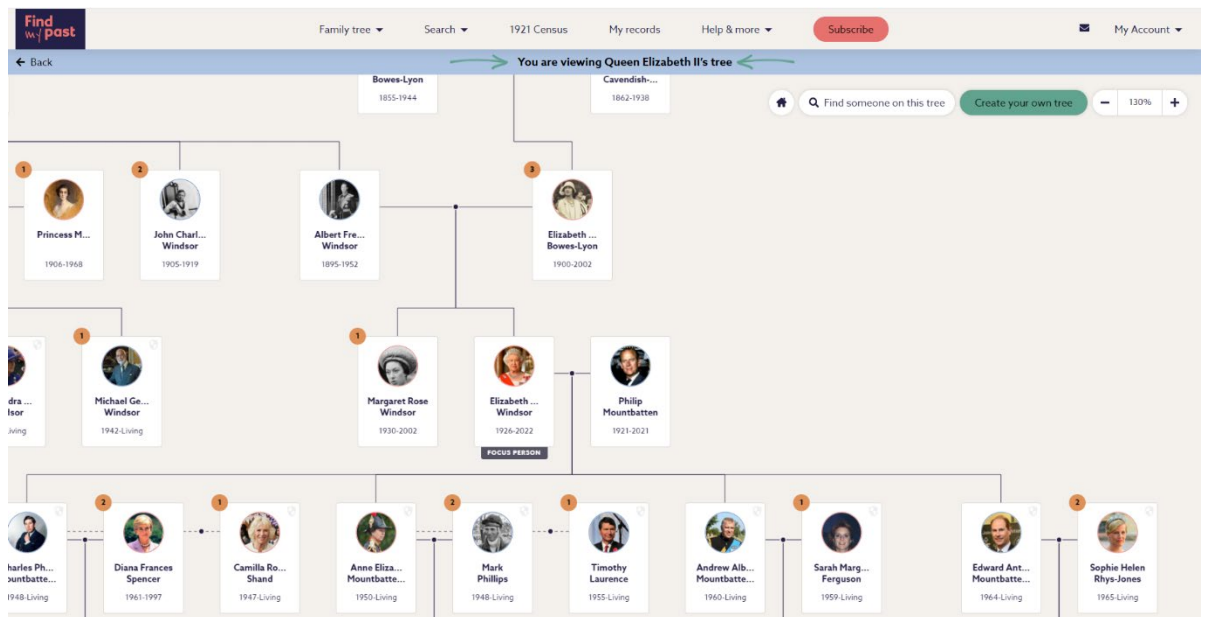
Find a person in the 1939 Register | Find a house in the 1939 Register | Map Search | Advanced Search

Who	When	Where
First name	Birth Year	Location
<input type="text" value="Winston"/>	<input type="text" value="1874"/>	<input type="text" value="London"/>

Records of people younger than 100 and still alive, or who died after 1991 are officially closed. You can find more details here.

Family Tree

By setting up a free account login with Findmypast you can use online software to build your family tree. This will provide a diagram of your family that you can grow as you located records.



Newspapers on Findmypast

Findmypast has a wide selection of British newspapers including thousands of local and regional publications from across the England, Wales, and Scotland. Each page has been digitized and indexed, offering you the ability to search within an article. Some of them are “free to view”, while others require you to pay to view; these paid articles are part of The British Newspaper Archive, a partnership between Findmypast and the British Library. Moonee Valley Libraries does not subscribe to this but if you find an article of interest you can buy a copy or use the details to search for the article elsewhere (such as the records available through the State Library of Victoria).

National Archives of Australia

The National Archives' holds more than 40 million items. These are primarily Australian Government records, from Federation in 1901 until today, although they do also hold a number of 19th century records. These include records relating immigration and military service, as well as many other topics relevant to family history. They also allow you to search by name, as well as basic and advanced searches.

There is an excellent collection of research guides produced by the NAA, as well as other useful references which can be found [here](#).

The screenshot shows the RecordSearch page of the National Archives of Australia. At the top left is the NAA logo. The page title is 'RecordSearch' with a 'Login' link on the right. Below the title are navigation links: 'Help', 'RecordSearch Forum', and 'View previous searches'. A menu bar contains 'Basic search' (highlighted), 'Advanced search', 'NameSearch', 'PhotoSearch', 'Passenger arrivals', and 'Newly scanned records'. Below the menu is a blue bar with 'Basic search for items' and 'Welcome guest'. On the right of this bar are links for 'Advanced search for items' and 'Bringing Them Home name index'. The main search area has a 'Keywords' input field, 'Dates' input fields (with an example '(eg 1921 or 1939 to 1945)'), and 'Search' and 'Clear' buttons. Below the search area is a notice about Covid-19 services and a disclaimer about historical context. At the bottom, there are links for 'Privacy', 'Copyright', 'Terms of use', 'Accessibility', 'Using the collection', 'Citation', 'Service charter', and 'Ask us a question'. The footer includes the copyright notice '© Copyright National Archives of Australia 2022' and the Australian Government National Archives of Australia logo.

War Service Records

Many Australian war service records from the First and Second World Wars have been digitised, and the information is available online. Registrations records will give a next of kin and address information, a description of the person and perhaps a photograph. It will also list the war service, postings, injuries, and service pensions. This section can be found [here](#).

Immigration and citizenship

A rich collection of records relating to immigration and citizenship can be found online. Of particular interest may be the 'passenger arrivals index', which covers over 10 million records from 1898 to 1972. You can search this by person, year of arrival, ports, as well as viewing a list of ships and aircraft. There are also research guides focussing on Chinese, British children, and Jewish immigration which can be found at the link above.

Trove is a website that connects you to more than 6 billion items from hundreds of organisations around Australia. It is primarily used to search historical newspapers (more information on this is included below), but it also includes gazettes, magazines, reports, maps, and more.

The screenshot shows the Trove homepage. At the top, the Trove logo is centered, with navigation links for 'ABOUT', 'HELP', and 'NEWS'. Below the logo is a horizontal menu with 'Explore', 'Categories', 'Community', 'Research', and 'First Australians'. A large purple banner contains the text 'Search. Uncover. Australia' and a search bar with the placeholder 'Search Trove...'. To the right of the search bar are 'All categories' with a dropdown arrow, a search icon, and 'Advanced Search' with a dropdown arrow. Below the banner, the National Library of Australia logo is on the left, and the Trove Partners logo is on the right. In the center, text reads 'Trove is a collaboration between the National Library of Australia and hundreds of Partner organisations around Australia.' with a link 'See our Partners'.


There is a basic search available from the home page. You must select a category to perform an advanced search or further refine your results. This then gives you the option to include or exclude terms, as well as refine by dates, places, and types of media. There are options to further refine results on the right-hand side when a search is performed.

Newspapers & Gazettes

The screenshot shows the search interface for 'Newspapers & Gazettes'. At the top right, there are links for 'Simple search' and 'Hide advanced search'. Below this is a search bar with a 'clear' link and a search icon. The search bar contains the text '"niddrie estate"'. Below the search bar are four radio button options: 'All of these words', 'Any of these words', 'The phrase', and 'Without these words'. Below these options is a large search filter box with the following fields: 'Type' (Any), 'Titles and places' (Type to search), 'Date range' (From: YYYY-MM-DD, To: YYYY-MM-DD), 'Article category' (Any), 'Illustration type' (Any), and 'Word count' (Any). At the bottom right of the filter box, there is a 'clear' link and a search icon.

Some items (mostly newspapers and gazettes) will display in the Trove website automatically. Other results are hosted by different organisations; in such cases Trove will provide a link to their website. As you can see in the image below, this photograph is available at the City of Melbourne Libraries website – Trove will redirect you to the hosting website in such cases.

180 Mount Alexander Road, Moonee Ponds

 Photograph



View ▾

Cite this ▾

FREE ACCESS

View at City of Melbourne Libraries. City of Melbourne Libraries online Heritage Collection. [↗](#)

Photograph

□

Newspapers

The marriage of Miss Alice Torrance (Torrle) Asker, only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. A. Asker, "Kia-ora," Robb-street, Essendon, to Mr. Norman Pickering, elder son of Mr. and Mrs. Pickering, of Ivanhoe, late of Moonee Ponds, will be celebrated at the Essendon Baptist Church on Saturday, February 17, at 6 p.m., and afterwards at "Ascot House," Moonee Ponds.

From Table Talk (Melbourne, Vic: 1885 - 1939), Thursday 8 February 1917, page 9

The personal notices in newspapers announcing births, deaths and marriages can be a valuable tool to trace elusive family members, or to verify existing knowledge. Death notices will often provide poignant details of a loved one's life, often being placed by friends, colleagues, and recreational groups as well as family.

Local newspapers in particular can be a source of articles or obituaries. If your family member was involved in sporting groups or other community groups you may find the sports results make mention of their skills. You may also be able to find photographs of family members.

If your family members were involved in a business, you may be able to find advertisements for a business or perhaps information about houses purchased by family members.

And of course, sometimes ancestors were mentioned in connection to the news! Maybe they were a letter-writer or involved in a local event. This can be wonderful not only for cross-checking other information, but for gaining a sense of them and their life.

LOCAL AND GENERAL

STRANGE SEA ANIMAL.

On Monday morning, when about a mile south of the wreck of the Nambucca, a fisherman, Mr. R. Davis, found a sea animal 10 feet long, with a 6ft. girth and a head somewhat like a Polar bear, lying on the beach. It was asleep, but while Mr. Davis was lassoing it with a rope, it awoke and showed fight. Mr. Davis tethered it to a tree, and went to Nambucca Heads, and asked Mr. J. Eichmann to telephone to the Museum authorities. Mr. Eichmann decided to inspect the animal first, and when he and Davis returned to the beach it was dead.

From The Kyogle Examiner (NSW : 1912; 1914 - 1915; 1917 - 1954), 12th June 1934, page 6.

Finding historical newspapers

Australia

- Many historical Australian newspapers have been made available online through [Trove](#).
- Some local newspapers from the Moonee Valley area are available on microfilm at Sam Merrifield Library. More information on these is included below.
- If you are looking for a Victorian newspaper which is not available through Moonee Valley or Trove, try the [State Library of Victoria](#) – they have most Victorian papers on microfilm.

New Zealand

- [Papers Past](#) provides online access to many historic New Zealand newspapers, as well as a number of journals and magazines (including Police Gazettes). New Zealand newspapers often reported on events in Australia.

Britain

- The State Library of Victoria has access for members to [online newspapers](#). You can join the [State Library](#) for free, and this will allow access to these resources.

Local newspapers

You can read historical newspapers from the Moonee Valley area at Sam Merrifield Library.

Our historical newspapers are on microfilm and can be read using our microfilm reader (don't worry if you haven't used microfilm before, it is fairly easy to use, and staff can show you how). There are also some historical newspapers available online.

Local papers

Newspapers from the local area that we have on microfilm include:

- The Moonee Valley Leader, formerly the Essendon Gazette, then Moonee Valley Gazette, (1888 – current)
- The Essendon & Flemington Chronicle (1882 – 1894)
- The Flemington Spectator (1889 – 1920)
- The West Bourke Times (1887 – 1909)
- The Moonee Valley Community News (1991 – 2010)

The library resource [Newsbank](#) has more recent local papers online:

- Moonee Valley Leader August 2000 – current
- Moonee Valley weekly October 2007 – current
- The Age 1991 – current

Copies of the Essendon Gazette from the years of the First World War (1914-18) have also been made available online through [Trove](#).

Local newspaper index

A number of local newspaper articles are indexed on our catalogue and can be found when searching there.

Another way is to search using an index. The Annals of Essendon is an index to the Essendon Gazette (under its various names) which allows you to check when articles on particular topics were published. It can be found in the Community Heritage collection under the call number 994.510113 MOON.

Other resources

Photographs

Photographs help to make a Family History more interesting.



Collect original photographs or copies of photographs of various family members. Try to find out and record when and where the photographs were taken.



Group of people, c.1910, Essendon – Moonee Valley Libraries

If your family lived in the Moonee Valley area, you could try searching in our catalogue for pictures, just in case we hold a photograph of one of your ancestors. Try searching with their names as well as the keyword picture, (e.g., 'Maud Kelly picture'). We don't have a lot of historical photographs of people, but you never know...

The [State Library of Victoria](#) and [Trove](#) hold extensive photo collections. Try searching using area names, locations, organisations, or people.



Unidentified wedding group, c. 1910-1920, Essendon – Moonee Valley Libraries

Post Office Directories

You can research your family home or places your family may have lived in by searching through Post Office Directories.

These were equivalent to modern day phone books and list Melbourne addresses by suburb, street, and house number as well as by surname. The directories list occupants, rather than owners, and only the heads of households are listed.

The Sam Merrifield Library holds Sands and McDougall Directories on microfiche from 1857 to 1974, as well as a range of hard copy directories. These are also available online via the State Library of Victoria [here](#).

Family history books and magazines

Genealogy books and magazines typically have detailed articles about specific topics, as well as tips and hints for researchers. Books can be found in the History section, usually under the call number 929. Moonee Valley Libraries holds Family tree magazine at the Sam Merrifield Library. Additional titles can be found digitally on the Overdrive / Libby, and Pressreader online platforms. Beware that books offering support for software or websites can become obsolete rather quickly.

Births, Deaths, and Marriages

The indexes to these records are searchable online for most states of Australia, and for New Zealand. These websites often provide information and tips for family historians as well.

- [Victoria](#)
- [New South Wales](#)
- [Queensland](#)
- [South Australia](#)
- [Tasmania](#)
- [Western Australia](#)
- [New Zealand](#)
- [The Ryerson Index](#) – an index of death notices from Australian newspapers with a strong focus on NSW notices from the 20th and 21st centuries.

Victorian state organisations

There are several excellent organisations that can help you with your family history research in Victoria.

- The [Public Record Office of Victoria \(PROV\)](#) is the archive of State and Local Government in Victoria. They hold public records from 1836 onwards relating to the state of Victoria. They have excellent resources and advice on researching and their collections [here](#). These can be invaluable if you are seeking information about people and places in Victoria.
- The [State Library of Victoria](#) is Australia's oldest public library. They have a rich collection and a strong digitisation programme, so many items are available online. Information on family history can be found [here](#).

Historical & Genealogical Societies

If you are wanting to expand your search further, consider visiting or contacting local history societies. They can often provide information on local people or places that you may not be able to find elsewhere. The Essendon and Keilor historical societies are two based in the Moonee Valley area, while the Royal Historical Society is concerned with the whole state. There are many more.

- [Essendon Historical Society](#)
- [Keilor Historical Society](#)
- [Royal Historical Society of Victoria](#)

There are several genealogical societies in both Victoria and Australia. As well as these your local library or community centre may have more informal ones too – it's worth asking!

- [Family History Connections \(formerly Australian Institute of Genealogical Studies\)](#)
- [Genealogical Society of Victoria](#)
- [Society of Australian Genealogists](#)

International websites

Family history often becomes an international affair; some commonly used international websites and organisations are listed below.

- [CO.AS.IT](#) – the homepage for the Italian Historical Society; although they do not undertake family history research they have assembled information and resources for those researching Italian ancestors.
- [CAFHOV](#) – Chinese Australian Family Historians of Victoria have resources on researching Chinese family history, indexes, and publications.
- [Irish Genealogy Toolkit](#) – a personal website with tools, resources, tips, and tricks for Irish genealogy.
- [IrishGenealogy.ie](#) – funded by the Irish government, includes Irish birth, marriage, and death records as well as other resources.
- [The National Archives](#) – the official archive for the UK Government, England, and Wales. Most records are available through Findmypast or Ancestry however. Others may cost to access.
- [ScotlandsPeople](#) – Scottish government website that provides access to the statutory registers of births, marriages, deaths, and so on; census returns; church records; valuation rolls; and legal records.
- [The FamilySearch Wiki](#) – a free online guide that contains links to genealogy resources of all kinds.
- [Liberty Foundation](#) – an index of 65 million records of passengers arriving to the Port of New York from 1820 to 1957; many Australian immigrants came via the USA.
- [Coraweb](#) – one of the oldest genealogy websites on the internet, collates links and resources.
- [Cyndi's List](#) – even older than Coraweb, another index to genealogical websites.

Further Reading

For more detailed advice on researching and creating interesting, engaging family histories, Moonee Valley Libraries hold multiple books in our collection, including eBooks. You can find these by searching our library catalogue, or in person at our branches – most are held under the call number 929.1 in the History section.