

## Bringing Them Home name index

The National Archives of Australia holds many records that contain information about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their history. The National Archives has created an index of names that appear in the most relevant of these records in response to the recommendations of *Bringing Them Home*, the report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families, released in 1997.

The Bringing Them Home (BTH) name index aims to help Indigenous people find information about themselves, their families and their country. The index contains:

- names of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- names of non-Indigenous people related to or associated with Indigenous people
- names of missions and institutions where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were placed
- places where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have lived or visited

The index does not contain information about the people named. To see this information you will need to view the original records (files, papers and photographs) or photocopies of them.

### Requesting a search of the BTH name index

On request, National Archives reference staff will search the index for you. To assist us to undertake a thorough search, it helps if you provide as many details as possible, including:

- name of the person you are researching – this includes any variations in the spelling of given names, nicknames, forgotten names, or Indigenous names
- family connections – the names of any siblings, children or other relatives
- language group, country or homeland – which were sometimes used to identify people
- place – where the person was born, lived, worked, or was sent to
- date of birth, age at events, or date of death of the person
- date ranges – year or period the person was in a certain place or area, such as the period they worked on a particular cattle station
- significant events that may have occurred in the person's life, such as being evacuated because of natural disaster or war

You may not be able to supply all of these details about the person you are seeking but, the more information you provide, the easier it will be for us to determine if there are references to the person or family you are researching in the National Archives' holdings.

You can ask for the BTH name index to be searched by contacting the National Archives' [National Reference Service](#):

National Reference Service  
National Archives of Australia  
PO Box 4924  
KINGSTON ACT 2604

## **Using information from the BTH name index to find records**

If a search of the name index locates entries relating to the person you are researching, we will send you a list of the names found in the index. You will then be able to:

- ask for photocopies of the pages of the original records that mention the name, or
- view the records in the National Archives research centre of the office in which they are held

Reference officers will be able to advise you where the records are located.

In some instances the records may contain distressing or offensive information. The records were created many years ago and are written in the language of the day. Some personally sensitive information in the records is withheld from general access under the provisions of the [Archives Act 1983](#).

If the reason for seeking access is to obtain information for the purpose of re-establishing family and community links, under the Memoranda of Understanding between the National Archives and Northern Territory, Victorian and South Australian Indigenous communities you may look at information normally restricted from public access. Please see the following fact sheets for more information on the Memoranda of Understanding between the National Archives and Indigenous communities:

- *Fact sheet 114 - Memorandum of Understanding with Northern Territory Aboriginal people*
- *Fact sheet 205 - Memorandum of Understanding with the Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency*
- *Fact sheet 209 - Memorandum of Understanding with South Australian Indigenous people*

## **Record holdings on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people**

The BTH name index is not the only information resource available to researchers of Indigenous family history.

While most government records relating to Aboriginal affairs before 1970 were created and maintained by state governments, the National Archives holds large quantities of records relevant to Northern Territory and Victorian Indigenous people.

A number of fact sheets and guides to the National Archives' records on Indigenous people are available. Please see *Fact sheet 113 – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people* for more information on the National Archives' records regarding Australian Indigenous people.

The Victorian Koorie Records Taskforce, in association with the Public Record Office of Victoria, has developed '[Finding your story](#)' website.