NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF AUSTRALIA

Passenger arrivals index

What is the Passenger arrivals index?

The Passenger arrivals index is an online database that includes the names from passenger lists in the National Archives series K269, *Inward passenger manifests for ships and aircraft arriving at Fremantle, Perth Airport and outports, chronological series,* and series A1197, *Incoming passenger cards*. Listing of the names from passenger lists was undertaken as a project under the Commonwealth government's Work for the Dole program.

Launched in February 2003, the index now includes the names of over 5.5 million passengers arriving:

- by ship between 1898 and 1966 (arriving in or travelling through the port of Fremantle or other WA ports)
- by aircraft from 1944 to 1966 to Perth Airport (or travelling through)
- by ship or aircraft from 1965 to 1972.

The index is useful to those undertaking family history research because the passenger lists lodged in Fremantle included all passengers disembarking in Fremantle, *and* usually passengers travelling on to other Australian ports (such as Melbourne or Sydney) or overseas ports (such as Auckland or Colombo).

Accessing the Passenger arrivals index

Access the Passenger arrivals index via the RecordSearch database. Once in RecordSearch, select the 'Passenger arrivals index' tab at the top right of the screen to display the search screen. See also *Fact sheet 13 - RecordSearch: an overview.*

Search tips

Start with a broad search

In your initial search, it is better to use only a family name and, if you know it, the year of arrival, or range of years (eg 1926 or 1926–1927). Not all passenger index entries include given names, ports of embarkation and disembarkation. If your initial search is very specific (eg it includes a

family name, given names, port of embarkation and day of arrival) you might not retrieve the relevant entry as these details may not be recorded.

Family names

You may need to conduct more than one search, or a wildcard search, to capture variations of family names such as: Paterson and Patterson; Abrams and Abrahams; Mackenzie and McKenzie (see 'Wildcard Searching' below).

If the family name includes more than one word, you must type all words (eg for Barr Smith type 'Barr Smith') or use a wildcard. If you type 'Smith' or 'Barr', you will not retrieve people with the family name Barr Smith.

Given names

You must combine a given name with another search option in an initial search.

Around 41% of entries have no given name or only one initial. Married women may be recorded with their husband's given name or initial(s), eg Mrs George Smith. If you use a given name to refine a search, it is better to search with a wildcard (see 'Wildcard Searching' below).

Year of arrival

Remember, the date of arrival is the date the ship arrived in *Fremantle*. A passenger may have arrived in an eastern port (eg Sydney) in January 1927, but the ship may have arrived in Fremantle at the end of 1926.

Ship names

Ship names must be typed in full, exactly as spelt, or with a wildcard, taking particular care if the ship name includes more than one word, eg: Citta de Genova; City of Sparta; Moreton Bay.

You can check the spelling of ship names by clicking on the 'View list of ships' button on the 'Passenger arrivals index' screen.

Ports of embarkation and disembarkation

For many passengers the port(s) is listed as 'Unknown'.

Wildcard searching

Use a question mark to replace one character, eg:

Hans?n to retrieve Hansen and Hanson

Use an asterisk to replace more than one character, eg:

T* to retrieve Thomas, Tom or the initial T

Thom* to retrieve Thomas, Thoms, Thompson or Thomson

M*kenzie to retrieve McKenzie and Mackenzie

Barr* or Barr*Smith to retrieve Barr Smith

M*farlan* to retrieve Mcfarlane, Macfarland and Macfarlane

Other

Children and spouses are not always listed separately, eg 8 [passengers] Fraser, Mr and Mrs D and family

Some of the earlier records are difficult to read, or persons may have entered the country under an occupation, or nickname, eg Mrs Ward maid

For more assistance select the 'Help' tab in RecordSearch.

Viewing the passenger lists

The digitised copies of passenger lists are either microfilm copies or scans of the original records. For series A1197 the barcode may refer to the box of passenger arrival cards, with the digital copy icon going directly to the relevant passenger card.

Microfilm copies of the passenger lists in series K269 are available for viewing in the National Archives offices in Canberra, Sydney and Perth, and in the Battye Library of Western Australian History in Perth.

A copy of a list for a particular voyage can be requested via RecordSearch (see the 'Help' text) or by contacting us. For a large ship, the list may include hundreds of people. Normal copying charges will apply.