

Australian South Sea Islanders

The following resources are a sample from the collections of the State Library of Queensland. The collections include published books, photographs, journal articles, posters, Digital stories, original documents and more.

Books

[After recognition : access and equity for Australian South Sea Islanders](#), Steve Mullins. Rockhampton, Qld : Rural Social and Economic Research Centre, Central Queensland University : 1996. Call no. SBG14067.

[The blackbirders : the recruiting of south seas labour for Queensland, 1863-1907](#), Edward Wybergh Docker. Sydney, NSW : Angus and Robertson, 1970. Call no. J 331.54209943 DOC.

[Captain Robert Towns \(1794-1873\) : a short biography of the man who first introduced the 'Kanakas' to Queensland and gave his name to the City of Townsville](#), Pam Carver. Townsville, Qld.: Maritime Museum of Townsville, c1992. Call no. P 994.36092 CAR.

[Cindie : a chronicle of the canefields](#), Jean Devanny (1894-1962). London : Robert Hale, 1949. Call no. J A823.2 DEV.

Extracts from the baptism register for kanakas, Christ Church (Bundaberg, Qld.). Bundaberg, Qld. : 1881-1893. Microfilm no.

[Registers of baptisms](#), South Seas Evangelical Mission. Australian National University. Pacific Manuscripts Bureau : 1886-1973. Microfilm no. FILM PMB 1201.

[Hambleton Plantation \(about 1889\)](#), Allan McInnes (1927-). Cairns Historical Society. Cairns, Qld. : Cairns Historical Society, 1982. Call no. P 994.36 M'IN.

[History and the South Sea Islanders on the Tweed](#), Itong, Johnny (1908-). Coolangatta, Qld. : Johnny Itong, 1994. Call no. P 926.3 ITO.

[Kanaka : a history of Melanesian Mackay](#), Clive Moore (1951-), Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies. Port Moresby, PNG : Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies and University of Papua New Guinea Press : 1985. Call no. J 994.35 MOO.

[Kidnapping in the south seas : being a narrative of a three month's cruise of H.M. Ship Rosaria](#), George Palmer. Edinburgh, UK : Edmonston and Douglas, 1871. Call no. RBJ 326.099 PAL.

[Me no go Mally Bulla : recruiting and blackbirding in the Queensland labour trade 1863-1906](#), Wal F, Bird (1926-). Charnwood, A.C.T. : Ginninderra Press, 2005. Call no. 994.303 2005.

[The mountain tops of Lemuria : the kanaka, a remnant : a problem for federated Australia](#), Harold Maclure. Bundaberg, Qld. : G. J. Young & Co. 1901. Call no. RBJ 331.117 M'LU.

[My wife and I in Queensland : an eight years' experience in the above colony, with some account of Polynesian labour](#). Charles H. Eden. London, UK : Longmans, Green, 1872. Call no. RBJ 919.43 EDE.

[Slave trade in the New Hebrides : being papers read at the annual meeting of the New Hebrides Mission held at Aniwa, July 1871](#), John Kay (ed.), Reformed Church of Scotland, New Hebrides

Mission: Annual Meeting. Edinburgh, UK : Edmonston & Douglas, 1872. Call no. RBJ 380.144 SLA [digitised].

[Slavers of the South Seas](#), Thomas Dunbabin (1883-?). Sydney, NSW : Angus & Robertson, 1935. Call no. J 380.144 DUN.

[The South Sea Islanders and the Queensland labour trade : a record of voyages and experiences in the western Pacific from 1875 to 1891](#), William T. Wawn [William Twizell] (1837-1901), William Delisle Hay (1851-?). London, UK : Swan Sonnenschein & Co. : 1893. Call no. G 919.3 1893.

[Queensland Canefields English of the late nineteenth century : \(a record of interview with two of the last surviving Kanakas in North Queensland, 1964\)](#), Thomas Edward Dutton, Canberra, ACT : Dept. of Linguistics, Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University, 1980. Call no. J 427.9943 DUT.

[Refined white : the story of how South Sea Islanders came to cut sugar cane in Queensland and made history refining the White Australia policy](#), Michael Berry, Australian Sugar Industry Museum. Innisfail, Qld. : Australian Sugar Industry Museum, 2000. Call no. Q 331.76336 BER.

[South Sea Islanders came to Buderim](#), HESSIE LINDSEL, Buderim Historical Society. Buderim, Qld. : Buderim Historical Society Inc., c.1995. Call no. P 994.3004 SOU.

[The sugar slaves : a novel of the Queensland kanakas](#), John P. McD. Smith. Henley Beach, S. Aust. : Seaview Press, 2002. Call no. J A823.3 SMI.

[A White Australia : the Kanaka labor question : sugar growing in Queensland](#) ... a Herald investigation. Melbourne, VIC. : Herald, 1901. Call no. RBJ 331.629597 WHI [digital copy available].

DVDs/Videos

[Australian South Sea Islanders : stories from the Sunshine Coast](#), Sarah Scragg; Queensland Museum. Sunshine Coast Regional Council.; Floating Land (Sunshine Coast, Qld. : Event), 2012. Call no. HDVD 305.899432 AUS.

[A commemorative pilgrimage of significant sites: the Australian South Sea Islanders from Tweed Heads to Torres Strait](#), Kathleen Mary Fallon, Matthew Nagas. State Library of Queensland, Qld. : 2014. Record no. 99183980684102061.

[Buderim : an Indigenous and South Sea Islander history](#), Lyndon Davis, James Muller. S.I. : s.n. : p2012? Call no. HDVD 305.8994 BUD.

Newspapers

[Coloured labour in Queensland](#). Alexander Clifford Vernon. Photocopied from The Daily Mail, Brisbane between Saturday June 18, 1927 and May 5, 1928. Call no. F 326 MEL.

Digitised Newspapers -

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper>

Government Reports, Acts etc.

[Acts and regulations on Kanaka labour, Queensland, Federal and Imperial.](#) [Pacific Island Labourers Acts.] Queensland Australia. n.p. : 19- . Call no. Q 344.0162 QUE.

[Australian South Sea Islander community : Queensland government action plan.](#)
Dept.of the Premier and Cabinet. Brisbane : Queensland Government, 2001. Call no. P 362.84995 AU.

[A few facts in connection with the employment of Polynesian labour in Queensland.](#) Maurice Hume Black. London : [Qld. government], 1894. Call no. RBJ 301.451994 BLA.

[Imperial and colonial acts relating to the Pacific Island labour trade, and regulations and instructions for the guidance of Government agents appointed under the Pacific Island labourers act of 1880.](#)
Queensland.; Great Britain. Brisbane : Acting Government Printer : 1884. Call no. RBJ 344.0162 QUE.

[Imperial and colonial acts relating to the recruiting, etc., of Pacific Island labourers, and regulations made there under; together with instructions for the guidance of government agents appointed to accompany vessels licensed to carry Pacific Islanders,](#)
Brisbane : James C. Beal, Government Printer, 1892. Call no. RBJ 344.0162 QUE.

[Kanakas - deportation of : copy of correspondence between the Prime Minister and the Premier of Queensland \(23rd July to 3rd August 1906\) and Departmental memorandum,](#)
Australia. Parliament <Melbourne> : Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia : 1906. Call no. RBQ 994.36 AUS.

[Kidnapping in South Sea Islands : circular despatch with instructions to Commodore for suppression of,](#) New South Wales. Parliament. Sydney : Thomas Richards, Government Printer : 1872. Call no. RBQ 331.6293094 KID.

[Pacific Island labourers : Statement showing the number of Islanders returned and the number of exemptions, etc.,](#) Australia. Parliament Publication: <Melbourne> : Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, 1908. Call no. RBQ 994.36 VIC.

[Reintroduction of Polynesian Labour into Queensland,](#) James Troubridge Critchell (1850-1917). Lond. : British Australasian Office : 1892. Call no. J 331.6293 REI.

Sugar Industry Labour Royal Commission (*Regarding the number of Pacific Islanders to be deported from Queensland at the end of 1906 etc*) In Parliamentary papers, Queensland. 1906, Volume 2, pages 467-911.

Magazines

[Not in vain.](#) South Sea Evangelical Mission. Sydney : Marchant. [years unknown].
[What God hath wrought amongst South Sea Islanders being ... annual report of the South Sea Evangelical Mission formerly known as the Queensland Kanaka Mission, 1908-09.]
Call no. RBS 266.023 001.

[Newsletter.](#) Australian South Sea Islanders United Council. Queensland State Branch, Brisbane : The Council. Issues nos. 1-5, March 1998-January 1999. Call no. S 305.8995 002.
Pacific linguistics. Series D ; no. 29.

[Queensland Canefields English of the late nineteenth century : \(a record of interview with two of the last surviving Kanakas in North Queensland, 1964\)](#) / by Tom Dutton. Canberra : Dept. of Linguistics, Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University, 1980. Call no. J 427.9943 DUT.

Journal articles - open access

Carine Davias. "[Cultural Heritage and Identity in the Literature of Australian South Sea Islanders and Other Media](#)." *Etropic* 12.1 (2016): n. pag. Web.

Abstract - Australian South Sea Islanders represent a small community whose ancestors mainly came from Melanesian Islands to work as indentured labour in the sugar cane plantations of Queensland from the 1860's to the beginning of the 20th century. Many still live near the old sugar towns, but apart from an official recognition of their existence and distinctiveness by the Federal Government in 1994 and by the Queensland Government in 2000, South Sea Islanders' culture, economic and political roles are still underrepresented or even ignored in Australia. In the 1970's, writers belonging to that community, such as Faith Bandler, Mabel Edmund and Noel Fatnowna started to tell their own family history since the arrival of their first ancestors on the continent. These autobiographical accounts enabled them to reassert their identity as a culturally distinct group and to shed light on a part of Australia's forgotten past. Other written testimonies followed at the beginning of the 21st century but the lack of young South Sea Islander writers induced us to look at their other means of expression to promote their culture and complete the missing parts of their personal and collective history.

Stead, Victoria, and Lucy Davies. "[Unfree Labour and Australia's Obscured Pacific Histories: Towards a New Genealogy of Modern Slavery](#)." *Journal of Australian studies* 45.3 (2021): 400–416. Web

Abstract - The passage of Australia's Modern Slavery Act 2018 received bipartisan support and was heralded within both Houses of Parliament as a significant step towards addressing Australia's complicity in modern slavery. Political discourse surrounding the legislation, however, exhibits a profound and disconcerting dehistoricisation, emphasising particularities of global supply chains and contemporary transnational capitalism. Australia's own histories of slavery, slaverylike conditions and unfree labour are overwhelmingly absent from these narratives, which are framed instead by occasional references to the transatlantic slave trade. Attending particularly to histories of coerced Pacific labour within Australia, we analyse these absences as reflective of deeply rooted fissures of memory and power within Australia's national imaginaries, and of the exercise of colonial power both within the settler state and in its entanglements with the region. Through reference to two threads of Pacific labour history in Australia—the struggle for recognition of the 19th-century Pacific labour trade, and the labour patterns of 20th-century Papuan and New Guinean domestic workers—we argue for an alternate genealogy of modern slavery, one that re-centres attention to race and coloniality, and attends more fully to the presence of the past in the exploitations of the present.

Journal articles – Members of State Library of Queensland / Onsite access

Proquest (Database)

McGavin, K. (2014). [Being "nesian": Pacific islander identity in australia](#). *Contemporary Pacific*, 26(1), 125-155,260.

Abstract - Pacific Islanders in Australia use the terms "Islander" and "Pacific Islander" in many ways and in different circumstances to define themselves and others. Through invoking discourses including these terms, Pacific Islanders both consciously draw on "panethnicity" and subconsciously strengthen and support their localized identities. In this way, Pacific Islanders blur the ethno-cultural and socio-political boundaries that traditionally separate groups with connections across a diverse range of countries. Indeed, diasporic settings give rise to trans-nationalist sentiment and actions

and serve to strengthen panethnic identity. Using insider and auto-anthropology and ethnographic research techniques, I draw on my experiences as an Australian of Pacific Islander descent and use examples drawn from my involvement in formalized community groups, cultural events, and social functions. In doing so, I argue that the expression of Islander and Pacific Islander identity is entwined with ideas about "race," place, stereotypes, and behaviour that highlight the dynamic ethnogenesis of this group.

Summy, H. H. (2009). [Fiji's forgotten people: The legatees of 'blackbirding'](#)¹. *Social Alternatives*, 28(4), 39-44.

Abstract - Most people both outside and inside Fiji are unfamiliar with the background of Fiji Melanesians. The reason for this has perhaps more to do with imperial expediency than accidental oversight. This article draws attention to the plight of this neglected and historically deprived ethnic minority group and examines events that led to its underprivileged status. It reports the well-intentioned but misguided past role of the Anglican Church in assisting the Melanesians. It also investigates recent attempts to improve their dire circumstances through the work of the self-organising Fiji Melanesian Community Development Association.

JSTOR (Database)

Quanchi, M. (2014). ["Kanakan" Portraits: Indentured Labor in Colonial Australia](#). *Pacific Arts*, 13(2), 33–44.

Abstract - Analyse a small collection of portraits, 1863-1904, of Pacific Island labourers who worked in Queensland and were known then as Kanakas and now as Australian South Sea Islanders. Offers a case study of the photography of colonial subjects. Suggests limits on the use of photography for the making of a holistic visual history of the Queensland labor trade.

Posters

[Queensland sugar industry, Bundaberg](#). S.I. : s.n. : 1896. Call no. HPT HIS 056.

Poster illustrating a series of scenes of the recruiting and labour of South Sea Islanders in the Queensland sugar industry surrounded by views of commercial buildings and sugar plantations in and around Bundaberg, Queensland. Includes a list of statistics about Bundaberg.

Photographs

A large collection of photographs are held at the State Library. Some of these are included in large personal collections of individuals, photograph albums or original photographs. State Library also holds copy photographs under the heading Kanakas.

Oral Histories

[OH 39 Redland Shire Oral History Collection](#), Redland (Qld.). Council.

Abstract: A collection of 125 interviews regarding the history of the Redland shire. Box 9696.

Item 107: Joyce May Krause - Transcript. Ms Joyce Krause's great grandfather, Hermann Holzapfel, was one of the first settlers on Mt Cotton in 1872, along with other German families who gravitated to the area. She speaks about evidence of Chinese settlement on the mountain and has documentation of Kanakas constructing the first church and school.

Original Materials and manuscripts

[27276 Sepia toned and mounted miscellaneous photographs 1890](#)

Summary/Contents: Large collection of sepia toned and mounted photographs probable from an album. Images include Cairns-Kuranda railway, sugar industry, Indigenous people in Cairns, Chillagoe Caves, Brisbane suburbs, South Sea Islanders, fig trees at Noosa and Cairns. (One Photograph only)

Boxes 15715 O/S and 15716 O/S

[6298 Brandon Photograph Album 1864-1884](#)

Henry, Brandon (1845-1899).

Photograph album containing early images of Mackay and sugar plantations in the area.

Box 14821 O/S.

[7697 Albumen paper prints of Bundaberg 1898](#)

Abstract: Fourteen albumen paper prints of the Bundaberg sugar industry.

Box 14761 O/S

4 (?) photos of ASSI

[3299 Newton Barton Diary 1894-1895](#)

Abstract: A shipboard diary kept by able seaman Newton Barton on one of his voyages to the South Sea Islands aboard the brigantine "Rio Loge." The purpose of the voyage was to recruit South Sea Islanders to work on the Queensland canefields.

Box 5317.

[M 996 W. R. Love Collection](#)

Abstract: Log books of ships "Heath" and "Clansman", both of which were used for transporting Kanakas.

Boxes 5052 and 5137 (item 2).

[10020 Conrad M. Kelsall and Alfred M. Stephens Correspondence 1894-1903](#)

Abstract: Twenty letters with various mentions of..."colonial views of the Boer War, *the status of Kanakas* and the 'White Australia' policy after Federation, involvement in the shooting of a local Malay, et al. The letters also contain wonderful contemporary social commentary."

Box 15354 O/S A2

[OM75-117 Journal of Canambie Plantation 1875-1928](#)

Abstract: Diary of Joseph Chapman Dixon who was a sugar cane grower in the Mooloolah River district.

Box 8948.

The diary gives a daily account of the events on the sugar plantation, including the building and operation of the sugar mill. The diary covers the period November 1875 - June 1895. In his reminiscences, Joseph Dixon tells of his voyage on the 'Tornado' in 1864 to Australia, and time spent in Sydney. In 1869 he took up land on the Mooloolah River to grow sugar cane, and later at Buderim Mountain. He discusses the Aborigines at Mooloolah River and the Kanakas working the sugar plantation.

Box 8948

[APE-25 Cowley Photograph Album ca. 1902](#)

Abstract: Album of photographs relating to the Innisfail (Geraldton) area.

Several photos, including copy prints of Australian South Sea Islanders.

Bib 396423

[6940 James Arthur Papers](#)

Abstract: Letters and documents of James Arthur, a Queenslander who worked as a recruiter of native labourers in the Pacific Islands. Arthur was murdered by disaffected islanders at Malayta in the Solomon Islands in 1900.

Box 14302

[M 1382 Cutting Books](#)

Abstract: Cutting books on miscellaneous topics .

Newspaper cuttings book (1846 – 1943) on miscellaneous topics. Topics include Boer War, WWII, Aborigines, weather, Kanakas, Freemasonry, Indooroopilly Bridge, Antarctic exploration, plus others.

Box 8163

[OM91-58 Central Queensland Clippings 1948-1954](#)

Abstract: Three cutting books relating to Central Queensland. Volumes 2 and 3 also include the column by 'Historicus' from the Rockhampton Morning Bulletin dealing with Central Queensland history.

Volume 2: delivery of Kanakas to pastoral stations.

Volume 3 1950-1954; similar material to Vol. 2

Boxes 9246 O/S (item 1) and 9247 O/S (item 2).

[OM64-02 Thomas Glassey Papers 1890-1950](#)

Abstract: Thomas Glassey was a founding leader of the Australian Labor Party – items include content from the 1901 Parliamentary Papers and a manifesto on the White Australia Policy.

Box 8397

[2967 Rawson Family Archive](#)

Abstract: Large album containing photographs of Rawson family properties in England and Queensland, views of Mackay area, kanakas and aborigines. The Rawson brothers Charles Collison Rawson, Edmund Rawson and Lancelot Rawson established the cattle station "The Hollow" on the Pioneer River at Mackay in 1866. The Rawsons were also involved in the sugar and coal industries.

Box 4376

[3361 Daphne Kingston Papers 1900-2003](#)

Abstract: Papers of Daphne Kingston. 3361/25: Ten Postcards depicting various subjects in Mackay, North Queensland; Japanese cutting tramway, family groups on bank of Pioneer River, Kanaka groups.

Item 3361/42: Six Photographs of Habanna, North Queensland, 1991. Images include Pinnacle Rock, building said to be old shop built for Kanakas, original convent and Mt Jukes.

Boxes 5573 - 5574.

[10144 Papua and New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and the South Sea Islanders Cutting Book 1906-1944.](#)

Abstract: A cutting book, compiled between 1906 and 1908, with newspaper clippings and photographs about the Solomon Islands, New Guinea and the South Sea Islanders. The clippings and photographs cover topics such as: the island of Samarai; commercial activities of Burns, Philp and Co.; alcohol prohibition; Woodlark Island and the mining industry; coconut tree plantations; German presence in the area; missionaries; the repatriation of the South Sea Islanders.

Box 15374 O/S A3

[APU-5 Album of views of Brisbane and North Queensland ca. 1895 \(Mathewson & Co\)](#)

Abstract: Album of scenes in Brisbane and North Queensland.

1 photo in red album "Cutting sugar cane Fairy Mead" / Box 11438 O/S A3

[27024 Photograph of Solomon and Sangow Headstone 1989](#). McCormack, John S
Abstract: One photograph of a grave at the Fairymead Sugar Plantation, Bundaberg.
1 colour photo
Box 15537

[7893 Scenery of Queensland by E.H.Forster ca. 1870](#)

Abstract: Album of photographs
1 photo showing men planting in field
Box 14911 O/S A3

[APA-8 Views of Bundaberg, Queensland, ca. 1897](#)

Abstract: Album of views of Bundaberg
2 images in small red album
Box 10955

[APO-22 Views of Townsville and Herbert River Photograph Album 1874-1882](#)

Abstract: Album of views of Townsville and the Herbert River area.
Images of ASSI some which have been reproduced in the copy prints (group images of boys in white clothing)
Box 10924 O/S.

[APO-41 Views of Mackay ca. 1895](#)

Abstract: Album of views of Mackay and district.
1 image of large group of ASSI
Box 14466 O/S A3

[APO-25 Photograph Album of Cairns Views 1890-1896](#)

Abstract: Album of photographs of the Cairns area.
About 4 ASSI's images
Box 11496 O/S A3.

[7868 Rev William Smith Family Photographs 1890-1942; 1988](#)

Photographs and exercise books.
1 photo in a packet of 7686 (marked in pencil with a 1) two ASSI men
Box 10070. Box 14911 O/S A3.

[API-6 Queensland Views Photograph Album ca. 1890](#)

Abstract: Album of photographs of Queensland Views. Box 10738 O/S (A3)
6 photos
Box 10738 O/S (A3)

[APO-32 Queensland Views Photograph Album 1867-1908](#)

Mobsby, Henry William; Department of Agriculture and Stock
Abstract: Album of photographs of views of Queensland
3 or 4 photos in large album
Box 10891 O/S A3

[6147 Trackson Family Photograph Albums 1879-1939](#)

Abstract: Trackson family albums including images of their home in Brisbane, their motor vehicle which was the first in Brisbane, and their travels interstate and abroad.
1 image in large black album of ASSI's outside large building at Bingera – also in copy prints. 2 images in small red album
Box 10768.

[7355 Brisbane and Mackay Photographic Collection 1870 - 1880](#)

Abstract: 43 albumen prints and 19 cartes de visite

Quite a few – some of individual men (with names at bottom of image)

Box 14290 O/S

[APO-8 Album of North Queensland Views: ca. 1890](#)

Abstract: Album of views of the north and north west Queensland

2 photographs – one a large group and the other 2 men in traditional dress (one with very large earrings) – both in copy prints

Box 10767 O/S (A3)

[APU-25 Hambleton Sugar Plantation Photograph Album ca. 1890](#)

Abstract: Album of photographs of the Hambleton Sugar Plantation and Cairns Railway Line.

Quite a few images (some in copy prints)

Box 11450 O/S

[APO-18 Album containing some Richard Daintree Photographs 1860-1870](#)

Abstract: Album of photographs, predominantly of Queensland, taken by Richard Daintree. Bib no: 396456

Box 10873 O/S (wrapped parcel)

[APO-13 Richard Daintree Album ca. 1870](#)

Box 11496 O/S A3

Digital Stories

[Australian South Sea Islander Stories Short films](#)

Exhibition - Plantation Voices – [Joskeleigh: a place to call home](#)

[Reclaiming Kanaka Town: recollections from Neville Willie](#)

Website

[Plantation Voices: Contemporary conversations with Australian South Sea Islanders](#)

The Pacific Manuscripts Bureau

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The Pacific Manuscripts Bureau microfilm collection is the most extensive collection of non-government primary documentation on the Pacific Islands available to researchers.

The State Library of Queensland holds an index to microfilm-
Complete annotated catalogue : PMB printed document series, microforms PMB Doc. 1-400
Australian National University. Pacific Manuscripts Bureau Bess Flores Canberra : Pacific Manuscripts Bureau, Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University : 1991.