



Who's Your Mob – First Nations Family History

Station, mission, police and church records

State Library of Queensland holds many other records that may help with your First Nations family history research. These include records from pastoral stations and missions, police records and church records.

Pastoral station records

Pastoral stations kept records of their activities and expenses. Some of these records are available at State Library of Queensland. The records vary in content. They may include letters, diaries, ledgers, staff lists and meeting notes. Some just record the weather, the location of stock in paddocks and fencing. Others may include the names of station workers and the amounts they were paid.

You can search for station records in State Library's online [One Search catalogue](#) by using the search term "station records" or searching for the station's name, such as "Glengallon station". You can then request the material to view in the John Oxley Library on level 4. The records are stored in archival envelopes and boxes, and some may be quite fragile. In some cases, there are online digitised versions that can be accessed and read through the One Search catalogue.

James Cook University holds some records of [North Queensland stations](#). Each station record can be searched online by personal name. Contact the [Special Collections Librarian](#) for access.

Mission records

Before the [Aboriginals Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act 1897 \(Qld.\)](#) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mission stations were set up by religious organisations.

Small amounts of land were gazetted as reserves for Aboriginal people. Reserves were run by the Government, not by religious organisations.

The 1897 Protection Act was applied to all Aboriginal reserves. Superintendents were appointed to carry out the Act. Missionaries also became Superintendents.

Most Aboriginal reserves in Queensland were never "managed" reserves, so no Superintendent was appointed. These reserves were controlled by the Local Protector of Aborigines.

Government mission records are held by Queensland State Archives. However, State Library of Queensland has some information regarding missions and reserves, such as Cherbourg or Yarrabah. These can be found in the [One Search catalogue](#). State Library also holds some church mission records, such as the Uniting Church records, which are also a possible source of information.

Some examples of material held at State Library include:

- [Marie Yamba, Bloomfield and Hope Vale : the Lutheran missions to the north Queensland aborigines 1886-1905 / Kay Elizabeth Evans](#) – available to request and view on level 4
- [Journals and notebooks re Tumarumba and Yarrabah, 1891-93 / E.R. Gribble and J.B. Gribble](#) – available on microfilm on level 3

Police records

The Native Police controlled Aboriginal people before Queensland separated from New South Wales in 1859. Torres Strait Islanders were under the control of the Police Magistrate on Thursday Island.

[Queensland Police Museum](#) holds records going back to 1864.

Queensland Police Gazettes have a range of information about missing people, desertions (husbands or wives who deserted a marriage) and those wanted by the law for criminal purposes. Police Gazettes are available at State Library in the following formats:

- Issues from 1864 to 1945 can be viewed online via the [One Search catalogue](#). Select the decade, then the year, then the particular issue
- Visit us on level 3 for [Queensland Police Gazette](#) from 1867 to 1945 on the Queensland Publications CD-ROM machine and microfilm
- Queensland Police Gazettes from 1881-1945 are indexed in Ancestry. Search by name to find the date/issue that you require.
- Browse the [Police Gazette Inquests 1875-1885 index](#) records on the Open Data Portal or through [One Search catalogue](#)
- For police gazettes from other states, see [Research Guide - Police records](#).

Find out more about [Police gazettes, court and gaol records](#) in the AIATSIS guide.

Church records – Births, deaths, marriages and minutes

Church bodies that managed missions and other institutions recorded birth, death and marriage information about people under their control. Some, like the Aborigines Inland Mission (AIM), published newsletters that announced births, deaths and marriages.

Church records can include:

- baptisms
- christenings or dedications
- marriages and
- burials.

Major Queensland churches with records about First Nations people are:

- **Anglican Church** - records are held by the [Anglican Records and Archives Centre](#)
- **Catholic Church** - records are held by the [Catholic Archives](#)
 - For information about Queensland Missions and Institutions responsible for children see: [A piece of the story](#)
 - For information about records for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders at Hammond Island Mission, Hamilton Island, Sacred Heart School or Sacred Heart Hospital contact:

Sacred Heart Church Thursday Island
PO Box 142, Thursday Island, Queensland, 4875

- **Lutheran Church** – records are held by the [Lutheran Archives](#)
- **Presbyterian Church** – The [Presbyterian Church](#) was involved with Aurukun (1904-1978), Mapoon (1891-1963), Mornington Island (1914-1978) and Weipa (1898-1966). To find records for your family check the book, [Mission Time](#).
- **Salvation Army** - All records for former children in care have been sent to Sydney. The [Salvation Army](#) ran the Alkira Salvation Army Home for Boys, Riverview Training Farm and Boothville Mothers Hospital, and the Purga Aboriginal School between 1915 and 1948.
- **Seventh Day Adventist Church** – The [Seventh Day Adventist Church](#) ran the Mona Mona Mission between 1913 and 1962.
- **Uniting Church** - Uniting Church records, which include records of the Methodist and Uniting Churches, are held at State Library of Queensland. Search by the church in the [One Search catalogue](#). Access to records more than 20 years old is unrestricted. Baptismal, marriage and burial registers are restricted in accordance with the Registrar General's Office, Queensland.

Adoption records

State Library of Queensland does not hold adoption records.

[Adoption Services Queensland](#) is responsible for administering adoption legislation and for providing services to people seeking information about past adoptions. It is free for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients.

Access to adoption records is governed by the *Adoption Act 2009* (Qld).

[Find & Connect](#) lists related organisations and information about how to find and access their records.

Other places to look include:

- [National Archives of Australia](#) has created the *Bringing Them Home* [name index](#) to records in its collection that are relevant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The index was a recommendation in the [Bringing Them Home](#) report into the separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families.
- [Link Up Queensland](#)
- [Community and Personal Histories](#)
- [Queensland State Archives](#)

Oral histories

State Library has collections of oral histories from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants. Two of the most notable are the [Bloomfield River Oral Histories](#) and the [Cape York Peninsula Oral History](#). We also have oral histories from [Mapoon](#), [Redland City](#) and [Townsville](#).


The [Bringing Them Home oral histories](#) from the National Library of Australia, recorded between 1998 and 2002, are also a good source of information. You can order copies of these from the National Library and many can be accessed online.

AIATSIS have an audio visual archive of 40,000 hours of audio recordings, including oral histories. They have 250 Aboriginal languages recorded in 700 dialects. You can contact AITSIS for more information about how to access these.

The [Oral History Association of Australia](#) has branches in each state, and includes interviews with Aboriginal Australians.

Need further information?

(07) 3840 7810 | <https://www.slq.qld.gov.au/services/ask-librarian>

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