



Who's Your Mob – First Nations Family History

Tindale Genealogical collection

Norman Tindale was an anthropologist based at the South Australian Museum. He recorded vast amounts of genealogical and other information about Indigenous communities from all over Australia, the majority being collected during the 1920s and 1930s.

Warnings and sensitivities

Aboriginal people are advised that the Norman Tindale Collection contains the names and images of deceased people and elements of secret, sacred tradition. Users should also be aware that some of the records include personal information that may contradict what is known about their ancestry.

The records in the collection are from anthropologists' field notes and were produced from a non-Indigenous perspective. Please note that offensive words, terms and descriptions are used throughout the records.

About the collection

The Norman Tindale Collection is a body of work compiled over a number of years by individuals from the South Australian Museum, under the leadership of anthropologist Norman Tindale. It includes vast amounts of genealogical information about Aboriginal communities throughout Australia, as well as journals, maps, artefacts and much more.

State Library of Queensland has copies of genealogies and photographs for the following Aboriginal communities in Queensland and northern New South Wales:

- Bentinck Island
- Boggabilla
- Cherbourg
- Doomadgee
- Mona Mona
- Mornington Island
- Palm Island
- Woodenbong
- Woorabinda
- Yarrabah

The South Australian Museum holds the full collection, and organisations in each state hold copies for their own state. See the [AIATSIS website](#) for information about where to find the Tindale genealogies in each state.

Accessing the collection

What is available online?

The Tindale Collection index is available for anyone to search on [One Search](#). The index includes people's names and the community where they lived.

Who can view the collection?

Family trees and photographs are available on request for individuals or families who are researching their own family history. Transcriptions are also available for some records because the handwriting in the original records can be difficult to read.

Requests can be made through the [Tindale Enquiry Form](#). Please allow up to 10 days processing time.

How can Land Councils access records?

Copies of genealogies and photographs are also provided to Land Councils for the purpose of Native Title claims. Please submit the request through the [Tindale Enquiry Form](#) on official letterhead with names of families researching the claim and claim number.

Why are there access conditions?

The South Australian Museum is the custodian of the Tindale Collection, and State Library of Queensland holds copies of records from Queensland and northern New South Wales. Under the terms of the agreement, only direct descendants, or those with written approval from communities or families, can view the genealogies.


In accordance with State Library of Queensland's [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collections Commitments](#), these access conditions also enable staff to provide context and appropriate cultural care messages for potentially offensive material.

How to locate and request Tindale genealogy records

- Search for your relative's name in our [One Search](#) catalogue. Select 'State Library Family History Indexes'.
- When you find a relevant catalogue record, the information you need is in the 'Notes' section. This will tell you the community name, page number and a negative number if there is one.
- You can then use those details to complete a [Tindale Enquiry Form](#) online.
- For more detailed instructions, see our [step-by-step guide](#) on how to locate and request Tindale genealogy records.

Need further information?

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

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