

Tips & Tricks for Researching in the National Archives

with Shauna Hicks, MA Grad Dip Lib Sc Dip FHS FQFHS

Australia established in 1901 when all the colonies joined the Federation of Australia.

Key Points to Remember

- Australia is a huge country – colony/state borders changed at different times
- Consider geographic distance – how far between places?
- Remoteness of rural areas
- Must know a place and a time – no central recordkeeping
- Must know a name and use all variants (both given and surnames) – with most archives spelling must be specific!

National Government Archives

National Archives of Australia www.naa.gov.au – various search filters but basic/advanced search can also be useful. Spelling must be exact.

Mostly records after 1901 but may have some colonial records eg passenger lists, military records (Boer War) and post/telegraph.

Highlight: Digitisation of World War One army dossiers (free online)

State Archives

State Archives & Records New South Wales www.records.nsw.gov.au

Queensland State Archives www.qld.gov.au/recreation/arts/heritage/archives

State Records of South Australia <https://archives.sa.gov.au>

Tasmanian Archive & Heritage Office

Public Record Office Victoria <https://prov.vic.gov.au>

State Records Office of Western Australia www.sro.wa.gov.au

Library & Archives NT

<https://lant.nt.gov.au>

ArchivesACT www.archives.act.gov.au

Final Thoughts

- Must know name, time (approximate), and place (at least a colony/state) – remember variant spellings
- Look for an online guide for your research question
- Check both the online catalogue and any online indexes, use filters
- Do multiple searches – why risk missing anything relevant
- Read the help – know what the wildcards are on the website
- Good luck!

Shauna Hicks

www.shaunahicks.com.au

shauna@shaunahicks.com.au