

Northern Territory Archives Service

Researching your Family History

Before you begin

Before you begin your family history research using resources of the Northern Territory Archives Service you need to prepare as much as possible to ensure that your visit is a productive one. Organise the information you have around each person you are researching. Think about what types of records will be useful in your research, based on the kinds of activities the people were involved in.

Northern Territory Archives Service (NTAS)

NTAS holds records of the Northern Territory Government as well as archives relating to functions that transferred to the NT Government with the granting of Self Government in 1978. The NTAS holds Community Archives which are records donated by individuals and organisations. The NTAS also holds a collection of oral histories.

Locating information at NTAS

Links to various search tools described below are on the NTAS website <https://dtsc.nt.gov.au/arts-and-museums/northern-territory-archives-service/informaton-for-researchers/researching-the-archives>.

Archives Navigator: Archives Navigator is the online access point for the NTAS archives management system. It enables you to undertake keyword searches to identify archives relevant to your topic. You can search across titles and descriptions to locate individual records. It is important to note that because archives are continually being added to the system, you should also check the List of Holdings for a complete list of series held by the NTAS, including inherited Commonwealth series.

List of Holdings: Use this list to identify record series which may be of use to your research and then ask reference staff for consignment lists to search for particular items within the record series.

Guides to the NTAS collection: The following topics are covered by short subject guides to archives in the NTAS: Mining in the NT, Pastoral Industry in the NT, Central Australia, the Second World War, Police Service of the NT, Borroloola NT, Railways in the NT, Cyclone Tracy, Government Residents and Administrators of the NT, Chinese People in the NT.

Oral History Collection: Oral histories provide a rich source of information about the past. You can search for oral histories on the NTAS website where you can view summaries of the interviews. See also the information leaflet about the Oral History Unit.

Indexes to Probates of the NT: Indexes to probate and wills are held in the Reading Room of NTAS. See the information leaflet about Probates, Wills and Letters of Administrations for more detailed information about probate and will records held at NTAS.

Other places to visit before using the Northern Territory Archives Service

Northern Territory Library (NTL) has a range of records which will assist you in finding family and the records about them. The NTL collection includes:

- The Electoral Rolls for the Northern Territory from 1922 to the present. These are useful for finding where someone was located and when they were there. NTL also holds copies of old Northern Territory telephone directories from pre WWII to the present.
- Microfilm copies of the Northern Territory Newspapers from 1873 to the present; see the Debnam Index to search for names appearing in the newspapers from 1873-1914.
- Indexes to Births Deaths and Marriages across the Northern Territory and Australia.

- The Northern Territory Collection includes publications and photographs that may be of interest <http://www.territorystories.nt.gov.au/>.

For further information about the NTL guides and indexes and other resources visit the following web address: <https://ntl.nt.gov.au/>

Genealogical Society of the NT (GSNT) holds a range of indexes to family history records. These indexes include the *Debnam* indexes to newspapers and passenger records, and *Digger*. *Digger* was compiled by the GSNT and is available through GSNT.

- *Digger CD1* is an index to Deaths in the NT; it can be searched by name and provides the researcher with date, age, place of death and place of burial as available.
- *Digger CD2* is an index to Northern Territory Census 1891 and 1901, the Electoral Rolls for the NT covering the period 1884 to 1940, and the Adelaide Almanac and Directory, 1908-1921.

The GSNT reading room located 84 Smith Street, Darwin is open on Monday, Tuesday and Saturday only. For more information about their services and collections phone 8981 7363 or visit their website: <http://www.gsnt.org.au/>.

Publications Libraries hold a wide range of publications covering the history of the Northern Territory. Check publications on topics relevant to the person you are researching, and check the bibliographies to see which primary sources were used. These can give excellent clues about what records to look at when you visit Archives.

National Library of Australia's TROVE is an internet search tool that allows you to search for photographs, publications and through digitised newspapers. Many NT newspapers up to 1955 have been digitised and can be searched online.

National Archives of Australia (NAA) holds Commonwealth Government archives. For a range of Fact Sheets and guides about archives in their collections see their website at www.naa.gov.au.

- If you are looking for incoming and outgoing passenger records 1898-1934 Port Darwin see NAA microfilm of series E1019.
- For defence service records, for immigration records, or records of the NT Administration 1922-1978 check the National Archives database *Recordsearch* at the following address: <http://www.naa.gov.au/collection/recordsearch.aspx>
- If you are researching your own Aboriginal family history, contact the NAA Darwin and ask for a search to be done using the *Bringing Them Home Name Index* to records relating to Aboriginal people from the Stolen Generations in the Northern Territory. Also visit the NAA website and look for a copy of *Tracking Family* which provides information about organisations holding records relevant to Aboriginal families in the Northern Territory.

When you are ready to visit the Northern Territory Archives Service make an appointment so that reference staff will be available to assist you with your research.

Contacts

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