



**AIATSIS**  
Australian Institute of Aboriginal  
and Torres Strait Islander Studies

**Finding aid**

**RAXWORTHY\_R01**

**Sound recordings collected by  
Richard Raxworthy, 1991**

Prepared April 2016 by LW  
26 April 2016

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## ACCESS

### Availability of copies

Listening copies are available. Contact the AIATSIS Audiovisual Access Unit by completing an [online enquiry form](#) or phone (02) 6261 4212 to arrange an appointment to listen to the recordings or to order copies.

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## SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

**Date:** 1991

**Extent:** 2 audiocassettes (approximately 60 mins each).

### Production history

These recordings were deposited with AIATSIS by Richard Raxworthy on 20 January 1993. They were the result of a meeting between Raxworthy and Ruth Thompson at Queensland University during an Oral History Association (now Oral History Australia) conference in 1991. The collection was deposited with AIATSIS on 20 January 1993.

## RELATED MATERIAL

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## ARCHIVIST'S NOTE

This finding aid was compiled from information provided by Richard Raxworthy and audition sheets prepared by AIATSIS staff. Timing points may be slightly out depending on the technologies and procedures in place at the time the recordings were auditioned.

## ITEM LIST

Archive number	Field recording number	Description
<a href="#">026532</a>	Field tape 1, side 1	Oral history - Richard Raxworthy interviews Ruth Thompson near Ravenshoe, QLD, 20/09/1991.
<a href="#">026533</a>	Field tape 1, side 2	Oral history - Richard Raxworthy interviews Ruth Thompson near Ravenshoe, QLD, 25/09/1991.
<a href="#">026534</a>	Field tape 2, side 1	Oral history - Richard Raxworthy interviews Ruth Thompson near Ravenshoe, QLD, 25/09/1991. <b>Restricted – information of a personal nature.</b>

## ITEM DESCRIPTIONS

### 026532/Field tape 1, side 1

Performer/speaker(s):	Ruth Thompson (Yutchina)
Personal subject(s):	Harold Thompson
Subject keywords:	History – Oral history, family, food – bush tucker, religions – Christianity – missions, Government Policy – State and Territory – Queensland, Government Policy - Initial period and protectionism
Language/people:	In English, Dyirbalic language group. Tape label mentions Mamu (Y122)
Places:	Ravenshoe (NE Qld SE55-05), Millaa Millaa (NE Qld SE55-06), Yarrabah / Cape Grafton (NE Qld SE55-02)
Recording quality:	Good

Timing point	Description
	<u>Oral history - Richard Raxworthy (RR) interviews Ruth Thompson (RT), near Ravenshoe, North Queensland, 20/09/1991.</u>
00:00:00	Archive announcement.
00:00:10	Pause.
00:00:46	RR tests the equipment and announces RT.
00:01:01	RT speaks of her early life at Millaa Millaa with Harold Thompson and his wife.
00:04:20	RT speaks of bush foods she used to collect with her grandmother and of looking for turtle eggs.
00:08:35	RT speaks of the Johnson River (her grandmother's area) and the Beatrice River (her grandfather's area) and of not needing to move about much.
00:09:28	Tape cuts out - pause.
00:09:35	RT speaks of not having been through any form of initiation. She speaks of being given her name when five years old, and of no longer knowing her language.
00:11:34	RT speaks of her grandfather, grandmother, and mother. She discusses her mother being sent to Yarrabah, and of the conditions there, as well as the farm where they all lived following this.
00:21:15	RT speaks of her language, and of keeping the stories about their lives alive for her grandchildren.
00:25:35	RR asks RT what she would like done with the tape. RT asks that it be made useful, as little has been recorded about life in her area, compared to other places.
00:27:12	RT speaks of coming along to the oral history conference, and how she ended up agreeing to this recording.
00:28:40	RT mentions the towns closest to where she grew up, of the bush that was there when she was young and the importance of recording this for future generations.
00:30:35	End of archive tape 026532.

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026533/Field tape 1, side 2

Performer/speaker(s):	Ruth Thompson (Yutchina)
Personal subject(s):	Harold Thompson, Roy Thompson
Subject keywords:	History – Oral history, Education - Schools – Attendance, Government Policy – State and Territory – Queensland, Government Policy - Initial period and protectionism , Health services - Health workers - Nurses and nursing, Family, Sex relations - Sex education
Language/people:	In English, Dyirbalic language group. Tape label mentions Mamu (Y122)
Places:	Ravenshoe (NE Qld SE55-05), Millaa Millaa (NE Qld SE55-06), Innisfail (NE Qld SE55-06)
Recording quality:	Good

Timing point	Description
	<u>Oral history - Richard Raxworthy (RR) interviews Ruth Thompson (RT), near Ravenshoe, North Queensland, 25/09/1991.</u>
00:00:00	Archive announcement.
00:00:08	Pause.
00:00:38	RR announces the interview. RT speaks of the school she attended when young and of her education.
00:03:25	RT briefly speaks of only knowing a few words of her language – in particular, for body parts, animals. She continues to speak of her school.
00:04:30	RT speaks of being ten or eleven years old and visiting Sydney for the first time.
00:06:32	RT speaks of high school, and of first seeing discrimination against other Indigenous students.
00:09:56	RT speaks of studying nursing following high school.
00:11:00	RT speaks of her mother being under the Act at the Thompson's place, and not getting out of it until after RT was married, and of her working occasionally for the Tobins', who owned the general store in the town.
00:15:00	RT speaks of the Thompsons' and of the ramifications of the Act on the lives of her and her mother.
00:17:50	RT speaks of her childhood and of growing up on the farm.
00:21:29	RT speaks of her work as a nurse, from the age of seventeen.
00:26:38	RT speaks of her wedding at Innisfail.
00:26:55	RT speaks of her husband Roy Thompson, and his family history, as well as where her husband and his mother took their names.
00:29:03	RT speaks briefly of her five children.
00:29:55	RT speaks of not receiving any formal sex education.
00:30:35	Tape cuts out mid-sentence. End of archive recording 026533.

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026534/Field tape 2, side 1

Performer/speaker(s):	Ruth Thompson (Yutchina)
Personal subject(s):	Roy Thompson, Enoch Tranby
Subject keywords:	History – Oral history, Family, Sex relations - Sex education, Race relations – Racism, Art – Ceramics
Language/people:	In English, Dyrbalic language group. Tape label mentions Mamu (Y122)
Places:	Ravenshoe (NE Qld SE55-05), Mount Isa (Qld Far NW SF54-01), Charters Towers (E Qld SF55-02), Yarrabah / Cape Grafton (NE Qld SE55-02)
Recording quality:	Good

Timing point	Description
	<u>Oral history - Richard Raxworthy (RR) interviews Ruth Thompson (RT), near Ravenshoe, North Queensland, 25/09/1991.</u> <b>Restricted – this recording contains information of a personal nature</b>
00:00:00	Archive announcement.
00:00:08	Pause.
00:00:22	Interview continues from field tape 1, side 2 (archive tape 26533), on the topic of sex education. RT speaks of the role of aunties in relation to the sex education of nieces.
00:02:20	RT speaks of her first pregnancy and of her husband Roy Thompson.
00:07:17	RT speaks of the challenges of married life.
00:08:32	RT speaks of getting by, educating her children, and of moving around for her husband's employment, as well as their financial situation in Mount Isa.
00:13:29	RT speaks of moving to Charters Towers following her divorce and of prejudices subsequently faced there.
00:17:42	RT speaks of her employment in Charters Towers and her initial interest in pottery, as well as her youngest son's employment as a drafter.
00:18:46	RT speaks of moving to Yarrabah to learn pottery and of being accepted by the community, then of eventually moving to Brisbane.
00:20:03	Pause.
00:20:08	RT speaks of the sort of pottery she used to make, and speaks of the stylistic elements of her art.
00:25:50	RT speaks of meeting the artist Enoch Tranby and his advice to RT in relation to her art practice.
00:29:02	End of archive recording 026534.

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