



# AIATSIS

AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF ABORIGINAL  
AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STUDIES

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## Sources – Tindale genealogies

The South Australian Museum has a large and important collection of photographs of Aboriginal people, together with accompanying genealogies. Many of these are the work of Norman Tindale from the 1930s to 1950s. Anthropological collections like the Tindale collection provide genealogical information about Aboriginal families.

### What are the Tindale genealogies?

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

Over 50,000 Indigenous people are included in the genealogies, as well as thousands of named photographic portraits.

The genealogies are charted in hand-written field notes, usually with one extended family included on each chart. Some charts trace families back as far as 1860 and sometimes include the language groups and/or traditional names of people.

**WARNING:** Tindale was very interested in 'caste', the 'admixture of Aboriginal and European blood', and therefore his notes contain racist and offensive language.

### What information do you need to search the genealogies?

To protect the privacy of the people whose personal information was recorded by Tindale, access to the Tindale genealogies is limited. Usually only direct descendants and persons with permission from families or communities can view and copy the genealogies.

To start searching you need to know:

- the place your family came from or where they lived
- the name of the person or people you are researching.

### Where do you find the Tindale genealogies?

The entire Tindale archive, which includes the genealogies, is available from the South Australian Museum. Various state and community organisations also have relevant copies of the genealogies.



## All of Australia

The **South Australian Museum** is the custodian of the complete Tindale collection. It holds material about families and communities all around Australia – individual places are listed under the states below. You will need to make an appointment with the museum's Family and Community History Consultant to view the material.

- [Overview of the Tindale collection](#)
- [Online gallery](#) of examples from the Tindale collection
- Detailed [finding aid to the Tindale collection](#)
- Contact details for the SA Museum [Family and Community History Consultant](#)

## New South Wales

The **State Library of New South Wales** has copies of genealogical charts and photographs from nine NSW communities, mostly collected through 1938. These include Boggabilla, Brewarrina, Cummeragunga, Kempsey, Menindee, Pilliga, Walgett, Wallaga Lake and Woodenbong. Check the [Index to the NSW Tindale Genealogies \(pdf, 196.22kb\)](#) before making an appointment with one of the library's [Indigenous services librarians](#). See the [SLNSW website](#) for more information.

Muda Aboriginal Corporation holds copies of genealogies for Brewarrina only.

[Dhiyaan Indigenous Centre](#) in Moree holds copies of genealogies for all of New South Wales (Cnr Balo & Albert Streets, Moree NSW 2400, Ph: (02) 6757 3374).

## Northern Territory

Tindale collected genealogies from Aboriginal people in the following places in the Northern Territory: Cockatoo Creek, Granites and Mount Leibig. They are held by the South Australian Museum. See *All of Australia* above.

## Queensland

The **State Library of Queensland** has copies of genealogical information and photographs for the Queensland Aboriginal communities of Yarrabah, Cherbourg, Mona Mona, Palm Island, Woorabinda, Bentinck Island, Doomadgee and Mornington Island, as well as two northern New South Wales communities at Boggabilla and Woodenbong. You can search the library's [Normal Tindale Collection Alphabetical Index](#) (pdf, 1.55mb). See the [SLQ website](#) for more information.

**Townsville CityLibraries** Indigenous Services holds copies of Tindale genealogies for Queensland. See the [CityLibraries website](#) for more information.

## South Australia



Tindale collected genealogies from Aboriginal people in the following places in South Australia: Koonibba, Macumba, Mirramitta, Nullabor, Pandi Pandi, Point McLeay, Point Pearce, Port Augusta and Swan Reach. They are held by the South Australian Museum. See *All of Australia* above.

### **Tasmania**

Tindale collected genealogies from Aboriginal people in Cape Barren Island in Tasmania. The [Riawunna Aboriginal Education Centre](#) at the University of Tasmania holds copies (Ph: (03) 6226 2772).

### **Victoria**

Tindale collected genealogies from Aboriginal people in Lake Tyers in Victoria. They are held by the South Australian Museum. See *All of Australia* above.

### **Western Australia**

The **Aboriginal History Research Unit in the WA Department of Aboriginal Affairs** holds copies of the Tindale genealogies, photographs and journals, as well as other anthropological records relating to Aboriginal people in Western Australia. See the [Department of Aboriginal Affairs](#) website for more information.

Tindale collected genealogies from Aboriginal people in the following places in Western Australia: Albany, Balgo, Borden, Broome, Christmas Creek, Collie, Derby, Fitzroy Crossing, Forrest River, Gnowrangerup, Gogo, Gordon Downs, Inverway, Jigalong, Laverton, Leopold, Liveringa, Margaret River, Meda, Moola Boola, Moore River, Mount Barker, Noonkanbah, Norseman, Quanbun, Southern Cross, Sturt Creek, Wiluna and Wotjulum.

