

# **Family history: Ancestry Library Edition**

### allyours Aim:

- to demonstrate the range of Ancestry resources
- to examine some strategies for using Ancestry
- to consider the benefits and problems of Ancestry

#### **Ancestry Library Edition**

Key features:

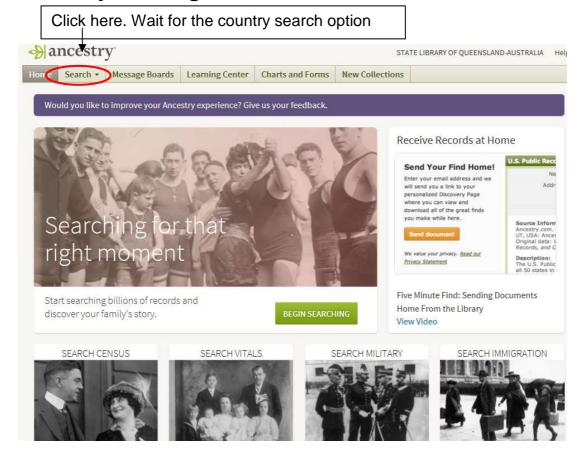
- quick name searches
- access to digitized images

#### **Ancestry databases**

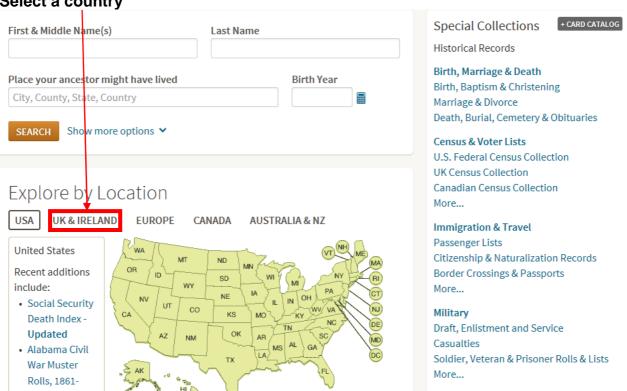
Wide variety of records available including:

- England, Wales and Scotland censuses 1841-1911
- Civil birth, death and marriage indexes for England and Wales
- Selections of British parish records
- Australia wide birth, death and marriage indexes
- UK Incoming Passenger Lists, 1878-1960
- NSW passenger lists 1826-1922
- Some 20th Century Australian electoral rolls1903-1980
- NSW Sands Directories 1861-1933

#### Ancestry: starting to search



Select a country



# Explore by Location



## **Ancestry: value of British censuses**

#### Censuses:

- provide a snapshot of a family and individuals over time: ages, occupations, residence, information largely missing from birth, death and marriage certificates
- may be a useful guide as to which family members emigrated and when; those missing between one census and another may have emigrated

#### Years available:

England, Wales and Scotland 1841; 1851; 1861; 1871; 1881; 1891; 1901; 1911

Australia 1828

### **Hints for using Ancestry**

Indexing problems are many and unpredictable, accidental or otherwise

- Given and surnames may be reversed eg Munro Colin
- Spelling may be inconsistent in original index/document eg Hunley for Stanley;
  Eyer for Eyre
- Informal rather than formal names may be used eg Frank for Francis Drummond Greville and Harry for Henry Charles
- Ages may be inconsistent
- Check original documents for context and crosscheck them with others eg *Trove*, other censuses, 19<sup>th</sup> Century British Library newspapers to see if the error is an indexing one or an inconsistency in the records.
- Put in as little detail as possible to get a reliable search; use the least common name option; vary your search terms and combinations of them.

### Hints for searching censuses

Be wary of assumptions when using the census.

Someone may:

- be visiting aged parents on census night and so is recorded as a son not head of the household
- be away from home as a boarder
- have changed occupations
- be in unexpected places
- have remarried

### Birth, death and marriage records

There are extensive collections of English and Welsh records which include indexes to civil records 1837-2005. FreeBMD <a href="http://www.freebmd.org.uk/">http://www.freebmd.org.uk/</a>, for the years it covers, often provides a more reliable search. It is possible to link to original parish records pre-1837 on Ancestry but also via FreeReg and other sites. The quality of church records on Ancestry is variable and their availability patchy. Often a sidebar suggests links to other records. These may be helpful or just a distraction. They should be crosschecked.

It is also possible to check across Australian birth, death and marriage indexes to the extent these are available. Crosscheck with Registry indexes. Those not online at Registry websites are held by State Library.

#### **Passenger Lists**

- NSW unassisted immigrant passenger lists 1826-1922 is of particular interest among the Australian passenger records here. Indexes directly link to the original records. .State Library holds the records on microfilm.
- A free site, Mariners in Australian Waters 1854-1922
  <a href="http://mariners.records.nsw.gov.au/">http://mariners.records.nsw.gov.au/</a> hosted by State Records NSW is also available but very incomplete as it relies on volunteers.
- Many immigrants to Queensland came via NSW or moved to Queensland later.
- Often little information is provided on unassisted passengers beyond a surname and title.
- Those travelling steerage may not be named and so may not be identifiable.
- Coastal passengers are also listed or included in a number in steerage.
- Seamen are included, often with their birthplace and age.

*UK incoming passenger lists 1878-1960* lists those going to/returning to the UK. The index connects to original passenger lists.

#### **Ancestry problem:**

Mrs Rawson's name does not appear on the *Ancestry* passenger index despite various wildcard searches.

#### Strategy:

Crosscheck with other sources

Use Australian newspapers online *Trove* <a href="http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper">http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper</a>

- Find her leaving Australia ship, date, port Ormuz 25 February 1903
- Find approximate date of ship's arrival 16 April 1903

Use this shipping information, rather than her name to search the list in *U.K. incoming passenger lists 1878-1960* 

An index search shows she has been incorrectly recorded as Mrs Lauce Kawaon *Trove*: located ship and time of travel to England

*Ancestry*: located passenger arrival by ship name and date.

### Ancestry: range of electoral rolls

Years currently available on Ancestry:

- selected years 1903 -1980
- none for South Australia

State Library holds many more:

- small selection for 19th Century Australia
- Queensland 1850s-2008
- South Australia 1992-2008
- Some on CD-ROM

See Info guide: electoral rolls

#### Ancestry: benefits of electoral rolls

Enable an easy search across time and across states for the period covered Do not have to search state by state, each division or subdivision Provide an image of a family over time

- occupations until 1980s
- residences
- movements
- possible marriages or deaths

#### **Explore Ancestry**

Explore what is available but easily missed:

- There are full Hamburg emigration lists
- The Dictionary of Biography is available
- The Illustrated London News is searchable by a person's name

#### Ancestry: private and library subscriptions

Private subscription includes:

- My Ancestry
- Publish
- DNA
- Community & Learning Centre

#### **Ancestry: summary**

Resources: worldwide but with a US bias

#### **Strategies:**

- Be aware of possible errors in indexing/original records and crosscheck within Ancestry and with other databases
- Be aware assumptions may be false
- Put in as little detail as possible for a manageable search

#### **Value of Ancestry:**

- · Access, previously impossible, to original British and Australian records
- Enables a search across records, across countries across time eg censuses, bdms as a fluid, easy, quick search but be aware of possible inaccuracies and crosscheck
- Be aware of differences between Ancestry library and private subscriptions

#### Role of SLQ

to provide key information services:

- to all Queenslanders
- onsite and remotely
- in the most appropriate format
- up to 2 hour free research service per enquiry; maximum of 12 hours per year

Use 'Ask us' on SLQ home page <a href="http://www.slq.qld.gov.au">http://www.slq.qld.gov.au</a>

- We do not do a whole family history
- We support those doing their research