



ABN: 96 242 345 452

Braidwood & District Historical Society

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Free Genealogy Sites Worth Exploring (Australia)

Compiled by the Braidwood & District Historical Society

Explore Australia's rich history and uncover your family's past using these free online resources. All sites are free to use and offer valuable tools for family history research, storytelling, and exploring local heritage.

Cemetery & Burial Records

[Araluen Valley History Cemeteries](https://araluenvalley-history.com.au/cemeteries/) - <https://araluenvalley-history.com.au/cemeteries/>

The Araluen Valley History "Cemeteries" page provides a searchable record of burials in the Araluen district, drawn from newspapers, gazettes, and family sources.

[Australian Cemeteries](http://www.australiacemeteries.com.au) - www.australiacemeteries.com.au

Regional cemetery listings with headstone photos and transcriptions. Particularly helpful for rural and lesser-known burial grounds.

[Australian Cemeteries Index](http://austcemindex.com/) - austcemindex.com/

Over 2 million headstone inscriptions and cemetery records across Australia. Ideal for verifying death dates and locating burial sites.

[Find A Grave](http://www.findagrave.com/) - www.findagrave.com/

Global cemetery database with photos, biographies, and GPS-linked grave locations. Useful for cross-referencing Australian burials with overseas family connections.

Newspapers & Obituaries

[The Ryerson Index](http://www.ryersonindex.org/) - www.ryersonindex.org/

The Ryerson Index is a free searchable database of death and funeral notices from Australian newspapers, with strong coverage of New South Wales and the *Sydney Morning Herald*. It's useful for confirming dates of death, locating obituaries, and tracing family history through newspaper records.

[Trove](http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/) - trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/

Australia's largest free digitised newspaper archive searchable by name, event, or location. Includes scanned pages and OCR text - invaluable for uncovering obituaries, birth notices, and local events.

Braidwood and District Newspaper Titles on Trove:

- [The Araluen Star and Miners' Right \(NSW : 1863 – 1864\)](#)
- [The Braidwood and Araluen Express and People's Advocate \(NSW : 1899 – 1904\)](#)
- [The Braidwood Dispatch and Mining Journal \(NSW : 1888 - 1954\)](#)
- [The Braidwood Express and People's Advocate \(NSW : 1904 – 1907\)](#)
- [Braidwood Independent \(NSW : 1867\)](#)
- [Braidwood News and Goldfields General Advertiser \(NSW : 1862\)](#)
- [The Braidwood News and Southern Goldfields General Advertiser \(NSW : 1864\)](#)
- [Braidwood Observer and Miner's Advocate \(NSW : 1859 – 1862\)](#)
- [The Braidwood Review and District Advocate \(NSW : 1915 - 1954\)](#)
- [The Captain's Flat Mining Record \(NSW : 1898\)](#)
- [The Manaro Mercury, and Cooma and Bombala Advertiser \(NSW : 1862 – 1931\)](#)

Convict, Legal & Immigration Records

[Braidwood Gaol Entrance Book](http://members.pcug.org.au/~ppmay/braidwood.htm) - members.pcug.org.au/~ppmay/braidwood.htm

Digitised entrance records for Braidwood Gaol (1856–1899) compiled from original registers held by State Records NSW. Includes names, aliases, ages, offences, and sentencing — valuable for local history research and interpretive signage.

 **Historical Note:** The gaol operated from 1861 to 1936 on Wallace Street. Conditions were harsh—letters from the gaoler and medical reports describe overcrowding, poor sanitation, and health risks. The gaol also served as low-cost accommodation for travellers.

Useful for: Tracing local criminal history, interpreting colonial justice, and identifying individuals incarcerated or housed in Braidwood Gaol.

Convict Records - <https://convictrecords.com.au/>

Australia's most comprehensive online database of transported convicts from 1787 to 1867. Based on the British Convict Transportation Register and enriched by community contributions. Includes name, crimes, trials, ships, and sentences and colonial assignments.

Irish Convicts to NSW - members.pcug.org.au/~ppmay/cgi-bin/irish/irish.cgi

Search Irish convicts transported to New South Wales between 1788 and 1849. Includes names, trial locations, sentencing details, and ship of arrival. Many entries also note county of origin and offence type.

Useful for: Tracing Irish ancestry, exploring convict-era migration, and identifying transport ships and trial records.

Museum of History NSW – State Archives - <https://mhnsww.au/collections/state-archives-collection/>

This is one of the most valuable resources for anyone exploring early NSW history or tracing family connections. The collection continues to preserve vital government records from the early colonial period (1788) onward, including convict, immigration, land, and legal documents.

What You'll Find

The Museum of History NSW's State Archives Collection (formerly known as NSW State Archives) offers a rich array of historical records, especially valuable for family history research and interpretive storytelling.

Colonial Secretary's Papers (1788–1825) Petitions, marriage permission requests, land grants, court cases, and memorials from early settlers and convicts. These are often the first stop for tracing early colonial ancestors.

Convict and Immigration Records Includes convict registrations, assignments, and immigration correspondence. *Ideal for:* Visitors exploring transportation history or early settlement.

Railway Employment Records Useful for tracing ancestors who worked in the NSW railway system. *Often overlooked:* These records can reveal job roles, transfers, and service history.

Divorce and Legal Papers Rich in personal detail, these records offer insight into family dynamics and legal proceedings. *Note:* May include property settlements, custody arrangements, and petitions.

Indigenous Family History Resources Dedicated guides and support for researching Aboriginal ancestry. *Important:* These resources are culturally sensitive and often include community consultation pathways.

MyAncestors - www.myancestors.com.au/

Links to BDM records, shipping lists, wills, inquests, adoption files, and more. Includes access to state archives, historical societies, and trade directories — excellent for building family trees and contextualising occupations.

State Library of NSW - <https://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/>

Australia's oldest public library and a major research hub. Offers access to rare books, maps, manuscripts, newspapers, and digitised collections. Public terminals provide access to NSW Land Registry records and State Archives.

Useful for: Deep archival research, rare publications, and accessing digitised land and immigration records

The Ships List - <https://web.archive.org/web/20240813092428/http://www.theshipslist.com/>

Extensive collection of passenger lists, ship descriptions, immigration reports, shipwreck records, and maritime images. Includes arrivals to Australia, assisted passage schemes, and special projects like German emigrants to South Australia.

Useful for: Tracing migration routes, shipboard experiences, and identifying immigrant ancestors

Directories, Census & Electoral Rolls

Greville's Post Office Directory - www.ihr.com.au/secure/html/greville75.html

NSW directory from 1875 listing residents, businesses, and post office locations. Useful for locating ancestors and understanding settlement patterns.

Useful for: Locating ancestors, identifying occupations, and understanding 19th-century settlement patterns.

FamilySearch Australia - www.familysearch.org/en/australia/

FamilySearch Australia is a free global genealogy platform offering access to Australian births, deaths, marriages, census, church, and immigration records. It's useful for building collaborative family trees, viewing digitised documents, and exploring historical collections by state and region.

Useful for: Building family trees, accessing state-based historical records, and collaborating with others on shared ancestry.

National Library Australia - www.library.gov.au/

Access to 180+ genealogy databases covering vital records, electoral rolls, cemetery indexes, and military service files, and digitised newspapers, making it a valuable resource for deep family history research. Requires free library card (Australian residents only).

Useful for: deep family history research, verification of life events, and exploration of national and state-level archives.

Births, Deaths and Marriage Records

Free searchable Indexes of Births, Deaths and Marriage with Name, Year, Mother, Father and Place.

State	Free Index
NSW	NSW BD&M Index - https://familyhistory.bdm.nsw.gov.au/lifelink/familyhistory/search?2 NSW Family Search Online Genealogy Records - https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/New_South_Wales_Online_Genealogy_Records
VIC	VIC BD&M Index - https://my.rio.bdm.vic.gov.au/efamily-history/68eb0d518339945cefb51c56 VIC Family Search Online Genealogy Records - https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Victoria_Online_Genealogy_Records
TAS	TAS Names Index - https://libriaristas.ent.sirsiidynix.net.au/client/en_AU/names TAS Family Search Online Genealogy Records - https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Tasmania_Online_Genealogy_Records
NT	NT Family Search Online Genealogy Records - https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Northern_Territory_Online_Genealogy_Records
QLD	QLD BD&M Index - https://www.familyhistory.bdm.qld.gov.au/ QLD Family Search Online Genealogy Records - https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Queensland_Online_Genealogy_Records
SA	Genealogy SA - https://www.genealogysa.org.au/resources/online-database-search Ancestral & Local History Research SA - https://www.jaunay.com/earlybdm.php SA Family Search Online Genealogy Records - https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/South_Australia_Online_Genealogy_Records
WA	WA BD&M Index - https://www.wa.gov.au/organisation/department-of-justice/online-index-search-tool WA Family Search Online Genealogy Records - https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Western_Australia_Online_Genealogy_Records

Military & War Service

Australians in the Boer War - https://members.pcug.org.au/~croe/ozb/oz_boer.cgi

A niche but valuable database of Australian soldiers and nurses who served in the Second Anglo-Boer War (1899–1902). Includes references to books, journals, and ephemera — useful for interpretive overlays and military-themed tours.

[Australian War Memorial](https://www.awm.gov.au/) - <https://www.awm.gov.au/>

Extensive military service records, nominal rolls, and unit histories from WWI, WWII, and other conflicts. Includes digitised diaries, photographs, and memorial listings — ideal for commemorative programming and ancestor research.

[National Archives of Australia](https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/SearchScreens/BasicSearch.aspx) -

<https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/SearchScreens/BasicSearch.aspx>

Official government repository with digitised military dossiers, immigration files, naturalisation records, and more. Includes research guides and tips for tracing service history and family migration.

Regional & Indigenous Family History

[AIATSIS](https://aiatsis.gov.au/family-history) - <https://aiatsis.gov.au/family-history>

The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies. Offers culturally sensitive guides, language resources, and access to community-held records.

[Araluen Valley History](https://araluenvalley-history.com.au/) - <https://araluenvalley-history.com.au/>

Araluen Valley History is a community-driven project dedicated to preserving the heritage of the Araluen Valley in southern NSW. It documents the valley's Indigenous roots, gold rush era, and the lives of settlers and families who shaped the region

[Monaro Pioneers](http://www.monaropioneers.com/) - <http://www.monaropioneers.com/>

Database of over 400,000 names from Eden/Monaro and surrounding regions. Includes family trees, biographies, and cemetery records — ideal for regional benchmarking and tracing interlinked families.

Land & Agricultural Records

[NSW Land Registry Services – Historical Research](https://nswlrs.com.au/services/record-searches/historical-research) - <https://nswlrs.com.au/services/record-searches/historical-research>

Explore over 19 million digitised land records, including Torrens titles, Crown plans, parish maps, deeds, and surveyor field books. Records date back to the early colonial period and are accessible via the Historical Land Records Viewer (HLRV), NSW State Archives, or approved brokers.

Useful for: Property history, land ownership, family holdings, and interpreting settlement patterns

[Return of Stock and Stock Owners – Braidwood](https://www.ihr.com.au/secure/html/vpsr.html#bra) - <https://www.ihr.com.au/secure/html/vpsr.html#bra>

Lists holdings, stock owners, acreage, and livestock counts (cattle, sheep, horses, pigs) across NSW districts, including Braidwood. Based on the 1885 Annual Report of the Stock Branch, sourced from the Dixson Library.

Useful for: Identifying rural ancestors, land use, and agricultural activity in the Braidwood district