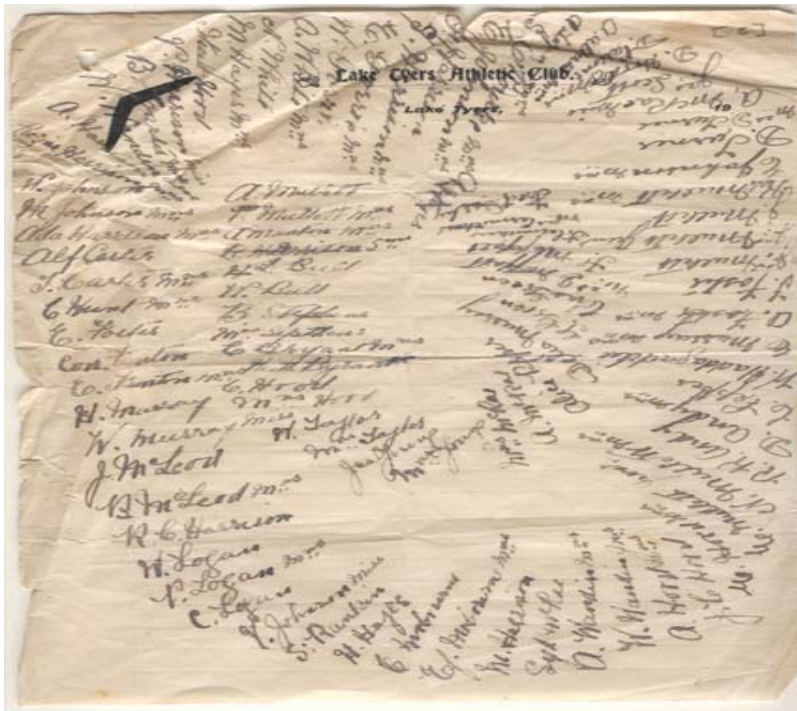


## Koorie Heritage – Aboriginal Records at PROV

Public Record Office Victoria (PROV) holds records relating to the administration of Aboriginal Affairs in Victoria. Its main holdings are records created by the office of the Chief Protector of Aborigines ([VA 512](#)) and its successor, the Guardian of Aborigines ([VA 513](#)), which administered Aboriginal Affairs in the early years of the colony.

Most of the records date from 1839 to 1946, with more extensive holdings from the period 1839 to 1859. The records were created by government agencies managing Victorian Aboriginal people residing on Aboriginal mission stations. These records contain a wide range of information about Aboriginal people, such as medical and education reports, correspondence, employment details, meeting minutes, annual reports, police reports, and the issuing of provisions, clothing and rations, and records of the movement of Aboriginal people across Victoria.

As well as being a valuable resource for historical and genealogical research, the records also provide an insight into an era of surveillance and control of Aboriginal people by Victorian government agencies.



### Example record

A petition lodged in 1931 with the Board for the Protection of Aborigines. This petition is unusual because the signatures have been arranged in a spiral pattern.

Signatories were residents of Lake Tyers mission station seeking to prevent the removal of station manager Captain Newman. The petition was unsuccessful. **PROV, VPRS 1694/P0 Correspondence Files, Unit 11, file May 1931 – June 1931**

## Accessing Records

In 1975 the Victorian State Government transferred responsibility for Aboriginal Affairs in Victoria to the Commonwealth. As a result, records were transferred to the National Archives of Australia (NAA) by the Victorian Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs.

Researchers seeking records from the 1860s through to the 1960s will most likely need to access them through both PROV and NAA at their shared reading room at the Victorian Archives Centre (99 Shiel Street, North Melbourne). Opening hours are 9.00 am to 4.30 pm Monday to Friday (except for public holidays) and two Saturdays a month. See the PROV website for further details about Saturday openings: [www.prov.vic.gov.au/main/saturdayopenings](http://www.prov.vic.gov.au/main/saturdayopenings).

## Starting your research

Records can be ordered through [PROV's online catalogue](#) for viewing in one of PROV's reading rooms. PROV holds a range of records relating to Aboriginal Affairs on microfiche and microfilm. These records are available in PROV reading rooms and do not have to be ordered. See PROV's guides to [Microfilm, Microfiche and Online Resources at the Victorian Archives Centre](#), and [Microfilm, Microfiche and Online Resources at the Ballarat Archives Centre](#) for more information.

The following online resources will assist you with starting your research at PROV:  
[Koorie People and Places](#) Research Pathway and [Getting Started](#) Research Pathway.

## The Aboriginal Protectorate and its successors

[VA 512](#) Chief Protector of Aborigines 1838–1849

[VA 513](#) Guardian of Aborigines 1850–1860

[VA 514](#) Central Board Appointed to Watch Over the Interests of the Aborigines 1860–1869

[VA 515](#) Board for the Protection of Aborigines 1869–1957

[VA 4371](#) Aborigines Welfare Board 1957–1968

See also [VF 175](#) Aboriginal Affairs on PROV's online catalogue for more detailed information about the administration of Aboriginal Affairs in Victoria.

## Aboriginal records available at PROV: a select list

[VPRS 1694](#) Correspondence Files [Board for the Protection of Aborigines 1889–1931]

See also: National Archives of Australia series B313 for other files in this series.

[VPRS 10768](#) Register and Index of Inward Correspondence [Board for the Protection of Aborigines 1909–1941] For an earlier register consult National Archives of Australia series B328.

[VPRS 926](#) Letter Book Coranderrk [Board for the Protection of Aborigines 1898–1924]

[VPRS 90](#) Daybook of the Native Police Corps, Narre Warren [1845–1853]

[VPRS 11](#) Inward Unregistered Correspondence to the Chief Protector of Aborigines - Reports and Returns [1847–1851]

[VPRS 10](#) Inward Registered Correspondence to the Superintendent of Port Phillip District, relating to Aboriginal Affairs [1839–1851]

### Viewing digitised records online

PROV is digitising records relating to Aboriginal Affairs, beginning with its early holdings. Once digitised, records can be viewed online by navigating to the item details pages in the relevant series and clicking on the **View digitised Item** button.

## Koorie Records Unit

PROV's Koorie Records Unit (KRU) has been established to foster awareness of records about Aboriginal people held by PROV, and aims to improve the accessibility of these records to Koorie people and the wider community. The KRU collaborates with Koorie community organisations such as Stolen Generations Victoria, in its outreach, education and training projects.

### Koorie Index of Names (KIN) database project

PROV is indexing records about Aboriginal people in its collection to produce a database index of Aboriginal names. The index itself will not contain information about the people named in it but will assist researchers to locate records (files, papers and photographs) relating to people in the index. See our website for updates on the KIN indexing project [www.prov.vic.gov.au/about/kru](http://www.prov.vic.gov.au/about/kru)

### Contact us

The KRU can provide advice and assistance to researchers wishing to access records about Aboriginal people in PROV's collection. Phone: **03 9348 5773** or tollfree **1800 657 452**, Monday to Friday except public holidays.

### KRU website

To find out more about the KRU, subscribe to our electronic newsletter (email subscription request to [ask.prov@prov.vic.gov.au](mailto:ask.prov@prov.vic.gov.au)) and visit our webpage [www.prov.vic.gov.au/about/kru](http://www.prov.vic.gov.au/about/kru).

## Publications

### *Footprints*

*Footprints* tells the story of Lucy and Percy Pepper and their children as they struggled to live independent lives through records held by PROV and NAA, such as letters, family photographs and other documents.

Order forms can be accessed online at

[www.prov.vic.gov.au/publications/publns/footprints\\_orderform.pdf](http://www.prov.vic.gov.au/publications/publns/footprints_orderform.pdf)

### *My Heart Is Breaking*

*My Heart is Breaking: A joint guide to records about Aboriginal People in PROV and NAA, Melbourne Office collections.* This guide assists people researching Aboriginal family and community history, or the history of interactions between government and Aboriginal people in Victoria. *My Heart is Breaking* is currently being updated and is due to be republished in 2009.

Order forms can be accessed online at

[www.prov.vic.gov.au/publications/publns/PROV\\_OrderFormOct2007.pdf](http://www.prov.vic.gov.au/publications/publns/PROV_OrderFormOct2007.pdf)

## Publications available online

### *Finding Your Story*

*Finding Your Story* is a valuable reference tool for Victorian Indigenous people seeking information on their separation from family and community. *Finding Your Story* is also a helpful guide for organisations that assist the Stolen Generations retrace family and community connections through records made by government and non-government agencies: [www.prov.vic.gov.au/findingyourstory](http://www.prov.vic.gov.au/findingyourstory)

### *wilam naling ...knowing who you are... report 2006*

This report addresses recommendations from the Commonwealth government's 1997 *National Enquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families*. The *wilam naling* report contains recommendations for improving access to records by people affected by removal policies: [www.prov.vic.gov.au/publications/wilamnaling](http://www.prov.vic.gov.au/publications/wilamnaling).

### *Tracking the Native Police*

PROV's online exhibition *Tracking the Native Police* tells the story of the Native Police Corps from 1837 to 1852. It contains records about the Aboriginal men who joined the corps, and also about the many Aboriginal people and communities they encountered throughout Victoria:

[www.prov.vic.gov.au/nativepolice](http://www.prov.vic.gov.au/nativepolice)

### *Provenance: The Journal of Public Record Office Victoria*

PROV publishes its online scholarly journal *Provenance* every year in September. The journal has featured a number of articles about Aboriginal people and issues, such as

'[Dallong – Possum Skin Rugs: A Study of an Inter-Cultural Trade Item in Victoria](#)' in issue 4, 2005,

'[Unequal Justice: Colonial Law and the Shooting of Jim Crow](#)' in issue 5, 2006, and

'[Give to us the People we would Love to be amongst us: The Aboriginal Campaign against Caroline Bulmer's Eviction from Lake Tyers Aboriginal Station, 1913-14](#)' in issue 7, 2008.

## Further information

### Koorie Heritage Trust's Koorie Family History Service

295 King Street

Melbourne Vic 3000

(03) 8622 2600

[www.koorieheritagetrust.com](http://www.koorieheritagetrust.com)

Oral histories, assistance with family history research, and library and education programs

## Link Up Victoria

139 Nicholson Street  
East Brunswick Vic 3057  
(03) 8388 1855

[www.vacca.org/01\\_program/link\\_up\\_victoria](http://www.vacca.org/01_program/link_up_victoria)

Family tracing, reunion, support and counselling assistance for Aboriginal people removed from their families as children

## Stolen Generations Victoria

34 Wurruk Avenue  
Preston Vic 3072  
(03) 9470 3477

[www.stolengenerationsvictoria.org.au](http://www.stolengenerationsvictoria.org.au)

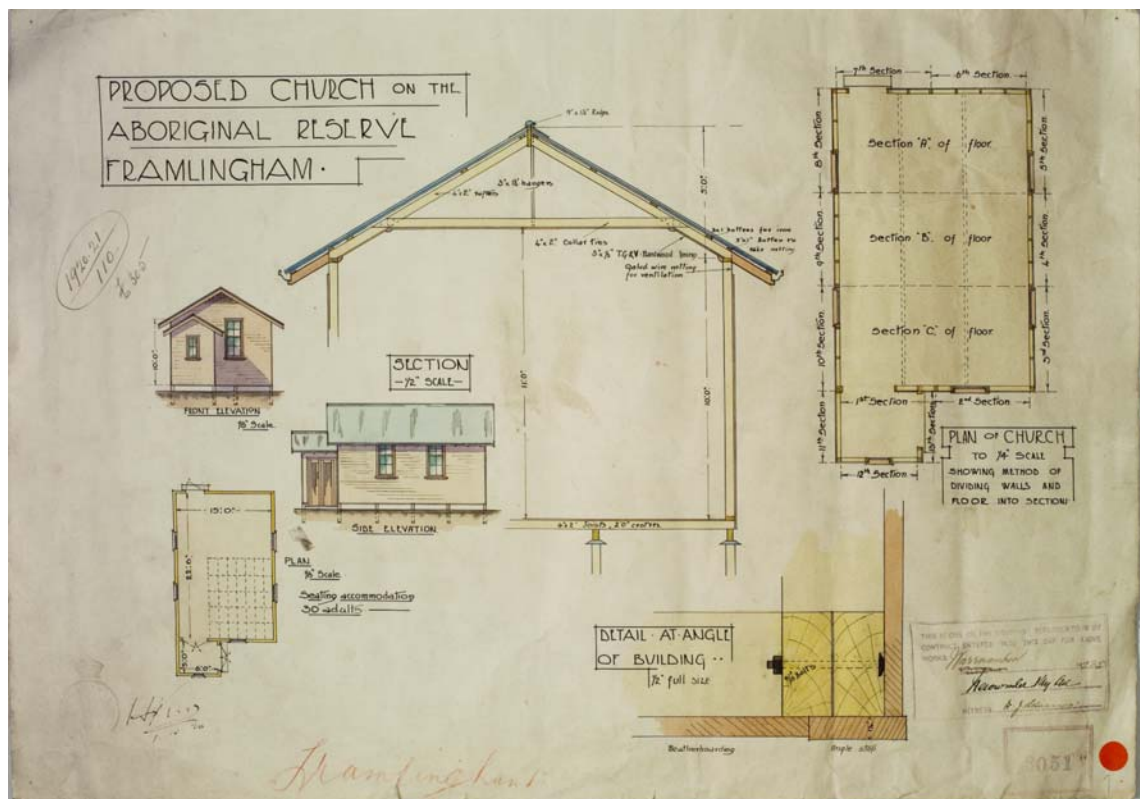
Supporting and addressing the needs of people affected by practices and policies of removing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples from family, community, country and culture

## Australian Institute of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS)

Family History Unit  
GPO Box 553  
Canberra ACT 2601  
1800 730 129

[www.aiatsis.gov.au](http://www.aiatsis.gov.au)

Free assistance for people with Aboriginal heritage to do family history research



## Example record

The proposed church building plan for the Framlingham Aboriginal mission station in 1920, near Warrnambool, Western Victoria. This building is still standing. **PROV, VPRS 3686/P1, Unit 370, Drawing No. ARF 1.**