

Information from the National Archives of Australia (NAA) website covering details of a series of registers they hold relating to the Birth of Australian citizens in New Guinea:

"This series comprises three different register formats relating to the birth of Australian citizens in New Guinea, in particular the Port Moresby area. The registers consist of 8 maroon covered volumes which contain entries of the names of children granted Australian citizenship through descent, though being born outside Australia. The entries include registration number (receipt number in pencil), name of child, sex, date of registration, whether present or not, date and place of birth, Name of father, maiden name of mother, previous children and name of witnesses to birth. The registers are in chronological order from 19 June 1952 to 18 May 1986. The registers have a label on the front cover giving a volume number and these are not in numerical order but appear to have been for volume issuing purposes. These numbers with 'Register' have been used as a control number for retrieval purposes. The registers are a permanent record of registration for Australian citizenship purposes and the basis upon which a certificate of Australian citizenship is issued to the child. Other (Australian) missions overseas maintain similar registers. A second component of this series consists of green receipt type books. The pages were originally in two parts with a perforated line between them. These appear to have been receipts for the registration of the child born with the main part of the page issued to the parents of the child registered. The part of the page remaining records the name, number of the registration (from the above registers) the page number and volume number from the registers, date of issue, place of issue and file number. The receipt number, which appears at the top of the page, corresponds to the number in pencil in the registers. The registers are numbered from 8 to 26, thus indicating that the series is incomplete. This number with 'Receipt' has been used as a control for this component of the series. The third component of this series is a single volume titled 'Birth Register Index'. This volume is used as a simple index to the registers. Columns are headed number, name, Christian names, date received, date sent to Canberra, Immigration appraised(?) and register number. The numbers in the left hand column are an index number and remains in strict numerical order while the register number in the right hand column corresponds to the register number in the above described volumes. This volume is controlled as 'Index'."

Of particular interest is the fact that two of these Registers have been digitised by the NAA and can be viewed on-line. Details for each entry (birth) include:

- Registration Number
- Name of Child
- Sex
- Date of registration
- Present or Not
- Date and Place of Birth
- Name of Father
- Maiden Name of Mother
- Previous Issue (Names and Ages), and
- Witnesses to Birth.

Because some people registered births when the register commenced, or when they found out about it, there are records of births some years before the date of first registration. Also there is a political nuance, the registers – at least the two that have been digitised - do not record the births of any children born in Papua. All the births registered occurred in New Guinea, with the exception of one or two ring-ins from

other overseas countries. The detail for those listed as previous issue does not give the place of birth, but in many cases gives the actual date of birth.

The first digitised volume (No. 36) covers the period from 19 June 1952 to 13 June 1961, is of 206 pages containing a total of 1,270 entries. This volume commences with registration No 1, the registration of a birth (Aug 1950) registered on 19 June 1952.

The second digitised volume (No. 64) covers the period from 29 April 1965 to 4 March 1969, is 203 pages but contains 3,776 entries.

To access these two registers –

1. Open the Australian National Archives web page (<http://www.naa.gov.au/>).
2. Select Record Search
3. Go to 'Search now (as a Guest)' – unless you already have an account.
4. Now select the RecordSearch – Advanced Search tab.
5. Select the 'Items' under the 'Series' box.
6. Enter 'A9125' in the box adjacent to the 'Series Number'.
7. Click 'Search' - the resultant 2 pages will list 7 Registers, 19 Receipts and 1 Index.
8. The 2 Registers that have been digitised are identified by this  symbol
9. Click on either to view.
10. If you want to print an item, suggest you read the 'How to view and print this page' – top right hand of screen. Also, you can 'enlarge' – see top LH of screen.

It is presumed that the National Archives will progressively digitise the remaining five registers and, hopefully, the Index, however we have no information as to when this is likely to occur. Our thanks to Member Bill Brown for alerting us to this facility.

Happy hunting!

Sydney
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