



**MANNINGHAM**  
UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

## U3AM at Home

### Effective use of the Web to Start your Family Research on a Budget

It is very hard to undertake looking into your family history without at some point in time going onto the web to source assistance. Depending what you type in, you can be overwhelmed with the number of responses. For instance, if you Google – Genealogy you will attract 234 million responses. While Family History generates 4.720 Billion. A bit of an overkill. But in this time of staying close to home, surfing the web in exploring your family's history can be revealing and not a bad way to spend a number of hours doing something interesting.

But there is no need to spend time sorting through the majority of sites on offer and most importantly spend big money. Below I have listed four starting points that can prove very helpful in your search and need not cost.

#### Starting out:

1. **Local Library** – this is possibly one of the best starting points when commencing family research. Melbourne is lucky in the quality of libraries that it has which also provide Genealogy services. Sometimes they will have a specialist Genealogist who can help. But the majority of libraries will have dedicated workstations that will allow you access to major research sites for no charge. Manningham Library at MC Square has possibly one of the best genealogies set ups. Check out their eLibrary. Other libraries worth checking out by either visiting or on-line are The Victorian Library, National Library and Mitchell Library in Sydney.

**All the above Libraries have excellent websites with links to family history research.**

For purely Australian based research, check-out the National Archives on - [naa.gov.au](http://naa.gov.au)

If your research takes you overseas then it may be worthwhile to go to the major library in the area of your research and see what they offer. Many provide degrees of on-line access to their family history sites.

2. **Free-bees** – these are web sites that don't have an initial fee to access them. There are many of them and by just typing in free family history sites on Google, there will be some good ones that come up and are worth exploring.

But the best site I can recommend in this sector is <https://www.familysearch.org/en/>  
This site is a non-commercial provider run by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, with most information being freely available.

One other worth checking out is [info@wikitree.com](http://info@wikitree.com) This is a site for active researchers and you may be asked to contribute information. But it is worth checking out.

3. **Toe in the water-** Exploratory one month offer sites. Before committing to an annual subscription that can range from \$100 – up to \$500. There are a couple of good sites that I have used, and you can take out a month's subscription to do your research
  - a. [info@hello.findmypast.com](http://info@hello.findmypast.com) – You can start off with a 14-day free trial or take out a months subscription for \$29.95. Provides a very exhaustive source of data for those researching their UK roots. Plus, it helps in setting up a starter family tree.
  - b. [notifications-au-archives@archives.com](mailto:notifications-au-archives@archives.com) – good starting point for researching Australian family history. This site consolidates a lot of the records and data accumulated by other sites, and a monthly subscription is \$14.95.
4. **Checking out the big player sites - Ancestry and MyHeritage** – these are the two big players in the market and subject to the type of subscription you take out can prove expensive. MyHeritage does offer a basic free service but this will only take you so far. Ancestry will from time to time offer 14 day free access to certain parts of their data base, use these offers to get your toe into family research. But be warned once you have indulged, they will follow you up frequently to join up. If one of these sites appeals to you, wait for the special offer to come to you, or sign up for a shorter period.

**Before signing up to any site check to see that the amount quoted is in Australian dollars. Many are in US dollars meaning an extra 40 – 60% increase when converted to Australian dollars.**

Looking for a site that categorises the many sites available then go to <https://www.cyndislist.com> – but put aside a few hours to explore.

If I can be of any help in assisting with your family research, I can be contacted on [tonyrobinson6@me.com](mailto:tonyrobinson6@me.com)

**Tony Robinson**  
**Tutor- Genealogy / Family History**