

Child migrant records held in Sydney

Many children have come to Australia without their families under child migration schemes. While a number of schemes operated prior to World War II, it was after the war that schemes involving the migration of large numbers of children were introduced. Some of the children were orphans, while others had been placed in the care of British children's homes by their families.

The Commonwealth Department of Immigration was responsible for approving the entry of individuals and recording their arrival. Matters such as accommodation, welfare and reception arrangements generally lay with state governments or charitable bodies such as the Big Brother Movement, Dr Barnardo's Homes, Fairbridge Farm Schools or institutions run by religious orders.

Between 1947 and 1953 more than 3200 children migrated to Australia under approved schemes. Most children were from the United Kingdom, with a small number from Malta. Proposals to include children from Poland and Italy did not proceed.

Record holdings

Records relating to child migrants to New South Wales - including migrant selection documents, passenger lists and immigration policy files - are held by the National Archives Sydney Office. Relevant files may also be held by other [National Archives' offices](#).

Migrant selection documents

The range of papers usually found in the files identified as migrant selection documents includes application forms, medical reports, and other papers completed by applicants for assisted migration to Australia from Britain. Consolidated they contain a wide range of personal details. From November 1948, papers were arranged chronologically by arrival date of the vessel or aircraft.

Personal documents of British migrants and British assisted passage migrants, which include children, are held from 1947. The table below lists the collections in chronological order.

Personal documents of British migrants and British assisted passage migrants

Title or description of record	Date range	Series number
<u>Personal documents of British assisted migrants</u>	1947–48	SP104/1
<u>Personal documents of British assisted migrants</u>	1948–49	SP104/2
<u>Personal documents of British migrants</u>	1949–50	SP122/1
<u>Personal documents of British migrants</u>	1951	SP231/1
<u>Personal documents of British migrants</u>	1952	SP274/1
<u>Personal documents of British migrants</u>	1953–54	SP343/5
<u>Personal documents of British assisted migrants</u>	1955–56	SP388/1
<u>Personal documents of British assisted migrants</u>	1956–57	SP427/1
<u>Personal documents of British assisted migrants</u>	1957–58	SP476/1
<u>Personal documents of British assisted migrants</u>	1958–60	SP500/1
<u>Personal documents of British assisted migrants</u>	1960	SP516/1
<u>Personal documents of British assisted migrants</u>	1960–63	SP593/1
<u>Personal documents of British assisted migrants</u>	1961	SP550/1
<u>Personal documents of British assisted migrants</u>	1962–63	SP643/1
<u>Personal documents of British assisted migrants</u>	1963–64	SP646/1
<u>Personal documents of British assisted migrants</u>	1964	SP669/1
<u>Personal documents of British assisted migrants</u>	1964–65	SP716/1
<u>Personal documents of British assisted migrants</u>	1965	SP725/1
<u>Personal documents of British assisted migrants</u>	1965	SP731/1
<u>Personal documents of British assisted migrants</u>	1965	SP745/1
<u>Personal documents of British assisted migrants</u>	1965–66	SP763/1
<u>Personal documents of British assisted migrants</u>	1966	SP785/1
<u>Personal documents of British assisted migrants</u>	1966–67	SP791/1
<u>Personal documents of British assisted migrants</u>	1967	SP835/1
<u>Personal documents of British assisted migrants</u>	1967	SP849/1
<u>Personal documents of British assisted migrants</u>	1967	SP874/1
<u>Personal documents of British assisted migrants</u>	1967–68	SP884/1

Passenger lists

Each vessel arriving at the port of Sydney (or aircraft arriving at Mascot) was required to lodge a list of incoming passengers. Arranged by date of arrival passenger lists include the name of each passenger and, in earlier lists, details such as age or marital status. Passenger lists for the period 1923 to 1966 are available as microfilm, For more information on passenger records please see *Fact sheet 64 - Passenger records held in Sydney*.

Passenger lists will often need to be consulted to establish the vessel name and date of arrival needed to access the migrant selection documents.

Immigration policy files

Files referring to child migration will be found in the main correspondence series of the Department of Immigration (New South Wales State Office), and some will contain information about individual children. Examples of relevant items are listed in the table below.

Collection references

Title or description of record	Date range	Series, item number
<u>Care of child migrants</u>	1947	SP11/18, E1947/1709
<u>Immigration – Fairbridge Farm Schools – capital expenditure, balance sheets, etc.</u>	1948–68	C3939, N1955/25/75209 part 1
<u>Immigration – Fairbridge Farm Schools</u>	1962–73	C3939, N1955/25/75209 part 2
<u>Immigration – Escorts for assisted child migrants</u>	1950–63	C3939, N1954/25/75385
<u>Immigration – Big Brother Movement – nominations claims for equipment allowance</u>	1950–61	C3939, N1957/75099 part 1
<u>Immigration – Big Brother Movement – nominations claims for equipment allowance</u>	1961–67	C3939, N1957/75099 part 2
<u>Immigration – Big Brother Movement – nominations claims for equipment allowance</u>	1967–70	C3939, N1957/75099 part 3
<u>Immigration – visit by Mr PL Hartley, Deputy General Superintendent of Dr Barnardo's Homes</u>	1952–77	C3939, N1963/75248
<u>Immigration – Survey of accommodation available in approved institutions for child migrants</u>	1953–62	C3939, N1955/25/75054
<u>Immigration – Selections of child migrants</u>	1954	C3939, N1954/25/75448
<u>Immigration – 100th post-war party of Little Brothers arrival on Fairsky, 9 November 1960</u>	1960	C3939, N1960/75177
<u>Immigration – child migration of orphans from Italy</u>	1961	C3939, N1961/75238

Locating additional records

Search the collection to locate additional material of interest. Keyword searches will help you identify relevant material.

For further information on child migration records held by the National Archives see:

Fact sheets:

- *Fact sheet 124 - Child migration to Australia*

Research guides:

- Good British Stock: Child and Youth Migration to Australia
- More People Imperative: Immigration to Australia, 1901–39

Collections in other institutions

Relevant records on child migration may be held by State government archives. Please see *Fact sheet 2 – Addresses of other Australian archival institutions* for contact details.

The Child Migrants Trust can assist in tracing the background and families of children who came to Australia as unaccompanied child migrants.