

RSL COMMUNITY LINK RESEARCH TIPS

Before filling out the RSL Community Link Application Form you will need to gather some very basic information about your veteran's military service. If you don't have them in your possession, all of the service details you require are available for free via the internet or, in the case of medal entitlements, available for free by lodging a Medal Enquiry Form as described later on this page.

When attempting the Application Form, you may find yourself in one of the following situations:

- **You have the veteran's medals in your possession, but don't know their names**
To find their names, you can compare the medals (and the medal ribbons) to images on the Department of Defence website www.defence.gov.au/medals. You can then write the names of the medals onto the RSL Community Link Application Form. It is likely that the veteran's name and service number are engraved or stamped on the edge or back of the medals. To find more information about your veteran's service, you can search the online Nominal Rolls as mentioned below.
- **You don't have the medals, but you do have a document showing the veteran's service number**
You can use the service number (sometimes called the serial number or regimental number) as the basis for an online search for information about your veteran's service, especially using the online Nominal Rolls mentioned below. Using the name and service number, you can obtain details of your veteran's medals by sending a Medal Enquiry Form to the Directorate of Honours and Awards as mentioned below.
- **You don't have the medals or any documents at all to show you the veteran's service number**
If you know the name, plus maybe the date of birth, or place of birth, or next of kin at the time of enlistment, or place of enlistment, then it is likely that you will be able to find the veteran's service number and basic service details on one of the online Nominal Rolls. Then, using the name and service number, you can obtain details of the medals issued to your veteran by sending a Medal Enquiry Form to the Directorate of Honours and Awards as mentioned below.
- **If you are researching a First World War veteran, it is very easy**
Just go to the website of the National Archives of Australia www.naa.gov.au and look for the link called 'RecordSearch'. Then, using the veteran's name and the date '1914-1918', you can find and view digitised images of every page of the veteran's complete service record. A note of the medals issued to a First World War veteran can be found on the last few pages of the veteran's records.

Online Nominal Rolls

Online Nominal Rolls are an excellent source of the basic information required for the Veteran's Memorial Plaque, including name, service number, branch of service and unit at the time of discharge. The Australian War Memorial www.awm.gov.au/research/people/nominal_rolls/ and the Department of Veterans' Affairs www.dva.gov.au/commems_oawg/OAWG/nominal_rolls/ link to Nominal Rolls for the following conflicts:

- Sudan War 1885
- Boer War 1899-1902
- Boxer Uprising 1900-1901
- First World War 1914-1918 (also referred to as World War One or WW1)
- Second World War 1939-1945 (also referred to as World War Two or WW2)
- Korean War 1950-1956
- Vietnam War 1962-1975
- Gulf War 1990-1991

Peacetime, peacekeeping or conflicts other than those for which there are Nominal Rolls

The websites of the Australian Army, Royal Australian Navy and Royal Australian Air Force all contain links to their individual service record offices. You can request the information needed to complete the veteran's service section of the RSL Community Link Application Form by contacting the appropriate record office by mail, email or telephone. The information will be provided to you free of charge.

Medals

Records of medal issues are held by the Department of Defence Directorate of Honours and Awards. You can obtain a list of the medals to which your veteran was entitled by sending a Medal Enquiry Form to the Directorate. If a Medal Enquiry Form was not included with these Research Tips it can be downloaded from the RSL Community Link section of the RSL Queensland website www.rslqld.org. Sometimes the eligibility for medals can be widened over time and some veterans may not have applied for additional medals to which they later became entitled. A note of the medals issued to a First World War veteran can be found on the last few pages of the veteran's records - just go to the website of the National Archives of Australia www.naa.gov.au and look for the link called 'RecordSearch'. Then, using the veteran's name and the date '1914-1918', you can find and view digitised images of every page of the veteran's complete service record for free.

Other online documents, photos, histories, glossaries and encyclopedia

The Australian War Memorial www.awm.gov.au has an excellent website with links to all the other websites mentioned here. You can access an online collection of rolls, documents, photos, film and sound, all of which can provide useful information about a veteran. The AWM's massive collection covers all conflicts.