How and where to research a person's individual Military Service Record. Unit Histories, Campaigns and other Military History Records in Australia and the United Kingdom

Introduction

The obtaining of a person's Military Service Records are an important aspect of determining an insight into an individual's time in the Services, such as the campaigns they served in, their rank, Units in which they served and any Medals, Honours, Awards or Decorations they received.

This information can be useful when researching for a Military History Project or for researching a relative as part of a genealogical investigation of a family.
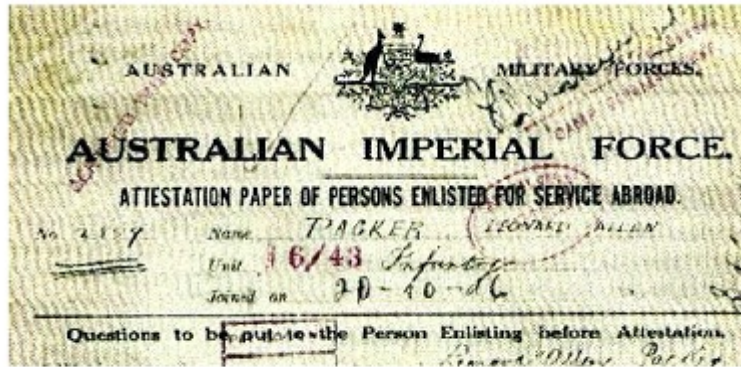
The Military Records of an individual can provide information:

- Records of Service
- Certificate of Service (WW2)
- Unit(s) in which a person served
- The Service in which they served Army, Navy or Air Force
- Campaign Areas or Theatres of War
- Embarkation and Return dates from and to Australia
- Method of departure-Ship or Plane
- Were they captured and became a Prisoner of War (POW)
- Were they wounded or Killed in Action (KIA)
- War Graves
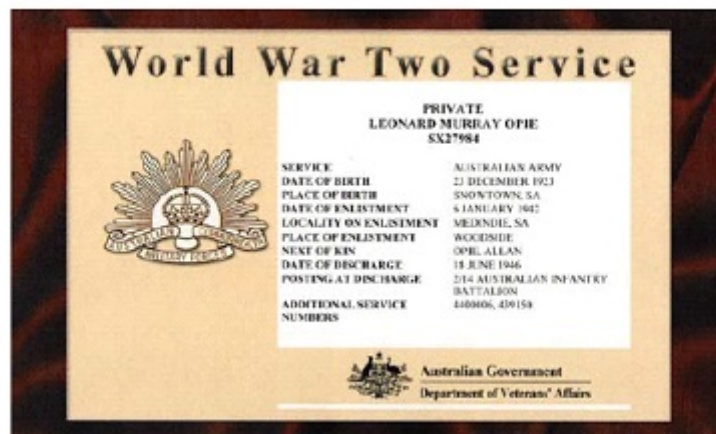- Medals and Decorations awarded

Examples of information that can be obtained:

Record of Service for a discharged Service Person from all Wars and Campaigns:

World War 1 Records are digitised and are available on the National Australian Archive site (without any charge).

World War 2 Records are available through the National Australian Archives site (charges apply)

Location of War Graves for deceased Australian service personnel.

Medals, Honours and Awards have been awarded to service personnel in all wars and campaigns

Nominal Rolls (available on the internet, in particular Dept Veteran's Affairs):

Sudan 1885
Boxer Uprising (China) 1900-1901
Boer War (South Africa) 1899-1902
WW1 1914-1918 and Embarkation Rolls
WW2 1939-1945
Korean War 1950-1953
Malaya Emergency 1948-1960
Malaysia & Borneo Confrontation 1963-1966
Vietnam War 1962-1972
Gulf War 1991
East Timor 1999-2003
Peace Keeping (UN) 1973

Other information:
Discharge Certificates
Prisoner of War Records Commemorative Rolls
Remembrance Book

Red Cross Wounded and Missing records
Sources of Information - Australia
In Australia the major sources of information are:

Australian War Memorial (AWM) Canberra
www.awm.gov.au
(in particular: PreWWI Conflicts Nominal Rolls, WWI Embarkation and Nominal Rolls,
Roll of Honour, WWI Red Cross files, WWII POWs)

National Archives of Australia (NAA) Canberra
www.naa.gov.au
(in particular WWII Service Records)

Discovering ANZACs (part of NAA)
http://discoveringanzacs.naa.gov.au

AIF Project
www.aif.adfa.edu.au/index.html

Dept of Veterans Affairs - Nominal Rolls
www.dva.gov.au/commemorations-memorials-and-war-graves/nominal-rolls

RSL SA Virtual War Memorial
https://rslvirtualwarmemorial.org.au/

Conflicts Since 1953
Personal files for all conflicts since 1953 are held by Defence Archives.
Defence Archives also holds records for members who enlisted or were commissioned
into the Regular Army from 1948, including those who did not see active service.
All enquiries should be directed to
Defence Archives
GPO Box 225
QUEENSCLIFF VIC 3225
ADF.records@defence.gov.au

Commonwealth War Graves Commission
www.cwgc.org

War Graves Photographic Project
www.twgpp.org

General Military Background History
www.diggerhistory.info

Awards and Honours
www.dpmc.gov.au/government/its-honour

Internet Research Sites United Kingdom

The National Archives
www.nationalarchives.gov.uk

The Long, Long Trail
www.longlongtrail.co.uk

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