

Making the Most of the Online NSW BDM Index

The NSW BDM online index is free to use and has both excellent advice for researchers about how to undertake family history research and also information about the background to the registry records. Searchers should also remember that the order of any search can be changed by clicking on the blue heading at the top of any column.

The site will search according to the date of the event and not the date when the event was registered. The online index is updated daily so look for the last date to include in your search in the writing near the date boxes. Options to enhance your search on the site will allow researchers to learn a lot by implementing additional the search functions provided. Below are three suggestions that may help you in your research. In this article examples of births have been used but this advice also works for deaths and marriages.

The search process works with almost every record with only a few exceptions where the registry has not entered in the full date in their database. This means that it does not work with the 'V' reels as these records have not been indexed according to the event date but according to the number of a baptism, burial or marriage in the church record. If any 'V' record appears in your search it needs to be ignored.

1. Finding an exact date of a Birth, Death or Marriage

Knowing an exact date can be very useful. The date of an event may be found by following this set of steps.

- Enter in the surname and given name of your relation eg. Frederick Dudley.

Do you know the registration number of the Birth you are searching for?

Yes ▾

Enter the details of the certificate you are looking for. Fields marked with an * are mandatory

Registration Number* 20156 / 1894

- In the 'Date of Event from' field, set the first date to 01/01/1881 and the 'Date of Event To' field to 31/12/1881. Start to change the month only. You don't need to calculate the number of days in each month.

- Continue to work down the 'Date of Event To' field by month until your relation is no longer showing in the index. Frederick Dudley disappears on 31/01/1881. This tells me my relation must have been born in February.

- Enter 31/02/1881 (Yes, the 31st) into the 'Date of Event To' field. Now work down the days until your relation's name disappears. Frederick's name disappears on 18/02/1881 so he was born on 19/02/1881.

Event Details

Date of Event Range

Yes ▾

Please enter a date range ending by 30/03/1919

Date of Event From*

01 01

Date of Event To*

31 12

2. Checking a birth date on NSW BDM:

The Event Details section can also be used simply to check a birth or death date. To check a specific date select 'No' and insert the date.

Event Details

Date of Event Range

Please enter a date range ending by 30/03/1919

Date of Event*

3. Investigate whether more information might be available on the record

This is a very useful search if you had once found and recorded a registration number but then can't find the record again because of a forgotten spelling variation. It may also provide further details about the participants such as a mother's maiden or former name or perhaps a father's surname on illegitimate births may also have been indexed.

There are a surprising number of records on the NSW BDM Index that have been indexed twice (and sometimes more than twice) to indicate the different information that appears on the registration. It is worth checking any registration to see if it has been indexed more than once.

For this search you don't need names. The default search for searching by number is 'No' and is found at the top of every search. To use this search select 'Yes' and everything else will disappear. Enter the registration number and year.

Here is one example.

Name	Registration Number	Father's Given Name(s)	Mother's Given Name(s)	District	PDF availability
<input type="checkbox"/> ? KELLY EMILIA	20156/1894		ANN E	MANILLA	Unavailable
<input type="checkbox"/> ? TAYLOR EMILIA	20156/1894		ANN E	MANILLA	Unavailable

This is the result.

It took years to uncover who these people were and what had happened and whether they were connected to my family. Eventually it was discovered that this birth was for the child known as Emelia Michie whose mother was Annie Emelia Kelly née Taylor. Annie was not married to the father and all the Michie children were registered with the surname Kelly. Knowing the duplicate names helped to hone in on the family and Annie's first marriage.

Practice makes perfect. Try it out! You may be surprised at the results and your finds may help you in your research without having to spend any money for clearly irrelevant registrations.

Using these searches should not however replace the purchase of registrations from the NSW BDM as these registrations are the building blocks for your history and are needed to keep you following the correct line.