

Making the most of a visit to the Society of Australian Genealogists during Congress

The SAG collections are located in two separate buildings in the Sydney CBD. Both will be open to Congress delegates free of charge in the week prior to, and the week following, Congress. It is about a 15-20 minute walk between the two buildings, so we encourage you to plan your visit so you don't waste time moving unnecessarily between the two.

If you aren't familiar with our collections and catalogues you may find the following useful:

General	<p>All bags must be placed in lockers; research papers and laptops and tablets can be taken into the libraries. To avoid tripping hazards no power cables can be used in the buildings. Out of courtesy to other researchers, mobile phones need to be muted and calls can't be taken inside.</p> <p>Volunteers who are SAG members will be available in both buildings to answer your queries and assist you to use the collection. Some are members who have especially volunteered to help welcome you to the SAG during Congress. Staff will also be available in both buildings to answer any general questions you have about the Society and its collections.</p>
Copies	<p>Photocopies of most material can be done by volunteers on your behalf (50c A4, 80c A3) and downloads of images from electronic resources can also be saved to a USB. There is a flat fee of \$2.50 per day for USB use – best to bring your own or you can buy one from us on the day. You can also take digital images using a phone or tablet – all copying is for personal research use only and normal copyright restrictions apply.</p>

Main Research Library – Level 2/379 Kent Street Sydney

What you need to know:	<p>Level 2, 379 Kent Street Sydney (between King & Market Streets). It is half-way between Wynyard and Town Hall railway stations. There are commercial parking stations nearby (nearest is at 383 Kent Street).</p> <p>This building has two lifts and the SAG library is all on one floor. It is wheelchair accessible and has a purpose-built accessible bathroom. There is a small kitchen equipped with a fridge and microwave. There are many coffee shops and take-away food shops within 200m of this building.</p>
What will I find here:	<p>This is the main SAG research library. It houses most of our book collection and all our fiche/film & CD-ROM collections, as well as online resources. This is where you go to get research assistance from our volunteers.</p> <p>Particular strengths include nearly 5,000 Australian family histories. Many of these won't be readily found in other collections and as we all know, it's always worth checking if someone else has already published something about the families you are researching. We also hold many local history publications and NSW cemetery records. The English and Irish book collections are also highlights.</p> <p>A good range of NSW parish registers is held on microfilm and CD, and there are over 1100 CDs available on the 15 computer systems. We have access to pay-to-view sites such as Ancestry, FindMyPast, The Genealogist, National Archives (UK) Discovery, British Newspaper Archives, FamilySearch digital images, and the Biographical Database of Australia.</p>

How do I know what you have?	<p>Our library catalogue is available to everyone at www.sag.org.au – use the catalogue shortcut in the top right-hand corner and then select the red catalogue box. You don't have to log in.</p> <p>Using the BASIC search you can enter a family name (e.g. SPENCER) or a placename (BATHURST, DEVONPORT, DUBLIN). You can also use the Advanced Search to find items by author, title etc.</p> <p>The search results will be grouped according to record type – book, pamphlet, CD, Microfiche, Microfilm.</p> <p>Explore each one and be sure to open the FULL record by using the red hyperlink. Note especially the LOCATION of a record – occasionally you might find an item is listed as being in VILLA STACK. This means it is NOT held at 379 Kent Street (see below).</p> <p>If you are an SAG member you can log in to the catalogue and set up a PROFILE (using the Profile tab on the left menu) and save the catalogue references for items you'd like to explore when you visit. Alternatively you can print or email catalogue entries to yourself so you can bring these with you on the day. See below for details about logging in as a member.</p>
Bookings	<p>You do not need to make a booking to use this collection, but we expect to be very busy around Congress. We will utilise a one-hour on-the-spot booking system for both computers and readers if it is warranted to allow all visitors to explore the collections.</p>
Tours	<p>We'll be running regular short introductory tours of around 15-20 minutes on Wednesday 7 & Thursday 8 March. You'll be able to put your name down for the next available tour when you come to 379 Kent St (no advance bookings).</p>
Hours of opening	<p>The library is normally open Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday & Saturday 10am – 4pm.</p> <p>During Congress we will remain open until 5pm on Wednesday 7 and Thursday 8 March. The library will be CLOSED on Saturday 10 March during Congress. It reopens after Congress as normal on Tuesday 13 March.</p>

Richmond Villa, 120 Kent Street Sydney

What you need to know:	<p>Richmond Villa at 120 Kent Street is where our manuscript and book stack collection is held. It is located about a 10 minute walk from Wynyard Station and bus interchange, and is at the Harbour Bridge end of Kent Street. There are commercial parking stations nearby in Kent St.</p> <p>The Villa was originally erected in 1849 and was moved to its current location in the mid 1970s. As it is a heritage building it does not have a lift and it is on 3 levels. There is a staircase leading from Kent Street to the entrance, or you can use the driveway next to the fire station, which has a slight incline to our entrance.</p> <p>If you use a wheelchair or have limited mobility, be aware that the toilets and kitchens at the Villa are in the basement and are only accessible via stairs.</p> <p>There are several cafes and take-away food shops within a 5 minute walk of the Villa.</p>
What will I find here:	<p>This is the where you'll find family research papers, copies of BDM certificates, photographs, family tree charts, maps and much more. We've been collecting people's research since the 1940s and much of it is unique material you will not find elsewhere.</p> <p>The manuscript collection is NOT open for browsing – you need to use the MIDAS catalogue to pre-order items you'd like to view so that we can bring themt into the Reading Room for you.</p>

	<p>We also hold our VILLA STACK book collection here – so if you find something listed on the library catalogue which is designated as VILLA STACK you'll need to email admin@sag.org.au to order it in advance for viewing, nominating which day you will be visiting (see Congress hours below). The stack book collection is spread across several rooms which are also used for other purposes and is not designed for browsing.</p>
How do I know what you have?	<p>Our manuscript catalogue is at www.sag.org.au and is called MIDAS. Use the catalogue shortcut in the top right-hand corner and select the blue catalogue box. Note this catalogue is not fully tablet compatible at present.</p> <p>You can search by name or place – results will then be grouped in three different record types (manuscripts & images, newspaper cuttings and other) - click on the MORE DETAIL hyperlink and then click on any of the blue hyperlinked numbers to explore further.</p> <p>When you see the list of name references <u>double-click</u> on an item of interest – you can then order an item for viewing by following the 'Request Copy or view' tab.</p> <p>If you are an SAG member you will be able to see more information, such as all the references in a file, if you LOG IN to the catalogue first. (see details below)</p>
Bookings	<p>You will need to pre-order items for viewing by using the MIDAS catalogue. As we expect to be very busy in the days around Congress it may not be possible to produce files for you to look at if you have not pre-ordered them, so avoid disappointment by doing your homework first.</p>
Hours	<p>Richmond Villa is normally open for research and manuscript viewing on Thursdays and Saturdays from 10am-4pm.</p> <p>During Congress the Villa will be open on Wednesday 7 and Thursday 8 March from 10am-5pm and after Congress on Wednesday 14 and Thursday 15 March from 10am-4pm.</p> <p>Richmond Villa will be CLOSED on Saturday 10 March during Congress.</p>
What if I'm an SAG member?	<p>If you are already an SAG member we encourage you to LOG IN to use both the MIDAS and library catalogues. With MIDAS this will allow you to see more information about a file, such as all the names that have been indexed in it – this will often help you determine if it is your family of interest. It will also allow you to order files for viewing with your member details already pre-populated. If you are logged in when using the library catalogue you can save records you'd like to view in the PROFILE menu – create your own little mini library catalogue!</p> <p>Once you are logged in to one of the catalogues you can toggle between the two using the left-hand menu.</p> <p>If you can't find your MIDAS log in or it won't work for you, contact us at membership@sag.org.au and we'll issue you with a new one. Please do this BEFORE 1 March!</p>
What if I have mobility issues	<p>As explained above, only 379 Kent Street is accessible via lifts and has accessible facilities. If you are planning to use the manuscript collection and need special assistance it would be best to make contact by email in advance (info@sag.org.au) so we can liaise with you on this.</p>