Untold Kin

Sourced family history brief

Case reference: **UK-SAMPLE-0001 (illustrated example)** Date: **16 Oct 2026** untoldkin.com

Józef (Josef) Nowak, Fremantle 1949

Born about 1918, Poland. Arrived in Western Australia in March 1949. Later known as Joseph Novak.

I Your question

After Józef Nowak landed at Fremantle in 1949, where did he go, and did he stay in Western Australia?

In your words: *"Family story says he came on a DP ship and later called himself Joseph Novak. We have no passenger record and no death."*

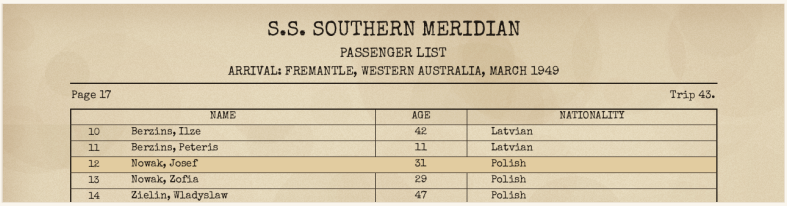
SHORT ANSWER

He is on the passenger list of the S.S. Southern Meridian, arriving at Fremantle in March 1949, aged 31 and travelling with Zofia Nowak, 29. A harbour paper that week says the ship's passengers went to a reception centre near Perth before placement in work. We found no Western Australian death for him under Nowak or Novak to 1985, which suggests he moved on.

II What we found

1. Nowak, Josef, age 31, Polish, S.S. Southern Meridian, March 1949 CONFIRMED

The ship's passenger list for its March 1949 arrival at Fremantle lists "Nowak, Josef, 31, Polish" on page 17, row 12. The next row is "Nowak, Zofia, 29, Polish".



S.S. SOUTHERN MERIDIAN
PASSENGER LIST
ARRIVAL: FREMANTLE, WESTERN AUSTRALIA, MARCH 1949

Page 17 Trip 43.

	NAME	AGE	NATIONALITY
10	Berzins, Ilze	42	Latvian
11	Berzins, Peteris	11	Latvian
12	Nowak, Josef	31	Polish
13	Nowak, Zofia	29	Polish
14	Zielin, Wladyslaw	47	Polish

Passenger list, S.S. Southern Meridian, page 17, rows 10 to 14. Row 12 is Josef Nowak.

SOURCE Passenger list, S.S. Southern Meridian, arrival Fremantle, March 1949, page 17. Demo link, not a live record. https://untoldkin.com/sample#demo-1

Why it fits: Name, age and nationality match the family story.

2. "New arrivals land at Fremantle", The Harbour Gazette, 16 March 1949 CONTEXT

The paper reports the Southern Meridian berthing on 15 March 1949 and says the passengers would spend their first weeks at a reception centre near Perth before being placed in work. It does not print his name.



ESTABLISHED 1861.

The Harbour Gazette

PORT EDITION: WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16, 1949. (10 PAGES) PRICE: TWOPENCE

NEW ARRIVALS LAND AT FREMANTLE ABOARD S.S. SOUTHERN MERIDIAN

Families from Europe Begin New Life in the West

FREMANTLE, March 15. The transport Southern Meridian berthed this morning with several hundred passengers from Europe, many of them families who had waited years in camps for a passage. Officials met the ship at the quay and checked papers on board. The passengers will spend their first weeks at a reception centre near Perth before being placed in work across the State.

(Continued on Page 2)

On landing, each person was given a meal, a medical check and a card with an identity number. Interpreters helped families fill in their forms. An immigration officer said most of the newcomers would go to farms, timber camps and railway work. Several had already been promised places with relatives who came out before the war.

Engraving: the Southern Meridian at the quay, this morning.

The Harbour Gazette, 16 March 1949, front page.

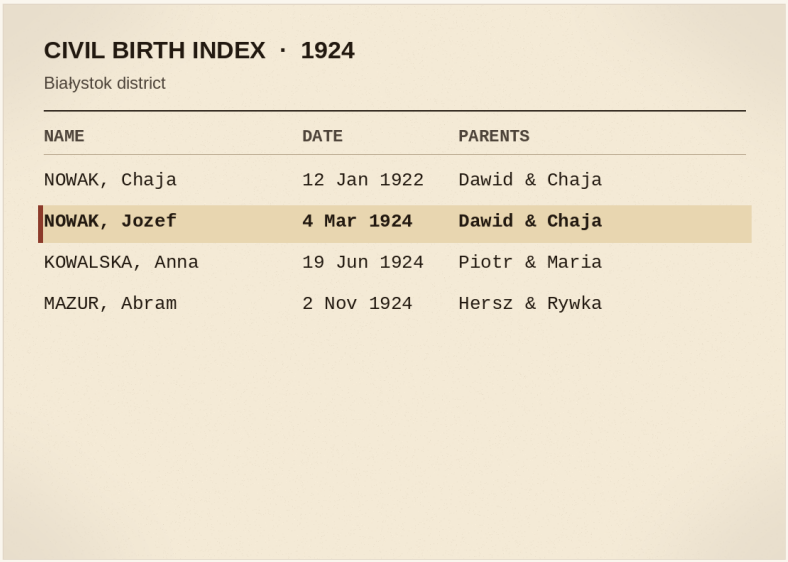
SOURCE The Harbour Gazette, 16 March 1949, page 1. Demo link, not a live record.
https://untoldkin.com/sample#demo-2

Why it fits: Explains where he went first after landing. *Why it is not proof:* It describes the whole ship, not him.

3. NOWAK, Jozef, civil birth index, Białystok district

POSSIBLE LEAD, NOT CONFIRMED

A civil birth index lists "NOWAK, Jozef", parents Dawid and Chaja. Treat this as a lead only.



CIVIL BIRTH INDEX · 1924

Białystok district

NAME	DATE	PARENTS
NOWAK, Chaja	12 Jan 1922	Dawid & Chaja
NOWAK, Jozef	**4 Mar 1924**	**Dawid & Chaja**
KOWALSKA, Anna	19 Jun 1924	Piotr & Maria
MAZUR, Abram	2 Nov 1924	Hersz & Rywka

Civil birth index, Białystok district. Highlighted row: NOWAK, Jozef.

SOURCE Civil birth index, Białystok district. Demo link, not a live record.
https://untoldkin.com/sample#demo-3

Why it fits: Same name and region. *Why it is not proof:* The index year does not match an age of 31 in 1949, and Nowak is a common name.

III What we already checked

- **Western Australian historical death index, 1949 to 1985.** Searched Nowak, Novak and Nowack with Joseph, Josef and Jozef. No clear match.
- **Digitised newspapers, Western Australia, 1949 to 1960.** Searched both spellings. Only the arrival report above.
- **Online electoral roll indexes, 1950s.** No Joseph Novak or Josef Nowak in Western Australia.

What we could not check online

- His migrant selection file is held by the national archives but is not digitised, so we could not read it.

IV Things you can do next

1 **Request his migrant selection file.**

Why: It usually records where he was sent to work and any later address.

Where: The national archives' immigration records request service. We include a drafted request with your brief.

Cost: Fees are paid by you directly to the provider; check current fee on their site.

2 **Ask relatives about Zofia.**

Why: If she is his wife or sister, her later records may show where the family settled.

Where: Family letters, photos or anyone who knew them.

Cost: Fees are paid by you directly to the provider; check current fee on their site.

Your case

- Your case stays open for **30 days** after delivery.
- Send us something new on this question (a document you ordered, a relative's information, a DNA match) and we will send **up to two follow-up updates**.
- Within 60 days, a new question is a new brief at **A$149**.
- Reply to hello@untoldkin.com with anything new or a new question.

Illustrated example. The people, records and links in this sample are made up to show the format of a real brief. Prepared by Untold Kin, untoldkin.com.