



Bric-a-BRAC May 2016

E-newsletter - Bendigo Regional Archives Centre

Welcome to the second issue for 2016 of our quarterly e-Newsletter Bric-a-BRAC.

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Ships to Cemeteries and Places in between: Did your ancestors leave their mark?

To celebrate the National Trust Heritage Festival 2016, BRAC and Bendigo Library are presenting a week of talks, tours, workshops and help sessions culminating in a Heritage Discovery Day on Saturday 14 May. Find the Program and booking details online at:

www.brac.vic.gov.au/Whats_On/Heritage_Week_Events_May_2016

BRAC will be hosting events in the BRAC Reading Room. There are some great activities on offer, so book your place and don't miss out!

- **Tuesday 10 May 2-3pm**, "Records in the Archives Discovery Tour"
- **Wednesday 11 May 11-12pm**, "Records in the Archives Discovery Tour"
- **Wednesday 11 May 2-3pm**, "Writing to the Council 19th Century Style" - presentation
- **Thursday 12 May 2-3pm**, "BRAC Petitions Online" - workshop
- **Thursday 12 May 5.30-6.30pm**, "Vahland Rediscovered" - presentation

Other events you might be interested in include:

- Friday 13 May 10.30am-12pm, "Friday the Thirteenth Cemetery Stories" presentation from the Bendigo Family History Group.
- Saturday 14 May 1.30-2.30pm, Scott Whitaker will be talking about his new book *Railway Hotels of Australia, Vol 1 Victoria*.

BRAC Special Opening, Saturday 14 May 10-2pm "Heritage Discovery Day".

Ships, cemeteries, hospitals, schools, hotels and court records, rate books and house histories, parish plans and directories all provide evidence of occupation. The experts and resources of the Goldfields Research Centre, Bendigo Regional Archives Centre, Bendigo Family History Group, Bendigo Regional Genealogy Society and City of Greater Bendigo's Heritage Unit are here to help with any research query.

All events are free but some require bookings. Book through the Goldfields Library website www.ncgrl.vic.gov.au/events, by email brac@ncgrl.vic.gov.au or phone (03) 5449 2703.

Simply tell us the events you wish to attend, and the number of people you are booking. We hope you have a chance to visit us, and find out more about the BRAC Collection.

W.C. Vahland Exhibit May-July 2016

BRAC are curating an exhibit highlighting William Charles Vahland's extensive career, as seen through his correspondence to the former Sandhurst/Bendigo Council, other records held at BRAC, and artefacts on loan from the Bendigo Art Gallery and Bendigo Library.

Learn more about this remarkable man, whose contributions to Bendigo were described in the following words: "the city's buildings in their ornate architecture bear silent but eloquent testimony to a brain fertile and resourceful."

When: May-July 2016

Where: BRAC display cases on the 1st floor Bendigo Library

Uses of Our Records

What questions are BRAC researchers trying to find answers to? Here is a sample of the reasons driving them in the months January-April 2016, giving readers some insight into the varied questions BRAC records can answer.

January 2016

- A Cemeteries Trust volunteer used Bendigo Minutes, Bendigo Committee Minutes, Bendigo Letter Books and Bendigo Staff Salary volumes. These were used to corroborate articles in the Bendigo Advertiser about "improper" activities by the Sexton at Bendigo Cemetery in the 1860s and 1870s.
- A Northern Territory researcher travelled to BRAC because he found the 1872 sausage/baked potato vending Petition via a web search. He used Bendigo Rate Books to trace his ancestor's land ownership. (He is a descendant of John Mall, a partner in the 1872 sausage vending business.)

February 2016

- A Melbourne researcher used 28 volumes of Shire of Strathfieldsaye Rate Books and 16 volumes of Shire of Mclvor Rate Books to trace her ancestors' 19th Century land ownership.
- A local researcher used 11 volumes of Bendigo Rate Books, to trace the exact locations of the synagogues that existed in the city in the 19th Century.
- A BRAC staffer used Bendigo Council Minutes and an extensive 1887 petition against proposed Sunday Horse racing from the Sandhurst/Bendigo Inwards Correspondence, to prepare a talk for "Mining Faith", a La Trobe University Seminar, held in Bendigo on 18 February.

March 2016

- A Melbourne Architect researched the history of a Hotel using Shire of Marong Rate Books and Bendigo Licensing Court volumes.
- A Distance Education Charles Sturt University student used a file of Bendigo Council's 20th Century Correspondence, Bendigo Council Minutes and Bendigo Committee Minutes to trace the history of the former South Garden Gully Hall and tennis courts.

April 2016

- The Curator for the Post Office Gallery (POG) used numerous records to prepare for her next exhibition about "Animals" (both wild and domestic). Numerous boxes of Sandhurst/Bendigo Inwards Correspondence and Bendigo Council Staff Salary volumes were used, as well as Bendigo Committee Minutes, a Shire of Huntly Dog Register and Shire of Huntly Pound volumes.

'Petitions of the People' Project Continues

The next stage of the 'Petitions of the People' Project is complete and is now available on the BRAC website. A total of 3,263 people signed the latest eleven petitions available online, making a total of 284 petitions with 14,240 names and addresses (and sometimes occupations) to search. See all 14,240 listings at http://www.brac.vic.gov.au/Digital_Records/Petitions_1870-1899. More names will be added during 2016, as digitising progresses.

Back in Time

In this issue, I would like to focus on the history of our local beloved **White Hills Botanical Gardens**. Already set aside on an 1858 Parish plan of Sandhurst, the early work to establish these gardens included the planting of 266 trees, 180 being blue gum, in the winter of 1869. (See VPRS 16936 Sandhurst/Bendigo inwards Correspondence, 25/11/1858; 03/07/1869, Box 1)

We know that there were already 1,587 trees, shrubs and plants in the gardens by May 1870. A further 1,117 additions were proposed at that time. (17/05/1870, Box 2)

The main planning of the gardens was undertaken by Samuel Gadd, the Council's Parks and Gardens' Curator from c.1872 to 1890s. Gadd's regular reports to the Council tell us much about his wonderful achievements in establishing our local Botanical Gardens. Gadd reported that 520 trees had been transplanted and 110 trees were newly planted, all within the year 1873. (17/11/1873, Box 12)

Just in the month of January 1874, Gadd reported a total of 6,634 visitors to the gardens. In March, the figure was reported as 5,695 visitors. (00/02/1874; 03/04/1874, Box 13) In 1895, Gadd proudly wrote of these gardens: "the public have shown their appreciation [of staff work] by patronising them more than for many years past." (10/08-16/08/1895, Box 42)

By 1879, much of Gadd's work must have been in place because only £598.14.11 was spent on the gardens that year, compared to £3,170 at the newly-created Lake Weeroona. In April 1880, Gadd wrote of shifting the birds from their aviary, in Rosalind Park, out to the Botanical Gardens. (09/01/1880; 09/04/1880, Box 15) By 1888, he referred to both birds and monkeys being housed at the gardens. (07/11/1888, Box 27)

Gadd had a major salt water problem in the gardens in 1888. His recommendation to Council was to allow the ground to rest for one or two seasons. (07/11/1888, Box 27) In his report for the 1891-92 financial year, Gadd wrote that the salt water was decreasing, and staff had put 250 loads of manure on the beds; they intended to do the same in the upcoming Spring. (16/08-19/08/1892, Box 35)

Johnson's Nurserymen in Preston sent up two cases of plants for the gardens in the winter of 1873. (25/06/1873, Box 11) Bucknall & Co from Prahran offered to supply "large and small walking stick Palms...Waratah Tree ferns...or any Gippsland Tree ferns." (17/08/1891, Box 34) Even Carter & Co, from London supplied seeds to Gadd. (12/01/1894, Box 39)

Local institutions including Epsom school No. 2367, the Eaglehawk branch of the Salvation Army, and the Eaglehawk Baptist Sunday School, asked the Council for permission to hold picnics at the gardens. (05/11/1892; 27/12/1892, Box 35; 12/10/1893, Box 38)

Not all have been respectful of the gardens' importance. In 1871, a White Hills resident, E. Manning, asked the Council to re-consider his application to mine in the gardens' reserve!! (01/09/1871, Box 5) In 1886, a local legal manager asked to lease the western section of the

gardens, presumably for mining purposes. (06/08/1886, Box 24) In 1892 locals “noticed with regret and alarm” that the tramways syndicate proposed not to construct the line to the Botanical Gardens. (15/06/1892, Box 35) And in 1891, two petitions and a public meeting of residents were required to prevent the Acclimatisation reserve, next to the gardens, being used as the Council’s night soil depot- “most undesirable” was the understatement in the August petition’s prayer!! (08/04/1891, Box 33; 28/08/1891, Box 34)

Even Baron Ferdinand von Müller, the legendary founding Curator of the Melbourne Botanical Gardens, took a benevolent interest in our local horticultural site. He wrote a letter of introduction to the Council for a Mr. Homeyer, and recommended him for the position of Curator of our gardens! (07/05/1872, Box 7.)

Until Next Time

Thank you for subscribing to our enewsletter. The next issue of Bric-a-BRAC will be out in August 2016. We will share new updates, events and happenings as well as more snapshots of our wonderful records. Until then, happy researching!

BRAC Staff

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Opening Hours: Wednesday and Thursday 10am-4.30pm (except public holidays)