



Bric-a-BRAC February 2016

E-newsletter - Bendigo Regional Archives Centre

Welcome to the first 2016 issue of our quarterly e-newsletter Bric-a-BRAC.

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'Ships to Cemeteries and Places in Between' Events at BRAC 2016

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.

A full program of events will be available in March in print and online.

BRAC will be hosting a number of events in the BRAC Reading Room. Some activities will have a limit on numbers attending, so book early.

- 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 question.

All events are free but some require bookings. Book through the Goldfields Library website www.ncgrl.vic.gov.au/evetns, 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.

Vacancies on the BRAC Advisory Committee

The Bendigo Regional Archives Centre (BRAC) Committee of Management is advised by a committee called the BRAC Advisory Committee.

There are currently a number of vacancies on the Committee and we are seeking expressions of interest from people with experience in Family History and Genealogy or the Goldfields Business Community. These appointments are on an honorary, unpaid basis for a three year term, with two meetings per year.

We would love to hear from you if you are interested. Contact Vivien Newton on (03) 54492700 or email vivienn@ncqrl.vic.gov.au for more information. Applications close Mon 29 February 2016.

Uses of BRAC Records

What questions are BRAC researchers trying to find answers to? Here is a sample of the reasons driving them in the months October-December 2015, giving readers some insight into the varied questions BRAC records can answer.

October 2015

- A La Trobe University student used 'Marong Rate Books' (VPRS 16266), 'Agreements between Bendigo Council and the Housing Commission of Victoria' (no VPRS), and 'Bendigo Council Maps and Plans' (no VPRS), to research the history of small homes and allotments in Bendigo and districts.
- The City of Greater Bendigo (CoGB) Heritage Adviser, working on the White Hills/North Bendigo Heritage Study, returned to BRAC to use the 'Bendigo Council's Building Registers' (no VPRS), and Bundle 12 of the 'Bendigo Maps and Plans' (no VPRS), to find details about houses constructed from the 1920s, within the Heritage study areas.
- A New Zealand researcher used 'Heathcote Rate Books' (VPRS 16334) and 'McIvor Rate Books' (VPRS 7006/P2), to trace her family's land ownership back to the 1860s.

November 2015

- A consultant for the CoGB used 'Bendigo Minutes' (VPRS 16269) and 'Sandhurst/Bendigo Inwards Correspondence' (VPRS 16936), to confirm the existence of a tip along the Back Creek, off Mundy Street.
- A local researcher used 'Shire of Strathfieldsaye Rate Books' (VPRS 16136) to trace the land ownership of Herbert Keck, a prominent nurseryman and Councillor for that shire.

December 2015

- A CoGB staff member used 20 volumes of 'Bendigo Rates Computer Print Outs' (VPRS 16268), to research a property's ownership from 1971-1992.
- A local researcher, preparing a report for the CoGB, used 55 volumes of 'Bendigo Rate Books' (VPRS 16267) to research two properties in Eaglehawk Road.

Next Petitions are Online

The next stage of the BRAC 'Digitised Petitions' Project' is now available on the BRAC website. A total of 3,263 people signed the latest eleven petitions added online, making a total of 14,260 Names, addresses (and sometimes occupations) to search. See these new entries at http://www.brac.vic.gov.au/Digital_Records/Petitions_1870-1899

More entries will be added during 2016, as they are completed.

Back in Time

In this issue, I would like to highlight records held at BRAC, which tell the story behind Bendigo's extensive contributions to the push for the colonies to federate thus forming the Commonwealth of Australia; this historic event occurred on 1 January 1901.

Details about events staged in our city in the lead up to the Federation Referenda in 1898 and 1899 are captured in (VPRS 16936) Sandhurst/Bendigo Inwards Correspondence. The candidates to represent Victoria at the Federal Convention's sittings (held in Adelaide, Sydney and Melbourne respectively) nearly all spoke at Bendigo's Town Hall in February 1897. They, or their agents, applied to the Bendigo Council for permission to do so. Henry B. Higgins and Isaac Isaacs were two such examples. (11/02/1897; 12/02/1897; Box 45)

In relation to the candidates' use of the Town Hall, the Councillors decided that this be "free of charge it being in connection with the national question of Federation..." (VPRS 16269, Bendigo Minutes, 29/01/1897, vol. 6, p. 717). After the successful second referendum in favour of Federation, the Minutes record: "That this Council place on record its approval of the magnificent vote [in Bendigo] recorded at the recent Election in favour of the Federation of the Australian Colonies." (Bendigo Minutes, 28/07/1899, vol. 7, p. 279)

Alfred Deakin penned a letter of apology for not being able to attend a 6 April 1898 meeting in Bendigo, to discuss the just completed draft Constitution. (30/03/1898, Box 47) This surviving correspondence came from future giants in Australian History.

The photo below, also in the BRAC Collection, tells the story behind the official Federation celebrations, held in Sydney from 1 January 1901. The gentlemen are all nine City of Bendigo Councillors (including Mayor McGowan (front, middle), Town Clerk Honeybone (back, far right) and Sir John Quick (back, second from the left). The ladies are their wives, including Lady Quick (third from the right). On the front of the photo it says "Falk Studios"; the back gives their studio's location as 496 George St. Sydney. I can think of no other reason for this particular group of locals to all be in Sydney at the same time.



+For further reading about Bendigo's role in Federation, see Maslunka (now Matthews), M.S., 'Bendigo: one Community's response to Federation', Honours thesis, University of Melbourne, 1983. (A copy is available at Bendigo Library LH 994.032 MAS), or for a biographical article about Sir John Quick go to <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/quick-sir-john-8140/text14223>

Dr. Michele Matthews

Until Next Time

Thank you for subscribing to our e-newsletter. Our next issue of Bric-a-BRAC will be available in May 2016. We will share new updates, details of events and happenings, and more snapshots of our wonderful records. Until then, happy researching!

BRAC Staff

Dr. Michele Matthews, Archives Officer (Tues, Wed, Thurs)

Claire McLeod, Archives Officer (Wed, Thurs)

BRAC Contact

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