

## E-Newsletter from the Bendigo Regional Archives Centre

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We are very excited to bring you our first issue of Bric-a-BRAC, the Bendigo Regional Archive Centre (BRAC) e-newsletter.

In this issue we are highlighting our upcoming events including our 5<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations and activities on June 23, 25 and 26. BRAC will also be running some activities for History Month in August.

Every Quarter we are planning to include a snapshot of some of our unique historical records penned by our in-house 'Historical Oracle', Dr. Michele Matthews. This quarter's column features our fascinating court records.

### BRAC Events & Activities - Winter 2014

#### **The Bendigo Regional Archives Centre 5th Birthday!**

We have been open to the public for 5 years! To celebrate you are invited to attend our Birthday Activities June 23-26, 2014.

##### Open Days

The Bendigo Regional Archives Centre (BRAC) Reading Room will have open days on June 23, 25 and 26. Visit the BRAC Reading Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Bendigo Library from 10am – 4.30pm. Talk with staff, ask questions and receive a BRAC Birthday pack.

***Please book for the activities on June 23, 25 and 26.*** Book by email [brac@ncgrl.vic.gov.au](mailto:brac@ncgrl.vic.gov.au) or telephone (leave message) (03) 5449 2703. Thank you!

##### Monday 23 June – Tours (Please Book)

Tours of BRAC Reading Room and “behind the scenes” in the Archives **11am 1pm 3pm**

##### Wednesday 25 June (Please Book)

##### Workshop

**“Find out more about your Ancestors’ daily lives.”** Look at unique Councils’ and Courts’ records from the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Learn how to find out about your Ancestors using our Archival collection. **11am - 1pm Activity Room 1** maximum of 20 people

##### Presentation

**“Historical Gems Held at the Bendigo Regional Archives Centre (BRAC)”** Speaker: Dr. Michele Matthews. Find out about the history of BRAC and the unique and wonderful stories hidden within the BRAC records. **2pm - 3pm Activity Room 1**

##### Thursday 26 June (Please Book)

##### Workshop

**“Find out more about your Ancestors’ daily lives.”** **11am - 1pm Activity Room 1** maximum of 20 people

##### BRAC Afternoon Tea and Website Launch

Find out about BRAC’s brand new website and how you can use it for your research. Enjoy a scrumptious afternoon tea with Birthday cake-cutting ceremony to celebrate BRAC’s 5<sup>th</sup> Birthday. **2.30pm - 3.30pm Activity Room 1**

## Snapshot from the Archives – Court Records

This quarter I want to focus on the wide range of Court records held at BRAC. Currently, there are 23 series available for ordering through the same online system used to order Council records, that is via the catalogue at [www.prov.vic.gov.au](http://www.prov.vic.gov.au)

There are a further 70 series of Court records which should be available to order this way later this year. In the meantime just speak to Claire or myself, and we will do what we call a manual order for any of these other volumes you may wish to use.

**What types of Court records do we have and from which Courts?** BRAC holds records from the various branches of Courts that existed in Victoria from the nineteenth century- Petty Sessions (which became the Magistrates' Court), Supreme Court, County Court, Insolvency, Mining and Licensing Courts, and branches of Commonwealth Courts. We have records created from cases heard in 10 local and district Court venues- Bendigo, Eaglehawk, Elmore, Heathcote, Huntly, Echuca. Kyabram, Rochester, St. Arnaud, and Tongala.

By far the largest number of surviving series were those created by the Sandhurst/Bendigo Courts. Of particular interest to genealogists will be what we call the Cause Lists' series. **VPRS 16734** combines both civil and criminal cases from 1860-1868. After that year, two series were created- **VPRS 16735** records only **civil cases (1869-1889)**, while **VPRS 16736** records only **criminal cases (1868-1890)**.

These last volumes are the ones which record the many unfortunate cases of local "deserted" or "abandoned" children. The full name and age of each child is given, as well as the Magistrate's ruling, which usually stated which Industrial school these children were to be sent to, and for how many years they had to live there. Researchers who have already accessed these volumes have found their missing ancestors, classified as abandoned/deserted, after they could not find them elsewhere in public records.

More about these absorbing Court series next time!

**Dr. Michele Matthews**

## Until Next Time

Thank you for subscribing to our newsletter. Our next issue of Bric-a-BRAC will be out in August 2014. We will share any new updates, details of events and activities and more about our Court Records. Until then, happy researching!

### **BRAC Staff**

Dr. Michele Matthews, Archives Officer (Mon, Wed, Thurs)  
Claire McLeod, Archives Officer (Wed, Thurs)

**BRAC Contact - email:** [brac@ncgrl.vic.gov.au](mailto:brac@ncgrl.vic.gov.au) **phone:** 5449 2703 **web:** [www.brac.vic.gov.au](http://www.brac.vic.gov.au)

### **Address**

You can find us on the 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Bendigo Library  
251-259 Hargreaves Street, Bendigo

### **Open Hours**

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