



Bendigo Regional Archives Centre

Annual Service Report

July 2014 – June 2015



Example letterhead from Bendigo Regional Archives Centre WWI Kit

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Front Cover Reference



RSA Letterhead

Source: Returned Soldiers' & Sailors' Imperial League of Australia to Bendigo Council, Bendigo Council's 20th Century Inwards Correspondence, File RSA, 5 April 1922, BRAC.

Bendigo Regional Archives Centre (BRAC)

Preserving our community's history

Who we are

Bendigo Regional Archives Centre (BRAC) was established on 24 October 2007 under the *Associations Incorporations Act 1981* (Vic) through a partnership between Public Record Office Victoria (PROV), City of Greater Bendigo (CoGB) and the Goldfields Library Corporation (GLC) to provide a combined regional archives service for the Goldfields Region.

Our facility was approved under Section 14(1) of the *Public Records Act 1973* as a Place of Deposit (POD) for the better preservation, management and utilisation of public records as specified by the Keeper of Public Records.

BRAC was made possible through a \$1.3 million grant from the State Government Regional Infrastructure Development Fund. This has enabled the building of an onsite repository and public access point within the Bendigo Library, Hargreaves Street, and an off-site archival storage facility at Nolan Street in North Bendigo.

What we do

We aim to collect, preserve and make available regional records of community and local interest, including records of the state and local government, private industry, community groups and individuals in their place of origin, and make them accessible to all researchers.

Our Mission

Our Mission is to:

- preserve our community's records in their place of origin.
- provide access to our community's records and encourage their use.
- build partnerships between government and the community.
- develop relationships that enable the sharing of community knowledge.

Message from the Chair



This year saw a number of achievements for BRAC. We were successful in gaining a grant of \$5,500 from the Frances and Harold Abbott Foundation for conservation of one of our most popular records series, Bendigo Rates dating from 1856. At almost 160 years of age, these very early volumes document the many residents of the Bendigo area throughout its foundation years. They are a valuable source of information for people tracing their families as well as those researching property, or finding out their own 'who's been sleeping in your house' story.

Since the launch of our new website our online engagement has continued to significantly grow over the past 12 months with around 65% of our online visitors being first time users. By far the most heavily accessed records are the online Petitions which have been digitised and transcribed by our volunteers. Throughout 2015 an additional 2,018 names have been indexed bringing the total number of transcribed names to almost 13,000. As we look forward to 2015-16 we will look to enhance our online presence to better engage with our researchers and grow our services. Projects such as these would not be possible without the support of our volunteers who give so freely of their time to support our projects and help make our collection more accessible.

This year we also saw the first significant transfers of records from government agencies into our collection. These included records from Swan Hill, Rochester and Campaspe. Records of Mclvor Shire were also relocated from the Ballarat Archives Centre and are now accessible from our Reading Room.

There have been some changes to our management and advisory committees throughout the year as we said farewell to Committee of Management member Graeme Hairsine who was replaced by Alison McNulty.

The Advisory Committee welcomed new member Nicole Pretty, Manager Bendigo Visitor Information Centre and also welcomed back Clare Needham, temporarily represented by Tansy Curtin. I would like to thank all the Advisory Committee members for their collective support and willing sharing of knowledge to improve our services as well as contributing to some of our key policies and strategies.

Finally, on behalf of the Committee of Management our thanks go to the Operations Committee for continuing to provide a supporting role to our strategic goals, and also our staff who deliver an excellent service to our clients and stakeholders.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Heazlewood', written in a cursive style.

Justine Heazlewood
Chair

Management and Staff

Committee of Management

The Committee of Management, established under Schedule 5 of the *Associations Incorporation Act 1981 (Vic)*, is responsible for overseeing the budget and implementing the Corporate Plan.

The Committee of Management is represented by members of the three establishing bodies.

Committee of Management Members 2014 – 2015

Justine Heazlewood, Director and Keeper of Public Records, PROV (Chair)
Graeme Hairsine, Assistant Director, Access Services, PROV (to Dec 2014)
Alison McNulty, Acting Assistant Director, Access Services, PROV (from Dec 2014)
Marg Allan, Director, Organisational Support, City of Greater Bendigo (Treasurer)
Cr Rod Fyffe, Councillor, CoGB
Chris Kelly, Chief Executive Officer, Goldfields Library Corporation
Vivien Newton, Senior Librarian, GLC (Secretary and Public Officer)

BRAC Advisory Committee

Dr. Charles Fahey, La Trobe University, Bendigo (Chair)
Ms. Tansy Curtin, Senior Curator, Bendigo Art Gallery (April 2014 - May 2015)
Mr. Kevin de Vries, Bendigo Business representative
Mrs. Alleyne Hockley, Castlemaine Historical Society Inc.
Ms. Rita Hull, Bendigo Australian Institute of Genealogical Studies Inc.
Ms. Kathryn Mackenzie, Executive Manager, Tourism, City of Greater Bendigo (to Nov 2014)
Ms. Clare Needham, Curator, City History and Collections, Bendigo Art Gallery (from May 2015)
Ms. Nicole Pretty, Manager Bendigo Visitor Information Centre (from Nov 2014)
Mr. Bruce Smith, Archives Research Consultancy
Mr. David Wright, Local Government Record Keeping, Public Administration

Operations Committee

Tracey Manallack, Manager, Community Archives, PROV
Lauren Bourke, Coordinator, Community Archives, PROV
Dr Dannielle Orr, Heritage Planner, CoGB
Michael Smyth, Manager, Information Management, CoGB
Vivien Newton, Senior Librarian, GLC
Jordana Lory, Manager, Information Services, GLC (to Feb 2015)

BRAC Archives Officers

Dr. Michele Matthews
Claire McLeod

Highlights

Undertaking the Conservation of BRAC records

In June 2014, BRAC was awarded a grant of \$5,500 from the Frances and Harold Abbott Foundation, administered by Sandhurst Trustees Ltd, to repair and preserve historic original Rate Books.

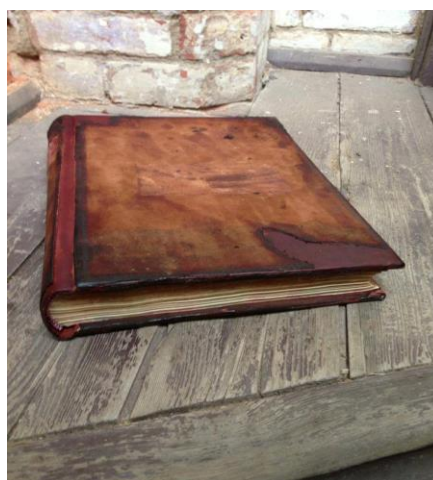
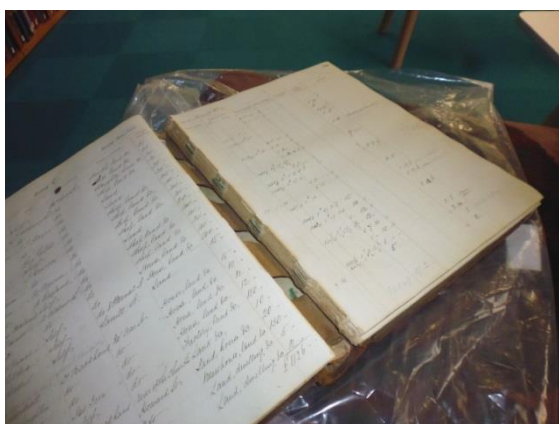
From July 2014 to June 2015 Bendigo Bookbinder and Conservator Simon Dart of SB Libris superbly repaired City of Bendigo rate books from 1856, 1857, 1860, 1861, 1871 and 1895 retaining as much of the original material as possible and including new hand-marbled end papers, stitching and cover boards.

With the generosity of the Frances and Harold Abbott Foundation these irreplaceable hand-written books will be safe to be handled for many generations to come.

The 1860 Bendigo Rate Book before and after the conservation work, 3 November 2014.
(Photography by M. Matthews)



The 1861 Bendigo Rate Book before and after the conservation work, 5 May 2015.
(Photography by M. Matthews)



Strategic Initiatives 2014-2015

Ensure that the BRAC archival collection is developed, preserved and made available to the community.

Petitions Online

Our Petitions' Project continued to grow throughout this year. 22 new petitions containing 2018 names are ready to be uploaded. Transcription of all petitions has been completed. At the completion of the project more than 600 petitions with over 30,000 names will have been transcribed and digitised.

Our volunteers Sandie, Norma, Eileen, Jo, Bev and Helen have continued to work on this project with great enthusiasm. We are indebted to them for their assistance, dedication and expert local knowledge used to identify signatories.

In connection with the Petitions' project, the Sandhurst/Bendigo Council Inwards Correspondence boxes 1856-1899 are being indexed by our volunteer, Dr. Helen Lunt. She is working her way through the 52 boxes in this series.

World War I (1914-1918) at BRAC

With the strong interest generated by the beginnings of the centenary of Australia's involvement in World War I, BRAC staff researched Council Minutes from the former Bendigo, Eaglehawk, Huntly, Marong, Strathfieldsaye, Mclvor and Raywood Councils, to gauge local civic responses to the events affecting the world, particularly the declaration of the war in August 1914, the Gallipoli landing in April 1915, and the end of World War I in November 1918.

An Education kit designed for use by Secondary students in Years 9 - 12 was developed. It comprised digitised versions of motions and correspondence, a transcript of all handwritten documents, together with some suggested questions for eighteen letters and reports. This kit was launched at a workshop for teachers, held at the BRAC Reading Room in March 2015.

Topics unearthed in correspondence to Bendigo Council included the formation and activities of local voluntary organisations, the contributions of local school children to the war effort, and the plans to construct a War Memorial in Pall Mall.

All the digitised images from Minute Book entries and correspondence were added to the BRAC website at http://www.brac.vic.gov.au/Digital_Records/WWI_Resource_Kit

Develop BRAC's capacity and capability to deliver and improve services, and encourage ongoing staff development and learning.

Presentations

Dr Michele Matthews' talks were popular throughout the year. Talks aimed at particular groups' interests allowed presentations to be either a broad overview of the BRAC collection, or a focus on specific BRAC records.

In July 2014, Michele presented a talk "Miners' Phthisis: the untold reality", which focussed on the enormous local death toll from Miners' Phthisis, and the impacts on miners' families and the community.

On 27 August 2014, Archivists from the Catholic Dioceses of Australia visited the BRAC Reading Room, for a talk about the BRAC collection and a tour of the repository.

In September 2014, the City of Greater Bendigo's Heritage Advisory Committee toured both the Nolan and Hargreaves Streets repositories, to gain an understanding of the records housed at BRAC, and the work undertaken by staff in the Reading Room.

The talk that generated the most interest this year, entitled "W.C. Vahland in the Archives", was presented twice in May 2015, as part of the City of Greater Bendigo's "Celebrate Vahland" events, which marked the centenary of the city's most famous local architect's death. Michele trawled the correspondence collection, to focus on William's often rocky relationship with the then City of Sandhurst Council. She argued that his roles as architect, councillor and citizen often became blurred, but this did not undermine the enormous contributions he made to the beautification of Bendigo and district.



Above: William Charles Vahland, c. 1870s, Bendigo Library Photographic Collection.

Staff Professional Development

BRAC staff developed their research and presentation skills by providing talks and workshops throughout the year to a variety of audiences. These included a workshop on finding ancestors in the BRAC Collection, tours of the Archives and presentations about the historical gems in the BRAC Archives.

A range of staff professional development was undertaken, including training by PROV as well as sessions and workshops presented by the Goldfields Research Centre (GRC). These included 'How to use Historical Directories', 'The Library Stack Collection' and 'Using TROVE'. Claire McLeod joined Library staff in an introduction to the Archival Management System offered by Civica, the provider of the Library Management System.

In August 2014, the State Library of Victoria's annual Family Feast Day was attended by both BRAC staff. Keeping to the theme of August as Family History Month, guest speakers included a senior staffer from the Immigration Museum, who explained what records and artefacts they held which could be of relevance to Family Historians.

Michele Matthews attended a workshop presented by Dr. Dannielle Orr, CoGB, in October 2014 entitled "Tracing the History of your House". This training included identifying the property, tracing property ownership and address changes, the details given on Parish Plans, and how to step through a Land Data search for the history of a house. This training is highly relevant to the many researchers who visit BRAC to undertake house research.

Our Records on Show

BRAC again contributed to the varied exhibitions staged at the Post Office Gallery. For "Crime and Punishment", a volume of Sandhurst Cause Lists (Criminal) was displayed, highlighting examples of local abandoned children in the 1870s. An historic 1892 letter to Bendigo Council, which showed the commencement of the professional partnership between Dr John Quick and Barkly Hyett, the Council's solicitor, was also displayed in this exhibition.

For the World War I exhibition staged from December 2014 - June 2015, BRAC loaned the historic letter sent to Bendigo Council, which shows the officer bearers of the Kennington branch of the Red Cross emblazoned in red ink at the top of the letter. (This local branch was the first to be established in Australia.)

BRAC is committed to supporting future historical exhibitions held in Bendigo's Post Office Gallery.

Publicising the Collection

In August 2014, National Family History Month was celebrated at BRAC with 'Behind the scenes' tours of the repository, a workshop which showcased which BRAC records were most relevant to family historians, and a talk entitled 'Historic Gems in the BRAC collection', which highlighted examples of more historically significant and unusual records held at BRAC.

In March 2015, BRAC participated in the final Bendigo AIGS Family History Expo, one of the largest annual regional Family History events in Victoria. Over 60 consultants and specialists were available on the day to help researchers. As part of the Expo, BRAC staff provided information and advice on BRAC collections and services. This event again resulted in increased researcher visits to the Reading Room and emailed research requests.

Dr Michele Matthews continued to highlight BRAC records, in her monthly column published in the Bendigo Historical Society's e-Newsletter. Series and topics included: Local Devotion to Queen Victoria, Nuisances, World War I, Plans and Maps series, Rates, the name Sandhurst, Street Trees, Women, Agreements and Contracts.

The collection has also enjoyed greater promotion through the BRAC website, with more than 300 web visitors per month. Networking with promotions staff at GLC and PROV has led to extra social media and website publicity for BRAC events.

E-newsletter

Bric-a-BRAC e-newsletter was published in August 2014, November 2014, February 2015 and May 2015. News about BRAC activities, events, updates of new series available, the Petitions' project and a "Back in Time" section which highlights one series each quarter, have all become standard features of Bric-a-BRAC. All issues can be found on the BRAC website.

Researching at BRAC

BRAC records continue to be used for wide-ranging research avenues.

Examples include:

- a researcher from England who used the Bendigo Court Insolvency Index and Insolvency Registers, and Bendigo Licensing Court records to trace the business activities of an ancestor living in Sandhurst in the 1880s.
- a Ballarat PhD History student exploring the working life of G.W. Knight, a Bendigo Council employee in the 1880s, used the Sandhurst/Bendigo Inwards Correspondence.
- City of Greater Bendigo staff who used the Shire of Strathfieldsaye Rate Books, Bendigo Rate Books and Borough of Eaglehawk Minutes to prepare their reports to Council.
- a La Trobe University Bendigo Botany student examining the Sandhurst/Bendigo Inwards Correspondence files to trace the work of John Roper, Bendigo's Street Tree Curator for nearly three decades.
- a Monash University Honours student who used the Bendigo Committee Minutes and the Bendigo Council's 20th Century Inwards Correspondence.
- a local researcher tracing the history of the home of the Catholic Bishop of Bendigo, in preparation for a VCAT hearing, used Shire of Marong Rate Books.

All BRAC researchers are welcomed and assisted with whatever facet of local History they are researching, but we occasionally have a special researcher visit to use BRAC records. We were honoured to welcome Dr Ross McMullin to the BRAC Reading Room in December 2014. This award-winning Historian examined Bendigo Council's World War I correspondence and Minutes, as part of his research on Major Murdoch Mackay, grandson and son of the influential owner/editors of the Bendigo Advertiser, who was tragically killed on the Western Front in 1916. This research will appear in Ross' forthcoming second volume about the talent Australia lost because of our high death toll in World War I.



Dr Ross McMullin in BRAC Reading Room, 10 December 2014.
(Photograph by M. Matthews)

Visiting BRAC

We were very excited to welcome Bendigo's Federal MP, Ms Lisa Chesters, to BRAC in April 2015. Lisa spent time talking with staff and volunteers, and viewing examples of records held at BRAC. Lisa is a keen lover of history, who enjoyed her first visit to us; she was impressed by the stories told by petitions and the age and excellent physical condition of the BRAC collection.



Ms. Lisa Chesters (middle), Federal MP for Bendigo, during her visit to BRAC, 23 April 2015, with GLC CEO Chris Kelly (left) and BRAC staffer, Dr Michele Matthews (right).
(Photograph by B. Robertson)

The BRAC Website – www.brac.vic.gov.au

The BRAC website was launched in February 2014, and has proved popular. Numbers of visitors have steadily increased to an average of 300 web visitors each month. Most sections of the website are being accessed frequently and people are finding and downloading what they need. Visitors view an average of five pages per session across different areas of the website.

A snapshot of a 6 month period (October 2014 to March 2015) shows the number of page views there have been in more popular sections.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------|
| • Digital Records / Petitions | 1699 |
| • Local & Family History | 1544 |
| • BRAC Guides / Order Records | 1191 |
| • Collections | 606 |
| • Local Networks | 353 |

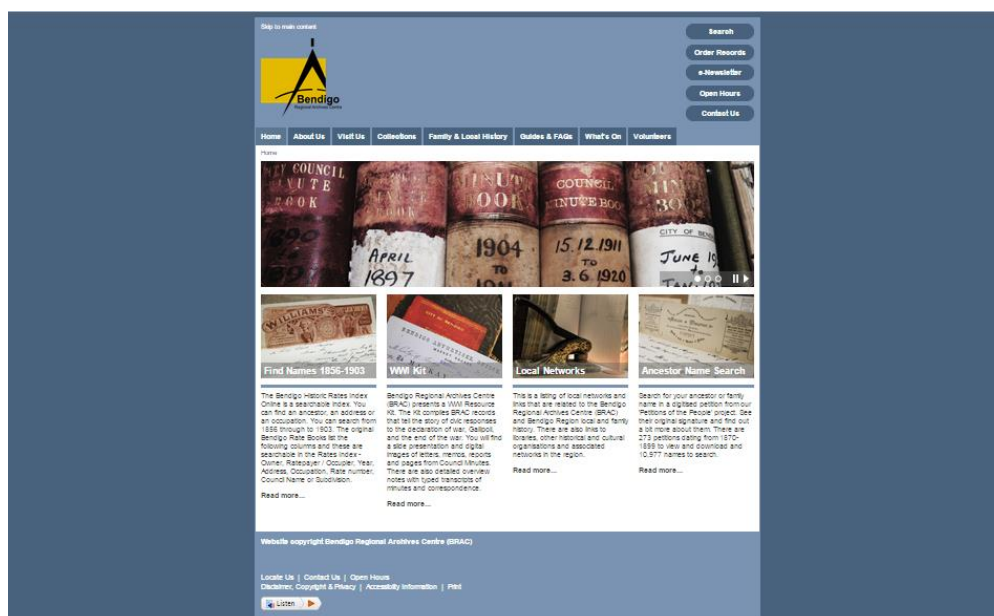
The website has been an excellent tool for greater promotion of, and access to BRAC resources and information. Digitised Petitions dating (1870 to 1899), BRAC information guides, the BRAC e-Newsletter 'Bric-a-BRAC', as well as digitised photographs of the BRAC Collection (such as those found in the BRAC WWI Resource Kit) can now be accessed by web visitors.

The digital records sections are the most frequently accessed sections on the site. There have been nearly 4,000 page views for the year in the Digital Records / Petitions section alone. In addition, the BRAC WWI Kit, with 33 digitised documents, had 225 hits in its first two weeks online, in March 2015.

Petitions will continue to be added, and other digitisation projects will be available on the website as they are completed. A 'W.C. Vahland' digital project, including photographs of some of his correspondence to Bendigo City Council, is underway.

Our web statistics show that 65% of users each month are new users, with 35% return users. An average of 90 users per month are finding the BRAC website through search engines, 90 users are linking from the GLC website, and 80 users are linking from the PROV website.

- Total hits for the year July 2014 – June 2015 **4,460**
- July 2014 – December 2014 saw usage steady with an average of 250 - 300 user sessions per month
- January and February 2015 had an increase of usage at between 350 - 390 user sessions per month
- May 2015 had 459 and June 2015 had 434 user sessions for the month



(Screenshot of the BRAC website homepage, June 2015)

Bendigo Regional Archives Centre gratefully acknowledges the support of the Victorian Government, for making the BRAC website project possible through the Local History Grants Program.

BRAC Advisory Committee

Since 2010, BRAC has been fortunate to receive voluntary services from a group of highly experienced people, coming from a range of fields and with an interest in Archives. This Committee have shared their expertise with BRAC staff and management, and promoted BRAC's services through their own professional and business networks.

The BRAC Advisory Committee meets twice a year, in May and November. Discussions over the last 12 months ranged across the many facets of BRAC operations and statistical analysis of BRAC Researchers. Much work and discussion focussed on developing a promotion and marketing strategy for BRAC.

All Committee members are thanked sincerely for their constructive, insightful and enthusiastic contributions to the continuing development of BRAC. We farewell Tansy Curtin, who joined the committee while Clare Needham was on maternity leave. We welcome Nicole Pretty, Manager of the Bendigo Visitor Information Centre, who replaced Kathryn Mackenzie.

Records Transferred to BRAC

On 6 August 2014, volumes from three series created by the former Shire of Mclvor were transported to Bendigo from Ballarat, to be amalgamated with the Shire of Mclvor records already held at BRAC. These volumes are all housed at the Nolan Street repository. (See Appendix 1.)

On 11 December 2014, records created by the former City of Swan Hill and Shires of Rochester/Campaspe were transferred to the Nolan Street repository. (See Appendix 2.)

Priority Measures 2014 – 2015

Corporate Plan Initiative	2014/15 Deliverables	Performance Measure	Comments
1.1 Collection Management Program (community records)	Community records held at BRAC are serialised, accessioned and managed in BRAC's Archival Control system	Community Records are arranged, described and serialised in BRAC's archival control system	Interim system to be piloted in July 2015. This system will eventually be replaced by an archival control system.
		Community Records held at BRAC are available for ordering online	Delayed until 2015-2016
1.2 Compliance of BRAC Repositories against PROV Specifications	BRAC repositories comply with PROV standards for storage of permanent public records.	Issues related to assessment are addressed and documentation supplied	Nolan Street: Compliant. Hargreaves Street: Compliance will be achieved by end of Quarter 1 2015.
1.3 Community Collections Strategy	Community Collections Strategy and Action Plan are implemented	Strategy document is approved by BRAC Committee of Management	PROV staff are developing a framework for appraisal, transfer and accessioning of community records including tools, policies and procedures - commenced and to carry over into 2015-2016
		An action plan for priority areas for acquisitions and collection development is implemented	Quarter 1 2015-2016
2.1 Staff Learning And Development program	BRAC will develop and maintain programs to increase staff skills through ongoing participation in projects and formal and informal training	BRAC staff Learning and Development program reviewed and implemented	PROV annual training delivered to BRAC staff 15 July 2014 - records handling - disaster management - manual handling
2.2 Service delivery model and service agreements (reopening after refurbishment)	BRAC's service models and agreements developed to ensure the effective management of BRAC and ensure public access to the BRAC collection during the Bendigo refurbishment project	Service model including opening and records delivery times developed for reopening of the Library site	Complete
2.3 BRAC Archival Control System (community records)	A system to provide intellectual and physical control to manage the collection	Archival Control System for Community Records is tested	Carried over to 2015-2016. Possible systems assessed and investigated.

Corporate Plan Initiative	2014/15 Deliverables	Performance Measure	Comments
2.4 Policy and Tools development	Develop and maintain BRAC policies, procedures and processes for administration and management of the collection to provide more effective resources and tools for staff	Approved BRAC policies and procedures are maintained	Procedures related to compliance including collection management, repository management, reading room operations have been completed and approved.
		Policies and procedures to support 2013-2014 priority measures are developed and approved by BRAC Committee of Management	Collection & Acquisition Policy approved.
3.1 Marketing and Communications Plan	A marketing and communications plan will be developed to promote BRAC's profile within the community including services and service changes and to encourage transfers of community records into the collection	Yearly BRAC Marketing and Communications plan developed and implemented	Plan approved by Committee of Management June 2015.
3.2 Public Programs	Develop outreach and public programs through partnerships and networks that connect users to the BRAC collection	Seminar and Information sessions program is developed and delivered	List of talks and seminars will be published in BRAC Annual Services Report
		Explore funding opportunities to produce a BRAC exhibition	Largely dependent on outcomes of 3.1 marketing and Communications Plan.
3.3 Online Engagement	Develop online resources and spaces to provide enhanced access to BRAC's collection	Review BRAC's current online resources and make recommendations for enhancing BRAC's online resources and engagement with the public	Review completed. Report to be delivered. Quarter 1 2015.
3.4 Volunteer Projects	Review of the BRAC Volunteer Program	Review the current volunteer program and make recommendations for future volunteer projects	Current volunteer program continuing. Review of future programs scheduled for Quarter 1 2015-2016.
		Funding opportunities for volunteer projects are explored	Dependant on above.
3.5 BRAC Advisory Committee	BRAC Advisory Committee will meet twice annually to support BRAC Initiatives	Two meetings held per annum	Complete and ongoing
		Register of members established and maintained	Complete and ongoing

Measures and Outputs

BRAC Events and Activities 2014 – 2015

Date	Organisation and Activity	Attendance	Event Description
11/08/2014	Tour of BRAC	8	Family History Month event
14/08/2014	'Historical Gems in the BRAC Archives' talk	12	Family History Month event
21/08/2014	Workshop 'Ancestors in the Archives'	12	Family History Month event
27/08/2014	Australian Catholic Diocesan Archivists	20	Presentation "Historical Gems" and Tour
18/09/2014	CoGB Heritage Advisory Committee	6	Tour of both BRAC repositories
04/03/2015	BRIT Town Planning Course Workshop	18	BRIT TAFE Students
12/03/2015	WWI Resource Kit presentation to local secondary school teachers	6	Teachers from 5 Government and non-Government schools attended.
10/04/2015	Premier and Mayor tour of BRAC Reading Room and repository	9	Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews, State Members of Parliament, their staff, and City of Greater Bendigo Mayor attended
23/04/2015	Federal MP for Bendigo Lisa Chesters tour of BRAC Reading Room and repository	3	
11/05/2015	'W.C Vahland in the Archives' Presentation	39	In conjunction with the City of Greater Bendigo 'Celebrate Vahland' centenary year
14/05/2014	'W.C Vahland in the Archives' Presentation	24	
	Total	157	Attended events in BRAC
04/08/2014	Bendigo Heritage Representatives meeting	11	Outreach activity
25/08/2014	State Library of Victoria Family History Feast Day	210	BRAC Promotional material into SLV show bags, staff attended the day (Outreach)
02/02/2015	Bendigo Heritage Representatives meeting	17	Outreach activity
15/03/2015	Family History Expo	200	BRAC Promotional material into show bags. Staff operated a BRAC display all day (Outreach)
01/06/2015	Bendigo Heritage Representatives meeting	14	Outreach activity
	Total	452	Reached through outreach activities

Researcher Statistics July 2014 - June 2015

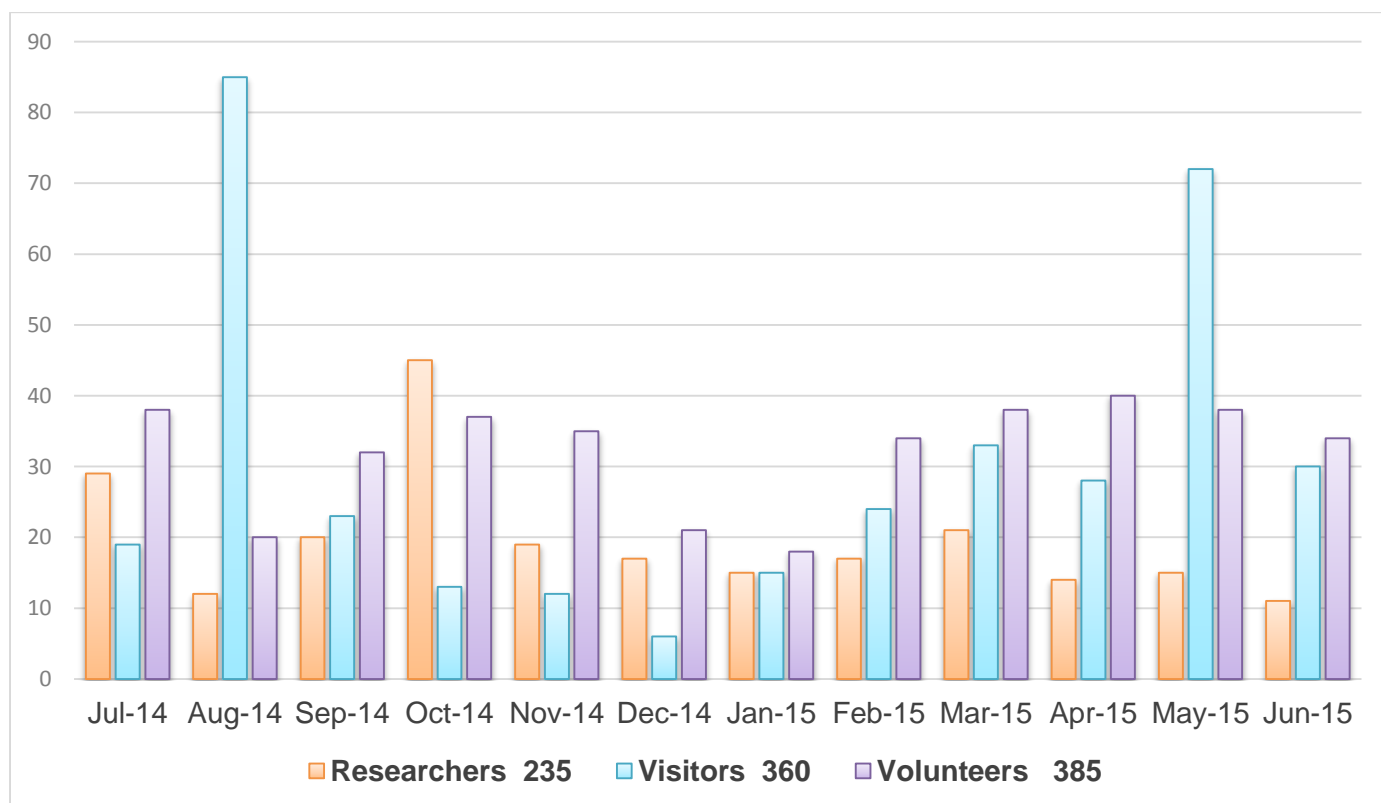
Numbers of Researchers, Visitors and Volunteers to BRAC

Date	Jul 14	Aug 14	Sep 14	Oct 14	Nov 14	Dec 14	Jan 15	Feb 15	Mar 15	Apr 15	May 15	Jun 15	Total
Researchers	29	12	20	45	19	17	15	17	21	14	15	11	235
Visitors	19	85	23	13	12	6	15	24	33	28	72	30	360
Volunteers	38	20	32	37	35	21	18	34	38	40	38	34	385
TOTALS	86	117	75	95	66	44	48	75	92	82	125	75	980

In 2014-2015, the numbers of Researchers, Visitors and Volunteers' increased markedly from the previous year. The spikes in Visitor numbers in August 2014 and May 2015 reflect the various activities presented in Family History Month (August), and the Vahland centenary celebrations (May).

The attendances of Volunteers to BRAC, from 2013-2014 to 2014-2015 more than doubled, directly due to the resumption of the Petitions' project after BRAC returned to the new Library in Hargreaves Street. Volunteers were able to continue their work in the comfortable Reading Room, and had almost completed this major project, through to the 1899 cut-off date, by the end of June 2015.

Researcher Statistics Graph



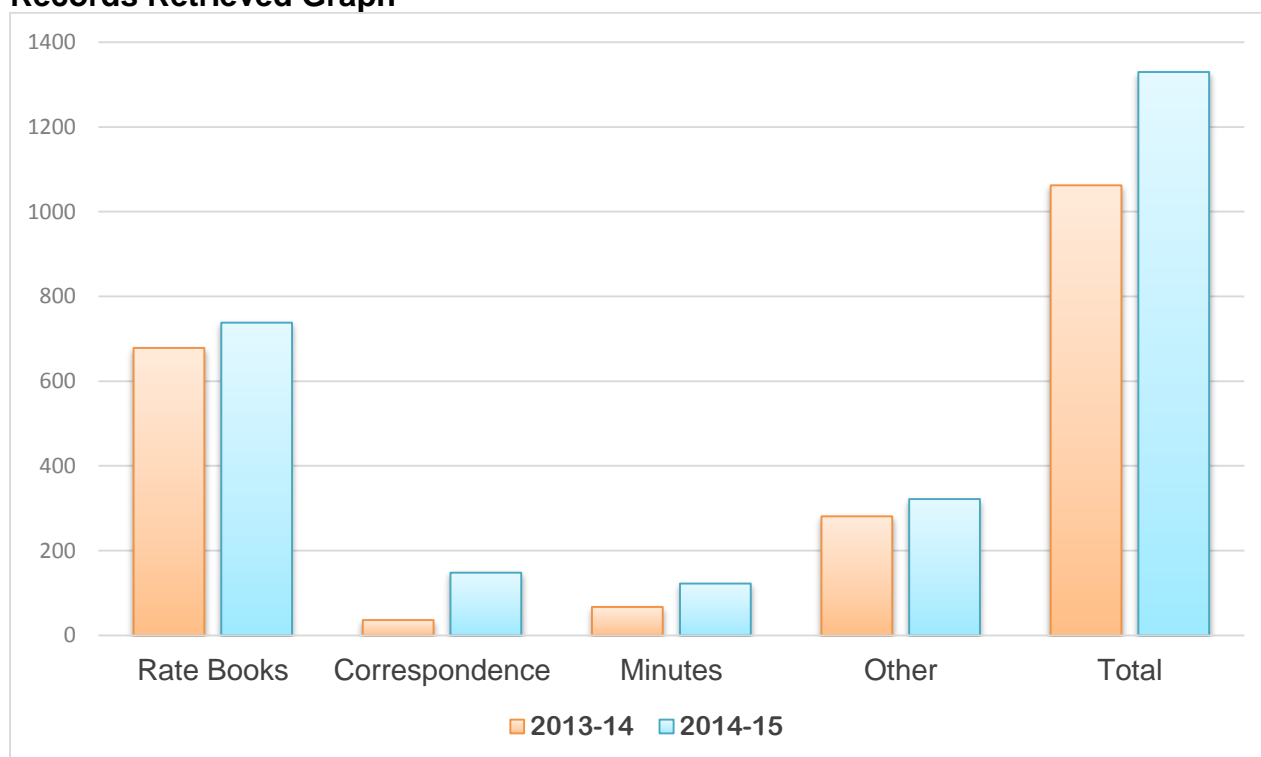
BRAC Communications & Enquiries

Date	July 2013 - June 2014	June 2014 - July 2015	Total
Phone	298	276	7% decrease
Email	169	247	46% increase
Web hits	1808	4460	147% increase

Records Retrieved Table

	2013-14	2014-15
Rate Books	678	738
Correspondence	36	148
Minutes	67	122
Other	281	322
Total	1062	1330

Records Retrieved Graph



Rate books continue to be the most used records held in BRAC although all forms of records showed an increase in use for the last financial year.

Finances

BRAC does not hold separate financial records. All financial dealings are undertaken by the City of Greater Bendigo.

Appendix 1- PROV series transferred to BRAC

VPRS 7006/P1,	Mclvor Rate Books	44 vols.	1897-1948
VPRS 7006/P3,	Mclvor Rate Books	1 vol.	1863-1869
VPRS 7010/P1,	Mclvor Minute Books	14 vols.	1874-1927
VPRS 7010/P3,	Mclvor Minute Books	2 vols.	1861-1867
VPRS 7015/P1,	Mclvor Letter Books	9 vols.	1891-1958
VPRS 7015/P3,	Mclvor Letter Books	3 vols.	1873-1892

Appendix 2- Series transferred to BRAC

VA 2515 Swan Hill III (Borough 1939-1965; City 1965-1994)

VPRS 14676/P1	Council Minutes (1939-1994), 86 vols.
VPRS 14677/P1	Committee Minutes (1939-1994), 11 vols.

VA 2497 Rochester (Shire 1871-1994)

VA 3677 Campaspe II (Shire 1994-ct)

VPRS 17693/P0001	Rate Books [1909-1968], 49 vols.
VPRS 17694/P0001	Finance Committee Reports (1950-1962), 3 vols.
VPRS 17695/P0001	Deeds and Securities Register (1902-1995), 1 vol.
VPRS 17696/P0001	Elmore to Cohuna Railway Trust Rate Book (1918-1921), 1 vol.