



# *Bric-a-BRAC* February 2017

## E-newsletter - Bendigo Regional Archives Centre

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Welcome to the first issue for 2017, of our quarterly e-Newsletter Bric-a-BRAC.

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Advance notice of the wonderful events to be presented by BRAC staff, or hosted in the BRAC reading room, during this Heritage Festival to be held in May.

Tues. 2 May, 11-12, 'Behind the scenes' Tour of the BRAC repository.

Tues. 2 May, 1-2. House History Part I- "Land Titles and Parish Plans".

Wed. 3 May, 11-12, Rita Hull, "Women in Lodges".

Thur. 4 May, 2.30-3.30, Dr. Michele Matthews, "Women and Children's 'voices' in BRAC records".

Tues. 9 May, 10-12.30, Mark Greal, "School records held at PROV".

Tues. 9 May, 1-2, House History Part II- "Rate Books and Directories".

All events are free, but bookings are essential via Eventbrite at [www.ncgrl.vic.gov.au](http://www.ncgrl.vic.gov.au) or phone BRAC on (03) 5449 2703; leave a message with your name and phone number, and which event/s you wish to attend.

[Petitions' Project digitising and typing are finally finished](#)

We are thrilled to announce that the last of the 628 Petitions used for this BRAC project was digitised in December 2016. The total number of names recorded on these Petitions is a whopping 34,172. This will be an invaluable database for researchers. Many thanks to our hardworking typist Sandie Morris. The remaining 344 Petitions still need to go through the final IT stages, where the digitised images are merged with the typed version of the Petition's prayer (ie what they were asking for), and the Petitioners' names and addresses (and occasionally occupations). Keep checking this link to the BRAC website for the release of further Petitions this year [http://www.brac.vic.gov.au/Digital\\_Records/Petitions\\_1870-1899](http://www.brac.vic.gov.au/Digital_Records/Petitions_1870-1899)

## Uses of Our Records

What questions do BRAC researchers try to find answers to? Here is a sample of the reasons driving them in the months November 2016-January 2017, giving readers some insight into the myriad questions BRAC records can answer.

### **November 2016**

- A local researcher used the **Shire of Strathfieldsaye Minutes** for conveyancing purposes for his property.
- A WA researcher used **Bendigo Rate books** from 1903-1927, to trace her Kuhlken ancestors' land ownership in Bendigo.
- A Sydney PhD student used **Bendigo Court of Mines**, **Bendigo Insolvency Court** records, and mining applications in **Bendigo Council Inwards Correspondence**, to search for particular 19<sup>th</sup> century miners he will be highlighting in his thesis.

### **December 2016**

- A CoGB staffer used **Bendigo Rate books** to trace the numerous owners of a property, and its age, relative to a demolition application.
- Local researchers traced the history of their home, and added to their research skills, by using the **Rate book Index** in conjunction with **Street Directories** and **Parish plans**.
- A local researcher continued to follow his family's home ownership on the Bendigo/Eaglehawk boundary, using the **Eaglehawk Rate books**.

### **January 2017**

- A UK researcher used **Bendigo Council Minutes**, to try and find reference to a letter sent to the Council in 1969 from her native town in the UK.
- An 1879 volume of **Bendigo Cause Lists- Criminal** to try and locate details about a researcher's ancestor sent to the local Industrial School that year.

## Back in Time

Researchers often ask if they can find out information about local Bendigo and district **Hotels**, using BRAC records. Many Hotels are referred to in various types of correspondence sent to the Council, all housed within **VPRS 16936 Sandhurst/Bendigo Inwards Correspondence**. Hotels were often used as city location markers by both residents and Council staff. The "Cricketeers Arms" (author's spelling, not mine) was given as the locale for damaging mining works being carried out near the Back Creek bridge. **(14/11/1895, Box 42)** Town Clerk Fletcher was asked by Mayor MacDougall to inform all Councillors they were to attend a luncheon at the Shamrock Hotel, during the Royal Princes' 1872 visit to Sandhurst. **(31/10/1872, Box 9)** W. Telford successfully applied for permission to run his cab between the Telegraph Hotel and the One Tree Hill Hotel for "a threepenny fare." **(30/10/1895, Box 42)** Roper, the Street Tree Curator, informed Council he had moved a street tree from Barnard Street, in front of the back yard of the Five Lions Hotel. **(06/06/1895, Box 41)**

## Back in Time (cont.)

Hotels were also landmarks referred to in some Petitions' prayers. In 1881, petitioners told the Council obstructions needed to be removed from Barnard Street, between the Red Lion Hotel and Don Street. **(30/09/1881, Box 17)** Other petitioners asked for Retreat Road to be formed, between the Durham Ox Hotel and the city's boundary, **(09/02/1881, Box 16)**

The number of publicans and breweries in our city also appeared occasionally in reports sent to Sandhurst/Bendigo Council. An 1871 document noted there were 91 "licensed publicans" and 114 "Beer sellers" in Sandhurst at that time. **(20/06/1871, Box 4)** In 1872, the Council's own statistics collector reported that the city boasted 8 Breweries! **(08/04/1872, Box 6)** Not bad ratios considering the 1871 census gave Sandhurst's total population as **21,987!!** (Mackay, G (ed.), **Annals of Bendigo**, vol. 2, Bendigo, 1914, p. 122.)

Hotels do appear in all eight series of **Rate books** held at BRAC. You can gauge any Hotel's location by its entry in a street. The Publican's name is recorded as either owner or occupier, or both- but, unfortunately, Hotel names are never recorded in any of the Rate books. **(See VPRS 16267 Bendigo, 16263 Eaglehawk, 16333 Huntly, 16266 Marong, 16136 Strathfieldsaye, 16334 Heathcote, 7006 Mclvor, and 17066 Raywood)**

The most comprehensive coverage, containing many details about individual **Hotels**, can be found in the following **Licensing Court** series held at BRAC:- **Bendigo (1884-1968), Eaglehawk (1883-86), Elmore (1878-1904; 1980-83), Rochester (1883-92), and St. Arnaud (1943-54) Licensing Courts.** (None have VPRS numbers yet, so they are orderable just by contacting BRAC staff.) All entries give the Publican's name, the name and address of the Hotel, whether a license or transfer of the license was being applied for, and the Magistrate's decision.



**Bendigo Licensing Court volumes,  
BRAC collection.**

## Victoria Petty Sessions Registers are now available through Find My Past. (released Friday 27 Jan 2017)

The Victoria Petty Sessions registers contain over 3 million records that will allow you to find out whether any of your Australian ancestors had a brush with the law. The Court of Petty Sessions was created to hear minor criminal cases such as those involving drunkenness, criminal damage and theft. These cases, brought before a magistrate, would usually not involve a jury.

Most of the original records are at the Public Records Office in North Melbourne but BRAC Court records are included in this release.

Explore these records through the Goldfields Library subscription (in our libraries), your own local Public Library, PROV or your own subscription.

To find the Petty Sessions specifically, click on Findmypast Friday from the Find My Past homepage and then on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> Jan. A link will take you to the search window

Or

Go to A-Z of records and type Petty Sessions into the search box. Select Victoria Petty Sessions.

A lovely list of the Courts covered is included on the information page. There are at least 27 courts from Bendigo and Central Victoria.

## Until Next Time

Thank you for subscribing to our e-newsletter. The next issue of Bric-a-BRAC will be available in May 2017. We will continue to provide updates, promote events and happenings, as well as share more snapshots of our wonderful records. Until then, happy researching!

### **BRAC Staff**

Dr Michele Matthews, Archives Officer (Tues, Wed, Thurs)  
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### **BRAC Contact details**

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**Address:** Find us on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor, Bendigo Library, 251-259 Hargreaves Street, Bendigo

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