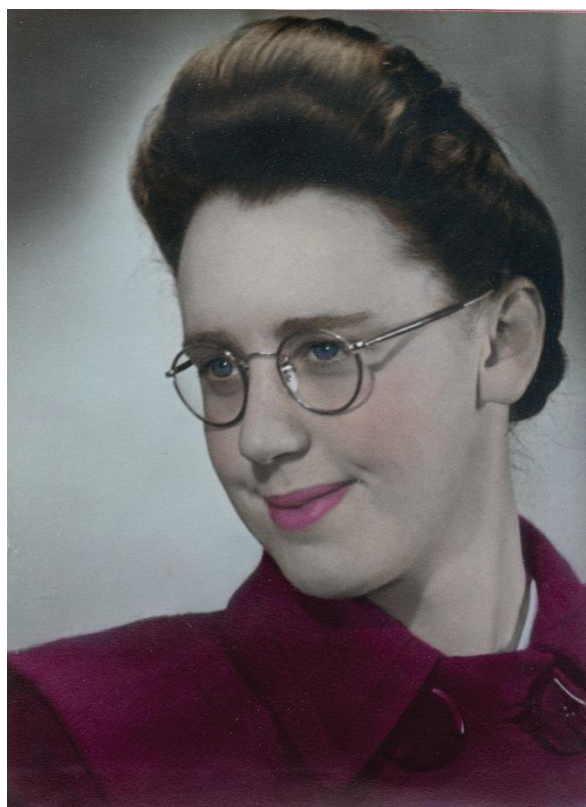




Betty Brown

Historical Centre

Annual Report 2024-2025





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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Betty Brown Historical Centre and the Shire of West Arthur respectfully acknowledges that the land upon which we work and live, is the traditional land of the Noongar people. We recognise their cultural heritage, beliefs and continuing relationship with the land. We honour Elders past, present and emerging and we support the principles of a reconciled Australia for all its people.



ABOUT THIS REPORT

The Betty Brown Historical Centre has been established in accordance with the bequest bestowed upon the Shire of West Arthur by Ms Betty Edith Brown who requested the facility preserve the wool trophies, needlework and memorabilia of the Brown family, and that it house historical relics and items of the district particularly in relation to the sheep industry.

Betty passed away on the 12 March 2015 and the Shire of West Arthur was advised of the bequest on January 8th, 2016.

Following notification, the Shire met with stakeholders (including Betty's friends, executor and other community members), identified a location for the Centre, established a committee to oversee the development of the Centre and trained staff in collecting, cleaning and curating an historical centre. The Centre was opened on the 8th of March 2020.

This document outlines what has been achieved during the 2024-2025 financial year. The annual report will:

- Document what has been achieved in that year
- Financial expenditure and income (including grants) over the past year associated with the Centre
- Proposed activities for the upcoming year.

This report is produced for internal reporting and planning purposes only.

ORGANISATION STRUCTURE

The Betty Brown Historical Centre is managed by a Museum Reference Group (MRG) which consists of two staff members from the Shire of West Arthur, one staff member and one committee member from the West Arthur Community Resource Centre (CRC), one Shire Councillor, and one Betty Brown Historical Centre volunteer.

Current MRG members are:

Vin Fordham Lamont – Shire Chief Executive Officer

Tahnee Lubcke – Shire Projects Officer and BBHC Curator

Karen Prowse – West Arthur CRC Manager

Janice King - West Arthur CRC committee member and BBHC volunteer

Robyn Lubcke – Shire Councillor

Pam Stockey – BBHC volunteer

REPORT ON ACTIVITIES TO DATE

The major activities undertaken in the 2024-25 financial year were the curation and opening of the Women at War Exhibition.

Women at War Exhibition

Curation of the Women at War exhibition began in April 2024 when the West Arthur CRC was awarded a Saluting Their Service Grant by the Australian Government Department of Veterans' Affairs. This grant helped to provide the Betty Brown Historical Centre with the opportunity to showcase the many women from the West Arthur community who were engaged in active service.

Objects for the display were collected over the course of the 2024 year from the Australian Army Museum, Red Cross, the Aviation Heritage Museum of Western Australia, local community members, and people with a connection to either the display or the community. The objects were catalogued (hard copy and some electronic cataloguing only), cleaned and readied for display. Panels were researched by Pam Stockley, with the assistance of Louise Higham's book 'On Active Service'. The panels were then designed and produced by Creative spaces who undertook the original design of the Centre.

An opening event was coordinated by Pam Stockley and facilitated by the CRC. This was held on April 24th and was attended by roughly 50 people. The new display was opened by Carmel Buller, daughter of Margaret 'Peg' McCarthy (one of the women featured in the exhibition). Morning tea was provided by the West Arthur CRC.

Museum Training Day

A museum training day was held on the 27th of November 2024. This training day was designed to upskill museum volunteers and the public on the handling and storing of historical objects. Participants learnt to handle, clean, catalogue and store their objects to ensure longevity. There were roughly 8 people in attendance with some expressing their desire to help as a volunteer at the museum in the future.

Cataloguing

A total of 35 objects were catalogued in 2023 in both hard copy and in the digital collection. A total of 60 objects were catalogued in 2024 both hard copy with the majority in the digital collection. The remainder are in the process of being added to the electronic database (Collection WA).

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Betty Brown Historical Centre	Budget	Actual
For the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025	2024/25	2024/25
Income		
Museum donations	\$100	\$172
Grant from Department of Veterans Affairs through West Arthur CRC		\$10,000
Total income	\$100	\$10,172
Expenditure		
Equipment purchase (Thumb drives)		\$27
Women at War - design and production		\$1,810
Purchase of Teardrop Banner, printing and promotion, historical research and minor costs funded by Department of Veterans Affairs grant (Donation from West Arthur Community Resource Centre)		\$10,000
Printing of Panels		\$514
BBHC Promotion 24/25 (CRC)		\$1,555
Reimbursement – K Chia (Cleaning of Ida Spencer Dress)		\$59
Total expenditure	\$5,000	\$13,965
–Deficit to be funded from reserve	-\$4,900	-\$3,793
	Budget	Actual
	2024/25	2024/25
Funds held in Shire of West Arthur Reserve Account		
Opening balance at 1 July 2024	\$134,654	\$134,654
Interest allocated to reserve	\$5,825	\$5,709
Transfer from reserve	-\$5,000	-\$3,800
Closing balance at 30 June 2025	135,479	136,563

THE YEAR AHEAD 2025-2026

To be current and creative, high-class museums need to invest their funds. To make sure that the collection is appropriately maintained, catalogued and continues to be of interest to the intended audience, the coming year will be busy.

Insurance

Currently, the Shire is still investigating insurance for the contents within the BBHC. As previously mentioned, the advice from David Wood (LGIS) in 2017 indicated that the Shire would need to catalogue all items in the Centre (including pictures) and that valuations should be sorted on items of high value or importance. As indicated above, every object within the centre itself has been catalogued, and the process of documenting the items is now ongoing. At this point, no values have been assigned to any objects. It will be necessary to keep updating the insurance as the number of the objects in the collection grows. To determine the worth of the collection, further guidance is required.

Museum committee members should prioritise investigating insurance options for the collection. The first attempts to contact AMaGA WA have not been successful but other avenues will be explored.

Museum Reference Group Meeting

The Museum Reference Group meets on an “as required” basis. In the past year, the MRG has met on two occasions (May and November) to discuss the proposed exhibitions, the annual report, and forward planning for the Centre.

New exhibitions

Football in West Arthur (1956 & 1976 Football Reunion)

A new exhibition ‘Football in West Arthur’ is currently in the process of being developed. The Shire will approach the West Australian Football League, and teams within the West Australian Football League that feature in the display to assist with funding. Shire staff will curate the display and some funds from the Reserve will be required to establish the exhibition. A budget for the proposed exhibition is included below.

INCOME	Shire	BBHC Reserve	Total
	\$9,500.00	\$5,000.00	\$14,500.00
Total Income	\$9,500.00	\$5,000.00	\$14,500.00
EXPENSES			
12 exhibition panels 4 large object labels Project management	\$5,000.00	\$470.00	\$5,470.00
Print 12 exhibition panels		\$3,352.80	\$3,352.80
Print 4 large object labels		\$96.80	\$96.80
Purchase promotional signage for Museum	\$188.35	\$1,011.65	\$1,200.00
Digitisation of exhibition material	\$4,311.65		\$4,311.65
Delivery to Darkan of panels		\$68.75	\$68.75
Total Expenses	\$9,500.00	\$5,000.00	\$14,500

It is proposed to open this exhibition on or around April 2026 to tie in with the proposed reunion of the 1956 and 1976 grand final teams.

Review of documents

It has become clear that certain sections of the policy and procedures documents, which were created at the start of the BBHC's design phase, need to be reviewed in order to guarantee that the Centre runs effectively and that records are kept in a professional manner.

Continuation of cataloguing

Although a significant quantity of items have been catalogued for the museum's inauguration (the existing collection comprises 455 catalogued objects), there remains a substantial number of items that require cataloguing, cleaning, and proper storage in the BBHC administration room within the CRC.

Furthermore, the Museum Administration room within the CRC requires organisation to establish systems that enable volunteers to effectively clean, store, catalogue, and input items into the database.

Australian Museums and Galleries National Awards

The Australian Museums and Galleries Association (AMaGA) conducts a National annual award ceremony in March each year, recognizing a range of exhibits from both small and large museums and galleries. Exhibitions may only be considered for entry one year following their installation. The Centre should endeavour to submit applications for these awards with each exhibition.

Social Media Presence and Advertising

The CRC currently promotes the Centre on a fortnightly basis through the Bleat and occasionally on the Centre's Facebook page. Promotion of the museum remains a challenge, and future initiatives should focus on ensuring that the Betty Brown Historical Centre receives extensive promotion.

Community Archives

The community archives located in the Shire office may be integrated into the Betty Brown Historical Collection as a sub-collection. They can remain stored in the Shire office, but their inclusion on the Collections WA website will make them accessible to public search. Additionally, efforts to promote the Community Archives could be initiated to raise public awareness regarding their availability for research purposes.