

# Liberty!



*A newsletter for Eureka's Children*

*April 2005*



## *Eureka 150 Celebrations*



The Eureka 150 celebrations were a great success with literally thousands of people participating in the various events in Ballarat during the period 26 November – 5 December 2004.

Apart from the excellent support received for the 'Echoes of Freedom' concerts (14000) which ran throughout the week, many hundreds, and in some cases thousands, of people attended events such as the Monster Meeting (Monday 29 November), the Eureka Stockade Diggers March

(Saturday 4 December), the Dawn Commemoration (Friday 3 December) and the Dawn Lantern Walk (Sunday 5 December). The Eureka Sunday Luncheon (5 December), conducted by the Eureka Stockade Memorial Association, received record support with



**Digger descendants laying a wreath at the new Eureka Monument**

over 260 in attendance. The travelling exhibition 'Eureka Revisited – the Contest of Memories' opened in Ballarat on 29 November (with over 3000 visitors by the end of December), on view until 13 February 2005, when it will tour to Old Parliament House, Canberra, (April – May 2005) and the State Library of Victoria (September – October 2005).

The objective of creating greater awareness of Eureka across the nation was clearly achieved, with the Press, Radio and Television throughout Australia giving very broad coverage to all aspects of the Eureka events of November/December 1854 and also to the Eureka 150 celebrations.



The Eureka flag was prominently flown in all States and Territories during the celebrations. Nearly 500 Eureka flags were flown across Victoria and almost 50% of Municipal Councils flew the flag. The flag was flown at all Racing Victoria venues for the period 29 November – 5 December, at Tullamarine Airport, Federation Square and several other key locations including Parliament House and also at the Haymarket, where a giant flag was flown until 10 December.

All State Parliaments flew the Eureka flag between the key dates or on 3 December. It was flown inside the Federal Parliament in both the House of Representatives and the Senate. The flag was also flown on the Sydney Harbour Bridge. Fifty flags were flown across Darwin and 220 flags were flown across the A.C.T.

***The Eureka Stockade Diggers March*** was the main activity of interest to Eureka's Children which again organised the March in conjunction with the Eureka Stockade Memorial Association. Many members of Eureka's Children participated in the March and it was generally agreed that the event was highly successful. Over 600 participants were involved and many people took advantage of the opportunity to 'register their Eureka connection'.

For Eureka 150 the conduct of the Diggers March was managed by 'Events Ballarat. Special thanks are due to Tracey Hull, Manager, Events Ballarat for the outstanding job she did in ensuring that this event was such a success. In addition to acknowledging the excellent work done by the staff of Events Ballarat, we must also acknowledge and



express our appreciation to the City of Ballarat for the funding of the event to the extent of \$10,000, together with further, significant, in kind, expenditure related in particular to media advertising.

**The Ballarat**

### **Memorial Concert Band leading the Diggers' March.**

Special thanks are also due to many people who were involved in the Diggers March. Firstly to those who were guest presenters, namely, Peter Lalor, who lead the re-enactment of the swearing of the 'diggers oath', Val D'Angri, who spoke about the Eureka flag and Laurel Johnson who spoke on 'the Women of Eureka'. The pre-eminent Eureka historian, Prof. John Molony was again the Commentator for the March and he did an outstanding job in bringing together all the relevant aspects of the Eureka story.

(**Note:** A special Booklet containing Prof. Molony's commentary for the Diggers March is available for purchase by Members; see page 8 for further details).

Special thanks must also go to the Ballarat Memorial Concert Band that gave recitals at various points along the way, led the March up to the Eureka Monument, (in the same way the German Brass Band led the diggers onto the Eureka in 1854) and then gave a further recital at the Concert. Others to be thanked include the Town Crier, Brian Whykes, and the other artists who performed in the after-March concert, in particular Shane Howard, Damian Howard and Marcia Howard, and the members of the joint Trade Unions Choir.

The Diggers' March was again lead by Cr.David Vendy, Mayor of the City of Ballarat, playing the part of Captain Ross, the Canadian who designed the Eureka flag. Immediately following Cr.Vendy and the Deputy Mayor,Cr. Steven Jones, came the national flags of the 19 countries represented at the Eureka Stockade. We were very pleased that Consular representatives from France, Ireland, Switzerland and the U.S.A. were able to join us and participate in the March.

We were also very pleased that three of the surviving grandchildren of Eureka diggers were present for the March, namely Leo Howard and Ella Hancock (the grandchildren of Patrick Howard) and John Molony (the grandson of Michael McInerney).



## *History's echo felt*

By Karen McCann

This article is reprinted from The Courier, 6 December 2004. Karen McCann is a journalist with The Courier.

Leo Howard's time-weary legs were unable to carry him along the three kilometre Eureka Stockade Diggers' March from Bakery Hill to the Eureka Stockade Monument on Saturday.

Instead the 88 year-old, one of the few living grandchildren of a Eureka digger, made the milestone pilgrimage in a car with his daughter Adele.

Mr Howard took part in memory of his grandfather Patrick Howard, who was exonerated for treason after the Eureka Rebellion, and joined hundreds of Eureka descendants in the emotionally-charged 150<sup>th</sup> journey.

"A trooper took his musket up to fire at grandfather Patrick as he stood outside his tent in



**Leo and Shane Howard**

*image by Charlie Sublet*

the early hours of the morning", Mr Howard said. "Patrick leapt for his gun but fortunately for him, and possibly for me there was a body of diggers who burst out of the tent he slept in. The trooper fired at the body of men as they burst out but Patrick couldn't because he had no powder in his gun."

Mr Howard's journey ended at the Stockade Monument where his son, Shane Howard, from legendary Australian band Goanna, sang his renowned rebel song about the Eureka Stockade.

Also taking part in the walk was fourth-generation Ballarat resident Val D'Angri. Dressed in period costume, Ms D'Angri has followed in the footsteps of her great great grandmother, who helped stitch the original Eureka flag, to create an exact replica for a Eureka exhibition. "It's thrilling. I sort of swell with pride to think that the family has been involved right back at the start."

Ballarat East resident Colin Holmes, dressed as a convict, complete with a 28 kilogram ball and chain, in an ambitious attempt to complete the walk.

Mr Holmes said his wife's great great grandfather unwittingly fired the first shot – with a potato – at Eureka. He was a nine year-year old boy and his sling shot fired the potato which dislodged a trooper's helmet," he said. "Everyone was there itching for a fight so I am not saying that it wouldn't have started without that."

CFMEU Furnishing Division member and Maldon resident Gary Winsanley joined the throng of unionists in the March. "I suppose the same struggles that people have gone through in the last 150 to 200 years are basically what we are still trying to achieve," he said.

Peter Lalor, the great great grandson of the legendary Eureka leader of the same name, lead the crowd in swearing the diggers' oath of the Southern Cross.

Mr Lalor said the 150<sup>th</sup> celebrations were a proud day for his family, which had 30 representatives including a cousin from Ireland at the weekend events. "To see something like this on the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of what is truly a significant event in Australian history is just heartwarming," he said.

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**Shane Howard - Echoes of Freedom Concert**

*image by Charlie Sublet*

## *The Eureka Project is unfinished*

**The logical conclusion to the Eureka project is a republic, with a popularly elected head of state, writes Ray Cassin.**

*This article is reprinted from The Age, 2 December 2004. Ray Cassin is an Age journalist*

In politics, silence can send as potent a message as any speech. Take John Howard's unexplained decision not to attend this weekend's Eureka 150 celebrations in Ballarat, for example.

This refusal, which other senior ministers have dutifully followed, has been interpreted by Opposition Leader Mark Latham as a prime ministerial failure to grasp the meaning of the diggers' uprising. And on this page on Tuesday, Gerard Henderson lamented the general reluctance of Liberal politicians to see that the Eureka heritage belongs as much to them as it does to parties of the left. The Liberals, Henderson complained, have not been very good at fighting this particular culture war.

Nonsense. The Prime Minister understands very well what Eureka means and his snubbing of the celebrations is emphatically the act of a cultural warrior.

Of course Howard understands that the uprising in 1854 was about democracy, not socialism or any other militant ideology. It's just that the kind of full-blooded democracy that Eureka represents - a frank assertion of popular sovereignty, coupled with a demand that the protection of individual rights be enshrined in law - is not something he feels comfortable with, let alone wants to endorse.

Naturally, he won't ever say that. In 2004 no holder of elected office, especially one with Howard's populist instincts, has the option of publicly disparaging democracy. But everything we know about the Prime Minister's attitude to our constitutional arrangements suggests he will resist any attempt to reinvigorate them by fostering greater democratic participation.

This is not only a matter of his well-known insistence on clinging to the monarchy; that stance is of a piece with his attempt, during the last Parliament, to hobble the Senate and its inquisitive committees (a proposal that presumably will lapse now that the coalition has won a Senate majority), and with his opposition to including in the constitution fundamental guarantees of the rights of citizens.

Australia is unusual among modern democracies not only in having no formal declaration of rights, but in virtually omitting mention of the people from its constitution altogether. We are there implicitly, of course, because the constitution stipulates that Parliament must be elected. But it is essentially a text that defines the distribution of powers between

the states and the Commonwealth: there is no preparatory assertion that Australia is constituted as a nation by the will of its people, so that the primary political relationships are between citizens and each other and between citizens and their governments, not between one tier of government and another.

The absence of a symbolic declaration of this kind, and of a bill of rights, perhaps partly explains why the constitution, to most people, is such an impenetrably dry document. (The British imperial legislation that first enacted Australia's constitution does contain a preamble proclaiming the choice of the people, but this is not part of the constitution itself.)

More importantly, though, the constitutional arrangements we have tend to accentuate the dominance of executive governments, especially when, as will be the case from July 1, the government of the day has a majority in both houses. Politics in this country is typically experienced as a top-down process: it is about what governments - and alternative governments - do, rather than about the action of citizens.

We elect a Parliament every three years (or every four years in the states), but in between elections we are not of much account; hence the demand, uttered from time to time by governments irritated by scrutiny from Parliament or the media, that they should be "allowed to get on with doing the job they were elected to do".

This kind of minimally democratic politics is the opposite of the ethos of the Eureka diggers, who swore "by the Southern Cross to stand truly by each other and fight to defend our rights and liberties". And the danger in the revival of interest in Eureka, for a politician of John Howard's conservative stripe, is that it just might result in renewed demands for thoroughgoing change in the way we are governed.

Such change - bottom-up politics, if you like - would be founded on the assertion in the diggers' charter that the people are "the only legitimate source of all political power". It would lead to the creation of an Australian republic, in which the people would choose their head of state, and in which their rights as citizens would be acknowledged in the basic instrument of government, the constitution. It would lead to everything that John Howard doesn't want.

That's why I suspect the PM is silently raging against the Speaker's last-minute decision that the House of Representatives will fly the diggers' Southern Cross flag to mark today's anniversary. He wouldn't want to be within cooee of anywhere the Southern Cross is raised this weekend, because he knows that wherever people see it they'll be reminded of what Eureka started, and what we still haven't finished.

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## EUREKA'S CHILDREN ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Eureka's Children AGM is to be held on Wednesday 20 April 2005, commencing at 6.30pm, at the Celtic Club, 316 – 320 Queen Street, Melbourne.

Currently there are only 5 Members on the Eureka's Children 'Executive Committee', with a further 5 positions being vacant.

In order that the Committee can operate effectively it is essential that at least 3 of the current vacancies be filled at the AGM. Should this not occur then the Executive Committee will have to give serious consideration as to the future viability of the Association.

Members are strongly encouraged to attend the AGM to express their views as to the future of Eureka's Children and, if possible, to offer themselves for election to the Executive Committee.

## EUREKA 150

Eureka Stockade Diggers' March Souvenir Posters

and

Prof. John Molony Commentary Booklets



Super A3 size Posters on 200 gsm paper  
\$12 each incl. postage

Commentary Booklet  
\$6 each incl. postage

Members may purchase a set of each of the above items for \$15.00 including postage.

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