

Liberty!



A newsletter for Eureka's Children

SEPTEMBER 2006

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EUREKA'S CHILDREN CONTINUES!

At the Annual General Meeting of Eureka's Children held on April 19th, following consideration of a proposal to call an Extraordinary Meeting for the purpose of winding up the Association, it was agreed that Eureka's Children would continue and an expanded Executive Committee was elected for 2006/2007.

Committee members are Robert Sublet, John Ireland, John Capp, Sharon Keys, Eric Howard, John Molony, Phillip Moore, Patrice Hickey, Josie Golding and Pat Phair.

Eric Howard was elected President, with Phillip Moore and Sharon Keys elected as vice-Presidents. John Ireland is Secretary and Robert Sublet is Treasurer.

At the Executive Committee meeting in July it was agreed that a major focus for the organization for the next few years would be the promotion of the development of the Eureka Stockade Centre as a Centre for the Story of Australian Democracy.

It was also agreed that the purposes for the existence and operation of Eureka's Children would be reviewed and when adopted, published.

So to all of our members who have understandably held back from renewing their subscriptions we now say, please get on board and support your organization to grow and prosper in its effectiveness!

DIGGERS MARCH

Eureka's Childrens' Committee has discussed at length the necessary requirements to provide for the annual Digger's March during Eureka week each year and does not consider it is in a position to support a March on an Annual basis.

A March conducted every few years would reduce the demands on Committee members and it is considered, keep the event as a special focus of Eureka celebrations.

This position was conveyed to the City of Ballarat who also support a March being held every few years rather than each year.

For example, the next march could be held in 2009, the 155th Anniversary of Eureka.

Therefore, Eureka's Children will not be supporting a Diggers March in 2006.

It is proposed by the City of Ballarat that there will be a Picnic conducted at the Stockade site on Saturday the 2nd of December, 2006. This will enable any intended family reunions around the Eureka theme to have a focus for celebration.

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NAKED DEMOCRACY: GOVERNING VICTORIA 1856-2006

This is the title of an exhibition at the State Library of Victoria, Keith Murdoch Gallery, Entry 1, 328 Swanston Street, Melbourne, which runs until October 1st, 2006.

It traces the evolution of democracy in Victoria, a work in progress since responsible government was achieved in 1856.

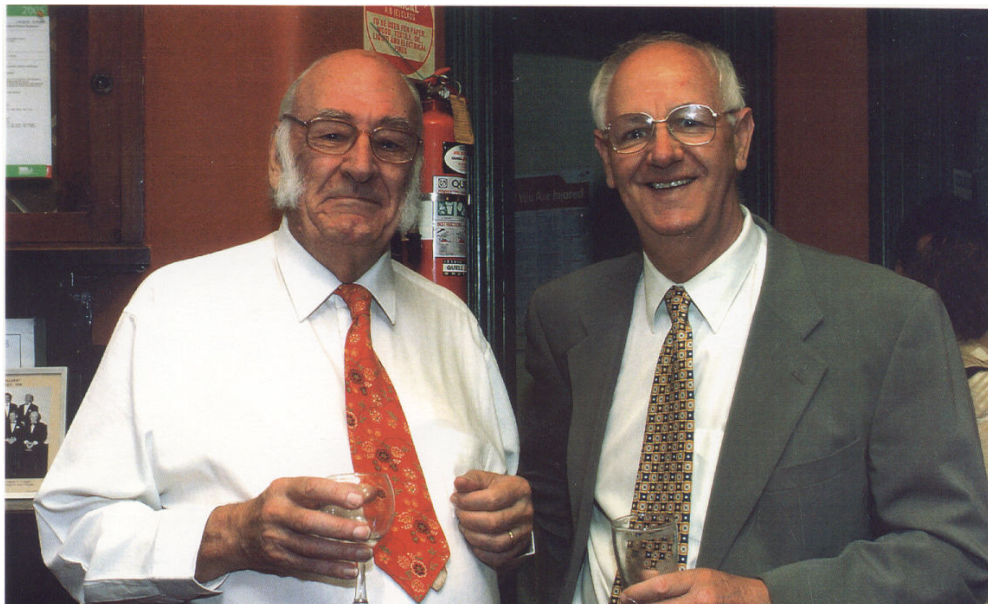
It is of particular interest to those connected with the events at Ballarat and Eureka in 1854, which were to have a major impact on governance of Victoria, occurring less than two years before Victoria's first elections for responsible government in 1856, which were the first in the world to utilize the secret ballot.

Voters in 1856 had to be over 21 years of age, male and in possession of a certain amount of property. This property qualification was removed in 1857 for voters for the lower house - the Legislative Assembly-, resulting in "manhood suffrage".

The booklet accompanying the exhibition makes the point that, "compared for example with Britain in the 1850's, a large percentage of Victorians had the right to vote. The colony was regarded from afar as a 'sort of convex mirror', a reflection of the mother country, but with a democratic twist."

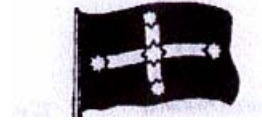
The Keith Murdoch Gallery is open daily from 10am to 5 pm and entry is free.

RECOGNITION OF A SUBSTANTIAL CONTRIBUTION – JOHN IRELAND



At the Commemoration of Eureka last December 4th in Ballarat, Eureka's Childrens' Treasurer, John Ireland, was honoured by the City of Ballarat for his contribution to the advancement of the Eureka Story over many years of activity and scholarship.

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John was presented with an Illuminated Address by the City of Ballarat.

The following text sets out the Speech presented by the Mayor of the City of Ballarat, Cr David Vandy, on that Occasion

Venue – Old Colonists Club

Date – Sunday 4th December 2005-12-01

CONFERRAL OF CITY OF BALLARAT'S EUREKA ILLUMINATED ADDRESS

As the final event in Eureka Week 2005 it is fitting to recognise a man whose passion and life has seen him be an educator, a researcher, a historian, a musician, an actor, a librarian and someone who has used these skills to not only educate himself about his family's proud link to Eureka, but in the process has helped to advance the knowledge and passion of Eureka to countless others in his travels.

As a founding Secretary of Eureka's Children his contributions in "Liberty" (A newsletter for Eureka's Children) such as his work on John Basson Humffray have enriched us.

He was challenged to prepare an A4 Eureka Summary for the Eureka Centre Website. He did manage to achieve this, but used both sides of the A4.

His presentations have included:

- *An account of his ancestor R.D. Ireland at the Twilight Talks at the Mechanics Institute*
- *An account of the Meeting for the Protection of Constitutional Liberty 6 Dec 1854 constructed from the Age, the Argus & the Melbourne Morning Herald*
- *More recently his paper - Were the Eureka Men Republicans?*

John lost his partner in life earlier this year, but I'm sure Judith will be with us in saying "Thank You" for your contribution to the advancement of Eureka.

On behalf of the City of Ballarat, I have pleasure in presenting you with this year's Eureka Illuminated Address.

This is a great honour that has been afforded John and Eureka's Children considers it a fitting recognition of his long contribution to the Eureka Story.

EUREKA STOCKADE DIGGERS MARCH – MAP OF THE ROUTE AND COMMENTARY – PART 1 BAKERY HILL

This is an extract from the commentary provided during the Digger's march in recent years by Professor John Moloney, eminent historian and member of Eureka's Children. It is intended to publish this material in successive editions of Liberty in the interests of bringing these comments to the attention of as many of our members and others as possible.

Eureka's Children was instrumental in seeing the Diggers March return to Ballarat in 2001 and Phillip Moore, our President at that time and local Ballarat identity Jack Harvey researched the route for the march, now from Bakery Hill to the Eureka Stockade, as taken by the Miners on the 30th of November 1854 when they marched from Bakery

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Hill to the Eureka Lead, built their stockade and elected their leaders.

Phillip and Jack produced the initial version of the commentary and Professor John Moloney added to and modified the material to develop the text below. We acknowledge and thank them for all of their important contributions

Eureka Stockade Diggers' March Route

Points of Interest

1. Bakery Hill
2. Catholic chapel
3. Hayes' tent
4. Carboni's vantage point
5. Beniley's Eureka Hotel plaques
6. Bentley's Eureka Hotel
7. Attack on government reinforcements
8. Approaching site of Eureka Stockade
9. Eureka Stockade Monument

The route of the Diggers' March retraces that actually taken by the diggers on the afternoon of that fateful day (Thursday 30 November) in 1854 when, having sworn their allegiance under 'the Southern Cross' on Bakery Hill, they then marched to the Eureka where they built their stockade and elected their leaders.

Prof. John Molony's commentary for the Eureka Stockade Diggers' March was presented at the various stopping points along the way.

BAKERY HILL

I am delighted and honoured to be among you today. I first spoke in this kind of a forum at the Stockade in 1988. So much has changed since those days when we were a small band of Eureka's children. We now have the new

Stockade but, above all, there is a clearer recognition that Eureka lies at the heart of the formative spirit of our nation. Here we are all Eureka's Children, here we are all at home because Bakery Hill remains our place where we assemble to restate and renew our ideals. From here we will go together to the other place that forever belongs to the diggers and the nation the Stockade. There, as here, we set aside all divisions of race, politics, social status and religion. Eureka's unique allegiance, its unflawed and lasting allegiance, is to Australian democracy.

During October and November 1854, the diggers of Ballarat, and many of their women, stood on Bakery Hill in their thousands at a series of four 'Monster Meetings'. Today, in our imagination, we can still look across the valley of the Yarrowee and see the Government Camp on the other side. In late 1854 the Camp stood out clearly to the diggers. The Camp, where the military and police were sworn to uphold good laws and a just order, was in fact a den of oppression, injustice and corruption. From the Camp, government spies were sent to Bakery Hill to hear and report on the words and intentions of the diggers at their meetings.

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Twice weekly the Commandant unleashed his hunters to harass the diggers by demanding they produce their licences to dig for gold. Within the Camp plans were made to smother the democratic agitation of the diggers at one blow. On Sunday morning, 3 December 1854, the forces of Queen Victoria came forth from the Camp to begin the work of crushing the bodies of the diggers, and of many others innocent of any involvement in the whole affair.

We do well to pause and think upon the reasons why the diggers came here to what they called their 'old spot' and why they left it for the Stockade. No high flown words, no tortured argument about law and order can ever excuse oppression, injustice and corruption, then or now. For months the diggers were dealt injustice and oppression. In the end they had no alternative if they were to retain a vestige of their human dignity. They had to make a stand.

When the diggers asserted their equal right to have a part in the political and social fabric of the colony of Victoria, they laid down the foundation stone of Australian democracy. Furthermore, on 11 November 1854 at this place, they publicly and solemnly expressed their allegiance to the fundamental principal of republicanism. The Charter of Bakery Hill, read out and consented to by the affirmation of the thousands here present on that 11 November, stated, 'the people are the only legitimate source of all political power'.

Henry Seekamp, editor of the Ballarat Times spoke truthfully in those far off days. Seekamp claimed that here on Bakery Hill the seed of Australian independence was sown. We must not grieve that the Tree of Liberty has not yet yielded up its fruit. We must work to create our independence in the certain knowledge that no structure of the powerful has ever, or will ever, freely grant independence to a sovereign people.

At Bakery Hill, on the morning of 30 November 1854, the decision was made to remove to the Eureka lead. There they knew they would be free to stand with each other on a place they felt was their own. Eureka was chosen, almost by instinct, as the ground on which the diggers would defend their rights and liberties. Shortly, when we go there, we will understand the diggers because it is also our place our ground - because the diggers took their stand there as defenders of the human rights which every Australian treasures.

At sunset on that same fateful day, some 500 diggers came back here where they raised the Southern Cross. Unfurled in its simple beauty, the Southern Cross was the symbol of Australian independence. For the first time in Australian history, men who were mostly British subjects swore an oath beneath a flag that was not British, but thoroughly Australian.

It is a privilege for us to repeat their words today, but we must be conscious that we are not engaged in an empty gesture. We do a sacred thing when we swear that we will stand together 'to defend our rights and liberties'. The diggers stood true to their oath, history will judge us if we fail it.