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Welcome to Liberty!

Welcome to the February 2017 edition of Liberty! Many great commemoration events were held last December for the 162nd Anniversary of the Eureka Stockade. Included in this publication is a transcript of the speech delivered by Phil Glendenning to the Sydney Eureka Commemoration Committee's event at the Bowler's Club in Sydney. Phil Glendenning is Director of the Edmund Rice Centre in Sydney, and the President of the Refugee Council of Australia. Phil was awarded The Eureka's Children Democracy Award for 2016.

Phillip Moore and Eric Howard met with the new Ballarat City Council Mayor Samantha McIntosh to present her with an overview of Eureka's Children and our activities, as well as background to a joint project with the Ballarat Council regarding the Eureka Avenue of Honour walk of honour at the Eureka site. Much work is being done on securing funding for that project that would see international embassies also contribute to the memorial which will honour the sacrifices of the Eureka fallen.

Memberships are now open for 2017. Please see the final page.

What a blazing start for 2017 and the future of Democracy in our world. As always, we encourage you all to send in any articles and material to publish. Now there is an even more plentiful supply of stimulus from across the globe...

If you'd like to write in and submit any material for Liberty! Please send your correspondence to eurekaschildren@gmail.com

Eureka's Children Raise the Eureka Flag

December 3rd 2016: Eureka's Children were invited by MADE to raise flags on the newly installed flag poles at the MADE facility at Eureka. It was wonderful that Eureka's Children members were present to raise Eureka Flags at the sight of the Stockade.

The Peter Tobin Oration for the 162nd Anniversary of Eureka was presented by Mike Yang, the President of the Chinese Community Council of Australia Vic Chapter, 2015-2016 and President of the Australian Hubei Chamber of Commerce

His Oration can be viewed [here](#)
(Through the MADE Youtube Chanel)



Presentation of the Eureka Democracy Award 2016



Eric Howard presented the Eureka Democracy Award for 2016 to Phil Glendenning on the 2nd of December at the Sydney Eureka Dinner at the Bowler's Club.

Pictured: (left) Eric & (right) Phil

Phil Glendenning's Speech to the Sydney Eureka Commemoration Dinner

I would like to begin by acknowledging and celebrating the Traditional Owners, the Gadigal people of the great Eora nation, on whose lands we gather tonight and pay respects to their elders past and present. These were and are people who know what it means to fight for equal rights in their own country. A struggle that continues.

I would also like to acknowledge the presence of Jack Munday here tonight. I wonder what Sydney would look like today were it not for Jack Munday? It would probably be full of those 'Toasters' along Circular Quay (like the one that Alan Jones lives in), or like the stretch of the Pacific Highway between Pymble and Wahroonga in northern Sydney, full of new towers of glass and steel. No heritage or history in sight. So thanks Jack for all you have done to preserve this city's history, heritage and humanity.

We gather at a particularly difficult and uncertain point internationally: Brexit has happened and Donald Trump is no longer a loud brash badly behaved host of a bad reality TV show. This is the so-called

"post-truth" era, or as Christos Tsiolkas describes it, a time of "willed ignorance". It's a worry.

The US has elected a president after a campaign based on racism, anti-intellectualism, misogyny and truth distortion. The Brits have rejected their neighbourhood; and across Europe, a wave of hyper-nationalist politicians is threatening to splinter the EU, especially Geert Wilders in the Netherlands and Marine Le Pen in France.

Here at home the re-emergence of the One Nation party points to a shift to the right in Australia that echoes the international movement in the Western world that seeks to put up walls between peoples rather than build bridges.

All of which makes the legacy of the Eureka Stockade all the more relevant to today.

Fr Frank Brennan noted in his speech to the Eureka Dinner in Canberra last year that when the Charter for the Ballarat Reform League was proposed on November 11 1854, there was within it a substan-

tive precondition: that 'equal laws and equal rights are dealt out to the whole nation'.

Thus the vision that underpinned the struggles in Ballarat was one that had the aspiration of 'justice for all'.

Equal laws and equal rights and justice for all are as relevant to contemporary Australia today as they were to the goldfields in Ballarat in 1854.

Of course, it was an event of its times and, as Frank said last year, it is no disrespect to the 10,000 gathered at Bakery Hill 162 years ago if we note that women, Aboriginal people, and Chinese diggers were not present or represented in any numbers or perhaps even at all. However tonight, 162 years on, I would like to apply the scrutiny of justice for all and equality particularly to the situation of Aboriginal people seeking justice and recognition, and to asylum seekers seeking dignified treatment on their arrival in Australia.

First, though I would like to briefly recall those historical events of 1854 that continue to echo down the ages to us today.

'Eureka was not just an historical event. It is still relevant today'

Many regard it as the day Australian democracy began.

The miners revolted against the cost of a licence they saw as unfair being imposed upon them by the colonial government. While they lost the battle, they won the war in gaining more rights for the ordinary man.

Just days before the stockade, the miners, who were led by Peter Lalor, burnt their licences en masse. It was at this meeting that the Southern Cross flag, which later became the Eureka flag, was first displayed. (A flag, that Michael Leunig has noted, "seems to come out whenever people come out to resist government").

On December 3, 1854 the bloody Eureka Stockade took place. The siege between miners and police and soldiers lasted just 20 minutes, but it ultimately claimed the lives of over 30 miners and six troops.

After the stockade the miners that were captured

were placed on trial in Melbourne. They gathered mass public support. Their egalitarian call connected with the punters! The fallout led to the abolition of miners' licences and all men being granted the vote in Victoria. Women's suffrage would take a while longer. But Eureka commenced the journey.

Of the Eureka Stockade, the Australian government website calls it a "key event in the development of Australian democracy". In the 1950's, around the time of Eureka's 100th anniversary former Labor leader Doc Evatt wrote that it "was of crucial importance in the making of Australian democracy."

In 1983, historian John Molony wrote "Eureka blended all the factors that go to make a legend... mateship, egalitarianism, anti-authoritarianism, improvisation". All of which contributed to the development of trade unions and later the Labor Party.

At the time of the 150th anniversary of the Stockade on December 4 2004 John Huxley wrote in the Sydney Morning Herald that: "The Southern Cross flag under which 30 diggers and six soldiers fought and died...was raised above parliaments and town halls across the nation.

A number of different themes were repeated in coverage of the anniversary: a fight for freedom, popular demand for democracy, defence of human rights, defence of trade union rights, struggle against government oppression, aspiration for a republic, and recognition of multiculturalism (it should be noted that men from 18 different nations were represented at the Stockade).

So Eureka was not just an historical event. It is still relevant today, as Bob Walshe has written not only because of what Eureka started but also of 'what we



still haven't finished'.

This notion of 'unfinished business' is a term often used to describe the struggle for equality and justice that Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders face in Australia today. Record incarceration rates (85% of prisoners in the Northern Territory are Aboriginal) that are higher now than when the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody reported in 1991. The nagging life expectancy gap between Indigenous and other Australians remains at 15-17 years.

And yet, despite these difficulties and the Stolen Generations and a history of dispossession, Aboriginal Australians have survived, and in increasing numbers. Custodians of the world's oldest living cultures – if you lived here for 60,000 years you probably got something absolutely right! Nevertheless, the struggle for freedom, self-determination and recognition continues.

'This paradigm shift from a society to an economy has been accompanied by a shift in language: people who travel in planes are no longer referred to as passengers, now they are customers'

In terms of this ongoing fight for freedom Senator Patrick Dodson (and former Deaths in Custody Royal Commissioner) said last week:

"There is nothing wrong with freedom, particularly if you are from the ruling class. There is a hell of a lot wrong with freedom if you have to battle to experience it—if you have to fight for it. I was born before the 1967 referendum, when we as Aboriginal people were not even counted in the census of this country, when this government did not have any power to make laws for Aboriginal people because it was excluded by the crafters of our Constitution in 1901. The whole battle for recognition—for freedom to enjoy the basics of being a citizen—in this nation had to be fought for by black and white Australians: Jessie Street, Faith Bandler and many others".

The "freedom to enjoy the basics of being a citizen" would not be a call unfamiliar to those on the gold-fields 162 years ago.

This notion of the citizen is one we have to defend, especially in these days where it often seems we all

live together in an economy rather than a society.

This is significant because the people who live in a society are citizens, and they have rights and they have responsibilities. However, those who reside in an economy are customers or consumers, with choices – dependent on how much wealth they have access to.

This paradigm shift from a society to an economy has been accompanied by a shift in language: people who travel in planes are no longer referred to as passengers, now they are customers (listen to the boarding announcement next time you are at an airport). Banks no longer provide services, they sell products (I remember recently renegotiating my mortgage, and was told by the bank manager how 'we have some great new products for you', i.e. how much further into debt he would like me to be!) And those who reside in the care of a psychiatric institution in NSW are no longer patients or residents, everyone is a client (what are they purchasing?)

Moreover, those who live in a society are valued inherently for who they are, as human beings with inalienable rights; in an economy we value people for what they can do, for their utility or production value. And once we base our relationships and interactions on economics primarily rather than humanity, it becomes easier to treat people in inhuman ways. Welcome to Don Dale and its torture of Aboriginal youth. Welcome to Nauru and Manus Island.

There is a need for us to reclaim the language, and fundamentally put humanity and the planet back in the picture. The language we use matters, because when we strip back the language we reveal the assumptions underpinning decisions, and when we strip back the assumptions underpinning decisions we reveal the values decisions are based on. I put it to you tonight the values broadly at work in our society today are not the values that were fought for at Eureka 162 years ago.

If we are not attentive to the words we use and the assumptions and values they represent, as Senator Dodson said last week, this enables and emboldens "an ideological creep back to bigotry and to racism". He explained, "It is fine if you sit in some leafy suburb and never rub shoulders with people who are battling to interpret and navigate their way through

modernity in this land of Australia, with its highly-sophisticated culture and its complexities of protocols and procedures and social ethos. We have to understand that today is not the day to be changing this section (18c) of the Racial Discrimination Act. It is not the day. We see every night on the news the bigotry, the racism, the hatred and the killings that take place in the Middle East, borne out by different interpretations that people extract from words”.

David Ervine, a Northern Irish Unionist politician who became great mates with Patrick, the former Aboriginal Catholic priest with Indigenous and Irish ancestry, summed this up when he visited Australia in 2004 to speak at the Treaty Conference, reflecting on the state of race relations in Australia

“I can smell racism. It doesn’t grow wild in a field. It is tended in a window box”. The point here is simple: words count. Language matters.

The Indigenous people gathered at Standing Rock in the United States do not see themselves as “resisters”; they call themselves “protectors”.

In his speech in the Senate last week calling for section 18c of the Racial Discrimination Act not to be watered down, Patrick Dodson said: “If this nation cannot stand up for the weakest, the poorest and those who are most vulnerable because of their race, their ethnicity or their beliefs, then we have become a very sad replication of what democracy is about”

This is one of the strongest defences of the principles of equality and justice for all that the Australian Parliament has heard in recent times. I recommend it to all Australians who value the Eureka heritage.

The success of the struggle to achieve freedom and democracy is best witnessed by a society’s treatment of its poorest people. Today in Australia that is best witnessed in our treatment of our First Peoples but also in the brutality meted out to the ‘last to arrive’ in this land of boundless plains to share with those who come across the sea.

That is, of course, with regard to Refugees and Asylum Seekers.

In the 17th century Emmanuel Kant proposed his Kantian injunction that ‘Human beings are never a means to an end. They are an end in themselves’.

His words loudly and baldly echo down the centuries in stark contrast to Australia’s treatment of asylum seekers and refugees on Nauru and Manus Island. The recent Four Corners program, The Forgotten Children gave Australians an all too rare opportunity to hear from the refugee children of Nauru themselves, and to see for ourselves what is being done in our name. It was very disturbing television.

One day last month here in Sydney, a young asylum seeker rose early, turned on his computer and read that the Government was preparing to ban all post-July 2013 boat arrivals from ever entering Australia under any circumstances. He went straight to his bathroom and swallowed a bottle of sleeping pills. He is one of the 30,000 asylum seekers in the community without rights or resolution to his case.

Today he has been released from hospital. He survived but the hope that sustained him for so long from his escape from the Taliban to the dangerous journey to Australia has been extinguished.

The devastating impact of these policies of incarceration and punishment on innocent people simply has to stop.

Since 1946 Australia has resettled more than 850,000 refugees. They have made a remarkable contribution to our country. Despite this, the current Government’s proposal to ban boat arrivals from ever entering Australia would mean great Australi-



ans like Anh Do, Bishop Vincent Long of Parramatta and South Australian Governor, Hieu Van Le, would never be permitted into the country if they arrived today.

Refugees like Gus Nossal, Victor Chang, Frank Lowy, Dr Karl Krusezinski, the 2017 NSW Australian of the Year Deng Adut, and hundreds of thousands of hard working refugees have been nothing but a positive for Australia.

And yet, we have a Minister for Immigration who just last week declared former Liberal Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser had made a mistake 40 years ago in bringing in Lebanese Muslims from the civil war in the 1970's, because 22 of the 33 Australians charged with terror related offences were the children or grandchildren of Lebanese Muslim immigrants.

In any other time, this statement would be staggering. To invalidate the existence of hundreds of thousands of Australian citizens because a sum total of 22 of them were charged – charged mind you, not convicted – with serious criminal offences is beyond any reasonable argument. This is not so much a dog whistle as a dog trombone! It is throwing red meat to One Nation supporters, and is more about polling in the northern suburbs of Brisbane, than anything to do with the humanitarian intake. The Minister's words should be condemned in the strongest possible terms.

Malcolm Fraser's record on support for refugees, particularly after the Vietnam War, is in stark contrast to the actions of Governments led by both parties since 2001. Fraser and then Opposition Leader Bill Hayden demonstrated what the country now lacks, leadership. Australia led the world in helping 2.1 million people re-settle around the world between 1976-1983. It was no mistake. It was born of bi-partisan leadership, something we do not have now.

Simply, today we treat asylum seekers and refugees who have arrived by boat as if we were at war with them.

Amnesty International reports that Australia's system discriminates and punishes, and in some cases, 'tortures' people who came to us seeking safety and protection. There are around 1200 people on

Nauru (including 128 children), a further 920 on Manus, and the 30,000 in the Australian community denied access to legal assistance, medical care and education. They are all trapped in an interminable limbo.

The Nauru Files, released by the Guardian, reported over 2000 cases of physical abuse, psychological abuse, sexual abuse, rape, and 59 incidents of child abuse, including child sexual abuse. For many refugees on Nauru, this sorry story means that life is characterised by fear and uncertainty.

This is certainly the case for Mahomood (name changed), and her 8 year old daughter (who has now spent almost half her life on Nauru). Although recognised as a refugee Mahomood lives on a 3 year visa, a Nauruan passport lists her identity as 'refugee'.

Mahomood and her daughter live in a remote camp. She is too scared to go out for food following an attack by two men on motorbikes as she walked to town to collect groceries. Her life is a two by four metre, plywood walled, tin roofed shack. She spends most of the day crying—she says she has lost all hope.

The tragic irony of this is that Mahomood came on the same boat as her brother. Today he lives in Sydney's south, married to an Australian woman and they are expecting their first baby. Equal laws? Equal rights? I don't think so.

These centres are established by the Australian Government, they are funded by the taxes we pay. They operate under extreme secrecy. There is no transparency, no accountability, no independent monitoring. But the cruelty is plain to see. It is writ large on the faces of the forgotten children all of Australia saw on Four Corners.

This whole sorry episode in our history has to be brought to an end.

The priority right now must be to get people off Nauru and Manus.

The policy of turning around boats at sea is deeply problematic, most likely illegal, and dangerous, especially with its potential risk to life and the very real possibility of refoulement.

However, the current political reality is that despite

the dangers of the turn-back policy and the need to one day replace it with something ethical and consistent with our international obligations, both major parties currently support the policy. It is not something that will change in the short-term.

But what can be done in the short-term, and what is achievable, is for the suffering and cruelty on Nauru and Manus to end, and for the 30,000 asylum seekers in limbo in Australia to be given a permanent solution. Boats are not arriving in Australia, they are being deflected away.

There is absolutely no need to prolong the suffering of those on Nauru and Manus for one day longer. They should be brought to Australia.

However, the Government and Opposition are committed to third country options, like the recent announcement of re-settling people in the United States. If this is to happen then firstly, they need to be credible options - nations that are experienced at resettling refugees and with a long-established capacity to do so – countries like the United States, or Canada, Sweden and of course, New Zealand.

Secondly, there needs to be a time limit. If the Government is unable to settle people in nations in a timely manner, then they must be brought to Australia. The Opposition should support the Government so that we can return to a bi-partisan commitment to protect rather than punish.

With Nauru and Manus empty, the next step will be to pivot to a realistic regional processing framework in cooperation with Indonesia, Malaysia, UNHCR and other relevant organisations.

With the offshore processing camps empty, Australia would have ample resources available to re-allocate to the region and help people seeking asylum before they are forced into a boat.

Such measures would include: assistance for access to work, education and health rights whilst claims are processed in the region; increase the annual refugee intake to at least 30,000 and moving to 40,000; increase support for the UNHCR for assessing claims in the region in a timely manner; and, for more resources and diplomatic efforts to be put into the two other 'durable solutions' the UNHCR speaks of – a peaceful return to country of origin when it is safe to do so, and integration into

the countries closer to the conflict zone.

Also, when the cruelty has ended and with a comprehensive regional processing framework in place, Australia's military could be used for the positive purpose of search and rescue, rather than forcing boats back out to sea.

The current policy of punishment and deterrence has moved Australia further away from engaging in the real global challenge of assisting the 65 million people who are displaced. Last year there were 24 million people recognised as refugees - just 107,000 of these people were resettled: that is less than one percent of the global population of refugees.

Our fixation with securing our borders renders us unable to engage meaningfully in working with the international community to tackle the root causes of displacement and ensure the people that do flee their country can live with dignity in the places they flee to. That the parents can work legally, the children can access school and health care is freely available.

Also, all research indicates that when refugees receive permanent protection they make a sustained positive contribution to the life of their new nation. Any notion of banning former refugees from Australia for all time, even if they are Canadian, New Zealand or US citizens, is a ludicrous proposition and indicative of the sorry state Australia has been reduced to.

These 24 million refugees, the population of Australia – are not just numbers. They are human be-

Below: Sydney Eureka Committee Member Jack Munday with Jim Coleman author of "The House That Jack Built – Jack Munday Green Ban Hero" under the Eureka banner.



ings. They are brothers, fathers, sisters, mothers, friends, they are children. More than half are children. They include Mahomood and her daughter. They include a young asylum seeker just released from a Sydney hospital.

Emmanuel Kant was right. None of these people were, or are, a means to an end. All of them are an end in themselves. The wrong done to them must be righted, the cruelty must stop and this sorry chapter in Australian history must be closed.

This generation has a challenge on its hands. All of us, unless you are an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Island person, are descended from someone who came from somewhere else – usually over the course of our history, by boat.

In wrapping up I would like to share with you a poem penned by a young Iranian asylum seeker who spent a number of years in mandatory detention, after arriving in Australia by boat:

‘I do not know
 what will happen after I die
 I do not want to know.
 But I would like the Potter
 to make a whistle
 From the clay of my throat.
 May this whistle fall into the hands
 Of a naughty child
 and the child to blow hard on the whistle continuously
 with all the suppressed and silent air of his lungs
 and disrupt the sleep
 of those who seem dead to my cries’

So tonight as we celebrate the values of egalitarianism, fairness and democracy of Eureka, we must proclaim to that asylum seeker, and all others who seek protection only to be met by cruelty, that we are not dead to their cries, and we must never be dead to these cries, no matter

what the limits or blindfolds of the domestic political debate.

Nor can we be dead to the cry of the Indigenous people of this country seeking fairness, equality and recognition in their own land.

Nor can we be silent. Martin Luther King once famously said that silence is betrayal, and that we begin to die the day we are silent about the things that matter. If there is one thing we know for sure about the men of the Eureka Stockade they were not silent in the face of things that mattered. They knew what mattered. Today, the first and last peoples of this nation must not have their cries met with the deadening silence of indifference. They matter.

The words of British journalist, Laurie Penny, writing for the New Statesman a year ago about Europe, seem ever more apt today, not just for the European continent but also for Australia:

“The greatest threat to our “way of life” is not migration. Migration does change society, although far less so than, for example, technology, economic austerity, escalating inequality, globalisation or climate change. But the greatest threat to our “way of life”, if there has ever been such a thing on this vast and varied continent, is not that someday you or I might be sitting on a bus and hear someone speaking Pashto or Tigrinya (or Dari or Arabic)...

“The threat is that we will swallow the public narrative that immigrants, people from non-European countries are less human than the rest of us, that they think and feel less, that they matter less. Europeans are quite capable of sitting calmly in the bubbling water of cultural bigotry until it boils away eve-



ry shred of compassion we have left. That's the real threat to our "way of life". It is in Australia as well.

I often say to young people, never let someone tell you that compassion for others is a form of weakness. In fact it is our greatest civilizing strength.

And so gathered here in this ancient land, by the harbour, in this country's largest city, not far from the place where the first boat-load of unauthorized arrivals came to this nation in the 1770's, we need to re-commit ourselves to the democratic and egalitarian principles of Eureka:

We swear by the Southern Cross to stand truly by one another and fight to defend our rights and liberties.

We affirm there is room for everyone under the Southern Cross.

We affirm for those who come across the seas we do in fact have boundless plains to share.

We affirm that justice for Indigenous Australians needs to be both formal and substantive. They must

be recognized in the Constitution, and there must be a treaty or a series of treaties.

I look forward to the day, when we will gather in Ballarat to celebrate the inevitable proclamation of the Australian Republic based in those principles fought for and made real in November 1854, and which have continued to evolve down through the years.

And wouldn't it be great to also welcome an Aboriginal leader, someone like Patrick Dodson, the Father of Reconciliation in Australia, and the former first (and only) Aboriginal Catholic priest, as First President of the Australian Republic.

I look forward to that day when we acknowledge that 'history happened here', when equal laws and equal rights and justice for all are a true lived reality in the lives and hearts of our First Peoples, and the last to arrive, and indeed all who call this continent home . 162 years on, a reconciled, truly egalitarian nation under the Southern Cross still remains ours to achieve.

'Chinese Fortunes' at MADE

MADE is putting on a bilingual exhibition to celebrate the Chinese contributions to the Goldfields. Though there is little evidence that there was any Chinese participation in the Eureka Stockade on December 3rd 1854, there is no doubt that there would have been a Chinese presence at some of the monster meetings and democratic agitation gatherings.

This is an exhibition celebrating the trials and successes of the Chinese who made the Goldfields their home and workplaces in that period. The exhibition will be held until 25 June 2017.

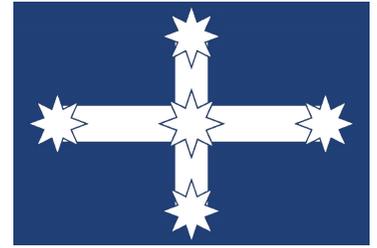
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Chinese Fortunes
28 一月 JANUARY - 25 六月 JUNE 2017

Please see the
MADE website
for more details:
www.made.org



Youth engagement in Democracy

By Conrad Corry



When I was 16yrs of age I wanted the right to vote in State and Federal Elections. I used to watch question time on occasions, even watching Lateline and the political/social commentary panel show The Glass House too. I was itching for my chance to fill in the ballot papers, to participate in the ancient and important custom of Democracy.

I believe it to be an affront to Democracy that self-aware 16 and 17yr olds have no right to vote in Australia, and yet, some of those over 18 (in large numbers as you'll see) waste their chance at voting by not showing up or not even registering to vote. We need ways to engage young people to participate in Democracy and as a start I'm arguing for an 'Opt In' system for 16 and 17yr olds to register to vote. This would entail a registration system where any interested 16 and 17yr olds would be able to register to vote voluntarily and then participate in elections. We basically have that system already for those over 18, as it seems to not be unlawful to not register to vote when one turns 18. I know several 30+ year olds who are not registered and they have not been fined or forced by the Commonwealth to register. That is why as of 31/12/16 there were 801,495 over 18s not enrolled to vote who were eligible to be registered. Their ages would vary. In Australia you can evade registering to vote indefinitely it seems...

I've always supported the idea of 16 and 17yr olds being able to vote on who their representatives to State and Federal Parliaments are. I've always observed a lot of hostility and cynicism to the idea of 16 and 17yr olds voting. The arguments against are sometimes emotional and range from: 'they're not mature enough' to 'they're only interested in themselves' and 'they're selfish' (said by some in the older generations as they negative gear several properties to evade tax and locking young people out of the housing market). Such comments blanketing all 16 and 17yr olds as lazy and self-centred are a little suspicious, as these comments seem based on nothing more than the provocative echo chambers of mainstream media and the innate prejudices of these critics.

Having been to Youth Parliament in my early 20s I observed many 16 and 17yr olds debating with a high level of sophistication, as well as taking an active role in discussing ideas that impact on all of us in a reasoned and well researched manner. This was a small example of the significant number of 16 and 17yr olds who would love the chance to vote on their own futures. Many 16 and 17yr olds leave school to work, learn trades, move out of home, fast-track into university subjects, work full time, are interested in their community's future—and yet, their income and GST taxes go to the Federal Government without the return privilege of a vote in how that Federal Government is run.

It is worth noting that it was in 1973 that the voting age was lowered to 18 from 21. Before '72 it was legal for the Federal Government to conscript 18yr old lads to fight in conflicts and not give them a vote in return for the 'privilege' of being maimed or dying for the Crown. So there is a precedent of the age being lowered to encompass the views of young people in the community as the times and circumstances change and wider changes threaten to swallow them up and impact them directly—I'd argue that Climate destabilisation is the biggest existential threat to Australia and the World, and why shouldn't those generations who will have to pick up the pieces and defend themselves from a hostile climate get a voice in preparing the defences before it is too late?

The Lowy Institute Report on voter engagement in 2013 alleged that out of the 18-29yr olds surveyed only 39% were of the opinion that Democracy is the most preferable form of government. This is alarming, but ultimately irrelevant





to the cause of allowing engaged 16 and 17yr olds to 'Opt In' to register and exercise the right to vote, as these young people will have shown the responsibility to actually register and would have demonstrated the awareness to take on that responsibility. As for why so many 18-29yr olds surveyed thought so little of Democracy, that is another serious question and we should probably look at the way many politicians at the Federal and State level conduct themselves with the obscene perks and post-politics lobbying jobs and other sinecures they receive (combined with the snarky and dishonest way the media seems to portray ALL politicians, even the genuine and honest ones).



I understand some of the trepidation towards letting certain teenagers vote. But if critics are claiming that voting is a sacred responsibility that all 16 and 17yr olds couldn't possibly comprehend, and that such rights are above and beyond the maturity of those young people, let's look at who else lacks the maturity and sense of responsibility. If we apply harsh criteria to these 16 and 17yr olds, let us then apply it at least equally to adults.

At the last Australian Federal election in 2016, according to the AEC, there were approx. 15,676,659 enrolled voters. There were also over 800,000 eligible adults (over 18) that were not even enrolled. Also, out of the 15.7 million voters actually enrolled, about 1,409,535 (8.99%) of these enrolled electors failed to even get their names ticked off (casting a ballot is not compulsory but turning up is). In the lower house voting, 720,915 that did get their names ticked off provided informal votes (this is either a deliberate or accidental filling of the ballot that goes against the very simple instructions for a correct ballot). So if we take the approx. non-registered adults (800k) and combine that figure with the informal votes we have a figure of over 1.5 million. So when we combine the 1.5 million with the 1,409,535 who didn't show up we get about 2.93 million. This is 2.93 million, or 17.75% of eligible 'adults' who did not participate in this election in a manner which allowed their vote to be counted—and yet we would deny rights to those 16 and 17yr olds who would show responsibility to actively seek out the right to vote?

I'm not arguing for a blanket franchise for 16 and 17yr olds, I'm calling for an Opt In system at that age. If a 16yr old is mature and responsible enough to Opt In and register to vote, then they are mature and responsible enough to engage in the voting process in a meaningful way—unlike 17.75% of the eligible 'adults'.

Once they're opted in, they're registered for life to vote. We wouldn't be the first to do it—16 and 17yr olds can vote in Argentina, Austria, Germany, and Switzerland, as well as Estonia, Ecuador and Brazil and others. It is especially obscene that 16 and 17yr olds don't get to vote for the representatives that legislate changes that decide their fate in Australia. These young people will have to deal with the Ageing population, Climate change, exclusive housing prices etc and yet they're voice stands effectively silent at election time.

There is no doubt that the bulk of those at Eureka were young men and women, no doubt some under the age of 18. Peter Lalor lost his arm at the age of 27 due to the massacre on the 3rd of December 1854. There were definitely many young people under 18 at the Monster Meetings and many more scratching their living from the earth showing some maturity by living in the bush throughout the central goldfields. Many of these people put their lives on the line to agitate for their, and our rights. We owe it to the agitators and heroes of Eureka to at least offer the self-aware and responsible 16 and 17yr olds a chance to vote if they themselves show the interest and Opt In. By virtue of being alive in this country, they have earned the opportunity to participate in this ancient and sacred and hard-won right.



Eureka's Children meet with the new Mayor of Ballarat City Council

By Phillip Moore



Eureka's Children President – Eric Howard and myself – Phillip Moore – Vice-president, met with the Mayor, Samantha McIntosh and her assistant Cameron Duthie on Tuesday the 7th February. Each year when a new Mayor is appointed we take the opportunity to introduce ourselves, to describe what Eureka's Children is about and to explain our close working relationship with M.A.D.E which includes various joint programs and other interactive events throughout the year and especially around December 3rd.

The Mayor was interested to learn that Eureka's Children is involved in many programs, not only in Ballarat but also in Melbourne, Sydney and Canberra as well as Victoria's Central Goldfield's digger's annual commemorative events. She was advised that one of our major objectives is to take the story of Eureka and its ideals of democracy to the Australian nation and that our web site - www.ewurekaschildren.org.au - provides a more detailed description of Eureka's Children; its aims, programs, activities and events.

Amongst the various programs we outlined to her we spoke in particular about a joint program we are currently undertaking with her Council ie: **The Eureka Avenue of Honour to the Fallen** in the Eureka precinct.

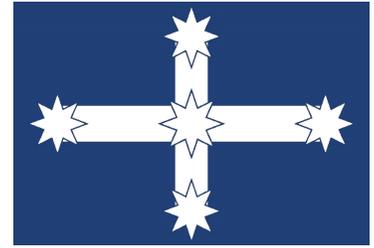
The 33 people who died as a result of the Eureka Stockade Battle in 1854 were from 7 + different countries – Ireland, England, Scotland, Canada, Germany, Russia, Prussia and 5 of unknown origin. The respective embassies are being approached by Eureka's Children for support and some funding; for the cost of their respective plinths and plaques that will be placed in front of the trees as part of the Avenue of Honour. The Ballarat City will take overall responsibility for the project and will underwrite the cost of developing the Avenue Trail Pathway, the acquisition and planting of 33 trees and the construction of a Story Display Board. They will be responsible for maintaining the Avenue of Honour.

Background to the Avenue of Honour Project can be viewed in the October 2015 Liberty newsletter which is included in our website – www.eurekaschildren.org.au



Pictured: Samantha McIntosh - Mayor of Ballarat City Council

A Call for Membership



The success of Eureka's Children Inc is dependent on gathering in new members to our Association. This also includes encouraging existing members to become family members, and by inviting their friends and other relatives to take up membership. One way to encourage membership from friends or relatives is for you to send them our [Liberty!](#) Newsletter to them.

The Aims of Eureka's Children are:

1. *To encourage understanding of the significance of the events surrounding the Eureka Stockade event of 3 December 1854 including the demands for Parliamentary democracy by the diggers and their supporters*
2. *To gain National and International recognition and acceptance of the view that the events of Eureka - the Stockade, the Monster Meetings at Bakery Hill, the Charter demanding democracy and the Oath under the Flag of the Southern Cross are icons of national and historical significance.*
3. *To provide a forum for the descendants of those who were connected with the Stockade event, its prelude and its aftermath as well as for other members and supporters.*
4. *To present a range of programs and events that celebrate Eureka, its legacy and contemporary relevance.*
5. *To actively participate in the public debate about democratic principles.*

Benefits of Membership

- Opportunity to learn about, support and promote the ideals which Eureka represents and especially the contribution of Eureka to the development of Australian democratic practice.
 - Opportunity to meet and join the descendants of those connected to the Eureka Stockade event; its prelude and aftermath, and including those people who have a special interest in Eureka and its ideal of Democracy
 - Opportunity to register your Eureka connection on our Data Base and in future publications of our Eureka Descendants Directory and to develop further insights into your ancestors' involvement, family relationships and friendships.
 - Opportunity to support various Eureka programs and events such as those organised by Eureka's Children and others at the Annual Celebrations of Eureka in Ballarat, Melbourne and Canberra, as well as those presented at the Museum of Australian Democracy at Eureka, and the Centre for Democracy at Old Parliament House in Canberra.
 - Invitation to special Eureka events throughout the year and the opportunity to meet authors, speakers and performers.
 - Representation through our Committee on various other Eureka Planning Committees providing greater opportunity to promote Eureka's Children's interests in achieving comprehensive recognition of the significance of Eureka.
 - Access to the hospitality of Melbourne's Celtic Club, where our Committee meets, and to their library with its special section on Eureka and Democracy.
- Subscription to our Eureka's Children newsletter – Liberty! - You can see the current archive of previous editions of Liberty! At www.eurekaschildren.org.au/liberty



EUREKA'S CHILDREN INC.

Membership Application/Renewal for 2017 (Jan-Dec)

Please print all details and where appropriate.

Surname:			
Other Names:			
Address:			Postcode:
Phone No			
Email			

Membership of Eureka's Children Inc. operates on a calendar year basis.

Ordinary Membership – Includes descendants of those connected with the Stockade event, its prelude and its aftermath as well as those who support the Eureka story and its ideals of democracy

Full \$30.00 per annum \$

*Concession \$15.00 per annum \$

Family Membership Full \$30.00 + \$20 = \$50 per annum \$

Family M/ship Concession \$15.00 + \$20 = \$35 per annum \$

Donations Welcome \$

Life Membership Full \$300, Concession \$150

Note: Concessional Subscriptions include Pension Card Holders.

For Family Membership please list each other name and there contact detail (See over page)

All amounts include GST

DONATIONS WELCOME \$.....

Total Cheque/Money order \$.....

NOTE: EFT Payments can be made to: "Eurekas Children - (BSB)704191 (A/C)90789"

Please include Eurekas Children as well as your name on the internet transfer

Please print, complete this form and return with your cheque/money order to: Eureka's Children. C/O. Celtic Club 316-320 Queen St, Melb. Vic. 3000 Ph. 0417330883

If paying by EFT and you are a new member you would need to also complete and return this form as an initial record of your membership

Contact Details:

Mail Address:

Eureka's Children (Care of Cultural Heritage Committee)
316-320 Queen St
Melbourne 3000

E-mail: eurekaschildren@gmail.com

www.eurekaschildren.org.au