

# BALLARAT & DISTRICT IRISH ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER - Issue 6

## OUR MAIN AIMS:

To create the social interaction of people interested in our Irish and Australian Irish culture.

To foster the involvement and presentation of Australian/Irish music, dance, literature and poetry.

To support, facilitate and participate in special events and festivals.

To present and support cultural, heritage and history workshops/seminars.



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## Dear Members and Friends

This issue of the BDIA newsletter contains the following articles:

1. **The John Molony Tribute - A Successful Day**
2. **A New Research Hub at Eureka Centre**  
Will now include:
  - . **Ballarat Libraries' Australiana Research Collection**
  - . **Ballarat & District Genealogical Society**
  - . **Public Record Office Victoria**
3. **Ballarat Heritage Services 21<sup>st</sup> Anniversary & Book Launch – “Pay Dirt – Ballarat and Other Gold Towns”**
4. **BDIA's Associated Friends and Groups - A Description**
  - . **Australian Irish Dancing Company**
  - . **Irish Traditional Music workshops by Geoff McArthur**
  - . **Ballarat Regional Multi Cultural Council**
  - . **Radio Station Voice FM 99.9**
  - . **Irish Murphy's**
5. **Eureka 165<sup>th</sup> Anniversary & Eureka Soapbox event**  
**A presentation by Phillip Moore : Ballarat Reform League Charter - Eureka's Preeminent Artefact**
6. **Summary of BDIA's Events for 2018-19**

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*With Christmas and the holiday season now approaching the BDIA committee members would like to extend our best wishes to members and friends for a happy and peaceful time over this enjoyable period and we look forward to holding many more wonderful events in the coming year of 2020*

## ***OUR TRIBUTE TO JOHN MOLONY - A GREAT DAY***

This was a special event to honour and celebrate the great contributions of John Molony in his early days as a priest in the Ballarat diocese and in later years in his distinguished career as Professor at the Australian National University in Canberra.

70 (plus) people attended this day on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> October.

In the morning session, people heard our three speakers ; Jim Ross, John McKinnon and Frank Sheehan, reflect on the life of John Molony as a priest in Ballarat.

In the afternoon people chose one of the five discussion groups that addressed social issues facing us today; some of which John Molony had discussed in his books. Our discussion group leaders were: John Mildren–*Global Population, Climate and Related Issues*, Phillip Moore–*Democracy in Australia*, Sandra Harvey–*Education Now and in the Future*, Tony Haintz–*Human Growth and Development*, Barry Ryan–*The Church in the Future*.

These presentations by speakers and discussion groups will soon be added to the Ballarat Catholic Diocese Web Site.

John's early childhood and education began at Sealake in the Mallee, then as a student at St Patrick's college in Ballarat followed by his ordination as a priest in Rome and his return to the diocese of Ballarat. After leaving the priesthood he developed a distinguished career as a Professor at the Australian National University in Canberra.

During his life John was a committee member of numerous organizations – one of these was Eureka's Children – descendants of the Eureka event of 1854. John was Chairman of Eureka's Children's Canberra chapter and also a committee member of Ballarat's Eureka Stockade Memorial Association.

Below is a photo of John with friends at an Annual Eureka Celebration in Ballarat.



## **NEW RESEARCH HUB AT EUREKA CENTRE**

Looking to research your ancestors? Want to learn more about Eureka and the history of Ballarat? The Eureka Centre has now become the home of a new shared resource and research hub for the community.

The Ballarat Libraries' Australiana Research Collection, Ballarat & District Genealogical Society and Public Record Office Victoria services have come together under the same roof as part of a collaborative hub aimed at making records and collections more accessible.

The new hub will be open to the entire community and Eureka Centre visitors, who will have an opportunity to access thousands of items, including photographs, objects, works of art, maps, books, paper records and more.

This hub will extend the visitor experience at the Eureka Centre by providing a research focus alongside displays of fascinating historical publications and documents, a collection point for loans and a welcoming public reading area.

"Many people who visit the Eureka Centre have some sort of connection to the Eureka story, so this hub will allow them to research their own family story and then bring it to life by then exploring the Centre's exhibition," Cr McIntosh said.

"The move from the Ballarat Library also means users have better access to parking."

Access to the hub and its research databases, such as ancestry.com, Trove, Find My Past and the British Newspaper Archive, will be free.

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## **BALLARAT HERITAGE SERVICES 21ST BIRTHDAY AND BOOK LAUNCH – 'PAY DIRT-BALLARAT AND OTHER GOLD TOWNS'**

Many of our Irish Association members and friends attended this special occasion at the Old Colonist Club for the launch of this magnificent book edited by Clare Gervasoni and Dorothy Wickam.

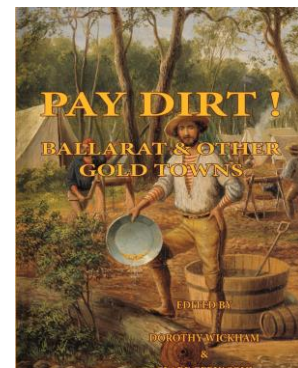
The book's different chapters by well known writers, shed new light on diverse and intriguing aspects of the Victorian goldfields and with four exciting themes - FACES, PLACES, SPACES AND TRACES it provides a widened scope for intelligent enquiry into our gold fields history.

The authors are: Fred Cahir, Ian D Clark, Leigh Edmonds, Terence FitzSimons, Clare Gervasoni, Tim Harrison, Benjamin Mountford, Janice Newton, David Nicholls, Val Noone, Robert Pascoe, Mark Pennings, Keir Reeves, Michael Taffe, Stephen Tufnell, David Waldron, and Dorothy Wickham.

**This book with its evocative illustrations and unexpected topics would be a valuable acquisition for your library and certainly a great read during the holidays.**

**Cost \$29.95**

**Contact: [www.ballaratheritage.com.au](http://www.ballaratheritage.com.au)**



**SOME OF BALLARAT AND DISTRICT IRISH ASSOCIATION**  
**ASSOCIATED FRIENDS**  
**THE AUSTRALIAN IRISH DANCE COMPANY**

The Australian Irish Dance Company has been in Ballarat for 21 years. Classes run out of the Eastwood Leisure Complex Monday nights during school terms. Classes range from Tinies (under 5) to adults (any age!). Irish dancing is a fun way to stay fit while also providing opportunities to perform at such events as St Patrick's Day, Good Friday Appeal, Begonia Festival, Harmony Fest and many more local events.



Classes are run by Emily White and Jeremy Evans. For more information contact Emily on 0409506889

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**IRISH TRADITIONAL MUSIC WORKSHOPS IN BALLARAT 2020**

Musicians – are you interested in learning to play authentic traditional Irish music in a group setting?

We are exploring the feasibility of running a pilot series of five weekly workshops in Ballarat next year aimed at musicians who would like to develop their understanding and ability to play traditional Irish tunes – jigs, reels, etc.

**Local musician, Geoff McArthur** has many years of experience in Irish music and has proposed a series of workshops teaching tunes in the traditional “copy and play” approach. Support resources will also be provided for home practice.

Workshops will be aimed at people playing melody on traditional instruments – eg fiddle, accordion, flute, whistle, tenor banjo, etc. They are not aimed at accompanying instruments – guitars, bodhran, etc. They are also not aimed at complete beginners and will assume a basic proficiency on your instrument.

The aim of the workshops is to start to build a community of musicians committed to learning and preserving Irish traditional music in its authentic form in the Ballarat and District community. Experienced players are VERY welcome to participate. Your experience will be invaluable to our shared learning. Musicians – are you interested in learning to play authentic traditional Irish music in a group setting? Geoff is also happy to answer questions or discuss suitability of workshops for your level of playing.

Expressions of interest: Please contact Geoff McArthur ([geoffmca@ncable.net.au](mailto:geoffmca@ncable.net.au)) or Phillip Moore ([phill.moore1@bigpond.com](mailto:phill.moore1@bigpond.com)) to express interest.

## BALLARAT REGIONAL MULTI CULTURAL COUNCIL (BRMC)

Our Irish Association (BDIA) is one of 24 Cultural Groups associated with the BRMC which manages the Ballarat Welcome Centre, located in the Barkly Square Community Hub; 25 -39 Barkly St. This Community Hub which has various tenants was formally East Ballarat's Town Hall and Library.

BRMC promotes cultural diversity and harmony and provides amongst its many activities; a wonderful range of social services, education and training,, senior programs and lunches, cultural events and trips.

Their web site and monthly newsletters are full of information. See: [www.brmc.org.au](http://www.brmc.org.au) Note: Newsletters in **Library** section of web site

Contact: 03 53830613 E: [welcome@brmc.prg.au](mailto:welcome@brmc.prg.au)



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### **RADIO STATION – VOICE FM 99.9**

Voice FM who were previously located in Dawson Street are now also located at the Barkly Community Hub in East Ballarat. Our Irish Association looks forward to ongoing programs and on air interviews with Voice FM in their new venue.

Voice FM now have 21st-century broadcasting facility with more space, better functioning facilities, extra studios and appropriate disability access, all of which complement Voice FM's drive to further enhance and broaden its program



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### **IRISH MURPHY'S**

**Irish Murphy's which is located in Ballarat's historical Sturt Street and open 7 days a week is a great place for hearty Irish music and good craic.**

**The bar offers a variety of craft international and local beers and a selection of wine and ciders.**

**The kitchen is open from 11.30am-2pm and 6-9pm serving traditional pub specialty meals.**



## **BALLARAT'S EURKA 165<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY – EUREKA SOAPBOX EVENT**

At the recent 165<sup>th</sup> Eureka Anniversary Commemoration and Celebrations in Ballarat one of the major events was the Eureka Soapbox debate.

Based on the belief that many people consider that Eureka is one of Australia's highly contested historical events - the programmers, in an attempt to bring some of the most polarizing issues to the fore, invited guest speakers to argue their side of one of the two selected and contested topics.

These topics were:

Debate 1 : Where should the Eureka Flag reside; the Art Gallery of Ballarat or the Eureka Centre?

Debate 2: What is the preeminent Eureka artefact: the Ballarat Reform League Charter or the Eureka flag?

Our Phillip Moore argued for the BRL Charter in Debate 2  
His presentation follows below



### **Ballarat Reform League Charter - Eureka's Preeminent Artefact - Phillip Moore**

At Eureka in 1854 people from some 30 or more nations swore an oath under the flag of the Southern Cross to stand truly by each other and fight to defend their rights and liberties; an oath which is encapsulated and expressed in further detail in the BRL Charter. These people wanted to establish their own Australian values, to become more independent of Britain, to be recognized as global citizens in this new land of opportunity down under and to further develop a multicultural country.

Nevertheless we often hear comments that the story and events of Eureka are contentious; so let me state clearly that there are certain basic facts about Eureka that are not disputable. These are:

- **There were three Monster Meetings of over 10,000 people at Bakery Hill**
- **There was a BRL Charter proclaiming Democratic Demands and Principles**
- **There was a Eureka Flag that was made**
- **There were a series of delegations and petitions by the diggers to the Governor and the goldfields Commissioner**
- **There was a battle at the Eureka Stockade where the diggers fought to defend those rights and liberties and were prepared to die for it**
- **The was an acquittal in Melbourne of all those diggers charged with treason**
- **And finally there were democratic parliamentary outcomes that came as a result of Eureka and its Charter that influenced not only Australia but the world**

May I suggest to you that these events and actions are intrinsic to and are the very essence of the Eureka story; its meaning and purpose. They are indisputable. Furthermore each of them is related to, underscored and were stimulated by the BRL Charter and each of them was a democratic action. The government however did the opposite – they initiated secret codes, used spies, planned a secret

police network, sent provocateurs among the diggers to stir up trouble, hoping to be able to blame the diggers for any violence that might arise. And finally spoiling for a fight the Governor agreeing with Commissioner Rede organized the brutal and indiscriminate attack on the diggers at the Stockade (and others nearby) stating “it is essential to come upon the diggers in the Stockade with arms in hand when we can legally crush them and their democratic agitation in one blow.”

Consequently I believe it is the BRL Charter that is at the very essence of what Eureka is about. It is a document of democratic demands and principles, it is a Manifesto to which the diggers were prepared to die for, its principles are embedded in our State and Federal Constitutions, it is resonant with universal democratic values, it is recognized in the UNESCO Australian Memory of the World Program and it is included in Victoria’s Heritage Register.

Whilst we don’t have an original copy of the Charter (there exists only the Clerk’s copy given to Hotham) it doesn’t matter because the real value of this document is in the content. This Manifesto is very much like and is equally important as the American Declaration of Independence of 1776 which is so respected and cherished in the USA today.

Whilst it is stated that the BRL Charter grew out of the Chartist Movement in the 1830’s and 40’s in Britain, motivated by the social and political struggles across Europe, we need to appreciate that of the thousands of people who came to the Victorian Goldfields many of them came with a ferment of ideas concerning social justice, the rights of man and the principles of democracy that were initiated much further back in time. These people had been influenced by the ideals of the American and French Revolutions, and by the writings of such progressive thinkers as Edmund Bourke’s “Reflections on the Revolution in France”, John Locke’s two “Treatises on Government”, Thomas Paine’s “Rights of Man” as well as Rousseau’s “The Social Contract” and Henry Parker’s writing that “People are the Authors and Ends of All Power”. In fact the events of Eureka place Australia firmly within a 3000 year old tradition of seeking to achieve human rights and freedom of expression by means of democratic agitation. From Aristotle’s ancient Greece, through the Age of Enlightenment to the early 1800s came a new consciousness of the “equality of man”.

The ideas of these great thinkers, and others that followed, were taken up in the Ballarat Reform League Charter, forming a long tradition of people seeking “the inalienable right of every citizen to have a voice in making the laws he is called upon to obey.” and the principle, and as it is expressed in the Magna Carta of 1215, that “No person is above the law, not even the King” – and that the most royal of all prerogatives is that the people are the only legitimate source of all political power”. It is these principles and others that are stated in the BRL Charter that raise the Banner and distinguishes it from the Chartist agenda of the 1830’s that concentrates only on specific pragmatic demands.

And it is these two principles in the BRL Charter that I want to speak more about rather than those other sections in the Charter that deal with the Immediate Objects of the Reform League and the Political Changes Requested – these like the Chartist Demands of 1830 are more straight forward.

Today there are many issues that our democratic system is not adequately addressing—Issues such as: The environment, deforestation, climate change, water management, housing, power supply, medical services, immigration and refugee caring and placement, and so on. Many of these issues involve our common resources and our public utilities which are there for all of us to share and to look after. Consequently to perform our role as decent citizens; we; each one of us, needs to be more engaged in our democratic system; we need to develop a better understanding of these challenges, enhance our knowledge of selected issues, and work and plan in solidarity with our community so that we can speak, vote and act intelligently and thus play our role as caring and creative Australians. This is what those two major principles in the Charter are about.

John Molony, in his book on Eureka, reminds us that “democracy is more than a political system. It is an ideal and a spirit born in each of us day by day. It is a social institution that needs constant examination and regular reform to remain potent. It proclaims the dignity of all human beings and their infinite capacity for good, for justice, truth and beauty.”

Steve Bracks, Patron of the Eureka Centre, stated at the Eureka 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemoration “Eureka is much more than a story - it is a responsibility that we all share –It is a calling to ensure we stay true to the Stockade's democratic principles”.

Whilst there are a plethora of major challenges and inadequacies facing our democracy let us not forget our Australian democracy nevertheless is one of the oldest and is considered as one of the most stable democracies in the world. We ought to be proud of it, protect it and enhance it. The question is do we value it or do we take it for granted?

Consequently it is my hope that when people, and especially the young, come to visit the Eureka Centre that they can view a copy of the Ballarat Reform League Charter that is, hopefully and should be, given the prominence it deserves in place and size in the Centre. And in fact copies should be available for purchase and take away. It is important that people are encouraged to read this Charter and understand its importance and meaning not only as it applied at that time of Eureka but also realizing that it applies to each and every one of us and encourages us in today's world to become more engaged as we face the many challenges and opportunities our democracy brings.

Whilst in Canberra we have a Museum of Australian Democracy at OPH which primarily presents a story about our system of government and how it manages our democracy here in Ballarat the Eureka Centre is really about the power of the people in an egalitarian multicultural society having their voice, their involvement as civic minded people in the development of democracy in this country.

Whilst I recognize the great importance of the Eureka Flag as a magnificent, awe inspiring iconic symbol of Eureka and that its proper place is in this Centre, nevertheless I believe that it is the Charter that was the very essence and backbone of the Eureka events; articulating the aspirations and needs of the diggers and their supporters – a cause they were prepared to die for. Furthermore I believe that it is the Charter that provided the foundations of Australia's most prominent or pioneering democratic theory and helped set the base for the future development of democracy in this country.

And because of this I would claim that the Charter is the Centre's preeminent artefact.



# BALLARAT AND DISTRICT IRISH ASSOCIATION

## EVENTS 2018/19

### 2018

12 March - Phill Moore arranged and conducted a **tour visit for Irish Ambassador**, Brendan O’Caollai, and Irish Minister, Charlie Flanagan to visit Ballarat’s Eureka Centre and Sovereign Hill as well as a reception with the City of Ballarat’s Mayor and Deputy Mayor and the CEO and President of each venue.

25<sup>th</sup> March - Together with our host, the Irish Ambassador, we, that is the Ballarat’s Mayor and myself – presented **at a special evening reception at the Irish Embassy in Canberra**, concerning a forthcoming project: **The Eureka Avenue of Honour for the Fallen at the Eureka** Stockade Battle in 1854. – which is to be established in Ballarat’s Eureka precinct. The High Commissioners of the respective countries representing those of the fallen were among the many invited guests who attended.

14-15<sup>th</sup> April – Our Members and friends attended the **Irish Heritage Exhibition at St. Patrick’s Archival Hall**. Curated by Dr. Michael Taffe –Diocesan Archivist and committee member of the BDIA

26-27 May- Joint program with Eureka’s Children in presenting a display of the Eureka Story at the **Ballarat Town Hall during Heritage Weekend**

19<sup>th</sup> August – An event at the **Barkly Motor Lodge** celebrating **our Irish Heritage and the Irish contribution to Ballarat since early settlement**.

27-28<sup>th</sup> October – Open day presentation and **celebration of Hymettus Cottage and Garden**. Owned by Michael and Marie Taffe. This beautiful Edwardian home and garden is a wonderful time capsule of life 100 years ago passed down through the generations of the Taffe family, presents to us the opportunity to celebrate our Australia Irish rich architectural and cultural heritage in Ballarat.

23<sup>rd</sup> Nov. – Members Attended **Annual Eureka Democracy award Dinner** – Winner: Adele Ferguson – Writer, Columnist for Age, ABC guest etc. Book/Bank enquiry.. **Speaker: Dr. Clare Wright: The Forgotten Rebels of Australian Democracy**.

16<sup>th</sup> December – **End of Year Xmas Party** – Irish Murphy’s

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### 2019

15<sup>TH</sup> March - **St Patrick’s Celebratory Dinner** @ Golden City Hotel Function Room. Speakers: Dr. Peter Casey and Dr. Michael Taffe - Spoke about the life and significance of St. Patrick.

16-17 March – Members attended **Dunnstown Irish Festival**.

18<sup>TH</sup> May – **Barry V Kelly Musical Drama** at Learmonth Café Sidra – Part of Plate Up Dinner Festival. Members attended and assisted producer Felix Maher with promotion etc.

25-26 May – **Ballarat Heritage Weekend** the BDIA presented in the Town Hall a display on Irish ancestry and Irish groups in Ballarat as well as a visual presentation on a big screen of people, places and events depicting the great Irish contribution to Ballarat since early settlement.

15<sup>th</sup> Sept - Members attended the special **Preview Movie “Ride like a Girl”** which portrays Michelle Payne’s life story and success when she rode herself into the history books by becoming the first and only female Jockey as yet, to win the Melbourne Cup when riding the Prince of Penzance.

**Talking History @ Eureka** - This series of talks at the Eureka Centre presented new perspectives on Ballarat and Goldfields history with a special focus on the events and legacy of the Eureka Stockade. The speakers were:

3 Sept. - Ailsa Brackley du Boi: “Popular Theatrical Entertainment, Eureka, 1854”

1<sup>st</sup> Oct. - Felicity Martin – “*Minefields of Memory: a history of interpreting Eureka*”

5<sup>th</sup> Nov.- Geraldine Moore – “*George Higinbotham and Eureka – The Struggle for Democracy in Colonial Victoria*”

19<sup>th</sup> Oct. - **A Tribute to John Molony** This special event of speakers and discussion groups was an occasion to honour and celebrate the great contributions of John Molony in his early days as a priest in the Ballarat diocese and in later years in his distinguished career as Emeritus Professor at the Australian National University in Canberra. Phillip Moore our Vice President initiated and chaired the planning group for this event.

29<sup>th</sup> Oct - **Book Launch “Jeremiah’s Trunk“ by Denise Tobin Shine @ The Old Colonist Club.** As the cover says “Two women, two centuries apart, both grapple with family secrets and heartache” when Abigail Skinner inherits an old trunk in Melbourne in 2013. The book alternates between Australia and Britain as the characters and their amazing stories are revealed and yes there is a link to Ballarat .

16 Nov. – **Annual Eureka Democracy Award Dinner**

BDIA members attended. **Winner of the Award: Tim Costella. Speaker: Geraldine Moore -*George Higinbotham and Eureka – The Struggle for Democracy in Colonial Victoria***

17<sup>th</sup> Nov – Members attended the **Celebration of the Ballarat Heritage Services 21st Publications Anniversary and Book Launch at the Colonist Club** - a special book about Ballarat and the Victorian Central Goldfields. Our Member Dr. Michael Taffe was one of the chapter contributors to the book

**1-3 Dec.** – Members attended - **Annual Eureka Commemorations in Ballarat**

Among the various programmed events was the Eureka Soapbox Debate. As outlined in the previous article Phillip Moore, a member of the Eureka Advisory Committee, was one of those speakers.

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