

**EUREKA
EDUCATION**

**THE
SIGNIFICANCE
OF
EUREKA**

**EUREKA
CENTRE
BALLARAT**

**ART GALLERY
OF BALLARAT**



THE SIGNIFICANCE OF EUREKA

The significance of the Eureka rebellion has been evident from its occurrence. It has been recognised by prominent authors, politicians and historians and continues to have a lasting resonance in art, popular culture and political movements.

image p.5:
Peter Solness *Standing tall* 2004
digital print on paper, 29.2 x 44 cm
Purchased 2004. Collection of the Art Gallery of Ballarat



Noel Counihan *On Bakery Hill* 1954
from *Eureka 1854–1954: A folio of linocuts*,
linocut on paper. Gift from the Estate of Ailsa O'Connor, 1981.
Collection of the Art Gallery of Ballarat

Historian **John Molony**,
The Age, 21 November 2004

'Eureka lives on in the heart and will of every Australian who understands, believes in and acts on the principle that the people are the only legitimate source of all political power.'

‘It was a revolution – small in size; but great politically; it was a strike for liberty, a struggle for principle, a stand against injustice and oppression... It is another instance of a victory won by a lost battle.’

American author **Mark Twain**,
Following the Equator, 1897

‘Is it possible to imagine a nationalism that is not racist, sexist and otherwise xenophobic? I do, and one of the reasons I can is because I have a picture in my head—indelibly inked there through my research—of men and women from many lands standing together beneath a new flag. The flag bore the symbol of the constellation that located and united them in their new home—the Southern Cross.’

Historian **Dr Clare Wright** in *The Forgotten Rebels of Eureka*, 2013

Peter Solness *A tattoo with attitude* 2004
digital print on paper, 29.2 x 44 cm
Purchased 2004, Collection of the Art Gallery of Ballarat

Prime Minister **Hon. Ben Chifley**,
forward to Leslie Haylen, *Blood on the Wattle – a Eureka Play*,
Sydney, Halstead Press, 1948.



‘The permanency of Eureka in its impact on our development was that it was the first real affirmation of our determination to be master of our own political destiny’

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‘ The events at Eureka 150 years ago played a part in the development of Australia. As a pioneer of democracy amongst free nations, Australia is one of the few countries to have been continuously democratic throughout the course of the twentieth century.’

Prime Minister **Hon. John Howard**,
Eureka Echo, 2004

Historian **Geoffrey Blainey**, speech at the Australia Post launch for the ‘Eureka Stockade 150th Anniversary Stamp Issue’, 29 June 2004



Australian Postal Corporation, ‘150th Anniversary of Eureka Stockade’, 2004, stamp (Australia). Reproduced with permission of the Australian Postal Corporation.

‘We should celebrate Eureka and its democratic protests as a landmark event in Australian history. But we should not go too far in celebrating the battle itself, exciting and tragic as it was. To me the main lesson of Eureka is that argument and compromise are more effective than an appeal to arms.’

May Day March 1945. photograph. Image 120. Eureka Youth League Collection. University of Melbourne Archives

‘Australian democracy occurred at Eureka.’



Leader of the Opposition **Hon. HV Evatt**, address to the Labor Golden Jubilee Committee, 1940



Former Victorian Premier **Hon. Steve Bracks** with the *Flag of the Southern Cross*

‘I believe Eureka was a catalyst for the rapid evolution of democratic government in this country and it remains a national symbol of the right of the people to have a say in how they are governed. The principles for which the diggers, fought are universal – human rights, justice and tolerance. These priorities are as relevant today as 150 years ago.’

Victorian Premier **Hon. Steve Bracks**,
‘Brief battle that hastened our democracy’,
The Age, 3 December 2004

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