

THE EIGHTH SIR JOHN QUICK BENDIGO LECTURE

150 Years of Gold

by

Peter McCarthy

Managing Director and Principal Engineer
Australian Mining Consultants Pty. Ltd.

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*Sir John Quick was a partner in the Bendigo law firm, Quick Hyett and
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150 Years of Gold

Peter McCarthy

When I was invited to speak by La Trobe University at Bendigo in this special year, the 150th anniversary of the official discovery of gold in Victoria, I recognised a convergence. Bendigo was by far the richest goldfield in Victoria, and it was one of the fields discovered 150 years ago, at a time when Charles Joseph La Trobe was Lieutenant Governor of the Colony of Victoria.

Although I am by profession a mining engineer and only an amateur historian, this presentation is largely a narrative. In telling the story of what happened 150 years ago, and what followed, I have tried to reflect a miner's perspective and an appropriately disrespectful attitude to authority.

First, to set the scene, some background on the years before 1851.

Melbourne was the administrative centre of the Port Philip District of the Colony of New South Wales. In the late 1840s the Colony went through a severe economic depression. Mutton and wool had become nearly valueless, so sheep were boiled down for tallow. Gold mining might have offered a solution but it was illegal to prospect for gold, which all belonged to the Crown.

There were a few surreptitious prospectors, like James Gumm, who had been digging for gold in the Plenty Ranges since 1842, but most of them had the sense to keep quiet about it. The first recorded gold discovery was made in March 1847, but the finder quickly made himself scarce. Another man who spoke too freely about his finds had to flee to Sydney to avoid being arrested. Nevertheless, there were many rumours or reports of gold discoveries, some of which were followed up and authenticated at the time, and reported in the press.

Then in January 1849, news reached Melbourne of the gold discoveries in California. Between 300 and 400 people promptly set off for the new El Dorado of San Francisco. There would have been more departures if it wasn't for a small gold rush in the Pyrenees Ranges, which offered a cheaper fare on the road to riches.

In August 1850 the Imperial Parliament passed a bill creating the new Colony of Victoria from what had been the Port Philip District of the Colony of New South Wales. It was titled "An Act for the Better Government of Her Majesty's Australian Colonies", and also permitted the creation of South Australia and Tasmania. The new arrangement was not to become official until 1 July 1851, at which time the Superintendent, Charles Joseph La Trobe, would gain the new title of Lieutenant Governor.

News of the decision reached Melbourne on November 11th 1850, and the following day was devoted to processions, sports, a royal salute, displays of bunting, speeches, and a huge bonfire and fireworks display on Flagstaff Hill. About twenty thousand people turned out for those celebrations at a time when Melbourne's population was only 23,000, and the entire Port Phillip colonies' population was only 70,000.

The new year of 1851 began badly. On "Black Thursday", February 6th, a dreadful bushfire swept through the colony, taking many lives. The colonists were still cleaning up after it when six days later, news of Hargreaves' gold find at Bathurst reached Melbourne. Hundreds of people packed their belongings and departed on foot or by the regular coastal steamers, leaving many houses empty and trade at a standstill.

Over the following three months, surreptitious gold prospecting increased and in some cases news leaked out about the origins of small parcels of gold. Speculation in new gold, coal and copper projects was aroused, provisions went up in price, and, inevitably, the banks raised interest rates. But there was a conspiracy of silence about the newfound wealth.

There was probably no general gold rush because there was still the difficulty of Crown ownership of gold, and the Superintendent was unlikely to do anything about that until he assumed his new role on 1 July. Until then, any gold found would fall under the control of the Sydney administration, and who knew what might happen then? From a Melbourne perspective, one could even imagine that the discovery of a major goldfield in Victoria might derail the political process that had been approved the previous year. However, once the critical date was past, what better assertion of independence from Sydney than a local discovery?

On June 5th the Melbourne Argus, commenting on a rumour that 300 people were already digging for gold in the Plenty ranges, said that no doubt many small parties were there but that 300 was an exaggeration.

On June 9th, the Mayor of Melbourne presided over a public meeting which carried a resolution to appoint a gold committee and to offer a reward to anyone “who shall disclose to the committee a gold mine or deposit capable of being profitably worked within 200 miles of Melbourne”. You will notice that the reward was not for discovering gold but for disclosing a discovery. The timing was prudent, allowing for preparation, travel, inspection and validation of any discovery, to have results ready for announcement soon after the 1st of July.

On June 11th a prospecting party set out on what turned out to be a fruitless search between Mt Disappointment and Warrandyte. Then a specimen submitted to the gold committee on June 13th by Henry Frencham, a reporter for The Times, caused great excitement, with a crowd of 200 waiting outside the analytical chemists to hear the result. Think of it for a moment, two hundred people milling about in the street, waiting to hear an assay result. This was the level of public excitement in the period before the official discovery of gold! Gibbons, the analyst, eventually came out and told the crowd that ‘Frencham’s statements were found to abound in moonshine and his specimen with iron sulphides’.

James Esmond, a station worker who had been to California, set up as a prospector in the Pyrenees on his return and kept himself fed somehow, without officially stealing the Queen’s gold, for several months. However, he nominated June 29th 1851, 150 years ago as the day he found gold. But consider the date and the minimum two-day horse ride that he knew it would take for the news to reach the authorities in Melbourne.

The news of Esmond's find was published in the Melbourne papers on July 16th, the same day as news of a find at Warrandyte, only 17 miles from the Melbourne GPO, and both well after the new Colonial administration came into effect. (The city of Warrandyte today claims the first gold discovery in Victoria). It later emerged that three shepherds employed by Dr Barker also discovered gold at Mt Alexander, just 30km south of Bendigo, on July 20th, but they kept the find secret for nearly two months while they dug as much gold as they could.

In the first month only 50 people arrived at Clunes. They lived "very comfortably in a collection of tilt carts, tents and mud huts". Parties making for Clunes camped overnight at Buninyong on the way up and yarned around their campfires. Thomas Hiscock found little nuggets the size of rice grains near his home in Buninyong, so some others decided to prospect locally. When that news reached Clunes on August 16th, a large group of dispirited diggers headed south for Hiscock's gully.

Alfred Clarke, a reporter from the Geelong Advertiser, arrived at Hiscock's find on August 15th and saw 8 cradles at work. One party was getting 2 oz per day. Many people were specking the hillsides. It was a dry diggings; washdirt had to be carted to the river for washing. But by late August the excitement had passed. Clark reported, "Parties were chopfallen and disgusted, selling their outfits for the merest trifle". Hiscock went back to his blacksmith shop in Buninyong.

On Monday August 25th came the news that Governor La Trobe had resolved the question of the ownership of gold by licensing diggers to mine it, imposing a licence fee of 30 shillings per month. That evening a mass meeting of diggers carried resolutions objecting to the fee. The resolutions were sent to the newspapers but there was no talk of violence. Journalist Clarke wrote "thirty shillings for 26 days work is the impost demanded by our Victorian Czar. Eighteen pounds sterling a head is the merciless prospective exaction on an enterprise scarcely fourteen days old. I say unhesitatingly, fearlessly and conscientiously that there has not been a more gross attempt at injustice since the days of Wat Tyler".

Many of the diggers in Hiscock's gully departed in the last two weeks of August, intending to be well out in the ranges when collection of the licence fees began. One such party, Dunlop and Regan, found Golden Point at Ballarat on about August 24th.

They got about an ounce a day, but new arrivals did better. One party got 23 ounces on a Saturday. The newspaper reported "the digging parties being stationed on the top of the

hill excavating the earth and conveying to the creek in barrows or sledges, assisted in some cases by a rope. At the side of the creek are the cradles, each worked by two men; of these parties there are now 40 or 50 working and lots of others on the road”.

In early September, experienced diggers sank shafts at Golden Point and discovered the jeweller’s shops that lay only a few feet beneath the surface. The Geelong advertiser reported “In this month fortunes were made in a few hours, and a digger who went down into a hole at daybreak a poor man emerged at sunset with a competency”.

Commissioner Doveton accompanied by Sub Commissioner Armstrong, Captain Dana and a contingent of troopers and black police, arrived at Ballarat on September 20th. Doveton was there to enforce the new licence fee and announced that a fee of 15 shillings would apply for the remainder of September. Individual claims would be limited to 8 feet square and the maximum any party could hold would be a double claim.

Next day, Sunday, speakers mounted stumps and denounced Doveton’s proposed actions. The diggers proposed changes but Doveton responded, and I quote, “I’m not here to make the law but to administer it, and if you don’t pay the licence I’ll damn soon make you pay it. We came to receive your licence fees and give you seven minutes before extreme measures will be taken, You are all a poor set of devils. What the hell did you come here for if you are not able to pay? Any man that strikes his pick into the ground will get three months for it”.

The diggers decided to hold out against the licence, but Connor, holder of one of the richest claims, paid the fee in return for a double sized claim. This broke the resistance of the others and the ensuing rush to pay licence fees used up all the forms that Doveton had brought. Clarke wrote “ If the truth be told the Government is the greatest gold digger; for where they dig they find it in pockets and are saved the expense of outfit or licence - work where they please and sink a shaft in every man’s purse, and perhaps in his heart too”.

Then Clark continued; “A man possessed of no mind himself, Mr La Trobe has hitherto been ready to confer honours on individuals assumed to be gentlemen but who are in reality, useless foppish whippersnappers, lost and dead to every sense but that which proclaims their ignorance. What would any community of free men think of any puppy of an officer who talked about irons and handcuffing those who did not pay for the privilege of being allowed to work?”

“The position of the Government is most critical; it is on the edge of a precipice over which the slightest step may plunge it. The first repulse of the Government officers by force on any of the colonial goldfields will never be forgotten till the Australians have abjured their loyalty and are a united and independent nation!” Remember, this is was only weeks after the first discovery of gold and three years before Eureka. Suddenly we were Australians, and the struggle for Federation and then for Independence had begun.

The officials argued that one benefit of the licence fee would be a gold escort to Geelong and Melbourne. When he heard that the gold would not be insured the Argus correspondent wrote “What benefit is it to the diggers to have an escort such as this? One blackfellow leading a horse to which 70 pounds weight of gold is strapped, and two white troopers behind him. A couple of men with double barrelled guns might take the gold, blackfellow and horse to boot”.

In November Armstrong, accompanied by two troopers, went from tent to tent in Ballarat forcing the occupants to take out gold licences including “butchers, bakers, storekeepers and others who are not diggers and have no inclination to dig”. Those who objected had their tents pulled down. Others were handcuffed and chained overnight to trees.

Two parties were on gold at Forest Creek (Castlemaine) at the start of October. The gold lay on the surface and was easily won. By November there were 2000 diggers there, who spread out all around the area and soon found the Bendigo diggings. Local station owner Stewart Gibson claimed that he had found Bendigo in September, and the discovery was also claimed for Margaret Kennedy, an overseer’s wife.

When news of the ease and richness of the Mt Alexander diggings reached Melbourne, the turnkeys of the jails, the warders of the lunatic asylums and 38 of the 40 Melbourne police all resigned. Despite efforts at recruiting, ten policemen were left to control 20,000 people over the New Year holiday. Fifty-nine ships were abandoned in the harbour at Melbourne even though offers of crew wages per voyage were increased from 8 pounds to 120 pounds.

Governor La Trobe somehow had to discourage the mad rush to the diggings, and to raise revenue to cover the increased wages of government employees. On December 4th his government announced that the licence fee would be doubled to three pounds per month from Jan 1st 1852. The miners didn’t take the news well. On December 10th the Argus reported “There appears to be an extraordinary demand for guns, pistols, powder and ball, and even cutlasses are enquired for. The diggers are usually the purchasers and people

wonder what they can want with such a quantity of arms. As it is not likely that the diggers are providing themselves with arms to shoot at the gold, we may be allowed to suppose that they are contemplating an excursion to the moors at the expiration of the present year”.

At this time the limited surface deposits at Ballarat had been worked out and almost all of the miners had joined the rushes to Forest Creek, Mt Alexander and Bendigo Creek. In that belt of country 20 miles long, 20,000 diggers were congregated.

Mass meetings were held at the new diggings to protest the license fee. At Mt Alexander on December 9th, three thousand diggers resolved “We pledge ourselves to resist it in every shape and form and will aid by every means in our power those who would do the same elsewhere”. At another meeting in Chewton two days later, fourteen thousand diggers rolled up. When news of this reached Melbourne, the Government despatched 130 soldiers to Mt Alexander. They were greeted with groans and hoots.

The Bendigo diggers resolved “while deprecating the use of physical force, and pledging not to resort to it except in case of self defence, we pledge to relieve or release any diggers fined or confined for non payment of the licence fee”.

In the face of this resistance, on December 13th La Trobe announced that the licence fee would not be increased and the previous order was rescinded.

In the previous few months, wages in Melbourne and Geelong had increased between 50% and 100%. A majority of able-bodied men had left for the goldfields. The ports of Melbourne and Geelong were full of deserted vessels.

Over that Christmas holiday, six hundred Bendigo diggers pooled their food resources for a banquet. They speculated about the remaining gold in Pegleg Gully, Ironbark Gully and Golden Gully, and about the future. Would there be an end to convict transportation? Would the goldfields be over-run by ex convict Vandemonians? Would the diggers eventually be forced to rebel against the government? And what would people at home in England think of it all when the first news arrived by ship the following April?

As the news travelled beyond the colony in the early months of 1852, a rush of new diggers arrived. The newcomers had no commitment to the colony but were there to make a quick fortune before returning to wherever “home” was. Even some of the established Victorians had changed their expectations. At Myers Creek, Bendigo, one successful digger said “I intend starting away home to England with the old woman; a place I never expected to see again when we left; but, please God, I’ll finish my days there yet”.

Eaglehawk Gully was found in April by two diggers looking for a stray horse. Then rushes quickly followed to German Gully, White Horse Gully, Kangaroo Flat, California Flat and so on. The rush to Red Hill was recorded by the Resident Commissioner "From the camp the night before we could feel the flutter of excitement. Tents were being struck and baggage packed - the gold fever was in the air. Next morning, as we rode out along the bush track, the sight was simply incomprehensible... The road was covered from end to end with every conceivable kind of vehicle, ranging from wagons to hand-carts and wheelbarrows. Red Hill... was no longer red, but grey with diggers".

One former Melbourne preacher and his family made 500 pounds at Eaglehawk in four months, but he did not like the diggings. He described it as "a pig's life", but a great temptation to a man with a large family. As well as the high price of provisions and the dearth of comforts and luxuries, the diggers had to suffer gangs of ex-convicts who robbed and swindled many an honest man's gold. The diggers would discharge their muzzle-loading guns at dusk every day, to warn would-be robbers that they were armed and to ensure a fresh, dry charge was in the weapon for the night.

For Bendigo diggers, bushranging gangs presented the greatest risk as they passed through the Black Forest with their gold on the way to Melbourne. The legislative council passed the Convict's Prevention Act in September, but by then thousands of ex-convicts and ticket-of-leave men had already found their way to the goldfields.

The difficulty of protecting assets is evident in this story from one Bendigo escort superintendent, who was waved down by a miner who was told that they couldn't carry any more gold.

"Would I take some notes then? I extended my hand, saying 'How much, and what is your name?' "Micky O'Halloran, yer honour, three hundred pounds".

"I clapped spurs to my horse to overtake my troop. The amount was too large to be taken in so loose a way. Not long after, another man rushed across my way, so suddenly that I nearly galloped over him, with a similar request".

"If it's only a few pounds," said I. "It's only a bundle of about five hundred pounds," exclaimed he. "I cannot take the responsibility", said I hurriedly. "There's none", shouted he "No receipt wanted". Away I shot after my troop, leaving him shouting after me "Cram it into your pistol holsters. Ram the bundle down your boots!"

After the rich pickings of 1852, the Bendigo field was littered with the debris of shallow workings and the spoil of thousands of cradles that had been banked up around the waterholes. Throckmorton, a New Zealander, employed fifteen Maori ex-sailors to work a puddling machine on the Bendigo side of Eaglehawk Gully. By the end of 1853 there were more than 1200 horse-driven puddling machines at work. This work required organisation and some capital; so many diggers were reduced to a subsistence lifestyle.

In mid 1853, some of the 23,000 Bendigo diggers formed an Anti-Gold-License Association to seek improvements in conditions and a reduction of the 30 shillings monthly license fee. The leaders of the Association were G.E. Thomson, Dr Jones and “Captain” Edward Brown. They raised a petition, which circulated around the goldfields (and which still exists), carrying the signatures of 5,000 to 6,000 diggers. The petition affirms loyalty to the Crown then mentions “the present impoverished condition of the Gold Fields” before making demands including a reduced license fee, improved law and order, the right to vote and the right to buy land.

La Trobe rejected most of its demands, leaving open the path to the Eureka rebellion at Ballarat the following year. After Eureka, five goldfields representatives were added to the old Council in Melbourne as an interim democratic measure. It is often claimed that Eureka spurred the government to immediate constitutional reform, but the timing is wrong. “An Act to Establish a Constitution In and For the Colony of Victoria”, which created the elected Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly, was reserved on the 25th March 1854, well after the Bendigo petition but eight months before Eureka, and gained Royal assent after Eureka in July 1855. This was a logical step by the Imperial government, which was probably not influenced by local events.

At Bendigo, mining of gold from quartz reefs followed the puddling era. By the time Sir John Quick, whose memory is honoured by this series of lectures, left school in 1862, gold mining in Bendigo and the other established centres was an industrial business which ran on steam power. For every miner underground, a greater number worked around the surface plant or in the bush gathering mining timber and firewood for the steam boilers. Foundries, sawmills and other industrial concerns proliferated in support of gold mining.

Sir John Quick worked in an iron foundry and as a battery hand in a mine. There are good descriptions of stamp battery operation in Victoria, but none as good as this American version by Mark Twain:

“I will remark, in passing, that I only remained in the milling business one week. I told my employer I could not stay longer without an advance in my wages; that I liked quartz milling, indeed was infatuated with it; that I had never before grown so tenderly attached to an occupation in so short a time, that nothing it seems to me, gave such scope to intellectual activity as feeding a battery and screening tailings, and nothing so stimulated the moral attributes as retorting bullion and washing blankets. Still, I felt constrained to ask an increase of salary.

He said he was paying me \$10 a week, and thought it a good round sum. How much did I want? I said about \$400,000 per month, and board, was about all I could reasonably ask, considering the hard times.

I was ordered off the premises. And yet, when I look back to those days and call to mind the exceeding hardness of the labour I performed in that mill, I only regret that I did not ask \$700,000”.

Sir John Quick must have thrived on the intellectual stimulation of quartz milling and later journalism, gaining academic qualifications and eventually being knighted for his contribution to Australian Federation.

The Bendigo goldfield was different from other Victorian fields in one important way: it contained a lot more gold. The gold was in quartz reefs; in horizontal “ribbons” which repeated predictably and could be followed to great depths, so that Bendigo for a time had the deepest shafts in the world. By 1872 Bendigo had 5,000 rateable houses for a population of 24,000, the principal suburbs being Long Gully, California Gully, Golden Square and White Hills Hamlet. Two new Mining Exchanges were being built and the colony’s first express train ran to and from Melbourne.

Bendigo, sometimes then called ‘Quartzopolis’ was full of optimism, despite the prognostications of ‘The Jeremiads of the Ballarat Press’ which reflected an ancient and perpetual rivalry between the two mining centres. The further progress of Bendigo was dependent on water supply. Water from the Coliban River was to be brought via Castlemaine to the Spring Gully Reservoir, a project as important in its time as the Goldfields Water Supply to Kalgoorlie thirty years later.

Fifty years after the gold discovery, a new century began with the Federation of the Commonwealth of Australia on 1st January 1901 and the death of Queen Victoria exactly three weeks later. The goldfields preserved the spirit of Alfred Clark’s 1851 call for a

united Australia. After many years of Federation discussions, the 'Yes' votes in the 1898 referendum had been Ballarat 95%, Bendigo 93% and Castlemaine 85%. Melbourne was much less certain, with Collingwood, for example, voting only 55% 'Yes'.

The pioneers of 1851 were now feeble and elderly, but they had been the first to call themselves Australians 50 years earlier, in defiance of 'Charley Joe' La Trobe. Ballarat sent Alfred Deakin to the first national parliament and hoped for a while that Ballarat would become the new national capital. The goldfields cities had electric lighting and a well-established telephone system, and were connected to Melbourne by fast trains. Bicycles filled the streets of every mining town.

The Amalgamated Miners' Association had been organised in Bendigo in 1874 by the militant Robert Clark, who modelled it on Britain's National Miners' Association. Unionism gained strength in Victoria through the 1890s and higher wages were putting pressure on the quartz mines. 'Miner's Complaint' (silicosis) and tuberculosis had become a serious problem and were a big disincentive to entering a mining career. A study of the problem by a Bendigo doctor, Walter Summons, led to improved regulations for ventilation of quartz mines but many mines could not comply and were closed down. Throughout Victoria, recruiters for the Western Australian mines were active and successful.

As gold production statistics show, the Victorian gold mining industry faded away after 1907. By 1918 the last Ballarat mine had closed and the Bendigo industry was a shadow of its former self. While individual mines across the state were to struggle on, the golden years were over. Despite this, the remaining headframes, mullock heaps and tailings dumps reminded communities that they were mining towns. Repeated attempts to reopen old mines or establish new ones had automatic community support.

Bendigo Amalgamated Mines was formed to consolidate many of the old leases, but came into production just after the Great War in a period of high inflation. The mines closed in 1922, after which the field flooded at depth.

A serious attempt was made to reopen the Bendigo field by Gold Mines of Australia through a subsidiary Bendigo Mines Limited in the mid 1930s. The plan was to connect the Nell Gwynne to the Carshalton shaft via the Napoleon shaft, a tunnelling distance of more than four kilometres. A battery was set up at the Carshalton shaft but only operated for a few years, and little of the planned mine development was done. The company had

bought George Lansell's Fortuna Villa mansion as a staff recreation centre, but this was sold again in 1938.

Other mines were developed in the 1930s. However, of thirty-seven mines Bendigo mines in 1940, only the four Deborah mines were still operating at the end of World War Two. The Central Deborah and the North Deborah were the last to close in 1954.

The community was always sensitive to the environmental effects of mining. William Kelly, in his "Life in Victoria" (1859), comments on the extreme baldness of the ranges resulting from the large amount of timber required for boiler fuel and for mine support. He noted that while in the earlier days some miners would fell a tree to fry some chops or boil a pot of tea, with the introduction of American stoves economy became inevitable because, apart from the expense, firewood had to be chopped to fit into them.

The effects of alluvial and underground mining on the landscape were locally severe, but not on the same scale as agricultural clearing and the effects of cloven-hoofed livestock. Regrowth began within weeks of the gullies being abandoned by miners. More serious problems arose with the removal of topsoil by hydraulic sluicing, and affected areas like Vaughan have never recovered.

Pollution from sulphur dioxide and arsenic fumes due to roasting of gravity concentrates was soon moved out of town by legislation, but then became concentrated at sites such as the Edwards works in Bendigo and Sebastopol. The disposal of mine tailings and in particular the residue of puddling machines blocked up waterways, causing pollution and periodic flooding. Sludge channels were developed in Bendigo and Ballarat by forming timber and later stone linings in the creek beds.

The greatest potential for environmental damage arose in the early years of the 20th century because of the popularity of dredging which polluted streams and rivers. Restrictive legislation was passed in 1906 and dredging remained of little significance until major developments occurred in the 1930s. However, serious attempts were made to manage the problem.

Much of the Loddon Valley near Campbells Creek was dredged prior to 1914, and resoiled by advance stripping and slum settling. The dredged areas were later reported to produce the best fruit and lucerne in the district. Resoiling was tried near Yackandandah in about 1914, where good dairy land resulted.

During the dredging era from the 1930s to around 1950, topsoil and overburden were prestripped and stacked by bulldozer, then replaced as the dredge passed. For example, the Newstead dredge operated a zero discharge pond which was resoiled by the dredge, leveled by bulldozer and regrassed. The Jim Crow and Adelong dredges used bulldozer resoiling. In the Ovens Valley no suitable soil was available, so the worked out area was leveled and planted to pines.

To put the environmental impact of quartz mining in perspective, a far greater volume of surface soil and rock is being moved and a greater area of land is being affected by the construction of the Calder Freeway than was affected on the quartz mining leases of the Bendigo goldfield by a century of mining.

And now, as I speak, history merges with the present, because the gold resource is still there, deep beneath the city. Bendigo Mining NL has developed an inclined tunnel more than four kilometres northward from the old Carshalton shaft site and is achieving unprecedented exploration success. The company has realistic plans for returning Victoria's gold production, within a few years, to levels not seen for more than a century. When this happens in Bendigo there will be renewed confidence in other Victorian goldfields where projects have stalled for want of investment.

The best way I could think of to sum up the 150 years of gold and to close this talk is to quote Randolph Bedford, mining entrepreneur and journalist: "Every morning was a New World, with yesterday's impressions keenly held, but not its lessons. The greatest thing in life is living fully every second; taking a 99 percent extraction out of life so that death shall find the tailings not worth the cost of cyanide".



Peter McCarthy

Peter began his career in underground mining in 1969 through the Engineering Cadetship programme offered by CRA Ltd and the University of NSW at Broken Hill, where he completed a part-time BSc in Mining Engineering. After gaining his Mine Manager's Certificate, Peter relocated to Ballarat in 1978 to manage development of the mining museum at Sovereign Hill. This involved some challenging underground tunnelling and the restoration of the complete surface works of a 19th century gold mine, with re-commissioning of steam boilers, various engines and the stamp battery. Peter served for several years on the Board and was later elected a Life Member of the Ballarat Historical Park Association.

As Senior Lecturer in Mining Engineering at Ballarat CAE Peter was instrumental in having Ballarat declared the Centre for Mining Education in Victoria, while mining engineering courses at RMIT and Melbourne University were shut down. He developed and gained approval for the Graduate Diploma in Mining course which still exists.

After completing a Masters Degree in Mineral Economics at Macquarie University, Peter relocated to Melbourne and joined a firm of mining consultants in 1986. This began the international period of his career with assignments north of the Arctic circle in Sweden, in the highlands of PNG, in New Zealand, Turkey, Africa and Burma following in quick succession. He was involved in feasibility studies for new mines, in detailed planning for existing mines, in technical reviews and due diligence for financiers, valuations for mergers and investigations into accidents.

Peter is currently Managing Director of Australian Mining Consultants Pty Ltd. His professional memberships include the Australasian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy, the Institution of Engineers Australia and the American Institute of Mining and Metallurgical Engineers. He is a member of the board of the Mineral Industry Consultants Association, a member of the Joint Ore Reserves Committee and a Foundation Member and Fellow of the CEO Institute.

Peter has published more than 30 technical papers and journal articles in his professional field and on mining history, a continuing interest. He is a past director of two gold exploration companies with interests in Central Victoria. His current interest, shared with his wife Anthea, is in developing a modest olive grove at their Faraday property, south of Bendigo.



Sir John Quick

John Quick was born in Cornwall, England in 1852. In 1854 his family migrated to Australia; his father died shortly thereafter.

At age 10 he entered the workforce, undertaking various manual jobs in mines then progressed to journalism. His drive for self improvement led him to complete a law degree at the University of Melbourne (1874-77) and in 1882 he was awarded a Doctorate in Law.

At this time, Sir John Quick was in charge of the Age Parliamentary staff. He entered politics himself in 1880, winning the Legislative Assembly seat of Sandhurst (Bendigo), which he held until 1889.

Quick's public support for Australian Federation commenced with an 1882 speech to Parliament. As a delegate from the Bendigo A.N.A., he attended the 1893 Corowa Conference where he presented the famous resolution which took Federation's fate away from Parliaments, and gave it directly to the people via elections for representatives and a referendum on the draft Constitution. He wrote the Enabling Bill needed for these stages to occur and also wrote a booklet, *A Digest of Federal Constitution* (1896), to help educate the public.

Throughout the two referenda campaigns of 1898 and 1899, he addressed numerous public meetings.

Quick's work for Federation was recognised with the award of a knighthood in 1901.

He was elected unopposed as Bendigo's first Federal M.P., holding the seat until 1913.

The Sir John Quick Bendigo Lecture has been established to revive the memory of this self-made man who had the forethought and perseverance to promote Australia's union. Quick himself referred to his long devotion to Federation as a "public duty" he had to perform. Sir John Quick deserves to be recognised as a "Father" of Australian Federation.

Written by Michele Matthews, BA(Hons) Melb, DipEd LaT

THE SIR JOHN QUICK BENDIGO LECTURE SERIES

The Sir John Quick Bendigo Lecture is presented annually by La Trobe University, Bendigo and the Sir John Quick Committee with the support of the City of Greater Bendigo.

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- 1996 Towns and Gowns: the Humanities and the Community -
delivered by Dr Janet McCalman, Prize-winning author and Australian Research Council
Research Fellow
- 1997 The Myth of the Level Playing Field -
delivered by Dr John White, Global Chief Executive, Visy Industries
- 1998 What Makes a Place a Community -
delivered by Dr Al Luloff Professor of Rural Sociology, The Pennsylvania State University
- 1999 Confronting Ageism Towards a Society for all Ages
delivered by Mrs Delys Sargeant, Chair National Coordinating Committee
(United Nations International Year of Older Persons) Australian Coalition 1999
- 2000 Referendum The Australian Way delivered by The Rt Hon Sir Ninian Stephen