



Book casts a light on the hidden half of the Eureka story

TOM COWIE

A NEW book is set to be released telling the untold part of Eureka: the role played by women.

The Forgotten Rebels of Eureka by Clare Wright hopes to shed more light on the thousands of women who came to the goldfields in the 1800s.

Ms Wright said the Eureka story had only been half told, with the role of women sidelined to a bit part in history or barely mentioned at all.

She said Eureka had been mythologised over time as a period of history that mostly involved "free-wheeling" men, which was untrue.

"They weren't just single men, there were huge numbers of women," she said.

"There were huge numbers of men that came with their families."

Adelphi Theatre proprie-

tor Sarah Hanmer is one woman who has been forgotten by history, according to Ms Wright.

As well as providing the headquarters of the Ballarat Reform League, she was a key financial benefactor of the diggers' movement.

Other women also played prominent roles in the rebellion, such as Clara Maria Duvall, who edited the *Ballarat Times* after her husband was captured.

Ms Wright said many women on the goldfields were often more successful than the husbands who had struck out looking for gold.

"Their wives were actually making a good fist of it. They were the ones that were becoming breadwinners," she said.

"They were really holding the fort as their men hunted for gold and didn't find it."

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CLARE WRIGHT, AUTHOR



EUREKA EXPERT: Clare Wright, historian and author of *The Forgotten Rebels of Eureka*.