

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT**  
**2021 EUREKA ORIENTEERS INC. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**7 JUNE 2022**

Hi everyone,

Our 2021 AGM is a bit late this year; it's already June! That's a result of us being a busy and productive club for the first half of this year, with several significant events already in the bag for this year.

However, thinking back to last year, it was thankfully a more normal orienteering year, compared to the previous one, 2020, where our calendar was torn to shreds by COVID-19. We still had significant event requirements last year, but at least we were able to stage events again, and get out orienteering. I'm sure many of you were the same as me and found the first time back out to be a challenge, recalling skills and thought processes that hadn't been exercised for some time.

We started 2021 with a few BUNS events, and then staged the NOL, Eureka Challenge and Vic Autumn-Spring #2 event at Petticoat Gully. Ian Lawford set the courses, and we got 161 at the event, which was a great turnout, representing how much orienteering had been missed the previous year.

Our MTBO connections were also represented, with the Vic MTBO Sprint Champs being run in Maryborough around the MEC and Bristol Hill, as part of the 3-event Vic Champs weekend. This was our first use of the new BS-11 touchless-only SI units, and we learnt a few new things from that experience! There are always new things to learn, regardless of our previous experiences.

Following that, we entered another period of lockdown restrictions, which impacted our Winter Series events and also the OVic Autumn-Spring series. The season was all but over by the time restrictions eased, with a couple of the events we'd planned being postponed into this year's calendar. Overall, though, Eureka continued its long-standing tradition of delivering quality orienteering events, despite the upheavals, and the good work that was done in preparation for cancelled events was not wasted, as we were able to stage those events later on.

You may have noticed that our club website at [eurekaorienteers.asn.au](http://eurekaorienteers.asn.au) has had a recent refresh. It was well due for a new look, and technically, it was forced on us. The old "theme" being used to control the website's layout ceased being supported quite some time ago now, and gradually, as the site continued being updated with new technology, bits and pieces of the old theme started to fail. A very recent update suddenly broke many of the tools displayed on the front page – the real time clock ceased to update, the weather widget only updated sometimes, and the layout of everything went awry and couldn't be fixed. That forced the change. Choosing a new theme was not easy, as there are thousands of themes available, some free and some with payment, and we had to find one that suits the type of content we usually post. After trying about eight different options, we're now using a modern theme that seems to suit our content and style quite well.

Many of our members have departed Ballarat to other places over the years, and also returned from lengthy periods away, and this year is no exception. After a few years of regular travelling to the ACT, Geoff and Jenny Lawford have recently permanently relocated to Canberra to be closer to family. Ken and Anitra Dowling are also well along in the process of relocating to New Zealand. Eureka deeply thanks you all for your lengthy loyalty and dedication to the club, and to orienteering generally, and the legacies you all leave behind through schools orienteering, event organisation, Foot and MTBO, mapping work and the Daylesford Permanent Orienteering Course, will be fondly remembered and valued. We wish you all well for the future.

Eureka also welcomes several past members back to active membership after periods away. Chris and Glenda Norwood have returned to Ballarat after 2 years living and working in London; Terry and Helen Haebich return after a lengthy absence due to health issues and Terry's knee surgery; and Sarah Corfe and Bill Borrie have also returned to orienteering. Welcome back to all of you!

Finally, it's sad to report that two of our past members have departed us in the most final of ways.

Rob Plowright passed away in Japan on the 29<sup>th</sup> of April this year. His participation in orienteering, and as a world-class mapmaker, are famous across the orienteering world. I clearly recall the mapping workshop Rob ran for the club, somewhere around 20 years ago now, and I still have the map board and coloured pencil set he gave each of the participants. I recall Rob saying that green pencil leads were the hardest to find, and if we ever found a reliable source of them to please let him know. I also recall his mapping philosophy of using the symbols available to show what an orienteer would expect to see in front of them when running through the terrain, and that technically-accurate mapping on its own was sometimes not as good as combining in some artistic skills, to ensure the runner got the right mental picture from the map. This was particularly relevant in complex goldmining terrain, where some features are built up from the undisturbed terrain so you climb up onto them, and other areas are dug out and you run down into them. We mourn Rob's passing, think of Rob's wife Masumi and sons Rui and Caio, and will remember him every time we enjoy one of his many maps.

Lesley Norwood, wife of Eureka founder Tom, and one of the most familiar figures at Eureka events for over 45 years, also passed away recently on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of May. I remember Lesley and Tom as among the first Eureka people I ever met, at a Eureka Christmas "do" at St George's Lake Creswick, probably at the end of 1983 or 1984. Lesley was someone who always remembered your name, and recalled what you'd been doing with yourself, regardless of the time between meetings, which made her an absolute powerhouse when running the Registration desk. She was also a founder of the long-famous Eureka Cake Stall, which earned a significant sum of money over many years to assist Junior orienteers to attend interstate events. We mourn Lesley's passing, join with Lesley's family in celebrating and remembering her life and please note that Lesley's memorial celebration will be held at Barnes Funerals, 701 Darling Street Ballarat, at 1pm this Friday.

In conclusion, coming up later this year is the 2022 Australian Championships Carnival. I'm sure we all remember how busy we were getting at around this time in 2015, the last time this carnival ran in Victoria when Eureka was the coordinating club for the "Dr Blake" carnival experience. Hard to believe that is now seven years ago...! Warwick Williams has been very busy this time around, as OVic's Carnival Director, getting things organised. Eureka has a smaller role overall this time, though we have got specific events and tasks to organise, so look out for requests for assistance coming up in the not-too-distant future. Being a local carnival again, I also encourage everyone to enter as many events as you can, and enjoy the vibe of having the National Championships week being held in our area.

Best wishes for the rest of 2022, and happy and safe orienteering!

Ian Chennell

President

7 June 2022