

HD BEACON TO THE FUTURE.**BY** By PAUL STEWART.**WC** 457 words**PD** 23 August 1998**SN** Sunday Herald Sun**SC** SUHERS**PG** 18**LA** English**CY** (c) 1998 Herald and Weekly Times Limited**LP**

FOR the first time Aboriginals will help celebrate one of Victoria's oldest European landmarks.

Members of the Framlingham and **Wathaurong** communities will take part in the festivities next weekend to mark the 150th anniversary of Cape Otway lighthouse. It stands on the second most southerly point of mainland Australia surrounded by the middens of the extinct Katabanut people who lived here for up to 80,000 years.

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The lighthouse was the first to mark Bass Strait and, in many instances, the first sight that greeted migrants from the British Isles. Built in 1848, it was the second lighthouse constructed on mainland Australia. The first was at Sydney Harbour's South Head in 1802.

Co-ordinating the 150th celebrations is tour guide **Bruce Pascoe**, a descendant of the Ballarat and Geelong Aboriginal communities.

Mr Pascoe said it was "significant that Koori groups had decided to take part in the anniversary".

"Aboriginal people are taking part as a major act of reconciliation. Some people from both white and Koori groups have questioned our involvement but in the spirit of reconciliation we will go ahead," he said.

Mr Pascoe said a "full scale" war was conducted between Aboriginals and settlers in the area from 1838 to 1842.

"All the Katabanut were wiped out except for a few women who escaped," Mr Pascoe said.

He said one infamous stretch of coast near the lighthouse was known as "Massacres".

"It was here that white men on horseback herded between 60 and 100 Aboriginal people, including a lot of women and children, straight off a cliff and into the sea," he said.

Mr Pascoe said during its time the Cape Otway lighthouse had lit the way "for all manner of shipping".

"It saw the arrival and end of the great days of sail," he said.

"It saw ships sunk in World War II after a German mine layer went through."

Mr Pascoe said the lighthouse keepers had to keep a light on in all weather.

"Keepers were the saviors of shipwrecked sailors and their families had to cope with isolation, erratic provisions and the general demands of remote life," he said.

Next Saturday, as the tall ship Ronah-H sails past the lighthouse, fireworks will be let off.

Mr Pascoe said other celebrations would see the original light at the Cape Otway lighthouse relit at sunset.

From 3pm there would be performances from former Goanna frontman Shane Howard, Mari Laury, Judy Jacques and the Lighthouse band, Howling Wind, Glen Romanis and members of La Mama Theatre group and Aboriginal dance groups.

All this week a half-size replica of Cape Otway lighthouse will be featured at Melbourne Central.

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