

Coin for Prince Leonard's Star marks 40 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE

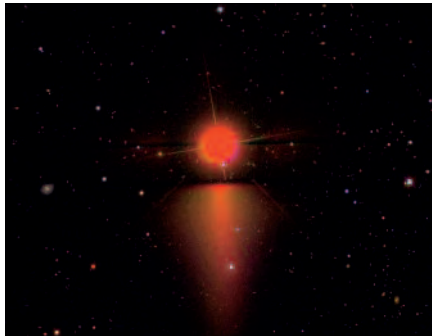
FORTY years ago on 21 April 1970, Western Australian farmer Leonard George Casley declared his Hutt River farm independent of the Commonwealth of Australia. As 'they' say, "The rest is history." But, as Prince Leonard of the now 40-year old Principality of Hutt River says, "We are still here."

To commemorate the fortieth anniversary of secession the Principality has struck a \$30 coin showing Prince Leonard's star in the Constellation of Virgo.

Prince Leonard is a Virgo who will turn 85 in August. In August 1999 star SAO 119916, located at RA: 13h 24m 42s, D: + 4° 24' 08", was named *HRH Prince Leonard* in his honour. In other star catalogues it is referred to as *HIP 65442*, *PPM 159732* and *HD 116621*. [Stars would seem to be almost as bad as coins in having multiple reference numbers.]

The striking design for the coin's reverse is the brainchild of Hutt River's Sir Steven Baikie. Virgo, goddess of justice, agriculture and the harvest, is portrayed as a comely maid draped tastefully in classical Grecian style and carrying a sheaf of wheat in her left hand and a palm frond in her right. She is overlaid by the stars of her constellation with the position of *HRH Prince Leonard* shown at her right hip.

For Prince Leonard, Virgo's wheat



HRH Prince Leonard, aka SAO 119916. Image courtesy Wikisky.

sheaf is a particularly compelling symbol. Forty years ago government-imposed draconian reductions in wheat quotas threatened to destroy the economic viability of his farm. It was in defence of his harvest that he declared independence. In the constellation the wheat sheaf is marked by the bright star *Spica*.

From an astronomical consultant Sir Steven learned that Prince Leonard's star is a cool red type that burns slowly at temperatures of about 4000–4500 °C. As such it can be expected to have a long life. It is about three quarters the size of our yellow Sun which is also hotter, at about 5000-6000 °C. The light from *HRH Prince Leonard* takes 1918.57 years to reach Earth. For any astronomers among the numismatic fraternity its apparent magnitude is 7.65.



The selectively gold and silver plated anniversary \$30 as struck, showing the location of star HRH Prince Leonard appropriately at Virgo's right hip. The chivalrous man always walks on the right side of his lady in order that his sword arm remains free for her defence. Image courtesy Principality of Hutt River.

The dual, gold- and silver-plated coin is struck on a 40 g brass flan, 45 mm in diameter and 3.5 mm thick with a reeded edge. Virgo is picked out in matt gold as is the Prince's effigy on the obverse. The lettering, including that defining the location of the Prince's star is selectively-plated in matt silver. Mintage is 1000 with each coin supplied in a capsule, fitted into a plush dark blue velvet case that bears the 40th Anniversary Logo printed in gold on silken lining inside the lid. Each coin is accompanied by an individually numbered information card 0001/1000 - 1000/1000.

The official launch will take place in the Principality on 21 April, the 40th anniversary of the secession.

Any reader wanting to order one of the new coins can do so at the Hutt River website: www.principality-hutt-river.com or email: huttriver@principality-hutt-river.com or snail mail to: Royal Mint of Hutt, Government Buildings, Principality of Hutt River, via Western Australia 6535.

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