



AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL FLAG ASSOCIATION (N.S.W) INC. NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2006

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MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR GENERAL

A MESSAGE FROM HIS EXCELLENCY MAJOR GENERAL MICHAEL JEFFERY, AC CVO MC (RETD) GOVERNOR -GENERAL OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA FOR AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL FLAG DAY 3 SEPTEMBER 2006

On National Flag Day 2006, Australians are called to celebrate the 105th anniversary of our country's most conspicuous national symbol.

One hundred and five years ago the newly federated Australia, emerging from the 19th century and poised on the threshold of a vibrant era of opportunity, sought to create a national flag to symbolically define its nationhood. One can imagine the extraordinary interest in the public design competition which ultimately drew almost 33,000 entries. The winning five – of similar design – were adopted to form the basis of Australia's national flag. It has remained thus, largely unchanged, in the years since.

We see the massive Australian Flag flying magnificently above the Parliament House Canberra representing our democracy and freedom; we delight in waving the flag during events of national significance including the Olympics and Commonwealth Games. And which Australian is not moved by the sight of our medal winners standing proudly on the dais, as the Australian Flag is hoisted to the music of our national anthem? And in front yards across Australia, thousands of people raise the flag every day as a symbol of pride in our nation.

Australia is indeed a "Nation of Excellence – the Global Example." I commend National Flag Day to all our citizens as an occasion on which to be very proud of our country and its outstanding achievements.



THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Our Australian National Flag of 'Stars and Crosses' has been one of the keystones in maintaining our national pride in Australia during 2006 despite the threats to our security both here at home as well as abroad. Australia remains a great bastion of freedom and democracy in our troubled world and our flag symbolizes that freedom.

On this the 105th Year of the Australian National Flag there has been a marked resurgence in national pride for Australian history, Australian heritage and Australian culture. Our Australian National Flag, designed by Australians, continues to be our most important symbol. It remains 'a flag of the people as well as the nation'.

" Our Australian National Flag of 'Stars and Crosses' is Australia's chief national symbol by law custom and tradition.

It represents the principles on which our nation is based.

**It is the right and privilege of every Australian to fly
The Australian National Flag."**

Importantly, it is also the **right of every Australian**, both young and old, **to know the full and accurate history of our Australian National Flag.**

ANFA is constantly striving to fully educate all Australians about the rich history and heritage of our own national flag despite attempts, by some, to downplay that heritage.



DON'T FORGET FLAG DAY CELEBRATIONS

MARTIN PLACE SYDNEY

12.05pm

FRIDAY 1 SEPTEMBER 2006

(NOT 3 SEPT. THIS YEAR)

Fortunately in 2002, with the magnificent help and co-operation of the former Federal Minister for Education, Science and Training the Hon Dr Brendan Nelson, one of ANFA's key objectives was realized. The video kit "Our National Flag...since 1901" was distributed to all Primary Schools throughout Australia.

Two of ANFA's current objectives are firstly to have this highly successful video kit distributed to all Secondary Schools throughout Australia and so enable young Australians of all ages to view the true and accurate story of our flag.

Secondly ANFA is working towards having the 'Proclamation of the Australian Flag Promise' made by the Governor-General. The Proclamation will lead to all Australian students being involved in using the Promise at their schools.

Australia's National Flag is worth defending!
Lets keep our flag flying ...aloft and free forever!

Les Dudman
PRESIDENT

AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL FLAG PROMISE

I promise allegiance to Australia & our flag of "Stars & Crosses", to serve my country and all its people faithfully & to uphold Australia's laws, values & traditions.



EDITORIAL 2006

An odd voice will, on occasions affirm there is still considerable opposition to our national flag – but when questioned, is unable to confirm by written copy, or even a name, place or date of the information source. We are aware of two colonies of opposition, both small in memberships. One is Ausflag Ltd which has been around since the early 1980s and has a web site which still contains inaccurate information. The other is the Flag Society of Australia. We understand one of its members has recently launched a book. We have not seen it yet but one early (scan) report found its academic style to be boring, unimpressive and the work of a writer with an agenda of their own. However, with a Federal election due next year we must remain vigilant.

Sadly we have lost two of our long standing Member/Councillors. They both leave with excellent records of achievement and voluntary service. David Field now wishes to devote full time to business and other interests after 18 years of service to ANFA. With his technical expertise, he proposed and led us into the professional education videos "Making Our Flag" and the widely distributed "Our National Flag...Since 1901." David was also a chief motivator in our decision to introduce the educational web site.

John Lynch was a real "true-blue" Foundation Member of ANFA, having attended the original Public Meeting in 1983 from which this Association emerged. With strong convictions about our Flag and nation, he was always upfront as a willing volunteer. On his own initiative he signed up a record number of new members for ANFA. Shortly after accepting a position on ANFA Council, John who had carried an illness, received medical advice to resign his activities.

We recognise and offer our sincere gratitude for the contributions these gentlemen have made towards the success of ANFA (NSW) Inc.



NOTICES TO MEMBERS

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) is convened for Tuesday 26 September 2006 at 10.30am to be held at Level 7 ANZAC House 245 Castlereagh Street Sydney.

An election will be held for a new Council of Management. The ANNUAL REPORT will be presented. Order of Business will be confined to AGM matters only. No general business will be heard except those items advised in writing to the Secretary at least 14 days prior to the meeting. All members are welcome to attend.

E.J. EGGINS
HON SECRETARY

Australian National Flag Day (3 September) will fall on a Sunday this year.

As we are supported by a school band our Council has decided to hold the ANNUAL CELEBRATION 2 days earlier, I.E. FRIDAY, 1 SEPTEMBER AT MARTIN PLACE near PITT STREET at 12.05pm. We look forward to seeing you there.

Many thanks to all those members who responded to our donation appeal 2005 or did so during the year according to their own schedule. In fact we would greatly welcome a spread of donations across the year, rather than all at once due to office staff limitations and associated delays in processing receipts and banking procedures.





As explained on the previous page, we are pleased to announce the flag's 105th birthday celebrations will be held (two days early) on Friday 1 September 2006. We are again delighted to advise the return of the renowned WOOLLOOWARE HIGH SCHOOL BAND conducted by their skilled musical director MR RAY AVARD. The band has had several trips overseas to perform as widely as North America and Europe. You will also be entranced to watch the entertaining MR JOHN VAUGHAN, our expert vexillographer leading the Australian flag raising team and the "Break Out the Flag" ceremony. We are pleased to announce that our GUEST OF HONOUR will be MR BRIAN POWYER, Assistant Director of Curriculum K-12, NSW Department of Education and Training.

EARLWOOD / BARDWELL PARK RSL SUB-BRANCH



CHILDREN'S ANNUAL "ANZAC COMMEMORATION DAY"

Our Annual Children's Day Anzac Service and presentation held on Wednesday 12th April 2006 at 11.00 A.M. was once again a great success and well received with approx. 300 Schoolchildren in attendance from six (6) of our local Schools being;

Bardwell Park Infants School
 Bexley North Public School
 Clempton Park Public School
 Earlwood Public School
 Undercliffe Public School
 Our Lady of Lourdes Earlwood

Plus quite a number of our own members attending to assist with the organising of the day. Each child present received an Australian Flag,

a Brochure titled "The Australian National Flag" supplied by the "Australian National Flag Association" together with a can of soda, a slice of plum cake, which they enjoyed seated on the carpeted floor in part of our Auditorium.

This year we had a slight change of format, many of the Children taking part in the short Service at our Cenotaph such as the reading of the Prayers,

a tribute to "Anzac" the placing of floral Tributes on the Cenotaph.

On their arriving in the Auditorium itself and being seated, they were then addressed by our local Federal Member Mr Tony Burke, M.P. Federal Member for Watson, after which he presented to each of the Schools present

(2 students from each School coming forward) and receiving a new Australian Flag to be flown from the Schools own Flagpole...

The whole of the presentation and proceedings concluded at 12.00 noon with the singing of the National Anthem "Advance Australia Fair", after which the Children all marched back to School waving their Flags..

A wonderful and moving sight to witness...

From: Cliff Poulton

Chaplain

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For history, civics, design, opinions, debate, social and general studies. Also protocol of 'Flying the Flag.'

WEB SITE: www.australianflag.org.au

for a wealth of information





A brilliant colour photo of the Australian flag on the front page of the Mosman Daily last Australia Day was most appropriate. It also prompted two interesting letters in that paper in the following weeks.

1: 16 FEB 2006 from Tony Burton,
Flag Society of Australia.

“Your striking front page photo on Australia Day said it all – young Australia, our hope for the future. What better day for such inspiration to take pride of place.

We should feel proud of our country and respect the current flag (Australia has a rich heritage of different flags going back to the 1820s). It is the caption that grates. In fact it is quite misleading.

It is ourselves as a nation we take pride in, not the flag, and the place we take pride in is our country, not the flagpole. It is misleading to refer to the “proud old flag” as if it has been around since time immemorial. The Australian flag, though based on a design for two ensigns in a public competition in 1901, is in fact derived, with no great originality, from the 1870 ensign of the colony of Victoria.

The ensigns were selected and amended by a committee, the blue version reserved for government use until 1941. It received Royal Assent to be the official flag of the people on 14 February 1954 under terms of the Flags Act drafted in 1953. We should be wary of overly venerating an artefact of the kind of nationalism that, when carried to excess, has brought so much misery to the world.

There was a time when Australians in our dry, laconic way had another word for flag-wavers and after the misuse of the flag at Cronulla, perhaps that still applies.

The real “old” flag is in fact the Union Jack, which even up to 1954 was used and regarded as the national flag across Australia and in school rituals. Until 1953, it was in the name of this same flag that Australians gave war service and even their lives. But no one fights or dies for a flag as such – and it is time that oft-heard furphy was put in perspective.”

ED: Fair enough. However, we stand by our colloquial use of “proud old flag”, for we feel anything whose origins date back 47 years before our proud old Daily (est. 1917) has the right to be respected for its heritage.

We agree with the comment of the Editor (Mosman Daily). Our “proud old flag” has truly gained icon status since it won the official government design competition in 1901, our year of Federation as a nation. I believe that the Flag Society of Australia is a small group, originally engaged in the study of flags generally. More recently however it appears to devote more effort to criticism and opposition to our popular national flag. It is well known that Tony has submitted lots of his designs into national flag competitions without success.

2. 9 March 2006 from Dawn Moss, ANFA (NSW) Inc.

Flag History Revealed

“TONY Burton’s claim that the Australian flag was derived from the 1870 ensign of the colony of Victoria (Opinion February 16) differs from other sources that it was based on the 1851 Australasian Anti-Transportation League’s banner of a gold Southern Cross on a blue ensign. Patricia Ratcliff’s biography *The Usefulness of John West*, published 2003, tells how the Rev John West of Launceston, Tasmania, spearheaded the Anti-Transportation League movements in 1851 (i.e. of convicts to Australia and NZ). The same year he designed the league’s banner which was hand-sewn in silk and, since 1896, has been housed in the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston. British-born Mr West became the co-founder / editor of the *Launceston Examiner* in 1842. He left Tasmania in 1854 to become editor of the *Sydney Morning Herald*, a post he held until his death in 1873. The first flag designed in Australia was the Bowman Flag (1806) designed and flown by the Bowman family near Richmond, NSW, to celebrate the victory at Trafalgar.

The original flag, now very fragile, was recently displayed by the Mitchell Library commemorating the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar (October 21, 1805). The Australian National Flag was first raised in Melbourne on September 3, 1901 (after a public competition) and a seventh point was added to the Commonwealth star in 1908 to acknowledge the territories as well as the six states.”

PS 1: While the Burton letter offered no proof that the Australian flag derived from the 1870 ensign of the colony of Victoria – the Moss research provides a more rational documentary linkage to the Anti-Transportation banner of 1851.

2: The September, 1901 issue of the Melbourne journal “Review of Reviews” published full details of the official Australian flag competition results. On the front cover was a large illustration of our new flag in full colour – red, white & blue – below which appears in large print “FEDERAL FLAG adopted as the NATIONAL FLAG by the COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT.”