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The Merchant Navy War Memorial Fund Ltd

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NATIONAL FLAG DAY MESSAGE

Australia's annual National Flag Day once again reminds us that since its introduction in 1901, it has been a symbol of great pride for our country. In two World Wars and many other conflicts our National Flag has flown, as a nation seeking a peaceful world. In peacetime how many of us feel that sense of pride in our nation, as honoured Australians enter an opening ceremony of the Olympic or Commonwealth Games.

When our first Prime Minister, Sir Edmund Barton, GCMG, KC, announced the results of a "Federal Flag Competition", in 1901 that resulted in 32,823 entries, two Flags were born... The blue **Commonwealth Flag (Australian National Flag)** and the **Australian Red Ensign** for the Merchant service and pleasure craft. The two versions of our flag were identical in design with the field (background) colour being blue and red.

Our National Flag day is also a day to remember with great respect the very significant number of Australian Merchant Navy seaman who gave their lives for their country in WWI & WWII. Their great courage and heroism and uncomplaining dedication to duty had the unreserved admiration of the sailors of the world's navies.

Those who were lost, and those who finally came home, but alive, have left an enduring legacy of service above self for us to learn from. That capacity for endurance of the common man facing uncommon danger is a lesson that every generation needs to learn afresh.

David Field FAICD
Chairman
The Merchant Navy War Memorial Fund

