

Ralph Kelly: Has the Australian Flag Debate Ended?

Abstract: *This paper updates my ICV17 paper *Filibuster: the century long Australian flag debate* which chronicled the debate about the Australian flag from pre-federation times to 1997. The various promotions by Ausflag and other want-to-be flag designers over the past 10 years are reviewed. The major new development is the impact of 11 years of a conservative government in entrenching the current national flag, particularly in the schools and in official propaganda where flag history is being corrupted.*

The nature of the flag debate has broadened from the search for the perfect design to the role of flags in a multicultural society. International context comes from the analysis about the Australian flag contained in the doctoral thesis of the late William Crampton, highlighting the parallels between the failure of flag designs to achieve national identity in Australia and Weimar Germany.

Flag loyalists are on the verge of declaring victory in their battle against the forces of change, particularly as Australian public attitudes and usage of the flag appears to have changed in the past decade. However, the possibility of a change of government is reviving the spirits of Ausflag and its 2007 flag change promotional effort will be explained.*

[note - the author is a director of Ausflag and this initiative will be revealed at the ICV, if it has not become public prior to August]*

INTRODUCTION

The flag debate up to 1997

Ten years ago at the 17th International Congress of Vexillology, Cape Town I presented a paper entitled *Filibuster: the century long Australian flag debate*. In that paper I recorded the early efforts for Australia to obtain a national flag, some initial criticisms of the design and the 50-year process for usage of the flag to expand from the initial restrictions to that of a modern national flag. I also recounted 40 years of efforts by various political lobbyists and designers to create a new design for Australia that they hoped would more clearly and unequivocally proclaim a unified Australian identity than a defaced British blue ensign.

Numerous flag design proposals were developed and national design competitions were conducted in 1971, 1985, 1993 and 1997. As an Australian vexillologist and a Director of Ausflag, I have personally seen over 10,000 competition entries, of which about 500 design proposals would be credible. Labor Governments under Bob Hawke (1983-91) and Paul Keating (1991-96) provided a political climate in

which a change of flag was feasible, but the government focus was concentrated on achieving economic reforms. In 1984 Prime Minister Hawke announced green and gold as the official national colours, "Advance Australia Fair" was confirmed as the national anthem and ownership of Uluru was transferred to the traditional owners. Two years later, the Australia Act severed the last constitutional ties to Britain, but changing the flag was "too hard". The prospects of change rose when Prime Minister Keating stated in 1992 that he regarded the existing flag "as an ambiguous representation of our nation and I believe it ought to be changed" [1]. But government support for a flag change became subordinated to the failed attempt to convert Australia to a republic. In March 1996, the conservative and wily Liberal Party leader, John Howard defeated the Labor Party and, three elections later, he remains Prime Minister; with the high probability of a fifth election win in October of this year.

Whilst it is demonstrable that there is a widespread and continuing dissatisfaction with the capacity of the Australian flag to adequately reflect Australia's nationality as it exists in the modern world, there has not been any political will or leadership of the type shown by Canada's Lester Pearson that is necessary for Australia to obtain a flag that looks to Australia's future, not to its past. Whilst many Australians have a sense of change being inevitable, the uncertainties as to how, when and to what are more problematic than ever.

PART 1 – AUSFLAG

Ten more years of efforts to change

Ausflag, which was founded in 1981 by Harold Scruby, is the most enduring and prominent group advocating a change of flag and in the dark shadows of the Howard Government it presses on with the fight. Ausflag continues to periodically issue press releases and posters, write articles and create publicity events to maintain the flag change issue in the media whilst its internet site has been a very widely used resource on Australian flags generally.



In July 1997, Ausflag launched the Australian Professional Design Competition with entries limited to members of professional design organisations and the Flag Society of Australia. From the 3,000 entries received, 100 design entries were judged to be the best and these flag designs, together with nine previous designs that had won previous competitions or had been promoted by Ausflag were shown to the public in a travelling exhibition of art galleries throughout 1998. There was a wide range of design concepts, though there were several recurring themes [2]:

1. The use of blue as the main colour – usually as background to the use of the Southern Cross, representing a continuation of the "local" design element of the current flag;
2. Use of the Commonwealth Star, usually with the addition of a eighth point in expectation of Northern Territory statehood – continuity, though often seemingly lacking in a symbolic intent;
3. Use of landscapes and earth colours – alluding to the Outback, a major influence in developing the Australian character. This also appears to be influenced by the first place designs for both the 1986 and 1993 Ausflag completions;
4. The Aboriginal flag or its colours appeared on a number of entries, with only a few designs attempting to represent Australia's indigenous people with other design elements;
5. Relatively few of the final designs used the national and sporting colours of green and gold, though I believe that there was some selection against designs featuring these colours in the judging process;
6. Gold stars and stripes were useful in many designs in providing some form of difference to the simple solution of merely separating the fly of the existing flag from the Union Jack.

7. A number of designs used the kangaroo, though few were able to effectively integrate this most uniquely shaped animal into their designs – resulting in few being selected for the final 100;
8. Many individual entrants provided multiple designs that were variations of their design concept – inviting the judges to pick the variant that aligned with their preferences, in effect “gaming” the competition process, rather than having a conviction about their design. This also resulted in a “mix-and-match” approach to the design process.

The Australian public was invited to vote for their favourite through Ausflag’s internet site, with the choice also including nine additional designs that Ausflag had previously promoted. The Top 20 designs were announced in May 1999. Interestingly, the public selected all four of the designs featuring kangaroos, two of the only three designs including green and gold were selected and all but two of the top 20 designs included the Southern Cross.

The judges’ selection of the winning designs was announced on Australia Day 2000. The overall winner was a design by Franck Gentil, which the judges praised for its pure simplicity¹³. Remarkably it is almost the same as



the first proposal for a new Australian flag – that of Jack Murray’s Socialist League in 1956, replacing the Union Jack with a gold Commonwealth Star rather than a white star. The most popular design by George Margaritis was awarded second prize by the judges, though they changed the design to change the direction of the kangaroo and changed its proportions.

None of the winning designs captured the public imagination and there was no follow-up public promotion of any of the designs, other than recording the event on Ausflag’s website.



This two and a half year process was more of a journey to attract media and public interest, than being successful in identifying the new Australian flag.

Whilst the Ausflag internet site remains central to the campaign for a flag change, it has remained substantially unchanged for several years. Ausflag’s site was recognised by Hitwise as one of the top 10 political web sites for 16 quarters from 2000 to 2004, but as the flag debate has quietened, and as other flag resources have become available on the web, including Flags of the World, Ausflag’s web site has lost much of its uniqueness.

One of the complaints that is made about almost all of the design proposals that have emerged from the Ausflag competitions, is that there is a uniformly pedestrian look about them. The same design elements are arranged differently, but few are striking and capable of being inspiration. In some ways Ausflag’s past success in achieving wide participation in its various competitions has exhausted the field. Design concepts that were originally fresh and innovative, now seem familiar and pedestrian. It is analogous to a marathon runner – there is a real possibility that Ausflag and the whole flag change movement has peaked too early and may struggle to complete the race.

Ausflag has held the view that the initial and primary task is to convince Australians of the need to change the flag, and when political leadership corresponds to public opinion on this threshold issue, then there can be a process by which the new Australian flag can be determined. All the promotions and competitions have been designed to create maximum media interest, with the search for the perfect flag a secondary objective.

Over the past seven years, Ausflag has been effectively dormant. Harold Scruby has become active in a new passion – he established the Pedestrian Council of Australia to promote road safety and the health benefits of walking. It is a theme that has been able to attract government and commercial sponsorship and regular media coverage, with no opposition. By contrast, promoting a new Australian flag is hard work.

An embarrassing blow was the decision of the former leader of the Australian Republican Movement, Mr Malcolm Turnbull, to join ANFA in March 2004. He was a former director of Ausflag and had sponsored a flag design exhibition in 1996. Cheekily, ANFA’s John

Vaughan called upon Ausflag to follow Turnbull's example and close down its activities [4].

Change-advocates are like nationalists in Eastern Europe when it was under Soviet rule – patiently waiting for the inevitable, faithful to the cause but pragmatically not confident of change in the near term. Ausflag supporters are not persecuted, merely ignored.

PART 2 – INDEPENDENT DESIGNERS

The inspired patriotic designers

Despite the failures of Ausflag's promotional efforts and flag design competitions, a number of Australians have personally been inspired to design the new Australian flag and to promote their vision through their own efforts. Their personal passion is impressive and is symptomatic of a real popular desire for a more effective design for the Australian flag. Several are also doing something that Ausflag is not doing – selling to the public flags to fly, car stickers and other ephemera that gets their design more widely seen. They must be getting sufficient public support to continue their efforts or they are true believers of their personal crusades. Another feature of private design proposals is that the designer gets the opportunity to explain the symbolic meaning of their design and its elements, whereas in design competitions a design's meaning has to be self-evident.

Unfortunately this results in the self-promoted flags having more design elements, rather than less. In my opinion this effort to "have something that everyone will relate to" tends to weaken the effectiveness of their designs, especially where the core design has a potentially inspiring innovation. Another aspect is that small design differences, such as the width of a stripe or shade of colour can be considered to be a greater part of the designer's vision than is evident to simple people like me.

Overall, the quality of the designs varies greatly and few are substantially different to the designs that have been entered. Following is a sampling of the independent designs of the past ten years.

Brendan Jones – Brendan Jones's flag dates from April 1995 and is stated to represent a reconciliation of the past, recognition of our

heritage and optimism about the future [5]. Reconciliation and heritage are shown by the Aboriginal colours of black, yellow and red progressing to the European colours of red, white and



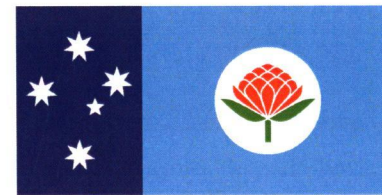
blue. The boomerang is a uniquely Australian artefact whilst the Southern Cross and Federation Star provide continuity with the existing flag. Placing the star in the honour position would "forge an Australian nation in which all citizens strive towards a common goal of a prosperous, peaceful, tolerant and unified nation". Jones was probably the first Australian flag designer to promote his flag on the internet and it is described on the Ausflag website as the "Reconciliation Flag".



In 1997 an additional variant design was proposed replacing the boomerang and the diagonals with thin vertical stripes including a line of yellow dots, alluding to one of the Aboriginal art styles and said to

represent "a coming together of all our cultures in peace and equality" [6].

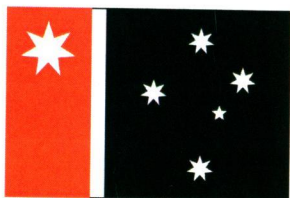
Jones has also designed state flags and Ausflag has submitted both the NSW and WA proposals to the state governments in attempts to start the process of flag change from the states.



Patricia Wooley – Attempting to reconcile the Aboriginal Flag and the Australian national flag results in a flag crowded with meaning but the strength of the black, red and yellow



colours results in it seeming to be an adaptation of the Aboriginal flag, rather than representative of the “cultural unity of many people of different origins” [7].



Douglas Dowell - Another designer places the Federation Star in the canton because “it places Australia ahead of its parts” [8]. A red stripe has a similarity to the Cross of St George whilst a black field for the Southern Cross as an Aboriginal element and because

a red white and blue flag would be “too British” to be able to unite all of Australia’s people. Dowell seems motivated by the need to remove the Union Jack from the Australian flag, observing that “the Union flag is such a striking symbol of the UK that the current flag cannot be considered ‘quintessentially Australian’ – it is British with a little bit of Australia in the bottom and the far right. Can that be right for a fully independent state?” A variety of colour combinations is offered for the full range of ensigns for military and shipping use, with a green and yellow sporting flag – and any of these variants could become the new national flag if his preferred colours are not accepted.

Dylan Crawford – Another variant of this design concept replaces Dowell’s thin vertical line with a wavy line in green and yellow, whilst reverting to the traditional blue field [9]. Crawford seeks to maintain the continuity of the Australian elements of the existing national flag adding the national colours, whilst the wavy stripes “recall the Dreamtime Serpent of Aboriginal legend” or alternatively, Australia’s “warm, sandy coastline”. He has rejected the use of the Aboriginal colours, as they have never symbolised Australia, whilst the green and gold do have a long tradition of representing Australia. Crawford pragmatically states “it will be easier for the general public to support a change if a new design is in some way familiar”. However, this flag highlights the design problem of retaining the existing flag – something needs to replace the space and lack of colour resulting from the



removal of the anachronistic Union Jack. The distinctive use of curves is justified by the curves of such icons as Uluru, the Sydney Opera House and Harbour Bridge, Parliament House Canberra and the extensive use of curves in Aboriginal art. Crawford creates a full set of variant ensigns and also state flags in a variety of design formats.

Fred Rieben – One of the most recent and most active new flag promotions is that of Fred Rieben who uses the name FlagOz [10]. After



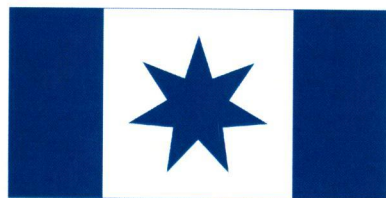
initially launching his flag in Perth, Rieben has travelled widely across Australia, promoting his flag and car bumper stickers, obtaining significant media coverage over the past three years.

He has added a boomerang shaped stripe of gold and a green fly to an enlarged Southern Cross on a blue field. A line of red dots invites a variety of interpretations, though most suggest an aboriginal art element. Whilst dot painting is limited to a few Aboriginal tribes, personally I like the subtlety of the dots, which to me, represent the diversity, and isolation of the various Aboriginal tribes. He also expresses well the sentiment many advocates of a flag change have: “Changing the flag is not denigration of the current design or rejection of the past. That a child leaves home and establishes itself independently in the world is the natural health course of life.”

Graeme King – The use of the internet as a direct voice to the people is demonstrated by Graeme King who in 2006 created a personal webpage with eight flag designs for Australia and eight for New Zealand [11]. His first flag uses the Southern Cross and an 8 pointed Federation Star in blue and white.



Ash Nallawalla - Launched Australia Day 1998, Nallawalla’s design, described as the “8 Flag” focuses solely on the Commonwealth Star. His design is derived from the Canadian flag, replacing the maple leaf with an eight-pointed Commonwealth Star. The eight points is in anticipation of statehood for the Northern Territory, alludes to the Eureka flag and eight “is considered lucky by many Australians”.



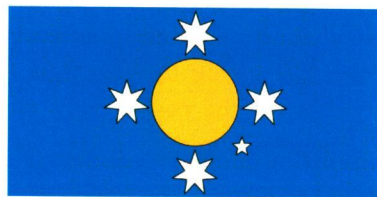
Seeking to gauge interest in his design concept, visitors to his website are invited to vote on variations with two shades of either blue or red stripes combined with either seven or eight pointed stars

in blue or red. One of the drivers for Nallawalla designing a new and simple flag was the large number of appalling renditions of the Australian flag: with wrong sized and misplaced stars, crudely drawn Union Jacks and no consistent colour shades [12].

Robert Vose – A different approach is taken by Robert Vose who proposes the Seven Golden Stars flag [13]. The sun from the Aboriginal flag occupies the canton and the Commonwealth Star and Southern Cross are transposed and enlarged on this green and gold flag.



Kim Lynch – Combining the Aboriginal sun with the Southern Cross is the reconciliation concept behind the Overview Flag [14]. The blue field represents the oceans that surround Australia and the square styled Southern Cross alludes to the “first multicultural society at the Eureka goldfields”, whilst the Epsilon Crucis star “represents the individual, the creative” [15]. Ensigns and state variants have also been designed. In the style of Brazil’s flag the design concept is an overview of the continent with the Southern Cross reflected in the sea.



Stephen Berry – Another flag that combines the Sun with the Southern Cross is Stephen Berry’s “The Sunburnt Flag” [16]. The rising sun honours Aboriginal Australia, the blood of the Anzacs, refers to early use as a crest on Australian coats of arms and can also represent Uluru on the horizon of the sweeping plains of the Red Centre. The Southern Cross is given the honour position in the canton, whilst the flag’s name is derived from Dorethea Mackellar’s poem, “I love a

Sunburnt Country”. Berry states that his design concept was derived by folding each of the Australian and Aboriginal flags in such a way that the parts representing people were hidden and only the elements that define Australia’s geography were visible – the Southern Cross and the blue oceans, the red land and the half sun: “Place not Race”. Realistically, he does not see his flag being adopted before 2012, and he hopes to achieve wide spread popular usage that would lead the way to official adoption, much as the Aboriginal flag was widely used before it had any official status.



George Poulos – The rising sun is considered by George Poulos to be the primary icon of Australia, with its significance founded on its early use as a crest on unofficial Australian coats of arms in the 19th Century, as a Federation symbol of a new country facing a bright future and the Australian Army badge with its links to the ANZAC traditions. Poulos, who has established himself as the Australian Iconography Foundation, rejects most of the “grab bag of Australian icons ... that have failed to capture Australian public imagination” [17]. In essence, Poulos’ flag portrays the main geographic and symbolic elements of his interpretation of Australia – the blazing sun, red earth, beaches and the Southern Cross.



Russell Kennedy – A senior lecturer in visual communications, Russell Kennedy’s Master’s thesis involved the creation of a new Australian national flag [18], the design of which he launched at the 1997 ICV17 at Cape Town. Kennedy has three designs – an “Advance Australia



National Flag” in blue and gold, his “Reconciliation Flag” in the aboriginal colours and a sporting flag in green and gold. Other colour combinations are used for military ensigns and state flags. His promotional efforts include a glossy brochure [19], distribution of his Reconciliation Flag to secondary colleges in Victoria in 2000 and inclusion of his design in one of the recent books on Australian flags [20].

Originally conceived as a corporate image for the Australian nation, much of Kennedy’s focus has been on the reconciliation version, where he claims that the kangaroo is a strong, unifying symbol for all Australians whilst the Southern Cross was retained for continuity reasons. Kennedy’s vision is that his Reconciliation Flag would fly along side the new national flag until reconciliation between Australians and indigenous people has been achieved.

Peter Markwick – Many of the entries into the Ausflag Professional Design Competition featured a base stripe (a “horizon line”) with a Southern Cross and/or a kangaroo. An example of this approach is Peter Markwick’s design in green and gold [21]. Markwick believes that a flag in green and gold and featuring a non-heraldic animal would be distinctive and would “say we are Australians, not transplanted Europeans”.



Yahoo Serious – In a scene from the 1993 film comedy “Reckless Kelly”, the comedian and independent filmmaker, Yahoo Serious literally tears the Union Jack from the Australian flag. Inspired by

the film scene, in 1997 he launched his design – a flag for all Australians. He morph’s the Federation Star into Alpha Crucis and adds a golden kangaroo and a red stripe in the base [22]. He notes that the Southern Cross alone “merely says we live in the Southern Hemisphere. Our flag must be an unambiguous symbol of national identity”. The kangaroo is uniquely shaped and exclusively Australian

and it is emotively emblematic of the Australian spirit, with universal acceptance and recognition.

John Williamson – A long-term campaigner for a new flag has been John Williamson, a country singer songwriter, whose works include “We must have a flag of our own”.

He has designed several flags over the past 15 years and his current design is called “the True Blue” flag, which combines the Southern Cross with a kangaroo of a distinctive drawing on a red ochre field [23].



Robert “King” Crawfoot – The “Australian Flag of Unity” was designed by a Melbourne media consultant in 2000. The flag design seeks to demonstrate unity by featuring all of the diverse elements in the flag design kitbag, with six colours and each of the stars in the



Southern Cross being attributed a symbolism – the Anzac, Indigenous, Federal, Environmental and Achievement stars. The unusually shaped kangaroo is named the “Endeavour Roo” and is intended to

signify the “individualism of all Australians: upwards and forward” [24].

Summary – Independent Designs

Well, what does all this suggest? Certainly enthusiasm and good intentions by flag designers, all hoping to see something better as Australia’s national flag. There are a number of design elements that recur in the individual designs that were also manifest in the Ausflag Professional Design Competition. Most of the independents want to include some acknowledgement of Australia’s indigenous people, though personally I think the designers over-state this preference relative to the general public sentiment. It can also be argued that the inclusion of a symbol of any specific ethnic group (British or indigenous) can be regarded as divisive and it would be better to focus on symbols to which all Australians can relate. There is a general

discomfit with use of the kangaroo on the flag and invariably it has to share the flag space with the Southern Cross, however incongruously. Most of the designs try to achieve widespread support by having something for everyone, forgetting the design principle that less is more. However, there is little innovation and the design concepts are generally as familiar and pedestrian as those that have resulted from Ausflag's various competitions.

Graeme King stated that he created a web page because there seemed to be groups claiming 'ownership' of the process of flag change and "they are not the easiest things to interact with". This is probably a reference to Ausflag, which has frustrated a number of designers with Ausflag's insistence on obtaining copyright of all flag designs that are entered into its competitions or may be promoted by Ausflag. The reason for this is to give it full freedom to utilise the designs and an intent that, if any design controlled by Ausflag were to be selected as the official national flag, then Ausflag would have the honour of donating the design to the Australian people. For the designers, Ausflag's insistence on control of design usage, its lack of track record in promoting independent designs or merely failure to win the judges' eye has led to a form of self-imposed *salon de refusés* [25] of independent designers.

A few designers have achieved fairly good media coverage and they have made effective use of the internet – but few new flags are flown and they have been no more successful than Ausflag in achieving sufficient public support, which is necessary for their designs to even approach the possibility of official adoption. The independent designers have however been filling the void



created by Ausflag's dormant period, promoting the concept of a flag change as much as promoting their personal vision. They live in hope of acceptance by the public as the precursor to official recognition.

**PART 3 – ANFA and the LIBERAL GOVERNMENT
Olympics celebrate the national flag**

One of the hopes of Ausflag was "Our Own Flag for the 2000 Olympics". But it was not to be. There was no public sense of irony in the prominent display of the Union Jack at the moments of success of Australia's sporting heroes, for the games were a happy and trouble-free event and Sydney was proud of this achievement.

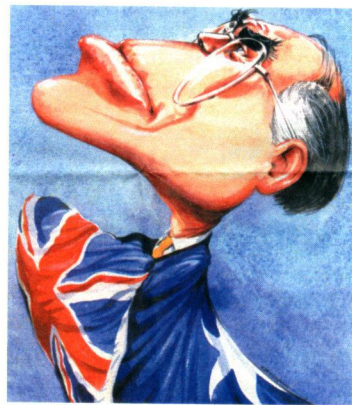
The two weeks of international attention on Sydney produced a high level of public support for the Australian flag.



One of the foundation for this favourable public opinion was the election in March 1996 of the Liberal-National Party Government of Prime Minister John Howard. The Australian Labor Party government of Paul Keating was overthrown by an electorate that feared the economic reforms that the Keating government had initiated and desiring a return to conservative economic and social policies, reassured by a series of Howard election promises that, in time, proved to be “non-core”.

Raise the Drawbridge

On Anzac Day 1996, Prime Minister Howard announced that the Flags Act would be amended to require that a referendum would be required before the Australian flag could be changed [26]. This was a superficially reasonable decision that could be interpreted as providing a method for changing the flag, but it effectively entrenched the current design, cynically relying on the Australian voters habit of rejecting most referenda. The Liberal Party whilst in opposition had promoted similar bills. The amendments require a majority vote for a new flag design from a range of future designs, with a choice that must include the current flag. This multiple-choice requirement is designed to split the vote for any change, leaving retention of the existing flag as the option with the highest vote. Of course, the Government has no intention to ever hold such a referendum; it is an attempt to frustrate any future government that might want to alter Australia’s sacred emblem.



The amendment to the Flags Act represents the turning point in the Australian flag debate and the start of Federal government intervention in the debate. On 3 September 1996, National Flag Day received official recognition [27]. National Flag Day had been promoted by the Australian National Flag Association (ANFA) since 1983 and from the beginning it attracted loyal testaments from politicians of all persuasions, who were anxious to not offend the conservative supporters of the national flag. School children are significant participants in the annual function – a public flag raising, with speeches in praise of our “flag of stars and crosses” [28].

Create the Creation Myths

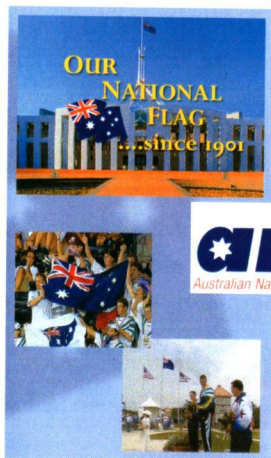
The Centenary of the 1901 flag competition had the potential for widespread promotion in the schools, with commemorative posters, stickers and educational kits proposed [29]. But only a low-key re-



enactment of the raising of the flag at Melbourne's Exhibition Building was actually held and the event was commemorated by the "Centenary Flag" [30]. This was a ceremonial version of the current Australian flag with an embroidered inscription on a wide headband, together with a cardinal red line to symbolise the "crimson thread of kinship" between the Australian people and Britain that stands at the heart of Federation. The reference to the crimson thread comes from the 1890's promoter of Federation, Sir Henry Parkes [31] and supports the ANFA contention that the national flag is "an icon representing continuity of customs, traditions and values" [32].

Indoctrinate the Young

ANFA realised early that the schools were pivotal in the flag debate and the aging population of war veterans and older supporters of the flag could be regenerated if the school students could be indoctrinated with the "correct" cultural values. ANFA's John Vaughan created a poster of Australian historical flags and ANFA produced a video on the Australian flag and its history, and these were distributed free to schools [33].



The Federal Government has colluded with ANFA to present a biased and inaccurate history of the Australian flag. The ANFA video strongly implies that the blue form of the Australian flag has been the sole national flag since 1901, ignoring the

delay in its formal adoption and the initial restrictions on its

usage, which required the Australian red ensign to be used for all non-government purposes until 1941. When the Federal Government agreed to distribute the ANFA video in 2002, it required that the teacher's notes be revised. The final text did make some mention of the

slow adoption of the Australian flag, the use of the Union Jack on official occasions and the existence of a red ensign for merchant ships, but the notes are superficial and tendentious and completely ignore the complex history of the flag from 1901 to 1953. Elizabeth Kwan had special access to the archival records, which show that ANFA resisted any efforts by the government's educational advisers to present a more accurate history and a balanced view on the flag [34]. The bibliography include ANFA's website, but not Ausflag's and there is no reference to the existence of any debate as to the possibility of a new flag for Australia [35].

Create the Creation Myths

A key visual of the video is a re-enactment of the 14 year old Ivor Evans, who is shown creating a flag to the design of his winning entry in the 1901 flag competition. The video states that Evans' entry was accompanied by a detailed explanation of the symbolism of the design. The video explains that the stars on the flag "represent our progress and the Union Jack represents the principles on which that progress is based" and show where modern Australia came from, and the ideals of our British system of law and parliamentary democracy. Ivor Evans supposedly quotes Dante as saying that the "four main stars of the Southern Cross symbolise the four moral virtues of justice, prudence, temperance and fortitude - something we Australians have to live up to". It matters little to ANFA that Dante did not identify his four stars nor did he even mention Aquinas' virtues, for Evans is actually paraphrasing a biblical text; useful Christian moralising in a video to be shown in secular schools [36].



The extensive use of Evans as a mere schoolboy is misleading. Whilst the comments are correctly attributed to Evans, they are words that

were recollections of Evans when he was age 72 [37], and written in his capacity as managing director of Evan Evans Flags, a business that he inherited from his father. Ivor Evans' flag business traded on exaggerations of his role as one of the five 1901 competition winners and ANFA has strived to build an Australian flag origin myth; but it is far less authentic than its role model: the Betsy Ross legend.

A further example of ANFA's errors is given by Elizabeth Kwan, who notes that the ANFA website refers to a national simultaneous flag raising in Australian schools that coincided with the announcement of the flag competition winner on 3 September 1901 [38]. The inaccuracy is that this schools event occurred on 14 May 1901 (to commemorate the first opening of Federal parliament) and the flag used was the Union Jack. Don't let the facts interfere with jingoistic rhetoric.

The ANFA video is clever propaganda that is misleading by omission, biased in its presentation and casual with the facts. It fails in its purpose as a reference source in school courses on history and civics, but would be a useful text for English language and visual communications as an exemplar of propaganda.

Salute the Flag

In October 2002, the Federal Liberal Government introduced a \$1,500 subsidy for all Australian schools to erect or repair a flagpole as a means of encouraging flag-raising ceremonies and to regularly fly the Australian flag in public and private schools [39]. The alleged educational purpose of this was to foster national pride, an element in a national campaign to promote the



teaching of Civics and Citizenship, one of the Federal Government's efforts to interfere in school curricula, which are a state government responsibility.

Information on the national flag was part of a *Discovering Democracy* programme [40]. The central premise of the government's initiative was the "conviction that civics and citizenship education is central to Australian education and the maintenance of a strong and vital citizenship. To be able to participate as active citizens throughout their lives, students need a thorough knowledge and understanding of Australia's political heritage, democratic processes and government, and judicial system. Civics and citizenship education is underpinned by Australian history, and the history of other societies which have influenced that historical tradition" [41]. The reference to other societies is code for British heritage, the values of which, as ANFA frequently asserts, are symbolized by the presence of the Union Jack on the Australian flag. In a multicultural Australia, ANFA is careful to link British values to the Australian flag, rather than directly link British colonial history or British ethnicity to the flag.

In June 2004, the Government announced a \$31 billion funding plan for Australian schools, which had a number of conditions for individual schools - mostly relating to the Federal views on uniformity of standards and values, but one condition was the need for each school to have a functioning flagpole and to fly the Australian flag [42].

Tendentious History

The most recent example of the collusion between the Liberal government and ANFA was the revision of the official handbook on the flag: *Australian Flags*, issued on 3 September 2006 [43]. When the first edition of this handbook was written in 1995, each of the three main Australian flag groups provided comments on the draft and there was some attempt at balance in the most sensitive topics. For the third edition, only John Vaughan of ANFA was consulted and this has resulted in the booklet exclusively containing



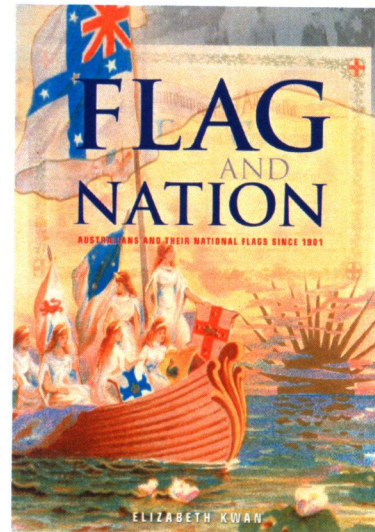


material that is consistent with the ANFA sanctioned view of Australian flag history and usage. All mention of the flag debate was erased, even the illustrations of failed designs in the 1901 competition, whilst the Centenary Flag gets a two page coverage, together with illustration of the cover of the 1901 *Review of Reviews* announcing the

winning design. These prominent sections reinforce the creation myths that ANFA is fostering. The publication was littered with errors, which highlight the lack of vexillological input, as distinct from patriotic influences [44].

The publication of Elizabeth Kwan's *Flag and Nation: Australians and Their National Flags Since 1901* in May 2006 should have been universally recognised as "a landmark in Australia's vexillological record" [45], but it has been ignored by supporters of the national flag. I can only attribute this to the fact that the book "tells the story of Australia's flag clearly and honestly, without the patriotic platitudes that are the stuff of myth and legend".

In ANFA's 2006 newsletter [46], the President of the NSW branch of ANFA attacked the Flag Society of Australia as a "colony of opposition"



and stated that "one of its members has recently launched a book. We have not seen it yet but one early report found its academic style to be boring, unimpressive and the work of a writer with an agenda of their own". Incredible insight in being able to criticise a book that you admit not to have read and cannot bring yourself to name. These comments support my personal contention that ANFA members don't want to know more than faith requires. In my opinion, supporters of the Australian national flag are like religious fundamentalists who require blind loyalty to the Holy Scriptures, as interpreted solely by the leaders of their brand of religion. I believe that there are many members of NAVA and the Flag Institute who are devoutly patriotic to their country's flag and seek to express their patriotism by learning more about their flag through their national vexillological associations. It is therefore odd that, despite the claimed 20,000 members of ANFA, that there would be less than a dozen members of Flags Australia who support the ANFA views. I think that this is because the ANFA members don't want to move from their comfort zone of ignorant loyalty to an almost religious icon of a former era in Australian culture.

New Conservatives

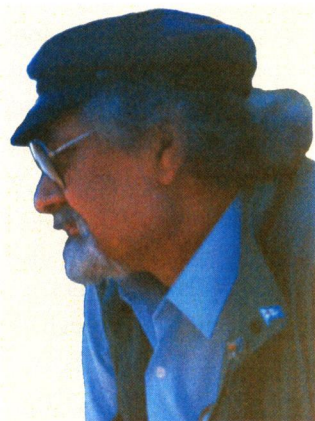
Another development has been the establishment of two new groups with an active interest in Australian flags and substantial internet sites. Mr Nigel Morris was ACT convenor for ANFA and in 2003 set up the Australian Flag Society Inc ("AFS") [47], with the intent to be more forthright than the conservative ANFA. Together with his cousin, Mr Ray Morris, AFS preaches the virtues of the flag, particularly its past military usage and it arranges the Australian National Flag Day event in Gunnedah whilst denigrating Ausflag, Elizabeth Kwan, supporters of the Eureka flag and anyone who doesn't agree with AFS's views.

Another website that has developed extensive material on Australian flags since 2002 is Digger History, which provides information on Australian military history and includes material on the Australian flag as well as army colours [48]. It's founder, Ted Harris, has an interesting perspective on the Australian red ensign – he correctly recognises it as having been used extensively prior to 1953 – a view that sets him apart from ANFA and AFS.

PART 4 – VEXILLOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

A Vexillological Framework

The late William Crampton, in his doctoral thesis, discussed the conflict over the national symbols in Australia and identified the situation as comparable to that of Canada prior to 1965 [49]. It is rather telling that Crampton's summary of the flag debate as at 1994 still remains valid today, with almost no progress in the arguments for and against change and little progress in the search for an alternate design. Crampton describes the nature of national identity [50] in Australia in terms of a vexillological theoretical framework and he draws a number of comparisons with Weimar Germany.



The Australian national flag initially had to go through a process of *legitimation* whereby the newly federated Australia slowly adopted a flag, which for a long period was regarded only as a government flag or, in its red form, a merchant shipping flag. Most people regarded themselves as subjects within the British Empire and looked to the Union Jack as a symbol of that identity [51]. Elizabeth Kwan's book [52] fully describes this period of emerging national identity. However, part of the problem with the Australian flag is that, as a result of the lack of effective endorsement and promotion by governments until fairly recently, it has never been fully accepted by Australians – in Crampton's terms it lacks reciprocation and participation.



The Australian flag is partly analogous to the position of the Black-Red-Gold flag in Weimar

Germany from 1919 to 1933. The use of the Black-Red-Gold flag as the national flag was the result of a political compromise, but the various coalition governments did not actively promote its usage and its ideology was based on the distant past of the liberal democratic and

federal movements of the early Nineteenth Century, rather than recent history or aspirations. ANFA's efforts to promote the Australian flag are similar to those of the *Reichsbanner Schwarz-Rot-Gold* organisation, which sought to generate positive public attitudes towards the official flag, as part of its wider role as a defender of the republic. The Howard government's efforts to enforce usage of the flag in the schools is similar to the Weimar government moves from 1927 to force the usage of the Black-Red-Gold flag on hotels and buildings owned by the *Länder* [53].

Reflecting its ambiguous symbolism, the Australian flag is also partly analogous to the position of the



Black-White-Red flag in Weimar Germany. The Weimar flag compromise was to make the Black-Red-Gold flag the national flag, but to retain the Black-White-Red flag (with the addition of a small canton of the national colours) as the merchant flag. The former flag continued to enjoy the emotional support of large segments of the population, particularly the conservatives and veteran groups who associated it with recent history and the achievements of the German Empire and its military use, including invoking the "millions who fought and bled under these colours" [54]. Like the ANZAC tradition, what needed to be recalled was the sacrifices and heroism of the soldiers, not a military outcome that could be blamed on poor leadership. Supporters of the Australian flag over the past 20 years have sought to increase the level of support by inventing flag flying traditions such as National Flag Day and inventing myths about the creation of the flag and its historical flags usage, seeking to diminish the roles played by the Union Jack and the Australian red ensign during wartime and ignoring the pre-1901 flags. This contrasts with Weimar Germany where the real achievements in creating a united German Empire and its pre-War economic progress were closely linked to the trusted national symbol of the Black-White-Red flag.

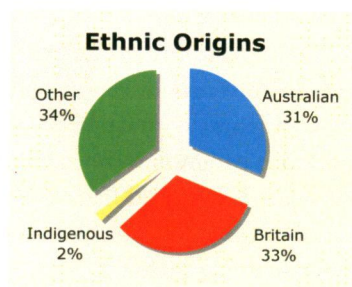
As the Black-White-Red represented the deposed Empire, the Australian flag includes the symbol of the defunct British Empire. Both

sets of conservative monarchists supported the traditional flag and opposed a new flag. For Weimar Germany the official existence of two flags with different emotional attachments highlighted the lack of an effective and unifying national symbolism. In Australia, the weakness of the public attachment to a mundane historical design and its anachronistic symbolism has led to an almost perpetual re-examination of the legitimacy of the national flag, the widespread usage of sporting flags and the multitude of new flag design proposals.

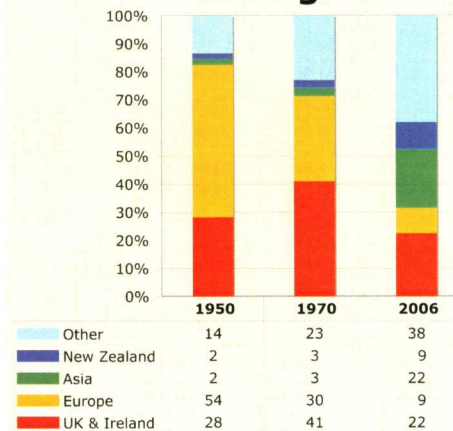
One of the fundamental difficulties of those that seek to change the Australian flag is that there needs to be a subtlety between rejecting the current flag design, but not rejecting the national values which the current flag symbolises. Flag change often occurs when there is a major constitutional or political change, but absent such changes and absent any national crisis, it is difficult to generate the catalyst and political commitment for a flag change. As Harold Scruby of Ausflag has observed, "There are too many votes to be lost and too few to be won by changing anything" [55]. It is for this reason that Ausflag has preferred evolutionary designs that only reject the Union Jack as the one element that can be safely rejected, without rejecting Australian patriotism. ANFA however is outraged by the prospect of any change and claims that rejection of any part of the flag is a rejection of all Australian democratic values and traditions. The public struggle to accept minimalist design changes – as they are generally uninspiring and not emotionally uplifting. Ultimately, even a well-designed flag chosen by an elite or imposed by a strong government cannot succeed in the long term, unless it receives widespread emotional public acceptance.

The societal background to change

Since 1972, with the election of the Whitlam government, Australia has been in a period of social change. After decades of conservative rule, massive changes in government policy occurred [56], including a radical change in the pattern of immigration. In 2006 immigration from Asia and



Immigration



Africa represented 42% of total immigration, compared to 4% in 1970. Immigration from Germany, Netherlands, Poland, Italy, Austria and Greece has fallen from 54% in 1950 to less than 2% in 2006. In addition, there has been a steady inflow of immigrants from the former Yugoslavia and Lebanon. Non-European settlers have outnumbered

those born in Europe from 1984 and they now represent 8% of the population, whilst a total of 22% of Australians were born overseas. In the 2006 Census, 250 different cultural and ethnic backgrounds were acknowledged by Australians – of whom 31% identified themselves as Australian, 33% as English or Scottish, 2% as Indigenous and 34% as Other [57].

Against this background, a significant proportion of the population now questions the pro-British symbolism of the Australian flag. The conservatives seek to glorify those aspects of the past as they see it, whilst others seek to modify the national symbols to reflect the way they see Australia's present and future. The recent misuse of the flag at Cronulla and on Australia Day is part of the bewilderment of many Anglo-Australians about the social changes occurring as a consequence of decades of multicultural policies and the changing ethnic mix. The flag stands for traditional values, which now seem to be under the threat of dilution in the multicultural milieu. It is important to note that most new flag designers want to represent their vision of current Australian values and aspirations, which are generally more inclusive, but not opposed to the traditional values, and if an effective modern design could be achieved and adopted, then the possibility exists that the Australian self image could be reaffirmed and strengthened by a flag change. As with Canada, such an outcome would surprise opponents of

change, but ultimately leave them just as proud a group of citizens as they currently are.

Ausflag's Task

As stated earlier, Ausflag has been effectively dormant over the past seven years.

A Federal election will be held in late 2007 and the Australian Labor Party, under its new leader Kevin Rudd, is currently considered as having the best prospects of victory in ten years. Any new Labor government would be unlikely to consider changing the flag, but it can be expected that a more neutral stance would be adopted.

This has encouraged Ausflag and its membership ^[58]. Ausflag has begun to plan its next flag change campaign. I had hoped to be able to share these plans today, but as they have not yet become public, I am obliged to limit my comments to my personal opinions, rather than express a formal Ausflag view.



In my opinion, Ausflag needs to change its tactics. The multitude of design competitions and promotions have shown that a new flag design is feasible, but Ausflag has, to date not endorsed any particular design as its preferred new flag. I believe that the debate needs to move into the phase that is analogous to the Pearson Pennant phase in Canada. For about five months, Pearson's design of a flag that evoked a "Sea to Sea" motto was widely promoted, drawing acclaim and opposition ^[59]. The specific flag proposal focused the debate and moved it on from "should the flag change" to "what should the new flag look like?" All of the likely design elements for an Australian flag have now been thoroughly canvassed in a myriad of combinations, but it is necessary to reduce the choice down to either one proposed design, or the two or three new designs required for Howard's referendum. Such a move would reinvigorate the debate and move it from a hypothetical debate to a substantive political debate. It would be necessary to actively promote the flying of the flag, which may require a licensing arrangement with one of the leading flag retailers and commercial sponsors to ensure the flag is manufactured in volume and widely available. Such a new flag

proposal could act as a lightning rod for comments, from which a consensus could emerge for the design or for another design – either way advancing the public support for a flag change. Since most political leaders follow public sentiment, the formal processes to adopt a flag would have a starting point.



It is unclear when Ausflag would launch a new flag campaign, though it is noted that Australia Day has been used to launch previous promotions. I also note the efforts of NZFlag.com Trust who have settled on a single flag design proposal and are actively promoting its sale and use.

Conclusion

The intellectual and vexillological arguments support a change of flag design. But the emotional arguments are ambiguous. The fact that the Australian flag has endured for so long works against change, yet a substantial proportion of the population does support the principle of a flag change. What is clear is that the debate is not dead, but the result is just as far away as ever.

The Canadian precedent has established that a flag change needs both a design that can capture the public imagination and political leadership that has the determination to effect a change. As Crampton notes, the Canadian flag shows "that it is quite possible to invent, promote and popularise a design provided that these two elements are present, as they were not in Weimar Germany" ^[60].

After reviewing the past ten years of effort in the flag debate, my personal prognosis for the next ten years is a continuation of the current flag as a comfortable and familiar national symbol, and public indifference to the need to either defend or change the flag. Perhaps it is the laconic nature of the Australian character, but attempts to sanctify the flag in the way that the United States flag is venerated are unlikely to succeed, however fervent the exhortations from special interest groups. Equally, it is difficult to envision the widespread passion needed for a new design to overthrow the status quo in the near to medium term.

Meanwhile, in the sporting arenas, anything will do for a flag to wave about [61].



End Notes:

1. House of Representatives *Hansard*, 28 April 1992, p1835.
2. These comments are based on "Professional Design Competition: The Judging" on Ausflag website at www.ausflag.com.au/ausflag/judge.html. Additional information and analysis is from the author, who was present at the judging as vexillological adviser. See also "Professional Designers Have A Go", *Crux Australis* Issue No. 54, pp. 55-71, "Ausflag Competition: People's Choice, Judges Options", *Crux Australis* Issue No 56, pp. 104-109 and "Ausflag decides: People and Judges", *Crux Australis*, Issue No. 57, pp. 46-53.
3. "Professional Design Competition: Winners" on Ausflag website at www.ausflag.com.au/new/pfdc/winner.html.
4. "The Turnbull Letters", www.ausflag.com.au/debate/turnbull.html
5. Brendan Jones, "New Australian Flags" website <http://members.optusnet.com.au/~brendan.jones/flags/> Brendan Jones is the web-master for Ausflag and is now a director of Ausflag.
6. Jones' second design was entered into the Ausflag Professional Design competition and was one of the top-100 designs (Design 021). See also "Flags of Reconciliation", *Crux Australis*, Issue No. 60, p. 186.
7. Patricia Woolley, *Australian Flag Ideas*, Wild & Woolley Pty Ltd, Sydney, 1997. www.fastbooks.com.au/ausflag.html See also "Flags of Reconciliation", *Crux Australis*, pp. 186-187.
8. Douglas Dowell, "A New Flag for Australia: Some Suggestions" <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Acropolis/9393/newflag/>
9. Dylan Crawfoot, "A New Flag for Australia", 1999, <http://members.tripod.com/djc9/newflag/>
10. FlagOz, "Southern Cross and Boomerang", 2004, www.flagoz.com/index.htm. An American born Australian living in Perth, Fred Rieben is a retired window washer.
11. Graeme King, "Proposed Flag Designs for the two countries that owe so much", 2006, www.angelking.net/new_flags/show.html
12. Ash Nallawalla, "A New Design for a Future Australian Flag", <http://crm911.com/flag/> Nallawalla is a Melbourne based online marketing consultant.
13. Robert Vose, "Seven Golden Stars", 2006, www.7gs.com/flag.html. Vose identifies himself as active in the debate about an Australian Republic. He promotes the Honorary President Model for the republic that would replace the Queen with an elected ceremonial head of state, whilst retaining the appointed Governor-General to continue with his existing executive powers.
14. "Australia- A new national symbol – The Overview Flag" by The Reef Multimedia Pty Ltd internet design consultancy, Melbourne, 1997, www.thereef.com.au/flag/ The designer does not actually identify himself on the website, but is presumed to be the Art and Design Director, Kim Lynch.
15. The design is very similar to that of James Parbery; see "A Flag For Us All", *Crux Australis*, Issue 52, pp. 191-198. Parbery used a dark blue field and a 16-pointed star,

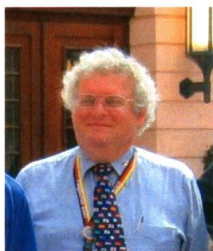
- alluding to the compass rose, as well as the sun on the Aboriginal flag. Profoundly, he says "People can learn to understand the symbolism or simply take it at face value. In the end, it's more important that we have a beautiful flag that makes us glad to see it."
16. Stephen Berry, "The Sunburnt Flag", designed 1998, re-launched June 2006, sunburntflag.com.au/melbourne/websites.com/index.html. Berry is Sydney based former children's charity organiser and he has a long term and strong involvement in Aboriginal heritage. Berry acknowledges George Poulos for his encouragement and he is a likely design influence, particularly with the references to the rising sun of the Anzacs.
 17. George Poulos, "Towards a Theory of Sol Australis", *Crux Australis*, No. 65, pp. 33-52
 18. Kennedy's thesis for the award of a Master of Art from Monash University in 2000 was entitled "Designing a New Australian Flag: National Identity, Reconciliation and Acceptance". His ICV17 lecture was "Designing a New Flag: a Theory of Evolution and Reconciliation" by Robert J Kennedy and Brian J Seddon, in "Flags in South Africa and the World: Proceedings of the 17th ICV" pp. 224-231.
 19. Russell Kennedy, *Advance Australia National Flag*, published by Evan Evans Group, 2005
 20. Geoff Hocking, *The Australian Flag: The First 100 Years*, The Five Mile Press, Noble Park, Vic. 2002 at pp. 51-53
 21. Peter Markwick, "Australian Kangaroo", *Crux Australis*, Issue No. 53, pp. 39-42. Markwick is a Sydney artist and member of Flags Australia.
 22. Yahoo Serious, "Australia Deserves an all Australian Flag", 1997, www.yahoo.ooserious.com/flag/flag.html Yahoo Serious changed his name by Deed Poll in 1980, 15 years before the internet company Yahoo started business.
 23. John Williamson, "John's Flag Design", the date of this flag is unclear, possibly as early as 1995, www.mallecboy.com/html/body_flag.html. "True Blue" is the name of Williamson's first major song from 1981 and the phrase is slang for unwaveringly loyal working class mates.
 24. Robert "King" Crawfoot, "The Australian Flag of Unity: Basic Symbolism" circa 2000, courtesy of Ralph Bartlett. The www.flagofunity.com website is no longer accessible.
 25. *Salon de Refusés* is an annual exhibition of the best of the entries that fail to be exhibited in the annual Archibald Prize for portraiture (and the Wynn Prize for religious art) run by the Art Gallery of New South Wales, which is the most famous art competition in Australia.
 26. The *Flags Amendment Act* 1998 added a new subsection 3 (2) to the Flags Act 1953 which states: "The blue flag referred to in subsection (1) ceases to be the Australian National Flag if, and only if (a) a new flag or flags, and the flag referred to in subsection (1), are submitted in each State and Territory to the electors qualified to vote for the election of members of the House of Representatives; and (b) the new flag, or one of the new flags, is chosen by a majority of all the electors voting." New subsection 3 (3) states "The form and manner in which a proposal for a new Australian National Flag is submitted to electors, and the manner in which a vote on the proposal is taken (which may include the adoption of a form of preferential voting for choosing among 3 or more flags), and arrangements for adopting a new flag as the Australian National Flag if chosen as mentioned in subsection (2), are to be as the Parliament prescribes."
 27. "Proclamation of Australian National Flag Day", signed by Governor General of Australia on 28 August 1996, published in *Commonwealth of Australia Gazette* Number S321.
 28. The phrase "flag of stars and crosses" is an invention of John Vaughan, national spokesman of ANFA, and former President of the New South Wales branch of ANFA. The phrase is rarely used by any flag commentator, other than ANFA.

29. Correspondence from John Vaughan, ANFA to Prime Minister Howard 12 April 2000, quoted by Elizabeth Kwan in *Flag and Nation: Australians and their national flags since 1901*, University of NSW Press, Sydney, 2006, p. 139.
30. "The Centenary Flag" was proclaimed a flag of Australia under section 6 of the Flags Act 1953 on 20 September 2001. The flag commemorates "the first flying of the Australian National Flag on 3 September 1901". See Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Australian Flags*, Canberra, 2006 pp. 26-27.
31. Sir Henry Parkes, "The crimson thread of kinship runs through us all", from speech to Australasian Federation Conference, Queen's Hall, Melbourne, February 1890.
32. Comment by John Vaughan in letter to Prime Ministers Office, 29 August 2001, quoted by Kwan Op. cit. p. 140. A similar phrase is quoted on the ANFA web site which wrongly purports to source the phrase to the *Flags Act* 1953: "Under the Flags Act of 1953, passed unanimously by parliament, it was confirmed that our 'Stars and Crosses' design be the chief national symbol by law, custom and tradition". The Act does not use such language, nor are the words to be found in *Hansard* relating to the Bill.
33. John Vaughan, *Flags of Australia* poster, various editions from 1983, Standard Publishing House Pty Ltd. Three versions of the ANFA video have been produced: *Why We Have a Flag* (1985), *Making Our Flag* (1992) and *Our National Flag... Since 1901* (2002). The video can be downloaded from www.flagaustnat.asn.au/vidco.php. The video includes excerpts from the 1996 National Flag Day function in September 1996. The teacher notes for the video were prepared by Curriculum Corporation (a Federal government entity) and are available at www.civicsandcitizenship.edu.au/verve/_resources/natflag.pdf
34. Kwan, Op. cit. pp 142-143.
35. The bibliography only lists two flag books – the Government's *Australian Flags and Australian Flags and Emblems* by John and Jennifer Barwick, which is an expensive, superficial book that was only available for sale to libraries. The widely available *Flags and Emblems of Australia* by Jill Bruce has similar material, but it was presumably excluded because it has one page on the Eureka flag and one page on moves for a new flag.
36. Dante Alighieri refers to four stars near the South Pole in "Purgatory", the second cantica of the *Divine Comedy* "To the right hand I turned, and fixed my mind upon the other pole, and saw four stars. Ne'er seen before save by the primal people." (Canto I of Purgatorio). Commentators generally attribute to these four stars the symbolism of the four cardinal virtues of Prudence, Justice, Fortitude and Temperance – but Dante does not make this attribution. The virtues derive from Plato's *The Republic* and they are also found in the Old Testament – The Book of Wisdom 8:7. They form part of the Christian doctrine described by St Thomas Aquinas in his *Summa Theologica*. Similarly, the four stars are likely to be the four most visible stars of the Southern Cross, though this is only a hypothesis of some commentators. The Southern Cross constellation cannot be seen below the 27th parallel and Western Europeans did not identify it until the 16th Century – at least 200 years after Dante's writing.
37. Ivor Evans, *History of the Australian Flag*, January 1959, Mitchell Library, Sydney.
38. Kwan, Op. cit. p. 139. The ANFA text is one of the National Flag Day Facts at www.australianflag.org.au/importantfacts.php
39. The political partisanship of this subsidy was demonstrated by the practice of the granting of the flagpole subsidy to the schools being channelled through the local Federal member of parliament if the electorate had a Liberal or National Party MP, or a Liberal-National Senator if the local member was an Australian Labor Party politician.

- This contrasts with the long-standing free Australian flag distribution scheme that is provided by the local member of parliament, irrespective of political party.
40. See Australian Government: Department of Education, Science and Training "Civics and Citizenship Education" website at www.civicsandcitizenship.edu.au/ccc/
 41. Transcript of Joint Press Conference of Prime Minister John Howard and Minister for Education, Science and Training Brendan Nelson, 22 June 2004.
 42. Transcript of Joint Press Conference of Prime Minister John Howard and Minister for Education, Science and Training Brendan Nelson, 22 June 2004.
 43. Awards and Culture Branch, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, *Australian Flags*, Third edition, 2006, Canberra.
 44. For a full listing of the changes made in the third edition see Ralph Kelly, "Review of Third Edition of Australian Flags", *Cross Australis*, No. 80, pp173-177.
 45. Kwan, Op. cit. Quotations are from cover review notes by Ralph Kelly.
 46. Australian National Flag Association, NSW branch *Newsletter*, September 2006.
 47. web-page at www.flagsociety.org.au
 48. "Colours and Flags" web-pages at www.diggerhistory.info/pages-flags/0-flag-cat-index.htm
 49. William G Crampton, *Flags as non-verbal symbols in the management of national identity: a thesis presented for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy*, University of Manchester, 1994 (unpublished), pp.157-162.
 50. Crampton (Op. cit. p162) defines national identity using a definition of Lucien Pye: "the political perceptions, cognitions, evaluations, and affective sentiments of those who make up the political system" i.e. how people come to understand politics, their response to the role of governments and the nature of their loyalty to the nation state. This definition comes from Lucien Pye, "Identity and the Political Culture" in *Crises and Sequences in Political Development*, Leonard Binder, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1971, p102.
 51. It is significant that the term "Australian Citizen" did not exist until 1949 when the *Australian Citizenship Act* came into effect. Prior to that time, all persons born in Australia (other than Aborigines) were "British subjects".
 52. Kwan, Op. cit.
 53. Crampton, Op. cit. p126-129
 54. Ibid. p135
 55. Comment by Harold Scruby of Ausflag in explaining why the Hawke Government did not support a flag change for the Bicentenary in 1988. *Sunday Telegraph*, 22 March 1988.
 56. These included increases in Federal government spending on social programmes, universal health insurance was introduced, higher education fees were abolished, equality of women was promoted, foreign policy was more independent, Australia withdrew its troops from Vietnam, racial discrimination was banned and the White Australia policy was abolished.
 57. Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2914,0,55,002 – 2006 Census of Population and Housing: Media Release and Fact Sheets 2006, 27 June 2007.
 58. Ausflag Limited is an incorporated company, with membership being by invitation of the Board of Directors, which mainly consists of a number of business identities, most of whom are Sydney based. Whilst Ausflag is politically non-aligned, most Ausflag directors historically have had better access to Labor Party politicians than to conservative politicians. The author is a Director of Ausflag providing vexillological expertise to its activities.
 59. Canadian Prime Minister Lester Pearson announced the proposed design of new Canadian flag on 19 May 1964. The Leader of the Opposition John Diefenbaker denounced the design as "Pearson's Pennant", a nick-name that endured. Ultimately a

- flag with a different maple leaf and wider red stripes was chosen by a Parliamentary Flag Committee on 22 October 1964, and subsequently adopted with effect from 15 February 1965. See Rick Archbold, *I Stand for Canada: The Story of the Maple Leaf Flag*, 2002, Macfarlane Walter & Ross, Toronto, Chapters 1 and 3.
60. Crampton, Op. cit. p161
 61. "Battle Flag of Australia" by Carroll and Richardson Flagworld Pty Ltd. www.flags2000.com.au

About the author



Ralph Kelly is an Australian from Sydney. Vexillology is a hobby interest of him. He drew his first flag over 30 years ago. Over that period he has progressed from waiting to see the new national flags in the next edition of the encyclopaedia to undertaking extensive archival research on Australian flags. He has presented papers at the 13th, 17th and 18th International Congresses based on his research into the history of Australian flags, his involvement in the Australian flag debate and general interest in world flags. Ralph is treasurer and a former President of the Flag Society of Australia. He is a regular contributor of articles and illustrations for *Crux Australis*. Ralph is also a Director of Ausflag, where he provides a vexillological perspective on that entity's promotional and political lobbying for a new Australian national flag. By profession he is an investment banker and company director.

Address of the author:

Ralph Kelly
64 Hannah Street
2119 Beecroft, NSW
AUSTRALIA
e-mail: rdkelly@bigpond.net.au