



Australian American Association Queensland Division - Brisbane



News Flash No 113 - 8th October 2025

Patron: Her Excellency the Hon. Dr Jeannette Young AC PSM, Governor of Qld.



AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL FLAG DAY CELEBRATION.



The Australian Defence Force Flag Party parading the Australian National Flag at the Celebration Ceremony.

Address: PO Box 340 Sunnybank Qld 4109 Email: admin@aaabrisbane.com

Web: www.aaabrisbane.com



The Australian Defence Force was represented by [from left] - Chief Petty Officer Andrew Stapleton RAN, Group Captain Dennis Tan RAAF and WO1 David McGarry RSM Australian Army.

The Australian National Flag Day Celebration was held at King George Square Brisbane City on 3rd September 2025.

The celebration was attended by The Right Honourable the Lord Mayor of Brisbane Councillor Adrian Schinner, who gave an address. Mr Allan Pidgeon AM, President of the Australian Flag Association also gave an address.

Members of the Lord Mayor's Youth Advisory Council, Ji Jenkins and Eloise Quinn read the Governor-General message .

The Australian National Flag Day is celebrated each year to commemorate the anniversary of the first time, the Australian National Flag was flown in 1901.

This day is a time for Australians to honour their national flag, reflect on its history and proudly display it. The flag known as the Commonwealth Blue Ensign was officially flown for the first time at a public ceremony at the Royal Exhibition Building in Melbourne. It was a powerful symbol of Australia nationhood.

Flag-raising ceremonies are held at schools, local authorities and in Australian households across the nation to recognise the significance of Australian National Flag Day. All Australians are encouraged to fly or display our national flag with pride and to celebrate our highest national symbol for unity, respect and strength.





The Right Honourable The Lord Mayor of Brisbane Cr Adrian Schrinner.



Mr Allan Pidgeon AM, President of the Australian Flag Association.



Members of the Lord Mayor's Youth Advisory Council, Ji Jenkins and Eloise Quinn read the Governor-General message.





Attending the Commemoration event was Guest Mr Leo Perdenia, from Poland, with Teresa Pokoj Secretary of the Australian American Association, Brisbane.



Band of the 1st Regiment, Royal Australian Artillery playing at the Celebration Ceremony.



Happy group of students with the Lord Mayor of Brisbane Councillor Adrian Schinner and other dignitaries.

Some Interesting facts about the Australian National Flag.



The Commonwealth star is the emblem of the Australian Federation. The six points represent the States and the seventh all the Federal Territories, which together constitute the nation, the Commonwealth of Australia.

The Constellation of the Southern Cross indicates our geographical location in the Southern Hemisphere. This Constellation of stars relate to the various indigenous legends and remind us of our rich and precious Aboriginal and Torres Strait heritage.

AUSTRALIA'S FLAG - "DID YOU KNOW?"

- The Australian National Flag is the only flag to fly over an entire continent.
- The Australian Flag was the first national flag chosen in an open public competition.
- The prize for the design competition (£75) was a substantial sum of money in those days – also two commercial organisations offered additional prizes amounting to £125.
- Given that there were 32,823 entries in the design competition, and the 'Australian' population was estimated to be around 3.6 million in 1901; an equivalent response rate from today's population would amount to some 200,000 entries!
- Arranging the 32,823 entries for display at the Royal Exhibition Building in Melbourne took eight weeks, and the judges needed six days to inspect them and choose the winning design.
- Entrants in the flag competition gave their imagination free rein: designs submitted featured "every kind of flora and fauna identifiable with Australia – sometimes all at once" (eg a flag depicting a kangaroo with six tails to symbolise the six states; one with a galloping emu heading south; and another of native animals playing cricket with a winged cricket ball !)
- The winning design was unveiled by the wife of our first Governor-General at a ceremony held at the Royal Exhibition Building in Melbourne on September 3, 1901.
- Two out of the five prize-winners in the 1901 flag design competition were teenagers (school boy Ivor Evans and apprentice optician Leslie Hawkins), another was a well-known female artist (Annie Dorrington) and one (William Stevens) was First Officer for the merchant navy. The fifth winner was a young Melbourne architect (Egbert Nuttall).

- The Southern Cross (formally known as “Crux Australis”) is a constellation that can be seen only in the night skies of the Southern Hemisphere. The individual stars are named by the first five letters of the Greek alphabet – Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Delta, and Epsilon.
- The Southern Cross has a very significant status in Aboriginal mythology (eg as part of the legend of Mululu of the Kanda tribe).
- The Australian National Flag is raised every morning at the school in Villers-Bretonneux in France, in memory of the thousands of Australian casualties incurred in liberating their village in 1917 (during the First World War).

As former Governor-General The Hon. Dame Quentin Bryce AD has remarked:-
 “Since it was first unfurled from the Royal Exhibition Building in 1901, our Australian flag has been an icon of our shared identity, of what it means to belong to our country. It is much loved, worn and flown by Australians here and across the world ...
 Wherever it is raised, it stirs in us a sense of unity...”

Published by ANFA (Qld) Inc. For further information about flag history and protocol, and the “rules” for flying the Australian flag. Please refer:- www.australianflag.net.au



Before we leave this Flag section, I believe it is important to “Flag” an important point about the Flags Act of 1953, as it is referred to. The Australian Museum of Democracy has a detailed webpage entry of the Act of 1953. Please refer:-
<https://www.foundingdocs.gov.au/item-sdid-91.html>

It is in fact the first Act of 1954 and signed unlike most other Federal Government Acts of Australia by the Queen herself, in Australia. During her first visit. Which shows how important the Act was and is. It is equally fitting that the newly “emboldened” by Royal Assent Australian Flag first task was to flap proudly above the Queen as she officially unveiled the “Australian American War Memorial” in Canberra. The memorial was a first; the first War Memorial anywhere in the world to pay homage to America for its assistance in WWII. That Memorial was to be the symbol of the Anzus Alliance as it grew and developed.”

*Please find attached to this **Newsletter No 113**, a Paper written by our Australian American Association’s ‘Special Projects Officer’ Mr Peter Rasey, for the National Flag Association of Queensland.*

Yours fraternally,



Mike Harris
*President, Life Member & Newsletter Editor,
 Australian American Association, Brisbane.*





A Flag for All Seasons

A Paper written for the National Australia Flag Association

by Peter A Rasey B Com, Dip of Adv Acc, Gr Dip of App Fin. & Inv., B Arts (Pol Sc), Dip of Adv. & Sec.
This paper aims to document the irreplaceable Australian flags housed in museums and collections across the country—flags that tell stories of passion, sacrifice, hardship, victory, and so much more. But first, it is essential to acknowledge the passion of three inspirational individuals whose efforts helped bring this document to life.

Lila Cameron

Lila Cameron a Brisbane Holland Park Lions Club, who with fellow Club member, the late David Floyd, OAM, a veteran of three wars. David from 2006, raised at dawn and lowered at dusk rain, hail or shine the Australian, the Queensland and the Lions Club Flags at Mott Park at Holland Park. Since David's passing, the Brisbane City Council has kindly added a light to our flagpole, making it possible to fly all 3 flags 24/7.

Sallyanne Atkinson AO

Former Lord Mayor of Brisbane, Sallyanne Atkinson AO, helped initiate Brisbane City's Flag Day event in 1988—now the longest-running event of its kind in Australia and importantly this quote from the 1998 Constitutional Convention (11/2/1998, page 784) tells the tale of support.

"I believe very strongly that symbols are important. They affect how we think and how we feel about ourselves, as well as how others see us."

A fitting sentiment as we explore the historical significance of surviving Australian flags.

Capt. Kasper Kuiper R.O.N.

As President of the Queensland Maritime Museum (QMM), Capt. Kasper Kuiper R.O.N. has faced the challenge of dealing with government entities that often undervalue the importance of preserving WWII heritage assets. As seen in the next paragraph.

The HMAS Swan (II) Flagpole

Owned by the Queensland Maritime Museum and displayed at its front entrance, the HMAS Swan (II) flagpole sits on MRD land. It was proudly used monthly by the Queensland Division of the Naval Association and is the only artifact outside Darwin that was a casualty of the Bombing of Darwin.

Unfortunately, the Southbank Corporation was uncooperative in restoring the flagpole for the 80th Anniversary of WWII. The Naval Association had to return the grant intended to restore it to operational status.

Mystery Flags

Before we begin, two **mystery** flags deserve mention:

1. The First Australian Flag flown on 3 September 1901—its current whereabouts unknown.
2. The Maitland Woods Gallipoli Flag, taken ashore and later returned to Canon Garland (Anzac Day Origins) in Brisbane by Rev. Maitland Woods. It was displayed at St John's Cathedral before being placed in storage, but now cannot be located. This flag is referenced in Canon Garland's papers held by the John Oxley Library.

Irreplaceable Flags of Australia

Listed chronologically, as ranking by importance would be impossible.

Breaker Morant Flag (1901) NSW

Found in a rubbish tip in Tenterfield, NSW (Red Ensign)

Link: <https://qmhs.com.au/wp-content/uploads/Skennerton-QJMH-Vol-2-2023.pdf>



last Image grave Breaker Morant. Sydney Morning Herald 1902

And another **mystery** that maybe related to this flag, is a rare Memorial to the Centenary of the adoption of the Australian flag at a location close to where Breaker Morant flag was found. A mystery as it is in a remote location which no detail as to who erected the Memorial.

See <https://monumentaaustralia.org.au/themes/government/federal/display/105087-centenary-of-the-australian-national-flag-> (works irregularly)

Birdwood Museum Flag WA An Australian Flag taken to Gallipoli by Sidney Exten and used extensively in Anzac Day marches until handed over to the Museum at Geraldton WA.

<https://www.geraldtonrsl.org.au/museum/> Refer holding institution link and for details refer to the appendix



Birdwood Flag (1916–1918) NSW

Flown at General William Birdwood's HQ on the Western Front during WWI (Red Ensign) found at the Newcastle Cathedral.

Link: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-06-29/australian-first-flag-found-and-restored-in-nsw/8663158>



Australian War Museum – Major Ewen Flag (1916–1918) ACT

A personal WWI journey recorded on an Australian flag

Link: <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C157639>



A reference can be found at the end of this section to the AWM collection.

“Bombing of Darwin Flag” Darwin 18th of February 1942

A battle-worn flag rescued from the airport, now at the Darwin Military Museum officially known as the “The 12 Squadron RAAF Flag”. Refer holding institution link and refer appendix

Link: <https://www.darwinmilitarymuseum.au/> Refer to the appendix for more details.



It should also be noted that a Red ensign was blown up, along with Neptuna docked at the wharf along with the Australian vessel Barossa. A Blue ensign flying on the Jackstaff of HMAS Mavie, when along with the ship to the bottom of the harbour.

Natural Disaster Flags of note

From bush fires survivors in Victoria with an Australian Flag was rescued from the ashes of Black Saturday and now proudly on display at the Marysville police Station.



To a survivor of the horrific 2011 Grantham Floods. An Australian Flag rescued by the Australian Defense forces presented to the PM and passed on to the Local Council.

The Flag framed now resides proudly at the Lockyer Valley Cultural Centre Gatton.



Victoria Park Barracks Flag (1945–1995) Qld

Found in an attic in 1946, sent in 1954 to the American War Brides Ass. it was displayed at meeting of the Ass. held around America and much later returned to Australia. It is now a valuable collection item at the Caboolture Historical Village. It is the central attraction of their yearly Flag day event.

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4aEBrotz4G0&list=PLv0V6xrruq2k0eEtXwwWyetkDYcZxaOfe&index=2>



Alan Bond's Giant Australian Flag (1983) Vic

Used during the America's Cup win; believed to be the template for the flag flown above Parliament House

Link: <https://www.sail-world.com/-79642/>

South Pole Antarctica Jon Stephenson Flag Tas

The Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery has several important Australian Flags in it's collection many of them to do with the Antarctic. My favorite is the Jon Stelhenson hand made bed sheet Flag. As it made in 1957 an incredible journey to the South Pole and returned to Australia.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2006-02-17/tas-gallery-thrilled-with-flag-offering/800932>

The story of the Tasmanian collection would not be complete without reference to the Wilkes effort to use the Flag to claim the Australian Antarctic Territory beyond dispute

See <https://www.austlii.edu.au/au/journals/MelbULawRw/1982/2.pdf>

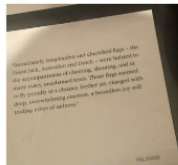
World Trade Centre Flag (2001) ACT

An Australian flag retrieved from the wreckage of the 9/11 attacks—a symbol of hope link-

<https://www.nma.gov.au/explore/collection/highlights/september-11-australian-flag> (cut and paste for best results)

The AWM Collection ACT consists of many dozens of Flags of great importance like

The Nakom Paton prisoner-of-war Camp Flag, is another example of determination over coming the lack of an official Australian Flag. However Weary Dunlop's diary entry sums up the empowering effect our



Australian Flag has.

<https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C114873>

Before we leave the Flag section

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Other

In some cases, the historical significance of the Australian Flag can be found in important painting held in Museums. Such as the painting of HMAS Parramatta I by Montague Dawson held by the Australian Navy painted circa 1911 flying the Australian flag from its stern. #

Or the significance can be found in regional locations like Townville with a Flagpole Plaque. The Queensland Museum details an intriguing tale of an official first by the Governor General of the day in 1901.

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FlagpolesA flag without a flagpole is incomplete. Flagpoles carry the weight of memory, often more than the flags themselves. They stand tall on Anzac Day, Australia Day, Remembrance Day—and every day. The Monuments Australia website (<https://monumentaustralia.org.au/>) documents over 40,914 monuments nationwide. Analysis shows that around 20% (10,000+) incorporate flagpoles, with hundreds of memorials consisting solely of flagpoles.

Additionally, flagpoles in Broome, Darwin, and Townsville have witnessed and survived the Japanese bombing of mainland Australia. Lest We Forget



Unique 2001 Centenary Flag



Born of one competition!

A battle survivor.

Flown in adversity.

And a welcoming symbol for new citizens.

Naval notes of interest

Naval use of the Australian Flag as documented by John Vaughan. "The period 1901 to 1911 was the period prior to the Royal Australian Navy being formed, and the decision was taken to Fly the Australian National Flag as the ensign for the Commonwealth of Australia Naval forces."

It should be noted that the First Royal Australian Naval Flagship HMAS Australia I, flew the Australian Flag from its Jack Staff, as the Royal Naval tradition was to fly the White Ensign from the stern.

After WWI when part of Australia's treaty obligations was to Suttle HMAS Australia I in 1924, it when to its watery grave off of Sydney flying the Australian Flag. <https://www.navy.gov.au/about-navy/history/history-milestones/scuttling-hmas-australia-i-naval-expansion> Image below associated with HMAS Australia I



Additionally of the same DNA



(First Civil Av flag, 2nd Unofficial Antiartic Territory Flag)



Version Two working draft 4/9/2025

POST SCRIP

An interesting parallel existing between the 1901 Flag Competition and the 1963 design competition to design the new Australian decimal currency. Both world firsts, both delivering uniquely Australian designs. Stuart Devlin was the winner of the currency competition and will also be celebrated in 2026. The 50th Anniversary of the adoption of his designs.

To add a flag to this paper email perrasey@bigpond.com