



His Excellency Major General Michael Jeffery AC CVO MC (Retd)
Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia

11 August 2008

**A Message
from
His Excellency Major General Michael Jeffery AC CVO MC (Rtd)
Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia
for
Australian National Flag Day
3 September 2008**

The competition to design a flag for the Commonwealth of Australia in 1901 produced an extraordinary result. No fewer than five people shared the prize; a fourteen year old Melbourne schoolboy, a teenage apprentice from Sydney, an architect, a female artist from Perth, and a ship's officer. Each had unknowingly produced strikingly similar designs which formed the inspirational background for the flag we still love and respect today.

In this way, even before its inception, the Australian flag united citizens across all locations, and from all walks of life, ages and gender, as it still does today, 107 years after it first flew 'aloft and free' from the Royal Exhibition Building in Melbourne on 3 September 1901.

Ever since then, the Australian flag has flown in many thousands of locations in Australia and around the world, a symbol of national pride in its home country and a respected symbol of a proud and successful nation internationally.

The Australian flag graces our proudest and most deeply significant commemorations as a nation - Australia Day, Anzac Day and Remembrance Day. It is a focal point of national pride at international events such as the Olympic and Commonwealth Games and wherever Australians are represented overseas.

Australian National Flag Day is an opportunity for all of us to celebrate a unifying and magnificent symbol of our proud and successful nation.

Marlena and I encourage all Australians to join together in honouring and celebrating the Australian Flag on 3 September.

(Michael Jeffery)