

AN OLYMPIAN FLAG EVENT

Colin Randall

Flags Australia

With a personal anecdote for the annals of vexillology, Colin unfurled one of the official bid flags for Australia to host the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney, displayed when the IOC announced its decision on 27 September 1993 in Monaco.

The bid flag comprised a smoke-trail from the Olympic Torch in the shape of the Sydney Opera House in the five colours of the Olympic Rings and Flag. The same motif was included in the subsequent logo and marketing of the actual Games in 2000.

Unbeknown to Colin at the time, his future wife Irene was also there, having won a Promoters' ticket to the event. Somehow, she acquired this very flag.

Many years later, to his great surprise and delight, Irene presented the flag to Colin with the full story – and an explanation of the hole in the top corner made with her nail file so that they could tie the flag to the railings of her hotel in Monaco. The Beijing bid team complained about the Sydney bid flags hanging on these railings, and they had to be removed.

Sydney won the selection by a narrow margin ahead of Beijing, so Colin's introduction was a fitting and graceful transition to Zhao Xinfeng's presentation on the protocols he had devised and implemented at the flag ceremonies of the 2008 Olympics in Beijing.

