**MINUTES**

**OF THE 2014 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**AND NATIONAL MEETING 27**

**OF THE FLAG SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA INC (FLAGS AUSTRALIA)**

**WEDNESDAY 26 NOVEMBER 2014**

**AT THE BARN, 3C AVENUE ROAD MOSMAN NSW 2088**

**CHAIRED** FSA President Ralph Bartlett, opening 6.15pm, a quorum present in person.

1. **PRESENT, PROXIES and APOLOGIES**

**PRESENT**

Victoria R. Bartlett

NSW A. Burton, P. Delprat, J. Dixon, R. Kelly, G. Naughton,

**PROXIES**

**to R. Bartlett** S. Duke, G. Leonard, B. Luxford

**to R. Kelly** E. Crump**,** B. Jones, E. Kwan

**to A. Burton** A. Brown, A. Chapman, P. Degens, P. Haylen

**APOLOGIES** A. Brown, G. Cairns, A. Chapman, E. Crump, A. Drake, S. Duke, P. Haylen, B. Jones, B. Luxford, S. Kelly, E. Kwan, P. Markwick, R. Strachan.

##### **2.0 MINUTES AGM 2013 and BUSINESS ARISING**

Circulated with AGM Notice, accepted with one amendment (to record a proxy by Dr Elizabeth Kwan).

Moved: Burton Seconded; Bartlett

VOTED FOR Unanimous

**BUSINESS ARISING**

Consideration of new Association Rules and ancillary statements – see Agenda Item 3.

##### **3.0 NEW ASSOCIATION RULES**

Pursuant to changes required under the new Associations Incorporation Reform Act (Vic) and related Regulations;

Pursuant also to the decision at AGM 2013 that the Executive fine-tune the changes to the Model Rules seen as compatible with the particular purposes and nature of the Society,

And whereas the same were provided in summary to members for ratification at AGM 2014,

And with details also placed on the website,

With appreciation expressed for the clarity and labour with which Ralph Kelly had prepared these papers and their digests for members,

And after lengthy discussion on each, seriatim,

the following five Motions for Adoption, detailed as attached,

and that same full text integral to these Minutes,

were moved, seconded and all adopted as below.

**3.1 ADOPTION OF RULES**

Adopted as amended in the same attached

Moved: R. Kelly Seconded; A. Burton

CARRIED Unanimous

**3.2 ADOPTION OF AIMS AND CORE BELIEFS**

Adopted as expressed in the same attachments

Moved: R. Kelly Seconded; R. Bartlett

CARRIED Unanimous

**3.3 APPROVAL OF MEMBERSHIP/SUBSCRIPTION FEES**

Adopted as expressed in the same attachments

Moved: R. Kelly Seconded; R. Bartlett

CARRIED Unanimous

**3.4 APPROVAL OF ASSOCIATE MEMBER CATEGORIES**

Moved: R. Kelly Seconded; R. Bartlett

CARRIED Unanimous

##### **3.5 APPROVAL OF THE NUMBER OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

##### Adopted as expressed in the same attachments

Moved: R. Kelly Seconded; J. Dixon

CARRIED Unanimous

**4.0 REPORTS RECEIVABLE FOR 2014**

Five reports as attached (**Appendix A**) were considered, their adoption moved, seconded and carried unanimously in the following order.

4.1 PRESIDENT

# 4.2 SECRETARY

4.3 TREASURER and SUBMISSION OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

4.4 EDITOR - CRUX AUSTRALIS

4.5 FLAGS AUSTRALIA WEBMASTER

**5.0 ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS AND COMMITTEE 2015**

5.1 Retiring from the Executive, Dr. E Kwan’s long service and her signal contribution to Australian vexillology were noted and appreciated.

Moved A. Burton Seconded R. Kelly

CARRIED Unanimous

5.2 in accordance with revised rules under the Act, all offices and positions were declared vacant. In response to all nominations received, and each vacancy considered, moved, seconded and voted on seriatim, the following were elected by the meeting:

President R. Bartlett (Vic)

Vice-President A. Burton (NSW)

Secretary/ (Public Officer) R. Bartlett (Vic)

Treasurer R. Kelly (NSW)

Editor, *Crux Australis* A. Burton (NSW)

Webmaster R. Kelly (NSW)

Committee NSW J. Dixon, G. Naughton, C. Randall

VIC B. Luxford

Only one nomination was received for each position and all office holders were endorsed unanimously.

5.3 The formal Annual General Meeting closed at 20:10.

**6.0 NATIONAL MEETING 27**

6.1 UPDATE ON PREPARATIONS FOR ICV26 SYDNEY 2015

Ralph Kelly and G. Naughton reported on continuing progress in preparing for the 26th ICV in Sydney in 2015, after adjustments to the venue reported at the September meeting in Sydney.

**ACTION** Further detail to be circulated to all known and prospective delegates early in 2015.

R. Kelly emphasised that members would be called on to make specific contributions to logistic arrangements and lectures.

A number of suggestions for Congress activities and fall-back venues were made by members.

**ACTION** A. Burton and P. Delprat co-opted to meet on possible use of **The Julian Ashton School of Art** for a Congress function at The Rocks (report to February meeting).

**ACTION** R. Bartlett to enquire further as to the feasibility of of a curator from Adelaide Art Lab (who did the restoration of the Eureka flag) giving a presentation at the ICV and the possibility of the recent replica of the Eureka flag being made available by MADE for display at the Congress.

6.2 FROM THE FLAG LOCKERS AND GENERAL

Given the lateness of the hour and the time in discussion on changes to the Rules, specific flag contributions from those present were truncated.

* Ralph Kelly showed a British blue ensign found in an antique shop, two crossed swords in the

 fly, no roundel, identified as used by British Army ships in WWII.

* Also circulated to all was a poster issued by MADE at Ballarat for the 160th anniversary of the

 Eureka based on a painting of the event.

* Tony Burton unveiled (literally unrolled!) the first layout of a handbook he has been writing on

 the protocols of flag design,

**CLOSE**

The meeting closed at 20.50 for dinner at Mosman Hotel Bistro, Military Road, MOSMAN.

**Appendix A:**

**REPORTS FOR 2014**

**PRESIDENT**

Welcome to Flags Australia’s 31st AGM and 26th National Meeting.

I regret to inform you of the death last week on 20 November of Society Co-Founder, Life Member and former President (Nov. 1997 – Nov. 1999), Elaine Peters, whose extensive life in flags is outlined in the eulogy on-line and read at this meeting.  A Memorial Service for Elaine will held on Thursday 27 November in Ringwood, Melbourne and where I will represent the Society. Elaine’s death follows that in early March 2014 of another Society Co-Founder, Kirk Bradbury. I now feel like an endangered species, as there are only two of the seven founders known to be still alive.

On a happier note, local Society meetings, roughly quarterly, continue in New South Wales, here in Mosman, and in Victoria, in Mount Waverley.  The last meeting in Victoria for 2014 will in fact be in Ballarat, on 3 December, the 160th anniversary of the Eureka Stockade and its Flag.

The journal, *Crux Australis* and the Flags Australia website are the essential public faces of our Society, showing the depth and breadth of our collective knowledge. I thank Tony Burton and Ralph Kelly as Editor and Webmaster respectively.

During the year the Society in Sydney and in Melbourne was contacted and interviewed by media about the possible separation of the Scottish Flag from the British Union FIag, if Scotland voted for independence, and any flow-on effect for the Australian National Flag.  I also received on-line and telephone enquiries about the cost of supplying flags commercially, and flag display etiquette, both queries generated by the Society’s website.  Other general flag enquiries have come from RSL, and Victoria Police – who have designed a new ceremonial flag-banner for dedication in March 2015, and from schools and community groups.

Of great importance, this year ICV 26 Chairman Ralph Kelly has been developing protocols and planning requirements for hosting next year’s Congress.  Ralph also has some excellent news that he will expand on in his ICV 26 Report.

I would however like to make a general comment.  For the Congress to run smoothly, the guiding Committee will be asking some members before and during the Congress to do various tasks.  It would be greatly appreciated if members accept such requests for assistance.  It is important that each person carry out their allotted tasks and maintain clear and open communication with Ralph and other committee members, to avoid gaps or confusion, and so reduce any problems that inevitably occur in a task like this.

The Congress is a great opportunity for us to demonstrate Australia’s grasp of vexillology.  With the benefit of experience, knowledge and help in IT now possible, I expect that Sydney’s will surpass the Congress hosted in Melbourne 26 years ago.

Finally, I encourage members to commit to attend and participate in the Congress from 30 August-5 September 2015. This is a unique and rare chance for our members and our international colleagues to meet on our home ground.

**SECRETARY**

While most flag queries are answered by information on the web-site, the year has also seen an increase in the number of proposed Australian flag designs gratuitously sent to the Secretary, who also received inquiries from the media and people wanting to purchase flags, the last referred to trade members listed on the website. As the Scottish referendum approached, the Secretary and other members of the Executive were sought from far afield, *The London Tim*es, the Scottish *Sunday Herald*,(the last misquoted in New Zealand), seeking comment on the impact a Scottish yes vote might have on the design of the Union Jack and the handful of other national flags, mostly in the South Pacific, that host the same flag on theirs. The issue had been canvassed in the last edition for 2013 of the journal and again in 2014 – the responses unchanged from then.

**TREASURER’S REPORT 2014**

The layout of the Society’s financial statements was changed last year due to the provisions of the *Victorian Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012*. It is also necessary to distribute to you today a form that certifies that the annual statements give a “true and fair” view of the financial performance and position of our incorporated association. For the year ended 30 June 2014, Flags Australia incurred a small surplus of $426 on its operating activities compared to a small deficit of $590 in 2013. Total Income of $5,886 was received, of which $4,920 was for new memberships and renewals and $606 interest was received. This lower interest amount is due to low interest rates and the timing of term deposit maturities. Total expenses were $5,460, with the largest cost $4,739 for printing and postage of four issues of Crux Australis. Whilst lower printing costs for recent issues have helped, postage costs, particularly for overseas mailings, increased significantly during the year. Society administration costs were lower at $597, despite increased web-site costs. We currently have 65 Australian members and 22 overseas members.

In addition, funds from donations received in 2010 for ICV26 are invested in term deposits. These earned an additional $708, since reinvested in the ICV26 Account, which stands at $18,500.

**EDITOR - CRUX AUSTRALIS**

Quarterly issues for 2014 (Nos. 109-112) were published on schedule, continuing a mix of topics covering Australian and overseas flags: Australia Day, green and gold as Australian colours, the 160th anniversary of the Eureka flag, British Overseas Territories, Federations (including South Arabia, and the West Indies) Thailand, Ukraine, Nigeria, the Middle East, Sri Lanka, the Buddhist flag, the emblem of Rotary, and as a first: Bibles on flags, with the first publication of the 2010 design changes in the insignia of the Dominican Republic, Provincial flags of Papua New Guinea, of West Papua’s OPM, flags of Pacific cargo cults, Scottish referendum, ditto New Zealand, general vexillology, preparations for the 26th ICV in Sydney, flag design, and a quiz related to each edition, the content of each also summarised on the Flags Australia website.

**WEBMASTER’S REPORT 2014**

The Society’s website (www.flagsaustralia.com.au) continues to be a significant forum for Flags Australia sharing its interest in flags with the public. Increased traffic in each of January, February and March caused us to exceed our bandwidth limit: we were off-air for the last day of each of these months. However, the cost of a further increase in our permanent capacity, to avoid such temporary peaks was considered too high.

The site now receives an average of 10,000 individual visitors a month, 25% higher than in 2013, with a total of 188,000 pages accessed during 2014. 67% of visitors come to our site from search engines such as Google, the most frequent search terms the Australian flag and flags, and state flags, though our new flag page is the most frequently visited in some months. Our site is in the first five names listed by Google for each of these terms, and even exceeds Ausflag’s ranking for “New Australian Flag”. A further increase in the number of other websites linking to our pages was observed. We received visits from internet-users in 159 countries, the top 5 Australia, USA, China, Great Britain and Germany.

The quality of our content each year leads to several requests to reproduce our artwork on other websites or in books and has been the source of media enquiries - particularly on the possible flag consequences of the Scottish independence referendum and the proposal for a new flag for New Zealand. We also receive a number of enquiries to purchase flags, all referred to our trade members. The website continues to be an effective presentation of the Society and our flag interests to the general public in Australia and internationally.

**REPORT ON PREPARATIONS FOR ICV 26**

Last year we launched the [www.icv26.au.com](http://www.icv26.au.com) website, with a major promotion of the Congress at the Rotterdam ICV in August 2013 and in hard copy in Crux Australis No. 111. 2014 has seen further planning for the Sydney ICV next year.

At the last Sydney meeting of FSA I reported that our promised venue was being rebuilt, with some uncertainty as to its availability. I can now report that Telstra has re-affirmed its sponsorship and confirmed that we will have use of the new 300-seat auditorium in the revamped Telstra Centre. This is a larger room than currently, with full audio-visual facilities, though we will not have access to a separate meeting room for workshops. There will be a break-out and refreshments space and our area will be separated from the Telstra public spaces to give us some control over ours.

Unfortunately this “wobble” caused a delay in our preparations, as several aspects of the Congress depend on the venue location. We researched CBD hotel accommodation, seeking to identify a “Congress hotel” to provide delegates a preferential room rate. We could not get a good deal, so we will recommend a list of quality hotels and short-stay apartments at various prices. The Closing Dinner venue is no longer tied to the accommodation strategy: we shall make a decision and booking on that shortly. My thanks to Gerald Naughton in helping to firm the mid-week Canberra excursion.

A positive development is that the State Library of NSW has agreed to display some historic flags in its AMAZE Gallery to coincide with the opening of the Congress, with confirmation of the 1806 Bowman flag, the Wentworth and Bland election banner and the 1855 painting *Picnic at Mrs Macquarie’s Chair.* The curator of the Queen Victoria Museum in Launceston has also agreed to make a presentation on the recently restored Australasian Anti-transportation League flag of 1851.

Our biggest uncertainty is the number of delegates we can expect. We had attempted to get some idea by asking for lodgement of an Intention to Attend form. Only 18 Australians and 18 international vexillologists have formally indicated their plan to attend. My analysis of attendance at most previous ICVs identified as many people as possible with a strong interest in flags: of about 80 delegates likely, 50 would come from overseas, and about 30 companions. We could get as few as 50 delegates.

The next few months will be busy. We will confirm bookings for the ICV events, update the website and commence the Registration process. I will need help from you, the members - as volunteers and if possible to prepare a lecture for the event. We need to sort out the technology for electronic lodging of presentations (I assume some sort of drop-box or Cloud solution). It would also be good to have a way of on-line registration and payment. Arrangements for the ICV to participate in the ANFA Australian National Flag Day ceremony need confirmation, as does a desired flag-raising at Observatory Hill. The Sydney ICV involves and requires a major commitment by Flags Australia: the serious work now begins, but I remain confident that we will show our international flag colleagues how strong vexillology is in Australia and that they will enjoy their visit to Sydney.

**Appendix B:**

**REVISED RULES**

**Variations from Model Rules by Flag Society of Australia Inc. (“FSA”)** The revised Rules are available on the Flags Australia website at: http://www.flagsaustralia.com.au/Rules.PDF

**AIMS AND CORE BELIEFS**

1. The Society’s Aims are:

* 1. to maintain its role as the pre-eminent Australian-based vexillological organisation bringing together individuals interested in discussing, collecting, researching, and publishing information about flags and their usage in Australia and internationally;
	2. to unite all those with a professional or personal interest in any aspect of flags and vexillology, including providing opportunities for fellowship and the sharing of various interests in flags through meetings of members in Melbourne, Sydney and other locales where possible;
	3. to educate and increase public awareness of flag and their usage, particularly through the publication of its journal, *Crux Australis*, the maintenance of an internet web-site, exhibitions, public lectures and by other means;
	4. to be an authoritative source for information on flags by providing information, advice and guidance on flags, vexillology and related matters to the public, media, government and private organisations;
	5. to facilitate the publication of books, posters, fact sheets and other media on the subject of flags, particularly reference material for schools and other educational purposes;
	6. to record and document information on flags, both Australian and international. This may include the establishment of a Flag Data Registry recording flag designs and specifications;
	7. to undertake research and study programmes relating to flags and related material, including information on similar disciplines such as heraldry, graphic arts, sphragistics, semiotics and social sciences;
	8. to facilitate advice on the care and preservation of flags owned by individuals and institutions, including acting as repository of books, posters, flags and related material in the custody or ownership of the Association;
	9. to participate in the international vexillological community through membership of the International Federation of Vexillological Associations (“FIAV”), participation or hosting of International Congresses of Vexillology and the exchange of information with other vexillological entities throughout the world; and
	10. to generally to support the Association’s Purposes through the promotion of educational activities including the study of the science, art, history, design, manufacture, function, usage, symbolism, development and social aspects of flags of all kinds; and the development of flag terminology, standards of usage, specifications, colours and descriptive terms.

Whilst the primary focus of the Association’s activities will relate to flags in Australia, the scope of the Association’s interests includes flags throughout the world and international vexillology.

1. **The Society’s Core Beliefs are:**
	1. The Society seeks to be relevant to its members, recognising that the style and intensity of member’s interests in flags varies widely. It seeks to assist members to further their individual interests, recognising that a balance is needed between a scholarly approach, and a general interest or hobbyist approach to the study of flags, and collector activities and the needs of members who have a commercial involvement in the manufacture or retailing of flags;
	2. The Society will conduct its activities in an unbiased manner. Membership of the Society requires respect of the varying flag interests and the cultural and political interests of other members;
	3. The Society is a not-for-profit association. It may undertake limited commercial activities such as the design or manufacture of flags, provision of flag information and artwork and accept payments that reflect the time and effort involved or value to the customer, however the scope and scale of such commercial activities needs to be limited to the Purposes and Aims of the Association.
	4. The Society is non-political and, as an entity, maintains neutrality with regard to the public debate on the possibility of a change of design of the Australian National Flag and similar initiatives (“The Flag Debate”). The Society does not advocate retention, nor does it support a change of design of the Australian National Flag. However, reflecting its interest in Australian flags and their usage, the Society will record and report on the various proposals for new flags and the promotional activities of both the current and new flag designs. The Society will strive for balance in its reporting of the Flag Debate. The Society will provide factual information on the Australian and other flags, including their history and design and in respect of any new flag proposals, it will provide information on good design principles as they apply to flags and technical matters. The Society recognises the importance and emotional impact of the current Australian National Flag, and we will provide information on its origins, historical usage and associations with patriotism and Australian values. The Society has the highest respect and regard for the Australian National Flag, commensurate with its position as the primary symbol of the Australian national identity, however this respect is for the status of the national flag, not exclusively any particular design. It is recognised that individual members of the Society may be active in the Flag Debate or hold strong personal views; any activities or public comments made by individuals, including office-bearers, must be declared to be personal to the individual and not representative of the views of the Society.
	5. The Society is national in its activities and perspective. Whilst meetings will tend to be only practical in the major cities, wherever possible the Society will seek to engage members located in other areas through *Crux Australis*, the website and by members willingly sharing information when requested.
	6. Recognising the on-going aging and changing circumstances of many of its members, the Association will seek to establish an appropriate archival repository facility for the preservation and maintenance of access to collections of flags and books donated or bequeathed to the Association.
	7. Without diminishing the importance of the educational and other aspects of the Society’s Purposes and Aims, the involvement of members of the Society needs to be enjoyable and aligned with their varied interests in flags – members should be able to celebrate their vexillological interests through the activities and support of the Society.

**3. Decisions by General Meeting to give effect to the Rules:**

New Rule Number:

2 In addition to the purposes of the Association, the attached “Aims and Core Beliefs” are adopted as the detailed guiding principles as to the role, aims and objectives and conduct of the Association.

12 (1) The amount of the annual subscription for the calendar year ending 31 December 2015 shall be:

$60.00 per member; and

$60.00 per associate member (overseas and institutions); and

$30.00 per associate member (member under the age of 15 years)

No subscription fee for Life Member.

In addition a concessional discount of $30.00 will apply to:

1. a new member in the first year of membership; and
2. a member who is a full time student up to the age of 24 years (student); and
3. a member who is a holder of an Australian Commonwealth Health Card or similar benefit (concessional).

Subscription fees shall be due on 1 January of each year, and if not paid within two months, the Treasurer shall be entitled to suspend membership (including the right to receive a personal copy of “Crux Australis”) until the subscription is paid.

12(3) – The will be no fixed joining fee other than the annual subscription. A member joining the Association after the start of a financial year shall pay a fee equal to the full annual subscription.

14 (1)(b) Associate members shall constitute the following categories of member:

1. International Members – a member whose place of residence is outside of Australia;
2. Subscribers – a public library or similar institution;
3. Youth – a member under the age of 15 years.
4. Life Member – a member designated by the Committee in recognition of services to the Association.

14(2) All members, including associate members, shall be entitled to receive a personal copy of “Crux Australis”, the periodic journal of the Association. No additional charge shall be made for the journal or postage, including airmail postage to International Members.

53 (1) The number of ordinary members of the Committee shall be four persons and this will remain unchanged until changed by a resolution of a future annual general meeting.