

Address by Sir David Martin

Transcript of His Excellency The Governor of New South Wales
Sir David Martin, KCMG. AO.
National Flag Day Address
Tumbalong Park, Sydney
3 September 1989

Thank you Sir Colin Hines, The Hon. Michael Yabsley representing the Premier, Senator Puplick representing the Leader of the Federal Opposition, important guests, all of you are important guests - those of you who are standing here and wonder what is happening and every - one who is watching. I have been invited today to stand here and say a few words about the Australian Flag and I come here as someone who is proudly Australian, I come here out of respect for a Flag which is proudly Australian. In my forty one years service in the Royal Australian Navy I've been to seaports all over the Globe on board Australian War Ships, in Harbours the world over I've saluted and stood still for a moment in respect while our Flag was raised each morning at the Ceremony of Colours and lowered at Sunset at the end of the day. I've seen, felt and shared the affections and pride which my Australian shipmates have for their National Flag. I've been warmed and impressed by the recognition and admiration of other Nations towards ships wearing that Australian Flag and as I've travelled around the world, in sporting activities or as a tourist or living in other countries, I've always had glued or pinned or stuck onto my car or my backpack or my tent or my skis, some sort of representation of the Australian Flag and I've been delighted when other Australians have seen it, waved and said 'good on you' and when people from other countries have said 'hello Aussie'. I can understand the wishes of many Australians to have more lighthearted symbols to wave on certain occasions, and I share their feelings. I'm a happy admirer of kangaroos, koalas, wattle, waratahs, broad brim hats, cans of beer. By all means let's make happy, slick, wonderful emblems for use on particular occasions, but in the midst of such lighthearted cheering, I'm comforted to know that the Australian Flag remains at the masthead proclaiming our maturity, continuity and stability as a Nation. In the short history of Australia our people have been involved in many activities and events of great turmoil, anguish, strife, pressure, anxiety, unhappiness, hopelessness but also and most particularly, success, joy and jubilation and on almost all these occasions, this flag has been a rallying point. It's become associated with Australians and our great deeds, strong victories and some gallant defeats. It's become identified with our proud history and our fine traditions.

On this 50th Anniversary of the outbreak of World War II it's timely to reflect on the triumphs and the tribulations during which this Flag has flown bravely, and on this Father's Day also, it's not a bad time as parents, to commit ourselves to serving Australia and setting an example to the younger generations. I've heard some people say that our National Flag is not always recognised in other parts of the world. My advice to those Australians, if that's so is to get the Flag, raise it higher, wave it more proudly and more often and more fervently, so that everyone will recognise it and recognize our pride in it. They'll see our joy in being Australian!