



eFlags

issue 1

September 2006

The virtual flag magazine of the Flag Institute

Greetings Flag Institute Member

Welcome to the first edition of eFlags, the Flag Institute's venture into virtual vexillology. As a companion to Flagmaster, eFlags will deal more with flag related news items, and how to use the Internet to vexillological advantage rather than the more serious academic articles to be published in Flagmaster. We are, we believe in a learning curve, and would be delighted to hear from any members with comments or ideas for improvements.

Please contact eFlags@flaginstitute.org

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Summer 2006, A Feast of Flags

To misquote an appropriate saying, the world cup of early summer of 2006 could have been described as a 'feast of flags', not just in England (note England not United Kingdom) but also around the world. Communal football watching became the norm, indeed the British Drinks and Pub Association estimate that an additional 15 million more pints than normal were drunk in pubs on the day of the England v Portugal quarter-final.



But for us Vexillologists, the most amazing feature was the sudden appearance of flags everywhere, as it suddenly became fashionable to flag flags. TNS Worldpanel, a company which tracks the nation's spending habits, assessed that 27% of adults bought a flag in June, equating to 10.5m crosses of St George.



Culture Secretary Tessa Jowell had two England flags attached to her official vehicle, and during England World Cup games a St George's Cross was raised in Downing Street. Prime Minister Tony Blair saying it would have been "completely absurd" not to show his support for England.

Even the beloved chairman of the Flag Institute was not above draping his car with a flag. Although, of course, being an Anglican Clergyman it was suitably amended to become an 'official' Church of England flag, for the Diocese of Peterborough.

This rash of flag flying was of course not short of its amusing incidents. For a few days the Institute's Membership Secretary pondered the creation of a new, non-human category of membership, when it was reported that the monkeys at Woburn Safari Park in Bedfordshire had given up their traditional antics of removing hubcaps and window wiper blades and had moved on to the obviously more understandable, challenging and exciting hobby of collecting flags from the cars of passing visitors.



But it was not just monkeys that found flying flags got them on the wrong side of the law. One England flag, Mr. David Cowley, a fireman from the Isle of Man, found himself arrested and handcuffed for displaying a Manx flag during an England Match. Stadium officials apparently being unable to see the difference between it and a swastika! 'Now I look back at it, it's quite funny,' he said. 'But it was scary at the time because no matter how much I tried to explain it was our national flag there was a steward with a bit of authority who wouldn't listen.' The issue was resolved with the help of a German policeman who could speak English, although the flag was not returned.



Such prominent display of flags caught the government on the hop when it was reported by the Press Association on the 29th June that Football fans could be fined up to £2,500 for flying the St George's Cross. After all, the main planning law concerning flags in the UK, the 1992 Town and Country Planning Regulations, stated that flags can only be flown without planning consent if they are on a vertical pole. All those flown at an angle or out of windows were therefore against the law. Although Yvonne Cooper the Housing Minister has been quoted as saying she would be "shocked" if any

council enforced the regulations during England's World Cup campaign.

Yet as hinted too at the start of this article, the unexpected, ubiquitous display of national flags was not solely an English affair, in some ways it became a world wide phenomena. In Germany too, a wave of unexpected flag flying broke out which just as in England led to the retail phenomenon of sales of flags, face paints, T-shirts, wristbands and practically any merchandise in the national colours. At Germany's two main petrol station chains, "das Car Flag" sold 80,000 units. As Matthew Beard reported *'They may not be as ubiquitous as the St George's car flag, but German companies have suddenly realised if they can arrange delivery quickly enough they have a license to print money before the bubble bursts.'* The mass display of flags was not even limited to countries participating in the tournament, or it seems even to the dates of the event itself. Reuters reported on the 22nd July, that finally two weeks after the final ball had been kicked, Bangladeshi police moved to uphold the law banning the flying of foreign flags, by ordering fans to take down world cup contenders (mostly Brazil and Argentina) flags.



But will it last?

Is I guess the ultimate vexillological question. Did we witness a mere 'flash in the pan', or will this will this have any long term flag related consequence?



1, Well certainly in England such widespread use of St George's Cross seems to have rescued the flag from both the extreme right wing politicians and the eccentrics. St George is without doubt now a mainstream symbol, . "The flag of St George has lost all racist connotations," concludes Kevin Miles, the Football Supporters' Federation's international coordinator. "It is now seen as the England flag." And maybe this England flag will itself reveal a rise in English consciousness (with a equal and opposite decline in the sense of Britishness?).

2, A similar story may well be said in Germany too, The issue of national pride - the Patriotismus-Debatte - has become the main talking point in the German media, Suddenly, Germans are waking up to the fact that it is normal to be patriotic. *"It's finally time to bury the old version of Germany. No more Adolf. It was nothing to do with me and nothing to do with my children. Earlier we didn't trust ourselves with the flag. But other nations do, so why not us?"* As the German newspaper Die Welt put it when considering the history of the flag *"One-and-a-half centuries after 1848, we have learnt to value and show the colours of our flag as a sign of our democratic nation."*

3, In terms of concrete changes Bangladesh may well not relax its rules on flying foreign national flags but at least the Department of Communities and Local Government has recognised the inadequacy and out of datedness of the 1992 Town and Country Planning Regulations, indeed members of the Institute have been asked to advise on a more reasonable and practical set of definitions regarding national flags.....so who knows something permanent might well come out of the summer of flag madness after all.



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Sources:

Sour English stereotypes linger amid the flag-waving' , [The Guardian](#) 12th July, 2006

MANX FLAG CAUSES WORLD CUP PROBLEMS Isle of Man Today 1st July 2006

Rainbow nation: Germany flies the flag once more Independent 19th June 2006

Flags in the News

Read what newspapers from around the world have to say about various flags related news items over the few months. Hit the links to read the report:

Canada: Manitoba to send letters, flags to slain soldiers' families

<http://www.cbc.ca/canada/manitoba/story/2006/08/30/mba-flags.html>

Indonesia: West Papuans hold flag-raising ceremony

<http://www.greenleft.org.au/back/2006/680/680p6i.htm>

Iraq: Kurds to fly own flag in Kurdistan

<http://english.aljazeera.net/NR/exeres/3963E80F-3755-4918-8AE3-017278F0E482.htm>

Iraq govt mulls new flag after Kurdish threats

<http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/IBO456610.htm>

Iraq: The Flag Controversy in Iraq

<http://www.kurdishaspect.com/doc96Eamad1.html>

Russia: Duma vice speaker proposes letting Russians fly national flag

<http://en.rian.ru/russia/20060822/52977619.html>

Taiwan: Ma lodges complaint over flag grab

<http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/front/archives/2006/08/28/2003325169>

USA: Teacher Placed On Leave For Hanging Foreign Flags

<http://www.thedenverchannel.com/education/9726287/detail.html?rss=den&psp=news>

USA: Flag Mandate: New requirements for classrooms, Institute to offer helping hand

http://www.newszap.com/articles/2006/08/28/az/north_valley/nep03.txt

USA: Flag, Other Artifacts Go Into Storage for Museum Closing

<http://www.wjla.com/news/stories/0906/358066.html>

And Finally.....*(just because it amused me!)*

Squirrels steal flags in Eau Claire cemetery to make nests

<http://www.duluthsuperior.com/mld/duluthsuperior/15453573.htm>

Flag Links:

Not so much news as sites of 'outstanding vexillological interest':

Armenia: new flag flying law

http://www.armenews.com/article.php3?id_article=23256

Australia: new Western Australia flag spec

http://www.dpc.wa.gov.au/documents/wa_flag.pdf

Canada: revised webpages of Quebec Government

<http://www.drapeau.gouv.qc.ca>

Canada: Saskatchewan adopts flag of Fransaskois as an official flag

<http://www.qp.gov.sk.ca/documents/english/Chapters/2005/Chap-39.pdf>

Lithuania: new flag flying rules

<http://www3.lrs.lt/cgi-bin/getfmt?c1=w&c2=249166>

Serbia: National Council of Bulgarians in Republic of Serbia adopt flag

<http://www.aba.government.bg/news.php?newsid=904>

Zomi Reunification Organisation (the Chin people, in Myanmar, Bangladesh & India): adopt flag

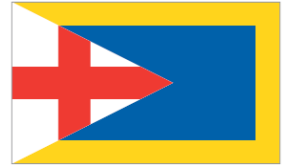
http://www.zogam.org/organisation.asp?article=organisation_36

Putting a face of flags: Biographies of Flag Institute personalities

Number 1 The President: Captain Malcolm Farrow OBE FFI



Malcolm Farrow left the Royal Navy in 1996 as a Commander after 34 years service, He then joined the Senior Civil Service (as a Commodore equivalent) but was made redundant a couple of years later, so he rejoined the Navy as a Captain to be the Director of the International Festival of the Sea 2001. Leaving again thereafter he spent a short time in the charity sector before becoming a consultant and then a civil servant in Captain's uniform on the Trafalgar bicentenary project team. He now works for the Forces Pension Society. Malcolm's interest in flags began a long time ago as a signals officer in the RN.



President's Flag

Forthcoming Flag Institute Events

Tuesday 17th October at 7:30pm

2006 Perrin Lecture:

Past and Future: the Union Flag at 400

By Mr Graham Bartram FFI,
Chief Vexillologist of The Flag Institute and Secretary General for Congresses of FIAV.

**The Naval Club, 38 Hill Street,
Mayfair, London W1J 5NS.**

<http://www.navalclub.co.uk/>

The event is free, but entry is by ticket only. To obtain tickets e-mail the following link

perrin@flaginstitute.org.uk

Saturday 25th November 2006

General Meeting and AGM

10am The Banbury Museum
Banbury, Oxfordshire.

<http://www.cherwell-dc.gov.uk/banburymuseum/index.cfm>

7:30pm The President's Annual Dinner (*Dress: Black tie and miniatures*)
Guest of Honour
Dr Whitney Smith Phd
Director, The Flag Research Centre, 'The Father of Vexillology'

The Cromwell Lodge Hotel, North Bar Street, Banbury
At a cost of £17:00 per head.

*Accommodation is available at the Cromwell Lodge Hotel,
a discount is offered to Flag Institute Members staying for the Meeting.*

<http://www.cromwelllodgehotel.com/>

A list of other available accommodation locally can be found on:

http://www.laterooms.com/en/k16279194_banbury-hotels.aspx

A Tourist Map of Banbury can be downloaded from

<http://www.cherwell-dc.gov.uk/files/publicationscheme/2391-500.pdf>

To attendance please register via the [Flag Institute Website](#) or e-mail the form below
to [Mike Kearsley](#), our secretary or copy and send to his [postal address](#).

Members are asked to make a contribution of £5:00 per head to cover teas and coffees.

Although there are a number of cafes and bars around the museum area, a Sandwich Lunch
can be provided at the museum at a cost of £6.50 per head.

Name.....

Address.....

Telephone Number.....e-mail.....

Guest Name:

Please reserve number places at the Flag Institute AGM on the 25th November 2006.

Please reserve number of Lunches (please advise if vegetarian required) (£6.50 per head)

Please reserve number places at the President's Dinner (£17:00 per head)

I would be willing to give a presentation at the meeting, entitled:

.....

I have objects I would like to present at a 'show and tell' session y/n

I have objects for the flag bazaar y/n

I have object I would like to present at a 'show and tell' session y/n

I have objects for the flag bazaar y/n