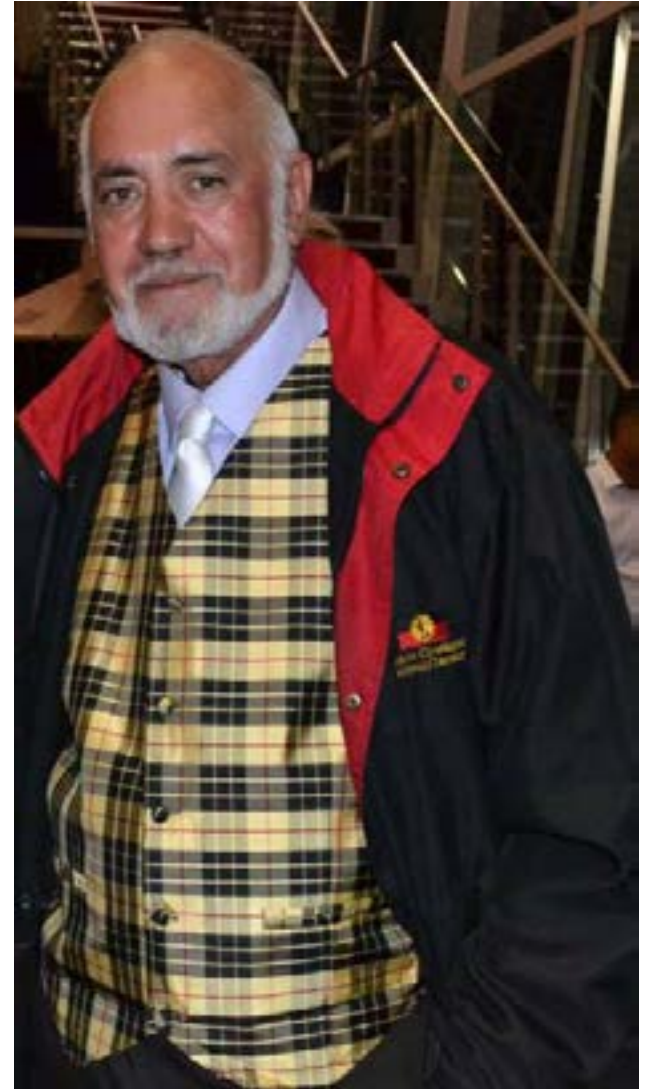


The Spirit of Belonging
Flag:
A Work in Progress

Darren Mc Cleod

October 2015





Introducing the Spirit of Belonging (SOB) Flag

Darren Mc Cleod's Spirit of Belonging (SOB) flag lifts us to a higher place to begin our national conversation about an Australian republic. It is a gift to the future from the remarkable Mc Leod family of Wreck Bay. The SOB flag represents, once again, an extraordinary act of generosity from our Aboriginal brothers and sisters. Darren's flag lifts our eyes, our discourse and our thoughts. I particularly like Darren's distinction between Indigenous Australians (those who have been born here) and Aboriginal Australians (those whose ancestors were here before the coming of the Europeans in 1788). The concept behind this takes some getting used to. It is a concept that calls up the day when all of us can feel happy and comfortable in our skins on these Australian lands. When we can all say that we belong here and any crimes or injustices have been atoned. Sometimes I wonder whether such a day will ever come. There is so much more than needs to be done in recompense and in support of Australia's first peoples, the Aboriginal nations of Australia. Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians spiritual and material wealth is created from Aboriginal *warra*. We must never forget this and it will take many, many decades and much philosophical debate and concerted action for us to truly pay the debt that is owed to all Aboriginal people.

Darren's work is all the more remarkable given that context where it is all too easy to dwell on debts that need to be paid. It is as if Darren and his family knows that justice will ultimately prevail and that the world itself cannot wait any longer for the gift of Aboriginal spirituality. The flag is an act of creativity dedicated to Darren's own people, to new comers and to all who live on this great Southern continent but it also speaks of the spirit of this continent which is something important for the world. Many things become apparent through Darren's flag, things that many of us have longed for: a sense of place, a true and just reconciliation with all of the nation's first peoples, glimpses of the deep spirituality of the land and even more than this – a vision of a better world emanating from the world's most ancient continent.

Where might this flag lead us? There is so much to say in answer to this question. The most important thing is for the symbolism of the flag to be seen. As Darren says it is a work in progress and he is looking for dialogue, debate and suggestions. For now it is just enough to see and understand the deep thinking and spirituality behind the flag. For in this alone things can change and that is what Darren wants most of all, to inspire us to belong and come together. This is a humble and thoughtful contribution to the nation's vibrations and rumblings. How good it would be to see this flag flying on every mast of our country and for this flag to finally bring us together with a common philosophy and sense of well being.

Finally I have to mention Bobby Mc Leod's haunting song "Rainbows and Tears" which is both an inspiration and accompaniment of the Spirit of Belonging flag. Bobby was one of the as yet un-discovered greats of Australian music. His life was big and his story is in some ways unbelievable. You can feel Bobby and the late great Aunty Iris Mc Leod in Darren's words. Listen to Bobby's song when you double click on the image of the flag below.

Peter Botsman

Mt Isa*

17 October, 2015

* Special thanks to the management and staff of the Coffee Club, Mt Isa for letting me use their cafe as my office on Saturday 17th October!

Spirit of Belonging

The Spirit of Belonging Flag speaks of a time when Australia co-existed in perfect harmony with its natural environment and traditional custodians.

It reflects through its artistic design the inner spiritual soul of the mother lore/law of our nation, through the rainbow serpent dreaming lores/law of this continent.

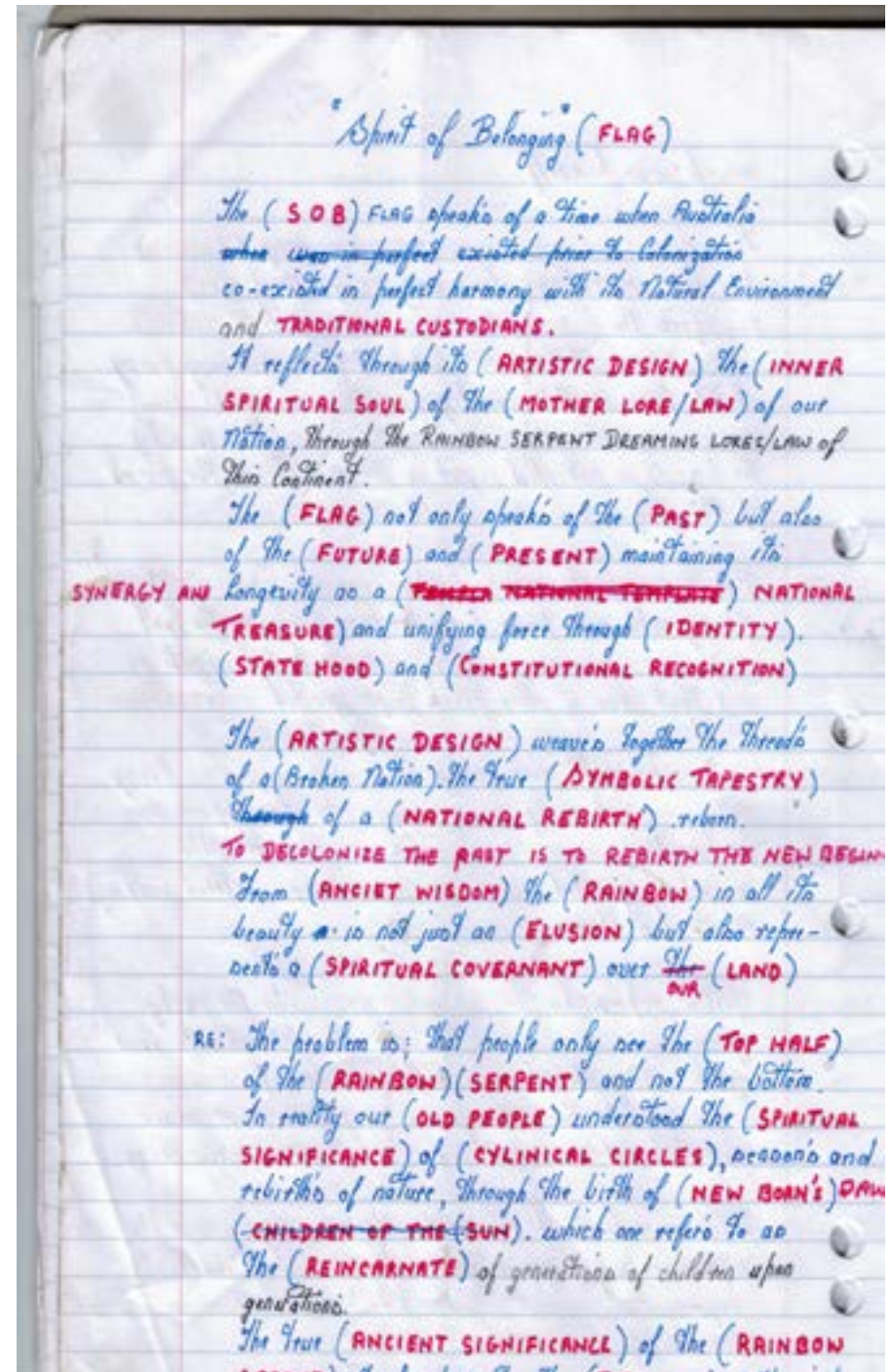
The flag not only speaks of the past but also of the future and present maintaining its synergy and longevity as a national treasure and unifying force through identity, state hood and constitutional recognition.

The artistic design weaves together the threads of a broken nation. The true symbolic tapestry of a national rebirth reborn. To decolonise the past is to rebirth the new beginning. From ancient wisdom the rainbow in all its beauty is not just an *elusion* but also represents a spiritual covenant over our land.

Re: The problem is that people only see the top half of the rainbow serpent and not the bottom. In reality our old people understood the significance of cylindrical circles, seasons and re-births of nature through the birth of new-borns, dawns which one refers to the reincarnate of generations of children upon generation.

The true ancient significance of the rainbow serpent not only represents the top half of the rainbow but also represents mountains (the great dividing range), underground river systems, rivers, lakes, estuaries, sacred sites which are all inter-connected through ancient song lines, dreaming tracks or lei-lines once again we have to remember the beautiful tapestry and what unites by unifying our resolve through the ancient knowledge and wisdom of our ancestral past.

Re: The Bible speaks: That from the point or start of all rivers, where they begin their flow, they enter the ocean and are drawn up through a natural baptismal or cleansing process and return to the place from whence they came. Once again we refer to the cycle of life which for me represents the arteries of life through our veins, referred to as blood lore/law. People see this as being something separate, but to Aboriginal people everything is complete within itself. Once again we refer to water dreaming dreamtime for without water we would not be here. When speaking about the embodiment of all things we speak about the third



person we connect to the healed state which one refers to virgin law/lore untouched by man kind that has been here since time immemorial. When the Bible speaks about the time when Jesus Christ was crucified on the cross of Calvary his last words were: "Father it is finished". To look deeper into what he said, I strongly believe that he meant that everything is complete for on the seventh day he rested, and when he died and rose from the dead it was not in a tabernacle or church but within the cave or womb of creation meaning mother earth to be with the father meaning God which was himself.

RED

The spirit of belonging flag is very sacred. The most revealing colour is red. The red signifies the spiritual blood ties to mother earth and that of our land/nation, giving every child born in this country a spiritual, cultural and Australian identity. This is why the red is situated in the middle or heart of the flag which also represents the umbilical cord.

BLACK

Black represents our first nation's peoples, the Aboriginals who have been here for more than 60,000 years before colonisation and that of other black people who have settled here and been granted citizenship.

WHITE

White represents our early white settlers being convicts and early pastoralists. It also represents modern day white Europeans who have recently migrated here, been granted citizenship and have settled here, calling Australia home.

YELLOW

Yellow represents the Sun which gives heat, warmth and inspires growth. It also represents Asian people: the early Chinese people who migrated to Australia to find gold. Many stayed on and had children with Aboriginal women. In later years many more have migrated to Australia and also have come to call Australia home.

BLUE

Blue in retrospect represents the Commonwealth and our long association with Britain but it also represents water for without water there would be no life (Water Dreaming).

THE SOUTHERN CROSS

The Southern Cross on the East Coast represents within Aboriginal lore

THE MOST REVEALING COLOUR IS (RED).
Signifies the (SPIRITUAL BLOOD TIES
EARTH) and that of our land/nation.
child born in this country (AUSTRALIAN
CULTURAL and AUSTRALIAN IDENTITY.
The (RED) is situated right in the middle
of the flag which also represents the UMBILICAL CORD.

Black represents our (FIRST NATION)
Aboriginals who have been here for
(60) SIXTY THOUSAND YEARS, prior
and that also of other Black People, groups
who have settled here.

White represents our early WHITE
CONVICTS and early PASTORALIST. It
modern-day WHITE EUROPEANS who have
migrated, granted CITIZENSHIP and
Australia home.

Yellow represents the ASIAN PEOPLE
year CHINESE PEOPLE migrated to
gold. Many stayed on and had children
WOMEN. In the latter years many more
migrated and once again have called

Biami the creator. It also represents to many the cross of Calvary but it is also symbolic representing the great southern land It was the flag of Eureka rebels and their spirit of democracy and freedom that has come to be one of the nation's cherished ideals.

THE SINGLE STAR

There are many aspects of this star. To me it represents the Stateless people with no belonging or ownership. It also represents the evening star or star of Bethlehem that guided the three wise men. For our northern peoples it is the star that guided the ancestral creators from their spirit island to the mainland. It could also represent the Star of David although it has 8 points. It also represents the long standing of our association with the Commonwealth and could be identified as the Commonwealth star.

POINTS OF THE STARS

There are eight main points of the stars representing the six states and the Northern and Capital territories. These points in turn divide into the many lines and territorial boundaries of the original first nations' domains. These first domains are the perfect natural and governmental divisions of the Australian continent. Within these divisions custodianship of estates transfers endlessly back and forward from grandparents to grand children as safe and rightful custodians. These custodians are the traditional owners of the many lands and estates of Australia. The wise counsel of the traditional owners and custodians is something that will become more and more important to the future well being and prosperity of the Australian nation.

Darren McLeod

October 2015

To many the (CROSS OF CALVARY) suspect, but it is also (SYMBOLIC) The (GREAT SOUTHERN LAND) adorned on the (AUSTRALIAN FLAG) and the flag prior.

E STAR: There are many aspects to this (STAR) To me it represents the (STATELESS) with (NO BELONGING) or ownership. It also represents the (EVENING STAR) that guided the (THREE WISE MEN) It could also represent the (STAR OF DAVID) although it has (8 POINTS). It also reflects the long standing of our association with the (COMMONWEALTH) it could still be identified as the (COMMONWEALTH STAR) through respect.

POINTS

POINTS

The (8 POINTS) of the (STARS) is very important in that it represents the (6 STATES) (TERRITORY) and the (ACT) of (CANBERRA) Subject to the (NORTHERN TERRITORY) a (STATE) under a (REPUBLIC) of the

