

# 4 Flags to Fly on the First People's Day

All of the symbolism and colours of the two Indigenous flags except the Dhari of the Torres Islander cultural flag.

## The Corroboree 1962

First Aboriginal Flag and "First People's Day" flag, designed by Bob King Crawford, a black Australia on an ochre land and the rings of eternity, as a gift to the first peoples in 1962. The Indigenous flag was also the emblem under which the first Aboriginal Exposition took place in 1979, at the Sidney Myer Music Bowl. The flag itself now resides at Museum Victoria. Its song of the same title was later performed at both theatre and major festival events with full Indigenous casts. It presided over Australia Day in Melbourne, with the other flags for 20 years. All rights were transferred by the artist to the Indigenous people, to use as they see fit.



## Koori Flag 1971

The next Koori flag design by Harold Thomas entered history on 12 July and began its life on an umbrella as a protest and later acknowledged as an emblem of the first peoples. The official explanation for its symbolism is the gold circle being the sun, the red the ochre colour of Australia and the black the people. It is the most easily recognised of any Australian flag. All three symbols appear on the

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## Flag of Unity 1988

The dramatic story of the Flag of Unity began in 1988. As it turned out it pre-empted the Torres Strait Islander flag in that it incorporated the same colours with the additional white of the star and headdress, the blue of the seas, and the black lines for the people and the other first peoples flag. It had additional symbolism as the 'Unity flag', as the roo represented the people, the cross the history, the sun with additional overtones of the wattle (the national flower) and on the slouch hat, and black for remembrance. It was the first flag to be recognised in a ceremony by a local and State Governments and the Ceremony to be honoured by a full blooded Aboriginal, Sir Dough Nichols. Created 22 years after the first of his major indigenous flags. It also had its creation in a song titled "The Australians". It was the flag used to promote the Long Walk in 2000, in which 400,000 people took part. Legend has it that the flag was used on "the" coffin in place of a British Australian flag of a "Marralinga victim" as a form of protest.



## The Creative Spirits 1992

Bernard Namok designed The Creative Spirits as the Torres Strait Islander's emblem for their nation, completing the quartet. The inclusion of its colours as part of the flag would seem to be inspired by the Flag of Unity i.e. the creative star of five points in white with a blue background is also on the Flag of Unity; the third star on the right. Also as are the green and black thus all three flags are married.

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