

The Vexilloid Tabloid

Portland Flag Association

“Free, and Worth Every Penny!”

Issue 9 April 2006

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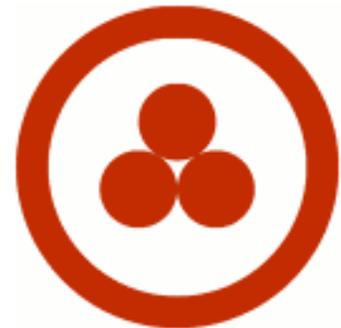
Pax Cultura: A Red Crystal of Culture

By Scott Mainwaring

Last December marked the amendment of the Geneva Conventions to include a new, nondenominational symbol for use (if desired) by societies within the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement: the Red Crystal. Together with the Red Cross, and the Red Crescent, flags bearing these symbols designate the obligation of all parties to the Conventions to protect the sick and wounded, and their caregivers, on the battlefield. The Red Crystal marks the latest evolution of this remarkably successful international agreement, dating from 1864, to use flags to help enforce humanitarian treaties.

Interestingly, there is a little-known analogous flag, movement and international treaty intended to extend Red Cross-like protections to cultural, not just medical, facilities. Called Pax Cultura (“Cultural Peace” or “Peace through Culture”), this movement was instigated by the mystical Russian artist Nicholas Roerich (1874-1947) and ratified in the Roerich Pact of 1935 by 21 member

nations (including the United States) in the Pan-American Union, the predecessor of today’s Organization of American States.

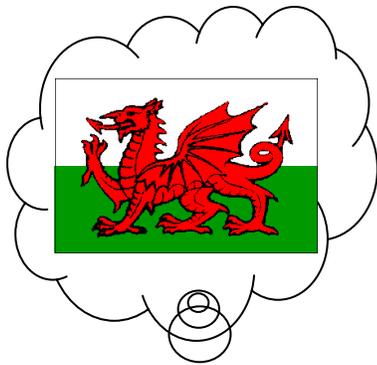


Pax Cultura

Roerich, also known as Nikolai Konstantinovich Rerikh, led a fascinating life, emigrating from Russia to New York City in the 1920’s and traveling widely in Asia (particularly in the Himalayas), attracting the support of FDR’s Commerce Secretary Henry Wallace (who Roerich influenced to include the Masonic Great Seal of the United States on the one dollar bill), and being twice nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.

The Roerich Pact marked the apparent height of his influence. It defined a symbol, the Pax Cultura

(Continued on page 2)



“Y DDRAIG GOCH DDYRY CYCHWYN”
“The Red Dragon will lead the way,”
the motto of Wales

If you wish to compliment the editor, or to contribute in the future, contact John Hood at 503-238-7666 or vivijohn@comcast.net. If you wish to complain, call your mother.

Pax Cultura: The Banner of Peace

(Continued from page 1)

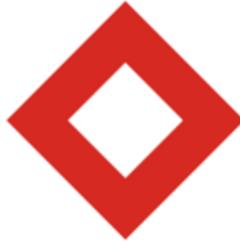
emblem, to be used on “Banners of Peace” that would be flown for protection over “historic monuments, museums, scientific, artistic, educational and cultural institutions.” The emblem consists of a large red circle enclosing an equilateral triangle of three solid red dots. Two alternative symbolic meanings are provided for this symbol by the Roerich Museum in New York City. In one, the circle represents “the totality of culture” and the three dots, “Art, Science and Religion, three of the most embracing of human cultural activities.” In the other, the circle represents “the eternity of time” and the three dots “past, present and future.” The museum further declares, “The sacred



Madonna Oriflamma 1932

By Nicolas Roerich

origins of the symbol, as an illustration of the trinities fundamental to all religions, remain central to the meaning of the Pact and the Banner today.”



As the Red Crystal illustrates, the International Red Cross Movement is vexillologically alive and well. The same cannot be said for Pax Cultura, which despite international sanction, was apparently never used in practice and is today an obscure historical (and vexillological) curiosity. The author was unable to find any Pax Cultura flags being offered for sale. The Roerich Museum does sell a banner for indoor use only.

References:

<http://www.roerich.org/>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pax_Cultura

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_Crystal

Wooden Flag Award

PFA member Ted Kaye recently journeyed to Fairbanks, Alaska, with two goals:

1. Fulfill his wife Debbie's dream to see the Northern Lights
2. Visit his 49th state and buy its flag.

At the lodge at Chena Hot Springs Resort, he observed the Alaska state flag. Perhaps the temperature of 50 degrees below zero caused the flag to invert.



I was hanging out down at Elmer's Flag and Banner the other day when a guy comes in and asks Mike for a green American flag. Mike looks puzzled, then says, “The American Flag is red, white and blue.” The guy thinks this over for a moment, then he says, “Okay, I'll have a blue one.”

Some Flag Related Websites

North American Vexillological Association <http://www.nava.org>

Flag Institute (United Kingdom) <http://www.flaginstitute.org>

Flags of the World <http://www.fotw.net>

Elmer's Flag & Banner <http://www.elmersflag.com>

Darwin, Northern Territory (Australia) <http://www.nationalflags.com.au>

Flag Society of Australia <http://www.flagsaustralia.com.au>

April 2006 Flutterings You Need to Know

We didn't have a big turnout this month, but there was still plenty of discussion, non the less. Scott told us about Nicholas Roerich and the Pax Cultura. (see associated article).

Mike told us about different methods of making flags. He also demonstrated a new gadget for measuring wind speed, sort of a hand held digital anemometer.

Marshall is off on another mission. It seems that he asked the fire department why they didn't fly the Portland City Flag over the firehouses. After some time and several emails, he got a gentle pat on the head for his trouble. Here are some of the messages:

From: "Kelly, Tim (PFB Email)"
<tkelly@fire.ci.portland.or.us>

To: "Edwards, Scott (PFB Email)"
<sedwards@fire.ci.portland.or.us>

CC: "'mgoldbe@msn.com'"
<mgoldbe@msn.com>, "Klum, John (PFB Email)"
jklum@fire.ci.portland.or.us>

Subject: DISPLAY OF CITY AND COUNTY FLAGS ON FIRE STATIONS QUESTION

Date: Fri, 17 Feb 2006
11:47:55 -0800

DCFM Edwards,

A Mr. Marshall Goldberg, member of a local Portland Flag Aficionados group, called with the following question:

"Why don't the fire stations in the City of Portland display the city, county or

state flags, along with the US Flag?"

In utter honesty, I did not have a suitable answer for neither him nor me. Could this question be forwarded up through channels to the Chief's Office (ultimately through the Commissioner to the Mayor's Office) for resolution (that is, unless you may have the answer)?

Thanks.

Tim

From: "Marshall Goldberg"
mgoldbe@msn.com

To: "Kelly, Tim (PFB Email)"
<tkelly@fire.ci.portland.or.us>

3/25/06 Never heard back on my question. Thanks, Marshall Goldberg

From: "Kelly, Tim (PFB Email)"
<tkelly@fire.ci.portland.or.us>

To: 'Marshall Goldberg '
<mgoldbe@msn.com>

Subject: RE: DISPLAY OF CITY AND COUNTY FLAGS ON FIRE STATIONS QUESTION

Date: Mon, 27 Mar 2006
16:29:25 -0800

Dear Mr. Goldberg,

I am very sorry for the miscommunication and delay. Although we would be very proud to display our city and county flags, in a time of budget constraints, the probable cost to mount, supply

and replace those flags on every Fire Bureau station as a matter of routine would be prohibitive. We are consistently fighting to save every penny in order to keep the staffing levels at a minimum compliance of safety (for both our own personnel and for those whom we serve). However, rest assured that we will not fail to continue to display our nations flag, regardless of the "financial climate."

I hope that you will understand the choices that we must make in order to maintain a safer city for us all.

Sincerely,

Tim Kelly, Senior Inspector
Public Education Office

It seemed to us that the fire department was a city rather than a federal organization and it should fly its sponsors flag, or at least fly the city flag under the US Flag, for want of additional poles. What do the rest of you think about this? Does anyone have a connection with the PFD?

Since Fred is such a news hound and trivia addict, he has promised to keep an eye out for more flags in the news to augment our publication.

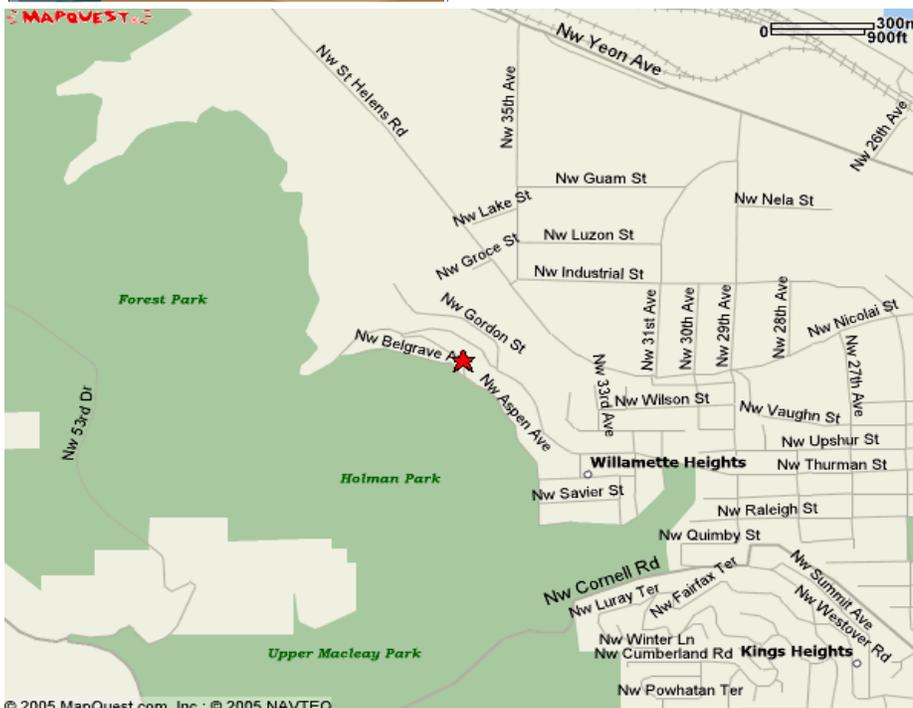
July Meeting

The next meeting of the Portland Flag Association will be at 7 p.m., Thursday, July 13, 2006, at Ted Kaye's house, 2235 Aspen Ave., telephone (503) 223-4660. See the map below.

We look forward to seeing those of you that have been otherwise committed, and hear some new war stories, see some different flags, and hear some provocative discussion.

Any and all flags, books or articles are welcome for "show and tell."

If you can't get to the meeting, perhaps you can give the editor something to share with our readers. As you can see, we have many interests.



Book Review

By Ted Kaye

Sweden's Story in Over 450 Flags (Vol. 1)

Author: Kevin Harrington (2005)

The president of the Canadian Flag Association has produced an interesting and extensive compilation of information and images relating to the history and use of the flags of Sweden. Retired high school teacher and librarian, Kevin Harrington wrote and self-published the first volume in 116 pages, 8.5" x 11" comb-bound. There is color on every home-produced page, with production values consistent with Flagscan, which the author also edits.

The book comprises four parts: "The Nation's Symbols", "Sweden's Growth and Expansion", "Maritime Sweden", and "Sweden-Canada". It includes a marvelous potpourri of flags, banners, logos, arms, seals, dia-

grams, maps, and other illustrations. Kevin also collects postcards, and many prizes of his collection are shown.

A major problem is the author's insistence on depicting many flags as "flying"—artificially curved rather than rectangular—which leads to distorted images that are sometimes difficult to decipher and frustrating to duplicate. Additionally, many other graphics are magnified or reduced without locking their aspect ratios, leading to unnecessarily "stretched" or "squished" images.

However, the book represents a useful (although expensive) reference on Sweden's symbols throughout history and across many fields. It is enjoyable to browse or read straight through, although it lacks an index or a page-numbered table of contents that would help it to serve as a reference. The writing is self-described as "often anecdotal, which allows the reader to acquire a strong sense of Swedish history, literature, and popular culture as well as an appreciation of Sweden's flag history". Kevin has dedicated several recent years to studying Swedish and visited Sweden three times in the course of his research. The result is a comprehensive and entertaining tome backed by sound scholarship and obvious enthusiasm, worthy of a "Bravo!"

The author's plan for the second volume includes the military, heraldry, ethnic peoples, and political parties. It will likely be worth acquiring as a companion to this volume--and it promises

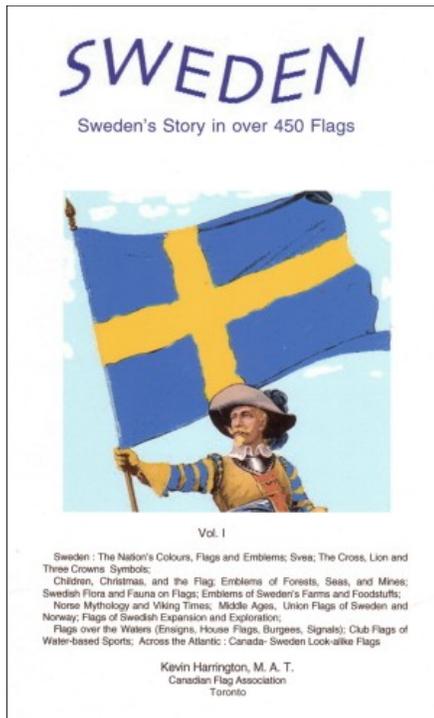
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Book Review

(Continued from page 4)

to have an index!

Sweden's Story may be purchased through the Canadian Flag Association, 50 Heathfield Dr., Scarborough, ON M1M 3B1 Canada, or by contacting the author at kevin.harrington@sympatico.ca (the price is US\$65, postage paid).



Flags in the News

In a recent newspaper article about the political unrest in Nepal, the grayscale picture showed a protester in front of a flag that resembled that of Honduras. With all the demonstrations occurring because of the immigration issue, and the protester looked to be a Latina, it seemed as though the paper had mixed up their photos.



A little research showed that the paper was right and that the demonstrator's flag was indeed that of the Nepali Congress Party.



Nepali Congress Party



NPC Variant

In color, it is quite different from the Honduran flag, and only has four stars, rather than five. So much for jumping to conclusions!

A report out of Canada shows yet another protest by the Six Nations. A housing project is being built on land that the Mohawks claim as theirs, and when things like that happen, they get upset and, among other things, bring out the Oka Warriors/Mohawk Nation Flag. It has been a rallying symbol since the Oka crisis of 1990.



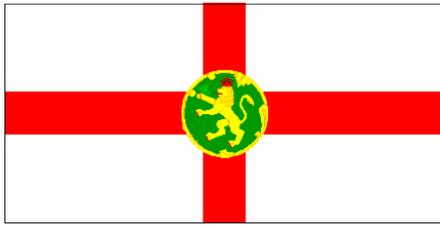
Oka Warriors/Mohawk Nation Flag Flies As Tires Burn In The Background



Last Minute Flag Sale!!!
Stewart Cameron, our member from Warren (over by St. Helens), is moving to Monaco and wants to sell the flags he has collected from visiting various antique stores, garage sales and Goodwill Stores. They range from various US Flags to embroidered Costa Rican and Guatemalan to some he's not sure of. Anyone who is interested, please call Stewart at his office on 503-636-4841. He is also learning French, and with his Scottish accent, it should be lovely.

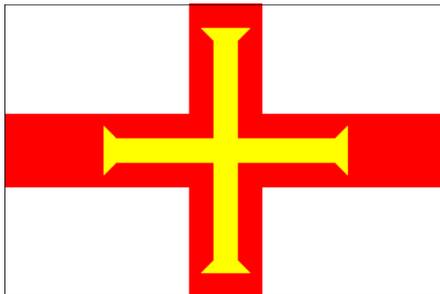
What Was that Flag? Answers to last quiz

These flags are from the Channel Islands of the United Kingdom. Our separated brethren at the Flag Institute could provide more definitive information on these locations, but suffice to say, they apparently are not part of the United Kingdom, but rather Crown Dependencies that belong to the Queen.



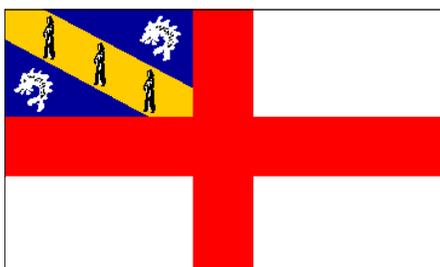
Alderney

Alderney is a dependency of the Bailiwick of Guernsey.



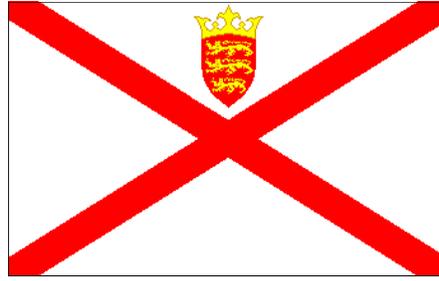
Guernsey

The Bailiwick of Guernsey uses both the Cross of St. George and William the Conqueror's cross pattée.



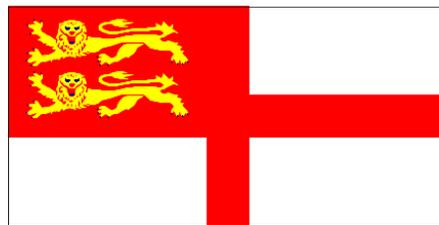
Herm

Herm is a feudal tenancy leased from Guernsey. The monks are a reminder of the monks from Mont-Saint-Michel that originally colonized the island.



Jersey

Jersey is another Bailiwick, entirely separate from Guernsey. The Cross of St. Patrick has several explanations, discussed in FOTW, take your pick.



Sark

Sark is another dependency of Guernsey. There seems to be a problem with the two leopards in the canton. This illustration shows them intruding into the Cross of St. George, which should be inappropriate.

There are examples of them being entirely within the canton. Again, take your pick! Sark is also known for Dame Sibyl Hathaway who was Seigneur from 1927 to 1974.



What's that Flag?

These are a few flags that may or may not be based on reality.

