The Confederate Flag Flap

By Ted Kaye

In June, the flag world witnessed a huge shift in attitudes toward the Confederate Battle Flag. Following the race-based shootings in Charleston, South Carolina, public opinion moved swiftly toward removing the flag from public displays and from merchant shelves.

“Few emblems in American history have provoked stronger passions than the battle flag of the vanquished Confederacy. To some it symbolizes honor and independence; to others, hatred and slavery”, says Tony Horwitz, in Confederates in the Attic (1998).

Usually only an occasional interview guest discussing flag topics in local and national media, for two weeks I found myself speaking daily—to Slate, NPR, National Geographic, CNN, PBS, Georgia Public Radio, KXL Radio (in Portland)—providing history, background, and perspective on the controversy.

Ironically, the work for which I may be best known, the flag-design guidebook Good Flag, Bad Flag, quotes the National Flag Committee of the Confederate States of America in describing what makes a successful flag design.

Top-name retailers, flag manufacturers, and flag dealers tripped over themselves to stop selling or making the flags—although Huntsville’s Alabama Flag & Banner ramped up production and sales!

Here in Portland, The Oregonian described how Dave Anchel, PFA member and owner of Elmer’s Flag & Banner, consulted his staff and his conscience, and decided to remove the flag from display, only offering it for sale from behind the counter. Regardless, his entire stock sold out the next day.

In likely the most newsworthy aspect of the controversy, the battle flag came down from the Confederate Soldiers monument on the South Carolina statehouse grounds. Prediction: Mississippi’s state flag will be the next target for change.

For more information, consult The Confederate Battle Flag, America’s Most Embattled Emblem by John M. Coski (2005). It provides a strong history of the flag and its evolving use from 1861 to the present.
In our July meeting, hosted by Ted Kaye, 16 PFA members enjoyed a lively 3+-hour evening of flags and other wide-ranging topics. As the host, Ted led the introductions and moderated the discussion.

John Schilke exulted in seeing a photo of a Roerich flag displayed on SE Stephens St.) and gave a brief description of its creator and its purpose—to protect cultural sites in wartime—(see VT #20).

Michael Orelove gave updates on his flags-for-educational-purposes solicitations, showed off some flags and burgees, and passed around the results of his writing off for state seals—40 of 50 states have responded so far.

David Koski described his project to facilitate flag image construction using Adobe InDesign, with layers for standard flag components—he showed resulting example flags.

Ted Kaye led a discussion of the Confederate Battle Flag controversy, using actual flags to illustrate the history of the CSA’s flag use. He has been very actively giving interviews in the past two weeks at the local and national levels on that and other subjects (see p. 1).

Lorraine Bushek, joining us for the first time, described her work as an artist, including the 3rd-place finalist in the 2009 Oregon flag redesign effort.

Ken Dale reflected on the symbolism of the U.S. Capitol building—whose construction continued even during the Civil War.

Scott Mainwaring noted that cell-phone cases featuring the Portland flag orient upside-down when taking a vertical photo. He created a correct version on Zazzle.com. He has also made versions of “homemade” U.S. flags, with “randomly perturbed” stars and colors.
Max Liberman consulted with the assembled members on agenda items for the 24th general assembly of FIAV in Sydney in September; he and Ted were named delegate and alternate. He then shared some of the thousands of submissions for a new flag for New Zealand—the good and the bad.

Nathaniel Mainwaring, who enters 4th grade this fall, updated us on his Minecraft-based flag work, featuring zombie pig-men.

Casey Sims described the development of his personal flag, and closed his presentation with a song on his guitar.

Patrick Genna displayed a recent Goodwill acquisition—a large flag of Antigua & Barbuda and distributed a fact sheet about it.

Robert Izatt described the crowdfunding campaign for the Cascadian Flag-Making Cooperative.

David Ferriday showed his latest flag-based art and noted that a recent local flag store’s ad depicts the Portland flag upside-down…

Alexander Baretich shared some of his recent designs, including the Cascadia nautical flag (see p. 6), religious flags, and another bioregional flag—that of Danubia.

Dennis Stephens lauded the recent Roman Mars TED Talk on city flag design: “Why city flags may be the worst-designed think you’ve never noticed” (ted.com), and showed the flag stickers on his laptop documenting his travels.

The meeting started at 7:00 and adjourned at 10:20, reflecting the host’s poor timekeeping ability.

Our next meeting will be at the home of Larry Snyder on Sept. 10th. Patrick took the Portland Flag Association flag for him—the customary task of the next host.
Flags of the Rose Festival Fleet

By Scott Mainwaring

Every June, Portland’s Rose Festival welcomes “the fleet” from the US and Canada. Moored along the Willamette river, the ships display a colorful range of flags to see—ensigns, jacks, signal flags, and courtesy flags.

A large Maple Leaf Flag, along with many smaller flags, flies from the sailing ketch HMCS Oriole, a Canadian Navy sail training vessel (launched in 1921, she is the oldest commissioned ship in the Royal Canadian Navy).

The Canadian Naval Ensign flies from the frigate HMCS Calgary (FFH 335).

The maritime signal flag “K”, the POW-MIA flag, and the Portland city flag fly on the USCGC Waesche.

The Union Jack of the United States flies from the bow of USCGC Waesche (WMSL-751), a National Security Cutter. She flies the traditional U.S. jack—only US Navy ships are flying the so-called First Navy Jack with the rattlesnake.

A Flag for Pluto

by Scott Mainwaring

On 13 July the New Horizons probe sent an image of Pluto dominated by Tombaugh Regio, a large feature informally called “the heart”.

Inspired, I created a flag for Pluto: its astrological symbol in orange, in a white heart, on black (for space).

I chose the astrological over the astronomical symbol (♃) as its symmetry makes it more flag-friendly. The aspect ratio of 1:1 is the closest a rectangle can come to the circular shape of the (dwarf) planet; and distinguishes it from standard terrestrial flags.

The “heart” of Pluto from 476,000 miles. Image taken by New Horizons on 13 July 2015.
Source: NASA/APL/SwRI
What’s in the Flower Bed This Year?

Every year, Michael Orelove plants his “flower bed” to represent a flag. Since 2010 he has grown the U.S., Oregon, U.K., Canada, and Alaska flags. This year he honors his native city, Chicago.

The flag has a white field with two horizontal light-blue stripes and four red stars arranged horizontally in the center. The blue stripes symbolize Lake Michigan and the Chicago River. The stars represent Fort Dearborn, the Great Chicago Fire of 1871, the World’s Columbian Exposition of 1893, and the Century of Progress Exposition of 1933. The stars are six-pointed

North American Flag?

by Michael Orelove

If Canada, the United States, and Mexico were to join to form a North American Union, what would the resulting flag look like?

Mike Hale, the former owner of Elmer’s Flag and Banner, put this flag together for me.

Residents of each country can easily recognize the color and design elements of their national flag in it.

Coming up this year are two major vexillological events.

The 26th International Congress of Vexillology (ICV 26) will take place in Sydney, Australia, 31 August–4 September.

See: icv26.com.au

NAVAs 49th Annual Meeting (NAVA 49) will take place in Ottawa, Ontario, 16–18 October.

See: nava.org/all-annual-meetings/nava-49-2015

PFA members will attend both!

Oregon Flag Registry Update

PROJECT STATUS

118 Total Prospects Identified
32 Total Entries Assigned
16 Total Entries Completed

The Oregon Flag Registry is under way: oregonflagregistry.org. Contact Scott Mainwaring to join the team: info@portlandflag.org.

Chinook Indian Nation

Ted Kaye recently completed the entry of the flag the Chinook tribe, based in Washington, with members in Oregon. From his entry:

Adopted January, 2003, the flag places a stylized Chinook salmon in the style of Northwest Coast Indian art in black and red on a field of white. Centered on its stomach are the contours of a human face.

The flag’s salmon image is the tribe’s logo, designed by Tony Johnson. An accomplished artist and canoe carver, he also led the Cultural Affairs Committee which adopted the flag.

The Chinook Tribe has struggled for years in its pursuit of federal recognition; the flag creates a banner for members to rally around.
The Cascadian Nautical Flag

By Alexander Baretich

Cascadia is a bioregion roughly encompassing Oregon, Washington, British Columbia and parts of other states and provinces in the U.S. and Canada’s Pacific Northwest (see V/T #36).

In 2012, nearly 17 years after designing the popular Cascadian flag, I created a nautical flag for Cascadia, specifically for vessels of oceans, rivers, and the sky. The “Cascadian Wave Flag” is a tribute to the bioregion’s waters and sky.

At the top of the flag, the two blue and three white waves represent the mountains and partially clear sky. Hence the white waves next to those two top blue waves represent snowpack and clouds. Two green waves are the forest-covered hills. Between the two green waves is a single white wave that represents mist or low clouds. At the bottom of the flag, the two blue waves represent the Pacific Ocean and the Salish Sea as well as the region’s rivers (Columbia, Willamette, Frazer, Snake, etc.). The white waves next to the two lower blue waves represent sea foam and the crest of waves.

The green isosceles triangle with its base against the hoist represents the forest-clad hills and mountains. The Douglas Fir echoes the central symbol of the 1995 Cascadia flag.

Several other flags in the Pacific Northwest have blue and white waves, including British Columbia, the Zapatopi Cascadian flag, and the city of Vancouver, B.C.—they may have played an unconscious element of my creation of Cascadian Nautical flag. It is certainly part of our collective iconography to represent bodies of water with blue and white waves.

I intentionally made the flag extra long (longer than 1:2), although I have made versions in standard proportions. A longer flag may well serve a vessel better than a shorter one.

Three colleagues and I have just launched the Cascadian Flag Making Cooperative. Our general goal is to provide Cascadian flags, locally produced and “artist-certified” with our logo, the @Doug symbol.

We hope to sell or offer this flag only to owners or captains of vessels—ideally merchant vessels that conduct fair trade as opposed to “free trade” or vessels that have a mission of exploration, research, ecology, bioregional awareness, and/or for socioeconomic and ecological justice.

Like the classic Cascadian flag, also known as the “Doug Flag”, I hope this flag—as well as all my designs—will not be used for hate, exploitation, and against the values or principles of bioregionalism.

In seeking out a bioregional flag, I believe that it’s the bioregion that will capture the artist—not the artist capturing the bioregion.
What’s that Flag?

By David Ferriday

Can you name these seven flags and identify the unifying theme?

Answers in the next issue…

What Was that Flag? Answers to the last quiz

By Scott Mainwaring

These 28 “people” appear on seals on U.S. state flags. We asked, for each face, to identify the state flag and the person’s occupation/identity. Tony Burton, editor of *Crux Australis*, got them all.

How did you do?

1. Delaware: farmer
2. Wisconsin: sailor
3. Nebraska: blacksmith
4. Massachusetts: Algonquin man
5. West Virginia: miner
6. Delaware: militiaman
7. Kentucky: frontiersman / Daniel Boone
8. South Dakota: plowman
9. New Jersey: “Ceres”
10. New Jersey: “Liberty”
11. West Virginia: farmer
12. Kentucky: statesman / Henry Clay
13. Florida: Seminole woman
14. Michigan: gunman
15. New York: “Justice”
17. Minnesota: plowman
20. New York: Sun
21. Maine: farmer
22. Maine: sailor
24. Kansas: plowman
25. Idaho: miner
27. Wisconsin: yeoman (miner)
28. Minnesota: Native horseman
The Vexilloid Tabloid, founded in 1999 by the late John Hood, is published bi-monthly by and for the Portland Flag Association—Portland, Oregon, U.S.A. Find back issues at www.portlandflag.org.

Portland Flag Miscellany

Portland's neighborhood names now grace merchandise depicting the Portland flag within the outline of the state of Oregon. Items include pinback buttons (above), magnets, mirrors, and bottle openers.

https://www.etsy.com/listing/227713944/portland-oregon-neighborhoods-pinback

The Portland Timbers (MLS soccer team) recently emblazoned its home stadium with images of fans wielding the iconic axe. This fan is also wearing a t-shirt bearing the Portland flag along with “Portland Timbers”—and “adidas”.

Nutcase Helmets, founded in Portland by former Nike creative director & designer Michael Morrow, features one design using the Portland flag.

“The most fun a helmet ever had!”
(Nutcase Helmets Global Page)

Carl Larson reports that Nutcase used the updated Pantone colors specified in the city code in that helmet!

nutcasehelmets.com

September Meeting

The next meeting of the Portland Flag Association will be at 7 p.m., Thursday, September 10, 2015, at the Lodge at Oswego Pointe (home of Larry Snyder): 5000 Oswego Pointe Dr., Lake Oswego, OR 97034. See the map at right.

We look forward to seeing those of you who have missed recent meetings, and hear some new stories, see some different flags, and engage in provocative discussion.

If you can’t get to the meeting, perhaps you can give the editor something to share with readers.