

The Aboriginal Flag and Victoria Square / Tarndanyangga - an Important Historical Connection

Birth of a Flag

The birth of the Aboriginal flag occurred in Victoria Square / Tarndanyangga in July 1971 at a land rights rally.

Later the same year, the Aboriginal flag was flown at the Aboriginal Tent Embassy in Canberra.

Today, the Aboriginal flag has come to be a powerful symbol for reconciliation and hope for many Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people throughout Australia.

Flag Designer

Harold Thomas designed the Aboriginal flag. Harold is a Luritji man who currently resides in the Northern Territory. Harold was born in Alice Springs and was the first Aboriginal person to graduate from an Australian Art School.



Colours of the Flag

The Aboriginal flag is divided horizontally into two equal halves of black and red, with a yellow circle in the centre. The black symbolises Aboriginal people; the red symbolises the mother earth and the yellow the sun, the constant giver and renewer of life. The red also represents ochre, which is used by Aboriginal people in ceremonies.

First Raising

The Aboriginal flag was first raised in Victoria Square / Tarndanyangga on Friday 9 July 1971 in support of land rights for Aboriginal people. The raising coincided with National Aborigine's Day, a day that has now grown into a national week-long celebration known as NAIDOC week.



Status of the Flag

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags were proclaimed as official flags under Section (5) of the Flags Act (1995) by the Governor General on 14 July 1995. This followed on from a decision by the Federal Government to recognise the flags as flags of Australia. The Australian flag is the **official** flag of Australia, however both the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags are **recognised** flags of Australia.

Permanent Flying of the Aboriginal Flag in Victoria Square/Tarndanyangga

In May 2002, Adelaide City Council's Reconciliation Committee recommended to Council that, along with a range of reconciliation initiatives, the Aboriginal flag fly permanently on one of the two big flagpoles in Victoria Square/Tarndanyangga. Council endorsed the recommendation pending the outcome of a Flags and Banners Policy. Council unanimously endorsed the Flags and Banners Policy on 8 July 2002 resulting in the permanent flying of the Aboriginal flag in Victoria Square/Tarndanyangga.

30 Years of the Aboriginal Flag



30th Anniversary of the Aboriginal Flag - Tarndanyangga Kurna Yerta

During NAIDOC week in 2001 Council, in conjunction with the NAIDOC SA Committee convened Tarndanyangga Kurna Yerta in Victoria Square/Tarndanyangga in celebration of the flag's 30th anniversary. Tarndanyangga - Place of the Red Kangaroo Dreaming - is the Kurna name for Victoria Square/Tarndanyangga.

Thousands of people were involved in the Aboriginal flag ceremony which saw the flag carried from Parliament House to the centre of Victoria Square/Tarndanyangga prior to it being raised by Harold Thomas on one of the big flagpoles in Victoria Square/Tarndanyangga.

Adelaide City Council

The Adelaide City Council honours the historical association of Victoria Square/Tarndanyangga as the birthplace of the Aboriginal flag. Council also acknowledges the traditional custodianship of the Adelaide Plains area by Kurna people.

Further Information:
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