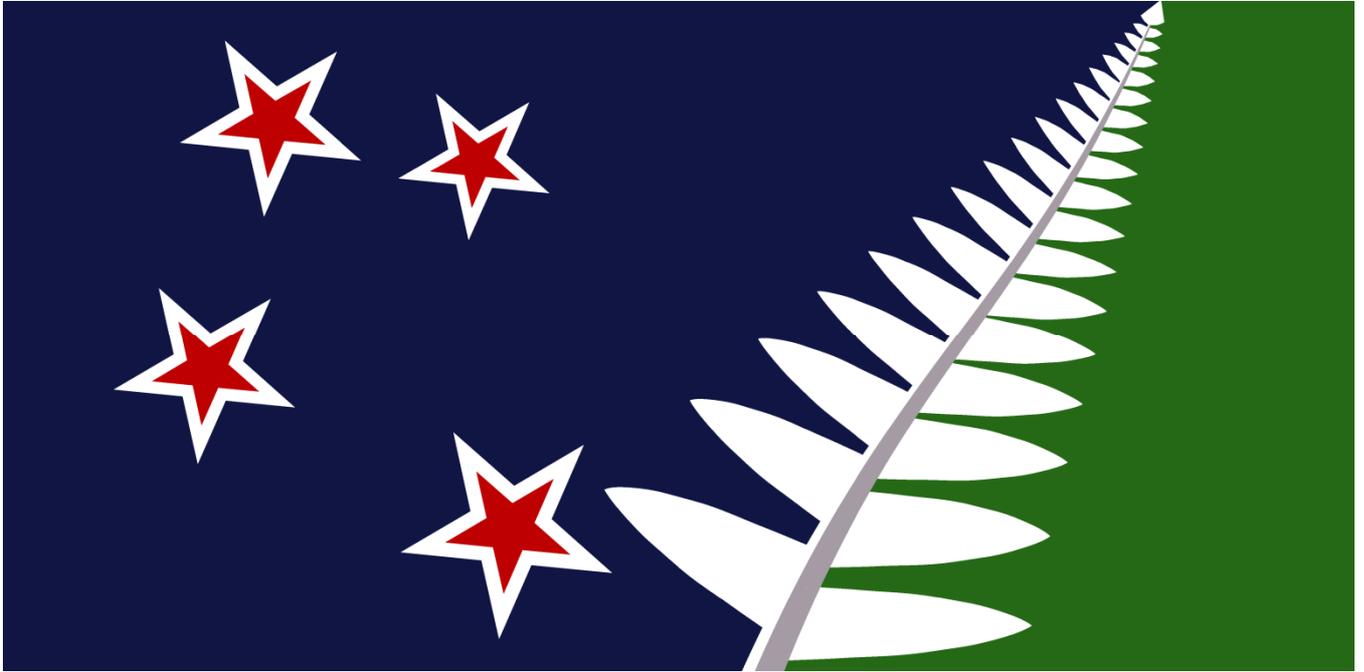
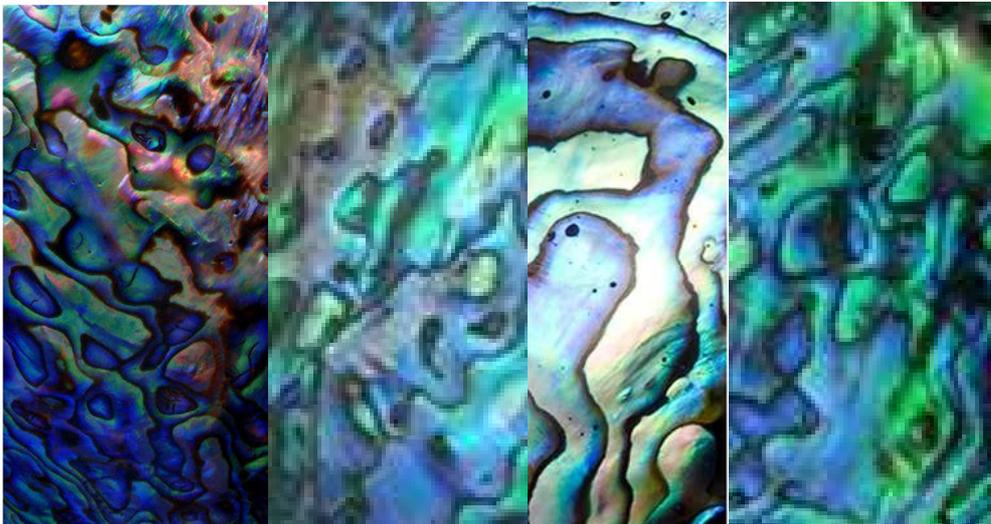


This is a flag with a story, a story that represents the Treaty and also our modern multicultural society. I have called it the Bring Together flag, because the theme is to represent diverse communities of New Zealand being brought together.



On the surface level the stars and fern are simply icons of New Zealand, while the blue and green Pau-shell colours represent the beauty of our natural environment. However the story is deeper.



Multiculturalism, and the Treaty of Waitangi, are specifically represented in the flag, and even the date of the Treaty is encoded in the design. The following describes the different parts of the story.

Aspect 1. A country of two halves

- When people see look at a map of New Zealand they see a country of two parts: we have two main islands surrounded by sea.
- The Silver Fern is shown on an angle similar to that of the South Island and Stewart Island
- The green part of the flag is next to the fern, hinting at Pounamu (New Zealand greenstone), part of a Maori name for the South Island: Te Wai Pounamu.
- The Southern Cross is shown on an angle that matches that of northland and the upper North Island
- The fern shape is a little like the ridges of a mountain range (the Southern Alps that make up the backbone of the South Island) while the red-on-white stars are a reminiscent of the volcanic mountains that have shaped some of the North Island's landscape.



Aspect 2. Peace Fern - Unity with Diversity

- The Silver Fern design symbolizes unity with diversity. The leaves of the fern represent communities, joined together into one country. I might not do things exactly the same as you do, and I might identify more with one group of New Zealanders than you do, but I can appreciate you are part of the great variety of people that make New Zealand what it is.
- Like a fern, a country or a community is a living thing, and if one part (a leaf) were removed then all parts would be diminished for it.
- The silver line on the fern represents speech. This is a twist on the proverb “Speech is silver but silence is golden”. Those who want to keep the gold to themselves often keep silent and want others to keep silent - but to benefit the whole nation together we must have speech. Different communities must communicate with each other, and no-one be deliberately left behind.

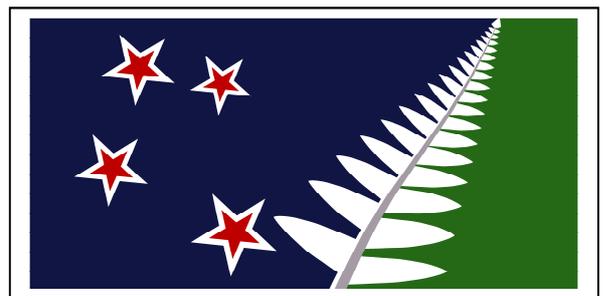


- Dialogue both ties us together and is the roadway to success, and to peace between the parts of our community. Thus the fern, and especially the silver line, has an ‘onward and upward’ shape like a road representing progress.

The peace fern idea applies to any grouping of communities in modern New Zealand, whether referring to people of different ethnic backgrounds, different religions, or however people define themselves. It is a strong call for New Zealand’s future, that this should be a place where diversity is accepted but we can all work together for the common good.

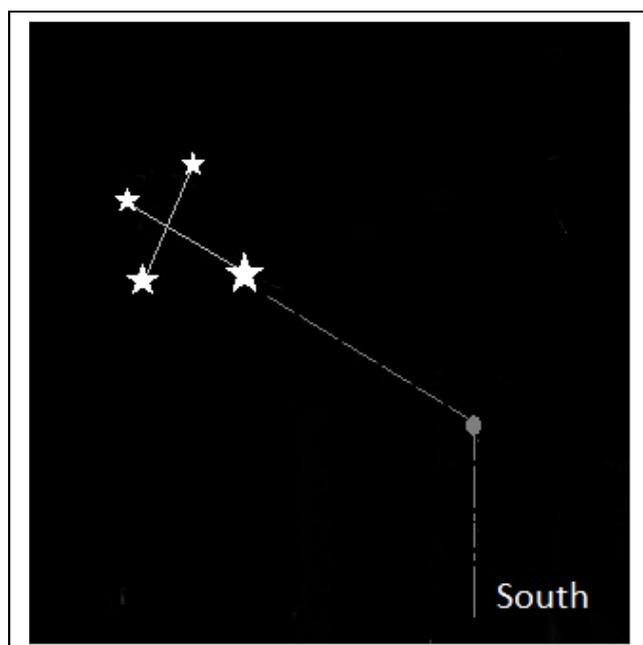
Aspect 3. The Treaty of Waitangi This is a particular case of the Peace Fern idea

- As well as being a country of two physical islands, we are country whose origin lies in a treaty between two groups of people. This is reflected in the flag.
- The leaves on the right side (on the land, represented by green) are taken to represent a diversity of iwi and hapu. Prior to the treaty, tangata whenua (the people of the land) were not united, and the leaves are shown as separate.
- The leaves on the left (on the sea side, represented by blue) refers to people who came across the sea from different nations and ethnicities. Although there is enormous diversity there, virtually all groups came to New Zealand “under the British flag”, that is, legitimised by the treaty. Thus they are shown joined together. The British flag is referenced by the colours of the Union Jack, shown in the stars.
- The silver line represents the Treaty itself. It joined Maori with the people from across the sea, and at the same brought Maori from being independent iwi and hapu into being part of one nation.
- The year of the Treaty, 1840, is represented by the points on the fern and stars. There are 18 leaves on each side of the fern: the first 17 leaves are separated but in the 18th they are joined. The number 40 is represented by the four five-pointed red stars and the four five-pointed white stars that form their border: $4 \times 5 \times 2 = 40$.



Aspect 4. Stars – The Power of Ideas

- The Southern Cross was a favourite early symbol on New Zealand flags. It is unique in the night sky as it always points the way to the South Celestial Pole and so is the easiest way to find the direction South and then all other directions of the compass.
- Some Maori referred to it as Te Punga, the anchor. This may be because the stars of the great canoe, the Milky Way, move relatively quickly, great distances across the sky, while the Southern Cross moves relatively slowly and brings everything back to its place the next evening.
- The Southern Cross is traditionally shown straight-up-and-down, but it can be seen on various angles to the horizon, depending on the time of year and time of night. It can even be used to tell the time, on any night of the year. The angle shown on the flag would be seen about 4 a.m. on Waitangi Day.
- In one sense the stars look back. They honour the current New Zealand flag. They also honour the brave Pacific and European navigators, who used stars and other signs to find their way to these islands.
- The red stars echo the use of red to represent mana, as commonly seen on Maori flags. The red with white edges and blue background further echo the colouring of the Union Jack. The colours symbolize that our country has both Maori and British heritage.
- The New Zealand flag traditionally shows only four stars, indicating the four directions of the compass: North, South, East and West. We can take this to symbolise New Zealanders who have come from all over the world – thus including everyone.
- Five-pointed stars are a traditional flag symbol. We could consider them as symbolising New Zealand values, for example freedom, justice, prosperity and compassion.



5. Other Aspects

• Sport and Other achievements

New Zealanders overwhelmingly think of the Silver Fern in a sporting context, with various codes having their own trademarked version of the fern. But not everyone in New Zealand is into sport, and their successes occur in other ways. The diversity of other successes by New Zealanders is represented by the stars.

- **Balance**

The stars and fern are shown with equal prominence and roughly equal size. I think this is symbolically very important. Some New Zealanders feel alienated and devalued by flag designs dominated by a sporting symbol. This design gives them equal prominence. The stars, and their borders, are also slightly bigger than on the current New Zealand flag, to give them more visibility from a distance. Also being on the left, nearer the flagpole, the stars are less likely to be hidden in folds of cloth and left unseen.

- **Outward-looking vs Local**

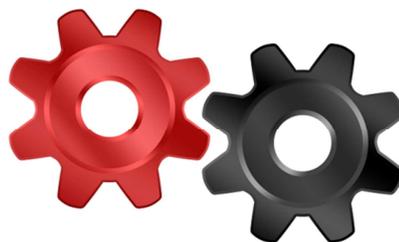
Stars are outward, universal symbols. They can represent ideas and goal that we reach out for. For some they may represent success on the international stage.

Balancing that, the Silver Fern is unique to New Zealand, and represents a local focus, on living things, and people native to these islands (New Zealand – Aotearoa).

For example in our search for economic growth (stars) we must not neglect the environment or the needs of people (fern).

- **Success is bringing everything together**

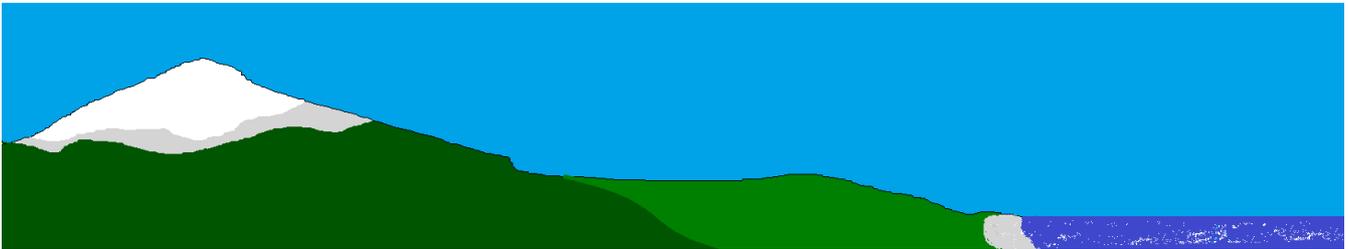
Put together, the stars and fern form a rough V shape. This means our success as a nation (as in v for victory) depends on balancing ideals with the practical needs of ‘he tangata’ (the people). The stars and fern are meshed together at the bottom like gears mesh together. It also represents that success requires the unity and working together of both North and South Islands, and of both Maori and non-Maori, of all groups, with fair treatment for all.



- **Blue and Green - The Colours of Nature**



In addition to representing the combination of land and sea (or sky), the green colour symbolises agriculture and forestry, and Pounamu (greenstone). The colours reinforce our “brand”, our natural, clean green image that is so important to our lifestyle and thinking, and for our tourism, agriculture, forestry and fishing industries. The blue-white-green colours remind one of looking down towards the sea, the sand, and farmland, or looking up at our amazing forests, white mountain peaks, and clear blue sky.



Blue/white/red/grey/green are also the colours of Paua commonly used in New Zealand for distinctive decorations and jewellery (see, for instance, <http://www.paua.org.nz/gallery1.htm>).

- **6 February 1840**

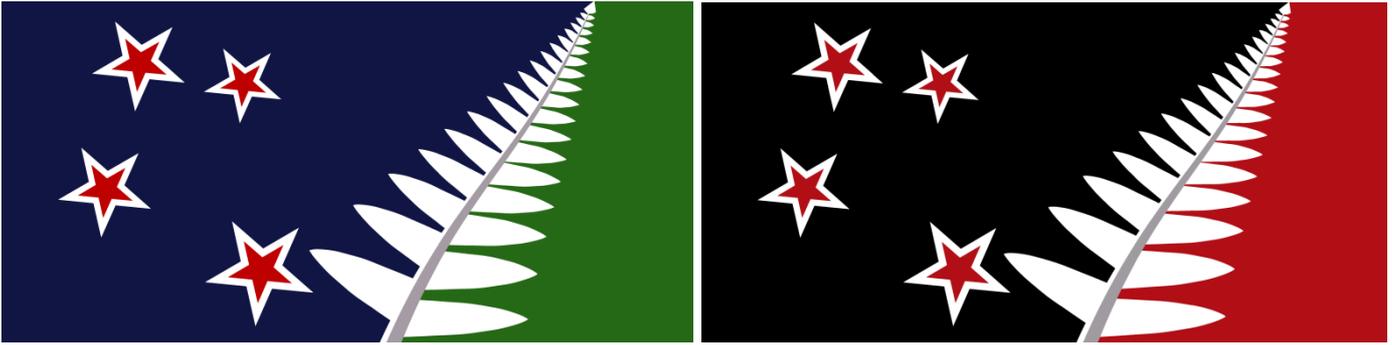
Above it was mentioned that the year 1840 is encoded in the tips of the fern and stars. If one really wants to find the actual date of first signing of the Treaty (though it actually took place over several months) one can look to 6 specific design features on the flag, each of which consists of a pair (2), and each pair has a meaning as outlined above.

1. There are two background colours, blue and green for sea/sky and land
2. There are two main symbols, Southern Cross and the Silver Fern.
3. The symbols are on two angles, matching the two Islands
4. The stars have two colours, red and white.
5. The fern has two colours, white and grey – representing communities and peaceful dialogue between them.
6. The fern has two sides specifically representing communities of Maori, and those who came from overseas “under the Treaty”.

That makes 6(2) 18 40.

Other Flags

New Zealand currently has the NZ Ensign as its national flag, but also a Red Ensign and White Ensign.



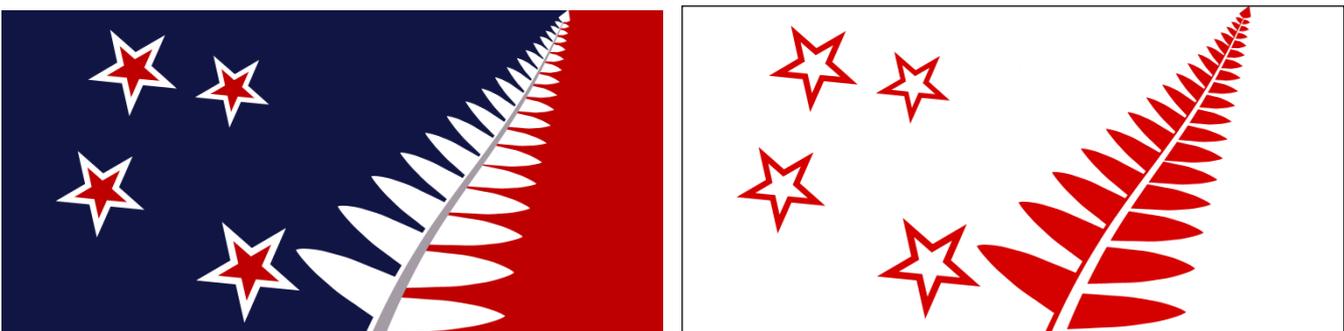
Proposed National Flag

Mana Flag (Flag of Honour)

- It is proposed that the blue-green flag be the National Flag, using the colours of nature to represent the beauty of our country. It has a peaceful look, yet not without courage as represented by the red stars. It will send a good message about us, to the world, which a black flag would not.
- However for domestic use one could also have a Flag of Honour (or Mana Flag) to honour New Zealanders' cultural, sporting and other achievements involving courage and determination. The flag features the black, white and red colours often used in Maori meeting-houses and decorations. The flag borrows both from common sports flags and Maori flags, but is neither one nor the other. It is hoped that it can be a flag for *everyone* to use and not just be dismissed as a Maori-only flag. It is expected that Maori will continue to fly flags of their own choosing to rally attention.
- Black is the usual colour for national sports teams and it is expected that black flags will also continue to be used at sports events, especially by the NZ Rugby Union who have a trademarked Silver Fern design. The Mana Flag links in to these, but does not infringe copyright. Many people, first seeing this proposal, are drawn to the black-red flag because it is visually striking, and yet on reflection they do not want to live under a black flag or be represented internationally by all the negative associations of the colour black. In this proposal we get the opportunity to use both colour combinations. In events of celebration either of the flags could be flown or both flown together.

Proposed Red Ensign and White Ensign

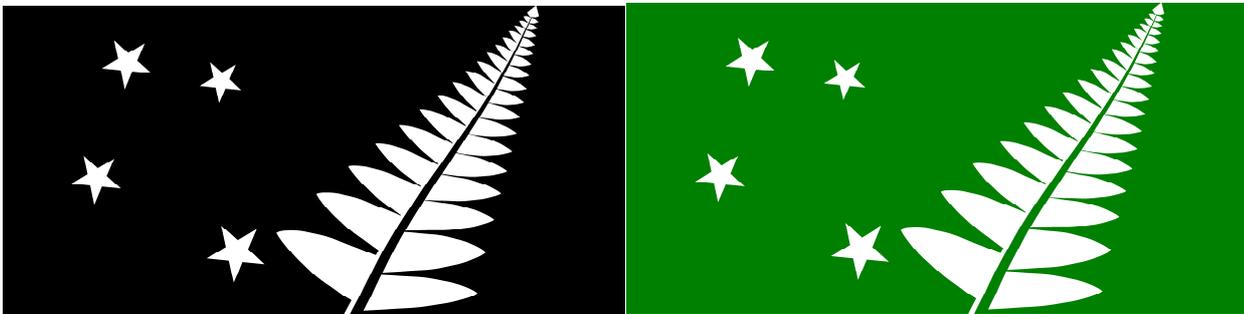
In the 1800s Red Ensigns were sometimes given to Maori because the red was regarded as a mark of mana. These days red ensigns are mainly used by civilian shipping. A white ensign is used for military purposes. The proposed design can be adapted as shown, with red symbolising courage and white symbolising honour.



Possible Sports Flag or Environment Flag

Many New Zealanders like the idea of a black-and-white fern flag for New Zealand's national flag. The All Black flag has a long history, and several other sports codes have jumped on the bandwagon of using black and/or a fern. In contrast many other kiwis absolutely cannot tolerate the idea of a black national flag because of the negative connotations of black (piracy, aggression, death, despair, mystery, illegal and underhand dealings, etc.). So it does not seem to me to be a suitable ensign for bringing kiwis together in unity: some compromise is needed. Now in sport it is common to use aggressive symbols and names for sports teams (e.g. sharks, lions, tigers, bulls, bears, raiders, warriors, buccaneers, storm, sting, etc.) to psych the players in, and to intimidate the opposition. So the proposed national flag could be adapted as a black-and-white sports flag as shown. It would not be at all out of place to have supporters side-by-side showing a national flag and a "we're going to take you down" sports flag of the same basic design. Win-win.

The green flag shows how the flag could be adapted for other purposes, such as an environmental uses.



Design Authorship

The flag design was created using a NZ-based computer program, R. This meant that dozens of variations could be tried, in order to find the most attractive version. The first design of this type was published online at www.starfern.co.nz in 2008, after being registered. That one had wiggly lines on the fern. I have since gone away from that one, because it looks too much like corrugated iron. However two supporters have kindly submitted that for me, without my permission but they meant well.

I submitted a version of this flag as the "Bring Together" flag. The current version is slightly better (some tweaking of the fern leaves) but I would not object at all if someone with better artistic skills than me were able to improve the style of the design, so long as the concepts behind it could be used.

- Barry McDonald, flag designer. 10 July 2015

Other background material to the design

What's so special about the Southern Cross?

“It was the time of the beginning of the New Zealand Marine, which then consisted of a single ship. In quite an informal way [Lieutenant] Markham was asked if he could suggest a distinctive flag. ‘You have already the right’, he replied, ‘to fly the Blue Ensign, why not add to it the stars of the Southern Cross?’ The suggestion was received with delight.” So reads the biography of Sir Albert Markham, later to become famous as an Arctic explorer. But Markham, interesting though he may be, is not our focus. Rather we consider the question: Why the response of “delight”? What did this symbol, this Southern Cross, mean to New Zealanders of 1868? What can it mean for us today?

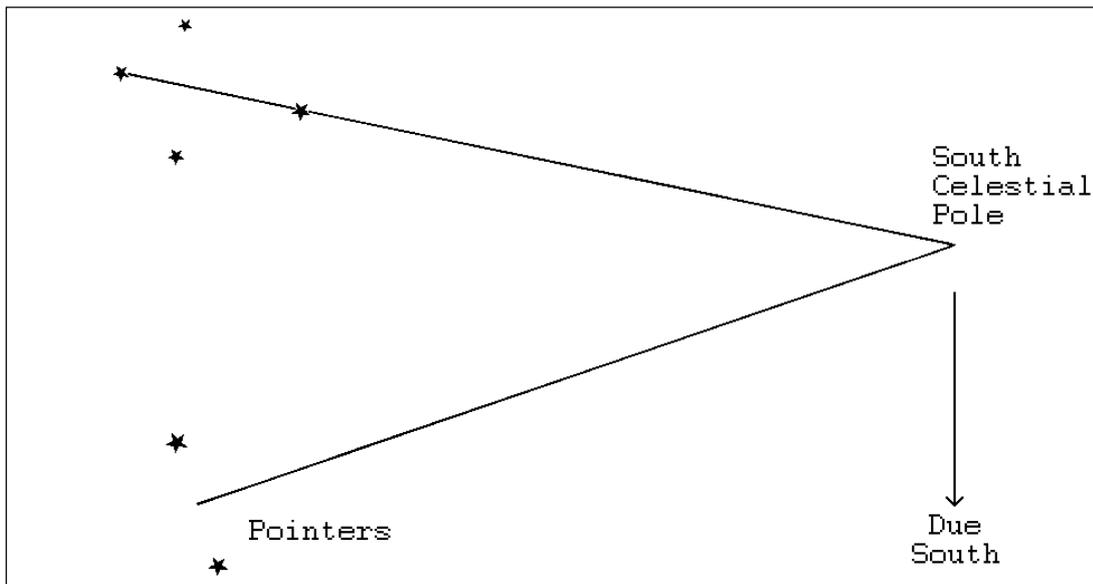
A simple answer often quoted is that the Southern Cross represents the Southern Hemisphere. But there are other southern stars, so there is more to it. Let's look back in history. To the ancient Greeks there was no “Southern Cross” but merely some stars in the constellation Centaurus. However due to a wobble in the earth's axis those stars ceased to be visible from Europe after the time of Christ, and largely passed out of European minds. Then in 1321 the Italian poet Dante wrote of an imaginary journey where he passed through the Inferno of the Earth's centre, and came out (supposedly on Easter Sunday 1300) on the coast of an island on the far side of the Earth. The first thing he saw was four bright stars near the South Pole, which were named for the four natural virtues Justice, Prudence, Temperance and Fortitude. Dante may have heard something of the Southern Cross from travellers such as Marco Polo, but whatever the facts it was Dante's poetry that had a lasting influence on European imagination. Nearly two centuries later, on Easter Wednesday in the year 1500, the Portuguese explorer Pedro Alvares Cabral discovered a southern coast. He called it the “Land of the True Cross” after the constellation of four unfamiliar stars high overhead in the early evening. The land, we now know as Brazil. The constellation, we know as Crux, the Cross. Generations of Europeans sailing south would see this constellation rising from the ocean ahead, with the long axis of the cross always pointing South. They took comfort from the thought that Christ was watching over them, so far from home. A world away, Polynesian sailors did not imagine the stars as a cross but they were well-known nonetheless. Visible as far north as Hawaii, they were part of a system of navigation used by the ancestors of Maori and Pacific Islanders to travel vast distances across the ocean.

The Southern Cross is visible only briefly from the northern tropics, rising and setting in a few hours. Further south the stars rise higher and higher until, from the Tropic of Capricorn down, the stars never set. New Zealand is one of only four nations in the world that can see the Southern Cross from everywhere in the country, all year round. (Yes, I'm excluding the Tokelauan territories we administer but that are not part of New Zealand proper.) The other three nations are Uruguay, Lesotho and Swaziland, which don't feature the Southern Cross on their flags. The upshot is that New Zealand has a unique reason to feel attachment to the Southern Cross and to claim it as a national icon. By contrast, our near neighbour Australia uses the Southern Cross on its flag, but the northern third of the continent cannot even see the stars at certain times of the year - since they are below the horizon. I wonder if the residents of Darwin ever feel a sense of irony when they sing Australia's national anthem “*Beneath* our radiant Southern Cross...”.

The Southern Cross is the quintessential symbol of South-ness. Not only in name: it can be used to find the direction South, and thereby all other directions of the compass. It can also be used to tell the time. These facts may not be important now, unless you are lost, but they still make a nice trick.

The angle the Southern Cross makes to the horizon depends on the time of night and month of the year. It can be sideways, even upside down. Imagine the Southern Cross is like the hour-hand of a clock, with the three ‘top’ stars at the tip of the hour-hand and the bottom star further down the hand, nearer the clock centre. Suppose you point your hand at the top star and then move it along past the bottom star and out the other side. Stop at a distance a bit further than a man's handspan as seen at arms length.

Then you will be pointing at the centre of the clock, a piece of blank sky called the South Celestial Pole. If you drop your hand to the horizon you will be pointing due South. Another way of finding south is by using a right angle line through the Pointers as shown below.



All Southern Hemisphere stars rotate around this South Celestial Pole (clockwise, of course!) So you can use the celestial hour-hand to tell the approximate time on any night of the year, using simple mental arithmetic.¹

Early New Zealanders were aware of these connections, and so the Southern Cross was special to them. It quickly became an icon. 'The Southern Cross' was the name of our first hotel (Wellington, 1841) and of an early Auckland newspaper (1943) – a forerunner to the New Zealand Herald. Australia chose to represent the Southern Cross by five stars including a faint one in the middle. New Zealand chose to represent it by just the four bright stars corresponding to the four compass directions. Those who like symbolism can think of this as representing people from all over the world. The Southern Cross gives New Zealanders an icon that is practical, historic, and uniquely relevant to us – and to my mind it would be a great shame to lose it.

Why are the stars red?

In 1865 the British Admiralty gave the instruction. Vessels in the service of a colonial government must “wear the Blue Ensign with the seal or badge of the colony in the fly”². The Blue Ensign is a flag with the Union Jack in the top left quarter and blue on the other three quarters. But the New Zealand Governor, Sir George Grey, had a decision to make. What should be the distinctive badge of New Zealand-ness on the flag?

In January 1867 Grey announced the badge would be the letters “NZ in red, ... surrounded by a margin of white”. This was temporary. On 23 October 1869 a new Governor, Sir George Bowen, followed

¹ Look at the ‘hour’ that the celestial hour-hand (top star) is showing: straight up-and-down is 12 o’clock, horizontal (East) is 9 o’clock, and so on. Now double this number to make the time on a 24-hour clock, for example 9 o’clock stars become 18:00 hours. Then find the number and fraction of months *after 22 April* (if living in Auckland or Wellington: date has to be adjusted slightly for eastern or western parts of the country). Double that and subtract from the ‘hours’. For example on 15 July subtract 5 ½ hours. (If it’s daylight saving, we would add one more hour.) So straight up-and-down stars will occur on 15 July at 6:30 pm, and the celestial clock will move forward one hour for every two hours of our clocks or cellphones.

² Italicised quotes are from *An Encyclopedia of New Zealand* (1966, edited by A.H. McLintock)

Markham's advice and proclaimed "a permanent device ... the distinctive badge of the colony ... shall be the Southern Cross, as represented in the Blue Ensign by four five-pointed red stars in the fly, with white borders to correspond to the colouring of the Jack." Why red?

The first surprise is that the colour red for the NZ badge precedes the use of the Southern Cross. So we don't have red just to avoid confusion with Australia's flag, as some may suppose. The Australian colonies of Victoria and New South Wales did have a Southern Cross on their flags, but they were actually proclaimed after New Zealand's flag. So the red stars were probably not flag envy. Governor Grey could easily have proclaimed white letters NZ, and Governor Bowen white stars. They would have been much easier to sew than two-tone stars, and would have had high visibility. So where did the red come from?

Let's look a bit further back in history. In 1830 a New Zealand built ship *Sir George Murray* was seized by Sydney Customs for not flying a flag and not being registered by a government. So in 1833 James Busby, the British Resident in the Bay of Islands, wrote to New South Wales Governor Burke suggesting "the Maori chiefs should select a flag to be recognised by British authorities as the national flag of the New Zealand tribes".

Burke sent back a suggested flag which had the Union Jack in the top left corner, and blue and white stripes elsewhere to represent New Zealand. Busby, and the Rev. Henry Williams who advised him, rejected the design outright. They thought Maori might feel insulted by the design, especially as the part for New Zealand had "no red ... a colour to which the New Zealanders are particularly partial, and which they are accustomed to consider as indicative of rank." Later (in 1834) a flag was chosen (top right) that had a lot of red, and was recognised as the flag of the Confederacy of Independent Tribes.

Much later, hapu friendly to the British were often given a red flag: "Some of these ... incorporated the British Red Ensign with special devices." (see Takutimu flag, for example) "But those presented by the Government usually consisted of the New Zealand Red Ensign ... with the name of the hapu, or of a notable ancestor, worked or printed on the fly. Maori preferred this flag because red was a colour denoting rank and mana." Governor Grey was familiar with Maori customs. So this appears to be one reason for our red stars – as a symbol of mana.

Red stars or letters do not show up well on a dark blue flag - unless there is some white in between. Therefore the Governors ordered that the letters and stars to be edged in white. In flag terms this is called fimbriation, and make our stars unique among the national flags of the world (A distinction I think we should keep). By happy coincidence it meant the New Zealand stars had the red centre, white edges and blue background that made them echo the Union Jack. Some British colonists may have seen this as showing loyalty to the Empire, or representing a hope for a south seas Better Britain. At any rate



the choice seems to have been an inspired one, as it meant our stars had meaning to both British and Maori cultures, reflecting both signatories of the Treaty of Waitangi.

After Grey's and Bowen's flags, the flag was changed in line with British Empire standards to show the red stars on a white disk. Finally in 1902 the flag reverted to just having white edges on the red stars, but with the stars in astronomically correct position, and with sizes of stars corresponding to the relative brightness.

What can we take from this? Firstly it was clear to early New Zealanders that the distinctively New Zealand part of the flag was the Southern Cross, and secondly the stars have always been deliberately red and white on a blue background. Was the choice of colour deliberate bicultural symbolism, or just luck? I believe it was a clever choice that both honours the mana of the original inhabitants, the Maori, and acts as a deliberate echo of the Union Jack brought into a South Pacific context. It makes the stars on our flag unique among the national flags of the world, and makes them a New Zealand icon. For these reasons I believe that if New Zealand ever chooses to change its flag the design must include the red-and-white-on-blue stars of the Southern Cross.

Song relating to the flag

The following song came about as I was trying to express the values displayed in the flag.

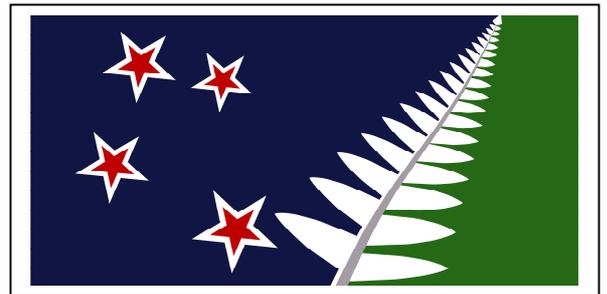
Just by Heaven's Door

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bMaMCnAvWoQ>

Just by heaven's door, there is a peaceful land of green
Under Southern Cross and where the day's first light is seen
Fields and ferns and forests rare with snow-capped mountains high
Surrounded by Pacific blue, beneath the clear blue sky
We call her God's own country, 'cause he kept her 'til the end,
Treasure in the Long White Cloud we call New Zealand.

Two ancient peoples met in peace beside Pacific's shore,
And there they made a covenant, they joined forevermore.
Justice and prosperity and freedom are our aim,
And in this hope the children of every nation came
To build this land our home, this is our place to stand
Keeping faith and hope and love in our New Zealand.

Freely men and women came to build their lives anew,
Not judged by class or creed or race, but just by what they do.
With courage, self-reliance and ingenuity
Alone or in their teams, they faced the world - and so will we:
We'll honour those who work hard, and those who lend a hand,
And those who serve with pride will say 'We are New Zealand!'



What is the song trying to say?

The song expresses appreciation for the beauty of New Zealand, respect for its past and a hope for its future. It was created as one New Zealander's attempt to express some New Zealand values – highlighting some things that are special about our culture and who we are.

The title 'Just by Heaven's Door' was inspired by the Dave Dobbyn song 'Slice of Heaven', which was once used as the feature music for a wonderful ad showing New Zealand's natural beauty and attractiveness as a tourist destination. In the song, the 'heaven's door' also refers to the fact that New Zealand is right on the dateline - one of the first places in the world to see the dawning of a new year. The 'Under Southern Cross' locates New Zealand in the Southern Hemisphere. This is where we are.

The green fields, ferns and forests, the white of snow-capped mountains and clouds and beaches, the blue of the sea and sky: to me these epitomise the natural beauty of our country. 'God's own country' or simply 'Godzone' is a common nickname for New Zealand, coined by Thomas Bracken in an epic poem describing New Zealand's magical beauty, and popularised by Prime Minister 'king' Dick Seddon. The nickname is also appropriate since this was the last major part of the world to be discovered and settled: until then God³ had it all to himself! So in the poem New Zealand is described as a hidden treasure (taonga) - hidden by geographic location and by 'the long white cloud' until discovered by Maori and latterly by Europeans.

The phrase 'Two ancient peoples' refers to Maori and British, peoples who had lived separately for millennia, each with their own distinctive cultures. It is really something special about this country that it was not imposed by conquest or invasion but formed by a treaty between friendly nations. Certainly there was conflict before and after that - New Zealand has never been entirely peaceful since man first set foot on these islands. But overall the history of New Zealand has been relatively peaceful and I am optimistic that this peace can grow. 'Covenant' means a sacred agreement, like a marriage, that should be honoured. Although the Treaty meant many things, its most enduring legacy is the lives of tens of thousands who were born as a result of intermarriage. After the Treaty, thousands came to this land from many different countries of the world, in search of a better life both materially and socially. Those who come with a good heart to see this country prosper and grow, and to grow along with it, are welcomed.

What is special about the character of New Zealand's culture? One strong kiwi value is a sense of justice and egalitarianism - a fair go for everyone. We value the relative freedom from corruption in our government, businesses and courts, compared to other parts of the world. We strongly value personal freedom and the right to be an individual, with individual conscience. And of course everyone wants prosperity. Also, to borrow the biblical phrase, we value 'faith, hope and love'. New Zealanders honour those who are trustworthy and loyal - who keep faith with each other and are true to their convictions and their word. We honour compassion, kindness and love: for example we don't allow vast sections of society to live in abject poverty or repression, as in some countries. And despite the prevailing cynicism I believe we have reasons to be optimistic as a nation and as individuals - to have hope for a brighter

³ Some kiwis may feel uneasy that God is even mentioned in the song. However the mention is in a widely acceptable and culturally relevant way, for example a recent sporting event was called the "Godzone Adventure Race". So those readers can take it as simply referring to this as being a place of magical beauty.

On the other hand for the writer and other kiwis, it would have felt hypocritical to have a song about New Zealand values without mentioning God, given the importance of religious faith to Maori, to generations of ancestors, to the history and institutions of this country, and to their own families and specific ethnic groups in their various ways. Thus the song tries very hard to balance religious and non-religious sensibilities of us all. If other kiwis do not like my compromise, then they are very welcome to write their own song expressing their own views.

In the phrase "he kept her 'til the end" one might imagine a great chief with a beloved daughter. The daughter is kept safe by his warriors and his mana until the day he gives her in marriage to the chief of a neighbouring tribe to seal a treaty of peace. The question is what will that tribe of humans do with the daughter: will she be treated with kindness and respect, or will she be harmed and abused. The answer is up to us.

future.

The first New Zealanders, Maori and Pakeha, were overwhelmingly free men and women who came to this land in search of a future – a better life. Little is known of what motivated the Maori settlers, but it is clear that many Europeans came to escape poverty or discrimination based on class or religion. Racial prejudice has been a harder barrier to overcome, particularly for Chinese and Indians, Pacific Islanders and Maori. But generally we have evolved a society where people are respected for their hard work and achievements and much less negative attention is paid to race.

Those early settlers had to be inventive and self-reliant. This was partly because the land was far from manufactured goods, and partly because labour was not cheap. Almost everyone aspired to be a homeowner rather than a hired labourer. So we became a country of independent do-it-yourselfers, with the image of the hard-working kiwi battler. But we never lost sight of the value of helping one's mate at times, and working together in teams for the common good. This was especially the case on the sports field - notably in Rugby. The team aspect of life was strengthened by the communal values of Maori and other ethnic minorities.

Perhaps it's a result of being a small nation of immigrants, but very many New Zealanders are outward-looking, with a global perspective. We are determined to compare ourselves, and compete with, the best in the world. We honour those who, by their hard work and character, earn the right to represent us overseas. The phrase 'we'll honour those who work hard' does not have a downside: it does not mean we dishonour those who are truly unable to work, nor that we should turn into workaholics. But it does mean that anybody in New Zealand can earn the respect of their peers by doing a good job at what they do. Those who support others are also highly valued as part of the team. The phrase 'serve with pride' refers partly to the Armed Forces, and official services such as Police, Fire and Ambulance, and the many others who assist our communities. But it also refers to the fact that New Zealand is a nation where 'Jack is as good as his master', and there is little or no stigma attached to serving others. Rather, people who put in the effort, take a pride in their work and contribute to society, are respected by their fellow New Zealanders.

So this is 'our place to stand' - our turangawaewae - our place to belong and where we are able to stand and express our opinions and our differences while respecting each other's right to be called a New Zealander.

New Zealand is our homeland. Let us build it and treasure it.