



# The Vexilloid Tabloid

Portland Flag Association

“Free, and Worth Every Penny!”

Issue 104 February 2024

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Minnesota's New Flag	1
January 2024 Flutterings	2
Dressed with Flags in 1916	5
Confessions of a Flag Vigilante II	6
Vertical Display of the Union Flag	7
McDonald's Flag	8
New England after ERII	8
Hand-Made Flags on Boats	9
Roundup	10
The Flag Quiz	11
Portland Flag Miscellany	12
Next Meeting	12

## Minnesota's New Flag

By Ted Kaye

Minnesota, the “Star of the North”, has a new, eponymous flag design, adopted by the State Emblems Redesign Commission ([mnhs.org/serc](http://mnhs.org/serc)) on December 19.

According to the commission, “The new Minnesota flag is simple, yet rich with meaning for all Minnesotans. On its left side, the flag contains a dark blue background with a white, 8 point star. One of the points of the star points north. The dark background is in the shape of the outline of the State of Minnesota. The remainder of the flag is a solid, bright blue.”

What some now rightfully call the “Minnesota Star” appears twice in the floor below the state capitol rotunda, in brass and marble. It fulfills multiple roles.



Minnesota, 2024—

The star echoes the state motto, it serves as a compass rose, it evokes both native and immigrant symbology, and as a bonus it has four tiny “M”'s for Minnesota.

The commission also adopted a new seal for the state, bearing a loon (the state bird). Flag and seal both become official on statehood day, May 11, 2024.



*Minnesota's new flag captures the imagination while standing apart from all other state flags with its unique design.*

—Minnesota Secretary of State  
Steve Simon



[portlandflag.org](http://portlandflag.org) | [facebook.com/portlandflag](https://facebook.com/portlandflag) | [instagram.com/portlandflag](https://instagram.com/portlandflag)

If you wish to compliment the editor, or to contribute in the future, contact Ted Kaye at 503-223-4660 or [editor@portlandflag.org](mailto:editor@portlandflag.org). If you wish to complain, call your mother.

## January 2024 Flutterings You Need to Know

In our January meeting, hosted by Mike Hale in Beaverton and streamed via Zoom, 12 PFA members and friends enjoyed two and a half hours of flags and video conversation.

Mike moderated the meeting, with the PFA flag standing beside the U.S. flag and the Christmas tree; he had set out a display of his historical flag collection, first assembled by his stepfather, Elmer, as a rental inventory, then showed a special U.S. flag and a flag of Mexico from his time living there.

Max Liberman gave an update on his work on flags of heads of state, discussing his hypothesis that the now-little-used Indian presidential standard had originally been inspired by the British royal standard.



Participants explore an extensive display of historical flags:  
(l to r) John Niggley, Alden Jencks, Mike Hale, and Max Liberman.

Alden Jencks reported that Utah's new flag, now two months away from official status, is widely flown there, and displayed his own, recently received from Utah colleagues.

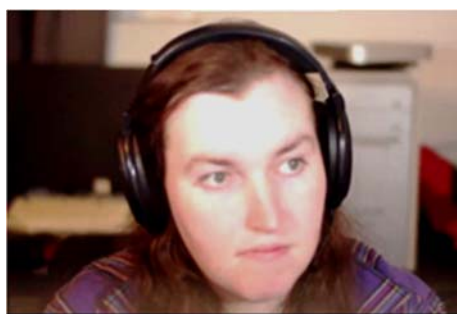
Alyx Wijers (a founder of the Greater Albany Unified Vexillological Association, joining from Newcastle, Washington), had recently traveled to Germany and the Netherlands for a conference, bringing back several flags such as that of Amsterdam.



Mike Hale points out the intricate painted charge on a Mexican flag.



Max Liberman explicates the disused presidential standard of India.



Alyx Wijers describes the flags he'd recently collected in Germany and the Netherlands.



Alden Jencks shows Utah's new flag.



Ken Dale gave away some flags and described 5-nation flag use by the Nordic Choir in which he sings (formerly the Scandinavian Choir, it now embraces Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden).

William and Joyce Gifford, joining briefly (from Oregon City) and during a brief technical problem with the Zoom call, shared a mash-up Puerto Rico/Cuba flag, to be explained more at a future meeting.

Ralph Bartlett (joining from Melbourne, Victoria, Australia) commented on a recent image of a large U.S. flag draped over a homeless camper's belongings (see p. 10).

David Anchel listed the most popular flags sold at Elmer's: U.S., Canada, Norway; during the current conflict Palestinian flags far outsell those of Israel—he speculated on the reasons.



**Ken Dale celebrates with the Nordic countries' flags.**

John Niggley shared an updated Alaska flag with larger stars than usual, and described the ceremony at work (Lam Research), where two buildings were united by a passageway, accompanied by flags for both sides.



**William and Joyce Gifford persevere despite Zoom issues.**



**David Anchel shows a sticker mislabeled "ISREAL".**



**John Niggley holds the flags of his company's two buildings.**



**Ralph Bartlett zooms in from Melbourne.**

*Continued on next page*





Alex Zimmerman unfolds the Continental Colors / Grand Union flag.

Alex Zimmerman (joining from Vancouver) told how students at the Washington School for the Blind experience flags, especially those with tactile differentiations such as embroidery and sewn components.

Ted Kaye brought several books received as recent gifts, posed VT 103's quiz (explaining the solution's hidden meaning), and reported on the final events leading up to the selection of the design for Minnesota's new flag (see p. 1), in which he and other NAVA members were deeply involved.



Ted Kaye with the new flag of Minnesota, chosen December 19.



Additions to Ted Kaye's flag book library show their colors.

Our meeting's timing was perfect, as in the following days' 15° (F) weather with snow and ice shut down the city for a week.

Our next meeting, on Thursday, March 14, 2024, will be hosted by Patrick Genna at his residence in Northeast Portland. Ted took the PFA flag for him.

We expect again to welcome our local members as well as far-flung friends to the meeting.





## Dressed with Flags in 1916



The newly-built and flag-festooned *Kitsap II* ferry on the Portland waterfront, ca. 1916.

Graham Houser came upon this flaggy image from early Portland.

The *Kitsap II* was built in 1916 in Portland for the Kitsap Transportation Company, to serve routes in Puget Sound. It could carry 550 passengers. The vessel was later rebuilt as a car ferry and had a long career under different names. It was finally scrapped in the 1950s.

This image is likely from its shakedown cruise, showing it “dressed” with many flags and moored on the east side of the Willamette River with the second Morrison Bridge in the background.

[vintageportland.wordpress.com/2024/01/04/kitsap-river-boat-circa-1920/](http://vintageportland.wordpress.com/2024/01/04/kitsap-river-boat-circa-1920/)



The flag atop the aft mast seems to show a large “K”, likely the house flag for the Kitsap Transportation Company.



On the flag atop the forward mast, the letters “K I” appear, likely for “Kitsap”, the name of the vessel or of its owner—other flags seem to be signal flags of the era.

On the bow, the jack staff flies a U.S. jack—48 white stars on blue.

## Confessions of a Flag Vigilante, Part II

By Alden Jencks

The Flag Vigilante returns with another stern exhortation. To wit:

***Never fly the flag of one nation below the flag of another nation on the same flagpole!***

Special and exceptional as we might believe our country to be, we must never display the Canadian Maple Leaf flag or the flag of the Kingdom of Eswatini below the Stars and Stripes. Every nation state, out of simple respect and diplomatic tradition, deserves to fly at the top of its own flag pole. Otherwise, a national flag flown below another denotes subjugation.

To be sure, on American soil, the American flag is properly accorded the honored on-its-own-right position in a line of flags, but every other national flag must wave at equal height and in equal size, at the top of its own pole.

Well-meaning Americans near our northern and southern borders run afoul of this guideline when they believe that they are saluting Canada or Mexico by pairing national flags on the same pole.

But the most egregious lapses might be seen in front of French-American schools (as well as German-American schools, Japanese-American schools, etc.). The pattern, it seems, is always the same. The bilingual school inherits a decommissioned public school, with its traditional, single flag pole in front of the building.

Then in come the French-speaking staff and students, and up goes the Stars and Stripes followed, in turn, by the French *Tricolore*. Quite well-intentioned, to be sure, but also quite wrong.

Solution: Erect a second flag pole; or else honor the language and culture of France with periodic, single-flag displays.

This week's admonishment concerning the no-no of double-decked, national flag-displays is stated explicitly in the U.S. Flag Code. But, like the topics of my previous article—"Don't fly flags up-side-down and don't fly discontinued national flags"—this guideline is also self-evident and reflects common sense and centuries-old diplomatic protocol. In other words, it is antecedent to any pedantic discussions about what the U.S. Flag Code "allows" or "doesn't allow".

In part III of this series I, your Flag Vigilante, will address full-on the topic of the Flag Code. Be looking for "The U.S. Flag Code—Its History, its Uses, and its Abuses".



**U.S. flies over Germany at the German International School of Silicon Valley, Mountain View campus.**



**Mexico flies over U.S.**



**U.S. flies over Ukraine.**



**Detroit flies over Canada on the waterfront in Detroit, Michigan.**



## Vertical Display of the Union Flag

Dear Editor:

I am afraid that an error (surely unintentional) has crept into an image on page 5 of issue 102 of the *Vexilloid Tabloid*, in which various flags are shown hanging vertically from a horizontal line.

In each case the obverse of the flag is depicted, having been turned clockwise through 90°—but with one exception. The British “Union Flag” is the seventh from the left, and in this instance it is the reverse of the flag that appears.

The result is that the design is inverted, with the white saltire of St. Andrew (representing Scotland) appearing above the red fimbriated saltire of St. Patrick (representing Ireland) in the fly.

This should be the other way round, the saltires being counterchanged, because precedence is given to St. Andrew’s in the hoist, Scotland



A display for Vexi-Day 2023.

having joined the union in 1707 to be followed by Ireland in 1801.

What appears is this:



when what should appear is this:



The error is readily made evident by comparing the British flag with that of Australia, second from the left in the same photo, on which the union flag appears in the canton correctly.

But it should be noted that the practice varies from one country to another, so that in the case of (for example) the United States, it is usually the reverse of the flag which is hung vertically, to maintain the canton in the “point of honour” at the top left corner.

Yours sincerely,

John Cartledge  
Boreham Wood, United Kingdom

PS See this entry on FOTW:  
[fotw.info/flags/xf-vert.html](http://fotw.info/flags/xf-vert.html)

*John, a loyal VT reader and frequent solver of our quiz, also contributed this issue’s quiz (see p. 11).*



NAVA 28 (Portland, 1994).

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the debut of the flag for the 28th annual meeting of the North American Vexillological Association (NAVA 28), held in Portland in October 1994.

The organizing committee for that meeting eventually evolved into the Portland Flag Association.

NAVA past president Don Healy designed the NAVA 28 flag, combining Oregon symbolism and the NAVA flag.

## McDonald's Flag



Michael Orelove spreads out the flag of the McDonald's fast-food chain.

The late Michael Orelove collected flags—not as keepsakes but as tools to educate. He used corporate flags to show how they can be serve to identify a product or business.

The “golden arches” flag may be one of the most widely-flown non-governmental flags in the United States. It has variants, some with different fonts and several without any lettering—conveying meaning just with the “golden arches”.

## Field Report: New England after ERII

By Alden Jencks

In the late summer of 2022, I headed out on an extended trip to New England. I was on a pilgrimage back to hallowed sites of our nation's beginning. I would see places where stout patriots resisted royal tyranny and created a new nation. There would be historic buildings, storied battlefields and, for me perhaps best of all, colonial town centers festooned with period flags of revolution and defiance. Armed with my digital camera, it was going to be a vexillologist's dream.



The U.K. Royal Standard waves in Newburyport, Mass.

But then, just as I was settling into my accommodations in Boston, the morning of September 8, 2022, dawned and with it came the news of the death of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II.

In the ensuing days and weeks, in Boston and elsewhere in historic New England, I saw festooned streets and lanes aplenty. But what I saw instead were Union Jacks, St. George Crosses, Royal Standards, and Red, White, and Blue Ensigs. There were also portraits of the Queen and signs expressing profoundest admiration and respect for the departed Monarch.

My trip to New England did turn out to be a vexillologist's dream, but the flags I photographed were quite different from the ones which I had expected.



The royal banner of Normandy (perhaps flown in error) bears two yellow lions passant guardant in Portsmouth, N.H.



The Union Jack flies alongside the U.S. and Massachusetts flags at Boston's city hall.



## Hand-Made Flags on Boats

Pam Hayes and family spent a year sailing in the Pacific in their 26-foot boat before moving to Portland 20+ years ago. She made a “Kids on Board” flag to fly in hopes of finding other kids for hers to get together with.

This summer her son and daughter-in-law had friends’ kids on their own boat for a week—after learning about the original version the kids were very keen to have a flag: below is the result.



“Kids on Board !!” flag signals to potential playmates on other boats.

Pam had also sewn a “courtesy flag” in advance of arriving at each country—on her hand-crank machine at sea. The stern visages of officious immigration officials would soften when they looked aloft and spotted the hand-sewn flag of their little-known nation.

(As a gesture of courtesy, boats fly a small version of a foreign nation’s flag from a halyard when entering and operating in its waters. No universal rules govern “courtesy flag” etiquette; officials interpret the rules differently from country to country, region to region, island to island, or even port to port.)

Pam recalls that when they arrived in Vanuatu, the Micronesian nation itself—and its flag—were less than 5 years old. Trying to pull together people who had no concept of nation and who spoke more than 120 different languages, the government had sent out ambassadors to teach people about the meaning and value of joining a nation—not unlike what Lewis & Clark did, presenting the flag of the United States to tribes as they crossed the continent.



Micronesia.



Pam Hayes’ hand-sewn courtesy flags of Solomon Islands, Australia, Tonga, Vanuatu, and Kiribati.

## Roundup



One of the encampments near Foggy Bottom in Washington, D.C., is notable for the giant American flag one man uses to protect his belongings.  
(Petula Dvorak/ *Washington Post* 12/21/23)



This Cuban flag, composed of peso bills, was observed by Ted Kaye in Havana in 2014. Readers, let's collect images of similar flags created as collages of other items!



Graham Houser and his mother-in-law unfurl the flag she won on her Norwegian cruise trip and gave him for Christmas!

It is a Norwegian split flag with a tongue, representing the postal service (vessels carrying mail under contract with the postal service are authorized to fly this flag).



Our colleague, John Moody of the NZFA, has proposed this design for a New Zealand prime minister's flag.

It came together in October 2022 with the assistance of Turkey Beach Productions, based in Kaiapoi. It is 2:3, as is the New Zealand flag.

The white field is for purity, and contrasts with the governor general's blue flag.

The four black-fimbriated red stars represent the Southern Cross the red represents the life blood of New Zealand and the black (definiteness and confidence) and the values of democracy, equality, merit, and integrity.

The crossed green sprigs of laurel (a traditional symbol of power and authority) could also be interpreted as highly stylized fern leaves (the green represents New Zealand's verdant landscape).



In a breach of flag protocol spotted by Alden Jencks on French channel TV5 International, during Volodymyr Zelenskyy's recent visit to Washington, D.C. the U.S. flag stands on its own left.



## What's that Flag?

By John Cartledge

Of what or where were these the flags?

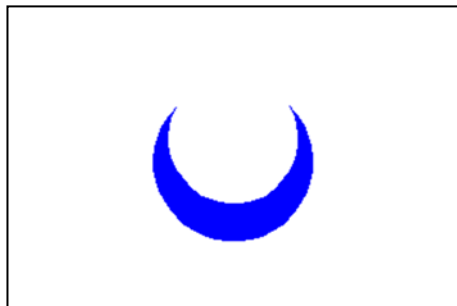


## What Was that Flag? Answers to the last quiz

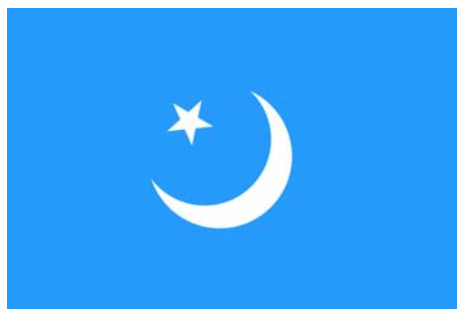
By John Cartledge

These flags represent defunct countries.

Congratulations to the solvers:  
Max Liberman and Mike Thomas.



Tlemcen (1235–1556).



East Turkestan (1944–1949).



Dhala (15th century–1904).



Kampuchea (1945).



Aceh (1496–1903).



Yugoslavia (1943–1992).



Etruria (1801–1807).



## Portland Flag Miscellany



Flag of Portland Stock Vector Image & Art - Alamy  
Get this image on: Alamy | License details  
Credit: Alamy Stock Photo

In a hilarious internet miscue, Alamy (a stock photo service) seems to confuse “Portland” with “Poland”.

Alamy offers a number of other accurate Portland Flag images.

[www.alamy.com](http://www.alamy.com)



Our colleagues at Flags For Good implicitly endorse the design of the Portland flag.

The company says: “We only sell the flags of cities that we think have good designs (or unofficial redesigns that we want to support). Anything less would be against our brand.”

[flagsforgood.com](http://flagsforgood.com)



The “Deviant Art” website may have used AI to generate this image for a Portland flag, and certainly deviated from the city’s 1851 founding date.

[deviantart.com/mustaphatr2/art/Non-Aligned-Portland-Flag-891162990](https://deviantart.com/mustaphatr2/art/Non-Aligned-Portland-Flag-891162990)

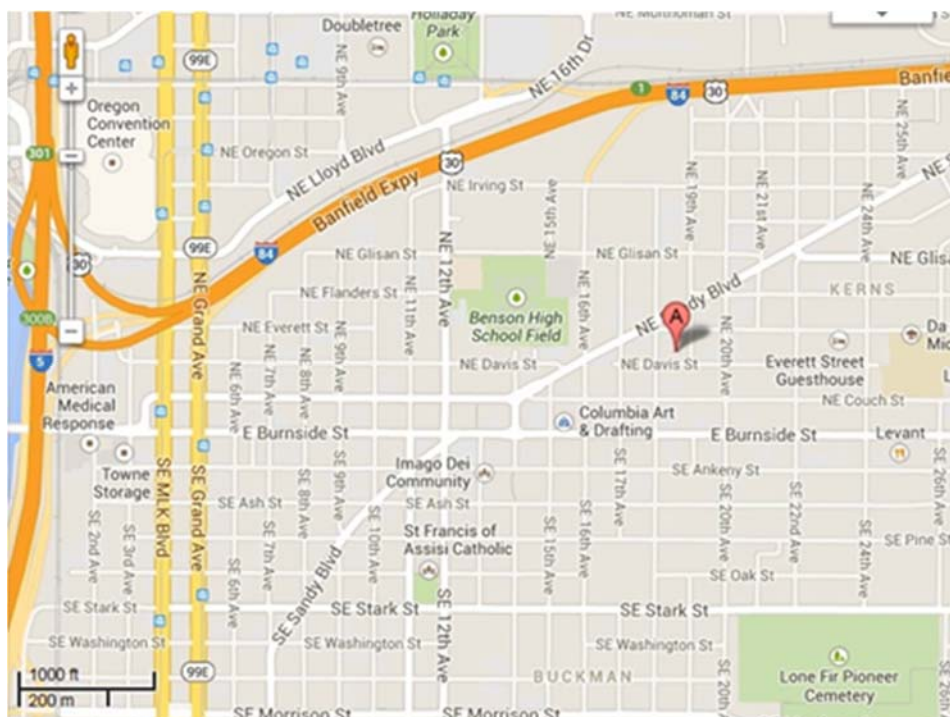
## March Meeting

The next meeting of the Portland Flag Association will be at 7 PM, Thursday, March 14, 2024, hosted by Patrick Genna at his residence, 1865 N.E. Davis St., Portland.

Those who cannot attend in person should watch for a Zoom invitation.

We look forward to seeing those of you who have missed recent meetings and engaging in provocative flag-related discussion.

Newcomers and friends from around the world are welcome!



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 [portlandflag.org](http://portlandflag.org).