NAVA 50 Heads West to San José

NAVA 50 is shaping up to be an exciting way to celebrate both the Association’s 50th Annual Meeting and a bit of the Spanish traditions of Old California. The meeting is located in the area of San José, California, the tenth largest city in the United States and right in the heart of California’s beautiful Silicon Valley. The local organizing committee is busy trying to capture a little bit of the Spanish past of California’s oldest city. Determined to provide a flag-filled weekend but not to lose the Hispanic feel of the area, the committee opted not to use any of the larger modern convention centers near downtown San José and has chosen instead to host NAVA 50 in a quaint 171-room hotel with a distinct early Spanish California feel about it.

“The pueblo of San José started out as a sleepy little Spanish town founded by part of a group of 240 settlers who had been led into Alto California by the Spanish explorer Juan Bautista Anza in 1776. Its purpose was to provide food for the military Presidio in San Francisco,” local planning Chairman Pete Loeser explained.

The Doubletree by Hilton Campbell Hotel is conveniently located in the Pruneyard, an outdoor and upscale shaded tree-lined shopping complex with 18 restaurants nestled next to the downtown area of San José. It is a popular destination for Santa Clara Valley’s dining residents. There are restaurants to meet all tastes within steps of the hotel in Pruneyard Plaza, including Buca di Beppo, Café Artemis, Coffee Society, Cold Stone Creamery, Kyoto Palace, Le Boulanger, Lisa’s Tea House, Little Wine Counter, Patxi’s Pizza, Pizza My Heart, Orchard City Kitchen, El Burro, Togo’s, Rock Bottom Brewery, Outback Steakhouse, and Pacific Catch. The Doubletree and the surrounding complex has been called “a Mediterranean oasis in the heart of Silicon Valley.”

NAVA 50 officially begins Friday afternoon, October 14, at 3:30 pm with the Preble Lecture co-hosted this year at San José State University by the SJSU Department of History in the...
My experience with the North American Vexillological Association goes back to 1969, just two years after NAVA's founding. The fledgling association was, in many ways, different from the organization we know today. The Association's founder and first president, Whitney Smith, sent out occasional mailings to members and NAVA News appeared as a mimeographed newsletter, which would evolve over years into a beautifully produced full color publication mirroring NAVA's growth. Nevertheless, The Flag Bulletin, the first flag research journal, was not published by NAVA but by Smith's Flag Research Center. NAVA's flagship scholarly journal, Raven, would not appear until more than a quarter of a century after the Association's founding, and the Flag Research Quarterly would not appear until 2013.

These observations are not to discount or belittle the early days of our Association; those were exciting days where NAVA members laid the foundation upon which so much has been built over almost five decades.

In what major way then is NAVA the same? It's the magnificent members. When I arrived at my first Annual Meeting, NAVA 7 in 1973, I entered the meeting site not knowing what to expect. A young and energetic Whitney Smith bounded across the room to welcome me and then I met a group of NAVA members for the first time. As we talked flags, I felt as if I had met a new family. As this was before the advent of cellular phones, I called collect to talk with my wife later that night using a wall phone hanging in a hallway. Excitedly, I told her how welcome and accepted I felt. These were people who enjoyed flags as much as I did.

That great feeling has been repeated at each Annual Meeting that I have attended. Add to that the wonderful people I have met while calling NAVA members or through exchanged emails, and the circle of my vexillological family has grown large, strong and amazing.

It is the camaraderie that for me is central to NAVA. We all are part of continuing that amazing feeling into NAVA's second fifty years.

One opportunity is to gather at NAVA 50 in San José this coming October. The organizing committee is hard at work to produce another outstanding Annual Meeting. What will make it an exceptional experience is the camaraderie of NAVA's amazing members. Make your plans now to attend and register as soon as you can. We want to know you are coming.
NAVA 50 continued from page 1

The Preble Lecture features Dr. Tamara Venit-Shelton, author and Associate Professor of History at Claremont McKenna College, speaking on the 1861 “Settlers’ War” in San José and other protest movements from 19th century America. This includes some that involved protesters wrapping themselves in flags. The primary artifact of that dispute, the flag of the Evergreen Home Guard, is part of the nearby Zaricor Flag Collection.

That evening, the President’s Reception will welcome attendees to the meeting in the Orchard Room of the hotel, followed by a sharing of the ever popular Vexi-Bits (mini presentations) that offer an opportunity to share flags, flag-related items, and stories with each other.

The official Opening Ceremonies will be held on Saturday morning and be followed by the first round of presentations, which will adjourn for a hosted lunch in the hotel restaurant. A special table will be provided for the board and “newcomers” to meet and get to know each other while surrounded by the rest of the attendees. Following the morning presentations, current plans call for members to enjoy a viewing of part of the Zaricor Flag Collection, hosted by Ben Zaricor himself.

Saturday evening, the annual Whitney Smith Dinner will be held in the Doubletree outside Garden Terrace in true California style. The Keynote Lecture will be given by NAVA old timer Bill Trinkle who will share some of his experiences starting the Bear Flag Museum. The evening will include the now traditional President’s talk, the Driver Award presentations, and other awards recognizing outstanding contributions by NAVA members.

The business meeting on Sunday morning will be followed by the second round of presentations, a no-host lunch, and several interesting flag talks and activities. The traditional flag auction in support of NAVA and the Closing Ceremonies will end the meeting later in the afternoon.

Several special displays and exhibits are planned for those attending the meeting, including: Flags from the Bear Flag Museum. (Trinkle Collection), and lesser known early California Bear Flags and flag variants of the Russian-American Company (Ferrigan Collection). The Santa Clara Valley and other nearby areas are a tourist bonanza. We recommend you plan to extend your visit to San José and bring your family and companions. There are many attractions in the city and the nearby area. Examples would be the San José Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum, the Winchester Mystery House, Mission Santa Clara and Mission San José (see a full list on the NAVA website). Short day trips from San José include Old Mission San Juan Batista (the largest of the 26 California Missions), Santa Cruz Beach and Boardwalk, Roaring Camp Steam Engine ride, and historical Monterey and Steinbeck’s Cannery Row, along with the world famous Monterey Bay Aquarium. California October weather in the area is normally warm and sunny during the days (high 60s to high 70s), but slightly chilly in the evenings (mid-50s to 60s). Dress is always California casual.

A reminder: If you wish to present a paper, or set up a display at NAVA 50, you will have to send application information to Jim Croft jccroft52@gmail.com by June 30, 2016. For more information, go to the NAVA 50 webpage.
Frederick Gordon Brownell awarded Sixth Laureate of the Federation at ICV 26 in Sydney

As State Herald of the Republic of South Africa between 1982 and 2002, Frederick G. Brownell played a major role in designing many coats of arms and flags in southern Africa, most notably the national flag of Namibia in 1990 and the national flag of South Africa in 1994. For his role in the latter, the FIAV Board awarded him the Vexillon at the Sixteenth International Congress of Vexillology (Warsaw 1995) and the President of South Africa recognized him with the Order for Meritorious Service, Silver (OMSS) in 1999.

In his own words, Fred is a herald by profession but a vexillologist by inclination. As such he was instrumental in establishing the Southern African Vexillological Association (SAVA) on November 26, 1990 and served on its initial executive committee. He was elected chairman of SAVA at its first annual general meeting in February 1992, holding the position until 1994 and again between 1998 and 2000. Fred continued to serve on the executive committee until February 2001. In recognition of his outstanding contribution and commitment to SAVA and his dedication to vexillology, SAVA made him an honorary life member in 2005. The FIAV Board named Fred as a Fellow of the Federation (FF) at the Twenty-Second International Congress of Vexillology (Berlin 2007).

Fred has published numerous articles and books on heraldry and flags, including articles in SAVA Journal on flags registered by the Bureau of Heraldry and “The Union Jack over Southern and Central Africa (1795–1994).” He has also completed the five-volume SAVA Journal series “South African Military Colours—1664 to 26 April 1994.”

Fred recently completed a doctorate in philosophy (DPhil) in the Department of Humanities at the University of Pretoria for a dissertation entitled Convergence and Unification: The National Flag of South Africa (1994) in Historical Perspective based on the process of, and his role in, designing the South African flag. For this contribution to vexillology, the FIAV Board awarded Dr. Brownell the Vexillon at the Twenty-Sixth International Congress of Vexillology (Sydney 2015). Fred is the only person to have been awarded more than one Vexillon.

His service has not been limited to vexillology and heraldry. Fred has also received the following South African honors: the Southern Cross Medal of 1952 (SM), the Military Merit Medal (MMM); and the John Chard Decoration (JCD).

Concluding his dissertation to be an outstanding, original contribution to the science of vexillology, on both the nomination of The Flag Research Center and the Southern African Vexillological Association and the recommendation of Scot M. Guenter Ph.D LF FF WSF FVAST, the FIAV Board named Dr. Brownell as a Laureate of the Federation (LF) on September 4, 2015. This is the highest recognition in vexillology, and only five other individuals have been so honored in FIAV’s history.

Although Fred was unable to attend the Twenty-Sixth International Congress of Vexillology in Sydney, the FIAV Board enlisted the aid of Bruce Berry and Marcel van Rossum to have Fred available on the telephone during the closing banquet to be congratulated for receiving his doctorate. After hearing a round of applause from the Congress participants, the Secretary-General informed Fred that he was the Vexillon recipient. Fred was very surprised and characteristically humble on receiving that award. The Secretary-General then asked him to remain on the telephone, and Fred heard the President ask the audience to rise and his name announced as the sixth Laureate of the Federation. It is fair to say Dr. Brownell was not expecting that!
The La Crosse Light Guard Flag
By Peggy Derrick
La Crosse County Historical Society

This flag is a piece of La Crosse history. It has been carried to war, hung in at least three different public buildings, and been forgotten and rediscovered several times over.

Often referred to as a relic of the Civil War, the flag actually predates the Civil War by about a year. In the young city of La Crosse, a private militia had formed, calling itself the Light Guard, with a quasi-military purpose but mostly appearing at parades, balls and other social events. According to the La Crosse Tri Weekly Union and Democrat, “ladies of the city” presented the silk flag to the Light Guard at one such social event on June 27, 1860, a ball described as “the affair of the season.”

Each side of this white silk flag has a painted medallion in the center. On one side, a light blue oval contains an eagle and the words “presented by the ladies of La Crosse, July 4, 1860, to The La Crosse Light Guard.” The medallion on the other side is a rendition of the 1851 state seal of Wisconsin. Together, these two sides perfectly represent the dichotomy of the public identity being forged at that time, with state and local symbols sharing opposite sides of the same symbolic object.

The next year, the members of the Light Guard marched off to war with their beautiful new flag. The Light Guard became Company B of the 2nd Wisconsin Regiment of Infantry Volunteers and saw action in some of the bloodiest conflicts of the war: the first and second battles of Bull Run, Antietam, Gettysburg and the Wilderness. They fought under their regiment’s flag, while their Light Guard flag remained in Washington, D.C. At the end of the three-year term, just 27 of their original 130 members returned; all the rest were dead, wounded or missing. Capt. Wilson Colwell, the sixth mayor of La Crosse, was among the casualties.

From here on, there are many points of conjecture and murkiness as the flag disappears and reappears in the historic record. Some years after the war it was discovered in Washington, D.C., by a former Company B member, who brought it back to La Crosse. Veterans carried it in parades for many years. Then it disappeared again, only to resurface in the effects of a deceased Company B member, Milo Pitkin.

In 1930, we find it documented in an article in the La Crosse Tribune, when it was presented to the La Crosse County Board by the daughter of Capt. Colwell, to be hung in the La Crosse County courthouse. There was a public ceremony in which the flag was symbolically returned to the “ladies of La Crosse,” a role played by the members of the Wilson Colwell Relief Corps, a GAR women’s auxiliary group. Then the flag was hung in the courthouse, where it remained until the courthouse was razed in 1965. Records show it was then transferred to the La Crosse County Historical Society by the county board.

At some undetermined point after that, someone allegedly removed the flag from society property, claiming that it had been “placed with the rubbish.” The flag then hung at the American Legion, until a group of Company B re-enactors recognized its significance and mounted a campaign to preserve the flag, now nearly in tatters. In 1994, they raised funds to have the flag professionally conserved and stabilized. Forty percent of the funding came from a La Crosse Community Foundation grant that was acquired with the La Crosse County Historical Society (LCHS) acting as fiscal agent. The curator at that time, Brenda Jordan, thought it important for LCHS to do everything it could to “dismiss the image of trying to throw it away.”

For the past two decades, the La Crosse County Historical Society has overseen the flag’s care. After its conservation, the flag went on display in the Swarthout Gallery at the main branch of the La Crosse Public Library, where it remained available to the public from 1994 until LCHS left the library building. With the closing of the Swarthout Gallery at the end of 2012, the flag was in storage for six months and now is available for viewing in the LCHS building at 145 West Ave. S, LaCrosse, Wisconsin.
What’s in a Flag’s Design?

A new web infographic by a pair of Danish designers has everything you never knew you wanted to know about the world’s flags.

By Linda Poon
April 1, 2016

At their simplest level, national flags are banners that express pride and loyalty. But if you take a closer look, a flag is a fascinating representation of a nation’s identity—from the colors and symbols used to the overall layout.

“It’s a very simple piece of design, and yet there are so many stories in it,” says Jeppe Morgenstjerne, a co-founder of the Denmark-based design agency Ferdio. “It’s telling of how the world has progressed.” He and fellow co-founder Birger Morgenstjerne recently created “Flag Stories,” an extensively detailed infographic breaking down the flag designs of the nearly 200 U.N.-recognized countries. The team studied everything from the most common colors used to the varying levels of complexity of the world’s flags.

CityLab picked out five points from Jeppe’s and Birger’s analysis, and to put the results into context, reached out to vexillologist (or flag expert) Ted Kaye, who authored the 2006 design guide Good Flag, Bad Flag. He was also the former editor of Raven, a scholarly journal about flags from the North American Vexillological Association. According to Kaye, there are two key points to keep in mind: The first is that flags are all about symbolism. That, he says, “can be carried not just by an object on a flag, but by how the flag is divided and what the colors are.” Second, imitation really is the highest form of flattery.

The three-striped “tribar” layout is the most popular

There are two major reasons for that, says Kaye. The first is simply because it’s easy to stitch three strips of fabric together. The second reason dates back to the 18th century, when a common way to represent a kingdom or a person was to take the colors from their coat of arms and place them as horizontal stripes on a flag. Among the first flags to use that design was that of the Netherlands, which Kaye says became an example for flags across Europe. Peter the Great then brought that layout further east after making the Russian flag a version of the Dutch flag.

But why are some vertically arranged? Thank the French Revolution. “It upended the structure of society in Europe, and it signified that by upending the horizontal tribar,” says Kaye. “The very nature of that verticality of the [French flag] represents a revolution of the then-order of Europe.”
Red, blue, and white dominate the colors of the world’s flags

A flag’s colors are often driven by the flag of the country it is related to. The U.S., for example, maintains the red, white, and blue colors used by the U.K. “Certainly, Great Britain, and France have bequeathed red, white, and blue to their colonies and former colonies,” says Kaye. That's not always the case, though. Sometimes the colors are “reactions” to a colonial power. “For example, the colors of the African National Congress [a political party in South Africa] are black, yellow, and green—opposite the colors of the Dutch and the English.”

Birger and Jeppe note that, strangely enough, purple is not present in any of the flags. That's because colors reflect the available technologies in making dyes, Kaye says. “Purple has been a notoriously difficult color to dye, except extremely expensively. In the Roman times, purple was reserved for the nobility because purple dye was so expensive.”
Colors have individual meanings, too

Sifting through descriptions of each flag, many of which they gathered from Wikipedia, the team pulled out keywords and grouped them into categories. The description of flags that use red, for example, often include words like “independence” or “sovereignty,” which are categorized under “struggle.” But Birger and Jeppe tell CityLab that different countries have their own interpretations. And even within a country, those differ. Kaye also cautions that often, meanings are attributed to the colors after the flag has already been adopted.

What do flag colours symbolise?

Blue doesn't necessarily symbolise the sea. Each national flag has its own meaning behind the colours, resulting in many combinations of meaning and colour. We analysed the symbolism for each flag to see the variety and most common meanings.

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1 Struggle includes struggle for national freedom, independence, sovereignty of the country
2 Bright Spirit includes life, energy, happiness, warmth and new opportunities
3 Landscape includes beauty of nature, greenery, palms, forest and vegetation
4 Brightness includes light, bright lights, bright future, optimism, joy, happiness

Above: Chart redrawn from flagstories.co.
Source: WIKIPEDIA
The star is the most commonly used symbol on flags

According to Kaye, the first country to use a five-pointed star on a flag was the U.S., and some believe it was inspired by George Washington, who had the symbol on his coat of arms. Before the U.S. flag, stars were depicted as having six or more points, mirroring how stars twinkle in the sky. “A star represented component parts of a country, so it’s now very popular to mean both independence—the Lone Star of Texas derives from the American flag—but also component parts,” he says. On China’s flag for example, the large star is said to represent the Chinese Communist party, and the four smaller ones surrounding it are associated with the four social classes that supported the party.

Most used symbols in flags

Two thirds of all national flags include the use of symbols. Some flags even have more than one. All of these symbols were counted and placed in a most used top five, with the star symbol taking first place.
The simpler the flag, the more efficient it is
Using Adobe Illustrator, Birger and Jeppe calculated the number of vector points, or points at which a lines meet, to determine the complexity of a flag’s design. The simplest flags, labeled “child’s play,” have just eight to 12 points. The most complex ones can have as many as 10,847 points.

Kaye’s first principle of flag design is to keep it simple—so simple that a child could recreate it from memory. “The idea of a flag is that it’s a piece of fabric to be seen at a distance, on both sides, while it’s flapping,” he says. “By making a flag complex, it’s more expensive, and that expense is wasted because you can’t see [the detail] at a distance.”

But flags that stray from that principle aren’t all bad. Kaye points to the flag of Bhutan, which falls under the “impossible” category in the infographic. It features a highly detailed dragon against a yellow and orange background. “It’s a very simple field division between the yellow and orange, and very distinctive; no other flag is yellow and orange,” he says. “And you can see that it’s a dragon in the middle.”

Not every flag follows the design principles Kaye laid out in 2006, but that doesn’t mean countries are scrambling to change their national banners. New Zealand, for example, recently decided to keep its current flag despite spending a year and $17.6 million searching for a new one.

People have very strong relationships with their flags for two reasons, says Kaye. One is proprietary: They’ve grown up with the flag and feel that it will always represent them. The other, he says, is what psychologists call the “mere-exposure effect”: “If they’re used to it, they like it.”

You can see more of Birger and Jeppe’s infographics at http://flagstories.co.
Visit to Uruguay

Article and photos by Tiago José Berg*

In the last month of October 2015, I visited Uruguay, especially its capital, Montevideo, where I saw a few landmarks, including the Plaza Independencia (Independence Square), the Estévez Palace (former presidential palace), the Palacio Legislativo (Legislative Palace) and the Estadio Centenario (stadium of football host of the 1930 FIFA World Cup final). I took the opportunity to photograph some flags and symbols of interest.

The flag of Uruguay was first adopted on December 16, 1828, and had 19 stripes until July 11, 1830, when a new law reduced the number of stripes to nine. It was designed by Joaquín Suárez, the first president of the country, inspired by two other flags—Argentina (sun and colours by historical connection with this country) and United States (the shape).

It has three horizontal stripes, the top and bottom being blue, and the central one white. On top of them, it has a diagonal red stripe.

The Flag of Artigas is flown alongside the National Flag and the Flag of the Treinta y Tres on government buildings. It has three horizontal stripes (top blue, central white and bottom red). The Flag of the Treinta y Tres, meaning “Thirty-Three Orientals”, was a militant revolutionary group led by Juan Antonio Lavalleja and Manuel Oribe against the Empire of Brazil. Their actions culminated in the foundation of modern Uruguay and its independence, and carries the words “Libertad o Muerte” (Liberty or Death) on the central stripe.

In main entrance of Estévez Palace (located at the independence square) we found a beautiful wood carving of the coat of arms of Uruguay, crowned by a rising golden sun, called the “Sun of May”, symbolizing the rising of the Uruguayan nation. The oval shield is surrounded by a laurel branch on the left and an olive one on the right, representing honor and peace, joined at the bottom by a blue ribbon. The scale is a symbol of equality and justice; the Cerro de Montevideo (Montevideo Hill) with its fortress on the summit, representing strength; a galloping horse, is a symbol the liberty and the ox, a symbol of abundance and livestock. The Estévez Palace was the working place of the President and has been converted to a museum today.

At the Estadio Centenario is located the Football Museum, which tells the story of the sporting glories of Uruguay, especially its football team, where I learned the country’s flag was used at the opening of the Paris Olympics in 1924.

The Legislative Palace in Montevideo, seat of the Uruguayan Parliament is considered one of the most beautiful legislative buildings in the world. On the palace facade are two poles: one with the national flag and the flag of Artigas—a homage to José Gervasio Artigas, national hero of Uruguay.

*Teacher of the São Paulo Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology in Capivari, São Paulo State, Brazil. NAVA member since 2011. tiago_berg@yahoo.com.br
Commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of the Chicago Municipal Flag Commission

To the NAVA News Editor:

Mary Pat Michel is the great-grand-niece of Alderman, later City Treasurer, James A. Kearns of Chicago, who was instrumental in getting Chicago its city flag and doing other city flag research.

NAVA provided Mary Pat Michel with several copies of "American City Flags", which describes James A. Kearns' role. She wrote us back a nice note and provided full documentation of her success in getting the flag commemorated.

Ted Kaye
Jan. 8, 2016

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CITY OF CHICAGO
OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN
COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
ROOM 302 CITY HALL

ALDERMAN EDWARD M. BURKE
CHAIRMAN

July 24, 2015

Ms. Mary Patricia Michel
3051 Landwehr Road
Northbrook, Illinois 60062

Dear Ms. Michel:

I want to thank you for your very kind e-mail letter sharing with me the fascinating story of the history of the Chicago flag, and the one-hundredth anniversary commemoration marking the formation of the Municipal Flag Commission.

It is my intention to prepare a City Council resolution honoring Alderman James A. Kearns, the formation of the Municipal Flag Commission, and the adaptation of the award-winning design prepared by the noted Chicago author and lecturer Wallace Rice. We will provide you with a copy of the resolution once it has been introduced and approved.

It is interesting to note that you are related to Alderman Kearns, who served the residents of the old 31st Ward with great distinction through four terms of office.

Alderman Kearns was also a member of the Committee on Finance for seven years. As you may know, I presently serve as its Committee chairman. Later of course, he was elected Chief Clerk of the Municipal Court. He was a much-admired civic leader who enjoyed a long and illustrious career in public life.

Without the involvement and dedicated leadership of Alderman Kearns, it is doubtful that we would have had a Municipal Flag Commission to stimulate public interest, or final design conceived by Mr. Rice.

The flag is an enduring and important symbol of the four defining historic events of our history.

Thank you again for sharing your research.

Sincerely,

Edward M. Burke
Chairman
Commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Chicago Municipal Flag Commission

CITY OF CHICAGO
OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN
COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
ROOM 302 CITY HALL

ALDERMAN EDWARD M. BURKE
CHAIRMAN

August 7, 2015

Ms. Mary Patricia Michel
3051 Landwehr Road
Northbrook, Illinois 60062

Dear Ms. Michel:

With appreciation and thanks, I am pleased to present to you a Resolution adopted by the City Council of Chicago to honor the memory of Alderman James A. Kearns and the important role he played in the conception and adaptation of the Flag of Chicago, a venerated and historic symbol of the greatness of the city.

On behalf of Mayor Emanuel and the members of the Chicago City Council we extend our gratitude to you, and to the members of the Kearns family.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
Edward M. Burke
Chairman
A resolution

adopted by The City Council
of the City of Chicago, Illinois

Presented by Alderman Edward M. Burke on July 29, 2015

Whereas, Recognizing the necessity for a symbolic representation of the City of Chicago in the form of a municipal flag, Alderman James A. Kearns of the 31st Ward introduced a resolution in 1915 to the City Council to appoint a Municipal Flag Commission to conceive and submit an appropriate design for review and approval by the Mayor and members of the Council; and

WHEREAS, For several years prior to 1915, Alderman James A. Kearns had studied and monitored the development, progress, and formal introduction of flags bearing municipal emblems in other domestic and international cities; and

WHEREAS, Working closely with Frederic Rex of the Chicago Municipal Library in City Hall, Alderman James A. Kearns and Frederic Rex entered into a correspondence with officials in Boston, New York, Cleveland, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, San Francisco, Richmond, Virginia and Baltimore to ascertain the procedural steps they had taken to design and unveil their local flag; and

WHEREAS, The Chicago City Council approved the resolution to establish the Municipal Flag Commission on July 12, 1915; and

WHEREAS, Upon passage of the resolution, Mayor William Hale Thompson appointed Alderman James A. Kearns to serve as Chairman of the Municipal Flag Commission; and

WHEREAS, Other distinguished Chicagoans named to the Commission by Mayor Thompson included Frederic Rex appointed as secretary, Alderman John A. Richert of the 4th Ward, Alderman Herman E. Miller of the 20th Ward, Mary E. McDowell of the Chicago Women’s Club, Lawton Parker of the Chicago Art Commission, author-lecturer Wallace Rice, Charles L. Daring and William H. Harper of the Chicago Association of Commerce, landscape artist Charles Francis Browne, architect Henry K. Holsman, Clarence A. Burley of the Chicago Historical Society, John Fitzpatrick of the Chicago Federation of Labor, and Mrs. Lewis K. Torbet of the Daughters of the American Revolution; and
WHEREAS, In November 1915, Alderman James A. Kearns authorized Frederic Rex to prepare and distribute Municipal Reference Bulletin Number 5 to the membership of the City Council in order to apprise and inform them of actions taken by civic agencies in forty other cities to design and enact flag heraldry; and

WHEREAS, Alderman James A. Kearns and Lawton Parker prevailed upon Wallace Rice, whose many public lectures at the Art Institute concerned the history of flag heraldry, to draw up a set of twenty rules and regulations governing a design competition open to the public; and

WHEREAS, Chicago residents, local artists, historians and individuals from all walks of life submitted over a thousand conceptual designs to Frederic Rex; and

WHEREAS, Of the many designs under review, only a small percentage warranted further consideration; and

WHEREAS, Common depictions of the Fort Dearborn blockhouse positioned at the center of the flag were rejected because other cities had already adapted similar images of military fortifications in their own designs; and

WHEREAS, Wallace Rice spent six weeks preparing 300 different renderings utilizing various shapes and colors submitted by contestants before designing his own version representing a hybrid of ideas for consideration; and

WHEREAS, The new municipal flag design by Wallace Rice features a white stripe, eight inches broad across the top of the flag, symbolizing the North Side of Chicago; and

WHEREAS, The upper blue band, nine inches broad, represents Lake Michigan and the North Branch of the Chicago River; and

WHEREAS, The eighteen-inch white center band symbolizes the West Side of Chicago; and

WHEREAS, The lower blue band represents the South Branch of the Chicago River and the Drainage Canal; and

WHEREAS, The bottom white band symbolizes the South Side of Chicago; and

WHEREAS, The first two stars represent the Great Chicago Fire of 1871 and the World’s Columbian Exposition of 1893; and

WHEREAS, Wallace Rice positioned the first two stars to the left of the banner intentionally so that additional six-pointed stars could be added to mark future notable and epic events at the discretion of the City Council; and
WHEREAS, A third star symbolizing the 1933 Century of Progress World’s Fair was added in 1933, with a fourth star representing Fort Dearborn was added in 1939; and

WHEREAS, With nearly unanimous consensus of opinion, this design was accepted by the Municipal Flag Commission and submitted to the full Chicago City Council on March 28, 1917 for review and approval; and

WHEREAS, On April 4, 1917, the day that the United States Senate voted support for America’s entry into World War I, the Chicago City Council, meeting in session, accepted the report of the Municipal Flag Commision and adopted the Wallace Rice design to serve as the official Flag of Chicago; and

WHEREAS, The City of Chicago flag is displayed on all municipal buildings where the American flag is positioned, on police and fire stations, public schools and libraries; and

WHEREAS, The inspired design is honored and recognized as the symbol of Chicago across the United States and around the world; and

WHEREAS, The Chicago City Council has been informed of the milestone 100th anniversary of the formation of the Municipal Flag Commission by Alderman Edward M. Burke; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Mayor and the members of the Chicago City Council assembled this twenty-ninth day of July, 2015, recognize and thank the late Alderman James A. Kearns for his dedication and commitment to championing the creation of the municipal flag; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be presented to Ms. Mary Patricia Michel, great-grand-niece of Alderman James A. Kearns.
3051 Landwehr Road
Northbrook, IL 60062

August 19, 2015

Alderman Edward M. Burke
Chairman, Committee on Finance
City Hall, room 302
121 N. LaSalle Street
Chicago, IL 60602

Dear Alderman Burke:

I cannot thank you enough for the Resolution adopted by the Chicago City Council recognizing the contributions of Alderman James A. Kearns in the development of the Chicago flag. Our family was excited and honored by this commemoration, especially our nonagenarians, some of whom still remember handing out campaign material for their Uncle James back in the day.

When I first read the 1915 flag report, I was impressed with the scholarship on the part of those who put the survey together. I am equally impressed with the work that went into the Resolution that provides so much interesting detail about the flag.

The additional information provided in your initial letter about Alderman Kearns’ career was also much appreciated. In that regard, I am enclosing a copy of what is left of an old photograph, dated August 25, 1923, which I always assumed was taken when James Kearns was an Alderman. However, looking at it closely, I realized the banner says “James A. Kearns Day, Annual Outing, Clerk of the Municipal Court.” What I thought was a political rally might have actually been an office outing. Also enclosed is a picture of Alderman Kearns looking very distinguished at my mother’s wedding in 1947, when he was about 73.

The Kearns family was a large one and the cousins are spread out at this point, but we will do our best to circulate this fine tribute to them. I know all will be as pleased as we are with your considerable efforts in bringing attention to Alderman Kearns’ role in this aspect of Chicago’s history. Thank you again.

Sincerely,

Mary Patricia Michel

Enclosures
Please plan to attend NAVA’s 50th Annual Meeting

NAVA’s board and the Organizing Committee invite you to register for an exciting flag-filled weekend in San José, the third-largest city in California and the 10th largest city in the United States! As the oldest city in California, it was the first capital of the state and has enjoyed a rich and diverse cultural past. San José is located in the heart of California’s Silicon Valley and surrounded by many attractions and things to do.

HOST HOTEL
DoubleTree by Hilton Campbell—Pruneyard Plaza
1995 South Bascom Avenue,
Campbell, California, 95008, USA
408-559-4300 Hotel/Reserve: (800) 222-8733

NAVA 50’s host hotel, the 171-room Doubletree, places you just down the freeway and light-rail track from downtown San José, in “a Mediterranean oasis in the heart of Silicon Valley”. The Pruneyard Plaza is an upscale shopping complex with 18 restaurants plus many shops, banks, and other attractions.

Make sure to reserve before 14 September 2016. Space and rates cannot be guaranteed after that date. Rooms are set aside for NAVA at $129/night plus tax for Friday and Saturday. On dates before and after NAVA 50, the rates are $50/night higher. Triple and quadruple rooms are just $10 and $20/night more. Parking is free at the hotel.

Go here: DoubleTree Campbell—Reservations and click on availability—use the Group code “NAV” (under “Add special rate codes”) to get the group rate or call (800) 222-8733 and ask for the “NAV” rate. Reserve early—space is limited.

SCHEDULE
This preliminary schedule is subject to change as the Organizing Committee finalizes the details.

Friday, 14 October 2016
12–5 NAVA 50 Check-in (lobby)
3–5 Preble Lecture (location TBD)
6–7 President’s Reception (location TBD)
7 dinner (optional)
8 Vexi-Bits (lobby)

Saturday, 15 October 2016
before 9 Breakfast (at hotel, on one’s own)
9–12 Opening Ceremonies and Presentations
12 Lunch (at hotel)
1:30–5 Tour (TBD)
6 Group Photo (lobby)
6 Whitney Smith Dinner and Keynote Lecture (Garden Terrace)

Sunday, 16 October 2016
Before 9 Breakfast (at hotel, on one’s own)
9–10 NAVA Business Meeting
10–12 Presentations
12 Lunch (on one’s own)
1:30–3 Presentations and other activities
3:30–4:30 Auction & Closing Ceremonies
5 Incoming Executive Board Meeting
6 Group Dinner (optional)

Vexi-Bits (mini presentations) on Friday evening will offer an opportunity to share flags, flag-related items, and stories.

All sessions will take place in the Harvest Room, unless noted otherwise.

PROGRAM
The Preble Lecture will feature Dr. Tamara Venit-Shelton, Associate Professor of History at Claremont McKenna College in California, speaking on the 1861 “Settlers’ War” in San José and other protest movements from 19th-century America that involved protesters wrapping themselves in flags. The primary artifact of that “War”, the flag of the Evergreen Home Guard, is part of the Zaricor Flag Collection.

The President’s Reception on Friday evening will welcome attendees to the meeting.

Optional group dinners on Friday and Sunday evenings will be organized at nearby restaurants.

The Opening Ceremonies on Saturday morning will be followed by the first round of Presentations, which will adjourn for lunch.

An additional TOUR section will be added with more details on a special tour to be held on Saturday.

SUBMITTING PAPERS & DISPLAYS
Please access the NAVA 50 webpage to obtain information regarding submission of papers and displays at NAVA 50.

Additional information and links to area attractions can be found at the NAVA 50 webpage.