



Recognition in Anthem Project

PRESS RELEASE - NAIDOC Week 4 July 2021 'Advance Australia Fair 2.0' - The 'Today Anthem'

The decision of the Prime Minister announced on New Year's eve last to adopt the word 'ONE' in place of 'young' in Verse 1 of the National Anthem was a momentous and most welcome first step. With this small change, at last the wrong of exclusion of our First Peoples in the Anthem became a celebration of inclusion. This went some way towards fixing an obvious problem with the anthem.

But an omission has been exposed – the song 'Advance Australia Fair 2.0' (the 'Today Anthem') has two further verses – Verse 2 about Our People and Verse 3 about Our Values. These are set out below. The verses have been written for all Australians. They give voice to what it means to be 'One' and what it means to be an Australian by singing of our core values as often stated by our Prime Ministers from Bob Hawke to Scott Morrison: Respect for our First Peoples and our Multicultural Society; Mateship; a Fair go; Our Resilience and the Freedom to advance positive change through our precious Democracy. They drive the piece and are inseparable from Verse 1.

Last month, the Recognition in Anthem Project (RAP) recorded the full three verses of its song. It was performed by Stefanie Jones on 31 May at the Utzon room, Sydney Opera House, accompanied by Keyna Wilkins (classical pianist) and Gumaroy Newman (virtuoso didgeridoo) who bring cultures together as the 'Yulugi Ensemble'. Stefanie was the first to publicly sing the new Verse 1 on 7 January this year at the SCG to open the 3rd Cricket Test against India. It was stirring and deeply moving.

The Utzon room in the iconic Sydney Opera House at Bennelong Point, has very special significance for all Australians. For thousands of years Bennelong Point was known to the Gadigal people as a gathering place for community, ceremony, songs, storytelling and festivity. In more recent years, it saw the creation of the Opera House. The Utzon room, including the spectacular tapestry, is the only internal room of the Opera House which remains as the brilliant architect Jørn Utzon designed it.

The recording announced a new phase. The quest is simple - to make the song whole – to make it work for all Australians in our advance towards reconciliation and appreciation of who we are as a people.

The present Verse 2 of the National Anthem is largely redundant. Very few know the words and it is rarely sung. Deletion of the present Verse 2 would be barely noticed.

How much better to include new Verses 2 and 3 which can serve purposes of great importance - to inspire and instil our values at schools and at citizenship ceremonies and, when time and the occasion permits, at other special events.

The recording of 31 May is RAP's contribution to action. It was recently launched during NAIDOC week 2021, and is presently being distributed on YouTube, Instagram and through the Website www.rap.org.au, where the video can be played from the Homepage.

The recording comes from members of the Australian arts community, who have suffered so directly from the devastating effects of COVID, yet have provided significant donated support for the recording project, not only from outstanding performers and the technical contributors, but also from the Sydney Opera House and the team behind it. All have worked hard to produce the recording.

The Recognition in Anthem Project and its members and supporters, invite you to enjoy this performance of the full three verses of 'Advance Australia Fair 2.0' for all Australians.

The new lines are part of the natural evolution of the song. It has journeyed through two changes by the original composer, Peter Dodds McCormick since 1878, and dramatic change in 1984 when it became our National Anthem. 'In history's page' let the 'Today Anthem' now inspire the very new Australia of the 21st century.

Australians have done it tough in recent years with drought, bushfire, flood and now COVID. As never before in this century, the country as a whole is surely in need of unity, purpose and hope. The new lines proposed for our most important of national symbols remind of the core values which hold us together. They have been written to provide the inspiration, strength and the courage to carry on and to advance reconciliation in the extraordinary and challenging times which confront us.

Hon. Peter Vickery QC,

Chair & Founder, **Recognition in Anthem Project**

Committee Elder, Aunty Sue Bulger (Wiradjuri)(NSW); Don Bemrose (Gunggari)(Vic); Dr Chris Sarra (Gurang Gurang)(QLD); and Dr Martin Haskett(VIC)

*Logo: Australia's National Flower – The Golden Wattle *Acacia pycnantha*
- Watercolour by Cheryl Hodges*

Additional Verses 2 and 3 Proposed by the Recognition in Anthem Project

Verse 2 – Our People

For sixty thousand years and more

First peoples of this land

Sustained by Country, Dreaming told

By song and artist's hand.

Unite our cultures from afar

In peace with those first here

To walk together on this soil

Respect for all grows there.

From everywhere on Earth we sing,

Advance Australia Fair.

Verse 3 – Our Values

In times of drought and flood and fire

When all but hope is gone

Australians join with helping hands

And wattle blooms again.

Tomorrow may this timeless land

Live for our young to share

From red-rock heart to sun-filled shore

Our country free and fair.

Beneath the Southern Cross we sing,

Advance Australia Fair.