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Flag focused on future

By CHRIS DYSON

The sight of three-masted sailing ship *Our Svanen* may conjure images of Australia's colonial past but the flag it flies is focused firmly on the future.

A golden sun shining amid the stars of the Southern Cross flutters on a blue background.

Distinctly Australian and so it should be - this will be our nation's new flag if designer James Parbery gets his way.

Mr Parbery is Ship's Artist aboard that other symbol of Australia's early history, the *Bounty*, and came up with the flag idea after a trip to England.

"When I returned to Australia I realised more than ever what a vibrant and sunny and optimistic country I was born to," he said.

Mr Parbery's flag philosophy that simple is best has resulted in an uncluttered design and deliberate absence of borders that reflects the open landscape and free spirit of Australia and its people.

"All the elements are combined as one but not bound, inspiring unity and order while reminding us of our wide open spaces and our freedom," Mr Parbery said.

The round disk of the golden sun incorporates the Aboriginal symbolism of a life-giving force that unites the land and the people.

Radiating from the centre are the 16 points of the compass, representing our seafaring heritage. "Also, the rising sun badge has been a feature on the slouch hat of our soldiers since 1901," Mr Parbery said.

Mr Parbery hopes his design is capable of inspiring pride in the hearts of most Australians.

It is certainly flown proudly by the crew of *Our Svanen*, a 75-year-old Danish ship that featured in the 1988 First Fleet Re-enactment and now takes tourists on cruises of Sydney Harbour.

Picture: KIRK GILMOUR



Deckhand Hilda Havard thinks the flag that flies atop the *Our Svanen* is a winning choice for Australia's new flag.