

A Flag Worth Waving



YOU CAN TELL a lot about a people by the way they celebrate their national day. In some countries there are military parades and mass rallies sanctioned by the state. Others assert their national uniqueness. But we do things differently here...

On Australia Day, we went to the beach. We burnt a snag on barbecues with family and friends. We had a hit

with the kids on a pitch in the park. Some, who will remember yesterday for the rest of their lives, became Australian in citizenship ceremonies. And across the continent, people waved the flag and wished each other happy Australia Day, effectively embracing all who understand that, for all its faults, ours is truly a lucky and happy country...

Australians are a pragmatic people, who are happy with our relatively flat social structure and the belief that everybody has a right to an equal start in life, even if these beliefs are not expressed in national sagas. And we understand that for all the benefits globalisation brings, it is also making much of the world much the same.

What we celebrated yesterday were the characteristics that make us different to, not better than, all other nations. And we congratulated ourselves on what we have done as a country and what, with good luck, we are yet to do. Both are worth waving a flag for.

