

Long, leisurely look at national day

Australia Day is clearly broken and the proposal for an Australia Long Weekend is something that we should all get behind (“Bigger and better than Australia Day, let’s make it the Australia Long Weekend”, July 29). The travel industry should support it wholeheartedly: must be better for travelling than an orphaned mid-week Australia Day. Business should support it: Mid-week holidays inevitably lead to more fake sickies. All parties should support its ambition to create a day without division that allows us all to celebrate what it means to be Australian. The argument over Australia Day cannot be left to remain as some kind of woke argument along party divides. We already have a number of holidays that create a long weekend such as the King’s birthday and Labour Day. It shouldn’t be that hard.

Anthony Melville, Birchgrove

What a sensible proposal to celebrate our nation on a special Australia Long Weekend on the second-last weekend in January. The choice of celebratory or relaxing activities for the occasion is limited only by the individual and collective imagination. Yes, the traditionalists will whinge, but one of the most attractive attributes of this rational proposal is that it sidelines the annual divisive controversy about January 26.

Rob Phillips, North Epping

This article was so sweet it made my teeth ache. It paints a picture from long ago with mentions of citizen ceremonies and sausage sizzles. That Australia is long gone. Social cohesion is at an all-time low. Identity politics have split communities and mass immigration has left us very unsettled. Most of us no longer even know what Australia stands for, as we do not have any overarching values that provides a bedrock for unity. We have been taught to feel shame about our country instead of being proud of our achievements. What would we be celebrating? Nobody knows.

Pamela Shepherd, Balgowlah

Much as I admire the efforts of Messers Jenkyn, Cousins and Elliott to confront the Australia Day problem I wonder why they’ve resisted the sterling efforts of Wesley Enoch to establish an Australia Day Eve to celebrate the eons of time before colonists

arrived at Sydney Cove. Perhaps the Friday before their proposed Australia Long Weekend could be dedicated to First Nations – their own honours list, for instance?

Jeremy Eccles, Clifton Gardens

This is an excellent solution to a problem that is not going away. It is an opportunity for all Australians to be happy celebrating our nation.

Beryl Crowther, Mona Vale

<https://www.smh.com.au/politics/nsw/long-leisurely-look-at-making-australia-day-more-inclusive-20240729-p5jxdo.html>