

CAMPBELLTOWN PHILATELIC NEWS

September , 2014

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www.philas.org.au/campbelltown

Next meeting 8th October,2014

Coin collecting night by Richard

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

It is proposed that members vote on the issuing of **Life Membership to Brian Roberts**. Brian has been a member of the committee , & specifically has been the club secretary for a number of years - having joined in 1999. The growth of member numbers and success of our annual Fisher's Ghost Stamp Fair has been largely due to his untiring efforts & ideas. Please be sure to be present to cast your vote on Wed 13th.

Mourning Covers – Bearers of Bad News

As the name implies these envelopes were used to send letters advising of people passing away. Mourning covers are easily distinguishable by the striking black borders around the outside of the envelopes. The reverse, and often the stationery inside, are also usually finished with black.



The particular mourning cover pictured was sent from Christchurch in New Zealand to Dalry in Scotland (via Glasgow and London) all the way back in July of 1867, almost 150 years ago. The stamp is one of New Zealand's lovely chalon issues.

Inside is a letter, pictured below, announcing that Margaret Gavin had died suddenly at almost 69 years of age. This was a fairly advanced age back then when most people didn't live past 50. It's interesting in the letter to see the deceased described as the "relict" of

the late Hugh Gavin, rather than using the term "widow" as we would use today.

In this case it took almost 2 months for word of the passing to arrive, given that New Zealand was such a far-flung colonial outpost and that the passage by ship was slow. How things have changed in this world of air transport and email.

Morning Stamps & Cover Club

The Mourning Stamps and Covers Club (MSCC) promotes the association of mourning stamps and cover collectors in activities conducive to the common growth in knowledge and enjoyment of all aspects in this field of philately.

The MSCC was founded in 2006, and has an international membership. It publishes a quarterly newsletter of approximately twenty pages entitled *Mourning Notes*, available by e-mail in color or by regular mail in black and white. Meetings of the club have been held at various conventions of the American Philatelic Society and the Royal Philatelic Society of Canada, as well as at smaller regional exhibitions.



Details of membership are on the internet.

More about Non-Soakable Stamps

Some well known non-soakable stamps are issues of Taiwan, Red China, India and sometimes Pakistan

from WWII to the mid 1960's. With these countries it was more or less normal to issue stamps without glue and use local post offices "glue pot" (usually with water-resistant glue) to affix stamps on cover. Sadly there is not much you can do with many of these stamps besides saving them on piece.

Another wave of non-soakable stamps are the self-adhesive stamps. Most of the self-adhesives are soakable, but they require special attention. Sadly there are also cases where all hope is lost; like the very early self-adhesives from the 1960's, French Marianne stamps from early 1990's, Italian Priority stamps in early 2000 and many UK and US self-adhesive issues after year 2007 which should be kept on piece.

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The Country with only one ATM

French Colonies collectors may enjoy the stamps of Wallis and Futuna, a small group of volcanic islands covering less than 60 square miles in the South Pacific between Samoa and Fiji.

Less than 1,200 people live in the islands' largest city, Mata-Utu, where there are no street names.

The territory's first stamps were released in 1920 and were on sale for eight years. They were overprints of the long running New Caledonia stamps of 1905-28.

In 1944, the first Wallis and Futuna stamps were released. The set of 14 depicted Ivi Poo, local bone carving in a tiki design.

In keeping with 20th century French colonial stamps, imperfs and trial colour proofs began to appear in 1957. For the past fifty years the islands' attractive stamps have focused on flowers, natives, bone carvings, tapa cloth, shells, fish, and boats.

In 2008, Wallis and Futuna released a stamp to honour its dead king, a former pig farmer with a stubborn streak. Two years before he died, Tomasi Kulimoetoke II set off minor riots, forcing the French to send in police from New Caledonia to help restore calm.

The trouble broke out when the King refused to turn over his grandson to the police. Tomasi Tuugahala had been found guilty of manslaughter after driving drunk and killing a pedestrian. The king eventually released his grandson, who was kept under wraps in the royal palace for four months before being hauled off to jail in New Caledonia.

In 2002, the King shut down the Wallis and Futuna newspaper after it published critical coverage of his support for a convicted embezzler. The king's rule that people had to get off their bicycles when they passed his palace did not endear him to the public.

Today, the less controversial King of Wallis and Futuna is Kalae Kivalu, a retired civil servant.

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Do you have "nice" stamps ?

The condition of stamps can make a major difference to the appeal of a stamp collection. It can also make a major difference to a collection's value. With newer stamps it's usually fairly easy to find examples which are in good condition, but for older stamps it can be a challenge.

Avoid faulty stamps

Because paper is such a fragile material postage stamps can easily become damaged. The most obvious faults are missing pieces and tears, which reduce the value drastically. These are usually fairly easy to spot but sometimes collectors can be deceived by skilful repairs. Thins, which are often caused by careless removal of hinges, are a very common fault, detectable when holding a stamp up to light. Creases are another problem which can be easily overlooked.

Pay attention to the margins on imperforate stamps

There are 2 main things to take into account when considering the condition of stamps without perforations. The first is the spaces surrounding the design of the stamp, known as margins. The best imperforate stamps have margins of all 4 sides, so that the design of the stamp is completely clear. Ideally these margins will be even and as large as possible (bearing in mind that the size of the margins is limited by how closely stamps were printed on sheets). Secondly, collectors need to be wary of buying supposedly imperforate stamps which are, in fact, perforated stamps which have been trimmed.

Watch the perforations

The nature and quality of perforations is a significant factor in the condition of stamps. The precision and neatness of perforations varies greatly and for many older stamps realistic expectations are needed. However, in the main perforations should be checked to ensure that they are neat and tidy with no perforations missing, short or pulled.

Try to select stamps that are well centered

Centering refers to how evenly the printed portion of a stamp is positioned within the perforated borders. A well centered stamp will have almost identically sized gaps between the edge of the design and the perforations on all 4 sides, while a poorly centered stamp will not. While centering is an important consideration for stamps throughout the world in the USA and Canada in particular, enormous price premiums are often placed on stamps which have exceptional centering.

Make sure the colour is true

Much of the beauty and visual appeal of old stamps is due to the attractive colours, and the subtle variations of these colours. When choosing stamps it is important to ensure that the colour has not faded, altered artificially or become uneven. It is also important to be wary of toning and "rust", which takes the form of unsightly brown marks. Rust is a particular consideration in humid climates, and is dangerous because it can spread from one stamp to another.

Ensure postmarks are neat

Personally, I find fine used stamps more interesting than mint stamps, and as a bonus they're usually also a fair bit less expensive. For used stamps it is important to pay attention to the quality of the cancel. I usually look for stamps with clean and clear circular date postmarks which don't obscure or dominate the stamp design, lightly applied either on the corners or centrally. It's best to avoid "killer cancels" where the postmark is smudged, unsightly or obliterates the design of the stamp. Machine cancels are also seen as less desirable.

Watch the gum on mint stamps

The appearance of the front of the stamp is more important than the back. Nevertheless, there are a few important condition factors relating to the gum on mint stamps. Care should be taken to avoid buying stamps which are described as mint unhinged and either have a hinge mark or have been regummed. Also, ensure that hinges marks are light, the gum covers the entire stamp and there are no paper adhesions

Cardplayers



Andrill

ANDRILL (**AN**tarctic **DRILL**ing) is a multinational collaboration comprising more than 200 scientists & educators from eight nations (Brazil, Germany, Japan, Italy, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, United Kingdom & United States) **Note Australia is absent.**

The aim is to drill back in time to recover a history of paleoenvironmental changes of the Antarctica region. Future scenarios of global warming require guidance from past history that will reveal potential timing frequency of future changes.



These USA stamps are an example from a number of the countries involved.

NZ cheap vehicle registration

New Zealand motorists are evading hundreds of dollars in vehicle licensing fees by incorrectly registering their cars as farm vehicles. It follows the revelation earlier this week that hundreds of drivers were falsely registering their cars as ambulances to save more than \$200 in fees.

Club Meetings well attended

Meetings are now being attended by more people, in spite of the cold evenings. There were in excess of 40 at the August display of Great Britain by John Hopper. There would be very few collections to equal what we saw that evening, especially the scarce hi-values of Queen Victoria in magnificent condition.

As well as the AGM business in September there will be 150 lots offered by the club (starting at \$1) as well as the many other auction lots for sale by members. This is a rare opportunity to bid on many bargains.

8th October is a different style of meeting with members & guests having the opportunity to learn

about coin collecting. Richard will have an assortment to show and to explain the finer points. We are hoping there will be coin auction lots as well.

Earliest Franking Postmark

The earliest postmark associated with the franking privilege was a two line, unframed stamp inscribed AFFRANCHI/PAR ETAT (franked be State), struck in black or red on official correspondence from Paris in 1672. This stamp is all the more remarkable since it preceded any other handstruck postmark of France by twenty-three years. A considerable time elapsed before this was followed, in 1744, by a single line mark inscribed AFFAIRES DU ROY. During the Revolution, the use of franks proliferated rapidly, reflecting the turbulent nature of French politics at that time.

Britain, parliamentary and official mail was carried free of charge, the privilege being granted by Royal Warrant as the revenue of the Post Office went to the Crown. In 1764, postal revenues were surrendered by the Crown to Parliament in return for a Civil List. The franking privilege, thereafter, had to be authorised by Act of Parliament. This necessitated the introduction of special stamps inscribed FREE in May 1764. At first, these were undated but a date was incorporated in 1791. In 1799, a crown was also featured, and this was characteristic of the English franks until they were abolished in 1840 as part of the package of postal reforms introduced by Rowland Hill. Only one type of 'free' handstamp was ever used at Edinburgh (1772 – 1788) but Dublin had a most elaborate system. Ireland was, in fact, using distinctive franks from 1706 onwards, the most attractive being the 'mermaids' – so called from the female figure adorning their frame and probably derived from the figure on the heraldic harp.

Special Sunday postmarks were used in London and Dublin. It was a condition of the franking privilege that letters had to bear the date of posting, in the handwriting of the sender, and were not passed free of postage if posted on any other day. Since franked letters, if posted on a Sunday, were not franked till the following day, a special Sunday mark was impressed on them to explain the apparent difference between the handwritten date and the date in the frank. These marks were inscribed SUN or SUNDAY and, in the case of Dublin, were also applied to ordinary mail arriving in that city on a Sunday and not delivered until the following day. London also had special stamps instructing postmen to deliver the letter before 10am on Sunday morning. These 'Sunday Marks' survived the abolition of the franking privilege for several years.

Philas stalwart Paul Thomas

Club members who attended Chatswood Day With Stamps recently may have seen Paul Thomas there and been shocked to hear he has terminal cancer. At Campbelltown we have been honoured that Paul presented on three occasions, his various Health related displays. We were delighted to have been able to add two covers to complement his philatelic items.

Club Member now Married

Katherine Emery took her vows and has now become Mrs Katherine Brunton. Congratulations !! In keeping with her equine interests she arrived at the wedding on a Clydesdale. Due to her work commitments Katherine is unable to attend any of our monthly meetings.

UP, UP and AWAY

He may not be as bulky as superman, but our Brian Roberts has proven as tough. Admitted to hospital by ambulance with apparent heart pains he was eventually diagnosed with infected gall bladder and gallstones. He is now out and about as usual but will be called in for an operation to remove the offending item shortly. Brian wishes to thank the many well wishers who visited him during his "confinement".

Social Security stickers used for postage



Illegal use of stickers as illustrated above from NZ to India would have been an almost unique event. In 1946 the postal authorities were better trained and more observant than their counterparts today. If such an item came up for auction there would be many philatelists who would wish to add such a scarce item to their collection. Postal items often pass through the system today underpaid, with foreign stamps, with stickers or even without any postage paid at all.