



**Newcastle Philatelic Society Newsletter**  
**VIEWS FROM NOBBYS**  
 Newcastle Philatelic Society, P.O. Box 34, JESMOND NSW 2299  
 Website : [www.newcastlephilatelicsociety.org.au](http://www.newcastlephilatelicsociety.org.au)  
**AUGUST, 2016 : Newsletter No. 178 : EDITOR: Ron Davis**

## WHAT'S ON IN YOUR SOCIETY

THE NEWCASTLE PHILATELIC SOCIETY MEETS 7.30pm SECOND THURSDAY of EACH MONTH  
 MAYFIELD SENIOR CITIZENS HALL, cnr, PACIFIC HWY & HANBURY STREET , MAYFIELD AND  
 EACH THIRD WEDNESDAY AT 10.00 a.m. AT STUDIO 48, 48 MACKIE AVENUE, NEW LAMBTON.

**VISITORS ALWAYS WELCOME**

DATES	DETAILS
Thurs 11 Aug 2016	Annual General Meeting and Awards Night
Wed. 17 Aug 2016	<b>Newcastle Daytime Meeting</b> : 10 am, 48 Mackie Avenue, New Lambton, Display by Tony Walker "NORTH BORNEO Part 2"
Sun. 21 Aug 2016	Junior Stamp Activities Meeting, at <b>WALLSEND STAMP FAIR</b> , 11 a.m
Thurs 8 Sept 2016	Display by John Pugsley "BOER WAR PRISONER MAIL"
Sun. 18 Sept 2016	Junior Stamp Activities Meeting, at <b>WALLSEND STAMP FAIR</b> , 11 a.m
Wed. 21 Sep 2016	<b>Newcastle Daytime Meeting</b> : 10 am, 48 Mackie Avenue, New Lambton, Display by Bruce Chadderton "A TASTE of KOREA"
<i>Thursday 22 Sept 2016</i>	<b>STAMP AUCTION NIGHT</b> (details, phone Don Catterall 02 - 4943 5639)
Thurs. 13 Oct 2016	Display by Dave Roberts "NZ 1901 1d UNIVERSAL"
Sun. 16 Oct 2016	Junior Stamp Activities Meeting, at <b>WALLSEND STAMP FAIR</b> , 11 a.m
Wed. 19 Oct 2016	<b>Newcastle Daytime Meeting</b> : 10 am, 48 Mackie Avenue, New Lambton, Display by John Hill – "POSTAL HISTORY OF RHODESIA AND NYASALAND"
Thurs 10 Nov 2016	Display by Greg Laidler "AUSTRALIAN PAINTING SERIES PART I"
Wed. 16 Nov 2016	<b>Newcastle Daytime Meeting</b> : 10 am, 48 Mackie Avenue, New Lambton, Display by Greg Laidler – "POSTAL HISTORY OF TATTERSALS"
Sun. 20 Nov 2016	Junior Stamp Activities Meeting, at <b>WALLSEND STAMP FAIR</b> , 11 a.m
Thurs 8 Dec 2016	Display by Keith Laverick "SPECIES OF BIRDS"
Mon. 12 Dec 2016	Visit to Maitland Stamp Club (Take along some pages)
Sun. 18 Dec 2016	Junior Stamp Activities Meeting, at <b>WALLSEND STAMP FAIR</b> , 11 a.m
Wed. 21 Dec 2016	<b>No Daytime Meeting</b> :

### **SECRETARY'S SNIPPETS, AUGUST 2016**

From time to time I hear mention that some of our senior members are unable to attend our night time meetings, as they are no longer able drive at night. It is now some years ago this was last raised, with a suggestion that those that need transport let it be known to the Secretary, who will advertise amongst members who attend meetings in the hope that someone may be able to offer a lift. Should you be interested, please contact me at the Society's address, PO Box 34, Jesmond, 2299, or by email : [moore.john@optusnet.com.au](mailto:moore.john@optusnet.com.au)

As you read this, another Society 'year' will have commenced with a new programme jam packed with displays and activities that I hope you will find enjoyable. A great thing about our Society is the number of members who are willing to display at our meetings as well as at other clubs, as well as exhibiting at exhibitions nationally and overseas.

- John Moore, Secretary -

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\*\* Nowadays, someone goes into politics with a wonderful future, and comes out with a terrible past.  
 \*\*\* A mammal's blood is red, an insect's blood is yellow, and a lobster's blood is blue.  
 \*\*\* Lack of sleep will kill a person faster than starvation will.

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**A PIECE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT**

"Greetings everyone; this time from the high seas on the gas-tanker "Northwest Stormpetrel" as we approach the east coast of Mindanao on our route back to Dampier. In the May Newsletter, I apologised for my absence in May and August. Unfortunately that will also include September as well (and maybe even beyond). No near term prospects of a relief from my work are in the offering. As the caption at the base of May's Newsletter on page 1 rightly quotes : "Life is like an icecream. Just when you think you have it licked, it drips all over you".

Mind you, things can be a lot worse. On our recent sojourn to Africa, we saw some wonderful things and also many things that remind us of just how lucky we really are. One bright spot was Rwanda, a country well on the road to recovery and yet seemingly disinterested in postage stamps. From what I can see, they have not issued any stamp in the last few years. A couple of items that I posted back home had stamps issued way back in 1994. I purchased these stamps across the counter at a Post Office in Kigali. An interesting country for a stamp collection, if anyone is thinking along the lines of not having to keep up with the multitude of new issues that is the case in most other postal administrations.

The Olympics are upon us again and it is now time to dust off those Olympic theme stamps and to see if they can form a collection or display. I wish you all well in the coming weeks, and hope that your stamp-collecting aspirations (and indeed National medal winning hopes) come to fruition.

Apologies again for my absence and my sincere thanks to those stalwarts in the Society who are doing all the real work.

Best wishes to you all.

- Tony Walker, President -

**SOCIETY AUCTION REPORT, 19<sup>th</sup> MAY 2016**

**Blessed with good weather for a change, a large crowd of well over 50 arrived and literally dived into the pool of goodies. An eager 39 took bidding cards and savoured the 345 lots on offer from 20 vendors.**

**While compiling the statistics, I thought we were going to set a new record of every single bidder winning at least one item, but bidder 31 blew it by going home empty-handed. Perhaps one day it may happen. ( I won't name the odd man out.)**

**164 lots were sold and that's 47% of lots submitted and an excellent result.**

**Total sales for the night amounted to \$1544, continuing our good run.**

**On this night there were not a lot of high value items sold, the crowd preferring to fight for the many bulk lots on offer of which there were plenty. Highest sale that broke this trend was \$180 for a lovely One Pound Blue and Red Kangaroo. It went for that price because it had a thin on the back but was still an excellent buy. Next came a huge collection of Poland which reached \$90 and was a gift at that price, the hagners alone being worth half that amount.**

**A Seven Seas 1980's Australian MUH album sold for \$55, that being well under half face value and this was followed by a very attractive collection of Mint British West Indies QE11 stamps which was bid up to \$48. Finally a stockbook with many mid-period New Zealand Plate Blocks sold for \$30.**

**It was good to see a couple more new faces plus a couple of the bidders who were new at our last auction. Tell your friends. All are welcome.**

**A Great Night with lots of happy buyers and sellers. Our sincere thanks to all who made it possible, not forgetting the ever busy workers.**

**The Next event will be our Swap and Sale Night on July 21st so whatever you do, try not to miss it. Next Auction Night will follow on Sept 22<sup>nd</sup> !**

**- Don Catterall, Auction Convenor.**

**ODDS AND ENDS • :**

**\*\* RICHARD SNEDDON** of Charlestown, one of our members, finds it hard to get around, and would like people to phone him to discuss 'stamps'. His phone number is **0400 466 696**. Richard is an ex-schoolteacher.

**\*\* GLADYS TYACK**, following the death of her husband Norm, has numbers of **mint Australian stamps** for sale at 50% face value – good for postage. They range from 4 cents up to 98 cents, including LOTS of 45 cent stamps (two + a 10 cent stamp = \$1). They are all in their original post office sales packets. Phone Gladys on **4987 5996** for a good deal !

**\*\* A NEW** survey of 1400 Australian travelers has revealed the truly bizarre things people cram into their luggage. The items include a plastic stag head, pet Siamese fighting fish, live lobsters, a large mirror in the shape of the United Kingdom, a ginger bread house, a 3kg bucket of Nutella and a collectible light-saber.

**\*\* The only time on record that snow has fallen in the Sahara Desert was on 18th February 1979. The storm lasted half an hour and the snow soon melted.**

## CHILE – EXTERNAL AIRMAILS 1920's TO 1940, a display by GORDON GIBBONS, Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2016

This collection has been prepared by me for me - NOT to suit some set of judging rules. I have restricted the period from **the start of the foreign air mails to the outbreak of the Second World War i.e. 1939/40**. Items selected are external airmails - purely domestic flights have not been included.

Chile is similar to Australia in the 1930's, at the end of the line for the airlines operating from Europe - you simply cannot go any further. The first air routes were established in the late 1920's to expedite the carriage of mail.

The initial routes involved mail being carried from Toulouse/Marseille to Dakar in West Africa then transferred to a fast boat to Natal/Pernambuco in Brazil - a journey of about five days. From there it was carried by air to Buenos Aires (Argentina). Initially the journey was completed by rail over the Andes, but was soon regularly carried by air - total elapsed time about ten days.

As aircraft technology improved, the ocean crossing was achieved by aircraft, so that by 1935 Air France could boast that a letter posted in Santiago would arrive in France four days later.

From North America, demonstration flights were carried out in early 1928 by the American aviator James Doolittle, and regular scheduled flight established by stages in 1929. And thereby hangs a tale - Juan Tripp, the founder of Pan American Airways wanted to establish a monopoly, but found that an established Peruvian shipping company - Grace Shipping - owned the landing rights along the west coast, and had the infrastructure in place to operate. They only lacked the aircraft and specialised experience to operate an airline. For Pan American to operate along the west coast it had to form a partnership with Grace Line, thus was formed PANAGRA - Pan American Grace Airways.

The routes were established in stages with the final stage from Santiago to Buenos Aires being flown in June 1929. It should be noted here that unlike some other South American countries, Chile did not permit PANAGRA to operate their internal air mail service - this was initially done by the Air Force, and from about 1932 this was converted to LINEA AREA NACIONAL (LAN).

External airmails travelled by one of two routes: The southern route operated by the Europeans though Argentina, Brazil, West Africa (Air France, DLH/Aero Condor, LATI) to Europe, Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, Brazil). The Northern routes (PANAGRA) to Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, North America.

The rate structures applying to overseas air mails are complicated, being basically an additive system built on two separate basic postal rates and up to three airmail rates.

The calculation was:

- 1) Cost of surface carriage - Basic weight charges per 20 gram  
     Within the Americas - Union Postal de America y Espana  
     Elsewhere - Universal Postal Union Payment using postage stamps (Correos).
- 2) Internal air route - From 1932 LAN stamp (LAN) - Basic Weight 10 gram steps
- 3) Foreign Air Routes - Basic Weight 5 gram steps  
     Within Americas - PANAGRA scale; Elsewhere - European Air Lines  
     Payment using Air Mail stamps (Correo Aereo).
- 4) Other charges ,e.g., registration - Payment using postage stamps (Correos).

Changes in postal rates were not correlated - they changed independently.

With the cessation of the DLH service in August 1939 due to the imminent outbreak of war in Europe, the only airline carrying mail for Germany & Italy was the Italian airline "Linee Aeree Transcontinentali Italian" (LATI) which by-passed both British & French controlled areas. Sindicato Condor Ltd. (Condor) acted as a feeder in South America.

- Gordon Gibbons -



### DID YOU KNOW?

■ IF you're concerned about road safety, don't buy a red car — it's the most dangerous colour in Australian conditions, the NRMA says.

Other colours at the bottom of the safety scale include maroon, navy blue, dark green, brown and black.

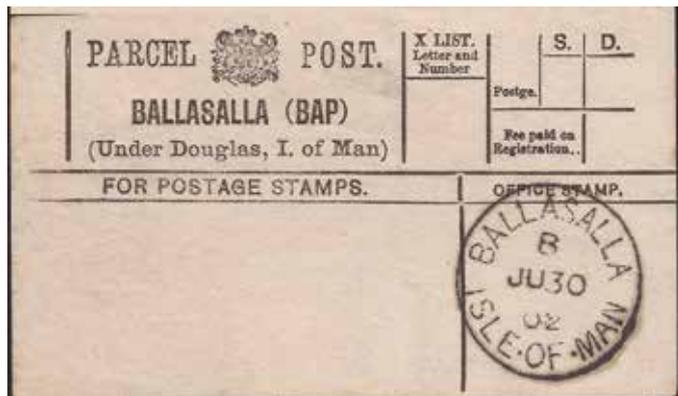
The safest colour is fluorescent orange, tested by makers such as Mercedes-Benz but not readily available in Australia.

The safest common colour is white, followed by orange, lime green, yellow and light blue — all easily seen by other drivers

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# BRITISH PARCEL POST LABELLING 1883-1970, PART 1

- display by ROGER EGGLETON, Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2016



This exhibit won a Gold Medal with Felicitations and a Jury Prize at the Canberra Exhibition earlier this year. This display was the first 64 pages of the exhibit.

Early parcels had a 7lbs. limit which was later increased to 11lbs. In 1874 the UPU was formed in Europe and 4 years later became the Universal Postal Union. In those days, Parcels Post was a monopoly of the railways, and several countries had no parcel post services.

On 1<sup>st</sup> August 1883, British Parcels Post started. Legislation of 1882 passed the parcel post rates – these were split up with the railways, with 55% of the postage going to the railway companies. Post Offices

tried to do better with their services – using a road route only, not on a railway. They had to expand the holding capacity of the post offices for holding bulky parcels, and provide wicker baskets for the postmen. It was an enormous printing job to get Parcels Post labels for each post office. Then in 1884 the service was changed to Parcel Post – and they chiselled off the last “s” off the plate.



In the 1890's an 'X ROUTE' label was printed for items to go partly on a railway. Roger showed 11 different labels used from 1883 to World War I. After World War I, small labels didn't have the post office name on them. Later, even smaller labels showed only the date stamp on them.

GIANT labels came from the Post Office itself – on large packages from their stationery section.

Handstamps were used instead of labels on several covers in Roger's display, in 1938, 1953, 1958, and 1963.



Labels were produced for the Channel Islands of Guernsey and Jersey which were then not part of the United Kingdom, so a large part of their label was a Customs declaration. Almost certainly from the Channel Islands were boxes of cigars, which were tax free. But £1 Customs Duty was charged for each box – and for this nice stamps were sold to collectors.

In 1970, Decimal Currency was introduced into Great Britain – and that was where Roger ended his display.

- R.D. -

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## DID YOU KNOW ??? ABOUT WIND SPEED ....?

What we do know is that because heat from the Sun is unevenly distributed, differences in air pressure arise on the planet. Air can't abide this, so it rushes around trying to equalize things everywhere. Wind is simply the air's way of trying to keep things in balance. Air always flows from areas of high pressure to areas of low pressure. As you would expect, think of anything with air under pressure - a balloon or an air tank - and think how insistently that pressured air wants to get someplace else, and the greater the discrepancy in pressures, the faster the wind blows.

Incidentally, wind speeds, like most things that accumulate, grow exponentially, so a wind blowing at two hundred miles an hour is not simply ten times stronger than a wind blowing at twenty miles an hour, but a hundred times stronger - and hence that much more destructive. Introduce several million tons of air to this accelerator effect, and the result can be exceedingly energetic. A tropical hurricane can release in twenty-four hours as much energy as a rich, medium-sized nation like Britain or France uses in a year!

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## GREAT BRITAIN'S MACHIN STAMPS

- display by **KEITH LAVERICK**, Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2016

Keith arrived in Australia from England in 1967. Two years previous in 1965, Machin essays were produced in Great Britain to form the main definitive stamp series in the United Kingdom, which was first issued on 5 June 1967. The design, from a sculpture by Arnold Machin, replaced the Dorothy Wilding diadem profile, and was derived from the Queen Victoria 1d. black stamp of 1840. After 49 years, the stamp is still in production – still without the country of issue, and with only the sculpted profile of the Queen and a denomination. Machins have been produced in sheets, mini-sheets, coils and booklets.



Keith pointed out that there are 17 different characteristics of the Machin issues, and collecting all 17 isn't easy.

There are 78 colours and 75 values for the small format low value Machins, resulting in 137 colour/value combinations to date. There were 4 sizes, mostly 20x24mm vertical, with 30x35mm for all high-value issues. In 1970, decimal values

replaced £sd values, and in August 2006, a 30x24mm "Large" size was issued.

Apart from the earlier £sd issues, in 1971 regional issues were produced for Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales, and the Isle of Man (which was the first one).

The many phosphor streaks and bars can cause confusion on the sorting machine – and some of these are difficult to get. Replacing the original 1957 graphite bars, fluorophosphor bars were introduced in 1967. These can be in the centre, bars of different widths, different lengths, different positions, and all over. In 1981, the phosphor caused undue wear on the Bickel perforator, so side bars were inset and shortened.

As well as the peel-and-stick gums, there were 4 conventional "wettable" gums – gum Arabic, polyvinyl alcohol, polyvinyl alcohol + dextrin, and lay-flat polyvinyl alcohol. The different gums came from different printers.

There were 7 different printers – Harrison and Sons (1967), Bradbury Wilkinson (1969), Enschede (1979), Waddington (1980), Questa (1980), Walsall (1997), and De la Rue (1999), with booklets being produced by Harrison and Sons (1967), Questa (1988), and Walsall (1989).

Perforations and Perforators : The current perforations are 14¾ top and bottom, and 14 at the sides, with an elliptical hole covering three perfs toward the bottom of each side.

There are 5 Machin head types, and 5 different numeral types – broad and narrow. In 1990, 1st and 2nd Class mail was introduced, and also in 1990, the "Two Heads" issue – Victoria and Elizabeth – for the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Postage Stamps – the 1d. Black.

Machins have been produced by 7 different printing processes – Gravure, photogravure, engraving, lithography, intaglio, embossing and letterpress. And there have been 4 different papers.

National Issues have been produced for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and Special Issues for the Millenium on 6 May 2000, and for the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Machin stamps in 2007.

Keith's Machin collection has been donated to the Newcastle Philatelic Society, and it has been decided to let Philas in Sydney look after it, so that other Societies can borrow the collection and appreciate the work that has been put into it.



- R.D. -

### SWAP & SALE NIGHT, 21 JULY 2016

Our new venue proved very satisfactory for this event with plenty of room and good lighting much appreciated and with good parking quite handy.

Eleven members took tables and most found ready buyers aplenty. In all I counted thirty one in attendance of which seven were non members, but another member counted over 40. This included a couple of new faces, and as always we hope they enjoyed the night and will be back again.

Quite a few regulars didn't make it, and we had apologies from several others, but regardless of this it was a jolly good night and we all look forward to next year.

- Don Catterall. Operations Coordinator -

\*\*\* It is impossible to cry in space because of the lack of gravity.

**INHAMBANE's spell as a stamp-issuing Portuguese colony from 1895-1920 straddled Portugal's revolution, so there were monarchist and republican issues .**

## **INHAMBANE – a hardly-ever-heard-of country**

After rounding the southern tip of AFRICA in 1498, the Portuguese navigator Vasco da Gama stopped at a natural harbour in what is now MOZAMBIQUE, and liked it so much that he called it Terra de Boa Gente (Land of the Good People). When a trading post was established there a generation later, however, the name that stuck was INHAMBANE (pronounced in-yam-ban).

The Portuguese introduced postage stamps in Mozambique in 1876, and these remained in use throughout the whole colony for the next two decades. But in the mid-1890s colonial administrators caught on to the fact that issuing stamps for separate districts could generate extra revenue, and Inhambane was one of many districts given its own stamp programme.

**The first issue**, of 12 stamps ranging in value from 5-reis to 300-reis, was a commemorative set marking the 700th birth anniversary of St Anthony, issued on July 1, 1895. It comprised key-type Mozambique stamps locally overprinted "Centenario de S Antonio/Inhambane MDCCCXCV". These are by far the most elusive Inhambane stamps, and it can be a challenge to put together a set. Spicing things up is the fact that many of the values can be found with the overprint inverted.

In 1903, Inhambane got its first proper definitive set. This time 16 values, from 2½r to 700r, used Louis-Eugene Mouchon's key-type design portraying King Carlos I, with the country name rather awkwardly split over two lines in the bottom tablet.

After Portugal became a republic following a revolution in 1910, all values except the 65r were overprinted "Republica" in 1911.

More stamps received a different "Republica" overprint in 1913, along with a surcharge, but this time on various stamps in the Vasco da Gama commemorative series, which had been issued for Macao, Timor and the Portuguese colonies in Africa back in 1898. There were three sets of eight values each. A regular republican definitive set made an overdue appearance in 1914, by way of 16 values from ¼-centavo to 1-escudo using the Ceres key-plate design by Constantino Fernandes, engraved by Jose Sergio de Carvalho e Silva. The generic design included the inscription "Republica Portuguesa", while the colony's name was printed in black in the bottom tablet.

Incongruously, however, the King Carlos key-plate design resurfaced three years later, in a set of 13 values locally overprinted "Republica" as a provisional measure. You can distinguish these easily from the 1911 set because their overprint is in a different typeface, sans-serif rather than serif.

Those were to be the final stamps issued for INHAMBANE. In 1920 the district started using Mozambique stamps once again, and its catalogue entry ends there.

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## **Why coal is not forming**

HAVE you ever wondered where coal came from and why it is found only in some eras of geological time?

We know that much of the world's coal was laid down over some 60 million years of the Carboniferous Period, 360 million to 300 million years ago, when trees were deposited and transformed to coal. But why did coal formation stop? The answer it seems is in the evolution of **fungi**.

Fungi are the recyclers of all living things. When an animal or plant dies, it decomposes by the combined effects of many fungi.

Several years ago, a group of scientists studying the evolution of fungi showed that at about the same time as coal stopped being laid down, the fungi developed enzymes called **ligninases** - enzymes that act on lignin, a special molecule that gives plants their strength and rigidity. Lignin is particularly difficult to break down.

They hypothesised that the arrival of these ligninase enzymes allowed the fungi to break down plant biomass completely, instead of the dead trees becoming coal, they were fully broken down and the carbon released into the atmosphere as carbon dioxide.

Previous explanations have mostly centred around coal formation as a result of plants falling into swamps, where they became buried and turned to peat and then to coal over millions of years.

During this Carboniferous Period, fungi were of course present and indeed the ancestors of the brown rot fungus were able to breakdown cellulose - but not the lignin, so the result was the formation of coal from the largely lignin remains.

Today, if you are unfortunate enough to have "dry rot" in your house, you will know that this fungus converts a normally strong piece of timber into a brittle shell. That brittle shell is largely lignin, as the brown rot fungus still doesn't have the enzymes to breakdown lignin.

It was in the family of white rot fungi that an ancient member evolved to contain the ligninase enzyme and the ability to digest lignin that its brown rot relatives did not have. Today there are thousands of species of white rot fungi, each with their own quiver of enzymes resulting in characteristic degradation patterns. White-rot fungi are common parasites of heartwood in living trees and are aggressive decomposers of woody debris in forest ecosystems.

**Professor Tim Roberts is director of the University of Newcastle's Tom Farrell Institute for the Environment**



## THE NEWCASTLE DAYTIME MEETINGS,

at Studio 48, 48 Mackie Avenue, New Lambton East,  
at 10 a.m. on the THIRD Wednesday of each month (except December).

### AUSTRALIA 1936 TASMANIA CABLE — Greg Laidler, Wednesday 18 May 2016



Amphitrite is the wife of Neptune, the Greek sea god – and she must have something to do with submarine cables! In 1936, it was the longest submarine telephone cable at the time (161 nautical miles long), owned by Bass Strait Telephone, and it cost £200,000. The cable stretched from Apollo Bay in Victoria to Stanley in Tasmania, via Naracoopa on King Island. “The Nut” at Stanley is shown on the stamp. The ship that laid the cable – the Cable Ship Faraday – is shown on a Barbados stamp on 16 August 1994.



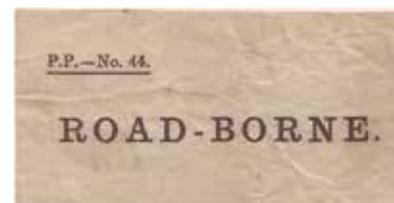
Greg had collected his 40-page display material over 8 to 10 years. The 2d. stamp was used for ordinary mail (89,116,000 printed) and the 3d. used for air mail up to 1958, and for registration fee and the overseas letter rate (3,902,000 printed). The stamps were printed in sheets of 80. At the side of each sheet was a dot – a perforation guide. The operator of the perforating machine lined up this dot to ensure the resulting stamps were “well centred”. Four different electrotype plates were used for the 2d. stamps – plate numbers 1, 2, 3, 4. For the 3d. stamp, only one plate was used, No. 1. Greg’s display was very detailed: There are two types of the 2d. value – one shows (plates 1 & 3), and one does not show (plates 2 & 4), the short line joining the inner and outer frame at the right of the left numeral.

It is interesting to note that the Postmaster General and the Prime Minister at the time, Joseph Lyons, were both Tasmanians.

### BRITISH PARCEL POST LABELLING, PART 2 — Roger Eggleton, Wed. 15<sup>th</sup> June 2016

This was the second half of Roger’s 128-page display (Sections 4 to 8), the first part having been shown at the night-time meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> June. His display covered the period 1883-1970. Section 4, “Foreign and Colonial Parcel Post”, included such labels as “Parcel Passing through the Post Office, Liverpool”, and “Parcel Passing Through the Post Office, London”, and “Insured From the Docks to Mount Pleasant”. Section 5, “Insured”, had such labels as ‘Fragile’, ‘Perishable’, ‘Unsuitable for the Mail Apparatus’, ‘By Parcel Post – Perishable’, and Controlled Delivery Labels such as ‘Redirected in Transit’.

“Private Parcel Labels and Tags” – Section 6 – included a label from a firm with a business name “Refuge Friend in Deed Life Insurance and Sick Fund Friendly Society”. A man from Whitfield King and Co., Ipswich, had 44,068 stamps covering the wall of his Stamp Room, with a face value of nearly £700. “HVP” was a label for High Value Packets, used between banks for regular parcel post and insurance. Section 7 was “Official Labels for Parcel Post”, and Section 8 was “Supplementary Parcel Labels”, which included Customs – “Opened for Customs Examination and Duly Closed Again at the Post Office”, and “Road Borne”. Interesting!



### THE ROYAL WEDDING 1981 - Russell Goddard, Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2016.

Charles and Diana’s wedding was on 20<sup>th</sup> July 1981. The total number of countries which produced commemorative stamps is unknown, but Russell’s display included 492 items from 18 countries and 8 local British off-shore islands. They were in formats of singles, pairs, blocks of 4, strips of 10, gutter pairs, sheetlets and labels, mini sheets, overprints, specimens and booklets, with minimum duplication. The stamps were collected over a number of years through agencies, dealers, and 10 separate postal auctions. The display is the culmination of many hours of research and writing up.



While most of the stamps were from 22 British Commonwealth countries, one notable exception was NORTH KOREA! Why a hardline Communist regime would allow its Post Office to create this issue celebrating the 1981 British Royal Wedding is unknown! Most of the less-prolific countries merely had 1981 Wedding overprints, there were 9 countries in an omnibus series, UGANDA had a currency revaluation, NIUE had Specimen overprints, ANTIGUA had stamps of different designs on sheets, sheetlets and souvenir sheets, BARBUDA had booklet panes imperforate between two \$1 stamps, and TONGA had “Cyclone Relief” overprints in addition to the “1981 Royal Wedding” overprints – messy!

\*\* Happiness comes through the door you didn’t even know you had left open.

## BOOK REVIEW : GREG LAIDLER'S *Plate Varieties of the \$2 Red Gums Definitive*

For the serious collector of modern Australian stamps, Greg Laidler's new book is a real eye-opener. Indeed, it is a model of scholarship that sets an impressively high standard for studies of this popular collecting area.

The full title of the book is "CONSTANT PLATE VARIETIES OF THE TWO DOLLARS 'RED GUMS OF THE FAR NORTH' DEFINITIVE STAMP" (published 2016, ISBN 978-0-9945768-0-4). This 78 page, spiral bound, A4 format, profusely colour-illustrated study is hot off the press. Self-published by the author, in a limited print run, its recommended retail price is \$50.00.

The text is a model of clarity and precision. The introductory section begins by putting Australia's "Paintings" stamps in context, and explaining why the \$2 Red Gums issue is of great technical interest. This is followed by succinct discussions progressively homing in on the subject of the book: explanation of plate varieties; the relevance of the printing cylinders; the sheet layout of the \$2 stamp, its marginal and gutter markings; lettering features and plate varieties linked to the black cylinders; and a compact two-page tabulation of the constant plate varieties on each stamp of the sheet. The statistical details of the study give it a firm scientific underpinning.

The main work (pp.16-71) devotes one or more pages to each of the 50 plate-positions of the sheet, giving fully illustrated details (in colour) of all the constant varieties found on stamps from that position. Though the varieties are minute, they are well defined by the enlarged illustrations, with lettered pointers added. For visual reference, four preliminary pages (pp.12-15) have composite illustrations of all the constant varieties, helpfully annotated with their plate-positions. The work ends with a comparative treatment of several similar varieties, a discussion of non-constant printing errors, and a checklist for the collector of these varieties.

If you are interested in this study, I highly recommend the book.

However, be warned that at first glance the book might give you a false impression of its quality. The illustrations cannot be described as "sharp". However, one cannot expect crisp enlarged images of photogravure-printed stamps, since the original printing process lacks such sharpness. In practice, the illustrations do show all the details required to recognise and identify the varieties, so they do succeed in spite of the inherent difficulties. You simply need to pay careful attention to detail (and a magnifying glass will no doubt be a handy aid).

— Roger Eggleton



## Most Prolific Mother "Awake", 22 Dec 1991



Leontina Judith Espinoza is listed as "the world's most prolific mother" in the **Guinness Book of World Records**. According to the Brazilian newspaper O Estado de S. Paulo, she is now expecting her 74th child at 60 years of age. She has been pregnant 35 times and has given birth to 73 children, of whom 39 were triplets and 24 were twins. The oldest of the 61 children still living is 44. "Born in Argentina and a Chilean citizen since 1963," says the paper, "Leontina lives modestly with her husband and 32 children in a village close to Rancagua, 90 km south of Santiago." "This will be the last one," she said. "I'm getting too old"

\*\* Golf is the only sport that has been played on the moon.

\*\* POLICE in Aspen, Colorado USA, offered the person who left a bag of cocaine at a grocery store to come and collect it. "We really try to take care of lost and found property like it is our own," Aspen Police said on its Facebook page. "But if this is your property, we're going to leave it up to you to come and collect it."



US submarine Barbaro used a cruise missile to deliver mail.