



Newcastle Philatelic Society Newsletter

VIEWES FROM NOBBYS

Newcastle Philatelic Society, P.O. Box 34, JESMOND NSW 2299

Website : www.philas.org.au/newcastle

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WHAT'S ON IN YOUR SOCIETY

THE NEWCASTLE PHILATELIC SOCIETY MEETS 7.30pm SECOND THURSDAY of EACH MONTH
MAYFIELD EX-SERVICES CLUB, 2nd FLOOR MEETING ROOM, HANBURY STREET , MAYFIELD
VISITORS ALWAYS WELCOME

DATES	DETAILS
Thurs 10 May 2012	Display by Andrew Brockett (Sydney) - "BRITISH GUIANA AIRMAILS"
Wed 16 May 2012	Newcastle Daytime Meeting : 10.00 am, 48 Mackie Avenue New Lambton East, Display by Anna Hill - "SELECTIONS OF DESIGN ERRORS ON STAMPS"
Sun 20 May 2012	WALLSEND STAMP FAIR , Junior Stamp Activities Meeting at 11 a.m.
<i>Thurs. 24 May 2012</i>	STAMP AUCTION NIGHT (details, phone Don Catterall 02- 4943 5639)
Thurs 7 June 2012	Display by Warren Oliver - "NEW SOUTH WALES"
Sun 17 June 2012	WALLSEND STAMP FAIR , Junior Stamp Activities Meeting, at 11am
Wed 20 June 2012	Newcastle Daytime Meeting : 10.00 am, 48 Mackie Avenue New Lambton East Display by Keith Kestel - "EXPLORATION & EVANGELISM IN THE PACIFIC"
<i>Thurs 21 June 2012</i>	SWAP & SALE NIGHT (details, phone Don Catterall 02 4943 5639)
Thurs 12 July 2012	Display by Tony Walker - "BELGIAN CONGO"
Sun 15 July 2012	WALLSEND STAMP FAIR , Junior Stamp Activities Meeting, at 11am
Wed 18 July 2012	Newcastle Daytime Meeting : 10.00 am, 48 Mackie Avenue New Lambton East, Display by Howard Fisher (Toronto) - "THE SCRAMBLE for AFRICA"
Thurs 9 August 2012	AGM, ANNUAL COMPETITION and AWARDS NIGHT
Wed 15 August 2012	Newcastle Daytime Meeting : 10.00 am, 48 Mackie Avenue New Lambton East, Display by Sandra Baker - "A POT-POURRI OF PRE-HISTORY"
Sun 19 August 2012	WALLSEND STAMP FAIR , Junior Stamp Activities Meeting, at 11am
Thurs 13 September 2012	Display to be confirmed
Wed 19 September 2012	Newcastle Daytime Meeting : 10.00 am, 48 Mackie Avenue New Lambton East, Display by Roger Eggleton - "PARCEL POST . SOME HIGHLIGHTS"

THE SECRETARY'S SNIPPETS - May 2012

Congratulations are extended to four of our members who had exhibits in the recent Canberra 2012 Stampshow held on 16th-18th March.

With POLAR being an exhibition class, it attracted entries from KEVIN DWYER, who exhibited "ANARE, The First 40 Years 1947-1987" which was awarded a Gold Medal and special prize, and KIM DWYER's "Amazing Antarctica" receiving a Vermeil.

In the Australasian Challenge, LIONEL SAVINS entered his New Zealand exhibit covering the "1935 Pictorial Issues" which received a Large Vermeil.

In the State Level classes, our Publicity Officer MARK SAXBY was awarded Gold for his exhibit "Australian Private Perfins". As always, it is pleasing to look at the exhibits, and in particular from our club members to see how they have improved their exhibits since last shown. In all, I personally enjoyed the exhibition as well as the social aspects, with a number of our members attending who were able to add new items to their collections.

Just a final reminder that our JUNE MEETING is one week earlier than normal due to renovations being carried out at our meeting venue.

- John Moore, Secretary -

AUCTION REPORT, February 2012.

This was a very busy night with heaps of lots, 457 in all, put in by 24 vendors.

We had a large attendance, even though several regulars were absent and they sadly missed out on some interesting material. It was also good to see quite a few new faces.

There were 36 active bidders and between them they bought 177 lots which at 39% is a very satisfactory outcome.

Total sales for the night were recorded at \$1.100, plus of course the late sales, which as always saw some action.

As we advertise, there truly was something for everyone and very few went home empty handed.

Highest price of \$48 was paid for a nice set of Greek Zeppelin stamps, then at \$42 a large batch of Security Post envelopes was won after some competition.

A Registered Post collection, a box of sorted stamps in envelopes and a stockbook full of States and much more, all fetched in the \$30's.

Congratulations to everyone for a very successful night, and Thanks to all the workers.

See you all on 24th May – our next Auction.

- Don Catterall. Auction Convenor.

***** FREE ADVERTISEMENTS!! May, 2012

For our members: Phone RON DAVIS on 4951 7878 if you have something you want to buy, or swap, or sell.

TO GIVE AWAY ! :

BERNARD DOHERTY - phone 4967 5478, email : bjdoh@bigpond.net.au - I am clearing out about 10 years of copies of these magazines – American Philatelist, Stamp News, Stanley Gibbons Stamp Monthly, and Australia Post Stamp Bulletin. Fantastic banks of information ! Must be picked up from Georgetown, though !

FOR SALE:

GLADYS TYACK – phone 4987 5996 – a thematic collection of SHELLS and shells used in ornaments, masks, etc. About 200, ex circuit sheets from a Victorian Club. PNG, Kenya, NZ, Grenada, Nauru, Aitutaki, Tuvalu, China, Cayman Is., Tuva, Maldives, Mauritius, Djibouti and Liberia. Very reasonable prices. Proceeds to charity on Burma-Thai border.

HAROLD FRANKS - phone 49530050. I have '1000s' of Australian INTERNATIONAL stamps - mint, mint no gum, and used, including the hard-to-get high values. Also some overseas stamps, mainly Poland and Russia.

KEVIN SIMKUS - phone 4951 1597: Stamp hinges \$5 a large packet (1000). Hard to get anywhere else!! Ideal for mounting stamps for sale on circuit book pages. Proceeds to Philatelic Society funds.

WANTED:

SANDRA BAKER - phone 4956 4515 (answering machine at Studio 48) or 4957 4715 – ANY stamps showing artifacts and monuments from EGYPT, like United Nations Day, and Stamp Day, etc – Nubian monuments, Egyptian images

DON CATTERALL - phone 49435639 : old postcards, and AUSTRALIAN Revenue and Railway Parcel stamps.

SANDRA BAKER - phone 49564515, issues showing "Pre-history"- early man, fossils, cave paintings, etc. There are several from China and from the Middle East that I need - Jordan, Israel, Lebanon, Iran, Iraq, and Afghanistan. And I am STILL wanting "pre-history" stamps from Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania.

HOWARD BRIDGMAN - phone 4950 2325 : Early U.S.A. covers wanted, pre-1930.

KEVIN SIMKUS - ph. 4951 1597: Wanted - MORE members to put their names down on the CIRCUIT LISTS to BUY stamps! Just take out the stamps you want from the circuit book, pass it on to the next person, & send the money to me. From 5c up. Only HALF of our members are on the circuit lists - are you one of them??



• FLY SWATTING :

Did you know why it is so difficult to swat a fly successfully? Because it only takes a thousandth of a second for the fly's eye to relay the information to its brain. But, E.G. Gray of London's National Institute for Medical Research says "there is a better way". He advises approaching the fly with a piece of tissue in the palm of each hand and holding each hand at an equal distance from the fly. Then, moving slightly to and fro, clap both hands on it. Why does it work? According to Gray, the fly's brain will only let it respond to movement from one sector of its field

of vision. "Two simultaneously approaching swats render the fly immobile," says Gray, "because its central nervous system now can't compute at which angle to take off."

THE NEW ZEALAND 1935 DEFINITIVES

Display by GRAEME MORRIS (Sydney), 9th FEBRUARY 2012



Graeme’s New Zealand collection covers the dates 1898 to 1998, and parts of it had been displayed at Palmplex in 2010 and at Canberra this year. His display here only included the 1935 definitive issues, but showed ALL the watermark and paper varieties. The first issue of these was on May 1st, 1935, but the issue continued to be used until the last high value was withdrawn in 1947.



Hence, the definitives suffered all the various problems of the Second World War, particularly with paper and ink. The original paper used in 1935 was “brittle”, and wasn’t popular with the printers, so in 1936 it was changed to one with a multiple watermark. Various attempts had been made to print more easily, including wetting the paper and changing the gum. The new paper continued in use until December 1940, when the printers, De La Rue, were bombed during



Mt. Cook

the London Blitz. During the Blitz years, there were 4 different printers – so there are 4 different perforations on the 2d. Maori Carved House. The 9d. Maori Panel, originally printed by Waterlow and Sons, (the only value NOT printed by De La Rue), was at this time printed at the New Zealand Government Printers. The paper was placed sideways to fit the printing plate, so the watermark appears sideways. There are also 40 sheets with a sideways inverted watermark, issued in 1936.

1/- Stamps depicting the Tui or Parson Bird were overprinted “OFFICIAL” in February 1937, and on 26th July 1938, the 2½d. Mount Cook was overprinted “OFFICIAL”. The 5d. and the 3/- values were never overprinted “OFFICIAL”, and the 8d. value was not overprinted until the “Blitz” issue of 1942.

An extra pin in the 13½ x 14 perforation comb caused uneven corners on the stamps with this perforation.

The low values were withdrawn gradually – the ½d. on 28th February 1938, the 1d. on 30th June 1938, the 1½d. on 26th July 1938, and the 3d. on 26th September 1941, and were replaced by the King George V portrait issue. Higher values continued until after the War ended.



Harvesting



Capt. Cook at Poverty Bay



Collared Grey Fantail



Maori Panel



Maori Woman



Maori Girl



Mitre Peak

• THE ENGINEERING INSTINCT OF THE PAPER WASP

Although it has a brain roughly the size of two grains of sand, PAPER WASPS have been described as “masters of engineering”. As its name suggests, the paper wasp builds and maintains its compound nest out of a special kind of paper, which it makes itself. (A number of wasp species build paper nests, inside which there are cells that serve as chambers for eggs, which develop into larvae.)

The insect collects fibres of plants and of dead wood from all kinds of places - logs, fence posts, tele-phone poles, and building materials. It then chews the cellulose-rich material, adding a sticky, high-protein saliva. When applied, the resulting paste dries to form a light, firm, yet tough, paper. Moreover, the saliva has special properties that enable the paper to generate and absorb heat, thus main-taining the right temperature in the brood-comb on cool days.

The wasp builds its nest "mouthful by mouth-ful." The finished product is a waterproof, paper-umbrella-covered cluster of hexagonal cells - the hexagon combining strength and efficiency. Wasps that live in wetter areas simply add more oral secretion because of its water-resistant properties. That said, the insects select sites that offer some kind of protective overhang. From this they suspend their downward-facing nests by a stalk, or petiole. Moreover, paper wasps do no harm to the environment - unlike our papermaking processes, which pollute air, water, and land!

Understandably, architects and researchers have been studying the wasp's products with a view to design-ing superior building materials that are lightweight, strong, more flexible, and biodegradable.

** Coconuts kill more people than sharks do. Approximately 150 people are killed each year by falling coconuts.

CRUISING THE CARIBBEAN...

THE DISPLAY BY RON DAVIS, THURSDAY 8TH MARCH 2012

The Caribbean Sea was named after the Carib Indians who inhabited the area before Spanish explorers arrived there in the 15th Century (hence the pronunciation "CaRIBean"). Apart from the large islands off the Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico called the "Greater Antilles" – Cuba, Puerto Rico, Jamaica, and Hispaniola (Haiti/Dominican Republic) – the large group of smaller islands called the "Lesser Antilles" form a "volcanic arc" sweeping from the Bahamas down to Trinidad and Tobago, off the Venezuelan Coast. These are divided into the Windward Islands and the Leeward Islands – related to the Trade Winds constantly blowing along the 12°-14° latitude. Then there are the Netherlands Antilles, off the coast of Colombia, and another small group of islands off the Venezuelan coast which use Venezuelan stamps.

From the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, it was a battle-zone for rival European colonial powers, as well as pirates who raided convoys crossing from South America. Britain, France, Spain, Denmark, the Netherlands and the U.S.A. were all involved. When the Panama Canal was built in 1914 and bananas and sugar became commercially important, the Sea became an important route of trade. It has been referred to as "the Spanish Main".

The Caribbean is the source of the warm waters of the famous Gulf Stream (from the Gulf of Mexico), which flows in from the Atlantic in the south-east, circulates around the Caribbean, then flows at 7km/hour through the Florida Straits, between Cuba and Florida, and up the east coast of the U.S.A. and across to northern Europe. Without the Gulf Stream, Great Britain and northern Europe would be ice-bound for most of the year.

There are three major "deeps" in the Caribbean Sea, the greatest depth so far measured being the Cayman Trench, 7535 metres (24,720 feet) deep, between Jamaica and the Cayman Islands. Another is between Cuba and Jamaica. However, it is rather shallow near Nicaragua and parts of Mexico.

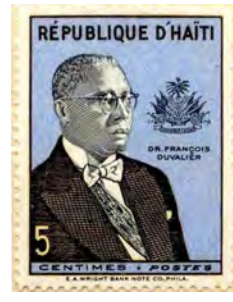
34 islands have separately issued postage stamps, in addition to the 12 "mainland" countries bordering the Caribbean – and Ron displayed stamps and/or postcards from all except 6 of them, ranging from 1873 to 1986.

Apart from very good cricketers, the main exports from these islands are coffee, sugar, and bananas, which make up 28% to 72% of the total exports from each individual country. Then there are the minerals – gold, silver, antimony, manganese, oil, bauxite (aluminium), and gypsum – and then there is tourism. Renowned for their mild tropical climate, tourists flock to the islands from all over the world – even from Newcastle – except during the hurricane season from late August to October!

Most of the islands have had a reasonably conservative stamp-issuing policy, but Grenada and St. Vincent and their Grenadines became involved with an agency which, a few years ago, flooded the stamp world with their issues.

Shown here are some of the 46 stamp issuing countries in the Caribbean.

- R.D. -



POPULAR CHOICE COMPETITION, 12th APRIL 2012

SOMETHING PHILATELIC STARTING WITH THE LETTER ‘U’

Eight entries were received in this competition, despite early fears that “it could be difficult finding something starting with ‘U’”. All these were very interesting. And it was noted that NO-ONE entered “UNUSED stamps” !

DON RUTHERFORD’s entry was “U.S.A.” – most of the stamps showed Presidents of the United States, and included some early Hawaiian issues, which were only on general issue in the Hawaiian Islands.



RON DAVIS showed “UNUSUAL STAMPS FROM UMM AL QIWAIN”, a small desert country in the United Arab Emirates – an Unusual country in itself. The stamp images were three-dimensional, described in the catalogue as “plastic-faced”. Umm al Qiwain unfortunately gained some notoriety by issuing hundreds of thousands of stamps a long way beyond that required for postal use.

JOHN MOORE’s entry was “UNION ISLAND”, a tiny island in the Caribbean Sea, between St. Vincent and Grenada. During the 1980’s in particular, they also swamped the market with excessive issues. John’s entry included stamps depicting railway engines, and commented that on an island only 3 sq. miles in area with a population of about 3000, no-one could have seen a railway engine except in a picture book !



RON DAVIS’s second entry was “UNUSUAL SHAPES OF STAMPS”- a mixture (on black pages) of triangular stamps, diamond and round stamps, tiny and trapezoidal stamps, die-cut irregularly shaped stamps and some octagonal ones.

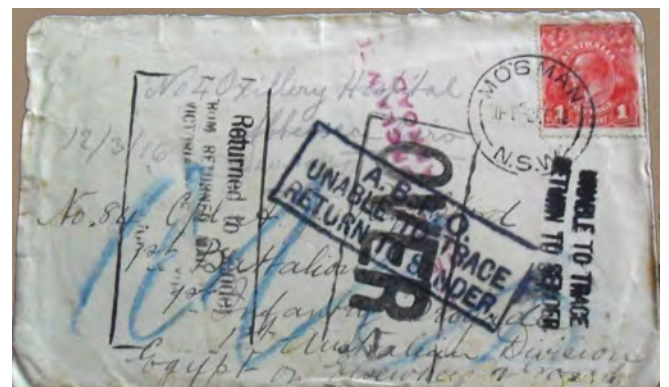
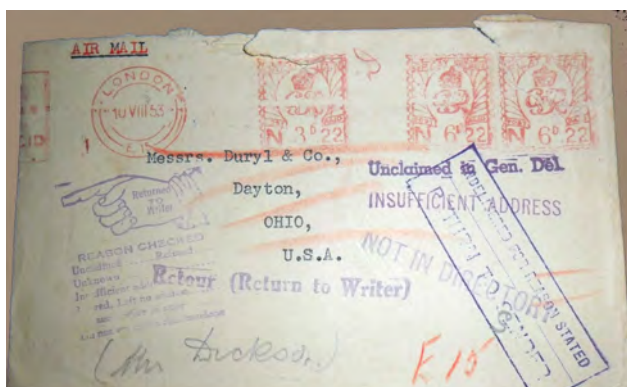
BERNARD DOHERTY gained Fourth place with his “UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA POSTAL CARDS”. It took the authorities six issues of a particular card to get the spelling of “cannon” correct (Bernie had all 6 issues), and there were unusual issues showing the Drakensburg Mountains with caption errors and changes.

CAROL DAVIS’s Third place was awarded to her “ULURU, AND ITS FLORA AND FAUNA”. Originally known as Ayres Rock, the desert area around it and nearby Kata Tjuta (the Olgas) teems with plants, birds and animals adapted to the dryness of the area, several of which have been depicted on Australian stamps and postcards.



GLADYS TYACK entered “UNDERWATER WORLD” – an attractive mixture of stamps and postcards, which included a Triton shell eating a Crown-of-thorns starfish (the ONLY predator that this starfish has) ! She gained Second place. There is more life under the sea than occurs on land, she says, and Gladys was able to expand beyond her Seashell collection to form this exhibit.

DON CATTERALL used some lateral thinking for his unusual entry, which was judged to be in First place – entitled “U is for UN*** - a series of covers with difficult-to-get cachets stating Undeliverable, Unknown, Unclaimed, Unable to trace, Undelivered for reason stated, etc.



BITS AND PIECES – Stuff that you probably didn't know

- OPTIC FIBRES :** Optic fibres are just long strands of very pure and very transparent coated glass. Ordinary window glass seems quite transparent. But if you have ever seen several panes of window glass stacked together, you might have noticed that the glass has a strong greenish tinge - with less than 30 centimetres total thickness of glass. The glass from which optic fibres are made is transparent, not for centimetres, but for 20 kilometres! The glass in an optic fibre is very skinny - between 0.1 and 0.2 millimetres in diameter.

There are two main types of optic fibre : mono-mode and multi-mode. The mono-mode fibres carry only a single signal. But they can carry this signal 120 kilometres before a repeater amplifier is needed to 'pump up' the signal. The multi-mode fibres can carry many signals at the same time, but need repeater amplifiers after just 10 kilometres.

Optic fibres can carry much more information than copper wires, because they carry beams of light. The frequency of light is around 100 trillion (i.e., 100 million million) Hertz (cycles per second). A recognisable voice communication covers about 5,000 Hertz. If you allow a "buffer" of 2,500 Hertz on each side, a voice signal takes up 10,000 Hertz. So, theoretically, you can squash 10 billion (i.e., 10 thousand million) voice channels into a beam of light. Practically speaking, 40,000 voice channels fit easily.

The first transAtlantic optic fibre cable, TAT-8, was laid in 1988. It carried 40,000 conversations - which was three times more than could be carried by all seven of the undersea copper cables that existed at the time!

But optic fibres have other advantages besides their enormous carrying capacity. They are much lighter than copper wire, and very skinny. This is important if you are trying to wrestle with a big drum loaded with a few thousand kilometres of cable. These properties are also very useful in planes.

Optic fibres are also immune to electrical interference. This makes them useful in electrically noisy environments, such as electrical power plants, factories and hospitals.
- Horns of a Dilemma :** The *Daily Telegraph* of London noted this unusual "No Trespassing" sign outside a farm field near Nottingham, England : "Don't cross this field unless you can do it in 9.8 seconds. The bull can do it in ten."
- MUSIC :** In a nine-week test in a supermarket, researchers discovered that the tempo of the music played over the speaker-system has a significant effect on the amount of items purchased. Using easy-listening music, the researchers played selections with a slow tempo (about 60 beats a minute) on certain days, and those with a faster tempo (108 beats a minute) on others. The results? Sales increased by 38.2 percent on the days when the slower music was played! This was attributed to the fact that the shoppers also walked more slowly through the aisles then and presumably took more time to browse and select items. However, when shoppers, on leaving the store, were asked whether music had been played inside, 33 percent were uncertain and 29 percent gave a definite "no."
- Why do X's at the end of a letter signify kisses ? In the Middle Ages, when many people were unable to read or write, documents were often signed using an X. Kissing the X represented an oath to fulfill obligations specified in the document. The X and the kiss eventually became synonymous.
- HOW LONG IS A METRE?** Okay, it's 39½ inches. The international standard of measurement defined a metre in 1790 as one ten-millionth of the distance from the North Pole to the equator. With the advancement of science, a more precise definition was needed. Currently, a metre is designated as 1,650,763.73 times the wavelength of orange-red light emitted from a krypton-86 lamp. Now scientists have come up with a new way of defining the metre - the distance that light will travel in one 299,792,458th of a second! According to physicist Karl Kessler of the National Bureau of Standards, the new definition - based on the speed of light - is ten times more accurate and will make it easier to measure interstellar distances accurately.
- 'UNMANAGEABLE DEBT'** (particularly relevant at this time!) : "For most developing countries, their debt has become unmanageable," says a World Bank economist, Chandra S. Hardy. "Some of them are in the absurd position of borrowing to pay interest. Therefore, the risk of default is rising precipitously. Right now, 90 cents out of every dollar goes into servicing debt - and for some of them, it's 100 cents !"
- The Emperor Nero could not have fiddled while Rome burned – fiddles hadn't been invented ! Although he may have used a lute or a lyre, he probably played a bagpipe.
- ELECTION TRIVIA :** The British 1983 national election was contested by "a total of 78 different parties - some of them just one-person strong", reported the *Daily News* of New York. Among the "also-rans" were such groups as "Freddy's Alternative Medicine Party, the Belgrano Blood and Hunger Party, the Fancy Dress Party, the Traditional English Food Party, the Assassin's Bullet Party, the Justice for Divorced Fathers Party, and the Nobody Party." The Loony Society, the Loony Monster Party and the Loony Monster Green Chicken Alliance all ran their candidates, says the report.
- You know you are "getting old" when the waiter asks how you'd like your steak and you reply "Pureed."

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).

“FRENCH SOUTHERN AND ANTARCTIC TERRITORIES” -
the display by **HOWARD BRIDGMAN,**
Wednesday 15th FEBRUARY 2012



From the late 1700s, France developed an interest in this part of the world – in the Southern Indian Ocean - and in the early 1900s, settled on Crozet Island. The Territory consists of a pie-shaped slice of Antarctica – Terre Adélie – and the Crozet Archipelago (annexed in 1772), and further north, New Amsterdam, St.Paul, and Kerguelen Island groups (occupied in 1949). Stamps



weren't issued until 28th October 1955 – overprints on a Madagascan French Colony stamp. The following year, definitives with local wildlife designs were issued. Topics on stamps are limited, being mainly wildlife (fish, birds and plants), explorers, research, ocean currents, map stamps, and atmospheric observations. However, they issued a “comedy” set of sheetlets of “Antarctic Olympics”, with, for instance, an albatross doing the marathon, and orcas (killer whales) doing a water ballet !! And Howard displayed the front cover of a stamp booklet – “Gourmand” – with recipes for cooking wildlife and fish from the islands !

“TRAVELLER’S TALES – PLACES WE’VE BEEN TO” - the display by **JOHN HILL,**
Wednesday 21st MARCH 2012

“I have here postcards from every one of the world’s continents”, John said, opening his display. Nearly every postcard had a story attached to it, and we were then entertained with tales about dancing in Argentina, Alsatian dogs in Russia, icebergs in Alaska, kilts in Edinburgh, palaces in Brunei, beefeaters in London, penguins in Patagonia, the Great Wall in Beijing, the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican, grilled grasshoppers in Thailand, the Gardens in Vancouver, wall murals in Belfast, Table Mountain in Capetown, natives in Bonaire, and betjaks in Djakarta. And Keith Laverick (ex Royal Air Force) said as he was leaving : “Well, I’ve found someone who has travelled even more than I have !”



“THE LOCAL POSTS OF GREAT BRITAIN’S OFFSHORE ISLANDS”
- the display by **RON DAVIS,** Wednesday 18th APRIL 2012



“Bill Hornadge (Seven Seas Stamps) sold me my first packet of stamps from HERM Island while I was still in Primary School. My parents nor my teachers could tell me where it was, and it wasn't until some years later that I found it in the Channel Islands (pre Google days, then). My interest in “tiny Islands” flourished while I was at University in the early ‘60s, and on a study trip overseas in 1967-69, I actually managed to visit some of these obscure places that I had



in my stamp collection!” Ron showed all of the 30 stamp-issuing islands around Great Britain, mostly around Scotland, the stamp cost being to cover someone from the island taking the mail posted by tourists and locals to the nearest mainland post office. Others are really “tourist souvenir labels”. Apart from Lundy (the first, 1929) off Devon, and Bardsey off the coast of Wales, most of them no longer issue these stamps.



Deteriorating stamps and covers?

“No one knows for sure whether postage stamps can last for centuries without deteriorating. But there are worrying signs that some have a shorter life-expectancy than others”.

Richard West, Editor-at-Large of the British Stamp Magazine and a Past President of the National Philatelic Society, has raised some relevant points in his January 2012 issue :

- Many stamps have survived over 150 years in remarkably good condition because they were printed on good quality paper and have been well looked after.
- There are many doubts about the paper and printing quality of present day postage stamps.
- Many philatelists over the years have advocated that all gum should be removed from the backs of stamps on the assumption that it is the gum that will eventually cause their deterioration. The present day mania for full gum, i.e. mint unhinged, will probably mean that this removal will never eventuate.
- It is well known that stocks of the first self-adhesive stamps issued by the US Post Office in 1974 are now discoloured and that stacked sheets of them have congealed into solid lumps.
- Similar questions have arisen over the addition of graphite and, later, phosphorus to stamps for machine cancelling and sorting. The phosphor bands on some of the O.B. Wilding definitives of the early 1960s have discoloured and now look more prominent than they did originally.
- The British Library Conservation Department is concerned about the future of stamps incorporating phosphor or phosphor bands. They suspect that many of to-day's stamps will be affected in half a century's time.
- The current trend away from printing stamps on presses in the traditional way in favour of counter printed labels and stamps is a matter of concern. Such stamps and labels are already fading after just a couple of years.

Mr. West does not want to be looked upon as a prophet of doom and gloom. However, his concerns should serve as a reminder that it is imperative to keep one's material in the best possible condition, using archival quality album pages, mounts and page protectors and avoiding extremes of temperature and humidity.

He concludes by saying that “we often find ourselves discussing where future generations of stamp collectors will come from. We also need to ensure there is something left for them to collect!”

Some of these concerns are even more significant for cover collectors. The degradation, discolouration and fading of covers are problems facing all serious cover collectors. The papers used for envelopes have often been, and still are, of poor quality. Many present day envelopes are made from re-cycled or re-constituted paper which tends to break down more readily and deteriorates more quickly. Many envelopes are not made from acid free papers.

Inks used for handwritten addresses and for hand-applied cachets are often not permanent and fade, particularly if exposed to sunlight and chemical vapours. Over time the glues used in the manufacture of some envelopes discolour the paper while some break down and lose their adhesiveness. Such strips of “instant” adhesive must be removed for long-time preservation, as they can penetrate right through the paper and hence ruin the cover.

Cover collectors need to exercise great care in the preservation of their more fragile items.

- from The Armidale Circle Bulletin, May 2012 -

A friend of mine, aged 93, had only the most basic needs and very few wants. His daughter, hoping to get a little help in choosing a suitable Christmas gift for him, asked : “Pa, what would you like for Christmas this year?” “Nothing,” he replied. “But Pa,” she kidded, “that’s what we gave you last year.” “Well,” he answered, “ I’m still using it.”



SYDNEY'S ANSWER TO THE SHORTAGE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT ?

• Statistically, 6 out of 7 dwarves are not happy



I wonder what people did BEFORE they got to this sign ?

At the Twelve Apostles, Victoria. Feb. 2012