

The Golden City Philatelist

BENDIGO PHILATELIC SOCIETY INC. A0016241J

P.O. BOX 962 BENDIGO, VIC. 3552

Now in our 87th year

May 2017



Diary of Future Events

Like all of our members who attended FIAP2017, I had a good time though it may prove to be expensive, even though I went mostly for the displays and didn't spend a lot on the day. I was inspired to make some drastic changes to my exhibit, making them all double pages but that meant printing costs have more than doubled and so have the cost of protective sleeves. It adds more than a hundred dollars to the cost, so less money for stamps. You may notice that my talk is again listed this month. That is because I had forgotten that it was school holidays last month until it was too late to organize the use of the projector. Realising I had a problem, I borrowed a projector but then, try what may, none of us could work out how to lower the screen and in the end gave up in frustration. As there is no auction in May, we decided to reschedule the talk till then... and it's still a secret.

April 29th Saturday ***Maryborough Stamp Fair***

May 2	Tuesday	Results and Viewing of Lois Whatley Competition - No Auction Tonight.
May 2	Tuesday	Member Display by John Armstrong . Topic: "It's still a secret!"
May 3	Wednesday	Daytime meeting
June 6	Tuesday	Philatelic Quiz
June 7	Wednesday	Daytime meeting
July 4	Tuesday	President's Display
July 5	Wednesday	Daytime meeting
August 1	Tuesday	All members one sheet display on their favourite topic
August 2	Wednesday	Daytime meeting
August 12	Saturday	Bendigo Stamp Fair



Railway Mail Sorting Car, France

Our April meeting was well attended with one of the most successful auctions for some time. 60 lots were offered of which 58 sold with some spirited bidding taking many of them well above the reserve to a total sales of \$465. One member commented that there was a lot less common material for sale so perhaps this is why bidding was so keen.

The Easter competition, with a prize donated by Ken Datson, was well subscribed, despite some of us watching our sugar intake these days, and was won by Lindsay Nicholls. Congratulations Lindsay and Thanks Ken!

April also saw the success of our first daytime meeting for those who can't make it to the evening meetings, or don't get enough time with the exchange sheets the night before. The day meetings are on the Wednesday morning following the normal club meeting. The first meeting attracted twelve members and one visitor and shows that there is certainly a need for these. Full details are in this newsletter.

The general monthly meetings of the Bendigo Philatelic Society are held 7.30pm at "Kalianna", 200 Nolan St., Bendigo.

Extra Daytime Meeting 1st Wed at Golden Square.

Auctions will be held at all meetings

EXCEPT MAY, JULY and NOVEMBER

5 items per member are allowed for auctions

except in December when *10 items per member* are allowed for the Christmas bonanza auction.

Exchange sheets will be circulated at all meetings.

CLUB CONTACTS:

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President's message



Daylight Saving and Easter have all come and gone, Days are shorter and the world of Philately is getting busier.

Last month the contestants for the Lois Whatley Quiz handed in their submissions for 2016-2017 and the winner will be announced at our May meeting.

We owe a big vote of thanks to Vice President Bill Trew who took over organizing the Quiz after the sad passing of our Secretary, Roman. Thanks Bill.

April saw the first of our daytime meetings at Golden Square with several members making some good and old purchases. Barred Numerals were the flavor of the day.

Come along, join us and bring your philatelic friends at 10AM on Wednesday the 3rd May. A good day browsing all the goodies in the Exchange sheets and enjoying your hobby on this our second meeting.

More about this will be in the Newsletter.

What a Auction we had at the April Meeting !!! I am sure many went home with bargains to add to their collection. Thanks to David Somerton, Viv Martin, Bob Hayes and Bill Trew for the professional approach to this Auction. Would be our best ever. Most of the 34 members present were involved in bidding for the great range of items presented.

As David Cotton wrote to us all so many times "Exchange sheets are always required" These are the life blood of our Society. Make up a couple each month and help keep us afloat.

See you all on Tuesday 2nd and hopefully on Wednesday the 3rd.

Happy Stamping... Libby.

The Future of Postal History - Is there one?

Many of us have come to realize that the post office is now really a souvenir shop that also handles letters. Stamps once told a story about the country where they were issued but these days you can go to "Darkest Africa" and find that all the stamps have Micky Mouse, Elvis or Marilyn Monroe on them. Our own post office is little better with most of the plethora of stamps issued being unavailable in most post offices.

The other thing that annoys the heck out of a lot of us is when someone sends a nice cover and it arrives in its pure virginal state with no sign that a postmark has even been contemplated. Worse, here in Bendigo we have someone in the sorting office that takes it on themselves to scrub out any reasonably nice stamps with a biro. I've seen covers where he (I'm guessing it's a he) has written so hard it has gone through the stamp. Why they can't give this vandal a proper post stamper, I can't imagine - well, actually I can.

The reason is that these days, philatelists are seen as a nuisance and the post office is more geared to selling souvenir stamps that show scenes from the latest blockbuster movie than it is to worrying about a lot of musty old farts like us.

It seems hard to believe, but things were not always this way. A member showed me a letter that was printed in the Australian Stamp Monthly on the 1st of January 1940. I have reproduced it later in this newsletter. Also, to show you how things once were, I'm going to show one of the covers from my Italian WW2 collection. The post office actually took their jobs seriously back then.

As for the question in the title above, will there be anyone who collects the postal history of our current age? Personally, I doubt it. What would they collect?



"Okay, we delivered your letter late, but look at the neat Elvis stamp on it!"

The Way We Were

As mentioned earlier, the accompanying scan is an extract from the Australian Stamp Monthly from the First of January, 1940. It harkens back to the days when stamp collectors could be found in every age and social group.

Can you remember, even as recently as the 1980s, how busy the Philatelic Section was in Melbourne. They had their own special counter in Elizabeth Street, near the corner of Little Bourke St, if I remember rightly.

Stamps were serious business and the post office made sure that collectors were looked after. It made sense. If someone wanted to buy a mint stamp to put in their collection, they were getting a fee without having to give the service.

Unfortunately, they pretty much killed the golden goose by ever increasing and irrelevant issues. In 1940, there were only four new issues, the A.I.F. set which were added to the around twenty definitives that were currently available. Every one of them was a masterpiece of design and the engraver's art. How many were released in 2016? I lost count.

Now I know that some of you enjoy looking for flaws, whether they are on a stamp or in an argument. You will be thinking that the accompanying article is American so what has that to do with us.

Well, having known quite a few postmasters - I was even married to a postmaster's granddaughter for a while (he was a keen philatelist) - I can state without fear that here in Australia, our postal staff were just as dedicated as their American counterparts but alas, here as everywhere else, those days are gone.



The following extract from a letter to an Australian philatelist from the United States Post Office Department indicates that considerable attention is paid to the marking of philatelic mail.

“Your views on this subject have been noted with interest, and you are advised that every effort is being made to improve post office cancellations from a philatelic viewpoint. Instructions are issued to postmasters and postal employees from time to time emphasising the importance of giving special attention to the cancellation of philatelic stamps.”

Following is a copy of the latest notice on this subject issued by the Department:—

Washington, February 20, 1939.

The Department has received many complaints from collectors of used postage stamps with regard to the excessive mutilation in the process of cancellation, which renders the stamps unfit for collection purposes. These complaints relate particularly to commemorative stamps which are easily recognised and to ordinary stamps in the higher and less commonly used denominations. Since the collecting of postage stamps is one of the most educational and remunerative of all recreational pastimes and the source of much profitable postal revenue, it is the desire of the Department that officers and employees of the Postal Service shall co-operate with collectors to the fullest extent practicable in the cancellation of stamps on philatelic mail.

Therefore, postal employees concerned in the handling and cancellation of mail matter should be constantly on the alert for letters and parcels bearing commemorative and other stamps of obvious philatelic value, in order that the stamps thereon may be given clear, legible impressions, free from unnecessary defacement. This applies primarily to mail matter requiring hand cancellation at post offices not supplied with machines or at all post offices where the mail is of such nature to require hand stamping.

The following directions should be strictly observed:—

1. All cancelling equipment, including machine dies, steel and rubber hand postmarking stamps, and stamp pads must be kept clean and in good working order to obviate smeary or blurred impressions.
2. Badly worn cancelling equipment should be replaced.
3. Letters or parcels bearing blocks of stamps should be cancelled with the least possible number of impressions. The oval-shaped canceller for registered matter can often be used to advantage on mail bearing multiples of stamps, especially on parcels.
4. Only regulation black cancelling ink furnished by the Department for the purpose may be used in the cancellation of postage stamps.
5. The circular part of steel or rubber hand postmarking stamps must not be applied directly over postage stamps; the defacing bars are for this purpose.
6. Daubers or other devices that obliterate the design of the postage stamp should never be used on philatelic mail.

Postmasters are requested to see that these instructions are brought to the attention of all employees concerned for their future guidance.

Extra Meeting of the Bendigo Philatelic Society.

For a trial period beginning in April, BPS will be providing a DAYTIME meeting opportunity for members and others.

Members should note that that this not an alternative or substitute to our normal monthly meeting.

All Society business and activities will continue to be conducted primarily at our scheduled 1st Tuesday in the month meetings 7.30 at Kalianna.

The main function of daytime meetings is to provide an opportunity for members, potential members and others who are unable to attend our evening meetings to continue to pursue their collecting interests through the Society.

Members are welcome to attend both meeting times. Daytime meetings will not be formal meetings.

It is anticipated that the basic programme for these daytime meetings will be

- a short update on Society activities, notices etc.
- a short presentation, workshop or display.
- Exchange sheets (the main activity).

Venue: Golden Square Hall 9 Old High St.
(Bendigo Field Naturalists Club rooms)
(Behind the Golden Square Fire Station)

Date: Wednesday May 3rd.
(Then every 1st Wednesday of the month)

Time: 10.00am

Coffee, Tea, biscuits etc, available throughout the meeting.

The venue has lots of free parking, has ground floor and ramp access and is close to a bus stop in High street.

Further details if required from Bob Hayes 0407 421940 or bobh@netcon.net.au

Maryborough Stamp Fair - Sat 29th April

Members should receive this in time for a reminder that the Maryborough Stamp Fair is coming up. So here it is.

MARYBOROUGH ANNUAL STAMP FAIR

Sat. 29th April. Open from 9.15 am to 3 pm

St Augustines Hall, Cnr Burns & Kars Sts. Maryborough

Stamps and Coins bought & sold - Four Dealers/Club member sales

Lucky door Prizes - Philatelic Displays - Raffle

Refreshments available

Free Entry. All welcome



Taking it seriously

I mentioned about the post taking their job seriously earlier in this newsletter. Here is another snippet from my Italian exhibit that shows what I mean.



Posta Militare (P.M.) 34 was in Tobruk briefly in June 1942 when Rommel retook the port, but was moved shortly afterwards to an abandoned barracks in Marsa Matruk, Egypt in July 1942. A few days after this letter was sent from Bergamo, near Milan in N. Italy, P.M. 34 reported:

“Durante la notte la sede dell'ufficio viene danneggiata da un bombardamento aereo inglese. Servizi ripresi nella mattinata.” which translates:

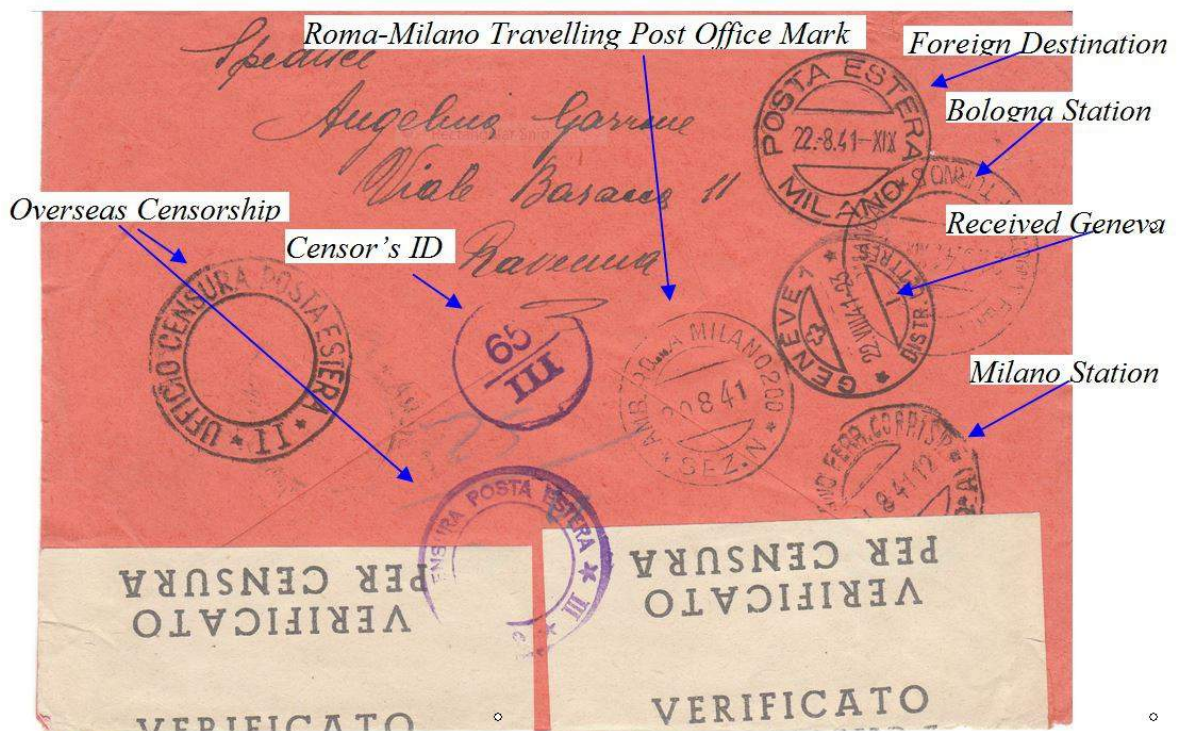
“During the night the headquarters office was damaged by English aerial bombing. Services resumed in the morning.” One can imagine them sorting through the rubble for lost mail. Posties were tough back then!

How much history can one cover hold?



I've been re-writing my Italian World War Two exhibit for the last few months. We all find something different in philately and to me, it is the stories that they tell. When I can, I find out about the people who sent and received the letters in my collection. After researching some of them, I feel that I almost know them personally and there have been times when chasing a story has led me to find living relatives and a friendship has begun.

I don't know who wrote this letter to the Red Cross, looking for news about a missing soldier. What I can tell you is how it got from Ravenna, near the coast towards the northern end of the Adriatic, to Geneva. It first was opened for censorship, then resealed with tape and stamped with the overseas destination censor stamp. It then travelled to Bologna which was a station on the Rome-Milan railway and there it was put on the train and carried north to Milan. It was then put on a plane to Geneva where it was sorted and sent to its destination. How do I know all this? By the postmarks, of course, though I've cheated and not shown you the back of the envelope yet.



So how do I know it flew from Milan to Geneva? The date on the Milan receipt stamp and the Geneva receipt stamp are the same. In these days when we are lucky if the stamps are even cancelled, looking back to how it used to be done is quite an eye-opener. How many letters written today will be able to fire the imagination of future philatelists? Very few, I suspect.

Stamp Supplies

It's amazing what some of our members have lying around. I was shown a page from a Bendigo newspaper with an advert for stamp supplies. I guessed pretty quickly by the colour of the paper that this might be a little out of date. Actually, it's from the Bendigo Advertiser of Thursday August 2nd 1945 so looking for the shop now might lead to some disappointment.

All is not lost, however, as I also received an email this week to tell me that Terry Clohesy at City Central Newsagency 5 Queen St. Bendigo will give BPS members a minimum 5% discount on Albums, Stock Books, Album pages, etc. and also on a range of Numismatic albums etc.

Members must show your current membership tag, which doubles as your badge at meetings (Please remember to wear them as I, for one, find remembering names, or anything else, is getting harder as I get older).

So if you are planning to buy some new albums, remember to take your tag home after the meeting and you can get a discount from Terry.



For Sale

One of our members is offering the following items for sale.

AUSTRALIAN COLLECTIONS x 3

1. Decimal collection, MUH complete 1966 to 2017 neatly compiled on Hagner sheets plus almost complete parallel FU collection plus MUH AAT collection complete 1981 to 2017 plus substantial pre decimal collection.

Offered as a package.

2. Decimal collection similar to above, without the pre decimal collection.

3. Decimal collection similar to collection 2, without the AAT collection.

Collections offered individually or as a whole.

Further details from the BPS Secretary.

Newsletter Archive

In building the digital archive, there are quite a number of Newsletters required. Many thanks to Tom Glazebrook and particularly to Ken Datson taking us back to October 2004. At the present time these are the only issues scanned to disk:

1971 ~ Vol 1 No.4 ~ JULY only

1973 ~ Vol 1 No.8 ~ JULY only

1974 ~ Vol 1 No.9 ~ JANUARY only

1980 ~ JULY only

1981 ~ JULY only

October 2004 to present - complete (or will be when scanning is finished!)

If members have copies of any missing issues, Viv would greatly appreciate it if you would be willing to *loan* for scanning (and they then *will be returned* to you).

Please contact *Viv Martin*. Ph: 03 5439 3655 email: vivmartin37@gmail.com



BENDIGO Stamp Fair Saturday

12th August 2017

10am - 4pm

Local & Melbourne
Stamp and Coin Dealers

St Andrews

Uniting Church Hall

24 Myers Street Bendigo

Free Entry

Food and Drinks Available

Bendigo Philatelic Society Inc

P.O. Box 962 Bendigo Central, Vic. 3552