



The Golden City Philatelist

BENDIGO PHILATELIC SOCIETY INC. A0016241J

P.O. BOX 962 BENDIGO, VIC. 3552

Now in our 91st year

December 2021



Web page: www.bendigophilatelicsociety.org Facebook: <http://tinyurl.com/zb2ma53>

Diary of Future Events

Tues. 7th December 7.30 Meeting at Kangaroo Flat RSL
 Wed. 8th December 12.00 Christmas Picnic - see below.
 Tues. 4th January 7.30 Meeting at Kangaroo Flat RSL

President's Message December 2021

With December at our Doorstep I send - Greetings to all Members,

At last life is becoming kind of normal, as long as we comply with the covid rules. Masks still have to worn inside and we are keeping a record of your vaccinations. This means we can have our Monthly meetings, at our new home in the Kangaroo Flat RSL.

2021 has been a strange year but our Philatelic Family has grown. I would personally like to welcome, Johan, Pauline, Ken, Bob, Jo and Peter so glad you have joined our family and hope you get a lot of enjoyment out of our shared Hobby.

Last month we had the announcement of the 2021 Lois Whately treasure hunt. The judge for this year's competition was Tom Harris, the judge's ruling is always final and we had joint winners: "Margaret Brown" and "Joy Watters" well done girls and thank you to Tom.

We also had our club competitions - Len Bennett Memorial Open Competition and John Tresise Memorial Thematic Competition. The open section was won by Noel Earles with a magnificent display "A Study of the ONE PENNY SIDEFACE" stamp of Tasmanian. The thematic competition was won by Joy Watters titled "The Earth's Resources". This was Joys first entry in a stamp competition and she won it. How many of us have achieved this !!! Fantastic Joy.

To future events : Tuesday 7th of December Normal Meeting, with Auction. Next Day : Wednesday 8th of December, "Picnic in the Park" BYO your own food partner and a chair. Venue: 12 noon "Lake Werona" just up from the children's play area. There is a couple of rotundas for shelter if it is hot or wet. It will be a great chance to talk and relax together.

Please put in your Diary 1st of March 2022 our normal Meeting Night. This will be our 90th Anniversary Dinner. Lots of fun, surprises and enjoyment. Please bring your partners and watch this space for future instalments.

Let me finish with my little phrase by saying TAKE CARE we CARE and you are all important and wish you and yours a Happy Festive Season and a healthy New Year, and may all your stamp wishes come true...Libby.



The general monthly meetings of the BPS are held on the first Tuesday of every month at 7.30pm at

**Old Long Gully School (now CVGT)
Cnr Stanfield and Jackson Streets, Long Gully**

Auctions will be held at all Tuesday meetings.

10 items per member are allowed for auctions
Christmas bonanza auction in **December** .

Exchange sheets will no longer be circulated at meetings. Please see Lyn to access sheets at home.

More sheets are always needed so please "lick and stick" a few.

CLUB CONTACTS:

President: *Libby Luke* ph: 0448 120 066

Vice-president: *David Somerton*

Secretary: *Joy Watters*

ph: 0439 473 645 email: joysgold2@gmail.com

Treasurer: *Margaret Brown*

email: mabrown@bigpond.net.au

Newsletter Editor, Webmaster: *John Armstrong*

email: jjarmstrong47@hotmail.com

Librarian: *David Robinson*

email: ddusa@live.com.au

Club Competition Winners



Len Bennett Memorial Open Competition was won by Noel Earles with "A Study of the One Penny Side-face stamp of Tasmania"

Joy Watters won the John Tresise Memorial Thematic Competition with a display of stamps showing "The Earth's Resources."



The Lois Whatley Treasure Hunt was a tie between Margaret Brown (left) and Joy Watters (second from right) with club President, Linny Luke and judge, Tom Harris (seated).

Bendigo Philatelic Society Library

FROM SHIPS TO HELICOPTERS - BPS 0015



This booklet which was published in Sydney, contains four chapters and is bound with a "wire O" punch bind. The booklet covers the topics of Australian postal services, Aeroplanes, East Coast Shipping, WW1, WW2, and the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCTORY

Reviews the early history of Sydney Harbour, including the early ferry service, the planning and building of the Bridge. Chapter one also covers Australia's early postal service and adhesive stamp designs.



CHAPTER TWO – VIGNETTES (The men, the ships and the sea followed by the aeroplane.)

Discusses early Australian East Coast shipping during the First World War. The aeroplane and how it developed Australian mail services ending the days of the great ships as mail carriers.

CHAPTER THREE - OVER THE ARCH BY AIR

This third chapter begins with quite a detailed look at the design and construction of the Sydney Harbour Bridge. Leading to information on the great ships & people who worked in and around Sydney Harbour and the coast of Australia. Included are personal stories on family, sailing, air flight and WW2.

CHAPTER FOUR - SOME SHIPS WHICH HAVE PASSED UNDER THE ARCH

Ship lists with short summary of the history and construction of some of the many ships that have passed through Sydney Harbour.

[Our library stocks an extensive range of books, leaflets & magazines.](#)

[which are available to members.](#)

Please contact me David Robinson on **0428 821 221** or email me at ddusa@live.com.au

How many potatoes does it cost to post a letter?

Six, apparently, as at the time this stamp was produced in 1946, the local letter rate was 1½d. This is a 1d or four potatoes stamp which was the postcard rate but as it turned out, it never actually became valid for postage. It came to light recently while sorting stamps to put on exchange sheets and how it got here is anyone's guess. Even so, it has an interesting story. Who better to tell the story than Allan Crawford, the designer and driving force behind the stamp.

From 1938 to 1943, Crawford was a British meteorologist working on Tristan da Cunha. The island's name, incidentally, is an Anglification of the name of the Portuguese sailor who discovered the island, Christao da Cunha.

During this first stint on the island, Crawford began a local news sheet called "The Tristan Times". As there was little currency on the island with most transactions by barter, the price was fixed as three cigarettes or four potatoes. Crawford returned to the island in 1946 and wrote of his experiences in a 1999 book, "Penguins, Potatoes and Postage Stamps".

"Before I left the mainland [i.e. South Africa, in spring 1946], I realized that for many years there was considerable demand from stamp collectors all over the world for postage stamps and letters from the world's loneliest island. Why should I not develop this potential?... I therefore designed a set of postage stamps. I had little work in a peacetime weather headquarters and I found the department draughtsman, Sergeant Jimmy Brown, also had time on his hands. So the two of us worked together. I thought up the ideas and produced the rough designs, and he completed the artwork. A problem was there was still no money on the island so we could not sell our stamps!

However, just as the islanders and sailors during World War II had bought their "Tristan Times" for potatoes and cigarettes, each stamp bore a local value expressed in potatoes. The values were based on four potatoes being equivalent to one penny.... We planned originally nine stamps...(and) to portray the islander's loyalty to the Royal family, we designed a tenth stamp showing HM The King sitting at the microphone broadcasting his annual Christmas message to the people of the Commonwealth..."

Crawford had returned on board the "S.A.S. Transvaal" on May 8, 1946. Two days later, the "S.A.S. Transvaal" left Tristan and returned to South Africa. It carried a petition, signed by the 12 members of the Island Council and addressed to the South African Post Master General who forwarded it to the Colonial Secretary in London. It was accompanied by essays of nine of the ten designs for the stamps.

The request was denied by the postal authorities but Crawford went ahead and produced the 1d stamp anyway, encouraging people to use them to promote the island. When news of the stamps got out, predictably, there was a rush of requests for copies from collectors around the world. Many even posted potatoes as postage but due to the long sea voyage, they were mostly rotten by the time they arrived. There was also a fear of introducing blight to the island and that was soon stopped.

In 1961, there was a volcanic eruption on Tristan da Cunha which forced an evacuation of the island. Some went to South Africa but many went to Southampton in England. I remember their arrival as I lived about ten miles away from there at the time. There was a flurry of local activity aimed at supporting the arrivals and in 1962, Crawford produced a souvenir sheet of the initial designs which was sold to aid them. By this time, I had arrived in Australia so despite being a keen philatelist by then, I missed the chance to obtain one of these.



So a politician dies...

The behaviour of Australian politicians of every political stripe has been much in the news lately. It seems a good time to reprint this old yarn.

So a politician dies...

And ends up standing in front of the pearly gates. Saint Peter looks at him for a second, flicks through his book, and finds his name.

“So, you’re a politician...”

“Well, yes, is that a problem?”

“Oh no, no problem. But we have recently adopted a new system for people in your line of work, and unfortunately you will have to spend a day in Hell. After that however, you’re free to choose where you want to spend eternity!”

“Wait, I have to spend a day in Hell??” says the politician.

“Them’s the rules” Says St Peter, clicks his fingers, and WOOMP, the guy disappears...

And awakes, curled up with his hands over his eyes, knowing he’s in Hell. Cautiously, he listens for the screams, sniffs the air for brimstone, and finds... Nothing. Just the smell of, is that fabric softener? And cut grass, this can’t be right?

“Open your eyes!” says a voice. “C’mon, wakey-wakey, we have only got 24 hours!”. Nervously, he uncovers his eyes, looks around, and sees he’s in a hotel room. A nice one too. Wait, this is a penthouse suite... And there’s a smiling man in a suit, holding a martini.

“Who are you??” The politician asks. “Well, I’m Satan!” says the man, handing him the drink and helping him to his feet. “Welcome to Hell!”

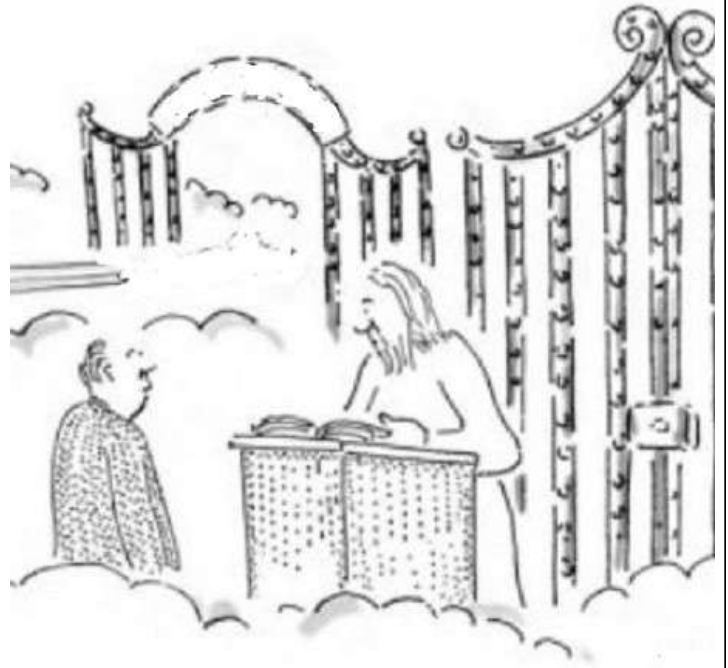
“Wait, this is Hell? But... Where’s all the pain and suffering?” he asks.

Satan throws him a wink. “Oh, we have been a bit misrepresented over the years, it’s a long story. Anyway, this is your room! The minibar is of course free, as is the room service, there’s extra towels next to the hot-tub, and if you need anything, just call reception. But enough of this! It’s a beautiful day, and if you’d care to look outside...”

Slightly stunned by the opulent surroundings, the man wanders over to the floor-to-ceiling windows through which the sun is glowing, looks far down, and sees a group of people cheering and waving at him from a golf course.

“It’s one of 5 pro-level courses on site, and there’s another 6 just a few minutes drive out past the beach and harbour!” says Satan, answering his unasked question.

So they head down in the lift, walk out through the glittering lobby where everyone waves and welcomes the man, as Satan signs autographs and cheerily talks shop with the laughing staff. And as he walks out, he sees the group on the golf course are made up of every one of his old friends, people he’s admired for years but never met or worked with, and people whose work he’s admired but died long before his career started. And out of the middle of this group walks his wife, with a massive smile and the body she had when she was 20, who throws her arms around him and plants a delicate kiss on his cheek. Everyone cheers and applauds, and as they slap him on the back and trade jokes, his worst enemy arrives, as a 2 foot tall goblin-esque caddy. He spends the day in the bright sunshine on the course, having the time of his life laughing at jokes and carrying important discussions, putting the world to rights with his friends while holding his delighted wife next to him as she gazes lovingly at him. Later, they return to the hotel for dinner and have an enormous meal, perfectly cooked, which descends into a food-fight when someone accidentally throws a bread roll at the next table (where Gandhi is having a game of truth-or-dare with Marilyn Monroe). As everyone is falling about laughing and flinging breadsticks at each other, his wife whispers in his ear... And they return to their penthouse suite, and spend the rest of the night making love like they did on their honeymoon. After 6 hours of intense passion, the man falls deep into the 100% Egyptian cotton pillows, and falls into a deep and happy sleep...



So a politician dies...

And is woken up by St Peter. "So, that was Hell. Wasn't what you were expecting, I bet?"

"No sir!" says the man.

"So then" says St Peter "you can make your choice. It's Hell, which you saw, or Heaven, which has choral singing, talking to God, white robes, and so on".

"Well... I know this sounds strange, but on balance, I think I would prefer Hell" says the politician.

"Not a problem, we totally understand! Enjoy!" Says St Peter, and clicks his fingers again.

The man wakes up in total darkness, the stench of ammonia filling the air and distant screams the only noise. As he adjusts, he can see the only light is from belches of flame far away, illuminating the ragged remains of people being tortured or burning in a sulphurous ocean. A sudden bolt of lightning reveals Satan next to him, wearing the same suit as before and grinning, holding a soldering iron in one hand and a coil of razor-wire in the other.

"What's this??" He cries. "Where's the hotel? Where's my wife? Where's the minibar, the golf-courses, the pool, the restaurant, the free drinks and the sunshine?"

"Ah", says Satan. "You see, yesterday, we were campaigning. But today, you voted..."

The World's Oldest Signed Letter.

Last year, what is thought to be the world's oldest known signature was sold by Bloomsbury Auctions in London for £175,000 or roughly AU\$320,000. The clay tablet bears the symbols "Ku" and "Sim" which archaeologists have interpreted as Kushim, the name of the person who recorded the tablet.

The tablet had been in a Swiss collection since the early 1950s and was bought by a collector from the United States. Despite some cracking, it is in remarkable condition for something 5000 years old.

The tablet, which is approximately 75mm square, apparently records a transaction that details beer production and possibly delivery to the brewhouse and was found during excavations of the ancient city of Uruk in what was once Mesopotamia but is now Southern Iraq. It has been dated to 3100BC.

Beer was very important five thousand years ago and could be used as currency or wages. Workers on the pyramids were said to live on a diet of mainly beer and onions so it was probably a good thing that most of the work was done in the open air.

Mesopotamia, the name comes from the Greek language meaning "between rivers", is considered the cradle of human civilisation. The land between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers was extremely fertile, allowing humans to transition from a hunter-gatherer lifestyle to creating fixed settlements. The inhabitants of this fairly small area are credited with the invention of the wheel, considered to be the most important mechanical innovation in history.

They also built the first cities, of which Uruk was an early example, and discovered how to make beer from grain and wine from grapes so next time you raise a glass you might offer up a small thankyou to them.

They are also credited with the birth of writing, the domestication of animals and the development of tools and (unfortunately) weapons. The weapons were perhaps used for attacking each other as well as defence for Mesopotamia was not a single entity but developed many cultural groupings and saw the rise and fall of several empires.

In his book, "Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind", Yuval Noah Harari mentions this tablet and describes it as a receipt for multiple shipments of beer, translating the inscription as, "29,086 measures barley 37 months Kushim".



The Hong Kong Engraved Issue of 1941

Like most of us, I suppose, when I peruse our exchange sheets, I generally expect to fill the cheaper spaces in my collection. This month, I was amazed and delighted to find a set of stamps that I have been wanting to acquire for some time, the 1941 engraved set issued by Hong Kong to celebrate 100 years of British rule, in my opinion, some of the finest engraved stamps ever produced.

Several times over the years, I have come across this set for sale but each time, either the condition was not up to what I wanted, or the asking price was way too high for my budget or, in the case of auctions, I was outbid by someone who either had a larger budget or wanted it more than I did.

The set on the exchange sheets was in excellent condition, was at a price I considered reasonable and, best of all, came at a time when I felt I could throw caution to the wind and afford it. After all, the next power bill is a month away!

The fact that these were issued at all was unusual as by 1941, the war was well under way. France had fallen and there were worries that with the events in Europe keeping the British busy, Japan would likely take advantage of the situation and invade.



The details on this street scene are breathtaking.



The stamps were designed from photographs. It has been suggested that the liner depicted on the 4c stamp was the "Empress of Japan" which seems ironic given the events later in the year

The previous year, the order had arrived to evacuate all the women and children "of pure European descent". The predictions came true as in December 1941, on the same morning that the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbour, they also attacked Hong Kong. The garrison held out for two weeks before surrender became inevitable and thousands of military personnel and civilians were dead.

The stamps were printed by De La Rue so as with most of their issues, there is no record of who the engraver might have been. I was so delighted with these, I would like to share them here.



Views of the harbour and the university again show stunning detail. These were engraved on steel with a small chisel called a burin. They were engraved life-sized and in reverse and required an extremely high level of skill.

The Hong Kong Engraved Issue of 1941

The 2c and 25c stamps have bats in the design of the border. This is because bats are thought to bring good luck as in Cantonese, the word for bat is pronounced the same as the word for fortune. Unfortunately, these bats brought as much good luck to Hong Kong as the recent covid-carrying bats have brought to the rest of the world.



I have read that this bank building was, at the time, the tallest in the city and also the first to boast air-conditioning. The bank owners were displeased with this stamp as the name of the bank has always used the older spelling of Hongkong as one word. The early British stamps for the colony also used this form.

When researching these stamps I read that the bank building was demolished in 1981 but I also read elsewhere that it is still there so I can't confirm either story.

The highest value of \$1 represented the postal delivery of 1841 by "China Clipper" and the 1941 seaplane. Interestingly, these were also often called "Clippers".



“Unclean” Stamps

The current trend around the world to mandate covid-19 injections has caused divisions in society that may take many years to heal. It has often been said that the unvaccinated are the modern lepers and when I heard this on a news broadcast recently, it reminded me of how many leprosy themed stamps I had seen. When I started looking, I found that there were far more than I had suspected, enough to produce a pretty good competition display.

Like the current situation, there was a lot of misinformation accompanied by lies and half truths that surrounded the disease and its unfortunate sufferers. Leprosy is not a highly contagious disease, requiring close personal contact over a period of time to transfer between people. It thrived, however on poverty where close quarters and poor sanitation were the norm.



Despite this, in Europe, lepers were required to carry a bell and ring it, shouting, “Unclean! Unclean!” as they came near other people. My English grandfather lived in what was then the village of Titchfield (an eight lane highway now runs through it). There is a small church there. Nobody is sure of its age but it is listed in the Domesday Book which was the survey ordered by William the Conqueror after he defeated the English forces at the Battle of Hastings in 1066. The church has a small window on one side which was the lepers’ window. Although they were forbidden to enter the church, lepers could watch the service through this special window.

Although the origin of the disease is not clear, it was probably brought to Europe by the returning armies of Alexander the Great. Then when the Romans invaded Greece they took it back and subsequently spread it throughout their empire. Raiding Vikings were thought to have caught it in Britain and taken it back to Scandinavia. The British took it to America while the Chinese are thought to have brought it to Australasia during the gold rushes when they made up about a third of the population in Australia.



This fear of infection from the Chinese carried over to the shearing sheds and growth of unionism among bush workers. The use of the word “scab” for a non-union worker refers to the disease and was originally used against Chinese shearers in Australia.

It was not until the 1870s that the lepra bacillus was isolated by the brilliant work of Armauer Hansen in Bergen, Norway. The disease has not been eradicated with 290,000 new cases recorded in 2018, half of them in India, but it can now be treated and the medications are provided free by the World Health Organisation.

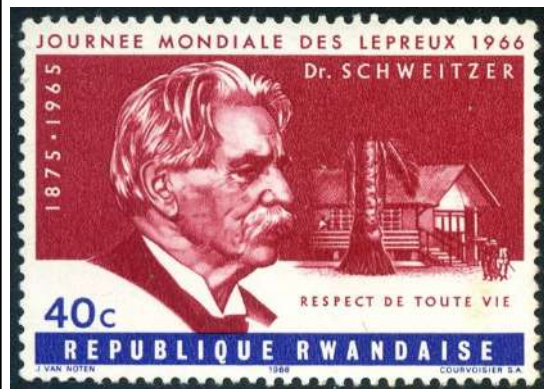
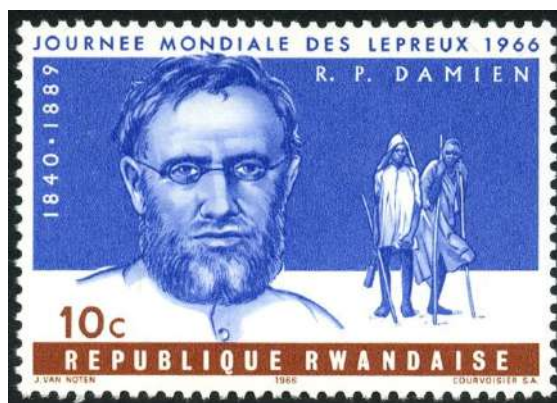


Most treatments are now done within the community. Fiji issued a set of stamps to celebrate the closing of the leprosy hospital there. It was no longer needed.



“Unclean” Stamps

Unfortunately, this has not always been the case and throughout history, people afflicted with leprosy have been segregated from the rest of society, often in dismal conditions. Not everyone has approved of this and some people have made heroic efforts to lessen the plight of sufferers. Father Joseph Damien spent many years administering to the inhabitants of such a “leper colony” on the Hawaiian island of Molokai. He eventually caught the disease himself and died from it.



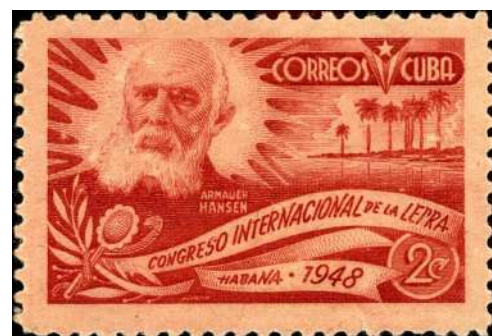
Dr Albert Schweitzer was another who devoted a great part of his life to this cause and there have been many others, less famous, who have been prepared to help relieve the suffering caused by this terrible affliction.



Up until the centenary of Hansen’s discovery, few countries had issued stamps to commemorate his work. Belgium issued a set on World Leprosy Day 1964 which also included a stamp featuring Father Damien.



Egypt had issued a stamp for the International Leprosy Congress in 1938 while Cuba issued a stamp for the Congress in Havana in 1948.



Netherlands New Guinea had also released a set of four inscribed “leprosy fight”.



While many countries, such as Italy, have now issued stamps encouraging support for the fight against leprosy, back in 1904, the Columbian Department of Cundinamarca issued cigarette tax stamps which clearly stated that the proceeds were to aid the fight against leprosy.



These are just a small proportion of the stamps that can be found to illustrate this subject. Space forbids showing any more. Now where did I put that bell?