



Capital Philately



Journal of the Philatelic Society of Canberra



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Capital Philately

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EDITORIAL

The last few weeks have been a particularly busy time for national and state stamp shows. First was Stampshow 94 in Melbourne, 27-30 October, followed by Swanpex 94 in Fremantle, 5-6 November, and finally Aeropex 94 in Adelaide, 18-20 November. Stampshow and Swanpex included both competitive national and state classes. The former had the national classes for 1994 in postal history and postal stationery and the latter the rest of the world, revenues and social philately. Aeropex 94 was modelled on the highly successful Aeropex 88 and was entirely devoted to all facets of aerophilately at the national/regional level. Reports indicate that all three shows were successful, the awards gained by Canberra-based members of the Society are given elsewhere in this issue of *Capital Philately*. Few will have been able to attend more than one of the shows - I was fortunate enough to be one of the judges for the national classes at Swanpex.

Swanpex 94 was a two-day show held in the Fremantle Convention Centre located in the old Ocean Terminal at Fremantle Harbour. This proved to be a splendid, spacious venue overlooking the harbour. The outside walk way provided the best view for smokers that I have encountered for many years! The show broke all records for attendance, with over 2,500 passing through the doors. Even more commendable was the tally for junior collectors who accounted for nearly half of the total. This spectacular number of youngsters is due to the co-operation and enterprise of Australia Post who sent personal invitations to all junior collectors in the Perth region. So a big pat on the back for Australia Post. It is interesting to note that all the correspondence sent out to exhibitors, and for advertising, for Aeropex 94 was also provided free by Australia Post. This assistance to our hobby is to be applauded. It is a matter of regret that such assistance does not appear to be on the current agenda of Australia Post on the Canberra region.

The new self service shop front of the old Canberra GPO has attracted a stream of complaints from its philatelic customers. Single mint copies of sets of recent new issues were unobtainable, either from the self-service racks or from the counter staff. They valiantly tried to explain that the Canberra GPO only had new issue sets available in packs that contained pairs of each value. Further, the pre-packaged pairs were the only examples

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of the new issues they had - it was impossible therefore, for them to satisfy the customers. They urged customers to write to Melbourne to put their case to be able to buy single sets of new issues. This state of affairs is to be regretted and it will undoubtedly lead to a further decline in the numbers of collectors of Australian material including junior collectors. Gone are the days when problems of this kind could be discussed with Australia Post at meetings of the ACT Philatelic Council - unfortunately they have not sent a representative to such meetings for over two years.

So praise to Australia Post for its initiative and support of our hobby in the other states, especially in West Australia, but concern over the marked decline in their interest in philately in the national capital.

AEROPEX 94 - A SOCIETY TRIUMPH

AEROPEX 94 was held at the Adelaide Town Hall from 18-20 November. It was devoted to Aerophilately and Astrophilately. There were separate international and national classes for both plus the new FISA 'Free Class'. The exhibition built on the experience from the highly acclaimed forerunner, AEROPEX 88. This year's show celebrated the 75th anniversary of the first England-Australia flight by Ross and Keith Smith in December 1919. There were over 400 frames of material on exhibition and over 70 competitive displays. The awards to Canberra-based members of the Society were:

International Class

T.Frommer: *Australia's Contribution to the Development of World Airmails 1914-34*. Gold and Grand Prix of the Exhibition.

T.Frommer: *Airmails of Papua and New Guinea 1926-1940*. Large Vermeil.

T.Frommer: *Airmail Labels and Vignettes of Australia 1920-1960*. Vermeil.

A.Alwast: *Air Mails of Poland*. Vermeil.

National Class

E.C.Druce: *Joining the Red Dots by Air*. Large Vermeil and Grand Prix National.

T.Frommer: *Famous Pilots and Famous Flights*. Large Vermeil.

C.Dalton: *Australian Air Mail Labels 1920-1949*. Vermeil.

D.I.Smith: *Jamaica 1914-1964 Fifty Years of Aerophilately*. Vermeil.

Tom Frommer's exhibits in aerophilately reached the highest possible levels of achievements at AEROPEX 94, although he will undoubtedly wish to go the final step to convert his Gold into a Large Gold. Our congratulations on a wonderful set of results.

It will be a surprise to some, and I have no doubt to the exhibitor himself, that Ed Druce has not only achieved a Large Vermeil but the National Class Grand Prix. Good progress from the forerunner of this exhibit which received a silver-bronze at AEROPEX 88!

The other awards to members of the Society were also of a high standard. Indeed, every exhibitor from Canberra was awarded at least a 'special prize'.



A FAVOURITE COVER (& CATALOGUE) FROM AUSTRALIA

Peter Kunz

In 1933 my aunt in Hungary, Vera Kunz, sent a letter with Hungarian stamps to *The Friendly Exchange Club* in Sydney asking for Australian stamps in return. She had written to Australia as a thirteen year old because it seemed to be an exotic country at the other side of the world and she, together with eleven year old brother Egon (my father), collected stamps.

A charming reply was written by Mr Evan T Jones on 11 October 1933 (the letter and cover are reproduced below). My grandfather was so impressed that he mailed two Hungarian dolls to Australia for the daughter of Mr. Jones.

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Manager, Evan T. Jones,
(Late of Fred Hagen Ltd.)

October 11th, 1933

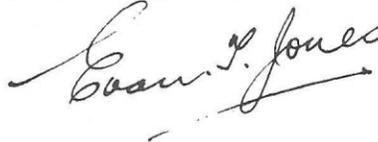
Dear Vera,

Your nice letter with stamps, was delivered to me by the Post Office, and I am sending you with this letter, some different kinds from Australia and other places. I hope you will like them.

You write English very well, so I hope you will be able to understand this letter, because I do not know how to write in your language. I have a little girl of my own, and her name is Vera, the same as yours. She goes to school, but she does not know where Hungary is - not yet. I have never been to Europe, but some of my friends have been to Budapest, and they say that your country is a very pretty one.

With very best wishes,

Yours truly,



The cover has a 3d Kingsford Smith to pay surface postage to Europe. It was cancelled at South Kensington Post Office on 12 October 1933 and carried a Vienna franking of 17 November on the front and is backstamped at Pestszentiorinc Post Office and later at Kispest Post Office in Budapest on 20 November. The letter was sent to my aunt in Pest and then forwarded to a new address in Kispest where the family had moved in the interim. When I visited Budapest in 1985 the letter was given to me by my aunt.

Ironically, my aunt would never have anticipated that her brother was to migrate to Australia as a refugee some sixteen years after the letter was written, while Mr Jones would never have guessed that his letter would return to its country of origin some 42 years after writing via the nephew of the addressee!

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When my father married my Australian mother there was an added philatelic connection. Her father, Walter F Thompson, had run the Atlas Stamp Company mail order business from home in the Sydney suburb of Roseville from the 1930s until the late 1950s. I understand that it was a supplier of packet stamps, although subsequent attempts by my mother to find old advertisements or references to the company in magazines such as *Stamp Monthly* proved fruitless.



Miss Vera Kocz

~~Pestzentöring,~~

~~Tisza Street 100,~~

~~HUNGARY~~

*Respect
Suchanow 25
1918*

IF UNCLAIMED WITHIN 14 DAYS, PLEASE RETURN TO
E. T. JONES, BOX 660, G.P.O. SYDNEY.

Unfortunately, my grandfather died in 1961 and all his remaining stock was sold. My only souvenir of his hobby and business which I still have is a 1959 Stanley Gibbons British Commonwealth catalogue. Three years after his death my own passion for our great hobby began. How I would have enjoyed sharing my enthusiasm with him!

I would be interested to know if any readers have any recollection of either *The Friendly Exchange Club* or the *Atlas Stamp Company*. I can be contacted on (06)281 2900(AH) or at 8, Renwick Street, Chifley, ACT 2606.

PHILAKOREA 94

PHILAKOREA 94, a world exhibition with a full range of classes, was held in Seoul 16-25 August. Two Society members exhibited and obtained the following awards:

E.C.Druce. *Postal history of New South Wales to 1870*. Large Gold.

T.Frommer. *Australia's contribution to the development of world air mails 1914-34*. Gold.

Congratulations to both Ed and Tom, Ed's award was the highest obtained by an Australian exhibitor.

TUVA IN PERSPECTIVE

Robert A. M. Gregson

The country which is now the Tuvan republic of the Russian Federation lies between Mongolia and Siberia, and is about at the centre of the Asian landmass. It has a population of around 309,000 (1989 census) and a density of about two persons per square kilometre. The population has increased about fivefold since the 1920s. The postage stamps of Tuva have been the subject of speculation and plain errors of fact. Now that they are listed in the catalogues of Gibbons, Michel and Scott, in some cases many years after they were issued, some background is worth putting on record. It is expedient to state from the beginning that postage stamps have three functions in the modern world, political, economic and postal. The philatelic interest is, from the perspective of governments, mostly economic. The timing of issues, and the design of the stamps of Tuva are best understood by knowing something of all three aspects.

Tuva was originally known as Urianghai and came under the Manchu Empire of China until the collapse of that dynasty in 1911. However, Tsarist Russia established trading interests there from the middle 18th century, and some of the tribes, in two districts (hoshuns) paid tribute in furs to both Russian and Chinese officials. Control of the local nomadic tribes by China collapsed in 1911, Tuvans joined in the war against the Chinese in Mongolia, and cautiously the tsarist government moved to protect its interests. In January 1914 some inhabitants asked to be received as Russian subjects, on April 5th 1914 the Tsar announced the establishment of a Russian protectorate over Urianghai. The town of Belotsarsk was then founded by Russians, later to be renamed Kyzyl. This is the present capital, the only town of any size, and has featured on postmarks in Roman or Cyrillic script, sometimes therefore as KIZIL. From July 1914 it was agreed that relations with foreign states, including Mongolia, should be through Russian officials. This is important, because the political status, and the postal history of Tuva, are intertwined almost continuously with those of both Mongolia and Russia. The period of the Russian revolution, 1917-1921, saw civil war battles between Reds and Whites in Siberia and Mongolia, in which some Tuvan partisans were involved. In the 1920s several Soviet citizens who were also active in the Mongolian People's Republic (the MPR) effectively directed policy in Tuva. Mongolia had hopes of annexing Tuva, in 1921 the provisional government of Mongolia resolved that '...we shall appoint seven men to the government of whom one shall be from Tannu Tuva'. Actually only a minority of the inhabitants are mongol, the majority are turkic. So, in 1921, the country took the name of Tannu Tuva, by which it is still anachronistically known to some philatelists. It became the Tuvan Autonomous Republic of the USSR by absorption in October 1944, and on the collapse of the USSR became the Tuvan Republic, with a political status rather like that enjoyed in the 1921-1944 period. This explains why it is now issuing stamps again.

Soviet policy was directed firmly to keep Tuva out of Mongolian hands; in 1924 Tuvans declared their affiliation with the MPR, and troops went in from the USSR to suppress the revolt. The Tannu Tuva Peoples' Republic was then set up, as a satellite state of the USSR. Russian stamps were already in use, with post offices at Turan and Kyzyl. The MPR, faced with a fait accompli, asked for a joint Russian Mongolian Committee and a strip of territory of 16,000 square kilometres was ceded to Mongolia. From then on the frontiers were fixed, though there was a mysterious frontier incident in 1958 which was settled by Soviet mediation. In 1925 there was proposed a treaty of friendship, and in August 1926 this was signed between the Peoples' Republic of Tannu Tuva and the MPR, with mutual recognition and agreement to exchange representatives. It is at that point that the first issue of Tuvan stamps, inscribed totally in Mongolian script, appeared. As Friters comments:

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Soviet Russia's policy in Tuva has in fact been devoted towards ensuring that a different national feeling is developed there. Soviet agricultural policy has aimed at settling the inhabitants and thereby drawing them away from a nomadic life like that of the Mongols. Intensive colonisation by Russians and the introduction of a national Tuvan written language (which until 1931 had been Mongolian) have been other important means of separating Tuva from Mongolia.

The second series of Tuvan stamps, designed and printed in Moscow, appeared only a few months after the first, in 1927, now inscribed in English and Russian, and included a map of Tuva; it was time to affirm the identity and limits of the country. Examples of the first and second stamp issues are illustrated in Figure 1.



Figure 1 Selection from the first (top two rows in mongol script) and second issues.

The industrialisation and collectivisation of the economy went on in bursts, the late 1920s saw electricity come to Kyzyl, and new schools opened as the old schools, for boys only, run by the lamas, were closed. The literacy levels, as in Mongolia, were initially extremely low, but steadily increased up to at least the 1960s. The number of people able to write a letter obviously increased at the same time. Today there are some 3600 Tuvans in higher education.

Tuva is known philatelically for the contentious use of pictorial stamps from 1934-36, and the once widespread assertions that these never saw use in Tuva, examples are show in Figure 2. Most supplies, including covers, were cancelled to order in Moscow at the philatelic bureau using duplicate cancellers. These stamps were accepted for international postage, and indeed examples have been used legitimately up to as late as 1958. The designs of these well-produced stamps was partly based on photographs of landscapes and ethnographic material, in some cases collected by an Austrian anthropologist, Otto Mänchen-Helfen. Others are artist's creations of historical events, and can be misleading;

there are no railways in Tuva though a locomotive is shown on the 1936 jubilee issue, see Figure 2. What is not widely known is that a Soviet state engineering company came into Tuva in the early 1930s and built up infrastructure, new roads, bridges, telegraph lines and post offices were constructed, all of had to be paid for by somebody, and selling stamps is part of the picture. Tuva has timber, and cobalt and other minerals useful in modern metallurgy, but the balance of trade would mean that the USSR was supporting Tuva as it did Mongolia.

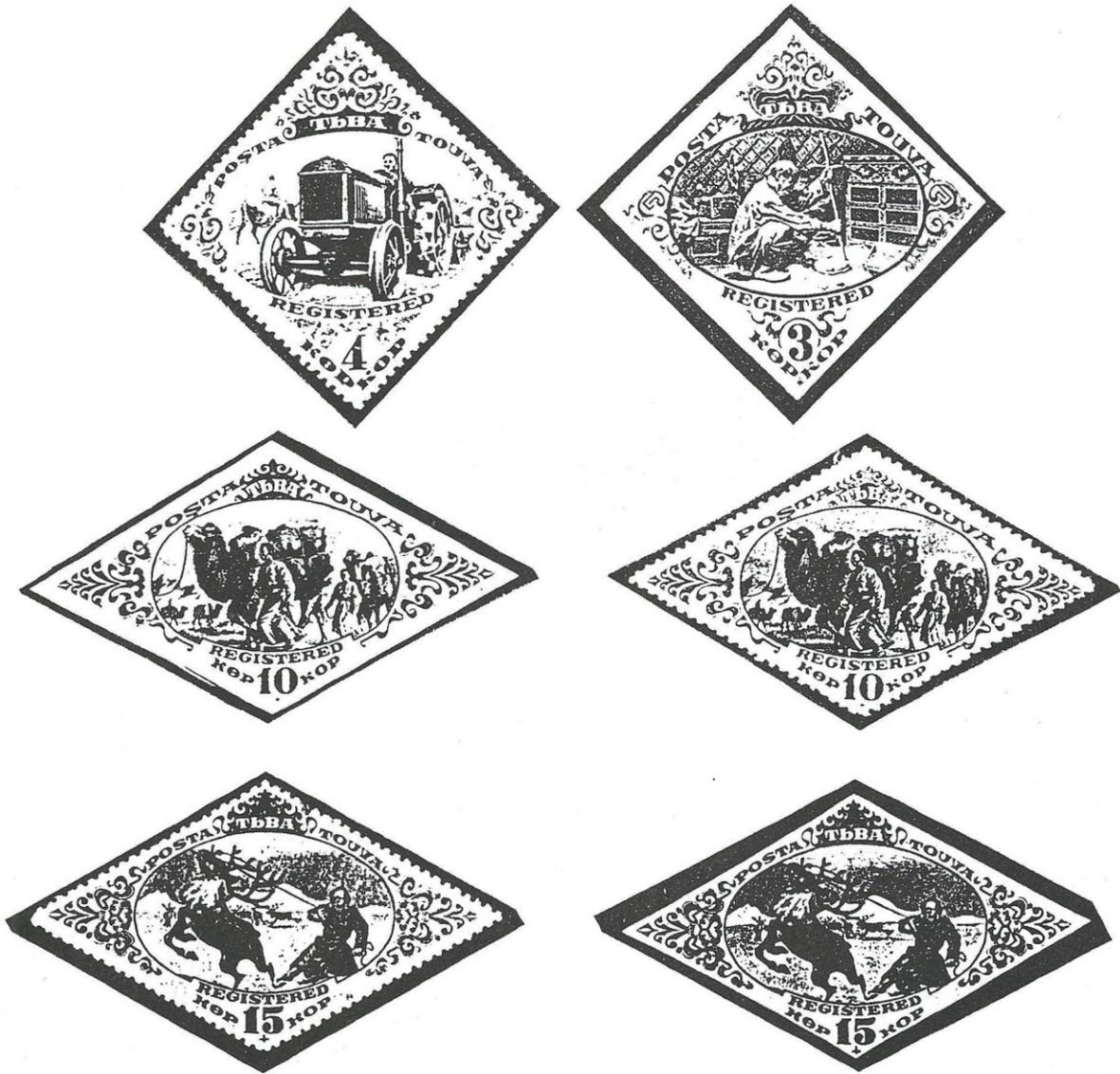


Figure 2 A selection from the contentious issues of 1934-36

The USSR had always been cautious about the military security of its southern borders, and in the 1930s the threat from Japan was real; the Tannu Ola mountain range is both the frontier to the south of Tuva, and a military natural defence line as it rises more steeply from the south side, Stalin wanted a defensible border and kept troops in Tuva.



Figure 3 The 1942 issue, printed in Tuva.

The tiny Tuvan republic issued some of its own stamps in 1943, which are rare, see Figure 3. Provisional surcharges by machine, or handwritten by pen, also exist. But then it officially used USSR stamps from 1944 to 1992. One USSR issue of 1962 actually shows a view of Kyzyl, or rather Lenin Street, with the new administrative buildings in the familiar architectural styles of provincial towns of the time. This is illustrated in Figure 5. The economic statistics for Tuva indicate a burst of expansion in the 1950s, including Kyzyl getting a trolley-bus line to the airport.



Figure 4 The spurious locomotive shown on the 1936 jubilee issue.

The collapse of the rouble currency from 1991 to 1994, which is still continuing though more slowly, has seen the postal rates surge, though not as fast as the exchange rate against the US dollar, which has deteriorated by a factor of 3100. Tuva appears to have kept the same postal rates as the CIS, having stayed in the same currency zone unlike states such as Azerbaijan or Moldova. A letter which in 1991 could have been sent for 10 kopecks now costs at least 80 roubles. The 1992-1994 spate of provisional surcharges which have come from all parts of the CIS was matched from Tuva; the status of some of these is dubious, but both USSR and CIS stamps overprinted TUVA (in Cyrillic Russian and Tuvan; TYBS, TbBA, TbIBA) and surcharged, have been seen on letters. Sheet margin inscriptions are sometimes trilingual and include POSTAGE TOUVA 1993. Over fifty such types have appeared so far. A selection of these issues is illustrated in Figure 6. The problem for stamp catalogue publishers already resembles the situation in 1919-1921, but this time is perhaps better documented. A specialist group, the Tannu Tuva Collectors Society, based in the USA, is producing a detailed listing of stamps and postal stationery. For general collectors the Gibbons sectional catalogue is quite accurate and adequate.



Figure 5 USSR issue of 1962 with a view of Kyzyl



Figure 6 A selection of the provisional surcharges 1992-93.

Tuva is now more accessible than it was; non-Russian visitors have been able to go there since 1991, and Aeroflot lies between Moscow and Kyzyl twice a week.

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Readers should be warned that philatelic articles are informative about stamps, but sometimes contain errors about Tuva's history, even postal history.

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SWANPEX 94

The venue for SWANPEX 94, 5-7 November, was the Fremantle Convention Centre. There was only one entry from a Canberra member.

National Class - Revenues.

E.C.Druce. *New South Wales Railway Parcel Stamps*. Silver.

EXHIBITING: THE CHALLENGE OF THE TRADITIONAL CLASS

E C Druce

All philately is born from traditional philately. With the wide range of classes now available to any collector who wants to turn into an exhibitor the choice is enormous. It was not always this way; indeed, the growth of classes is a relatively recent phenomenon. I have tried to crystallise the major happenings that have led to the present ambit of exhibiting and, to some extent, the range of collecting interests, see below.

A Brief history of Competitive Philately

- mid 1990's development of Social Philately by Australia (& NZ, Sweden etc)
- early 1990's Acceptance of Revenues by FIP as an exhibiting class
- 1980's Formalisation of current classes with regulations and guidelines
- 1970's Current classes begin to emerge (Traditional, Postal Stationery, Aerophilately, Thematics, Postal History, Literature and Youth)
- 1960's FIP begins to grow and become truly international and regulate international philatelic exhibitions
- late 1940's and early 1950's thematic collecting and postal history begin to emerge as collecting themes
- 1930's Exhibiting becomes stronger and FIP begins in Europe, more and more interest in stamp varieties, watermarks, perforations, papers, printings etc.
- 1920's The new fangled flying machines stimulate Aerophilately
- 1910's Postal Stationery begins to be ignored because catalogues and albums ignore it because of space restrictions
- early 1900's Exhibiting gaining popularity, particularly in Europe
- 1890's Philately (Traditional and Postal Stationery) well established
- 1860's and 1870's first simple exhibitions of collections
- 1850's stamp and stationery collecting began to grow stimulated by catalogues
- 1840 first stamps issued
- 1838 first stationery issued
- Late 1700's and early 1800's. Collecting of Fiscals and Franks (Autographs)

It is a moot point whether the range of classes resulted in the development of collecting habits or whether the need for competitive differentiation stimulated changes in collecting styles. While I'm sure that the overall process is iterative (each facet bouncing off each previous facet), if I had to choose which is the most important of the two approaches then I

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would choose the latter. I firmly believe that competitive philately triggers changes in style and collecting habits.

Take for instance the beginnings of exhibiting. Exhibitors showed their albums, open at the page with the rarest stamp. This evolved into displaying several pages and with the desire to continually show something rare. How do you make a stamp with a common design and value rare? One way is to discover different perforation varieties, changed watermarks or stamps which show printing characteristics which make it unique in a sheet of 100. Instantly one has increased the rarity one hundredfold!

My thesis is that the desire to show rarity competitively was the underlying reason to study stamps and their printing. This desire has produced the current science and methodology of traditional philately. Once these research techniques and practices had become widespread and accepted as the basis for philatelic study, the wish to be different, to be innovative, and to discover rarity in the dross of generally available philatelic material spawned an increasing interest in covers and the secrets which might be locked away in the stamps used, the markings and the routes. Thus was born Postal History.

Interestingly, some of the rarities of postal history owe their survival, and hence their rarity, to the early traditionalists seeking rare material: imperforate stamps with four clear margins and a light but legible cancellation; strips of three or more or blocks of four (one way to make a stamp four times rarer, otherwise why would we collect blocks of four?). Thus many beautiful covers have been destroyed over time and the remaining stock is slim and therefore rare and consequently rising in price.

Added to the scarcity is an increase in demand. Postal History exhibits generally look appealing and colourful. By their side, stamp exhibits look spotty and repetitive. Equally, stamps, however rare, only take up a small amount of space on a sheet. But covers: they take up plenty of space and can add rarity to an exhibit. So the chase is on for fine and rare covers by both Postal Historians and Traditional class exhibitors.

These Postal Historians, however, have grown up learning the techniques of philately from a traditional perspective (and so they should in my view). They often commenced collecting the stamps before they switched to Postal History. The temptation is ever present to insert some fine philatelic pieces, stamps and proofs for example, in to the exhibit on the Postal History of a region or nation state.

Despite clearer guidelines on both traditional and postal history classes there has continued to be confusion in the minds of many exhibitors on what they should include and what they should exclude in terms of material. Hence the birth of *The F.I.P. Guide to Exhibiting and Judging Traditional and Postal History Exhibits* compiled by the Presidents of the Traditional Commission (Bob Odenweller) and Postal History Commission (Paul Jensen).

This very useful book (in two volumes with text in one and illustrations in the other) takes as its feedstock the collection of Egypt formed by Samir Fikry. The collection has many fine philatelic pieces and amazing covers. This grist has been taken by the authors and mounted in four different ways - two bad, two good, one of each for each class.

The result is that one can see a bad Traditional exhibit and then a good exhibit using the same material. The same is true for postal history. Indeed, the correlation is even stronger because the same covers have been used in the traditional exhibit as have been used in the

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postal history exhibit. By illustration therefore, the authors have shown how to use covers in Postal History exhibits and the same covers in a Traditional exhibit.

The basis for the use covers in a Postal History exhibit is to exemplify routes, rates or markings, or any combination of those three or perhaps, although rarely, some unusual facet of postal system development in the country chosen for exhibition. In a Traditional exhibit the question being answered is 'For what purpose was the stamp issued?' This book and its ample, nay fulsome, illustrations demonstrates this difference to perfection. It also demonstrates the absurdity of putting mint stamps into a Postal History exhibit (although as usual in life there can be exceptions to this rule, but only if exhibitors know exactly what they are doing).

Finally, the good and bad exhibits demonstrate the use and abuse of collateral material: photographs, maps etc. The text also is critical, it together with the material amounts to the basis on which treatment is judged. Text which is nothing to do with philately or which merely describes what you can already see is detrimental to the exhibit whereas text which draws out further information from the philatelic material and which show erudition (the research of others or of oneself) will be advantageous. All these points are illustrated to perfection.

The only problem with this book is that while it is excellent in sorting out the basic question of what material to include and what style of text to adopt, it is a static book in a moving system. Methods and techniques of exhibiting are continually changing (nearly always for the better) and indeed there is never a single way of doing anything well. This book should be used for sorting out some of the fundamental questions on what material to use and how best to describe it. It should not be used as a template for every exhibit in either of these classes. Some have been heard to say that it is already out of date in terms of exhibiting styles. Don't be put off by this; it is an excellent book, well worth the \$25 and available from you local philatelic council. In the case of the ACT, contact Bruce Parker.

Members should note that a copy of the two-volume study has recently been added to the Society's library [Ed].

STAMPSHOW 94

STAMPSHOW 94 was held at the Caulfield Town Hall in Melbourne from 27-29 October. Five Canberra-based members of the Society entered exhibits, the awards obtained are listed below.

National Class - Postal History

E.A.Bodley. *Coping with success*. Silver-bronze.

National Class - Postal Stationery

E.C.Druce. *Postal Stationery of Aden*. Vermeil and Special Prize

D.I.Smith. *Postal Stationery of Jamaica*. Vermeil.

E.C.Druce. *Postal Stationery of Bechuanaland*. Large Silver.

I.McMahon. *George VI Canada*. Silver.

One-Frame Competition

C.Dalton. *Australian pioneer rocket mail experiments*. Large Vermeil.

Congratulations to all.

**FRANKING PRIVILEGES UNDER THE PAN AMERICAN
POSTAL CONVENTION**

Ian McMahon

The Pan American Convention from 1921 to 1971 provided free franking privileges for surface mail from the embassies and consulates of member countries to destinations within the Pan American Union (later called the Organisation of American States). A description of these franking privileges is given in an article by Cary Funder in the January 1993 issue of the *American Philatelist*. Covers posted under this arrangement usually bear rubber handstamp inscriptions, such as 'Diplomatic Mail Free', to indicate that the mail was posted under the convention together with the seal of the embassy or consul.

Canada was a signatory to the Pan American Postal Convention from 1931 to 1966 and hence mail posted from the embassies or consulates of other signatories to the Convention were carried free. At a stamp fair in Canberra last year, I acquired a number of such covers all posted in Ottawa, in either 1962 or 1963, and addressed to the Danish Embassy in Ottawa. All bear a rubber handstamp indicating that the correspondence was diplomatic mail. For example, Figure 1 shows a cover from the Cuban Embassy with a handstamp inscribed 'Cuban Diplomatic Correspondence, Free Postage, Pan American Postal Convention, Universal Postal Union'. The cover has the Embassy seal on the reverse. Figure 2 shows a USA cover, postmarked with a special Ottawa handstamp used for postmarking free mail inscribed 'Free Canada Franco'. The cover illustrated in Figure 3 from the Venezuelan Embassy is simply inscribed 'Diplomatic Free' but with the Embassy seal on the front.

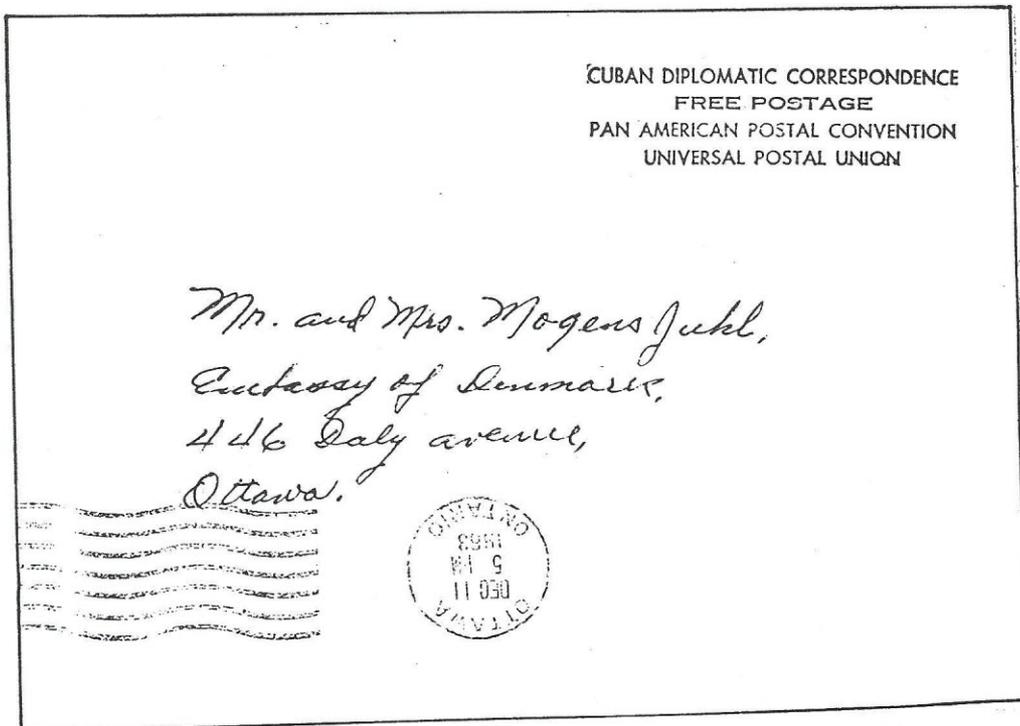


Figure 1 'Free Cuban Diplomatic Correspondence'

Figures 2 and 3 are on the next page.

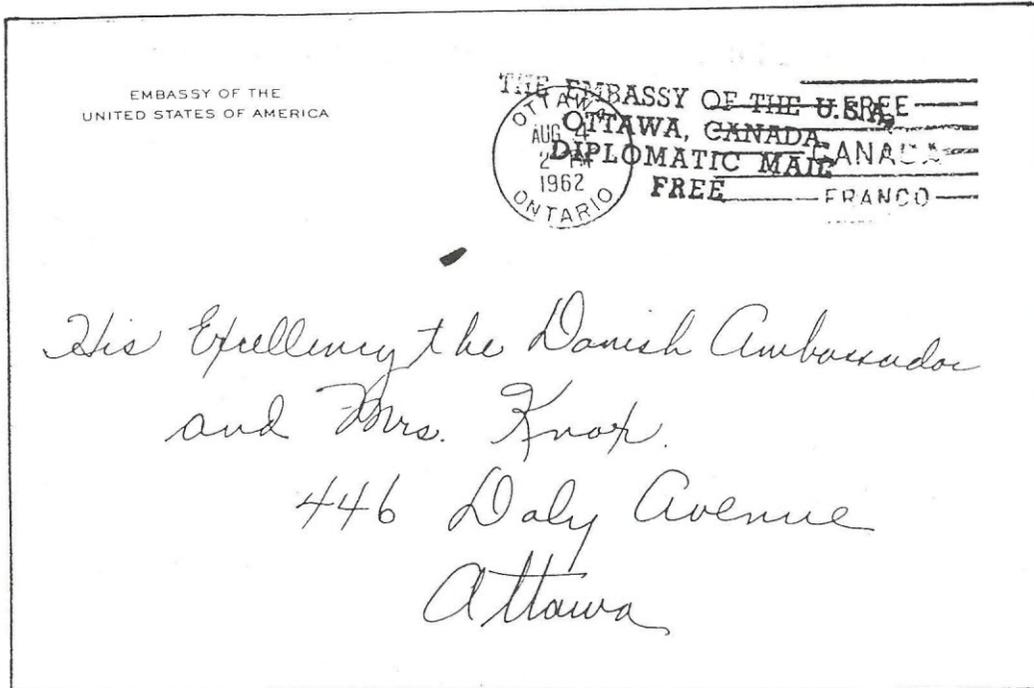


Figure 2 'Free Canada Franco' Ottawa meter mark.

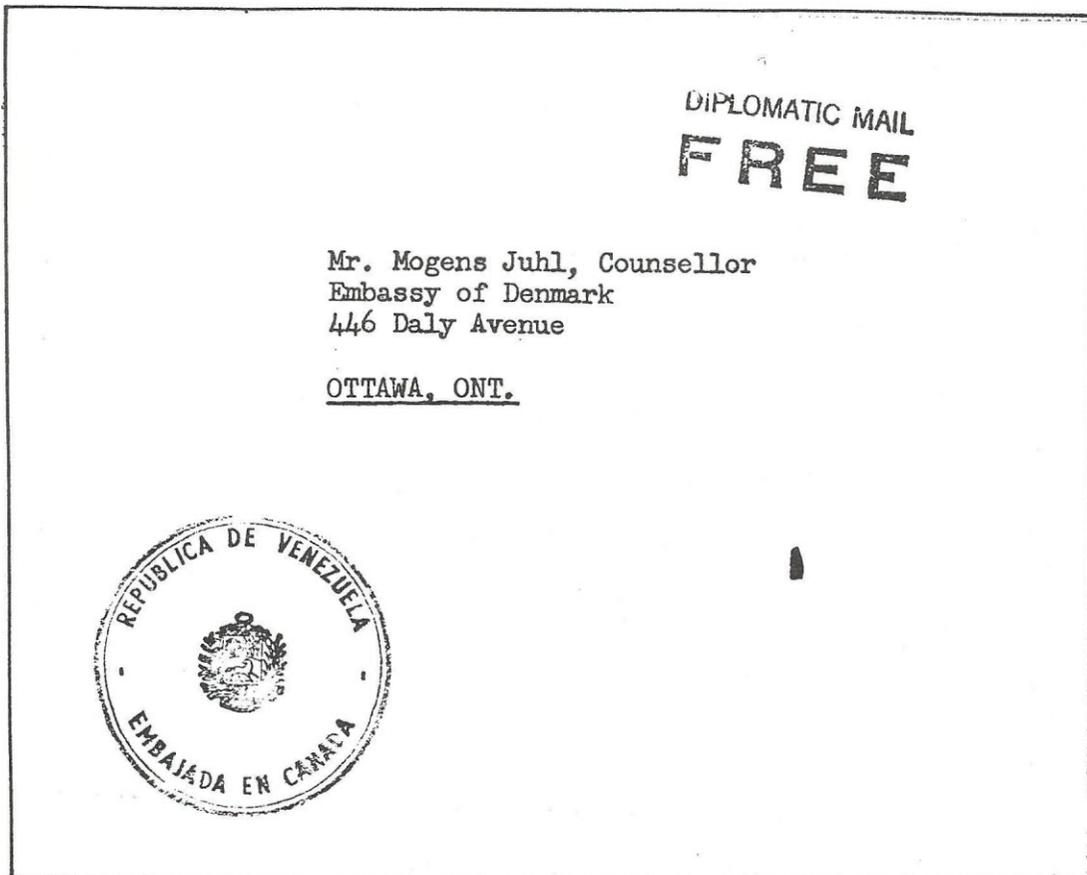


Figure 3 'Diplomatic Mail Free' from Venezuelan Embassy.

JAMAICA COVERS WITH JUSQU'A MARKINGS

Dingle Smith

The description of 'jusqu'a' markings on West Indies covers by Darryl Fuller (*Capital Philately*, vol. 12, no. 2) has provided the answer to a philatelic query that has intrigued me for 20 years. As a collector of Jamaican material I have four covers cancelled with double purple bars. These range in date from 13 Dec. 1930 to 26 Oct 1932. In 1974 I corresponded with Tom Foster, the doyen of Jamaican postal history and author of *Jamaican - the Postal History 1662-1860*. At that time, he was engaged in extending the range of his book, unfortunately it was never completed due to his death in the late 1970s. Among the covers I sent him were the four with purple bars. His reply states:

'...these are not airmail markings, although they usually have a connection with airmail postage'. His preferred explanation was that they were '...the type of marking [used] to cancel any stamps on cover in excess of the postage usually required for the correct transmission of the letter'. He was clearly in error although he did add that '...I have never seen them from Jamaica except in the early 1930s'.

The two covers illustrated were both sent from Jamaica to England in December 1930. Both are in airmail weight envelopes with printed 'By Air Mail' instructions, ie not airmail etiquette labels. Such envelopes must have been unusual in the island as until December 1930 there was no airmail service!. The first is postmarked Dec 10 1930 and has a special first flight Jamaica to Miami cachet. Such FFCs are relatively common although this one is rather special as it is addressed to Francis Field! I have never seen any of these covers with the purple bar markings.

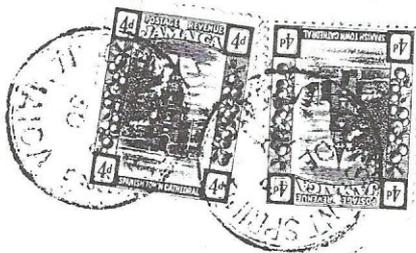


The second cover (overleaf), with identical handwriting, is postmarked Dec 13 1930. This has a 'jusqu'a' marking of two purple bars cancelling the air mail instruction. McQueen illustrates an identical marking, except that his example is enclosed in a rectangle, 49 x 29mm. McQueen suggest that it was applied in New York and he describes the marking on

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letters from Texas to England. Thus, application in New York seems more for the two Jamaican covers than the alternative of Miami.

There is however, a further query. Was the date of the first issue of the 'purple bars' between about Dec 10 and 13 1930 or were FFCs exempt from this kind of cancellation? I subscribe to the latter view and, if correct, it indicates a desire by the US Postal Services not to spoil FFCs. This is exactly contrary to the view of Foster who, in his letter of 1974, suggests that FDCs were often defaced by purple bars because they had postage in excess of that normally required.



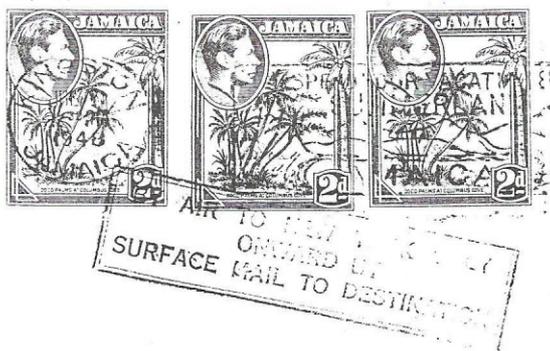
Mrs J. H. Robertson

14 Chander Court

England

London S.W. 1

As a postscript, I also have a cancel (undoubtedly applied in Jamaica) that states 'Air to New York and onward by surface mail to destination'. This is dated 2 July 1948 and appears only to have been used for a short time, it is illustrated above. It could be regarded as a refinement of the rather crude 'jusqu'a' markings.



Members interested in 'jusqu'a markings' markings are recommended to consult *Airmail Jusqu'a Markings* by Ian McQueen (1993). The monograph, with over 300 illustrations, describes these markings on a worldwide basis. The publication can be purchased for 10 pounds sterling (plus postage) from W.A. Page, 138, Chastilian Rd., Dartford, Kent DA1 3LG, UK. A copy of the book has recently been added to the Society's library.

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