



Capital Philately



Journal of the Philatelic Society of Canberra



The Philatelic Society of Canberra Inc.

(Founded 1932)
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CAPITAL PHILATELY

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EDITORIAL

This issue marks the end of my second year as editor and hopefully the dawn of an exciting new era for the journal. With this issue I will have finally caught up on the delays in publishing the last few issues of Capital Philately. However, more importantly this will be the last issue in this format, at least for the next year. The editorial committee has had a few meetings to discuss the format of the journal and the actual contents. These discussions arose out of some analysis of collectors' interests done by the vice-president, Robert Gregson. The analysis of which appears on pages 79-80 of this issue. A survey of members was also undertaken and the analysis of this will appear in the next issue. What is apparent at least on the surface is that collectors' interests and the content of Capital Philately are not the same. While this may not be an issue, in that we do publish a wide range of material, I am sure the members of the Society would like to see more material on Australia and New Zealand. These changes have also coincided with another issue relating to the two other journals published by groups within the Society. This is discussed below in detail but the editorial committee believes that these changes will produce a journal that is more attractive to both local, and interstate and international members.

In order to improve the journal I will need material to publish and of course this must come from you. I have always been keen on series of articles and I tried to start this with Ian McMahon's articles on the library. I hope to continue this and I like 'Found in the Trash' which is relatively easy to produce and interesting I believe. However, other areas that the editorial committee discussed include book reviews and more general articles on aspects of philately like the koalas and kangaroos on the selvedge of Australian definitives. At the moment one or two people write most book reviews but I would prefer a greater spread of authors. These reviews do not have to be a page or more long, and indeed as editor I would prefer to have five or six smaller reviews in each issue. In order to produce articles like the 'kangaroos and koalas' the editorial committee may ask particular members to write articles. Please do not refuse if asked because we need material to publish and we need a wider spread of material and authors. We have a number of people both on the editorial committee and in the Society who will be more than willing to help you knock an article into shape, if required. Writing can be fun and from an editorial point of view, the more the merrier.

As you may be aware the Philatelic Society of Canberra has two other branches attached to it – the Machin Group and the Postcard Group. These two groups are of moderate size and could probably survive on their own but are attached to the Society to provide protection to their office bearers and members by being part of an incorporated association. There is also a considerable overlap in membership, as well as saving overheads for the two groups. Both groups have their own journals, Machinations and Pastcards, both of which are of a very high standard and both are well regarded. However, the production costs of each is quite expensive because they are produced in runs of 100 or less. This gives them a higher unit cost than say Capital Philately and it is becoming harder for these two groups to maintain their standards at a reasonable cost. This was discussed by the Society's

Council, and the editorial committee was convened to look at the cost of publication and other issues to do with the journal, as discussed above.

What we have decided to try is to combine all three into one journal. We will do this by each editor producing their own journal in multiples of four pages. The separate parts will have different numbering and will bound together in a way that allows the three to be separated if required. The most likely order will be Capital Philately with Pastcards inside that and Machinations inside that. This will make Machinations the easiest to remove - the reason for this being that it has the highest overseas membership. This will require a new design for the cover but this is a relatively minor issue I believe. The journal will remain Capital Philately, because this allows us to post it more cheaply, but will be Capital Philately incorporating Machinations and Pastcards. There are some obvious advantages and disadvantages to this approach, which is why we will trial it for a year to see how it works. The advantages include a lower production cost, greater readership for all three journals, better value for money and a considerable saving on postage. Other advantages will be that it will be a more attractive journal to external members and we should be able to sell more memberships. Further, the journal will be more attractive to advertisers so we should be able to further lower the cost by getting more paid advertising. There are of course some negatives including the possibility that the individual journals will lose some support or "presence". This is why we are trying to ensure that the overall journal can be taken apart so that readers can bind the individual sections if they prefer. A few members may not wish to receive the additional reading but it is hard to see that this will be a major issue of concern. There are still a few technical matters to sort out and the issue of overlap between memberships to finalise but overall I believe that we will have a better and more informative journal. So when you receive the first issue please provide feedback on your likes and dislikes and any ways we can improve the 'combi-journal'.

Two members of the Society exhibited in London (see below) and once again did the Society proud, so to speak. Tom is to be congratulated as this is his third large gold medal which makes him eligible for the Championship class. Dingle Smith also did very well and I had feedback from another source that felt his display also deserved a gold medal. Congratulations to both and I look forward to the results from Canpex in New Zealand where a number of Society members are exhibiting including one novice at the National level.

This issue of Capital Philately has an interesting mix of philatelic content and some personal commentary that I like and I hope readers do as well. Robert Gregson's article on Visby is an interesting insight into the shape of things to come in philately and relates well to an article I am writing on the future of the mail. The more personal accounts by the President and "Litotes" make interesting reading and if I can keep up a mixture of the two in future issues I believe that I will be producing a balanced journal. If you have any comments on this or any issues raised please don't hesitate to send a letter to the editor, whether for publication or not.

MEMBERS' EXHIBITION RESULTS

LONDON 2000 - 22 - 28 MAY 2000

Tom Frommer	Australia's Contribution to the Development of World Airmails 1914-1934	Large Gold (96)
Dingle Smith	Postal Stationery of Jamaica	Large Vermeil (88)
Dingle Smith & Richard Peck	Priced Catalogue of NSW Revenues and Railway Stamps	Silver (71)

Addendum

The study of NSW revenues and railway stamps also attained a vermeil medal at Adelaide Stampex 99 (78 marks) and a silver medal at Canada's 5th National Philatelic Literature Exhibition held in conjunction with Orapex 2000, the Canadian National Exhibition in Ottawa, 6-7 May 2000.

TRAVELS OF A PRESIDENT

A personal account of philatelic interactions

Albert Farrugia

It is time to talk of travel, of countries strange and wondrous, of men and things unheard of in our antipodal isolation. It is time, in short, to talk of my Professional Development Award, granted to me by the Commonwealth of Australia's Department of Health and Aged Care to investigate blood transfusion systems and their regulatory mechanisms in Europe and North America. Not the kind of stuff which philatelists are in the least bit interested in, alas, but it is what enables the presidential body to retain its tenuous connection with the presidential soul, pays the presidential mortgage, and, in the immortal words of Mel Brooks, gives me "a nice livin". Be that as it may, I spent February to May undergoing the work program covered by the award, working harder than I ever have in my life, and, if the truth be known, having a very pleasant time. I was privileged to work in peer agencies and meet numerous experts in my line of work, and came back loaded with material for my own work place. Away with that, you say. This is about stamps, isn't it, you say? Patience, patience, I say.

In Tronto

One of the countries I visited was Canada, a place I have much affinity for, for it reminds me, more than any other, of the Land of Oz. Cold as hell in winter and snow storms abounded even when I was there in March-April, but very similar to us in political and social aspects. They also suffer from the incubus (*Ed. means nightmare*) of federation, and with them the Quebec phenomenon accentuates the problem. But they have a beautiful country, great people and have the advantage of sitting next to the United States without being part of it (Some of my best friends are Americans). And, as you may know, a tremendous philatelic presence – at last, I hear them say – and I have collected Canada, in a desultory but steadfast fashion, for some years now. My basic collection is approaching the philatelically familiar stage where I can't afford what I haven't got, and some years ago I made the fatal mistake of thinking that collecting Canadian revenues would allow me to continue without going broke ... but that's another story.

Be that as it may, some years ago I started a correspondence with a Canadian collector and, like many such relationships, we exchange used stamps from our respective countries and exchange news on our lives. John Moffat is my friend's name and over the years I'd figured out that he's of Scottish extraction, which means he plays golf, which endears him further to my heart (on both these counts). So knowing I was going to spend some time in his town of Toronto (or, as they call it, *Tronto*) I wrote informing him of the fact. He wrote saying that, wonder of wonders, his wife and himself were going to visit Australia early in the year – much to my chagrin I was going to miss them as it was going to happen in the first phase of my trip. So I arranged to call him when I was in *Tronto*, and since this was in Easter week, I was able to snatch half a day with him and his tribe. He picked me up at my hotel; remember we had never met, but that proved to be no problem, and we spent a pleasant afternoon touring *Tronto* followed by a visit to his golf club and supper at his house. Then came the STAMPS.

John took me to his local club – the North York Philatelic Society, and I was introduced to the officials and members who were there. The meeting started through the usual scrutiny and buying/selling of material and some dealers were actually in attendance. I met the President Joseph Malbouef and the Secretary Arthur Bone. I may mention that my friend John has served in most of the Society's positions in his time. The next phase was the formal part of the meeting, with reports, items of interest etc. Then came the lecture part. I had been pre-warned by John that I was IT.

I gave a 20 minute or so talk about the philatelic situation in Australia as I saw it. I started by talking about the Philatelic Society of Canberra and gave a special plug of my pride and joy, the Machin group. Then I discussed the situation in relation to Modern Issues. went over the development of special issues in Australia over the past fifty years, starting with the rather drab issues of the fifties

through to the current situation. I spoke eloquently and well, on the iniquities of sheetlets, the outrage of multiple single-denomination series, the mysteries of the Australian Dependencies where the number of stamp issues outnumber the population. I expounded on the difficulties in obtaining stamps, particularly in used condition for the likes of my mate John Moffat. The frustration of not finding stamps supposedly current when I visited suburban post offices for franking my mail. I speculated on where had the stamps gone; touched on the occasional spurts of CTO's one encounters; gave a serve to the SPECIMEN overprints which Australia Post occasionally regales us with; and then waxed sarcastic on the holier I than thou attitude of catalogues such as SG in relation to the "bad boy" countries such as the Arab States, Redonda etc - similar criteria should apply to Oz Post.



JOHN MOFFAT, ALBERT FARRUGIA, JOSEPH MALBOUEF

Of course, I was wowing them. I was amongst friends. The Canadian Post Office is up there with the best of 'em, in the stakes of who's entitled to be designated the worst of 'em. All the above misdemeanours of Aussie Post have been well emulated by their Canadian counterparts. Oh, yes, which is why my Canadian collection will draw the line at end 2000, at least as far as the special issues go. Their definitives are another story, and the modern series form a fascinating study, with a plethora of printings and varieties. But more on that some other time.

I rounded off by suggesting some areas of potential hope (if that's not a tautology). I suggested that the collection of special issues postally used on cover during their official marketing period was worth pursuing. It was difficult enough, heaven knows. So there may be a future for modern philately. Maybe. I was happy to discuss the situation with the members of the society, who mostly expressed similar views. And I shall always cherish my memories of my evening with my friend John Moffat and his fellow collectors ... in *Tronto*.

The Centre of the Empire

My final leg in my marathon overseas trip involved a visit of three days to an institute in Berlin, and then I flew to London to get the plane back to Australia. The day happened to be Saturday the 27 May and I flew into London at 9 am. I hopped into a train – the express from Heathrow to Paddington gets you into central London in 15 minutes – took the tube to Earl's Court and was in Stampshow 2000 by 11 am. This was not totally unplanned, in the sense that some fellow philatelists in the Machin mould (see below) had informed me that they would be there, but it was just a way of putting in time as the flight back to Oz, as usual, was set to depart in the evening.

The Stamp Show 2000 – Perspectives on Our World – was held in Earl's court over the week 22 to 28 May, and considering I was able to only put in six hours in a week long event I was fairly pushed to see all that there was to see. In fact, the reality is that I didn't! The exhibition consisted of 3,500 frames of outstanding material deployed over the following classes:

- Championship – restricted to exhibits which had been awarded three large gold medals in the previous ten years
- Traditional – including UK, Commonwealth, Americas, Europe and Rest of the World
- Postal History - including UK, Commonwealth, Americas, Europe and Rest of the World
- Aerophilately – including the PSC's very own Tom Frommer with his renowned exhibit on Australia's development of world airmails
- Astrophilately
- Revenues
- Postal Stationary – including another PSC luminary – "Dingle" Smith with his exhibit of Jamaican postal stationary
- Thematics

- Maximaphily
- Youth
- Open

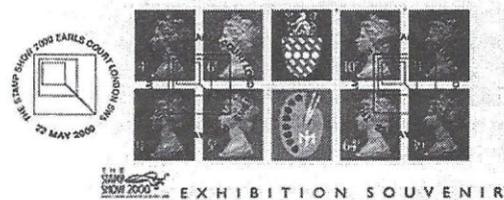
My primary aim in attending was to team up with two colleagues in the Machin area who I had been in contact with for several years. Larry Rosenblum from California runs the web page of the GB Collectors Society in the USA (see <http://www.gbstamps.com>) which includes one of the best Machin sites on the Web. Yes, Larry is a fellow devotee of that most morish of stamp designs, the GB Machin definitive. We had agreed to meet at a certain dealer's stall and we managed to find each other, aided by our respective photos on the web. I must confess to being slightly impeded as Larry's shows him behind bars! Anyway, we then teed up with world-wide Machin authority Douglas Myall, and I was privileged to accompany my two peers in the field as they went over the Machin related material at the Show. One of the most interesting stands was entitled Eyes Right! The definitive story. This comprised material from all the definitive stamps issued in GB from 1840 onwards, drawing from the Heritage Collections of the Post Office and material on loan from various sources. It included the proof sheet of the Penny Black and



for us buffs, Machin's final bust used for the Machin design (right). Other interesting stands from the Machin point of view included those of the various printers currently engaged in printing British stamps, including De La Rue (left). At this point I might remark that the Post Office did not lose the opportunity of foisting on us all several carefully crafted but irresistible gimmicks, designed to further penury. On the Machin front, the piece de resistance is probably the Jeffrey Matthews Miniature Sheet, showing ten of the original Matthews colours. I took the opportunity to buy a

few sheets and actually franked mail to myself in Aussie with the stamps – unfortunately some of them arrived with the usual “Conan the Barbarian” type cancels, and the £1 stamp arrived damaged. Clearly, these stamps were just not meant to go through the post.

After sharing a London pub lunch, not to mention a shower as we rushed to the pub with Larry, we attended the joint meeting of the GB Decimal Stamps Study Circle and the GB Decimal Stamp Book Study Circle. This was one of several specialist society meetings held throughout the week. The two



Douglas Myall, Albert Farrugia, Larry Rosenblum

societies both offered attendance at the meetings to interested collectors attending Stamp Show and this was a great occasion as it enabled a lot of interaction of people involved in Machins. I was able to have discussions with several like minded collectors and made several valuable contacts for the PSC's Machin Interest Group. Douglas Myall put up an exhibit of Machin singles arranged according to his established criteria for collecting, and a presentation was made to Hans Fashjing, editor of *The Bookmark Catalogue* of Decimal Stamp Books, for his services to British Philately.

Unfortunately, I had little time to do more than sample the various dealers' stands, but managed to pick up a couple of unusual items for my Malta collection nevertheless. I blanched at the price I realised I had paid for them when I found out that the Aussie \$ had decided to expire while I was overseas. Then it was just time to say goodbye to Larry and Doug, jump back into the tube, and then on to Heathrow and eventually, Australia.

All in all, my philatelic jaunts formed a minuscule part of my travels, but, along with all the other events, they form an indelible memory of a very important phase of my life.

ODE TO AN EXHIBITOR

By R. U. Uptuit
(with thanks and apologies to W. Shakespeare)

To exhibit or not to exhibit – that is the question:
Whether 'tis tougher on the ego to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous criticism,
Or to take umbrage at the judges' remarks,
And by opposing receive a Certificate of Participation.

To write up – to shove lots in a stockbook
No more; and by an exhibit to say we end
The aimless accumulating, and the thousand unfiled stamps
From the exchange books. 'Tis organisation
Devoutly to be wish'd!

To write up – to exhibit.
To exhibit – perchance to win a medal: ay, there's the rub!
For in that striving for gold, what nightmares may come
When we have Mastercarded off this month's pay packet,
Must give us pause. There's the dilemma
That makes calamity of so many marriages.

For whose spouse would bear the hours of time at eBay,
The nights alone, the unkempt yard,
The pangs of unfulfilled desire, the chores' delay,
The insolvency of the cheque account, and the spurns
That the patient, waiting children take,
When she herself might his collection burn
With a naked flame?

Who would these drawbacks bear,
To grunt and sweat over a computer-formatted page,
But that the glory of something after the exhibition –
The undiscover'd network of collectors, from whose contact
An exhibitor finds he is no longer alone – excites the mind,
And makes us want to read the books we have
And search for others that we know not of?

This mental stimulation does make philatelists of us all,
And thus the onerous task of writing up
Is occasioned by the pale cast of light
Under the magnifying glass,
And findings of great pith and moment!
When these are gibbered excitedly, the spouse turns away
And loses interest.....

*(Ed: I'll leave you to guess who wrote this but it is by one of our recent first time exhibitors.
Read carefully and you too may wish to become an exhibitor.)*

Litotes

In his 35th year Dante Alighieri threw a mid-life crisis stemming, it seems, from woman trouble and banishment. His reaction was to write some 15,000 lines of verse which, on a third reading, now seem to me an attempt to satisfy a medieval niche market for sado-masochism. Dante was lucky: other things being equal, he had another 35 years to go. By contrast, I find myself well past the usual scriptural use-by date and facing a crisis based not on deprivation – still happily married and unlikely to be deported – but rather on abundance. For one thing, I'm faced with shelf after shelf of books bought and still not read, and even more shelves of books I'd like to re-read. More to the point in the present context, I'm also faced with collection after collection needing a total rewrite, stock books that bulge to the point of bursting, enough duplicates to keep an exchange circuit going for years and cupboards full of mysterious material that I've been meaning to look at for years.

It all goes back, as it always does, to boyhood influences. First, there was the concept of Renaissance Man, an omni-competent creature who could write a sonnet, cut a throat, participate in Neo-Platonic debates, fight a duel, seduce his neighbour's wife and sight-read a madrigal, all at the drop of a hat and without raising a bead of sweat. Renaissance Man was held up as a role model though things like throat-cutting were not recommended.

Then there were the uncles and family friends who had both the nous and the means to collect things like the long George V commemorative sets that appeared in the thirties and who would generously toss over one or two low values from such a set to start things off.

No wonder then that my target, once serious collecting set in, was the whole of what is now Stanley Gibbons Part 1. Only one thing stood in the way - finance. In those days, paper delivering or whatever was not quite the thing, and in any case school left little time. One lived on one's pocket money. On that, there were many calls, from model railways to, as the years went on, taking the girl friend of the day to the cinema.

Even so, good things were to be had, even on a limited budget. There was a dingy corner shop in a sleazy part of what we would now call the town's CBD that sold cigarettes and sweets and magazines (of a sort) – and stamps. I ought to put that in capitals: STAMPS. Because the owner's stock books included Penny Blacks at one shilling each and other such treasures. He had no more idea than we of the niceties of plating and the attraction of numbered London Maltese Crosses. Theoretically, I could have put together the whole of Plate 11 with numbered MCs out of those stock books. I didn't, of course. The cinema!

In any case, as things turned out, such a gem would have done me no good in the longer run because the war intervened and, as wartime Britain was not a very pleasant place to be, I volunteered to go where the booze, so to speak, if not cheaper, was at least more plentiful. There, collecting seemed a little frivolous, and adding albums and stock books to all the gear one had to lug about would have added to the load.

When I got back from what had turned out to be a peaceful war, threads had to be picked up, of course, and some threads proved to have come unravelled beyond any hope of reconnection. In particular, and whether it was because my family had come to the gloomy view that I was bound to become some corner of a foreign field I never did find out, in my absence my younger brother in whose keeping all my boyish treasures, from Meccano to stamps, had been left had flogged the lot. I have since forgiven him but the loss smarted.

¹ (Ed: A cryptic title and a cryptic author but litotes means understatement I gather!)

Capital Philately

The getting of a degree, and then a job, steered my energies and interests in other directions for several years, and then suddenly I found myself surrounded by stamps again. The concern for which I was working at the time had a vast inwards and outwards correspondence and its smooth running was one of my responsibilities. The old addiction revived at the sight of hundreds of covers from all over the globe coming in every day. No one else wanted them at the time so I saved them from the WPB. On the other side of the coin, it was policy to personalise outgoing mail – no Francopost or anything like that – so I also had access to vast numbers of Wilding sheets. When good flaws turned up positional blocks came out of the sheet. I still remember one 2d light red-brown sheet that had about five big varieties in it: by the time I'd finished with it, the post clerk was almost in tears.

But such fringe benefits didn't compensate for other aspects and the time came to pack everything up. By then, as well as albums and stock books, there was an accumulation of many thousands of stamps off paper, waiting to be gone over. I didn't want to discard them so they were carefully packed into tobacco tins and crated with all the other gear. It was some time after we landed in Melbourne before we had occasion to open the crates. When we did, we found that while Customs had passed over all the books we'd brought – there was strict censorship in those days – they had found the tobacco tins, of which there must have been several dozen, quite irresistible. I had obviously been suspected of smuggling on a grand scale. Every tin had been opened and its contents strewn randomly amongst the other contents of the crate concerned. It was months before we could be sure that the opening of a book or the unrolling of an unused pair of socks would not be followed by a gentle fluttering of stamps.

I had worried that collecting in Australia might prove difficult: SG Part One was still my chosen field. In fact, things went smoothly. Melbourne at the time had several places equivalent to the old corner shop (but not at the same prices, of course) and there was a near equivalent in Canberra for a time. Friendly contacts in the UK helped keep up the flow of varieties and there was for a while a dealer in Sydney who seemed to have better access to Wilding material than my earlier recourse to the post room had provided. Time, death and other unpleasantnesses removed them from the board. But the rash of philatelic horrors that followed the granting of independence to former Colonies made SG Part One an aesthetically impossible dream even if one had been able financially to keep up, and cheerfulness kept breaking in from other directions. Bulk buys opened up new vistas - countries outside Part 1 that one would never have contemplated earlier.

I began dabbling in thematics, at first to interest my daughter in ornithology, and then in an attempt to prove to myself whether it could be done properly. It can't. Take, for instance, the modest field of armoured fighting vehicles, a field in which I had some practical interest, once upon a time. The first real tank, the one that showed up at Cambrai (as opposed to Jules Verne's fictional forerunner), just isn't to be found on any stamp I know. I was seduced into postmarks, notably GB Duplexes and squared circles and FPOs of both world wars, followed by the cancels of British Guiana and Trinidad and Iceland and the Faroes and and and ... There really is no end to it. SG Part One may have gone by the board but its place has been filled to overflowing. And the process shows no signs of ending. Every exchange book, every auction catalogue I open has something in it that makes me stop and think: That looks interesting, I'd like to follow that up. (I don't feel the same about Machins but having got this far – in all innocence because who could have guessed the things would go as long as they did and in the way they did? – I'm reluctant to give up.)

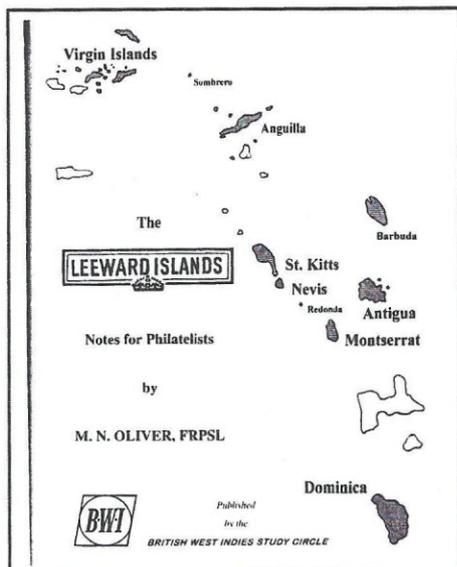
I know I should pull in my horns. I know I should dispose of the material I don't (yet!) collect – but where do I find the time to do that?

It is a real crisis point that I'm at. Che far? as Dante might have said. Perhaps I should found Philatelists Anonymous but how would I make the time to do *that*? And even if I did, I should still like to keep on just my little side collection of forgeries.

(Ed: This is the first part of a series of articles, by an easily guessed member of the Society, which I found fascinating and I hope you do as well.)

THE LEEWARD ISLANDS NOTES FOR PHILATELISTS

M N Oliver FRPSL



A copy of this book arrived in the mail just before the exhibition in London in May. Whilst I knew it was to be published, I didn't know when and it was a pleasant surprise. It gives me great pleasure to review this book because I had some small part in helping with the chapter on postal stationery. This is an excellent book, not because of its subject matter (which is of course of great interest to me), but because of the information it contains.

To get the technical matters out of the way, it is hardbound book of 300 pages about B5 size. It is copiously illustrated mainly in black and white but with three full pages of colour and an additional eight colour illustrations. It contains numerous maps and illustrations, a very useful bibliography, comprehensive index and a loose page of errata and addenda.

The author, Michael Oliver, has been researching all facets of the Leeward Islands for many years and this book brings together much previously published research along with much unpublished material. It supersedes the Robson Lowe Encyclopaedia Volume 6 on the Leeward Islands which regrettably had many errors. Perhaps only those who collect all facets of the Leeward Islands would truly appreciate the amount of work which has gone into pulling all the information in this book together.

It is important to appreciate some of the history of the Leeward Islands before I talk about the coverage of the book. The islands of Antigua, Anguilla, Barbuda, Dominica, Montserrat, Nevis, St Kitts and the Virgin Islands were first formed into a single colonial unit in 1832. The individual islands had their own postage stamps but in 1890 a Federal issue of stamps was produced for use in all of the individual Presidencies, as they were known. These were a De La Rue keyplate design. Indeed keyplates were used for all the issues from Queen Victoria to Queen Elizabeth II. The Federal issue of stamps were the sole stamps used in the islands from 1890 to 1902 with the exception of the Virgin Islands which issued its own stamps in 1899. However, the drop in philatelic income caused by this change led to the individual presidencies wanting to issue their own stamps and this was agreed in 1902. However, rather than getting rid of the Federal issue of stamps, both were issued and used in the individual islands. This makes for some interesting combination covers. This situation continued until 1956 when the Leeward Islands stamps were demonetised and the Federation was broken up, although Dominica left in 1940.

The book essentially covers all aspects of the Leeward Islands from 1890 to 1956 including the stamps, postal stationery and the postal history. For its size and content it is one of the best "one country" books I have seen, in that it covers just about everything of interest in the above period. The book has eight parts which cover the following:

1. The Islands
2. Postal Arrangements from 1840
3. Thomas De La Rue & Co
4. The Federal Postage Stamps
5. The Federal Postage Stationery
6. Post Offices and Postmarks
7. Postage Rates
8. Maritime Mail Services

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In addition it has seven appendices which cover the following:

- A. Perpetual calendar 1752-2100
- B. Colour Chart
- C. Postage Stamps – Priced Listing
- D. Postage Stationery – Priced Listing
- E. Proofs, Essays, Colour trials etc.
- F. De La Rue and Crown Agents Sample Records
- G. Selected Bibliography

The book contains information on numbers printed of all the stamps and stationery; has an excellent chapter on De La Rue - that is worth reading on its own as a potted history - as well as the colour chart which uses actual stamps to illustrate paper and gum shades, ink colours and the coloured papers used by De La Rue. The information on post offices and postmarks is very extensive including earliest and latest known dates and all are illustrated. The maritime mail services were obviously very important to the islands and the chapter on these covers all of the services and all of the markings used that are known on Leeward Islands stamps or covers.

Most of the known varieties and errors that occur on the stamps are illustrated and included in the priced listing. I believe that most of the pricing is quite realistic and is based on auction and dealer listings. I helped price the postal stationery and whilst some prices may surprise some collectors in general I believe they are realistic. Much of the stationery is quite rare, especially used. For example, one of the KGV registered envelopes had a single printing of 307 and all of these were sent to the Virgin Islands, which had the lowest usage of Leeward Islands stamps and stationery of the five presidencies. Needless to say this is a very rare item.

Overall I believe this is the best one country book I have seen although it is not perfect. There a few obvious omissions, such as forgetting to list the KGVI £1 sideways watermark in appendix C, and I would have listed the revenues for completeness, but these are minor issues. Overall it is a great book and one I highly recommend if you collect the Leeward Islands or any of the individual islands.

The book is available for £59 from the British West Indies Study Circle and has an £8 discount if you are a member. As membership is only £10 a year it is worth joining. Contact Peter C Ford, 22 Tudor Way, Congleton, CHESHIRE CW12 4AS, UK to order a copy, or he can be contacted by e-mail: pccford@hotmail.com

Darryl Fuller

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A MODERN LOCAL POST IN VISBY

Robert A. M. Gregson

Visby is the main town on the island of Gotland, which lies on the Baltic sea about midway between the coasts of Sweden and Latvia. A map of Gotland appears on a Swedish stamp of 1999 (Facit No.2170) as it was the most easterly and hence the first territory of that nation to greet the new millennium. The island has been Swedish since 1645, but from before then had a very long and eventful history, changing hands between different local powers. Its museum has rich displays of prehistoric burials, hoards of silver from the Viking times, old grave stones inscribed in runes, and carved statues from mediaeval churches, to mention only a few things. The city of Visby is famous for the fact that its stone city walls are largely intact nearly all the way around the old city, and inside are eleven ruined churches, mostly of Gothic style and dating from the 1200s. The city walls have been depicted on two Swedish stamps (Figure 1) of 1965 (Facit Nos. 561, 562, S.G. 479,480), and unsurprisingly on numerous picture postcards. The area is also of great interest to botanists, as Linnaeus wrote a book in 1741 on his visit to the islands in the Baltic and the classification of plants there.



Figure 1: The 1965 issue of Sweden showing Visby Ringmur

A monochrome picture postcard current in the 1940s is shown in Figure 2; the section of town wall, on the northern edge of the old city, is partly demolished here. The damage is locally attributed to a battle with German invaders from Lubeck in the 14th century, but a history text says it equally well can have just fallen down through poor workmanship. The limestone walls are generally much higher, and characterised by the many towers, each about four stories high, one of which is seen on the postcard and also on the stamps of 1965.

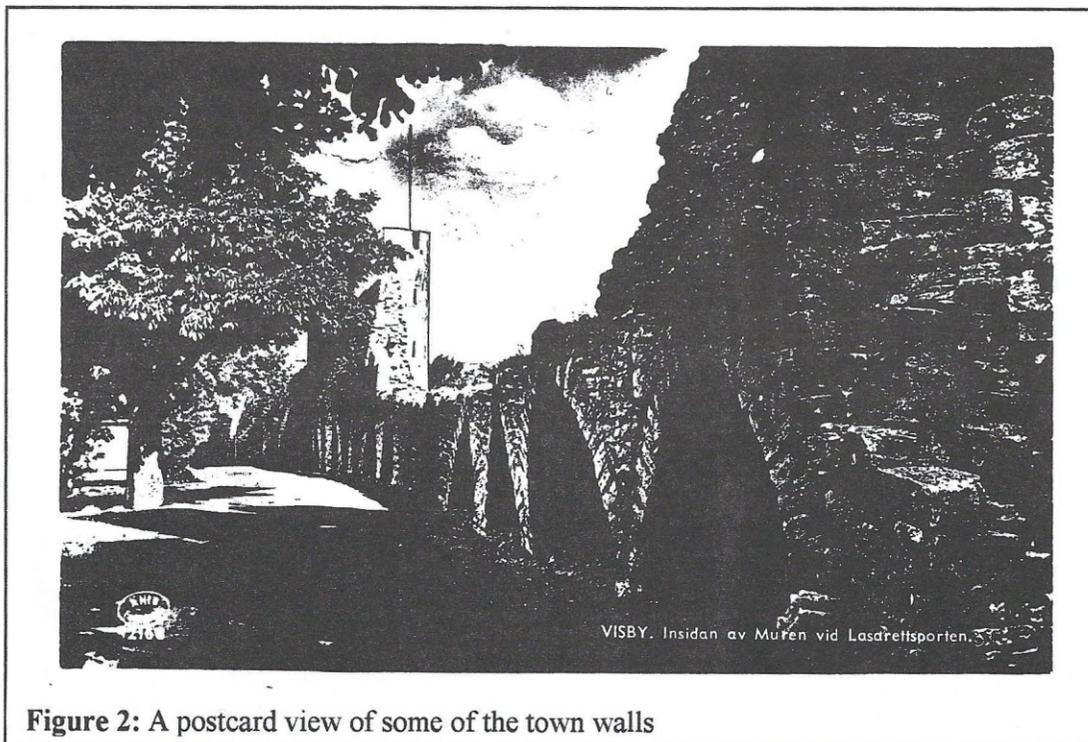


Figure 2: A postcard view of some of the town walls

For the philatelist, however, there is an additional interest, in that it has a commercially active local post, which has also issued a few stamps, and runs in competition with the government postal services. I was able to visit its offices in August 2000, and can describe some of its features.

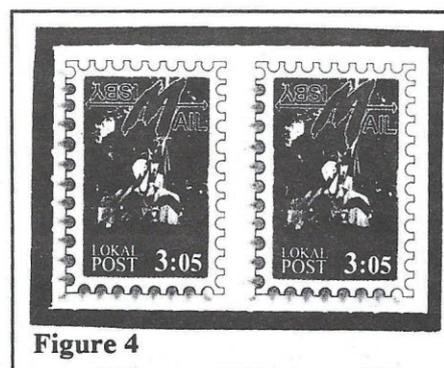
The stamps so far issued are listed, in part, in the catalogue *Facit Sverige 2000*, which attempts, with reservations, to cover the local issues that have been permitted under Swedish law since the relaxation of the state postal monopoly in 1993. There have been at least three more active periods in Swedish postal history where local posts have operated legally, and in some cases issued their own stamps; in the 1880s, in the 1940s, and today. Visby did not have one such post in the earlier epochs. The catalogue says (my translation) "Through all the post monopoly being relaxed there arose the possibility of a large number of local post enterprises operating over the whole country. Many appeared and quite a number have already left the arena. A committee under the chairmanship of Carl-Olav Carenburg was set up to study these issues, and has compiled enough information to produce a catalogue for the collector". It is therefore of interest to find a local post that actually flourishes, and might be thought to illustrate what could happen in Australia if the government monopoly here were to be similarly relaxed.

The present local post in Visby is run from premises in the new town, outside the city walls, and at the back of the offices of the local newspaper *Gotlands Tidningar*, sharing the same address at 10 Broväg. It was preceded by another company, called *Gute Post HB*, which appears to have become defunct after a month. That firm issued one undenominated stamp depicting a sheep on a bicycle against a background of town ruins. I deduce that there is a commercial connection between the two present businesses, as one of the letter boxes of the local post, which is now called *Wisby Mail HB*, indicated that mail posted to either of the two newspapers in the town from that box would be delivered free. It also indicated that the local post would forward mail not just on the island of Gotland, but also to a restricted number of locations on the mainland in the postal code areas of the cities of Malmö and Göteborg.

Another local post box in the old city market place was plain with no such displayed information. These local letter boxes are mounted on posts on the pavement alongside the government boxes, which usually come in pairs, with one for Gotland deliveries and the other for wider distribution, and all three boxes are distinctively colour coded.

In the offices of the company it was apparent that most of the business activity was the delivery of commercial circulars and accounts, in prepaid envelopes. I did not see any stamps affixed, the supply of stamps was kept in a safe and there was a plentiful stock of at least one issue which comes in sheets of 30. The stamps can be bought via the internet page of the company as well as locally. The justification for the local posts is that they can undercut the rates of the government mail services for some categories of mail. The rates of all the posts seem to rise slowly, annually, and now undenominated stamps for the basic letter rate are ubiquitous.

In agreement with, and augmentation of the catalogue, I can confirm that the stamps so far issued are: 17th March 1997: one denomination of Kr 2.85, in three designs, showing views of the skyline of the old city, multicoloured, rouletted. (Figure 3 shows one of them).



2nd October 1997: one stamp of Kr 3.05 showing a knight on horseback in the mediaeval pageant held in Visby for one week each year, multicoloured, rouletted. (Figure 4)



Figure 5: The 10 comic designs commemorating the Island Games

5th March 1999: 10 different designs of Kr 3.05, to commemorate the Island Games. These are comic designs, each shows a sheep (the armorial animal of Gotland) playing some sport. The webpage address of the company appears on each stamp of this issue. (Figure 5, a part of a sheet of 30 stamps).



Figure 6; A Gotland ram; Gutefår

The Gotland sheep is actually a distinct breed, and appears realistically on a Swedish Kr 3.20 stamp of 1994 (Facit No. 1824) in Figure 6.

It is unsurprisingly, also a popular theme for the profusion of modern picture postcards for tourists (Figure 7).

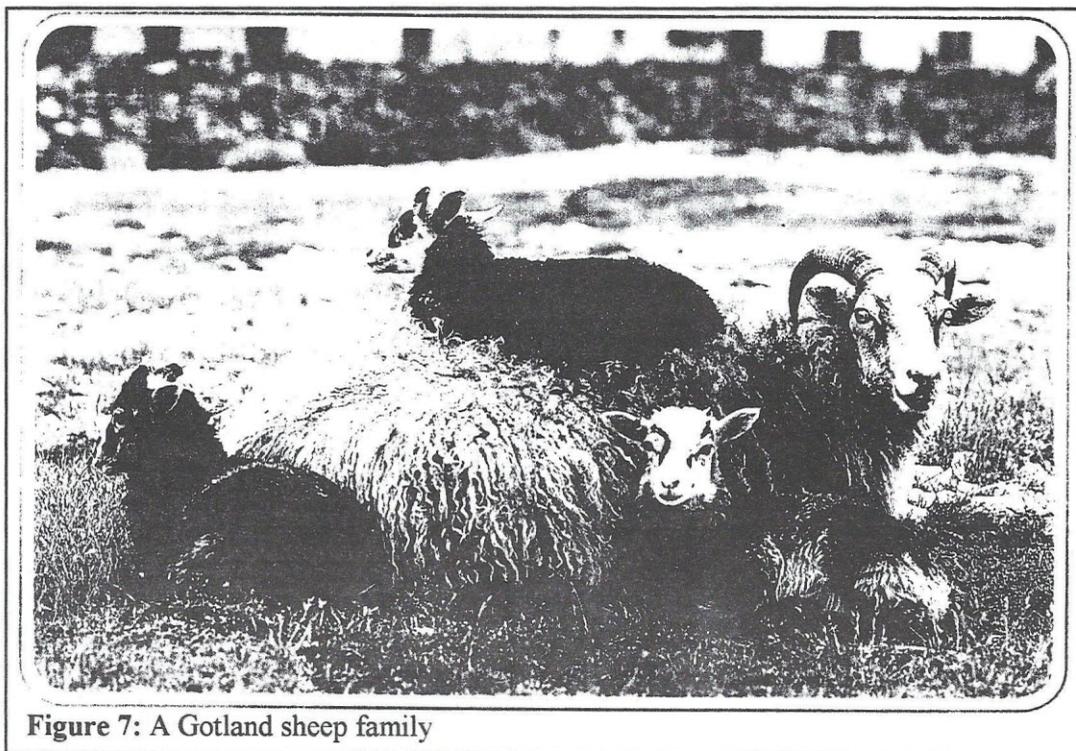


Figure 7: A Gotland sheep family

Of issue date unknown, an undenominated stamp of the peel-and-stick type. (Figure 8). This appears to coincide with the shift to undenominated stamps for the internal letter rate by the government issues.



Figure 8: Strip of undenominated peel and stick stamps.

The postal stationery is shown in reduced size in Figure 9, the original is 23 x 16 cms.

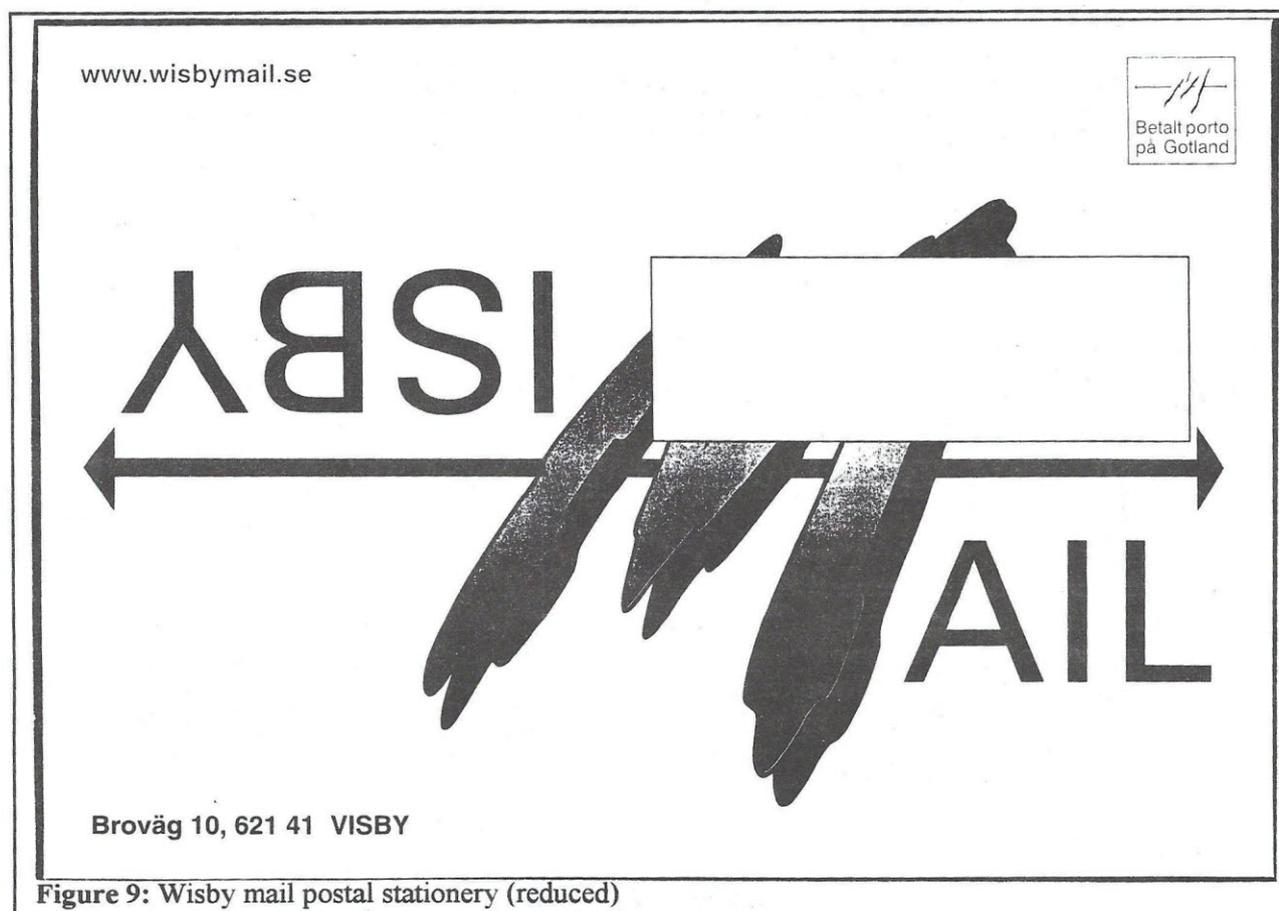


Figure 9: Wisby mail postal stationery (reduced)

These modern local stamps are elusive, particularly on cover, and from the little I was able to determine in Stockholm are not carried by dealers in any amount. The earlier issues from the 1880s to the 1940s are fairly easy to find unused but are no longer cheap, and have been repeatedly catalogued in specialist texts, both in Swedish and in English.

To make informed sense of what is actually now happening in these local posts, it is helpful to ignore the currently fashionable distinctions between Social Philately, Postal History, Postal Stationery, and Traditional Philately, and take a coherent perspective.

MATERIAL REQUIRED FOR THE NOVEMBER AND ALL SUBSEQUENT ISSUES

MEMBERS' COLLECTING INTERESTS

Robert A M Gregson

The following tabulations are based on a sample of 100 application forms for membership that are on file, and span 1992 to 2000. They fall into two non-overlapping periods, 1992-94 and 1996-2000. Though the changes between the two periods are relatively slight in terms of the proportions of members involved, they are of interest because they reveal such things as the emergence of systematic Machin collecting.

What a collector indicates as being his or her predominant or exclusive philatelic interest when applying to join the society does not, of course, indicate what subsequent changes in interests emerge after contact with other members and with seeing displays of material previously unfamiliar to the applicant.

It is not surprising that some persons will stay with a social group for years, even until death, whereas others drop out very soon after joining, or simply become non-financial. Hobby interests compete with other demands in time and resources, and some persons are very mobile from one city to another, taking their interests with them, and making collections that reflect their current circumstances and location. Some long-standing interests are focussed on countries or periods in which the collector has lived or worked, and may fruitfully depend on a special knowledge of history, culture, science and technology, or language.

Year of Application	N
1992	20
1993	7
1994	10
Total in 1st Group	46
1996	1
1997	13
1998	10
1999	5
2000	19
undated	7
Total in 2nd Group	54

The fluctuations reflect the intermittent recruitment drives that the society pursues when holding exhibitions.

Note that in the following table (over the page) of specific interests, the totals running down the table do not add up to the number of respondents, because most persons indicated multiple interests. The proportions are, however, calculated on the basis of the number of respondents. There is no way, from the responses given, reliably to discriminate between what might be called active or continuing interests, and passive or intermittent interests. Some responses, such as Australia, may be inclusive or exclusive of specific subgroups within the wider heading.

In the cases of Europe, and the British Commonwealth, I have not listed some particular countries which are only mentioned once in all the respondents of both periods added together. These include; Yugoslavia, Albania, Eire, France, and Sweden, and; Hong Kong, Fiji, Ceylon, New Hebrides, Zululand and Nigeria.

Proportions given in brackets in the second and fourth columns are sums of grouped categories such as British Commonwealth. Nearly two-thirds of these respondents give Australian philately, in various designations, as their main if not exclusive interest. New Zealand is often given along with Australia, not on its own, and accounts for 13% of respondents. This is about the same as for Great Britain. Thematic collectors account for onetenth of respondents, there may have been a slight drop in the popularity of thematics but equally it may be that thematic collectors don't choose to join a society which is seen as 'serious'.

Capital Philately

The British Commonwealth as a whole, and Europe, are about equally of interest, around one-fifth of respondents mentions them. Remaining interests are very sparse. It would be very helpful to compare these figures with known patterns of purchases (*Ed. According to the exchange superintendent these figures are very similar to expenditure patterns on the exchange circuit.*), and with the balance of advertising in philatelic magazines. The editorial policy of Capital Philately may not presently reflect the balance of this table. It could also be important to examine the reported interests of persons who drop out, as compared with those who stay members for many years.

(Ed: This analysis was carried out by Robert in May this year and when combined with a survey of members, which will appear in the next issue, is one of the driving forces behind trying to move Capital Philately to a journal that more reflects the members' interests whilst maintaining the journal's excellent achievements over the years.)

Interest	First N ex 46	Group: propn.	Second N ex 54	Group: propn.
Australia	16	.348	19	.352
Specific issues:	-	-	-	-
KGV	4		-	-
KGV+I+E	1		2	
Predecimal	2		5	
Decimal	-	-	2	
Dependencies	5	.109	4	.074
PSC	-	-	1	(.610)
New Zealand	6	.130	6	.111
Predecimal	1		-	(.130)
Pacific Islands	5		1	
New Guinea Papua	6	.130	-	-
Aust. States	3		4	
NSW	1		-	-
WA	-	-	1	(.090)
Thematics:	-	-	-	-
railways	1		-	-
aviation	1		1	
soccer	2		-	-
birds	-	-	1	
other	5		-	(.100)
G.B.(U.K.)	5	.108	5	.093
machins	-	-	4	(.140)
British Commonwealth	7		3	
Canada	-	-	4	
Specific colonies	3		5	(.220)
Western Europe:	1		1	
Germany	4		2	
Latvia	1		1	
other countries	5		6	(.210)
Asia	1		3	
China	2		-	-
USA	1		1	
Postal Stationery	2		2	
Postal History	1		2	
Postcards	-	-	1	
Literature	1		1	
Classic Stamps	-	-	1	
Used Stamps	1		-	-
defunct postal				
Administrations	-	-	1	



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