



Newcastle Philatelic Society Newsletter VIEWS FROM NOBBYS

Newcastle Philatelic Society, P.O. Box 34, JESMOND NSW 2299
Website : www.philas.org.au/newcastle

AUGUST, 2011 : Newsletter No. 158 : EDITOR: Ron Davis

WHAT'S ON IN YOUR SOCIETY

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

DATES	DETAILS
Thurs 11 August 2011	ANNUAL COMPETITION , (Experienced, Intermediate and Beginners' Sections) A.G.M. and Presentations of Awards Night
Wed 17 August 2011	Newcastle Daytime Meeting : 10.00 am, 48 Mackie Avenue New Lambton East Display by Ron Davis - "IDLING ACROSS THE INDIAN OCEAN"
Sun 21 August 2011	WALLSEND STAMP FAIR , Junior Stamp Activities Meeting, at 11am
Thurs 8 September 2011	Display by John Pugsley - "BOER WAR PART II"
Sun 18 September 2011	WALLSEND STAMP FAIR , Junior Stamp Activities Meeting, at 11am
Wed 21 September 2011	Newcastle Daytime Meeting : 10.00 am, 48 Mackie Avenue New Lambton East, Display by Howard Fisher, Toronto - "PRIMATES"
<i>Thurs 22 September 2011</i>	STAMP AUCTION NIGHT (details, phone Don Catterall 02 4943 5639)
Thurs 13 October 2011	Display by Bernard Doherty - "UPFRONT AND BEHIND THE SCENES"
Sun 16 October 2011	WALLSEND STAMP FAIR , Junior Stamp Activities Meeting, at 11am
Wed 19 October 2011	Newcastle Daytime Meeting : 10.00 am, 48 Mackie Avenue New Lambton East, Display by Bernard Doherty, - "NEWCASTLES AROUND THE WORLD"
Thurs 10 November 2011	Display by Ed Wolf, Sydney - "EUROPE-AUSTRALIA AIR ROUTES"
Wed 16 November 2011	Newcastle Daytime Meeting : 10.00 am, 48 Mackie Avenue New Lambton East, Display by Don Catterall - "POST CARDS"
Sun 20 November 2011	WALLSEND STAMP FAIR , Junior Stamp Activities Meeting, at 11am
Thurs 8 December 2011	Display by Lionel Savins, Sydney - "NEW ZEALAND POSTAL STATIONERY"
Mon 12 December 2011	Visit MAITLAND PHILATELIC SOCIETY (phone John Moore 4956 8931)
Sun 18 December 2011	WALLSEND STAMP FAIR , Junior Stamp Activities Meeting, at 11am
DECEMBER 2011	NO Newcastle Daytime Meeting

A PIECE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT, AUGUST 2011

It has been a great honour to have served in the capacity as President over the past two years. It has been an interesting, helpful and challenging experience, as well as a steep learning curve.

To those who share with me the fascination of philately, may I encourage you to collect what you like - and like what you collect, and, to learn as much as possible about the subjects that you find most interesting.

The work of your Committee has been exceptional and I would like to commend and thank ALL of them, for their fine contributions over the past two years.

May I commend to you, your incoming President, Gordon Gibbons.

- Keith R. Kestel, President

*** IN TURKEY, in the 16th and 17th centuries, anyone caught drinking coffee was put to death.
perhaps this was the origin of caffeine being bad for your health ??

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2010-2011

I would like to thank all the members of the current Committee whose commitment and skills I value, who continue to do the work; on many occasions, behind the scenes, to enable one and all to enjoy the 'hobby' of philately.

To those members who have gone the second mile by entering Exhibitions in NSW and interstate, oftentimes under difficult and changing circumstances, your efforts are appreciated. The results are pleasing but they only reflect part of the story.

I would also like to record my thanks to all who have conducted presentations and impromptu two minutes talks at the meetings. The variety of subjects and the treatment of their subject matter has been exceptional.

In particular, I would like to thank the Executive - John Moore, our Secretary, Bernard Doherty, Assistant Secretary and Public Officer and our Treasurer, Don Rutherford - for their combined gifts and graces. Thank you for a task well-done. Congratulations.

In closing, may I express my sincere thanks to you all for your support and encouragement that has sustained me during my term as President.

- Keith R Kestel, President 2009 – 2011

TREASURER'S REPORT 2011

Newcastle Permanent Building Society Charlestown - Cheque Account

Opening Balance 1-7-2010 \$3169-66

INCOME

Subscriptions	1363-50
Interest Insurance a/c	2113-09
Commissions & Sale by Tend	464-59
Sundries	415-20

EXPENDITURE

Room Rent	785-00
Insurance	250-00
Refund	27-45
Affiliation Fees	169-50
Expenses	669-24
Australian Tax Office	731-40
Bank Fees	13-50
Donations	150-00
Transfer to insurance fund	1000-00
Total Sundries	276-50

TOTAL \$4356-38 **Total** \$3796-09

Closing balance 30-6-2011 \$3778-91



These "Show Week" labels were issued every year for many years, each one in a different colour, but NONE of them show the year date. The Show ALWAYS started on a Friday, so, with a "perpetual calendar", you can find the year by matching the first date with a Friday (in this case, February 23rd).

EXCHANGE BRANCH STATEMENT of INCOME and EXPENDITURE

National Australia Bank – Opening Balance 01/07/2010 \$2550.77

INCOME

Sales from Books and Late Fees	1294.50
Bank Interest	0.06
Unpresented Cheque	<u>12.83</u>
Total	1307.39

EXPENDITURE

Payments to Vendors	1126.67
Postage & Telephone	35.61
P.O. Box, Jesmond	86.00
Unpresented Cheque	<u>12.83</u>
Total	1261.11

Closing Balance at Bank 30 /06 /11 \$2597.05

The Exchange Branch Books have been audited and found to be correct Dr. J. F. Hill, Hon. Auditor 2/8/2011

In submitting this report, I take the opportunity to thank all those Members who by their co-operation have helped to make my task a little easier.

However, it is disappointing that more Members are not taking the opportunity to use the Exchange Branch to buy and/or sell.

- Kevin Simkus, Exchange Branch Convener -

SECRETARY'S ANNUAL REPORT, 11th AUGUST 2011

Currently the Society has 105 members, a decrease of 10 over the previous year. On a positive note, a number of new members have joined the Society and have become regular attendees at our meetings. During the year, average attendance at the monthly meetings has been 24, a decrease of two over the previous year (much of this decrease came about by one night which had a particularly low attendance).

The regular Auction Nights as well as the annual Swap And Sale Night continue to attract good attendances. Thanks go to convener DON CATTERALL for his efforts in promoting both of these activities.

RON DAVIS has continued to convene the Daytime Meetings, attracting a regular group of attendees. Thanks are extended to SANDRA BAKER for hosting these meetings as well as our Committee meetings at her art studio, Studio 48.

The 2010 Christmas Party was hosted by KEITH and PAMELA KESTEL at their residence, with those present having an enjoyable time.

The Newsletter, which continues to be edited by RON DAVIS with help from BERNARD DOHERTY, allows members who wish to, to receive an electronic copy in full colour in preference to the printed black and white copy.

STEPHEN MORRIS continues his efforts in attracting youth to stamp collecting, with varied participation.

MARK SAXBY as Publicity Officer continues to promote the Society in the printed and electronic media, as well as exploring other avenues to maximize the Society's activities to the larger community.

During the year a number of members displayed their collections to members of other clubs, as well as participating in various Exhibitions in Australia and overseas.

The Doron Trophy was again keenly contested with seven Society members being eligible. The winner this year was JOHN PUGSLEY, with his Boer War exhibit in October 2010.

The annual Popular Choice Competition held at the April meeting was Something Philatelic Starting with the Letter 'T'. There were eleven entries, with the winner being JOHN PUGSLEY – "Tasmania".

In the 2011 Annual Competition, there were eight entries in the Experienced section. These were judged by ED BURNARD, DON RUTHERFORD and BERNARD DOHERTY. The winner was MARK SAXBY with his entry "Australian Private Perfins".

I wish to say a particular 'thank you' to two members who have retired from the Committee at this AGM. Firstly, TREVOR DUMBRILL, who joined the Society during 1975 and immediately found himself on the Committee, followed quickly as Society Secretary, followed by being elected as President for two years (1980/1). Following this, Trevor was Treasurer for two terms before becoming a Vice President in 1985, a role he has continued in until the present day. Secondly, JOHN PUGSLEY retires after six years on the Committee, two years of which he was President.

In closing, I wish to make special thanks to DON RUTHERFORD and KEVIN SIMKUS for the written financial reports they table at the Committee meetings, and to BERNARD DOHERTY for filling in for me on a number of occasions when I was absent due to personal reasons.

- John Moore, Secretary, 11th August 2011

AUCTION REPORT, MAY 2011

What a good night was had by all ! With 43 bidders in the room and 414 lots on offer, few went home empty handed. In all 173 items were sold and that represents 42% of material changing hands.

Total sales for the night amounted to \$1,335 and thus some very useful cash for the 20 vendors who submitted lots. *What have YOU got to sell?*

Top sale of the night was a very nice FU 5/- Sydney Harbour Bridge which went for \$190. \$48 was paid for a shoe box full of interesting covers, whilst a hanger sheet which contained NZ Exhibition stamps fetched \$46, these latter coming from the late John Fordham collection, as were more covers and some unusual NZ cut outs/proofs (?) which both went for \$28.

Next, a Second Wmk 2/- Roo sold for \$30 and a group of Military covers went for \$24. These were the highlights of a very interesting and worthwhile auction night, just 7 of the 173 lots sold. Well done, Everyone ! Come along in September and get involved yourself, either as a vendor or a buyer, always room for both, but before that, of course, we have our Swap and Sale Night on the 23rd of June. Hope to see you there.

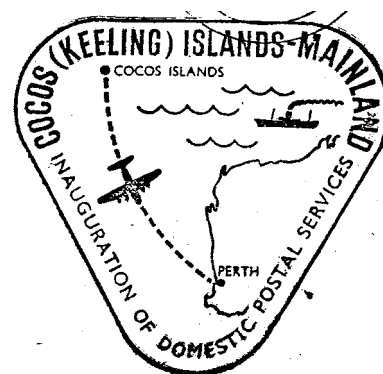
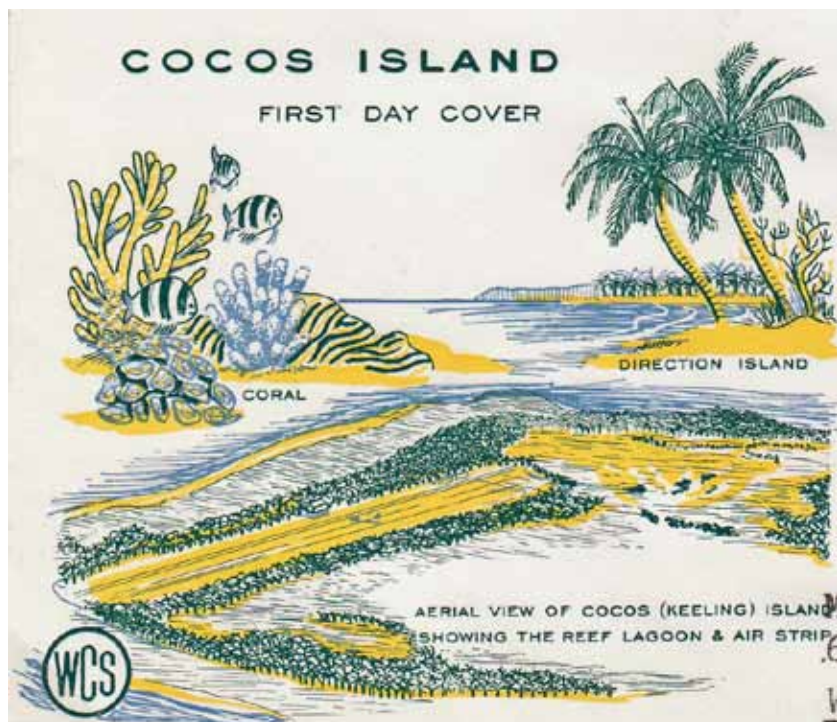
- Don Catterall, Auction Convenor.

** We understand that the Australian Stamp and Coin Dealers Association will be holding a big Stamp and Coin Fair at the Panthers Club in King Street, Newcastle West on 9th October this year. A good chance to get that elusive item that you've been looking for!

COCOS ISLANDS – Display by Kim Dwyer, Thursday 12th May 2011

Did you know that there are TWO Cocos Islands?! One is a 46 sq.km. “uninhabited” island south-west of Costa Rica in the Pacific Ocean, and the other is deliberately called the Cocos-Keeling Islands to avoid confusion. Islands? There are 27 of them, small coral islands in the Indian Ocean, 2572 km north-west of Perth, and the subject of Kim’s display, which consisted of commercial covers and philatelic material covering the period from 1955 to 1990.

Discovered in 1609 (by Captain Keeling), the islands were visited by Darwin in 1836, and acquired by Great Britain in 1857. In 1878 they were placed under a Ceylon governor, then under the Straits Settlements in 1886. Made a protectorate of Singapore in 1903, the islands were placed under Australian authority on 23rd November 1955. During the late 1800’s, they were settled by the Clunies-Ross family, who brought coconuts to the islands – they are not native – which became their major export. West Island and Home Island have about 98% of the approx. 2000 total population. The highest point on these islands is 3 metres (10 ft., so rising sea levels will be a problem, especially as their total area is only about 13 sq.km.!)



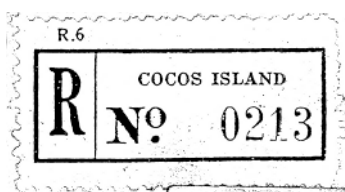
In November 1955, for the FIRST Postal Services flight, the shortest ever period of postal charges was created, for 1 day, specifically for that flight. The “By Air” cachet is very scarce.

From 1955, Australian postage was used up to 1963, when the first Cocos Islands

stamps were issued, but in 1966 they reverted back to Australian issues. 1969 saw the next issue of Cocos stamps; in 1973 the first set of Definitive stamps, and in 1994 the Australian Post Office took over the Cocos Postal Bureau.

In the 1960’s, following the first pre-decimal issue of stamps, there was a push by the islanders to have the islands recognised and a set of black-and-white postcards was produced. BUT there were NO provisions on the islands for tourists! In more recent years, this has picked up a bit – it is easier to reach there from Indonesia. In a letter dated 6th May 1969, there was a paragraph: “there is only one charter aircraft every three weeks”, hence “some delay in the return of mail from Cocos.”

Missent mail has always been a problem – there is a general lack of knowledge of the islands’ location. Kim displayed items which had been sent via Christmas Island, and with cachets “via Auckland”, “Missent to Willemstad, Curacao”, “Missent to Sydney NSW Australia” (after Tokyo !!), and “Missent to ICELAND”! There was an Air Mail bag tag (a weekly or fortnightly service) and a Sea Mail bag tag (an infrequent service), and items with a large overprinted cachet “OFFICIAL PAID MAINLAND” and “MAINLAND POSTAGE PAID”.



The postage rate for inter- and intra-island mail was 1 cent, which became 5 cents later. Other items in Kim’s display were registered covers and pieces of parcel, and two postally used aerogrammes from 1990 (when new aircraft became available), and provisional overprints 1990-1991 issued because they ran out of “Shell” stamps and needed them for the correct value postage. There were four of five of these overprints, as well as “official” overprints, which are rather hard to find.

It is perhaps not surprising that Kim’s display won a Large Gold Award at a recent Exhibition. R.D.

*** The person who never makes a mistake leads a pretty dull life.

** The highest high tides in the world are in the Bay of Fundy between Nova Scotia and New Brunswick on the east coast of Canada. Here the water level at high tide can be 14.5 metres (47 feet) above the low tide level – nearly as high as a five-storey building!

HEARD ISLAND – Display by Kevin Dwyer, Thursday 14th July 2011

Heard Island was “the most isolated outpost in the world” when it was established in 1947. It was also Australia’s remotest territory – a sign on their Post Office tent read “Nearest phone booth – 2400 miles from Mitchell and Busselton Road, Fremantle W.A.” Located in the South Indian Ocean, its nearest neighbour is Kerguelen Island, 310 miles (500 km) away, its highest point being the dominant Big Ben, a volcano 9000 ft. (2747 m) high. First sighted by a sealer in 1833, it was re-discovered by an American navigator, Captain John Heard, in 1853, and together with Mc.Donald Island constitutes the Australian external territory “Heard and Mc.Donald Is.”, with a total area of 290 sq.km. Heard Island is 21 km across and 43 km long, with many glaciers, and all land higher than 300 metres above sea level is perpetually covered in snow.

Kevin’s 48-page display covered the period from the Base’s establishment by Group Captain Stuart Campbell in 1947 to 8th March 1955, when it was replaced by Mawson Base on the Antarctic mainland. Dominant were several unique original photographs in the display, taken at the Base.

It was difficult building the scientific Base from scratch, and so took several months in late 1947 into 1948. They had to contend with 80 – 90 km. per hour winds and blinding snow storms. The first things unloaded from the ship were a tractor and two Nissan huts, accommodation while they established the camp. (They look like half of a galvanised rainwater tank - there are still Nissan huts in use in southern parts of Newcastle!)



Heard Island Base during its establishment in 1947-48.

Following Group Captain Campbell as leader at the Base was AUB GOTLEY (1917-1983), a meteorologist, who was also their radio operator. Aub, leader for 14 months, made the Base “a comfortable working station” in those 400 days. Engaged to be married to Doreen Struthers a few days before he left for Heard Island, Aub sent radio reports to his fiancée, describing 52 dangerous cyclones and 193km/hour winds! One of these reports, published in the Sydney Morning Herald on 2nd August 1950 says: “*Heard Island temperature has risen slightly and is now between 1 and 3 degrees below freezing, with some moderate westerly winds.*”



Big Ben (2747 metres in height), Heard Island

Some excitement at the Base when their doctor, Dr. Udovikoff, contracted appendicitis and had to be urgently sent back to “civilization”. He was replaced by Dr. R.W. Allison, who became their doctor and postmaster.

Supplies (and the doctor) were delivered to the Base up to 1950-51 on HMAS *Labuan*, which was formerly *LST 3501*, a ship designed to unload military tanks onto land, and wasn’t really suitable for pushing through Antarctic drift ice.

In his display, Kevin included many original telegrams radioed by Aub Gotley to Melbourne and transcribed there, and photographs of the Research Station people at work (and at play), and lots of other unique material. He conceded, though, that “this original stuff should be in the Government Archives or in a museum”.



The de-commissioned Heard Island Base photographed in 1997

For many years a basic camp on Heard Island was maintained for Australian expeditions which have visited periodically since the Base closed, but the Base site is now derelict. R.D.

** Despite importing large quantities of Australian coal, China has more than 10,000 mines producing 3500 million tonnes of coal, compared to Australia’s annual production of 400 million tonnes. Until 2008, China was a net exporter of coal, but now Australia’s rival for supplying coal to China is Mongolia. (Australian Financial Review)

FREE ADVERTISEMENTS !!

August, 2011

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

FOR SALE:

HAROLD FRANKS – phone 4953 0050. I have '1000s' of Australian INTERNATIONAL stamps – mint, mint no gum, and used, including the hard-to-get high values. Also some overseas stamps, mainly Poland and Russia.

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

WANTED:

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

SANDRA BAKER - phone 4956 4515, issues showing "Pre-history"- early man, fossils, cave paintings, etc. There are several from China and from the Middle East that I need – Jordan, Israel, Lebanon, Iran, Iraq, and Afghanistan. And I am STILL wanting "pre-history" stamps from Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania.

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

JOHN BASSFORD - phone 4952 5716 : Anything from "unusual countries" and "dead countries".

DAVID PICKERING, phone 4953 2735 –Locomotives on stamps & postcards, and ALL Aust. 'Specimens' Overprints.

REX HILL, phone 4957 0176 - pre printed pages for albums, Great Britain from 1840, British Commonwealth, Channel Islands, Isle of Man, early Norfolk Island, early Cocos Island.

DON CATTERALL - phone 4943 5639: old postcards, and AUSTRALIAN Revenue and Railway Parcel stamps.

CHRIS ASHHURST-SMITH - phone 4957 0622: N.S.W. POSTMARKS, with Circular Date Stamps; and George V or VI Australian.

GREG LAIDLER, phone 4957 8267 (leave a voice message), or email at glaidler@bigpond.com, or at club meetings - wants copies of the 1974 PAINTINGS definitive stamps, especially the \$1 and \$2 values. I am researching the location of printing varieties of the \$2 stamp. Some of these stamps have scratches or dots and blobs of various colours. These flaws changed as the printing cylinders of different colours were changed. I would like to purchase or view sheets, panes, blocks, and covers and used copies.

**SWAP AND SALE NIGHT, JUNE 2011**

Another Cold and Windy Winter's Night was an ordeal to be overcome, but a surprising number braved the elements and brought about a successful event. There were well over 30 in attendance and this included a couple of visitors who were happy to find a cheaper source than our local stamp fair. About 10 sellers took tables and for a couple of hours we all had a busy Philatelic and Social time. Sincere thanks to everyone who participated !

It will be on again, same time, same place next year.

Don Catterall. Event Convenor.

SCAVENGER HUNT, Thursday 9th June 2011

There were only five members who tackled the challenge of the vagaries of the Scavenger Hunt, concocted by Don Catterall. It wasn't all that easy, although Don insisted that it was (well, HE had all of the stamps!). But the interpretations of the clues were often very diverse – a stamp depicting "a hand", for instance. A "hand" can ALSO be a member of a ship's crew, a workman or employee, one's handwriting, playing cards which are held, or a measure of a horse's height !



686. Thermopylae

An "Imp" proved to be the hardest – we had a mischievous child, a bunyip, various aboriginal spirit people, and "a young grafted tree" (ympe), but it turned out to be a species of Rose !

"The name of a Battle in Greece" – Google pointed to the famous Battle of Marathon in 490 A.D. and a miniature sheet from 2010 (which, as it turned out, DIDN'T have a name on it). The correct answer was the Battle of Thermopylae a few years later, and a famous clipper ship.

Did you know that "Big Ben" is actually the name of a bell, rather than the building which houses it, which is part of the British Houses of Parliament ?



602. Imp

Don also had organised a few Trivia questions, on the assumption that there wouldn't be all that many entries in the "challenge". Interesting !! Ron Davis was voted by the members to be the most popular entry.

THE NEWCASTLE DAYTIME MEETINGS,
at Studio 48, 48 Mackie Avenue, New Lambton East, at 10 a.m.
on the THIRD Wednesday of each month (except December).

“FALKLAND ISLANDS” - display by DON RUTHERFORD, Wed. 18th MAY 2011



One of the most noticeable buildings in the Falklands' main town, Port Stanley, is the Roman Catholic Church and St. Mary's Church beside it. Discovered in 1592, the Falklands were settled by some French and Spanish, then taken over by the British in 1833. Argentina didn't recognise this, and sent any mail back to the sender. Early mails depended on ships calling, the first vessel being 6th January 1827. In 1887 a post office opened. "WAR TAX" stamps were issued 1918-1920. In 1946, mail went by ship to Montevideo, then by air to England. 1952 saw the first direct flight to the Falklands from the U.K. – a flying boat left Southhampton 21/4/1952 arriving in the Falklands on 28th April. The Aquila Airlines return flight on 2nd May arrived in Southhampton 8/5/1952. Sheep



farming was by "absentee landlords", and young people were leaving the islands. Whaling stopped in the early 1960's. The 1982 Argentinian invasion was because everyone thought that Britain had lost interest. But "the 1982 war saved us" – the Governor became Commissioner once the Argentinians were "kicked out". Squid fishing was a big industry, but after 1982, the fishermen had to get a licence to fish in the area. This gave the islands an income, and some of the locals took to squid fishing and became quite wealthy. A hovercraft mail was started 21st November 1967 between Port Stanley and Green Patch in the East Falklands. Mount Pleasant P.O. (2/11/1984) was the fourth post office to be opened in the Falklands in 73 years (!) at the new Mount Pleasant Airport which opened on 12th May 1985.

“BELGIAN CONGO” - display by TONY WALKER, Wednesday 15th JUNE 2011

Tony's display was an introduction to the stamps of the "Congo Free State", Belgian Congo, and finally post-independence Congo issues up to 1968.

The "Congo Free State" was in theory free from colonial control. However, in effect, it was a private fiefdom of the Belgian King Leopold II. The display touched on the cruelty of this "State". To be honest, cruelty was not introduced to the Congo by the Belgians at all, as slavery and inter-tribal warfare was already well and truly entrenched in this area. Sadly, the Europeans took the cruelty to new lows on a systemic basis that would see the untimely death of millions.

The Belgians reluctantly, at first, took control late 1908 in order to alleviate the situation. After a while, the situation for the Congolese did improve, albeit due to new industries such as mining leap-frogging the woefully inefficient ivory and rubber trades. After all, if you want to make money, it does not make good business sense to kill off your work force.

By the end of WWII, many Congolese were probably better off than any other African country. However; the Belgians appear to have taken care of the Congolese in a very paternal manner. The uranium used for the first atomic bombs came from this area. The Congolese were well educated to a point of supplying a good work force. But by the end of the 1950's only a small handful had been given the opportunity of tertiary education. So, the Congolese were not ready for Independence in 1960, even though they probably deserved it. To this, add hurried elections, tribal differences, badly worded speeches, and the greed and need for the west (and east) to continually exploit the huge and valuable resources of this region.

The result was, and continues to be, a toxic mix of cruelty, greed and mass murder on scales that defy all logic. This area SHOULD be one of the most prosperous areas on earth! During all this, they did produce some interesting stamps and postal history. The postal history side of this area includes all the different areas of interest such as river transport, ocean going ships, caravans of native porters, early aviation etc. etc.



“WORLD HISTORY ON COVER FROM 1900 TO PRESENT”
- display by JOHN HILL, Wednesday 20th JULY 2011



"I start in 1900, on 1st January at 12 o'clock", John said, "with a Boer War cover, and a cover from the Boxer Rebellion in Peking in June 1900". Later, "the world's first airmail flight took place in northern India between Allahabad and Naini Junction – a distance of 5 miles (8 km), on 18th October 1911, carrying 6500 letters and postcards." Such were the calibre of the interesting items in John's display, most of which had a political flavour. The decision by Kaiser William II (pictured) to go to war in July 1914 was thoroughly dealt with (he was convinced he had an invincible army), as were the German hyper-inflation of 1923, wartime WWII leaders Franklin Roosevelt (U.S.A.) and John Curtin (Australia), the German occupation of Alsace-Lorraine in 1940, Polish postcards from supporters of Germany, the "last issue of the 3rd Reich", the Chinese-Soviet dispute, the

Chinese Cultural Revolution, the Falkland Islands War, and an unstamped card from Jacqueline Kennedy. He included a Moon Landing cover, signed by Neil Armstrong in March 1972, Martial Law covers marked "non-censored", and a Kennedy Space Centre cover "signed" by Richard Nixon and Spiro Agnew, of Watergate fame. The war in Afghanistan brought us up-to-date, with a letter from an Australian airman posted in an Australian Army Field Post Office (FPO). John had promised us "something special" – I think he "produced the goods"! Fantastic!



Don't lick your phone

The Swedish postal service, Posten, plans to give customers tongues a rest by allowing them to pay their postage via mobile phone text message instead of stamps.

A similar system was launched in Denmark in April, allowing customers to send a text message, with a special code sent back in reply. The code is then written down on the letter showing the postage has been paid.

The postal services in both Sweden and Denmark believe that paying postage by mobile phone will make the letter sending process easier.

Source: www.postaltechnologyinternational.com,

14 March 2011



** The COCONUT is the "Swiss Army knife" of the plant kingdom – in one neat package, it provides a high-calorie food, potable water, fibre that can be spun into rope, a hard shell that can be turned into charcoal, and can serve as a handy flotation device. (Soils Digest).



NEWCASTLE CITY COUNCIL

BITS AND PIECES

** A very-long-time member of the Newcastle Philatelic Society, Dr. PADDY LIGHTFOOT, was awarded the Order of Australia Medal (OAM) in this year's Queen's Birthday Honours. His Citation reads : "Dr. Patrick Verney Lightfoot, New Lambton Heights, for Conservation and the environment in the Hunter Region – 13 June 2011". Paddy has been instrumental in the development of the internationally-famous Shortland Wetlands and the Kooragang Wetlands (and probably the Belmont Wetlands, too). Paddy provides material for our Society's circuit books – if you've seen the initials "PL" on the bottom of the circuit book sheets, they're his.

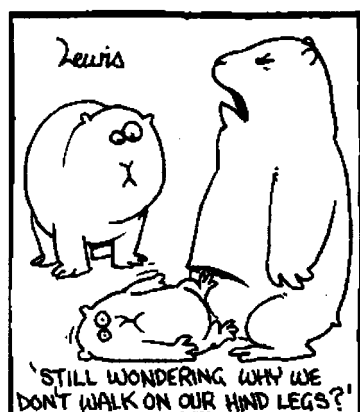
** An Indian plastic bag making company is recycling plastic bags into monsoon-resistant plastic road bitumen (ABC).

** One of our members, Gladys Tyack, has passed on a RECIPE TO REMOVE PEEL-AND-STICK STAMPS from their paper backings, from the Mooroolbark Philatelic Society magazine. Simply place the stamps in a container with a small amount of water and a pinch of salt, which acts as a colour fixative. Place the container into your microwave and cook on high for about a minute and a half. Take it out and add some cold water to cool it down. It is likely that the stamps will be floating or easily peeled off. To finish, wash the stamps in a soapy bath then rinse a few times. I have not tried this, but apparently it works.

** The rate of sea level rise along the U.S.A. Atlantic coast is greater than at any time in the past 2000 years (Soils Digest).

** Among the first "Germans" captured at Normandy were several Koreans. They had been forced to fight for the Japanese Army, until they were captured by the Russians and forced to fight for the Russian Army, until they were captured by the Germans and forced to fight for the German Army, until they were captured by the U.S. Army.

** Following a massive naval bombardment, 35,000 U.S. and Canadian troops stormed ashore at Kiska in the Aleutian Islands. 21 troops were killed in the firefight. It would have been even worse if there had been any Japanese on the island! (From Colonel B.G. Swinford, United States Marine Corps, Retired).



Wombat pouches face backwards so they don't fill with dirt when wombats dig.

** Enthusiasm is infectious - and so is lack of it.

** German submarine U-120 was sunk by a malfunctioning toilet!

** The urban population of China is growing at 5 million people a month ! (Sydney Morning Herald)

** Some people have learned to drive by accident.



Road sign on the Queen's Highway, Fiji