

APF NEWS

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The Genesis of a Stamp



Exhibition Timetable Updates Listed Inside

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AUSTRALIAN PHILATELIC FEDERATION	Contents
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Editorial

This issue finishes my first year as editor and to date I have had positive feedback, so I don't expect much change next year, except hopefully more physical exhibitions happening. The issues will revert to a more normal timetable with issues published in March, July and November. Given the current focus on One-frame exhibits there will be an article on exhibiting these in the March 2021 issue, as the APF executive made an important qualification to how they are judged at a recent APF meeting. There is also a new One-frame coordinator – Mark Diserio. Stay safe and keep philately strong.

APF President's Column



The main focus for the APF in recent months has been the National Online One-frame exhibition, AusVipex2020. You will find both results and a detailed article elsewhere in this edition of APF News. Suffice to say that this exhibition appears to have been a success with 67 entries now judged and exhibitors in the process of receiving their feedback from the judges via Zoom video conferences at the time of writing. Everything from the electronic entry form to lodgement of exhibits (scans of pages in PDF form in this case) via the website up-loader, exhibit displays, Judges and

Committee meetings via Zoom, to the end of the process – feedback to Exhibitors – has been carried out using web-based and electronic tools.

We have learned some significant lessons from this pilot experience about how to use technology to advance our hobby and will be considering how this might be useful in the future. This is not to say the APF sees online exhibiting as a replacement for the traditional exhibition, far from it. However, this is clearly one effective way of exhibiting either stand alone or as a supplement to traditional exhibitions.

Judges and exhibitors will shortly receive a questionnaire about their experience of this new approach to exhibiting. The APF would also appreciate your views and any comments, emailed to myself, hesperus@netspace.net.au, will be very welcome. All feedback will be treated as confidential and will be used in developing any future online exhibitions.

You can view the exhibition at <https://www.ausvipex2020.com.au/>.

I would like to thank the Exhibition Committee, Ian McMahon, Glen Stafford, Stephanie Bromser, David Figg, and John Moore for their efforts in making this exhibition a success.

On other APF matters, given the uncertainty about travel within Australia, the APF Executive finally decided to hold the AGM by Zoom video conference on 12 December. There really was no other option though my personal preference for the annual APF gathering would have been a face-to-face meeting. While technology now offers us quick and easy communications without leaving home, some of the important benefits of a get-together of keen collectors from all over Australia is in the informal face-to-face networking that inevitably occurs. With the continual lifting of travel restrictions around Australia it is our plan to hold the Awards Dinner as a face-to-face gathering in Adelaide in the New Year. Hopefully by then, life will have returned to normal, or something like it.

In closing I would like to thank all those involved with the APF for their efforts in sometimes-difficult circumstances this year and wish the philatelic and collecting community a peaceful Christmas and a successful 2021.

Peter Allan
APF President.

Australian Virtual Philatelic Exhibition – AusVipex2020

The idea for AusVipex2020 arose from the rather depressing succession of Exhibition cancellations in the first few months of 2020 as show after show was withdrawn from the exhibition calendar. The concept was initially discussed at a Zoom-based APF Executive meeting. Despite some uncertainty as to how well received such an exhibition would be, the APF decided to proceed.

While some of us are familiar with one approach to an online exhibit having been involved in several online exhibitions offered by the South African Philatelic Federation, AusVipex would be somewhat different. Exhibits would be shown as online image galleries on a public website. Judges would work from hi-res scans of the exhibit pages and use a combination of Zoom video conferences and emails to apply the standard Australian philatelic judging process to the exhibits. As usual, the judges would work in teams of three, each member initially scoring exhibits and a Team result arrived at after video conference discussion between team members. The preliminary results would be then reviewed by all jury members and any judge would have the right to challenge preliminary results as is normal at Australian exhibitions.

One of our major concerns was how any exhibits might be offered by exhibitors. Would exhibitors embrace the idea of a philatelic exhibition based on a website? Too few and the exhibition might prove underwhelming but too many and the workload associated with processing entries – making images of exhibits pages and creating online galleries of these – might prove too overwhelming. The judging could be spread across as many judges as needed but technical work to mount an online display could only be undertaken by the APF webmaster as a significant amount of knowledge of web design is required.

We decided to limit entries to Australia and New Zealand partly to avoid competing with other online exhibitions underway at the time, but also to reduce the chances of receiving more exhibits than we could cope with, bearing in mind the whole exercise was something of a trial project. In the end, we received 67 one-frame entries, overall of very high quality.

The entry process

In keeping with an online exhibition, an electronic form was adopted for entries. The advantages of this are that it is quick and easy for entrants to complete (provided they understand how the process works). The required information can be typed on a computer and a few clicks will automatically create an email complete with the Exhibition secretary's address to dispatch the entry form. For the exhibition committee, all data entered can be very quickly exported to an excel spreadsheet, saving considerable time compared with the traditional method of re-typing information from scanned entry forms. In reality, there were some problems. While around 80% of entries were received error-free, it became obvious the process was not obvious to all exhibitors. For a start, it's essential to use Adobe PDF reader to open the form. We now realise that not everyone uses Adobe software. A slight re-think and clearer instructions and some modifications to the form design should iron out most of these issues should we use this approach in the future.

Exhibit pages were to be provided to the exhibition as single page scans in high resolution in PDF format. A file uploader was provided on the exhibition website and generally, this worked well though there was the occasional glitch which required a page to be uploaded a second time.

Exhibits

The key principle was that exhibit pages should be displayed on the website at maximum quality and size to ensure the exhibitors' hard work was shown to maximum advantage.

To achieve this, the exhibit pages submitted were converted to large image files and each exhibit was presented as a slideshow, page by page. This meant that the exhibit would be viewed one page at a time. Obviously, no physical frames are involved so the usual strict page size requirements do not apply. For instance, an exhibitor could have used an A4 page size that would not fit within standard display frames, but these would present no problem for an online page display.

The judges were however provided with resolution PDFs of the displays so had access to the original scans as provided by the exhibitor.

Differences between an online and a physical exhibition

There are actually many differences between the online exhibition and the traditional exhibition, some obvious and some quite subtle.

AusVipex can be viewed from anywhere in the world with online access. This potentially allows the widest possible range of viewers. The exhibits can be left online for far longer than the traditional three or four day exhibition. In the case of AusVipex, we will leave the displays online until the end of December, a period of over two months. As an exhibitor, your family and friends can easily view your exhibit, including sharing via social media. It's difficult to fully take in the full range of displays at a traditional exhibition but with online displays, it's easy to return over a period of time, which is what many viewers of AusVipex are doing.

On the other hand, we lose the social interaction that many people enjoy at a traditional exhibition. While the scanning process can provide a very good representation for the exhibit page, the quality of the image depends on the quality of the scan. We found the vast majority of exhibit scans were of good quality, but some were not perfect. It's worth noting the Jury was instructed to ignore any technical faults in the scans.

Online, the exhibit is in effect presented page by page while traditional exhibition frames present four rows of four sheets.

One issue which might require further thought is the possibility of digital editing of scans after they have been made. For instance, it's easy to add notations and symbols such as arrows to an existing PDF in a way that's not possible with a physical exhibit page. While it is a fundamental requirement that the scans show real items owned by the exhibitor, the Committee did not include any restriction on post-scanning edits on the PDFs, such as adding arrows highlighting specific aspects of display items.

Some technical details

Web statistics present a very accurate picture of visitor numbers. The following statistics cover the period from posting the first batch of exhibits (16 October) to 5 November.

During this time the exhibition website has received 705 individual visitors. Each visitor visited the site on average 2.6 times and viewed 9.4 pages per visit.

In total, there were 18,876 pages viewed. Exhibits receive on average between 2 and 3 visits from the same viewer over time.

The majority of visits were from Australia (nearly 50%) but visits are recorded from a wide range of other countries including:

- India - 15%
- USA – 8%
- UK – 5%
- Malaysia – 5%
- New Zealand – 3%.

Results

The results include 8 Large Gold exhibits, 16 Gold and 21 Large Vermeil exhibits. Prizes have been awarded as follows:



Special Prizes

Best in Show

Entry 38 – Michael Blinman “[NSW Embossed Stationery 1838-50](#)”

Runners Up

Entry 42 – Paula Sager “[The Perkins Bacon 5d Diadem Stamp of New South Wales](#)”

Entry 56 – Stephen Browne. “[The Postal History of Van Diemen’s Land to 1825](#)”

Jury Recognition Awards:

Marilyn Gendek Entry 37 “[The Scottish Women’s Hospital Royaumont 1914-1918](#)”

Mark Diserio Entry 55 “[A Gift From Australia](#)”

Special Prize, Best topical Exhibit

Gaye and Graeme Chequer Entry 4 “[Cattleya Orchids](#)”

Feedback and where to from here

Overall the feedback from exhibitors and judges has been very positive. We have received numerous comments from Exhibitors which indicate they were pleased with the way their online exhibits were displayed.

As mentioned, some exhibitors experienced problems using the electronic entry form, and a few had difficulties with the website up-loader when loading their exhibit pages.

The APF is keen to see what can be learned from this first online exhibition in the event we run something similar in the future. Personally, I don't think this type of exhibition will be seen as a replacement for the traditional exhibition in the future but might prove to be a useful additional option for exhibitors or perhaps a way to fill any gaps in the exhibition program.

In any case, we will survey exhibitors and judges seeking their feedback, and welcome any comments readers may have. Please feel free to send your views about AusVipex2020 to Peter Allan, hesperus@netspace.net.au.

Peter Allen

AusVipex2020 Results

While the exhibition has been judged and results awarded please don't forget that the actual exhibits will be up until December at <https://www.ausvipex2020.com.au>

FAMILY NAME	GIVEN NAME/S	EXHIBIT TITLE	TOTAL	MEDAL
Class 12a - One Frame Traditional				
Bodley	Elspeth	British Forces in Egypt 1932-1940	82	LV
Wotherspoon	Geoffrey	KGV 4d Empirical Research	83	LV
Monk APR	Gordon	A Study of the Australian KGV 1d Die Issue 3	88	G
Gould	Andrew	The New Zealand Chalon Paper Fold Variety	81	LV

Lower	Harry	1d Green Letterpress Stamps of South Australia	90	LG
Shaw	Jim	Victoria - ½d "Bantam" - Stamps, Stationery and Usages	77	V
Tiernan	Jon	South Australia Railway Parcel / Freight Stamps 1885-1966	84	LV
Gould	Andrew	The New Zealand Chalon Overlap Variety	90	LG
Xavier	Paul	Fiji First and Second South Pacific Games Issues	79	V
Sager	Paula	The Perkins Bacon 5d Diadem Stamp of New South Wales	92	LG
Marshall	Ross	Poland Postage Due, Plate Study of 4-Value of 1919	84	LV
Marshall	Ross	Poland Postage Due, Plate Study of 2-Value of 1919	84	LV
Marshall	Ross	Poland Postage Due, Plate Study of 30-Value of 1919	84	LV
Marshall	Ross	Poland First Official Stamp Issues 1920	83	LV
Boylan	Russell	St Vincent - The UPU Specimens 1886-1947	86	G
Gosse	Thomas	The King George VI Large Key Type Revenue and Postage High Value Stamps 1937-1953	86	G
Clark	Bill	Six Pence Stamps of Victoria 1860 to 1863	79	V
Gibson	R A (Bob)	BERLIN STALINALLEE', 1953-1961, Deutsche Demokratische Republik	83	LV
Elsmore	Dave	Queensland Tramway Parcel Stamps	88	G
Elsmore	Dave	Queensland Parcel Carrier Receipts	90	LG
Class 12b - One Frame Postal History				
Haynes	Bruce	COVID 19 Impact on Incoming Western Australian Mail: Jan-June 2020	66	S
Chitty	Lindsay	M.V. Gripsholm Mail, Diplomatic Exchange Vessel, Far East WW II	86	G
Ling	Chung H	Japanese Occupation of British Borneo 1942-45	87	G
Ling	Chung H	Liberation of Occupied British Borneo June-October 1945	86	G
Glendenning	Robert	Canberra to the Capital	73	LS
Laidler	Gregory	The Life and Career of William Riddell Birdwood	84	LV
Howard	James	Civil Censorship of Brunei Mail 1939-42	82	LV
Shawley	John	Mauritius Outward Mail 1840-1850	90	LG
Kwan	Patrick	Aspects of Philatelic Trade in Mauritius 1885-1915	73	LS

Marshall	Ross	Poland Judicial Mail	86	G
Marshall	Ross	Russian Mail to Britain "via Hamburg"	88	G
Diserio	Mark	A Gift From Australia	88	G
Browne	Stephen	The Postal History of Van Diemen's Land to 1825	92	LG
Schofield	Tim	Registered Mail in the Moreton Bay District of New South Wales to 1859	82	LV
Kennaway	Timothy	Vietnam Ordinary Letter Postal Rates 1967-71	68	S
Curtis	Tony	Inscribed FCT & Federal Territory - The Postmarks of Australia's Federal Capital & Jervis Bay Territories 1925-1940	82	LV
Curtis	Tony	New South Wales Receiving Offices 1875-1930	83	LV
Curtis	Tony	Transition to a Capital - Postmarks of Australia's Federal Capital Territory 1850-1925	78	V
Griffin	Tony	Letter Rates in Papua 1916 to 1932	74	LS
Watson	Bob	Letters from New Zealand to the USA in the Nineteenth Century	87	G
Class 12c - One Frame Postal Stationery				
Shatten	Allen	Tasmania - Unframed Queen Victoria Postcards	83	LV
Tozer	Peter	The Small 18 Cent Australian Embossed Pre-stamped Envelope: A Preliminary Study	79	V
Tinney	John	The Early Postal Cards - Bohemia	73	LS
Blinman	Michael	NSW Embossed Stationery 1838-50	93	LG
Class 12d - One Frame Aerophilately				
Bradley	David	1930s Airmail of Mozambique Company	72	LS
Tennant	Douglas	Ulm's July 1934 Air Mail from New Zealand	86	G
Class 12f - One Frame Thematic				
Collett	Debra	Grapes - Food, Fermented and Figurative	79	V
Radnell	Vera	The Language of Falconry	89	G
Class 12g - One Frame Revenues				
Elsmore	Dave	Victoria 5/- Typographic Stamp Duty	79	V
Elsmore	Dave	Queensland 1866-1894 Impressed Duty	83	LV

Tiernan	Jon	Tasmanian Beer Duty Stamps 1880-1902	85	G
Burke	Sean	Rhodesian Penny Double Head - Fiscally Used	68	S
Class 12i - One Frame Picture Postcards				
Figg	David	The Hoboken 1900 Docks Fire	87	G
Figg	David	The Adelaide Hills Railway Viaduct	73	LS
Figg	David	Circular Quay, Hub of Sydney	80	LV
Smith	Dingle	"Tally Me Banana". The Rise of the Jamaican Banana Industry	80	LV
Tinney	John	Touring Britain with Besley	57	B
Gendek	Marilyn	Napoleon: Exile, Death, Resurrection	80	LV
Burke	Sean	Some Early Postcards Published by the Barotseland (Zambeze) Mission by Paris Missionary Society	73	LS
Class 12j - One Frame Open				
Gendek	Marilyn	Mental Illness: An Illustrated History	79	V
Gendek	Marilyn	The Scottish Women's Hospital Royaumont 1914-1918	85	G
Christensen	Michael	New Zealand 1990	74	LS
Class 12l - One Frame Polar Philately				
Saunders	Dianne	Dogs in Antarctica 1901-2015	73	LS
Class 12m - One Frame First Day Covers				
Griffin	Tony	Excelsior 1970 National Development First Day Covers	80	LV
Garrick	Ann	Soil Science Congress & World Medical Association Assembly	75	V
Class 12n - One Frame Frugal				
Sparks	Ken	Postage Charges Calculator Labels and Predecessors: from TIM to PCC	80	LV
Class 12o - One Frame Topical				
Chequer	Gaye and Graeme	Cattleya Orchids	90	LG

Melbourne 2022 – 8 to 11 September – Put the dates in your diary now!

Fakes, Forgeries, Facsimiles and Fantasies (*Caveat Emptor*)

Darryl Fuller



Figure 1 *Fantasy item*

This article was prompted by the apparent sale of the item in Figure 1 on eBay for \$2,850. This item is not what it purports to be - an essay or trial for a kangaroo issue. It is a complete affectation made by someone with some design skills, a printer and the ability to add reasonable perforations. It bears some minor similarity to one of the Kangaroo essays (Figure 2) that sold in the Arthur Gray sale for many tens of thousands of dollars. It is not an unrecorded essay or trial - it is a pure fantasy. It was sold with the following heading “**Australia GV 20sh (£1) essay or trial for the Kangaroo issue. MNG RARE\$\$\$\$ (IT)**”. The \$2,850 was the start and end price and it is not possible to know whether the lot was actually bought by someone at this price, or whether it was a shill bid, designed to create a market price. It was sold by an Australian seller who most likely purchased it off a supplier in Taiwan who creates many fantasy stamps. Indeed, you can buy complete sets (½d to £5) of perforated and gummed stamps of this design for around \$A10. You can also get sets of the Kangaroo essays (of the type shown in Figure 2) gummed and

perforated for a similar price, all on eBay. At least the Taiwanese seller calls the items gummed reproduction stamps as required by eBay. The Australian seller of Figure 1 did not do this and effectively broke eBay rules.

Why are these items a problem? After all, anyone can produce and sell a gummed label without breaking any selling rules, or the law. It is only when you represent the item as something it isn't that this is an issue. I just hope no naïve collector actually paid \$2,850 for an item that cost less than a \$1 to produce. Any reasonably knowledgeable stamp collector would not fall for this item. In the long run, all of these fantasy items are going to be a problem for future collectors. They will end up in collections and in 10-20 years, someone will come across these items and not be able to find them in a catalogue. They will do an internet search and should one of the essays from the Gray collection come up, with its 5-figure price, then the person may then be under the impression they are sitting on a fortune. Whereas they are in fact sitting on labels with little except curiosity value.



Figure 2 *Kangaroo essay (ex Gray)*

The rest of this article will be an overview of the differences between forgeries, fakes, facsimiles and fantasies with the aim to help educate newer collectors.

Postal Forgeries

Postal forgeries are stamps forged to defraud the post office of revenue. While not common they have occurred almost since postage stamps were invented. Recent examples include forged stamps used on the Nigerian scam mail of the 1990s. These scam letters were sent out in vast quantities, before spam emails, and eventually the scammers decided to print their own stamps. They are not rare items



Figure 3 2d KGV red forgery (left)

and even I managed to receive one and keep it. The stamps are quite poor quality. With improved printing techniques the UK Machins were also forged in large quantities. These are quite good forgeries and a number of values were produced. These stamps were often sold to convenience stores, which often sell basic postage stamps, at bargain prices and the store made a greater profit than the same items bought through the postal service. From what I gather this was a large-scale forgery ring. You will find further information on both these forgeries online.

Australia also had some well-known forgeries back in 1932. A group which operated a lottery scam through the mail decided the cost of postage was too high, so printed their own stamps. They printed the 2d Sydney Harbour Bridge stamp and the 2d red KGV head. They came undone because a philatelist queried the Post Master General's Department about a new perforation on the 2d KGV head stamp. Figure 3 illustrates the forged stamp on the left and the original on the right. They are a reasonable copy and it was the perforations that initially gave them away, plus no watermark. The group was caught and charged. Some of the stamps ended up on the market and are highly collectable. They are not overly expensive selling for some hundreds of dollars in mint condition, although the 2d Bridge is far more expensive. On a genuine cover they are quite rare. Overall postal forgeries, especially those correctly used on cover, are quite sought after and exhibitable.

Stamps Forged for Collectors

People have been forging stamps for collectors ever since the hobby started. There are many monographs and articles on forgeries, and it pays to find this information in the area of your collecting interest. Some stamps have a number of forgeries and the ones from the earlier days of the hobby are often collected by philatelists. One might include some in an exhibit, but often they are left out unless important in some way to the story being told. Many early forgeries were quite crude with some forgers using catalogue illustrations as the base design. These forgeries turn up in old time collections all the time and are usually easy to tell from an original. The postmarks are often 'wrong', just groups of dots or bars, and this is often the simplest way to tell (Figure 4 illustrates a sheet of a well-known Virgin Islands stamp with typical non-descript postmark (*refer addendum to the article also*)). Stamp forgeries were so common that by 1863 a book was published called "Forged Stamps: How to Detect Them".

Therefore, there are many forgeries and much information out there, so it pays to research the items you buy. There was a lot of junk produced by such forgers as Panelli and the Spiro brothers. They in fact produced the stamps as facsimiles because collectors wanted to fill the spaces in the printed stamp albums that were beginning to become popular. They were not sold as fakes *per se*, but they are still commonly found in old collections and most collectors consider them forgeries. Some



Figure 4: Spiro brothers Virgin Island facsimiles. (ex Argyll Etkin)

forgeries are so good that it takes an expert committee to tell the fake from an original. The best forger was Jean de Sperati and another important forger was François Fournier.



Figure 5: *Sperati forgery (ex Gray)*

Sperati was without a doubt the most dangerous stamp forger ever. He would take a genuine cheap stamp of the same vintage (paper, watermark etc) and bleach it, leaving the postmark in place. He then had a method to make the paper pervious to ink and use photolithography to print a new stamp through the postmark. He did this to over 500 rare stamps and he was so good that the forgeries tend to sell for more than the originals. Only one Australian stamp was forged by Sperati, the £2 Kangaroo and map stamp (Figure 5). He also forged a 2/6d Papua Lakatoi, the Tasmania £1 tablet stamp and the WA £1 orange stamp.

It was not illegal to sell forged stamps at the time as long as the stamp was marked as such.

Sperati got around this by signing on the back in easily erased pencil, “facsimile”. He fooled many experts with his forgeries. The British Philatelic Association considered Sperati’s work so dangerous that it paid him \$US40,000 in 1953 to purchase his stock. This was a great deal of money at the time. The stamps in his stock were then marked by the BPA as shown in Figure 6.



Figure 6: *Backstamp*

François Fournier was not as good as Sperati in forging stamps (Sperati produced a few copies of high quality material) but he did produce a lot of forged material. Fournier came to philately late in life and in fact did not produce forgeries but rather facsimiles. His business grew rapidly and he was, for a while, on good terms with both stamp dealers and societies. He claimed over 10,000 customers and his last price list had 3,671 different stamps for sale, although not all were his creations. Despite the fact that they were facsimiles he refused to mark the stamps as such. This created problems as unscrupulous dealers (and collectors) started to pass his creations off as genuine. His advertising of his wares was banned by most stamp journals so he created his own journal, with some success. However, WWI created problems with sales and Fournier died in 1917. His huge stock, over 800 pounds in weight, was bought from his widow by the Union Philatelique de Genève to stop it falling into the wrong hands. An extensive five volume collection of his works was kept by the Union. The Union then used students from the Geneva School of Arts and Crafts to create 480 representative albums of Fournier’s work. Each item has *Faux* or Facsimile printed on the reverse. These were sold to dealers and collectors. The remainder of the stock was burned in 1928. The albums do come up for sale now and again and sell in the low 4-figure range. However, complete albums are getting scarce as many have been cut up and the items sold off individually.

While Fournier was not as good as Sperati, he did produce a lot of relatively good forgeries of overprints on stamps. The Leeward Island produced a set of overprinted stamps for Queen Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee that have been extensively forged with a 20-page monograph produced on the forgeries. The author, J.A.C. Farmer, considered one of Fournier’s overprint forgeries on this issue the most dangerous, with only a few quite minor differences. Indeed, for many years the well-known Stanley Gibbons British Commonwealth stamp catalogue used one of Fournier’s forgeries to illustrate the overprint! A pair of overprint proofs, taken from a Fournier album, is illustrated in Figure 7.



Figure 7: *Fournier overprint forgeries*

For a good overview of the various forgeries of Australia go the website <https://stampforgeries.com/forged-stamps-of-australia/> as it covers a variety of forgeries especially the overprints where many forgeries exist. The OS overprints on the two low value Kingsford Smith stamps have been extensively forged, some quite well. The late Rod Perry, back in the 1970s, outed one forger who had bought sheets of the basic stamps off him which then turned up overprinted OS. These forgeries were quite good except that the forger used a genuine overprint to copy that had a small flaw in the O. It had a small nick at about the 8 o'clock position, which meant all the stamps had the same flaw. These days the Kingsford Smith stamps appear on eBay with often quite poor overprint forgeries. This is one set of stamps that should always be bought with a certificate of authenticity.

Postal History Forgeries

This is a very large topic that I will cover by using one specific example of a postal history forgery. Postal history only really became popular in the 20th century, mainly thanks to the late Robson Lowe. Early forgers forged stamps and rarely covers. However, as postal history became more valuable, forgers began forging covers. They might add a stamp, replace a stamp, add postal markings, embellish markings or even remove something from a genuine cover, and in the process creating a more valuable item. Such material can be difficult to confirm as completely genuine as the starting point is often a genuine cover. The American Philatelic Society has an expertising service and has had a series of articles in 2020 in their magazine, *The American Philatelist*, discussing the lengths they go to expertise a cover. They make fascinating reading.

The rise of Chinese philately has led to a rise in forgeries in this area and postal history is no exception. Forgeries of postal markings are relatively common with examples going from the crude to dangerous. The following comes from an unpublished article by Dr Andrew Cheung on Fake Shanghai Custom House markings. There are two types of this marking, shown in Figures 8 and 9 with the Chinese characters in the second meaning Shanghai Customs. They are relatively rare with 17 known of the paid handstamp and only seven of the second.



Figure 8: *Earliest known date
ex Mizuhara sale
(Spink January 2016)*



Figure 9: *ex W. Hancock
correspondence, Lurgan
(Interasia June 2016)*

The markings were applied to mail carried by Customs Post's courier service operating between Peking and Shanghai, which accepted mail from members of the foreign legations (*Ed: There were a number in China at the end of the 19th Century*) and Customs officials in Northern China. Fake covers have been recorded bearing these two markings in the last decade, and the following illustrates two extremes.



Figure 10: Fake Customs House PAID handstamp added to genuine postal card.

Figure 10 shows a 1910 incoming U.S. 1c postal stationery card from La Crosse, Wisconsin with added 2c George Washington adhesive to Shanghai. It has a fake Customs House Shanghai PAID datestamp in black ink, applied on arrival. Judging by the appearance and the inking, the datestamp could be made of rubber and the fake datestamp copied from an illustration in a reference book. The fake is quite crude and in the wrong period, therefore it is unlikely to deceive anyone!

The second cover, Figures 11 & 11a, is a more dangerous forgery. It is a letter dated 11 November 1875 from Shanghai to Aylsham, England franked with a Hong Kong QV 30c stamp paying the half ounce Packet rate, cancelled with a blue 'S1'. Sent by French Packet *Tigre*, it left Shanghai on 12 November to Hong Kong and then via Suez to Europe, arriving at Aylsham on 25 December. According to Richard Gurevitch (*well-known Australian Hong Kong specialist who maintains meticulous records of Hong Kong QV covers*), the original cover came from a John Bull sale in 1983. The catalogue description did not mention the Custom House Shanghai datestamp on reverse, which would indicate that it was added at a later date. This is a dangerous forgery.

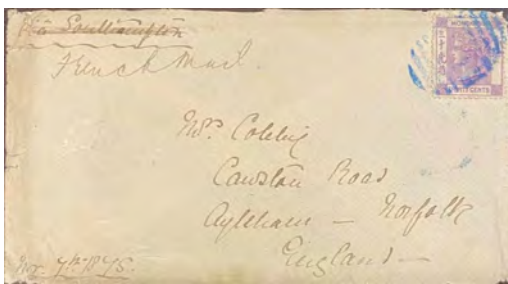


Figure 11: 1875 cover from Shanghai to England

The above cover illustrates the importance of old auction catalogues, and now, the saving of images from the internet. Otherwise a cover like this is likely to be sold as a genuine usage of this handstamp, because everything else about the



Figure 11a: Reverse of the 1875 cover showing added Customs House marking post its sale in 1983.

cover is genuine. One other type of postal history affectation that is starting to appear is where a facsimile stamp is added to a genuine cover. An example is shown in figure 12. It is a perfectly good Jamaican registered cover worth \$5-10 at most, with a facsimile of the

The above cover illustrates the importance of old auction catalogues, and now, the saving of images from the internet. Otherwise a cover like this is likely to be sold as a genuine usage of this handstamp, because everything else about the

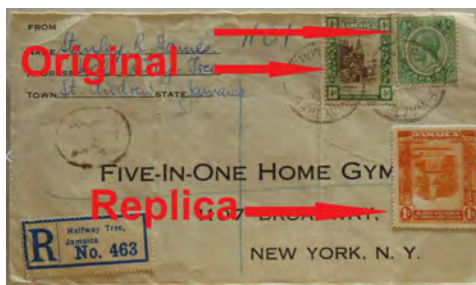


Figure 12: Jamaican cover with added "error".

very rare 1-shilling inverted centre, worth \$20,000+. No copies are known on cover and adding this to this cover adds nothing, except to ruin a perfectly good cover. The simple question is why? It adds nothing, destroys something useful and can't be used in this form. This is one of those items that I do not understand at all. Whoever is doing this needs to stop.

Facsimiles and Reprints



Figure 13: *Samoa Express remainders.*

Facsimiles are what Fournier produced although many were passed off as original stamps. However, in addition there were a variety of facsimiles and official reprints produced over the years. A good example are the Samoa Express stamps of 1877-1881 (Figure 13 shows examples of the remaindered stamps). These stamps were for a private mail service and the stamps were printed in Sydney. These stamps were very popular and are one of the most frequently encountered forgeries and reprints in the world of stamps. The original stamps are relatively rare but “remainders” of these stamps were sold to a stamp dealer in 1882

after the service was closed. They are genuine stamps but from a fourth state of the printing stones. A UK company, Whitfield King & Co. obtained the rights to have reprints made and sold vast quantities over the years. They are easily identifiable as they were made from new lithographic printing stones and had a different sheet size. Despite the quantities produced, the reprinted stamps were very popular – so much so they were also forged, with at least six different forgeries known. Therefore, if you come across these stamps, chances are they are a reprint or a forgery, most with minimal value (\$1). The remainders have a higher value and the original stamps are probably under catalogued. The stamps only paid for local postal services so covers exist with both an Express stamp and stamps from New South Wales, which paid the international postage. One such cover sold for over \$US57,000 a few years ago. For further information on these stamps go to www.filatelia.fi/forgeries/samoa-express.html which was also the source of Figure 13.

Postal administrations also produced reprints of stamps when they did not have enough copies available to use in presentation sets, or specimen sets. The Australian States did this a bit and Figure 14 illustrates an example of a Victorian high value stamp with



Figure 14: *Official reprint (courtesy Richard Juzwin)*

reprint on it. Not all reprints have minimum value with this stamp priced at \$750. More recently the Royal Mail produced a facsimile reprint of the 1929 Postal Union Congress £1 stamp (Figure 15). These are perforated and gummed and currently sell for around £7 each.



Figure 15: *2010 Royal Mail facsimile.*

More recently there are many more facsimiles being produced by individuals and sold on eBay and other places. Figures 16 & 16a illustrate an example of one of these types of facsimiles. It is a classic 1d black block which no-one would mistake for an original and is clearly marked FACSIMILE on reverse. You find many classic stamps on eBay that are facsimiles for sale. They should have an indication of such on them but not all do, so beware. Some are clearly sold as facsimiles in the listing but may not have an indication on them. Some are simply sold as is, which is a clear sign of buyer



Figure 16: *Facsimile penny black block of six.*

beware, but despite this seem to sell at higher prices at times. The stamps of modern China are one area where you need to be especially careful. There are many Chinese stamps that exist as originals and also as official reprints. The reprints have a much lesser value. However, there are also many of the expensive

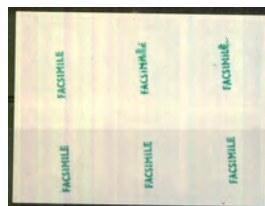


Figure 16a: *Facsimile penny black block of six.*

Cultural Revolution stamps of the 1960s that have been extensively forged and many forgeries are quite good at first look. Figure 17 illustrates facsimiles of three of these stamps for sale on eBay. In this case they have a printed black line through the value to indicate they are a facsimile. They are not expensive to buy. They may provide a cheap space filler in an album, but my concern is that in 20 years or so, people will be fooled by them. There are also high-quality forgeries out there so never buy expensive Chinese stamps except from a reliable dealer, auction house or with a certificate of authenticity.



Figure 17: *Chinese Cultural Revolution facsimiles*

Fantasies

This is a wide topic, but the section will focus on WWII propaganda stamps, bogus stamps from non-existent countries and modern fantasies such as the item in Figure 1 which started the article. I am not including local stamps which usually had a purpose in that they were designed to pay a fee for some sort of mail carriage. Propaganda stamps were produced in WWII for political reasons with plans to flood the stamps into a country to either demoralise or the possible hope that the stamps would be used. One popular stamp is the Hitler skull stamp illustrated in Figure 18 together with the stamp it parodies. It was produced by Great Britain. Germany also produced propaganda stamps as shown in Figure 19. These stamps have a wide range of countries as the bottom of the overprint and are very collectable. They are so popular that they too have been forged!



Figure 18: *Propaganda stamp.*

Over the years, stamps have appeared purporting to be the stamps of a region or country that are pure fantasies. Either the country did not exist (at least legitimately) or was a region that had no authority to issue stamps. Even more recently, regions or countries in turmoil have had stamps issued for them, and sold to collectors, that are not postage stamps because the issuing



Figure 19: *Liquidation of Empire Singapore stamp.*

company had no authority to produce and sell them. Given the turmoil in the region involved, no Government (if there is one) has the time to chase this so the UPU keeps a track of all issued postage stamps to stop these illegal stamps. The World Association for the Development of Philately (WADP) and the Universal Postal Union (UPU) joined forces to develop a WADP Numbering System (WNS) which was launched on 1 January

2002. You can look up recent stamps online to see if they are actual issues, which helps limit the marketability of these fantasies (see www.wnstamps.post/en).



Figure 20: *Sealand fantasy stamp.*

Republic of the South Moluccas which never issued stamps. They tried to break away from Indonesia but many of the stamps were in fact issued by a New York stamp dealer. Their history is more complicated than this, but these stamps are generally considered to be bogus and fantasies.



Figure 21: *Bogus South Moluccas stamp.*

The UPU put out a bulletin on 30 April 2012 stating: “*The regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia have put into circulation illegal postage stamps bearing the inscriptions "Republic of Abkhazia" in English, Russian and Abkhazian, and "Republic of South Ossetia" in English and Russian. These stamps do not comply with the conditions for postage stamps set out in article 8 of the Universal Postal Convention but are nevertheless sold on various websites.*” There is some debate that these stamps are actually being used within the breakaway region as local stamps, and that some countries recognise the region, but this is not easily confirmed. Figure 22 illustrates one of their stamps which are available online but are considered illegal stamps and are NOT allowed in competitive philatelic exhibit.



Figure 22: *South Ossetia ‘illegal’ stamp.*

The final fantasy I would like to discuss are the fantasies made up by someone with a computer, a printer and some way to perforate the stamp. They are not forgeries created to deceive a postal administration, or a copy of a known stamp to deceive a collector, or even produced for political reasons as some of the bogus material is. They are just produced to relieve collectors of money, as with Figure 1. I found an example on eBay as shown in Figure 23 which is a New Hebrides stamp of a ridiculous value, £20, which never existed. This is sold as a replica but serves no purpose. It can’t fill a gap in an album because it never existed. I strongly recommend that collectors do not support those issuing these fantasies as they add nothing to philately, and in the future will most likely detract.



Figure 23: *A pure fantasy.*

Conclusion

This article provides an overview of a very large topic that is of great importance to all philatelists. Where there is a dollar involved someone will try something to relieve you of that dollar, in this case by producing forgeries, fakes, facsimiles or fantasies. The FIP takes the issue very seriously and has

the Fight Against Forgeries Commission to help fight against these issues. The current Chair of the Commission is Australian Dr Geoffrey Kellow RDP FAP and as noted in the last APF News, this issue is taken very seriously at exhibitions.

It pays to know your subject, as even the most knowledgeable can be fooled, but knowledge is power. It can save you money particularly when looking at items that seem a bargain, like the item which started the article. If this item was a genuine essay, proof or unissued item it would be worth ten times what was paid. As it is, it isn't worth 0.1% of what was paid so '*Caveat Emptor*' (buyer beware).

(My thanks to Dr Andrew Cheung for his help with the postal history section and supplying the images and words.)

Addendum



Figure A:

After I finished this article, I was searching Delcampe (www.delcampe.net) a site that specialises in selling stamps and other items by auction, similar to eBay, for items of interest. I came across sheets of British Virgin Island forgeries for sale (as forgeries) by well-known English dealers Argyll Etkin, one of which is illustrated in Figure 4. I also came across the stamp shown in Figure A at left, for sale for €1,493.59 (over



Figure B:

\$A2,400). It claims to have four certificates of authenticity by Oscar Corbella, Sebastian Grunberg and Torterolo at Autre. Now while I would not claim to be an expert, I have collected this area for over 45 years, and I have never seen this postmark used on a genuine Virgin Islands' stamp. In figure B you will see an image of a very similar stamp that I excised from the sheet shown in Figure 4. I will leave it to the reader to make up their own mind on the genuineness of stamp A. Remember, caution is also needed with certificates of authenticity.

Useful Philatelic Websites

Stamp Auction Listings

There are many stamp auctions held worldwide each month and if you have a specialist area it can be difficult to keep up with auctions. There is nothing worse than missing that item you have hunted years for, only to see one at auction after the auction has closed. Many auction houses will not keep sending you catalogues if you are not a regular purchaser, and who can blame them. Catalogues may be cheaper to print these days, but postage is often the higher cost. Some auction houses will send you a reminder email but not all do, so what can you do?

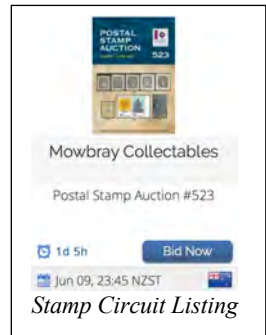
The following two websites not only list up and coming auctions but provide links to the catalogue listings. With a few clicks you can quickly see what is listed in your area of specialisation. The two sites also allow you to sign up and bid through the sites. The really great service offered by the sites is that you can search the sites for lots in closed auctions. This is a useful tool if you are starting in a

new area and want to get an idea of prices, or if you are a researcher. The sites also send out regular emails letting you know what auctions are new or which are closing soon, so you are unlikely to miss an auction. There is overlap between the sites, in terms of which auctions they cover but it is best to go to both for the widest source of auctions.


www.stampcircuit.com

Stamp Circuit has 111 affiliated auctioneers and includes a listing with details on each auctioneer. It also has a list of up and coming philatelic events.

www.stampauctionnetwork.com



Phoenix Auctions Worldwide Public Auction - June 12, 2020 (Sale Starts June 11th 23:00 EDT) This auction features the fantastic Large Gold Medal Exhibit of the Kangaroo & Map stamps formed by Peter O'Rourke. It features an extraordinary array of **Monogram** and **No Monogram** pieces as well as many imprints and watermark and perforation varieties. This is one of the most significant collections formed and we are honoured to be able to offer it you on Peter's behalf.



Stamp Auction Network Listing

This site has similar information and companies but has more US auctioneers. The front page of the website is much more crowded but is easy to navigate. It too allows research of older auctions.

The Museum of Philately – David Feldman



is also a way to view material that you are only likely to see at the largest international exhibitions, and these are short on the ground at present.

There are a number of exhibits of classic material including David Feldman's own "thematic" exhibit the Emerald Collection '1843 to 1870 Classics of the World' which comprises only green stamps from this period, a nod to David's Irish heritage. There are also individual rarities and information on famous collectors from KGV to Tapling, as well as links to issues from particular countries.

At right is a page from the Emerald Collection including a most amazing piece from Switzerland. Take a look at www.museumofphilately.com especially if you have an interest in classic philatelic material.



Exhibition Timetable and Updates

Exhibitions continue to be moved such that even exhibitions thought quite likely (Taipei 2021) have been moved. There are now few international exhibitions in 2021 with the result that 2022 is getting very crowded. This may cause issues for Australian commissioners filling their quotas. Hopefully one positive from Covid-19 is that exhibitors have been busy rewriting old exhibits, or even better, completing new exhibits. The changes are such that the table below only lists exhibitions in the order they are scheduled. Previous tables had some exhibitions listed but moved to a new date. This may cause confusion so has been stopped.

The table below has been expanded out to 2026 but as with all such lists some of these will not happen and others will pop up. Check <https://apf.org.au/philatelic-exhibition-timetable/> for updates as changes are coming thick and fast.

2021	Exhibition	Type	Contact	Close	Comments
25-30 Aug	PhilaNippon (Yokohama, Japan)	FIP or FIAP	(frankpauer2@bigpond.com) Frank Pauer	TBA	
9-10 Oct	Toowoomba	National 1-frame	Exhibition Secretary 2021, QPC PO Box 9471 Wynnum Plaza PO, WYNNUM WEST QLD 4178	5 July 2021	
10-12 Oct	Royalpex (Hamilton NZ)	National	lakatoistamps@gmail.com (Tony Griffin)	TBA	
22-24 Oct	Newcastle	Half National	Moore.john@optusnet.com.au (John Moore)	TBA	Incl. Picture Postcard Challenge & Royalpex
9-13 Nov	Cape Town 2021	FIP	Moore.john@optusnet.com.au (John Moore)	15 May 2021	Postponed from March 2021
19-22 Nov	<i>Notos</i> (Greece)	<i>FEPA</i> or <i>FIP</i>	<i>Australian involvement</i> <i>unlikely</i>	<i>TBA</i>	
2022					
19-26 Feb	London 2022	FIP	sbromser@optusnet.com.au (Stephanie Bromser)	Closed	Postponed from May 2020
18-20 Mar	Canberra Stampshow 2022	Half- National	TBA	TBA	
Mar	Hong Kong	FIP	TBA	TBA	
31 Mar-	Hunfilex	FIP	David.figg@internode.on.net (David Figg)	TBA	
3 April	(Budapest)				
6-8 May	Taipei (Taiwan)	FIAP	djbsfuller@iinet.net.au (Darryl Fuller)	TBA	Postponed from June 2021
18-22 May	Helvetia (Lugano)	FIP	(geoff@brusden-white.com) Geoff Kellow	TBA	

9-12 Jun	CAPEX (Toronto)	FIAF or FIP	ian.mcmahon4@bigpond.com (Ian McMahon)	TBA	
4-9 Aug	Indonesia (Jakarta)	FIP	TBA	TBA	Moved from 2020
20-21 Aug	Stampex (Adelaide)	National 1-frame	David.figg@internode.on.net (David Figg)	TBA	
8-11 Sep	Melbourne 2022	FIAP	David.figg@internode.on.net (David Figg)	TBA	Postponed from Feb 2021
Sep	Qatar	FIAP	TBA	TBA	
Oct	Thailand (Bangkok)	FIP	hesperus@netspace.net.au (Peter Allen)	TBA	
TBA	Wellington NZ	National	TBA	TBA	Australasian Challenge also
TBA	China	FIAP	TBA	TBA	Moved from 2021

2023

16-19 Mar	New Zealand (Auckland)	FIAP	Glen Stafford	TBA	
25-29 May	IBRA (Messe Essen)	FIP	ian.mcmahon4@bigpond.com (Ian McMahon)	TBA	Moved from 2021
TBA	Perth	National	TBA	TBA	

2024

TBA	Philakorea	FIP	TBA	TBA	
TBA	Sydney	National	TBA	TBA	Aerophilatelic Challenge
TBA	Toowoomba	National 1-frame	TBA	TBA	

2025

March	Canberra	Half- National	TBA	TBA	
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2026

TBA	Brisbane	National	TBA	TBA	May swap to 2025
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**AUSTRALASIAN PHILATELIC TRADERS' ASSOCIATION INC.
THE APTA PAGE**

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APTA in 2020

2020 promised to be an exciting and productive year for the philatelic trade. Major international shows were scheduled in New Zealand, London and Taipei, to then be followed up early 2021 by an

international event in Melbourne. However, this was not to be the case. The Covid 19 pandemic caused the cancellation and/or deferral of practically all philatelic shows, both domestically and overseas.

Whilst the pandemic has had a disastrous impact on many industries, the impacts have been mixed for APTA members. Those members reliant on trade show and shop-front business have struggled, whereas members with well-developed mail-order and on-line trades are actually doing very well. Anecdotal evidence is that realisations at public auctions with on-line bidding facilities are also quite strong.

Overall, the APTA Committee does trust the impacts on our members is not too severe and we can look forward to a return to normal business conditions in the very near future. There are signs that things are slowly returning to pre-Covid with shows recently being held in Perth (see report below) and also in Brisbane with a Stamp & Coin Mini Show being held on 8th November. Both shows were restricted to state-based dealers only.

Perth Stamp & Coin Show is a Huge Success

The APTA Supported **2020 Perth Stamp & Coin Show** was held over the weekend of Saturday 19th & Friday 20th September. It was reduced from the usual 3 day show to a 2 day event due to the Covid border into WA resulting in no interstate or overseas dealer participants. Nonetheless it was a resounding success with 22 WA based dealers filling all available stands including representation from Australia Post with a limited-edition PNC and miniature sheet on both days. Both sold out by lunchtime each day and continue to be very popular with collectors especially with the “Victory in the Pacific” and “bird” themes. Queues formed early each day with Saturday being the busiest, as collectors could at last attend a major state show. Stand holders benefited from this enthusiasm with all dealers reporting very good to excellent sales. It was also great to see some new and part time members of the trade having stands and interacting with collectors. Free valuations in the lobby proved popular with a steady flow of stamps and coins interspersed with the odd bit of militaria including a rather impressive KGV ceremonial sword!

The show was set up by lunchtime Friday, allowing the afternoon to be used as an opportunity for trading between dealers. This allowed some to re-stock and others to catch-up on the latest activities in the hobby. Needless to say, everyone was grateful of the opportunity especially considering the circumstances being experienced by our colleagues on the other side of the country.

The attendance exceeded 500 over both days which was better than expected considering the current health concerns and the weather which was wet and stormy both days

The event was announced on several radio stations and in the West Australian and some community newspapers. The dealers are also to be thanked for their active promotion at their local stamp and coin clubs.

APTA AGM

At the APTA AGM on November 6th, the following people were elected: President – Stewart Robbins, Vice President – Ian Boulton, Treasurer – Steve Hamilton, Secretary – David Bryon and Committee Member – Ian Perry.

The Genesis of a Stamp

Peter Plowman

(Ed: Firstly, my thanks to Peter Plowman for agreeing to republish this longer version of an article that was originally published in Cruising News July 2020. My thanks also to Alfred Grech who suggested republication, and Graham Morriss for passing the suggestion on to me. I hope you enjoy this background look at a recent stamp issue. There may also be a follow up article.)

In February 2019, I received the following email:

*I am a researcher for stamp design at Australia Post. We are considering a stamp issue to mark the 150th anniversary of the first "regular" Sydney-Auckland-San Francisco mail steamship service, the messy beginning of which you detail in Across the Pacific. I was hoping to talk to you about this and about possible visual material relating to the first steamships used, particularly the Wonga Wonga. If you are up for a conversation on this episode of history, I wonder if you would mind giving me a call.
With thanks and kind regards, Hilary*

When I called, Hilary told me that Australia Post was considering issuing two stamps in March 2020, provided suitable illustrations of the ships that commenced the first regular mail service to the United States in 1870, *Wonga Wonga* and *City of Melbourne*, could be located and the artists identified. I was pleased to offer my assistance, and the subsequent research would have all the qualities of unravelling a great mystery.

I had written extensively about the early days of mail services to the west coast of America in my book *'Across the Pacific'* so had the essential details immediately at hand. In December 1863 the New Zealand Government awarded a contract to the Intercolonial Royal Mail Steam Packet Co to operate the first steamship mail service across the Pacific, between New Zealand and Panama. The New South Wales Government approached the New Zealand Government to have the service extended to Australia, the mail subsidy to be shared by the two governments. There would be monthly departures from Sydney, with a call at Wellington. At Panama passengers and mail would be transported to Colon on the newly opened railroad, and a Royal Mail Line ship would operate the voyage to Southampton.

As a result, the Intercolonial Royal Mail Steam Packet Co was reorganized as the Panama, New Zealand and Australia Royal Mail Co, with a capital of £375,000, some provided by the Royal Mail Steam Packet Co. Four iron-hulled steamers were ordered from British shipyards, with accommodation for 100 first class and 60 second class passengers, and a service speed of 10 knots.

The mail service began on 15 June 1866, when *Kaikoura* departed Sydney, leaving Wellington on 24 June, arriving at Panama on 21 July. After the overland connection, passengers and mail left Colon on 23 July, arriving at Southampton on 14 August. However, after nearly three years of struggling to make the service a financial success, it was terminated in March 1869.

On 10 May 1869, the transcontinental railway across the United States was completed, which made possible the establishment of a faster connection to Britain from Australia and New Zealand via San Francisco. This was of particular interest to Hayden Hezekiah Hall, an American of rather dubious reputation living in Australia. Born in 1825 in Hartford, Connecticut, Hall arrived in Sydney in 1854,

and became known as 'the handsome American' but in December 1855 was declared bankrupt. This was discharged on 8 March 1856 and Hall left for New York where in January 1857 he married, and later that year returned to Australia with his wife. On 11 December 1862 Hall was again declared bankrupt; being discharged in March 1863 and again returning to America.

By 1864 Hall was back in Sydney as a partner in the firm of Samuel Hebblewhite & Co, which went bankrupt on 1 November 1866. Despite this, in December 1866 Hall was appointed the United States commercial agent in Sydney, though he preferred to call himself the U S Consul. Hall was a strong advocate of improving the shipping connection between Sydney and San Francisco, and originally organized a monthly service by sailing ships.

On 6 January 1870, Hall was awarded a mail contract by the New Zealand Government, who would provide a subsidy for a steamship mail service using Australian flag vessels from Sydney and Auckland to Honolulu, where the mail would be transferred to an American flag vessel for the voyage to San Francisco. As the new service would be from Sydney, the New Zealand Government asked the New South Wales Government to assist with the mail subsidy, and they agreed to contribute £7,500 towards the cost of the service to December 1870, and a further £2,500 up to March 1871.

Hall arranged the charter of two vessels owned by the Australasian Steam Navigation Co, *Wonga Wonga* and *City of Melbourne*, to operate between Sydney and Honolulu. The sector between Honolulu and San Francisco would be operated by the steamships *Idaho* and *Ajax*, owned by John Holloday & Co. This advertisement began appearing in Sydney newspapers:

SAN FRANCISCO AND OVERLAND TO ENGLAND.

The CALIFORNIAN, NEW ZEALAND, and
AUSTRALIAN MAIL LINE OF STEAM PACKETS,
under contract for a monthly MAIL SERVICE.

The splendid steamship WONGA WONGA, 1500 tons,

T S Beal, commander, will be dispatched from
Sydney on the 26th March, at 4pm, via Auckland and
Honolulu (Sandwich Islands), carrying an experienced
surgeon. Superior accommodations for saloon, cabin, and
intermediate passengers. A good table, with attendance,
can be relied upon in each department. Saloon passengers
are provided with every requisite-wines and spirits extras.

Bedding, &c, is not provided in the cabin or intermediate.
Parties proceeding to the United States of America or Europe
should avail themselves of this line which has decided
advantages over all others, having calm seas, and avoids the
disagreeables of a long sea voyage; the whole journey may be
considered a pleasure trip. Immediate application for passages
should be made to avoid disappointment, as many berths
are already engaged, to H H HALL, U S Consul.

Wonga Wonga left Sydney on 26 March 1870, carrying 52 cabin passengers, including Mr and Mrs H H Hall, 39 saloon passengers and 70 in steerage. *Wonga Wonga* arrived in Auckland on 1 April,

leaving the next day, and arrived in Honolulu on 19 April, where passengers and mail were transferred to *Idaho* for the final leg to San Francisco.

Passengers and mail brought to Honolulu by *Idaho* transferred to *Wonga Wonga*, which departed on 21 April, arriving back in Sydney on 17 May. The second departure of the mail service from Sydney was on 27 April by *City of Melbourne*, and the service was subsequently advertised as the American Australian Mail Line, but usually referred to in Sydney as the 'Hall Line'.

Finding the Right Wonga Wonga



Figure 1: *Wonga Wonga* by H C Berry

book *Early NZ Steamers* by Douglas Wilkinson, published in 1966. One was a painting of a ship with one funnel by H C Berry (Figure 1), the other a painting of a ship with two funnels by Dickson Gregory (Figure 2). The original of the Gregory painting was held in the State Library of Victoria Collection, but the identity of the ship was listed as 'unidentified' by them.

It was immediately obvious the paintings were depictions of two very different

My first action was to search for suitable illustrations of both *Wonga Wonga* and *City of Melbourne* that could be used on the stamps. In the case of *City of Melbourne* this proved quite difficult, nothing of sufficient quality being found, but fortunately this ceased to be a problem when I was advised by Hilary that a decision had been made to produce only one stamp, which would feature *Wonga Wonga*.

Prior to contacting me, Hilary had located two illustrations captioned *Wonga Wonga* in the



Figure 2: *Wonga Wonga* by Dickson Gregory

ships, and just to confuse matters further I was able to locate another painting of a ship named *Wonga Wonga*, done in 1856 and signed by F C Johnson, depicting a ship with a single funnel but of a totally different overall appearance to the Berry painting. This raised the possibility that there may have been three ships named *Wonga Wonga*. The first question I had to answer was which painting was of the right *Wonga Wonga* for the stamp?



Figure 3: *Wonga Wonga* by F C Johnson

One of the companies involved in the Australian coastal shipping trades was the Australasian Steam Navigation Company,

better known as the ASN, and in 1854 there were three ships under construction for them in Glasgow. One, built by Smith & Rodger, was delivered in April 1854 as *City of Sydney*. The other two, being built by J & G Thomson, were to be named *Wonga Wonga* and *Telegraph*.

What was quite amazing was my discovery that at exactly the same time a small Australian firm, Graham, Sands and Company, of Melbourne, was having two ships built for them in Glasgow, by Lawrie & Co, the first to be named *Storm Bird*, the second *Wonga Wonga*. I found that *Wonga Wonga* was an aboriginal name for a type of pigeon found along the east coast of Australia, and there was also a *Wonga Wonga* vine.

The Graham, Sands vessels were much smaller than the ASN ships, and it seems they were built as a speculative venture, as *Storm Bird* was offered for sale when it arrived in Melbourne on 13 October 1854, as was their *Wonga Wonga*, which departed Glasgow on 11 August, and reached Melbourne on 17 December. The ASN *Wonga Wonga* was launched on 15 May 1854 and left Glasgow on 21 September for Australia, via the Cape of Good Hope. This *Wonga Wonga* arrived in Sydney on 14 December.

Each vessel had an iron hull, single propeller and one funnel, but in size and appearance they were quite different. The Graham, Sands and Company *Wonga Wonga* was 108 gross tons, 107 feet long, and had two masts, with accommodation for 12 cabin, and 20 steerage passengers. The ASN *Wonga Wonga* was 662 gross tons, 207.2 feet long with a beam of 25.3 feet, had three masts, and accommodation for 54 saloon, 50 intermediate and 120 steerage passengers. This was the vessel depicted in the painting by F C Johnson.

The smaller *Wonga Wonga* was purchased by the Auckland Local Steam Navigation Company, and by 22 December was being advertised in Melbourne newspapers as due to depart for New Zealand on 2 January 1855, but this was put back several times. Meanwhile, after three weeks at Sydney being prepared for service, the ASN *Wonga Wonga* ran trials in Sydney Harbour on Monday, 1 January 1855, and on 3 January departed on its first commercial voyage, to Melbourne.

The first voyages in Australian waters by both vessels named *Wonga Wonga* encountered unexpected problems. The ASN *Wonga Wonga* reached Port Phillip Bay in good time, but as the *Argus* reported on Monday, 8 January:

The Wonga Wonga, the new steamer belonging to the Australasian Steam Navigation Company, left Sydney on Wednesday evening, at five o'clock, and entered Port Phillip Heads at three am on Saturday. In consequence of the black buoy off Swan's spit being considerably to the eastward of its proper position, the Wonga Wonga grounded, but was got off on the following morning.

The location where *Wonga Wonga* went aground had claimed several ships in the past, and it proved difficult to refloat the vessel. Attempts on Saturday were unsuccessful, but the ship was eventually pulled free on Sunday morning and went up the bay to berth in Port Melbourne. Fortunately, no damage was inflicted, and the ship departed on 10 January as scheduled for the voyage back to Sydney.

With the departure date of the other *Wonga Wonga* from Melbourne for Auckland being put back several times, it was still in the port, berthed at Queen's Wharf, when the ASN *Wonga Wonga* made its first trip to Melbourne, though this coincidence was not mentioned in local newspapers. Eventually the smaller *Wonga Wonga* departed Melbourne on 16 January, having 32 passengers and some cargo

on board, but the voyage did not start well, as the Auckland newspaper *Southern Cross* reported on 9 February, though they also had some confusion with the ship's name:

The screw steamer Wonga Wonga (sic), recently purchased in Melbourne by Mr D Simpson for the Auckland Local Steam Navigation Company, arrived in harbour under sail, on Tuesday last; she left Melbourne, under the command of Captain Thompson, late of the Galatea, on the 16th ult; but owing to her being caught in a heavy gale, was anchored for shelter in Western Port, whence she sailed on the 24th ult. Owing to a defect in her boilers which was discovered shortly after starting, the passage has been made under canvas, the vessel proving herself to be a remarkable fine sea boat.

After this rather unfortunate start, *Wonga Wonga* went on to have a very successful career in the New Zealand coastal trades until being wrecked on 2 May 1866 off Greymouth. From descriptions of this *Wonga Wonga* in the Wilkinson book I was able to ascertain that it was the vessel depicted in the painting by H C Berry, and not the one that made the first mail voyage to Hawaii.

I was now able to turn my full attention to the ASN *Wonga Wonga* and found that it mainly operated on the Australian coastal trades, where it developed a fine reputation. However, for a short period it was diverted to services between Melbourne and New Zealand, as in November 1858, the ASN was awarded a contract by the Government of Victoria and the Provincial Governments of Wellington and Nelson to carry mail between Melbourne and Wellington. The first vessel to depart Melbourne, on 26 November, was *Wonga Wonga*, but this service was only maintained until August 1859, when another company took over the mail contract. The Otago gold rush that started in 1861 resulted in the ASN returning to the New Zealand trade, and *Wonga Wonga* was one of several ships that operated across the Tasman Sea from Sydney and Melbourne to the goldfields for some months.

Wonga Wonga mostly operated between Sydney and Melbourne, but at times the voyage would be extended to Adelaide and Albany, in King George Sound, Western Australia. Several newspapers reported that *Wonga Wonga* left Melbourne on 3 October 1867 and arrived in Sydney two days later, but it remained in port for the rest of the year and into 1868. *Wonga Wonga* seems to have been taken out of service to undergo repairs, as on 5 March 1868 the *Sydney Morning Herald* reported:

The Wonga Wonga -This vessel (whose reputation as one of the fastest and most comfortable sea-going steamers in the colonies, is proverbial) has, for some time past, been laid up for repairs, and the directors of the ASN Co have now decided to lengthen her, furnish her with a new boiler, and reconstruct the engines so that when again ready for sea, the Wonga Wonga will not be easily recognised.

The old boilers and engines have been taken out, the vessel placed on the slip, and the process of separating the plates having been completed she was yesterday drifted apart 37 feet. When the hull is again perfected, she will receive her new boilers, now nearly finished, the engines (also being in a forward state) will then be fitted, and finally a spar deck will be fitted, allowing ample space for a first and second class saloon, as also a very superior steerage.

A report on the ASN in general in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on 1 Aug 1868 included:

Considerable alterations and improvements have been made in the Wonga Wonga, which it is expected will render her not only a profitable vessel to the company, but a favourite with the travelling public. The hull of the vessel has been lengthened to the extent of 37ft,

and raised upon 7ft, by which her gross tonnage has been increased from 697 to 1002 tons. She has been provided with new boilers, and besides having had her engines thoroughly overhauled and refitted, an additional cylinder and surface condenser have been added, by which her steaming capabilities are increased to 280 nominal horse power. She is now the largest ship in the company's service, possessing very extensive and complete accommodation for passengers and cargo; and it is expected will maintain an average speed of twelve knots per hour from Sydney to King George's Sound, carrying sufficient coal (owing to her reduced consumption) for the round trip back to Sydney.

With the installation of more powerful machinery and new boilers, *Wonga Wonga* also had a second funnel fitted, which quite changed its appearance to that depicted in the painting by Dickson Gregory. This information was passed on to State Library of Victoria, which has changed their designation of the original painting to *Wonga Wonga*, *Wonga Wonga* departed Sydney on 29 August on its first voyage in the new guise, going to Melbourne. The extent of the alterations and improvements probably indicate why *Wonga Wonga* was selected to operate the Pacific service, as it was virtually a new ship.



Figure 4: *H H Hall*

Wonga Wonga operated the mail service to Hawaii for H H Hall (Figure 4) until March 1871, when his mail contract was terminated and a new contract awarded to the American firm, John Holloday & Company, whose ships operated the full route between San Francisco and Sydney via Auckland. However, hoping to regain the New South Wales mail contract, Hall renewed his charter arrangement with the ASN for both *Wonga Wonga* and *City of Melbourne*, and a third of their ships, *City of Adelaide*, and each of the ASN ships made at least one round trip from Sydney to San Francisco. In July 1871, Hall cancelled his charter arrangement, but the ASN decided to operate the route themselves, though only from Sydney directly to Hawaii, where passengers transferred to a Holloday ship. The ASN had hoped to

obtain a mail contract from the New South Wales Government, but when this failed, they withdrew from the Hawaii service at the end of 1871.

Wonga Wonga then operated primarily on the service from Sydney to Auckland ports, which explains why the painting captioned *Wonga Wonga* and attributed to Dickson Gregory appeared in the Wilkinson book. The ASN withdrew from the New Zealand trade early in 1875, the last sailing being made by *Wonga Wonga* from Auckland on 10 February, arriving in Sydney six days later. *Wonga Wonga* then operated on the coastal trade from Sydney to Brisbane, Bowen, Townsville and Cooktown, but was withdrawn following its arrival in Sydney on 24 June 1875.

In October 1875 *Wonga Wonga* was offered at auction, but not sold and remained idle in Sydney. In July 1878 it was reported the ASN was employing a large number of Chinese immigrants, and “the old *Wonga Wonga* steamer was to be fitted up as a Chinese boarding establishment.”

From September 1879 an International Exhibition was to be held in Sydney in the purpose-built Garden Palace, and on 29 March the *Sydney Morning Herald* reported *Wonga Wonga* “has been purchased from the ASN Co for the purpose of being converted into a floating hotel. She will be at once fitted up for that purpose, and be ready to accommodate visitors to the International

Exhibition.” It seems the ship was only leased for this duty, as in December 1879 *Wonga Wonga* was advertised for sale by the ASN. When no buyers came forward, it was broken up at the ASN facility in Pyrmont in 1880.

Finding the Right Dickson Gregory

Having identified the correct painting for the stamp (Figure 2), I began to research the artist, and soon found out that his full name was Charles Dickson Gregory. I then discovered there had been two maritime artists in Australia with that name, one listed as 1850–1920, the other 1871–1947. The question became which of them created the *Wonga Wonga* painting to feature on the stamp?

The Charles Dickson Gregory born in 1850 is listed in several reference books, including *The Encyclopaedia of Australian Artists*, compiled by Alan McCulloch, and *The Dictionary of Australian Artists*, edited by Joan Kerr. Both state that he was born in London and brought to Australia in 1851. After failing to achieve success on the gold fields as a young man, he was able to make a living painting ships and other subjects, eventually opening his own studio in South Melbourne. He went back to Britain in 1873 to study at the Royal Academy Schools, and never returned to Australia.



Figure 5: *Charles Dickson Gregory (born 1871)*

Dickson Gregory was involved in the formation of the Shiplovers’ Society of Victoria in 1930, and often gave talks around the country. In one newspaper interview, Gregory stated his father, George, was the chief engineer on the *Chusan* when it came to Australia in 1852, the first P & O Line vessel to come to the country. Dickson said he first went to sea with him at around six years of age, which indicates George Gregory must have settled in Melbourne prior to 1871. He might have been employed by a coastal shipping company or on one of the numerous small steam vessels operating around Port Phillip Bay to be able to take the young Dickson with him.

The younger Charles Dickson Gregory (Figure 5), who was known to friends as Dickson, was born in South Melbourne in 1871, and was a ship enthusiast who did painting as a hobby. He only came to prominence in Australia following the release of his first book, *Australian Steamships Past and Present*, published in Britain by The Richards Press, of London, in 1929, which included many of his paintings, including one of *Wonga Wonga*. It is said King George V and the Prince of Wales each received a copy of the book, and the King showed particular interest in Gregory’s painting of the *RMS Ophir* (Figure 6), which features on the frontispiece, as he and Queen Mary, then Duke and Duchess of York, made their trip to Australia in 1901 on that vessel.

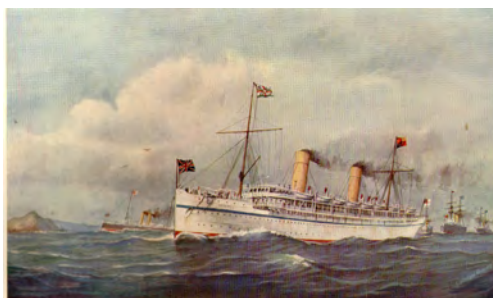


Figure 6: *Ophir by Dickson Gregory*



Figure 7: *Chusan* by Dickson Gregory

Dickson Gregory's painting of *Chusan*, under full sail with a wisp of smoke coming from the funnel (Figure 7), appeared on the \$1 stamp of an issue of four by Australia Post on 15 January 1998, titled 'Clipper Ships' and also featuring *Flying Cloud*, *Marco Polo* and *Heather Belle*. While they were true clipper ships, the inclusion of *Chusan* seems strange as it was steam powered.

Having obtained all this information, I was able to discount the elder Charles Dickson Gregory as being the artist of the painting to be featured on the new stamp. However,

the existence of the elder Charles Dickson Gregory might explain why the younger man signed his paintings and authored his books as Dickson Gregory.

It is interesting that The Encyclopaedia of Australian Artists refers to the elder Charles Dickson Gregory only as Charles Gregory, and it seems this was the way he signed his paintings completed in England after he left Australia. However, before leaving Australia in 1873, Gregory appears to have developed a sizeable reputation as an artist, and, despite his tender years, was listed as a founding member of the Victorian Academy of Fine Arts in 1870. The entry also states, "*He produced a large volume of work while in Australia including watercolours of marine subjects and painted birds.*"

The Dictionary of Australian Artists entry on the elder man states, "*Gregory's youthful Australian years were also artistically productive. He painted numerous watercolours of ships, including Sailing Ship Preussen, SS Katoomba, City of Hobart, Sophia Jane, and Wreck of the Admella,*" but this is totally inaccurate. The paintings of *Sophia Jane*, *Katoomba* and *City of Hobart* referred to are definitely by the younger Charles Dickson Gregory, all being included in his book printed in 1929 and bearing his distinctive signature. The painting titled *Wreck of the Admella* is also clearly signed by the younger Dickson Gregory (Figure 8), and he did a number of other wreck paintings.

The *Preussen* was a five-masted sailing ship built in 1902 and wrecked in 1910, which never came to Australia, and that painting was probably done by the elder Charles Dickson Gregory when he lived in England. All of this leaves a major question mark over the authenticity of any maritime paintings claimed as being created in Australia by the elder Charles Dickson Gregory.

Surprisingly, there is no entry at all for the younger Charles Dickson Gregory in the Dictionary of Australian Artists, while The Encyclopaedia of Australian Artists is rather dismissive of his work,



Figure 8: *Wreck of the Admella* by Dickson Gregory

which may be due to the misallocation of some of his paintings to the elder Charles Dickson Gregory. The entry merely states:

GREGORY, CHARLES DICKSON (Active from c 1890, Melb). Painter, jeweller. He worked for the firm of Alfred Felton and was known for marine paintings, which, although similar in style, lack the finish of G F Gregory. The two were not related.

It is interesting that the elder Charles Dickson Gregory is not mentioned in this entry, which points to there being no known familial relationship, particularly as the entry goes to lengths to distance the younger Gregory's work from another maritime artist, G F Gregory, and the fact that they were not related.

In fact, there was both a father (1821 – 1887) and his oldest son (1857 – 1913) with the name George Frederick Gregory who were maritime painters, as was his third son, Arthur Victor Gregory (1867– 1957). I had seen paintings signed G F Gregory and A V Gregory in various books and had thought they were probably brothers of the younger Charles Dickson Gregory. This seemed a logical conclusion considering their years of birth (1857, 1867 and 1871) and the fact that all three had a father named George.

However, not only does The Encyclopaedia of Australian Artists extract dismiss this, none of the entries about the George Frederick Gregory family of maritime artists make any mention of either man named Charles Dickson Gregory. It seems, therefore, that the two men named Charles Dickson Gregory were not related to any other marine artists with the surname Gregory, and most likely not related to each other. It's all just a very interesting coincidence.

It is also of interest that McCulloch considered Gregory's involvement with Alfred Felton was the only part of his life worthy of inclusion in his Encyclopaedia of Australian Artists. Alfred Felton was born in England in 1830 and migrated to Victoria in 1853 to search for gold. In 1857, he was in Melbourne as a commission agent, and by 1861 was a wholesale druggist. In 1867 Felton went into partnership with Frederick S Grimwade as Felton Grimwade and Company, "wholesale druggists and manufacturing chemists".

Felton never married, and as his wealth grew, he gave away considerable amounts to charity, and developed large collections of paintings, furniture, objets d'art and books. He purchased two large country estates and owned the largest house at that time in St Kilda, but preferred to live simply in rooms at the Esplanade Hotel, where he died on 8 January 1904. It seems that Dickson Gregory was employed by Alfred Felton in his final years, as in his book, "*Flinders Lane: Recollections of Alfred Felton*," Russell Grimwade, the son of F S Grimwade, stated:-

The engagement of Dickson Gregory as his personal attendant and secretary soon developed into an arrangement that brought comfort and relief to the aging man. Gregory would by arrangement ride his bicycle to the Esplanade Hotel in the morning to learn the plans of his day, or else await his coming at the office. His invariable salutation in the morning was "Anything fresh?," after which instructions would be given... Perhaps the most important item of the day's work was to send Gregory round to Kosminsky's to learn if there were any new ivory miniatures for inspection. Always Gregory had the task of collecting from Mullens, the Athenaeum or Public Library the dozen or so books that seemed necessary to his intellectual appetite each week

In the book "*Mr Felton's Bequests*", by John Poynter, it is stated that in Felton's will, "*A legacy of £500 for Felton's 'clerk' Dickson Gregory, provided in the first codicil, was increased to £1,000 in*

the second." In 1904 this was a huge amount and would have established Gregory financially. After his employment with Alfred Felton ended Dickson Gregory entered the jewellery business and became quite well known in this field. I found a death notice and a brief obituary published in the *The Age* on 7 August 1947:

GREGORY August 6 at Frankston (suddenly). Charles Dickson, son of the late George and Elizabeth Ann, loved brother of Lily, (Mrs L Myers), Sandringham.

Mr C Dickson Gregory, noted authority and lecturer on shipping history, collapsed and died while writing at his country home, Arundel, Mornington-road, Frankston, on Wednesday. He was 76 years of age. Mr Gregory, who lived in Albert Street, East Melbourne, recently spent some weeks in hospital, and went to Frankston to recuperate. He was born in South Melbourne, and entered the jewellery business. He was manager of Messrs Stewart Dawson's Melbourne business for many years. Later he joined Hardy Bros Ltd and retired about 10 years ago. He was unmarried. Mrs Meyer, of Sandringham, is his only sister.

There was also an obituary published in the *Melbourne Herald* the same day:

Expert on Ships Was Judge Of Jewels

The man "who knew more about Australian ships than any other man in the world" was not a sailor, but a Jewel expert. He had travelled around the world 12 times. He was Mr Charles Dickson Gregory who died at his home at Mornington last night aged 76. Mr Gregory was foundation member and for many years, president of the Melbourne Ship Lovers' Society, a member of the Historical Society of Victoria and also of the Model Ships Society. His books on shipping included "Australian Steamships Past and Present," and "The Romance of the Edina."



Figure 9: *The issued stamp.*

Today Dickson Gregory is held in high regard in maritime art circles in Australia, in contrast to the summary of his career in *The Encyclopaedia of Australian Artists*, which was no doubt in part due to the misattribution of much of his work to the other Charles Dickson Gregory.

Dickson Gregory's painting of the *Wonga Wonga* is reproduced on the \$1.10 stamp issued in Australia on 3 March 2020 (Figure 9), and my

journey to verify both ship and artist was certainly an interesting one.

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