

NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2009

EDITORIAL WELCOME

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

EDITORIAL WELCOME	1
IPDA CHAT ROOM	2
PROBLEMS WITH BRITISH POSTMARKS	2
CLOSING STUFF	4

Hello everyone. Apology for late issue this month, and as I start to write I realize time is not on my side so this will be a short issue. Well it is a short month after all !. I am back in Sydney as I write and finding so much to do around the house. I even managed to soak a few stamps yesterday, rather a lot had been put in my "to be soaked" box while I was away. Found it rather interesting because some US stamps that I thought might be difficult to soak came off the envelopes really easy while the some of the GB Christmas issue were impossible to remove but some of the same apparent stamp came away easy. Argghh I started to think, Royal Mail using a new gum — non soluble maybe. I've not researched it but I expect there was a soluble gum printing and a non soluble gum printing. Anyone know. Anyway, some of the stamps were ruined. Of course it could get worse when the new Royal Mail security stamps are issued in a weeks time. I hope to be able to report on those next month. Back to me keeping "on cover" I guess. Although when you get a lot of stamps it is tidy to be able to stock book them.



The year of the Ox is upon us and part of my celebrating the festivities occurred in Kuala Lumpur where I have been these past weeks. I was treated to a traditional Chinese New Year dinner. Very nice food and a wonderful way to eat.

I have been reading Stamp News Australasia, the February edition arrived in my mail box the other day. Informative and interesting as always. One piece really caught my eye though. If you don't see the magazine this might have you thinking. It was about the number of stamp variations issued by Australia Post in November 2008. Written by David Mallen, always a good read. He is author of Australian Stamp Variations and if you are interested you can find his website at <http://www.users.bigpond.net.au/asv/> He noted that someone has asked if Australia Post has contravened Clause 7 of the UPU Philatelic Code of Ethics because of the number of variations being issued. Clause 7 states, "Postal administrations shall not produce postage stamps or philatelic products that are intended to exploit customers" Well what do you think of that clause :-)



Above: After soaking paper was "thick"

David notes that in November there were 169 variations issued by Australia Post and to obtain one of every variation would set the customer back AUD \$1330. yes, \$1330, that is not a typo I assure you. Looking at my thematic interest, the A380 as you all know by now, Australia Post issued some variations to commemorate the first Qantas A380. Yes I did fly the inaugural Sydney — Singapore if you are wondering. There were 3 variations I believe but interesting (to me anyway) is the imperf sheets sold (block of 4 from a larger sheet of 12 blocks) are considered by Australia Post as "collectable stamps" and not valid for postage. Exploiting the customer I wonder?



Above: After soaking paper was "thin"

While this is a snapshot of the Australian postal scene I am thinking of other countries and are some of them also in breach of Clause 7. I think of Royal Mail for one. Have you seen their pricing lists. Awesome and certainly beyond my meager budget. Your views and thoughts about the Postal Administration in your country. I hope to hear from you.

Both stamps from same issue but I suspect different gums used

Even though only two pages I hope you enjoy this issue and I do look forward to receiving emails and ideas for future issues. Michael

IPDA CHAT ROOM

Do you use the IPDA Chat Room? If not maybe you will find some time. I occasionally pop in but often no one is there. Probably world time differences but always worth having a look. We do have a new chat room, changed by regular chatters who felt that the old site was giving them problems such as disconnecting them, sending them to unsolicited porn channels and other minor hiccups. I have been informed and can confirm from experience that the "new" members chat room is reliable and fits the bill for regular chatters. Our thanks to Allan Oliver who was kind enough to come up with a replacement chat room for us. The new chat room has the distinct advantage of being able to eject any unruly guest !!!

To get to the Chat Room, go to the IPDA Web Site www.ipdaonline.org and click the Chat Room icon on the Home Page, This opens the Chat Room. It is that simple although it takes a few seconds to load. Be patient and if you get a message about digital signature just click Run and then you enter your "nickname" and click enter (no password is required) This is an open chat room for members and non members.

Something else to point out, in case you ever have problems entering the members area on the website: Some members using internet Explorer 07 and 08 have had difficulties logging in to the members enclosure. The problem has been addressed. Follow these instructions. By default, Internet Explorer 07 disables active content (JavaScript) in local HTML files. So, to use Secure HTML, you need to check the following.

Tools > Internet Options > Advanced > Security > Allow active content to run in files on My Computer.

Tools > Internet Options > Security > Internet > Custom Level > Allow websites to prompt for information using scripted windows > Enable.

PROBLEMS WITH BRITISH POSTMARK IDENTIFICATION



Many collectors have GB items in their collection where only part of the postmark is visible and identification of the place from where it was posted can at times be difficult. A typical example is shown to the left

To aid in the identification of these types of part cancellations, a database of British Postmark Names has been set up at ... http://www.philatelic.org/projects/cancels/postmarks_search.php

Here you can enter the part of the postmark that can be seen and the results are displayed as a list from which you can select the best match for more details. This is an ongoing project with over 5,000 entries at this time and over 30 percent of these are illustrated.

I hope that this is useful to all collectors, and something you can pass on to your customers. Many thanks for this piece to Allan Oliver from the UK.

JUST SOME CLOSING STUFF

For the past few months I have been telling you that we have vacancies on the Board. There are two positions available. Association Secretary, and Membership Secretary. Both are Directors of the IPDA. You would have the opportunity to play a significant role and put forward your ideas for the IPDA. The Association's procedures are all online and all contacts with fellow officers and members are conducted via the internet. If you are willing to help, or wish to learn more about these positions please contact Alan at secretary@ipdaonline.org Anyone interested? Write to me michaelatipda@gmail.com or Alan, for details. Don't be shy.

To finish on a topic I started with. In the Australasia Stamp News magazine there is a full page Ad which details the results of a survey. People were asked their view on Australia Post's new issue practices and products. 54% of respondents ticked "seriously damaging to the hobby" and 36% ticked "generally detrimental to the hobby". 90% therefore are pretty disappointed. Typical responses were "too many issues", "needless and meaningless variations", "too many poor designs and puerile topics which damage Australia's image". What does this mean to us? Well if you are selling, what are you selling. Not new issues as it would cost you a fortune to stock up wouldn't it. How are dealers coping with all the new issues we keep seeing, whichever country we are in? Can you even imagine people collecting all these new issues in the current economic climate. To be honest I cannot.

I hope you have thoughts and maybe even the time to write to me. All ideas and feedback is welcome and I will never be upset at criticism as that can only be for the improvement of this Newsletter. Enjoy your stamp and stamp colleagues. *Michael*