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## NEWSLETTER MAY 2013

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### EDITORS COLUMN

It is May. Hard to believe. This is the month some of us will be in Melbourne, Australia, to visit and participate in the World Stamp Expo 2013. This month a birthday special. My birthday, so thanks to all who wrote to me to make this an 8 page issue.

I am planning to be in Melbourne. No idea which day yet. Will play it by ear I think. Maybe the opening day, the 10th will be good.

I have written about the show many times over the past few months and not had one single response from Members. If you are going to attend please feel free to drop me an email. Maybe we can meet up.

In the May - June issue of Australia Post's Stamp Bulletin there is plenty of information on the Expo including floor plans and details of special products only available at the Show.

One item that may be of interest to some of you is the Kangaroo and Map stamp that will be issued on 10th May. Another reason to get there for that and get a nice first day franking maybe.

2013 marks the centenary of the first Australian Commonwealth postage stamp issue.

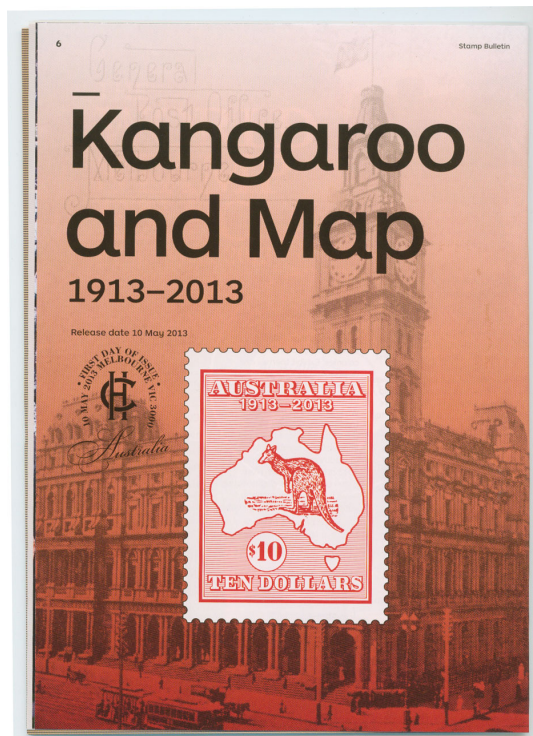
As many of you will no doubt know, for some 60 years prior to its release the colonies had produced their own postage stamps. This issue, the \$10 denomination, is the last in the Colonial Heritage stamp series which has been running since 2010. The stamp will be released as a sheet of 10 stamps. And there will be various products for the collector to buy including a FDC with a gummed stamp and a FDC with a MS. Both look very attractive from the brochure pictures I have seen so far. There will be a limited edition (5000 copies) Prestige cover which shows a facsimile envelope signed by Andrew Fisher, who was the Prime Minister back in 1913. There is also a special show souvenir sheet overprinted with the Australia 2013 logo. This will be a limited edition of 250 available at the show and I would expect likely to be sold out in minutes even at the \$30 price it is being sold for.

I will report more in the June edition and hopefully have some photos for you.

In this issue there are a few articles which I hope you find of interest. Some follow up from the article last month on scanning stamps for internet display, a new section dealing with criminal activities of various sorts and an article on one Members approach to stamp inventory for his sales.

Finally, your Board meet this past month. Various topics were discussed including the Chat Room — you can access this from the IPDA web site home page at [www.ipdaonline.org](http://www.ipdaonline.org) if you want to chat to other members or other philatelic colleagues, Members fees these maybe due for you so please pay through the link that you should receive when your membership fee is due, and the AGM. The AGM will be held on 5th August (USA / northern hemisphere time (morning of 6th for us down under!!)) Please make a note of this in your diary as we would like a good attendance please.

Michael [michaelatipda@gmail.com](mailto:michaelatipda@gmail.com)



Still looking for my copy. Machin 13 issues are now around. Anyone want to write to me with some 2013 printed stamps :-). We all use email these days - life can be so boring without real mail and real stamps



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### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

There were a few in my mail box this past months so my thanks to those of you who wrote, and especially to those who wrote kind words expressing appreciation to the contents of recent Newsletters. All ideas for articles and articles themselves are always welcomed. Sometimes I have no idea what to write about you know. Hard to believe hahahahah but true :-)

Lets start with some of the comments I received in response to Don O'Neal's piece on Creating Great Stamp Images for Internet Listings. I for one have taken some of his advice on-board and am now far more careful when scanning stamps and in particular making sure there is not a large black border - as you may recall from some of the images I used in the previous article.

One response from Member

In reading the article in the April edition of the newsletter I noticed the reference to using Adobe for adjusting the scans needed for the internet. I have always found Adobe to be way too much software for the simple job of scanning my stamps for the internet. Instead, I have been using a piece of software called "PhotoPad Image Editor" provided by "[nchsoftware.com](http://nchsoftware.com)". This software is FREE and is very well maintained by NCH. It is simple to use and has a great program for rotating the image when it is not straight. For me, this software works every bit as well as the Adobe and much simpler.

I hope this helps some of our smaller dealers.

Harry Buehne: Visit my stamp store at <http://www.bidstart.com/stores/hebuehne>

And also on Don's piece and the email I sent advising about the fake Paypal invoice

Hi Michael,

I also received a similar email last week. As well as your good advice about logging in, I just wanted to point out that all genuine Paypal emails start with 'Hello (your name)'. If it doesn't, it is not from Paypal. Also, if you look at the email address of the sender, it is not paypals. It is sometimes similar with spelling mistakes or added bits, but often from some completely different address.

I also wanted to thank Don O'Neal for writing the article on processing images. I found it very helpful and informative.

Finally, being the quiet type, I don't correspond very much. But I read all your newsletters eagerly and enjoy them. It is sometimes a bit isolating being a home based internet seller, but your newsletter makes me feel like I am part of a collective, a connection to the world. So, thank-you for all the work you put into getting that out every month. I appreciate it. Kind regards Debbie Shoheit

*And this also on the fake Paypal message from Member Rich Noddy*

One easy way to see if an email is fake is to "hover" your cursor over any link within the body of the email, without clicking on it. This will show you the URL of the link destination....if it does not have Paypal in the link then it is a phish (bear in mind also that even having Paypal in the link does not always mean it is genuine!).

And finally Philippe Poppe sent me a copy of a fake eBay / Paypal invoice which he had received; it looked so genuine but as I say it was actually a fake. Philippe commented that his business gets many of these, often on a daily basis. So watch out for that type of scam as well.



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### EBAY, PAYPAL AND THE OFAC

*Another piece I received this month from Roger West, our Director in the UK and owner of Avion Thematics. Thanks Roger for sharing this with us.*

I recently received a disturbing email from Paypal probably as a result of a recent sale, but I gather other dealers have received similar mails from Paypal and/or eBay. My mail was warning me that I cannot sell items originating from Sudan and went on to mention that selling Cuban stamps was also violating their policies. I checked with another dealer and he'd had some of his Iraq items removed by eBay.

It appears that eBay and Paypal are obliged to conform to the United States regulations administered by the Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), and although I'm registered in the UK, I have to go along with Paypal's policies.

I'm sure we all have similar feelings about money laundering and preventing monies getting into the hands of terrorists, but the offending item I sold was a 1941 Sudan set issued when Sudan was part of the British Empire. This Paypal policy would presumably apply to ALL internet listings which accept Paypal as a method of payment - this means YOUR website as well as eBay, Delcampe, BidStart, eBid, Specialist Auctions and all the others.

It is a very sad day for philately when an organisation far distant from your country of residence is effectively dictating what you can and cannot sell. My father and millions like him, fought in the second World War to stop the spread of dictatorship - I fancy they would turn in their graves if they knew what was going on.

Roger B West  
Avion Thematics

*On the eBay theme although in a different view, I read the following — posted on a Dealers site on eBay - Is this impacting other Members? Perhaps a topic of interest and one where other experiences could be shared? One wonders how far eBay is going to go to preclude stamps selling, this seems to have been a thread I have seen in numerous forums of late. Thoughts?*

"Sorry, but my minimum postage charge in the US is now \$2 as I have been personally informed by eBay that if I wish to continue selling I must enter tracking on all US shipments. The minimum on-line postage for a first class package up to 3 ounces with tracking is \$1.69. The handling charge also includes private insurance and the 15% commission eBay now charges on postage. (This also means I must use computer labels to save time and costs, but I will include recent used commemoratives as compensation.) Save: pay only the single highest shipping, additional lots are no extra charge. Buy five lots and free shipping in US except very heavy lots. We do use stamps on lots shipped out of the US. If you buy several lots please wait for a combined invoice as eBay just adds all p&h together".

### NOTHING TO DO WITH STAMPS

I saw this, and, as many of you know aviation is one of my main interests. This about a pilot who had trouble adjusting to retirement, so he built his own dream boat :-)







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### IPDA PHILATELIC CRIME NEWS REPORT

The following is a new section received from Alan Devine, our Chairman and Confidential List Officer. This is an extension of the confidential list service intended to pick up those events that will not appear in the Confidential Names List. You may notice that one item of the information in this new list falls under the description of professional advice for dealers. That is something we have always said we should provide but have never done so. If any Member comes across material they would like to share in future issues please email to me at [michaelatipda@gmail.com](mailto:michaelatipda@gmail.com). I will also share with Alan.

**THEFT:** Search continues to find and recover a scarce 1970 Thames first-day cover with the scarce Dickens Fellowship stamp issue (SG824/248), and the scarce Broadstairs, Kent special handstamp, which was stolen during the ASPS societies convention in Sussex, UK, in October 1970. Value estimated at £50.00. Send information to the PTS Office telephone 01273 594110 or email to [office.pts@btinternet.com](mailto:office.pts@btinternet.com) Source: Philatelic Exporter - April 2013.

**STOLEN:** \$12,000 combined value of current Australian postage stamps stolen on 4<sup>th</sup>. December 2012 from a Post Office in Baroondara, Victoria, Australia. The stamps are in official post office folders as issued to post office outlets. Send information to the Detective Senior Constable Andrew Austin at Baroondara Crime investigation Unit phone number +61 3 8851 1155. Source: Philatelic Exporter - April 2013

**BURGLARY:** On March 11<sup>th</sup>. and 15<sup>th</sup>. 2013 in Lechlade, Gloucestershire, UK, a collection of Great Britain 1912-24 Royal Cypher issues (SG 176-396) face values 3d. to 1/- was stolen. The collection contains rare shades many with RPS certificates. The PTS has photocopies of some of these stamps. Source: Philatelic Exporter - April 2013

**STOLEN IN TRANSIT:** A theft, between the East Coast USA and Sussex, UK, resulted in loss of stamps valued at over £5800. The items missing are British Central Africa 1891-95 to £1, Nyasaland 1908-1964 mint collection, French Office in Alexandria 1895-1901 set, and Iran 1951 50r. and Luxemburg mint collection. The PTS has copies of this loss. Source: Philatelic Exporter - April 2013.

**NOTE:** Any information about the stamps listed above may be sent to the addresses given above or to the PTS at phone +61 01273 594110 or Fax 595379 or by e-mail to [office.pts@btinternet.com](mailto:office.pts@btinternet.com)

**FAKE MAILS:** Member R West (UK) received emails purporting to come from PayPal. They asked if he had received items from an earlier eBay sale or asking about an expensive item, or saying they have not received an item I sent (and several others). When you click on 'respond' you get what appears to be the eBay log-in page but it isn't. The only way he noticed the fake was that his computer remembers his eBay details so when the genuine log-in box appears its already filled. If somehow you respond to the fake email you must log-in to the real site and immediately change your details. Source: Member R West (UK) - April 2013

**A CON:** P. Poppe Member from the Philippines reported :- " I was getting tens of emails each week from Indian, Sri Lankan and Pakistan sellers offering very rare stamps with high dollar value, which I could have, within a few hours for an extremely low price (documented with an extremely blurry photo) , if I paid immediately with Western Union. Sometimes these sellers recycle their emails to send to different senders on the same day". Members are advised to be extra careful when dealing with offers like these from S E and S Asia and make sure sellers are members of a registered and respected society of stamp dealers. Source: Member P Poppe (Philippines) - April 2013

**FRAUDULANT SELLING ON eBay:** **Urgent Warning.** Watch out for 'cheap' buys of what appears to be a bargain or a scarce or valuable item offered by a seller who eBay openly allows to have 10 to 20 active handles at a time and often 10 to 20 fake 'shill' bidding accounts to push up the genuine bidders like you, and who generally do nothing when advised, despite their alleged rules to the contrary. Very often the buyer of one of these so called bargains pays up front but the purchased item never arrives. Sometimes a registered envelope which is supposed to contain the item purchased turns out to contain a wad of plain paper! You end up 100% out of pocket Source: Member Glen Stephens (Australia) April 2013.



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### IPDA PHILATELIC CRIME NEWS REPORT ..... CONT'D

#### ILLEGAL USE OF YOUR CREDIT CARD.

Sometimes a dishonest person obtains your credit card number and other details such as your bank account number and charges your credit card account with a fictitious amount. The first you learn of this is when you receive a phone call from your bank or notice it in your bank statement. There are a number of things you can do in this circumstance.

First, if you have not already done so, check with them that it will allow three or more months after the date of the alleged debit is charged to your bank account before it accepts the debit as valid and any chance of recovery has expired. All banks have some form of insurance and most use this to pay you the amount you have lost as a result of an illegal debit.

Second, if your bank cannot or will not give you a period of grace in which you may claim a charge is not yours or is a dishonest charge then change your bank to one that will give you this service.

Third, only give your credit card details to a person or business you trust and have had satisfactory dealings with.

Fourth, when dealing with someone you have not dealt with before, arrange to send your credit card number in three parts. Part one is for the first eight numbers of your credit card and part two is for the balance of your credit card number. Part three, is if you are asked to provide the three digit security number which is shown on the reverse of your card. Lastly, always check your bank account carefully and if you find an amount you do not know, immediately contact your bank.

Source: IPDA Confidential List Officer - April 2013.

### PHILATELIC BLOGS

I was given a suggestion that perhaps Members read blogs and would like to know of some other good ones. You all read mine I know :-). Here are a few others I read and which you may enjoy when you get a quiet moment hahahahahahaha .....what is a quiet moment I hear you ask.

My first choice is <http://blog.stampmagazine.co.uk/> Adrian Keppel writes every Friday. Always interesting reading.

There is a comprehensive selection of thoughts and materials at <http://www.stampcollectingblog.com/> that you might want to have a look at. One interesting article I saw was [Damn unsoakable stamps \(or if you can't soak them...\)](#) food for thought?

What about <http://globalphilatelic.blogspot.com.au/> and please do enjoy <http://www.thegomc.com/> From an Asia perspective look at <http://www.jodarl.com/blog/> who are Singapore based and so have an interesting Asian theme to their articles and stamps.

Not forgetting probably the very best site ever for writings on Machins and of course with a consistently excellent contribution from our very own Director in Spain <http://machinmania.blogspot.com.au/>

From the US the excellent Don Schilling blog at <http://stampcollectingroundup.blogspot.com.au/> have a read of the Links sidebar, awesome!!!

Finally, perhaps one for the GB enthusiast, is Ian Norvics' <http://blog.norphil.co.uk/>

And if you want more just check out <http://philatelyresource.blogspot.com.au/> albeit it is a bit dated I think.

Anyone want to send me the blog they really enjoy reading? I look forward to hearing from you.

### MAINTAINING MY STAMP INVENTORY

*Editors Introduction: In the March issue I wrote of my admiration about the number of listings some members had to their stores. Doug Noernberg has kindly written a piece I hope you will enjoy and maybe find useful.*

The first part of maintaining inventory is having a central database that can track everything you need it to. This could be done manually, but being internet dealers all, I suspect using a database program of sorts won't be too difficult for most of us. I have seen many postings and articles about various software and programs offered on the market, but they weren't available years ago, and mine is a home-grown Access database that has its origins from when I made my first spreadsheet of U.S. stamps by Scott number using SuperCalc on my father's Super XT 10MHz IBM clone PC back in the late 80's. It has grown and assimilated new capabilities ever since (for all you Trekkies, I call it the Borg spreadsheet). I couldn't do without it! Today, I use it to track all manners of things, including: stamps and values, inventory, customer information, inventory purchases, sales; I can run reports (including year-end tax reports), personal want lists, and even print packing slips and address envelopes.

All individual stamps (and sets, or other combinations I may offer for sale), are given a unique record in the database with all of the pertinent information about that particular issue or set. All stamp issuing entities (i.e. countries, colonies, etc.) are given a unique three letter 'code', which I use as a prefix to the Scott number to create my numbering system. Therefore, Canada Scott # 35 is CAN0035, or a Great Britain Machin Scott # MH72 is GBRMH072 (note the placeholder zeroes to keep sorting easy). All information about this issue is then tied to that unique record number (the country code helps make it unique).

If I have one or more stamps of this issue, I add a numerical suffix (-01, -02, etc.) to give it its unique inventory number based on the stamp number, so my eighth Canada Scott # 35 is classified as CAN0035-08 (see Figure 1) which shows Use of small tabs of paper to track individual stamps. Here, the inventory number is determined (CAN0035-08), and I see where I acquired it (purchase #222 in my database).



Figure 1

So for each stamp record I may have multiple inventory records tied to it, one per stamp that is, or was at some time, in my inventory. All pertinent information about the individual stamp itself is stored in that record, including: the inventory number, whether mint or used, information on its quality, the description, where it is stored (more on this later), where I bought it, what I paid for it (cost basis), whether it's sold, if so to whom, and for how much, etc.

Of course, the parameters that I have noted are just the tip of the iceberg compared to what I actually track. Figure 2 shows a screenshot of my main database page where you can see how it's just choc-full of information I've slapped on and started keeping track of over the years.

Fig. 2 – Screenshot of the “Borg” Database with information about the stamp issue on the top (with stamp code circled in red), and the inventory record about the individual stamp on the bottom part of the page (with inventory code circled in green).

Figure 2





#### MAINTAINING MY STAMP INVENTORY ..... CONT'D

Now that my database is sort of defined, let me walk through the process of preparing stamps for sale. When I purchase a new lot of stamps (say a lot I bought off of BidStart, or from an auction at my local stamp club), the first thing I do is enter information about the purchase into my database – i.e. how much I paid and where I got it. A 'purchase number' is assigned. I then sit down to start figuring out what I have, and break down the collection. This is almost exclusively a manual process, except I create new stamp "records" in my database as I come across Scott numbers that I don't already have a record for (it's constantly growing). It's a convenient time to do this, because I already have the catalogue open to the right page while I'm identifying the stamp.

As stamps are identified and deemed "worthy of sale", I basically start filling out a small paper tab with the catalogue number, country code and purchase code (I leave off the inventory "dash" number for now – See Figure 1). And yes, I have a box of hundreds of paper tabs that I occasionally take time to make on a guillotine cutter. I place the stamp in a stockbook along with its paper tab in no particular order, as shown in Figure 3. If there are any notes to myself (about a defect, a desire to make a scan of the back of this particular stamps, or other things to check), I make a tiny note on the paper tab.



Figure 3

When I'm ready to begin listing stamps, I take them out of the stockbook, assign the next available inventory "dash number" on the strip of paper (referencing my database), and put the stamp in a black stocksheet. I scan the stamps and parse the images (using the inventory code as the image title), and enter the balance of the stamp information into the database, including the price I plan to charge. When I amass a sufficient number (usually one stockpage worth), I export the data out of my database into a specially-formatted comma delimited file, massage the data a bit, then use BidStart's awesome Bulk Uploader to list the stamps.

As I process each individual stamp, I put it "away" in different storage locations, depending on the size and value. For items I'm selling for more than a dollar or so, I use stock cards labeled with the inventory number. I also do this for more fragile items, such as the Scott #4128 with really thin paper, as shown in Figure 4. For sets, or larger items, I will use appropriately-sized glassines, and for the more numerous common stamps under \$1.00 or so, I use the Elbe manila stockpages along with the paper tab as shown in Fig. 5. If I have more of a given stamp than I want to process, I stick the extra stamps in a glassine by stamp ID number, and put a yellow tag in the Elbe pages as a clue that I have more in inventory that are just stored elsewhere and available to be processed later (also visible in Fig. 5).



Figure 4

Some of the really convenient things about using a unique stamp inventory number with some 'intelligence' to it include

I can - tell the country and catalogue number just by looking at it, sort by it very easily; I know how to look it up very quickly: BidStart has a private ID field, and that's the number I plug in there. That way, even if I take a store item and send it to auction, it will get a new BidStart Item ID number, but my Private ID number never changes and is always consistent: It provides a common link between BidStart, my library of scanned images and my database, so I can export sales from BidStart, and associate the sales data with my database using this number as my common thread/ key field.

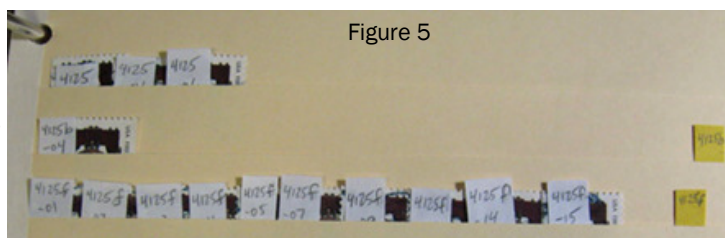


Figure 5

Using an update query in Access, I take the Sales information exported as a comma delimited file out of BidStart and update my spreadsheet directly. I can update my records on sales of hundreds of items in a few minutes, without retyping anything and possibly making editorial errors or accidentally "missing" one here or there. I think it's a slick system, but requires religious maintenance, which is no problem for an anal retentive engineer such as myself! Perhaps some may find tidbits here or there that may work for them or help them improve their own inventory system..I look forward to seeing what others do so that perhaps I may learn from them, too!

Doug Noernberg.

Noernberg Stamps



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### DELCAMPE REPLY TO MARCH ARTICLE

**Delcampe wrote asking for right of reply to an article I published in march. Here is their reply, unabridged.**

*Some time ago, we were mentioned in one of the articles written by Mr Roger West regarding the use of our website: Delcampe.net As such, we would like to rectify the situation in many ways.*

*It was mentioned that the API system (a synchronization system) we had put in place was far too complicated. The only thing we could say is that the API Code is very easy to integrate since it has already been used by several dozen dealers. But, of course, a **skilled** programmer is needed to set it up. This is obviously suggested for any eCommerce project. It also seemed that the fact that our Tech support was only available through a Google Group was a complicated thing. Yes, our IT department can only be reached through this Google Group when it comes to the API BUT what is important to say about this is the fact that this is very convenient for everyone: to have a direct link with our API developers with fast reply is a must-have!*

*Mr West also had some troubles with the numerous emails he received from us. The problem with this was that those emails have been sent because he had not correctly set up his account. As advised in one of the emails sent to him and his developer, there is a way to set this up in his account to avoid the sending of these emails*

*We were then criticized for having removed items from Mr West's store. Those items did not respect our Terms and Conditions and as such had to be removed. Yes Delcampe fights against illegal issues and it is something we should not be ashamed of. Quite the opposite, we are really happy to fight them and we are paying close attention to this when it comes to dealers. Most of dealers associations forbid those illegal stamps. We do hope the IPDA also fights against those illegal issues.*

*Also, we want to emphasize that the rule is the rule for everyone on the website. Before creating an account, one must read and accept our Terms and Conditions. This implies thus that one owes to respect the rules on our website. As such, when a member fails to respect them, he/she can have their account suspended.*

*We want also to underline the fact that we all work in a professional way. Mr West wrote that he got very little sympathy from our team but the truth is that we are never rude with our members.*

*There were also some words about a list of forbidding countries (regarding illegal issues) which had spelling mistakes. We want to underline the fact that this list hasn't been created nor sent by Delcampe itself. Therefore, Delcampe is not responsible for any of its spelling mistakes.*

*And finally, it seems that it takes too long to upload items. We want to tell you that the upload is not slow. The insertions of items are queued, and this allows a very fast insertion process on your side, then we take care, ourselves, of inserting the items into our website. Very convenient for any users.*

*We understand that everyone has the right to have his/her opinion about our website. However, some of the statements made were not totally true and we thought we had to give another version of the story.*

Kind regards, Miranda Delcampe International - The collectibles marketplace

### CLOSING REMARKS

To conclude this issue please let me add that if you are going to The World Stamp Expo in Melbourne don't forget to drop by IPDA member stands. Ian Boulton will be there at Stand 157 and I am sure he will be most pleased to say hello. I will be there Ian :-). Also you can find Glen Stephens around somewhere and definitely at the stampboards.com table right next to the "Court of Honour". Delcampe has a stand, Stand 117, and while I don't know who will be on the Stand we should still drop by and say hello as they are also an IPDA Member.

The Standholder list makes very impressive reading and without showing too much favouritism I must see Hong Kong Post, Bill Barrell (who I never can convince to take out IPDA membership), the Australian Philatelic Traders Association (worth seeing them I think for contacts), Stanley Gibbons and let's see what they have to say about their direction for BidStart perhaps?, Andrew Lajer also from the UK will no doubt have an excellent stand, based on past performances, plus what will surely be interesting stands from the various Postal Authorities in attendance.

And finally, as I always say, your articles or ideas for articles are always welcome.  
Best wishes, Michael [michaelatipda@gmail.com](mailto:michaelatipda@gmail.com)