



# INTERNET PHILATELIC DEALERS ASSOCIATION

Established 23 February 2002

Newsletter December 2018

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## Stamp of the Month



The stamp of the month, surely, has to be a Christmas stamp. I did try to find one that inspired me but after looking at many issues I found little that inspired me other than Great Britain. Then I saw the Canada issue. I only show one (the other two are similar but with a different colour) because it is just so boring. Canada Post goes one step further and says .."stamps with a secular issue that's designed to inspire plenty of warm thoughts.." .. I did not make this up.

Merry Christmas to all our readers.



## Welcome to the December Issue

Merry Christmas everyone. The year has gone so fast hasn't it. It seems only yesterday that a group of the Directors were thinking how could we re-build the IPDA. Now, some 10 months later, not only have we re established the IPDA and built a new website but we have more then doubled the membership. A credit to all the hard work the Directors have put in these past months. I am confident that as we go into 2019 this trend will continue and we will see our numbers grow and the value of the IPDA membership will be realized.

You know our expectation - ok, maybe a dream right now - is that collectors will look to see if a seller is an IPDA member. They will do this because they will know they will get quality and fairness and great service. Yes they may get that from many other sellers but perhaps, just perhaps, seeing that a seller is an IPDA member will mean something extra. Today we look and recognize membership of many philately organisations, the APS in the US immediately comes to mind and the GBPS in the UK of course, plus for European collectors perhaps the ????? So why not the IPDA. Together we can make this happen and I hope the success of 2018 will encourage us all to make it happen in 2019.

One thing I do think worth asking is this: how can you contribute? We have an active committee with the current team of Directors but we are still short of a Newsletter Editor. Any volunteers? Please write to me or the General Secretary. We welcome new ideas. And one more role we think could be filled, especially if we are to grow the IPDA in 2019. A Publicity Officer. Someone to take charge of promoting the IPDA. Making sure the right IPDA publicity material has the right social media presence and the right print medium presence. No small task but one that is important for us to grow the membership and our presence in the philatelic community.

Finally let me say how honoured I have been to have worked with our Directors this year. From me and on behalf of all the Directors I wish you all a happy, healthy and safe Christmas. See you in 2019 Alan  
IPDA Chairman and Confidential List Officer [alan.devine@devalri.com](mailto:alan.devine@devalri.com)



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## The Future of Philately - Philatelic Low Hanging Fruit

*One topic regularly mentioned in philatelic circles is, where is the hobby going?, is it in decline? why is there a decline in membership and interest in philatelic organisations and groups? In summary, what is the future of philately?*

*In the November issue we published a piece by Andrew MaGavin from Universal Philatelic Auctions (UPA) in which he concluded philately is alive and well. Readers may also be aware of a philatelic think tank called W4. This UK group published a paper in July 2018 on the subject The Future of Philately. A prestigious group of member who are past or present Fellows or Members of the Royal Philatelic Society London.*

*The following from the GPTT, a US based group. The authors are Robert Bell, Sean Burke, Yangchen Lin, Gary Wayne Loew, Nick Salter and Colin Fraser. This piece, published with the kind permission of the GPTT, looks into this topic, the future of philately, in more depth. If IPDA members find this material useful and interesting we will include some more material on this topic in future issues. Content is also welcomed - please send to the [General Secretary](#)*

### Introduction

A Global Philatelic Think Tank (GPTT) was recently established In the US to address the issues of the apparent decline in membership and interest in organized philately, is seen in the Western World. Membership in many philatelic societies, attendance at stamp shows, and exhibitor participation numbers have all been affected in the US and elsewhere, including Europe, South Africa, Australasia and Japan.

The philatelic industry consists of many disparate parts and hobbies are not usually subjected to detailed analysis. Consequently, there are very few facts and statistics to consider. It has been estimated (1) that the annual philatelic market is \$5 – \$10 billion. Also, it was estimated in the same reference (1) that there were 48 million collectors of which 18 million were in China. How accurate these figures were and what the figures are today is not known. The main indicators of activity in organized philately are therefore surrogate, often-involving paid membership, inquiries, and show participation.

Considering the discussions and symposia that have taken place to address the future of philately in the West a number of things are slowly being tried to improve philatelic interest. These are mostly in the area of improved standards, advertising, and technological advances using the Internet. Such projects that often take significant effort, money, and people.

These endeavors have most often focused on “the youth” – who mainly neither have the time, money or inclination for the hobby. Rather, it would seem that, more attention should be focused on younger professionals, or the recently retired, who often do have the time and the resources to actively participate in the hobby. However, the hobby needs to present itself to them in a style that is appealing and enticing. Crucial to this is providing an active “on-line” digital presence that fits in with their electronic life style. However it should be noted that these older groups of people do not have as many years to live as children. The benefits therefore may be short lived making this a temporary solution. However, this approach may well be valuable while looking for longer-term solutions.



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For simplicity it can be said that there are low, intermediate, and high hanging fruit to be harvested to help solve/slow the membership problems of organized philately. Low hanging fruit solutions hope to produce positive results in the "short term," and are not very expensive or too time consuming to undertake. But they do provide the opportunity for individuals to do something and help make a difference. This is different from some complex planned projects that require considerable money, people, and effort.

But, one has to be particularly blunt and ask the question; do the traditional philatelic organizations really matter to potential new members? Maybe, they no longer fulfill a relevant role? Looking at organizations in other fields – be it churches or chess, golf, and bridge clubs, etc., they are all similarly declining and experiencing membership issues.

However, there remains a critical role for organized philately, particularly with the need for physical buildings. These are needed to ensure that stamps, philatelic artifacts and philatelic literature, all in hard copy, are preserved indefinitely, to educate philatelists on how to keep such material safe for future generations and properly bequeath it when they die. Also, to continue to offer a unique atmosphere to meet people, browse through books and observe actual stamps that the Internet can never provide. And yet again, one can ask the questions; would Cloud storage of books, journals and images suffice for buildings, and are people still looking for these supports and comforts? Would well-conducted surveys, with a focus on technological advances help to clarify?

It is all the benefits of organized philately where membership fees come to pay for the physical infrastructure and the salaries of dedicated historians, curators, librarians and administrative staff to keep this all functioning. And many think that it's worth paying for, just as we pay taxes for the upkeep of great museums and national institutions to preserve humanity's legacy. But this is the part of philately that many do not seem to understand. They get almost everything for free online nowadays - music, movies, Wikipedia, etc. Do they need to realize that there's a hidden cost and that people's creativity is something worth perpetuating and funding? And as one discusses all this, one can hear the echoes of the newspaper and publishing industry's problems. And also when one considers things globally, what is expensive and inexpensive often differs from country to country. Within and between countries perceptions of price and value vary greatly.

If the tsunami wave of change is inevitable one can then ask, whether the idea of slowing things down to get the best transition possible is of any value? There is also the issue of the value of camaraderie and whether the "Internet freebee seekers" will ever miss the personal friendships that often develop within philately, and consider returning to something that offers this. Would Philatelic Shows that better focus, in some way, on camaraderie/collegiality help? Perhaps also, Internet philatelic usage classes at shows would help bridge the gap?

It has been suggested by some that elevating philately from a simple hobby to a branch of art and science might well be worthwhile. However, most philatelists are looking for relaxation and not an extension of work! So would that work?





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Also, that the hobby be called Postal History/Stamp Collecting or some other name. Also, does calling philately a hobby have any negative connotations? For example one of us was told that we do not need to standardize literature citations in philatelic publications because philately is *only* a hobby. Much debate would be required before such suggestions were accepted.

And another thought is that, if technology has led to the current situation, will it be the expected immense advances yet to come in technology that rescues organized philately in some way?

**Recruitment Groups** The main source of recruitment to philately over the years has been via children. This in recent years is exemplified by the work of the [Postal History Foundation in Tucson, Arizona](#), and the [Stamp Active Network](#) in the UK. It is not known whether the general membership issues of organized philately have impacted these programs in any way. (*Footnote: there are many IPDA members who support the Stamp Active network. Well done to you all*)



There is also the argument heard frequently that philately is not declining, it is just migrating to another platform. The hobby goes, continues to grow and prosper, although the venues are changing. If that is true then there should be more philatelic buying on the Internet globally. And many say there is. With the maturation of these Internet philatelists will it lead to more collectors desiring to join philatelic organizations? And desiring to pay for the services, particularly if they are offered something they want. If such a possibility is correct it would seem very worthwhile encouraging potential philatelists to actively participate in philatelic Internet activities. Also, if there is truth to this, it should help to slow the downward drift in organized philately to allow time to plan for the future. In addition, if there is reluctance for the youth of the Western nations to participate in the hobby, then focusing, as previously mentioned, on business professionals, the retired, and elderly may be the way forward.

Many of our organized philatelic members are/were senior executives, professionals and military officers, developing customized content (articles, etc.) for their society publications. These are individuals with decades of experience, a seasoned worldview, disposable income and time for hobbies. By way of specific examples, the following professional societies each have *departments or operations focused on providing services for soon-to-retire or already retired senior executives and professionals*: e.g. Military Officers Association of America, The Retired Officers Association, Federation of American Scientists, The American Chemical Society, American Society of Mechanical Engineers, and Financial Executives International.

There are many more such organizations offering similar programs to their retired/retiring members. The important point is that each of these programs is hungry for content to publish in their newsletters and bulletins. Actively providing the content these organizations are seeking can be valuable. Information articles are an effective way to increase interest. BUT, the content can't be (and should not be) too technical. Many philatelists tend to go too far over people's heads - caution is required. These groups of people would seem to be worthwhile considering with some kind of a defined program.



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**Use of the Internet** It is also recommended for prospective philatelists/collectors that the following platforms be explored: Academia.edu, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, Snupps, and Reddit etc.

**Reaching Out to the Arts and Sciences** One strategy if you have the knowledge and skills to is to step out, and undertake multidisciplinary research, which widens the interest in and applicability of philately. This kind of research can often be done individually at very little cost by collaborating with university labs. Publishing the research is valuable, not only in philatelic journals, but also on personal websites where the images illustrated are high-resolution color photographs. Also, posting about the topic on Facebook, where numerous contacts from all six inhabited continents are useful. This means that people of all ages and backgrounds, from high-school students, to retirees, to blue-collar professionals, to professors, get free and immediate access to fascinating multidisciplinary information, some of which will likely appeal to their particular interests. The following, very specific examples span both the arts and sciences: Laser spectroscopy of ink chemistry: <https://www.linyangchen.com/BMA-Malaya-15c>, Overturning previous theories about the world's smallest perforation through statistical analysis. <https://www.linyangchen.com/Malaya-stamp-perforation> Graphic design and typography of plate numbers: <https://www.linyangchen.com/Malaya-stamp-plate-numbers>



**Invitations** Can simple invitations be effective? At a recent meeting of the Rhodesian Stamp Circle in Australia there were 18 people who attended. Five of whom were new folks (two invited by a member). They had no philatelic background but did come from Southern Africa. Two with philatelic backgrounds (who had come via our website invitation) and one of these brought a friend, originally from Zimbabwe. There was a grand philatelic meeting starting at 10am. This was followed by a BBQ lunch, a wine tasting, with the last leaving at 9.00pm that night! Incidentally, one of the attendees had a grandfather who managed a tea plantation in Nyasaland who was imprisoned as a POW in both WWI and WWII as he was of German stock! Invitations may be a beginning.

**Stamp Club Formation** A stamp club about 30 miles away from one of the authors meets monthly. The attendance is about ten to fifteen people. One person calls members once a month to remind them of the meeting at a local church. Members pay a small charge to rent the room. In addition, a dealer comes with items for most of the attendees, and members also bring stamps, or postal history items for each other.

There are no talks/lectures and everything is focused on the philatelic material being collected. And it works. The club has been going for at least twenty years. This initiative's success arises from the activity of the coordinator and the dealer.

Also, organizing a room at the local library or Starbucks and inviting people to attend would seem to be worthwhile with the idea of establishing a stamp club with people who have dropped out of the hobby.



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## The Future of Philately - Philatelic Low Hanging Fruit ..... cont'd

**Conclusion** Various inexpensive initiatives to philately's membership/attendance problems may be easier than we think. It should be pointed out that the suggestions here have not been evaluated as to their quantitative impact on people's interest in organized philatelic memberships. Knowing whether a particular initiative is successful is often difficult. If there are no hard membership/participation figures available it may be necessary to rely on softer data such as impressions and survey data.

It is thought that using different approaches at the local personal level could well work to encourage newcomers to participate in philately. Further it would also seem that a book entitled, "*Becoming a Philatelist*" or similar name, which laid out a road map to how to get started and the joys of the pastime, would be worthwhile.

There must be many other low hanging fruit initiatives that have been tried around the world that could also work. Listing the most "successful" would be worthwhile. We would welcome hearing about others in a brief summary form.

We would also ask collectors to kindly forward suggestions of Low Hanging Fruit initiatives to [philatelicsolutions@gmail.com](mailto:philatelicsolutions@gmail.com) and whether they have, or have not, been shown to work.

This article was put together by six volunteer members of the GPTT and represents their different experiences in ways to recruit people to the hobby of philately using relatively simple approaches. These are things that could easily be undertaken by most philatelists.

**Reference** [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philatelic\\_investment](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philatelic_investment)

## Letters to the Editor

Since we don't officially have a Newsletter Editor we do not have any letters to the Editor! We did have one member some months back tell us that the Newsletter should have more content. Easy to say but perhaps harder to accomplish. Anyway, over the past three Newsletters we have gone from 8 pages to 12 pages and now 16 pages.

Is this too much? Perhaps too much reading? and since everyone is very busy is it impossible to digest it all?

Or, do you just look at the Table of Contents and only read the piece or pieces that interest you? We welcome all comments and will do our very best to meet the expectations of members in future issues. Please let us know.

And if you want to volunteer to be the Newsletter Editor, please contact the [General Secretary](#), who will be thrilled to hear from you 😊





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## The Life and Times of a Delcamper

*IPDA Director UK James Minns provides has been working closely with the Delcampe auction portal and has provided the following report of his endeavours. He welcomes contact from other members and can be reached at [JandRStamps@gmail.com](mailto:JandRStamps@gmail.com)*

Having spent the best part of six months setting up my account and shop on Delcampe I felt that now was the time to put "pen to paper" and write an account of my experiences within the Delcampe environment.

I signed up mid-April with a portfolio of around 45,000 items on my database. With this significant amount of items you can perhaps imagine the daunting task that lay ahead of me. It took me over two months to manually load around 17,000 items at an average of 200-250 items per day.

All was going quite nicely and suddenly disaster struck, I fell afoul of the Delcampe moderators, who I liken to how I would imagine a fascist regime would be organised, a rule unto themselves, to my horror they deleted 5,500 of my items because they were "infringing copyrights", and when I looked at what they deleted I felt so sorry for the penguins and the ducks, etc., appearing on the stamps and thought how cruel an operation this was for me to perform and how adversely it must have affected the bird and animal population throughout the world. I wrote to the "Help Line" and also their "Customer Support" and the eventual answers were verbatim statements rather than actually responding to my points in question.

The situation did settle down, but the moderators had missed some items on the first cull and when I added a similar item they suspended me for 5 days, which was most frustrating. They said I had relisted the same item, but this was not so, I appealed to no avail, there is no negotiating with these people.

Before I move on further I want to talk about the subject of the so called privately produced stamp issues, thousands of sets were produced, mainly since around 1998, and they have become very popular with thematic /topical collectors, due mainly to their vast diversity of subject material. Many of these were from countries like Benin, Djibouti, Madagascar, etc., and also there was a group of states that are affectionately known as the "Russian Locals", these include the likes of the republics of Dagestan, Buriatia, Altaj as well as Adigey, Chechnia, Turkmanistan and Sakha, there are many more. None of these are approved by the UPU but, as I said earlier, they are extremely popular with collectors and hold their value as well, if not better, as the so called "approved" sets. It's fair to point out at this stage that Delcampe are the only listing site that does not allow these. eBay, Hipstamp, eBid, Amazon, etc., have no issue with them whatsoever, after all, what possible harm can they do, people should have the right to buy what they collect in my opinion. The IPDA require dealers to describe items accurately and a note such as "this item is privately produced and offered purely on its thematic appeal" would satisfy the IPDA. They allow Cinderella's so the private issues should be considered thus and allowed. Enough about that for now, I'll fringe on this issue again later, but for now move back onto the main theme.

Okay, I was hit hard, so I embarked on a phase where I was very cautious and careful in what I listed. This went on for



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## The Life and Times of a Delcamper ..... cont'd

a month or so, no problem, the moderators left me alone, but alas, by chance I happened to list a few items by mistake and they removed another 2,500 more items (some of which they missed the first time) and suspended me for a second time, but for 7 days this time. I was a tad miffed!

I now had to proceed with ultra-extreme care (and this is still the case as I write this) because I was threatened with either a longer suspension next time or even being thrown off the site for good. This happened to someone within the IPDA and, as a matter of interest, this is how I became involved with selling stamps. I would have never in a million years believed how difficult it can be to sell a set of stamps.

During the first cull the moderators deleted about 4,000 of my listed "GB locals". I appealed then, because they are legitimate "carriage labels" valid for sending mail from the Scottish islands to the nearby mainland. When the situation had settled down a bit I wrote to the support line and asked permission to list my GB Locals, and, to my surprise the moderators agreed, so I asked myself, why did they delete so many thousands of them in the first place? I did think of asking for compensation because it took me some time to relist them, but it would have been a waste of time and, anyway, the moderators would have probably not seen the funny side of it and start to examine my stock more closely again, just to be awkward. Discretion is the better part of valour I told myself, not wanting to rock the boat too much.

Another issue I had with Delcampe was their dual standard approach (again I did challenge this but with no answer to my question). On the first cull over 2000 of my GB Local, Staffa, were remove, and yet if I did a site search it came up with 1200 entries, so other people were being allowed to list. I also saw listed other private "banned" issues. Annoying, to say the least.

On a more positive note, a couple of months ago Delcampe issued new bulk lister software (v4.0) so I decided to have a play with it. After many days and nights I got to grips with it and was able to list a thousand items at a time. This is a fairly complicated procedure and requires the user to have some basic knowledge of using EXCEL formulas and "cut and pasting" data between spread sheets. I don't propose to cover this issue within this article but I do intend to produce a follow up detail specification so as to assist the stamp dealers out there dealing on Delcampe.

So what are my conclusions? Reading this so far you would be excused for thinking that I dislike Delcampe. Well, actually the site does have some good features, I like the layout of the user interface very much, it is easy to use and find your way around, which is more than I can say for the horrendously complicated Amazon selling site. The sales tracking, from order placement right through to final shipment is superb as you can see at a glance what stage each order is at. It is, in my opinion, much easier to use than eBay, in fact do I recommend the use of Delcampe for both new starters and dealers currently listing on other sites? Their rates are reasonable, starting at 7.8% plus 14p per item sold, but you do have to subscribe to "Gold+" (£GBP 52.00 per annum) to get hold of the bulk listing program, which is an absolute must have if you have thousands of items to list. If this is ok to you then you are good to go.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact at [JandRStamps@gmail.com](mailto:JandRStamps@gmail.com). James Minns





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## Sinterklaas ( Santa Claus )

*IPDA Member Peter C. A. de Jong from The Netherlands has provided this material, sourced from the Stampblog. A view of the history of Christmas with a Dutch theme in parts and showing some stamps. Some text has not been adjusted for translation to English so with apology for any apparent errors.*

The Sinterklaas or Sint Nichola(a)s or St. Nichola(a)s history starts historically in Turkey. Here is Saint Nicholas the bishop of Myra (Turkey), so he does not come from Spain. Died on December 6 about 340 AD. Remains of his bones were later brought to Bari in Italy by the worshipers. Bari was in Spanish hands for a long time and who knows, one has previously confused Italy with Spain. Because of the many good deeds that he would have done, he was declared saintly.

There were all kinds of legends about this person and his good deeds. The spice nuts and candy throw would come from giving money to poor people. Where his help, "Zwarte Piet" comes from is not clear. There are a number of stories about this. For example, Piet would be an orphan from Africa, who after being a slave as a thank you for his release, continued to help Sint Nicolaas. The roe used to be used for cleaning chimneys in the associated bag was the soot stored. The arrival by Steamer from Spain. The steamer may be derived from the stories that Saint Nicholas came to rescue sailors who were in need. The fact that many port cities have a St. Nicholas Church is derived from this.

The celebration of the Sinterklaas feast has been customary in Western Europe since the 13th century. Saint Nicholas is at that time the most worshiped saint and patron, patron means: protector of schoolchildren, nubile youth, merchants, sailors and travelers. Around the Middle Ages, certain poor children received food and gifts, including shoes, on the day before the holiday (= death day) of St. Nicholas (6 December). Later all the poor children were treated and the Saint Nicholas feast became a popular custom. Shoes (stood in the church) as a location for gifts and candy played an important role in this.

Sinterklaas markets were held since the late 15th century and remained the tradition until the 19th century. After the disappearance of the markets, the party was celebrated more in the family circle at home. At the beginning of 1900 the first entries of Sinterklaas were organized. After the Second World War (after 1945), the adults also increasingly participated in the Sinterklaas celebration. When the television was generally good, in 1952 they started an annual television broadcast about the arrival of Sinterklaas. This annual TV broadcast, mid-November, is the start for the Sinterklaas period that lasts until December 5th.



In the city archives of Utrecht, The Netherlands, it appears that in 1427 the children shoe was filled on the 5th of December in the Sint-Nicolaas church to give the proceeds to the poor of the city on the death of the saint, 6 December. Reports are known from which it can be concluded that the Sint-Nicolaas was celebrated in the home circle where the children were spoiled with gifts if they were good.

..... cont'd

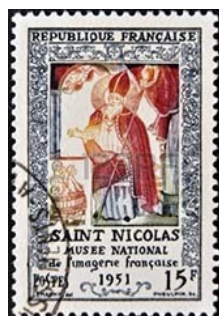
## Sinterklaas ..... cont'd



About a century later, in 1663, Jan Steen painted a scene of this subject. The little boy on the left has clearly not been good and therefore does not get anything from the holy man. **“Pakjesavond” (Present’s evening)** [This link is interesting](#) and explains more.

The present’s evening, as we know now, came only after the end of the 1950s, when the prosperity in the Netherlands increased after the reconstruction period. Incidentally, it is a typically Dutch phenomenon.

In some other countries children are spoiled with treats or shoe gifts, but a package evening with the unpacking of gifts we all know in the Netherlands. The Nicholas party is also celebrated in different countries. Some examples include:



Italy - From 7-9 May, various festivities are held in the city of Bari to commemorate the town's patron saint. It is claimed that Saint Nicholas is buried in this city.

France - In the Lorraine and in Alsace the anniversary of the death of Saint Nicholas is commemorated. Knight from Lorraine would have stolen the right finger of Saint Nicholas from the Italian Bari in the 11th century. In honor of this relic a basilica was built and from then on St. Nicholas became the saint of the Lorraine.



Malta - Saint Nicholas the patron saint of the city of Siggiewi. Here, on the last Sunday of June, a large festival is celebrated in honor of the holy man.

Portugal - The saint is in the city of Guimarães patron saint of the students. Between November 29 and December 7, different celebrations are celebrated every year to commemorate him

Belgium - In Belgium Sinterklaas is celebrated on December 6, not with a packet of evening but with the clearing of the shoe that was put the night



before.

And one more, a memory from my country: On November 2013, the Dutch Post Office issued special Sinterklaas stamps in a sheetlet in honor of the Dutch children's party. By rubbing over the stamps, the smell of spice was released.

vrolijk kerstfeest to you all ..... Peter C A de Jong





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## Degrees of Quality - the answers .....

As expected we had not a single response to this little piece about stamp descriptions, other than a view from the 100J team. I thought you might like to read what they had to say. For further information please contact Raymond D. Lieberman, Founder / Publisher / Editor, [ray@100j-grading-newsletter.com](mailto:ray@100j-grading-newsletter.com)





The stamps are described from left to right as Stamp 1 (on the left) – Very difficult to view the right side to see if there are perforation faults (which lower the grade). It is heavily cancelled which would lower the grade. The bottom centering is less wide than the top margin. Overall – not a great stamp.

Stamp 2 – Centering off on the top and left margins. Picture does not allow for examining for faults. Overall - better than stamp 1 but low grade on centering.

Stamp 3 – Best of the lot. Cannot tell if there is a pulled perf on the left side (could be an ink blob or a pulled perf).

Stamp 4 – Total space filler. Heavy cancel. Significant piece missing at the bottom right. Unless an extremely rare stamp, not worth even discussing. The actual descriptions used by the sellers are now included just for reference.

Just to recap from the November issue, If you want further information or details about grading, please review the PSE website ([www.gradingmatters.com](http://www.gradingmatters.com)). And, please keep reading **100J**. <http://www.100j-grading-newsletter.com/>

Fine - Very Fine used	Nice Light Cancel	Sound	Used Fault
			

Now if you think this is just me talking, I received this, an unsolicited email from an IPDA member. Abbreviated to fit the available space.

"I was poking around on the web the other night and stumbled onto PSE, Professional Stamp Experts grading website. After reading the monthly report of grading I got to thinking. Is it worth it? What struck me was the column explained how many 'non-collectors' will send in 'grandma's stamps thinking they found a million dollar stamp. For **FREE**, you can email them a picture of your 'million' dollar stamp and after review, Professional Stamp Experts will advise you to either send it in for grading or send it to file #13. Here in the US, file #13 is known as the trash can. As a collector/seller anytime I see a graded stamp of value I know it's a great find. Do you have any 'perfectly' centered stamps that catalogue at 1.00usd? With a grade of 90+ or even better 100, your stamp could be worth thousands of dollars. Give them a try, I did."





## You just got to laugh sometimes

I was on eBay the other night and just had to bid. I haven't seen these stamps offered on line for some time. What got my attention wasn't the value of the mint stamps shown below, it was the placement of the over prints.

Now if you can't see it, let me describe:

Persi# 363 1 KR purple—eye brow high light and down the nose issue - cat USD \$30

Persi# 364 2 KR blue—out the bottom of the nose issue - cat USD \$40

Persi# 365 5 KR brown—both sides of the moustache issue - cat USD \$50

While these are very well centered and mint 1904 Postage due issue stamps, they were never issued since the spelling 'tax' would not have read correctly in Farsi. As a stamp collector with a moustache these stamps hit me in a special kind of way: my wallet. Maybe I should bid higher.

For USD \$120, not bad for some moustache stamps. I hope you smiled as I did when you saw the stamps.

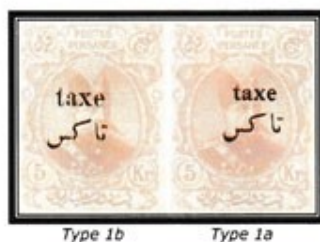


1904 Postage Due Issue

۱۲۸۳ خورشیدی، تمبرهای منتشر نشده برای مصرف بر روی پاکت‌های دارای کسر تمبر

An existing stock of certain values of the Full Portrait issue were overprinted for use as postage due stamps. However they were never issued since the spelling of the word "tax" in Farsi would not have read correctly and would have sounded something other than postage due. The overprints were done by typeset and three major types can be distinguished.

Type-1a & 1b are similar with small letter **t**, however in type-1b the word **taxe** is 7mm while in type-1a it is 6mm wide. The word **Taxe** in type-2 is written with a capital letter **T**. Both types of 1a and 2 were used in the same plate, as the se-tenant copies with both overprints exist as shown on a pair of 1ch stamps.



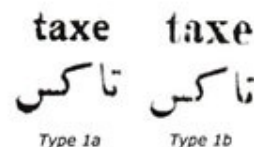
Type 1b Type 1a



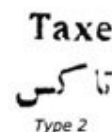
Se-tenant pair Types 2 + 1a



Se-tenant pair Types 1b + 2



Type 1a Type 1b



Type 2

As always, please enjoy and happy collecting! Lee



# INTERNET PHILATELIC DEALERS ASSOCIATION

Established 23 February 2002

Newsletter December 2018

## I found an old stamp album, am I rich?

*Do you have time to browse the internet and read philatelic blogs? I suspect the answer is no. If that is the case I think it is a pity. It is fun relaxing time away from stamps but still with stamps if you know what I mean. I found this article and thought it would provide a fun insight into a topic and question many of us are frequently asked. And just maybe it has some guidelines for the next time you are asked the question :-)* It is reprinted with the kind permission of the author who you will enjoy reading more of at the [Punk Philatelist](#).

Welcome, fortune-seeker! My data suggests you've probably found this page after Googling that question, or something similar, like:

**I inherited a stamp collection! Am I rich?**

**I used to collect stamps when I was a kid and the album is lying around somewhere. Am I rich?**

The answer to these questions is..... No

Well, probably not. But also, maybe. Welcome to stamp collecting!

I know, that's no help. You want to find out exactly how rich you are and you want to find out NOW. Thing is, an internet search can't tell you that. Only a careful inspection of your album by someone who knows their stuff will be able to confirm that you can quit your day job. (Spoiler: probably not.)

So, take it to a stamp dealer. But be prepared for the likelihood that they will tell you it's worthless. And if you think they're just angling to buy it from you for a bargain basement price so they can sell it and make the millions that are rightfully yours, no problem! You have a right to a second opinion. Take it to another stamp dealer. Or contact a local stamp club (or "philatelic society" if they're posh), where someone might be prepared to take a look and tell you the same thing, albeit possibly based more on guesswork than knowledge.

What's that? How can I be so sure? Ya got me, I can't. I'm just going on probabilities. And I don't want to shatter your dreams on your first foray into philately, so how about I give you a quick overview of how likely it is that you're sitting on a fortune? Then you can get to bed and decide how quickly you want to spring out of it in the morning.

### PUNK'S QUICK GUIDE TO HOW RICH YOU ARE

Here's the deal.

Your stamps are valuable if lots of people want them and can't get them.

Your stamps are not valuable if no one wants them.

Your stamps are also not valuable if all the people who want them can get them easily....eg .....

End of story.



Scott 220, issued in 1890, image from one of 2718 copies available in one online store.





# INTERNET PHILATELIC DEALERS ASSOCIATION

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## I found an old stamp album am I rich? .... Cont'd

Here are three quick questions to help figure out if you might have something:

1. When are the stamps from? Before about 1930? Proceed to question 2. After 1930? Hit the sack, you're going to work tomorrow.
2. Did the album belong to someone who spent their childhood soaking stamps off the mail and stashing them in an album in random order, but who then stopped collecting for the rest of their life, occasionally mentioning their old album and how it was probably "worth a fortune now" – the typical story for most inherited grandparents' albums? Go to bed, it will be rubbish. (Yes, I know, they're really old, and in a moment I'll explain why that doesn't count). But go to question 3 anyway!
3. Did it belong to someone who went to the post office and bought nice fresh stamps when they were released, and kept collecting until the day they died, and laid out their stamps carefully in an album with detailed notes? Oh hello. NOW you might have something.

Statistically, the sweet money is in mint (unused), very old, high-face-value stamps. (Face value is the value on the front, or face, of the stamp. "1c" or "1d" stamps are not high face value. Pounds or dollars are a start.)



GB SG 212, OG Mint never hinged for sale at £7500

There *are* exceptions to every rule, and a very small number of used, modern, or low-face-value stamps will be valuable. But they are needles in the haystack. Probably not your haystack. Are there any questions?

### ***You: But these stamps are old!***

It's a common misconception that old equals valuable. Think about life before the telephone. People sent mail to each other ALL THE TIME. It was how they kept in touch, made plans to meet, and if the mail service was frequent enough, how husbands would inform wives they would be home late from work. Thousands were sailing, and letters home were the Facebook status updates of the day. There are MILLIONS of old stamps, especially the lower values, soaked off letters, sitting around in old albums. Old means nothing. Old, rare and wanted by collectors: now we're talking!

### ***You: But they have Hitler on them!***

Why does everyone think Hitler stamps are worth something? Third Reich stamps are like those of any other nation: some are valuable and most of them aren't.

### ***You: But I saw a valuable stamp on the internet and this looks exactly like it!***

Whoa there, Sherlock. Does it have the same perforations, paper, watermark, colour, shade, or that one subtle error that the untrained eye can't see? No idea what I'm talking about? If you're new to stamps, they can be much more complicated than they look. Often the valuable ones look just like the worthless ones. Take it to a dealer.







# INTERNET PHILATELIC DEALERS ASSOCIATION

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## I found an old stamp album am I rich? .... Cont'd

**You: But I saw a valuable stamp on the internet and this comes from the same country!**

When I was a kid, I knew the most valuable stamp in the world was a used 1c stamp from British Guinea. Then someone gave me an album that contained an unused, 4c stamp from the same country. I treasured it because I figured that if a used 1c stamp was valuable, surely a *mint* 4c stamp was worth four times as much! I was seven years old and I was an idiot.



**You: But I read an old stamp catalogue that said this stamp was valuable!**

If you found exactly the right stamp (see above re watermarks, paper, perforations etc), well done you. But catalogue values can change a lot over the years, and they don't always go up. Even if your stamp still has a high catalogue value, don't expect that as your paycheck. Catalogue values supposedly represent the full retail price from a dealer. Unless your stamp is VERY rare, that's not what you'll get for it, because dealers need their margins to make a profit. Expect to sell for under catalogue.

**You: My stamps are still on the envelope. I should soak them off, right?**

STEP AWAY FROM THE STAMPS. Nearly all stamps – including otherwise worthless ones – are worth more if they're still stuck on the envelope (or 'cover' as we call it). The whole envelope, not just a cut-off corner. And don't go doing anything stupid like trimming the perforations off to make them look "pretty" (it's happened).



**You: This is depressing. Is there really no chance I have anything special?**

Congratulations! Through sheer desperation, delusion, or hope, you have persevered through this relentless negativity. You are now one of us! Here's the bit where it pays off.

The fact is, you never know. Even a page of unremarkable-looking stamps might harbour one with a tiny variety, or flaw, or even a rare postmark, that won't jump out, even to the eye of an experienced dealer. And no dealer in the world could know everything about the stamps of every nation in the world. (Bear that in mind if your album seems to hold a carefully curated collection of an uncommon country – it might be worth seeking out an expert in that country's stamps, rather than taking it to the first dealer you find.)

But the chances of finding that one freak discovery are so slim that it is unfair to expect a dealer to pore over the entire collection with a fine-toothed comb, trying to find it for you. The chances are so slim that it's just not worth their time. So, why not try to find it yourself?

### YOUR TREASURE MAP

You won't be able to do it overnight, but with the right attitude, some patience, and an appreciation that the gold may not be there to be found, you might yet be able to strike it rich. Or at least make enough for an ice cream.



Fiji SG 256a with "extra Island", from the 1938-55 George VI definitive issue



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## I found an old stamp album am I rich? .... Cont'd

You will need to familiarize yourself with philatelic terms, so some sort of beginner's guide to stamp collecting (in book form or online) will be useful. You will also need a specialist catalogue, which lists all the stamps of a country or region *plus their known varieties*. (Specialist catalogues can be a little pricey. A regular, garden-variety – ie cheap – catalogue will only list the basic stamps, not the varieties. If you're a total newbie it would be a good idea to start with a basic catalogue and work your way up. Your local library might have a catalogue, if you're lucky.)

If you find it all a bit overwhelming, a local stamp club or collector friend might be happy to help you out. Alternatively, there are online stamp forums that can be Googled just like you Googled this page. Some of them are friendlier or more open to beginners than others, so lurk for a while before jumping in.

DO search old threads to see if your question has already been answered (it almost certainly will have been). DON'T post up scans of your stamps and expect anyone to be able to tell you what they're worth. It just doesn't work like that.

This won't change your chances of having a valuable stamp, but it will improve your chances of finding one if it's there to be found. Even if none show up, perhaps by the end of the search, you will have found that you've come to appreciate the noble and fascinating intellectual pursuit that just fell into your lap. Welcome to philately!

Good luck with your hunting! For now: GO TO BED.

## Chairman's Chatter

Just a short space given to me this month. That last piece was entertaining I thought. Some conversation pieces for us to use with that person asking us to value their collection perhaps 😊

Space for the one thing I do want to tell you about - we have a new By-law and a new (simpler) form layout for the reporting of matters to the Confidential Officer. Matters you feel need reviewing because of potentially fraudulent and less than honest behaviours. We have been hearing about buyers claiming not to have received their orders when in fact their claims are thought questionable. It is a very difficult matter to prove of course but if you have doubts and wish to let us know, particularly after repeat occurrences we - with full confidentiality of course - might be able to see a trend if customer names repeat themselves and then we will publish in the Confidential Report. The new form is available to members on the web site - after logging in to the members area go to the Confidential List drop down.

Finally from me, Thank you to all members for your participation and support of the IPDA during 2018. It has been a successful year as you have helped us re-build and grow the Association. Have a wonderful Christmas season however you may enjoy it and participate at this time of year. My best wishes to you and your families and friends. Be safe and of course enjoy your philately. See you in 2019. Merry Christmas Alan [alan.devine@devalri.com](mailto:alan.devine@devalri.com)