

BULLETIN OF THE PAPUAN PHILATELIC SOCIETY, PORT MORESBY

PATRON: HH THE ADMINISTRATOR, BRIGADIER D M CLELAND

At our last meeting, Mr Ferguson volunteered to give a talk on the subject of "Shades". This is a very controversial subject, as it has never been decisively fixed as to what constitutes a real shade in a stamp and what is just a normal variation in printink ink intensity as experienced in every kind of printing process. Mr Ferguson pointed out the anomaly that although Stanley Gibbons, who is the "Law" on this subject, issue a colour guide to differentiate between various allied colours, the selfsame firm does not adhere to this code in the classification of the stamps listed in their own catalogue; ie there are colours listed there that do not appear in the colour guide. This is rather ridiculous since under these circumstances it is virtually impossible to identify a "shade" unless accompanied by all the other varieties in existence, to enable a comparison to be made. Since, very often, the shades may be rather rare and expensive items, this puts the subject way out of reach of the average collector. This also was the view put forward by the speaker.

He then invited comments from the listening members, but this proved to be a mistake as a rather lively debate ensued which made straightforward questioning and answering impossible. There emerged two very distinct opinions on the subject: those who believe that for the specialised collector there is a great deal in the research of shades, with historical implications, whereas the average collector clearly took the view that it was not worthwhile to delve into this controversial matter. All stamps are subject to discolouration due to climatic and atmospheric influences and it is hard to say when such a difference in colour is the original or an acquired shade. It therefore becomes evident that to make a representative study of shades, it could only be done in mint specimens, in blocks preferably, and as pointed out by one of our members, in imprint and plate number blocks specifically. This, however, automatically places the subject beyond the means of the average collector.

It proved a very interesting evening and our thanks are due to Mr Ferguson for presenting the subject, giving us a chance to air our individual opinions.

The following new members are welcomed to the Club:

No 22	Mr J Keogh	Titles Commission
No 23	Mrs A Keogh	Dept of Works
No 24	Mr A Voyce	Duin, Bougainville

The Secretary has again received a number of letters from abroad, which according to our general practice we shall pass on to those members who are willing to get in touch with these collectors. We hope that members will follow these enquiries up, since it shall be our endeavour to maintain the impression of our active interest abroad in the same way as it is evidence over here. Most of the overseas collectors are interested in current Papua & New Guinea stamps which should be easy enough for every member. All those interested, please contact the Secretary, either at the next meeting or direct.

At the last Committee Meeting the possibility of making available to our members more of the stamps of Papua and of New Guinea was raised. From our overseas letters it can be clearly seen that many people expect us to have these early issues for exchange purposes, which is a natural attitude as it is generally the case that the collectors of any one country are well stocked with their own issues. This does not apply in our case since Papua and New Guinea is quite a different country from the old Papua and the Mandated Territory, and indeed very few of our members have even been here at that time.

The fact remains that there is a great demand for these stamps and it is clear that until our members have satisfied their own requirements there can be no question of our exchanging these early issues overseas. Pre-war issues are highly priced in catalogues but are not really as scarce on the stamp dealing market as it would appear and we shall try and obtain bulk lots of the cheaper varieties through the Club and distribute them through the Exchange booklets, proviso being that in this case cash settlement has to be made to reimburse the Club for the initial outlay. In this fashion it is hoped to make some of the pre-war issues available to members at prices well below catalogue.

Our next meeting will be at the usual place, at Mrs Beadel's residence in Four Mile next Monday 2nd May at 8.00 pm. There is no set programme as yet, but as usual something will be arranged to keep you entertained. If you have any friends interested in stamps, don't hesitate to bring them along; and take your own stamps - there is always time to do some exchanging.

Apologies for the delay in the distribution of this issue, but the holidays this month have held up the production of this magazine.

Remember we mentioned in the last issue that Bob d'Arx had sent in an odd St Lucia perforation for analysis. Well, Stanley Gibbons gave the verdict that it was a standard listed perforation, and something must be wrong with the perforation gauge used. Bob reckons that the climate has interfered with his plastic gauge. Bad luck, Bob - better luck next time.

One of our new members, Mr Voyce, is a resident of Bougainville and a keen collector of all items intimately connected with Pacific Islands and Papua New Guinea in particular. Postal History items are of interest to him - any odd cancellations, taxed letters etc. In particular he would like to have covers showing handstamps of ships plying in these waters, where these covers have been handed in on board for posting at the nearest Post Office; also special flight covers, perhaps autographed by the pilot if no other means of identification is available. Any member who has something that may be of interest, please contact Mr Voyce in Buin.

It is with great pleasure that we notice that the trend of Thematics has found adherents amongst our members. So far the subject of "sport" and "flowers" have been chosen, but there are many others. How about some of you starting a collection of, say, cars, trains, ships, animals, aircraft, architectural designs, landscapes, mountains, birds, "Stamps-on-stamps", bridges etc, etc. Thematics are ideal for the modest collector as they embrace collection of the whole world without requiring the acquisition of every stamp issued. It is fun also since a great deal of searching is required for even some of the cheapest stamps. Other subjects for limited collection would be "Overprints and Surcharges", "UPU issues of all the world", Charity Stamps, Red Cross stamps and so forth. Much better than keeping all stamps, since you know that there is no hope of ever getting a complete collection of the whole world, and specialising in any one country may prove too expensive.

Our next meeting, which will be on 6th June, will be the Annual General Meeting and it is important that there should be the fullest possible attendance of our members. This is our first Annual General Meeting and the first permanent Committee has to be elected and the general policy and conduct of the Club discussed. The Papuan Philatelic Society has been formed only a few months ago, but both the attendance and the keenness of the members has shown that it will be of lasting interest in this community and that our activities will be of positive value in furthering the object of philately.

Stamp Collecting is something peculiar to certain types of people and is generally incomprehensible to other people. But there is little doubt that once bitten by the bug (unless it be a passing childhood fever), the addicts of philately are rarely cured of the disease. Nor, since a great deal of pleasure can be derived from our hobby, is such a cure to be advocated. There is, however, one danger - that of neglect. To enjoy stamp collecting, it must be actively pursued.

Philately is not concerned solely with the accumulation and preservation of stamps. There are many aspects of study in stamps, and not nearly as involved and technical as is commonly supposed. Many stamp collectors who enjoy their hobby will maintain that they are such modest collectors that apart from keeping the odd stamps they come across, they have no chance to interest themselves in the finer points of the field, which they suppose are too much trouble. This is not really justified since it is often the fine points that make collecting really interesting. Even if you have little chance of getting new stamps and even if you have insufficient exchange material to increase your collection in this way, various means of confining the scope of your collection and enlarging your knowledge of their subject are possible.

Although most beginners amongst us will certainly keep every stamp they come across, it is not a good scheme to make these stamps, acquired at random, a basis for a collection of its own. If he does not want to specialise in a country, a collector with moderate means should at any rate limit his field to such an extent that those stamps he may have and which do not further his chosen field can be used for exchange to augment his main collection. If he does not care for Thematics, he might restrict his collection to a certain period of years, eg King George VI reign, or post-war issues. Unless a collector is willing to spend regular sums of money on increasing his collection, and has no exchange material, his collection is likely to be rather static and his interest would soon fade.

One of the main objects of the Society is to keep the general interest of collectors on a high level, be it by providing the means of regular exchange or by discussions and features which will gradually increase the members' knowledge of philatelic matters. A philatelist, in fact, is not merely a collector of stamps, but some one who makes study of stamps his specific hobby. The Society will do its best to further your interests, so we hope you will all turn up at the Annual General Meeting with your support and suggestions.

The following new members are welcomed:

No 25	Mr G Toogood	District Services
No 26	Mr M Ilcheff	Dept of Works

At the last meeting, we had another "quiz" by which we hope to familiarise members with the means of identifying unusual stamps. Mr DeCoen won the first prize with the high score of 67%. Even if a country does not show its full name on a stamp, there are normally typical features by which identification is possible. Even the moderate collector should be able to tell all but the rarest stamps apart and classify them into their respective country heading. In fact it is not very difficult if the stamps are carefully scrutinised.

There seems to be a general wish to have another Auction Night, so we will try to put one on for our July meeting, as most of our next meeting will be taken up with Annual General business.

The Exchange Secretary requests that ALL exchange books be handed in to him by next meeting or at the latest in the second week in June. The half-yearly balance will be struck by the end of June, when cash settlement of unequal balances is required from all members.

It appears that Monday nights are not the best for some of our members and it may be possible to arrange an alternate regular night more suitable to most of us. With this end in view, we shall circulate forms at the Annual General Meeting for completion by each member. This should enable everyone to indicate which nights are inconvenient, and from examination of all the forms we will be able to select that night which will permit the maximum number of members to attend regularly.

A number of our members are experiencing difficulty in completing their exchange booklets due to their inability to price the stamps along catalogue basis lines. We are willing to assist those who are not so fortunate to have a catalogue at their disposal by buying a Stanley Gibbons Simplified Catalogue for 1955 for the Club use. When it has arrived, it will be available to all members on a free library basis. However, one catalogue amongst the many who may require it will make it impossible to loan it out for periods longer than 3 days and we will have to impose stiff fines on retention of the catalogue over and above the permitted time.

Please bring as many of your stamps to the monthly meetings as you can take along. Not only will it simplify direct exchange, but most of us like to look at other people's stamps, be it their collection or just duplicates. We have seen very few displays of mounted stamps and since we shall have competitions for mounted displays, members should start getting some ready.

In case you have forgotten: We have a large pile of back numbers of the Australian Stamp Monthly, which are available to members on a library basis. They are kept by the Secretary. By browsing through them, much interesting information can be obtained and it is generally useful to be up-to-date in the world of stamps. And those who have no regular subscriptions can catch up with some of the recent innovations and stamp news. Take some copies home with you after the next meeting: same place same time, on Monday 6th June at 8.00 pm, at Mrs Beadel's residence, Four Mile, and particularly important since it is our Annual General Meeting.