

Nelson Philatelic Society (Inc)

2016 October- Issue 390

JOIN THE NELSON STAMP CLUB



THE WELLINGTON TO AUCKLAND
EARLY MAIL "RUN" in the 1850's



Next Meeting : Tuesday 11th October at 7.15 pm

Earlier time allows members and visitors time to review the Sales Table, Set up Displays, etc, before the official meeting Starts at 7.30 pm.

Meeting Dates

Oct 11th	Tuesday	7.30 pm	8 Page Competition Open Topic
Oct 15th	Saturday	9.00 am	Open Day to 3.30pm
Nov 8th	Tuesday	7.30 pm	Robert—Display
Dec 13th	Tuesday	7.30 pm	Xmas Supper & Auction

This Issue

1. Meeting Dates
2. Is a complete all-era worldwide stamp collection possible (Part 2)
3. Stanley Gibbons Store in Central London
4. Tin Can Mail
5. Tin Can Mail
6. Jokes / Stamps Wanted
7. Circuit Books and Editor Message.
8. September Meeting Minutes

THE WELLINGTON TO AUCKLAND EARLY MAIL "RUN" in the 1850's

From about 1856 mail was delivered regularly between Wellington and Auckland by a succession of Māori mail carriers. The trip took two and a half weeks each way, partly because the carriers, who had become devout Christians, refused to work on Sundays. The journey up the west coast was difficult and often dangerous. One postman almost drowned crossing Kāwhia Harbour by canoe in rough weather. However, he managed to save both himself and his mailbag, which could weigh around 30 kilograms. The route went Wellington to Wanganui to New Plymouth to Mokau to Auckland



IS A COMPLETE ALL-ERA WORLDWIDE STAMP COLLECTION POSSIBLE?

1st July, 2016 (Part 2)

As I have now officially reached the 100,000 stamp landmark with my collection, I believe now is a good time to have a proper look of what a collection of this scale contains; and maybe more importantly what is missing and how it has grown since last in-depth look. You can (and should) consider this entry as an independent sequel to [Is a complete all-era worldwide stamp collection possible](#) entry that I wrote way back in summer of 2009. Possibly the most important lesson I learned from doing this analysis is never to throw away old backups of anything, as I painfully realized that I no longer have accurate details of what my collection was alike in 50K stamps. Instead I had to use the landmark of 60K stamps as my comparison point. But even with this minor error, I think the results of this analysis do provide very interesting and unique perspective into anatomy of a stamp collection of this size.

Oh! How it has grown

Let's start with geopolitical overview. I've split the stamps in my collection into seven geopolitical groups: Europe, Africa, Americas and Caribbean, Asia, Australia and Oceania, Middle East, and United Nations and other international organizations; each containing a varying number of postal entities. In summer of 2010 I had roughly 60K stamps, in summer of 2016 the collection is at 100,000 stamps.

What I find hugely interesting are the growth percentages. My largest and strongest area, Europe (used to be 21% complete; now 30% complete) 'has grown 53% in six years. My collection of African stamps (used to be 5% complete, now 10% complete) has more than doubled in size. Not to mention the UN/International organizations which has gone from zero to over 300 stamps. Most collectors have got first hand experience that there is a very clear relationship between collections completion rate and difficulty of obtaining new material; that is what the above statistics are all about. The better the collection, the harder it will be to add up. And it is clearly beginning to show on my European collection even at this low completion percentage.

I would love to make generalization such as 'at 20% completion, you can expect 50% growth rate', but again most of the worldwide collectors know, it's not that simple. Adding up European stamps is much easier than stamps of exotic Oceanic islands. Adding up stamps of 'common countries' (such as Germany, France or US) is much easier than adding stamps of 'dead countries'.

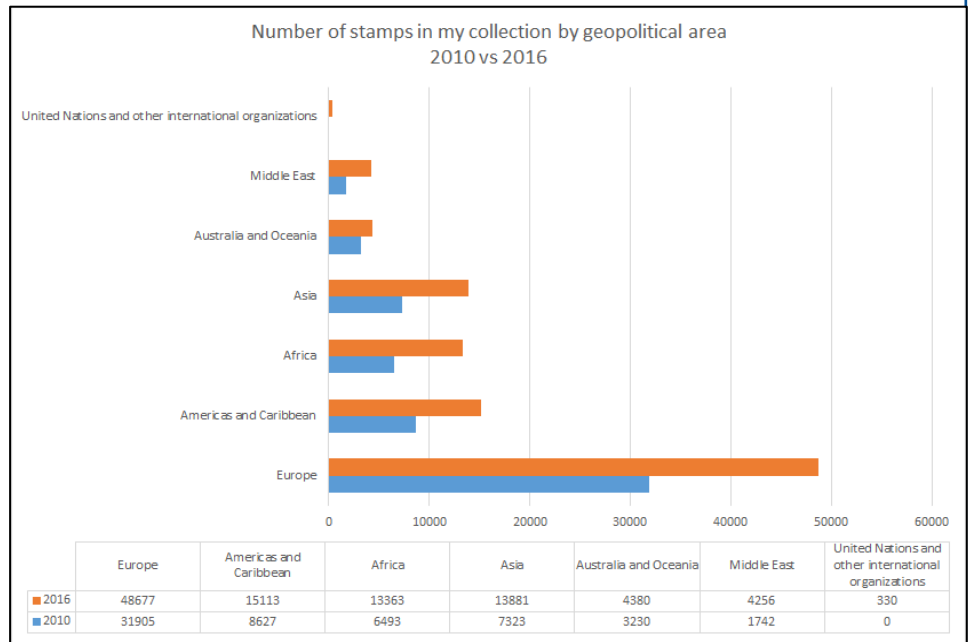
I've always had a gut feeling that most of my active growth has happened with common countries.

The Stamps that should be out there (but, they are hard to find)

Looking from another perspective I am always fascinated by what I don't have. It defines the areas that I am looking for new additions. Every time I manage to find a stamp from place that is 'brand new' to my collection, I smile like an idiot at least for the rest of the day.

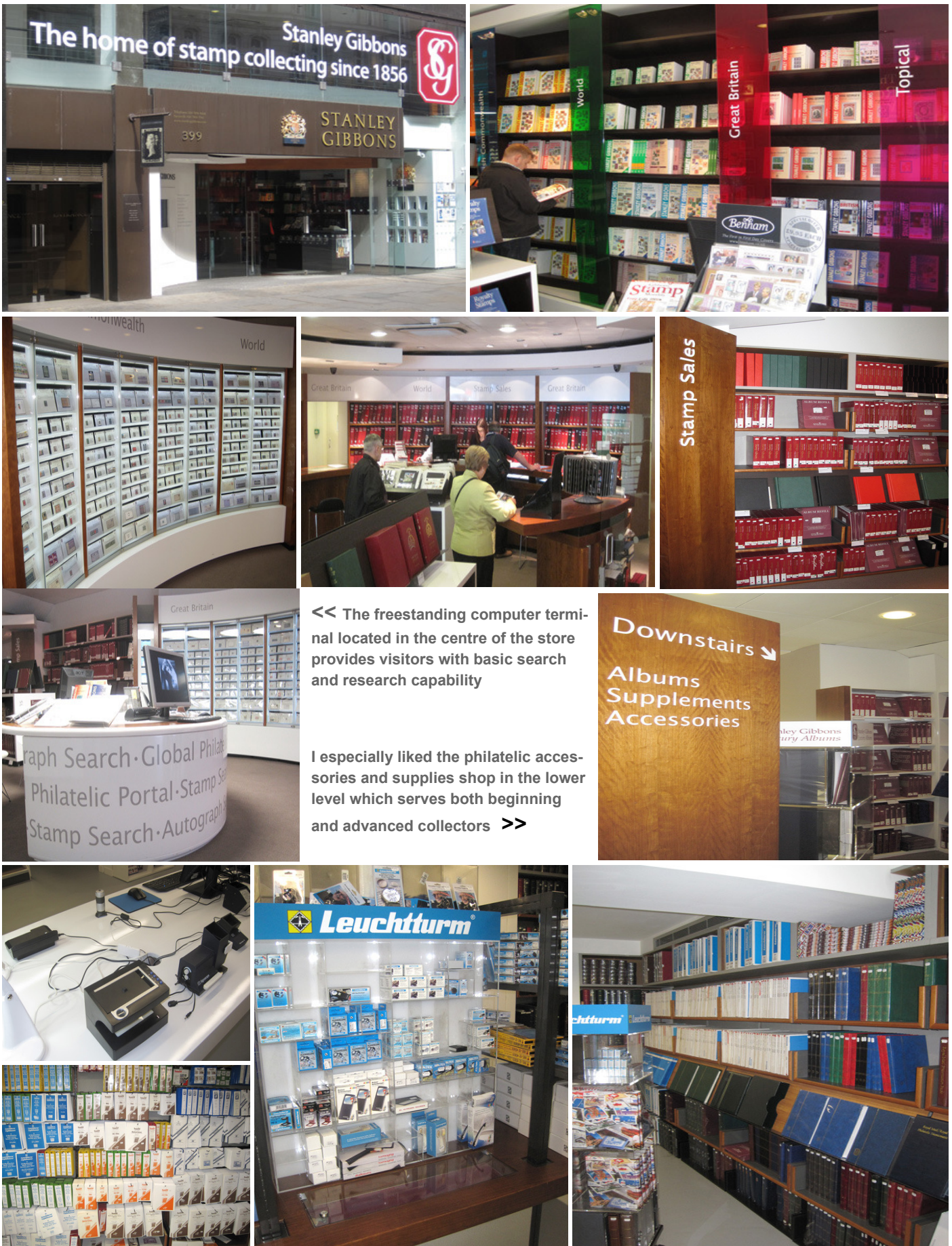
So back to the question I placed seven years ago: is an complete all-era world collection possible? I still believe that if one has got enough resources and huge amounts of persistence, then anything is plausible. But there are definitely some hard balls – like finding some of those 'pesky' occupation/liberation/rebellion stamps in used condition. Even in this time and era where most things are just one click away, some of them might genuinely be 'once in a lifetime' finds. So it is definitely going take a lot of good luck and patience to find them. I still hope to find them used, but knowing what I know, I am not keeping my hopes too high. But miracles do happen, and there is always hope.

Based on the statistics I have no doubts in reaching the next two milestones (150,000 and 200,000 stamps) with my current acquisition strategy. What happens after 200,000 stamps... Well, I'm not going to bother my head with that, but rather choose to live day by day and see what kind of stamps land under my nose in the meantime. What else can I say than to be continued some day (likely in year 2024 or whenever I manage to reach the landmark of 150,000 stamps).



STANLEY GIBBONS STAMP STORE IN CENTRAL LONDON

This past weekend I visited Stanley Gibbons store in central London (399 Strand). Many collectors don't have access to a real old-fashioned stamp store. That is why I would like share my photo story with everyone who happens to come across this web page . Sometimes you just gotta let pictures speak for themselves!



TIN CAN MAIL

The story begins back in 1882 when William Travers, a plantation manager, found himself 'marooned' on the tiny doughnut-shaped island of Niuafo'ou, half way between Fiji and Samoa. It is nothing more than the tip of a volcano jutting out of the vast blue waters of the Pacific. Just a couple of miles out, he could see passenger liners steaming past, but none ever called because the island had no harbour and no beaches. In fact the steep, rocky sides of the island plunge six miles down to the bottom of the Tongan Trench making it impossible to anchor and hard to land even a rowing boat.



The only white man on the island, Travers resented being unable to communicate with the outside world. So when the need to contact his company in Australia became desperate, he came up with an ingenious plan.

He wrote to the Tongan postal authorities asking them to seal his mail in a ship's biscuit tin, and arrange for the captain of one of the Union Steamship Company vessels to throw it overboard as they passed the island on their way between Suva and Fiji. These ships traded regularly between the islands of the Pacific. If the captain would give a hoot on the ship's siren, he would send a swimmer out to collect the tin.

Carefully he wrapped this letter in grease-proof paper and tied it to a short stick. He approached the strongest swimmer on the island and asked him to swim out to the next ship and hand his letter to the captain. In this way Tin Can Mail was born. It was to become a more regular happening after Arthur Tindall set up as a trader on the island some years later.

The island's fishermen were well used to swimming in the dangerous shark-infested waters, which they did clinging to a long buoyant pole cut from a type of hibiscus. By putting a pole under one arm they could float and fish for hours on end.

However, the strong currents meant that a swimmer might often struggle for up to six hours to retrieve a mail tin dropped from a ship only a mile off shore. In stormy weather it proved impossible to collect the mail and any number of other methods were tried. In 1902 William Edgar Geil wrote in his book 'Ocean and Isle' that he had watched the captain send letters to the island by rocket. On this occasion the attempt was successful, but often the rocket overshot the island altogether, landed in the lake in the centre, or just got lost in the undergrowth. On a previous occasion the package of letters had burst into flames en route. The arrival of the rocket was an event that caused the entire population to down tools and watch. Then began the mad scramble to retrieve the package and collect a reward.

Charles Ramsay, who had been hospitalised for several years after being severely gassed in the First World War, came to Niuafo'ou as a plantation manager in 1921. He too needed to communicate with the outside world and took over the task of swimming the mail. The only white man to do so, he went out 112 times in all weathers.

If a ship happened to pass at night it would blow its siren and the swimmers would go out as a group, one carrying a lamp. Back on shore they would build bonfires to guide the swimmers home to the tiny island.

The next phase in the Tin Can Mail saga came when Walter George Quensell arrived on the island in 1928. He quickly realised that philatelic interest could be generated by this unique method of delivering the mail and so, with a child's printing set, he produced a rubber stamp which read "TIN CAN MAIL" and applied it to all outgoing letters.

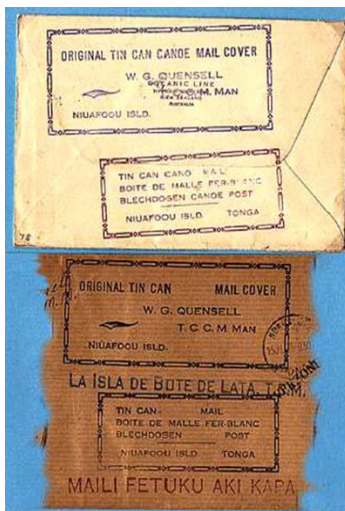
The total eclipse of the sun in 1930 was best viewed from Niuafo'ou and had a major impact on what was now known as Tin Can Island. Paul

Diefenderfer, the Director of Education in Suva, accompanied the American expedition as chief photographer. He liked the idea of cachets and the scientists were quick to produce one of their own to commemorate the occasion. Diefenderfer also persuaded Quensell to develop his idea further and have rubber stamps made in New Zealand.



Inevitably one of the 'postmen' was attacked by a shark and died. On his deathbed he confessed that, in a temper, he had opened the tap on one of the huge concrete fresh water tanks. This was a great crime because the island had no fresh water and rain water had to be collected during the hurricane season and stored. The Chief pointed out that what he had done threatened the very existence of the inhabitants and said that the Gods had justly punished him.

As it happened there were no further incidents in which sharks were involved – and no further tampering with the water supply!



Queen Salote, however, was very upset and ordered that in future, mail was to be collected by outrigger canoe. This was much more difficult because the boats had to be thrown from the cliff top. The crew had then to jump into the water and climb aboard. There were no restrictions on fishing from a fau pole and it is thought that many of the swimming mailmen continued to collect the mail this way when no one was looking. At one stage they threatened to strike and it was only averted by Quensell cutting the word 'canoe' from all his rubber stamps.

Quensell arranged with ships' captains that if passengers mailed their letters 'in the Tin' together with 6d to cover stamps and costs, he would apply his cachets before posting them on. Captains soon applied rubber stamps of their own telling the story of Tin Can Island and the ship which carried the letter. The history of all these cachets has now become a study in itself.

Naturally the passengers loved to watch the 'natives' collecting the mail and soon many cruise liners



made a point of calling at Tin Can Island. People wrote from many parts of the world enclosing their 6d and a self-addressed envelope. By enclosing £1 one could get the entire set of definitives and registration too! In later years Quensell developed cachets in a variety of languages. Despite the impression this created that Tin Can Mail was a philatelic gimmick, it was still the only way the islanders could get their letters. For over 100 years, even Government correspondence with officials on the island came in, and went out, in tin cans and did not escape Quensell's ever-more ornate cachets – such as the example to the Chief of Police. >> The islanders benefited greatly from the interest that this generated because, instead of a vessel visiting once a year to collect the copra harvest, they now had visits from cruise ships as often as twice a week. These brought not only the mail, newspapers and magazines, but fresh meat and vegetables, as well as news of the outside world.

Being a volcano, Niaufo'ou was subject to constant tremors but in 1946 there was a huge eruption and half the island was buried under lava. Miraculously, no lives were lost but within twenty minutes the recently-built radio station and Quensell's house with his entire collection of Tin Can Mail, were destroyed. It was three days before a passing plane saw the eruption and radioed for help.

With the volcanic eruption/destruction of the island of Krakatoa very much on their minds, the Government ordered the evacuation of the entire island, and it was to be 12 years before the islanders would be permitted to return and harvest their valuable copra crop. By that time Quensell had died.

In a letter, Quensell told a friend that during his 27 years on the island, he had sent more than one and a half million letters to 148 nations and states. His cachets became ever more elaborate, such as this delicate large map of the island showing its sulphurous lake. He wrote that towards the end, excursion vessels had brought as many as 40,000 letters a visit, mostly from the USA.



It was not until 1962 that the Matson line, responding to pleas from the islanders, resurrected the Tin Can Mail, inviting Quensell's son, now living in Auckland, to sign some commemorative covers.

The islanders really needed the contact with the outside world and the move was a great success. However, the visits proved so popular with the cruise passengers that the genuine mail was swamped, making commercial covers from the period extremely rare.

Tin Can Mail continued for over 100 years, in fact until 1983, when an airfield was built on the island and, sadly, it all came to an end.

With special thanks to Betty Billingham



Jokes and Stamps Wanted

A minister parked his car in a no-parking zone in a large city because he was short of time and couldn't find a space with a meter. Then he put a note under the windshield wiper that read: "I have circled the block 10 times. If I don't park here, I'll miss my appointment. Forgive us our trespasses." When he returned, he found a citation from a police officer along with this note "I've circled this block for 10 years. If I don't give you a ticket I'll lose my job. Lead us not into temptation."

There was a very gracious lady who was mailing an old family Bible to her brother in another part of the country. "Is there anything breakable in here?" asked the postal clerk. "Only the Ten Commandments." answered the lady.

Mujibar was trying to get into New Zealand legally through Immigration.

The Immigration Officer said, 'Mujibar, you have passed all the tests except one. Unless you pass it you cannot enter New Zealand.'

Mujibar said, 'I am ready.' The officer said, 'Make a sentence using the words **Yellow**, **Pink** and **Green**.'

Mujibar thought for a few minutes and said, 'Mister Officer, I am ready.' The Officer said, 'Good, go ahead.'

Mujibar said, 'The telephone goes; **green, green,..... green, green.....green, green,** and I **pink** it up, and say, **'Yellow**, this is Mujibar.'

Mujibar now works at Telecom. You've probably spoken to him.

Stamps Wanted:

Any stamps / cinderellas / labels from Guam Guard Mail; Maakhir State of Somalia; Waikoa Island; Queen Maud Land; Mevu; Republic of Port Maria; Chyan; Tui Tui; Bhokara; Sedang; Upper Yafa; Elsenarre; Lunamon; Kolkis; Karenni; Corterra; Vinland; Raoul; Fantippo; Muggy; West Papua; Bounty Island; Liegerland; Spratly Islands; Heliopolis; Taniquah; Tarajara; East Turkistan; Latvijas Tobago.

Please contact Alan Tunncliffe, 2 Inglewood Place, Avonhead, Christchurch 8042,

tel: 03 358 48 38.

email :alant@snap.net.nz

Collection Interests .

Thanks for the latest Philatelic Society Newsletter, I enjoy your new direction.

Input from members will maintain interest.

I have a particular interest in building a complete NZ collection, I am well on the way filling up my Premier NZ stamp album, to 1980, by about 70%.

I am interested in used stamps and I am focusing on missing parts of my collection from 1855 to 1960.

Your suggestion of a sell, buy, swap and exchange section is worth pursuing.

I am also interested in different approaches to present stamps and where to purchase stamp supplies

Roger Brodie

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	<u>Pam Frahm</u>	<u>5444005</u>
	<u>Sue Smart</u>	<u>545 2287</u>
	<u>Robin Ashley</u>	<u>544 3116</u>

Circuit Manager News

Again I want to record my thanks to those of you who have prepared booklets for inclusion on the circuits.

I am pleased to report that I have been able to get several volumes (each made up of 10 booklets) ready for circulation HOWEVER I want to stress the importance of keeping the circuits moving. Unfortunately some folks are holding on to the volumes for considerably longer than the 3 day window so please try and keep the momentum going. If you want to join the circuits, either as a seller, buyer, or both; then PLEASE let me know as no-one gets put on to lists without their express desire to participate. Allan Smellie, Circuit Manager 547 1140.

Message From the Editor

I have decided to try and make the newsletter as interesting as possible, but need input of what members would like to add.

A few people mentioned that they enjoyed reading the newsletter, but not many suggestions were forthcoming.

Thankyou Roger Brodie for responding to me. Great stuff.. Hope we get more responses like yours?

I would like to members to email me a little information about what your are collecting interests are, with a couple of photos of favourite pages. If a computer is not available hand written is ok.

Few suggestions of mine are

A Stamp Buy, Sell, Wanted and Exchange Page.

List of members and their collecting interests.

A crossword, if someone has time to make one.

Items of interest, members collections.

My email is Robin.ashley1951@gmail.com.

Cheers Robin



September Meeting Minutes 2016

Minutes of the September meeting of the Nelson Philatelic Society held in the Woodstock Room of the Stoke Primary School on Tuesday 13th September 2016, at 7.30pm.

Welcome: With President Robert being overseas Len Roberts took the chair and welcomed members and visitors to this first meeting returning to our regular evening slot. (2nd Tuesday of the month ... 7.15 sales table with meeting to start 7.30pm).

Items of Interest: Len displayed a recent envelope he had received as regular mail using a \$2 pink 1967 pictorial " just goes to show the diminishing value of our stamps" said Len
Sue showed a selection of items from the "Blenheim Riviera Principality"
Barry asked if anyone could give clarity on what appeared to be a no value Cinderella used for postage ex the UK.

Allan showed several NZ Post "Christmas gift" items given to households who provided a "drop off" secure place for mail delivery bags.

Mitchener Cup: There were 4 entries on the subject letter "M"

Len A collection of **Mauritius** stamps

Kelvin **Many, Many, Magic Moments** (a selection of Olympic stamps)

Robin **Mauritius Marine life**

Sue **Music**

The winner by a very narrow margin was declared to be **Len**.

Minutes: Having been circulated, taken as read and confirmed.

Allan/Len, Agreed

Matters arising: Still no sign of the missing "8 page" trophy.

Correspondence:

Outward: Nil

Inward: NZ Federation Minutes

Brasil Collector looking for correspondent

Various catalogues and brochures.. tabled

"That inward correspondence be received" ... Allan/ Ann, Agreed

Actions: Nil

General business: 1. Blenheim Visit **Sunday 18th Sept , 10am – 3pm** Len and Sue were going to be in Blenheim and Kelvin offered spare seats in his vehicle.

2. Notice of 8 page competition "open" topic .. scheduled for **October 11th**.

3. Next "Open Day" **Saturday 15th October**

New Members: Nil

Subscriptions: Those still to pay annual sub ... **PLEASE NOTE it is now due at \$20**

There being no further business, Allan advised that the "Letter of the Month" for the meeting on 11th Oct, would be the Letter "T", and that our "TOPIC" for the evening would be the "8 page Competition"

The Speaker for the evening, Allan Smellie introduced his collection of **Israel** stamps giving an introduction as to WHY Israel, followed by an outline of the History and Geography of the country, and then a look at some of the stamps on various thematic topics.