

NEWSLETTER OF THE ORANGE COIN & STAMP CLUB FOR 24th JUNE 2025

#272

2025 is our 60th Year



Rob. Willis's table at our 2025 Orange Coin & Stamp Expo, March 2025

Our web-site is <https://orangecoinsandstamps.org/>

THIS NEXT ORANGE COIN & STAMP MONTHLY MEETING IS ON THIS TUESDAY 24TH JUNE 2025 at 7.30.

Our current monthly meeting is at the Orange Cultural Centre at 7.30 on this **Tuesday 24th June 2025**.

The next night meeting after that is on Tuesday night, 7.30pm 29th July 2025. The heaters will go on at 4pm – its winter weather.

Our next monthly coin & stamp mini-fair is in the Orange Cultural Centre is on **Saturday 5th July 2025** from 9 to ‘middayish’.

Our meetings and the monthly fair are held in the Orange Cultural Centre building Sale St, Orange. It’s the building that used to be a school. It’s on the right hand side as you enter the Woolworths Car Park. The building is sort of opposite Harris Farm Market, but entrance is from the mini-park on the Sale St frontage.



OUR ANNUAL CLUB AUCTION IS PLANNED FOR SATURDAY 6TH SEPTEMBER 2025

- As the Saturday morning mini-fair at the Orange Cultural Centre winds down.

We need you to organise your auction lots in the next few weeks.

Already there are prime European stamp album lots from the estate of the late Tony Richards and the estate of the late Elmar Ozols.

Start writing your descriptions now. They will need to be ready at the latest for our 29th July Club meeting or the Saturday morning mini-fair on 2nd August. Don’t delay or “put it off to the last minute”.

OUR ORANGE 2025 COIN & STAMP EXPO DEALERS - PLEASE KEEP SUPPORTING THEM

- **Orange Stamps & Coins** (Howard Lyons), PO Box 9288, Orange, 2800; Mobile 0427 107 554 Phone/fax (02) 6362 2368, E-mail: - howard.lyons@bigpond.com

Buying and Selling – Stamps, Coins, Banknotes, Accessories, etc.

- **Phil & Win Morehouse**, Bankstown. NSW 2200 Ph: (02)9707 4087, New e-mail is: - phillipmorehouse401@gmail.com World-wide stamps bought and sold
- **Top End Coins:** Les Robinson, P.O. Box 381, Nelson Bay. 2315 Phone: 0455 660 email: topendcoins@gmail.com
- **Peter Neville Stamps.** Orange. Phone 0400754209 peternevillestamps@gmail.com or www.ebay.com/str/stampsorangens

DATES FOR 2025

Orange Coin & Stamp Club 24th June 2025 night meeting, 7.30pm at the Orange Cultural Centre.

Orange Coin & Stamp Club mini-fair at the Orange Cultural Centre Saturday 5th July 2025, 9 to 12ish.

Sutherland Shire Stamp & Collectors Fair, Saturday 5th July 2025, 9-2.30, Gynea Anglican Church, 131 Gynea bay Road, Gynea.

Sunshine Coast Stamp Club Stamp Fair, 6th July 2025, 9-12, CWA Hall, Short St, Nambour Qld

Campbelltown & District Philatelic Society meeting 9th July 2025, 7pm at St Thomas More Church Hall, 43 Acacia Ave., Ruse 2560. Annual General Meeting.

Northern Suburbs Club's Winters Day with Stamps, Sat. 19th July 2025. 10-4 at St

Leonards Catholic Church Hall. Auction begins at 2.

Ipswich Stamp Club's Stamp Fair, 19th July 2025, 9-14, Function Centre, Ipswich Show Grounds, Salisbury Road, Qld

Orange Coin & Stamp Club 29th July 2025 night meeting, 7.30pm at the Orange Cultural Centre.

Orange Coin & Stamp Club mini-fair at the Orange Cultural Centre Saturday 2nd August 2025, 9 to 12ish.

Campbelltown & District Philatelic Society meeting 13th August 2025, 7pm at St Thomas More Church Hall, 43 Acacia Ave., Ruse 2560. *State colonial stamps* by Chantal Paris

Orange Coin & Stamp Club 26th August 2025 night meeting, 7.30pm at the Orange Cultural Centre

Bendigo Philatelic Society's Stamp Fair, 30th August 2025, 9.30 to 2.30. St Andrew Uniting Church, 24 Myers St Bendigo, Victoria

Orange Coin & Stamp Club mini-fair at the Orange Cultural Centre Saturday 6th September 2025, 9 to 12ish, and then our **annual Club Auction**

,
Campbelltown & District Philatelic Society meeting 10th September 2025, 7pm at St Thomas More Church Hall, 43 Acacia Ave., Ruse 2560. *Airmail Cinderellas* by Ian Dolstra

Hobart National 1-frame Exhibition and Stamp Show, at Hobart Town Hall 30th October to Sunday 2nd November. Entries close 4th August.

Wagga Stamp & Coin Club's Stamp and Coin Fair, 22nd and 23rd November 2025, starts at 9am, Sturt Public School, White Avenue, Koorringal [a Wagga suburb] 2650

PHILAS NSW Incorporated

Notice of Special General Meeting

There will be a Special General Meeting of PHILAS Associated Club Delegates at 11:00am on **Saturday 26th July 2025** at 20 Egerton Street, Silverwater NSW 2128.

The Agenda for the Special General Meeting is as follows:

- To approve the PHILAS Library Incorporated and PHILAS NSW Incorporated audited accounts for the 2023-2024 Tax year.
- To receive an update on the progress of the application with ASIC for Commonwealth Incorporation of PHILAS NSW Inc.
- To respond to issues raised in a request for a Special General Meeting received from the Illawarra Philatelic Society, the Philatelic Society of NSW and the Newcastle Philatelic Society.
- It will assist with catering and seating arrangements if you can advise your attendance during the week before the meeting – thank you.

Mike McHugh
Secretary – on behalf of the PHILAS NSW Incorporated Executive Council.

PHILAS 2025-2026 MEMBERSHIP FEES

Our Club's PHILAS membership fees for will be due at the end on June 2025

Affiliation Fee:

- Australian resident and overseas adult members \$1 each
- Juniors (under 18 years) Free

Public Liability Insurance Fee:

- Australian resident adult members \$3.50 each
- Juniors (under 18 years) Free

The next PHILAS Auction #145 date is “to be advised”.

When and Where

Philas House, 20 Egerton Street, Silverwater
Tuesdays and Saturdays, 9am - 4pm
Come for an hour or stay the day - lunch is provided

Viewing Times - But We Need Volunteers to Make It Happen

We want to open our doors for in-person viewing of the auction lots at Philas - but this depends on having enough volunteers to run things safely and smoothly.

Here's when we're planning to offer viewing, if we can get the help we need:

Saturday 26 July – 10am - 3pm
Tuesday 29 July – 10am - 3pm
Saturday 2 August – 10am - 3pm
Tuesday 5 August – 10am - 3pm
Thursday 7 August – 3pm - 8pm
Friday 8 August – 10am - 8pm
Saturday 9 August (Auction Day) - from 8am

A Winter's Day with Stamps

Date: Saturday, 19th July 2025

Time: 10 am to 4 pm

Location: St Leonards Catholic Church Hall

Activities:

Club tables: Sydney Anglican Stamp Society, Northern Suburbs Philatelic Society, Smithfield Stamp Club, Parramatta Philatelic Society, Sutherland Shire Philatelic Society, Eastwood Epping Philatelic Society, Cinderella Stamp Club of Australasia, and the New South Wales Postcard Collectors Society.

Dealers: Phil & Win Morehouse, Bexley Stamp & Coin Accessories

Stamp Auction: Begins at 2 pm with Lots starting at a minimum of \$5 - 20 lots per vendor - includes estate material - Cash only payment.
Hourly Lucky door prizes

TURN YOUR STAMPS INTO CASH! GET SOME PAGES READY FOR THE CLUB'S EXCHANGE BOOK

Colin needs coin and stamp pages for the next stamp circuit book and the next coin/note circuit books

Colin can be contacted direct at Email: ptilinopus1@bigpond.com Ph: 63690634

ITEMS FOR THIS NEWSLETTER AND CORRESPONDENCE TO THE CLUB

Items for this newsletter are always required. You do not have to be a member of the Orange Club. They need to be posted to the Editor, Derek Dolstra, who is also the secretary at the Club's postal address: -PO Box 9113, ORANGE 2800 or better still e-mailed in Word format (pictures as jpg files) to: - ddolstra@bigpond.net.au or Phone 02 63 614 872.



**3 Barrack St Sydney
2000**

Ph (02) 9299 2047 & Fax (02) 9290 3710
remains the same. Their e-mail address is sales@wynyardcoins.com



THE MARIA THERESA THALER AS A TRADE COIN IN EAST AFRICA

Geoff Edwards introduced his talk to the Club on 27th May 2025 by saying that he had two main collecting interests:-

1. The Machin head stamps of Great Britain, especially showing postal use to Australia, and
2. The currency development of British East Africa

“Tonight”, he said, “he wanted to concentrate on the *Maria Theresa* silver thaler used as a trade dollar in east Africa”.



The Maria Theresa thaler was originally struck in Austria between 1741 and 1780. It was the circulating currency of the Holy Roman Empire and its dominions.

The obverse shows a bust of Empress *Maria Theresia of Habsburg* facing right, wearing veil, tiara, and pearl brooch. It has the lettering “R · IMP · HU · BO · REG · M · THERESIA · D · G”, with a small “S F” at the base for the Latin *Maria Teresia Dei Gratia Romanorum Imperatemitrix Hungariae Bohemiaeque Regina* translated as *Maria Theresia, by the grace of God, empress of the Romans, queen of Hungary and Bohemia. Schöbel Tobias. Faby Josef.*

The reverse of this 40mm-diameter coin showed the Coat of Arms of *Maria Theresa* on a double-crowned shield divided into four fields representing Hungary, Bohemia,

Burgundy, and Burgau (Günzburg); the crowned inner shield showed the coat of arms of Austria. These were supported by a crowned double-headed eagle. It has the lettering "DUX · BURG · CO · TYR · 1780 · X' ARCHID · AVST" for the Latin *Archiducisa Austriae Ducisa Burgundiae Comitisa Tirolis* translated as "Archduchess of Austria, duchess of Burgundy, countess of Tyrol."

The coin was 0.835 silver. It contained 0.75 troy ounces of silver.

The original mintings of these coins are quite rare.

During *Maria Theresa's* reign the coin proved popular as a trade coin in the near-East and the Levant. It had a standard weight and silver bullion content and the Austrian Mint had a good reputation.

Maria Theresa started her 40-year reign when her father, *Charles VI*, Holy Roman Emperor, died on 20 October 1740. As well as Empress of Austria, Naples, Bavaria, Serbia, Sardinia, and the Holy Roman Empire; she was separately Emperor of the Diarchy of Hungary.



A Van Meytens portrait of Maria Theresa dated 1759

Although she was expected to cede power to her husband, Emperor *Francis I*, and her eldest son, Emperor *Joseph II*, who were officially her co-rulers in Austria and Bohemia, Maria Theresa ruled as an autocratic sovereign with the counsel of her advisers. She promulgated institutional, financial, medical, and educational reforms.

The *Empress Maria Theresa* also promoted commerce and the development of agriculture, and reorganised Austria's ramshackle military, all of which strengthened Austria's international standing.

Geoff Edwards noted that *Maria Theresa* made a big effort to appear in the eyes of her subjects, as a king. She even learnt to ride in a saddle (rather than side-saddle) and had become a seasoned equestrian.

In Europe there was a serious shortage of silver, because merchants used silver coins as payment for the numerous goods such as spices, tea and silk that they imported from India and the Far East. It was this outflow of silver that helped to make the Maria Theresa thaler rather famous: because its weight remained constant and the inscription on its edge made forgery difficult it became a popular form of tender in Asia and Africa. This circumstance was exploited by the Habsburg Monarchy and thalers were exported at a profit. Just in the years 1762 and 1763 the state 'earned' some 800,000 gulden from this oriental trade.

After the death of *Maria Theresa* in 1780, the Austrian Mint was permitted to continue striking the silver thaler coin (with the 1780 dies) to meet the continued demand from the Middle East, where it was the only silver coin trusted and accepted by the Arabs. From then on, with the date frozen at 1780, the coin proved increasingly popular as a World-wide trade coin. It became one of the most important trade coins in Europe and the World.



Worn Maria Theresa trade thalers

In the Near-East it was also worn as a women's ornaments and as jewellery. The fine workmanship of the coin, as well as the buxom portrait of the Empress, is said to have carried a strong appeal to the male Levantines, who liked their women.

It is estimated that until 2000, 389 million pieces were minted.

As of 2025, it is still sold by the Vienna Mint as a bullion coin, even though it was demonetised in 1854.



At this point Geoff passed around a recently minted, Vienna Mint 'souvenir' *Maria Theresa* thaler coin (see above).

Geoff also mentioned that Italy occupied Libya from 1911 to 1943, initially taking over the Ottoman provinces of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica after the Italo-Turkish War. In 1934, these were unified as the colony of Italian Libya. While the official currency was the Italian lira, the Maria Theresa thaler remained popular in trade and circulated alongside it, particularly in regions with established trading relationships.

The *Maria Theresa* thaler is first recorded as circulating in Ethiopia from Emperor *Iyasu II* of Ethiopia (1730–1755). According to traveller James Bruce, the coin, not debased as other currencies, dominated the areas he visited in 1768. Joseph Kalmer and Ludwig Hyun in the book *Abessinien* estimate that over 20% of 245 million coins minted until 1931 ended up in Ethiopia.

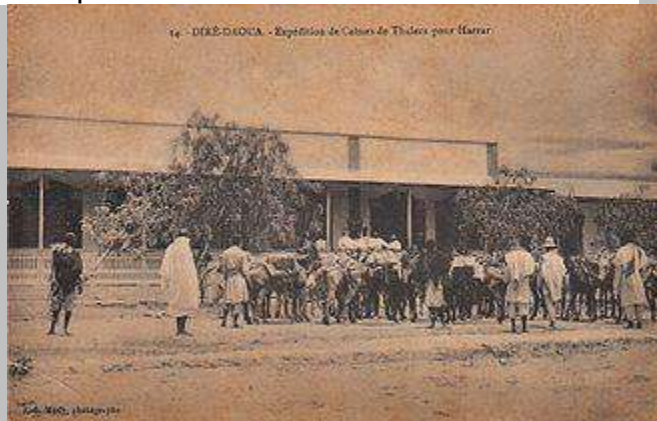


The British Expedition to Abyssinia in 1868 was an expensive one. Here British troops negotiate the Chetta Ravine with the help of elephants from India.

In 1868, the British “trade” expedition to Magdala, the capital of *Emperor Tewodros II of Ethiopia*, under Field Marshal Robert Napier, took Maria Theresa thalers with them to pay local expenses. Thirteen thousand soldiers were sent along with 40,000 animals, including 44 elephants trained to pull the big artillery guns. It was really a punitive expedition, not a trade mission, launched in response to Emperor *Tewodros II's* seizure of European hostages, including British diplomats. The British army, under General Robert Napier, marched to the Abyssinian capital of Magdala, rescued the hostages, and destroyed the fortress, leading to Tewodros's suicide. Geoff said he had a Maria Theresa thaler coin in his collection from that expedition. Geoff also noted that he had three different sources that stated that the appearance of the die cracked thaler coincides with General Napier's expedition.

The *Maria Theresa Thaler*, later played a significant role in the Italian occupation of Abyssinia (modern Ethiopia) in the 1930s. Italy, under Mussolini, sought to establish an economic presence in the region by using the thaler as a form of currency for their troops and to influence the local population. The thaler, originally minted in Austria, was already well-known and trusted in the region, making it an ideal choice for Italian colonial purposes.

Starting in 1935 the Italians minted the *Maria Theresa* thaler at the mint in Rome for use in their conquest of Ethiopia. *King Umberto II* had secured from Austria the right to strike the coin in order to provide its troops there with money. This was interpreted by other countries as the end of Austria's monopoly regarding the coin and they proceeded to produce their own *Maria Theresa* thalers.



Shipping crates of Maria Theresa thalers in Ethiopia in 1910

The thaler became legal tender in Italian Abyssinia in 1935. Italy was allowed to produce the coin for itself and Austria would limit its own production, Mussolini started to put his plan into action. It didn't end particularly well for him, however, as Abyssinia put up a good fight and refused to be conquered. In 1938, he withdrew the circulation of the thaler from Abyssinia.

Due to Mussolini's efforts, Italy now held a monopoly on the coin. Many other countries weren't too happy about the situation and decided to act.

In response to Italy's actions, Great Britain also sought a licence from Austria to mint the *Maria Theresa* thalers. They initially wanted to use them for trade and to pay for military expenses in east African territories and colonies like Tanganyika, Uganda and Kenya. These later became very useful when Britain invaded Italian East Africa between June 1940 and November 1941 after Mussolini had declared war on Britain. Mussolini had previously united Abyssinia, Italian Eritrea and Italian Somalia in 1936, calling the new territory Italian East Africa.

Then, during World War II, the British also minted some 18 million *Maria Theresa* thalers in Bombay to use in their East African Campaign to drive the Italians out of Ethiopia

The U.K. government exchange rate was 10 *Maria Theresa* thalers for 1 gold sovereign or 2 Indian rupees for 1 *Maria Theresa* thaler.

England's Royal Mint produced 20 million trade *Maria Theresa* thaler from 1936 to 1961.

The Birmingham Mint produced 3 488 000 *Maria Theresa* thalers.

The minting monopoly went back to the Vienna Mint after 1961.

The Paris Mint meanwhile resorted to producing their own *Maria Theresa* thalers in 1936, followed by Brussels in 1937, each without asking Austria's permission. Even during World War II, with the German blockade of British ports, production continued as London sent its dies to Bombay. This time saw a huge level of production of *Maria Theresa* thalers in Wartime: -

- Bombay struck 18 million over two years
- Paris struck over 4.5 million between 1936 and 1945
- Brussels struck just under 10 million
- London struck over 15 million between 1936 and 1940

In 1947, London's dies, which had been returned from Bombay, were put back to work as the orders for *Maria Theresa* thalers came back in. Over 6 million were struck over the next two years. Britain had lost India as a colony, meaning the obverse needed to be redesigned to remove 'IND EMP' (Emperor of India) from King George VI's title. The Royal Mint in London found itself unable to keep up with demand, so the dies were sent to the Birmingham Mint to produce for the year.

Millions were issued from Birmingham, and even more from London, where striking continued until 1961. Brussels also produced another 11 million before they stopped issuing the coin in 1957.

Despite the fact that most of these coins are identical, some aren't. Namely, those struck in London and Brussels from dies made before the War.

In Brussels, the engraver that produced the dies missed out one of the nine pearls on Maria Theresa's brooch. It might be an interesting discrepancy to us today, but it was rather an issue at the time. Ten million were made and each was greeted with disapproval from many – it's thought that the Arabs of Yemen were so used to the design of the thaler that they'd reject the coin if they couldn't feel each of the nine pearls with their thumb.

London saw a similar hiccup too. Its dies missed out the central feather of the Imperial Eagle that featured on the coin's reverse. Seeing as London's dies had also been used for the thalers struck in both Birmingham and Bombay, these coins also bear the mistake.

Eventually the *Maria Theresa* coins were being struck in Vienna, Rome, London, Birmingham, Paris, Brussels, Utrecht and even Bombay.

The Indian rupee was the dominant currency used along the East African coast during the second half of the 19th century, where it had marginalized the American gold dollar and the *Maria Theresa* thaler.



The German East Africa Company acquired rights to mint coinage in 1890 and issued rupees, which were equivalent to the Indian and Zanzibar rupee. The Company retained its coinage rights even after the takeover of German East Africa by the government later in 1890. The Germans circulated a very similar silver coin to the thaler in German East Africa, It was the silver 2 rupee. It was 35mm-diameter and circulated from 1890. It was used in Tanganyika as late as 1920.



It became a dominant trade coin in inland Central Africa, even in the Congo, east of German East Africa, in the period before World War I.



In Central Africa the Maria Theresa thaler also competed with cowrie shells. These shells did not naturally occur in Central Africa. They were only found on the Indian and Pacific Oceans. The Indian Ocean coastline was 700km to the east, so they couldn't be counterfeited. They exchanged at 2,000 to the Maria Theresa thaler.



Paying with a bag of cowrie shells in Central Africa, 19th Century

The Portuguese colonised Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) from 1505 to 1658 introduced silver reis coins which were used for trading. The Portuguese also inflicted silver reis coinage on the sultan of Zanzibar.



Portuguese silver reis coin of Alfonso VI (1656-1667). These were also minted in Goa in India.

The Dutch East India Company (VOC) governed what is now Sri Lanka, then known as Dutch Ceylon, from 1658 to 1796. This saw the first introduction of *Maria Theresa* thalers from spice traders operating out of Zanzibar.

The *Maria Theresa* thaler was also formerly the currency of the Hejaz, Yemen, and the Aden Protectorate, as well as Muscat and Oman on the Arabia peninsula. There it was widely used for traditional jewellery, both as a source of silver, and as a decoration itself. The coin remains popular in North Africa and the Middle East to this day in its original form: a silver coin with a portrait of the ruler on the front and the Habsburg Double Eagle on the back. It was also much traded in Mauritius in the Indian Ocean.

The *Maria Theresa* thaler was also used as an ingot coin in Africa. It played a crucial part in the dowry payments during marriage and was much prized by women as a component in jewellery and also as an amulet to protect the wearer from the evil eye. On account of its high silver content, it was a vital source of silver in the

making of the much-coveted traditional jewellery. From Kuwait to Kano millions of thalers were melted down to satisfy the demand for silver ornaments of every kind.

Geoff also described having bought a badly-worn *Maria Theresa* thaler at Omdurman in the Sudan, from which 0.75 ounces of silver bullion was obtained.

If you did any sort of business in East Africa you went to the local silver merchant and bought Maria Theresa thalers.

Geoff also remembered that the late Bob Roberts had years ago retailed a good range of Maria Theresa thalers – all with different rims and texts from all the different mints. Geoff Edwards passed around one of these that was minted in Brussels in 1910.



Agadez cross jewellery

Geoff said he had also purchased a Maria Theresa thaler at Agadez in Central Africa. These were used there to make Agadez crosses. The Agadez cross is the most popular category of Saharan Berber jewellery made especially by the Tuareg people of Niger. Only a few of these pieces of jewellery exactly resemble a cross. For most of them, it is a pendant with a varied silhouette, related either to a cross (*tanaghilt*), or to a form of plate or shield (*talhakim*).



Occasionally one actually looks like a cross



Geoff also spoke of the 'Silver Road', an ancient trading route that runs across the middle of Africa to Khartoum westwards from Atlantic. This helped disseminated the *Maria Theresa* trade thalers right across Africa in the 19th Century.

Maria Theresa thalers were a huge success as a trade coin, partly because they had a standard and unchanged silver content for now over 250 years.

CALLIOPE QUEENSLAND 4680: A GOLD-FIELD, A POST OFFICE & A COMMUNITY

In 1853 the Port Curtis (Gladstone) township was surveyed, it having been urged on the New South Wales Government as a superior port to Maryborough for pastoral interests in the Dawson and Burnett River areas. The following year Governor FitzRoy inspected the area, naming the river after the vessel Calliope in which he travelled.



Calliope is only 20km south-southwest of the port city Gladstone in Central Queensland. Today it's near the 'cross-roads' of the Bruce Highway and the Dawson.

The discovery of gold in 1863 gave rise to the Calliope diggings, and by 1864 there were 400 miners, four stores and three hotels in the settlement. Alluvial gold was readily won, keeping the diggings active for several years. By 1868 Calliope boasted sufficient permanent settlement to sustain a private school, and three years later the Calliope township was surveyed at a new site. A state primary school opened in 1872.

GOLD AND QUEENSLAND

Gold symbolises wealth. It transformed Queensland's history and landscape. Gold brought migrants from other colonies and overseas and it established new towns, some in areas not previously settled by Europeans. The timely discovery of gold at Gympie, for instance in 1867 saved Queensland from the worst effects of the 1866 economic depression, and provided an important boost during the first 50 years of the State.

The Gold-fields were romanticised in the popular press as a way to make a fortune, encouraging rushes to newly discovered fields. In Queensland in the late Nineteenth Century, gold was a tradeable commodity. Individuals traded gold with store owners for mining equipment, food, supplies and even alcohol. Later, gold exchanges were set up at a number of places in Queensland in the 1880's like Charters Towers and Brisbane, but that was well after the rush to Calliope.

The measurement of gold was important. Gold was weighed using troy ounces (not 16 to the pound weight like avoirdupois ounces). Most traders had portable scales that measured against standards for ounces and pennyweights (*dwt* abbreviation – there were 20 to the troy ounce).

Assays were another part of the measurement of gold, the price fetched dependant on the purity of the gold produced. All gold contains some, but a varying amount of silver, and usually some of the platinoid metals, and sometimes copper and silver. Sometimes there was still some quartz attached to the gold.

Before the gold exchanges were set up in late-1880's, gold was sent direct to the Mint in Sydney (and sometimes the Mint in Melbourne). **Your** gold was directly smelted and refined there into **your** gold sovereign coins, which were sent back to you.



Sydney Mint gold sovereign of 1866

Some diggers didn't want to wait the 6 weeks or so to receive their gold sovereign coins back and sold it to, or traded it for goods, to shopkeepers. The price of gold in the late-1860's was £3 8/- but the shopkeepers paid less. They sent their gold to the Mint too.



A Queensland gold escort involved mounted persons accompanying the coach containing a strong box for the registered post items (including gold). Banknotes and coins to banks were also sent by the same registered post. This was the escort from Croydon to Cairns.

This process of sending gold to the Sydney Mint and returning the gold as gold sovereigns involved registered mail. That way the gold was insured, even though it was transported to/from a sea port by the Gold Commissioner's escort.



The Queensland Gold Commissioner's escorts were often drawn from ex-navy or army personnel

That's why there was a clamour to establish a post offices on the early gold-fields. That started here, close to Orange, with the Ophir rush of May 1851. The early post offices were mostly ramshackle affairs, often built out of a simple bush timber frame covered in either canvas or sheets of bark. But they always had a 24-hour armed guard from the Gold Commissioner's detail.

GOLD AT CALLIOPE

The gold at Calliope was discovered by a Mrs Brennan who picked up a 3oz nugget on Sheep Station Hill in May 1863.

The Calliope Gold-field in Queensland was officially proclaimed on 26th March 1863, making it the first proclaimed gold-field in Queensland.

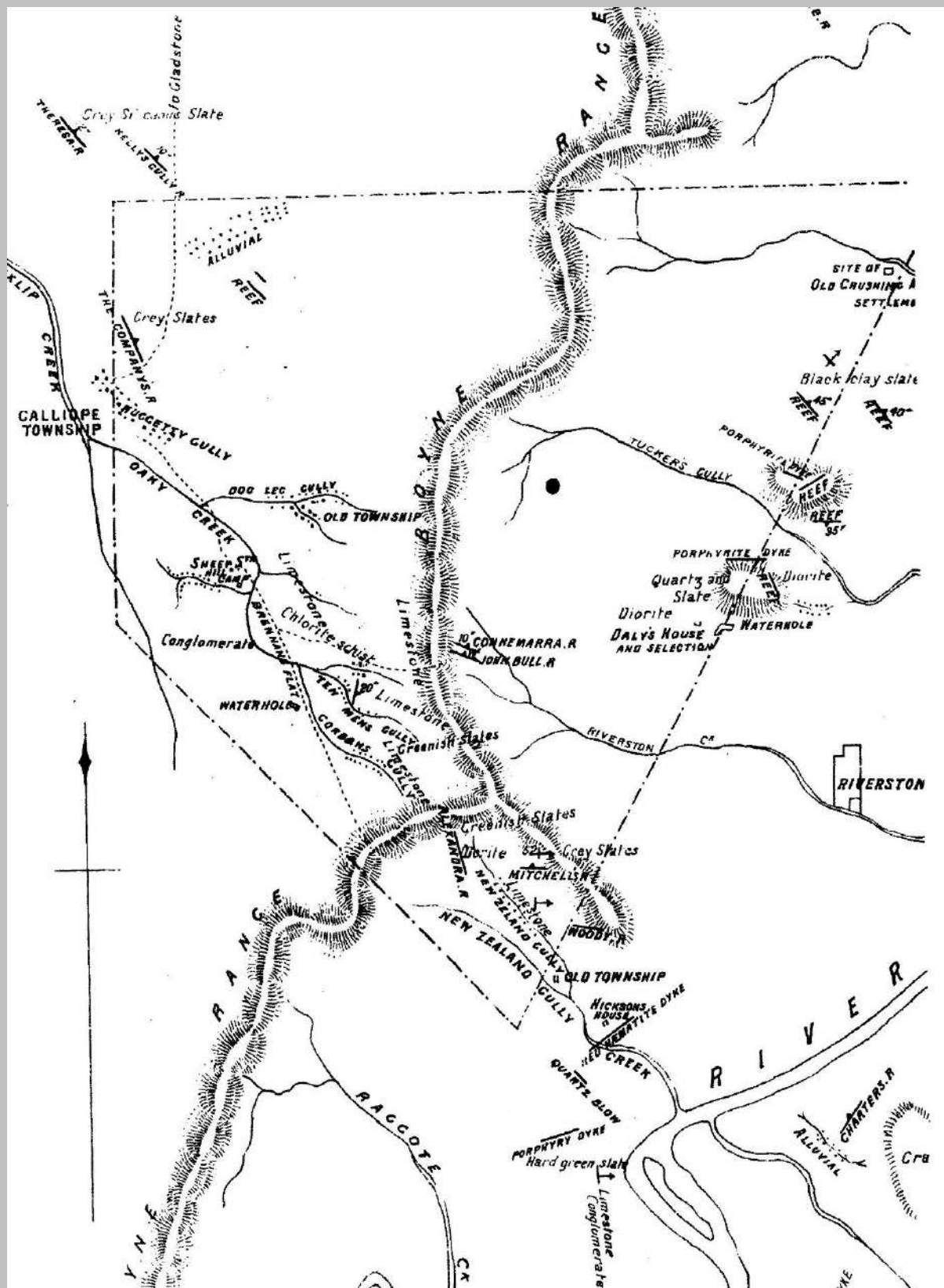
The gold-field was divided into two parts divided by a low ridge which forms the watershed between the Calliope and Boyne Rivers. There was alluvial gold in all the gullies emanating from this ridge, called the Boyne Range. Those on the Calliope River side include Nuggety Gully, Dogleg Gully (which had its own township), Ten Men's Gully and Gordon's Gully.

Nuggety Gully, despite being patchy, was the most productive. In 1866 600 men were working this gully. The number had decreased by 1868. Many 5oz nuggets were found. An African American is reported to have picked up 13 and 73 ounce nuggets.

On the eastern side of the Boyne watershed Machine Creek, Tucker's Gully, Pancake Gully and New Zealand Gully were worked. New Zealand Gully has been worked since 1863 was the most productive. The gold was much finer and was more evenly distributed than at other parts of the gold-field. A large number of men were employed at New Zealand Gully and in 1872 it had its own township.

An 1868 report on the *Gladstone Observer*, reprinted in the Brisbane Courier of 4th July 1868 notes "an excellent heart as to the future of the Calliope gold mining district". It adds "the scene of the present workings at Nuggety Gully for a distance of a mile, by about a hundred yards in width, the ground is perforated by every description of opening, from a 'hen-hole' to the neat looking Calliope gold field shaft of the experienced miner....The sinking averages 20 feet but we heard of on party down 40 on gold, from one we saw 17 ounces of gold taken out of 20 pounds of quartz." It added "The number at work does not exceed two hundred; three months ago there were not less than 400".

The 1885 report of the Assistant Government Geologist, William Rands, included the map of the gold-field, shown above. Rands noted that the future of Calliope would depend on its quartz reefs rather than alluvial gold which was getting worked out. He reported that none of the ten-odd reefs had "has had a fair trial". The deepest shaft was only 100ft (30m). They were all abandoned because of poor management and lack of capital. No part of any profits were put aside for mine development. This led to a cessation of all reef mining after about 1885.





The Company's Reef mine was where the Calliope Sportsground is today

Reefs included The Company's Reef, in the town (which went 12 pennyweights [dwt] per ton or 0.6 troy oz. to the ton, and the Teresa reef on what was Stowe pastoral station. Kelly's Gully Reef was 2km from there. The Perseverance Reef. The Alexandra Reef (abandoned 1867) and Mitchell's Reef were worked at New Zealand Gully.

Another reason for the decline of mining was that homestead selections were being granted to holders of Miner's Rights within the declared Gold-Field and you couldn't mine on them. The problem was a little bigger. Queensland's first Gold Field had been declared over Calliope in 1864. The land was always wanted by pastoralists. The idea of a Gazetted Gold Field was taken from the New South Wales legislation. It prevented land being converted from Crown to private land. It was illegal to mine gold on private land until the 1890's. Miners and pastoralists were always arguing with one another.

By the 1880's the gold was mostly worked out. With no work left to do, the miners began to leave. By the year 1885, only twenty miners were left in the Calliope district. Local beef production continued in the area, and Calliope continued to serve as a centre for that industry.

The CALLIOPE POST OFFICE

The Calliope Goldfield Post Office opened 1st March 1864, a year after the initial discovery of gold. Gradually the "Goldfield" was dropped from then name.

Gladstone post office had opened previously on 1st July 1854 as a New South Wales post office. Joan Frew noted that it took months for mails to arrive from Sydney. There was no regular shipping service, that is, until the Calliope gold rush. Gladstone was always better connected with Brisbane, especially when its Telegraph Office opened in January 1865.

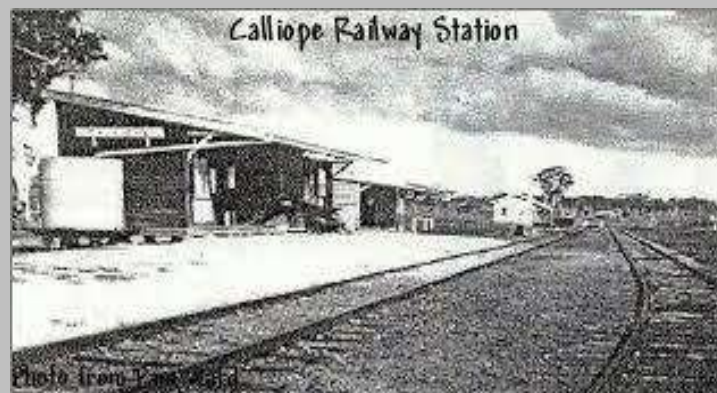
At the turn of the Twentieth century, Mrs. Bain had a store beside the Diggers Arms Hotel on the corner of Bell and Muirhead Streets. The Post Office, an Allowance Office, earlier been installed in Bedford's Store, but in 1902 it was handed to Sarah Mary Bain, appointed postmistress at this store.

The discovery of copper was made in Many Peaks in 1896. Many Peaks is 60 kilometres to the South of Calliope. The mines there employed a lot of Calliope residents. Subsequently, in 1910, a railway was constructed through Calliope, leading to Many Peaks from Port Curtis. A large bridge was built over the Calliope River. Many Calliope residents found employment on building the railway and the bridge.

The railway from Gladstone to Many Peaks was officially opened on 25th July 1910, with a station at Calliope Bridge just over the western side of the Calliope River.



The Calliope Post Office was then moved to the new railway station, then or soon afterwards. It left the railway station about 1926.

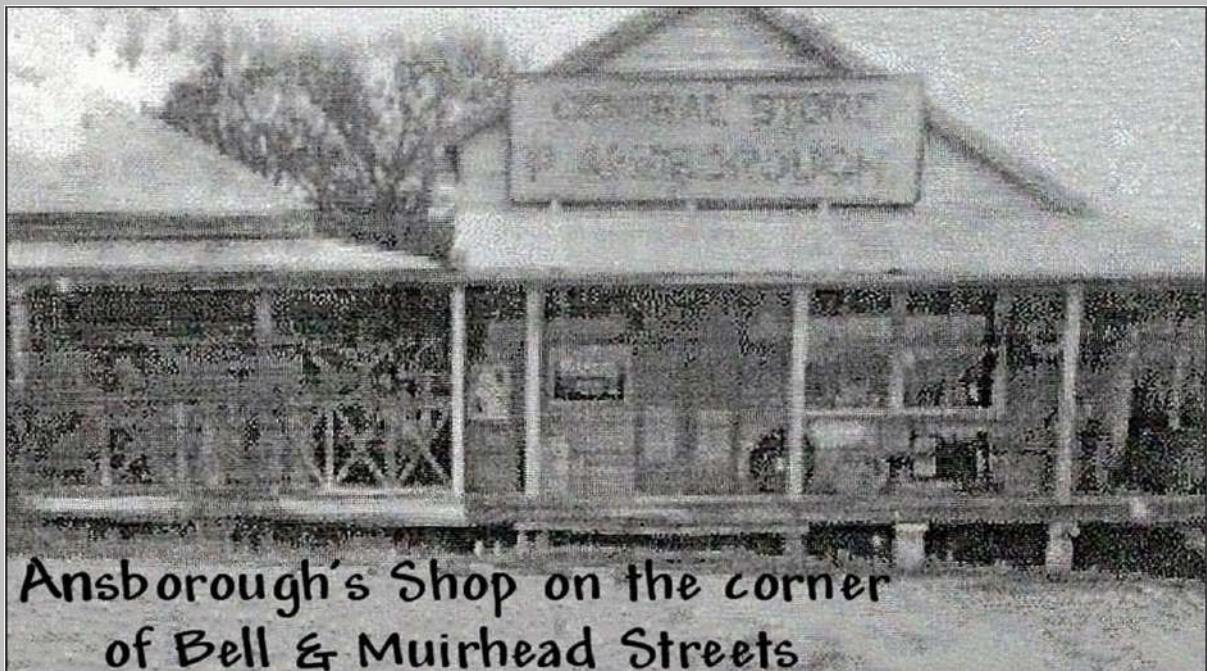


The Calliope Post Office was at the Calliope Railway Station from about 1910 to about 1926

The last regular train ran to Many Peaks ran in 2002. It carried mail-bags to and from Gladstone until about 1970. The line closed and since 2018 it has become the Boyne Burnett Inland Rail Trail.

Around 1924, Patrick and Vil (Jensen) Ansborough took over what had become Sarah Bain's general store. When the Post Office left the railway station in 1926 it moved to its old site what was now Patrick and Vil. (Jensen) Ansborough's general store.

On the opposite corner of Bell and Muirhead Streets was the home of George and Nellie (Williams) Ferguson. George was a persistent miner and he and Nellie had spent some of their early years on the Tableland Diggings. They then came into the township of Calliope and lived in a home where the Post Office was eventually positioned.



Not much was recorded about the Calliope Post Office from the 1930's to the 1990's.

In 1993/4 the Calliope Non-Official Post Office became a Licenced Post Office
In 2025 mail is delivered from the Gladstone Delivery Centre.



The Calliope Licenced Post Office in 2025 was at Shop 2, 44 Stirrat Street. It opened from 9am to 5pm, Mondays to Fridays

CALLIOPE DECLINES THEN REVIVES

After the demise of gold-mining the population figures look grim. It's only in recent years when Calliope has become an effective outer suburb of Gladstone that things have improved:-

1881	59
1891	202
1901	302
1911	516
1978	492
2001	1182
2011	4206

CALLIOPE (24° 4' S. lat., 151° 6' E. long.), a gold-field and postal centre in the county of Clinton, situated between the Calliope and Boyne rivers, about 17 miles from river to river, and 329 miles NW. of Brisbane. Hotels: Sun, Diggers' Arms, and Tattersall's. There is a State school (No. 20), a school of arts, with library of 291 vols., two places of worship, Undenominational and Roman Catholic (both visited), Episcopal and Presbyterian ministers also visit, and two stores. The port of Gladstone is about 15 miles distant NE. Coaches run to Rockhampton bi-weekly, fare, 25s.; to Gladstone twice a week, fare, 5s. It is a rich mineral district, and is also of good grazing capabilities. Population, 202 (census 1891). Formation: metamorphosed rock, principally grey and green slates. At Marblestone, 9 miles from Calliope, large beds of fossiliferous limestone are to be seen.

From the 1903 Australian Handbook. Mail came in on the coaches only twice a week.



Calliope township in 1928. The population of the Calliope census district then was about 500

By the early parts of the 1990s, the population of the town had increased from a few hundred to 1,000 people. As a result of cheap land availability and an increase in mining activities around the area that required passing through Calliope, there was a boom of land around 2007. By the year 2011, the population of the land had increased to over 4,000. By 2016, a census carried out revealed the population to be at own to 3,438.

A large number of new homes and town houses have been built in Calliope due to its proximity to Gladstone Port and associated industries.



This image is from a realtor's promo. The fabric of Calliope has changed in the past few decades. They better be careful that the housing was not build on deep alluvial of even reef mines.

The following pages show just a few of the 10 Calliope pages from your editors collection. Okay for a Club meeting display, certainly not for a display at a higher level.

CALLIOPE, Queensland

CALLIOPE “39” RAYS OBLITERATOR (1864-1912)

When the Calliope Post Office opened on the just-discovered Calliope gold-field, on 1 March 1864, it was supplied with a “39” rays obliterator (with 6mm-high numerals). This was used until circa-1913.

Manning (2009) recorded its use from 1864. He gave it a “C” rarity rating for use on side-face stamps and an “RRRR” rating for use on Chalon head stamps.



Above, an impression of the Type 1c, "39" rays obliterator of Calliope cancels a 1d orange-vermilion *Queen Victoria Chalon head* (small star watermark, perf 12) stamp of 1874



Above, an impression of the Type 1c, "39" rays obliterator of Calliope cancels a 1d vermilion *Queen Victoria '4-figures'* (Crown over 'A' watermark, perf 12½ x 13) stamp of 1907-09.

CALLIOPE, Queensland

CALLIOPE REGISTERED ONE-LINE CANCELLER & TYPE 1b DATE-STAMP

Bernard Manning (2011) recorded the use of a Type 1b date-stamp at Calliope from 30th January 1875 to 2nd May 1907. He gave it a “C” rarity rating.



The piece, above, torn from a registered mail Tattersalls cover shows two impressions of the two-line “REGISTERED / CALLIOPE” canceller and a single impression of the Type 1b, “CALLIOPE / AP 10 / 98” = QUEENSLAND = “date-stamp cancelling two x 2d blue *Queen Victoria side-face ‘4 corners’* (Crown over ‘Q’ watermark, perf 12½ x 13) stamps of 1897, and single 1d vermilion *Queen Victoria side-face ‘4 corners’* (Crown over ‘Q’ watermark, perf 12½ x 13) stamp also of 1897,

CALLIOPE, Queensland

CALLIOPE, TYPE 1, 27mm-DIAMETER DATE-STAMP

Dell & Price (2017) have recorded use of a Type 1, 27mm-diameter (arcs 1½mm, 1½mm) date-stamp at Calliope from 10 FE 13 to -4 FE 69. They gave it a “C” rarity rating.



At left, an impression of the Type 1, 27mm-diameter (arcs 1½mm, 1½mm), "CALLIOP[E] / 23SE30 / Q[UEENSLAND]" date-stamp cancels a ½d orange *King George V* (multiple Crown over 'A: watermark, perf 12½ x 13½) stamp of 21st November 1928



At left, an incomplete impression of the Type 1, 27mm-diameter (arcs 1½mm, 1½mm) "[CAL]IOPE / [??]MY52 / [QUEENSL]AND" date-stamp cancels a 2½d maroon *Centenary of Victoria's First Adhesive Postage Stamp* of 27th September 1950.

CALLIOPE QLD 4680

CALLIOPE, RUBBER, 31mm x 31mm-DIAMETER, "QLD., AUST. 4680" DATE-STAMP



At left, an impression of the 31mm x 30mm diameter (no arcs) stretched, "CALLIOPE / 11 NOV 1986 / QLD., AUST. 4680" rubber date-stamp cancels a 36c *Orchids: Pink Enamel Orchid* stamp of 18th September 1986, on piece.



At left, an impression of the 31mm x 30mm diameter (no arcs), stretched, CALLIOPE / -7 JAN 1987 / QLD., AUST. 4680" rubber date-stamp cancels a 36c *Australian Wildlife (1st Series): Kookaburra* stamp of 13th August 1986, on piece.



At left, an impression of the 31mm x 30mm-diameter (no arcs), stretched, "CALLIOPE / 16 SEP 1987 / QLD., AUST. 4680" rubber date-stamp cancels a 37c *Australian Wildlife (2nd Series): Brush-tail Possum* stamp of 1st July 1987, on piece.



Your editor had been making/printing up his own 'postcards' on 200gsm paper. It's easy.

This one shows an image of the current Calliope LPO and a \$1.50 *Kids Showtime: Blinky Bill* stamp of 4th September 2024 cancelled by an impression the 34mm-diameter, "CALLIOPE / ["P" logo] / 20 MAR 2025 /QLD 4680" rubber date-stamp.

THE ORANGE COIN & STAMP CLUB:-

IT'S ORIGINS.

by Les Warburton.

This article is the transcript of Les Warburton's speech to the dinner held to mark the Club's 30th Anniversary in 1995. Les Warburton was the Club's first President. He has since been made an Honorary Member of the Club.

It gives a person a lot of satisfaction & pleasure to know that a club which he was partly instrumental in forming is still functioning strongly after 30 years. Although the original & early minutes of meetings are lost, I can still remember the formation of the club.

I don't remember how I met Col & Eileen Davidson, but i do know it had something do with coins, and it was from this meeting that the Orange & District Coin & Stamp Club came into being.

At the time there were more people interested in getting a collection of Australian coins together "than you could poke a stick at", as it was less half a year away from the Decimal change-over" of 14 February 1966.

We thought that it would be interesting to know just how many were interested, so we decided to place an advertisement in the local paper with the view of forming a Coin Club.

As the result of the advertisement we received many calls from interested people. We found that among the callers were also stamp collectors who inquired if we intended to include philately as part of the clubs interests, and, as you can see, this eventuated.

The inaugural meeting was held at Allcorn's Star Ballroom (New Patmos) on 29 July 1965. As I remember, 23 people attended. They were as follows:-

Philip Barrow, Robert Bartlett, Veronica Cameron, Ray Cantrill, Perce & Mrs Curall, Colin & Eileen Davidson, Geoff Floyd, Ray Flynn, Lal Hansen, Frank Hazzard, Geoff Hennessey, Des Morrissey, Ray Norman, Tom Robards, Mrs Rowe, Keith & Lionel Stewart, Lee Serisier, Barry Tate, Les & Dot Warburton. If I have forgotten anyone, I apologise.

We held two or three meetings at this venue before moving to the old Town Band Hall in William Street. We stayed there for quite some time before moving to Gryliss' Cafe next to the Strand Theatre in Summer Street.

The Foundation Office bearers were:-
President:- Les Warburton,

Secretary:- Geoff Hennessey,
Treasurer:- Veronica Cameron.

At the inaugural meeting a name for the club was settled on. I remember well that Col. Davidson moved that the club's name be the Coin & Stamp Club (not the Stamp & Coin Club). This was carried.

I can remember that at one early stage we boasted a membership of 94.

Such was the enthusiasm that we held our meeting fortnightly & held auctions which drew people from Sydney, Dubbo, Narromine, Bathurst and other district towns.

At one of these auctions I recall bidding \$300.00 for a 1930 penny, but, as the reserve was \$350.00, I missed out. Three hundred dollars then would be the equivalent of about \$2 000.00 now. This coin currently sells for in excess of \$6,000.00.

Well after the decimal coinage change-over of February 1966, interest dropped off quite dramatically. It was mainly due to the efforts of Phil. Nicholas, as Secretary, that we survived a quiet period. After a while, Col. Davidson took over as President, and guided the Club to its present stage.

