

NEWSLETTER OF THE ORANGE COIN & STAMP CLUB FOR 27TH JANUARY 2026

#278

Still our 60th Year



The late Norm. Binns (left) and Tony Read (right) listening to opening speeches at the Club's tables at the Orange Hobby Fair in the PCYC Hall, 26th February 2011

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



The committee of the Orange Coin & Stamp Club welcomes members & readers to our 2026 year.

The current meeting is on Tuesday 27th November 2026 at 7.30pm.

Our next Mini-fair is on Saturday morning 7th February 2026 9-12, at the Orange Cultural Centre.

The next night meeting after the January one, is on Tuesday 24th February 2026

The Club normally meets on the last Tuesday of each month (except January). Our mini-fair is on the first Saturday of each month (except January).

The Orange Club anticipates holding two 2-day coin & stamp shows at the Orange High School Hall in 2026 – Expo in March/April and our Spring Fair in October/November.



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.

**OUR ANNUAL
CHRISTMAS IN
FEBRUARY & 60th
ANNIVERSARY DINNER IS
ON WEDNESDAY 4TH
FEBRUARY 2026 AT THE
ROBIN HOOD, 6.30 for
7pm**

The November meeting confirmed the date & time of our now-annual *Christmas in February* dinner.

It's at the Robin Hood Hotel in west Orange on Wednesday night, 4th February at 6.30 for 7pm.

Everyone, including partners, are welcome.

Why February? Well, November/December is always busy in Orange (as members are too) and it's hard to get a booking. July in Orange, despite any snow, is too cold.

The Club has agreed to also include celebration of our 60th Anniversary at the Robin Hood on Wednesday 4th February 2026.

DATES FOR 2026

Orange Coin & Stamp Club, January 27th 2026 meeting, 7.30pm at the Orange Cultural Centre.

Orange Coin & Stamp Club mini-fair, Saturday 7th February 2026, 9 to 12ish, at the Orange Cultural Centre

Orange Coin & Stamp Club, February 24th 2026 meeting, 7.30pm at the Orange Cultural Centre.

AUSVIPEX 2025 – Virtual Philatelic Exhibition

The Australian Virtual Multi-frame Philatelic Exhibition (AUSVIPEX 2025) is now live at www.ausvipex2025.com and will be online until 28th February 2026. Explore exhibits from over twenty-five countries in a wide range of classes. Visit the [AUSVIPEX 2025 Website](http://www.ausvipex2025.com)

Orange Coin & Stamp Club mini-fair, Saturday 7th March 2026, 9 to 12ish, at the Orange Cultural Centre

Orange Coin & Stamp Club, March 31st 2026 meeting, 7.30pm at the Orange Cultural Centre.

Orange Coin & Stamp Club mini-fair, Easter Saturday 4th April 2026, 9 to 12ish, at the Orange Cultural Centre

Wodonga Stamp Fair, Saturday 11th April 2026, 9-3, at 15 Havelock St, Wodonga VIC 3690

Wagga Stamp & Coin Fair, May 16th & 17th 2026, Sturt Public School, White Avenue, Koorringal (a Wagga suburb),

Rockhampton Club's Stamp Fair, Saturday 13th June 2026, 9-3; at Fox Hall, Gladstone Rd, Rockhampton Qld

OUR SPRING FAIR 2025 COIN & STAMP DEALERS - PLEASE KEEP SUPPORTING THEM

- **M.R. Roberts' Wynyard Coins**, 3 Barrack St Sydney 2000; Ph (02) 9299 2047 & Fax (02) 9290 3710 Their e-mail address is sales@wynyardcoins.com
- **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
- **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

- **Larry's Bullion** (Glenn Deveigne),
silver bullion bought and sold; phone
0458262302,
stillafriend2025@gmail.com

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

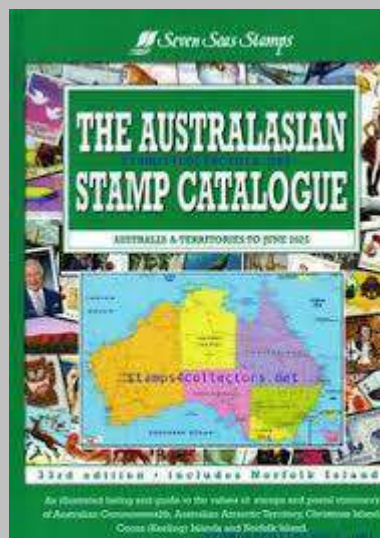
Colin needs coin and stamp pages for the next
stamp circuit book and the next coin/note circuit
books

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.

OUR A.S.C. CATALOGUE HAS ARRIVED FROM SEVEN SEAS



The club was offered this new catalogue at the
discount price of \$95. It has arrived.

It weighs nearly 2kg, and is ready to be added
tour library.



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 M.R. Roberts' Wynyard Coin Centre's tables were always busy at the 2025 Spring Fair



But coin dealers at the 'back end' of the Hall at our last Spring Fair found trading quieter. How do we ensure that these visiting dealers get an equitable flow of buyers and sellers?

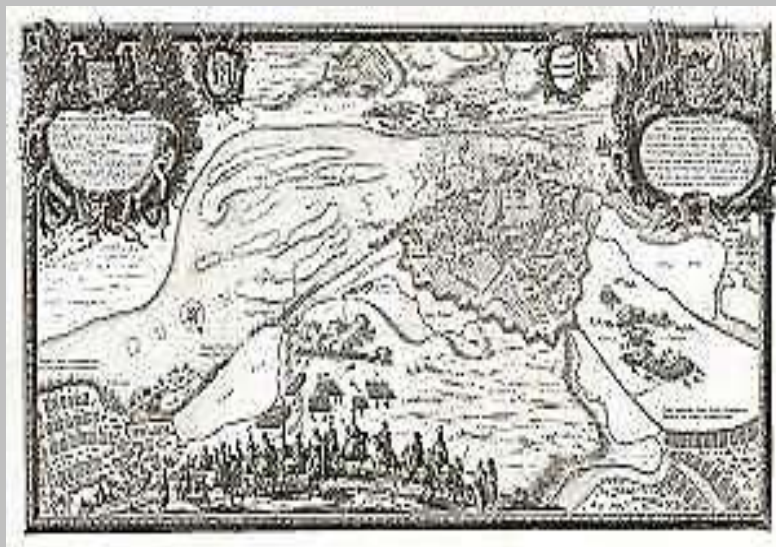
THE SWEDISH WAR AGAINST LIVONIA OF 1621-1623 & THE SIEGE OF RIGA

1621 was the year when Sweden's King Gustav II Adolf announced that the previous treaty with the Polish – Lithuanian Commonwealth was void. The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was at that time fully occupied with a war with the Ottoman Empire.

Gustav had re-built the Swedish army and wanted a “second go” at Livonia (Lithuania). He had 9 regiments of infantry, cavalry, 56 cannons and 25 warships.



The Swedish fleet sailed up on 3rd August 1621 to the front of Riga, the capital. He had 17,800 armed men. 5,000 of these had come from Finland, along with a retinue of aggrieved Estonian nobles. The Riga garrison only had 400 foot soldiers and a militia of 4,000 to 7,000.



The bombardment began on 23rd August. At different points up to 1,000 cannon balls an hour were fired.

By early September the Swedish army were digging tunnels under the walls. On 12th September they decided to storm the city.

Gustav was persuaded by his entourage to give Riga one last chance to surrender. Riga had only 1,000 defenders left. He sent a trumpeter to the wall announcing they had 6 hours to decide whether or not to surrender. After continued negotiations the city capitulated on 15th September. The Swedish conquest shocked Europe as for the first time a Protestant country was defeated by a Catholic one.

Gustav took some time to occupy the rest of Livonia. Among other things he changed the currency from Polish to a Swedish one.

One Solidus Riga Coin of Gustav II Adolf



When Riga was captured in 1621, Sweden demanded that coins be minted with the name and image of the Swedish king and in accordance with the Swedish monetary standard.



The monetary standard refers to the metal that the coins would be minted in. That was silver. Despite that, the new coins continued to be produced in the Polish style, as that was what the trade had demanded. The lowest-denominated coin, the schilling, or solidus, showed the coat of arms of Gustav II Adolf (G II A) and Riga's small coat of arms. These coins were minted in rolling mills. That involved a metal die being drawn between two cylinders. One cylinder embossed the obverse design and the other the reverse design. The strip of silver was then cut up into the coins. The silver content was so low that imported Swedish copper coins were used instead in the 1820's. It was only valued at one forty-eighth of a silver thaler.

It was issued from 1631 to 1634 have the two last digits of their dates at the very top of the reverse in a slightly smaller font.

Queen Christina's One Solidus Riga Coin



Queen Christina was born in December 1626. She inherited the throne at the age of five in November 1632 from Gustav II Adolf. There was a regent from 1632 to 1644. She reigned until June 1654.



1 solidus coin of Queen Christina from the Riga Mint (1645 to 1654)

During the *Torstenson War* of 1644, she initiated the issuance of just large, heavy copper plate money, to be used as currency. Due to her lavish spending which pushed the country to near bankruptcy, she depleted Sweden's reserves of silver. Fortunately Sweden was a prolific producer of copper. Christina (via her regent) did mint 1 solidus silver coins for Riga in Swedish Livonia from 1634 to 1638. In later years (after ?1638), with the shortage of silver, these were minted from copper.

The coin showed the Vasa royal family coat of arms, inside a crowned monogram, surrounded by the lettering "CHRISTINA. D.G.R.S." (Christina Dei Gratia Sveciae)



Swedish copper plate money, used between 1644 and 1776, comprised large copper plates stamped as currency due to abundant copper production and limited silver. Ranging from ~1 lb to over 50 lbs (10 daler), these heavy, square "coins" necessitated sleds for transport. Their inconvenience led to the creation of Europe's first banknote



Queen Christina of Sweden

Coins & background notes supplied by Tony Read

STAR BANKNOTES



Ever seen a star on a banknote? Well most people aren't even aware of them unless they are a keen banknote collector. If you have a star on one then the value can be worth hundreds or thousands of dollars more, depending on the banknote's condition.

Until 1948 Australian banknotes damaged during the printing process were replaced with notes bearing the same serial number. As the post-War economy boomed, this meant increasing constraints on efficient note production. It seems that Australia decided to implement the system used in the United States whereby a 'star' was printed on the replacement notes.

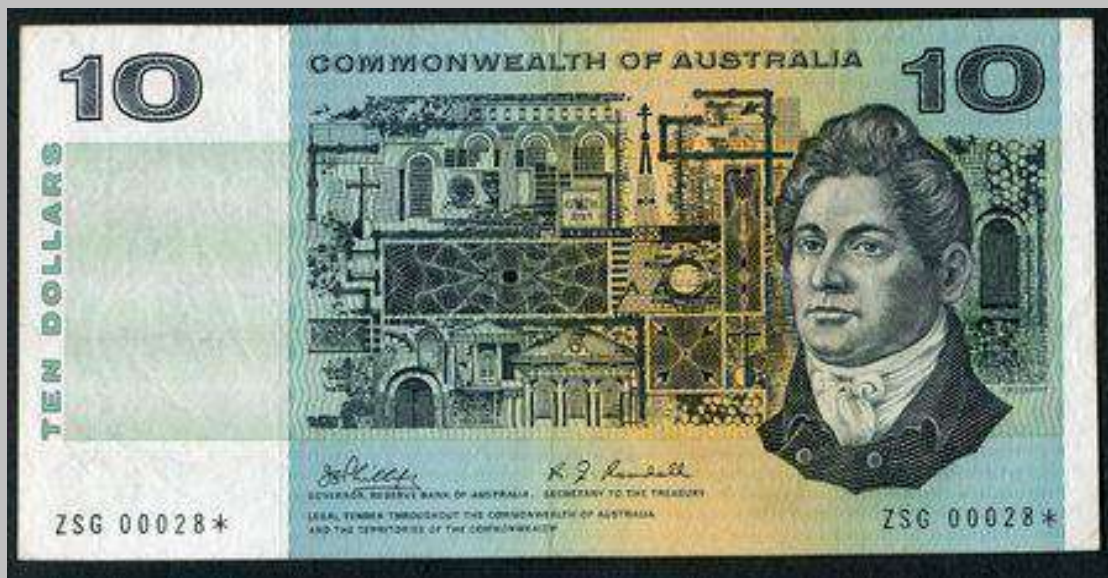
These notes bore a five-pointed hollow star in place of the last digit in the serial number (which was unrelated to the serials of the note it replaced). It is estimated that the spoilage rate averaged around one note in every five hundred, or 0.2%, depending on various factors, including denomination, signature combination and period of issue so there were once quite a few of these notes in circulation.

Misprinted banknotes are always destroyed immediately (or at least they are as soon as they are spotted), which leave a standard bundle of 100 notes one or two notes short. Checking the serial numbers at the start and end of each bundle is one quick and initial way of telling how many notes are included, so rather than just take a few notes from the next batch to make up the bundle, up until 1948, not only did staff at the Commonwealth Note Printers need to manually identify each mis-printed note and remove it from the series of notes to be issues, they then needed to manually re-number a replacement note.



The star replacement system was maintained when Australia switched to decimal currency from February 14th 1966, however only on the \$1 notes through to the \$10 notes - they were not initially used in the printing process for \$20 notes.

The star replacement system was brought to an end late in 1972, less than a year before the \$50 note was introduced in October 1973.



When we consider that this needed to be done 13, 000 times per week (the equivalent of 100 hours work), we can readily understand why note printing management were keen to do whatever they could to increase the efficiency of their staff.

The new star replacement system made it much easier for printing staff and tellers to check and count notes, and brought about a considerable saving in time and labour costs.

Star replacement notes were first introduced into the printing process of Australia's 10/- and £1 notes, but were not used on £5 notes until 1962, and were not used at all on £10 notes.

Although we know that all Australian pre-decimal notes are extremely rare, Commonwealth Note Printer records have not yet yielded exact mintage figures for them.

During the reign of *King George VI*, star replacements were limited to the lower two denominations - namely Ten Shilling and ones like the one above – the One Pound notes.

Those bearing the signature of H.C. Coombs and Roland Wilson were issued from 1952, but with the death of *George VI* in that year new designs were prepared, the Ten Shilling featuring Matthew Flinders and the One Pound a youthful *Queen Elizabeth II*.

It was noted that this 1952 One Pound star replacement note signed Coombs and Wilson also bears the Last Prefix 'W/6'. Back in 1983 it was assumed that the last prefix was 'W/5' but this has been revised since. This type of note in this condition these days would sell for over \$60,000



ABBCO BREAD TOKENS

Here is something new from the December 2025 *Queensland Numismatic Society Monthly Magazine*. It's a short article, by George Shea on ABBCO bread tokens.

ABBCO

AUTOMATIC BREAD BAKING COMPANY

by
George Shea

I'll start with a brief of the beginnings of ABBCO. In 1914 the NSW Government purchased the Newington College bakery and established the State Bakery, producing bread for the city. The main purpose of the bakery was to regulate the market and prevent profiteering, a significant issue during the War.

The bakery also provided training for the 3rd Australian Field Bakery in 1916 before it left for the Western Front.

The State Bakery was sold in about 1925 but continued in operation as the Automatic Bread Baking Company (ABBCO), one of the largest independent bread bakers in Sydney for many years.

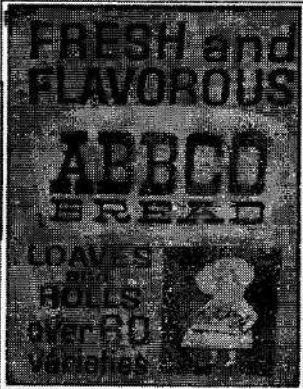
The Bakery was attractive with a Federation facade which can still be seen at Percival Road, Leichhardt which houses the Old Bakery café. The previous address was Balmain Road.

In 1940 the company was charged a 1,438/15/- pounds penalty for selling their 4lb loaves underweight. The following year the court dismissed the case after testing 914 loaves finding all to be correct.



This is a badge with a pin and clasp fixing on the back. It appears to be made of pewter and measures 35.8 X 27mm.

The person responsible for this sign needed to improve his spelling and grammar as he invented a new word which I doubt is in any dictionary.





THIS IS THE COMMON OVERSE

ABBCO BUILDS BONNIE CHILDREN OH

MADE OF ALUMINIUM BY AMOR WITH A DIAMETER OF 29.2mm

TYPE 1 REVERSE

EAT ABBCO & FEEL GOOD - OH

THE WHEAT SPIKES AT THE TOP ARE QUITE LONG. THE BOTTOM RIGHT SIDE SPIKE SITS UNDER THE DASH.





TYPE 2 REVERSE

EAT ABBCO & FEEL GOOD - OH

THE WHEAT SPIKES AT THE TOP ARE MUCH SHORTER. THE BOTTOM RIGHT SIDE SPIKE DOES NOT GO UNDER THE DASH. A SPIKE ABOVE THE F.

COMPANY SEAL PRESSING

AUTOMATIC BREAD BAKING COMPANY LIMITED

THE SEAL IS MADE OF COPPER WITH A DIAMETER OF 41mm



At one time ABBCO were the last large bakery making tank loaves in Sydney. Your editor remembers buying ABBCO bread, but the tokens were well before his time.

The **Automatic Bread Baking Co (ABBCO)** started off as the Newington College Bakery.

In the years of and on either side of the First World War, the Newington College kept a small herd of cows to provide fresh milk for the boarders and staff. But what of that other staple of the daily school diet, bread?

The College had a kitchen, but no baker and our bread most likely came from a source nearby. In 1910 a large brick bakery was built on Percival Road, just north of the Stanmore railway station, on recently subdivided land from the 'South Annandale Estate', now the suburb of Stanmore. In 1914 the New South Wales Government purchased the bakery and established the State Bakery, producing bread for the city.

While financially successful, the main purpose of the Bakery appears to have been to regulate the market and prevent profiteering, a significant issue during the War. The Bakery also provided training and testing facilities for the 3rd Australian Field Bakery in 1916 before it left for the Western Front.

The State Bakery was sold in about 1925 but continued in operation as the Automatic Bread Baking Company (ABBCO), one of the largest independent bread bakers in Sydney for many years.

The Bakery was built with a 'Federation arts and crafts' façade which can still be seen at 92–96 Percival Road, in Stanmore.

ABBCO operated from the 1920s through the 1970s, pioneering hygienic, automated bread production. Emerging from the former NSW State Bakery in Stanmore (est. 1910) around 1925, ABBCO became renowned for its large-scale, "untouched by human hands" production and, later, its Rozelle/Lilyfield factory on Balmain Road.



The ABBCO Rozelle/Lilyfield factory in 1953 and now

With thanks to the Queensland Numismatic Society Incorporated

WORLD WAR I WAR TAX STAMP ISSUES

During World War I several Crown colonies in the British Empire raised funds for the Empire's war effort by issuing stamps overprinted "WAR TAX". "WAR" or "WAR CHARITY". Some just had a red cross overprinted on them. Red and black was used. Even though the stamps would have been printed in England, overprinting was done locally. Some issues also showed the new value overprinted too, but generally it was not.



Cayman Islands
Green Halfpenny
Not surcharged
with value



Cayman Islands
Blue Penny
Surcharged one and a
half pence



Cayman Islands
Orange Twopence
Surcharged one and a
half pence



Ceylon
Green 3 cents



Gibraltar
Green halfpenny



Grenada
Red penny



Montserrat
Green halfpenny
Red surcharge



Montserrat
Green halfpenny
Black surcharge



Trinidad and Tobago
Green halfpenny issues
with varying surcharges



Trinidad and Tobago
Red penny issues
with varying surcharges



Turks & Caicos Islands
Red penny issues
Black surcharges – one being smudged – right.

Islands to name a few.



**Antigua Halfpenny
Red printing**



**Antigua Halfpenny
Black printing**



**Dominica Halfpenny
Black printing**



**Bahamas One Penny
Red Printing and
Dated 7-5-1918**



**Bahamas Threepence
Black bold printing**



**Bahamas Halfpenny
Black printing**



**Bahamas One Penny
Black printing**



**Barbados One Penny
Black printing**



British Honduras British Honduras British Honduras
All green one cents stamps with varying fonts of 'war' printed over
onto the stamps.

All the issues sold with a surcharge over the normal postage rate. Although the additional cost was initially resented by some, these War Tax issues raised considerable additional revenue. It was the end of the Empire "penny post" scheme".

Colonies such as Antigua, Barbados, Bahamas, British Honduras, Cayman Islands, Ceylon. Dominica, Fiji, Gibraltar, Gold Coast Monserrat, Trinidad & Tobago, and Turks Caicos Islands overprinted their stamps. Canada issued overprinted stamps too.



Great Britain and Australia imposed war taxes on mail but did not issue specific "war tax" stamps; instead, they simply used regular stamps to cover the increased fees. The United States raised the first-class letter rate by one cent in 1917, issuing a special "Victory" stamp for the new rate.



U.S. Victory stamp of 1918-1919

Australia did not increase postage until weeks before the Armistice, on 28th October 1918. This increase was implemented as a "**Halfpenny War Tax**" on most mail items, including letters, postcards, and lettercards, to help cover the costs of the war effort.

The half-ounce letter rate went up from 1d to 1½d

At the end of the War there was a realisation that the financial cost of the War was immense.

MAIL DELIVERY BY CAT

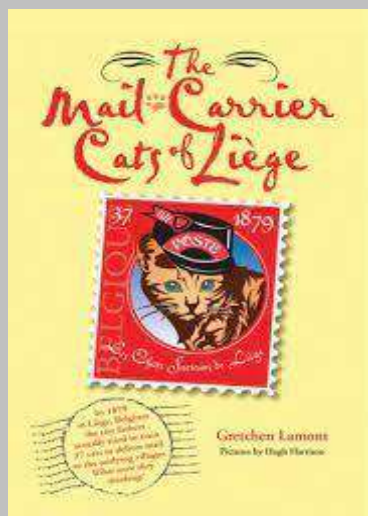


A 2011 *Stanley Gibbons* monthly magazines made mention of the 1879 experiment in using cats to deliver mail. The trial apparently occurred in the environs of the Belgian city of Liege.

The Belgian authorities recruited 37 cats to deliver mail, with waterproof bags attached to their collars. It was an idea posited by the Belgian Society for the Elevation of the Domestic Cat, which felt cats' natural sense of direction was not being fully exploited.

During the trial, the cats were rounded up from their villages near Liège, taken a few kilometres away and burdened with a note in a bag - with the idea the cat would return home complete with missive. There was a bowl of milk waiting for them at their delivery destination.

Although all the cats - and the correspondence - eventually turned up, the feline disposition unsurprisingly proved unsuited to providing a swift or reliable postal service and the idea was dropped.



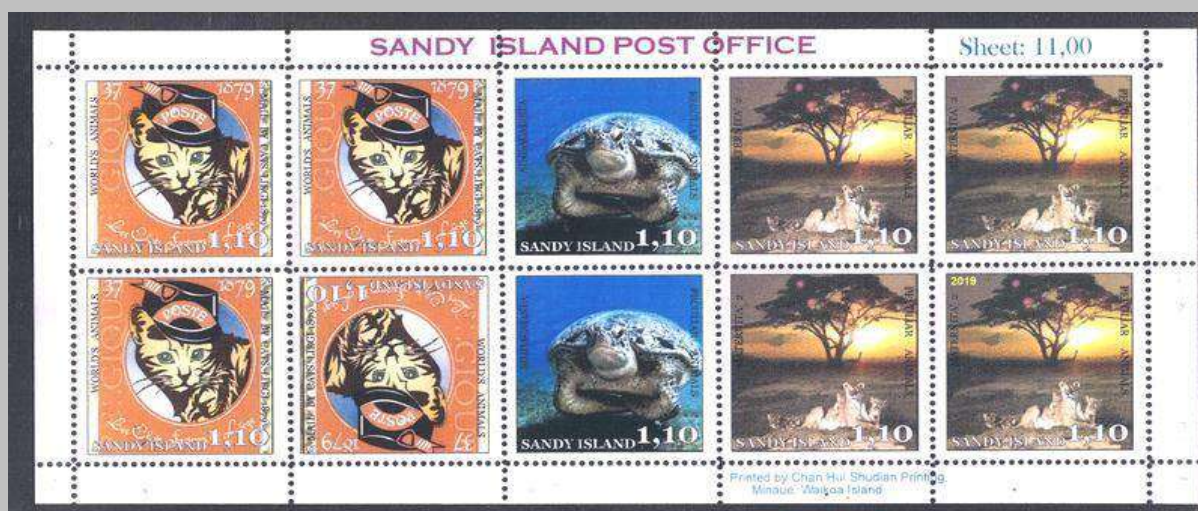
The story gained further traction with the publication in 2007 of the children's book, *The Mail Carrier Cats of Liège* (Les Chats Facteurs de Liège) by Gretchen Lamont.

Also, the press in the United States became fascinated with this zany story. A wire service must have got hold of it. There were contemporary write ups in newspapers across the eastern United States, including the conservative *New York Post*.

The cat delivery service, thankfully, does not seem to have gone past a trial. An on-line search couldn't find a photo, or any sort of image of it.



The only stamp issue featuring the Belgian cat delivery was one produced by the rather “dodgy” Sandy Island Post Office:-



Sandy Island Post Office was the invention of Italian philatelist Postmaster, Signor Fabio Vaccarezza. This Sandy Island (although there are quite a number island so named throughout the World) was entirely fictional.

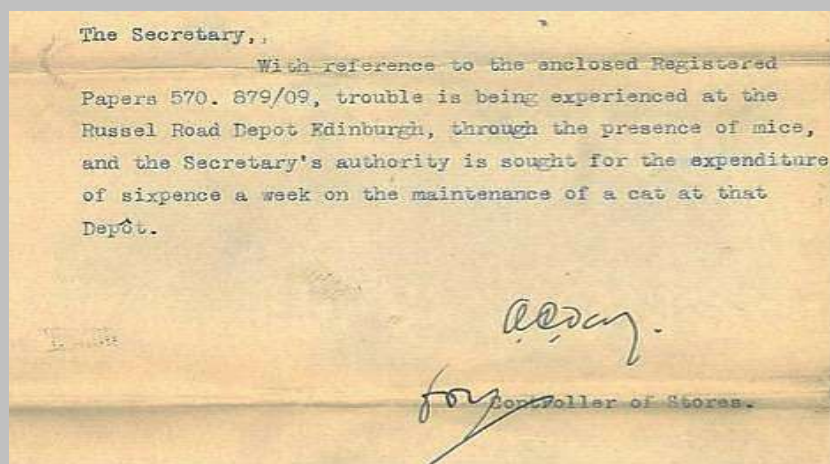
It gets much worse. Since Signor Fabio's death, a German man calling himself King Marduk I has laid claim, on behalf of the State Kingdom of Marduk, to Sandy Island, which he claims does indeed exist and which he names after himself, i.e. King Marduk Island.

The self-styled king, who is named for a Babylonian god (or possibly for the eponymous alleged tenth planet of our solar system “discovered” by the crackpot archaeo-astronomer Zechariah Sitchin), several years ago tried to claim the Principality of Sealand, the disused World War II derrick off the coast of Essex, England.



King Marduk I

BRITISH POST OFFICE CATS



Tibs the Great is no more

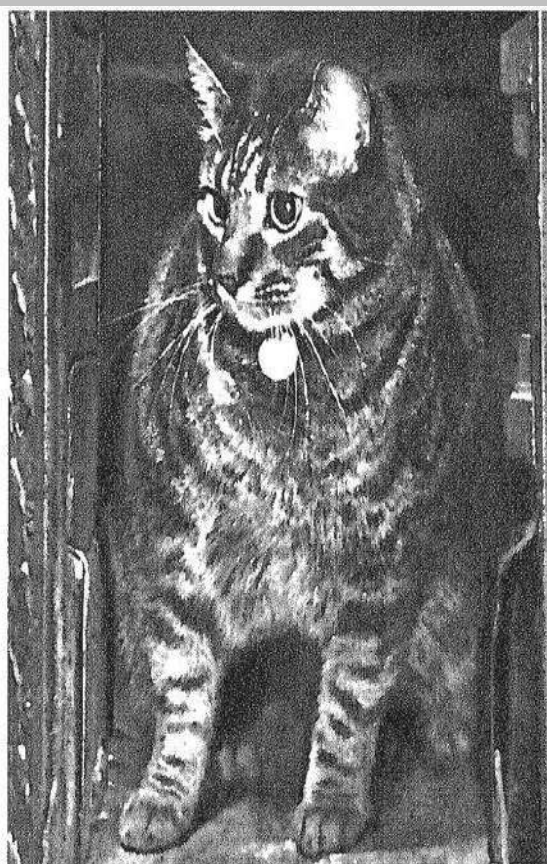
TIBS, the Post Office's number one cat, the imposing 23lb. giant who has reigned at Post Office Headquarters for 14 years, is no more.

Mr. Alf Talbut, Cleaner at St. Martin's-le-Grand, who has served his "Tibby" since the cat was born, never failing to come in at every Bank Holiday to see him fed, first realised something was wrong when Tibs failed to turn up for his morning meal one Monday just before Christmas. Reports came in that he had been seen on the floor above his basement home. Mr. Talbut began to leave food at strategic places and a little of it would go, but the big cat was not found until later in the week.

Mr. Talbut needed the help of a colleague to carry Tibs to the People's Dispensary for Sick Animals, where the veterinary surgeon was in no doubt. Tibs had cancer of the mouth. Almost exactly on his 14th birthday the life of the Post Office's senior cat was brought to a close.

Tibs was an official member of the Post Office staff and was paid 2s. 6d. a week. He lived in the basement and all his life he never ventured from the precincts of his domain—where no rat has been seen since Tibs sorted them out early in his career. (He once brought a pigeon into the basement. It was freed, shaken but unhurt.)

Twice Mr. Talbut took him from Headquarters. The first time was to the PDSA where he was detained for six weeks for treatment of an infected ear. When he was returned home fit and well, a collecting box for the PDSA



Tibs in 1954, as he appeared in the book *Cockney Cats*. raised more than £50 from grateful members of the staff at Headquarters.

His second outing was to a special cats' and film stars' party, where Tibs was the dominant figure among the cream of the cat world.

There is no record of Tibs ever granting audience to a Postmaster General, but his fame had spread to nearby St. Bartholomew's Hospital where members of the staff often brought friends to "see for themselves."

"I looked after his mother, Minnie," said Mr. Talbut "she was a fine cat too, but Tibs was a worthy successor. I don't think we'll have another cat. There will never be another Tibs."

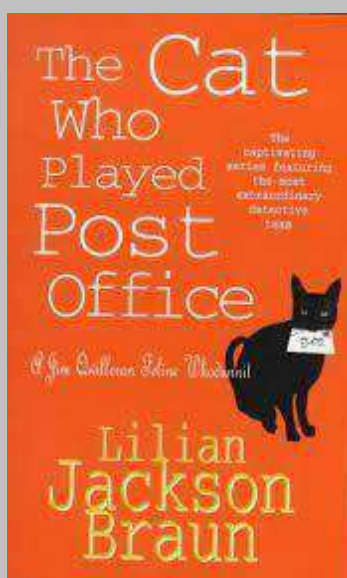
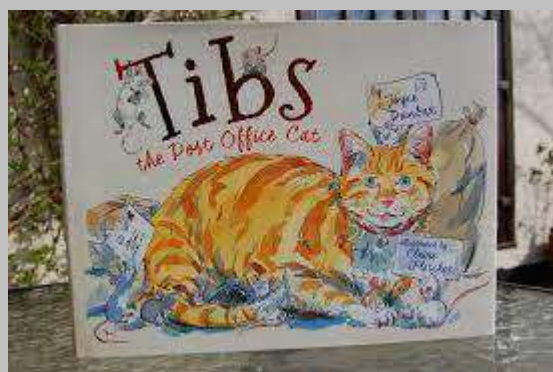
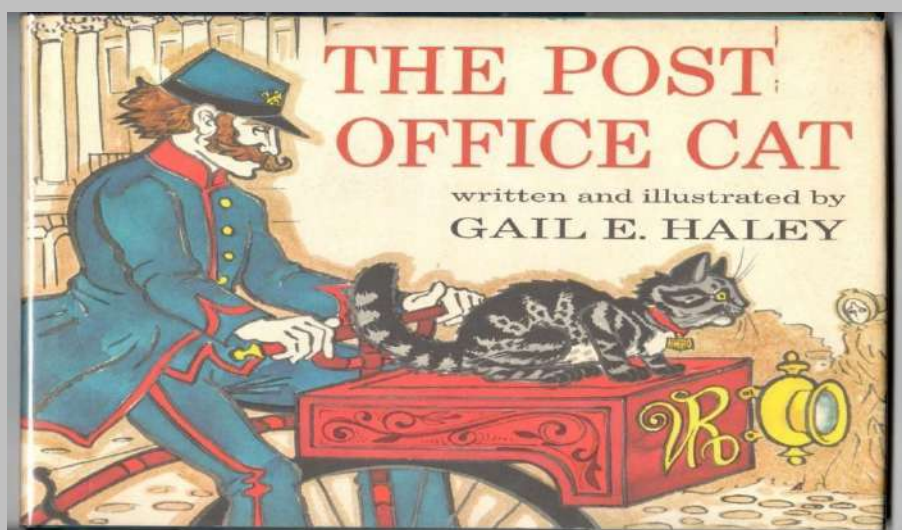
In 2016 the Royal Mail announced that it would open a new Postal Museum and Mail Rail. Its exhibitions would feature a restored section of a little-known London underground mail railroad. But it buried the cat story. Sure, the institution is responsible for such mail-delivery revolutions as the postage stamp and the iconic red pillar mailbox, but the upcoming heritage effort is exciting for more than mere philatelic history. Located beneath the streets of London, the Royal Mail also paid tribute to the phenomenon of post office cats.

The *Guardian* reported that the museum would feature a display paying homage to the postal system's furry employees of yore — post office cats with their own wages and pensions. Early postmasters weren't necessarily cat lovers; they needed a way to get rid of mice. So they brought cats in to their buildings. But cats don't eat for free, and in 1868 the Secretary of the Post Office authorized post offices to hire cats, allotting only one shilling, not the requested two, a week to feed all three original cats—over time, the salary of these furry workers would sometimes result in bitter battles over just how much money they deserved. In 1918, a finicky cat helped bump the salary up, giving each cat its own weekly shilling, and that rate remained until the 1950s, when it was revealed that the one-shilling-a-week allowance had stayed the same, though the rate apparently kept up with inflation over the years.

The Postal Museum advertised on the internet "Following the passing of *Tibs the Great*, the last great Post Office cat, the Postal Museum is searching for 12 volunteer mousers to fill the vacancy until September 2018. Each month a successful cat-pplicant would be appointed to the ceremonial role of Postal Museum Cat (PMC). PMCs were expected to work from home so needed be reliable purr-fessionals. While a volunteer position, there are great purrks, including provision of an official hat (modelled below by *Charlie*).



Again, the story of the British post office cats has been popularised in children's book. Cats in the U.K., however, never got to deliver anything.





BUT HERE'S SOME MORE ANIMAL & POST OFFICE STORIES: –

The Supia Post Office is in Arizona in the U.S. The mail is carried by mule brigade to-and-fro this post office, which is near the base of the Grand Canyon (it can also be accessed by foot) six days a week. Given its remote location, the mules take roughly three hours to move the out-going mail where it needs to go (to the Peach Springs, Arizona Post Office), and another five hours to make it back up the trail. In 2021 this process is indeed still in effect. The post office is located in a village that is home to the Havasupai Nation, a Native American tribe.



DOG-SLED MAILS

Dogs were used to deliver mail across snow and ice, when they pulled a dog-sled. Dogsled mail was used northern parts of Alaska and Canada, especially during the Klondike Gold Rush of 1896 to 1903). Then there was no mail service at all during the winter months from October to May. Mail could only be conveyed by boat along the Pacific coast. At first there were irregular dog-sled mails. Regular year-round mail services service seems to have begun around the 1910s. The dog-sled teams were largely replaced in the 1930s by small aircraft.



When mail has to travel by dog sled, weight is critical. Carriers would bring first-class mail, but newspapers, magazines and packages were left behind. Sometimes correspondents slid newspaper clippings and gifts into letters, but if the package was too thick, suspicious carriers would leave it behind for the spring steamboats. Dog sleds loads were not to exceed 400 pounds, but the weight varied greatly.

Winter mail was precious to the lonesome populations in the far north of the Americas and they were quick to shower their wrath on carriers or postmasters who moved too slowly.

The struggle to get to the gold fields was too great for many of the 'green' stampeders. After they lost their goods when their ship was swamped on the way to Dyea, Mr. and Mrs. Rowley went to work packing freight to raise enough money to keep going. When Mrs. Rowley received a letter from her brother which referenced \$100.00 that he had sent (and which she had not received), it was enough to send her into a rage. She grabbed a pistol and set out to shoot the postmaster at Dyea, shouting that he had stolen her money. Although she did not shoot the postmaster, she was still arrested for attempted murder.



Fur trader Ed Shepherd (left background) and Nathan Noongwook (right background) stand next to sled holding Adventurers Club of New York flag, as last U.S. mail run via dogsled in Alaska prepares to go from Gambell to Savoonga on Saint Lawrence Island. Nathan Noongwook was father of Chester Noongwook, who made the last mail run. From front: "The last mail run from Gambell to Savoonga." 1963.

Canadian and Alaskan postmasters were still allowed to use dogs for "emergency mail service". In the 1940s cachets were produced reading "Alaska Dog Team Post" and depicting a team. The last regular-scheduled dog team route was shut down in 1963, when Chester Noongwook of Savoonga on St. Lawrence Island retired his team.



Dog-sled mail leaving Nome. Alaska

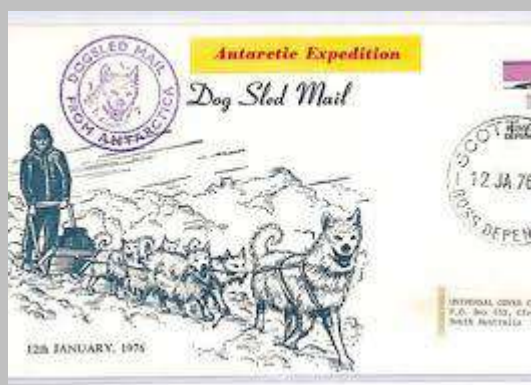
Dog-sled mail also saw limited use in the northern parts of Russia during the first half of the 20th Century. When there was sufficient ice build-up, Sakhalin Island huskies were used to cross the Strait of Tartary and mushers would note the ability of the dogs to navigate over ice flows during blizzards, even maintaining the correct course over the 480 kilometres (300 mi) from Nikolaevsky-on-Amur to Alexander post on Sakhalin.

In recent years, competitive dog-sled races have carried some commemorative mail. An example is the *The Sled Dog Mail Run*, an annual Cariboo, in Canada, event. Sledgers sworn in as Canada Post mail carriers usually carry close to 3,000 Mail Run envelopes by dog sled over the Gold Rush Trail, a former sled dog mail route.





And a cover from a 1976 commemorative dog-sled mail from New Zealand's Scott Base:-



MAIL BY REINDEER



The U.S. Post Office decided to use reindeers to carry mail in Alaska, starting in 1899. They served a number of snow-covered routes north of the Arctic Circle. They temporarily replaced dog-sleds. The reasoning was that each reindeer could pull up to 400kg. They also had the ability to forage for foods such as lichens, which the dogs couldn't do.

They were soon found to be "too difficult to handle" and by the 1910's all the reindeer mail routes had reverted to dog-sled mails.

There is quite an interest in Canada and the United States in covers carried by dog-sled, and even reindeer.



GEOFF EDWARDS – MACHIN STAMPS OF THE UNITED KINGDOM

Geoff Edwards gave a talk to the November 2025 Club meeting on his large and remarkable collection of Machin stamps on cover. He illustrated his talk with examples of covers posted from Britain to Australia.



Block of the 1d per-decimal Machin head stamp of 1967

The Machin series of stamps, introduced on June 5, 1967, is the definitive postage stamp of the United Kingdom, featuring a sculptured profile of Queen Elizabeth II by artist Arnold Machin. They replaced the Wilding series of Elizabethan portraits. The Machin often single-coloured stamps were produced in over 350 billion copies until 2022, making them what has been called “one of the most produced artworks in history”.



The original sculpture used for the Machin-design stamps

Sir Arnold Machin's method was to sculpt *Queen Elizabeth II* profile in clay. The printing essays were then done by Harrisons & Sons, from photographs of the sculpture, completed with Machin's additions and adornments. The design would eventually have only the Elizabeth's profile and the value of the stamp

The resulting Machin series of stamps became the main definitive stamp series in the United Kingdom for most of Elizabeth's reign. They were issued from 5th June 1967 until her death in 2022. The initial 5th June 1967 issue consisted of 16 stamps with values from ½d to 1/6d. The last issue of Machin head design stamps was on 4 April 2022, four months before the Queen's death on 8 September 2022.

The 16, 1967-issued, pre-Decimal stamps were produced by Harrison & Sons using photogravure. They had two phosphor lines, which fluoresced under ultra-violet light for the letter facing machines.



Later issued on 5th March 1969, were high-value designs (2/6d brown, 5/- lake, 10s ultramarine and £1 bluish-black). These being larger, were engraved (intaglio) and recess-printed by Bradbury Wilkinson and Company.



On 17th June 1970, as Britain anticipated converting to Decimal currency, the Post Office these were issued 10p cerise, 20p olive-green, 50p ultramarine and £1 bluish-black Machin values. They, too, were engraved (intaglio) and recess-printed by Bradbury Wilkinson and Company.



From 15th February 1971 the remainder of the range of U.K. Machin stamps began to be issued in the new Decimal currency. This included a whole range of new values: - ½p, 1p, 1½p, 2p, 2½p, 3p, 3½p, 4p, 4½p, 5p, 5½p, 6p, 6½p, 7p, 7½p, 8p, 8½p, 9p, 9½p, 10p, 10½p, 11p, 11½p, 12p, 12½p, 13p, 14p, 15p, 15½p, 16p, 16½p, 17p, 17½p, 18p, 19p, 19½p, 20p, 20½p, 22p, 23p, 24p, 25p, 26p, 27p, 28p, 29p, 30p, 31p, 32p, 33p, 34p, 35p, 37p, 39p, 50p, 75p.

These were printed by Harrisons, with some by Enschede. After 1980 the House of Questa and Waddington's Security Print also took up Machin printing in order to keep up with demand, producing their versions via lithography. De la Rue also became involved in printing.

In 1977 a taller portrait format was used for the large £1, £2, and £5 stamps, and also at various times between 1983 and 1987 for the odd values of £1.30, £1.33, £1.41, £1.50 and £1.60. These values were withdrawn after the introduction of the "Castles" high-value stamps of 1988. "Castles" stamps had values to £5.

Geoff mentioned a few of the £2 stamps that had the "£" sign missing.



1993 saw the introduction of both self-adhesive stamps and elliptical perforations on the lower vertical sides of the Machins, the latter as a security measure.



Even newer security features were introduced in 2009. This was because, when the "Machin" self-adhesive stamps passed through the mail centres often failed to get a cancel. So to stop re-use of un-cancelled used stamps (soaked off) mail, two ellipsoidal tear-away panels were added to the bottom half of each stamp. The water-soluble layer between the stamp and the adhesive was also abandoned. Also the background around the image of *Queen Elizabeth II* was printed with continuous, very fine-print "ROYAL MAIL" iridescent printing.

These features rendered the stamps difficult, if not impossible, to remove off a cover. Collectors and stamp re-users could no longer soak off a whole stamp.

In 2016, yet another security feature arose in that the backing paper for all of the Machin self-adhesive stamps had a security background printing in grey of "ROYAL MAIL", repeated (there were 3 types).

On three occasions, postal sources have confirmed that a replacement for the Machin series was proposed by the Post Office, and its successor, the Royal Mail. However, the Queen subsequently rejected the proposed designs.



Four months before Queen Elizabeth II's death on 8th September 2022, the final Machin issues featuring the now-mandatory, and very controversial security barcodes on the right-hand side, known as V-Numbers appeared. These were released and printed from 2022 to 2023.

These barcoded stamps were aimed at reducing counterfeiting and enable tracking. A stamp could only be used once. If used again the computer at the mail centre picked it up. They replaced older, non-barcoded Machins that became invalid for postage. As of July 31, 2023 (with a six-month grace period), all definitive Machin stamps without a barcode became invalid for postage.

Geoff Edwards said that it was hard to get all the Machin stamps on covers sent to Australia. He mentioned the difficulty of getting, say, a £1.85 stamp on a cover to here. To get some values he had to resort to covers sent to other countries.

One of the last Machin issues, Geoff added was the £4 20p green barcoded stamp that paid for a large letter to Australia.

Postage rates to Australia kept going up and up. A postcard to Australia in 1967 cost 5p. Now one costs £1.85 to post.

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