

SOUTH PACIFIC PERFIN BULLETIN

NO. 95 OCTOBER 2011

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EDITOR'S COMMENT

On occasion I have been asked if perfins are a good investment. Certainly if you have been able to buy good scarcer items cheaply you may make a good return out of them. Interest is currently high and most that are available sell readily.

But in the longer term and particularly with certain groups of perfins there are a few dark clouds on the horizon. The main area of concern is the Australian officials. There is great interest in this area and prices for many scarcer items are significantly higher than 'normal stamps' as there are a number of collectors willing to pay these prices. Considering the reputed scarcity of some of these items the prices are not really that unreasonable. Perfins do however have one major problem in that they are comparatively straightforward to forge. This is the situation that has now developed with New South Wales officials where I have seen fakes/forgeries of most of the patterns used. A very similar situation you may remember was exposed with VG officials a number of years ago and prices collapsed and they are still available at comparatively low prices. Similarly the claimed forgery of OS officials by a major dealer casts doubt on this area also. It is likely that prices of NSW Officials and Commonwealth OS perfins will drop considerably once most people collecting realize the extent of the problem.

Certainly we can develop methods to identify the fakes and a great deal of success has been achieved in this direction. Unfortunately some of the fakes have been circulating for a few years so that they are starting to appear in collections. Some have been distributed by selling on Ebay and others have been sold in major auction houses and as we are unlikely to be able to prevent their creation the fakes will continue to appear while ever the scarcer officials are readily saleable. Any further reports of new items will need to be regarded with a high degree of skepticism particularly of predecimal items which in general achieve better prices.

Fortunately this situation is not replicated for private patterns or most non-Australian perfins and hopefully this will continue to be the case for a good while longer.

David Andersen

VALE – PETER WOOD

It is with much regret that we have learned that Peter passed away in August. Peter was Treasurer from mid-1991 to mid-2006, during which time he maintained accurate records and provided sound financial advice to the Club. It was a time when the Club developed from its “infancy”, and under Peter’s watchful eye the Club progressed to an excellent financial position.

We have extended our condolences to his widow and family.

ELECTION OF OFFICE-BEARERS 2012

The election of office bearers is due to take place in 2012. A nomination form is enclosed. Please return your completed form to the Secretary by 31 December 2011.

AUSTRALIAN EXCHANGE CIRCUIT MANAGER WANTED

The position of Australian Circuit Manager is still vacant. We again call for volunteers to fill this role as soon as possible. It is not a complicated or arduous job. Access to a computer with printer (and/or a photocopier) would be helpful. The circuit books generate a significant part of the Club’s income through the commission charged to vendors (currently 5%), and loss of this income would have an impact on the subscription rates. The circuit accounts are ready to be handed over. There are enough books on hand for packets of books to be sent out straightaway.

PRESIDENTS COMMENT- NOMINATIONS FOR COMMITTEE

You will have noticed above that it is time for us to call for nominations for the Committee of the PCNZA. If you are interested in helping out the running the Club I would encourage you to put your name forward. The more people sharing the work, the better the job we will be able to do, and the easier it will be for all involved.

If you have an interest in a particular role then let John Mathews or me know and we will put you on the list. The Committee can be readily expanded to accept willing people who want to participate

The Circuit Manger job is still available and I would even vacate the Presidents chair if someone else wanted the job as I have many other roles I could be doing such as building a Club Web site and my existing job as Librarian.

Join in.

David Coath

AUCTION 2/2011

The catalogue for auction 2/2011 is enclosed with this issue of the Bulletin. The last auction was very successful and was characterised by strong bidding. There was an unusually high number of tied top bids. In this case, as in all postal auctions, the first of the tied bids wins the lot. In consequence early bidders get the benefit of their early bids.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

We have again been pleased with the prompt payment of subscriptions by the majority of our members. If you have forgotten to do so (coloured patch on address label), please forward your subscription to the Treasurer.

MARK SAXBY PERFIN EXHIBIT AT NEWCASTLE

Mark Saxby received a Vermeil for his exhibit "Australian Private Perfins" at the recent Newcastle Philatelic Society Annual Competition. Mark has exhibited Perfins at National level but of late he has been expanding his exhibit and decided to enter it in the Experienced Section at Newcastle.

The exhibit scored well in all categories. Well done Mark and we hope to see the expanded exhibit at Canberra next year.

Members may take a lead from Mark and look to exhibit at a local level with a view to building up the quality of content in their exhibits. Give it a try.

NZ FROM INDIA

Richard Smolnicki has informed us that the "NZ" perfin on the stamp of India shown in the July 2011 Bulletin (page 8) is a partial of the scarce "NZ/IC" Perfin used on the stamps of India.

MINT VG UPDATE

Owen White recounted on how some mint VG perfins 'escaped' being used.

"When I was a sub-teen in the 1930's and just starting to collect I had very few funds that would permit me to buy mint stamps let alone imprint blocks of four. My father in the 1930's was a Member of the Victorian State Parliament, and was entitled to a monthly allotment of postage stamps to use on his correspondence (I think it was 36 shillings!). I must have learnt of his allotment and asked him to use some of it for stamps for my collection. He agreed and allowed me to go to the Parliamentary Library on Saturday mornings once a month to collect his allotment which eventually included those much sought after imprint blocks! They were of course VG perfins.

"They are still in my collection and when I dispose of it, these mint VG perfins will be included."

SECURITY OVERPRINTS A FERTILE GROUND FOR FINDS David Andersen

Numerous companies overprinted duty stamps to discourage misuse in the same way that perfins were used for both duty and postage stamps. Indeed some organisations like the Government Insurance Office used both perfins (G/NSW) and overprints(GIO) on duty stamps. A complication of the overprints is that in some cases cancellations used on documents can be confused with overprints. Collecting these items on document or piece helps in determining if a particular item is an overprint applied before the duty stamp was applied to the document or a cancellation applied after.

Since the publication of Security & Cancelling Overprints of Australia by Bryan Magee in 2000 a considerable number of additional items have surfaced. A small number of these have been recorded in the Bulletin and eventually one would expect that they will be listed in the online catalogue Private Revenue Perfins of Australia for subscribers of this publication.

Ian Spencer sent me a number of scans some time ago of quite a few new items so some of these are listed below as are a range of other items that have been added to my collection. Possibly these may encourage other members to contribute additional information about other issues which can be published.



ESD (6mm) in black and purple between two lines on 3d NSW Stamp Duty. The overprint does not extend onto the backing indicating this is probably not a cancellation



E GATTON ??? (5mm) in purple on 3c NSW Stamp Duty- overprint does not extend onto backing



MPLE EM ??? (5mm) in purple on 3c NSW stamp duty. The overprint does not extend onto backing- but looks rather like the same lettering as the previous type (also came from the same source so could it be part of a longer inscription)



F.B.A. in purple or black on 2/6 5/- and 10/- South Australian fiscally used stamps used 1888 to 1889



M.M.B.W. 50c (2.5mm) in black on 50c Victorian Stamp Duty used in 1976



RELIANCE /PTY. (3mm) in black on 10/- NSW Stamp Duty



SHELL (8mm) in purple on NSW 3d Stamp Duty. This particular stamp bears a double impression of the overprint. The backing paper has an address underneath the stamp 'Cr Margaret Street/ Carrington Street/SYDNEY/PO Box 26 ?4 / Tel 2 0225



SHORTLAND COUNTY COUNCIL (1.25 mm in black twice between lines) on NSW 3d Stamp duty issues. The Council also used the NESCA overprint which is more common at their offices at NESCA House King Street Newcastle PO Box No. F487



TFC LTD (3mm/1.75mm) in red on NSW 2d Stamp Duty



T&G/ML (3 mm) in black on NSW 3c Stamp Duty



THE/MYER/EMPORIUM/LIMITED new type with large serif letters. On 3d Victorian Stamp Duty



VD/J (3mm) in purple on 1d Queensland QV. The overprint appears to be typescript and the stamp to be double perf on one side



V.O.CO/PTY LTD (3mm) in black on 2d NSW Stamp Duty. Used by Vacuum Oil Company.



W.A./NEWS 2.5mm purple on WA 3d revenue duty (one inverted). These overprints are on a slight angle suggesting a rubber stamp.

WHEN IS A SERVICE PUNCTURE NOT A SERVICE PUNCTURE – IHC.3 (David Coath)

I can still recall the old joke, “When is a door, not a door?.....Answer, “When it is a jar” (a jar). But when is a Service puncture not a Service puncture?... Answer, when the device is taken over by the Company. This may have been the case with IHC.3.

As you would know a Service puncture is a temporary perfin design that is created by a stamp vendor as a value add service to customers. It was most popular in Melbourne between about 1896 and 1920, although some examples are known from the early 1890’s and others were still being made in the early 1930’s. Service punctures make up more than two thirds of the total number of Australian private perfin patterns.

For excellent background on these you should read Chapter 8 of Commercial Perfins of Australia (CPA) – Grant/Mathews (1992) and the early pages (2-4) of Handbook of Australian Private Perfins (HAPP) John Mathews (2003). Please note that when I use the term service puncture here I am referring to Victorian service punctures.

The general features of service punctures are :

- 1) They are generally created specifically for a single batch of stamps. Hence the large number of patterns, their variation and the relative rarity of a given pattern.
- 2) The pins were of a fairly fine nature and they tended to displace paper rather than remove it, as a customised device does.
- 3) Sometimes patterns of the same letter combinations, or in the case of IHC’s, designs, made at different times, will be similar. But generally different batches will have some variation in spacing between letters or the like. Patterns of the same scale and style but having variations in the distance between letters or differences in a small number of pin locations, are considered to be “types” of the one pattern.

The IHC group of International Harvester is littered with service punctures. CPA listed 10 IHC’s of which 6 were service punctures. HAPP listed 24 of which 20 were service punctures and today my collection of these shows more than separate 40 patterns, as well as many types, of which 37 are service punctures. There are likely more yet to be found.

Looking at the IHC group the only customised device/patterns are:

IHC.1, a Perth device used 1939 - 1970

IHC.2, a Launceston device that moved to Perth in 1916 and served their until at least 1935 and was most likely replaced by IHC.1.

IHC.8, a large format Sydney device found only (very rarely) on NSW Railway stamps

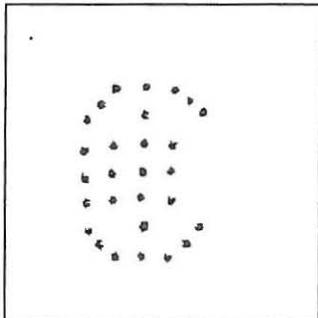
IHC.10 an Adelaide device used in 1921 - 22

New IHC (see article in this Bulletin) which was located in Melbourne and may have replaced the IHC.3 device and in turn been replaced by IH.18.

The 38 or more service punctures (plus types) of the IHC group have the following general characteristics that are consistent with being service punctures:

- 1) They are almost all rare .
- 2) They sometimes show small pin location variations, or types, of a given pattern.
- 3) They have short periods of usage consistent with being from a single batch of stamps.
- 4) They are most commonly found at the end of the common period for service punctures that is 1913 – 1920.
- 5) The patterns are made by a single head.

However this is not the case with IHC.3 illustrated below.



This is similar to the image as it appeared in CPA and is the true image for the pattern. The image for IHC.3 as it appeared in HAPP is distorted and appears both narrower and slightly taller than the true pattern.

IHC.3 is found used from as early as 1915 until at least 1946 and over this time the pattern is very consistent and it is very common and this is contrary to many of the general characteristics of the other service puncture patterns in the IHC group, as noted above.

Of the other service punctures in the IHC group they are used in Melbourne and most are used in the period of 1912 – 1915 and this is confirmed by the fact that they are generally found on Kangaroo issues of the 1st and to a lesser extent the 2nd watermark. A small number, perhaps 8 or 9 are found used after 1915, that is in the period after the creation of IHC.3

So why is IHC.3 different from all other service puncture patterns in the IHC group, and why does it exist 10 or more years after the end of the known period of use of service punctures? Frankly we will likely never know, but one possibility is that the device used to create the IHC.3 pattern was purchased by International Harvester, late in 1915 or soon after, most likely from the Stamp vendor.

Alternate arguments could be made that:

- 1) The user was such a good and regular customer that the stamp vendor kept the

device setting in place to consistently produce IHC.3. This does not fit well with the long usage period and this service was not offered to other large users such as Robert Reid.

- 2) The device, despite the characteristics of the pattern, was not produced by the same device used to produce service punctures, and that the pattern was produced by a customised device that produced a similar looking pattern to a service puncture.

HIDDEN IN PLAIN VIEW: a new customized IHC pattern (David Coath)

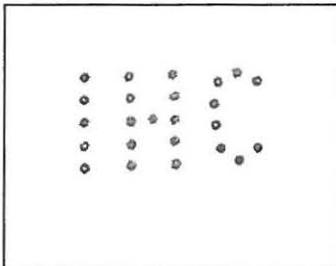
In the past 18 months or more I have been working with fellow PCNZA member and Revenue expert Dave Elsmore on his project "Private Revenue Perfins of Australia". As described in David Andersen's excellent review in the last SPPB, it is an online catalogue that is built up on the structure of Revenue stamps of Australia, that is, State by State.

The State by State approach to Australian perfins has provided some fresh perspective to me and my collecting and I have written a number of articles about new discoveries and revised findings in the SPPB but also on Dave's perfin web site perfins.com.au, see the Research tab.

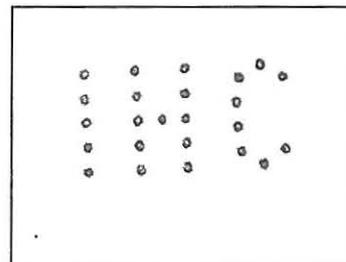
The advantage of a State by State approach is that it focuses more on the location of the device that produces a given perfin pattern. This means that when you find a pattern on a revenue stamp of a given State it is prima facie evidence that the device was located in that State. There are some notable exceptions to this in the patterns of some Stock Brokers, Constable and Co. (C.5), A D Meares and Bishop (M&B.1) and Charles A Ord & Minnett (O&M.1) which were all located in Sydney but are known to have used revenue stamps of various States from Sydney. What is more some devices have been known to move from State to State.

The State by State perspective also has its pitfalls as it focuses your attention to a small sub set of patterns and this was brought home to me when having completed the Western Australian section, which included the pattern IHC.a (IHC.1 in HAPP), I was surprised to find what appeared to be the same pattern on a revenue stamp of Victoria.

The pattern I found was not in fact IHC.1 but a new IHC pattern from a customised device that produced a slightly larger IHC as illustrated here:



IHC.1



New IHC

The IHC pattern group of International Harvester is a “mixed bag” dominated by the IHC.3 (see separate article in this issue) and a large number of rare patterns, mainly service punctures and some from customised devices with very short lived usage (IHC.10) or specific Railway usage (IHC.8).

The most common pattern in the group would be IHC.3 but the 2nd most common would be IHC.1 followed by IHC.2.

The new IHC is similar to IHC.1 but is both taller and wider. It was in use for only a short period in the late 1930's until the mid 1940's. I have found it used on postage stamps as well. These were found in my collection of IHC.1's and I would suggest that you all check your IHC.1's as you may find some of these new patterns as well.

I have found the 3 examples of the pattern on the following issues:

1938 5/- Robes (Thick paper)

1942 1½d Queen Elizabeth (Queen Mother) Green watermarked paper

1943 9 d Platypus (perforation 15x14)

Please let me know what you find and in particular I would like to see postmark evidence so that we can build a firmer usage window. If you find anything just drop me an email at [davidcoath@onthe.net.au](mailto: davidcoath@onthe.net.au) or via mail, preferably with a scan or photocopy, and I will provide an update to this article with details of members findings in the next Bulletin

Good luck and I hope you find some of this new pattern, “hidden in plain view” as mine were.

INTERNET CORNER

British Scout Perfins <http://www.sossi.org/perfin/bsa.htm>

A single page listing perfins found on the 1957 Jubilee Jamboree issues. Of particular interest are the B.P patterns once thought to have an Australian connection. It has been discovered that they were used by Mr W.O Hawkins the Company Secretary at Slopers (1939-60) and a FDC dated 1/8/51 with the stamps and envelope punctured is illustrated.



Perfin Stamps of Australia <http://www.perfins.com.au>

Set up by Dave Elsmore this site provides a number of useful features. A number of excellent exhibition displays are available including but not limited to Tasmanian Private Perfins by David McNamee and CofA perfins on GB stamps by David Hopper. In addition to general information there is a page of useful links to other perfin websites. A number of articles are available that provide recent research on a few Australian commercial patterns. Also included is an article by Dave Elsmore from his “Lets Educate the Judges Series” providing advice for judges looking at exhibits of perfins on railway and revenue stamps. The majority of contributors are Club members.

Railroad Perfins of the USA <http://alphabetilately.com/TORRP.html>

A display of rail related perfins put together by the late Dexter Wright Nice to see this display available despite the passing of the person who put it together.

UNBELIEVABLE FAKES

David Andersen

Some of the faked issues that I have seen recently are quite unbelievable. Included were some New South Wales issues with the OS/NSW type B pattern that are illustrated below.



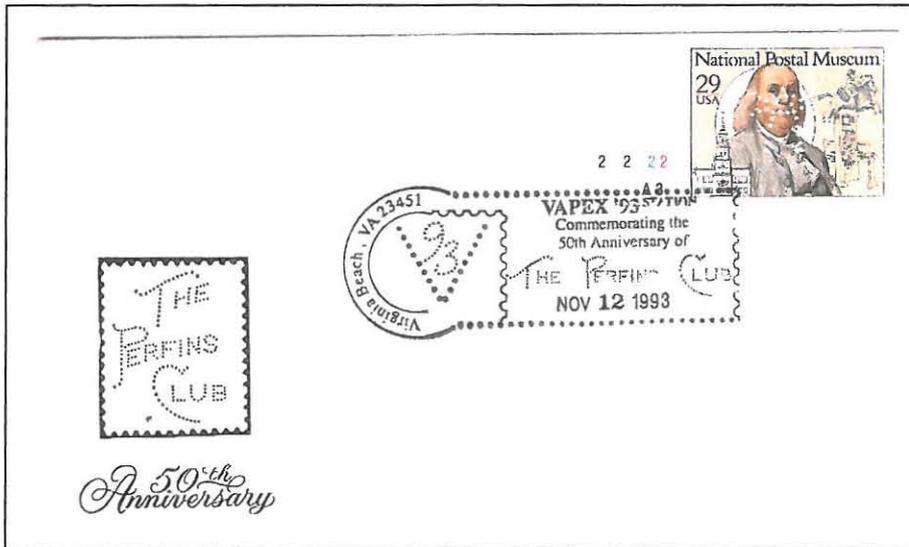
While the 5d values were punctured with this pattern the 6d, 8d and 1/- certainly were never punctured. The person faking these issues appears to be quite ignorant of this area. As I have now seen fakes of most New South Wales official patterns extreme care needs to be taken when purchasing scarcer items whether from ebay and mainstream auctions. It is very much CAVEAT EMPTOR.

MORE EXHIBITION PERFINS

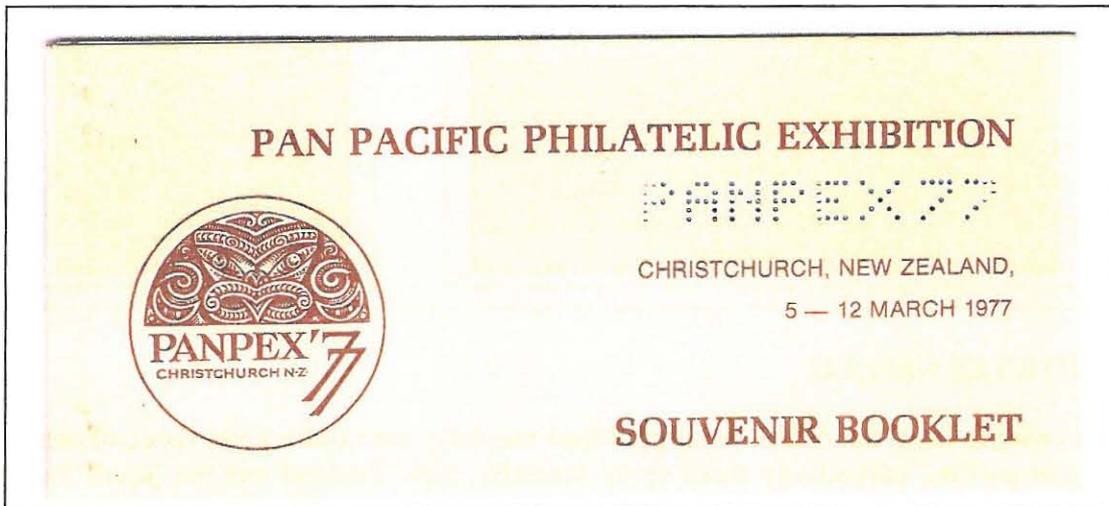
A bit more variety this issue from wide range of places. First up a COMPEX (though it looks more like COMPEI) perfin on a 4c Mercury stamp from the Compex 1966 exhibition "Featuring man in space".



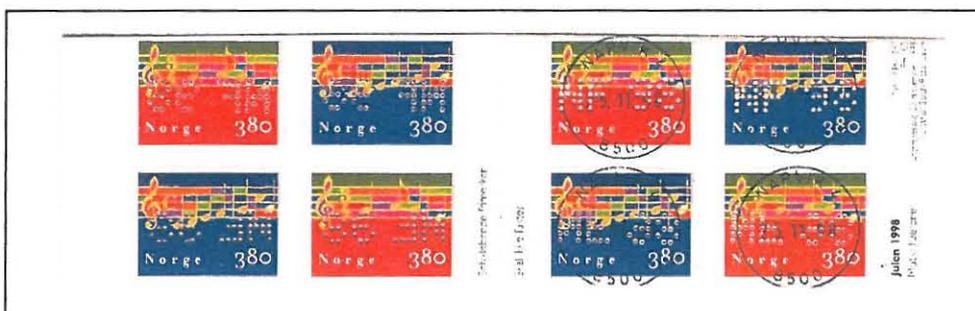
Again from the US a cover from VAPEX 93 which was held to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Perfin Club. The stamp bears a lighthouse perfin of the Virginia Philatelic Association.



From New Zealand a Pan Pacific Philatelic Exhibition Souvenir Booklet punched with PANPEX77. Only the booklet cover was perforated. While most New Zealand members would be familiar with this item others may not be.



Last for this issue a NF 98 perfin from Norway punched into a booklet. Unfortunately I don't know the full details of this issue but it is a nice exhibition product which like all of the items listed here are inexpensive items advertising perfins as well as being a souvenir of the exhibitions.



THAI OFFICIAL

The stamp illustrated at the right was advertised as an official. The letters (มท) are “TS”, and are for the Ministry of Interior (กระทรวงมหาดไทย). Can anyone provide information about the issues produced etc. These appear to sell on ebay for a small premium.



Any help would be much appreciated. Please contact the editor - contact details on the front cover.

NAWANAGAR STATE

A perfin that deserves to be displayed is the spectacular NAWANAGAR STATE perfin found on the revenue stamps of Nawanagar, one of the Indian States. These were punched in the revenue stamp before being applied to a document. These are noted on a range of revenues in the period 1926/27 to 1943/44. However not all revenues were this large so for the smaller stamps they used an alternative pattern, a simple NS.



ARTICLES NEEDED

In order to keep the SPPB being produced regularly we need a good range of articles about perfin, particularly those from Australia, New Zealand and the South Pacific area. Your contributions will be most welcome. Contact the editor - details on the front cover.

AUCTION WATCH

Items of perfin interest from auctions/direct sales since the last Bulletin include the following. Thanks to Tony Nobilo for passing on his spotting of perfin lots in auctions. Prices in A\$ unless indicated.

		Est.
a. NZ. 4 x “DB/&Co” and 9 x “NZF” all on 1d SSF, various positions	(Len Jury auction, Jul 11)	NZ \$ 20
b. NZ. 8d 1898 Pictorial perf “DB/&Co”	(Auckland City Stamps auction, Aug 11)	NZ \$ 25
c. GB. “NZL” Perfin on 10/- blue 1883 QVic.	(Len Jury auction, Sep 11)	NZ \$ 85
d. Registered air mail env to USA 1937 with 2 x 5/- Roo, 2 x 2/- maroon Roo and 3d blue KGVI all perf VOCO.6.	(eBay, Sep 11)	sold for US \$362
e. West Australia £1 QVic perf “W A”, used.	(eBay, Sep 11)	sold for US \$214