PHILAS Club Notification for circulation to all Club Members and Associates

Issued - 24 September 2024

Presidents Report to the PHILAS 2024 AGM

The philatelic landscape is changing.

Philatelic products are being less commonly used, increasingly replaced by electronic media or logistics services not tied to governmental post offices.

The positive side of this trend is the ease with which these same media facilitate us finding items to add to our collections, via online sales sites, auctions and online conversations. The same can be said for the ease with which we can find out the back stories behind our philatelic gems; when they were printed, what was their purpose, how did they travel and, of course, what are they worth?

And we face an obvious issue with club members getting older, less interested in providing management support, less able to undertake physical duties, and moving out of the hobby for health reasons. There is not the tranche of younger people rushing to take up the hobby, so the workload is increasingly falling on fewer and fewer people. I applaud all of you who are taking on those tasks and keeping the hobby alive at a local, state, country or international level

PHILAS has faced its fair share of challenges in 2024. Many of these are ongoing but are slowly and methodically being worked through, with a view to avoiding hasty or emotional decision making. The major ones are;

Governance

In 2023 a recommendation was made to PHILAS to move from being an incorporated society to being a company, a result that was initiated at the Special General Meeting on 6 April, where a new constitution and management structure was approved by the PHILAS members. Progress towards getting the company approved with ASIC has been held up by Fair Trading NSW's delay in giving us their approval to make this change, which is required before we go to ASIC.

In the meantime, we continue to operate as an Incorporated Society, under the existing constitution.

Mixed Governance

Early in 2024 Fair Trading NSW raised their concerns about the entanglement of the governance and finances of PHILAS and The PHILAS Library, which are separate entities. They stressed the need to fix this situation as each body had specific legal requirements that weren't being met. A path forward has been provided to FTNSW and again we are making slow progress, the key initial step being to unwind the finances of the two entities.

Auctions

PHILAS held its first auction for some time in June 2024. The auction material mainly consisted of bulk lots heavy to Australia with a range of other material. It was good to be able to move some of the large volume of consignment material that has built up since the move from Brisbane Street and another auction is planned for early December, with a catalogue well on its way to being created. These are the result of the efforts of a very

dedicated group of volunteers who put in many hours on Tuesdays and Saturdays to sort and lot material from vendors and estates.

Volunteers

Whilst we have some volunteers regularly turning out to assist with auction preparation more of them would always be appreciated. If you have some time and wish to enjoy good company then please make your interest known to our auction manager (auction@philas.org.au) or to our secretary (office@philas.org.au).
Even if you don't want to help with auctions but are prepared to do a bit of cleaning or printing and collating of PHILAS News or other written material, your help will always be valued.

Accommodation

For some time, the PHILAS Executive has been getting a range of feedback about the Egerton Street premises, both positive and less positive. Some large sums of money are required to complete the building, in line with the DA which was approved in May, including building a mezzanine level, strongrooms, lifts and air-conditioning.

To make absolutely sure that this expenditure is appropriate the Executive has sought a commitment from our members towards supporting the development course of action, or a recommendation to follow another course of action. These discussions will be undertaken in far greater depth following this AGM, in line with the Accommodation Options paper that has been circulated to all clubs.

In the meantime, some clubs and various committees have availed themselves of the Egerton Street premises for their meetings and have generally found them suitable if not a bit cramped when they have a good attendance.

Sydney 2025 Exhibition

New South Wales has been awarded the right to host a National Stamp Exhibition in Sydney in 2025. These sorts of exhibitions provide us with the opportunity to see many of the better exhibits which often represent the better collections in Australasia.

A committee, led by Geoff Lewis and supported by PHILAS, is in the process of organizing this event which will be a local philatelic highlight in the coming year.

Our Community

If we define our community as being those people that belong to our member clubs, it is only true as far as them being the ones who bear the burden of supporting organized philately (PHILAS and APF), through their presence at events and their payment of club dues.

The most pressing challenge to PHILAS is to find ways to engage with non-club member philatelists. With maybe as many as 5 out of 6 philatelists not belonging to a club, and an increasing number living and collecting online, forward-looking strategies are required to engage with this market.

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This is the challenge I table for all of our members to consider. Success in this area will ensure longevity of our hobby, increase its presence in the wider community and improve the quality of philately and our enjoyment of it.

In 2025, PHILAS needs your thoughts and ideas for how we might improve our engagement with these, often digital, philatelists.

Finally, PHILAS, the clubs and community need your support. I am hoping we get a deep pool of energetic and engaged candidates standing for the Executive at this AGM. I am looking for people to step up and help others in the community, whether it be as a guest speaker at a club, a part time treasurer, a circuit book superintendent or even the very much appreciated supper person … whatever you can do to help out will be appreciated.

I would like to thank the Executive and clubs for your support this year and I wish you all the best going forward.

Bruce Chadderton

Bruce Chadderton 24 Sept 2024

President