

I hope it's not too cold where you are and our thoughts go out to all adversely affected by the recent storm events and flooding.

Events in recent weeks suggest that more regular updates from myself are required to ensure that perceived gaps in the knowledge about what is going on at Philas aren't filled by misinformation from disaffected parties or former committee members.

I am sure you will understand that commercially sensitive information is not something that the Philas Executive Committee is in a position to share, so the nuts and bolts of some initiatives will remain in-committee.



### ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2023 - 2024

The audited accounts were finally received for both Philas and the Library in early May. These will be provided to all parties well in advance of the SGM planned for 26 July.

### ACCOMMODATION

The Executive has made a decision to sell the premises at Egerton Street and look for something better suited to our hobby and members' needs. This is consistent with the message we received from delegates and members at the AGM in December 2024.

We are fortunate that the Silverwater commercial property market has picked up significantly over the last 12 months (10% over the last 6 months alone) so a sale now should ensure that we achieve a price that will cover the original cost of purchase and renovation works undertaken since then. We currently have a gaggle of agents beating down the door looking to secure exclusive rights to sell the premises, but we don't want to do that until we have identified and secured a new location.

The Executive has been looking at an alternative venue and doing due diligence on it since February [including undertaking a zoning assessment, structural integrity assessment and purchasing an independent valuation].

This venue, which is 25% larger than Brisbane Street, is smaller (17%) in size than the proposed two level Silverwater structure (as it was intended to be constructed). The venue appears to be configurable on a single ground floor level to meet Philas' needs; administrative offices, meeting rooms (large and small), Open Days, auctions and the library, so we don't believe we will be constrained by its size. It comes with 20+ dedicated car parks and is located within 300m of a train station and on a major bus route so will be a lot more accessible at all hours of the week. As was the case with the building at Brisbane Street, it is a strata title with the property being only 4.7% of the strata.

### CORPORATISATION

In acting on the decision reached at the Special General Meeting in April 2024 the Executive of Philas Inc has successfully applied to transition to Philas Ltd, a corporate body with a Board of Directors. The Certificate of Registration was received in the third week of May 2025.

There are a number of steps to work through to ensure this transition meets ASIC and Fair Trading NSW requirements. Although the Constitution of the new company provides that the Directors take up their positions immediately after registration, we are seeking advice from both agencies as there are administrative efficiencies if we make the transition at the end of this financial year.

A meeting of the new Board members elected at the SGM, is to be convened mid – late June, for the purpose of ensuring we have identified all of the transition processes and to put into effect all the necessary administrative and legal requirements.

## **AUCTION**

Michael Nibbs and his small band of volunteers are looking are planning to offer a major auction on 9 August, including fine material of a standard not offered by us since September 2022. Whether this target can be met depends entirely on how many volunteers from the clubs come to Silverwater to assist with the tasks required.

The draft catalogue lists about 2,240 lots, with 991 allocated to room and ‘live’ online bidding, and another 108 to room and absentee bidding. The remainder are to be offered only to absentee bidders.

There is still a lot of work to be completed to make this happen, so if you are able to find some time to assist in any capacity please contact Michael on [auction@philas.org.au](mailto:auction@philas.org.au) or 0466 228 182.

A timetable is to be posted to the Philas website which identifies viewing windows during the two weeks before the auction date. Volunteers from the clubs are asked to nominate which specific viewing windows they are able to assist with some people need to provide lots to viewers and others to supervise and ensure viewing remains secure.

Philas will be sending out a timetable specifically looking for volunteers to oversee viewing sessions; rather than having to do any heavy lifting this role will require you to keep an eye on those viewing auction material to make sure nothing gets damaged or misplaced.

And if you are available on the weekend of 9/10 August, again in any capacity, we would encourage you to make yourself available as the auction process is integral to the disposal and redistribution of philatelic estates whilst the income received helps keep Philas running.

Please understand that this is a major task undertaken on behalf of Philas, which we all belong to, yet the workload is falling on the shoulders of a small number of people. If no new people step up to support the auction team it puts this function at risk in the future, so if you can find a bit of time that would really be appreciated.

## **SUPPORT FOR MEMBERS**

Philas is exploring the scanning of the display collection and creating a library of scanned exhibits (40 – 50 pages from interesting exhibits). These will be laminated and made available via a booking system for use as displays at club nights across the state. The plan is to ask our current exhibitors if they will make a selection of pages from their exhibit(s) available for scanning by Philas personnel to support this initiative. This material could also be used by exhibitors to assist them develop their exhibit.

And speaking of exhibiting; David Collyer is rallying a group of experienced exhibitors to identify existing, and develop new, resources to help those wishing to understand exhibiting, how to develop an exhibit and how to improve its appeal to the judges. These will largely be online however exhibitor workshops and one on one guidance may also be available in the future.

## **CONCLUSION**

Thank you for your ongoing support. There is a lot going on still, but I am hopeful that we will reach a stage where Philas is operational on all fronts before the end of this year.

*Bruce Chadderton*