

# **The Roll of Distinguished Philatelists**

## **New Signatories for 2024 and details of the signing ceremony**

An open invitation to all to attend in person or by Zoom.

At the meeting of the Board of Election of the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists on 7th March 2024 it was unanimously agreed that the following philatelists be invited to be the new signatories to the Roll:

Walter Britz, RDP, Uruguay

Yu-An Chen, RDP, Chinese Taipei

John Davies, RDP, United Kingdom

Bernard Jimenez, RDP, France

Ivar Sundsbø, RDP, Norway

The invitation to sign the Roll is the highest and most prestigious of honours in philately, and is the world's oldest philatelic honour recognising achievement, research, publication and service in many areas of philately. The Roll was instituted in Harrogate in May 1921 and the signature of His Majesty King George V appears at its head as the first signatory. The total number of signatories up to and including those selected in 2024 (but excluding H.M. King George V) is 412 from 42 different countries. In its design, the Roll contains the names of 46 so-called "Fathers of Philately", names of great philatelists who would have been invited to sign had they been alive at the time. At the first ceremony in Harrogate the signatures of the initial 39 names were added to the Roll.

This year's signing ceremony, on the occasion of the 103rd anniversary of the first signatories to the Roll, will take place at 5pm on Friday 12 July 2024 in Southampton, England, during the Philatelic Congress of Great Britain. In addition to the 2024 signatories, one existing RDP, Patricia Kaufmann RDP from the USA who was elected in 2023, will also sign as she was unable to do so last year. The ceremony will be followed by a drink's reception. On the Saturday morning of Congress, 13 July 2024, the new RDPs will be giving displays as part of the Congress programme. Attendance at the ceremony is open to all; there is no need to pre-book and attendees should gather for the ceremony from 4.30pm. Dress code is flexible, although most attendees wear lounge suits and ties. The main participants in the signing ceremony will wear black tie. The ceremony will also be broadcast live on Zoom so that it can be seen by a worldwide audience. The login details will be announced on the ABPS website in due course.

The new signatories join 88 other current living RDPs from 28 countries, spread over six continents. More details on the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists can be found at: [http://www.abps.org.uk/Awards/Roll\\_of\\_Distinguished\\_Philatelists/index.xalter](http://www.abps.org.uk/Awards/Roll_of_Distinguished_Philatelists/index.xalter)

## **Walter Britz, RDP, Uruguay.**

One of the most widely known names among the philatelists from the South American continent, Walter Britz has been an active participant in the philatelic world of not just Uruguay but across many South American and Hispanic countries for a number of years. As chairman of the FIAF (International Federation of American Philately) Commission for Traditional Philately, he has been the driving force behind a number of the FIAF Congresses, including 2016 (Cordoba) and 2019 (Buenos Aires).



He has served as webmaster for FIAF Traditional Philately for many years and has been involved in numerous exhibitions in both an organisational role and as a member of the jury. He was recently elected as President of the Uruguay Philatelic Federation, and was responsible for “Revista FIAF”, the magazine sent to all FIAF members, underlining his continuing involvement in the promotion and development of organised philately. 2023 saw the first international exhibition held in Uruguay in 50 years, with participations from 17 countries from the American continent and Spain, for which Walter was the driving force. The last year also saw the holding of a most successful academic conference “Real Academia Hispánica de Filatelia e Historia Postal” which brought together 9 philatelists from 9 different countries in order to promote Hispanic American philately,

As a specialist in the issues of his home country, Walter has formed major collections of the classic period of Uruguay, with exhibits of both traditional philately and postal history receiving high awards, including the FIP Grand Prix International at Brasilia 2013 (Traditional) and Brasilia 2017 (Postal History). Most recently, his “Uruguay: Early issues of the XIX Century (1856-1862)” was the winner of the FIP Grand Prix d’Honneur at IBRA 2023.

Many of Walter’s researches have been published as articles in numerous philatelic magazines and he has participated in several video presentations on subjects relating to the early stamps and postal history of Uruguay. As a member of the Uruguay Committee of Experts, Walter is involved in the expertisation of the stamps of Uruguay.

## **Yu-An Chen, RDP, Chinese Taipei.**

The collections and exhibits formed by Yu-An Chen are well known at international exhibitions and have gained high awards. His exhibit of the “World War II Surcharges of the Chinese Republic” was awarded the Grand Prix in 2016 at both PhilaTaipei and Bangkok. His exhibit “Chinese Imperial Postal Cards and Letter Sheets” received the Grand Prix International in Malaysia in 2014. High awards have also been achieved for his exhibit of the 1948-49 Gold Yuan issues.



Yu-An is widely involved in organisational matters as related to exhibitions and jury work. He has been a key organiser of several FIAP (International Federation of Asian Philately) exhibitions, including Taipei 2015 and Taipei 2023 as well as being a member of the FIAP executive committee (and vice-president since 2017) and FIAP coordinator for a number of exhibitions such as Singapore 2019 and the up-coming Melbourne 2025.

He has been a bureau member of the FIP Postal Stationery Commission and is presently a member of the FIP Postal History Commission. He was heavily involved in the organisation of the 74th FIP Congress, held in Taipei in March 2017, at which time Yu-An was president of the Chinese Taipei Philatelic Federation. Yu-An is an FIP accredited juror for all classes and has served on numerous FIAP and FIP juries since 2008.

As a student and researcher, Yu-An has written numbers of articles on both specialist and general subjects. These include advice to judges on how to judge an exhibit and how to handle the essential role of feedback to the exhibitor.

His specialist articles exhibit a deep knowledge of many subjects that relate to the overprints on Chinese stamps in the second world war period, especially the Gold Yuan surcharges. These were the subject of a series and articles in the Chinese Taipei Philatelic Society magazine, which covered both the stamps themselves and their overprints and the postal history of the period.

## **John Davies, RDP, United Kingdom.**

The name of John Davies is synonymous with the promotion of youth philately within the United Kingdom. He has been actively involved in youth philately since 1988, when he first joined the Melville Committee, and was very much involved in creating the youth organisation now called the Stamp Active Network. This, together with “Kidstamps”, a free postal club for children, is the mainstay of junior philately within the United Kingdom.



Stamp Active reaches a wide audience through its fine website, which is generally agreed to be the website that establishes the “gold standard” internationally among websites promoting youth philately. This website received a large gold and was voted the best in class at the specialist FEPA (Federation of European Philatelic Associations) exhibition Italia 2018, in Verona. John has held many posts within Stamp Active and currently takes the lead role as events manager and webmaster. He has been involved in the production of the range of award-winning colourful and interesting promotional guides and books aimed at the young collector.

As a member of the ABPS (Association of British Philatelic Societies) executive committee, John has been the leader in the promotion of youth philately now for over 30 years and has been the driving force of much of what has been seen as a model for reaching out to youth philately in Europe and beyond. His contributions have been reflected with the receipt of awards from the ABPS and from FEPA.

In his own collecting interests, John has focused on the building an exhibit of the 1890 Penny Postage Jubilee celebrations. This exhibit has become one of the leading Open Class exhibits seen at international exhibitions and has gained awards up to large gold at numerous exhibitions around the world, including being voted “best in class” at the New York FIP World Stamp Show in 2016.

The 1890 Penny Postage Jubilee was also the subject of the book, “A Jubilee Reminiscence – A Philatelic History of the Great Britain Penny Postage Jubilee” published by the Royal Philatelic Society London in 2020, with illustrations largely taken from his collection.

## **Bernard Jimenez, RDP, France.**

Bernard Jimenez has been one of the most active philatelists both within his home country of France and internationally. He has been a member of the board of the French National Federation since the early 1990s, with particular responsibilities for international affairs and has been directly involved with all the major exhibitions held in France. His contributions to philately in France have been recognised by the award Mérite Philatélique Français (the highest award in French philately) and the Mérite Philatélique Européen (the high award from the Académie Européenne de Philatélie).



Elected to the board of FIP in 2006, Bernard has been involved as representative and coordinator of numerous international exhibitions. From 2016 until his retirement in 2022, he was a vice-president of FIP. One of the repeated comments about Bernard has been his generosity with advice, his knowledge and his hard work. He has always been willing and able to assist everybody from the most advanced collector and exhibitor to the beginner. Certainly, for those who were planning and organising a philatelic exhibition, to have Bernard as the FIP coordinator gave access to a wide knowledge and a positive and friendly approach.

His administrative duties have not prevented Bernard from being involved in research and publication. Many articles cover his interests in thematic philately, where he has formed award-winning exhibits including “The Bee”, “The Night” and “From Stone to Jewel”. A postal history collection of “French Post Offices in China” also achieved the Grand Prix in the French national exhibition. An interest in the worldwide exploration and voyages of Jean-François Galaup, Count of Lapérouse, led to Bernard writing a book based on the archives and letters written by Lapérouse. This book, “L’Expédition Lapérouse – Une Adventure Humaine et Scientifique Autour du Monde”, was published in 2019 and reprinted in 2021 with a print run of 10,000 copies.

Bernard’s involvement with FIP has naturally led to his being involved on numerous international juries in a wide array of classes. He is recognised as one of the best-informed Thematic judges and his positive approach is very much appreciated by exhibitors when it came to feedback on their exhibits.

## **Ivar Sundsbø, RDP, Norway.**

A prolific student of many aspects of philately and postal history, Ivar Sundsbø has written large numbers of articles in both Norwegian and English. His book “Norske brev før 1855” (Norwegian Covers up to 1855) lists and analyses older Norwegian covers. Ivar was also co-author of “Norge komplett” (Norway Complete) a textbook for beginners to stamp collecting that has sold over 6,000 copies. Others of his many articles cover diverse subjects from postal history, to aerophilately and forgeries.



Ivar's exhibits reflect the wide range of his interests and the personal research that he has applied to the subject. His study of the OAT and AV 2 markings on forwarded air mail covers has produced gold medals at various international exhibitions, including London 2000 and Korea 2001. As a jury member, Ivar is a qualified juror and team leader in Traditional, Postal History and Aerophilately and he is in demand at FIP exhibitions as a member of the jury. Recent assignments have included Notos 2021 (Athens) and London 2022, where he was team jury leader in both postal history and aerophilately.

Over recent years Ivar has held numerous senior philatelic roles within Scandinavia. He was jury president of Nordia exhibitions in 2008, 2014 and 2019 and has been involved in the management of numerous other exhibitions. In 1989 he proposed the formation of a Norwegian “Fight Against Forgeries” committee. He was one of its first members and remains a member to this day. In international philately, Ivar has been the Norwegian representative on the FIP Postal History commission; the FIP Aerophilately commission; and the FIP Fight against Forgeries commission.

Ivar has given regular educational seminars internationally. At the Stockholmia 2019 exhibition he was the presenter of four papers at the seminar. He also devotes time on a regular basis to assisting and teaching collecting, exhibiting and judging and is the organiser of an annual seminar for judges and exhibitors.