

THE GRAND DUKE...

4 His actions and those of others were found not to breach any Commonwealth laws.

5 The Royal Bank of Avram is still flourishing.

In defence of his brush with the law, The Duke points out that while laws are made for the benefit and protection of "The Public", an old saying that "The law is an ass" had that perception reinforced as recently as last year when the following clauses were included in "NEW TAX SYSTEM (GOODS AND SERVICES TAX) ACT 1999 – Section 165 -55 Commissioner may disregard scheme in making declarations.

For the purposes of making a declaration under this Subdivision, the Commissioner may:

- (a) treat a particular event that actually happened as not having happened; and
- (b) treat a particular event that did not actually happen as having happened and, if appropriate, treat the event as:
 - (i) having happened at a particular time; and
 - (ii) having involved particular action by a particular entity; and
- (c) treat a particular event that actually happened as:
 - (i) having happened at a time different from the time it actually happened; or
 - (ii) having involved particular action by a particular entity (whether or not the event actually involved any action by that entity)."

And there are many more such quaint laws which have the capacity to encourage the public not to take some laws seriously.

There have been four different sets of Ducal coins. The first was issued on October 1, 1980, at \$A4.60 per avram, but by the mid-80s inflation had taken hold and they had reached \$A14.50 per avram or \$10US. The second issue was in 1985. Both sets had six denominations – One, Three, Seven, 15, 30 and 75 ducals and mintages were limited to 250 sets for the 1985 series, and the following for the 1982 series – 1 (271), 3 (274), 7 (273), 15 (276), 30 (276) and 75 ducals, 269. The coins are enamelled on a goldine plated metal with the name "Royal Bank of Avram" on the fronts and year with "Duchy of Avram" on the backs. They are of good quality and rather attractive.

The One ducal coin was 12 mm in

diameter and featured the historic Rudge Arms granted under Letters Patent 1643.

The Three ducal coin was 16 mm wide and featured another Rudge Arms under Letters Patent 18/6/1975.

The Seven ducal coin was 18 mm wide featuring the Earl of Enoch Arms under Letters Patent 21/8/1976.

The 15 ducals coin was 22 mm wide with the Marquis of Mathra Arms under Letters Patent 12/3/1980.

The 30 ducals coin was 26 mm wide with the Duke of Avram Arms under Letters Patent 22/10/1979.

The 75 ducals coin was 30 mm wide with the Royal See Arms under Letters Patent 30/4/1986.

In 1990 a set of coins was issued and the Millennium series was issued in 2000, with approximately 250 sets each. Of similar diameters to the first two issues, the new issues featured the following Arms.

One ducal, The Lord Rama Arms, letters patent 30/4/1981.

Three ducals, The Viscount Ulom Arms, letters patent 30/4/1981.

Seven ducals, The Grand Duke of Avram, letters patent 12/3/1987.

Fifteen ducals, The Grand Duke of Avram, Cardinal Archbishop, letters patent 12/3/1987.

Thirty ducals, The Royal Bank of Avram, letters patent 8/11/1986.

Seventyfive ducals, The Royal See, letters patent 30/3/1990.

The first set of notes issued (dated 1st October, 1980) was comprised of One (160 x 79 mm), Three (163 x 82 mm), Five (165 x 85 mm), Seven (169 x 89 mm) and 15 Avram (171 x 91mm) denominations. They were designed principally by the Rt. Hon. Lord Ramsat (a noted numismatist) especially for collectors.

A special first issue of 1,000 sets of notes bearing AA prefixes and suffixes was available to collectors at A\$56 per set at the time of the initial release. Another set with C prefixes was available at A\$48. Single and grouped notes with AB prefix and suffix were also available at various prices. The fronts featured His Eminence, The Grand Duke of Avram and geometric patterns, and the backs, various Arms.

A further 25 Avram denomination (178 x 98 mm) was issued on July 1, 1981, with a "message and best wishes of the people of the Duchy of Avram" to Prince Charles and Lady Di for their



forthcoming wedding on July 29, 1981. These had C or D prefixes.

The lower denomination notes are printed in two colours while the 25 Avram note is in three colours. All notes are printed by offset process and are what some may regard as rather bland. Never-the-less, they are an official issue of the Royal Bank of Avram, and all printing plates have since been destroyed.

It is believed that a new set (The Millennium edition) is being printed for 2001.

While the cost of sets of notes can now vary between \$100 and \$250, general notes overprinted "Sample" are available at \$3 each. The asking price for sets of coins varies from \$129.50 for 1982 to \$22 for 2000 dated coins. As the Avram is pegged to the U.S. dollar, the asking prices are also in US\$. When the initial coins were issued the \$US was \$A1.25, but it is now \$A0.52.

Further information is available on the Internet at www.royalbanker.org or by writing to The Mint Release Manager, The Royal Bank of Avram, c/o P.O. Box 628, Sorell, Tasmania 7172 or by email royalbank@hushmail.com

References:

Various correspondence and advertising literature from 1982 to 2000.

"Tasmanian Bedevils Aussie Govt. With Private Bank Note Emission", *Bank Note Reporter*, September, 1981.

"Just call him John" by Kit Kiefer, *World Coin News*, 1 April, 1986.

The Tasmanian Mail, 28 April, 1987, "Prince in a right royal rage" by Veronika Smith.

Who's Who in the World and Book of Dedications and www.royalbanker.org *Tasmanian Numismatist* (articles by Graeme Petterwood) June 1997, 1999 and September 2000.

Illustrations are from the Grand Duke of Avram's Website at www.Avram.org.