



AUSTRALIAN PHILATELIC FEDERATION LTD

BEYOND AUSTRALIA

“Stamp collecting offers a world of interest”

Most Australian stamp collectors start by collecting Australian stamps as they are more readily available than those of other countries whether in the mail, from dealers or from Australia Post. As they develop their interest in stamp collecting they often consider broadening their collecting interests.

The really exciting part of stamp collecting and philately in general is that YOU decide what you will collect. There are no rules or requirements that impact upon this fascinating hobby.

This brochure provides an overview of some of the many highways and byways of stamp collecting. The great part of stamp collecting is that you can be as general or as specialised as you want with your collection.

While most Australians start by collecting Australia, many develop other collections that may be sparked by a variety of factors. Many collectors find that philately is so fascinating that they have many collections which tend to be only limited by their finances.

If you wish to spread your interests beyond Australia and even beyond stamps then the following ideas may help you decide which areas to investigate.

What country should I collect?

Collectors often develop an interest other than Australia through receiving stamps from relatives and friends overseas, as a result of visiting other countries, by perusing world catalogues or from discussions with other members of a stamp club. Sometimes people begin collecting a far away country as a substitute for visiting it.

Whatever country or area you decide to collect it pays to be pragmatic about what is involved. A little bit of research with a catalogue or in your local stamp club's library will show you what is involved. Some countries have a lot of quite expensive stamps that you may never be able to afford. To some this is no concern, but others decide to find a country to collect where they can get a satisfying degree of completeness. Others collect an area which is challenging but not necessarily expensive because the fun is in the chase.

Staying with Australia

Many collectors decide that they wish to continue collecting Australian stamps. But the question remains – is there more to collecting than just buying new issues or collecting one of each stamp? The answer to this question is very definitely – YES.

Stamp collecting has many avenues besides basic collecting. While continuing to collect Australia, collectors can choose to specialise in many different ways including booklets, postal history, postal stationery, postmarks, revenue stamps or detailed studies of particular issues. The scope is unlimited and Australia offers many satisfying challenges.

Another possibility is collecting the stamps of the Australian states. Each Australian state issued its own stamps before Federation, and for many years afterwards before Commonwealth stamps were issued.

Specialised Collecting

Many collectors choose to study one issue or a group of issues of stamps in great detail. For example, many collectors of Australian stamps have chosen to form detailed collections of the early issues of the Australian Commonwealth, the Kangaroo and Map stamps and the King George V sideface stamps.

Other collectors prefer to study modern issues in more detail including, for example, the peel and stick stamps currently issued by Australia Post. Australia Post is a pioneer in these stamps and they offer much scope for

relatively low cost specialisation. There is great variety in these stamps with many different printings and with the stamps being sold in booklet and roll formats.

Specialised information on Australian stamps is available through a wide range of specialised publications. Your local stamp club or dealer is the best place to start for information.

Postal History and Postmark Collecting

Postal History includes the collecting of envelopes (often but not always with stamps attached) which demonstrate postage rates, mail routes, usage of stamps, and postmarks. A popular area for postal historians is to collect the postal history of the area you were born.

Collectors in this field often have a detailed knowledge of the operation and history of the postal system as well as a knowledge of the social history of the period they collect. If you are interested in the past then this can be a fascinating area of specialisation.

Postal Stationery

Postal Stationery is stationery issued by the postal authorities which has an impressed stamp indicating the prepayment of a postal service. Usually the imprinted stamp will indicate the value of the postage paid although many modern issues just have an indication that postage has been paid. The most familiar are stamped envelopes, aerogrammes, stamped postcards, letter cards, and newspaper wrappers. Postal stationery is an increasingly popular collecting field in Australia and this is helped by the many items of postal stationery issued by Australia Post.

Revenue and Railway Stamps

Many collectors collect stamps issued by Governments for the purposes of collecting stamp duty or for the prepayment of parcels carried by the railways. Revenue stamps predate the issue of postage stamps by over a century.

This is a vast field which is ripe for new discoveries and if you like a challenge can be most satisfying.

Cinderellas

Cinderellas are labels which look like stamps but which were not issued by the post office or by governments for either postal or stamp duty purposes. The variety of such labels is endless and can include publicity labels, labels for 'private posts', charity labels, airmail stickers and registration labels.

Aerophilately

There is something very romantic about collecting stamps and covers associated with the development of air mail services. Names such as Charles Lindbergh, Charles Kingsford Smith and Amelia Earhart all conjure up images of a pioneering age. To hold in your hands an envelope signed and carried by one of these aviators can be quite a thrill. This is why aerophilately has always been a popular part of philately.

Social Philately

Social Philately involves the collection of stamps, covers and related documents associated with the social history of a town or city or a theme. Social Philately allows a collector to expand their collecting interests by including a range of other collectibles including postcards, letters, telegrams, tickets and newspaper clippings. This is a relatively new concept but one that is becoming increasingly popular.

Thematics

Thematics involves collecting along a theme, with birds the most popular thematic among stamp collectors. Thematics involves not just collecting stamps but also postal stationery, covers, booklets and other stamp material that is part of your theme or story. At the highest level thematics involves telling a story using the

philatelic material in your collection. This can be quite challenging but is also a lot of fun and need not be expensive.

I've Decided – What Now?

Once you have decided on a new collecting interest the best thing you can do is research your area of interest. This is best done by getting g advice from fellow collectors through your local stamp club or your local stamp dealer.

Stamp Clubs

Stamp clubs (or philatelic societies) exist in most areas and provide their members with the opportunity to meet with like-minded people and to share information about their hobby. They often offer displays, visiting speakers, newsletters or magazines and purchasing schemes for books and accessories. Importantly they provide you with an opportunity to obtain stamps at reasonable prices through their exchange books. Many clubs also organise stamp fairs and exhibitions. Stamp club members can help you with advice on storing and housing your collection and give you ideas on new collecting areas.

Specialised Clubs

In addition to local stamp clubs there are many specialised groups which can help you enjoy your new collecting interests. These include clubs for collectors of postal history, postal stationery, thematics, and cinderellas as well as clubs for collectors of particular countries. For information on such clubs please contact your state philatelic council or the APF.

Dealers

Developing a close relationship with a stamp dealer is one of the best ways of obtaining new material and getting valuable advice when starting a new collecting interest. For information about the dealers near you please contact the Australasian Philatelic Traders' Association (APTA) www.apta.com.au

Literature

There is a vast array of specialised literature on just about every aspect of stamp collecting. This literature can be both hard to find and is sometimes expensive, however, this is one of the best reasons to belong to one or more stamp clubs as most have a library and some have great libraries.

For Further Information

www.apf.org.au

or

Contact your State Council

- ACT: ACT Philatelic Council,
GPO Box 9800 CANBERRA ACT 2601
- NSW: New South Wales Stamp Council
GPO Box 9800 SYDNEY NSW 2001
- QLD: Queensland Philatelic Council
18 Coolcrest Street WYNNUM QLD 4178
- SA/NT: South Australian Philatelic Council
GPO Box 9800 ADELAIDE SA 5001
- TAS: Tasmanian Stamp Council
GPO Box 9800 HOBART TAS 7001
- VIC: Victorian Philatelic Council
GPO Box 9800 MELBOURNE VIC 3001
- WA: Western Australian Philatelic Council
GPO Box 9800 PERTH WA 6001

(Further contact details, including e-mail addresses, are available on the APF website.)

Other brochures in this series are available from the Australian Philatelic Federation or your State Council:

- 1 *Why collect stamps?*
- 2 *Why Join a Stamp Club?*
- 3 *I have just inherited a stamp collection - where do I go from here?*
- 4 *I have just rediscovered my old stamp collection – where do I go from here?*
- 5 *Where do I get stamps for my collection?*