



# Capital Philately

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The Philatelic Society of Canberra  
(Founded 1932)

President: P. Barsdell  
Hon. Secretary: B.S. Parker  
G.P.O. Box 1840, Canberra  
A.C.T., 2601, Australia

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Capital Philately:

Editorial Committee - E.C. Druce  
A.G. Salisbury (Editor)  
A.R. Tippett

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# Capital Philately

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## Editorial

One of the most noticeable features of philately in recent years has been the increasing interest shown by collectors of all stages of development in what is loosely called "postal history". The study of actual stamps, whether adhesive or impressed, remains the true basis of the hobby, but in many cases, such a collection tends to be supplemented, if not entirely replaced, by different types of ancillary material, especially covers and entires. This appears to be due to a desire to make a collection more "interesting" - in other words, the owner feels that there should be some kind of story embodied in the collection, so that the viewer can learn something of a historical nature.

Postal history is defined in Sutton's "Stamp Collector's Encyclopaedia" as "an extension of philately embracing the study and collection of all postal markings, stamps, covers, etc", while a fuller description is given in "A Glossary of Philatelic Terms" published by the Philatelic Congress of Great Britain - "the study of the interchange of information and transmission of news throughout the ages through the medium of the posts. A postal

historian is not necessarily either a philatelist or a stamp collector. Much of his work is research, and if the material he collects is properly portrayed, it can be understood by, or be interesting to, anyone who has no knowledge of stamps or stamp collecting". These two definitions (and there are many others) offer quite different interpretations of what postal history really is.

The purist postal historian exhibits a cover in his collection, and he has studied, and is able to explain, all of the markings which it has acquired during its journey through the postal system from sender to recipient. This involves detailed knowledge of the route by which it has travelled, and this, taken to its logical conclusion, means, for example, study of shipping lists and time-tables and the records of ports of call, all of which enable the exact details to be clearly mapped out. Interruptions such as enemy action, shipwrecks, accidents and so on, are researched and related to the particular cover, so that everything which humanly can be found out is known and accurately set down. Then there are important facts to be ascertained about the postal rates involved, such as what the sender had to pay in relation to the size and weight of the article, how that amount was allocated between the transmitting and receiving post offices, the carriers and agents, and how much the recipient had to pay, if anything. All of this information would be recorded on the cover, and the historian has to interpret it, to see if the details he had found fit in with the whole body of known facts. He then has to study the postmarks, to determine the route followed, to see that the dates are consistent with whatever else he knows. He wonders who applied them to the cover, and why some of them are in red or blue, perhaps, instead of black, and whether a particular mark on a particular date is reasonable in regard to other existing circumstances.

This kind of postal history is the real essence of the subject, and in exhibiting a collection, it requires only a small amount of detailed writing-up, because the purpose of the exercise lies in displaying the whole cover as an item of its own intrinsic importance. The main, if not the only, emphasis lies in the postal or philatelic nature of the whole item by itself. It need scarcely be said that such items must be genuine, so that contrived mail material, such as unaddressed covers or covers bearing grossly overpaid rates of postage, and other "spurious" items, cannot legitimately come within this category.

Other material can come under the postal history definition, if the term is interpreted more loosely. This is the distinction between ordinary history and pure postal history. An actual cover

may be supplemented by a large range of other historical information, which the researcher may find out. It may be supplemented also by photographs, contemporary newspaper articles, maps, and so on, all of which serve to expand the information which is visible from the cover itself. This requires a lot more space than can normally be taken up by a cover accompanied merely by explanations, say, of the postal markings. The writing-up must be fuller, with enough to attract the interest and comprehension of anyone who sees it, on the lines of the implication in the Philatelic Congress definition quoted above. Such a project needs a considerable amount of research, not confined to pure philately, but designed to find out all the relevant facts and put them on the record. The philatelic cover (or whatever it may be) is one component of the story - it may be only of supplementary importance to the telling of the whole story, but the project is still capable of being interpreted as an exhibit of a bit of postal history.

This is where a difficulty arises. Exhibits of the first type are properly qualified for entry into philatelic exhibitions under current rules, and to be assessed by competent judges, but in most cases, expanded ("grangerised") exhibits of the second type would face possible disqualification. In competitive exhibitions, space available to the owner is limited, and he cannot afford to enter material which requires large amounts of descriptive matter, while, from the point of view of the judges, there is no time for them to read and digest and assess what may appear to be over-long stories about the material on show. So the exhibitor in a postal history display, if he wishes to receive an award, must follow the rules and exclude large amounts of the detail which, to him, are entirely relevant and essential to telling the complete story.

This distinction was described clearly by Dr A.R. Tippett in an article in "Capital Philately" for May 1985, where a plea was made for setting out all the facts of a particular subject, before they are lost or forgotten. The corollary to this is that any research is valuable, and should be recorded, even though the opportunity for its use may not present itself immediately.

For those who wish to enter their postal history collections in competitive exhibitions, there seems to be no remedy if they fall into the second category, and this is a situation which, however unfortunate, has to be accepted, for the practical reasons set out above. Such a collection is eminently suitable for display at meetings of societies and other smaller gatherings, and it would be a pity if such displays should become unavailable for the mere reasons that they are ineligible for higher levels. If we wish to expand our collections to show a complete story for the edification of others, we should be encouraged to do so, even though the limitations on further progress are clear.

At the time of writing, preparations for the Fourth National Philatelic Convention, to be conducted by The Philatelic Society of Canberra in March next, are well advanced, and an extensive range of exhibits from a wide area of Australia will be entered. Many people are making their philatelic debut, while others, with previous experience, are entering as a preliminary to displaying at Stampex 86 in Adelaide in August. It remains for the rest of the general membership of the Canberra Society to assist, by their attendance and other support, to make the event at least as successful as the last three Conventions.

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**LETTER TO THE EDITOR**

Mr J.S. White, FRPSL, of Sydney, writes: -

**THE POSTAL HISTORY OF NEW SOUTH WALES**

Dr E. Druce's article "The Postal History Column - early N.S.W. Markings" in your August 1985 issue was interesting, in that it attempted to list, from known copies in private hands, which pre-stamp markings were used, and to trace their evolution.

Your members may not as yet be aware, but this project is being undertaken by a group of dedicated researchers of the Australian States Study Circle of the Royal Sydney Philatelic Club as part of researches for a definitive volume, "The Postal History of N.S.W.", to be published in the Bi-Centennial Year 1988.

We have been fortunate in being given access to official State records in their original form, and the work should be a definitive listing when it is published. Some comparisons between scarcity of copies in private hands compared with official records are interesting, and might prove the subject of a future article.

I would like to take this opportunity of inviting any of your members and readers who have an interest in the Postal History of NSW and who may be able to assist to contact me c/o Philas Publications & Research Committee, P.O. Box A495, Sydney South, 2000.

**THE POSTAL HISTORY COLUMN - MISSING COVERS**

**E.C. Druce**

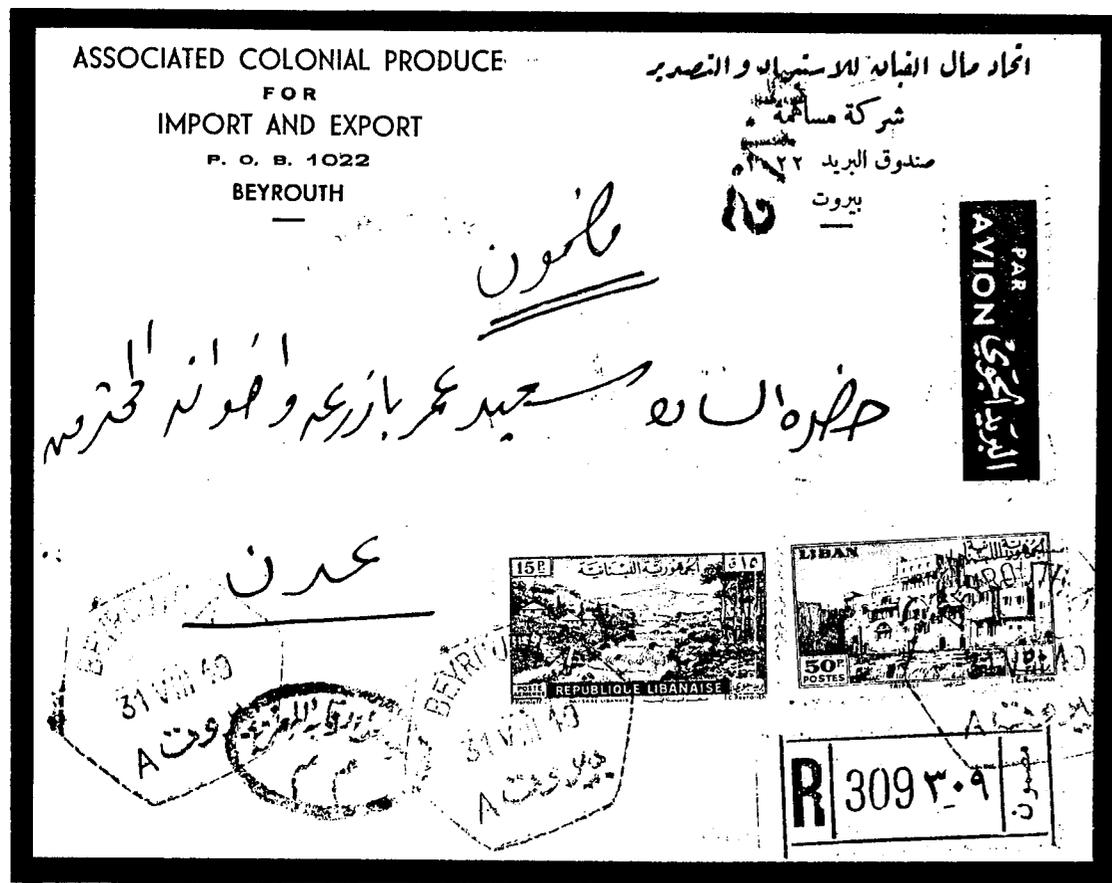
Postal History as defined by the action of philatelists is the study and interpretation of covers, wrappers and fronts in respect of rates, routes and markings. The work of a postal historian therefore begins with a cover and it is interpreted with the aid of information published or available to that person.

However, there are examples of postal history which are either waiting to be discovered or which may no longer exist. There are several cases where post offices are known to have been open but no markings are known, or where particular rates and routes have existed for a short time but examples have yet to surface.

Knowledge of the possibilities is usually trapped in various announcements made by the post office administration, and a diligent study of their official publications is often an eye-opener in respect of what may be hidden in a bundle of old covers. One important publication is the Australian "Post Office Guide" which is a mine of information. Most countries have such a publication, and if you can get hold of one, then it will unlock all sorts of new horizons to collecting their stamps and postal history.

However my latest acquisition was made at the Canberra Book Fair at the Albert Hall and cost me thirty cents. It was the Universal Postal Convention (together with Final Protocol and Detailed Regulations) as agreed at the Lausanne Congress of the Universal Postal Union in July, 1974. It is published by Her Majesty's Stationery Office and I suspect that it may be out of date. That is immaterial because from an historical point of view it may help to explain all sorts of rates, routes and markings.

For example, the other day one of our members asked me what AV2 meant when it was hand-stamped on the front of a cover. The Universal Postal Convention supplies the answer. AV2 is the number of a post office form agreed by the Convention for international use in respect of airmail correspondence in transit à découvert. This means that the mail is not closed, or sealed in a bag to its destination but must be sorted and forwarded by an intermediate postal administration. The AV2 bill (filled-in form) is used to calculate the amount of postage due to the intermediate authority, and is calculated on weight. The mark is not common, because the mail was bundled into country of destination by the originating administration and it is presumed that only the top envelope of the bundle was marked. Ordinary and registered mail were bundled separately.



I have illustrated a registered cover bearing the mark, which originated in Beirut, Lebanon, and was addressed to Aden. There was insufficient mail to make up the bag, so the letter was sorted at Cairo and on-forwarded.

Some other articles which should produce interesting postal history, but which I have not seen, are:

"Article 19.12. Perishable biological substances made up and packed in accordance with the Detailed Regulations shall be subject to the tariff for letters and to registration; they shall be forwarded by the quickest route, normally by air, subject to payment of the corresponding air charges. They may be exchanged only between officially recognised qualified laboratories. This exchange shall, moreover, be restricted to those member countries whose postal administrations have declared their willingness to admit such items, whether reciprocally or in one direction only."



A similar article covers radio-active substances:

"The Detailed Regulations list the packing requirement for perishable biological substances which includes the furnishing, on the side which bears the addresses of laboratories sending and receiving the item, of a violet coloured label as illustrated. Items containing radio-active materials must be provided by the sender with a special white label bearing the words "Matières Radioactives".

The other two Articles which intrigued me because of my previous ignorance of them are Article 30 covering "Withdrawal from the post. Alteration or correction of address at the sender's request" and Article 106 "Postal Identity Cards". I imagine that Article 30 is rarely used and I have never come across any example; similarly I have never seen a postal identity card which, according to the regulations, must contain a photograph and a postage stamp representing the charge collected.

Altogether the Universal Postal Convention is an eye-opening book and is full of all sorts of information of value to the postal historian. It also provides a mine of ideas for thematic collectors - Article 124 has six sections covering requirements which are acceptable and those that are not, in respect of the acceptance and transmittal of post cards - a real challenge would be to put together a collection showing the operation of this particular article and it would only cost time not money. Why not set yourself a similar challenge so that you can enter Canberra 88?

However the text of the Convention contains all sorts of interesting information. For example, when people think of freedoms they list speech, assembly, religious practice, etc. Postal historians however, should have in their list freedom of transit as well; Article 1 of the Convention reads as follows:

"1. Freedom of transit, the principle of which is set forth in Article 1 of the Constitution, shall carry with it the obligation for each postal administration to forward always by the quickest routes which it uses for its own items, closed mails and a *découvert* letter-post items which are passed to it by another administration. This obligation shall also apply to airmail correspondence, whether or not the intermediate postal administrations take part in reforwarding it.

2. Member countries which do not participate in the exchange of letters containing perishable biological substances or radioactive substances shall have the option of not admitting these items in transit *à découvert* through their territory. The same shall apply to the items referred to in Article 33, 6.

3. Member countries not providing the insured letters service or not accepting liability for insured letters carried by their sea or air services may not, however, refuse transit of such items in closed mails through their territory or conveyance of them by their sea or air services; but those countries' liability shall be limited to that laid down for registered items.

4. Freedom of transit for postal parcels to be forwarded by land and sea routes shall be limited to the territory of the countries taking part in this service.

5. Freedom of transit for air parcels shall be guaranteed throughout the territory of the Union. Nevertheless, member countries which are not parties to the Postal Parcels Agreement shall not be required to forward air parcels by surface.

6. Member countries which are parties to the Postal Parcels Agreement but which do not provide an insured parcels service or which do not accept liability for insured items carried by their sea or air services, may not, however, refuse transit of such parcels in closed mails through their territory or conveyance of them by their sea or air services; but those countries' liability shall be limited to that laid down for uninsured parcels of the same weight."

I've never come across any postal articles which demonstrate the operation of this Article, but maybe they are around and all it needs is a keen eye and an understanding of the background.

FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE DE PHILATÉLIE (F.I.P.)  
THEMATIC PHILATELY  
S.J. Wilson

The levels of thematic philately in Australia are generally below those of country collecting, and the same can be said of the whole English-speaking world. In exhibiting at World level, we are behind world standards.

The world body of philately, the Fédération Internationale de Philatélie (F.I.P.) developed in continental Europe, and both Britain and the United States of America were late in joining and accepting the world leadership of this body. Philately itself has long been in a healthy condition in both Britain and the USA; the same cannot be said for thematics. While this field has long had many followers in Britain, standards there have really not advanced to the levels of other aspects of philately. The American Topical Association is probably the world's largest philatelic society but it continues to go its own way, quite divorced from the lines of F.I.P. thematic thinking. Personally I regard the U.S.A. standards as far below those of F.I.P. in this field.

The leadership of the thematic area of F.I.P. is confined to continental Europe, so it is no great surprise to learn that most of the important written material is in German, Italian, French, Spanish or other European languages than English. The result is that the average Australian collector has gone on in thematic philately, quite unaware of development of thought, and indeed in Exhibition standards, in Europe. Little which could be regarded as being really "on the ball" has been written or available in English until recently.

The Thematic Society of Australia published a small booklet in 1982 entitled "Guidelines for Exhibiting Topical Collections", and I was one of a sub-committee of five which was responsible for it. All material in English relevant to thematic exhibiting was circulated and read, and we managed an odd translation from other languages. Nevertheless, while it remains a good guide, it is not up-to-date in regard to all aspects of thematics.

A quick check shows that I have displayed to the Philatelic Society of Canberra on six occasions, starting on 1st March 1973. Because the idea appealed to me, I have always included the widest variety of philatelic material possible in my collection, and indeed one talk to the Society on 2nd September 1976 was entitled "Philatelic Variety in Thematic Collecting". My use of all types of postal material in the collection was coincidental, but this has been the core of the F.I.P. philosophy for many years.

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## **STAMP NEWS**

P.O. Box 1410, Dubbo, N.S.W., 2830, Australia.

The F.I.P. has sponsored several all-thematic exhibitions. At the first of these about twelve years ago in Belgium, there was only one Gold Metal awarded, and many entries failed even to get a Certificate of Merit. It is a very different story today; the Regulations have always been strict, and progressively have been made more so. Nevertheless at AUSIPEX 84, Australian thematic entries were awarded medals from Vermeil down, and all awards were above the Certificate of Merit. At F.I.P. Exhibitions, thematic entries are now regularly awarded Gold Medals; the world standards have risen remarkably.

At the all-thematic World Exhibition ARGENTINA 85, held in Buenos Aires in July 1985, 17 gold medals were awarded, all to Western Europe. Australia had six adult entries, resulting in two Vermeil, one Large Silver, two Silver and one Silver-Bronze medals. Only in Silver Medals did entries from the U.S.A. better these results. Latin American exhibitors did well, but entries from Western Europe did far better than any other geographical area.

So, what are the standards of international thematic collecting? If I were to go into full detail it would fill several issues of "Capital Philately", so I must be brief. There must be a Plan in which the exhibitor details the collection, much as a Table of Contents details the chapters and sub-divisions of a book. That comparison is quite valid. The Plan is now compulsory in all National Exhibitions in Australia and New Zealand. In it the collector must detail the development of the collection, and what is shown must relate back exactly to the Plan. This aspect was not dealt with sufficiently in the "Guidelines" booklet mentioned above, and the example shown (which came from my collection) does not give sufficient analysis of the Exhibit and refers only to the whole collection. Much of the "collection" details given there should be on the Title Sheet, which is the first page of the Exhibit and is immediately followed by the Plan.

In any exhibit there must be the greatest possible variety of postal material. The word "postal" is used here deliberately to exclude "philatelic" material which has not seen postal use. That means a very strict limit on First Day Covers and the contrived material which floods the market today. Most miniature sheets should be avoided, as well as material from Arab Trucial States and similar issues. The inclusion of photographs, drawings, maps, long write-up, etc, is sure to reduce the exhibit's award, even at National level.

There is tremendous emphasis on a clean, uncluttered presentation of a wide variety of items of postal material.

Writing-up must be brief, with short comments indicating continuity of thought. Postally-carried covers are most important. Stamps may be either mint or used, but not a combination on the one sheet. Generally, every sheet should have at least one postal item other than stamps. Postal history items are also important, and indeed to succeed at a National or World Exhibition, the exhibitor must show the whole range of postal philately applicable to the collection.

Exhibitions are competitive against a standard. The award relates directly to:

- (a) the presentation of the collection
- (b) the Plan and how it is executed
- (c) the originality and scope of the theme used
- (d) the philatelic knowledge of the exhibitor, as shown by the variety of postal items used (not only stamps)
- (e) the condition of the material
- (f) the scarcity, rarity and availability of the stamps and postal documents.

Within F.I.P. circles, for some years there has been a tendency to favour "theme" collections which tell a story, and the F.I.P. Congress in Rome late in 1985 changed the rules to eliminate the old "subject" and "purpose of issue" methods of presentation in exhibits. This means that collections arranged to show material according to the country of issue or on a scientific basis are no longer considered suitable in F.I.P. Exhibitions. As Australia is affiliated with the F.I.P., it can be anticipated that it is only a matter of time until rules for National Exhibitions here are brought into line.

The Australian Philatelic Federation has recently circulated a number of important papers on thematic philately, which I hope will find their way into our Library. These are:

- The Presentation of Thematic Collections, by Giancarlo Morolli et al. Dr Morolli is the Thematic representative on the F.I.P.
- How to Build a Thematic Collection, etc, from the seminar by Dr Morolli at AUSIPEX 84. This is in two sections.
- The Elephant, by Mary Ann Owens. This is the text of a talk given to the Royal Philatelic Society of Victoria during AUSIPEX 84, based on the collection which was awarded a Gold Medal at World level - the first such award to an American.

Another recent F.I.P. rule change affects all types of philatelic exhibits, and this is to bring in an introductory sheet or "plan" to explain what is the purpose and the extent of the Exhibit. In this, thematic philately has led other branches of the hobby. A proper introduction will, in my opinion, strengthen the

presentation aspects of all forms of exhibits, and indeed will greatly help viewers understand the collections shown. No doubt details of this change will be published widely.

As was obvious in Australian National Exhibitions until relatively recently, there was little leadership in the thematic field, and even judging standards were quite unsatisfactory. Now several exhibitors have gained good awards at National and World level and thematic collectors know where they are going. The standard has risen dramatically, and the collections in this field are worth looking at in Exhibitions.

Many thematic exhibitors have read widely and learned a lot in recent days, and I feel that this aspect of Exhibitions is now doing well in Australia, with those involved being acutely aware of the need to prove a wide range of philatelic knowledge by the types of postal material shown. As most books deal only with the available stamps, delving beyond that is a matter of individual philatelic research, which is just as genuinely "philatelic research" as any other aspect of philatelic investigation.

Two examples of thematic research must suffice:

- (a) A loose-leaf catalogue of all known postmarks and franking-machine impressions which feature birds is published in West Germany by Motivgruppe Ornithologie. This is mentioned as I am a member of this organisation, and have contributed many items to the book. Issue commenced about ten years ago, and as it covers all countries, older items still come to light occasionally and new designs are often issued;
- (b) A Gold Medal was awarded to Mary Ann Owens (U.S.A.) at AUSIPEX 84 for her entry "The Blue Danube". In this the Danube itself was traced postally from its source to the sea. One aspect of the material was the pre-stamp covers and nineteenth-century stamps with postmarks from towns along the river; some were on cover, but most were on piece. With the break-up of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, town names changed, sometimes more than once, and here was a postal record of these events well put together and with first-class presentation. The collection was the result of ten years research.

Thematic philately, as it has developed, presents an enormous challenge to the individual who wishes to do well in Exhibitions. Original thinking and "personal" treatment of the theme is obviously necessary, and this always involves investigation of aspects of philately not dealt with in catalogues and other books.

**SOME THOUGHTS ON DISPLAYING AND JUDGING AT  
PHILATELIC EXHIBITIONS**

**A.G. Salisbury**

(This text was originally delivered as a talk at the Dubbo Stamp Fair, organised by the Macquarie Valley Philatelic Society, in September 1985)

Philately is a hobby, and those who follow it do so because it gives them recreation and pleasure, and this is the main purpose of the whole thing. Yet philately is something which you cannot do by yourself; you must join in with others if you want to gain the utmost from it. You must also make a fair contribution of mental exercise, study your stamps and read widely about them, so that, by doing this, and by studying the efforts of others, you will be able to extend your knowledge continuously. It is certainly true that you can never know all about your subject.

There are various levels of philatelic exhibitions. First, there are the displays which are a regular feature of society meetings, where invited local members show parts of their collections as a matter of interest. Such events usually do not carry any kind of a prize, other than perhaps a certificate or memento of the occasion. The next step up is a show with a larger scope, such as the Dubbo Stamp Fair, where the display is open for competition by a wider range from the general public, as a means of attracting non-collectors to come and see it, and where the organisers try to show them what the hobby is all about. Such events are set up on a competitive basis, with prizes for the best entries in each class, and there are no restrictions on who may enter. This is an ideal chance to make a debut by collectors who have never competed before, to try out their performance against others, who are all more or less in the same boat. By giving encouragement to such people, they can be induced to try to improve their collections, with the idea of performing better at a similar show, or to try their luck at a higher standard.

Then there is the State exhibition, where the field of entries is sought from a much wider area, extending over the whole State. The standard has to be rather higher, with the result that any awards earned carry some kind of status, and will show that the display is on the way to better things. At this level, the awards begin to fall into a more definite pattern, and the medals or certificates are not given on any competitive basis, but are on the basis of the merit of the individual entries standing on their own. Each entry can receive an award, which is an indication of

its own particular worth, with nothing to do with any other entry in the same class. Entries have to be made under the classifications laid down by the organisers, so that, in a section devoted, say, to British Commonwealth stamps, every entry can earn an award if they are good enough. The standard of awards usually covers gold, silver and bronze, with the possible addition of a certificate of merit. Thus, if every entry in a class measures up to the required standard for a silver medal, then they will all get that medal. On the other hand, the judges may decide that no entry measures up to the required rules, so that no awards are made at all. This does not happen often, because the exhibition committee usually screens the entries to see if they are eligible.

The next higher step is the National exhibition, where entries are sought from, and are open to, collectors from all over Australia. But here we find that there are some restrictions on those who may enter. Entries are acceptable only from people who are members of a Philatelic Society which is affiliated to a State Philatelic Council. A National exhibition, because of its higher reputation, will attract a larger number of entrants (and also a larger number of the general public), and it is necessary to maintain a reasonable standard of exhibits. An award at a National exhibition shows that the exhibitor is really at a high standard, and the awards cover a wide range, such as gold, vermeil, silver, silver-bronze and bronze, with again the possibility of certificates of merit or participation. An example of a National exhibition was that held in Brisbane in October 1985. Usually invitations to competitors are advertised widely over a long period, and a comprehensive catalogue is published, and the results are widely circulated.

Finally, at the top level is the International or World exhibition, such as AUSIPEX 84, held in Melbourne in 1984, which is organised on a world-wide basis, designed to attract the leading collectors from everywhere. A high level of entry qualification is necessary, which in Australia means that the collection must have obtained at least a vermeil award at a National exhibition. A huge amount of publicity has to be produced, and as visitors from overseas can be expected to attend in large numbers, the organisers have to provide a comprehensive programme which involves many years of advance preparation. Awards are on a prestigious level, and those who earn them can be marked out as the leading experts in their field.

Now as to the organisation of exhibitions, the rules in this country are worked out by the Australian Philatelic Federation, which used to be known as the Australian Stamp Promotion Council. For a display at a local Society level, there are no rules of this

kind, and it is up to the individual body to run the display as it chooses. The same largely applies to events such as the Dubbo Stamp Fair, and the local people have a marvellous chance to do a good job in publicising philately, which, of course, is the main object. Then for the next State level, there are no definite rules laid down as yet, and the Fourth National Philatelic Convention, which will be held in Canberra in March 1986, comes under this heading. The organising committee can determine its own conditions, but it obviously has to keep in mind that most people who qualify for awards will then wish to enter at the higher National level, so there have to be some restrictions imposed, if not on entries, at least on the awards bestowed. Similarly, it has to be kept in mind that the overall standards must be consistent with those of other similar exhibitions. At the National level, there are definite rules about entries, covering the classes in which you may enter, what material is eligible, and so on. All of these conditions have to be well advertised in advance. There is no need to detail here the conditions for entry at international exhibitions, except to say that the rules are laid down by an international body, the FIP, or the International Philatelic Federation, of which Australia is a member, and this body takes a major part in the administration of any world exhibition to which it gives its patronage.

Now in regard to judging, this is a matter of the greatest interest to those who are affected by it. The following sets out objectively the kind of principles which are used to determine what award an entrant can expect to get.

The rules for judging are well-defined as principles, and they become stricter as you go up the ladder. Of course, all the rules have to be applied subjectively, so really it is true to say that the judge must deal with every entry in isolation, while keeping the general principles in mind all the time. For the society and local exhibitions, there may be cases where the prizes are given by popular vote, but there are some problems here. There may be an overwhelming vote for an entry which has no philatelic worth at all, so that the successful exhibitor is encouraged to try for something higher, only to find that the rules there give him no award at all. So it is always better to stick to real philatelic principles when judging at all levels. At the local level, the organisers can select anyone they like to be the judge or judges, and if they pick on someone who has had previous experience at that level or at a higher level, then they are entitled to expect that he will follow the rules and give the best result that he can. For State and National exhibitions in Australia, it used to be the practice to invite as judges people who were known to the organisers, and, even though this was rather uncertain, it worked

pretty well, although there were instances where people were being approached, literally at the last minute, to join the panel of judges, without any prior notice or chance to do any preparation. The A.P.F. has rationalised this in recent years, and there is now a Register of qualified Australian National and State judges, who are authorised to officiate at those levels. People who wish to become qualified are entitled to apply, and if they meet the criteria, they have to attend a course of instruction arranged by the Federation. If they pass the course, they then have to attend an exhibition as an apprentice judge or observer for practical experience, before having their names entered in the Register. The Federation also nominates qualified Australian judges to the F.I.P. for approval as international judges. This system is based in Switzerland, and those who are registered may be invited by the organisers to act at world exhibitions anywhere.

No matter what the level, the person who acts as a judge has to do an unevitable job. It goes without saying that he must have a considerable knowledge about philately in general, with perhaps some specialised knowledge in a particular aspect, although it is quite possible that he may be called upon to judge in an area which he does not collect himself. It is undoubtedly true that the more knowledge that a collector can acquire on any subject is of immense importance, and we should always try to widen our knowledge on all aspects of collecting. In fact, a store of knowledge on some particular aspect of philately is more important than actually having the stamps yourself. Judging is essentially subjective, and the judge's personal likes and dislikes do intrude to some extent. But the judge has to remember all the time that the exhibitor's tastes may well be different, and it is perfectly legitimate to express them how he likes. The most important thing is the collection itself, and the method of showing the stamps depends on the individual's personality. Philately is an individual hobby, and no-one can lay down rules as to what the collector must or must not do, if he is collecting for his own satisfaction. The limitation arises where you have to adhere to the rules laid down for the particular exhibition, and the first important thing to be done by anyone who wishes to enter is to read the rules carefully. It is surprising how often an entry has to be rejected, or disqualified itself, and loses its chance of an award, merely because it does not conform to what is clearly laid down.

It is not possible to set out definite guide-lines for judging every type of entry, but you have to remember that you are attempting to show to the judge that you know what you are talking about, and that you have made a proper study of your stamps. Remember that the judge is there because the organisers think he knows the subject, but he is not infallible. You may know a lot

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City and Venue	Auction Date	Closing date for receipt of Vendors Material
Canberra, ACT To be held at the G.P.O. in conjunction with Canberra's fourth National Philatelic Convention. See Catalogue centre page lift out of this issue of 'Stamp News'.	Saturday, 15th March	Closed
Wagga, NSW To be held in conjunction with Wagga Stamp Club's two day Stamp and Coin Fair.	Saturday, 17th May	Monday, 24th February
Sydney, NSW To be held at the Wesley Centre Auditorium, Pitt Street, Sydney — Opera House Stamp and Coin Fair being staged from 6th to 8th June.	Saturday, 7th June	Monday, 24th March
Canberra, ACT To be held in conjunction with Stamp and Coin Fair at Canberra's prestigious Albert Hall (Town Hall).	Saturday, 19th July	Monday, 21st April
Sydney, NSW To be held at the Wesley Centre Auditorium, Pitt Street, Sydney — Opera House Stamp and Coin Fair being staged from 3rd to 5th October.	Saturday, 4th October	Monday, 21st July
Canberra, ACT To be held in conjunction with Stamp and Coin Fair at the Albert Hall (Town Hall). <i>(Auctions are also planned to be held in Newcastle and Dubbo during the year)</i>	Saturday, 22nd November	Monday, 25th August

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more than he does about the detail of your exhibit, but you have to give him credit for being fair and impartial, and for knowing what distinguishes a good collection from an indifferent one. If you make any descriptions of your stamps in the writing-up, it must be accurate. It is no use making a statement "This stamp is the only copy in existence", as the judge may well have seen another. You should qualify by saying, perhaps, that "only a few copies are recorded", but here again, it is safer to content yourself to a simple statement of what it is that you are attempting to show, and leave it to the judge to make his assessment. If you make a statement, it must be correct, and capable of being proved. Errors such as wrong dates will lose you some points, and mistakes of spelling show that you have not properly checked what you have written. These matters may be of less importance than the actual stamps, but you can do better without perpetrating them. The important thing is to demonstrate that you know more than just how to mount your stamps in the order in which they are listed in the catalogue. When you make up your entry, it is a good idea to look at it and see if it presents a picture which will attract someone else beside yourself.

When the judge looks at your entry, it is the first impression which counts most. It usually takes only a couple of minutes to assess the level of award which will be given, and the judge's first task is to look at all the entries in this way, to gain an overall idea of the general level or standard. He will then want to make a detailed examination of every entry, to confirm or otherwise what he thought at first. In this closer look, the judge will be seeking factual mistakes. He will expect to see that the owner is completely familiar with his stamps. For example, it is possible for someone who knows nothing about stamps to buy a high-level collection, and enter it in an exhibition and gain a good award. This may not matter so much at a local exhibition, although the facts will soon become known more widely. If the entry is put into an exhibition at a higher level, such risks are greater, as the owner will be subject to wider scrutiny by a wider audience. An award at any show is really an encouragement to improve the collection and gain a better award at the next level. For instance, you may show an entry several times at different places at the same exhibition level, and you may well (but not necessarily) gain the same kind of award every time. But the more times you do this, the more your collection will become known, and judges will be looking for some evidence of its development, or improvement of the material and its presentation. Because of the idiosyncrasies of individual judges, you may not always get the same award — sometimes it may be higher and sometimes it may be lower — but you can be sure that experienced judges will be keeping an eye on performance at different places. So you have to bear in

mind the need to expand and improve the collection, which is especially important as you advance to higher levels. Judges always know what has been shown at National exhibitions, and they are not too impressed if the same collection bobs up every time. They tend to say "We have seen this before".

It is important to realise that the standards are different at exhibitions as the level rises. At a local or State show, the judges will not be over-critical, because they will acknowledge that this may be the exhibitor's first attempt, and they will have in mind the need to encourage the exhibitor to try again. When the material is shown at a National exhibition, the judges will expect the owner to have done a lot more home-work, and to have corrected any mistakes or deficiencies which came to notice earlier. It is true that they may be an entirely different team of judges, but they will be well aware of the standards they will expect to see. So if you are lucky enough to receive the gold medal at a local or State level, you should not look forward with confidence to getting the same result next time, unless you have done a tremendous amount of work in the meantime. When you enter at National level, for example, the judges will know of your previous performance, as you will have had to set it out on your entry form as a qualification. So anyone who may earn an award at a State show will most likely receive a lower one at the next National one. You need to keep in mind that the entries are judged against a standard appropriate for that level, and not against each other. All this means is that the higher the level, the more philatelic knowledge you are expected to show.

Referring back to the first impression which the judge gets from your stamps, and getting into a bit more detail, this means that primarily you are showing your stamps, and the rest of the factors involved are of less importance. You may feel that, for your own satisfaction, you need to decorate your pages with a lot of extraneous matter, but the judge will think that this detracts from the stamps. You should use plain album pages without fancy borders, and you should avoid the temptation to titivate them with art-work. Black and highly-coloured pages are almost universally prohibited from exhibitions. You need the minimum of writing-up, as long as you remember to include the essential philatelic information. If you are capable of doing so, the most simple way is to use your own hand-writing, but you must be sure that it is neat and legible. Nothing puts off the judges so much as being unable to read what is written on the pages. A typewriter makes the job a lot easier, although some people may think this takes away some of the individuality of the owner.

Whatever kind of writing-up you use, you must keep consistently to it, as it is untidy to have some pages hand-written and others typed. This also applies to the use of pages of different sizes or types. Similarly, if you want to underline what is written, avoid using differing colours, and confine it to one colour - red or black. Transparent mounts can present a problem. If you use them, you must see that the stamps are fixed so that they cannot move about. The pages will receive a lot of handling when the frames are being set up, and those who do this work have neither the time nor the responsibility for adjusting your stamps. You have to avoid any suggestion of carelessness or untidiness, which is vital in forming the judge's first impression.

As to the actual story you tell, some details are essential, such as the date of issue, the reason for the stamps, the name of the printer, and the watermar's and perforation gauges, with, maybe, the addition of the numbers printed, which is a good indication of scarcity. You have to be careful to show that your display is as complete as possible, and the judges will be looking for any gaps. Of course, the higher the level of the exhibition, the greater is the importance attaching to completeness. In mounting each page, you need to achieve an overall balance in appearance. Stamps arranged in straight rows of equal length tend to look monotonous, and if the stamps are of differing sizes or shapes, you should try out different formats to see which looks the best. The pages should not be over-crowded, and if a set is too long, then it can be broken up and carried onto a second page. While presentation is important, the judge will know enough to be able to suppress his personal tastes and to remember that it is the stamps, with your obvious philatelic knowledge, which count most.

If you enter a postal history section, or wish to demonstrate some postmarks, then covers will be an essential part of your display. These need to be used intelligently, to show something special, and not used merely as a substitute for individual stamps. If you are showing a particular issue of stamps, then to have some of them on cover does nothing for the display, except to make the judge wonder why you do it. But if the cover demonstrates something unusual or special, then by all means show it separately, and explain what it is about. The higher the level, the less popular are such items as unaddressed first-day covers and pre-stamped envelopes. Material which obviously has not passed through the mails is best left out.

In the case of postal history especially, the covers will form the main part of the display, and any special features will have to be pointed out. You should also show, for example, the numbers of covers carried on an air flight, if this is known.

Where there is a limit to the number of pages that you may show, it is important to work out beforehand exactly what you are trying to achieve. It is no use attempting to show "The Postmarks of New South Wales" in an entry of fifteen pages, and you need to limit the scope of your description to what you can practicably fit in. The judges will have read the catalogue to see what your entry is about, and if you show something which does not fit in with that, then you will lose points.

The foregoing relates to all kinds of philatelic exhibits, but there are some things which should be said about thematic collections. Thematics are so popular as a variant of traditional collecting that there are special conditions, and even up to the international level, there are rules which apply specially to this type of collecting. There is no need here to dwell unduly on this. The Thematic Society of Australia published some years ago an excellent booklet setting out the considerations relating to thematics in Australia. However, this booklet is now out-of-date in relation to changes in the guide-lines laid down by the F.I.P., and it should not be followed closely, until a revision is made. In the meantime, advice on the current practice may be obtained from that Society.

It needs to be said that there are two main kinds of thematic collecting - one relates to the special topic shown in the design of the stamp, such as "Horses on Stamps", where the designs are used by the exhibitor to tell the story. The other kind relates to the theme of the exhibit, where a story needs to be illustrated with stamps and other material which, on the face of it, may not appear to be directly related to the theme. An example of this would be "The Story of the Red Cross on Stamps". Under current thinking, however, this latter type of thematic collecting is being more and more favoured and the former type may well be supplanted by it.

In all thematic entries, it is necessary to set out, firstly, a plan of what your thematic entry is designed to show, and then demonstrate how your topic or theme is developed on the pages you are showing.

Presentation is all-important in thematics, and there has to be a proper balance between the stamps and the story written about them. As well as the description in the exhibition catalogue, the owner must follow his own plan precisely. He must show that he has researched all material in existence which fits into that plan. As well as his knowledge of the subject, the exhibitor must remember that thematics is a branch of philately, so that his own general knowledge of the overall hobby is important as well.

Like all exhibits in any class, there must be some common thread running through the pages, and you must avoid giving the impression to the viewer that you have just pulled out a lot of odd pages from your albums. In all cases, you have to imagine what the viewer is going to think when he looks at the entry. In fact, it is worth thinking that you are a member of the public who knows nothing about philately. Is he going to be interested or bored?

From all this, you will see that to make up an acceptable exhibit is not as easy as it might look. The main points may be summarised as under -

1. The judge is supposed to know what philately is all about, and how your exhibit will fit in the overall picture, and especially in your chosen field. You are supposed to demonstrate that you know how to do this.
2. Be as accurate as you can in what you say, remembering that the higher the level of the exhibition, the more important it is for you to make no mistakes in what you say.
3. Don't attempt to cover up any deficiencies, especially where you are relying on getting marks for completeness. If a stamp is easy to obtain, you are expected to have it.
4. The condition of your stamps is most important, and you will lose a lot of points for a poor copy of a stamp which you should be able to show in a fine condition.
5. Show the judges that you know your subject, and that you have done a lot more than merely to follow a listing in a catalogue. Anyone can do that. If you have done any original research, make sure that this is evident.
6. If an item is rare, you may say so, especially if you are sure of the facts. Don't tell the judges how much it is worth, as they are expected to know a valuable item when they see it.
7. Don't do anything that is prohibited by the rules for the exhibition. Even if the organisers have overlooked it, the judges won't.
8. Don't expect an award for a "straight through the catalogue" display, which anyone can put together. You get marks for a well-thought-out and well-developed collection, and the harder it is to produce such a display in a difficult area, the more will the judges be impressed.

9. You are entitled to get the views of the judges as to why you didn't get the top award, but don't shoot them if you don't like what they say. They are objective about this, and the whole idea is to try to show you how to do better next time.

Now, after all that, these notes may have given you something to think about on the question of how to enter exhibitions. There is a lot which is not covered, but the points made will perhaps relate to the development of your own collection, and even if you have no intention of entering competitively, you may have picked up some ideas about making your efforts more attractive to others, and specially to non-collectors. The important thing is that we should be trying all the time to develop and know more about stamps, and this can only be for the benefit of the hobby as a whole. No one can criticise you in any way for doing your own thing, but you can always learn from the efforts of others. The more that people can be persuaded to show their collections, and so gain experience, then there will be the more chance that future exhibitions will include their efforts. If nobody starts now, then there will be nobody to provide the world exhibitions twenty years ahead.



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## A PHILATELIC HISTORY OF FRANCE

(continued)

P. Saxby

The next three stamps are concerned with the early history of the French Revolution. S.G. 1922 portrays a cardinal, a noble and a commoner, and recalls the opening of the States-General in 1789. This, the traditional political representative system of the French monarchy, was first summoned in the thirteenth century, but prior to 1789, had been last summoned in 1614. The States-General consisted of representatives of the First Estate (the clergy), the Second Estate (the nobles) and the Third Estate (the people). King Louis XVI issued the decree summoning the States-General on 8th August 1788, but the meeting did not open until 5th May 1789. During May, there was a dispute whether the three Estates should sit together or apart. On 10th June 1789, the Third Estate forced the hand of the privileged orders by calling for a common assembly. The States-General disappeared as an institution on 17th June 1789, when the deputies declared themselves to be a "National Assembly", but all distinctions between the Estates were not abolished formally until 5th November 1789.



The battle of Valmy, on 20th September 1792, is commemorated by S.G. 1923. Following the storming of the Tuileries and the massacre of the Swiss Guards on 10th August 1792, an Austro-Prussian army commanded by the Duke of Brunswick invaded France on 19th August 1792, capturing the fortresses of Verdun and Longwy. Moving slowly towards Paris, it was weakly opposed by the small Army of the Centre under Kellermann. Lafayette, of American War of Independence fame, had been relieved of his command of the Army of the North, and replaced by Dumouriez, and fled to join the Austrians. Dumouriez hastened to join Kellermann in an attempt to halt the Brunswick advance. At Valmy, 36,000 French troops of questionable quality, a mixture of professionals and eager, but untrained, volunteers, met 34,000 seasoned Prussian regulars. Fortunately, perhaps, for the French, the main bodies never became

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engaged, as the Prussian infantry were thrown back by cannons manned by regulars of the old royal army. This "Cannonade of Valmy" so discouraged Brunswick, who was never enthusiastic about the invasion, that he withdrew. France was saved, and Europe was subjected to a further twenty-three years of war.

The Fall of the Bastille (S.G. 1924) recalls 14th July 1789, when the Paris mob, led by the workers from the Faubourg St. Antoine, stormed the Bastille, the royal fortress that dominated the eastern side of Paris, butchered the governor and most of the small garrison, liberated the few prisoners, and dismantled the fortress stone by stone. Its fall represented a supreme gesture of defiance towards royal despotism, and 14th July is still celebrated as France's National Day. Modern historical interpretation suggests that the Bastille was attacked, not to free prisoners, but to secure arms, but the event demonstrates the passing of the revolutionary initiative from the legalisms of the States-General to the Paris mob. Its immediate consequence was that foreign regiments that might have been used by the King for a counter-revolution were withdrawn from the environs of Paris, and France was set irrevocably on the path to revolution and regicide. A few days later, the red and blue of Paris was merged with the Bourbon white to form the modern French tricolor.



The fashions of post-terror France are depicted by "Incroyables and Merveilleuses" (S.G. 1975). Prior to the Revolution, court dress, in particular, had become very formal, with powdered wigs, tight-fitting breeches and waistcoats. Dresses were generally full, with a bustled look, and hair dressed in a style to give the effect of height rather than width. The Revolution, in a reaction against this, swung to a style (or lack of it) that favoured naturalness to the point of uncouthness. The styles of the 1790s were again a reaction to the "sans culottes", and saw a change essentially from court to country dress. Men changed from the tricorne to a hat with a narrow brim and high crown, embroidery disappeared, and coats were cut away in front. Men wore their own hair instead of wigs, boots instead of pumps,

and ceased to carry swords. Women's styles were based upon what were thought to be classical modes - high-waisted of plain and thin materials. High-heeled shoes were replaced by heel-less slippers, and caps or hats were discarded in favour of narrow head-bands. Dresses were so scanty that cashmere shawls and wraps came into fashion.

(To be continued)

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**FOURTH NATIONAL PHILATELIC CONVENTION, MARCH 1986**

The panel of judges for the Exhibition to be held in connection with the Convention is as under. These people comprise those members of the Philatelic Society of Canberra who are qualified as National judges, plus three other qualified judges - two from Sydney and one from Melbourne. Their names are-

D.H. Brennan, A.W. Bunn, FRPSL, E.C. Druce, T.W. Ilbery, A.G. Salisbury (Chairman), N.J. Sheppard and S.J. Wilson.

In addition, three members of the Society, who attended the recent training course for appointment as State judges, will act as apprentice judges. They are Mrs E.A. Bodley, and Messrs T. Frommer and D.I. Smith.

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