

ASSCO INFO-SHEET NO. 7

GETTING INFORMATION ABOUT STAMPS

There are five main ways in which you can learn about your stamps.

There are books telling how and what to collect . . . Stamp catalogues which list how much various stamps are worth . . . Magazines which have interesting stories about stamps, about other collectors, and what stamp dealers are offering to sell . . . Regular bulletins which post office organisations issue telling about coming issues plus stories about earlier issues . . . and (quite often) newspaper articles about stamps.

One good book, written and produced in Australia, is called "STAMPS — A Collector's Guide", written by Bill Hornadge, who is the editor of "Stamp News" magazine. We've sent your Junior Club a free copy for the club library. There's a list of other books worth seeing which we've told the club leader about. Australia Post has a range of good booklets about various periods and aspects of Australian stamps — all at just 50 cents each!

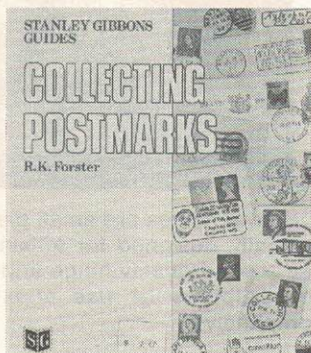
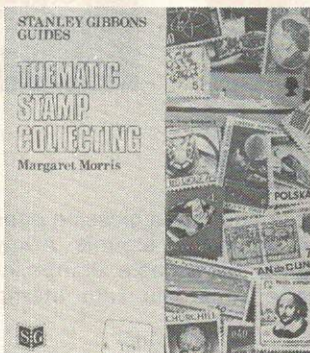
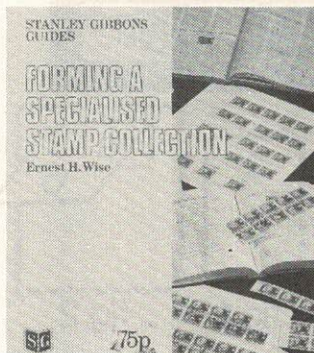
Stamp catalogues **CAN** cost a lot of money — but I think it's important for you to have your own Australian catalogue, at least. As well as giving an idea of values of stamps, a catalogue lists lots of useful information about each issue, and can be used to tick off items as you get them. Ask your newsagent if he has a small "**SEVEN SEAS**" Australian stamp catalogue on sale, and if you would like to see a catalogue about stamps from other parts of the world, ask at your local library to see a **STANLEY GIBBONS** catalogue.

There are two main stamp magazines issued in Australia — "Stamp News" and "Stamp Monthly". Each comes out monthly, and has up to 200 or more pages of information and advertisements. "Stamp News" even has a Juniors Club with regular competitions on a special page for you. "Stamp Monthly" has a similar section. These magazines can be obtained through newsagent or stamp dealer, and will help keep you up to date with new issues and interesting stories.

Australia Post issues a colourful little "**JUNIOR STAMP PREVIEW**" regularly. It's free, so write to "JUNIOR STAMP PREVIEW, Box 511, South Melbourne, Vic, 3205" giving your name, age and address (don't forget the postcode) and mention ASSCO. Then you will know in advance about new Australian stamps that are to be issued.

Why not start a newspaper clipping folder to keep articles and news about stamps? In some States there are regular stamp columns every week in certain newspapers. And of course stories — and photos — about stamps keep cropping up everywhere. Ask the family to watch out for you when reading the papers.

One little book the **ASSCO MAN** uses all the time — and it costs less than a dollar — is "**WHAT STAMP IS THAT**". It's an illustrated guide to identify stamps from all over the world . . . it explains what many abbreviations on stamps mean . . . you'll find it very handy..



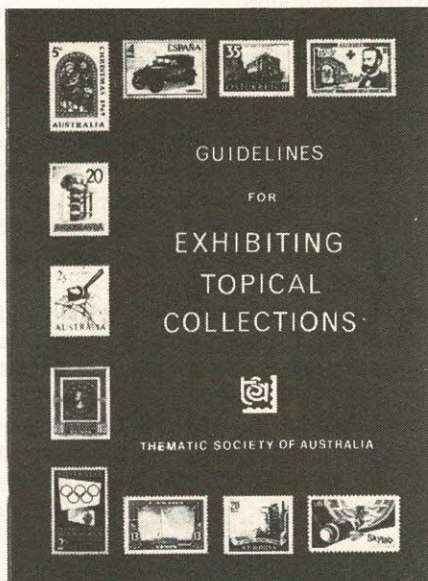
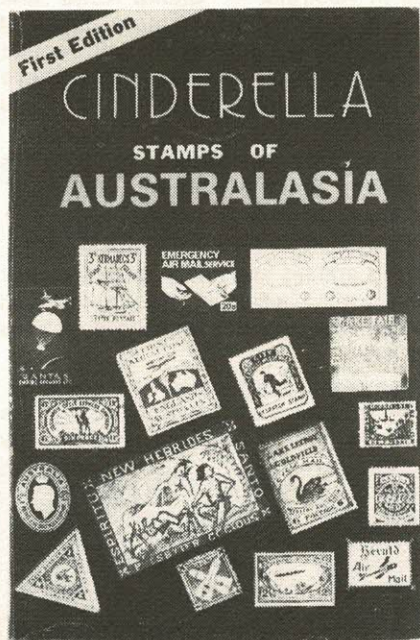
SHOULD I COLLECT MINT OR USED? 1032A

This is a question which is very often asked, and indeed it is sometimes thought that unless a stamp is postmarked it is not genuine. A moments thought will make it clear that if anyone is clever enough to fake a stamp it would be easier to copy a postmark. In any case, there are so very few forged stamps, especially of modern issues, that you need have no fear of them unless you are buying highly priced rarities.

To get back to the question of value, however, it is not possible to give any hard and fast answer; generally speaking you will find that it is cheaper to buy and easier to get **USED** stamps of the larger and more important countries such as Great Britain, U.S.A., France etc., while the **UNUSED** are commoner in the case of countries with only small letter-writing population, such as most French Colonies, the small British Colonies such as Cayman Is. and some countries like Abyssinia, Paraguay, Liechtenstein, Arab States, and so on.

It does not make any difference whether you collect used or unused stamps. It is equally correct and just as interesting — some collectors, of course, collect only one or the other, but by far the greater number accept either unused or used. It is, after all, a matter of personal choice, and whilst it is very nice to be able to say your stamps have actually paid postage on a letter or parcel it is also very pleasing to see a page of stamps, particularly of attractive pictorial scenes, which are not defaced by postmarking.

Unfortunately, nowadays some small countries even **print** the postmark on, to make their issues more appealing to collectors. Some of these are the Arab States, East European countries, and small islands.



Stamp hinges are small pieces of gummed glassine paper specially designed for affixing stamps into albums. Always use a good quality hinge and never, ever, paste stamps into your albums or use stick-tape (this will ruin stamps completely).

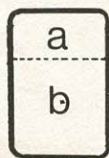


fig.1

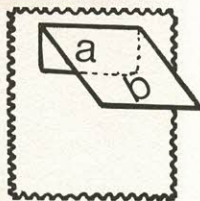


fig.2