

ASSCO INFO-SHEET NO. 8

DID YOU KNOW . . .

There are so many things to learn about stamps, but here's a few interesting things that collectors should know. Your family and friends will be impressed when you mention some of them.

Over 6,000 different stamps are issued each year by nearly 150 various countries. If you had one of every postage stamp ever issued, there would be over 200,000 different types in your collection. No — there is not one person in the world who has **every** stamp — because there is only one or two examples of each of the rarest stamps! To assemble a complete collection would cost over \$15,000,000. (And that's a **LOT** of pocket money.)

The first adhesive (sticky-backed) postage stamp in the world was issued by Great Britain in May, 1840 — it had Queen Victoria's head on it, and it's well known as the "Penny Black". What lots of collectors **DON'T** realise is that New South Wales was nearly first — it issued a lettercard in 1838 on which a stamp was printed.

Although most stamps have gum on the back which must be licked to stick on an envelope, some countries have peelable self-stick backs (including Tonga and Sierra Leone). And in some parts of India, large pots of glue are placed on post office counters to help stick stamps on envelopes.

What sorts of stamps can you buy at face value at Australian post offices? Silly question? "Australia, of course" . . . Yes, but also the stamps of many of our Pacific Ocean neighbours, for which Australia Post is an agent, including:—

<i>Fiji</i>	<i>Christmas Island</i>	<i>Pitcairn Island</i>
<i>Western Samoa</i>	<i>Norfolk Island</i>	<i>Papua New Guinea</i>
<i>Nauru</i>	<i>Aust. Antarctic Territory</i>	<i>Cocos/Keeling Island</i>

Only recent and current stamps can be bought this way — but it's the **CHEAPEST** way to buy them. News about issues of these countries is given in a bulletin we've suggested to your club leader to get.

The first stamp club in the world was formed in Paris (France) in 1860 — just 20 years after the first stamp. There are over 300 adult stamp clubs in Australia right now (some are called philatelic societies) and we know of nearly 500 junior stamp clubs using the ASSCO programme.

Every stamp issued by Canada since 1934 has a secret mark hidden in the design, which often cannot be seen by the naked eye. Try using your magnifying glass to see if you can find these marks. (By the way, not many adult collectors seem to have heard about this.)

The first **system** of postal services was founded over 2,500 years ago. This was in Persia. But the first **public** postal service was founded in 1505 by Prince Francis von Taxis.

The ASSCO list of philatelic records:—

The country to issue the most **AIRMAIL STAMPS** is Venezuela. Many other South American countries issue many special airmail designs.

The first animal stamp in the world was issued in 1851 by Canada, showing a beaver. (It's hard to get, and costs lots, but a reproduction appears on another Canadian stamp issued in 1951.)

One of the highest value stamp ever issued was in Germany in 1923. Because of inflation, its value was 50 billion marks, which is equal to about 6,000,000,000 Australian dollars!

The largest set of stamps ever issued was by Turkey, with nearly 400 stamps of different pictorial designs.

The rarest postage stamp in the world is the 1856 one cent issue of British Guiana. Only one exists, and this was re-sold in early 1980 for \$850,000!

British Guiana has produced two others which rank in the top ten most valuable stamps. Hawaii, Mauritius and New Zealand account for the other seven. These ten are:—

1. British Guiana .1856	1c.	7. Hawaii1851-2	5c
2. Hawaii1851-2	2c.	8. British Guiana . . .1856	4c.
3. Mauritius1847	1d.	9. Mauritius1848	2d.
4. British Guiana .1851	2c.	(error—PENOE instead of PENCE)	
5. Mauritius1847	2d.	10. New Zealand1862	3d.
6. Hawaii1851-2	13c.		

In the next ten, British Guiana has another five stamps, Mauritius and Canada two each and Hawaii one. Thus from only five countries come the twenty rarest stamps known and nearly half of these were issued by British Guiana!

ARABIC, GREEK AND RUSSIAN INSCRIPTIONS

ΑΣΟΒΝΥ ΑΤΡΑΔ . .		White Russia	Russia
БАТУМСКАЯ . . .		Batum	Russia
БИЪЕГА		Montenegro	Jugoslavia
БЪЛГАРСКА . . .		Bulgaria	
БЪЛГАРИЯ		Bulgaria	
СРБИЈА		Serbia	Jugoslavia
СТОТИНКИ		Bulgaria	
ДРАХМН	currency unit	Greece	
ДРЖАВА С.Х.С. .	currency unit	Jugoslavia	
ЕДИНАЯ РОССІЯ .	O. or I	South Russia	Russia
ΕΛΛΑΞ		Greece, but if O. on Crete they remain proper to Crete	
ΕΛΛ. ΓΡΑΜΜ . . .		Greece	
ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ		Greece	
ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΙΟΙΚΗΣΙΣ .	O. on Greece	Greek occ. of Albania	Albania
Σ. Δ. Δ.	O. on Greece	Dodecanese Islands	Greece
НОВЧ	currency unit	Montenegro	Jugoslavia
ΗΠΕΙΡΟΣ		Epirus	Greece
ΙΟΝΙΚΟΝ ΚΡΑΤΟΣ . .		Ionian Islands	Greece
ЈУГОСЛАВИЈА . . .		Jugoslavia	
КИТАЙ	O. on Russia	Russian P.O.'s in China	Russia
КРАЉЕВСТВО С.Х.С.		Jugoslavia	
ΛΕΒΑ	curr. unit (Para)	Bulgaria	
ΛΕΠΤΟΝ = ΛΕΠΤΑ .	currency unit	Greece and Crete	
ΛΗΜΝΟΣ	O. on Greece	Lemnos	Greece
ЈЪЕДИНЕННЫЕ НАШИИ .		United Nations	
ПАРА	currency unit	Serbia	Jugoslavia
ПОШТЕ ИР ГОРЕ . .		Montenegro	Jugoslavia
ПОЧТА		Russia (Russian word meaning "Postage")	
ПОЧТОВАЯ МАРКА .		Russia	
ПРНА ГОРА		Montenegro	Jugoslavia
ΠΡΟΣΩΡΙΝΗ ΚΥΒΗ .		Crete	Greece
РСФСР		Russia	
РОССІЯ		Russia	
РУБ	currency unit	Russia and certain Russian countries	
РУССКАЯ ПОЧТА .		Western Army	Russia
ЦРНА ГОРА		Montenegro	Jugoslavia
УКРАЊСЬКА		Ukraine	Russia