



# SIPA Bulletin

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## GUEST EDITORIAL

Time has to have a fresh look at the hobby of stamp collecting. It is threatened from three directions. First you will not have enough stamps in the days to come to make a collection. More and more mails would be bearing single metre stamps or computerised labels indicating the total payment to the post office in cash while handing over the article at the counter. In the days to come the person at the Post Office counter facing a franking machine would refuse your article if you do not pay in cash. Because that saves a lot of hassle in selling loose stamps of sundry denominations to make up the postage you have to pay for the article, saves the storage space for stamps and saves cost of printing and of imported paper. Use of postage stamps will be increasingly restricted to only such articles as are used on nonrecorded, ordinary articles of mail, if at all the post office in the days to come continues its present stamp issuing policies. It appears, higher denomination stamps will soon be out of circulation. There will be no variety when one receives a recorded article as all of them would bear a dull, same-look, computer print-out. If the staff at the counter connive with the outside elements you may get forged prints against payment made because there is little security mark to identify that it was imprinted at the Post Office counter only and not outside.

A second reason is: people are already resorting more and more to e-mail, and would be following e-trade and e-commerce. They would soon lose the art of letter writing. Courier service would be harnessed in e-business. So new generations of stamp collectors are faced with the prospect of nonavailability of commercially used stamps. Stamps that we have so far would soon become classics. It would not be a collector's world but a seller-buyer world. Buyers would soon turn to investment potentials and not the fun that goes with collecting things.

The third one is more serious. Older the collector the greater is his interest in classical stamps and stationeries. Already there is a murmur that the older judges do not consider nonclassic materials as worth pursuing and their judgment is weighted in favour of collections which have old classics and such other items which one can only have by encouraging pilferage from archives. In the circumstances how do we plan to increase the tribe of philatelists? Is it not being handed down from one investor to another if the second generation of philatelists loses interest in pursuing the hobby of their parent(s)?

The hobby of stamp collecting, we said in the last issue of this journal, is threatened from three directions. First you will get less and less stamps to make a collection, second, there will be no variety with the prospect of nonavailability of commercially used stamps and third, present system of evaluation of a collection is weighted in favour of collections which have such items which encourages pilferage and theft.

A collection in order to qualify for a gold medal must have lots of errors, a few specimens, two or three colour trials or artist's sketches, and some proofs. While errors are a result of human lapses in security check of sheets of stamps before they are issued to the post offices, they should be minimal. But our insistence on a good number encourages a trade in errors which in turn gives rise to a chain of people who connive at creating errors and passing them through. Can you otherwise explain why one gets so many errors in Pakistani stamps? It is a modern country and the system of checks in military regimes that Pakistan frequently goes through should not allow any defective sheets to pass through the security checks. The insistence on trials and proofs and the like encourages pilferages from Government archives where they are generally kept and they instead of being the country's national treasure becomes a part of the album of rich person/investor. Colour trials or proofs or specimens are made for seeking approval of the competent authority in the Government or Postal Department. As such they are not available outside, they are kept as parts of government records. By giving extra weightage to these items we encourage people to steal or pilfer the items from government archives or files. Similarly insistence in fiscal philately on full documents gives rise to pilferage of papers from case records, for, documents with fiscals affixed on them are available only on government offices or registries.

The Department of Posts in the Ministry of Communications of the Government of India has made a salutary provision that any proof, essay or colour trials exhibited in any philatelic exhibition held in the country would disqualify the entry. They believe and rightly so that these items are not available except through theft and therefore not to be encouraged as collectibles. If every country adopts this principle much of theft in art objects and philatelic items would remain in government museums and art galleries for every body to see.

**Shri S. Sahoo**

Hon. EDITOR - SIGNET  
President Elect - PCI, Life Member - SIPA

Our Second Sunday Meetings were held regularly where 30 members attended with President Shri. Balakrishna Das presiding. Shri. G. Madan Mohan Das, Spoke. New members introduced themselves. Talks by members with display, News/Views invited.

## STAMP NEWS

### Hundred Years of Railways in Doon Valley

06.05.2000

1500

0.7 million



The Doon valley, measuring about 75 kms in length and 25 kms in breadth, is famous as a tourist destination on account of its salubrious climate. In the later half of nineteenth century, despite laying of railway line upto Hardwar and Saharanpur, access to the valley and the nearby Mussoorie hill station was extremely difficult on account of the steep Shivaliks skirting the valley from south east to north west. The tourists travelled upto Saharanpur by rail and used bullock or horse driven carts for Dehradun or upto Rajpur from where ponies or dandies carried them to Mussoorie.

Railway line between Hardwar and Dehradun was sanctioned on 18th November 1896 and the contract for the construction and working of Hardwar-Dehra Railway between the Secretary of State and the Hardwar-Dehra Railway company was signed on 26th March 1897. Land was made available free by the government. Work on the track and buildings was completed by early 1900 at a cost of about Rs. 26 lakhs and the line was opened for traffic on 1st March 1900. Mussoorie and its adjoining areas also gained substantially from the far easier access.

Operations of line were entrusted to Oudh and Rohilkhand Railways. The line generated profits instantly and produced more than 3% of net earnings on the total capital employed in 1900 in the first 10 months of operation. Profits went up to 12% in 1920-21 of the total capital outlay on the project which had gone upto Rs.31 lakhs by that time.

Railway having a length of 51.26 kms passes through the dense forest, now a reserve forest known 'Rajaji National Park', endowed with rich flora and fauna. The line has 15 curves, the sharpest being 4 1/2 degree and ruling gradient of 1 in 75. There are two tunnels having a total length of 478.30 metres and 236 bridges having total waterway of 1355 metres.

Dehradun station is at present served by 8 pairs of daily and two pairs of bi-weekly train services connecting it with all parts of the country. Direct trains to Mumbai, Howrah, Varanasi, Gorakhpur, Ujjain, Delhi and Amritsar

are available here. Approximately 9000 passengers avail the facility of rail transport at Dehradun station daily.

Theme : Railways, Environment

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### MIGRATORY BIRDS

#### ROSY PASTOR, GARGANEY TEAL, FOREST WAGTAIL AND WHITE STORK

24.05.2000

300,300,300,300

1 million and

0.5 Million

Mixed Sheets



The subject of migration is one of the most enthralling branches of the study of bird life. In India a great influx of migratory birds takes place annually during winter, between September and November. The set of stamps depicts four prominent species of migratory birds seen in India-Rosy Pastor, Garganey Teal, Forest Wagtail and White Stork.

Rosy Pastor (*Sturnus roseus*) is a distinctive rose-pink starling, or myna, with a glistening black head, neck, upper breast, wings and tail. It is a winter visitor to India and moves from the north-west eastward to Bihar, staggling into West Bengal, Assam and Bangladesh. It is also seen throughout the Peninsula, decreasingly through Kerala and southern Tamil Nadu. The species can be in small parties or large flocks, and prefers the neighbourhoods of cultivation, especially jowar and bajra. One of our earliest migrants entering the northwestern parts of the subcontinent by middle July, bulk passage of adults and young occurs between August and October. Return transit is usually observed in March and April. It breeds in south-east Europe and south-west Asia, mainly during May and June.

The Garganey Teal (*Anas querquedula*) is one of our commonest and most widespread migratory ducks.

Smaller in size than Duck, it is one among the earliest to arrive in its winter quarters, and one of the last to leave. Small parties of this duck are occasionally seen till well into May. It is well distributed throughout India and frequents every type of water bodies, large and small jheels, marshes, village tanks, coastal backwaters and lagoons. Difference in colouration distinguish the male from female. Known breeding areas include Europe, Russia, Mangolia and Japan.

The Forest Wagtail (*Motacilla indica*), slightly bigger than sparrow in size, has olive-brown upper side and blackish brown wings. Mostly a winter visitor, it is commonly seen in north-east India, Eastern and Western Ghat complexes and Andaman Islands. It is usually seen singly in well wooded country, sometime in loose pairs or small parties. The Forest Wagtail arrives in September and leaves in April. It breeds during May and June in Assam. Other breeding areas include China, east Asia, Korea and Manchuria.

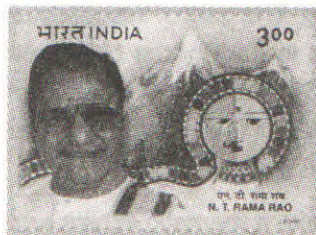
The White Stork (*Ciconia ciconia*) is a long-legged, long necked bird, bigger than Vulture in size. It is a winter visitor arriving in September/October, and leaving by March/April, mostly seen in northwestern India and in smaller numbers east and south in the Gangetic plain, Assam, M.P., Gujarat, Rajasthan and Maharashtra. It stalks along sedately in search of food on marshy grasslands or moist fields ploughed for winter crops. Food consists of frogs, reptiles, insects etc. It breeds during March to May in Europe, north Africa and western Asia.

Theme : Birds, Flora & Fauna.

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### N.T. RAMA RAO

28.05.2000      300      0.8 million



Affectionately known as 'ANNA' (Brother) for the Andhrites, 'Viswa Vikhyata Nata Sarvabhowma' Late Dr. Nandamuri Taraka Rama Rao remained in the hearts of young and old alike. Popularly known as

NTR, he has been a legend in his life time. Born in a poor agriculturist's family on May 28, 1923 to Lakshmaiah and Venkata Ramamma, at Nimmakuru in Krishna district, he was a crusader till his last breath.

He got introduced to theatre during college days. After graduating in Arts, he took up Government service briefly, only to resign and join the tinsel world, full time. He went on to act in leading roles in more than 320 films. His

mythological characters, particularly Lords Rama and Krishna remained in the hearts of people who even worshipped NTR as living God. A self disciplined man, he was an early riser, a practitioner of Yoga and teetotaler.

In March 1982, the matinee ideal turned politician and founded the political party called *Telugu Desam*, with the objectives of Telugu cultural renaissance and rejuvenation of the economy of Andhra Pradesh. The party swept the polls in the next elections and NTR was sworn in as the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh in January 1983. Working nearly 16 hours a day, he dedicated himself to the all-round development of the people. The programmes and schemes introduced by him included sale of rice at Rs.2/- per kg., construction of houses for the weaker sections of society, the Telugu Ganga Project to irrigate the parched lands of Rayalaseema, reservation of jobs in select categories for women, pension for destitute widows, re-organisation of district administration and giving equal share of property to the girl child. He passed away on 18.1.1996, at Hyderabad.

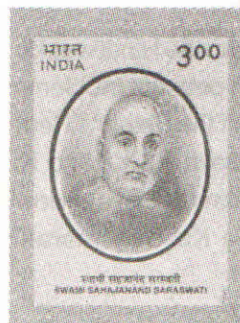
The stamp design is based on the alphabetic symbolism of the Telugu word 'anna'. Anna, meaning 'brother' is formed by the combination of two letters 'a' and 'nna'. First alphabet in the word 'amma' (mother) and the second alphabet in the word 'nanna' (father) put together forms 'anna'. Thus 'anna' is the manifestation of mother's love and father's support. In the stamp design, the first part of the emblem viz. the half cut face of the sun symbolizes father and the second part viz. the earth, symbolizes the mother. The design also incorporates other symbols representing the life and achievements of NTR.

Theme : Politicians, Cinema, Chief Ministers.

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### SWAMI SAHAJANAND SARASWATI

26.06.2000      300      0.4 million



Swami Sahajanand Saraswati (1889 - 1950) was a sanayasi as well as a revolutionary, who dedicated his life to the cause of political and economic independence of the Indian people.

Born in the district of Ghazipur of Uttar Pradesh, he was brilliant as a young student. Renouncing his home and family and adopting the way of asceticism, he moved to Varanasi where he devoted nine years to the study of Sanskrit and Hindu philosophy. The struggle for independence took stronger form with

the advent of Mahatma Gandhi to the country. Gandhiji's impassioned speeches inspired the nation in the non-cooperation and civil disobedience phases of the National Movement and Swami Sahajanand Saraswati was deeply influenced by the Mahatma's call to the nation. He made significant contributions to spreading the movement for which he was arrested immediately and sentenced to undergo rigorous imprisonment for one year.

From 1924 to 1928 his activities centered on the propagation of Khadi and prohibition, the two most important items of Mahatma Gandhi's constructive programme. Simri village in Shahabad district and Bihata in Patna district became two important centres of his activities. He established a Khadi weaving centre at Simri and an Ashram for political and Sanskrit teaching at Bihata. As a recognition of his work for the Congress, he was first elected a member of the UPCC and then the BPCC and the AICC.

While advocating the abolition of the zamindari system and creation of peasant proprietorship as the central slogans of agrarian reforms, he took up the burning issues of feudal oppression, such as forced labour, illegal exactions, evictions etc., for organising Kisan resistance and struggle. By the mid-thirties the Kisan movement in Bihar under his inspiring and militant leadership became a powerful political force which worked for the defeat of landlords by the Congress in the 1936 elections to the Bihar Legislative Assembly.

Swami Sahajanand was a powerful agitator and propagandist, and his speeches moved and moulded millions of peasants in the defence of their rights. Swamiji came to be addressed as 'Kisan Pran' (life of Kisans) by his Kisan Sabha followers. Such was his popularity that Sahajanand Day was observed throughout Bihar on 19 April 1940 in protest against his arrest. In 1949, only a year before his death, the country honoured him by celebrating his Diamond Jubilee and presenting him a purse of Rs. 60,000/- on the occasion.

He was also a forceful writer and ran the Hindi weekly Hunkar from Patna. His noted works on peasant problems and struggle include, 'The Other Side of the Shield', 'Rent Reduction in Bihar: How it Works', 'Gaya Ke Kisano Ki Karun Kahani' (Pitiable stories of the Kisans of Gaya), 'How the Kisans Fight' and 'Kisan Sabha Ke Sansmaran' (Reminiscences of the Kisan Sabha)

Theme : Freedom Fighter, Personality.

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Thematics is an exhibit whereby a collection is arranged and presented to express a concept or topic through the use of a wide variety of philatelic materials. In a way, it is very similar to picture writing. In Thematics, the various philatelic materials presented is used to interpret the general knowledge on the chosen subject and the philatelic knowledge relevant to the materials used. Without the required knowledge the selection of materials to be used and the writing required that describe the materials will not only be erroneous but also meaningless. In essence, the exhibit must impart information and at the same time be able to create the pleasure of an aesthetic experience especially to the viewer.

Each item that goes into a thematic exhibit is, in a true sense, a suggestive symbol. Interrelating all the symbols with its description will form a complete picture and complete story. A thematic exhibit should be able to communicate an insight, create a heightened awareness and a sense of personal involvement or enlargement. To achieve this, the collector must above and foremost like and enjoy the chosen subject.

There are specific rules that one can follow in order to put up a very good thematic exhibit. The collector must understand that each material that goes into the collection is both the source and the means. The collector must perceive in the material(s) as a way to communicate his original perception on the subject matter.

### **Point of view**

In thematics, the adherence to correctness is very essential. However, it should not prevent the collector the freedom of expression and being inventive in the development of his chosen topic. The goal of the collector is to attract and hold them still in front of the exhibit as they go over it page by page. Thematics is an intellectual exercise. It is for the creative collector and creativity implies both talent and hard work.

The two elements that make a thematic exhibit are:

### **1. The Chosen Subject**

The natural tendency is to select a subject that one has a particular interest in and more often it is in no way directly related to philately. Having an existing interest on a particular subject would mean that, to a certain degree, the basic knowledge to develop the subject property is already present.

## 2. The Exhibit Plan

Even before the collector goes on a buying spree for materials, an Exhibit Plan must be developed. Without any doubt, the Plan is the heart and soul of the exhibit. An exhibit plan is like a novel. It must have a well developed story line: an introduction, followed by a series of chapters that divide the topic into small sub-topics, and a conclusion - all of which must be inter-related with each other. A Plan can be simply viewed as a road map. It provides the driver directions, detailed information on certain surrounding areas, and an idea on how to arrive at a place at the shortest distance and time possible.

A well developed plan enables the collector to fix the scope of coverage of his subject. A lot of subjects are so diverse that they practically make up our entire planet. For the topic "Birds", it would be virtually impossible to have them all in one exhibit. Fixing the scope of coverage would mean limiting the exhibit to a particular bird class and/or its habitat region and even, in a philatelic sense, cover only a specific period of issue and/or use. A good example would be that of Eagles by a Japanese Collector, who limited his coverage by concentrating on pre-1900 issues only. By doing such, the collector can easily identify the issues involved and the countries that issued them. The study of the subject is therefore concentrated on a fixed period. With a good Plan, the collector can benefit with the following:

### 2.1. Specific Area of Knowledge

Thematics require a high degree of knowledge covering, among others, scientific, technical, history, mythology, political, and even on religion for certain subjects. The Plan directs the collector to specific areas in which more research is required which usually is on the subject matter per se rather than on the philatelic aspect of the topic. With the right knowledge the collector can make the necessary corrections and improvements throughout the course of putting up the exhibit.

### 2.2 Material Identification

Putting in the right materials is a key factor in a thematic exhibit. The materials presented must be tailor made. It must be no less than exact. A good thematic exhibit is not only consistent with the Plan but also one with the proper mixture or combination of materials representing a wide range of countries.

### 2.3 Material Purchase

The collector will save a lot of time, effort and money since the purchase of irrelevant and even unnecessary materials will be minimized or eliminated.

## SELECTION OF MATERIALS

The materials available for thematics is so wide that one can practically spend his entire fortune and still not be able to come up with a decent collection or exhibit. Limit the selection to stamps that clearly show a design that fits properly into a particular exhibit section. It must be the main stamp design. It is not advisable to use stamps with very small subject designs that one will have to use a magnifying glass and/or pointers in order for it to be recognized properly. This is also the same for covers, most especially for meter slogan, cachet, or special commemorative cancels. The clarity of design is very important in a thematic exhibit.

## THE RIGHT TYPE OF MATERIALS

A thematic exhibit is made up of a combination of all types of philatelic materials. The most important element to consider is that it should be a postal administration or an issue of a past or existing government. Having qualified the material as legitimate, one must look into other relevant philatelic details before the material is to be considered or purchased.

**STAMPS:** In general, the following must be avoided and if possible not be included in the exhibit: Cancelled to Order stamps (CTOs), Middle East Sultanates, Small island countries such as those in the Pacific and Caribbean, and the so called Mickey Mouse or Disney issues, Cinderella issues or those stamp looking items must not be used in a thematic exhibit. Admittedly, the said issues are highly colorful and attractive. More often these issues are produced specifically for stamp collectors. Having a piece or two in an exhibit is acceptable but having lots of them is certainly ill-advised.

Most of the commemorative issues consists of several values, either issued with a typical design or several different designs. It is not advisable to use complete sets of a particular issue most especially if the stamp is issued in a typical design format. In such a case a single stamp from the set would be sufficient.

**COVERS :** One must avoid the First Day Covers or FDC's. FDCs can be included in the exhibit but to a very limited degree. An example of such a cover would be one with an error on it. First day cover cachets cannot be used even if the caught envelopes are official issues of the postal administration. Preference is always on commercial covers or covers that really went through the mail system.

The most ideal commercial cover would be one that bears only the desired stamp with a good clear cancellation. However, a lot of commercial covers have on them several

stamps. In such a case select the cover that the particular stamp usage you are after the stands out among the other stamps. If the stamp you're after is a commemorative issue refrain from buying a cover that has other commemorative stamps not related to the chosen design on it. The other stamps, which more often are bigger and colorful, is a distraction rather than an asset. Since a lot of thematic stamps are commemorative issues the ideal cover would be one that is in combination with a definitive stamp which more often is smaller than the commemorative stamp.

**POSTAL STATIONERY :** Under this category are postal cards (not post cards), postal envelopes, letter cards or envelopes newspaper wrappers. The basic characteristic of all is that they have a stamp imprint on them. Some are printed with views like post cards (also known as view cards which are privately and commercially printed).

#### **SPECIAL CACHET, METER SLOGAN & COMMEMORATIVE CANCELS:**

There are a lot of these materials around. One should consider only those that are clear in all respects. Meaning, every aspect of the cancel most especially the design sought, is readable. A lot of special, cachet and commemorative cancels are being prepared specially for collectors. Like FDCs, having one or two in an exhibit is acceptable. Most meter slogan cancels are on commercial covers. Again, the key here is to select one that has a complete strike.

**ERRORS:** Needless to say, the ideal errors that deserve a place in a thematic exhibit are those that are recognized and genuine. These errors are: (1) missing color or values; (2) inverted printing; (3) those having no perforation while the normal issue is with perforation; (4) colour shifts, they must however be clearly visible to the eye; (5) accordion errors or stamps with paper folds, (6) stamps printed on the gum side; (7) double impression errors or errors caused when, the printing plate strikes the paper for the second time creating a double image of the subject; and (8) partial perforation errors.

One must be very careful in the purchasing of missing colour errors especially those described as partially having a missing color. These are the easiest type to fake even with the use of household chemicals. For young collectors, it is suggested that they should first make consultations before buying any type, of error.

#### **PROOFS, ESSAYS ARTIST SKETCHES:**

One of the best materials that can really make a thematic exhibit look good. These type of materials have

a price premium. Proofs and essays of issues are more expensive and sometimes harder to find. Proofs that would not cost so much are those from the French territories.

#### **MISCELLANEOUS MATERIALS:**

• Telegrams can be included in a thematic exhibit as more often they were operated as a branch of the post office. Early greeting telegrams have beautiful designs and the most noted country to use them is England. Internationally Reply Coupons, a lot of which also were issued with designs on them. An example of this would be that of Israel, their coupons depicting ancient ruins.

#### **SELECTIVE AND PRECISE BUYING**

The most common mistake of collectors, especially in a big show where dealers are aplenty, is uncontrollable desire to swoop down on all dealers and buy as he possibly can. Very often, a lot of the materials purchased cannot be, for one reason or another, used in the exhibit.

The purchase of mint stamps must be made according to its freshness in colour, centering, and completeness of perforation. Though there is a preference on mint stamps, it is immaterial to a thematic collection if the stamps is never hinged or previously hinged. In a lot of issues, there is a big price difference between a never hinged and a previously hinged stamp.

For used stamps, the purchaser can be guided on the following factors: The stamp must show no visible damage on the front. On an expensive item, a small thin on the back that is not visible on the front (especially for dark coloured stamps) is acceptable in a thematic exhibit. The cancellation must be crisp or light and not heavy. If one collects birds, it will be a waste of money if one buys a stamp with the bird design almost completely covered by the cancellation. The stamp still shows some freshness in colour and not over-soaked with cleaning agents.

For covers, they must be clean and with clear cancellations. The exception to the rule is the classic covers. Any form of damage to the cover must not affect the stamp and cancellation. Overall, the damage must be within tolerable limits.

#### **EXHIBIT PRESENTATION**

A thematic exhibit must be presented in such away that it clearly shows a high degree of fluidity and at the same time aesthetic. There is no specific formula on exhibit presentation but there are certain guides that can greatly improve the overall presentation of the exhibit. Exhibit pages must have proper allowable margins. Contents must be balanced and not

over-crowded. Select a type face and size that is easy to read and clean. Use of fancy type letters is not advisable.

Illustrations can enhance an exhibit if used properly. It should be limited to those that stress a point or that help impart valuable information. Most often used are maps and scientific charts. Coloured pointers are commonly used in a thematic exhibit. However, they must be of a size and colour that will not create a distraction on a particular page. Its use must be governed by one rule: Use only when necessary.

## CONCLUSION

Thematic collecting and exhibiting requires a lot of hard work, patience and persistency. This is a collecting field where the entire spectrum of philately is covered: from the A to Z countries and involving all the different types of materials that are deemed acceptable to this hobby of ours. It provides the collection an endless avenue of knowledge. It is difficult and yet at the same time loaded with enjoyment. A thematic collector is essentially one that really enjoys seeing ordinary things at a different perspective.

(Courtesy : Malpex - 97, Kaula Lumpur)

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## ROWLAND HILL

by Derek Baker



The centenary of the death of Rowland Hill the man whose ideas on postal reform revolutionised the world's postal systems-occurred on 27 August of this year. Like most great inventions, the idea of using adhesive labels to pre-pay postage cannot be exclusively attributed to one person, but Rowland Hill is credited with having developed this concept into a practical reality.

Rowland Hill's postal reforms, and his dogged fight with certain postal officials to ensure that his proposals were given a fair chance to prove themselves, resulted in Britain developing a postal system that was adopted by nations around the world.

Prior to the acceptance of Hill's reforms, a letter from overseas could easily cost from 2s 6d to 5s sterling, a large percentage of a worker's wage in the 19th century. An inland letter of three or four pages, travelling from London to Edinburgh, could be almost as expensive. Hill's reforms simplified costing by introducing a flat penny rate for all inland letters not exceeding half an ounce in weight. It also eliminated the need for all incoming letters from

overseas being sent to London, where specially trained clerks worked out ship letter fees due to ship masters, plus inland fees and any additional charges that might apply. Pre-payment of letters removed the need for a postman to collect payment on delivery, greatly speeding the delivery service. The great reduction in postal rates that followed the introduction of uniform penny postage meant that working-class people could at last afford to communicate with distant friends and relatives; made all the more important since the improvement in general education was bringing literacy within the reach of all sections of the community.

Rowland Hill was born on 3 December 1795, at Kidderminster, a thriving manufacturing town situated some 32 kilometres south-west of Birmingham. He was one of eight children born to Thomas Wright Hill, a brass-worker turned schoolmaster. All of Thomas Hill's six sons were required to assist their father as trainee teachers, at his school "Hazelwood". The reforms practised at this school received favourable comment, and resulted in a more pretentious school "Bruce Castle", being established at Tottenham, in the London district.

During 1835, Hill became secretary to a society organised by Edward Gibbon Wakefield, for the proposed colonisation of South Australia. Shortly afterwards, he became interested in postal reform, at that time being advocated by Robert Wallace. Wallace and Hill first met in 1836, and Wallace unselfishly made the fruits of his research freely available to Hill. In later years, Hill was to say of Wallace - "So far from evincing any jealousy, Mr Wallace at once gave me all the advantages in favour of my plan, he had adopted it with all his accustomed heartiness."

Rowland Hill's thorough research into the feasibility of a uniform rate of postage for all inland letters not exceeding 1/2 oz in weight, together with other suggestions for improving the postal service, were published in pamphlet form in 1837, under the title "Post Office Reform - Its Importance and Practicability" (1837). This pamphlet was a major factor in the wide acceptance of the reforms that he advocated.

James Raymond, Postmaster-General of New South Wales, received Rowland Hill's pamphlet together with the report of one committee of enquiry on postal reform, in 1838. Raymond was greatly impressed by the proposal to use stamped stationery to pre-pay postage, and upon application he quickly obtained the approval of the Governor, Sir George Gipps, to employ this method of pre-payment for Sydney's local penny post.

It is an interesting fact that Rowland Hill's pamphlet actually resulted in the colony of New South Wales beating Great Britain by 18 months for the honour of issuing the world's first pre-paid postage stamps. These stamps issued to the public in November 1838, for use on letters

posted and delivered within the boundaries of the Sydney penny post, consisted of an embossed impression of the Post Office Seal. ( ). This seal showed the lion and unicorn in a double circle and the words "General Post Office, Sydney, New South Wales". Letter sheets embossed by this seal could be purchased for 1s 3d per dozen sheets, or 1 1/4d each. One penny of this amount was for postage, the additional 1/4d being charged to offset production costs. In addition to these letter sheets, Sydney residents could also purchase notepaper or envelopes embossed with the seal, at a cost of 1s 8d for 25 items. These local post prepaid embossed sheets continued in use until adhesive stamps superseded them in January 1850.

Hill, on the other hand, had to overcome a great deal of opposition to his proposals for Post Office reform.

Two of Hill's bitterest opponents came from within the Post Office. They were the Postmaster-General, the Earl of Lichfield and the Secretary to the Post Office, Colonel Maberley. Lord Lichfield, speaking in reference to Rowland Hill's pamphlet, said - "With respect to the plan set forth by Mr. Hill, of all the wild and visionary schemes which I have ever heard or read of, it is the most extraordinary".

It is only natural that Colonel Maberley should be hostile to Rowland Hill, since most of the latter's criticism of the Post Office's inefficiency reflected on Maberley's management. Hill repeatedly asked that Maberley be moved to another position and that he be appointed Secretary to the Post Office, so that he could oversee the implementation of his plans for postal reform. Maberley described Hill's plans as - "utterly fallacious - unsupported by facts and resting entirely on assumption". Maberley's considered judgement on the effect of reducing the postage rate to 1d was that - "the revenue would not recover itself for forty or fifty years". In fact, the total number of letters handled reached the five-fold increase that Rowland Hill thought was necessary to offset the lowered rate of postage in 1854.

The old system that Hill sought to change based the cost of a letter on the number of sheets of paper it contained and the distance over which it travelled. Hill's proposed reform recommended a uniform rate of 1d for all inland letters not exceeding 1/2 oz in weight, and upon acceptance of his plan, it was agreed that the transition from the old system to the new should be gradual. This would allow the Post Office time to cope with the greatly increased mail flow that was anticipated with the drastically reduced postal charge.

Accordingly, an interim uniform rate of 4d for all inland letters not exceeding 1/2 oz was introduced on 5 December 1839. The sharp rise in the volume of mail that followed the reduction in postal rates, re-assured those who had doubted Hill. The public, however, felt that they were being cheated out of the full reform that had been promised, and the general criticism that followed, forced Hill to introduce uniform penny postage not only much earlier than was originally intended, but also long before the production of the stamps was completed.

The 4d rate was withdrawn on 10 January 1840, after just five weeks operation, and was replaced by the uniform penny post. Handstruck "Penny Paid" marks struck in red ink, were used to indicate pre-payment. There were two values; the 1d, struck in black, and the 2d, struck in blue. Both handmarks featured the head of the young Queen Victoria based on a medal engraved by William Wyon. Adhesive postage stamps were introduced on 6 May 1840.

Rowland Hill's original plan was to use stamped stationery. For security purposes, an elaborate envelope design was prepared by William Mulready, R.A., featuring a sketch of Britannia, seated with a British lion at her feet, and sending forth winged messengers to all parts of the globe. Like the adhesive stamps, they were available in two values - 1d, printed in black ink, and 2d, printed in blue ink.

The Mulready envelope ( ) was the first officially produced envelope to be made available to the general public. Envelopes seem to have first appeared commercially about the year 1838, when Dickinson, the paper manufacturer, referred to them before a Select Committee as the - "new fashioned envelopes with the four corners meeting under the seal". Home-made envelopes, however, are known to date back to the 1770's. Envelopes did not become popular until the introduction of uniform penny postage, because under the old system of costing, the envelope would count as an additional sheet, and would double the cost of a "single" letter. Unfortunately for these first envelopes and letter sheets, they became the target of considerable laughter and ridicule, commencing when John Leech, well-known cartoonist of the period, produced a satirical version of the Mulready envelope and wrapper ( ). These caricature envelopes were published by Messrs Fores, of Piccadilly, on 26 May 1840, less than three weeks after the "Mulreadies" were first introduced. A plump Britannia is depicted, accompanied by a lion with patches over his eyes, and letters tied to his tail. An American colonist on one side, and an oriental on the other are "thumbing their noses" at Britannia, while a bevy of rather ungainly "flying postmen"



carry letters overseas. The caricature envelope caught the fancy of the general public, and sold well. As a result, a large number of stationers produced versions of their own, some (including Fores) publishing sets of these envelopes. Rowland Hill, sensitive to the public reaction, quickly withdrew all unsold envelopes and letter sheets, and had them destroyed.

The decision to employ adhesive labels to prepay postage was made a fairly late stage. As Hill was unsure which method might prove the most popular with the public, he decided, almost as a last minute afterthought, that prepayment of postage should be effected by the use of "a bit of paper just large enough to bear the stamp, and covered at the back with a glutinous wash."

The withdrawal of the Mulready pre-paid stationery ensured the success of adhesive postage stamps, and as history bears out, they were eventually adopted by nations throughout the world. However, the pre-paid envelope and letter at a later date in simpler format, when they proved more successful. Stamped envelopes, bearing the embossed head of Queen Victoria within an oval frame, became available in 1841.

Today's air letter, for instance, is a modern version of the letter sheet.

When the British Government decided to adopt Rowland Hill's postal reforms, Hill was given an advisory position in the Treasury. He found, however, that his position was "ineffectual", as he had no authority within the Postal Department, and could only make recommendations to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

During the summer of 1841, the Whig Government, which contained a number of Hill's enthusiastic supporters, was displaced from office by the Conservative Party. A suggestion made by Hill during that year, that Colonel Maberley (Secretary to the Post Office), be transferred to another post, and Hill appointed in his place to supervise the new reforms, was refused. The following year, Hill was advised that his services were no longer required. In a bitter outburst, Hill stated that - "The measure was to be handed over to men who had opposed it stage by stage, and whose reputation was pledged to its failure." Following the Whig's return to power in June 1846 Hill was appointed Secretary to the Postmaster-General (Lord Clanricarde), in December. Colonel Maberley was still Secretary to the Post Office, and for the next eight years the two men virtually shared a dual secretaryship, though the relationship between them remained hostile. In 1854, Maberley was transferred to the Audit Office, and Rowland Hill finally assumed full control as Secretary to the Post Office.

During 1860, Lord Stanley of Alderley was appointed as Postmaster - General, and once again Rowland Hill met with opposition within the Post Office Department. The situation deteriorated to the stage where, in the spring of 1864, Hill tendered his resignation. His salary was continued as a pension, while a grateful Parliament awarded him a special grant of 20,000.

Hill's reforms raised the number of inland letters handled annually in Britain from an approximate 77 million in 1848, to about 642 millions, in 1864. He was knighted for his efforts in 1860.

Sir Rowland Hill died at Hampstead, London, on 27 August 1879, and was buried in Westminster Abbey on 4 September 1879.

*(Courtesy : Australian Stamp Bulletin)*

## **FORGERIES**

*by S.M. Mullick*

"Fakers come and Fakers go,  
but Fakes go on for ever"

The lives of persons associated with philately in the past and present cannot always be commended for all their actions.

Forgery covers counterfeit, facsimile, imitation, reproduction, fake or even bogus. A forgery is an imitation of a genuine stamp, in which every part is false including the paper, the design and the perforations. A fake is basically a genuine stamp which has been tampered. An imperforate stamp which had perforations added later is a fake. An overprint added later is also a fake. Perforations and overprints could be forged on a genuine stamp. Once the method of forgery is established many copies are generally produced but fakes have normally very few identical copies. Forgeries are made with the intention of financial gain. Most of the forgers adopted lithography, as it allows easy duplication. Forgers have found it difficult to get true watermarks and that is why philatelists keep a strict watch of the paper. Forgeries are often found to have been cancelled with the same town postmarks e.g., 'STOCK EXCHANGE' cancellation of forged stamps in U.K., Nice forgery of France.

There may be quite many fakers, but those famous on record in respect of Indian stamps are surprisingly foreigners, Dr. Bernard Assmus had faked, sold and attempted to sell rarities, interalia, the India 4 anna inverted centre of 1854. During his trial, he won praise from the Bench for his singular ability in this regard. The Judge, however, was more disturbed by the inversion of the

Queen's head on the faked stamp of India than by the charges of the fraud. He commented, "I think it is a very serious offence on the part of the prisoner to deal with the Queen's effigy in the way in which he had done". He was prosecuted during 1891 - 1892. At Ginza in Tokyo there was a stamp dealer by name Kamigata. He advertised in 1896 and offered high priced foreign stamps for sale. This offer included about 25 forged stamps. Some of the counterfeits were his own manufacture while those on India were imported. A number of forged overprints were produced by W.R. Thomas and he sold the forged '1866 officials' of India in 1902. A Belgian expert in forgery and fakery of postage stamps and covers was Mr. Raoul Ch de Thuin. He had about 70 cliches of Asian stamps including Indian Native States in his stock. Mr. Jean de Sperati, an Italian born, French citizen copied 1854 half-anna, 1856-1864 two annas imperforates, 1882 - 1888 nine pies rose, one rupee grey and 1885 - 1906 Gwalior nine pies. In Frere Hotel in Bombay, one Mr. Thomas Hill resided. He had contacts with Mr. Harold Treherne of U.K. Mr. Hill used to send large quantities of genuine Indian stamps and Harold supplied him with forged overprints to lots of 1000 per type for sale in India. Harold in 1902 forged 1854 stamps of India of half-anna, one anna and four annas including Gwalior State Stamp. Harold's best were the forgeries of certain stamps of Jammu & Kashmir. The aforementioned persons are recorded offenders of international standard connected with Indian stamps. There are quite a few Swiss, Italian & German forgers of International standard. But the real number in India and abroad cannot perhaps be correctly estimated. Dealing with fictitious stamps and their use on postal articles are offences under the Universal Postal Convention and Indian Post Office Act and penal clauses are provided for its users. Philatelists must therefore be careful and scrutinise before acquiring a valuable collection. All known forgeries of Indian stamps are:-

- 1852 Scinde Dawk - extensive forgery in all the three colours
- 1854 Half anna red S.G. 1 - easily detectable forgery.
- 1854 Half anna blue, Die I-defect in Queen's profile.
- 1854 Half anna, Die II- Forged Postmarks on genuine unused specimens.
- 1854 Half anna, Die III - light postmarks removed by chemicals to pass as genuine unused.
- 1854 One anna, Dies I and II - forged 'Straits Settlements postmarks applied. Also 'one' replaced by 'half' to make it appear a half-anna red.
- 1854 One anna, Die III - busts of Dies I and II touched up to pass off as buss of Die III.
- 1854 Four annas - various types of forgeries including dangerous forgeries of the rare error 'Head Inverted'.

- 1854 Two annas - simple forgery.
- 1860 8 pies purple on bluish - chemically bluish copies made from others.
- 1866 6 annas - overprinted 'Postage' - Forged overprints.
- 1882 Double impression of 1/2 anna and 2 annas - Forgeries of genuine stamps.
- 1882 1 rupee slate - Forgery to deprive Government of revenue.
- 1898 1/4 on 1/2 anna, surcharge double - Ink and the 1/4 second overprint differ.
- 1905 1/4 inverted - Forged overprints of the surcharge.
- 1912 Half-anna double impression - Forged second impression.
- 1921 Nine pies on 1 anna - all types of forged overprints.
- 1922 1/4 on 1/2 anna - Forgeries of Inverted and Double overprints.
- 1926 1/2 anna double impression - Forged second impression.
- 1937 K.G. VI One rupee - lithographed forgery with blurred design.
- 1949 8 annas - blurred with irregular letterings.  
12 annas - Mahatma Gandhi 'Service'.

Forgeries have also taken place in respect of Official Stamps and on stamps overprinted C.E.F. (China Expeditionary Force) and I.E.F. (Indian Expeditionary Force):

- 1866 Small Service - Forged overprints on all values.
- 1866 Overprint inverted - Forged overprints on some values. Some rubbing and reprints exist.
- 1868 Overprint S.G. Type 07 - Forgeries in Large Service series.
- 1872 9 pies, S.G. no. 014 - Forged overprint with forged postmarks.
- 1883 S.G. Nos. 038a, 040a and 040b - Forgeries of overprint double and inverted.
- 1900 S.G. Nos. 050a and 050b - Forgeries of overprint double and inverted.

Indian Armed Forces served during the 1914-1918 War in France, Egypt and Mesopotamia (Iraq) and postal unit was attached to it. The King George V stamps, 3 pies to 1 rupee were overprinted I.E.F. for use of the forces. There was no stop after 'E' or 'F'. in certain values. Some

values had double overprints. This accounted for many forgeries of this series.

Indian Refugee Relief Stamps were also forged. Forgeries of Indian Native States Stamps are known with cancellation in blue-black ink from (1) Bundi, (2) Bhor and (3) Duttia. Other forgeries of Dhar, Faridkot, Kishangarn and Jammu & Kashmir were noticeable.

All forgers have not necessarily done to defraud everybody. Some printed and sold for the benefit of stamp collectors. Still others did to deceive others with the intention of getting illegal profits: Information on philatelic forgers is difficult to obtain. The identity of a forger is accidentally disclosed. When philatelists gather privately, they talk about people associated with stamps. The stories of the misdeeds are not committed on papers. The world had about 80 infamous forgers. Unauthorised practices and the culprits committing them are not publicized, but a little enlightenment is necessary to be brought to the fore. A forged copy of \$2 red Hawaiian Statue was sold for 21 in a Robson Lowe auction on 3rd October 1975. Philatelists therefore beware of this evil in their hobby and business.

(Courtesy : Souvenir, India 80)

## JUNIOR CORNER

### GETTING STARTED IN STAMP COLLECTING - PART II

*By MaryAnn Bowman*

In Part One of this brochure, we discussed where you can get stamps, what to collect, soaking and saving stamps, and organizing your collection.

Now that you've begun to build a collection, let's talk about becoming a philatelist and learning about tools and information that you can use to really enjoy stamp collecting ... the world's most popular hobby.

#### V. Stamp Collecting Tools

The basic stamp collecting tools you will need are the album and hinges or mounts for affixing the stamps. Those have already been discussed. There are two other tools that the stamp collector considers essential.

Stamp tongs are used for handling stamps without damaging them or getting them dirty. Although they look tweezers, they are not. Stamp tongs have special rounded ends and will not pierce or damage a stamp. Although your hands should be clean when handling stamps, use the tongs to handle stamps. Oils on your fingers can damage stamps.

Another "must-have" for the collector is a price guide or catalogue of some sort. The Harris and Brookman catalogs of United States stamps are popular, inexpensive price guides. A colorful guide from the United States Postal Service is available at your local post office for a reasonable fee. The Postal Service Guide to United States Stamps also contains much useful information for the beginner. The Scott Standard Postage Stamp Catalogue is a good source for finding out about the world's stamps. Although current editions are too expensive for beginning collectors to consider purchasing, they can be found at most public libraries.

As you become more familiar with your stamps, a few other tools can be added to your equipment.

Once beyond the basics, all stamp collectors need a perforation gauge, watermark fluid and tray, and a color guide. Again, a stamp dealer or an experienced collector will be able to help you in learning the proper use of these tools.

#### VI. Finding Others Who Collect

Stamp collecting can be more fun if you find others who collect stamps. Ask your friends, perhaps they are collectors themselves, or knowsomeone who is. Check at your school to see if they have a stamp club. The Ben Franklin Stamp Clubs are sponsored by the United States Postal Service and are growing in number. If no stamp club exists, speak to your teacher or principal. Perhaps they would be willing to help organize one. They can do so by requesting free support materials from your local postmaster.

Frequently, larger populated areas will have either a city or county stamp club. Inquire at the library, post office, stamp store, or of your collecting friends to see if they know of a stamp club in your area. Stamp clubs are a fun way to meet new collectors, obtain new stamps, and learn more about the hobby.

Visit the philatelic windows at larger post offices. Visit your local stamp stores. They may be helpful to you in pursuing the hobby.

Find a penpal from a foreign country, preferably one who collects stamps. You would gain much knowledge about the culture, history and geography of another country. You might even trade stamps through the mail. At the very least, you will get their country's stamps on your mail. Be sure to use commemorative stamps on the mail to your penpal.

Join a stamp collecting organization. There are many groups, perhaps some that even specialize in a collecting area that you are interested in. Most specialized

organizations and local stamp clubs are affiliated with the American Philatelic Society, a national society of nearly 60,000 members.

One of the best ways to meet young collectors such as yourself is to join the Junior Philatelists of America (JPA). The JPA is the only youth oriented organization in the United States that brings collectors from the world together.

Many stamp collecting groups sponsor stamp shows, which can vary from an afternoon "bourse" which features several dealers from the area to three or four day exhibitions which include displays by other collectors. Many of these exhibitions include special areas for young people to learn more about the hobby and add new stamps to their collections for free or at a reduced cost. You can find out about these shows in stamp collector publications, in your local papers, or from stamp stores in your area. Try to attend the next show in your area!

### VII. Reading About Stamps

Stamp Collectors who have the most fun with their stamps are the ones who learn the most about their hobby. Reading available literature will help to make your collecting experiences even more fun.

Next time you go to the library, check the card catalog under the subject "Stamps" or "Stamp Collecting." Check out the books. See if the library has any stamp collecting newspapers or magazines. Many of the stamp collecting newspapers or magazines will send you a copy free or at a nominal charge.

A trip to your local stamp dealer or stamp show will also help you find a few basic books about stamp collecting.

Next time you are browsing in a book store, check to see what stamp collecting books are available.

Many national philatelic organizations and their special study groups have newsletters, magazines, and books to help you in learning more about stamp collecting. There are a lot of books about stamps... enough to fill a library for stamp collectors!

Stamp collecting is fun... but finding someone to share the hobby with and reading about philately will pave the way to ensuring your hobby will last a lifetime!

### VIII. Books and Publications

Here's a list of some books and publications about stamps that you might find helpful. Some publications can send you a sample copy or more information on how you can obtain a copy.

An Introduction to Stamp Collecting, by Steven J. Rod (\$2.95)  
Linn's Stamp News, P.O. Box 29, Sidney, OH 45365-0029.

Basic Philately, by Ken Wood. Stamp Collector, P.O. Box. 10, Albany, OR 97321-0006

Brookman's Price Guide of US, UN and Canada. Brookman Stamp Co., P.O.Box. 429, Bedford, NH 03102-5457.

Canadian Stamp News, 10, Tempo Ave., North York, ON, Canada M2H2N8 (bi-weekly)

Harris Postage Stamp Catalog, H.E. Harris & Co., P.O. Box 7087,

Portsmouth, NH 03801.

Linn's Stamp News, P.O. Box 29, Sidney, OH 45365-0029 (weekly)

Meekel's Stamp News, P.O.Box 5050, White Plains, NY 10602 (weekly)

Minkus Specialized American Stamp Catalog, Minkus Publications, Inc. P.O.Box 1228, Fort Mill, SC 29715.

The Philatelic Catalog, Philatelic Sales Division, U.S. Postal Service, Washington, DC 20265 - 0001.

The Postal Service Guide to U.S. Stamps. Published each year (\$5.00) and available at most local post offices.

Scott Standard Postage Stamp Catalogue. Scott Publishing Co., P.O.Box 828, Sidney, OH 45365-8959.

Scott Stamp Monthly, P.O.Box 828, Sidney, OH 45365-8959

Stamp Collecting Made Easy (\$1.00) Linn's Stamp News, P.O.Box 29, Sidney, OH 45365-0029

Stamp Collector, P.O. Box 10, Albany, OR 97321-0006 (weekly)

Stamps, 85 Canisteo Pl. Hornell, NY 14843-1544 (weekly)

Start Collecting Stamps, by Samuel Grossman (\$8.95). Running Press, 125 S. 22nd St., Philadelphia, PA 19103

### IX. Clubs

Here's a list of some of the major national philatelic organizations. They can send you information on joining and their activities. For local organizations, the American Philatelic Society and Linn's Stamp News maintain lists of local organizations.

American Association of Philatelic Exhibitors, P.O. Box 432, South Orange, NJ 07079

American First Day Cover Society, 14359, Chadburne, Houston, TX 77079-8811.

American Philatelic Society, P.O.Box 8000, State College, PA 16803-8000

American Stamp Dealers Association, 3 School Street, Suite 205, Glen Cove, NY 11542.

American Topical Association, P.O.Box. 630, Johnstown, PA 15907-0630

Council of Philatelic Organizations, P.O.Box COPO, State College, PA 16803-8340

Junior Philatelists of America, P.O.Box 1600 Trenton, NJ 08607-1600 .

(Courtesy : Junior Philatelists of America)

## NATIONAL TOPICAL STAMP SHOW 2001

The American Topical Association's National Topical Stamp Exhibition will be held in Mesa, Arizona, USA on June 22 - 24, 2001 according to the announcement from the A.T.A. The exhibition will be held at the Sheraton Mesa Hotel and Convention Center. National Topical Stamp Show is a WPS national show for Topical exhibits, the Grand Award winner is eligible to compete in the annual APS World Series of Philately.

## HOW YOUR DEALER CAN HELP YOU

by *Tony Shields*

Most stamp dealers have been collectors before they began trading in stamps and many continue to collect throughout their years in business. Many dealers have exhibited their stamps in competitions and several have gone on to win gold medals at national and international exhibitions.

This factor, plus experience gained from everyday business and market knowledge, helps make the dealer a philatelic expert and able to help people at all levels of collecting to improve their collections and get greater enjoyment from the hobby.

### Beginners

Whether you are a child aged five or an adult aged seventy, it doesn't matter when you begin to collect stamps. Your local stamp show can help you choose suitable albums, catalogues, tweezers and other equipment needed for your hobby and to suit your budget. Your dealer can also give you advice on how to collect, how to soak stamps off paper, sort them, display them and care for them. Most dealers are particularly helpful to beginners - especially juniors - as the newcomers are the future of our hobby and business. Dealers sell handbooks which identify the country a stamp is from plus catalogues which tell you its value, age and history. Your dealer can give details of where the local stamp club meets and when, and stamp clubs can give further assistance to the novice collector.

On top of this, the local stamp shop SELLS STAMPS - big ones, small ones, cheap ones, dear ones, in an endless range of shapes, sizes, colours, subjects, countries and prices. You can buy stamps you choose from their Browse Boxes for a few cents each, packets of world stamps from \$1 upwards and bags of stamps on paper (sold by the kilo) for endless hours of sorting pleasure. You never know what treasures lurk in them! Dealers also have collections for sale to get you off to a good start.

### Advanced Collectors

Eventually collectors aim to complete their collection of one country (usually Australia) or several countries or particular subjects, eg. stamps issued by Antarctic countries or stamps portraying birds. They know from catalogues and literature what stamps they need (their 'wants list') and dealers are usually able to supply these items from their stock or from other dealers' stock throughout the world. Some stamps are very difficult to obtain, but over time dealers can supply most items the collector needs. A good dealer will remember or record his clients' quality requirements, budgets and interests.

### Exhibitors

With strong worldwide contacts, specialist dealers are able to supply exhibitors with significant stamps and

covers. Stamp auctions also sell rare items to add to collectors' exhibits and dealers can provide suggestions for the exhibitor, plus introduce them to other collectors with similar interests. The wider the range of dealers who have been advised of your collecting interest, the greater the amount of stamps, covers and other exhibitable items you will be offered - better medal levels result.

### Do You Have Stamps to Sell?

Dealers can provide accurate market valuations on whole collections or single rarities for insurance, probate, property settlements or just collectors' curiosity as to 'What is it worth?'

Most dealers are keen to buy scarcer stamps, collections and even the messy accumulation in the attic that Grandpa saved off mail for 50 years. Don't tear the stamps off old envelopes and postcards - it will reduce their value, so leave them on as they are. Ensure that there is no wildlife in the collection, eg. silverfish or spiders. They always make me reluctant to check a collection carefully. Only show the dealer exactly what you want to sell and try to work out a price you want for it. Be realistic, as a dealer has to make a living reselling material just like yours' and the dealer may have it in stock for many years without disposing of it. Few dealers will pay more than half their selling price for most stamps, and sometimes much less, depending on saleability, stocks on hand and their finances. Whilst Post Offices sell more stamps to collectors than dealers do, they don't buy them back, so collectors always look to the trade when it comes time to sell. Remember the dealer is the expert and may value several different collections every day. In a few moments, the dealer can determine if the stamps for sale are worthwhile. It is usually uneconomical for the dealer to buy beginners' collections, as they will only be worth a few dollars. Don't interrupt the dealer when they are valuing your collection, as it can lead to errors in the valuation and it may take a longer time. Ask your questions after the valuation has been finished.

In conclusion, remember that your dealer can be a friend, advisor and supplier of nearly all your philatelic requirements and will buy your collection when it comes time to sell. Many serious collectors have made a good profit when they sold their collection, but remember that the aim of any hobby is to enjoy your leisure time and any money that you make is a bonus. Dealers, however, have to make money from their business.

*Tony Shields has operated a stamp & coin shop in Greensborough (Melbourne) for the past 30 years, selling particularly Australia, Antarctic and S.E. Asia material. He is a past President of APTA.*

(Courtesy : FIAP Journal)