



AUSTRALIAN PHILATELIC FEDERATION LTD

## I HAVE REDISCOVERED STAMP COLLECTING WHERE DO I GO FROM HERE?

*“Stamp collecting – a hobby for life”*

Many people at some time in their lives collect stamps. Many begin collecting stamps as a child and lose interest as they grow older and the pressures of study, work and family limit their time for recreational activities.

Later in life they rediscover their stamp collection and wonder what to do with it.

This brochure aims to give you some of the options if you find yourself in this situation.

### Rediscovering Stamp Collecting

On rediscovering your old collection you may find yourself renewing your interest in stamp collecting.

Stamp collecting is one of the world's most popular hobbies, satisfying our collector instincts as well as providing an insight into the history, geography and culture of the countries whose stamps we collect. Many people also consider it therapeutic and a relief from stress.

Many stamp collectors take up stamp collecting later in life. This may be triggered by discovering your old stamp collection, or by your children's interest in collecting or because you are looking for a serious hobby.

**Whatever the reason it is never too late to start stamp collecting!**

### Where to Begin?

If you had only the most basic stamp collection when younger but are seriously interested in taking on a new challenge. Then you need some good advice from another stamp collector or stamp dealer. This brochure, and others in the series, such as *New to Collecting*, *Why Join a Stamp Club?* and *Where Do I Get Stamps for My Collection*, are all a good start.

If you have collected before and want to restart with your old collection, then you also need some good advice. There can be no better advice than to seek out fellow collectors. Even if you have no interest in organised philately, your local stamp club or local stamp dealer is an ideal place to get some advice on the direction to take. The advice can also save you from making costly mistakes.

Collecting can simply involve buying new stamp issues from the post office and storing them in an album or stockbook. But if you want to fill gaps in your collection then you will need to find other sources of stamps such as stamp dealers and stamp clubs.

The other question you will want to answer is what do I want to collect? Very few people collect all the stamps of the world, there are simply too many and it is too expensive. Many collectors specialise and only collect Australia; or stamps from the year they were born till now; or their country of origin. The ways and byways of stamp collecting are endless. Take a look at collecting brochure number six, *Beyond Australia* for more ideas.

### How Can Stamp Clubs Help?

While stamp collecting can be a solitary hobby it is far more fun when done socially. The best way to take your hobby forward is to join a stamp club. The social interaction and friends you will make, tend to last a lifetime.

Stamp clubs (or philatelic societies) exist in most areas. Their membership includes people from a wide range of backgrounds who are interested in stamp collecting. They provide their members with the opportunity to meet with like-minded people and to share information about their hobby. They often offer displays, visiting speakers, newsletters or magazines and purchasing schemes for books and accessories. Importantly they provide you with an opportunity to obtain stamps at reasonable prices through their exchange books. Many clubs also organise stamp fairs and exhibitions. Stamp club members can help you with advice on all aspects of the hobby.

For details of stamp clubs near you please contact the philatelic council in your state. Contact details are given at the end of this brochure or try [www.apf.org.au](http://www.apf.org.au)

## **Dealers**

Stamp dealers and auction houses are an important source of stamps. Developing a close relationship with a stamp dealer is one of the best ways of obtaining new material. Most dealers see a wide range of material and will assist you in obtaining the stamps you need for your collection. For information about the dealers near you please contact the Australasian Philatelic Traders' Association (APTA) at [www.apta.com.au](http://www.apta.com.au).

## **Australia Post**

If you are interested in modern Australian stamps you can purchase stamps, first day covers and other products directly from Australia Post. Most Australia Post shops carry a range of new issues. You can also order directly by mail from the Australian Philatelic Bureau [www.auspost.com.au](http://www.auspost.com.au).

## **Obtaining stamps for y collection**

There are many ways to obtain stamps for your collection – from the mail, the post office, dealers and clubs. See Collecting Brochure 5 *Where do I get stamps for my collection?*.

## **What Are My Options If I Don't Wish To Keep The Collection?**

If you decide that you no longer have an interest in collecting, you may decide to dispose of the collection. If so then your next step should be to determine the value of the collection.

Many people are aware of stamp catalogues. In valuing stamps from stamp catalogues, it needs to be remembered that a dealer needs to make a profit on a purchase and will normally only buy a stamp for a fraction of the catalogue price which is most commonly a dealers' selling price. Some indication of current dealers' selling prices can be obtained from advertisements in stamp magazines.

You also need to be aware that the condition of a stamp is very important in determining its value. Damaged stamps, for example, are usually of no value unless the stamp is exceedingly rare. Look after your stamps. Stamps can be easily damaged by water, mould or insects. Do not, for example, leave your stamps in a damp garage or basement.

## **Valuations**

The best way to have the collection valued is to have a valuation done by a dealer. Most people will find that there is a local stamp dealer to whom the collection can be taken for a valuation.

Members of the Australasian Philatelic Traders' Association (APTA) agree to abide by a code of ethics and will provide you with a realistic idea of what your collection is worth. Stamp dealers are usually listed in the yellow pages but ask them whether they are members of APTA. A list of dealers can be found at [www.apta.com.au](http://www.apta.com.au)

It is important to remember when asking for a valuation from a stamp dealer that they may charge for their time. Most dealers are more than happy to take a quick look at a collection and let you know whether it is of little value or whether you should have it properly valued. Also, they will often waive the cost of valuation if you sell the collection to them.

## What next?

After you have determined the value of the collection, your options for dealing with the collection include:

- selling the collection; or
- giving the collection away.

If the collection is of little monetary value you should consider giving the collection to a young collector or donating the collection to a junior club in your area.

## Disposing of the Collection

If the collection has a reasonable monetary value (say over \$500) you may wish to sell it. The major ways of doing this include:

- direct sale to a dealer
- consigning the stamps to an auction house
- direct sale to a collector
- sale through the exchange books of a stamp club

For most people, direct sale to a dealer is the most convenient method of selling stamps. If the dealer is interested in the collection, a member of APTA will make you a fair offer for your stamps or direct you to another dealer who may be interested. It is worthwhile obtaining at least two offers.

If the collection is of significant value the best method of disposal is by auction. APTA will advise you of the names of reputable auction houses who will be able to sell your material on commission.

If your collection consists mainly of lower value material it may be better to sell the material through a local stamp club. Most clubs have exchange books through which members can sell stamps on the payment of a small commission. Your local club will advise you on the details of this method of selling your stamps

**For further information see brochure number 3 *I have just inherited a stamp collection – where do I go from here?***

### For Further Information

[www.apf.org.au](http://www.apf.org.au)

or

Contact your State Council

ACT: ACT Philatelic Council,  
GPO Box 980 CANBERRA ACT 2601  
NSW: Philatelic Development Council - NSW  
GPO Box 9800 SYDNEY NSW 2001  
QLD: Queensland Philatelic Council  
18 Coolcrest Street WYNNUM QLD 4178  
SA/NT: South Australian Philatelic Council  
GPO Box 9800 ADELAIDE SA 5001  
TAS: Tasmanian Stamp Council  
GPO Box 9800 HOBART TAS 7001  
VIC: Victorian Philatelic Council  
GPO Box 9800 MELBOURNE VIC 3001  
WA: Western Australian Philatelic Council  
GPO Box 9800 PERTH WA 6001

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

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

- 1 *New to Collecting Stamps*
- 2 *Why Join a Stamp Club?*
- 3 *I have just inherited a stamp collection - where do I go from here?*
- 5 *Where do I get stamps for my collection?*
- 6 *Beyond Australia!*
- 7 *How can I identify and value my stamps?*

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