



ABANDONED STAMPS OF AUSTRALIA

What Collectors Missed



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Text by Richard Breckon

*Images from the National Philatelic Collection, Australia Post
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1928 TRANS-TASMAN 1ST AIRMAIL OVERPRINT, 1½d

A tiny quantity of an overprinted 1½d George V stamp was prepared for the first attempts by aviators to carry official air mails between Australia and New Zealand. Originally, the stamp was intended for the ill-fated flight by New Zealanders, John Moncrieff and George Hood, on 10 January 1928. In the event, no airmail was carried, and the plane was lost. The next flight on 10 September 1928 by Charles Kingsford Smith and Charles Ulm was successful, although an official airmail was not carried. Just 240 overprinted 1½d stamps were intended to be affixed to mail addressed to each New Zealand Member of Parliament. However, at a later point, the plan was thought undesirable, if the public could not buy the stamp. Since all examples of the overprinted stamp were destroyed, the reproduced image is an artist's impression.



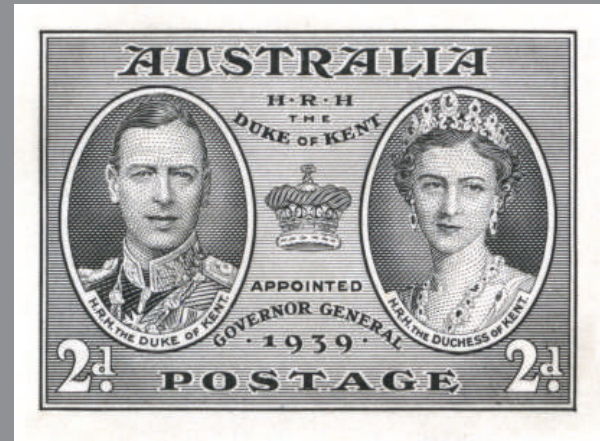
1939 TRANS-INDIAN OCEAN “GUBA” FLIGHT, 5s.

In June 1939, a survey flight across the Indian Ocean was carried out by Australian aviator, PG Taylor, in the flying boat *Guba-II*. This was intended to establish a safe air route, should the existing land route through Asia be interrupted by war. Originally, an official air mail was planned for the survey flight, which would involve a postage fee of 5s. per half ounce, in addition to the normal surface postage of 2d. A 5s. commemorative stamp was developed; the production of which reached an advanced stage before the carriage of an airmail was cancelled. All supplies of the 5s. stamp were destroyed, except for a single, imperforate proof sheet of 80 stamps, now held in the National Philatelic Collection.



1939 PROPOSED APPOINTMENT OF DUKE OF KENT AS GOVERNOR-GENERAL

In 1939, a stamp issue was developed to commemorate the appointment of the Duke of Kent as Australia's Governor-General. Prince George, Duke of Kent, the younger brother of King George VI, had been unable to take up his appointment in November 1939 due to the outbreak of war. The stamps, in denominations of 2d, 3d and 6d, reached an advanced stage of production. In the event, the Duke of Kent was killed in an aircraft accident in 1942 and three years later, his brother, the Duke of Gloucester, took up the position of Governor-General.



1949 ROYAL VISIT OF KING GEORGE VI

The first visit to Australia by a reigning monarch was scheduled for 1949. King George VI, Queen Elizabeth (later the Queen Mother) and Princess Margaret were to tour that year, but the visit was postponed to 1952 because of the King's ill health. The 1952 visit was abandoned for the same reason. A visit by Princess Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh was planned for 1952, but this visit was cancelled because of the King's death. Stamp designs were prepared for each proposed royal visit and, in most instances, the steel dies were engraved. For the 1949 visit a 1s.6d stamp die was engraved by Frank Manley featuring the King and Queen, which was later adapted for the 1952 visit. Of course, both stamp dies were abandoned.



1963 ELIZABETH II “BEADLE” SCULPTURED PROFILE, 5d

A couple of years after the 5d Queen Elizabeth II stamp was issued in 1959, steps were taken to develop a replacement design. The Post Office's policy required definitive stamp designs to be replaced about every three years. The 1959 stamp for basic letter postage soon became very familiar to the public. The new stamp design was based on a sculptured profile of the Queen prepared by Paul Beadle. The recommended version of the sculptured profile design was approved by the Queen in November 1962. Work began on engraving the stamp die in early 1963. However, the final result was not favoured, which led to the sculptured profile design being scrapped altogether. Instead, a new 5d stamp was issued based on the 1963 Royal Visit commemorative stamp.



1965 ELIZABETH II PHOTOGRAVURE COIL, 5d

In the mid-1960s, the Post Office had essays prepared of photogravure coil stamps; the design being based on the 1959 (recess) 5d Queen's portrait definitive stamp. The intention was that photogravure coil stamps would be printed on continuous reel-fed paper. The photogravure coil stamps could be cut into rolls of the desired length, instead of being laboriously joined together from rows of sheet-format, recess coil stamps. However, pressure of work at the Note Printing Branch during the lead-up to decimal currency caused the 5d photogravure coil stamp to be abandoned. Instead, photogravure coil stamps in continuous rolls appeared in decimal denominations in 1966.



1969 ELIZABETH II “HEDGECOE” PORTRAIT

The 1966 Elizabeth II decimal definitive stamps remained current until the issue of the photogravure-printed Marine Life & Gemstones stamps in 1973. However, a plan existed to replace the 1966 stamps with a design similar in concept to British “Machin” stamps. In mid-1967, Australian authorities obtained photographs by British photographer, John Hedgecoe, of the Queen in silhouette profile. Artists of the Note Printing Branch prepared various preliminary designs with the recommended version being approved by the Queen in November 1968. The production involved engraving a single master die without denomination, from which subsidiary dies would be engraved with individual denominations. By July 1969, the master die had been engraved, but a decision was made to cease work on the project. This was at a time when an upgrading of photogravure printing capacity was planned, which would allow single-colour recess definitive stamps to be replaced by multicolour photogravure issues. In the event, it was four years before this development occurred.



**1971 ELIZABETH II OVERPRINT,
8c on 6c**

On 1 October 1971, the rate of basic letter postage was increased from 6c to 7c, leading to the issue of a 7c Queen's head definitive stamp. However, a few months ahead of the 1971 rates increase it was a possibility that basic letter postage might rise to 8c. As there was insufficient time to produce an 8c Queen's head stamp, a plan was devised to overprint "8c" on the 6c orange Queen's head stamp, should this become necessary. Several trial sheets of 100 of the 8c on 6c overprinted stamps were prepared, which are now held in the National Philatelic Collection.



1972 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF ASIAN-OCEANIC POSTAL UNION, 7c

The Asian-Oceanic Postal Union (AOPU) was established in 1962 and it was proposed to issue a 7c commemorative stamp in 1972 to mark the body's 10th anniversary. (The regional grouping of UPU members is now called the Asian-Pacific Postal Union.) The 1972 stamp design featured the AOPU symbol. This was designed by George Hamori of Sydney, who had originally designed the AOPU symbol itself. In August 1971, the stamp design was approved by the Postmaster-General, Sir Alan Hulme. In the normal course of events the stamp would have been released in 1972, but this did not happen. The reason is obscure, but it is thought the stamp was dropped from the issue programme because it was not an occasion of sufficient interest to the community.



1980 MOSCOW OLYMPIC GAMES, 22c

Four stamps were planned to commemorate the 1980 Moscow Olympic Games. Following the invasion of Afghanistan by the USSR in December 1979, a US-led call for a boycott of the Moscow Olympics was launched, which was supported by the Australian government. Nevertheless, the Australian Olympic Committee decided to participate in the games. In the circumstances, Australia Post did not proceed with the stamp issue. Two of the four stamps had reached the point of being proofed in sheet format, although no printing of the supply of stamps had been carried out. The proof sheets of the two stamps have been retained in the National Philatelic Collection.

