

Australian Bicentenary

21 June 1988



Four stamps will be issued on 21 June to commemorate the bicentenary of the arrival of the First Fleet in Australia in January 1788. The stamps – 18p and 34p, printed in horizontal set-tenant pairs – were designed by Australia Post and comprise the first British “joint issue” with another postal administration. Stamps in almost identical designs will be issued by Australia Post on the same day.

The bicentenary celebrations have attracted considerable media attention, special programmes have been shown on British television and the royal visit by the Prince and Princess of Wales to witness the arrival in Sydney of a replica “First Fleet” on 26 January received widespread coverage. Further interest will be shown this month when HM The Queen visits Australia to open the new Federal Parliament Building, which is featured on one of the new stamps.

Australia was first sighted by the Spaniard Luis de Torres in 1606 and 10 years later the Dutch reached the west coast. Abel Tasman, after whom Tasmania is named, reached the south east coast by the mid 17th century. The new discoveries were known as New Holland but no attempt was made at settlement. The first British connection came in 1688 and 1699 with visits by William Dampier but it is Captain James Cook who is usually associated with Australia. Cook mapped the coast of New Zealand in 1769 and in 1770 traced the coast of Australia from Cape Howe to Cape York. He took formal possession for Britain and named the territory New South Wales.

Following the American War of Independence convicts were no longer transported to the Carolinas but kept in “hulks” in British rivers and harbours. In 1779 Sir Joseph Banks, who had accompanied Cook in 1770, recommended that a convict settlement should be formed in Australia. The first fleet of some 700 convicts and 200 guards sailed from Portsmouth in May 1787 and arrived in Botany Bay in January 1788. The first colony was established at Port Jackson a few miles away; this has since developed into the city of Sydney.

The four stamps reflect the strong historical, constitutional, sporting and cultural links between Britain and Australia. All four stamps have as their background the Australian flag comprising the “Union Jack” and six stars. The first of the **18p** stamps highlights the historical connection, featuring an early settler and a 19th century clipper ship of the type that sailed between Britain and Australia. The second 18p value illustrates the constitutional link, showing The Queen, the Palace of Westminster and the new Federal Parliament Building in Canberra with its distinctive flag pole. Australia operates a “Westminster” style Parliament – the upper house comprising the Senate, the House of Representatives being the equivalent of the British House of Commons.



Sporting links form the subject of the first **34p** stamp which portrays one of the World's best-known cricketers, Dr W G Grace and a tennis racket. Cricket and tennis are perhaps the two most popular sports in Australia and it will be remembered that the current Wimbledon champion is an Australian – the ebullient Pat Cash. The second 34p stamp concentrates on the cultural links featuring the new Sydney Opera House with the famous Harbour Bridge in the background with portraits of Shakespeare and John Lennon representative of the literary and musical links between the two countries.

Technical Details

Designed by Garry Emery for Australia Post, the stamps have been printed in lithography by

The House of Questa Limited. They are of square format, measuring 34.7mm, printed in sheets of 100 on phosphor coated paper with PVA Dextrin gum. Perforation is 14½. The colours and plate numbers are the same for both values, double pane sheets with A and B numbers: 1A/1B (deep ultramarine) 1A/1B (orange-yellow) 1A/1B (scarlet) 1A/1B (black) 1A/1B (bluish-grey) 1A/1B (emerald).



The Australian stamps – the Bicentenary logo replaces the Queen's profile, the value is expressed in cents

PHQ Cards

PHQ cards (Nos 111 A-D) featuring each of the four stamps will be available from 6 June, price 15p each.

Presentation Pack

The presentation pack (No.191) will cost £1.26 and was designed by The Partners with text by the novelist Thomas Keneally. It was printed by Clement & Foster Limited.

Souvenir Book

A 40-page souvenir book containing both the British and Australian sets of stamps will go on sale at the Bureau, philatelic counters and all main post offices on 21 June, price £3.95. The book will remain on sale at post offices until 19 August unless previously sold out; it will be available from the Bureau and philatelic counters for one year. Entitled "Links", the book will explain the historical, constitutional, sporting and cultural links between the two countries.

First Day Cover

The fdc design features a map of Australia, a kangaroo and parrot. It costs 16p. Two pictorial postmarks will be used for the fdc service, one from the British Philatelic Bureau featuring stars

and a globe, the other from Portsmouth shows one of the vessels of the First Fleet.

A fdc service will be provided by the Bureau with the official Royal Mail cover addressed to the destination required with the four stamps cancelled with either postmark. The charges will be £1.50 (inland) and £1.31 (overseas). Application forms, available from the Bureau and main post offices, should be returned not later than 21 June.

Customers requiring only the special pictorial postmarks may obtain them under the reposting facility by sending on the first day of issue a stamped addressed envelope under an outer cover endorsed 'Special First Day of Issue Handstamp' to:

'British Philatelic Bureau' 20 Brandon Street
EDINBURGH EH3 5TT

'Portsmouth' Special Postmark Duty
Letters District Office
Slindon Street
PORTSMOUTH PO1 1AA

Sale of Australian Items

Because of the "joint" nature of this issue, the British Philatelic Bureau and philatelic counters will be selling the Australian Bicentenary stamps, first day cover, presentation pack and maximum cards until 31 December 1988.

The four Australian stamps (2 x 37c, 2 x \$1) will cost £1.80 a set, presentation pack £1.95. First day covers bearing the four stamps with special cancel will be £1.90, a set of four maximum cards £2.75.

Australia Post are producing two special fdc's bearing respectively the British 18p and Australian 37c stamps and British 34p and Australian \$1 stamps, the British stamps cancelled at Brighton, East Sussex and the Australian stamps at Brighton, South Australia. Enquiries to: Philatelic Bureau, GPO Box 9988, Melbourne, Victoria 3001, Australia. The covers may also be available from dealers in the UK.

Collectors wishing to prepare their own "joint" fdc's may affix Australian Bicentenary stamps to covers bearing the British stamps with first day cancel to be sent to the Australia Post Philatelic Bureau to have the Australian First Day of Issue handstamp applied. These should be sent to Melbourne as soon as possible after 21 June.



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Austr
Little trans-
mainly of young British emigrants
and the immigrant vessels which
would continue to arrive over
the next 150 years takes mainly
with immigrants from the British Isles,
with immigrants from the British Isles,
and Cockneys who led their native wit and
expectations directly into Australian society.
The being who emerged from this era of
immigration is very like the man who stares at us
so piercingly from the stumps, shadled from the
neck, forthright, intense, shadled from the
antipodean sun by broad-hemmed hat.

Parliament
The Parliament stamp symbolises the
incarnation of the Westminster system in a dis-
tant place in a remote rural area of south
eastern Australia, a series of former
sheep paddocks nearly 200 miles from
Sydney, a place called Canberra.
The position of the Monarch in
Australia's constitutional existence
is a fiercely debated issue, and
there has always been
a strand of repub-
licanism. But it
cannot be de-
signed that a mas-
sive loyalty to
the monarchy
still exists in the
country, and will
a great number of
Australians look to a
monarch as a symbol
of stability amongst the
scrimmaging and rebut
tumultuous and state politics
feverence of Australia.
The Queen is by statute Queen
of Australia, and even among republicans
there to be considered ungracious.

**British-style in-
dependent judiciary**
Australia was founded in the
Georgian era, and its first arrivals,
whether those under sentence or those
consigned to some administrative task in
the country's deep space, brought with them the
English law for games, England

tain, such texts
Bicentennial event which
will be played at the Sydney
Cricket Ground after Au-
stralia Day, 1988, that
Australia's pastions are at their highest
The major diplomats crisis between Aus-
tralia and Britain was probably that associated with the
backline bowling controversy in the test series
of the early 1980s. Most test series have been
less acrimonious. Because the two competi-
ng nations live on opposite sides of
the globe, the British have to stay up
all night to hear what is happen-
ing during Australian-planned test
matches, and the Australians have
to stay up all night when their
team is playing. That venerable
curator which runs from Lord's
to the way of Old Trafford and
Headingley to the Oval
We are united, day and
night, therefore,
across thousands
of miles, in a
fraternal obser-
vance with a
minute strip of
bruised turf.
Whoever wins the
Bicentennial Test, no
one can shake from
Britain the glory
of having invented
the game.
The stamp particu-
larly engages in the set is the
one celebrating on town,
the premier Australian
of the Opera
House, the
Bicentennial

THE AUSTRALIAN BICENTENARY
200 YEARS OF EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT
ROYAL MAIL MINT STAMPS

