

Stamps

Weekly Times Column

By Warren Joel

Stamp collecting has been around for many generations, but is the old stamp collection worth anything?

Like so many areas of collecting it is highly specialised, requiring many years of expertise to master. But with stamps there is not only the stamp itself but what may be attached to the stamp or even what post mark is on the stamp.

If we just look at Australian stamps for a moment the value of the right stamp in mint condition will exceed six figures. Now here is where it all gets hard, because if we take that first watermark 1 pound stamp and then have the original edging, or in a group of say 4 stamps, the price will jump to many times the original price.

Stamps, like coins and banknotes, will have an even greater demand if the stamp has a printing defect. Leave off part of a Queen's head or miss print the colour and the price will jump. And it may not just be the stamp, but even the postmark, first day cover, where it was sent from, it's destination and even how it got there. These things will all affect the value.

We have only just touched on Australian stamps, but stamps and stamp collecting has been around since the English first produced the Penny Black in 1837. If we add to this the hundreds of countries that use and produce millions of stamps today we have a large selection to look through and collect.

Again like most areas of collecting the devil is in the detail. I have seen hundreds of stamps and stamp albums sell through the sale room for less than the face value of the stamps. I remember one sale where the stamps were sold in large removal boxes for a few dollars each box.

Next week: The country Auction - What to look for

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Warren is a third generation auctioneer and valuer specialising in Art, Antiques and Collectables, accredited by the Commonwealth in 2002 different areas of collectables.

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