

# Cinderella Corner

## The Myer Philatelic Department: Cinderellas

Welcome to the second edition of Cinderella Corner for 2018. For Australia, February signifies another month of warm weather and, hopefully, a welcomed opportunity to read this article under the backdrop of the glorious sun. This piece discusses a few of the cinderella labels affixed to items from the Myer Philatelic Department, including some that directly advertise

Myer-related products and services. It is, of course, by no means exhaustive and only offers a snapshot of the different labels that exist under the Myer theme. Outside of the cinderella world, Myer is an area of interest to many philatelists, as the organisation is an Australian juggernaut with a richly instituted history.

The finer points of difference between ephemera and philately can, on occasion, pose difficult for established and prospective collectors. The former holds one definition of *collectible items with the initial expectation to be short lived*, and philately, in a



Figure 1

broader sense, is *the study and collecting of postage stamps*. Somehow, with the rise of popular philately over several decades, both terms have expanded (and continues to do so) and as a result, there exists several questions concerning the ‘boundaries’ of items with specific philatelic endeavours and those with ephemera ones. Postcards, for example, often adorn the collections of both philatelic and pure ephemera enthusiasts. And, since the term was coined in 1959, so too do the vast array of cinderella labels that exist throughout the world.

There is a broad array of collectors who are

interested in philatelic and ‘philatelic-related’ ephemera items concerning the Australian goliath *The Myer Emporium* (hereon identified as *Myer/Myer’s*), including *The Myer Philatelic Department*. However, as a foremost cinderella enthusiast and collector, this piece is limited to exploring a few covers that herald interesting ‘Myer’s labels’ affixed to them, along with other labels not on cover that have also been linked to Myer



Figure 2

# Vito Milana



Figure 3

by Phil Downie and his wife Zita and the following year the Department began circulating Myer Philatelic News. Over the span of many decades, The Myer Philatelic Department helped nourish the philatelic needs of many collectors from the Myer store in Bourke Street, Melbourne. It has also been documented that some of the cinderellas that have been seen on Myer-related items were produced

department stores.

The Myer Philatelic Department in Melbourne (also known as the Myer Emporium Philatelic Department) was fairly elusive, especially when compared to some of the giant Philatelic Traders and Dealers in Melbourne and surrounds at the time of its early operation, including William Ackland, Ken Baker and Max Stern. It was established in 1938

within the Myer Philatelic Department in Melbourne.

Australian cinderellas occasionally adorned either the front or reverse of Myer covers. Figure 1 illustrates one such item with a rather simplistic blue and black label attached to the front (top left hand corner), which reads ROYAL SHOW 20<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER. The postmarked date of 17 September

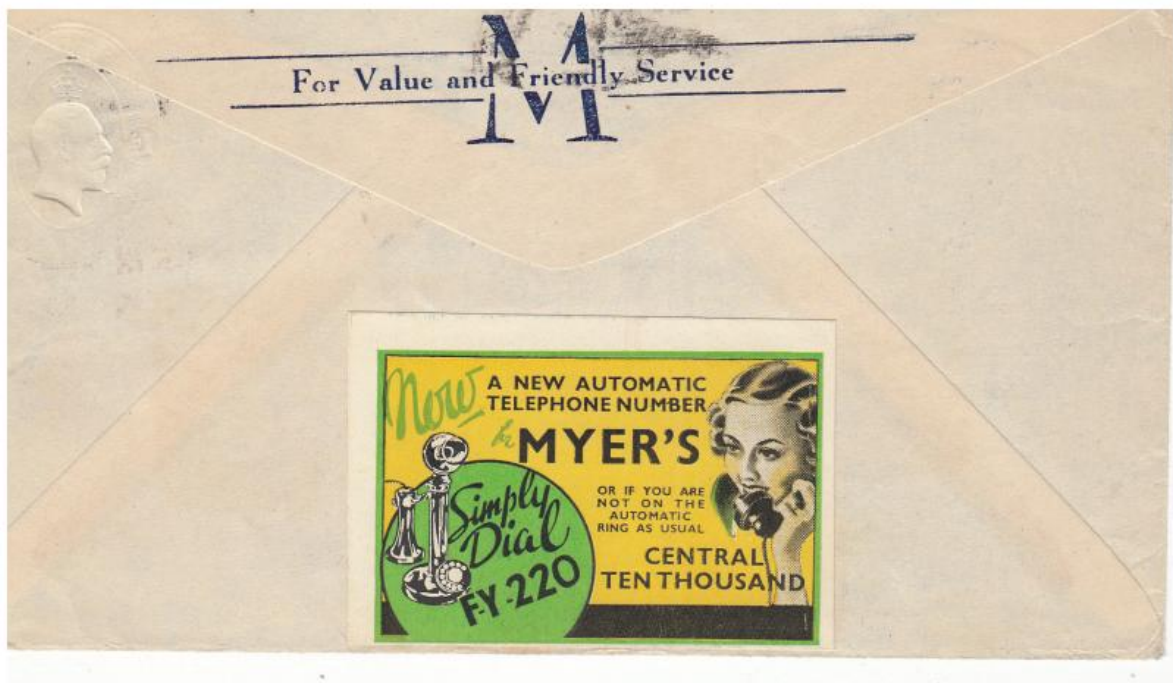


Figure 4



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1956 ascertains the year of the label, which promoted the Royal Agricultural Show, held that year at the Showgrounds in Ascot Vale, Melbourne. Of interest, the Myer Emporium occupied several ventures in the 1956 show, including promoting of its some of its products. Its function on the cover was therefore likely to encourage people to attend the show, sample and purchase items that were available throughout the 10 days. The label measure 55mm by 31mm and is rouletted 7 on all sides.

Figure 2, while sharing similar simplicity to the cinderella featured in Figure 1, promotes and echoes a 21<sup>st</sup> consumerism trend more than 60 years after its usage. The advertising label reads:

For Your Better Comfort & Convenience SHOP AND POST EARLY THIS CHRISTMAS

Coloured red and white, the label is imperforated and measures 47mm by 61mm, and is affixed to the rear of a Myer Emporium Limited cover with a 1951 postmarked date. It is likely that local printers were sourced by Myers to produce them and their purpose was to ensure that customers purchased products, as Christmas gifts, from their stores.

Figures 3 and 4 are scans from the front and



Figure 5



Figure 6



# Vito Milana



Figure 7

reverse of one cover. Postmarked 5<sup>th</sup> October 1935 (Melbourne, Victoria), the cover, which I have been informed is a scarce one, promotes The Myer Mural Dining Hall and Grill Room (which opened the previous year in 1934), and contains the text:

*The Myer Mural Dining Hall and Grill Room provide a setting of unusual beauty and comfort for your Morning Tea, Lunch, Afternoon Tea.*

Affixed to the reverse flap of the Printed-to-Private-Order stationery envelope is a colourful and rare cinderella label, which illustrates a woman on the telephone (right) and a dormant telephone (left). The text on the label reads:

*Now A NEW AUTOMATIC TELEPHONE NUMBER for MYER'S - OR IF YOU ARE NOT ON THE AUTOMATIC RING AS USUAL CENTRAL TEN THOUSAND - Simply Dial F-Y-220*

Coloured green, black, white and yellow, the label measures 66mm by 44mm and is imperforate on all sides. In a similar spirit, Figure 5 highlights a parallel message to the label illustrated in Figure 4, but with far less detail. The text reads: To Telephone Myer's SIMPLY DIAL FY220 FY-Dou-ble-two-oh. The label is coloured blue, green and white, is imperforate on all sides, and measures 38mm by 55mm.

Figures 6 and 7 are scans from the front and reverse of one cover. Postmarked 11<sup>th</sup> November 1947 (Melbourne, Victoria), the cover promotes The Myer Library, which operated from the 1930s

to the 1960s, and contains the text:

*THE MYER LIBRARY has - over 4,000 books - all the best Magazines - those "hard-to-get" books unobtainable elsewhere - Low Subscription Rates*

On the reverse of the cover is the additional text "FOR VALUE AND FRIENDLY SERVICE" along with an affixed red and white label with the text: POST your Christmas mail NOW. The square label measures 45mm by 45mm and is imperforate on all sides. Another variety

of this label is illustrated in Figure 8. It is identical to that offered in Figure 7, except it is coloured black and white. It is unsure if these Christmas Mail labels had any direct links to Myer, except several have been sighted on different Myer covers.

I welcome any further information from readers who have insight into these types of cinderellas, especially those that specifically advertise Myer's. There are, surely, many more that exist.



Figure 8