

Cinderella Corner

Welcome back to Cinderella Corner. This March issue is devoted to the wonderful fantasy issues of Gerald M. King. As content is being prepared for April, May and beyond, I encourage subscribers to email me cinderella material to be researched or published in forthcoming Cinderella Corner pieces.

The Australian Cinderellas And Other Philatelic Items Of Gerald King

Gerald M. King is an institution in the world of cinderella philately. Based in the UK, Gerald, foremost a creative artist, has been longstanding in his designing and producing of labels and other fantasy items for over 50 years and is still actively involved in philately.

Commencing in 1965, Gerald produced a set of 34 stamps to celebrate the wonderful creation of *Alice in Wonderland* after Great Britain did not issue a commemorative stamp to honour the 100th anniversary of Lewis Carroll's most famous publication. Since that time, more than 50 years ago, Gerald has released hundreds of fantasy stamps and other philatelic items that cover a range of topics and themes, including (but certainly not limited to):

- Wonderland: his most famous serving of delightful and humorous labels, divided into four areas: Pre-Alice stamps; Pre-Alice covers; Alice in Wonderland and Alice through the Looking Glass; Wonderland Commemoratives and Wonderland Christmas Cards.
- Snark Island
- Alternative Lundy
- Elizatoria
- Shakespeare
- The Tudors
- Puffin Post
- Burma
- Worldwide

A more detailed list of Gerald King's topics and work can be found on this private collector's website: www.askmeaboutstamps.com. With such breadth and history at hand, most collectors of cinderellas (and even postage stamps) would no doubt have stumbled across some of Gerald's work at some point.

This article covers one of his more ambitious and spectacular series of work: Elizatoria (and in particular those stamps that herald Australian and Australian States' designs). It then covers some of his other items outside of the Elizatoria sets that explore early Australian fantasies.

The Elizatoria series created by Gerald King number into the hundreds. They are, foremost, Elizabeth II heads in classic Victorian frames. Across two beautifully detailed A5 catalogues, Gerald numbers each of his created Elizatoria items for many worldwide countries under the British Empire, addressing colour details, varieties and imperforate variations, frame origins and head sources. Countries range from Uganda in Africa to the Falkland Islands.

Under Australia and the Australian States, Gerald has produced many unique and gracefully detailed items. These include some unadopted essay designs to high value postage revenues. A few of these are now explored.

Queensland Labels

In the catalogue *Elizatoria Part Two*, Gerald King lists a set of Queensland labels. Figure 1 illustrates one of these. Coloured in black and rose, it defines a 1d stamp with Elizabeth II head originally designed by D. Wilding. A second example, presented in Figure 2, shows a slightly higher value 6d Queensland stamp label, coloured in bright blue and black, with adopted head design from A. Machin. Alongside Queensland, Gerald created many high quality labels for all of the Australian States.

Victoria: Signed Proof Cards

Three examples (Figures 3 to 5) illustrate stunning



Figure 1



Figure 2

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Above: Figure 3 & 4

Left: Figure 5



colour proof cards, individually numbered and signed by Gerald King. Measuring 70mm x 65mm, these cards also pinpoint details of the original printers. Figure 3, the Victorian 3/- stamp proof card, is **F. Grosse, Melbourne**; Figure 4, the Victorian 6d stamp proof card, is attributed to **Messrs. De Gruchy & Leigh, Melbourne**; Figure 5, the 2d Victorian stamp proof card, is **J. P. Atkinson, Melbourne**.

Gerald King produced coloured, and black and white, proof cards for all states and all are individually signed. They are vibrant and of high quality and mention other prominent Printers across Australia, including:

- Govt. Printing Works, Melb.
- F. W. Robinson, Melb.
- Messrs. Perkins, Bacon & Co.
- Thos De La Rue & Co.
- John Ash. Australian Note and Stamp Printer

Imperforated Labels

Some of Gerald King's most highly prized and sought after items drawn from his Elizatoria creations are those rare and wonderful items that are imperforate. Figures 6 and 7 exemplify two imperforate strips, each containing four labels. The first, presented in red and white, is for a 1d issue and the second, in blue and white, is for a 4d. These are scarce and some of the oldest of the issues and are most popular amongst collectors not only for their imperforate states, but also given the Van Dieman's Land – Tasmania association.

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Figures 6 & 7

Australia Black Swan

This set of six cinderella stamps (see Figure 8) covers the following high values: 1s, 2s, 5s, 10s, £1, and £2. The colours are vibrant and keenly selected. This fantasy set is based on essays intended to replace the first Kangaroo and Map types, yet the outbreak of World War I caused the series to be quickly terminated. Each of these labels presents the 'Crown over A' watermark imprint on the reverse.

Baldy Essay

Another fine example of Australian items issued by Gerald King outside of the Elizatoria catalogue are those fantasies based on the so-called "Baldy" essays. Designed by E. A. Arnold for the 1911 stamp design competition, Gerald produced a number of items that celebrated

these. Figure 9 illustrates one block of four labels from six bi-coloured colour proofs, and Figure 10 illustrates one six issued 6d colour trial labels. Gerald also completed signed proofs for four higher values in this design in black and white as well as matching proofs (and stamps) in full colour.

The Baldy design items are one of several sets completed by Gerald by artists who entered designs in the 1911 competition. Others include fantasy items replicating designs by E. T. Luke as well as Max Tannenberg.

Concluding Remarks

Gerald King's stunning Australian items are both rare and highly sought after by a string of worldwide collectors. Most fetch,



Figure 10

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Figures 8 (above) & (left)

at auction, hundreds of dollars each. If you are lucky to find one on the internet or offered through private hands, it would be worth securing as they are a great investment. Only recently, a pair of his imperforate Tasmania labels sold for the equivalent of over \$400 Australian dollars. Each of his proof cards, offered with matching stamps, see similar realisations. Given that Gerald does not reprint any of his issues, these are all limited and worthy additions to any cinderella label collection.

If you are interested in learning more about any of Gerald King's items or in collecting some of his incredible work, please contact me. I am also keen to learn more, so any further information is welcomed. Alternatively, you can contact Anne Vickers who is Gerald's representative and who first introduced me into the wonderful world of Gerald King: a.nne1@btinternet.com