

Cinderella Corner

Newcastle

Welcome to the August edition of *Cinderella Corner*. This month's piece has been provided by cinderella collector and enthusiast Mr. John Patterson of New South Wales. His insight into the labels discussed is rich and invaluable; I thank him for his efforts and remarkable contribution.

Sun, sand, surf, steel. String these words in a sentence and most New South Welshmen will know immediately what you are referring to. Add the words Stockton Bridge, Silverchair and The Screaming Jets to this alliterative cavalcade and most Australians would instantly recognise that New South Wales's second largest city Newcastle sits at the centre of this word cloud. Another 'S' word that deserves association with Newcastle is stamps.

Newcastle has had a highly active philatelic society since at least 1918, and of course readers will be aware that her sesquicentenary was the subject of a 1947 Australian postal stamp issue comprising three values. Newcastle has also been the subject and source of several important and interesting cinderella stamp issues which this article shall explore.

Newcastle is best known for the important contribution which her gargantuan coal and steel industries played in the economic prosperity of Australia over many decades. These industries influenced most aspects of life in Newcastle by helping to fund sport-

ing, architectural and artistic infrastructure. They also helped to instil a strong sense of social conscience and local pride amongst her citizens. These characteristics are reflected in Newcastle's cinderella stamps.

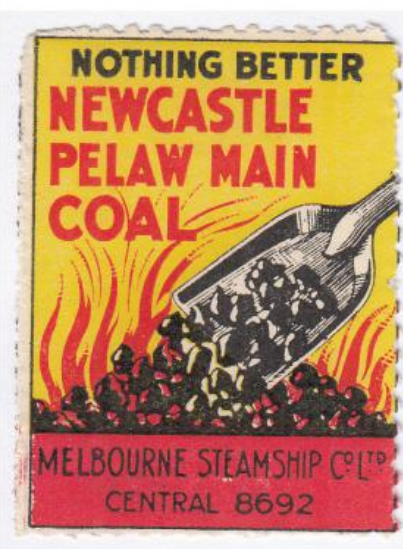
World War 1

The first official national day known as "Australia Day" was held on July 30th, 1915 as a fundraising day for Australia's World War 1 effort. This was the only year Australia Day fell on that date which allows us to precisely date the scarce block of six shown in Figure 1 that was produced to support Newcastle's fundraising for the day. Each stamp measures 31mm x 32mm.

The 1930s

Figure 2 shows a stamp produced by the Newcastle Philatelic Society to promote the visit to Newcastle by Prince Henry, Duke of Gloucester during his 1934 Australian tour. 1934 was the 75th anniversary year of the 1859 proclamation of Newcastle as a principality hence the reference to "Jubilee Celebrations" in the text. Newcastle's first major stamp exhibition was scheduled to coincide with the Dukes visit. (Dimensions: 41mm x 51mm).

Whilst the stamp at Figure 3 was produced in Melbourne it presents as a superbly visual advertisement for the high quality coal which had been extracted from Newcastle since 1790 and exported



L-R : Figures 1-3

Vito Milana



Top L-R :
Figures 4 & 5

Left L-R :
Figure 6 - 8

internationally since 1799. Pelaw Main was a major colliery 30kms west of Newcastle famous for the quality of its gas coal, which the Melbourne Steamship Company regularly shipped down the East Coast for the Melbourne market. (Dimensions: 39mm x 53mm).

World War 2

Newcastle played a crucial role in Australia's World War 2 campaign. The "Fortress Newcastle" living histories project indicates that during WW2 Newcastle had the largest mainland military establishment in Australia's history, and was the critical hub for Australia's largest war materials production program. It is also the only place in Australia where coastal defences were fired at an enemy naval vessel (8/6/1942). It should therefore come as no surprise then that the population of Newcastle was highly active in recruitment and fundraising for the war effort.

The stamp at Figure 4 was produced to support WW2 RAAF recruitment efforts, inviting Novacastrians to sign up as aircrew at the Hunter Street RAAF depot. Campaigns such as this were high-

ly successful in attracting local recruits and were probably helped in part by the training and operational opportunities available close to home through the nearby Williamstown RAAF base. (Dimensions: 40mm x 52mm).

Figure 5 shows a scarce group of fundraising stamps exhorting Novacastrians to immediately support their local WW2 fundraising efforts by purchasing War Savings Stamps or Certificates Now. This design is only known with a Newcastle attribution, so it is most likely a locally conceived and produced issue. The fairly intimidating and ferocious soldier captured in a dramatic half tone action pose could well be a local recruitee photographed demonstrating his approach to the hun during local training. This stamp is only known in these three colours and measures 36mm x 58mm.

Figures 6, 7 and 8 show three different locally produced Newcastle Schools Red Cross Appeal one penny fund raising stamps from the World War 2 period. The stamps were sold to and by schoolchildren and the money raised was used to help fund the Red Cross's charitable wartime activities. The label

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identified with Figure 7 was also issued as a 3 pence value. It is interesting to note that despite the fact that fundraising efforts were conducted in schools across Australia during WW2 these stamps are the only WW2-era Red Cross fundraising stamps shown in Dave Elsmore's respected online catalogue that specifically reference a schools appeal. This would suggest that the conception and production of these stamps (and the associated fundraising program) was entirely a local affair. In common with many other early Australian localised fundraising stamp issues these stamps were produced using relatively inexpensive paper and basic printing, rouletting and design – production attributes which can impart a certain primitive charm and localised interest to what some people might otherwise consider unremarkable stamps. These stamps measure 31mm x 33mm (Fig. 6), 25mm x 37mm (Fig. 7) and 30mm x 28mm (Fig. 8).

The Sesquicentenary

In 1947 Newcastle celebrated the 150th anniversary of the first known exploration of the area by an Englishman, Lieutenant John Shortland. During September 1797 Shortland sailed into the mouth of a previously unexplored river and noted the obviously abundant coal deposits there as well as the deep water harbour which the river mouth lead to. He named the river the Hunter after the NSW Governor of the time, and as soon as he reported the presence of the

coal to Governor Hunter the processes which lead to Newcastle's future role as Australia's leading coal producing area were put in train. Within two years Australia was exporting coal from Newcastle, as well as using it for much of the energy and heating requirements of the nascent colony.

The 1947 sesquicentenary featured parades, processions, fireworks, all sorts of exhibitions, race meetings, concerts, athletics carnivals, the unveiling of monuments and the delivery of speeches. Much of the focus of the event was geared towards the importance of Newcastle as an industrial centre, a subject which is the feature of the promotional stamps shown at Figures 9 and 10. Figure 11 shows a more generalised promotional stamp for the anniversary featuring Nobby's Beach and the iconic geological feature known as "Nobbys Head" which is topped by a lighthouse constructed in 1858. Newcastle's industrial character is referenced in the image by a large boat steaming past Nobbys into the Harbour. The dimensions are Figure 9 – 55mm x 70mm, Figure 10 – 45mm x 50mm, and Figure 11 - 41mm x 64mm.

A major philatelic exhibition was also a feature of the 1947 sesquicentenary celebrations, held in Tyrrell Hall and run by the Newcastle Philatelic Society. The rather grand classically themed Souvenir Sheet at Figure 12 was produced to promote the exhibition and is often encountered on cover. In common with Figure 11 this stamp features an image of Nobby's Beach, Head and Lighthouse however, despite show-



L-R: Figures 9 - 11



Top L-R : Figures 12 & 14
Left : Figure 13

image in Figure 12 should be considered a more accurate representation. This sheet also references the importance of industry and commerce to Newcastle's self image, whilst its imposing size attempts to add further gravitas to the classical iconography. Dimensions 78mm x 60mm.

The Newcastle Show

In common with many Australian towns and cities, the annual show is a major feature of Newcastle's calendar. The Newcastle Show is an agricultural show that features show jumping and sideshow rides amongst its many attractions, along with a range of competition exhibitions covering such diverse subjects as wood chopping, parkour and robotics. First held in 1902 an indication of the show's importance to the local community can be gleaned from the fact that up until 2012 Newcastle Show Day was a local public holiday.

During the 1960s and 1970s a promotional cinderella was produced annually for the show. Although

ing a view taken from the same location, the artist here has interpreted the landscape quite differently than the artist behind Figure 11. The

featuring the same design each year the series is notable for the attractive colour combinations that were changed for each issue. The other primary difference between each year's issue was the inclusion of the dates for the show in the particular year being promoted. These dates are the primary tool for determining the particular year of issue. Figure 13 illustrates some of the colour combinations used for this issue. The stamps measure 40mm x 50 mm (with some minor variations between the years) and are sometimes found on cover.

The Bicentennial

The colourful and appealing sheet at Figure 14 was produced by the Newcastle Bicentennial Community Committee during the 1988 Australian Bicentennial year to promote local landmarks, businesses and wildlife, as well as a range of local Bicentennial festivities including the major stamp exhibition Norpex (once again presented by the Newcastle Philatelic society). The sheet was produced as perforate, imperforate and roulette. Individual stamps are sometimes seen on cover. The roulette sheet measures 165mm x 63 mm, and each stamp measures 38mm x 26mm. Hopefully readers have enjoyed this brief introduction to the cinderella stamps of Newcastle. With any luck Newcastle will continue to be the source and subject of many more interesting cinderellas for years to come. If you have any other Newcastle cinderellas not shown here please let me know via patterronics@gmail.com.