

The Kookaburra Stamps of Australia 1914-1960

Objective of this Exhibit

This traditional exhibit documents the Kookaburra stamps of Australia to 1960, including variations of shades, perforations, printer imprints, flaws and errors. The Kookaburra was issued as a 6d value except for a re-engraving of the 1914 6d to a 3d value in 1928. The exhibit will document how Kookaburra usage changed as rates increased and illustrate the development of airmail service during this 46-year period.

Organization

This exhibit is organized chronologically by Issue, then secondarily by usage: a) Usage as intended, b) Other solo rate usages, and c) Combination/make-up rate usage.

Issue	Value	Printing	Frame	Issue	Value	Printing	Frame
1914	6d	JB Cooke	1	1942	6d	WCG MacCracken	5
1928	3d	Melbourne Town Hall	1	1949	6d	"By Authority"	6
1928	3d	J Ash	1	1952	6d	"No Imprint"	7
1932	6d	J Ash	2	1956	6d	No Watermark	7
1937	6d	J Ash	4	1947		B.C.O.F. Overprint	7

Background

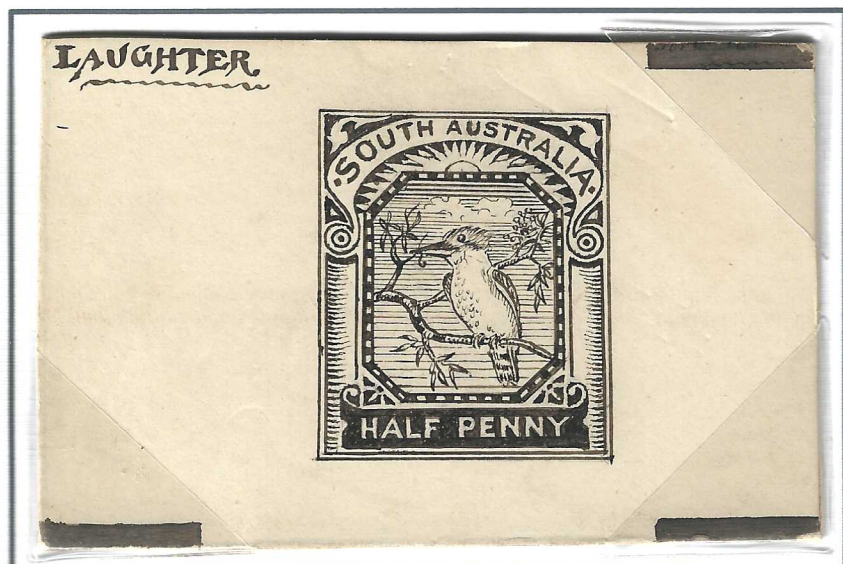
The Kookaburra is an iconic symbol within Australia, along with the Kangaroo and Emu. The Kookaburra is associated with laughter, joy, and merriment due to its distinctive and infectious call that resembles hearty laughter. Kookaburras were popular with Australian settlers and received the nickname, "Bushman's Clock" as their laughter-like call comes at early dawn and dusk.

Kookaburra is a loanword from the Wiradjuri "Guuguubarra", onomatopoeic of its call. The nickname "Laughing Jackass" came about due to its call being mistaken for many different animals, such as donkeys and monkeys. Donkeys are classified as Asses; Jacks are male asses, hence "Jackass". In the old Tarzan movies the jungle sounds included recordings of Kookaburra calls, even though they do not live in Africa.

Discussion

The 6d Kookaburra was issued to pay the 1 pound intrastate parcel rate (1914-1929) and then the first-step 1 pound parcel rate for delivery within 30 miles (up to 1-Dec-50). Current day preservation of these low usages is quite rare. On 16-Dec-29, the first ship left Perth to connect with the new Karachi-London airmail service, costing 6d plus surface fees. Intended uses expanded over time, and as rates changed the 6d Kookaburra found additional unofficial uses such as 3d domestic airmail plus 3d registration, for example. This exhibit illustrates the many uses of the Kookaburra, used both solo and in combination rates.

Highlights of the exhibit include stamp plate numbers and printing errors, a full 1928 International Philatelic Exhibition sheet, and WW2 airmail, POW and military usage.



**Half Penny "LAUGHTER"
Essay for the 1896 South Australia
Stamp Competition**

Pen and Ink on very thick card.
Kookaburra on Eucalyptus Branch.
No numerical value.