

Australia Launches Clipper Ships Stamps



On February 17 Australia Post set sail with the release of a new stamp issue depicting four 19th century clipper ships that sailed in Australian waters.

Australia Post Philatelic Manager, Michael Zsolt said both stamp collectors and maritime enthusiasts alike have a fascination with clipper ships and this evocative period of maritime history. "The sailing ships featured in this issue have played a role in Australia's maritime history. We trust everyone, especially maritime history enthusiasts, will 'hoist their sails and set sail' to collect these beautiful clipper ship stamps. From the earliest days of European exploration, sailing ships were crucial in the development of Australia." Mr Zsolt said.

Clipper ships were widely used in the mid-19th century due to being fast, yacht-like vessels. The clipper route from England to Australia and New Zealand, returning via Cape Horn, although subject to dangerous weather conditions, generally offered captains the fastest circumnavigation of the world.

Left to right, the clipper ships at the helm of this new stamp issue (designed by Lisa Christensen of the Australia Post Design Studio) are:

- The *Phoenician* was the first clipper ship to come to Australia, arriving in Port Jackson on July 21, 1849, taking 91 days from England.

The stamp design is based on a painting by Frederick Garling, titled "Clipper barque Phoenician, 1850s."

- The *Monkchester* was a clipper barque built in 1865 by Messrs. Peverill for Messrs. A. Strong of North Shields, England. The stamp design is based on the 1865 painting by John Scott, a noted English oil painter from Newcastle.

- The *Frances Henty* was constructed in Aberdeen, Scotland in 1852 and named after the wife of Thomas Henty. The vessel carried passengers, gold and wool between London and Victoria until at least 1869. The stamp is based on a painting by E. C. Moore, titled "The Frances Henty, 1854."

- The *Arabian* was one of many clipper ships that sailed in Australian waters. The stamp design is based on the 1840s lithograph by John Raphael Isaac, after a painting by C. P. Williams.

The new stamp release comprises two domestic base rate (70c) stamps and two large letter rate (\$1.40) stamps. The products associated with this stamp issue include a first day cover, stamp pack and a set of four maxicards. The Era of Sail: Clipper Ships stamp issue is available at www.auspost.com.au/stamps or contact the Australia Stamp Agency in North America toll free (USA and Canada) on 1-800-443-4225 while stocks last.