



Exhibiting in the Traditional Philately Class in Youth - Some Practical Advice

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“Traditional Philately is about the study of stamps allowing all aspects of philately to be included in one form or the other” as defined by the FIP website dedicated to Traditional Philately¹. This article serves as a general guide for those youth collectors or novice exhibitors interested in showing their stamps and covers in this class. The beginners can try showing in the One-frame Class first in order to gain experience and when they have gathered enough experience they could proceed to show more frames. Gary Brown and Jan Berg have written good guidelines on the FIP website for more advanced exhibitors^{2,3}.

Materials required for exhibiting

- Philatelic materials relevant to the subject e.g. stamps, covers, postcards, booklets etc.
- Non-philatelic material e.g. newspaper cutting, time-table, photograph of post office, post office notice etc. care must be taken to choose materials related to the subject and only a small proportion is allowed so that these do not overwhelm the philatelic items.
- Reference books, both factual and philatelic on your subject required for writing up the exhibit.
- Exhibit pages, plain white or cream colour paper (around 100 - 120-lb, stiff enough for mounting one exhibiting frame with sagging and able to go through a desk top printer, office printer allows thicker paper up to 180 lbs) either 8.5" x 11" or A4 size page
- Paper Ruler (for measuring margins and to aid in placing items straight on your pages)
- Stamp Hinges (for mounting used stamps to your pages)
- Clear Stamp Mounts (for mounting mint stamps to pages)
- Corner Mounts (for mounting covers, booklets, postcard etc. to pages, large-size photo-corners e.g. Herma Transparol No. 1301 are preferred)
- Color cards (pastel colours such as beige, light grey) cut into shapes of philatelic items with about 1mm margin for highlighting items. Exhibitors often use red for important rarity.
- Sheet Protectors (either top or side open, Mylar D is best but expensive but essential for valuable items)
- Typewriter or Computer for write-up preferred. Pages written by neat hand writing in ink is acceptable.
- Desk top or office printer either monotone or colour for printing pages.

Choose an appropriate subject

Decide on a subject for your exhibit and this is usually what you have got in your collection. A broad scope subject for example a commonwealth omnibus issue would require lots of stamps and covers whereas a small subject, for instance just one stamp or one issue would require specialized material and plenty of study.

The write-up of the exhibit explains why the stamps were issued, what purpose they served, the printing process used to produce them, etc. This could be very challenging since you should show all the stamps in your subject, either mint or used varieties. The exhibit also should show usage of the stamps on covers, postcards, printed matter, parcel etc. For each of these shown, the postage rate must be described, hence a postally used item is far superior than a philatelic item e.g. first day cover since the rate is usually correct.

The Plan

Develop a plan for your exhibit. Gather all the relevant material you have on the subject and figure out how you will show it. Your exhibit needs to be organized in some easy-to-understand order. A good stamp exhibit has a beginning, a middle and an ending.

Arranging your stamps and covers

Place your stamps, covers and other items you wish to show on the exhibit sheet arranging them to make an eye-appealing page. Stamps should be placed on top half of the page and a cover or two should be placed below these.

Keep in mind that your exhibit tells a story. Therefore, your pages must be placed in a logical sequence i.e. chronologically by issue date or by denominations of a set of stamps in ascending order showing the low values and then high values.

Keep ample even margins on each page; say around 0.5 - 1 inch all round since this prevents material or write-up being covered up when the pages are mounted in the frame.

The best layouts result when the viewer's eye immediately focuses on key items on the page. Therefore, pages with your best philatelic materials should be placed on the second and third row (eye-level) of a 4x4 frame so they can readily catch the eyes of the judges and viewers.

To avoid monotony, sheets after sheets of stamps arranging in a similar fashion quickly loses viewers and judges interest of your exhibit. *Figure 1* shows a typical overcrowded page, page balance can be better obtained by the pyramid effect (*Figure 2*). In these two pages, the stamps are "thinned out" and a booklet and a cover put on the bottom of the page in order to break monotony.

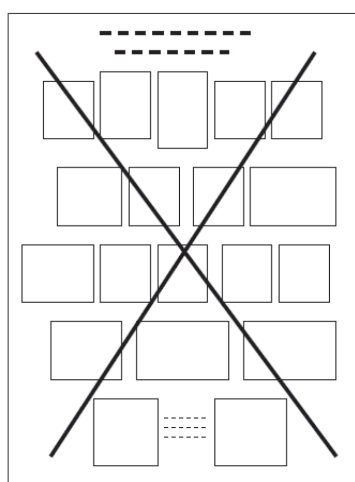


Figure 1

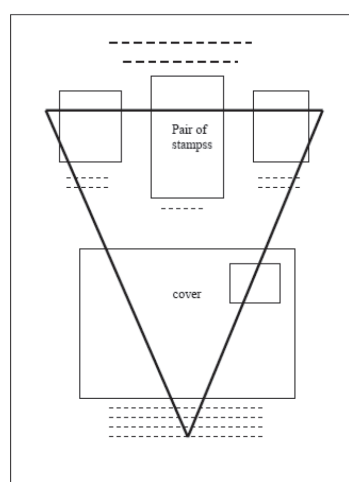
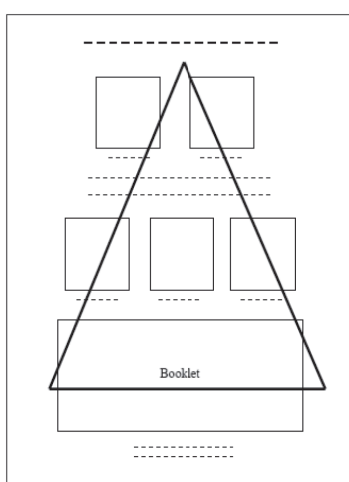


Figure 2

Sometimes, usages of the stamps on cover can be shown on a page instead with mixing with stamps, *Figure 3* shows such pages each with two covers arranged differently. Most postal history exhibitors are familiar with these layouts. However, with two larger covers, it is invariable that overlapping may occur, this is allowed but care must be taken not to cover relevant postal markings or the address (*Figure 4*).

Long or large size covers are either folded or mounted diagonally by exhibitors. Some exhibitors use double page for displaying a long or large size cover with the remaining blank space filled with other philatelic elements (*Figure 5*).

Finally, each page must be numbered. The page number can be written on the back of the page or by using numbered self-adhesive stickers applied to the back of the sheet protectors. The latter has the advantage when it comes to rearranging the sequence of the pages as you do not need to re-write the number on every page, simply insert the right sheet into the right sheet protector.

Condition

The condition of your material counts very much in a philatelic exhibit. When finding stamps and covers for your exhibit, pay attention to the condition of these items. If the stamps have been postmarked too heavily, the judges and viewers cannot see them clearly. So if you have option, it is better to choose those stamps which are lightly canceled or preferably by circular datestamp instead of "wavy lines" machine cancellation.

Condition also applies to the physical state of the stamps and covers; stamps and covers that are torn, thinned, grubby with unclear postmarks would lose points in "condition".

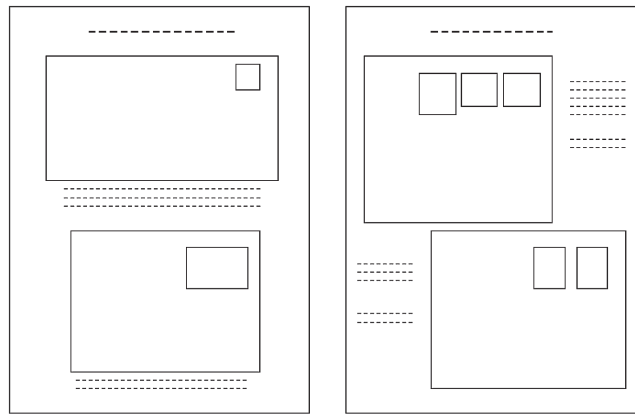


Figure 3

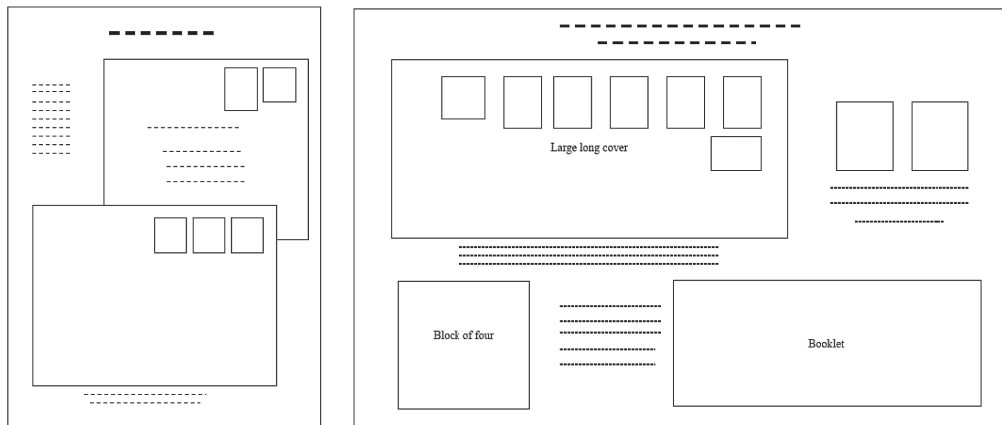


Figure 4

Figure 5

Page description

When you come to write-up your exhibit, the text should be brief and to the point explaining what you are trying to show after all this is an “exhibit” and not a book! As a matter of fact, even experienced exhibitors sometimes write too much on their pages since they have done plenty of research on the subject. Such pages would score highly on Philatelic Knowledge and Personal Research but may lose points on Presentation as well as Treatment. Over-written pages with two or three stamps (unless they are rare items) or a single cover could be perceived by the judges as lacking in philatelic material and therefore could lose points in Treatment.

The size of the text should not be too small or too large, typical font sizes are 10-12 pts. being used by most exhibitors. Beware of using fancy fonts for writing up your pages and use of too many different sizes. In general, three different sizes should be enough, e.g. 13-14 pts. for heading and subheading, 10-12 pts. for descriptive text and 9 pts. for quoting references and provenance. Rarity should be highlighted by bolded font or in slightly larger font. A typical rarity statement is “One of four recorded stamps with this variety” but not “Very rare”, “Unique”. Explaining why an item is rare and quantity known reflects the philatelic knowledge of the exhibitor and the source of information can be quoted in a smaller font on the page.

See *Appendix 1* for a selection of pages of a 1953 QEII Coronation Omnibus issue exhibit from a novice. Three of the four pages show the use of commercial covers bearing the subject stamp and these will be appreciated by the judges as they are more challenging to find. One page shows two unusual covers; underpaid mail to Hong Kong with postage due and the stamp paying military rate; in Traditional Philately write-up, the emphasis is on the stamp and its usage, therefore, the exhibitor did not include too much details on the routes and rates in the description.

Appendix 2 and *3* show pages of an exhibit of a Youth exhibitor at the World Youth Stamp Exhibition 2014 in Malaysia. The layout of the exhibit is by value of the stamps in the set in ascending order. Other related philatelic items, booklet, coil stamps, errors, aerograms are shown with some study.

Title/Introduction/Front page

The title page is the most important page as it tells the judges (and the viewers) what your exhibit is all about and what nice materials you have put into your exhibit. On this page you should mention the following:-

1. What are you going to show i.e. the purpose of the exhibit?
2. How are you going to show i.e. treatment of the subject?
3. An index of materials shown e.g. First issue on page 2-6, Second issue on page 7-16 etc. usually listed in chapters like a book.
4. What are the attractions e.g. presence of hard to find material
5. Something about philatelic research e.g. books, references used

Some exhibitors may wish to show one or two philatelic or non-philatelic item on the title page to make the title page more appealing or sometimes to occupy excessive blank space on this page. Never put items which are irrelevant to the exhibit e.g. the national flag of the country or a map of the country!

Some exhibitors suggest doing the title page first but in practice it would be better to write up the title page last after you have done all pages since it gives you a better idea as to what the exhibit is really about.

One page for this purpose is the norm but some exhibitors use two pages if the subject is complex. When you enter your exhibit into competition, you are expected to submit your title page to the organizing committee together with your application form. The title page at this stage does not necessarily be the final version but the final version must appear on the exhibit frame as page no. 1.

Figure 6 shows a “bad” title page from a novice exhibitor since it only described the basic facts of the stamp issue; there is no mentioning of “What” and “How” to show. Furthermore, there is no index, no description of interesting items and no references.

Figure 7 shows a better title page from a novice exhibitor with text explaining the reason for the issue, philatelic details about the stamps, what will be shown and how it is organized. Note the two philatelic references quoted at the bottom of the page. The two non-philatelic items on the page; 1953 Coronation medal and a photograph of HM the Queen Elizabeth II are related to the subject but occupied much space.

The Hong Kong SAR “Bird” definitive stamps

This is the third issue of the Hong Kong SAR released on 31 December 2006. The bird design created by local designer Bon Kwan was chosen to reflect the wide variety of bird species (more than 460) domiciled in Hong Kong.

Printing details
Printed in photogravure by Joh. Enschedé of the Netherlands. Five cylinders are used for printing; four of them colour cylinders while the fifth for phosphor lines. Cylinder numbers appear on each of the four corners while the requisition number is placed over the top stamp from the left. Printer's sheet is made up of two panes Plate A1x4 and B1x4 of 100 each, for the low values (10c to \$5) and 50 each for the larger format high values (\$10, \$13, \$20 and \$50).

Security measures
To counter forgery, the stamps are printed by security fibre impregnated paper and for the high values with additional perforations around the value.

Phosphor lines
Printed over the stamps using a separate cylinder for security as well as for mail sorting automation. Low values are printed with left and right phosphor lines while high values have one line on right only.

Low values

High values

Requisition No.	Released date	Denominations
DO	31 December 2006	10c, 20c, 50c, \$1, \$1.40, \$1.80, \$1.90, \$2, \$2.40, \$2.50, \$3, \$5, \$10, \$13, \$20, \$50
EE	28 September 2007	10c, 20c, 50c, \$1, \$1.40, \$1.80, \$1.90, \$2, \$2.40, \$2.50, \$3, \$5, \$10, \$13, \$20, \$50
ES	22 January 2009	10c, 20c, \$1, \$1.40, \$2, \$3, \$5, \$10, \$13, \$20
EX	30 July 2009	10c, 20c, \$1, \$1.40, \$1.80, \$2, \$3, \$5, \$10, \$20
FB	8 December 2009	10c, 20c, 50c, \$1.4, \$2.4, \$3, \$5
FJ	29 June 2010	10c, 20c, \$1.4, \$1.8, \$10, \$20

1953 Coronation issue

The First Commemorative stamp of Queen Elizabeth II

On 9th February 1952, Princess Elizabeth was proclaimed as Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Elizabeth The Second, following the death of her father King George VI a few days earlier.

The Coronation was on 2nd June 1953 and to commemorate the occasion, a Commonwealth omnibus issue was planned. The stamp was designed and engraved by Bradbury Wilkinson. The design is composed of an approved portrait of Her Majesty the Queen in an oval frame incorporating the date of the Coronation and the name of the issuing territory and the value. The stamps were recess-printed by De La Rue in sheets of 120 divided into two panes A and B. There are two formats: horizontal (10x6) and vertical (6x10).

Number of stamps issued varied between colonies. While the combined Malaya states issued more stamps than any other colonies, the total sales of the Hong Kong stamp during its six-month life was 15,240,844, the highest of all the 59 participating Crown Colonies. Because of the quantities printed, 2 duty plates (Plate 1 and 2) and 4 head plates (Plate 2,3,5 and 6) were used for the Hong Kong issue alone. For smaller colonies, only one Head Plate and one Duty Plate was used and furthermore, a large proportion of the printed stamps were retained by the Crown Agents for philatelic sales in England. The issue was withdrawn from sale on 31 December 1953 and was invalidated on 1 January 1964.

This exhibit is a study of the issued stamps and usage from all British Colonies using the same key plates during the first six months of sale. Covers after this period are less common and examples are shown here. In practice, for many of the smaller colonies, most covers are found cancelled on the first few days and commercial covers are virtually unknown. The exhibit is arranged in geographic regions beginning with South-east Asia:

- South-east Asia (15)
- Indian Ocean (1)
- British Africa (15)
- Mediterranean (3)
- South Atlantic Ocean (5)
- British West Indies (16)
- Central & South America (2)
- Pacific Ocean (5)

The Official Coronation Medal (Silver)

Photograph of H.M. the Queen Elizabeth the Second (1953)
From the Great Britain Official Coronation souvenir book

Reference: The Philatelic History of Hong Kong Vol. 1 - The Adhesives by Hong Kong Study Circle published 1984
The Commonwealth Queen Elizabeth II Stamp Catalogue 1978 edition published by Urry, Harris & Co. Ltd Bristol & London

Appendix 1

NEGRI SEMBILAN

SOUTH EAST ASIA

Date of issue: 2nd June 1953
Designed and engraved by Bradbury Wilkinson & Co.
Recess printed by De La Rue on multiple Crown script C4 paper
Perforation 13.5 x 13
Number issued: 1,746,088

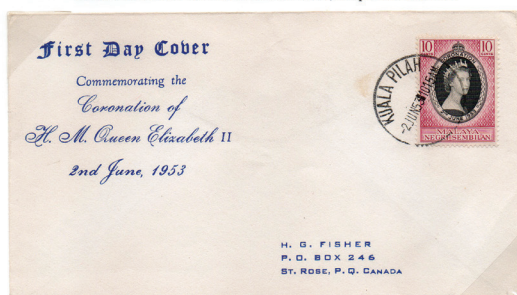
Duty Plate 1B, Head Plate 5B



Duty Plate 1B, Head Plate 6B



2 June 1953 Kuala Pilah surface mail to Canada, 10c printed matter rate



GOLD COAST

BRITISH AFRICA

Date of issue: 2nd June 1953
Designed and engraved by Bradbury Wilkinson & Co.
Recess printed by De La Rue on multiple Crown script C4 paper
Perforation 13.5 x 13
Number issued: 6,110,499

Duty Plate 1a, Head Plate 3a



22 July 1953 airmail letter Accra Gold Coast to England, 15d airmail rate (1/2d x 6 stamps on reverse)



BRITISH GUIANA

CENTRAL & SOUTH AMERICA

Date of issue: 2nd June 1953
Designed and engraved by Bradbury Wilkinson & Co.
Recess printed by De La Rue on multiple Crown script C4 paper
Perforation 13.5 x 13
Number issued: 2,273,921

Duty Plate 1A, Head Plate 5A



30 December 1953 surface mail letter to U.S.A., 10c postage + 4c registration fee



SINGAPORE

SOUTH EAST ASIA

2 June 1953 insufficiently prepaid surface mail letter to Hong Kong, 10c underpaid and 20c due on arrival



27 July 1953 Forces airmail letter to England sent from Singapore 10c Forces letter rate



10c Requisition A and E

"Secret mark" Phosphor band

A 0043547

Perforation error
Shifted downwards

Colour cylinder 2A, 1A; Phosphor cylinder 1A
Date of release: 26 January 1997

Colour cylinder 2A, 2A; Phosphor cylinder 2A
Date of release: 16 April 1997, date announced by Hongkong Post for all values
10c and 20c were released weeks before 16 April since stocks on these values were exhausted*

*According to the report in Hong Kong Philatelic Society newsletter April 1997 page 3

10c Use as a "make-up" value

23 September 1998 underpaid 30c local letter. Local rate was \$1.30 up to 30g. from September 1996
Mailed at the airport, Air Mail Centre (23.9) and returned by Kowloon Mail Centre (28.9)
No postage due levied since it was not collected at Tung Chung Post Office

RETURN TO SENDER
UNCLAIMED
Dr. Richard Ambler,
P.O. Box 100,
c/o Tung Chung Post Office,
Tung Chung, Lantau Is.

3 April 2007 postcard \$1.40 rate. Local letter/postcard rate was increased to \$1.40 up to 30g. from April 2002
The pictorial definitives released on 18 October 1999 replaced this issue, but this remained valid for postage till today

香港回歸祖國10周年
郵票展覽
STAMP Exhibition

Mr. Leung Ka Ho
Flat A, 13/F, Vincent House
513-515 Lockhart Road,
Causeway Bay, Hong Kong

10週年紀念
ANNIVERSARY

\$1.30 Requisition R

Normal

"Phantom Building" error

Few sheets of the printing are found with offset of image probably due to a dirty roller
Re: HKPS June 1999 NL page 4

Stamp booklet

\$1.30, \$2.50, \$3.10

Ashton-Potter booklets contain a special printing of the \$1.3, \$2.5 and \$3.1 stamps printed on glossy paper with Arabic gum. The full sheet was cut into units of ten with narrow margins all round and a wider margin on the left for affixing to the booklet cover. There are two types of booklet cover:

Type I: No white margin on the left.
Type II: 8mm wide white space inside left-margin of the booklet for attachment of stamp pane.

Sold at 7-Eleven, Circle-K, Petrol station shops from 26 January 1997. Re-called by Hongkong Post on or soon after 18 October 1999 following the issuance of the new definitive stamps.

Type I booklet cover (no white margin)

\$1.30 stamp booklet
Arabic gum

\$2.50 stamp booklet
Arabic gum

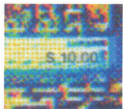
\$3.10 stamp booklet
Arabic gum

Appendix 3

High Values sheetlet \$10, \$20, \$50

Printed by Ashton-Potter and issued on 26 January 1997. Around November 1998, fake sheetlets were sold to the public at a discount outside the post office and some were used for sending parcels (Ref. HKPS NL December 1998). The police was informed and the culprits were arrested and prosecuted.

"Secret mark"
"\$10.00" is clearly seen upon magnification



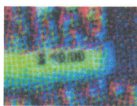


Genuine high value sheetlet



Fake high value sheetlet

"Secret mark"
"\$10.00" is blurred upon magnification



Coil stamps 10c, 50c, \$1.30, \$1.60, \$2.50, \$3.10

The coil stamps are sold in a coin-fed electronically operated machine installed outside each post office. Only the four "postage" values were available from these machines: \$1.30 (first-step local letter rate), \$1.60 (letter rate to China and Macau), \$2.50 (airmail letter rate to zone 1) and (\$3.10) airmail letter rate to zone 2.

The 10c and 50c values were available from older mechanically operated machines instead in remote post offices or machines installed in commercial buildings.

Printer and printing method: Joh. Eschede of the Netherlands by offset lithography.

Format: Rolls of 1,000 with serial number printed on the gum side of every five stamps.

Gum: PVAD gum only, less liable to sticking in humid climate.

Perforations: Perf. 13. Pin-size 0.9 mm.

"Secret mark": None



10c



50c



\$1.30



\$1.60



\$2.50



\$3.10



10c



50c



\$1.30



\$1.60



\$2.50



\$3.10

Aerogramme \$2.30

\$2.30 aerogramme issued on 26 January 1997 has a printing error on "sender's name and address" - Chinese characters transposed. It was re-called/sold out by April 1997. Emergency formula aerogramme pre-franked \$1 + \$1.30 inscribed "From approved by Postmaster General Hongkong No. 205" Junk Trade Mark was released on 1 April 1997 as interim measure pending the re-print with correction.

Printing error - 寄件姓名及地址

FIRST FOLD HERE 第一次折叠在此

SENDER'S NAME AND ADDRESS 寄件人姓名及地址

IF THIS AEROGamme CONTAINS ANY ENCLOSURE OR BEARS ANY ATTACHMENT IT MUST BEAR POSTAGE AT THE RATE FOR AIR MAIL LETTER

本航空郵票若載有任何物品或附有附件，必須補足航空信件所需之郵資

SECOND FOLD HERE 第二次折叠在此



Aerogramme 郵簡

Aerogramme \$2.30

Emergency formula aerogramme pre-franked \$1 + \$1.30 inscribed "From approved by Postmaster General Hongkong No. 205" Junk Trade Mark. **First Day of Use**

Aerogramme re-print released on 10 April 1997 Printing error corrected - 寄件人姓名及地址

FIRST FOLD HERE 第一次折叠在此

SENDER'S NAME AND ADDRESS 寄件人姓名及地址

IF THIS AEROGamme CONTAINS ANY ENCLOSURE OR BEARS ANY ATTACHMENT IT MUST BEAR POSTAGE AT THE RATE FOR AIR MAIL LETTER

本航空郵票若載有任何物品或附有附件，必須補足航空信件所需之郵資

SECOND FOLD HERE 第二次折叠在此



Aerogramme 郵簡

References

1. <http://www.traditionalphilately.dk/what-is-traditional-philately.html>
2. <http://www.traditionalphilately.dk/exhibits/introduction-to-trad-phil.html>
3. <http://www.traditionalphilately.dk/exhibits/trad-phil-exhibiting-advanc.html>

