

For immediate release, 29 July 2011

Australasian Antarctic Expedition centenary celebrated by Australia Post

Australia Post is celebrating the centenary of the Australasian Antarctic Expedition (AAE) with the release of five domestic rate (60 cents) stamps depicting images from the historic 1911 expedition. This is an Australian Antarctic Territory stamp issue and is available from 2 August 2011.

The AAE left Hobart in December 1911 under the command of Douglas Mawson and returned to Adelaide in February 1914. Mawson was knighted for his achievements during this expedition and is regarded as one of the greatest figures of Antarctic exploration.

After departing Hobart in the *Aurora* captained by John King Davis, the AAE landed at Macquarie Island where it established a radio camp. The party then continued its voyage to the Antarctic continent, arriving at Cape Denison, the main base of the AAE. Cape Denison is now known as the birthplace of Australia's Antarctic territory – an area two-thirds the size of Australia.

The AAE explored extensively along the Antarctic coast and conducted scientific and meteorological observations, which were recorded in great detail.

"This remarkable expedition is a landmark moment in Antarctic history, achieved during the 'heroic era' of polar exploration," said Australia Post Philatelic Manager, Michael Zsolt. "The journey took immense courage, skill and determination, and Australia Post is delighted to commemorate the expedition's centenary with the first in a four-year program of stamp issues."

The five stamps depict key moments in the departure of the AAE from Hobart and the journey to the Antarctic. The photographs used for this stamp issue were taken by the expeditioners and sourced from various national archives. They include the *SY Aurora* which carried the AAE to and from Hobart, the *SY Aurora's* Captain, John King Davis, who was second-in-command of the expedition, the landing at Macquarie Island and birdlife on Macquarie Island.

The AAE stamp series will be issued every year until 2014, celebrating key moments in the AAE's experience.

The Centenary of the AAE stamp issue was designed by Melbourne-based Andrew Hogg Design. The company's recent stamp designs include Corrugated Landscapes (2009) and Emergency Services (2010).

The Centenary of the AAE stamp products include a first day cover, stamp pack, minisheet and a maxicard set of five. The stamps and associated products are available from participating Australia Post retail outlets, via mail order on 1800 331 794 and online at www.auspost.com.au/stamps from 2 August 2011 while stocks last.



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