

MALAYSIA
AND THE
FEDERATION OF MALAYA
-
THEIR STAMPS & POSTAL STATIONERY

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Digital Second Edition



Malaya Study Group
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Foreword to First Edition

Len Stanway has for many years been the European doyen of modern Malaysia issues. He has already written extensively in the *Malayan Philatelist* and the *Sarawak Journal* about the stamps which so often in specialist situations tend to be forgotten because they are “too modern” or “only wallpaper”. This is an insult to the philatelic research and depth of knowledge of the author of this book, which is Volume One of what will be a three-volume work.

The introductory chapters on the politics and history of the Malaysian Nation from 1948 through to the present day represent, in themselves, an extremely worthwhile project and one which is not available in such a concise yet comprehensive presentation anywhere else to my knowledge.

It is easy when writing a foreword to a friend’s work to be over ambitious with praise and often lamentably uncritical. For this work, Len was considerate enough to allow me early sight of his chapters and after some hopefully constructive comments, he rearranged many dozens of pages to follow one of my suggestions. This demonstrates, if that were necessary, the humility of this author, but it does not begin to congratulate him for what looks, even at first glance, a lifetime’s work.

It would be unsatisfactory, if not dangerous, to select any particular section of this great work for special praise. Being a revenue collector myself, it is wonderful to see so much information now in one place about these interesting and elusive stamps. The early chapter on the Postal Stationery, which continues the research which the Group published on George VI material, is comprehensive and beautifully illustrated. The same could be said about any chapter from the postal history and rates, the Royal succession, the philatelic information and the detailed and comprehensive listing of every issue from 1948 to date.

The author is to be congratulated for bringing together a multitude of facts and decades of published and unpublished information and producing what will surely be the definitive work on Malaysian issues of this generation. Some might query the complete listings of every printing and detailed, almost pedantic, publication of facts and figures, but to be comprehensive this is necessary and this will be the manual for every collector of Malaysia stamps and postal history.

In writing this work, Len Stanway will open the eyes of the blinded classic collector to the delights and intrigue of the modernist and I am sure will recruit many new collectors to the cause. In particular, the publication of this magnum opus in both electronic and paper form will allow a speedy and inexpensive worldwide distribution of a truly superb work.

The Malaya Study Group is proud to be honoured with the opportunity to publish this great work and we thank Len for his outstanding contribution.

Peter Cockburn
Chairman, Malaya Study Group
June 2009

Foreword to Second Edition

The first volume of the 1st Edition of “Malaysia and the Federation of Malaya; their Stamps and Postal Stationery” was published in hard copy in 2009. It was rightly described by the MSG’s then-Chairman, Peter Cockburn, as “The definitive work on Malaysian issues”.

In the 13 years since that first volume was published, more than 200 issues of Malaysian stamps, miniature sheets, registration labels etc., have been produced. This digital Second Edition includes all these and the necessary accompanying philatelic information for each issue. It brings Len Stanway’s *Magnum Opus* up to date to the end of last year. It also covers valuable new information about earlier issues that has come to light in the past decade.

Over this period, digitisation of all aspects of stamp production, requisitioning, etc., has proceeded apace, but, with the plenty that digital technology allows, comes a carelessness about storing and curating the necessary supporting information. (How many of us with our tablets and smartphones keep and curate the hundreds of images that we capture in the way that photograph albums used to do?) and, as Len himself notes, the industry and postal authorities’ restructuring that has taken place over the past 10 15 years has led to the loss of much archival material. It reflects great credit on Len Stanway’s diligence and meticulousness that he has been able to amass the information that he has, particularly about the more recent issues.

This Second Edition continues the superb quality of the earlier printed volumes; and in a more accessible and inexpensive format, bringing this work to a wider audience. The Malaya Study Group is proud to be associated with this valuable project and we are very grateful to Len Stanway for his outstanding contribution to Malaysian philately.

Dominic Morris
Chairman, Malaya Study Group
September 2022

Introduction.

At the outset of the period covered by this book all the states of the Malayan peninsula and the former Straits Settlements were using the stamps of the “Malaya Key Type” series derived from the 1935 issue of Straits Settlements, whilst the British possessions on Borneo were completely separate issuing authorities. Collectors complained about exploitation, but stamps were essentially issued for postal purposes and collecting was only one consideration, and a small one at that, in the minds of postal officials. Today, philately is big business and the majority of stamps are primarily produced for export sales to collectors world-wide, with little postal justification. Similarly, postal stationery has evolved from purely utilitarian items to a wide variety of philatelic/tourist products, plus a far wider range of items for use on specialist services. We now have miniature sheets and sheetlets, illustrated airletters and covers, stamp booklets, etc. However, few philatelic services are provided for postal stationery, so it is very difficult to keep track of new productions. Post Offices have ceased to be places to go to post letters and now are often combined with retail shops offering a wide variety of products previously the province of specialised stationers and, often, different trades altogether.

This book was originally envisaged in 1995 with the intention to consolidate in easily-referenced form all the information which had been published on “modern material” in *The Malayan Philatelist*, the journal of the Malaya Study Group, and other MSG publications. It was soon realised that there were many gaps that needed to be filled. It now seeks to document, to the greatest extent possible, the stamps and postal stationery issued in Malaya and Malaysia from creation of the Federation of Malaya in 1948, through independence in 1957 (1963 in the case of Sabah and Sarawak), to the end of 2021.

Hard copy printing made it necessary to publish the original book in three volumes. Volume 1 in this series provided the background to modern Malayan philately and took the story from the formation of the Federation of Malaya in 1948 to the summer of 1963. Volumes 2 and 3 took the story from the establishment of the enlarged federation of Malaysia to 2009, including the postage due labels and revenue stamps of Malaysia and a variety of miscellaneous material, such as railway stamps, Cinderellas, first flights, presentation booklets, etc.. The creation of Malaysia brought North Borneo (renamed Sabah) and Sarawak into the scope of this book. We therefore included a description of the issues of those countries that were in use at that date and which continued in use until 1965. The contemporary issues of Singapore, which was briefly part of the Federation, are not included as no new Singapore issues appeared during the Malaysia period and the post-1955 stamps of Singapore form part of a separate story. The definitive issues of Malaysia covered all had considerable complexity, the 1986 issue being in use for over thirty years and possibly the most complicated issue ever released in Malaya. The rate of release of special issues grew steadily during this period. The issue rate peaked around 2000-2001 with a plethora of issues to mark the Millennium. The introduction of registrations stamps with tear-off barcode labels as part of the 2001 new registration system added a new element to Malaysian philately and are difficult to obtain intact for obvious reasons.

This digital edition consolidates the three volumes in a more convenient order of chapters and provides considerable additional information, both on subsequent issues and on more recent discoveries about earlier issues. Some additional miscellaneous material has also been added.

Whilst detailed printing and sale information exists in the public domain for many of the issues at the start of this period, this quickly petered out and became shrouded in “commercial confidentiality”. At the same time, organisational restructuring in the postal authorities and printer mergers have led to the destruction of a lot of archive material which would have been of immense value to researchers. The introduction of information technology has made it easy to dispose of records by the press of a key, which means that the ledgers so valuable in historical research are no longer created or retained.

Given how recent the material described in this volume is, it is remarkably difficult to obtain sheets or even marginal blocks of many issues, so, if it was not recorded at the time of issue (which it generally was not), it is very difficult to assemble detailed information on sheet formats, sheet markings, etc., in retrospect.

With the growth in the number of special issues, it became impossible for sorting staff to know every issue and this led to the abandonment of the practice of declaring old issues invalid for postage.

The author apologises in advance for any omissions and hopes that readers knowing any additional information will contact him via the publishers in order to put the record straight for any future publications. Where appropriate, the author will seek to collate such updated information for publication through the pages of *The Malayan Philatelist* and/or through supplements to this volume.

Throughout the book, with the exception of state names, I have tried to use the modern Bahasa Malaysia version of Malay names and texts wherever possible, unless the context dictates otherwise. References to currencies, etc., reflect those used at the time of issue.

A special effort has been made to ensure consistent descriptions where it is clear that the same perforator would have been used for multiple issues. Some dimensions may therefore vary slightly from those originally published in *The Malayan Philatelist*.

Acknowledgements

The Author would like to thank all the present and past Malaya Study Group members and others who have contributed directly or indirectly to this book, including, but not exclusively, Messrs. David Aggersberg, Roger Barry, Michael Case, Patrick Cassels, Chang Kok Kay, Peter Cockburn, N. H. Gong, Richard Hale, John Hawes, Rob Holley, Mike Kingsland, Hong Tuck Kun, Khor Seow Loon, Lim Ken Beng, Dr. Abdul Majid, N. G. "Mac" McClaren, Andrew McClellan, Susan McEwan, David Medhurst, Wayne Menuz, B. J. Moss, Graham Nelson, Andrew Norris, Bill Pain, Gordon Peters, John Ray, Joe Robertson, Anthony Rogers, Alan Teh Leam Seng, David Tett, Rod Vousden, B. A. Wallace, Clifford Wong. I would also like to thank David Beech and his staff at the British Library Philatelic Collections and the staff of The Postal Museum for access to their collection and records for research.

I am also grateful to everyone who has ever studied modern Malayan material and put pen to paper to record their results in a philatelic journal. Often, the smallest contribution can provide the biggest impact in solving a riddle.

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References to S.G. numbers are references to the 2017 Edition of the Stanley Gibbons Brunei, Malaysia & Singapore Stamp Catalogue, unless otherwise stated.

References to I.S.C. numbers are references to the 29th Edition of the Standard Stamp Catalogue of Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei and the 1st (2003-2005) Edition of the Standard Catalogue of Malaysia - Singapore - Brunei Revenue Stamps & Postal Stationery.

References to Barefoot numbers are references to the 1st (2006) Edition of South East Asia Revenues.

References to H&G numbers are references to Higgins & Gage World Postal Stationery Catalog, Section 12 (1979).

References to Kessler numbers are references to the Kessler's Catalogue of Aerograms, Volume II, Aerogram Catalogue Publishing Co., Inc.

Unless otherwise stated, all illustrations are taken from material in the author's collection.

Len Stanway

Basildon, 30 September 2022.