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ROYAL AUSTRALIAN MINT 1992

The Year Ahead

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Royal Australian Mint

With two major international coin programs scheduled in addition to regular coin release, this year will be a very important one for the Royal Australian Mint.

The annual coin set to be officially released in mid-February 1992, is the first of the new six coin structure, following the end of the one and two cent minting. The set focuses on an Olympic theme one dollar coin with a female javelin thrower on the reverse designed by Margaret Priest. With the exception of the Queen and Diana, The Princess of Wales, this is the first female to appear on an Australian coin.

Two hundred dollar gold coins in the Pride of Australia series will also be produced in proof and uncirculated versions. The reverse design is the popular echidna (which also appears on Australia's five cent coins) and will be released in July.

The \$10 State Series is drawing to a close with only two more coins to be produced. 1992 is the Northern Territory's year, and with the 50th anniversary year since the World War II bombing of Darwin, this coin is expected to attract considerable interest in the "Top End", as well as to collectors of the full series. The Northern Territory Coat-of-Arms will be the design on the reverse of both proof and uncirculated silver coins.

The ever-popular Bird Series continues again with the fourth release bearing a design of Australia's emperor penguins. The double thickness piedfort proof version will again be produced together with a standard proof coin and if past demand is a guide, these coins should be extremely popular with collectors and the general public alike.

Masterpieces in Silver will not be produced in 1992 - in fact the 1991 series may well be the last produced by the Royal Australian

Mint. Instead, the Mint will release two prestigious and exquisite international collector coin programs.

The Olympic Centennial Coin Program is scheduled for worldwide release in March 1992. In this unique program, five mints will in turn produce two silver and one gold coin each, with the designs depicting a specified Olympic theme. Participating mints with the year of release and theme are:

1992 Royal Canadian Mint

Citius, Altius, Fortius (faster, higher, stronger) - the Olympic motto.

1993 Royal Australian Mint

Participation, Fair Play and Friendship.

1994 French Mint

100 Years of Olympic Congress, commemorating the decision to reinstate the Olympic Games, at Baron de Coubertin's initiative.

1995 Austrian Mint

Music, Art and Sport.

1996 Greek Mint

100 Years of Modern Olympic Games, commemorating the first modern Olympic Games held in Athens in 1896.

Each mint will be promoting the entire series, as well as the coins that they strike themselves. All coins are legal tender in their country of origin, and the Australian coins will have face values of \$250 and \$20 for gold and silver respectively. Significant export earnings in the vicinity of \$20 million (including the use of gold and silver raw materials) are expected as a result of participation in this program.

The Royal Ladies is an international collector program celebrating the 40th anniversary of the accession to the throne and the coronation of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in 1952-3. With the assent of Buckingham Palace, two exclusive sets of five coins and a medallion will be produced in 22 carat gold

and sterling silver. Each of the coins bears a Stuart Devlin portrait of one of The Royal Ladies - Elizabeth, The Queen Mother; Diana, The Princess of Wales; Sarah, The Duchess of York; Anne, The Princess Royal; and The Princess Margaret. The reverse of the medallion will feature a new portrait of Queen Elizabeth II seated on the throne of the House of Lords and the obverse will be the Crest of the Commonwealth Games Federation - a major financial beneficiary of The royal Ladies Program. The series is scheduled for release in September - October 1992.

1992 is also the International Year of Space and the Mint will release a commemorative \$5 aluminium bronze circulating quality coin in April/May this year. The design for this coin was chosen as the result of Australia's first public design competition since Stuart Devlin was chosen to design Australia's decimal coins in the 1960's. The competition was won by Albury school teacher John Skillington, and the coins will be sold at face value of five dollars each. A limited number of proof coins will also be struck.

The one dollar coin design change for the

annual coin sets is certain to be of interest to collectors of Australian circulating currency. At this stage, there has been no decision to release the \$1 coin into general circulation, but the mint is hopeful that public demand will see this coin released into general circulation later this year.

Meanwhile, visitors to the Royal Australian Mint in Canberra, are able to mint their own 1992 dollar coin on Australia's first public coining presses, and one of these presses will also be taken to Sydney's Royal Easter Show for the first time ever, in April this year. The Olympic dollar will also be struck as a silver dollar for limited release later this year.

All in all, a very busy year ahead for Mint Staff in Canberra, and an exciting range of some of the best collector coins in the world for collectors and the general public alike.

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