



ATA RELEASES HALLOWEEN CHECKLIST AND CROSSWORD PUZZLE ON ITS WEBSITE

Members of the American Topical Association (ATA) have prepared a new Halloween Checklist and also a Halloween Crossword Puzzle, and posted them for free download on the organization's website at <http://www.americantopicalassn.org>. The checklist is available in both Excel and .pdf format through October 31.

Checklists are a member-to-member service of the ATA, as its members have created and continue to update more than 590 checklists covering a plethora of stamp collecting themes , ranging from abacus to zoology. Releasing an extensive ATA checklist to the stamp collecting public is a new event. Once philatelists are aware of the number of stamps relating to a topic and the challenge in creating an in-depth collection of those stamps, they realize some of the exciting possibilities inherent in topical/thematic collecting.

The new Halloween checklist comprises ~285 philatelic items relating to such themes as black cats, bats, owls, witches, spiders, monsters, ghosts, and horror stories. Combining these various topics into a single Halloween-themed checklist is a "first." The checklist has been made possible through the combined work of several ATA members, notably ATA Board Member Jean Stout of Pearl, Miss.

The first section of the ATA checklist includes stamps issued by postal authorities and listed in the *Scott Standard Postage Stamp Catalogue*. The second section lists stamps and "cinderellas" that are not listed in the catalog. The third section lists other philatelic items not usually listed in the general *Scott Catalogue*, including cancellations, air letter sheets, booklet covers, meter stamps, postal cards, postmarks, stamped envelopes and wrappers. ATA checklists also include related topical information such as other available checklists, published handbooks, and Study Units related to the theme.

The Halloween Crossword Puzzle offered on the ATA website is courtesy of Australian member Will Cochrane, whose popular website is found at www.philatelicdatabase.com. A large variety of philatelic material related to popular topics/themes is always found on the website. Other interactive crossword puzzles using topical themes (including one with ATA as the subject) are also available on the site.

A free copy of the Halloween checklist and crossword puzzle will be mailed to any collector who sends a SASE to ATA by the end of October. For further information about ATA, email americantopicalassn@msn.com, call 618-985-5100, or address letter to ATA Halloween, PO Box 8, Carterville, IL 62918-0008.