

AMERICAN TOPICAL ASSOCIATION

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ATA LAUNCHES STAMP CHECKLIST DATABASE

The American Topical Association has announced the launching of the biggest benefit to stamp collectors in its 65-year history. A five-year undertaking has resulted in doubling the number of its topical checklists to nearly 1200. The lists are being produced from a regularly updated database.

Already the world's leading supplier of topical stamp checklists, the ATA is making the lists available to members from a new database containing almost 400,000 stamps and 578,502 topical listings.

Creating, merging and updating the listings have been the tasks of committed volunteer Karen Cartier, with technical assistance from her son, Michael. The project included adding topical listings from almost every page of the *Scott Standard Postage Stamp Catalogue*, as well as all new issues.

"ATA checklists began when members sent in their lists for other members to use. Hundreds did," said ATA president Jack André Denys. "Now that Karen Cartier has included every Scott-listed topical stamp in the database, our checklist service has made a huge leap forward. We are indebted to her for her time and perseverance in this colossal task."

ATA checklists, available in a spreadsheet format or printed, include the country, date of issue, Scott number, denomination, and a description of what is depicted on the stamp. They are invaluable to topical collectors in researching and acquiring stamps. In some cases, meter stamps, postmarks, postal stationery and other items are included. Lists will be regularly updated, and members have the option to receive annual updates.

With nearly 1200 topics to choose from, collectors have a much greater choice for collecting major topics such as railroads and butterflies, to minor topics like hedgehogs and hurricanes. Hundreds of new lists not previously available through ATA, such as World War I and various lists relating to World War II, are being introduced.

Complete listings of the ~1200 checklists, according to Topic and also Alphabetical, are posted on the ATA website. A bonus listing of ~200 People shown on stamps is also included there.

Checklists are available to ATA members at a nominal price. Cost is a penny per item on the checklist—with Mini-lists for 50¢ and Maxi-lists over 5,000 items for \$50. Membership information is available at www.americantopicalassn.org or by calling the ATA office at 618-985-5100.

"It's important to note that these checklists will never be 'finished,'" said executive director Vera Felts, "as we will be constantly updating them, and making them more complete and accurate than ever before. As always, the help of ATA members is important in keeping the database information current and correct."

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