

# PRESS RELEASE

## Australia's Most Wanted Coin Collection!

Playing a unique role in the nation's earliest colonial history, Bushrangers have always had a special place in the hearts and minds of Australians.

Romanticised and celebrated in film, literature and art for so many decades, Australia's vivid bushranger history has now been brought to life on a series of legal tender coins! Struck by the precious metal specialists at the Perth Mint, this 'world first' for numismatics has the whole industry talking.

Comprising four massive Two Ounce .999 fine silver Proofs, the 2003 Australian Bushranger Proof Coin Collection pays tribute to some of the most famous outlaws of the colonial period. Sure to intensify demand for this historic, limited edition set (2,500 mintage worldwide), the 2003 Australian Bushrangers Proof Coin Collection has been acclaimed as among the finest examples of colour minting yet seen.

### Colourful characters...

Honouring Ned Kelly, Ben Hall, Mad Dan Morgan and Captain Thunderbolt, the 2003 Australian Bushrangers Proof Coin Collection depicts some of the most well known characters of the colonial period. Inextricably linked with Australia's 'Gold Rush' heritage, the short but spectacular lives of men such as these form the basis of Australian folklore.

Rebelling against abject poverty, and the hardship of life on the land, the 1850s bushranger found the Gold Rush created a fertile environment in which to ply his trade. With the infrastructure of society dissolving in the face of the mad dash for gold, the 1850s offered easy pickings as people deserted their homes, shopkeepers their stores and troopers their posts. It did not help the police that many people sympathised with the bushrangers' hatred of the oppressive colonial authorities. Many saw bushrangers as heroes of the downtrodden, a fact illustrated by the 60,000 people who signed the petition to save Ned Kelly from the noose in 1880.

### Sell out expected

Sympathy with Australia's wild colonial boys has reverberated down the century since the last bushranger met his fate, with this fascinating history proving an outstanding choice for a coin series. Already provoking a strong response from collector and history buff alike, there is wide expectation that the limited worldwide mintage of only 2,500 sets will sell out rapidly.

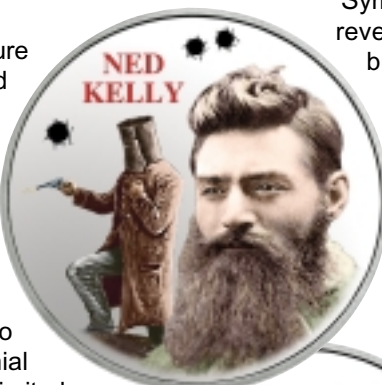
Each set of four coins, issued as legal tender for the Cook Islands, is beautifully presented in a rustic timber case. An informative eight-page historical Certificate of Authenticity accompanies the set, while the 'Wanted' poster outer sleeve is the perfect finishing touch to a most impressive collector presentation.

### Unrivalled quality...

The initial demand for the 2003 Australian Bushrangers Proof Coin Collection is as much due to the immense quality of the coins as it is to the powerful theme. Struck to the most rigorous Proof standards of the Perth Mint, these large Two Ounce coins offer a spacious venue for the glorious full-colour designs.

Ken Downie, Managing Director of Australia's leading coin dealer Downie's & Sherwood, commented on the outstanding technical quality of this new coin series. Following recent meetings with the Perth Mint and other key industry players, Mr Downie said that 'the general consensus was that these large, 50.3mm pure silver coins represented the best application of colour minting techniques that the Mint had ever produced'.

For further information on the 2003 Australian Bushrangers Coin Collection, please call Downie's & Sherwood Tollfree on 1300 788 358.



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