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# Daughter of well-known art collector in battle over \$3.5 million stamp collection

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**Exclusive.** The daughter of well-known art and antiques collector Justin Sterling is involved in a legal battle over her father's \$3.5 million stamp collection.

Marilyn Kino has lodged a Supreme Court writ claiming a number of rare and valuable stamps have gone missing from her father's collection after he died from renal failure aged 88 in June 2012.

In her affidavit obtained by Fairfax Media, Mrs Kino said she was the sole beneficiary of her father's estate and married to retired lawyer Michael Kino, a keen philatelist.

Mr Sterling had been a prominent art and antique dealer in the 1960s before indulging in his passion for collecting vintage cars.

"In his later years, my dad sold many of his artworks and antiques and all of his antique car collection but still retained an interest in collectables," Mrs Kino said in her affidavit.

"In about May 2007, my dad decided that he would like to put together a collection of major world stamps...

"Realising the difficulty of finding the right philatelic items, my dad then decided to limit his collection to Australian stamps specialising in King George V, kangaroos and Sydney Harbour Bridges."

Mrs Kino said that in early 2008 her father asked her husband, Michael, and his brother, Brian, to help him put together the collection and they had several meetings to discuss the matter.

In about May 2008, an important collection of Sydney Harbour Bridges came up for auction through Prestige Philately.

Michael Kino claimed his brother Brian bid at the auction for Mr Sterling and made substantial purchases.

Between June 2008 and April 2010, Mr Sterling spent about \$3.5 million buying stamps. The stamp collection was not insured but kept in a safe at Mr Sterling's Caulfield apartment.

Mrs Kino claimed Brian Kino "generally had unfettered access to the collection and he may have had the combination to the safe".

She said that in about June 2010 her father told her he had had a falling out with Brian Kino and Richard Juzwin, who had been helping Mr Sterling source rare and desirable stamps.

In November 2011, Mr Sterling hired Bernard Manning to accurately catalogue the collection who then reported that a number of valuable stamps were missing.

Mrs Kino later hired Charles Leski's Mossgreen auctioneers at the end of last year to arrange for parts of her father's stamp collection to be sold.

Mrs Kino claimed that Mr Leski contacted her last month to say that Prestige was planning an auction of Australian stamps and one of the stamps allegedly belonged to her father.

She contacted Mr Juzwin who specifically remembered selling the stamp to her father in July 2008.

Mrs Kino sent an email to Prestige's managing director, Gary Watson, who replied that Brian Kino had confirmed that the stamp in question had been a gift to him from Mr Sterling.

Mr Leski then confirmed there were other items in the Prestige auction from Mr Sterling's collection.

Mrs Kino instructed her lawyers to alert Mr Watson that eight stamp lots in the Prestige auction had been removed from her father's collection without authority and demanded they be withdrawn from the auction.

She said her father would have told her if he had given any stamps from his collection to Brian Kino, which he hadn't.

Mrs Kino and her husband had not spoken to Brian Kino since 2009 or 2010 and she had not been aware some of her father's stamps could have been in his possession until last month.

The defendants named in the writ, including Brian Kino and Prestige, have denied any wrongdoing and the case has been set down for trial before Justice Peter Vickery on a date to be fixed.

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