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THE JOURNAL OF THE IRISH PHILATELIC CIRCLE



**CELEBRATING THE MILLENNIUM
- PEOPLE OF THE 20th CENTURY.
GOOD FOR THE THEMATIC
COLLECTOR BUT IS AN POST
STRETCHING THE ISSUING
POLICY TOO FAR?
WHY NELSON MANDELA,
JESSE OWENS AND MOTHER
TERESA?**

CELEBRATING THE MILLENNIUM

PEOPLE OF
THE 20th CENTURY

A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

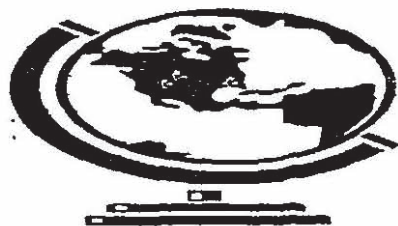
After a decade in the post of Editor it is time to step down and let someone new take control of the *JOURNAL*. It was a great honour to follow Cyril Dulin and I still have the memory of providing the then secretary, Keith Jamieson, with an inspection copy of the first *JOURNAL* under my care. Keith's face when he saw the yellow paper on which the *JOURNAL* was printed was quite something else and it took some explanation before he appreciated that it was a joke – the late Edwin Davey was beside himself with laughter.

Much has changed in that intervening decade; there was a move back to Ireland by the Editor and a return to Rochester – An Post appears to have embarked on the course of total proliferation of philatelic items – two changes of secretary and so on. However, in one respect nothing has changed; the encouragement and enthusiasm by members continues. My sincere thanks to all who wrote over the past ten years and in particular to those who ensured a constant stream of material for publication.

I finish my career as Editor with the March 2000 issue and care has been made in the selection of material for this *JOURNAL*. An article by the late Tony Graham – the last one he sent; Tony was in constant communication and provided a regular flow of material and it is only fitting that I had one last item by him for inclusion. Pleas for assistance with research projects – always pertinent and, of course, the TWYTW 2000. It is only fitting that my last *JOURNAL* coincides with annual review – my first did likewise!

My thanks to everyone who assisted – the *JOURNAL* reflects the membership and the society as a whole; I certainly would not have been able to maintain the effort without the support of everyone. A special thanks to all those who contributed and in particular the 'regulars'.

Well done to everyone and keep the effort up for my successor!



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THAT WAS THE YEAR THAT WAS - 1999

Brian Warren

There was no major revision in postal rates during 1999. Inland and G.B. rates for most items in excess of 500grms increased on 5 July as did all registration and swiftpost rates for both inland and international destinations.

SPECIAL AND COMMEMORATIVE ISSUES

The 1999 programme, comprising 50 stamps, 6 self-adhesive stamps, 5 miniature sheets (including the overprinted *Titanic* sheet) and 7 booklets, was issued over 11 release dates at a total cost of IR£48.44. The Millennium set of six stamps could only be purchased as a complete sheetlet (i.e. two sets) increasing the cost by a further IR£1.80. All counter issues are now in sheetlet format – the total cost of all 28 sheetlets was IR£164.86.

The 1998 totals were 42 sheet stamps 6 self-adhesive stamps, 5 miniature sheets and 5 booklets at a cost of IR£42.64; four issues (Europa, 1798 Rebellion, Tour de France and Postboxes) were issued in sheetlet form at a total cost of IR£24.40 for 6 sheetlets.



Date of Issue	Description		Cost	Plate Numbers/Notes	Paper	Perf.	Printer
26 Jan	Love Stamp (15 th Issue)	- Puppy	30p	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	14 x 14 ³ / ₄	ISSP
	Greetings Booklet (9 th Issue)	- Pets	IR£2.40	Two panes (8 x 30p)	CCP3	14 x 14 ³ / ₄	ISSP
	Year of the Rabbit	- Miniature Sheet	90p	3 x 30p Greetings	CCP3	14 x 14 ³ / ₄	ISSP
16 Feb	Irish Actors						
	- Micheál MacLiammoir (Birth Centenary)		30p	1A1A/1B1B	CCP3	14 x 14 ³ / ₄	ISSP
	- Siobhán McKenna		45p	1A1A/1B1B	CCP3	14 x 14 ³ / ₄	ISSP
	- Noel Purcell		50p	1A1A/1B1B	CCP3	14 x 14 ³ / ₄	ISSP
26 Feb	Irish Emigration- Ship arriving in New York harbour		45p	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	14 ³ / ₄ x 14	ISSP
	Irish Immigration- U.S. Postal Service stamp (33c)		23p	P1111		11 x 11	Ashton-Potter
	(Joint Issue with U.S.A.)						
19 Mar	Maritime Heritage						
	- Polly Woodside		30p	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	14 x 13 ³ / ₄	Walsall
	- Ilan		35p	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	14 x 13 ³ / ₄	Walsall
	- RNLI Lifeboat (75 th Anniversary)		45p	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	13 ³ / ₄ x 14	Walsall
	- Titanic		IR£1.00	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	13 ³ / ₄ x 14	Walsall
	- Titanic miniature sheet (non-phosphor)		IR£2.00	2 x IR£1	CCP3	13 ³ / ₄ x 14	Walsall
	- Titanic miniature sheet with gold foil o/p		IR£2.00	2 x IR£1	CCP3	13 ³ / ₄ x 14	Walsall
	- Polly Woodside miniature sheet (Joint issue)		52p	30p Irish plus 45c Australia – See below			Ausprint



29 Apr	Europa (39 th Issue)	- Kilcolman Nature Reserve	30p	Sheetlets of 10 (5 x 2)	CCP3	14¾ x 14	ISSP
	Parks and Nature reserves	- Phoenix Park	40p	Sheetlets of 10 (5 x 2)	CCP3	14¾ x 14	ISSP
		- self adhesives	2 x 30p	IR£30 per box of 100 (50 x 2)		9¾ x 9½	ISSP
29 April	Centenary of Birth of Sean Lemass		30p	1A1A/1B1B	CCP3	14 x 14¾	ISSP
	Single European Currency		30p (38c)	1A1A11AA/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	14¾ x 14	ISSP
	Council of Europe – 50 th Anniversary		45p	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	14 x 14¾	ISSP
15 June	UPU – 125 Years of Postal Development		30p	se-tenant	CCP3	14¾ x 14	ISSP
			30p	1A1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B1B	CCP3	14¾ x 14	ISSP
15 June	U.N. International Year of Older Persons		30p	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	14¾ x 14	ISSP
	Pioneer Total Abstinence Association – Centenary		32p	1A1A/1B1B	CCP3	14 x 14¾	ISSP
17 Aug	GAA Team of the Millennium	- Various players	15 x 30p	plus label in sheetlet	CCP3	14¾ x 14	ISSP
	Booklets - Self adhesive	- Kings of Leinster	8 x 30p	See below		11¼ x 11½	Ausprint
below		- The Kingdom	8 x 30p	See below		See below	
		- Ulster Abú	8 x 30p	See below		11¼ x 11½	Ausprint
		- The West Awake	8 x 30p	See below		11¼ x 11½	Ausprint
		- Mint Mounted Sheetlet	IR£9.95	Mounted for display (1,000 printed)			
		- Imperforate mint Mounted Sheetlet	IR£30.00	Mounted for framing (1,000 printed – all sold)			
9 Sept	Irish Aviation (2 nd Issue)	- Douglas DC 3	30p	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	14¾ x 14	ISSP
	(Commercial Aviation)	- Britten Norman Islander	32p	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	14¾ x 14	ISSP
		- Boeing 707	40p	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	14¾ x 14	ISSP
		- Lockheed Constellation L-1049G	45p	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	14¾ x 14	ISSP
		- Prestige Booklet	IR£4.91	Four panes – see below	CCP3	14¾ x 14	ISSP

Date of

Issue Description

Cost

Plate Numbers/Notes

Paper

Perf.

Printer



11 Oct	Extinct Irish Animals	- Giant Deer	30p	se-tenant	CCP3	14 x 14%	ISSP
		- Mammoth	30p		CCP3	14 x 14%	
		- Wolf	45p	se-tenant	CCP3	14% x 14	ISSP
		- Brown Bear	45p		CCP3	14% x 14	
		- Miniature sheet	IR£1.50	single set – non phosphor	CCP3	14% x 14%	ISSP
		- self adhesives	4 x 30p	IR£30 per box of 100 (25 x 4)		9¼ x 9½ (H)	ISSP
						9½ x 9¼ (V)	
4 Nov	Christmas (29 th Issue)	- The Holy Family	30p	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	14% x 14	ISSP
	Nativity Play Scenes	- Visit of the Shepherds	32p	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	14% x 14	ISSP
		- Adoration of the Magi	45p	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	14% x 14	ISSP
		- Booklet (self-adhesive – Child in Angel's Costume)	IR£5.40	(20 x 30p i.e. two free stamps)		11¼ x 11½	Ausprint
31 Dec	Celebrating the Millennium (1st Issue)- Grace Kelly People of the 20 th Century	- Jesse Owens	30p	}			
		- John F. Kennedy	30p				
		- Mother Teresa	30p	}	CCP3 paper – perf. 14 x 14%		
		- John Count McCormack	30p				
		- Nelson Mandela	30p	}	Printed by ISSP		

Printers and Sheet Format: All stamps were litho printed by Irish Security Stamp Printing Limited (ISSP), Walsall Security Printers (Walsall) or the Australian firm, SNP Ausprint (formerly known as SNP Cambec).

All commemorative and special issues are now issued in 16 stamp (4 x 4) sheetlet format with both “A” and “B” sheets. This 4 x 4 format will be the normal layout for the majority of future issues. The plate numbers are located in the left margin opposite R1/S1 and the colour controls in the right margin opposite R1/S4. The imprint is in the bottom margin under R4/S1. The bottom right corner is blank. Details about the particular stamp (e.g. “Love 1999” or “Noel Purcell Actor”) are included across the top margin – see illustration on next page. This layout applies to both horizontal and vertical format designs. All sheets are perforated through all four margins and all individual stamps have a 2mm phosphor frame. Any variation in the above format for any individual issue is referred to below or in the table above.

First Day Covers: Blank FDC's cost 30p (as per 1998). Pictorial cancels were available for all issues. Special first day covers were provided for each issue other than the GAA Team of the Millennium and Celebrating the Millennium sheetlets.

Maximum Cards: There was only one set of maximum cards, which was issued for the Endangered Animals at a cost of IR£1 per mint set.

Postcards: No postcards were issued in connection with any commemorative or special issue during 1999.



Row 1 of "A" sheet of Love stamp with
plate numbers (at left) and colour checks (at right)

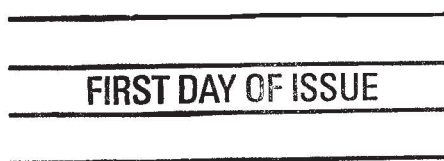
Love Stamp and Greetings Booklet: The two pane booklet contains eight 30p stamps in se-tenant strips of four designs. The stamps feature cute and cuddly pets - (I) Puppy; (II) Kitten; (III) Goldfish; and (IV) Rabbit. Each stamp has two labels featuring various greetings which are attached top and bottom. The outer edges of the panes are imperforate. One stamp in each pane has an imperforate edge giving a total of five identifiable stamps in addition to the sheet issue, which bears the "Puppy" design. The make-up of each pane is as follows:-

Pane 1: 30pl, 30pll, 30plll and 30plV (right margin imperforate); and

Pane 2: 30plV, 30plll, 30pll and 30pl (right margin imperforate)

Each pane is rouletted in the binding margin and stitched into the covers. Three of the designs are included in the Year of the Rabbit miniature sheet referred to below. There was no special "St. Valentines Day" label this year although some post offices distributed stocks of the 1998 labels. There was a separate first day cancel for the booklet panes featuring a Rabbit in the design whereas the sheet stamp cancel featured a Puppy.

Year of the Rabbit Miniature Sheet: A special miniature sheet to mark the Chinese Lunar Year of the Rabbit was issued on the same day as the Love stamp and the Greetings booklet. The sheet is similar to prior years and contains three of the Greetings stamps - 30p II, 30p III and 30p IV (right margin imperforate). The left hand panel shows a rabbit. The labels differ from the booklet panes and refer to the Year of the Rabbit (in English and Chinese) and Happy New Year (in English, Irish, Cantonese and Chinese). Same FDC cancel as for the booklet panes.



Cancel on U.S. Postal Service cover

Irish Emigration\Immigration: This was a joint issue with the U.S. Postal Service which issued a 33c stamp in the same design. The inscription "Irish Emigration" in the top margin of the Irish sheetlet extends across all four stamps and incorporates both the Irish and U.S. flags.

The American stamp is inscribed "Irish Immigration" and is slightly smaller format (40mm x 25mm) on phosphorised paper. The U.S. stamp was issued in sheetlets of 20 stamps (5 rows of 4 stamps) and there are plate numbers in all four corners but no top margin inscription as on the Irish sheetlets. Nine sheetlets make-up the master sheet as shown by way of a diagram in the bottom margin which indicates the position each issued sheetlet was within the master sheet.

A joint Irish first day cover with both stamps was available. The U.S. stamp was cancelled with a Boston "First Day of Issue" postmark. A ceremony to launch the stamps was held in Cobh and, as a result, the pictorial first day cancel was also available in Cobh for this issue. The plain joint first day cover sold by the

U.S. philatelic bureau incorporated the Cobh cancel. I noted that the Boston cancel used on covers sold by An Post is slightly smaller than on covers sold by the U.S. Postal Service.



Maritime Heritage: This was a partial joint issue with Australia Post. The stamp issue co-incided with the opening of the "Australia '99" international stamp exhibition in Melbourne (19-24 March). The Titanic miniature sheet was also available with a gold foil overprint featuring the show logo. Both versions of the Titanic miniature sheet are non-phosphor thus creating two versions of the £1 stamp (phosphor and non-phosphor).

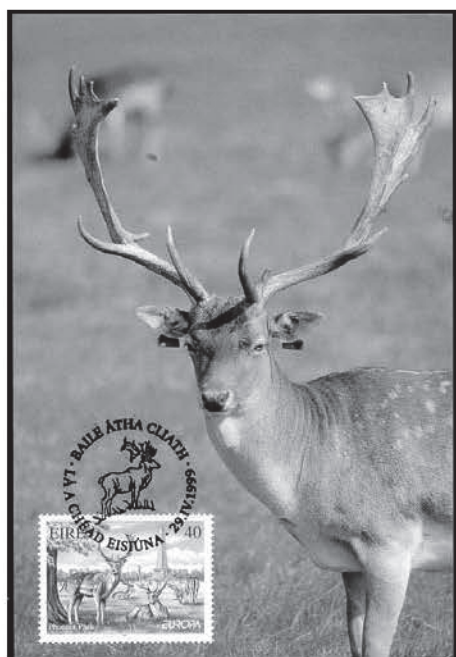
In addition, there was a joint issue miniature sheet (on phosphorised paper) which incorporates a different version of the Irish 30p Polly Woodside stamp and an Australian 45c stamp featuring the same ship. Although both stamps show the Belfast built ship, the designs are not identical and show different illustrations of the ship. The Irish stamp also differs somewhat in colouring from the equivalent sheet issue and, although the same size, the design element is larger as it bleeds into the margin; the perf. size also differs (14 x 14½). This was the first Irish miniature sheet to incorporate a stamp of another country.



The individual 45c sheet stamp was not sold separately by An Post but was available from Australia Post as part of a set of four stamps featuring sailing ships also issued on 19 March. The 45c sheet stamp has a pink phosphor background and a different perf. (14½ x 14) when compared to the same stamp within the miniature sheet (14 x 14½). The stamps were produced in sheetlets of 20 (5 rows of 4) with the stamps horizontally se-tenant with half stamp labels showing the "Australia '99" exhibition logo.

Three different first day covers were available from An Post – one each for the single Heritage set, Titanic miniature sheets and Polly Woodside miniature sheet. The same pictorial cancel featuring an Anchor was used for the single set and the Titanic sheets. Due to the local connection with the Titanic, this first day pictorial cancel was also available in Cobh. A separate cancel featuring the Polly Woodside was used for the joint issue miniature sheet but only applied to the Irish stamp; the Australian stamp was left uncanceled. A Melbourne version of this cancel was also available.

Polly Woodside – Australia Post Issues: Australia Post provided their own separate FDC for the Polly Woodside miniature sheet (not available from An Post); the Irish stamp was cancelled with the same Dublin bureau cancel (and not the Melbourne version) and the Australian stamp with a special Melbourne *Polly Woodside* pictorial cancel; this latter cancel was not applied to the Irish FDC's sold by An Post. The miniature sheet is postally valid in each country. The Australian single set also had a separate FDC and an attractive set of maximum cards with a different pictorial cancel.



Europa (Parks and Gardens): The sheetlets comprise of ten stamps with illustrated side panels. The side panels are imperforate, all other margins are perforated. Sheetlets have an imprint and colour controls but no plate numbers. The card illustrated is an Office of Public Works postcard of a Fallow Stag in the Phoenix Park.

As usual, the self-adhesive stamps are smaller in overall layout than the sheet stamps and measure 37.5mm x 26mm. Produced in boxed rolls of 100 stamps plus two reminder labels (10 and 20). The roll of 102 stamps/labels is split into six strips of seventeen. The rolls are reeled sideways with right hand delivery commencing with the "Kilcolman" design. The usual Dakota logo plus number (No: 5 seen to date) is on one of the bottom flaps; the matching flap has the reference 034418A. Sold in strips of two as well as complete rolls by the bureau.

Sean Lemass/Single European Currency/Council of Europe: The font used for the ISSP imprint differs from previous issues. The Single European Currency stamp (30p) is also inscribed in Euro currency (38c).



UPU – 125th Anniversary: The two stamps feature photographs of a post office van and driver of the 1920's and a modern postal depot scene respectively. A similar model van in P7T livery is available from the philatelic bureau (cost: IR£10.00). A total of five colour plates were used for this set-tenant set instead of the usual four-colour combination. A separate cover and cancel was used for this issue.

Pioneer Total Abstinence Association - Centenary: The stamp features a photograph of the founder, Fr. James Cullen S.J. with St. Francis Xavier Church, Gardiner Street, Dublin 1, the founding place of the Association together with the Pioneer pin in the background. The first day cover and cancel was combined with the U.N. International Year of Older Persons stamp.

GAA Team of the Millennium (Football): The sheetlet features a team of fifteen "Best of the Millennium" players (one for each team position) as selected by a panel of GAA officials and journalists. Each stamp features a watercolour illustration of each player and the layout of the sheetlet of fifteen stamps plus one label matches their position on the field of play. The label reproduces the GAA crest and has a phosphor box. There are no plate numbers, imprints or colour controls on the sheetlet. A similar sheetlet for Hurling will be released during 2000. A presentation pack containing a sheetlet attached by the left hand margin and tied by a first day cancel was also available. This was the only first day service offered by the bureau for the sheetlet. This issue also saw the release of the first imperforate sheetlet by An Post which sold out on the day of issue.

In addition to the sheetlet, four booklets containing self-adhesive versions (38mm x 27mm) of the same stamps were issued – one for each Province. Each booklet features only those players from the respective Province as follows:-

Kings of Leinster:	Kevin Heffernan (Dublin) x 3, Tommy Murphy (Laois) x 2 and Martin O'Connell (Meath) x 3. The cover of the booklet features Keith Barr (Dublin) and Graham Geraghty (Meath);
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The Kingdom (Munster):	Danno Keefe, Joe Keohane, Sean Murphy, Mick O'Connell, Pat Spillane (x 2) and Mikey Sheehy (x 2) – all from Kerry. The cover features Eamonn Breen (Kerry) and Mark O'Connor (Cork);
Ulster Abú:	John Joe O'Reilly (Cavan) and Séan O'Neill (Down), each x 4. The cover features James Ruane (Donegal) and James Traynor (Down); and
The West Awake: (Connaught)	Séan Flanagan (Mayo), Tom Langan (Mayo), Séan Purcell (Galway) and Enda Colleran (Galway), each x 2. The cover features Liam McHale (Mayo) plus Kevin Walsh (Galway).

Complete booklets with the pictorial first day cancel were also available from the bureau. No pictorial first day cover was available. Collectors/dealers could prepare their own covers with any combination of the sheetlet or booklet stamps for cancellation with the pictorial postmark. Booklets were on general sale in their respective province. The surname of Cavan's former centre-half-back John Joe O'Reilly was mis-spelt and appeared on both the sheet and booklet stamps as "Reilly".

Commercial Aviation – Sheet Issue and Prestige Booklet: The plate numbers are in the right hand margin and the colour checks in the left hand margin for all four sheet stamps. The colour check blocks incorporate a series of plane silhouettes instead of the usual colour spots. The booklet contains four illustrated panes of stamps and eight pages of bilingual text and/or photographs; the text/photographs also extend to inside the front and back covers. The side panel of each pane gives details about one of the aircraft featured. The booklet contains a total of fifteen stamps as follows:-



Pane 1 (DC3): Block of 4 x 30p stamps;

Pane 2 (Lockheed Constellation): Set of four values in a block of four;

Pane 3 (Britten Norman Islander): Block of four with 30p + 32p in row 1 plus 32p + 30p in row 2;

Pane 4 (Boeing 707): Three stamps in a se-tenant strip – 30p, 40p and 30p.

As all stamps are of horizontal format and are perforated on all four sides, there are no additional singles ex. this booklet. The panes are rouletted at left and stitched into the booklet covers.

Extinct Irish Animals: All the individual stamps in the miniature sheet are perf. 14¾ due to the mix of horizontal and vertical formats and thus differ from the sheets stamps; in addition they are non-phosphor and each stamp bleeds into the adjoining design.

The self-adhesive stamps are smaller in overall layout than the sheet stamps and measure 37.5mm x 26mm (Brown Bear and Wolf designs) or 26mm x 37.5mm (Mammoth and Giant Deer designs). Produced in boxed rolls of 100 stamps plus two reminder labels (10 and 20 in black). The roll of 102 stamps/labels is split into six strips of seventeen. The rolls are reeled sideways with left hand delivery commencing with the "Brown Bear" design. There is no Dakota logo on the bottom flap on the one box examined, only the usual number reference (Nos: 2, 4 and 5 seen to date); the matching flap is also missing the usual six digit or six digit plus letter reference. Sold in strips of four as well as complete rolls by the bureau. Light and dark shade variations noted on all four stamps.

Christmas Booklet: The twenty stamps are set out on one pane, folded four times, containing two columns of ten stamps. Each stamp measures 25mm x 30mm.

Millennium Issue: The Millennium sheetlet incorporate two sets of six stamps with no plate numbers or other sheet markings. A presentation pack was also available which contains a large card with the sheetlet attached and cancelled with a pictorial first day postmark. No other first day cover service was provided but collectors/dealers could prepare their own covers for cancellation with the pictorial postmarks. No post office was open on 31 December although this date was designated as the "first day of issue". It is the first of a series of six sheetlets; the second sheetlet was "released" on 1 January 2000.

DEFINITIVES - BIRDS OF IRELAND



Date of Issue	Description		Cost	Plate numbers/Notes	Paper	Perf.	Printer
25 Jan	£3 Counter Booklet	- Blackbird	IR£3.00	10 x 30p phosphor	CCP3	14 x 14%	ISSP
16 Feb	Sheetlet	- Various	IR£4.50	15 x 30p – all phosphor	CCP3	14 x 14%	ISSP
	£1 Booklet (1/99)	Goldcrest	IR£1.00	3 x 30p Goldcrest (phos.) plus 2 x 5p Woodpigeon (non phos.)	CCP3	14% x 14 14 x 14%	ISSP
18 May	New 45p definitive printing (phosphor) – ISSP printing	45p		1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP1	14 x 14%	ISSP
June	£2 Definitive (non-phosphor) - Reprint		IR£2.00	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	14 x 14%	ISSP
30 June	European Airmail Booklet (Liffey Bridges)		IR£1.60	5 x 32p Robin	CCP1	14 x 14%	ISSP
	Worldwide Airmail Booklet (Powerscourt Gardens)		IR£1.80	4 x 45p Song Thrush	CCP1 & 3	14 x 14%	ISSP
6 Dec	30p definitive (phosphor) – ISSP printing		30p	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP1	14 x 14%	ISSP
	32p definitive (phosphor) – ISSP printing		32p	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP1	14 x 14%	ISSP

£3 Booklet (Blackbird): This booklet appeared without prior philatelic notice with 30p phosphor stamps. The cover design, content and layout do not differ from the initial non-phosphor issue. First noted by a collector on mail posted from Blackrock, Co. Dublin in March, a release date of 25 January was later announced by the philatelic bureau which serviced plain covers with this date. This gives four new stamps with phosphor frame viz. 30p Blackbird and 30p Goldcrest with either imperforate top or bottom edge. Although primarily a counter booklet, an experimental booklet machine was installed in the GPO Dublin circa May/June which distributed both £1 and £3 booklets; however, within weeks of installation it was “Out of Order” and was later withdrawn.

Sheetlet: This was the first phosphor issue of the definitives in sheet format to be printed by Irish Security Stamp Printing Limited (ISSP). The sheetlet contains 15 x 30p stamps, all of vertical format. Thirteen of the designs have already appeared (Stonechat, Lapwing, Gannet, Corncrake, Magpie, Goldcrest, Kingfisher, Peregrine Falcon, Barn Owl, Robin, Song Thrush, Blackbird and Puffin). Twelve of the stamps are identifiable as new due to the change in value or format and the incorporation of a 2mm phosphor frame and in the case of the 30p Blackbird, due to the change in perforation (as the equivalent Walsall phosphor stamp was perf. 14 x 13%). The two new 30p designs feature the Wren and the Pied Wagtail. A first day pictorial postmark was available but no special An Post cover.

£1 Booklet (Goldcrest): The cover incorporates the "Goldcrest" design. The pane of 5 stamps and 1 label contains 3 x 30p Goldcrest (previously "Blackbird" design) and 2 x 5p Woodpigeon on CCP3 paper. Unusually, the 5p stamps are non-phosphor, whereas the 30p stamps have an all-over phosphor except for a narrow margin of approx. 1mm at both left and right. Presumably this phosphor format has been used so as to ensure that the phosphor does not spill over on to the adjoining 5p stamps. This gives two new singles – 5p imperf. at bottom on CCP3 paper (previously CCP1) and 30p Goldcrest, imperf. at right on CCP3 paper with all-over phosphor (AOP).

Sheet stamps - Reprints: The IR£2 value appeared on CCP3 paper in June 1999 and remains non-phosphor. The 45p with phosphor frame was reprinted by ISSP (previously Walsall) and given a full philatelic release by the bureau on 18 May. It is readily identifiable due to the different perforation (and paper) as compared to the Walsall printing. A pictorial first day postmark but no special cover was provided. In an edition of *Collectors News*, An Post stated that the stamps were printed on paper purchased from De La Security Print (previously known as Harrisons) i.e. CCP1 paper and *that future versions of the definitive range will also be printed on this paper*. However, as noted below the IR£1.80 Tourist booklet was also printed on CCP3 paper which is supplied by Tullis Russell (previously known as Coated Papers Limited). This results in a further 45p "single" ex. the booklet on CCP3 paper as compared to CCP1 of the sheet printing.

The initial 30p and 32p phosphor values were also printed by Walsall and released in 1998. As with the 45p value the new ISSP printings are readily identifiable due to the different perforation (and paper) as compared to the Walsall printing. The 30p value (Blackbird) was previously included in the sheetlet issued earlier this year also printed by ISSP but the sheetlet stamps were on CCP3 paper. The 32p value on CCP1 paper was first included in the IR£1.60 Tourist booklet issued on 30 June 1999 (see below) but the stamps ex. booklet are of a distinctive darker shade. No first day service or postmark was provided. An Post indicated in *Collectors News* that the stamps would be released during week commencing 29 November but in the event they were not available from the bureau until 6 December.



Tourist Booklets: Two new booklets aimed at the tourist market were issued at the end of June. The pane of 5 x 32p Robin stamps in the IR£1.60 are set out in a single row in a miniature sheet type format with large margins at left (imperforate) and top and bottom (perforated); the right margin is made-up of five gummed and rouletted airmail labels. The individual stamps are the same size as sheet stamps with the same perf. and the usual phosphor frame as for ISSP issues. The individual stamp is effectively a new stamp as this is the first 32p Robin with phosphor frame printed by ISSP; the breast of the Robin is of a much deeper shade than previous issues of this design.

The IR£1.80 booklet is in the same format with 4 x 45p definitives with phosphor frame and four rouletted airmail labels and appeared on both CCP1 and CCP3 paper. The individual stamp matches the sheet issue (CCP1) released on 18 May although again, the colouring of the booklet stamps are of a deeper shade as compared to the sheet issue. The booklets are part of a new initiative by An Post to ensure that stamps in booklet form are readily available at retail outlets.



ISSP (non phos.) – flat accent



ISSP (phos.) – steep accent

Flat and Steep Accents: As first pointed out by Otto Jung, the accent (fada) over the E of Éire is flat on the Walsall printing of the 45p (and other Walsall values) whereas the ISSP phosphor printings of the 30p, 32p and 45p values has a much steeper and thinner accent. The 15 x 30p sheetlet and the stamps in the two Tourist booklets also have the steeper and thinner accent. All other ISSP printings (including booklets and self-adhesives) appear to have a flat accent over the E.

Harrison (now De La Rue Security Print) - CCP1 Paper: A fellow collector has within the last year obtained confirmation from Harrisons (now owned by De La Rue hence the name change) that a variation in the CCP1 paper, first noted on the Christmas sheetlet of 1996, was a deliberate change. Previously the gum on all CCP1 paper had a slight blue-green tinge with a mottled effect although this somewhat varied over the years. This PVAD gum was replaced by a layflat PVA type adhesive in 1996 which is whitish with a slight blue tinge. After consultation with fellow collectors and dealers it is proposed that the two types will be designated CCP1 (PVAD) and CCP1 (PVA) when it is necessary to differentiate between the two types of stock. As far as I can ascertain, the only Birds of Ireland definitives to have been printed on both types of CCP1 paper are three of the initial values - 28p, 32p and 52p. (non-phosphor). Both types appear to have been available from the time of issue in January 1997. Both "A" and "B" plates noted except for 28p CCP1 (PVA) plate 1B. Can anybody confirm? All other values printed on CCP1 paper have been with PVA gum. Apart from the 1996 Christmas sheetlet, I'm not aware of any other special issue which exists on both types of CCP1 paper. All subsequent CCP1 printings have been on the PVA type of paper.

FRAMA LABELS

The two machines at Dublin Airport and the machine at Killarney were withdrawn from use during 1999 (and probably as early as 1998 in the case of the No: 2 Dublin machine). The Sligo machine now utilises the new type of paper which gives a yellow reaction under U.V. light as compared to the yellow-green colour of the original paper. This leaves Limerick as the only machine which continues to use the original paper. As far as I'm aware all the other nine machines (including the withdrawn machines) are known to have dispensed labels on both types of paper.



Sligo Frama with missing bottom frame line

COUNTER MACHINE LABELS



Baile Chathail - Charlestown

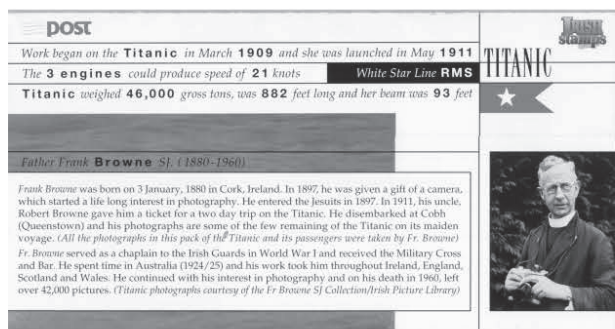


Baile Locha Riach - Loughrea
(with use of CDS rather than SID)

The use of these labels first mentioned in my 1998 report is now widespread and the intention is to introduce them to all post offices which have computer terminals (and thus SIDs). The majority of offices with this facility now utilises the labels for all "stamps" above 45p and, as a result, many smaller offices do not stock higher value sheet stamps.

As labels do not refer to the name of the office, it is difficult to determine the office of origin unless the label has been datestamped. However, they are separately identifiable from the GROF code (an internal An Post reference allocated to each office).

PRESENTATION BOOKS, FOLDERS AND PACKS



26 January – Lunar Presentation Pack: The pack contains a Year of the Rabbit miniature sheet. Cost: IR£3.00 – face value: 96p.

26 February – Irish Emigration/Immigration Pack: The pack contains a copy of both the Irish (45p) and U.S. (33c) stamps. Cost: IR£1.50 – face value: 67p.

19 March – Titanic: The pack contains a copy of the unoverprinted Titanic miniature sheet. Cost: IR£3.00 – face value: IR£2.00.

19 March – Polly Woodside: The pack contains the Irish/Australian joint issue miniature sheet featuring the Polly Woodside. Cost: IR£2.00 – face value: 52p. This pack was “sold out” at the bureau in Dublin by October 1999.

17 August – GAA Team of the Millennium (Football) Pack: The pack contains a large card with the sheetlet attached and cancelled with the pictorial first day postmark. Cost: IR£6.50 – face value: IR£4.50.

17 August – GAA Team of the Millennium (Football) Folder: The folder contains a mint perforated sheetlet plus the four booklets. Cost: IR£19.95 – face value – IR£14.10.

9 September – Irish Aviation: The pack contains a single set. Cost: IR£3.00 – face value: IR£1.47.

11 October – Extinct Irish Animals: The pack contains the miniature sheet. Cost: IR£3.00 – face value: IR£1.50.

4 November - Year Pack: The Year Pack contains one each of the special and commemorative stamps issued during 1999 including both the sheet and self-adhesives for the Europa and Extinct Irish Animals sets, a pair of the Christmas self-adhesive (cut from a normal booklet with backing), the GAA Team of the Millennium sheetlet and the USA Irish Immigration stamp, but excluding the Celebrating the Millennium sheetlet, the Greetings booklet panes and any of the miniature sheets – a total of 53 stamps with a face value of IR£18.24. Cost: IR£18.50.

4 November - Year Book: Each book contains all special and commemorative stamps issues as per the year pack together with one of the Greetings booklet panes and the four miniature sheets (Year of the Rabbit, Titanic, Polly Woodside and Extinct Irish Animals) – total face value of IR£24.36. A numbered black print of the 30p Single European Currency stamp is also included in the book. Total printing of 3,500 standard copies (1998: 3,000) and 150 (1998: 120) full-bound leather editions. Cost: IR£30 (leather edition – IR£100).

31 December – Celebrating the Millennium (1st Issue – People of the 20th Century) Pack: The pack contains a large card with the sheetlet attached and cancelled with the pictorial first day postmark. Cost: IR£6.00 – face value: IR£3.60.

In addition to the above items, a “Celebration of the Seas” pack was also available from An Post which includes 17 maritime stamps from 13 countries including Ireland and Australia. Two of the individual 45c *Polly Woodside* Australian stamps are included plus the 35p Irish stamp (“*Ilén*”) from the Maritime Heritage set (Cost IR£5.75).

POSTAL STATIONERY

IF UNDELIVERED PLEASE RETURN TO:

POST ÉIRE

POST

POST

Postage Paid

Postas Paid

NAME:

ADDRESS:

PLEASE DO
NOT PRINT AN
ADDRESS
IN THIS AREA

Date Of Issue	Description	Cost	Notes
19 Feb	St. Patrick's Day - set of four prepaid postcards	60p	per card
	- set of four greetings cards	90p	per card including prepaid envelope
	- CD plus card	IR£4.95	including prepaid padded envelope
Oct	Postcard – reprint with revised layout	IR£1.40	pack of five postcards
Nov	Registered envelope (C5 size) – new printing	IR£2.50	includes IR£2.00 inland registration fee and 35p postage



St. Patrick's Day Cards: Four postcards were available featuring (1) Tara Brooch; (2) Fairy; (3) Dove of Peace; and (4) Landscape. The Postage Paid imprint has the usual R.J. King design but the lettering of "Postas Íoctha/Postage Paid" differs as compared to prior years. The St. Patrick's Festival logo introduced last year was replaced by an Ireland's Millennium Festivals logo ("The Party Starts Here"). The price of individual cards at 40p was unchanged. The postcards are known to have been on sale as early as 14 February (5 days in advance of the official date).

Four greetings cards complete with prepaid envelope bearing the same R.J. King stamp design were also available. The stamp imprint on the envelope matches the postcard imprint and thus differs from last year. In addition a return address inscription ("In the event of non-delivery return to") is included at the top left corner. The cards feature (1) Celtic Greetings; (2) Balloon; (3) Stained Glass Window of St. Patrick; (4) Peace. The price of individual cards was increased by 10p to 90p.

A new product, the Compact Disc ("CD") card was introduced this year. The card includes a CD of a lively traditional music session recorded live in Dublin's "Ferryman" pub by Cleasaí (a group of professional musicians who came together just for this recording). The CD card was sold complete with a padded envelope (225mm x 170mm) which incorporates the R.J. King Postage Paid imprint; the imprint matches that used on the greetings card envelope of 1998 but in slightly smaller lettering/format. The reverse of the envelope can sometimes be found with either of three different codes 321 3.99 A613, 276 3.99 A613 or 321 3.99 B613. Partial codes also known.

Both postcards and envelopes (including the padded envelope) incorporate a pre-printed "Priority/Aerphost" logo but they differ in style/layout. A green "first day of issue" cancel was available from the bureau for use on postcards and both types of envelope. A similar first day cancel was also in use for the first time in Limerick this year. I presume that cancels were also provided to other cities/towns that normally obtain pictorial postmarks for stamp issues. Can any member confirm use of the cancel at other locations ?

A special promotion was undertaken, prior to the issue of the cards, by the Letter Post division of An Post to business users with meter licences. The promotion did not offer a discount but free overprinting was available for orders of more than 1,000 cards. The outer white envelope (230mm x 162mm) containing details of the promotion was similar to the envelope used for an equivalent offer last year. The R.J. King Postage Paid stamp printed on this special envelope matches the lettering/format used on the padded envelope. Unlike last year, An Post did not enclose any free postcards with details of the promotion.

An Post staff received one of the cards with a special message printed on the card to thank staff for their efforts since their introduction in 1984. Up to 1998, a cumulative total 19.5 million cards were sold. All four cards were also overprinted by the Stampa Council with a combined greetings and thank you message. One card was sent to each member cancelled with a Dublin Mail Centre IMP slogan ("Always Include/Return Address/On Your Envelopes/Post) of 12.03.99. Total of cards 1,200 (300 of each card) produced.

Finally, a special pair of "Happy St. Patrick's Day" postmarks for 16 and 17 March, similar in design to the first day postmark, were provided by the philatelic bureau – see illustrations. I'm unsure as to why these cancels were made available but they may have been used in connection with a special promotion in New York at the time of the annual St. Patrick's Day parade.

Postage Paid Postcards: The postcard now incorporates a space for the sender's name and address at top left. The reverse side of the card (at mid right position) incorporates a feint four line message which reads "PLEASE DO/NOT PRINT AN/ADDRESS/IN THIS AREA". A large number of these cards are used for various television and radio postal competitions which require the sender to include his name, address and phone number. The inclusion of effectively two addresses on the right hand side of the card (albeit on different sides) probably resulted in a number of cards being incorrectly sorted by the Dublin Mail Centre OCR/IMP machinery. The five cards are included in a clear cellophane wrapper (not shrinkwrapped) together with an information slip with the Letter Post/An Post logo which states that the postcards are Postage Paid to Ireland and Britain.



Initial printing (1998)



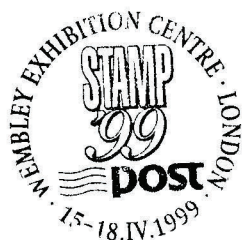
New printing (1999)

Registered Envelope: A reprint of the envelope was first noted in November. The Postage Paid/Minimum Registration Fee Paid indicator has been repositioned closer to the An Post logo and the lettering has been reset in a heavier typeface (see illustration). It should be noted that registration rates were increased on 5 July 1999 from IR£1.70 (inland and foreign) to IR£2.00 (inland) and IR£2.50 (foreign), hence the increase in the price of the envelope by 30p to IR£2.50. Although the wording on the reverse of the envelope has not been altered, the basic envelope cost only covers the inland fee and postage up to 50grms (35p).

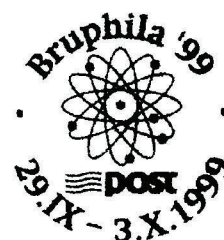
Bureau de Change Postcards: There was no Bureau de Change promotion this year.

Oireachtas Postcard: There was no postcard issue for Oireachtas '99 which is now split over two public holiday weekends. During 1999, An tOireachtas was held in Dublin (30 April to 2 May) and in Dungarvan, Co. Waterford (29 to 31 October).

EXHIBITION SOUVENIRS AND CACHETS - OVERSEAS

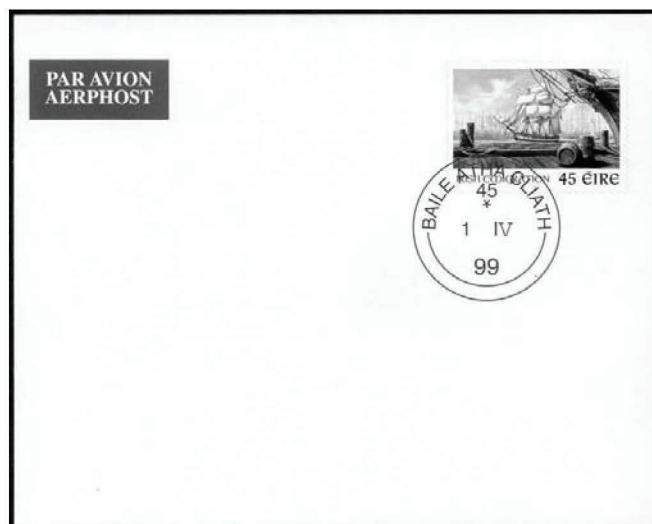


Australia Post cancel



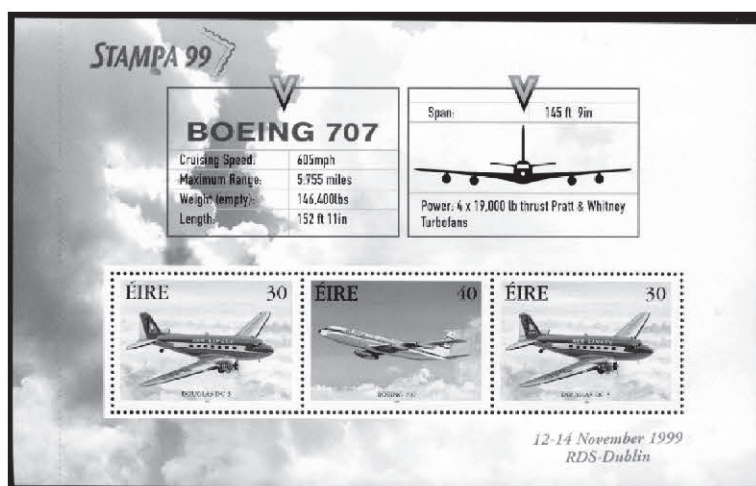
As referred to under *Special and Commemorative Issues*, the Titanic miniature sheet was overprinted with the show logo for Australia '99 (19-23 March) and a special Melbourne version of the Polly Woodside cancel was available. In addition, there was an ordinary show cachet which incorporated the exhibition logo of a kuala bear. Australia Post also provided a "Ships" cancel for 19 March.

Cachets were also available from the An Post agent at Stamp '99 in London (15-18 April), IBRA '99 in Nuremberg (27 April-4 May) and PhilexFrance in Paris (2-11 July). At IBRA '99 the cachet was sold applied to an Olympic Games aerogramme. All cachets were available from the bureau in Dublin.



In advance of the New York Mega Show (22-25 April), the philatelic bureau posted out a specially printed card to collectors on their mailing list resident in the New York/New Jersey area inviting them to the show. The imprinted stamp on the card featured the 45p Emigration issue complete with simulated perforations and cancelled with a pre-printed bureau CDS of 1 IV 99. The old style air mail etiquette design was also included on the card. There was no special cachet at the show. The bureau posted out a similar card in 1997 for this show which incorporated the 52p Barn Owl definitive.

EXHIBITION SOUVENIRS, POSTMARKS AND CACHETS – REPUBLIC OF IRELAND



Date of Issue	Description	Cost	Plate Numbers/Notes	Paper	Perforation	Printer
7 Mar	IPTA/An Post Collectors' Road Show, Limerick Birds of Ireland sheetlet with o/p in black	IR£5.00	500 copies (numbered)	CCP3	14 x 14½	Mahons
17 Apr	IPTA/An Post Collectors' Road Show, Dublin ("Stampania '99") - Titanic miniature sheet with o/p in dark blue	IR£3.00	500 copies (numbered)	CCP3	14 x 14½	Mahons
22 May	IPTA/An Post Collectors' Road Show, Cork Birds of Ireland sheetlet with o/p in red	IR£5.00	500 copies (numbered)	CCP3	14 x 14½	Mahons
25 July	IPTA/An Post Collectors' Road Show, Killarney Birds of Ireland sheetlet with o/p in green	IR£5.00	500 copies (numbered)	CCP3	14 x 14½	Mahons
19 Sept	IPTA/An Post Collectors' Road Show, Sligo Birds of Ireland sheetlet with o/p in dark blue	IR£5.00	500 copies (numbered)	CCP3	14 x 14½	Mahons
2 Nov	Stampa '99 - Titanic miniature sheet with o/p in red - Aviation booklet pane 4 with o/p in red - £3 Definitive booklet (non-phos.) with o/p in red - GAA Millennium sheetlet with o/p in black	IR£15 IR£5	1,500 printed 1,500 printed 1,500 printed 3,000 printed	CCP3 CCP3 CCP3 CCP3	13½ x 14 14½ x 14 14½ x 14 14½ x 14	Mahons Mahons Mahons Mahons
12 Nov	Stampa '99 - Christmas card - A4 card for GAA Millennium sheetlet	50p 40p	Custom House, Dublin 1 (5,000 printed)			
21 Nov	IPTA/An Post Collectors' Road Show, Galway Birds of Ireland sheetlet with o/p in maroon	IR£5.00	500 copies (numbered)	CCP3	14 x 14½	Mahons
4 Dec	Cork Philatelic Society – Annual Exhibition- Booklet - Special cover for postmark	IR£2.50 30p	2 x 45p Emigration stamp (200 copies numbered) per envelope			



IPTA/Collectors' Road Shows – Limerick, Dublin, Cork, Killarney, Sligo and Galway: The one day shows were held in Jury's Hotel (Limerick), Riverside Centre (Dublin – two days), Jury's Hotel, Western Road (Cork), Great Southern Hotel (Killarney), the Silver Swan Hotel (Sligo), and Great Southern Hotel, Eyre Square (Galway). A special postmark for each event was available as well as the souvenir listed. All of the postmarks are repeats of prior year designs. The only one day show held on a Saturday was Cork; the remainder were held on a Sunday. The Dublin show was a two day event but the same postmark was used on both days.

Cork Philatelic Society Exhibition: A numbered booklet containing 2 x 45p Emigration stamps was available. The interleaving features various Cobh and Cork paquebot cancels and the back cover reproduces the show cancel. The souvenir cover features a silhouette of two of the figures from the *Annie Moore* memorial at Cobh.



Stampa '99: The souvenirs were distributed to members in advance of the show. The overprinted GAA Team of the Millennium sheetlet was the public souvenir available at the show. A special Christmas card was also available which features an attractive full colour photograph of the Customs House building in Dublin. A black and white illustration of the 52p stamp issued in 1991 featuring this building is reproduced inside the card. The three postmarks in use at the show were as follows:-

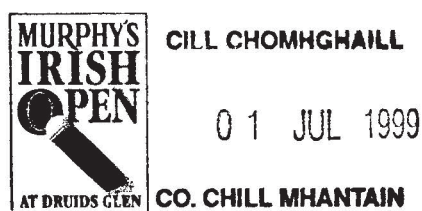
12 November: Year 2000 (Celebrating the Millennium);
 13 November: Lifebelt (Titanic); and
 14 November: Aer Lingus tailfin (Commercial Aviation)

Originally, the 12 November postmark was to be used with the initial Millennium issue of An Post, which was to be released prior to the show, but was subsequently deferred to the end of the year. Note that contrary to An Post's own regulations, the postmarks provided by the philatelic bureau did not refer to "Báile Átha Cliath", the place of posting. No postcard or envelope was provided this year by either Stampa or An Post. A large white A4 card was available from the organisers for use with the overprinted GAA sheetlet.

There were no other postmarks/cachets available as no overseas postal administration attended the 1999 exhibition.

A John Hinde postcard featuring a map of Ireland was overprinted for the Stampa Awards Dinner, which was held in the Lansdowne Hotel, Pembroke Road, Dublin 4 on 13 November. Each of the cards had one of the Titanic stamps (ex miniature sheet) cancelled with the Lifebelt postmark of the same date.

PRIVATE CACHETS



Irish Open: The Irish Open Golf Championship (1 to 4 July with Pro-Am on 30 June) was once again held at Druids Glen, Co. Wicklow. In similar manner as in 1997 and 1998, post office facilities were provided but there was no special postmark. This year there was no datestamping of mail at the venue. Any mail posted at the venue was put into the mail system at Bray Post Office and on request received a Bray SID postmark. A private cachet in black (similar to that used in 1997 and 1998) was provided by one enterprising collector. The tournament was won by 19 year old Sergio Garcia (Spain).



St. Brigid's College, Callan: The Convent of Mercy school in Callan, Co. Kilkenny which has a thriving junior stamp club marked its golden jubilee with a special cachet which was applied to postcards featuring an aerial view of the school. The stamp was cancelled with the counter SID of Callan P.O. It should be noted that this was a private cachet and not a commemorative postmark.

SLOGAN (IMP) POSTMARKS

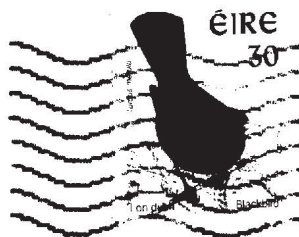
All slogans are only in use at the Dublin Mails Centre. It is likely that similar IMP machines will be introduced at other locations in the future.



IMP 7 - ALWAYS INCLUDE A / RETURN ADDRESS / ON YOUR ENVELOPE/=POST: First used, for both machines 1 and 2, from January 1999 and continued in use until 31 March 1999. It was then replaced by the "Eurvoté....." slogan noted below. It was used intermittently thereafter and was last seen used on 31 October 1999. See also *Year 2000 Testing* note below.

**EURVOTE
11 JUNE
EURFUTURE**

BaileAthaCliath
DMC
04.06.99
22500554



IMP8 - EURVOTE / 11 JUNE / EURFUTURE: First seen, for both machines 1 and 2, on 1 April 1999. The European Parliament elections took place in Ireland on 11 June 1999. The slogan was last used on 10 June 1999.

**National Heritage
Week
5-12 September**

BaileAthaCliath
DMC
01.08.99
12:00 pm
22401883



IMP 9 - National Heritage / Week / 5 – 12 September: First used on 1 August 1999 on both machines 1 and 2. The slogan continued in use on both machines up to and including 1 September 1999.

**Christmas Gift
Dúchas Yearly Ticket
For 62 Heritage
Sites
CALL SAVE 1850 600 601**

BaileAthaCliath
DMC
10.11.99
08:30 pm
24103701



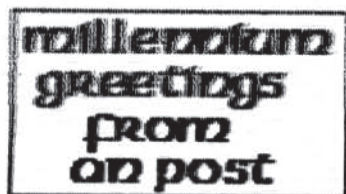
IMP 10 - Christmas Gift / Dúchas Yearly Ticket / For 62 Heritage / Sites / CALL SAVE 1850 600 601. First seen on machine 2 dated 1 November 1999 and on machine 1 dated 2 November 1999. Dúchas is the state owned body with responsibility for national heritage sites such as old castles, monastic sites, and interpretative centres. Last noted on 15 November 1999.



BaileAthaCliath
DMC
13.12.99
02:30 pm
22906627



IMP 11 - POST EARLY / FOR CHRISTMAS / =POST: First noted on 16 November and was last noted on 23 December 1999. See also *Year 2000 testing* note below.



BaileAthaCliath
DMC
04.01.00
01:00 am
20204455



IMP 12 - MILLENNIUM / GREETINGS / FROM / AN POST: In use from 28 December on both machines and continued in use until 3 February 2000.

Introduction of Time Portion of Postmark

**ALWAYS INCLUDE A
RETURN ADDRESS
ON YOUR ENVELOPE**
 **POST**

BaileAthaCliath
DMC
03.07.99
12:30 pm
12507415



On 2 July 1999, the time portion of the IMP postmark was first put into general use. (This was also used, on test mail only, on 5 November 1998) The time format appears below the date and above the code number.

The earliest time noted on 2 July 1999 was 12:30pm (i.e. half an hour past midday) equivalent to code "25". However, it may well have been used earlier in the day. No IMPs from 2 July 1999 onwards have been seen without the time included (except for Year 2000 testing – see notes below).

Partial Printing of Slogans

**ALWAYS INCLUDE A
RETURN ADDRESS**

BaileAthaCliath
DMC
11.06.99
23504437



Occasionally, the complete slogan is not printed. The illustration above shows IMP 8 used in June 1999 with the lower half omitted. This is due to the fact that the postmark plus slogan is printed by two ink heads and in this instance one head failed to print the slogan element of the postmark.

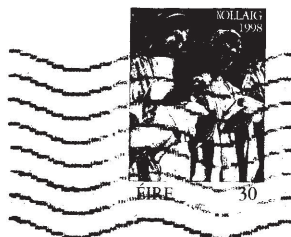


Overseas members should note that, if programmed to do so, for identified foreign destinations (i.e. non Irish or G.B. mail), only the "wavy" lines, and town, time, date and number are applied but the slogan is omitted (as illustrated above). If, however, the OCR does not recognise the address as being foreign, the full slogan will be applied. Therefore, IMP cancellations on foreign outbound mail may or may not have a full slogan.

Year 2000 Testing



Baile Atha Cliath
DMC
20-06-99
20103232



IMP 3 – BE AWARE OF DEPRESSION (with “-“ in date)

On Saturday 19 and Sunday 20 June 1999, the date format on the IMP slogans was changed for a short time. The normal date format is, for example 18.06.99 with full stops between the day / month and the month / year. On both 19 and 20 June 1999, the format changed to read 19-06-99 / 20-06-99 with a dash between the day / month and the month / year. The “Return Address.....” slogan (IMP7) was used on 19 June but, on 20 June 1999, this slogan was replaced on both machines by the **BE AWARE / OF DEPRESSION** slogan (IMP3).

From 21 June 1999, the date format reverted to the full stops version and the slogans reverted to the “.....Return address.....” slogan (IMP 7).

It has now been determined that over this weekend, An Post carried out “Year 2000” testing at the DMC. This necessitated changing the computer’s internal clock to dates beyond 2000. The date in the IMP cancellation is normally printed from a reading of the computer clock. However, to avoid the danger of printing dates beyond 2000, the set-up of the cancellation was changed that weekend so that rather than being read from the computer clock, it was manually input as a string of text, either 19-06-99 or 20-06-99 as appropriate. It is not clear if the use of a dash rather than full stops between the numerals was deliberate or an oversight. The indent date on the back of the covers reads “01” for the 19th indicating a 1 January test and “29” for the 20th indicating a possible 29 February leap year test.

A further test appears to have been undertaken commencing during the weekend of 20 and 21 November. The **POST EARLY / FOR CHRISTMAS / =POST** slogan (IMP 11) was in use but the date format reverted to the “Year 2000” format of 20-11-1999 or 21-11-1999. Note the year format was “1999” as compared the usual “99” used for the June “Year 2000” tests. The time (which was introduced in July) was omitted on both days.

This format of the “-” and no time continued during the following week, up to and including 26 November 1999. The indent dates on the reverse ran from 01 (20th) to 07 (26th) indicating that they were testing for dates between 1st and 7th January 2000. On and from 27 November 1999, the date had returned to the usual format and the timer was in use again.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

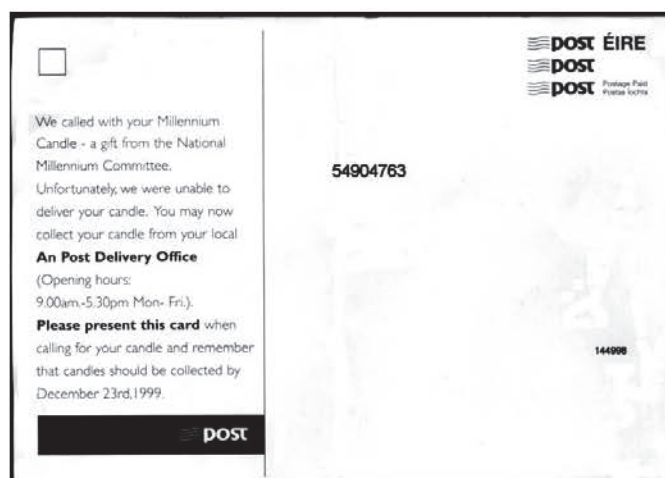


Economy (Surface) Label: As noted last year, these labels were introduced in April 1998 in sheet format. Thanks to Heinz Grunz, I can confirm that they were also made available in roll format although I have found that most offices can only supply the labels in sheet format.

Valentine’s Day Label: There was no repeat issue of such labels in 1999. Regular readers will recall that special labels were provided in 1998 and 1997.

June - Lapel Badges: During 1999 An Post re-launched the small badge featuring the 2d Map of Ireland stamp. At the same time, two new badges were put on sale featuring the Ashworth postbox as included on the Postbox set issued in 1998 and the Cuchulainn statue which stands in the window of the G.P.O. in Dublin. Unfortunately, the mounting card for the Ashworth box states that the box is situated at Kent Railway station in Cork. This is incorrect as the box is held by the National Museum at their new premises at Collins Barracks, Dublin 7. The box in Kent Station is the Ornate box as featured on the An Post FDC for the Postbox set. Each badge costs IR£3.50.

June - Model Van: As well as the lapel badges, the first model van was also released by An Post. The van is a Ford Model A Van of which 60 were purchased by the Department of Posts & Telegraphs between 1928 and 1933. The same vehicle is featured on one of the 30p U.P.U. stamps issued on 15 June. Produced by Lledo plc. Cost: IR£10.00.



Millennium Candle postcard (address excised)

6 December - Christmas Postcard (Philatelic Bureau): The philatelic bureau sent out a large postcard with Christmas and Millennium greetings to all deposit account holders. The card reproduces the 30p sheet Christmas stamp and incorporates the stamp as a postage paid indicator (with the figure "30" retained within the design). The stamp was cancelled with a printed first day cancel which matches that used for the Christmas issues but with the different date of 6 December and in a smaller format.

December – An Post Christmas Cards: The general fold out card used by An Post incorporated the 30p self-adhesive Christmas stamp design.

December – Santa Christmas Envelope: The 1999 envelope seen by me was a repeat of the 1997 and 1998 design with Santa pulling a sleigh together with the usual postage paid indicator cancelled with a pre-printed "North Pole 12.00 PM Dec Christmas" postmark.

December – Millennium Candle Postcard: All households in the Republic of Ireland received a special Millennium Candle which was delivered by An Post. If it was not possible to deliver the candle, a postcard was left requesting the addressee to collect the candle from their local delivery office. Each card was preprinted with the relevant household address and had the usual postage paid imprint. It was not possible to purchase a card or obtain a card of another address.

That Was The Year That Was – 1997: In connection with the Famine issue released on 14 May 1997, first day facilities were available at Strokestown, Co. Roscommon which is the location of a Famine Museum. A pictorial first day postmark was available which matched the bureau design.

CONCLUSION

Once again, I wish to thank An Post and my many philatelic friends for their help in producing this article. Particular thanks to Maurice Barrett and John Lennon for keeping track of all the new IMP slogan postmarks and John Mullen for his unstinting work in relation to the definitives. Thanks also to Bernard Donoghue, Tony Finn, Heinz Grunz, John Holman, Otto Jung, Jimmy Kelly, Michael Kelly, Declan O'Kelly, Pádraig O'Shea, Jim Ryan, David Turner, Ronny Vogt and Ian Whyte for providing much valuable assistance and information.

Finally a plea to members who might be attending any of the international exhibitions attended by An Post or their agents. Any information would be welcome from members who attend any of the overseas shows as regards the availability of souvenirs and cachets. I can be contacted by e-mail at brian.warren@ie.pwcglobal.com or by post at 2 Dargle Valley, Marley Grange, Dublin 16, Ireland.

BALLYMENA MAN PLEADS POVERTY IN 1790

A.W. Graham

In the course of research I came across an entire in the Public Record Office, Northern Ireland [Ref. Downshire Papers: D607/B/28B] and transcribed the contents and the delightfully clear examples of the early BALLYMENA namestamp and the 'Bishop' datestamps.

The letter is from Robert Hewitt, postmaster of Ballymena to Earl Hillsborough in London, and gives some notion of the patronage prevalent at the time and the potential for abuse this lead to. It appears from the record that he did in fact resign, and one hoped that he found better fortune across the Atlantic. The Irish Post Office Establishment Book of 1801 [Post Office Archives, Reference POST 59/25] noted that Thomas Leared [Laird] was appointed postmaster at Ballkymena in 1791 and his basic salary in 1801 had increased to £30 a year. However, he also had a rough time of it and is mentioned in various sources as having been involved in the 1798 Rebellion, and, after capture by the rebels, he narrowly escaped with his life. The story is recounted in OLD BALLYMENA – A HISTORY OF THE TOWN published in 1857 and reprinted in book form, c1890.

Both postmasters linked by the same town namestamp which also survived. The example from December 6th, 1790 appears to be the same as that noted up to October 21st, 1808 by Jim Rankin. It has the same size and style.

My Lord

Finding the Post Office at Ballymena not to be sufficient for Bread for my Family, from what your Lordship were pleased to say to me at Dromore, I make bold to make my Necessity Known to your Lordship, I have no more my Lord than £20 yearly to support my Little family, now My Lord as I have served under Government for over 10 years and would be willing with many Blessing to your Lordship to take a place Either in Ireland or England or if your Lordship could not procure a place in Either of those Kingdoms, under your Lordships protection I would go to Nova Scotia in America as I have a Brother that is a Loyalist and now living there in the province of New Brunswick nigh to the new city of St. John, so if your Lordship would be so good as to take

this in Hand and send me with my little Family there in the Spring, your Lordship would have this place that I now Hold to serve a friend at Home, therefore My good Lord Hillsborough when your Lordship thinks of the Hardships I Labour under to keep a House with so small a Salary, I hope your Lordship will think pardon what I have said and take it to a good Consideration, and I make Bold to look your Lordships answer which I trust in God shall be a favourable one if so I shall be in Duty bound to pray for your Lordships good success in all things and also for your Lordships good family

I am my good Lord
your Lordships Most
Attentive and very Humble. [Humble] St [Servant]
Robert Hewitt