



Irish Philately

THE JOURNAL OF THE IRISH PHILATELIC CIRCLE



March 2004 – Supplement

That Was The Year That Was – 2003

Brian Warren



*Official I.P.C. envelope with special postmark as issued
for the Annual Convention held in Dublin on 10/11 May 2003*

Copyright © 2004, Brian Warren

Acknowledgments

Once again, I wish to thank my many philatelic friends for their help in producing this annual supplement. Particular thanks to Maurice Barrett (who supplied the information and illustrations relating to IMP/slogan postmarks), to John Mullen for his work in relation to the definitives and special cancellations and to John Lennon for additional information relating to IMPS and for identifying the initial phosphor frame variations. Finally, thanks to Brian Donoghue, Tony Finn, Heinz Grunz, John Holman, Otto Jung, Jimmy Kelly, Michael Kelly, Frank McDonald, Declan O'Kelly, Pádraig O'Shea and David Turner for providing much valuable assistance and information.

As usual, I once again ask members who might be attending any of the international exhibitions attended by An Post or their agents to let me know as regards the availability of any Irish souvenirs or cachets. In particular, shows attended by agents often result in the use of a cachet organised by the agent without the knowledge of the philatelic bureau in Dublin. I can be contacted by e-mail at brian.warren@ie.pwc.com or by post at 2 Dargle Valley, Marley Grange, Dublin 16, Ireland.

THAT WAS THE YEAR THAT WAS - 2003

by Brian Warren

Note illustrations of single stamps (and pairs) and postmarks (except IMPS) are full size; illustrations of IMPS, blocks & strips, booklets, covers and stationery items are reproduced at between 50% and 66% of full size.

Overseas rates (including G.B.) were revised on 3rd January with the G.B. rate increasing to 50c and the basic overseas rate to 57c. Inland postal rates were increased on 30 August with the basic letter rate increasing by 7c to 48c.

SPECIAL AND COMMEMORATIVE ISSUES

The 2003 programme, comprising 43 regular gummed stamps, 8 self-adhesive coil stamps, 4 miniature sheets and 7 booklets, was issued over 12 release dates at a total cost of € 80.91.

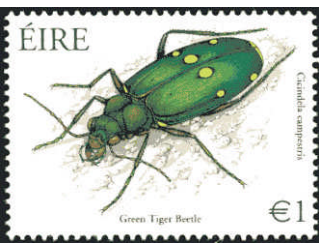
All counter issues were in sheetlet format – the total cost of all 34 sheetlets was € 277.64.

The 2002 totals were 43 regular gummed sheet stamps, 2 self-adhesive coil stamps, 6 miniature sheets and 4 booklets, which were issued over 11 release dates at a total cost of €58.97. All counter issues were in sheetlet format – the total cost of all 27 sheetlets was €208.18.

The massive increase over the 2002 figures is due to the rise in postal rates and to the number and cost of booklets. The total cost for the 4 booklets was €23.89 in 2002 rising to 7 booklets at a cost of €41.84 in 2003. An unfortunate new trend was charging a premium over face for the two prestige booklets issued during the year.

Date of Issue	Description	Cost	Plate Numbers/Notes	Paper	Perf.	Printer
  						
28 Jan	Love Stamp (19th Issue)	- Puppies	41c	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3 14 x 14¾	ISSP
	Greetings Booklet (12th Issue)	- Old Favourites	€4.10	10 x 41c self-adhesive	11¼ x 11½	SNP Sprint
	Year of the Goat/Ram	- Miniature sheet	€1.50	3 x 50c – see below	CCP3 14 x 14¾	ISSP
28 Feb	St. Patrick's Day	- St. Patrick	41c	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3 14 x 14¾	ISSP
	- St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin	50c	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3 14 x 14¾	ISSP	
	- St. Patrick's Cathedral, New York	57c	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3 14 x 14¾	ISSP	
	- Prestige Booklet	€8.00	Four panes	CCP3 14 x 14¾	ISSP	
	- Booklet (self-adhesive)	€4.10	10 x 41c	11½ x 11¼	SNP Sprint	
	- Booklet (self-adhesive)	€5.00	10 x 50c	11½ x 11¼	SNP Sprint	
	- Booklet (self-adhesive)	€5.70	10 x 57c	11½ x 11¼	SNP Sprint	

(Table continued on next page)

Date of Issue	Description	Cost	Plate Numbers/Notes	Paper	Perf.	Printer
   						
   						
1 April	Fauna and Flora (Beetles)					
	- Seven spotted Lady-bird	41c	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	13¾ x 14	Walsall
	- Leaf Beetle	50c	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	13¾ x 14	Walsall
	- Great Diving Beetle	57c	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	13¾ x 14	Walsall
	- Green Tiger Beetle	€1.00	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	13¾ x 14	Walsall
	- Miniature Sheet (Seven spotted Lady-bird)	€2.00	Single stamp with phosphor	CCP3	13¾ x 14	Walsall
9 May	Europa (43rd Issue – Posters)					
	- Dingle Peninsula	41c	1A1A1A1A	CCP3	14 x 14¾	ISSP
	- Connemara	57c	1A1A1A1A	CCP3	14 x 14¾	ISSP
9 May	European Year of People with Disabilities	41c	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	14¾ x 14	ISSP
20 May	Special Olympics					
	- Shauna Bradley (Ireland)	41c	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	13¾ x 14	Walsall
	- Michael Breen (Ireland)	50c	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	13¾ x 14	Walsall
	- Ezra Canty (U.S.A.)	57c	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	13¾ x 14	Walsall
	- Michael Mullins (Ireland)	€1.00	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	13¾ x 14	Walsall
30 June	Gordon Bennett Car Race					
	- Napier (Britain)	41c	se-tenant horizontal strip of four } in sheetlets of 16 } plate numbers 1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B } CCP3 paper – perf. 14¾ x 14 - Printed by Walsall			
	- Mercedea (Germany)	41c				
	-Mors (France)	41c				
	- Winton (U.S.A.)	41c				
	- self adhesive	4 x 41c				
			€41 per box of 100 (25 x 4)		11¼ x 11½	SNP Sprint
30 June	Ford Motor Centenary Walsall	- Model T Ford	41c	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	14¾ x 14
29 July	Centenary of Powered Flight					
	- First Irish Monoplane Flight, 1909	41c	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	14¾ x 14	ISSP
	- First non-stop Transatlantic Flight, 1919	50c	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	14¾ x 14	ISSP
	- First Powered Flight, 1903	57c	se-tenant } 1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	14¾ x 14¾	ISSP
	- Lillian Bland, Irish aviation pioneer, c. 1910	57c				
	- Miniature Sheet (First Powered Flight design)	€5.00	Non-phosphor	CCP3	14¾ x 14¾	ISSP

(Table continued on next page)

Date of Issue	Description		Cost	Plate Numbers/Notes	Paper	Perforation	Printer
	  						
	   						
29 July	The Rebellion of 1803	- Robert Emmett	41c	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	14¾ x 14	ISSP
		- Thomas Russell	50c	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	14¾ x 14	ISSP
		- Anne Devlin	57c	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	14¾ x 14	ISSP
9 Sept	National Gallery of Ireland – 2nd Issue						
	- "Self-Portrait as Timanthes" (James Barry)	48c	} se-tenant horizontal strip of four } in sheetlets of 16 } no plate numbers on issued sheetlets } CCP3 paper – perf. 14¾ x 14 – printed by ISSP				
	- "Woman Reading a Letter" (Gabriel Metsu)	48c					
	- "Man Writing a Letter" (Gabriel Metsu)	48c					
	- "Woman Seen from the Back" (Antoine Watteau)	48c					
	" Woman Seen from the Back" (Antoine Watteau)	48c					
	- Prestige Booklet	€8.00	four panes of four stamps (face value €7.68) – see below				
16 Sept	Frank O'Connor (Birth Centenary)		50c	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	14 x 14¾	Walsall
	ETS Walton (Birth Centenary)		57c	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	14 x 14¾	Walsall
30 Sept	Irish Mariners	- Admiral William Brown	48c	} se-tenant pair	CCP3	14¾ x 14	Walsall
		- Commodore John Barry	48c		1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	14¾ x 14
		- Captain Robert Halpin	57c	} se-tenant pair	CCP3	14¾ x 14	Walsall
		- Captain Richard Roberts	57c		1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	14¾ x 14
	- Miniature Sheet (Commodore John Barry)	€5.00	Phosphor	CCP3	14¾ x 14	Walsall	
	- self-adhesives	4 x 48c	€48 per box of 100 (25 x 4 designs)	11¼ x 11½	SNP Sprint		
16 Oct	Election of Pope John Paul II (25th Anniversary)						
	- Irish Visit, Phoenix Park, Dublin	48c	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	14 x 14¾	ISSP	
	- In St. Peter's Square, Vatican City	50c	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	14 x 14¾	ISSP	
	- Addressing United Nations, New York	57c	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	14 x 14¾	ISSP	
10 Nov	Christmas (33rd Issue)	- Flight into Egypt	48c	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	13¾ x 13¾	ISSP
		- The Angel	50c	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	14¾ x 14	ISSP
		- The Three Kings	57c	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	14¾ x 14	ISSP
	- Booklet (self-adhesive -The Nativity)	€11.04	(24 x 48c i.e. one free stamp)	11¼ x 11½	SNP Sprint		

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 Sprint.



Top margin of the Gordon Bennett Race Centenary sheet

All issues continue to be issued in 16 stamp (4 x 4) sheetlet format with both "A" and "B" sheets. 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 are included across the top margin. This layout applies to both horizontal and vertical format designs. All sheetlets have an imperforate top margin; all other margins are perforated. Any variation in the above format for any individual issue is referred to below and/or in the table above. All stamps have a phosphor frame unless otherwise stated.

First Day Covers: Blank FDCs cost 50c for issues released prior to 30 June; since 30 June covers cost 75c (2002: 50c). Special covers and pictorial cancels were available for all issues.

Maximum Cards: No maximum cards were issued by An Post during 2003.

Love Stamp and Greetings Booklet: The theme was "Baby Animals". The 41c sheetlet issue features a pair of Puppies. The greetings booklet is in self-adhesive format and features the Puppies design on the cover. The ten stamps plus ten labels are set out in one pane, folded twice, containing two columns of five stamps and five labels. The labels do not have die cut perforations but are cut with straight edges. There are five different stamp designs featuring Puppy Dogs, Kittens, Kid Goats, Rabbits and Chicks. Each design appears twice and the stamps measure 25mm x 30mm. Three of the designs are included in the Year of the Goat/Ram miniature sheet referred to below as regular size gummed issues.

Year of the Goat/Ram Miniature Sheet: A special miniature sheet to mark the Chinese Lunar Year of the Goat or Ram was issued on the same day as the Love stamp and Greetings booklet. The sheet contains three of the Greetings stamp designs in regular size format – 50c Kid Goats, 50c Chicks and 50c Kittens (all with phosphor frame) plus six small labels. The 50c Kittens stamp is imperforate at right. The left hand panel shows a Goat and the labels refer to Happy New Year in English, Irish (each twice) plus Chinese and Cantonese. A different cover referring to the Year of the Goat/Ram was produced for the miniature sheet but the first day cancel was the same as for the sheet and self-adhesive issues.

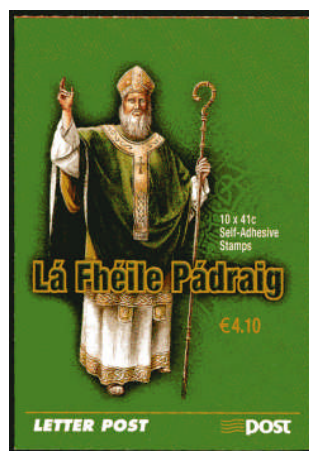
St. Patrick's Day: 2003 marked the centenary of the establishment of St. Patrick's Day as a Public Holiday in Ireland and An Post issued a series of stamps and booklets on the St. Patrick theme to mark the occasion.

The 41c design was criticised because it features St. Patrick in vestments which were invented 500 years after his death. An Post in reply stated that their aim was to feature an immediately recognisable image of Ireland's Patron Saint. The 50c and 57c designs each feature a scene from the St. Patrick's Day parades in Dublin and New York.

The four panes in the prestige booklet contain horizontal strips of stamps (all fully perforated) featuring the same designs as the sheet issue as follows:-

- Pane 1: 4 x 41c;
- Pane 2: 4 x 50c;
- Pane 3: 4 x 57c;
- Pane 4: 1 x 41c plus 1 x 50c plus 1 x 57c.

The panes are rouletted at left and are stitched into the booklet covers. The booklet was sold for €8.00 although the face value of the stamps was only €7.40. This is the first time that a modern booklet has been sold for a price in excess of face value. The individual stamps in this booklet match the sheet issues (same size and perforation) but the bottom horizontal frame line is missing on all the booklet stamps



10 x 41c and 10 x 57c self-adhesive booklets

In addition, three booklets containing self-adhesive versions (25.5mm x 38mm) of the same designs were also issued. The booklets contain two vertical columns of five stamps with surplus paper retained.

All stamps (sheets, gummed booklet, self-adhesive booklets) have a phosphor frame. Hopefully this will not become an annual issue given that the postcards and greetings cards are already prepaid. However, a report in the June 2003 issue of the British publication "Stamp Magazine" stated that An Post have plans to make this an annual release over the next three to five years. A single 65c stamp was issued in February 2004.



Fauna and Flora (Beetles): This issue was printed by Walsall and, as a result, all four margins of the sheets are perforated. The phosphor is "all over" except for the main Beetle element of each design. This is best described as "background phosphor" and is similar to the treatment on the Irish Rock Legends set issued last year, also printed by Walsall. The stamp in the miniature sheet also has the same background phosphor.



Europa (Posters): The attractive two designs featuring advertising posters by Paul Henry are in the usual ten stamp format for Europa issues except the layout differs from prior years with three rows of three stamps followed by a final row of four stamps with the illustrated panel featuring the EUROPA logo to the right of rows 1 to 3. Imperforate margin at right; all other margins perforated.

Sheetlets have the usual sheet markings (plate numbers, imprint and colour controls) but all sheetlets are "A" sheetlets with no "B" sheetlets noted. For all prior Europa sheetlets, there has been no plate numbers except for the first of such sheetlets issued in 1989. Unusually, there was no self-adhesive roll for this set. All Europa issues since 1995 have included self-adhesive as well as regularly gummed stamps.



European Year of People with Disabilities:

A single 41c stamp incorporating the EYPD logo was issued.

Special Olympics: The 2003 Games were held in Ireland from 21 to 29 June. This was the first time that the event was held outside the U.S.A. Shauna

Bradley from Baltinglass, Co. Wicklow (41c) took part in bowling in the 1999 North Carolina Games. Michael Breen (50c) from Gorey, Co. Wexford also competed at the 1999 Games as a swimmer. Athlete Ezra Canty from New York, U.S.A. is featured on the 57c value and presumably also participated in the 1999 Games. The €1 value features Michael Mullins, an athlete from Casla, Co. Galway who took part in the shot-putt in the 1999 Games. He was the only athlete featured on the stamps to compete in the Dublin Games. He participated in three events – 400m (5th); 4 x 100M relay (4th) and 4Kg shot-putt (5th). All four sides of the usual sixteen stamp sheetlets are perforated. Usual sheet markings. All stamps with phosphor frame.

In addition to the four stamps, a set of unannounced large size postcards was released by An Post on 19 June – see Postal Stationery section.



Gordon Bennett Race: 2003 marked the centenary of the holding of the Gordon Bennett Automobile Race in Ireland on 3rd July 1903. Both the top and bottom margins of the sixteen stamp sheetlet are imperforate with left and right margins fully perforated. Usual sheet markings. Walsall has used an overall "background phosphor" as explained above (Fauna and Flora issue). The four stamps are set out in the same se-tenant order (as listed in the table on page 2) in each of the four rows of the sheetlet.

The self-adhesive roll of 100 stamps is split into 5 strips of 20 (plus the usual 2 reminder labels on the last two strips). Surplus paper removed. There are no markings on the bottom flaps of the box. The reverse of the backing paper has a repeated "Sprintpak – SNP SPrint" reference (not SNP Sprint) under a small rectangular square. This reflects the change in name of the printing firm at the end of last year from SNP Ausprint to SNP Sprint; the previous reference read "Sprintpak – SNP". The individual self-adhesive stamps have the usual phosphor frame.

The plaque featured on the first day cover comes from a monument to the 1903 race situated on the main Dublin-Athy road near Athy. Although a scene from the Gordon Bennett Race of 1903 was illustrated on the cover of the *"Irish Motoring Classics"* booklet issued in 1989, the four stamp designs in the booklet were not connected with the race.



Ford Motor Company Centenary: Henry Ford's father, William left his home county of Cork for U.S.A. in 1847 and established the Ford Motor Company in 1903. A Ford assembly plant was established in Cork in 1917 but was closed in 1984.



Rejected 1989 design

Some members may recall that in 1989, a set of four stamps (plus a booklet as referred to above) was issued on the theme "Irish Motoring Classics". Initial colour advertisements in the British philatelic press featured a Model T Ford on the 39p value. However the issued stamp (and later advertisements) featured a Thomond car on the 39p value. The late change was due to non-approval of the Model T Ford design by the Irish Government given the closure of the Irish assembly plant in 1984. However the Model T Ford did appear on the 1986 set of Stampa postcards issued by An Post for the Centenary of Irish Motoring. Now nearly 20 years after the closure of the Cork plant the Model T has finally appeared on a stamp.

Both the top and bottom margins of the sixteen stamp sheetlet are imperforate with left and right margins fully perforated. The stamp has the usual phosphor frame. Usual sheet markings. The Ford logo appears in feint relief in all four margins.



Centenary of Powered Flight: The two 57c stamps are set out in se-tenant format both horizontally and vertically within the sheetlet.



As well as the usual pictorial first day cancel, a special alternative first day cancel was also available at Clifden, Co. Galway. The cancellation was designed by IPC member John Mullen on behalf of the Irish Airmail Society who organised their own first day cover for the Alcock & Brown stamp (50c value).

The 50c value shows the plane over the town of Clifden. The Vickers Vimmy plane landed in a nearby bog after their successful East-West transatlantic flight on 16th June 1919. The miniature sheet is non-phosphor.



The Rebellion of 2003: The 41c design shows a profile of Robert Emmet and Green Street Courthouse where he was tried and sentenced to death following the failed Rebellion. The 50c value features Thomas Russell who was given the task of organising Ulster for the projected Rebellion. He was tried at Downpatrick and hanged there on 21 October 2003. The stamp features the prison in the background – now the Down County Museum. The 57c value features Anne Devlin, the devoted servant of Robert Emmet. Anne Devlin was arrested following the failed Rebellion and was initially questioned and imprisoned at Dublin Castle. The stamp features in the background the prison tower (now known as the Record Tower) plus the Chapel Royal (since renamed Church of the Most Holy Trinity). Anne Devlin was eventually released in 1806 and died in poverty and obscurity in the Liberties area of Dublin on 16 September 1851.

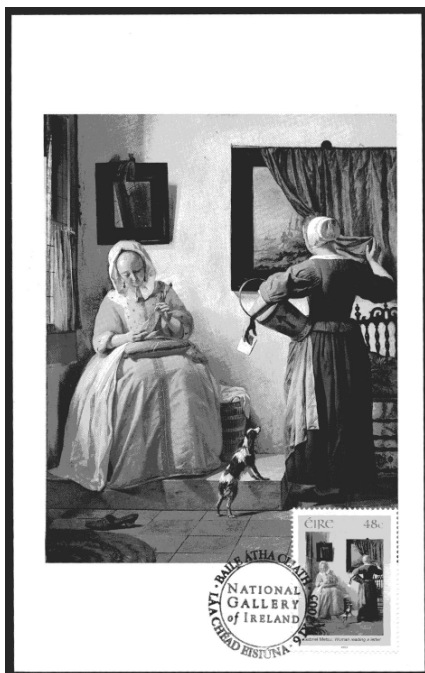


National Gallery of Ireland: This is the second of a series of three sets to be issued over a three year period (2002 to 2004) to mark the 140th Anniversary of the National Gallery of Ireland. Sheetlets do not bear any plate, imprint or colour control markings.

Same se-tenant order (as listed in the table on page 3) for each strip of four within the sheetlet.
The prestige booklet contains four panes, each containing a se-tenant strip of 4 x 48c stamps (all fully perforated with phosphor frame) as follows:-

- Pane 1: "Self portrait as Timanthes" (James Barry)
 Pane 2: "Woman Seen from the Back" (Antoine Watteau)
 Panes 3 and 4 : Two pairs of "Man Writing a Letter"[‡] and "Woman Reading a Letter"[‡] (both Gabriel Metzu)

The booklet sold for €8.00 although the face value of the stamps was only €7.68.



National Gallery postcard- "Woman Reading a Letter"

The National Gallery sell attractive postcards for the two paintings by Gabriel Metsu (marked [‡] above) which could be used as maximum cards.



ETS Walton
1A1A1A1A
plate block

Frank O'Connor and ETS Walton: Printed in the usual sixteen stamp sheetlet format with imperforate top and bottom margins and perforated left and right margins. Usual sheet markings.

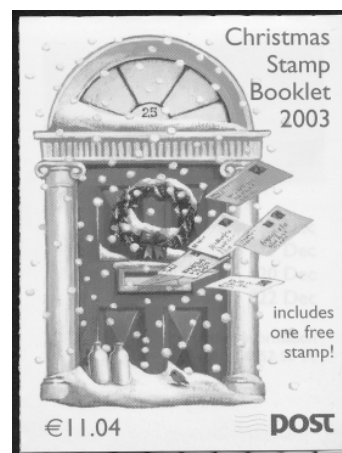
Irish Mariners: The gummed stamps were printed in the usual sixteen stamp sheetlet format with imperforate top and bottom margins and perforated left and right margins. In the case of both sheetlets, the stamps were set out in the same se-tenant order (as listed in the table on page 3) for each of the four rows in the sheetlet. Usual sheet markings (and not as illustrated in *Collectors News*). All stamps (including the stamp in the miniature sheet) with phosphor bands over the two white line borders at top and bottom.



Strip with "only 20 stamps left" label

The self-adhesive roll of 100 stamps is split into 5 strips of 20 plus the usual 2 reminder labels ("Only 20/stamps left..." and "Only 10/stamps left.../ORDER NOW") in black on the last two strips. Surplus paper removed. The reverse of the backing paper has a repeated "Sprintpak – SNP SPrint" reference under a small rectangular square. The individual self-adhesive stamps measure 37mm x 26mm and have the usual phosphor frame. There are no markings on the bottom flaps of the box. The box illustrates the Commodore John Barry stamp. Strips of four were available from the philatelic bureau.

Election of Pope John Paul II: A Papal Portrait which incorporated reproductions of the three stamps and a book were also available – see section "Presentation Packs, Folders and Papal Portrait".



Christmas: The 48c stamp is in square format and measures 36mm x 36mm.

The Christmas booklet contains 24 x 48c self-adhesive stamps giving one free stamp per booklet. The twenty-four stamps are set out on one pane, folded five times, containing two columns of twelve stamps, all with phosphor frame. Each stamp measures 30mm x 25mm (and not the same size as the larger 50c and 57c regular gummed stamps as illustrated in *Collectors News*).

A pair of self-adhesives ex. booklet was available from the philatelic bureau; this is the first time that I can recall that you could obtain the Christmas self-adhesive stamp without buying a complete booklet or year book/package.

PRESENTATION PACKS, FOLDERS AND PAPAL PORTRAIT

20 May – Special Olympics – Presentation Pack: The pack contains the set of four stamps. Cost: €5.00 – face value: €2.48.

29 July – Centenary of Powered Flight – Presentation Pack: The pack contains the set of four stamps. Cost: €4.50 – face value: €2.05.

9 September – National Gallery of Ireland (2nd Issue) – Presentation Folder: The presentation set pack contains a complete sheetlet of sixteen stamps plus the four booklet panes (note: the pane showing the two paintings by Metsu is included twice). The packs could be added to the folder sold with the 2002 collection. Cost: €35.00 – face value: €23.04.

30 September – Irish Mariners – Presentation Pack. The pack contains the miniature sheet plus a first day cover of the single set. Cost €10.00 per pack – face value: €7.85.



Part of the mounted Papal portrait showing the three "imperf" stamp designs

16 October – Election of Pope John Paul II – Papal Portrait and Book: A mounted Papal portrait incorporating the three designs in imperforate format was available (3,000 printed). As the sheet was stuck down on a backing card and was not issued as a gummed sheet or as a regular perforated item, I do not consider this to be a true imperforate issue like the GAA sheet of 1999. Cost: €20.00.

A book entitled "A Polish Pilgrim – Celebrating XXV years of Pope John Paul II's Papacy" was also available for €40. The book incorporates a first day cover and a set of the stamps (not a pair as stated by An Post in *Collectors News*).

10 November - Year Pack: The pack contains one each of the special and commemorative stamps issued during 2003 including both the sheet and self-adhesives for the Gordon Bennett and Mariners sets and a pair of the Christmas self-adhesive (cut from a normal booklet with backing) but excluding the Greetings booklet panes and any of the miniature sheets – a total of 53 (2002: 47) stamps with a face

value of €26.53 (2002: €21.76). Cost: €30 (2002: €30.00).

14 November – Definitive Presentation Pack: The pack contains all twenty-four euro values issued to date in sheet format together with five other stamps from booklets as follows:-

Sheet Values: 1c, 2c, 3c, 4c, 5c, 7c, 10c, 20c, 38c, 41c, 44c, 47c, 48c, 50c, 51c, 55c, 57c, 60c, 75c, 95c, €1, €2, €5 and €10.

Ex Booklets: 36c Wren imperforate left (ex. second €2 booklet issued on 6 August 2002), 41c Goldcrest imperforate bottom (ex. 10 x 41c gummed booklet), 48c Pied Wagtail imperforate top or bottom (ex. 10 x 48c gummed booklet), 50c Puffin (ex. 10 x 50c self-adhesive booklet) and 57c Song Thrush (ex. 10 x 57c self-adhesive booklet). The two self-adhesives are complete with backing paper. The booklet stamps were included, as the five birds depicted thereon are not shown on any of the sheet issues. The 48c Pied Wagtail exists with either imperforate top or bottom margin; I presume that packs were made-up with either version. Cost: €35 (face value: €27.45)



19 November - Year Book: Each book contains one each of the special and commemorative stamps issued during 2003 including both the sheet and self-adhesives for the Gordon Bennett and Mariners sets and a pair of the Christmas self-adhesive (cut from a normal booklet with backing) but excluding the Greetings booklet pane. The four miniature sheets (Year of the Goat, Fauna & Flora, Centenary of Flight and Irish Mariners) were also included. There was no black print included this year; all previous Year Books included a black print. Total printing of 3,000 standard copies (2002: 3,000) and 150 (2002: 150) full-bound leather editions. Cost: €55.00 (leather bound edition €160.00) - face value: €40.03.

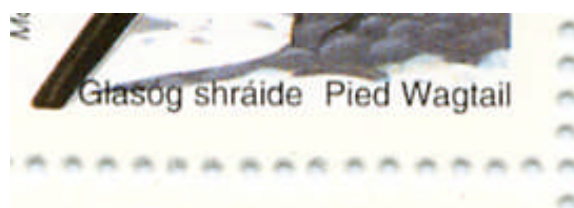
DEFINITIVES - BIRDS OF IRELAND

Date of Issue	Description	Cost	Plate Numbers/Notes	Paper	Perf.	Printer
						
6 Jan	Sheet issue – new value	- Ringed Plover	75c 1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B1B	CCP3	14¾ x 14	ISSP
		- Sparrowhawk	95c 1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B1B	CCP3	14¾ x 14	ISSP
	Self-adhesive booklet (new G.B. rate)	- Puffin	€5.00 10 x 50c		11¼ x 11½	SNP Sprint
25 Aug	Sheet issues – new values	- Stonechat	7c 1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B1B	CCP3	14 x 14¾	ISSP
	(new inland rate)	- Peregrine Falcon	48c 1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B1B	CCP3	14 x 14¾	ISSP
25 Aug	No Value Indicator Self-Adhesives	- Booklet	€4.80 10 x N (National - 48c) – 2 designs		11 x 11¼	SNP Sprint
	(Peregrine Falcon and Pied Wagtail)	- Boxed Roll	2 x N (48c) €48 per box of 100 (50 x 2 designs)		11 x 11¼	SNP Sprint
30 Sept	Self-Adhesives	- Booklet	€4.80 10 x 48c – 2 designs		11 x 11¼	SNP Sprint
	(Peregrine Falcon and Pied Wagtail)	- Boxed Roll	2 x 48c €48 per box of 100 (50 x 2 designs)		11 x 11¼	SNP Sprint
30 Sept	Vending Machine Booklets	- Plain cover	€2.00 4 x 48c plus 2 x 4c		14¾ x 14	ISSP
	- Peregrine Falcon on cover	€4.80 10 x 48c (2 designs)			14 x 14¾	ISSP

Sheet Issues: International (including G.B.) postal rates increased on 6 January 2003. As a result, two new sheet values were issued - 75c (large envelope, up to 50grms., G.B. priority rate) and 95c (large envelope, up to 50grms., Europe/Rest of World priority rate). The two new values (7c and 48c) issued on 25 August 2003 were required due to an increase in the inland letter rate from 41c to 48c with effect from 30 August. All four stamps were printed in the usual 10 x 10 format. The 48c, 75c and 95c have the usual phosphor frame; the 7c has no phosphor.

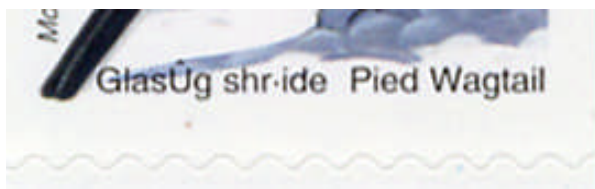
Self-Adhesive Rolls (SNP Sprint): A new National (N) NVI roll was issued on 25 August to meet the new 48c rate. Prior to the approval of a rate increase from the Communications Regulator, An Post decided to print National rate NVI's in both roll and booklet form in case a lower rate increase was approved. This allowed for the immediate introduction of the new 48c rate as approval was only given in the week prior to the increase. The Peregrine Falcon (as per sheet issue) and the Pied Wagtail designs are included in the roll. The roll was sold for €48 by the philatelic bureau from the day of issue even though the rate increase was not

operative until Saturday 30 August. Post offices did not sell the roll in advance of the rate increase.



ISSP printing - note correct ó and á

The Pied Wagtail design used on the new self-adhesives printed in Australia has an inscription error. This design was previously used in the old Irish currency sheetlet of 15 stamps printed by Irish Security Stamp Printing Limited (ISSP) - see above. The Peregrine Falcon was used on the new 48c regular gummed sheet stamp but this design and the Pied Wagtail were used together in the 4 new self-adhesive items - NVI "N" roll and booklet plus the 48c roll and booklet (all produced in Australia). Both designs were also used in the 10 x 48c regular gummed booklet (produced in Ireland by ISSP).



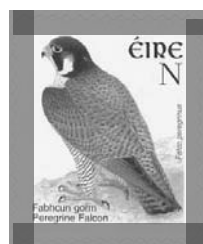
SNP Sprint printing – note incorrect Ú and – instead of ó and á

It seems ISSP sent the Pied Wagtail design down the electronic line to Australia and the computer at the other end did not recognise the Irish fada (´) and gobbledygook came out – see illustration above. Obviously nobody sent printed proofs back to An Post to check or, if they did, somebody was asleep. I suspect they were all done in a hurry in advance of the August 2003 rate change and by the time it was noticed on the N issue, the 48c had also been printed. Members should keep an eagle (if not a pied wagtail) eye out for reprints of the 48c, as I'm sure the self-adhesive roll and/or booklet will be reprinted in due course. Use of rolls far outnumber that of booklets so this should be the first to change.

The name is correctly spelt on the stamp in the ISSP printed 10 x 48c regular gummed booklet.

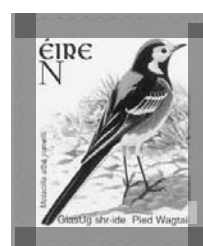
On the following 30 September, the roll was re-issued as 100 x 48c with the same designs (and inscription error). As usual, strips of 2 stamps at 96c can be purchased from the bureau for both N and 48c stamps.

Both rolls of 100 stamps are split into 4 strips of 25 plus 2 reminder labels in black on the last two strips. The labels read "Only 25/stamps left..." and "Only 10/stamps left.../ORDER NOW". This is a change from previous Australian definitive roll printings which were split 25/25/26/24 with two labels indicating that there were 20 and 10 stamps left. Surplus paper removed. The reverse of the backing paper has a repeated "Sprintpak – SNP SPrint" reference under a small rectangular square.

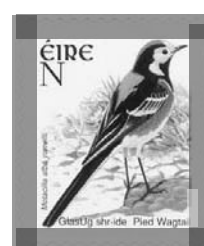


The individual self-adhesive stamps have the usual complete phosphor frame. There are no markings on the bottom flaps of either box, also a change from previous issues. Both boxes feature the Peregrine Falcon stamp design.

Self-Adhesive Booklets (SNP Sprint): A new booklet for the 50c G.B. priority rate was issued on 6 January. This was in the usual format and contains 10 x 50c Puffin design stamps with surplus paper retained. This design was previously used for the 44p sheet value and does not match the sheet design for the 50c value (Grey Heron). The phosphor frame appears complete under U.V. light but there appears to be a mix of yellow colours at bottom right.



small indent



large indent

10 x National (N) NVI and 10 x 48c booklets were also issued in line with the inland rate increases. Each booklet contains five pairs of stamps (Peregrine Falcon and Pied Wagtail with inscription error) in the usual format with surplus paper retained. In similar manner to previous national rate booklets (see 2002 article published March 2003), the phosphor frames are not complete. Although there is no reason for incomplete phosphor frames, the stamps in both booklets can be found with either a small indent or large indent at bottom right. This indicates that the same phosphor printing plates as used for the earlier Robin and Song Thrush booklets have both been used for the new booklets. Coupled with the roll self-adhesives this gives a total of 12 identifiable stamps as follows:-

Stamp	Frame Type	Sources
National (N) NVI Peregrine Falcon	Complete	N Roll
National (N) NVI Peregrine Falcon	Small indent	N Booklet
National (N) NVI Peregrine Falcon	Large indent	N Booklet
National (N) NVI Pied Wagtail	Complete	N Roll
National (N) NVI Pied Wagtail	Small indent	N Booklet
National (N) NVI Pied Wagtail	Large indent	N Booklet
48c Peregrine Falcon	Complete	48c Roll
48c Peregrine Falcon	Small indent	48c Booklet
48c Peregrine Falcon	Large indent	48c Booklet
48c Pied Wagtail	Complete	48c Roll
48c Pied Wagtail	Small indent	48c Booklet
48c Pied Wagtail	Large indent	48c Booklet

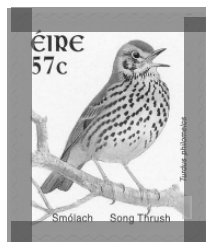


fig 1



fig 2

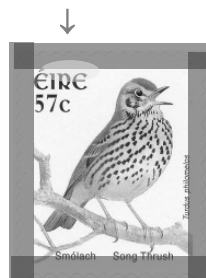


fig 3

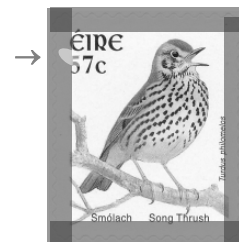


fig 4

As well as the various types referred to in my 2002 article, I have since discovered further phosphor variations of the 10 x 57c booklet. The normal (correct) issue has a small indent (*fig 1*). I have also found two other versions of the same booklet. The first variation has the 57c stamps with a large indent in the phosphor frame (*fig 2*) – this is the phosphor frame used in the 44c and E booklets. The second variation has the same phosphor frame types as used in the first 10 x N NVI booklet with the Blackbird and Goldcrest designs. The stamps in column 1 have a curved indent in the top of the frame (*fig 3*) – as previously used on the Blackbird stamps and stamps in column 2 have a very small indent in the left frame (*fig 4*) – as previously used on the Goldcrest design.

Self-Adhesives - Perforation: I have always found it difficult to measure the perforation size on the modern Australian self-adhesive stamps. Although I have an electronic measurement gauge, the irregular corners appear to result in a variation in the measurement by a $\frac{1}{4}$. Taking the recent N and 48c definitives, they appear to measure $11 \times 11\frac{1}{4}$ as compared to $11\frac{1}{4} \times 11\frac{1}{2}$ for the 38c issue of 2002. Sometimes this difference occurs on stamps of the same issue and even on opposite sides of the same stamp. However, if I place two stamps with different electronic measurements on top of each other they visually match. I have also tried using a plastic gauge but found it difficult in the 10 to 12 range – my eyesight is not the best! Perhaps the answer is to measure to the nearest $\frac{1}{2}$ (as do Stanley Gibbons for all stamps). Traditionally over the years Irish produced catalogues have measured to the nearest $\frac{1}{4}$. Can any member help? What are your views?

Vending Machine Booklets: Both booklets contain regular gummed stamps. To take account of the 30 August inland rate increase, the €2 booklet now contains 4 x 48c (Peregrine Falcon), plus 2 x 4c (Corncrake). The outer margins are imperforate with a top imperforate binding margin and a perforated bottom margin. The booklet has thus four new identifiable singles – 48c Peregrine Falcon imperforate left, 48c Peregrine Falcon imperforate right (both with phosphor frame), 4c Corncrake imperforate left and 4c Corncrake imperforate right (both non-phosphor) – all on CCP3 paper. The €2 booklet was not available until some two weeks later at the philatelic bureau but they were available from vending machines in the Dublin area by at least 3 October; however, the bureau did cancel FDC's bearing the pane with 30 September date.

A new €4.80 also for use in vending machines was scheduled for issue on the same date. This new booklet contains 5 x 48c Peregrine Falcon and 5 x 48c Pied Wagtail (with correct inscription). There was a return to the alternate design layout in both rows as used in similar pre-euro 10 x 30p booklets. The outer margins are imperforate with an imperforate binding margin on the left and a perforated margin at right. This gives four new identifiable stamps – 48c Peregrine Falcon either imperforate top or bottom and 48c Pied Wagtail either imperforate top or bottom – all with complete phosphor frames. The cover includes an illustration of the Peregrine Falcon stamp and incorporates the wording "10 GUMMED 48c". This booklet was not available from either the bureau or from machines in the Dublin area until mid October, although 30 September is the official issue date and FDC's exist with this date.



Booklets - First Day Postmarks: Although An Post did not provide serviced FDC facilities for any of the booklet stamps/panes issued on 25 August and 30 September, collectors could make-up their own covers to receive either pictorial or CDS cancellations. I have also seen postmark illustrations for nine locations which were provided with a pictorial first day cancel on 25 August. The locations were Bray, Cork, Dublin, Galway, Kilkenny, Limerick, Tralee, Sligo and Waterford. Presumably they are the only post offices currently provided with first day pictorial cancels for definitive and commemorative/special issues.

POSTAL STATIONERY

Date of Issue	Description	Cost	Notes
			
	<i>Special Olympics postcard by Aileesh O'Riordan (age 15)</i>		<i>Reverse of "Stampede" postcard</i>
19 Feb	St. Patrick's Day - set of three prepaid postcards	€1.00	per card - sold separately
	- set of three greetings cards	€1.80	per card including prepaid envelope – sold separately
19 June	Special Olympics - set of 12 postcards	€10.00	Sold in two sealed packs of six postcards at €5.00 per pack
14 Aug	"Stampede" postcard	€1.00	per prepaid card

St. Patrick's Day Cards: Three postcards were available featuring (1) Harp and St. Patrick's Bell Shrine; (2) Sheep in Field; and (3) Shamrock superimposed on mountain and river scene. The Postage Paid imprint has the usual R.J. King design. It would have been an opportunity to use the St Patrick design as featured on the 41c stamp issued later in the month. The St. Patrick's Festival logo also appears on each card.

Three greetings cards complete with prepaid envelope bearing the same R.J. King stamp design were also available featuring (1) St. Patrick (as per 41c stamp design); (2) St. Patrick's Cathedral and Parade, New York (as per 57c stamp design); and (3) Various Irish Rural Scenes. This enabled collectors to affix the 41c and 57c stamps to the respective cards and obtain a maximum card style cancel. The envelope was similar to the type used in 2001 and 2002 with the wording *"In the event...."* positioned 2mm to the left of the three sender's address lines. The pre-printed "Priority/Aerphost" label is positioned 74mm to the right of the left hand side of the envelope as compared to 68mm on the envelopes used in 2001 and 2002. A green "first day of issue" cancel was available from the bureau and other large main post offices for use on both postcards and envelope. The price of both types of cards remained unchanged from 2002.

Special Olympics Postcards: In addition to the four stamps for the Special Olympics, a set of unannounced large size postcards was released by An Post on 19 June. An Post, a Games sponsor, ran a schools competition on the theme *"The four corners of Ireland welcomes the four corners of the*

World". 40,000 entries were submitted from children who were asked to represent the theme artistically or through the written word. Twelve of the winning entries were reproduced on postpaid postcards. The name, county of residence and age of each designer is recorded on each card but no titles were given to any of the designs. The postpaid stamp features the same poorly reproduced 2d map design used for the Sellafield cards issued in 2002. Surely it would have been more appropriate to use one of the sheet stamp designs. The cards were sold in two separate shrink-wrapped packs of six (with paper label).

The Games Village was located at the R.D.S. premises in Ballsbridge, Dublin 4 at which An Post had a stand and a skeleton cancel. Details and an illustration are included under the section "Other Special Postmarks and Cachets". Each Special Olympics athlete received a free set of cards.

"Stampede" Postcard: During the summer months, a number of life-size model cows were on exhibit at various shopping centres in Dublin. The models were subsequently auctioned for charity. One of the model cows is covered in modern Irish stamps and was situated in the G.P.O. in Dublin. The model cow was subsequently sold for €13,000. A special postpaid postcard was issued featuring the cow. The same postpaid stamp reproducing the 2d map stamp was also used for this card.

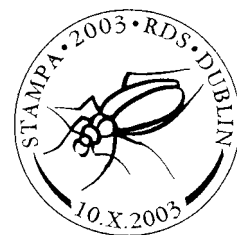
Christmas Postcard (Philatelic Bureau): No postcard was sent to customers this year.

EXHIBITION AND SOCIETY SOUVENIRS, POSTMARKS AND CACHETS – REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

Date of Issue	Description	Cost	Plate Numbers/Notes	Paper	Perforation	Printer
---------------	-------------	------	---------------------	-------	-------------	---------

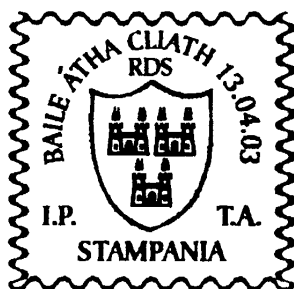


Ladybird miniature sheet with incorrect date of 14 April instead of 13 April as per cachet



13 April	Stampania 2003 (R.D.S., Dublin)	- Seven-spotted lady-bird Miniature Sheet with "Stampania 2003" and date overprint in red	€4.00	600 copies (numbered)	CCP3	13¾ x 14¾	Mahons
10 May	Irish Philatelic Circle	- Postcard	€2.00	Featuring Dublin postmarks (€2.50 cancelled)			
	- Envelope		€2.00	Illustrated with IPC logo			
18 Sept	Stampa 2003 (Members' Souvenirs)	- St. Patrick's Prestige Booklet with o/p		1,000 overprinted in black	CCP3	14¾ x 14¾	Mahons
	- Seven-spotted Ladybird miniature sheet with o/p		€25.00	1,000 overprinted in black	CCP3	13¾ x 14¾	Mahons
	- Centenary of Aviation miniature sheet with o/p			1,000 overprinted in black	CCP3	14¾ x 14¾	Mahons
18 Sept	Stampa 2003 (Public Souvenir)	- Phil Lynott miniature sheet with o/p	€5.00	1,500 overprinted in black	CCP3	12¾ x 13¾	Mahons
27 Sept	Cork Philatelic Society Exhibition	- Booklet	€3.50	250 printed (contains 2 x 48c Ford stamps)			
	- Illustrated cover (old Ford Works, Cork)		€0.50	with 41c Ford stamp – 110 printed.			
8 Nov	IPTA/An Post Collectors' Road Show, Limerick	- National Gallery sheetlet (2nd issue) with o/p	€9.50	600 copies (numbered)	CCP3	14¾ x 14	Mahons
9 Nov	IPTA/An Post Collectors' Road Show, Waterford	- National Gallery sheetlet (2nd issue) with o/p	€9.50	600 copies (numbered)	CCP3	14¾ x 14	Mahons

All sheetlets/minature sheets/booklets/postcards as listed above were privately produced/overprinted by the organisers. Overprinting (if applicable) was with the permission of An Post.



available. The former Ford assembly plant was based in Cork and is illustrated on the cover.

Stampa 2003 (10 to 12 October): The various souvenirs were posted in advance to members with

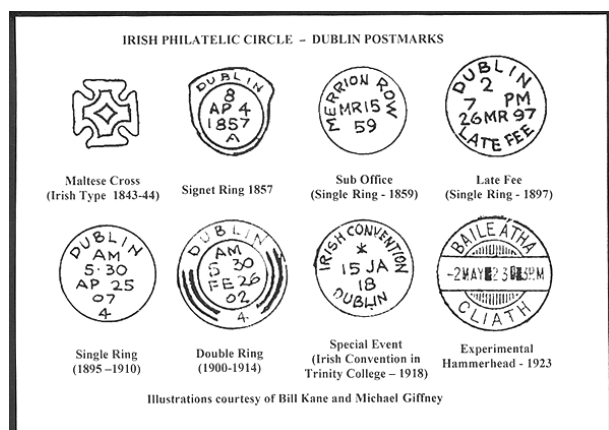
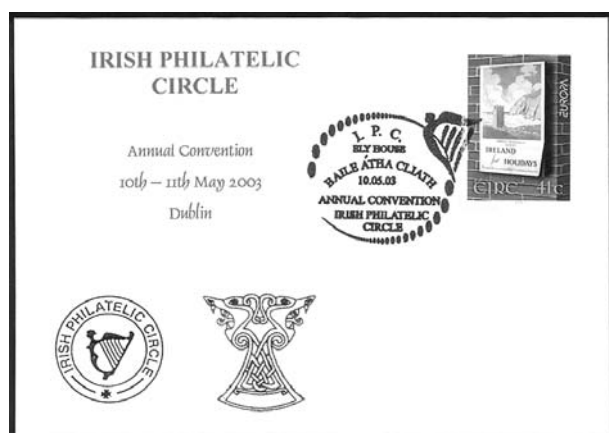
certain members receiving them as early as 18 September. The three special cancels available and the related stamp issues were as follows:-

- 10 October: Beetle (Fauna and Flora – Beetles)
- 11 October: Propeller (Centenary of Powered Flight)
- 12 October: Shamrock (St. Patrick)

The designs are based on the equivalent first day cancels for stamps on the same theme issued during 2003. Note the inclusion of "Dublin" instead of Baile Átha Cliath". No official cover was available.

The Awards Dinner was held in the Lansdowne Hotel, Pembroke Road, Dublin 4 on 11 October. The Awards Dinner Menu was printed on the reverse of an An Post gold edged invitation style card. The obverse side reproduced the three postmarks. In addition, each card was cancelled with the Propeller postmark of the same date. Total of 50 cards produced.

IPTA Roadshows: The Irish Philatelic Traders Association organised two shows on succeeding days in November. The first show was held in Jurys Hotel, Limerick (8 November) followed by a new venue the Granville Hotel, Waterford (9 November). The Association produced a souvenir as listed for each event. An Post was not present and no special postmark (or cachet) was available.



Obverse and reverse of IPC postcard

OVERSEAS EXHIBITIONS

PHILATELIA COLOGNE



21-23.03.2003

No souvenirs were issued by An Post in connection with any international exhibitions in 2003. I'm only aware of two exhibition cachets. Cachets were available for **Philatelia Cologne (21 - 23 March)** and for **Bangkok 2003 (4 to 13 October)**. An Post attended the latter exhibition in Thailand. Ireland was represented at the show by Irish Commissioner, Frank McDonald. Neither cachet was advertised by An Post in *Collectors News*.

Irish Philatelic Circle – Annual Convention: The I.P.C. held their Annual Convention at Ely House, Ely Place, Dublin 2 on 10/11May. A special postmark was provided by An Post for 10 May and the Circle produced two souvenirs. As well as a cover (50 serviced covers produced), a postcard illustrating on the reverse eight Dublin postmarks was also available (mint or with postmark – 50 of each produced). The 41c Europa stamp was used on both serviced covers and cards.

Cork Philatelic Exhibition: The annual show was held in Jurys Hotel, Cork. A booklet containing 2 x 41c Ford stamps plus a special postmark and cover was

OTHER SPECIAL POSTMARKS AND CACHETS



Bremen Commemoration Flight: A special flight to mark the 75th Anniversary of the first East-West flight of the Bremen left Baldonnell Airbase at 6.38 am on the morning of 12 April 2003.

Both a German aircraft (named "Bremen") and an Irish Air Corps aircraft (named "Fitz") flew to Canada. 6.38 am was the time of departure of the original flight. Various covers were flown by the Air Corps. Although no special postmark was available, the Irish Air Corps arranged for a special blue cachet as illustrated to be applied to flown covers which also received a small single ring CDS on arrival in Canada.



An Post had a temporary office at the R.D.S. for the Special Olympics. The office was manned by members of An Post's Transactions Services, from Sunday 22 June 2003 to Saturday 28 June 2003 and a skeleton postmark was available for all days. All impressions were of poor quality and there was no year slug. The Special Olympic pre-paid postcards and stamps were on sale.

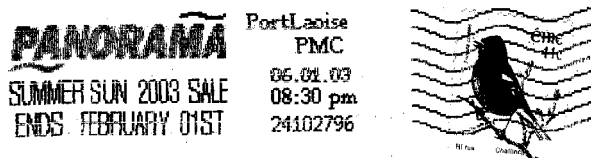
A stand for the European Year of People with Disabilities was located beside An Post stand and a special postcard (not produced by An Post) was also available.

SLOGANS USED ON INTEGRATED MAIL PROCESSORS (IMPs)

(all illustrations of IMP postmarks reduced)

All new slogans used for the first time in 2003 are listed below. Repeat uses of earlier years' slogans are referred to at the end of this section. All slogans were in use at the Dublin Mails Centre ("DMC") and at Portlaoise Mails Centre ("PMC") except IMP 61. Athlone Mails Centre ("AMC") introduced slogans commencing with IMP 60. Earliest known dates are recorded although slogans were not necessarily introduced at both Mail Centres on the same date. Each slogan is usually replaced by the following listed cancel.

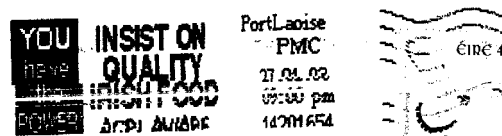
DMC continued to exclude the time within the postmark whereas PMC always has the time printed.



IMP 48, used on 6 January 2003 on PMC machine 2

IMP 48 - PANORAMA / SUMMER SUN 2003 SALE / ENDS FEBRUARY 01ST

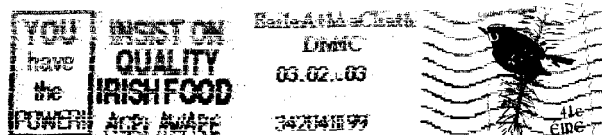
In use from 6 to 26 January.



IMP 49, used 27 January 2003 on PMC machine 1

IMP 49 - YOU / have / the / POWER / INSIST ON /QUALITY / IRISH FOOD / AGRI AWARE

The wording **YOU / have / the / POWER** was printed as a negative with a solid black background. In use from 27 January to 2 February (and early hours of 3 February at DMC).



IMP 50, used 3 February 2003 on DMC machine 3

IMP 50 - YOU / have / the / POWER / INSIST ON /QUALITY / IRISH FOOD / AGRI AWARE

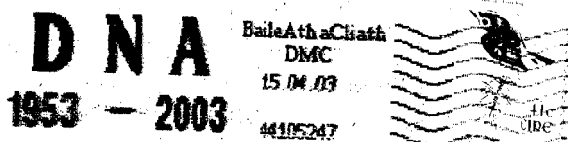
IMP 49 was replaced on 3 February with a revised layout; the wording **YOU / have / the / POWER** was now printed as a positive within a black rectangle. In use until 10 March (DMC), 11 March (PMC).



IMP 51, used 27 March 2003 on DMC machine 1

IMP 51 - 2003 / European Year of / People with Disabilities.

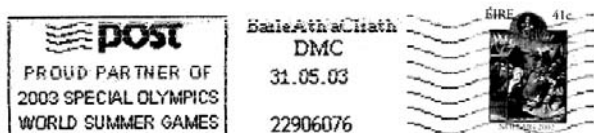
In use from 10 March until 6 April (DMC), 7 April (PMC) then replaced by IMP 52.



IMP 52, used 15 April 2003 on DMC machine 4

IMP 52 - D N A / 1953 - 2003

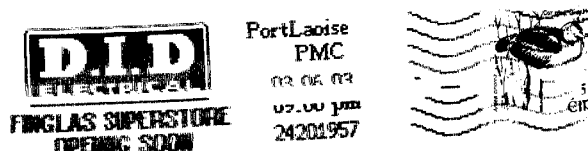
Jim Watson and Maurice Wilkins who shared the 1962 Nobel Prize for Physiology/Medicine with Francis Crick for their discovery of DNA's double helix, both have Irish family connections. (DNA = Deoxyribonucleic Acid). In use from 7 April until 11 May.



IMP 53, used 31 May 2003 on DMC machine 2

IMP 53 - POST / PROUD PARTNER OF / 2003 SPECIAL OLYMPICS / WORLD SUMMER GAMES.

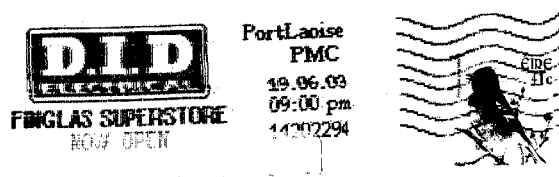
It was first seen on 12 May and was in use to 2 June.



IMP 54, used 3 June 2003 on PMC machine 2

IMP 54 - D.I.D. / ELECTRICAL / FINGLAS SUPERSTORE / OPENING SOON

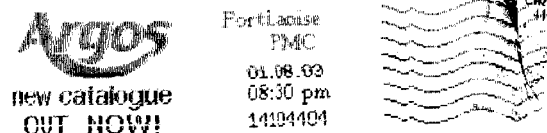
In use from 3 June until 13 June (DMC), 17 June (PMC). This slogan was updated following the opening of the store on 14 June 2003 - see IMP 55 below.



IMP 55, used 19 June 2003 on PMC machine 1

IMP 55 - D.I.D. / ELECTRICAL / FINGLAS SUPERSTORE / NOW OPEN

In use from 12 June to 26 June at DMC and from 13 June to 26 June at PMC. Note during the period 13 to 17 June one PMC machine was using IMP 54 and one was using IMP 55. After IMP 55 was withdrawn from use, IMP 53 was re-used during July 2003 and this, in turn, was replaced by IMP 7. ("Always Include A/Return Address").

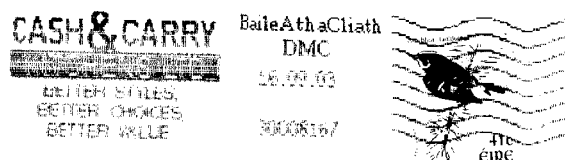


IMP 56, used 1 August 2003 on PMC machine 1

IMP 56 - Argos / new catalogue / OUT NOW!

In use from 1 August at both DMC and PMC. Last noted on 24 August.

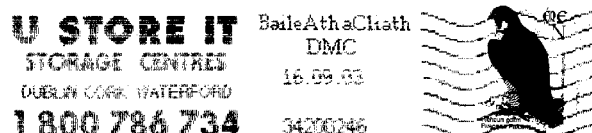
Note this slogan has been repeated in January/February 2004.



IMP 57, used 16 September 2003 on DMC machine 3

IMP 57 - CASH & CARRY / KITCHENS LTD / BETTER STYLES, / BETTER CHOICES, / BETTER VALUE

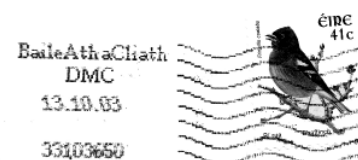
First seen used on 25 August. Cash and Carry Kitchens Limited manufacture fitted kitchens and bedrooms at its factory in Co Cork and has showrooms in Dublin, Cork, Waterford, Galway and Portlaoise. The company provides a design and make package to its customers. Last seen used on 16 September 2003 (as illustrated).



IMP 58, used 16 September 2003 on DMC machine 3

IMP 58 - U STORE IT/STORAGE CENTRES/ DUBLIN CORK WATERFORD/1 800 786 734

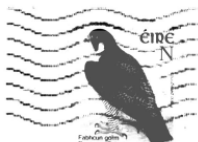
In use from 16 September to 7 October.



IMP 58 was last seen used at DMC on machine 3 used at 2:00 p.m on 7 October. By 5:30 p.m. that day, the slogan portion had been replaced by four dots. This use of the four dots is common on foreign addressed mail where the optical character recognition technology reads a non-Irish address; however it is very unusual for Irish addressed mail. The four dots were used on all mails, including Irish addressed mail, until 30 October 2003.

Discover
Science + Engineering

Portlaoise
PMC
12.11.03
07:00 pm
23810892



IMP 59, used 12 November 2003 on PMC machine 2

IMP 59 - Discover / Science + Engineering

In use from 30 October. This slogan had the "Discover" portion in a typeface utilising cogs, and similar engineering, Nutty Professor type characters. IMP 59 was replaced by the usual POST EARLY / FOR CHRISTMAS / - POST slogan on 26 November. It was also re-used on DMC machine 4 on 3 December.



Baile Átha Cliath
DMC
17.12.02
10703399



IMP 60, used 17 December 2003 on DMC machine 1



Portlaoise
PMC
11.12.03
09:30 pm
14309504



IMP 60, used 11 December 2003 on PMC machine 1

IMP 60 – BUDGET TRAVEL / SALE STARTS 6 JAN / www.budgettravel.ie

First noted in use on 8 December. This slogan was also in use at the Athlone Mail Centre from 9 December. Last used on 5 January 2004.

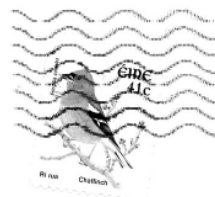
IMP 61, used on 4 December 2003 at AMC

IMP 61 – POST EARLY / FOR CHRISTMAS / = POST (white lettering on black background)

This was only in use on one of the machines at the Athlone Mail Centre (with tag code 3980) and was the first slogan to be used at the AMC. Only used on 4, 5 and 8 December (no IMP use at AMC on weekend of 6 & 7 December). Presumably the negative image was an error although it was not replaced by the regular positive image (IMP 11). It was replaced by IMP 60 on 9 December.

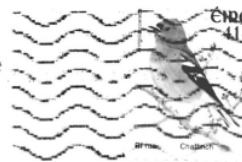
Athlone Mails Centre

ATHLONE MAIL CENTRE
AMC
04.10.02
00017430



AMC IMP cancellation with all English inscriptions

Baile Átha-Luain
Athlone Mails Centre
14.07.03
03486641



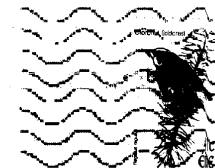
AMC IMP cancellation with town in Irish

From 11 February 2003, the IMP impressions from AMC changed to incorporate the town name in Irish – note also "Mail" became "Mails".

Cork Mails Centre

Test mail from Cork Mails Centre ("CMC") was noted in use with **CORK MAILS CENTRE / CMC / 24.05.03** which had Athlone Mails Centre / 25.05.03 (machine 2) superimposed on them. The tag code was Athlone only.

CORK MAILS CENTRE
CMC
11.08.03
00026088



CMC IMP cancellation of 11 August 2003 - centred format

It is believed that CMC became operational on 11 August 2003. An IMP "wavy lines" cancellation, similar to that originally used at Athlone, was used on and from that date. The IMP impression is worded **CORK MAILS CENTRE / CMC / 11.08.03 /** (plus a number which does not match the indent on reverse). Note all English wording.

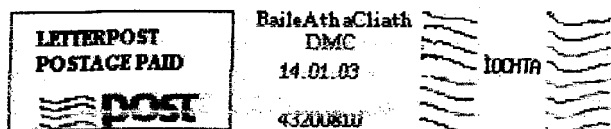
CORK MAILS CENTRE
CMC
10.09.03
00127315



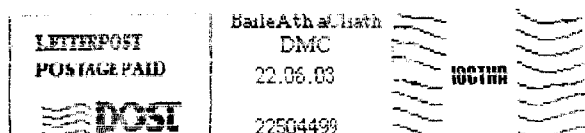
CMC IMP cancellation of 10 September 2003 - left aligned format

The CMC IMP cancellation initially used shows the CMC, date and number in a centred format. Sometime in September 2003, this format was changed and the CMC, date and number are now left aligned for one of the four CMC machines in use. The first slogan to be seen used at the CMC was IMP 56 ("Argos") on 29 January 2004. There was no use of IMP slogans in Cork during 2003. The wording has not yet been altered to include the town name in Irish (except for "Paid" IMP at CMC – see below).

Postage Paid IMPs



IMP P1 – incorrect lochta spelling
used 14 January 2003 on DMC machine 4



IMP P2 – correct lochta spelling
used 22 June 2003 on DMC machine 2

IMP P2 (PAID 2) – Letterpost / Postage Paid / = POST with IOCHTA

The incorrect spelling of IOCHTA per **IMP P1** was last seen on 2 March 2003. The corrected spelling of IOCHTA as per **IMP P2** was first seen on 5 March 2003.



IMP P2 – correct lochta spelling
used 13 October 2003 on PMC machine 2

IMP slogan P2 is frequently used at the DMC, mainly on DMC machine 4. It was first seen used in Port Laoise, on machine 2, on 13 October 2003.



IMP cancels with "IOCHTA" have been used at both AMC and CMC but without any Letterpost slogan at left. Note the CMC slogan as illustrated above has the town name in Irish.

Repeated Slogans

IMP 11 - POST EARLY / FOR CHRISTMAS / =POST (in use from late November to 7 December) was used at all DMC and both PMC machines but not at AMC or CMC.

IMP 7 - ALWAYS INCLUDE A / RETURN ADDRESS / ON YOUR ENVELOPE/=POST which is the usual default slogan used on all machines in the absence of a sponsored or An Post slogan was noted in use in late July.

SP 340 LUCOZADE / SPORT / GOOD LUCK / IRELAND appeared occasionally in Galway up to June.

Other Slogan News

(illustrations are full size)



Pass on your / Postcode slogan
used at Dublin on 27 May 2003

In May 2003 (and again in December 2003), a Universal machine with a Baile Átha Cliath die (H) was recorded in use to obliterate adhesive stamps primarily on large (A4 size) letters. The cancellation used the UK *Pass on your Postcode* slogan. Presumably, this machine was purchased from Royal Mail and the UK slogan was used in error. Also noted with the town die inverted (20 May).



Cork PAID die, undated, used July 2003

A machine die from Cork, worded **CORCAIGH / PAID** and with no date shown was used at Cork in July 2003 to obliterate adhesive stamps. The reason for this usage is not known. Most impressions seen have been of poor quality; I understand that this was used in the CMC prior to introduction of the IMP postmarks in August.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

December – An Post Christmas Card: The An Post Christmas card featured a picture of the G.P.O. Dublin in the snow..

December – Santa Christmas Envelope: The 2003 envelope repeated the design used since 1997 but in a larger format (240mm x 163 mm).

June – Enamel Pins: An Post produced two enamel pins for the Special Olympics. One reproduced the 41c stamp design and was sold for €3. The second pin featured the Special Olympics and An Post logos (as featured on each postcard) – this was given away at various promotional events. Customers purchasing the €3 pin at the philatelic counter in Dublin were given the second pin free of charge.

Model Vehicles: A Model T Ford post office van was available in connection with the Ford stamp issue (cost: €15). In addition, a boxed set of five different vehicles was sold from 14 November (cost: €60).