

Mid-Western Philatelic Society.

Newsletter.

My sincere thanks to all of you for the lavish praise accorded to the first issue of the MWPSNL. Your help and encouragement is greatly appreciated.

My grateful thanks also to Sean Moore for providing a long and interesting article on his own speciality for this issue. His contribution made the work of producing a second issue very much easier than would otherwise have been the case, and has certainly helped to prolong the life of The NL.

I would again appeal for contributions from our members - any item on stamp collecting, from a one line "comment" to a twelve page "mini-thesis" would be very welcome.

Also much appreciated is your patience with my spelling, typing and typesetting errors. I'm afraid that these have by no means eliminated from this issue, so I would again ask for your patient understanding.

MH.

Spring 1990.

Notes, News and views.

Our October meeting was particularly lively and enjoyable. Apart from the usual "chat", we were treated to two displays. The first, by Pierre Cousineau consisted of a complete run of Irish Commemoratives, 1929 to date. The unusual layout of the collection, coupled with meticulous writing-up, in both Irish and English gave this display a very high degree of interest.

Joe McCarthy entertained the group with his display of early Irish Illustrated F.D.C.'s. Dating from the thirty's, they are probably the oldest Illustrated F.D.C.'s which any of us have seen, and are rare items indeed. Joe has kindly agreed to write a short article on these for the Newsletter.

Much of the discussion at both the December and January meetings was devoted to planning the annual exhibition. It has been decided to hold this in Cruises Hotel - as usual - and the date set is 3rd. March next. The motif selected for the souvenir envelope is the "Finnis 750" logo, and, if possible, this will also be used on the Booklet. Your help is needed to make the Exhibition a success, and you can help in the following ways:

1. Attend on the 3rd. March;
2. Bring a friend, your wife (if she will come!), and your family;
3. Advertise - tell anyone who will listen that it is on;
4. Volunteer to help, even if only for an hour or so.

Admission prices will be 20p. (adults) and 10p. (children).

MacDonnell Whyte reports a very successful December Auction, indicating that the Irish Stamp Market is in a very healthy position. There were many bids from overseas, especially from Germany, where Irish material enjoys ever-increasing popularity. A few random realisations: 1929 O'Connell FDC (cat. £275) r. £160; 1954 Marian Year "hand flaw" (cat. £30), r. £12; 1st. Def. set ½d to 1/- um/m. (cat. £200), r. £95. Perhaps the realisations at this and other auctions indicate the foolishness of paying full catalogue price to fill the gaps in our collections.

Talking of auctions, the Bath postmarked penny black of 2/5/1840, achieved a price of £55,000 at auction last November, against an estimate of only £15,000. The Bath Postal Museum had hoped to purchase this item for the Museum, but were unable to raise the money.

Two Postal Historians, John Mackay and Tony Cassidy have produced a Postal History of County Clare which will be published very shortly by the German FAI. I have had the pleasure of seeing a draft copy of this work and can honestly say that it is superb and an absolute "must" for anyone interested in Irish Postal History, and of course, particularly anyone interested in the Postal History of County Clare. Each Post office in Co. Clare is listed, with a brief history of that office, and even included are offices which were never opened for one reason or another. Copies are probably available by the time you read this, and if you have difficulty getting one, your local friendly dealer will be able to help (queries to John Mitchell).

Anyone who wants to use the club's new watermark detector, should ask Sean Moore. It is available to any member who wants to use it.

The Mini-Mart - held each month in Halla Ida, Thomas Street from 10.30 am. to 1.00 pm. - continues to struggle. The idea of the mart is to provide a forum at which collectors of stamps, coins, post-cards and cigarette cards can meet, gossip, swap, buy, sell or just look and it is an excellent idea well deserving of our support. However, it cannot continue indefinitely without greater support both from the members and the general public. Calvin Ormston "took a table" at the January Mart, and his support is greatly appreciated. It would be a great boost if other members took tables, or even just dropped in for a few minutes to chat, and give moral support to those members who are actively supporting the venture.

Any ideas out there as to how we could attract the public to the Mart? The local papers will only publicise if they have a blank space to fill, and we have found that small ads have no impact. Of the three local papers circularised in December none gave mention to the Mart and of the same three, in January only the "Limerick Leader" gave us a mention in their "Talk of the Town" column.

If anyone would like to submit an article, a letter or any item for inclusion in the Newsletter, it could be dropped into John Mitchell's shop (M-Sign Products, at 24, Mallow St., or by post to Michael Hartnett at 1, Clifton Close, Ennis Rd., or handed to any member of the committee at one of our monthly meetings. Anonymity is guaranteed, if requested. Collection of any material will be arranged on foot of a phone call to (061)51228.

Our thanks to Calvin Ormston, who supplemented our pre-meeting stamp sale at the January meeting with a large range of FDC's, and also to William Ryan who displayed a large collection of Irish (with some GB) material to the members. Some of the material displayed by William will be on sale at the February meeting.

The Philatelic Bureau has invited comment of its services from 'subscribers'. One can only admire their courage, in exposing themselves to the wrath of collectors nationwide in this way. However, this may possibly be the start of a genuine effort to provide a service to collectors, based on what we want, rather than on what the Bureau wants to give us. For that reason, it should be supported and members who feel strongly about the services provided by the Bureau should reply without holding anything back. Do tell them exactly what you think of them, but be careful of the language you use - I think there is a law against using the postal system to transmit obscene language. Our Hon. Sec., John Grace is going to comment on behalf of the Society, but naturally, individual members should also make their own comments. This sounds like an opportunity not to be missed.

My own pet hate (one I know to be shared by many collectors) is the ever increasing number of stamps and related items issued each year with the sole objective of separating the long-suffering collector from his hard earned cash. The German catalogue publisher Michel, has produced an international list of stamps issued up to 1988 (they produce this list annually, and it does make interesting reading). In that year Ireland issued a total of 21 stamps, 3 sheetlets and 1 commemorative booklet. So far, not too bad. But in addition to these items there were also - a new £2 definitive; a £2 counter booklet, a set of eleven postage dues (how often are these things ever used on under-paid mail?) ; six St. Patrick's day cards;

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a reprint of the re-direction card; a set of five Millennium PC's; a reprint of the 'A' size envelope; a Slogadh Naisiunta PC; four "All Ireland Final" PC's (I reckon these as just about acceptable as they were issued free of charge, though they had to be stamped if used) and four "Postal History Exhibition" cards. Last, but not least financially, there were three presentation packs. One has to ask, how many of these diverse items are concerned with postage rather than finance?

In fairness one must mention that we are not the worst in the world (yet). That honour, for 1988 goes to Grenada and Grenadines which issued a total of 385 items with a face value of Stg£129.62; Guyana came second with 383 items totalling Stg£57.26. Interestingly, Great Britain - a 'respectable' issuing territory - if one includes the Islands and the Six-Counties, came joint fourth with 183 items issued. They tied for fourth place with Comoro Islands.

The stamps and sheetlets issued by An Post come to a total of £20.39; if you add one each of the other items issued the total rises to £46.78. One can only sympathise with those of us who collect blocks, cylinders or any other form of multiple.

Another area of dedicated Philatelic Bureau service is of course, Saturday opening. By that I mean that it doesn't. It opens during business hours, not during those times when it's customers could conveniently get to visit. Many shops are now opening on Sundays, and whatever your personal view on this trend, it is being done because the buying public wants it. The bureau does not even open on Saturday! An Post issues all those items listed in the preceeding paragraph, then they make it hard for the collector to buy the stuff. Perhaps they feel that we would not fully appreciate their offerings if they also made it easy for us to buy the stuff. This is possibly the reason why there is no Philatelic counter in Limerick, or most other large towns and cities for that matter.

Contacts: I have received an impassioned plea from a chap in Bulgaria whose name is German Germanov for someone to write to him and swap stamps. If anyone would like to contact him, his NAA is under the item on Bunratty.

It was intended to put in a 'contacts colume' and also one for swaps; instead of a distinct colume, I am using these items as "page fillers". If any readers would like to have them listed systematically in future issues, please let me know.

Would those members whose collecting interests were not listed in the last issue of the Newsletter, please advise either myself or our Sec. of their interests, both for the Societies records, and for listing in the next issue.

Contacts: Benoit Charlier, of Ambabel Brazzaville, rue des 4-Bras, 2, 1000-Brussels, Belgium, would like to exchange stamps of Belgium, Netherlands and other European Countries for Irish stamps.

Are you getting what you want from your newsletter? any tips, comments or suggestions would be received most gratefully.

Varieties.

By: Sean Moore.

While just about every topic in the world is shown on stamps, from animals to machines, Art to Sports, famous people, places and things, most stamps are composed of but six parts - Design, Printing, Paper, Watermark, Gum and separation.

Every once in a while "errors" (or (as they are more generally called) "Varieties" occur in any or all of these six parts, and some of these varieties can command fantastic prices in the stamp world, and for the keen-eyed collector, can be very rewarding to the person who is prepared to spend some time looking for varieties. Many varieties are listed in the various catalogues covering whatever country you collect, and having seen an example of one, it becomes that much easier to spot another of the same variety.

"Varieties" add a new dimension to stamp collecting and gives a little bit of excitement and in a way, a sense of adventure to the collector, and also the satisfaction of finding a variety knows no bounds, especially if not already catalogued.

Some Irish varieties occur on watermarked stamps, and in the past it had proved difficult to be sure that you had found an inverted watermark, but the Club has recently acquired a watermark detector, a "Signoscope", which makes watermark detection that much easier, and which will be readily available to all members who wish to avail of same; but let me add just a small word of warning - it is in the interest of all members that great care be taken of the "Signoscope" while it is in your possession, and, if at any time, it fails to function, please do not tamper with it in any way, as it can only be repaired by a qualified person, and it is also covered by guarantee.

I have set out some Irish Varieties as an example, which have occurred in the recent past, most of which have been in the printing of the stamps, but, unfortunately, some varieties have not shown up in the photo-copying process.

When buying mint stamps which contain a variety, it is advisable to collect same in pairs, strips, or blocks of four, or better still, in a positional block, which pin-point the exact sheet position of the "error", and will become much more acceptable for a future sale, and the "error" can be compared with a normal stamp.

A good example of a variety that was readily available in a post office in Canada in 1959, for 5 cents, was the "St. Lawrence Seaway Issue" some of which were printed with the centre inverted and recently, a single stamp with this variety sold for \$3,000. In 1976, the U.S. Bi-Centennial issue contained at least one sheet, printed without the silver colour on all four values - 7p, 8p, 9p and 15p, and, at present the low value, 7p., is in the catalogue at nearly £200, so keen eyes are often well rewarded.

As you collect and exchange stamps, be it regular issues, varieties, F.D.C., Mint or used, you will meet new people, and develop lasting friendships, that will grow over the years and you can be happy in the knowledge that stamp collecting has grown into the world's most popular hobby, and has often been referred to as The Hobby of Kings and Kids. As we can't yet claim a king among our members, we will just have to be satisfied with being called "Kids". HAPPY COLLECTING.

(Ed. Note: The following pages illustrate some of the varieties from Sean's vast collection, and indicate very well the type of material for which anyone interested in this fascinating branch of our hobby should search. I have held over till the next Issue two superb studies on the varieties to be found on the 1971 "Europa" issue and the 1969 "First Dail" issue.)

Row 8 Stamp 2
'Laying an Egg'



ASPIRATE
MISSING
ON T OF 23p

BELLY
BUTTON

"OHN"
DOUBLED
IN JOHN



HER::LINGUS
↑

LIP
FLAW

BROKEN
FRAME
ON LEFT

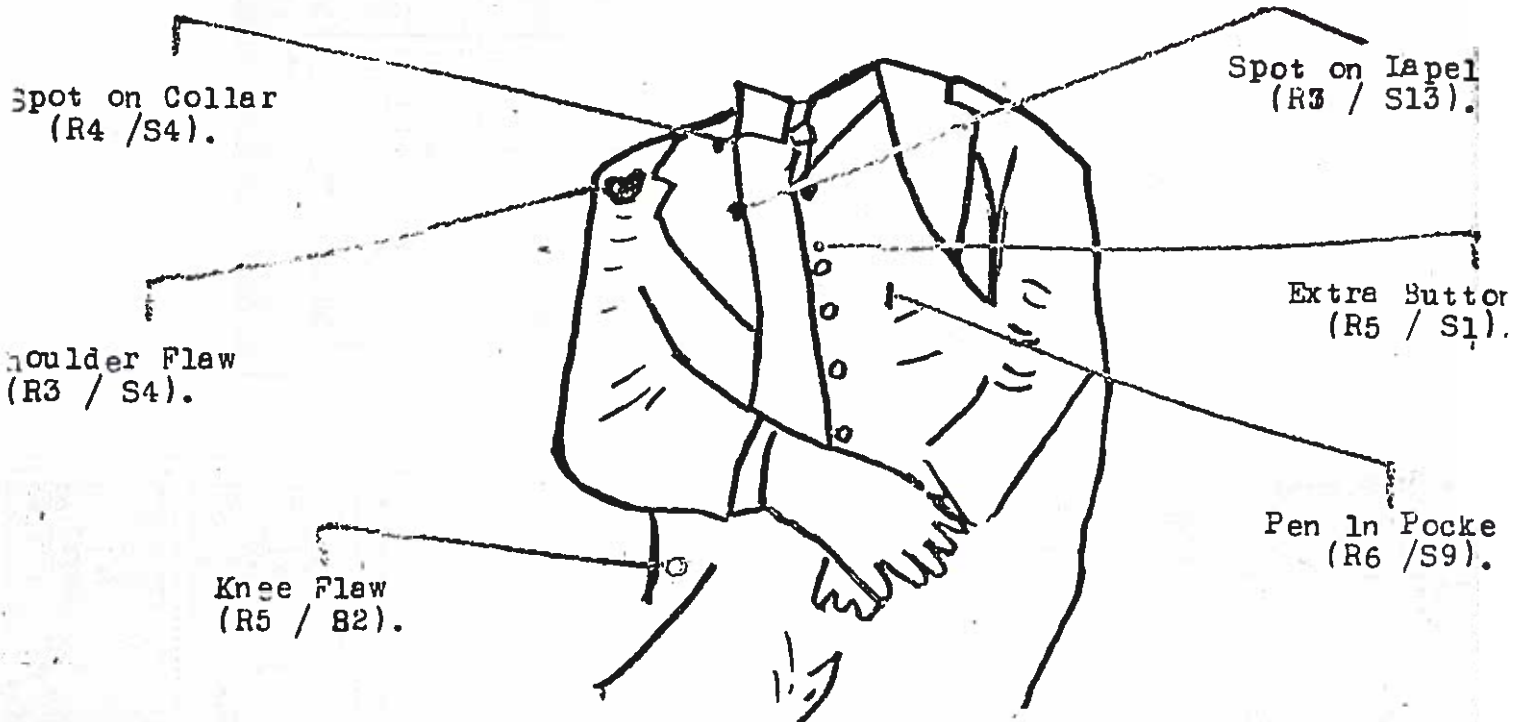
DARK
STONE



ISSUED SEPTEMBER 23. 1968.

TO COMMEMORATE THE CENTENARY OF HIS BIRTH

Connolly was born in Edinburgh of Irish parents on June 5, 1868. The hardship endured by many workers at the time was experienced at first hand by Connolly from his youth. In forceful speech and writing he took up the cause of working class emancipation and Irish political freedom in this context. He founded the Irish Socialist Republican Party and edited its organ, the "Workers' Republic". From 1914 onwards he was in command of the Irish Citizen Army, which joined forces with the Irish Volunteers in the Rising of 1916 to proclaim the Irish Republic. He was executed on 12th May, 1916.



SPOT ON LAPEL



2

SPOT ON COLLAR



EXTRA BUTTON

&

KNEE FLAW



SHOULDER FLAW



EN IN POCKET.



EUROPA

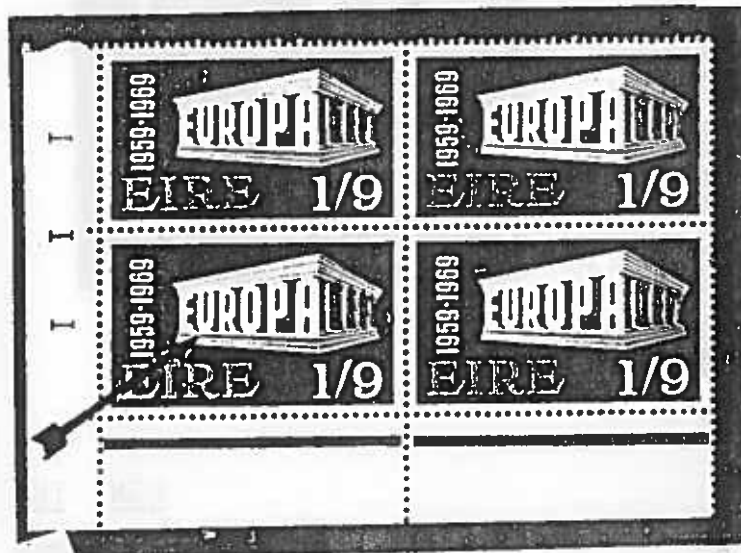
ISSUED APRIL 28, 1969

EIRE, as a member of C.E.P.T. (CONFERENCE EUROPEEN des POSTES ET TELECOMMUNICATIONS) has issued stamps each year since 1960 (with the exception of 1961) in the design common to that used by other member countries.

DESIGNERS: LUIGI GASBARRA, GIORGIO BELLi and MYRA MAGUIRE.

BROKEN 'U'

R20/SI



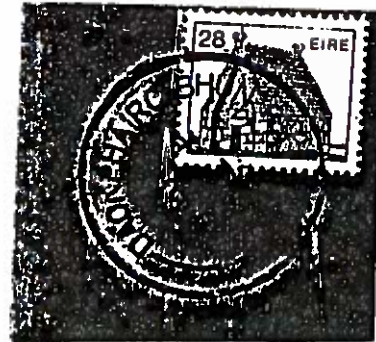
WHITE SPOT IN 'P' R13/SI



Bunratty. A rather interesting post mark from Bunratty folk Park has appeared in recent months. It has been possible to get items "post marked" with a non-postally valid frank at the 'Post Office,' in the folk park for many years, and I believe that this facility has been popular with tourists. However the mark now being used appears to have postal validity. It seems as if items can now be posted in the folk park, for normal collection and delivery. If so this would make the folk park a new Office, though it could be argued that it has been there for many years. Can anyone throw any light on this?



The Old Frank.



Postally used frank (note Irish)

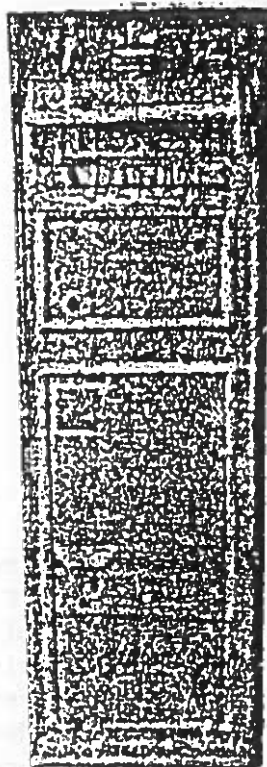
The folk park has a number of items which are of philatelic interest. At the entrance, there is a Handyside Pillar box, with monogram "VR", inscribed "Post Office". The Office itself is an authentic looking building, with an original Wall Box and three period P.O. signs. The Box is an 'H.C. Smith' of Cork and has the manufactureres inscription inverted. This is an Irish copy of the type made by Smith and Hawkes in c. 1861. The "Penfold" Pillar box (referred to in the last issue) can be seen in the Park. At Bunratty House, there is a beautiful, brass bound, letter box. For anyone interested in these things, the Folk Park could well repay a visit.



Bunratty (continued): This village has a long postal history, dating from at least 1834, by which time it was an established post town. In 1836, Lewis describes the village as follows:

"A post-town and parish, in the Barony of Bunratty, county of Clare, and Province of Munster, 6 miles (W. By N.) from Limerick and 100 miles (W.S.W.) from Dublin; containing 1300 inhabitants. This place is situated on the mail coach road from Limerick to Ennis, and on the northern shore of the river Shannon. The Castle was erected in 1277, by the De Clares, and was subsequently the residence of the earls of Thomond; it was besieged in 1305, but not taken; and the small town adjacent to it was burned in 1314. The Castle was either enlarged or rebuilt by Sir Thomas De Clare in 1597, and is still the largest in the country."

The H. C. Smith wall box
in the folk park.



Contacts: Would anyone like to correspond with and exchange stamps with -

German P. Germanow, Ul. "Lozengrad" 2, apt. 7,
4400, Pazarjik, Bulgaria.

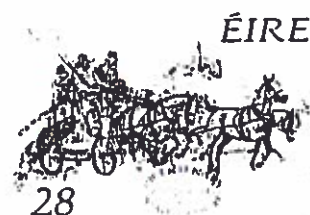
He is interested in thematics from the whole world, particularly
Cars, art, Trains and Flora & Fauna.

Cinderellas: Anyone interested in collecting "philatelic ephemera" (i.e. the items associated with stamp collecting, such as albums, dealers adverts etc.), is invited to subscribe to the quarterly magazine "Philatelic Paraphernalia". Details from: Victor Short, Hunter's Lodge, Ashwell, Oakham, Leicestershire, England, LE15 7LJ.

A (short) History of the Post Office.

There is no doubt that a postal service existed in Ireland from very early times, though not a great deal is known of it, up to the 16th. century. There is evidence of an established service as early as the 12th. century, but the era which brought us to the use of postmarks and postage stamps, probably could be said to have started in 1559 when the first regular service between Dublin and London was mooted. This was in fact established in 1561 with a single ship which plied between Howth and Holyhead. The first Postmaster of Dublin - Nicholas Fitzsimon - was appointed in 1562. This first service was in fact, somewhat less than regular, and no regular service existed beyond Dublin, except whatever arrangements were made by the military authorities. Indeed the first attempt to spread the post beyond Dublin, was made as a result of military need when in 1579 at the time of an insurrection in Munster, official post stops were established in Kildare, Kilkenny, Kildare and Tipperary. Mails continued to be carried by the military in Ireland long after the appointment of official Letter Carriers in England.

In 1635, Evan Vaughan was sent to Ireland to set up Post stages and to employ foot and horse posts along main roads. At this time, Dublin's letter Office was situated in Castle Street. Vaughan's efforts were successful, and a huge increase in the volume of mail occurred. So great was the increase in mail volume, that the practice of delivering each letter ceased at this time; instead letters were delivered to local centres for collection by the addresses. These centres were probably the precursors of local post offices. The Government monopoly of the post was set up in 1657, and the first post office post mark - the Bishop Mark - was introduced about 1670. Whilst this showed only the day and month, it was very successful in reducing delays, and remained in use for about 125 years.



Ireland's rapid commercial development during the 17th century, led to a corresponding growth in the development of the postal service, which has continued to grow to the present day. In 1784 the Irish Post office became independent. However, the systems used by the P.O. were not dependable, delays were frequent, and fraud and theft were rampant. An element of dependability was introduced with the advent of the Mail Coach, introduced to Ireland by John Anderson, an immigrant Scot, in 1789. Anderson was also responsible for developing the system of turnpike roads which laid the foundation for our modern road-way system. The famous Bianconi took over his system of coaches and turnpikes following Anderson's death, in 1815, and continued to develop the system with great success.

Some of you may already have heard of the next big step, the introduction of the adhesive postage stamp in 1840, so I will not labour that point. Rowland Hill also invented the "slit cut in doors" through which letters could be put by the carrier, which represented a huge saving of the postman's time. By 1895, the volume of mail had grown from nine million (in 1839) to forty-two million. In the same period, post offices had grown from 732 to 1378, and there were two daily deliveries between Dublin and London.

The National Telephone Company was taken over by the P.O. in 1912. Ireland achieved independence in 1922, and our first stamps - "the overprints" - were issued in February of that year

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The Post Office (continued):

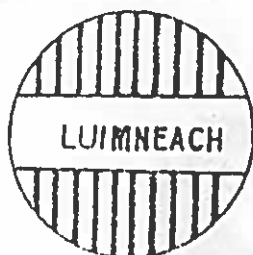
The change over from British to Irish administration of the Post Office was achieved with considerable efficiency, and with every possible cooperation from the British side.

Perhaps the next big event, was the separation of the Postal and Telephone services, which led to the establishment of An Post on 1st. January 1984. Starting with the Penny Post Day promotion, An Post has issued series of "new" postal items ranging from St. Patrick's Day cards to Love Stamps, which, while not earning universal approval, has certainly earned the new company much needed revenue. An Post has also embarked on a programme of Post Office closure, which aims to reduce the overall number of offices by about 1,000 over a three year period (1987 - 1990). In 1982, the total of P.O.'s reached about 2,300, so one may expect this to be reduced to about 1,300 by 1990, if they stick to their programme. Probably the next big step from the collectors point of view will be postal mechanisation; we are already a little down that road, and much more will be seen over the next few years. I have heard it said, that, in fact the adhesive postage stamp is now regarded as somewhat oldfashioned; it is the demand from collectors and propagandists that have kept the humble postage stamp in production. Perhaps in a few years, we will all be collecting blue dots.

Limerick Post Marks:



Registered.



Parcel.



T.P.O.

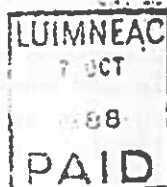


T.P.O.

A new style Official Paid mark was introduced in early 1989. Like its counterpart in Ennis this was used 'inverted' for a time, but unlike the Ennis Mark, the error was quickly corrected.



The wrong way.



The right way.

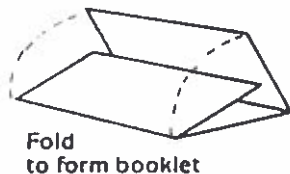
Contacts: Thomas Bond,
Lupinvej 67,
8700 Horsens, Denmark. Collects whole world, and would like
to swap bulk lots of about 100 at a time.

Swaps: Sean Moore is plating the 1976 miniature sheet, and is offering to swap
sheet numbers 1, 3 and 5 for numbers 7, 8 or 9.

Sean is also looking for the 10d. from the first def. series (1922 -1937)
in unmounted mint condition. This item is catalogued at £30, and he is
prepared to offer the 1/- value unmounted from the same series in
exchange. The 1/- value is cat. £90, so there is a good deal going for
someone there.

Christmas Sheetlet: The Christmas Sheetlet, which was issued by An Post on 14/11/89
at a cost of £2.90, appeared, as is now usual, in two perforation types -
Perf. through right hand margin only, and perf. through both left and right
hand margins.

"It had to Happen" Dept.: The USPO has issued booklets of plastic stamps - at last,
what we've all been waiting for!



Fold
to form booklet



Peel
to use stamp

Patent pending



0 15645 89609 3

Self-adhesive

**EXTRAordinary
Stamps™**



**Eighteen
Stamps \$5**

**EXTRA convenient.
No licking!**

**EXTRA humidity resistant:
Won't stick together!**

**EXTRA strong adhesive:
Stays put on envelopes!**

**EXTRA easy to use.
No tearing!**

**\$5 buys
18 First-Class stamps
plus all the
EXTRA features.**

Last Word: The Photocopier has been severely attacked by Gremlins. I hope that the
black mark down the side of most pages, and the "faded" look of many
others does not take from the enjoyment of your Newsletter.

REMEMBER: (1) Exhibition - 3rd. March 1990 - Cruises Hotel.
(2) Next Mini-Mart - 1st. April 1990 - Halla Ida, Thomas St.

Rare Irish Stamps:



1935 Experimental Coil - 2d. Perf: 15 x imp.
Only fifteen of this stamp are believed to exist
unmounted. The Cat. price for mounted is £9,500,
and it is uncat um/m.

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