

Irish Philately

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June 2019 – Supplement

That Was The Year That Was – 2018

Brian Warren



Elf Christmas Sheetlet

Leaders from the €50 and €100 rolls issued during 2018

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THAT WAS THE YEAR THAT WAS - 2018

by Brian Warren

Note that illustrations of single stamps, pairs and postmarks (except inkjets - IJPs) are full size; illustrations of IJPs, blocks and strips, booklets, covers and stationery items are reproduced at between 40% and 66% of full size.

Postal rates changed with effect from Wednesday 4 April 2018. The basic inland rate for the first weight step of 100g remained at €1.00 but all subsequent weight steps, registered and express services and all overseas rates increased by on average 10%. The basic overseas 100g rate increased from €1.35 to €1.50.

SPECIAL AND COMMEMORATIVE ISSUES

The 2018 programme, comprising 33 regular gummed sheet stamps, 20 self-adhesive stamps, 4 miniature sheets, 2 special sheetlets and 4 booklets, was issued over 21 release dates at a total cost of €126.35. The

introduction of commemoratives/special issues on the SOAR strips and the release of two special sheetlets has substantially added to the total cost. All counter regular gummed issues were in sheetlet format – the total cost of all 17 regular sheetlets (excluding World Meeting of Families and Elf special sheetlets) was €318.60.

The 2017 totals of 31 regular gummed stamps, 4 self-adhesive stamps, 3 miniature sheets and 3 booklets were issued over 19 release dates at a total cost of €95.93. All counter regular gummed issues were in sheetlet format – the total cost of all 19 sheetlets was €308.62.

There were 12 single stamp issues compared to 12 in 2017, 3 in 2016, 2 in 2015, 7 in 2014, 5 in 2013, 4 in 2012 and 7 in 2011. The Greetings and Love and Marriage stamps are excluded in these totals as they are only available in self-adhesive pairs and booklets.

Date of Issue	Description	Cost	Plate Numbers/Notes	Paper	Perforation	Printer
						
11 Jan	GPO Dublin (200th Anniversary) - GPO Engraving - large format postcard	€1.00 -	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B see note below	PCP	13¼ x 13½	Cartor -
18 Jan	Sir Alfred Chester Beatty - Portrait - Birth of the Virgin - Shah Jahan, Allusions to the Seven Lucky Gods - Daikoku - Miniature Sheet	€1.00 €1.00 €1.00 €1.00 €4.00	} } } } Se-tenant strip	CCP3 CCP3	13¼ x 13¼ 13¼ x 13¼	Cartor Cartor

(Table continued on next page)

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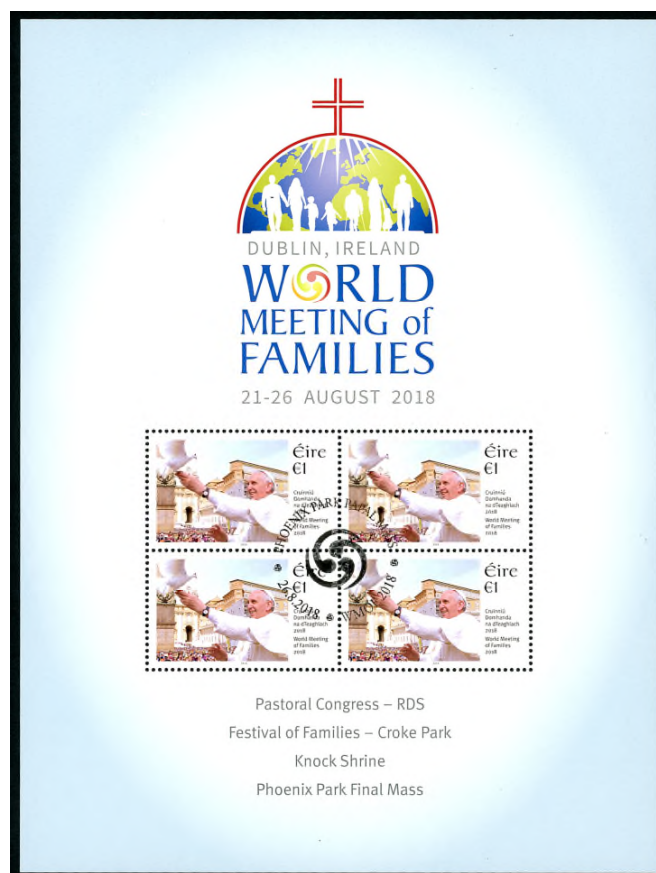





8 Feb	Love and Marriage -	self-adhesive booklet - Heart	€10.00	10 x N (€1.00)	TRSA	13 x 13	Cartor
22 Feb	St. Patrick's Day	- Image of the Saint	€1.35	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	13¼ x 13¼	Cartor
1 Mar	John Redmond (Death Centenary)	- Painting	€1.00	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	14 x 14¼	Cartor
22 Mar	Irish National Teachers' Organisation	- Handwriting	€1.00	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	13¼ x 13¼	Cartor
5 April	International Statesmen	- Martin Luther King - Nelson Mandela	W (€1.35) W (€1.35)	} 1A/1B	CCP3	13¼ x 13¼	Cartor
3 May	Europa (57th Issue - Bridges)	- Mizen Head - Boyne Viaduct c.1900	€1.00 €1.55				
24 May	Na Piopairí Uilleann	- Uilleann pipes	€1.00	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	14 x 14	Cartor
31 May	1400th Anniversary of the death of St Kevin	- Woodcarving of St Kevin	€1.00	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	13¼ x 13¼	Cartor
12 July	Flora & Fauna - Native Irish Bees	- Garden Bumblebee - Tawny Mining Bee - Ashy Mining Bee - Heather Bee Miniature sheet	€1.00 €1.00 €1.00 €1.00 €4.00	} 1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B Se-tenant strip of four	CCP3	13 each side	Cartor
20 July	World Meeting of Families	- Pope Francis - Family group Miniature sheet	€1.00 €1.50 €2.50				
2 Aug	Royal Dublin Society	- Main entrance - Show jumping - Crafts - Science	€1.00 €1.00 €1.00 €1.00	} 1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B Se-tenant block of four	CCP3	13½ x 13½	Cartor

(Table continued on next page)

Date of Issue	Description	Cost	Plate Numbers/Notes	Paper	Perforation	Printer
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2 Aug	Commemorative and Special Stamps					
	Self-adhesive on a roll (SOARS)	- GPO 200 (1)	€1.00			
		- Boyne Viaduct (Europa 2018) (2)	€1.00			
		- Na Píopairí Uilleann (3)	€1.00			
		- James Early Irish Deer (Urban Art) (4)	€1.00			
		- Rock of Cashel (Royal Sites) (5)	€1.00			
		- Clerke (Irish Shop Fronts) (6)	€1.00			
		- Horse riding, Grange, Co. Sligo (Wild Atlantic Way) (7)	€1.00			
		- Surfing at Inch, Co. Kerry (Wild Atlantic Way) (8)	€1.00			
		- Loughnashade Trumpet (100 Irish Objects) (9)	€1.00			
		- GPO 200 (10)	€1.00			
		- Surfing at Inch, Co. Kerry (Wild Atlantic Way) (11)	€1.00			
		- Ardagh Chalice (100 Irish Objects)(12)	€1.00			
21 Aug	World Meeting of Families - Sheetlet	- Pack	€8.00	Block of 4 x €1.00 stamps	CCP3	13¼ x 13½ Cartor
6 Sept	Irish Scientific Discoveries	- Light wave	€1.00			
		- Protein and killing bacteria	€1.00			
		- Purifying polluting gases	€1.00			
		- Cot-side device for preterm infants	€1.00			
		- Prestige booklet	€13.00	Four panes (see below)	CCP3	13½ x 13½ Cartor

(Table continued on next page)

Date of Issue			Cost	Plate Numbers/Notes	Paper	Perforation	Printer
	  						
10 Oct	RMS Leinster - Centenary of the Sinking	- Leinster	€1.50	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	13½ x 13½	Cartor
18 Oct	Popular Democracy	- Éamon de Valera	€1.00	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	13½ x 13½	Cartor
		- Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington	€1.00				
1 Nov	Christmas (47th Issue) - Booklet Stamps						
		- Christmas Dinner (1)	€1.00	}	Produced in booklet format only		
		- Attending Midnight Mass (3)	€1.00				
		- Visiting the Local Crib (4)	€1.00				
		- Star of Bethlehem (5)	€0.50				
		- Friends at Airport Arrivals (6)	€1.00				
		- Waiting for Santa (7)	€1.00				
		- Booklet of 22 stamps	€19.00				
		- Booklet of 6 stamps	€5.00		See below for contents		
					Designs 1 to 4 plus 2 x design 5		
1 Nov	Elf on the Shelf	- Presentation Pack	€9.95	Sheetlet of 6 stamps and cards		13¼ x 13¼	Cartor
8 Nov	Armistice Day (Centenary)	- Thomas Kettle Poem	€1.50	1A1A1A1A/1B1B1B1B	CCP3	13¼ x 13¼	Cartor
		- Extract from "Flanders Fields" by John McCrae	€1.50				

Printers and Sheet Format: All stamps were printed by the French based firm Cartor Security Printing ("Cartor") or the Irish firm CCL Label Ireland Limited. Cartor used lithography to print the stamps; CCL Label Ireland use a HP Indigo high resolution digital printing process (SOAR stamps).



Top margin of Sir Alfred Chester Beatty "B" sheetlet showing plate numbers and colour control spots

Except for the Europa issue, all regular gummed sheet stamps were issued in 16-stamp (4 x 4) sheetlet format with both "A" and "B" sheets. The plate numbers are located in the left margin beside row 1 and the colour controls in the right margin beside row 1.

The imprint is in the bottom margin under the first stamp in the last row. The bottom right corner is blank. The subject of the issue, normally in both English and Irish, is printed across the top margin. This layout applies to both horizontal and vertical format designs. All sheetlets have an imperforate top margin, all other margins being perforated.

For the Emoji, Royal Sites, Irish Railway Stations, Urban Art and National Ploughing Championship issues, each row/block was set out in the same se-tenant sequence within the sheet.

The format for the Europa stamps is referred to below. All stamps printed on an off-white CCP3 paper have a full phosphor frame. Stamps with an overall phosphor (as indicated by the reference PCP in the foregoing tables) are printed on a white CCP1 paper.

With the exception of the Yeats, Lions International and Postcrossing issues, all stamps bear the year imprint at the foot (middle or at left) of the stamp. On the Yeats stamp the imprint is incorporated into the design at bottom right. On the Lions International stamp it is at top left and in the case of the Postcrossing stamp it is at the bottom of the left vertical.

First Day Covers: Unserved FDCs cost €1 (2017: €1). Special covers and pictorial cancels were available for all issues. A presentation folder with all 23 (2017: 23) first day covers for the special and commemorative issues (including the three miniature sheets) was available from early December.

The price of €75 (2017: €75) compares with a cost of €63.12 (2017: €63.12) if bought as individual covers. All serviced covers sold by the bureau continue to bear a "printed", and thus sharper looking, first day postmark as compared to the hand applied cancellation which is used on collectors' own covers.



GPO Dublin - Bicentenary of Opening: The stamp features an image of the GPO which was engraved by Robert Havell and Son and published in 1820 by G.H. Jones. As well as the €1 stamp, a large format glossy postcard reproducing the stamp (complete with perforations, denomination, etc.) was available on purchase of the stamp at the GPO. However, the far better 2014 small size museum card featuring the image alone is still available at the bureau counter for 40c which I used as a maximum card as illustrated. A small exhibition outlining the history of the GPO was held during the early months of 2018 in the main office. It included a nice reference to the

well-known philatelist and IPC member the late Bill Kane. A re-enactment of the opening by Sir Edward Lees, Post Office Secretary at the time, was performed by the Fishamble Theatre. The short 15-minute play was presented in the main office of the GPO to coincide with the issue of the €1 stamp. A news report featuring a short extract can be found at

<https://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/gpo-celebrates-its-200th-anniversary-with-performance-and-stamp-1.3352100>



Sir Alfred Chester Beatty (1875-1968): Sir Alfred Chester Beatty was born in New York and became a very successful mining magnate. He moved to London in 2011 and started a serious collection of European and Persian manuscripts. He subsequently added decorated copies of the Qur'an and later added Japanese and Chinese paintings to this collection. In 1950 he moved to Ireland and built a library for his collection in Ballsbridge, Dublin 4. When he died in 1968 he bequeathed his collections to the nation. The library was subsequently moved to Dublin Castle.

At the time of issue a card was available in the Library shop depicting Sir Alfred walking down a Parisian street. The same image was shown on page 15 of *The Collector*. In addition, the design showing *Shah Jahan, Allusions to the Seven Lucky Gods* is shown as one of three images on a large greeting card. Finally, the image on the miniature sheet of *The Queen of Sheba* is also illustrated on a greetings card. Subsequent to the stamp issue, four individual cards depicting the actual stamp designs were available.

Subsequently, the library issued a set of four cards reproducing the actual stamp designs and collectors could make up their own maximum cards.

This is not the first time that images from the Chester Beatty Library have provided designs for Irish stamps. The three higher values in the 1988 Christmas set bear images from a 15th-century French Book of Hours held in the Library. In the following year the 24p, 28p and 46p values featured a series of miniatures from a Flemish Psalter or Psalm Book of the late 13th century, also held in the Library. Finally, in 1990 the 26p, 30p and 50p denominations featured designs based on Coptic Art. All three designs by Brian Cronin were based on samples of Coptic Art provided by the Library.



Love and Marriage (13th Issue): The booklet is in self-adhesive format and incorporates ten "N" (National rate - currently €1.00) stamps set out in one pane, folded twice and illustrating a heart, a

design used in many such booklets in prior years. Surplus paper retained. The stamp measures 32mm x 32mm. The cover of the booklet features the same design. A pair of self-adhesives with same backing and surplus paper intact is available from the philatelic bureau. The overall stamp size is larger than in prior years for such booklets.



St Patrick's Day: The stamp features a detail from *St Patrick (1603)*, a hand-coloured print engraved by Flemish artist, Adriaen Collaert+, a copy of which is held in the National Gallery of

Ireland. The stamp measures 30mm x 51mm. Note the use of gold; thus there are a total of five plate numbers and colour control spots (illustration on page 3).

This was the last St Patrick issue as in 2019 it has been replaced by a stamp on the theme "Ireland".



John Redmond (Death Centenary): The stamp features a painting of John Redmond by Sir John Lavery which is in The Hugh Lane Gallery, Dublin 1.

This is the third time in recent years that John Redmond has featured on an Irish stamp. He appeared on both the 60c Home Rule Act 1914 and 68c World War I (poster) stamps issued in 2014. The stamp measures 30mm x 41mm (illustration on page 3).



Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO):

INTO is the largest and oldest teachers' trade union in Ireland and was founded in 1868. The stamp depicts the words "Celebrating the 150th Anniversary of the founding of the Irish National Teachers' Organisation" as if hand-written in a child's school copy book. It is repeated in Irish. The stamp measures 51mm x 30mm (illustration on page 3).



International Statesmen: The stamps honour two remarkable leaders and civil rights activists - Martin Luther King (1929 - 1968) and Nelson Mandela (1918-2013). They both show black



and white photographs of the two men and were issued in se-tenant format. Each stamp measures 36mm x 36mm. As they were issued the day following after an increase in the basic overseas letter rate (from €1.35 to €1.50) on 4 April, both stamps are inscribed "W". The basic national rate remains at €1.00. Each stamp measures 36mm x 36mm.

Stampa 2019

**Griffith College
South Circular Road, Dublin 8**

11h to 13th October 2019



Europa (Bridges): The €1 stamp depicts the dramatic footbridge that leads to the Mizen Head lighthouse. This is Ireland's most south-westerly land point. The original bridge was

completed in 1909 but given its exposure to extreme elements for over 100 years, it had to be rebuilt in 2011. Mizen Head light was converted to automatic operation and, as a consequence, the light keepers were permanently withdrawn in March 1993. Subsequently, the Commissioners leased surplus buildings to Mizen Tourism Co-operative Society Ltd, a local community group, to create the *Mizen Vision* visitor centre. The former lighthouse structures have been converted to a museum.

The €1.50 stamp features the Boyne Viaduct in Drogheda, Co. Louth. Opened in 1855, the viaduct is a 30 metre-high railway bridge that crosses the River Boyne and carries the main Dublin-Belfast railway line. The central Pratt truss was originally made of three iron spans that were wide enough to carry two tracks. This is the image shown on the stamp (c. 1900). In 1932, the three spans over the river were replaced with the current iron trusses and the central portion became single track. When the tracks were again re-laid in the 1990s, the interlaced tracks were replaced with a single track over the whole viaduct and points at each side. The bridge as seen to-day was partly illustrated on the 28p buses stamp issued in 1993.

Both values were printed in the normal ten-stamp format for Europa issues (5 rows of 2 horizontal stamps with a surrounding panel). The plate numbers are included in the left margin, beside stamp 1 of row 1. The printer's imprint is placed under stamp 1 of row 5 and the colour controls are in the left margin beside stamp 1 of row 5. The top, bottom and left margins of both sheetlets are perforated; the right margin is partially perforated with 3 holes extending into the surrounding panel. I cannot

recall seeing this type of perforation format before on an Irish commemorative issue. Each stamp measures 45mm x 28mm.



Na Píobairí Uilleann: The Society of Uilleann Pipers in Ireland was formed in 1968. The stamp, which measures 41mm x 30mm, features the earliest known image of uilleann pipes, 'a piping pig' as the capital letter 'M' from a 16th-century manuscript. In 2017, the uilleann pipes were recognised by UNESCO as an 'Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity'.

1400th Anniversary of the death of St Kevin:



The stamp, which measures 51mm x 30mm, was unveiled in the Glendalough Visitor Centre, Co. Wicklow at the same time as the installation of 'St Kevin and the Blackbird', an artwork by Imogen Stuart and Tim O'Neill. Imogen Stuart's artwork and the stamp are based on a woodcarving by the artist which portrays St Kevin's closeness to nature. St Kevin spent most of his life in Glendalough and established two known sites: St Kevin's Bed, a man-made cave and St Kevin's cell which is located near a mountain stream.



Flora & Fauna - Native Irish Bees: The designs are based on illustrations by botanical artist Shevaun Doherty. All of the bees are native to Ireland. They are Ireland's first hexagonal-shaped stamps cleverly mimicking the shape of a honeycomb. Given the unusual shape and thus the difficulty of separating individual stamps, they would have been far

better suited to a self-adhesive format. Each side of the hexagonal stamp measures 20mm.



A different first day cover was available for the miniature sheet. The miniature sheet illustration features, in addition to the bees shown on the stamps (clockwise from right), the red-tailed

bumblebee, the white-tailed bumblebee, the garden bumblebee and the moss carder bumblebee.

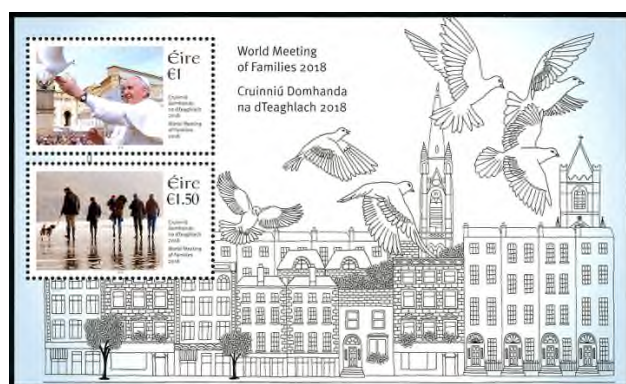


World Meeting of Families (WMoF): The World Meeting of Families takes place every three years to celebrate the family as the cornerstone of people's lives. The ninth meeting was held in Dublin from 22 to 24 August 2018, at the RDS, Dublin 4. It was followed by a concert in Croke Park, Dublin on the 25 August, and a closing mass in the Phoenix Park on 26 August. Pope Francis visited Ireland on the 25/26 August attending the concert at Croke Park and celebrating the mass in the Phoenix Park. He also made a brief visit to Knock Shrine, Co. Mayo on the morning of 26 August.

This was the second stamp in two years which required a reprint. The €1.00 value was reprinted with new plates 2A2A2A2A/2B2B2B2B and released in September 2018.



70,000 stamps were printed in the second run compared to 122,000 for the original issue. Both stamps measure 45mm x 29mm. A different first day cover was available for the miniature sheet.



The miniature sheet contains one of each stamp and incorporates a montage of various Dublin landmarks/buildings, including The Spire in O'Connell Street and the spires/bell towers of Christchurch Cathedral and John's Lane Church (Thomas Street).



A large format postcard was available on purchase of any of the WMoF products from the philatelic counter during July/August. This reproduces the background design shown on the miniature sheet.

In addition to the miniature sheet issued in July, an extra large sheetlet of four stamps (4 x €1) in a plastic pack was released the day before the Congress priced at €8 (i.e. double face value). This was not announced in advance by An Post although a postcard was sent out to collectors on the mailing list advertising the new item - see *illustration on page 4*.



An Post had a stand at the Congress where the stamps, miniature sheet and sheetlet, etc., were available. The sheetlet was sold at An Post's stand at Stampa at a special price of €5. The sheetlet was available at this price, both mint or with any of the three special cancellations mentioned below, or the Stampa cancel for 5 October. At the show, they also included in each sheetlet pack one of the large format cards referred to above from what was obviously a second printing. This second issue is on glossy card (both sides) as compared to the matt card of the initial printing.

Three additional postmarks were available (as illustrated) for the RDS (22-14 August), Knock (26 August) and Phoenix Park (26 August). Both Knock PO and Parkgate Street PO (the nearest post office to the Phoenix Park) were open on Sunday 26 August selling the stamps and the sheetlet. The miniature sheet first day cover was sold out by early October.



Royal Dublin Society: The Royal Dublin Society (RDS), best known for its showgrounds and exhibition space, was founded in 1731 and previously had a single stamp issue in both 1931 and 1981 to mark its 200th and 250th anniversaries.



Today the RDS is acknowledged as one of the world's oldest philanthropic societies. It continues to support science, arts, industry and agriculture. Each stamp measures 36mm x 36mm.

Irish Scientific Discoveries: The set of four stamps features a number of modern Irish scientific discoveries. Each stamp features a single photographic image to represent the research areas referred to in the table above. The two colour designs are each reproduced in cool grey and fluorescent orange; the latter glows under UV light.



The set was also issued in a prestige booklet containing four panes of stamps. Each pane features a se-tenant strip of three stamps with one design per pane. Note that the prestige booklet was sold at €1 above face value this year.

This set, although a worthy subject, is very dull to look at and it is surprising that it was chosen as the subject for the 2018 prestige booklet. Collectors who have a standing order for special and commemorative issues received a complimentary large format undenominated postcard with their order which reproduced one of the booklet panes - one card per order. Four

different postcards exist, one for each booklet pane design.

Thanks to dealer Paddy Lineen, I can point out a late design change between one of the stamps as illustrated in The Collector and the actual issue. On the third stamp, which relates to the purifying of polluting gases, part of the inscription was originally to be "*Emission absorption*".



However, the actual stamp as issued had the correct reference "*Emission adsorption*". The large postcard referred to above featuring the same stamp has the correct inscription.



SOARS: Without advance notice, a new SOAR set of sixteen different stamp designs was distributed to post offices during August/September. Strips of sixteen were available from the philatelic counter from early September. The new set combines the original phase II definitive stamps issued last January (same designs and sequence) with eight commemorative/special stamps using various designs released over the last three years. This is the first time commemoratives/special stamps have been issued in this format. Each stamp has the usual three vertical yellow phosphor bars. No first day pictorial postmark was available for this new set.

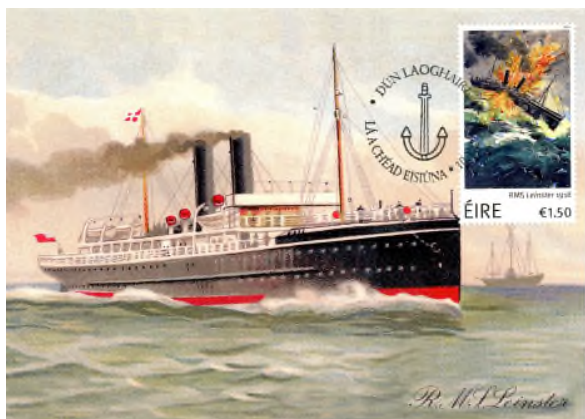
The pre-printed set was first made available at Stampa and is made up of three strips of four stamps. The first two strips (stamps numbered 1 to 8) bear the eight new designs in the same order as on the counter rolls. The final strip is made up of the last stamp in the definitive set, the first stamp in the commemorative/special set, the last stamp in the latter set and finally the first stamp in the definitive set (numbered 9 to 12). As members will appreciate from the foregoing, the final strip sequence is only available as a pre-printed set.



This pre-printed set has a date code of 18214 which equates to 2 August 2018. I doubt if any post office had the new rolls by that date. The earliest used date I have noted was in September. If any member is aware of an August date, please let me know by sending an e-mail to brian.warren2@upcmail.ie



RMS Leinster: The centenary of the sinking of the RMS Leinster during World War I was marked by a single stamp issue on the actual anniversary date. The stamp measures 30mm x 51mm. The torpedo sinking of the ship is the worst single disaster on the Irish Sea and the greatest tragedy involving an Irish-owned ship. The estimated death toll of 567 included 21 of the 22 postal workers who were working in the mailroom on board as the boat made its way from Kingstown (now Dún Laoghaire) to Holyhead in Wales.



Postcard produced by Stampa
(without own inscription used as maximum card)

The design is based on a magnificent painting by Brian Palm. Being Dún Laoghaire born and having lived during my youth next to what is now the National Maritime Museum (formerly the Mariners' Church) in the town, this is my favourite stamp of 2018. A special pictorial first day cancellation was available in Dún Laoghaire and could also be obtained from the bureau.

An Post also made available, free of charge on the day of issue, a large undenominated format postcard featuring the entire painting (*illustration on page 17*).



Prior to the release of the stamps, four small format postcards were issued on the opening day of Stampa by An Post Museum & Archive featuring (1) a reproduction postcard of Kingstown Harbour in 1834; (2) Drawings of RMS *Ireland*, the last paddle steamer mail boat to ply between Kingstown and Holyhead (3) RMS *Leinster* - same illustration as on the Stampa postcard; and (4) a letter recovered from the RMS *Leinster* which is in the An Post Archive (*illustrated above*).

Popular Democracy: The issue is primarily to mark the centenary of when women were first granted the right to vote in the British General Election on 14 December 1918. One of the designs features an image of one of the prominent Irish suffragettes, Hanna Sheehy-

Skeffington. Along with her husband Francis Sheehy-Skeffington, Margaret Cousins and James Cousins, she founded the Irish Women's Franchise League in 1908, with the aim of obtaining women's voting rights. She died in 1968. Her husband was summarily executed during the 1916 Rising, even though he was against fighting and tried to prevent looting at the time. He featured on one of the Easter Rising definitive stamps issued in 2016. The British soldier responsible for his execution, Captain Bowen-Colthurst, was later found guilty but insane and interned briefly at Broadmoor Hospital before emigrating to Canada.



The second stamp features Éamon de Valera, who was elected unopposed as outgoing Member of Parliament for East Clare in 1918 while in prison in Lincoln Jail in England. De Valera was a Commandant in the 1916 Easter Rising, a political leader in the War of Independence and part of the anti-Treaty opposition in the ensuing Irish Civil War (1922–1923). After leaving Sinn Féin in 1926 due to its policy of abstentionism, he founded Fianna Fáil, and was head of government (President of the Executive Council, later Taoiseach) from 1932 to 1948, 1951 to 1954, and 1957 to 1959, when he resigned after being elected as President of Ireland. He died in 1975. Both stamps measure 36mm x 36mm (*illustration on page 5*).

Christmas 2018 (47th Issue): There was no SOAR issue this year. The Christmas stamps were released either in booklets or, in the case



of one design, in a sheetlet of six stamps. The booklet designs were the result of a public appeal earlier in 2018 which asked the public to submit ideas online for a set of Christmas stamps. The philatelic community was not requested to submit any ideas. Although well intended, the resultant list of ideas was difficult to turn into attractive designs.

The set includes a 50c make-up value, a good idea, allowing both inland and overseas rates to be catered for in the one booklet. The €19.00 booklet includes one free €1 stamp and is made up of designs 1 & 2 both x 3, designs 3, 4 and 5 all x 4 and designs 6 & 7 both x 2.

The 22 stamps are set out in two columns of 11 stamps split into a block of 2 x 9 and 2 x 2 (the 50c stamps). A collectors' pair was also available with designs 6 and 7 which, combined with the €5 booklet, gives a full set.



All illustrations above reduced

Non-Irish based members might query the design "*Late Late Toy Show*". The Late Late Show is a long running (since 1962) weekly chat and entertainment show on Irish television. In late November/early December they have a special show aimed at children which features all the latest toys, gadgets, children's' books, etc., coming up to the Christmas season. Children feature in all the entertainment acts in the same show. This special annual show has one of the largest Irish TV audiences - hence its inclusion in the set of Christmas stamps.

The special "*Elf*" pack was aimed at a younger audience and was also sold in some stationery stores. The "*Elf on the Shelf*" range of goods originates in the USA. The *sheetlet* (illustrated on the front cover) contains six self-adhesive stamps set out in three rows of six. Each stamp has an elliptical perforation on each of the horizontal sides, a first for Irish stamps.

Note that the illustration on the front of the pack has the elliptical perforation on the vertical sides and the illustration in *The Collector* has no elliptical perforations. All stamps have a phosphor frame and the paper is Avery s/a 247grm. The pack also included six non-denominated postcards, each with an "*Elf*" Christmas image which could be used to produce maximum cards. The "*Elf*" stamp was NOT included on the serviced cover sold by the bureau. However, collectors could include the

additional stamp for the first day cancellation on their own-prepared covers.



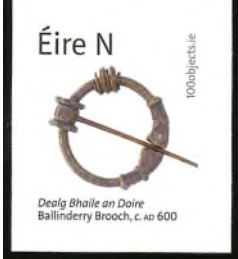
Armistice Day (Centenary): The stamps were issued on 8 November, three days before the actual anniversary. Some postmasters, seeing the superimposed 11.11.11 lettering on the stamps, thought that the stamps should not be sold before 11 November (a Sunday!). However, in at least one post office in Dublin, the stamps went on sale on 7 November. Two first day postmarks are associated with this issue. The postmark, as illustrated in "*The Collector*" and also shown on the first day cover insert, was only available on covers handed in for cancellation. This postmark refers to "*Armistice Day*". The serviced fdc's sold by the bureau with the printed cancellation all have the 11.11 11 design in the postmark.

YEAR PACK AND YEAR BOOK

Year Pack: The Year Pack contains all of the special and commemorative stamps issued during 2018, including a pair of the Love and Marriage self-adhesive booklet stamps, the €5 Christmas booklet and the Christmas booklet pair (i.e. the remaining two designs) but excluding the SOAR issues, all booklets and all miniature sheets – a total of 43 stamps with a face value of €45.85 (2017: €41.25). Cost €48 (2017: €45).

Year Book: The bilingual book contains all of the special and commemorative stamps issued during 2018, including both regular gummed and self-adhesive stamps as included in the year pack, together with the three miniature sheets and the Elf sheetlet - a total of 43 stamps plus four sheets with a face value of €62.35 (2017: €49.45). All are pre-mounted in the year book. Total printing of 900 standard copies and 80 leather-bound editions. Cost €80 (2017: €80) (leather edition: €220 in both years). Print run in 2017 was also 900 copies (leather edition: 80).

A HISTORY OF IRELAND IN 100 OBJECTS, A SELECTION - NINTH DEFINITIVE SERIES

Date of Issue	Description	Cost	Notes	Perforation	Printer
	     				
25 Jan	A History of Ireland in 100 Objects - Definitive Series (Phase 2) - Loughnashade Trumpet (1) - Keshcarrigan Bowl (2) - St Patrick's Confession (3) - Book of Kells (4) - Petrie 'Crown' (5) - Springmount Wax Tablets (6) - Tara Brooch (7) - Ardagh Chalice (8)	€1.00 €1.00 €1.00 €1.00 €1.00 €1.00 €1.00 €1.00	} Se-tenant vertical strip of four (Numbered 1 to 4) } Se-tenant vertical strip of four (Numbered 5 to 8)	11 x 11¼ 11 x 11¼	CCL Label (I) Ltd CCL Label (I) Ltd
25 Jan	A History of Ireland in 100 Objects - Definitive Series Booklets (Self-adhesive) - National - International	€10.00 €13.50	10 x N (€1.00) - Derrynaflan Paten 14 x 14 10 x W (€1.35)* - Donore Handle x 14 x 14		Cartor Cartor
25 Jan	New - Roll of 100 stamps - Corleck Head - Ballinderry Brooch - Roll of 100 stamps	N (€1.00) N (€1.00) €100.00	} See below } See below	11 x 11 11 x 11¼	Ashton-Potter? Ashton-Potter?
Late 2018	New - Roll of 50 stamps - Designs as above	€50.00	See below	11 x 11¼	Ashton Potter?
* : Subsequently increased to €1.50 as from 6 April 2018 with complete booklets then costing €15.00.					



SOAR Issue: The second set in this series was issued on 25 January. There are 8 designs as listed, and the bureau set, (numbered 1 to 8), is split into two strips of four. The strips sold by the bureau

have the eight designs set out in the same order as the SOAR set sold at post office counters. Strips of any length can be obtained from post office counters. All counter rolls are printed in the same sequence (as illustrated above). The date code 18025 corresponds with

25 January and the reference code is 02501000001 (as before). Each stamp measures 56mm x 25mm and has three small pre-printed vertical yellow phosphor bars similar to previous SOAR definitive issues. As with previous issues, the surplus paper is removed between stamps. The Tara Brooch and the Ardagh Chalice have featured previously on the Irish Heritage and Treasures definitives of the 1990s (IR£2 and IR£1 values respectively).



There were two separate first day covers. The first cover with SOAR stamps 1 to 4 illustrates St Patrick's Bell (6th-8th century AD). The second cover with SOAR stamps 5 to 8 illustrates Mullaghmast Stone (500-600 AD). The first day pictorial cancel also features the Ardagh Chalice (illustration on page 13).

National €10.00 Self-adhesive Booklet: The booklet contains 10 x N (€1.00) small vertical format stamps illustrating the Derrynaflan Paten (late 8th/early 9th century). Each stamp measures 20mm x 24mm and has the usual yellow phosphor frame. Surplus paper retained. The cover of the booklet shows a detailed image of part of the Paten. A pair of self-

adhesives with normal booklet backing and with surplus paper also intact is available from the philatelic bureau. The phosphor on both the complete panes and pairs extends into the surrounding margin.

International €15.00 Self-adhesive Booklet: The booklet contains 10 x W (€1.50) small vertical format stamps with the Donore Handle (700-720 AD). Each stamp measures 20mm x 24mm and has the usual yellow phosphor frame. Surplus paper retained. A pair of self-adhesives with plain backing and with surplus paper intact is available from the philatelic bureau. The booklet also contains 10 x small format airmail labels. The cover of the booklet shows a detailed image of part of the Handle. On this pane (and the pairs), the phosphor does NOT extend into the surrounding margins.

€100 Coil Roll and Coil Pair: The order form attached to the first issue of *The Collector* issued in January 2018 referred to a new coil roll of 100 stamps. as did the publicity notice at the bureau counter in Dublin. Although I understand that the coil had been printed, it was not issued on the day and there was no reference to it inside the actual brochure. The roll has the usual numbering on reverse of 100/80/60/40/20. Each leader has a number - #2 on the leader illustrated on the front cover.



Ex €100 roll

How ever, during March coil pairs were released at the bureau counter and it was possible to obtain the January definitive first day cancellation on covers prepared by collectors/dealers. The coil pairs have plain backing and the surplus paper has NOT been removed.

The release of the new roll was deferred until supplies of the 2017 roll were exhausted. The name of the printers has not yet been released but it is probably Ashton-Potter, given that the phosphor frame is the duller type similar to the 2017 roll printed by the same firm. Complete rolls of the new coil were released during early July.



Ex €50 roll

€50 Coil Roll: In February 2019, a new €50 roll was discovered. Subsequently, it became clear that the roll was first released in late 2018.

The make-up is similar to the €100 roll except the number sequence is 50/40/30/20/10 and the label "See reverse/for quantity/remaining" is smaller than on the €100 roll. The individual stamps are the same as those included in the €100 roll. Each leader has a number e.g. #11 on the leader illustrated on the front cover.

STATIONERY AND COMMEMORATIVE POSTCARDS

Date of Issue	Description	Cost	Note	Printer
				
11 Jan	GPO 200 - large format postcard	no charge	See note below	An Post Print & Design
6 May	Darkness into Light - set of 4 small format postcards	no charge	See note below	?
21 Aug	World Meeting of Families - large format postcard	no charge	See note below	?
21 Sept	Culture Night - large format postcard (GPO 200)	no charge	See note below	?
5 Oct	RMS <i>Leinster</i> - set of four small format postcards	40c	Per card (see note below)	?
10 Oct	RMS <i>Leinster</i> - large format postcard	no charge	Available at GPO and major offices	?
Oct ?	"A" size envelope - new printing		See note below - new inner lining	Trimfold Envelopes Limited

GPO Bicentenary: As well as the €1 stamp, a large format glossy undenominated postcard reproducing the stamp (complete with perforations, value, etc.) was available at the GPO.



Pieta House - Darkness Into Light Postcards:

Pieta House is an Irish charity which provides a free, therapeutic approach to people who are in suicidal distress and those who engage in self-harm. For some years, it has organised an annual "Darkness into Light" charity walk.

The 2018 walk was held on the early morning of Saturday 6 May, the idea being that participants commence the walk in darkness and end it in daylight. The awareness walk/run had a record-breaking number of participants this year. Well in excess of 150,000 people took part in the events all over Ireland, north and south, and across the world at the weekend.

An Post supported the walk by producing a set of four postpaid postcards for the organisers of the event. The cards were only advertised on the An Post and Pieta House facebook pages. The cards were not available from An Post. An individual postpaid card was given to each participant who finished the walk.

The idea was that each participant should spread the *"Darkness into Light"* message by sending the card to a friend. All cards were given out at the various event locations with a booklet stamp ('W' rate) affixed to the card.

World Meeting of Families Postcard: A large format un-denominated postcard reproducing the background design shown on the miniature sheet was available on purchases of any of the WMoF products from the philatelic counter during July/August. A second printing was made available at Stampa, as already noted. The second issue is on glossy card (both sides) whereas the initial printing was on a matt card. (see illustration on page 8).

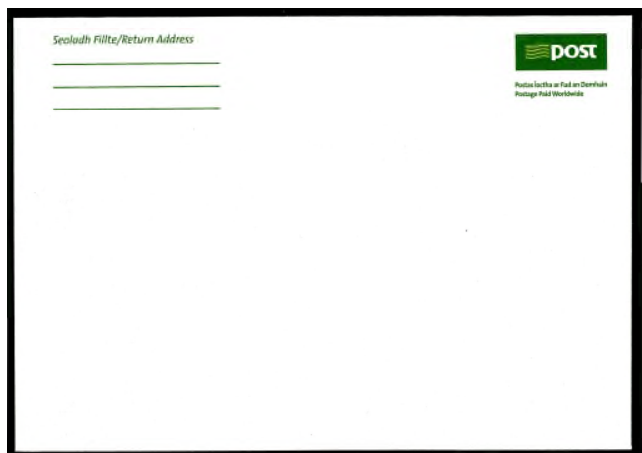
Culture Night: The Culture Night large format postcard features the same GPO 200 stamp design as used on a similar card released in January 2018. However, the card differs in that on the reverse there is a reference to Culture Night and an An Post Postage Paid indicium. This is the first time the Culture Night card was issued in this format. Normally, on the night, cards are distributed with a self-adhesive booklet stamp ('W' rate) affixed to the card.

Note that there will be a Culture Night stamp issue in 2019.

RMS Leinster - Postcard Set: As already referred to under *Special and Commemorative stamps*, a set of four undenominated postcards was released prior to the release date of the RMS Leinster stamp at Stampa (5 October) - see illustration of one of the cards on page 11.



RMS Leinster - Large Format Postcard: As already referred to above on the day of issue An Post also made available, free of charge, a large format un-denominated postcard of the stamp. This featured the entire painting.



"A" Envelope: A new printing of the "A" size envelope was first noted in October although it may have been released earlier in 2018.



The size and format is unchanged as is the printing on the front. However, the printed pattern on the inside of the envelope has a new design with a repeating *"Autofast"* wording in dark grey as illustrated. *Autofast* is a brand name of Trimfold Envelopes Limited based in Kilkenny, so, presumably, they printed the envelopes for An Post. The firm only produces these envelopes in a brown colour as blanks.



I also illustrate the blue pattern on the inside of the previous printing released back in 2014.

The envelopes are distributed to post offices with a wrapper as illustrated, which clearly indicates that the envelope can be used both for inland and overseas postings. There was some misunderstanding as to whether this type of envelope could be used for international postings back in 2012.

EXHIBITION AND SOCIETY SOUVENIRS AND POSTMARKS

Date of Issue	Description	Cost	Numbers/Notes	Paper	Perforation	Printer
						
8 April	Spring Stamp & Coin Fair - 2018 National booklet	€15.00 *	with black overprint - see below. TRSA	14 x 14		Mahons
	- Illustrated cover	€4.00 #	with special postmark - see below.			DSS
16 May	Dublin Stamp Society Visit to Revenue Museum					
	- Illustrated cover	€4.00 #	with special postmark - see below.			DSS
24 Sept	Stampa 2018 - Native Irish Bees MS with black o/p	€22.00 *	625 overprinted	CCP3	13 each side	Mahons
	(Membership) - 1916 Centenary MS with red o/p		625 overprinted	CCP3	13½ x 13½	Mahons
	- RMS Leinster postcard		1,000 printed with Stampa 2018 imprint		Visiprint	
24 Sept	Stampa 2018 (Public souvenir)					
	- World Meeting of Families MS with black o/p	€6.00 *	800 overprinted	CCP3	13¼ x 13½	Mahons
* : The production and overprinting of the miniature sheets and booklets marked with an asterisk above were arranged by the organisers of the show. Overprinting of the miniature sheets and booklets was with the permission of An Post. # : The Spring Stamp & Coin Show and Dun Laoghaire covers were prepared by the Dublin Stamp Society and printed by Brian Warren. The Cork booklet and Jack Lynch cover were produced by the Cork Philatelic Society. The set of four train station covers were produced by Raven Stamps. The Stampa covers were produced by the organisers and printed by Brian Warren. None of the items listed above were sold by An Post.						

Spring Stamp & Coin Fair: This annual show was held at the RDS in Dublin on Sunday 8 April. The front cover of the 2018 National definitive booklet was overprinted by the organisers for the show and numbered. Total printing of 400 booklets. The single line overprint in black reads "Spring Stamp & Coin Fair, 2018". An Post was in attendance and provided two special postmarks illustrating the Wellington Monument and the Phoenix monument. Both structures are situated in the Phoenix Park in Dublin. The Dublin Stamp Society provided two illustrated covers showing each of the two monuments. These were available serviced with the 2017 Europa Dublin Castle stamp and the relevant special postmark. Total printing of 40 sets of covers.

Dublin Stamp Society - Visit to the Revenue Museum, Dublin Castle: The Dublin Stamp Society had their annual "Away Day" during May to



the little known Revenue Museum in Dublin Castle, Dublin 2. Although the museum is primarily devoted to the history of the Revenue Commissioners and most of the stamp displays relate to fiscal issues, there is much of interest to the philatelist. The museum is usually open weekdays only from 10am-1pm and 2pm-4pm. A special cover was produced by the Dublin Stamp Society and a special postmark was provided by An Post. It is well worth a visit but ring in advance to make sure it is open (353 -1-8635601).

Web: www.revenue.ie/en/about.revenue-museum



Stampa 2018: The various souvenirs as listed were posted to members in advance, with certain members receiving them on 24 September. The Easter Rising miniature sheet ("The Participants") has a single-line overprint in red which reads "STAMPA 2018". Both the World Meeting of Families and Native Irish Bees miniature sheets have a two-line overprint in black which reads "STAMPA / 5th to 7th October 2018". Copies of the postcard featuring the RMS *Leinster* were also available separately at the exhibition at €2 per card. The three special cancels and the related stamp issues were as follows:-

5 October: Families (World Meeting of Families stamp issue);

6 October: Honeycomb and Bee (Native Irish Bees issue); and

7 October: Mizen Head Bridge (€1 Europa stamp featuring the bridge)

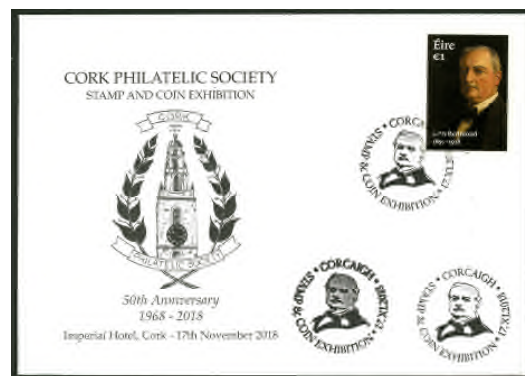
The three postmarks were designed by Brian Harmon and Brian Warren. A set of three illustrated and serviced covers on the same theme designed by Brian Warren were also available at €4 per cover. Originally, the 7 October postmark was to feature the RMS *Leinster* as the stamp was to be issued on 4 October. However, as the release of the stamp

was deferred to 10 October (the actual anniversary date), the postmark design was changed.

The RMS *Leinster* Card was also used as a ticket (60 copies) and menu for the awards dinner in Wynn's Hotel, Lr. Abbey Street, Dublin 1 (60 menus, 50 attended). The menu card does NOT have the Stampa 2018 imprint. The same design appears on the An Post postcard referred to under Stationery.



Cork Philatelic Exhibition / Cork Stamp & Coin Exhibition: The Cork Philatelic Society held its annual show in the Imperial Hotel, Cork in association with Raven Stamps. The usual booklet produced by the Society contains a pair of the John Redmond stamps.



The Society also produced an illustrated cover bearing their crest/logo to mark the 50th anniversary of the first exhibition in Cork in 1968. Note that, depending on the pressure applied, the head of John Redmond within the cancellation could appear "clear" or "shaded".

In addition, four serviced covers were sold as a set by Raven Stamps. Each cover illustrated one of the native Irish bees included in the stamp set issued earlier in the year with matching stamp. Two special postmarks were available from An Post. The first postmark with a portrait of John Redmond was for the Society cover and the second cancellation with the image of a bee was used on the set of covers featuring native Irish bees sold by Raven Stamps.



Raven Stamps also arranged for the overprinting of the Native Irish Bees miniature sheet. The three-line overprint reads "Cork Stamp & Coin Fair/ Saturday 17th November / Supported by An Post". All souvenirs were individually numbered (booklets and sheets).

SLOGANS USED ON INTEGRATED LETTER PROCESSING SYSTEM MACHINES (ILPS - NEC Japanese machines in use at all four mail centres)

(Illustrations of all slogan postmarks have been reduced)

There were no new slogans during 2018 - a first in the modern era.

Continued Use/Re-use of Slogans

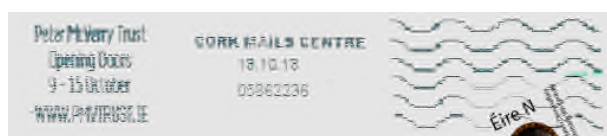
ILPS 137 Remember to / Use Your / EIRCODE



ILPS 137 used at DMC on 11.12.2018

This slogan was used throughout 2018 at all mail centres and continues in use in 2019.

ILPS 138 Peter McVerry Trust / Opening Doors / 9-15 October / WWW.PMVTRUST.IE



ILPS 138 used at CMC on 18.10.2018

This 2017 slogan, originally used in October of that year, was briefly used in error at CMC on 18 October 2018. Also known used briefly at AMC.

COMPACT FLATS SORTING MACHINES (CFSMs - built by Selex Elsag in Genoa, Italy and in use at all four mail centres)

I have NOT noted any changes in the CFSM postmarks during 2018.

OTHER ITEMS

Che Guevara Update (2017): Thanks to Heinz-Jürgen Kumpf, who obtained confirmation from An Post, I can advise that the second printing of the Che Guevara issue amounted to a print run of 94,000 stamps. This second release also sold out within a short period. The second printing is identical to the first printing.

East-West flight Commemoration: Special covers with an illustrative postmark dated 12 April 2018 (the anniversary date) were produced in Germany to mark the 90th anniversary of the first East-West Atlantic flight in 1928. They were carried on an Aer Lingus flight and bear a receiving Baile Atha Cliath CDS on reverse dated 13 APR 2018. The postmark incorporates an outline illustration of the Junkers *Bremen*.



An Post Santa Envelope: The envelope is a new design with an elf included in the postmark. As An Post changed their branding in February 2019, there will be a further change in 2019.

An Post Christmas Card: I have seen various An Post Christmas cards but the general corporate card had no philatelic significance. I have also seen a small sized card which reproduces the "Attending Midnight Mass" Christmas stamp design. I do not know if cards exist reproducing the other six designs.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank my many philatelic friends for their help. Particular thanks to John Lennon and Michael McNamara for supplying information relating to the ILPS slogan postmarks; also thanks to Paul Coleman, Stephen Ferguson, Tony Finn, John Fitzsimons, John Greer, Heinz-Jürgen Kumpf, Michael Kelly, Keith Kilduff, Paddy Lineen, Héloïse Mitchell, John Mullen, Michael McNamara, Declan O'Kelly of Cathedral Stamps, Pádraig O'Shea of Raven Stamps and Lee Wolverton of Rodgau Philatelie for providing much valuable assistance and information; and, finally, thanks to Héloïse Mitchell for proof reading the article.