

Christmas

13 November 1990



The five stamps to be issued on 13 November will be Britain's 25th Christmas issue (first in 1966) and feature traditional Christmas country snow scenes, all with a village church in the background.

They are of horizontal format, 41 x 30mm, printed in sheets of 100 with PVA Dextrin gum. Perforation measures 15 x 14.



Presentation Pack

The pack (No. 213) will cost £1.60; it was designed by John Gorham with text by Susan Hill and illustrations by Andrew Davidson. It was printed by Moore & Matthes (Printers) Limited.

Royal Mail Stamp Cards

Cards, featuring enlargements of the stamp designs, will be available approximately two weeks before the stamp issue, price 19p each. They are numbered 131A-E.



The 17p and 22p stamps for basic inland second and first class rates feature children building a snowman and a man and child with a Christmas tree and bunches of holly. Carol singers are shown on the 26p value for European (non EEC countries). The higher value stamps, 31p and 37p, showing tobogganing and skating, are for airmail postcards outside Europe and basic rate letters for airmail zones A-C.

All five stamps reflect the traditional view of Christmas activities as featured on many Christmas cards.

Technical Details

The stamps were designed by John Gorham with illustrations by Andrew Davidson and printed by Harrison & Sons Limited in photogravure. The 17p stamp is on fluorescent coated paper with a single phosphor line; the other values are on phosphor-coated paper.

First Day Cover

The Royal Mail first day cover will be available from the British Philatelic Bureau, "Collections" centres, philatelic counters and main post offices approximately two weeks before 13 November, price 19p. Two pictorial postmarks will be used for the first day cover service — one for the Bureau, the other for Bethlehem, Llandilo, Dyfed.

A first day cover service will be provided by the Bureau with the official Royal Mail cover addressed to the destination required with the stamps cancelled with the requested postmark. Application forms, available from the Bureau and main post offices, should be returned not later than 13 November.

Customers requiring only the pictorial postmarks may obtain them under the reposting facility by sending on the first day of issue a stamped envelope under an outer cover endorsed "Special First Day of Issue handstamp" to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT (Bureau postmark) or Wales & The West Special Handstamp Centre, Cardiff LDO, Penarth Road, CARDIFF CF1 1AA (Bethlehem postmark).

First Day Posting Boxes will be provided at most main post offices for those collectors who wish to post covers to receive the standard, non-pictorial "First Day of Issue" handstamps.



A number of special handstamps sponsored by stamp dealers and others, will be used on 13 November - details of these will be found in the *British Postmark Bulletin*, available on subscription from the British Philatelic Bureau.

Souvenir Cover

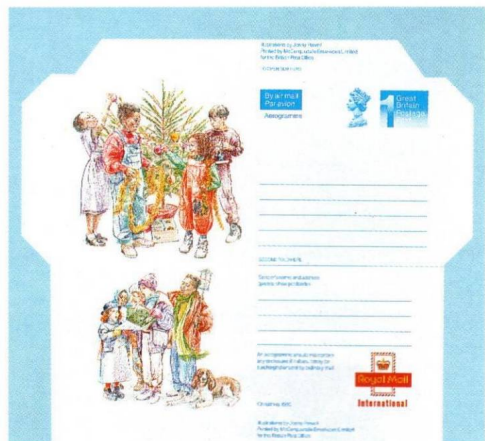
A souvenir cover, of similar design to the first day cover, will be available from "Collections" centres and philatelic counters from 14 November, price 19p. This will be on sale for one year.

Christmas Stamp Book

A book containing 20 second class (17p) Christmas stamps will go on sale at the Bureau, "Collections" centres, philatelic counters and post offices in a test area (to be announced) from 13 November, price £3.40. The books will remain on sale in the test area until 22 December unless previously sold out. The front cover of the book will feature a snowman.

Christmas Aerogramme

Christmas aerogrammes have been issued annually since 1965. This year's aerogramme features children engaged in Christmas activities such as decorating the Christmas tree. The aerogramme, designed by Jenny Powell and printed by McCorquodale Envelopes Ltd goes on sale on 13 November, price 42p. It will be withdrawn from sale at post offices on 22 December but will remain on philatelic sale for one year.



Royal Mail Yearbook

Volume 7 of the Royal Mail Special Stamps Yearbook will go on sale on 13 November. The handsomely produced book contains background information about the development and production of all the special issues of 1990.

The book is hardbound with a matching slipcase and includes sets of all 1990 special issues. It will be available from the Bureau, "Collections" centres, philatelic counters and main post offices, price £18.50.

1990 Collectors' Pack

The 1990 edition of the Collectors Pack will be issued on 13 November, coinciding with the issue of Christmas stamps, price £10.50. The pack contains all 1990 special stamps plus the Penny Black miniature sheet, mounted on a quality display board. In addition to the stamps, there is a colourful and informative brochure, giving details of the stamps subjects. The pack will be available from the British Philatelic Bureau, "Collections" centres, philatelic counters and main post offices.



the kite
outside. It was very bright and the
the air in plumes. I'd never seen the countryside look like
this, softened and changed by the snow. And behind the low
hills the sky was gathering again, heavy with more to come.
Our boots scrunched softly as we trudged along the path
leading to the church. There, beside the
path, we built our snowman. He was a
really good big one by the time we'd done,
with a scarf and an old top hat. I thought
we ought to give him a stocking to hang
up, too - he was one of the family now!
Later on, after lunch, we set off to
fetch the Christmas tree and holly
branches. On the way back,

was part of it.
On Christmas afternoon and Boxing
Day, everybody was out, and, on the slopes
around, we tobogganed, whooshing down and tumbling off
into the snow and lugging the sledges back up to
the top, over and over again. There was the
sound of voices calling and laughing all
around the fields, and then someone
said the pond was frozen hard over,
so we all went to see, and people brought
out skates and there was the zip and hiss
of the blades across the ice and bright
colours of new jumpers, as
and around in the
ht.
le time, I was remembering
when I was very old, just as
ays told me. When we were young,
mers were long and hot and it always snowed at
doesn't happen nowadays, they said. But it did.
Christmas that year. Just as I'd known it would.

