

Royal Mail news Golden wedding stamps

- Self adhesives • Changes to the definitive series • New aerogrammes



Both sheet and book stamps will have two phosphor bands (blue fluor), PVA gum, and are perforated 15 x 14 with elliptical perforations on vertical sides.

A presentation pack (price 90p) containing one of each sheet stamp will be available from the Bureau, Post Office Counters philatelic outlets, and main post offices. There will be no stamp cards for this issue.

Gold definitives As part of Royal Mail's celebrations of the golden wedding anniversary of HM The Queen and HRH The Duke of Edinburgh, the 26p national definitive and 1st class non value indicator stamps printed in gold will be issued on 21 April – the birthday of HM The Queen. The gold printing will replace the existing 26p rust and 1st NVI in flame until the end of the year. Special commemorative stamps marking the golden wedding will be issued on 7 October and will feature a specially commissioned photograph of the Royal couple by the Earl of Snowdon.

Both 26p and NVI gold stamps will be issued in sheets of 200, printed in photogravure using new computer-produced cylinders by Harrison & Sons Ltd (26p) and Walsall Security printers (1st). The 1st class stamp will also be issued in books of 10 produced by Harrison and Walsall, again printed in photogravure.



and, when not satisfied, remoulded and started the whole process again. In the course of a year's endeavour, he produced three plaster casts of The Queen's profile in bas-relief. His preliminary designs for the stamp surrounded the profile with rather elaborate frames and included the lettering POSTAGE and REVENUE. But the total effect depended upon the quality of the modelling in the head and the right balance of light and shade.



The previous sub-types still existed and those philatelists specialising in this series can become involved in paper, printing methods and gum as well as other factors. During the same period, The Post Office began to consider other methods of printing and, for the first time in more than 40 years, low-value definitive stamps were printed by a method other than photogravure when The House of Questa, John Waddington PLC and Walsall Security Printers Limited printed values in offset lithography. Joh Enschedé Security Printing of The Netherlands

ish definitives in 1979, and the return to printing the majority definitives by photogravure, by Walsall and Enschedé. The definitive has produced a wide range of stamps. It had maintained the reputation of the Post Office with its excellence of workmanship and its adherence to the hopes of its collectors of classicism and dignity.





Orders for first day covers must be received at the Bureau by 21 April 1997

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Unstamped Royal Mail first day cover envelopes will be available from main post offices, the British Philatelic Bureau and Post Office Counters philatelic outlets around a week before 21 April, price 25p.

The Bureau will provide a first day cover service – collectors may order the Royal Mail cover bearing the stamps, cancelled with a pictorial ‘first day of issue’ postmark of the Bureau or Windsor, price 96p UK (includes VAT) or 82p overseas (no VAT).

Collectors may send their own stamped covers on the day of issue, for these cancels, to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT, or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Wexham Road, Slough SL1 1AA (for Windsor). The outer envelope should be endorsed ‘FD DEF 9701’ (Bureau), or ‘FD DEF 9702’ (London SW).

First Day Posting Boxes will be provided at most main post offices for collectors who wish to post covers to receive local (mostly non-pictorial) ‘first day of issue’ handstamps.

Details of other sponsored special handstamps will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – the Royal Mail’s magazine for postmark collectors. It is available on subscription from the British Philatelic Bureau: £10 UK and Europe; £21.75 rest of world (airmail) ●

Self-adhesive update New 1st and 2nd class self-adhesive NVI stamps will be issued on 18 March, previewed here last month. They will be available at 300 main post offices in Scotland and Northern Ireland, from the British philatelic Bureau and Post Office Counters philatelic outlets.

First day posting boxes will be provided at all offices normally offering this service in Scotland and Northern Ireland and at offices in England and Wales with a philatelic outlet – regularly listed on the inside front cover of the *Bulletin*. First day of issue postmarks will be available only for these places. All first day covers posted in Scotland will be given the ‘first day of issue Scotland’ postmark, covers posted in Northern Ireland will receive the ‘first day of issue Belfast’ cancel. Collectors may post covers with just one or both of the new stamps to qualify for the ‘first day of issue’, philatelic counter and sponsored handstamps in use on 18 March ●

