

definitives, Revenue Protection labels, free franking, William Blott – Inspector of Franks, British Packet Mails to India 1815-19, mobile posting boxes on buses, and an important three page statement by Martin Rush, Head of Heritage Services, entitled ‘The National Postal Museum’s Future’. Mr Rush gives details of work carried out since the NPM closed in 1998 and is ‘happy to report that the Consignia plc Board has now endorsed revised proposals to develop gallery space in central London, with a view to re-opening to the public as soon as practicable.’ ●

**Auction enquiries** Cavendish Philatelic Auctions Ltd, 153-157 London Road, Derby DE1 2SY. Telephone 01332 250970.

**Cavendish auctions** The Cavendish auction on 30 November included some notable results. A letter of 1660 sent by Colonel John Birch from Shrewsbury to the High Sheriff of Derbyshire realised £920 (estimate £400), and a cover from Islay in 1848 with failed re-use of a 1d red made £805 (£300). The cover, franked by a damaged and clearly previously used 1d red, roughly affixed using sealing wax, was endorsed ‘Old Stamp’ in red and a fine black handstruck ‘2’ charge-mark added. An 1839 entire with the distinctive handstruck of Galway realised £1380 (£1000). The ‘Valuables by Post’ auction of material from the large gold medal collection of Vivien Sussex will be held on 6 March ●

## Royal Mail news New Occasions stamps ● New packs ● Customised Cartoons sheet



### Technical details

**Printer** The House of Questa

**Process** Lithography

**Stamp size** 41 x 30mm

**Sheets** 100

**Perforation** 15 x 14

**Phosphor** Two bands

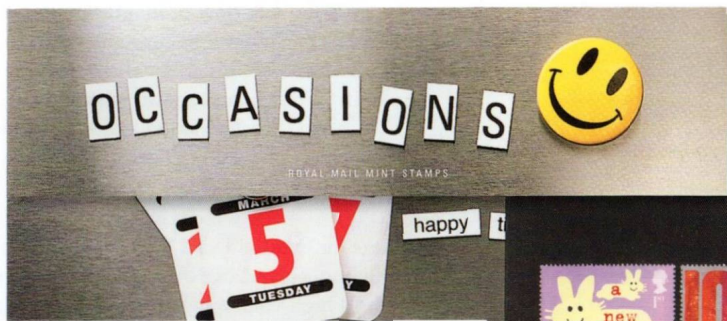
**Gum** PVA

**Gutter pairs** Vertical

**Occasions stamps** A second series of Occasions stamps will go on sale at post offices, Royal Mail Talents House and Post Office philatelic outlets from 5 March. The five colourful 1st class stamps feature: New baby (rabbit) designed by Ian Bilbey; ‘LOVE’ by Alan Kitching; ‘hello’ in sky-writing by Hoop Associates; Moving Home (Bear the gardener) by Graham Percy; and ‘best wishes’ spelt out in flowers by Ian Bilbey.

The stamps will be suitable for use on greetings mail – for Valentine’s Day, new baby arrival, birthdays, and sending best wishes for new jobs, examinations, or moving to a new home. The Queen’s silhouette and 1ST indicator are positioned at top right. The five stamps will be printed in separate sheets. The existing set of ‘Silver’ Occasions stamps (issued in February 2001) will remain on sale, giving customers a choice of designs to use on their mail.

A presentation pack (right, £1.70) and stamp cards (25p each) will be available as usual.



Sponsored handstamps for 5 March will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from Tallents House (£10 UK and Europe; £21.75 elsewhere).

For a sample copy write to: The Editor, *British Postmark Bulletin*, Royal Mail, 2-14 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8HQ.



**FIRST DAY FACILITIES** Unstamped Royal Mail FDC envelopes will be available from main post offices and philatelic outlets about a week before 5 March, price 25p. Orders for FDCs with the stamps cancelled by a pictorial first day postmark of Tallents House or Merry Hill, Wolverhampton must reach Tallents House by the day of issue. Price £2 UK (including VAT) or £1.71 overseas (no VAT).

Covers may be sent on the day of issue to: Royal Mail, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB, or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, St Stephens Street, Birmingham B6 4AA (Merry Hill postmark), marking the outer envelope 'FDO203' (Tallents House), or 'FDO204' (Merry Hill). Covers can be posted or handed in at main post offices for the Merry Hill pictorial cancel. A non-pictorial Merry Hill postmark is also available from the Special Handstamp Centre, request 'FDO204 NP' ●

**Plate numbers and colours**

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- All five stamps Q1 yellow ●
- Q1 magenta ● Q1 blue ● Q1 black ● Q1 phosphor. Rabbit stamp additionally Q1 lilac, Love stamp Q1 silver, and Best Wishes stamp Q1 deep blue.