Wedding Stamp 2008
Greetings 2008
Chinese Year of the Rat
Munich Air Disaster
St Patrick’s Day
European Year of Intercultural Dialogue
Dear Collector,

Variety is the spice of life – it could also be said that it is the spice of philately!

And in this issue of Collector’s News variety is to the fore with news, articles and images that reflect the diversity and engagement of collecting.

We tell the story of the tradition of marriage on page 4 and celebrate it with the beautiful Wedding Stamp issue for 2008. The history of the greeting card is told on page 6 and is complemented with reproductions of our “Greetings” stamp issue for 2008. We commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Munich Air Disaster on page 10 and St Patrick’s Day gets its due recognition on page 12.

On page 8, we explore the influence of rodents on our lives; as 2008 is the Year of the Rat in the Chinese astrological calendar, we learn about the characteristics of those born under that sign.

While stamps have always been considered miniature works of art, nowhere is this more directly expressed than in the French series of Art Stamps which featured the works of great artists in a larger-than-usual stamp format to be seen on page 18. 2008 is the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue, we celebrate this on page 13.

Food for thought, a feast for the eyes and hopefully a great read, waits between the covers of this latest Collector’s News. Enjoy.

Aidan Murphy,
Marketing Manager, Irish Stamps

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The images throughout Collectors News are correct at the time of going to press, but final product may not be exactly as shown.
OUTLOOK FOR 2008

In this, the first issue of the year it is appropriate to look ahead to what we have planned. The draft programme of issues for 2008 is shown on page 15. Please note some dates may be subject to change and we will update accordingly in future editions of Collectors News.

The 2008 programme comprises 41 stamps plus 4 Irish Music which were deferred from 2007. It is now the policy of An Post to limit the Annual Stamp Programme total to circa 40 stamps per year. This policy decision was taken in light of preferences and comments expressed by our loyal collector base.

During 2008 is it also intended to positively address the thorny issue of the availability of commemorative stamps at all Post Offices. The objective is to ensure that some commemorative issues are available at all Post Offices. To achieve this objective it may be necessary to limit the availability of less high profile issues to a smaller number of offices. The simple reality is that stamp sales at most Post Offices do not warrant the availability at these offices of over 40 stamps in any year. It is hoped that revised arrangements concerning the availability of commemorative stamps at Post Offices will be in place by the middle of the year, and of course any such arrangements will be notified in advance in Collectors News.

Another change that we are contemplating – as an initiative aimed at ensuring a greater awareness and availability of our high-profile Special and Commemorative stamps – concerns the number of stamps on a commemorative sheet. The proposal currently under consideration may involve moving to Sheetlets of 10 or 20 stamps, as this would facilitate sales of these stamps in Post Offices.

Don’t worry these changes won’t result in more stamps in the Annual Programme, which, as stated, is something we are actively working on reducing in future years!

EVENTS TO NOTE

On February 16 and 17, 2008, the Irish International Coin and Banknote Fair takes place in the Serpentine Hall, RDS, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4. (Anglesea Road Entrance).

This Annual Event attracts stand holders from around the Globe who present a vast array of coins, tokens, banknotes, medals, postcards, stamps and other collectables. Organised by the Numismatic Society of Ireland and sponsored by the Central Bank, it is the Coin Event of the Year. Opening times 11am – 6pm Admission €5. A specially commissioned encapsulated souvenir €2 Treaty of Rome uncirculated coin will be available to the first 200 attendees each day. There will only be 400 of these unique show souvenirs available to the public, price €10, first come first served.

The Dublin Coin Auction takes place in the Herbert Park Hotel, Ballsbridge, on Friday 15 February at 3pm, viewing of Lots on Thursday 11am - 6pm and Friday 11am - 6pm. Catalogue on www.dublincoinauction.com

STAMPA COMPETITION WINNER

The winner of the Celtic Cats canvas which was on display at the An Post stand at Stampa 2007 is Karen Snedker, from Raheny, Dublin. Congratulations to Karen and a huge thank you to all who entered the competition!

INTERNATIONAL EVENTS 2008

Collectors please note the following International Philatelic events:

- February 1-3 Sarasota, USA - National Stamp Exhibition
- February 27 - March 1 Islington, London, UK - Spring Stampex
- February 29 - March 2 USA - St Louis Stamp Expo
- May 8-10 Germany - 18th International Essen Stamp Fair
- June 20-27 Romania - Efiro, Bucharest
From cakes to bouquets, from gowns to feasts – weddings have always been bedecked with the icons of celebration. For the ancient Greeks and Romans, the bouquet was a symbol that combined the motifs of both fertility and religion. Our Greco-Roman cousins assembled the wedding bouquet from a pungent mix of garlic and herbs or grains; garlic to ward off evil spirits, and herbs to ensure a fruitful union.

The wedding cake has always played a central role in ancient nuptials. The custom was that guests brought small cakes and piled them high on a table – the task of the bride and groom was to attempt to kiss each other over the high pile. Eventually, a medieval baker decided to put all the cakes together and cover them with frosting, thus the piles of little cakes became the tiered wedding cake seen at weddings today.

As for the glamorous gown – well, through the 18th century, most brides simply wore their Sunday best to the altar. Red was a favourite during the Middle Ages in Europe. The custom of throwing rice, originated with the ancient Hindus and Chinese. In these cultures, rice is the symbol of fruitfulness and prosperity. Tossing it after the ceremony was believed to bestow fertility upon the bride and groom. The event of marriage itself is well endowed with myth, symbolism and history – and as long as there are men and women who express their love and commitment to each other in a wedding ceremony, no doubt these great traditions will continue.

* One old Irish superstition holds that May is an unlucky month to get married in, because of its association with the Virgin Mary. This superstition seems to have lost its power, however, since May is now one of the most popular wedding months for Irish people. *
The 2008 Wedding stamp was designed by Amanda Brady, with stamp photography by Harry Weir. The stamp shows the bride and groom in a loving embrace on their wedding day. The wedding stamp is only available in a self-adhesive booklet of 10 stamps and also as a self-adhesive pair for Collectors. A First Day Cover is also available for this issue. These stamps are sure to be extremely popular, so please be sure to order yours early to avoid disappointment! Please use the order form attached, call us on +353 (1) 705 7400 or log on to www.irishstamps.ie.

Product Code 0801BK Price €5.50

Product Code 0801FDC Price €1.55
What we have come to know as the Greeting Card began in ancient China, as simply a means of sending messages of good luck and good will. While the greeting card is now a global cultural phenomenon, it has taken a long and varied history for it to become the welcome and ubiquitous communication it is today.

The early Egyptians conveyed their greetings on papyrus scrolls accompanied by little illustrated hieroglyphs. It is quite possible that the Moors carried that tradition from North Africa into Spain, from where the tradition spread throughout Europe. It is known that in the 1400s, greeting cards made from handmade paper were being exchanged in Germany. In fact New Year’s greetings were being reproduced from woodcuts at around that time, as well as Valentine’s cards which were also made by hand.

From a philatelic point of view, it was the postage stamp which gave the greeting card its impetus. Prior to the advent of printing, greeting cards were expensive – indeed only the wealthy could really afford them. The introduction of printing brought the cost down – but with the arrival of the postage stamp came an inexpensive means of sending individualised greetings to friends and family. Which brings us nicely to the An Post Greetings issue, due for issue on 16 January. These colourful stamps, designed by Steve Simpson feature two playful patchwork characters, a trumpeting elephant and a juggling frog. The stamps are guaranteed to cheer up any greeting you may send by post, Happy Birthday, Thank You, Good Luck, Congratulations or even just a letter to say Hello!

Available as a self-adhesive booklet of 10 x 55c stamps, these stamps are always handy to have around. For Collectors, a self-adhesive pair and a First Day Cover, designed by Steve Simpson, are also available.
Irish Stamps Year Book

A full colour hardback book which contains all the commemorative stamps and miniature sheets issued by the Irish Post Office in 2007. With accompanying text on each stamp issue and associated imagery related to the stamp subjects, this book is highly readable and a visual treat! Priced at just €60 (07YB) the Irish Stamps Year Book 2007 would make a prestigious gift, highlighting the many fascinating aspects of Irish culture and heritage.

Stamp highlights from 2007 include the following:
- Flight of the Earls
- The Planets
- Ireland’s Viking Heritage
- Rugby World Cup 2007
- Celtic Cats

.....and many, many more!

Also available...

Irish Stamps Year Collection 2007

A collection of all the commemorative stamps issued by the Irish Post office throughout the year. Housed in an attractive full colour folder, the stamps are presented on protective mount cards with explanatory notes on each stamp.

The Year Collection is priced at just €35 (07YP) and would make an ideal souvenir or gift.

Available now from the Philatelic Shop, GPO, Dublin 1, telephone 00353 (1) 705 7400, online at www.irishstamps.ie, or by using the order form attached.
Technical details

Date of Issue: 23 January, 2008
Value & Quantities: 78c (.26m)
€2.34 Lunar Pane (25k)
Design: Renze Zhou
Stamp Size: 40.64mm x 29.79mm
Lunar Pane Size: 130mm x 74mm
Colour: Multicolour with phosphor tagging
Make-up: Sheetlets of 16
Perforations: 15 x 14
Printing Process: Lithography
Printer: Irish Security Stamp Printing Ltd.

In China, the year in which you were born, during a twelve year cycle, is associated with an entire menagerie of Animal symbols. Each animal carries with it its own unique attributes and characteristics which, according to Oriental lore, transfer to the person born under that sign in that particular year. The year 2008 is the Year of the Rat.

In China, the sign of the rodent is far from being a harbinger of nasty rat-like qualities. In fact, those born in the Year of the Rat are considered to be brave and very entrepreneurial! Why? Because rats know exactly where to find solutions and can thrive and survive in any environment.

Those born in the Year of the Rat are thought to be very demanding, hate being bored and want constant stimulation. This particular attribute sometimes causes them to over-reach themselves – and that’s the downside – their drive to reach for success in love, in life and in business can be their undoing. But because one of the characteristics of people born in the Year of the Rat is their sharp intellects – they can often see disaster coming so they mostly avoid it.
To celebrate the Year of the Rat, An Post is issuing a beautiful stamp designed by Renze Zhou. The stamp, which is designed in a typical Chinese style, depicts a rat, standing on its hindquarters, sniffing at a lit candle. Three copies of this stamp will also feature on our Year of the Rat Miniature Sheet Lunar Pane, which was also designed by Renze Zhou.

The stamp and the Lunar Pane are both available on First Day Covers, which have also been specially designed by Renze Zhou and are available to purchase on 23 January from www.irishstamps.ie, by using the order form attached or by calling +353(1)705 7400.

Product Code 080378SH Price €12.48

Product Code 0803FDC Price €1.78

Product Code 0803MS Price €2.34
The Munich plane crash on 6 February 1958 was a disaster on so many levels. Twenty three people died including eight Manchester United footballers and while the human tragedy brought its own grief and anguish – the loss to the sport of football remains an abiding one.

Manchester United were returning from Belgrade where they had just beaten Red Star Belgrade in the quarter-finals (5-4 on aggregate) of the European Cup and had stopped off at Munich for re-fuelling. On that cold winter’s day, the British European Airways plane crashed on the third attempt to take off. Amongst the 23 that perished were eight United players; Liam Whelan, Roger Byrne, Mark Jones, Duncan Edwards, Eddie Colman, Tommy Taylor, David Pegg and Geoff Bent. The other victims included club officials, journalists, supporters, a cabin steward and the co-pilot. The players were affectionately known as the ‘Busby Babes’. Their youth and skills on the pitch had already earned them an enviable reputation before the disaster – now, 50 years later they have become virtually iconic of a time when the beautiful game was a sport without mega-star, millionaire players.

Among the dead was Liam Whelan; born in Dublin on 1 April 1935, Liam began his football career playing for Home Farm. He was soon spotted by Manchester United and in May 1953, at the age of 18, he made the move to the famous club. Whelan spent a couple of seasons at Manchester United before he began to command a regular place in their first team. Playing at inside forward for United, Whelan was to become one of their best players, as they won back-to-back League Championships in 1955-56 and 1956-57.

Whelan was the Manchester United top goal scorer in 1956-57 with an incredible 26 goals from 39
appearances. Overall he scored a total of 52 goals from 96 appearances. Liam Whelan was only 22 years old; his loss to both Manchester United and Ireland was expressed eloquently by the presence of 20,000 mourners at his funeral in Glasnevin cemetery.

To mark this poignant anniversary An Post will issue a 55c stamp, designed by RMG Target. The stamp features a photograph of Liam Whelan, the young Irish player and the iconic image of the Munich Memorial Clock at Old Trafford. A First Day Cover, designed by RMG Target, is also available for this issue.

Product Code 0804FDC Price €1.55
Every year, the people of Ireland celebrate the birth of a son born to two Italians called Calpurnius and Conchessa who happened to be spending some time in Britain. They gave him the name Maewin Succat. Not exactly a name that rolls off the tongue, but perhaps that’s why he used his baptismal name – Patricius.

And we have good reason to thank him for using the more customer-friendly version of his name – otherwise we would be parading down O’Connell Street on March 17 celebrating the unpronounceable!

While we, and indeed the rest of the world normally associate the colour green with St Patrick, in fact blue was the original hue assigned to him. It wasn’t until the 19th Century that he “went green”. Green, being the colour which in Celtic mythology, is associated with immortality and mysticism.

The 2008 St Patrick’s Day stamp, designed by Ger Garland, portrays a line engraving by Leonard Gaultier based on a drawing by Thomas Messingham, entitled *S. Patricius Hiberniae Apostolus, claruit anno dominium CCCCLVIII (1619)*. It depicts St Patrick standing on snakes, holding his crosier in his left hand and blessing the kneeling crowd with his right. It has been reproduced with the kind permission of the National Library of Ireland. Ger Garland also designed the First Day Cover to complement this issue.
EUROPEAN YEAR OF INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE

In October 2005, the EU Commission announced that 2008 will be the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue. With a focus on culture, education, youth, sport and citizenship the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue will develop a variety of projects that will encourage the intercultural initiatives at European, national and local level.

The ever-increasing cultural diversity of our societies means that we must engage with all aspects of cultural diversity within European Union Member States and An Post’s issue of a stamp to celebrate Intercultural Dialogue will reflect those aspirations.

The stamp features the Year of Intercultural Dialogue logo. The central idea of the design concept is; dancing together as an expression of ‘joie de vivre’. Several figures form a circle and turn about, hand in hand. The open ellipse echoes the openness of the EU: people from all nations are welcome here. The four basic colours of the logo - blue, red, yellow and green - symbolizes both harmony and diversity in that they are the base colours from which all other hues are formed.

Technical details

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www.irishstamps.ie
2008 COIN SET

The 2008 Coin Set for Ireland is the sixth and final issue in the Heritage of Ireland Series, and features Newgrange, site of one of the most famous prehistoric passage-tombs and monuments in Western Europe.

NEWGRANGE

Built over 5000 years ago, the passage tomb is entered through a long stone passage, with the whole area being covered by a huge mound.

The mound itself covers over an acre and was constructed from over 200,000 tons of stone and earth. Standing 11 metres high, its diameter varies between 79-85 metres. It is bordered by a kerb made of 97 stones, many of which are decorated. The most striking of these is the entrance stone. The decorative stones which surround the monument are highly regarded as some of the finest achievements of European Neolithic Art.

One of the many notable features at Newgrange, certainly the most famous is the small opening, the roof box, situated above the passage entrance and discovered in 1963 during archaeological excavations. At dawn on the winter solstice, the shortest day of the year (21 December) and for a number of days before and after, a shaft of sunlight enters the chamber through an opening in the roof-box. The ray’s first hit the edge of the broken basin stone at the back of the chamber floor and then, as the sun rises higher, the beam broadens and moves down the passage. The alignment is so accurate that there is very little chance that it was accidental. Modern research suggests that Newgrange is probably the oldest known deliberately aligned structure anywhere in the world.

Priced at just €24, as the last in the Heritage Series, this Coin Set will be in great demand. This year quantities are limited, so get your order in early to guarantee your set. You can order now in The Philatelic Shop, GPO, O’Connell St, Dublin 1, by using the order form attached, or by calling +353 (1) 705 7400.

Coins are dispatched by Registered Post and the appropriate fee applies.
<table>
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<tr>
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Collectors please note that some of the above dates may be subject to change.
A review of the commemorative cancellations for 2007 appears on these pages. Collectors please note that these cancellations were only available at the time of issue. However, a complete set of First Day Covers is now available to buy featuring these cancellations.

- Irish Franciscan College, Louvain - 400
- Luke Wadding OFM - 350
- Wedding Stamp 2007
- Greetings 2007
- Chinese Year of the Pig
- St Patrick’s Day 2007
- Flight of the Earls
- Ireland Series - Castles
- Treaty of Rome
- Europa 2007 - Scouting
- The Planets
- Canonisation of Blessed Charles
My interest in the French art stamps began about 1970. I was drawn to these stamps by their colourful subject matter and large format design. The French Post Office (La Poste) began issuing this series of beautiful art stamps in 1961 and the practice has continued to the present time, that’s 47 years of miniature, eye-pleasing works of art!

In 1966 the French Minister for Post and Telecommunications, in an interview with the editor of Le Monde des Philatelistes, said “Introduce to your readers the concept of an imaginary museum issued over a number of years in a series to represent French art in its varied manifestations”. Over the years the art stamps of France have extended their scope to include many of the wider aspects of European art. In the early 1990s La Poste honoured the then 12 member states of the European Union with the issue of a stamp for each in the art series. The theme throughout was modern art, mainly abstract. The Irish stamp depicts a work by Sean Scully.

It is interesting to note that Great Britain is represented by a work by the Dublin born artist Francis Bacon. These art stamps cover a very wide spectrum from prehistoric cave paintings to modern abstracts and from 16th century classics to the great impressionists. The series also presents us with many artistic mediums, such as sculptures, mosaics, woodcarvings, tapestries and stained glass works. La Poste has used the art stamps as a vehicle to publicise philatelic exhibitions, through the use of a tab attachment to the stamp.
The printing process for these miniature works of art was the subject of a special souvenir sheet which was sold to raise funds for the establishment of a postal museum in Paris.

The sheer variety of colour and design of these large format stamps make them a joy to collect and display, and to think that this is just one small aspect of the wonderful hobby of philately!

BY JOHN FITZSIMONS
PRESIDENT, FEDERATION OF PHILATELIC SOCIETIES OF IRELAND
AT THE HEART OF EVENTS - DUBLIN’S GPO

It is the focal point of O’Connell Street, the birth-place of independence, the headquarters of the Irish Post Office for nearly two centuries, Dublin’s GPO with its fine classical façade is a building which manages to combine both practicality and inspiration in equal measure. For the thousands of people, natives and visitors, who enter its doors every week, it’s a place both to do business and a place to think a little.

While there are books which mention the GPO in the context of the 1916 Rising and books which consider its architectural distinction, there is none which makes the building the focus of our attention and lets it, as it were, tell the story of the events, great and small, which have happened in and around it over the centuries. From sealing wax to the early days of broadcasting and from the Dead Letter Office to the Proclamation, Stephen Ferguson’s At the Heart of Events – Dublin’s General Post Office is a fascinating guide to the GPO.

Illustrated with photographs of items drawn from An Post’s own and other collections, this little book will be welcomed by all who would like to know something of the history of the Post Office in Ireland, the story of today’s GPO and its predecessor in College Green and, of course, the events of 1916 which gave to the building the unique status it holds today. It is available at €10 in the Philatelic Shop of the GPO, you can order it using the order form attached, or online from www.irishstamps.ie.

Since he joined the former Department of Posts and Telegraphs, Stephen Ferguson has spent most of his career in the GPO working in various branches of the Post Office. He is currently Assistant Secretary of An Post and happily devotes his spare moments to its history and archive.
Now available, the Collectors News Binder is the ideal way to store all your Collectors News magazines. Each binder can hold up to 15 issues.

Priced at just €5, order yours now on the order form attached, as stocks are limited. Product Code 03CNB.
Facsimile of the 1916 Proclamation

An original 1916 Proclamation, the document which was read by P. H. Pearse from the front of the GPO, Dublin, at the start of the Easter Rising, has been on display in the Philatelic Shop of the Post Office for some years. While various reproductions are on sale in shops around the city, there was until now nothing available in the GPO itself for those who might want a souvenir of their visit to one of Dublin’s most famous buildings.

An Post has now produced a fine facsimile of the Proclamation on display in the GPO. The poster size of 72cm by 48cm is just slightly smaller than the double-crown measurement of the 1916 printing and, retaining the creases of the original, folds down into a neat 24cm by 18cm. A short explanatory note by Stephen Ferguson, on the reverse of the poster, sets the document in context and outlines the complications that faced the printers as they worked in secret on an old press in Liberty Hall. Copies of stamps commemorating the events of 1916 and those who signed the Proclamation illustrate his commentary.

This facsimile edition of the GPO Proclamation, on sale at €10, will be prized by all who would like to have their own copy of one of the most famous documents in Irish history.
This year’s collection of our First Day Covers is the perfect way to acquire every Irish Stamps commemorative FDC issued for 2007. Included in this is the wonderful Planets Stamps FDC as well as the hugely popular RTÉ Performing Groups and Rugby FDC’s.

The First Day Cover collection contains 34 commemorative FDC’s, and includes 8 FDC’s with minisheets. Priced at €80 and housed in an attractive cardboard presentation box, this collection is a great way to round up the full wealth of covers from the past year.
An official limited edition collection of five An Post Model Vehicles is available to purchase from the Philatelic Shop, GPO, Dublin 1. The vehicles featured, which measure 80mm x 30mm approx. are, the Model T Ford, Horse Drawn Vehicle, Anglia Van, Transit Bus and VW Transporter. Each of these vehicles featured in the fleet over the years and has its own legitimate Fleet Number.

The collection is contained in a superb presentation box set. A card showing an illustration of the General Post Office sits on top of a foam underlay. The models are housed in five cut-outs making for a delightful set. The collection is limited to 2,500 sets with each one being certificated and individually numbered.

This limited edition collection costs €60 (postage €4.50 within Ireland and €5.40 rest of the world) and is a must-buy for model enthusiasts and collectors alike. Available now from the Philatelic Shop, GPO, Dublin 1, 00353 (1) 705 7400 or online at www.irishstamps.ie.
Orders should be sent to:
Philatelic Bureau, Order Department,
PO Box 1991, GPO, Dublin 1, Ireland.
Tel: 00 353 (1) 705 7400
Fax: 00 353 (1) 705 7289
www.irishstamps.ie

**ORDER FORM**

**Collector Account Holders:**
Please note that this order will be treated as additional to your standing orders.

**PLEASE SEND MY ORDER TO:**
Mr./Mrs./Ms. ____________________________
First Name ____________________________ Surname ____________________________
Address ________________________________
Account Number (if any) _______________________
Tel: ____________________________ Email: ____________________________

**PAYMENT METHOD:**
Cheque/Bank Draft [ ] Money Order [ ] Eurogiro [ ]
Postal Order [ ] Credit Card [ ] From Account [ ]

Please note Visa Electron and Maestro cards are not acceptable for mail orders.
(These cards must be swiped.)

**Credit Card Payments:**
Please debit my: VISA card [ ] Mastercard/Eurocard [ ]
Amount to be debited € ____________________________
Credit Card Number ____________________________
Credit Card Expiry Date ____________________________
Cardholder’s Name: (Please Print) ____________________________
Mr./Mrs./Ms. ____________________________
Cardholder’s Signature ____________________________

Please tick this box if you do not wish to receive further editions of Irish Stamps Collectors News [ ]

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**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY**

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**Exchange Rate Guidelines:**
€ 1 = $1.50; € 1 = Stg £0.73

**NB** Customers, please be aware when stamps are ordered for more than one issue the entire order will only be dispatched after the last stamp issue date.

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Irish Stamps IBAN No. IE51 BOFI 9000 1770 9738 87.
Irish Stamps BIC Code: BOFIEIE2D at Bank Of Ireland,
College Green, Dublin 2.
**ORDER FORM**

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* Coins Sets are limited to one per customer.

Customers who are happy to receive their orders after the last issue date can do so by ticking this box.

The following postal charges will apply:

Ireland = 55c; International (including U.K.) 78c. Orders over €63.50 in value and coin collection/set will be sent by Registered Post €5.00 for Ireland & €5.60 for Rest of the World. (This fee includes Priority Postage) Postage for Framed Items, Prints, Books, Albums or Van Sets are €5.70 (within Ireland) & €7.25 (international including U.K.).

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