

Smilers News



www.smilers-info.com

Apr-Jun 2009

● Latest Smilers News from Bletchley Park Post Office

For us footie-fans the cricket season sometimes feels interminable. Not so for the folks at Bletchley Park Post Office who have just announced their 9th Cricketing Smilers sheet so far this summer. The sheet was issued to commemorate the opening match at the restored cricket ground at **Sheffield Park**, Sussex and features a cap, as worn by WG Grace, in Earl of Sheffield's colours, when he played at the park.



Also available is a rather nice cover bearing the stamp/label and featuring the man himself, WG Grace. (30/06)



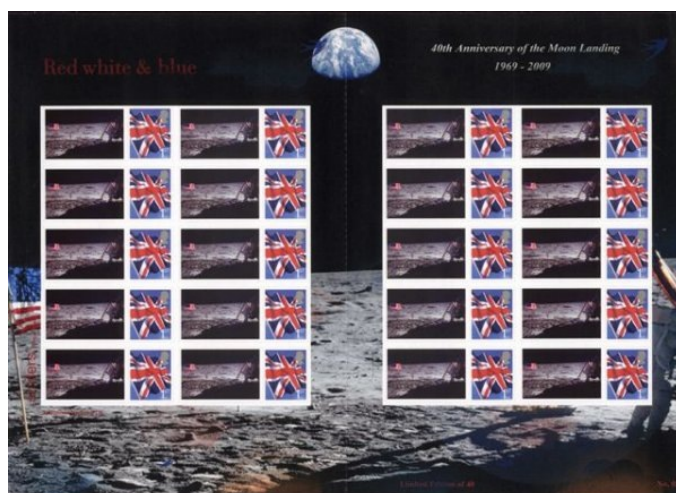
● Thematix Smilers Sheet

A new National Thematic Exhibition - **Thematix** - is to be staged at Harlequins Rugby Club at Longhorn Drive, Twickenham, Middlesex, on 26-27 June 2009. To mark the event the organisers are issuing a limited Edition (75) Themed Smilers sheet available at the show priced £19.95 or if any are left over afterwards at £25.00. For further information please contact John Horsley of County Auctions.(24/06)



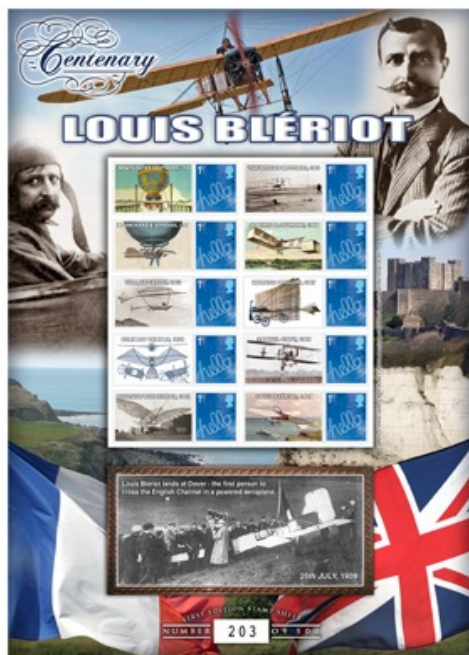
● 40th Anniversary of the Moon Landing - Take 2

George Kreisler (Xmerimental Marketing/Artizan) has produced another overprinted themed sheet to commemorate the **40th Anniversary of First Manned Moon landing** in 1969. We understand 39 sheets are available from Rushstamps priced £58.50 (Ref: X-41) from a limited printing of 40 sheets. This sheet will be catalogued by us, ref: TS-350. (24/06)



● ... And Two New Sheets from Benham.

Currently on sale at the Benham website are two new Business Customised Stamp Sheets. The first celebrates Man's attempts at flight, from the earliest days up to and including the **Centenary of Louis Blériot** 1909 powered cross-Channel flight (Product Code: GBS0105). A numbered Limited Edition of 500, the sheet should be available from 25th July. The second sheet celebrates the **40th Anniversary of the first Manned Moon Landing** in 1969 (Product Code: GBS0104), again a limited edition of 500 sheets. (18/06)



●A New Sheet from Buckingham...

Spotted in their latest edition of cover lover is a new Business Sheet from Buckingham Covers celebrating the **70th Anniversary of the Auxiliary Fire Service**. No more information available at the moment but as soon as we have some you will be the second to know. (18/06)



● ... A New Sheet from Westminster...

The Westminster Collection is currently selling a **British Anniversaries** Business sheet although you will have to look very carefully to find it! As usual there is little information forthcoming from Westminster/Harry Allen regarding this sheet, but if it follows the pattern of recent issues this will be a promotional item designed to tempt their customers to sign up for a smilers cover series featuring these stamps and labels. You can currently order this sheet for a reasonable £9.99 by entering the following sheet code in the search box at <http://www.westminstercollection.com> The sheet stock code is: **J35/950A/0** and there is no illustration on the website. (18/06)



● A New Sheet from Bradbury...

Adrian Bradbury has advised of a new Business sheet due out in July, this time produced in association with the British Postal Museum and Archive appropriately entitled **Delivering the Mail**. Adrian Bradbury's latest sheet is from a limited printing of 1000 sheets and is numbered 39 in Adrian's *History of Britain* Series. It is also the first in a planned series of stamp sheets to be issued annually in association with the BPMA. Sheets are currently on sale at www.bfdc.co.uk, the last sheet announced by Adrian has already sold out and is not due for issue for another month! (18/06)



● Thaipex - Update

Update: Mike Shepherd writes

"Re the 'small' sheets of 10 for Thaipex - RM also made these available at last years Beijing Expo. However the normal (x20) sheet was just a 'doubled-up' version of the sheets of ten, so one can create the smaller sheet by guillotining the big one down the middle. I suspect the Thai one will turn out to be the same."

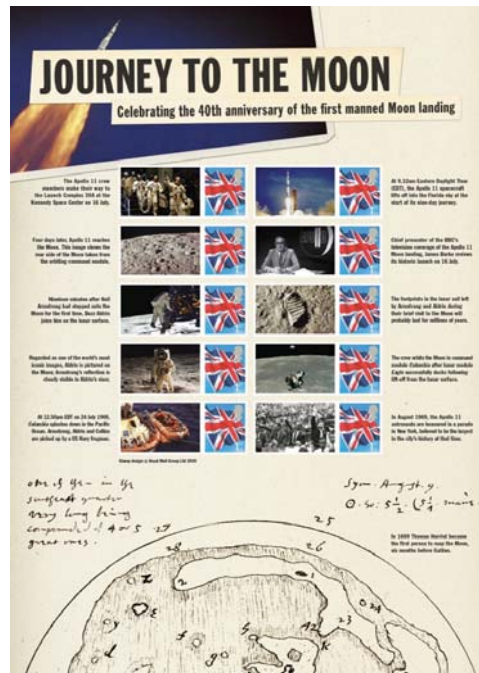
Thanks Mike for this feedback. It seems obvious now you point it out! (18/06)



Further to the earlier feature re: Thaipex (see 05/06), contrary to the statement that this sheet will only be available in sheetlets of 10v, it now emerges that this information was wrong despite our checking this with Royal Mail. Royal Mail have now confirmed that the illustrated sheetlet will be available only at Thaipex itself, the sheets available to purchase from Tallents House will be the conventional A4 horizontal format sheets of 20v. So two sheets to collect not one and the A5 sheet is bound to be available in much smaller quantities so one to track down if you can. (10/06)

● Journey to the Moon - 40th Anniversary of first Moon Landing

Further to the snippet on the 5th June we are now able to share with you the final image for the Royal Mail Commemorative Stamp Sheet commemorating the 40th Anniversary of the first manned Moon landing in 1969. The sheet is due for issued on 21 July 2009 and will be catalogued as CSS-004. (10/06)



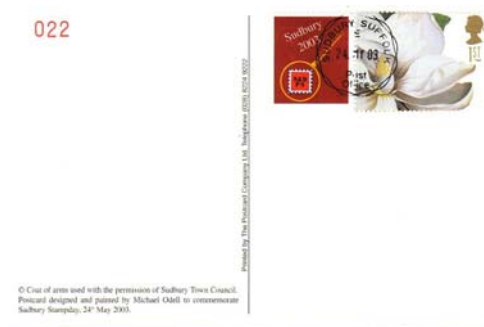
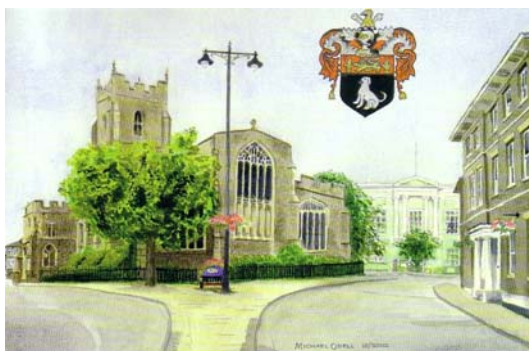
● 40th Anniversary of the Moon Landing

George Kreisler (Xmerimental Marketing/Artizan) has produced an overprinted themed sheet to commemorate the 40th Anniversary of the first manned moon landing in 1969. We understand 38 sheets are available from Rushstamps priced £58.50 (Ref: X-40) from a limited printing of 40 sheets. This sheet will be catalogued by us, ref: TS-346. (06/06)



● Sudbury Philatelic Society

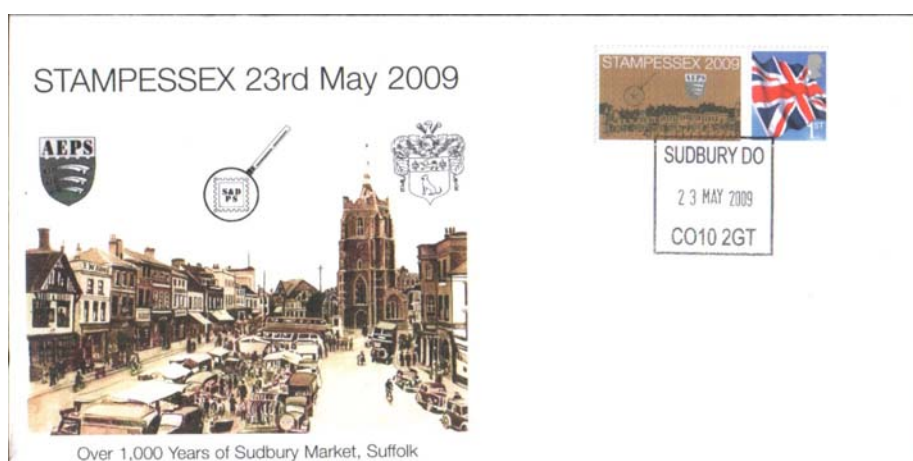
Sudbury and District Philatelic Society were one of the first Philatelic Society to recognise the potential of personalised stamps as a means to raise funds for the society. In May 2003 they produced an unknown number of personalised sheets of the Flowers Smilers format and using these stamps/labels sold numbered, illustrated postcards featuring these personalised stamps at their 2003 meeting. This appears to have been well received as they have repeated this format in 2005, and again in 2007.



Another two years have gone by and Sudbury and District Philatelic Society have produced a limited number (25) of themed sheets to coincide with their recent Philatelic meeting in Sudbury. It will be included in our catalogue of themed sheets.



A souvenir envelope was again produced by the Sudbury and District Philatelic Society and was one of the highlights of StampEssex 2009, held at St Peter's, Sudbury, on Saturday 23 May 2009. The original painting by artist Michael Odell for the envelope design was based on a postcard of Sudbury market, published in the 1950s by Frith. The themed smilers stamps label featured an image of the north side of Market Hill in 1790. (06/06)



● Thaipex

Royal Mail has kindly provided us with an image of the Thaipex 09 sheet, due for issue on 3 August 2009. This was thought to be a 20v horizontal format smilers sheet similar to previous stamp show offerings from Royal Mail. However, we have had it

confirmed that it will only be available as a 10 v sheet. As a result this will be Royal Mail's first 10v water-activated gummed sheet and it remains to be seen whether it will be available to buy as a pair of 10v sheets or not. (05/06)



● First Glimpse of the Moon Landing sheet from Royal Mail

The Philatelic Bulletin included an image of the latest Commemorative Stamp Sheet due for issue on 21 July to commemorate the 40th Anniversary of the first manned Moon Landing in 1969. The image below is courtesy of Ian Billings at Norvic as Royal Mail has not released a hi-res image of this sheet. The sheet will be catalogued as CSS-004. As soon as we can get a better image we will replace the scan with a hi-res image of the sheet. (05/06)



● **British Wildlife - A new Direction for Ridgewood**

Ridgewood Designs are proud to announce the production of their first Business Customised Sheet. In the past, Ridgewood (the folks behind the Smilers Catalogue) has provided a Smilers sheet design and production service for various customers and we have noted the general interest and uptake of these sheets. We have now decided to complement our existing activities with a number of specially designed and licensed Business Customised Sheets, to be issued through the course of the coming year. The **British Wildlife** sheet represents the first of our planned sheets and we have some exciting sheets in production. We will be able to provide further information on these as soon as we receive confirmation that our sheet designs have been approved by Royal Mail.

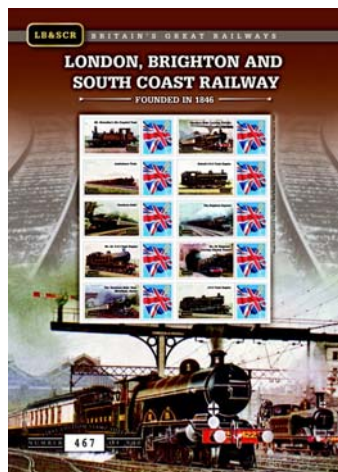


The **British Wildlife** sheet has been produced to coincide with Charles Darwin's Bicentenary Year and to compliment Royal Mail's Action for Species stamp series. It is available immediately and on-sale via eBay through our [associates](#) who will be happy to handle all sales enquiries directly. All our sheets will be produced in limited quantities and we think you will find that they complement those from other sheet producers.

By way of an update - steady progress is being made towards the release of the **2nd Edition of the Smilers Catalogue**, hopefully later this year or early next, ready for the International Stamp Exhibition in 2010. The work has had to be completely re-written to include all the new sheets, types and varieties and we are busy re-formatting, editing and extending it prior to going to print later this year. It's just amazing how many more sheets are around today than just two years ago. (01/06)

● **... and Two more from Benham**

They are coming thick and fast this month! Two further new sheets this month, this time from Benham. The first is the 4th sheet in their recent series of British Railway Companies - this sheet features the **London, Brighton and South Coast Railway**. The second sheet features the welsh definitive sized smilers stamps - a fitting choice for a sheet entitled **Mythical Creatures**. (24/05)



● Two New Business Sheets from Bradbury...

It's always a pleasure to review AG Bradbury's business sheets, often innovative, always bright and packed with information and detail, Adrian's latest offerings are no exception. Adrian Bradbury's latest sheets are Nos. 38 and 43 in Adrian's *History of Britain Series*. The clue here is that there are at least four more sheets in production for later this year.



Adrian's latest pair commemorates the **125th Anniversary of Greenwich Meridian** and the **Bicentenary of the Ennoblement of Arthur Wellesley** who was ennobled Viscount Wellington in 1809. He was later "upgraded" to the Duke of Wellington following the Battle of Waterloo! The later sheet is likely to be in high demand as Adrian has only printed 250 of this sheet. The higher production costs associated with lower printings has forced Adrian to raise the retail price to c. £50 a sheet which is an interesting move by Adrian. Does this point to a waning of interest in this type of sheet, hence lower print runs, or is this just an experiment by Adrian, following the trend set by a few private producers recently? (16/05)

● New Smilers, our survey says

Today I was contacted by a market research company working on behalf of Royal Mail and I was asked to provide them some feedback on-line to proposals from Royal Mail for potential new Smilers stamps. If you are a regular customer of Royal Mail chances are you may have received a similar e-mail. This review would appear to be in connection with a Royal Mail proposal to expand the choice of the current range of designs sold by Royal Mail. This response from Royal Mail appears to be a direct response to feedback from Royal Mail Key Account holders last September and the follow-up open letter sent by Adrian Bradbury on the way forward for Smilers. If you haven't seen these before I would be interested to receive your feedback on this potentially interesting development.

There are two themes being considered. Birthdays and Overseas Mail. Six designs for each theme were evident and I share these with you for your enjoyment. I thought we would do our own mini-poll. Send me an e-mail ranking the birthday stamps in order of preference and similarly the Overseas Mail in order of preference and if I find some time from somewhere I'll report back on your views. Keep Smiling!! (15/05)

SM01	SM02	SM03
SM04	SM05	SM06
SM07	SM08	SM09
SM10	SM11	SM12

Post Note: The Images in the above article were subsequently removed at the request of Royal Mail.

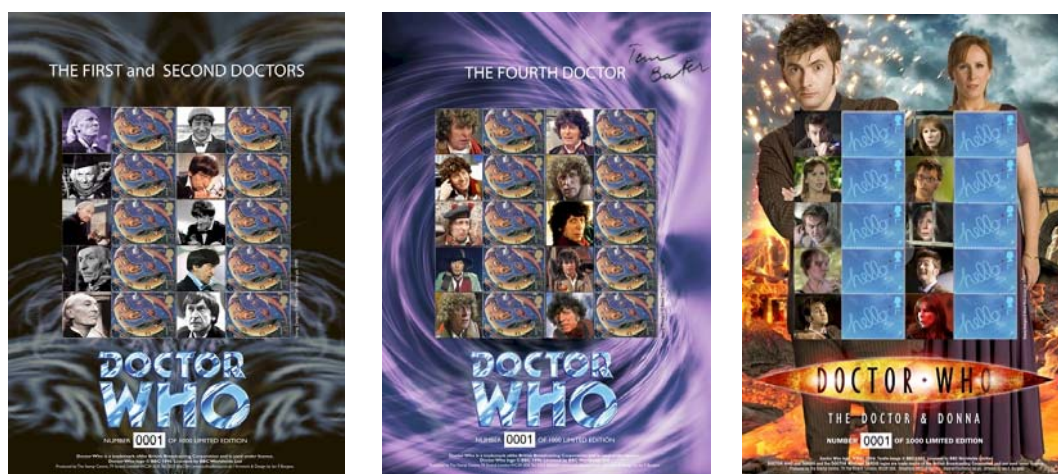
● Flying High with the Condor

[Rushstamps](#) have available their latest overprinted themed sheet from the Krieslar stable based on the Red White and Blue customised smilers sheet with boarder and label designs featuring the Flight of the Condor. Not the movie but the bird! What a pity they didn't opt for the Flying High sheet! Sheets were also available via eBay from the GB Stamp Centre although availability from that source is limited. (13/05)



● Three New Dr. Who sheets from the The Stamp Centre

[The Stamp Centre](#) have released three new Dr. Who themed Business Customised stamp sheets to compliment their already considerable catalogue of Dr. Who stamp sheets.



The first sheet fills a gap in an otherwise complete series featuring the various incarnations of the Doctor from the early black-and-white episodes to the current day. The second new sheet surprisingly features the Fourth Doctor (Tom Baker) - the first incarnation of Tom Baker as the Doctor appeared in 2004 entitled the 4th Doctor (see also BC-028 in the catalogue). Finally the third sheet features the current Doctor (soon to be regenerated we hear) with co-star Catherine Tate (Donna) from the most recent series. Printings of all numbered sheets limited to 1000 each. (09/05)

● Elm Park Regeneration Partnership

The Elm Park Regeneration Committee will be issuing a new themed smilers sheet on 6th June 2009 to mark the 2009 Elm Park Fiesta event. Fifty sheets will be printed with c. 40 of these split in half and sold as half sheets. As in previous issues, the remaining ten sheets will be sold as whole sheets at a premium to smilers sheet collectors to raise money for the Fiesta event. The sheet depicts a steam train which apparently represents the first train to pass through the Elm Park station in May 1935. When I queried the choice of the Northern Ireland smilers sheet as the landscape for their latest (7th) sheet they provided a very honest reply - *"The smiler sheet format was chosen largely because we liked the green countryside and because it was new! We also hope that lots of Northern Irelanders will visit Elm Park."* (06/05)



● Buckingham's Hitachi 395 Business Customised Sheet

Buckingham covers have released details of their fourth Business sheet this month. It has been issued to commemorate the introduction of the Hitachi 395 trains from St. Pancras Station. *"The arrival of the fastest commuter trains in Britain will slash journey times considerably for many Kent travellers. At speeds of up to 140mph, journey time from London to Ashford will be as short as 36mins!"* The sheet is due for issue on 20th May 2009 and is the latest in Buckingham's Platinum Edition Sheets - it will only be available to Buckingham Sheet Club Members. (30/04)



● Bletchley Park Post Office Cricketing Themed Sheets

Bletchley Park Post Office have got their cricketing season off to a flying start by announcing no less than 7 planned themed smilers sheets this summer to be issued between 6th May 2009 and 12th September 2009 to commemorate certain cricketing calendar highlights. They have produced a [preview flyer](#) which describes the sheets and provides an advance order form. Although not mentioned, each sheet is from a limited printing of 50 sheets and in keeping with past practice we expect these to be numbered on the reverse by BPPO. (27/04)

● A hat trick of new Business Customised Sheets from Buckingham Covers

Featured in a recent edition of Buckingham's *Cover Lover* magazine were two Business Customised Sheets, due out in July. Also, another sheet has been spotted by an eagle-eyed contributor on Buckingham's website making a total of three new sheets from Tony Buckingham.



These are:

- **150th Anniversary of the Birth of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle**
- **90th Anniversary of First Transatlantic Flights** by Alcock and Brown
- **100th Anniversary of Louis Bleriot Cross Channel Flight**

Nice to see the re-appearance of the Lion and Shield stamp on the Conan Doyle gummed sheet. We make it seven new Business sheets announced this month (plus a "raft" of other sheets) from various sources, in the space of the past 13 days or so - that's about one every two days since the 8th April for Business sheets alone. Do you think this is what Gordon meant by [Quantitative Easing](#)? (21/04)

● **Royal Mail sub-contract's out Smilers's Printing**

Royal Mail would appear to have sub-contracted out some of the label printing associated with their Smilers sheet production to Cornwall based printing company, **St. Ives Print**. St. Ives have, for some time, been Royal Mail's sole print supplier for posters, advertising and other business related materials i.e. everything except stamps. Royal Mail's use of a sub-contracted printer was first noticed when differing order references started to appear on some Smilers sheets about a month ago. The familiar numerical order number normally appears in the bottom left hand corner of the sheet. However, recently it has appeared supplemented with the Smilers stamp code (e.g. sm15) - see [Royal Mail Smilers Coding](#) for a full list of these codes.



From what we have been told by one well-known stamp dealer, the sheets with the SM numbers are printed by St. Ives Print and they have experienced part orders supplied with a combination of both numbering systems. I sincerely hope that Royal Mail will *step up to the plate* and rectify this and ensure that the application of their numbering system is at least *consistent between the two printing centres*. (18/04)

● **Mythical Beasties!**

Adrian Bradbury has come up with another stunner, this time featuring specially commissioned illustrations of mythical creatures by Malcolm Greensmith on his History of Britain Series No. 37 - Mythical Creatures and Heraldry - the connection being that many of the mythical creatures feature on heraldic devices. To compliment these images the sheet border design features reproductions of three GB stamp sets: English Heraldry; Scottish Heraldry and the Queen's Beasts set. The sheet is due out in May ahead of the planned Royal Mail Mythical Creatures issue due out in June. (17/04)



● Ten of Britain's Best from No. 10

Ten great British Prime Ministers of the 18th and 19th centuries feature on a new Business Customised Sheet from Benham. *"A fascinating and informative sheet featuring ten British Prime Ministers, from Robert Walpole to William Gladstone. Each label bears a contemporary portrait which is enlarged and repeated in the sheet background together with an image of the door to 'Number 10'. Numbered Limited Edition of 500."*



The sheet is due for issue on the 28th May 2009, the 250th anniversary of the birth of William Pitt the Younger. (17/04)

● New Themed Smilers Sheets due in April

Three new sheets have been announced so far this month.

Rushstamps have released a new themed smilers sheet entitled Earl Shilton Rocks! The new **Earl Shilton Scout Group** Sheet features 20 x 1st Class Harry Potter stamps and commemorates the Centenary Year (1909-2009) of the Hinckley District Scout Council. Sheets are available from Rushstamps.



The North East Philatelic Association, on the occasion of their 60th convention which will take place later this month in Redcar have produced two sheets featuring the lifeboat *Zetland* as she was in about 1864 and as she is today in the museum at Redcar. The pre-issue scans have been supplied by NEPA and will be overpainted in blue with the wording : **NEPA 2009, 60th Convention, Redcar, Home of Lifeboat Zetland**.

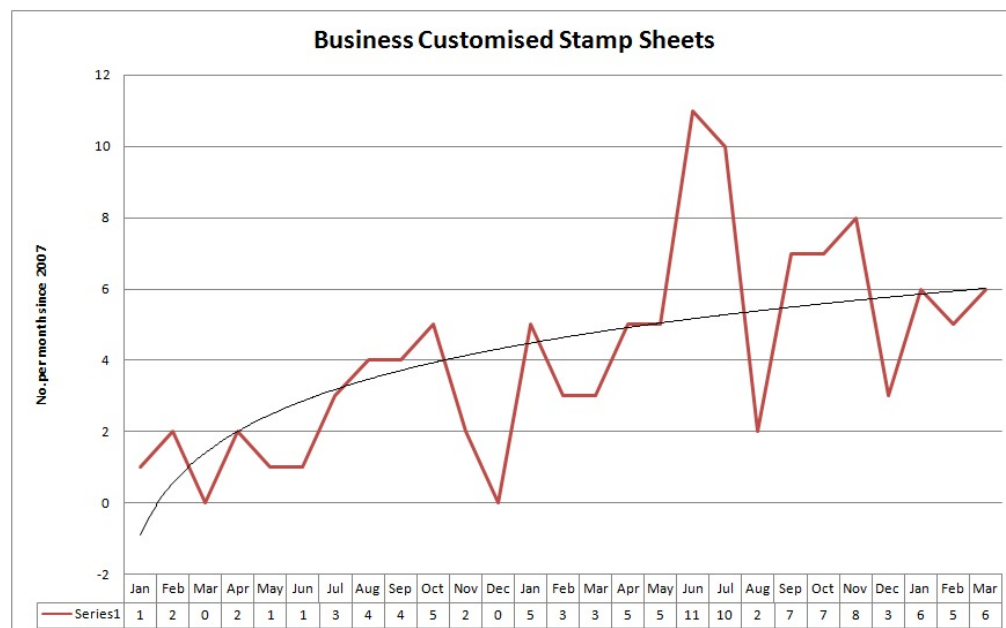


A commemorative cover featuring these Smilers stamps/labels is also planned. Further details available from Geoff Reynolds. (16/04)

● Trendy Business Customised Stamp Sheets

Royal Mail certainly seem to be on to a winner with their Business Customised Stamp Sheets if the number of recent sheets appearing is anything to go by! During the five year period January 2002 to January 2007, around 100 sheets were issued by various

companies and organisations or expressed another way, an average of just over 1 and a half sheets per month over that period. Today that number has quadrupled to around 6 sheets per month in just over two years. With an average selling price of between £25 and £30 per sheet, collecting one of every sheet produced is going to cost you a minimum of c. £2,000 per year, more if you include some of the more expensive low print number sheets that have been appearing recently.



We thought you might be interested to see the production trends over the period since January 2007 which shows the average number of sheets produced per month stabilising at around six per month, Our question - is this sustainable in the current economic climate? Our fear? In these troubled times of low consumer spending activity will the Business Customised Sheet producers take a leaf out of the Governments book and try to "print" their way out of a problem. Let's hope not. (10/04)

● Spring has arrived - Victorian Garden Flowers

AG Bradbury (www.bfdc.co.uk) has announced a new Business Customised Stamp sheet entitled **Victorian Garden Flowers**, the latest BCS sheet in the **History of Britain Series (No.36)**, although, to be honest, I do struggle to see the connection with British History! From a limited printing of 1,000 sheets, the format follows the now well-established A4 portrait, self-adhesive BCS format bearing 10 x DS Flower Smilers stamps set against a background of Victorian era botanical illustrations which are also the subject of the 10 photo labels.

● Three New Themed Smilers

Three new *Themed Smilers* have appeared during March; all produced by the same (private) producer and currently being marketed jointly by the *GB Stamp Centre* and *Rushstamps*, although the former appears to be out of stock of at least two of these sheets at the time of reporting. They all comprise themed customised *Red White and Blue* 20v landscape-format Smilers sheets with photo labels to match the theme and edge-to-edge overprinting. We understand 25 sheets of each have been produced. Further details and illustrations on the [Mar-09](#) page of themed Smilers new issues. (08/04)

- 130th Anniversary of the Birth of Einstein (TS-336)
- 170th Anniversary of the Birth of Cézanne (TS-337)
- Easter 2009 - Rembrandt (TS-338)

Royal Mail Post Boxes

Royal Mail have released images of the planned **Post Boxes** generic stamp sheet due on 18th August 2009. The sheet features one of the four stamps of similar theme to be issued as a mini sheet on the same day. The mini-sheet is printed by Walsall whereas the generic sheet is printed by Cartor, both in Litho. The sheet was designed by Elmwood and will be priced at £8.35. (01/04)



Keep Smiling!