

Smilers News

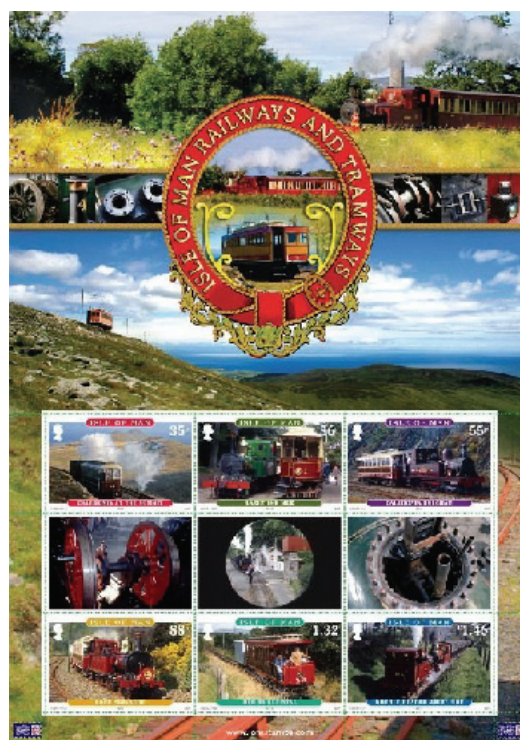


www.smilers-info.com

Apr - Jun 10

■ Railways and Tramways Sheet

AG Bradbury in association with Isle of Man Post has produced a new Smilers format A4 customised stamp sheet priced £35 each, featuring a set of 6 new stamps issued by the Isle of Man Post Office. The stamps feature the islands Victorian Railways and Tramways and four of the stamps are repeated twice in the A4 sheet format giving 10 stamps and 10 labels. The labels feature images of previously issued Isle of Man stamps of a similar theme.



A colourful A5 souvenir sheet featuring this set of six stamps is also available from Isle of Man Post priced at £4.92 which may also appeal to thematic and Smiler sheet collectors alike. (25/06)

■ New Sheet Images from Royal Mail

With the latest edition of Key Account News comes the first glance at the Battle of Britain Generic Stamp sheet (GS-076) due mid-September and the London Eye Commemorative Sheet (CSS-011) due mid July. There is still no information on the Olympic 2 Commemorative Sheet due out on 27 July 2010. (22/06)



70th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain (GS-076)



10th Anniversary of the London Eye (CS-011)

● Planet Prints Goes Public

Matt Christelow (Gemini, Wintons, etc.) and Graham Jones (Planet Prints sheets) have now registered a company called Plant Print-Stamps Ltd. ("PPS") and all previous and future sheets associated with Matt and Graham will now come under the single trading banner of Planet Print-Stamps Limited. Matt has provided some additional updates on interesting changes at the Planet Prints stable. The Bloodstock BCS sheet is being advertised in a magazine ("Racing

Ahead") during June and July and they are running a two-page spread on Smilers which will be featured on the front cover. The Bloodstock sheets are being sold at £150.00 and £175.00 (framed). As a result of this association the Magazine has put PPS in touch with a Liverpool FC fanzine who has requested that PPS produce a sheet featuring Bob Shankly - could be interesting.

'SMILER' STAMP SHEETS

**Combine the sport of kings – horse racing –
with the hobby of kings – stamp collecting!**

**Own something very special: a beautiful limited-edition,
framed sheet of UK stamps, featuring some of the most famous
racing horses in the land.**

These stamp sheets have been produced by Planet Prints in conjunction with Lisa Miller, equestrian artist.

'Smiler sheets' are personalised stamp sheets. Each sheet contains 10 legal, UK, first-class Royal Mail postage stamps, within an attractively designed A4 sheet. Each stamp shows a unique racing image, alongside the Union Flag and the Queen's head.

Planet Prints have produced a limited, numbered edition of just one hundred copies of this 'smiler' sheet. This makes them very exclusive, very desirable and very collectable.

Once the hundred have been sold, that's it: there will be no more.



Planet Prints are offering this piece of history for:

**£180.00, in a glass-fronted black frame,
or £155.00 as an un-framed sheet**

Prices include p&p. The sheet size is A4 (297mm x 210mm)

Please contact PLANET PRINTS to order, or for more information:

Telephone: 01825 760040 • Email: sales@planetprints.com

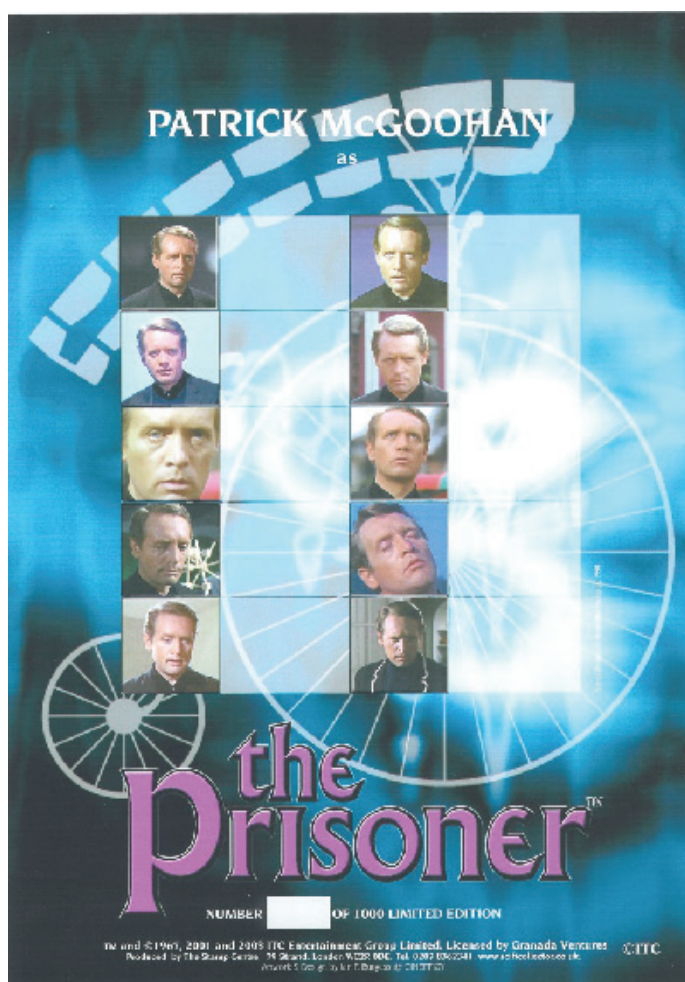
Planet Prints, 1 Quarry House, Mill Lane, Uckfield, East Sussex TN22 5AA

The recent Cateram 7 BCS sheet was produced with the kind permission of Caterham Cars and James Drake. All images were supplied by Caterham Cars and help celebrate their 50th Anniversary. The sheet features their new Caterham 7 spots model. The edition is limited to 100 and we understand from Matt that there are plans to advertise them through an associated Caterham 7 website.

Finally, Planet Print-Stamps have announced the forthcoming release of a new BCS sheet featuring Scottish Tartans and would like to express their thanks and gratitude to Robert McRitchie for his tireless efforts in obtaining permissions for this sheet. The sheet will be advertised in a Scottish magazine aimed at the American market. (12/06)

- **Captured at last! The missing "Prisoner" sheet image...**

For those of you who bought the first edition of our Smilers Catalogue in 2007 you may remember that we did our best to keep the publication "up-to-date" with place holders for future sheets that we had heard about prior to going to print. One such "place holder" was for a Business sheet from the Stamp Centre featuring the TV cult programme "The Prisoner". Regrettably the sheet never appeared, the place holder was reassigned and probably the sheet has faded from most folks memories. A while back I was fortunate to acquire the proposed artwork for this sheet from Steve Scott at the Stamp Centre, which, to my knowledge, has never been (publically) seen before. The problem as I understand it was an expired image rights licence which could not be renewed for a reasonable sum so the project was dropped. Prompted by the new TV series of the same name, I thought you might like to see what might have been if the Stamp Centre had forged ahead with this project as originally planned. What a shame! (31/05)



- **Roman Britain from AG Bradbury and two more Sheets from Royal Mail**

Adrian Bradbury has announced a new Business Customised Stamp Sheet due in September featuring **Roman Britain**. This is sheet No. 58 in Bradbury's History of Britain series and perhaps even more remarkable this is the 45th new sheet announced this year! - that's a rate of about 9 a month or 2 a week so far this year excluding Royal Mail's products and innovations, which brings me nicely to the latest sheets to be announced by Royal Mail.



I use the term "announced" with some caution as most folks will not have spotted these yet. Buried in the Royal Mail stock list are hints of two new commemorative sheets to appear later this year. A second **London 2012 Olympic and Paralympics' Games** sheet is due on the 27th July (stock code AV010) whilst a **London Eye 10th Anniversary** sheet will appear on 10th August (stock code AV011), both priced £13.50. No images available yet and as soon as we have them you will see them here.

These sheets are not supplied to regular Smilers standing- order customers and have to be ordered either as a separate standing order for commemorative sheets or as one- off's, quoting the stock code references, from Tallants House. The Halley's Comet sheet announced earlier this year is now available to order from Tallants House also priced £13.50 (Royal Mail Stock Code: AV008). (30/05)

● London 2010 - Part 3

Thought you might like to see what the Instant Smilers stand looked like at the show. Here are some photos of the twin booths, posters, the chaps that manned the booths and their customers. Interest was brisk but not high. The chaps on the booths estimated that they had sold c. 70 sheets per day of the instant smilers so less than 1000 overall for the whole week. This could be one of the lowest runs of instant smilers ever and we will wait and see how Royal Mail use up the surplus sheets - could they be aired again at the forthcoming STAMPEX show but with different logo? We will have to wait and see. (23/05)



● London 2010 - Part 2

You will have noted from Keith's e-mail (see Part 1) that the Royal Mail Instant Smilers stand had printer problems (quelle *surprise*). The two chaps on the Instant Smilers stand were in good spirits when I visited them on Friday 14th and were quick to point out that because of printer problems earlier in the week there were actually two versions of the personalised smilers sheet to be had! Fact or fiction - you decide. Anyway as a result I bought twice as many sheets as I had intended! The original set-up used a HP Colour Laser Jet CP3505 PCL6 and the problem they had was that the top right hand corners of some sheets (not all) would get bent during the printing process. At some point during the week a second printer was pressed into use - a Xerox Phaser 8560N PS. Now the differences in the overprinting may not be obvious at first glance, but because the Phaser uses solid ink it feels raised and waxy, almost like the surface was coated with crayons. This gives the printed labels a glossy sheen, so if one holds the sheet up to the light the difference is more apparent.

Instant smilers® order form

Share a special moment – Celebrate 10 Years of smilers®

For London 2010 smilers® come in sheets of 20 stamps.
Prices start at £14.95 for a single sheet. If you purchase 2 or more sheets, it's £13.95 per sheet.

- Please complete your personal details

(Full Name (please include an abbreviation) or Mr/Ms/Ms/Ms/Ms)

First Name Surname

Address

Order telephone number Email address

- Please Input the quantity of sheets you'd like to order:
- Please pay at the smilers® till
- Now make your way to the Instant smilers® Photo Booth

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Instant Smilers at London 2010 - Order Form

Regarding Keith's comment about the show logo on the first label, it was definitely undersized in the printing and looked wrong, frankly. The order forms had the logo the full height of the label but even so it was the wrong shape for the label. One day Royal Mail will no doubt crack the printing but until then we continue to be disappointed. (23/05)



As intended - ex Order Form



As printed - ex actual sheet



what could have been

● London 2010 - Part 1

Well **London 2010** has come and gone and folks are probably wondering what all the fuss was about. I flew in from Moscow for one day on Friday 14th and was struck by how similar it all was to STAMPEX. A few Postal Authorities but otherwise nothing really different. I thought it was just me but recently I received an e-mail from a fellow Smilers collector and I have to say his summary of the event and the items on offer from Royal Mail pretty much mirrored my own feelings. What did you think?

Here's Keith's thoughts on London 2010.... (23/05)

"Went to the 2010 Exhibition on Thursday. Having been guided up the escalators by the slightly over excitable security staff (I don't think me and my son going in and 2 men coming out were going to end up in a ruck in the lobby), I started off at the Royal Mail stand. I think they did a really good job. All their products are quite beguiling and the stamps etc on the whole are very well designed.

So procured the necessary miniature sheets and the '10 years of smilers' 2010 sheet. Maybe it's just me but I don't find this sheet very attractive (I did say 'on the whole'). All a bit garish and slapdash. Some article somewhere had the 2000 and 2010 sheets side by side. The 2000 sheet was the epitome of design and elegance in contrast. Will anyone in 2020 be looking back fondly on the 2010 sheet ? Usually RM come up with some really good sheet designs so this has to be a disappointment.

Equally the 2010 logo on the top left label was completely lost in an ocean of white. Couldn't they have done a special rectangular logo to fit the label properly?

The guy on the stand I used explained to me about the printer problems. I understand from Robert you know about that. The chap also surmised (but was probably his own view, not RM's !!) they would be destroying the excess stock as it was really only relevant for the stamp fair. That would make it a decently valuable personalised sheet if so (ironic given its ugliness !).

Anyway, very little else of interest to the smilers collector at the exhibition that I could see. Just the Stamp Centre and Buckingham but nothing new. Hopefully I didn't miss anything !

In fact, the RM stand aside, I found 2010 a bit dry. I'm not a hardcore collector and collect only UK commemoratives so I'm probably not the target market for the dealers. But it stood out to me that you have the enormous RM machine, knocking out new issues and products galore and all these dealers completely ignoring said products (unless there's an error). A complete dichotomy. But a serious issue I think given how much collecting costs these days. In other words, what's the point ?

On a similar note, did you get the daily email from Stanley Gibbons ? The author commented on the absence of children in the week though quite what the organisers expected during the school term !! But again children will naturally be drawn to collect the UK commemorative issues but there's nothing to encourage them from the dealers.

Keith Wraight."

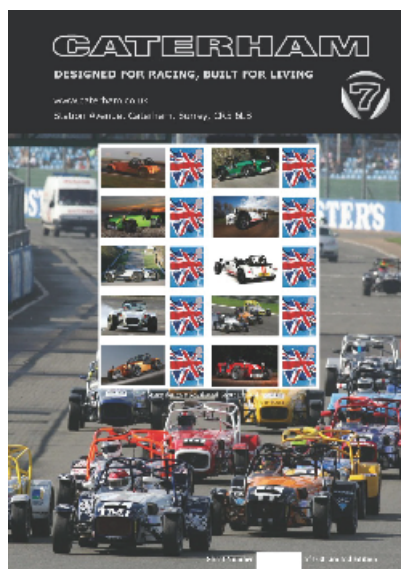
● Recently Announced Business Customised Sheet

The Business Customised Sheet market continues to grow with no fewer than four new sheets announced in the past week or so. Whilst I do my best to keep this web site up to date, at this rate I will have to give up my day job. Come to think of it, that's not a bad idea! Full details of these sheets on the New Issues pages. (23/05)

The following sheets have been released with no prior notice and have therefore been allocated permanent catalogue numbering:



BC-293 - The New Adventures of Merlin

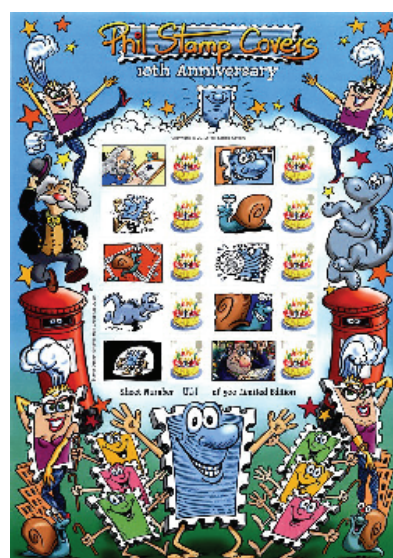


BC-294 - Caterham 7's

The following previously announced sheets have been released so these have also been allocated permanent catalogue numbering.

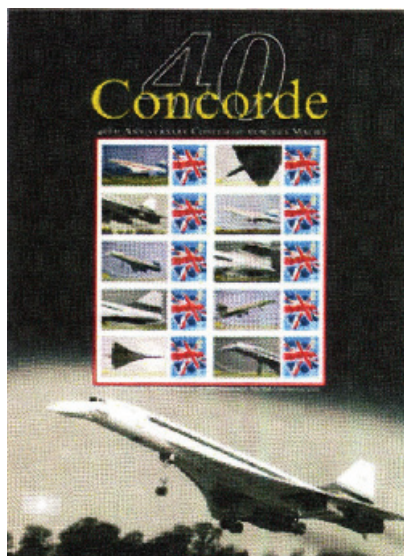


BC-295 - Evacuation of Dunkirk



BC-296 - Phil Stamp 10th Anniversary

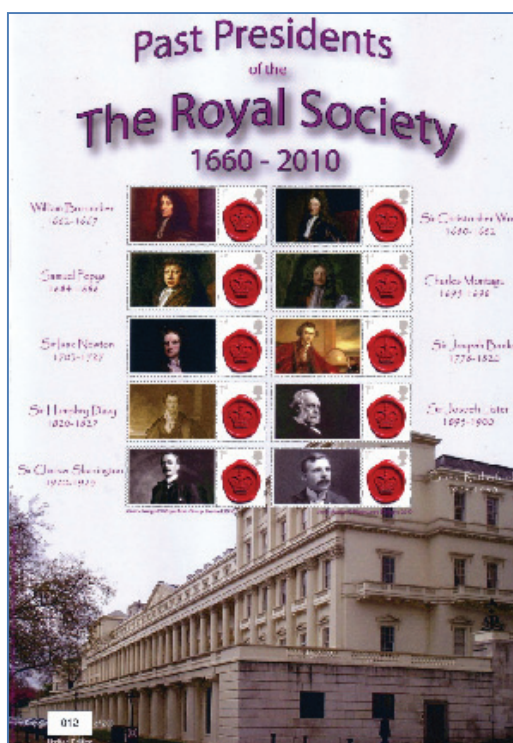
The following sheets have been announced and have been allocated provisional catalogue numbering.



BC-308 - 40th Anniv. Concorde's Mach 2 BC-309 - 70th Anniv. of Battle of Britain

● **Past Presidents of the Royal Society**

The latest limited edition (200) business sheet from Ridgewood Stamp Sheets is in the final stages of production and will be available later this month. Originally planned for earlier this year to coincide with Royal Mail's Royal Society issue we have to admit that this one nearly beat us - it has taken a lot longer to produce than we could have sensibly foreseen. In the end there were a combination of factors but finally we are very pleased with the end result and we hope you like it as much as we do. (12/05)



• Business Sheet Blitz continues....

This one has taken us all by surprise. Announced and then issued all in the space of a week, the latest Business sheet from AG Bradbury commemorates the Blitz of London - 65 years this September. From a limited printing of 375 sheets, the sheets retail at £50 each, with buyers limited to one sheet per person unless they regularly purchase more than one sheet in which case buyers may order their usual number. This is sheet No. 57 in Bradbury's History of Britain Series. (12/05)



• London 2010 Personalised Smilers

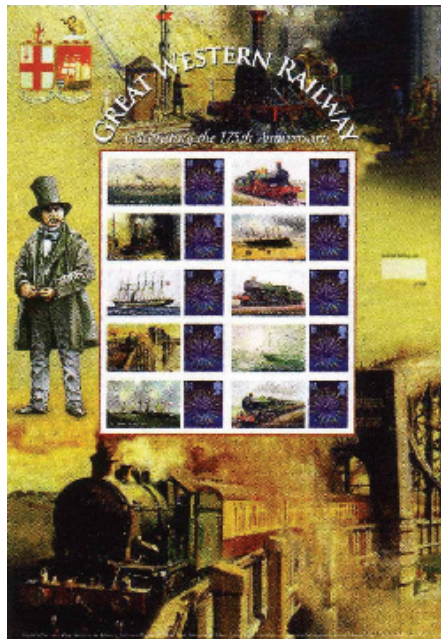
My thanks to Keith Wraight for forwarding an image of the Instant Smilers to be made available at London 2010 International Stamp Expo, to be held at British Design Centre, London next month. (28/04)



• ... and four more from the Buckingham stable!

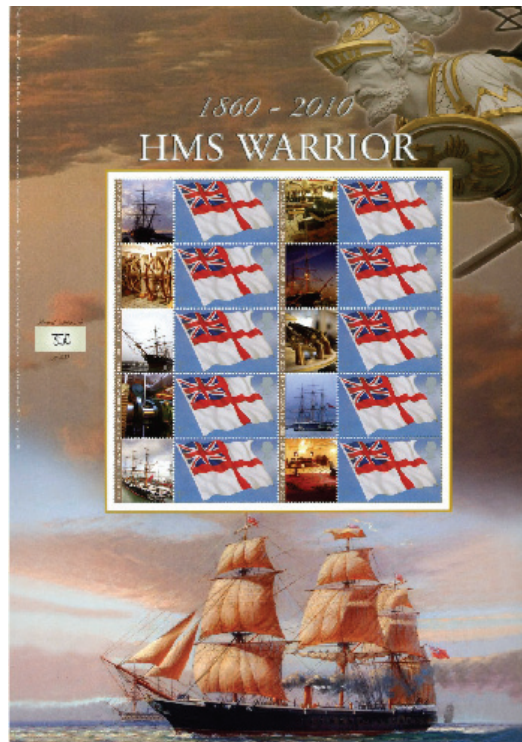
Recently spotted in new "ad-mail" from Buckingham Covers are four new Business customised sheets. All sheets have been previously announced but this is the first time we have had a chance to see the images. The quality of the images is not good and as soon as we have better images we will update this

site. These four sheets push the total number of sheets to over 300 - 10% of which have been announced since the end of January this year!! (28/04)



● HMS Warrior

The previously announced HMS Warrior sheet from Buckingham Covers has now been issued (24 April) featuring the Victorian ironclad battleship on display at Portsmouth Royal Naval Dockyard. The sheet, which is conventionally gummed, is probably the last to feature the White Ensign Flags stamp as this has now been withdrawn from the Business Customised stamp programme. Shame! (26/04)



• Latest Elm Park sheet announced

The Elm Park (Business) Regeneration Committee have announced details of their latest personalised smilers sheet which is produced and sold to raise money for local community events. This year Elm Park celebrates its 75th anniversary, and since they had an air field there during the Second World War they decided the theme of their latest sheet should include a spitfire. The label design was designed by an Elm Park Resident. (17/04)



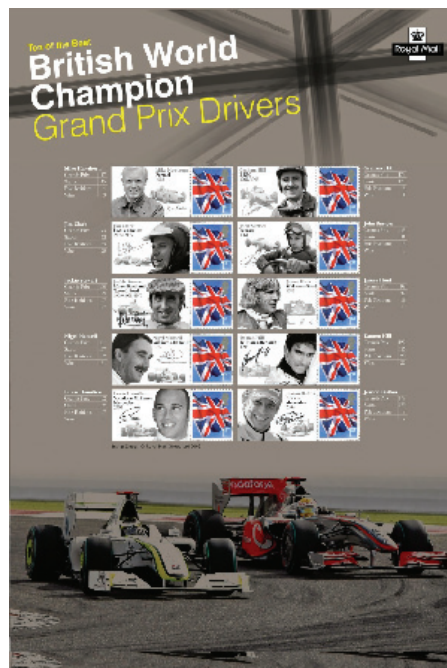
• New Business Sheet producer makes a joke out of Smilers!

Phil Stamp Covers celebrate their 10th Anniversary this year and to mark the occasion they have designed and produced a stunning Business Customised Stamp sheet featuring some of the cartoon characters which have adorned their covers over the past 10 years. I really like this sheet a lot as, for me, it captures the spirit of the Smilers brand. It's colourful, interesting, innovative and in short remarkably pleasing - well done to Steve and all the folks involved at Phil Stamps. You can buy the sheet directly from PhilStampCovers website priced £30. There is also a commemorative cover available for Smilers cover collectors. The sheet (and cover) are both available signed by the artist for an additional £10. (17/04)



● **British Grand Prix Commemorative Sheet**

Royal Mail has released a publicity image of the **British Grand Prix Commemorative Sheet** due out on 8 Jul 2010. It features images of past British World Champion Grand Prix drivers. When these sheets first appeared Royal Mail told us that the purpose of the Commemorative Sheet (as RM dubbed them) was "to mark anniversaries that never made (the current) stamp programme". When the Olympic Commemorative sheet appeared last year we were told that this was a "one-off" as visitors were expecting something appropriate to mark the Olympic Games. Whilst I think this is a pleasing sheet design and should appeal to a broad range of sheet and thematic collectors alike, I do find the subject of the latest sheet a little worrying for the philatelic trade.



I think the Philatelic Trade can now safely assume that the scope of these commemorative sheets can be anything Royal Mail choose placing them in direct competition with the Business sheet producers who created the market that Royal Mail now wish to sell to. Is this healthy? Will this effectively kill off the independent producers who are already seeing interest in these sheets wane probably because of the sheer number of sheets being produced by various folks, ourselves included? What is your view? Did Royal Mail get it right with this sheet or have they stepped over the line? (17/04)

First Glimpse of RM's new Smilers sheets

The latest Philatelic Bulletin from Royal Mail (back cover) provides a first glimpse of three new personalised Smilers sheets issued by Royal Mail and available from 6th April. Royal Mail seem to have followed the lead set by Universal Mail with their latest, rather busy, sheets which bring together regional flags and tourist scenes. You will probably have noted the new price for sheets, up c. 3.5%, not bad considering the change in postal rates from this month.

Sometimes I am completely at a loss to understand the marketing folks at Royal Mail or for that matter the point of the Royal Mail Key account briefing which I attended on February 25th. There was absolutely no mention of these sheets then, yet they must have been under production because these things do not happen overnight. What a missed opportunity for both cover producers and Smilers collectors alike. (15/04)

New Flag stamps Smilers sheets



New Smilers sheets Three new sheets will be issued on 6 April, for customers wanting their own images printed on labels adjoining the Flag stamps for England, Scotland and Wales. Featuring the St George's flag, the Saltire and the Welsh Dragon, the sheets include background photographs that depict notable landmarks in each country. Available in sheets of 10 or 20 first class stamps, the sheets are priced £7.80 and £13.95 respectively. Sheets of 20 are available at £12.85 each for orders of more than one sheet.

To place an order visit www.royalmail.com/smilers or telephone 0845 074 2000.


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● **New Smilers by Post Leaflet flags up a few surprises**

Recently spotted at the Royal Mail website is a new Smilers-by-post order form which has flagged up some interesting developments on the personalised Smilers front. Three existing country smilers stamps have been (silently) added to the personalised range (England, Scotland and Wales) whilst others seem to have been removed from those previously available. DS05 (Sunflower) and DS06 (Robin in Letterbox) seem to have gone. Also gone are DS07 (Best Wishes), DS15 (Welsh Dragon), DS21 (Scottish Lion) DS22 (Northern Ireland). All Xmas stamps have also disappeared but probably will return in time for Christmas.



Smilers® all round
From everyday life to special occasions, Smilers® stamps are the perfect way to share your moments.

Ordering is easy
Choose your moment
You can order your Smilers® online or by post.

Smilers® order form
Please complete and return to: Royal Mail, PO Box 100, London W1A 0AB.

Check list
Please check the following items before you order:

Place your order
Smilers® stamps are available in sheets of 10 or 20 stamps and in individual stamps. The price of each stamp is shown in the table below.

Sheet Size	Sheet Price	Individual Stamp Price
10 stamps	£1.50	£0.15
20 stamps	£2.50	£0.125

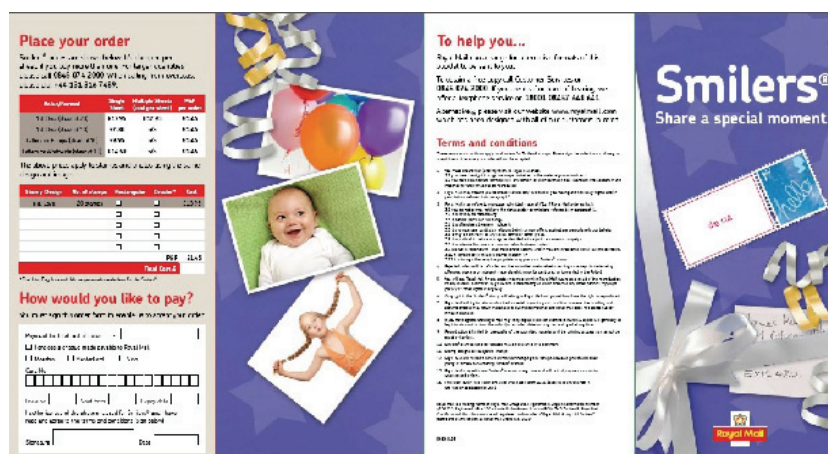
How would you like to pay?
Please tick one of the following boxes:

☐ I would like to pay by credit/debit card.

☐ I would like to pay by cheque.

☐ I would like to pay by cash on delivery.

Smilers®
Share a special moment



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Smilers®
Share a special moment

So it looks like all the Country Flag sheets - which didn't feature country flag stamps - have been withdrawn to be replaced by country sheets which now do feature flag smilers stamps. Why keep the England sheet and not the Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland sheets. I am also really surprised at the removal of Sunflower, Robin and (perhaps to a lesser extent) the Best Wishes sheets. Whether these will reappear later (remember the Robin stamp has already disappeared and reappeared) remains to be seen. (15/04)

● **Scott of the Antarctic - Centenary of Scott's 1910 Expedition**

Adrian Bradbury has produced another stunning sheet in his History of Britain series - the centenary of Scott's 1910 Expedition to the South Pole provides the historical context for the **Scott of the Antarctic** sheet. The **Terra Nova Expedition** (1910–1913), officially the British Antarctic Expedition 1910, was led by Robert Falcon Scott with the stated objective "to reach the South Pole and to

secure for the British Empire the honour of this achievement". Scott and four companions attained the South Pole on 17 January 1912, only to find that a Norwegian team led by Roald Amundsen had preceded them by thirty-three days.



From a limited printing of 375 sheets, the sheets retail at a healthy £50 each, with buyers limited to one sheet per person unless they regularly purchase more than one sheet in which case buyers may order their usual number. This is sheet No. 56 in Bradbury's History of Britain Series. (12/04)

Recent Business Customised Sheet Announcements

The Business Customised Sheet market shows no sign of slowing down if the latest batch of sheets announced are any measure of interest. Four new sheets have been announced in the past couple of weeks with three of them coming from Benham!





Buckingham Covers have issued details of their **Evacuation of Dunkirk** stamp sheet due out in May. Benham Covers have announced their 5th RAF sheet featuring **RAF Helicopters** and continue the aviation theme with their **Battle of Britain** sheet commemorating the 65th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain. They continue the Battle of Britain theme with a sheet featuring Southern Railways Battle of Britain class locomotives. (10/04)