Christmas This year's festive stamps offer a



Technical details

Printer De La Rue

Process Gravure

Stamp size 20 × 24mm and 30 × 24mm ('Large')

Sheets 50

Perforation 15 × 14 die-cut

Phosphor 2nd class standard size: one band. Others: two bands

Gum Self-adhesive

Gutter pairs Vertical

Miniature sheet size 115 × 102mm

Miniature sheet perforation To be advised

Cylinders and colours

Definitive-size stamps D1 pearlescence © D1 magenta © D1 yellow © D1 cyan © D1 black

Large stamps As above plus D1 blue (2nd) and D1 gold (1st) Phosphor D1 all values. ROYAL MAIL has issued Christmas stamps annually since 1966. This year's Christmas stamps – the 41st issue – go on sale at Post Office branches, Tallents House and Post Office philatelic outlets on 7 November. As for the past five years, they are printed on self-adhesive paper, the stamps have die-cut perforations and can be removed from sheets by rouletting which surrounds the 'perforations'. There will also be a miniature sheet containing the same stamps but in a conventional gummed format. They were designed by CDT Design using illustrations by Tatsuro Kiuchi featuring: and class (standard & Large) snowman, 1st cass (standard and Large) Father Christmas, 72p reindeer, and \pounds 1.19 Christmas tree. Four of the stamps will be the standard definitive size; the other two will be bigger and inscribed 'Large' for larger-size UK letters as part of the new 'Pricing in Proportion' letter pricing structure. The standard 1st and 2nd class stamps will cost 32p and 23p, the Large versions 44p and 37p. The year of issue (2006) is included on each stamp, reversed out of the phosphor bands.

MIINIATURE SHEET For the third year, Christmas stamps will also be issued in a miniature sheet containing one of each stamp. The stamps are traditionally gummed, not self-adhesive.

FIRST DAY FACILITIES The FDC envelope, designed by Tatsuro Kiuchi, features a robin perched on the antlers of a deer, set in mountain scenery. Orders for serviced FDCs must reach Tallents House (address below) by the day of issue.

Collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue to: Royal Mail, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB (for Tallents House postmark), or to one of Royal Mail's Special Handstamp Centres (Bethlehem postmark), marking the outer envelope 'fdo639' (Tallents House), or 'fdo640' (Bethlehem). For details of other special postmarks see the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from Tallents House (£12.25 UK/Europe; £24.95 elsewhere). For a sample copy write to: The Editor, British Postmark Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London ECIV 9H0.

STAMP BOOKS Two Christmas self-adhesive stamp books will be available from 7 November – 12 × 1st class stamps (£3.84) and 12 × 2nd class stamps (£2.76). The books, which contain the standard (definitive) size stamps, are printed in gravure by De La Rue •

new look at some favourite Christmas images



Christmas 2006

Mrs J Robinson 200 Manorbier Road Ilkeston

Derbyshire DE7 4AB



Set of stamps or miniature sheet	£3.27
Presentation Pack	£3.80
FDC envelope	£0.30
Serviced FDC (UK) stamps/MS	£4.32
Serviced FDC (overseas) stamps/MS	£3.68
Set of 7 stamp cards (6 stamps + MS)	£2.10

Christmas 2006





Left: the first day cover. The presentation pack (below left), written by Leah Moore, was designed by Godfrey Design using illustrations by Tatsuro Kiuchi of Father Christmas, robins, Christmas trees and snow scenes.

12X

Christmas Stamps

n the glittering twilight of Christmas morning the birds awoke to a loud anuffling noise

"It's a bear!" Blackbird twittered nervously. "It might be huge hedgehogs!" chirruped Wren, hopping about in 0right. "On a gorilla esting a toffsel" giggled Blue Tit, quite giddy will excitement. "Nonsemsel" abouted Robin. "It can't be any of those things. This is my wood Td know about it!" "Well, what is it then?" asked Blue Tit. But Robin had already flown away.

Darting through the wood, Robin followed the noise through the knobbly branches and the snow-dowered treetops. At last he spotted a flash of red between two pines. "What's this?" he thought. "A new rohin? Qausing a fluss in my wood?" His heart thudded

as he whizzed straight towards the red trespasser.

rashing through the trees he burst suddenly into open space in a shower of pine needles. He was in a glade with a tiny cottage, sleepy under its blanket of snow. He couldn't see a robin, but there, sitting glumly on the chinmey was Father Christmas, red hat on his head. Robin flew over to ask why he looked so sad.

"Twe been robbed!" Santa sniffed into his beard. "The children's presents, they're all gone! I tied the sleigh to the drainpipe, and I only stopped to wipe my glasses." He blew his nose loudly on his hat.

"When I looked back they were gone! Stolen! At the last house on my list too." Bobin frowned.

"They can't have gone far," he said, and began scanning the garden for clues.



Above: 12×1 st and 12×2 nd class stamp books.