Women's Rugby World Cup 2017
Welcoming the world to Ireland

Irish Railway Stations
Four new stamps, all instant classics

Francis Ledwidge
Celebrating a very special centenary

Jack Lynch
Commemorating Cork's favourite son

Free Secondary School Education
A new stamp to celebrate the 50th anniversary

National Ploughing Championships
Two new stamps to mark the biggest event of its kind

Urban Street Art
Recognising a contemporary art form
Welcome to the third edition of The Collector for 2017. In this bumper edition we present seven new stamp issues across a wide range of topics with Sport, Culture, Anniversaries and Art to name a few.

Our first two issues highlight the Women’s Rugby World Cup 2017 and Irish Railway Stations. While all eyes were recently on New Zealand as the 2017 Lions tour took place, the pinnacle of the Women’s game takes place on our shores as twelve teams fight it out to see who will become the next World Champions. On the other hand, Railway Stations have been a part of our transport system for over 180 years, and we highlight four scenic stations on pages 6 and 7 for you to add to your collection.

The words birth is not the beginning, death is not the end help to define the next two issues as we acknowledge the centenary of Francis Ledwidge’s death and at the same time the centenary of Jack Lynch’s birth. One man was a two-time leader of Ireland, and the other a beautiful Poet whose words still carry emotion and meaning in this day and age. Find out what we’ve issued for you on pages 8-11.

2017 marks the 50th Anniversary of Free Secondary School Education, without which we surely would have to drop the word ‘scholars’ in the saying “Ireland, the land of saints and scholars.” We sometimes forget that in the midst of worldwide anniversaries and historical figures, these are the moments that really help change us as a people and a nation. Read more about this and view the stamp that will be issued on page 12.

To round off this edition we finish with a mixture of culture and art as we issue stamps commemorating the National Ploughing Championships and Urban Street Art. Since its inception in 1931, the Ploughing Championships has become one of the biggest outdoor events in the world with more than 1,700 exhibitors and 280,000 visitors attending in 2016. Urban Street Art can take on many different forms, shapes and sizes and you can view our four visually striking stamps that are a must for any collection on page 16.

As always, we give you one final opportunity to claim stamps that were featured in our 03/16 edition in the Last Chance Saloon section. These issues include Wild Atlantic Way, Irish Shop Fronts and Cycling.

We hope you enjoy this latest edition of The Collector, and we will see you again in the 04/17 edition when we round off this year with the final issues for 2017.

Joanne Ferris, Irish Stamps

STAMPA 2017

Stampa, the annual Irish National Stamp Exhibition will once again be held in the Griffith Conference Centre on the campus of Griffith College, South Circular Road, Dublin 8 (near Leonard’s Corner) from Friday, October 6, 2017 to Sunday, October 8, 2017. The opening times for Friday and Saturday is 11:00am to 6:00pm while Sunday is 11:00am to 5:00pm.

The admission fee is €5 and there will be free parking available with dealers from home and abroad in attendance. A special exhibit of model post boxes will be on display and as always An Post have a vast range of current issues for sale and will display materials from their archives. Further details will be published in the 04/17 edition of The Collector. Details of Stampa membership souvenirs and the prospectus is available on stampa.ie

DETAIL.DESIGN STUDIO WIN COVETED ICAD BRONZE BELL AWARD

Detail. Design Studio recently won the coveted Bronze Bell at the 2017 ICAD (Institute of Creative Art and Design) Award Ceremony in the Print Design – Stamp/s category for their set of stamps celebrating Dogs. Paul McBride and Stuart Greer designed the stamps.

Paul explained: “An Post commissioned us to design a series of stamps celebrating four uniquely Irish dog breeds. We were huge fans of photographer Carli Davidson’s work, especially her brilliantly original and funny series ‘Shake’ and asked her to collaborate on the project.

The aim was to capture quieter, more contemplative portraits, with a focus on the expression as well as the differing tones and textures within the coats of these four distinct dogs - the Irish Wolfhound, Irish Red Setter, Kerry Blue Terrier, and a Sheepdog. The combination of side profile shots and extreme cropping helped emphasise these qualities as well as add a rhythm and balance to the stacked sequence. In addition, we designed a first day cover and miniature sheet featuring an alternative more illustrative portrait of the wolfhound as well as a graphic version of the red setter.”

Cover image courtesy of Ciaran Cooney/eiretrains.ie
2017 will see the eighth edition of the Women’s Rugby World Cup tournament take place and this time it’s in Ireland. Matches are planned from August 9 to August 26 in University College Dublin, Queens University, Belfast and in Kingspan Stadium, home of Ulster Rugby, in Belfast.

Women’s rugby is one of the fastest growing sports in Ireland and should be boosted further with our hosting of the World Cup. Our national team is performing very well having reached the semi-finals at the last World Cup in Paris, recording a first ever win over New Zealand along the way, before being beaten by eventual champions, England.

Ireland has also won the Six Nations titles twice in recent years, taking the Grand Slam in 2013 and winning the 2015 Women’s Six Nations Championship.

The tournament itself promises to be the most exciting one yet and will also be a highlight of the sporting calendar in Ireland with so many players and supporters travelling to Ireland. The trophy has been on show at numerous clubs and schools in Ireland in anticipation for the event to begin.

The pool stages take place in University College Dublin from August 9 to August 17, with the semi-finals and play-offs in Upper Malone, Queens University, Belfast from August 22 to August 26. The final will be played at the Kingspan Stadium which is one of the shortlisted venues for Ireland’s 2023 Rugby World Cup bid.

That event is a much-prized tournament with a number of countries around the world looking to host what will be the biggest rugby event to date. It also happens to be taking place in the year of the 200th anniversary of the legendary ‘invention’ of the sport by William Webb Ellis.

This year, teams from England, Spain, New Zealand, Australia, Wales, USA, Italy, Canada, Hong Kong, France, Japan, and of course Ireland will all compete for their sports highest honour: The 2017 Women’s Rugby World Cup. England and New Zealand have been the main victors of this competition with two and four wins respectively, and USA with the other victory in 1991.

The stamp you see here was designed by Zinc Design Consultants and shows Irish captain Niamh Briggs in the thick of the action on the field.

You can buy this stamp and also the First Day Cover by using the Order Form attached, by calling our sales team on +353 (1) 705 7400 or by visiting our website at irishstamps.ie from July 13, 2017.

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**WOMEN’S RUGBY WORLD CUP 2017**

“Ireland hosts biggest tournament yet”
Ireland has a number of truly great railway stations, from the smaller, prettier village-style stations to the major classical buildings you’ll see in most of our bigger cities. One of the first things every schoolchild in Ireland learns in history class is that the 15 most important railway stations in the Republic of Ireland were renamed in 1966 to honour the 16 executed leaders of the 1916 Easter Rising.

The reasons that the numbers don’t add up is due to the fact that the Pearse Brothers, Pádraig and William, were both executed and Pearse Street Station is named in honour of the two of them.

However, the first railway line in Ireland opened long before that, on December 17, 1834, and ran for six miles from Dublin city to the port of Kingstown (now Dún Laoghaire) and was quite a novelty for the first few years of its existence.

Today, Iarnród Éireann is the body that operates the railways in southern Ireland while Northern Ireland Railways is in control in the north. The preservation of the trains themselves falls under two groups; The Railway Preservation Society of Ireland looks after steam trains while the Irish Traction Group looks after diesel locomotives.

The four stamps you see in this issue were designed by Dublin firm WorkGroup and showcase the stunning work of multi award-winning photographer Janice O’Connell from f22 Photography.

The stations featured are Heuston Station Dublin which is a magnificent design by English architect Sancton Wood. This station was originally known as Kingsbridge Station and was opened in 1846. Also shown is Clarke Station, Dundalk which opened on February 15, 1849 and was designed by William Hamilton Mills of the Great Northern Railway (Ireland).

Originally known as Clanmire Road Station, Kent Station in Cork opened in 1893 and finally, there is Bagenalstown Station which is a very attractive and ornate station in limestone also designed by Sancton Wood.

These stamps are available as a Block of 4, Miniature Sheet and First Day Cover formats which you can purchase by using the Order Form attached, by calling our sales team on +353 (1) 705 7400 or by visiting our website at irishstamps.ie from July 20, 2017.

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Francis Edward Ledwidge was one of the most admired Irish war poets and was sometimes known as the Poet of the Blackbird. He wrote poetry while serving as a soldier in the British Army in World War I before he was killed at the third battle of Ypres on July 31, 1917 just seventeen days before his thirtieth birthday.

Ledwidge was born in Slane, Co. Meath in 1887, the eighth of nine children in a very poor family. His parents wanted to give their children the very best education that they could afford. But when Francis was only five years old his father died prematurely and this forced his wife and their children out to work at an early age. While working as a road labourer he won the patronage of the writer Lord Dunsany after writing to him in 1912, enclosing copybooks of his early work. Dunsany, a man of letters already well known in Dublin and London literary and dramatic circles, and whose own start in publishing had been with a few poems, promoted him in Dublin and introduced him to W.B. Yeats.

Francis left school aged thirteen but continued to educate himself while working wherever he could. He was appointed secretary of the Slane branch of the Meath Labour Union in 1913 and was always a keen poet, writing anywhere and everywhere - sometimes even on gates or fence posts. From the age of fourteen he was published in his local newspaper, The Drogheda Independent.

On the outbreak of World War I, Francis enlisted on October 24, 1914 in the 5th battalion Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, part of the 10th (Irish) Division. He wrote throughout his time in the army and his first volume of 50 poems, Songs of the Fields, was published in 1915. He died in 1917 and three months later his second volume of poems Songs of Peace appeared.

His Complete Poems was published in 1919 and there are now more than 200 Francis Ledwidge poems published to date. The cottage where Ledwidge was born is now the Francis Ledwidge Museum and has some of his original letters, poems and memorabilia on display.

The commemorative stamp you see here was designed by Detail. Design Studio and features a traditional portrait of Ledwidge but with a modern treatment which has inverted the colour scheme.

You can buy this stamp and the First Day Cover by using the Order Form attached, calling our sales team on +353 (1) 705 7400 or by visiting our website irishstamps.ie from July 27, 2017.
John Mary "Jack" Lynch (15 August, 1917 – 20 October, 1999) was a Cork barrister and politician who served two terms as Taoiseach of Ireland, from 1966 to 1973 and from 1977 to 1979. He first rose to prominence locally and then nationally as an exceptional sportsman, winning a very impressive ten senior county championship hurling medals, including eight-in-a-row.

He won five All-Ireland hurling championships with Cork together with Cork's first All-Ireland football championship. Lynch received many individual honours in his sporting life, not only was he named as the "Hurling Captain of the Forties", but in 1984 Lynch was placed on the "Hurling Team of the Century". His legacy was firmly cemented with his inclusion in 1999 on the "Hurling Team of the Millennium".

Jack Lynch had been interested in politics from an early age and was first elected to the Dáil as a TD in 1948 at the age of thirty-one. He served as Minister for Education and the Gaeltacht from 1957 to 1959, Minister for Industry and Commerce from 1959 to 1965, and Minister for Finance from 1965 to 1966.

It was during his first period as Taoiseach that the Northern troubles broke out in 1969 and he decided that a peaceful approach to Northern policy was the only way forward. Other milestones during his time at the top in Irish politics included the appointment of a Commission on the Status of Women in 1970 and this was the first politically significant Irish State initiative on women's rights and the equality agenda.

He also oversaw Ireland joining the European Economic Community (European Union) in 1973, a defining moment in modern Irish history which contributed to Ireland's future economic prosperity.

In the general election of 1973 his party (Fianna Fáil) increased its share of the vote overall but lost the election by the narrowest of margins. However, four years later he was returned to office with the largest majority his party had ever enjoyed. Following an internal power struggle and the emergence of Charles J Haughey, Lynch resigned as Taoiseach of Ireland and leader of Fianna Fáil in 1979. However, he remained in the Dáil as a TD until his retirement from politics at the 1981 general election. Jack Lynch died in 1999.

This commemorative stamp was designed by Vermillion Design and features a portrait photograph of Jack Lynch which you can buy alongside the First Day Cover by using the Order Form attached, calling our sales team on +353 (1) 705 7400 or by visiting our website irishstamps.ie from August 10, 2017.
50TH ANNIVERSARY OF FREE SECONDARY SCHOOL EDUCATION

“50 years since a national milestone was introduced”

Fifty years ago, in 1967, the Minister for Education, Donogh O’Malley, announced plans for free second-level education throughout Ireland.

While this was nothing very special in the European context – many of our neighbours had made this move already – it turned out to have a significant impact on the development of Ireland through economic development, social mobility and cultural change.

The move followed a review of second-level education undertaken in 1962 by the Department of Education and the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development). This report dealt with two main themes: the capacity of the educational system to meet skill requirements for economic growth, and inequalities in levels of participation.

Perhaps the most remarkable thing about this announcement is that it was made without having been discussed at the Cabinet table and there had been no approval from the Department of Finance, nor were ministers briefed in advance. But once the announcement was made, the Government was committed and the public loved the idea, naturally.

Minister O’Malley’s largest task was to consult with the voluntary secondary school managers. These managers were dissatisfied with a number of issues - the lack of forward planning and consultation, the undermining of autonomy of secondary schools and the differential grants in lieu of fees. Fundamentally, these secondary school managers were unhappy with the cavalier style of consultation adopted by Minister O’Malley. An alternative scheme was proposed but the Catholic hierarchy advised the managerial representatives to accept the scheme.

One of the strongest reasons for adopting free secondary education was that at the time about a third of all children who finished primary school were dropping out of education. At fifteen years of age fewer than 50% were still in full-time education. By age sixteen, only 36% were still at school.

The report suggested that the numbers of those giving up school, together with a restricted curriculum in many secondary schools, would result in a shortage in qualified labour (particularly in relation to technical qualifications) necessary for the economic development of Ireland going forward.

Within a decade, participation rates in second-level doubled and today, Ireland has one of the highest rates of second-level completion in the EU with more than 90% of the population completing the Leaving Certificate.

This commemorative stamp and the First Day Cover are available to purchase from September 7 by using the Order Form attached, calling +353 (1) 705 7400 or by visiting our website irishstamps.ie from this date onwards.

Technical Details

Date of Issue: September 7, 2017
Value & Quantity: €1 (122k)
Design: Ger Garland
Photography: Alan Betson
Stamp Size: 36mm x 36mm
Paper: TR PVA Gum 102gsm
Colour: Multicolour with phosphor tagging
Make-up: Sheetlets of 16
Perforations: 13.3 x 13.3
Printing Process: Lithography
Printer: Cartor Security Printing
The National Ploughing Championships is a huge agricultural show that takes place in different locations in Ireland every year in September. Remarkably it is one of the largest outdoor events in the world with over 1,700 exhibitors in 2016.

Everyone in Ireland appears to be aware of the Ploughing Championships and people all over the country seem to know when it is on (even those with no agricultural connections) thanks to regular media updates, news bulletins, etc. But not many know of the history of the championships – there are records of a ploughing match in Camolin Park, Wexford on October 20, 1816.

The first inter-county ploughing contest took place in 1931 as a result of an argument between two lifelong friends, Denis Allen of Gorey, Co Wexford and JJ Bergin of Athy, Co Kildare. Each argued that their respective counties had the best ploughmen. This resulted in a challenge being called for. Therefore on Monday February 16 1931, the first National Ploughing contest took place in Mr W.K. Hosie’s field at Coursetown in Athy, Co. Kildare. Many years later, in 2011, this same venue was once again host to the National Ploughing Championships.

Although an extremely successful event, it is not without its hiccups. In 1965 extreme snow conditions postponed the Ploughing Championships at Enniskerry, Co Wicklow, by a week. In 1971 the attendance of the event in Finglas, Dublin 11 fell dramatically and the event ended up being a financial loss.

Today, the Ploughing Championships requires over 700 acres to accommodate what has become a festival, including a tented trade village, a food fair and a craft village, fashion shows, sheepdog trials, Loy digging (manual ploughing), lamb shearing and cookery demonstrations. Aside from the ploughing itself, there are exhibitions and trade stands offering everything from new cars to pet food.

In 2011, University College Dublin carried out a study which found that the Ploughing Championships generates €36 million per annum for the economy, local and nationally over the three days of the event. This brought in €6.6 million in taxes for the National Exchequer. Five years later and the 2016 event was the most successful ever with over 280,000 attendees over the three days.

This issue celebrates the unique National Ploughing Championships with two beautiful stamps designed by Ger Garland which you can buy alongside the Miniature Sheet and First Day Covers by using the Order Form attached, calling +353 (1) 705 7400 or by visiting our website irishstamps.ie from September 14.
Street art is recognised as a form of contemporary art that has been brought into the mainstream consciousness around the world by artists like Banksy. It’s also known as ‘guerilla art’, ‘post-graffiti’ and ‘neo-graffiti’.

Urban street art is visual art in public locations, usually unsanctioned, on abandoned buildings etc. The most common forms you will see in cities today are stencil graffiti, wheatpasted poster art or sticker art and street installation or sculpture. Traditional spray-painted graffiti artwork is often recognised as street art, excluding territorial graffiti or pure vandalism.

Street art is used by artists to communicate directly with the public, without the restrictions of the formal art world or the need for gallery space. Ireland has a rich heritage in urban street art with the massive murals of Northern Ireland speaking to the world from both sides of the Northern conflict.

Street art is often used to comment on current issues. In Dublin, for example, the artist Maser’s tribute to Seamus Heaney on Bachelor’s Walk illustrated Heaney’s last words “noli timere” “Don’t be afraid”.

Maser is originally from Ireland but now lives in the USA. In 1995 he began painting graffiti on the streets of Dublin and his unique abstract style soon earned the respect of other artists in Ireland and throughout Europe.

Another internationally-acclaimed Irish street artist is Conor Harrington. From Cork and now based in London, he paints outdoor murals and more traditional artworks for galleries. Fin DAC is also from Cork and has an international reputation, working and exhibiting alongside artists as diverse as Goldie, Nick Walker and Jef Aerosol with commissions for Armani, Red Bull and the London 2012 Olympics.

James Earley is a street artist from Dún Laoghaire. He has curated design retrospectives, graffiti art festivals, the art collection for The Dean Hotel, Dublin and completed a remarkable Joycean makeover of Blooms Hotel, Temple Bar. Some of the work of these four Irish contemporary street artists are celebrated in four new stamps designed by Aad Design.

This Strip of 4 and First Day Cover is accompanied by a unique Prestige Booklet all of which can be purchased by using the Order Form attached, calling +353 (1) 705 7400 or by visiting our website irishstamps.ie from September 21.
“What if, what if, what if?” Don’t let this be you! Here is your last chance to get the below Commemorative Stamps which you may not have had the opportunity to obtain in 2016. Before you flick one page more and start purchasing the new issues within this edition, have a quick glance one last time at what 2016 had to offer you and see if there is room in your shopping cart for one or two more stamps!

**Wild Atlantic Way**
**Issue Date:** July 28, 2016
**Withdrawal Date:** July 28, 2017
The Wild Atlantic Way is the world’s longest defined coastal touring route. Stretching from the Inishowen Peninsula in Donegal to Kinsale in Co. Cork, the route offers visitors an opportunity to truly discover the Atlantic Coast. The stamps feature Horse Riding on the coast at Grange, Co. Sligo; Cycling on the Aran Islands, Co. Galway; Fly Fishing at Glenbeg Lough, Co. Cork and Surfing at Inch, Co. Kerry.

**Irish Shop Fronts**
**Issue Date:** August 18, 2016
**Withdrawal date:** August 18, 2017
Shop fronts in Irish cities and towns are an essential piece of architectural history, with different styles created by craftsmen often following a family tradition of craftsmanship. Designed by Ger Garland, these stamps feature the following shops: Thomas Moran (Souvenir Shop), Westport, Co Mayo, The Winding Stair (Book Shop), Dublin city centre, Vibes & Scribes (Arts & Hobby Shop) – Cork city and Clerke (Grocer) – Skibbereen, Co Cork.

**Cycling**
**Issue Date:** September 15, 2016
**Withdrawal Date:** September 15, 2017
Cycling is fast becoming one of the most popular activities in Ireland. It is low impact, makes no noise, emits no air pollutants or greenhouse gases and eases traffic congestion. In addition, cycling increases fitness levels and provides a sense of wellbeing. The stamps feature four different aspects of cycling: commuting/safety, family/leisure, sportive/charity and high performance/competition.

The unveiling of the Ninth Definitive Stamp Series ‘A History of Ireland in 100 Objects, a selection’ took place earlier this year in the Rotunda, National Museum of Ireland – Archaeology, Kildare Street, Dublin 2. For more information on the stamps, use a smartphone with the CEE App installed to scan the stamps or visit 100objects.ie. Pictured at the unveiling (l to r) were Laura Mahoney, Chief Executive Royal Irish Academy, Tara Clarke, Zinc Design Consultants (Stamp designers), Raghnall O’Floinn, Director National Museum of Ireland and Brian Fay, Company Secretary An Post. For a full list of the A History of Ireland in 100 Objects, a selection’ products go to irishstamps.ie/100objects

An Post, along with many other Postal Administrations, recently exhibited at a China Post Group Corporation stamp exhibition with the cultural theme of One Belt & One Road. The exhibition of stamps was presented to the public at Chaoyang Planning Museum of Art, Beijing, from 16-21 May. The exhibition is now moving around between Chaoyang post offices until November, and China Post will arrange to bring schools and community groups to see it.

An Post provided more than 50 stamps that showcased the culture, scenery and history of our country. The exhibition was organised under the guidance of the Publicity Department of Chaoyang District Committee and the Cultural Committee, and with the assistance of the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Each exhibition area also allowed a small zone for the country to exhibit their featured commodities and to interact with the visitors.
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The Collector 03/17

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