



Well this is number two, and we're breathing a sigh of relief.

This one has been printed by grownups, whereas the first one was produced on a very Heath Robinson contraption put together with bailing twine and several dodgy inkjets rigged up in Uncle Steve's back room; the man is a genius at building complicated bits of machinery out of wire coat hangers and string.

Also, we are beginning to come to terms with making things that people want ...like now.

Isobel and I have been producing the odd Discworld item for years and years. All at a very gentle pace, and mostly one at a time.

Now we realise we have a tiger by the tale, and are gearing up for it, as much as two old potterers can do, so please bear with us.

We did not appreciate the dichotomy between the stamp collector and the Discworld stamp collector, and it caught us out.

Stamp collectors want stamps, at as low a price as possible with occasional interesting variations to add a bit of spice. As we know from the past, Discworld collectors want limited editions, numbered, and not hundreds of them

please, unless they don't have one, in which case just enough in the market to include them, which is very understandable. Terry of course wants little pieces of Discworld, and is even prepared to help make them, let alone write them into life in the first place.

So what can we do?

We will produce stamps that are directly related to Discworld books. These stamps will be produced in quantities of thousands. They will be available to all and sundry, and there will be occasional 'sports', which will appear in our Little Brown Envelopes.

These stamps will run for a good while before being retired, and when they are retired we shall publish exactly how many of a particular stamp, value, colour, have been sold.

We will on some occasions produce a limited number of stamps that are very rare. These stamps will be in small editions because that's what Terry wrote. If he writes 'there are less than a hundred', then there will be just 99. They will be like the \$5 Blue and ONLY available in our Little Brown Envelopes.

We know this fuels the secondary market on e-bay, but can't think of a fairer way of distributing these stamps. In effect we are giving them away, and trusting to luck they fall into the hands of collectors not speculators.

Now when Terry has an idea so good we will all burst unless it's made, something that is a Discworld Artefact, as well as having a rare stamp on it, these we will endeavour to produce in the hundreds, probably never more than four hundred, and, depending on how bloody difficult they are to make, possibly as few as two hundred. These will be numbered, just like our limited editions, will always be reasonable in price, and we will offer them to the Journal Readers first. Just how we let you know before the rest is something that is causing us a lot of thought. Not all of you are on the Internet, and many are overseas, but there must be a way you can be the first to take up the edition. What is left to sell; and I'm afraid in fairness there will only be an allocation of one per journal, will be offered for sale on the web site, and heaven help us if we have the rush that we did for the Thruppny dreadful envelope.

Of course, we are still learning, we have loads of ideas for new stamps and other interesting bits of paper, and Terry; the Gods bless him, is being so helpful and enthusiastic for what we are doing that we really want to create the best Cinderella stamps, and look after our collectors and friends with the same care that they have come to expect for the past 25 years.

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Important and Interesting facts and figures.

(Notes from the Stationery Cupboard) by I Maccalariat

The first stamps were produced just 6 months ago and I have calculated that there are already in excess of 80,000 in circulation.

There are a lot more of some than others for example the most common, the halfpenny red, is out there in quantities in excess of 20,000, whereas just 63 of the very rare \$5 Blue triangle have been found. Other rare stamps in circulation include the Eminence Gris (about 125) and the Tower of Art Specials (175 of each) There has recently been a reprint of the Tower of Art stamp; the only difference that you will notice is in the borders where proof marks and the Teemer and Spools Logo are now in evidence.

Tower of Art stamps are always hand-perforated and occasionally misperforations occur, less often as we get more proficient.

The Assassin's Guild stamps introduced in December are also hand perforated as were the Hogswatch Stamp. Incidentally there were 2,900 of these produced including those used on the Hogswatch First Day Cover.

To give you an idea of your chances in obtaining a rare stamp, they are added to the Little Brown Envelopes as follows: One in 50 will contain a Blue Triangle, one in 20 an Eminence Gris and one in ten a special Tower of Art. There are exceptions, and Stanley was feeling generous at Hogswatch when he decided to up the odds. The new rarity The Thrupny Dreadful (Post Paid) turns up in one in 40 envelopes. Always wash your hands after handling this one and keep it away from the cat.

Keep your stamps tidy, save the paperclips and will the person who removed the pencil sharpener from my desk please return it.

THE COMPETITION

The Last competition was dead easy, lots of entries, but the first out of the bag were as follows :

Laurie P Alessio from Victoria Australia, Tilo Wieczorek from Germany, Catherine "Bottom pineapple" Reynolds (Don't ask. This is a family publication) from Manchester and Jean Tillson from Massachusetts USA. Yes I know we said three winners, but that last card stuck to Stanleys finger and he wouldn't let go. Thank you Jean.....

The prize one of each of the Tower of Art stamps will be posted off to these lucky people.

And now for this Issues Competition

The prize this time for the first 3 correct answers will be a special Engraver's proof of Artwork sheet for the Assassin's post paid stamp. The Thrup'ny Dreadful. Just 40 of these sheets were printed.

What did Miss Maccalariat make her daughter practice to get the expression right? Answers on a Post Card (nothing "sticky" this time please) to Uncle Henry at The Cunning artificer, 41 High St, Wincanton BA9 9JU

Closing date 15th April 2005

WHAT'S NEW

Civic Penny Black.

We are pleased to announce a new variation on the Patrician Penny Black, and that is The Penny Black Civic.

Easily recognisable because the paper is thinner (80gm) than the normal Penny's, and the printing process is one we have never used before.

The other difference is in the letters in the corner cartouches of the stamps.

These stamps have been produced on a very old Heidelberg letterpress. The letters or plate are clamped into a frame, a printing form supplies the ink before this is covered with the sheet and "pressed" on to produce a ready-printed sheet which can be reproduced indefinitely.

It's an old and tried process, which gives the stamps a unique, slightly antique look. The plates are of zinc, and therefore do wear out quickly, so we are only doing the one print run. These stamps will be available exclusively to Journal subscribers as an unperforated A4 Proof sheet (see enclosed order form) and also individually in the Little Brown Envelopes.

Merchants Guild Stamps

Really splendid works of art by Colin Edwards and Alan Batley these stamps demonstrate the way this very powerful Guild sees itself as the very fulcrum of commerce in the city state of Ankh-Morpork and beyond.

Available now:

The Farthing stamp sponsored by the Candlewick makers and Oil men The Penny farthing sponsored by the Grocers and Dry goods Merchants. The Three penny, sponsored by the Fish Mongers The Fifty penny sponsored by the Butchers and Tripe Merchants.

Initially these stamps will all be hand perforated and will be available to buy individually or by the sheet. They will also appear in the Brown Envelopes.

The Assassins Thruppny Dreadful (individually wrapped) is now in circulation in the LBE's, as is The Thruppny Resurrection. If ever Terry suggests another 'special' with an edition of only 99, I'm going into hiding until they're all distributed.

The Assassin's Guild Three penny proof sheet of 9 stamps will be discontinued at the end of March.





HERO'S OF DISCWORLD STAMPOLGY. No's 182

No 1 Colin Edwards.

I was first introduced to Terry Pratchett's books by my son Sam, then 12, who had found 'Truckers' in the school library. Because the library in Norwich (opposite our Fire Station) had burnt down a couple of years earlier I then had the job of buying the whole backlog including all the Discworld books and inevitably read them too. I was hooked.

I had been collecting fantasy buildings and was surprised to find that their manufacturers also produced the Discworld figures advertised in the back of Terry's books. I also found out that Josh Kirby lived nearby and taught at my old art college. This whole Discworld phenomenon had been right on my doorstep and I seemed to be the last person to know!

My son started to collect the pewter figures, and we soon visited the Clarecraft factory. Then we collected the larger figures and found out more about Bernard and Isobel and the history of Clarecraft. The only problem was that Bernard had moved to Somerset by this point, so it was a while before I had the opportunity to make a detour to Wincanton, and to actually meet the Cunning Artificer. I had not expected to be discussing with Bernard how we could possibly pool our skills to produce something new for Discworld.

I had been a frustrated 3D designer at art college in High Wycombe before moving on to Norwich School of Art to specialise in graphics. In those days we were all taught the value of traditional hand skills - lettering and life drawing, twenty odd years ago - no computers or scanners back then - it all seems so far off now.

Creating the stamps gave me the chance to revisit the traditional skills and to research the early days of hand engraving and stamp production methods. I got to know our local stamp dealers and built up a stack of reference material, then brought in Alan Batley, an illustrator I have worked extensively with (and, I then discovered, Discworld reader), to start fleshing out the early ideas. I got to meet Terry too, which was more than worth the twelve hour round drive just to hear him enthuse about our initial efforts. Had we hidden the falling man too successfully? Just how did the Brass Bridge span the Ankh? Was the mixture of traditional stamp elements and newly originated artwork working? Somehow it all fell into place.

I am very pleased to be collaborating with Bernard and Alan on the stamps and every new design brings its own challenges. What Bernard refers to as 'my magic' can be anything from designing the whole stamp or frame from scratch, to sourcing original stamps, restoring them photographically, and reworking them to suit modern printing methods. Sometimes this involves retouching out defects or franking marks, or stitching together elements of completely different stamps.

The prawns for the Hogswatch stamp were originally Victorian line engravings but were scanned and cut into several sections, then reassembled to fit into the spaces available. However, most of the illustration is created specially for the stamps and I work very closely with Alan throughout - lots of faxes, phone calls and progress visits - to make sure that what we are both doing individually marries up. I also oversee the production and printing of the stamps and I still get a real buzz from seeing them make it into print and perforation - producing such tiny items makes such a contrast to my normal output of logos, brochures, packaging and books.

Its great to know that the stamps are appreciated, by Discworld collectors and stamp collectors alike, and I hope you all continue to get as much fun out of collecting them as we will have designing and producing them.

No 2 Alan Batley

Made in Suffolk, year of manufacture 1961, basic engineering but reliable and easy to service. Warranty expired years ago!

Graduated from Middlesex Polytechnic with BA (Hons) Degree in Graphic Design. I worked on a farm before and during the course to pay for beer money, rugby tours and pay off the student overdraft. My family have all been tamers or farm workers many with a 'healthy' interest in sheep, so it was inevitable that my first job in the design world was running a studio for an agricultural publishing company (and in true agricultural style for a pittance).

Two years later I met some bloke called Colin Edwards at an SLAD event in Norwich, he bad some spare desk space in his studio and was looking for some complimentary disciplines to join him. Well, he was a smooth talker and I'd had a few, pints of Old Dropped Sprout by then, and before I knew it, along with a mate, I packed my belongings into the back of a 2CV and moved to Norwich.

I've been stuck here ever since in fact for over 21 years working as a freelance illustrator and model maker for Ad Agencies, Designers, Architects, Publishers and Local Authorities. Clients have included Norwich Union, Barclays Bank, Letts, Collins, National Trust, Lotus, Jewsons, Guardian Royal Exchange and of course The Cunning Artificer of Discworld fame. During this time I've one wife, one son, three dogs and two cats.

I have a wide range of illustrative styles including engraving and woodcut style, technical and architectural, watercolour, children's illustrations, the list is exhaustive and keeps me on my toes. Everything is done by hand with brushes, pens, pencils etc. I've only just learnt to c-mail. The ink stains and acrylic paint splats on my hands and, what was until then, my best shirt, can normally identify me.

Working on the Discworld Stamps has been great fun. It has given me the chance to use the traditional illustrative styles for a subject that really demands and deserves it. Interpreting someone's narrative does have inherent dangers, particularly with an author as popular as Terry Pratchett, because so many fans will have different ideas of what characters and buildings look like. However, some of the subjects already exist in the form of Bernard's sculptures, and the guidance from Terry and Bernard has been essential in getting the images

Please let it be known, these men are HERO'S.

They put up with strange, sometimes garbled messages, phone calls, scribbled bits of paper, and occasionally an actual meeting in the flesh.

With yours truly, normally after I have been to see Terry, or had a telephone conversation with him, and there is a new stamp in my head, that I can see but no one else can, yet.

I blab, I draw pictures in the air, I am incoherent with excitement, and I need to get it all down before I forget.

They then get very bad drawings, ideas, stuff that Terry suggested like "she'll have a chin on her like the toe of your boot" Or some angle on a design idea that turns it literally upside-down, when viewed sideways, and ... it makes the ordinary totally extraordinary in a very Discworld sort of way.

It's a great team, I'm so incredibly fortunate to work with them, and Discworld Stamps as we know them could not have happened without them.

So I take this opportunity to thank them for all their efforts, and will just add, it's not going to get any easier, but by heck, it'll be worth it.

STAMP FACTS



How to tell a hand perforated stamp from a machine perforated one.

It would be nice to say that it is easy but where would the fun be in that? Some of our stamps have a tatty look about them and the 'perfs' are not easily distinguishable from each other. These were done when Terry and Bernard were first at the Bath Postal Museum. Whilst they were operating the Victorian perforator a chap who had used one during his apprenticeship advised them that they should run beeswax over the pins. The other

trick they learnt was to do more than a single sheet at a time. This made the perforations cleaner possibly making some hand perfed stamps difficult to distinguish from the machine perfs.

A good way to identify a hand-perf is to see if there are either wide or narrow margins around the stamp. These arise because the stamps have to be lined up by eye, causing a wide variety of margins.

Sounds easy? Your editorial staff is currently negotiating with Bath Postal Museum for you to try you hand at it yourself.

Pleasant as it is, travelling to Bath and staying there for several hours while using the Museum's perforating machine has proved both time consuming and expensive. The good folk in the museum are really helpful and the coffee is good, but it takes a day out of every week, time we can ill afford. So, when the opportunity came to buy our own hand operated perforator we dug deep into our pockets and bought the bugger. It now resides in our workshop and is lovingly tended by Vince who is becoming an expert at the art of perforating.

Some of you will have benefited from his learning curve in the form of mis-perfs - where the perforations run right through the stamp. We always try to remove these before the stamps go to the packers but some get through.

It is possible to identify stamps perforated at Wincanton from those done at Bath because the gap between perforations is different. If you measure the number of perforations in a 2cm. length of the stamp you will find that the Bath stamps have 12 perfs. and Wincanton stamps 10 perfs.. (Holes to the uninitiated) The Bath perfs. do show a slight variation, possibly where we replaced missing pins and the measurements are not exact, but it's a good guide.

The stamps produced by Enschede in Holland are perforated on a comb perforator. This is a highly sophisticated piece of kit, and the whole sheet of stamps is perforated in one go. There are 13 perfs per 2cm length of stamp and the margins are set evenly. The gutter (the space between the stamps) is regular.

SWAP SHOP

A Ms. Weyland wishes to swap genuine 4-leafed clovers for Discworld related Products. Contact the sub-editor for more information



we will of course, be offering special PRIZES

for the 3 best problems in the next issue

Dear Uncle Henry,

For those of us interested in philitetly? Erm fillaterly? Well stamp collecting then, the new Discworld stamps are a refreshing and dare I say a fun additional sideline to a much maligned hobby. We aren't all "anoraks" and usually have other interests as well. I collect pieces of string and the rubber bands dropped by the postman, so you can see my life is full and varied.

Regards, A Longhurst

Well thank you for sharing that with us, not only is it an interesting hobby but thrift is a virtue much overlooked in these days of profligate use of stationery products. I commend this activity to other readers.

Dear Uncle Henry,

I reckon you'd be the sort of old pommy geezer who'd know a thing or two about the best tweezers to use when handling our precious little paper mates. There's a raging debate going on here in amongst the members of the Coolarrikinna Bowls and Returned Servicemen's Club (The CBRSC Philately Club meets every 5th Monday) I've always been a cranked spade aficionado myself, but my mate Dave, backed by the secretary and treasurer Bruce O'Reilly swears by the common pointed variety. Mind you, this from a bloke who thought he'd found a 24c inverted Jenny on the back of a postcard discovered in the loft of his Granny's shearing shed. Fair dinkum, it almost broke my heart when I told him he was holding the postcard upside down.

Anyway, getting back to the tweezers, which of the little peckers do you prefer? The cranked spade or the common pointed variety? I reckon the common pointed is as useful as an ashtray on a motorbike.

Yours, Lozza

Dear Lozza,

It is without doubt that you are a gentleman as well as a scholar and you are quite right. Studied opinion has it that the cranked spade is indeed the superior implement and is of course, I'm sure you are aware, considerably more useful in rooting out unpleasant intruders from the body's orifices.

I remain sir, your obedient servant. Henry

Dear Uncle Henry,

Please can you help me? I've been a fan of Discworld for a number of years and I never thought I'd collect stamps as part of it. What is the best way to preserve the stamps so they don't fade or anything as I would like to display them for all to see

Lots of Love and best wishes, Suzanne

Dear Suzanne,

This is an interesting problem and thank you for bringing it up. In some way or another all stamps are little works of art and to lock them away seems a shame. When they are framed correctly a group of stamps can look superb. We are looking into the idea of an inexpensive picture frame suitable for our stamps that has a UV protective glass.

Yours

Uncle Henry

Rarity, price and availability (Are stamp collectors easily parted from their money)?

Many words have been expended in various forums about the actual rarity of an item and consequently how much a purchaser has parted with their hard earned cash. This is clearly important to you dear reader because as collectors it forms an essential part of our world. Many would agree with your humble sub-editor that if only 10 were ever made then this would be rare indeed. Then these 10 must be worth more than something of which 10,000 were made, surely?

However, consider this! Suppose our stout friend The Cunning Artificer was to give me, your humble sub-editor, some of his materials, tools and exceedingly good advice. With all of this I then produced a work of art, a limited edition of one. Would any of you good folk wish to pay me £10,000 for it on the grounds that it is an original? If you were to see the final piece you would probably condemn it to the Tate Modern for its originality alone!

My point, if not obvious, is that rarity alone does not create high prices. Consider an item of interest to us all, The Waterstone's First Day Cover for which 10,000 were produced, clearly not rare. So how is it that one was sold at auction for more than $\pounds 40.00$? Surely the buyer has been ripped off? Consider, how many of you were able to obtain one as part of a deal to purchase a likely best-selling novel?

But how many of you have every intention of retaining it as part of your ever-increasing collection, both of stamps and other objects d'art? So how many are there that might become available, not that many I would humbly surmise!

Dear reader you should also bear in mind that the object of discussion was not available to all.

I am aware of an individual residing in deepest East Anglia who did not have access to the appropriate purveyor of the likely best seller and its free accompanying object of discussion, and had to ask friends to obtain one for him. Add to this the fact that the object of discussion was not available around the World. A perusal of the bidders of the object of discussion would show that many were from a nation that is separated from us by a pond. For these collectors, who may be reading this journal, this item of discussion was an extremely rare thing indeed, which many of us in metropolitan Great Britain could easily take for granted!

So in conclusion, firstly the number produced does not always drive the price. What will drive price are the items availability to potential purchasers (i.e. the supply) and its desirability to those potential purchasers (i.e. demand).

Secondly if more than one person wishes to obtain an item, especially in a free market such as an auction, then a bidding war will commence until one person is prepared to pay more than all the others. By the way you don't have to be rich to win at an auction just willing to change you principles for a while or go without something else.

There is also the feeling one gets of perhaps being the first person to own something before anyone else has.

A premium some consider worth paying for!

Stuart Wrighton

THE STANLEY HOWLER STAMP JOURNAL

DEAR READER,

Welcome dear reader to this second edition. Who would have thought it would have run this far? In fact the

stamps haven't run they've galloped at an amazing pace, irrespective of any given value for pace. A couple of days ago before sitting down to write this missive I found out that there are 550 of you out there, possible more by now.

Since we last sat down together dear reader we have seen a rash, no an outright eruption of stamps being offered on the open market. This in turn had led to much correspondence on forums about values, rarity, (and sanity). The issues of description, genuineness, perforations and the issue of issues have all been hotly debated. These need to be addressed soonest and some in this very issue.

What must, however, be appreciated dear friends is that it is as I described to one correspondent "an operation run from a small English market town with a small number of staff including 5 cats and a delightful parrot" (Though the parrot has been relocated to avoid becoming the cat's dinner)

By the time you read this Stanley Howler will have started to catch up and have its own forum where you can ask questions directly to us and not use similar devices where the odd (wild) rumour has led to down right pandemonium and sleepless nights for the staff of SH

Stuart Wrighton

STAMPS & OTHER THINGS THAT WILL APPEAR SOONISH.

To Stampex, we go on the 23 - 27th of February. Your assistant Editor and the stout party will be holding the fort for those nice folk at The Bath Postal Museum. In keeping with the traditions of Stampex we will have on offer a First Day Cover. This is not a Discworld Artefact; it is a specifically designed homage to those who collect Cinderellas within the stamp collecting fraternity.

It will flourish a specially designed stamp, and is all rather tasteful. We will produce 500, and any we bring back will be offered for sale.

We will be having a gathering on the 30th April which just precedes the launch of 'Hat Full Of Sky' in paperback. We will be offering a First Day Cover, and Commemorative Stamp. Under development are stamps from Sto Lat, Sto Helit and Lancre. We will also be producing stamps for Uberwald and other Smarl River Principalities later in the year.

There will be a 'Field Post Office'

at the Clarecraft Event in July. This will be manned by members of the CITY WATCH

and other uniformed hangers on who will be overseeing the special issue stamps and covers.



THE THRUP'NY DREADFUL (THE ZOMBIE STAMP')



This, one of the first Guild stamps, was printed for the Guild of Assassins with Post Office licence but, alas, not with skilled oversight.

On the first run the denomination was left off, perhaps because the Assassins felt unable to spoil the look of their coat of arms. A more insurmountable problem, however, was that purchasers claimed to feel unaccountably ill after licking, and in one case claimed

to be unaccountably dead.

There was also a pervasive rumor that someone known to the friend of a friend had been found dead after eating twelve of the stamps concealed in a beetroot sandwich by

Whatever the truth of the matter, the stamp sold only to vampires and other members of the city's undead community until in desperation the Post office began to sell them already affixed to envelopes which were printed with the warning in

red: Do Not, Repeat Not Lick, and signed by Assistant Postmaster Groat. There are fewer than a hundred of these known to be in existence

Some unused stamps turn up from time to time. They have been known to kill snails. Collectors should be sure they are handled with tweezers or, for preference, by somebody else.

A Little Gem from the pen of the master, Mr Terry Pratchett.?

THE CURRENT FRANKING STAMPS IN USE AS FROM DECEMBER 2004



ANKH-MORPORK.

This is the common frank for the city, and was the first one used. The design is taken from the city coat of arms & the original Post Office hat badge. Normally red, there have been other colours including black, but these are only struck when the ink pad has been stolen.

STO KERRIG



A town of the plains, about 40 miles from Ankh-Morpork and heavily dependent on cabbages & cabbage based products. A sub Post Office is in operation, the frank is normally black except when its green.

STO LAT



About 20 miles from Ankh-Morpork. The second city to have it's own post station, and quick to employ a registered frank. Colour normally red but it has been known to be black, for similar reasons above.



...... T. Groat. Assistant Postmaster

ANKH-MORPORK POST OFFICE. THE CAUTIONARY FRANK. Only used on the infamous 'Thrupny Dreadful' and as such very rare. If encountered wash your hands thoroughly and go and lie down. You may need a doctor or an undertaker, time will tell.



Used once on the Hogswatch First Day Cover on that date. Unlikely to occur again.



The ANKH-MORPORK Consulate. WINCANTON. Only used for diplomatic mail. Always black. except when red. ALL ABOUT STAMPS FROM THE HOME OF STAMPS IN THIS ISSUE: YOUR FREE STAMP IS THE NOW INFAMOUS 50P CABBAGE GREEN





KINDLY ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE, ABUSE, VALEDICTORY COMMUNICATIONS, OR MARRIAGE PROPOSALS TO:

The Editor The Stanley Howler Stamp Journal. c/o 41 The High Street, Wincanton, Somerset. BA9 9JU Tel 01963 824 686

e-mail bernard@cunningartificer.demon.co.uk www.discworldstamps.com

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