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Dear Member,

Herewith the last journal for 2008 with apologies for its lateness. This is due to work and other commitments. The Society had a good year in 2008 and a very interesting and varied display programme. It started off in January with Austrian First Flights and finished in November with the first 100 years of scouting in Ireland.

One new member was elected during the year. A new librarian and Bourse Secretary were appointed. Society members were successful at exhibitions both domestic and international with some first time entrants. We congratulate all those who gained awards at these exhibitions.

The Society moved back into Ely House for meetings at the beginning of September after almost a year's absence. A few new displayers as well as displays were included in the Society's programme for 2008. This was great to see and hopefully it will continue in future years.

It remains only for me on behalf of myself and the Committee of the Society to wish you all belated New Year Greetings.

NEWS

Membership Changes

No new members have been elected since the last journal. I have received no notification of any resignations or bereavements in the same period.

STAMPA 2008

The Society had a very successful showing at Stampa 2008 and members gained the following medal awards :

Vermeil	-	Brian Warren and Barry Wilson
Silver	-	John Fitzsimons and Anthony Hughes
Silver Bronze	-	John Greer and Pat Casey
Bronze	-	Gerry Byrne, Robert Moore and Robert Sinclair

Exhibition Commissioners

The following members of the Society have been appointed as National Commissioners for exhibitions in 2009 and 2010 :

Brian Warren	-	FEPA Exhibition, Rome October 2009
Pat Casey	-	International, London May 2010
John Fitzsimons	-	International, Lisbon October 2010

New Franking Machines

New franking machines have since October last been installed in a host of Dublin locations including The Square, Tallaght, Blanchardstown, Dublin Airport. These machines weigh items of mail and issue the appropriate valued stamp for the weight. A post box is located with the machine for posting such mail.

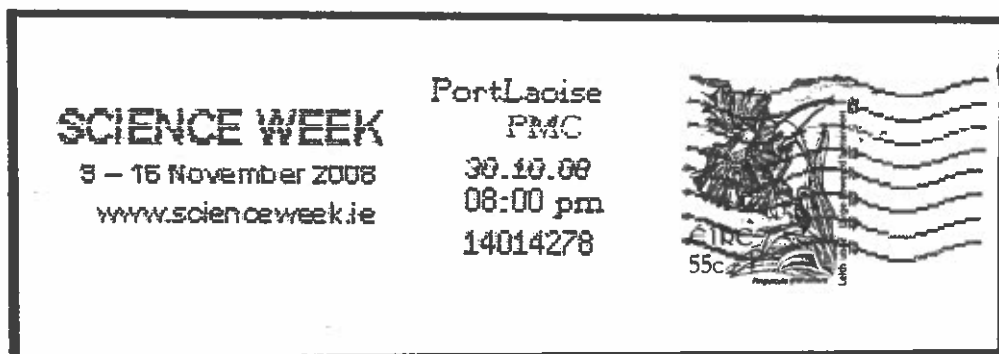
Post boxes

The post box on Errigal Road, Drimmagh referred to in the Sept. journal has now been moved to a location on that road nearer its junction with Drimmagh Road. It is a small square stand alone type and is located at the wall of the Children's Hospital.

IMP Slogans

I have seen the following IMP slogans since the September journal :

SCIENCE WEEK
9-16 November 2008
www.scienceweek.ie



used at Portlaoise Mail Centre on 30 October and presumably at other centres as well, though I have not seen examples of usage.

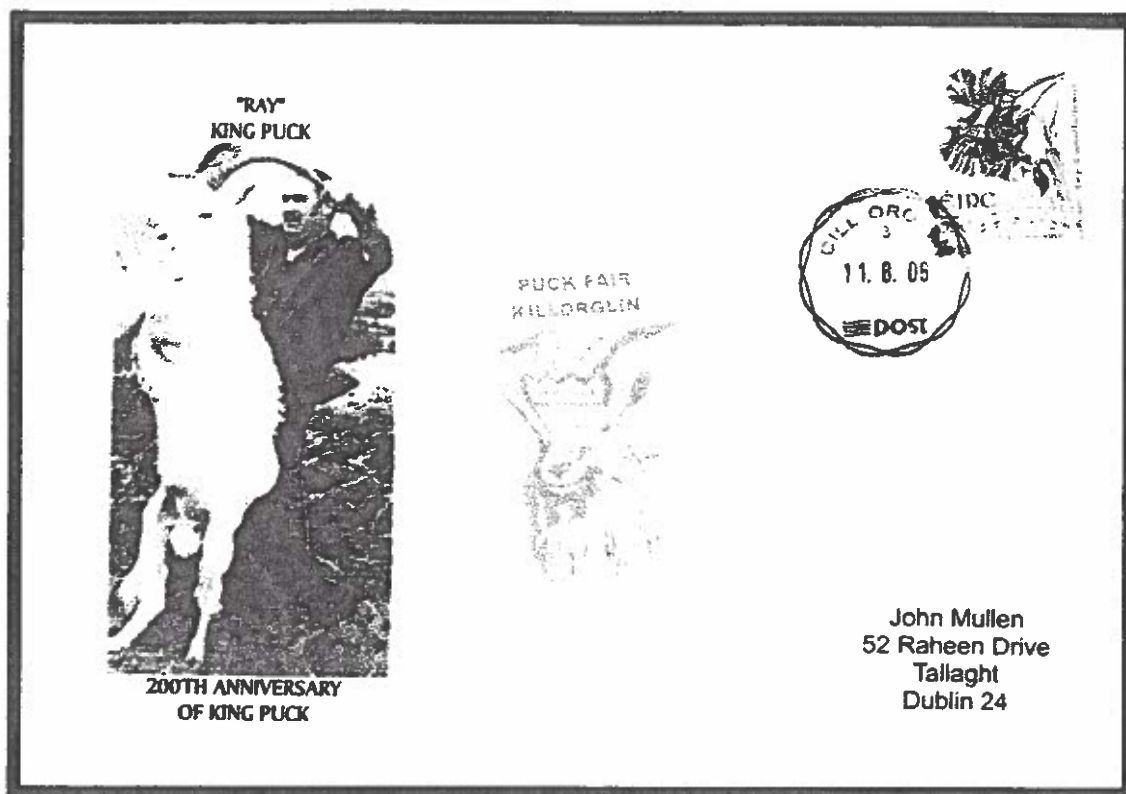
POST
EARLY FOR
CHRISTMAS



Puck Fair Festival
Killorglin Co. Kerry 10th/12th August 2008

By John Mullen

While holidaying in Co. Kerry I always like to take in a visit to the Puck Fair, and this year been no exception I arrived on the 11th August 2008. To my surprise the Puck Fair committee had at the top of the town a mobile office which I visited and made a suggestion to produce an official post card and a cachet, which I had produced for my own benefit, my suggestion was taken on board as a way to raise some badly needed funds, we will have to wait till next year to see if my suggestion will be accepted.



Cover date stamped Killorglin 11.8.08 showing proposed cachet

So where and when did this festival originate

The Origins of the fair have been lost in the midst of antiquity, and various commissions set up over the last 200 years have tried in vain to date them. Evidence suggests that the fair existed long before written records. There is one written reference from the 17th Century in existence which grants Jenkins Conway, the local landlord at the time, the right to collect a sum for every animal brought to the August Fair. This would suggest that the Fair was something already well established in the local community.

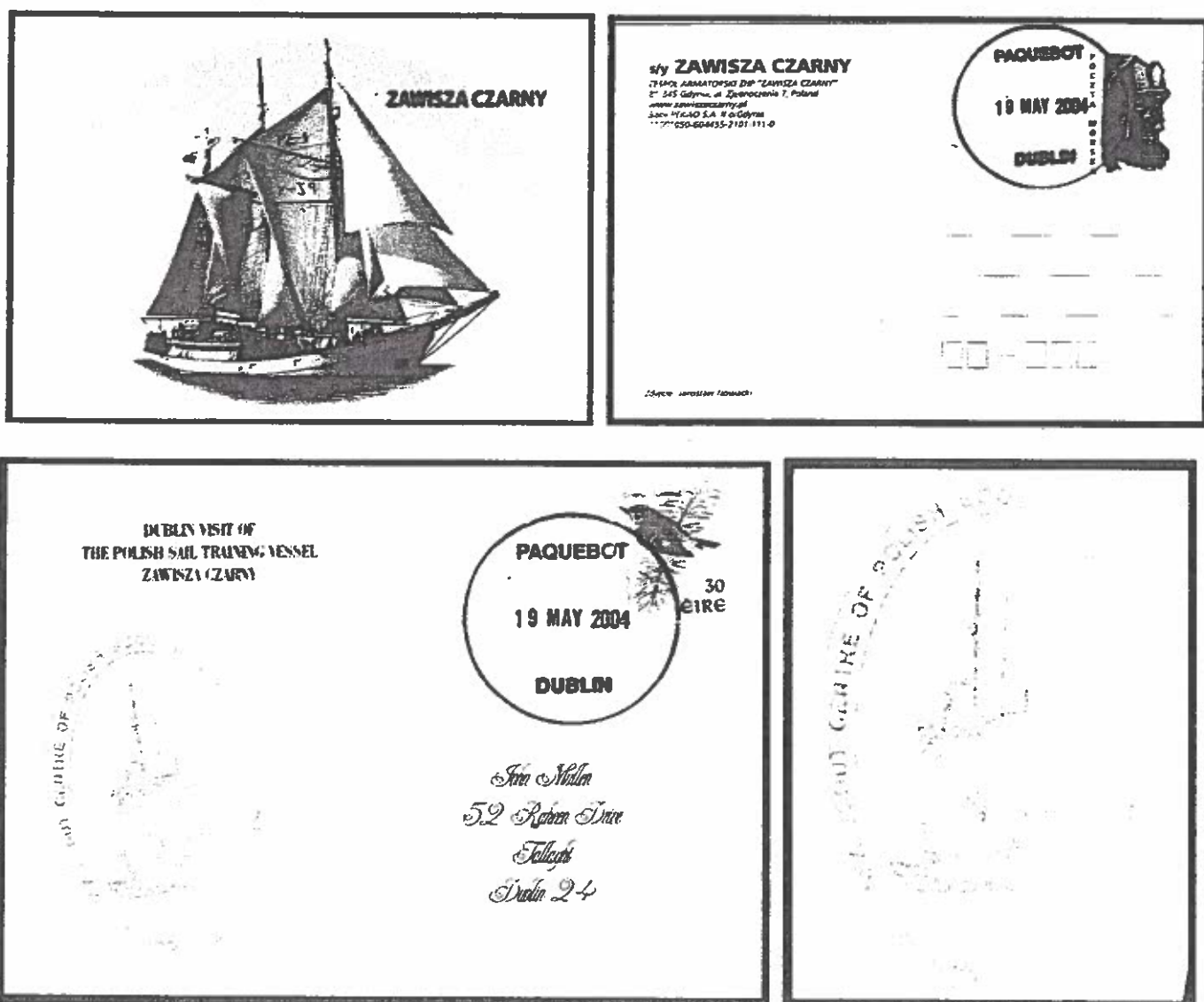
King Puck, when did he appear? one legend regarding the origin of "King Puck" relates to the time of Daniel O'Connell, who in 1808 was an unknown barrister. It seems that before that year, the August fair held in Killorglin had been a toll fair, but an act of the British Parliament empowered the Viceroy or Lord Lieutenant in Dublin to make an order, at his own discretion, making it unlawful to levy tolls at cattle, horse or sheep fairs. Tolls in Killorglin were collected by the local Landlord Mr. Harman Blennerhassett, who had fallen into bad graces with the authorities in Dublin Castle and as a result the Viceroy robbed him of his right to levy tolls.

Blennerhassett enlisted the services of the young Daniel O'Connell, who in an effort to reverse the decision, decided that goats were not covered by the document and that the Landlord was legally entitled to hold a goat fair, and levy his tolls as usual. The fair was promptly advertised as taking place on the 10th August 1808, and on the day, a goat was hoisted on to a stage to show all attending that the fair was indeed a goat fair, and Blennerhassett collected his toll money and Killorglin gained a King. This year's goat was christened Ray (Ray of sunshine) as he was caught on a sunny day, one of the few.

2004 Dublin Visit of the Polish Sail Training Vessel Zawisza Czarny

By J. Mullen

This year 2008 been the Centenary of Scouting, I was looking through my maritime covers and came across the 2004 Polish Sail Training Ship that visited Ireland. On the 19th May 2004 Dublin Docklands received a visit from the Polish Sail Training Ship Zawisza Czarny. The ships hand stamps in English reads Sea Scout Centre of Polish Scouting and Guiding Association with an illustration of the ship in the centre and the second without the scouting inscription. Zawisza Czarny was a Mediaeval Polish Knight of great fame and the ship had on board a pre-paid post card with a pre-paid illustration of Zawisza Czarny. The Ship was built at Gdynia Shipyard in Poland and reminded of our own ill-fated Asgard II in size.



**R.C.C. Suirbhéir
Revenue Maritime Unit.**

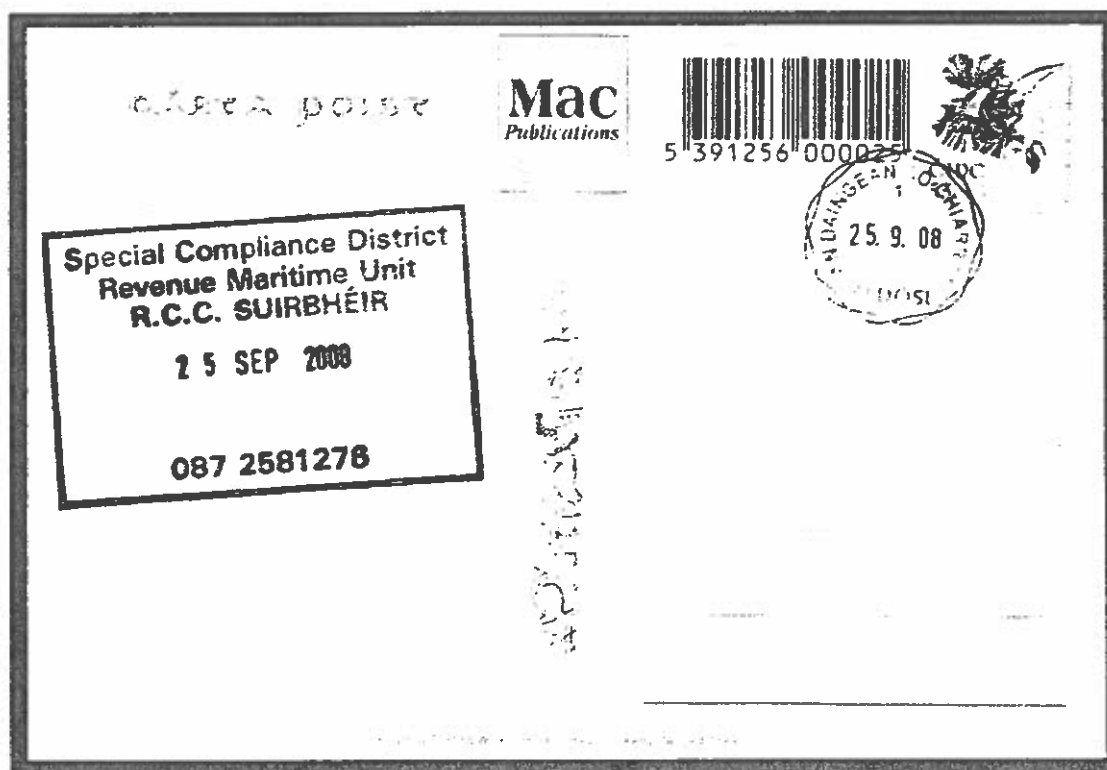
By J Mullen

As most of my friends will know of my interest in ships and their cachets, recently I came across an Irish ship that I had never seen before while on holiday in Kerry, I had brought some friends to An Daingean (or should I say Dingle), while there I spotted what I thought was a Naval ship that I did not recognise, so I purchased a local post card and I went to investigate. Much to my surprise the ship was from a Revenue Maritime Unit, Customs, a smaller ship than the naval ships we know, but still very impressive, I was allowed to enter the Marina with the help of the local Marina Officer who escorted me to the ship for an interview with one of the crew.

The Navy has no authority with this ship but are there to assist the Customs Officers along with the Aer Corps when and where it is necessary. The ship has no armaments so relied on the Navy to assist in difficult situations, and on boarding a suspect boat, Officers from the Customs ship are joined by armed Naval Officers.



Special Compliance District, Revenue Maritime Unit, R.C.C. Suirbhéir 25 Sept 2008 Cachet



Dingle postcard date stamped 25.9.08 An Daingean Co. Chairrai and Customs cachet

Official Classification.

The Revenue Maritime Unit is based in Cork. The units are equipped with rigid inflatable boats and a Revenue Customs Cutter, the R.C.C. Suirbhéir, and is staffed by trained Customs Officers. The objective of the R.C.C. Suirbhéir is the prevention, detection, interception and seizure of controlled drugs, fiscal goods, arms/ammunition/explosives prohibited and restricted goods, smuggled or illegally imported or intended to be exported out of the State/EU.



R.C.C Suirbhéir,

Hull Length:- 22.7 meters, Hull Breath:- 5.4 meters, Engines:- 2 x 820 Kilowatt, Speed:- 25 knots, Fuel Capacity 8000 ltrs. Built by Uudenkaupungin Työväne in Finland at a cost of €1.6 million.

She was named following a competition among Revenue staff which attracted over 2000 entries. The winning suggestion, by Pádraig Dooley from Kilkenny, recalls the former Customs service grade of "Surveyor" which was used for hundreds of years. The name also indicates the function of the vessel while the use of the Irish version is in keeping with the tradition of naming all Government vessels in the first language.

The ship was launched on the 28th June 2004 and officially named by Ms Noeleen McCreevy, wife of Mr Charley McCreevy who was Minister of Finance at that time.

Displays

"Guess What?"

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16 October

This display was given by Pat Carey and was in two parts covering East Germany and extended Germany. It included East German Officials, Courier labels on and off cover official covers, General Government issues some with tabs, Bohemia and Moravia issues.

"Be Prepared" Scouting in Ireland, the First 100 Years.

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13 November

This display was given by Adrian Lee and was his first time to display. The display took the form of Social Philately. It included scouting handbooks, merit badges, material relating to the very early years of scouting as well as stamps, covers, postcards some with Jamboree cancels including Woodstock, Inistige and some Stamp souvenirs.

Open Class Competition

This competition was held on Thurs 2 October with 3 entries each of 9 sheets being submitted. These were - "Enclaves, enclaves and other oddities" by Michael McNamara, "Victorian letters to France and Russia" by Hans Neumann, "Empire to Commonwealth" by Brian O'Connell.

The winner of the competition by a very narrow margin was Hans Neumann with "Victorian letters to France and Russia". This was awarded the Open Class Trophy and medal for 2008.

Cathal O'Griofa Memorial Trophy 2008

The vote for the award of this trophy for 2008 was taken at the meeting of 13 November. Following the counting of votes the winner was Adrian Lee for his display "Be Prepared" Scouting in Ireland, the First 100 Years which had been shown earlier in the evening.

Society Social Evening

This took place in Ely House on Thurs 27 November. It took the format of a slightly larger than normal bourse opener with some very nice material being offered for sale. The bourse aspect of the evening was attended by some 25 members.

Following this a total of 29 members and guests sat down to dinner in the Stafford-Johnson Room in the House. It was fitting to have had the dinner in that room as Dr. Stafford-Johnson was Secretary of the Society in the early 1920s and a Supreme Knight of the Knights of St. Columbanus. This room therefore, has in a way a connection to the Irish Philatelic Society.

The evening after a very satisfactory dinner was topped off by a social Christmas drink in the bar of Ely House.

The Sinking of the Asgard II in the Bay of Biscay September 11th 2008

By J Mullen

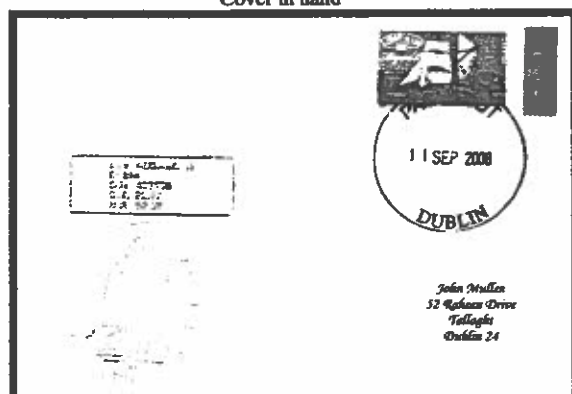
It is with great sadness that I write these few lines on the sinking of the Asgard II in the Bay of Biscay, in which all 25 crew members were rescued by a French coastguard vessel. As all my philatelic friends will know I had a great grá for Asgard II and it is interesting to know that my last contact with the Asgard was at the Dublin Docklands Festival where I had great difficulty getting her ships hand stamp. I contacted Coiste An Asgard The Irish Sail Training Committee who organised a number of the ships hand stamps for me so I had some covers in hand.

It is ironic that the Dublin Docklands Festival coincided with the 90th anniversary of the sinking of R.M.S. Leinster and the sinking of Asgard coincided with the anniversary of 9-11 in America.

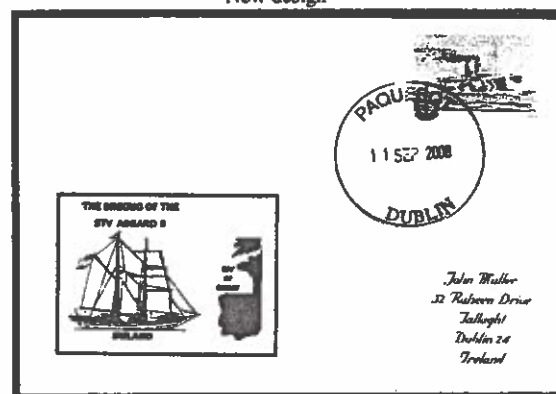
As a result I felt compelled to commemorate the life of Asgard by organising a commemorative cover and the DMC (Dublin Mail Centre) were only to glad to help and in their efforts produced a new Paquebot hand stamp, first used in June 2008, so even in her demise she has produced something new for me.

The Asgard II will be sadly missed, as for many years she has worked very hard with the young people of Ireland in sail training. May she rest in peace in the Bay of Biscay, a Bay that has claimed many ships down through the years.

Cover in hand

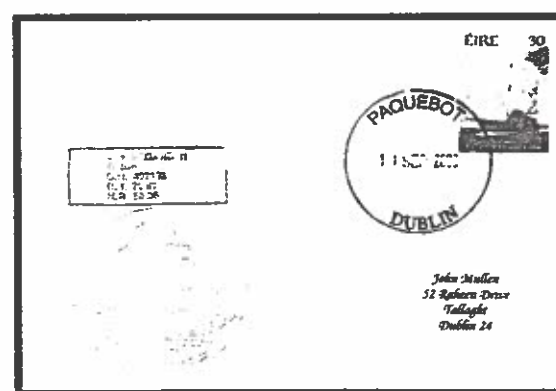


New design



Cover showing Asgard II hand stamps with a French commemorative of the Asgard cancelled with the new DMC Paquebot hand stamp 9-11-2008

Commemorative cover showing the Asgard II off the Bay of Biscay R.M.S. Leinster commemorative stamp cancelled with DMC Paquebot



FDI 90th Anniversary of the sinking of RMS Leinster with Asgard II cachet for Dublin Docklands Festival and paquebot date stamp on the day of sinking

Asgard stamp of 1998 with cachet and Paquebot date stamp for day of sinking

The Asgard II was built by Jack Tyrell of Arklow, Co. Wicklow. On the day of sinking the Captain was Colm Newport whose main priority was the safety of the 5 crew members and 20 trainees travelling on board and ordered all into life boats prior to been picked up by the French Coastguard. Presently we are all in the dark as to what actually happened to our lovely Asgard II.

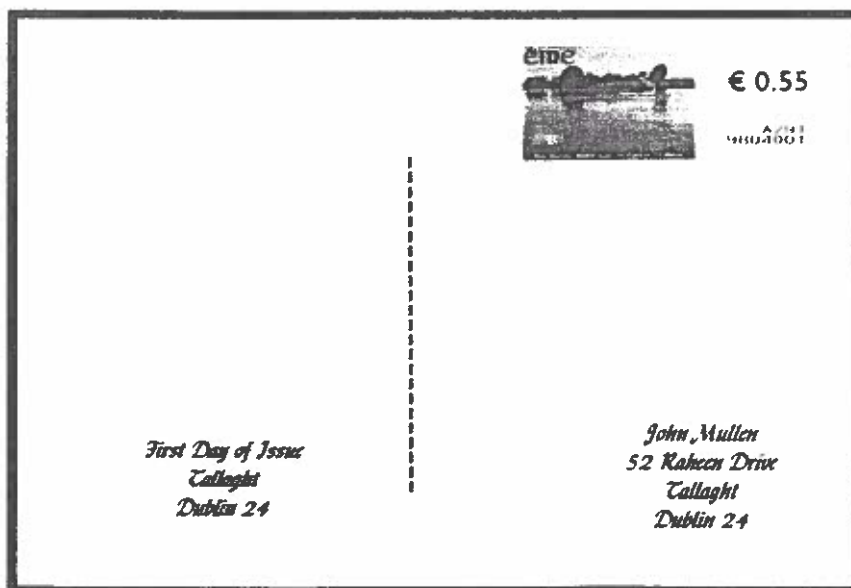
Automatic Postage Labels The Square Tallaght

On the 17th October I received word that the new An Post machine was been installed at the Square Tallaght. I arrived at 11am and the machine was up and running and one of the An Post representatives gave me the introduction.

The machine produces four labels, 55cent local, 82cent airmail, 95cent and 1-50cent for larger local and international envelopes. The machine will also weigh parcels and evaluate cost and then produce a label for the cost of postage, unfortunately the post box beside the machine will not accept parcels thus you have to go to the post office to send the parcel any way !

The labels can be produced in quantities of no more than a strip of five, and can be of any of the four denominations, the original labels in the GPO had four phosphor bands framing the stamp, all labels will now have three vertical phosphor bands and from speaking to the assistant it appears that the extra phosphor bands was the cause of the jamming of the GPO machine, (reading between the lines), see below. Each machine has two different designated numbers (Groff number. Machine number.) with the Groff number printed on the receipt.

The machine will also produce a receipt. There is no facility to register mail at the machine, one of the draw backs of the machine is, when the postage rate increases there is no facility to get the small values needed to upgrade for the increase. At the side of the machine there is a glass drawer which houses Parcel receipts, Customs declaration and airmail stickers, which I doubt will last in a shopping centre where there are so many children, and the weighing scales will provide an interesting play area. All in all, this machine is good and easy to use and saves having to go the busy Post Offices if all you require is some postage stamps or wish to weigh a parcel.



Tallaght First Day of Issue



Mixed labels



Receipt

Update; Tallaght DSU date stamp on further research is Tallaght Delivery Services Unit and not "Sorting"

Gorch Foch German Sail Training Ship

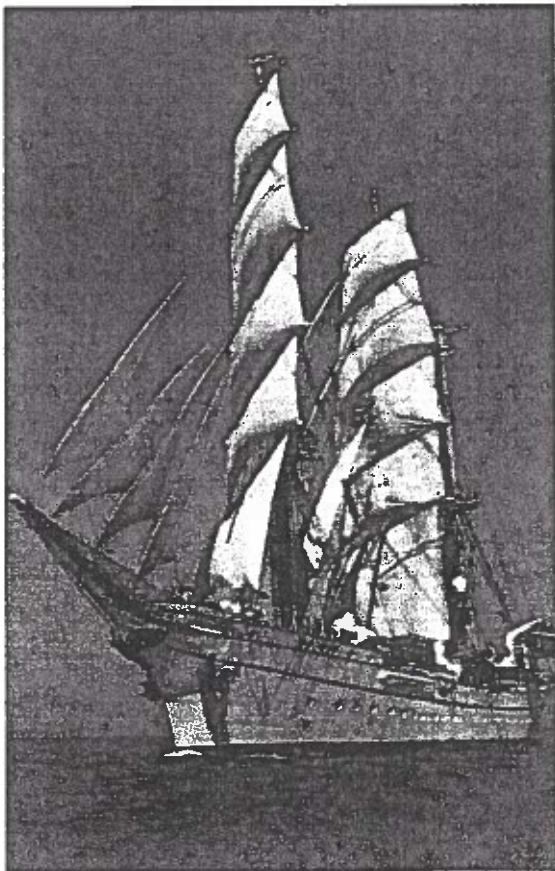
By J. Mullen

On the 24th September 2008 The German Sail Training Ship "Gorch Fock" arrived in Dublin Port as part of a European tour, starting in Keif and continuing on to Hamburg, Dublin, Lisbon, Cadiz, Cherbourg and returning to Kief. The ship is a very impressive ship and on my visit found the crew very accommodating.

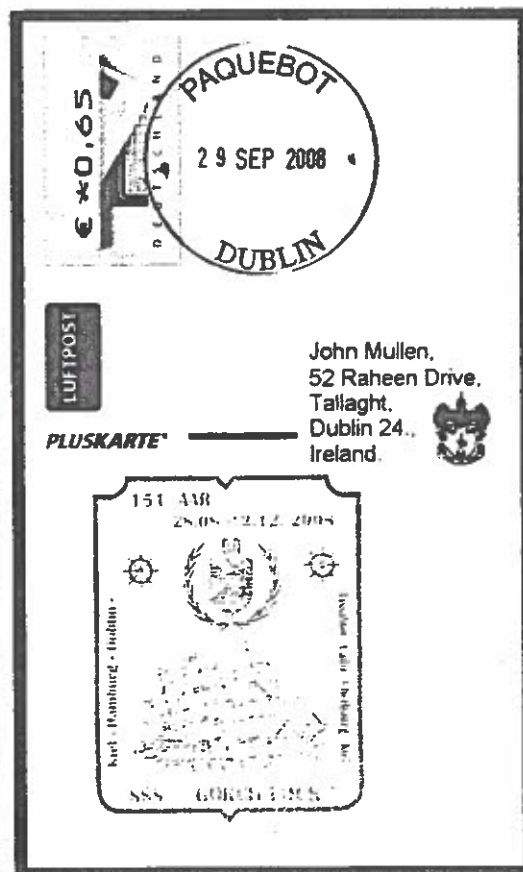
The name "Gorch Fock" was a pseudonym of the author Johann Kinau who was born on 22nd August 1880 in Finenwerder near Hamburg. Johann had a great love of the River Elbe and the sea in general.

However, his wish to become a sailor did not transpire, due to his weak physical constitution, and his father directed him to study as a clerk, later becoming a bookkeeper for the shipping company Hamburg-Amerika-Line and his vision of the sea and seafaring never left him. He became a gifted poet and author. He wrote a large number of stories in both standard and Low German and is credited to introducing the Low German language spoken in the Elbe region into German literature.

The first "Gorch Fock" is now on display in Stralsund harbour. "The Eagle" (ex Horst Wessel), the "Sagres" and the "Mircea" serve as sail training ships for the US Coast Guard, the Portuguese and Rumanian Navy. After the end of the war, the "Herbert Norkus" was filled with ammunition and sunk.



Gorch Fock at sea showing full sail.



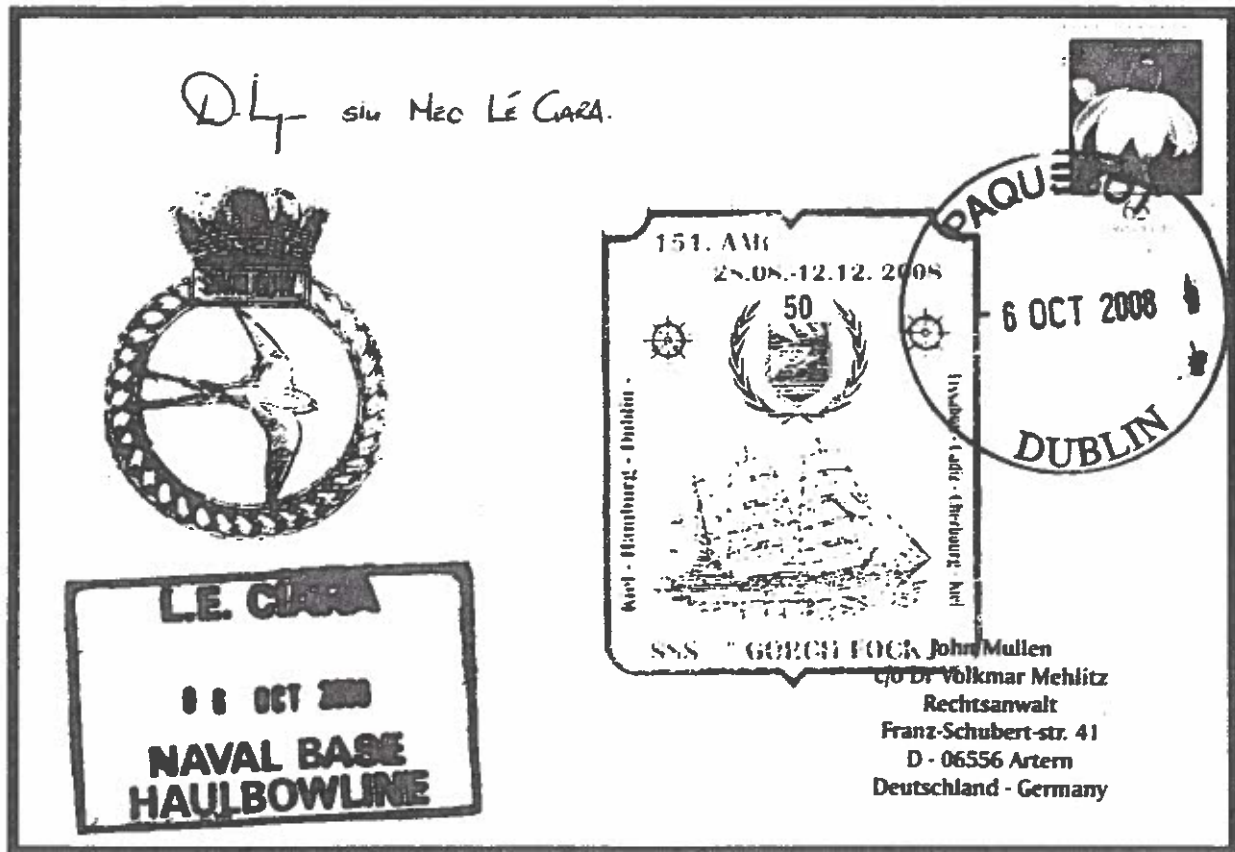
German Postcard date stamped
Dublin Paquebot 29th September 2008
also showing the Ships cachet

**Irish Naval Ship
L.E. CIARA**

By J. Mullen

Over the weekend I went down to see the German ship SSS Gorch Fock. When I went on board I found the crew very helpful in every respect, I managed to get a number of the ships postcards 8 in all.

While there I noted the L.E. Ciara in port so I proceeded to walk down to the ship and asked a member of the crew, if it would be possible to get examples of the ships cachet which he was delighted to accommodate me. I was introduced to David Lyons Sub. Lt. Maritime Engineer on board L.E. Ciara, he kindly produced the ships hand stamp which I applied to some covers. We got talking and the conversation came round to philatelic matters and he inquired as to what I did with these covers and after explaining, he indicated he had a second hand stamp which he went and got for me. Much to my surprise the hand stamp was from HMS Swallow. The HMS Swallow was a British Naval ship which patrolled the Hong Kong waters. After Hong Kong was handed back to China the Irish Government purchased HMS Swallow and re-named her L.E. Ciara.



Cover date stamped 6.Oct.2008. Paquebot Dublin with German Definitive 65 cents
and showing Cachets from "SSS Gorch Fock"

"L.E. Ciara"

and "HMS Swallow"

Signed by David Lyons Sub. Lt.
Maritime Engineer Irish Navy

TALLAGHT DSU
Delivery / Sorting / Unit

By John Mullen

On the 1st of September I received a cover from Germany and much to my surprise it had a new two coloured Tallaght hand stamp on it. I called down to the delivery office to enquire, to find that they had 2 hand stamps, the second been all black, when I enquired as to what the DSU stands for I was told it was **Tallaght Delivery / Sorting / Unit**. The hand stamp reads, Tallaght DSU with a centre date and the unit address Unit 5, Sq. (Square) Ind. (Industrial) Complex, Dublin 24.

You will also note that the date in the Bi-colour stamp has a slash / for 1 (01)

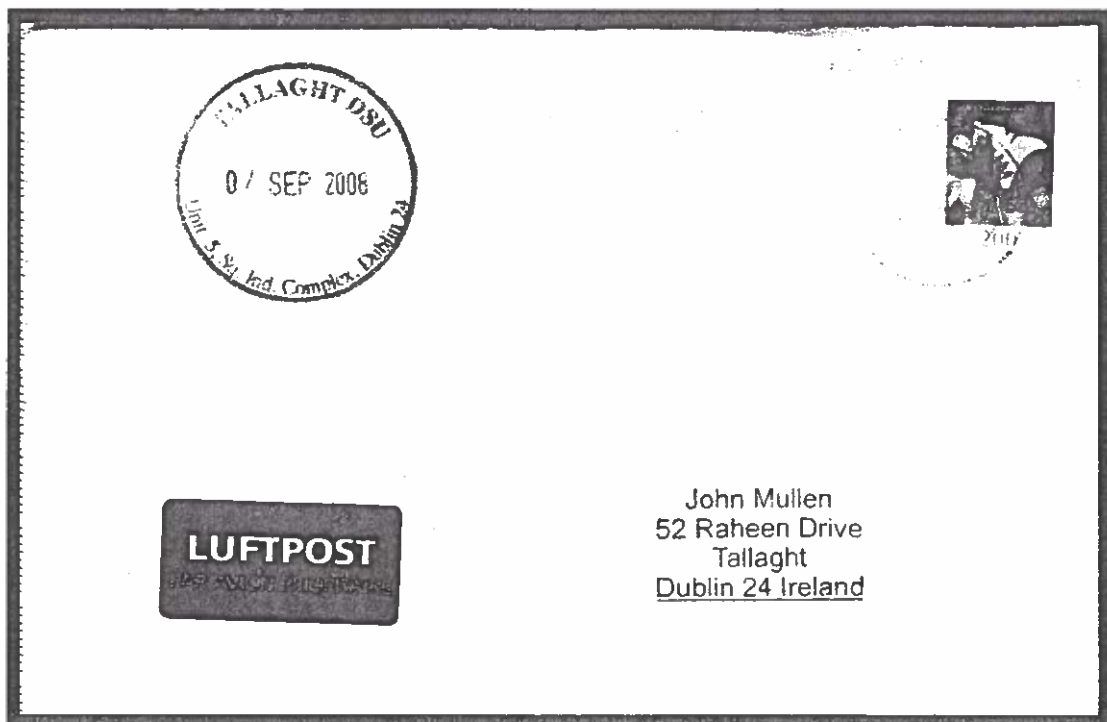
Actual size



Tallaght DSU in black



Tallaght DSU in two colours Red and Black



Cover Germany to Tallaght showing the new Tallaght hand stamp