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Small shop huge site



Whilst viewed with feint suspicion at first, the introduction of the world wide web has proved a boon to stamp collectors.

Today over the internet, sales are booming as more and more dealers and individual collectors trade on the web.

Setting up a commercial internet site, however, is not easy and a stamp site, in particular is fraught with difficulties, resulting in some sites proving very difficult to navigate, especially for stamp collectors with only a rudimentary knowledge of the internet.

One site that shines out like a beacon, however, is Rowan Baker's at the Covent Garden Stamp Shop.

Actually it is not 'a site' but four 'stand alone' sites; GB, Commonwealth, USA and Foreign.

Not only have the sites literally thousands of items for sale (currently over 24,000), navigating is easy and the viewer has several choices of how he or she can group the search: by

country, year, subject (theme), omnibus, condition, SG catalogue number (SG or Scott on the USA site), price or type. In some cases there are further sub-categories within the main ones to narrow a search more specifically. In addition, the sites will also be offering a limited selection of catalogues, mounts, albums, accessories and stockbooks. Most items are illustrated, proprietor Rowan Baker has scanned literally thousands and thousands of stamps!

All items on the sites are in stock and collectors will receive the actual stamp or stamps illustrated. Rowan has praised his web development team for the comprehensive site they have constructed, although he admits that they have no wish to take on another stamp dealer!

The Covent Garden Stamp Shop website is, however, not fully completed as Rowan is working on several refinements to make it even more impressive. The first site, the Commonwealth, came on line on 8 March 2006 and was the fifth attempt to get it right! Foreign followed about six months later and GB went live on 21 November 2006. The latest site, USA, went live on 18 May 2008.

Fears over disclosure of personal details have also been dealt with in a most satisfactory manner. The website uses SSL encryption to ensure personal information is delivered to Rowan over a secure connection.

Personal details are not stored on the website. Collectors can order and pay for stamps using the encrypted secure payment system, by visiting the shop or over the phone.

The websites can be found at:
www.british-stamps.com
www.usa-stamps.com
www.commonwealth-stamps.com
www.foreign-stamps.com

The shop can be found at 28, Bedfordbury, Covent Garden, London WC2N 4RB.