

Isle of Man Launches WW I Series



The Isle of Man and The Royal British Legion have joined together to mark the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of WW I with an impressive Trench Warfare issue. Perhaps best known for its yearly Poppy Appeal and Remembrance services, the Royal British Legion promotes the welfare and interests of current and former members of the British Armed Forces.

Due to be released on February 19, the issue includes a set of six singles, a souvenir sheet and two presentation packs and First Day Covers. It is the first in a four year series that will continue through 2017. The mint stamps are issued in sheets of seven with a label bearing the words of Rupert Brooke, "Safe, Though All Safety's Lost...". Brooke was a young British poet who died from an infected mosquito bite while serving with the British Mediterranean Expeditionary Force in 1915.

Shown above and on the Official First Day Cover, the stamps show black and white images alongside the Royal British Legion poppy. The six images used in this issue reflect and depict life in the trenches—communications, war horses, sappers that dug tunnels under the trenches, the trenches themselves, the officers' dugout and Christmas truce. The stuffer card for the FDC includes an illustrated story of the issue.



A native of California, Kimball has a B.A. in Philosophy from Scripps College, an M.S.L.S. from the University of Southern California and an M.A. in History from the University of California, Irvine. In 1985 she received a Fulbright Fellowship at University College, Cardiff in Wales.

An academic research librarian at the University of California for most of her career, she also spent a year as a Local History Librarian in Northampton Central Library in England, her collection includes art and craft described as "trench art" that was made from salvaged materials, often from the battlefield itself, empty ordinance shells and bones, created by professional and amateur artists, often with a commemorative theme.



Shown above is the cover of the four-page Presentation Pack for the set of singles. A Presentation Pack also will be available for the souvenir sheet.

Text by Colonel Charles Wilson accompanying the stamp issue describes the way in which the war was fought, and how the Isle of Man was involved both at home and in the trenches. The text that accompanies the miniature sheet is by Jane Kimball and discusses the trench art originating during WW I.

As with all current and recent Isle of Man stamps and coins, the WW I set and mini sheet are available to order online with free worldwide delivery at the Isle of Man Post Office site, <http://www.iompostoffice.com/stamps/>.



The miniature sheet (next column) features trench art, with the stamp within the miniature sheet being an image from the collection of trench art formed by Jane A. Kimball, a world respected author who is based in the U.S. It is described as "a detail from a German Christmas card produced in Knockaloe Camp on the Isle of Man in 1917," Knockaloe being an interment camp on the Isle of Man for aliens during World War I.