

Press Release

Date: 23rd April 2021

Isle of Man Post Office Celebrates the Life and Legacy of John Ruskin



Isle of Man Post Office is pleased to issue this set of six stamps in celebration of the life and legacy of one of Victorian Britain's most influential figures, John Ruskin. The Guild of St. George, set-up by Ruskin 150 years ago, played a pivotal role in the history of the Laxey Woollen Mills - a Manx institution that continues to practice traditional crafting methods to this day.

John Ruskin (1819 – 1900) was a writer, artist and philanthropist, and a fierce critic of prevailing social and political norms. He wrote about nature, art and architecture, craftsmanship, geology, botany, Greek myth and education—a dizzying variety of subjects. Driven by his deep faith in social justice, his concern for the impact of industrial society on people and their environment, and

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his passionate advocacy of a sustainable relationship between people, craft and nature, he established the Guild of St George in 1871 to right some of the social wrongs of the day and make England a happier and more beautiful place in which to live and work.

With the assistance of the Ashmolean Museum and the Guild of St. George, local designer Emma Cooke of EJC Design was able to create six compelling stamps narrating the story of John Ruskin's life and the impact his actions and initiatives have had on countless lives and continue to do so to this day.

Declan McCarthy, Head of Publishing and Licensing Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology University of Oxford said: *"The Ashmolean Museum is thrilled to be partnered with Guild of St George to celebrate the genius of John Ruskin in this beautiful set of stamps from the Isle of Man Post Office. Ruskin was a true polymath and genius of his time, and it is warming to know that he continues to be celebrated more than 120 years after his passing. ."* He continued: *"This set of stamps marks the culmination of a number of months of collaboration with both the Isle of Man Post Office and the Guild. As Ruskin said: 'Quality is never an accident; it is always the result of intelligent effort.'"*

Dr. Rachel Dickinson, Master of the Guild of St. George said *"On behalf of Ruskin's Guild and our 320 Companions around the world, can I express our delight and appreciation for this beautiful acknowledgement of John Ruskin's founding of the Guild 150 years ago, with the set of six stamps issued by the Isle of Man Post Office, in partnership with the Guild and the Ashmolean Museum."* She further added *"In his lifetime, Ruskin's ideas, values and his writing across a dazzling range of subjects had a colossal influence on public debate and thought in the 19th century. As an educational charity committed to making lives better through the lens of art, craft and the rural economy, we are delighted to celebrate the continued importance of Ruskin's ideas in the 21st century."*

John Wood, Managing Director Laxey Woollen Mills, said: *"John Ruskin, along with Egbert Rydings and the Guild of St. George were instrumental in setting up Laxey Woollen Mills in 1881, so we are absolutely delighted and honoured to be featured in this fabulous issue, celebrating the life of John Ruskin. One hundred and forty years later Laxey Woollen Mills is still here, continuing to stand by Ruskin principles, producing quality hand-woven cloth and garments on traditional pedal looms using locally grown Manx Loaghtan and other Manx wools. We think he would approve."*

Maxine Cannon, General Manager Isle of Man Stamps & Coins, said: *"We would like to thank the staff of the Ashmolean Museum for their assistance in the research and production of this issue, as well as expressing gratitude to the Guild of St. George for their contribution. But our journey started much closer to home, the day we received the book A Weaver's Tale: The Life & Times of the Laxey Woollen Industry 1860 – 2010 by local author Sue King. We are indebted to her for the wealth of research material within her book, and Manx National Heritage for the supply of images."*

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The stamps will be issued on 27th April 2021 and will be available as Set, Sheet Set, Presentation Pack (limited to 1500) and First Day Cover (limited to 2250). For more information visit www.iompost.com/ruskin.

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Technical Details

Text: The Guild of St. George and The Ashmolean Museum

Design: EJC Design

Printer: Cartor

Process: Offset Lithography

Colours: 4

Paper: 110gms PVA gummed

Perforations: 13 per 2cm

Stamp Size: 40mm x 40mm

Format: Sheets of 16

Date of Issue: 27th April 2021

NOTES TO EDITOR

- For images of the stamps, please [here](#).
- Attachment 1: Issue Text
- Attachment 2: Set
- Attachment 3: Press Release Word Document
- **About the Guild of St. George** The Guild of St George, a registered charity No. 231758, was founded by John Ruskin 150 years ago, in 1871, to make Britain a happier place to live in. It has two major cultural assets: the Ruskin Collection in Sheffield, cared for by Museums Sheffield, and Ruskin Land near Bewdley in the Wyre Forest, 100 acres of oak woodland, orchard and meadow. Its most vital asset is the international network of more than 320 Companions (members), who share a common interest in Ruskin's values and concerns and seek through their work and example to engage diverse audiences with Ruskin's ideas today. More information at www.guildofstgeorge.org.uk
- **About the Ashmolean Museum** The Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology in Oxford was established in 1683 and is the oldest museum in the United Kingdom. It houses the University of Oxford's collections of art and antiquities. The Museum was enhanced by a 2009 redevelopment project, which saw the collections expand into 39 new galleries. The holdings have the character of a 'collection of collections', an accumulation of sometimes highly specialised private collections.
- **Photographic Credits:**

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- 1st value - St George and the Dragon, by John Ruskin, after Carpaccio. c. Ruskin Collection at Museums Sheffield. Insert: Egbert Rydings © Manx National Heritage (PG/13227). Laxey Woollen Mill © Isle of Man Department for Enterprise.
 - EU value - Street poster in Walkley, Sheffield, 2019, photograph by Jenny Owens.
 - L value - John Ruskin (1819-1900), Study of a Velvet Crab, 1870. Bodycolour over graphite on blue wove paper, 31.5 x 21.5 cm. Ashmolean Museum (WA.RS.ED.199).
 - ROW value - Venice by J M Nicolson © Manx National Heritage (195Li-2501/012)
 - £1.82 value - John Ruskin (1819-1900), Drawing of the Pier in Turner's 'Calais Pier', 1878. Watercolour and bodycolour over graphite on wove paper, 13.8 x 22.2 cm. Ashmolean Museum (WA.RS.SUP.176).
 - £2.17 value - Photographs of Ruskin Land in the Wyre Forest by John Iles.
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Issued by Nicole Livingston, PR, Communication and Social Media Executive, Isle of Man Post Office
Tel: 01624 698 471 Email: nicole.livingston@iompost.com

Sales & Marketing

Phone: +44 (0)1624 698 437
Mobile: +44 (0)7624 497 248
Email – Maxine Cannon
maxine.cannon@iompost.com

Customer Services

Phone: +44 (0)1624 698 430
Fax: +44 (0)1624 698 434
Email: stamps@iompost.com

www.iomstamps.com

Office hours: Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5pm GMT