

Dogs on Stamps

By Neil Ritchie

Crufts 2023 dog competition has finished and this year's Best in Show is a Lagotto Romagnolo called Orca, my congratulations to all the owners and dogs that took part. But do you know how many GB stamps have been produced featuring our wonderful doggy friends? and which breeds have been chosen?



Well, the count starts with the first dog issue that appeared way back in 1979 with a set of four stamps depicting an Old English Sheepdog, a West Highland Terrier, an Irish Setter and a Welsh Springer Spaniel, notice how the four Home Countries were all represented. This was followed in 1981, the International Year of the Disabled, with a blind man and guide dog and in 1990 by a single stamp of the Sesquicentennial (150th) celebration of the RSPCA series of an adorable puppy. Up until now no breed of dog had been shown twice - but that was about to change with the issue of a set of stamps featuring a few of the dogs painted by George Stubbs. During the 18th Century he undertook a lot of dog portraits for wealthy owners, those highlighted included a Pointer, King Charles Spaniel, a Rough Dog? (whatever that was) Foxhounds, a Spitz and another small Spaniel. In 2001 a selection of Dogs and Cats appeared of which five featured dogs, these were more generic and include a man with dog on a bench (looks very like a Terrier), a dog in a bath possibly a Retriever, a Boxer, a Hound in a car and a dog behind a fence (really difficult to tell what type of dog that was!). 2005 saw a sheepdog as part of the Farm Animals series and in 2008 the Working Dogs set of stamps included a Golden Retriever, German Shepherd, Springer Spaniel and Collie. In 2010 seven stamps celebrated the Battersea Dogs Home and finally in 2014 a stamp showed the classic Dougal from the Magic Roundabout TV children's programme. This makes a grand total of 33 dogs assuming, of course, that you agree to Dougal being a dog.

Dogs are great animals as they can help with people's mental well being and being extremely useful in rescue, assistance and security. They have the ability of being equally exasperating and adorable, but only if you are a dog lover!.