

Reprinted from "The South Pacific Perfin Bulletin" No.33 October 1995. JOHN MATHEWS writes:-

"After the previous articles brought no response from other readers about the "snowflakes" on the 1993 Christmas mini-sheet stamps produced by The Netherlands, I decided to write to the authorities' in' The Netherlands and received the following reply from PTT POST FILATELiE in Haarlem:-

"With reference to your letter of 5 August 1995, I would like to provide you with some background information about the 1993 Xmas stamps. " PTT Post ordered the designer to create 'cheerful' December stamps. He worked this feature into the design in three ways.

First of all, cheerfulness is reflected in the image, the cheery colours, the atmosphere associated with festivities & fireworks, and the hands of the clock which ring in the new year. In the second place, the shape added a festive character to the stamp - it was the first time in The Netherlands that a stamp had this shape, which provided the stamp with a special feature.

The third aspect concerned the pattern of holes. The underlying idea was to make the stamp appear more playful. By putting holes in the stamps, the colour of the envelope becomes part of the stamp. During the holiday season, envelopes of different

colours are used to send Christmas cards and New Year greetings, so the stamps take on a range of additional colours. The purpose of the holes was to contribute to the festive character of the stamps."

(Ed:- and we had been looking for deep and significant meaning when the answer was so simple!)

* * * * *