BRITISH PHILATELIC

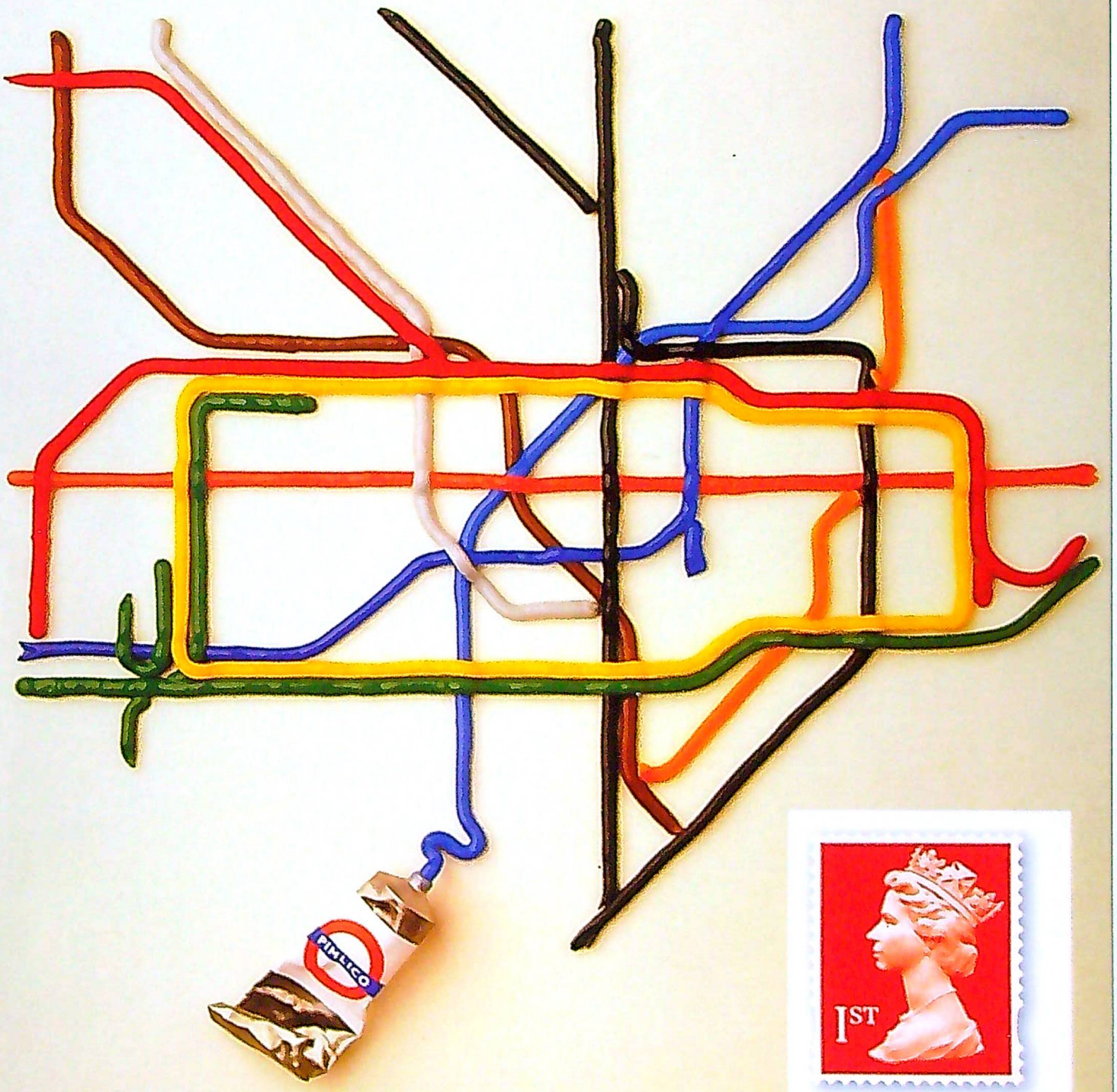
Bulletin

Volume 50 Number 5

The Royal Mail magazine for stamp collectors

50TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR | JANUARY 2013 £1.20

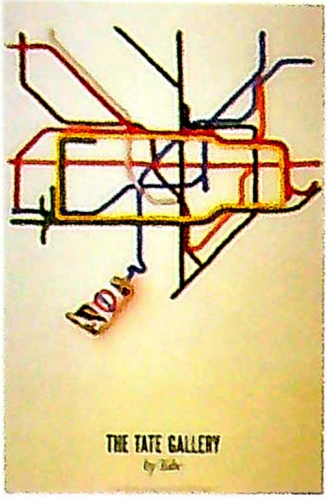
Jane Austen • Pondlife • Underground Art



Issued this month: the Royal Mail Red definitive, plus arty, historic London Underground specials

WIN 2013 DEFINITIVES • PREVIEW NEW POST & GO MACHIN • M ROBINSON VICTORIAN POST BOXES

Issues and withdrawals



Cover: The Tate Gallery By Tube, by David Booth of the agency Fine White Line,1986; courtesy of the London Underground Museum. This image is shown on one of the London Underground stamps issued this month. For more details see page 148. Stamp image © Royal Mail Group Ltd

To order philatelic items, including those listed on the right, contact Royal Mail Tallents House at the address below. Minimum handling charge UK £1.45, Europe £1.55, rest of world (airmail) £2.15. Some products can be ordered on the Royal Mail's website: www.royalmail.com/stamps. Selected items are available at Post Office branches and philatelic outlets at main post offices in: Bristol, Cambridge, Chester, Colchester, Croydon, Durham, Edinburgh, Exeter, Glasgow, Grimsby, Harrogate, London (Eastcheap and Trafalgar Square), Norwich, Nottingham, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Southend on Sea, Stevenage, Stroud, Trowbridge, Truro, York and Newport, Isle of Wight

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Information about Royal Mail products is that which is available at the time of going to press. Royal Mail is not responsible for opinions and information provided by independent writers in the features section of this publication.

3 January	**Issue** Definitive Colour Palette revision – 'Royal Mail Red' 1st Class and 1st Class Large, 'Slate Grey' 50p, 'Wood Brown' £1; values 1p, 2p, 5p, 10p and 20p colour unchanged but with iridescent overprint: Stamps, Presentation Pack, 6 x 1st Class Stamp Book, 12 x 1st Class Stamp Book, 4 x 1st Class Large Letter Stamp Book, 100 x 1st Class Business Sheet colour change, 50 x 1st Class Large Letter Business Sheet **Issue** Country Definitives English and Welsh: change of printer and sheet format for 1st and 2nd Class.
9 January	**Issue** London Underground: Stamps, Miniature Sheet, Stamps and Miniature Sheet Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards, Stamp Book 4 x Machins 1st Class and 2 x London Underground Stamps, Coin Cover
9 January	**Withdrawal** Roald Dahl: Stamps, Miniature Sheet, Prestige Stamp Book, Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards
2 February	**Withdrawal** Kings and Queens series – Houses of Lancaster and York; House of Tudor, House of Stewarts, House of Stuart, House of Hanover, House of Windsor: Stamps, Miniature Sheets, Presentation Packs, Stamp Cards
7 February	**Issue** Lunar Year of the Snake: Generic Sheet
20 February	**Issue** Post & Go 2nd Class Machins: 2nd Class and 2nd Class Large Stamps
21 February	**Issue** The Work of Jane Austen: Stamps, Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards
22 February	**Issue** Post & Go, Freshwater Life 1 – Ponds: Stamps

Royal Mail

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Dive into Ponds! The first in a new series of Post & Go Freshwater Life stamps **150**

The *British Philatelic Bulletin* is published monthly by Royal Mail, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB ● Editor: William Doherty ● Price £1.20 from Post Office Ltd philatelic outlets (see opposite) ● **Annual subscription** £12.95 UK & Europe; £17.95 elsewhere. Send subscriptions to Royal Mail Tallents House (address opposite) ● **Binders** (to hold 24 issues) £8.50, storage boxes (about 30 copies) £9.95 available by post from Royal Mail Tallents House ● Royal Mail also publishes the fortnightly *British Postmark Bulletin*, giving details of forthcoming special handstamps – available on annual subscription from Royal Mail Tallents House: £12.25 UK and Europe, £24.95 rest of the world ● ©Royal Mail. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or parts is prohibited without prior permission of the Editor ● **Printed** in Great Britain by Zenith Print & Packaging Ltd ● **ISSN** 0953 8119 ● Royal Mail is a trading name of Royal Mail Group Ltd Registered in England and Wales, number 4138203. Registered office: 100 Victoria Embankment, London EC4Y 0HQ.

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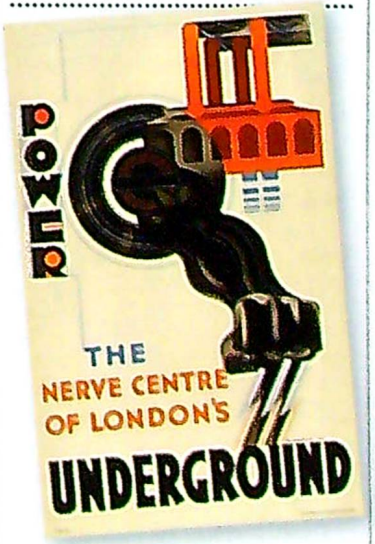


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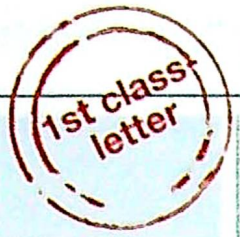
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Correspondence

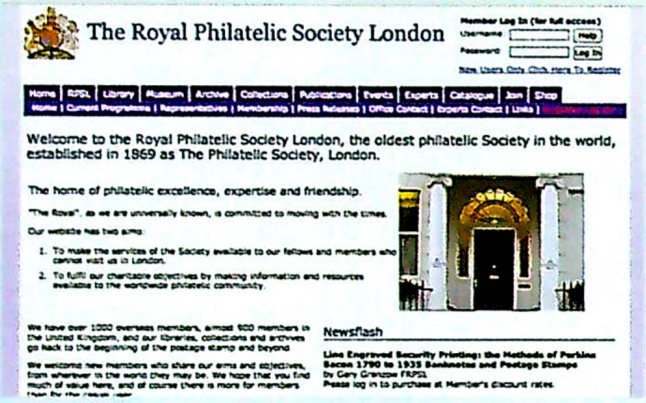


Cumulative index

Larry Rosenblum's letter in the November edition of the *British Philatelic Bulletin* (Vol 50, No. 3, p68) raises a topic which the Royal Philatelic Society London [RPSL] has some sympathy with. At our headquarters in London we have complete runs of over 2,000 philatelic journals, including the *British Philatelic Bulletin*. Although this is a tremendous resource, it is often very difficult to find out exactly what is in these journals. Our solution was to create the RPSL Catalogue, which hosts cumulative indexes to many journals. Currently we have indexes to approximately 160 titles, one of which is the *British Philatelic Bulletin*. The BPB index at present covers 14 volumes, but it is being expanded as and when volunteer time is available. These indexes are available to both members and non-members of 'the Royal' online at www.rpsl.org.uk.

A search of the cumulative indexes provides hits on 474 articles about Machins, of which just 20 are in the *British Philatelic Bulletin*. These hits cover 18 titles altogether, published in several countries.

Frank Walton FRPSL, Vice President, The Royal Philatelic Society London


The Royal Philatelic Society London

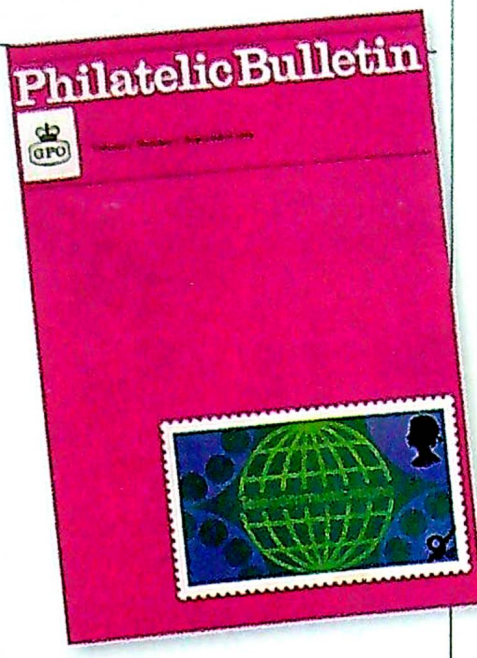
Welcome to the Royal Philatelic Society London, the oldest philatelic Society in the world, established in 1869 as The Philatelic Society, London.

The home of philatelic excellence, expertise and friendship.

Newsflash

Keep the mail coming...

The Editor welcomes your letters and the senders of those published will receive philatelic delights as a thank-you. Occasionally we award a *Bulletin* binder to the writer of the 'First-class letter'. Send your letters to: The Editor, *British Philatelic Bulletin*, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB. Remember, you can also send e-mails to bulletin.enquiries@royalmail.com



Stamped receipts of the 1960s

Further to your request for letters from loyal *Bulletin* subscribers, I can advise you that the earliest *Bulletin* I have is September 1969 and I have also kept an article from the Stamp Magazine announcing the formation of the Bureau.

In those days you had to find a co-operative Postmaster if you wanted specific items such as cylinder blocks. I also remember that receipts were issued with the appropriate stamp – are these collectable?

John Paul, Somerset

Thank you for sending the interesting enclosures, which we hope to show in a future edition of *Bulletin*. The receipts you have collected are indeed collectable. Have any other *Bulletin* readers kept them with their stamp collections?

2012 Favourite Stamp Poll

Along with the November issue of *Bulletin*, you should have received a leaflet inviting you to take part in our annual Readers Stamp Poll. It shows all the special-issue stamps of 2012 in miniature, to help you choose your favourites. We value your opinion, so if for any reason you did not receive a leaflet, please contact the address on the left. Use the Freepost address on the leaflet or vote by e-mail to bpb.readerspoll@rocketmail.com.

Oh, and remember – one lucky voter drawn at random wins a 2012 Royal Mail Year Book!

ROYAL MAIL DEFINITIVE STAMPS



What's new... the Royal Mail Red Machin begins the year on a bright note

FROM 3 JANUARY the colour of the First Class and First Class Large Definitive stamps is 'Royal Mail Red', replacing the special Diamond Blue colour that was chosen to mark The Queen's Diamond Jubilee during 2012.

The 50p definitive will change colour from Light Grey to Slate Grey and the £1 from Ruby to Wood Brown. The colours of the other values – 1p, 2p, 5p, 10p and 20p – remain the same until their next tariff change, but the Royal Mail iridescent overprint is added on all values.

Royal Mail is also marking this significant change of colour palette with a First Day Cover, Presentation Pack and three Stamp Books. ▸

New Colour Definitives	
Design	Original bas relief by Arnold Machin
Sheet format	1st Class – Portrait 1st Class Large – Landscape
Stamp size	20mm x 24mm Portrait 30mm x 24mm Landscape
Printer	De La Rue Security Print
Print process	Gravure
Perforations	Kiss-die cut simulated
Phosphor	Bars
Gum	Self-adhesive

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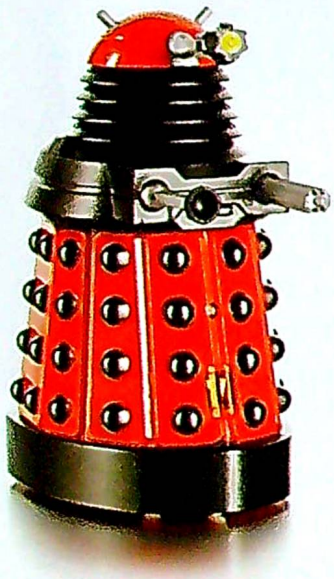
Above: new colours and old sit well together in the Presentation Pack

Left: Royal Mail Red Stamp Books are available in books of 4, 6 or 12. Standard size stamp in books of 6 and 12, Large size stamp books of 4



Above: Definitives Presentation Pack, £3.90

Definitive story Inside the elegant and informative Definitive Presentation Pack, Douglas Muir outlines the history of Definitive Stamps since the Penny Black, including details of how Arnold Machin's iconic design was first created and developed for use on stamps. The Royal Mail Machin definitive, featuring Arnold Machins bas-relief portrait of Her Majesty The Queen, was first introduced in June 1967 and since then has appeared on more than 200 billion stamps across the world •



The First Day Cover for the new colour palette Definitives is designed by Robert Maude and features a detail of the Royal Mail Coat of Arms. It was shown on page 101 of last month's *Bulletin* and is available until 3 January •

Coming off There is still time to enjoy the Kings and Queens stamp series and the Roald Dahl special issue in mint condition, but both are coming off sale very soon – check page 130 for the withdrawal dates of these popular issues •

Take me to your album The wraps are off this year's Classic TV stamps – the subject will be *Doctor Who*. Watch out for more details in *Bulletin*. The last time a Dalek was featured on a Royal Mail stamp was to represent television in The Entertainers' Tale issue of 1999 – alongside Bobby Moore (sport), Charlie Chaplin (cinema), and Freddie Mercury (popular music) •

© Alamy / Andrew Twort



Not for the ophidiophobic On 7 February 2013, in anticipation of the beginning of the Year of the Snake on 10 February, Royal Mail issues the Smilers® Generic Sheet shown above. It features 20 Smilers® Fireworks stamps beside labels with images of traditional oriental celebrations, all surrounded by snake illustrations by Rebecca Sutherland.

In Asian culture, each lunar year is 'ruled' by a different animal from a cyclical series of 12. Traditionally, the snake is associated with ambition and seductive charm. The sheet costs £12.50 •

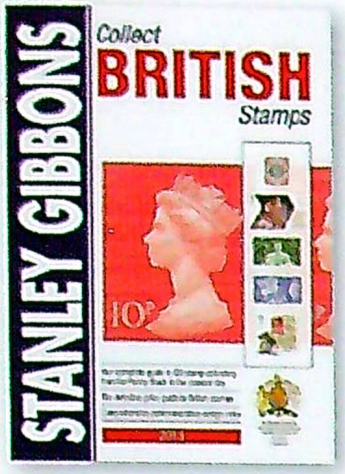
Lunar New Year Generic Sheet Technical Details

Number of stamps	20
Design	Firework stamp from the Smilers® range.
Sheet Format	Landscape
Stamp Format	Definitive
Stamp Size	20mm x 24mm
Printer	Cartor Security Printing, Meaucé, France
Print Process	Lithography
Perforations	15 x 14
Phosphor	Bars
Gum	Self-adhesive



Above: the background of the Year of the Snake Smilers® Sheet features bright and breezy snake illustrations by Rebecca Sutherland
Left: the Lunar Year of the Dragon sheet, which comes off sale on 21 March 2013

New Year, New Catalogues John Holman reports on the latest versions of key catalogues



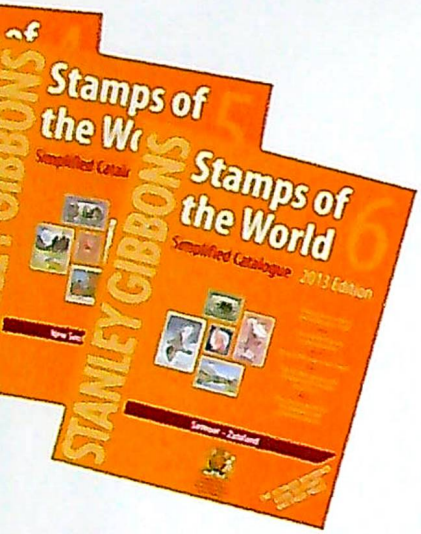
Above: a GB collector's favourite annual – *Collect British Stamps* catalogue from Stanley Gibbons

UK Collector's best friend The 2013 edition of the ever-popular Stanley Gibbons *Collect British Stamps* is now available, listing all UK issues from the Penny Black to Royal Mail's 2012 Christmas set. It costs £13.95 and is available from Tallents House (address on page 131), the Stanley Gibbons shop at 399 Strand in London, by post from Stanley Gibbons Publications, 7 Parkside, Ringwood, Hampshire BH24 3SH, by calling 01425 472363, or emailing orders@stanleygibbons.com •

Across the whole world The 2013 edition of *Stamps of the World* is now available, in six volumes listing stamps from all countries. Over 2,500 new stamps have been listed since the last edition and a further 800 images added. This edition also includes a 20-page illustrated guide to identifying stamps, with a section on foreign scripts and examples of difficult-to-identify 'no-name', stamps such as those issued by Austria, Finland and Switzerland. It is the only world catalogue with all volumes published simultaneously. The six-volume set costs £249.95 •

Windward Islands & Barbados Another recent publication is a second edition of the Windward Islands & Barbados catalogue which now lists more varieties as well as new issues. New discoveries have been added to the 1993-2004 local surcharges of St Vincent. It costs £27.95 and is available from Stanley Gibbons in London or the Ringwood address above •

Valuable stamps New from Michel is the second edition of the *Valuable Stamps of the World; Rarities from 1840 to Today*, a catalogue listing over 10,000 stamps valued by Michel at 200 Euros or more. About 200 stamps have been added since the first edition, notably from North Korea and the Soviet Union, while new areas included include Ascension, Laos and Timor. The catalogue has 1,260 pages and costs €59.80 •



Above: the comprehensive six-volume *Stamps of the World 2013* catalogue from Stanley Gibbons

Old Germany The Michel *Cover Catalogue, Germany* prices postal history of Old German States, North German Confederation, German Empire, Local Issues 1922 to 1923, Post Offices Abroad, etc. It includes 13,000 illustrations and 46,000 price quotations. The catalogue contains 1278 pages and costs €89 •

Comprehensive CEPT The CEPT (Conference of European Postal & Telecommunications) catalogue lists Europa stamps since the first issues of just six countries in 1956 to the present. Postal stationery is also listed, and issues for the Council of Europe, EFTA, CSCE and NATO, and Scandinavian joint issues. Over 4,800 items are illustrated, 18,000 prices quoted and strong price increases noted for British varieties and joint issues from the Balkans and Liechtenstein. Issues are listed in more detail here than in the regular Michel catalogues. The CEPT catalogue has 542 page and costs €52. Enquiries to Schwaneberger Verlag GmbH, Ohmstrasse 1, 85716 Unterschiessheim, Germany, e-mail vertrieb@michel.de or visit www.michel.de •

Stamp Scene John Holman keeps you posted on events in the philatelic world of 2013

UK exhibitions Spring Stampex at the Business Design Centre, Upper Street, London N1 on 20 to 23 February, will include displays of Cinderella and revenue stamps and related items. Some 200 frames of material will be shown and a number of seminars are planned.

As usual Royal Mail will have a stand at Stampex, offering the full range of stamps and philatelic products. The Jane Austen stamps go on sale on the second day of the exhibition (see preview on page 152), marking the 200th anniversary of the publication of *Pride and Prejudice*. On the third day of Stampex a new illustrated Post & Go stamp series is launched – Freshwater Life part 1, Life in Ponds (preview on page 150). The new second-class Machin Post & Go will be also available with a special Stampex postmark (preview on page 149). For Stampex enquiries: call 01273 594110 or e-mail info@philatelic-traders-society.co.uk. Autumn Stampex runs from 18 to 21 September.

The well-attended Scottish Philatelic Congress will be held at the Dewar Centre, Perth on 19 to 20 April.

Looking further ahead the Philatelic Congress of Great Britain and Roll of Distinguished Philatelists (RDP) Ceremony will be held at the Hallmark Hotel, Gloucester on 27 to 30 June, and the popular Midpex event will take place at the Warwickshire Exhibition Centre on 6 July •

International events The main international exhibitions of 2013 will be Australia 2013 World Stamp Exhibition in Melbourne (10 to 15 May); Thailand 2013 World Stamp Exhibition in Bangkok (2 to 14 August), and Brasiliana 2013 in Rio de Janeiro (11 to 17 November).

Royal Mail will be represented at both the Melbourne and Bangkok exhibitions and exhibition sheets will be issued •

British Postal Museum & Archive The BPMA, located at Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London WC1, near the famous Mount Pleasant sorting office, is open Monday to Friday, 10am to 5pm (Thursdays until 7pm). It will also be open on Saturday 12 January, 9 February and 9 March (10am to 5pm), but closed on Monday 14 January, 11 February and 11 March. For details of BPMA services and events, call 020 7239 2570, e-mail info@postalheritage.org.uk, or visit the BPMA website at www.postalheritage.org.uk.

Two BPMA exhibitions are currently on view: the 2012 Diamond Jubilee display at Freeling House and 'Post Office in the Community' at Blists Hill Victorian Town, Ironbridge, Shropshire (10am to 5pm daily). Among some 25 online exhibitions on the BPMA website are: Aerial Post, regional stamps, Machins, David Gentleman, postal vehicles and letter boxes •

2013 Europa theme A plethora of Postal Vehicles will be seen on stamps across Europe this year, as 'The Postman Van' is the Europa theme for 2013, followed by 'musical instruments' in 2014. The winners of the public vote for best three 2012 Europa stamps on the theme 'Visit' (see page 370, ▸









Location, location, location – from top: Gloucester, Melbourne, Bankok and Rio de Janeiro are all hosting major philatellic events this year

Photographs: © Luis Santos; © Travelling Light; © Sergey Belov; © Steve Allen



Above, left to right: winners of the 2012 PostEurop Europa Jury Prize – Markku Penttinen for Finland, Olga Ivanova for Russia, Mrs Svanbjorg Manai for the Faroe Islands; and Anita Hägblom for Aland, with Mr. Botond Szebeny, Secretary of PostEurop at centre back

Bulletin volume 49) were Turkish PTT, Magyar Posta (Hungary) and CTT Correios (Portugal). PostEurop (an association of European public postal administrations) also organises a multi-national jury who award another set of winners, separately from the public vote. The Jury gave first place to Russia •

Stamp fairs The next Strand Stamp Fairs will be held at the Royal National Hotel, Russell Square, London WC1 on 11 January, 15 February, and 22 March, open 9am to 4pm. Some 20 to 30 dealers will attend. This popular fair has been held since 1969. Enquiries 020 8946 4489 or see www.stampshows.net. The York Racecourse Stamp & Coin Fair will be held at York Racecourse, York YO23 1EX on 18 to19 January, open Friday 11am to 6pm and Saturday 10am to 4pm.

The Manchester & District Philatelic Traders Association Stamp Fair will be held at Sale Grammar School, Marsland Road, Sale M33 3NH on 12 January (10am to 4pm), and the Liverpool 2013 Fair at the Liner Hotel (formerly Gladstone Hotel), Lord Nelson Street, Liverpool L3 5QB on 8 to 9 February. The venue is close to Lime Street station. Open Friday 10.30am to 5pm, Saturday 10am to 4pm. For further details of the Liverpool fair contact Fred O'Reilly 01226 765069 or Terry Barnett 0151 486 2610.

The 2012 Salisbury Stamp Fair was a very successful event and the 2013 fair will be held at the Five Rivers Leisure Centre, Hulse Road, Salisbury SP1 3NR on 15 to 16 March •

Anniversaries 2013 marks the 50th anniversary of the setting up of the Philatelic Bureau (Tallents House) and of the *Bulletin*, which started life as the Bureau's newsletter in September 1963. We also celebrate 60 years of Stampex, first held as the Coronation Year National Stamp Exhibition in January 1953 •

Society meetings The National Philatelic Society's first meeting of 2013 will be on 14 January when Ian Harvey displays 'GB Booklets: Production & Promotion'. On 9 February Christine Earle shows 'They Also Served', and on 9 March Ramon Goode will display 'Wembley 1924 & 1925'. These meetings will be held at the Welsh Centre, 157-163 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1, starting at 2.30pm.

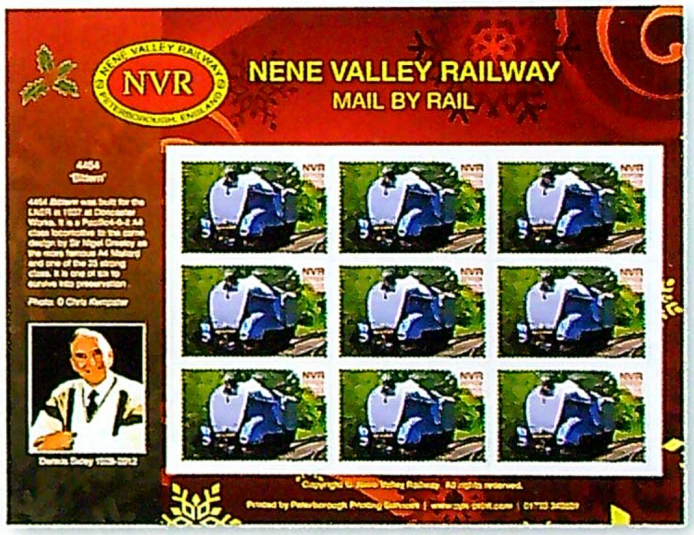
'Cape of Good Hope from 1864' is the subject of Robert Johnson's display at the Royal Philatelic Society London meeting at 41 Devonshire Place, London W1, on 10 January. On 24 January Birthe King will show 'The Loss and Restoration to Denmark of North Schleswig', and Gavin Fryer will display 'Blindman's Mail' on 7 February. Non-members are welcome at RPSL meetings by prior arrangement with the Adminstration Office on 020 7486 1044. For more details visit www.rpsl.org.uk.

The GB Philatelic Society, founded in 1955, is the main society for collectors of GB stamps, especially pre-Elizabeth II issues. At the next meeting on 26 January, John Davies will display 'A Jubilee Reminiscence' at 11am, followed by

Photograph © PostEurop

the Society's competitions at 2pm. This meeting will be held at the Royal Philatelic Society London at 41 Devonshire Place, London W1. The display at the Society's meeting at Stampex at the Business Design Centre, London N1 on 23 February at 2pm will be 'German Propaganda Forgeries' by Claudio Cassuto. For information about the GBPS, write to Peter Tanner at 13 St Hubert's Close, Gerrards Cross, Bucks SL9 7EN, or visit www.gbps.org.uk •

New railway stamp The Nene Valley Railway, which runs from Peterborough to Yarwell, has issued railway letter stamps since 1986. Three or four new stamps are issued each year, and the final one for 2012 went on sale on 6 November to coincide with Royal Mail's Christmas set. The 25p stamp features locomotive No 4464 Bittern, built at Doncaster in 1937 for the LNER. It is a Pacific A4 class locomotive, the most famous of which is Mallard, which holds the world steam speed record.



The NVR stamp was printed in sheets of nine by Peterborough Printing Services, and the print run was 500 sheets. First Day Covers were serviced with the railway stamp tied by a dated NVR Christmas handstamp and Royal Mail Christmas Stamps cancelled by a Robin Close, Birmingham special handstamp. Covers bearing two Royal Mail First Class Christmas stamps cost £4.50, or £11.60 with full set of seven Christmas stamps.

Plans for 2013 include new stamps in March, June, August and November, coinciding with Royal Mail issues, as well as special event covers, and further 'heritage covers' depicting Nene Valley stations. Orders and enquiries should be sent to: Nene Valley Railway (Stamps), Wansford Station, Stibbington, Peterborough PE8 6LR. The minimum order should be £5, and add £1 to cover postage and packing. A catalogue of stamps still on sale is available on request or can be seen at www.nvr.org.uk•

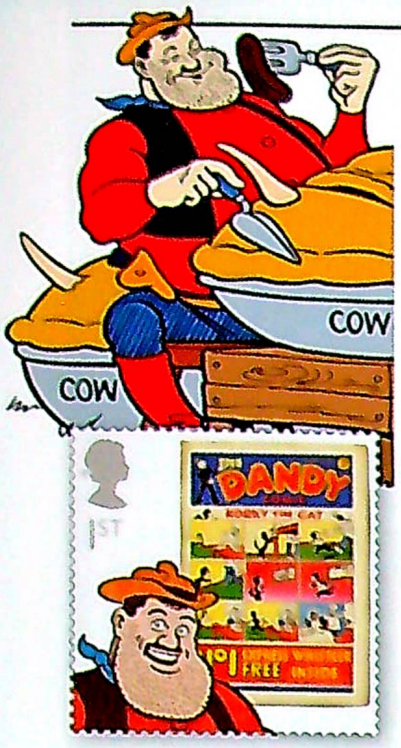
Thematic Collecting CD In 1998 Bulletin produced its fifth publication, An Introduction to Thematic Collecting by Margaret Morris, an internationally acclaimed thematic collector. An updated version has now been produced as a CD by the British Thematic Association. Its 32 chapters include What is Thematic Collecting?, Choosing the Material, Assembling the Material, Assembling the Information, Getting it all Together, Displays & Competitions and Lastly – Meet the Experts. It is written for the collector rather than the exhibitor, and does not require readers to have any prior thematic knowledge.

Price: £2.50 postpaid UK, £3.50 Europe, £4.50 rest of world. Remittances payable to British Thematic Association, or to wendybuckle@btinternet.com by PayPal, or by post to Mrs W Buckle, 87 Victoria Rd, Bournemouth BH1 4RS •



Stamp-related exhibitions & events – London Underground: Royal Mail issues stamps marking the 150th anniversary of the London Underground on 9 January (see Previews on pages 72 and 102 and background feature on ▸

Stamp image © Royal Mail Group Ltd



page 142). Specially restored trains will take part in commemorative events organised by the London Transport Museum and London Underground. The Museum, located at Covent Garden Piazza, London WC2E 7BB is open daily 10am to 6pm (opens Friday 11am). Last admission is at 5.15pm. Admission is £13.50 adults, £10 concessions. An article by Richard West on stamps and postmarks relating to London transport history was published here in February 2009 •

Stamp-related exhibitions & events – Comics *The Dandy* was one of ten comics featured in a special issue in March. First published 75 years ago, it is Britain's longest-running comic. A display 'The Art and History of The Dandy' can be seen at the National Library of Scotland, George IV Bridge, Edinburgh EH1 1EWuntil 3 February 2013. Visit this display to find out more about the fascinating process behind the production of Desperate Dan and other characters, from pencil sketch to print, featuring original drawings and artboards from the archives of D C Thomson, alongside material from the National Library of Scotland collections. Open: Monday to Friday 10am to 8pm, Saturday 10am to 5pm, Sunday 2 to 5pm •

A selection of forthcoming auctions Spink will auction the 'Lionheart' collection of GB and British Empire specimen stamps on 23 January, with a Collector's Series sale the following day. Enquiries: 020 7563 4000 or e-mail info@spink.com, or see website www.spink.com.

Cavendish will auction the 'Otis' Collection of GB cancellations in March. The company will have a stand at the international exhibition in Melbourne in May. Enquiries to Cavendish on 01332 250970, visit www.cavendish-auctions.com or e-mail stamps@cavendishphilau.demon.co.uk.

Grosvenor's sale on 7 March will include the John du Pont collection of Falkland Islands stamps and postal history, with two red and four black 'franks' – the first Falklands postal marking before adhesive stamps were introduced. Phone 020 7379 8789 or visit www.grosvenorauctions.com •

End of an era Michelle Briggs has recently retired from Stanley Gibbons after 34 years service. She joined SG in 1978 and worked in the New Issue department in Drury House before transferring to the Catalogue team and moved from London to Ringwood in 1985. She was the main editor of *Stamps of the World*, deciding what to include in the 'Simplified' and making sure that information and prices were accurately transferred from the catalogue supplement and the other main foreign and Commonwealth catalogues. During this time much has changed and she managed the changeover from a purely manual operation to a computerised one, as well as managing the day-to-day operation of the department. She also looked after the incoming material for the new issue listings, checking it all through and distributing it to editors and handled many telephone calls from collectors.

Hugh Jefferies, SG Catalogue Editor, comments: 'Since I became Catalogue Editor as well as GSM Editor, Michelle has been my right hand; tactfully reminding me of everything from when it's time to have my lunch, to important

Desperate Dan © DC Thomson

deadlines and meetings – I don't know how I'm going to manage without her – and that is on top of the fantastic job she does on the monster six-volume *Stamps of the World* and the vast experience which she is able to bring to bear in assisting collectors around the world every day of the week.'

Michelle now joins husband Michael in retirement. Michael, who worked at SG from 1964 to 2011, was News & Art Editor of *Gibbons Stamp Monthly*.

David Beech will retire as Head of the Philatelic Collections at the British Library in March, after 30 years there. He intends to continue, in his words, 'a modified philatelic involvement', mainly through the Royal Philatelic Society London, and will be 'developing many other interests rather put to one side in recent years' •

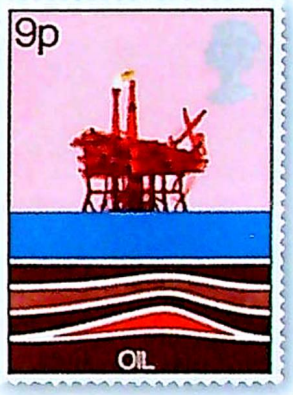
This month in history John Holman's time machine takes us back to January 1978

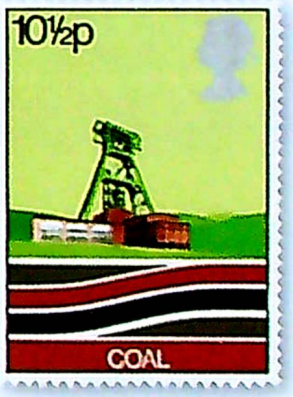
On 25 January 1978, Royal Mail issued four boldly designed and colourful stamps featuring Energy Resources. They depicted a North Sea oil platform; a modern coal pithead production platform; a flame rising from the sea representing natural gas; and an electricity nuclear power station and uranium atom. The name of the energy source – Oil, Coal, Natural Gas, and Electricity were clearly stated at the base of each design, with the value and Queen's silhouette well-positioned at top left and right respectively.

The stamps were designed by Peter Murdoch, who had earlier designed the 1973 European Communities issue (see This Month In History in the January 2011 issue of *Bulletin*), and 1977 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting stamp. In 1968 he had designed, with a partner, the graphics for the Olympic Games in Mexico.

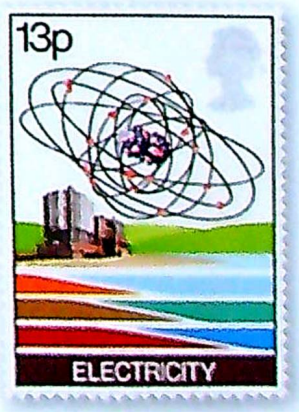
Printing, by Harrisons, was in five or six colours with The Queen's head in silver, and an 'All Over' phosphor overprint. Somewhat surprisingly, no major errors of missing colours or imperf stamps are recorded in the catalogues, but two noteworthy constant varieties are to be found – a retouch to the left of the word 'coal' on the 10½p stamp and a break in the left-hand frame line near the value on the 13p denomination. A special first day postmark was provided only for the Philatelic Bureau, but there were a number of sponsored handstamps in use on the day of issue. The one used at Peterhead has the highest catalogue valuation. A Forties Field (oil) cancel was used at Aberdeen and FDC collectors also like the Aberdeen first day cancel and that for Battersea, location of the famous power station. Covers cancelled by the circular datestamp of Seascale (home of the first nuclear power station) are also much sought-after.

Supplies of the 11p stamp were exhausted in December 1978 and the other values withdrawn on 24 January 1979. Sales ranged from 9.3 million of the 13p overseas rate stamp to 42.3 million of the 9p denomination, then the basic UK first-class letter rate. An article on energy resources featured on the stamps was published in the January 1978 *Bulletin* when the stamps went on sale. Thirty-five years later, energy supplies are still a major area of political debate with much support for 'greener' fuel in the future •









Stamp images © Royal Mail Group Ltd



Art that moves us all

All aboard for a magical history tour of London Underground posters – now appearing on a new Miniature Sheet. Simon Ball takes the trip

POSTER POWER as much as high-tech transport has kept London moving for over a century. Striking images supported by inspiring slogans have lined the platforms, concourses and ticket halls, acting as the voice of London Underground: encouraging passengers to enjoy the best London has to offer by Tube or take the train to escape the bustle of the city; explaining why the underground network is the transport of choice for modern city dwellers; and even delivering safety messages to commuters in time of war.

Above: the Art of the Poster Miniature Sheet pays tribute to Underground poster power

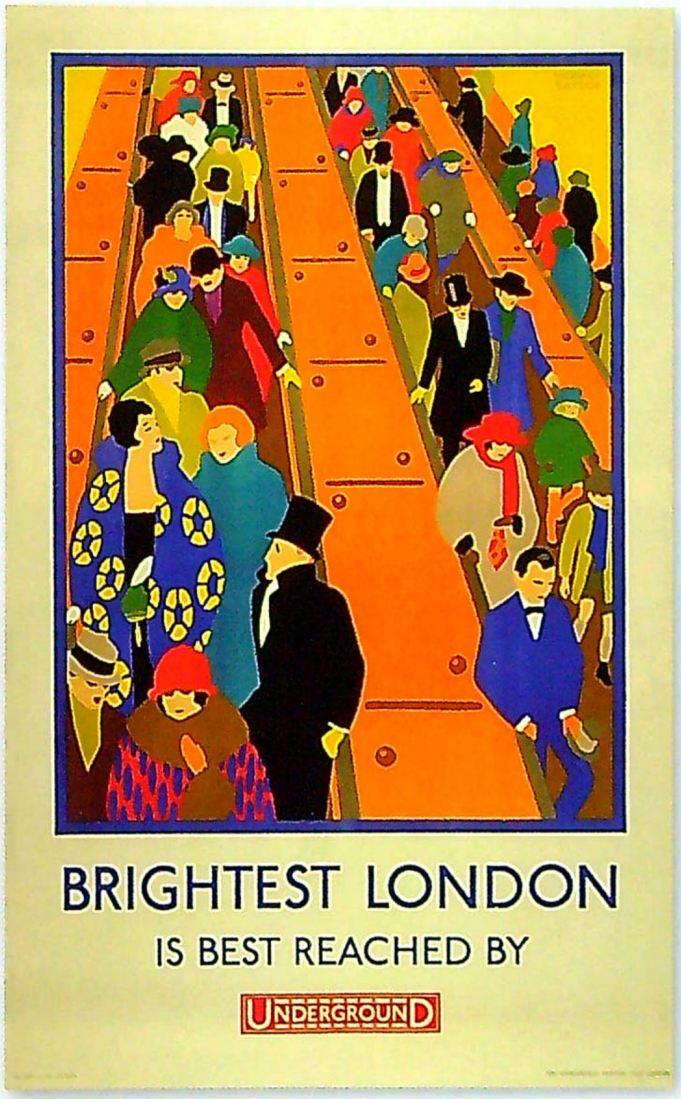
Below: the first graphic poster commission for the London Underground, by John Hassall, 1908

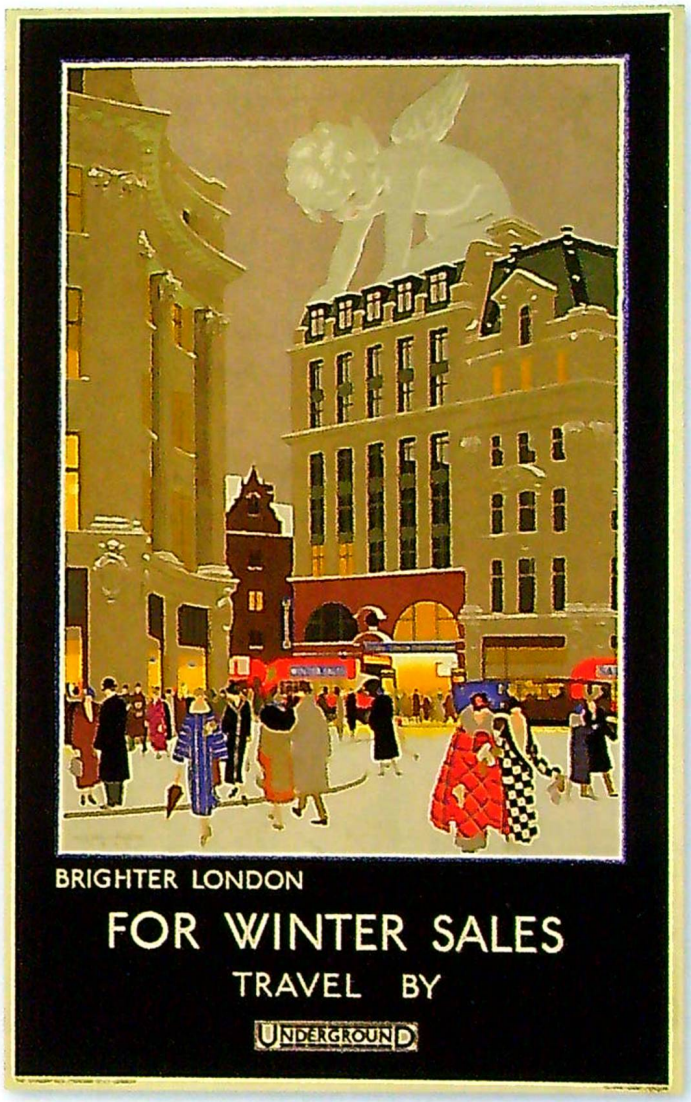
Now, to mark London Underground's 150th anniversary, a major exhibition showcasing 150 of the very best Tube posters is about to open at the London Transport Museum (LTM) in Covent Garden. Royal Mail is also celebrating the milestone with the release of a special anniversary Miniature Sheet showing 12 of these iconic posters (above). No wonder there is so much interest in London Underground's poster programme, for it has made an extraordinary contribution to the nation's graphic design heritage.



Frank Pick is the person credited with overseeing a 'golden age' of graphic design in the underground system of the early 20th century. Pick began his career as an assistant to Sir George Gibb, Chairman of the Underground Group, and two years later was appointed publicity officer with responsibility for promoting public use of the underground network.

When Pick arrived, posters were not new: underground stations were plastered with colourful graphics. The London Underground's predecessors – the Metropolitan Railway and the Underground Electric Railways of London (UERL) – had been quick to harness the revenue-raising potential of





Above: 'Brighter London For Winter Sales' poster by Harold Sandys Williamson, 1924

Above left: 'Brightest London Is Best Reached By Underground' poster by Horace Taylor, 1924

the advertising poster in the 19th century. But Pick's appointment came at a crucial time for the UERL. Passenger numbers on the three recently opened underground lines were disappointingly low and the company was facing the possibility of bankruptcy. Even though Pick had no background in graphic design (he trained as a lawyer), he realised the potential of the poster to attract custom and boost revenue. The poster programme he initiated was at first driven towards encouraging people to visit London's attractions, theatres and shops to increase network usage.

Now Pick's legacy is an archive of over 5,000 posters, featuring work by some of the most influential names in 20th-century art and design. On the following pages Anna Renton, curator of the forthcoming LTM exhibition, describes a selection of the most important works being shown.

Dazzling graphics selection

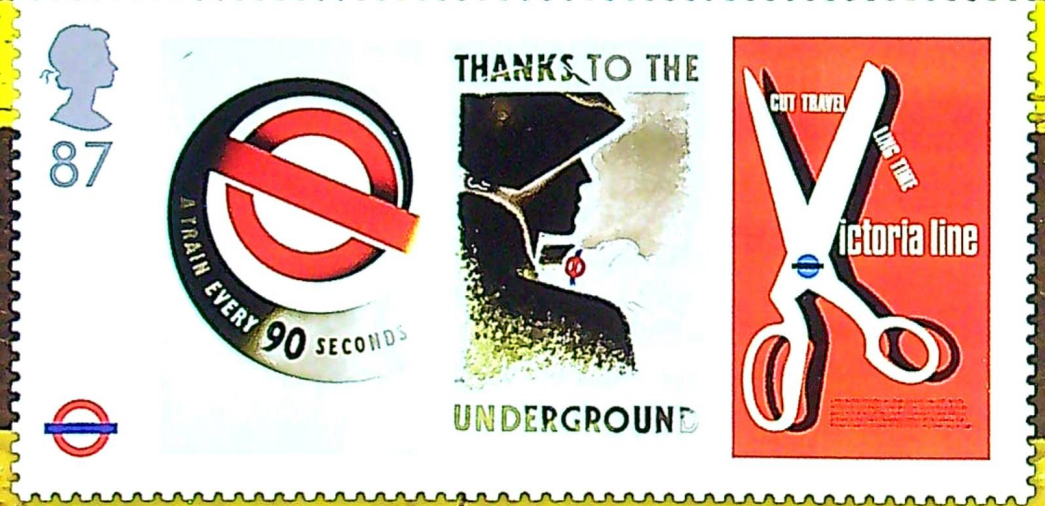
The very first graphic poster commissioned by the Underground group is 'No Need to Ask a P'liceman' (facing page). It was designed by John Hassall, the commercial artist who also created the famous 'Skegness is so Bracing' poster for the Great Northern Railway. 'In 1908, London's various Underground railways agreed to publicise their companies as part of a complete system,' Anna explains. 'To relieve public apprehension about ▸ *continued on page 146*

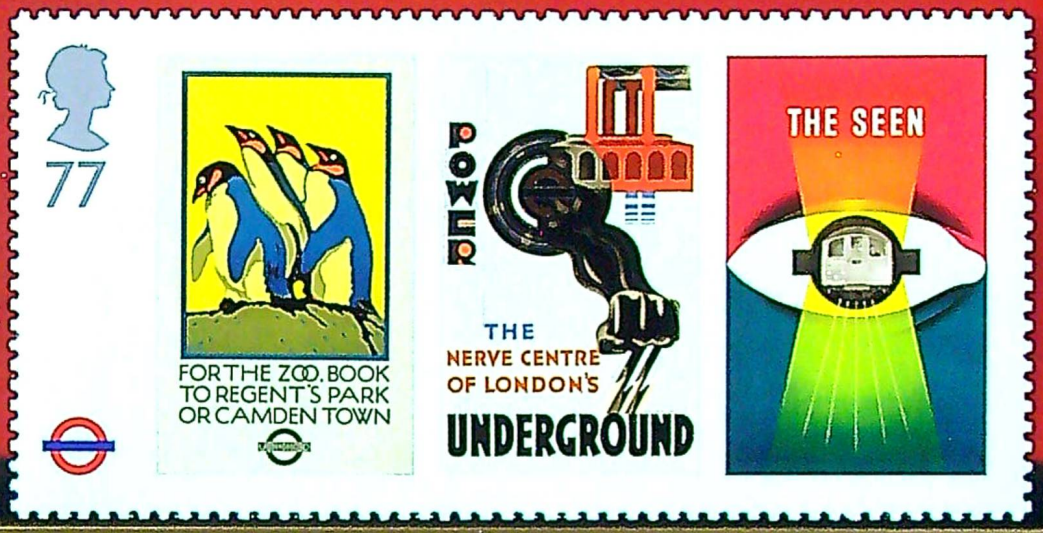


CLASSIC POSTER ART

on the London Underground Miniature Sheet, issued 9 January

Celebrating 150 years of London Underground, this month's Royal Mail pictorial issue comprises six sheet Stamps and a Miniature Sheet of the four stamps shown here. See pages 72 and 102 for technical details.





Above left, first-class stamp: **Golders Green** (1908) artist unknown; **By Underground To Fresh Air** (1915) by Maxwell Armfield; **Summer Sales** (1925) by Mary Koop

Below left , 87p stamp: **A Train Every 90 Seconds** (1937) by Abram Games; **Thanks To The Underground** (1935) by Zero (Hans Schleger); **Cut Travelling Time, Victoria Line** (1969) by Tom Eckersley

Above, 77p stamp: **For The Zoo** (1921) by Charles Paine; **Power** (1931) by Edward McKnight- Kauffer. **The Seen** (1948) by James Fitton

Below, £1.28 stamp: **The London Transport Collection** (1965) by Tom Eckersley; **London Zoo** (1976) by Abram Games; **The Tate Gallery by Tube** (1987) by David Booth at Fine White Line Design





Stamp images © TfL from the London Transport Museum collection, except 1938 image reproduced with permission of Ian Allan Publishing Ltd and 1949 photography by Paul Grundy. © Royal Mail Group Ltd. London Underground and logo are registered trademarks of Transport for London.

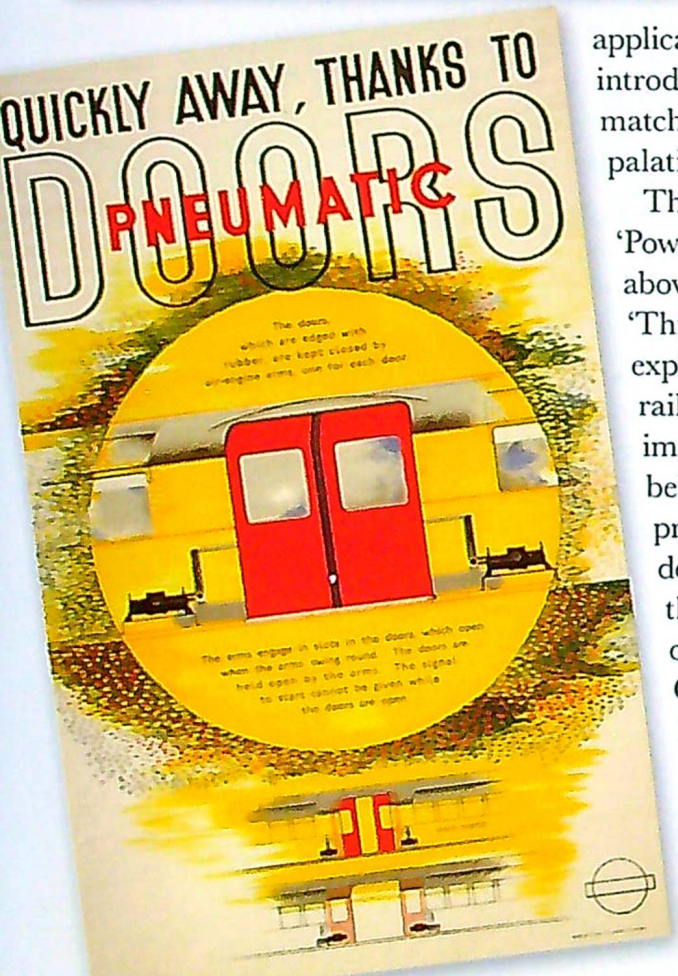


continued from page 143 ▸ using the joint system, they promoted a new map that enabled people to find their way around the city. This poster was commissioned as part of that campaign, and provides a classic example of the Underground's early advertising. John Hassall employs robust cockney humour to present Tube travel as accessible and easy to use.'

During the First World War, the publicity role of UERL's posters was overtaken by a propaganda and public safety function. Pick hired artists such as Frank Brangwyn to illustrate recruitment posters, while other works offered advice on air raid safety procedures and the like. And it was the two decades of Pick's adventurous commissioning between the wars that have come to be regarded as the 'golden age' of the Underground poster. By 1933, when London's underground and bus companies were collected together under the London Transport umbrella, the organisation was regarded as a major patron of the arts.

Avant-garde on the platforms

While Pick understood the reassuring effect of traditional design, he also recognised the potential of the artistic avant-garde, but with the proviso that 'the subject remained clear'. The commercial application of such styles as Futurism, Vorticism and Cubism introduced modern art to a wider public using the trains and matched the modernity of the expanding network, with its palatial Art Deco stations designed by Charles Holden.



This modernity is perfectly summed up by Anna's next choice, 'Power – The Nerve Centre Of London's Underground', (shown above) by American émigré artist Edward McKnight Kauffer. 'This striking poster was commissioned in 1931,' Anna explains. 'The modern design underlines the impact electric rail travel was having on urban life in the 1930s. The bold image unites man and machine as the powerful driving forces behind London's Underground. 'As well as the technological progression of the time, this poster illustrates contemporary developments in art and design. Kauffer's move away from the Underground's Johnston typeface suggests his awareness of typographical styles pioneered by the Bauhaus School in Germany. The geometric design suggests the influence of Futurism and the prevalent Art Deco style.'

Mike Dempsey, who put the Tube map on a stamp in 2009's British Design Classics issue, confirms Pick's

Poster images © London Transport Museum

importance to Britain's graphic design heritage: 'There can be no doubt that Frank Pick was the major catalyst in the creation of the incredible explosion of brilliant posters produced during the 1920s and 1930s.'

Masters of art

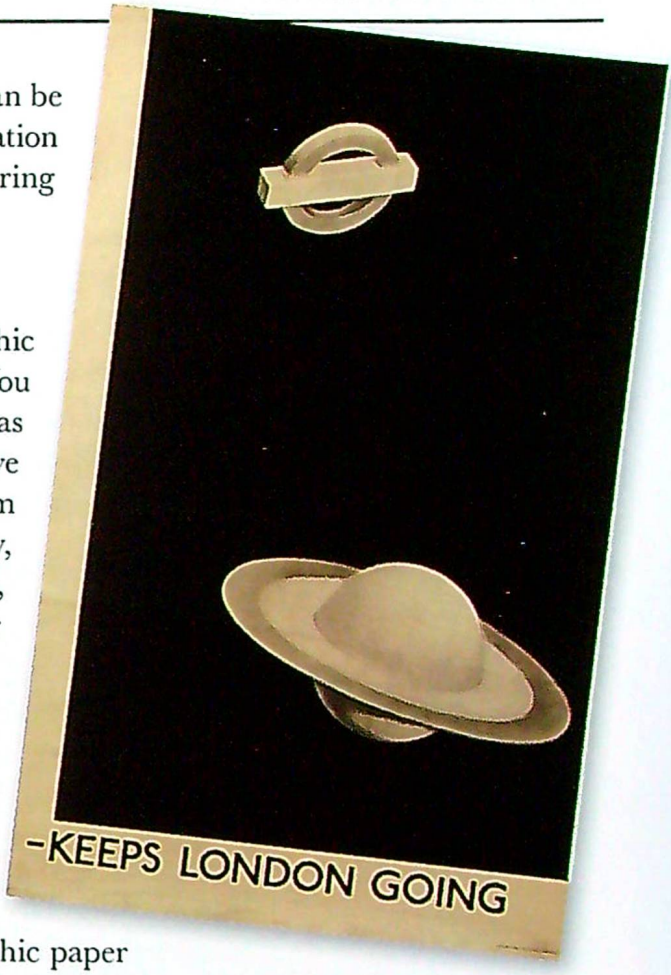
The sheer diversity of artistic brilliance and graphic innovation is clear when you see these jewels of Tube art. You will see craftsmanship in execution with masters such as Frank Newbold and Cecil Lawson. But you can also observe the development of Cubism, Surrealism and Modernism through the bold, powerful graphic posters of Man Ray, Edward McKnight Kauffer, Laszio Moholy- Nagy (below, facing page), Aldo Cosomati, Paul Nash, Hans Schleger and other leading artists of the time.

The Surrealist Man Ray's 'London Transport – Keeps London Going' (right) is perhaps the crown jewel of the collection, as Anna explains: 'This poster was designed in 1938 when Man Ray briefly lived in London. The iconic design presents the roundel logo as a planet, ruling over the night sky. Man Ray used an experimental process to create the image, placing objects directly onto photographic paper and exposing them to light.

'One of the Underground's most famous poster images, it has become one of the most iconic and valuable transport posters in history.'

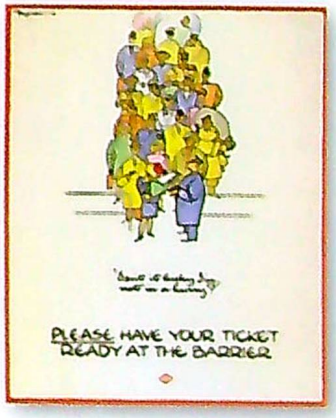
In 1999 the design team Trickett and Webb used Man Ray's creation as inspiration for their Tube poster 'Simply Fashion by Tube and Bus'. Says Brian Webb: 'Pick was brilliant at allowing young artists to try new things. He didn't like all the posters that were produced, but he had the sense to realise that variety was necessary.'

The outbreak of the Second World War, however, rudely interrupted this golden age. Posters resumed their propagandist role, informing the public about the blackout, discouraging unnecessary travel and promoting Tube etiquette to help make travelling bearable in a system creaking under the pressures of wartime. A role perfectly encapsulated by Anna's pick from the war years, 'Please Have Your Ticket Ready At The Barrier' (right) by Cyril Kenneth Bird (otherwise known as Fougasse). Says Anna of this poster, produced as part of a series for London Transport in 1944: 'The war marked an increase in newcomers to London, many unused to Underground travel, so a code of conduct on the Underground was particularly important. There was a shortage of staff, ▸



Above: one of the Underground's most famous poster images, this Man Ray design still inspires young artists

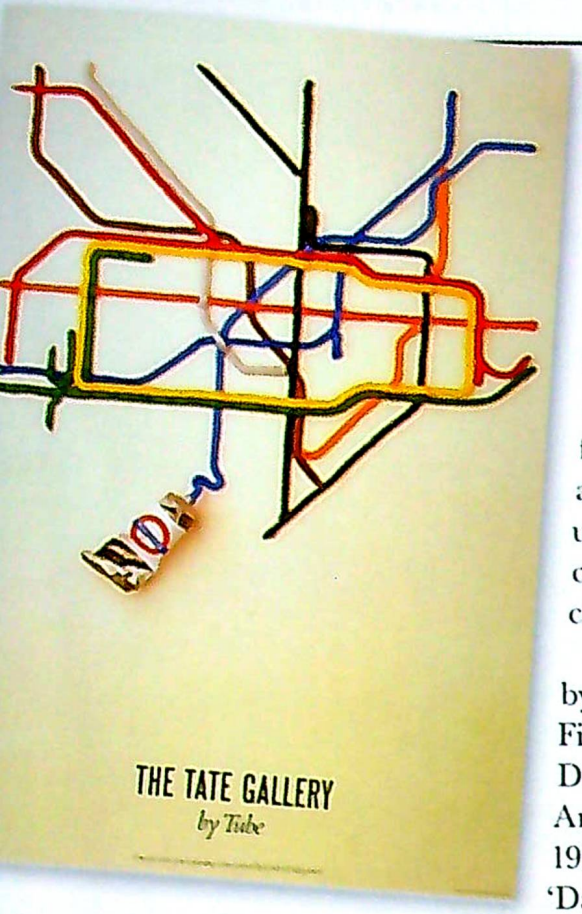
Below: 1944 poster by Fougasse, who designed information posters for nearly every government ministry



Find out more about the art of Underground travel

To check out artwork of special interest on any London Underground journey, visit http://art.tfl.gov.uk

Annie Mole's popular 'Going underground' blog highlights visual arts seen on the Underground and has been described by The Times as 'an irreverent and informative must-read for everybody, not just subterranean commuters' http://london-underground.blogspot.co.uk/



Above: 'The Tate Gallery By Tube', by David Booth, Malcolm Fowler and Nancy Fowler at the Fine White Line Agency – chosen for the new £1.28 stamp

vehicles and parts, people were travelling more on service away from home, and overcrowding had increased. Fougasse's design observed an everyday procedure, using humour to communicate with the passengers in a witty eyecatching and memorable way.'

The post-war poster period

In the second half of the 20th century, the poster started to be overtaken by other communication media. This, combined with fare increases that reduced passenger numbers, led to a decline in advertising on the Underground. Tube stations became dreary, uninviting places, with black paper or ancient, tattered posters covering unused advertising sites. Something had to be done to cheer up this environment and tempt the advertisers back.

The answer was Art on the Underground, a series of commissions by leading artists and designers initiated in 1986 by Dr Henry Fitzhugh, London Underground's Marketing and Development Director. Perhaps the best known Art on the Underground poster is Anna Renton's final choice, 'The Tate Gallery by Tube' (left), a 1987 commission by David Booth and the Fine White Line agency. 'David Booth has used the distinctive form and public popularity of Harry Beck's diagrammatic Underground map to create the bestselling Underground poster of all time,' explains Anna. 'Underground lines appear as if squeezed from a tube of paint – the original mock-ups were actually created in toothpaste before finally being moulded in plastic.'

Henry Fitzhugh commissioned leading artists of the day and the initiative went some way in building on the legacy of Frank Pick, with six posters being commissioned a year. When Fitzhugh left in the early 1990s, however, times had changed. Advertising space was being sold more aggressively, so leaving fewer spaces for Art on the Underground commissions. Some space was reserved specifically for the campaign until 2000, since when Art on the Underground has worked with established and emerging artists to present their work in many locations across the Tube network. There is a vast range, from the largescale and spectacular to the quiet and contemplative. But all are intended to inspire and enrich the commuter experience.

We leave the final word to one of Royal Mail's most prolific stamp designers, Kate Stephens: 'London Underground posters have set benchmarks in design standards over many decades. In energetically pursuing their policy of commissioning artists, illustrators, designers and photographers they have created iconic statements in graphic design. They resonate with humour and wit, the posters' colours are exhilarating and they have a graphic quality that is unique' •



Where to see more

Poster Art 150 – London Underground's Greatest Designs will exhibit 150 of the best designs which have been chosen by an independent panel. Visitors will be invited to vote for their favourites and the most popular poster will be revealed at the end of the exhibition.

Poster Art 150 runs from February 15 to October 27 2013 at the London Transport Museum, Covent Garden Piazza, London, WC2E 7BB. Admission to the exhibition is included in the entry ticket to the main Museum galleries (£13.50/£10 adult concessions, under-16s free) which allows free entry to all the Museum galleries for a whole year. For further information visit www.ltmuseum.co.uk

London Transport Museum © Transport for London. All poster images © London Transport Museum



New Post & Go Second Class two new Machin self-service stamps come out next month

NEW SECOND CLASS and Second Class Large Post & Go stamps will be issued next month, bearing blue Royal Mail background and a blue Machin head, with one phosphor bar. The first day of issue is 20 February, on the first day of Stampex, and the stamps will be supplied to Crown Post Office branches during March. Consequently they will be available in the first instance from Hytech v2 machines and only later from Wincor-Nixdorf machines.

Post Office Limited trialled self-service postage machines in 2008 and Post & Go machines made by Wincor-Nixdorf are now installed in 146 branches. They dispense self-adhesive stamps according to customer specifications, allow customers to weigh items and obtain the correct tariff stamps without queuing for counter service. There are six options of tariff-specific overprints, as well as a line of code specific to the Office where the machine is sited, and the machine's number if there is more than one at the same Office. As customers in Crown Post Offices have become accustomed to the Post & Go machines, there has been a growing demand for Second Class Post & Go stamps in addition to the existing First Class options.

Above: Second Class Post & Go stamp, issued on 20 February, the first day of Stampex

First Day Covers A First Day Envelope is available for these Second Class Post & Go's, in the generic format, as used for the Union Flag issue. The carrier and filler card will explain recently proposed changes to the machine-overprinted information. (Final details of these revisions to overprinting are not confirmed at time of this preview article going to press, but they will be included in a later edition of *Bulletin*.) •



Below: the alternative handstamp featuring the NI postcode and the standard Tallents House handstamp for Post & Go's. In addition, there will be a special Stampex version for those attending Stampex on 20 February

Post & Go Machin Second Class Specifications	
Date of issue	20 February 2013
Number of stamps	2
Design	Royal Mail
Stamp format	Landscape
Stamp size	56mm x 25mm
Printer	Walsall Security Printer
Perforations	Die-cut simulated
Phosphor	Single bar
Gum	Self-adhesive
First Day Cover design	The Chase





Stamp design © Royal Mail Group Ltd



Right: the Freshwater Life Post & Go series is launched during Stampex next month, with these six designs about pondlife

Above: the Tallents House first-day postmark for all Post & Go issues



Water world A new Post & Go series explores life on and under the surface of ponds, lakes and rivers

Creatures great but small feature in Freshwater Life, the three-issue Post & Go series for 2013. The first set, seen here, shows pond life, the second life in lakes, and the third reveals the denizens of rivers. The Ponds set showcases three common species – the Three-spined Stickleback, Emperor Dragonfly and Smooth Newt – and three endangered species: Lesser Silver Water Beetle, Fairy Shrimp and Glutinous Snail. Issued on 22 February, the stamps



are designed by Kate Stephens and the vibrant illustrations are by Chris Wormell. The release includes a First Day Cover and packaged Stamp Set.

Stamp by stamp The six-stamp issue is mounted on an attractive card with information about the species by conservationist and international freshwater expert Dr Jeremy Biggs and a profile of leading animal illustrator Chris Wormell. All values are First Class with a philatelic Post & Go code.

Three-spined Stickleback The archetypal 'tiddler', the stickleback is a small, beautifully streamlined, torpedo-shaped fish with a broad tail fin. The name derives from its hallmark spines in front of the dorsal fin.

Emperor Dragonfly These stunning blue dragonflies are Britain's biggest. The larvae are actually brown, with rounded heads and large eyes. Widespread in southern England, the species seems to be extending northwards.

Smooth Newt Along with the common frog, the Smooth Newt is our most widespread amphibian. Both sexes are green-brown with whitish cheeks.

Lesser Silver Water Beetle The beetle earns the name 'silver' from air bubbles that get trapped in the fine hairs on its underside. These hairs form part of an elaborate underwater breathing system.

Fairy Shrimp This rare shrimp sports 11 pairs of legs fringed with bristles. The male's second set of antennae are used to grab females during mating.

Glutinous Snail With a glossy amber shell, this snail feels sticky when handled, hence its name.

Orders for the Serviced First Day Covers must reach Royal Mail by 22 February. Customers may send stamped envelopes on the day of issue to Royal Mail, Tallents House (address on page 130) for the Tallents House, Edinburgh postmark •



Above: the Post & Go Ponds handstamp, with FISHERS POND as the place name

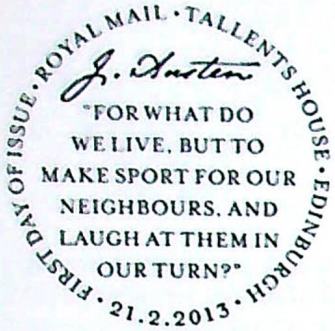
Below: the Stamp Set is available with this carrier card

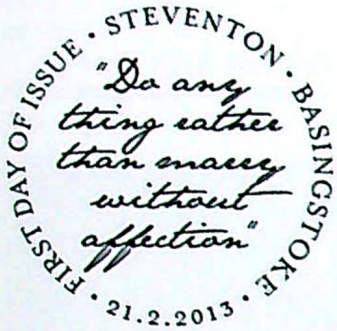


Post & Go Freshwater Life I: Ponds – Prices	
Stamp Set	£3.60
First Day Cover UK	£4.80
First Day Cover overseas	£4.00
First Day Envelope	30p

Post & Go Freshwater Life I: Ponds – Specifications	
Date of issue	22 February 2013
Number of stamps	Six
Stamp design	Kate Stephens
Stamp illustration	Chris Wormell
Stamp format	Landscape
Stamp size	56mm (w) x 25mm (h)
Printer	Walsall Security Printers
Print process	Gravure
Perforations	Kiss die-cut simulated
Phosphor	Bars
Gum	Self-adhesive

Pride, not prejudice New stamps pay tribute to Jane Austen – one of Britain's best-loaved authors





Above: the special handstamps for the Jane Austen issue bear quotations – one in earnest and the other laced with gentle irony typical of the author. Steventon is Austen's birthplace

Although they were written in the quiet Hampshire countryside of two centuries ago, today Jane Austen's novels and their characters are respected and loved more than ever. Darcy, Elizabeth Bennet, Emma Woodhouse, Willoughby and Colonel Brandon remain alive in our imagination and now they star in a series of commemorative stamps. The new issue, released on 21 February, marks the 200th anniversary of the publication of *Pride and Prejudice* with six stamps celebrating her major works. A First Day Cover, Presentation Pack and Stamp Cards will also be available.

Stamp by stamp Each stamp of the new issue is illustrated by Angela Barrett to portray a pivotal scene from Jane Austen's key novels, as follows.

First Class – Pride and Prejudice: '... she beheld a striking resemblance of Mr Darcy, with such a smile over the face, as she remembered to have sometimes seen, when he looked at her. She stood several minutes before the picture in earnest contemplation ...'

This is Austen's most famous novel, with no small thanks to the character of Mr Darcy. The hero has to conquer his own pride, while the heroine Elizabeth struggles to overcome her prejudice, before the couple can admit their love for one another. Austen began writing this story in 1796 and returned to the manuscript later, to have it published in 1813. The result is a novel that offers layers of insight for readers of all ages.

First Class – Sense and Sensibility: '... saw Marianne stretched on the bed, almost choked by grief, one letter in her hand, and two or three others lying by her.



Jane Austen Stamps – Specifications	
Date of issue	21 February
Number of stamps	Six
Stamp design	Webb & Webb
Stamp illustration	Angela Barrett
Stamp format	Portrait
Stamp size	27mm (w) x 37mm (h)
Printer	Cartor Printers
Print process	Lithography
Number per sheet	25/50
Perforations	14x14
Phosphor	All over
Gum	PVA

Jane Austen Stamps – Prices	
Stamps	£5.30
Presentation Pack	£5.80
First Day Cover UK	£6.84
First Day Cover overseas	£5.70
First Day Envelope	30p
Stamp Cards	£2.70



Above: the six Jane Austen stamps issued next month feature illustrations by Angela Barrett

Elinor drew near … took her hand, kissed her affectionately several times …'

This novel was first written the year before Austen began *Pride and Prejudice* but was not published until 1811. It recounts the difficult lessons in love experienced by the Dashwood sisters – Elinor and Marianne – before they eventually are able to achieve happy marriages.

77p – Mansfield Park: '… pausing a moment … for a courage which the outside of no door had ever supplied to her, she turned the lock in desperation, and the lights of the drawing-room and all the collected family were before her.'

Mansfield Park is the country mansion where little Fanny Price is brought up by rich relatives. The problem of her growing love for her cousin Edmund is further complicated by his falling in love with another.

77p – Emma: 'She had not been able to speak … then reproaching herself for having taken no leave, making no acknowledgement, parting in apparent sullenness, she looked out with voice and hand eager to show a difference; but it was just too late.'

This skilfully crafted story is one of Austen's later works, published in 1816. The confident and privileged Emma presumes to advise her more humble friend Harriet on her choice of boyfriends. The plot thickens when Harriet takes the advice to heart and discerns a distinct appeal in Emma's own faithful companion, Mr Knightley. ▸



Above and below: the elegant Jane Austen Presentation Pack contains details of her life and works



£1.28 – Northanger Abbey: 'She took her candle and looked closely at the cabinet … having thrown open each folding door … her quick eyes directly fell on a roll of paper pushed back into the further part of the cavity …' A fascination with murder stories takes Catherine Morland from Bath to Northanger Abbey, where she believes a terrible crime has been committed. Happily for Catherine, her suitor Henry Tilney sees beyond her preoccupation with horror.

£1.28 – Persuasion: 'It was evident that the gentleman… admired her exceedingly. Captain Wentworth looked round at her instantly in a way which shewed his noticing of it. He gave her a momentary glance … which seemed to say, "That man is struck with you …"'

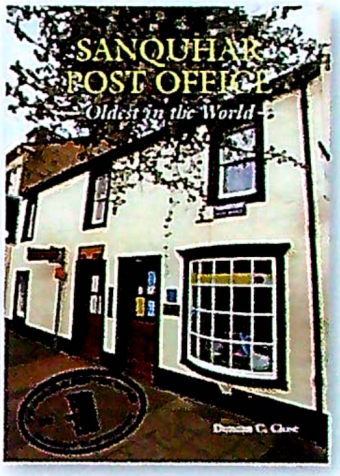
At 19 Anne Elliot becomes engaged to a young naval officer, but her snobbish father strongly disapproves. She is persuaded to break off her relationship. Eight years later her suitor returns, now an influential and affluent Captain – and showing no interest whatsoever in Anne.

Jane Austen died at the age of 41 in 1817, the year before this book was published, its title chosen by Austen's brother.

First day of issue Orders for Serviced First Day Covers must reach Royal Mail by 21 February. Customers may also send stamped envelopes on the day of issue to Royal Mail, Tallents House (address on page 130) for the Tallents House, Edinburgh postmark •

handwriting image © Alamy

A golden oldie John Holman reviews a fascinating philatelic companion for winter nights



THE SMALL TOWN OF SANQUHAR IN DUMFRIESHIRE has a remarkable post office that recently enjoyed its 300th anniversary (see Geoffrey Lord's letter on page 292, Volume 49). It has most probably operated in the same building since 1712, making this the oldest post office in Britain and almost certainly the oldest in the world. James Mackay wrote about the Sanquhar Post Office and its history in the *British Philatelic Bulletin* of January 1994. And to mark the tercentenary, Duncan Close of the Royal Burgh of Sanquhar Heritage Society has produced a handsome book '*Sanquhar Post Office: Oldest in the World*'. He begins with a chapter on the history of the town, then provides a detailed account of the postal service in Sanquhar.

A resting place for runners An act of 1711 empowered the establishment of Cross Posts and one of the earliest was between Dumfries and Ayr via Sanquhar and Cumnock. The service was apparently established in 1712 and it would have been at this time that the present Post Office in Sanquhar started its long career as a change house, where the runners rested and were refreshed, and exchanged mail bags before starting on their respective return journeys back to Dumfries, or on to the next stage at Cumnock.

In 1966 the Post Office set out to establish the oldest operational post office building still in use and Sanquhar could then prove usage since 1806. Subsequent research put the date back to 1763 and later a letter of 1738 bearing the Sanquhar postmark was discovered. The Office has been in continual use since 1738 at least and probably right back to 1712. In 2009 *The Guinness World Book of Records* recognised Sanquhar as the world's oldest.

Pictorial records of an 18th-century Postmaster Over half of the book comprises some fine illustrations of relevant documents and of mail from Sanquhar. The oldest is a town council minute of 1739 referring to John Forsyth, Postmaster. The earliest postmark shown is a mileage mark of 1826, then Maltese Cross, numeral '303' and other types in use in Victorian times. More recent items shown include the special handstamp in use 1974 to 1975, the first day postmark used for the issue of the Rowland Hill stamps in 1979, Sanquhar meter marks, and FDCs cancelled at Sanquhar, some with the oldest post office cachet used in recent years. There are in addition illustrations of the Post Office itself, posting boxes, and staff. There is a list of Sanquhar Postmasters from John Forsyth in c.1730 to Mrs Penny Murphy who took over in 2011.

Many of the illustrations are of items from the collection of Sanquhar postmarks and memorabilia of the late Robert McGavin whose foresight in making the collection made the book possible.

This well-produced and highly readable book is available by post from Duncan C Close, 15 Broomfield, Sanquhar, Dumfriesshire DG4 6LL. It costs £10 including UK p&p and £11.50 to include postage overseas. Proceeds from sales will go to the Heritage Society •

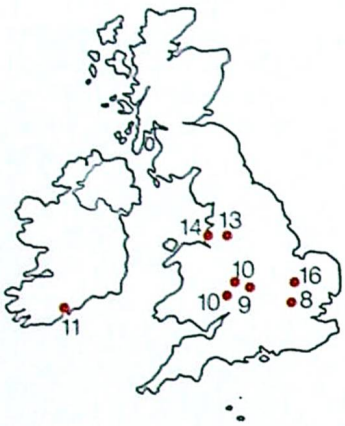

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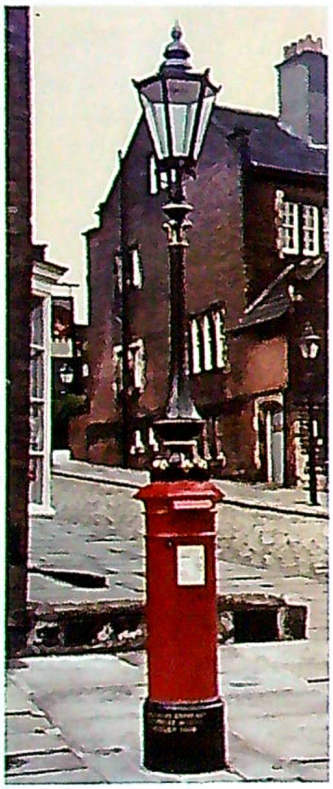
Flutes, scripts and spikes Martin Robinson's guide to Victorian pillar boxes, Part Two

In 1856 yet another pillar box design made its appearance, and very unusual it was, too. It was cast by Smith & Hawkes of Birmingham in the form of a fluted column but by a misunderstanding it was surmounted by a large dome and crown which made it 8 feet (2·4m) high! Three of these were made for Birmingham and Southern District and two went into service, one of which is in the Post Office's collection, although currently in private ownership in a garden in Hertfordshire where, when I photographed it in 1986, the front of the box was obscured by a leylandii hedge (8).

Later the same year further fluted boxes were made with the misunderstanding corrected: the large dome was replaced by a more modest flattened cone and the crown became a detail within the royal cipher on the side of the box. The first batch of boxes had a vertical posting aperture (9) and ten of these survive, including a famous pair at Eastgate and Westgate in Warwick. Another batch of boxes was made in 1857 with a horizontal aperture (10) and only four of these remain, all still in daily use, three in Malvern and one in Dog Kennel Lane, Shirley, Solihull.

Amidst the confusion of designs offered by ironfounders in various parts of the country, the Postmaster General decided in 1857 that all pillar boxes 'should be manufactured after the same pattern ... as those now made for London'. A cheaper version of the ornate Science and Art box (see previous article), without all the decorations, was commissioned from Smith & Hawkes and fifty were made (11). The only surviving example is at the Kent Railway Station in Cork, Republic of Ireland.

An improved design which took into account some criticisms was put out to tender and in 1859 Cochrane & Co of Dudley produced what were called the 'first national standard' pillar boxes. The design was similar to the cheaper version of the London ornate box, but taller and with the posting aperture below the cap fitted with an inward-opening flap that couldn't be left open


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(some apertures were later fitted with a hood). A wire guard inside prevented letters falling out when the door was opened, and the door was hinged at the left rather than the right. The box was supplied in two sizes and six of the smaller and ten of the larger survive (12). A unique version of the smaller box with a lamp post on top stands by the Co-op Pioneers' Museum in Toad Lane, Rochdale (13).

Even the larger box was found to be insufficient for heavy postings in some parts of Liverpool and the city's Postmaster preferred the traditional suspended mailbag rather than an internal wire guard. He also thought the aperture was too large and that the box should bear the words POST OFFICE. In consequence a few 'Liverpool special' boxes were made, one of which with its distinctive crown on top is still in use at Albert Dock in that city (14).


14


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The Penfold and beyond Between 1866 and 1879 the hexagonal 'Penfold' design was used throughout the country. These have already been dealt with in an earlier article in this series, so we move on to the so-called 'anonymous' boxes of 1879-1887. These reverted to a plain cylindrical design and were manufactured by Andrew Handyside & Co of Derby. Their distinctive feature, and the reason for their name, is that they bear no royal cipher, crown or wording of any kind apart from the maker's name below the door.

By 1883 complaints had been made about letters becoming trapped inside the top of these boxes, so the aperture was lowered in castings made after that. Both high (15) and low aperture boxes (16) come in large and smaller sizes, and over three hundred can still be seen on our streets. One famous high aperture box in Priory Road, Cambridge is surmounted by spikes. It has been in several different locations and is popularly believed once to have stood next to a college wall, where the spikes would have deterred students from using the box as an aid to climbing in after hours.


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In 1887 the Post Office had to admit that the omission of the royal cipher and other wording had been an oversight and from then onwards all pillar boxes had a large VR royal cipher cast in script letters on the door and the words POST OFFICE on either side of the posting aperture. With the exception of a few experimental variations, the basic shape and style of pillar boxes have remained much the same throughout five subsequent reigns •



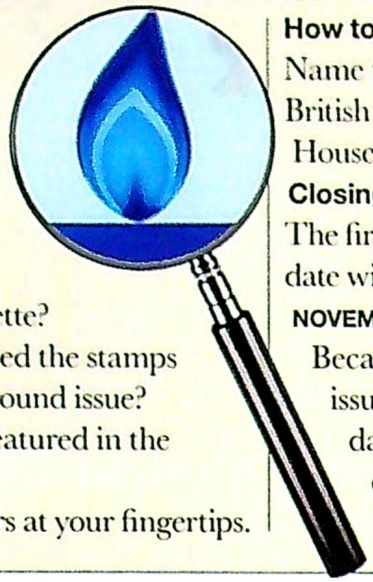
Reader's letter: Reader T Mullins sends a photo of a Victorian post box in Adelaide, South Australia. This is one of the survivors of sixty such boxes erected in Adelaide in about 1866. They were cast locally and were clearly modelled on the fluted boxes made by Smith & Hawkes in 1857 for Birmingham and Southern District.

Please send your photographs to The Editor at the address on page 100 or e-mail digital images to rmbulletin@rocketmail.com. (We cannot promise to return photos.)

Happy New Prizes Pick up a pen – it's puzzling time. You could win the complete London Underground special issue

NAME THAT STAMP

From the detail shown right, identify the name and year of issue of the stamp beneath the magnifier.



JANUARY QUIZ

a) Wood Brown replaces what colour in the new definitives palette?

b) Which design company created the stamps in this month's London Underground issue?

c) Name the earliest monarch featured in the Kings and Queens series.

Clue: you can find all the answers at your fingertips.

How to enter: send your answers, marked 'January Name that Stamp' and/or 'January Quiz' to: British Philatelic Bulletin Prize Draws, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, EH12 9PB.

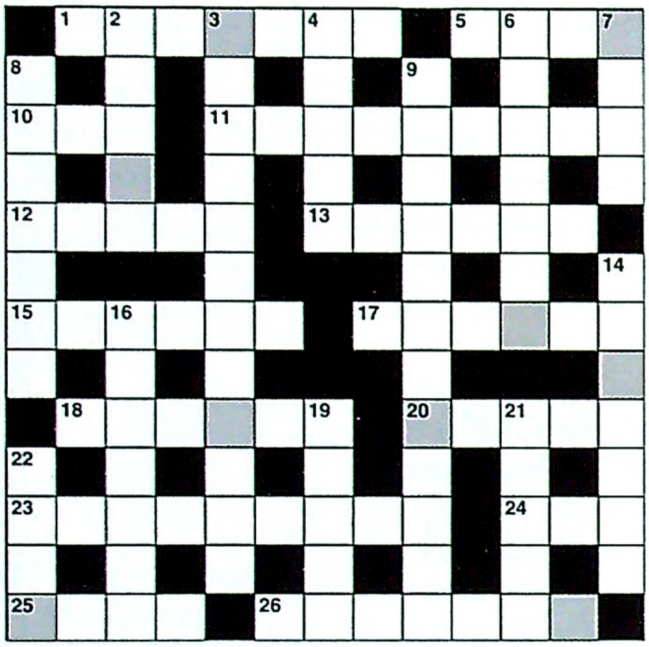
Closing date: 18 February 2013.

The first three correct entries drawn after the closing date win the complete London Underground issue.

NOVEMBER SOLUTIONS

Because of the late delivery of the November issue of the *British Philatelic Bulletin*, the closing date for the November puzzles has been extended to 18 January, as notified on page 126 of your December edition •

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD Complete the puzzle below, then rearrange the letters in the grey squares to form a stamp-related word. Send that word, with your name and address, to 'January Crossword' at the address above. The first correct entry drawn after 18 February win the 2012 Royal Mail Year Pack



CLUES ACROSS

1 Scrape before the French cause brawl (7)
5 Business mogul conceals air pollution (4)
10 Listener of The Archers (3)
11 Unknown competitor, nightmare? (4,5)
12 Whole amount to speak? Not quite (5)
13 Green space often seen (6)
15 Form you begin to find stylish (6)
17 I smoke out Arctic dweller (6)
18 Whistler to rest in comfort (6)
19 Tries out religious ceremonies (5)
20 City limits unfashionable women's clothing (9)
24 Gemstone without a ring for one's friend (3)
25 Month taken with duck sauce (4)
26 Sound of cattle tethered, we hear, when the sea turns (3,4)

CLUES DOWN

2 Unit of weight for stone, a rock initially swallowed by feline (5)
3 Cheats, then marks as correct – nonsense! (12)
4 Cyril performing at London theatre (5)
6 Radio man, Romanic, perhaps (7)
7 Part of the big reward just got bigger! (4)
8 Vegetable put old Latvian off cue (7)
9 Scientist bursts tyres with an experimental toy (9,3)
14 Study only for solace (7)
16 Suitably including notes with skill (7)
19 Nearly didn't remember sacrifice (5)
21 Slightly warm food regimen taken up, including starter of prawns (5)
22 Bench shape (4)

Prize draw rules and regulations 1 Promotions are open to all readers aged 18 and over, except employees of Royal Mail Group Ltd, their business associates and immediate families. 2 Responsibility cannot be accepted for entries which are incomplete, damaged or not received for any reason. Proof of posting is not proof of receipt. 3 Prizes must be accepted as offered; they are not transferable and there are no cash alternatives. The cost of transport to and from a prize venue, where applicable, is not included. 4 Winners are notified within 28 days of closing date stated. 5 For prize draws where readers must answer a question, winners will be the senders of the first correct entries drawn at random by an independent person after the closing date. 6 Promoter's decision on any aspect of the promotions is final. No correspondence will be entered into. 7 Entry implies acceptance of these rules. 8 Prizes are subject to suitability and availability. The promoter reserves the right to a) substitute a prize of equal or greater value if circumstances so demand and b) to suspend or cancel or hold void any of the competitions or prize draws at any time without notice. 9 Winners' names are available 28 days after closing date; send an SAE to The Editor, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB.
The promoter of 'Identify' and 'Knowledge' is Royal Mail Group Ltd, 100 Victoria Embankment, London EC4Y 0HQ.

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Happy New Year – of the Snake!

The Lunar New Year starts on 10 February 2013 and to coincide with the beginning of the Year of the Snake, Royal Mail is issuing a celebratory Generic Sheet of 20 stamps. For more details, see Royal Mail News on page 135, visit www.royalmail.com/snake or phone 08457 641 641.

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