

BRITISH PHILATELIC

The ROYAL MAIL magazine *for stamp collectors*

Bulletin

Volume 37 Number 6

FEBRUARY 2000 • 85p

Welsh Highland Railway • A
visit to Questa • FDC cancels



Making a splash: the third
in Royal Mail's Millennium
stamps series for 2000

A preview of *Water and Coast*, on sale from 7 March

Forthcoming issues and withdrawals



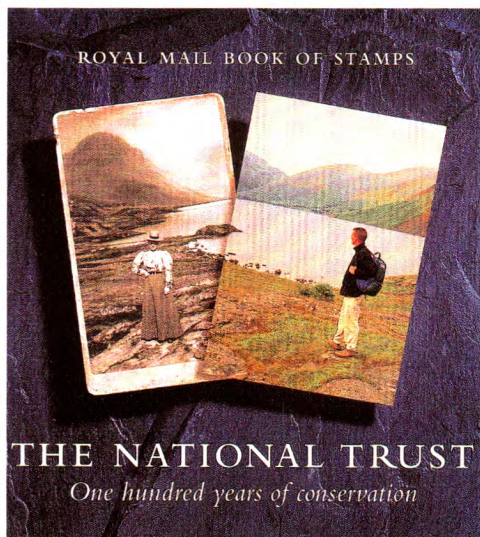
Cover The 19p stamp in the forthcoming Water and Coast issue features the Millennium project which is turning back the legacy of industrial waste on the Durham coast. Water and Coast is previewed on page 176.

1 February	Issue Millennium: Fire and Light stamps and presentation pack
15 February	Issue Special by Design prestige stamp book (£7.50)
29 February	Issue Millennium: Water and Coast stamp cards
29 February	Withdrawal 6p and 30p national definitives
7 March	Issue Millennium: Water and Coast stamps and presentation pack
14 March	Issue 4 × 1st and 4 × 2nd (Walsall), 10 × 2nd (Questa), 10 × 1st Millennium definitive (Questa and Walsall) with revised telephone number in postcode details. Available initially from Bureau and philatelic outlets and from post offices and retail outlets as earlier stocks exhausted.
15 March	Withdrawal Walsall 4 × 1st and 10 × 1st and Questa 10 × 2nd stamp books, issued 5 May 1998.
21 March	Issue Millennium stamp book: 4 × 1st class Millennium definitives and Postman Pat label. (Unfolded panes available only from Bureau)
28 March	Issue Millennium: Life and Earth stamp cards

Issues Note some items are available only from the British Philatelic Bureau and Post Office Counters philatelic outlets at main post offices in Bath, Belfast, Birmingham Brighton, Bristol, Cambridge Canterbury, Cardiff, Chester Colchester, Coventry, Croydon Durham, Edinburgh, Exeter Gatwick Airport, Glasgow Gloucester, Grimsby, Guildford Harrogate, Leeds, Leicester Liverpool, London (Lombard Street and Trafalgar Square) Manchester, Newcastle upon Tyne, Norwich, Nottingham Oxford, Plymouth, Portsmouth Southampton, Southend-on-Sea, Stevenage, Stratford-on-Avon, Truro, Windsor and York

Revised philatelic sales at Trafalgar Square As of mid December 1999 the philatelic service at London's Trafalgar Square PO has established a mini retail environment selling a variety of Royal Mail pre-packaged philatelic items including gutter pairs, cylinder blocks, yearbooks, yearpacks and a full range of presentation packs for all the 1999 Millennium issues as well as all definitive presentation packs. This is the first time that Royal Mail have sold these pre-packaged items outside of the Wembley stamp show and Stampex. The philatelic counter is open Monday to Friday 08.30-20.00, Saturday 09.00-20.00.

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The **British Philatelic Bulletin** is published monthly by Royal Mail, 2-14 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8HQ. ● **Editor** JR Holman ● **Price** 85p for single copies, from Post Office Counters philatelic outlets ● **Annual subscription** £9.50 in UK and Europe. £13.50 rest of the world. Subscriptions should be sent to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT ● **Binders** to hold 24 issues, price £7, available by post from British Philatelic Bureau (address as above) ● Royal Mail also publishes the fortnightly *British Postmark Bulletin*, giving details of forthcoming special handstamps. Available on annual subscription from British Philatelic Bureau (address above) UK and Europe £10, rest of the world £21.75 ● **Copyright** Unless copyright is attributed to a specific author, any article or feature may be reproduced without formal permission, but acknowledgement should be given to *British Philatelic Bulletin*. Requests to reproduce any copyright articles should be addressed to the Editor, 2-14 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8HQ ● **Design** by Robert Maude ● **Printed** in Great Britain by The White Dove Press ● **ISSN** 0953 8119

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This month The Editor previews this issue

THE MAIN FEATURE this month is a report by Douglas Myall of a visit to The House of Questa's new printing works at Byfleet. The article will appeal to all collectors interested in stamp printing, but will be of particular value to specialist collectors of Machin stamp books. This replaces Douglas's normal Decimal Stamp Books feature this month; he will be back in April with a detailed account of the Special by Design prestige book which goes on sale this month.

More information is coming in about the Stamp Show at Earl's Court in May and in Royal Mail News we announce the range of products that will be issued as souvenirs of this event. The range contains items that should appeal to serious philatelists and the average collector as well as gift-givers and souvenir-hunters – an increasingly important group of Royal Mail customers. Before Stamp Show there will be Spring Stampex at the Business Design Centre in London, 1-5 March. The theme of the exhibition will be the 150th anniversary of the first Spanish stamps. The first stamp, depicting Queen Isabella, features on the exhibition postmark. Details of this important national exhibition are given in Stamp Scene.

The Fire and Light set issued this month includes a stamp featuring the Welsh Highland Railway. I am pleased to publish an article on this interesting line by Peter Johnson, a well-known author on railway subjects and a keen collector of railway stamps and postmarks. For first day cover collectors, Derek Williams writes about FDCs with related postmarks, illustrated with examples from his extensive collection.

Finally for all of you who, like me, enjoy entering competitions and prize draws, you have three chances of winning a prize this month. As well as our 'identify a stamp' and general knowledge competitions, we have a prize draw to win the three prestige books issued in connection with Stamp Show 2000. Good luck and enjoy this month's magazine. JOHN HOLMAN, EDITOR •

Stamp scene Spring Stampex and Stamp Show 2000 • A tribute to Sir Rowland Hill

Stampex opening hours

1 March	Noon-19.00
2-4 March	10.30-18.00
5 March	10.30-16.00

Admission £3 on the first day and £1 other days. Free tickets for any days are available from the Stampex office, 107 Charterhouse Street, London EC1M 6PT. Telephone 0171 490 1005. A free entry ticket is included in this *Bulletin*.

Spring Stampex organised by the Philatelic Traders' Society, will be held at the Business Design Centre, Upper Street, London N1, 1-5 March. The theme of this year's exhibition will be the 150th anniversary of the first Spanish stamps, and in the main hall visitors will find themselves surrounded by 'things Spanish'. There will be over 200 frames of material drawn from prominent overseas collectors and members of the Spanish Study Circle. Also on the Village Green area will be the Circle's information stand to give details of the Society along with members of the Anglo-Spanish Society who can help with non-philatelic matters. Two further stands will provide information on Afinsa and Edifil, two major Spanish philatelic companies.

COURTS OF HONOUR AND DEALERS At the rear of the mezzanine floor will be two Courts of Honour – one showing highlights from the superb Afinsa collection of Spain no 1, the other material from the British Library's Tapling collection including the famous '2 Reales blue, error of colour'. Information will be available on holidays in Spain from the Spanish Tourist Authority, and there will be a chance to taste Spanish wines arranged by the Cultural Department of the Spanish Embassy.

There will be 100 or so dealers' stands, about one-fifth from overseas. They will offer all things philatelic: stamps, postal history, philatelic literature, accessories, etc. Royal Mail will provide a Stamp Show 2000 stand where you can register for free tickets. Mail posted at the exhibition will receive a special handstamp reproducing the design of the first Spanish stamp.

David Harrop will provide one of his very popular displays of artefacts from the Manchester Postal Museum. At the rear of the mezzanine will be Kids Corner, organised by the National Youth Stamp Group, where younger collectors can participate in a free auction on the Saturday. Each young collector will be given a free packet of Spanish stamps.

Over the weekend there will be a number of meetings of specialist societies including the Great Britain Philatelic Society, Egypt Study Circle, and the Concorde Study Circle. All will welcome interested visitors.

EXHIBITION CATALOGUE AND PRIZE DRAWS Every visitor will receive the free prestigious Stampex catalogue and a handsome folder plus the chance of winning a £5 voucher which can be spent with dealers at the show. There will be 50 given away at random every day. In addition at the end of each day, one lucky visitor will win £50 in vouchers to spend at the show or at Autumn Stampex 2000. In addition there will be daily draws for a Spain album, a pack of Spanish stamps value £50, a pack of the 1999 issues of Spain, and a Royal Doulton figurine of Carmen, value £200.

At the end of the week all visitor cards will go into a draw to win a week-end break in Madrid during the Madrid 2000 exhibition in October. For the runners-up there will be a case of Spanish 'Champagne', a 40-hour language course and a large packet of Spanish stamps valued at £500.

SHIPS 2000 EXHIBITION The Ship Stamp Society, under the auspices of the British Philatelic Trust, will mount a 100 frame 'Ships 2000' exhibition at Stampex. Entries to this exhibition will come under nine classes: Thematic, Traditional Philately, Maritime Periphery: Postal History & Postal Stationery, Maritime Covers, Cinderellas, Maximaphily and Open Class, Adult One Frame, Youth Entries, and Literature. The judging will be carried out according to UK National Regulations with gold, large vermeil, vermeil, silver, silver bronze, and bronze medals awarded. An award at vermeil or above will provide qualification for the exhibit to be entered into an FIP or FEPA international exhibition.

For further information on this exhibition contact Philip Cant, 51 Ketelbey Rise, Basingstoke RG22 4PE ●



Future Stampex dates

Autumn Stampex 2000
20-24 September

Spring Stampex 2001 *
28 February-4 March

Autumn Stampex 2001
19-23 September

Spring Stampex 2002 *
27 February-3 March

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* Invited displays provided by the King George VI Collectors Society and the Royal Philatelic Society London.

Special days and postmarks

As with all world stamp exhibitions, each day of Stamp Show 2000 will have a theme.

22 May	Art & Entertainment
23 May	Royalty
24 May	Environment
25 May	Transport
26 May	Technology
27 May	Sport & Olympic
28 May	Youth

A different themed postmark will be used for each day. A general exhibition postmark will be available all days, and a cachet for use with the Stamp Show 2000 passport which can be completed by visiting the many postal administrations represented at the show.

Admission Opening day £10, on subsequent days £5. The opening day ticket will be valid on subsequent days and will include the Millennium Time-keeper miniature sheet issued on 14 December 1999.

Ticket enquiries 0845 072 2000 (UK); +44 (0) 20 7253 9900 (overseas).

Stamp Show 2000 The first international stamp exhibition in Britain for a decade will be held at Earls Court, London SW5, 22-28 May 2000. Details are now being received of some of the many attractions.

ROYAL COLLECTION The Court of Honour will contain material from The Queen's Collection, much of which has never been seen in public before. The exhibit will show the deep interest in stamps of the Collection's founder King George V, who always tried to spend three afternoons a week with his collection. He is reputed to have been interrupted on just two occasions. The exhibit will include many of the major rarities in the Collection, also George VI and Elizabeth II artwork, proofs and stamps. On show will be George V's British Commonwealth catalogue carefully annotated in his handwriting to show which stamps (few) were missing from his collection, his magnifying glass, paper knife and other items.

One of the major attractions of the exhibit will be the section entitled 'The Collector King' which illustrates the development of the King's portrait into the unsuccessful 'Downey Heads' issue of GB of 1911. The portrait was also intended to be used for colonial stamps, many of which were held up when it was decided to scrap the Downey Head issue. Artwork and proof material will be shown together with GB and colonial material relating to the subsequent 'Mackennal' head designs.

George V took a close interest in stamp design and, with his philatelic adviser J A Tilleard, designed the 1903 issue for Canada. His appalled reaction to the Downey Head fiasco was shared by the public and philatelists in equal measure. Despite the 'Downey Head disaster' the early years of his reign saw the development of the 'Seahorses' high values, regarded by many as some of the most attractive GB stamps. The display will include the artwork, proofs and colour trials together with the stamps themselves – perhaps the most complete collection of this issue. Some of the Downey Head stamps in the collections of Post Office Heritage are shown on p169.

A section of the exhibit will feature a number of colonial commemoratives prior to 1910, but such issues took on more importance during the King's reign. On show will be artwork, proofs and issues for such diverse colonies as Jamaica (Child Welfare), Falklands Islands (Centenary), Sierra Leone (Abolition of Slavery), and GB (Empire Exhibition and Postal Union Congress), also the 1935 Silver Jubilee omnibus issues.

STAMP PRINTERS The four printers who supply Royal Mail – De La Rue, Enschedé, The House of Questa, and Walsall Security Printers – will each have a special stand with absorbing displays.

PERSONALISED MAIL There will be a chance to personalise your mail with your own portrait. Sheets of 10 stamps, each attached to a label with a personalised portrait, will be available. Details to be announced.

MINIATURE SHEET AND SOUVENIRS See Royal Mail News, page 169 ●

Millennium tribute to Sir Rowland Hill The 14th annual general meeting of the Association of Friends of the National Postal Museum took place at the Mount Pleasant Complex in London on the morning of 27 November; 54 members and guests were present.

The afternoon was planned as a Millennium tribute to Sir Rowland Hill. Dr I David Hill, Sir Rowland's great-great-great nephew, gave an illustrated talk entitled 'A Range of Hills'. Dr Hill is a descendant of Sir Rowland's brother Arthur who ran the family school at Bruce Castle, Tottenham. The building is now a museum.

Dr Hill presented meticulously researched and detailed family trees for branches of his family going back in part to the 1400s through to today. This was presented in a most interesting way since the personalities were brought to life by his knowledge of them and their roles in society. These were related in the context of relevant historical details of their times. Sir Leonard Hill, for example, was a noted physiologist interested in the problems of deep sea diving, while Sir Austen Bradford Hill was a statistician who noted the connection between smoking and health.

On the other hand, some relatives, by a touch of nepotism perhaps, had a role in postal developments. Sir Rowland's eldest brother, Matthew Davenport Hill, was a judge and helped him in his postal reform campaign. Sir Rowland's son, Pearson Hill, invented the machinery, well-known to philatelists, for cancelling stamps. Edwin Hill, who worked for the Inland Revenue, was thereby involved in the production of postage stamps. Frederick Hill became an Assistant Secretary in the Post Office, while Edward Bernard Lewin Hill became head of the Establishment branch. He was not afraid to put forward some unpopular policies.

In the second part of his talk, Dr Hill showed how Sir Rowland has been portrayed on many commemorative stamps from 1940 to 1979 by countries as diverse as Argentina, Guatemala, Belgium, Liberia and Taiwan. He illustrated the original portraits and sculptures used. Finally he mentioned the relatively unknown cartoon by Sir John Tenniel which appeared in the 19 March 1864 issue of *Punch*. This features on one of the prestigious covers produced by the Friends of the NPM to mark this occasion. The filler card reproduces the *Punch* page on one side and on the reverse a letter from Sir Rowland to his brother Arthur, dated 18 February 1869, in which he advises him of his intention to resign from his post as Secretary to the Post Office. The letter is annotated by David Hill.

A full account of Dr Hill's talk will appear in a forthcoming issue of *Cross Post*, the journal of the Association of Friends. P J WORTLEY •

Details of the special cover featuring the Tenniel cartoon of Sir Rowland Hill, were given in Commemorative Covers Review, October 1999.

The Association has sponsored a Millennium Tribute to Sir Rowland Hill special handstamp for use until 1 November 2000. Covers to receive this handstamp should be sent to: London Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Mount Pleasant, London EC1A 1BB, requesting handstamp number 6312. Covers should bear at least 1st class postage. ED.



Sir Rowland Hill on one of the Pioneers of Communications stamps issued in 1995.

The Association of Friends of the National Postal Museum stages events and visits, and publishes the journal *Cross Post* and postcards featuring material from the PO Heritage Collections (cards featuring the Frank Staff Postal History Collection were shown here last month).

For details of the Association and its activities contact Ray Pottle, PO Box 40, Uckfield TN22 2SP. Telephone 01825 766546. Please enclose a stamped addressed envelope or international reply coupon with written enquiries.

Royal Mail news Prestige books • Pictorial label books • Stamp Show 2000 souvenirs

Late news The finished books have now been delivered from the printers and the phosphor arrangement on pane 3 is not as originally intended and announced in January's *Bulletin*. The 19p stamps in this pane have the phosphor band at right instead of at left or right. The perforation on all stamps is gauge 14.

Prestige stamp books The third of three special prestige stamp books to promote The Stamp Show 2000 (Earl's Court, London 22-28 May 2000) will be issued on 15 February. Entitled *Special by Design* it will cost £7.50 and contain a mixture of standard and Millennium definitives and four entirely new stamps unique to this book (see last month's *Bulletin*).

The two previous books in this series are still available from the Bureau and philatelic outlets. *The Definitive Portrait* (March 1998, price £7.49) contains panes of 20p, 26p and 37p stamps in the classic Wilding design. *Profile on Print* (February 1999, price £7.54) contains two panes of 1st class XVI stamps in standard size printed in flame (orange) in gravure and lithography, and three panes with stamps of larger size printed in black in letterpress and intaglio, and embossed on white self-adhesive paper (with value printed in litho in grey). These large-format stamps are unique to this book. For further details of these two books, which remain on sale until after Stamp Show 2000 in May, see *Bulletin* February 1998 and January 1999.

The quantities issued of the 1997 BBC and 1998 Speed prestige books were 165,300 and 143,387 respectively •



Postman Pat label from new £1.04 stamp book. The label is designed by Brian Delaney, and the book was printed by Walsall Security Printers.

New pictorial label books A new £1.04 stamp book will be available from philatelic outlets from 21 March. This will contain four 1st class Millennium definitives and a label featuring popular children's TV character Postman Pat. Unfolded panes will be available only from the British Philatelic Bureau.

Royal Mail's Collectors Club recently ran a competition for under-sevens to design a Postman Pat postcard. The winners and runners-up will receive their prizes at a special ceremony at Stamp Show 2000 in May. Postman Pat, the creation of John Cunliffe, featured on stamps and a miniature sheet issued by the Isle of Man Post Office in September 1994.

A further label book marking the opening of the National Botanic Garden of Wales, at Middleton Hall, Llanarthne, Carmarthenshire, will be issued on 4 April. A coin cover will also be available at the same time •

End of line for Castles and To Pay labels All remaining stocks of the £1.50, £2, £3 and £5 Castles stamps, the presentation pack and stamp cards will be withdrawn from sale at the Bureau and Post Office Counters philatelic outlets on 4 August.

Remaining stocks of To Pay labels and presentation packs were withdrawn from sale at Post Office Counters philatelic outlets on 28 January and will be withdrawn from sale at the Bureau on 31 May •

Stamp Show 2000 The products listed opposite will be issued on 22 and 23 May as souvenirs of the Stamp Show.

The miniature sheet will combine the new 1st class Millennium definitive with a classic commemorative stamp design from the past. The sheet will bear the Stamp Show 2000 logo.

The exhibition card contains a miniature sheet of eight definitive stamps selected to show the colours that were specially chosen by Jeffery Matthews for the Machin definitive range.

Further information will be announced in April's *Bulletin* •

22 May

Commemorative envelope Available only at the show

Exhibition card Incorporating definitive miniature sheet

Jigsaws Available only at the show and from the Bureau

Smilers stamps In sheet of 10

Stamp cards Commemorative book label designs and Millennium definitive

23 May

Miniature sheet and presentation pack

26 May

Retail book of Millennium definitives and Millennium stamps

Post Office Heritage Collections George V shades, 1912

THE COLLECTIONS of Post Office Archives and the former National Postal Museum (now closed) include much of interest to specialist collectors of GB stamps. This month we feature a page from a collection of George V definitive shades bearing four shades each of the 1912 Downey Head 1d die 1B watermark Crown (SG Specialised N9) and die 1A watermark Simple Cypher (N10). The shades are: scarlet, pale scarlet, bright scarlet and aniline scarlet (N9) and scarlet, pale scarlet, bright scarlet and deep bright scarlet (N10). A feature on aniline ink was published in the *Bulletin* in September 1992.

This George V study, the Reginald M Phillips Collection of Victorian stamps and other collections can be seen by prior appointment at Post Office Heritage Collections, Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London WC1X 0DL. Enquiries: 020 7239 2570.

PUBLICATIONS Copies of the National Postal Museum's *Review* of 1996 and 1997-98, also the first four of its *Special Stamp History* books (1929 Postal Union Congress; 1935 George V Silver Jubilee and 1936 proposed Memorial stamps; 1936 proposed Edward VIII Coronation; and 1953 Coronation) are all available from the British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT. The *Reviews* cost £5 each, the *Special Stamp History* books £7.50 each •

Scarlet



Pale scarlet



Bright scarlet



Aniline scarlet



SG N10, issued August 1912
Die 1A, WM Simple Cypher, perf 15 x 14

Scarlet



Pale scarlet



Bright scarlet



Deep bright scarlet



Bookmakers to Royal Mail

In the first of two articles about The House of Questa, Douglas Myall describes operations



THE HOUSE OF QUESTA is one of Royal Mail's major suppliers of postage stamps, both definitives and special issues, which are produced in sheet and book form. In the October 1998 issue of the *Bulletin* I reported their decision to relocate their factory to Byfleet, in Surrey, where they had installed a new gravure press. In this first of two follow-up articles, I will describe operations at the new location, with particular reference to the new press. The production of books of stamps will be described in part two, next month.

The factory The factory is in a pleasant semi-rural location, and is laid out as a series of open plan areas. Access to all of them is restricted, with different levels of access allocated according to one's need or authority. Some of them, especially those housing the presses, have their humidity and temperature automatically controlled and precautions extend to ensuring that no dust enters when the door is opened. Security has the very highest attention and cameras monitor all operations continuously. The firm is involved in all kinds of security printing but is known primarily for postage stamps. The sequence from concept to finished product involves a series of operations which vary according to the precise nature of the job.

Reproduction room This is where the artwork is created or received and modified to suit the chosen method of production. It is first scanned, either on a flat-bed machine or, if higher resolutions are required, on a drum scanner. High resolution colour scans of large originals at actual size can be very large indeed and each piece of artwork is kept on a separate compact disk. This is loaded onto a computer and displayed on large colour monitors where skilled operators ensure that the image is entirely suitable for the later processes; eg, having regard to the intended size of the finished stamp and where the text etc are to be placed. This may involve modifying the density of colour or altering the colour balance.

Pre-press and plate making The production area of repro then adds the ancillary parts of the finished design, such as the values, country name, borders, the monarch's head, etc. The final digital image is then passed to an imagesetter where it is split into its component colours. The firm's presses use the almost universal CMYK system which can produce any colour by a mixture of cyan, magenta, yellow and black; special colours such as silver are additional. A black and white film is produced for each of the colours for which a cylinder will be required.

Cylinders (gravure) are made by electro-mechanical or laser engraving depending on the screen resolution required. Cylinders for Machin definitives are engraved by a diamond stylus at a resolution to match that of other printers.

Printing Cylinders, or plates, are prepared to fit the appropriate press and laydown required. This operation is described more fully under 'printing presses' below. The various bookmaking processes will be dealt with in part two.

Perforating Because the lithographic presses are sheet-fed, perforation is done off-line. Stacks of about 500 sheets are knocked into line and one edge is lightly glued. The operator feeds them into a Bickel perforator. The selected sheets are kept in register by the glued edge.

Examining and finishing The perforated sheets are examined by experienced ladies who look for anything untoward, such as printing blemishes or faulty perforations. This is done at an incredible rate and any rejected sheets are removed for destruction. The others are then passed in stacks of about 500 to the operator of a fearsome guillotine which removes unwanted margins and cuts the stacked sheets into smaller sizes if required.

Printing presses Questa have several printing presses and the choice of which one to use for a job depends on such matters as: the length of the production run, the number of colours (units), whether gravure or lithography, etc.

There is a mixture of Mitsubishi and Heidelberg lithographic presses, with between two and six units. These are sheet-fed machines. Having six units, instead of the more common four, the Mitsubishi press can cope with jobs requiring special colours in addition to the four basic colours of the CMYK system, in a single pass. This press also incorporates an inkjet printer which adds the sheet number to the margins as well as such matters as Royal Mail's Secure Stock Operations (SSO) number, formerly known as the Warrant number. It is also used for printing some of Royal Mail's first day covers.

The major press is the huge gravure press and ancillary equipment made by Applications Technologies Nouveaux, or ATN, of France, which has now been installed for over a year. It has nine units but a tenth is planned and the present floor layout is arranged to accommodate this. Steven Winton, my affable host and guide, walked me along this gigantic machine, explaining the purpose and operation of each constituent as we went.

Paper There are two paper delivery systems which can be diagonally spliced into the production web without halting or even slowing operations. The machine minder receives timely warning that a reel is about to come to an end and a new reel can be spliced to give a continuous print. The paper is supplied from the UK in mill reels containing up to 7,000 metres of paper. Immediately after loading, the paper goes through a tensioning unit and web guidance system to ensure that the pull is correct and that the paper is centred in the press and square to the printing units.

Cylinders Cylinders have different diameters for different jobs. They are stored in racks and when selected for a job, each is loaded into a trolley. The liquid ink is fed from a drum underneath the trolley and kept rotated. An inking roller in each trolley presses the ink into the image recesses. Sufficient trolleys are on hand to enable a full set of up to nine cylinders to be made ready while the press is running another job. It is a simple matter to load a trolley complete with its inking system directly into the chosen unit on the press. Cylinders are kept for a period after the issue date of the job concerned. The image is then ground off and the cylinder is ready for re-use.

Printing units The ATN press has nine units at present, and Questa have plans to add a tenth in the near future. The nine are arranged five/four, separated by a second web guidance system. At this point, the web can be turned so that the other side of the paper is printed by one or more of the remaining units in the sequence. Of course, not all nine units are required for all jobs and only

those needed for a particular task are selected. For example, a straightforward four-colour run might use the two units on each side of the middle web guidance system. Phosphor ink is usually loaded into the final unit to ensure that it is printed on the surface of the stamps. So-called 'Phosphor under Ink' errors are unlikely at Questa.

Each unit has its own drying system like a gigantic hair dryer; this makes sure that the paper is ready to receive the next colour without any risk of smudging or offsetting.

A 'futee' detection system uses a stroboscopic camera placed across the web to detect errors. The parameters for this are pre-set by the operator. If any is detected, a coloured light flashes, a klaxon sounds and the relevant part of the web is automatically tagged with a coloured label. Different colours mean different things; red, for example, is used to denote a doctor blade flaw. Fault labelling on-line means that the print run is not stopped; the offending part is identified by the coloured tags and removed later.

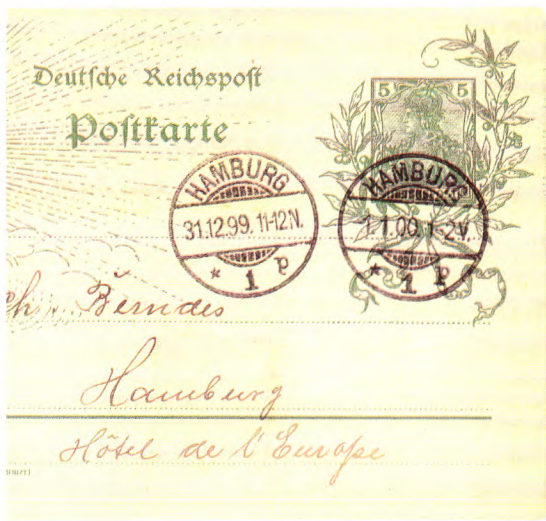
Perforating The press incorporates an on-line APS perforating facility which employs a full

width cylindrical cutter. As well as the usual purpose-made stud cylinders, which are very expensive, Questa also use a modified system of flexible magnetic plates which are comparatively cheap and quick to make. Any combination of 'pin' layout is possible, including the ellipses specified by Royal Mail. This system is immensely flexible. The perforation cylinders rotate at the same speed as the printing cylinders providing continuous on-line perforation. The cutters, however, operate nine times as fast.

Other units The ATN press also incorporates an ink-jet monitoring system for scanning data, such as the date of printing and sso number, which is printed in sheet margins at Royal Mail's request. Following the perforating cylinders, there is a die cutting unit for use with self-adhesive stamps on a backing sheet, a punching unit, a sheeteer and stacker (used for special issues) and a reel stand capable of holding two reels prior to removing them from the press for later stages of production. There is also a slitting machine which is presently used for dividing the web into column reels for bookmaking, to be described next month ●

Text © D G A Wyll 2000

Cover corner New century double dates, by James Mackay



THE DOUBLE DATING of souvenir cards and covers to mark the dawn of the new Millennium is not as innovative as one might imagine. Back in December 1899 the Imperial German postal service produced a special 5 pfennig postcard showing a sunrise behind the date 1900 and enshrining the Germania stamp with a floral wreath. Examples of the card with various dates early in January 1900 are not uncommon, but those with double dates are much sought after.

This card posted in Hamburg to the Hotel de l'Europe bears at left the handstamp of 11-12 midnight on 31 December 1899 and alongside, cancelling the stamp, the postmark of 1 January 1900 between 1 and 2am. Clearly the Reichspost made special arrangements for the double stamping of souvenir mail and we would welcome further information on how this was advertised ●

Card shown at 75% actual size

The Welsh Highland Railway

The history and future of the railway on the 26p Fire and Light stamp, by Peter Johnson

When completed, the Welsh Highland Railway (WHR) will link up with the Festiniog Railway (FR) at Porthmadog, providing a stupendous 40-mile long narrow gauge railway between Caernarfon and Blaenau Ffestiniog, the FR's inland terminus.

Whilst the Millennium project is concerned with new construction, the WHR actually has a long and complicated history going back to the earliest days of Welsh industrial development. At the Caernarfon end, the first three miles to Dinas were first covered by the tracks of the Nantlle Tramway, a horse-drawn, 3ft 6in gauge system opened to serve slate quarries in the Nantlle Valley in 1828. It was taken over by the Carnarvonshire Railway in 1862 and mostly incorporated into the standard gauge route to Afon Wen.

The North Wales Narrow Gauge Railways (NWNGR), 2ft gauge, opened the section from Dinas to Rhyd Ddu in 1881. The NWNGR was an impecunious affair that did reasonably well for passengers in summer by promoting Rhyd Ddu as the nearest railway to Snowdon summit; the station was variously named Snowdon or South Snowdon. Trans-shipment at Dinas for the final three-mile journey to Caernarfon harbour always hindered NWNGR development. The railway became moribund during the First World War. It had in 1885 obtained powers to extend from Dinas to Caernarfon and in 1900 obtained further powers to extend to Beddgelert. Some work was carried out near Rhyd Ddu but the extension was never finished.

Quarry tramway At the Porthmadog (originally Portmadoc) end there was a horse tramway serving slate quarries in the Croesor Valley, opened in 1864. This 2ft gauge line was built privately and without Parliamentary sanction. In 1877 proposals were made to link the Croesor Tramway with the NWNGR at Rhyd Ddu, the route taken being through the Aberglaslyn Pass and Beddgelert.

Next on the scene was the Portmadoc, Beddgelert & South Snowdon Railway (PB&SSR), a front for the North Wales Power & Traction Company (NWP&TC) based in the Conwy Valley at Dolgarrog. The NWP&TC was seeking to extend its electricity generating business by selling power to quarries throughout and around Snowdonia. Apparently conscious of the objections routing its overhead high-tension transmission lines through areas of scenic beauty would attract, NWP&TC sought to minimise the effect by promoting a series of electrically powered narrow gauge railways along broadly the same routes!



The WHR is the largest Millennium Commission-supported project in North Wales. The Commission is contributing £4.3m to the estimated £10m cost of building 12 miles of 2ft gauge railway between Caernarfon and Rhyd Ddu, at the foot of Snowdon. The WHR's Welsh name is Rheilffordd Eryri, a local name for the Snowdon area. Above, Garratt No 143, featured on the 26p Fire and Light stamp, leaving Dinas for Caernarfon, with the Irish Sea behind.

In furtherance of these aims the PB&SSR obtained, in 1901, Parliamentary approval to buy the Croesor Tramway and to extend it to Beddgelert, via the Aberglaslyn Pass. The works here had to meet with the approval of the Lord Lieutenant, a requirement proposed by the National Trust. The tramway purchase was completed but no work was carried out. In 1904 the PB&SSR was given permission for a railway that effectively extended the NWNCR from Dinas to Caernarfon; some land was purchased but, once again, no work was carried out. In 1906 the PB&SSR took over the NWNCR's Beddgelert extension powers and for the first time it became possible to complete a Caernarfon-Porthmadog railway.

In 1906 the PB&SSR carried out some works around Beddgelert, including three tunnels in the Aberglaslyn Pass. By 1909, however, NWP&TC was in financial difficulties and all work on railway building had stopped.

Completion, then closure Then the local authorities took an interest and applied for powers to take over and complete the Caernarfon-Porthmadog rail link. A Light Railway Order giving the necessary powers to complete the railway, now known as the Welsh Highland Railway, was made in 1922. The NWNCR section was refurbished and re-opened the same year.

The remainder of the route was opened on 1 June 1923. The WHR was linked to the FR in Porthmadog and there was through running between the two lines. 1923 was to be the WHR's most successful year however, and in 1927 it was placed in receivership. In the face of increasing road competition the WHR quickly gained a reputation for late running and uncomfortable passenger accommodation. It was finally closed in September 1936, after three years of seasonal operation by the FR. The Ministry of Supply requisitioned the track for the war effort in 1941 and in 1944 a winding up order was issued.

Revival That should have been it for the WHR but it was too fascinating a railway to be forgotten. Restoration proposals were first made in 1961 and a society was formed, later becoming established in Porthmadog. In 1989 the FR, controversially, took an interest in the scheme and eventually won the right to acquire the WHR assets from the Official Receiver.

The FR decided that it would start at Caernarfon, using the former standard gauge trackbed, now a cycletrack, as far as Dinas where a link would be made to the NWNCR section. The Millennium Commission award was announced in 1995 and the Caernarfon-Dinas section was opened in 1997. Following a Transport & Works Order in June 1999, the next section, to Waenfawr, another three miles, is due to open on 27 May 2000. The target date for Rhydyddu is May 2001, with Porthmadog five years later.

A feature of the new railway is its intended operation by Garratt-type articulated steam locomotives. The first one built, by Beyer, Peacock in Manchester in 1909 for export to Tasmania, is being restored and should return to service this year. Three larger Garratts, class 'NGG16' 2-6-2+2-6-2s, were also built in Manchester but were obtained from South Africa.

This issue is the first by Royal Mail to feature a narrow gauge railway ●



Engine no143, which appears on the 26p Fire and Light, is the last Garratt built at Beyer, Peacock. It is one of the two Garratt locomotives returned to working order and used on the WHR's Dinas to Caernarfon section. These large, 64-ton locomotives are strong enough to cope with long trains on the WHR's steep gradients and sinuous curves whilst running at up to 25mph.

Below, a detail from the 1930s poster *Snowdonia* by Charles Baker, for the London Midland and Scottish Railway.



Water and Coast is the third of 12 sets of Millennium issues



Turning the tide The attractive fields, beaches, wildlife sites and recreation areas of this aptly-named Millennium project have replaced tons of waste that blighted the Durham coastline.

National Pondlife Loved by children and so vital for wildlife, the world of Britain's ponds can be explored at the National Pondlife Centre in Prescot, Merseyside.

Parc Arfordirol Reclamation of the coastal headland at the Millennium Coastal Park, Llanelli, is a heartening symbol of our ability to recover from the ravages of our industrial past.

Portsmouth Harbour The role of this port at the heart of Britain's nautical tradition will be enhanced with a new leisure harbour and maritime arena, and reclamation of historic buildings.

The Water and Coast issue will go on sale at post offices and philatelic outlets on 7 March.



Peter Wood



Nick Turner



Photonic/BBC Natural History Unit



Ken Kirkwood

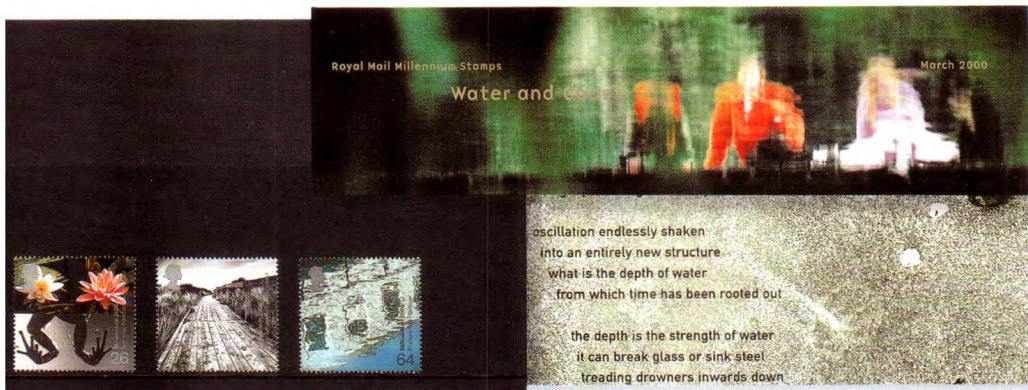
for 2000, inspired by Millennium projects throughout the UK



Two species closely associated with Britain's pondlife: a Variable Damselfly settling on Ragged Robin.

The 19p stamp, *Turning the Tide*, features the Millennium project which is turning back a legacy of industrial waste on the Durham Coast • The 26p represents the National Pondlife Centre at Prescot, Merseyside • Parc Arfordirol, the Millennium Coastal Park in south Wales, is the subject of the 44p value • The 64p stamp depicts Portsmouth Harbour, where a renaissance forging links between past and present is now under way at the historic port.





A well-illustrated presentation pack (above, price £1.90) and stamp cards (price 25p each) will be available at main post offices and philatelic outlets.

Technical details

Printer Walsall Security Printers

Process 44p litho, others gravure

Size 37 × 35mm

Sheets 100

Perforation 14 × 14.5

Phosphor One band 19p; two bands others

Gum PVA

Gutter pairs Vertical

Cylinders and colours

19p W1 silver ● W1 black ● W1 dull blue ● W1 sage-green ● W1 olive-grey ● W1 orange-yellow ● W1 pale grey

26p W1 new blue ● W1 silver ● W1 black ● W1 greenish yellow ● W1 magenta

44p W1 black ● W1 grey ● W1 silver

64p W1 black ● W1 grey ● W1 deep bluish green ● W1 greenish blue ● W1 cobalt ● W1 grey-green ● W1 brownish grey

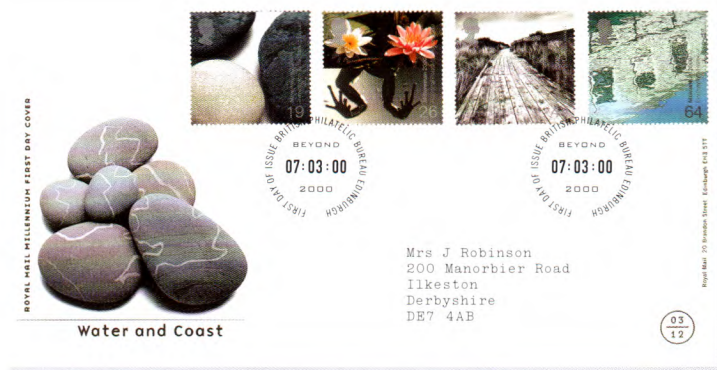
The phosphor cylinder W1 was used for all values. The 44p stamp is printed litho, others gravure.

When coal mining ceased along the Durham coast, all that remained were mountainous heaps of coal spoil, rusting conveyor belts, broken concrete and twisted metal. The Turning the Tide Millennium project has changed all that. Attractive promenades and cycle ways have replaced an industrial legacy of a million tonnes of waste. Where fly-tipping and vandalism were common, now families can walk and picnic along reclaimed pathways edged with wildflowers. Coal mining in Durham and Northumberland is recalled by the Thomas Hepburn stamp in the 1976 Social Reformers set.

Over the past century two-thirds of British ponds have disappeared under concrete or tarmac, or have been drained or simply neglected. Set in a newly created wetland environment, visitors to the National Pondlife Centre enter at the bottom of a people-friendly pond before surfacing to interact with a host of aquatic plant and animal life through a series of multi-media displays. Supplementing this activity will be vital research projects into freshwater ecology and unique training workshops and courses on pond conservation. Pondlife featured on the covers of four 50p stamp books issued in 1986-7.

The Millennium Coastal Park is now home to the endangered Scoter duck and an expanding population of one of Britain's most endangered animals – the water vole. The pulverised fuel ash and derelict Victorian steel mills are gone, replaced with parks and open spaces linked by the Sustrans National Cycle Route, a footpath running the length of the park, and train routes taking visitors to many of the attractions on offer in this area of Wales.

A massive facelift of the historic maritime centre of Portsmouth Harbour is under way, with a new leisure harbour and maritime arena, as well as the construction of new promenades and a waterbus network linking Portsmouth and Gosport. Due to this new and improved access, historic buildings are being brought back into use for leisure activities, while the futuristic Spinnaker Tower will provide visitors with an unparalleled view of the enormous naval dockyard, where the *Mary Rose* and HMS *Victory* are reminders of the port's seafaring history. Both of these famous ships have featured on British stamps.



Future Millennium issues

Life and Earth	04.04.00
Art and Craft	02.05.00
People and Place	06.06.00
Stone and Soil	04.07.00
Tree and Leaf	01.08.00
Mind and Matter	05.09.00
Body and Bone	03.10.00
Spirit and Faith	07.11.00
Sound and Vision	05.12.00

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Unstamped Royal Mail FDC envelopes will be available from main post offices and philatelic outlets about a week before 7 March, price 25p. Orders for FDCs with the stamps cancelled by a pictorial first day postmark of the Bureau or Llanelli must reach the Bureau by 7 March. Price £2.22 UK (including VAT) or £1.89 overseas (no VAT).

Collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT, or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Penarth Road, Cardiff CF11 8TA (Llanelli postmark), marking the outer envelope 'F00005' (Bureau), or 'F00006' (Llanelli). Covers can be posted or handed in at main post offices for the Llanelli postmark. A non-pictorial Llanelli postmark is also available from the Special Handstamp Centre, request 'F00006 NP'.

Details of sponsored handstamps for 7 March will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from the Bureau (£10 UK/Europe; £21.75 elsewhere). For a sample copy write to: The Editor, British Postmark Bulletin, Royal Mail, 2-14 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8HQ. Covers may bear just the 19p Water and Coast stamp for any philatelic postmark in use on 7 March.

MILLENNIUM PHILATELIC PRODUCTS A well-illustrated Water and Coast pack and stamp cards will be available from main post offices and philatelic outlets. Each of the Millennium packs this year includes a specially-commissioned poem. The Water and Coast poem is by Devon-based Alice Oswald who frequently features water in her poetry. As part of her research for the Royal Mail commission she visited the Turning the Tide project on the Durham Coast; her poem is called *Seaham, County Durham* ●

Future Millennium issues The fourth set in the Millennium 2000 series will be issued on 4 April. Entitled Life and Earth, this features the ECOS project on the River Braid flood plain in Ballymena, Northern Ireland; the Web of Life building at London Zoo; the Earth Centre at Doncaster, South Yorkshire; and project suzy (short for sustainability) at Nature's World, Middlesbrough. Details next month ●



The Richard West column Encouraging young collectors



Youngsters enjoy exhibitions, writes Richard West (above).

ENCOURAGING YOUNG collectors is frequently spoken about, but regrettably not so often practised. It's not surprising; it takes great skill to know how to appeal to youngsters these days, especially if you do not have your own young family, or otherwise come into frequent contact with the younger generation. Plus, it can be costly; demands have changed, and 'second-rate' material simply will not do if you are going to appeal to a young audience.

For the past few years Stanley Gibbons has been doing a marvellous job at introducing more youngsters to the hobby, thanks to its annual stamp exhibition at Wembley. In truth, and no one at Gibbons would deny this, the resource and initiative has come from Royal Mail.

A huge investment has been made at providing attractions at Wembley that entice the young enthusiasts, both to the hobby and to return to Wembley for the Gibbons' exhibition to enjoy more of the same each year.

However, this year, understandably, Royal Mail is putting all its efforts into The Stamp Show 2000, to make this a memorable event, not only for youngsters but for the entire family, and that most certainly includes all committed collectors.

Stanley Gibbons likewise believes that it is far better to concentrate on The Stamp Show 2000, and so has decided to cancel its Wembley show for 2000, originally intended to be held at the beginning of February. (Stampex will be taking place as usual at the Business Design Centre in Islington 1-5 March.)

Specially for youngsters But while we all wait for The Stamp Show 2000 at Earls Court (22-28 May), there will be another event that will be attracting young collectors. Every two years, an international stamp exhibition is held specifically aimed at young collectors. This year, at the end of March, the venue will be Bangkok in Thailand. Youngsters from all over the world will be flocking to Bangkok, not only to show their own stamps, but to see what others are achieving.

In recent years, internationals in the Far East, whether primarily for youth or not, have attracted thousands of young enthusiasts. The hobby is positively encouraged, so that throughout the duration there is a constant stream of organised school visits. Avidly making notes, these youngsters keenly inspect all the exhibits on display.

While we may not see quite the same enthusiasm from the young in this country, there is certainly no lack of interest in the hobby, despite what some may believe. Do you realise that at Autumn Stampex each year on show are the entries in the national youth stamp competitions? These are organised by the National Youth Stamp Group, a band of volunteers who do much to further the hobby.

The youth competitions fall into two categories: the Stamp Active competition for the younger collectors who are just starting to exhibit, and the British Youth Stamp Championships, for those who have reached a higher level. Success in the 'championships' can see a young collector being invited to show at one of the youth international-

als. Indeed, five young collectors from Great Britain will be exhibiting at Bangkok, namely Adam Bell, Hayley Davies, Martin Ferguson, Scott Ferguson and Rebecca Humfrey. I am sure we all wish them well.

It may be interesting to reflect on the fact that at Autumn Stampex in 1999, there were more exhibitors in the youth competition, than in the 'adult' competitions. So don't let anyone tell you that the young are no longer interested in stamp collecting. The truth that they are will certainly be evident at Bangkok 2000. And at The Stamp Show 2000.

Arrange a family visit There may be fewer organised school groups coming to Earls Court, as the week concerned is the half-term holiday in certain areas. But that gives you a wonderful opportunity. If there is no school that week, why not make a family visit to The Stamp Show 2000? The chance to show your own young relatives, or perhaps other youngsters you know, just how exciting stamp collecting can be. Experience has shown that once youngsters are introduced to the hobby, they are not slow to recognise its potential. Use the last week in May this year to share your enthusiasm and enjoyment with others •

First day covers and related postmarks Derek Williams presents a few covers and cancellations from his collection

EVERY serious First Day Cover collector has his or her own preferences, and most of us has more than one type of FDC in his or her collection. For instance, official covers range from over 100,000 in a Royal Mail issue to small issues of under 100. Many collectors only collect these very small editions. Autographed covers can be divided into showbiz signatures, political signatures (easiest to get), sporting personalities, stamp designers etc. Metermarks can be combined with CDS (Counter date stamp) cancellations, to give closely associated combinations such as 'The King Henry VIII' school metermark with the official cover also produced by the school or comical combinations such as the 'Please give Blood' metermark with a Dracula stamp.

But one of my favourites has always been the related CDS postmark FDC. A good opportunity occurred with the Canals issue of 20 July 1993, (right) since any post office with 'Water' in the name was suitable and there are lots of places in the UK called Water-something-or-other.

There is an enormous range of possibilities. Any one of thousands of post offices can be combined with a stamp issue, or with just one of the stamps in an issue, sometimes even with the cover itself. Lots of cover producers regularly service covers with related postmarks and their produc-



A typical example of a related CDS postmark and, as far as I know, one not yet listed in any catalogue.

tions appear in the catalogues at relatively high prices, but they naturally have to do it on a fairly large scale if they are to make any profit from it. If you do it yourself, you can do just one if you want to, and bask in the knowledge that you have something unique.

Oh no you can't! I thought I had managed it with a 'Holmes Chapel' cancellation on the Sherlock Holmes stamp issue of 12 October 1993 but that one is in the catalogue so I expect there are a few more around. Unless you can think of something no one else has thought of, there are probably going to be other similar covers in existence. Researching obscure post offices is no guarantee that no-one else knows about them: all the people in the area know they exist and some of the locals may well be collectors. In an attempt to avoid that possibility I usually try to think of a connection that, while being very appropriate, is

not immediately obvious. Then I try to find a post office with the right name. A good example is one I did for the Cats issue of 17 January, 1995, below. I searched the Yellow Pages for post offices with names that related in some way to our feline friends, and after a whole morning in the local library came up with about a dozen good ones. Most of them had the word 'cat' in them however, such as Catbrook, Catcott, and so on, all of which began with the word 'cat' and were therefore the first ones everyone would have looked for. Not surprisingly all of those now appear in the catalogues (as does Mousehole).



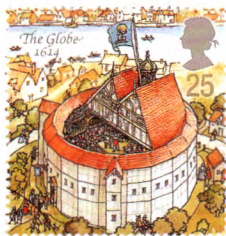
Possibly unique: Kitt Green, Wigan CDS. Not surprisingly, many covers feature 'cat' in the cancellation.

But one I found and serviced that didn't have the word 'cat' in it has not yet come to light, (although it probably will after this article) and therefore may well be unique. It is 'Kitt Green', in Wigan, on a Presentation silk cover. Another of my favourites is 'Lion Green' Haslemere, Surrey, which I have on a Stuart cover.

FDC producer Fourpenny Post, of Wallsend, Tyne and Wear has come up with many clever associations in the past four or five years, two of these being notably 'Jump' on the 1996 Olympic Games issue, and 'Tiptoe' in Lynton on the Women of Achievement stamps issued on 6 August 1996 and depicting Margot Fonteyn.



Fourpenny Post's 'Jump' in Barnsley, on the Olympic Games stamps of 9 July 1996.



Cancellation on cover produced by the late John Swanborough, a man full of good ideas and a sad loss to the collecting world.

One of the most appropriate associations in my collection is the 'Theatre Square' CDS cancellation on the Globe Theatre stamps of 8 August 1995. According to Mike Porter's recently produced and excellent CDS catalogue only seven of these covers were done.

There can be all sorts of difficulties in obtaining these covers, particularly geographical ones and collectors sometimes go to great lengths – yours truly being no exception. The Roman Britain issue of 15 June 1993 was quite a challenge: the best post office name I could come up with unlikely to be used by others was 'Romanby' in North Yorkshire. I persuaded the wife we needed a break, so off we went for the weekend.



There are only two CDSs noted with the word 'Roman'. Are there others with the 'Romanby' cancellation?

Surprise, surprise! The village of Romanby happened to be within easy driving distance of York, so during a most enjoyable weekend in a fascinating city I had no trouble in persuading Barbara to come with me to Romanby to send a few FDCs by registered post. This one has still not appeared in any catalogue other than Mike Porter's as he knew I had done that one. In fact there are only two CDSs noted with the word 'Roman' in them.



'STILL LIFE WITH ORCHIDS' Mary Elizabeth Duffield

ORCHIDS

First Day Cover - No. 85 'Silk Issue' 1993 Series
PRESENTATION: PHILATELIC SERVICES SOTHEYB'S C

Above, this Presentation Silk cover features *Still Life with Orchids*, a painting by Mary Elizabeth Duffield, famous for her orchid paintings. Duffield post office is near Derby.



'THE 7th GREEN, MITCHAM COMMON' H. Rowntree

GOLF

First Day Cover - No. 97 'Silk Issue' 1994 Series
PRESENTATION: PHILATELIC SERVICES SOTHEYB'S COLLECTION



Below: I would be surprised if anyone else has a set of all three post offices around Mitcham Common, including Mitcham.

cds cancellations specifically related to the envelope design are much less common, mainly because the envelope is usually designed to go with the stamp issue anyway. The fact that the envelope also relates to the cancellation is assumed to be coincidental. For the Orchids issue of 16 March 1993, I obtained a first day cancellation that as yet has not appeared in any catalogue (above).

Another envelope related cancellation is for the Golf issue of 5 July 1994 (above), a Presentation Silk cover featuring *The 7th Green, Mitcham Common*. Minimal research elicited the surprising fact that there were no less than three post offices around Mitcham Common: Mitcham Junction, Mitcham Road and just plain Mitcham, Surrey.

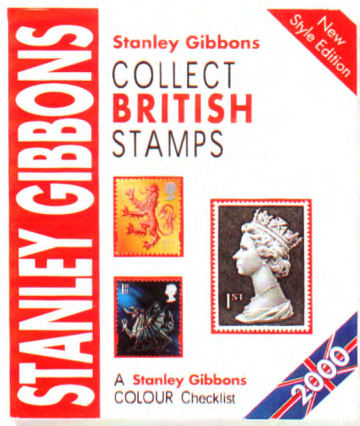
Sometimes there can be actually be too many cds associations! In July 1994 I trotted round to the local library to see if I could find some good ones for the Summertime stamp issue of 2 August. I looked for post offices with names beginning with 'Summer' or 'Sunny'. Before I got halfway through the many volumes of Yellow Pages for the UK I had collected more than 50 with 'Summer' or 'Sunny' in the name, at which point I gave up, as I simply could not afford the time or money to service so many cds FDCs. I picked up 20 or so and now have a collection of 16 related cds for that issue. (The discrepancy is because sending 20 does not necessarily mean you get 20 back.)

Now I have a Summercourt, two Summerfields (Birmingham and Margate), three Summerhills (Belfast, Glasgow, and Wrexham), one Summerley, Summersdale, Summerseat, Summerston, Sunnybank, and Sunnylands, three Sunnysides (Coatbridge, Nottingham and Rotherham) and Sunnyville in Billericay. Unfortunately some of them are poorly cancelled, but as most of them are uncatalogued they are still well worth a place in my collection. It does seem strange that two of the most common words in place names relate to sunshine, when lack of it is what most of us complain about in this country.

In this article I have only been able to mention a few examples from 1993 to 1996. There are thousands more of course, no-one will ever know how many. Even if they did, they still wouldn't know how many were done of any particular cancellation. The information just isn't known except in a very few cases where the postmaster made a note of how many he did – and he is probably the only one who knows anyway! Related postmarks can be a very frustrating corner of FDC collecting, but it can also be one of the most interesting – and exciting ●

Derek Williams is founder of the GBFDC (the Association of Collectors of GB First Day Covers). For details of the GBFDC, write to: Richard Park, Secretary GBFDC, 2 Chaffinch Close, Horsham RM12 5HA.

Books Stanley Gibbons • Machins • FDC catalogue • 1894 coded time system • Skeleton postmarks • Czech military



Stanley Gibbons Collect British Stamps 2000 edition 170 pages, card covers. Price £7.95 from Stanley Gibbons Strand shop or Stanley Gibbons Publications, Parkside, Ringwood BH24 3SH. Also available from the British Philatelic Bureau.

Stanley Gibbons Collect British Stamps, 2000 edition This is described as 'New Style Edition' and is now 'perfect bound' (that is it has a spine) rather than stapled, and the text is printed on a pale blue rather than grey background. This makes it easier to read but the colours of many of the stamps are not as good as in previous editions. This is a handy listing of basic British stamps from the Penny Black to the Christians' Tale set of November 1999. As well as definitives and special issues, regional issues are included, also Channel Islands wartime stamps, postage dues, 1984 'Frama' postage labels and Victorian and Edward VII official overprints. First day covers, presentation packs, gutter strips, and Post Office souvenir books, year books and year packs are all listed and priced. Most prices remain as in the Part 1 catalogue published in October, but there are a few increases. Some 1952-54 Tudor Crown definitives are increased used, the set price up £3 to £45. Both 1953 Coronation and 1955-58 St Edward sets are up £1 used, but the 1960 Europa 156d is reduced mint from £7 to £6.50. Used phosphor sets of 1962 NPV and 1963

Freedom from Hunger are both up £2 and the 1963 Compac stamp increased £1 mint and used. The price of the 1965 Battle of Britain presentation pack is reduced by £3 from that given in the 1999 GB Concise catalogue. The scarce 6p litho definitive from the 1994 Northern Ireland prestige book is increased by £2.50 to £10 both mint and used. Prices for the 10p and 30p litho are also increased •

The Complete Deegam Machin Handbook, Supplement to 2nd edition The 2nd edition of Douglas Myall's Handbook was published in October 1996 and reviewed here in March 1997. It was well received and awarded the National Postal Museum medal for research, a gold medal at ChicagoPex, large silver gilt at Autumn Stampex, and a vermeil at Palmerston, New Zealand, all in 1997. The supplement updates the Handbook to the issues of June 1999. It comprises over 500 updated, amended and improved pages to replace those in the Handbook plus over 100 completely new pages. The Handbook has been regularly updated in Myall's Deegam Reports, nos 15-31 of which are now incorporated into the Supplement. Appendix 4 covering Identification of unknown Machin singles has been revised to provide additional help, and Deegam Profiles added – a system that can be used for writing-up a collection. Machin postal stationery is now listed and illustrated and nearly 100 new pane diagrams are provided showing phosphor layouts, etc. A new appendix allows users to convert NV1 litho booklet plate combinations into DP numbers and vice versa. Myall provides new articles on EME (Electro-Mechanical Engraving) printing, embossing, letterpress and the pre-decimal intaglio issues. In his preface to the supplement Myall states that since 1996 'there have been some major changes of official policy affecting the whole Machin field. Chief among these must be the decision to use the occasion of the 4-yearly allocation of new printing contracts... to impose stricter quality stan-

dards on the four firms which print the Machin definitives, and tighter specifications in an attempt to secure uniformity of product. Perhaps it is unnecessary to say that these aims have not been entirely achieved. The use of different presses, printing methods and, in some cases, materials, have left tell-tale indications of the stamps' origins, to say nothing of such differences as unexpected changes in the perforation gauge.' It is such differences that are the lifeblood of the 'Machin maniacs' (Mr Myall's term) who collect and study these issues in minute detail. For them this supplement is *de rigueur*. The supplement has simple instructions for merging into the 2nd edition and is supplied loose or in a green binder •

The Complete Deegam Machin Handbook, Supplement to 2nd edition Pages only: £22.99 postpaid UK; Europe and worldwide surface mail add £1 postage; airmail USA, Canada Hong Kong add £6.50, rest of world £7.50. Binder and pages £30.99 postpaid UK; Europe/surface mail add £2, airmail USA, Canada, Hong Kong £10, elsewhere £11. Available from John M Deering, The Machins, PO Box 2, South Molton EX36 4YZ. The 2nd edition (1996) is still available from Mr Deering.

Millennium First Day Cover Catalogue Compiled by Mike Porter. The first edition of this new FDC catalogue was published last year and sales proved the need for such a work. It concentrates on issues since 1953 and lists, in three sections, covers bearing circular datestamps (cds), slogans, and meter marks. Users are advised to study carefully the introductory notes on prices quoted in this catalogue. For cds covers an 'average selling price' is usually given, whereas for slogans and meters a price range is quoted, described as 'an approximation of what the cover should be selling for.' The average selling price for 1953 Coronation covers with full set cancelled with a cds varies from £35 with House of Commons postmark to £700 for Pall Mall datestamp. Prices have not been established for Sandringham and Windsor Castle cds covers but are given a value code E (over £100). Such codes are shown against quite a few covers of the 1960s indicating the scarcity of such material. There are omissions it seems – surely 1965 Churchill covers exist with Westersham datestamp (town near Churchill's home at Chartwell) and 1966 World Cup covers with a

Wembley postmark. The reasons for inclusion are given alongside each entry – some are obvious (Buckingham Palace for any Royal issue), but some are not – eg Haslemere Lower Shiplake, and Wisbech for the 1981 National Trusts set. These places were, respectively, birthplaces of the founders of the NT. From the Post Offices issue of 1997 onwards the numbers of covers serviced with each cds is quoted – often less than 10 covers. In some instances better identification of the post office is needed – eg Queen Elizabeth Ave for the 1997 Golden Wedding issue (Where is this avenue?), or Coronation Square listed under the Queen's Beasts issue. In the slogan section over 2000 slogans are listed, beginning with the Long Live the Queen slogan used during Coronation Year – valued at £100+ if applied at London SW1. Most recent slogans are valued at up to £10, the listing tailing off with the ending of sponsored slogans at the end of 1998. Meter marks are listed only since 1997 and mostly priced in a £7-£10 range. The illustrations of such covers show an unvalued meter impression applied at the top of covers with the relevant stamps affixed below and to the left cancelled with cds. For the Inventors' Tale set the cover bears a Science Museum meter with the stamps cancelled with the counter datestamp of the post office located in the Museum's entrance. For all specialist collectors of modern FDCs this is a useful work of reference. A few more illustrations would be welcome and hopefully page numbers can be added in the next edition •

Millennium First Day Cover Catalogue £7.50, postage £1, from: Mike Porter, 192 Radburn Close, Harlow CM18 7EQ

Military Cards of the Exiled Czechoslovak Forces in France and Great Britain 1939-1945 by V J Králíček and W A Page. After the occupation of Czechoslovakia in March 1939 and the disbanding of the Czech Armed Forces by the Germans, a large number of Czech soldiers and airmen left their homelands and found their way, by various means, to France where they joined the reconstituted Czech Army. They assembled at Agde in southern France in a camp which had originally been used by refugees from the Spanish Civil

War. They used French military and ordinary civilian cards; later a number of cards and lettercards were produced expressly for their use. After the fall of France and the evacuation of the Czech Forces to England in July 1940, further correspondence cards were produced. This work brings together in one publication a detailed listing of, and the background to the military postal cards provided for the Czech Forces in exile. The cards used in Britain carried George VI stamps cancelled by Czech Army Field Post cancels as described by Richard Beith in the *Bulletin of* August 1998. This interesting book is published by the Czechoslovak Philatelic Society of Great Britain •

Military Cards of the Exiled Czechoslovak Forces in France and Great Britain 1939-1945 Available from Mr Beith at 14 Middlecroft, Guilden Sutton, Chester CH3 7HF. Price £8.25 including UK postage. Cheques payable to the Czechoslovak Philatelic Society of Great Britain.

The Use of the 1894 Coded Time System in British Post Offices by John A R Moy. Once more John Moy has addressed himself to the fascinating subject of the time codes which were employed in datestamps in the early 1890s. As before, this greatly expanded volume has been published in conjunction with the British Postmark Society and forms a valuable adjunct to our knowledge of the usage of code time stamps.

It is a strange feature of British postmarks that although many of the early 19th century handstamps incorporated some indication of the time – a feature borrowed from the Dockwra Penny Post of the 1680s – for half a century from 1840 the Post Office studiously avoided showing a precise time. Doubtless this omission was sanctioned originally in order to avoid the embarrassment of packets perceived to have been delayed in transit, but the absence of a time was a considerable inconvenience to postal officials themselves.

In 1892 an elaborate system was devised by J D Rich, the postmaster-surveyor of Liverpool, and tested there and subsequently at Birmingham and Bristol in 1893, before being adopted nationwide at the beginning of 1894.

This code employed the letters A to M (excluding J) to denote the hour, and the letters A to L

(excluding J) to indicate five-minute intervals. A symbol followed by A or P denoted am or pm; in England and Wales this consisted of a saltire cross with stops in the angles, but Scotland favoured an eight-pointed asterisk while Ireland used a solid square. There were many variants of these symbols.

This system was superseded by time in clear from January 1895 onwards. Consequently the time code stamps had a very short life and examples have long been eagerly sought by collectors.

The previous edition, published in 1991 and reviewed here in April 1992 listed postmarks from 394 provincial offices in England and Wales. Now the scope of the book has been expanded to include London, Scotland and Ireland, which had been the subject of separate studies by John Moy in the *Postal History Annual*. The opportunity has also been taken to include data on an additional 48 offices in England, two in Wales and 11 in Ireland as well as the use of similar stamps in South Africa. JAMES MACKAY •

The Use of the 1894 Coded Time System in British Post Offices Published by the author at Tree Tops, Cobham Way, East Horsley, Surrey KT24 5BH. £10 plus £2 postage.

Skeleton Postmarks of England and Wales by James Mackay. Somewhat belatedly we review the 2nd edition of this work, compiled by Colin Peachey and published by the British Postmark Society in 1996. Mackay's original book was published in 1993. About one-third of the entries are new or amended in the 2nd edition. The introduction explains the different types of Skeleton postmark to be found, gives notes on periods of use, errors, formats, paid dies, etc. Most important of all, perhaps, it provides a clear definition of Skeleton handstamp: 'a circular datestamp made up from loose type, rather like a "John Bull" printing outfit, except the characters are metal, and this helps to prevent confusing a skeleton impression from a rubber datestamp of similar size. Skeletons are brought into use, usually for a short period, then return to "the stores", disassembled and the same "actual handstamp" re-issued in due course with a new set of lettering.'

Skeletons were issued for use at Christmas and

summer peak periods, following the theft of a datestamp, to temporary post offices and new offices pending the arrival of the proper datestamps, and for short-term use while a normal datestamp was being replaced due to accident, loss or wear. The listings are arranged in two sections covering the 'Early Period' (1838-54 plus Bickley Station 1868) and 'Second Period' (Evesham 1869, and 1881-1994). Handstamps used during the first period were traditionally referred to as 'travellers' although the term skeleton was also used. The handstamps of this period were firstly produced without rim and are of distinctive appearance. During the second period, skeletons were most used in 1901-30. Different sizes and types were prevalent for different years within this period; typical of the Edwardian period was a 36mm handstamp with the date in two lines, then 28mm with the date in one line from 1914. In modern times skeletons have been rarely used; 'head office' datestamps are normally provided rather than a skeleton requisitioned. The

listings give the inscription in the skeleton postmark, the county, earliest and latest known dates of usage, type number, diameter and notes. Some 17 different types are described and illustrated, with many local examples interspersed throughout the text.

Colin Peachey took over the work of recording skeleton postmarks from James Mackay in 1992 and now hands over to John Frost. Completing his stint, Colin has published a Supplement to the Second Edition, necessitating the amendment of about 25% of the entries in the 1996 book. The listings in the supplement, like the book, are divided between the two periods, although the second now covers Evesham & Tiverton both 1869, and 1880-1995.

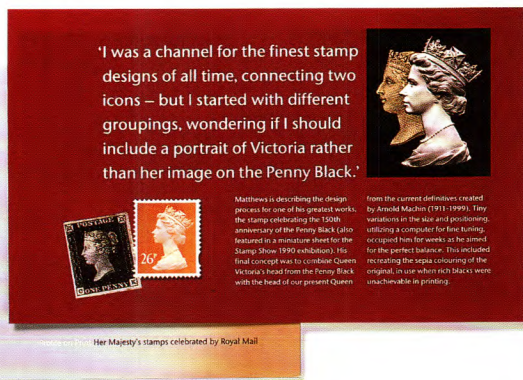
The supplement, based on reports from numerous collectors, amounts to 24 pages •

Skeleton Postmarks of England and Wales The 1996 book costs £12.50 (postage £1.50 UK, £2.30 elsewhere), the supplement £2 (postage 50p) from Colin Peachey, 19 Moorland Road, Hemel Hempstead HP1 1NH.

Special prize draw Win Stamp Show 2000 prestige books

SIMPLY write your name and address on the back of a postcard or sealed envelope and send to the following address for a chance of winning the three Stamp Show books – *The Definitive Portrait* (March 1998), *Profile on Print* (February 1999) and *Special by Design* (February 2000).

The senders of the first 15 cards to be drawn on 3 March will be sent the three books. Send your entry to: Stamp Books Draw, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 2-14 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8HQ •



From the left: a pane from *The Definitive Portrait*, front cover of *Profile on Print*, and a page from *Special by Design*.

Greetings stamps labels Greetings in Art, by Lionel Jones

THE SEVENTH SERIES of greetings stamps went on sale on 21 March 1995. They feature a mixture of images by such diverse artists as Renoir, Lowry, Beryl Cook, and Eric Gill. One photographic image, by Alice Hughes, depicts Edwardian beauty Alice Keppel with her daughter. Part of the 'Circus Clowns' stamp, by Emily Firmin and Justin Mitchell, was adapted for use on the front cover of the book. Accompanying the 10 stamps were 20 colourful labels attached by an inter-panneau gutter. These included messages such as Happy Birthday, Good Luck, Love & Kisses, Write Soon, Bravo, Hurrah, and Happy Anniversary in a variety of scripts against differ-

ent backgrounds. The entire book, including the stamps and labels were designed by Newell and Sorrell, all printed in litho on a sheet-fed Roland press by Walsall Security Printers. A comb perforator was used, gauge 15 × 14. No fewer than 20 different plate number combinations (in the margin between the stamps and labels) were required in the printing of this book. As well as being sold in books at post offices and some retail outlets, the stamps and labels were also issued, for collectors, in a presentation pack. The stamp designs were also issued as stamp cards. At the time of writing the book and stamp cards are still available from the British Philatelic Bureau •



Posting boxes 191

THANKS to Mr W de Beer of London we feature boxes on Freire (left) and Osorno stations, Chile. Mr de Beer writes: Chile being a long attenuated country, the main concern for the postal customer is whether his mails should go south or north. Accordingly the boxes, on railway stations at least, are positioned and marked to show 'Sur' and 'Norte'.

For details of the Letter Box Study Group send a SAE or IRC to the Membership Secretary, Mrs V Scott, 38 Leopold Avenue, Handsworth Wood, Birmingham B20 1ES. The Group produces many interesting publications and postcards •



Postbag Letters to the Editor

Millennium definitive The superb picture of the new Millennium definitive shines from the *Bulletin* page. This adaptation by Richard Scholey of the Machin head stands as a beautiful design of modern philately. I read with interest in the December supplement concerning the arrangements for Millennium postmarks, two of which were pictured in the *Bulletin*. However there has been a missed opportunity. The new issue could surely have been brought forward for the high volume of Christmas sales, and the present 1st class and new definitive used with a dual Millennium frank on a special cover. LESLIE PRICE, LIVERSEDGE •

Stamp Advisory Committee I have noted mention of this Committee in various letters in the *Bulletin* in recent months. Can you tell your readers who sits on this Committee? M GREY, EXETER.

The Stamp Advisory Committee comprises six Royal Mail staff and nine external members. The Royal Mail representatives are: Mark Thomson (Managing Director Stamps & Collectibles), Barry Robinson (Design & Security Print Director, Stamps & Collectibles), Jane Ryan (Design Manager), Fiona Merrikin (Committee Secretary), Julietta Edgar (Head of Product Development, Stamps Marketing) and Lorna Clarkson (Business & Consumer Markets). The external members are: Dr Jean Alexander, Floella Benjamin, Mary Lewis, Prue Leith, Prof Alan Livingston, John McConnell, Richard Negus, Michael Wolff, and Jan Wright •

Farthing stamps I was interested in the article in September concerning the proposed farthing stamp. The picture is the same as that in *The British Postage Stamp* by Robson Lowe (page 167). This raises the question: why was this essay produced? Lowe comments: 'in connection with the Universal Postal Scheme', maybe the introduction of the 1½d rate for overseas postcards in July 1875 and the possible upgrading of inland postcards for overseas use. Alternatively was consideration being given to an inland farthing rate after the demise of the Circular Delivery Companies? M E PEACH, BEDFORD, NS, CANADA.

With regard to the farthing essays, I can shed no light as to why they were produced. All that is known is that they turned up ('most unexpectedly' according to Edward Bacon) in 1935 with the De La Rue examples. DOUGLAS MUIR, CURATOR PHILATELY, POST OFFICE HERITAGE •

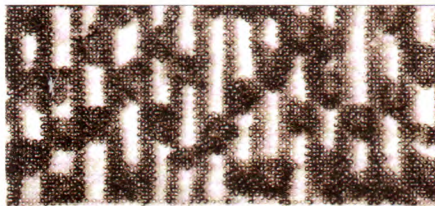
Queen's head on special stamps Looking back through old issues of the *Bulletin* I found reference to the Queen's head used on special stamps from 1966-68 being designed by David Gentleman, based on the coinage head by Mary Gillick. I can find nothing about her and hope you can publish some biographical details sometime. P H BARR, HALIFAX.

Mary Gillick (1881-1965) was born in Nottingham and studied at the city's school of art and then at the Royal College of Art. In Nottingham she met her future husband Ernest with whom she formed a working partnership. Eventually she concentrated on medal and portrait bas-relief work, much influenced by the great renaissance medallists. From c1920 onwards she produced medals for learned societies and institutions such as the Royal Society and the Institute of Physics. In 1952 she designed the uncrowned head of The Queen for the new coinage of Britain and some Commonwealth countries. It was also used for various medals. A joint heads of The Queen and Duke of Edinburgh was produced for royal visit medals. From 1955 onwards she produced a series of mural memorial plaques for church authorities. For the medals and plaques she worked from photographs and available portraits, aiming to show the subjects as they were best-known or remembered, and liked to interview living subjects. FROM 'THE TIMES', 1 FEBRUARY 1965 •



The Queen's head, based on the coinage head by Mary Gillick

Competitions Win £200 in two easy-to-enter competitions



FIRSTLY, identify the special stamp from the detail above. Send your answer to *February Identify* Competition. Secondly, test your philatelic knowledge by answering the questions below. Send your answer to *February Knowledge* Competition.

1 What is the popular name of the competition announced in *The Times* in September 1839 to design methods of pre-paying postage, including stamps?

2 In which building was the international stamp exhibition held in London in 1990?

3 What colour is the 1953 183d Coronation stamp?

Send your answer (addressed to either *February Identify* Competition or *February Knowledge* Competition), name and address on a postcard or back of a sealed envelope to: British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 2-14 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8HQ.

The senders of the first cards drawn in each competition on 17 March will each receive £100. Ten runner-up prizes will also be awarded in each competition. The competitions are not open to Royal Mail employees •

Events

Until further notice Postal Memorabilia displays at Museum of Lincolnshire Life, Burton Road, Lincoln; Manchester Postal Museum, Wythenshaw Park, Manchester; and Oldham Post Office. **Enquiries** D Harrop, 15 Hawthorn Road, Stockport SK4 3DQ

1 February North of Ireland Phil Soc Auction at Hunterhouse College, Upper Lisburn Road, Finaghy, Belfast, 19.30 (viewing from 17.30). **Enquiries** N Scott, 028 90 795530

26 February Welsh Philatelic Society meeting at Southgate Hotel, Penparcau, Aberystwyth. **Enquiries** Peter Brindley, 01248 352682

1-5 March Spring Stampex, Business Design Centre, London N1. **Enquiries** Stampex 0171 490 1005

2-4 March Philatex (London International Stamp & Cover Show) at Royal Horticultural Hall 2, Greycoat Street, London SW1. **Enquiries** Chris Rainey 01268 726687 or Trevor Davis 0181 946 4489

4 March GB Phil Soc Members' Displays at Spring Stampex, 14.30. **Enquiries** Andrew Lajer, 01189 344151

18 March Streety Phil Soc Stamp Fair at Streety Community Centre, Foley Road East (off main A452 Chester Road between Sutton Coldfield and Brownhills), 09.30-16.00. Dealers in stamps, postal history, postcards, etc. Admission 25p, children 10p. Refreshments. **Enquiries** Laurie Rennison, 0121 308 2260 •

Late news

Golden Jubilee The Insurance & Banking Philatelic Society of Great Britain will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2001 with a display at Spring Stampex, an auction, and presentation of trophies and awards at the British Philatelic Centre on 5 May. The Society's well-produced Newsletter contains interesting articles as well as Society news. Membership is open to all employed in, or retired from, financial services •

Enquiries John Payne, Kelso, Devonshire Avenue, Amersham HP6 5SE. Please enclose SAE.

New GB list Stanley Gibbons GB Specialist Department's latest list offers 283 items, from the Penny Black to the 30p error of value on the 1998 Joyce Grenfell stamp. The list, illustrated in colour, is rich in fine Victoria, Edward VII, and George V stamps, including multiples, booklet panes and paper trials. Most interesting are recently discovered paste-ups for the Edward VII 6d and 1s stamps using the previous Victorian designs – offered at £5000 each. The list also includes postal history •

Enquiries Adrian Roose, Stanley Gibbons Ltd, 399 Strand, London WC2R 0LX. Telephone 0171 836 8444.

Friends of the National Postal Museum Jeffery Matthews will be the guest speaker at a meeting of the Friends on 26 February. He has designed a cover for the Friends which will be serviced with the panes from the Special by Design prestige book issued on 15 February. The meeting also includes a display of Royal Mail free post cards by Mark Kearnes. On 12 May the Friends will visit the Royal Mail Sorting Office in Manchester and the Manchester Postal Museum •

Enquiries Ray Pottle, PO Box 40, Uckfield TN22 2SP. Telephone 01825 766546.

Spink auction results The GB sale on 15 December realised £320,000 with a fine block of six Penny Blacks, shown here in December, making £35,000. As mentioned in December, Spink is moving to new premises. Their new address is: 69 Southampton Row, London WC1B 4ET •

White Dove success The Post Office has named White Dove Press of Southend-on-Sea its supplier of the year. White Dove print a wide range of philatelic products for Royal Mail, including this *Bulletin*. The award was presented to White Dove's owners, Richard Owers and Keith Gladden, by PO Chief Executive, John Roberts •

Hunphilex The first bulletin for the Hunphilex 2000 international exhibition in Budapest has recently been published. The exhibition at the House of the Hungarian Culture Foundation will be held on 18-21 August to mark the 1000th anniversary of the birth of the Hungarian state.

The Hungarian PO is issuing a stamp showing the exhibition venue and logo, and the Hungarian Philatelic Federation has produced a colourful souvenir sheet showing King Stephen from a medieval manuscript. The sheet is available perf and imperf •

Enquiries Federation Nationale des Philatelists Hungrois, Budapest, POB 4, H-1387, Hungary. Fax (36-1) 269 0620.

Rowland Hill's Post Office Journal The Royal Philatelic Society London has announced publication of *The Reform of the Post Office in the Victorian Era*, a documentary history, 1837-64, based on Hill's *Journal* and ancillary papers. This two-volume, 1300-page work is expected to be published by the time of Stamp Show 2000, price £150 •

Enquiries Royal Philatelic Society London, 41 Devonshire Place, London W1N 1PE.

Christmas mail record Christmas mail reached record levels with 2.5 billion letters and cards delivered in the four weeks prior to the holiday •

People Professor Jeremy Black, who advised Royal Mail on the 1999 Millennium issues, was awarded the MBE in the New Year's Honours List. Dr Douglas Latto, a well-known collector of GB surface-printed and stamp design essays, died in December, aged 86. He received several gold medals at international exhibitions and was Vice-President of the GB Philatelic Society •

THE SPECIAL BY DESIGN PRESTIGE STAMP BOOK



The art of freedom and limitation of the heart of heraldry appeals, says Matthews. Although a strict language (a mix of French and Latin) governs the colour and placing of animals and symbols, all other details are open to interpretation. Heraldic convention may dictate that a lion should be red and rampant, but the image can sit in

a square or a circle and can be hairy, slim or fat. The controlled freedom which this formula allows is illustrated above: the royal lion passant guardant remains recognizable in a montage of images, rendered in various styles and materials, dating from the 15th century to Matthews' own Heraldic Issue of 1998 (the red lion passant guardant).

This issue celebrated the Order of the Garter's 650th anniversary and the 45th anniversary of the Coronation. It featured The Queen's Beasts, ten heraldic animals commissioned for the Coronation to represent Her Majesty's lineage, from the lion of Richard I and the pelican of Edward I.



Matthews is fascinated by the art of heraldry, which he has perfected on several issues of Special Stamps, the original Machin definitives for Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, and The Post Office coat of arms.

The 1984 issue celebrating the 500th anniversary of the College of Arms inspired him to create Royal Mail's first square stamps partly to allow for the captioning and titling, which might have become cluttered in a smaller area. The issue embraces the range of styles available to a heraldic artist, from the simple arms of Richard III to the more

elaborate arms of the Earl Marshall. It began with stamp-size sketches, then pointed them four times larger to hold detail. He results. I tested my models, using penwork, watercolour and even plain pencil for the blue countermark. The cover can be seen in the swirling mandala which surrounds the shield of Richard III.



Royal Mail's prestige stamp book for 2000 tells the story of the stamp design process, illustrated through the work of Jeffery Matthews. Special by Design is the third and final book in a series of three related to this year's Stamp Show 2000, which runs from 22-28 May 2000. The book focuses on the 1972 Silver Wedding issue as an

example of the pure design process. Heraldic iconography is explored by focusing on the 1984 College of Arms stamp issue, the 1998 Queen's Beasts issue and the Country definitive iconography. Issued on Tuesday 15 February, this book is available at Post Office Counters philatelic outlets or from the British Philatelic Bureau.

British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT
UK telephone order line 08457 641 641, overseas 0131 550 8989



Reference 99-ENA



Royal Mail