

BRITISH PHILATELIC

The ROYAL MAIL magazine for stamp collectors

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Bulletin

Vienna internationals • New series: philately on-line



This month: Stone and Soil,
next in the Millennium series

The Stone and Soil issue will go on sale on 4 July

Forthcoming issues and withdrawals

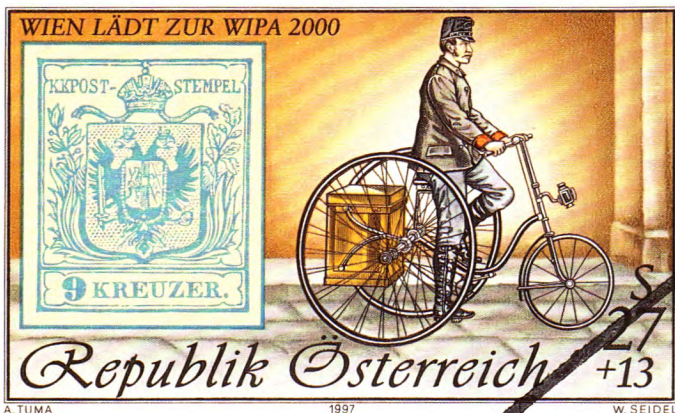


Cover The Stone and Soil stamps, featuring Millennium projects which celebrate the land, is previewed on page 304. Photograph: GettyOne.

6 June	Issue Millennium People and Place stamps and presentation pack
27 June	Issue Millennium Stone and Soil stamp cards
3 July	Withdrawal 7p, 26p, 31p, 37p, 38p, 39p, 43p, 44p, 63p and 64p definitives
4 July	Issue Millennium Stone and Soil stamps and presentation pack
25 July	Issue Millennium Tree and Leaf stamp cards
4 August	Withdrawal £1.50, £2, £3 and £5 Castle definitives, presentation pack and high value definitive 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

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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

THIS MONTH'S *Bulletin* returns to a more normal issue after all the information on Stamp Show and its souvenirs contained in the May *Bulletin*. I hope that all of you who visited the show found it interesting and enjoyable and I will welcome your views for publication in Postbag.

Our Millennium series of issues is now about 75% complete with the issue this month of the People and Place stamps (previewed last month); in this issue we show the July issue – Stone and Soil. A few readers have asked about the programme for the year 2001. The final set of Millennium stamps (bringing the total number of stamps to 100) will be on the subject of The Future and will go on sale on 16 January. Thereafter the programme will return to normal with a mix of issues for events, anniversaries and thematic subjects. The first will feature Family Pets, to be issued on 13 February. Further information on next year's stamps will be found in the Royal Mail News section of this *Bulletin*.

One of our feature articles this month looks at Austrian stamps issued to commemorate the international exhibitions staged in that country. The latest exhibition, WIPA 2000, takes place 30 May to 4 June, to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the first Austrian stamps. Douglas Myall provides the 51st of his specialist reports on stamp books, this time dealing with the recent issues resulting from the postal rate changes in April. Ron Negus begins a new series, 'Philately on-line' which help collectors interested in new technology. In this series he will expand on the subjects introduced in his booklet *New Technology for Stamp Collectors*, which was issued free with the April *Bulletin*.

In addition we have the usual popular features on posting boxes, cover corner, Post Office Heritage, a selection of your letters, and don't forget the prize competitions. Hopefully there is something to interest all readers.
JOHN HOLMAN •

Stamp scene ABPS awards • Jersey Prince William issue • Monaco • GB stamps polls



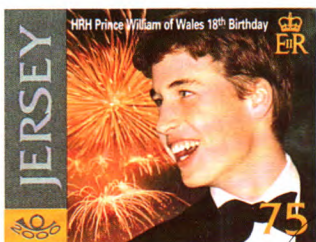
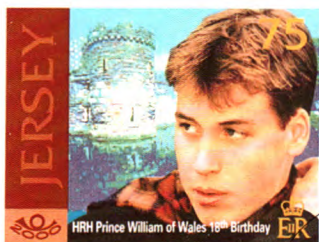
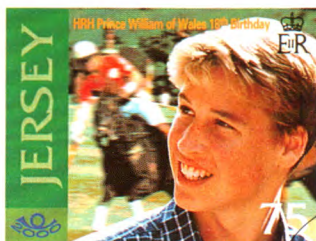
Brian Asquith To be awarded the ABPS Congress Medal.

ABPS awards The Association of British Philatelic Societies has announced that its Congress Medal for 2000 will be presented to Brian L. Asquith at the 82nd Philatelic Congress of Great Britain in London on 9 September. The Medal is awarded to a person who has contributed to organised philately at a national level. Mr Asquith's philatelic interests, which are predominantly aerophilately and thematic, have influenced the direction and diversity of the many tasks he has undertaken. He joined the Aerophilatic Club London in 1970 and was Chairman for several years and fronted the merger with the British Air Mail Society to form the British Aerophilatelic Federation. He was the first Chairman of the Federation and is currently Chairman again. In 1978 he founded the Concorde Study Circle

and became its Chairman. He has judged aerophilately at national level and since 1996 as a full international judge. He was involved in the APEX exhibitions in 1973, 1983 and 1993 and is already planning another Federation exhibition for 2003. He was a founder member of the British Thematic Association in 1984, serving as Treasurer for eight years. As founder Chairman of Council of the ABPS, he has guided its progress effectively and has represented ABPS at meetings of the Federation of European Philatelic Associations. He is a Trustee of the British Philatelic Trust and has been involved with Stamp Show 2000. In addition to all these national commitments, he is still an active supporter of local philatelic societies and events.

Awards of Merit, for voluntary service to philately at regional, specialist and local society level, will be presented to Michael F Bament, Peter J Basterfield, Cyril E H Defriez, Hanns Jorg Fasching, Ron Hignett, Mrs Yvonne Larg, John Oakley, Pat O'Brien, and John G S Scott. Our congratulations to all on this recognition of their efforts •

Jersey stamps To mark the occasion of Prince William's 18th birthday •



Readers may be interested to see the stamps to be issued this month by the Jersey Post Office to commemorate the 18th birthday of HRH Prince William of Wales. The stamps were designed by William Wall using photographs from four photographic agencies. They were printed by The House of Questa.

Enquiries Jersey Philatelic Bureau, Postal Headquarters, Jersey JE1 1AB. Telephone 01534 616612.

Astro Space Stamp Society The Society, in association with the Crown Agents, offers mint mini-collections of recent and/or obsolete thematic miniature sheets in an easy-to-enter competition. Answer the following questions relating to the historic first manned Moon landing in July 1969: 1) Launch day; 2) Walking on the Moon day; 3) Safe return to Earth day. All entries must be dated, giving full name and address and state British Philatelic Bulletin June issue and page number. All entrants receive a mint Crown Agents stamp set •

Entries and enquiries Astro Space Stamp Society, 21 Exford Close, Weston-super-Mare BS23 4RE. Enclose an A4-size SAE (UK) or four international reply coupons (overseas) with competition entries.

Stamp Magazine readers' 10 favourite British stamps

- 1 1840 Penny Black
- 2 1929 £1 PUC
- 3 1953 1s3d Coronation
- 4 1948 £1 Silver Wedding
- 5 1913 Seahorses (4)
- 6 1924 Empire Exhibition (2)
- 7 1940 Stamp Centenary (6)
- 8 1936 Edward VIII (4)
- 9 1967 Machins (various)
- 10 1980 London 50p

Favourite GB stamps The results of our 1999 Stamp Poll were published here in April. The favourite individual stamp was the 64p value of the Scientists' Tale set. This features Saturn as photographed by the Hubble Space Telescope. Reporting the results in the May issue of *Gibbons Stamp Monthly*, it was noted that this magazine predicted that this stamp might win the *Bulletin* poll last August when it suggested that if it did, 'future stamps will be entrusted to computers, telescopes or other bits of machinery!'

Last December *Stamp Magazine* asked its readers to vote for their favourite stamps of all time. Over 1500 readers responded and the results were published in the May issue, as shown left. In addition listings were given for the top three GB issues voted by overseas readers, and the top 10 of the following: post-war British stamps, most popular post-war years for British issues, Commonwealth issues, 10 Commonwealth stamp issuing countries, European issues, European stamp issuing countries, rest of the world stamps and stamp issuing countries, and finally combined non-GB stamps. It all makes fascinating reading ●

Monaco enquiries Office des Emissions de Timbres-Poste, 23 av Prince Héritaire Albert, 98050 Monaco Cedex.

Prestige show in Monaco Following successful exhibitions of rare stamps in 1997 and 1999, a further exhibition will be held in the Principality, 1-3 December 2000. The exhibits will be displayed in three locations. An exhibition entitled '100 of the rarest stamps and philatelic documents in the world' will be staged in the Museum of Stamps & Coins. The items will be specially selected from the collection of Queen Elizabeth II, from 14 major postal museums and 100 eminent collectors, members of the exclusive 'Club de Monte-Carlo'. Next door to the Museum, at the Salle du Canton, there will be an International Trade Exhibition with 100 stands of postal administrations and international dealers. An exhibit entitled 'Prestigious collection of exceptional Olympic documents' will be shown in the Hall of the Collection of Classic Cars. It is expected that top international athletes will attend this display ●

Preston & District Philatelic Society For details contact Paul Gaywood, 2 Fairways, Fulwood, Preston PR2 8FX. Telephone 01772 713917.

Young Stamp Collectors Day In April the Preston & District Philatelic Society held an open day for young collectors in the Preston area. Every school was invited to submit a stamp design to celebrate the new Millennium. The winner was Gillian Henry, age 10. Young visitors were able to buy stamps at a special table to add to their collections ●

Bulletin back issues Brian Green has for disposal volumes 5-36 in pristine condition. He would like to dispose of them in one lot, the proceeds going to charity. Offers to: Brian Green, Mistletoe Farm, Rampton Road, Willingham, Cambridge CB4 5JF. Telephone 01954 261143.

Derek Hunt has seven volumes, Nos 27-33, for sale, also a run of In-Phil leaflets, Nos 1-140. He can be contacted at 9 Harrington Close, Windsor SL4 4AD. Telephone 01753 868390.

Mr N Milinkovic has available complete runs of volumes 16-32, and 34-35, plus part-runs of volumes 15, 33, and 36. Offers of a good home should be sent to him at 28 Roselea Avenue, Welton, Lincoln LN2 3RT ●

Royal Mail news Queen Mother's birthday

• Stamp issues for 2001 • New coin cover



Queen Mother's birthday To commemorate the 100th birthday of HM Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother, a miniature sheet bearing four 27p (1st class) stamps will be issued on 4 August, Her Majesty's birthday. In addition to the sheet and the usual FDC, presentation pack and stamp cards, there will also be a prestige stamp book, a coin cover, a commemorative document, and bank note cover. Further details next month ●

2001 stamp issues The last set in the Millennium series will be issued on 16 January. Entitled 'The Future', its four stamps will bring the Millennium total to 100 (48 each in 1999 and 2000).

The Family Pets issue (13 February) celebrates our affection with household pets such as the cat, budgie, dog and hamster. On 13 March there will be an opportunity to explore the British obsession with the weather, as 2001 will be the anniversary of the first weather charts published in the UK.

Stamps marking the centenary of the Royal Navy Submarine Service will be issued on 10 April. The history of submarines can be traced back to the 17th century. A set devoted to Buses follows on 8 May. The first double-decker bus ran at the Great Exhibition in 1851 and 2001 marks the centenary of the first electric tram between Shepherd's Bush and Kew Bridge.

On 12 June when stamps pay tribute to British fashion hats admired the world over. Such hats are especially part of the scene at Royal Ascot and society weddings. In contrast, the set for 10 July is devoted to Pondlife – the PostEurop theme for the year's Europa issue. There are almost 50,000 ponds in Britain, many on village greens – offering sanctuary to fish, insects, spiders, frogs, toads, ducks, water voles and many other species.

To mark the 100th anniversary of the first Nobel prize awards by the Institute, stamps featuring some of Britain's greatest achievers will be issued on 6 October. The 300th anniversary of Punch and Judy's first appearance in Britain is commemorated by Puppet stamps on 4 September.

The 2001 programme concludes on 6 November with the traditional Christmas issue ●

Details of the 2001 stamps will be announced in the usual way, normally in the *Bulletin* the month preceding issue.

Country stamps update The cylinder numbers for the new stamps issued on 25 April are:

N Ireland 1st, 40p & 65p W1 colour ● W1 phosphor

Scotland 65p W1 greenish yellow ● W1 bright magenta ● W1 new blue ● W1 grey-black ● W1 silver ● W1 phosphor

Wales 65p W1 violet ● W1 gold ● W1 silver ● W1 black ● W1 phosphor



Bulletin publication goes off sale The sixth in the series of Bulletin Publications, *The British Empire Exhibition Stamps of 1924 and 25*, by Alan Sabey, was published in April 1999 to coincide with the 75th anniversary of the issue of these, Britain's first commemorative stamps. A limited number of this publication is still available from the British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT. Price £2.95. Any remaining stock will be withdrawn from sale on 30 June 2000.

The seventh Bulletin Publication, *New Technology for Stamp Collectors*, by Ron Negus, was included free with the April 2000 *Bulletin*. Additional copies of this publication are available from the Bureau, price £2.95 •

Libraries coin cover A cover celebrating the 150th anniversary of the Libraries Act will be serviced on 14 August. This will bear three stamps cancelled by a special handstamp. It will encapsulate a 50p coin commemorating the sesquicentenary of public libraries. The cover will be available from the British Philatelic Bureau, price £12.95. Coin covers often prove very popular, so early ordering is advised. This is in the range of collectibles now produced by Royal Mail, aimed at a wider collecting audience and not aimed primarily at philatelists •

Prestige stamp books Following the increase in postal rates from 27 April the prices of the 1999 *Profile on Print* and 2000 *Special by Design* prestige books are now £7.83 and £7.73 respectively. The packaged set of these books plus the 1998 *Definitive Portrait* book costs £23.05 •

Correction The eighth most popular stamp of 1999, listed on page 239 in April, should read 'Travellers' Tale 63p not 64p. Surprisingly only one reader wrote in to point out this slip •

Sowing the seeds Richard West reports on Bangkok 2000



Preparing oneself for the camera: to appear on a personalised stamp at Bangkok 2000.

THERE CAN BE no doubt as to what was the main attraction for visitors to Bangkok 2000. It seems that 'personalised' stamps are truly capturing the imagination of the public. Throughout the exhibition long queues formed, all anxious for the chance to have a self-portrait on a label set-tenant with an actual postage stamp. While this is being written before The Stamp Show 2000, there can be no doubt that the 'Smilers' stamps will have resulted in just as much enthusiasm.

Bangkok 2000 was a combination of two exhibitions: a world youth stamp exhibition and an Asian international stamp exhibition.

The event was officially opened by Her Royal Highness Princess Mahra Chakri Sirindorn who



Left, the postmarks used on mail posted at the exhibition. Above, Richard West.

duly posed for a sheet of personalised stamps. She also sent herself a postcard from the exhibition.

The Princess collects, and indeed has a collection of postcards which she has sent herself from all the places she has visited both officially and unofficially. This collection was on display.

The postcards I sent home and posted from the exhibition, as it happens each bearing two stamps, were each clearly and neatly hand-stamped three times. One stamp bore the day's special handstamp; the second stamp bore the handstamp in use throughout the exhibition; and the cards received the exhibition cachet.

As for the exhibition, it was carefully arranged with the familiar mixture of displays, dealers and postal administrations. The displays were excellent. There is no doubt that many of the world's younger exhibitors can give the older collectors a run for their money, and hopefully all will maintain their interest in the hobby.

The five entrants from Great Britain all did well. Scott Ferguson with 'They Travelled Great Waters' won a Vermeil medal; his brother Martin achieved a Large Silver medal with 'Christmas'; Hayley Davies won a Silver for 'Let's Collect Stamps'; Rebecca Humfrey also won a Silver for 'Saying it with Flowers'; finally Adam Bell was awarded a Diploma for 'From Heath to Harbour'. Congratulations to all five.

The previous international stamp exhibition held in Bangkok had been in 1993. It was the first exhibition to really fire the imagination of the public, who arrived in their tens of thousands

every day. As is well known, the economic fortunes of the Far East have changed in more recent times, but that still did not prevent the visitors arriving in their droves, particularly, and as fully expected, the younger visitors. However, be under no misconception: these young visitors were there because they wanted to be. It was school holiday time in Thailand: the youngsters were not there in organised school groups, but visited with their friends and family.

The hobby is there to be enjoyed, and this becomes evident by looking not only at the stands of the postal administrations but also the other dealers. There was little older material on show; most were selling the issues of today with their bold, colourful designs. The inevitable passport was popular.

Some may regret that the exhibition had such an emphasis on modern material (although the exhibits from Asian collectors in the display frames certainly redressed the balance), but if the outcome is that stamp collecting has an appeal among this large, young audience, can it be so bad? If one had taken away the young visitors from Bangkok 2000, the place would have been deserted.

Life is often a compromise: we might well wish that others followed a different path. But if the result is that the seeds of stamp collecting are sown for the future, is it not in the long term for the good? ●

Richard West is Editor at Large, Stamp Magazine

Vienna exhibitions As WIPA 2000 opens its



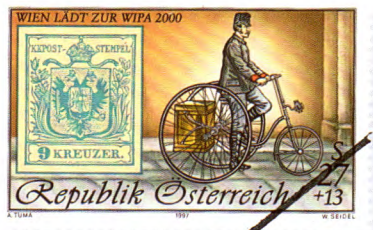
WIPA 1965 Right, the souvenir sheet issued with admission tickets included this reprint of the 1933 sheet, in red instead of blue, with the overprinting NEUDRUCK WIPA 1965.

AUSTRIA and Germany must share the honours for developing the notion of philatelic exhibitions. In 1870 Dresden staged the first exhibition devoted entirely to stamps, while Frankfurt-am-Main can claim to have had the world's first stamps to commemorate a stamp exhibition, albeit a 1 pfennig stamp in five different colour versions, produced by the Circular Post in 1887. The fact that this private post was organised by a prominent stamp dealer, H J Dauth, may have had some bearing on the matter.

The Frankfurt show is often regarded as the world's first international philatelic exhibition, because it drew the participation of some dealers from Austria as well as Germany; but credit for staging the first exhibitions which included the word international in their title must go to Austria.

doors, James Mackay compares past events

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Royal opening A show with the resounding title of Wiener Internationale Briefmarken Ausstellung (Vienna international postage stamp exhibition) was held in the Wiener Gartenbau (equivalent of the horticultural halls in London) in the Parkring in 1880. It seems to have qualified for the epithet 'international' purely because of the scope of the material exhibited, and not confined to Austrian stamps.

This week-long show attracted no fewer than 8000 visitors and encouraged the promoters to repeat the exercise the following year. WIPA 1881, as its title was shortened, opened on 15 November that year in the same venue as before. It was opened by none other than Archduke Carl Ludwig, younger brother of Kaiser Franz Joseph, and this may have accounted for

WIPA 2000 Stamps of 1997-99, above, issued to promote the exhibition. The 1997 stamp (top) reproduces the 9 kreuzer stamp of 1850.



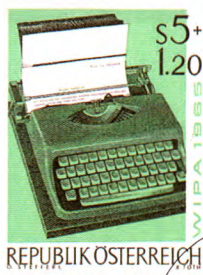
WIPA 1965 From left: In July 1964, a set of eight stamps featuring panoramic views of Vienna served as a curtain-raiser, including premiums in aid of exhibition funds. The show was marked by a set of six charity stamps illustrating the development of the letter through the ages, from Egyptian hieroglyphics to the type-writer.

the vast crowds which flocked to the exhibition and required a large contingent of the local constabulary to bring them under control. Carl Ludwig was accompanied by two other Archdukes, Rainer and Eugen, along with Prince Schwarzenberg and the Postmaster General, Baron von Dewecz. A guard of honour was provided by Viennese postmen under the command of the headposter, Heinrich Ritter von Kamler, so it was a truly aristocratic occasion.

Undoubtedly a highlight of the show was the stand organised by the Staatsdruckerei which included the original press on which the stamps of 1850 had been printed. Reprints from the original plates had been produced in 1866 and 1870, but now the State printing works produced a kreuzer stamp in blue on white paper or on 15 different shades of coloured paper. This time the design was modified to include the date 1881 in a cartouche at the foot. These imitations were distributed to visitors as souvenirs of the show. Participation in this exhibition was purely Austrian, the adjective again referring to the international scope of the stamps on display. London (1890) was the first exhibition which could be described as truly international in character, drawing exhibits as well as dealer participation from many overseas countries.

Post-war revivals Due to the upheavals of the First World War, and the revolution and economic collapse which came in its wake, more than half a century elapsed before Vienna was able to repeat the process. WIPA 1933 was held from 24 June to 9 July that year and was by far the largest exhibition of its kind held up to that time, the opening ceremony being performed by Wilhelm Miklas, President of the Republic. During the 16 days of the show it attracted more than 42,000 visitors. For the first time dealers from as far afield as the USA took part.

The exhibition was spread over three different venues: the Secession, the Artists' House and the Military Casino. Over 800 philatelists submitted entries, and in addition to numerous dealers, 17 postal administrations and nine printing works took part, resulting in a plethora of souvenirs. Apart from labels, reprints, cards and covers, this show yielded the first distinctive registration labels for a philatelic exhibition. As before, the Staatsdruckerei took a very prominent part, and gave demonstrations of engraving and printing.



The show was marked by the release of a 50 groschen stamp (with 50 groschen charity premium) reproducing *The Honeymoon* by Moritz von Schwind. On ordinary paper it is expensive enough, but a version on granite paper rates twice as much, while the miniature sheet containing a block of four (rationed to one per visitor) is a major rarity. This stamp rated very highly in *Stamp Magazine's* recent poll of the world's best stamp designs.

WIPA 1965 was held in June 1965 at the Hofburg and Messepalast and about 200,000 visitors passed through the turnstiles over the ten-day period. A staff of 200 manned the exhibition post office and applied the 395 different pictorial handstamps to souvenir mail.

For the centenary of WIPA 1881 a week-long exhibition was held at the Hofburg and Messepalast in May 1981. All three versions of the 16+8sch stamp (see right) were also produced as a print to accompany admission tickets. The sheet was also printed in other colours, without the value.

WIPA 1981 Advance publicity for the show included a 16+8sch stamp, centre, showing the new Hofburg (November 1979) and inscribed '1 Phase' to indicate that the engraving was at an early stage. It was re-issued inscribed '2 Phase' (November 1980, right) and as a miniature sheet (February 1981) containing the finished design.

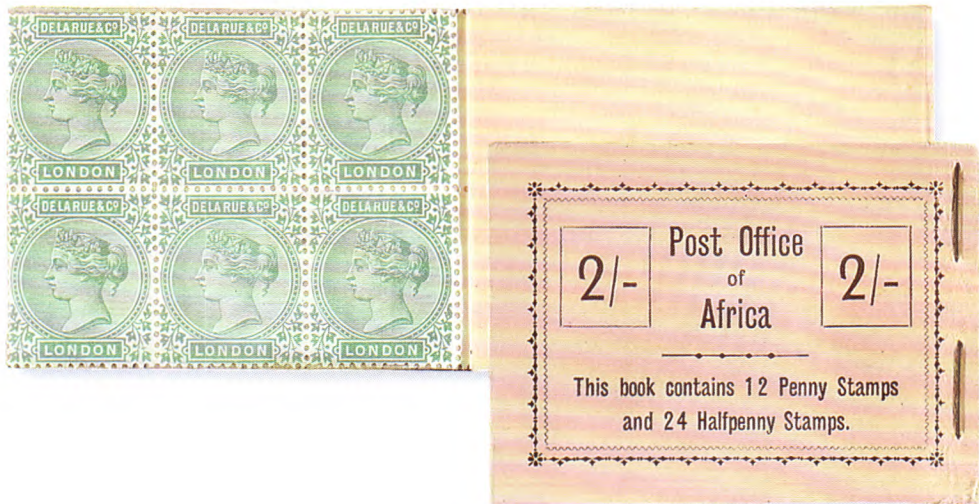
150th anniversary exhibition In connection with WIPA 2000, celebrating the 150th anniversary of the first Austrian stamps, a 27+13sch was released in May 1997 showing the original 9 kreuzer and a bicycle postman. In the next two years similar stamps reproduced the 2sch of 1929 and a mailvan, and the 25g of the Costumes series (1949) with a mailplane and vans. All three were united in the miniature sheet released on 21 January, alongside a non-postal label containing the 150th anniversary logo. Individual stamps from this sheet have the date 2000 in the lower margin, whereas the stamps issued in 1997-99 bear the actual year of issue.

Amongst the attractions at WIPA 2000 will be two of the rarest and most famous stamps: the first Mauritius issue and the Swedish 3 skilling yellow – the most expensive stamp in the world. The Literature class in the competition includes philatelic computer programs for IBM or Apple Macintosh computers. Inventory programs, databases or programs for the display in the form of diskettes or CD-ROMs will also be judged. It promises to be an interesting exhibition ●



James Mackay receives his Rowland Hill Award for Philatelic Excellence, 1999. Left, Stuart Sweetman, Post Office Group Managing Director, Customer and Banking Services. Right, TV presenter Jonathan Dimpleby, the Awards ceremony compere.

Post Office Heritage Collections Dummy stamps printed by De La Rue



ALTHOUGH the first British stamp book was not put on sale until March 1904, the Post Office became involved with stamp books in 1880 when essay books were produced containing four panes of six 1d lilac Queen Victoria revenue stamps (SG F22). These were manufactured by De La Rue who prepared further essays, containing blank white stamp-size labels, in 1885.

At some time prior to 1903, De La Rue produced further essay books containing panes of six dummy stamps bearing the Queen's portrait and the inscription DE LA RUE & CO LONDON, printed in purple or green. The book covers were blank, in pink or blue, containing respectively four panes of green stamps and nine panes of purple stamps. Examples of both exist in the Reginald M Phillips Collection in Post Office Heritage.

Similar experimental books were made up for the Orange River Colony postal authorities in 1905. These had pink covers inscribed '2/- Post Office of Africa – This book contains 12 Penny Stamps and 24 Halfpenny Stamps 2/-' and contained four panes of green stamps and two panes of red. An example is mounted with the two blank cover books on page 34 of volume 44 of the Phillips Collection. (An imperf pane of six of the green stamps was illustrated in the *Bulletin* of February 1981.)

The De La Rue Correspondence Book for the period states that the company could produce 30,000 books and proposed packing them in a case measuring 30 × 26 × 23 inches with an estimated weight of 3¼ cwt.

To make an appointment to view these items, write to Post Office Heritage Collections at Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London WC1X 0DL or call 020 7239 2570 •

A Victorian decorated cover Miss G Morris of Rhyl submits this attractive example



The cover was addressed to Mr John Myerscough, grandfather of Miss Morris. It bears three ½d stamps, cancelled LIVERPOOL 10 August 1893. The floral illustrations include the exhortations 'Good Luck' and 'Good Health'.



On the reverse is a large wax seal, plus 'Rhyl and Sound Health', 'Rhyl and Success' and 'Rhyl and Myerscough for ever'. This last inscription is initialed 'EWH', presumably the sender of the letter. There is a Rhyl circle date stamp of 11 August near the seal.

Other decorated covers, of the reigns of Edward VII and George VI, have appeared in our Cover Corner features in September 1998 and January 1999.



Strangford Stone Quarried from the Mountains of Mourne, this 25 tonne granite megalith was raised by the people of Killyleagh using ropes and muscle power.

Trans Pennine Trail A route used by walkers, wheelchair users, cyclists and horse riders, this trail connects Wakefield and Leeds, Sheffield and Chesterfield, York and Selby.

Kingdom of Fife Cycle Ways Aiming to promote cycling as a part of daily life, this project encourages people to cycle to the shops, school or work, and not just for recreation.

Changing Places Massive areas of Britain lie derelict and neglected – a waste of a precious resource. This project aims to reclaim wasteland for the benefit of local communities.

The Stone and Soil issue will go on sale at post offices and philatelic outlets on 4 July.



Dario Mordani



Witold Krassowski

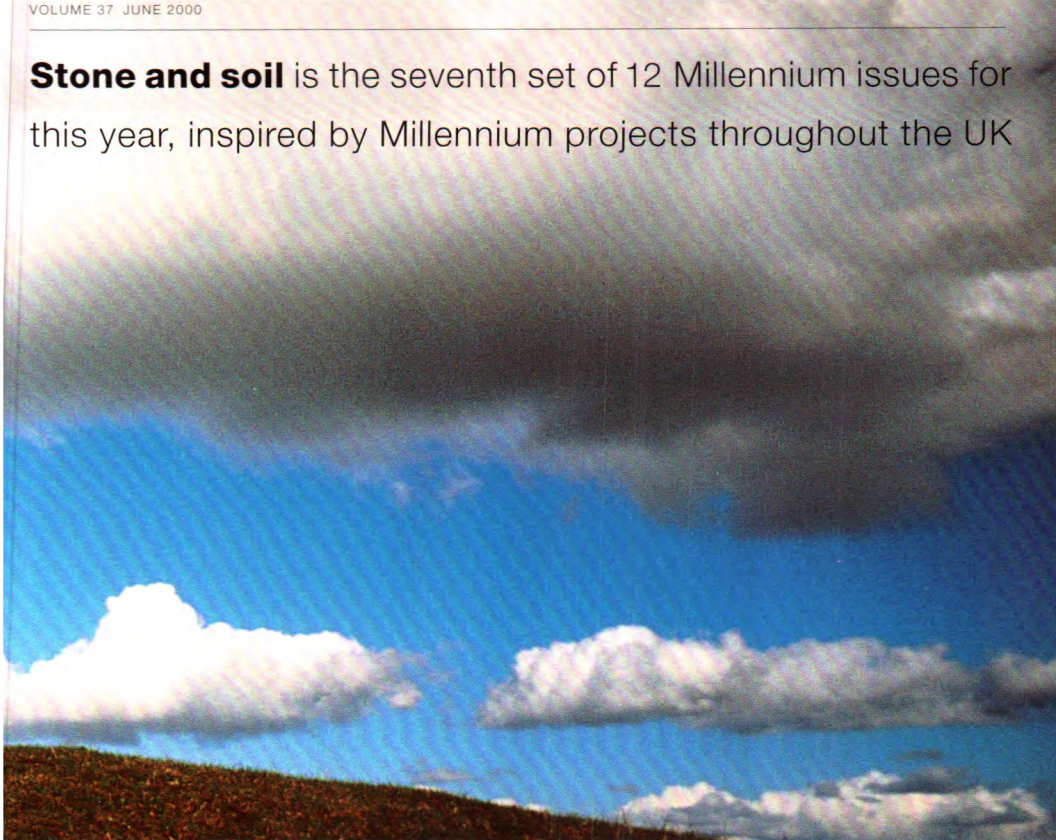


John Parker



Jo Crowther

Stone and soil is the seventh set of 12 Millennium issues for this year, inspired by Millennium projects throughout the UK



The 2nd class stamp depicts the raising of the Strangford Stone, the huge megalith in Killyleagh which has created a timeless landmark • The 1st class represents the 430-mile Trans Pennine Trail, enjoyed by travellers of every kind • The 45p value represents the regional networks of cycling routes now being developed in Fife • The 65p, *Changing Places*, symbolizes the regeneration of neglected land in England and Wales, led by the Groundwork Foundation.

27 — Fife Cycle Ways
 25 — Strangford Stone
 26 — Trans Pennine Trail
 28 Changing Places



A well-illustrated presentation pack (above, price £1.95) and stamp cards (price 25p each) will be available at main post offices and philatelic outlets.

Technical details

Printer Joh Enschedé Stamps

Process Gravure

Size 37 × 35mm

Sheets 100

Perforation 14 × 14.5

Phosphor One band 2nd class; two bands others

Gum PVA

Gutter pairs Horizontal

Cylinders and colours

2nd 1A brownish black ● 1B grey-black ● 1C silver ● 1D phosphor

1st 1A greenish yellow ● 1B bright magenta ● 1C new blue ● 1D grey-black ● 1E silver ● 1F grey ● 1G phosphor

45p 1A brownish black ● 1B grey-black ● 1C black ● 1D silver ● 1E phosphor

65p 1A greenish yellow ● 1B bright magenta ● 1C new blue ● 1D black ● 1E silver ● 1F phosphor

Last year hundreds of young people pulled together in Killyleagh, Northern Ireland to raise a 12.5m (40ft) high granite megalith using ropes and muscle power. The Strangford Stone, quarried from the Mourne Mountains, is one of the tallest megaliths in Europe, 10m of it visible above ground. The team effort has created a landmark for centuries to come.

The Trans Pennine Trail runs from Merseyside to Humberside, its east-west trail crossed by north-south sections. In all it forms a route of some 700km (430 miles) through a wide variety of rural and urban landscapes, following disused railway lines, riversides, canal towpaths, minor roads and paths. Funding is by a partnership of local authorities.

One of the most comprehensive regional networks of cycles routes is being developed in Fife. Urban centres will be linked, routes clearly signed and traffic calming and reduction measures introduced where required. Work on the 500km (300 mile) network includes creating on-road cycle lanes, building protected road crossings, creating joint-use paths for pedestrians and cyclists and providing secure cycle parking facilities.

Massive areas of Britain lie derelict and neglected – a waste of a precious resource. The Groundwork Foundation's Project, Changing Places, aims to regenerate over 1000 hectares (2500 acres) in sites across England and Wales, enhancing the environment for local communities.



FIRST DAY FACILITIES Unstamped Royal Mail FDC envelopes will be available from main post offices and philatelic outlets about a week before 4 July, price 25p. Orders for FDCs with the stamps cancelled by a pictorial first day postmark of the Bureau or Killyleagh must reach the Bureau by 4 July. Price £2.25 UK (including VAT) or £1.92 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, 57 Queen Street, Glasgow G1 3AZ (Killyleagh postmark), marking the outer envelope 'FDO019' (Bureau), or 'FDO020' (Killyleagh). Covers can be posted or handed in at main post offices for the Killyleagh postmark. A non-pictorial Killyleagh postmark is also available from the Special Handstamp Centre, request 'FDO020 NP'.

Details of sponsored handstamps for 4 July 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 2nd class Stone and Soil stamp for any philatelic postmark in use on 4 July.

MILLENNIUM PHILATELIC PRODUCTS A well-illustrated Stone and Soil pack (price £1.95) and stamp cards (25p each) will be available from main post offices and philatelic outlets. Each of the Millennium packs this year includes a specially commissioned poem. The Stone and Soil poem, entitled *Strangford Stone* is by Belfast-born Michael Longley. His collections include *Goose Fires* (winner of Whitbread Prize for Poetry), and *The Ghost Orchid*. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature •

Next Millennium issues The eighth set in the Millennium 2000 series will be issued on 1 August. Entitled Tree and Leaf, it features Yews for the Millennium; the Eden Project, St Austell; Millennium Seed Bank, Ardingly; and Forest for Scotland – details next month. The series then continues with Mind and Matter (5 September), Body and Bone (3 October), Spirit and Faith (7 November), and Sound and Vision (5 December) •



Properly addressed A first day cover's worth may depend



GB23. A GBFDC official cover by GBCovers, 102 Regal Way, Kenton, Harrow, Middlesex E

Above: this cover's address is integral to the envelope design.

Below: this sponsored cover, produced for the 1983 Commonwealth Day issue, shows no sign of an address anywhere on the envelope.



TO THE MAJORITY of FDC collectors, a first day cover is much more collectable if there is no address on it. There are exceptions to this such as very neatly printed addresses, or addresses that are part of the overall design of the envelope. The cover above left is a good example of this.

However, there are also a fair number of FDC collectors who would not include a cover in their collection if it did not have an address on it. Their argument is very reasonable: the purpose of the postal system is to deliver items to a specific address. If there is no address it cannot be delivered, therefore it is not a valid postal item.

That is a purist view of course. There is no law that says first day covers have to be valid postal items; people can collect what they like. Meter mark covers are a good case in point – they are not even cancelled by Royal Mail, and don't have to be posted or taken anywhere. Usually the metermark cancellation doesn't even touch the stamps, which are generally affixed some time later. That job is usually done with a Royal Mail cancellation on the actual day of issue. All the same they are collected, and if the date on the metermark is a first day of issue date, then it is accepted by meter mark collectors as a fully valid first day cover.

There are many kinds of FDCs. Those that are sent through the post in the normal way obviously must have an address on them or they would never arrive at their destination. However, a large number do not go through the system in the normal way, and do not need an address to reach the recipient.

A 'sponsored', or 'official' cover for instance, is one which has a specially designed envelope and a sponsored handstamp to go with it. The main point about these covers is that only the sponsor possesses the envelopes, and while anyone is entitled to have their covers cancelled with the handstamp, they usually can't have it done on the sponsor's cover. That limits the issue to a specific person or company and to a precisely limited number in the issue. The reason I say that they can't 'usually' have it done on the sponsor's cover is because there is one exception that I know of, which is Fourpenny Post of Wallsend, who sell unserviced envelopes for every issue as well as producing serviced covers. That way the collector can obtain the official cover more cheaply by doing it him or herself, but of course it will be much more difficult to fix a catalogue price as it cannot be known exactly how many there are.

on whether it is addressed, as Derek Williams demonstrates



Above: the poor condition of this cover, and a residue of glue left behind following the removal of an adhesive label, renders it almost valueless.

I know of no other producer who does that; usually the sponsor prints the envelopes, sticks the stamps on them all, packs them and takes or posts the whole consignment to the Handstamp Centre that is dealing with his sponsored handstamp. No-one else is able to obtain the envelopes. At the Handstamp Centre the covers are unpacked, and very carefully cancelled by hand, often using a special device for positioning them under a large magnifying glass. Then they are put back in the box and sent back to the producer. In some cases the producer will even ask to be told when the covers are ready, then call at the Handstamp Centre to collect them as well as having delivered them there. In such cases the covers will never have gone through the postal system at all, apart from the short sojourn at the Handstamp Centre.

My second illustration (above, centre) is a good example of an unaddressed cover that must have been dealt with in this way, for the Commonwealth Day stamp issue of 9 March 1983. The sponsored cover was produced by Stewart Petty Charity Appeals. Only 1000 were made, and they are currently catalogued at £15 each. There is no sign of an address having been applied anywhere on the envelope.

That is one way a FDC can be produced without any address on it. There are several others, some of them rather 'unofficial' ways, such as using a removable label or writing the address lightly in pencil and erasing it afterwards, and my next illustration (above, right) shows one of the pitfalls of the 'removable label' method. It is a sad example of what started out as a very nice cover, but has been turned into a disaster. I would not normally keep a cover that had the mark of a removed label on it, but this one is so awful in other ways too that it was worth retaining as a horrible example. It is an official cover catalogued at £20 (oddly the unofficial version is catalogued at £30) but has been badly bent and scuffed – enough in itself to make it valueless, but in addition it started off with a rather large label which has been removed, leaving a residue of glue behind. Inevitably dirt and hairs have adhered to the patch of glue leaving a disgusting oblong.

If and how an envelope is addressed is all a matter of personal taste of course. There is no 'right' or 'wrong' way to do this; but like everything else, the most popular way ends up being the method most people look upon as the right way to do it.



Hawkwood Covers
60 Hawkwood Crescent,
Chingford, London, E4 7PJ

Above: an excellent example of a well-printed address, on a cover produced by Hawkwood Covers for 1982 Christmas stamps.

Right: this British Library official cover would have been a more valuable item had it been decently addressed.

100th Anniversary of the
Death of Sir Rowland Hill



Amongst FDC collectors there are many preferences. In general, unaddressed covers, or those where the address is actually part of the design are the most desirable as I have said, but size is also important. A well printed address is acceptable, but not so good if it is on a large label. Tiny labels are much better. A typed address on an otherwise desirable cover can be acceptable, but only if it is very well typed. Addresses made with a rubber stamp can also be acceptable if neat and clear.

The cover above left is an excellent example of a well printed address. A limited edition of 1000 was produced by Hawkwood Covers for the 1982 Christmas stamps. Now catalogued at £25, this address detracts nothing from the value.

The least popular of all the kinds of addressed covers are handwritten ones. To be acceptable at all they have to be very well written indeed, and

even then would be much less acceptable than any kind of printing or typing unless extremely rare. A badly written address will render the cover uncollectable, unless is very rare indeed.

My final illustration, above right, is a good example of what would have been a desirable cover indeed had it been decently addressed. It is British Library official cover number 11, produced for the stamp issue of 22 August 1979 which commemorated the 100th anniversary of the death of Sir Rowland Hill. It is catalogued at £40, but the poorly handwritten address has ruined it. I'd do well to get a fiver for it! ●

Derek Williams is founder of the GBFDC (the Association of Collectors of GB First Day Covers). Other articles on FDC collecting by Mr Williams were published in the Bulletins of February 1998, February and July 1999 and February 2000.

Decimal stamp books 51 Specialist report by D G A Myall

Tariff changes By the time you read this, The Stamp Show 2000 will have come and gone. As I write, it is still several weeks away but all the signs are that it will live up to all expectations and even rival Stamp World 1990 which was the best to date. It was, perhaps, a little unfortunate that the tariff increase, although postponed for three weeks, came into effect before the show, making some of the philatelic offerings a bit out of date. One of them, the Jeffery Matthews miniature sheet even revived the 6p, a value that was withdrawn from sale at post offices on 4 October 1999. Of course, it is still valid for postage to that amount. From 27 April, the prices of books containing 1st class non value indicators (NVIs) went up by 1p per stamp. This also affected the price of the *Profile on Print* and *Special by Design* prestige books which were sold at the show in a special pack containing the three precursor books promoting the show.

Books with value stamps were issued on 27 April with revised contents. The 4 × 38p and 4 × 64p were replaced with 4 × 40p and 4 × 65p respectively. These values pre-pay the worldwide postcard rate and the 20g worldwide letter rate. The stamps were printed in gravure by Walsall from cylinders w1. They have two phosphor bars from 9mm bands, but there are no numbers for these cylinders as, unlike those used for sheet stamps, Royal Mail no longer require them on booklet panes. Both values are new to the decimal range and the 40p is in a colour, grey blue, that has not been used before. It is one of four new colours recently added to Jeffery Matthews' palette and is very attractive, I think. The dark turquoise of the 65p from this palette was last used for the 32p stamp. The covers contain the new stamp images of course, but the barcodes, text on the yellow strip and on the outside back covers are the same as before. On the inside, the new telephone contact numbers are given.

The £1 and £2 machine vend books required new contents in view of the increase of 1p in the cost of the 1st class service. One 19p stamp and three 27p stamps would have come to exactly £1

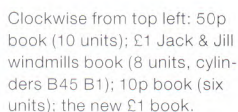


and twice that to make £2. However, much to everyone's surprise, value stamps were replaced by NVIs, the first time that these have ever appeared in a machine vend book. It does not seem that this innovation can survive another rate increase since, unlike retail (window) books, they are sold at a fixed price. If, for the sake of my argument, the 2nd class rate went back to 20p, the new £2 book would contain stamps to the value of £2.02. Of course, Royal Mail might feel generous and still let us have the book for £2. They did something similar in September 1990 when the 50p book contained 3 × 17p and a label. But there will eventually be a change that requires these books to contain value stamps again – unless there are plans to modify vending machines to take exact amounts or to give change to the nearest penny. The stamps are laid down sideways on the cylinders but are not the first NVIs to be so. In 1989, sideways printed NVIs by Harrison in panes of four appeared in covers printed by Walsall. The 1st class stamps in these books were black so the new ones are the first flame NVIs with sideways direction of printing.

The new £1 and £2 books, both stamps and covers, were printed in gravure by Questa. The stamps are from Q1 blue and Q1 flame in each case, each layout being separately numbered. The 1st class NVIs have two phosphor bars from 9mm bands; the 2nd class ones have a central bar 4.5mm wide. The covers state the revised contents on the front; there is nothing printed on the back, whereas the replaced covers advertised other books. The perforation gauge and marginal perforation type are unchanged. There is no printing on the yellow strip and no barcode.



Tel:
08457
111 222



Also on 27 April the 4 × E stamp was re-issued with the revised postcode enquiry phone number on the inside cover. The cylinder used was W1; the book now sells at £1.44, the E stamp is now equivalent to 36p.

Millennium NVI varieties As well as the differences mentioned here last time, other unintended varieties are beginning to appear. The layout of the phosphor bands on recent panes is so exact that only slight shifts in registration can cause a band to be inset from the left or right edge or short at the top or bottom. Because these stamps still have the correct number of bars they do not embarrass Royal Mail in use and there is little incentive for them to take any special action to prevent them. Nevertheless, they are extremely popular with collectors and are well worth looking out for, especially in prestige books. The most recent affects the panes with the Wales Botanic Gardens label. The phosphor goes right to the edge of the perforations but no further; maybe the intention is to minimise the use of what is regarded to some degree as a pollutant and incidentally to reduce

costs. The extent of the shift varies but there are some nice varieties with the left bar set well in from the left. This is known on unfolded panes as well as in booklets.

Other phosphor varieties are of much more interest to both Royal Mail and the printers. Those which give most concern are where the phosphor is completely or partially omitted, or where the number of bands is altered. All have occurred on the *Questa* panes of 10 Millennium Machin from cylinder Q1. As well as yielding panes and single stamps with no phosphor at all, some have singles with only a left bar; the one normally at the right being omitted. Current prices are about £45 for a book with no phosphor and £35 for a stamp with left bar only. Incidentally, the copies of the latter which I have seen also have this bar well inset •

Greetings stamps labels 1997 Flowers, by Lionel Jones



THE FINAL SET of greetings stamps, issued in a book of 10, went on sale on 6 January 1997. They featured 19th century flower paintings by Georg D Ehret (five paintings), Alfred Chandler, Mrs Augusta I Withers, Miss Charlotte C Sowerby, and Pierre-Joseph Redoute. The names of the books from which the paintings were taken were given on the inside back cover of the book.

Accompanying the stamps, separated by a narrow gutter margin, are 20 colourful labels depicting flowers and foliage with a variety of greetings, including Best Wishes, Thank You, Happy Birthday, With Love, RSVP, Good Luck, and Get Well.

The entire book, including the stamps and labels was designed by the London-based design group Tutssels, and printed in litho by Walsall Security Printers. The exotic *Gentiana acaulis*, shown on the first stamp in the pane, also featured on the front cover of the 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 and the stamp designs reproduced on stamp cards. At time of writing, the book, pack and cards are all still available from the British Philatelic Bureau •

Philately on-line Join the discussion, by Ron Negus FRPSL

IN MY *New Technology for Stamp Collectors* booklet, issued with the April *Bulletin*, I mentioned the existence of English language newsgroups for philatelists. This article explains how these groups operate and how you can find them and participate in them when you are connected to the internet.

A philatelic newsgroup is simply an electronic discussion group. It allows messages to be posted in a standard format so that they can be accessed, read and, if appropriate, answered by other collectors anywhere in the world. The messages may contain comments, new questions, or answers to earlier questions which all relate to some common topic. There are many thousands of newsgroups and it is likely that one exists for any subject in which you have an interest, from archaeology to zoology. This overall collection of all newsgroups is called Usenet.

Both the main internet browsers, Microsoft's Internet Explorer and Netscape's Communicator provide the necessary software for accessing newsgroups. Details of the required procedures for this access can be found on their Help screens. A number of stand-alone newsreader programs also exist if you want more features than those offered in the standard browsers. A comprehensive search facility to locate existing newsgroups can be found on the web at: www.deja.com/usenet/.

It is not necessary to join any particular newsgroup to be able to read the messages it contains. The opening screen (see illustration above) for any particular group will display a list of current messages, normally arranged in date order with most recent postings shown first. This list indicates the subject of each message, the date it was sent and the author's name. Clicking on any title brings up the full message to the screen.

The full message screen provides an option to send a reply, and the ensuing question and answer sessions arising from any single message are known as a 'thread'. From each opening screen, the software allows easy navigation up and down a thread where one exists, so that the full scope

Home >> Discussions >> rec., collecting, stamps, discuss

>> **rec.collecting.stamps.discuss**

Forum **rec.collecting.stamps.discuss**

Post Message or Subscribe to rec.collecting.stamps.discuss

Last Msg	Name	# of Msgs	Latest Post By
04/02/2000	GR-Questa E2 B&K mhsophor	1	Ron Jackson
04/02/2000	EMKO Radio Stamps	1	mm
04/02/2000	B&K art, interesting postcard	6	Herb F
04/02/2000	O Sole Mio.....Naples!	2	Bob Harper
04/02/2000	Source for high quality envelopes?	5	Bob Harper
04/02/2000	I need help from G.B. experts, help	5	I love old Italian
04/01/2000	English field post query	3	Hills
04/01/2000	April Stamp Trader List update, new and deleted li	1	Phil Ouphill
04/01/2000	About the Stamp Trader List	1	Phil Ouphill

The main philatelic newsgroups are: rec.collecting.stamps, discuss, rec.collecting.stamps.marketplace and rec.collecting.postal-history. All are worth viewing, with contributions from around the globe. There is also a group called alt.collecting.stamps, mainly concerned with newsgroup administration.

of the discussion about the item can be followed from beginning to end. The author's e-mail address is also included to allow an individual reply to be sent when any comment you wish to make would not apply to the group as a whole.

Within Usenet, newsgroups are organised in hierarchies. The top level is identified by a major subject classification, and there are about 20 of these. A top level group called 'rec', for example, covers all types of recreational topics, including hobbies. At the next level of this hierarchy we can find all the newsgroups concerned with 'collecting', for instance. Then another sub-level can be introduced to cover those collecting groups that deal with 'stamps', with further sub-levels below this, if needed. A newsgroup's identifier is made up from each level of its hierarchy separated by full stops (as listed above).

Since my booklet was published, two new websites have been announced that will interest readers of the *Bulletin*. One is for the British Philatelic Trust, and the other is the Stanley Gibbons site. These both came on-line too late for inclusion in this article, but I will review them next time. ●

Mr Negus regrets he is unable to answer individual correspondence. He will be happy to take any readers' comments into account in future articles. ED

Postbag Letters to the Editor

Millennium definitive I read with great interest Douglas Myall's descriptions (April *Bulletin*) of the Millennium definitives issued in sheets and books of 10 (6 January) and in the *Special by Design* prestige book (15 February). I have since examined the stamps in the books of four with Postman Pat and National Botanic Garden of Wales labels (21 February and 4 April). Both these books were printed by Walsall and I have compared them to the stamps in Walsall's book of 10 and the prestige book. On the Postman Pat pane the '1st' is positioned further to the right than on the other Walsall stamps, but not so far to the right as on the Questa printing. On both pictorial label panes there appears some damage to the '1' of '1st', a slight indentation mid-way down the left-side. The printing quality is better in the books of four and 10, the colour of the stamps in the prestige book being dull and speckled in comparison. As Mr Myall points out the perforation of the stamp in the prestige book is 14 (as in the Questa book) as opposed to 15 x 14 in other Walsall books and De La Rue sheets. I look forward to examining the Millennium definitive in the 'Coronation' miniature sheet issued in May.

Also, I am surprised no one has pointed out the significant shade difference on the current 19p definitive from cylinders 8 and 9 with De La Rue imprint. Stamps from cylinder 8 are much lighter than those from cylinder 9 which is much closer to the old cylinder 3 of Harrison days (no imprint). The difference is most marked when comparing the colour of the 'jubilee line' in the lower sheet margin – a bistre-brown on cylinder 8, compared to olive-green of cylinders 3 and 9.

I hope these comments are of interest to fellow collectors. **KEN MARKS, PORTSMOUTH** ●



Stamp from the Postman Pat book (left) and other books. The '1st' is further to the right on the stamp from the Postman Pat book.

New definitives I was interested to see your footnote to Robert Rush's letter in the March *Bulletin*. Whilst not becoming 'tired' by the outstanding Machin series, I am of the opinion that GB stamp issuing policy requires a thorough overhaul, in order to bring some innovative and imaginative ideas to encourage young collectors. My suggestion is to retain the Machin series for our high values, NVIS, booklets and the 'make-up value' stamps. The basic rate values for each type of mail to be pictorial. In this way we could celebrate the beauty, history, and diversity of our country. The designs to be changed annually and of course when rates are increased. Such issues to be in place of part of the current 'specials' so that overall cost remains much the same. Perhaps each 'rate' could have its own subject: fauna, flora, buildings, scenery, and historical personalities to name but a few. Just consider what a collection could be built up over say a five year period. Not to mention if in some cases the values had se-tenant designs. There is so much that could be done given the will. **PHILIP OVERELL, BURTON ON TRENT** ●

Country stamps The letters in March have a valid point with regard to country stamps – particularly for England. We have many counties which could be represented on the stamps issued as definitives. Subject matter could be changed as values change and this would give a boost to our image – the foreigner would realise that we English do exist, as opposed to the Welsh, Scottish, and Irish, which already have their own identity. Perhaps the powers that be could be persuaded to do something on these lines. Machins have had their day and any more variations are not welcome. The idea of two or more series running concurrently might be acceptable for those with a deep pocket, but I am not in favour of too many changes as we have had over the last year – keep the special for anniversaries, etc as heretofore. I do like to be constructive even if I haven't agreed with some of your previous issues and their artistic qualities! **E J BUNN, ST ALBANS** ●

Stamp design I would like to expand on some of the issues raised by Felix Ormerod in the April *Bulletin*. In agreeing with him that the purpose of a stamp is to pre-pay postage, I wonder why there are so many specialist booklets issued which are of interest primarily to collectors and largely unknown (and unwanted?) by the general public. In 1999 instead of the usual one, there were two prestige booklets and two booklets of 1st class stamps including special issues. It would seem that Royal Mail are producing stamps simply to make a profit from those who wish to maintain a complete collection. I am dismayed to discover that 10 issues are planned for 2001, in spite of many pleas for a reduction to six or even less.

I wholeheartedly agree with Mr Ormerod regarding the dark colours of so many of the Millennium Tales stamps. With no white border and the increasing use of ink-jet cancellations it is very difficult to detect the postmark, let alone obtain a clear one.

One further point – the design of a stamp should convey the subject in a way that is obvious to anyone who uses it. I particularly highlight the 43p Patients' Tale, the 44p Farmers' Tale and the 26p Artists' Tale from 1999, and the 64p Fire and Light and 26p and 44p Water and Coast in 2000. These designs are so obscure as to seem only a pretty label to prove payment of postage. I hope these points can be considered by those responsible for the design and production of future issues. M J GREENWAY, LONDON ●

Shape of stamps to come Oh how I agree with Felix Ormerod (April) about those four tired values – 19p, 26p, 44p and 64p. Like a great many collectors, I feel the main reason now for the issue of special stamps is Post Office profit so there is no need to stick to the same format every time. Why not an occasional single high value? I do not like the beer bottle label shape, they are boring to look at and I have been unable to find an interesting way to mount them on an album page. I always end up with four columns of stamps down the page. Stamps in the proportions of $1 \times \sqrt{2}$ with horizontal and vertical designs add interest. R HARRISON, RETFORD ●



Collectors at dealers' stands at Spring Stampex. The flags over the railings reflect the Spanish theme of the exhibition.

Super Stampex I must say how much I enjoyed Spring Stampex in March. The displays of Spanish and Ship stamps were a credit to the organising societies and I hope there will be many similar special displays at future Stampex exhibitions. It is a pity that a few more visitors don't spend some time looking at the displays rather than rushing straight to the dealers' stands. I went to the exhibition twice, the first time taking my grandson who appreciated the packet of Spanish stamps given him by the Spanish Stamp Society – this was a nice gesture towards the younger visitors. When we got home we looked at the stamps – I hadn't realised how interesting and colourful Spanish stamps were and so viewed the displays with renewed interest on the second visit. MRS PAM HILLS, REIGATE ●

Change of head From your Postbag it seems that, like me, a considerable number of your readers are concerned about the format and presentation of our stamps. I, too am fed up with the seemingly unending colour changes of the Machin type with all its additional gum varieties and other visible (and invisible) changes. As our coins have now moved to a more fittingly mature portrait of The Queen, why should our stamps still live in the past? B J DUNN, BIRKENHEAD ●

The Editor is always pleased to receive contributions for 'Postbag', especially letters adding information to that already published, so benefiting fellow philatelists. All letters to the Editor are carefully read; matters of general interest will be dealt with in 'Postbag'. The Editor regrets that he is unable to reply personally to letters ●

Cover corner

THIS MONTH'S ITEM comprises a 'do it yourself' first day cover for the Coronation stamps of 3 June 1953. Although pictorial covers were available from dealers, there were no Royal Mail covers in those days – the first was for the Shakespeare Festival stamps in 1964. Many collectors simply addressed plain envelopes to themselves and posted them at their local post office. This cover, submitted by Geoff Isherwood of Cheshire, was addressed to a Mr Howden in Egham and cancelled with the WOKING SURREY thick-arc hand-stamp timed at 1.30pm on 3 June. Although the town name is somewhat difficult to read, the date is clear enough. The Coronation took place on 2 June (as indicated on the 1s6d stamp) which was a public holiday, the stamps went on sale the following day. These were the first commemorative stamps of the present reign and the last (exclud-



ing the 1957 Parliamentary Conference issue), to include the inscription 'POSTAGE REVENUE'. The 1s3d design was the work of Edmund Dulac who was said to have been inspired by a portrait of Elizabeth I by Nicholas Hilliard. Dulac's design was recently re-issued as a £1 stamp in the second Stamp Show 2000 miniature sheet ●

Posting boxes 195

THE FIRST of this month's photos, submitted by N S Atherden of Hampshire, shows two Elizabeth II rectangular boxes at English Street in Carlisle. He tells us these are cast iron, split cypher twin boxes with a common roof. They were introduced 1974-80, and manufactured by the Carron Company of Falkirk.

The second photo, from Roger M Skiffins of London E18 is of a Victorian Penfold box he photographed near the seafront in Bournemouth. Penfolds are probably the most popular boxes included in this feature – other examples (including modern replicas) were shown here in July 1979, November 1980, August 1981, January, April and September 1988, June, October, November and December 1989, September 1990, February and April 1991, January 1992, July and December 1993, September and November 1995, and March, July and December 1997 ●



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.

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



March identify The detail is from the 64p Life and Earth stamp, issued 4 April 2000. The winner was C Czerwenka of Austria.

March knowledge The answers: 1) blue; 2) 1967; 3) Settlers' Tale. The winner was J W Allcock of Berkshire.

Ten runner-up prizes were also sent for each competition. Our thanks to all who entered.

FIRSTLY, IDENTIFY THE STAMP from the detail above. Send your answer to June *Identify* Competition. Secondly, test your philatelic knowledge by answering the questions below. Send your answer to June *Knowledge* Competition.

- 1 Who received the 1999 Rowland Hill Award for Lifetime Achievement?
- 2 How many stamps will there be in the Royal Mail Millennium series when completed in January 2001?
- 3 Who is Editor at Large of *Stamp Magazine*?

Send your answer (addressed to either the June *Identify* Competition or the June *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 3HQ.

The senders of the first cards drawn in each competition on 14 July 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

3 June Millennium Stamp & Postcard Fair hosted by Ringwood Phil Soc at Greyfriars Community Centre, Ringwood, Hants. **Enquiries** Colin Mount, 01425 474310.

3 June BARRY 2000 Stamp and Postcard Fair at Memorial Hall, Gladstone Road, Barry, 10.00-16.00. **Enquiries** Mrs G Hopkins, 20 Tarrws Close, Wenvoe, Cardiff CF5 6BT.

4 June Association of GB First Day Cover Collectors First Day Cover Fair at Falstaff Hotel, Warwick New Road, Leamington Spa, 10.00-16.00. Admission free. **Enquiries** Terry Barnett, 0151 486 2610.

10 June SWINPEX 2000 at St Joseph's School, Queen's Drive, Swindon.

15-18 June Welsh Philatelic Society meeting at Plas

Tan y Bwlch, Maentwrog. **Enquiries** Peter Brindley, 01248 352682.

17 June Annual Bournemouth Stamp, Postcard Fayre and Auction at Summerbee Secondary School, Mallard Road, Bournemouth, 10.00-16.00. Auction starts 16.30. Dealers, refreshments, free admission. **Enquiries** R W J Sharp, Harcourt, 72 Cardigan Road, Bournemouth BH9 1BG.

24-25 June Thematica 2000 at Carisbrooke Hall, Seymour Street, London W2. **Enquiries** F Brian Sole, 01372 467652.

24 June GB Phil Soc meeting : President's Guest 11.00, AGM 14.30 followed by 'Seldom Seen' – Anthony Eskenzi. At British Philatelic Centre, 107 Charterhouse Street, London EC1. **Enquiries** Andrew Lajer, 01189 344151 •

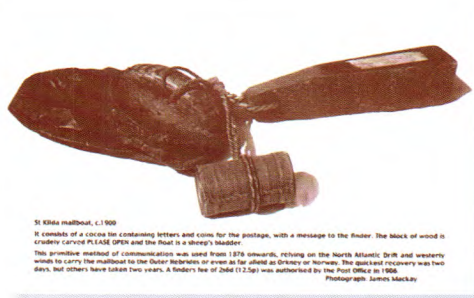
Late news

Rowland Hill's Journal launched by Lord Briggs

The Royal Philatelic Society London hosted a reception at the British Library on 18 April to launch its two-volume *The Reform of the Post Office in the Victorian Era*, a 1300-page documentary history of the period 1837-64, based on Sir Rowland Hill's Journal and Ancillary Papers. Available by the time this report is published, price £150 UK carriage paid from: Royal Philatelic Society London, 41 Devonshire Place, London W1N 1PE.

The reception was attended by officers of the Society and worthies from the philatelic world. The Post Office was represented by Christine Jones and Douglas Muir from Post Office Heritage, and John Holman, Editor of this *Bulletin*. Principal speaker Lord Briggs, better known as the eminent historian Asa Briggs, said he was pleased to be invited to provide a foreword to the book which he described as 'admirable and learned'. He said he had a 'fairly long-term interest in philately', collecting stamps for many years after school days. He recalled, when at the University of Sussex, being involved in negotiations between the GPO and Reginald M Phillips over the setting up of the National Postal Museum and spoke of Phillips as 'an extraordinary person' who gave him almost a weekly tutorial on stamps. Lord Briggs, a reader of this *Bulletin*, included a chapter on stamps in his book *Victorian Things* (1989).

He then went on to speak of Rowland Hill 'a remarkable person indeed'. He had studied the educational work of the Hill family in Birmingham when writing his book on the history of the city. Hill's journal, which said Lord Briggs, deserves recognition as a primary historical source, offers some penetrating insights into Hill's personality as he developed and his experience broadened. Amongst the many honours bestowed on Hill was election as a Fellow of the Royal Society which then included people of different areas of life, not all scientists. This, said Lord Briggs, acknowledged that Hill was 'a person who brought different kinds of knowledge together, working in an inter-disciplinary way.' ●



St Kilda mailboat, c.1900

It consists of a coxswain containing letters and coins for the postage, with a message to the finder. The block of wood is carved curved PLAGE OFFICE and the float is a simple board.

This primitive method of communication was used from 1870 onwards, relying on the North Atlantic Drift and westerly winds to carry the mailboat to the Outer Hebrides or even as far afield as Orkney or Norway. The quickest recovery was two days, but others have taken two years. A finder's fee of 20s (12.5p) was authorised by the Post Office in 1908.

Photograph: Ian MacKay

Glasgow 2000/St Kilda The post office on St Kilda, off the west coast of Scotland, closed in 1930 when the island was evacuated. As mentioned in the *Bulletin* of November 1999, on the occasion of Glasgow 2000 a mailing from the island is being arranged to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the evacuation. An appropriate cachet has been prepared and a postcard showing a mail boat used to float mail from St Kilda in 1906 will be published. Serviced cards will be franked with a Scottish definitive and despatched from the island. The organisers have no control of the quality of the postmark which the card receives on entering the postal system.

Serviced cards cost £3. Unused copies of the mailboat card cost 50p each or £2 for five, plus postage. Send addresses for mailing, with remittance payable to J C Stone, to address below. The closing date for receipt of orders is 17 June. All proceeds will be donated to Glasgow 2000 and to St Kilda ●

Orders and enquiries Jeffrey Stone, 20 Springfield Road, Aberdeen AB15 7RR.

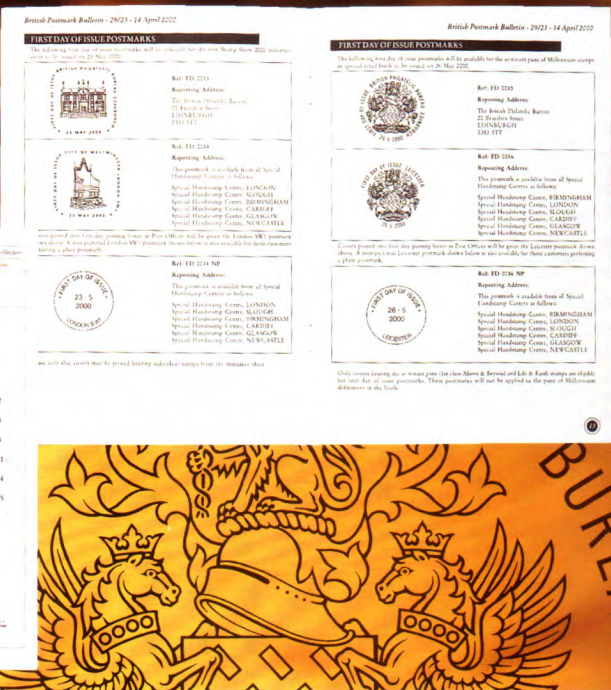
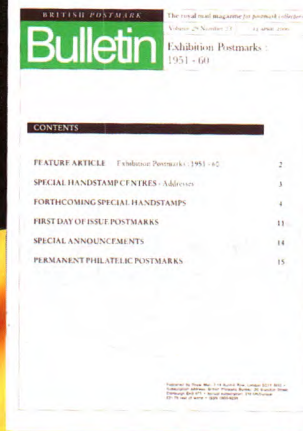


Spink GB auction Spink's 7 June auction includes many fine Victorian stamps, errors on Elizabeth II commemoratives and Machins, circular delivery and college stamps, revenues, postal fiscals, 1911 London-Windsor aerial post mail, and postal history covers ●

Enquiries 020 7563 4000 or website www.spink-online.com

BRITISH POSTMARK BULLETIN THE MAGAZINE FOR POSTMARK AND FIRST DAY COVER COLLECTORS

BRITISH POSTMARK
Bulletin



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