

BRITISH *PHILATELIC*

The ROYAL MAIL magazine *for stamp collectors*

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Bulletin

Ice Age Animals issue • 2005
definitives • Welsh Assembly



Animal Tales from
8 New Stamps from
Royal Mail and the
US Postal Service
10/01/06



Forthcoming issues and withdrawals



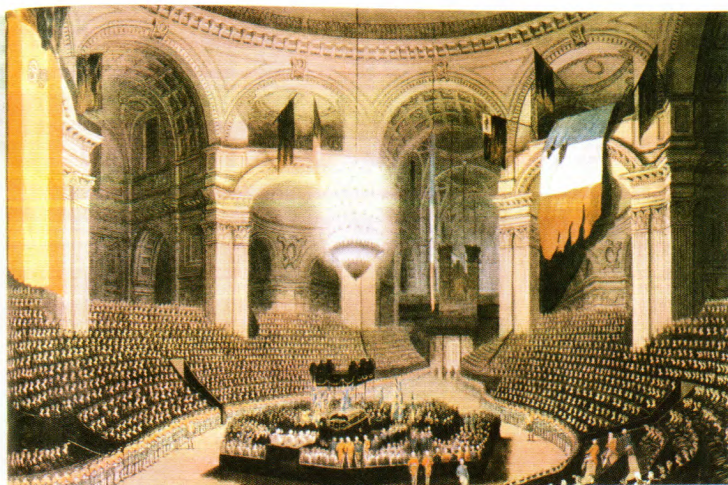
Cover Animal Tales, a set of eight stamps jointly issued by Royal Mail and the US Postal Service, will be issued on 10 January. These stamps were previewed in the November *Bulletin*. Photograph by Geoff Dann.

Issues Some items available only from Royal Mail Talents House and Post Office Limited philatelic outlets at main post offices in Bath, Belfast, Birmingham, Brighton, Bristol, Cambridge, Canterbury, Cardiff, Chester, Colchester, Coventry, Croydon, Durham, Edinburgh, Exeter, Glasgow, Grimsby, Guildford, Harrogate, Leicester, London (Trafalgar Square & Eastcheap), Newcastle upon Tyne, Norwich, Nottingham, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Southampton, Southend-on-Sea, Stevenage, Stratford-on-Avon, Stroud, Truro, Windsor & York.

Royal Mail Talents House 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB, UK. Telephone order line (08.30-17.00 Monday to Friday): 08457 641 641; from overseas +44 131 316 7483. Minimum handling charge UK £1.30, Europe £1.55, rest of world (airmail) £2.15. Some products can be ordered on Royal Mail's website: www.royalmail.com/stamps

3 January	Issue Animal Tales stamp cards.
10 January	Issue Animal Tales stamps, presentation pack, stamp cards, Smilers sheet and joint UK/USA FDC.
10 January	Withdrawal Farm Animals stamps, presentation pack, stamp cards and Smilers sheet.
17 January	Issue Ingot cover – Castle High Values No 2 (Edinburgh Castle).
31 January	Issue British Journey/England stamp cards.
31 January	Withdrawal Standard air letter – Welsh version (July 2001) and in discount pack of six (October 2001).
7 February	Issue British Journey/England stamps and presentation pack.
16 February	Issue Brunel stamp cards.
23 February	Issue Brunel stamps, miniature sheet, presentation pack, stamp cards, prestige book and coin cover.
23 February	Withdrawal Jane Eyre stamps, miniature sheet, presentation pack, stamp cards and prestige book.

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Above: Nelson's funeral, in the Trafalgar prestige stamp book.

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Auctions Bonham's specialised GB sale in September included some attractive Mulready's and their caricatures across 13 lots, and included a Spooner's number three envelope used from Bath to Clevedon, which went for £1116. A 1935 Silver Jubilee 'Prussian Blue' sold for £5640, while an example of the Jersey 2½d regional imperforate on three sides sold for £1234 •

Harmers of London's 12 September auction featured worldwide lots and collections with 386 lots coming under the hammer, bringing in £241,000. One of the features of the sale was an incredible pair of 'Imperial' albums which were broken up into a number of single country lots and started with a European selection in mixed condition. Estimated at £2,600, this lot sold for £3,000. One-country collections followed and a few notable realisations were: lot 120, Canada collection on leaves (estimate £3,000, realised £4,500); lot 126, Cape of Good Hope collection in album (estimate £1,500, realised £1,800). However, the top realisation of the day was lot 168 – a GB collection on leaves (estimate £35,000, realised £34,000) •



Stampex 01252 628006.

Philatex 020 8946 4489 or
01793 513431 or see website
www.stampshows.co.uk

UK Exhibitions Spring Stampex will be held at the Business Design Centre, London N1 on 22-26 February. The main feature will be a display organised by the British Thematic Association with participation by the following societies: Alba Stamp Group, Bicycle Stamps Club, Bird Stamp Society, Concorde Study Circle, Glasgow Thematic Society, Guild of St Gabriel, Philatelic Music Circle, Scout & Guide Stamp Club, Ship Stamp Society, and West of England Thematic Society, plus displays by individual members of BTA. A feature on this display will be included in next month's *Bulletin*. Royal Mail's Brunel stamps will be issued on the second day of the exhibition (see special postmark, left). Autumn Stampex will take place 20-24 September •

Philatex (London International Stamp & Cover Show) will be held at the Royal Horticultural Hall, Greycoat Street, London SW1 on 23-25 February. Open Thursday 11.00-19.00; Friday 10.00-18.00; Saturday 10.00-17.00, admission free •

Other major exhibitions during the year will be Thematica (June and November) and the ABPS national exhibition at Torquay (November) •

Washington 2006 Website:
www.washington-2006.org

Washington 2006 With only a few months to go before America's once-a-decade international exhibition opens its doors, Washington 2006 has issued its twelfth in a series of Member Updates providing up-to-date information about the event that takes place 27 May to 3 June at the Washington DC Convention Centre. The Exhibit Selection Committee reports that 640 philatelic and 220 literature entries have been chosen to compete. More than twice as many applications were received from around the world. Full details are to be found on the exhibition's website (see left), or by writing to: W2006, PO Box 2006, Ashburn, VA 20146, USA.

As part of the lead-up to this major world show, we will feature in the coming months some of the key rarities to be displayed, starting here with the 'Blue Boy' Alexandria, Virginia Cover of 1846. This is the Alexandria, Virginia, postmaster provisionally printed on bluish-grey paper, known as the 'Alexandria Blue Boy.' Dated 25 November 1846, it is one of the great rarities of 19th century US postal history. It is the only known example, on or off cover, of the provisionally printed on this colour paper. A few copies of the stamp are known on buff coloured paper. The cover originally contained a love letter written by an Alexandria resident to his fiancée, to whom he was secretly engaged. The family kept the letter and envelope until 1907, when they sold the cover by itself to a dealer. Since then it has graced the collections of such luminaries as George H Worthington, Alfred H Caspary, Josiah K Lilly, and others •



The 'Alexandria Blue Boy', last sold in 1981 for \$1 million by David Feldman SA.

The Modern British Philatelic Circle came into existence on 1 January 2006. Formed by a merger of two long-established philatelic organisations, the GB Decimal Stamp Book Study Circle established in 1971, and the British Decimal Stamps Study Circle founded in 1974, the new Circle aims to cover all aspects of GB stamps issued since the reign of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II began in 1952. This includes both definitives and special issues, whether issued in sheets, booklets, coils or miniature sheets. It has a written constitution overwhelmingly approved by the members of both former bodies. All its publications and promotional material will be identified by a new logo (right), designed by *Bulletin* author Douglas Myall. Until its first AGM is held later in the year, the Circle's affairs will be run by a steering committee formed from the members of both previous committees. It will publish a *Journal* every two months under the title of *The Bookmark*, a registered trademark. The annual membership subscription is only £8, plus another £4 for airmail delivery of the *Journal* to overseas members •



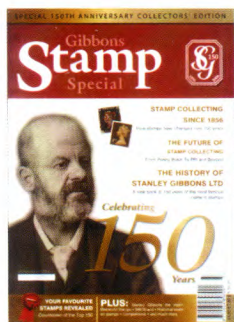
MBPC Membership Secretary
Mr A J Wilkins, 3 Buttermere
Close, Brierley Hill, West Midlands DY5 3SD. Telephone
01384 891373.

Society publications The September/October issues of the *GB Journal* and *GBPS Newsletter* contain the usual mix of society business, plus main articles, smaller-length features and other important snippets of information. This issue includes subjects as diverse as Harrison roll testing labels with perfins, experimental machine postmarks, 'double head' stamps, a 'Found in wc in Bad Order'(!) marking and British, International and Commonwealth reply coupons, among others •

The November-December issue of the American Topical Association's journal *Topical Time* includes features on Impeachment of a US President, Rain Gauges, Castles on Italian postal stationery, Butterflies of Nabokov, US map stamps, towns with geological names, scalpel and tongs, and USA pictorial postmarks, as well as details of the activities of the ATA and its various units. As always the magazine is well printed and profusely illustrated, a credit to the Association and Editor George Griffenhagen •

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www.american-topical-assn.org



150th anniversary magazine

From Stanley Gibbons Ltd, 7 Parkside, Christchurch Road, Ringwood BH24 3SH; via website www.stanleygibbons.com or from 'all usual Stanley Gibbons distribution channels' (presumably including local and UK national newsagents).

SG sesquicentenary Stanley Gibbons has clocked up 150 years in the stamp industry, and started its celebrations with the publication on 3 October 2005 of a special edition magazine, which they reckon could become a collectable in its own right.

Readers will probably already know that it was in 1856 that Stanley Gibbons was established, and that it is now based in London and Ringwood. Edward Stanley Gibbons founded the company, the future of which was assured following the acquisition of a sackful of rare stamps brought back from South Africa by two sailors. These days, turnover has reached in excess of £10 million annually, and SG is probably the most recognised brand name in philately, even among non-collectors.

The *Gibbons Stamp 150th Anniversary* special edition magazine includes many interesting features, including a fascinating nine-page article by our Editor entitled 'In Search of Stanley Gibbons', which researches the life of the founder of the company in a well-illustrated and extremely detailed piece. There are 19 other articles which cover the various SG departments, publications and company history, technology, postal administrations, cinderellas, interviews, autograph collecting, reminiscences, the future and past history of our hobby, investments and stamp prices. It concludes with what is described as 'an ideal introduction to the wonderful world of stamp collecting', which in four pages happily reminded me of many of the stages I had gone through in my early stages of collecting stamps.

A run-down of the top 150 stamps, as voted for by readers, reveals that the top five are: 5) the Indian 4a octagonal of 1854; 4) the British £1 1948 Silver Wedding commemorative; 3) the Canadian 50¢ blue ship design of 1929; 2) the Penny Black of 1840; and 1) the British £1 PUC stamp of 1929, which netted 11% of total votes cast. Over half (26) of the top 50 are British stamps, 21 are from the British Commonwealth, leaving just three 'foreign' stamps: the Czechoslovakian 1919 1h brown, Bavaria's 1849 1k black, and the Austrian 1933 50g+50g blue stamp.

The magazine cover bears a unique number, although at first it did not appear to be linked to any competition, as is the usual reason for such magazine numbering. However, page 85 reveals that one lucky reader will win a Gems of the Baltic cruise for two people donated by Saga Holidays. The terms for entering seem to imply that you must be over 50 to enter, so that precludes me (just!). There is also the chance to win a Cape of Good Hope Triangular worth £150.

On a personal note, I found it disappointing that it was necessary for the publication to be printed in Spain (presumably due to cost) and that Gibbons could not have found a British printer that offered a competitive enough price that would have enabled it to support an ailing industry.

There are 164 well-illustrated colour A4 pages, with an excellent balance of advertising (comprising 57 pages) versus articles (107 pages). There is no ISSN or ISBN quoted. The magazine sells for £4.95, 7.50 euro or US\$8.95, which represents such good value these days that I heartily recommend its purchase, as it is the type of publication that one will keep 'dipping' into down the years ●

Self-adhesives catalogue The first edition of *'The Bookmark' Catalogue of Self-adhesive Stamp Books*, compiled and edited by Graham Eyre and published by the Great Britain Decimal Stamp Book Study Circle, was briefly mentioned last month and it is now possible to include a review.

It is hard to believe that with such a modern subject as British self-adhesive stamp books there can already be the need for over 500 pages of A5 text and illustrations, but this is very much the case. Some readers may be unaware that this type of stamp book was initially trialled on a restrictive basis during 1993. Self-adhesive stock was not introduced generally until 1998 (business sheets), or 2001 (stamp books).

Graham is the ideal person to compile such a publication, as his enthusiasm for the hobby and sheer rate of output is both contagious and prodigious. Not that he worked alone of course, as there was a team of experts who had contributed to content and checked through drafts prior to publication. Yes, there are a few spelling mistakes here and there that they missed (probably something which, in my experience, some readers will have delighted in pointing out!) but it would be churlish to focus on this single and minor negative point.

There are 12 sections within the catalogue that cover Notes, Policy, Printing Processes, Numbering and Lists, followed by each of the issued book types, including the popular business sheets. The work concludes with appendices covering miscellaneous stickers used with the packaging, and a full listing of scanning tags, including the pre-self-adhesive versions that all have such a following with specialist collectors. (These items were introduced by Royal Mail in 1995 solely for use by retailers. They afford better security, plus an opportunity for improved stock control.)

The clever thing about the layout is that any section of the catalogue can be removed and all sections on a similar theme can be kept together if you prefer, ie it is modular. So, if you want to separate, say, all 1st class definitive items (water-activated, self-adhesive and business sheets) then this is perfectly feasible. Similarly, all packaging materials could be placed together, or even discarded if of no interest.

Technically, it is a good publication. The pages are four-hole punched with holes large enough to ensure easy turning of pages, the binder is amply capacious enough for the current content (although a second binder will be required when the second edition appears, I suggest), and the divider cards between sections are laminated to ensure that they do not tear. The text, photographs and illustrations are clear, and are of a large enough size to be easily readable. Each page is printed on heavyweight, non-reflective 130gsm paper.

I cannot claim to be an expert on these issues, but the catalogue does appear to contain everything that I am aware has been issued to the end of 2004. The only items that appear not to be mentioned are the pair of unissued self-adhesive booklets that were produced as part of trials for usability by the disabled – see *Bulletin* June 2004. A few 1st class single mint and used stamps are in circulation; no 2nd class are known in private hands. The withdrawn International rate books that erroneously had notches in

Copies of the catalogue (and MBPC membership details) available from Keith Woodward, 14 Chedington Avenue, Mapperley, Nottingham NG3 5SG (email keith@mbpc-circle.co.uk). Enclose £25, plus £5 P&P (overseas extra), which includes membership for one Study Circle year (July-June).

the covers (and which should have been returned to Royal Mail by its Key Account customers, as instructed, prior to issue) are mentioned in the introduction and occasionally appear for sale, often in postage lots.

This catalogue cannot be taken in isolation, for it is 'merely' the most recent publication in a series that is set to expand and improve with the extension of the Circle's scope and its merging with the British Decimal Stamps Study Circle. While the self-adhesive catalogue is recorded here in its first edition, the previous parts of the catalogue (currently sold-out) that cover stitched, folded, retail (window) and prestige decimal stamp books has reached its seventh edition (plus a first supplement).

I do not think that I am giving away any secrets if I reveal that the eighth edition is in preparation and is currently undergoing a major rewrite and update so that it will match the style of the self-adhesive work, including the look of the binding and the extent and scope of content. Each section mentioned above will be in a stand-alone catalogue, eg stitched books will be dealt with as a separate volume in future.

Put simply, if you collect this subject then you need the catalogue and must be a member of the GB DSB SC, or more to the point its successor organisation the Modern British Philatelic Circle, to ensure that you keep up to date with the finer points of new issues ●



BPMA Friends Membership
enquiries: Mrs Avice Harms,
13 Amethyst Avenue, Davis
Estate, Chatham ME5 9TX.

BPMA Friends publication Readers of the *Bulletin* who are also Friends of Postal Heritage (recently renamed Friends of the British Postal Museum and Archive), will have received the first of a new-style *Cross Post* magazine during October, and the change is remarkable.

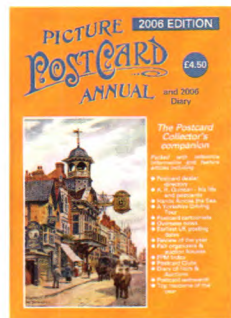
The page size has become A4 (from a non-standard smaller size, which had always annoyed me), it has many more pages on quality heavyweight paper (this issue, which starts volume 11, contains 52), and it has a new editor in regular *Bulletin* contributor Richard West. It is also now in full colour throughout, which together with Richard's years of experience in magazine publishing (he is a previous editor of *Stamp Magazine*) enhances the professional look of the publication to such a degree that it should be sold at newsagents nationally – and preferably monthly!

Features within the first issue start with news from BPMA and its CEO Tony Conder, and details of Friends trips 'out and about'. There are then major articles on 'Victorian Innovation', 'The Post Office in War', 'It's All Over' and 'Carrying the Mail', and this issue concludes with a retrospective on Percy Metcalfe – one of Britain's foremost sculptors and medalists. All articles are well illustrated with over 100 items in total, many from the BPMA collections and those of the individual writers. There are also six pages of colour advertising from dealers and auctioneers that will enable readers to enhance their collections, and the advertisers' support of the Friends is to be commended.

There is a price to pay for such improvements, however, and the publication frequency has altered from thrice to twice annually, but there is so much more enjoyment to be derived from reading this new version that it is a price worth paying.

If any medium can convince potential members that they should join the Friends, then this new publication is it. There are many other benefits, of course, including newsletters from BPMA and the Friends, discounted items from the BPMA shop, meetings of members and visits to places such as the Debden Stores that hold items too big to fit in Freeling House such as vehicles and letter boxes, Didcot Railway (with its mail exchange apparatus) and stamp printer outings. 2006 sees the 21st birthday of the Friends and a special lunch will be held in Maidstone to mark the occasion. So, why not join in and help shape the future of Britain's postal heritage? •

Picture Postcard Annual The 2006 (26th) edition of this popular reference work includes a postcard dealers directory, feature articles, a review of 2005, lists of fair dates and auction houses, etc. This year the main feature articles cover Hands Across The Sea, Driving Tour in Yorkshire, Postcards of A R Quinton, Modern Cards of 2005, etc. Of particular interest to postal historians is the listing of earliest known dates of posting of postcards (other than the PO postal stationery card) from over 500 places, from Aberdare to York. The profusely illustrated 96-page annual is an enjoyable read. Price £4.50 (postage UK £1, Europe £1.60, elsewhere £4) from Reflections of a Bygone Age, 15 Debdale Lane, Keyworth, Nottingham NG12 5HT; telephone 0115 937 4079. Back issues available most years 1982-2005. Reflections also publish *Picture Postcard Monthly* •



Royal Mail news New issues and products

Forthcoming special issues The 2006 programme starts on 10 January with eight Animal Tales stamps featuring characters from children's literature. The stamps were previewed here in November. There will be two issues in February: 10 stamps showing views of England in the British Journey series (7 February); and six stamps, a miniature sheet and a prestige book to mark the bicentenary of the birth of Isambard Kingdom Brunel (23 February). Both issues were previewed last month. A miniature sheet will be issued on 1 March to mark the opening of the new Welsh Assembly building (see p138) and five stamps depicting Ice Age Animals go on sale on 21 March. This set is previewed this month.

On 18 April we will issue eight stamps to mark the 80th birthday of HM The Queen. The stamps are designed by Kate Stephens and printed by Enschedé, and will be issued in pairs featuring portraits of The Queen from childhood to the present. A miniature sheet will be issued in May to mark the opening of the new Wembley Stadium, and in June six stamps will honour some of the teams that have won the World Cup since 1966 – England, Italy, Argentina, Germany, France, and Brazil! The stamps, designed by Madeleine Bennett and printed by Walsall, will be issued to coincide with the World Cup finals in Germany (9 June - 9 July). Also during June there will be an issue featuring Modern Architecture. Details of these stamps will be published nearer the time of issue •

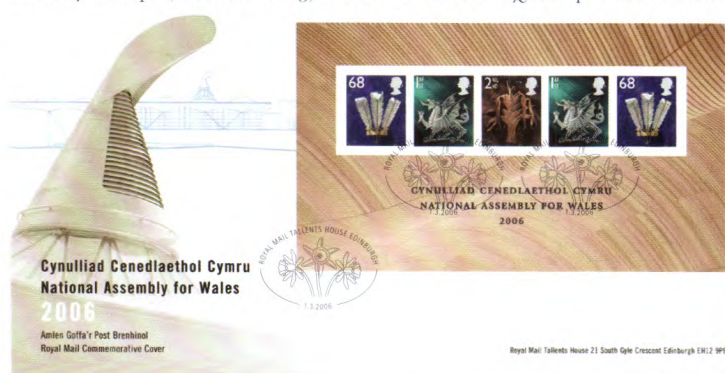


CYNULLIAD CENEDLAETHOL CYMRU NATIONAL ASSEMBLY FOR WALES 2006

The Welsh Assembly sheet bears three of the four Welsh country stamps: one 2nd class, two 1st class, and two 68p printed in a horizontal se-tenant strip, price £2.17. The sheet was designed by Silk Pearce and printed by De La Rue.

Welsh Assembly miniature sheet A new miniature sheet will be issued on 1 March to mark the opening of the new building for the National Assembly for Wales (Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru) in Cardiff. The building is located in a prominent and prestigious site facing the waters of Cardiff Bay, and has a strong national identity. It is located alongside Crickhowell House and the Pierhead Building and offers views across the Penarth Marina. The National Assembly was opened in 1999. Readers will recall a similar miniature sheet produced for the Scottish Parliament in October 2004.

A Royal Mail first day cover envelope will be available (25p), and fully serviced FDCs (below) can be ordered from Tallents House, price £2.97 UK, £2.53 overseas. Please state if Tallents House or Cardiff postmark required. Orders must be received by the day of issue. Collectors wishing to service their own covers should send them on the day of issue to Tallents House for the Tallents House postmark, or to one of the Special Handstamp Centres for the Cardiff postmark, requesting postmark No FDO607 (Tallents House) or FDO608 (Cardiff). There will be no presentation pack or stamp cards for this issue although the stamp cards showing the Welsh country stamps (October 2003) are still available – £1.20 per set of four ●



Royal Mail Tallents House 21 South Gyle Crescent Edinburgh EH12 9PE



Smilers sheets A generic Smilers sheet will be available from 10 January, containing 20 1st class Animal Tales stamps showing Paddington Bear. The stamps in these Smilers sheets are printed by lithography on self-adhesive paper. Price £6.55. For details of how to order customised versions of the sheets, with your own image printed on the labels phone 0845 074 2000 (UK customers) or +44 131 316 7489 (overseas), or pick up a Smilers leaflet/order form at a Post Office branch. At the Smilers website (www.royalmail.com/smilers), orders can be placed using digital photos. Prices start at £14.95 for one sheet of 20, £13.95 each for 2-4 sheets, £11.95 each for 5-9 sheets. Enquire for prices of larger quantities.

A new generic Smilers sheet containing 20 1st class Fun Fruit & Veg stamps will be available from 7 March, priced £6.55. Like the original stamps (March 2003), the stamps will be interactive and self-adhesive. The labels feature speech bubbles for users to add messages. Stickers showing ears, eyes, mouths, hats, etc are printed in the sheet margin, for users to adorn the stamps as required. The sheet will be printed by Cartor.

Further Smilers sheets will be produced for the Wembley Stadium issue (May), for the Washington international stamp exhibition (May), and for Christmas (November). A Smilers sheet bearing the small-size pictorial definitives (issued October 2005) will be available in July •

Above left: one of the Smilers sheets with the definitive-size pictorial stamps, which can be ordered with a customised image on the labels (similar to the one shown here). Another of the six sheets, featuring the letterbox stamp, was shown here in December. Right: the Fun Fruit & Veg generic sheet.

First day postmarks The alternative First Day of Issue postmarks for this year's issues will be as listed below •

10 January	Animal Tales: Mousehole, Penzance	6 June	World Cup Winners: Balls Park, Hertford
7 February	British Journey/England: Tea Green, Luton	20 June	Modern Architecture: London EC3
23 February	Brunel: Bristol	18 July	National Portrait Gallery: London WC2
1 March	Welsh Assembly miniature sheet: Cardiff	31 August	Three Kings miniature sheet: to be announced
21 March	Ice Age Animals: Freezywater, Enfield	21 September	Victoria Cross: Cuffley
18 April	Queen's 80th Birthday: Windsor	3 October	Sounds of Britain: to be announced
May	Wembley Stadium miniature sheet: Wembley	7 November	Christmas: Bethlehem, Llandeilo

Royal Mail monopoly to end The age-old Royal Mail letter monopoly ends from 1 January when postal liberalisation comes to the UK and companies licensed by the regulator Postcomm can run mail services. Under existing licenses a number of private operators collect mail from large firms, sort it and deliver it to Royal Mail mail centres for final delivery to the addressees. This hybrid service is known as 'downstream access' to the Royal Mail system. Such mail bears indicia (printed postage impressions) to show handling by a private operator and Royal Mail. An article, by Martin Robinson, on the UK Mail service was published here in January 2005. It will be interesting to see if any of the licensed operators issue their own stamps •



Ingot, coin, and medal covers The second of the ingot covers featuring the 1955 Castles stamps will be available from 17 January, featuring the 10s Edinburgh Castle stamp. The cover bears the £1 stamp from the Castle miniature sheet cancelled by a special Edinburgh postmark (shown at left). Price £24.95 plus handling charge from Tallents House, telephone 08457 641 641. The third and fourth covers, featuring Caernarfon and Carrickfergus Castles, will be available from 25 April and 25 July.

The first coin cover for 2006 will be available from 23 February, issued in conjunction with the Brunel stamps. It bears a set of the Brunel stamps and two new £2 coins honouring the great engineer, price £15.95. The third of the country coin covers goes on sale on 17 March – this bears the Northern Ireland country stamps and a £1 coin showing Egyptian Arch, price £13.50. For details of the two earlier covers (Scotland and Wales) see November 2004 *Bulletin* (page 75) and the advertisement on the back of the June 2005 *Bulletin*. Both covers are still available, price £13.50 each. The final cover in this series, bearing the English country stamps and English £1 coin will be available in April 2007.

Further coin covers during 2006 will be for The Queen's 80th birthday (18 April) and Victoria Cross (21 September); medal covers will be issued for the World Cup (6 June) and National Portrait Gallery (18 July) •

Coming off sale Remaining stocks of the Farm Animals stamps, presentation pack, stamp cards and Smilers sheet will be withdrawn from sale at Tallents House on 10 January. The Jane Eyre stamps, miniature sheet, presentation pack, stamp cards, and PSB will be withdrawn on 23 February, and the 'Written Word' coin cover (with Jane Eyre stamps) on 23 March •

Favourite stamp poll If you haven't voted yet for your favourite stamps and *Bulletin* author of 2005 there is still time to return the voting form sent out with the December *Bulletin*. All forms are entered in a prize draw. Return your form by 13 January to: 2005 Bulletin Poll, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ •

Bulletin price The price of the *Bulletin* is being increased from this issue, the first increase since February 2003. Single copies now cost £1.20 and the annual subscription is now £12.95 UK/Europe, £17.95 rest of world •

Trafalgar Nigel Fordham concludes his series with Nelson's state funeral and the public's emotional farewell to their hero

'IN ANCIENT ROME such circumstances would have been recorded as an omen of future bad luck from the instant his last remains quitted that element on which he had so often triumphed.'

A Miss Berry, a schoolgirl in 1805, recalling Nelson's funeral and the landing of his coffin at Westminster for *The Times* in 1863.

IN DECEMBER 1805 HMS *Victory* brought Nelson home to the Nore, where his body was taken out of the spirits which preserved it, placed in the *L'Orient* coffin given to him by Captain Ben Halliwell following the Battle of the Nile, put into a lead coffin and then into a highly decorative casket. The casket was taken by river to Greenwich, and on passing Gravesend and Tilbury forts, received their gun salutes. The coffin was covered with a White Ensign. Nelson had died on 21 October, so the authorities had almost three months to make arrangements for what became an unprecedented state funeral, normally reserved for royalty. The Nelson Charisma had started.

On 4 January Nelson's casket was placed in the Painted Hall in Greenwich which had been transformed into a mortuary chapel. The first mourner was the Prince of Wales, who made a private visit the following day, Sunday, before the doors were thrown open to the public. The numbers of people queuing alarmed the authorities, and the Governor of Greenwich Hospital requested more troops to control the crowd. The doors were open Sunday, Monday and Tuesday. On Wednesday, 8 January, the casket was taken by river to London, surrounded by a flotilla of State Barges, Livery company barges, and other boats. Minute guns fired as the boats proceeded down the Thames. The weather was fine but grey. A strong wind was blowing, which made controlling the 'little fleet' difficult. As the funeral barge arrived alongside Westminster steps, the weather changed dramatically and the sky darkened. At the point the coffin was being landed, a sudden squall of rain and wind erupted, soaking and buffeting the crew try-

ing to land the coffin and place it on the hearse that was to take it to the Admiralty, where it was to lie overnight. Crowds surrounded the Admiralty all night, hoping to glimpse the coffin.

On 9 January, the day of the funeral, crowds gathered early, lining the streets to get a good view of the funeral procession. Stands were built and tickets sold for the best seats. Some 31 Admirals gathered to follow the coffin, including the Admiral of the Fleet Sir Peter Parker, and Admiral Collingwood, Nelson's second-in-command at Trafalgar. Lord St Vincent, an admirer of Nelson's, was too overcome to attend. One hundred Captains followed the Admirals. The Royal family were represented by the Prince of Wales (in a private capacity at the insistence of the King) and his brother the Duke of Clarence, who had served with Nelson. Also present were Nelson's friends Lord Hood, Sir Samuel Hood, Captain Bligh (of *Bounty* fame) and Donnett, who served with him at Copenhagen.

Able Seaman John Brown of HMS *Victory* wrote to his family in Liverpool on 20 December 'There is three hundred of us pickt out to go to Lord Nelson's funeral we are to wear blue jackets, white trousers and a black scarf round our arm and hats besides gold medal for the Battle of Trafalgar valued £7 is around our necks that I shall take care of until I take it home and shew it you.'

The vast procession was assembled to accompany the casket from the Admiralty to St Paul's. The only thing that spoiled the spectacle was the red of the numbers of soldiers overwhelming the blue of the Naval uniforms. Few were impressed by the number of soldiers (said to be 10,000), and



reserved their applause for the small contingents of Greenwich pensioners and the 48 seamen and Marines from HMS *Victory*, who proudly bore and showed the battered ensign to the crowds. As the huge, plumed funeral car went by, bearing the gilded coffin high above the crowd, there was a sound like that of waves on a seashore as onlookers removed their hats. When the head of the procession reached St Paul's the rear had still not left the Admiralty, such were the numbers. It was 2 o'clock when the funeral car arrived at St Paul's.

A special lantern was erected mounted with 130 lamps, and suspended inside the dome. Captured flags from enemy ships taken at Trafalgar were hung around the coffin. Choirs from Westminster Abbey, St Paul's and the Chapel Royal sang music specially assembled for the occasion, and a special Grand Dierge was played by the organist, who had studied under Mozart. The *Victory's* crew, who had been carrying the ship's Ensign, suddenly tore it to pieces, before it could be folded and put on the coffin. No one objected to them keeping this memento. (A small scrap from this flag recently sold for £47,800 at auction!) The service lasted four hours. The sarcophagus placed on top of the grave was originally prepared for Cardinal Wolsey in the 16th century, and held in Hampton Court. It was a gift from the King.

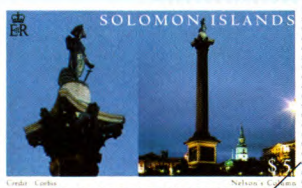
The word 'immortal' was first used by Collingwood, in his despatch to the Admiralty announcing victory at Trafalgar and the death of Nelson. The term was much used at his funeral service to describe Nelson and has since been used at all Trafalgar nights. The toast 'The immortal mem-

ory' is said to have been started by Nelson's original Signals officer Captain John Pascoe, who had been appointed Captain of the *Victory*, at a Trafalgar night dinner in 1856.

Many places throughout the world have had towns, streets and pubs named after Nelson. I have visited a pub in Berne, Switzerland, called the Lord Nelson. There is a town in New Zealand named for him, a Nelson river in British Columbia, Canada, and many roads named after him in Britain and around the world.

Perhaps the nearest we can hope to understand what the public mood was like for Nelson's funeral was the outpouring of grief and extraordinary scenes displayed by the British public at the death and funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales. There are similarities between the two events. Sorrow overtook the public, strangers met and consoled each other, songs were written, and old songs rewritten. Both were commoners who rose to high office, and both had a knack for communicating with all levels of people. Both were involved in scandals. Both were loved by the public, and both had enemies. Both had broken marriages. Both courted publicity, and loved to walk and talk in a crowd. Both had compassion, and whilst Nelson was famous for his battles and victories, Diana was a champion and battler for vital causes such as banning mines, and the plight of aids victims, neither subject at that time popular.

This is my last Trafalgar article for the *Bulletin*. I hope you have enjoyed sailing with me through this fascinating 200-year-old chapter of Britain's nautical history •



Left: A Gibraltar/Isle of Man joint issue miniature sheet, and three issues on different aspects of Nelson's death. This page: *Projected View of Trafalgar Square, 1844*, by George Henry Andrews.



Ice Age Animals Royal Mail digs into the pre-historic past

FIVE NEW STAMPS featuring Ice Age Animals go on sale at Post Office branches and philatelic outlets and Royal Mail Tallents House on 21 March. The stamps are: 1st class Sabre-Tooth Cat; 42p Giant Deer; 47p Woolly Rhinoceros; 68p Woolly Mammoth; and £1.12 Cave Bear. The stamps are designed by Howard Brown, using illustrations by Andrew Davidson – both well-known names to collectors of British special stamps.

The five stamps will be issued to Post Office branches in sheets of 25. However sheets of 50 with gutter margins will be available from Post Office philatelic outlets and Royal Mail Tallents House.

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Unstamped Royal Mail FDC envelopes will be available from main Post Office branches and philatelic outlets about one week before 21 March, price 25p. The cover features the skeleton of a Sabre-Tooth Cat. Orders for FDCs with the stamps cancelled by a pictorial first day postmark of Tallents House or Freezywater, Enfield, must reach Tallents House by the day of issue. Price £3.93 UK or £3.35 overseas.

Collectors may send their stamped covers on the day of issue to: Royal Mail Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB (for the Tallents House postmark), or to one of Royal Mail's Special Handstamp Centres (Freezywater postmark) marking the outer envelope 'FDO609' (Tallents House), or 'FDO610' (Freezywater). Covers can be either posted or handed in at main Post Office branches for the Freezywater postmark. A non-pictorial Freezywater postmark is also available from Special Handstamp Centres; request 'FDO610 NP'.

Details of sponsored handstamps for 21 March will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from Tallents House (£12.25 UK and Europe; £24.95 elsewhere). For a sample copy write to: The Editor, British Postmark Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ.





Technical details

Printer Joh Enschedé

Process Lithography

Stamp size 37 x 35mm

Sheets 25 and 50

Perforation 14 x 14.5 (to be confirmed)

Phosphor Two bands

Gum PVA

Gutter pairs Vertical



ICE AGE ANIMALS
Royal Mail Mint Stamps

...the remarkable evidence of life in the ice age around 200,000 years ago. Fortifying a working quarry, the sands and gravels excavated for road works proved to contain something far more precious – the remains of countless animals and plants, and the activities of early humans, in remarkable concentration and state of preservation. The sand and gravel deposits had been laid down by the ancient River Thames along a now-abandoned channel, and carcasses of animals lying alongside had been occasionally washed in and buried.

The Stanton Harcourt deposits date to an interglacial phase – a warmer period sandwiched between two advances of the polar ice caps. Excavations by Katharine Scott and Christine Buckingham have so far yielded more than 1500 bones and teeth from large mammals, as well as the remains of many smaller creatures and plants – providing a unique snapshot of life in this period. The bone remains are dominated by the mammoths – including over 100 skulls, some of them up to three metres in length. Other species include an extinct form of elephant, as well as lions, horses, bison and bears.

The large bones had to be carefully excavated and removed from the site for study. For the more fragile remains, this involved days of carefully scraping away sediment and brushing them with layers of preservative before encasing them in a plaster jacket rather like a fractured limb. The heaviest find was a huge mammoth tusk that, once plastered, was so heavy that an RAF helicopter had to be enlisted to lift it from the site. In the laboratory the painstaking process of unwrapping the bones, hardening and conservation



took several years. Then scientific work upon the bones could begin – revealing, for example, that the Stanton Harcourt mammoth was an early species adapted to the relatively temperate environment.

As well as large bones, logs, nuts and branches, tonnes of the sandy sediment were collected, sieved and sorted under the microscope, to reveal the remains of thousands of tiny seeds, insects, mollusc shells, fishes and frogs. These all point towards a warm climate – some species today live no closer to the UK than the Mediterranean. Now a graphic picture has emerged of a river bordered by areas of grassland and forest, where grazing animals looked out for lions and other predators – including humans.

Tools like handaxes, fashioned from flint, attest to the presence of humans at Stanton Harcourt – most likely to have been an early Neanderthal people – who would have hunted and scavenged many of the animals whose remains have been found at the site. First entering Britain around 600,000 years ago, hominids had an intermittent presence throughout ice ages, coming and going as the climate and vegetation changed, just as prey animals did. Migrations of humans and animals were easiest in the polar ice caps had expanded (caused sea levels to drop, creating bridges from Europe to Britain).

It is thanks to the patient efforts (hard work of the excavation teams, like Stanton Harcourt, that this extraordinarily rich picture of life in ice Britain has been built up for future generations to enjoy.

Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorbie Road
Ilkeston
Derbyshire
DE7 4AB

Woolly Mammoth:
Mammuthus
primigenius

Cave Bear:
Ursus spelaeus

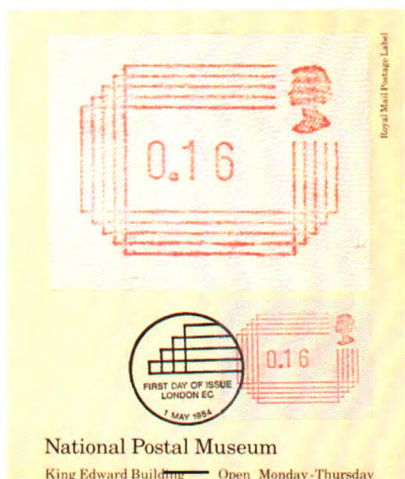
ROYAL MAIL TALLENTS HOUSE 21 SOUTH GYLE CRESCENT EDINBURGH EH4 9PB

Above: the first day cover and pack. The pack was written by Adrian Lister, Professor of Paleobiology at University College London, designed by Godfrey Design, and printed by Walsall Security Printers.

PHILATELIC PRODUCTS A well-illustrated pack (price £3.50) and stamp cards (30p each) will be available from main Post Office branches and philatelic outlets and Tallents House. The pack gives an overview of ice age animals, with descriptions of the five species on the stamps. It also includes details of the excavations at Stanton Harcourt, which have provided remarkable evidence of life in the Ice Age, around 200,000 years ago •

Around the Regions

Richard West looks at how postcards became more popular nationwide



THE STAMP CARDS from Royal Mail, introduced in 1973, were not only following a trend for maximum cards, but also for collecting modern postcards with a postal theme. The fashion had first been established by the National Postal Museum, which in 1969 set the ball rolling with a number of sets of cards that looked back to the days of reform and to the stamps of Queen Victoria. The designs were carefully selected to provide collectors with useful background materials, including portraits of the key personalities, proofs and such like. Their popularity can be measured by the fact that more than one printing was required in each case. These initial series of cards were later to be

joined by others illustrating stamp printing essays from other reigns, or means of postal transport.

Further series were also added, including cards publicising the NPM, depicting the Penny Black (with various corner letters) or Machin head (in various colours), plus a card reproducing the 16p 'Frama' postage label, the latter two clearly usable as maximum cards. However, the majority of the cards produced by the Museum were linked to the many excellent special exhibitions it held over the years until its closure in 1998. At times these cards could almost be described as 'stamp cards' reproducing stamp designs which had not previously been afforded such treatment.

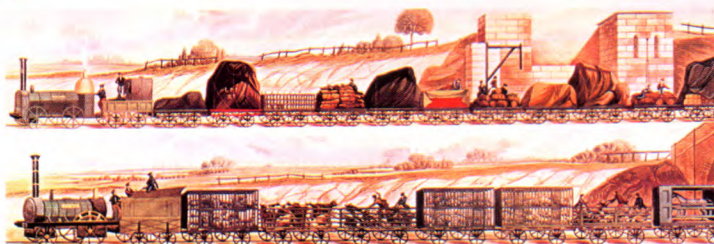


At the time Post Office Archives was a separate entity, and in 1990, to coincide with the international stamp exhibition Stamp World London 90, launched its own range of postcards. These naturally focused on material held in the archives, including paintings and engravings, often concentrating on the transportation of the mail.

All this may lead one to believe that the Post Office itself had little interest in postcards, apart of course from everyday postal stationery and the 'stamp (PHQ) cards'. However, in 1890 a postcard had been issued, on 16 May, to mark the Penny Post Jubilee, made available at the exhibition at London's Guildhall. Over the years several other exhibitions warranted similar promotional postcards from the Post Office, most notably a number issued in conjunction with the British Empire Exhibition in 1925. Again the theme of such cards has varied over the years, but many have concen-

trated on modern methods of transporting mail, such as TPOs and postbuses, while a few are now quite rare, such as those intended just for members of the former Stamp Bug Club.

It is worth noting here the 'books' of postcards which Royal Mail produced in conjunction with selected special issues between 1995 and 2003. These usually included not only the stamp cards, but others related to the stamp issue, and were produced first for the 1995 Cats set. The last such book was for the British Museum issue of 2003, containing cards featuring enlargements of the six stamps. Of particular note is the 1997 Golden Wedding commemorative book, which contained cards of the four stamps entitled 'All The Queen's Horses', cards of the 20p and 26p Golden Wedding set and two cards showing the Royal couple at the time of the engagement and Golden Wedding: the book came with the relevant stamps.



TRAVELLING ON THE LIVERPOOL AND MANCHESTER RAILWAY

A Train of Waggons, with Goods Etc Etc.

also

A Train of Carriages, with Cattle



Norfolk



Page 147 Vaughan Williams design, for a European Music Year exhibition; NPM Frama 'maximum card' with an attached label; NPM 'stamp card' for an exhibition on the 40th anniversary of the Accession; and an NPM card of the Wyon Medal.

These pages The PO Tower, 1966; card for Stamp World London 90, of William Wyon and the Penny Black; card for the 5th birthday of the Stamp Bug Club; a North Western Postal Board card for the Liverpool and Manchester Railway; a South Western Postal Region postbuses card; a later London Postal Region card showing the Post Office's underground railway; and a card from The Post Office Archives, of a London loading platform.

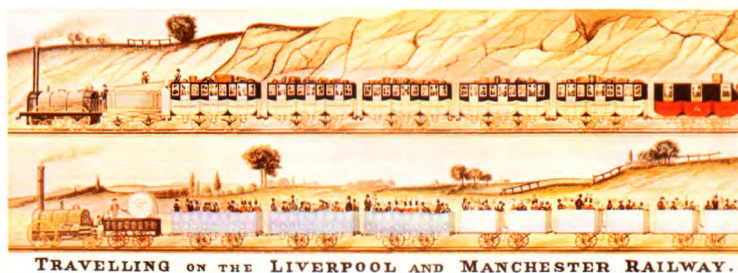
During the 1970s the chain of philatelic counters within main post offices was growing rapidly, and this doubtless encouraged the issue of more postcards. A few were produced in 1990, for the 150th anniversary of the introduction of the Uniform Penny Postage, specifically for sale via philatelic counters. However, most of the various Regions into which the Post Office was divided had earlier started to release their own sets of cards. The pioneers came from the London Postal Region, and dated from 1966, for in October of the previous year the Post Office Tower, as it was then called, was opened. The various cards show views of and from the Tower, using various locations, and by day and night.

The first Region truly to appreciate the potential of the postcard was the South Western Postal Region, which on 18 October 1971 issued a card that depicted the mural at Dorchester head post

office. Gradually the other Regions followed suit, making the 70s and 80s the 'golden age' for such cards. The designs encompassed all aspects of the post, both historic and current, many featuring postbuses. Regions involved were: Eastern, London, Midlands, North Eastern, North Western, South Eastern, South Western, Northern Ireland, Scottish and Wales and the Marches. Often the cards were sold in related sets. For 1983 the North Western Postal Board produced a calendar, with each month marked by a postcard with a line drawing of a pillar box, it being possible to tear off the cards.

As with so many phases, it has since eased considerably; there could be many reasons, not least the gradual closure of philatelic counters and the loss of the National Postal Museum. It is of interest therefore that in 2005 the new British Postal Museum and Archive revived the postcard con-

Another card (see p149, top right) from the North Western Postal Board, celebrating the Liverpool and Manchester Railway, which was the first regular passenger service to carry mail for the Post Office.



A Train of the First Class of Carriages, with the Mail.
A Train of the Second Class for outside Passengers.

Nov '16

cept with two series, each of three, looking at the Travelling Post Offices, and coinciding with the release of the classic film *Night Mail* on DVD.

The concept of stamp and similar postcards was also adopted by the postal administrations of Guernsey, Isle of Man and Jersey, among others, and by British Telecom. Private producers have also offered various 'postal related' cards.

This can only be an overview of these cards (a full listing would fill several issues of the *Bulletin*), and I will finish by mentioning the Exhibition Card, introduced in 1967 specifically for sale at exhibitions, mainly international, at which the British Post Office was represented. Four cards were produced, to which were affixed appropriate stamps for cancellation, the last being issued in 1990 ●

Text © Richard West 2006

Treasures of the BPMA The Dendy Marshall Collection: a remarkable archive of postal markings, by Martin Robinson

IN THE 1965 National Postal Museum inventory of the R M Phillips collection, a page is devoted to 'the Dendy Marshall collection of pre-adhesive postal markings and of cancellations', consisting of 31 volumes containing 22,977 items and valued then at £1,000. The entire collection had been bought by Phillips when it was auctioned by Robson Lowe in December 1945, C H Dendy Marshall having died earlier that year. An obituary described him as 'a distinguished specialist of the unorthodox school in the stamps (hand-struck and adhesive) and everything relating to the British Post Office...' Before the sale, the auctioneer added that 'he (Dendy Marshall) was the first to realize the immense field of interest in the study and acquisition of all material relating to the British Post Office,' in other words what we now call postal history. He 'must have been,' Robson Lowe said, 'more bold and certainly more far-

seeing than others, for everything remotely connected with the carriage of mails that he could conveniently house went into his collection.' In a 1986 *Cross Post* article Douglas Muir said it was fitting that his collection was acquired *in toto* by another collector of similar breadth of vision.

The NPM inventory is not entirely accurate, for the collection covers British postmarks from 1800 to 1936, not just the pre-adhesive era. Of the 31 volumes, 15 are devoted to England, Wales and post offices and agencies abroad, four to London, five each to Scotland and Ireland; and two supplementary volumes cover later postmarks. Almost all the postmarks are on cut-outs, to the distress of many modern collectors, who may grieve for the entires and envelopes they were cut from and the extra information they might have provided. They are laid out by place, in order of the numbers allocated to post offices in 1844 and,



within that, in chronological order, in small albums bound in burgundy leather. These formed the basis of his great work: *The British Post Office from its beginning to the end of 1925*, awarded The Royal Philatelic Society Crawford Medal in 1928. Marshall also wrote on stamps: *The Line Engraved Twopence Postage Stamps of Great Britain* (1929) and several railway history books and papers, including *The Rainhill Locomotive Trials of 1829* (1929), *The Centenary History of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway* (1930), *A History of the Southern Railway* (1936) and *Early British Locomotives* (1939).

Above is the first of six Newcastle upon Tyne pages in the collection. It begins with a straight-line mileage mark from the late 18th century (date unknown as the mark is separated from its entire), circular dated 1817 and 1825 mileage marks, several other circular marks of 1833 to 1854, a single oval obliterator with numeral of the type issued

in 1844, and a variety of duplex marks of 1855 to 1871. Pages follow with duplex marks, squared circles, double circle datestamps with thick arcs, registered and rubber packet stamps, instructional marks, machines 1908-32, paid handstamps 1900-37 and meter marks 1927-33. There is little annotation, but this is, as Douglas Muir says, 'a remarkable and largely unused postmark archive, virtually untouched and in its original form' •

Acknowledgement Douglas Muir, Unregarded trifles: notes on other aspects of the Phillips Collection (*Cross Post* Vol 1, No 3, Autumn 1986) • **Clarification** The 1984 Mailcoaches stamps (July article) were engraved by Czeslaw Slania, and designed by Keith Bassford and Stanley Paine.

The British Postal Museum & Archive Open Monday to Friday and selected Saturdays 10.00-17.00, Thursdays until 19.00. Call 020 7239 2570 or see www.postalheritage.org.uk for more details. To make an appointment to view philatelic material call the Curator of Philately, Douglas Muir, on 020 7239 2565.

2005 definitives checklist

We hope this list will prove helpful to collectors in completing their collections. Please read the following notes carefully. We quote Royal Mail order numbers (prefixed DS, YB, etc) as given on the Tallents House stock lists. Some stamps were issued only in books and can be bought from Royal Mail only in complete books.

Notes Printers are designated C (Cartor), D (De La Rue), E (Enschedé), and W (Walsall) • Unless otherwise stated definitive and country stamps are gravure printed, have PVA gum, perforation gauge 15 x 14 (with ellipses at lower left and right sides), and two phosphor bands, or one central band on 2nd class stamps • The dates quoted are those the stamps were first available from Tallents House; in some instances they may have been available at post offices earlier to meet postal needs • All 1st class Machin definitive stamps are printed in gold.

Machin definitives

24 February 39p light grey & 42p sage printed by W (previously D) in *The Brontë Sisters* prestige book (YB025). The 42p was also printed by E in the *Glory of the Garden* prestige book after the D printing.

5 April 9p orange D (DS090); 35p lime green, one phosphor band, E (DS356); 46p old gold D (DS460).

26 April 35p lime green, one phosphor band, D (DS357).

18 October 50p sand & 68p stone printed by W (previously D) in the *Battle of Trafalgar* prestige book (YB026).

Wilding definitives

22 March 50p brown Carickfergus Castle, £1 red Caernarfon Castle, £1 blue Edinburgh Castle, 50p black Windsor Castle in designs of the 2s6d, 5s, 10s, and £1 stamps of 1955. Miniature sheet of four, recess and litho, E (MZ020). All-over phosphor (no bands).



Pictorial definitives

4 October 6 x 1st class featuring reduced designs of former stamp designs: 1990 Teddy Bear, 1996 Christmas 19p, 1997 Flowers (*Guzmania splendens*), 2001 Union Flag, 2002 LOVE, and 2002 Hello. In book, self-adhesive, gravure, W (UB258). Also issued in customised Smilers sheets (six sheets, one for each stamp), litho, C.

Country stamps

24 February 2nd & 40p England stamps printed by W (previously D) in *The Brontë Sisters* PSB (YB025).

5 April 42p: England (ES420), Scotland (SS420), Wales (WS420), Northern Ireland (IS420), W. (N Ireland litho, others gravure.)

10 May 42p: England (ES421), Scotland (SS421), Wales (WS421), D.

26 July 42p: Northern Ireland, D (litho) (IS421).

Mixed value stamp panes and miniature sheets

24 February Pane of 4 x 2nd class, 2 x 39p and 2 x 42p with central label of a Brontë Museum hand stamp, W. From *The Brontë Sisters* PSB (YB025).

D1b
D1b
D1b

De La Rue

D1+

9p

E1

35p

D2

35p

D1+

46p

Left: Scotland and Northern Ireland 42p stamps, printed by Walsall and De La Rue. Above: New definitives printed by De La Rue (9p and 46p) and by Enschedé and De La Rue (35p).

24 February Pane of 2 × 2nd class and 2 × 40p England with dividing label showing advert for the Misses Brontë's Establishment, W. From *The Brontë Sisters* prestige book (YB025).

22 March Wilding Castles (MZ020).

5 July 60th anniversary of end of Second World War miniature sheet containing 5 × 1st class definitives and 1 × 1st class St Paul's Cathedral stamp (design as 1995 25p Peace & Freedom stamp), E (MZ024).

18 October Pane of 4 × 1st class, 2 × 50p, and 2 × 68p with central label showing Nelson life mask, W. From *Battle of Trafalgar* prestige book (YB026).

Stamp books

27 January 6 × 1st class definitives with Smilers advert (showing Hello stamp) on inside front cover (UB255). (Book available from Post Office philatelic outlets and to Tallents House sending order customers from 22 March.)

24 February *The Brontë Sisters* PSB with panes of definitive, country and Brontë stamps, W (YB025).

26 July 6 × 1st class definitives with Smilers advert (showing LOVE stamp) on inside front cover (UB257).

4 October 6 × 1st pictorial definitives, self-adhesive, W (UB258).

18 October *Battle of Trafalgar* prestige book containing panes of definitive, White Ensign, and Trafalgar stamps, C and W (YB026).

Presentation packs

22 March Castles miniature sheet (DP040).

5 April 42p country stamps for England, Scotland, Wales and N Ireland, W (CP022, price £2.20).

6 September Definitives 1p, 2p, 5p, 9p, 10p, 20p, 35p (lime green), 40p, 42p, 46p, 47p, 50p, 68p, and £1 values; also self-adhesive 1st class, 2nd class, Europe (to 40g), Postcard (Worldwide) and Worldwide (to 40g) stamps. Note: The self-adhesive stamps are from special coils printed on a plain white substrate. The 1st and 2nd class stamps are sold only in this pack. (DR005).

6 September Definitive Collection: six presentation packs and a set of the four 42p Country stamps. The packs contain the low and high value definitives, numbers 71 and 62, and the four Country pictorial packs of 2nd, 1st, E (not 40p) and 68p for England, Scotland, Wales and N Ireland, nos 63-66 (DY002).

Mad for Machins The specialist and dealer John Deering is

JOHN DEERING LIVES and breathes Machins; he would probably also eat and drink them, were it not that eating and cooking are another passion. This love for the Machins developed early in life, when John was only 10, thanks to his parents moving to the West Country, and buying a village store – with a post office. The stamp collecting bug had already bitten at the age of five, despite no other family members collecting (apart from his father as a schoolboy). In those early days, it was approvals that appealed, with their big and brightly coloured specimens.

Seeing all the new issues in the post office stock stimulated John's inquisitive mind – it was the early 1970s with decimalisation in its infancy. The special issues were fine, but it was the technical aspects of the Machin definitives that intrigued.

Simultaneously stirring was his dealer instinct, making up approval books to circulate among the members of the school stamp club. Then, when 15, glandular fever struck, confining John to bed for several weeks: he spent the time reading stamp magazines, pondering over the classified advertisements – clearly there was a living to be made from stamp dealing.

Up and running Over the next two years, the die was cast. With moral support from his parents, and more tangible financial help from a bank, he was up and running, quite literally, attending every stamp fair possible. Gradually, however, the fascination of Machins took hold, encouraged by the fact that material was readily available, and there for study as it was issued. Collecting earlier material is fine, but can anything surpass the thrill of undertaking your own original research?

By his late teens John had become a specialist Machin dealer, discarding stamp fairs in favour of mail order. He was fortunate, for at home his bedroom was so large, half served as an office. In its formative years the business did not provide a living: John worked part-time on a farm, under-



taking anything from hay-making to driving a tractor to earn his 'pocket money'. But nothing could equal the thrill of quietly working alone in his office surrounded by stamps, buying and selling. As soon as possible, the farm work ended. Mail order meant price lists, and John has always contended that these should be works of reference, many still being consulted years after they were first issued. In a similar vein, he always ensures that stamps sent to clients are fully annotated, so that their new owners can immediately identify what has been sent.

The Machins In 1988 John married Carolyn, and they moved to Cullompton in Devon. Five years later they moved to their present home, in South Molton in North Devon. This spacious house has an annexe, enabling John to keep his home separate from his office, and understandably this is called 'The Machins'.

One possible downside of dealing is that a line has been drawn under the personal collection: it is not easy to deal and collect the same material. It's not necessarily a disadvantage: there is still the excitement of discovery, and discussing one's findings. Has any stamp issue ever been studied at a greater technical level? That said, a new discovery is not always sold on immediately. Often a purchase is retained for a while so that it can be enjoyed and admired, and after a few months is eventually offered for sale. However, a reference collection of some material is maintained, especially of items that are difficult to distinguish.

There are personal collecting interests besides Machins, notably the Great Britain high values since 1955. One aim is to form a collection based on elephants, another of John's loves.

Long days However, it does come down to the fact that John is mesmerised by the Machins. He works between eight and twelve hours each day, studying, checking, meticulously recording the

interviewed by Richard West

information, then sharing it with others. In fact, some 50 per cent of his time is spent in research; the rest is left to buying and selling. He is proud of the fact he is recognised as one of the few true experts on the Machins, and is a member of all the related specialist societies.

When it comes to catalogues and handbooks on Machins, and there are several, John cannot recommend any over the rest. He consults them all, for each has invaluable information. His advice to other collectors is to invest in them all.

Having devoted so much time to studying this issue, does he feel it is time for the Machin to be retired? His answer is a most definite 'no', believing that this beautiful concept should be retained for the next monarch. Nor does he believe Royal Mail exploits the issue's popularity, apart from its inclusion in prestige stamp books, as the many changes are there for operational purposes, the market not being driven by collectors' demands.

New audience In contrast he feels that Royal Mail will find any excuse for a special issue. However, he does like some designs: for example, an issue such as Fruit and Veg can help bring stamps to the attention of a new audience. He believes that the Smilers concept could be expanded to a much wider non-philatelic market. Generally speaking, he feels the market for GB material is particularly strong at this time, the strongest it has been for a long time. Rising prices are encouraging growth, which is fine as long as it remains steady and does not lead to speculation. New people are joining the hobby, younger people, although not necessarily young people. That many today appear to have more disposable income is clearly a help.

What is changing is the way business is conducted. The internet is opening up new markets, bringing with it a shrinking world. John is currently perfecting his own website.

Many will view a John Deering price list with disbelief. The level of detail is incredible – but reassuring that someone is prepared to devote the time and patience to ensure all is studied and recorded today, for the collectors of tomorrow ●



Some of the Machin stamps from which John Deering makes his living. John can be contacted at: The Machins, PO Box 2, South Molton, Devon EX36 4YZ; telephone 01398 341564; e-mail machinsmcc@johndeering.devon.co.uk

A few questions put to John Deering

Apart from your price lists, how else do you share your knowledge with others? In 1984 I started a column called 'Machin Watch' in a magazine called *Stamp News*. When that ceased publication, John Holman asked me to continue the column in *Gibbons Stamp Monthly* of which he was then editor, and I have been writing for the magazine ever since.

Does Carolyn help you in the business? She works in local government, mainly in IT, but is always keen to help out at the office, and has met many of my collectors at exhibitions. She has her own interest, a horse, which she bought recently.

We have not seen you at many exhibitions recently. Is there a reason? We have gone through five very difficult years, with family bereavements, two spells in hospital for myself, while Carolyn was involved in an accident, then a year later suffered a brain haemorrhage, from which she has fortunately made virtually a full recovery. We are both now fit and on form.

Is it boring, working alone so many hours each day? I enjoy my own company, and do have an assistant. In fact, I am now seeking more help. I enjoy music while I work, almost anything from the past 40 years, and some popular classical music.

What do you enjoy when you are not working? I love food, and so adore cooking. One of my ambitions is to participate in a residential cookery course, and maybe to own a restaurant, although not to be the chef. I am a stamp dealer, after all. One of my specialities is rack of local lamb, and I particularly enjoy steak stuffed with stilton, a good curry, or a traditional roast.

Do you find time to take holidays? We are not really holiday people, although we have enjoyed visits to the Kruger National Park in South Africa, where I could indulge my passion for elephants. We adored Venice, and would love to visit Iceland.

Any other ambitions apart from Iceland and a restaurant? I have an obsession to do everything properly, so I wish I had more energy and that there were more hours in the day. I would love to be up-to-date in my office, and to improve my stock even further. With any luck, I will still be dealing until the day I drop.

Philately on-line An on-line source for GB, by Ron Negus

THE FOLLOWING LINKS ARE TO THE MAIN SECTIONS OF THE SITE. THERE ARE MANY SUB SECTIONS FROM THE LINKS.



AT ONE TIME, long ago, collectors were able to visit a stamp shop in their local high street to look through stock books, select stamps and buy them for their albums. Today, stamp shops are very difficult to find in any town centre, and the nearest equivalent are the stamp fairs held in various locations. The difference is that when shops were commonplace, calling in to visit them could be arranged at any convenient time. Many older collectors will recall such visits during a lunch break from work.

Stamp fairs tend to be held for one day only, and this makes an opportunity to attend more difficult to arrange. An alternative approach is to turn to the internet. Many dealers now advertise their wares on-line, which means, in effect, their 'shops' are open all day and every day throughout the year.

The quality of the websites offered by dealers varies enormously. Some simply provide details of their current stock as a printed list, without illustrations, and give a postal address to which orders can be sent. The typefaces and coloured backgrounds used on these sites often make the listings difficult to read, and they do nothing to entice the collector. They correspond to the old type of stamp shop whose window display contained dusty sheets of stamps, where many had been bleached by strong sunlight.

More enlightened dealers, however, realise that their site must be interesting, colourful and easy to navigate if it is to provide a profitable outlet that will attract collectors. For the GB enthusiast, a site that has recently been redesigned, is hosted by Mark Sargent, and provides an opportuni-

www.stampsforsale.co.uk To buy items from this site it is necessary to register – a simple procedure explained on the home page. Non-members can browse the site at will.

ty for browsing, as well as buying material. It has taken more than three years to develop to its current state, but the result is highly effective. Future planned developments include adding more images of all the listed stamps, and providing a site search engine.

To assist a new customer to know the dealer, Mark has included a pen portrait of himself and his family. This also explains how he decided to become a stamp dealer and the route he took to achieve this. His decision to use the internet was taken in 1999, and he developed his first website then. After a couple of years, he decided it needed more facilities, and the re-design began. This improved version is now available.

On all the introductory pages describing how to use the site, the text is very clearly written, with a friendly tone. The possibility of minor technical problems occurring because of the many different computer set-ups is acknowledged, and a contact/feedback form is available to obtain help.

The navigation arrangements on the site are also very user-friendly. The stocks for sale are organised into major categories, such as Collections, New Issues, Errors, King George 6, Booklets, etc and the titles for each section are concise. A single click on any section name will bring up the relevant detailed pages. For a more in-depth search, an A to Z index is provided. High definition illustrations are shown in many of the sections: some of these are small thumbnails which can be enlarged by clicking on them. For stock lists, in the appropriate sections, both the SG and the Scott catalogue numbers are quoted. A very straightforward 'shopping basket' facility is included on the site for all purchases, and payment can be made by major debit/credit card, Paypal, personal cheque or cash.

Described by Mark Sargent as 'The most comprehensive Great British website...in the world', it will certainly be worth a visit for all collectors who include GB amongst their interests ●

Posting boxes

THIS MONTH we feature three boxes – all painted green – in the Republic of Ireland, photographed by David Trussler. The Penfold box, below, is in the town of Skibbereen and the time plate bears information in Gaelic and English.



The rounded-top lamp box bears the cypher of Edward VII (1901-10); the other has the 'post' logo of An Post, the Irish Post Office. Posting boxes in Ireland were featured here in March 1994, November 1995, and October and December 1998 •



Reader's response

Ian Billings writes: Like many others, I'm sure, I found the articles by Colin Baker on STO very interesting. However, I was disappointed that at no point did he mention that the work was done by Her Majesty's Stationery Office security printing works, and this is where the final STO work (of the main period) was done in the 1970s.

Indeed, when the end of this scheme was announced, it led to considerable extra work for the Harrow Press from dealers and collectors' organisations not only in this country, but in Europe as well. Colin remarks that 'a few STO envelopes are known from 1979 onwards'. Of course, and some of those from the early 70s have recently been advertised with a surcharge for the Tsunami appeal. Some dealers must have many thousands still in stock, and are happy to seize on any opportunity to use them for their own benefit (and sometimes for others') •

Special prize draw

FIRST PRIZE THIS MONTH is a Brunel Collection: pack and first day cover of the stamps, miniature sheet and FDC, prestige book and prestige book stamp pane FDC, stamp cards, and a coin cover. Five runners-up will be sent a pack of the Brunel stamps. Send your name and address on a postcard to: Brunel Draw, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1Y 9HQ, to arrive by 10 February •



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



October identify The detail is from the 1987 18p Flowers stamp. The winner was B Normanton of Australia.

October knowledge Answers: 1) Dan Fern; 2) British Postal Museum & Archive; 3) 1992. The winner was D Bowcock of Yorkshire.

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 January *Identify* Competition. Secondly, test your philatelic knowledge by answering the questions below. Send your answer to January *Knowledge* Competition.

- 1 What colour is the current 50p definitive?
- 2 Which set of Millennium stamps featured the Millennium Bridge, Gateshead?
- 3 Who designed the Metropolitan Police stamps of 1979?

Send your answer (addressed to either January *Identify* competition or January *Knowledge* competition), name and address on a postcard or back of a sealed envelope to: British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ. The senders of the first cards drawn in each competition on 10 February will each receive £100. Ten runner-up prizes of presentation packs, first day covers or stamp cards will be awarded in each competition. Competitions are not open to Royal Mail employees ●

Events

11 February Rotherham Stamp & Postcard Club Open Day at Broom Valley Club Room, Brunswick Rd, Broom Valley, Rotherham, 10.00-16.00. Dealers, displays, refreshments available. Free adjacent car parking. **Enquiries** J Bradley, 01709 837073.

22-26 February Spring Stampex at Business Design Centre, Upper Street, London N1. See page 132 for more details. **Enquiries** Stampex 01252 628006.

23-25 February Philatex at Lawrence Hall, Royal Horticultural Halls, Greycoat Street, London SW1. Open Thurs 11.00-19.00; Fri 10.00-18.00; Sat 10.00-17.00. Admission free. **Enquiries** C Rainey, 01793 513431 or T Davis, 020 8946 4489, or see website www.stampshows.net

11 March-2 April STAMP Lincs (annual exhibition by Lincoln PS) at Museum of Lincolnshire Life, Boston

Road, Lincoln. Thematic displays. **Enquiries** P Wain, 01522 525984.

21-22 April Scottish Philatelic Congress at Dewar's Centre, Perth.

13 May Worpex 2006 at Oldbury Park Primary School, Oldbury Rd, Worcester, 10.30-16.30. Specialist society meetings, 30 dealers, free car parking. Organised by Worcester & District Philatelic & Postcard Society. See www.worpex.com

A useful Stamp Fair & Auction Diary is published six times a year and can be ordered from S Reeves, PO Box 109, Enfield EN3 5QF. E-mail fairs@stampdiary.com or telephone 020 8292 5361. The annual subscription is £4 UK, £6 Europe, £12 USA & Canada. The Diary covers events throughout the UK and includes postcard fairs and auctions ●

Late news

Royal Mail update Ian Griffiths has been appointed as Managing Director of Royal Mail Letters. Now Group Managing Director of GKN Automotive, he will take up his appointment early in 2006, and have day-to-day responsibility for the delivery of more than 20 billion letters per year. Royal Mail Chief Executive Adam Crozier commented: 'He is arriving at Royal Mail with an impressive background in managing large workforces to deliver excellent service for customers and profitable performance for shareholders in a highly competitive and fast-moving marketplace.'

Jane Ryan, Head of Stamp Design, left Royal Mail at the end of December. Jane joined Royal Mail's Design team in 1993 and succeeded Barry Robinson as Head of Stamp Design in 2002. We wish her well in her future endeavours.

We received some 1300 forms voting for 2008 stamp subjects. All were entered in a draw for 2005 Yearbooks, which will go to: Mrs A Darby, R Brockhurst, B Swift, H Hillman, and G Haigh.

The cylinders and colours of the forthcoming British Journey England stamps are: D1 silver D1 black D1 magenta D1 yellow D1 cyan (blue), D1 phosphor, also D1 silver and D1 other colours. Plate numbers and colours for the Brunel stamps are: E1 silver E1 black E1 cyan (blue) E1 magenta E1 yellow (all values) with E1 phosphor except the 42p which is all-over phosphor, the other values have two bands. The perforation is 14 x 13.5, not 14.5 as stated in the December *Bulletin* •

Events The exhibition 'Art for Mailing: Wildlife Stamp Designs by Ian Loe' is on show at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge from 26 January to 23 April. It includes sketches and artwork for over 500 stamps designed by Mr Loe over the past 25 years. The exhibition is supported by the British Philatelic Trust, British Library Philatelic Collections and Crown Agents Stamp Bureau • A Wildlife Stamp Weekend, at Edinburgh Zoo, 10-13 February, will include 40 frames of philatelic material from across Scotland. All events are included in the Zoo admission charge. Enquiries 0131 314 0350, www.edinburghzoo.org.uk •

Stamp book award *The Queen's Stamps* by Nicholas Courtney, published by Methuen in 2004, has been awarded a gold medal at Canada's seventh National Philatelic Literature Exhibition. Competing against 180 entries, the judges awarded the book a score of 88/100. The book, reviewed here in August 2004, is still on sale, priced £25 •

Auctions Spink's four sales of Stamps and Banknotes in Hong Kong on 20 November witnessed fierce bidding, resulting in total realizations of some £1,861,500. The sales featured collections of stamps from the eminent British philatelists, Charles Goodwyn and Richard Pratt. Enquires: Spink, 020 7563 4000, www.spink.com

Grosvenor's auction of GB stamps and postal history held on 17 November included a 2001 65p Nobel Prizes with the hologram omitted (eight known) which made £2250, and an interpanneau block of 16 (4 x 4) of 1997 £5 Castles with The Queen's head missing on two stamps and largely missing on a third, which realized £4000. Bromides of designs by Edmund Dulac for the 1935 Silver Jubilee issue made £2300 and £2500 respectively. Enquiries: www.grosvenorauctions.com

Cavendish will hold a Worldwide sale on 19-20 January. Enquiries: www.cavendish-auctions.com

Harmers sale on 8 November included seven lots of essays of the 1964 Botanical issue from the Goaman archive – they made £7800 (est £7200). A slightly damaged 2d Mulready wrapper uprated by six 1d reds brought £10,000 (£7500) and a thematic collection of Manchester United issues £1400 (£1000). The 'Apollo' Collection of world stamps realized £692,000 (est £362,935) on 22 November. Enquiries: www.harmers.com •

Obituary We are sorry to report the death on 28 November of Michael Furnell, Editor of *Stamp Lover*, journal of the National Philatelic Society. A profile of Michael was published in the *Bulletin* in February 2003. A friendly and helpful man, Michael will be missed by the NPS and by his many friends in the philatelic world •

New Castles stamp ingot cover



1955-2005

EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND
THE CASTLES STAMP INGOT COLLECTION

Fiftieth anniversary issue

2005 marked the 50th anniversary of the issue of the popular Castle high value stamps designed by Lynton Lamb. Royal Mail commemorated the anniversary with a miniature sheet and by starting a new series of stamp ingot covers. The first, issued in September, featured Windsor Castle. The second cover, with a stamp ingot reproducing the 10s Edinburgh Castle stamp, will be available from 17 January. This bears the £1 Edinburgh Castle stamp from the miniature sheet, cancelled by a special Edinburgh datestamp showing a silhouette of the castle. Further covers, featuring Caernarfon and Carrickfergus castles, will be issued later in the year.

Price: £24.95 each, plus handling charge: UK £1.30, Europe £1.55, rest of world £2.15.

Place a regular order for the four stamp ingot covers, and receive a free booklet about the Castles stamps, a Castles miniature sheet, and a collection box.

Royal Mail

Talents House, 21 South Gyle
Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB
Telephone orders: UK 08457
641 641; overseas +44 131 316
7483. Internet orders: www.royalmail.com/stamps



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