

Philatelic Bulletin



Volume ³2: Number ¹5



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In recent issues of the Bulletin reference has been made to the decision to improve its style and appearance. The newly designed Bulletin will, we hope, receive our readers' approval and be seen as a more attractive monthly presentation of matters of interest to philatelists.

The first issue of the Bulletin saw the light of day in September 1963 and has been regularly produced since then. While the simple duplicated sheets have afforded a record of philatelic affairs, we felt that the official organ of the Bureau's activities with a steadily increasing circulation, merited something which favourably compared with other magazines.

We hope that subscribers will find the new Bulletin easier to bind into volumes than the old, and that they will welcome the colourful publications as worthwhile additions to their libraries of philatelic matters.

Reference has also been made to the increase in annual subscription which will be 7/6 from this issue. This increase is unavoidable bearing in mind the cost of producing the new Bulletin. It may be timely to remark that the fee for the old style Bulletin would have had to be raised if production costs, albeit modest, were to be fully met.

We are pleased with the increasing popularity of the Bulletin – the circulation is now over 15,000 – and we shall do our best to provide in future issues interesting articles and information.

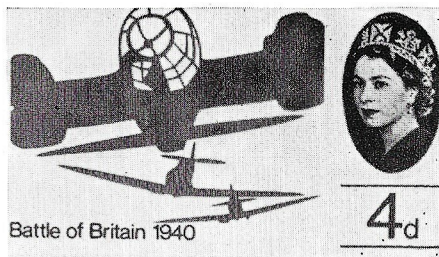
We do not as a rule publish articles on philately as such, as we feel that this subject is adequately covered in books and commercial magazines. We are, however, sometimes able to print information on subjects relating to the collection of stamps,

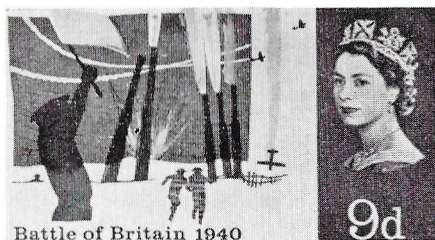
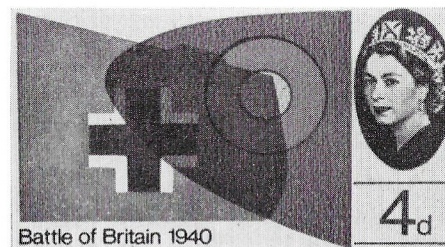
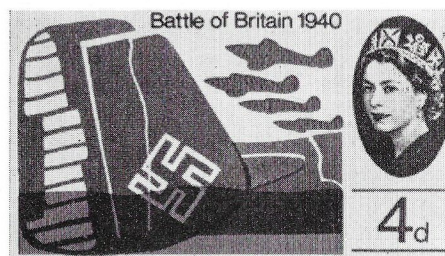
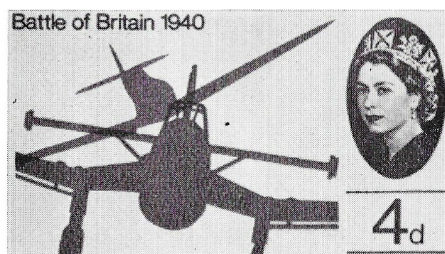
or on postal history, and we shall continue on this basis.

We mentioned in the last Bulletin that the first day of issue of the Battle of Britain stamps is September 13th 1965.

We are sure that this unique issue will be greatly sought after and supplies will, of course, be available from the Bureau for some time.

For the benefit of those of our readers who have not already seen the designs we reproduce them here.





As was perhaps to be expected the appearance of the swastika symbol as a feature of the design of a British stamp gave rise to a good deal of controversy. We quote here the Postmaster General's answer to questions in the House of Commons:

'The stamp referred to is one of a block of six designs depicting different aspects of the Battle of Britain. The broken swastika, half covered by the shattered tail fin of a Luftwaffe bomber that has been shot down and is sinking in the English Channel. Above, four RAF fighters ride triumphant. Since this is what the Battle of Britain was all about I do not propose to withdraw the stamps.'

The stamps to be issued on September 13th 1965 to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Battle of Britain will recall many memories to those who lived through this event in history. In case, however, our memories are more dimmed by the years than we would admit, and for the benefit of the younger generations who were spared the tragedy of World War II, the following article describes the events of the time.

The Battle of Britain July 10 – October 31, 1940

The 'Battle of Britain' was the first major campaign in world history to be fought entirely between opposing air forces – and as such was probably the last one of its kind. As a battle it was decisive, preventing the invasion of Britain by the German armies and influencing the whole course of World War II.

The German plan for the invasion of Britain – Operation 'Sea Lion' – had been fixed to start by mid August 1940. In preparation, every available vessel from Germany and the German-held territories of Europe had been assembled at ports on the Continental side of the English Channel. Because the British Navy was a force to be reckoned with in Channel waters, the German naval commanders insisted that complete air control by their own side was essential if Operation 'Sea Lion' was to stand any chance of success.

Rapid action was of paramount importance to the German plans. The major part of the British army had just retreated with heavy losses and casualties from Dunkirk, leaving behind a great deal of its equipment. British industry, then going over to full war production, would soon have been in a position to arm the population against an invasion. This meant that the tremendous superiority of the German army was a declining asset, while the massed invasion fleet

at the Channel ports was tying up valuable shipping which was urgently needed elsewhere for the German war effort.

In an all out bid to destroy Britain's Royal Air Force and make invasion possible, the German Luftwaffe assembled three air fleets at bases in Belgium, Holland, France, Norway and Denmark – a total of 3,500 aircraft consisting of 1,000 long range bombers, the same number of fighters and 250 dive bombers.*

Opposing them was a Royal Air Force seriously weakened by the recent loss of 300 fighter pilots over France and the Low Countries. On June 4th, the RAF could muster only 446 serviceable aircraft, of which 331 were Hurricane and Spitfire fighters. By mid-August, when the battle was at its height, RAF strength had been built up to 704 aircraft, of which 620 were Spitfire fighters. During the whole course of the battle, less than 1,000 British pilots were involved a fact which prompted the famous Churchill remark of August 20th, 'Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few'.

Although fighting against odds of almost 5 to 1, the British aircraft had two important factors on their side. One was the assistance of a radar aircraft detection network, consisting of 20 stations which had been installed from 1936 onwards. Although the Germans were at the time working on radar, and had in fact sent a Zeppelin on a reconnaissance flight over England in an attempt to locate the British installations, they were not aware of their effectiveness and never made any concerted attempts to destroy them. With the help of the radar network, the RAF was able to make the best use of its limited number of fighters by directing them straight to their targets, avoiding the necessity for maintaining wasteful standing patrols.

The RAF's second main advantage was that its pilots were fighting over their own soil, enabling them to remain in the air without re-fuelling for longer than their Luftwaffe opponents. Also, the majority of British pilots who were forced to abandon their aircraft were able to return to the battle at a later stage.

The battle opened with a series of preliminary Luftwaffe attacks starting on July 10th. A number of airfields were attacked and a vital radar station at Ventnor in the Isle of Wight was destroyed – fortunately without the knowledge of the Luftwaffe. In these preliminary skirmishes, the Luftwaffe lost 286 aircraft against RAF losses of 150.

In the critical weeks which followed, the most important dates were:

August 13: The first major attack by the Luftwaffe failed to inflict any serious damage. Losses: Luftwaffe, 45 aircraft, RAF, 13.

August 15: All three Luftwaffe fleets joined in an attack which inflicted considerable damage on airfields in Southern England. Aircraft flying from bases in Norway and Denmark attacked the North East of England, seriously damaging RAF Bomber Command headquarters at Driffield, Yorkshire and destroying 10 aircraft on the ground. Luftwaffe losses of 75 aircraft were the heaviest of the entire battle, while RAF losses were less than half this number. As a result the Luftwaffe never again attempted daylight raids from Norway.

August 16: In an attempt to reduce the serious losses of the previous day, Luftwaffe bombers attacked supported by three times their number of fighters. Nevertheless the Luftwaffe sustained a loss of 45 aircraft against RAF losses of 21.

August 24 onwards: The Luftwaffe continued to step up its attacks on airfields, still sustaining

heavier losses than those of the RAF. Night attacks then switched to bombing sorties of the ports of London and Liverpool which only inflicted slight damage in relation to the number of aircraft involved. When attacks on fighter airfields resumed, RAF Fighter Command was for several days under severe pressure, and on one day alone 65 servicemen were killed and wounded during raids on the Biggin Hill headquarters.

September 7: 250 Luftwaffe bombers attacked London, causing damage to riverside areas.

September 15: 'Battle of Britain Day.' Heavy and sustained fighting took place over London and the South of England. The RAF destroyed 56 aircraft for a loss of only 26 of their own.

September 17: The German Headquarters War Diary records 'The enemy air force is still by no means defeated; on the contrary it shows signs of increasing activity'. Operation 'Sea Lion' was postponed indefinitely.

October 12: Operation 'Sea Lion' was deferred until the Spring of 1941. Then, at the end of the month the plan to destroy the RAF and pave the way for invasion was finally abandoned, and the Battle of Britain had been won.

Having survived the onslaught, the RAF went over to the offensive, bombing military objectives and destroying a high percentage of the invasion fleet. The German advance westwards had been halted and the tide of the War had begun to turn.

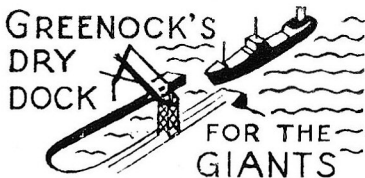
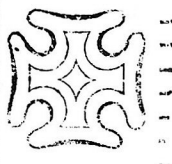
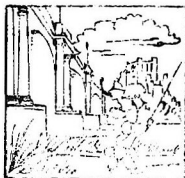
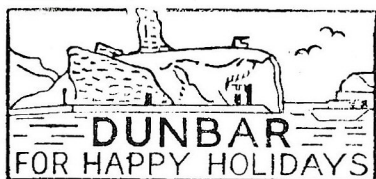
* The German aircraft illustrated in the 4d value stamps are the long range bombers Heinkel HE 111 and Dornier DO 172, the dive bomber Junkers JU 87B and the Messerschmitt fighter Bf 109E wing tips only, crossed with those of a Spitfire fighter. British aircraft shown are Spitfire and Hurricane fighters.

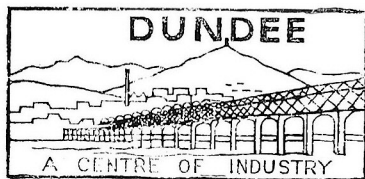
In order to meet the publication date for this issue we are unable to print the up to date list of postmark slogans. We will, needless to say, print a full list in the next issue.

In the meantime we give a few illustrations of the type of slogans already used. Additionally we include a specimen impression of the special handstamp to be used at Sevenoaks, Kent Post

Office to mark the 'At Home' Day Display at Royal Air Force Biggin Hill on 18th September. Special posting facilities are being provided at Biggin Hill.

We hope to provide illustrations of slogans and handstamps as a regular feature in future bulletins.

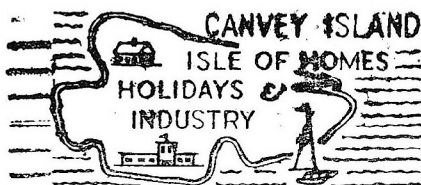
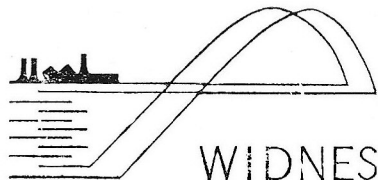




Live to Learn
Learn to Live
EDINBURGH ROAD
SAFETY CAMPAIGN



ROYAL LIVERPOOL
PHILHARMONIC
SOCIETY
125TH ANNIVERSARY
MARCH 12TH 1965



S GUILDFORD
H SURREY COUNTY
O
WHIT - MONDAY



their road
safety
depends
on you



LEARN TO SWIM WEEK -
SCOTLAND
31ST MAY - 5TH JUNE 1965



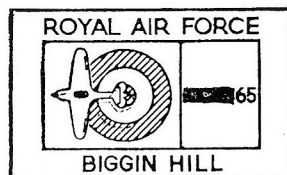
YORK RACES
16TH-17TH JULY



YORK RACES
17TH, 18TH, 19TH AUGUST



NATIONAL EXHIBITION
KELSO
SCOTTISH WEEK
1ST-4TH SEPTEMBER 1965



The Post Office's recent policy of issuing more commemorative stamps than hitherto has been the subject of many comments in both trade papers and the national press.

That it is now entering the realms of big business is reflected in the following article, reprinted with acknowledgement to the Financial Times, from that newspaper's issue of 28th July 1965.

Now that the Post Office has thrown away its pride and decided to make money from stamps, commemorative issues are following each other off the presses in quick succession. No sooner were the 6d and 2s 6d special stamps honouring the 700th anniversary of Simon de Montfort's Parliament out for sale last week than the design for the next issue, publicising the Commonwealth Arts Festival, was shown to the public.

This philatelic revolution follows many years during which the U.K. held to the cobwebbed tradition that 'stamps are for postage only.' There has been the odd commemorative stamp – the first in 1924 featured the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley – but no consistent policy. It required an outstanding occasion, such as the King George V Silver Jubilee and the King George VI coronation, to force the Post Office into printing new designs.

Change of Heart

But a year or two ago there was a profitable change of heart. In 1963 six multi-coloured, even dramatic, sets of stamps were released, and last year the Post Office estimates that it made £200,000 to £300,000 solely from philatelic sales – a trifle compared with the postal services' overall loss of £8m., but still a handy sum. This year there will be nine new issues, and plans for

1966 are also well advanced, with the Post Office holding a list of more than 50 suggestions, ranging from the third centenary of the Fire of London, and the World Cup, to King Charles II hiding in his oak tree.

However, issuing too many commemorative stamps is worse than printing none at all: once the market is swamped the collectors lose interest. So the Post Office is unlikely to go much beyond this year's number of sets.

The GPO's stamp customers fall into two categories – the enthusiasts for mint stamps, which never go through the post, and the collectors of used ones. Even the latter make their contribution to the profits: more often than not they will use a whole set of new stamps to post a fourpenny letter. Indeed, the PO reckons that on average it sells $\frac{1}{2}$ m. stamps per set for philatelic purposes only, and in 1964 the six issues contained 15 individual stamps, while this year there will be no fewer than 19.

Face values are chosen in a canny way – if one set contains a sixpenny stamp, the next is sure to omit that one, so that no commemorative stamps of identical value are 'out' simultaneously. Apart from raising income, these special stamps are, of course, good national propaganda. And in some countries they even carry a surcharge mostly benefiting a charity, thus boosting sales beyond immediate philatelic demands. Our own GPO is at present examining this possibility too.

In its efforts, the PO is assisted by a permanent stamp committee operating under the auspices of the Council of Industrial Design. When special issues are contemplated, the committee nominates suitable artists. The print contracts for stamps run for five years – and currently Harrison

and Sons prints all low values by photogravure, while the 2s 6d to £1 stamps are printed by line engraved process on the presses of Bradbury Wilkinson. Last year one issue of 156m. stamps cost £24,000 to produce (including artists' fees, printing, additional paper and distribution), and another issue of 267m. came to £29,000.

The PO's promotional efforts often go to the provision of first day covers – specially designed envelopes stamped on the first day of issue. Collectors paid 4s 6d for such a Churchill cover (there were two stamps, 4d and 1s 3d), while those who sent in their own addressed envelope for stamping were charged 2s 6d. By mid-day on the first day 100,000 Churchill covers had been sold.

The stamp trade welcomes the GPO's new policy. 'They are with the times at long last,' is one comment. On the whole, designs are regarded as 'more interesting,' and the PO's philatelic service is appreciated. And although demand at the moment is greater for 19th century 'classic' stamps – 'as they become scarcer, they are bought as an investment' – demand for the most recent British stamps is hardening too. In consequence the Shakespeare 2s 6d stamp, for example, is now worth 2½ or 3 times its face value. 'Stamp dealing is like dealing on the Stock Exchange – it all depends on supply and demand, and as long as there are not too many, and they are not of too high face value, the British special issues should be doing all right,' is one expert's verdict. Of course, collectors may do better still if they come across a faulty stamp. But here, too, it is a question of numbers – if too many misprints crept by the inspectors' eyes, values would suffer.

Further Crop

The next few months will see a further crop of

special stamps. The Salvation Army's centenary will be celebrated (issue date August 9), and so will Joseph Lister's discovery of antiseptic surgery, as well as the Commonwealth Arts Festival (both due out on September 1), and the 25th anniversary of the Battle of Britain (September 13). On October 8 it will be the turn of the Post Office communications tower, followed, on October 25, by the 20th anniversary of the United Nations, and next year the 900th anniversary of the foundation of Westminster Abbey.

Also in 1966, the Post Office hopes to pacify the Scots who were outraged by the failure to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the birth of Robert Burns – in 1959! The new policy obviously has its pitfalls. But for all that, Britain's progress from the 1840 Victorian penny blacks to the new stamp look of the middle 1960's, slow as it has been, is to be welcomed. And despite the innovations our stamps still remain the only ones in the world which do not bear the name of the country of origin.

First Day Covers

A full first day cover service on specially designed envelopes will be provided by the Philatelic Bureau for the issue of stamps on 8th October commemorating the opening of the Post Office Tower. On this occasion the cover is being produced as a souvenir. It will bear the legend 'Post Office Tower' and 'GPO Commemorative Cover' instead of the usual title 'GPO First Day Cover'. The cover was designed by Clive Abbott, who also designed both of the Post Office Tower stamps. The size of the cover will be $6\frac{1}{2}$ " long by $3\frac{3}{4}$ " wide.



The inclusive charge for the Bureau's first day cover service will be 4/6 (70 cents). In addition the Bureau will also service customers' own envelopes for a total cost of 2/6 (40 cents). Application forms, giving full details, are attached for those wishing to avail themselves of these services.

Special attention is drawn to the final date of acceptance given on the application forms.

We regret that we cannot deal with any orders received after the closing dates.

We would emphasise to customers that the first day covers issued by the Bureau will bear the Bureau's own special first day of issue postmark. We are unable to meet requests for any variations from this postmark.



To meet the wishes of those who prefer to prepare and post their own covers, the official first day envelope will be available for this issue in advance from the Bureau and from the 64 offices shown hereunder where philatelic posting boxes are being provided. The price of the envelope will be 6d for single copies. For bulk orders the prices are:

250: £4 3s 4d	1,000: £15	5,000: £60
500: £8	2,500: £33	10,000: £104

List of offices with Philatelic posting boxes:

Trafalgar Sq. BO WC2	Kingston-on-Thames
London SWDO	Leeds
London ECDO (Chief Office)	Leicester
	Lincoln
Aberdeen	Liverpool
Aberystwyth	Llandudno
Belfast	Londonderry
Birmingham	Maidstone
Blackpool	Manchester
Bournemouth	Middlesbrough
Bradford	Newcastle-upon-Tyne
Brighton	Newport, Mon.
Bristol	Northampton
Cambridge	Norwich
Cardiff	Nottingham
Chelmsford	Oxford
Chester	Peterborough
Colwyn Bay	Plymouth

Croydon
 Derby
 Douglas, Isle of Man
 Dundee
 Edinburgh
 Exeter
 Glasgow
 Gloucester
 Guernsey
 Harrow
 Harrogate
 Hastings
 Hull
 Ipswich
 Jersey

Portsmouth
 Preston
 Reading
 Romford
 Sheffield
 Shrewsbury
 Southend-on-Sea
 Stockport
 Stockton-on-Tees
 Stoke-on-Trent
 Swansea
 Swindon
 Taunton
 York

Presentation Packs

A special presentation pack of the two mint stamps will be on sale at the Bureau and at the Post Offices shown above. The pack will contain in addition to the two stamps an information leaflet giving artistic and technical details of the stamps, the printing process and the designer. The cost is 2/6 per pack, plus the usual handling charge of 6d for orders under 10/- and 2/6 for orders of 10/- and over if ordered from the Bureau.

For orders of 100 or more the charge will be 2/- per pack plus 2/6 handling charge.

