

BRITISH PHILATELIC

The ROYAL MAIL magazine *for stamp collectors*

Bulletin

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Plants stamps • Definitives of
2008 • A Churchill collection

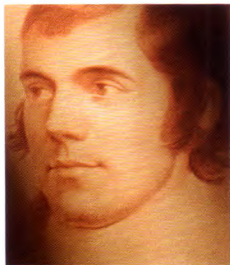
A Man's
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that



1759 ROBERT BURNS 2009

**Robert Burns: the miniature
sheet celebrating the birth of
Scotland's national poet goes
on sale on 22 January.**

Forthcoming issues and withdrawals



Cover A detail from a portrait of Robert Burns, by Scottish painter Archibald Skirving. A preview of the issue marking the 250th anniversary of the poet's birth was published in the October *Bulletin*. Portrait © Scottish National Portrait Gallery/Bridgeman Art Library.

Availability All items available from Royal Mail Talents House (address below). Selected items are available at Post Office branches and Post Office philatelic outlets at the main post offices in: Bristol, Cambridge, Chester, Colchester, Coventry, Croydon, Durham, Edinburgh, Exeter, Glasgow, Grimsby, Harrogate, Lichfield, London (Eastcheap & Trafalgar Sq), Newcastle upon Tyne, Norwich, Nottingham, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Princes Risborough, Southampton (High St and Hedge End), Southend-on-Sea, Stevenage, Stroud, Trowbridge, Truro and 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 £1.45, Europe £1.55, rest of world (airmail) £2.15. Some products can be ordered on Royal Mail's website: www.royalmail.com/shop

7 January	Withdrawal James Bond stamps, presentation pack, miniature sheet, prestige stamp book, stamp cards and press sheet
13 January	Issue Design Classics stamps, presentation pack, prestige book, stamp cards, postcard and stamp set, generic sheet (Mini stamp), Mini medal cover
14 January	Withdrawal Smilers All Round generic sheet
22 January	Issue Robert Burns miniature sheet, presentation pack, press sheet, stamp cards (3), coin cover
27 January	Issue Silver Stamp collection No 2 Belfast Cathedral
4 February	Withdrawal Working Dogs stamps, presentation pack and stamp cards
12 February	Issue Darwin stamps, miniature sheet, prestige book, stamp cards, press sheet, Theory of Evolution coin cover
17 February	Issue Definitives with security features: 2nd and 1st class standard, 2nd and 1st class 'Large', 50p, £1, £1.50, £2, £3 and £5; business sheets of 100 1st, 2nd, business sheets of 50 Large 1st, Large 2nd; NVI books – 6 × 1st, 12 × 1st, 12 × 2nd, 4 × Large 1st, 4 × Large 2nd; rolls 500 × 1st, 500 × 2nd, 1000 × 1st, 1000 × 2nd, presentation packs
26 February	Issue Celebrating Wales miniature sheet, presentation pack and stamp cards (5); Celebrating UK miniature sheet collection
27 February	Withdrawal Monarchs (Lancaster & York) press sheet
27 February	Withdrawal Smilers book (issued 17 October 2006)

Contents



This 1966 magazine features Churchill commemorative issues

A Churchill collection The remarkable career of a great man offers Simon Moorcroft a philatelic challenge, as well as ample opportunities **146**

The British Philatelic Bulletin is published monthly by Royal Mail, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HQ. • **Editor** J R Holman • **Price** £1.20 each from Post Office Ltd philatelic outlets • **Annual subscription** £12.95 UK & Europe; £17.95 elsewhere. Send subscriptions to Royal Mail Talents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB • **Binders** (to hold 24 issues) £8.50, storage boxes (about 30 copies) £9.95 available by post from Royal Mail (Edinburgh address, above) • Royal Mail also publishes the fortnightly *British Postmark Bulletin*, giving details of forthcoming special handstamps. Available on annual subscription from Edinburgh address above: £12.25 UK & Europe, £24.95 rest of the world • **Copyright** Design & text Royal Mail Group Ltd, unless attributed to a specified author. All requests to reproduce any articles should be sent to the Editor, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail Letters, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HQ • **Design** Robert Maude • **Printed** in Great Britain by Westernham Press • **ISSN** 0953 8119 • Royal Mail is a trading name of Royal Mail Group Ltd. Registered in England and Wales no 4138203 registered office 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ

Issues and withdrawals 130

Stamp scene The GPO Film Unit; Saucy postcards exhibition; BPMA in Swindon; Journals and publications **132**

Royal Mail news Coin and medal covers; New stamp book series; New Silver Stamp; Generic sheets; 2009 issues and postmarks; BPMA news; New security features for definitives **136**

The definitives of 2008 A listing of definitives issued in 2008 **140**



Robert Burns labels A look at the labels issued by Burns scholar Peter Westwood **143**

Plants A preview of the next issue in the Action for Species series **144**



Design icons Richard West visits design firm HGV, to hear the story behind the new Design Classics stamps **150**



Fourteen passions A review of Royal Mail's new Yearbook, *Special Stamps 2008*, by Martin Robinson **152**

Philately online A look at an online catalogue of errors and varieties, by Ron Negus **155**

Obituary The philatelic life of Ron Negus – an appreciation by John Holman **156**

Commemorative covers A review of some of the new covers on offer **157**

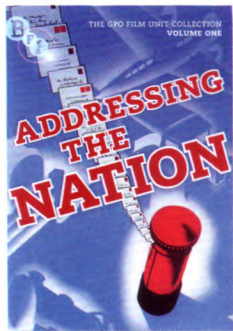
Competitions Enter for a chance to win a 2008 Yearpack **158**

Prize draw Miniature Sheet Collections to be won **158**

Events **158**

Late news **159**

Stamp scene News and upcoming events: Glenn Morgan keeps you posted



Addressing the Nation DVD available from the BPMA by post or from website <http://shop.postalheritage.org.uk/products/dvd3> price £24.99. Also available from the Film-store at the BFI Southbank, London SE1 and from good DVD retailers.

Addressing the Nation – the GPO Film Unit The first of three deluxe two-disc box sets presenting all the key films of the GPO Film Unit on DVD has recently been issued. The complete collection includes legendary filmmakers such as John Grierson, Len Lye and Humphrey Jennings.

Created 75 years ago out of the ashes of the Empire Marketing Board Film Unit, the GPO Film Unit was one of the most remarkable creative institutions that Britain has produced. A hotbed of energy and talent, it provided a springboard to many of the best-known and critically acclaimed figures in the British documentary movement. John Grierson, Alberto Cavalcanti, Humphrey Jennings, Basil Wright, Harry Watt, Edgar Anstey and Arthur Elton, alongside innovators such as Len Lye and Norman McLaren, are some of the directors whose work embraced public information films, drama-documentary, social reportage, animation and advertising.

Celebrating the 75th anniversaries in September 2008 of both the BFI and the GPO Film Unit itself, the BFI National Archive, in partnership with the British Postal Museum & Archive (BPMA), Royal Mail and BT Heritage, has curated and restored this legendary output of short films. *Addressing the Nation* contains 15 films from the period 1933-35, and provides a fascinating exploration of the unit's early experimentation with sound. It features Basil Wright's award-winning *Song of Ceylon*; Len Lye's *A Colour Box*; the critically-acclaimed *Weather Forecast*; *Coal Face*, directed by Alberto Cavalcanti; and Auden and Britten's precursor to *Night Mail* (included in volume two) and other neglected works, many of which will be available for the first time since their original release. The discs are presented in an attractive deluxe box with an 80-page bound book containing introductory essays, biographies and film notes. The DVDs also include as extras *On the Fishing Banks of Skye* (John Grierson, 1935) and a GPO Film Display trailer.

As a collector, I especially appreciated *Air Post*, *6.30 Collection*, *The King's Stamp* and *Sixpenny Telegram*, but all of the films are fascinating due to the passage of time and the phenomenal changes that have occurred to our world since they were made back in the 1930s. Volume two will be available from next month, and volume three later this year ●



PICTORIAL POSTCARDS
1894-1994

Saucy postcards An exhibition covering the 'saucy' postcards of days gone by is on show at the Russell-Cotes Art Gallery and Museum, Bournemouth, until 1 February. Opening hours are 10.00-17.00 Tuesday to Sunday, and admission is free. This major exhibition takes a behind-the-scenes look at the artwork that went into creating the red-nosed husbands, buxom beauties and other cheeky characters associated with Bamforth's comic postcards. Tracing the journey from the artist's rough sketch to the final print, 200 original artworks are on show alongside the original postcards. Visit www.russell-cotes.bournemouth.gov.uk for further information. Shown opposite is one of the Picture Postcards Centenary stamps of 1994 ●

BPMA Swindon On 3 November I was one of the Trustees of the Friends of the British Postal Museum & Archive favoured with a visit to the proposed new location for the BPMA, at Swindon. A few minutes from the railway station by foot, and a similar distance from a motorway turn-off can be found what was, until 1986, the mighty Great Western Railway's engineering workshops. This huge site now has new uses and has become home to STEAM, the Great Western Railway's museum attracting 100,000 visitors annually. It also boasts the largest designer outlet village in Europe, set to shortly expand even further to cater for the 3 million visitors who already visit it each year. The site is also fast becoming the place to be if involved in cultural activities, for The National Trust with its fine shop and restaurant, English Heritage and the National Monuments Record are already operating very successfully from the same location.

Importantly, Swindon's regeneration company and local council are very much behind the BPMA's proposals to relocate operations to Swindon, and they are actively working with BPMA staff to help facilitate this.

Nothing had quite prepared me for the sheer scale (around 41,000 square feet) of the proposed BPMA Grade Two Listed building, and it soon became apparent that the opportunity of creating a world-class postal museum and archive centre is immense. At the moment it is an empty shell in need of much work to bring it to the required standard, but with a little imagination it was easy to picture where the reception, archives, museum, cinema, offices, shop, galleries, search room and exhibition area would be sited.

Collectors appeared to have been happy with the King Edward Building which had previously housed the postal museum, and that was tiny in comparison, so everyone should be delighted at the progress already being made to secure the Swindon premises, where it could potentially open its doors as early as 2012. Crucially, the building would be owned by the BPMA, something that had proved impossible to achieve in London, where rental was the only option, with all the inherent costs and dangers that come with not being in charge of your own destiny.

I live in Essex, so naturally my local town would be my favoured location for the new museum, but that viewpoint probably applies to every current and potential user of the BPMA, wherever they live. The truth is that even London is not at all convenient for many collectors and researchers but, despite this, it is hoped that a continuing toe-hold will be maintained in the capital city, and a potential plan is currently being discussed to achieve this aim. As the main BPMA presence is not feasible in London, on cost grounds, and because of the non-availability of suitable premises, then I defy anyone to find a better location than the Swindon site. The *Bulletin* will continue to keep its readers up-to-date with developments concerning this exciting project •



A view of part of the proposed new location for the BPMA, in Swindon.

GB Collectors Club Enquire to: Larry Rosenblum, 1030 E El Camino Real, PMB107, Sunnyvale CA 94087 USA; e-mail lr@gbstamps.com or see www.gbstamps.com/gbcc

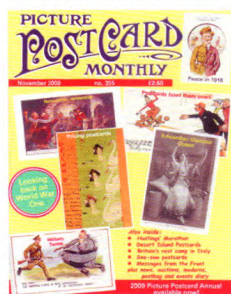
GB Philatelic Society Further information from Peter Tanner, Highstandings, 13 St Hubert's Close, Gerrards Cross SL9 7EN; e-mail petertannerHS13@talktalk.net

British Royal Portraits Stamp Group Cyril Parsons, 83 Ingram Avenue, Aylesbury HP21 9DH.

Society journals The latest issue of the *GB Chronicle* (GB Collectors Club) contains its usual interesting mix of member-related information (meetings, subscriptions, etc) and detailed articles on the philately of Great Britain from all eras. Number 117 includes features on Victorian postal stationery wrappers, official seals, a mystery cover, Machin stamps and a plating record on Queen Victorian Penny Red Stars, among other articles. There are 28 black-and-white pages and a coloured cover section. Subscriptions cost us\$35 for UK membership •

The latest issue of the *GB Journal*, the excellent publication from the Great Britain Philatelic Society, includes features on combination covers, the 'L4' late fee mark, the Post Office and the Colleges, the Truro Crown cancellation and unusual London District Office cancellations, plus the regular Focus on GB and KEVIN Notes. A detailed index to volume 46 is also included. Most articles are in colour and the 19 pages of advertising will prove invaluable to anyone hoping to build up their collection, whatever era interests them •

Newsletter 137 of the British Royal Portraits Stamp Group has recently been published, ably edited by Cyril Parsons who uses his 'From Your Editor' feature to promote the benefits of using the British Postal Museum & Archive (BPMA) for researching, and provides an update on relocation to Swindon. Within its six A4-sized colour pages are interesting features on new issues relating to British and overseas royalty. The main feature article for this newsletter relates to the George VI portrait used on the Crown Colonies' Coronation issue of 1937, written by Brian Livingstone •



Picture Postcard Monthly
15 Debdale Lane, Keyworth,
Nottingham NG12 5HT.

Picture Postcard Monthly This magazine has appeared for 355 monthly issues and continues to be of great value to anyone interested in this topic. Most stamp collectors own at least a few cards, whatever their philatelic interests, so are bound to find something of interest within its 60 A4-sized full-colour pages. Regular contents include: Fairs/Auction Diary, News Desk, Club Scene, Postbag, Time Traveller (an old card is contrasted with a recent photo of the same place), Freecard Gossip, Moderns News, Card Chat, Beginners, Website of the Month, What the Postman Saw (messages on the back of cards), Book Reviews, Auction Notes, Picture Postcard Puzzles, as well as articles on specific aspects of the hobby. Priced £2.60 (£32 for 12 issues, postpaid to UK addresses), it is available from postcard shops and fairs, or from Picture Postcard Monthly (address at left). Secure online orders can be placed at www.postcardcollecting.co.uk/subscribe.htm •

Stamp Preview and In-Phil A further Stamp Preview for the Golden Wedding stamp issue, dated November 1997, has been reported. A reader has notified me that In-Phil number 101 was printed 'for office use only', as customers received a special mailing for the new self-adhesive stamps that it related to. This issue is therefore assumed to be quite rare, although the British Philatelic Bureau Customer Services staff member who responded to the question posed by our reader stated that 'In-Phils are printed for information and order purposes only and are not philatelic items' •

First day cover catalogue A new edition of *Collecting British First Day Covers* has recently appeared at a cost of £14.75, plus £1.25 postage within the UK. Its 242 pages are crammed with hundreds of pictures of postmarks and covers, all of which are printed in colour on quality art paper. It is the only book of its kind to have been published annually since 1981, and includes details of all covers produced for British stamp issues from the 1840 Penny Black up to the 2008 autumn issues. A detailed introduction guides you through collecting FDCs and appears to have something for everyone – whether a beginner or a seasoned collector. This is not a price list, but a comprehensive guide to first day covers which have been produced over the years for British stamp issues, whether commemorative, definitive or country stamps. An online facility enables the downloading of postmark illustrations, which is a useful additional service for purchasers. Enquire to the address opposite, visit www.bfde.co.uk, or email brad@bfde.co.uk •



A G Bradbury 3 Link Road, Stoneygate, Leicester LE2 3RA.

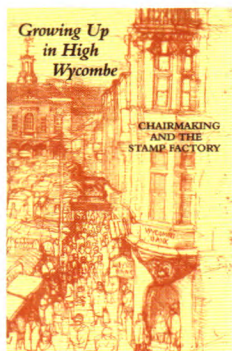
Memories of stamp printing *Growing Up in High Wycombe: Chairmaking and the Stamp Factory* is the title of a new book which gives an account of what it was like to grow up in the Buckinghamshire town of High Wycombe in the 1920s. It describes author Hubert Albert Berry's progress from childhood to his working life within the town. Affluence in the 1920s turned into near poverty in the 30s, as the depression hit hard. After the war in the 40s came a career in the 'Stamp Factory' (as folk from Wycombe called Harrison and Sons Ltd) at a time when opportunity was open to all, when business in the 50s was changing rapidly and new methods and technology were appearing at a rapid pace.

The initial 36 pages relate to early memories, school, family and chairmaking, and offer a most interesting read, but it is not stamp-related. It is pages 37 to 60 that will interest readers of the *Bulletin* the most, for Mr Berry recalls the period when he started at the company in 1947 through to 1960 when he moved on internally.

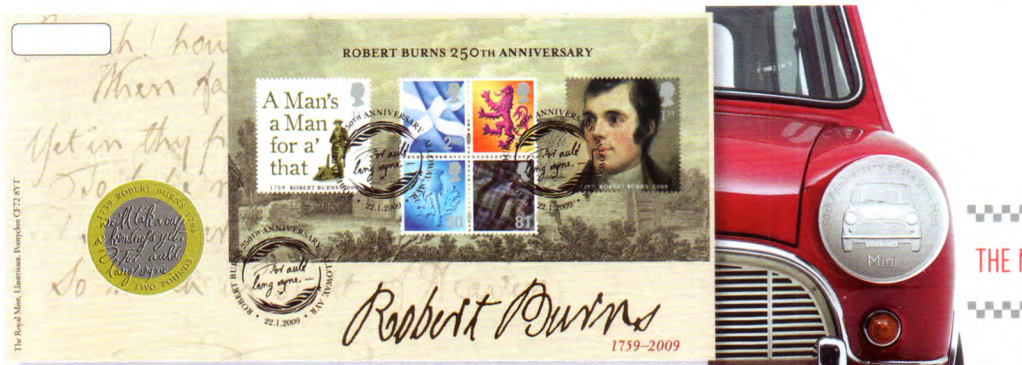
It is a worthwhile purchase for anyone with an interest in the late lamented Harrison and Sons who seeks first-hand reminiscences from a man who spent around five years managing the stamp production area. It fails to reveal anything new about production techniques or methods, for that was never the purpose of the book. What it does do so well is to clearly reveal to readers the human side of what it meant to work at Harrison and Sons. The book concludes: 'Sadly at the time of recalling these memories, neither the High Wycombe factory nor the company of Harrison's is any longer in existence.' Sad, indeed.

This hardback book, with its protective dust-jacket and more or less A5-sized pages is well printed and is illustrated with eight black-and-white images relating to the stamp factory, together with a further 32 images in section one. A useful book list brings the publication to a close.

Published by Rare Books and Berry, at £9.95, ISBN 978 0 95399 518 9. I obtained my copy from www.amazon.co.uk at a discounted price of £6.71 with free delivery, but it is also available from the publisher by visiting www.rarebooksandberry.co.uk •



Royal Mail news New issues and products



Robert Burns coin cover (22 January) and Design Classics Mini medal cover (13 January)

Coin and medal covers Devotees of our coin and medal covers will soon be able to add four interesting new covers to their collections.

A Mini medal cover goes on sale on 13 January, price £14.63, followed by a coin cover bearing the Robert Burns miniature sheet cancelled by a special Alloway postmark on 22 January, price £15.21. A Theory of Evolution coin cover bearing the Darwin stamps cancelled by a special Down House postmark, goes on sale on 12 February, priced £19.53. Down House was Darwin's home from the 1840s until his death in 1882. A Concorde medal cover, on sale from 2 March, marks the 40th anniversary of the first flight, of Concorde 001, price £14.63. Further details will follow shortly.

Coin covers are available from Tallents House, Post Office philatelic outlets, and selected po branches, medal covers from Tallents House only •

New stamp book series Three new stamp books are to be issued, containing Design Classics stamps and 1st class definitives (with security features). The first, containing four 1st class definitives and the Telephone Kiosk and Routemaster Bus stamps will be available from 10 March, price £2.16. This is followed on 21 April by a book containing two Mini stamps, and a third on 17 September with Spitfire and Concorde stamps. All self-adhesive, printed by Walsall •

New collection A Celebrating UK miniature sheet collection will be available from 26 February. Details will be given in next month's *Bulletin* •

Coming off sale Remaining stock of James Bond stamps, miniature sheet, miniature sheet press sheet and PSB will be withdrawn on 7 January, and Working Dogs on 4 February. The Smilers All Round generic sheet, issued January 2008, will be withdrawn on 13 January, and the Smilers stamp book, issued 17 October 2006, comes off sale on 27 February. This contains the New Baby, Best Wishes, Thank You, Balloons, Fireworks, and Champagne Bottle stamps, with standard (non-elliptical) perfs. The Houses of Lancaster & York miniature sheet press sheet will also be withdrawn 27 February •



TH ANNIVERSARY OF A BRITISH ICON

The Royal Mail, Llandudno, Porthcelyn, CF73 9YT



THE CATHEDRALS SILVER STAMP COLLECTION

BELFAST CATHEDRAL

Belfast Cathedral, the second issue in the new Silver Stamp Collection (27 January)

Silver stamps The second in our new Silver Stamp Collection will be available from 27 January. This reproduces the 48p Belfast Cathedral stamp of May 2008. Silver stamps, manufactured in 999 sterling silver, use processes pioneered and patented by the Royal Dutch Mint, in Utrecht, Netherlands. The stamp is housed in a sealed blister, to protect the high-quality finish and help prevent tarnishing. Silver stamps are not valid for postage. The collection includes a card with two views of the cathedral and bearing the 48p Cathedral stamp cancelled by a special Belfast postmark of 27 January. Available from Tallents House, price £24.42. Limited edition of 3000. The next in the series will be available from 28 April. Collectors placing a regular order for this collection will receive a booklet about Cathedral stamps and a collection box ●

2009 issues Details of this month's special stamps – Design Classics (13 January) and Robert Burns (22 January) were given here in September and October. Next month's issues comprise stamps and a miniature sheet commemorating Charles Darwin (12 February) and a Celebrating Wales miniature sheet (26 February). This month we preview the Plants stamps and miniature sheet for issue on 19 May ●

Favourite stamp poll If you haven't voted yet for your favourite stamps and *Bulletin* author of 2008 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 16 January to: 2008 Bulletin Poll, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail Letters, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HQ ●

2009 first day postmarks The special issues of the early part of 2009 are listed opposite, with the alternative first day of issue postmarks. Please note that the issue date for the Pioneers of the Industrial Revolution issue has been brought forward one week, from 17 to 10 March ●

13.01 Design Classics: Longbridge, Birmingham

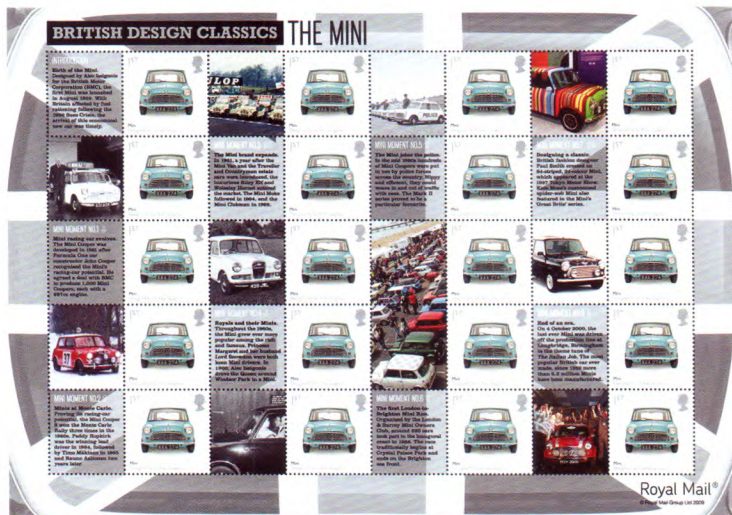
22.01 Robert Burns: Alloway, Ayr

12.02 Charles Darwin: Shrewsbury

26.02 Celebrating Wales miniature sheet: Tyddewi, St Davids

10.03 Industrial Revolution Pioneers: Steam Mills, Cinderford

21.04 Monarchs – House of Tudor: London SE10



The Design Classics Mini and Concorde generic sheets are printed in litho by Cartor.

New Generic sheets The first of this year's generic sheets, 'Design Classics – The Mini', goes on sale on 13 January. It contains 20 1st class Mini stamps plus labels telling the story of this famous car with evocative images of it and its enthusiastic drivers; price £7.74. The Mini was launched in August 1959. With Britain affected by fuel rationing following the Suez Crisis in 1956, the arrival of this economical new car was timely. Over the next 40 years it became the most popular British car ever; by the time production ceased in October 2000, over 5.3 million cars had been produced.

A sheet bearing 20 of the 1st class Concorde stamps from the Design Classics set will be available from 2 March, marking the 40th anniversary of the first Concorde flight. The labels feature images of Concorde with a short history of this iconic aircraft. In November 1962 Britain and France agreed to jointly build a supersonic aircraft, and in March 1969 Concorde prototype 001 took off from Toulouse and made its first flight. A month later Concorde 002 completed its maiden flight from Filton near Bristol ●

Security features for definitive stamps Changes are being made to 1st and 2nd class standard and 'Large' definitive stamps, and the 50p, £1, £1.50, £2, £3, and £5 values. Future printings will all be self-adhesive (except rolls), and will feature four small semi-circular slits within the stamp, to prevent their removal from envelopes. In addition each will be printed with iridescent ink featuring a security pattern on the darker colour around the Queen's head. The stamps will be printed in gravure by De La Rue, now in sheets of 50 instead of the current 200 (standard 2nd and 1st, 50p, £1 and high values) and 100 (Large). The change will also affect books (6 × 1st, 12 × 1st and 12 × 2nd standard, 4 × 1st and 4 × 2nd Large, business sheets of 100 2nd and 1st class standard, and of 50 2nd and 1st class Large Letter stamps, and stamp rolls (500 and 1000 1st and 2nd class standard). The new stamps are due to be issued on 17 February 2009. First day services will be

provided as these are regarded as new stamps. Two serviced FDCs will be available, bearing the NV1, 50p and £1 stamps (£4.00 UK customers, £3.48 overseas), or the high value stamps (£13.69 UK, £11.91 overseas). Please state if Tallents House or Windsor postmark required. Orders should reach Tallent House by the day of issue. Collectors can send their own stamped covers to Tallents House or to their nearest Special Handstamp Centre for the Windsor postmark. Two presentation packs will be available: NV1 and 50p and £1 stamps, price £3.60; high value stamps price £12 •

Submitting covers Readers are reminded that when submitting covers for special handstamps to Royal Mail's Special Handstamp Centres, the outer cover must bear full postage. Mail posted without payment, marked 'Free-post' (which does not apply to SHCs), or sent in the Royal Mail plastic 'see-through' envelopes used for the return of covers to collectors, may be subject to delay and refusal. Readers are also reminded that covers and cards submitted for handstamping must bear a return address – Royal Mail reserves the right to return any un-addressed items uncanceled. The address can be typed, handwritten (in ink or pencil), rubber-stamped, or by using an address label. However 'Post It' notes should not be used for this purpose as they can easily become detached.

The addresses of Royal Mail's Special Handstamp Centres are shown opposite •

London Special Handstamp Centre Royal Mail, Mount Pleasant, London EC1A 1BB

Wales & The West Special Handstamp Centre 220-228 Penarth Road, Cardiff CF11 8TA

Scotland & Northern Ireland Special Handstamp Centre Rutherglen DO, Duchess Place, Rutherglen, Glasgow G73 1BT

Northern England Special Handstamp Centre South Shields DO, Keppell Street, South Shields NE33 1AA

Midland Special Handstamp Centre Birmingham Mail Centre, St Stephens Street, Birmingham B6 4AA

British Postal Museum & Archive Currently on show at the Museum is an exhibition marking the 50th anniversary of country (regional) stamps. The BPMA is open Monday to Wednesday and Friday 10.00-17.00, Thursday 10.00-19.00, also certain Saturdays – see website for dates. Details of lectures and film shows are given in our Events listing. The BPMA, located at Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London WC1X 0DL (near Mount Pleasant), contains the collections of the former National Postal Museum and Post Office Archives •

BPMA For further information telephone the BPMA on 020 7239 2570 or see website www.postalheritage.org.uk

Storing your Bulletins Binders and box files are available for storing this and the *Postmark Bulletin*. The sturdy box files, in maroon for the *Philatelic Bulletin* and green for the *Postmark Bulletin* are available from Royal Mail Tallents House, price £9.95 each. Order codes: PB349 (Philatelic), PB350 (Postmark). The files will store 30 copies of the Philatelic and about 50 of the Postmark Bulletins. The traditional binders for the Philatelic and Postmark Bulletins cost £8.50 (order codes BB001 and PB322 respectively) •

Collect British Stamps A reminder that the 2009 (60th) edition of the popular Stanley Gibbons *Collect British Stamps* colour checklist is now available, price £9.95, from Royal Mail Tallents House as well as from Stanley Gibbons, and stamp and book shops •

Checklist of 2008 definitives

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



Above: stamp panes from the James Bond (8 January) and RAF Uniforms (18 September) prestige stamp books. Right: Country stamps anniversary (29 September), Celebrating Northern Ireland (11 March) and Last We Forget No 3 (6 November) miniature sheets.

Notes Printers are designated C (Cartor), D (De La Rue), and W (Walsall), and printing process G (gravure) or L (litho) • All stamps are perforation gauge 15 x 14 with two phosphor bands (2nd class standard size, one band) • The dates quoted are those the stamps were first available from Tallents House; in some instances they may have been available earlier at Post Office branches or retail outlets to meet postal needs • All 2nd class Machin definitive stamps are printed in bright blue, 1st class in gold.

Machin definitives

8 January 1st gold, L, D from James Bond prestige book (YB033), also printed by W in RAF Uniforms prestige book (18 September, YB035).

1 April 15p shocking pink (DS151); 56p lime green (DS560); 81p sea green (DS810), all G, D. The 9p stamp (orange DS090) was re-issued at Post Office branches from 1 April; it had not been withdrawn from sale at Tallents House.

Pictorial 'Smilers' definitives (self-adhesive)

15 January 1st class Union Flag, Hello, and LOVE stamps, L, C, elliptical perfs from 'I wrote to say' Smilers All Round generic sheet (AT041), also from 'Green and pleasant land', 'Just wanted to say', and 'Sending you my...' Smilers sheets.

28 February Union Flag, Hello, Flower, Balloons, Fireworks, and Champagne bottle stamps, G, W, elliptical perfs, from 6 x 1st stamp book (UB286).

28 October New Baby, Flower and Balloons stamps, L, C, elliptical perfs from Smilers for Kids packs (in sheets of 10) and themed sheets of 20 (packs SK001-004; themed sheets SK005-008).

Country stamps

11 March Northern Ireland 1st class (Fields) L, C, self-adhesive in 'Glorious Northern Ireland' generic/Smilers sheets (Generic sheet AT040).



Above: Country stamps PSB pane (29 September). Left: shocking pink, lime green and sea green issues (1 April).



11 March Northern Ireland 1st class (Giant's Causeway and Carrickfergus Castle), L, D in 'Celebrating Northern Ireland' miniature sheet (MZ048).

1 April 50p: England (ES500), Scotland (SS500), Wales (WS500), Northern Ireland (IS500). 81p: England (ES810), Scotland (SS810), Wales (WS810), Northern Ireland (IS810) G, D.

29 September N Ireland, Scotland, Wales 1st class in designs of 1958 3d, 6d and 1s3d – three stamps for each country. G, D, cream background in Country stamps anniversary miniature sheet (MZ051), L, D, white background in Country stamps PSB (YB035).

29 September England, N Ireland, Scotland, Wales 1st class, L, C, elliptical perfs from 'Glorious UK' generic sheet (AT044).

6 November 81p England, Scotland, Wales, and N Ireland L, D, previous printings G, in 'Lest We Forget' miniature sheet, D (MZ053).

Mixed value stamp/label panes & miniature sheets

8 January Pane of 8 × 1st class definitive (gold) L, D, and central label showing typewriter in *Ian Fleming's James Bond* prestige book (YB033).

11 March 'Celebrating Northern Ireland' miniature sheet containing 1st class Giant's Causeway and Carrickfergus Castle stamps (new designs), plus two special stamps, L, D (MZ048).

18 September Pane of 4 × 2nd and 4 × 1st definitives and central label showing RAF roundel in *RAF Uniforms* prestige stamp book, L, W (YB034).

29 September Three panes of 6 × 1st class Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales country stamps – three of current Country stamp design, three in designs of 1958 3d, 6d, and 1s3d Regional stamps, L, D from Country Stamps prestige book (YB035).

29 September Pane of nine 1st class country stamps, three each for Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales in designs of the 1958 3d, 6d, and 1s3d Regionals, L, D, from Country Stamps PSB (YB035).

29 September 50th anniversary of Country stamps miniature sheet containing 1st class stamps for N Ireland, Scotland and Wales in designs of 1958 3d, 6d, and 1s3d stamps. G, D, cream paper background (MZ051). Also sold in 'press sheet' containing 15 miniature sheets (PZ007).

6 November 'Lest We Forget' miniature sheet No 3 containing one each of England, Scotland, Wales and N Ireland 81p country stamps, and 1st class special stamp (Poppy), L, D (MZ053).

Stamp books

8 January *Ian Fleming's James Bond* prestige book containing panes of 1st class definitive and James Bond stamps, D (YB033).

15 January 4 × 1st class definitive and 2 × pictorial definitive 'LOVE' stamps plus labels, all with elliptical perfs, W (UB285). Stamps as in 2007 book. ►

28 February 6 × 1st class pictorial definitives (Hello, Flower, Union Flag, Balloons, Fireworks, Champagne Bottle), G, W (UB286).

13 May 4 × 1st class definitives and 2 × special stamps (Beside the Seaside 1st class, now self-adhesive) G, W (UB287).

10 June 6 × 1st class definitive, Carry On stamps advert on inside front cover, G, W (UB288).

18 September *RAF Uniforms* prestige book containing panes of definitive and RAF Uniforms stamps, L, W (YB033).

29 September Country Stamps Anniversary prestige book containing panes of 1st class country stamps in current designs and NVI versions of 1958 Regionals designs L, D (YB035).

Business sheets (self-adhesive)

None

Generic/Themed sheets

15 January 'I wrote to say...' 20 × 1st class pictorial definitives: 8 × LOVE, 6 × 'Hello' and 6 × Union Flag with adjoining circular labels, self-adhesive, L, C (AT041). Also available as Smilers sheets, with customised image on labels, 20 × Union Flag (headed 'Green and pleasant land'), 20 × LOVE (Sending you my...) and 20 × 'Hello' (Just wanted to say).

11 March 'Glorious Northern Ireland': 20 × Northern Ireland 1st class, self-adhesive (all previous printings gummed) L, C, non-elliptical perfs (AT040). Also available as Smilers sheets, with customised image on labels.

29 September Glorious UK: 5 × 1st class England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, with country scenes on adjoining labels, L, C, with elliptical perfs (AT044).

28 October Smilers for Kids: pictorial definitives with adjoining circular labels, L, C, elliptical perfs. Packs

with sheets of 10, or Themed sheets of 20 – New Baby stamp (Peter Rabbit pack SK002, sheet SK006), Flower stamp (Flower Fairies pack SK001, sheet SK005), Balloons stamp (Noddy pack SK003, sheet SK007), Balloons stamp (Mr Men/Little Miss pack SK004, sheet SK008). Note sheets of 10 in packs with labels, games, stationery, etc.

Presentation packs

1 April 15p, 56p and 81p new definitives (DP053).

1 April 50p and 81p Country stamps for England, N Ireland, Scotland and Wales (CP025).

11 March 'Celebrating Northern Ireland' miniature sheet containing 1st class Giant's Causeway and Carrickfergus stamps and two special stamps (AP291).

29 September 50th Anniversary of Country stamps miniature sheet (1st class stamps in designs of 1958 3d, 6d, and 1s3d Regionals) (CP026).

29 September Country stamps Collectors Pack containing 2nd, 1st, 50p and 81p stamps for England, N Ireland, Scotland and Wales (CR002).

8 November 'Lest We Forget' miniature sheet No 3 containing four 81p country stamps and 1st class special Poppy stamp (AP302).

Stamp cards

11 March Northern Ireland 1st class stamps showing Carrickfergus Castle and Giant's Causeway, in set of five, including cards showing large-size 81p stamps and Celebrating Northern Ireland miniature sheet (AQ118).

29 September Machin definitives 1p-£5 and NVI stamps, 24 cards (DQ021).

29 September Country stamps in 1958 designs, three cards each for Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, and card reproducing miniature sheet, 10 cards (CQ001) ●

Robert Burns A selection of labels from the series published by Peter Westwood

ROBERT BURNS was born in a humble cottage, built by his father, in Alloway, near Ayr on 25 January 1759. In 1959, despite a lengthy campaign for bicentenary stamps, none were issued, although the GPO allowed the small sub post office at Ayr to open on the anniversary day, which was a Sunday. Hundreds of covers, both special and plain, were handed in for cancellation with the office datestamp; one such cover is shown below, top left.

From 1956 onwards, labels featuring Burns were issued by the Scottish Secretariat and other organizations. These were not postally valid but were regularly used on mail alongside the normal stamps. Since 1969, Burns scholar Peter Westwood has produced dozens of different labels, or essays as he calls them, to commemorate events and anniversaries in Burns' life. Some of these labels are featured here together with his latest productions to mark the 250th anniversary of the poet's birth. Full details can be obtained from the address opposite. Mr Westwood, the Editor of *The Burns Chronicle*, has written the presentation pack for the forthcoming miniature sheet marking the 250th anniversary •

Peter Westwood 1 Cairnsmore Road, Castle Douglas DG7 1BN; e-mail peter@cairnsmore1.freeserve.co.uk

BI-CENTENARY

of
Scotland's National Poet
1759-1959



ROBERT BURNS
(The Naughton Portrait with permission of National Gallery)
Postmarked at Poets Birthplace
Alloway, Ayrshire
25th January, 1959



**250th
Anniversary
Birth of
ROBERT
BURNS**



1759

2008

UNITED STATES POSTAGE : \$1

*That Man to Man, the World o'er
Shall brothers be for a' that.*



PETER J. WESTWOOD

*Peter J. Westwood
2008*



Plants The next set in the Action for Species



TEN 1ST CLASS STAMPS and a miniature sheet featuring plants and Kew Gardens go on sale at Post Office branches and philatelic outlets and Royal Mail Tallents House on 19 May – the third in the Action for Species series, following the Birds and Insects stamps of September 2007 and April 2008. The stamps depict some of the UK's 450 wild plants at risk: Round-headed Leek, Floating Water-plantain, Lady's Slipper Orchid, Dwarf Milkwort, Marsh Saxifrage, Downy Woundwort, Upright Spurge, Plymouth Pear, Sea Knotgrass, and Deptford Pink, using illustrations from the Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew and the Natural History Museum, London.

The stamps and sheet were designed by Studio Dempsey and litho printed by Cartor, in sheets of 30 (for Post Office branches) or 60 (for Tallents House and philatelic outlets). The stamps, 35mm square, have a phosphor background screen and perforation 14.5.

The miniature sheet comprises two 1st class and two 81p stamps depicting Palm House, Kew Gardens; Millennium Seed Bank, Wakehurst Place; Pagoda, Kew Gardens; and Sacklet Crossing, Kew Gardens.

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Orders for serviced FDCs must reach Tallents House by the day of issue. Collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue to: Royal Mail Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB (Tallents House postmark), or to the nearest Royal Mail Special Handstamp Centre (Kew postmark) marking the outer envelope 'FDO913' or 'FDO914'. For details of sponsored handstamps and addresses of the Handstamp Centres see the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from Tallents House (£12.25 UK/Europe, £24.95 elsewhere). For a free sample copy write to: The Editor, British Postmark Bulletin, Royal Mail Letters, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HQ •

series features ten of the UK's most endangered wild plants



Set of stamps	£3.60
Miniature sheet	£2.34
Presentation pack (stamps and sheet)	£6.45
Miniature sheet press sheet	£0.00
First day cover envelope	£0.30
Serviced FDC: stamps (UK customers)	£4.61
Serviced FDC: stamps (overseas customers)	£4.01
Serviced FDC: miniature sheet (UK customers)	£3.16
Serviced FDC: miniature sheet (overseas customers)	£2.75
Stamp cards set (15)	£5.85



An illustrated pack, written by Gail Vines, gives details of each of the endangered plants shown on the stamps. The pack was designed by Russell Warren-Fisher, and printed by Walsall Security Printers.

UK plant distribution map
← 1930

IN THE UK, about 30 per cent of our native flora is now threatened with national extinction - amounting to more than 450 species of wild plants. Nearly as many again are worryingly scarce. This means that almost two in every five of our wild plants are of conservation concern. Agricultural practices, urbanisation, pollution, over-exploitation, the spread of invasive alien species and climate change have all contributed to this alarming decline in Britain's wild plants.

Species under threat...

Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorber Road
Ilkeston
Derbyshire
DE7 4AB

UK plant distribution map
2000 →

PLANTS
UK SPECIES IN RECOVERY

Royal Mail First Day Cover



Royal Mail: Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB

a few woodlands in Gloucestershire and Monmouthshire. Cessation of tree-cutting and coppicing, which traditionally created well-lit clearings, is probably to blame for its decline.

PLYMOUTH PEAR (*Pyrus cordata*) is a unique British wild pear, discovered in 1863 in hedge-banks outside the city of Plymouth. Today, only a few hundred trees exist in just seven locations.

SEA KNOTGRASS (*Polygonum maritimum*) grows just above the high-tide level in a few places along the southern coast of England and Ireland. A Mediterranean species on the edge of its range in southern Britain, it is vulnerable to exceptional tides.

DEPTFORD PINK (*Dianthus armeria*) was once widespread, but over the past 60 years it has suffered one of the most rapid declines of any species in the British flora, as the dry pastures, field borders and hedgerows it needs have steadily disappeared. It is now restricted to about two dozen sites in England and Wales.

The featured distribution maps are based upon map schemes from the Botanical

The miniature sheet is shown at proof stage; the 81p values are subject to confirmation.

Round-headed Leek
Floating Water-plantain
Lady's Slipper Orchid
Dwarf Milkwort
Marsh Saxifrage
Downy Woundwort

A Churchill collection The beginnings and



The scope for a Churchill collection is immense. It is a vast subject, and an important one, not only as he is considered by many the 'Greatest Briton', but also because his legacy is as strong and as relevant today as it has been at any time in the past.

THE QUESTION OF HOW I entered the hobby of philately has been put to me on many occasions. Philately has been part of my life for as long as I can remember due to my father being a collector for over 25 years. When I was younger, I did observe my father writing up material, and occasionally looked through his collections; I also accompanied him on visits to our local society in Colchester, but was not persuaded to collect. I was still not interested at the age of 10, when I decided not to visit The Stamp Show 2000, which I regret, particularly as a show on that scale is unlikely to be held in Britain again. It was not until 2002, after a visit to Stampex, that I decided collecting was something I would like to pursue.

Once I had decided to start collecting, the challenge was to find a subject which could be meaningfully pursued, but one which was not too complex in nature. I decided to choose 'famous people', which meant any famous person, from any country, on any stamp. It was of course a thematic subject, an area which many new collectors, particularly younger ones, choose to begin with. I pursued this line for a number of months, acquiring a substantial amount of material before realising that the field was far too large and that specialisation was necessary. I did not dispense with my criteria of 'famous people' but felt any subject should reflect my great interest in history, particularly modern British history (19th century onwards). The question was, which British person dominated the 20th century, and who appears on enough stamps to enable the formation of a sizeable collection. Of course it did not take long to determine that Winston Churchill would be the right person to select.

Thus began the task of assembling a basic stamp collection. I began by visiting local fairs and putting out a general request for Churchill material. At first I was simply interested in acquiring stamps with a direct connection to Churchill such as stamps with his image on. However, it quickly became apparent that this did not provide the basis for any form of story, display or exhibit. A wider scope was required. With Churchill, like any theme centred on one person, the options are generally limited to illustrating their life story or the events which occurred during their lifetime. I decided to go with the former option. It was at this point that I decided that I should begin to write up my collection for the purposes of entering a competition. I wrote up 32 sheets over a period of about eight months. By the standard of my current exhibit, the first was basic to say the least. I dealt with the main events of Churchill's life, namely: Early Life, First World War and Years of Appeasement, Second World War, Later Life, Death and Legacy. The exhibit consisted primarily of stamps, with a number of other covers and one propaganda card – one of my first major purchases.

developments of a challenging subject, by Simon Moorcroft

1. Sowing the Seeds of Greatness

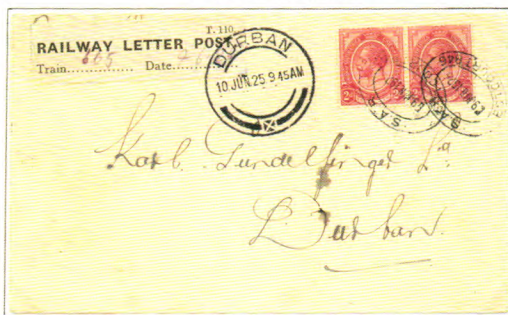
1.5. Seeking Adventure



Cover redirected to internecine at officer's prisoner of war camp in Pretoria. 'USA Consulate Pretoria' and 'Gezien Censor' cachets are latest recorded examples

Churchill's arrival in Durban caused a sensation with him being hailed a war hero. This achieved much publicity in Britain.

Railway Letter Post from Estcourt to Durban



By October 1899 Churchill was in Cape Town as a correspondent working for the Morning Post where he obtained an invitation to travel aboard an armoured train into Boer occupied territory. The train was ambushed and Churchill was taken prisoner.

He was taken to the officer's POW camp at a former school in Pretoria. On 12th December Churchill escaped and evaded re-capture due to his determination and good luck.



Churchill's escape route

After escaping from the camp Churchill hid in a mine and stowed away aboard firstly a train travelling through neutral Portuguese Mozambique and then a ship. Churchill was able to reach Durban by December 23rd.



This card, produced by the Nazis in 1940, lampoons Churchill and shows a battleship being broken over his head. The inscription 'WERT Keinen PFENNIG' translates to 'not worth a farthing', and the value is crossed out. These cards, although not particularly scarce (except those printed on greyish white card), are hard to obtain. Over the following years I have acquired many hundreds of items, of which a good number, sadly, are not allowed in competition. I would highlight though a number of important acquisitions. The first is a cover sent from the officers' prisoner of war camp in Pretoria in 1900 bearing the cachet 'PRISONER OF WAR PRETORIA'. This camp was where Churchill was taken after being captured by the Boers following the ambushing of an armoured train on which he was travelling.

The second item is a telegram sent by Churchill to Willy Sax in Switzerland. Sax was one of the finest manufacturers and suppliers of artists' materials in the world, and supplied many leading artists of the day. Churchill

Above left: a page from Simon Moorcroft's display. There are many 'Churchill' issues, such as the two 1965 stamps and the National Portrait Gallery stamp of 2006 above, but the author found that these alone would not provide a sufficient basis for the story.



Above and on opposite page, two items from the author's collection. Churchill had seen in 1942 that a pre-fabricated harbour would be needed for the D Day landings in Europe, and so the Mulberry Harbours were created.

wrote to him often, requesting paint and other materials to be sent to England. Churchill had taken up painting after leaving office in 1929 and it was an important distraction during his wilderness years, in the 1930s. He never lost his passion for the hobby, publishing a book on the subject, *Painting as a Pastime*, in 1946. The third item, and probably the rarest piece I have, is a letter signed by Churchill, dated 1927, when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer. Most of his signatures date from 1940 onwards, so to find an earlier example in good condition is quite rare.

The first major competition I entered was the British Youth Championships in 2004, where I was awarded the Stanley Gibbons Cup for the best entry in my particular class. I was persuaded by this early success to carry on with competitive philately. It had become evident that the exhibit needed to expand, and a more coherent story had to evolve. I decided that I needed to expand out the sections with particular emphasis on enlarging the areas relating to his early life and the Second World War. I began to explore the man himself, looking at some of his beliefs and focusing on his attributes, and moved the story away from just Churchill to take into account the wider context.

In the past four years I have entered a number of thematic competitions including Essex Federation, where I was placed second; the British Youth Championships in 2007, where I won the Urch Harris Trophy and the Melville Cup, for the best overall exhibit in the youth class, and the FIP international exhibition, Belgica 2006 where I won a silver medal. Participating in these competitions has been of great benefit, and the experience invaluable. I now plan to enter the youth one-frame competition at London 2010.

Expanding the collection, and in particular the competitive exhibit, is not an easy task. The theme of Churchill is possibly one of the most challenging to collect. This is not due to a lack of information. Indeed, more has probably been written about the life and legacy of Winston Churchill than any other individual in British history. Thus the challenge presented to anyone researching Churchill, particularly for the purposes of a philatelic collection, is not to find information, but rather to adopt an approach which is sufficiently analytical so that unwanted details can be excluded. This is a real challenge with such a vast array of source material available, but nonetheless vital if one is to progress.

The official biography, which Churchill's son Randolph began, writing two volumes before his death, and which was completed by Oxford historian Martin Gilbert, runs to eight volumes with a further 23 companion volumes (some as yet unpublished) of background correspondence, notes and private papers. In addition to this are hundreds of other biographies, some written during Churchill's life and many since his death. There are also many books written by Churchill himself. Many provide a very useful account of his life, although some, such as *The Second World War*, are more

memoirs, and hence biased in his favour, rather than historical accounts. His biography of Marlborough, for which he won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1953, is considered one of the most important biographical works ever written.

The second cause of difficulty is the fact that while Churchill is the overall theme, there are possibly up to 100 other themes that also relate to the story. This makes finding material far more difficult, because one cannot simply ask to view Churchill material. For example when trying to illustrate Churchill's support for nuclear power one cannot look under Churchill and no dealer is likely to organise stock into such specific categories as 'nuclear energy'. Thus one has no choice but simply to search at random through stock in the hope of finding the right item. In this particular case I was lucky in being able to find a specimen strike of the official handstamp for the Atomic Energy Office, taken from a ledger of specimen official handstamps.

Another problem I have encountered is that certain aspects of Churchill's life, in particular specific events, are almost impossible to illustrate with philatelic material. In the autumn of 1897, while in India, Churchill joined a small force which travelled to the North West Frontier to quash a number of small-scale rebellions by Afghan tribes. Indeed, this expedition was to form the basis of his book, *The Story of the Malakand Field Force*. However, it is widely agreed among experts that mail from this expedition, and similar ones to it, do not exist. This means illustrating this period is virtually impossible. The same is true for other aspects of his life.

However, that is not to say that the scope for expanding the exhibit is not there. I have extended the approach greatly since I began collecting, and that is something I will continue to do. I wish to do this on three fronts. The first area, and the easiest to expand, is the section illustrating his life story, which is what the current collection focuses on. The second section would consider what made Churchill the man he was. I hope to show how his childhood, the connection with his great ancestors, such as John Churchill, and other factors moulded the man into a great national figure who believed his destiny was to save Great Britain and the Empire from decline and destruction. I also wish to explore the issue of his legacy. His impact on the modern British state, and in particular our political system, must not be underestimated. He continues to attract huge respect, even today, in this country and across the world, and that requires recognition in any specialist collection.

The scope for the collection to develop is immense. The subject is a vast one and one which is of great importance, not only given that he is the Greatest Briton but also because his legacy is as strong and relevant today as it has been at any time in the past. The research and work I have put into the collection has given me great pleasure. The knowledge that I have gained through the process has been invaluable •



Churchill played a significant role in the planning for D Day, and visited the Normandy beaches on 12 June, six days after the invasion.



The author, Publicity Officer of the British Thematic Association. His father, Alan, is Senior Vice President of the Royal Philatelic Society London.

Icons of a century Richard West meets the

Pierre Vermeir, who designed the Design Classics stamps says 'The best stamp designs by miles are those of Great Britain.' Richard West interviewed the designer to learn more about his work on this issue, and his high opinion of British stamps.

PIERRE VERMEIR, having trained as a designer, decided to leave his native Belgium in 1983, and to settle in London. He was convinced then, and still believes today, that London is the Mecca for design, so 20 years ago, with two others who have

since left the company, established a design studio called 'HGV'. In 1993 he took a bold step and made an approach to Barry Robinson, who was then Royal Mail's Design Director – after all, Royal Mail is 'one of those clients every designer in the country would like to work for'. The gamble paid off, and Pierre was asked to design the presentation pack that accompanied the stamp issue marking the opening of the Channel Tunnel, in 1994. Soon afterwards came his first stamp commission, for the Medical Discoveries set, also issued in 1994.

The latest series to be designed by HGV is that featuring British Design Classics of the 20th century, issued on 13 January. As with most new British special issues, a fairly specific design brief was sent to a number of design studios, the brief differing for each studio, so that Royal Mail can assess different treatments of the same subject. One of these was sent to HGV.

Pierre regarded the task as fairly straightforward, believing the designs should speak for themselves – 'why embellish with elements that might distract from the iconic designs?' Of the ten icons finally selected, Royal Mail had already firmed up on six, and Pierre was able to offer his own suggestions. He felt there was a need to ensure a balanced set, and that it was not just about design but also engineering. Thus furniture would fit alongside a double deck bus and Concorde. Not all the possible icons could be used: there are only 10 stamps. Considered but not finally included for example were the iPod and Dyson cleaner, both British designs.

Pierre realised that for the final stamps he would have to use specially commissioned photographs, but initially he mocked-up his designs using images obtained elsewhere, until all were satisfied with the final choice and how the items would be seen. He felt that showing the likes of the aircraft, Routemaster and Mini as frontal views better fills the space on the stamp, and ensures that they become the focus of attention, each shown in a proud way. There is always a need to look at the entire set, and to determine how the designs will fit together, in addition to how they appear on their own. Throughout, he worked with his team at HGV.

Once satisfied came the task of commissioning a photographer able to appreciate the style needed for each stamp: that photographer was Jason Tozer. Now came the real challenge of the commission, finding the objects to be photographed. For example, the Royal Air Force Museum at Hendon has a Spitfire, but clearly not in flight. The Victoria & Albert Museum has a miniskirt, but would not allow it to be worn by a model in order to be photographed; an approach was therefore made to Mary Quant, who was able to supply the right skirt. As Concorde no longer flies, it was necessary to visit a museum in Germany where one is kept; it took some care-

designer of the new Design Classics stamps



ful manoeuvring to obtain just the right angle. The Mini came from the car collection at Beaulieu. The polypropylene chair was provided by its creator, Robin Day. An enthusiast in Sussex revamps telephone kiosks to ensure they are completely accurate: the equipment seen inside is totally correct. The lamp came from Anglepoise. The book came from Penguin Books; Royal Mail was keen that the cover should be of a work by a British woman writer. The Routemaster and Underground map came from the collection in the London Transport Museum. Although to translate the resultant photographs into the stamp format was fairly straightforward, some retouching was needed, for example, to give the feeling of motion to the propellers of the Spitfire.

As Pierre explains, 'These designs have all evolved over the years, so on the stamps we are not necessarily showing the very first concept, but the form in which the particular item is most recognisable. With designs that remained in use for some time, it is inevitable that modifications occurred, but the basic concept is retained. I admit that having all the items photographed in a proud way, as objects of art, looks very simple, but from a design point of view, we learned so much we did not know before. It was the most challenging of all the designs we have so far created for Royal Mail.'

Royal Mail also asked HGV to design the prestige stamp book to accompany the stamps. It was known that the text would look at design in fairly general terms, but initially nothing had been written: Pierre was thus able to specify the number of words required. The idea was to provide a few facts and figures, and to add a bit of history surrounding the icons featured. Similarly, in selecting the illustrations, Pierre was keen not just to focus on the designs chosen for the stamps, but also to create a feeling for the time during which these objects were created, putting them into context. Thus included is a view of King's Road in Chelsea, at one time at the forefront of all that was innovative in British design. Finding the right images was not difficult: discovering the owners of the illustrations was far more difficult, and took a considerable time. ►

The Design Classics stamps, issued on 13 January.



Pierre Vermeir, designer of the Design Classics stamps.

Looking back on his previous stamp designs for Royal Mail, Pierre found the Medical Discoveries set a challenge because he could not feature recognisable people, and also because he could not predict how the 'pixel' effect between the two illustrations on each design would work in print.

With the Nobel Prize stamps, Pierre felt that, as the prizes themselves recognise innovation, so the stamps had to be innovative, and so used techniques in their printing not previously used for British stamps.

Once it had been decided to use illustrations for the set to honour J R R Tolkien, it was clear which drawings to use. The task was then to fine-tune them to the stamp format: even the typeface used was designed by HGV.

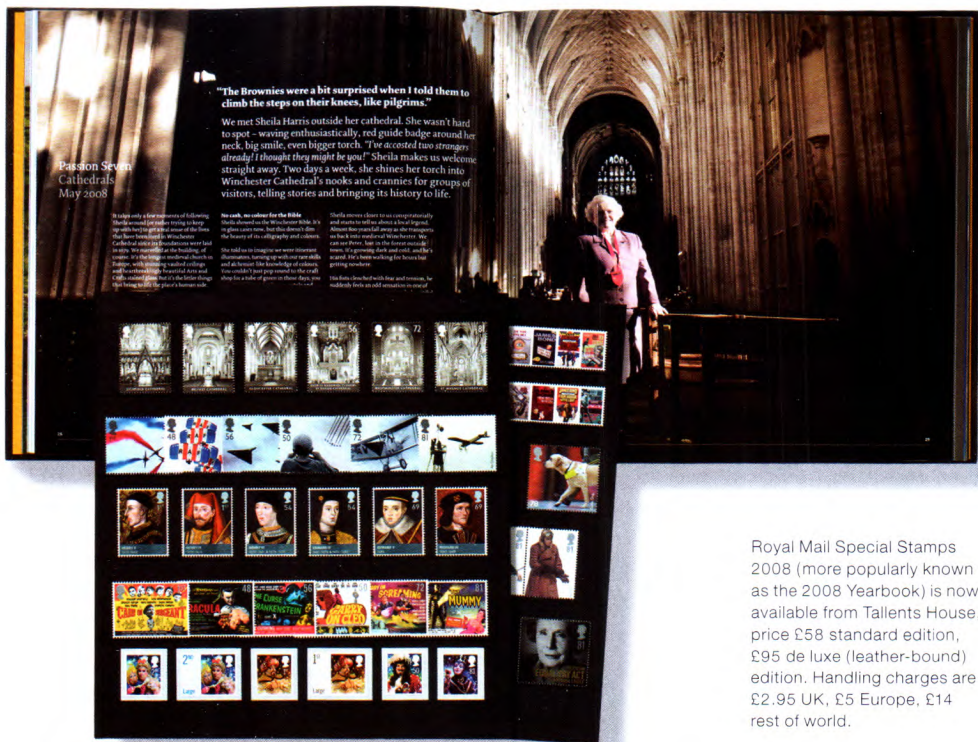
How has Pierre found the task of stamp design? 'I find it very exciting and stimulating. Royal Mail has a fantastic approach to stamp design, and is very sophisticated as a client. The best stamp designs by miles are those of Great Britain. The subject matter chosen, plus the choice of designers and illustrators, stands out in the world of stamp design. Royal Mail is the best client I have and I love the relationship, a working relationship, working together to make the best of the project. There is a need to be accurate and professional, and not controversial, although it is inevitable that those who are passionate about the subject matter of a stamp may offer comments. However, with Royal Mail there is always mutual respect.' ●

Text © Richard West 2009

Fourteen passions Martin Robinson looks at the new *Royal Mail Special Stamps 2008*

THE 2008 YEARBOOK contains all of the year's stamp issues, including the miniature sheets, with articles about the stamp subjects, technical details and design briefs. The book's theme is 'Passions', and we meet people who are keenly interested in this year's subjects, from assistance dogs, lifeboat crews and pantomime to collectors of RAF uniforms and James Bond first editions. The book was written by Steve Yelland with portraits by Randal Mackechnie, and was designed by True North. On the cover and throughout the text are featured metal badges supplied by the Badge Collectors' Circle. The book runs to 64 pages and is available from Tallents House.

I was struck by a paragraph from the introduction, which sums up the fascination of stamps: 'Stamps are... today's geography lessons and tomorrow's history books. They're also works of art, financial investments, cultural markers and a source of endless pleasure to millions.' In my days in education I reckoned I could teach much of the school curriculum through stamps, given the chance. As it was, I made do with running a stamp club, and the other week when giving a society display, met someone who had been a member of my first stamp club 40 years ago. What he said about this life-changing experience(!) reinforced my belief in the intrinsic value of stamp collecting, let alone its possible economic benefits in an otherwise uncertain world. So hurrah for a book that enhances our enjoyment of stamps and through them leads us to some heartwarming stories.



Royal Mail Special Stamps 2008 (more popularly known as the 2008 Yearbook) is now available from Tallents House, price £58 standard edition, £95 de luxe (leather-bound) edition. Handling charges are £2.95 UK, £5 Europe, £14 rest of world.

But *revenons à nos moutons*. The 2008 Yearbook has a different take on the year's stamps. As well as describing the stamps themselves with the design brief and technical details, for those who like that sort of thing, it introduces us through a series of 'passions' to people who are intimately connected with and committed to some aspect of the subjects. The first is a man who has been a James Bond fan for over 40 years, and since 1982 has collected first editions of the books, which are now worth in the region of £55,000. He gives tips for other book collectors, and the chapter ends with a quiz about the expensive cars featured in Bond books and films.

Next we meet a Royal Mail employee who lost his sight and now devotes his life to raising money for Guide Dogs for the Blind. He does this with his own guide dog, Travis, and a few devoted helpers who have accompanied him along the Pennine Way and up all the Scottish Munros.

Passion three is about an artist who dons armour and takes part in jousts. We take part in one (described as the 'Premiership football of its day') and learn how replicas of 15th century armour are designed and made.

This is followed by the story of Myrtle Smith, a Belfast woman who led a 20-year crusade for the establishment of Thanksgiving Square and its statue; and the RNLI inshore lifeboat at St Abbs on Scotland's North Sea coast, and the seven members of the Crowe family with 200 years of lifeboat service between them. ►



Passion number six is that of the Butterfly Conservation organiser in North Wales who is trying to encourage people to provide suitable habitats for declining species of butterflies. We hear about the fascinating life cycle of the Large Blue and its dependence on red ants, and get hints on what to plant to attract butterflies to our gardens.

Sheila Harris is a Winchester Cathedral guide with a gift for bringing history to life; and Ken Burns is a man with a passion for Carry On films, who spends his time creating cartoons and comic strips based on their characters.

The chapter on Air Shows introduces us to a modern wing walker, living a life like that of the 1920s barnstormers. Then we go to the Repton Boys' Club and meet Tony Burns, who during a career of over 50 years has been Britain's most successful boxing coach – his boys have won 200 titles. We hear how young boxers are trained, and about the history of boxing at the Olympics. What's more, the discipline of boxing is credited with forming strong, happy and self-respecting citizens.

Adrian Kilby graduated from Airfix kits to collecting items of RAF uniform, and has become an expert on the subject with his own museum. Did you know that pairs of Second World War flying gloves often don't match, because lefts and rights were made in different factories to stop pilfering? Meanwhile Barbara Andrew gives talks about her suffragette grandmother Thirza Cox, illustrated by some of her possessions, drawings and old photos found in a box after her death.

Scott MacKenzie is a panto nut, director and costume designer who also runs a theatrical hire business, specialising in over-the-top dame costumes. A memorable quotation reminds us that in panto: 'A beautiful girl and a handsome boy fall in love with each other. They are both played by girls. They are helped by a big fat woman who is played by a man. An evil bad-die tries to stop the couple marrying, but a magical character tries to stop him. This all takes place near a village populated with... people who dance and sing a lot. At the end the lovers marry and live happily ever after. And we knew this would happen from the start!' We join the Mansfield Hospital Theatre Troupe production of *Snow White*, and share the gasps, giggles, laughs and shouts of glee from the audience.

Finally, to illustrate the Lest We Forget theme, there are Janet Brown and the volunteers of the North East War Memorials Project, who seek out and record all manner of memorials, whether crosses, plaques, rolls of honour, church bells or other forms of commemoration.

This is a new and refreshing approach, and the enormously varied stamp-related stories are made more memorable because of their personal dimension. The format is not only attractive and informative, but also highly successful and entertaining. The only slight thing I can find to criticise is '...each have been named...' in the section about guide dogs. Apart from that tiny blemish, it's a splendid book ●

Philately online Ron Negus reviews a catalogue of errors



www.errors.info Users of this site can gain full access to all its content free for 30 days by simply registering. When this trial period has elapsed, the information available is restricted and an annual subscription of £9.95 must be paid to obtain full access again.

Clicking on an image displayed within the search results brings up a much fuller description from the stored record of the variety. This has a larger image of the variety and, if available, an image of the stamp in its normal state, for comparison. Both of the images presented on this page can be viewed at an even larger size, in a separate window, by clicking on them. This allows minute inspection of particular errors to be made easily.

The stored record contains much additional information of importance to the specialist. This includes full production details together with the sales figures for the normal stamps. The various cylinder numbers found, an identification of each type of variety, and notes about how the variety or error occurred are also given here. Of particular interest are the known, or estimated, quantities that exist for each type of error, together with a realistic approximation of its value. This latter figure is derived from dealers' lists and auction realisations, and the amount can be shown in various currencies. These details are updated on a regular basis.

This site is very well worth visiting for any GB or Commonwealth collector who wants to keep abreast of errors and varieties that have been recorded on the Elizabethan stamps from his country of interest. The layout, content and design of this website are all excellent. Tom Pierron asks for comments, including whether the idea of this online catalogue should be extended to varieties on stamps of other reigns. This reviewer hopes he will undertake this task in due course, for the benefit of philatelists everywhere ●

Sadly, this will be the last Philately Online from Mr Negus, who died in October. Since 2000 he had contributed 103 articles in this useful and popular series. I am hopeful that another contributor will continue his good work. ED

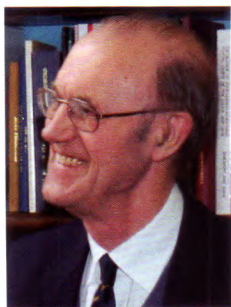
AMONGST collectors of QEII stamps, the name of Tom Pierron is well known. For some years he has published a paperback catalogue of the numerous errors and varieties found on these stamps. He now has an online version of this catalogue (address above), which he describes as 'the most informed and up-to-date catalogue of its kind'.

The statistics relating to the site are updated constantly. At the time of writing (October 2008) there were 1760 records, providing details of 2709 varieties. This information is shown at the top of each page. A detailed analysis of all the records is listed on a separate set of tables. This includes the 10 years, from 1952 to date, that produced the greatest number of varieties and errors, the top 10 varieties by catalogue value, and the number of errors created by each postal administration.

The home page shows the latest catalogue updates and additions. This can be modified so that this display on the home page only appears when changes have been made on a specified set of records, such as a particular country.

A simple search can be made using entry boxes on the home page. An advanced search option enables the user to make very specific searches by criteria such as gum, printer, printing type, designer and catalogue number. The resulting records can be sorted into different sequences, giving added flexibility. The results of searches are displayed in a standard format, including a thumbnail image of the error or variety, with its (online) catalogue number and date of issue. In small print under these headings is a brief description of the error; for example, 'olive-green missing'.

Obituary Ron Negus, 1933-2008



Ron Negus

RON NEGUS, who died in October, was a regular contributor to this magazine for 12 years. The younger brother of James Negus, the former SG Catalogue Editor, Ron was born in 1933 and, in his youth, was a keen footballer, playing for West Ham Boys. After national service in the RAF, he followed a career in statistics (a Fellow of the Royal Statistical Society), and as a systems analyst for computer technology, working for various companies including Thorn Electrical, Berger paints, and Barclays Bank.

He had wide-ranging philatelic interests, but his main specialist areas were Poland and North Viet-Nam. A couple of years ago he visited Poland for the first time, having collected the country's stamps for many years. He served as the Editor of the London & Provincial Stamp Club Bulletin from 1981, and later became an active member of the Royal Philatelic Society London. He was elected Fellow in 1989, served on the Society's Museums & Archives and Publications Committees, and was appointed as the Royal's Honorary Archivist in 1996. In 2003 he was awarded with the Society's London Medal for his work. In 1959 he published *Polish Definitive Issues 1920-1925*, and, 40 years later, *Polish Exile Mail in GB 1939-1949* (together with George Kay).

He started his interesting articles on Eminent Collectors for the *Bulletin* in 1996, and in 2000 began his popular 'Philately Online' series, and wrote *New Technology for Stamp Collectors*, published as Bulletin Publication no 7. In all, he wrote over 100 'Online' articles, providing a useful guide to the ever-growing number of philatelic websites. These articles were invariably written to an exact length, to fill a page, always submitted on time, and needed little, if any, editing – making him an editor's ideal contributor. He also submitted a number of other articles including two on Printed Postage Impressions, and a report of a visit to the Cardinal Spellman Museum in the USA. He was regularly voted amongst the most popular contributors by readers in our annual *Bulletin* poll. In recent times he had also been writing on a variety of subjects for *Gibbons Stamp Monthly*, *Stamp Magazine*, and *Stamp & Coin Mart*, as well as scholarly pieces on philatelic history for *The London Philatelist*. David Beech, Past President of the Royal, described Ron as 'a good philatelist and one of the few who had a good understanding of philatelic history.'

Like his brother Jim, who died last February, Ron was a quiet and somewhat scholarly person, with a dry sense of humour. He was always considerate, helpful, and reliable. Away from philatelic matters, he was involved in a local history project in Canterbury where he lived. He will be greatly missed at the Royal Philatelic Society, by readers of this magazine, and by myself as a valued contributor and as a good friend. We extend our sympathy to his wife Nanette, his daughters Sandra and Helen, stepson Glen, stepdaughter Joy, and his four grandsons and granddaughter, who gave him great pleasure. The philatelic world was represented at Ron's funeral by Alan Moorcroft, Senior Vice President of the Royal Philatelic Society, Stuart Henderson, and myself • *John Holman*

Commemorative covers New this month



Benham A Christmas stamps cover featuring the Victorian Pantomime Dame Dan Leno, with a pictorial Waterloo Road, London SE1 handstamp. **Price** £11.95 plus £2.50 postage. Please give media code BPE0812A and product code BLCS401A when ordering ●



Royal Naval Philatelic Society FDC serviced 11 November featuring the National Destroyer Memorial, in memory of destroyer crews lost 1939-45, bearing Poppy stamp(s) with special Forces PO postmark. **Prices** Five covers are available: plain £10.90, double signed £15.30, special £17, extra special/triple signed £21, and multi signed £52 ●



Cambridge Stamp Centre Cover honouring the 17th Indian Division, featuring the troops, the bridge at Myangin, crossing the Irrawaddy, and the Burma Star; signed by Major Sir Eric Grant Yarrow of the Division. Stamp cancelled by a special WWII Operations Remembrance Day handstamp. **Price** £24.95 plus postage ●



GB Covers Hand-made cover (edition of 40) produced for the Women of Distinction stamp issue, featuring the statue of Bodicea with the stamps cancelled by Bodicea Street, London N1 handstamp. **Price** Non-GBFDC members: £15 plus £1.50 postage ●



M Tanner Cover (20 numbered) for the 250th anniversary of Horatio Nelson's birth, bearing 24p Nelson 1982 Maritime stamp; comes with two earlier cover image postcards – Battle of Trafalgar & Victory. **Prices** £16.99 plus £1.50 worldwide postage. Postcards 60p each plus postage if ordered separately. 2005 Battle of Trafalgar PSB (DX35) £10.50 plus postage ●

Orders and enquiries

The Benham Group Unit K
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515494. e-mail enquiries@
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2LA. Fax/Answerphone 020
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only)

Cover producers wishing to announce a recent or forthcoming cover should submit copy of up to 75 words in the style above. The text should briefly describe the cover, state the stamps and postmarks it will bear, and give retail prices and an address for orders and enquiries. Announcements are published on a first-come-first-served basis and may be modified or shortened at the Editor's discretion. Copy for consideration for the March *Bulletin* should be sent to The Editor (address on p131) by 8 January. Copy for April should arrive by 9 February. Royal Mail cannot enter into correspondence or telephone conversations concerning announcements in this Covers section.

Competitions Enter for a chance to win the 2008 Yearpack



October identify The detail is from the 1982 Maritime Heritage (Nelson) stamp. The winner was K Anson, USA.

October knowledge Answers: 1) David Gentleman; 2) £1.42; 3) National Philatelic Society. The winner was J Paulson, of Derbyshire.

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 Who designed the 1997 Enid Blyton stamps?
- 2 Which stamp issue featured the Tanad Valley Plygain?
- 3 Who featured on the 15p Famous Authoresses League stamp of 1980?

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 Letters, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HQ. The senders of the first cards to be drawn in each competition on 6 February will each receive a 2008 Yearpack. Runner-up prizes of presentation packs, FDCs, or stamp cards will be awarded in each competition. The competitions are not open to Royal Mail employees •

Events

Until 14 February 'Last Post: Remembering the First World War' BPMA exhibition, Churchill Museum & Cabinet War Rooms, London SW1. **Enquiries** BPMA 020 7239 2570.

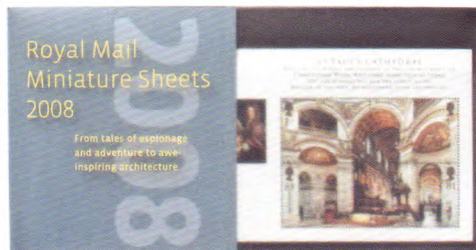
Until April 'Lions, Leopards, Unicorns & Dragons' exhibition commemorating 50 years of the regional stamps, at BPMA, Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London WC1. **Enquiries** 020 7239 2570.

25-28 February Spring Stampex at Business Design Centre, Upper Street, London N1. Cricket displays. **Enquiries** 01252 628006.

26-28 February Philatex (London International Stamp & Cover Show) at Lawrence Hall, Royal Horticultural Halls, Greycoat St, London SW1. **Enquiries** 01793 513431 or www.stampshows.net •

Prize draw

THIS MONTH WE HAVE as our main prize a 2008 Miniature Sheet Collection, containing all of the year's sheets and an insert giving complete details of each issue. Four runners-up will be sent Design Classics presentation packs. To enter, send your name and address on a postcard (or the back of a sealed envelope) to: January Draw, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HQ to arrive by 30 January 2009 •



Late news

Special stamp price changes The recent change in VAT alters previously announced prices of the special stamp issues for January and February, as follows. Design Classics: FDC £4.61 UK, £4.01 overseas; FDC PSB pane £3.50 UK, £3.05 overseas; stamp cards £3.91; postcard set £6.19; generic sheet £7.74 • Robert Burns: FDC £3.53 UK, £3.07 overseas; stamp cards £1.17; press sheet £74.99 • Darwin: FDC £4.41 UK, £3.84 overseas; FDC miniature sheet £3.16 UK, £2.75 overseas; FDC PSB pane £2.74 UK, £2.39 overseas; stamp cards £3.91 • Celebrating Wales: FDC £3.16 UK, £2.75 overseas; stamp cards £1.96. New prices for the Pioneers of the Industrial Revolution and Tudor Monarchs will be published next month •

Royal Mail update A new Stamps and Postcards pack, containing a set of Design Classics stamps and postcards showing the stamp designs on a Union Flag ('Union Jack') background, will be available from 13 January, price £6.19. The cards in this pack are larger than normal stamp cards, measuring 160 x 114mm. The pack also includes an informative filler card.

Royal Mail's Stamp Programme Manager is grateful to the 1600 readers who returned their voting forms for 2011 stamps, sent out with November's *Bulletin*. All forms were entered in a prize draw. The winners were: J Bowkett of Canada; Mrs H Pollard, Lancs; I Dawson, Middlesex; J Sparham, Kent; and J Freire-Banos, Bristol.

Please note that the Edward VIII & George VI ingot pack no 4 was wrongly included in the list of forthcoming issues in the November *Bulletin*; this pack went on sale in November 2007. We apologise for any confusion caused.

The illustrations of the Design Classics stamps (September *Bulletin*) were from proofs, as well as the change to the Mini stamp caption (November *Bulletin*). The design of the underground map stamp will differ from that shown •

Security Machins The new specifications being introduced to a number of Machin definitives in February include a more secure and cost effective

self-adhesive laminate, security slits and an extra print working. Current gummed Machin sheet stamps, in 1st and 2nd class (standard and Large Letter), 50p, £1, £1.50, £2, £3 and £5 values, are being converted to self-adhesive format and will, along with stamps already in this format, include the revised laminate and security slits to help prevent removal. The slits do not affect removal of the stamps from the backing sheet or from stamp books. An additional iridescent print working repeats the words 'ROYAL MAIL' in a wave design in the background. The text is designed to be prominent only when viewed at an angle. The new features will affect collectors of used stamps, as the new laminate does not allow stamps to be soaked from the substrate. Whilst this is unfortunate for collectors of used stamps, it does reflect the need for Royal Mail to ensure that postal revenues are protected and costs are controlled •

NPS one-frame seminar One-frame displays were an Experimental class in which all disciplines of philately were assessed by separate judges, but now FIP has agreed that one-frame exhibits can be assessed by judges from their respective classes. ABPS competitions at Autumn Stampex will include one-frame competitions. As the National Philatelic Society's One Frame seminar held on 4 December was fully booked, it is being repeated on 15 January. Dr Alan Huggins, an experienced National and International juror, will discuss the principles of creating the exhibit and the judging criteria. Attendees are encouraged to bring a 16-page, one-frame display with them. The seminar, at the Royal Philatelic Society, 41 Devonshire Place, London W1, starts at 2pm; seminar fee £5 (£3 for NPS members). For further details and a booking form, see the NPS website at www.ukphilately.org.uk/nps •

Burns exhibition An exhibition titled 'Zig-Zag: The Paths of Robert Burns' is on show at the National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh until 25 January, before going on tour to Aberdeen, Dumfries and Glasgow •

Visit the glorious United Kingdom



The five sheets in the 'Glorious' series are: Wales (1 March 2007), England (23 April 2007), Scotland (30 November 2007), Northern Ireland (11 March 2008) and UK (29 September 2008). The Wales, England, Scotland and Northern Ireland sheets all contain the 1st class country stamps for the relevant country; the UK sheet has five stamps from each country. All have adjoining labels featuring beautiful scenery, buildings and landmarks. Price £7.74 per sheet.

Order codes: AT031 (Wales), AT032 (England), AT039 (Scotland), AT040 (Northern Ireland) and AT044 (UK)

Handling charges: £1.45 UK, £1.55 Europe, £2.15 elsewhere.



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