

BRITISH PHILATELIC

The ROYAL MAIL magazine for stamp collectors

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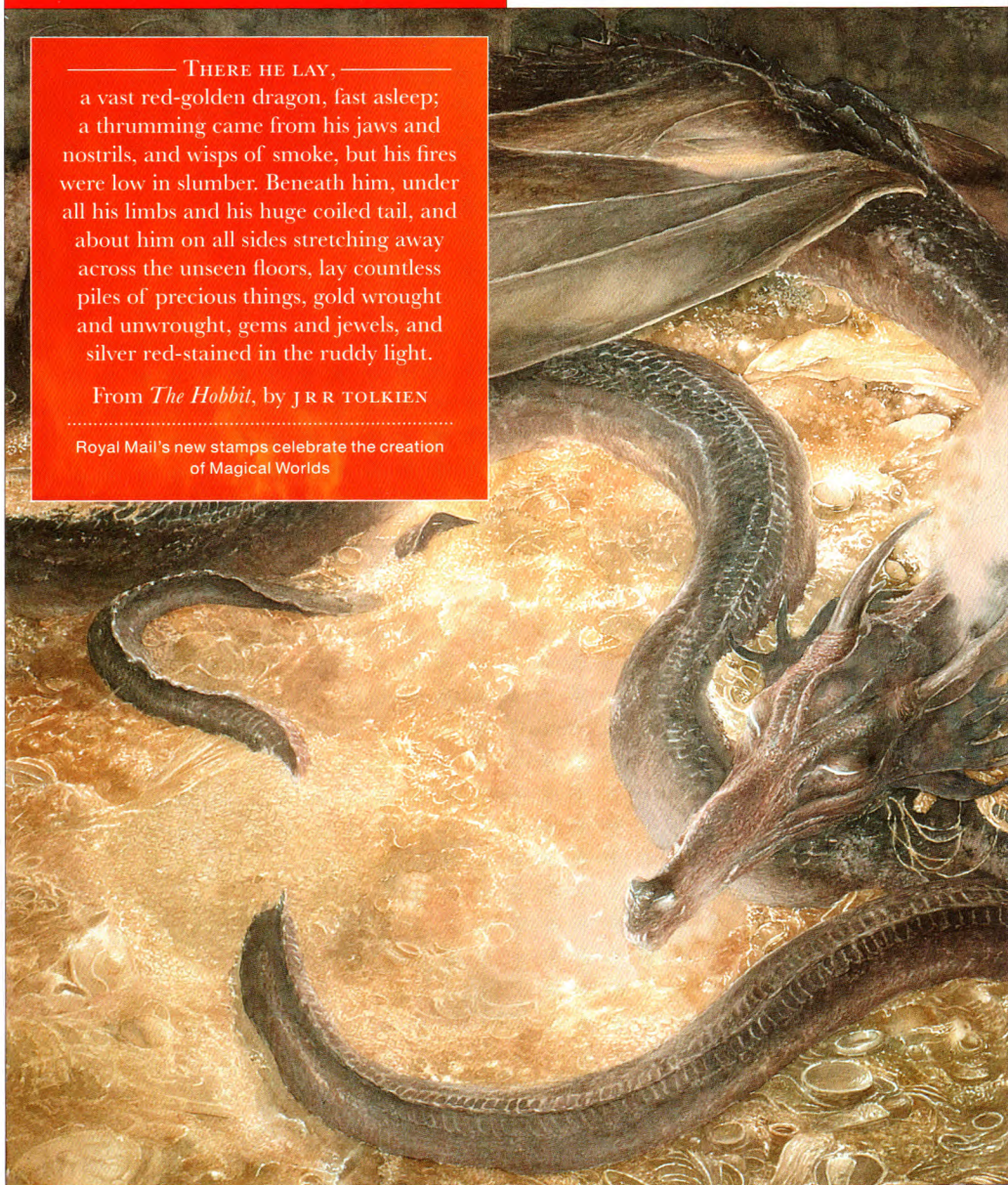
Bulletin

Magical Worlds stamp issue
• Scottish postbus services

— THERE HE LAY, —
a vast red-golden dragon, fast asleep;
a thrumming came from his jaws and
nostrils, and wisps of smoke, but his fires
were low in slumber. Beneath him, under
all his limbs and his huge coiled tail, and
about him on all sides stretching away
across the unseen floors, lay countless
piles of precious things, gold wrought
and unwrought, gems and jewels, and
silver red-stained in the ruddy light.

From *The Hobbit*, by J R R TOLKIEN

Royal Mail's new stamps celebrate the creation
of Magical Worlds



Forthcoming issues and withdrawals



Cover Illustration by Alan Lee, and passage from *The Hobbit* by JRR Tolkien, courtesy of Harper Collins Publishers Ltd. Royal Mail's Magical Worlds stamps are featured on page 292.

Correction The illustration on page 272, May *Bulletin* was wrongly captioned. It shows initial black and white artwork for a 13 mills design which eventually developed into the issued Dome of the Rock design. This artwork, and the 13 mills stamp on Harrison water-marked paper (not shown in May), are now in the National Postal Museum and were displayed at the Israel '98 exhibition last month.

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

9 June	Withdrawal Architects of the Air stamps, pack and stamp cards; National Postal Museum Aircraft post-cards. <i>Note: NPM cards will be withdrawn from Bureau but remain on sale at NPM shop.</i>
16 June	Issue Welsh aerogramme (available singly and in discount pack of six)
16 June	Issue National Health Service stamp cards
June	Issue Standard aerogramme on heavier paper (available singly and in discount packs of six)
22 June	Issue 1st and 2nd self-adhesive stamps (vertical format) in sheets of 100. Singles and sheets available from Bureau, sheets only from other outlets.
23 June	Issue National Health Service stamps and pack
23 June	Issue 10 × 1st book with Woolworth promotion. <i>Note: date of philatelic availability, books on sale at Woolworth stores from early May.</i>
30 June	Withdrawal Scottish aerogramme – Nature of Scotland
July	Issue 10 × 1st class book with Win a Camcorder prize draw promotion cover. Available from about 10,000 retailers. Date of philatelic availability to be announced.
5 July	Issue National Health Service Philatelic Numismatic Cover
7 July	Withdrawal All The Queen's Horses stamps, pack and stamp cards
14 July	Issue Magical Worlds stamp cards
21 July	Issue Magical Worlds stamps, pack and aerogrammes (English, Scottish and Welsh versions)

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Scottish postbus services

Postbus services in Scotland began in June 1968. Martin Robinson looks at 30 years of operations in some of the remotest parts of the British Isles **308**

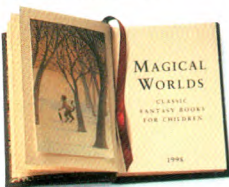
The *British Philatelic Bulletin* is published monthly by Royal Mail, Royal London House, 22 Finsbury Square, London EC2A 1NL • **Editor** JR Holman • **Price** 85p single copies from Collections, philatelic counters, and National Postal Museum • **Annual subscriptions** UK and Europe £9.50, rest of the world £13.50. Subscriptions should be sent to British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT • **Binders** to hold 24 issues, price £7. Available by post from British Philatelic Bureau (address above) • **Royal Mail** also publishes the fortnightly *British Postmark Bulletin*, giving details of forthcoming special handstamps and postmark slogans. Available on annual subscription from British Philatelic Bureau (address above) UK & Europe £10, rest of world £21.75 • **Copyright** Unless copyright attributed to specific authors, all articles and features may be reproduced without formal permission, but acknowledgement should be given to *British Philatelic Bulletin*. Requests to reproduce copyright articles should be sent to the Editor, 22 Finsbury Square, London EC2A 1NL • **Design** by Robert Maude • **Printed** in Great Britain by The White Dove Press • **ISSN** 0953 8119

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This month The Editor previews this issue

THIS MONTH we preview the forthcoming Magical Worlds stamps featuring characters from popular childrens' books. The stamps will no doubt delight many adult collectors as well as their children and grandchildren.

Three regular contributors – Douglas Myall, Martin Robinson, and Jim Mackay – all write on very different subjects, covering the wide range of interests of *Bulletin* readers. Adam Novak, Director & General Manager of Royal Mail National, gives his views on the Rowland Hill Awards and advance information on Royal Mail's Millennium stamps to be issued during 1999.

This month we have two prize competitions plus the usual features keeping you up to date with the philatelic scene, including forthcoming exhibitions. Hopefully we will this month be enjoying some warm Summer weather, but don't entirely overlook your stamps. Enjoy your collecting as well. JOHN HOLMAN, EDITOR •

Royal Mail news Magical Worlds stamps • Self adhesives • NPM news • Stamp books



The designer The stamps were designed by Peter Malone, born in Hampshire in 1953. He was educated at Winchester School of Art and Coventry Polytechnic, he now lives in Somerset. He illustrated the 1996 Christmas aerogramme, but these are his first stamps for Royal Mail.

Magical Worlds Stamps commemorating five hugely popular children's books go on sale at post offices and philatelic outlets on 21 July. The issue marks the centenaries of the death of Lewis Carroll and the birth of C S Lewis. The designs feature characters from their books, celebrating the wealth of British fantasy literature enjoyed by children of all ages.

The **20p** stamp (basic inland 2nd class letter rate) depicts Bilbo Baggins and Smaug the dragon from *The Hobbit* (1937) written by J R R Tolkien, the forerunner of his most famous work, *The Lord of the Rings*. The **26p** value (inland 1st class basic rate) depicts Mr Tumnus (a faun), Lucy, and Aslan the lion from *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, the first of C S Lewis's *Chronicles of Narnia* books, published in 1950.

The four Prosser children, Anthea, Cyril, Jane and Robert, from E Nesbit's *The Phoenix and the Carpet* (1904), feature on the **37p** denomination (airmail postcard rate). The **43p** stamp (airmail basic letter rate) features Pod and Arrietty, tiny folk from *The Borrowers* by Mary Norton, published in 1952 and now a successful film.



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Derbyshire
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Technical details

Printers De La Rue Security

Print

Process Gravure

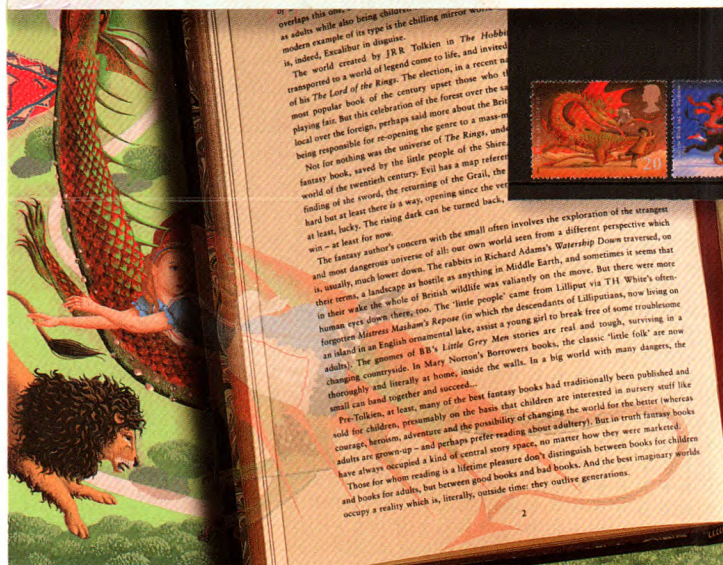
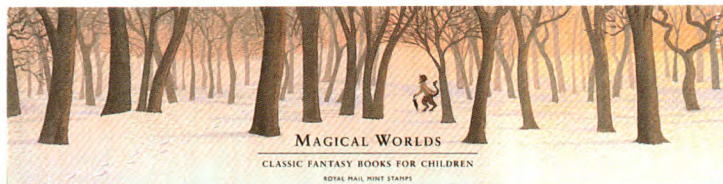
Size 41 x 30mm

Sheets 100

Perforation 15 × 14

Phosphor One band 20p ●
two bands others

Gum PVA



Presentation pack and stamp cards A well-illus-

stamp cards A well-illustrated pack (price £2.25) and stamp cards (25p each) will be available from main post offices and philatelic outlets.

The pack, written by top fantasy writer Terry Pratchett, appraises children's fantasy literature. Illustrations are by Peter Malone, designer of the stamps.

Aerogrammes Country aerogrammes will be issued on 21 July on the Magical Worlds theme, one each for England, Scotland and Wales. Price 45p each. Details next month.



Lewis Carroll's ever-popular *Through the Looking-Glass* (1871) is the subject of the **63p** value (airmail letters over 10g) which features Alice and the Red Queen.

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Unstamped Royal Mail FDC envelopes will be available from main post offices and philatelic outlets about a week before 21 July; price 25p. Orders for FDCs with the stamps cancelled by pictorial 'first day of issue' postmark of the Bureau or Oxford (Carroll, Lewis and Tolkien connections) must reach the Bureau by 21 July. Price £2.64 UK (including VAT) or £2.25 overseas (no VAT).

Alternatively, collectors may send stamped covers, on the day of issue, to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT, or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Birmingham B1 1AA (Oxford postmark), marking the outer envelope 'FD9811' (Bureau), or 'FD9812' (Oxford). Collectors can post or hand in covers at main post offices for local (mostly non-pictorial) first day handstamps. Sponsored handstamps will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from the Bureau (£10 UK/Europe; £21.735 elsewhere).

Covers may be posted bearing just the 20p Magical Worlds stamp for any philatelic postmark in use on 21 July; the normal 1st class rule is waived.

Health stamps Plate numbers and colours for the forthcoming Health stamps are:

20p 1A (deep claret) ● 1A (black) ● 1A (grey-brown) ● 1A (pale cream) ● 1A (cream)

26p 1A (deep grey-green) ● 1A (black) ● 1A (grey-brown) ● 1A (pale cream) ● 1A (cream)

43p 1A (deep lilac) ● 1A (black) ● 1A (grey-brown) ● 1A (pale cream) ● 1A (cream)

63p 1A (deep dull blue) ● 1A (black) ● 1A (grey-brown) ● 1A (pale cream) ● 1A (cream)

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE AWARDS Royal Mail is sponsoring two major children's literature awards in 1998 – the Carnegie medal for the best children's fiction and the Greenaway medal for the best illustrations in a children's book. The Carnegie medal is widely regarded as the Booker of the children's book world, and the Greenaway is one of the most coveted prizes of its kind. Winners also receive £1000 to buy books for schools and educational establishments. Further details next month ●

Welsh aerogramme A Welsh version of the standard aerogramme will go on philatelic sale on 16 June. It will be available both singly (36p), and in discount packs of six (£1.99). It will go on sale at post offices in Wales as stocks of English language aerogrammes are used up. No first day facilities will be available ●



Robert Maude FDC winners In January we offered 25 first day covers of the Endangered Species stamps signed by the designer Robert Maude. The winners were: Mrs J Doggett, Cornwall; L Court, Yorkshire; G Jones, Cardiff; F Draper, Herts; Mrs M Dungate, Dorset; Mrs D Cox, Devon; Mrs E Bailey, Cambridge; H McGlashan, Falkirk; R Dorin, Berks; L Bird, Yorkshire; M Dhokia, Coventry; P Foulds, Cheshire; Miss Y Trouillard, France; K Hong, Singapore; J McFadyen, Glasgow; D Cluett, Hants; J Smith, Barbados; N Shereshevsky, Israel; M Blackford, Birmingham; K Ward, New Zealand; A Earl, Surrey; G Faulkner, Kent; J Watson, Lancs; T Roberts, Kent; and J Choppin, Essex ●

National Postal Museum There is still time to see the 'Golden & Glorious' exhibition, commemorating the golden wedding of The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh. This exhibition, which opened last August, will close this month to be replaced by a new exhibition with a sports theme. Still on show is the 'Victorian Posts' exhibition, (ground and mezzanine floors), and 'Going Places with the British Post Office' (on an explorers theme) in the temporary exhibition gallery, ground floor. Permanent displays in the main gallery (top floor) include the famous R M Phillips Collection of Victorian stamps. The 'Post Haste!' exhibition of postal vehicles, letter boxes and artefacts is on the ground floor. The NPM shop offers a wide range of souvenirs; mail posted at the shop receives a unique Maltese Cross handstamp. The NPM, in King Edward Street, London EC1A 1LP, is open Monday-Friday 09.30-16.30, admission free •



Design, by Hugo Fleury for 1953 Coronation stamp, in 'Golden & Glorious' exhibition. Fleury's one issued stamp was the 6d value of the 1949 UPU set.

De La Rue sheet numbers In future De La Rue Security Print will use the Domino ink jet system to apply sheet numbers in the margins of sheets of stamps. The first special issue to have ink-jet sheet numbers will be Christmas •

Self adhesive stamps in sheets Following the trial sale of rolls of self-adhesive stamps, sheets of 100 1st and 2nd class self-adhesive stamps will shortly be available at post offices in Scotland and Northern Ireland and from philatelic outlets. The stamps are in upright format (as other definitive stamps), printed by Walsall Security Printers in gravure. The sheets comprise five sections, one with four stamps plus Royal Mail branding; and four each of 24 stamps. Collectors can purchase singles or complete sheets from the British Philatelic Bureau. All other outlets sell only complete sheets. The stamps are not regarded as a new issue so no first day facilities will be provided •

Stamp books Resulting from the revised postal rate for European letters, introduced on 6 April, a new £1.20 book containing four 30p stamps and airmail labels (etiquettes) is now available from main post offices, selected retail outlets, the Bureau and philatelic outlets. The book was printed by Walsall Security Printers in gravure (cylinder w2) – the first time this firm has printed this value. No first day facilities were available.

The 10 × 1st Woolworth promotion book, reported last month, will be available from the Bureau and philatelic outlets from 23 June. A further promotion book will be available from about 10,000 retailers from the beginning of July. Containing 10 1st class stamps printed by De La Rue Security Print, the covers of the book give details of a Royal Mail prize draw to win a JVC Camcorder •



JVC Camcorder promotion
Date of availability from the British Philatelic Bureau and other philatelic outlets to be announced.

Stamp scene Summer Isles • ABPS awards

Societies news • Youth competitions

For details of the GBCC

write to: Frank Koch, PO Box 309, Batavia, OH 45103-0309, USA.

The Club publishes a well-produced magazine, *The Great Britain Collectors Chronicle*.

Great Britain Collectors Club The US-based GBCC has made a \$400 donation to the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund. The Princess's tragic death last August occurred one week before the Club's inaugural National Convention in Indianapolis and many of the Club's social activities planned for that event were cancelled as a mark of respect. GBCC President, Gordon Milne – a Scot – donated to the Club his stock of PHQ cards and presentation packs issued for the Princess's wedding in 1981. These were displayed at the Club's table at INDYPEX with the proceeds going, in the GBCC's name, to the memorial fund. Unsold items were later put on offer through *Linn's Stamp News* and were quickly bought by readers from across the USA •

Enquiries B L Asquith, Alandale, Radcliffe Gardens, Carshalton Beeches, SM5 4PQ

Concorde Study Circle Francis Kiddle, Chairman of the British Philatelic Trust, proposed the toast to the Concorde Study Circle at its 20th anniversary meeting at Stampex on 1 March. Four of the founder members were present – Brian Asquith (now Chairman), Len Gleicher, Keith Palmer and Derek Partridge. A limited edition anniversary postcard was produced •

Entries should be sent to: Anne Broadhurst, Benham, Folkestone CT20 1SD by 21 June.

For details of Stamp Active send a stamped addressed envelope to: Stamp Active, 3 Longfellow Road, Banbury OX16 9LB.

Design a Cover competition Stamp Active, the activity club for young philatelists, has teamed up with Benham in a competition to design a cover for the Magical Worlds stamps to be issued on 21 July. The stamps mark the centenaries of Lewis Carroll and C S Lewis. The winner and runners-up will have their very own cover designs made into a unique Benham FDC, complete with stamp and postmark. The winner will also receive a selection of Benham covers on a children's theme. Entry is open to all aged 18 and under. Entrants should draw or paint their design on a good quality envelope of any size. Designs should be based on: 1) The Hobbit; 2) The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe; or 3) Through the Looking Glass. The name and address should be placed clearly on the front of the cover, leaving space for Benham to attach a stamp and postmark. The entrant's theme and age should be written on the reverse •



Summer Isles Shown are three of the local stamps (local carriage labels) featuring the Mountains of Assynt-Coigach, issued by the Summer Isles, Scotland on 30 April. The issue was mentioned here in April. Orders and enquiries: Summer Isles Philatelic Bureau, West Croftnuisk, Edradynate, Aberfeldy, Perthshire PH15 2JU •

Awards for philatelic service Amongst the notable philatelists who will sign the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists this month will be Mrs Francesca Rapkin, who has contributed articles on thematic collecting to this magazine. Mrs Rapkin has built up impressive collections of German and Olympic Games stamps as described in the *Bulletin* interview with her in October 1996. She has given numerous talks to local societies, judged many competitions and given great service to the hobby. Francesca adds to the rare occasions when husband and wife have signed the Roll, her late husband, Leon, was accorded the honour in 1984.

The Association of British Philatelic Societies will present its 1998 Congress Medal to Thomas Rielly of Edinburgh at the Philatelic Congress of GB at Scarborough on 6 June. Mr Rielly, a stamp collector for over 50 years, is a member of numerous local and specialist societies. His interests extend beyond stamps and postal history to subjects such as letter boxes and PO vehicles. He has displayed material from his collections throughout Scotland and the North of England. His work for organised philately is manifold. He has served as President of the Scottish Philatelic Society, Scottish Philatelic Congress and Alba Stamp Group, as assessor for nominees for signature of the Book of Scottish Philatelists, judge for the Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies Literature Award and in many other capacities. He was Organising Secretary of the 75th Philatelic Congress of GB held in Edinburgh in 1993 and is currently on the Organising Committee for the Glasgow 2000 exhibition.

We congratulate all on this recognition of their philatelic work ●

National youth stamp competitions This year young collectors have the opportunity to participate in one of two national competitions, with exhibits being on display in London at Autumn Stampex. The Stamp Active Competition, a new event in its interim phase, is open to collectors up to age 16. Entries should be four or eight sheets in length, and incorporate material linked by country and period, or by design feature. The Melville National Stamp Competition is open to young philatelists up to age 21. Entries can be from eight to 64 sheets, and exhibitors have the chance to enter competitions at an International level.

Judging will be completed by late August, and exhibitors informed of their awards in September. Autumn Stampex, at the London Business Design Centre, Islington, 30 September-4 October will include events specifically for young collectors ●

Obituary: O W Newport We regret to record the recent death in March of Oliver William (Bill) Newport, a leading student of Channel Islands stamps and Postal history. Bill Newport was born in 1922 and served in the Royal Navy before entering the stamp world, working at H E Wingfield, Stanley Gibbons and the Jersey Post Office. He will best be remembered as Assistant Editor of *Stamp Collecting* and Editor of *Philatelic Magazine*, 1967-70. He wrote prolifically on Channel Islands issues, and contributed articles here in June and December 1985, February 1986 and October 1988 ●

The ABPS Awards of Merit, for voluntary services to philately at regional, specialist and local society level, go to:

B H Baldock, Mrs E Broad, P Care, K Carpenter, D J Cooper, G F Crabb, G W Frost, A H Jones, J and M Lucas, J M Minns, Dr P G E Reid, K A Rippin, and Mrs V J Sussex.

Entry forms together with full competition rules, are available from the Competition Secretary, Mrs Jean Wood, 6 Beech Grove, Whitley Bay, Tyne & Wear, NE26 3PJ. Completed forms should reach her by 6 July 1998, and entries by 31 July.

Exhibition news Stampex prize winners • Juvalux '98 • Lorca '98 • Thematica

Autumn Stampex will be held at the Business Design Centre, 30 September-4 October.

Enquiries Stampex office, 0171 490 1005

Stampex Visitors to Spring Stampex were invited to enter a draw for £50 vouchers to spend with exhibition standholders. The winners were: C Banfield of Chigwell, R Emerson of Wokingham, I Muirhead of Hove, E Evans of Stoke-on-Trent, and W McIvor of Basingstoke. A prize draw was held on the stand of Complete Collections Ltd as agents for Marini, the Italian stamp album company. The winners – Mrs M Whitnall of Uckfield, G White of London, and Mrs Rumsey of Reading – received luxury GB albums. A further draw for Marini albums is included in this *Bulletin* •

EXPOSITION PHILATELIQUE MONDIALE



The Luxembourg PO issued stamps promoting Juvalux '98 in May 1997.

Juvalux '98 This exhibition devoted to youth and postal history will be held in the halls of the Foire Internationale, Luxembourg, 18-21 June. This is the 13th FIP World Youth Exhibition; the first, fifth and ninth were also in Luxembourg, in 1969, 1978 and 1988. The exhibition is being organised by the Luxembourg Philatelic Federation with the support of the Luxembourg Post Office. Postal history material will be displayed in four groups: Europe, America, Asia & Australasia, and Africa. The Youth Philately entries will be in seven groups: Traditional Philately, Postal History, Postal Stationery, Aerophilately, Astrophilately, Thematic Philately, and Maximaphily. The exhibits will be assigned to four age groups: up to 15 years, 16-17, 18-19, and 20-21 years. Visitors to the exhibition should also see the country's fine postal museum and the many historic buildings such as the Grand-Ducal Palace, Chamber of Deputies, and the Law Courts •

Lorca '98 This World Philatelic Exhibition of Literature and Mophilia (modern philately) will be held at the Exhibition and Congress Palace, Granada, Spain, 2-7 June. The Mophilia Salon will include competitive entries of stamps and documents issued within the last 15 years. The exhibition is being organised by the Spanish Federation of Philatelic Societies and the Spanish Post Office •

Thematica opening hours

Saturday 27 June 10.30-17.30
Sunday 28 June 10.30-17.00.
Admission is free.

Competition enquiries to Brian Sole, 01372 467652

Other enquiries to Thematic Exhibitions, 0181 343 2434

The next Thematica exhibition will be held 20-21 November.

Thematica This popular exhibition for thematic collectors will be held at the Carisbrooke Hall, Seymour Street, London W2 on 27-28 June. Carisbrooke Hall is near Marble Arch underground station (Central line). Visitors can enjoy a wide range of displays and examine the stocks of leading thematic dealers. Plenty of tables and chairs are provided in both the dealers and exhibition halls for collectors to browse and chat. Refreshments and meals are available. Visitors can vote for their favourite display, the winner receiving the John Fosbery Thematic Trophy. This competition is open to anyone who has not won a thematic class medal at a national or international competition. The British Thematic Association Trophy competition, judged under the rules of the Stampex thematic class competition, is open to all on payment of an entry fee •

Prize draw Win Marini GB luxury hingeless albums worth £589

HERE IS A CHANCE to win Marini Great Britain luxury hingeless stamp albums. The first prize is a complete set of the five volumes for all stamps from 1936 (Edward VIII) to date, each volume comes supplied in luxury padded binder and matching slipcase. The full set retails for £396. Second prize is the Elizabeth II album for 1991-97, retailing at £97 and 3rd prize the 1981-90 album worth £96. These albums could be yours by answering just two questions.

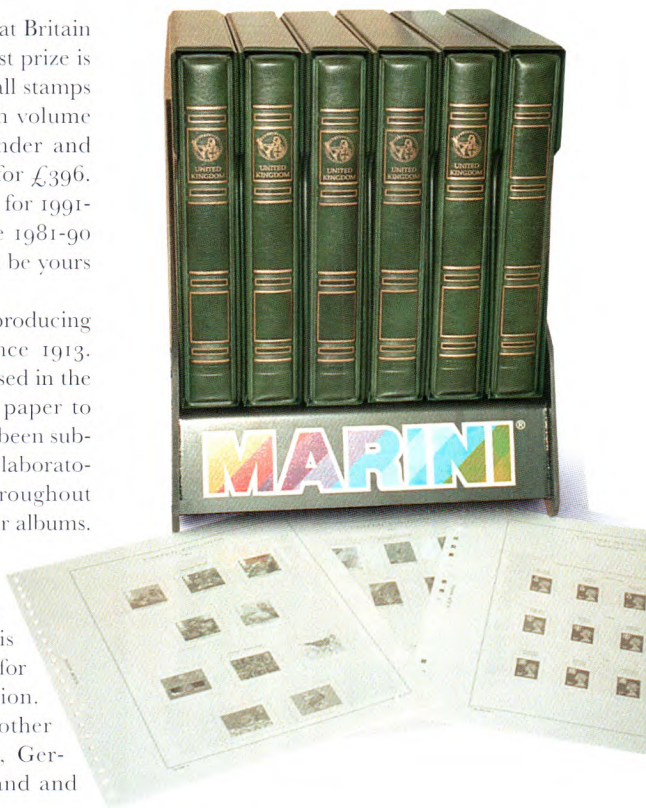
Marini, based in Genoa, have been producing philatelic albums and accessories since 1913. They guarantee that all the materials used in the manufacture of their products, from paper to transparent film and printing ink, have been submitted to rigorous analysis in specialist laboratories. They make continuous checks throughout production to ensure the quality of their albums.

The GB albums house the stamps of Edward VIII and George VI, Elizabeth II Pre-decimal, Decimal, 1971-80; 1981-90; and 1991-96. A supplement is supplied for the 1997 issues. An album for the issues of 1840-1936 is in preparation. Albums are produced for numerous other countries including Belgium, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Malta, Switzerland and United States.

For a free sample Marini hingeless page and current brochure write to: Complete Collections Ltd, Marini Free Page Offer, PO Box 1482, Fern-down BH22 0YL. To enter the competition answer the following questions:

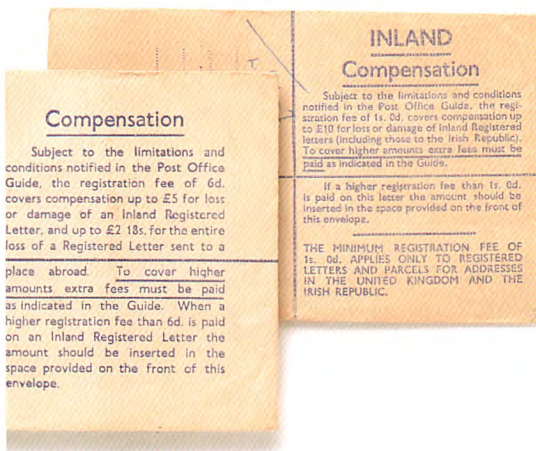
- 1 In what year did Marini start producing philatelic albums?
- 2 In which Italian city is Marini based?

Send your answers, with your name and address, on a postcard or back of a sealed envelope to: British Philatelic Bulletin Marini Albums Draw, Royal Mail, 22 Finsbury Square, London EC2A 1NL by 17 July. The winners will be announced in the September *Bulletin*. Entries must be posted separately; multiple entries in one envelope will be disregarded. The competition is not open to employees, families or agents of Royal Mail, Marini, or Complete Collections Ltd ●



MARINI
Italian technology in philatelic material

Postal stationery rarities To conclude his series, Colin Baker looks at printing errors and stationery produced for collectors



This concludes the present series of articles by Mr Baker, the earlier instalments published in January, March and May. His three earlier series of articles on Victorian, 20th century, and private postal stationery were published here in September 1994–April 1995, September 1995–August 1996, and November 1996–March 1997.

PRINTING ERRORS can happen to all stamps and stationery and occasionally these are not noticed before being sold to the public. These include sheets being folded in the printing presses, flaws in printing or colours being omitted. Since these are special types of error they will not be included in this overview of rare stationery.

However, there have been a number of instances where other types of printing errors have occurred which will be of interest to serious collectors. These have not been detected until the particular items of stationery had already been released and used by the public. Most of these errors came about because the instructions included on the reverse side of an item related to particular postage rates or other postal fees which had recently been increased. The value of the stamp on the front of the item had been raised to the correct amount, but nobody had bothered to check the back. It is amazing how many times this same mistake was repeated over the years.

The first of these errors occurred in 1940, at the time of the postage rate increases in May of that year. Lettercards carried the 2½d stamp but the instructions on the reverse still referred to the old rate of 1½d. This mistake was corrected in the next print run, released in September 1940.

Much the same thing has happened with registered letters. Compensation fees and rates have been revised over the years, the stamp value altered, but the backs of the specially reinforced envelopes have continued to show the fees and levels of compensation which were current before the subsequent price increase. The first of these errors can be found on registered envelopes released following the rate increases of June 1952 (shown opposite). Some later issues repeated this error, so it is worth checking the backs of all registered envelopes to make sure the printed instructions tally with the stamp's value.

Between 1855 and 1882 most of the embossed stationery stamps had their printing dates included in the design. This was generally placed in three small circles located at convenient points around the border, although the 4d with its narrow edge was an exception, as was the much smaller ½d stamp, which due to its low value and lack of space never had the date inserted.



The stamp's printing date was formed by the use of three special inserts, called slugs, one each for the day, month and year. Occasionally these date slugs, which had to be changed almost every time the dies were used, were inserted upside down. This type of error is not often seen and can create interest in a collection. But despite their relative rarity they are not that much more expensive than the price of a normal example.

The so-called albino impressions of embossed stationery stamps must be included under this heading of printing errors. They were probably caused by two sheets of paper becoming stuck together and being fed into the printing press at the same time. Those that have gone through the post were sometimes treated as unpaid mail and charged at double rate. Theoretically that would have been correct since the Revenue would have been paid for only one sheet of stamps and not two.

The embossed pink seals impressed on Post Office envelope flaps from 1850 can also be found without colour. The authorities were not so strict about these as there was no loss of revenue involved, and so albino seals are a little more common, although they are still worth hunting for.

Above Compensation fees and rates for registered letters have been revised over the years, but the reverse of an envelope may continue to show fees and levels of compensation current before an increase. The reverse of the envelopes above is shown on the opposite page.

Opposite page, from top In 1890 the 1d postcard and 1d envelope were produced celebrating 50 years of the Uniform Penny Post. Some of these envelopes today command very high prices where they were used in conjunction with other stamps, particularly with the Penny Black or Two-penny Blue or with the high value stamps of 1890.

Oswald and Victor Marsh used the letterpress stamps of George VI and Elizabeth II which were impressed onto sheets of coloured paper in various layouts of blocks of four and tête à tête pairs. The sheets were cut and folded to give a variety of mint and used items and some were even trimmed to represent die proofs and trials.

Philatelically created rarities Over the last 100 years or so, some items of stationery have been specifically produced for collectors and it is important to keep this in mind when rarity or value are being considered. There is certainly no reason why this type of material should be excluded from a collection, especially considering that the Post Office's first commemorative covers were postal stationery (shown opposite).

Stamp dealers and others have conspired in the past to produce many different types of private stationery (see part 2 for details of multiple stamps). In the latter half of this century rarities were deliberately produced using the stamped to order system.

Two people in particular who were renowned for creating this type of material were Oswald and Victor Marsh. Whether they were brothers or were father and son is not clear. Certainly their activities spanned a long period of time starting from the First World War and ending at the beginning of the reign of our present Queen. The stamps of Edward VII were used first by them including the 1d, 1½d and 6d values, each being applied in a variety of combinations which are believed to have been impressed shortly before the stamps were demonetised. Victor Marsh even produced a booklet in 1923 with the title *Great Britain Abnormal Embossed Postage Stamps of King Edward VII and George V* in which a number of his creations were illustrated.

Although it is believed that two people were involved in producing and selling all these items it has recently been suggested that the name Victor Marsh was a pseudonym for a man called H Edgar Weston, whose name can sometimes be found on postally used items, particularly those postmarked in the first half of this century. Research is still being carried out to establish the truth about these two people and their philatelic creations. Should more information on this intriguing subject become available in the future I will pass this on to the Editor. However, even though this is a fascinating episode in the philatelic history of this country, and the stamps were postally valid, the creation of such combinations of stationery stamps in limited numbers does not justify a position in the list of real postal stationery rarities.

In 1973, just before the stamped to order facility was withdrawn, another firm of stamp dealers in Hampshire created this country's first self adhesive stamps by having the Machin embossed stationery stamps impressed onto self-adhesive labels. Numbers produced were limited and prices today reflect this.

These four articles have described the majority of postal stationery which is difficult to locate and is usually expensive when it is found. However, the articles are not intended to be exhaustive and collectors may have their own favourite rarities which have not been featured.

Although postal stationery does not have the same scope for errors as today's multi-coloured commemorative stamps, it is still worth being observant when hunting for material for your collection. What might seem at first glance to be a mundane, everyday item, could be that elusive rarity you have always searched for, and it might just be that you pick up a bargain ●

For details of the Postal Stationery Society (founded 1992) contact D Taylor Smith, 23 Britannia Road, Norwich NR1 4HP



Penny Postage Jubilee-18

Guil'dhall, London.



2^{re}
 4
 our
 2^{re} Kew
 in W Lancashire



POST OFFICE JUBILEE
OF
UNIFORM PENNY POSTAGE

AT SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM, 2ND JULY, 1890.



NORTH MAIL MAKING FOR HIGHGATE 1700 AT 3 MILES AN HOUR.



RATES

44.
54.
1 2
2 3

1840.

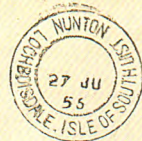
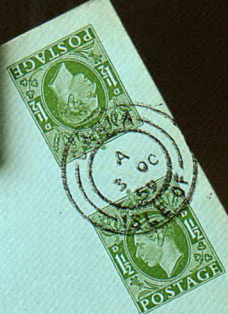
5. W. *Sidney N. Sherborn Esq*
540 *Kings Road*
Chelsea St



1890.



THE NORTH MAIL 1960, APPROACHING CARLISLE AT 48 MILES AN HOUR.



Victor Marsh, J.P.S. 804
13 Lion Road
Riverside
England Twickenham Midd

Imperial Penny Postage The centenary of



Canada's 2c 'XMAS' stamp of 1898 was designed by R Weir Crouch, Gustave Hahn, A H Howard and R Holmes, although William Mulock suggested the motif. The caption, 'We hold a vaster Empire than has been', was a quotation from *A Song of Empire* by Sir Lewis Morris, which had been composed for Victoria's Golden Jubilee in 1887. The stamp (shown at 175% actual size) was released on 7 December.

cause of Ocean Penny Postage since 1847. By this he meant a penny rate between Britain and the USA. Arguing that cheaper postage meant better communications, and that better communications would prevent war between the nations, Burritt worked through the League for Universal Brotherhood to achieve his aims. Apart from a considerable number of tracts and pamphlets, Burritt used the medium of the Mulready caricature and the pictorial envelope to spread his message, and such items, postally used, are now keenly sought by postal historians.

The notion of a universal penny rate was never realised, and the nearest thing to it was the 25 gold centime rate eventually promulgated by the Universal Postal Union in 1875 – necessitating the introduction of a 2d stamp in the UK – for the basic international letter rate. The campaigners for cheaper postage, however, were not content to let matters rest at that; if a penny rate were not feasible through the world at large, then at least it should be possible within the confines of the British Empire.

Jackaroo to postal reformer The right man in the right place, at the right time, was John Henniker Heaton. Born in Kent in 1848, he had emigrated to New South Wales after leaving King's College, London. For some time he worked as a jackaroo in sheep stations in the Outback before settling in Parramatta, now a suburb of Sydney, where he joined the staff of the local newspaper. Later he edited a paper entitled *The Penny Post*, little realising at that time how this concept would later dominate his life. In 1873 he married Rose Bennett, daughter of a prominent Sydney businessman.

Heaton stood for election to the NSW parliament in 1883, but was narrowly defeated. This disappointment induced him to return to England the following year with his family. For several months he was employed in looking after various Australian interests, but in 1885 he successfully contested Canterbury in the general election and entered parliament as a Conservative. Heaton quickly made his mark in the Commons as the champion of postal improvement. Over the ensuing decades he was the *bête noir* of successive Postmasters General on both sides, but undoubtedly his principal

A QUARTER OF A CENTURY after Rowland Hill's scheme of Uniform Penny Postage was adopted in Britain, people were beginning to suggest that a penny letter rate throughout the British Empire might one day be feasible. In 1866 William Hastings, a Lloyd's underwriter, published a pamphlet outlining a penny rate to all countries, but he did not argue his case cogently, and the matter was ignored. Five years later Frederick Brittain published a pamphlet entitled *Ocean Penny Postage – Is It Practical?* but concluded that it was not.

This was in answer to Elihu Burritt, 'the learned blacksmith' who had tirelessly championed the

an ideal, by James Mackay

On 30 March 1866, John Henniker Heaton MP moved a resolution in Parliament 'that in the opinion of this House the time has now arrived for the government of this country to open negotiations with other governments with a view to the establishment of a Universal Penny Postage System'. The goal of a universal penny rate was never to be achieved but, through Heaton's tenacity, it was briefly realized within the British Empire on Christmas Day 1898.



John Henniker Heaton MP, 'Penny-Postmaster-General of the Empire', as portrayed by Phil May in *The Review of Reviews* in 1893, courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery, London.



New Zealand definitive stamp of 1 January 1901 designed by Guido Bach, showing Zealandia over the caption 'universal postage' (these words were retained when the stamp was re-designed in 1909 to include 'Dominion of' across the top); Canada 2c on 3c surcharge and 1915 war tax stamp; Victoria 1912 and Tasmania surcharges.

platform was imperial penny postage. According to Heaton himself, he was motivated by several experiences as a young man, both before leaving England and after he settled in Australia.

On one occasion he recalled an old woman who wished to write to her son in the colonies, but could not afford the 6d for the stamp. He paid the postage for her, as a result of which she had a remittance of £5 from her son who thereafter wrote to her regularly. In NSW he was moved by the sight of a young Irish labourer being carted off to prison for defrauding the revenue. His crime had been to conceal a letter to his mother in Limerick, inside a newspaper. As papers could be transmitted by post for a penny, this ruse had saved him 5d every time – until detected.

By the time Heaton moved his resolution in Parliament on 30 March 1886, France had introduced a 25c rate, not only to her own far-flung colonies but to parts of the British Empire as well, whereas the British Post Office retained the 6d rate for letters to Australia and New Zealand. The rate to India was 5d and 4d to the West Indies, but only 2d to Canada, whereas the French had a simple 25c (2d) rate to India and the West Indies.

Mailing abroad There was an even more glaring discrepancy in the printed matter rates. It cost 1d to send a circular from England to India or Hong Kong, but only 5c (a half penny) from France to the same destinations. One enterprising firm saved £300 a year by sending a clerk over to Calais every Friday to mail its circulars from there. In 1888 France reduced its letter rate to Australia to 25c, but Britain remained obdurate.

In 1890 the Post Office celebrated the golden jubilee of Uniform Penny Postage. At a banquet on 15 January the PMG, Henry Raikes, took the opportunity to attack Heaton, ridiculing his proposals 'which must necessarily diminish the revenue by a great amount and must do it for the sake of the few at the expense of the many.' Raikes seems to have been unaware of the irony of speaking at a jubilee banquet and attacking the very principles for which Rowland Hill himself had fought so ardently.

Heaton was stung into action. On 28 January 1890 he rebutted Raikes's arguments in a long, well-argued letter in *The Times*, stating that Imperial Penny Postage would only cost £60,000 a year and would be a great advantage to the Empire. Heaton's argument, however, was undermined from a surprising direction. Julius Vogel, a former premier of New Zealand, said that any attempt to cut postal rates would lead to a deterioration in the mail steamer services, and he argued instead for a ½d letter rate in Britain as a much more laudable objective. Furthermore, the Australian colonies had recently voted against a reduction of their letter rate to Britain, from 4d to 3d, and had no wish for a 1d rate.

Persistence rewarded Nothing daunted, Heaton persisted in his campaign. *The Review of Reviews* organised a mammoth petition agitating for Imperial Penny Postage, while Heaton kept up the pressure in newspaper letters and articles as well as questions and debates in the House. On 17 April 1890 the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced, in his budget, that a 2d rate to the Australian colonies would shortly be introduced.

This measure temporarily brought the campaign to a halt. For a time Heaton directed his attacks to such reforms as the free re-direction of letters, the adoption of a cash on delivery system and 1/2d inland postage. Meanwhile the Imperial Federation League took up the cudgels, and a postal delegation had a meeting with the PMG in February 1893. Four years later, as part of the celebration of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, the question of reducing imperial rates as the Post Office's contribution to the celebration was raised. At the Postal Union Congress in Washington later that year the British delegates argued in favour of a reduction of the UPU rate to 2d.

When this was rejected, Britain turned to the question of adopting such a rate within the British Empire, but William Mulock, the PMG of Canada, announced that he would introduce a 3c (1d) rate on 1 January 1898. This unilateral decision was contrary to the rules of the UPU, and Canada was persuaded to postpone this decision till an Imperial Postal Conference could be convened in London in June 1898, presided over by the Duke of Norfolk, the British PMG.

Prince's birthday While Britain and five of the Australian colonies were against the 1d rate, Mulock now went further and proposed a flat penny rate. Cape Colony and Natal supported this motion and in the end Britain gave way. The imperial penny rate was scheduled for 9 November 1898, the birthday of the Prince of Wales. When the Duke of Norfolk told Queen Victoria that the penny rate would come into force on the Prince's birthday, the jealous queen sharply queried, 'Which Prince?'. 'Why, Ma'am,' replied the quick-witted PMG 'the Prince of Peace of course'.

As a result the implementation of the plan was delayed till 25 December, which is why the 2c stamp released by Canada, is inscribed XMAS 1898. The 3c 'Maple Leaves' definitive was also re-valued as a 2c stamp by means of a surcharge.

The Australian colonies were unable to implement the resolution for some time. Ironically it was New Zealand that made the first move, on 1 January 1901, with commemorative envelopes and postcards as well as a new definitive stamp. The Australian colonies combined to form the Commonwealth of Australia in 1900 but it was not till May 1911 that an imperial penny rate was adopted, leading to a spate of provisional surcharges in Tasmania, Victoria and Western Australia.

The imperial penny rate was an early casualty of the First World War, disappearing in Britain in 1915 when the rate was raised to 1 1/2d. At the same time Canada raised the rate to 3c, but implied that this was a temporary measure, by issuing war tax stamps. Australia abandoned the penny rate in 1918. ●

30 years of postbus services in Scotland

Perfect postbus country, by Martin Robinson



The first Scottish postbus timetable, October 1973, top, and a timetable/fare table for the Dingwall-Heights of Dochcarty route

FOR THE ENTHUSIAST, Scotland is postbus country par excellence. There are more postbus services in Scotland than in the whole of the rest of the British Isles put together, with more variety of terrain and vehicles. The two things go together, of course: rougher terrain means tougher vehicles, usually Land Rovers.

Scottish postbuses certainly have their devotees, who return with their families (and who know what means of persuasion are used) for holiday after holiday to record the development of postbus services. This article deals with the growth of the Scottish services in the last 30 years, but it is important not to overlook the contribution over very many more years of other transport contractors who have worked in association with Royal Mail, for example many a visitor to Scotland will recall MacBraynes buses bearing the logo 'ROYAL MAIL SERVICES'.

The present story began on Tuesday 4 June 1968, with the first Scottish postbus service which ran between Dunbar, the resort on the A1 to the east of Edinburgh, and the nearby villages of Crowhill, Innerwick and Spott. This was one of the four experimental services described in a previous article (*Bulletin*, February 1997). By October 1974, when the first postbus timetable was published by Postal Headquarters Scotland, there were 25 Scottish services. A special handstamp was used on 1 October 1973, at Port Ellen, Isle of Islay, to commemorate the two most recent services from Port Ellen to Portnahaven and Port Askaig. The introduction to the timetable gives a potted history of postal transport and goes on to say that: 'There were and are many areas in Scotland where bus services do not exist or have ceased to exist mainly because of cost. But the one service to the rural areas which still functions is the delivery of mail to the remotest part of our country. This fact was considered by the Post Office and it was decided to try to replace some little red vans by a red bus. So in 1967-68 the postbus experiment was launched in Wales, Devon, the Lake District and Scotland. The first Scottish Postal Minibus as it was known was put into service at Dunbar in East Lothian on 4 June 1968, running between the Post Office at Dunbar and the little village of Spott. The service however ran at a modest loss, and it was not until 1971... that it was found that when the Post Office ceased to be a Civil Service Department and became a Corporation (in October 1969) it became eligible for not only a rebate on petrol

tax but a capital grant towards purchasing buses. So the modest Dunbar loss became a small gain. Without delay the Post Office in Scotland undertook a survey of potential routes using the following criteria: 1) The service must not compete with an existing bus service or contractor; 2) The service must meet the demonstrable requirements of the local community; 3) Alterations to existing mail service – eg modification and timing – can be considered if this would be acceptable to the community. Local Councils, Government Departments, Development Boards and so on were all consulted and on 17 April 1972, the first of the new postbus fleet started operation between Elgol and Broadford on the Isle of Skye. By 1 October 1973 the Post Office in Scotland were operating 25 mail and passenger carrying services. In many of these areas they also are able to carry on a Goods Delivery Service which is invaluable to people living in remote parts.'

50th route In March 1975 another special handstamp celebrated Scotland's 50th postbus route (Dingwall to Heights of Docharty), and by May 1977 there were 100 buses running north of the border. By the end of 1997 there were 230 postbus services operating in Great Britain, of which 137 were in Scotland. The distribution of the Scottish services reflects the principles quoted in the previous paragraph and Royal Mail's response to the lack of public transport in more remote areas. There are 14 services in the Borders region, 13 in Dumfries and Galloway, 6 in Lothian, 7 in Fife, 6 in Central, 20 in Strathclyde (which includes the islands of Islay, Tiree, Arran, Colonsay, Luing, Mull and Lismore), 12 in Tayside, 7 in Grampian, 41 in Highlands, 7 in Western Isles and 4 in Orkney and Shetland – including the most northerly service on the island of Bressay. Twenty former services inaugurated at various times between 1972 and 1997 have now ceased to run. To take the example of one region, Highlands has services running from Ardgay (2), Bettyhill, Dalwhinnie, Dingwall, Drumnadrochit, Fort William (2), Gairloch, Grantown-on-Spey, Halkirk, Invergarry, Invergordon, Inverness (2), John O'Groats, Kinbrace, Kyle (3), Lairg (4), Lochinver, Nairn, Newtonmore, Poolewe, Rogart (2), Scourie (2), Skye (3), Strathconon, Thurso (2), Tongue (2) and Torridon. Former services at Alligin-Kinlochewe, Altnaharra-Rispond, Laide-Achnasheen, Muir of Ord-Tomich, Roy Bridge-Moy and Isle of Skye-Skinidin have for various reasons ceased to run.

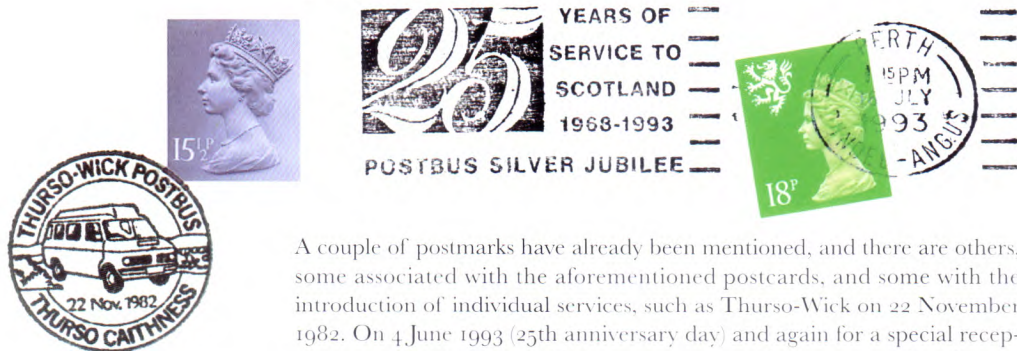
As we have already indicated, the great appeal of Scotland for the postbus enthusiast is the sheer variety of the many routes and their vehicles, combined with the obvious attraction of the unspoilt countryside, majestic scenery and friendly folk. Over the years the postbus fleet has included the usual Commer, Dodge and LDV minibuses, as well as Land Rovers, estate cars and some larger vehicles. The current fleet consists of Land Rover 4 and 8-seaters, Ford Escort saloons, Ford Sierra, Mondeo and Peugeot 405 estate cars, LDV 20 and 400 minibuses, and a handful of larger vehicles. A few routes, for instance Glendale-Dunvegan on Skye, have vehicles inscribed in Gaelic and English.



Special handstamp commemorating Scotland's 25th postbus, 1 October 1973

Opposite, from top Scottish Postal Board card from the first set issued in November 1979, showing a postbus at Kirkcudbright harbour; 25th anniversary cover and handstamp with POST BUS TOUR cachet; and SPB card from the second set of July 1980, showing the Ballater-Braemar-Linn of Dee Land Rover crossing the river Clunie in the Grampian region.

Philatelic material For the more philatelically-minded collector, ie one who is looking for covers, cards, postmarks, tickets and other paper-based items, there is probably less material available than in other areas of the UK. Compared with the many postbus cards issued by the South East Postal Region (*Bulletin*, March 1998) Scotland's output is much more modest: two sets of five cards each in November 1979 and July 1980, and a single card as part of a set issued in June 1982 marking the centenary of St Andrew's Ambulance Association, showing a postbus and a mobile first aid post. To make up for this, those who, like me, never go past a shop selling postcards without checking to see if there are any depicting letter boxes, post offices or anything postal, might agree that Scottish stationers seem to have a higher proportion of cards falling into this category, including quite a number showing postbuses, my favourite being one with a postbus meeting a Loganair plane of the Outer Hebrides airline at Great Cockle Shore on the Isle of Barra.



Special handstamp for the inauguration of the Thurso-Wick postbus, 22 November 1982, left, and 25th anniversary slogan postmark, July 1993

A couple of postmarks have already been mentioned, and there are others, some associated with the aforementioned postcards, and some with the introduction of individual services, such as Thurso-Wick on 22 November 1982. On 4 June 1993 (25th anniversary day) and again for a special reception on 10 September of the same year a special cover and handstamp were issued at Edinburgh. The one shown opposite bears an additional cachet commemorating a grand tour of Scottish postbus routes undertaken by David Cott and Jack Wahlberg in aid of charity. 25th anniversary sweatshirts and mugs were also on offer in 1993, together with a slogan postmark 'TWENTY FIVE YEARS OF SERVICE TO SCOTLAND 1968-1993 POSTBUS SILVER JUBILEE', which was used at Edinburgh, Glasgow and Perth from 5 July 1993 to 31 January 1994 (to 31 December 1993 at Perth).

Since that first postbus timetable of 1973 there have been regular new editions charting the growth of Scottish services and packed with information, maps and illustrations. Individual timetable/faretables sheets were available, but I am not sure if they are still. Compared with other postal regions, Scotland is not an exciting collecting area for those interested in tickets. The method adopted by other regions of pre-paying fares by means of postage stamps stuck to small cards and cancelled with a rubber handstamp has not been used, and most Scottish tickets were from printed rolls with a different colour for each value (several different styles were produced by the Glasgow Numerical Printing Company, later GNP-Booth), or more recently machine-printed tickets of the Almex or Setright type. Some of these were illustrated in an earlier article (*Bulletin*, February 1997) •



25 years '68-93



The Royal Mail Postbus in Scotland

Gordon Macdonald '93

CARRIED ON
GRAND SCOTTISH
POST BUS
TOUR



POSTBUS



4th JUNE 1993

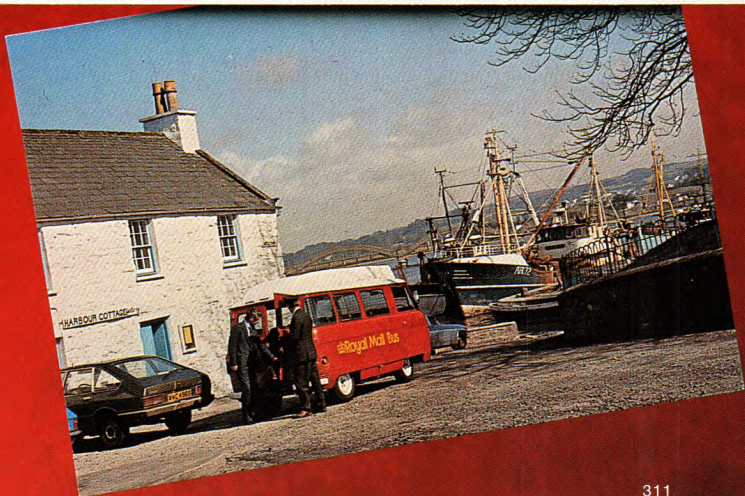


EDINBURGH

Daniel G H
Jack Wahlberg
AUG 93



Royal Mail



Chairman's comments Adam Novak, the Director and General Manager of Royal Mail National and Chairman of the Stamp Advisory Committee, reflects on this year's Rowland Hill Awards and reveals how Royal Mail's plans for the Millennium are progressing.

ANYONE WHO WAS privileged to attend the second annual Rowland Hill Awards held at the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) on 24 February is unlikely to forget the occasion. It was a truly remarkable evening, underlining how quickly and successfully this event has become a major fixture in the philatelic calendar.

This setting, where the British Film Academy Awards are held, was ideal for such an occasion. The welcome was given by Royal Mail Managing Director and guest of honour Richard Dykes, who presented the awards along with British Philatelic Trust Chairman Francis Kiddle and Chairman of the Philatelic Traders Society Graham Childs. We had dramatic camera close-ups on a giant screen of the surprise of award winners as their names were announced. And the whole show was superbly compered by TV presenter Nick Clark.

Stars of the evening, of course, were the awards winners themselves (full list appeared in an earlier *Bulletin*). All of the winners and nominees for the 14 awards deserve the highest praise for their achievements. However, I am sure that none of these will take exception if I single out eight-year-old Daniel Austin, winner of the Young Collector Award, for special mention here.

Daniel not only formed his own stamp collecting club at his local school but also decided to put the club – and his school – on an international footing by creating a site for it on the World Wide Web. Such a bold initiative by someone so young augurs well for the future of stamp collecting. If the hobby is to continue to succeed, it needs to attract new members, especially the young. Daniel's award, and the extensive media coverage it

received, is sure to stimulate other young people to discover the joys of stamp collecting for themselves – an aim which underpins the Rowland Hill Awards.

A further surprise of the evening was that, in addition to the 14 category awards, a special award was made to Barry Robinson, Royal Mail Design Director. As Richard Dykes was about three-quarters of the way through explaining the criteria by which the judges had decided to make such an award, I think the penny must have dropped with Barry that Richard was actually talking about him. Barry's face at that point became a picture of surprised delight. And judged by the rapturous ovation which Barry received, the audience clearly believed that no one was worthier of such an honour.

Barry's contribution to stamp design over the last 21 years is second to none. He epitomises the very best in design management principles, particularly the instinct for matching and focussing the creative talents of artists, designers, illustrators, engravers and photographers to particular stamp projects with such telling effect. Quite simply, Royal Mail has been blessed to have him as its custodian of stamp design.

My own contribution to the evening was to give the audience a flavour of what Royal Mail is planning for the Millennium. A great deal of vigorous thinking, debate and development has already taken place and we are well advanced in our plans.

The Millennium is a major watershed. When you think about it, William the Conqueror hadn't even been born when Britain last celebrated such an occasion. And it is no exaggeration to say that more than a few things have happened



Richard Dykes, Managing Director of Royal Mail (right), presents an award to Bruce Duckworth, designer of the Architects of the Air stamps, at the recent Rowland Hill Awards

Inventor's Tale, The Traveller's Tale, The Worker's Tale and so on.

Our January 1999 issue, for example, is likely to be The Inventor's Tale with the theme of time. We start with time itself by featuring Harrison's chronometer which enabled mariners to calculate longitude and which led ultimately to Greenwich Mean Time. From there, we move on to how we have reduced the time to do things – the Industrial Revolution and the advent of steam power. Our next step is how we have frozen time through Fox Talbot's invention of the photographic plate. And finally we arrive at the point of how we have accelerated time through Alan Turing's development of the electronic computer.

Each of these aspects is being handled by a different artist or designer. What will be of added interest to philatelists is the fact that one of these happens to be David Gentleman for whom this will be his ninety-ninth Royal Mail stamp commission. How appropriate it would be if his hundredth Royal Mail stamp design were to appear in the year 2000 itself!

To do justice to the enormity of the subject matter in 1999, for example, we are taking a much more flexible approach. Instead of nine separate issues we intend to produce what is effectively a single set of 48 stamps of the same size to emphasise a recognisable homogeneity. Yet each month's issue of four stamps will have an even more closely related theme. And, if all this were not challenging enough, each stamp will be designed by a different artist to underline a remarkable creative diversity. The breadth of artistic talent involved is truly staggering.

So how and where do we start to encapsulate a thousand years in 48 stamps?

Think of a book with 12 chapters, with a chapter being issued each month. In determining chapter headings, we have selected overall themes which we believe best describe those events which have shaped the way in which we live and think today. And to make the themes come alive, we relate the chapter's story through a 'tale' – The

This brings me on to the year 2000 when we aim to represent the then 'present' by showing through the stamps how British people actually celebrate this momentous event. Each stamp is likely to represent a Millennium site and the whole set will form 'routes' around the entire country. In addition, we will be marking the start of the year 2000 with a very special single stamp – a Millennium stamp – which will be available for the whole year and will replace the first class definitive stamp. I can assure readers it will be a worthy icon to mark the new Millennium. Add to this the Stamp Show 2000 sponsored by Royal Mail and we can expect a philatelic year to remember.

I hope to keep readers updated as our Millennium plans unfold further. What is clear already is that our original aim of marking the occasion in an inspiring, refreshing and appropriate way looks certain to be fulfilled. Stamp collectors, quite rightly, would expect nothing less of us ●

Decimal stamp books 40 Specialist report by D G A Myall



Cover and rates information panel from the 4 x 30p book

Overseas tariff change A change in the 20g letter rate to Europe came into effect on 6 April. Hitherto, this had been 26p to countries of the European Union and 31p to the others. There is now a pan-European rate of 30p. All other postal rates are unchanged, including the 31p rate for 20g letters by surface mail. For letters to Union countries this is a substantial increase but for other countries it takes us back nearly five years. From 1 November 1993 until 7 July 1996 the 20g letter rate to non-EU countries was also 30p. After the tariff increase of July 1996 the 30p remained on sale but did not have a specific duty. Now the demand for it is likely to increase. To help meet this, a new book of 4 x 30p stamps went on sale on 5 May. This was printed by Walsall in gravure and contains four of the new-style airmail labels mentioned here last October. The front cover states the contents to be: 4 European airmail stamps and there is a reproduction of part of an airmail label beneath a smaller version of the block stamp design. All in all, this is a very colourful cover. The stamps seen are from cylinder w2 so cylinder w1 may also exist.

Because a 1st-class NV1 is now insufficient postage for a letter to European Union countries, the validity notice in the retail books with these stamps has been changed. The statement that they pre-pay the 20g letter rate to EU countries has been removed. There are other changes to the text in all NV1 books; the printer's imprint and the contact points for enquiries have changed

places. However, the new 4 x 30p book has the former layout for these items and the validity notice inside is more detailed than before. I have not seen the 4 x 63p book at the time of writing but I understand that the front cover has been revised to include the 'airmail label flash' mentioned above and it will probably have the same validity notice inside. I also believe that the 4 x 37p has been reprinted with this notice but will still have the current 'Tourist' cover. There are no new cylinder numbers in these books except that w3 has been seen on the 4 x 1st.

The covers of the £1 and £2 machine-vend books have also been reprinted. Reference to overseas rates has been omitted as considered no longer relevant to these particular books.

Walsall perforations Writing about the Walsall books last October I said that one could tell that the stamp panes went through the press inverted by the fact that the powdered gum and paper ('swarf') from the APS perforator at the back of the panes was at the top of the holes. Reader N Burkit says that he cannot see the swarf on a book of 4 x 1st from cylinder w1 that he bought from a local newsagent. The reason is that this book, and some others, exists with panes perforated by one of two machines. As well as the APS, which gives the characteristic swarf, they have been perforated on the Bickel perforator. This gives clean-cut holes with no trace of swarf. Collectors refer to the two methods of perforating

These stamps are valid whatever the current postage rate and may be used for First Class items up to 60g within the UK or up to 20g to countries in the European Union (EU). They can also be used as part payment for postage on heavier items to any country provided the full cost of postage is paid for the item.

These stamps are valid whatever the current postage rate and may be used for first class items up to 60g within the UK. They can also be used as payment for postage on any item to any country provided the full cost of postage is paid. Information on postage rates is available from post offices.

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2 @ ½p, 2 @ 1p, 1 @ 7p

£40.00

as rotary (APS) and comb (Bickel). An easy way to remember which is which is the mnemonic r = rotary and rough; c = comb and clean. All Walsall books with gravure stamps have been rotary perforated. Those which have been comb perforated in addition are: Mr Burkit's 4 × 1st from cylinder w1; 10 × 1st gold from w2 w2; 10 × 1st flame from w1 and 4 × 2nd from w1. All these cylinder numbers appear at the lower half of the pane margin, against row 2 of the pane. Books of 4 × 1st from cylinders w2 and w3 are known rotary perforated only.

The panes in the De La Rue books are also APS (rotary) perforated. The perforator incorporates a buffer that removes much of the swarf but there is almost always sufficient left to identify the method. However, if you collect single stamps you should be aware of the possibility that some may appear to be comb perforated.

New fluor phosphor? Ultra violet lamps designed for use by collectors are either short-wave or long-wave and there is a dual model on the market. The phosphor inks which are used to overprint the bands on Machin stamps are specified to react to irradiation under short-wave ultra violet from the mail sorting machines and this is the type you should normally buy. However, since about December 1996, new phosphor inks have been used by Walsall and Questa which react to long-wave as well as to short-wave uv. Modern phosphor inks are a blend and include a blue

fluor to facilitate an on-press check for their presence. This helps to avoid stamps with the phosphor omitted. Printers source their own materials and these can vary in composition from time to time. It seems that the new inks include a blue fluor which has phosphorescent characteristics although they are still within the required specification for mail sorting.

Panes in books being printed at the time of the changeover exist with both inks. Those with a long-wave afterglow provide new single stamps for specialist collectors. For example, the £1 and £2 machine-vend books with the incorrect rates panel all have the old ink; those with the corrected rates panel, first seen on 24 January 1997, all have the new ink. Other books with the new ink are: Questa 10 × 2nd from Q26 Q26/Q2 onward; Walsall 4 × 2nd from w14 w19 onward; 4 × 1st from w48 w51 w59 onward; 10 × 1st from w55 w42 w45 onward and the flowers Greetings panes from w6 w6 w10 w5 w5 w8 onward.

Terminology A reader has asked me why I sometimes use the word 'book' and at others the word 'booklet' and wants to know which is correct. Nowadays, both are correct (except that I have never seen prestige books referred to as booklets). It was not always so. At one time, the Post Office referred to books of stamps sold over the counter as books and the smaller ones sold through machines as booklets. This useful distinction has been lost and the two terms are now interchangeable ●

Out of the Arc Postage stamps in enamel and chocolate, described by Colin Bendall and Catherine Orton

IN MAY 1922, the Postmaster General received an unusual letter from P H Vogel & Company, a London firm of exporters and importers and manufacturers' agents. They asked, 'Will you kindly let us know if there is a law prohibiting the copying of English postage stamps in enamel on silver. We have an idea of making a silver enamel box in the shape of an envelope with an address and facsimile of a franked English postage stamp.'

The Post Office was anxious to prevent the possibility of postage stamp forgery and so replied asking '...by what means the facsimile of the postage stamp will be produced...and in particular whether any dies will be used.' Vogel & Company assured the Post Office that the reproduction of stamps would be done by hand and that dies would not be used. The company commented 'We have a sample of an Austrian stamp done in enamel on a box which we should be pleased to show you if you would kindly make an appointment', and also offered to explain the production process. Five days later, the Post Office

gave its approval for the manufacture of the box.

A month later, in June 1922, J Lyons & Company Limited applied to the Designs Branch of the Patent Office for the registration of a chocolate cake design – the cake was in the shape of a stamped postcard! The Patent Office asked the company to obtain written consent from the Postmaster General.

Consequently, later that month, A A Thornton, a chartered patent agent acting on behalf of Lyons, requested permission from the Post Office. The Post Office, obviously concerned about stamp forgery, again asked if a die would be used during the manufacture of the cakes. Thornton replied on 5 July that '...a die will not be necessary for impressing the proposed design on cakes of chocolate, the said cakes being made from moulds...' As a result, on 11 July the Post Office approved this unusual idea too •

Post Office Archives is located at Mount Pleasant (Phoenix Place entrance), London EC1A 1BB. The search Room is open 09.00-16.15, Monday to Friday.

Book review *ABPS Yearbook and Societies Directory*

THIS NEW EDITION of the *Association of British Philatelic Societies Yearbook*, edited by John Hammonds, contains some 260 pages of essential information for every UK philatelic society and much of interest to overseas philatelic organisations and individual collectors. One of the most important sections is a comprehensive directory of British philatelic societies with a detailed listing of those affiliated to the ABPS and a courtesy listing of the remainder. A useful geographical index of societies is included, plus a section devoted to UK specialist societies. A review of the work of the ABPS makes interesting reading together with sections on its awards scheme, the British Philatelic and Stuart Rossiter Trusts, the British Philatelic Centre, Stampex and the forthcoming Brighton & Hove exhibition (November 1998).

Information is given on the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists, the Philatelic Congress of GB, and the National Youth Stamp Group. No fewer than 56 pages are devoted to a listing of the names and addresses of collectors prepared to give philatelic lectures and displays – an essential guide for society secretaries. Other sections cover philatelic insurance, the Data Protection Act 1984, British philatelic magazines, expertising services, UK philatelic trade organisations, and where to see stamps in UK museums. This new edition represents good value for money and is recommended for all serious philatelists. Price £10 from: The Secretary ABPS, c/o 107 Charterhouse Street, London EC1M 6PT. The ABPS also publishes a *National & Specialists Society Handbook* – reviewed here in October 1997 •

Competition Win a mint Penny Black, catalogued at £4500

Sponsored by Omniphil GB Home Approvals and GB Select-Direct Exclusive new GB only approvals department opens – free £220 cat value GB spacefiller quality if you apply now. £200 loyalty bonus program plus free £220 high cat GB.

If you only collect GB there's never been a better moment to reply. Apart from receiving free of charge £220 cat value in spacefiller quality high cat stamps of GB – yours to keep free, whatever you decide, you will have the unique opportunity to be one of the very first to benefit from Omniphil's increased investment in their GB Home Approvals department. Due to unprecedented demand we've taken on more staff to service your approval requests backed by tens of thousands of pounds worth of new GB stocks.

So if you collect GB stamps from QV through to QEII write today stating whether you collect mint and/or used. You will automatically receive your free £220 cat value spacefillers plus as part of the £200 Loyalty Bonus program spend just £12 nett only and you can pick a further 33% worth of stamps. (All this in addition to normal discounts from SG catalogue prices.) Pick £16 worth – send £12, pick £20 worth – send just £15, etc.

Omniphil have over 1,000 collectors participating in this approvals service. With discounts like these no wonder the service is so popular. So, if you haven't tried their GB Home Approvals Service before, drop them a line and request their free 220 offer. State if you collect used and mint and any other countries collected too. Reply to: **Omniphil GB Home Service, Bulletin Free High Cat 220 Offer, PO Box 29, Stroud GL6 6RW.**

For similarly well priced examples of scarce GB high values catalogued £50+ write to GB Select Direct, PO Box 99, Market Harborough, LE16 8ZR quoting SG numbers, mint or used and condition required for no obligation quotation.

To enter the competition answer the questions below and send, with your name and address, on a postcard or back of an envelope to: June Bulletin Competition, Royal Mail, 22 Finsbury Square, London EC2A 1NL to arrive by 24 July. Entries must be posted separately, multiple entries in one envelope will be disregarded.

- 1 Which was the first postbus route in Scotland?
- 2 Who designed the forthcoming Magical Worlds stamps?
- 3 Where will the Lorca '98 exhibition be held?
- 4 Which *Bulletin* contributor will sign the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists this month?
- 5 Which MP urged Imperial Penny Postage?

Answers will be found in this *Bulletin*. The competition is not open to employees, families or agents of Royal Mail or Omniphil/GB Select Direct •



1st prize QV 1840 1d grey-black letters K-E fine 3 large margins mint original gum example of rare plate 1a. SG cat £4,500, GB Select-Direct selling price £500.

2nd prize QV 1883 10s ultramarine letters M-A, magnificent appearance superb central cds used fine colour well centred example marred only by diagonal blue crayon line. SG 183 cat £275+, GB Select-Direct price £50.

3rd prize KGV 1915 5s Seahorse, a lightly cancelled southwest centred example with minor imperfections, ex scarce DLR printing. SG 410 cat £160, GB Select-Direct price £22.50.

The winners of the March competition were P Laing of Pittsburgh, M Boreham of Warrington, and Dr G Pegg of Bristol.

The answers were 1) Eric Morecambe; 2) James Mackay; 3) Canterbury to Crundale; 4) Bearsden Philatelic Society; 5) Queen Victoria. Our thanks to all who entered.



Postbag

Pre-paying postage I have collected stamps for over 30 years and always enjoy looking at the stamps and postmarks on my daily mail. For the past few years my wife and I have kept a record of the stamps and other forms of pre-payment, with a breakdown as to the types of stamps affixed. I supply our 1997 and 1990 findings in the hope they might be of interest to fellow *Bulletin* readers. I stress that this is our personal mail received at home, not at our place of work and includes letters and packages from relatives, friends, businesses and of course advertising mail. Only mail posted in the UK is included in the listing. For the record, we received 79 items from overseas during 1997, mostly bearing adhesive stamps.

Stamped mail	1997	1990
Definitive (valued) stamps	109	251
Country stamps	17	22
NVI stamps	92	14
Self-adhesive stamps	8	0
Special stamps (that year)	101	123
Special stamps (earlier)	15	12
Greetings stamps (that year)	6	2
Greetings stamps (earlier)	1	0
Total stamped mail	349	524
Non-stamped mail		
Postal stationery	2	8
Post Paid postmark	34	32
Meter impression	103	80
Printed Postage Impression (PPI)	292	101
Total non-stamped mail	431	221
Total mail	780	745

Breakdown of 1997 special issues

Henry VIII	7	Post Offices	4
Missions of Faith	0	Enid Blyton	0
Tales of Terror	2	Golden Wedding	6
Architects of the Air	5	Christmas	68
Queen's Horses	9	Total	101

A few general comments might be of interest. Firstly the amount of stamped mail declined from 70% of the total in 1990 to 45% in 1997. The use of 1997 special stamps amounted to 29% of stamped mail and just 13% of all mail (9 and 4% excluding Christmas stamps). Sadly two issues of 1997 special stamps (Missions of Faith and Enid Blyton) were not used on any letters. Postal Stationery envelopes, once quite frequently encountered, are rarely used but the number of items bearing the red 'Paid' postmarks (machine and handstamp) has, surprisingly, held up. The number of items bearing meter impressions has grown but not by so much as mail bearing PPIs.

Interested in pre-payment of postage as well as the designs and printing aspects of adhesive stamps, I now pay more attention to meters, PPIs and Paid postmarks than I used too. There is much interest in them and I suggest more collectors should examine them rather than rapidly consign them to the waste-bin. I learned a great deal about PPIs and meters from the articles by Ron Negus and James Mackay in this *Bulletin*. As they are an important part of the postal scene in the closing years of the 20th century, perhaps we collectors should revise our attitude towards them.

Finally I might add that we normally use definitive stamps on mail to businesses and specials on letters to relatives and friends. My wife particularly likes the Flowers greetings stamps and of the 1997 sets I preferred the Architects of the Air set. GEORGE HOWELL, DERBY ●

Favourite stamps Surely there is something to be learned from the voting figures on 'favourite stamps'? They show one thing all too clearly. You issue far too many stamps as well over half the designs have little or no appeal. Perhaps, if you issued fewer stamps each year you might find the time to be more selective in choosing stamps with a wider appeal. G. IZMIDLIAN, SPALDING ●

The Editor is always pleased to receive contributions for 'Postbag', especially letters adding information to that already published, so benefiting fellow philatelists. He regrets that he is unable to reply personally to letters.

Posting boxes 177

THIS MONTH's photograph was submitted by Dr Allan Pullin who came across this 'rather sad, faded and forlorn' Edward VIII box at the junction of Canning Street and South Bedford Street, Liverpool L8 in September 1997. Martin Robinson's excellent *Old Letter Boxes* tells us that during the short reign of Edward VIII some 161 pillar boxes were cast, of which many are still in use. A listing is published in the Letter Box Study Group.

Edward VIII wall and pillar boxes in Suffolk and Worthing were featured here in May 1980 and February 1986. An Edward VIII pillar box in Blackpool was depicted on a North Western Postal Board postcard issued in November 1981. Cards posted in this box on the day of issue received a special 'Posted in the Box' cachet which incorporated the Edward VIII royal cypher in its design •



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

Events

2-7 June Lorca '98 world exhibition for philatelic literature and modern philately at Palacio de Exposiciones y Congresos, Granada, Spain. **UK Enquiries** P Pearson, c/o Royal Philatelic Society London, 41 Devonshire Place, London W1N 1PE.

4-7 June Philatelic Congress of GB at Royal Scarborough Hotel, Scarborough. **Enquiries** A Griffiths, 01923 673199.

6 June Bournemouth & District Phil Soc Stamp and Postcard Fair at Summerbee Secondary School, Mallard Road, Bournemouth, 10.00-18.00. Dealers, free admission, refreshments. **Enquiries** R Sharp, 72 Cardigan Road, Bournemouth BH9 1BG

13 June York Philatelic Society 50th anniversary exhibition and fair at Archbishop Holgate's Grammar School, Hull Road, York, 09.30-17.00. Dealers, displays etc. Admission free, refreshments. **Enquiries** Harry Hayes 01904 764660

18-21 June Juvalux '98 international exhibition

(Youth/Postal History), at International Convention Centre, Luxembourg. Dealers, postal administrations, philatelic journals stands. **Enquiries** Richard West, 0181 686 2599

19-21 June GB Philatelic Society Conference at Swallow Highcliff Hotel, St Michael's Road, West Cliff, Bournemouth. Displays, dealers, etc. **Enquiries** P Kenton, 01932 222864

25 June 'Machin Ps' display by Bob Setchfield to Loughborough and District Phil Soc, at Shelthorpe Community Centre, Woodthorpe Road, Loughborough, 19.30. **Enquiries** R Tatton, 01509 268073.

27-28 June Thematica '98 at Carisbrooke Hall, Seymour Street, London W2. **Enquiries** Brian Sole, 01372 467652

3 July GB 1890 Jubilee of Uniform Penny Postage – display by Francis Kiddle to The Hale Phil Soc, St Lawrence Church Hall, Whitchurch Lane, Little Stanmore, 19.30. **Enquiries** J Corscaden, 01923 673347

ROYAL MAIL COLLECTOR PLATES AND MUGS

The late Tony Evans's endearing photographs of a kitten, rabbit, duckling, and puppy dog, used on the 1990 RSPCA stamps, are reproduced on fine bone china plates, price £19.95 each (£75 set of four) and coffee mugs, £5.95 each.

Christmas plates feature the Angel Gabriel stained glass window in St James's Church, Pangbourne, Berks and Ken Lilly's drawing of a robin with holly – designs used on 1992 and 1995 Christmas stamps. Price £19.95 each.

All plates are 8" in diameter. Please state clearly the design(s) required.

Also available are plates and mugs featuring the designs of the 1995 Cats and 1985 Famous Trains stamps – enquire for further details.

Royal Mail Collections, Free-post, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 0HN. UK telephone order line 0345 641 641.



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