

BRITISH PHILATELIC

The ROYAL MAIL magazine *for stamp collectors*

Bulletin

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Irish overprints • 25 years of
Postbuses in the southeast



1998©

Some of Britain's best-loved comedians feature in new stamps to be issued on 23 April. 'What do you think of it so far?'

Forthcoming issues and withdrawals

Late news The Diana, Princess of Wales stamps have also been printed from cylinders 1A 1B 1C 2D 1E and 1A 2B 3C 3D 2E as well as 2A 2B 3C 3D 2E recorded in the special supplement to the January *Bulletin*.

2 March	Withdrawal Scottish aerogramme – Alexander Graham Bell
10 March	Issue The Stamp Show 2000 prestige stamp book
10 March	Withdrawal Missions of Faith stamps, pack and stamp cards
17 March	Issue Lighthouses stamp cards
24 March	Issue Lighthouses stamps, presentation pack and aerogrammes
24 March	Withdrawal Captain Cook aerogramme
6 April	Issue 1st and 2nd class self-adhesive stamps (vertical format) in rolls of 200. Available from post offices in Scotland and Northern Ireland, Bureau and philatelic outlets. See page 199 for further information
16 April	Issue Comedians stamp cards
20 April	Withdrawal 26p and 1st NVI gold definitives; 10 x 1st gold definitives books (Harrison and Walsall)
20 April	Withdrawal NPM Letterboxes and Silver Wedding postcards. <i>Note: To be withdrawn at the Bureau, will remain on sale at the Museum</i>
23 April	Issue Comedians stamps and presentation pack
28 April	Withdrawal 10 x 2nd book (Harrison)

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.

Free Bulletins Secretaries of philatelic societies and stamp clubs who would like a supply of *Bulletins* to give to members should write to The Editor, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 22 Finsbury Square, London EC2A 1NL. Please state number of members in club.

Readers who know collectors who might like a sample copy of the Bulletin should also send names and addresses to the Editor. We will be pleased to send a free copy.

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Technical details

Printers Walsall Security
Printers Ltd

Process Offset lithography

Size 41 x 30mm

Sheets 100

Perforation 15 x 14

Phosphor One band 20p ●
two bands others

Gum PVA

Comedians Five stamps featuring some of Britain's best-loved comedians go on sale at post offices and philatelic outlets on 23 April.

The **20p** stamp (basic inland 2nd class letter rate) features the incomparable Tommy Cooper (1922-84). Born in Caerphilly, he was a Horse Guard for seven years before entering show business. He starred at the Windmill and Palladium before becoming a tv favourite in 'It's Magic'. He was an accomplished magician although his act combined skill with total buffoonery. His large frame and gormless face meant he had had only to walk on stage to make audiences laugh. His catch phrase 'Just like that' is still part of the language. He died on stage at Her Majesty's Theatre, making people laugh to the very end.

Eric Morecambe (1926-84) features on the **26p** denomination (inland 1st class and EU basic weight letters). Born Eric Bartholomew in Morecambe, Lancs, he became a song and dance man age 12 and shortly after met Ernest Wiseman (Ernie Wise) and the famous Morecambe and Wise double-act was born. Their radio and tv shows were enjoyed by millions and their Christmas shows from 1961 to 1978 were a national institution (the shows are still repeated). Perhaps they will always be best-remembered for 'sending up' the guests, such as Glenda Jackson and Andre Previn, on their shows and for the good-natured baiting of Des O'Connor. Eric's line 'What do you think of it so far?' will long be remembered. He suffered from heart problems in his last years and died hours after a stage show. His death covered the front page of most national newspapers.

Joyce Grenfell (1910-79), shown on the **37p** stamp (airmail postcard rate), was the niece of Nancy Astor, the first woman MP to take her seat in the Commons. Despite largely American parentage, she was, writes Maureen Lipman 'the quintessential comic Englishwoman. She was a gifted writer as well as performer on stage, radio, tv and film. She is best remembered as the toothy, gallumping Miss Gossage ('Call me Sausage') in the St Trinian's films and for the memorable exclamation 'George, don't do that' in her monologues. She was very interested in music and was a regular on the tv show 'Face the Music'. She wrote volumes of autobiography and



Mrs J Robinson
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Ilkeston
Derbyshire
DE7 4AB



fez was the funniest sight on television. One look at that crumbling edifice; one earful of that guttural chortle as yet another conjuring trick seemed to trick the conjurer and – “Just like that” – we were helplessly enslaved.

Born in Caerphilly in 1922, son of a coal miner, he spent seven years in the Horse Guards before breaking into show business via the

He died in 1984 on stage at Her Majesty's Theatre. Most people watching thought it was part of the act



LES DAWSON, the pessimist, misogynist, pianist and above all linguist, was the stand-up who made us all fall down. He gave *End of the Pier* comedy a peerless twist. He delighted in the English language not only in "She's got a face like a bag of chisels" patter but in his satire of pseudo lyricism and the books he penned of a ferrety, pigeon-fancying, cloth-capped bygone North.

The stocks, rubber-faced comedian, born in Collyhurst in 1934, ran the job gamut from navy to brick, fetching up, after National Service, in a Paris brothel playing the piano. He travelled from Northern clubs ('If they liked you they let you live via 'Opportunity Knocks' to *Sex Les* and *Blankety Blank*, in which he blissfully and subversively

"My wife's gone off with the man next door," he moaned tearfully. "Ooh, I do miss him."



PETER COOK put the native back into *Alternative*. Born in Torquay in 1937, president of 'Footlights' at Cambridge, he and his team re-invented satire through *Beyond the Fringe*, changing British comedy's targets from Ealing Magistrates and Mother-in-Laws to the Establishment itself. The *Fringe* transferred to London and Broadway, and every satirical programme since, from TW5 to Monty Python, was influenced by it. Cook founded The Establishment nightclub and 'Private Eye' magazine. No pillar of society was safe.

Georgina "Balla Ma Souveraine" is in the St. Trinian's films. One of the few female writer-performers of the century, she travelled extensively for ENSA, returning for nine revues, three solo shows here and in America, 25 films and TV's 'Face the Music'.

Her marriage to Reggie, her gift for friendship and her Christian Science faith informed her life. She believed both she and her audience were 'there for joy.' Her two volumes of autobiography and four books of correspondence remain best-sellers. The 2000 people attending her funeral in 1979 heard the minister call her 'The most spiritual person I've ever met!'

ER COOK

It's the time to say goodbye to his iconoclastic wit. He played Greta Garbo and The Leaping Nuns of Norwich (on a trampoline) and he remorselessly reduced his partner Dudley Moore to hysteria. The philosopher El Wisty and the scatological 'Derek and Clive' tapes achieved cult status. His last appearance as four guests of Clive Anderson showed **improvisational genius**.

When he died in 1995, Alan Bennett announced that Cook's only regret was that he once saved David Frost's life.



Presentation pack and 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 contains tributes to those shown on the stamps by leading comedienne Maureen Lipman.



her published correspondence is much read. Maureen Lipman starred as Grenfell in a recreation of her stage show.

The lugubrious Les Dawson (1934-93), shown on the **43p** stamp (airmail letters basic rate), was born at Collyhurst, near Manchester and after numerous jobs and national service entered show business, playing a piano in a Paris brothel, and touring the northern clubs. He came to the attention of a wider public in 'Opportunity Knocks' and went on to star in 'Sez Les' and the game-show 'Blankety Blank'. His stage/TV act included the hilarious playing the piano out of key, the 'Cissie and Ada' conversations (with Roy Barraclough), and many good-humoured, if politically incorrect, mother-in-law jokes. He was also an accomplished writer. He symbolised, says Maureen Lipman, 'a ferrety, pigeon-fancying, cloth-capped bygone North'. Towards the end of his life he remarried and a daughter was born shortly before his sudden death. Crowds of fans lined the streets of Lytham to watch his funeral cortege pass.



The final stamp, **63p** (airmail letters, second weight step) features Peter Cook (1937-95), a noted alternative comedian. Born in Torquay, he became president of the famous 'Footlights' group at Cambridge and came to national fame in 'Beyond the Fringe', 'That was the Week That Was' and in his partnership with Dudley Moore. The stamp shows him as the bizarre E L Wisty character from the Cook-Moore shows, which ended with the powerful rendition of 'Now is the Time to Say Goodbye'. Cook was proprietor of the satirical *Private Eye* magazine. His last appearance, on the Clive Anderson show, was a tour de force. Years of a bohemian lifestyle undoubtedly led to his early death when he was heralded as the inspiration to many of today's alternative comedians.

THE DESIGNER The stamps were designed by Gerald Scarfe (born 1936), noted for his distinctive satirical cartoons. He worked for *Punch* and *Private Eye* during the 1960s. Exhibitions of his work have been staged in New York, Montreal, Chicago and London. He has written and directed many live action and documentary films for the BBC and Channel 4, and worked, as Art Director, with the animators of 'Hercules', the 1997 Disney animated movie. Gerald Scarfe lives in London.

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Unstamped Royal Mail FDC envelopes will be available from main post offices and philatelic outlets around a week before 23 April, price 25p. Orders for the cover bearing the stamps, cancelled with a pictorial 'first day of issue' postmark of the Bureau or Morecambe, price £2.64 UK (including VAT) or £2.25 overseas (no VAT), must reach the Bureau by 23 April. 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, Forth Street, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 1AA (for Morecambe postmark), marking the outer envelope 'FD9807' (Bureau), or 'FD9808' (Morecambe).

Posting boxes will be provided at main post offices for collectors to post covers for local (mostly non-pictorial) 'first day of issue' handstamps. Sponsored special handstamps will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from the Bureau (£10 UK/Europe; £21.75 elsewhere).

Covers may be posted bearing just the 20p Comedians stamp for any philatelic postmark in use on 23 April; the normal 1st class rule is waived for the day •

COMEDIANS ON STAMPS This is our first set devoted to this subject, but a few earlier British stamps have featured comedians and comic actors. Peter Sellers (1925-80) and Charlie Chaplin (1889-1977) featured on the 17p and 29p stamps of the 1985 British Film Year set, and Stan Laurel (1890-1965) on one of the 1990 'Smiles' greetings stamps.

Tony Hancock was depicted on a special handstamp used in May 1996 to commemorate the unveiling of a statue of him by another giant of British comedy, Sir Harry Secombe. Bob Hope, born in London, and the Scottish comedian Sir Harry Lauder were shown on Scottish aerogrammes in 1979 and 1989. The 'Fat Lady' seaside humour shown on the 1994 Picture Postcards stamps was the stock-in-trade of Les Dawson.

British comedians have been honoured by other nations: Chaplin, Laurel and Sellers have been depicted on stamps from several countries, and Sidney James, long remembered for his partnership with Tony Hancock, featured on a stamp from Ghana in 1997 •



New format self-adhesive stamps Following the trial sale of rolls of 100 self-adhesive stamps at post offices in Scotland and Northern Ireland, rolls of 200 self-adhesive stamps will be available from 6 April. The stamps – 1st and 2nd class – will now be in normal upright format as other definitive stamps. The rolls will be supplied in dispenser boxes. Printing, in gravure, is by Joh Enschedé Stamps of the Netherlands. The stamps have elliptical perfs on vertical sides; the 1st class stamp has two phosphor bands, the 2nd class one band. The rolls will be on sale at post offices in Scotland and Northern Ireland only.

Collectors will be able to obtain single stamps or strips from the British Philatelic Bureau. Post offices and philatelic outlets, other than the Bureau, will sell the stamps only in complete rolls. No first day facilities will be available •



Design for 1953 Coronation stamp by H.L. Palmer in the 'Golden & Glorious' exhibition

National Postal Museum The current displays at the NPM will be of interest to collectors of all ages, beginning on the ground floor with a fascinating display of historic postal vehicles and artefacts. The 'Victorian Posts' exhibition, (ground and mezzanine floors), explains the 19th century postal services. In the main gallery (top floor), visitors can see the 'Golden & Glorious' exhibition, commemorating the golden wedding of The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh (left, a design from the exhibition), the famous R M Phillips Collection of Victorian stamps, and 'all-world' and thematic displays. The well-stocked shop offers a wide range of books, postcards, and souvenirs; mail handed in at the shop receives a unique Maltese Cross handstamp. The NPM, in King Edward Street, London EC1A 1LP, is open Monday-Friday 0.930-16.30, admission free ●

Times stamp supplement A 16-page *Collecting Stamps* supplement was published in the 13 January edition of *The Times*. The colourful supplement included feature articles on thematic collecting, Stanley Gibbons, Millennium stamps, issues honouring Diana, Princess of Wales, stamps as an advertising medium, Egyptian stamps, Royal Mail's 1998 stamp programme, World Cup stamps, the growth of private postal services, and a potted biography of Dorothy Wilding (1893-1976) whose portrait of The Queen is re-used on stamps in the forthcoming prestige stamp book. The front cover of the supplement features Royal Mail's Diana, Princess of Wales stamps, also memorial issues from Dominica, The Gambia, Grenada, Guyana and Nevis. Amongst the contributors to the supplement were *Bulletin* writer James Mackay, Editor John Holman, and Hugh Jefferies, Editor of *Gibbons Stamp Monthly*. This *Times* supplement follows earlier supplements in *The Times*, *Telegraph* and *Express* in 1996 and 1997. All have generated interest in the hobby of stamp collecting ●

Successful business postboxes The new British business park postbox – as shown in our Posting Boxes feature last August – is spreading across Europe. Made in Newcastle upon Tyne by ROMEQ, the engineering arm of The Post Office, the box accepts mail into a cylinder like a bank night safe. The letters then drop into a secure interior. Royal Mail has provided hundreds of the boxes for business customers throughout the UK – providing additional franked mail collection facilities for customers based out of town centres, where a later collection is required. The boxes, made from heavy-gauge sheet steel, are shaped and welded to resist impact. If damaged, engineers can unbolt it from its baseplate and replace it by another. Boxes in Wales are inscribed bilingually, those in Scotland bear the Scottish crown without EUR cypher. Now these boxes have become an export earner, being used already in Ireland, Jersey, Guernsey and Isle of Man. The Dutch Post Office is trialling the box ●

Lighthouses aerogrammes Three 'country' aerogrammes will be issued on 24 March in conjunction with the Lighthouses stamps. The English aerogramme headed 'Heroine of the Longstone Lighthouse' tells the story of Grace Darling, daughter of the keeper of the Longstone lighthouse, Farne Isles. With her father she helped rescue nine men from a stricken ship in 1838. The Scottish aerogramme, entitled 'Mystery at the Flannan Lighthouse', tells the haunting tale of the disappearance of the three lighthousemen in 1900. It is believed a freak wave swept the men into the depths. The Welsh aerogramme is inscribed in both Welsh and English: 'Trychineb Yng Ngoleudy Smalls/Tragedy at the Smalls Lighthouse'. This lighthouse is commemorated on the 26p stamp. In the late 18th century one of the two keepers died and the other, fearful of being accused of murder, kept the body in a box lashed to the outside of the lighthouse. Only when the relief boat eventually arrived did his ordeal end and after this three keepers were appointed.

The aerogrammes will be sold at post offices in the respective countries and at the Bureau and philatelic outlets, price 45p each. They were designed by Trickett & Webb Limited and printed by McCorquodale Envelopes Limited. The Scottish aerogramme bears the Royal Mail logo with Scottish crown, the Welsh aerogramme the Post Brenhinol logo and Welsh version printed airmail etiquette. The three aerogrammes bear the standard aerogramme Postage Paid 'stamp' so do not qualify for 'first day of issue' postmarks in use on 24 March. However, they may be submitted for sponsored and permanent philatelic handstamps in use that day – details will be found in the *British Postmark Bulletin* ●

Lighthouses stamps: plates & colours The numbers used were: 1A (gold) 1A (greenish yellow) 1A (magenta) 1A (new blue) 1A (black) for each value. The phosphor band on the 20p measures 7.5mm, that on stamps in column 10 is 9.5mm overlapping into the stamp margin. On other values, the bands adjacent to vertical sheet margins measure 9.5mm, the bands across pairs of stamps measure 16.5mm ●

TRYCHINEB YNG NGOLEUDY SMALLS

Codwyd y goleudy cyntaf o bren yn hwyr yr 1770au gan ddefnyddio dyluniad arloesol. Roedd yn wythnoglog, safai ar naw coes a defnyddid ysgol raff i gyrraedd llety'r ŵelwad. Digwyddodd trychineb yn ystod y blynyddoedd cyntaf y defnyddiwyd y goleudy: bu farw un o'r ddau geidwad. Gan ofni y byddai rhywun yn ŷmau ei fod wedi cyflawni llofruddiaeth pe bai'n gollwng y corff i'r môr, gosododd ei bartner y corff marw mewn bocs a'i glymu wrth reilen y llusern y tu allan. Dim ond pan gyrhaeddodd y llong gyfnewid o'r diwedd y daeth profiad annymhol y ceidwad i ben. Wedi hyn, apwyntiwyd tri cheidwad i'r goleudy ar y graig.



TRAGEDY AT THE SMALLS LIGHTHOUSE

The first lighthouse was built in a pioneering timber design in the late 1770s. It was octagonal, perched on nine legs, and with the keepers' accommodation reached by a rope ladder. Tragedy struck during the first years of operation: one of the two keepers died. The survivor, fearful that he might be suspected of murder if he committed the body to the deep, placed the corpse in a box and lashed it, outside, to the lantern rail. Only when the relief boat eventually arrived did the keeper's ordeal end. After this, three keepers were appointed to the rock.



Craig Smalls yw'r fan fwyaf gorlle yng Nghymru; bu dau oleudy yng cilomedr o arfordir Sir Benfro. Gyda'r goleudy Smalls, a 15 goleudy arall, Nghymru, gan Trinity House.

51° 43'.23N 05° 40'.10W

The Smalls reef is the most westerly of Wales; two lighthouses have a 27km off the Pembrokeshire coast. Smalls, and 15 other Welsh lighthouses, are administered by Trinity House.



Stamp scene International Exhibitions •

GB Philatelic Society • Scottish Congress



Opening hours

23 April	11.00-18.00
24th and 25th	10.00-18.00
26th	10.00-17.00

Admission is free

Further information from

Sylvia Cook, International
Stamp Exhibitions
Telephone 01425 461353

Stamp '98 The organisers are hoping for some 25,000 visitors to the next 'Stamp' exhibition at Wembley on 23-26 April. The 1997 show attracted 21,000 visitors – some 62% of whom had either collected stamps for less than five years or had never collected! The exhibition, supported by Stanley Gibbons and Royal Mail, is clearly fulfilling its function of attracting new collectors and new recruits to the hobby. For the 1998 exhibition there will be over 120 standholders – postal administrations, stamp and postal history dealers, coin and card dealers, auction houses, album and accessory suppliers, associations and societies, philatelic publishers, and stamp printers. Amongst the many attractions will be an exhibition of bird stamps. Entitled Birdpex (what a title!), it will be the world's largest international competition for this most popular of collecting themes. This is being held for the first time in the UK following successful Birdpex exhibitions in Germany and New Zealand in 1990 and 1994.

Royal Mail will have a stand at the exhibition offering its full range of stamps and philatelic products. The Comedians stamps will be issued on the opening day, 23 April. A special commemorative envelope will be available for the exhibition postmark and up to four souvenir cachets will be offered at the stamp printers' stands. Visitors will also have the chance of getting their covers autographed by a celebrity guest on the opening day •

Readers in the UK interested in competing at Lorca '98

should write for an exhibition brochure and application form to:

Patrick Pearson, c/o Royal
Philatelic Society London, 41
Devonshire Place, London
W1N 1PE, or

Lorca '98, Apartado 1998,
E-18080 Granada, Spain.

Forms must be returned by
15 March.

Lorca '98 This World Philatelic Exhibition of Literature and Mophililia (modern philately) will be held at the Exhibition and Congress Palace, Granada, Spain, 2-7 June 1998. Organised by the Spanish Federation of Philatelic Societies and the Spanish Postal Administration, it will be held under Fédération Internationale de Philatélie regulations. The literature competition will cover books, monographs, research articles, bibliographies, exhibition and auction catalogues, stamp catalogues, philatelic periodicals, columns in philatelic or non-philatelic publications, and audio-visual and computer systems.

The Mophililia Salon at the exhibition will include competitive entries of stamps and documents issued within the last 15 years from collections developed chronologically, thematically or otherwise. The manner of presentation is totally up to the exhibitor, however there should be an introductory statement. No fee will be charged for exhibits in the Mophililia Salon. Literature exhibits for the Mophililia Salon should have been published not earlier than 1996, except books and special studies and motion pictures which should have been published not earlier than 1993 •

Philatelic Software Ltd received a vermeil award and special prize for the StampMaster CD-ROM program at Mefivil – the first international exhibition of philatelic audio-visual and computer systems – in Buenos Aires in December. A Royal Mail film was included in the honours class •

International exhibitions The main exhibitions for 1998, under FIP patronage, auspices or recognition, are: Israel '98 (Tel Aviv, 13-21 May), Lorca (Granada, 5-11 June), Juvalux '98 (Luxembourg, 18-21 June), Portugal '98 (Lisbon, 4-13 September), Ilsapex '98 (Johannesburg, 20-25 October), and Italia '98 (Milan, 23 October-1 November) •

National Youth Stamp Group A Youth Conference was held in Wakefield on 31 October-1 November to discuss ways to encourage stamp collecting among the young. Organised by the British Philatelic Trust, it brought together representatives of the regional philatelic federations, members of the NYSG and other interested parties. The conference underlined the valuable work done by Federation youth officers who all reported facing similar obstacles. Persistence was cited as the main factor in successfully forming clubs in schools, personal contact with a sympathetic staff member is essential. Officers agreed the importance of the National Curriculum, which follows themes, and is thus particularly suited to stamp-related activities. Stamp fairs were suggested as useful venues for developing youth interest, and the need for the trade to cater for younger collectors, if only with 'penny boxes', was also stressed. Delegates were impressed by the report from the Kettering Society which has a thriving youth group, and even runs its own youth packet •

Enquiries John Davies, 3 Longfellow Road, Banbury OX16 9LB

Scottish Philatelic Congress The 69th annual Congress will be held at the Town Hall, Falkirk on 21-22 March, hosted by the Bearsden Philatelic Society which is celebrating its 50th anniversary. The doors open at 09.00, with the official opening, by Magnus Magnusson, at 11.00. In addition an exhibition, numerous stamp and postcard dealers will be present and the British Philatelic Bureau will have a stand. Sunday 22 March will be Collectors' Day with displays by local societies and meetings of specialist societies. School children will be welcome. Admission is free, as is car parking; refreshments will be available on the Saturday •

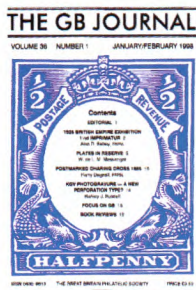
Enquiries T J Woods, 32 Bryan Street, Hamilton ML3 0JW

For details of a souvenir postcard and postmark see *Commemorative Covers Review*.

GB Philatelic Society The Society has just published *King George V Stamps Issued in Rolls*, written by Leslie Wilkinson. The book is based on extensive research and brings together all previously published information in addition to much new material. The January/February 1998 issue of the Society's *GB Journal* contains articles on the 1925 British Empire exhibition 1½d imprimatur and Perkins Bacon Reserve Plates, and useful notes on Charing Cross postmarks, 1886, a new perforation type of George V photogravure ½d, curious used Victorian stamps, Seahorse variety, etc. The GBPS will be holding its first Conference at Bournemouth on 19-21 June. The event costs £10 as a weekend visitor, £145 with accommodation at the Swallow High-cliff Hotel •

Enquiries about the Conference to P Kenton, Greenstead, 6B Oatlands Chase, Weybridge KT13 9SA. Telephone 01932 222864.

Enquiries about membership of the Society to A Lajer, The Old Post Office, Hurst, Reading RG10 0TR.



Chairman's comments Adam Novak, the Director and General Manager of Royal Mail National and Chairman of the Stamp Advisory Committee, discusses the Diana, Princess of Wales stamps and the Rowland Hill Awards



A LASTING, affordable, accessible, timely and appropriate tribute to a remarkable lady whose life inspired people everywhere and whose tragic death moved the world. That is the clear, unmistakable verdict of the philatelic world and beyond on the stamps we issued last month to honour the memory of Diana, Princess of Wales.

The fact that five months elapsed between the Princess's death and the issue of these stamps underlines the sensitivity with which Royal Mail handled the project. This interval, however, also belies just how proactively we responded.

Few will forget that terrible August Sunday morning when news broke of the tragedy in Paris. Later that day Barry Robinson, our Design Director, and I were on the telephone to each other discussing how Royal Mail should respond. If we were to have a set of stamps, there were three major questions. Who would design them? When should we issue them? And how should we issue them?

Barry tackled the first question and was soon contacting photographers with whom Diana had willingly cooperated to find a suitable mix of formal and informal portraits which could be used for the stamps. He decided that, instead of attempting to visualise the Princess's life from childhood, it would be more appropriate to capture her glamour, humanity and endearing charm,

qualities with which she was most associated in the public eye. Consequently his choice was from photographs taken in the last decade.

When Barry presented his outline ideas, we were able to make the decision to proceed on the basis of these. This decision enabled Barry to finalise the designs, including the cropping of the images and other details such as borders and typography. Since a black border would have contrasted harshly with the images, purple was chosen instead – we checked the appropriateness of this with the College of Arms. We also felt that captions other than Diana's dates (1961-1997) would have been superfluous.

Cromalin proofs were ready within a short time and Barry personally supervised the final corrections to the cylinders. This achievement was a tremendous tribute to Barry's commitment not to mention his energy since he had managed very little sleep during the whole research and design process.

The next question was the timing of the issue. Every one of our stamps is approved by Her Majesty The Queen before being issued. A vital extra consideration with these stamps was that we wanted to ensure the Spencer family and Kensington Palace had no objection to the timing – final acceptance came just before Christmas.

Meanwhile we had been carefully considering



Adam Novak presents Royal Mail's Innovation Award for journalistic excellence to Christine Earle at the inaugural Rowland Hill Awards ceremony last year at the Victoria & Albert Museum

conclusions about the demand pattern for the Diana stamps, we anticipate that it will be Royal Mail's most popular ever issue.

The other significant philatelic event in February was the second annual Rowland Hill Awards ceremony – a detailed report of this will appear in a future *Bulletin*. Last year's inaugural event was an unqualified success and the benefits of this were to be seen in the excellent response which this year's awards evoked. Based on this evidence, it certainly looks as if the concept has struck just the right chord within the philatelic community.

Readers of the *Bulletin*, of course, have played their part by being able to nominate their favourite Post Office Counter for the Post Office Excellence award. This was one of four Innovation Awards sponsored by Royal Mail, the others being for journalistic excellence, stamp innovation and product innovation. Our partners in this annual prestigious event, the British Philatelic Trust and the Philatelic Traders' Society, provided their own awards. The BPT sponsored awards for initiative in youth work, young collectors, authorship, research, community work, team work and new horizons while the PTS sponsored awards for personal contribution, business enterprise and retail development.

Award ceremonies can sometimes be seen simply as opportunities for mutual backslapping and overly long speech-making. I believe these awards are different because they have a very serious purpose, namely to raise standards within the industry and to heighten awareness of the joys of philately to the world beyond. The success of the first two years owes much to the fact that the philatelic community recognises that this purpose is not only serious but also much needed.

With so many counter attractions emerging, philately has undergone considerable challenges in recent years. I believe that the example of the Rowland Hill Awards can only serve to increase the industry's confidence to take stamp collecting successfully into the next millennium ●

how we should handle the issue. Since we felt strongly that this should be a tribute, not a commercial exercise, we decided against most of the additional products usually made available with a special issue – we have only issued a presentation pack and a commemorative cover. We also felt strongly that it would be entirely in tune with the Princess's achievements for all profits from the sales of philatelic products to be contributed to her Memorial Fund.

Affordability was another major consideration. Mindful of an anticipated unusually high demand and the fact that we were adding an extra special issue to our widely-accepted norm of nine per year, we decided that all of the stamps would be 26p, making the set an affordable £1.30.

Availability was equally important. We decided to increase our usual print run fourfold, to distribute six times the norm, and to organise stocks in such a way that we could replenish any area of the country or any of our 19,500 post offices at short notice. We are also geared to switch production on again quickly if demand exceeds the highest expectations. I can assure readers we are determined that no one should be disappointed in wanting to participate in this unique tribute to a unique person.

Although it would be premature to draw firm

George V definitives: the 1922 Irish overprints Fred Gee

Shortly after the end of the First World War, and in response to the protracted 'Home Rule' campaign, Ireland was offered the opportunity to become an independent state within the British Commonwealth. While the six counties in the north-east of the island – the greater part of the ancient province of Ulster – opted to remain part of the United Kingdom, Southern Ireland accepted the offer of Dominion status. By January 1922 a Provisional Government was installed in Dublin, and in December of that year the Irish Free State (later to be known by its Gaelic name 'Eire') came formally into being.

I DO NOT WISH to concern the reader further with the constitutional or political aspects of the partition of Ireland – only with its immediate philatelic consequences. Towards the end of 1921 and throughout 1922 the legal and administrative preparations for the establishment of the new state proceeded apace and, of course, one thing that was needed urgently was a set of postage stamps.

As a temporary expedient it was decided to continue to use the then-current definitives of the United Kingdom – all the low value 'Mackennal Heads' up to 1s and the three high value Seahorses – but overprinted with an appropriate inscription. What makes these overprints particularly distinctive is the fact that the wording is not only in Erse Gaelic, but is also in the Celtic script which has remained such a characteristic feature of Irish typography.

Two different wordings were used for these overprints, and the four settings using the original wording plus two different settings with the second resulted in six basic varieties of overprint, only one of which was common to both low values and high values.

The original wording – first appearing on 17 February 1922 – was 'Rialtas Sealadac na hEireann', which translates as 'Provisional Government of Ireland', and beneath this wording was the date '1922'. It was this date which produced the most obvious variety. On the low values overprinted by Dollard Ltd the figures of '1922' looked as though they had been inserted as an afterthought, using an old-fashioned typewriter; whereas on those overprinted by Alex Thom & Co or by Harrison & Sons the figures were much bolder and, unlike the 'typewriter' figures, were sans serif.

On all the high values with this wording the figures in the date were of the 'typewriter' variety, but it was these Seahorses which provided the third version of the initial overprint, in that the wording and the date were here set out in only four lines, whereas on all the low values they were set out in five lines.

During the course of 1922 there were several different printings of these stamps with the first version of the wording, and towards the end of the year, as the formal handover of constitutional power approached, it was found that further supplies were needed of the ½d, 1d, 1½d, 2d and 1s values. These were supplied by Alex Thom in early December, and this printing provided yet another variety, for the letters of the Erse wording were now spaced out more widely than those of the previous overprints. As these stamps became available only a matter of days before new stamps appeared upon the inauguration of the newly-independent Irish state, they are amongst the most difficult to find of these 1922 overprints, especially postally used.



Original wording The KGV 1d and 4d overprinted in black and in red, both with 'typewriter' figures '1922'. The 6d and 2d show the bold figures, but the latter has the wider spacing of the Erse lettering.

investigates the first stamps of the emergent Irish Free State

On 6 December 1922 the first stamps appeared bearing the designation 'Eire'. But the initial supplies of these new stamps proved insufficient to meet the anticipated demand, so the KGV definitives continued in use – but now with a different wording for the overprint: this became 'Saorstát Éireann 1922', meaning 'Irish Free State 1922'. Again the lettering was in the Celtic typeface, but all the stamps with this wording had the bold sans serif figures for the date.

Even so, it was this date which provided yet another variety. All the existing GB definitives were overprinted with the new wording, and although the low values had only a relatively short life, the overprinted Seahorses remained in use for many years, as the new 'Eire' set did not include any value higher than 1s. When a reprint of these overprinted Seahorses was called for in 1925 the year was still shown as '1922' but now the figures were set much closer together than before.

But this sixth variety of overprint was not the end of the story. In some respects it seems surprising that the new Irish Post Office was happy to use overprinted GB stamps over such a long period, but high value stamps (that is, with values over 1s) bearing the name 'Eire' were not issued until 1937 – 15 years after partition – when the erstwhile Dominion became a Republic. So, when a re-engraved version of the three Seahorses was issued in 1934, once again this new version was overprinted with the words 'Saorstát Éireann'.

There are numerous variations in the positions and spacing of all these overprints, and numerous examples of damaged, or even missing, type. An interesting variety to look out for amongst the low values is the use of red (or carmine) ink rather than black, this being found on the 2½d, 4d, and 9d values (with both types of date, and with both wordings). The intensity of the black ink tended to vary as between one printing and another and, as well as being found in blue-black, these overprints are found occasionally in grey, sometimes so pale as to be hardly visible (especially on the agate 9d stamps).

All these overprints are invariably listed in catalogues under 'Ireland' or 'Eire' rather than under 'Great Britain'. This is, of course, perfectly correct as they were, indeed, the first stamps of the emergent Irish state. But the collector of GB can validly regard them as being worthy of a place in his or her album, since they did, after all, provide the last examples of GB stamps being used in Southern Ireland •



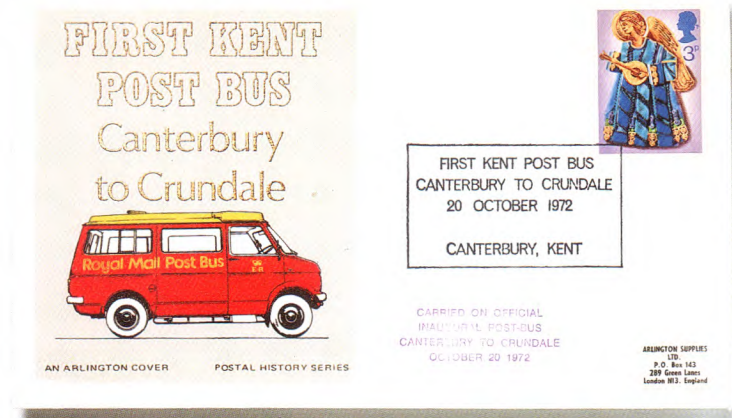
'Irish Free State' wording

In black (10d) and in red (9d); on a re-engraved 2s6d Seahorse overprinted as late as 1934 (even though the overprinted date was still '1922', the figures had reverted to the wider setting of December 1922); and the on the 5s, with the narrower setting of the figures '1922'.

25 years of postbuses in the Southeast

Martin Robinson writes about some of the items which can form a colourful collection for the postbus enthusiast

Special handstamp for first run of Canterbury-Crundale postbus and, below, cachet applied to 1974 Canterbury postbus cards



**CARRIED ON THE
CANTEBURY TO CRUNDALE
POST BUS**

**FIRST POST BUS TO OPERATE
IN KENT
INTRODUCED ON 23rd. OCT. 1972**

THE FOUR ORIGINAL postbus services of 1967-68 in Wales (Llanidloes-Llangurig), the North West (Penrith-Martindale), the South West (Honiton-Luppitt) and Scotland (Dunbar-Innerwick), were dealt with in a previous article (*Bulletin*, February 1997). There were no new services until 1972, when nine further postbuses started operation in Scotland and the first South East region postbus, based at Canterbury, began serving the villages of Crundale, Sole Street and Godmersham. Recently there has been some discussion amongst postbus aficionados about the precise date the Canterbury-Crundale postbus started running, prompted by Royal Mail's desire to commemorate the service's 25th anniversary last autumn. The confusion arises because a special handstamp with the wording **FIRST KENT POST BUS / CANTEBURY TO CRUNDALE** was used at Canterbury on 20 October 1972, whilst a cachet applied by the Post Office to a commemorative card issued in 1974 is worded **CARRIED ON THE / CANTEBURY TO CRUNDALE / POSTBUS / FIRST POST BUS TO OPERATE / IN KENT / INTRODUCED ON 23rd OCT 1972**. Which of the two dates is correct? Almost certainly the truth of the matter is that there was an inaugural run on the 20 October, which was a Friday, and the service proper started on the 23rd, the following Monday. The writer would be grateful if anyone can confirm that this was the case.

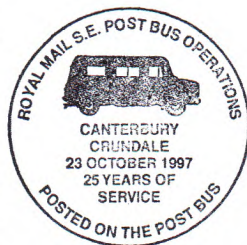
The Canterbury-Crundale route and timings have changed over the years, but remain fairly typical with – Monday to Saturday – an early morning outward trip to make the first delivery and an inward one combining the first collection with an opportunity for shoppers to travel into Canterbury by 11.30. Monday to Friday there is a second round trip starting at 14.00. The 3000 commemorative cards referred to above showed a postbus flanked by views of four villages on the route and all bore the cachet, which was applied in violet at Canterbury Head Post Office. A second printing of 6600 cards made in 1978 had the village names on the front instead of the back. Bell Punch printed omnibus tickets were used at first in various colours and values from 2p to 15p, with the values overprinted in red or green, then Setright Speed machine tickets from March 1977.

In 1973 two new routes began in Surrey: Dorking-Ockley and Oxted-Lingfield. The inauguration of these routes was marked in both cases by a commemorative card and special handstamp. These are now of great interest to collectors and cards postmarked on the first day of service are particularly sought after; specialists also distinguish a number of varieties. The cards were reprinted in 1978.

1974 saw no less than eight new postbuses in the South East: two in Kent (Tunbridge Wells-Mayfield and Sittingbourne-Wormshill); three in East and West Sussex (Petworth-Bignor, Heathfield-Waldrone and Hailsham-Bodley Street Green); and three based at Hungerford in Berkshire. Of these all three Sussex routes and two of the Hungerford ones have since ceased to run. In 1975 there were five more routes: one in Hampshire (Petersfield-Froxfield); two based at Newbury in Berkshire; and two at Newport, Isle of Wight, all of which survive except the Isle of Wight routes. The Henley-on-Thames to Frieth route was added in 1976 but later ceased; services from Reigate to Outwood and Reigate to Leigh were added in 1979 and 1982 respectively; and in 1989 Canterbury-Grove began operation.

The most dramatic growth in the South East region happened in 1993 when 17 new routes were inaugurated, of which three were additional ones based in Canterbury (Canterbury to Westmarch has since closed). There was another Sittingbourne route; one based at Rochester, two at Gravesend; four at Maidstone and six at Chippenham. If Chippenham seems to be straying from the South East, it is mentioned here because the Chippenham routes, although properly in South Central region, are listed in Royal Mail's South East postbus timetable book. Incidentally the Chippenham group is unusual in that it includes a Sunday service which runs at 13.15 from Chippenham station all the way along the A4 via Calne, Marlborough and Hungerford, conveying the product of Sunday collections to the Royal Mail Centre in Reading, and arriving back in Chippenham at 17.00. To bring the story up to date, Ashford-Biddenden and Horsham-Maplehurst started in 1994 and Haywards Heath-Balcombe in 1995.

With 40 routes, of which 31 are still with us, the South East region is the richest in postbus services after Scotland, of which more in the next article in this occasional series. It is also the region most prolific in collectable postbus items, for many postcards have been issued depicting South East



The 25th anniversary of the first Canterbury postbus service was marked on 23 October 1997 by an officially-applied cachet.



Later vehicles bore the Dodge badge and one of them from the Canterbury-Crundale service is now preserved in Royal Mail's historic vehicle collection.

Opposite From the top: 1980 Petersfield-Froxfield card; 1972 Canterbury bell Punch printed ticket; SEPR tickets, 1975 vertical and 1976 horizontal; 1973 Oxted-Lingfield card.

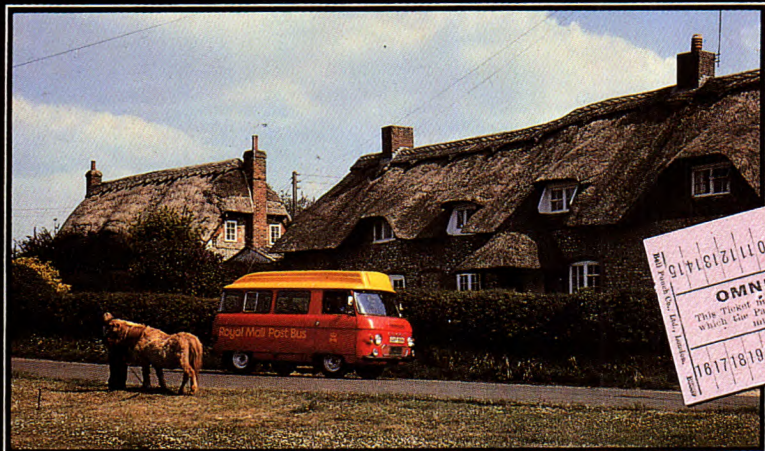
Dormobile buses, one of which, XUF 902K, was the first vehicle used on the Canterbury-Crundale service. This soon went into reserve and was replaced by Commer PB2000 11-seater CCD 532L, one of the many which were the workhorses of the postbus service during the 1970s and 1980s. At the latest count most South East region routes were using the LDV Pilot 9-seater bus or its predecessor the Leyland DAF200 10-seater. There were a few LDV Convoy 15-seaters including two with tail lifts, plus half a dozen Peugeot 405 or Ford Mondeo estate cars which have four passenger seats. South Central's Chippenham-based services were using 8-seaters which have a larger mail compartment. The introduction of a bus with tail-lift conversion at Sittingbourne in January 1992 was marked by a limited edition card and handstamp sponsored by Royal Mail Canterbury. A caption on the reverse of the card reads: 'Representing Royal Mail's commitment to the community, the Sittingbourne to Wormshill postbus shown overleaf is the first in the UK to be specially adapted to accept wheelchair passengers. All monies raised from the sale of this limited edition postcard will go towards the British Paralympic Team.'

The 1970s and early 1980s had seen an immense growth of interest in the picture cards issued by the then regional Postal Boards, and the South East was the most active in this respect, issuing some 68 cards between 1972 and 1986, of which nearly half featured postbuses. In addition to the Sittingbourne card mentioned above, a set of six cards designed by Richard Blake and issued in 1995 showed postbus routes in Kent and West Sussex. The Reigate-Leigh postbus was also included in a set of cards under the title *Carrying the Royal Mails* issued by the Post Office in 1981. As mentioned earlier, the first cards were issued in 1973 (Dorking-Ockley and Oxted-Lingfield) and 1974 (Canterbury-Crundale). Eleven further cards issued between 1974 and 1979 showed the postbuses at Sittingbourne, Tunbridge Wells, Hungerford, Newbury, Henley on Thames and Redhill. The Hungerford one, showing the postbus at Denford Mill House, had an unusual special handstamp in the shape of a postbus with the wording: 'POST BUSES/ARRIVE IN BERKSHIRE/1 JULY 1974/HUNGERFORD, BERKSHIRE'. Some of the cards marking the Redhill-Outwood service had an additional printed cachet reading: 'Posted on first day/of Redhill/Outwood Post Bus'. The high point was reached in 1980 when SEPR issued two sets of nine cards, all devoted to postbuses, the first set showing services in

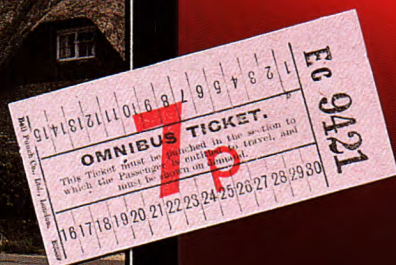
region postbuses and at one time most of the routes used card tickets bearing postage stamps to pay fares which were cancelled with individual rubber stamps. These alas were replaced with machine tickets which, although identifiable from a serial number, are much less attractive to all but the most fanatical collector, and paper tickets not identifiable to routes at all.

The vehicles used for the services of 1967-78 had been Morris J2 7-seater minibuses, but later the Post Office bought six Bedford CF 9-seater

The Petersfield-Froxfield Royal Mail Postbus



Froxfield Green



Royal Mail Post Bus



TICKET



TICKET

Royal Mail Post Bus



From May 1977 rover tickets for Southern Vectis buses and British Rail trains on the Isle of Wight became available for use on the island's two postbuses and special tickets (far right) were printed.

Probably the oddest ticket is in the form of a small map, a souvenir of a special postbus journey to Pooh Sticks Bridge near Hartfield, East Sussex, on the day of issue of the Year of the Child stamps in July 1979.



Kent and Hampshire and the second those in Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Surrey. One of the attractive black-framed cards shows the Petersfield-Froxfield bus standing in front of thatched cottages at Froxfield Green.

Lots of people must have sets of these cards tucked away as they were printed in large editions of 20,000. Those who were more directly interested in the postbus services took a delight in collecting tickets. The South East region ones were particularly prized: most of the services used small white cards with the silhouette of a postbus in red and space for postage stamps to be affixed to the value of the fare paid, which were cancelled by means of a dated rubber stamp identifying the route. The tickets were originally vertical in format but from 1976 a horizontal design was introduced as new stocks were needed. Specialists distinguish several different types, the earlier ones now being exceedingly scarce. The rubber stamps used on the tickets were rectangular, oval or in the shape of a postbus, and usually struck in black, red or violet. It was possible to buy return tickets on the routes controlled by Reading HPO: these were indicated by an additional rectangular cachet on the reverse with the service number, a large letter R and the words: 'VALID ON DAY/OF ISSUE/ONLY.'

Although there is not space here to go into all the details of later tickets, it is perhaps just worth mentioning the unusual ones shown above. All of these, plus extra cachets and details of vehicle types, route changes, leaflets, timetables and faretables are the meat and drink of the postbus enthusiast and can form a surprisingly colourful collection. ●

Postal stationery rarities by Colin Baker, part 2

PRINTING both the Post Office issues and private stationery with advertising material and other matter was a common feature from the birth of postal stationery until well into the reign of our present Queen. This generally gives greater appeal to most items and prices rise accordingly; the amount of the increase depending on the quality of the printing and engraving. This kind of material not only adds appeal to a collection, but is often a segment of our history. Some examples may be the only ones now in existence and are worth searching for, although expect to pay high prices for better quality ones.

Multiple stamps Private stationery which had stamps added at the Stamping Branch of the Inland Revenue at Somerset House in London was often impressed with more than one stamp to make up the value of postage which the firm or individual had requested. Many envelopes and newspaper wrappers were intended for heavy weight items or for foreign destinations and stamp dies for every possible rate of postage were not available, hence the need for two or sometimes three different value stamps to be impressed on each item. Certain stamp dealers have also been known to re-submit items which had already been stamped, creating philatelic covers carrying up to seven stationery stamps. However, multiple stamping was not normal for PO stationery.

It was the general practice to impress only one stamp on any postal stationery sold to the public at post offices, and stamp designs for new values which were necessary for increases or decreases in postal charges were always prepared. There were situations, however, when these new stamps were not ready in time and new stationery had to be issued to meet particular changes to postage rates. This happened in the 1940s when wartime conditions were causing headaches for the PO (right).

The financial cost of the First World War was a heavy burden on the British tax payer and to help overcome this both postage rates and registration fees were raised three times over a period of five years. The Post Office was reluctant to destroy large quantities of outdated registered envelopes and in 1920 took the unusual step of having an additional embossed stamp added to the envelope flap to bring the combined postage and registration fee to the then current level. Three different combinations of original envelopes and addition stamps exist, so look out for 2d+2d, 3d+1d, and 3½d+½d in dealers stocks.

In 1921 the registration fee was increased from its previous level of 2d to 3d, and once again stocks of outdated envelopes had an additional stamp added to bring the postage and registration fee up to the correct level.



The rates for inland postcards and letters were increased on 1 May 1940 to 2d and 2½d respectively, but the new letterpress dies in these higher values were not ready, affecting both the postcard and lettercard of the period. The problem was overcome by printing two stamps on both these items, adding an extra 1d in both cases during a subsequent printing operation. The 1d plus 1d postcard can often be seen in dealers stocks, but the 1½d plus 1d letter card is much more rare.

Opposite, from top Uprated registered envelope with an additional stamp used June 1921 to May 1922. Three different envelopes were treated in this way and these are much more scarce than the earlier 'extra stamp' issue. If you find 2d+3d, 3d+2d or 4d+1d offered for sale, snap them up immediately as they are seldom seen on the market.

The last issue of Edward VII lettercards, superseded by that for George V a few weeks later.

The short-lived 1d printed paper rate envelope: few examples of these survive, and prices today reflect their rarity.

Some 3d Empire Postcards were used in unusual ways: this example, registered to Germany when the 3d rate to Australasia applied, carries an additional 1½d stamp to make up the 1½d postcard rate and 2d registration fee of 1889. This card was sent from one stamp dealer to another which probably explains why it has survived over the years.

On 29 May 1922 inland postage rates were suddenly reduced by ½d, and all the unused 5d registered envelopes (including those with extra stamps) had to be withdrawn from sale to be replaced by a new 4½d envelope.

Short periods of use Over the years there have been instances where particular items of stationery have either had a very limited period of use, or were issued at postage rates applicable to special routes and destinations, which were subsequently amended as the postal administrations of the 19th century struggled to unify all worldwide postcard and letter rates.

One such card is the 3d Empire Postcard, issued in 1889 for use to Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific via France and Italy (the faster overland route). Following a revision in postage rates in 1891 the 3d postcard was superseded by the standard 2d postcard. The number of 3d postcards correctly used to the far side of the world was small and today these are eagerly sought after by collectors.

There have been occasions when new items of stationery have been issued, only to be superseded a short while later by a subsequent issue due to a change of postage rate or the ascension of a new monarch to the Throne. This happened in 1922 when new 1d ungummed envelopes were released by the PO following the rise in the printed paper rate from ½d in June 1921. A few months later, in May 1922, the printed paper rate was reduced to ½d again and the 1d envelopes became superfluous. With the normal letter rate then standing at 1½d all the existing 1d envelopes were of no use and the remaining stock was destroyed.

In 1939 new postcards and lettercards were released carrying the new letterpress 1d and 1½d stamps of George VI. The new stationery had taken a considerable time to prepare (the King had ascended the throne in 1936), but it was soon to be overtaken by an upward revision to the postage rates in May 1940. This stationery was withdrawn from sale after barely a month's use and finding these particular items of stationery, especially the lettercards, is quite difficult. Even more rare are the 1d postcards of this same period printed on stout white card.

In 1911 a change was made to the colour of the card used in the production of lettercards, the earlier blue colour being replaced by white card at the request of the Postmaster General. The first white lettercards carried the stamp of Edward VII even though his son George V had taken the throne a year earlier. However, the version carrying the new 1d George V stamps was released soon afterwards and the earlier Edward VII issue was withdrawn, having only been on sale for about a month. Once more the limited period of use has given rise to a rare item of stationery.

Apart from those items of stationery which were superseded after only a short period, the dies for some stamped to order stationery were not used that frequently and examples on envelopes or wrappers are difficult to find. Particularly look out for high values such as the Victorian 10d in blue and the 1898 undated one shilling without florets. In this century the Edward VII high value stamps can also be difficult to find, as can the George V 4d in blue ●

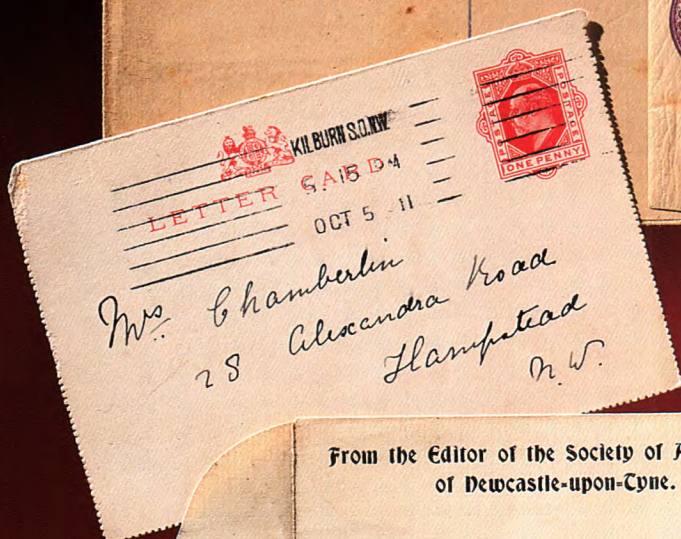
For details of the Postal Stationery Society (founded 1992) contact D Taylor Smith, 23 Britannia Road, Norwich NR1 4HP

This space is reserved
for Official
Registration Label.

REGISTERED LETTER.

THIS LETTER MUST BE GIVEN TO AN OFFICER OF THE
POST OFFICE TO BE REGISTERED AND A RECEIPT
OBTAINED FOR IT.

THE ADDRESS MUST BE
WRITTEN ON THIS SIDE.



From the Editor of the Society of Antiquaries
of Newcastle-upon-Tyne.



The Wilding definitives by Matthew Hinton

Part 4, phosphor issues

THE PHOSPHOR-GRAPHITE stamps, of the same values as the graphite issue – ½d, 1d, 1½d, 2d, 2½d, 3d, 4d and 4½d, appeared in November 1959. They were used with the graphite detecting ALF machinery, and improved the efficiency of the sorting system greatly. This was the first use for phosphor in this country, and it was a great success – resulting in many countries taking up the idea, and of course the UK still uses phosphor on its stamps. It was such a success, in fact, that the graphite lines became redundant. The ALF was adjusted such that it no longer scanned for graphite lines, and the lines were soon phased out.

The width of the phosphor bands changed in 1966, with the 1d, 2d, 3d, 4d, 5d, 6d and 1s3d all being obtainable with both 8mm and 9.5mm bands. This is measured across two stamps – the width being that of the entire band.

Originally, 'green' phosphor was used – referred to the reaction under UV light. In 1961 this was replaced by blue phosphor, which reacted more strongly and was, thus, more efficient. It was used until 1966 in conjunction with green until violet phosphor was developed for use. The method of applying the phosphor varied also, between photogravure (photo), typography (typo) and flexography (flexo). You will possibly recognise the term photogravure, as it is a common method of printing the design on stamps. The method is the same for phosphor, and requires an extra phosphor cylinder. Sometimes this was not possible, so typography was used. Flexography is similar to photogravure in that, unlike typography, it does not indent the paper of the stamp. It can, then, be difficult to tell these two apart. All phosphor-graphite stamps used green phosphor, applied by typography.

The ½d exists with all three colours of phosphor, the green being applied by photogravure except on graphite-lined stamps. The violet is typo on sheet stamps and photo on those from coils, whilst the blue is photo on stamps with

upright watermarks and typo on those with the watermark sideways. The 1d value follows the same pattern as the ½d, with 8mm violet phosphor applied by photo on coils, some books and some sheets, and by typo on sheets and 2s booklets. The 9.5mm bands were applied photo except for the 2s books, which employed typo and flexo methods.

The 1½d value has green photo, violet typo and blue photo (upright watermark) and typo (sideways) elsewhere. The 2d with left phosphor band exists with green photo, and blue photo and flexo. On the copies with two bands the blue bands were applied by typo on cream paper and photo on the whiter versions, whilst violet bands are found in photo only. The 2½d Type 1 has blue typo bands whilst the Type 2 variety with one left band has blue phosphor, applied by photo on cream paper and typo on white paper. Double-banded stamps had green photo originally, changing to blue for the cream/white paper stamps later on.

The 3d value was also originally produced with green photo bands, later switching to blue photo (upright watermark) and typo (sideways). Later the stamps were issued with violet bands, except where there is a sideways watermark – when the application was typo or flexo. The blue and green bands on the 4d followed the same pattern as the 3d, with 8mm violet bands applied by photo (except some typo 2s booklet stamps) and the 9.5mm ones were similar, but used flexo instead of typo.

Most 4½d stamps on cream paper have blue typo bands, but photo on white paper; most 6d and 1s3d values had green or blue photo bands. Violet bands were applied by typo (6d 8mm), typo and photo (1s3d 8mm) and photo (6d and 1s3d 9.5mm). The bands on the 5d, 7d, 8d, 9d, 10d, 1s and 1s6d only exist in violet photogravure.

The 2½d 2 band stamp with inverted watermark can fetch £50 or so, and a few partially perforated booklet panes exist, affecting the 4d

value. A *broad band* error occurs when the wide band which normally lies across the vertical perforations of *two* stamps, is displaced such that the entire band falls to one side of just *one* stamp. This occurs on ½d (all phosphor colours), 1d (all phosphor colours), 1½d (blue and violet phosphor), 2d (violet), 2½d (green and blue), 3d (all), 4d (blue and violet), 6d (violet), 10d and 15d (blue and violet). Some of the 3d stamps with a side band are affected in a similar manner. Prices for such errors are usually around £40 or so. A similar variety is the deliberate *narrow band* – found on stamps from the left and right columns on sheets where the bands were printed in typo. This affects the phosphor-graphite stamps, except 2d, and 2d, 2½d, 4½d and 6d blue and ½d, 1d, 1½d, 6d and 15d violet.

The choice of method for applying the phosphor bands was a matter for the printer and some printings are scarce. An extreme example is the 6d blue phosphor on the whiter paper. A mint single is catalogued at 60p with photo bands but £275 with bands applied typo!

The phosphor was sometimes applied in error to both the front and the *back* of the stamp on the 1d (violet), 1½d (violet), 2d (green), 3d (violet), 4d (violet), and 4½d (graphite and blue). They fetch around £25 each, except for the 4d which is extremely scarce. It should also be noted that some of the 4d value from booklets were printed on a slightly glossy paper.

The ½d value exists with the bands completely omitted, although it is only the ink which has not been applied. The method of application for the violet phosphor here was typography, and so an impression has been left on the face of the stamp. This is a fascinating variety which can be picked up for just a few pounds.

Another error can be seen on some of the copies of the 2½d, where two bands appear to have been applied to the Type 2 version on cream paper, when only one was necessary. This impression is given by the displacement of the band, such that two narrow bands are present. The band(s) have, in addition, been applied by the photogravure method, rather than the intended typography, and the feature is detectable

by the distance between the bands being 16mm, as opposed to 12mm on a genuine two band stamp. The same value gives us a variety catalogued at £125, where pairs of stamps exist, one without phosphor, one with band at right. The two bands error is also known on Type 1 stamps, and Type 2 printed on white paper – on this stamp, one should note that the printing is in a slightly stronger shade of carmine.

Presentation pack A presentation pack was produced in 1960, containing two of each of the phosphor-graphite values. These are ½d, 1d and 1½d (St Edward's Crown watermark) as well as the 2d to 4½d (Multiple Crowns watermark). The pack states that all values have the St Edward's Crown watermark, and usually a label is attached to deny this, stating: 'CORRECTION. The ½d, 1d, and 1½d stamps bear the St Edward Crown Royal Cypher watermark.' The price inscription varies and is either '3s8d' or '50c'.

Watermark varieties Multiple Crown stamps are affected by the sideways and inverted watermark varieties, up to and including the 4d value. It only occurs on booklet (inverted) and coil (sideways) stamps, and affected up to half of the copies emanating from such sources. The reason for this is that sheet stamps were, at the time, produced by Harrison and Sons' method of printing double sheets of 480 stamps on continuous reels of paper. Sideways-inverted watermark stamps can have the image inverted either to the left or right, and all inversions and sideways-inversions are deliberate, resulting from the way the sheets of booklet panes were arranged on the printing cylinders. Sometimes the left sideways inversions are slightly more scarce, and thus a little more valuable, than their right-sideways counterparts. The reverse can also be true.

There is one sensational watermark variety which stands out from the crowd because it is so incredibly unusual. It occurred on the 2d value in the 'phosphor-graphite' series. This value was supposed to have been printed on paper with the Multiple Crowns watermark, but instead some sheets appeared with the erroneous St Edward's

Crown watermark. Examples with the wrong watermark are catalogued at £1.70 compared to just £4.50 for the normal. A few copies of the 2½d also exist with the wrong watermark – this is not catalogued as such stamps were not used by the public for postal purposes.

Flaws Don't forget the usual array of positional flaws and minor varieties to collect. It is well worth looking closely at your stamps, to see if you

have any of the constant varieties listed in the SG Specialised Catalogue. The 'Phantom R' in the jubilee line of the 3d stamp, mentioned here in January, is a popular variety.

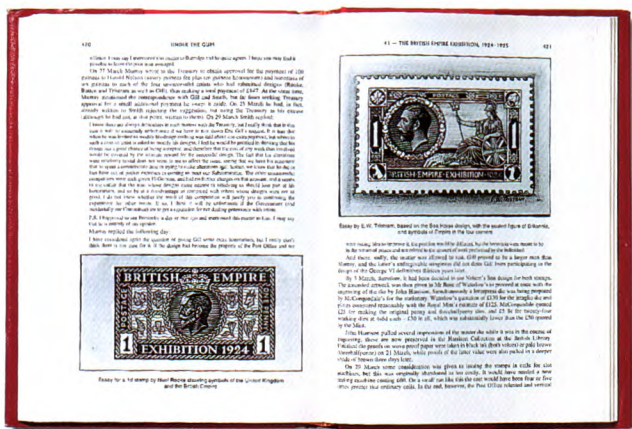
The phosphor Wildings were issued at a time of change and experimentation. A collection of the basic values is important in itself, but a selection of varieties, and even errors, make for an interesting display of these intriguing issues •

Books *Early Forces Mail* • A background to British stamps 1840-1940 • The Paisley Rocketeers Society

Early Forces Mail The first postal history lecture in memory of Stuart Rossiter was given by Barrie Jay at the National Army Museum in 1995 (see *Bulletin* March 1996, p205). Professor Jay described four episodes in the wars of the 18th and early 19th centuries. This well-produced book, which takes the story back a century, includes illustrations of some fine letters and covers (entires) from his collection. He begins with the 'Thirty Years' War (1618-48), between Protestants and Catholics, in which British forces took little part. He shows a letter of 1629 from a soldier in Schiedam sent to his brother in Calais; this was probably carried privately as it bears no transit markings. The War of the Grand Alliance (1689-97), between England, Holland, the Holy Roman Empire *et al*, against the French was complicated by the attempts of the exiled James II to regain the throne from his daughter and son-in-law, William (III) and Mary. Amongst the items shown is one from March 1689 sent to the Secretary of War and marked 'for their Maties Especiall Service'. In the section on the War of Spanish Succession – best-remembered for Marlborough's victory at Blenheim – is shown a letter to a young officer in Forfar about the recruitment of soldiers. The letter was charged 3 Scots shillings, equal to 3 English pence. During the War of Austrian Succession, much of the mail from the Continent was carried by the Thurn & Taxis Post and letters to England crossed the channel be-

tween Calais and Dover. Jay quotes from an entry of 1742 in Post Office Archives referring to this service. His interest in campaign letters started when he bought over 50 letters written by Lieutenant Philip Browne to his brother in London. Some of these are of particular interest as they give some indication of how letters travelled to the British Army during this War. The Seven Years' War (1756-63), considered the first world war, was fought by a coalition against Frederick the Great of Prussia. Early in the War, the French threatened an invasion of Britain; British fire ships, to attack the French fleet, are mentioned in a letter from a father to his son in 1759. The chapter of the *Armée d'Angleterre* records the planned invasion by the French in 1796-7; those who landed in Wales were quickly dealt with. Local support for a landing in Ireland is suggested in a letter of 1796 mentioning *Fenoilles* – probably an error for *Grenouilles* (Frogs), slang for the French even then! During the French Revolutionary Wars, Cartel letters from POWs in England were carried free to France where they were charged internal postage. The bibliography, maps and contemporary illustrations, as well reproduction of the letters, makes this a useful work for military and social as well as postal historians.

70 pages, card covers. Price £20 (postage £1 UK, £2 overseas) from Stuart Rossiter Trust, c/o Robert Johnson, Osborne Clarke, 50 Queen Charlotte Street, Bristol BS1 4HE •



Under the Gum: Background to British Stamps 1840-1940
by James Mackay

Price £52.50, postage £1.
ISBN 9963579760

Available from James Bendon
Ltd, PO Box 6484, 3307
Limassol, Cyprus

Under the Gum: Background to British Stamps

1840-1940 by James A Mackay This is a superb book that lives up to its title. What the book gives is the story behind the stamp issues that is not given in any catalogue. The design and printing of adhesive stamps, the precautions against forgery and fraudulent re-use, problems with paper, watermark, inks, gum and perforation were problems that had to be solved by the British authorities. How these problems and many more were tackled and solutions eventually reached by trial and error is reflected in these pages.

What is so enjoyable about this book is the logical and clear way James tackles these subjects. Commencing with the Treasury Competition each chapter then examines every major stamp issue in chronological order interspersed with other important subjects like the experimental separation of stamps, the end of the Perkins Bacon contract, the introduction of stamp booklets, upheavals in postage rates, advertising on stamps, the Waterlow scandal of 1928, War time measures and postage due labels. The relevant background to each of these changes is given in detail with many quotations from official records. The quotations are inset in a slightly smaller size of type which is much more acceptable than the practice of placing them as a footnote or in an appendix. The reader is therefore presented with a flowing story of events with all the important and relative facts laid before them.

The correspondence between the various departments and officials concerned is fascinating and helps explain why so many delays occurred but also gives one an incisive view of all the problems involved in any change. No better example of this is the six chapters, some 66 pages, detailing the problems that arose from the accession of King George V with the Downey issue and the three years it took to get the first definitive stamps into circulation. Correspondence between the Postmaster General, The Royal Mint, Board of Inland Revenue, the engravers, the printers and King George V himself help explain why three different heads were finally used for the low value definitives, why the colour of the 2d was changed soon after issue and later the 9d value was changed, why the 6d was the 'odd man out' for 26 years and many other questions are answered here.

The research for this book has taken place over the last 12 years at Post Office Archives augmented by material from the archives of the Inland Revenue, Treasury and Royal Mint. However with each subject tackled James is not just quoting from official records but examines previous recorded views weighs them against the evidence and enables a balanced and informed view to be taken. For instance when dealing with Official Stamps he examines very carefully the question of how these came onto the market, the evidence that they were on sale to the public for a short

period, the legality of possessing and dealing in official stamps and the subsequent use of Official Paid stationery. Much of this centres around the famous 1896 court case of *R v Creeke and Richards* and James devotes several pages to the case and several more to examining the implications and subsequent views of the philatelic trade in these stamps and a careful examination of the views expressed by Mr A Wiseman in his 1982 article 'The Origin and use of the I R Official Overprints'. Such detail is fascinating and gives so much background to the issues involved.

I particularly enjoyed the chapter dealing with the Stock Exchange Forgery where in 14 pages James gives the story from the discovery of the forgeries, by Charles Nissen, the details of the police investigation, the discovery eleven years later of the plate 6 forgeries and the aftermath. It is rather satisfying to discover that it was Melville who destroyed the long cherished Post Office illusion concerning the security offered by corner lettering and watermarks and showed the important role philatelists can play as a result of their close study of postage stamps.

The contents of the book are distilled from a long series of articles (about a hundred in all) which were published in the now defunct periodical *Stamps* and latterly in *Gibbons Stamp Monthly*. It appears that the book contains no further information than was contained in those articles, certainly that is the case with the George V series, but the presentation of them all in a superbly printed and illustrated book is very welcome. The illustrations used are different from those that appeared in some of the original articles. The ones now used are important and relevant and have reproduced extremely well.

I have no hesitation in recommending this book which I found to be a very important background study to the stamp issues of 1840 to 1940. Anyone wishing to discover the events leading to a stamp issue, a colour change, to the problems experienced with perforating or gumming the stamps and all the official negotiations involved in these and many more events will find the answer in this book. My only criticism is that the type size of the quotations is rather small and

may be a problem for some readers. In fairness to increase the size would have greatly added to the already substantial 526 pages and so it is worth accepting the use of a magnifying glass if necessary. My only wish is that it had been published some two years ago as it would have saved me many hours of research at PO Archives to discover what is contained here on the George V issues alone. In conclusion any collector wishing to discover the background to any aspect of British stamps in the period 1840 to 1940 should make this book their first priority. It could save them many hours of diligent research. *Review by Alan Moorcroft* •

The Paisley Rocketeers *Bulletin* contributor Donald Malcolm has written an interesting account of the work of John D Stewart and the Paisley Rocketeers Society. Inspired by Gerhart Zucker's rocket mail in the Outer Hebrides in 1934, Stewart launched a rocket mail from near the PO Sorting Depot in Paisley in October 1935. This used seven firework-type rockets bought at 1d each from a local shop. Following further launches, the Paisley Rocketeers Society was established in 1936. Up to the outbreak of war the Society embarked on a series of experimental flights, all carefully recorded. Examples of the rockets and the mail carried are illustrated. Some of the early letters are now sought after by keen collectors of rocket mail. The Society was reconstituted in 1965, largely due to the noted philatelist Margaret Morris who had purchased a collection of early rocket mail. Flights, carrying philatelic mail, were made in 1965-66, but in 1969 the Society's activities fell foul of Home Office regulations. Undaunted it continued experimenting and in 1977 appeared on the Dave Allen television programme. The 100th flight was made in September 1983. Mr Malcolm's book provides a pictorial record of selected flights and covers up to March 1986. He concludes: 'And no doubt there will be more flights as we approach 2001 (the true Millennium date)'.

32 pages, card covers. Price £4.50, postage 50p, from Stenlake Publishing, Ochiltree Sawmill, The Lade, Ochiltree, Cumnock KA18 2NX •

Competition Win Queen Victoria 5s stamp catalogued at £1100

Pre-Easter Bonus Offer sponsored by Omniphil Home Approvals and GB Select Direct Selecting stamps you want from the armchair comfort of your own home is the ideal way to add to your collection. Just think – no obligation, no intrusion, no intimidating dealers to face! Plus, if you reply before Easter a special Easter Bonus stamp catalogued at £38+ with your second selection and with your first selection you will receive a total of £120 cat QV GB free, comprising: free 1841 2d blue cat £40, plus spacefiller quality QV stamp(s) cat £80 – a total of £120 yours free to keep whatever you decide.

Unlike most other dealers Omniphil are big enough to offer each and every stamp individually available for you to select from their library of over 4895 different approval books. Yes, they break every set – very helpful for collectors with broken sets. If your collection is missing stamps from 1840 to the 1980s all you have to do is tell them all the countries/areas that you collect and they will send a suitable selection as available without obligation.

At present Omniphil Approvals are offering all *Bulletin* subscribers, who have not applied before, the opportunity to pick a further 25% worth of stamps free of charge via their £200 loyalty bonus program provided subscribers can select stamps to a sales value of £12 from each selection requested. The first 250 *Bulletin* subscribers to receive their approvals will also be sent absolutely free of charge an 1841 2d blue catalogued £40 plus a further £80 cat QV spacefiller – a total of £120, plus £38 cat GB Easter Bonus stamp free with your second selection. Write telling us all countries you collect and whether you collect mint and used to: **Omniphil Home Service, Bulletin Bonus QV 120 Offer, PO Box 29 Stroud GL6 6RW.**

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

- 1 Which comedian was born Eric Bartholomew?
- 2 Who wrote *Under the Gum*?
- 3 Which postbus service started in October 1972?
- 4 Which Philatelic Society is hosting the 1998 Scottish Congress?
- 5 The R M Phillips Collection is of the stamps of which reign?



1st prize GB 1867-83 5s rose plate 4, the scarce anchor watermark white paper, letters B-A, good used example cancelled almost clear of profile, SG 134, catalogued £1100; GB Select-Direct selling price £200.

2nd prize GB 1867-80 2s milky blue, letters J-I, average to good used example with tiny fault, good colour well-centred for this scarce desirable shade missing from most GB collections. SG 120b, cat £500; GB Select-Direct price £120.

3rd prize GB Edward VII 1902 £1 dull blue-green, a good-looking, inexpensively priced spacefiller quality example of this key high value. SG 266, cat £350; GB Select-Direct price £97.50.

The winners of December's competition were W Mead of Essex (1st prize), R Perry of South Australia & G Shergold of Lancs (2nd), Mrs A Ehlin of Sweden, J Bell of Norfolk & R Vouden of Kent (3rd), and Mrs J Mills of N Yorks, G Jarvis of Surrey, G Jones of Denbighshire, & Mrs B Meek of Norfolk (4th)

The competition was sponsored by A G Bradbury, 3 Link Road, Leicester LE2 3RA

The answers 1) Robert Maude; 2) Fédération Internationale de Philatélie; 3) George Higlett; 4) Roses, Safety at Sea, Letter Boxes, Charles Dickens, British Wildlife, British Birds, Sea Birds, British Wild Flowers, British Butterflies, Domestic Cats, Wild Cats, Royal Wedding, Great Western Railway, and Farming (any two); 5) Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies. Our thanks to all who entered.



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 •

Posting boxes 174

THIS MONTH'S PHOTOGRAPHS were submitted by Rosalind Wicks of Rillington, North Yorkshire and show George V Ludlow and M type boxes at the village post office. The photographs were taken in 1988 and 1995 respectively. The 1988 photograph also shows a local postwoman, Mrs Ravis. Mrs Wicks tells us that the George V Ludlow wall box was installed in 1937 and later moved to a small sorting office adjacent to the post office. In 1995 this was removed as the sorting office was no longer in use, and a new M type box installed outside the PO. This proved inadequate for the type and amount of post and, in 1996, was removed and an EHR pillar box (of 1957) installed.

Mrs Wicks publishes a range of postcards featuring letterboxes – for a list of cards available send a stamped addressed envelope or international reply coupon to: Mrs R Wicks, 11 Scarborough Road, Rillington, Malton YO17 8LH •



For details of the Letter Box Study Group send a SAE or IRC to the Membership Secretary: Mrs V Scott, 38 Leopold Avenue, Handsworth Green, Birmingham B20 1ES.

The Group's next meeting will be at Royal Mail, Thorpe Road, Norwich on 28 March, 10.00-15.00. Enquiries to H Bradley, 96 South Gipsy Road, Welling DA16 1JD.

Postbag

Stamp designers I am sorry that Mike Dempsey's excellent Pictorial Postcards stamps were omitted from my article on stamp designers (September *Bulletin*) and glad that Mr Dempsey put the record straight in December. In checking to discover how the omission occurred I found that the Stanley Gibbons *GB Concise* catalogue gives the designers as M Dempsey and B Dare which I had not associated with the group Carroll, Dempsey & Thirkell. This raises an interesting question which has perplexed me for some time – does one attribute a design or a work of art or an invention to the person who originates it, or to his company? In the case of inventions, if the designer/inventor is employed to design, then his work belongs to the employer. The designer/

inventor, however, is given the kudos of having created it, and his name must be recorded on the patents. Do the same rules apply in the case of artwork or design, and if so does the credit go to the designer or to the company he works for? WILLIAM AUBREY WITHAM, NEWTON MEARNS, GLASGOW •

Return of the Wildings Thank you, thank you for the return of the Wildings (prestige book, 10 March). It will be a pleasure to see and use them again, and, I hope, give a new generation of collectors a chance to see just how much they have been missing since the *Machins* arrived. JIM O'NEIL, HOYLAKES •

Bulletin back issues John Hitchon offers free to a good home, save the cost of postage, copies of the *Bulletin* from December 1968 to December 1997. He could deliver to north of Edinburgh if required. Contact Mr Hitchon at Tomatin Cottage, Lonemore, Gairloch, Ross-shire IV21 2DB. Telephone 01445 712355.

M Brady of 25 Cherry Orchard, West Drayton UB7 7JR (telephone 01895 851214) has issues of July 1974-September 1983, March 1984-March 1985 and February 1995-December 1996 available to anybody willing to collect from him.

Mr Evans has for disposal vols 19-25 (September 1981-August 1988). Vols 19-22 are in binders. Offers should be sent to: J A Evans, 65D Sandy Lane, Church Crookham, Fleet GU13 0DA •

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

Events

Now showing Golden and Glorious (Royal stamp issues), Post Hastel (vehicles and artefacts) and Victorian Posts exhibitions, at National Postal Museum, King Edward Street, London EC1A 1LP. Open Mon-Fri 09.30-16.30. **Enquiries** 0171 776 3636.

Now showing Postal Memorabilia displays at City Square Post Office, Leeds and Museum of Lincolnshire Life, Burton Road, Lincoln. **Enquiries** D Harrop, 15 Hawthorn Road, Stockport SK4 3DQ

5-7 March London International Stamp and Cover Show at Royal Horticultural Hall 2, Greycoat Street, London SW1. 5 March 11.00-19.00, 6th 10.00-18.00, 7th 10.00-17.00. Over 100 dealers, admission free. **Enquiries** T Davis 0181 946 4489 or C Rainey 01268 726687

7 March British Aerophilatelic Federation (South Coast Group) meeting, Worthing. **Enquiries** 01403 265072

11 March British Empire King George VI display by J Crawford to Paisley Phil Soc, Ralston Community Centre, Allanton Avenue, Paisley, 19.30

21 March GB Philatelic Society displays - Making Books - Sterling Machins (D Knight) and Parcels, Packets & Papers (Dr M Melrose) at British Philatelic Centre, Charterhouse Street, London EC1. From 11.00. **Enquiries** A Lajer, 01189 344151

21-22 March Assn of Scottish Philatelic Societies Congress at Falkirk Town Hall, 09.00-17.00 21st, 10.00-16.00 22nd. National and junior exhibitions, British Philatelic Bureau, displays by local societies, etc. Hosted by Bearsden & District Phil Soc.

Enquiries T Woods, 32 Bryan Street, Hamilton ML3 0JW

24 March Display of Roses (thematics) by Sheila Foster to Camberley and District Stamp Club, St Michael's Parish Church Hall, London Road, Camberley. **Enquiries** H Capsey, 01344 424984

28 March North of Ireland Phil Soc Exhibition & Fair at University Road Methodists Halls, Fountainville Avenue, Belfast, 10.00-16.30. Stamps, postal history, accessories, postcards, books, etc. Admission free. **Enquiries** N Scott, 01232 795530

28 March David Morrell Stamp Day, County Museum, Truro, Cornwall. Displays relating to Cornwall. Admission £3.

28 March Norfolk & Norwich Phil Soc exhibition and fair at University of East Anglia

28 March Rayleigh Phil Soc Stamp Day Exhibition and Fair at Mill Hall, Bellingham Lane, Rayleigh, 10.00-17.00. Admission free. Dealers, displays, refreshments. **Enquiries** R E How, 01702 544632 •

ROYAL MAIL STAMP CARDS



Royal Mail's very popular Stamp Cards reproducing the designs of special stamps were introduced in 1973. Some are now highly-priced collectors' items.

Definitive Stamp Cards started in 1993. Currently available are cards showing: the £1, £1.50, £2 and £5 Castles and £10 Britannia high values (£1.25 set of five cards) • £3 Castle (25p) • £1 Machin definitive (25p) • 1994 Bank of England,

1995 R J Mitchell, and 1996 Queen's Birthday commemorative labels (75p set of three) • and 1995, 1996 and 1997 Greetings stamps (£2.50 each set). Stamp cards are ideal to send to your friends, philatelic or otherwise.

Available from British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT, and from Post Office Counters philatelic outlets

