

BRITISH PHILATELIC

The ROYAL MAIL magazine *for stamp collectors*

Bulletin

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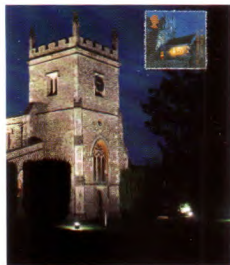
World Millennium stamps •
150 years of Spanish issues



This month: the Spirit and
Faith issue continues Royal
Mail's Millennium series

The Spirit and Faith issue will go on sale 7 November

Forthcoming issues and withdrawals



Cover St Lawrence Church, Bovingdon, illuminated by the Church Floodlighting Trust. This Millennium Project is one of four featured on the Spirit and Faith stamps, previewed on page 48. Photograph by Derek Phillips.

1 October	Withdrawal Rugby World Cup label book (and unfolded pane) and 1999 Christmas stamp books.
3 October	Issue Millennium Body and Bone stamps and presentation pack.
3 October	Issue 2000 Christmas airletter (aerogramme).
3 October	Issue Customised Christmas stamp sheets: 20 × 19p 1995 Robin in postbox, 10 × 1st 1997 Father Christmas with cracker. Available with greetings labels from Bureau and postshops, or with customised photograph from Bureau only.
13 October	Withdrawal 1999 Christmas aerogramme.
31 October	Issue Millennium Spirit and Faith stamp cards.
1 November	Withdrawal 1995 Greetings stamp book and reprint (issued 21 Mar 1995 and 5 Feb 1996); 1996 Cartoons greetings book and reprint (26 Feb and 25 Nov 1996); 1997 Flowers greetings book and 1999 printing (6 Jan 1997 and 16 Mar 1999).
7 November	Issue Millennium Spirit and Faith (Christmas) stamps, presentation pack and stamp books (20 × 19p; 10 × 27p) • 2000 Yearbook, standard and deluxe versions.
28 November	Issue Millennium Sound and Vision stamp cards.
5 December	Issue Millennium Sound and Vision stamps and presentation pack • 2000 Yearpack.

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 and Trafalgar Square) Manchester, Newcastle upon Tyne, Norwich, Nottingham Oxford, Plymouth, Portsmouth Southampton, Southend-on-Sea, Stevenage, Stratford-on-Avon, Truro, Windsor and York

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Canada celebrated the new year with this peace dove, having previously issued 139 stamps in their Millennium series.

The Millennium continues

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The British Philatelic Bulletin is published monthly by Royal Mail, 2-14 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8HQ. ● **Editor** JR Holman ● **Price** 85p for single copies, from Post Office Counters philatelic outlets ● **Annual subscription** £9.50 in UK and Europe; £13.50 rest of the world. Subscriptions should be sent to: British Philatelic Bureau, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB ● **Binders** to hold 24 issues, price £7, are available by post from British Philatelic Bureau (address above) ● Royal Mail also publishes the fortnightly *British Postmark Bulletin*, giving details of forthcoming special handstamps. Available on annual subscription from British Philatelic Bureau (address as above) UK and Europe £10, rest of the world £21.75 ● **Copyright** Unless copyright is attributed to a specific author, any articles or features may be reproduced without formal permission, but acknowledgement should be given to *British Philatelic Bulletin*. Requests to reproduce copyright articles should be addressed to the Editor, 2-14 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8HQ ● **Design** by Robert Maude ● **Printed** in Great Britain by The White Dove Press ● **ISSN** 0953 8119

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Stamp scene NYSG launch • Glasgow 2000 • GB societies • Methodist Philatelic Society



The eminent stamp designer Jeffery Matthews with *Have a Go, Show* and the medals he designed for the British Youth Stamp Championships.

How to encourage young collectors At Stamp Show 2000 the National Youth Stamp Group (NYSG) launched their new booklet *Have a Go, Show*, written by Richard West and sponsored by the British Philatelic Trust and the Postal History Society. It is designed for youngsters who would like to start writing up and entering competitions. The guide covers the different types of displays, how to start them up and then proceeds to detail how to improve a collection with other philatelic material. It also contains details for both the Stamp Active Competitions and the British Youth Stamp Championships. Over 2000 copies were given out to youngsters at Stamp Show 2000 and further copies were available on the Kids Corner stand at Stampex. The booklet is available by post, price £3 postpaid, from National Youth Stamp Group, 3 Longfellow Road, Banbury OX16 9LB •

Glasgow 2000 hours

17 Nov	11.00-18.00
18 Nov	10.00-17.00
19 Nov	11.00-16.00

Scotlands' Posts Orders and enquiries to: James Mackay, 67 Braidpark Drive, Giffnock, Glasgow G46 6LY.

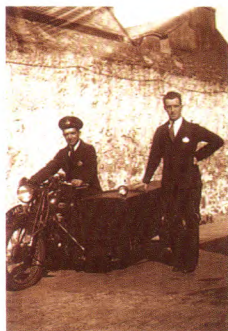
Glasgow 2000 Readers are reminded that the third national exhibition under the auspices of the Association of British Philatelic Societies will be held at the Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre, Glasgow, 17-19 November. Admission is free. The opening ceremony, at 11.30 on the 17th will be performed by John Ward, CBE, Chairman, Scottish Post Office Board.

Publication of a major new work, *Scotland's Posts* will coincide with the exhibition. Written by James Mackay, it provides a succinct but comprehensive survey of the origin, growth and development of all aspects of the postal services in Scotland from the early 17th century to the present. The final chapters review the development and the retrenchment in services since 1945, the rise and fall of the sub post office, the changing pattern of postal administration, the transformation from a government department to a public corporation and the impact of privatisation and deregulation in more recent years.

The book contains hundreds of illustrations of postmarks as well as maps and diagrams. Appendices provide identification of the post office numbers of 1844-1906, the telegraphic codes of 1870-1924 and the S-numbers from 1924 to 1969. Approx 200 pages. Price £16 plus £3 postage •

Northern Ireland Postcard

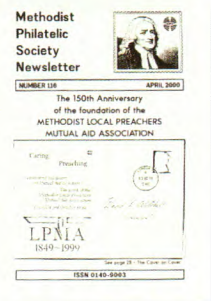
Price 30p unused cards, 60p with first day postmark. Add 40p for postage. Orders to: N Scott, 49 Kingsdale Park, Belfast BT5 7BZ.



Northern Ireland postcard The North of Ireland Philatelic Society continues with its annual postcard. Number 15, now available, features a motorcycle and sidecar combination in use c1920 for town delivery of parcels and mails to sub-post offices in the Newry district. Postmen J P and P Doran feature in the photograph; the Doran connection with the Post Office started in the 19th century. The photograph has been reproduced by permission of the Newry Post Office Historical Society •

Methodist Philatelic Society The Society was formed in 1970 to encourage the study of philately associated with Methodism, and to provide a medium of communication on all related philatelic subjects. It now has an international membership of 300. The MPS publishes a newsletter four times a year, provides a cover service for all known Methodist related stamps and postmarks, and the friendly exchange of material and information between members. Members requiring correspondents or special philatelic wants may have their request published in the newsletter.

The April 2000 issue of the MPS *Newsletter*, edited by Brian Thompson, includes a number of interesting articles and reports – on covers commemorating the Methodist Local Preachers Mutual Aid Association, the expulsion of three ministers from the Wesleyan Conference in 1849, and Charles Wesley's marriage in 1749; the wreck of the *Stella* (featured on a stamp from Alderney); Methodism and Salvation Army links; Philatelic Notes on the New Testament; and Wesley stamp covers •



The annual subscription is £7. For details contact T M Smart, 11 Northwood Park, Woodlesford, Leeds LS26 8PE.

GB societies The July/August issue of *The GB Journal*, published by the Great Britain Philatelic Society, contains features of interest to stamp and postal history collectors. James Grimwood-Taylor writes "The Chichester Road "Hot Cross Bun" and "1" in Circle Marks, 1681-87"; F W Taylor looks at Penny Star with Reversed Watermark; W de L M Messenger continues his study of Neale's Steam Press Experiment 1854-56; and Harry Dagnall examines the effects of photocopying stamps. Amongst the books reviewed is *Year 2000 Price List* published by Trevor Harris of the Hendon Stamp Company. He is the leading dealer in GB Edward VII issues and we are told 'this publication combines his latest specialised listing of shades with five pages of useful background information and notes on the various printings.' There are some 91 new shades which are additional to those listed in the SG Specialised Catalogue.

Distributed with the *Journal* is the GBPS's *Newsletter*, edited by Tony Walker. This contains useful reviews of GB material at Stamp Show 2000, including a list of GBPS members' awards, details of a collectors' website, dealers' directory, GBPS meetings, etc •

Collectors of GB stamps in Germany have their own specialist society, *Forschungsgemeinschaft Grossbritannien E V*, which publishes *Rundbrief*. Issue no 120 contains features on Pictorial Philatelic Counter Handstamps; Cross-Channel Mail, 1583-1902; Sir Henry Bishop; Victorian covers; Stamped-to-Order envelopes; and no fewer than 43 pages on new Machin, country and special issues. In terms of coverage of new issues it rather puts the GBPS to shame. Other useful features include a Questions & Answers section and a listing of articles in the journals of other GB philatelic societies. Text in German •

The July issue of the *GBCC Chronicle*, published by the Great Britain Collectors Club in the USA, contains reports on Stamp Show, Larry Rosenblum's 'Mostly Machins' column, and useful notes and articles on PO notices 1666-1899, the Bath Postal Museum, GB on Ebay, GB new issues, 1959 Phosphor and Graphite stamps, and Bishop marks •

GBPS Andrew Lajer, The Old Post Office, Davis Way, Hurst, Reading RG10 0TR.

Year 2000 Price List Hendon Stamp Company, PO Box 624, London NW4 3NJ.

Enquiries Bernhard Weiss, Florianweg 57, 47574 Goch, Germany.

GBCC Secretary-Treasurer Janet Gordon, PO Box 42324, Cincinnati, OH 45242-0324 USA. Subscription \$18.50 in USA, \$27 elsewhere. MasterCard/Visa payment accepted.

Royal Mail news Poetry • Recent miniature sheets • Rowland Hill Awards nominations

Year 2000 'poetry' presentation packs may be ordered on 08457 641 641 (UK only).

For more information on the Poetry International festival call 020 7921 0971.

The poetry of stamps *Philip Parker provides an update on Royal Mail's poetry activities.* Sixty-five years after W H Auden was employed by the GPO to compose verse, poetry has returned to Royal Mail. To complement the year 2000 Millennium stamps, a dozen contemporary poets were commissioned to reflect on the different themes of the monthly stamp issues. The original work is published in the 12 presentation packs and this month Ian MacMillan's poem *Fat Man in the Bath* graces the Body and Bone presentation pack. The year-long celebration of verse and design was complemented in August by the publication of *The Life of the Century*, the Poet Laureate Andrew Motion's special tribute to The Queen Mother. The poem was commissioned by Royal Mail last year for the prestige stamp book with the special stamps of four generations of the royal family.

While Auden was employed with the GPO for six months in 1935, Mimi Khalvati was appointed to spend six months with the stamps department during 2000. Mimi is Royal Mail's Poet in Residence, funded by the Poetry Society in their Poetry Places project. She has been exploring the world of stamps and the culture of letters and has been giving poetry readings and running poetry workshops with staff which have been enthusiastically received. This includes readings with the artist and stamp designer David Gentleman where both explored their respective 'miniscule formats'.

The climax of Royal Mail's year of poetry is the sponsorship of Poetry International on London's South Bank (6-14 October). This is Europe's largest poetry festival, and many of the poets commissioned by Royal Mail will be giving readings at the festival where Mimi Khalvati will be running poetry 'surgeries'. Of particular interest are 12 unique 'poetry films' that have been especially made with children. Poets and film-makers worked with the young people over the summer to create innovative short films at 12 of the projects celebrated by the Millennium Stamps. The children mailed postcards bearing the relevant stamp image to the South Bank Centre with comments and poems of their own. All the films and the children's postal poetry may be viewed in the ballroom of the Royal Festival Hall throughout October and into November in a special free-entry exhibition which showcases the arts of poetry and stamps. Poetry and stamp design are natural partners, after all. It is hoped that Auden would have approved •

New Chairman for Wales The new Chairman of the Post Office Board in Wales is Mr Graham Cater. A graduate of Swansea University and a qualified rugby referee, the new Chairman is keen to help boost wealth creation by support of small and medium size businesses in Wales. His role is about communicating to the people of Wales what the Post Office is about and getting feedback from them about their postal services and the network of nearly 1500 post offices in the Principality. He succeeds Mr Lewis Evans, Chairman since 1996 •

Miniature sheet colours and cylinders The Jeffery Matthews miniature sheet (22 May) was printed in sheets of 18 (3 × 6), cut into individual sheets before issue. The cylinders used (guillotined off) are listed at right, the numbers positioned, inverted, in right sheet margin opposite row 3. Traffic lights, in same order (no iridion), were located opposite row 2 above. The complete sheet is shown below, reduced to 21%, with an actual-size detail at right.

The Queen Mother miniature sheet (4 August) was printed in sheets of 21 (3 × 7) from cylinders P94 phosphor 1A silver 1B yellow 1C magenta 1D cyan (blue) 1E black. The numbers, guillotined off, were in the left sheet margin opposite row 6. Traffic lights, in order yellow, magenta, cyan, black, silver, were in the right margin opposite row 6. The complete sheet will be shown in next month's *Bulletin* ●

Jeffery Matthews cylinders

1A 64p stamp colour ● 1B
31p ● 1C 10p ● 1D 39p ● 1E
4p ● 1F 5p ● 1G 6p ● 1H red
label ● 1I £1 ● 1J iridion ink
used on £1 stamp

Below, traffic lights and the inverted cylinders in the right sheet margin of the Jeffery Matthews sheet.



Send nomination forms to
John Whittaker, Stamps and
Collectibles, Royal Mail, 2-14
Bunhill Row, London EC1Y
8HQ, by 7 January.

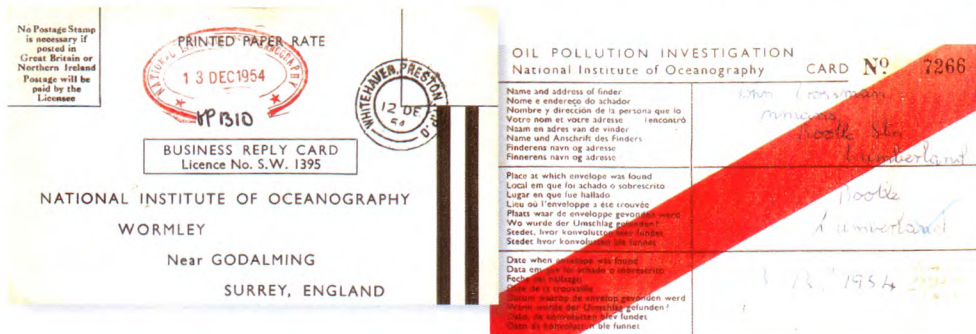
All forms will go into a draw,
the winner to receive £100
worth of Royal Mail philatelic
products. Enquiries about the
Awards should be addressed to
John, above, or telephone
020 7847 3317.

Rowland Hill Awards This month's *Bulletin* includes a form for readers to
nominate the post office they consider provides the best philatelic service
to its customers. From nominations a short-list will be prepared for final
judging in the Post Office Excellence section of the Rowland Hill Awards.
The criteria is set out on the nomination form.

The Awards, sponsored by Royal Mail, the British Philatelic Trust and
the Philatelic Traders' Society, were initiated in 1997 to recognise individ-
uals and organisations who have made a major contribution to philately
during the year. The awards for 2000 will be made at a ceremony in Lon-
don next Spring.

The Post Office Excellence Award for 1999 was won by Haslingden PO,
the runners-up were Romsey Branch Office and the Galleries Branch Office
in Bristol. Previous winners were: 1996 Leeds Chief Post Office, 1997 Truro
Branch Office, and 1998 Newport Sub Post Office, Shropshire •

Social philately's Glasgow 2000 debut by James Mackay



FOR THE FIRST TIME as any exhibition in the
northern hemisphere, Social Philately constitutes
a major competitive class in Glasgow 2000, the bi-
ennial national exhibition at the Scottish Exhi-
bition and Conference Centre, 17-19 November.

Some 24 collections have been entered in this
class, ranging from promotional postal orders to
death notices. One entry is entitled Operation
Postcard and deals with an extremely offbeat
aspect of British socio-economic history. The
drift envelope experiment of 1954 was carried
out by the National Institute of Oceanography
on behalf of the Ministry of Transport, to deter-
mine the track of ocean current in connection
with international action which was then about
to be taken to prevent the pollution of the sea by
oil illegally discharged by ships.

It was decided to drop, at different seasons of
the year, a number of plastic envelopes, each
containing a postcard returnable to the NIO. The
dropping tracks were arranged to zigzag across
the approximate northern and southern bound-
aries of the North-East Atlantic Drift and also to
traverse the main body of the Drift (popularly
known as the Gulf Stream). To encourage find-
ers of the envelopes to complete and return the
short questionnaire on the back of the card, a
reward of half a crown was offered. The first
drop took place on 20 January 1954 but was
unsuccessful as only envelopes of a single thick-
ness were used. As a result, cards were enclosed
in two envelopes on the three subsequent drops.

To ensure that all cards were dropped within
the same short space of time, the cards were

dropped in bundles of 10 with a soluble paper wrapper, from Shackleton aircraft of RAF Coastal Command, operating from Ballykelly (Northern Ireland) or Pembroke (Wales). In addition, one envelope was released at noon each day throughout the year from two Ocean Weather Ships when at stations India and Kilo. Unfortunately all the envelopes supplied to the ship were of the single type, with the result that only four were eventually recovered in legible condition; two of these are included in the four-frame display. Successful airdrops were carried out on 5-7 May, 31 August - 1 September and 17-19 December 1954. A total of 6,395 cards were dropped and 2,643 were eventually recovered.

Remarkably a few cards were recovered in Iceland from the first successful drop, freak contrary winds being responsible for this aberration. More than half of all cards recovered were found on the west coast of Scotland, including the Outer Hebrides, Orkney and Shetland, leading the *x10* to conclude that the Scottish islands act like a comb or sieve of the ocean currents. The first frame shows the composition of the drift envelopes and their contents, a map of the North Atlantic showing the drop-zones and recovery coasts, and a selection of cards recovered in the United Kingdom, highlighting exceptional recoveries in relatively sheltered waters off Anglesey, Caldey, the Scillies, Hayling Island and the Isle of Wight – the farthest penetration of cards up the English Channel.

Illustrated left is a card which was remarkable not only for being found on the Lancashire coast, but also on account of the variety of the modes of transport by which it was conveyed. It was flown by RAF Shackleton from Pembroke on 1 September 1954 and dropped in mid-Atlantic. It then drifted 605 miles in three months and 13 days to land on Bootle Beach. The finder, John Crossman, completed the details on the card and popped it into the post at Bootle Station whence it was carried on the Whitehaven-Preston travelling post office whose handstamp appears on the front. Thus this card was flown, then borne on the wind and waves, and finally transported by rail to its destination •

Reviving a trend? Richard West sees what the young of Scotland have achieved



The Glasgow 2000 souvenir sheet, designed by youngsters in Scotland, and printed by Enschedé.

GLASGOW 2000 will take place on November 17 to 19; details are given elsewhere in this issue. However, I would like to focus on just one aspect of this major event.

Spearheaded by Frank Soutar, who does much to promote the hobby among the young in Scotland, the exhibition has already done much to focus increased attention on stamps. It was Frank's idea to have an exhibition souvenir sheet, with the labels designed by the young. He received great support for his idea, not only from the organising team of Glasgow 2000, but also from the Scottish Philatelic Traders Society which provided sponsorship of £750. However, of particular significance, Joh Enschedé, stamp printers of The Netherlands who print for Royal Mail, kindly agreed to produce 50,000 of the sheets free of charge. You can see the result above, and a sheet is included with this *Bulletin* thanks to the organisers of Glasgow 2000.

Schools throughout the United Kingdom were informed of a competition, run during 1999, to find designs for the labels. Around 350 entries were received. Understandably most came from schools in Scotland, but in all 19 schools, both primary and secondary, sent in entries.

Left, Christine Hall, holding her winning design, and other entrants from Menzieshill High School, Dundee. Right, Frank Soutar with Alistair McDonald of Abercorn School, Glasgow.

Most of the entries will be on show at Glasgow 2000.



Three judges were selected, chosen from different parts of Scotland, to ensure their views would be independent. Two were collectors; one was a non-collector. There were two men and one woman. After much deliberation, they reached their conclusions.

The entries were divided into two age groups. In the group up to 12, the winner was Christine Hall from Menzieshill High School in Dundee. The runner up was Rachel Robertson from Ardgowan Primary School, Greenock.

In the 13 to 16 age group the winner was Alistair McDonald of Abercorn School, Glasgow, a school for children with learning difficulties. The runner-up was Hannah Shewan of Auchterarder High School, Auchterarder.

In each category, the winner has received a voucher for £50, and the runner-up a voucher for £25; the vouchers can be exchanged at a shop of the winner's choice.

The prizes were presented to the winners at their schools. It was particularly gratifying that the winners came from four different schools, and from well scattered parts of Scotland.

You can see the winning designs on the Glasgow 2000 souvenir sheet. Also at Glasgow 2000 you will be able to meet representatives from Joh Enschedé.

In addition to other competitive displays, the exhibition will also include the entries in an Inter-Federation Youth Competition, which has been open to all philatelic federations in the UK.

Each year Frank organises a national youth stamp competition in Scotland, with the youngsters competing for the national trophy, the Alba Salver. This year the award has been won by Calum Mill of Bearsden. The entries in this national competition are on show at the annual Scottish Philatelic Congress held in March in Falkirk.

It is interesting that Glasgow 2000 is being publicised by a souvenir sheet. At one time every national exhibition had its sheet, and these were always highly sought-after. Indeed, the money they raised helped ensure the exhibitions were a major success. Fashions change, and enthusiasm for such sheets declined in the 1980s. Could it be that Glasgow 2000 will set the trend, and we see a revival of the exhibition souvenir sheet? ●

Text © Richard West 2000

Special prize draw Win the 1992 leather-bound yearbook



WE HAVE 10 of these yearbooks to give away – to the senders of the first 10 cards drawn on 10 November. The standard version of this yearbook is now catalogued by Stanley Gibbons at £60!

Simply write your name and address on the back of a postcard and send it to: Yearbook Draw, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 2-14 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8HQ ●

Philately on-line Ron Negus explores the Channel Islands



Isle of Man Post Office - Stamp Centre

Welcome to the exciting world of Isle of Man stamps!

In the following pages you will find a wealth of information about stamp collecting and the products and services offered by the Isle of Man Post Office for collectors.

ISLE OF MAN POST OFFICE STAMPS

The Isle of Man has been issuing its own stamps since gaining independence from the British Post Office on 5 July 1973. Its issues, denominated in sterling and bearing the Queen's head, are very popular with GB collectors. Its website provides an excellent source of information about the stamps and encourages collectors to order these and related philatelic items.

MANY GB collectors include the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man within their areas of interest. These collectors can find information about all their stamps on the web from the official post office sites in each of these offshore locations.

On the Isle of Man Philatelic Bureau site at www.gov.im/stamps/ illustrated details of recent issues are shown with purchase prices for each set, plus an easy ordering facility. Other useful information pages list the methods available for purchasing the various philatelic products on offer, plus a full description of each product. The latter include mint sets, cto sets, presentation packs, maximum cards and booklets. The postal address of the Bureau, telephone and fax numbers and an e-mail address allow contact by any preferred method. As the Bureau is a government department, the site links directly to other sites on aspects of life on the Isle of Man, providing useful background for writing up stamps for display.

When the British Post Office was reorganised in October 1969, the Channel Islands each established their own independent postal administrations. The Jersey Philatelic Bureau OnLine can be found at www.jerseypost.com/stamps/, and contains details of all the current philatelic products on offer. A novel feature on this site is a section giving details about the artists employed to design Jersey stamps, many of whom have also designed GB issues. Another part of the site,

called Kidzone, contains simplified information about stamp collecting designed to attract children to the hobby. A few pages are also devoted to the history of the island and these include some brief comments on its postal history, although the German occupation from 1940 to 1945 and its philatelic effects are not mentioned at all.

The sister Channel Island, the Bailiwick of Guernsey, which includes Guernsey itself as well as Alderney, Sark and Herm, has its own website at www.post-office.guernsey.net/. The Guernsey Philatelic Bureau claims to have over 36,000 account holders of its own, and supplies a further 40,000 customers through its world-wide network of agents. The names of the agents, with contact addresses, are listed. Navigation around the various types of information about the Bureau and its products is simple and all pages are written in a way which will interest collectors at all levels. Full illustrated details are given about all current stamps together with the associated production facts like printer, process, paper and gum, cylinder markings, and so on. This also includes the withdrawal date. A useful feature is a separate page which indexes the illustrated details of all past issues from June 1996 no longer available from the Bureau itself. Finally, there is a useful warning page about the risk of ordering online with a credit card since the site is not secure, and postal communication is advised ●

The new President of the 'Royal' Richard West interviews Gavin Fryer, beginning his two-year term as President of The Royal Philatelic Society London

A NEW PRESIDENT for The Royal Philatelic Society London is not an unusual event: after all, each President serves just two years. But in its current President Gavin Fryer, who has just taken office, the 'Royal' has someone who is familiar with a wide spectrum of the hobby.

It all started very early in life: from the age of 5 Gavin was already collecting, enthused by the Dulac heads that were arriving on parcels addressed to his father. No one in the family collected, although his father's methodical ways certainly rubbed off on Gavin. Fortunately relatives and friends proved a good source for more material, so that by the time Gavin went to prep school, he already had two loose-leaf albums full of stamps. The dealers in Guildford also freely gave much useful advice.

Relatives in the Dutch West Indies were a further major help: the stamps they sent provided good material for swapping. By the time Gavin went to public school, he was already concentrating on the Commonwealth, and early GB. When 14 he bought himself a collection of Newfoundland, attracted by the engraved designs. This collection provided yet more swapping material.

At Marlborough he established a stamp club, organising exhibitions in the school library for Prize Day. He also added yet another diversification to his collecting, by building up a collection of London postmarks from 1840 to 1890.

Leaving school, he sought an individual country to collect and opted for Ascension, particularly fascinated by the George VI printings. In 1965 he joined the Royal, and in 1970 gave a paper on Ascension to the Society. After a while he felt he could take his collection of Ascension stamps and postal history no further: it was time to move on.

He worked on the postal history of Malaya, and also bought a collection of Newfoundland,



fascinated by the Perkins Bacon die proofs, essays, printings and papers. The Newfoundland was purely for study; he wanted to collect another country. Purchase of an 1811 letter from Madagascar provided the spur, and the resulting collection won the Stampex Mailcoach Trophy as well as several international gold medals. Madagascar was the subject of another paper to the 'Royal', in 1976.

To broaden his interests Gavin bought an accumulation of Machin cylinder blocks, seeing the fascination the study of these issues has to offer. He has also delved into the techniques used by those in Europe who undertake expertising.

But there was still a desire to extend the collecting boundaries even further: to understand the problem facing the collector of today who may find tackling a single country too daunting. Why not try more lateral thinking? Gavin's solution has been to study the use of European classic stamps on cover and to develop a comparative scale of the cost of sending letters in the various countries. This latest collection has been awarded large gold medals and was nominated for the Grand Prix at Italia 98.

Personal collecting aside, Gavin has been a member of two societies in his home area, serving as both Secretary and President of Woking and District Philatelic Society, and as President of the Federation of Surrey Philatelic Societies.

As mentioned, he joined the 'Royal' in 1965, was made a Fellow in 1970, and has served on the Society's Council, from 1976 with a break. For 12 years he was Chairman of the Publications Committee, and responsible for publication of 12 new works.

So what are his plans for his term as President? He is very much aware of the special amateur status of the Society which he plans to maintain,

and indeed enhance. He is particularly anxious to appeal to a younger membership, still pursuing their working careers, who will be the custodians of the leading collections in the future.

For the past months, the 'Royal' has undertaken an ambitious RPSL 2000 and Beyond Appeal, with the aim of raising £1.5 million to make the invaluable resource of its building in central London even more vital, for not only members but philately as a whole. The Society's library and museum are without parallel: they have to be preserved, and made more easily accessible not only to members but also to any philatelic student. These resources will be better housed and maintained. The Society's meetings are always well attended with superb papers and displays being presented. There is inconvenient pressure on the present meeting arrangements. The plan is to provide a more spacious, conducive meeting room. Gavin hopes that during his Presidency the appeal will have reached a stage whereby work on this ambitious programme can begin, to take the 'Royal' into the new Millennium.

But the Society's activities are not confined to this prestigious building in London: the Society is frequently well represented at international stamp exhibitions, and holds regional meetings within the UK that are popular with members.

Another invaluable resource of the Society is its Expertising Committee. It has recently invested in equipment that makes its work more precise. There are plans to make greater use of modern technology with the Society's highly respected magazine *The London Philatelist*.

If you would like to savour a flavour of the 'Royal', and encourage a young collector at the same time, there will be a young person's afternoon on Saturday, 13 January. If you would like to know more, write to The Honorary Secretary at The Royal Philatelic Society, 41 Devonshire Place, London W1G 6JY, or telephone 020 7486 1044 for more details. You can bring along a young collector, and meet Gavin Fryer. And perhaps decide to join the 'Royal' for yourself •

The Royal's two vice-Presidents are David Beech and Christopher Harman. An interview with Mr Harman was published in the Bulletin of May 1996. ED

Decimal stamp books 53

D G A Myall's specialist report

NEW PRESTIGE BOOKS were issued in August and September. This means that, for the first time, three prestige books have been issued in the same year. I hope that, despite the interest they provide, this will not become a precedent. Prestige is to do with esteem, regard, reputation and status. Writing as a collector, I would not like to see their standing cheapened by overexposure. It has to be said, though, that the new books maintain the excellence of production of their predecessors. In article 52 I covered the stamp content of prestige books with special reference to Country (Regional) stamps and their unusual pairings. The two new books provide us with even more unusual combinations.

Queen Mother's centenary The August book is titled *The Life of the Century* and was issued to commemorate the life of HM Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother who celebrated her 100th birthday on the day the book was issued. Spanning four generations and two world wars, some of the historic events which occurred during the life of this remarkable lady are recalled by a shrewd selection of photographs, from sepia print to full colour. It is striking how informal most of them are and I feel that this reflects The Queen Mother's approach to the media with whom she has always been a favourite. As the poet laureate, Andrew Motion put it 'what's formal mixed with what's humane – just so' in the specially commissioned poem which forms the text of the book. Printing was by Questa using gravure for the stamp panes and lithography for the covers and interleaves.

The first pane of stamps contains eight Scottish country definitives set round a label depicting Glamis castle. There are six of the saltire 2nd class XVI and two 65p tartan stamps, the first pictorial country stamps to be issued in books. These stamps differ from the sheet versions, which were printed by Walsall, in several respects. The booklet stamps have a much finer screen and were



printed sideways on the cylinders. The very dark colours of the 65p stamp required very wide phosphor bars on the sheet stamps in order to give a strong enough signal in the mail sorting machines. The booklet stamps have bars of the conventional width, leading to the possibility that Royal Mail does not consider that many of them will be used for postage, a supposition in which they are probably correct.

The second pane contains nine of the brownish olive Millennium 1st class xv1. I have noted some of the differences in the three printers' versions of this stamp in an earlier article but the prestige book issue also differs from that in Questa's retail books. The former is printed from cylinders with a sideways laydown, has narrower phosphor bars (9mm instead of 9.5mm), and is perforated 15 × 14 instead of 14. Another difference between the two Questa versions is that the heads on the stamps in the prestige book are slightly smaller. You can see this best by looking at the size of the gap between the bottom of one stamp and the top of the one directly beneath it.

The other panes contain four special issue 2p stamps showing The Queen Mother and the miniature sheet of stamps featuring her with The Queen, Prince Charles and Prince William.

An A to Z of trees The September prestige book is titled *A Treasury of Trees*. From Ash to Zoological Riches (creatures which live in or on trees) the

fascinating text written by Francesca Greenoak (truly) explains our affinity for trees and the diverse uses to which mankind has put them. The book was printed by Walsall, the stamps in gravure and the covers and interleaves in lithography. It continues the now usual pattern of including both special issue stamps and definitives.

Four of the five panes contain stamps from the Tree and Leaf and the Stone and Soil sets in the Millennium series. Differences between these and the sheet versions, which were printed by Enschedé and De La Rue, were noted in the August *Bulletin*. One of these is unusual indeed. The phosphor bars on the 65p Groundworks Changing Places stamps in the book have their edges tapering off into the surrounding paper, whereas those on Enschedé's sheet version do not. This was done deliberately but I do not know the reason for it.

The other pane contains four of the Machin Millennium 1st class xv1s alternating with four Wales pictorial (Leek) 2nd class xv1s round a central label bearing a simple leaf design. Because labels in this position are required to have no phosphor printed on them in case they are used as stamps (a very remote possibility I would have thought) the single bar on the 2nd class stamps is placed at the right side instead of in the centre; it is also wider than that on the sheet stamps. The 1st class stamps are not the same as those in Walsall's retail books, the most significant difference



being the perforation gauge: 15×14 in the retail book and 14 in the prestige book. Both Walsall and Questa seem to be using these two gauges almost indiscriminately on their definitives and collectors will wish to ensure that they have all the variants if such matters interest them. The formulation of the phosphor ink also seems to be different, fluorescing much brighter on the stamps in the 'Trees' book. The definitive pane yields vertical and horizontal se-tenant pairs comprising Machin and pictorial country definitives, the first time such a pairing has occurred.

Special Millennium book Stamps from the Stone and Soil and the Tree and Leaf sets also appear in a special retail book issued on 5 September. The Trans Pennine Trail stamp and the Eden Project stamp are printed se-tenant in a pane of two 1st class xvts along with a pane of eight Millennium definitives in the latest of a series of such mixed content retail books. Again, the special issue stamps were printed by Walsall whereas the sheet equivalents were printed by Enschedé and De La Rue respectively. The pane has a margin all round and makes an attractive miniature sheet to accompany the normal issue.

The pane of eight Millennium definitives contains no surprises. The stamps are exactly the same as in Walsall's normal pane of ten. This is only to be expected since the smaller pane was achieved by 'bursting' it from the normal pane,



Panes from the Queen Mother and Treasury of Trees prestige stamp books and, above, a pane of two special stamps from Millennium retail book, 5 September.

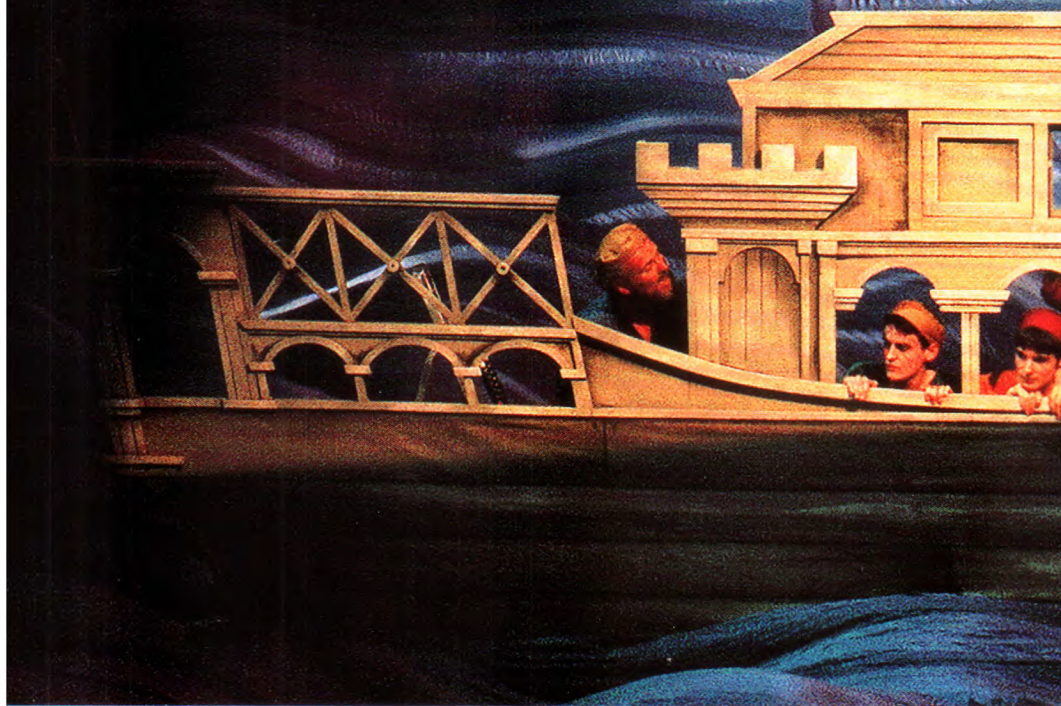
leaving the two right-hand stamps to be disposed of as waste. They are thus from the same colour cylinder, w1.

Neither Walsall nor Questa number their phosphor booklet cylinders and I understand that this is in accordance with official requirements. Just to be clear, the perforation gauge is also the same on the stamps from these sources. The same pane of eight was used in the previous book in this series. This was issued on 26 May and the pane of two Millennium stamps comprised the National Space Centre stamp from Above and Beyond, se-tenant with the London Zoo stamp from the Life and Earth set. These were both 1st class xvts. The sheet version of the Space Centre stamp was issued in January and had a face value of 26p; the basic inland letter rate had been raised to 27p on 27 April, hence the change to an xvt for the May issue.

Neither the new Millennium cover nor the standard cover has any printing on the yellow strip but the changed content is clearly indicated on the very colourful front cover of the new book which shows parts of all three stamps it contains. Both books are sold at the same price, £2.70, and have the same barcode ●

Corrections to August article The BBC Anniversary book was printed by different firms, but not six different firms as stated. The 13p stamp in the Beatrix Potter book had side band left.

Spirit and Faith Eleventh in the series of Millennium issues



St Edmundsbury Cathedral Today's cathedral was begun in 1503, yet remained unfinished. The Millennium project will finish the north transept, cloisters and dramatic central tower.

Church Floodlighting The Church Floodlighting Trust provides lighting to places of worship for all denominations, emphasising the church as a focal point of the community.

St Patrick Centre This visitor centre in Downpatrick, the reputed site of St Patrick's grave, will contribute to developing the town's potential as an ecclesiastical and historical centre.

Mystery Plays Known in medieval times as the Corpus Christi Play, the York Mystery Plays were traditionally performed outdoors in York from the 14th to the 16th centuries.

The Spirit and Faith issue will go on sale at post offices and philatelic outlets on 7 November.



Denis Waugh



Jacoby Merralls/Nick Catone



Ken Griffiths



James Morris

for 2000, inspired by Millennium projects throughout the UK

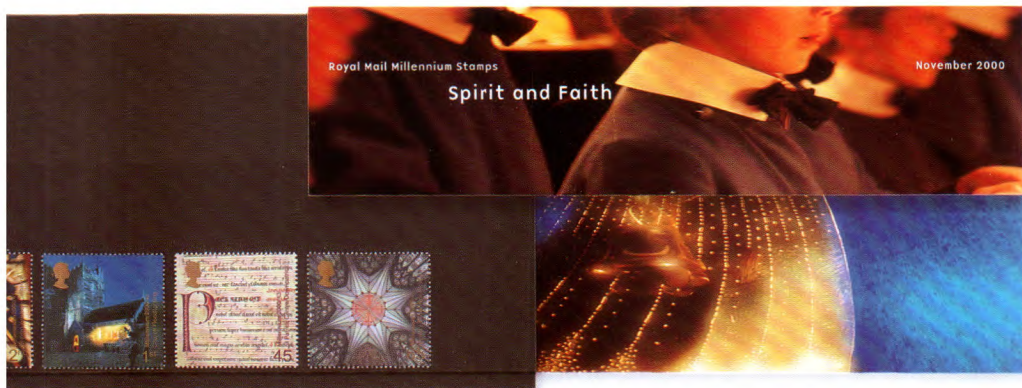


A scene from the York Mystery plays staged in York Minster, the subject of the 65p Spirit and Faith stamp.

The 2nd class stamp represents the Millennium project to finish construction in St Edmundsbury Cathedral, Suffolk

- Ss Peter and Paul Church in Over Stowey, Somerset, on the 1st class, represents the Church Floodlighting Trust
- The St Patrick centre in Downpatrick, Northern Ireland is the subject of the 45p
- York Minster chapter house, on the 65p, symbolizes the York Mystery Plays, seen in the surroundings of the Minster for the first time in July 2000.





A well-illustrated presentation pack (above, price £1.95) and stamp cards (price 25p each) will be available at main post offices and philatelic outlets.

Technical details

Printer De La Rue

Process Gravure

Size 37 × 35mm

Sheets 100

Perforation 14 × 14.5

Phosphor One band 2nd class, two bands others

Gum PVA

Gutter pairs Horizontal

Cylinders and colours

2nd 1A gold ● 1B greenish yellow ● 1C cerise ● 1D new blue ● 1E grey-black ● P95 phosphor

1st 1A gold ● 1B greenish yellow ● 1C cerise ● 1D new blue ● 1E bright blue ● 1F black ● 1G grey-black ● P96 phosphor

45p 1A deep reddish purple ● 1B olive-sepia ● 1C red ● 1D black ● 1E gold ● P96 phosphor

64p 2A gold ● 2B greenish yellow ● 2C cerise ● 2D new blue ● 2E grey-black ● 2F black ● P97 phosphor

For nearly 1000 years the site of the cathedral in Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, has been a place of worship and pilgrimage. On 2 December 1999, The Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, the Rt Rev Richard Lewis, officially marked the start of construction work at Suffolk Cathedral. The project has received a Millennium Commission grant of over £5 million. Stained glass windows have featured on 1971 and 1992 Christmas stamps.

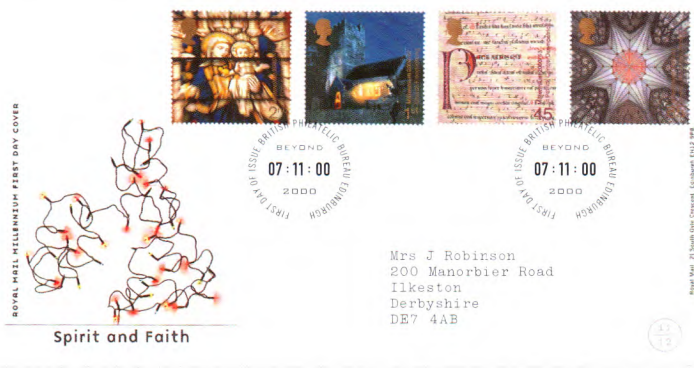
The Church Floodlighting Trust will provide funding support to floodlight up to 400 churches, attention being paid to energy efficiency and environmental standards.

The St Patrick Centre will celebrate the life and legacy of St Patrick. The stamp depicts a 12th century Latin Gradual in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. Inclusion of St Patrick's feast suggests that the Gradual was for an Irish Benedictine monastery. Reference to a bishop suggests a place with a cathedral, the only such place in Ireland at that time being Downpatrick.

The York Mystery Plays are based on the Bible and tell the story of mankind's spiritual journey from Creation to the Day of Judgement. The stamp features part of the 14th century conical roof of York Minster's chapter house. A roof boss in the Minster featured on the 3½p stamp in the 1974 Christmas set, the Minster on a 1969 Cathedrals stamp.

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Unstamped Royal Mail FDC envelopes will be available from main post offices and philatelic outlets about a week before 7 November, price 25p. Orders for FDCs with the stamps cancelled by a pictorial first day postmark of the Bureau or Downpatrick must reach the Bureau by the date of issue. Price £2.25 UK (including VAT) or £1.92 overseas (no VAT).

Collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue to: British Philatelic Bureau, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB, or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, 57 Queen Street, Glasgow G1 3AZ (Downpatrick postmark), marking the outer envelope 'F00029' (Bureau), or 'F00030' (Downpatrick). Covers can be posted or handed in at main post offices for the Downpatrick postmark. A non-pictorial Downpatrick postmark is also available from the Special Handstamp Centre, request 'F00030 NP'.



Details of sponsored handstamps for 7 November will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from the Bureau (£10 UK/Europe; £21.75 elsewhere). For a sample copy write to: The Editor, *British Postmark Bulletin*, Royal Mail, 2-14 Bunhill Row, London EC4Y 3HQ.

MILLENNIUM PHILATELIC PRODUCTS Each of the Millennium packs this year includes a specially commissioned poem. That in the Spirit and Faith pack, entitled *Eating Chips with the Saints* is by David Hart who was born in Aberystwyth in 1940, and now lives in Birmingham. He has worked as an Anglican curate in London, a university chaplain in Birmingham, and as an arts administrator. In 1998 he became the first Writer in Residence in a cathedral – at Worcester. A freelance writer for the past three years, he won the National Poetry Competition in 1994 and was runner-up in 1996. He was Birmingham Poet laureate 1997-9. His poem, *Eating Chips with the Saints* was written after a visit to Downpatrick to research St Patrick where he did actually eat chips in the grounds of the abbey there.

STAMP BOOKS Two Christmas stamp books will be available from 7 November: £2.70 containing 10 1st class Church Floodlighting stamps and £3.80 containing 20 2nd class St Edmundsbury Cathedral stamps. The books have been printed by De La Rue. The cylinders are as follows: 2nd class B2A gold • B1B greenish yellow • B1C cerise • B1D new blue • B1E grey-black • B20 phosphor; 1st class B1A gold • B1B greenish yellow • B1C cerise • B1D new blue • B1E bright blue • B1F black • B1G grey-black • B21 phosphor.

Next Millennium issues The last set in the Millennium 2000 series – Sound and Vision – will be issued on 5 December. This features Ringing in the Millennium; Year of the Artist; the Wales Millennium Centre (Canolfan Mileniwm), Cardiff; and TS2K Talent and Skills 2000, London. Details next month. The final Millennium issue – The Future – will be issued on 16 January. The entire series will then comprise 25 sets, 100 stamps in total. The Royal Mail Millennium collection was granted Millennium Product status by the Design Council in December 1999 •



The Millennium continues James Mackay



No sooner had the last of the fireworks fizzled out on M-eve than all the hoary old arguments surfaced about the Millennium being at the end of 2000 and not at the beginning. The 20th century does not end until midnight on 31 December, and I would not be surprised to find a second round of celebrations in three months' time.



CANADA AND THE USA, WHOSE MILLENNIUM marathons notched up an impressive 139 and 150 stamps respectively, both decided that M-day itself should be celebrated by a single stamp, a peace dove from Canada and a top-hatted baby from America (left, illustration based on artwork by J C Leyendecker). Both, of course, were still rounding off their long-running Millennium programmes into the year 2000. Conversely Australia had a single stamp on the eve of the Millennium but followed this with a sheet of 25 stamps showing the faces of Australia. A similar approach was adopted by Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands, although in this case a strip of five from each sufficed. Sweden's relatively modest programme consisted of three booklets of ten, the last of which appeared on 17 March and covered the period from 1970 to 1999, including stamps featuring UN peacekeepers, mobile phones and Abba.

Royal Mail is not alone by any means in hedging its bets, with a second round of Millennium stamps. Indeed, the momentum of issues from around the world is increasing rather than abating. Ireland's original contribution was a rather idiosyncratic sheet of 15 Gaelic footballers, but on 31 December An Post released a sheet containing two se-tenant blocks of six stamps portraying people of the 20th century. Only one native Irishman, Count John McCormick, was included in the line-up, although there were two Irish-Americans, Grace Kelly and John F Kennedy, along with those icons of our times, Mother Teresa and Nelson Mandela. Intriguingly

surveys recent issues from around the world



Lenin appeared in the sheet margins. A second sheet appeared the following day depicting landmarks in Irish history whilst a third sheet, released on 29 February, highlighted scientific discoveries. Three other sheets are scheduled for release at two-monthly intervals later in the year.

The countries in the Crown Agents ensemble have yielded a diverse range of issues, mostly in sets of four with the occasional miniature sheet. With commendable economy several countries combined the Millennium with Christmas. St Lucia's pair of scenic stamps, for example, had labels alongside inscribed either 'Happy Christmas' or 'Happy Millennium'. Samoa's set of four had the dates 1999 and 2000 featured prominently, with Christmas and Millennium respectively superimposed.

The Cayman Islands issued four stamps reproducing Christmas stamps of previous years, but the set was accompanied by a miniature sheet which bore a Millennium greeting in the sheet margins. A miniature sheet from Nevis comprised four stamps extolling the merits of the Four Seasons holiday resort, adding, almost as an afterthought, a millennial greeting in the sheet margins. Similarly Vanuatu's miniature sheet plugging the country's tourist attractions has a welcome to the new Millennium confined to the sheet margins.

A set of six from the Falklands featured scenery and wildlife but their special purpose was indicated merely by the word 'Millennium' across the top. The Seychelles set of four scenic stamps did not even go this far, and anyone seeing detached stamps would be none the wiser, but the words 'Happy Millennium' were inscribed on the selvage.

Clockwise, from opposite page: a miniature sheet from Vanuatu and stamps from St Lucia, Nevis, Falkland Islands, Cayman Islands and Samoa.



This page, clockwise from top left: St Kitts, Italy, Sri Lanka, Israel, Italy, New Caledonia. Israel's issue concentrates on churches of different Christian faiths in the Holy Land, among them St Andrew's Scots Kirk, shown here.

World peace It may be remembered from my previous article (January) that the Åland Islands had featured the ∞ symbol to emphasise the hopes that the dawn of the new Millennium would bring world peace. This theme has been taken up by several other countries. Sri Lanka's set of four has motifs symbolising peace, justice, equality and hopes for the future. Peace doves were also much in evidence in the stunning souvenir sheets released by Tonga and its dependency Niuafo'ou, while neighbouring Kiribati's set of five symbolised faith, harmony, hope, enlightenment and peace.

Among the issues from the French group were a 3 franc stamp from France itself showing a child's prize-winning painting 'Long live the year 2000', part of the 'Stampin' the Future' global design contest which also yielded colourful stamps from Gibraltar, St. Kitts and Israel. New Caledonia's pair of greetings stamps showed children in party mood, whereas French Polynesia adopted a more symbolic approach; one stamp showing an adult hand holding the tiny hand of a new-born baby, the other showing a child's eye, the hope of the future. Switzerland's 90c stamp came in a se-tenant strip with two labels between, carrying greetings in four languages.

Least inspired was the pair from Denmark, derived from the long-running definitive low values. Among other countries which based their designs around the numerals 2000 were Israel with a set of four highlighting technological achievements and concern for the environment, and a set of four with matching miniature sheet from Taiwan, contrasting the latest state-of-the-art technology with the need to conserve nature and ancient buildings.



The Christian message Previously I had lamented the fact that so few Millennium stamps remembered that they were actually celebrating the 2000th anniversary of the birth of Christ. In January, however, Germany released a stamp celebrating the Year of Jubilee with Christian symbols and a Latin motto denoting that Christ was yesterday, is today and will be for ever. Egypt's contribution was a pair of stamps inscribed 1999 and 2000 respectively, but accompanied by a small souvenir sheet depicting the flight of the Holy Family into Egypt.

The Vatican, of course, has continued with its series portraying the popes who occupied the Holy See in previous Holy Years, but concluded the philatelic celebrations with a sheetlet reproducing the bronze panels on the doors of St Peter's Basilica. A similar theme was adopted by Slovenia which followed up a single stamp showing celebratory fireworks and a secular quarter symbolising the technological achievements of the 20th century with a 2000 tolar souvenir sheet featuring the bronze door of Ljubljana Cathedral, with the Yesterday, Today and Always motto rendered in Slovene as well as Latin. Italy's contribution to the Year of Jubilee is a set reproducing Old Master paintings of the life of Christ. Sometimes the religious aspects of the Millennium cropped up in unexpected places. Thus Russia's contribution was a magnificent miniature sheet whose three stamps reproduced icons of Christ against a sumptuous background of angels in medieval monastic Cyrillic.

Israel and San Marino chose the theme of pilgrimage, the latter's sheet of four reproducing medieval views of the leading churches of Rome.

This page, clockwise from top centre: stamps from Gibraltar, Switzerland, France, Denmark and Kiribati. The Swiss stamp was also available later in a personalised version, with the option of a photograph on the labels.



Twenty countries in the Inter-Governmental Philatelic Corporation joined in an omnibus, with each concentrating on events and personalities of a particular half-century, so that the entire period from 1000 to 2000 was covered.

The sheet from Nevis (detail above) dealt with the 1990s, and ended with a 50¢ stamp portraying a rather crestfallen Bill Clinton at the time of his impeachment.

Events and personalities San Marino also released a sheetlet of 12 stamps highlighting events of the 20th century and this was a popular approach adopted by many other countries, ranging from the set of eight from the People's Republic of China, with portraits of Sun Yat-sen, Mao Zhedong and Deng Xiao-ping alongside Chinese achievements of recent years, to the Marshall Islands, whose sheets of 15 have echoed the American series but taken a global view.

Most prolific of this year's Millennium stamps are those produced in sheets of 17 (with a non-postal label) or 18 from the countries in the Inter-Governmental Philatelic Corporation group. At the same time 10 countries released similar sheets concentrating on a decade of the 20th century. On top of that several countries have produced sheets concentrating on different aspects, such as peacemakers or 'visionaries' (ie computer nerds) of the 20th century, or even the achievements of individuals, such as the sheet from Mongolia tracing the career of Charles Darwin or the sheet from Guinea illustrating the travels of Marco Polo. Surely it should have been the other way round?



'Mini-millennium' issue from Norway, marking Oslo's 1000 years.

Several 'mini-millennia' have also been celebrated recently, and include a joint issue from Iceland and the Vatican celebrating 1000 years of Christianity in the far north. Canada, Iceland and Greenland have also been recalling the 1000th anniversary of Leif Eirikson's discovery of America, and last but by no means least Sweden has celebrated Czeslaw Slania's 100th stamp engraving with a stupendous miniature sheet, containing the world's largest engraved stamp. Next year, the 78 year-old will have been plying his burin for half a century – a good excuse, I hope, for an even greater masterpiece •

The Swedish stamp celebrating Slania's 100th stamp engraving was shown in the May Bulletin, page 287. ED.

Spanish stamps España 2000 will celebrate 150 years of issues, writes James Mackay

IT WAS ON NEW YEAR'S DAY of 1850 that Spain introduced adhesive postage stamps, a measure first advocated as far back as 1843 in emulation of the recent postal reforms in Britain but delayed on account of the turbulent political situation. Insurrection, civil wars, three abdications in three quarters of a century, republics, dictatorships and regional factions have all left their mark on Spanish philately, although for the past quarter of a century Spain has enjoyed stability and growing prosperity as a constitutional monarchy under King Juan Carlos. From being regarded the pariah of Europe during General Franco's Fascist regime, Spain has become a major member of the European Union. Even the dispute with Britain over Gibraltar has diminished in recent years.

Reviewing the course of Spanish philately over the past 150 years, one is struck by the sheer magnitude of the subject, with about 4,000 stamps to contend with; yet the present-day policy of issuing about 60 stamps a year is modest by world standards, and the vast majority of these stamps are tariffed at the basic domestic postal rates. In the classic period, up to the end of the 19th century, Spain had produced about 300 stamps (compared with 214 from Britain between 1840 and 1900). This prolificacy was largely explained by the fact that, in the early period, Spain got a new series of stamps every year, the object of this being to deter would-be forgers. This policy continued until 1867. During this period the very homely features of Isabella II were depicted, the only relief being provided by the arms series of 1854 and the numeral quartet of 1867 resulting from a currency reform which led to stamps denominated in *milesimas de escudo*.

Mounting discontent at the corrupt and repressive government of Queen Isabella led to the revolution of 1868 and her subsequent abdication and flight into exile in France. During the period of the provisional government stamps portraying the erstwhile monarch were overprinted *HABILITADO NACION* (valid for the nation). These were followed by the series of 1870 featuring the female allegory of Spain. Marshal Serrano was the military strong man who presided over this turbulent period, first as chairman of the provisional government and then as regent, while Europe was scourged for a suitable prince to replace Isabella. The throne was offered to a Hohenzollern and his rejection due to a protest from Napoleon III was one cause of the Franco-German War later that year. By the end of 1870, the crown had been accepted by an Italian prince, the Duke of Aosta, who reigned as King Amadeus. Unable to cope with the factionalism and politicking of his adopted country however, he returned to Italy in February 1873.



The 150th anniversary of Spanish stamps is being celebrated at the ESPAÑA 2000 exhibition in Madrid, 6-14 October. Stamps featuring horses and ESPAÑA logo were issued in December 1998 and November 1999 to promote the exhibition. King Juan Carlos and Queen Sofia are patrons of the exhibition, to be held in the Cristal and Pipa pavilions in the Casa de Campo.



Queen Isabella II, and King Amadeus. A facing portrait of the King featured on the lower values, and a profile on 1872-73 peseta denominations.



Above: Alfonso XII, Alfonso XIII (1889, 1900, 1909, 1922). Right: 1920 UPU Congress showing Alfonso XIII and the GPO, Madrid; General Franco and Juan Carlos I.

Opposite, above: Frama label and commemoratives. Below: Queen Isabella on commemoratives, and a Carlist issue of the pretender to the throne.



Monarchy restored Spain now became a republic, reflected in the stamps depicting the allegories of Peace (1873) and Justice (1874), but the monarchical tradition in this intensely conservative country soon led to the restoration of the Bourbon dynasty in the form of Isabella's son, who ascended the throne on the last day of 1874 as Alfonso XII. The practice of new sets at more or less annual intervals was resumed, the majority featuring profiles of the King, typographed at the Government Printing Works in Madrid, although a welcome change was the series of 1876-77 with a facing portrait recess-printed by Bradbury Wilkinson. At the age of only 27 Alfonso XII died suddenly on 25 November 1885 and the nation held its breath. He had left no heir, but his young bride was pregnant. There was a sense of relief, almost euphoria, when Queen Christina gave birth to a son on 17 May 1886. Named after his late father, Alfonso XIII was King from the moment he was born, but 46 years later he abdicated and went into exile. His long but troubled reign can be charted in the definitive stamps which showed him as a baby (1889), as a schoolboy (1900-5), in military uniform when he came of age (1909-22) and in mid-life (1922-29).

Commemoratives The first special issues appeared in 1905 to celebrate the tercentenary of the publication of *Don Quixote* by Cervantes, the 300th anniversary of whose death was likewise marked by stamps in 1916, though intended solely for the correspondence of the members of the senate and chamber of deputies. Madrid hosted the Postal Union Congress of 1920, resulting in yet another lengthy series. No fewer than 52 stamps, including some previously intended for the Spanish colonies, were overprinted in 1927 to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the coronation, while the following year 32 stamps portraying the King and the Pope supported the fund for the restoration of the catacombs in Rome. The release of very long



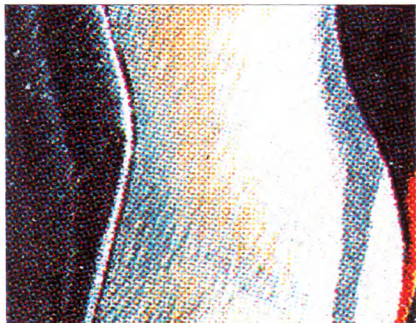
sets continued till the collapse of the monarchy in 1931. Ironically, some stamps of 1930 reproducing the *Naked Maja* by Goya were even used in anti-royalist propaganda.

The Second Republic was proclaimed in April 1931 and lasted eight years, but in July 1936 a military coup brought General Franco to power as the leader of the Nationalists in what turned out to be the bloodiest civil war seen in Europe to that time. Stamps were issued by both Republicans and Nationalists, not only for general use throughout their respective territories, but augmented by numerous local issues and even municipal fund-raising stamps. The Republicans beleaguered in Barcelona operated a mail by submarine, complete with distinctive stamps.

Carlist issues In 1873-74, during the second Carlist War, stamps portraying Don Carlos, pretender to the throne, were issued in Catalonia, Valencia and the Basque provinces. During the latter part of the Second Republic autonomy was granted to the Basque country (Euzkadi) which briefly had its own postal stationery. Since the defeat of the Republicans in April 1939, however, the stamps of Spain have been unified. Definitives portraying Franco gave way in 1976 to those portraying Juan Carlos, grandson of Alfonso XIII. By contrast with the very long sets of the 1920s and early 1930s, commemorative and special issues of more recent times have consisted mainly of short sets, augmented by the serial release of stamps with such themes as regional arms and costumes, the explorers of America, tourist attractions, castles and paintings.

Since 1989 Spain has been an enthusiastic user of vending machine stamps, originally Framat, then Klussendorf and then (since 1992) Epelsa, the last-named appearing in many different designs, often of a commemorative nature •

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



July identify The detail is from the 1st class Tree and Leaf (Eden Project) stamp. The winner was Samuel Dryburgh of Fife.

July knowledge Answers: 1) Clive Abbott; 2) People and Place; 3) old gold. The winner was Cheow-Lay Wee, London.

Ten runner-up prizes were also sent for each competition. Our thanks to all who entered.

FIRSTLY, identify the stamp from the detail above. Send your answer to October *Identify* Competition. Secondly, test your philatelic knowledge by answering the questions below. Send your answer to October *Knowledge* Competition.

- 1 Who designed the 1997 Enid Blyton stamps?
- 2 Which set of Millennium stamps features the Trans Pennine Trail?
- 3 What do the initials NYSG stand for?

Send your answer (addressed to either October *Identify* Competition or October *Knowledge* Competition), name and address on a postcard or back of a sealed envelope to: British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 2-14 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8HQ. The senders of the first cards drawn in each competition on 17 November will each receive £100. Ten runner-up prizes of presentation packs and FDCs will be awarded in each competition. Competitions not open to Royal Mail employees ●

Events

7 October Welsh Philatelic Society meeting at Oswalds, University of Wales, Bangor. Displays of postal history and postage dues. **Enquiries** Peter Brindley 01248 352682.

7 October Scottish South West Congress, hosted by Eastwood Phil Soc, at Queen Margaret School, Ayr.

14 October Redhill Phil Soc Millennium Stamp and Postcard Fair: Harlequin Theatre, Warwick Quadrant, Redhill, 10.30-16.00. Dealers, free entry. **Enquiries** B Gowers, 4 Montfort Rise, Salfords RH1 5DU.

21 October HAMPEX 2000 Hampshire Federation Convention at Thorneden School, Winchester Road, Chandler's Ford, Hants. **Enquiries** Colin Mount, 01425 474310.

21 October Association of Essex Phil Socs Autumn Rally Stamp Exhibition & Fair at Stanway Village Hall,

Villa Road, Stanway, Colchester, 10.30-16.30.

Enquiries D F Sapsford, 24 Thurlston Close, Colchester CO4 3HF.

26-28 October Philatex at Royal Horticultural Hall 2, Greycoat Street, London SW1. Open 26th 11.00-19.00; 27th 10.00-18.00; 28th 10.00-17.00. Admission free. **Enquiries** Chris Rainey 01268 726687.

28 October Assn of Sussex Phil Socs Convention & Stamp Fair at Hove Town Hall.

28 October Thatcham & District Phil Soc Annual Stamp Fair at Memorial Hall, Bath Road, Thatcham, 10.00-16.00. 12 dealers, refreshments, free admission and car parking. **Enquiries** 01635 866942.

28 October Bolton Phil Soc Fair & North West Federation Convention at Canon Slade School, Bolton, 10.00-16.00. **Enquiries** G B Fielding, 01204 307252 ●

Posting boxes 198

THIS MONTH we feature two boxes in the Republic of Ireland, photographed by our contributor Brian Warren. The first shows a wall box in Beach Road, Salthill, Co Galway. The former plain door with Edward VII cipher was replaced subsequent to Irish independence in 1922 with a new door incorporating an attractive SE (*Saorstát Éireann* – Irish Free State) monogram with harp. The second photo shows an experimental modern oval metal box installed in 1999 at Upper Pembroke Street, Dublin 2. It bears the An Post insignia, and is one of a few similar boxes, all in Dublin ●

Other boxes in the Irish Republic have featured in this Posting Boxes feature over the years – see Bulletin September 1978, June 1989, March 1994, November 1995, and December 1998. Four Irish stamps featuring posting boxes were shown here in October 1998. ED



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.

WITH Chris Williams, Mr Warren has compiled *Republic of Ireland Letter Box Listing*, recently published by the Letter Box Study Group. This well-illustrated guide is divided into four main sections, each with introductory notes, dealing with the post-1922 pillar, wall, lamp and pouch boxes. The introductory notes are followed by detailed listings of the various types. This publication is a 'must' for anyone interested in Irish posting boxes and would be very useful on a posting box tour of the country ●



Republic of Ireland Letter Box Listing Spiral bound, 37 pages, with laminated covers. Available from the Letter Box Study Group, 4 Hampden Road, Shaw, Lancs OL2 8QB. Price £5 postpaid UK, £6.15 Europe, and £7.10 elsewhere. Cheques must be drawn on a UK bank.

Postbag

New book printings Further to my letters in June and July, I have now examined the two Stamp Show 2000 miniature sheets, the special retail book issued on 26 May and the Queen Mother miniature sheet and prestige book. I hope my notes on the variations between stamps from these and other printings will interest fellow collectors – such variations make the hobby fascinating.

The stamps in the Jeffery Matthews sheet all differ from the normal sheet stamps in that they are on phosphorised paper thus making eight new single stamps although only the complete

sheet is listed by Stanley Gibbons – MS2146 in the catalogue supplement in August *Gibbons Stamp Monthly*. As expected the colours well match the sheet stamps although the backgrounds seem slightly more mottled, and the 'p' of the values slightly thinner on the miniature sheet stamps.

The £1 Coronation stamp in 'Her Majesty's stamps' miniature sheet is a pretty close match to the original 183d stamp of 1953. The colour of the £1 is rather deeper and there are some noticeable differences: for example, the Queen's eyebrows are thicker, her eyes clearer and her nostrils

more pronounced. The image appears to have been enhanced somewhat. The 1st Millennium definitives in this sheet differ from the previous printings in being on phosphorised paper whereas others have two phosphor bands. Again this is not listed as a separate stamp by Gibbons – the miniature sheet is NO MS2147 in August *GSM*. There is a good colour match to the De La Rue sheet stamp issued in January.

The same comment applies to the Millennium definitives in the 26 May book. The 1st National Space Centre stamp is of course a new stamp as the previous printing had 26p value. The perforation is also different – 14×14.5 as opposed to 13.5×14 . It is listed as SG 2126a in the catalogue supplement in August *GSM*. The accompanying 1st Web of Life stamp is a good match to the sheet stamp although the phosphor bands appear more obtrusive and the silver printing is less sharp.

Now to the Queen Mother miniature sheet and prestige book, printed respectively by DLR and Questa. The miniature sheet measures 121×89 mm whereas the sheet in the book measures 125×85 mm (ignoring the silver border). The difference is easy to see – more of the lamp holder at right can be seen on the book sheet and less of the Queen's dress and Queen Mother's coat. The yellow of the QM's coat is brighter in the book. The same applies to the yellow and red (curtains) on the pane of four QM stamps, and on both panes the silver printing is brighter than on the miniature sheet where the silver appears more grey. The 1st Millennium stamps in this book are a deeper shade than the stamps in the *Questa* book of 10 issued in January, the value appears lower, the phosphor bands slightly narrower, and, most significantly, the perforation is 15×14 instead of 14. (The *Questa* P 14 stamp earns separate listing in the SG catalogue – 2124b.) Finally, the two Scottish country stamps in the QM book. The 2nd class has slightly more blue, seen in the white of the Saltire flag, and there is noticeably more pink to the 65p value on which the Queen's head and value are positioned slightly lower. This scrutiny of the different printings gave me an interesting hour of pleasure, now to write-up my collection...

KEN MARKS, PORTSMOUTH ●

Perkins D cylinder printing press I was most interested to see James Mackay's article on the Penny Black printing press in the July *Bulletin*. Perhaps I may be permitted to bring the story up to date. The Library departments of the British Museum, including the Philatelic Collections, were transferred to the British Library in 1973. During the Stamp World London 90 international philatelic exhibition the press was shown in the Court of Honour 'Before and after the Penny Black'.

When Douglas Muir, Curator Philately, Post Office Heritage, suggested to me that we should have the press at the Stamp Show 2000 and print from it, I readily agreed. We took steps, with much help from Royal Mail, to have the press professionally refurbished by the expert Chris Holladay and engaged Mark Balakjian the printer who made such a splendid job of printing with a commentary at the exhibition. In this process we discovered that the D cylinder was probably not the original one used for the 1d black. We added some counterweights, a new blanket and an extra steel plate to the printing bed to support the printing plate which otherwise would have become bent or out of shape after a little use. The British Library was delighted to have lent the press and its use was an education to us all, not to mention good fun! DAVID R BEECH, FRPSL, Head of Philatelic Collections, British Library, London NW1 ●

Millennium Issues I have just received your letter containing my *Bulletin* Competition prize. Nearly a year ago I won my first prize ever in one of your competitions, so I was more than surprised to once again be one of the few lucky people. The first day covers sent are a welcome addition to my collection. Last year I complained about the Millennium stamps but I have changed my opinion on most of this year's issues so far. From my point of view there is a slight improvement on the design of most of the stamps, because they are firstly more assigned to the Millennium project, secondly their design is in most cases more clear. The Tree and Leaf issue is a very positive example. I am really looking forward to the last issues for this year and hope they are similar to the previous issues. M K P KAHLBOW, REUTLINGEN ●

Stamp Show 2000 I appreciated your comments on the Stamp Show in the July *Bulletin*. I was there for the first three days. The picture of the unveiling of the Queen Mother Canadian stamp brought back memories of this Canadian event at the show. I also had great difficulty in deciphering the organisation of the exhibits. All the other reviews that I have read about the show were very laudatory and did not mention any problems with

the exhibits. This may reflect current trends where the dealers are prominent. At the Spring Stamp-ex there were relatively few people viewing the exhibits both of which I found to be very interesting. Having exhibited myself at the national level in Canada, I am well aware of the tremendous effort and large amount of time involved in the preparation of an exhibit. MICHAEL E PEACH, BEDFORD, NS, CANADA ●

Late news

Thematica II exhibition This year's Thematica II will be held on 22 & 23 November at the Carisbrooke Hall, Seymour Street, London W2 (close to Marble Arch underground station, Central Line). Admission free; open 10.30-18.30 Wednesday, 10.00-17.00 Thursday.

There will be the usual gathering of dealers from many parts of the world with a varied stock specially selected with the thematic collector in mind. The exhibition will also include activities for younger visitors ●

Association of British Philatelic Societies Pat Rothnie has succeeded John Hammonds as the Association's Honorary General Secretary and Keith Fitton replaces Phil Kenton as Chairman of the National/Specialist Society Liaison Committee. Geoff Longbottom has been appointed Publicity Officer ●

Indonesia exhibition The international exhibition announced for August did not take place. The organising committee is looking for a new date in 2001 or 2002 depending on the availability of the Jakarta Convention Centre ●

Jeffery Matthews draw The following were winners of a signed miniature sheet in our draw in the August *Bulletin*: Mrs M Burfield, M von Wagner, R Ingram, R Littlemore, A Ames, L Quinton, P Nicholls, J Wood, G Gilmurray, J Kenney, G Holmden, W Inkster, A Savvas, C Buckland, M Burns, B Stonestreet, M White, Miss J Fourdrinier, J Leighton, and Mrs A Thoupos ●

Obituary Peter Shrides, who died in August, was Design Adviser to the Post Office, 1976-80. He rejoined the PO as an illustrator after the war and persuaded the organisation that good design was important. This was recognised by awards from the Design Council, the Society of Industrial Artists and Designers, and the Royal Society of Arts. As a designer in the PO studio, he designed the first presentation pack – for the Shakespeare issue in 1964. After a spell in the Public Relations Dept, he was, in 1971, appointed design co-ordinator working with Stuart Rose, taking over from Mr Rose as Design Adviser in 1976 until his retirement in 1980. He then continued as a part-time consultant on stamp design until the end of 1981, and was awarded the OBE in 1982. He was responsible for Royal issues including the sets for the Silver Jubilee, the 25th anniversary of the Coronation, and the Queen Mother's 80th birthday. Away from stamps, he was involved in the introduction of the PO identity – signposting, lettering and livery for both staff and vehicles ●



Peter Shrides, right, Design Adviser to the Post Office 1976-80, with his predecessor Stuart Rose.

AN EXTRACT from *Yes* by
Carol Ann Duffy from the
Royal Mail presentation
pack 'Sound and Vision'
published in December.

The poetry of stamps

A bell is ringing over the fields,
a big humorous blast of a yell, then
exuberant peals like children running
and here they come, running and laughing
straight at the future, dogs at their heels.



Throughout 2000 Royal Mail is publishing specially-commissioned poems from contemporary poets to accompany its monthly Millennium Stamps. The poets include Jo Shapcott, John Agard, Tobias Hill, Moniza Alvi, Alice Oswald, Lavinia Greenlaw, John Cooper Clarke, David Hart, Ian McMillan, Michael Longley, Holly Ruth Hopkins and Carol Ann Duffy.

The presentation packs featuring the poems are available by calling 08457 641 641. www.royalmail.com

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