

BRITISH PHILATELIC

The ROYAL MAIL magazine *for stamp collectors*

Bulletin

Volume 41 Number 1

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Bulletin's 40th anniversary •
British Museum issue • Toys



250 years of the British Museum, celebrated in six new stamps: on sale from 7 October.

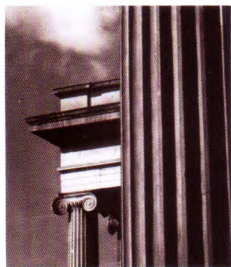
THE BULLETIN

40TH

ANNIVERSARY

1963-2003

Forthcoming issues and withdrawals

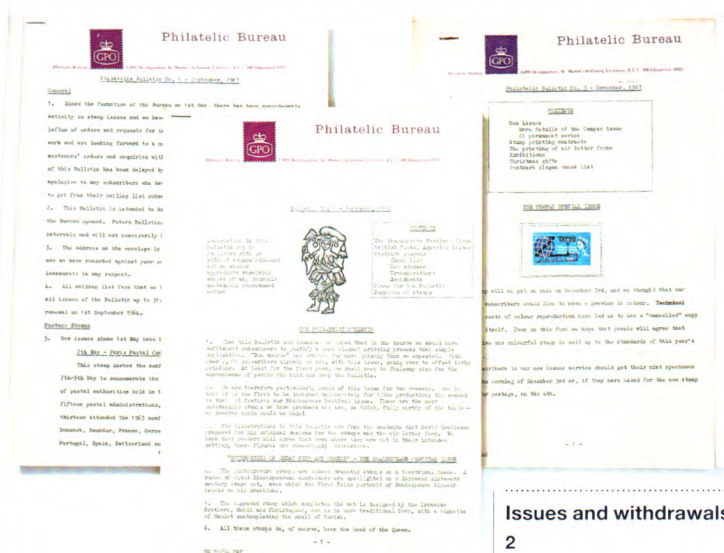


Cover A detail of the portico of the British Museum, photographed by Phil Sayer. Royal Mail's British Museum stamp issue is previewed this month, beginning on page 16.

Issues Note some items are available only from Royal Mail Tallents House Edinburgh and Post Office Limited 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 Grimsby, Guildford, Harrogate Leeds, Leicester, Liverpool London (Trafalgar Square and Eastcheap), Manchester, Newcastle upon Tyne, Norwich, Nottingham, Oxford, Plymouth Portsmouth, Southampton Southend-on-Sea, Stevenage Stratford-on-Avon, Stroud Truro, Windsor and York

27 August	Issue Extreme Endeavours coin cover.
9 September	Withdrawal Bridges of London stamps, presentation pack and stamp cards (self-adhesive stamp book sold out).
11 September	Issue Transports of Delight stamp cards.
18 September	Issue Transports of Delight stamps, miniature sheet, presentation pack and stamp book (2 × Transports of Delight stamps and 4 × Machin 1st class, all self-adhesive).
23 September	Withdrawal Astronomy miniature sheet, presentation pack and stamp cards, and <i>Across the Universe</i> prestige book.
30 September	Issue Christmas Smilers sheet (generic) – 20 × 1st class Robins (2001 Christmas stamp) self-adhesive • British Museum stamp cards.
30 September	Withdrawal Smilers: Christmas Cracker and Teddy/Dennis the Menace (both issued 1 October 2002).
7 October	Issue British Museum stamps, presentation pack and medal cover • Victorian ingot pack No 4.
7 October	Withdrawal Pillar to Post stamps, presentation pack and stamp cards.
14 October	Issue Revised country stamps for England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. As current issues, but with white border around design. Also presentation packs and stamp cards.
14 October	Withdrawal Northern Ireland E stamp printed by Walsall.
21 October	Issue Pillar Boxes Ingot cover No 4.
28 October	Issue Christmas stamp cards.
31 October	Withdrawal 1st class 'Boots' promotional stamp pane • 2nd and 1st class coils of 1000 stamps issued 29 April 1997.

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The British Philatelic Bulletin is published monthly by Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ • **Editor** J R Holman • **Price** £1.10, single copies from Post Office Limited philatelic outlets • **Annual subscription** £11.75 in UK and Europe; £16.75 rest of the world. Subscriptions should be sent to Royal Mail Talents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB • **Binders** to hold 24 issues, price £7, are available by post from Royal Mail (Edinburgh address above) • Royal Mail also publishes the fortnightly *British Postmark Bulletin*, which gives details of forthcoming special handstamps. Available on annual subscription from Edinburgh address above; £12.25 UK and Europe, £24.95 rest of the world • **Copyright** Design & text Royal Mail Group plc, unless attributed to a specific author. All requests to reproduce any article should be sent to the Editor, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ • **Design** by Robert Maude • **Printed** in Great Britain by the Perivan Group Limited • **ISSN** 0953 8119 • Royal Mail is a trading name of Royal Mail Group plc. Registered in England and Wales, number 4138203, registered office 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ

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This month The Editor previews this issue

FORTY YEARS AGO this month the first issue of this *Bulletin* was published – 12 pages of information (plus a four page listing of postmarks) printed on an office duplicating machine. Issue NO 3 proved very popular as it included the forthcoming COMPAC Cable stamp overprinted CANCELLED. Soon the number of subscribers increased rapidly and in September 1965 the duplicated *Bulletin* was replaced by the magazine format you know today. A history of the *Bulletin* begins on p20 in this 40th anniversary issue.

You will also find enclosed a souvenir sheet commemorating our birthday – this shows stamps from 1963 (including the COMPAC overprint) and 2003, together with the GPO logo which appeared at the top of the early issues of the *Bulletin* and the current Royal Mail logo. The sheet has been produced in the same size and as a companion to the sheet sent out with our 25th anniversary issue in September 1988. As well as our usual monthly competitions, there is a special Anniversary Competition for those who have subscribed since 1963 and an Anniversary Draw open to all readers. There will be a small display relating to the *Bulletin* on the Royal Mail stand at Autumn Stampex (17-21 September) – this will include copies of the first issue, the issue with the COMPAC stamp, and other items from our archives.

Stamp collecting has changed considerably over the 40 years and many products announced in today's *Bulletin* were unheard of in 1963. As well as giving information about the ever-increasing number of forthcoming issues and related products, we aim to keep you informed of events and activities on the British philatelic scene and to publish articles on old and new British stamps, personalities, postal history and other subjects of interest to a wide range of readers. We are fortunate in having some good contributors.

I have been Editor of this and the *Postmark Bulletin* for 15 years – and sooner perhaps rather than later it will be time to hand over to a successor. Who knows, perhaps for the first time the *Bulletin* will have a lady Editor.

JOHN HOLMAN, Editor •

Stamp scene Exhibitions • Auctions • Mail by air, 1919 • Publications • Charity covers



UK exhibitions Autumn Stampex, organised by the Philatelic Traders' Society, will be held at the Business Design Centre, Upper Street, London N1, 17-21 September. It will include the annual national competitions, displays by the British Society of Russian Philately, and the National Youth Stamp Group activities area and Saturday auction.

Over 20 trophies and special awards will be competed for in the national competitions, with the famous Silver Mailcoach going to the best exhibit. Around 100 dealers, many from overseas, will meet all requirements for stamps, covers, accessories or literature. See the Philatelic Traders' Society website: www.philatelic-traders-society.co.uk for a list of dealers.

The Royal Mail stand will offer the full range of current GB stamps and collectibles. A posting box will be provided for mail to receive the special Stampex handstamp in use each day of the exhibition (opposite page), and on 18 September an additional 'Stampex First Day of Issue' handstamp (right) will be available for the issue that day of the Transports of Delight stamps, miniature sheet, and self-adhesive stamp book.

The Great Britain Philatelic Society, Concorde Study Circle, Ceylon Study Circle, Wreck & Crash Mail Society, Polar Postal History Society, Bird Stamp Society, British Decimal Stamp Study Circle, and American Airmail Society will hold meetings at Stampex at the weekend.

The Business Design Centre is near Angel underground station (North-ern line) on bus routes 4, 19, 30, 38, 43, 56, 73, 153, and 341. Entry is free •

Autumn Stampex will be followed by Philatex, Royal Horticultural Halls (Lawrence Hall), Greycoat Street, London SW1 (30 October - 1 November); Thematica 11, Carisbrooke Hall, Seymour Street, London W2 (28-29 November). Scotex will be held at the Scottish Exhibition & Conference Centre, Glasgow, 18-19 October •



Stampex opening hours

17 Sept	12.00-19.00
18-20 Sept	10.30-18.00
21 Sept	10.30-15.00

Enquiries Stampex, 107 Charterhouse Street, London EC1M 6PT. Telephone 020 7490 1005

International exhibition The Bangkok 2003 world philatelic exhibition will be held at the IMPACT Convention Center, Muang Thong Thani, Nonthaburi Province, Thailand, 4-13 October. The exhibition is being organised by the country's Communications Authority and Philatelists Association, to celebrate the 120th anniversary of Thai postal services and the first stamps. The Thai Post Office has been issuing stamps to promote the exhibition; these began with a set of four featuring Thai food in October 2002, followed by tourist attractions (March 2003), and handicrafts (to be issued 4 October). The stamps include the exhibition logo in the design.

The first Siam (Thailand) stamps were issued in August 1883, although the name of the country was not shown on the stamps. Siam joined the UPU in 1885 and the name Siam first appeared on stamps in 1887. The country's name was changed to Thailand in 1939. The country's definitive stamps feature the monarch, King Bhumibol, and many of the special issues mark royal birthdays and anniversaries •

Bangkok 2003 will be open 11.00-20.00 weekdays and 10.00-20.00 on weekends.

Auctions The All World auction at Cavendish (25-26 September) includes some good GB material, Australasia and the Geoffrey Manton collection of Queensland. Amongst the GB rarities to be auctioned are an 1839 original Chalmers Treasury essay on cover (one of few in private hands), and a rare attempted re-use of 1840 2d blue on 4d charged cover •

Cavendish Philatelic Auctions
Telephone 01332 250970

Spink, and Behr, France's leading stamp dealer, will auction the prestigious 'Lafayette' collection of the classic stamp errors of France in Paris later this year. Pascal Behr, Chairman of Behr said: 'The Lafayette Collection is by far the best collection of French classics in existence. It boasts most of the great rarities of France - very often unique pieces which have passed through the hands of the most prestigious collectors of all time, such as Ferrary, Champion, and Burrus to name but a few'. Some items have not been on the market since the Ferrary auction of 1924 •

Spink Telephone 020 7563 4000.



Dropping the mail *Bulletin* reader John Meek of London has submitted the intriguing illustration shown left, from a book on the aircraft industry published in 1919. It is titled 'Dropping the Mail', and shows a Bristol aircraft dropping a container of mail on a parachute. There is no explanatory text to accompany the illustration and, Mr Meek writes, 'as the operation appears fraught with danger, I assume that the picture springs from the artist's imagination.' We should be interested to hear from any readers who can identify this air drop. It is possible it is an artist's impression based on the emergency airmail service operated during the Railway Strike of 1919. Mail carrying by air in October that year included two services, the carriage of civilian mails and the carriage of government despatches. Owing to the small volume, these two services were combined after a few days but the government despatch service did include a reference to the use of dropping grounds as well as landing grounds. This mail service was the subject of a two-part article by Richard Beith in the *Bulletin*, June and July 1995 •

Publications Trevor Harris has recently published *King Edward VII Year 2003 Price List* (2nd edition) and *Queen Victoria 1887 Jubilee Year 2003 Price List*. They are available, price £14.95 and £7.50 respectively from: Hendon Stamp Company, PO Box 624, London NW4 3NJ. The following review by Chris Harman was published in *The London Philatelist* in June and is reprinted here with his and the Editor's permission.

Trevor Harris is well known as one of the foremost students of the GB stamps of King Edward VII. What he calls his price list is therefore more than a mere price list. It sets out the latest research in the subject and brings together information that has been known to some but is here made into a coherent whole. His conclusions have been checked with the RPSL Expert committee, although he is not correct when he says that certificates will be issued for all the variants listed, only the more significant ones.

The introduction to this price list is the key to this publication. It describes the background to the stamps and the various evolutions that they went through, firstly as printed by De La Rue and later at Harrison's or Somerset House. There are hints on distinguishing the different printers and on some of the rarer shades and more spectacular varieties. This is all very useful, even if there are some frustrating quirks, such as the repetition of the same information under more than one heading, or notes on distinguishing some values but not others. A little more attention to this in a future edition would be an improvement. Nevertheless, if you collect the Great Britain stamps of Edward VII, this is a necessary part of your library.

The companion volume for the Queen Victoria Jubilee set is less detailed and more of a priced listing of an expanded version of the Gibbons Great Britain Specialised Catalogue, Volume 1. Unlike the Edward VII volume, there is a suspicion that some of the shades are less clearly distinguishable and have less importance in terms of having any particular significance in terms of identifying printings. There is also a suspicion that some of the prices suggest that shades are sometimes much rarer than they actually are. The subject of the Jubilee issue is worthy of further development based on a wider sample of material, so that the different shades and printings may find their proper level.' ●

The American Topical Association has recently published its 144th handbook – *The Roosevelts on Worldwide Stamps*, edited by Melvin Morris. The 104-page book, with 65 stamps and other philatelic items shown in full colour, provides separate biographies of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, his wife Eleanor, and their cousin Theodore. The book includes extensive worldwide philatelic checklists for each including Navy ships named for the Roosevelts and a checklist of 'Teddy Bears' as namesakes of Theodore. Details are given of F D R as a philatelist, explaining the global repercussions of his stamp collecting interests after he became President. This is the fourth ATA book dealing with US presidents, following works on George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and John F Kennedy. The four Presidents books can be ordered for a special price of \$35 plus postage, the Roosevelts book alone costs \$22 plus postage ●

The East Anglian Postal History Study Circle has published its 10th handbook on East Anglia's postal history. *The History of Norfolk Undated Circular Handstamps, 1828-1860* by R E F Pegg, contains 290 pages listing the villages in Norfolk, their populations, post offices, postmasters or postmistresses, postal areas relating to the Crown Offices, principal landowners and large houses, and handstamps used ●

Orders & enquiries American Topical Association, PO Box 57, Arlington TX 76004-0057, USA. E-mail americantopical@msn.com or website www.americantopical.org

Postal history handbook £17 (£13 members), postage £4, from: P Day, 17 Heywood Road, Diss IP22 4DJ.

Cover collectors help charities Buckingham Covers, part of Internetstamps Ltd, have raised over £10,000 for the Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital (GOSH) by means of celebrity signed covers. Celebrities that have helped GOSH include Tony Blair, Petula Clarke, Fred Truman and Gillian Anderson. Tony and Cath Buckingham recently presented the cheque to Kit Palmer at the Hospital. This year they hope to raise at least £20,000 for GOSH. They have also raised substantial sums of money for the Douglas Bader Foundation, Falklands Chapel, Himalayan Trust, and other good causes ●

To support GOSH by buying a signed cover, contact Tony Buckingham, Church House, 136 Sandgate Road, Folkestone CT21 5XD. Telephone 01303 85072.

New list Rushstamps' latest price list (Rush Telegraph 27) comprises 72 pages of GB, Commonwealth, foreign, singles, sets, covers and collections. See Rushstamps at Stampex or Philatex, or phone 023 8028 2044 for free list ●

Bulletin back issues Ronald Jeffkins of Dartford has copies from September 1994 to date for disposal to anyone willing to collect from him. Contact him on 01322 227350 ●

Royal Mail news Country stamps • Future issues • Smilers • Ingots • New collectibles

England

2nd Three Lions of England

1st Crowned Lion

E English Oak Tree

68p English Tudor Rose



Northern Ireland

2nd Giant's Causeway

1st Aerial view of fields

E Patterned linen

68p Parian china vase detail



Scotland

2nd Saltire flag

1st Scottish Lion

E Scottish thistle

68p Tartan



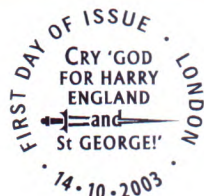
Wales

2nd Leek (wood carving)

1st Welsh dragon

E Daffodil (slate carving)

68p Prince of Wales feathers



Postmarks for 14 October

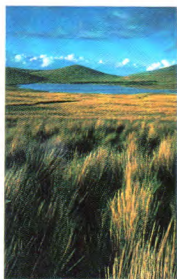
Above and opposite: London, Belfast, Edinburgh and Cardiff. The Tallents House postmark is shown on page 3.

Revised country stamps As announced here in June (page 319) the current country stamps are incurring poor machine readability rates due to low phosphor signal. As the stamps are primarily for postal use, we must produce a new set to overcome the problem in order to meet the postal delivery standard required. All 16 current country stamps (England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales) will thus be reissued on 14 October in the same basic design but with a narrow white border around each stamp, as illustrated above. The stamps will be available initially from Tallents House and Post Office philatelic outlets and at Post Office branches as stocks of the current issue are used up. The subject of each stamp is described at left above.

All 16 stamps are being printed in sheets of 200 by De La Rue, the Northern Ireland stamps in lithography, the others in gravure.



ENGLAND
ROYAL MAIL FIRST DAY COVER
DEFINITIVE STAMPS



NORTHERN IRELAND
ROYAL MAIL FIRST DAY COVER
DEFINITIVE STAMPS



SCOTLAND
ROYAL MAIL FIRST DAY COVER
DEFINITIVE STAMPS



CYMRU/WALES
AMLEN DWRNOG CYNTAF Y POST BREIHNI
ROYAL MAIL FIRST DAY COVER
STAMPAU DEFINIOL/DEFINITIVE STAMPS

FIRST DAY ARRANGEMENTS First day cover envelopes will be available from main Post Office branches and philatelic outlets, price 25p each. The covers (above, from left to right) feature: Upper Whitelea Green near Parkend, Gloucestershire (England); Dears Meadow, Mourne Mountains, Co Down (Northern Ireland); Highland scene near Loch Fyne (Scotland); and Rhosili Beach, South Wales (Wales).

Serviced covers with Tallents House or country capital postmarks (London, Belfast, Edinburgh, or Cardiff) can be ordered from Royal Mail Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB, price £2.23 (overseas £1.90) per cover. Please state which countries/postmarks required.

Collectors can send stamped covers on the day of issue for the different postmarks – Tallents House (FD0335), London (FD0336), Belfast (FD0339), Edinburgh (FD0337), and Cardiff (FD0338). Covers for the London postmark should be sent to Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Mount Pleasant, London EC1A 1BB, for Belfast and Edinburgh to: Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Duchess Place, Rutherglen, Glasgow G73 1BT, and for Cardiff to Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Penarth Road, Cardiff CF11 8TA. These first day postmarks can be applied to any of the 16 new country stamps to be issued on 14 October.

PRESENTATION PACK AND STAMP CARDS Separate packs will be produced for each country, containing the four new stamps for each. Price £1.90 per pack. Stamp cards, reproducing the stamp designs, will also be available, price 30p each. The current range of country stamps, packs and stamp cards will remain on philatelic sale until further notice. The Scottish and Welsh stamps were first issued in June 1999, Northern Ireland in March 2001, and English stamps in April 2001 •

Coming off sale The London Bridges stamps, pack, and stamp cards will be withdrawn from sale on 9 September. These stamps were voted the most popular set of 2002, and the 1st and 47p values from the set the favourite individual stamps of the year (see April *Bulletin*). The Astronomy miniature sheet and *Across the Universe* PSB will be withdrawn on 23 September •



Details of other postmarks for 14 October will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin*, Royal Mail's magazine for postmark collectors.



Above: Transports of Delight miniature sheet and the self-adhesive stamp book, to be issued with the stamps on 18 September.



Two of the Christmas stamps, shown at proof stage.

Future issues The special issue this month is Transports of Delight, featuring transport toys; the stamps were previewed here last month. The special stamp programme will continue with the British Museum on 7 October and Christmas on 4 November. The British Museum stamps are previewed this month.

The Christmas stamps, to be previewed here next month, will feature ice sculptures by Andy Goldsworthy, who designed the Springtime stamps of 1995. There will now be six Christmas stamps covering the most used British and overseas rates: 2nd class, 1st class, E (letters to Europe up to 20g), 53p (letters to Europe 20-40g), 68p (airmail letters 10-20g), and £1.12 (airmail letters 20-40g). There will also be Christmas stamp books (folded sheetlets) containing 2nd and 1st class stamps, and the traditional air-

letter in standard and bilingual Welsh/English versions •

2004 stamp programme The programme is given below; please note some changes to that announced here in April (page 232).

There will be two prestige stamp books: Trains and Royal Horticultural Society. The Trains book – to be issued in February or March – will be a tribute to the TPO service. Miniature sheets will accompany the Classic Locomotives and Merchant Ships issues, and a further miniature sheet will be issued to mark the opening of the new Scottish Parliament building; the date for this depends on the opening of the building •

January	Classic Locomotives	June	British Journey: Wales
February	Occasions	July	British Journey: London
February	Lord of the Rings	August	Royal Society of Arts
March	British Journey: Northern Ireland	September	Woodland Animals
April	Merchant Ships	October	Crimea
May	Royal Horticultural Society	November	Christmas

Smilers sheets for Christmas There will be three Smilers sheets for Christmas. The first, on sale from 30 September, contains 20 × 1st class robins 2001 Christmas stamps, price £6.15. The other two sheets – 20 × 1st class 2003 Christmas stamps, and 20 × 2nd class 2003 Christmas stamps – will be available from 4 November, price £6.15 and £4.20 respectively. All three sheets will be printed in litho by De La Rue and have self-adhesive stamps. The stamps in sheets and books are printed in gravure.

The two Smilers sheets issued on 1 October 2002 (Christmas Crackers and Teddy/Dennis the Menace) will be withdrawn from sale on 30 September. A Smilers sheets album is available from Tallents House, price £16.50 (order code PA665) •

Smilers crossword answers Below are the answers to the crosswords on the Smilers Cartoons stamp sheets (generic and customised) issued on 29 July •

Generic sheet		Down			Customised
Across	16 opt	2 meal	30 he	20 ten	Across
1 bids	18 snooze	3 tax	31 elder	21 gin	1 bank
4 ugh	20 flopping	5 oily	32 fop	22 cater	manager
6 score	25 Cos	7 eager	35 hop	24 couch	6 post office
8 outer	26 ideal	8 food	36 linen	27 Poe	12 red
9 shy	29 go	10 Emmy	Down	28 ewe	13 pa
12 opera	31 sit on	13 wedded	1 Oliver	29 cell	14 tin
14 money	32 demo	15 bliss	2 more	30 left	16 bets
15 ET	34 fig	16 aviator	3 Erin	33 quid	19 eke
16 or	37 mail	18 fete	4 nestle	34 tune	20 taxi
17 type	38 bar	20 relieve	9 Europe	35 eddy	22 ever
18 so	39 sky	25 eat	10 Leeds	Down	23 special
19 ta	Across	26 trout	11 brew	1 sites	delivery
21 owl	1 smart	29 fan	12 ode	2 ink	24 at
22 own	4 pa	31 always	15 everyone	3 kindergarten	25 sea
23 zip	5 ox	32 shrink	18 loom	6 toy	26 philately
24 rich	6 lei	34 echo	19 David	7 letter	
27 no	9 ale	36 cent	Copperfield	9 gnu	Down
28 dogs	11 gym	37 glow	20 doting	11 dope	1 boost
30 as	12 owe	38 mail	22 get	14 string	2 notes
32 do	14 Derby	Across	25 archer	16 almoner	3 mania
33 life	16 ad	1 omens	27 oil	17 motorcycle	4 noble
35 time	17 if	5 lore	28 her	18 ape	5 gate
36 Togo	19 verse	6 Irish	33 phone	23 toupee	6 peke
39 spa	21 id est	7 vent	34 spine	25 cowl	7 Oder
40 royal	22 in	8 revel	Across	26 heels	8 tot
Down	23 one	11 broke	1 smirk	29 cheque	9 frill
1 bus	24 vet	13 rod	4 token	31 fund	10 chest
2 duo	27 ear	14 epees	5 stake	32 tied	11 party
3 she	28 of	16 we	7 lying		12 revs
5 gruel	30 to	17 alarm	8 tiger		13 peal
7 couch potato	31 angst	19 dodo	10 elude		15 ice
9 some	33 worry	21 among	12 on		17 ed
10 Yen	34 end	23 tee	13 asp		18 sly
11 daydreaming	35 sock	24 cigar	15 tea		21 ash
13 re	37 gnome	26 pooch	17 mar		
	39 an	29 pi	19 opium		
	40 orbit				



Coin and ingot covers and packs Shown here is the Extreme Endeavours coin cover now available from Tallents House. This bears the six stamps cancelled by a special Plymouth postmark for 27 August and has a £1 coin encapsulated. Price £13.50.

The fourth Pillar to Post ingot cover will be available from 21 October. The ingot reproduces the 47p stamp from the Pillar to Post set (October 2002). The cover bears two of the 47p stamps cancelled by a special postmark. The cover should be ordered from Royal Mail Tallents House, price £29.95. The fifth and final cover in this series, scheduled for 27 January, features the 68p Pillar to Post stamp.

The fourth in the 'Victorian Stamp Ingot Collection', featuring the 1881 Penny Lilac stamp, will be available from 7 October, price £26.95. These attractively illustrated folders each contain a silver ingot of the featured Victorian stamp, with full technical details and its historical background. The fifth and sixth in the series, scheduled for 2 December and 3 February, feature the 1882 £5 orange and 'Jubilee' 1s stamps. The Victorian Stamp Ingot Collection, and a collection device in which to house them (free with regular orders), is available from Tallents House, Edinburgh only •

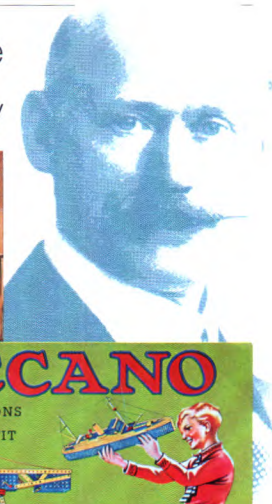
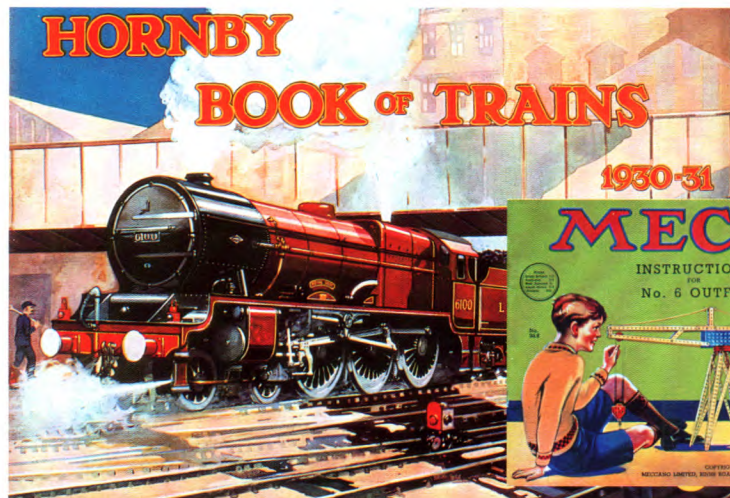


New collectibles New products are being added to Royal Mail's popular collectibles range. Available this month will be four bone china mugs featuring classic Victorian stamps – the Penny Black, 1881 1d lilac, 1882 £5 orange, and 1900 1s green and red. Postmarks in use at the time are reproduced on the inside of the mugs. Price £19.95 per set of four.

Also available from September are two jigsaws, one of the Penny Black (200 pieces) and the other (250 pieces) featuring a TPO train being hauled by the locomotive *Seaforth Highlander* – as in the film *Night Mail*. Price £19.95 each. Orders for all these products should be sent to Tallents House •

A genius for toys

Richard West looks at the 'Toys' stamps, and a British industry's legacy



FRANK HORNBY started an industry with a toy crane made for his sons, which he developed into the famous construction toy, Meccano. His idea, of providing the parts to make an endless array of objects by simply bolting the components together, was patented in 1901 as 'Mechanics Made Easy'. Meccano Ltd was formed in 1908, and moved to Binns Road in Liverpool in 1914, which for many years would be firmly associated with the Hornby name. In the 1930s Meccano produced its Constructional Kits, including impressive-looking clockwork sports cars and the biplane seen on the 1st class stamp.

Many looking at the Transports of Delight stamps may not appreciate that three of them focus on the work of just one man: the 'father' of the British toy industry, Frank Hornby. It is fitting that his genius, and British toys, have been so recognised.

Hornby railways The next chapter in the Hornby story was model railways, made of tin plate in o gauge, a scale of 1/43rd actual size. However, as toys, locomotives and coaches were not always of scale length, as in the case of the M1 locomotive and tender on the 42p stamp. Hornby Railways were introduced in 1920; in 1938 came the oo gauge Hornby Dublo system, which is basically half the size of o gauge and thus more suited to modern homes.

Although the name Hornby still exists in the model railway world, and is still oo gauge, it has no connection with the creation of Frank Hornby, except in name. Competition for Hornby came from the toys produced by Lines Brothers, including their oo gauge Tri-ang Railways, produced mainly in plastic and consequently more detailed. Lines Bros bought Meccano in 1964; at the same time Hornby Dublo passed to G and R Wrenn Ltd, who continued manufacture under their name until George Wrenn retired. Tri-ang appended the name 'Hornby' to their own model railways; thus today's Hornby Railways in fact owe their ancestry to Tri-ang Railways.





Above: a Dinky Toys van, and advertisement illustrations of some figures from the range, which included postmen and posting boxes.

Previous page: Frank Hornby with two of his creations, Hornby Trains and Meccano.

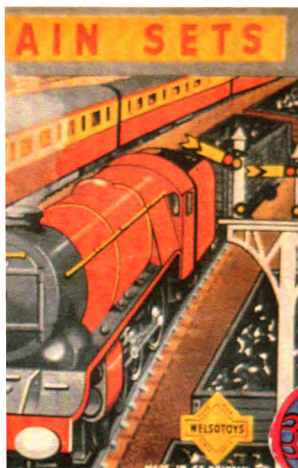
Dinky Toys In 1931 Frank Hornby introduced a range of station staff, sold as 'Modelled Miniatures', to complement his trains. In 1933 a selection of vehicles was added; these proved so popular that by the following year the range had grown to 150. Various names were tried for these: Meccano Miniatures, Meccano Dinky Toys, and then finally, in 1934, Dinky Toys.

From then until the 1950s there was probably hardly a boy in Britain who did not own a Dinky Toy or two. Indeed, the name became synonymous with any toy car, and to an extent it still is. But as often happens with well-established brands, complacency set in. The 1956 Ford Zephyr on the 47p stamp lacks windows and any interior detail. Competition came along, offering many more features, while to an extent Dinky stagnated; when they did respond, it was probably too late. Frank Hornby had died in 1936: perhaps he would have been more alert to the need to stay one step ahead.

Even as part of Tri-ang, Hornby's problems were not over, so over the years there were new owners and names, until the fateful day in November 1979 when came the news that the factory at Binns Road was to close.

International market Production of Dinky Toys was not confined to Binns Road. There was a factory at Speke, one near Paris producing a range known as French Dinky Toys, and in Denmark, Spain and Hong Kong. Old tooling, no longer needed for Dinky Toys, was often passed to India and used there to produce a range called Nicky Toys.

Even after production of Dinky Toys ceased, the name was retained and in 1987 was acquired by Matchbox Toys. For a time the name was perpetuated, but with control of much Matchbox production now directed from the United States, the name 'Dinky' seems to have been dropped for ever.



The competition After the war, demand gradually moved from tin plate toys to the more sturdy die-cast method of production. Dinky Toys' main competition came from die-cast Corgi Toys, launched in 1956 as 'the ones with windows'. Corgi Toys were developed by Mettoy (short for metal toys), created in 1933 by Philipp Ullman, who had 21 years' experience in the German toy industry. Mettoy was based in Northampton, using the premises of an offshoot of Bassett Lowke, another famous name of the British toy industry. In the early years much of the production was exported to the United States. As business grew a move was made to Swansea.

Wells Brimtoy, featured on the E stamp, developed from two separate companies. The first was The British Metal and Toy Manufacturers Ltd, founded in 1914; following bankruptcy, certain of its directors started a new company called Brimtoy Ltd in 1923. The second was A Wells and Co Ltd, established in 1919, which mainly operated from Walthamstow in north London. In 1932 Brimtoy Ltd was taken over by Wells to form Wells Brimtoy, a name which was retained until 1970, when a further take-over occurred. The tin plate toys of Wells Brimtoy were extremely popular, but for most model enthusiasts it is the buses, trolleybuses and coaches which have the greatest appeal. The buses and trolleybuses were clearly meant to represent London Transport vehicles, as is apparent on the E stamp.

Overseas production Wells Brimtoy was not the only toy manufacturer based in north London: it was home to many. The British toy industry was vibrant: sadly it is no more. Names like Corgi, Hornby, Matchbox and Scalegtrix still exist, but often the ownership is overseas, with production undertaken in the Far East •

The Transports of Delight set is the first British issue featuring specific toy products. The 1968 Christmas set showed children on a rocking horse, a dolls' house and dolls, and a train set. The 1989 Games and Toys issue featured a toy train, boat and plane, blocks, board games, a dolls' house and a robot.

The 68p stamp shows a toy from Mettoy around 1960, the space ship *Eagle* used by Dan Dare, whose exploits featured in the popular boys' comic of the same name.

Page 13: F Hornby © New Caverdinh Books. Book of Trains and Meccano label © Robert Opie Collection. Pages 14 - 15: Dinky toy, Wells Brimtoy label and *Eagle* © Robert Opie.

The British Museum Royal Mail's new issue



Technical details

Printer Walsall Security Printers

Process Gravure

Size 30 x 41mm

Sheet size 50

Perforation 14 x 14.5

Phosphor 2nd class one band, others two bands. The 42p and 68p have phosphor background at left and band at right

Gum PVA

Gutter pairs Horizontal

Cylinders and colours

All values W1 brownish grey ● W1 black ● W1 greenish yellow ● W1 magenta ● W1 pale new blue ● W1 phosphor

Other handstamps for 7 October will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from Tallents House (£12.25 UK/Europe; £24.95 elsewhere). For a sample copy write to: The Editor, British Postmark Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ.

SIX STAMPS marking the 250th anniversary of the founding of the British Museum in London will be available from Post Office branches and philatelic outlets and from Royal Mail Tallents House Edinburgh from 7 October. They feature heads in the Museum's many collections.

2nd class: painted wooden coffin of Denytenamun from Thebes, c900BC (Egyptian). Denytenamun was the incense bearer of the temple of Amun.

1st class: Alexander the Great, c200BC (Greek). Alexander was deified in his own lifetime, and after his death was worshipped as a god in images such as this.

E (European rate): Sutton Hoo Helmet c600AD (Anglo-Saxon). The Sutton Hoo helmet, excavated from the ship burial in Suffolk, is one of only four Anglo-Saxon helmets found in Britain.

42p: sculpture of Parvati, c1550AD (South Indian). The bronze sculpture of Parvati is an example of what in India is known as an 'utsavamurti' or festival image. The goddess Parvati is the consort of the god Shiva.

47p: mask of Xiuntecuhtli, c1500AD (Mixtec-Aztec). This mask of the Central Mexican Fire God, Xiutecuhtli, and similar mosaic masterpieces were fashioned by Mixtec craftsmen for the Aztec Royal Court.

68p: Hoa Hakananai'a, c1000AD (Easter Island). The Easter Island (Rapa Nui) statue Hoa Hakananai'a is unusual in also having designs carved on the back relating to a later birdman cult.

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Unstamped Royal Mail FDC envelopes will be available from main Post Office branches and philatelic outlets about a week before 7 October, price 25p. Orders for serviced FDCs with the stamps cancelled by a pictorial first day postmark of Tallents House Edinburgh or London WC1 must reach Tallents House (address below) by the day of issue. Price £3.10 UK, £2.64 overseas.

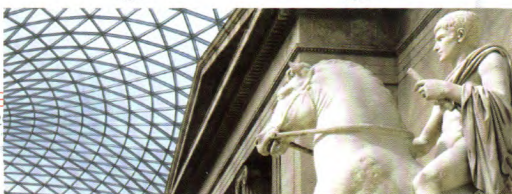
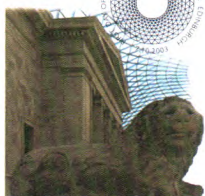
Collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue to: Royal Mail, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB (Tallents House postmark), or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Mount Pleasant, London EC1A 1BB (London WC1 postmark), marking the outer envelope 'FD0321' (Tallents House), or 'FD0322' (London). Covers can be posted or handed in at main Post Office branches for the London postmark.

celebrates 250 years of a 'universal museum'



The stamps were designed by Rose Design with photography by Graham Montgomery. The Queen's silhouette and value/service indicator are at top left, with captions down the left side of the design.

The presentation pack, below, was designed by HGV Design, with text by Jim Davies and Sir David Attenborough.



The British Museum
1753-2003

Royal Mail, Milton Stanger



collect and conserve a fabulous range of world views and materials – among them relief and exquisite gold, silver and shell work, ceramics and glass, comic prints and drawings.

As collectors have continued to outgrow the available space in Bloomsbury, they have provided including The Natural History Museum in the nineteenth century and The British Library last. Construction of the main building started in 1823. At its heart is the large, internal quadrangle and Francis 1664 Reading Room which has now been restored to its 1657 glory. In 2000 Queen Elizabeth II and her consort was opened. It is the largest covered public square in Europe and provides a magnificent setting place at the centre of one of the world's greatest museums.



PHILATELIC PRODUCTS A well-illustrated pack containing the six stamps (price £2.80) and stamp cards (30p each) will be available from Tallents House, main Post Office branches and philatelic outlets.

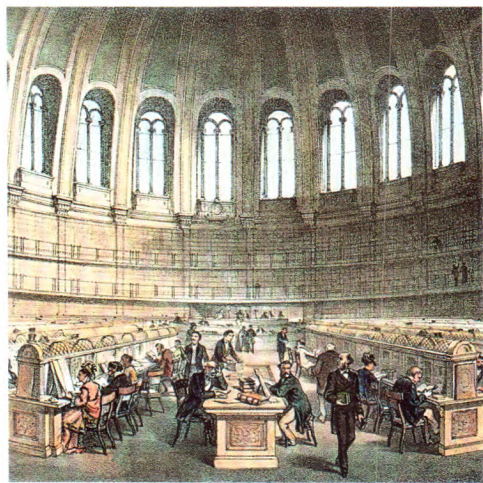
A British Museum medal cover bearing the six stamps and with a special Museum medal encapsulated will be available from Tallents House from 7 October, price £12.95.

Royal Mail and the British Museum will jointly issue a booklet of large-format postcard reproductions of the new stamps. Each will be A5 size (21 × 14.75cm) with a white border. The six cards are bound in a card cover with an easily detachable adhesive. The postcard book will be on sale at the British Museum, and can be ordered by post from Tallents House in Edinburgh (order code PB372), price £4.99.

The three first day of issue postmarks (two shown above) will be applied in silver.



Postmark for the medal cover.



The British Museum's famous Reading Room, above c1880, was frequented by many of the world's greatest scholars and writers. Its collection was separated from the Museum in the 1970s to form the British Library.

The British Museum was founded by Act of Parliament in 1753 as a new kind of institution 'maintained, not only for the Inspection and Entertainment of the learned and the curious, but for the general use and benefit of the Public'. Two and a half centuries later, the Museum continues to make world cultures accessible in the heart of London, and welcomes millions of visitors a year. With tens of thousands of objects displayed in around 100 galleries, its collection is a phenomenal showcase of rare art and antiquities from history's great civilisations.

The core of the original collection was bequeathed by Sir Hans Sloane, a retired doctor and prodigious collector. The Museum became the repository for numerous artefacts acquired during the 18th and 19th centuries – most notably the Rosetta Stone, the Lykian tombs and the Parthenon sculptures, also known as the 'Elgin Marbles'. As collections outgrew the available space in Bloomsbury, they provided the basis for new institutions including the Natural History Museum.

Construction of the main building started in 1823. At its heart is the large internal quadrangle and famous gilded Reading Room which has now been restored to its 1857 glory. In 2000, the Queen Elizabeth II Great Court was opened – the largest covered public square in Europe. Each year the Museum welcomes up to 5 million visitors. The 7 million objects in the collections span two million years of human history.

For many years the British Museum housed the national library which included the Philatelic Collections, the most famous being the collection bequeathed by Thomas Taplin MP in the 1890s. The library part of the Museum was separated to become the British Library in the 1970s and is now housed in its own building near King's Cross Station.

The British Museum is noted for many fine exhibitions – the 'Treasures of Tutankhamun' in 1972 was seen by 1,694,117 visitors, the largest attendance ever at a temporary exhibition in the UK. Currently on show is an exhibition about London Life in 1753, the year the Museum was founded ●





The Bulletin's 40th birthday Four decades of keeping collectors informed, by the Editor

In May we noted the 40th anniversary of the setting up of the Philatelic Bureau in London, now part of Royal Mail Tallents House, Edinburgh. This month we mark our own 40th anniversary. Staff at the new Bureau expected increased demand for information about British stamps; hitherto the Stamp Duty in London answered letters from collectors, but no literature was specifically produced for philatelists.

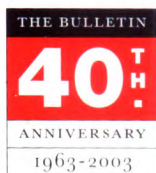
Early years Getting the Bureau 'off the ground' taxed the energies of the small staff allocated for the purpose, and so it was not until September 1963 that issue No 1 of the Philatelic Bulletin was published. This contained 12 pages of information designed 'to bring collectors up to date with events since the Bureau opened'. Details were

given of the Paris Conference, National Nature Week, Lifeboat and Red Cross stamps as well as information about the change from cream to whiter paper for the definitives, the Isle of Man 3d chalky paper and the change of printer for the high values. Information on handstamps and slogan postmarks was also included. Readers interested in the early days of the *Bulletin* are referred to an interesting account by Frank Langfield, the first Bureau Manager, in the *Bulletin* of May 1984. Issue No 3, in November 1963, gave details of the COMPAC stamp and included, to the delight of many readers, a copy of the stamp overprinted CANCELLED. This is listed in Stanley Gibbons GB Specialised Catalogue and priced at £22.

The Post Office was particularly proud of the 1964 Shakespeare Festival stamps and the February 1964 *Bulletin* gave full advance information, including illustrations of the characters which appeared on the stamps. For the first time the PO provided a FDC envelope and presentation pack and these were announced under the heading 'A Full Range of Philatelic Facilities to Support the Stamps'. The work involved in processing orders for the Shakespeare stamps was so considerable that the March issue of the *Bulletin* had to be cancelled, but to 'sweeten the pill' collectors were sent a specimen copy of one of the Shakespeare airmailers.

Format and features With Volume 3, the *Bulletin* changed from the A4 format produced by duplicating stencils or offset-litho, to the A5-size printed magazine we know today. Initially all illustrations were black & white; colour was first introduced from Volume 6, starting with colour pictures of the 1968 Special Issues and Collectors Packs.

In the early years the *Bulletin* gave considerable coverage to the National Postal Museum which opened in 1966. 'National Postal Museum Notes' gave way to a regular feature on Gems of the R M Phillips Collection which continued until 1993. Another popular feature 'Posting Boxes' started in July 1978 and still continues, albeit irregularly at times. Nearly 220 posting boxes have been featured over the years. The Cover Corner feature, started in May 1998, has included some unusual and colourful covers (commercial and philatelic) sent in by readers. However by far the most popular of our regular features is Douglas Myall's series 'Mainly Machines' (and his former 'Decimal Stamp Books') – Douglas has been voted the readers' favourite author for six out of seven years.





Stamp collecting is rich in characters past and present and I have been pleased in recent years to include Richard West's interviews with current philatelists, and Ron Negus's profiles of eminent collectors of the past. Some of Richard's subjects are young collectors – some undoubtedly the leading philatelists of the future. I am also keen to promote philatelic societies through our Events listing and from time to time in Stamp Scene.

I like to think that in content and style we are one of the 'Big Four' UK philatelic magazines, along with *Gibbons Stamp Monthly*, *Stamp Magazine*, and *Stamp & Coin Mart*, although unlike them we have no paid advertising and are not sold by newsagents. I see the *Bulletin* as more akin to these commercial magazines than to the bulletins and newsletters of other postal administrations which are essentially product brochures. My aim as Editor has been to broaden the content, and hopefully the appeal, of the *Bulletin* and I believe we offer as interesting a magazine and good value for money as our three rivals. It has, I have to say, not always been easy reconciling the needs of the readers with those of Royal Mail and I hope that the right balance has been reached and that you the readers view the *Bulletin* as a worthwhile hobby magazine and not just as a Royal Mail product brochure.

It is interesting to note – and often forgotten within Royal Mail – that apart from stamps, stamp books and postal stationery, the *Bulletin* is the oldest of Royal Mail's philatelic 'products'. We pre-date first day covers, presentation packs, stamp (PHQ) cards, the year book and year pack, albums, Smilers sheets, and the now vast range of collectibles such as ceramics, framed stamps and cards, ties, jig-saws, and other souvenir items.

Top, from left: the first issue in the A5 format, 1965; souvenir editions for the Interpex 1968 and London 1980 exhibitions; and a new name, March 1983.

Bottom: 'Bulletin Publications' numbers 1 and 6, of 1993 and 1999 (the tenth in this series will be published next Spring); a special issue for The Stamp Show 2000; and the issue marking the 50th anniversary of The Queen's accession in 2002. (Special Royal issues have been published in 1969, 1972, 1981 and 1986).

Editors and contributors Top row: Editors Frank Langfield (1963-64), John Holman (from 1988), John Memmott (1980-83), Douglas Muir (1986-88), and Archie Page (1965-80).

Bottom row: Editor Charles Gowen (1983-85) and Assistant Editor Frank Brench (1974-85), who won many friends in the philatelic world, and contributors Jean Alexander and Len Newbery.



Bulletin people Over the 40 years there have been six Editors (pictured above). For the first 16 years the Editor did not receive credit for his work; the Editor's name was not published until August 1979. Originally the Editor was based at the Philatelic Bureau, later at various Postal Headquarters buildings in London, and from 1986 to 1992 at the National Postal Museum. It is now part of the Publications Team within Royal Mail Stamps & Collectibles at the Royal Mail Headquarters at 148 Old Street.

In addition to the Editors, many people have been involved in writing for, designing and printing the magazine. Distinguished writers of the past include Barbara Last, James Negus, Len Newbery, James Watson, and Norman Williams. Today's regular contributors include James Mackay, Dorothy Martin, Glenn Morgan, Douglas Myall, Ron Negus, and Richard West. Jean Alexander has provided our annual index – we remain the only one of the 'Big Four' UK philatelic magazines still publishing an index.

Our current designer is Robert Maude, who continues the good work of his predecessors Angus Mathieson, Sam Southward, and Philip Sharland. The magazine is currently printed by Perivan-White Dove at Southend; previous printers were Krisson Printing, Westerham Press, Cripplegate Printing Co, Moore & Matthes, Raithby Lawrence, and Clement & Foster. Supervising the print quality at Royal Mail is Paul Burnett who is one of the longest serving members of staff, having joined the old GPO in 1965.

Over the years the *Bulletin* has won a number of awards for its content and design. We are particularly pleased, both this year and last, to have been finalists in two categories – for Best Use of Typography and Best-Designed Customer Magazine – of the prestigious Magazine Design Awards. In design terms, we are 'up there' with the best of them!



Finalist certificate for the best designed customer magazine in the 2002 Magazine Design Awards. Over 550 magazines are entered for these awards, including some of the best-known national titles from the major publishing houses.



Reader participation An important event in the *Bulletin* year is the annual stamp poll in December. This was started by Douglas Muir in 1986 asking for readers to vote for their favourite set of special stamps during the year. From 1991 we added your favourite individual stamp and from 1996 your favourite *Bulletin* writer. Voting forms are received from readers throughout the world – for the 2002 poll, entries arrived from 29 countries including Brazil, China, New Zealand, Saudi Arabia, and Thailand. The number of sets to be voted on grew from 10 in 1986 to 14 in 2002.

Readers frequently add comments about Royal Mail stamp policy and stamp designs to the voting forms and these, like opinions expressed in letters to the Editor, are passed on to relevant senior managers within Stamps & Collectibles. The Editor, it should be stressed, is not directly involved in choosing subjects for stamp issues, the number of stamps, or their designs. The number of letters he receives varies over the year, usually much higher in the winter months and declining as the warmer weather approaches and collectors tend their gardens, or go on holidays or excursions. Many of the letters express strong views – this was especially true during 1999 and 2000 when the controversial Millennium stamps were being issued. It would not be an exaggeration to say that some of the letters received almost amounted to 'hate mail'!

Reader participation is encouraged through our monthly competitions, started in September 1988, and more recently prize draws. The numbers of entries received varies from a few hundred to several thousand. The recent mystery prize draws proved very successful and more will be held in the future. The occasional competitions sponsored by stamp and cover dealers also attract widespread interest.

Favourite issues 1986-2002

1986	Nature Conservation
1987	Flowers
1988	Linnean Society
1989	Birds
1990	Queen Mother
1991	Maps
1992	Wintertime
1993	Autumn
1994	Age of Steam
1995	Christmas
1996	Wildfowl & Wetlands
1997	Great Tudor (Henry VIII)
1998	Lighthouses
1999	Scientists' Tale
2000	Tree & Leaf
2001	Weather
2002	London Bridges



Postmarks and covers From the outset the *Bulletin* announced forthcoming special handstamps and slogans, but as the number increased it was not always possible to give adequate advance notice. In 1971 it was decided to publish a separate *Postmark Bulletin*, and this made its debut in June. Now published fortnightly, it is edited by John Holman, along with this *Bulletin*, and despatched to subscribers from Tallents House in Edinburgh. In recent years we have redesigned it in similar format to the *Bulletin* and introduced feature articles, literature reviews and societies news sections to make it a more useful magazine.

Commemorative and first day covers are a popular aspect of modern British philately and since 1992 a separate *Commemorative Covers Review* supplement has been produced as part of this *Bulletin*. The information published is provided by an ever-growing number of cover producers.

The future The appearance of the magazine may have changed somewhat over the past 40 years but the basic aims remain the same – to provide information about recent and forthcoming British stamps as well as interesting feature articles on past issues, postal history, and thematic collecting, and information and reports on philatelic events and personalities. I imagine that eventually the *Bulletin* will be provided via the internet rather than as a printed magazine but whenever that happens the then Editor will have an important published archive at his (or her) disposal. It is testimony to the quality of the articles published over the years that back issues of the *Bulletin* are so sought-after. Forty years on from the first duplicated *Bulletin*, I think we can justifiably claim to be a recognised part of the British philatelic scene with a loyal and appreciative readership. Long may it continue ●

Photographs by Geoff Damm

Anniversary competition and prize draw

Bulletin anniversary competition This is a special competition for readers who have subscribed since the *Bulletin* started in 1963. Simply answer the following question – the answer will be found in the first issue of the *Bulletin*. The Isle of Man 3d stamp had been printed on coated paper and went on sale at post offices on the island in July. How long was it anticipated stocks should last for?

Send your answer on a postcard to: First Issue Competition, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ by 30 September. The sender of the first card drawn will be sent £40; five runner up prizes of first day covers and presentation packs will also be awarded ●

Prize draw To commemorate our 40th anniversary, in this month's draw we have 10 prizes of £40. For a chance to win £40 simply write your name and address on the back of a postcard and send it to Anniversary Draw, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ, to arrive by 30 September ●

Philately on-line The new FIP literature site, by Ron Negus



Welcome by The Literature Commission Fédération Internationale de Philatélie - FIP

Philatelic Literature

There are many things that make it stand out in FIP World Exhibitions. It invariably is the largest FIP competitive class in such events, often competing well over 150 entries. Second, it is the only class that does not have to conform to FIP Official Language - it can be presented in any language. Third, no pre-qualification is necessary, primarily for the reason that all literature, irrespective of its judged medal award, contains information of value to somebody. Fourthly, it is vital to philatelic research, literature could be stated to be the lifeblood of philately.

Your Commission that looks after philatelic literature within FIP has had to evolve rapidly. The introduction of electronic media in the form of videos, CD ROM's and Internet has produced no end of problems, not least is the enormous resource that is available through this media. How judging techniques have been introduced and very significant retraining of judges has been undertaken. Your Commission, represented by its Bureau, has worked hard to foster all aspects of literature. This website is just one of the initiatives that have been made.

www.f-i-p.ch The FIP main website has details of its support activities in addition to those for literature.

www.norbyhus.dk/fipliterature This Literature Commission site encourages greater use of philatelic literature.

AT INTERNATIONAL exhibitions under FIP rules, the largest competitive class is often that devoted to philatelic literature. The Literature Commission of the FIP comprises eminent collectors from around the world who are all accredited judges. Their Chairman is Francis Kiddle, RDP, FRPSL, a former President of the Royal Philatelic Society, London.

The Commission have recently introduced a website, to encourage greater use of philatelic literature (address above). In an introductory page, Francis Kiddle explains that the subject covers 'the stored form of philatelic knowledge that can be retrieved by other collectors who are interested in information on the same subject. The stored form can be manuscript, typed or printed text, video tapes, CD-ROMs or pages on the Internet.'

The creation of the FIP site was undertaken by a member of the Commission, Toke Norby, who is resident in Denmark. He is also responsible for the maintenance of the various pages. These include details of the Commission members, provision for a Newsletter, reports from recent FIP exhibitions, a listing of medal winners for literature and links to philatelic libraries and selected literature dealers.

A separate section is devoted to the website evaluation scheme introduced by the FIP in 1999, which I have mentioned in this column in previous issues. As well as providing a blank application form and information about the evaluation scheme, this part of the site lists the results for the years from 1999 to 2002 inclusive.

Brian Birch FRPSL, a leading UK philatelic bibliographer, has contributed to this site by allowing the reproduction of a number of his listings. Perhaps the most important of these is the extensive index to sources for the biographies of philatelists and dealers. This is arranged alphabetically and a useful page headed 'Explanation' describes how surnames are treated in different languages. All the sections in this part of the site have introductions by Brian, describing the background to the listings. Another significant section is to be found under 'Biographical Resources', where a summary is provided of unpublished bibliographies of biographies that exist.

Another separate section provides a Bibliography to Cumulative Indexes to Philatelic Periodicals, which Brian Birch has been compiling for nearly 20 years. In the introduction to this he says that it is to 'provide a guide to sources of information regarding the contents of individual philatelic periodicals, including Annuals, Year Books and other serial publications.' As such, this list is an invaluable starting point to check if any particular journal has a published cumulative index.

For philatelists, one of the problems sometimes met in performing literature searches is the discovery that the author has used a pseudonym. To help in this area, another of the listings given on the site details known pseudonyms, and this page also includes the initials used by many well-known philatelic authors to sign their work.

Brian Birch had deposited printed versions of his listings in the major philatelic libraries in the past, but access to these was sometimes limited. Their appearance now on the Internet is a major step forward in opening up these guides to philatelic literature to a much wider audience and is to be commended. They are excellent examples of the practical help being offered to collectors by the FIP Literature Commission •

The Enigma secret Richard West visits Bletchley Park and



Above, part of a display and right, the mansion house at Bletchley Park today.



IF IT WERE FICTION, probably few would believe it credible. At Bletchley Park during the Second World War no fewer than 12,000 people worked, in three shifts daily, with around 40 dispatch riders every hour bringing messages for decyphering. Yet this hub of activity remained unknown, to the enemy, to UK residents, and even to those living in the area: a local 'bobby', asked to listen to gossip, reported that all seemed totally ignorant of the secrets of Bletchley Park.

In 1883 Sir Herbert Samuel Leon, wanting a country estate, built a mansion surrounded by landscaped gardens on a site at Bletchley Park which had previously held just a few farm buildings. Over the years the mansion was extended, adding many architectural styles. 'Sammy' as he was known, died in the mid-1930s. When his widow died and the family offered the mansion for sale, for £7,500, it looked as if it might be redeveloped as a housing estate. However, in 1938, the Government was looking for a home for its Code and Cypher School, and Bletchley Park fitted their requirements, with good road, rail and telephone links. The property was checked out, under the disguise of Captain Ridley's Shooting Party. It proved ideal, so operations began, much of it in huts built in the grounds. The 12,000 staff were mostly civilians and Wrens, decyphering intercepted messages. Bletchley Park became the centre of intelligence, until the operation (Government Communications Headquarters, GCHQ) was moved to Cheltenham after the war.

In 1947 Bletchley Park became a GPO Training Centre, and a 'formal' sub post office was established, although clearly there would have been much postal activity during the war, but under the veil of secrecy.

Long-held secret Even long after the war the activities within Bletchley Park remained a secret. For many, had it not been for the theft of the German Abwehr Enigma coding machine in more recent times, or the film *Enigma*, the true name of the site might have remained a mystery.

Today at Bletchley Park you can see not only the mansion, but also the remaining huts from which operations were masterminded. The main objective was to decypher messages coded by the Germans on the Enigma machine, ironically first revealed at the 1923 Congress of the UPU. It was envisaged as a means by which the banking industry could send coded messages. Enigma can be set up in any one of 150 million million million ways: taking as its basis a series of three rotors and plugs randomly inserted, different electrical circuits are created, so, even though the same letter may be used in the original message, in the coded version it will appear as a different letter each time. As long as those receiving the coded message know the particular settings used, the message can be decyphered.

Prior to the war, organisations using Enigma might leave the settings unchanged for several months. However, during the war the Germans

finds an extraordinary past among more modern attractions



First day covers For further details write to Chapman and Mitchell Covers Ltd, Bletchley Park Post Office, The Mansion, Bletchley Park, Bletchley, Milton Keynes MK3 6EB, see www.bletchleycovers.com or telephone 01908 631797.

changed their settings at least daily. Books were issued which gave the settings for each day so that messages could be decyphered.

It was three Poles who in 1932 first discovered the way of breaking the Enigma code; just after war broke out, they passed on their findings to Bletchley Park. Leading mathematicians worked on breaking the codes; one, Alan Turing, devised an electro-mechanical device, called the Turing Bombes, which could establish the settings in use at any one time. With the settings identified, any intercepted message could be decyphered.

However, the Germans devised a much more sophisticated version of Enigma, called Lorenz, which at first baffled the Bletchley brains. Tommy Flowers, a Post Office engineer with an incredible genius, felt he had the answer. He built the first programmable electronic computer, Colossus, capable of unravelling the cyphers used by German Intelligence.

The knowledge received had to be treated with care: not all Generals actually believed the information they were receiving from M16. Equally, to be seemingly fully cognisant of the enemy's plans would put him on full alert.

Visitor attractions It is a fascinating story, and a visit to Bletchley Park can be fully recommended. Following the break-up of the GPO in 1969, the site passed to British Telecom, which has now released the main area on a 250 year lease (after which it changes to freehold) to the Bletchley Park

Trust, which is restoring the site to show what it was like during the war. In addition to embarking on a 'Cryptology Trail', visitors can see other displays including: Churchill memorabilia; toys; Second World War memorabilia, uniforms and vehicles; model railway and model boats; historic cinema projectors with a working cinema; computer museum; wartime electronics and amateur radio station; and us, German and British Re-enactment Groups.

Philatelic souvenirs Also essential is to visit the 'Bletchley Park Post Office', offering a wide range of first day covers, invariably linking each new British issue with some aspect of the history of the Park. This enterprise started in 1994 when Royal Mail released four stamps to recall the D-Day landings. The covers produced are limited, sometimes as few as 200, never more than 1,500, and where appropriate, autographed covers are made available.

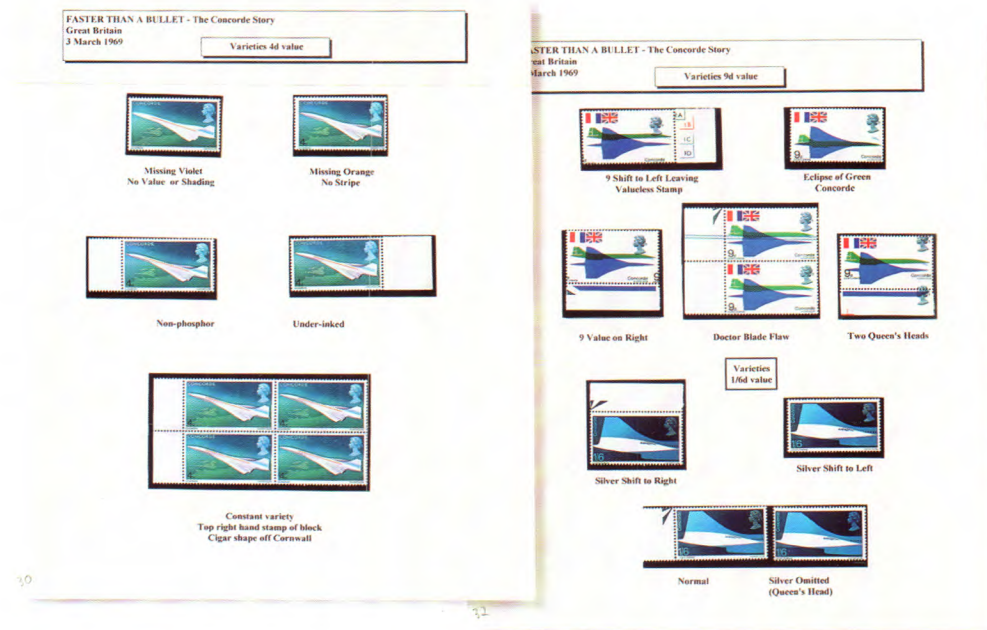
Today this post office provides a gallery of the many covers available, and also has a recreation of a post office as it would have looked during the Second World War. Visitors can send a 'Secret Message' to family and friends: within a specially designed envelope is a typical Ration Book of the time, and a Bletchley Park Identity Card. If posted at the 'Post Office' a dated 'Bletchley Park Post Office' cancellation will be applied, but the office does not have full sub post office status at present.

Bletchley Park is easy to reach (by rail from London Euston, Birmingham and Bedford) or by road (close to the M1, Junction 14). It is an incredible experience. There are guided tours, but most exhibitions are only open at weekends. Themed weekends are held throughout the year. Admission prices vary, currently from £6 to £9 for adults. For details, visit www.bletchleypark.org.uk or telephone 01908 640404.

Such an ambitious restoration project costs a lot of money. The Post Office and its covers are the brainchild of Terry Mitchell and John Chapman; many volunteers also assist with their fund-raising activities. This enterprise is but one of many within Bletchley Park, including a Business Park (especially for those involved in communications technology), plus a conference and educational centre ●

Text © Richard West 2003

Concorde Two further pages from Brian Asquith's collection



At Spring Stampex and at the Royal Philatelic Society London in April, Brian Asquith showed part of his famous Concorde collection. He has kindly agreed to us featuring a few of his pages.

Shown here are errors and varieties. Those on the 4d value are missing violet (no value or shading), missing orange (no stripe), non-phosphor, phosphor under-inked, and a nice constant variety showing cigar shape off Cornwall (R13/2, referred to as 'Oil Slick' flaw in the *SG GB Specialised Catalogue*). The varieties on the 9d stamp

are: '9' shifted to left resulting in valueless stamp, eclipse of green Concorde, 9 positioned at right, doctor blade flaw, and two Queen's heads owing to downward colour shift. Finally on the 1s6d value we see silver shift to right and left, and silver omitted, affecting the Queen's head ●

Brian is Chairman and Newsletter Editor of the Concorde Study Circle which was founded in 1978, has 80 members, and normally holds two meetings and publishes two newsletters each year. For details contact Brian Asquith, Alandale, Radcliffe Gardens, Carshalton Beeches SM5 4PQ.

Philatelic Congress Richard West reports from Gateshead

THE Philatelic Congress of Great Britain, held in Gateshead in early July, was thoroughly enjoyable – as expected of a North-East Congress.

Marking the centenary of the North East Philatelic Association (NEPA), the organisers ensured a full programme. Local collectors provided a wide range of displays, some thematic (Val Beeken, Cliff Garside, Mike Gibson, Dorothy Martin, David Williams), others more traditional (Keith Hayes, John Kirkham, Mike Oxley, Geoff Reynolds, Tony Walker). Tony offered a glimpse at the origin of the Machins, with original ideas by Andrew Restall and various colour trials.

The more formal presentations given to Congress were similarly varied. The Kay Goodman Memorial Lecture, given by Michael Sefi, showed highlights from The Royal Philatelic Collection. Alan Drysdall, one of the new signatories to the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists, provided some thoughts on the topic of philatelic research. Other papers included: Francis Kiddle on 100 years of poster stamps; Stephen Holder on collecting in 1903, and how it has changed since; Alan Huggins presenting an overview of postal stationery; and Richard West on youth philately over the past 100 years. The Paper on youth philately was accompanied by displays from some collectors from the North-East who have achieved major

successes in youth competitions, namely Gillian Birchnall, Paul Blakey, Martin and Scott Ferguson, Jessica Moore and Jean Wood. The closing display was given by John Jeffery, who as Chairman of Congress showed Holland in the Wars.

The highlight of Congress is the signing of the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists, this year held in Gateshead Civic Centre's Council Chamber. There were five new signatories: Dr Pichai Buranasombati of Thailand, Dr Alan Drysdall and Chris Harman of GB, Gustaf Torsten of Sweden and Joseph Wolff of Luxembourg. The Congress Medal was presented to Peter Chantry.

The packed Congress programme also allowed for less formal occasions, with a visit to Trinity House, Newcastle, and a walk over the Gateshead Millennium Bridge to the Baltic Centre for Contemporary Arts, which was featuring an exhibition of the work of Antony Gormley. Receptions were given by the Mayor of Gateshead, Harmers and Stanley Gibbons, while the Congress Banquet was followed by local entertainment.

It was a totally pleasurable occasion, as always in good company. The organisers – with John Jeffery as Chairman, Tony Walker as Vice-Chairman, Pat Rothnie as Secretary, Cliff Garside as Treasurer, and helped by Val Beeken, Jean Wood and Mike Oxley – are all to be congratulated •

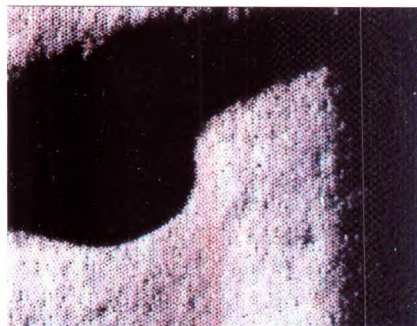
Posting boxes 216

SHOWN THIS MONTH are photographs of two Victorian wall boxes at Gravesend in Kent, from Graeme Cruickshank. The first is on platform 1 of Gravesend station, the second in Clarence Place at the corner of Shrubbery Road. The last collections are at 18.30 from the station and 18.15 at Clarence Place, with a note on both boxes that a 19.00 collection is made from the Gravesend Sorting Office in Milton Road •

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.



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



June identify The detail was from the 2002 27p Coastlines Luskentyre stamp. The winner was T McGill of Bristol.

June knowledge Answers: 1) S Clay; 2) 1992; 3) Thematica. The winner was J Camp of Essex.

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 September *Identify* Competition. Secondly, test your philatelic knowledge by answering the questions below. Send your answer to September *Knowledge* Competition.

- 1 Who designed the 1969 Christmas stamps?
- 2 In which year did the character Biggles feature on a stamp?
- 3 Who was the first Editor of this *Bulletin*?

Send your answer (addressed to either September *Identify* competition or September *Knowledge* competition), name and address on a postcard or back of a sealed envelope to: British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ. The senders of the first cards drawn in each competition on 17 October will each receive £100. Ten runner-up prizes of presentation packs or FDCs will be awarded in each competition. Competitions are not open to Royal Mail employees ●

Events

10 September Leamington & Warwick PS Introductory Evening for potential members. Cheese & wine. Oddfellows Hall, Clarence Terrace, Warwick Street, Leamington Spa, 19.30. **Enquiries** M C Aston 01926 403451 or <http://leamphil.users.btopenworld.com>

13 September Rotherham Stamp & Postcard Club open day at Broom Valley Community Centre, off Brunswick Road, 10.00-16.00. Displays, stamps and accessories on sale. **Enquiries** W Wombell, Hillcroft, Aston Common, Aston, Sheffield S26 2AD.

17-21 September Autumn Stampex. See page 4.

27 September Portadown Stampex & Collectors Fair, Town Hall, Portadown, 10.00-16.30. Admission free. **Enquiries** J Proctor 028 38 334964.

4 October Welsh PS meeting at Oswalds (University Conference Centre), Menai Drive, Bangor, starts

10.30. Mini displays by members, dealers, chat with fellow collectors while enjoying excellent hospitality.

Enquiries Marion Turner, 2 Coed Glyn, Gellilydan, Blaenau Ffestiniog, Gwynedd LL41 4EL.

4 October Kent Federation of Philatelic Societies Autumn Rally and Stamp Fair (hosted by Gravesend and District Stamp Club) at St George's Church Hall, Gravesend. 14 dealers, KFPS competitions, displays, etc. **Enquiries** M Thompson 01474 325507.

4-13 October Bangkok '03 general world international exhibition. See p5. **Enquiries** UK Commissioner, K Fitton.

11 October Assn of Sussex Philatelic Societies Ardingly Stamp Show & Sussex Convention at South of England Show Ground, Ardingly. 30 dealers, guest speaker. **Enquiries** M Pullan, 01892 655269 ●

Late news

Autumn Stampex The National Youth Stamp Committee will run its usual youth stand where there will be lots of activities for the young stamp collector. On the stand will be a lucky dip at 50p a go with a Penny Black as one of the prizes. Every tooth goody bag will contain a voucher for a special prize from the youth stand. On Saturday the Stamp Auction starts at 13.45. The British Youth Stamp Championships and Stamp Active Competition, sponsored respectively by Stanley Gibbons and Cavendish Philatelic Auctions, will be on display in the Gallery. Anyone wishing to know more about NYSC and encouraging youngsters into the hobby should visit the stand for leaflets or contact Anne Dummer on 01536 519959, or e-mail anne@dummerah.freeserve.co.uk •

Heritage lectures Heritage Royal Mail is arranging a series of lectures at the Phoenix Centre, Phoenix Place, London WC1X 0DL (next door to Heritage Royal Mail). The first two lectures in September are part of the first Archives Awareness Month. Each lecture is on a Tuesday evening at 19.00, and the Search Room will be open until 18.45 with last requisitions for archive material at 18.15. The lectures are: Love and Hate in the Dublin GPO, and other archive treasures by Professor Keith Jeffery of the University of Ulster (2 September); From Under the City to Love on the Wing... Music used to evoke images in the GPO Film Unit by Charles Wiffen of the Royal College of Music (23 September); Love Your Letterbox by Christine Jones of Heritage Royal Mail (21 October); and Poster Poster on the Wall... by Roger Crawford (18 November). Enquiries: Libby Buckley on 020 7239 2561, or e-mail libby.buckley@royalmail.com •

Artist's exhibition Work by Craigie Aitchison is on show at the Ingleby Gallery, Carlton Terrace, Edinburgh until 13 September. Another exhibition of his work follows at the Royal Academy, London, 9 October - 9 November. Paintings by Mr Aitchison featured on the 64p Christian's Tale stamp of 1999 and on an aircard of 1997 •

Auction news A block of 12 of the 1847 10d embossed stamp all overprinted SPECIMEN made £8234 (estimate £3500) at Harmers auction on 8 July. A superb 1867 watermark Cross 10s imperf horizontal pair colour trial in mauve more than tripled its estimate to achieve £9400, and an 1867 £1 block of four in mauve went for £11,174. For future sales contact Harmers on 020 8747 6100.

At Cavendish's sale on 19 July an 1890 Jubilee Christmas card printed 'From the Postal Staff' at Derby reached £690 and the tiny blue London Crowned 'Paid/Au 19/58' mark on an incoming unpaid letter from India to Queen Victoria made £862. A handstruck 4 of Carlisle applied in error on a 'Free' cover made £1955. The 2003-4 season starts 25 September with a Specialised Australasia sale. Details from Cavendish: 01322 250970.

Prices realised in Spink's 10 July GB sale ranged from £40 to over £6000. A rare multiple of 12 Victoria 6d IR OFFICIAL made £517 (est £400-500), a beautiful hand-painted essay of 5d 'Jubilee' £1725 (£1200-1500), and used vertical pair of the 1913 Waterlow £1 green £1035 (£700-800). The top realisations, both £6325, were for an entire with 1774 Dublin Dockwra, and 1884-88 £1 brown-lilac, watermark Orbs with strike of octagonal LONDON datestamp. Details of future auctions from Spink: 020 7563 4000.

Bonhams' 16 July sale included some modern GB errors. A pair of the National Productivity Year 3d, one with nearly missing Queen's head, made £160, an imperf block of four 19p Machin £230, and a vertical strip of five 1d Machin with spectacular inking flaw £220. For details of the 10-11 September auction phone Bonhams on 020 7468 8345 •

Royal Mail Album Slipcases Slipcases for our albums will soon be available from Tallents House, Edinburgh: FDC Album (order code PA672); Presentation Pack Album (PA673); Postcard Album (PA674); Stamp Album (PA675); and Smilers Album (PA676). Price £7.50 each. The slipcases, designed to protect your albums and their contents, are in colours to match corresponding albums •

Own a collection of postal history



Victorian Stamp Ingot Collection A series of attractive folders containing

silver ingots of Victorian stamps, actual-size reproductions of the stamps, full technical details and historical background.

The third in the series, featuring the 1870 Halfpenny Red stamp, was issued on 12 August. The series was launched with the Penny Black, followed by the 1847 Embossed Shilling stamp.

A storage box is available free when you subscribe by regular order. For further details contact Royal Mail Tallents House, or visit www.royalmail.com/stamps



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5 014721 103112

Ingot shown above is larger than actual size. Dimensions: 22.5 x 18.6mm