

BRITISH PHILATELIC

The ROYAL MAIL magazine for stamp collectors

Volume 47 Number 9

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Bulletin

London 2010 • Olympics
and Paralympics issue



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SPECIAL EDITION LONDON 2010 INTERNATIONAL STAMP EXHIBITION 8-15 MAY

May and June's issues and withdrawals



Cover Approved engraver's drawing of the Medal Head. This pen-and-ink sketch ('Medal head II, 19 March 1913') was drawn by J A C Harrison from Bertram Mackennal's plaster cast

6 May

Issue London 2010 Festival of Stamps: Accession of King George V – Miniature sheet, Stamp sheet, Press sheet, 1st class Ingot cover George V British Rarity, £1 Ingot Cover George V Commonwealth Rarity

8 May

Issue London 2010 Festival of Stamps: The King's Stamps – Miniature sheet, Press sheet, Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards (including both Festival of Stamps sets), Prestige Stamp Booklet, Pack of 4 x FDCs Festival of Stamps PSBs panes • London 2010 Instant Smilers® sheets, Instant Smilers® Generic sheets, Exhibition sheet, Exhibition Philatelic Souvenir sheet, Postal Union Congress facsimile pack, Accession of King George V Miniature sheet with London 2010 overprint, King George V postcard pack • Definitive Collectors pack

13 May

Issue Britain Alone stamps, Dunkirk Miniature sheet, Presentation Pack, Prestige Stamp Book, Dunkirk Medal Cover, Stamp Cards, Stamp Rolls change to Security Definitives

18 May

Issue Halley's Comet Commemorative sheet

20 May

Withdrawal Henry VIII and Elizabeth I Coin Cover
• The House of Tudor Prestige Medal Cover

21 May

Withdrawal 15p, 16p, 81p Low Value Definitive • 50p, 81p Country Definitive, Business sheets 'non security features' • No 78 Low Value 2008 Tariff Presentation Pack • No 79 Country 2008 Tariff Presentation Pack
• No 77 Low Value Collectors Pack • No 81 Country Definitive Collectors Pack

15 June

Issue House of Stuart stamps, Miniature sheet, Press sheet, Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards, Cachet Cover
• Mammals Stamp Book

15 June

Withdrawal Mythical Creatures stamps, Stamp Card and Presentation Pack

18 June

Withdrawal Kew Gardens Cover

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May madness Stamp fever sweeps London

AT LAST! This month sees what many will consider to be the highlight of the myriad events of 2010 – the International Stamp Exhibition in London. Many years of planning are now coming to fruition; we can all indulge in our once-in-a-decade chance to socialise in London with friends and luminaries from all over the world, and simply revel in all things philatelic. The Festival also gives us a pertinent opportunity to reflect on all that has happened since the accession of George V to the throne a century ago. Since the era of the Philatelist King, the world has seen enormous changes but that does not mean that the appeal of the stamp – and of collecting stamps – has abated one jot. While stamps were widely regarded as mini-encyclopaedias for young collectors of King George's time, in the internet age some would argue that the educational role of postal history is less relevant. However we find that, on the contrary, the number of young collectors is on the rise, because the web has opened up new possibilities for collectors of all ages. Membership at the Royal Philatelic Society London is increasing and so are sales of stamps and stamp literature on eBay.

It's clear that philatelic passions burn bright all over the nation that invented the humble postage stamp. And to mark this very important month in the UK stamp-collecting calendar, this issue of *Bulletin* features a special section which celebrates the Festival past and present. You'll also find a little extra in your mailing this month – a highly informative supplement entitled *The George V Royal Cypher Issue 1912-24*, written by the RPSL's President, Alan Moorcroft.

And there are many more interesting events to catch during the remaining seven months of this festival year. If you haven't yet visited the displays at the British Library (see images below), Bath Postal Museum and Museum of London Docklands, don't delay. The newly opened Guildhall show (see opposite) is a welcome addition to these excellent displays – look out for the film footage of the first ever airmail flight (1911) and the first regular Airmail flight to Australia (1934), captured at opposite ends of the King's reign.

Whatever your area of interest, this summer has enough philatelic activity to inspire renewed vigour in your research and collecting. Enjoy! •

Real treasures: some of the highlights from the display currently at the British Library. The Western Australia 2d mauve error, the unused Barbados one shilling blue error and the only known mint Plate 77 Penny Red



Round-up News and upcoming events:

Glenn Morgan keeps you posted



The Postal Congress Union stamp of 1929 will be reproduced – live – at the exhibition by security printers Enschedé

Empire Mail: George V and the GPO From 7 May to 25 July at London's Guildhall Art Gallery, there will be a major exhibition focusing on the philatelic passions of King George V and the extraordinary innovations in the General Post Office that took place during his time on the throne.

The reign of the Philatelist King (1910-36) was an era of conflict and change, which saw the development of new communication methods that brought the world closer together. The exhibition features philatelic rarities from the GPO Film Unit, posters, vehicles and pillar boxes, and explores themes such as mail transportation, the first Atlantic air crossing, the rise of graphic design in the 1920s and 1930s, and wartime memorabilia.

The rare exhibits, including a display of exquisite stamps and stamp artwork, are sourced from The British Postal & Museum Archive and the Royal Philatelic Collection (RPC). The RPC was started in the 19th century by royal stamp enthusiasts and its present structure, which includes a large amount of material rarely seen in public, was the creation of King George V and his adviser Sir Edward Bacon. Between 8 and 15 May the exhibition will include regular demonstrations by staff from the security printers Enschedé, who will be printing reproductions of the 1929 Postal Union Congress £1 on an intaglio press. Exhibition opening times are: Monday to Saturday 10am-5pm, Sunday noon-4pm. For details, visit www.london2010.org.uk or for information on the venue log on to www.cityoflondon.gov.uk • ►



'The Smilers Bible': a reliable reference to this fast-growing area of collecting for both dealers or collectors

Publications

New Smilers Catalogue This second edition of *Customised Stamp Sheets of Great Britain* provides a handy A5 reference guide to all customised stamp sheets issued in Great Britain since they first appeared in 2000. Completely revised and updated to the end of January 2010, it takes in all new formats including Smilers for Kids packs, commemorative and Isle of Man sheets, Universal Mail customised stamps. It includes more than 500 colour illustrations as well as notes on market prices, trials and errors, rare sheets, perforation varieties and printing variations.

The catalogue costs £24.95 and can be bought through the Royal Mail website – please see www.royalmail.com/shop for details of p&p charges to European Union countries and for elsewhere overseas.

To mark the 10th anniversary of this service, there will be Smilers® booths at the London 2010 International Stamp Exhibition at the Business Design Centre, Islington on 8-15 May. At the Royal Mail stand visitors will be able to create special Smilers® sheets with their image on the labels. The latest Smilers® information is always available at www.smilers-info.com ●

Clubs and societies

American Philatelic Research Library After 25 years as librarian to this major philatelic resource, Gini Horn has left her position at the American Philatelic Society. Finding a replacement for such a knowledgeable and helpful member of staff will be a near impossible task for the APS Board ●

Post Office Vehicle Club Formed in 1962, the POVC is for anyone who is interested in vehicles ranging from the original GP fleet through to those used today. The club publishes a monthly newsletter *Post Horn*, and membership costs £16. For further information and to request a specimen copy of the newsletter, visit www.povehclub.org.uk, email povehclub@aol.com, or write to Frank Weston, POVC, 32 Russell Way, Leighton Buzzard LU7 3NG ●

Aberdeen Philatelic Society Congratulations to Scotland's fourth oldest philatelic society, founded in 1910 and so celebrating its centenary this year. As one of the many events marking this important milestone in the Society's history, from 17 July to 14 November there is a rotating exhibition that explores different maritime topics. The exhibition will be held at Aberdeen Maritime Museum, Ship Row, and opening hours will be Tuesday to Saturday, 10am-5pm, Sunday noon-3pm. For further information about the exhibition visit www.aagm.co.uk or call 01224 337700.

Membership benefits of Aberdeen Philatelic Society include a library of catalogues and books, a forgeries reference collection that may be borrowed, a twice-yearly newsletter, and exchange booklets with priced material from a wide selection of countries. There are displays by society members, visits to and from other societies, an opportunity to meet and discuss the hobby with fellow collectors, and twice-yearly room-only and postal auctions. Subscription rates are £10 (or £5 if you live more than 20 miles from Aberdeen).

For full membership details visit www.aberdeenphilatelic.org.uk ●

The next generation

Top of the class There is a fear that the children of today have too many distractions to get the philatelic bug, but some keen collectors are determined that won't happen.

The Stamp Active Network, supported by Stanley Gibbons, is providing 50 stamp starter packs to interested schools and junior stamp clubs. They contain reference materials, stamps, hinges, tweezers, and stock books. If you know a school that might be interested, put them in touch with Bev Davies on bev.stampactive@btinternet.com. And if you'd like to support future learning you can become a sponsor of a new school club by donating £50. In return, you'll receive a certificate giving details of the club and further information on their progress. For more on the Network, go to www.planetstamp.co.uk.

Another programme that takes stamps to the kids is Stamps in Schools, which provides 'stamp days' for Key Stages 2 and 3 classes. Erne Grieve, who set up the BPMA-sponsored scheme says, 'In the last 12 years, I've been into over 300 schools across the UK, from Inverness to the Isle of Wight. The visits usually involve a presentation lasting about an hour, when I tell children about the history of stamps (thereby linking with the Victorian era), give them tips on how to start a collection, and involve the children in activities with stamps. I try to make sure that each child takes something home to encourage them to make stamps a hobby. And if a teacher or parent is interested in forming a school stamp club, I can give them advice and some support'. To get involved and help spread the word to future generations, go to www.postalheritage.org/stampsinschools •



Skills of observation: many children enjoy collecting things from a very young age

Junior winner To demonstrate how youngsters can take stamps to their heart, witness Young Collector of the Year 2009, Jacqs Scourfield, 13. She takes philately seriously. 'I started to collect stamps when I was five or six years old,' Jacqs explains. 'My grandad had a collection, and they started a stamp club at my school in Tenby – and that got me interested. My twin sister, Hazel, also collects. I spend a lot of my pocket money buying stamps on eBay and at a local market. I look out for anything related to childhood from around the world, and I have also put together displays on other themes such as the Chinese New Year and animals for competitions. I really enjoy learning about the history behind the stamps and doing the notes. And you get to meet other young collectors and see what they are doing.' Now Jacqs, one of three young British collectors entering the 20-strong youth class at the International Stamp Exhibition, is hopeful that her exhibit *A Childhood in Stamps*, which won The Melville Cup for the overall best entry at the British Youth Stamp Championships last year, is a winner again •



Jacqs shows off a few of her many philatelic awards

What's new? Issues, products and events



As a famous former Postmaster General, Tony Benn was the ideal recipient of the message sent by carrier pigeon to help launch the London 2010 Festival of Stamps

THE CLIMAX OF THIS EXCITING YEAR for philatelists will surely be this month's London 2010 International Stamp Exhibition, where, from 8 to 15 May the Royal Mail will be displaying an abundance of must-see items on a stand occupying 300 square metres. Situated towards the rear of the mezzanine level of the London Business Design Centre in Islington, the stand is distinguished by a huge arch of outsized George V stamps.

On behalf of the Exhibition organisers, Tony Benn has already received a unique message of thanks and good wishes in the form of a one-gram Pigeongramme, as used in World War II. It was sent by carrier pigeon from the hands of The Marquess of Bath, a Patron of the Bath Postal Museum.

Royal Mail marks the launch of the Festival and the Exhibition with two new Miniature Sheets and associated products, all reviewed in detail in the last issue of Bulletin (April). The first sheet – the Accession of King George V – celebrates the centenary of the accession of the philatelist King, and is issued on the exact anniversary date, 6 May. The overprint of this sheet will be available only at the Exhibition and in the yearbook. The second sheet, The King's Stamps Miniature Sheet, is issued on 8 May to mark the start of the eight-day Exhibition. To meet the anticipated levels of demand from philatelists, there are 14 Royal Mail sales counters and numerous display units, featuring the new show products as well as Royal Mail's current philatelic range. There will be a private viewing area for the trade customers.

Also in the Royal Mail area of the mezzanine level are two Instant Smiler[®] booths, so that visitors may celebrate the event – and the 10th anniversary of Smilers[®] – by having their photograph taken and printed onto a new International Exhibition Smilers[®] sheet, over-printed with the London 2010 Festival of Stamps logo.

Special posting facilities are provided for posting covers and postcards with an individual postmark for each day of the show, as well as special postmarks for the new issues. If you aren't able to visit the exhibition you can browse and order online at www.royalmail.com/portal/stamps or through Tallents House and enjoy the Bulletin souvenir section from page 267 ●



One of the items that will be on show – the Mackennal head 1½ die

Philatelist King displays The fascinating material on display at the George V exhibition in the Royal Mail area at the Business Design Centre won't be on show after the Exhibition closes, so be sure not to miss this rare opportunity to see some of the BPMA's treasures. This exhibit shows the development and production of the early George V definitive stamps, offering a chance to closely examine the original dies, rollers and printing plates, some of which were created for stamps that were never issued. The story then continues to the present day, illustrating the development of Royal Mail's new King George V stamps. This part of the exhibit demonstrates how the modern printers, Enschedé, took dies and proofs from the 1920s and used them to create the modern 2010 special stamps. The whole display creates an illuminating contrast of old and new techniques, both used for a common aim ●

Exhibition memento Before you know it, the London 2010 International Stamp Exhibition will be a dim and distant memory and it'll be another decade to wait for the next international. This charming, neat George V pin is a perfect little reminder of the celebrations (and stamps bought and sold), and of the role of Britain's most prolific royal collector. Available at www.royalmail.com/portal/stamps for £3.95 •



Stirling castle cachet cover John Holman, editor of *Bulletin* for 22 years, travelled to Stirling Castle to witness the House of Stewart cachet cover arriving. Pictured here with Gordon Barclay, Steward at Stirling Castle, John was completing his last official cachet cover inspection. The cover features all seven special stamps, introduced on 30 March this year, and bears a superb calligraphy scroll and Stirling Castle cachet, to bear witness to its posting from this historic spot. The castle has survived at least eight sieges and many coronations; it is inextricably linked to the Scottish Stewart's dynasty •



John Holman and
Gordon Barclay at
Stirling Castle

New Grand Prix commemorative sheet A striking sheet of British World Champion Grand Prix Drivers is to be issued on July 8 this year, dedicating a label to each of ten British Formula 1 World Champions. A comprehensive biography of each champion is included on the backing card, and an interview with Murray Walker, the acclaimed voice of F1, takes pride of place •

All for a good cause Anyone selling items on eBay can now donate a percentage of the selling price to charity, and now you have the option of choosing the British Postal Museum & Archive as your cause. Your listing will get a blue and yellow 'eBay for Charity' ribbon logo alongside the item in the search results and extra visibility through the eBay for Charity pages, highlighting the seller's commitment to preserving and promoting access to Britain's postal heritage. Buyers can also make a donation at checkout, too! Go to pages.ebay.co.uk/ebayforcharity/ to find out more •

The 2010 Bradbury Stamp Organiser Over 23,000 images of British stamps are included in this efficient stamp organising kit, which harnesses the most powerful and easy-to-use software to help you view, store, retrieve and present reports of your collection of British stamps and related products. View images of over 18,000 British First Day Covers, every Presentation Pack and PHQ Card set, every Stamp Book and all the stamp pane formats. You can also view images of all Prestige Stamp Book panes. It's an easy way to catalogue your collection and also to identify any gaps that need to be filled. For more details and to make sure you have the necessary system requirements, see www.bfdc.co.uk/so •



Stop press Change of handstamp location – the alternative handstamp location for the Great British Railways series has now changed from York to Swindon. The coins and medals on pages 2 and 10 of the *Philatelic Bulletin Supplement* are reproduced from photographs © Geoff Dann 2001. All rights reserved •

such as *Martin the Mule* and *The Woodcrops* remain timeless (and are hugely popular with a new generation on video); a modern counterpart such as the animated *Heidi* is an international hit, while live-action dramas such as *Orange Hill* and magazines like *Live* and *Kicking* have broken new ground. Breaking the news is *Newsround*, the first regular television news programme for young people.

magazines have raised the cover price of *Sal* once a week in 1998 to join the children's TV magazine. Now in its 15th year this perennial favourite is on a high line a week, and has run nationwide ad-give competitions (6), including the book *Christmas* (1998) in 1998.

Things Fall Apart ■ Postman Pat ■ The Really Big Book of Going Down ■ The Lividown: 7 Plays ■ The Little Green Book ■ The Demons (a collection of short stories)



Prestige Stamp Books The story of a rather erudite collectible, by Glenn H Morgan

1 1999's The Profile on Print: Her Majesty's Stamps Celebrated by Royal Mail now has a value of around £18, which represents more than a 100 per cent rise in value over a decade.

3 FT100: The Story of the *Financial Times*, 1888-1988, issued in 1988 is worth triple its original face value of £5.

5 1972's Story of Wedgwood can achieve £45 for ones with rarer perforations.

The King's Stamps	£11.15
Britain Alone	£9.76



The Prestige Stamp Book (PSB) was born in December 1969, with the £1 Stamps for Cooks issue, sponsored by the Milk Marketing Board. At the time it was described as ‘an experiment aimed at the housewife’s handbag and to test the market’, but the format has since spread around the world. Many post offices produce a similar product and Royal Mail PSBs are widely recognised as valuable collectibles because of their unique features.

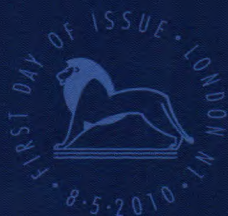
Differentiated from counter sheets PSBs are normally made up of four or five unique stamp panes in se-tenant combinations, or use different printing processes from the counter sheet equivalent. Earlier books contain only definitive stamps, but from 1990 special stamps, unavailable elsewhere, have appeared. The books have always contained several pages of informative text written by experts, plus many relevant illustrations.

From the third book onwards, PSBs have been produced in a larger page size so 'outside edge' stamps can have an unprinted margin. This change eliminated the poor perforation quality that spoiled the appearance of the first two smaller books. Dealers and collectors had great difficulty sourcing well-perforated copies and so the PSBs devoted to Cooks and Wedgwood (both of which have full perforations) command higher prices (see panel left). All PSBs are sold at the face value of the stamps they contain, so the background history and additional photography are a bonus.

Keeping them mint There are different options for housing your PSBs. Some collectors use filing boxes or First Day Cover albums, others mount them onto album pages with large photo corners. One of the best is the custom-designed, 10-leaf album available from Tallents House for £15.50 (order code PA707), with 10 extra continuation leaves at £4.50 (order code PA708) – just call 08457 641641. PSB condition is important to collectors, so don't be tempted to 'explode' (break up) the book to display individual pages. If you want it to retain its financial value ●



London 2010 International Stamp Exhibition Souvenir section



Judgement days

Richard West reveals what the jurors will be up to during the Exhibition



First class? The 33 jurors will have to choose the best of the best from the 2,400 competitive frames entered

THE SPIRIT OF COMPETITION bubbles through all international stamp exhibitions, albeit in a seriously civilised manner, and is an essential ingredient of their success. The displays of exhibits create an important exhibition feature, and the announcement of the winners provides an exciting climax to the proceedings. But before the winners are chosen, the judges must be chosen. And putting together a well-balanced panel is crucial.

International standards This month's London 2010 International Stamp Exhibition attracts exhibits from around the world. And so this major once-in-a-decade exhibition needs an international jury, with each judge possessing expertise in the appropriate field alongside proven experience of

Image: Alamy

the closely scrutinised process of judging. Most international stamp exhibitions follow an established pattern – each participating country is invited to nominate one or two potential judges, plus a few names for future consideration. To be nominated, previous experience as an exhibitor and membership of a jury in one's own country is essential.

The classes of London 2010 The exhibits are divided into various classes, depending on the material being shown. At London 2010 the classes are: Traditional (the study of stamps), Postal Stationery, Revenue Stamps, Postal History, Aerophilately, Thematic Philately (where the emphasis is on the topic rather than the country of issue), Literature, a Youth class for young collectors, and a One-Frame class, where the requirement is an entry of 16 pages with a focus on the reign of King George V.

London 2010 differs from other international stamp exhibitions in that, for the first time, half of the exhibits are on show during the first four days, then they are changed overnight so that the remaining exhibits are on display for the final four days. The organisers have selected a panel of judges whose expertise corresponds with the spread of competition and who are able to judge exhibits in both halves of the exhibition.

The panel and the process As is the convention, the panel of judges has a President and a Secretary, an Expert Team and Apprentices, in addition to the main body of jury members (33 in total). Not all of the jury members judge every exhibit – that would be impossible in the time available and with the volume of items needing to be examined (a total of 2,400 frames). So the jury is divided into teams, each being allocated a specific number of entries to assess. Every entry is judged in accordance with a pre-determined marking scheme, and judges are encouraged to offer comments to each entrant to help with developing the exhibit in the future.

Strictly confidential The President is there to oversee timely judging, and to ensure that all the teams are judging to the same standards. The Secretary is the one who handles the paperwork and collates all the results, with the help of an assistant. The Expert Team examines all entries to ensure that no forgeries or other misleading items are included, and the Apprentices – part of an international jury for the first time – are assessed and hopefully deemed competent to act as fully fledged judges at future events.

Preliminary results are posted in the jury room after each team has assessed its allocated entries. Entrance to this room is, of course, strictly forbidden to anyone except judges and all the discussions and decisions of the jury are necessarily confidential. ►

Every entrant achieving
Bronze level or above receives
one of these coveted medals





The reverse of the competition exhibitors' medal continues the George V theme

Hierarchy of gongs Depending on the number of points it receives, every exhibit is awarded a medal, starting with Bronze and going on to Silver-bronze, Silver, Large Silver, Vermeil, Large Vermeil, Gold, or Large Gold. Each jury member also makes time to look at work not allocated a medal, and can discuss any result if it is felt that the particular judging team has overlooked a crucial point. Every entry is given the same care and attention.

Once all the results have been agreed, one exhibit will be chosen from each class to receive 'Best of Class'. If an exhibit demonstrates outstanding qualities, such as a different approach to a subject, or outstanding personal research, the judges can – at their discretion – award a special prize.

Then comes the final task – deciding who gets the Grand Prix. After the second round of judging, the officials decide upon the best exhibit in the whole exhibition by means of a secret ballot. And still the jury's task is not over. On the fourth and eighth days, after announcement of the results (excepting the top awards, which are held back until 15 May) all entrants have the opportunity to discuss their exhibits with the appropriate members of the jury. No wonder then that most jurors don't celebrate into the early hours at the Palmares dinner. They head home for some well-earned rest!

The jurors' view



Francis Kiddle, UK, President: 'I have been very involved in the difficult task of choosing the exhibits to give a balance of countries and exhibition classes, while also ensuring that at least a quarter of the exhibitors are showing for the first time. I am one of the judges in the Literature and Revenue classes, but as President, my wider role is to check for consistency among all the teams of judges. During the exhibition, I shall be judging for at least eight hours each day, and then dealing with administration. I will have no time for anything else!' For Francis, London 2010 is the culmination of five years of hard work: 'What I want is a splendid event, with no problems, and then a happy retirement!'

Background: Francis collects 'back of the book' material, mainly revenues, local stamps, Cinderellas and postal stationery. He has been collecting since he was six years old, when he was given a smaller stamp album than his older brother and rivalry – which still remains – spurred him on.



Malcolm Groom, Australia, Secretary: 'Preparing for judging involves many hours of reading to refresh my memory of subjects I have judged before, as well as researching new aspects. A well-prepared exhibit will teach the judges, as they cannot know everything about everything. I enjoy the opportunity to talk with the exhibitors after the judging to learn more about what they're trying to achieve and offer ideas as to how that might be accomplished. Often the passion the exhibitor has for his/her subject is evident when you talk with them but does not show through their pages.'

Background: Malcolm collects anything Tasmanian and Australian external airmails. While in England he and his wife plan to visit their daughter and granddaughter, who live in Surrey, and also hope to fit in a visit to the theatre.

Jonas Hällström, Sweden, Judge: 'I expect a fantastic philatelic event with the best of collections on display. I'm certainly looking forward to making international friendships. My plan is to focus on the show and, of course, the social gatherings it will bring.'

Background: Jonas has a thematic collection on the theme of sailing ships, for which he has won a Large Gold medal internationally.



Bob Odenweller, US, Judge: 'Each London exhibition since the first one I attended in 1970 has been different for me, and this will be my first as a judge. I'm most looking forward to the chance to get together again with many of my philatelic friends from around the world. The unusual experiment of showing only half of the exhibits at a time, coupled with the smaller jury size than usual, means a heavy workload for the jury. Judges need to have a wider knowledge these days than ever before.'

Background: Like Francis Kiddle, Bob's enthusiasm for philately was partly fired by having an older brother who was also a collector: 'Since he was older and stronger, he got first choice of what came into the house, getting the best of the US material sent by our relatives.'



Charles Verge, Canada, Judge: 'Learning is what I enjoy most about judging – learning new information about a subject, new ways of developing an exhibit and new layout and presentation techniques. In North America, judges have to judge all classes at an exhibition, so this is a bit different for me. The icing on the cake is the possibility of viewing the world's best, rarest and most spectacular items.'

Background: Charles' long-term goal is to put together an exhibit in every class and to win a Gold medal at the national level with each. So far, he has achieved this in Traditional, Postal History, One-Frame, Open Class, Aerophilately, Literature, Post Cards, Thematics, First Day Covers and Cinderellas, and is currently working on a Revenue exhibit.



Vojtech Jankovic, Slovak Republic, Apprentice: 'London has been very important in my philatelic career. The Stamp Show 2000 was the first international stamp exhibition at which I exhibited, and I'm hoping that after London 2010 I will be an accredited international judge. Judging is a natural way to improve my passion as well as to help others to improve.'

Background: Vojtech has focused on sport, initially football and then developing an exhibit on the bicycle. He has been preparing for his Apprentice tasks by attending exhibitions and seminars, reading and researching to learn as much as possible •



London 2010 two phases of judging

To enable visitors to view more than 2,400 frames covering most of the FIP exhibiting classes, exhibits are changed midweek, as follows.

First phase 8 to 11 May: Traditional, Revenue, Postal Stationery and One-frame Exhibits with a link to George V. Second phase 12 to 15 May: Postal History, Aerophilately, Thematic Philately, Youth One-Frame.

Showstoppers

A selection of stellar items on show at this month's keenly anticipated exhibition

WITH ALL EYES of the stamp community already turned to the UK for the year-long Festival of Stamps, this month's London 2010 International Stamp Exhibition offers an unrivalled opportunity to talk to the experts and spot fine and rare items at the trade stands of dealers and postal administrations from across the globe. Here are just a few of the highlights, chosen from the myriad treasures on display for all to see 'up close and personal'.



See the cover that has travelled to the moon and back, autographed by all three Apollo 11 astronauts – at stand 110

Space on the Village Green As you enter the exhibition through the Village Green area, you can see an exceptionally well-travelled item at stand 110 – a cover that has literally been to the moon and back. 'The Apollo 11 space cover is our star item,' says Brian Austin of Buckingham Covers. 'It's signed by the astronauts who carried it on the first manned landing on the moon in 1969; we have never seen one before.'

This gem comes from the collection of the astronaut Michael Collins, who was the command module pilot on Apollo 11 (his second spaceflight). He has added by hand that the cover was 'carried to the moon' and it bears his autograph with that of the two other legendary astronauts Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin. For devotees of space and transport themes, stand 110 also features a range of covers featuring railways, Concorde and much more.

Top-flight rarity As you enter the hall at the top of the entry escalator, turn right to follow the gallery round and you will soon see the Sandafayre stand, where Vincent Green is displaying, among other gems, one of his personal favourites: 'I'll be taking a block of four American stamps that show the Wright brothers' aircraft, autographed across the front by Orville Wright.'

Sandafayre operates the world's largest postal auction, selling GB, Empire and Foreign stamps, and boasts one of the biggest teams of stamp experts in the world, so a visit to stand six offers a great chance to pick the brains of some passionate experts. However general or specialised your philatelic proclivities, they will be happy to put your name on their Special Interests Register and keep you informed about items of special appeal.

Super-franked Mulready At the centre of the mezzanine level is stand 90, where you can see a Mulready one-penny envelope, quite breathtaking in its rarity and beautiful detail. It is additionally franked with no fewer than 13 Penny Blacks, which, along with the delightful envelope illustration by William Mulready (see above right), offers a rare feast for the eyes.

'This one is a personal favourite of mine,' says Guy Croton of Spink, who will be at this stand for most of the exhibition. 'It's the largest known



The largest known Penny Black franking on a Mulready (right) envelope takes pride of place at stand 90

The Sunderland Collection is a wonderful new find (example below) which Mark Samwell has kept back to show at stand 41



franking on a Mulready envelope, and it was posted to Nova Scotia on 16 May 1840, just ten days after the Penny Black was first introduced.'

Among other rare specimens at stand 90 are a number of fine 1840 Queen Victoria line-engraved stamps and a selection of valuable lots to be included in a Rarity Auction on 11 May at 7pm.

History related by post In the relaxed atmosphere of the gallery level, at the opposite side from the competitive exhibits, Mark Samwell is justifiably excited about a new find that he has held on to especially to show at stand 41: 'It's a fabulous series of hand-illustrated covers, recently discovered in a Victorian family scrapbook. Sent from England to Africa between 1877 and 1900, these items from the 'Sutherland Correspondence' are ►



Now you see it, now you don't: Singapore SG50/a 'The Missing Monarch' is in the important collection of Queen Elizabeth Commonwealth definitives on stand 79



A pretty anniversary sheet: a new French issue, this nicely illustrated set commemorates 150 years of stamp trading

beautifully illustrated with a variety of historic themes, including representations of the Egyptian Campaign, Zulu Wars, Native Americans and Victorian musicians.'

Favourite takeaways Stanley Gibbons exhibition catalogues are always sought after, and for London 2010 there are extra SG treats to watch out for. So be sure to pay an early visit to stand 79 (to the right as you arrive at the mezzanine level on the escalator) and join the rush for Stanley Gibbons' goodie bag, which includes, most importantly, an exclusive London Showguide. SG is launching a new catalogue on each day of the exhibition, including the ever-popular 'GB Concise' and a special King George V catalogue, as well as a range of new titles such as the first edition of an Antarctica catalogue.

Exciting new acquisitions are the stuff of everyday for Dr Philip Kinns, Director of Philately at Stanley Gibbons, but he is clearly particularly pleased with a recent coup. 'We have just purchased a very important collection of Queen Elizabeth Commonwealth definitive issues, replete with rarities, major errors, varieties and positional multiples, which represents the finest lot to come on the market for many years, and includes items that we have not handled in decades,' Kinns enthuses. For specialists in this area the Stanley Gibbons stall will be an important port of call.

Family philography Next door at stand 95 you can enjoy a nice piece of philatelic family history – a folder celebrating the long history of the Bolaffi family firm, with gems from its 'Archive of Philography and Communciation'. Bolaffi is unilaterally expanding the language of philately, in a helpful way: 'Philography is a neologism we coined to describe the study and the collection of documents about the written word. That includes Sumerian tablets, Egyptian papyrus, medieval parchments, letters sent to Space and so on, but, above all, letters with stamps,' a Bolaffi Press Officer explains. A portrait of grandfather Alberto, who founded the company 120 years ago, forms part of a new set of French stamps issued on 17 May, dedicated to the 150th anniversary of '*Bourse aux timbres*' (see left).

The beating heart In the centre of the exhibition space, towards the rear of the mezzanine level, is the extensive Royal Mail stand, which provides facilities for visitors to purchase and post their covers and cards with a different franking for each day of the Exhibition. Also in this area is the keynote exhibition devised by the BPMA, showing the development and production of the George V definitive stamps, with a rare opportunity to view the original dies, rollers and printing plates, some of which were created for stamps that were never issued. The story continues to the present day, illustrating the development of Royal Mail's new King George V stamps.

Royal Mail's Mark Say is understandably pleased with this impressive focal point: 'We are very proud of the George V attractions and of giving so many people the opportunity to see unique philatelic artefacts,' he says. 'These stamps have shaped postal history and the collection is a testament to



The rare green £1 Seahorses is one of the inspirations for the new issues – and a mint copy is also up for grabs at the Royal Mail stand

the rich heritage under our guardianship. To celebrate this historic exhibition we have earmarked an original Seahorses stamp [valued at around £2,500] to give away as the grand prize in a lucky draw. There are also eight 10d blue Seahorses to win – you can find out how to enter at the Royal Mail stand.'

Like-minded people Perhaps the most important highlight of the Exhibition is the people it brings together under one roof. 'We all relish being part of what is probably the most important stamp event in the world,' says Guy Croton.

For hundreds of philatelic societies there will be get-togethers in London, with plenty of old hands around to offer advice and keep newcomers on their toes. Says David Beech, Head of the Philatelic Collections at the British Library (do remember to catch the amazing display there, too) and a past president of The Royal Philatelic Society London, 'I am especially looking forward to the displays by the Royal Philatelic Societies... an opportunity to see outstanding material from combined resources.'

Christopher Oliver, Chairman of the Middlesex Philatelic Federation, anticipates conviviality: 'I am looking forward to having lots of people helping and taking part in a philatelic valuation exercise... enjoying our young persons' stamp corner... and having a good day out.' Christine Earle, Honorary Secretary of the RPSL, concurs. 'I'm looking forward to meeting up with old friends from around the world... and visiting some outlying exhibitions, especially Bletchley Park.'

Chairman of the London 2010 International Stamp Exhibition, Brian Trotter, confidently anticipates... 'a thoroughly enjoyable event, bringing together enthusiasts from around the world. All will leave with fond memories of yet another highly successful "international" held in London.'

Stamp people enjoy stamp people, and at London 2010 there's an unparalleled distillation of philatelic expertise, rare and beautiful specimens and pure passion. As Vincent Green of Sandafayre puts it, 'We're all excited about this rare opportunity to catch up with old customers and new friends from all over the world – I'll be trying hard to look as if I've had some sleep!'

‘That damned fool’ The final part of Douglas

THE ROYAL HOUSEHOLD was annoyed at Bacon’s ‘requests’ to government departments for materials to augment the King’s collection, and Sir Frederick Ponsonby (senior of the two Assistant Private Secretaries to the King) spoke to Bacon about this. So the next approach in November 1915 was through Clive Wigram, the other Assistant Private Secretary, who wrote to the Secretary of the Post Office, GEP Murray: ‘Some years ago the Board of Inland Revenue at Somerset House sent the King specimens cut from the series of registration sheets of postage stamps, which are now at the General Post Office. Since that period, sheets of a number of other stamps have been registered, and His Majesty hopes that you will let him have a pair cut from one of the corners, with full margins left on both sides, of each of these sheets, particulars of which I enclose. The King would also like to be furnished with the dates of registration in each instance, and for the future to have a similar pair sent to him of each sheet registered, with the date, so that his collection may be kept up to date.’

Storm in the Post Office This caused a furore in the Post Office, which had taken over responsibility for stamp production from the Inland Revenue, and thus the care of the collection of past registration sheets. Attitudes in response to such requests were quite different from the more relaxed view taken before. FH Nichols, the officer in immediate charge of stamp records, wrote a stinging memo. He pointed out that the Inland Revenue had given the King, then Duke of York, specimens cut from registration sheets up to 1898, but that later ones had not been cut. No mention was made of those Victorian examples obtained more recently by Bacon. He went on: ‘I am strongly of opinion (indeed I do not think the point admits of argument) that the official collection of registration sheets, which is the one and only authentic official record of British Postage stamps, ought to consist of complete sheets of stamps and not of more or less large fragments of sheets (as it unfortunately does for the whole of Queen Victoria’s reign). This view was apparently accepted by the King, for in a letter dated 3 March 1914 asking for additional specimens from certain sheets of old stamps, Major Wigram says: “His Majesty recognises that if the sheets had never been cut it would be best to keep them entire, but as several specimens have been detached at various periods he thinks that one more from each sheet can make little or no difference”.’

However, there was a duplicate collection of registration sheets in the Record Room, which was already marked for destruction. Nichols saw no great objection to stamps being cut from these. ‘If the King insists on specimens from registration sheets, I think we had better revert to the practice of having a second unperforated Registration sheet on each occasion.’ This practice of having a second registration sheet had ended when the Post Office took over the stamp work from the Inland Revenue the previous year.

Indefensible mutilation Herbert Samuel, Postmaster General, concurred: ‘The mutilation of the standard registration sheets seems to me to be wholly indefensible. I am at a loss to understand how the Board of Inland Revenue can

Evelyn Murray was Secretary of the Post Office for over 20 years



Muir's history of the King George V as collector

have permitted it. The books – as they stand – seem to me to be discreditable to that department. I see no objection to registering – on each occasion – a special sheet for His Majesty. I think it is quite a proper thing to do, if Mr Bacon will give us an undertaking that the sheets shall in all cases be kept entire, and shall not leave the King's possession.'

As a result Murray replied to Wigram with a diplomatic suggestion. 'With reference to your letter of the 17th instant, the registration sheets for all stamps issued in the latter or in the present reign are at present complete, and I think it would be a mistake to mar their completeness by detaching individual stamps.'

He understood that this view commended itself to the King and quoted Wigram's letter of March 1914. Murray then went on to mention the existing duplicate registration sheets, which could be used to provide the imprimaturs required, and suggested that an extra sheet could be provided again in future: 'It is of course important that these stamps should not find their way into the hands of philatelists, and I have no doubt that you would make arrangements that any specimens which are not required for His Majesty's purpose would be duly destroyed.'



George V described his hobby as 'the most effective means of brief forgetfulness'

Complete sheets Wigram relayed this to the King who, after thanking the Post Office for all their trouble, suggested that Bacon examine the 'surplus' sheets. Subsequently, Wigram wrote officially to Murray agreeing with the proposal for an extra registration sheet in future. 'I explained to the King the gist of our conversation... His Majesty quite understands your wish to preserve intact for the Post Office as many individual registration sheets as possible, even though, in the past, individual sheets have been mutilated, thereby rendering imperfect a complete collection of sheets. In fact, I told His Majesty that you considered it a slur that the Post Office could not now boast of a complete record of sheets.'

As a result of Bacon's examination of the duplicate sheets (of the reign of King Edward VII and his own) the King asked for a corner block of four from each of these, but from those for stamp booklets he preferred a block of four or eight from the centre of the top two rows, to show the tête-bêche printing layout. Wigram continued: 'With regard to the future, the King desires me to thank you for your suggestion to print a duplicate sheet, which proposal His Majesty accepts with pleasure. As only corner blocks of four Stamps are required for the King's Collection, perhaps you would be good ►

1919. Proof taken at the
Royal Mint after
the Die had been re-
touched. The figures
"1" are thicker, etc.

Dies 34, 35.



Die proofs from the Royal Collection, alongside Bacon's distinctive handwriting

enough to destroy the remainder of the sheets without their leaving the control of the Post Office.'

Murray did instruct the Inland Revenue to provide a duplicate registration sheet on each occasion. A note by Walter Gates, an Assistant Secretary, summed up Post Office irritation at Bacon's activities: 'When I look at these and other papers, I cannot help deprecating the considerable amount of trouble which is or has been given to the IR and the PO by requests which are often only made from what one might term the curiosity-hunting point of view. And I would most respectfully suggest that, if it were possible to give a hint in the proper quarter, requests of this kind might be curtailed for the future.'

This may well have been effective. Wigram called and had an interview with Murray (who was 'most affable') but he then noted back at the Palace in a memorandum headed 'secret': 'This morning I went to see Mr Murray, fearing that friction was beginning to arise between Mr Bacon and the Post Office Secretariat, which might lead to some unpleasantness if not smoothed down. Mr Bacon, being an enthusiastic philatelist, appeared to be rather grasping as regards some of his demands for stamps.'

A year later, Bacon again wrote directly to Murray, this time clearly at the King's instigation, in connection with a Sinn Féin label, apparently cancelled in the Dublin GPO during the Easter rebellion in 1916. A delay in reply caused Bacon to write again, in umbrage, at this apparent rudeness. This brought the wrath of the Royal Household down on Wigram. He had to explain to the King, to whom Bacon had complained, that Bacon 'had no business to write direct to Mr Murray in His Majesty's name and that Sir Frederick Ponsonby had already come to an agreement with Mr Bacon on this point'. Bacon was duly contrite, claiming he had misunderstood what the arrangement was. No further correspondence was filed for three years.

Royal Mint proofs After the Great War, Bacon resumed his requests direct to the Royal Mint. This prompted questions as to whether the Post Office had been supplying the same items as the Mint. And so, on 27 August 1919, the Post Office wrote to the Royal Mint to regularise the situation. 'The Postmaster General understands that it is the practice of the Royal Mint to supply the Curator... with: A proof impression in black of each new die, and of any change in the die, prepared for the adhesive postage and 'postage and 'postage due' stamps... A proof impression in black of each new die, and of any change in the die, made for postcards, letter-cards and wrappers, and of the first embossed die of each value made for stamping envelopes.

'Specimens of the colour essays and of the stamps as finally issued are supplied to the Curator by the Post Office, and it has been suggested that it would be convenient if all proofs and specimens for the King's collection were to reach the Curator through one channel. If you see no objection perhaps you will be so good as to arrange for proofs hitherto supplied by the Royal Mint, including any now ready for transmission, to be forwarded to this Office for transmission by the Postmaster General to the Curator.' This practice was then put to place – and continues to this day.



This series is based on a chapter from Douglas N Muir's book *George V and the GPO: Stamps, Conflict & Creativity*, available from Tallents House for £19.95 plus handling

Keeping a record As both Prince and King, George kept a daily diary, which is generally dry and to the point. Meteorological notes begin each day, as befits a former sailor. And there are frequent references, when at Buckingham Palace, to working on his stamp collection – two or three times a week when possible. There are particular notes coinciding with times of high excitement or stress. In 22 June 1914, for example, he detailed, in great spirits, the new arrangements he had experienced Trooping the Colour that morning ('I never saw it better done') and then wrote: 'Spent all the afternoon with Bacon choosing more stamps...' Shortly afterward, his entry on Sunday 28 June read: 'A nice hot day 77° in the shade... We got the sad news that the poor Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife the Duchess of Hohenberg were assassinated this morning at Sarajevo by a Serbian with a revolver – they were in a motor car, it will be a terrible shock to the dear old Emperor and is most regrettable and sad. We dined alone. Marked my new stamp catalogue. Bed at 11.30.'

Throughout the terrible war that ensued, he records that when in London he often worked at his stamps with Bacon 'before and after luncheon.' He believed that this retreat helped him to preserve his health and reason in the war years – he wrote that it was 'the most effective means of brief forgetfulness'. When his main biographers said anything at all about George and his collection it tended to be rather disparaging. On one thing, however, they were united. It was indeed, for him, a refuge – what one described as 'the solace of stamp album and shotgun'.

Greatest collection At the time of his death in January 1936, his collection comprised some 328 albums containing almost a quarter of a million stamps, all bound in three-quarter morocco red leather and described by Bacon in his small, neat hand. It had become a deliberate, vast, record of the stamps of the British Empire and remains the greatest in existence. ●

The London International Past glories

Colin Searle traces the history of London's international exhibitions from 1890 into the new millennium

LONDON HELD ITS FIRST international stamp exhibition exactly 50 years after the 1840 launch of the world's first postage stamp, the Penny Black. Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh (Queen Victoria's second son)

opened the May event and even displayed stamps from his own albums. These went on to form the basis of King George V's outstanding collection, which is, of course, the focus of this year's Festival of Stamps. Alfred visited this first show on several occasions, along with his nephew, Prince George. And in July 1897 at the second international exhibition, some of his rare collection was displayed in the Court of Honour.

Nine years later, more than 4,000 visitors attended the next event in the Royal Horticultural Society Hall in Victoria, and there were 257 varied exhibits, again including some from the future king's collection – notably the famous Mauritius 2d. In 1911 the President of the Junior Philatelic Society, Fred Melville, proposed that it sponsor the Jubilee exhibition in 1912. The Society also launched a competition to design an 'Ideal' penny stamp to replace the unpopular Downey Head issues. A model stamp factory was erected at the Royal Horticultural Society Hall to produce the winning entry, which went on sale at the show.

Melville's double In 1923 organising the first exhibition after the Great War fell again to Fred Melville. This time there was a budget of £4,000 – over four times that of the previous exhibition – and the stamps on show were insured for more than £2 million at 1923 prices. Highlights included the British Guiana one cent magenta and a Western Australian inverted Swan error. New airmail-themed labels were produced specially for the exhibition.

As it fell in the same year as the outbreak of Second World War, the 1940 event was scaled down and held at the smaller London Museum. King George VI lent some items from the Royal Collection and the Post Office celebrated the centenary of the release of the first stamp by issuing six stamps featuring portraits of Queen Victoria and her great-grandson King George VI.

The Royal Philatelic Society, London (RPSL) and the British Philatelic Association (BPA) organised the May 1950 exhibition where more than 31,000 visitors posted some 150,000 items of mail. King George VI visited the exhibition with Princess Margaret, and again lent material from the Royal Collection. There were just over 900 frames on show, supported by exhibits from 26 countries. The Post Office lent Rowland Hill's diary from 1840 and the original die of the Penny

One of the airmail-themed stamps issued at the 1923 Royal Agricultural Hall exhibition



Black. More than 1,000 frames were displayed at the July 1960 event at the Royal Festival Hall, where the Queen exhibited 'Stamps of 100 Years Ago', the Post Office provided historic documents from their archives, and two stamps were issued marking the General Letter Office's tercentenary. The 1960 Grand Prix was awarded to Reginald M Phillips for his Great Britain display and, in 1965, he presented his collection to the nation, which famously formed the basis for the founding of the National Postal Museum (now the BPMA).

An exciting new age The Philatelic Traders' Society joined the RPSL and BPA in organising the 1970 exhibition, which was held at Olympia. Three David Gentleman designs showing early stamp-printing processes were issued for the event. With 129 stands and 3,745 frames on show, 'Philympia' celebrated the great changes in British philately that had happened during the 1960s. The foundation of the Philatelic Bureau and its Philatelic Bulletin, the National Postal Museum, and Tony Benn's more liberal policy on issuing stamps were all advancements of the era. And it was the first time that commemorative stamps from overseas administrations – such as Gibraltar, Grenada and the Maldives – were issued.

'London 1980' was staged at Earl's Court under the patronage of the Fédération Internationale de Philatélie – a first for Britain. The event was also supported by the Post Office and this led to the launch of Britain's first miniature sheets. There were displays from the Royal Collection, the British Library's Tapling collection and unique material from the Post Office archives. Many Commonwealth and foreign countries also issued stamps, booklets and miniature sheets for the event. The number of frames and dealers at the show rose to 4,385 and 190 respectively. Attendance grew again to 95,000 for 1990's Stamp World London, held at Alexandra Palace, which saw the 150th anniversary of the Penny Black and a commemorative issue featuring the Machin head with Queen Victoria's silhouette taken from an original Penny Black die. It was the most popular exhibition to date and launched a resurgence in the hobby over the following years.

The Stamp Show 2000, sponsored by Royal Mail and held at Earl's Court, was a huge event that took four years to organise. More than 55,000 people attended, many coming to view the largely unseen Royal Collection. Special souvenirs included miniature Machin sheets, showing Jeffery Matthews' new colours, and reproduction Penny Blacks printed on the original press. The Smilers® instant stamps booth also proved very popular.

Which brings us to this year's celebrations. The 2010 London International Stamp Exhibition carries British philately to ever higher exhibition standards and, it is hoped, will inspire a new generation of collectors over the decade to come •



Top: two of the 1970 issues designed by Gentleman, which depict different printing methods. Below: a sheet of the 2000 Smilers®



Real keepers Exhibition collectibles to treasure



POSTAL UNION CONGRESS STAMP
ROYAL MAIL STAMP REPRODUCTION

*Approved
H. Parkes
7 March 1929*



Issued on 8 May: above, Postal Union Congress Facsimile Pack, £4.95; right, Jeffery Matthews London 2010 Exhibition Philatelic Stamp Sheet, £4.95; below left, Postcards, £3.95 per pack of six, featuring images of the era of George V, including this vintage mail van and an image of the very first Airmail flight; below right, the striking Exhibition handstamp



Business Design Centre, London 8-15 May 2010

EXHIBITION SOUVENIR



One-stop stamp site James Hall feels at home online with this most convivial website

MY FIRST VISIT to **www.philatelydatabase.com** was memorable, in the way one might remember a first encounter with a fine wine. And please don't scoff until you have had a taste yourself, because this site really is a modern classic. With appeal for philatelists of all levels of experience and specialisms, the design and content are refined but relaxed in tone; at once authoritative and compelling.

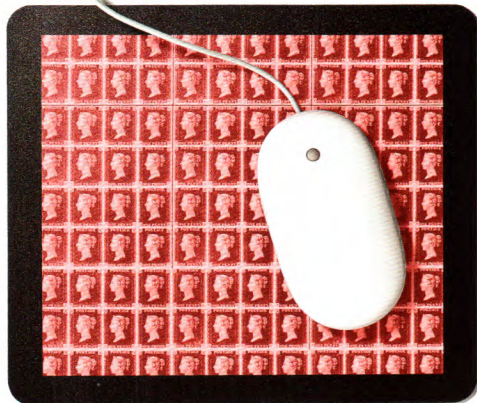
The Philately Database home page carries teasers for a dozen or so fresh and fascinating stories from around the world, plus an inviting array of links to news feeds, thematic articles, discussion threads, a weekly opinion poll and an invitation to subscribe to a free weekly newsletter. The main sections of the site are well conceived and delivered, all well worth a visit: Stamp Profiles, Video, Maps, Dictionary, Crosswords, Directories, Facebook Forums and Post Office.

Co-founders Richard Turton and William Cochrane worked on the concept for more than a year before the site launched in 2007: 'We both worked for the journal *Philately from Australia* between 2005 and 2006,' Turton recalls, 'and very much wanted to take that publication online, but couldn't get the idea authorised, so we made our own site. We wanted to create an online archive for articles that would otherwise be lost or only available to society members.'

Now one is based in Leeds and the other in Australia, and they 'utilise Skype and email to best advantage.' The quality of the writing is the best I have seen on a stamp website; all is clear, readable and modern, presenting stamp collecting as very much alive and part of the present. Turton's considerable experience in Graphic Design is immediately evident.

'We listen very closely to our readers,' he says. 'The site has changed a lot in response to their needs and concerns. We initially had an online Forum section that was integrated into the site itself, but we saw that Facebook was growing at an incredible rate. Our Facebook page is a relatively new undertaking for us, but we are pleased with the positive response. So far most members look to exchange stamps. We also use Twitter, primarily to publish our rss feed and bring in new readers from that social network. We listen to our readers very closely and the site has changed greatly from its inception due to their needs and concerns. For example, it went from a three-column site to two columns in response to reader's opinions. And it is always great when we receive comments from readers who recognise relatives or personal connections in the articles. One that comes to mind was the grand-daughter or great grand-daughter of the distinguished Irish philatelist Lane Joynt. After she discovered our article about him, she wanted to pass on some of his philatelic collection and we were happy to point her towards David Beech at the British Library.'

PhilatelyDatabase.com is that kind of place. Bulletin readers will revel in it ●



Celebrating sport The philatelic countdown to

The artists responsible,
top row, left to right:

a) Paralympic Games: Rowing
by Marian Hill

b) Shooting by David Hillman
c) Modern Pentathlon by
Katherine Baxter

d) Taekwondo by James Fryer
e) Cycling by Matthew Dennis

Bottom row, left to right:

f) Paralympic Games: Table
Tennis by Michael Craig-Martin

g) Hockey by Darren Hopes

h) Football by Alex Williamson

i) Paralympic Games: Goalball
by Tobatron

j) Boxing by Stephen Ledwidge



TEN NEW OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC stamps are released on Tuesday 27 July this year, the second set in a series of three, comprising 30 stamps in total, in celebration of London's hosting of the 30th Olympiad and 2012 Paralympic Games. The 30 designs allow one stamp to represent each of the Olympic and Paralympic sports. The first set came out in October 2009 and the final ten will be issued in 2011.

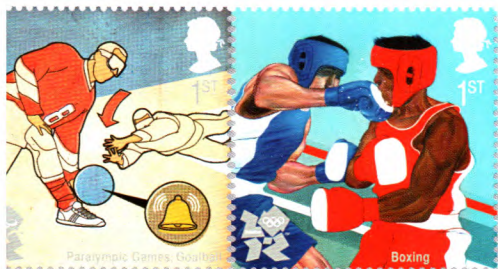
Created by a range of contemporary artists (see caption, left) this 2010 set depicts Paralympic Rowing, Paralympic Table Tennis and Paralympic Goalball; Shooting, Modern Pentathlon, Taekwondo, Cycling, Hockey, Football and Boxing. Each stamp also bears the London 2012 Olympic Games or Paralympic Games logo.

The stamps are printed in litho in two sheets, bearing se-tenant strips of five stamps; each individual design is thus available in vertical strips of five. Associated stamp products include the Royal Mail fully illustrated presentation pack containing the full set of ten mint stamps, with text provided by Ian Cole, a former Sports News Editor of the *Daily Mail*.

Also available in July are a commemorative sheet, ten postcards, and a commemorative coin and stamp cover.

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Orders for serviced first day covers must reach the Royal Mail (at the address given below) by 22 October 2010. Customers may also send stamped envelopes on the day of issue to Royal Mail, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB, to receive the Tallents House, Edinburgh postmark. As an alternative pictorial and non-pictorial Badminton Glos postmarks will be available for the issue. Sponsored special handstamps will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin* •

London 2012 continues with more handsome commemoratives



Below: the boldly illustrated commemorative presentation pack contains the full set of ten mint stamps and information about each of the sports featured

Above right: stamp book No 3 includes Paralympic Rowing and Paralympic Table Tennis stamps

London 2012 stamp prices

Set of stamps	£4.10
Presentation pack	£4.60
First day cover envelope	£0.30
Serviced first day cover stamps, UK customers	£5.29
Serviced first day cover stamps, overseas customers	£4.51
Stamp cards sets	£4.00
Commemorative sheet	£13.50
Coin and stamp cover	£17.50
Stamp book	£2.46



Commemorative covers New this month

Orders and enquiries

GB Covers

102 Regal Way, Kenton,
Harrow, Middlesex HA3 0RY
Phone 0208 907 7252
Email derek@gbcovers.co.uk

Cotswold & Stuart Covers

PO Box 100, York YO26 9SS
Phone 0844 980 9772
Email em@postmark.co.uk

M Tanner

180 Whitehorse Road, West
Croydon, Surrey CR0 2LA
Phone 020 8684 9757



GB Covers A limited edition of 37 Official First Day Covers, with a special Stewart badge handstamp, (an issue of 29 Miniature sheet covers also available). **Price** Each authorised and numbered, £16 plus £2 p&p ●



Cotswold and Stuart Covers have produced this cover for the Festival of Stamps. Designed for the 8 May Miniature Sheet issue, Jeffery Matthews Palette Souvenir Sheet and the Prestige Booklet set First Day Covers. Also available on 6 May is a different design cover for the Miniature Sheet. **Prices** Miniature Sheet £6.75, Palette Souvenir Sheet £9.50, First Day Covers £19.50, 6 May Miniature Sheet £9.50. UK p&p £1.20 ●

GB Covers A limited edition of 37 Official First Day Covers, with a special W (Air Raid Warden) handstamp. An edition of 26 miniature sheet FDCs and 14 sets of four covers for the PSB also available. Each cover is authorised and numbered. **Price** £16 plus £2 p&p ●



M Tanner Limited to 20 numbered copies, this unusual AA Milne/Rolling Stones cover features, Cotchford Farm, once owned by the author and also the place where Rolling Stone, Brian Jones, died. Winnie the Pooh 11 stamp plus 1st Class Rolling Stones Let it Bleed Album Cover stamp are postmarked Park Lane, W1 (7/01/2010). Suitable for later dual postmarks. **Price** £17.99 plus £1.50 worldwide p&p ●



Cover producers wishing to announce a recent or forthcoming cover should submit copy of up to 75 words in the style above. The text should briefly describe the cover, state the stamps and postmarks it will bear, and give retail prices and an address for orders and enquiries. Announcements are published on a first-come-first-served basis and may be modified or shortened at the Editor's discretion. Royal Mail cannot enter into correspondence or telephone conversations concerning covers announced here.

Competition rules

1 Promotions are open to all readers of Bulletin aged 18 and over, except employees of Royal Mail Group Ltd or Redwood, their immediate families, their agents, or anyone professionally connected with these promotions. 2 The closing date for receipt of entries is 9th June 2010. 3 Responsibility cannot be accepted for entries which are incomplete, delayed, wrongly delivered, damaged or not received for whatever reason. Proof of posting is not proof of receipt. Prizes must be accepted as offered. No cash alternative to prizes and prizes are not transferable. 4 Winners will be notified by post within 28 days of closing date. 5 For competitions where readers must answer a question or solve a crossword, winners will be the first correct entrants drawn at random by an independent person after the closing date. 6 Promoter's decision on any aspect of the promotions is final and binding and no correspondence will be entered into. 7 Entry implies acceptance of these rules. 8 In the case of businesses, consent of the owner/line manager will be required to enter the draw. Any tax liability arising as a result of winning the prize is the responsibility of the individual. 9 Prizes are subject to suitability and availability. The promoter reserves the right to substitute a prize of equal or greater value should circumstances make this necessary. 10 The promoter reserves the right to suspend or cancel or hold void any of the competitions or prize draws at any time without notice. 11 Winners' names and counties are available 28 days after the closing date. Send a SAE to Sharon May, Bulletin, 7 St Martin's Place, London WC2N 4HA. 12 The promoter is Royal Mail Group Ltd, 100 Victoria Embankment, London EC4Y 0HQ.

Festival prize draws Win a 2010 Memento Collection



February Identify The detail shown was from the 26p Christian's Tale stamp in the Millennium series of 1999. Our winner was John S Childs of Nottinghamshire.

February Knowledge Answers: 1) Ruby 2) Above & Beyond 3) 1949. Our winner was B T McCarthy of Hampshire.

Runners-up prizes were also awarded in each competition. Our thanks to all who entered.

FIRSTLY identify the stamp from the detail above. Send your answer to May *Identify* Competition, The Philatelic Bulletin, Redwood, 7 St Martin's Place, London WC2N 4HA to arrive by 9 June 2010.

Secondly, test your philatelic knowledge by answering the following questions. Send your answers to May *Knowledge* Competition at the above address to arrive by 9 June 2010.

1 What is the name of the floating independent principality in the North Sea, six miles off the coast of Suffolk, with its own postage stamps?

2 The 1985 Royal Mail Insects commemorative

issue included images of a bee, dragonfly, stag beetle, ladybird and which other insect?

3 What is Britain's smallest stamp?

Send your answers on a postcard by 9 June 2010 to the Editor, address on Contents page 259.

The senders of the first correct answers drawn after the closing date will receive a prize selection of Festival of Stamps-related philatelic mementoes. One runner-up prize of a presentation pack, first day cover or set of stamp cards will be awarded in each competition. Please read the prize draw rules and regulations on the facing page, left.

Events

3 May-31 Oct Rugby post – display of rugby-related stamps at the Twickenham World Rugby Museum, Tues-Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 11am-5pm. £6/£4 concs.

18 May GPO London Walking Tour: 1-4pm, meet Farringdon Station. £ 6/£5 concs/£4 Friends of BPMA.

11 May Enschedé Talk: The King's Stamps – 7-8pm at BPMA, London WC1. Free. Call 020 7239 2570 or email info@postalheritage.co.uk to book a place.

19 May Strand Stamp Fair, The Royal National Hotel, Bedford Way, London WC1H 0DG, 9am-4pm, 020-8946 4489. Presentation on Abolition Stamps at the Museum of London Docklands, 1-2pm.

20 May Talk: The Design is in the Post – Artists and the GPO. 7-8pm at the Phoenix Centre, London WC1. Free. To book, call or email BPMA, as shown left.

22 May Federation of South Wales Convention, The Princess Royal Theatre, Civic Centre, Port Talbot. Contact: 01656 740520.

25 May Tour the Post Abolition display, Museum of London Docklands, 2-2.30pm. Free.

27 May RPSL Talk: Alan Anyon and Dieter Bortfeldt – A different look at Colombia, 1pm. Members and guests.

27 May Talk: Illustrating Britain and Stamp Design, Phoenix Centre, London WC1, London WC1. 7-8pm. Free. To book, call or email BPMA, as above.

29 May Colne Valley Postal History Museum special openings, Halstead, Essex; 10am-4pm. Free. The Solent Stamp & Postcard Show, St James Road Methodist Hall, Shirley, Southampton, 10am-4pm. Contact 01202 303053 ●



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Even more excitingly, every entry made at the Royal Mail stand will also be put into a closing day draw, for a complete set of all four 'Seahorses' stamps: the 2/6 brown; 5s red; 10s blue and the very rare £1 green. These stamps really are fit for a King, so visit the Royal Mail stand for your chance to win.



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No purchase necessary. Simply complete an entry form at the Royal Mail stand during the eight days of the Exhibition. Only one entry per person per day. Terms and conditions apply.