

BRITISH PHILATELIC

The ROYAL MAIL magazine *for stamp collectors*

Volume 45 Number 1

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Bulletin

Christmas • A cinema theme
Birds in recovery • PO Rifles



Forthcoming issues and withdrawals



Cover Detail from the portrait of Lieutenant General Sir John Moore by Thomas Lawrence, painted c1805. The uniform is a Lieutenant General's coatee, with the Bath Star. Courtesy of the Council of the National Army Museum, London.

Issues All items are available from Royal Mail Tallents House (address below); selected items are available at Post Office branches and Post Office philatelic outlets at main post offices in Bath, Birmingham, Brighton, Bristol, Cambridge, Canterbury, Cardiff, Chester, Colchester, Coventry, Croydon, Durham, Edinburgh, Exeter, Glasgow, Grimsby, Harrogate, Leicester, London (Trafalgar Square & Eastcheap), Newcastle upon Tyne, Norwich, Nottingham, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Southampton, Southend-on-Sea, Stevenage, Stratford-on-Avon, Stroud, Truro, Windsor and York.

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28 August	Issue Endangered Species (Birds) stamp cards ● 6 × 1st stamp book with Harry Potter advert on inside front cover, printed by Walsall
30 August	Withdrawal Three Kings miniature sheet
4 September	Issue Endangered Species (Birds) stamps and presentation pack ● Canada Post Endangered Species pack and New Zealand Post Native Wildlife pack
11 September	Withdrawal Business sheets: 100 × 2nd class, 100 × 1st class, issued May 2006
13 September	Issue Army Uniforms stamp cards
16 September	Withdrawal Stamp books: 6 × 1st, 12 × 2nd, 12 × 1st, issued April 2006
20 September	Issue Army Uniforms stamps, presentation pack, PSB and Royal Mail/BFPO joint cover ● N Ireland 2nd and 1st class stamps printed in gravure ● Stamp books: 6 × 1st with bilingual postcode text inside
20 September	Withdrawal VC stamps, miniature sheet, prestige book, pack, and stamp cards
30 September	Withdrawal VC miniature sheet press sheet
1 October	Withdrawal 6 × 1st stamp book with Stamp Collecting advert on inside front cover
2 October	Withdrawal Sounds of Britain stamps, presentation pack and stamp cards
9 October	Issue Royal Diamond Wedding stamp cards
16 October	Issue Royal Diamond Wedding Anniversary stamps, miniature sheet, presentation pack, miniature sheet press sheet, souvenir cover and £5 coin
16 October	Withdrawal Smilers 2005 stamp book, Smilers 2006 presentation pack and stamp cards, Extra Special Moments generic sheet
30 October	Issue Christmas stamp cards

Contents



Lights! Camera! Action!

Karen Foy explores how the magic of the movies can be captured in a collection with a cinema theme: from early silent films to the golden age of Hollywood, and on to the blockbusters of today **18**

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Issues and withdrawals to October 2

This month The Editor previews this issue **4**

Stamp scene Croypex 100; Autumn Stampex; ASSS journal; Machins at the RCA; Holland in bloom; St Petersburg's international; Journals competition; Philatelic speakers seminar **4**

Royal Mail news Royal Diamond Wedding; New edition of Queen's stamps book; Country stamps and new books; Generic and Smilers sheets; BPMA; *Bulletin* success **9**

Treasures of the BPMA The Post Office Rifles, by Martin Robonson **12**



Britain abroad Robert Baden-Powell, by James Mackay **14**



Christmas A preview of Royal Mail's traditional festive issue **16**



Species in recovery A look at the first set in a new series: Birds **22**



Philately online Going back in time with Rail Mail, by Ron Negus **25**

Life in the stamp trade Richard West talks to Fred Twining **26**

The readers reply Your opinions of the Machin and self-service post **28**

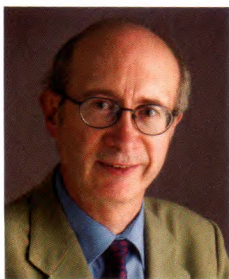
Special draw Win the 2006 Yearbook **29**

Competitions £100 to be won in two easy-to-enter competitions **30**

Events **30**

Late news **31**

This month The Editor previews this issue



John Holman, Editor

THIS ISSUE starts the 45th year of the *Bulletin* and I hope you will find much to interest you in its pages. We preview the Christmas issue which this year features angels and the Madonna and child, and Karen Foy explores the world of cinema on stamps. There are three articles related to recent issues: James Mackay reports on stamps featuring Lord Baden-Powell, Dave Wariner looks at the birds on the stamps to be issued on 4 September, and Martin Robinson tells the story of the Post Office Rifles, reminding us of the Army Uniforms stamps to be issued on 20 September. Richard West meets Fred Twining, a veteran of the stamp world, and Ron Negus recalls the Post Office Railway. In June we invited your thoughts on the Machin, and I am pleased to include a selection of your views in this *Bulletin*.

This is an important month for me, as it was 50 years ago that I started stamp collecting. A lot has changed in the philatelic world (and the world in general) since 1957 and in some respects stamp collecting is not quite as gentle, scholarly and relaxing a hobby now as it was then. But it is still a very worthwhile hobby and one that continues to give me great pleasure. Over the years I have collected a variety of material, closing some collections and starting others. I still maintain five specialised collections, but have over the past decade or so also gone back to basics and restarted an all-world used collection. It is interesting to compare design styles, printing methods and postmarks from countries across the globe – what I term ‘comparative philately’. Specialised collecting can be stressful, but comparative philately is relaxing and therapeutic, and a form of collecting I recommend. It reminds me of more leisurely days, and I hope that whatever happens to the hobby, there will always be those who simply enjoy sorting and looking at stamps, improving their philatelic and general knowledge along the way. Whatever your collecting area and method, I hope you find as much satisfaction in this great hobby as I do. JOHN HOLMAN, EDITOR •

Stamp scene News and upcoming events: Glenn Morgan keeps you posted



Glenn Morgan

Croydex 100 This exhibition, marking the centenary of the Croydon Philatelic Society, will be held at the Fairfield Halls, Croydon, 3-8 September, daily from 10.00 to 16.30. It will comprise 25 small displays covering a wide range of philatelic subjects, including Brunswick & Hannover, Paris post, New Zealand, and, not surprisingly, Croydon postal history. A centenary dinner will be held on 7 September, attended by the Mayor of Croydon, representative of the Royal Philatelic Society London, and representatives from European philatelic societies visited by Croydon PS in recent years. There will be a stamp fair (28 dealers) and a display of GB material from the reigns of Victoria, George V, George VI and Elizabeth II from the Royal Philatelic Collection on Saturday 8 September. Staff from Bonhams auc-

tioners will be on hand to give free valuations, and members of the Croydon Philatelic Society will be present to answer questions about the Society and the displays. Croypex promises to be a worthwhile celebratory event in the lead-up to the ABPS Croydon 2007 exhibition and the Philatelic Congress to be held at the Fairfield Halls in November. The Fairfield Halls are near East Croydon station •

Croydon Philatelic Society

The Society has more than 130 members; for details see www.croydonps.org.uk

Stampex Autumn Stampex will be at the Business Design Centre, Upper Street, Islington, London N1, 19-22 September. Opening hours are 12.00-19.00 on Wednesday, 09.30-18.00 Thursday and Friday, and 09.30-17.00 on Saturday. Many dealers (including about 20% from overseas) will offer everything from classic stamps to new issues, postal history to philatelic accessories. The National Youth Stamp Group caters for younger visitors by providing a host of activities, including the ever-popular Saturday afternoon auction. The Royal Mail stand will have the full range of current stamps and other products, and the Army Uniforms stamps and prestige book go on sale on the second day of the show. A special Stampex First Day of Issue postmark will be available. The British Forces Post Office will have a stand, offering their colourful covers for sale. An accompanying display will complement the new British Army Uniforms issue, and visitors can expect to see a real Field Post Office, some of their equipment, send an e-bluey and admire some military uniforms. There will be a joint stand for the Association of British Philatelic Societies and National Philatelic Society where visitors can go for information and purchase the Stampex business customized sheet (shown at right), which this year features birds on the labels alongside the Union flag stamp. The birds depicted are: robin, chaffinch, great tit, collared dove, tree sparrow, dunnock, blackbird, greenfinch, blue tit, and wood pigeon. A free exhibition postcard (No 13 in the series) features an unused design for a Song Thrush stamp for the 1998 Endangered Species stamp issue.

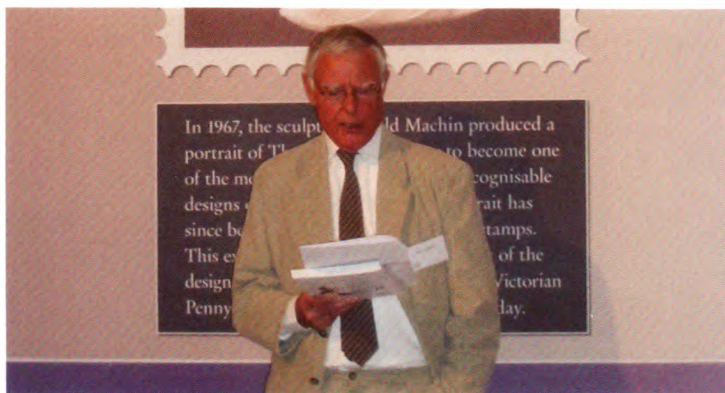
A number of societies will hold meetings at Stampex, including the GB Philatelic Society. The Business Design Centre is near Angel underground station (Northern line) and there are plenty of eating places nearby •

Astro Space Stamp Society Issue 74 of *Orbit*, the Society's journal, has recently appeared. Within its 42 A4 pages (some in colour) can be found much to interest the collector of this fascinating discipline. Articles include the Shuttle story; details of USA spy, classified, secret and unknown flights, unmanned satellites on stamps and much more besides •



ASSS Address membership enquiries to: Brian J Lockyer, Secretary, ASSS, 21 Exford Close, Weston-Super-Mare BS23 4RE, email: bjlockyer.spacestamps@virgin.net

David Gentleman speaking at the opening of the BPMA's Machin anniversary exhibition at the Royal College of Art in London on 18 July.



Machin book Douglas Muir's new book *A Timeless Classic: The Evolution of Machin's Icon* is available from Tallents House, price £19.95. The 246-page well-illustrated book was reviewed by Martin Robinson in the July *Bulletin* (pages 348-49) •

ABPS society journal competition John Holman and I acted as judges this year for the ABPS society journal of the year competition. It was enjoyable reading so many publications that we might not have seen before, or might see but choose not to read because the content appears irrelevant to our interests. A detailed review revealed something of interest in every journal. The winner in the Specialist Societies Class (10 entries) was *Maple Leaves*, published by the Canadian Philatelic Society of Great Britain. Second was the *Journal of the Revenue Society of Great Britain*, and third the *Journal of the France & Colonies Philatelic Society*. There were nine entries in the Local Societies and Federations Class. The winner was the Sheffield Philatelic Society, with the Croydon Philatelic Society second, and Cornwall Philatelic Federation, and Redditch Philatelic Society in equal third place. The two winning societies received a cheque for £100, while first and second placed editors received a Certificate of Commendation at the ABPS Annual General Meeting held at Midpex back in June.

The ABPS noted: 'It is extremely heartening to see such a significant increase in the number of entries and hopes that interest in the event will continue to grow'. Our congratulations to all editors; not one entry was unworthy of submission, making the choice of winning titles very difficult •

Stamp Weekly This month sees the 40th anniversary of the publication by Link House of *Stamp Weekly*. I recall eagerly visiting WH Smith every week to get a copy of this colour tabloid newspaper, until it ceased publication after nearly 200 issues in June 1971. The first issue led with a piece on the world's rarest stamp being for sale – at that time the 1¢ British Guiana, not the yellow Swedish Triskilling stamp now holding that coveted position. It seems a shame the British philatelic market can no longer support a weekly publication. The other weekly, *Stamp Collecting*, ceased in 1984 •

World Stamp Exhibition, St Petersburg It was late November last year when news came of a World Stamp Exhibition to be held in St Petersburg, in Russia, on 19-25 June 2007. Could the organisers get it together in such a short time? Details about exhibiting were received just before Christmas, and entry forms were required by 6 January. It did happen and, by and large, proved a highly successful event, despite some last-minute qualms as Customs requirements were changed. The organisers put out all the stops to make this a good and friendly occasion.

The exhibition was staged in two halls, about five minutes' walk apart, centred around the main Post Office. Attendance in the principal hall was good, but sadly fewer seemed to find the second venue. The focus was certainly on the competitive exhibits, with over 60 nations represented, and no fewer than 56 on the judging team, including Brian Trotter and Iain Stevenson from the UK. Demand was such that not all the British collectors who applied were accepted, and in the end there were 11 entries from UK exhibitors. These achieved the following medals: Alan Huggins – Large Gold for GB Wrappers; Chris Harman – Gold plus a Special Prize for GB Revenue Duties; Patrick Reid – Gold for Tasmania: What happened to That?; Michael Smith – Gold for Orange Free State; Robin Pizer – Large Vermeil for German Exchange Control; Richard Wheatley – Vermeil for Netherlands East Indies; Edward Lawrence – Vermeil for Hong Kong and Treaty Ports; Melvin Tillman – Vermeil, South American Mails to Europe; Clive Akerman – Vermeil for Latin American Revenues; Brian Cartwright – Vermeil for Madame Joseph Revisited (Literature); and Michael Bister – Large Silver for France; Marianne de Muller.

Winners of the three Grand Prix were: Michael Ho – Grand Prix D'Honneur for China: the Small Dragon and Its Surcharges; Prakob Chirakiti – Grand Prix International for Siam Classic: The First Issue; and Igor Gorski – Grand Prix National for Rural Postal Stamps of Russia 1865-1900.

The exhibition was officially opened by Valentina Matvienko, Governor of St Petersburg, and Leonid Reiman, Minister of Information Technologies & Communications of the Russian Federation.

For guests the hospitality was superb, it being quite an experience to be taken by coach to the various venues with a police escort – needed to carve a way through the dense St Petersburg traffic. Perhaps the main surprise was that the Russian Post Office was not selling stamps, covers, and so on, in the exhibition halls. Perhaps it was felt that with the Post Office building so close, this was unnecessary, but I wonder what sales were lost as a result.

Everyone in St Petersburg, both within and outside the exhibition, was friendly and helpful. St Petersburg is a fascinating place with stunning architecture. All involved in the organisation of the event can feel satisfied with what was achieved in so short a time, and encouraged to repeat the success another time. *Richard West* ●



During the exhibition in St Petersburg, the contract was signed by the organisers of the London 2010 International Stamp Exhibition and FIP, the International Federation of Philately. Signing the contract were Brian Trotter, Chairman of the London 2010 organising committee (left), and Peter McCann, FIP Consultant for the London exhibition.

NPS enquiries National Philatelic Society, c/o British Postal Museum & Archive, Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London WC1X 0DL. Telephone 020 7239 2571 or see www.ukphilately.org.uk/nps

Philatelic speakers seminar The National Philatelic Society is holding a seminar entitled 'Philatelic Society Speakers – what to expect from them and what they should expect of you!' on 6 September. This provides an opportunity to consider and discuss the way you display and how you treat speakers visiting your philatelic societies. This will be led by Jeremy Martin, a notable postal historian and a strong supporter of the West African Study Circle, Society of Postal Historians and his local society in Salisbury. He is co-author of a pamphlet which discusses the 'do's and don'ts' of philatelic displaying from both the presenter's and the audience's point of view. The seminar takes place at the Phoenix Centre, Phoenix Place, London WC1X 0DL. There will be a charge of £5 (£3 for NPS members) to cover refreshments and expenses. Places are limited; apply by 1 September.

Forthcoming NPS displays at the National include 'World Poster Stamps' by Charles Kiddle (on 8 September) and 'The Post Office Goes to War' by Christine Earle (13 October). Visitors are always welcome •

Holland in bloom TNT Post in the Netherlands has issued one of two 'unique' stamp sets planned for this year (details of the second set are still under wraps). The flower stamps, issued on 1 May 2007, come in sheetlets of ten and contain real seeds of five different flowers, including petunias, toad-flax, snapdragons and lobelia, that you can grow yourself.

As far as TNT Post can ascertain, these are the first stamps with 'real flowers' instead of only a picture of them. The seeds are embedded in the stamp beneath a thin layer of plastic and the recipient simply peels back the plastic, plants the stamp and seeds, and watches them bloom. The humble postage stamp has come a long way since 1840! •



Royal Mail news New issues and products



Diamond Wedding products The stamps for the 60th wedding anniversary of The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh were shown in July's *Bulletin*; they go on sale on 16 October. In addition, there will be a souvenir cover bearing the 1972 Silver Wedding and 1997 Golden Wedding stamps in addition to the new issue. Price £14.99. The Royal Mint £5 coin for the anniversary will also be available from Tallents House in a silver proof version in a presentation box, price £34. The reverse of this coin features the north rose window of Westminster Abbey, and the obverse a new double portrait of The Queen and the Duke.

Details of a coin cover and commemorative document, both available from 20 November, will be given next month ●

Generic and Smilers sheets Following on from the Wales and England sheets (1 March and 23 April 2007), a Glorious Scotland generic sheet goes on sale on 30 November, and a Northern Ireland sheet is scheduled for March. The Scotland sheet contains 20 1st class Lion Rampant stamps and adjoining pictorial labels featuring Eilean Donan, the Isle of Skye, the Forth Rail Bridge, Bagpipes, Rosslyn Chapel, Edinburgh Castle, The Old Course St Andrews, Skara Brae Orkney, Highland Games, and Spean Bridge. Price £7.35. A Smilers version, with your own image printed on the labels, will be available.

It is proposed to issue a Glorious UK sheet featuring all four countries in September 2008 and the labels on this sheet will feature a particular theme. We invite our readers to suggest their favourite five themes (for example architecture, the countryside, flora and fauna, sport, transport, etc). Simply write your three suggested themes on a postcard and send, with your name and address, to: UK Themes, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ by 28 September. All cards will be entered into a draw, and the senders of the first six cards drawn will be sent the four country generic sheets ●

For information on the Smilers service phone 0845 074 2000 (UK customers) or +44 131 316 7489 (overseas), or see website: www.royalmail.com/smilers

Special issues The special issue this month is Army Uniforms which goes on sale on 20 September, the second day of Autumn Stampex. The stamps were shown here in June. This month we preview the 2007 Christmas stamps (see page 16) ●

The new stamp book to be issued on 20 September.

To check Postcodes and addresses for free go to

www.royalmail.com/Postcodes4free

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New country stamps and stamp books The 2nd and 1st class Northern Ireland country stamps have now been printed by De La Rue in gravure, and will go on sale at Post Office branches in the Province as supplies of the existing litho printings are used up. Supplies will go on philatelic sale on 20 September.

A new stamp book goes on philatelic sale on 20 September and will be available at Post Office branches and retail outlets as stocks require. It contains six 1st class definitives with revised postcode information on the inside front cover – this gives the Royal Mail postcode website address and has text in both English and Welsh (as shown above). The book was printed by Walsall in gravure and costs £2.04.

Please note that the 2005 Smilers book will be withdrawn from sale on 16 October. The 6 × 1st book with the stamp collecting advert on the inside front cover (shown here in October 2006) will be withdrawn on 1 October. The 'Love' stamp book (January 2007) is now out of stock ●

BPMA British Postal Museum and Archive, Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London WC1, near Mount Pleasant sorting office.

For further information see website www.postalheritage.org.uk

British Postal Museum and Archive Visitors to the BPMA at Freeling House can see 'A Timeless Classic: The Evolution of Machin's Icon', a small but interesting exhibition to mark the 40th anniversary of the Machin definitive. Vehicles from the BPMA's 'Moving the Mail' exhibition can be seen at Grampian Transport Museum, Alford, Aberdeenshire until 31 October.

The BPMA is open Monday-Wednesday & Friday 10.00-17.00, Thursday 10.00-19.00. It is also open on Saturdays on 13 October, and 8 December, 10.00-17.00. Archive Tours are held at 14.00 on the last Thursday of each month until November ●

Bulletin success *The British Philatelic Bulletin* (2006 issues) received a silver-bronze award at the 10th New Zealand Philatelic Literature Exhibition, 2007. Douglas Myall received a bronze for his *40 Years of Machins – a Timeline* (British Philatelic Bulletin Publication No 13), and a silver-gold for the CD version of *The Complete Deegam Machin Handbook*. Glenn Morgan received a bronze for *British Stamp Printers* (Bulletin Publication No 12) ●

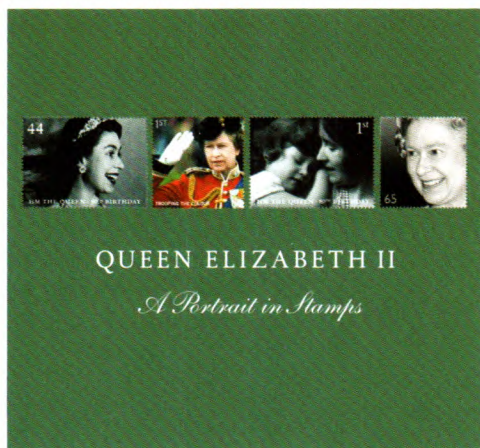


Royal Mail/BFPO joint cover

Shown here is the Royal Mail/BFPO joint cover for the Army Uniforms stamps, to go on sale from 20 September, price £9.99. The covers travelled from the UK to an Army base in Germany by land via the Channel Tunnel, and bear a cachet to this effect.

Queen's stamps book Royal Mail is publishing a new edition of the popular *Queen Elizabeth II: A Portrait in Stamps* book, first published for The Queen's golden jubilee five years ago. The fascinating stories behind the stamps featuring Her Majesty are told in this unique book, written by Fay Sweet, and a joint publishing collaboration by Royal Mail and The British Library.

The image of royalty has changed in the half-century since The Queen's accession in 1952, and stamps have reflected this change. There are colour reproductions of every UK stamp featuring Her Majesty, from the Wilding definitives to the forthcoming Diamond Wedding Anniversary set, together with many stamps from the Commonwealth. 128 pages, 250 colour images, paperback. Price £9.95 plus handling charge: £2.95 UK, £5 Europe, £14 rest of world •



Buy now! Sales of Victoria Cross stamps, miniature sheet, pack and stamp cards end on 20 September. The VC coin cover remains on sale •

Storing the Bulletin Binders and box files are available for storing this and the *Postmark Bulletin*. The sturdy box files, in maroon for the *Philatelic Bulletin* and green for the *Postmark Bulletin* are available from Royal Mail Tallents House, price £9.95 each. Order codes PB349 (Philatelic), PB350 (Postmark). The files will store 30 copies of the Philatelic and about 50 of the Postmark Bulletins. The traditional binders for the Philatelic (BB001) and Postmark (PB322) Bulletins cost £8.50 each •



Treasures of the BPMA Martin Robinson uncovers a long

ON 20 September Royal Mail is to issue a set of stamps and a prestige book showing the development of British Army uniforms. Further stamps will follow in 2008 and 2009 featuring uniforms of the Royal Air Force and Royal Navy. The army uniforms shown on the six stamps in the first set date from the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, the two World Wars and the present day.

There is a long and distinguished history of the postal services during wartime and the importance of maintaining communications for soldiers and civilians alike has never been underestimated. Postal services were maintained with little interruption during the Blitz, and a famous and often-reproduced photo shows a London postman clambering over rubble in a bombed street to make a collection from a pillar box, symbolising the nation's determination to carry on in spite of the wartime difficulties. The morale of serving soldiers is maintained by regular contact with their loved ones, as is epitomised in *Mailshot*, the history of the Forces Postal Service (published in 1987 by the Defence Postal & Courier Services, Royal Engineers).

The Post Office Rifles was formed in 1867 after Fenians set off bombs in London and Manchester to draw attention to their campaign for Irish independence, and 1,600 Post Office employees were enrolled as special constables commanded by Major J L Du Plat Taylor. The following year the Postmaster General approved a proposal that 1,000 of these men form a volunteer regiment of soldiers, the 49th Middlesex Rifle Volunteers, the Post Office Rifles under Du Plat Taylor, who was now gazetted as Lieutenant-Colonel. In 1877 he suggested the formation of an Army Postal Corps within the Regular Army. With unrest in Egypt in 1882 threatening the vital Suez Canal, the War Office revived the idea, and a hundred men from what was now the 24th Middlesex Rifles were dispatched, serving for three months and coming under fire at the battle of Kassassin.

Sir Garnet Wolseley, the army commander in Egypt, found their work so useful that an Army Post Office Corps, still attached to the 24th Mid-



This page: officers of the Post Office Rifles regiment in 1903 (top), and officers and men of the regiment in 1882.

dlesex, became part of the Royal Engineers' reserve, but did not see service again until the South African War in 1899, where they set up a field post office. It was not without its critics, however; the young Winston Churchill, then a reporter for the *Morning Post*, complained of letters being delayed or going astray. 16 officers and 1,000 men from other companies of the 24th Middlesex also vol-

and distinguished record of postal workers' wartime service



Above: an officer in review dress, 1903, and cap badge of the 8th Battalion, City of London Regiment (Post Office Rifles).

unentered for overseas service as riflemen, the largest contribution by any volunteer regiment, and they suffered 46 deaths through injury or disease. Under the Territorial and Reserve Forces Bill of 1907, all part-time Volunteer and Yeomanry regiments were brought into the Territorial Army, the 24th Middlesex becoming the 8th Battalion, City of London Regiment (Post Office Rifles).

Upon the outbreak of the First World War the large number of recruits led to the formation of a second Post Office Rifles battalion, the 2nd/8th Londons. Both battalions served in France from 1915 until the end of the war, suffering 1,800 dead and 4,500 wounded; at the battle of Wurst Farm Ridge in September 1917 more than half the 2nd/8th were killed or wounded. Its men received 40 medals for gallantry, including the Victoria Cross won by Sergeant A.J. Knight, who single-handedly captured a German machine gun position, bayoneting two of the crew. This medal was put on display in the BPMA search room at Freeling House to coincide with a set of stamps celebrating the 150th anniversary of the Victoria Cross in September 2006. At the same time Sergeant Knight was shown on a postcard issued for Autumn Stampex in that year, and a road was named after him in Birmingham.

In later years the Post Office connection was to become diluted: in 1921 the 8th Battalion Londons was amalgamated with the 7th, who were not Post Office men; then in 1935 it became the 32nd (7th City of London) Anti-Aircraft Battalion, Royal Engineers, and then in 1940, the 32nd Searchlight Regiment, Royal Artillery.

The BPMA collection of Post Office Rifles material includes medals, a sword presented to the Duke of Teck (honorary colonel, 1876-1900) and a host of papers, minutes and correspondence. The British Forces Post Office at Mill Hill Barracks has a collection of related paintings, prints, silverware, medals and other memorabilia. There are memorials at Abbots Langley, Paignton, and Uckfield, and a book of remembrance at St Botolphs in Aldersgate, London EC1. The Post Office Rifles' badge is one of those cut into the chalk hillside at Fovant, Wiltshire. The National Postal Museum, forerunner of the BPMA, published two relevant postcards: ss/1 issued 29 January 1981, featuring Terence Cuneo's painting of Sgt Knight winning his Victoria Cross at Ypres in 1917; and ss/10 issued 22 July 1982, showing a contemporary engraving of the Post Office Rifles leaving St Martins-le-Grand for Egypt in August 1882 •

Britain abroad Lord Robert Baden-Powell,



Joseph Gillain's illustration of the World Chief Scout at the 1929 jamboree, featured on a recent miniature sheet issued by Belgium.

NEXT TO royalty and Rowland Hill, the founder of the Scout movement has probably been portrayed on more stamps than any other Briton, although he is conspicuously absent from British stamps themselves.

The youngest colonel in the British Army, he became a national hero for his successful defence of Mafeking, besieged by the Boers for 217 days in 1900, and it was at that time that he made his philatelic debut, on the 3d stamp produced for the Mafeking local post. Rumours that Queen Victoria was 'not amused' can be discounted, as he was immediately promoted to major-general and awarded the C.B. He later became Inspector General of Cavalry and retired from active service in 1910 with the rank of lieutenant-general.

His change of direction began in 1903 when he was guest of honour at a great Boys Brigade rally in the Albert Hall. Four years later, at the age of 50, he organised a camp on Brownsea Island for 20 boys drawn from both the public schools and the working classes. Out of this arose the Scouting movement, which rapidly spread around the

world. At the first world jamboree in 1920 he was acclaimed World Chief Scout, a title he enjoyed until his death in 1941.

The image featured most often on stamps, the painting by David Jagger shown opposite, was commissioned by the Scouts and presented to Baden-Powell at the Arrowe Park Jamboree marking the movement's coming of age. In the same year he was created Baron Baden-Powell of Gilwell. More than half a century passed after the Mafeking 3d before Baden-Powell next appeared on stamps. In 1953 Liechtenstein hosted the 14th International Scout Conference and released a set of four in a standard design by Canon A Frommelt, a portrait based on a photograph taken at the 1929 jamboree. Frommelt also produced a rather strange caricature version of this for the 1957 photogravure stamp marking the centenary of Baden-Powell's birth. Most of the stamps issued that year, however, used the Jagger portrait, reproduced many times since then, and almost an icon of Scouting. It has reappeared on many stamps this year, not only in the Europa line-up but in centenary issues from many other countries. It has been used by Monaco, with a reproduction of the 1900 Mafeking stamp in the background.

The most original of this year's Baden-Powell stamps are from Belgium: a 46¢ stamp in sheets of 10 (opposite) and a miniature sheet (above), both by cartoonist Joseph Gillain (Jijé). Jijé created comic strips for the Catholic press, and also wrote and illustrated biographies of Don Bosco, Columbus and Baden-Powell; the last-named is the source for the miniature sheet ●

by James Mackay



Top: Belgium's 46c stamp, with Joseph Gillain's 1950 portrait clearly modelled on David Jagger's painting.

Above: Portugal is so far the only country to use this 1929 photograph.

Right, David Jagger's 1929 portrait of Baden-Powell, considered his masterpiece, is located in Baden-Powell House, the Scouting hostel and conference centre in South Kensington.



Christmas Hark the Herald Angels Sing: this



THIS YEAR there will be two issues of Christmas stamps: one set featuring Angels, and two additional stamps showing the Madonna and Child for those who wish to use a specifically religious image on their Christmas mail. All these stamps go on sale on 6 November.

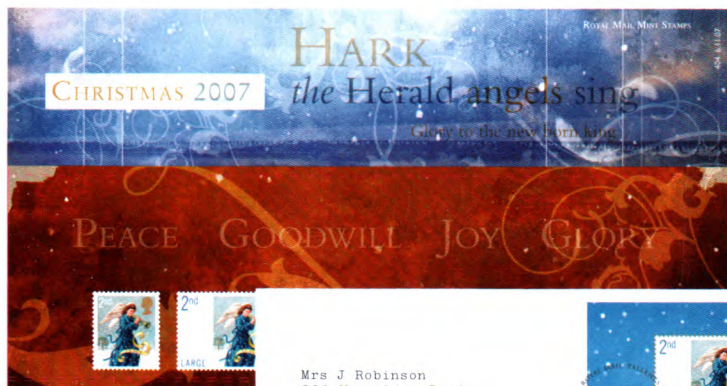
The Angels set comprises 2nd class, 2nd class Large, 1st class, 1st class Large, 78p and £1.24 values depicting angels, designed by Rose Design using illustrations by Marco Ventura. The stamps will be printed in gravure by De La Rue on self-adhesive paper in sheets of 50. They will also be available in a conventionally gummed miniature sheet.

The Madonna issue, designed by Peter Willberg, comprises 2nd and 1st class stamps reproducing religious paintings: *Madonna and Child* by William Dyce, c1827, and *The Madonna of Humility* by Lippo di Dalmasio, c1390-1400. These two paintings are held respectively by the Tate Gallery, and the National Gallery in London. These stamps will be printed in gravure by De La Rue in sheets of 50, on self-adhesive paper.

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Orders for serviced FDCs must reach Tallents House (address below) by the day of issue. 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 a Special Handstamp Centre (Bethlehem postmark), marking the outer envelope 'FD0735' (Tallents House), or 'FD0736' (Bethlehem). For details of sponsored special postmarks see the *British Postmark Bulletin*.

The presentation pack is written by Maev Kennedy, and tells us about the famous hymn *Hark the Herald Angels Sing*. Yet in Charles Wesley's original hymn there were no angels, and, although there are angels in St Luke's Gospel, which inspired it, they do not sing! Wesley's great hymn, written in 1739, opened with the archaic word for sky in 'Hark how all the Welkin Rings'. In 1855 William Cummings rewrote the words of the hymn to set Luke's angels into Wesley's sky, and made the angels sing. As Ms Kennedy notes: 'A Christmas classic was born'. The pack includes many evocative images of angels, from medieval paintings to Antony Gormley's imposing sculpture the 'Angel of the North' near Gateshead. The choice of *Hark the Herald Angels Sing* for the theme of the stamps reminds us that 2007 is the 300th anniversary of the birth of Charles Wesley. The words of this hymn were featured on the 19p stamp of the Christians' Tale set in the 1999 Millennium series. The pack has been designed by so design consultants and printed by Walsall.

year's festive stamps honour Charles Wesley



Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorbie Road
Ilkeston
Derbyshire
DE7 4AB

Above: the presentation pack, written by Maev Kennedy.

The first day cover, right, is available with Tallents House or Bethlehem pictorial postmarks (both shown top right).



AIRLETTERS The 2006 airletters (standard and bilingual Welsh/English versions) will be put back on sale at Post Office branches on 6 November; they have remained on sale from Tallents House since November 2006. These airletters reproduce illustrations of reindeer and Father Christmas by Tatsuro Kiuchi. The front panel of the standard airletter was shown on page 74 of the November 2006 *Bulletin*.

GENERIC AND SMILERS SHEETS Information on this year's Christmas sheets will be published in next month's *Bulletin* •

Christmas prices miniature sheet is abbreviated MS

Set of stamps or MS (Angels)	£3.48
Set of stamps (Madonna)	£0.58
Presentation Pack (Angels and Madonna stamps)	£4.60
FDC envelope	£0.30
Serviced FDC: Angels stamps/MS (UK customers)	£4.46
Serviced FDC: Angels stamps/MS (overseas)	£3.80
Serviced FDC: Madonna stamps (UK)	£1.21
Serviced FDC: Madonna stamps (overseas)	£1.03
Stamp cards set (8 stamps and MS)	£2.70
12 X 1st book: Angels stamp	£4.08
12 X 2nd book: Angels stamp	£2.88
Airletter (standard or bilingual version)	£0.60

Lights! camera! action! Karen Foy revisits



Crowds greet Charlie Chaplin as he arrives at his hotel in Piccadilly in 1921. One of the greatest actors of the silent era, Chaplin perfected all the moves and facial expressions of his character – a tramp – in many short films in the 1910s and 1920s.

Kinetoscope to cinema It was the researcher W K Laurie Dickson who first used his knowledge gained as an employee of the Edison Laboratories to invent a workable celluloid strip containing images. This early creation was to form the basis of a method of photography and projecting images with movement. With this technology, Thomas Edison came up with two inventions in 1894. One he named the 'Kinetograph' – the first moving picture camera, the second the 'Kinetoscope' – a cabinet in which a continuous hoop of Dickson's celluloid film would electronically pass through a lighted lens where it was projected onto glass. These 50-foot clips of film, shot in Edison's 'Black Maria' studio by Dickson, were shown to the audiences in Kinetoscope Parlours, where they would be watched through an eye piece.

Europe soon saw the introduction of Kinetoscope Parlours which spread rapidly across the globe, even though Edison never crossed the Atlantic to patent them. This made it easy for the Kinetoscope to be copied, and imitations were soon made. Robert W Paul, a British scientific instrument maker and electrician, and his partner Birt Acres came up with the idea of showing moving pictures to a larger audience instead of individuals. In 1895, he invented a film projector and gave the public their first showing.

In France, Auguste and Louis Lumiere invented the cinematograph, a portable camera that had a developer/printer and a projector all in one. Later in 1895, they gave exhibitions in Paris where they charged the public to see projected films. The business grew, and they became Europe's leading producers. The Lumiere Brothers were remembered on a single 30f stamp in 1955 which marked the 60th anniversary of their invention.

At first Edison dismissed the projection equipment but six months later he came up with the Vitascope and joined the trend. The first films lasted under one minute, and were usually only one scene long. These portrayed incidents of everyday life, a sporting event or a comedy. They were not edited and had no camera movement but by the end of the century, with new knowledge and discoveries in moving photographs, a motion picture industry had started in many countries of the world, known as the cinema.

a golden age of cinema, captured on stamps



Royal Mail issued five stamps on 8 October 1985 to honour the British screen icons Peter Sellers, David Niven, Charlie Chaplin, Vivien Leigh and the director Alfred Hitchcock.

The silent years Silent films became popular in 1860, but remained a novelty until around 1880-1900, when single-reel films became easily produced. For the first 30 years, they were accompanied by subtitles, live musicians and sound effects, but were still classed as silent movies. Many of these early movies were often damaged due to the technical error of being played at the wrong speed and then copied, making the resulting visual quality inferior. Actors of the silent screen would emphasise their body language and facial expressions so that the audience could understand what an actor was portraying in the film. Today's audiences would no doubt think that silent movies are very basic, and would possibly prefer to watch a silent comedy, where the over-acting would be accepted as natural.

Breaking the sound barrier Since the introduction of moving pictures, producers and inventors had tried to marry sound with image, and during the late 1920s silent films were replaced by 'talking movies'. At this point, Charlie refused to go along with this new sound accompanied film making, and instead maintained his image which he portrayed into the 1930s. The memories most people have of Chaplin's tramp is seeing him shuffling off, penguin-like, into the sunset, spinning his cane. He represented the 'little guy', the underdog who used his dreamlike humour to defeat his rivals.

During this decade, the British film industry made some of its best-loved classics, boosting the morale of the public during a period of Depression. Stars such as Vivien Leigh and David Niven, and the genius director Alfred Hitchcock, became some of Britain's top exports. Five stamps issued on 8 October 1985 honour these icons, alongside Chaplin and Peter Sellers.

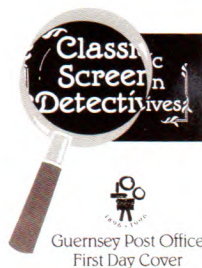
Hooray for Hollywood When the European film industry was temporarily halted by the First World War, Hollywood in California became the centre of cinema's universe. The 1920s saw the greatest output with swashbuckling masterpieces and slapstick comedies but the introduction of sound saw the arrival of the movie stars and Hollywood's Golden Era. ►

More recently, many of these famous faces have appeared on stamp sheets around the world. In 1995, Gibraltar issued two four-stamp mini sheets which included Audrey Hepburn in *My Fair Lady*, Marilyn Monroe in *Some Like It Hot* (SG MS 756a), Ingrid Bergman in *Casablanca* and Laurence Olivier in *Rebecca* (MS 756b). These sheets, paying homage to the actors, are still produced today with up-to-the-minute icons alongside cinema legends.

Animation Another growth area was animation, the production of cartoon films from a series of drawings. *Snow White*, produced by Walt Disney, took three years to make and premiered on 21 December 1937. It was the first full-length animated feature film with a soundtrack album. At 83 minutes in length, it was a phenomenal success throughout the English-speaking world, and the first film in Technicolor with sound. In movie history, *Snow White* is one of Disney's greatest animation creations. A stamp set of stills from *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* was issued by Grenada at Christmas 1980 and later; a profile of Snow White appeared on a 32¢ USA stamp.

A British institution Royal Mail commemorated the cinema's centenary on 16 April 1996 with five stamps related to the industry. The 25p celebrates film stars in general, and the 19p shows the Odeon, the famous cinema chain. Created by Oscar Deutsch, the buildings were originally Art Deco themed and provided a luxurious environment in which to watch the films. Interior decoration was designed by Oscar's wife, Lily and the first cinema in the chain opened at Perry Barr in Birmingham at a cost of £30,000. The Odeon in Leicester Square became 'the' place for glamorous film premiers. In contrast, the 41p shows how cinemas have changed. Big screen multi-plexes have brought a renewed interest back to cinema-going, which saw a drop in popularity in the 1980s. Now with up to ten film choices and many timed screenings, there is always something showing to suit all tastes.

Guernsey's first film screening took place on 31 August 1896 at St Julian's Theatre, which later became the Gaumont Cinema. The five films shown were animated photographs lasting up to five minutes each. As popularity in film watching grew, cinemas opened across the island as the public rushed to watch the latest releases. A German air-raid on St Peter Port on 28 June 1940 resulted in the closure of all the island's cinemas but following occupation, they gradually re-opened, with a programme of exclusively German films. After the war, British films were re-shown once again and glorious Technicolor arrived on their screens. On 6 November 1996, a set was issued to celebrate the cinema's centenary showing five of the world's best-loved detectives. Britain was represented with Agatha Christie's character Miss Marple in the form of Margaret Rutherford while Basil Rathbone is shown as the classic King of Crime – Sherlock Holmes. Humphrey Bogart is portrayed as the mean and moody Philip Marlowe, whereas crazy Inspector Clouseau brings humour to the 24p stamp. The final stamp in the series is of Chinese super sleuth Charlie Chan, played by Warner Oland who went on to star in 16 Chan movies. Each black-and-white image of the film star is enhanced by a different coloured metallic background.



Left: Guernsey's 1996 issue celebrating the centenary of cinema featured the actors who played five of the world's best-loved detectives.

Royal Mail Mint Stamps present:

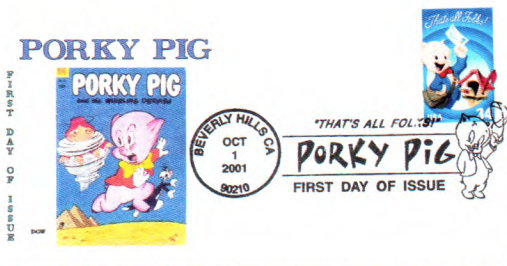
100 years of going to the pictures
a cinema celebration

Right: Royal Mail's 1996 issue featured images representing different aspects of the film industry.



Breaking news One of the oldest media companies in the world, Pathé is synonymous with providing up-to-date coverage of events across the globe. The company was founded in 1895 by Frenchman Charles Pathé, a pioneer of moving images, but it began in London in 1902. At first, bi-weekly newsreels were silent, with title cards describing the action, but voice-over narration arrived in the 1930s. During the World Wars, the Pathé News cockerel's appearance on screen would signal a hush – for many this was the only means of finding out what was happening in the war. The cockerel, a Gaul symbol of victory, features on the 35p British Cinema stamp.

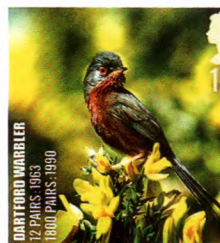
A cinema theme Don't feel restricted to British film – Chechnya issued a nine-stamp sheet in 1999 showing screen legends Marilyn Monroe, James Dean, Groucho Marx and Alfred Hitchcock, whilst Australia featured classic films such as *Picnic at Hanging Rock*, *Strictly Ballroom* and *The Story of the Kelly Gang* in a colourful set issued in 1995. This theme can be as simple or as complex as you wish. It is possible to create a complete cinema history, from the architecture of the buildings to the stars of the silver screen by including examples of each country's contribution to this multi-million pound industry. From the silent movies to the talkies, animation to adventure, all genres are represented, so in the immortal words of the animation icon Porky Pig: 'That's All Folks!' Now it's up to you! ●



Species in recovery: Birds Dave Warriner

Top row: White-tailed Eagle, Bearded Tit, Red Kite, Cirl Bunting and Marsh Harrier.

Bottom row: Avocet, Bittern, Dartford Warbler, Corncrake and Peregrine.

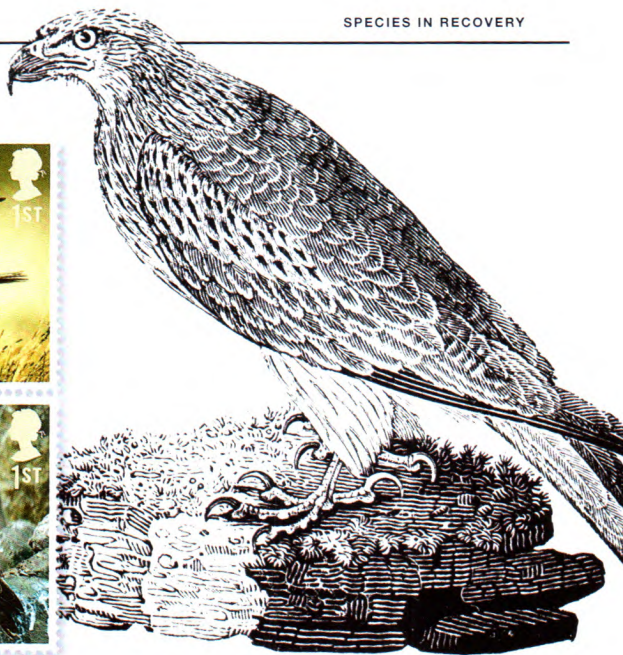
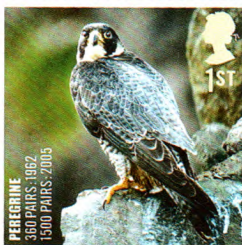


ON 4 September Royal Mail will issue the first in a new series of animal thematics that will focus on the UK's endangered wildlife. There is a difference to previous issues that have looked at Britain's rarest creatures, as the object of the series is to examine the positive side of our relationship with the animals that we share these islands with. Therefore all of the species featured in each issue will be showing encouraging signs of population recovery with the help of conservation groups, and enlightened farming practices and land management. The first of these issues will look at birds, while insects will follow next in 2008.

The White-tailed Eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla*, left) is the first of the birds to be featured in this set of ten 1st class se-tenant stamps. Feeding mostly on fish, birds and carrion, this is the largest of the UK's birds of prey, having a wing span of around eight feet. Until the close of the 19th century the White-tailed Eagle was a common sight in England, Scotland, Ireland and the Isle of Man. However persecution by shepherds, gamekeepers and fishermen resulted in its complete extinction within the British Isles by 1918, when the last bird, a rare completely white albino specimen, was shot in Shetland. However in 1976, a re-introduction programme initiated by Scottish Natural Heritage and the RSPB saw 82 young Norwegian eagles released on the Isle of Rum and the species was breeding successfully by 1985. Further releases of Norwegian birds have now ensured a viable small but self-sustaining population on the west coast of Scotland and the Hebrides.

The male Bearded Tit (*Panurus biarmicus*) has a long Mexican-style moustache rather than a beard. These sociable and noisy birds have in the past suffered from a combination of habitat destruction and cold winters, but their numbers are now increasing thanks to

finds encouraging signs



more sensitive reed-bed management and the recent milder weather. Their numbers have also been boosted by welcome immigrants from the Netherlands. Feeding mainly on insects, spiders and seeds, they are most often seen skimming their reed-bed habitat, giving away their presence by their distinctive 'ping' calls.

In medieval times the Red Kite (*Milvus milvus*, above) was respected as a scavenger, helping to keep city streets clean, and killing one was a capital offence. However, changing attitudes in later years had them reclassified, along with other birds of prey, as vermin and by 1903, when the bird was finally given protection, only a handful of pairs were left in the remote oak woods of central Wales. Until relatively recently their climb back has been hampered by poor habitat, illegal shooting, egg collectors, organochlorine pesticides and the devastation of a major prey animal – rabbits – by myxomatosis in the 1950s. However since then the bird has successfully recolonized parts of Wales and thanks to the re-introduction programme started by the RSPB, English Nature and Scottish Natural Heritage in 1989, this majestic reddish-brown bird with its distinctive forked tail is becoming re-established in parts of England and Scotland too.

The fields and hedges of the south Devon coast are the northern-most limits of the Cirl Bunting (*Emberiza cirlus*) in Europe. At around 700 pairs the bird is on the RSPB's red list for endangered birds, but enlightened agricultural practices like organic farms and the recent mild winters have seen an encouraging increase in populations. The best time to see Cirl Buntings is during the breeding season, when the males often sing on a prominent branch. These birds are very vulnerable to disturbances from mankind, so beware, if you get too close to a Cirl Bunting the bird will sing at you to distract you from its nest site instead of searching for food for its young. ►

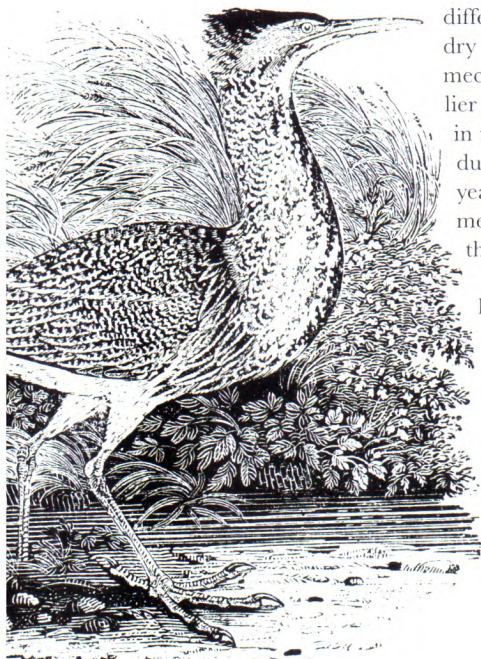
The Marsh Harrier (*Circus aeruginosus*) is the largest of the harriers and can be recognized by its long tail and the way that its wings form a shallow 'v' in flight. Aside from its greater size it can be distinguished from other harriers by the absence of white on the rump. Like other birds of prey it has suffered from persecution and, from the 1950s, from organochlorine pesticides such as DDT. Acquired from prey animals, these toxins concentrate in the bird's tissues resulting in poisoning, eggshell thinning and low birth rates. Fortunately this majestic summer visitor is recovering, breeding regularly in the reed-beds of Kent, East Anglia and the north of England.

With its distinctive curved bill the Avocet (*Recurvirostra avosetta*) can often be seen in quite large flocks searching for invertebrates in the tidal mud and river estuaries of Britain's south and east coasts. Chosen as the symbol of the RSPB, the black and white wader has staged a remarkable recovery since the 1940s, in part due to the wartime flooding of coastal marshlands.

The Bittern (*Botaurus stellaris*, below) is also on the RSPB Red List. It is estimated that there are around 20 breeding pairs in the UK, the population being supplemented by a further 50 to 100 birds that over-winter here. With its black and brown plumage the Bittern is very hard to see as it moves through its reed-bed habitat, hunting for fish and frogs, but the male makes a distinctive far-carrying booming sound in the Spring to attract a mate.

The Dartford Warbler (*Sylvia undata*) has in the past been the victim of severe winter conditions. The population of this small, long-tailed bird crashed to a few pairs in the 1960s, but since then numbers have increased to around 2000 breeding birds. A resident of the lowland heathlands of Surrey, Suffolk, Dorset, Devon and the New Forest, the Dartford Warbler is usually seen bobbing between bushes hunting for insects.

The Bittern, below, is related to the Heron, but it is a much more secretive bird than its more familiar cousin. Habitat destruction is the greatest threat to the Bittern.



A relation of Moorhens and Coots, the Corncrake (*Crex crex*) differs from other members of the Rail family, as it lives on dry land. Once common all over the UK, it fell victim to the mechanization of farming in the mid 19th century when earlier hay cutting caused habitat loss. The decline accelerated in the 1950s when hayfields were turned over to silage production, and extinction was predicted. However, in recent years many farmers have changed their grassland management programmes, resulting in an increase in population of this very secretive bird with its distinctive rasping call.

Like other birds of prey, the Peregrine (*Falco peregrinus*) has been the victim of persecution by farmers and game keepers and the effects of the organochlorine pesticides. However since the banning of these chemicals, this large powerful falcon has staged something of a comeback, and can now even be found nesting in high-rise buildings in London. The Peregrine feeds mainly on other birds, such as pigeons and small ducks, targeting the birds in flight and diving towards it at speeds of up to 180 kph to take it on the wing. To achieve this the Peregrine has baffles in its nostrils to control its breathing •

Philately online Ron Negus goes back in time on Rail Mail

Mail Rail online **London Post Office Railway**

Home | Contact Us | Site Map | News | History | Mail Rail | London Post Office Railway | Further Reading |

- Designed solely for movement of letters and parcels.
- Operated 19 hours a day, 266 days a year.
- 23 Miles (37 Kilometers) of 2 foot gauge track.
- 70 feet (21 meters) below the streets of London.
- Fully automated, computer controlled trains.
- Carried the Capital's mails for over 75 years.
- Once served 8 stations, including 2 mainline stations.
- Once carried around 4 million letters every day.
- Paddington to Whitechapel, with all stops, in 26 minutes.

SPEDDING LONDON'S MAIL

Deep down beneath the choked streets of London was a railway which once ran busily for nineteen hours a day. It carried no passengers and its trains had no drivers or guards. Yet this seemingly strange system was one of the most successful railways in the world.

The Post Office underground railway was a unique solution to the problem of transporting large volumes of mail across a capital city. Designed solely for the movement of letters and parcels, its automatically controlled trains operated on a 6.12 mile (10 Kilometre) route between Paddington and Whitechapel. An average of 4 million letters were once carried each day between the nine stations on the line - serving two British Rail main line stations and major London sorting offices.



Mail Rail - being tested

<http://tinyurl.com/z2fv35> This site reveals full details of the underground railway operated by the Post Office for 75 years, from 1928 to 2003. A secret to the majority of Londoners, it provided a vital link in the distribution chain that enabled up to four million letters a day to be transported between the major sorting offices.

THE Post Office Railway was once an important part of the distribution service for letters and parcels. It ran 70 feet below London's streets and served nine stations, from Paddington to Whitechapel. The fully automated and computer-controlled trains covered a six-and-a-half-mile route, with stops at each station, in 26 minutes.

After 75 years of use, Rail Mail – as the service was known – was mothballed at the end of May 2003. The reason given was that using the underground railway was significantly more expensive than moving letters and parcels between London sorting centres by road. Mothballing was chosen so that if the circumstances changed, the system could be restored quickly to full working order.

Because it was so little known, the Post Office used to organise regular visits to the underground stations on the route. On these, the operation was explained as the driverless trains passed by with their cargoes of mail. These particular visits were very popular and occupied an evening in the programme of many philatelic societies based in the London area.

Now that such visits are no longer possible, this Mail Rail site on the web (address above) allows interested collectors to learn more about its history and see photographs of the equipment and stations. When Mail Rail closed, in May 2003, a BBC news programme included an interview with Amanda Smith, who was one of the service's last controllers. There is a direct link to this interview from the Mail Rail site.

Interesting information about how the railway was constructed forms one section of the website.

This explains why Parliament's decision to begin building in 1915 was disrupted during the First World War, even though tunnelling was allowed to continue. In that conflict some parts of the incomplete underground route were used to store works of art from the National Portrait Gallery, the Wallace Collection, and other London museums. During the Second World War stations were used also as air-raid shelters for Post Office staff.

For the technically minded, other pages of the site discuss the locomotives and other rolling stock used, the operational details, and maintenance tasks involved in keeping the service running. In the section on the rolling stock there is also a list of railway museums in which some of these items are now on display. The maintenance schedule, described on the relevant page, involved regular inspection and repair after certain mileages, in a similar way to routine car servicing.

While Mail Rail was operational, some extensions to the network were discussed. These would have allowed trains to service other major sorting offices, and a description of these additional routes is provided on a page entitled 'Extensions'. Once again, cost was a major factor and none of the additional lines was ever built.

A 'Frequently Asked Questions' page gives a brief summary of the main features of Mail Rail which have been covered in depth on the earlier parts of the site. Elsewhere, details are given of other sites containing information about tunnels and other underground railway systems in the UK and abroad. A list of books on these subjects is also given on the page headed 'Further Reading'.

Finally, a 'Guest Book' is provided to allow for comments about the website to be recorded. The comments made by earlier users are shown, and indicate that most visitors found the site of considerable interest •

Life in the trade Richard West meets veteran Fred Twining

FOR 60 years Fred Twining has been highly respected in the stamp world, involved throughout the years with the auctioneers Harmers, and yet he has not collected during those years. Born in Hounslow, Fred had a fairly traditional school life, although his school did have a stamp club, which met on Saturday mornings. Its proceedings followed a fairly routine pattern each week, with a packet of 500 different being scattered on a table and the members free to pick the ones they wanted. Fred remembers that his first stamp came from Ceylon, from the reign of King George V. In those days, collecting was straightforward: you owned a printed album and filled as many spaces in it as possible. It was quite simply a hobby, one from which you learned – about the countries of the world, and goods they exported. He bought one stamp, triangular he recalls, on hire purchase, paying off its 6d cost at a penny a week. He remained a general collector, although he did for a while look closely at Barbados.



was starting on a major sale for the new season, to be held on 10-12 and 17-18 November. It was the Charles Williams' collection, deserving of a very special catalogue – for the first time, this included full-colour illustrations of some of the highlights on its front cover. The five sales realised a total of £22,000.

There were no clear thoughts about a career, so he joined a bank in the City of London. Then came National Service in 1943, joining the Royal Marines in a time of war. He was a Signaller, involved in the D-Day landings, during which he lost his kit bag with all his possessions. Apart from France, war service took him to India where he arrived on VE Day, and was later to be part of the victory march through Poona. At the end of the war in the Far East, his services were required in Java, but he was still able to spend Christmas of 1945 in Calcutta, before finally being demobbed in August of 1946. It was back to the bank, but it now lacked excitement: the regime was oppressive, although it was not all doom, for there Fred met his wife. They were married in 1948, moved to Kent, and will celebrate their 60th anniversary next year. Still maintaining his collecting interest, Fred saw an advertisement by Harmers in *Stamp Collecting Weekly*. He joined the company in May 1947, at a time when the hobby traditionally enjoyed a summer break. At Harmers, work

Fred was just a junior, working for the company's three to four describers. They would dictate the descriptions, while Fred, a self-taught two-finger typist, put their words to paper together with the estimates of realisations. The typed script would be cut up and put in alphabetical and chronological order and glued onto the backs of old album leaves, often left on top of radiators to dry, before being edited and sent to the printers. Items to be illustrated would be photographed, and the chosen photographs laid out on black paper. Gradually Fred learned much from these describers, not least how to detect forgeries and repairs. He also learned much from the company's founder, H R Harmer, whom he describes as a lovely man who was a keen sailor. Harmers opened an American office, and HRH spent much time in New York, but whenever he was in the London office, where he had his own safe in the ladies toilet, Fred was in his company, constantly learning.

Even today, he can tell instinctively if a stamp is right or wrong, although he may not be able to put his finger on why. It may be the smell: he can tell if a stamp has been chemically treated. Or he may put a stamp on the palm of his hand, to see if it curls in the right direction.

One thing Fred quickly learned was that there was no point having a personal collection when constantly surrounded by so many fine stamps. He could never build a collection to match those he handled, and he gained so much pleasure from seeing material others had gathered. He began describing, valuing and viewing collections, then became head of the British Commonwealth department following the death of his predecessor. He enjoyed meeting collectors, and visiting many

parts of the world, from Europe to the USA and Australia, to attend exhibitions. To mark 25 years of service the company took Fred and his wife to Newfoundland, Toronto, the Niagara Falls and New York. In 1990 Fred officially 'retired', but he remains a consultant, although since the company moved from Bond Street to Chiswick, his visits to the office have been less frequent.

He remembers special moments: the lady from New Zealand who brought in a schoolgirl collection for sale, which contained the India 4 annas inverted head. At that time, in 1954, it sold for £725, then was 'lost' for a few years before being sold again by Harmers in 1988, this time realising £52,800. A cover from the Dale Lichtenstein collection bearing a pair of the 1d 'Post Office' Mauritius sold for a record £158,333 in October of 1968; Harmers held at press conference at the Savoy Hotel in London on the Sunday before the cover was sold. Also memorable was the block of 36 'VR' Penny Blacks sold in 1989. He admires 'characters' from the stamp world: the business acumen of A L (Mick) Michael, who at one time controlled Stanley Gibbons; that 'old rogue' with the vast knowledge, Robson Lowe; and Bill Lea Snr. He has some amusing stories – Joe Saatchi was examining a purchase of Penny Blacks while waiting for the Underground train home: as the train approached, the sudden gust of air took the stamps away, forever lost in the tunnel. And the member of staff arranging stamps for photography who realised too late that one missing stamp had stuck to the bottom of a saucer and was lost with the washing up water down the drain. Other famous names who collected stamps were Pilkington (glass), Stephens (ink), Oakey (sandpaper) and Forsyth (owner of large stores in Edinburgh and London).

When he joined Harmers, the stamp auction business was very different from today. The staff numbered between 25 and 30, whose tasks ranged from accounts to advertising, from dealing with clients at the 'front counter' to general assistants. The pace was slower: it was paramount always to be polite to the customers. Indeed, there were some clients that junior members of staff were not allowed to meet. During sales, tea and coffee

and cigarettes were brought round: those at the back of the auction room could hardly see the rostrum through the clouds of cigarette smoke. There were members of staff whose role was just to look after the postal bidders: alongside the rostrum a lady from the accounts department would keep a check on how much each client had spent, to ensure that spending limits were not exceeded. While the company existed to make a profit, there was still a chance for the collector with just a few pounds in the pocket to leave with a successful bid or two. Fred regrets that, from the 1960s, investment had played such an important part in the hobby, often meaning that only those with the deep pockets can afford to bid at auction.

However, Fred's life at Harmers has provided some fascinating moments, such as visiting the Royal Philatelic Collection and the British Library to check on the authenticity of items, and being requested to value the De La Rue archives, even though their sale was not to be entrusted to Harmers, and valuing the Abbott collection, held at Manchester's Whitworth Museum. Harmers has always maintained a fine forgery collection, and through his knowledge of forgeries, Fred was invited to be a member of BPA Expertising. He remembers seeing a cover from British Guiana to which a block of four stamps had literally been sewn. Later the same cover came up for expertising again, but now the stamps were affixed in the customary manner, and all the sewing holes were gone!

Married with two children and two grandchildren, none of whom collect, Fred has always enjoyed a private life away from stamps. His passion has been cricket from the day he ventured along to Hounslow cricket club as a youth. He has been a member and an official of the Honor Oak Club for more than 55 years. Never strong as a player, he made the fourth eleven; he nevertheless enjoys both watching and helping wherever possible.

Fred clearly believes he enjoyed the best times in the stamp world: he does not think he could cope with today's technology (Why does the computer place New Zealand alphabetically before Newfoundland?). His 60 years' experience will prove very difficult to beat ●

Readers reply The Machins at 40 and self-service postage

IN THE JUNE *Bulletin* we invited your views on the Machin stamp series, on the occasion of its 40th anniversary. A selection of the letters we received in reply is published below.

It is perhaps not a coincidence that the Machin stamps and the world's first postage stamp, the famous Penny Black, have so much in common. Arnold Machin and William Wyon were masters of their craft (I use the word 'craft' and not 'art' deliberately). Both men were very familiar with industrial processes. In the design stages of their respective stamps, relief images were pre-eminent: Wyon's medal, Machin's plaster cast. When these images finally came together to mark the 150th anniversary of the Penny Black it was the marriage of two of the greatest icons of portraiture the world has seen. DAVID NUGUS, KENT ●

I have never considered the Machin to be a great stamp design, just a perfectly adequate definitive for the past four decades. I often wonder what the stamps from many countries would have been like had the entries to the 1839 Treasury Competition been more acceptable. None of the somewhat bizarre designs submitted were considered suitable, although some were awarded prizes. The organisers fell back on a Queen's head design (drawn by a Scottish baronet), which had not been awarded a prize, and adapted it for the issued stamp. Had one of the unaccepted entries been used instead, would the monarch's head have ever appeared on a British stamp, or (by setting an example) on the stamps issued by any other nation? One can only speculate what might have been... G P COLLE, WEST YORKSHIRE ●

I do not remember the first time I used a Machin, but I clearly remember the first time I received one. My girlfriend Judith (now my wife) wrote me a letter and the envelope featured a Machin, with a commentary added by the good lady: 'Second Class Mail to a First Class Male'. Happily both the Machin design of 1967 and our marriage of 1969 are still going strong. I have shown the commemorative stamp with Arnold Machin's picture to people with no interest in stamps. 'Who's he?'

and 'Why is he on the stamp?' were typical responses. Indeed I have yet to encounter anybody among my regular circle of friends who knows the name even though, of course, many attach an example of his work every time they write to me! DAVID SEYMOUR, LONDON ●

Is it just a coincidence that the three people most associated in philatelic circles with our 40 year old definitive have surnames beginning with M – Arnold Machin the designer, Jeffery Matthews for the adaptations and colour range, and your contributor Douglas Myall, who may have done more than anyone in recording the Machin issues. Perhaps all three should have featured on the anniversary stamps? PETER MILLS, LEICESTER ●

There is universal agreement that Arnold Machin and his collaborators produced a design which is truly outstanding and which will be admired for evermore. The stamp owes its greatness to its simplicity, regality and clarity. It is a perfect picture of Her Majesty and one by which the many thousands of Commonwealth members, and others, have identified her as the Head of State and have her icon to remember her by. All of this is a massive tribute to the artistry, imagination and skill of Arnold Machin – no mean achievement. IAN FERGUSON, DEVON ●

'I think the design is starting to show its age.' 'The Wilding had greater appeal.' Sound familiar? Half your writers intimated that the Machin is long past its sell-by date. How many recipients realise that it's not just a photo and a number on plain paper? Very few, I would suggest. The Wildings were clearly designed, something you cannot say about Machins – or should that be machines? The innate beauty of our definitives disappeared overnight in 1967. The recent decimal Wildings were a breath of fresh air – who closed the window? JIM O'NEIL, MERSEYSIDE ●

I think Machin stamps are very interesting to collect because of the different ways they have been issued: sheets, rolls, booklets and miniature sheets. In addition to this, different printers and printing techniques, adhesive versions, perforations, phosphor bar combinations, multi-value coils, panes and underprints make Machin stamps the most fascinating stamps in the whole world. MARTTI TAURU, FINLAND ●

On a recent visit to the USA we visited Bernheim, near Louisville, Kentucky. There is a display there of four panels illustrating the motto 'Sic transit Gloria mundi' – rather like a tapestry but made of hundreds of Machines, in all colours. A really nice tribute to what everyone describes as a classic design. G D BIRCH, KENT ●

Self-service postage I read with interest Martin Robinson's article about self-service postage machines (June *Bulletin*, page 300). I was involved in a review of stamp vending machines around 1973-74 for Postal Marketing. Initially it was thought that the B machine, selling a single stamp and the F machine, selling a booklet, would be phased out as they were the older machines, and the network of G machines would be reduced based on reven-

ue. It was thought that the stitched booklet was too expensive to produce.

However the F machine was very reliable, suffering a breakdown on average once every two to three years, and some never needing any repair. If my memory is correct it was inconsistent stitching that caused most problems. Analysis of the running costs showed that for every £1 of revenue it cost only 8p to sell a booklet through the F machine, compared with the cost of selling a stamp over the counter of 10p.

The G machine, a mid-sixties design, proved to be prone to breaking down and the cost of selling £1 about 30p. A part of the problem was the glue, which was prone to absorbing moisture and sticking to its neighbour in the roll, or the glue coming off in the dispensing slot.

Although I am sure that Mr Robinson is correct in saying that the cost of postage eventually brought about the demise of the G machine, the writing was on the wall much earlier because of the vending cost. Indeed, the cost analysis turned the argument in favour of booklet vending machines. It is but conjecture that if the F machine had been retired, would we still have stamp booklets today? STEVEN CANN, SURREY •

Special draw Win a copy of the 2006 Royal Mail Yearbook

[illegible]

THE WINNER of this month's draw will be sent a 2006 Yearbook, and five runners-up will receive the Army Uniforms prestige book. For a chance to win, simply write your name and address on

the back of a postcard and send it to Yearbook Draw, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ, to arrive by 28 September •

Competitions Win £100 in our easy-to-enter competitions



June identify The detail was from one of the Beatles 1st class stamps. The winner was P Backe of Norway.

June knowledge Answers: 1) 1984; 2) C Walter Hodges; 3) £1.52. The winner was C Bird of Birmingham.

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 Where is the Stampex exhibition held?
- 2 In which year did the Pontcysyllte Aqueduct feature on a stamp?
- 3 What was the colour of the George VI 5 shilling high value stamps?

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 to be drawn in each competition on 12 October will each receive £50. Runner-up prizes of presentation packs, first day covers or stamp cards will be awarded for each competition. The competitions are not open to Royal Mail employees •

Events

Until 31 October Vehicles from the BPMA's 'Moving the Mail' exhibition at Grampian Transport Museum. See page 10.

Until April/May 2008 'A Timeless Classic – The Evolution of Machin's Icon' exhibition at British Postal Museum & Archive. See page 10.

30 August - 1 September Picture Postcard Show at Lawrence Hall, the Royal Horticultural Society Halls, London SW1. **Enquiries** 020 8886 0469.

1 September City of Preston PS Stamp and Card Fair at Barton Village Hall, Garstang Road (A6) near Preston, 10.00-16.00. Approx 20 dealers.

3-8 September Croydex, celebrating the centenary of Croydon PS. See page 5. **Enquiries** F Simpson, 020 8660 3595.

4 September Talk 'Tommy Flowers and the Birth of Colossus' at BPMA. Book tickets on 020 7239 2570 or e-mail info@postalheritage.org.uk

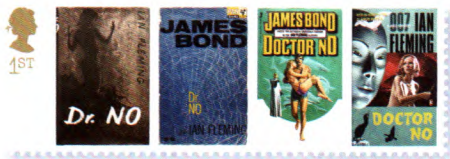
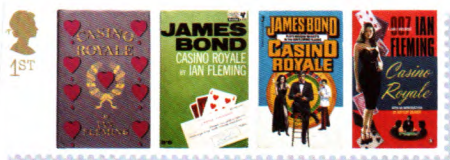
19-22 September Autumn Stampex. See page 5. **Enquiries** Stampex 01252 628006.

29 September Autumn BasPex stamp fair and exhibition, organised by Basildon Philatelic Society, at Barstable School, Timberlog Close, Basildon, 10.00-16.00. Free admission and car park. Dealers.

29 September Morecambe & District PS 60th anniversary stamp fair at the Platform, Morecambe. **Enquiries** B Fullick, 01524 409377.

4 October Talk 'Jeffery Matthews Designs' at BPMA, Freeling House, London WC1, 19.00. Book tickets on 020 7239 2570 or e-mail info@postalheritage.org.uk

Late news



Forthcoming issues The first special issue of 2008 pays homage to the James Bond books written by Ian Fleming, who was born on 28 May 1908. Six stamps, a miniature sheet and a prestige book go on sale on 8 January. The stamps, printed in separate sheets, feature the covers of Bond books: 2 × 1st class, *Casino Royale* and *Doctor No*; 2 × 54p, *Goldfinger* and *Diamonds Are Forever*; and 2 × 78p, *For Your Eyes Only* and *From Russia With Love*. The miniature sheet contains one of each stamp. The stamps, measuring 60 × 21mm, were designed by A2 design group, London, and printed in lithography by De La Rue. The prestige book, titled *Ian Fleming's James Bond*, will contain four panes of stamps: 8 × 1st class definitive with centre label showing Ian Fleming's typewriter; James Bond stamps – 1st *Casino Royale*, 54p *Goldfinger*, 78p *For Your Eyes Only*; James Bond stamps – 1st *Doctor No*, 54p *Diamonds Are Forever*, 78p *From Russia With Love*; and 2 × 1st White Ensign flag stamp, 2 × 1st Union Flag (Union Jack) stamp, first issued 2001. Further details will be published next month.

The Working Dogs stamps (on sale 5 February) will feature: 1st class Assistance Dog; 46p Mountain Rescue Dog, 48p Police Dog, 54p Customs Dog, 69p Sheepdog, and 78p Guide Dog. They will be printed in litho by Walsall. The 1st class stamp will carry the EUROPA symbol ●

2010 stamp issues We seek your views on issues for 2010 and you will find with this *Bulletin* a form for you to vote for five subjects from a short list

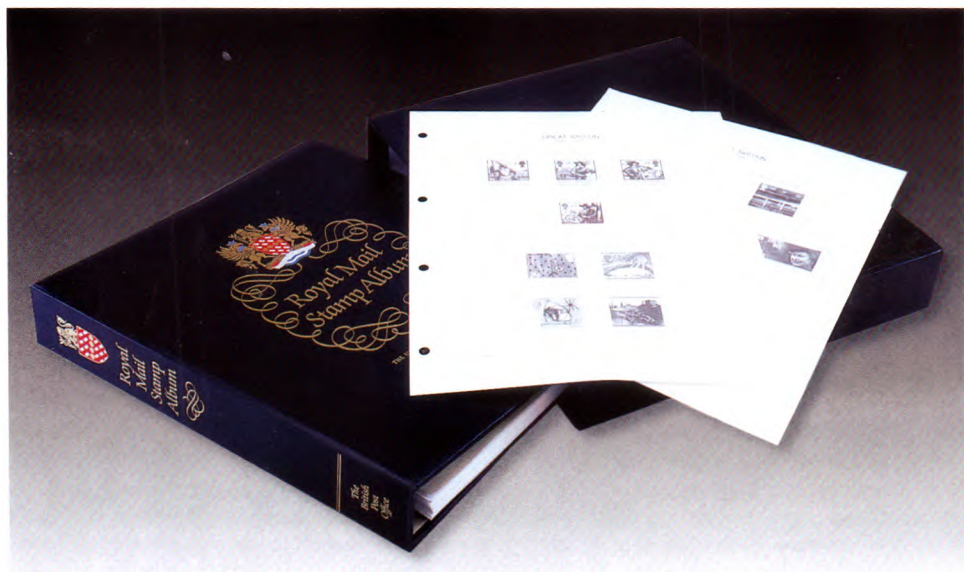
drawn up by Royal Mail's Philatelic Sector. Send your form in by 28 September for entry in a prize draw to win one of six 2007 Yearbooks ●

Harry Reeves Readers who used to visit the former National Postal Museum will be sorry to learn of the death in July of Harry Reeves, at the age of 75. Harry, who worked as a custodian at the Museum from 1982 until he retired in 1992, was a real character, and always gave visitors a warm welcome. He was especially good with parties of schoolchildren. He was an accomplished model-maker, and some of his models were used in NPM exhibitions. Our condolences to his wife Vi ●

Crown Agents change CASCO Philatelic Services Ltd, the new joint venture owned by The Crown Agents for Overseas Governments and Administrations Ltd and 288 Group Ltd, will assume the business operations of the Crown Agents Stamp Bureau from 1 October. This unites the extensive Crown Agents' design and production experience with Harry Allen's 60 years of distribution and marketing expertise. Harry Allen is a part of the 288 Group. The Crown Agents have advised and assisted postal administrations in the design, production and distribution of stamps since 1847. The Management Board of CASCO Philatelic Services Ltd will comprise Allan Wallace (Chairman) formerly of the Royal Mint, Stephen Allen, Chairman of 288 Group Ltd, Jeff Scott of the Crown Agents, Ian Glen of Westminster Collection, and Peter Robinson of 288 Group ●

Northern Ireland stamp fair Portadown & District Philatelic Society will hold Portadown Stampex & Collectors Fair at Portadown Town Hall on 29 September, from 10.00-16.30. Dealers will offer stamps, first day covers, postcards, postal history, cigarette cards, coins, banknotes, medals, football memorabilia and more. Displays will be given by members of the Philatelic Society. Refreshments will be available and there is car parking near the Town Hall. Enquiries to J Proctor: telephone 028 38 334964 ●

The Royal Mail deluxe album



Royal Mail's Deluxe Album is the ideal way to display a collection of Elizabeth II stamps. The Album comes complete with plastic mounts to secure stamps safely, specially designed to carefully preserve your collection of all the definitive, country, special, and postage due stamps, and miniature sheets. The Album is available in three volumes: volume 1 Pre-decimal issues (1952-70), volume 2 Decimal issues (1970-89) and volume 3 Decimal issues (1990-99).

Prices Volume 1: £79.95 (order code PA634). Volumes 2 and 3: £99.94 each (PA635 & PA636), or all three volumes for the special price of £245 (PA685).

Continuation pages for 2000-2005 inclusive: £69.99 for the set of 71 pages (PA729). Pages for 2006 issues: £14.95 (PW029).

Empty Album binders: £39.95 (PA194).

Handling charges: £1.45 UK, £1.55 Europe, £2.15 elsewhere for 2006 continuation pages. £2.95 UK, £5 Europe, £14 elsewhere for complete albums, empty binders, or 2000-2005 pages.

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