

BRITISH PHILATELIC

The Royal Mail magazine for stamp collectors

Volume 48 Number 3 | NOVEMBER 2010 £1.20

Bulletin

Wallace & Gromit • Christmas
collection • 2010 Stamp Poll



Cracking news for Christmas! Watch out for Wallace & Gromit on 2 November

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Issues and withdrawals



Cover: Greetings from Wallace & Gromit™ – see page 72. The First Class Wallace & Gromit Christmas issue is available at standard size and large landscape size, with kiss die-cut simulated perforations. © and ™ Aardman/Wallace & Gromit Limited (2010). All rights reserved.

2 November

Issue Christmas with Wallace & Gromit stamps, Miniature Sheet, Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards, Stamp Books • Christmas Smilers® generic sheet
• Re-issue of 2007 Madonna and Child stamps at Post Office Ltd • Annual Collections

Withdrawal Christmas 2009 stamps, Miniature Sheet, Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards, Stamp Books, Christmas Smilers® generic sheet

30 November

Issue Olympic and Paralympic Sports Covers, numbers 3 and 4

3 December

Withdrawal Monaco Exhibition Sheet

6 December

Deluxe Album continuation pages 2010

24 December

Withdrawal Christmas 2006 Airletters

29 December

Withdrawal Smilers® for Kids

31 December

Withdrawal 2008 Yearbook and Yearpacks

Royal Mail Tallents House

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Weirdly wonderful items that recall the peculiar posting activities of the man known as The Human Letter. By Michael Pitt-Payne **77**

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Postbag Readers' questions and favourite finds

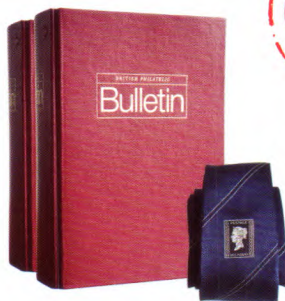
Christmas stamps anomaly

I attach two images of the 2009 First Class Christmas stamps – one with the matrix stripped, and the other with the matrix intact.

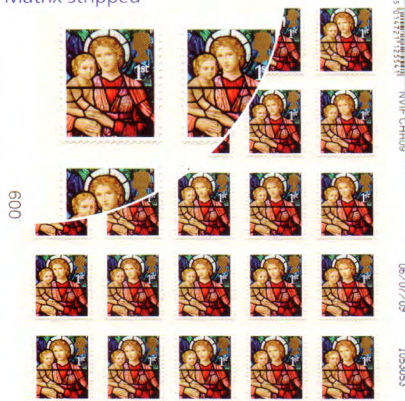
Having not seen this before, I wondered whether anyone knows if this is a common variety or something of a rarity?

Adrian Bradbury, Leicester

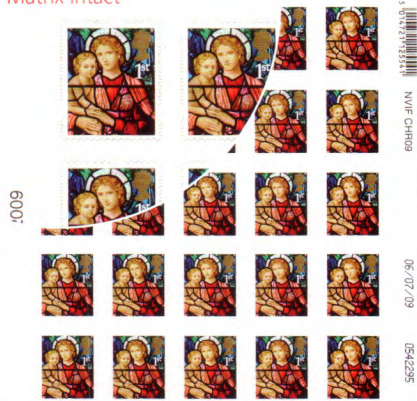
Mr Bradbury receives a set of *Bulletin* binders and a Penny Black tie.



Matrix stripped



Matrix intact



Decoding the codes

In his article in June's *Bulletin*, Douglas Myall refers to the availability at Spring Stampex of booklets of 12x1st or 12x2nd NVIs with the production year added to the stamp design. These booklets are not recognised as new products by the Philatelic Bureau, making them difficult to find for collectors without easy access to a British Post Office. Mr Myall also mentions that business sheets are being reprinted with the production year incorporated in the stamp design. Will the same apply to reprints of regular sheets of security Machins (which do not have a source code)?

A second question concerns the coils of 1st and 2nd security NVIs issued on 13-5-2010. Do the

coils of 500 and 1,000 stamps have the same or different source codes?

Dudley Nash, Quebec, Canada

Dear Mr Nash

The booklets of 12x1st or 12x2nd with production year added are not specifically listed by Tallents House because they are the standard product for the specific year and available across all outlets. However, Mr Nash has pointed out the difficulty for overseas customers wishing to purchase these products, and as a result we will ensure future standard products of this type are added to the stock list. Regular Machin definitive sheets will have the production year added but continue without a source code. And finally, both coils of 500 and 1,000 have the same 'R' source code.

Letting off steam

This month's 'angry letter' concerns the bulk posting of FDCs. What's your opinion?

I have collected stamps for over 50 years and have long been aware that stamps are a source of revenue as well as an instrument of postage. The phrase 'used' stamps does not mean stamps that have passed through the postal service but ones that have been 'cancelled to order'. For that reason I now restrict myself to collecting mint stamps as they are issued. I do this because at least I know that the stamps are valid for use as postage stamps.

Similarly I have long guessed that first day covers are 'bulk postmarked' and do not actually pass through the postal service. By today's post (22 September) I received a despatch from my regular reputable stamp dealer. Imagine my surprise when I found that I now own two Manx covers – one bearing six stamps of Internment Art History and postmarked Douglas with 'First Day of Issue 24th September 2010'. The second bears a Miniature Sheet 'The Christmas Story' also postmarked Douglas but this one shows 'First Day of Issue 01.10.2010'.

I am sure that other Bulletin readers will make their own minds up about the validity of 'postal' items produced by the Isle of Man.

Roy James, Retford
We have asked the Isle of Man Post Office for their comments.



Complete your collection

PJ Uphill of Swanage has a complete set of *The Philatelic Bulletin* from September 1969 to August 2003, offered free to any *Bulletin* reader willing to collect. Please telephone 01929 424 001 if you are interested.

Index linked

Whatever happened to the Index to Volume 46 and Volume 47 of the *Bulletin*? Dr Jean Alexander started the compilation of this invaluable aid in 1983. Please may we have our Index back?

Mrs M W Proctor, South Africa

We have had many letters and emails on this subject and will reinstate this service in August's issue. Retrospective indexes for volumes 46 and 47 are being prepared and we will let you know when these are available.

Reader recommendation

I've recently seen a new exhibition 'The Dhow – Mastery of the Monsoon' at the Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies, University of Exeter, open



until 17 December. The exhibition features a case full of stamps, coins and banknotes illustrating the dhow (a traditional Indian Ocean wooden ship), which stamp collectors may be interested in viewing. More information can be obtained by accessing their website <http://projects.exeter.ac.uk/mares/dhowExhibition.html>.

Jackie Phillips, Cambridge

Keep the letters coming...

Editor of the *British Philatelic Bulletin*, Karin Ward welcomes your letters and has a topical selection of philatelic delights to give as a thank-you to the senders of those published.

Please note, however, that Royal Mail cannot reply to all

letters and reserves the right to edit for length. Please include an email address if possible. Send your letters to: The Editor, *British Philatelic Bulletin*, Royal Mail, 1st Floor, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HQ.

What's new? Issues, products and events



The £1.46 stamp shows Wallace giving a double thumbs up to his own gift-giving, while Gromit is swamped by his Christmas pullover

Christmas News 'That's Christmas licked then Gromit,' is one of Wallace's favourite catch phrases. And this year that phrase is likely to be heard in many households across the nation as the Christmas card-writing is completed and envelopes stamped with Wallace & Gromit special issue stamps. The 2010 Christmas issue (see October *Bulletin*, page 58) has already got the stamp world talking, and the buzz is set to continue with the associated philatelic products.

For readers who do not move in cinematic circles, Wallace & Gromit are much-loved animated characters who have become international movie stars since their first appearance at an animation festival in Bristol 20 years ago. They have won four Oscars and six BAFTAs, and their films are set to become timeless classics – so these stamps make ideal festive collectables.

The Wallace & Gromit philatelic collection has been two years in the making: to create the stamps Royal Mail worked closely with Aardman Animations and the characters' creator Nick Park, to devise brand new scenes that were photographed at Aardman's film studio in Bristol. The stamp sheets and Presentation Packs (see below) make welcome Christmas gifts for Wallace & Gromit fans and the special Smilers® sheets (see page 73) can make uniquely personalised stocking-fillers for budding and seasoned philatelists alike.

Advent calendar fold-out This year's Christmas Presentation Pack is a true original. Designed by the creative team at Manchester-based True North, the pack has a paw-print and Christmas ribbon design and is printed by Fulmar Colour Printing. The Pack features all seven of the Christmas stamps and folds out to become a Wallace & Gromit Advent calendar, not to be opened until 1 December! It also contains behind-the-scenes details of how the cheese-loving inventor and his long-suffering dog Gromit aim to spend Christmas away from the spotlight, at home in Lancashire.

The 2010 Christmas issue Presentation Pack opens to reveal a unique Wallace & Gromit Advent calendar



Christmas with Wallace and Gromit



You can almost hear the music drifting from the softly lit background of the Miniature Sheet, as Shaun taps his sheepskin-booted foot to keep time on his violin

Shaun the Sheep on violin The Miniature Sheet contains all seven stamps set within a specially designed surround featuring Shaun the Sheep in warm winter boots and playing the violin.

First Day Cover The First Day Cover includes a filler card illustrated with images of Nick Park creating the stamps, from drawing board to final photography. A First Day Cover of the Miniature Sheet is also available – please see illustrations on page 96.

Christmas Cards and Stamp Cards Enlarged versions of the illustrations featured on the first-class stamp (Gromit posting his Christmas cards) and second-class (Wallace & Gromit singing carols) have been used on the Royal Mail Christmas cards. Available in packs of ten, they feature five cards of each design, and can be bought from most main post offices.

Eight postcards featuring enlarged images of all seven stamps, and the Miniature Sheet have been also been produced.

Postmarks Three postmarks have been issued for this Christmas launch: a pictorial postmark from Royal Mail Tallents House (Ref No: FD 10 37), Wallace & Gromit in party hats; and both a pictorial (Ref No: FD 10 38, Wallace & Gromit delivering gifts) and non-pictorial (Ref No: FD 10 38NP) alternative postmark from Bethlehem, Llandeilo.

Customers may send stamped envelopes to Tallents House for the pictorial or non-pictorial postmark, quoting the appropriate reference number •



First Day Covers are stamped at Tallents House, with the Wallace & Gromit pictorial postmarks, as above

Collections of the Philatelic Year The latest Yearbook and Yearpack are released in the first week of December, which – if you have been a very good philatelist all year – is just in time for you to put one on your wish list of significant Christmas gifts to yourself.

A perfect resumé of the year's stamps and a very special addition to anyone's collection, The Yearbook (£85) and Yearpack (£60) both contain all the special-issue stamps of 2010, including the Lest We Forget se-tenant strip and London 2010 issue. Each includes an introduction by Eugene Byrne, who has written about many of the Royal Mail special issues.



THE 2010 YEARBOOK First introduced in 1984, the Royal Mail Yearbook has become the essential stamp album: held in a hand-finished slipcase, this beautifully designed and lavishly illustrated hardback book explores the stories behind every stamp issue.

Every Yearbook is individually numbered and comes with the entire year's stamp issues for you to insert in special protective carriers provided in each chapter to keep the stamps in excellent condition. The Yearbook is available in a leather-bound volume and a softback version.

2010 YEARPACK This is the cool little brother of the Yearbook, and also contains a year's stamps in a protective cover and transparent sleeve. Its large,

illustrated gatefold design makes the Yearpack an appealing gift, and definitely the easiest way to collect the year's set of Special Stamps in one go.



2010 PRESENTATION PACK COLLECTION Many philatelists refer to the insert cards in Presentation Packs for information about a particular subject. But how to store them for both heightened protection and ease of access? The Presentation Pack Collection – a stylish black case, embossed in silver, comes complete with the whole year's Presentation Packs – allows this fascinating collection to be kept in perfect condition.

2010 MINIATURE SHEET COLLECTION All the special Royal Mail Commemorative Miniature Sheets released in 2010 each have their own distinctive design and character and make a most collectable record of the philatelic year. And they are stored together in the handy Royal Mail Miniature Sheet Collection

Christmas Smilers® Personalised Sheets Designed by True North, the personalised Smilers® sheets include Nick Park's pencil sketches for The Christmas World of Wallace & Gromit collection on the border.

Both the first-class and second-class sheets feature Wallace, Gromit, Shaun and Feathers McGraw on the border. However the 10x60p sheet also includes sketches of Fluffles, while the 10x97p only features Wallace, Gromit and Feathers on the border •

Last chance this month to buy the 2009 Christmas stamps and the associated stamp items and Smilers® sheet – all go off sale on 2 November. Go to www.royalmail.com/shop to order •



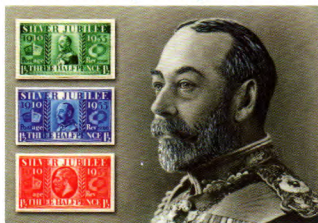
2010 Favourite Stamp Poll and Yearbook Prize Draw

The special stamps issued during 2010 are all shown on pages 90 to 93 and we hope you enjoy looking at them all as much as we did when compiling the pages – recalling the fun, hard work and little deadline dramas associated with the different issues. Once again we invite all *Bulletin* subscribers and all the other people who read *Bulletin* (of whom we like to think there are many) to vote for their favourite stamp of the year.

Bulletin is the ideal source of opinions from informed philatelists, and your participation in this poll is very much appreciated by everyone involved in creating and promoting Royal Mail stamps. As a token of our thanks for your time and goodwill in taking part, all entries will go into a prize draw and the first five drawn at random after the closing date will receive a 2010 Yearbook. So please turn to page 90 for details of how to vote, feast your eyes on all the special issues of the year and let us have your verdict •

Postcard collection completed The BPMA's fifth postcard in the 2010 series looks at the stamps produced for the Silver Jubilee of King George V in 1935.

It features a photo portrait of George V by Vandyk alongside the 1934 essays by Mackennal, which used this image. This card completes the limited edition set of five, available from The BPMA for £5 (plus £2 p&p) from 1 November. Each set is numbered and includes an informative insert. You can order by phone on 020 7239 5125, or online at <http://shop.postalheritage.org.uk> •



What's on at the BPMA

Talk: GPO Film Unit

4 November 7-8pm

An illustrated insight into the preservation of the moving image and the important place GPO films holds in the history of non-fiction film.

Archive Open Day

7 November

10am-5pm

Following this year's theme of Science, Technology and Medicine, this month's Open Day looks at Sickness and Disease at the BPMA, particularly focusing on material about vaccination and quarantine.

Annual Open

Afternoon

7 December, 2pm

Discover behind-the-scenes secrets of the BPMA and its holdings.

To book phone 020 7239 2570 or email info@postalheritage.org.uk

The BPMA is at Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London WC1X 0DL

Stamp Scene continues to keep you posted



The estimate-busting First Day Cover, sold by Warwick and Warwick earlier this year

Seasonal sale Auction house Warwick and Warwick's auction on 1 September contained an interesting Royal Mail First Day Cover of the full set of five 1988 Christmas stamps, including the rare 13p denomination rather than the issued 14p denomination. The cover is postmarked at Paddington on 15 November, the official first day of issue. This suggests that not all of the 13p errors came from the 1988 Yearbooks, as it is unlikely that a collector would have purchased a Yearbook on the day of issue and immediately removed one of the sets of stamps to affix to a first day cover. Currently ten of these stamps have been recorded in mint condition, one used and three on first day covers. The cover realised £2,760, including the buyer's premium ●



Andy Warhol's 1962 airmail stamp design for the US postal service

Internet postage Collectors who thought that buying postage over the internet would be a flash in the pan, may be surprised to learn that Dymo Endicia's web application has so far enabled Americans to purchase in excess of five billion dollars' worth of stamps. However, the US postal system is reported to be in a sorry state overall: it suffered a loss of revenue of \$3.5 billion in the last quarter. Many factors are blamed for this overall downturn, including email, the economy and pension costs ●

Stanley Gibbons expands and publishes Stanley Gibbons has acquired Benham's first day cover and collectables business from Flying Brands Ltd for £1.5 million. Benham trades in Jersey and the UK, and its other activities include mail-order collectables retailing, and distributing new issue stamps. Stanley Gibbons chief executive Mike Hall said, 'The Benham name is as synonymous with quality first day covers as the Stanley Gibbons name is with philately. It will provide opportunities for Stanley Gibbons to diversify into other collectables markets and add specialist skills in volume mail order, collector club management and in-house design.'

'Following our recent research into the Chinese collectables market, we see substantial opportunities to promote and distribute specific China-related

Benham products there,' the CEO added. In addition, commemorative collectable products linked to the London Olympics 2012 are expected to deliver some substantial one-off revenues to the business.

In addition to this development, the Gibbons Stamp Monthly Archive has been issued on DVD, comprising a searchable database from 1890 – 2009 and allowing searches by author, subject, volume number or keyword, with full reproduction of each page as originally printed.

Over 40,000 pages of articles, features, editorial and other content from the *Monthly Journal*, *Gibbons Stamp Weekly* and *Gibbons Stamp Monthly* is included and in addition to the 120 years of articles, purchasers also receive a free disk of bonus material, including a number of extra articles.

This research tool is available for £199.95 from Stanley Gibbons shop, online or by telephoning UK freephone 0800 611 622, or International +44 1425 472 363. An online demonstration can be seen by logging on to www.stanleygibbons.com/online-shop/gibbons-stamp-monthly-archive.aspx •



Checking values Newcastle University spin-out company Data Complexity Ltd has created data-mining software capable of analysing complex data across the internet and then extracting key information. They launched the site www.oldstampprices.com earlier this year, offering a paid-for valuation analysis service. Bill Shepherd from Data Complexity said: 'We can help collectors to know the true value of a particular stamp at low cost, by providing real-time information on price, condition and trends in the market. We're not aiming at high-value stamps. Our market is the large number of stamps bought each year by small collectors at around the £5 to £20 price, which has spiralled significantly with the growth of e-commerce.' •

This month in history

John Holman recalls the National Productivity Year stamps...

Few commemorative stamps have been issued in November – that slot usually being reserved for the Christmas set. The first non-Christmas November special issue marked the start of National Productivity Year in November 1962. This set was also the first to be designed by David Gentleman, produced in plain and phosphor versions, and to have 'traffic lights' printed in the sheet margins. The bold designs symbolised 'Units of Productivity', 'National Productivity', and 'Unified Productivity' with building blocks, map, and arrow motifs, plus NPY logo and portrait of The Queen.

The backgrounds were printed in the colour of the corresponding definitive stamp – 2½d red, 3d violet, and 1s 3d green. The 3d and 1s 3d values without The Queen's head are now highly priced errors. The 2½d exists in two distinctive shades of green – myrtle-green and blackish-olive, both worth collecting. They were used in considerable numbers on Christmas mail that year and remain a popular set with collectors. To find out more about the NPY stamps, see my article in the *Bulletin* of November 2002, pages 78 to 82.



Events

UK

3-5 November

PHILATEX, London
International Stamp
and Cover Show,
Royal Horticultural
Halls, Greycoat
Street, London

5 November

The Stuart Rossiter
Memorial Lecture,
RPSL, 5pm (for free
admission email
drbeech@btinternet.
com)

13 November

Archive Open Day,
BPMA, 10am to 5pm
Mobile Post Office
(GPO2) on display at
the Lord Mayor's Show

Until 14 November

Impressions of Africa:
money, medals and
stamps at the British
Museum, London and
Maritime Philately at
Aberdeen Maritime
Museum

8 December

'Expertisation and its
future' seminar,
British Library, 3pm

ABROAD

21-25 November

Jerusalem 2010
Multinational Stamp
Exhibition, Jerusalem

Calling all young team players!

Stamp Active Network is seeking nominations for the Young Collector of the Year award 2011. The Award is presented in memory of Anne Dummer, the winner of the Rowland Hill Award for Youth Work in 2000. Anne devoted virtually all her time to encourage young collectors, mainly in her hometown of Kettering where she led a group of young collectors attached to Kettering Stamp Club. She was the instigator of Kidstamps and a driving force in youth philately.

There are prizes for junior/school stamp club leaders, and young collectors (up to 18 years) who are not only enthusiastic collectors but, more importantly, seek to share and promote the hobby with their colleagues and friends.

Nominations should be made by the end of January 2011 – in writing to David Rossall, Stamp Active Network, 15 Woodlands Grove, Kilmarnock, KA3 1TY, or by email to davidrossall@talktalk.net. The results from the nominations will be announced after Spring Stampex 2011 and the presentation of the trophy will be organised at a suitable philatelic venue •



Brilliant Britain results Back in April the Stamp Active Network launched a one-page competition for primary school children on the theme of 'Brilliant Britain'. Over 30 entries were received from children from many different areas of the UK, and the judging has now been completed. The results are as follows:

Class A – up to 7 years	1st	Joshua Davies	Spittal VC School
Class B – 8 to 9 years	1st	Millie Smith	Lostock Hall School
	2nd	Louise Avery	Welwyn Garden City
	3rd	Heather Nuttall	Lostock Hall School
Class C – 10 to 12 years	1st	Lynne Mitchell (pictured)	Doonfoot Primary School
	2nd	Emily Smith	Prendergast Primary School
	3rd	Francesca Stringer	Greenford School

All entrants received packets of stamps and the winners also got Stanley Gibbons vouchers. Thanks go to all those who entered – Stamp Active Network look forward to receiving even more entries next year •



Picture posed by model. © Corbis

The human letter

Michael Pitt-Payne shares some one-off items from the novel collection of William Reginald Bray

AS A KEEN COLLECTOR of unpaid and underpaid mail for more than 50 years, I first became aware of the activities of WR Bray about 30 years ago. I acquired a couple of surcharged postcards dated 1899 that carried his name and address and a request for them to be returned if undelivered. The first card was addressed to his friend EW Arnold – two neatly cut-out date stamps for Brockley and London had been used as part of the address. As it was contrary to Post Office Regulations to attach any sort of label to a postcard, the Post Office treated this item as if it were underpaid, and a fine of one pence was collected on delivery. The second card was addressed to Santa Claus Esq, with a request for it to be forwarded. The card was returned as 'insufficiently addressed', and the sender charged a halfpenny. Clearly, in 1899 the Post Office had not realised the commercial possibilities of communicating with Mr Claus! And so began a collection.

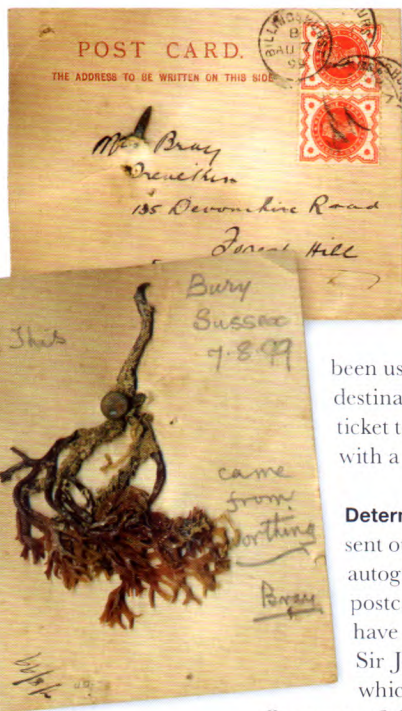
But who was he? Willie Reginald Bray was born in 1879 and lived for 60 years. By day he was an accountant, the epitome of respectability. But privately he devoted many hours to a very British and idiosyncratic pursuit – provoking all possible penalties available from the postal service.

Seaweed and a skull, stamped In 1898 he purchased a copy of the Post Office Guide and made a careful study of the regulations, which he then proceeded to test by sending out a variety of unusual postcards. He had noted that many strange things could be sent by post and so he amused himself by posting such items as a purse, a rabbit's skull and a nail brush. I have a postcard which he sent to his mother in 1899 with a piece of seaweed from the beach at Worthing attached to it by a metal tack. He sent this unusual missive via the regular penny post.

Bray often worked with a friend, Ernest Arnold. ►

Below: WR Bray was a respectable accountant who died in 1939 leaving a collection of more than 10,000 items of philatelic interest, much of which has been appearing on the philatelic market since the 1950s





Above: a piece of seaweed which Bray posted to his mother in 1899

Below right: despite its festive message, this card was returned 'Contrary to Regulations' because it was officially too small

Opposite page, clockwise from bottom left: Bray posting onions; a train ticket used to indicate the address on a letter (it arrived safely); a postcard with cut-out post marks attached was marked 'contrary to regulations'; Bray being delivered by two postmen in 1932; artistic addressing to Rookery Villa, Alplaham, Tarporley. The letter in the background is on the back of the card shown on page 67

and they sent correspondence to each other as part of the testing process. The Post Office set a minimum size limit of $3\frac{1}{4}$ by $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches for postcards and the two friends tested this by sending cards measuring 3 by $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches. I have one of these small cards, which has been treated as a letter and surcharged, while another has passed through the post unscathed. The regulations stipulated that redirection of post should take place within a day of the first delivery; Bray tested this regulation by redirecting a card 16 months after it was delivered. It was treated as an unpaid item.

He also had artistic talent – I have a delightful card where pictures of a rookery, a ham and a barrel of tar have been used in place of words, and it appears that the card reached its destination. Another experiment involved Bray's attaching a railway ticket to a postcard to indicate the address; it was returned to sender with a surcharge to be paid.

Determined autograph hunting During the course of 40 years Bray sent out more than 32,000 requests and collected more than 10,000 autographs, beginning in 1900 when he and Ernest Arnold sent postcards to every British General engaged in the Boer War. I have a card sent to Major General French (later Field-Marshal Sir John French) in South Africa by EW Arnold in June 1900 which has been signed by the General and returned to England.

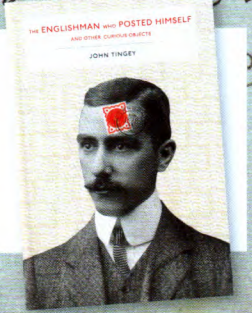
On many of the requests the Generals were only identified by means of a picture on a cigarette card attached to the address side of the postcard and it was left to the Postal Officials to identify the addressee.

As the Post Office regulations did not allow the attachment of items to postcards, Bray decided to attach picture cigarette cards to Letter Cards and I have an example of this on an autograph request (see page 67) which was sent to Sir Edmund Monson the British Ambassador in Paris in 1902.

W Reginald Bray's life and prolific mailing activities have recently moved into the media spotlight through a BBC World Service programme and a new book (see box, right) which takes its title from Bray's claim that he was the first person in the world to have 'posted himself'.

He claims to have successfully shipped himself in 1900. And on 14 November 1903 Bray posted himself and his bicycle by registered mail from Forest Hill Branch Office to his home at 135 Devonshire Road. He was escorted by two postmen, and his father Edmund Bray signed to confirm safe receipt of his son and bicycle. He reenacted this escapade almost 30 years later, in 1932. By this time Bray had become even more skilled in the arts of self-promotion, and there was a photographer on hand to record the event for posterity ●





Think like Reginald and win *The Englishman Who Posted Himself*
 To find out more about the curious postings of Reginald Bray, read *The Englishman Who Posted Himself and Other Curious Objects* by John Tingey (Princeton Architectural Press, New York). We would like to celebrate WR Bray's eccentricities and so challenge *Bulletin* readers to send us the most unusual postcard they can think of (but totally non-scary and within regulations). The ten entries that take our fancy will win a copy of the book and, of course, the admiration of fellow mischievous philatelists. Send your entry to Reginald Rules, *Bulletin* Editorial, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1t 1HQ. Closing date: 10 December 2010

Lady and the stamp

On the eve of an exciting sale, Kathryn Saville looks at the life of a highly acclaimed philatelist

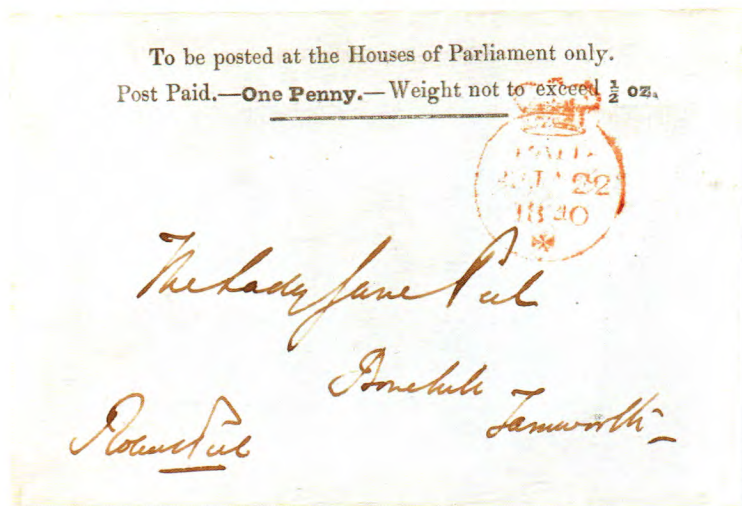
LADY MAIRI BURY JP, born Mairi Elizabeth Vane-Tempest-Stewart in 1921, was one of the few acclaimed female stamp collectors of the 20th century. A prize-winning member of The Royal Philatelic Society, she was awarded ten gold medals in her lifetime and built up a particularly fine collection of around 500 Penny Blacks. And her influence continues – one of the highlights at the recent International Stamp Exhibition was the posthumous exhibit of her later line-engraved issues, which was awarded a Large Vermeil.

One of a kind Lady Bury was something of an eccentric and her long life was littered with extraordinary experiences. She piloted her first plane at the age of 12, set up the first thoroughbred stud in Northern Ireland, and would walk around the family home with a cockatoo on her shoulder. Mairi Bury was also believed to be one of the last surviving persons in Britain to have met Hitler and his chief henchmen in the 1930s. She dismissed Hitler as ‘a nondescript person’ and Himmler as ‘a shop walker at Harrods’.

At the outbreak of the Second World War, Mairi drove pickups in the London docks while serving in the motor transport section of the Women’s Legion, a division that her mother had founded during the previous war. In 1976 she gave the ancestral home of Mount Stewart in County Down to ►



Lady Mairi Bury, 1921-2009



Left: Lot 1 – 1840 Houses of Parliament 1d envelope sent by Robert Peel
Estimate £10,000-12,000



Above: Lot 952 – 1841 2d
violet-blue mint, very few
known

Estimate £10,000-12,000
Right: Lot 540 – 1840 2d
Mulready envelope with 2d
blue, £10,000-12,000



Above: Lot 8 – 1840 1d
Rainbow Trial block of four
Estimate £10,000-12,000
Below: Lot 472 – 1840 2d
blue Plate 1 mint
Estimate £8,000-10,000



the National Trust, but continued to live in one wing until she died.

Her remarkable character was in great part attributable to her upbringing. Her father Charles, the seventh Marquess of Londonderry, was one of the leaders of the Ulster Unionist movement, and Secretary of State for Air. Her mother, Edith, was a renowned socialite and hosted some staggering parties, welcoming such luminaries as W.B. Yeats, the future King George VI and Queen Elizabeth, Michael Collins, Winston Churchill and Ramsay MacDonald. The partying line has continued through Mairi's niece Annabel Goldsmith.

A passion born Mairi was more of a cerebral character. As the youngest of the family, she was encouraged to pursue whatever interest took her fancy, and she fortuitously began collecting stamps at the age of eight – and continued until the day she died in November 2009. It all began in 1929, when Arthur Balfour, the former Conservative Prime Minister, presented her with his magnificent stamp albums (about which there is little public detail).

In 1970 she started a specialised British collection and became fascinated by the Queen Victoria 1d black and the 2d blue issues. In building this part of her collection, she was greatly helped by the philatelists Tony Alcock, Robert Tyrell, GB line-engraved expert Donald Forbes-Smith, and Andrew Lajer.

'Lady Mairi loved all her stamp collections and bought them from anyone that offered her a nice item,' Andrew Lajer explains. 'Having collected for so long she knew what she was missing and snapped it up. She achieved a number of Gold Medals and had a special cabinet into which she placed all her medals and trophies... the certificates were proudly displayed on the wall just outside her sitting room. Her grandson, Frederick [Aubrey Vane-

Tempest-Stewart], is a collector of the reign of Edward VIII, and Lady Mairi encouraged him enthusiastically.'

He continues, 'Her first love were the stamps of Queen Victoria but she also had collections of Edward VII and George V, displaying most at competitive level at the annual Stampex exhibition.'

The collectors' view Jane Moubray, past President of The Royal Philatelic Society said, 'Lady Mairi Bury joined the RPSL in 1970 and became a Fellow in 1980. We knew her best for the beautiful 1840 Penny Blacks and Two Pence Blues, the 1887 Jubilees, and the King Edward VII stamps which she collected with great knowledge and meticulous care. They brought her ten gold medals and delighted everyone who saw them.'

Another of the members of The Royal Philatelic Society residing in Northern Ireland is Jon Perrott. He remembers the great collector fondly: 'Lady Mairi rarely looked back and was always enthusiastic about the future. Our last meeting, a few days before her death, was to discuss arrangements for our regional meeting on 13 February 2010. As patron of the North of Ireland Philatelic Society she had enthusiastically participated in the NIPS Centenary display at The Royal Philatelic Society. Later when I expressed my wish to organise the first regional meeting in Northern Ireland, she immediately offered her home, Mount Stewart, as the venue – and what a perfect setting it was. Lady Mairi had derived great pleasure from the philatelic world coming to her home in recent years and her younger daughter, Lady Rose Lauritzen, has expressed the wish that Mount Stewart should continue to be the venue for future regional meetings. This would be a most appropriate tribute to her memory.'

Richard Ashton, who is organising the sale for Sotheby's, knew Lady Bury personally and admired her collecting style. 'She wasn't a "cheque book collector,"' he says. 'She was interested in many forms of postal history and that's what makes this a particularly interesting auction – she bought at all levels, so there will be something in the financial reach of most collectors.'

The sale takes place on 24-26 November 2010 at Sotheby's, London. There will be six sessions over the three days, featuring over 2,000 lots. Call +44 20 7293 5224 or email richard.ashton@sothebys.com for a catalogue and further details ●



of 12 fl. Per

Above, from the top:

Lot 98 – 1840 1d black Plate

1A Imprimatur from the First Registration sheet

Estimate £15,000-18,000.

Lot 99 – 1840 1d black Plate 1A mint

Estimate £10,000-12,000.

Lot 102 – 1840 1d black Plate 1A used

Estimate £300-400

Lot 469 – 1840 1d black 'VR'

Imprimatur from the Second Left: Mount Stewart, where Lady Mairi's daughter hopes to help philatelic traditions live on



The Scottish Crown Affair Martin Robinson has a tale of nationalism and compromise



THE FIRST PILLAR BOXES of the present reign were erected late in 1952, and the first in Scotland was on a housing estate in Edinburgh. Within a couple of days it had been painted with tar, and it soon emerged that this was the work of Scottish nationalists, who objected to the EIIR cipher on the grounds that Elizabeth I reigned before the Treaty of Union in 1707, so the new monarch was only the first Elizabeth of Scotland.

A different country Scottish nationalism has a long history, and senior *Bulletin* readers will remember that on Christmas Day 1950 the Stone of Scone was stolen from beneath the Coronation Chair in Westminster Abbey and spirited away to Scotland, from where it had been taken by Edward I in 1296. It was recovered soon afterwards, but the British Government returned it to Edinburgh Castle in 1996. Philatelists will also be aware that nationalist agitation led to the issue of special stamps for Scotland and the other regions of Great Britain in 1958.

In 1953 the Secretary of State for Scotland suggested that in future, post boxes and mail vans should bear the Scottish Crown rather than a royal cipher. From 1954 the manufacturers cast special boxes for Scotland, but not before the aforementioned Edinburgh pillar box had been destroyed by a home-made bomb.

The photograph above left shows what appears to have been an interim solution to the problem of using the royal cipher in Scotland: this double-aperture pillar box, photographed at Hawick post office in 1987, has an 'ER' cipher without the 'II'. I am not aware that this exists elsewhere, so it seems not to have been considered a viable long-term compromise. The full range of letter boxes was produced with the Scottish Crown: large, small and dual-aperture pillar boxes, large and small wall boxes, including the Ludlow boxes, and lamp boxes.

Our illustrations, left, show the difference between crown shape used to represent the Scottish Crown on post boxes (top) and the shape used for the St Edward's Crown, currently used with the EIIR cipher.

Above: double-aperture box minus Roman numerals.
Below: spot the difference between the Scottish and English (bottom) shapes



Far Frae Hame The 1974 Type G rectangular box (facing page) carries the Scottish Crown, with no royal cipher. What is unusual about this one, and not apparent from the picture, is that it was one of two erected in Sheffield, presumably in error. It was photographed in 1987. Can any readers confirm whether one or both of these Scottish boxes still live in Yorkshire? Also pictured is a Scottish lamp box that was photographed in 1988 in Westwell



Far left: A 1974 Type G rectangular pillar box has established a wee place for the Scottish Crown in Yorkshire. Middle: A small wall box with a Scottish crown. Near left: This K Type pillar box has a rather oversized crown to that boldly states its Scottish identity

Leacon, near Ashford in Kent. And the Scottish version of the 1980 K Type has a particularly large and splendid Scottish Crown.

Not to be matched? Another oddity is shown in a large Ludlow box (below right). Instead of the usual EIIR cipher, this has a Scottish Crown on the white enamel plate at the top. The Letter Box Study Group's list says that this type 'doesn't exist', and the Scottish Ludlows made between 1954 and 1965 (when production ceased) all have a cast crown at the top. What we have here is an earlier Ludlow box with a specially made replacement plate, and this is confirmed by the lack of escutcheon (keyhole cover) and curved rather than flat moulding round the edges of the box – typical of pre-George VI manufacture. Yet another one-off customised gem! ●

Below: the rareness of this Scottish Crown on the enamel plate of this Ludlow box is confirmed by the Letter Box Study Group's list – it claims that no such boxes exist



Readers' photos The photo on the right was taken by R Wicks at Kilmaurs. The Scottish Crown on the removable enamel plate of this Ludlow box is a most rare combination. Another of our favourites this month is shown on the left, taken by Dr Ronald Elbourne while on holiday in Dorset. Quite firmly attached to wall box, and on Royal Mail headed paper, is a request not to use the box for mail!



This month's winner: Rosalind Wicks of Malton wins this month's prize – a copy of *Old Letter Boxes* (£4.95, Shire Books) and Presentation Pack of the 2009 Miniature Sheet. **For more information:** visit www.lbsg.org or contact the Membership Secretary at 38 Leopold Avenue, Handsworth Wood, Birmingham B20 1ES (email membership@lbsg.org). **Send your photographs to:** The Editor, the *British Philatelic Bulletin*, 1st Floor, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HQ. We regret we cannot return your photographs.



1966 and all that

John Holman recalls the birth of Christmas stamps and traces 45 years of their popularity

THE FIRST CHRISTMAS STAMPS WERE ISSUED IN 1966, in the same year that Bobby Moore held aloft the World Cup Trophy and in the same month that Tom Jones released the Number One hit *Green Green Grass of Home*. Austria had issued the first true Christmas stamp in 1937, so we were by no means the first, and by 1966 we were joining many countries that were already commemorating the festive season philatelically.

The 1966 stamps were bold in design and caused quite a stir. They were the winning designs from a schools' competition announced by the Postmaster General Tony Benn. About 5,000 entries were received and the winners were *King of the Orient* by Tasveer

Shemza of Stafford and *Snowman* by James Berry of London, both then six years old. By the time the stamps were issued on 1 December 1966, Mr Benn had moved to another government department and his successor, Edward Short (now Lord Glenamara) launched the Christmas issue and presented the children with their prizes.

Errors exist with the gold-embossed head of the Queen completely missing, and others with the gold head but without the embossing. The

Errors exist with the gold-embossed head of the Queen completely missing

names of the designers and printer were shown in the bottom margin of the stamps and one stamp in some sheets of the 3d value had the initial 'T' of 'T SHEMZA' missing, making an interesting constant variety. First day covers were serviced bearing a postmark for the tiny village of Bethlehem in south Wales, the postmark being applied at the Head Post Office in Llanelli. A Bethlehem postmark is still used on Christmas FDCs.

Not everyone thought getting children to design stamps was a good idea and the practice was not repeated until 1981, when five stamps by children aged five to 16 resulted from a *Blue Peter* competition.

Religion versus secular designs An ongoing discussion about Christmas stamps has been about how to reconcile the wishes of customers who like to see Biblical themes on their stamps at Christmas with those of others who prefer jolly images of holly, festive foods, presents and Christmas trees. The policy has been to have a balance, some years seeing religious issues, others secular. Since 2007 additional Christmas stamps showing the Madonna and child have been available at post offices for customers specifically wanting a religious image.

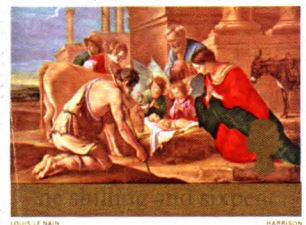
Religious image GB stamps started with the second Christmas issue in 1967, reproducing paintings of the Adoration of the Shepherds (see right) and The Madonna and Child. The designs were the work of Stuart Rose, head of Post Office Design. The 1s 6d stamp caused some controversy because the value was expressed only in words and the Queen's head was placed in the lower right-hand corner rather than at the top. The 4d stamp went on sale in October but the other two values were not released until late November. The Nativity story was also the theme of the 1969 set showing the Herald Angel, Three Shepherds and Three Kings, in colourful images by Fritz Wegner who also designed the 1979 issue showing the Nativity story spread over five stamps (see 13p value, right).

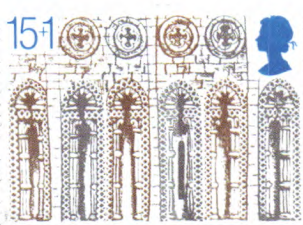
The 1970 Christmas stamps – the last with shillings and pence values – reproduced Nativity scenes from the beautiful De Lisle Psalter in the British Museum. They were the work of 28-year-old Sally Stiff, and were produced by Harrison & Sons Ltd on a 'Wood' machine. Eight cylinders printed the colours, one embossed the gold Queen's head, and one applied phosphor. Not surprisingly errors of missing colour, phosphor, and embossing exist (4d and 5d, right). The five-penny stamp with missing gold head is extremely rare. Sally Stiff also designed the 1972 stamps that featured angels, made from textiles, with musical instruments – trumpet, lute and harp. Angels with musical instruments appeared again for Christmas 1975, this time the work of R Downer.

Enid Marx produced the 1976 issue, taking inspiration from English medieval tapestries of ►

Facing page: the very first Christmas issue of 1966 produced some nice varieties for errors collectors.

Below: Biblical-themed stamps began with the second Christmas issue in 1967, designed by Stuart Rose. Other Nativity scenes shown here are from 1979, 1969, and two from 1970





Above, left to right: 1974 Christmas issue featured stone medieval bosses from British Cathedrals and churches; David Gentleman's design of 1989 included a 1p surcharge for charity; the stained glass theme of 1992

the Christmas story – an interesting textural approach, but the reduction of the tapestries to stamp size did not work especially well.

Churches and stained glass The 1971 issue reproduced stained glass windows from Canterbury Cathedral, beginning a theme of showing the splendours of some of our cathedrals and churches. The 1974 set – one of my favourites – featured medieval bosses from York Minster, Worcester Cathedral and churches in Norfolk and Devon. The 3½p stamp exists with the light stone background colour omitted, recently catalogued at some £35,000. Stained glass was also the subject for the 1992 issue, from churches in Surrey, Berkshire, Oxfordshire and south Wales. David Gentleman's 1989 stamps, showing Ely Cathedral, included a 1p surcharge for charity on four of the five values.



In 1977 David Gentleman interpreted the Twelve Days of Christmas

These 1968 stamps were part of the first secular Christmas set, designed by Rosalind Dease

Christmas Carols Carol singing might be considered to cover both religious and secular themes. Eminent stamp designer David Gentleman designed six stamps based on the carol Good King Wenceslas for the 1973 issue, followed by another six on The Twelve Days of Christmas in 1977 (see 9p, left).

Carol singers, from Tudor to Victorian times, featured on the 1978 design by Faith Jacques, and in 1982 Barbara Brown provided colourful interpretations of five popular carols including While Shepherds Watched, and We Three Kings. Carol singing again featured on one of 1990 stamps, this time devoted to the theme of a 'white Christmas' in the snow. Linda Gray's Folk Customs issue of 1986 also crosses the divide between religious and secular.



Secular themes The first non-religious stamps were the 1968 trio showing children playing with their Christmas presents, designed by Rosalind Dease. This was the only issue to bear the greeting 'Happy Christmas'. We had to wait until 1980 for the next secular issue, this time showing Christmas decorations by Jeffery Matthews who tells me it is his favourite of all his Royal Mail designs. Interestingly, he did the original drawings in pencil on stamp paper specially supplied by Royal Mail, as he found he could get the best results on this paper. With lateral thinking, he included Christian symbolism – the star,



Left: one of Jeffery Matthews' personal favourites among his Royal Mail designs is this Christmas stamp of 1980

crown, light and evergreen in his fine designs (see the 12p stamp, above).

Tony Meeuwissen's 1983 stamps evoked a fantasy Christmas. Pantomime characters were featured in 1985 and 2008; Father Christmas in 1997 and 2004; a Dickensian Christmas for 1993 (celebrating the 150th anniversary of Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*); robins in 1995 (see below) and 2000, and a robin also appears this month, with Wallace and Gromit on one of images specially created by Aardman Animations (see Volume 48, page 58).

Specialist study Christmas stamps make an attractive thematic collection and can form a serious philatelic study. There is much to collect – books of Christmas stamps were introduced in 1984, miniature sheets in 2004, and Christmas stamps in definitive stamp size in 2006. Self-adhesive stamps started in 2001 and Christmas stamps in Smilers®/generic sheets in 2000.

In 1984-87 certain values had stars underprinted on the back as part of a discount promotion. A special discount rate for Christmas cards in 1986 resulted in the 12p and 13p stamps in the same design (below left). In 1988 stamps were printed at 13p before the rate increased and 14p stamps produced – only a few of the 13p stamps were found in Royal Mail Yearbooks and they are now catalogued at £9,000. Happy Christmas! •

Below left to right: the 1986 12p was the same design as the 13p stamp; this robin was voted *Bulletin* readers' favourite of 1995; from 1984 to 1987 certain values had a starred underprint on the back



Simply the best – in your opinion, which is the top stamp of 2010? Vote for your favourite here

2010 has been a great year for stamps. London 2010 Festival of Stamps has marked a memorable year for philatelists. We are inviting you to look back over Royal Mail's special issue stamps and vote for your favourite stamp of the year. We would also like to know if there is a special theme touched upon in 2010 that you would like to see developed in the future.

We value your opinion, so please take a few minutes to study the stamps shown on the next three pages, and on page 92 find out how to vote – it's simple and your vote will give you automatic entry in a special prize draw.

January 2010 Classic Album Covers



February 2010 Girl Guiding UK



February 2010 The Royal Society



March 2010 Battersea Dogs & Cats Home



March 2010
House of Stewart



April 2010
Mammals



May 2010
Britain Alone



June 2010
House of Stuart



July 2010
The Olympic
and Paralympic
Games II



August 2010
Great British
Railways



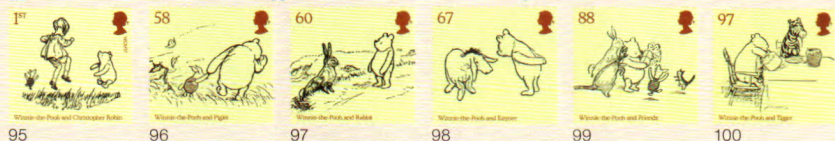
September 2010
Medical
Breakthroughs



September 2010
Birds of Britain
(i) Post and Go



October 2010
Winnie-
the-Pooh



November 2010
Christmas



How to vote Please write on a postcard the number shown beneath the bottom left corner of your favourite stamp on these pages • We would also like to know if you have a favourite set of special stamps and whether you think the theme could be further developed – if so, please write down the name of the set and tell us your ideas • As a thank-you to *Bulletin* readers for taking part in this poll, your entry will be included in a prize draw for a leather-bound 2010 Yearbook (but only if you include your name and address on the card, of course). Please send your votes to 2010 Stamp Poll, Karin Ward, *Bulletin*, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HQ •

Commemorative covers

Winnie-the-Pooh covers Featuring either the full set or the Miniature Sheet, each of these Stamp Centre covers is a limited edition of just 300 and both will be cancelled by the official handstamp, designed and sponsored on date of issue. **Price:** full set cover, £14.99 plus £1.25 p&p; Miniature Sheet version, £12.50 plus £1.25 p&p ●



Cotswold Covers is producing a special FDC to mark the 40th Anniversary of their founding. Christmas 1970 saw the first issue of the company and they have produced fine covers for every issue since. The one-off cover will bear the traditional trademark C in ruby red, as will the special postmark cancellation.

Price: £8.50 plus £1.20 p&p ●



Ploughing Day nostalgia An unusual limited edition of 50 covers has been produced by Mid-Suffolk Light Railway Co. in commemoration of this year's 60th Anniversary of the disbanding of the Women's Land Army. It features WLA ladies ploughing a field and a passing MSLR loco, cancelled by special handstamp 11844 WWII. Carriage labels were also issued depicting WLA scenes with images of the railway. **Price:** £3.25 each; blocks of 6 different stamps £1.50; in A5 format £3 and in A4 size £6 plus p&p of 60p per order for UK addresses ●



Armistice Day 2010 This Civil Defence Association (CDA) has produced a cover for Armistice Day featuring an image and insert of this year's Battle of Britain Memorial flight for the CDA at the National Memorial Arboretum (NMA). The poppy stamp is cancelled with the NMA postmark on 11 November. **Price:** £11 each, including UK p&p (cheques payable to Civil Defence Association please) ●



A bit of a snowball fight One of two limited-edition official covers for Christmas 2010 from Buckingham Covers, with complete Wallace & Gromit Christmas issue of seven stamps and carrying the special pawprint 'WIGAN Gt Manchester' postmark. Stock code BC417. **Price:** £14.60 (incl p&p) ●



Orders and enquiries

Buckingham Covers

Warren House, Shearway
Road, Folkestone CT19 4BF
www.buckinghamcovers.com
Phone 01303 278137
Email betty@
buckinghamcovers.co.uk

Civil Defence Association

Armistice Cover, 24 Paxton
Close, Matlock, Derbyshire
DE4 3TD
www.civildefenceassociation.
org.uk
Phone 01629 55738
Email aedissel@btinternet.com

Mid-Suffolk Light Railway Co.

74 Edgecomb Road,
Stowmarket IP14 2DW.
www.railwaystamps.org.uk
(Cheques to be made out to
B Reynolds)
Email barry.reynolds@tiscali.
co.uk

Cotswold and Stuart Covers

PO Box 100, York YO26 9SS
Tel 0844 980 9772
www.cotswold-first-day.co.uk

The Stamp Centre

79 Strand, London WC2R 0DE
www.stamp-centre.co.uk
Free order line 0800 975 4581

Seasonal specials

Orders and enquiries

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Online shop for small orders
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Overseas +44 131 316 7483
8.30am-5pm, Monday to
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products online at
www.royalmail.com/shop

BPMA Shop

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online at shop.postalheritage.org.uk

BFDC Ltd

3 Link Road, Leicester
LE2 3RA
www.bfdc.co.uk
Phone 0116 2705367
Email brad@bfdc.co.uk

Poster Art For Christmas cards with special appeal for philatelists, check out the BPMA collection. The examples shown right carry reproductions of poster campaigns that ran during the 1940s and 1950s, encouraging customers to give stamp books as gifts, or to post their cards early to avoid a last-minute rush at Christmas. The 'Give Books of Stamps as Christmas Presents' poster is by P Vinten from 1948; the 1950 'Travel Shop Post Early' poster was designed by the prolific FHK Henrior. Each card measures 12.2cmx17cm. **Price:** £2.50. See p95 for a chance to win a set of 12 cards ●



Bradbury Covers This is the fourth stamp sheet in the series 'Delivering the Mails', on the theme of Post Early for Christmas. It is produced in association with The British Postal Museum & Archive, with a percentage of the proceeds going towards the BPMA. **Price:** £35 (incl p&p) Stock Code 35856 from BFDC Ltd ●

FAB Miniature Stamp Sheet: Stingray, Joe 90 and Captain Scarlet were just some of the ground-breaking TV shows devised by Gerry Anderson in the 1960s, and now set to feature on FAB: The Genius of Gerry Anderson, a set of six stamps and this revolutionary new Miniature Sheet design – a spectacular start to Royal Mail's 2011 Stamps Programme and released on 11 January.

The four-stamp Miniature Sheet is made up of four new stamps – 41p, 60p, 88p and 97p – featuring Thunderbirds 1 to 4. The sheet shows the opening sequence of Thunderbirds, Anderson's most celebrated creation, and by tilting the stamps you can see the vehicles take off (thanks to a microlenticular process used in production). **Price:** £2.86. You can order online or contact by telephone ●

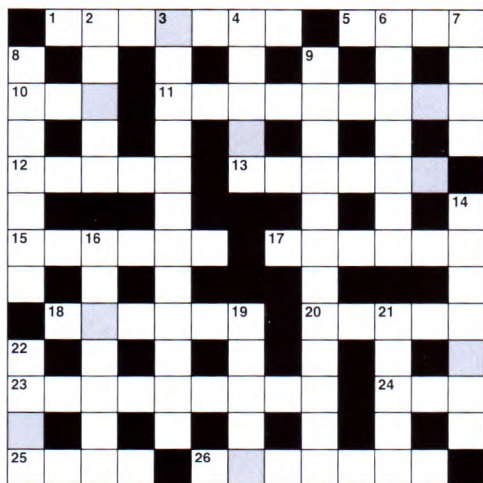


Prize draw rules and regulations

1 The closing date is 10.12.2010. 2 Promotions are open to all readers aged 18 and over, except employees of Royal Mail Group Ltd, their business associates and immediate families. 3 Responsibility cannot be accepted for entries which are incomplete, damaged or not received for any reason. Proof of posting is not proof of receipt. Prizes must be accepted as offered; they are not transferable and there are no cash alternatives. 4 Winners are notified within 28 days of closing date. 5 For prize draws where readers must answer a question or solve a crossword, winners will be the senders of the first correct entries drawn at random by an independent service after the closing date. 6 Promoter's decision on any aspect of the promotions is final. No correspondence will be entered into. 7 Entry implies acceptance of these rules. 8 Prizes are subject to suitability and availability. The promoter reserves the right to a) substitute a prize of equal or greater value if circumstances so demand and b) to suspend or cancel or hold void any of the competitions or prize draws at any time without notice. 9 Winners' names are available 28 days after closing date; send an SAE to Karin Ward, The British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail 1st Floor, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HQ. The promoter is Royal Mail Group Ltd, 100 Victoria Embankment, London EC4Y 0HQ.

Prize draws Philatelic puzzles to put you to the test

CROSSWORD Upon completing the puzzle, rearrange the letters in the grey squares to form a stamp-related word and send this, with your name and address to the address opposite. The first correct entry drawn after 10 December wins the Royal Mail 2010 Yearbook, a Wallace & Gromit Real Yorkshire Wensleydale truckle, and a set of BPMA Poster Art Christmas Cards



CLUES

Across

- 1 Greek character points inside my stack (7)
- 5 Star disguised as old Russian ruler (4)
- 10 Food made from pork, maybe, is a non starter (3)
- 11 Make a rude noise with fruit? (9)
- 12 Stupidly lied about hot Indian city (5)

- 13 Hide letterhead that is vulgar (3,3)
- 15 Enrol again, or quit (6)
- 17 Good man has yen to do some sewing (6)
- 18 Saw and rule mostly snapped by carpenter's mate (6)
- 20 Scientist Newton had one article in the bag (5)
- 23 Rise above nerds, can't go wrong (9)
- 24 Half a scarab? It's still an insect! (3)
- 25 Gardening implements on garden pipe, we hear (4)
- 26 Such times, I'd entered into fights (7)

Down

- 2 Very warm, the Spanish accommodation (5)
- 3 Modern singers, not eastern, designed formal wear (7,5)
- 4 Support for artist removing head from animal (5)
- 6 Organise alternative drink outside (4,3)
- 7 Beams to lift, you say? (4)
- 8 Commanders may be dodgy dealers (7)
- 9 Forgetful best man dined out (6 6)
- 14 Bush here appears stupid on film (7)
- 16 Bird a very long time in southern seaside town (7)
- 19 Cut her as ordered (5)
- 21 French priest opening your church (5)
- 22 A hut rebuilt in American state (4)

Identify and Knowledge competitions

1 *Identify* the stamp from this detail, right. Please give the name of the stamp and its year of issue.

2 Test your philatelic *Knowledge* by answering the following questions:

- a) How many special issues were there in 2010?
- b) WR Bray famously tested the Post Office's regulations in late 19th and early 20th centuries. But which of the following cannot be mailed today: batteries, money or asbestos?
- c) When were the first Christmas stamps issued in the UK?

Please send your answers on separate postcards, marked *Identify* or *Knowledge* to The Philatelic Bulletin, 1st Floor, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HQ to arrive by 10 December 2010. The senders of the first correct answers drawn after the closing date will receive a prize selection of British stamps. For rules and regulations, please see facing page •



