

BRITISH PHILATELIC

Bulletin

The ROYAL MAIL magazine for stamp collectors

Volume 41 Number 12

AUGUST 2004 £1.10

70 years of gravure stamps •
Crimean War issue preview



1st

Sir Rowland Hill

was awarded the first RSA Albert Medal
in 1864 for his postal reforms and the
introduction of the Penny Post.

The Royal Society of Arts 1754–2004



Eric Gill created this famous
typeface and was among the very
first to be awarded the distinction
of Royal Designer for Industry (RDI)
by the RSA in 1938.



57

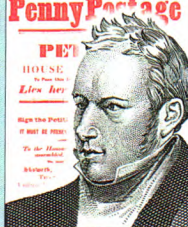
eg: abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

The Royal Society of Arts 1754–2004

UNIFORM
Penny Postage

PENNY
HOUSE
in Every House
Litera Ave

Sign the Penny
Postage at Home
in Every House
Litera Ave
Litera Ave
Litera Ave



Forthcoming issues and withdrawals



Cover Eric Gill, who designed the borders of the George VI low value definitives, and Sir Rowland Hill – the subjects of two stamps in the new Royal Society of Arts issue, on sale from 10 August. Gill portrait by Howard Coster © National Portrait Gallery London.

Issues Note some items are available only from Royal Mail Tallents House Edinburgh and Post Office Limited philatelic outlets at main post offices in Bath, Belfast, Birmingham, Brighton, Bristol, Cambridge, Canterbury, Cardiff, Chester, Coventry, Croydon, Durham, Edinburgh, Exeter, Gatwick Airport, Glasgow, Grimsby, Guildford, Harrogate, Leeds, Leicester, London (Eastcheap and Trafalgar Sq), Newcastle, upon Tyne, Norwich, Nottingham, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Southampton, Southend-on-Sea, Stevenage, Stratford-on-Avon, Stroud, Truro, Windsor, and York.

Royal Mail Tallents House
21 South Gyle Crescent,
Edinburgh EH12 9PB, UK.
Telephone order line (08.30-
17.00 Monday-Friday): 08457
641 641; from overseas +44
131 316 7483

27 July	Issue Smilers sheet: 20 x 1st class Union Flag stamp and labels.
3 August	Issue Royal Society of Arts stamp cards.
10 August	Issue Royal Society of Arts stamps and presentation pack.
11 August	Withdrawal Pub Signs stamps, presentation pack and stamp cards.
26 August	Withdrawal DNA coin cover • Coronation coin and banknote covers • Extreme Endeavours coin cover • British Museum medal cover.
28 August	Withdrawal Smilers sheet: 20 x 1st class Cartoons stamps and labels. (Withdrawal postponed from 28 July.)
30 August	Withdrawal 1st class definitive in coils of 500 (issued April 1997) • 1st class definitive in sheets of 200 (November 1997) • 1st class definitive in business sheets of 100 (self-adhesive, May 2002) • presentation pack of self-adhesive stamps (March 1997) • vended books of 10 x 1st and 10 x 2nd class (January 2001) • Books of 12 x 1st and 12 x 2nd self-adhesive (August 2001) and 6 x 1st book (self-adhesive, flame colour, printed Questa, July 2002).
9 September	Issue Woodland Animals stamp cards.
16 September	Issue Woodland Animals stamps and presentation pack.
Please note The British Journey: Scotland stamps were not withdrawn from sale on 14 July as stated in last month's <i>Bulletin</i>. Stamps, pack, stamp cards & self-adhesive stamp book will remain on sale from Tallents House until further notice. The stamps will also be available from post offices in Scotland where there is a local demand for them • The Classic Locomotives and Lord of the Rings packs are now sold out at Tallents House.	

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70 years ago, the first British stamp printed by the photo-gravure process was issued. James Mackay describes the circumstances surrounding its design and printing **370**

The British Philatelic Bulletin is published monthly by Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ • **Editor** J R Holman • **Price** £1.10 single copies from Post Office Ltd philatelic outlets • **Annual subscription** £11.75 UK & Europe; £16.75 elsewhere. Send subscriptions to Royal Mail Talents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB • **Binders** (to hold 24 issues) £8.50, storage boxes (about 30 copies) £9.95 available by post from Royal Mail (Edinburgh address, above) • Royal Mail also publishes the fortnightly *British Postmark Bulletin*, giving details of forthcoming special handstamps. Available on annual subscription from Edinburgh address above: £12.25 UK and Europe, £24.95 rest of the world • **Copyright** Design & text Royal Mail Group plc, unless attributed to a specified author. All requests to reproduce any article should be addressed to the Editor, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ • **Design** Robert Maude • **Printed** in Great Britain by White Productions Ltd • **ISSN** 0953 8119 • Royal Mail is a trading name of Royal Mail Group plc. Registered in England and Wales no 4138203, registered office 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ

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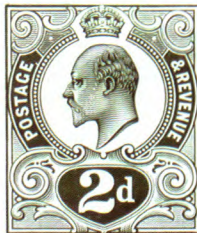
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Stamp scene Exhibitions • Auction news • Publications • New SG *Concise* catalogue

Stampex opening hours

15 Sept	12.00-19.00
16-18 Sept	10.30-18.00
19 Sept	10.30-15.00

Entry will be free.

The Business Design Centre is near Angel station and is well served by bus routes.

Enquiries Stampex, PO Box 371, Fleet GU52 6ZX.
Telephone 01252 628006.

UK Exhibitions The Picture Postcard Show will be held at the Royal Horticultural Society New Hall, London SW1 (1-4 September), followed by Autumn Stampex, Business Design Centre, London N1 (15-19 September); Philatex, Royal Horticultural Halls, London SW1 (28-30 October); Thematica II, Carisbrooke Hall, Seymour Street, London W2 (26-27 November), and Basildon 2004, Towngate Theatre, Basildon (20-21 November).

Autumn Stampex, organised by the Philatelic Traders' Society, will include the annual national competitions, a display by the China Philatelic Society, and the National Youth Stamp Committee activities (see below). The national competitions cover Aerophilately, Postal History, Postal Stationery, Revenue, Special Studies, Social Philately, Thematic, Traditional (GB, Commonwealth, Foreign), and Literature. Over 20 trophies and special awards are on offer, including the Silver Mailcoach for the best exhibit, the National Philatelic Society Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee trophy for the best first time entrant, and the Royal Mail trophy for a GB exhibit from the Traditional Class. Last year's winner of the Silver Mailcoach was A Mayflower for a display of Mulready envelopes and lettersheets. There will be about 100 dealers' stands, including many from overseas, satisfying all requirements for stamps, covers, accessories or literature. Royal Mail's stand will offer the full range of current GB stamps and related material, and a posting box will be provided for the special Stampex handstamp. The Woodland Animals stamps will be issued on 16 September when an additional Stampex first day of issue handstamp will be available •

ABPS Directory Price £15 (UK postage £1) from ABPS, c/o 107 Charterhouse Street, London EC1M 6PT.

Society publications The 2004 edition of the Association of British Philatelic Societies Directory & Handbook is essential reference for all interested in organised philately. As well as listing all national, local and specialist societies, it has useful sections on exhibitions and awards, museums, catalogues and magazines, international philatelic organisations and much else. There is of course information about the work of the ABPS, British Philatelic Trust and National Youth Stamp Committee. 194 pages •

First Day Coverage Enquiries to Richard Park, 2 Chaffinch Close, Horsham RH12 5HA.

For details of Bristol meetings telephone Trevor Jones: 0117 931 2692. For Liverpool meetings and general Association enquiries: Terry Barnett, 7 Mackets Lane, Hunts Cross, Liverpool L25 0QA, telephone 0151 486 2610; or see website www.gbfdc.co.uk

The June issue of *First Day Coverage*, newsletter of the Association of GB First Day Cover Collectors, has useful information for all FDC collectors. Arthur Roberts reports on the new Automated Postal Service machines and covers he serviced when the Alfreton machine was introduced on 18 March. Leon Winsky has FDCs of 1966 England Winners and 1975 Parliamentary Conference issues signed respectively by the full England team and by eight Prime Ministers from Lord Stockton (Harold Macmillan) to Tony Blair. Derek Williams writes on the first signed cover in his GB series, and Roger Callan looks at first day use of airletters. There are tips on making covers and an obituary of Edgar Smith who, as 'Cuthbert' wrote on modern GB issues. The Association will meet at Stampex on 18 September, and at the Ship and Shovel, Craven Passage, London WC2 on 27 November •

The June issue of *Stamp Lover* (National Philatelic Society) includes features on Przemyśl (a town in Poland), French Sudan, the US stamp honouring Paul Robeson, tercentenary of British Gibraltar, Philately and the UPU, a report on Spring Stampex, illustrations of recent USA special handstamps, auction news, readers' letters, news of forthcoming events, book reviews, and the ever-useful checklist of articles in the main UK philatelic magazines, including this *Bulletin*. The NPS is currently seeking new members. Benefits of membership include use of one of the leading philatelic libraries in the English-speaking world, auctions, a shop window service for philatelic books and accessories, and interesting meetings held at the British Philatelic Centre in London •

The April issue of the *Chronicle*, quarterly journal of the Great Britain Collectors Club, includes an interview with Tony Walker, Editor of the GB Philatelic Society Newsletter, collector of Machins, and member of Royal Mail's Stamp Advisory Committee. He talks about his campaign to make modern issues more acceptable to the philatelic establishment and for display at exhibitions. He comments: 'Unfortunately few modern collectors accompanied me on this campaign and it was a lonely furrow, which I greatly enjoyed ploughing I might add! There is still much work to do and regrettably in the UK the specialist QEII Machin societies are very introverted, and turn their backs on everyone else, often fighting amongst themselves... Despite this, modern stamps and Machins in particular are penetrating the defences of the line-engraved. A significant number of serious GB collectors now have Machin collections, be it postal history, booklets, stamps or whatever.' On his work on the Advisory Committee, he notes 'Probably our most difficulty arises with the Christmas issues. Firstly they come up every year, and it is not easy to be different and original, year on year. One has to avoid being different for the sake of it. Also the representation of other faiths has to be considered, so should the Christmas stamps be secular or non-secular? This is an emotive subject as you can imagine. Recently, to seek fresh ideas, a number of graphic firms were invited to submit their ideas for Christmas stamps to the SAC, without any prescriptive brief... we had nearly 400 separate images to look at, in addition to the rest of the agenda. We work hard!' (For a profile of Mr Walker, by Richard West, see *Bulletin*, December 2003.) •

The Summer 2004 issue of *TPO*, quarterly journal of the TPO & Seapost Society, includes a report on the special handstamps used on 16 March, day of issue of the *Letters by Night* prestige book, TPO services and postmarks of Taiwan, Hungary, Estonia, and the postal history of the cruise ship *General von Steuben*. The useful listing of initials and abbreviations connected with TPOs of many countries assists in identifying postal markings. Included in the journal is the catalogue for the Society's next auction and a list of its publications currently available: *Railways of West Wales*; *TPO Postmarks of Great Britain 1962-1990*; *Irish Mail*; *Norwegian Railways – Postal Connections and Cancellations*; and *An Introduction to Ocean Letters*. Also available are back numbers and an index to *TPO* journal. The Society will have a stand at the Basildon 2004 exhibition on 20 November •

National Philatelic Society

107 Charterhouse Street,
London EC1M 6PT. Tele-
phone 020 7490 9610 or see
www.ukphilately.org.uk/nps

GB Collectors Club

Parker A
Bailey, 17 Greenwood Road,
Merrimack, NH 03054, USA,
or see www.gbstamps.com/gbcc

The TPO & Seapost Society

C J Barlett, Woodrich, Quarry
Lane, Gorsley, Ross-on-Wye
HR9 7SJ or see website www.TPO-SeapostSociety.fsnet.co.uk

Postal Stationery Society

Enquiries to: Colin Baker, 4 Greenhill Gardens, Sutton Veney, Warminster BA12 7AY or see www.postalstationery.org.uk (This site was reviewed in February Philately On-line.)

The May issue of the Postal Stationery Society's well-produced *Journal* includes good articles on GB Certificates of Registration (1841-78), early pictorial postcards (Royal Naval Exhibition, 1891, etc), Part 3 of a useful GB Postage Rates prepaid by Postal Stationery (1840-2003), the Centenary stamped to order wrappers produced by W H Smith Ltd in 1948, notes on aerogrammes, and a report of the Society's March meeting. The Society next meets on 30 October at the British Philatelic Centre, Charterhouse Street, London EC1; next year it mounts a joint display with the GB Philatelic Society at Spring Stampex and meets on 26 March and 29 October ●



GB Concise Catalogue Price £19.95 (UK postage £3) from Stanley Gibbons, Parkside, Ringwood BH24 3SH. UK mail order freephone 0800 611622.

New GB Concise out The 2004 edition of Stanley Gibbons's popular *Great Britain Concise Catalogue* was published in May. This lists all British stamps from the Penny Black to the British Journey: Northern Ireland set in March this year. Over the past 12 months or so there has been a resurgence in the GB stamps market and there are some notable price increases since the last edition or the 2004 edition of *Collect British Stamps* last November. An unused Penny Black (sg2) is now £4500, up from £3750 in the last *Concise* and £4000 in *CBS*. Prices for the 1841-51 2d with white lines jump significantly, especially the violet-blue shade, from £9500/£650 to £12,000/£800. The Victorian £5 orange on blued paper (sg 133) is up £5000 unused to £30,000; the £1 on white paper (136) rises even more, by £20,000 to £70,000 unused. Some watermark varieties are up, for example the Edward VIII 1/2d dull blue-green (sg 215wi) from £1200 mounted mint and £650 used to £1400/£750. The price of the 2d Tyrian Plum jumps from £28,000 to £40,000 – not bad for a stamp 'prepared for use but not issued'! The Prussian blue variety of the 2 1/2d George V Silver Jubilee is up £1000 in unused and used condition, a mint set of George VI low value definitives (462/75) is £3 up at £35, and the 1948 £1 Silver Wedding is also up £2, at £40 mint/used. First day covers of the 1951 High Values and Festival of Britain are increased by £50 and £5. Into the present reign now, and the early presentation packs of Wilding low and high value definitives are priced £150 and £875 (previously £130 and £650), and the pack with the phosphor graphite stamps is now £285 (£250). There is a hefty mark-up for the 1961 POSB 3d Thirrell printing with orange-brown omitted, from £325 to £650 (the Timson printing of the same error remains £140). There are a few odd prices amongst the current Machin definitives – why should the 1p and 2p stamps be 15p each mint/used rather than the minimum price of 10p? and are used copies of the £1 really worth £2.70 (£1.60 last year)? This is priced more than the £1.50 gravure high value which is rarely seen used other than on FDCs. The now obsolete recess printed high values of 1999 increase to £34.80 from £17.25 mint but remain £12.25 used. The first Greetings stamps (1989) remain £25 mint but are now also £25 used (£17 last time); single used stamps are now £5.50 each except for the Teddy Bear which remains at £3.75 – presumably an error in re-pricing. The 1993 £10 Britannia is up £2 mint and the PHQ card doubles in price unused to £5 and is also up £5 used at £35. The differential in price between the 1996 Cartoons Greetings on all-over phosphor paper and with two bands

is increased and the much-hyped Welsh version of the Princess Diana pack is now £150 (£80). Prices for the 1999/2000 Millennium sets are now £5/£5.25 (£4.50/£4.75) and used sets of PHQ cards £10 (£9). The 1999 Royal Wedding cards are up by £2.50 unused, but by only 50p used. The 1st class Night Sky (2126a) is back up from £1 to £3.50 mint and used – originally issued in 2000, it got a new lease of life in the 2002 *'Across the Universe'* PSB. The 2000 'Her Majesty's Stamps' miniature sheet is up £6 mint, and last year's £1 'Coronation' stamp from the *Perfect Coronation* prestige book is now a staggering £45 – it was just £1.50 in *CBS* last November. The book itself is also £45 so if you want the £1 stamp, buy the book and use the other stamps for postage. Finally, collectors of generic Smilers sheets will be pleased that these are now listed – at the end of the catalogue under the heading 'Post Office Label Sheets', with their own numbers, prefixed LS. The first, for the Stamp Show 2000, is catalogued at £50, and the two 2000 Christmas sheets at £190 each. The similar 2001 sheets, but with the company name Consignia in the margin, are listed but unpriced. Even three current sheets (when the *Concise* was published) are priced at £30 each. Individual stamps from these sheets, even if different to stamps from other sources, are still not listed. Overall an important edition for collectors of GB of most periods, but especially perhaps collectors of recent issues •

Auction news Grosvenor's 25-26 May GB and All World auction included a Penny Black plate 1a used on entire on 6 May 1840 (first day of use) cancelled with Maltese Cross and with 'T.P./Queens' Receiving House handstamp – it realised £21,000 (est £20,000-25,000). A corner marginal block of 24 1d red-brown, plate 8, with full deckled edge sheet margins showing plate number and inscription made £8500 (£5000-6000). Another block, of 23 on lavender tinted paper (largest known multiple on this paper) made £6500 (£5000-6000), and a magnificent block of 1867-78 5s watermark Maltese Cross, overprinted SPECIMEN realised £6500 (£5000-6000). There was a good range of Elizabeth II material. A unique block of six (with sheet number) of the Wilding 1s, multiple crown watermark, double-print made £550 (£500-600), and items from the M C Farrar-Bell archive including pencil essays for Coronation, CEPT, Lister and other issues realised £500 (£200-250). Six values of Tudor Crown Wildings overprinted CANCELLED with top corner clipped off, mounted in a Harrison's brochure made £580 (£600-800), and a 1992 £5 Windsor Castle with missing gold Queen's head realised £180 (£80-100). Another error – 1995 Rowland Hill 25p with missing heads and value, 68 copies known, made £140 (£100-120) •

Grosvenor 399-401 Strand (third Floor), London WC2R 0LT. Telephone 020 7379 8789 or see website www.grosvenorauctions.com

More auction news on p381.

New collection for British Library The British Library has received a new collection of customs stamps from HM Customs and Excise. It comprises British revenue stamps in proof form for the period 1827 to 1933; the main taxes covered are Table Water Duty, Medicines, Entertainment Allowances and Playing Cards; also Pension Order Forms. The British Library's Philatelic Collections are available to researchers by appointment with high-lights on public display seven day a week, admission free •

Philatelic Collections British Library, 96 Euston Road, London NW1 2DB. Telephone 020 7412 7635, or see www.bl.uk/collections/philatelic/

Jeffery Matthews receives his MBE from The Queen. The honour was given for 'services to graphic design, especially postage stamps'. Jeffery has designed many fine stamps, notably Royal and Heraldry issues, and has carried out extensive work on definitives and country stamps ●



Stamp Active competition

For details and an entry form send a SAE to Jean Wood, 6 Beech Grove, Whitley Bay, NE25 3PJ. The closing date is 1 October.

For NYSC information contact Anne Dummer: telephone 01536 519959 or e-mail anne@dummerah.freemove.co.uk

National Youth Stamp Competitions The National Youth Stamp Committee (NYSC) has decided, for 2004, to divide the annual youth competitions into two sections. The British Youth Stamp Championships will be on display as usual at Autumn Stampex, and the Stamp Active Competition entries will be shown at Basildon 2004 (Towngate Theatre, 20-21 November). The 'Championships' are for young collectors aged up to 21 and the entries will be on show alongside exhibits by adult collectors. The Stamp Active Competition is for youngsters developing their collections, gaining from the experience of competing. The display area has been provided by the exhibition organisers and the Competition sponsored by Cavendish Philatelic Auctions. There will be activities for young collectors at Basildon; the Competition prizes will be presented at 2.30pm on the Sunday.

The nyssc, with Stanley Gibbons, is holding a Youth Day at the sg shop, 399 Strand, London WC2 from 10am to 4pm on 19 August. There will be various activities for young collectors and goody bag supplied by Stanley Gibbons. It will be a good opportunity for young collectors to look around a stamp shop and see what is available to help with their collecting! ●

Orders and enquiries Rushstamps (Retail) Ltd, PO Box 1, Lyndhurst SO43 7PP. Telephone 023 8028 2044.

Customised sheets promote stamp collecting Rushstamps has produced two business customised sheets (similar to Royal Mail Smilers sheets) containing 2004 Occasions stamps. On one sheet, the labels alongside the stamps feature Queen Victoria 'Jubilee' stamps surrounded by the message COLLECT BRITISH STAMPS; on the other sheet the labels bear just the message in a variety of typefaces. The two sheets cost £20 postpaid. The latest issue of *Rush Telegraph* (no 29) includes many offers for British stamps and Cinderella items plus Commonwealth and Foreign material ●



Correction In James Mackay's Anniversaries article (*May Bulletin*) we featured what was said to be the special postmark for the 60th anniversary of inland airmail services. The illustration was taken from a filler card in one of the souvenir covers but was not in fact the handstamp used. The actual handstamp is shown here (at reduced size). Our thanks to Alan Finch for bringing this to our attention ●

Royal Mail news Special stamps • Ingots • New postal stationery • Coin covers survey

2004 special issues This month's special issue, on 10 August, marks the 250th anniversary of the Royal Society of Arts. The 1st class stamp will be of particular interest to stamp collectors as it features the Penny Black and honours Sir Rowland Hill, winner of the RSA's Albert Medal. The 57p pays tribute to Eric Gill's typeface; Gill was the designer, along with Edmund Dulac, of the ½d to 6d values of George VI definitives. The next set, Woodland Animals, goes on sale on 16 September – the stamps were previewed last month. Please note that the first day postmarks for this issue will be applied in silver ink.

In this *Bulletin* we give details of the Crimean War stamps (12 October) – see page 368.

The Christmas stamps and miniature sheet (2 November) feature specially commissioned paintings of Father Christmas by childrens' book illustrator Raymond Briggs. The Christmas stamps will be printed by De La Rue. There will also be Christmas stamp books (folded sheetlets) containing 2nd and 1st class stamps, and the traditional airletter in standard and bilingual Welsh/English versions.

A miniature sheet is scheduled for 5 October to mark the opening of the new Scottish Parliament building. The sheet, price £1.57 will include one 2nd class, two 1st class and two 40p Scottish country stamps and a view of the new building. A commemorative cover will be available but there will be no presentation pack or stamp cards for this issue. Details next month •

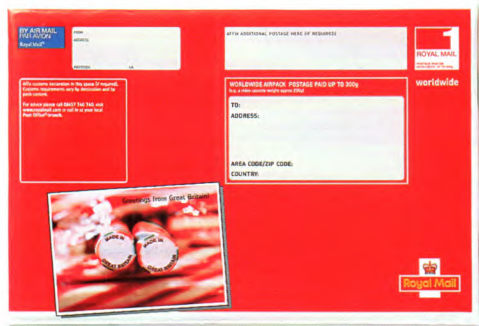
New Stamp Ingots series The second in a new collection of six ingots featuring stamps of the reigns of Edward VII and George V will be available from 16 September. It features the Edward VII £1 stamp. The series continues in November with George V 1d Mackennal profile penny. Ingots for the George V 10s Seahorse high value, 1d 1924 British Empire Exhibition, and 1929 £1 Postal Union Congress commemoratives will be available next year. Price £26.95 each from Tallents House. Collectors signing up for the complete series of six can purchase the first in the set (Edward VII 1d stamp) at £13.50 and receive a free collection box. The Victorian stamp ingot collection is still available, price £26.95 each – see the back cover of last September's *Bulletin* for full details •

Reader's request Mr B Twomlow is seeking a copy of the 1999 Royal Mail Millennium Catalogue. Any offers to him at 33 Oxford Road, Southsea, Portsmouth PO5 1NP •

2005 stamp programme Dates and number of stamps may change. Exact issue dates will be announced nearer the time.

January	Farm Animals (10 stamps + Smilers sheet)
February	British Journey: SW England (6)
February	Castles (miniature sheet)
March	Magic Circle (5 + Smilers sheet)
March	Charlotte Brontë (6 + miniature sheet + PSB)
April	World Heritage Sites (8)
May	British Journey: North of England (6)
June	Trooping the Colour (6 + miniature sheet)
July	Motorcycles (6 + miniature sheet)
August	Celebration of Food (6)
September	Independent Television (6 + Smilers sheet)
October	Battle of Trafalgar (6 + miniature sheet + PSB)
November	Christmas (6 + miniature sheet + Smilers sheet)

The Castles sheet will mark the 50th anniversary of the first Elizabeth II high value stamps. PSB = prestige stamp book.



C4 Airpack This smaller size sells at £2.99 each for Europe and £3.99 each Worldwide; the larger C3 size are £4.49 Europe and £5.49 Worldwide.

with a blue Air Mail 'label' printed at top left. The packs exist in four designs for both European and Worldwide destinations. Three designs have an illustration at lower left, with the caption 'Greetings from Great Britain', showing deckchairs on a beach, two sticks of rock with 'MADE IN / GREAT BRITAIN' on them, or fish, chips and tomato ketchup on sheets of newspaper. These illustrations are repeated, enlarged size, on the reverse of the packs. The fourth type does not have an illustration on the front of the pack but a map of the world overprinted with the word 'airpack' on the reverse. There are also larger c3 sizes (Europe and Worldwide), again with map on reverse, with the indicator showing postage paid to 500g.

New pre-paid c4-size Airsure and International Signed For pre-paid 'plastic' packs are available for mail to Europe and Worldwide. Prices: Airsure Europe £5.99, Worldwide £6.99; International Signed For Europe £5.49, Worldwide £6.49. All are pre-paid up to 300g. They are of similar design to the previous packs, but the new style postage paid indicator ●

Coin covers survey Royal Mail recently sent questionnaires to some of its customers purchasing coin covers. The majority of the respondents were male and aged 45 plus. The distribution was nationwide but with a bias to the south of the UK. Only 3 per cent said they were members of any coin clubs or societies but 42% read a stamp or coin magazine – 33% read this *Bulletin* and 6% *Stamp & Coin Mart* (others 4% and less). The main reasons for buying coin, medal and ingot covers were to 'add to or enhance a collection' or as an investment. About 10% said they bought the products as gifts for others. The fact that the covers included both stamps and coins/medals was an important factor in purchasing, as were limited edition, unique postmark, and attractiveness of the cover design. The average number of coin covers owned by respondents was 29, and 12 and 7 medal and ingot covers. Some 63% of coin cover purchasers thought them good value for money. The next coin cover will be available from 30 November (St Andrew's Day) entitled Scotland Country Definitive Coin Cover, price £13.50. This will bear the Scottish country stamps and £1 Scottish coin newly issued by Royal Mint in 2004 and featuring the Forth Railway Bridge. It will be the first in a new annual series of Country Definitive Coin Covers that follows the Royal Mint's £1 country coin programme ●

New postal stationery New Airpacks ('plastic' envelopes ideal for sending documents, videos and small presents overseas) went on sale at main Post Office branches from late April. Eight of the new packs are c4-size and bear a new postage indicator at top right, in the style of the new design of PPI (printed postage impression), with 1st class indication and 'POSTAGE PAID GB / EUROPE (OR WORLDWIDE) UP TO 300g'. A space is provided alongside for additional postage to be added if necessary. The background is red, with printing reversed out in white or in black on white and

Olympic Games Celebrating Athens and the London 2012 bid, by Bob Wilcock of the Society of Olympic Collectors



ROYAL MAIL is not marking the Athens Olympic Games in any way this year, but that does not mean all is quiet on the Olympic philatelic front. The Olympic torch relay will circle the globe this year, including London on 26 June. It started its run at Wimbledon, and the Society of Olympic Collectors sponsored a handstamp which also reflects the tennis connection (right). SOC also have one of the first commemorative SmartStamps, used only on one day, and commemorative Smilers using the first class Christmas stamp with photos of torch runners, Frank Bruno and Chris Akabusi together holding an Athens torch, and Andrew Lindsay with his Sydney gold medal. The Andrew Lindsay photo is also reproduced as a postcard. Full details of the various souvenirs can be found on the SOC website at www.societyofolympiccollectors.org

soc celebrates its 20th anniversary this year, and the Society joined the Wenlock Olympian Society for celebrations during the annual Olympian Games. Another special handstamp marked the event (right).

On 25 May London 2012 was officially recognised as one of the five final candidates, along with Paris (the favourites), Madrid, New York and Moscow, to host the 2012 Olympic Games. Royal Mail has supported the bid through the issue of a stamp booklet on 15 June, with a pane that makes an attractive vignette.

London 2012 has been franking their mail with a London 2012 meter mark since 2003. There may well be other collectors and philatelic items between now and decision day at the International Olympic Committee Session in Singapore on 6 July 2005.

The Society of Olympic Collectors is the largest English-language society in the world catering exclusively for Olympic collectors. More details may be found on the Society's website (above) or from the Secretary, Paula Burger, 19 Hanbury Path, Sheerwater, Woking, Surrey GU21 5RB •



Royal Mail is proud to support London's bid to host the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games in 2012.



Articles by Mr Wilcock on Olympic stamps and postal history were published in the Bulletin in July, October and November 1988 and July 1996.

The Court Post Office 1990-2004 Part 5:

by Glenn Morgan FRPSL

Parts 1-4 of this series were published in the *Bulletin* from April-July. (Part 4 in July was incorrectly headed part 3.) Mr Morgan is the author of *Royal Household Mail*, published in 1982, and Hon Librarian of the National Philatelic Society. A profile of him was published in the *Bulletin* in February 1998.

Mourning mail The past 15 years has seen much joy for the Royal Family. Unfortunately they have also experienced much sadness, as in any family, although their grieving is extremely public. The Royal Family goes into immediate mourning, traditionally for a period of up to six months, depending on who has died, although these days it tends to be only a few days.

Princess Diana, Princess Margaret and HM Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother all passed away. As recorded in the June 2003 *Bulletin*, such events result in huge increases in mail to the Royal residences. At the height of mourning for Princess Diana, between 80 and 100 mailbags a day were received, compared to the more usual two or three. From a collecting viewpoint, Royal deaths produce mourning stationery, as envelopes and letterheads framed with a black border are brought into service as a mark of respect. There are funeral invitations to send out, acceptances to process and letters of thanks in respect of the condolences expressed to despatch.

Celebration mail There is a long tradition of a Monarch sending greetings to subjects reaching a milestone in life, be it a significant age or wedding anniversary. King George V introduced a service in 1917 that marked 100th birthdays and diamond (60th) wedding anniversaries. This tradition has been continued, and expanded. Her Majesty now sends messages for diamond, 65th and platinum (70th) wedding anniversaries and every year thereafter, and for the 100th and 105th birthdays and every year thereafter.

The Inland Telegram Service was used for many years, until it ceased in 1982, when Telemessages took their place. Royal Cards have replaced these since 1999. Many people do not realise that it is necessary to apply for a congratulatory message, believing that a card will magically appear. This is not feasible, not least because of Data Protection Act legislation which would preclude the Royal Household from having access to the dates of every potential celebrant. A form addressed to the Anniversaries Office at Buckingham Palace will, however, result in a card being sent. Applications must not be made more than three weeks in advance, but can be sent up to six months after the event has been celebrated. As it is The Queen's custom to send messages only to citizens of one of Her Realms or UK Overseas Territories, those born or married overseas, or who currently live abroad, must provide evidence of their British nationality. Wherever possible, cards are 'pulled' in instances where death of the proposed recipient has been advised in time, to avoid impacting on the grief of the family. This can involve contacting the local delivery office on the proposed date of delivery – something that was never possible with Telemessages.

Royal Telemessages There were two different types of Telemessages, as shown opposite. The artists were chosen locally by the regional Arts Councils and were all approved by The Queen. The final Royal Telemessage was despatched from Buckingham Palace in time to be delivered to the addressee on 11 June 1999, to be replaced next day by Royal Cards.

The series concludes with Royal messages and postmasters



Telemessage

1 POSTAGE PAID
SAC 10 BRISTOL
P00010

BRITISH TELECOM TRANSMITTED THIS TELEMESAGE ELECTRONICALLY
TO A ROYAL MAIL SORTING CENTRE NEAR YOU FOR DELIVERY TODAY



ER

26 December 1994

TELEMESAGE

ROYAL-CARD

THE QUEEN SENDS YOU WARM CONGRATULATIONS AND GOOD WISHES ON YOUR
DIAMOND WEDDING ANNIVERSARY.

PRIVATE SECRETARY



Telemessage

1 POSTAGE PAID
SAC 10 BRISTOL
P00010

This Telemesage was transmitted electronically to a
Royal Mail Sorting Centre near you for delivery today

ER

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
LONDON
SW1A 1AA

22 July 1992

TELEMESAGE LIP

ROYAL-CARD E

MY CONGRATULATIONS GO TO YOU BOTH ON YOUR DIAMOND WEDDING
ANNIVERSARY. I HOPE THAT YOU SPEND A HAPPY AND ENJOYABLE
DAY OF CELEBRATIONS.

ELIZABETH R.



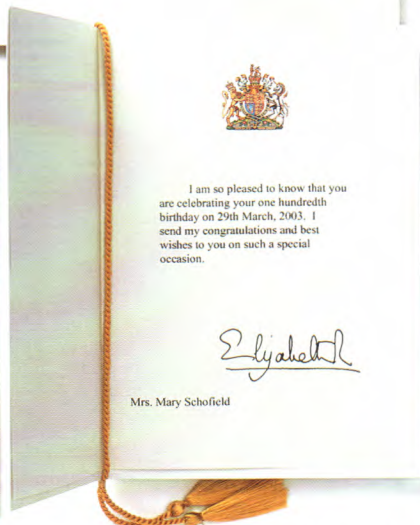
Windsor Castle
by Peter Rogers

Royal Telemessages The initial design (top) bore the Royal Coat of Arms on its face and a Royal Mail Coach inside. This was replaced in 1990 by a set of Royal residences: Windsor Castle (left), Caernarfon Castle, the Palace of Holyroodhouse and Killyleagh, used as appropriate for celebrants in England, Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland.



Royal cards are intended for recipients residing in the UK. An insert bears the Royal Coat of Arms, a greeting from Her Majesty and a facsimile of her signature. A BP (Buckingham Palace) prefix on the label's number identifies the source of the mail item to Royal Mail officials.

A new envelope design may have been introduced by now, as one was planned for introduction by the end of 2003.



Royal Cards Royal Cards were introduced on 12 June 1999, timed to arrive on The Queen's official birthday. In 2002, a total of 22,000 cards were despatched, all of which were sent by Royal Mail Special Delivery two days prior to the intended receipt date. If the celebrant lives in Australia, Canada or New Zealand, the completed application form is submitted to the relevant Governor-General, who, as The Queen's personal representative in these countries, arranges for despatch of the greetings.

HM The Queen Mother's 100th birthday card The first member of the Royal Family to qualify for a free congratulatory birthday message on the occasion of her 100th birthday was Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother, on 4 August 2000. On her birthday, The Queen Mother emerged from Clarence House with The Prince of Wales. Following a ride past by the King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery, she watched the Band of the Irish Guards playing Happy Birthday, and a march past by the Grenadier Guards. The Queen's Postman, A (Tony) Nicholls, then delivered the Royal Card (left). She asked her equerry, Irish Guards Captain William de Rouet, to open the envelope with his sword, as the envelope had been sealed prior to despatch. She was clearly delighted, smiling as she opened the card because The Queen had signed the card 'Lilibet', her childhood name.



Royal Postmen The Court Postmaster is backed-up by a small team of postmen who prepare the mails for delivery to each department. Similarly, they collect the post in readiness for several van delivery runs per day to Nine Elms sorting office for London mail or the local office elsewhere in the Kingdom. The postmen also staff the counters at Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle and each wears a unique badge. Prior to 1990, these were cloth badges that were sewn on to the uniform, and then an attractive red, black and gold generic badge was utilised (right, at top). These bore the residence name only and were not personalised. The current version is worded either Windsor Castle or Buckingham Palace below a crown, and with the words Royal Mail (right, centre and bottom). It is in red, gold and black with the forename of the postman; only two were ever made for Windsor Castle.

Court Postmasters The role of Court Postmaster involves managing all employees, plus the incoming and outgoing mail for and from the Royal Family members and their Households. The postal staffs are employees of Royal Mail and are not employed by the Royal Family. There have only been 28 holders of the office of Court Postmaster from Robert Gascoigne, appointed in 1565, through to Michael Delaney who came to office late in 2003. Three have held office during the period covered here and brief biographical details follow.

Adrian Vidler MVO took-over from Brian G Johnston on 21 December 1990, having previously been Assistant Court Postmaster since March 1985. During Adrian's period of office, the position of Court Postmaster was evaluated and upgraded to Superintendent (PE 'A') in 1998, having previously been Assistant Superintendent. The job content was further re-evaluated in 2003 to become graded as a (SB9) Senior Management position. Adrian's final day of service as Court Postmaster was 28 June 2002. Shortly before, he was given the MVO (Member of the Royal Victorian Order). Queen Victoria instituted this title as a reward for personal service to the Sovereign. It is clear that the major contribution that Adrian made to update the outmoded Royal postal services had met with Her Majesty's approval.

David Wren came to Buckingham Palace from the House of Commons, where he had been the Assistant Postmaster, on 4 June 2002. He was appointed temporary Court Postmaster, a position he held until 29 August 2003. David has now returned to the House of Commons, where he is Deputy Postmaster within the Palace of Westminster.

Michael J Delaney was appointed as Assistant Court Postmaster on 1 April 2001; retitled Deputy Court Postmaster in July 2003. His appointment as Court Postmaster was effective from 1 September 2003 and hopefully Michael will experience a long and happy time in this unique position, having joined the Royal Mail staff at Buckingham Palace 13 years previously as a cadet •



It is hoped that this survey will assist collectors to identify items they may be unaware of and therefore are probably missing from their collections. However, it must be stated that Royal Mail and Royal Household members employed at Royal residences are extremely busy and therefore cannot respond to requests for copies of any postal cachets or markings recorded here. As a refusal to comply with such a request may offend, please consult a dealer in British postal history or ephemera if you wish to obtain such material.

The Crimean War 1854-56 The 'Crimean

The six stamps are captioned as follows.

2nd class Pte McNamara, 5th Dragoon Guards, mounted charge at Battle of Balaklava

1st class Piper Muir, 42nd Regiment of Foot, amphibious landing to take Keich

40p Sgt Major Edwards, Scots Fusilier Guards, gallant action at Battle of Inkerman



57p Sgt Powell, 1st Regiment of Foot Guards, fought at Battles of Alma and Inkerman

68p Sgt Maj Poole, Royal Sappers & Miners, defensive line at Battle of Inkerman

£1.12 Sgt Glasgow, Royal Artillery, gun battery besieged Sevastopol



Technical details

Printer Walsall Security Printers

Process Lithography

Size 30 x 41mm

Sheet size 25 and 50

Perforation 14 x 14.5

Phosphor One band 2nd class, two bands others

Gum PVA

Gutter pairs Horizontal

Plates and colours

All values W1 silver ● W1 grey ● W1 grey-black ● W1 black ● W1 phosphor

SIX STAMPS marking the 150th anniversary of the Crimean War will be available from Post Office branches and philatelic outlets and from Royal Mail Tallents House Edinburgh from 12 October. They feature soldiers who fought in the War, from photographs produced and sold under the title 'Crimean Heroes' in 1856. The Queen's silhouette and value/service indicator are positioned at top right, and the identity of the soldiers and the inscription THE CRIMEAN WAR 1854-1856 are printed at the foot. The stamps were designed by Atelier Works using photographs by Cundall and Howlett, courtesy of the Director, National Army Museum, London

The War was the first conflict to be comprehensively photographed. Roger Fenton, who travelled to the Crimea with the patronage of Prince Albert, is often regarded as the first war photographer. The 'Crimean Heroes' series, shown on the stamps, was photographed by Joseph Cundall and Robert Howlett of the Photographic Institution of London in June and July 1856. Most of the images were taken at Aldershot where returning troops congregated for a grand London parade. The Heroes series was for general sale, and copies were sent to Queen Victoria, who had earlier commissioned Cundall and Howlett to photograph disabled war veterans.

An exhibition 'A Most Desperate Undertaking' telling the story of the Crimean War from the soldiers' perspective is on at the National Army Museum, Royal Hospital Road, London sw3 until October. The Museum is open daily 10.00-17.30, admission free. Enquiries: 020 7730 0717.

Heroes' return to mark the war's anniversary



FIRST DAY FACILITIES Unstamped Royal Mail FDC envelopes will be available from main Post Office branches and philatelic outlets about a week before 12 October, price 25p. Orders for serviced FDCs with the stamps cancelled by a pictorial first day postmark of Tallents House Edinburgh or London sw3 must reach Tallents House (address below) by the day of issue. Price £4.25 UK, £3.62 overseas.

Collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue to: Royal Mail, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB (Tallents House postmark), or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Mount Pleasant, London EC1A 1BB (London postmark), marking the outer envelope 'FD0427' (Tallents House), or 'FD0428' (London). Covers can be posted or handed in at main Post Office branches for the London postmark.

Details of other handstamps for 12 October will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from Tallents House (£12.25 UK/Europe; £24.95 elsewhere). For a sample copy write to: The Editor, British Postmark Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HO.

PHILATELIC PRODUCTS A well-illustrated pack containing the six stamps (price £3.80) and stamp cards (30p each) will be available from Tallents House, main Post Office branches and philatelic outlets. The pack was written by Alastair Massie of the National Army Museum, and designed by Atelier Works ●

The introduction of photogravure James Mackay looks

TOWARD the end of 1932 the Treasury reminded the Post Office that the 10-year contract held by Waterlow and Sons to print the low-value definitives was due to expire at the end of 1933. While considering the question of putting out the new contract to tender, the PO took the opportunity to examine the feasibility of producing the stamps by some process other than letterpress (typography). In particular, photogravure was believed to be cheaper and aesthetically more attractive.

The process was invented by Karl Klietsch and Samuel Fawcett of Lancaster in 1895, and styled Rembrandt photogravure. It became increasingly used for book and magazine production in the early 20th century, but the technique was closely guarded, and this encouraged rival firms to try and develop their own processes. Motley & Miller, for example, devised the Printex process which was employed for the 'Ideal Stamp' of the 1912 philatelic exhibition, and was subsequently used for essays of the Downey Head stamps, but never employed for actual postage stamps.

In Bavaria, then a world leader in fine printing, photolithography and chromolithography were widely used in the production of picture postcards, but in 1911 Oskar Consee of Munich used photolithography to print the long series for the 60th birthday of Prince-Regent Luitpold, and later the same year applied chromolithography to the three-coloured stamps marking the 25th anniversary of the regency.

Monochrome photogravure The biggest breakthrough in the use of photo-mechanical processes, however, was in March 1914 when Bruckmann of Munich printed the Ludwig III definitives in monochrome photogravure. These stamps, designed by Ferdinand Schirnböck, demonstrated the effectiveness of the process when the design took note of its strengths and weaknesses. To this day, the Bavarian definitive stamps of 1914 remain a classic example of photogravure at its best, in spite of the fact that the process was still relatively in its infancy and the detail not as sharp as was later achieved.



From left: the 'Ideal Stamp' produced for the 1912 exhibition; early Bavarian gravure issues, 1/2d and 1 1/2d stamps printed by Harrison (with 34 controls) pending the issue of the gravure printings, and the first gravure stamp, issued 20 August 1934.

Waterlow Brothers & Layton installed photogravure presses at their Watford plant and used this process to produce their National War Savings stamps in July 1918. Photogravure was also used to forge Bavarian stamps for use by British agents in disseminating anti-war propaganda purporting to originate within Bavaria itself. After the War all of the five major security printing firms in Britain had photogravure capabilities. First to use the process for postage stamps was Harrison and Sons who produced the Egyptian definitives of 1923, some of the Peruvian series of 1924 and the Gold Coast series of 1928 by this method. Waterlow lagged behind, but by 1932 they were likewise printing photogravure stamps for Peru.

Production cost By the end of April 1933 the Post Office had received tenders from all five firms (Bradbury Wilkinson, De La Rue, Perkins Bacon, Harrison and Waterlow) for the series for the halfpenny to the shilling. They were requested to quote prices for printing by letterpress, intaglio and in photogravure; surprisingly photogravure proved to be £2500 more expensive than letterpress, and intaglio was £9000 more expensive, on the cheapest tenders. The total cost, including paper, of the lowest tender was £53,000.

Sir Kingsley Wood, the Postmaster General, was at first inclined to continue with letterpress 'seeing that the surface-printed stamp serves its purpose sufficiently and that the vast majority of stamps are not scrutinized by the users.' But later he changed his mind, arguing that for £2500 a year extra the public would get a much more at-

at the first British photogravure stamp, issued 70 years ago



tractive stamp. As Harrison and Sons had made the lowest tender so far as photogravure was concerned, they were engaged on 5 July 1933 to produce some 40,000 sheets of 1d and 1½d stamps by the process as an experiment. Sir Evelyn Murray (Secretary of the Post Office) and H Sparkes (Controller of Stores) visited the Harrison factory at Hayes, Middlesex to see the process at work and examine the first sheets off the press.

King's wishes In this experiment the designs were modified from the letterpress series of 1912 to suit the screened process. The effigy was based on Sir Bertram Mackennal's profile of the King and was eventually to be used for the issued photogravure stamps, but at this stage the size used for the 1d was enlarged in line with the bigger profile which had been used for the 1d and 2½d typographed stamps. On 22 July the PMG had an audience with King George and showed him samples from the trial printings in various colours. His Majesty favoured the retention of the existing designs, suitably modified for photogravure, but expressed a preference for a smaller head on the 1d and 2½d.

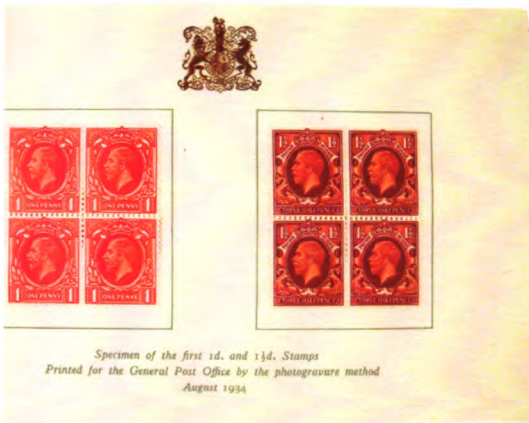
During the late summer and autumn, further trials were made of the 1d and 1½d, together with 4d stamps. These were made in various colours on glazed unwatermarked paper without gum, or on ordinary unwatermarked paper with gum. There was also a trial of a modified version of the 1d scarlet with the background to the effigy considerably lightened. Examples of this lighter background 1d exist perf 15 × 14, although I have not been able to trace any papers regarding this

experiment. Imperforate essays of the 1d with the original large head are also known, on paper watermarked Block Cypher.

Launch delayed Originally, Sir Kingsley Wood hoped to launch the first photogravure stamps on 1 January 1934, but by November it was obvious that this could not be achieved in time. For this reason Harrison and Sons, whose contract was due to commence on 1 January, were obliged to continue printing stamps by the letterpress process for several months. The Harrison printings are very similar to their Waterlow counterparts, but control blocks can be readily identified by the digits 34 or 35, denoting the year of printing. By 11 December 1933 Murray informed H Napier, the PMG's private secretary, that the new stamps would not be ready for issue before August.

An undated memo sheds light on the manner in which Harrison modified the letterpress design for photogravure. A black impression was taken from the letterpress master die. This was photographed and enlarged considerably. The lines in the oval and in the head were bleached out, and a staff artist worked this up as a pen and wash drawing. From this was obtained the standard effigy used for all the stamps of the series. This drawing was re-photographed and reduced to stamp size for the production of the multipositives using the step and repeat process.

Jumping the gun By July 1934, production of the photogravure 1d stamp was sufficiently advanced for Harrison to display a complete sheet in a window of their showroom at 45 St Martin's Lane, London WC1, a well-intentioned act that caused intense embarrassment in Post Office circles. On 8 August the *Post Office Circular* intimated that the 1½d stamp, pre-paying the inland letter rate, was to go on sale on Monday 20 August and four days earlier Sir Kingsley Wood held a press conference to reveal the new stamp. This was unprecedented, and drew forth effusive and extensive press coverage. The photogravure series was likewise greeted warmly by the general public. The only



Specimens of the first 1d and 1 1/2d photogravure stamps, and approved essay for 1 1/2d stamp.

body unhappy at the change was the Royal Mint, which had manufactured the letterpress plates, and there was a sour note in the Annual Report of the Mint which likened the colour of the new 1 1/2d to a piece of raw liver.

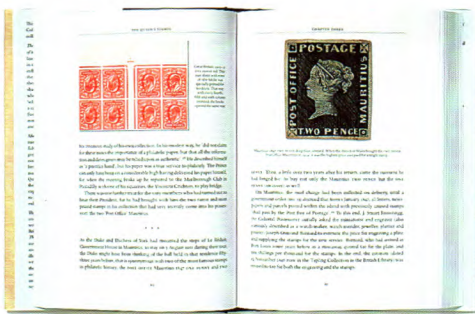
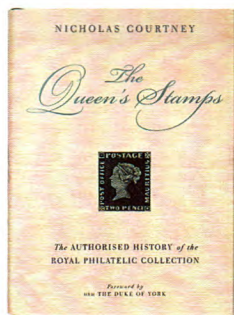
The 1d and 1/2d photogravure stamps went on sale in September and November 1934, with the other values following during 1935 and 1936 ●

Next month Dr Mackay looks at the issue of the other George V definitives printed in photogravure.

The Queen's Stamps Review of a new book, by the Editor

The Queen's Stamps, by the Royal author Nicholas Courtney, is only the third work on what is arguably the finest stamp collection in the world. It follows Sir John Wilson's book of 1952 and the short guide written by Hugh Jefferies in 2002 (reviewed here July 2002). The press notice for Mr Courtney's book tells us that he explains how major stamp issues were created, and how stamps have played a major role in celebrating our culture and history – from coronations and military campaigns to outstanding achievement in sports, arts and science. And he tells the story of how, through good judgement and often sheer luck, some of the most precious stamps in the world were acquired for the Collection, among them the 1d and 2d 'Post Office' Mauritius, Bermuda 'Cottonreels', the only used GB 2d Tyrian Plum (technically an unissued stamp), and the 'Kirkcudbright cover' – the largest block of 10 Penny Blacks used on 6 May 1840, the first day of their validity (the cover was shown here in June 1996). The Preface describes how Lord Lichfield took the photograph of The Queen used on high value stamps from UK overseas territories, issued in 2003 on the 50th anniversary of the Coronation.

Lichfield had just five minutes to capture images of The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh and, working quickly, using digital photography, he completed the task with time to spare. The photograph now hangs in the National Portrait Gallery. We are given details of the albums in which the Collection is housed (red for the collection of George V, blue for the stamps of George VI, and green for the current reign), all now kept in a vast strong room, under carefully controlled environmental conditions, at St James's rather than Buckingham Palace. The Introduction goes over the generally well-known history of how the Penny Black came to be issued and illustrates some of the Treasury Competition entries for the design of the first stamp. Included is one by Sir George Mackenzie which showed the young Queen Victoria in profile on a black background; Courtney says that 'Hill must have had Mackenzie's design in mind when he had something similar drawn up to illustrate his notion of the ONE PENNY black and the TWO PENCE blue.' (For information on Sir George Mackenzie and his design see *Bulletin*, August 2001.) Also shown is the beautiful block of 38 of the 1840 2d plate 1, the largest known



The Queen's Stamps 352 pages, hardbound. Published by Methuen Publishing Ltd, 215 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1V 1EJ. Available from bookshops, price £25. ISBN 0 413 77228 4.

multiple from that plate, purchased by George V in 1924 (see p376) The Introduction concludes with a brief look at the genesis of the hobby of stamp collecting in Britain in the 1850s and 60s. Meetings of up to 100 collectors, for the purpose of exchange, were held in Birch Lane, London – these included young and old, men and women, and even we learn ‘one of Her Majesty’s Ministry’ although we are not told who.

The book is arranged in 10 (unheaded) chapters, the first dealing with the earliest stamp-collecting members of the Royal Family – Edward, Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII), Prince Arthur, and Prince Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh – the acknowledged founder of the Royal Philatelic Collection. Kept short of money, the Prince sold letters received from his mother, Queen Victoria, and charged social climbers to lunch with the Prince of Wales. In 1900 he was forced to sell his beloved stamp collection to his brother for an undisclosed sum. It was then passed on to Prince George (George V) and parts of it were amalgamated with his own collection. Today only three stamps, from Hong Kong, New Zealand, and Sierra Leone, can be positively identified as from the Duke’s collection. Amongst the fine illustrations is a page of Russian war charity stamps said to have been prepared by the Tsarevich, and a pair of cuff-links made from GB Victorian stamps which belonged to George V. Chapter 2 describes the development of the collection by the Duke of York (George V) in the 1890s and shows his specially bound edition of the Stanley Gibbons catalogue of 1891. The early 1890s were a philatelic watershed, when the science and style of collecting was changing – the vogue for ‘one of every-

thing’ and emphasis on rarity (like the Tapling collection) gave way to the ‘study collection’. This more sophisticated form of collecting required time, scholarship, money and opportunity, and for Prince George his change of fortune came at exactly the right time. In 1892 his brother Prince Albert died and George was elevated from a comparatively impecunious naval officer to second in line to the throne, with the title Duke of York. As an heir to the throne, the idea of collecting the stamps of GB, the Dominions and Colonies took on a new meaning for him. He appointed J A Tillett to help him – a fruitful and happy partnership. Among the items illustrated is the collection of Canadian 1897 Diamond Jubilee stamps presented to the Duke, and the block of 30 Turks Island 1881 ½ on 1d surcharge given as a wedding present – an item he frequently exhibited.

Chapters 3 and 4 continue the story during the reign of Edward VII when George was Prince of Wales, beginning with the issue of new stamps for the new monarch. Mr Courtney notes that Edward VII did not have his philatelist son to advise him, as George was overseas on an Empire tour. In Malta, en route to Australia, he was presented with the valuable stamp collection of the Baron of Gomerino, and in Ceylon received another collection; approaching Singapore, he and an equerry spent two afternoons arranging the stamps ‘between blotting paper to prevent them sticking together’. In Australia he obtained reprints of the early Victoria stamps printed from the original plates and the Sydney Philatelic Club appointed him their patron and presented him with stamps of New South Wales in a handsome leather-bound album. He also purchased stamps

from a dealer, but details were not recorded. En route to New Zealand, he worked on his collection and there he received more stamps, including the Great Barrier Island pigeon post issue of 1898-99, and in Tasmania visited Mr Park to see his splendid collection of Australian stamps. Edward VII, although not himself keen on stamps, encouraged his son's interest and arranged for the Inland Revenue to supply him with corner pairs (later blocks of four) of all new Post Office and Crown Agents issues, including essays and proofs; he also received stamps registered at the UPU headquarters in Berne. In 1904 George gave a talk and display on the early stamp issues of his father's reign to the (Royal) Philatelic Society, describing how his parents influenced the design of the British stamps, the King personally choosing Emil Fuchs to provide the head for the stamps. The display included half sheets of the 1d stamp in *lête-bêche* arrangement for stamp books; his audience was also shown his most prized possessions, the two 'Post Office' Mauritius stamps. In 1904 the Prince paid a world record £1450 for the unused 2d stamp; later in the year he acquired the 1d used on cover by a private treaty. The Collection also has a set of reprints taken from the engraved copperplate which was found in a London bank (its whereabouts are now unknown), and some excellent examples of the subsequent 'POST PAID' issue. All of these key items are illustrated. Through Tilleard, the Prince was offered choice items by dealers and private collectors, often at favourable prices. As with the current stamp market and clearly 'price-conscious', he would not buy stamps at any price. Some countries gave him greater pleasure than others and his first love was always the West Indies. Chapter 4 ends with the story of the 2d Tyrian Plum, and shows the only example known on cover, addressed to the Prince at Marlborough House and postmarked at the East Strand post office in London on 5 May. A friendly dealer or thoughtful philatelist at Somerset House (some say that the Prince engineered it) sent a letter to him bearing the stamp to arrive on 6 May, for the 70th anniversary of the Penny Black. That day Edward VII died and the Prince became King George V.



Chapters 5 to 8 are devoted to the years of the 'Philatelist King', not least his involvement with the British stamps of his reign. The first stamps, issued in June 1911, were 'dreadful' and the King was deeply disappointed. When he first saw the proofs he summoned the head of Harrison's, complaining they made him look like 'a stuffed monkey', and on their issue an admonishing letter was sent to the Postmaster General. These chapters give details of new acquisitions to the Collection, and it is good to know that like many collectors, King George was not infallible and that 'however much scholarship and money are lavished on a collection mistakes are made'. In his case it was a collection of Bahamas bought in 1913, amongst which there were some examples of *passant pour neuf* (passed for new) – where manuscript or cancellation marks had been removed to give the impression of unused stamps.

As King he received dozens of unsolicited gifts of stamps which he normally only accepted if the donor or the gift was an official one, although exceptions were made where the gift was a stamp he particularly wanted. Often stamps offered by a friend were accepted on the basis of a swap of an item of equal value. A blow to the Royal Collection came with the early death in 1913 of Tilleard, whom the King had appointed 'Philatelist to the King' in 1910. We are given tantalising details of King George's Stamp Room at Buckingham Palace – a bright and airy ground floor room with an oak bookcase housing the bound volumes and a square table in the centre. Otherwise the room was spartan – exactly the environment that suited the King who, within this sanctuary was



'Working die' of the 2d Tyrian Plum, December 1909.

not to be disturbed except in a dire emergency. With his new curator, Edward Bacon, he examined his stamps with a magnifying glass – in fact a 'gallery' glass intended for looking at pictures. It is now used by The Queen who is shown using the glass to inspect stamps in a photograph used as a frontispiece to the book. It has to be said that Her Majesty does not appear greatly enthralled – it is no secret that she does not have the same enthusiasm for stamps as her grandfather. Bacon, who served as 'Curator of the King's Philatelic Collection' for 25 years, kept accurate accounts of expenditure on the Collection, including the purchase of album leaves, hinges, tweezers, benzene and peroxide of hydrogen from Stanley Gibbons. He set about rearranging the Collection from scratch, mounting everything and writing it up – an enormous task. However, his method of mounting has been criticised as he often added new hinges over old ones. Courtney comments: 'Such a basic error of judgement in one so punctilious is hard to reconcile.' Writing up was however Bacon's forte, with a precise, neat hand, quite different from the King's.

Courtney writes: 'Throughout his life, George v was somewhat of an enigma... his own children were terrified of him. His Private Secretaries served him loyally, yet his temper and rages were legendary. He appeared divorced from the world outside, yet his acts of kindness and thoughtfulness to others were legion. But to the philatelic world, a place where he felt completely at home and comfortable, he was invariably charming and generous, both of himself and his collection.' Perhaps, as for so many collectors, stamps were his

escape from the pressures of family life and work; his stamps were probably his closest friends.

Much of chapter 8 concerns British Victorian stamps in the Collection, including illustrations of the 1841 1d rose red 'B-blank' error and one of the nine examples (four unused, five used) of the 1d rose red plate 77. Examples are also shown of illustrated envelopes. Courtney notes that it is surprising that the Mulready and caricature envelopes appealed so much to the King, as the latter lampooned authority which cannot have amused him. The King worked on his Collection up until Christmas 1935 and died at Sandringham in January 1936. On his death John Betjeman penned a few lines which ended 'In that red house in a red mahogany bookcase, The stamp collection waits with mounts long dry.'

The two final chapters deal with the Collection after 1936. Bacon was distressed by the death of his sovereign and philatelic friend and worried that the new king, Edward VIII, would abandon the Collection. It was even rumoured that Edward would dispose of it, but early in his reign he made it clear that it was to be maintained. Indeed, in his youth he had been quite an enthusiastic collector and purchased stamps from Strand dealers. He took a keen interest in forthcoming stamp issues bearing his portrait but dismissed the idea of a memorial stamp for his father, and there are no examples of the 'IN MEMORY' essay in the Collection.

Following Edward's abdication rumours began afresh about disposal of the Collection but King George VI wished it to continue, although funding it was primarily to be through the sale of duplicates. Bacon died in 1938 and was succeeded by Sir John Wilson, very different to Bacon in stature and attitude. The new King did not take an active role in the Collection, and it was relegated from its smart position on the ground floor to another part of Buckingham Palace. The new collection of George VI stamps includes proofs and colour trials at the king's request, and many artists' drawings. Although Wilson mounted the early stamps of George VI, subsequent issues were merely filed. The Collection was held in a London bank vault during the Second World War. George VI was

shown examining his *Collection in Picture Post* in December 1944, items were loaned to various overseas exhibitions, and, with Princess Margaret, herself a collector, he visited the London International Exhibition in 1950. Chapter 9 ends with an illustration of the St Vincent 1948 Silver Wedding £1 stamp printed in black – this issue was stolen before it reached the island and the replacement was printed in purple.

Finally we come to the chapter on the current reign, which opens with details of the preparation of the new Wilding definitives. Here there is an error of fact: the Postmaster General in 1952 was Earl de la Warr, not Ernest Marples, who did not take up the post until 1957. We are shown The Queen, as Princess Elizabeth, looking at stamps at Buckingham Palace, and artwork for the 193d Coronation stamp by Edmund Dulac and cylinder block of the issued stamps. The Queen was said to be unhappy about Dulac's design but reconciled to it being used for a higher value stamp which had much less use than the basic letter rate 2½d stamp. This chapter includes many fine colour illustrations of colour trials for the 1929 Postal Union Congress £1 stamp, Jamaican pictorials of George VI and Elizabeth II (including unissued £1 stamp), and the trials for the GB 1977 £2 in no fewer than 10 different colours. We are told about changes to stamp policy, Tony Benn's audience with The Queen in 1965 when he raised the topic of certain British stamps being issued without her portrait, and the introduction of the Machin design – all fascinating reading. The book closes with a review of the Collection in recent years, the acquisitions, and the appointment of new Keepers – John Marriott, Charles Goodwyn, and Michael Sefi in 1969, 1995 and 2003. Goodwyn obtained The Queen's agreement to show the Collection more widely, and he and Sefi, along with their assistants Suresh Dhargalkar and Rod Vousden, have certainly been busy in this respect and in speeding up the mounting of stamps in the Collection. There is an amusing story when The Queen asked Marriott his opinion of her collection of GB and Commonwealth first day covers, which she had begun in 1952. Marriott was embarrassed, and answered as politely as a serious

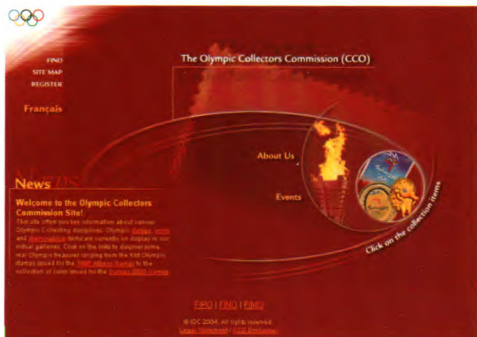
philatelist could. He thought FDCs were a somewhat sub-standard form of collecting. The Queen roared with laughter and said 'Sir John (Wilson) did not think much of them either!' The book concludes with various appendices, a glossary of philatelic terms, bibliography and footnote references, although there is no index.

Mr Courtney is to be congratulated on a job well-done. His book is not a dry tome purely on the stamps in the Collection, but an enjoyable narrative linking the Collection to the work and times of its Royal owners, and including some useful insights into the development of philately over the past century •



Block of 38 of the 1840 2d plate 1, the largest known multiple from that plate, which was purchased by King George V for the Royal Collection in 1924. Page 372 and above reproduced by gracious permission of Her Majesty The Queen to whom copyright belongs.

Philately on-line Ron Negus finds more Olympics material



FOR MUCH of this month, newspapers and television will be devoting maximum coverage to the events in Athens during the summer Olympic Games 2004. Collectors of sports stamps in general, and of the Olympic theme in particular, will already have seen their collections multiply with the inclusion of the issues to commemorate the occasion from countries around the world.

For collectors of Olympic material, however, postage stamps only represent one aspect. At the 10th World Olympic Collectors' Fair, which took place in Switzerland in May 2004, visitors were able to view, buy and sell, or complete collections of many objects that bore the five Olympic rings. These included lapel pins and badges, mascots, torches, flags, official documents, photos, films, autographs, coins, medals, souvenirs, posters and postcards, as well as stamps.

The largest collection of these objects is housed in the Olympic Museum in Lausanne. Opened in 1993, the Museum welcomed its two millionth visitor during the summer of last year. More details about the building and its exhibitions can be found by visiting www.olympic.org and selecting the Museum logo on the foot of the page. This includes a virtual tour of the various levels.

The first floor of the Museum is devoted to philately and numismatics. The collections here include over 12,000 Olympic stamps and more than 600 coins relating to the history of the Games. Former President of the International Olympic Committee, Juan Samaranch, donated the bulk of the stamps in 1989. His collection, which he

www.sportstamps.org Olympic collectors will also find this website of interest. Sports Philatelists International, a group that was formed in 1964 and which now covers thematic relating to 72 different sports, hosts this. Its 'Links' page is particularly useful.

started in 1945, is made up entirely of blocks of four. It had been awarded many prizes at exhibitions worldwide.

In 1982, Mr Samaranch founded the International Olympic Philately Federation (FIPO). Its purpose is to bring together people who have an interest in the Olympics and who wish to achieve their aim through philately. From a handful of collectors when it began, FIPO has now grown to 31 national chapters, and is associated with 50 sports collectors groups internationally. The Federation awards a Prix Olympia to the postal administration judged to have produced the best design for an Olympic stamp. FIPO also assists in organising the Olympihex international exhibition that is held during the Games.

FIPO has its own web site, and this can be located via www.collectors.olympic.org – this brings you to the home page of the Olympic Collectors' Commission, which is the administrative body responsible for the three main Olympic collecting disciplines. In addition to philately (FIPO) these also cover numismatics (FIMO), and memorabilia (FIMO). Links found on this home page will send you directly to the websites for the relevant collecting area, each containing large amounts of information.

Some collectors may wish to use the Olympics as an exhibit for inclusion in the new Social Philately class. For these, the pages on the website associated with Olympic memorabilia (FIMO) will offer some useful ideas. Pictures of the various Olympic torches that were used for the Games, from Berlin 1936 to Sydney 2000, are an example. The pages on the FIMO website showing these also include details of the route followed in carrying the torch, and this could be used to illustrate a story about the Games, adding stamps or stationery related to the countries passed through on the route ●

A lifetime in stamps Richard West interviews David Boyd



'HAVE GAVEL, WILL TRAVEL', a talk presented by David Boyd recounting his experiences as an auctioneer, has been enjoyed no fewer than 545 times by societies throughout the United Kingdom. But how did David become interested in stamps, and involved with the auction business?

It inevitably started at school: David was living in North Cheam in Surrey, and a close friend, Brian Cave, was already collecting Sarawak. So David starting collecting too, the issues of King George VI, and even at that stage he wanted the complete sets. By the age of 10 he was a member of the local Sutton and Cheam Philatelic Society. He well remembers one display, of just one issue, the Hong Kong 1891 overprint, given by Col Francis Webb, which after 1½ hours had only reached its halfway point!

After primary school David won a scholarship to Kingston Grammar School. His maths teacher, in his first teaching post, proved not only to be brilliant at his job, but was also a stamp collector, and started a stamp club at the school. David naturally joined.

By the time he left school in 1958, he had determined that his career would be in stamps. On the one day he had three interviews – with Stanley Gibbons, City of London Philatelic Auctions, and Robson Lowe – and was offered a job in each case. He decided to work for 'Robbie', but after a year National Service in the RAF disrupted his career. It was during his National Service that he sold his collection, retaining just a few key items – quite simply, he needed the money.

David has always been an organiser so, soon after joining a local youth hostel group, he became its Chairman. His interests included cycling, travelling all over the country, and it was through his cycling that he met his wife Pat (left, with David): they married in 1961.

Return to stamps After the RAF, it was back with Robson Lowe, where David remained until 1972. Robbie built up a strong team, which, by the time that Robson Lowe joined up with Christie's, numbered no fewer than 55. David regards Robbie as an innovator, probably the first great postal historian, a philatelic genius, who was capable of the most incredible philatelic study.

Leaving Robbie, David then joined the stamp department at Phillips auction house, which had recently acquired the philatelic auction of Puttick and Simpson. However, the business was not in good shape, and after one sale there was virtually no material left to sell. David therefore attended auctions at the nearby Harmers sale rooms, and bought collections, which he then split and re-offered at Phillips. Not that this met with the approval of the Chairman of Phillips, but at least it provided material for sale. It also broke one of David's own golden rules, that auctioneers should never 'own' the material they sell.

Rothschild collection David's time at Phillips was to prove extremely successful, and after only three years, he was invited to join the main board of the company. Many famous collections were to be sold, such as those of Great Britain of Harold Fisher and Dr Douglas Latta, the 'Osprey' collection of world airmails, the stock of R C Alcock of Cheltenham, and a collection which had been formed by Barclays Bank of countries in which it had a presence. However, probably the most notable collection sold was that of Baron Alfonse Rothschild: the sale was arranged through the lawyer acting for the estate, while the collection itself was in a vault hidden in the Catskill Mountains. It proved to be a remarkable collection, sold in the nine 'Alfonse' sales between 1981 and

1992. Among the sale's highlights was a block of 39 of the first stamp of Norway, which was sold for £105,000.

One of the keys to David's success was his willingness to travel, always prepared to go and have a look at potential items for sale - and often with surprises along the way. Understandably he would aim to fit in several visits on each trip, often combined with visits to philatelic societies to present his 'Have Gavel, Will Travel', or to be guest of honour at society dinners. It was Robbie who encouraged David to speak: his first philatelic engagement was with the Ford Motor Company Philatelic Society at Dagenham, which, through lack of preparation, he now looks back on as a minor disaster, although is thankful that the audience was very understanding.

'Retirement' In 1998, Phillips changed hands, and David found he was no longer wanted, his last sale being in September of that year with total realisations exceeding £1 million. In his 'retirement' David has handled the sale of several collections, passing these for sale by Grosvenor Philatelic Auctions, for whom he is now a Consultant.

He is now able to spend more time on his own collecting, which includes local postal history (he still lives in Surrey), German locals and Cinderellas in general. The fun comes from the search and final acquisition. It sometimes is a familiar tale: he searched for 15 years for a Penny Black on cover posted in Cheam, then two turned up. He fails to follow the advice he offers others, and tends to collect on a wide basis, buying the items he likes. He usually buys at auction. For a time he would buy at his own auctions at Phillips, having to pay more than the highest bid received, until a law change in the early 1990s prevented such purchasing. He never arranged 'private deals' with those bringing material for sale at auction.

Retirement has meant David can spend more time with Pat - his travelling for Phillips often meant they were separated for long periods. Both enjoy cycling and travelling, and have been able to spend much time overseas, often combining these interests, visiting museums or simply walking. David believes many stamp collectors have a

longing to travel, which sparked the interest in the first place, seeing exotic locations on stamps.

As for the future of the hobby, David is optimistic: 'Ours is now a very well established hobby, which, despite scare stories over the decades, remains as healthy as ever.' He is concerned however about the increasing re-emergence of the idea of stamps as an 'investment'. Admitting that the hobby cannot really be divorced from financial considerations, experience should caution against promoting the investment possibilities ●

DAVID BOYD FACT FILE

Greatest career satisfaction A job well done, producing a good catalogue with accurate descriptions and realistic estimates, so that at the end a worthwhile cheque can be sent to the vendor, often someone who knows nothing about stamps, possibly the beneficiary of an inheritance.

Most memorable item ever sold 1861 Neapolitan Provinces one half tournee printed in error in black instead of green on a part of a cover. Gibbons catalogue price was £5000; Italian catalogues listed it at around £12,000; David estimated it at £8,000. Bidding started at £5,000 and ended at £105,000, at which the auction room erupted into spontaneous applause.

Who he admires in the hobby Robson Lowe and A L 'Mick' Michael, Chairman of Stanley Gibbons in the late 1960s/early 1970s, a man of great charisma; and today's many collectors who undertake incredible work, such as Jane and Michael Moubray and David Springbett.

Favourite philatelic book That by Müller, which, while not providing values, gives the relative rarity of the 'classics' as pairs, blocks or strips, on and off cover.

Other interests David enjoys watching athletics, and also bird watching and playing chess.

Family and collecting Two daughters, but neither collects. In fact, there is even a touch of resentment, because they felt that working for Phillips took Dad too often away from home.

Prize draw Stanley Gibbons collecting books to be won

FOR THIS MONTH'S DRAW we have six each of *Collect British Stamps* and *Collect British Coins*. For a chance to win a copy of each, simply write your name and address on the back of a postcard and send it to Collect Stamps/Coins Draw, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ to arrive by 31 August ●

Competitions Win £100 in Royal Mail stamps and products



May identify The detail was from the William Shipley RSA stamp. The winner was Dr M Down, Newcastle upon Tyne.

May knowledge Answers: 1) Paul Cox; 2) Above and Beyond; 3) Valencia, Spain. The winner was K A Jansen, Germany.

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

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

- 1 Which company printed the 1988 Australian Bicentenary stamps?
- 2 In which year did Biddulph Grange feature on a stamp?
- 3 Who writes the Mainly Machines column for the *Bulletin*?

Send your answer (addressed to either the August *Identify* competition or August *Knowledge* competition), name and address on a postcard or back of a sealed envelope to: British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ. The senders of the first cards drawn in each competition on 15 September will each receive £100 worth of Royal stamps and/or related products. Ten runner-up prizes of presentation packs, first day covers or stamp cards will be awarded in each competition. The competitions are not open to Royal Mail employees ●

Events

Until 11 January 2005 The Queen's Own: Stamps that Changed the World exhibition (stamps from the Royal Philatelic Collection) at Smithsonian National Postal Museum, Old Post Office, near Union Station, Washington DC. Admission free.

30-31 July York Stamp & Coin Fair, York Racecourse.

13-28 August Olympilex 04, specialised world Olympics/Sports international exhibition Athens. Website (Hellenic PS): www.hps.gr

28 August - 1 September Singapore 2004 international at Suntec Convention and Exhibition Centre, Marine Centre, Singapore (includes World Stamp Championships) **Enquiries** UK Commissioner, B Sole, 3 Stockfield Rd, Claygate, Esher KY10 0QG. Telephone 01372 467652.

1-4 September The Picture Postcard Show 2004 (formerly BIPEX) at the New Royal Horticultural Hall, London SW1. Wed 11.00-20.00; Thurs and Fri 11.00-19.30; Sat 10.00-17.00. Admission £5 first day, £3 others. **Enquiries** M Day 0151 339 5422 or D Popplestone 02380 446143.

11 September City of Preston PS Stamp & Card Fair at Barton Village Hall, Garstang Road (A6) 3 miles N of M6 junction 32 and M55 junction, 10.00-16.00. **Enquiries** P Gaywood, 2 Fairways, Fulwood, Preston PR2 8FX.

11 September Rotherham Stamp & Postcard Club Open Day at Broom Valley Club Room, Broom Valley, Rotherham, 10.00-16.00. Local stamp dealers, displays by Club members, refreshments. Admission free. **Enquiries** J N Bradley, 01709 837073 ●

Late news

British Singapore entries David Springbett is the sole British entry for the World Stamp Championships as part of the Singapore international exhibition (28 August - 1 September) with an exhibit of Nyasaland Large Key Plates 1907-32. We wish him well and hope he brings the gold medal back to Britain. A profile of David, by Richard West, was published in this *Bulletin* in January 2002; David signs the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists this year. There are 12 other British entries to the Singapore exhibition, including two youth, and one in the 'one frame class'. We wish them all success •

Automated Postal Service In the June *Bulletin* we reported the introduction of experimental APS machines at three Post Office branches - Broadgate, London EC2; Arndale Centre, Luton; and Alfreton, Derbyshire. The locations were selected to provide a cross section of customer use - primarily businesses, domestic, and a rural area. Customer reaction to the machines has been favourable and they have been put to good use, especially at Broadgate. The machines issue labels similar to those produced by Post Office counter staff using 'Horizon' computers. The machines handle basic 1st and 2nd class mail, UK standard parcels, overseas airmail and surface mail, and premium services - Recorded, Special Delivery (9am and noon delivery), Airsure, and International Signed For. The trial of the machines will continue until the end of September, when the experiment will be evaluated •

Revised airletters Collectors of postal stationery will be interested to know that the standard air letter (aerogramme) has been revised and now has the word 'Air letter' beneath the printed blue 'By AIR MAIL' label. The phosphor bands are now shorter than on previous printings. The change affects both the single airletter (42p) and the discount packs of six (£2.30); airletters in the packs have a discount 'star' on the top flap. The revised airletters will go on sale at Post Office branches as stocks of earlier printings are used up •

Autumn lectures The Postal Heritage Trust offers a warm invitation to a series of free autumn lectures at the Phoenix Centre, Phoenix Place, London WC1X 0DL. Each lecture will take place on a Tuesday evening at 7pm. The lectures are: 7 September - The GPO and its Films in the 1930s by Dr Ian Aiken, Senior Research Fellow, de Montfort University; 5 October - The Future of Britain's Oldest Public Service, Reflections of an Old Postmaster-General by Tony Benn; 9 November - The Machin Design by Douglas Muir; and 7 December - The A to Z of Special Stamps, by Barry Robinson. To book your seat, call 020 7239 2570 or email heritage@royalmail.com •

Auctions In Cavendish's auction on 18 June, a 1d black plate 11 (ex Shaida) made £977 (est £400), another not quite four-margined example £632 (£360), and a beautiful pair of 1841 2d blues (Pl 4 on lavender paper) on piece £805 (£400). A cover bearing the ever popular 1d red plate 225 made £575 (£450). First day covers are still making a revival, and 700 1993 covers made £1495 (£500), while a similar lot of 1994 (some signed) went for £2530 (£600). A collection of Spoon cancels on piece made £1035 (£360). September sales are: Overland Mail, 1650-1900 (22nd), Hong Kong (23rd) and Worldwide & GB (24th). Enquiries: 01332 250970 •

Sotheby's will auction what might be the most important stamp collection to be sold for 50 years. Formed by Sir Gawaine Baillie Bt (1934-2003), the collection of British and Empire stamps is estimated to fetch in excess of £11 million. The first auction on 29 September - 1 October will be of GB stamps 1840-2000 including 1880 2s brown in unique pane of 20 (est £200,000-250,000) and 2d Tyrian Plum (£20,000-22,000). Further details next month. Enquiries 020 7293 6000 or www.sothebys.com •

Spink will auction the Ronald Butler Australian States collection on 22-23 September. Enquiries: 020 7563 4000. Harmers will auction All World (late August) and Airmails and Collections (September). Enquiries: 020 8747 6100 •

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Notes

(C) = correction

(L) = letter

Authors' names are in italics

Each issue contained a supplement listing Commemorative Covers.

The March issue included the booklet *The Travelling Post Office 1838-2004* by Peter Johnson (British Philatelic Bulletin Publication No 10).

'Rule Britannia' Smilers generic sheet



This new Smilers Generic sheet, issued on 27 July, contains 20 1st Class Union Flag stamps from the 2001 'Flags & Ensigns' miniature sheet. Designed by Turner Duckworth and printed by Walsall, the sheet also contains images of the nation's favourite summer pastimes and icons, including the postbox and a London bus. It has been issued to celebrate the feast of sporting events that have either taken place or will be held over the summer, such as the international cricket test, Euro 2004, Wimbledon, the British Open and the Olympic Games, amongst others. Sheet size: A4. Code AT012. Price £6.15.

For further details about this and previous Smilers Generic sheets, including the RHS 'Dahlias' edition issued on 25 May, call the number given opposite. Smilers Albums and leaves can also be ordered by calling this number or by visiting our website, www.royalmail.com/shop



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