BRITISH PHILATELIC

Bulletin

The magazine for collectors of UK stamps

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Previews: Rugby World Cup and Post & Go Sea Travel



JOANNA LUMLEY GURKHAS SHEET VERDICT • J HOLMAN STAMP SCENE • BEE QUIZ TOP PRIZES

Issues and withdrawals



Front page: Bees Special Stamps (see page 368) and the Ghurkas Commemorative Sheet (page 372) are issued this month. The Rugby World Cup issue and Post & Go Sea Travel stamps are available next month and previewed on pages 359 and 370.

Royal Mail is not responsible for opinions and information provided by independent writers in this publication.

14 August	**Issue** Singpex Post & Go: Machin Collectors Strip and Union Flag Collectors Strip. Both with 'Singapore 2015 World Stamp Expo' overprint.
18 August	**Issue** Bees: Stamps (1 x 1st Class, 1 x 2nd Class, 1 x £1, 1 x £1.33, 1 x £1.52, 1 x £2.25), Miniature Sheet (2 x 1st Class, 2 x £1.33), Stamp Book (2 x Special Stamps, 4 x 1st Class), Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards (11 in set).
18 August	**Withdrawal** Sustainable Fish: Stamp Book (2 x Special Stamps, 4 x 1st Class,).
20 August	**Issue** The Gurkhas: Commemorative Sheet (10 x 1st Class).
15 September	**Issue** Battle of Britain: Coin Cover (50p uncirculated).
16 September	**Issue** Post & Go: Sea Travel (6 designs).
17 September	**Issue** Animals of the First World War: Commemorative Sheet (10 x 1st Class, with info card).
18 September	**Withdrawal** Seaside Architecture: Stamps (2 x 1st Class 2 x 97p, 2 x £1.28), Miniature Sheet (2 x 1st Class, 2 x £1.28), Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards, Coin Cover.
18 September	**Issue** Rugby World Cup 2015: Stamps (2 x 1st Class, 2 x 2nd Class, 2 x £1, 2 x £1.52 in se-tenant pairs), Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards, Stamp Book (4 x 1st Class definitives, 2 x 1st Class Special Stamps).
18 September	**Withdrawal** 4 x Classic Locomotives Series Stamp Books: Classic Locomotives of England (2 x Special Stamps, 4 x Machins); Classic Locomotives of Scotland (2 x Special Stamps, 4 x Jubilee Definitives); Classic Locomotives of Wales (2 x Special Stamps, 4 x Machins); Classic Locomotives of Northern Ireland (2 x Special Stamps, 4 x Machins).

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Royal Mail

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Information about Royal Mail products is the latest available at time of going to press. Issue dates shown in advance may be subject to change. Stamps are not shown to scale. Stamp sizes are listed on Royal Mail Preview pages.

To order philatelic items, including those listed above, contact Royal Mail online at www.royalmail.com/stamps or at Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB. We would advise you to quote 15CDG, the *Bulletin* media code. Telephone order line (08.30 to 17.00 Monday to Friday): 03457 641 641. From overseas: +44 131 316 7483. Minimum handling charge UK £1.45, Europe £1.55, rest of world (airmail) £2.15.



The quay issue A first glimpse of the world-famous harbours in Sea Travel – the new Post & Go stamp set out next month **370**

● **Royal Mail Editor** William Doherty, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB ● **Publishing Editor** Kate Shaw, HMS President (1918), Victoria Embankment, London EC4Y 0HJ ● Price £1.50 from Post Office Ltd philatelic outlets or by order from Post Office branches ● **Annual subscription** £12.95 UK & Europe; £17.95 rest of world. Send subscriptions to Royal Mail Tallents House (address above) ● **Binders** (to hold 24 issues) £8.50; storage boxes (about 30 copies) £9.95; available by post from Royal Mail Tallents House ● Royal Mail publishes the fortnightly *British Postmark Bulletin*, giving details of forthcoming special handstamps – available on annual subscription from Royal Mail Tallents House: £12.25 UK and Europe; £24.95 rest of the world ● Stamp images © Royal Mail. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or parts is prohibited without prior permission of the Editors ● **Printed** in Great Britain by Zenith Print & Packaging Ltd ● **ISSN** 0953 8119 ● Royal Mail is a trading name of Royal Mail Group Ltd. Registered in England and Wales, number 4138203. Registered office: 100 Victoria Embankment, London EC4Y 0HQ

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Contents

Issues and withdrawals Dates and details of comings and goings in UK stamps **354**

Correspondence Readers share their notes and queries **356**

Royal Mail Update Commemorating the animals who served in the First World War **358**



On the ball We tackle the highlights of next month's Rugby World Cup 2015 issue **359**

Stamp Scene See the world of philately through the eyes of our intrepid stamp guru John Holman **362**

Bee's knees This month's big buzz is the stunning Bees issue – six Special Stamps and a Miniature Sheet **368**





Himalayan heroes Why Nepal's Gurkhas became a British Army legend **372**

Junior stampers Stamp Active news for young collectors **375**

First-class days out Venues that bring alive the history behind recent stamp issues **376**

This Month in History Steam back 40 years to train stamps that mark a revolution in public transport **378**



Printed paper rate Continuing Colin Baker's A to Z of postal stationery **380**

Bee alert Win new stamps and more by looking through a loupe and getting cryptic **382**

See you at Stampex A reminder of those September dates and Special issues **384**

Correspondence

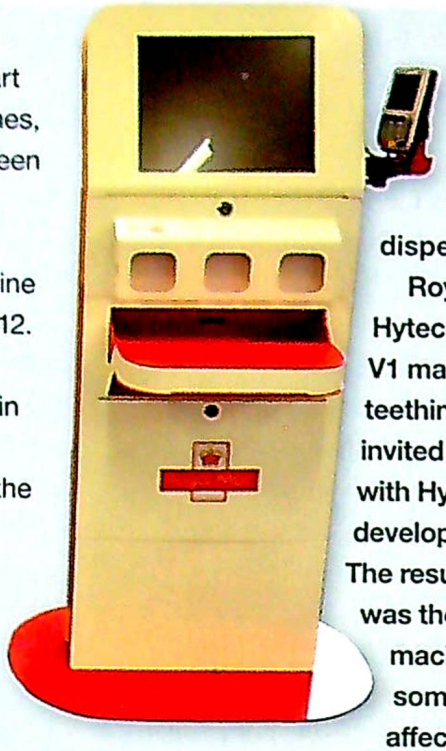
Post & Go machine ancestry

Having read in *Bulletin* Douglas Myall's three-part series on the development of Post & Go machines, I am still a lillte confused about the period between the Wincor machines and the NCR machines introduced last year.

If I understand correctly the Hytech V1 machine was replaced by Hytech V2 in the autumn of 2012. Was Hytech V2 short-lived and reconfigured to become Royal Mail Series 1 and then replaced in 2014 with Royal Mail Series 2 machines? Or is Hytech V2 the same as Royal Mail Series 1 (as the alpha-numeric strings appear to be the same)?

Please can someone help clear up this muddle for me?

Derek Beechey



Firstly, it should help to separate the development of the post office machine from the development of the Royal Mail machine, as they are totally different. From the perspective of Post Office Ltd, the development went straight from Wincor to the National Cash Register Corporation (NCR). The Hytech machines are not used in post offices; they have been used only at non-post-office sites dispensing Post & Go stamps.

Royal Mail worked with Hytech to develop the original V1 machines. Then there were teething troubles and Royal Mail invited Intelligent AR to work with Hytech on the software to develop a more reliable machine. The result of that collaboration was the Royal Mail Series 1 machine. However, there were some fundamental issues affecting our ability to provide reliable machines and it was decided to develop a totally new machine with Intelligent AR, which resulted in the Royal Mail Series 2 machine (above), launched in February 2014.

Martyn Fry, Head of Production, Royal Mail Stamps and Collectibles

Letting off steam about June

Is it me or does the June edition of the *Bulletin* have a few pages that are not easy on the eye? Pages 294 and 295 for example? Many pages, this time, seem to have a lot of pictures and very little text.

Could we please have some good technical articles about printers, printing methods, sheet production, book production and first day cover stamp production – I gather the latter are sometimes different from the production of the main stamp issue, which rather negates the first day cover from the purist's point of view. And how about an article on the new post box production at Longbenton and removal of Machan's contract?

I consider the *Bulletin* to be really good value for money, but I do wish that the Tallents House could manage to put real stamps on the envelope in which it is delivered.

Howard Wilson



Thank you for your insights and suggestions for features, many of which are now in planning. In regard to the number of images, a picture can speak a thousand words, particularly in the world of pictorial stamps and even more particularly in the case of Post & Go stamps. But your observation about the setting out of page 294 is correct; we broke our own design rules and squeezed in more images than usual to give readers the best available overview of Post & Go activity at London 2015 Europhilex. In the Preview on page 295, we thought the Battle of Britain Mini Sheet rather small, so showed it larger in your July edition. What do other readers think?

Kate Shaw, Publishing Editor

A place for medals

I read with great interest the recent reviews of the First World War 1915 stamps – each one tells an amazing story. Kulbir Thapa, the first Nepalese Gurkha to win the Victoria Cross, is a good choice, but why was 'VC' not added after his name?
Derek Hunt

A good question and one well debated in the planning of the First World War stamp series. It was decided that the portraits should all hint at an inspiring story and that medals would not be mentioned. Coincidentally, the VC features in stamps shown on page 374.

What, no Penny Blacks!

I am writing to query the stamp-issuing policy of Royal Mail. I very much liked the look of the new Penny Black and Two Penny Blue stamps and noticed from the *Bulletin* that they are supposedly available in sheets of ten, so thought I would buy some to use on letters. But at three Post Offices I was told that only Presentation Packs had been issued for sale. I also send postcards to friends in Europe but there are no pictorial £1 stamps available.
Guy Hindley

Sorry, the list of stamp issues in your May edition did not mention that Smilers® Sheets are not available at Post Offices – we will make this clearer in future. We find the Penny Black book with six stamps handy for use on letters. Our next issue with a £1 value is the Rugby World Cup (see page 359).



Keep the letters coming...

We welcome your letters ... Write to the Editor, *British Philatelic Bulletin*, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB. You can also email bulletin.enquiries@royalmail.com. The senders of letters published here receive a Bees Presentation Pack as a token of our thanks.

Irresistibly yours?
Dr A Raoof is offering his collection of the 'British Philatelic Bulletin' 1975–2015 to anyone willing to collect it from Nottinghamshire. Interested? Email raoof@btconnect.com

Stamp of significance: Castles

The Castle stamps of 1955, in all their various printings and in various formats over the years, hold pride of place in my collection.

I well remember my first sight of these stamps – it was on a wrapper of an issue of *London Illustrated Weekly*, posted to Pakistan from Glasgow in 1956. I loved the look of them and kept them for years. Unfortunately I somehow lost those very first Castles, but my affection for them was reawakened on arrival in the UK in 1967 – and they now hold pride of place in my QEII collection.
Dr A Raoof



Thank you for your letter and kind offer of passing on your *Bulletin* collection. The Castles are personal favourites of mine too. We welcome readers' letters about their favourite pictorial stamps. You can find the last 50 years' worth at www.rmspecialstamps.com.
William Doherty, Royal Mail Editor

NEW SUBSCRIBERS AHOY! If you would like to receive the *Bulletin* by mail for 12 months, this is a good time to subscribe, for just £12.95 for 12 issues. From September 2015 the annual subscription will cost £18, in line with the current cover price, but with free p&p.

Royal Mail Update Battle of Britain heroes and First World War animals receive philatelic tribute

Battle of Britain Medal Cover – Specifications	
Date of issue	15 September
Limited edition	10,000
Cover design	Supple Studio
Obverse design	Ian Rank-Broadley FRBS
Reverse design	Gary Breeze
Diameter	27.3mm
Weight	8g
Alloy	Cupro-nickel
Quality	Brilliant uncirculated
Price	£15.95

* For stamp specifications see page 295 of June *Bulletin*

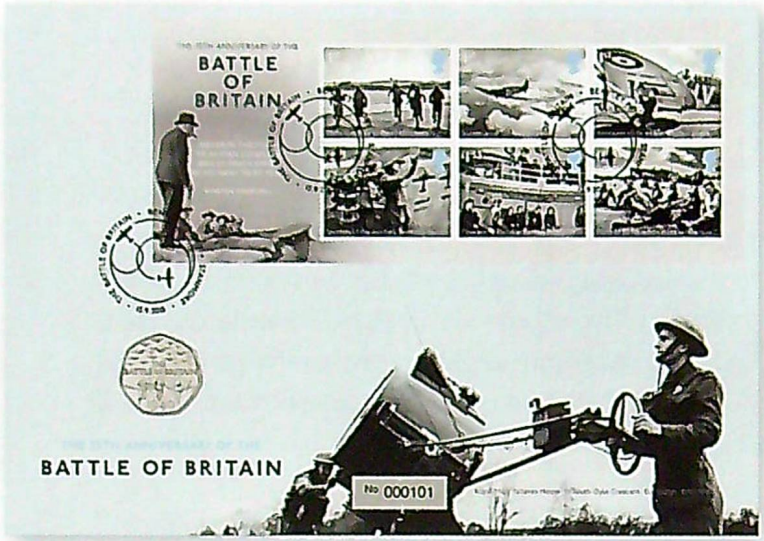
High flyers, fighting fauna The courage of The Few and animals who served on the front line in the First World War are celebrated by two new philatelic mementoes of history's greatest conflicts.

The Battle of Britain Coin Cover features a special 50p coin and Miniature Sheet marking the 75th anniversary of the campaign. (For photography accreditation see page 337 of June *Bulletin*.)

In the Animals of the First World War Commemorative Sheet, ten labels with First Class Union Flag stamps show dogs, horses, cats, camels and pigeons carrying messages and men, and giving comfort as mascots. More details in a future issue •

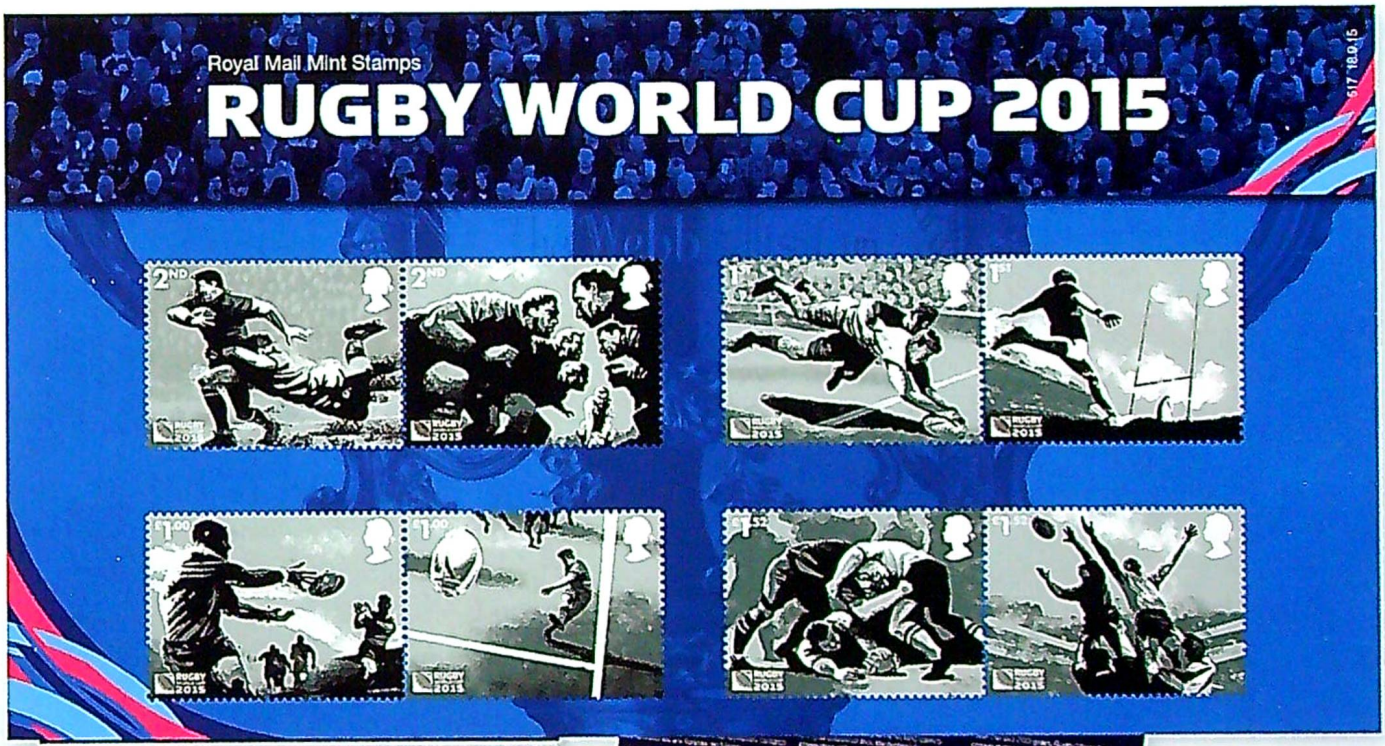
Right: the Battle of Britain Coin Cover

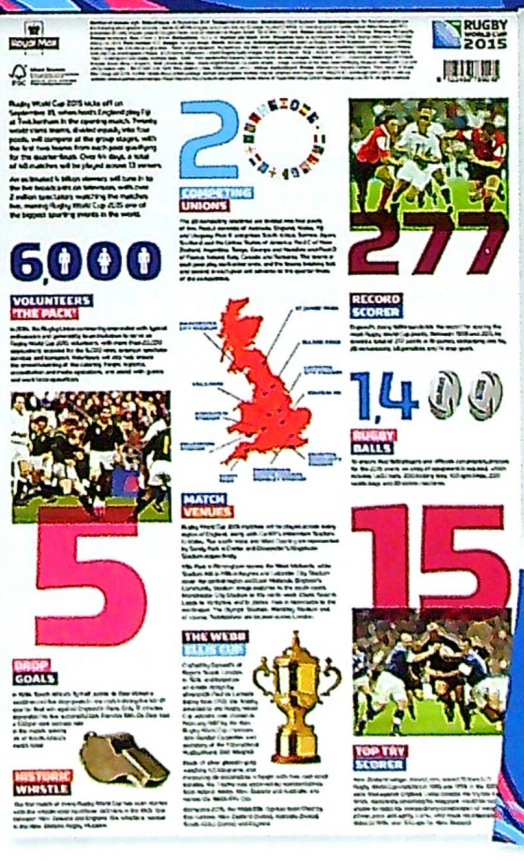
Below: the Animals of the First World War Commemorative Sheet





Animals of the First World War Commemorative Sheet – Specifications	
Date of issue	17 September
Number of stamps	10 x 1st Class Union Flag Stamps
Sheet and Pack design	Up Creative Consultants Limited
Stamp format	Portrait
Stamp size	20mm x 24mm
Sheet format	A4
Printer	International Security Printers
Print process	Lithography
Perforations	Die-cut simulated
Phosphor	Bars as appropriate
Gum	Self-adhesive
Price	£14.95



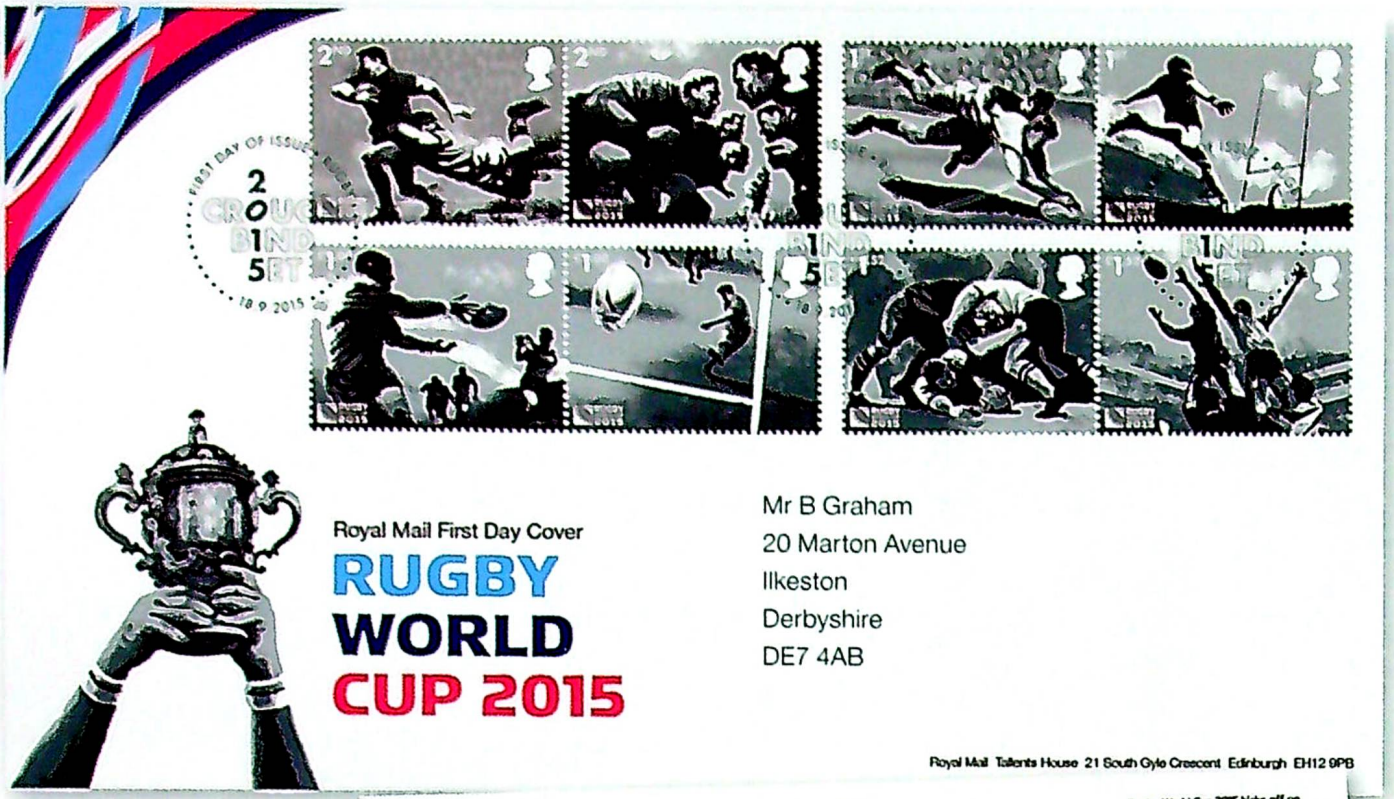




Above and left: the colourfully illustrated Presentation Pack from the Rugby World Cup 2015 issue out on 18 September

Goal post The Rugby World Cup 2015 stamps score high on action and drama

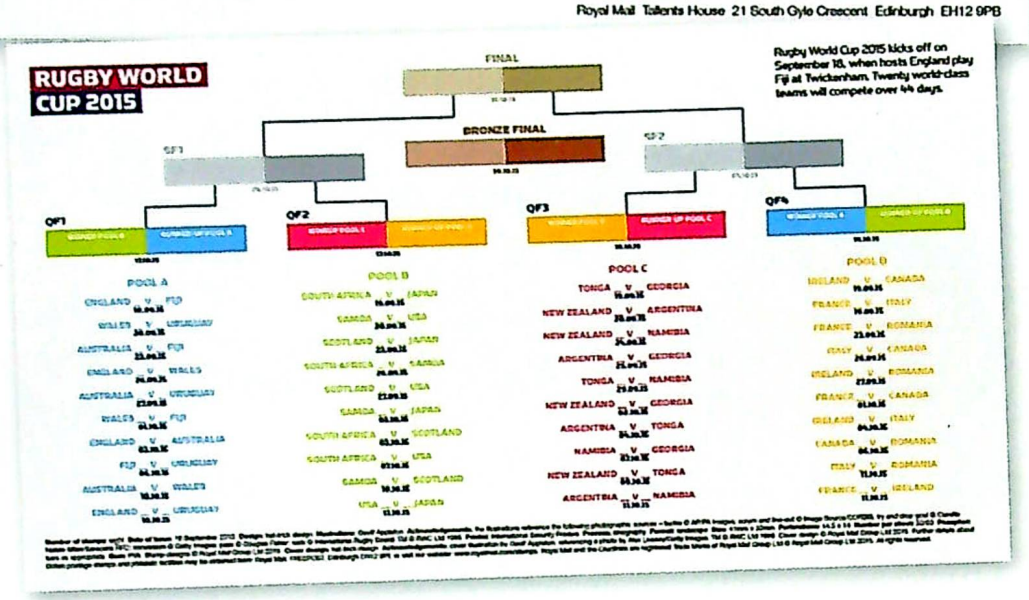
THE EXCITEMENT of one of the world's toughest sports comes to powerful life in the action-packed Rugby World Cup 2015 issue. The eight stamps feature all the classic moves, from tries and tackles to scrums and rucks, that evoke the drama of the game. The UK is hosting the 2015 World Cup and the set comes out on the first day of this Rugby Union tournament – kicked off by ▸



Clockwise from top: the First Day Cover; the Filler Card's Fixture Planner; pictorial alternative mark



FD1522-PL



Rugby World Cup – Specifications	
Date of issue	18 September
Number of stamps	Eight
Design	Hat-trick
Illustration	Geoff Appleton
Stamp format	Landscape
Stamp size	41mm x 30mm
Number per sheet	30/60
Printer	International Security Printers
Print process	Lithography
Perforations	14.5 x 14
Phosphor	Bars as appropriate
Gum	PVA

England with its match against Fiji. Accompanying the issue is a Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards and a Retail Stamp Book.

Stamp by stamp The Rugby World Cup stamps come in a variety of values – Second Class, First Class, £1 and £1.52.

TACKLE In Rugby Union a tackle occurs when the ball carrier is held by one or more opponents and brought to ground. *Second Class*

SCRUM A scrum involves eight forwards from each team bound together. Its purpose is to restart a game after a minor rule infringement. *Second Class*

TRY A try – worth five points in Rugby Union – is scored when a player reaches the opposing goal line and grounds the ball on or over the line. *First Class*
CONVERSION A conversion kick is taken after a try is scored, from a point in line with where the ball was grounded. *First Class*
PASS In a rugby pass the ball must be thrown from one player to another in either a backwards or lateral direction. *£1*
DROP GOAL To score one, a player drops the ball to the ground, lets it bounce and kicks it over the bar between the posts, earning three points. *£1*
RUCK In a ruck one or more players from each team, on their feet and in physical contact, close around the ball on the ground. *£1.52*
LINE-OUT Consisting of three to eight players from each side, a line-out takes place when the ball has been kicked or knocked out of play. *£1.52*

Also in the issue is a Presentation Pack which, when folded out, provides two full A4 sides of Rugby World Cup trivia. One side focuses on key World Cup facts and figures, and has images of rugby legends Jonny Wilkinson, Jannie de Beer and Jonah Lomu. Also covered are fascinating mementoes of the tournament, including the whistle used to referee the 1905 match between New Zealand and England (this will be used again for the first match of the 2015 Rugby World Cup). The other side charts the development of the game.

Orders for Serviced First Day Covers should reach Royal Mail at Tallents House by 18 September (address on page 354), quoting the *Bulletin* code CDG. The Tallents House postmark text has been arranged into the shape of rugby posts, with a ball flying over them. Two alternative postmarks have the location Rugby, birthplace of the game. The pictorial version features the scrum command – 'crouch, bind, set' – known to players around the world ●



FD1522-TH



FD1522-NP



Rugby World Cup – Prices	
Stamp set, AS26B	£7.38
Presentation Pack, Code AP408	£7.90
First Day Cover Stamps/overseas, AF396	£9.33/£7.78
Stamp Cards (set of 8), AQ227	£3.60

Above: the Tallents House and alternative non-pictorial postmarks, the eight-stamp Rugby World Cup 2015 issue



Stamp Scene John Holman keeps you posted on events and activities in the philatelic world

UK diary dates

6-9 August Philatelic Congress of Great Britain, Queen's Hotel, Leeds. Enquiries: P Gaywood, gaywood@hotmail.co.uk

7 August Strand Stamp Fair, Royal National Hotel, Bedford Way, London WC1, 9am to 4pm. Information: 020 8946 4480, www.stampshows.net

8 August National Philatelic Society display – Ethiopia (Tristan Brittan), Welsh Centre, 157 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8UE

4 September Strand Stamp Fair, see above

5 September National Philatelic Society Country meeting at Postcard Pursuits, 9 The Arcade, Letchworth Garden City, Herts. Display by NPS members. Enquiries: P Mellor, 01582 762284

16-19 September Autumn Stampex, Business Design Centre, London N1

26 September Mid Anglia Federation Stamp Day, Village Hall, Warmington, near Peterborough •

UK exhibitions

Autumn Stampex will be held at the Business Design Centre, Upper Street, London N1 on 16-19 September. Open Wednesday 11.30am to 7pm, Thursday & Friday 10am-6pm, Saturday 10am to 5pm. Admission free. Over 100 dealers and postal administrations will have stands, including Royal Mail which will release Special Stamp issues during the exhibition (see page 384). The ABPS will mount National Competition exhibits covering all classes of the Fédération Internationale de Philatélie (FIP) – Traditional, Postal History, Aerophilately, Postal Stationery, Revenue, Thematic, and Open – plus non-FIP classes of Picture Postcards and Cinderella. A new Stampex customised sheet will be on sale at the exhibition information stand, and a free Stampex postcard included in the exhibition programme. Stampex enquiries to Philatelic Traders Society, PO Box 290, Lingfield RH7 9AX, 01342 830225/6, email info@thepts.net.



The popular Scotex event – the annual Scottish stamp and postcard fair – will be held on 16-17 October at the Dewars Centre, Glover Street, Perth where it has been staged since 2006. About 30 dealers attrend this fair, organised by the Scottish Philatelic Traders Association. Enquiries 01368 860365 •

International exhibitions

The next international stamp exhibition will be held in Singapore on 14-19 August, marking the 50th anniversary of the country's independence. It will include displays by the Singapore Philatelic Museum and of Singapore stamps and postal history of the past 180 years.



In 2016 international exhibitions will be held in New York (Javits Center, New York City, 28 May-4 June, information www.ny2016.org), and Taipei (World Trade Centre, Taipei, Taiwan, 8-13 October) •

BPMA news

The BPMA, located at Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London WC1, near the famous Mount Pleasant sorting office, is open Monday-Friday 10am to 5pm (Thursdays until 7pm) and on Saturdays 8 August and 12 September (10am



to 5pm), but closed the following Mondays. On show at Freeling House until 7 August is an exhibition marking the 175th anniversary of the Penny Black. This will include the registration sheet of the Penny Black and other items of great philatelic importance.

Visit the BPMA website for details of the 'Post Office in the Community' exhibition at Blists Hill Victorian Town, Madeley, Telford, Shropshire (see also and www.ironbridge.org.uk). Some 25 exhibitions can be seen on-line, including Aerial Post, regional stamps, Machins, David Gentleman, postal vehicles and letter boxes. A temporary exhibition, 'Pop it in the Post: your world at the end of the street', will be touring a number of UK venues between now and March 2016 – see Days Out on page 377 for further details of this and a number of one-day events. See the BPMA website or BPMA 'What's On' events guide for further details of tours, talks, and other events Contact the BPMA on 020 7239 2570, or e-mail info@postalheritage.org.uk . for a copy of the 'What's On' guide or to book for tours or talks.

The BPMA's online shop offers a wide range of products: Cards; DVDs & CDs; Gift sets; Homeware; Mail Rail prints; Philatelic; Postcards; Publications & maps; Replica GPO posters; and Stationery. There are items to interest most philatelists, postal historians, and the general public •

Birthday Honours



Congratulations to Hugh Jefferies, Editor of Stanley Gibbons catalogues, and former Editor of *Gibbons Stamp Monthly*, on being awarded the MBE 'for services to philately' in The Queen's Birthday Honours List in June. It is appropriate Hugh should be recognised in 2015 – the 150th anniversary of the SG catalogue and the 125th anniversary of *GSM*.

The MBE was also awarded to Robert Gillmor 'for services to wildlife art'; his illustrations featured on Bird and Farm Animal Post & Go stamps in 2010-12. An article about his work was published in the *Bulletin* of June 2011.

2015 has been a good year for comedian Lenny Henry – he was shown on one of the Comedy Greats stamps in April and awarded a knighthood in the Honours List. Although his real name is Lenworth, I imagine he will always be known now as Sir Lenny •

Catalogue review

The 2015 Edition of Stanley Gibbons Great Britain Concise Stamp Catalogue was published to coincide with Europhilex. It lists all GB stamps from the Penny Black to the Comedy Greats issue. Such has been the volume of new issues in recent years, the catalogue is now over 450 pages and has a retail price of almost £35. It is designed to appeal to collectors who want more specialised listings and information than in *Collect British Stamps*, but less than in the five-volume Specialised Catalogue. However time may have come to review the level of detail in the Concise to ensure that ever-growing bulk and higher price do not deter purchasers in the future. Collectors trying to locate particular special issues amongst the listings will find (as I have done) the Commemorative Design Index of great help.

The issues from Queen Victoria to George VI (1840-1952) amounts to 60 pages (including some of advertising), the stamps of Elizabeth II then occupy the next 314 pages before the listings of postage dues, postal fiscals, stamp ▸

booklets, Post Office label sheets and Royal Mail commemorative sheets – much of these sections adding to the deluge of Elizabeth II material.

The Penny Black, the 175th anniversary of which we celebrate, is now priced mint at £12,500 and used at £375, its companion Twopence Blue at £38,000 and £900. If you have a Penny Black and have never checked its watermark, do so – one with inverted crown watermark is catalogued at £48,000 mint and £2500 used. I am always somewhat puzzled why the catalogue includes the Parliamentary and Mulready postal stationery of 1840 whereas none of the later stationery with valued or non-denominated stamp impressions is listed. For the record, 1d black Mulready envelopes are now £350 unused/£550 used (lettersheets £325/£525) and the 2d equivalent £450/£2500 (lettersheets £425/£2400). Prices for the rare Parliamentary envelopes (for use of MPs, not sold to the public) start at £6000.

Prices for most Elizabeth II issues remain the same as in the 2014 edition but I did notice that the 1955 Waterlow Castles (SG 536/9) are up £25 mint to £250, and the 2010 Business & Consumer Smilers sheet (MS3024) up £2.50 to £17.50 mint and used. The 50p Windsor Castle stamp (3221) from the 2011 Aerial Post prestige book is now £1 dearer at £5 mint/used, and the 1st class definitive-size Olympic and Paralympic stamps (3250/1) 15p up at £1.90 each mint. The attractive miniature sheet for The Queen's Diamond Jubilee (MS3272) goes up £3 to £12 mint/used, and the Olympic Gold Medal Winners stamps (3342/70) are now £2.25 each mint and £2.75 used compared to £1.50 mint/used in 2014. The set of 29 is now priced at £60/£75 (both £40 in 2014). However the set of stamps in sheetlets is now £260 mint/used up only £10 on the 2014 price. Price for the Paralympic Winners stamps remain at 2014 levels. The 2013 Doctor Who stamps and miniature sheet are both up £1 mint but the three self-adhesive stamps (3448/3450) are now £5.50 each mint and £5 used compared to just £1.25/£1.10 last time. Also increased considerably are prices of the self-adhesive versions of the Football Heroes and Butterflies stamps (3475/78, 3509/10). The 2013 Football Heroes prestige book is up £10 to £35.

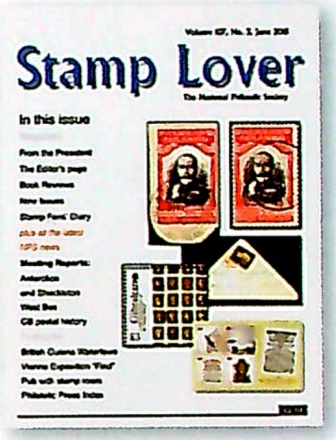


As always the new, 30th edition Concise will not disappoint and those still having the first edition (of May 1986) can have fun comparing the prices now and 30 years ago, and also marvelling at or despairing of the number of issues since then. Price £34.95, available from Stanley Gibbons shop 399 Strand, London WC2R 0LX, or by mail order from Stanley Gibbons Publications, 7 Parkside, Ringwood, Hants BH24 3SH. UK Freephone Order Line 0800 611622 •

Society news

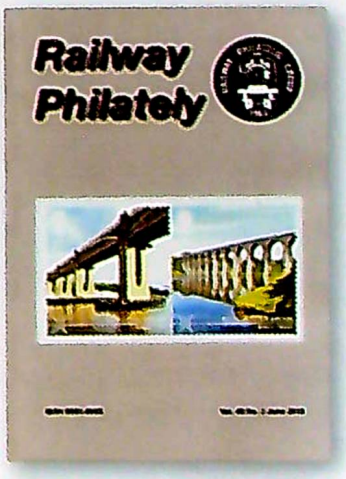
The Stamp Lover has been published by the National Philatelic Society (formerly Junior Philatelic Society) since 1908. The June 2015 issue includes features on British Guiana – the Waterlow Lithograph definitives, 1860-75 (by Simon Richards), Vienna 1933 Exhibition Medals (Jack Shamash), A Pub with a Stamp Room (Bersted near, Bognor Regis, by Dave Hill) as well as extensive book reviews, a checklist of articles in the British philatelic press (uncluding the Bulletin) for July-December 2014, and a useful two-page listing of forthcoming stamp fairs, with contact telephone numbers for the organisers. NPS meeting reports cover interesting displays on Antarctica and Shackleton's Voyage, and

GB Postal History with a difference, plus the country meeting at Thatcham in March (another country meeting will be held at Letchworth Garden City on 5 September). In his 'message' Editor Michael Goodman comments on Post & Go stamps from the BPMA and notes his disappointment with the recent Penny Black anniversary stamps, preferring the 1990 issue with conjoined Machin head of The Queen and Wyon head of Queen Victoria. Membership of the NPS is £32 (£28 if living over 60 miles from London), overseas £24. There is a reduction for members receiving Stamp Lover electronically and a special introductory offer for new members. Contact the society at nps@ukphilately.org.uk or visit www.ukphilately.org.uk/nps for further details.



The Philatelisten Vereniging Groningen philatelic society is celebrating its centenary. It was founded in 1915 by some British soldiers of the internment camp in Groningen and some of their Dutch guards. These soldiers were unable to escape in time from Belgium to Britain during the First World War and came to the Netherlands where they were interned. A feature article on the British Camp, by Ernst Flentge was published in the April 2015 of the magazine Filatelie. On 5-6 September the society will organise a large exhibition and an international stamp fair. The theme of the exhibition will be 'The British Camp', with presentation of posters, pictures, etc from the camp. Three special stamps will be issued with motives from the British Camp; these will be on sale only during the exhibition. Collectors interested in the exhibition and/or the stamps should contact H R Reus of the Groningen 100 exhibition committee, PO Box 410, NL 9700 AK Groningen, Netherlands.

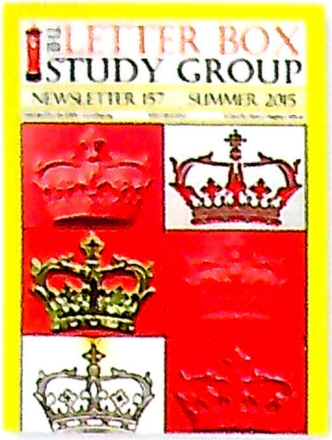
The Railway Philatelic Group (founded 1966) publishes Railway Philately with interesting features on stamps depicting railways, railway letter and parcel stamps, railway postmarks and other related matters. The June 2015 issue includes articles on the parcel stamps of the Southern Railway (by Chris Tennant), and Manchester Corporation Tramways and Maryport & Carlise Railway (Francis Kiddle), as well as an update to Grahame Blackman's book on Railway Sub Office postmarks, recent metermarks with a railway connection, and a look at the High Level and Royal Border railway bridges in Royal Mail's recent Bridges issue. For details of the RPG contact Patricia Peters, 81 Kirriemuir Avenue, Glasgow G52 3DP or see www.railwayphilatelicgroup.co.uk



The June 2015 issue of Themescene, journal of the British Thematic Association, includes features on Amundsen's Northeast Passage Expedition 1918-23, Magna Carta, Automobiles, 2015 United Nations Year of Light, as well as reports on Essen and Europhilex, a Just4Kids section and a further instalment in John Hammond's 'Back to Basics' series dealing with overprints and surcharges. In his Chairman's message, Barry Stagg challenges the idea that stamp collecting is dying, rather he sees it as changing. More people are interested in social history and Mr Stagg notes that 'genealogists and social commentators are starting to see a lot of value in what we know as Thematic (and its close cousin Open) collecting'. He urges collectors to talk about their collection at every opportunity as 'not only will you find others with a similar interest but everybody loves a good story'. For details of the BTA contact peter.denly@uwclub.net or visit www.brit-thematic-assoc.com.



The Summer 2015 issue of the Letter Box Study Group Newsletter is, as ▸



always, full of interesting features and outstanding colour photography. Pride of place in this issue is Bob Drummond's fascinating article 'The Scottish Crown: fact and fiction' about the use of the Scottish Crown (of King James V) on boxes north of the border - the story is more complex than one might think. Also very good is Chris Downer's 'A Collage of Letter Boxes – Dorset'. In my view this is the best-produced and most lively of all magazines produced by philatelic/postal history societies in the UK – all editors should obtain a copy or two and give them close scrutiny. The Newsletter reflects extremely well on its Editor, Simon Vaughan Winter, and members of the LBSG whose enthusiasm for their subject seems boundless. For LBSG details contact Val Scott, membership@lbsg.org or see website www.lbsg.org •

Postal History lecture

The Stuart Rossiter Memorial Lecture for 2015 will be given by Ben Palmer at 5pm on 6 November at the Royal Philatelic Society London, 41 Devonshire Place, London W1G 6JY. Mr Palmer's talk entitled 'Theory v. Practice in Postal History' will explore and explain various techniques and methodology in postal history research, publication, exhibiting and judging. Pitfalls and problems are contrasted and the concepts are dovetailed in the ultimate quest for postal history knowledge.

Drawing on both personal experience and those of internationally renowned postal historians, he examines the key factors in making a significant contribution to the postal history field. Juxtaposing both micro and macro perspectives, he will attempt to address what might be missing in the study of postal history, evaluate prevailing attitudes and current trends and provide possible strategies for the development of postal history. Mr Palmer is the author of The Pre-UPU Destination Mail of Victoria (2009) and The Sydney Views: A Guide and Index to Covers (2013).

Free admission to the lecture is by non-transferable ticket on application to Rex Dixon at rexdixon@btinternet.com . Early application is advised. The Stuart Rossiter Trust, a charitable trust, promotes research into the history of the postal services and supports publication in this area •

Auctions

Grosvenor's auction on 24 September of specialised sections of Falkland Islands and Antarctica will include the Bryant Rose collection. Enquiries: Grosvenor, 399 Strand London WC2R 0LT, Tel. 020 7379 8789, www.grosvenorauctions.com

Cavendish's September auction will include collections of British Army in the Crimea, Cross-Channel Mails, 1583-1853; Indian Postal History 1681-1840; Straits Settlements, Malaysian States, North Borneo and Sarawak; Burma stamps and postal history; China Cultural Revolution Period; as well as worldwide stamps and postal history. Enquiries: Cavendish Philatelic Auctions, 153 London Road, Derby DE1 2SY, Tel. 01332 250970, stamps@cavendish-auctions.com •

News from the islands

Guernsey Post's next issues will be on 9 September – a set for Alderney marking The Queen becoming the longest reigning British monarch. Christmas issues for Guernsey and Alderney go on sale on 6 November. Enquiries: Guernsey Philatelic Bureau, Freepost GU267, Envoy House, La Vrangue, Guernsey

GY1 5SS, e-mail philatelic@guernseypost.com.

Jersey will issue part two of its The Great War series on 4 August, followed on 6 August by stamps to mark 450 years of Sark as a fief to the Crown. Stamps commemorating the Reign of Queen Elizabeth II go on sale on 9 September and a Links with China – Garden Flowers set on 22 September. Enquiries: Jersey Philatelic Bureau, Freepost JE793, Jersey Post, Jersey JE1 1AF, website: www.jerseystamps.com

In September the Isle of Man will issue a prestige book marking The Queen becoming the longest-reigning British monarch. In October stamps will feature Artwork of Bryan Kneale and the Manx Prayer Book on the Christmas issue. Orders and enquiries to: Isle of Man Stamps & Coins, PO Box 10M, Douglas, Isle of Man IM99 1PB, or visit www.iomstamps.com •



Europhilex

Well, Europhilex has come and gone and I think it fair to say it was a great success with some 15,000 visitors over the four days. I thought it was better than the 2010 exhibition with more attractions such as the Philatelic Events that changed the World display of rare and unique items, and the Post Office Mauritius printing die. It was not of course on the scale of the Stamp Show 2000 at Earl's Court but perhaps the days of such vast shows is now past – at least in the UK. But Bill Hedley and his team who organised Europhilex can be proud of their achievement, the success may in part be due to the good on-line publicity for the show which included a list of the competitive displays so visitors could choose in advance what they wanted to see. I noted a respectable number of people looking at these displays although the majority seemed to be overseas visitors. British collectors seem far more interested in touring the dealers/postal administration stands than viewing competitive displays.

The Grand Prix d'Honneur (Best in Show) award went to James Peter Gough for 'The UPU and Its Impact on Global Postal Services' and Grand Prix National to Alan Holyoake's 'Secured Delivery Leading to the Introduction of UK Registration of Internal, External and Transit Mail 1450-1852' (what a title!). The Best in Class winning exhibits were as follows:

Traditional - Joseph Hackmey, 'Classic Switzerland'; Postal History - James Peter Gough, 'The UPU and Its Impact on Global Postal Services'; Postal Stationery - Henrik Mouritsen, 'The Classic Postal Stationery of Denmark 1865-1905'; Aerophilately - Jean-Claude Vasseur, 'Newfoundland Airmail'; Revenue - Andy Taylor, 'The Austrian Newspaper tax'; Open - Birthe King, 'Denmark: Conscience, Conflict and Camps 1932-1949'; Youth - Hanna Pilipovich, 'On the 100th Anniversary of the Romanov Series'; Thematic - Damian Laege, 'Fascinated in Feathers'; and Philatelic Literature: Luis Frazao, Portuguese Pre-stamp Period Postmarks, Volume 2 •

Bees' needs

As the Bees stamp set is released we reveal why these endangered creatures are in desperate need of protection – and how you can help

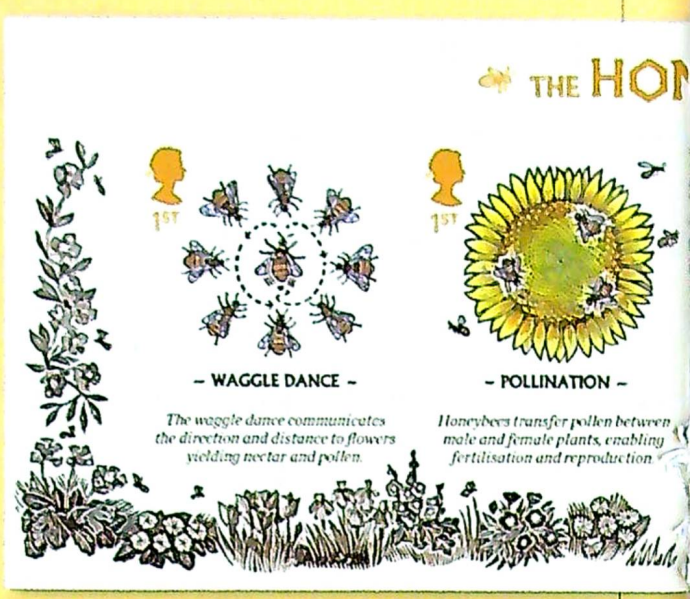
Bees are our stars in stripes. These furry farmers fulfil a brilliantly effective role in our agricultural system as they pollinate hundreds of crops and so keep thousands of British farms in business. Everything from beans, cucumbers and tomatoes to apples, avocados and strawberries flourish thanks to pollination by bees. Their work contributes around £400 million to the UK economy every year. Their pollination of flowers – wild and cultivated – also helps the countryside, parks and private gardens thrive.

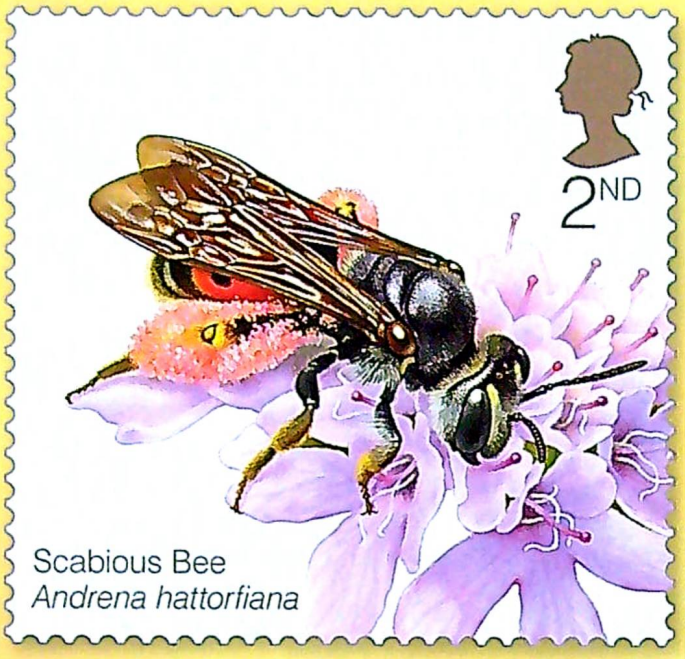
Yet these stars are fading. And largely thanks to us. Bees rely almost entirely on flowers for food, but changes in farming methods to maximise productivity has meant the destruction of 97 per cent of Britain's flower-rich grassland in the last 70 years. Fertilisers and herbicides diminish bees' natural food supplies and insecticides are believed to be harmful to them. Twenty species have become extinct since 1900 and a quarter of species are endangered. But harming bees harms us: in the absence of bees, manual pollination would cost the UK £1.8 billion. A third of our diet relies on them. So it makes sense to protect them. Now a number of organisations are doing that and you can get involved too.

The Bumblebee Conservation Trust recommends creating a garden that attracts bees and allows them to thrive. The key is bee-friendly flowers rich in pollen and nectar. Plant foxgloves, lavender, geraniums and wild roses. *Details: www.bumblebeeconservation.org*

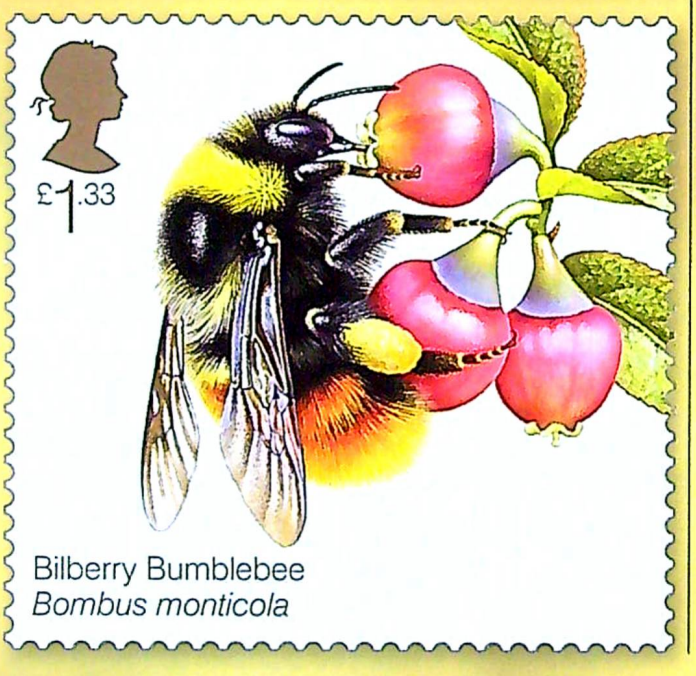
Friends of the Earth has an excellent guide for making 'bee and bee' accommodation in your garden for solitary bee species (those that do not live in hives) out of twigs and a plastic bottle! Its website also offers advice on creating wildflower meadows in local communities – and free seeds! *Details: www.foe.co.uk*

The British Beekeepers Association, along with Friends of the Earth, is lobbying to prevent a ban being lifted on neonic pesticides believed to harm bees. You can also adopt a beehive with the Association and receive a pot of honey and seasonal updates from your adopted beekeeper. *Details: www.bbka.org.uk.*

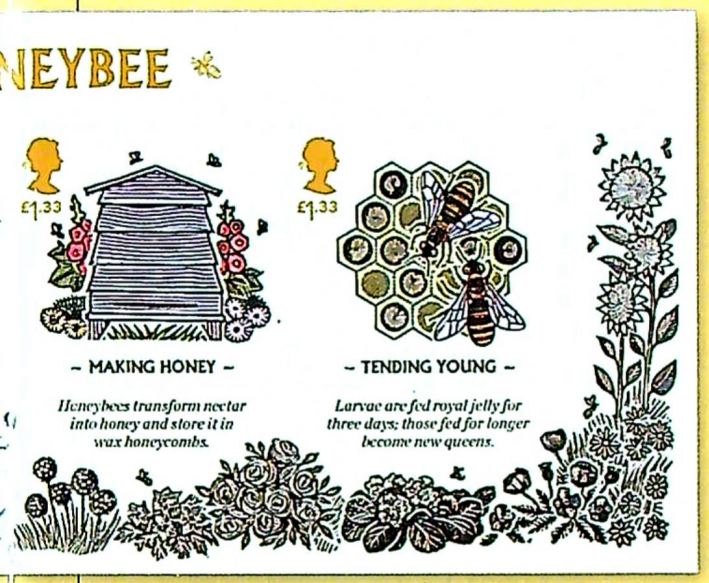




Scabious Bee
Andrena hattorfiana



Bilberry Bumblebee
Bombus monticola



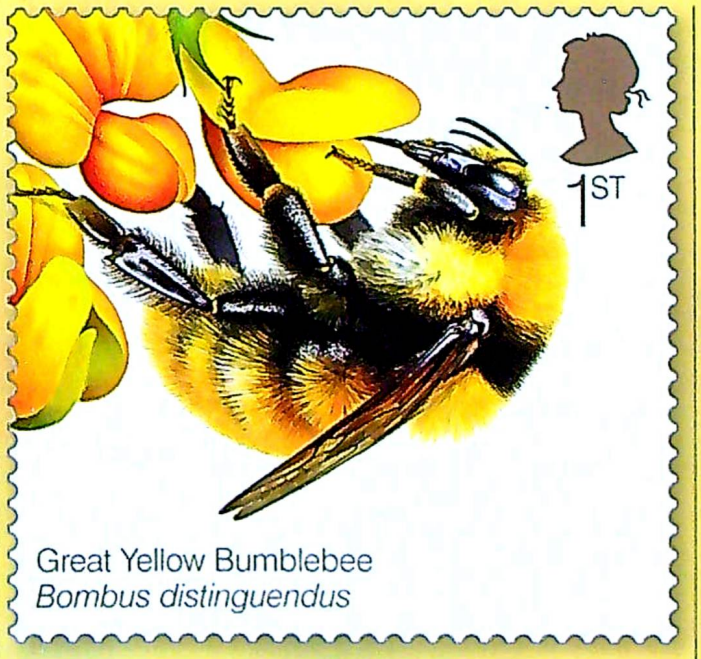
The Bees issue We created quite a buzz with our preview of the Bees stamp issue (below) in July's *Bulletin* so this month we reveal a little more about the four-stamp Miniature Sheet (left) accompanying it. The Sheet focuses on four activities of the Western honeybee (*Apis mellifera*) and comes in a mix of values – First Class and £1.33...

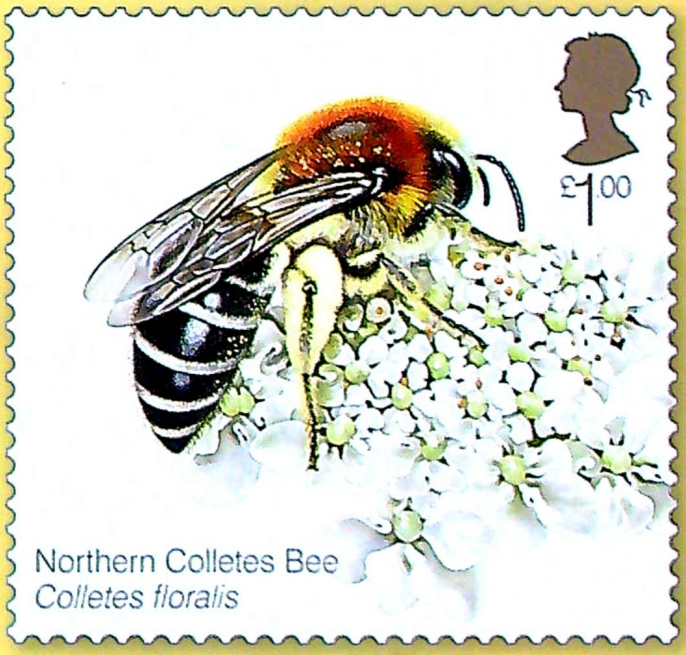
Waggle Dance Bees do the 'waggle' to tell hive mates the location of flowers bearing pollen and nectar. *First Class*

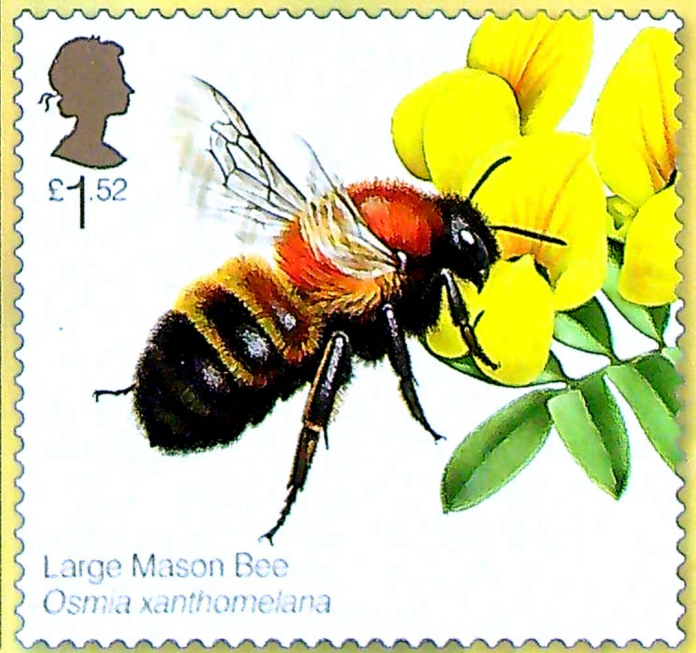
Pollination Bees transfer pollen between male and female plants, enabling fertilisation and reproduction. *First Class*

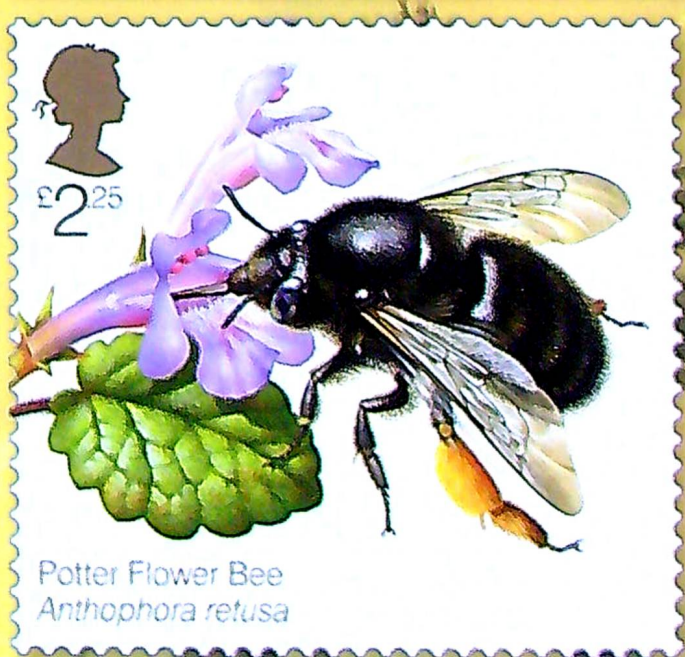
Making Honey The honeybees then transform nectar into honey and store it in wax honeycombs in the hive. *£1.33*

Tending Young Larvae are fed royal jelly for three days. Those who get fed for longer become the queens. *£1.33*











Cruise views New stamps featuring a variety of destinations evoke the romance of classic cruises

Top deck The Sea Travel issue reflects Britain's reputation as one of the great nautical nations and the British tradition of discovering the world by ship, and evokes the glamour of the ocean cruise. The stamps feature six historic ports and maritime destinations: Dover, New York, Venice, Hong Kong, Sydney and Vietnam. This Post & Go set is released on 16 September and comes with a Carrier Card written by leading travel writer Simon Calder, who offers an overview of each destination.

Stamp by stamp The six gravure-printed stamps all come as First Class values and are designed by leading creative agency Osborne Ross, whose previous philatelic credits include the 2012 Space Science issue.

DOVER This port in the South East of England with its famous white cliffs has provided a crucial link with Europe for two millennia.

VENICE The Italian city remains supremely immune to modernity. Some of the world's greatest art resides in the museums of Venice, but the real joy is to drift between the palaces by *vaporetto* – the local water bus.

NEW YORK CITY The ideal way to see Manhattan at its most majestic is sailing in at a dozen knots from the Atlantic Ocean as the thriving city and its iconic skyline slowly come into view.

HONG KONG The next best thing to wafting into Hong Kong aboard a cruise ship is to take the Star Ferry, shuttling day and night across a superb natural harbour flanked by dazzling skyscrapers.

SYDNEY Australia's largest city features structures that reflect its connection with the Pacific: the Harbour Bridge beautifully frames the waterside Opera House's shape, which echoes a scattering of sea shells.

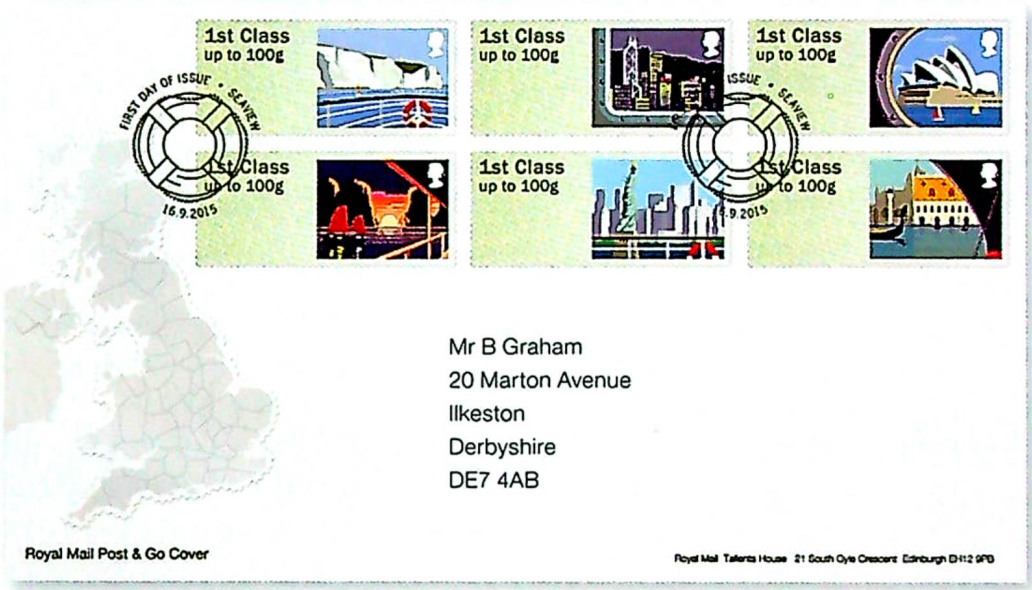


FD1522-TH



FD1522-NP

Above: the Sea Travel issue, Tallents House postmark and non-pictorial alternative mark





FD1522-PL

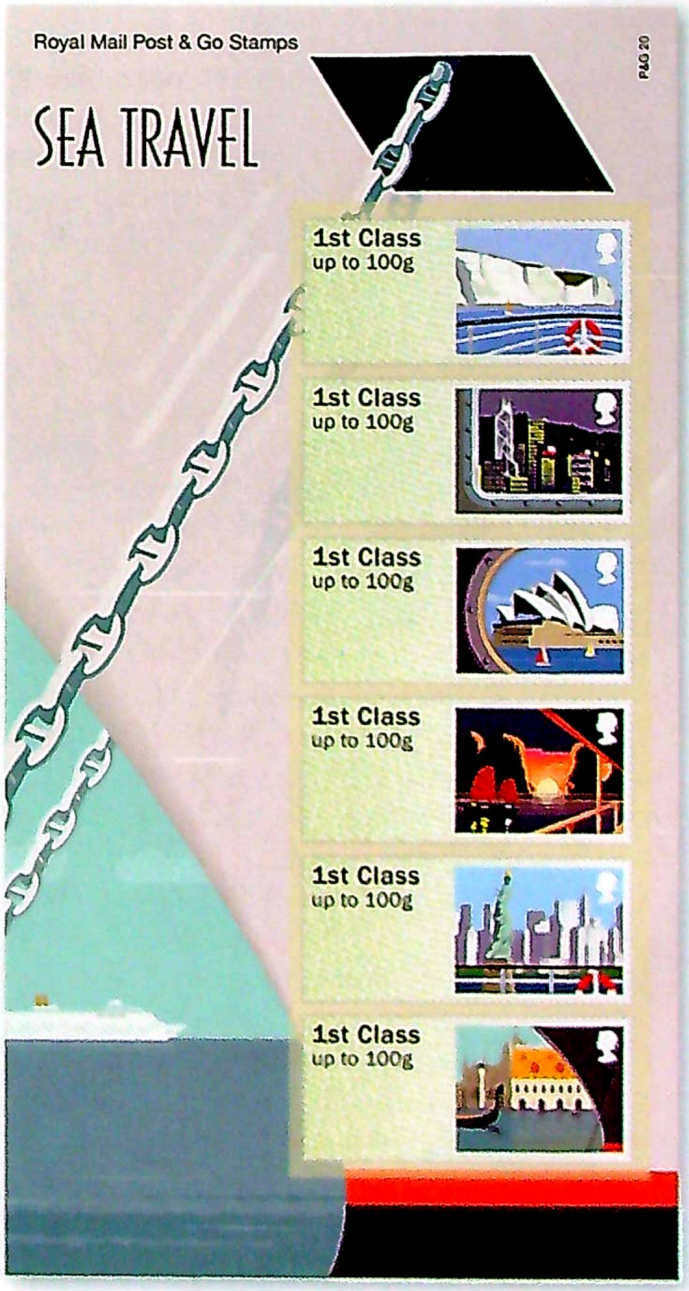
Clockwise from left: First Day Cover, pictorial alternative postmark with illustration of a lifebelt, and Carrier Card

HA LONG BAY This extraordinary Vietnamese seascape of limestone pillars, comprising some 1,600 islands and islets, has been recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Orders for Serviced First Day Covers must reach Royal Mail by 16 September. Customers may send stamped envelopes on the day of issue to Royal Mail, Tallents House (address on page 354, quoting media code CDG) for the Tallents House, Edinburgh postmark. The two alternative postmarks have the location Seaview from the Isle of Wight •

Post & Go: Sea Travel – Prices	
Stamp Set and Carrier Card	£3.78
First Day Cover UK	£5.01
First Day Cover overseas	£4.18
First Day Envelope	30p

Post & Go: Sea Travel – Specifications	
Date of issue	16 September
Number of stamps	Six
Stamp design	Osborne Ross
Stamp illustration	Andy Tuohy
Stamp format	Landscape
Stamp size	56mm x 25mm
Printer	International Security Printers
Print process	Gravure
Perforations	Die-cut simulated
Phosphor	Bars as appropriate
Gum	Self-adhesive



1815 -2015 Faithful friends

As Joanna Lumley welcomes Royal Mail's eloquent tribute to the Gurkhas, we explore two centuries of their history as heroes of the British Army



GURKHA CAMPAIGNER and TV star Joanna Lumley has welcomed the new Royal Mail Commemorative Sheet that salutes the elite fighting unit. 'This will make the Gurkhas so proud. It's fantastic that Britain is able to pay tribute to them like this,' the *Absolutely Fabulous* actress told the *Bulletin*.

Joanna, who headed a successful campaign to win retired Gurkhas UK citizenship, added: 'Honour and remembrance mean an awful lot to the Gurkhas so this issue is a very fitting way to recognise their courage and loyalty.'

The Commemorative Sheet, out on 20 August, marks two centuries of the Gurkhas' unstinting service in the British Army. It reveals how in 1814 colonial British forces, after inconclusively fighting against a formidable Gurkha army from western Nepal, decided it was better to be the Gurkha's friend than his enemy. One year later Gurkha units were soldiering for the British under an agreement with the Nepalese government.

The Sheet also pays tribute to the Gurkhas as a people, celebrating their physical and mental courage, and ability to survive a tough life in a harsh land. The wild, mountainous terrain and savage climate in the Himalayan foothills has generated a race of hardy, cheerful survivors whose courage in battle has won them praise in combat theatres around the globe. As the Gurkhas say: '*Kathar hunu banda marnu ramro*' – 'It is better to die than be a coward.'

Ten First Class Union Flag stamps with labels are included in the Sheet, tracing the history, culture and character of the Gurkha soldier:



The Gurkhas' origins Gurkhas are of Mongolian ethnicity and originate from the Himalayan foothills of Nepal.



Indian Mutny, 1857-59 The first non-British troops in action against the mutineers, they faced threats and attempts to persuade them to change sides. But Gurkha loyalty was never in doubt.

The Kukri

The viciously curved symbol of Gurkha fighting prowess is a traditional tool used by Gurkhas from boyhood for anything from cutting wood to chopping up vegetables. The military version, of course, has a far more menacing function.

***Tough stuff** The blade is made from tempered steel and the handle from buffalo horn or wood.

***Long and lethal** The blade measures about ten inches and the weapon's total length is 16 to 18 inches.

***Bloody clever** A notch on the bottom of the blade prevents blood dripping onto the user's hand. The notch also represents the Hindu trinity of Bramah, Vishnu and Shiva.

***Complete kit** The kukri scabbard (called a *dap*) holds two small knives – the *karda* for skinning and *chakmak* for sharpening the main knife and making a fire with a flint.

***The kukri legend** It is a myth that a drawn kukri must taste blood before it is returned to the scabbard – but testing this is not recommended.





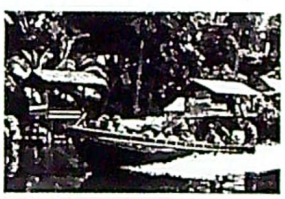
Battle of Dargai, 1897 During the Pathan Uprising, the British route was overlooked by the 6,500 foot-high Dargai Heights. Heavily defended, the Heights were eventually taken at great cost by the 2nd Gurkhas and Gordon Highlanders.



First World War, 1914-18 Around 100,000 Gurkhas fought in the Great War and 13 per cent lost their lives. Gurkha battalions served on the Western Front and in Persia, Mesopotamia, Palestine, Egypt, Salonika and Gallipoli.



Second World War, 1939-45 In the Second World War, Gurkhas fought in North Africa, Italy, Malaya and Burma. At Monte Cassino they reached positions closer to the German-held monastery than anyone else, and as part of the British 14th Army in the Far East palyed a vital role in the crushing of the Japanese. The soldiers of the Nepal Army were also involved and nearly every Gurkha of military age was fighting for the British.



Borneo, 1963-66 When Indonesian troops attempted to invade the Malaysian Borneo territories, the British depended mainly on Gurkhas, whose skills in jungle fighting defeated a far more numerous enemy. During a Gurkha assault on enemy defences in Borneo in 1965, Lance Corporal Rambahadur Limbu won the Victoria Cross for knocking out a machine gun trench, rescuing two wounded comrades under savage fire, and giving covering fire so his company could capture the position.



Falklands, 1982 After the Argentine invasion of the Falkland Islands in 1982, the British response included a Gurkha battalion. Such was the Gurkhas' reputation that when they were about to attack an Argentine position, the enemy fled.



Afghanistan, 2000 Having fought in all of the three Afghan Wars of the 19th and early 20th centuries, all branches of the Gurkha Brigade went on to play a major part in Operation Herrick, the Afghan campaign of 2002 to 2014.



Gurkha Traditions Soldiering for Britain has long been an honourable profession among Gurkhas, and the virtues of loyalty, integrity and self-sacrifice are highly revered. The Gurkha way is encapsulated in the concept of *kaida*, which translates as 'custom and tradition': they follow Gurkha traditions and maintain their cultural identity to achieve the highest standards. Indeed, they say that while he has breath in his body, a Gurkha will never give up.



The Gurkha Welfare Trust This Trust exists to repay the debt that Britain owes to veteran Gurkha soldiers who may have fallen on hard times. Projects include supplying water to isolated communities in the hills of Nepal and there are two residential homes for Gurkha veterans. ▸

Cenotaph photograph: iStock/Peter Macdiarmid



Above: Joanna Lumley and a a Gurkha veteran place a wreath at the Cenotaph on Whitelhall in London

Recruitment test

Every year thousands of young Nepalese men apply for just 310 positions in the Gurkhas. The recruitment process includes intelligence and language exams but the clincher is the three-mile 'doko run', one of the toughest physical tests in the British Army.

The Gurkha hopefuls race up a 1,500 foot-high hill at Pokhara in Nepal's Western Region with 55lb of rocks in a *doko* – a traditional wicker basket with a carry strap that fits round the forehead.



Above: Major James Lumley, on the right with a rifle over his arm, during the battle for Mogaung in Burma in 1944. He was deputy commander of the 3rd battalion 6th Gurkha Rifles

Below: his daughter Joanna Lumley with Tulbahadur Pun



Below right: a 2006 stamp set marked the 150th Anniversary of the Victoria Cross and showed Corporal Agansing Rai

Admiration for the character and courage of the Gurkha soldier is in the blood of army daughter Joanna Lumley – for her father served with the Nepalese heroes in the Second World War. Major James Lumley witnessed their acts of bravery as his unit the 6th Gurkha Rifles fought savage battles with the Japanese behind enemy lines during the nerve-wracking Chindit campaign in Burma.

'The Gurkhas have been heroes to me since I was a little girl and they were heroes to my father when he fought side by side with them,' Joanna recalls. 'I would hear stories of their courage in Burma – there was one about a Gurkha who carried two badly injured, unconscious comrades a hundred miles or so.'

Her father's comrade, Rifleman Tulbahadur Pun, won the Victoria Cross on 23 June 1944 for storming enemy machine gun positions that had pinned down the Gurkhas, including James Lumley, at the strategically important Japanese rail hub of Mogaung. His one-man charge cleared the enemy defences and helped the Gurkhas take Mogaung.

'One such hero for me was Tulbahadur Pun. I met him and knew him and he was such a humble man, despite his bravery. He was so modest,' says the 69-year-old actress. Pun became a key figure in the Gurkha Justice Campaign, when Joanna and other activists won retired Gurkhas the right to become UK citizens and live here in 2009.

'At one time, the day a Gurkha's service ended they were deported, literally picked up and flown out of the country,' says Joanna. 'They'd paid all their taxes, they'd fought alongside us, many had given their lives, had done everything asked of them, and then were treated in this terrible way. Yet these men helped our country in the direst times. My father and all who have fought with the Gurkhas said they are inspiring – brave in the most frightening of situations yet unbelievably bright and cheerful, with no time for gloom or terror or regrets.

'With the Gurkhas there, everything seems suddenly possible in the grimmest places, whether in Burma then or elsewhere in the world now. The least we could do was not abandon them, to give them citizenship rights in a country for which they have sacrificed so much to help' •

For the philatelic specifications of the Gurkhas Sheet and a full list of sources of all images used, see page 326 of July Bulletin. *Gavin Edgerley-Harris, Curator of the Gurkha Museum (see page 377), was an expert consultant in the production of the Sheet.*

100,000 The number of Gurkhas who served in the First World War.

6,500 The number of medals and mentions in despatches awarded to Gurkha troops.

33 The Gurkhas have seen active service in 33 campaigns and conflicts around the world, from the North West Frontier to Iraq, the Balkans to the Falklands.

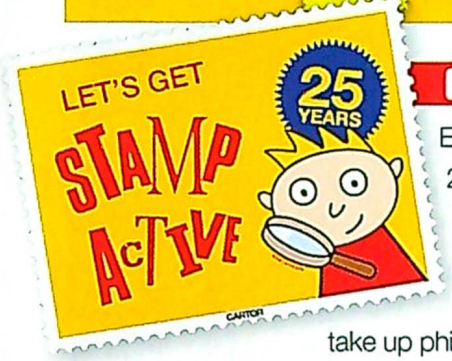
13 A total of 13 Victoria Crosses have been awarded to Gurkha soldiers.





Photograph © AFP/Getty Images. Stamp images © Royal Mail





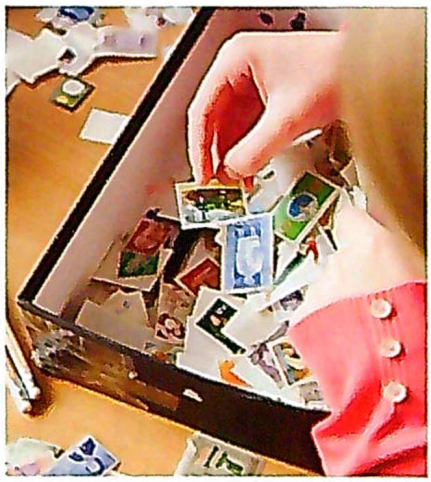
HAPPY BIRTHDAY POSTER

Everyone's favourite youth stamp club celebrates its 25th anniversary this year and has a specially designed stamp label to mark the occasion. The poster stamp is sold in sheets of ten to helps raise funds for Stamp Active, the organisation that encourages children to take up philately. It was just one of the highlights of Stamp Active's Kids Corner at the London 2015 Europhilex.

Youngsters visiting the stand took part in exciting philatelic activities with a European theme, and used points gained by completing the activities to obtain free stamps and first day covers. Children finishing the treasure hunt received a free goodie bag. And the grown-ups were winners too! A 'bring a child' prize draw was held for adults who came with a young collector to the Stamp Active stand.

The winners were: first prize of an original 1840 Penny Black Cover won by Connie Latham-Warde of Kirk Ella; second prize of a Royal Mail 2014 Year Book won by Chris Barker of Crayford; third prize of a Guernsey Post 2014 Year Book won by Mia Lee of London.

Stamp Active will be running the Kids Corner stand at Autumn Stampex next month. Chairman John Davies said: 'Young collectors have a great time and really enjoy the activities. We just want to see many more come along.' ●



QUICK QUIP

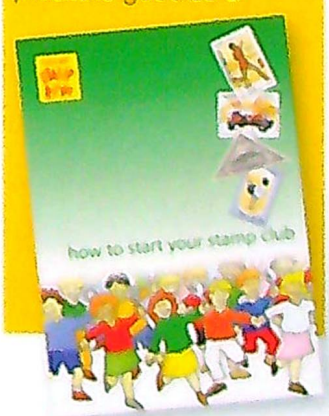
A woman buys stamps at a post office to send a parcel. She asks the man behind the counter: 'Shall I stick them on myself?' He replies, 'Stick them on the parcel and it will get there quicker!'

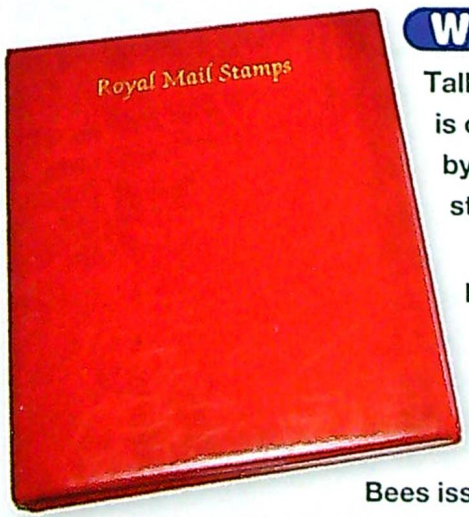
What's your favourite stamp joke? Email them to rmbulletin@rocketmail.com and we will print the best ●

JOIN THE CLUB

Kidstamps is a postal stamp club run by Stamp Active. It is easy to join at www.stampactive.co.uk and you get free stamps and activities (only if you are aged between five and 19 – no oldies please!) There are 2,000 members so far!

Fancy launching your own stamp club with your chums? Stamp Active can help with that too, by giving you a starter pack bursting with philatelic goodies ●





WIN AN AWESOME ALBUM

Talk about selfie-adhesive stamps! Royal Mail is celebrating 50 years of Special Stamps by fixing 50 plaques showing favourite UK stamps on 50 post boxes across the country. Take a snap of yourself next to one of the post boxes with a Special Stamp plaque and email it to rmbulletin@rocketmail.com for your chance to win a Royal Mail stamp album and the new Bees issue (shown on page 368). The most original or funniest pic wins!

Remember to ask permission from an adult and to include your age and the place where the photo was taken. For a list of addresses where the post boxes with stamps can be found, visit www.royalmail.com and click on 'Latest news'. Closing date: 19 September 2015. Rules on page 382 ●



Turn over for Stamping Days Out ☛



Stamping days out... Holidaying in the UK this summer? Then you are sure to come across places and people telling the extraordinary stories behind Special Stamps released in 2015



MEMORIAL TO THE FEW

Under a Kent sky once buzzing with RAF fighters blasting the Luftwaffe, a tribute to Battle of Britain heroes also captures the drama of aerial combat. The National Memorial to The Few at Capel-le-Ferne, perched on Vera Lynn's White Cliffs of Dover, sees Battle of Britain veterans and their families return each year to remember fallen comrades.

They will stop awhile, running their fingers along the names of The Few inscribed on the Christopher Foxley-Norris Memorial Wall. (Foxley-Norris was a Hurricane pilot in the Battle and the first President of the Battle of Britain Memorial Trust, which maintains the site.) Perhaps they will follow the gaze of the main Memorial, an immense statue of an RAF pilot who stares across the Channel, seemingly still waiting for the Germans. And hopefully you will come too, given that in this 75th anniversary year of the Battle of Britain, Royal Mail has released a Miniature Sheet marking the campaign.



Above: the Memorial's statue of the RAF pilot gazes out to sea; the Scramble Experience

Below: The Queen opens the Wing visitor centre in March

Capel-le-Ferne is about remembrance but also about education. The Wing visitor centre immerses you in the fear and excitement of the Battle with the interactive Scramble Experience. As Trust Honorary Secretary Group Captain Patrick Tootal says: 'Here you can remember those who fought with courage and commitment in 1940 but you can also discover so much about the importance of the battle in the history of this country.' Highlights of the Experience include:

- **Stop the bombers** Based on a cathode ray tube machine used to plot enemy attacks in 1940, this video game tasks you with clicking on the screen 'blips' – representing German raiders – so RAF squadrons can scramble to intercept.
- **Dispersal hut** This realistic waiting area for air crew contains pilot costumes for children to dress up in. A nice touch is a chess game abandoned by pilots as they scrambled for yet another confrontation with the Luftwaffe.
- **Aircraft activities** Rearm and reload model aircraft; compare specifications of British and German planes in a Top Trumps-style game.
- **Plotting table** This interactive map allows you to 'swipe' on wartime RAF airfields for facts and information about them.



Video presentations take you back to 1940, including one film that follows a single war-torn day in the Battle. Even the design of the Wing, opened by The Queen this year, is evocative of Britain's best-known symbol of defiance – the Spitfire. The structure is in the exact shape of that heroic aircraft's elegant wings. *Where* Memorial to The Few, Capel-le-Ferne, Kent. *When* 10am to 5pm •

There is a remembrance service for The Few at the Memorial on 15 September – officially Battle of Britain Day. For more details visit www.battleofbritainmemorial.org.



BRITISH POSTAL MUSEUM & ARCHIVE

Rare mail vans, the world's first and still most exciting stamp, the power of the pillar box – the British Postal Museum & Archive (BPMA) offers collectors and their families a range of fascinating activities in August and September:

- **Penny Black 175** An insightful exhibition that reveals the story behind the creation of the Penny Black and its social impact. On show is a rare sheet of original Penny Blacks. *When* Until 7 August, 10am to 5pm Monday to Friday, to 7pm Thursdays. *Where* BPMA, Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London WC1.
- **Trip back in time** The BPMA museum tour is an extraordinary journey through Britain's postal heritage via hundreds of intriguing exhibits. Highlights include Rowland Hill's desk, pillar boxes designed by famed architect Giles Gilbert Scott and an extremely rare box with Edward VIII's cipher, a Victorian five-wheeled postman's bike, and a beautifully preserved pre-war Morris Minor mail van. *When* 5 August, 2 September. *Where* BPMA Museum Store, 3 Imprimo Park, Lenthall Road, Loughton, Essex.
- **Games talk** Naomi Games, daughter of the famed artist and creator of iconic stamps for the 1948 London Olympic Games and for the Festival of Britain in 1951, gives an intriguing talk entitled 'Miniature Posters: the Stamp Designs of Abram Games'. *When* 17 September, 6.30pm to 7.30pm. *Where* Phoenix Centre, Phoenix Place, London WC1.
- **Pop it in the Post** This family-friendly exhibition reveals how the 19th century letter writing revolution and introduction of the post box changed the lives of millions *When* Until 27 September. *Where* Bruce Castle Museum, Lordship Lane, London N17 •

For further details visit www.postalheritage.org.uk/events.



Above: a rare Penny Black sheet and a portrait of its creator Rowland Hill are at the BPMA

THE GURKHA MUSEUM

Trace the action-packed history of the Nepalese heroes celebrated in Royal Mail's new Commemorative Sheet, from their 19th century battles with the British to serving the Crown around the world from Monte Cassino and Malaya to Bosnia and Afghanistan.

A mix of dramatic reconstructions and treasured mementoes, including Gurkha medals, pepper the displays at the Winchester museum. You can see life-size models of Gurkha troops re-enacting scenes from classic Second World War campaigns: firing a Vickers heavy machine gun in North Africa, assaulting Japanese bunkers in Burma and firing a mortar at Monte Cassino. Also on display is the Victoria Cross of Rifleman Kulbir Thapa, who appears on a stamp in this year's First World War 1915 issue. *Where* Peninsula Barracks, Romsey Road, Winchester, Hampshire. *When* Monday to Saturday, 10am to 4.30pm •

Find out more at www.thegurkhamuseum.co.uk.





Above: the Kulbir Thapa stamp and Gurkha Museum entrance



This month in history

John Holman chugs back 40 years to stamps marking a technological milestone – the first public rail system

On 13 August 1975, the Post Office issued four stamps celebrating the 150th anniversary of the first public train line – the Stockton and Darlington Railway. The stamps, designed by Brian Craker, featured four iconic locomotives. The 7p stamp depicted *Locomotion*, Robert Stephenson's Stockton and Darlington line engine that could haul a 90-ton train at 15mph. The 8p featured *Abbotsford*, an 80mph Waverley Class locomotive of 1876, designed by Dugald Drummond for the North British Railway. *Caerphilly Castle*, a 1923 GWR Castle Class locomotive, graced the 10p denomination. A British Rail Inter-City Service High Speed Train (HST) from 1975 appeared on the 12p top value.

On all four stamps of the 150 Years of Public Railways issue the trains face right, as does The Queen's silhouette printed in silver positioned top left. The value is top right on all but the 7p. This was moved to the left to accommodate the tall funnel of Stephenson's *Locomotion*. The stamps are clearly captioned with the name of the locomotive, its class, railway company and date.

These are the only issued stamps designed by Brian Craker, though he did submit designs for the 1981 Fishing issue. His *Locomotion* stamp, with 4½p rather than 7p value, and *Caerphilly Castle* design, with 4p value and locomotive facing left rather than right, featured on the 1980 Stampex souvenir sheet. The sheet commemorated the 150th anniversary of that other world-famous pioneer line, the Liverpool and Manchester Railway.

Printing was by Harrisons, using five colours (including silver) for the 7p and six colours for the other three values. The stamps have all-over phosphor. No major printing errors are recorded, but noteworthy constant varieties on the 7p, 10p and 12p stamps are listed in the *Stanley Gibbons GB Specialised Catalogue*. A presentation pack was issued, as was a souvenir book (sold at 85p), which included a fully illustrated history of the railways, the stamps



Opposite page: the 1980 Stampex souvenir sheet

Above (clockwise from left): the presentation pack; two handstamps marking the opening of the Stockton and Darlington line; a local first day of issue handstamp

contained in raised plastic wallets on the front cover. The book was sold at most main post offices as well as from the Philatelic Bureau and philatelic counters. Stamp cards (5p each) were issued, for the first time, for all the stamps in the set. The set of four cards is priced in the 2015 *GB Concise Catalogue* at £70 compared to £1.25 for the set of stamps.

The Post Office first day cover, like the presentation pack, featured a front view of a steam locomotive. Philatelic Bureau-serviced covers received a Bureau cancel showing railway signals or alternative handstamps for Darlington, Co Durham; Shildon, Co Durham; or Stockton-on-Tees, Cleveland in the shape of a punched railway ticket. Covers with the Shildon cancel have the highest catalogue value. Local first day of issue handstamps were provided at nearly 200 offices. Four relevant special event handstamps were used on the day of issue, and 150th anniversary slogan postmarks used at Darlington (19 May to 24 August) and Bishop Auckland (28 July to 23 August, the slogan inscribed 'Shildon'). First day covers bearing these slogans are priced at £600 each in the *Collecting British First Day Covers Catalogue*! Other special handstamps were used on 27 September 1975, the actual anniversary date of the opening of the Stockton and Darlington Railway.

The stamps were previewed in the July 1975 *Bulletin*. To mark the close connection between the railways and the postal service, a special 'Railways and the Post' exhibition was mounted at the National Postal Museum from August 1975. Articles about this show were published in the *Bulletin* at the time.

The railway stamps were withdrawn from sale one year after issue. Sales were 47.1 million for the 7p value, 9.9 million for the 8p, 10.5 million for the 10p value, and 8.6 million for the 12p stamp. Some 134,700 presentation packs were sold, but the number of souvenir books sold is not recorded •

H is for... Halfpenny Post 2



Fig 1

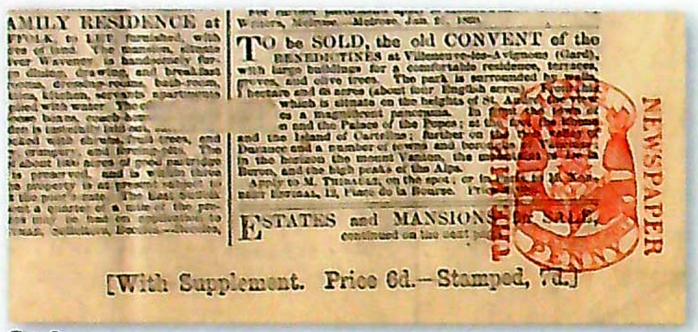


Fig 2

Fig 1 The Field – The Field newspaper of 1860, sent through the post free by paying the tax
Fig 2 Tax Stamp – The Newspaper Tax Stamp – 1d in 1860

Looking back to the time when all newspapers, regardless of size, could be sent through the post for just a halfpenny

The Stamp Act of 1712 placed a tax on all newspapers and other printed documents – this Newspaper Tax was dubbed a 'tax on knowledge'. In 1836 the tax was still mandatory, but it now included a concession giving all newspapers that paid the tax free postage. The tax stamp had to be visible and this was achieved by using a narrow band of paper that held the newspaper in a roll, but which allowed the tax stamp to be seen. In 1855 the tax was changed from a mandatory charge to an optional one that continued to give newspapers free postage.

In 1870 the voluntary tax was finally abandoned. The introduction of the ½d postcard on 1 October 1870 was coupled with the ½d printed paper and newspaper rate. From that date on, newspapers – regardless of size – could be sent through the post for ½d, as could any other printed papers not exceeding two ounces in weight. Heavier printed papers cost proportionally more.

As part of the introduction of these new services, prepaid ½d newspaper wrappers went on sale. They were much the same size as the wrappers that had been used for many years previously, but included a long, thin ½d stamp. It was deliberately designed this way to make it easier for postal workers in busy sorting offices to see the stamp and to place their cancellation over it.

Although the ½d rate was only intended for printed papers, a number of items were seen going through the post that were obviously correspondence. In 1875 three lines of instruction were added to the pre-stamped wrappers, reinforcing the rule that the ½d rate was only to be used for printed papers.

It seemed to have little effect, for later that year the instructions were strengthened to five lines. By the end of the 19th century the Post Office felt the public had taken due note of the regulations and the instructions were removed.

From the introduction of these new rates in 1870, the public could use adhesive stamps for sending printed papers that were not suitable for enclosure in a wrapper. But it was not until 1893 that the Post Office offered ½d unsealed envelopes for this service.



Fig 3

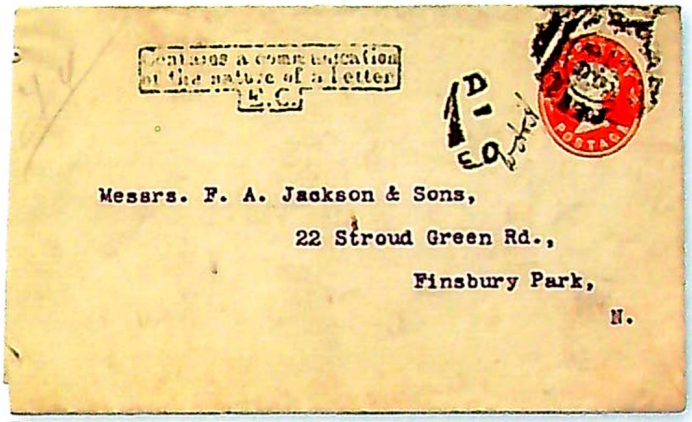


Fig 4



Fig 5

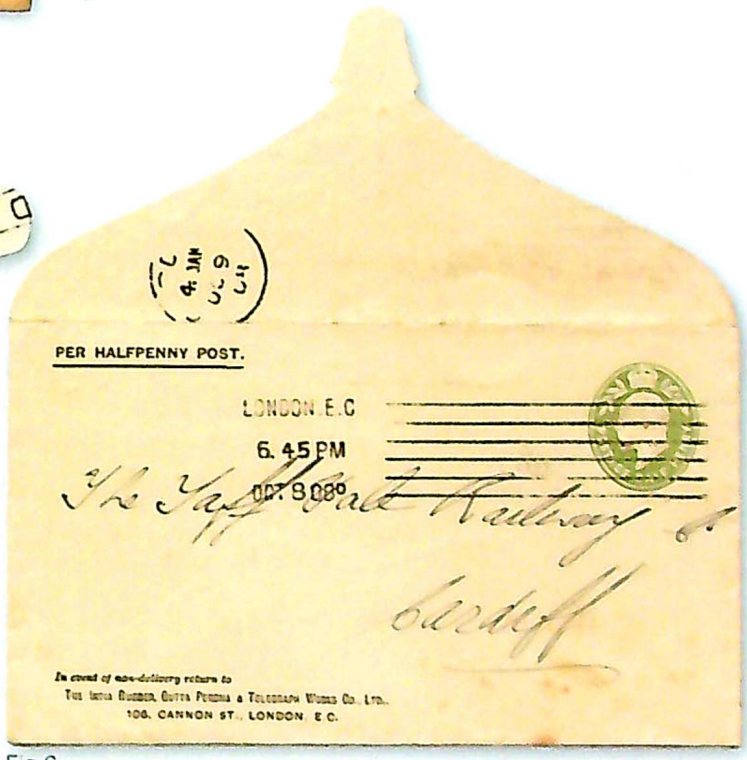


Fig 6

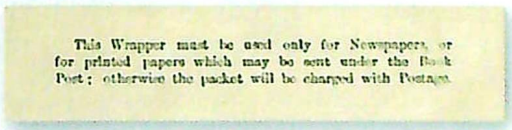


Fig 7

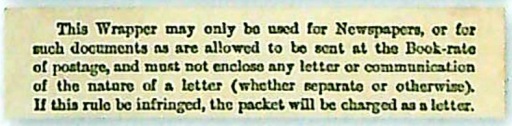


Fig 8

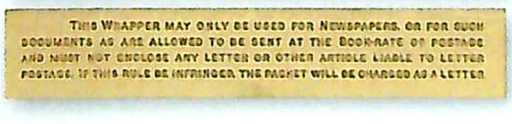


Fig 9

They had a simple tuck-in flap that did not always work effectively, and occasionally the contents would slip out and be lost. The Post Office considered its envelopes to be satisfactory, and left it to the private stationery trade to come up with ingenious ways of preventing unsealed envelopes from bursting open.

Sending newspapers through the post gradually declined and the Post Office issued its last prepaid newspaper wrappers just before the start of the Second World War. Even the humble printed paper rate envelope suffered the same fate a few years later, and for a number of years the Post Office had no pre-stamped envelopes for printed papers.

However, the introduction of first- and second-class mail in 1968 saw a new range of envelopes issued. There was no restriction on what could be enclosed. Both classes could be sealed and so were suitable for both printed papers and correspondence •

Next in Baker's A to Z of Postal Stationery: I is for Illustrated Envelopes.

Colin Baker is Secretary of the Postal Stationery Society. He welcomes enquiries about the Society by email at pss.secretary@gmail.com.

Fig 3 Overweight – Printed papers enclosed in a wrapper that weighed more than 2oz
Fig 4 Nature of a letter – A printed paper rate envelope used for correspondence and marked 'Contains a communication of the nature of a letter'
Fig 5 Found without contents A Post Office envelope that has burst open and lost its contents
Fig 6 Fancy tuck-in flap Privately produced envelopes would often have specially designed flaps to try to stop them coming open in the post
Fig 7 Three-line instruction
Fig 8 Five-line instruction
Fig 9 Four-line instruction The instructions printed on 1d newspaper wrappers between 1875 and 1898

Bee alert Grab a pen and get your brain buzzing with puzzling – this month's new Specials await ten lucky winners

NAME THAT STAMP

From the details shown below, identify the name and year of issue of the two stamps beneath the magnifiers.



How to enter Send your answers, with your contact details, marked 'August Name That Stamp' and/or 'August Crossword' to Bulletin Prize Draws, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB or email rmbulletin@rocketmail.com.
Closing date 10 September, 2015.

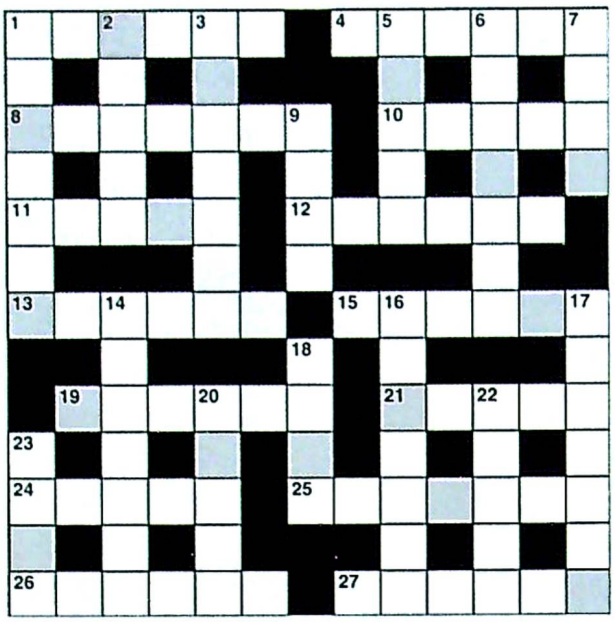
Prizes The senders of the first correct entries drawn in each section after the closing date win the Bees Presentation Pack and a Royal Mail album. Eight runners up receive Presentation Packs ●

May Penny Black Quiz solutions 1a, 2c, 3a. *Winner* Mr P Pincket, Belgium. *Runners up* Mrs D L Gilbert, Hertfordshire; Mr J Peart, West Sussex; Mr A R Boyer and Mrs M J Boyer, Lincolnshire.

Prize draw rules and regulations 1 Promotions are open to all readers, except employees of Royal Mail Group Ltd, their business associates and immediate families. 2 Responsibility cannot be accepted for entries which are incomplete, damaged or not received for any reason. Proof of posting is not proof of receipt. 3 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 stated. 5 For prize draws where readers must answer a question, winners will be the senders of the first correct entries drawn at random by an independent person 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) 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 The Editor, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB. The promoter is Royal Mail Group Ltd, 100 Victoria Embankment, London EC4Y 0HQ.

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

Complete the puzzle, then rearrange the letters in the grey squares to form a stamp illustrator's name.



CLUES ACROSS

1 Male, say, to talk under his breath? (6)
4 Even chance to turn cat over (4 2)
8 Boots you might need – when water sources overflow, that is (7)
10 Salvation's regularly eliminated (5)
11 Drive politician into concocting lie (5)
12 Leading lady at cathedral recently (6)
13 Husky, four legged animal, we hear (6)
15 Hot and humid weather finally in issue (6)
19 Pleasure trip for rowing teams, we hear (6)
21 Happen to get business backing scoundrel (5)
24 Nothing in beer that's sharp (5)
25 No longer active, former leader of cell got in touch (7)
26 Metro shaken by start of relatively minor earthquake (6)
27 A fruit to emerge (6)

CLUES DOWN

1 Sentimental crush around week one (7)
2 Bulb surprisingly lit up (5)
3 Wait up with the French items of food (7)
5 Attack in the studio (5)
6 Ring in so quietly for shellfish (7)
7 Cooking vessel good for attack of hunger (4)
9 Sediment seen in low tide initially (4)
14 Flying company finds sort of fracture non starter (7)
16 Apex of building poor, oft shabby (7)
17 Car tour arranged for custodian (7)
18 It's only a small lake! (4)
20 Opening passage trio performed about noon (5)
22 Vessel in choppy ocean (5)
23 Hits back, given minor argument (4)

Puzzle page sponsored by CORBITTS

PUBLIC AUCTION
POSTAGE STAMPS OF THE WORLD

Thursday 3rd September, 12 noon
Britannia Hotel, Newcastle Airport

A substantial sale including hundreds of collections and boxed lots, one country ranges, single stamps and postal history











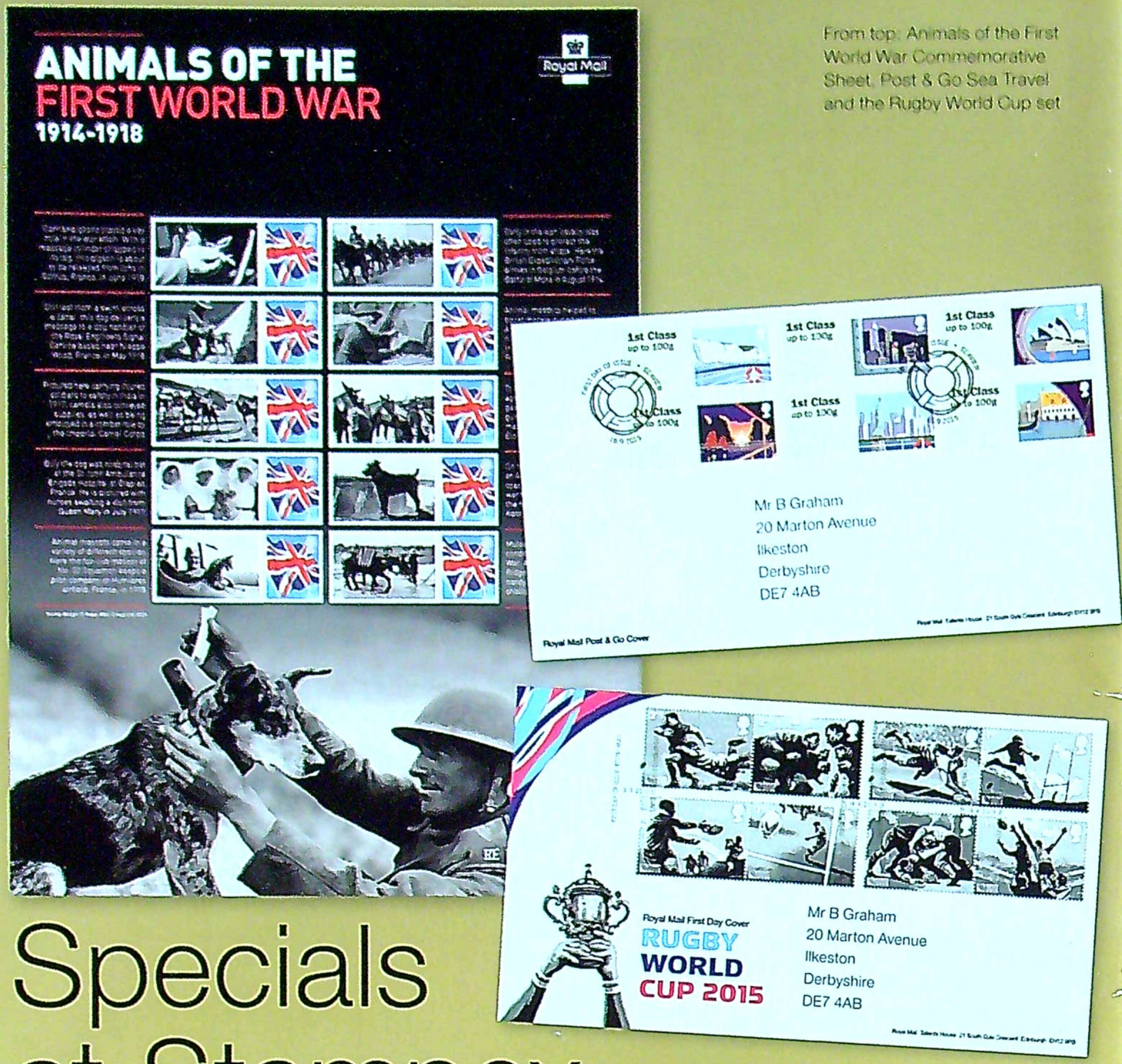


View this catalogue at www.corbitts.com

Complimentary catalogue available on request



5 Mosley Street, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 1YE
Tel: 0191 232 7268
Email: info@corbitts.com



From top: Animals of the First World War Commemorative Sheet, Post & Go Sea Travel and the Rugby World Cup set

Specials at Stampex

Autumn Stampex is at London's Business Design Centre from 16 to 19 September – look out for the new issues!

Three stunning Royal Mail Special Stamp sets make their debut at Stampex next month. The Sea Travel Post & Go, Animals of the First World War Commemorative Sheet and the Rugby World Cup 2015 issues launch on 16, 17 and 18 September.

With 100 stands, top-notch displays, society meetings, young collectors' area and more, Stampex has it all. Bring along this copy of *Bulletin* and you can pick up a complimentary first day cover at the Royal Mail stand. We look forward to seeing you there! •

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