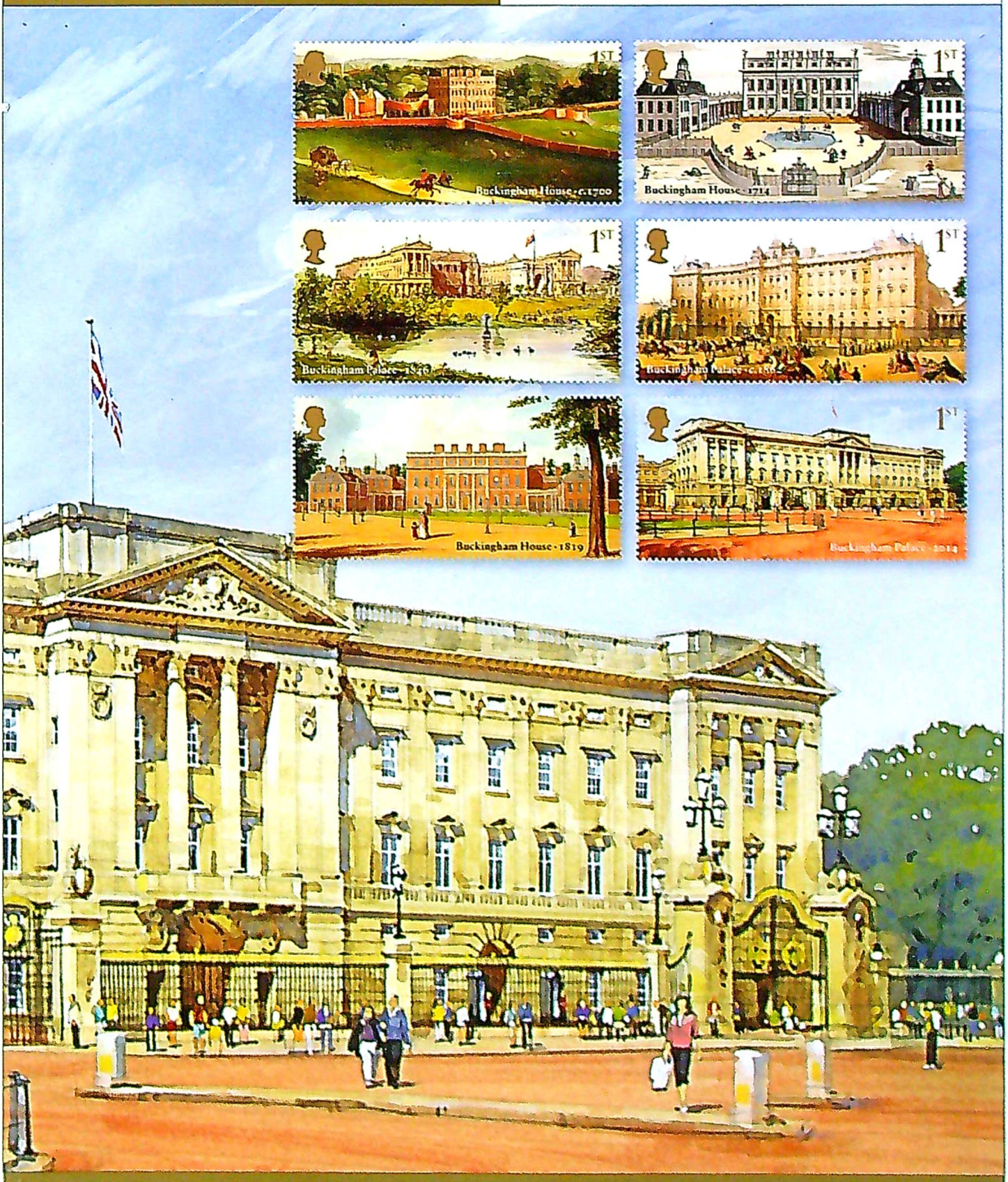
BRITISH PHILATELIC

Bulletin

The magazine for collectors of UK stamps

VOLUME 51 NUMBER 8 | APRIL 2014 | £1.50

Great British Film • Top ten stamps • Buckingham Palace



JOHN HOLMAN STAMP SCENE ● COLIN BAKER AIR LETTERS ● WIN FRAMED PALACE STAMPS

Issues and withdrawals



Cover image: this painting, by Chris Draper in watercolour and gouache, was commissioned by Royal Mail for one of the six new Buckingham Palace stamps, available from 15 April.

Buckingham Palace stamps: for philatelic specifications, see page 199 in the March edition of the *British Philatelic Bulletin* and turn to page 240 for more background information about this special issue.

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7 April	**Withdrawal** Lunar Year of the Snake Smilers® Generic Sheet.
15 April	**Issue** Buckingham Palace: Stamps (6 stamps in se-tenant strips of 3), Miniature Sheet, Prestige Stamp Book (panes 1, 2 and 4 with 4 x 1st Class; pane 3 with 2 x £1, 2 x 10p, 4 x 20p), Stamp Book (6 x 1st Class, 4 x 1st Class, 2 x pictorials), Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards (11 in set), Medal Cover.
16 April	**Withdrawal** Great Britons: Stamps (10 x 1st Class in se-tenant strips of 5), Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards.
9 May	**Withdrawal** Football Heroes: Stamps (11 x 1st Class), Miniature Sheet, Prestige Stamp Book, Stamp Book (2 x 1st Class Football Heroes, 4 x 1st Class Machins), Presentation Pack with bespoke poster, Stamp Cards.
10 May	**Withdrawal** Australia 2013 World Stamp Exhibition: Smilers® Exhibition Sheet (20 x 1st Class).
13 May	**Issue** Great British Film: Stamps (3 x 1st Class, 3 x £1.28 – all se-tenant), Miniature Sheet (4 x 1st Class), Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards (11 in set).
30 May	**Withdrawal** Her Majesty The Queen – Six Decades of Royal Portraits: Stamps (1st Class, 2nd Class, 77p, 87p, £1.28, £1.90), Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards, Coin Covers, Commemorative Document.

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. Telephone order line (08.30 to 17.00 Monday to Friday): 08457 641 641. From overseas: +44 131 316 7483. Minimum handling charge UK £1.45, Europe £1.55, rest of world (airmail) £2.15. Selected items are available at Post Office branches and philatelic outlets at main post offices in: Bristol, Cambridge, Chester, Colchester, Croydon, Durham, Edinburgh, Exeter, Glasgow, Grimsby, Harrogate, London (Eastcheap and Trafalgar Square), Norwich, Nottingham, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Southend on Sea, Stevenage, Stroud, Trowbridge, Truro, York and Newport, Isle of Wight.

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The ***British Philatelic Bulletin*** is published monthly by Royal Mail, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB ● Editor: William Doherty ● Price £1.50 from Post Office Ltd philatelic outlets (see opposite) ● **Annual subscription** £12.95 UK & Europe; £17.95 elsewhere. Send subscriptions to Royal Mail Tallents House (address opposite) ● **Binders** (to hold 24 issues) £8.50, storage boxes (about 30 copies) £9.95 available by post from Royal Mail Tallents House ● Royal Mail also 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 Editor ● **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

Correspondence

First-class letter



Philately on the move

I have noted with some gratification the now frequent references in *Bulletin* about various philatelic and postal exhibitions to be seen around the UK. From small local museums to heritage railways, we have seen a considerable growth in the development of travelling exhibitions, often sourced from the BPMA.

As a retired designer who produced several stamp-related exhibitions, I know the value of these for both the venue and the promotion of the hobby to a much wider public. This is a subject I have been 'banging on' about for several years to colleagues in the museum world and also in print, including this publication (London 2010 feature, Volume 43, August 2006).

Designers and curators have taken this argument on board and are producing exhibitions which, having fulfilled their initial function, can go on to be used as a travelling exhibit.

David Negus, Kent

The image shown above is from 'Last Post: Remembering the First World War', currently touring the UK. See page 236 for details.

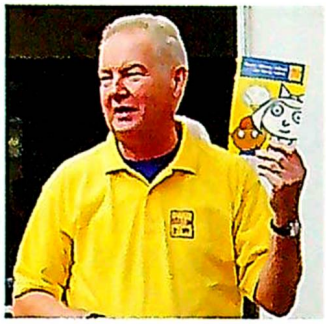
Au secours

I used to send stamps from my Christmas cards and other spares to Stamp Active Network so they could be used by junior philatelists. Then last November a note on the *Bulletin* letters page advised readers to stop sending them. Can anyone recommend other youth organisations or charities that accept stamps and put them to good use?

L M Scott, France, by email

Over to you, readers. We will do our best to publish all the suggestions we receive. John Davies (below), President of Stamp Active Network, also replies:

Thank you for your contributions to youth philately. Last year we were overwhelmed by people's generosity in sending stamps and our storage space reached full capacity. However, we are always on the lookout for other kinds of support. Please let the Editor know if you would be willing to help a young collector of French stamps via the supervised SAN forum.



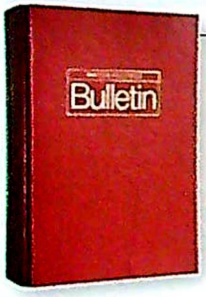
Twopenny blues



In February *Bulletin* you state that youngsters at Spring Stampex had the chance to win an 1840 Twopenny Blue like the one shown on page 191 – which is clearly not an 1840 stamp at all! It has the white lines below 'Postage' and above 'Two Pence', which were not introduced until 1841.

Steve Fraser, by email

We apologise for this mistake. You can read more about the winner of the Twopenny Blue on page 255 – and rest assured that the winning child received the right stamp.



Keep the letters coming...

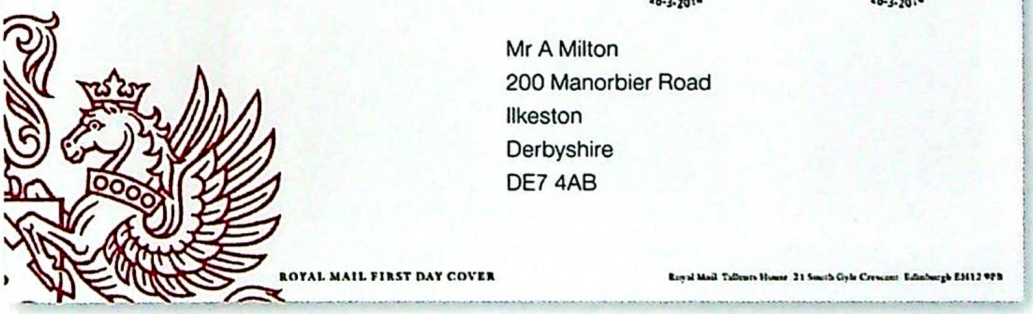
The Editor welcomes your letters and the senders of those published will receive philatelic delights as a thank-you. The writer of the 'First-class letter' receives the *Bulletin* binder.

Send your letters to: William Doherty, *British Philatelic Bulletin*, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB. Remember that you can also send emails to bulletin.enquiries@royalmail.com.

Royal Mail News 2014 Machin definitives and Country definitives have arrived, with cool new colours and in a comprehensive philatelic range of mint stamps, First Day Covers, Presentation Packs and alternative postmarks







Above left: the four new Machin definitive stamps in tones of blue and green from the Jeffery Matthews colour palette

Left: Windsor postmark on First Day Cover, £5.90

Below: the Tallents House pictorial postmark



FD 1407-TH

Machin definitive stamps New postal rates come into effect on 31 March, with four new definitives issued in readiness on 26 March.

- 97p Purple Heather is the new rate for airmail letters to Europe weighing up to 10g and airmail letters to Europe up to 20g.
- £1.47 Dove Grey is the new tariff for airmail letters to Europe of the next weight category, from 21g to 60g.
- £2.15 Marine Turquoise is the new rate for Rest of World airmail letters between 21g and 60g.
- 81p Holly Green for the minimum surface mail rate, known as the International Economy rate from 31 March.

Machin definitive First Day Cover This elegant cover, featuring the Royal Mail coat of arms, is available with either a Tallents House or Windsor postmark. The cover, created by leading stamp designer Robert Maude, can be ordered from the address on page 226 or purchased online at www.royalmail.com/stamps. Cost: £6.96. ▸

Machin Definitive Stamps – Specifications

Date of issue	26 March
Number of stamps	Four
Stamp format	Portrait
Stamp size	20mm x 24mm
Printer	De La Rue Security Print
Print process	Gravure
Number per sheet	25
Perforations	Standard definitive
Phosphor	Bars as appropriate
Gum	Self-adhesive

Beginner's guide...

What? Standard UK postage stamps are also known as 'definitives' and 'Machins', after their designer Arnold Machin.

When? The Machin stamp was first issued on 5 June 1967 and since then Machin's timeless, iconic design has featured on more than 200 billion stamps. The Queen herself called the design 'admirable'.

Why collect? Over the years the simple design has incorporated a huge variety of Machin specifications to excite the collector's enduring interest – including numerous colour palettes, printing processes, printers and adhesive methods.

Find out more The British Postal Museum & Archive (BPMA) has a wealth of information on Machins – visit www.postalheritage.org.uk and search under 'Machins'. Also try the Machins Collectors Club at www.machins.org. Douglas Myall (visit his website at www.deegam.com) is a leading Machin expert and writes regularly for the *British Philatelic Bulletin*.



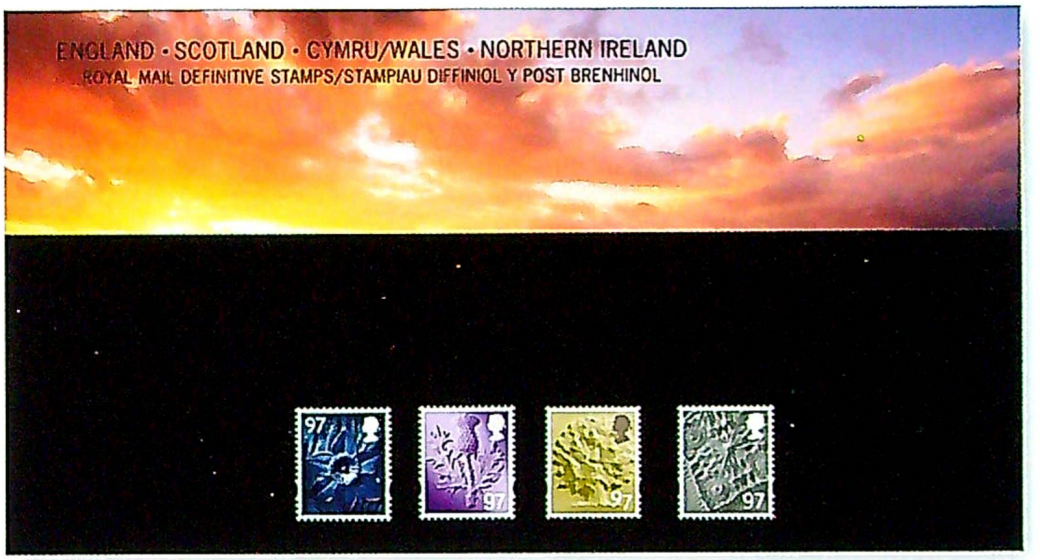
Definitive Stamps Presentation Pack The elegant Presentation Pack, shown above, contains information written by BPMA Curator Douglas Muir, who gives you an expert insight into the Machin story. Cost: £5.90.



Country definitive stamps and Presentation Pack The crisply styled country stamps, with their sharp reliefs of national emblems – of England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales – are available individually in their new 97p values, as a set at £3.88, or in a classic £4.40 Presentation Pack that includes background information from Douglas Muir.

Country definitive First Day Covers A single Country definitive and an evocative landscape from the relevant country is carried on four First Day Covers, each containing a special filler card. You can choose the Tallents House postmark or an alternative mark for each of the four capital cities (as shown on right). Price: £1.64 or £6.56 for the set of four •

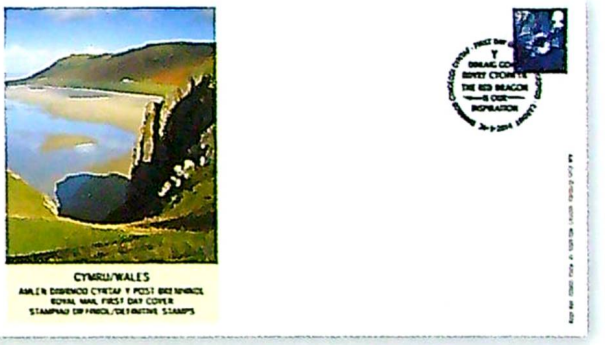
Country Definitive Stamps – Specifications	
Date of issue	26 March
Number of stamps	Four
Stamp format	Portrait
Stamp size	20mm x 24mm
Printer	International Security Printers
Print process	Lithography
Number per sheet	25
Perforations	15 x 14
Phosphor	Bars
Gum	PVA

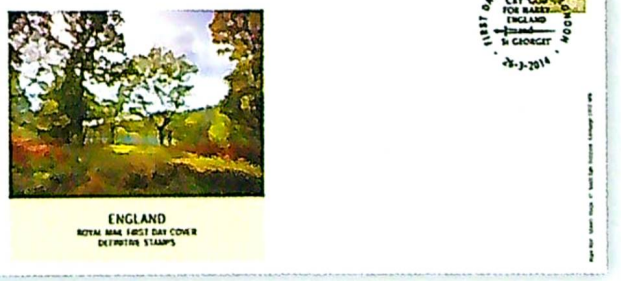


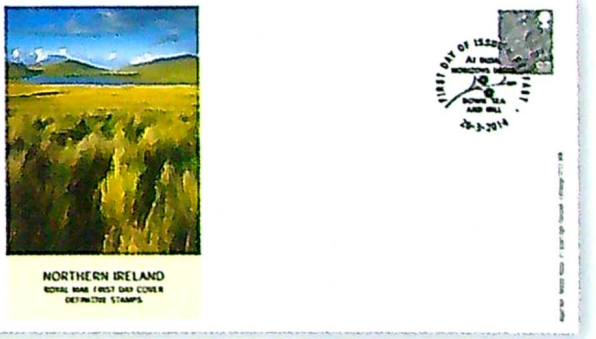
Left: the traditional Presentation Pack with all four new Country definitives

Below: First Day Covers with a different postmark and scenic illustration for each country represented











FD 1410-PL



FD 1409-PL



FD 1408-PL



FD 1411-PL

Postmark order numbers for First Day of Issue definitives, 26 March 2014

	Tallents House	Pictorial	Non-pictorial
UK Machin definitives 81p, 97p, £1.47, £2.15	FD 1407-TH	FD 1407-PL	FD 1407-NP
England Country definitive 97p	–	FD 1408-PL	FD 1408-NP
Scotland Country definitive 97p	–	FD 1409-PL	FD 1409-NP
Wales Country definitive 97p	–	FD 1410-PL	FD 1410-NP
Northern Ireland Country definitive 97p	–	FD 1411-PL	FD 1411-NP



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

UK diary dates

10 April Inverness Philatelic Society display: Postal History, Postcards & Latest Additions, Haugh Community Centre, 7pm.

11-12 April Scottish Philatelic Congress, Dewar Centre, Perth, Friday 10am to 5pm, Saturday 10am to 4pm. Approximately 40 dealers.

25 April Strand Stamp Fair, Royal National Hotel, Bedford Way, London WC1, 9am to 4pm. 20 to 30 dealers. Information: 020 8946 4480, www.stampshows.net.

26 April GB Philatelic Society displays: The 1841 Twopence (Jane Moubray, 11am) and QEII Wildings (Mike Osborne, 2.15pm), Royal Philatelic Society London, 41 Devonshire Place, London W1.

27 April Telephone & Post Office Vehicle Gathering, Milton Keynes Museum, McConnell Drive, Wolverton, Milton Keynes MK12 5EL, 11am to 4.30pm. Information: www.povehclub.org.uk.

27 April Hinckley & District Philatelic Society Spring Fair & Exhibition, Newbold Verdon Primary School, Dragon Lane, Newbold Verdon, Leicestershire LE9 9NG, 10am to 4pm. Dealers, parking and refreshments. Information: 01455 613826.

8 May Royal Philatelic Society London meeting, 41 Devonshire Place, London W1: Great Britain Surface Printed by Bob Galland. Display from 1pm, lecture 5pm. Non-members welcome – call 020 7486 1044 in advance.

8 May Inverness Philatelic Society AGM, Haugh Community Centre, 7pm.

10 May Spring Essex 2014, Marconi Social Club, Beehive Lane, Chelmsford CM2 9FH, 10am to 4pm.



10 May Worpex Stamp & Postcard Fair, Tudor Grange Academy, Bilford Road, Worcester WR3 8HN. 45 dealers, car parking, refreshments. Information: www.worpex.com.

16 May Strand Stamp Fair: details as above.

17 May Bexley Philatelic Society 50th anniversary Stamp Fair, Freemantle Hall, Bexley DA5 1AA.

17 May GB Philatelic Society displays: George V: Profile Head 1d (Michael Sefi, 11am) and Postal History With a Difference (Don Davies, 2.15pm), Royal Philatelic Society London, 41 Devonshire Place, London W1 •

Society anniversary

Bexley Philatelic Society marks its 50th anniversary with an all-day stamp fair at the Freemantle Hall in Bexley on 17 May. There will be ten dealers, a bourse, tombola, philatelic displays, refreshments and parking at two car parks close to the hall. The society's first meeting was in April 1964 at the home of founders Chris and Phyl Carr in Erith, but it was soon a tight fit with more members than chairs. The society then used a room in council offices for many years. Early members included Hillary Norwood, husband of the famous KGB spy Melita Norwood, who even displayed his Russian stamps at club meetings, but gave no tell-tale signs of links with Cold War espionage. Another prominent member

was Henry George Leslie Fletcher, a Bexleyheath dentist and author of *Postal Forgeries of the World* (1972) •



Today the society boasts a membership of nearly 100, including three Fellows of the Royal Philatelic Society London. It runs a busy local packet, fortnightly meetings at Freemantle Hall (right), and biannual auctions and competitions. New members are always welcome – contact secretary Adrian Smith at adethebeak@yahoo.co.uk for details.

The Freemantle Hall, 51-75 Bexley High Street, Bexley, Kent DA5 1AA, is in the heart of Bexley Village, a short walk from Bexley railway station (Charing Cross to Dartford via the Sidcup line). It is off the Black Prince Interchange of the A2 dual carriageway •

Most famous stamp

Sotheby's New York will offer the most famous stamp in the world in a dedicated auction on 17 June. No stamp is rarer than the sole-surviving example of the British Guiana One-Cent Magenta, a unique yet unassuming issue from 1856, and no stamp is more valuable: each of the three times it has been sold at auction, it has established a new record price for a single stamp. The British Guiana is equally notable for its legacy, having been rediscovered by a 12-year-old Scottish boy living in South America in 1873, and from there passing through some of the most important stamp collections ever assembled. The pre-sale estimate of $10 million to $20 million would mark a new world auction record for a stamp.



Above: Guyana issued this modern stamp featuring the 1856 One-Cent Magenta, printed with the image of a three-masted ship

The British Guiana was displayed at the Stanley Gibbons Catalogue Centenary Exhibition in London in 1965, but has not been on view publicly since the '86 International Stamp Show in Chicago in 1986. This spring the stamp will travel to various destinations, including London and Hong Kong, before returning to New York for exhibition in Sotheby's York Avenue galleries from 14 June. The British Guiana is on offer from the estate of multimillionaire philatelist John du Pont – its most recent purchaser who bought the stamp in 1980. Part of the proceeds from the sale will benefit the Eurasian Pacific Wildlife Conservation Foundation, which du Pont championed during his lifetime •

Exhibitions

The popular Scottish Philatelic Congress will be held at the Dewar Centre, Glover Street, Perth on 11 and 12 April. It is open on the Friday from 10am to 5pm, and on the Saturday from 10am to 4pm. Admission is free. The first Congress was held 90 years ago in Glasgow. This will be the 85th Congress and is hosted by the Scottish Postal History Society (see below). The Congress will include the National Exhibition, Open and Pictorial Postcard class competitions, and about 40 dealers in stamps and postal history. Royal Mail is providing Post & Go machines and a Congress postmark will be used. The special display, in memory of noted Scottish collector Tom Rielly, will be by Ian Evans.

As in previous years, a commemorative cover and postcard have been produced. The cover marks the 90th anniversary of Gleneagles Hotel, which is hosting the Ryder Cup in September, and the postcard celebrates the 12 Scottish regiments who were in France with the British Expeditionary Force in 1914. The price of the cover and postcard unserviced is 50p each, or serviced with a first-class stamp and Congress handstamp for £1.10 – plus a handling charge depending on the number of items ordered to cover postage and packing. ▸

Orders, with cheque payable to the Scottish Postal History Society, should be sent to: Alan Wishart, 19 Strath Nairn, Law, Lanarkshire, ML8 5LL (email at. wishart1@btopenworld.com). Further information on Congress can be found on the website of the Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies at www.scottishphilately.co.uk.

The Scottish Postal History Society was founded in 1978 for the study of the country's postal operations in all its aspects, from the earliest times to the present. It aims to help everyone from internationally renowned postal historians to dealers and relative beginners to enjoy and better understand the rich diversity of those operations. It is an active society both socially and philatelically, and publishes the award-winning journal *The Scottish Post*. For further information call the Secretary on 01698 425120.



The 2014 Philatelic Congress of GB will be held in Ypres, Belgium from 11 to 14 July – a rare excursion outside the UK. A further short Congress takes place at The Three Swans Hotel, Market Harborough (left), from 25 to 27 July. It includes talks and displays and the presentation of the Congress Medal. Enquiries to Paul Gaywood – 01772 713917 or gaywood@hotmail.co.uk.

An international stamp exhibition is being held in Seoul from 7 to 12 August, and Malaysia 2014, a joint World Youth Stamp Exhibition and Asian International Exhibition, is on in Kuala Lumpur from 1 to 6 December. For details of Malaysia 2014 contact Richard West at richjwest@btinternet.com •

Stamp-related exhibitions

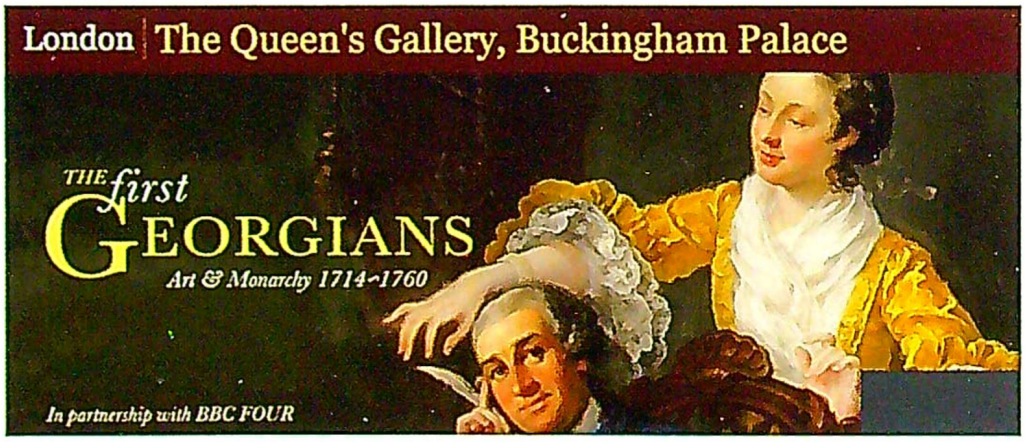
The main anniversary of 2014 will be the centenary of the start of the First World War, with Royal Mail issuing stamps on 28 July. For details of numerous local, regional, national and international events and exhibitions see the Imperial War Museum's website at www.iwm.org.uk.

Royal Mail commemorated the centenary of the birth of Benjamin Britten with a stamp last April and coin cover in November to mark the 100th anniversary of his birth. A small display, 'Benjamin Britten: A Life in Pictures', can be seen in Room 31 at the National Portrait Gallery until 30 June.

Royal Mail's 2014 Remarkable Lives issue on 25 March includes a stamp that pays tribute to Dylan Thomas in the centenary year of his birth. For special anniversary events, visit www.dylanthomas100.org.

This year is the 300th anniversary of the last monarch of the House of Stuart and the first of the House of Hanover, respectively Queen Anne (left) and King George I, depicted in the Kings & Queens issues of June 2010 and September

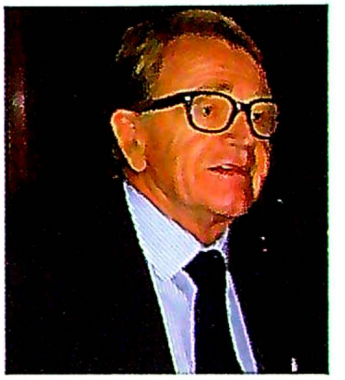




2011. An exhibition, 'The First Georgians: Art & Monarchy 1714-60', is on at the Queen's Gallery in Buckingham Palace from 11 April to 12 October (for details visit www.royalcollection.org.uk). The Royal Mint is producing a £5 coin marking the 300th anniversary of the death of Queen Anne •

Obituaries

Sir Christopher Chataway, who died in January aged 82, was a successful athlete, broadcaster, politician and businessman. He is best remembered for pacing Roger Bannister to the first sub-four minute mile, competing in the 1952 and 1956 Olympics, and holding the world record for the 5,000 metres.



Elected a Conservative MP in 1959, he was appointed Minister of Posts & Telecommunications in 1970, and Minister for Industrial Development in 1972. As Posts Minister he opened the Philympia international stamp exhibition in 1970 and Stampex in 1971 and 1972. He also opened the 'British Philately at the Olympics' exhibition at the National Postal Museum in 1988. Photographs of him at these events were published in the *Bulletin* in May 1971, April 1972 and December 1988.



Richard Payne, who died in January aged 70, was a noted collector of the GB Victorian ½d 'Bantam' stamp, St Helena stamps and postal history, and Irish revenues, and was an authority on the stamp printing firm Perkins, Bacon. His exhibit of the GB 1870 Halfpenny Rose won him five international gold medals. He was Secretary of the GB Philatelic Society from 1972 to 1981 and President from 1984 to 1986. He was also involved in the Royal Philatelic Society and many other philatelic societies and events. Richard spent his life in the food industry, his family firm importing and processing fruit and vegetables. As well as stamps he had a collection of historic buses and sometimes arranged coach trips for fellow philatelists.

I met Richard on several occasions in the 1990s, and always found him jovial and good company. After one event in London, he gave me a lift to Charing Cross station where he jumped out of his car, opened the boot, and thrust into my hands the impromptu gift of a large basket of mushrooms •

BPMA

The British Postal Museum & Archive, located at Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London WC1, near the famous Mount Pleasant sorting office, is open Monday to Friday 10am to 5pm (Thursdays until 7pm) and on Saturdays 12 April and 10 May, 10am to 5pm (but closed Mondays 14 April and 12 May). On show at Freeling House is a display of photographs of Mail Rail, the famous Post Office Underground Railway built in the 1920s. The Post Office in the Community display can be seen at Blists Hill, Ironbridge, Shropshire, and 25 online exhibitions on the BPMA website include: Aerial Post, regional stamps, Machins, David Gentleman, postal vehicles and letter boxes.

There are also BPMA exhibitions on show elsewhere. 'Great Train Robbery of August 1963' is now at Grampian Transport Museum, Alford, Aberdeenshire (until October 2014). 'Last Post: Remembering the First World War' is on tour, at Mansfield Museum from 5 April to 11 June, at Guildford Museum from 16 June to 13 September, and an extended version can be viewed at the Coalbrookdale Museum of Iron, from 10 April to 27 March 2015. The 'Last ▸

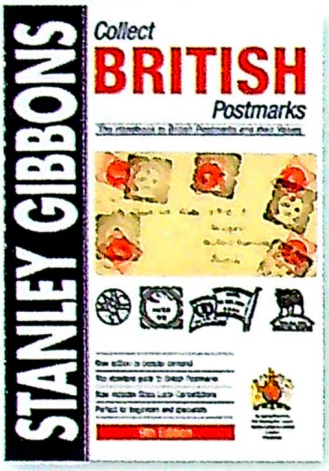
Post' exhibition has been created by the BPMA in partnership with the Cabinet War Rooms. It explores the effect of the events of 1914-18 on the Post Office and its people and the vital role of postal communications in the war effort.

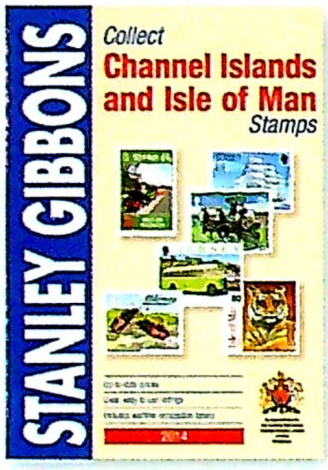
An online version of the 'Last Post' exhibition can be found at www.postalheritage.org.uk where information is arranged under topics including 'Delivering Mail to a World at War', 'The Post Office's Home Front', 'Frontline Communications' and 'The Censor's Stamp'.

Also at www.postalheritage.org.uk are details of talks, tours of the BPMA Archive and the BPMA Store at Debden, Essex, the popular Pillar to Post: GPO London walking tours and a copy of its comprehensive Events Guide. Advance booking and a small charge apply to some events.

The Friends of the BPMA run an interesting programme of events and publish *Cross Post*, a magazine containing many articles on British stamps and postal history. For information about the Friends, visit www.postalheritage.org.uk/friends or email friends@postalheritage.org.uk. Membership costs £21 a year, with a reduced rate for the over-65s •

New catalogues





Stanley Gibbons has published new editions of *Collect Channel Islands and Isle of Man Stamps* (29th edition, £29.95) and *Collect British Postmarks* (9th edition, £32.95). The 392-page *Islands* catalogue lists the Channel Islands wartime issues as well as the regional stamps for Guernsey and Jersey (1958 to 1969) and Isle of Man (1958 to 1973) and all the independent postal administration stamps, postage dues and booklets. Some postal stationery items are listed for Jersey and the Isle of Man.

Since postal autonomy Guernsey has issued 1,483 stamps and miniature sheets, 41 postage dues and 97 books. To this can be added 507 stamps and 22 books for Alderney. Jersey has issued 1,792 stamps, 46 postage dues and 74 books, and the Isle of Man 1,855 stamps, 25 postage dues and 80 books. Many of these issues depict island history, flora and fauna, transport, and so on, and most are well-designed and printed. Perhaps not collected by so many as they once were, the stamps of these islands still have a dedicated following and the latest edition of this catalogue will be welcome.

Stanley Gibbons published the 8th edition of *Collect British Postmarks* in 2011 (see review here in the February 2012 issue of the *Bulletin*), taking over the title from the British Postmark Society. It quickly sold out, hence this new edition which includes a new chapter on Scots Local cancels and a much expanded fifth chapter on early Irish postmarks. The 8th edition suffered from a number of typesetting errors, now almost eradicated by careful proof-reading by Colin Peachey. This work deserves its sub-title *The Handbook to British Postmarks and their Values* and includes many detailed listings (machine postmarks, for example) and good-quality illustrations. My only concern is that as it increases in size, so it becomes less 'handy' for taking to exhibitions and stamp fairs when searching for those elusive postmarks for one's collection. Both these Collect catalogues are available from the Stanley Gibbons shop at 399 Strand, London WC2 and by mail order from Stanley Gibbons Publications, 7 Parkside, Ringwood, Hants BH24 3SH, by calling 0800 611 622 (UK only) or by email to orders@stanleygibbons.com •

The budding stamp artist

Botanical artist Julia Trickey talks about her first time as a stamp illustrator – for this year's British Flora Post & Gos



Above: artist Julia Trickey signed first day covers for visitors at Stampex where Spring Blooms launched

British Flora is your first stamp commission – how was it for you?
I've really enjoyed the whole experience. I normally work on my own so to be actually working with other people to a brief has been very enjoyable indeed.

How did the Royal Mail commission come about?
The stamp designer Kate Stephens contacted me early in 2013 to ask if I would like to be considered, along with several other botanical artists, to produce illustrations for British Flora Post & Go stamps. After a nail-biting few weeks the artists were whittled down to just myself and one other. We then prepared three illustrations each to be scrutinised by the Stamp Advisory Committee. And I won! Kate and I agreed to crop in close to the flowers and plants, as if looking at a secret world under a magnifying glass. How close to focus in on the flowers took practice, as cropping too much sometimes resulted in the plant becoming unrecognisable.

What was the challenge of designing stamps?
That the final product is going to be so small. At the time I was working on larger-than-life painting, at the other end of the spectrum! It was quite a leap going from painting things four or five times their actual size to be painting things much, much smaller..

Was there one flower you found particularly difficult to paint?
On white flowers – such as the snowdrops and blackthorn blossom in the first set – the danger is that you put too much paint onto the shadow. If you are too heavy-handed the flowers start looking grey. You have to underplay it in some way and that's quite hard to do.

Did you produce many drafts for each illustration?
I produced pencil ideas first. Sometimes those ideas came quite quickly. I would take elements of the plant and arrange them within the dimensions. Sometimes this was a little awkward, but when I did something that I thought worked I would send the pencil drawing off to Kate. Once she approved it I would be able to get on with the painting. But in the early ▸

Right: released on 19 February at Stampex, the Post & Go Spring Blooms are proving popular. More of Julia's illustrations appear on future Post & Gos – Symbolic Flowers on 17 September and Winter Greenery on 13 November

Below: Julia meets keen collectors at the Royal Mail Stampex stand



stages of the process we could be going backwards and forwards with different ideas – she would tell me if there were things not quite working. But once I started painting, most of them went well first time.

● How much time did you spend on each stamp design?

I don't paint full-time because I am teaching botanical art and doing other things as well, but if I allowed two weeks per stamp that was comfortable. If I had to do it full-time I could probably do it in about three days.

● What kind of working environment do you prefer?

I have always worked from home. Working in natural light but not direct sunlight is always preferable, so I have a desk in the bay window of our north-facing bedroom – not very glamorous!

● How did you get into botanical art?

I discovered botanical illustration at an adult education class. I loved it from day one and haven't looked back.



● What made the stamps easier to do?

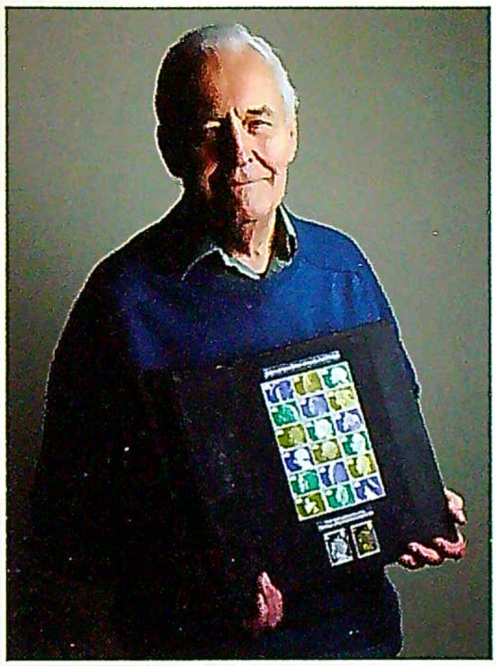
Agreeing early on with Kate to crop in close to the flowers was really helpful because it meant that I had a handle on the final style of the stamps – however varied the plants in size, colour and shape.

● What was your biggest obstacle?

Botanical art tends to be plant portraits displayed with no background, and therefore you see the white of the paper behind the subject. Deciding that this style would not work for the stamps took me out of my comfort zone. After some experimentation I decided to paint the backgrounds separately from the plants, then merge them using appropriate computer software. This way the background could be adjusted if needed to suit the colour of the flowers.

● Where are you now with the painting?

I've just one more illustration to paint, for the final Post & Go set Winter Greenery. It's been such a wonderful experience that I'd love the opportunity to paint another set in the future – British trees, fruit or fungi anyone? •



Photography by Paul Stuart

Farewell Tony Benn

Tony Benn, who died last month, will be remembered by many collectors as an enthusiastic Postmaster General in the 1960s. Born in 1925, he became an MP in 1950 but was disbarred in 1960 when his father died and he inherited the title Viscount Stansgate. He led a campaign to reform the law and in 1963 was able to renounce his peerage and sit again as a MP. In 1964 the Labour party, under Harold Wilson, won the general election and Benn became Postmaster General.

He took a great interest in commemorative stamps, following on from his predecessor, Reginald Bevans, who increased the number of special issues and set up the Philatelic Bureau the previous year. In December 1964 Benn announced new criteria for stamp issues and in January 1965 a memorial set for Sir Winston Churchill. He worked with David Gentleman on designs for new stamps, famously including designs for stamps without The Queen's portrait which were never issued. He introduced Christmas stamps (although they were not issued until after he left office), and wanted the Post Office to sell Christmas cards. In 1966 he was promoted to Minister of Technology and Edward Short became PMG. During Short's term the new definitives (Machins) planned by Benn were issued, and a new Stamp Advisory Committee established.

Benn remained Minister of Technology until 1970, returning to office as Secretary for Trade & Industry when Labour won the election in 1974. In that role he was also briefly Minister of Posts & Telecommunications until that position was abolished. Out of office again in 1979, he stood for the Deputy Leadership of the Labour Party in 1981 and was narrowly defeated by Denis Healey. In 1988 he challenged Neil Kinnock as Labour leader. In his later years Tony Benn toured the country giving well-attended one-man shows and appeared on TV programmes such as 'Question Time'. He was involved in the Stop the War in Iraq campaign.

Tony Benn was respected as a politician even by those who disagreed with his views. Prime Minister David Cameron described him as a distinguished writer, speaker and Parliamentarian who was 'always engaging and interesting'. Former Labour leader Gordon Brown paid tribute to a 'powerful, fearless relentless advocate for social justice and people's rights' and predicted that Benn's speeches will continue to have a 'profound influence on generations to come'.

With Benn's death, Roy Mason (Lord Mason of Barnsley) is now the only surviving holder of the historic office of Postmaster General. For more on Tony Benn's time as PMG see *Bulletin* articles 'PMG Extraordinary' (December 1994) and 'Stamp revolutionaries' (December 2011) •

John Holman



Above: Tony Benn as Postmaster General
Left: In 2011, photographed with David Gentleman's unadopted 1960s designs.

Below: a selection from the special stamp sets issued during Benn's time as Postmaster General, including one for the Post Office Tower, in which he took a keen interest







Your Exclusive Tour

The Throne Room

In the Throne Room an archway, guarded by winged victory figures bearing garlands, features the Chairs of Estate. Queen Victoria once used the room for court gatherings and as an extra dancing room, and it has also been the setting for official wedding photographs. Today The Queen, on special occasions such as Jubilees, receives loyal addresses here.

The Grand Staircase

One of the first things visitors to Buckingham Palace see is the spectacular John Nash-designed Grand Staircase in the Grand Hall. As you climb the curving marble staircase, with its fine bronze cast pattern of acanthus, oak and laurel leaves, you pass portraits of George III, William IV and other Royals.

Clearly lit by a glass dome in contrast to the shadows of the Grand Hall, this is the route taken by those arriving for an investiture in the Ballroom or a grand reception. The landing is adorned with friezes showing the Four Seasons.

The Green Drawing Room

Leading to the Throne Room is the Green Drawing Room, which was originally the Duchess of Buckingham's saloon at the old Buckingham House.

It is the scene of Cecil Beaton's iconic 1953 photograph of a newly crowned Queen Elizabeth sitting regally on a couch with her six Maids of Honour in attendance. They held the train of The Queen's dress during the Coronation ceremony earlier in the day.

In fact, the backdrop for the photo was introduced by Beaton to represent Henry VII's Chapel in Westminster Abbey.

The Blue Drawing Room

One of the Palace's most magnificent rooms, the Blue Drawing Room is the setting for drinks before lunch parties and lavish State and diplomatic occasions.

It is designed in sumptuous Georgian style, with massive Corinthian columns, vast chandeliers, and a Sèvres porcelain table commissioned by Napoleon Bonaparte and presented to the British after the defeat at Waterloo ●









1761 Buckingham House (as it was then known) is bought by King George III for his wife Queen Charlotte, as a family home close to St James's Palace, which will continue to be the seat of the Royal court and its ceremonial heart.

1775 Charlotte moves in after the building has been refurbished and it is renamed the Queen's House.

1820 George dies and his son George IV commissions John Nash to expand the house and transform it into a palace. The main block doubles in size, the wings are rebuilt and the building wrapped in Bath stone.

1830 Before work is complete George IV dies and is succeeded by William IV. The government dismisses Nash for spending too much on his spectacular scheme. Architect Edward Blore, known for his low prices, takes over.

1837 William also dies before he can take up residence and Queen Victoria, just 18, moves in. She is the first British monarch to travel from the Palace to be crowned at Westminster Abbey.

1840 Victoria marries Prince Albert and the Palace becomes a prominent centre of the social and official life of the country. A new wing contains nurseries and guest rooms, and a balcony is built for public appearances.

1851 Victoria takes to the balcony for the first time for the Great Exhibition and again for saluting her army before and after the Crimean War.

1855 A large ballroom is completed for the Royal couple, both keen dancers. The design of the room and other new

This month's pictorial stamp set invites you to explore the most renowned royal home ever. The Buckingham Palace Miniature Sheet features some of its finest State Rooms and the six-stamp special issue tells the story of its extraordinary history...

M PALACE













additions leads one style commentator of the time to dub Buckingham Palace the 'Headquarters of Taste'.

1901 King Edward VII gives the Palace's interior a makeover in white and gold, and paintings are restored and cleaned. His plan is to make his official home the splendid backdrop for a glittering court life. The front is totally remodelled, creating the appearance we see today.

1911 The Palace forecourt, scene of Changing the Guard, is constructed.



1914 Suffragettes campaigning for women's voting rights chain themselves to the railings of Buckingham Palace.

1945 King George VI and Queen Elizabeth famously appear on the balcony with Winston Churchill to the roar of VE Day crowds. The Palace has survived nine bomb strikes during the Second World War.

1962 Highlights of the Royal Collection are displayed in the new Queen's Gallery, which was expanded for the Golden Jubilee in 2002.



1993 The State Rooms are opened to the public for the first time, in late summer when The Queen is staying at Balmoral in Scotland.

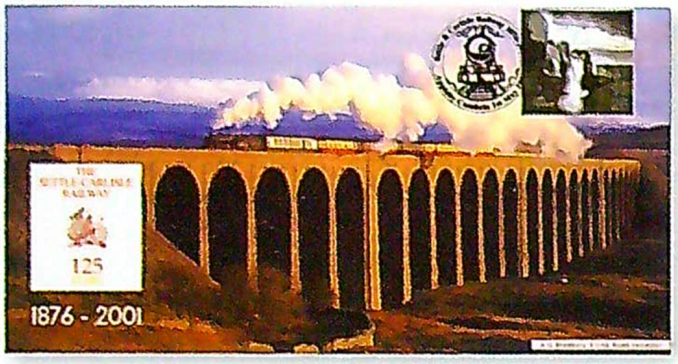
2002 More than a million people gather outside the Palace and back down the Mall to celebrate the Golden Jubilee.

2012 Buckingham Palace plays a central role in London's Diamond Jubilee celebrations, with a concert, fireworks display, flypast and Royal balcony appearance.



Above: the latest cover celebrating the refurbished Settle-Carlisle Line

Right: April 2014 postmark and the 2001 cover showing the famous 104ft-high Ribblehead Viaduct with its 24 arches





Cover story

Adrian Bradbury has created a new cover to mark the 25th anniversary of the saving of one of the UK's most loved and picturesque railways

I FIRST GOT INVOLVED with the Friends of the Settle-Carlisle Line (FoSCL) in 2001, when I was asked by Peter Shaw (FoSCL Vice President) whether I would be prepared to design a souvenir first day cover to celebrate its 125th anniversary. The 2001 cover featured one of Peter's photographs showing a Stanier Class 5 Mogul no.2968 crossing Ribblehead Viaduct.

In 1983, when British Rail issued Closure Notices for the Settle-Carlisle line, the FoSCL spearheaded a rigorous campaign to save the route. It took six long years until the government announced that the line must stay open! The long-awaited official announcement came on 11 April 1989, hence the date of the specially sponsored postmark shown above.

Since then a partnership has worked closely with the railway authorities to promote and develop the Settle-Carlisle line. Today it is completely refurbished and has passenger and freight trains running successfully – the result of 25 years of dedicated work and an achievement which, I hope you agree, is something to celebrate •

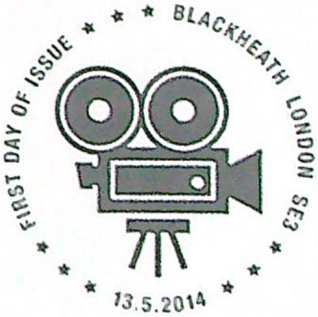
Orders and enquiries

The new Settle-Carlisle Commemorative Cover costs £20, which includes worldwide postage and packing. Purchase from:
BFDC Ltd
3 Link Road
Stoneygate
Leicester LE2 3RA
www.bfdc.co.uk
Stock code 41032



Picture post A new stamp set applauds British movie-making and the iconic documentaries produced by the GPO Film Unit during the 1930s

BRILLIANT MOVIES, screen legends and classic documentaries enter the philatelic hall of fame with the release of the star-studded Great British Film issue on 13 May. Focusing on key British movies since the Second World War, the six-stamp set features David Niven, Peter O'Toole and triumphs such as *Chariots of Fire* and *2001: A Space Odyssey*. A Miniature Sheet comprises four stamps charting the success of the GPO Film Unit. The Sheet notably features every collector's favourite cinematic train journey in the iconic *Night Mail*. Also available are a Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards and special postmarks.



FD1413-PL

Stamp by stamp The Great British Film issue, designed by Johnson Banks, features a mix of First Class and £1.28 values:

A Matter of Life and Death Dapper movie legend David Niven appears in this 1946 classic in one of his finest roles, as a Second World War RAF pilot who cheats death on a mission and is caught between our world and the next. The fantasy romance, made in both black and white and colour, became the first Royal Command Film, and was watched at a special performance by King George VI and Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret. Danny Boyle used a clip from the movie in his opening ceremony show for the 2012 London Olympics. *First Class* ▸

Great British Film Stamps – Specifications

Date of issue	13 May
Number of stamps	Six
Stamp design	Johnson Banks
Stamp format	Landscape
Stamp size	60mm x 30mm
Printer	International Security Printers
Print process	Lithography
Number per sheet	18/36
Perforations	14.5 x 14.5
Phosphor	All over
Gum	PVA



FD1413-TH

Lawrence of Arabia Everyone remembers Peter O'Toole's eyes of swimming pool-blue scanning the desert for action in this legendary epic from 1962. And no wonder: O'Toole combined his stunning looks with a mesmerising performance in a movie that is considered director David Lean's master work. Steven Spielberg has confessed that this winner of seven Oscars inspired him to become a filmmaker. *First Class*

2001: A Space Odyssey It may have had an American director but anglophile Stanley Kubrick made his 1968 science fiction classic in Britain (at Shepperton Studios) with British technicians who created, before the computer age, special effects and sets depicting the future of space travel that have never been bettered. The deadly battle of wits between homicidal computer H.A.L and astronaut Dave is still thrilling today. British author Arthur C Clarke, who wrote the original book on which the movie is based, also co-wrote the script. *First Class*

Chariots of Fire Slow-motion yet epic athletic action, that soundtrack, beautiful photography – *Chariots of Fire* had it all. This 1981 story of two athletes competing in the 1924 Olympics is considered to be one of the best ever movies about sport, and won a heap of Oscars and BAFTAs. Produced by David Puttnam, it is also seen by leading critics as a key milestone in post-war British film. *£1.28*

Secrets & Lies A winner at Cannes and the BAFTAs, Mike Leigh's tale of a black woman seeking her real mother is British social realism at its finest. The film, made in 1996, is the director's most commercially successful, and the cast includes his regular collaborator Timothy Spall. *£1.28*

Bend It Like Beckham This 2002 comedy, which made a star of a young Keira Knightley, tells the story of a teenage girl – played by Parminder Nagra – who wants to become a professional footballer against the wishes of her traditional Indian parents. The film was a huge international hit, topping the UK box office, smashing box office records in India for a foreign film, and becoming





the highest-grossing Indian-themed film in the US. Intriguingly, in 2010 it was the first Western-made movie to be shown on North Korean TV. *£1.28*

Above: the six stamps, designed by Johnson Banks, celebrate 50 years of Great British Film

Far left: the Presentation Pack contains an informative insert card, written by Dr Scott Anthony, giving an overview of the history of the UK film industry and the legacy of the GPO Film Unit

Miniature Sheet The extraordinary story of the GPO Film Unit is celebrated by four Miniature Sheet stamps depicting classic works made in the 1930s. All the stamps on the Miniature Sheet are First Class:

Night Mail 'This is the Night Mail crossing the border / Bringing the cheque and the postal order' – immortal lines from an immortal film. The poetry of W H Auden and Benjamin Britten's music combined to make a classic of the story of the postal special's nightly journey from Euston to Glasgow. Directed by Harry Watt and Basil Wright, *Night Mail* was an influential piece of work that was to inspire innumerable day-in-the-life documentaries.

A Colour Box This vibrant animated short, with the theme of cheap parcel post, was made by painting bright, abstract shapes directly onto celluloid. The paint was then combed and textured so that it seemed to 'dance' to the soundtrack. Len Lye's lively mix of raw energy and modernity attracted the attention of artists such as Paul Nash and the Surrealists.

Love on the Wing This was the breakthrough film of Scottish animator Norman McLaren, and the ▸

Great British Film Stamps – Prices

Stamps – 3 x 1st Class and 3 x £1.28 se-tenant	£5.70
Miniature Sheet – 4 x 1st Class	£2.48
Presentation Pack	£8.70
First Day Cover Stamps/overseas	£7.32/£6.10
First Day Cover Miniature Sheet/overseas	£3.45/£2.88
Stamp Cards, set of 11	£4.95



FD1413-NP



Great British Film Miniature Sheet – Specifications

Date of issue	13 May
Number of stamps	Four
Stamp design	Magpie Studio
Stamp format	Landscape
Stamp size	41mm x 30mm
Sheet size	115mm x 89mm
Printer	Joh. Enschedé Stamps
Print process	Lithography
Perforations	14.5 x 14
Phosphor	All over
Gum	PVA

Top: the Miniature Sheet pays tribute to the influential work of the GPO Film Unit

Above left: the postmark shows 'Blackheath' – the location of the GPO Film Unit's studios in London

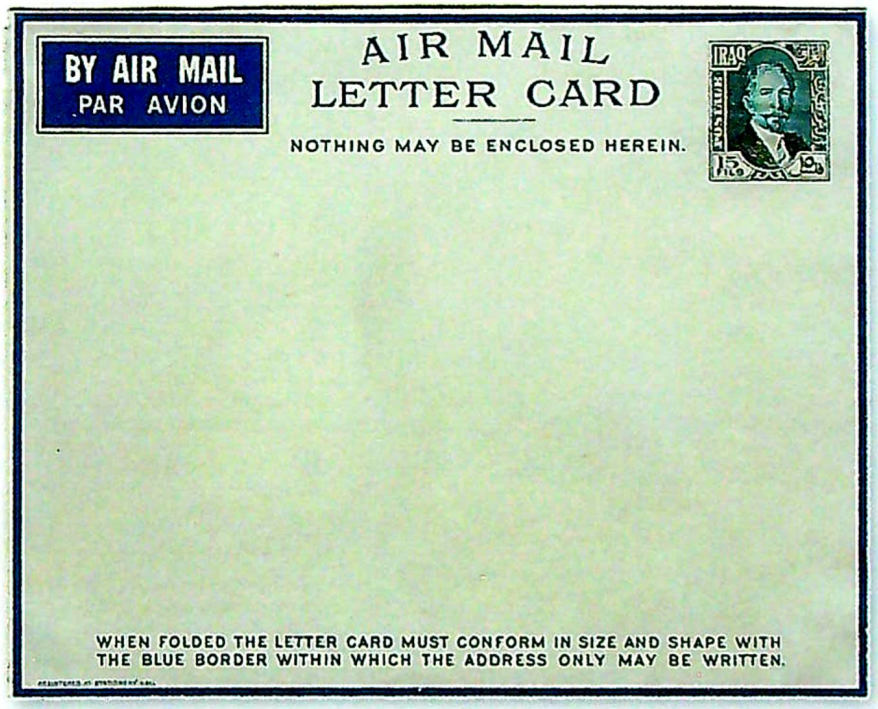
imagery – a man sprouting wings, a giant floating eye, a flying bone – suggests the influence of the London International Surrealist Exhibition of 1936. The film's visual narrative was about the pleasure of sending and receiving personal letters.

Spare Time Produced for the New York World Fair of 1939, *Spare Time* gives an insight into how Britain spent its leisure time. The film portrays ordinary people from Sheffield, Manchester and Pontypridd enjoying a huge variety of musical activities, sports and other leisure pursuits against a backdrop of the steel, cotton and coal industries. *Spare Time* was the creation of Humphrey Jennings, a poet and painter as well as a film director.

Special postmarks As an alternative to the Tallents House, Edinburgh postmark, non-pictorial and pictorial Blackheath, London SE3 postmarks are available, as Blackheath was the location of the GPO Film Unit's studios. Orders for serviced First Day Covers must reach Royal Mail by 13 May. You can also send stamped envelopes on the day of issue to Royal Mail, Tallents House (address on page 226) •

'A Matter of Life and Death' © Carlton Film Distributors 1946, courtesy of ITV; 'Lawrence of Arabia' © 1962, renewed 1990 Columbia Pictures Industries, Inc., all rights reserved, courtesy of Columbia Pictures; '2001: A Space Odyssey' TM & © Turner Entertainment Co. (s14); 'Chariots of Fire,' for the US, Canada, the US Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico only™ & © Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc. (s14), © 1981 Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation in all other territories; all rights reserved; 'Secrets & Lies' photograph by Simon Mein © Thin Man Films Ltd; 'Bend It Like Beckham' © Kintop Pictures, Bend It Films and Roc Media.

A is for air letter



Iraq was the first country to use air letters – called Air Mail Letter Cards

Colin Baker's new A-Z series on postal stationery takes off with the inside story of the air letter

GUERNSEY-BORN Douglas Gumbley was the Inspector-General of Posts and Telegraphs in Iraq in the 1930s, during the British mandate there. He was also the inventor of the air letter. Sending letters by air mail in Iraq was very expensive then, and Gumbley saw the need for a much cheaper method. So he created a lightweight paper letter sheet with a pre-printed stamp and gummed flaps – what we know today as an air letter. It was amply big enough for most uses and was issued on 15 July 1933 with a 15 fils stamp (fils being the Iraqi currency). Although this new air letter was made from thin blue paper and weighed only four grammes, Gumbley called it an Air Mail Letter Card. It was to be issued and used in Iraq, but he registered his design at Stationers' Hall in London, making it difficult for other countries to copy his idea.

In Britain there was little need for this new and innovative form of mail. The cost of letters sent by air was being cut all the time, so that towards the end of the 1930s the air mail rate to many countries was equal to the surface rate, though only for the first half ounce. But the outbreak of the Second World War in Europe in 1939 was to change all that – in wartime aircraft could not be spared for carrying large quantities of mail, but many British troops who were stationed in the Middle East and Africa wanted to be able ▸



An Air Mail Letter Card sent from the Middle East in 1943



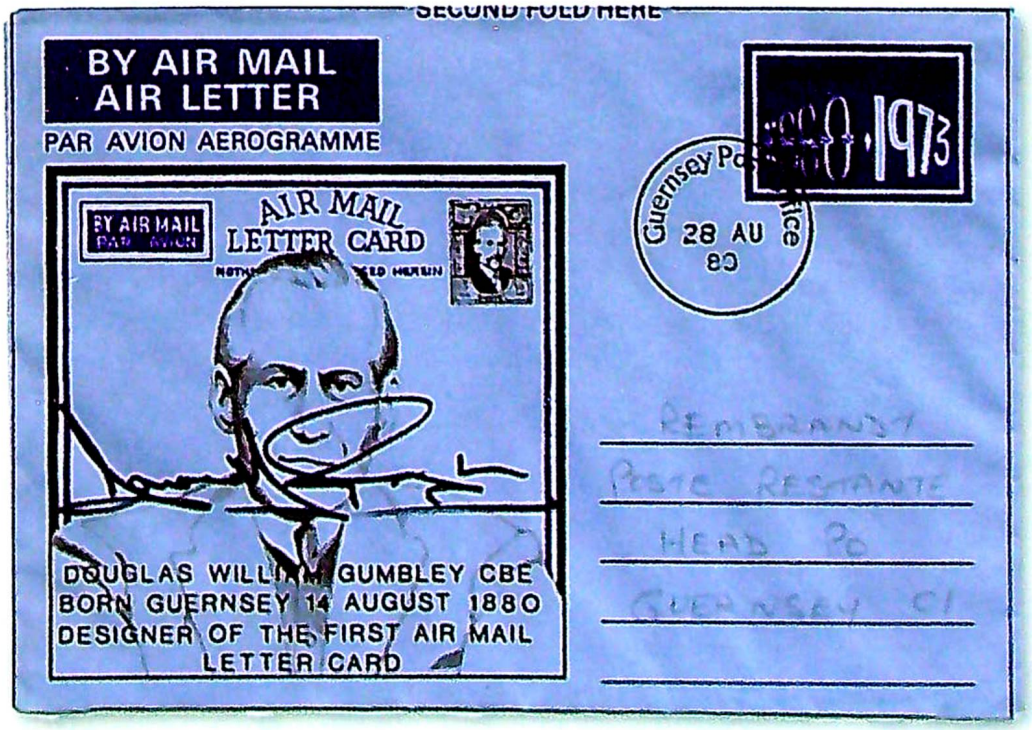
This is the 6d air letter that replaced the unstamped version in 1943

to write to their families at home and, of course, their loved ones back in Britain wanted to send a speedy reply in return. And so Gumbley's lightweight air letter was suddenly in great demand.

Unstamped Air Mail Letter Cards were produced and issued to troops in 1941. An unstamped civilian version was also made available for use by their families at home in Britain in December 1942. This was followed by a pre-paid version that became available the following June. For this issue, the term Air Mail Letter Card was dropped in favour of Air Letter, a term



A 1½d version of the 6d air letter only for use to service personnel stationed overseas



A Guernsey air letter celebrating the birth centenary of Douglas Gumbley in 1980

that was used – with only a short break – up to the final air letter issued in Britain in 2009. When the Second World War ended in 1945 the air letters continued to serve the public. They were popular because they were so inexpensive. But as we approached the new millennium, the development of the internet and email communications meant that air letters were being used so much more rarely than in previous decades that they were withdrawn from sale in Britain 2012. Some countries, however, continue to use them today in exactly the way intended by Douglas Gumbley •





Stamp champs 2013 readers' poll results are in

THE NATION'S FAVOURITE STAMP and stamp issue can now be revealed! In December's *Bulletin* we asked you to take part in our 27th annual stamp poll by voting for the stamps you most admired and you responded enthusiastically. More than 2,000 readers voted for their first, second and third-favourite stamps and sets, and we would like to thank all those who participated. So without further ado, let us unveil the top ten winners in each category.

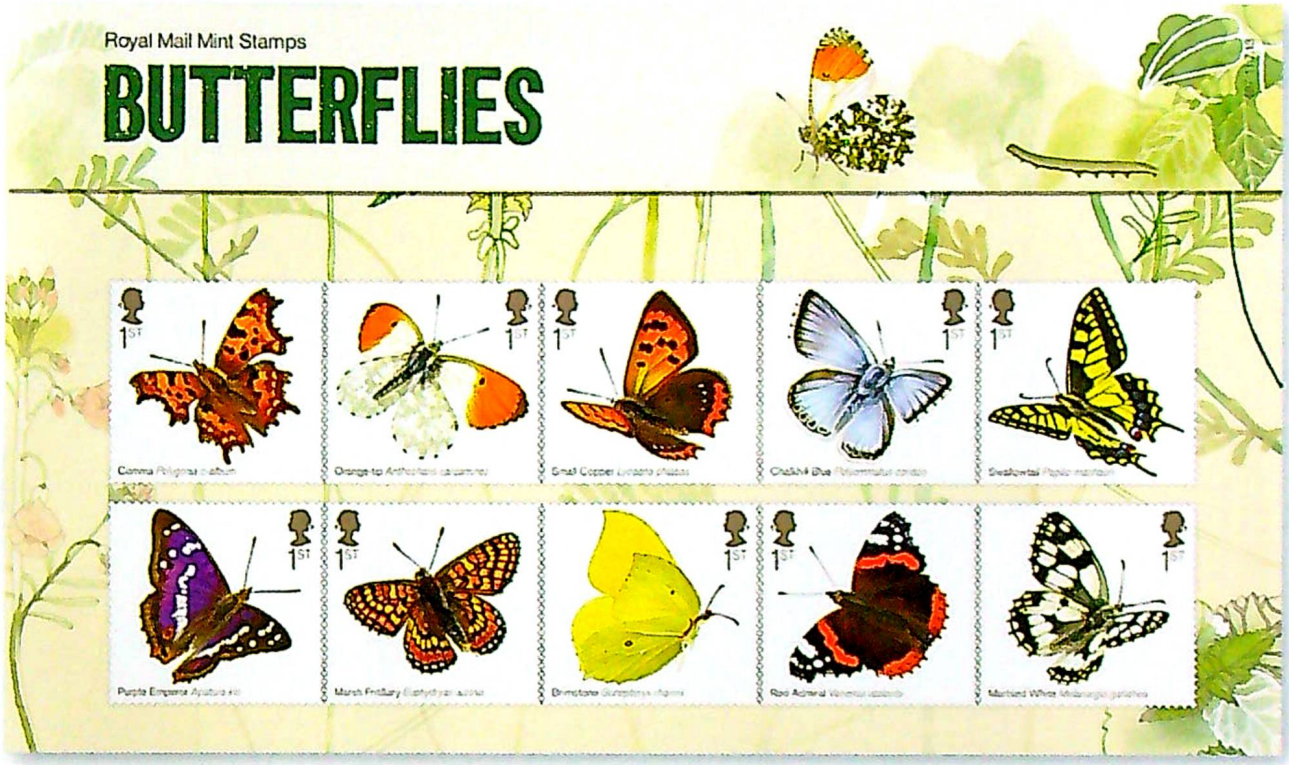
Bulletin stamp of the year The stunning 88p value from the Six Decades of Royal Portraits issue has been crowned favourite stamp of 2013. It shows the 1955 portrait by Pietro Annigoni, seen by many to be the defining painting of The Queen. The win demonstrates readers' loyalty to stamps carrying an image of the monarch, especially when you consider that Six Decades also took fifth place in the stamp set rankings.

Also performing well was the Merchant Navy issue. The Cutty Sark First Class was voted second favourite stamp and the £1.28 RMS Queen Elizabeth came fourth. Two more from the set were in seventh and eighth place, and the four stamps earned a total of 748 votes. The popularity of nature and wildlife issues among readers remains strong, with the Butterflies set's Red Admiral stamp fluttering home comfortably to third place. And as you will see here, the set itself did rather well in the issue contest.

We know that historic British transport remains an abiding passion for many collectors and this was

TOP TEN FAVOURITE STAMPS 2013

	Votes
Royal Portraits: Pietro Annigoni (71)	330
Merchant Navy: Cutty Sark (110)	265
Butterflies: Red Admiral (92)	222
Merchant Navy: RMS Queen Elizabeth (112)	213
London Underground: Classic Rolling Stock (14)	194
Andy Murray: £1.28 with trophy (97)	183
Merchant Navy: HMS King George (116)	144
Merchant Navy: RMS Britannia (109)	126
British Auto Legends: Jaguar E-Type (98)	124
British Auto Legends: Morris Minor Van (104)	123



reflected by the London Underground set's Classic Rolling Stock £1.28 value arriving in fifth place. And you did not forget one of 2013's great national events – Andy Murray's historic Wimbledon victory. The £1.28 showing the Scottish master proudly holding his trophy aloft was proclaimed the sixth most popular stamp with almost 200 readers' votes. Using their London 2012 experience in 'instant' releases, the Royal Mail Stamps and Collectibles team planned the Murray issue when it became clear he had a chance of victory and served up the stamps in double-quick time when the photographs were taken – which all added to the excitement of the issue.



Bulletin stamp issue of the year 2013's highest flyer is the Butterflies set – a victory that reflects *Bulletin* readers' love of wildlife. Taking first place as favourite issue (with 899 votes) is also an endorsement of the delicate yet vibrant beauty of artist Richard Lewington's stamp illustrations.

Just 65 votes behind was the Merchant Navy set, its ten stamps portraying adventure on the high seas. Next came the Madonna & Child Christmas issue – a parade of poignant classic paintings that also includes the contemporary portrait by Fadi Mikhail, specially commissioned by Royal Mail.

Also winning big is the London Underground set in fourth place, followed by Six Decades of Royal Portraits, then British Auto Legends and Doctor Who with only 33 votes between them.

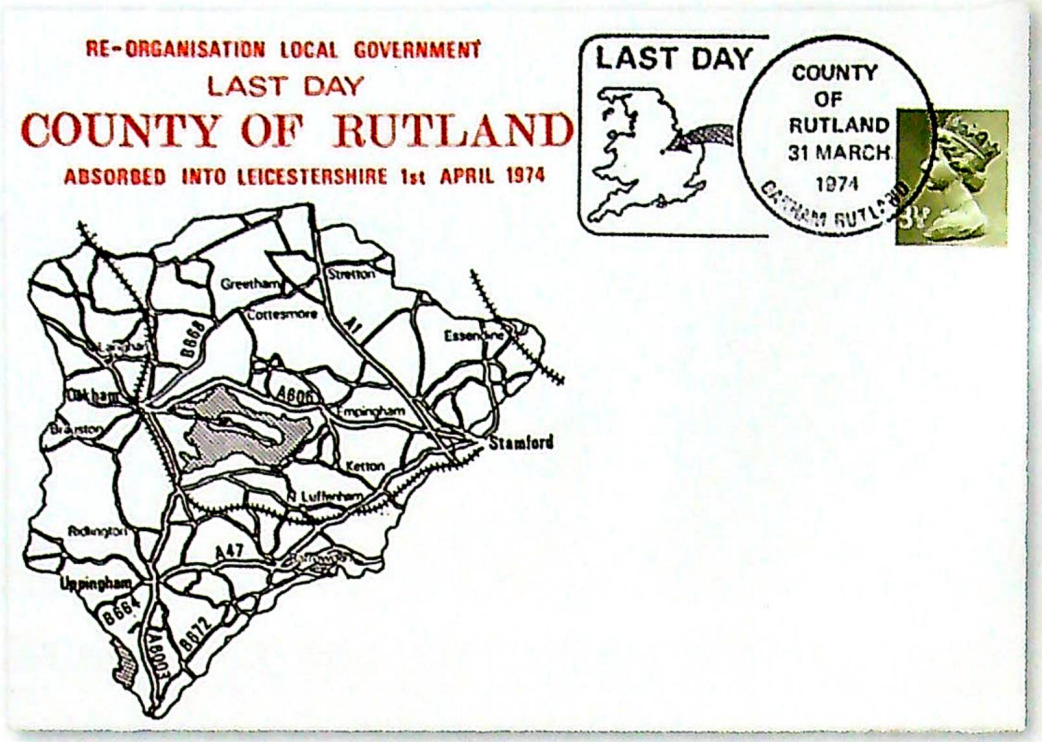
Key to poll results In the favourite stamp table, far left, the figures in brackets refer to the key numbers beneath the images on the voting form distributed with the December 2013 edition of the *Bulletin* •

The Favourite Stamp Poll prize draw result is on page 254.

TOP TEN FAVOURITE ISSUES 2013

	Votes
Butterflies	899
Merchant Navy	834
Madonna & Child	551
London Underground	503
Six Decades of Royal Portraits	383
British Auto Legends	322
Doctor Who	289
Classic Locos of N Ireland	212
Dinosaurs	171
Andy Murray	141

This month in history John Holman gathers some postal mementoes of April 1974, when the Local Government Act of 1972 came into effect



Above: 'Last Day' cover marking Rutland's last day as England's small county. Despite fierce opposition, on 1April 1974 it was officially absorbed into Leicestershire

AN EXTENSIVE REORGANISATION of local government in England and Wales was implemented on 1 April 1974. Some historic counties disappeared and new ones were created. Some highly populated areas were defined as metropolitan counties and districts. The changes were enacted by the Conservative government of Edward Heath but did not come into force until 1 April 1974, a month after Heath was defeated in the first general election of 1974 following the miners' strike and three-day week. Dislike of these local government changes may have been a factor in his defeat in both elections.

A number of special handstamps were sponsored for 31 March to mark the last day of some authorities and on 1 April when new ones started. In addition, reference to the new authorities was made in a number of slogans. Some examples of both handstamps and slogans are shown here. Ordinary postmarks – both counter datestamps and machine dies – were amended. Bath became Bath, Avon, and Oakham 'switched' from Rutland to Leicestershire. There was fierce local opposition in Rutland, England's smallest county, to being absorbed into Leicestershire. 'Welcome to Rutland' signs remained in place alongside those for Leicestershire. Eventually Rutland was restored as a unitary authority.

Avon, an artificial county containing Bristol and Bath, was never popular especially in Bristol which since medieval times had been a city and county in its own right. Shortly after Avon came into being, a special handstamp was used to mark the new Avon Fire Service, and covers were serviced with the stamps showing historic fire engines issued at the time.

With two exceptions, the new county names became part of postal addresses from 1 July 1974 – explained in an announcement in the *Bulletin*



Above: heralding changes in local government on 1 April – the new Cumbria and the Metropolitan Borough of Oldham. The Avon County Fire Brigade held an open day to mark its name change

in May 1974 (page 15). The exceptions were Greater Manchester and Hereford and Worcester. In one other area – Humberside – it was necessary to add 'North' or 'South' to the address. The announcement stated that 'until 1 July 1975 a dual sorting system will be operating in the Post Office for both old and new county names. After that time letters not bearing the new county names, like other incorrectly addressed mail, may be delayed.'

The local government changes of April 1974 (and for Scotland in May 1975) make for an interesting philatelic study.

Full details of the special handstamps and slogans were announced in the *Postmark Bulletin* at the time and can now be found in the publications of the British Postmark Society •



Below: in came Dudley and South Yorkshire, and out went the 900-year-old Monmouth borough



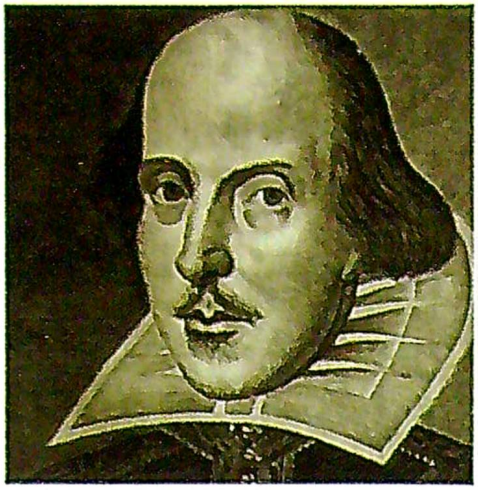
a



b



c


d

April anagrams

Happy 450th birthday to the bard of Avon! As well as being the greatest writer in the English language, Shakespeare is among the top three subjects most celebrated on postage stamps across the world. In April we particularly remember his life and works, as Shakespeare was baptised on 26 April 1564 and died on 23 April 1616



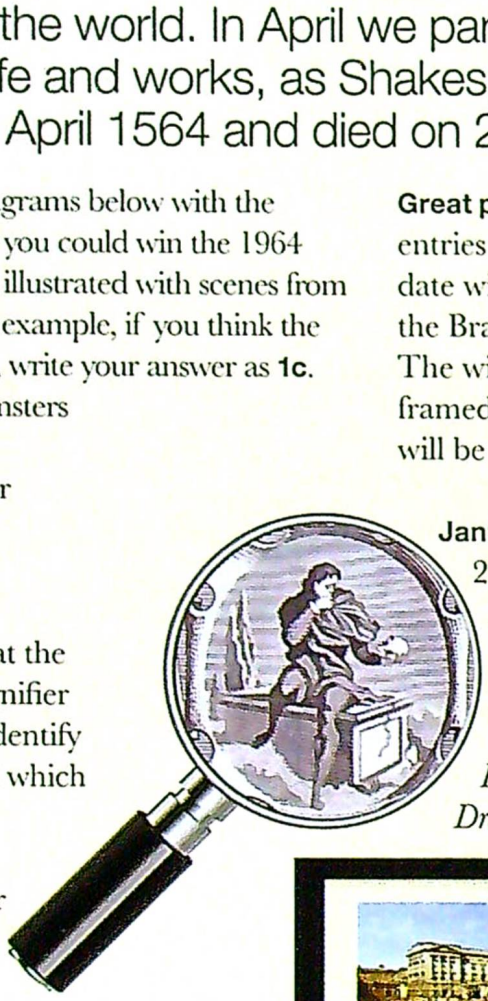
e

Correctly match the anagrams below with the images **a** to **e** above and you could win the 1964 Commemorative Sheet, illustrated with scenes from Shakespeare's plays. For example, if you think the first anagram refers to **c**, write your answer as **1c**.

1 Graded minimum hamsters
2 Keep a horseless bag
3 I am a weakish speller
4 Remount jade oil
5 Ah melt

Great prizes Senders of the first four correct entries drawn in each section after the closing date win prizes. First prize for April Anagrams is the Bradbury commemorative sheet shown below. The winner of Name That Stamp receives a framed set of Buckingham Palace stamps. There will be three runners-up prizes in each section.

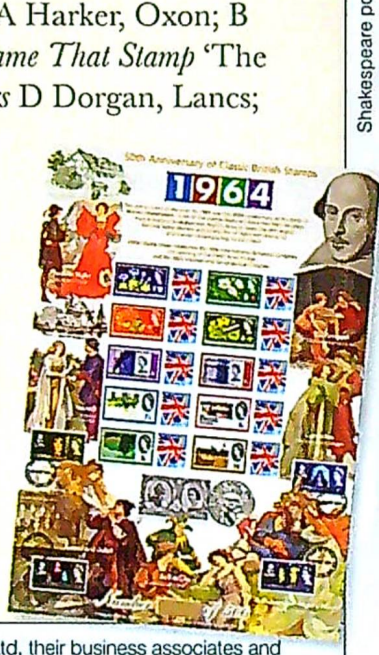
NAME THAT STAMP Look at the stamp beneath the magnifier on the right. Can you identify the year of its issue and which play it represents?



How to enter Send your answers, marked 'April Anagrams' and/or 'April Name That Stamp' to: *Bulletin* Prize Draws, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB. **Closing date** 20 May 2014.

January solutions and winners *Feline Lucky* 1b, 2a, 3c, 4b. *Winners* A Harker, Oxon; B Meek, Norfolk. *Name That Stamp* 'The Clangers'. *Winners* D Dorgan, Lancs; J Woodbridge, West Midlands. *Readers' Poll Prize Draw* K Webb, NZ •





Shakespeare portrait, First Folio, 1623 / Dreamstime. For April events see www.shakespearesbirthday.org.uk

Rules and regulations **1** Promotions are open to all readers aged 18 and over, 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. The cost of transport to and from a prize venue, where applicable, is not included. **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) to suspend or cancel or hold void any of the competitions or prize draws at any time without notice. **9** Winners' names are available 28 days after closing date.



TWOPENNY BLUE WINNER Tom Lawson's lucky day



Young collector Tom Lawson was delighted to win a Twopenny Blue stamp as first prize in the Stamp Active prize draw at Spring Stampex at the Business Design Centre in Islington, London. He enjoyed a double celebration, as his philatelist grandfather Keith had presented him with a Penny Black just before Stampex.

'I'm excited and happy to have won,' said Tom, who is 11 and attended the exhibition with his mum Sarah – a former collector – and Keith (all pictured right). 'I was talking with my grandad about how the Blue is even better than the Black. He gave me a Penny Black last night, which was really generous, and now I've got a Blue as well!'

Keith, 67, who has been collecting since he was six, added: 'We're so pleased for Tom – this was a wonderful prize. Tom visited me when he was about six, and he saw a lot of stamps lying around and said: "Grandad, I want to collect stamps too!" It's great to start collecting when you're so young. And it's easy – once you can read you can collect stamps.'

Tom, from Sittingbourne, Kent, has previously been billed by experts as the UK's youngest collector. His current passion is for Commonwealth stamps ●

AUCTION ACTION

Feverish bidding and big prizes made the children's auction an exciting finale to Stamp Active's appearance at Stampex. Around 20 youngsters vied for over 30 lots, which included all the GB first day covers for 1975, GB mint stamps pre-1971, an Australian Captain Marvel sheet, a Royal Mail stamp folder, a Delhi 2010 Commonwealth Games sheet, and mint sets of Isle of Man stamps.

Adding to the fun was the man with the hammer – professional stamp auctioneer and National Philatelic Society President Michael Thompson, whose eagle eye and humorous banter helped make the sale a hit with children and parents alike.



The auction has become a regular event on the Saturday of every Stampex exhibition and promises to be a very special occasion at the London 2015 Exhibition. No money is needed to take part in the bidding, because young people spend 'points' earned by answering a series of questions based on the Stamp Active animal-themed stamp display.

Other popular Stampex activities included a treasure hunt sponsored by Guernsey Post ●

FIVE GOLDS FOR 2014 WINNERS

Many new names have appeared alongside the more experienced young collectors who entered the Stamp Active competitions for 2014. The judges were impressed with the originality of the displays on show and as a result were able to award no fewer than five Golds:

The Kidstamps Cup – Lucy Hobbs for *What is Great About Australia.*

Best entry Class B – Lucy Hobbs for *What is Great About Australia.*

Best entry Class C – Robyn Archibald for *The Progress of Medical Science.*

Best entry Class D – Rachel Moore for *The Ins and Outs of Energy.*

Best Group – Neyland Community School for *The Food We Eat.*

Schools Trophy – Doonfoot Primary School.

Images artwork copyright www.stampactive.co.uk

Glittering prize

Award yourself this gleaming medal of Buckingham Palace with the new special stamp set celebrating the world's finest Royal residence.

The brilliant uncirculated cupro-nickel medal is presented within a beautifully illustrated pack which contains informative text written by Peter Denton.

Produced by Royal Mail in association with The Royal Mint, the Buckingham Palace Medal Cover costs £14.95. To order this prestigious limited-edition item, visit www.royalmail.com/stamps or write to Royal Mail, Tallents House at the address on page 226 ●

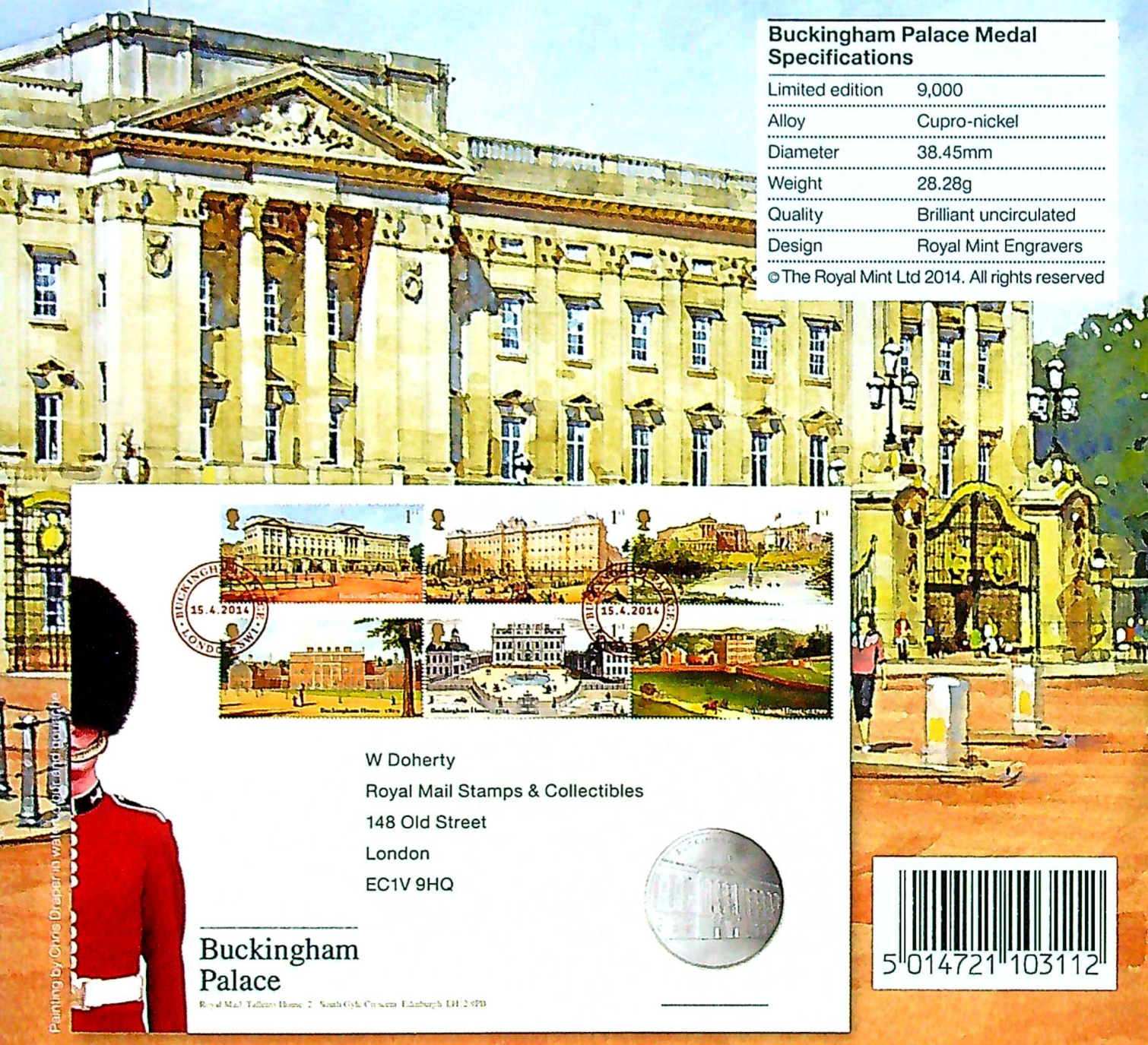


The design on the reverse side of the medal shows the lyrics of the National Anthem and the Peace statue by Sir Thomas Brock, created as part of the Memorial to Queen Victoria, the first monarch reside in Buckingham Palace

Buckingham Palace Medal Specifications

Limited edition	9,000
Alloy	Cupro-nickel
Diameter	38.45mm
Weight	28.28g
Quality	Brilliant uncirculated
Design	Royal Mint Engravers

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Painting by Chris Draper in watercolour and gouache

W Doherty
Royal Mail Stamps & Collectibles
148 Old Street
London
EC1V 9HQ

Buckingham Palace

Royal Mail Tallents House 2 South Gyle Crescent Edinburgh EH12 9PD

5 014721 103112