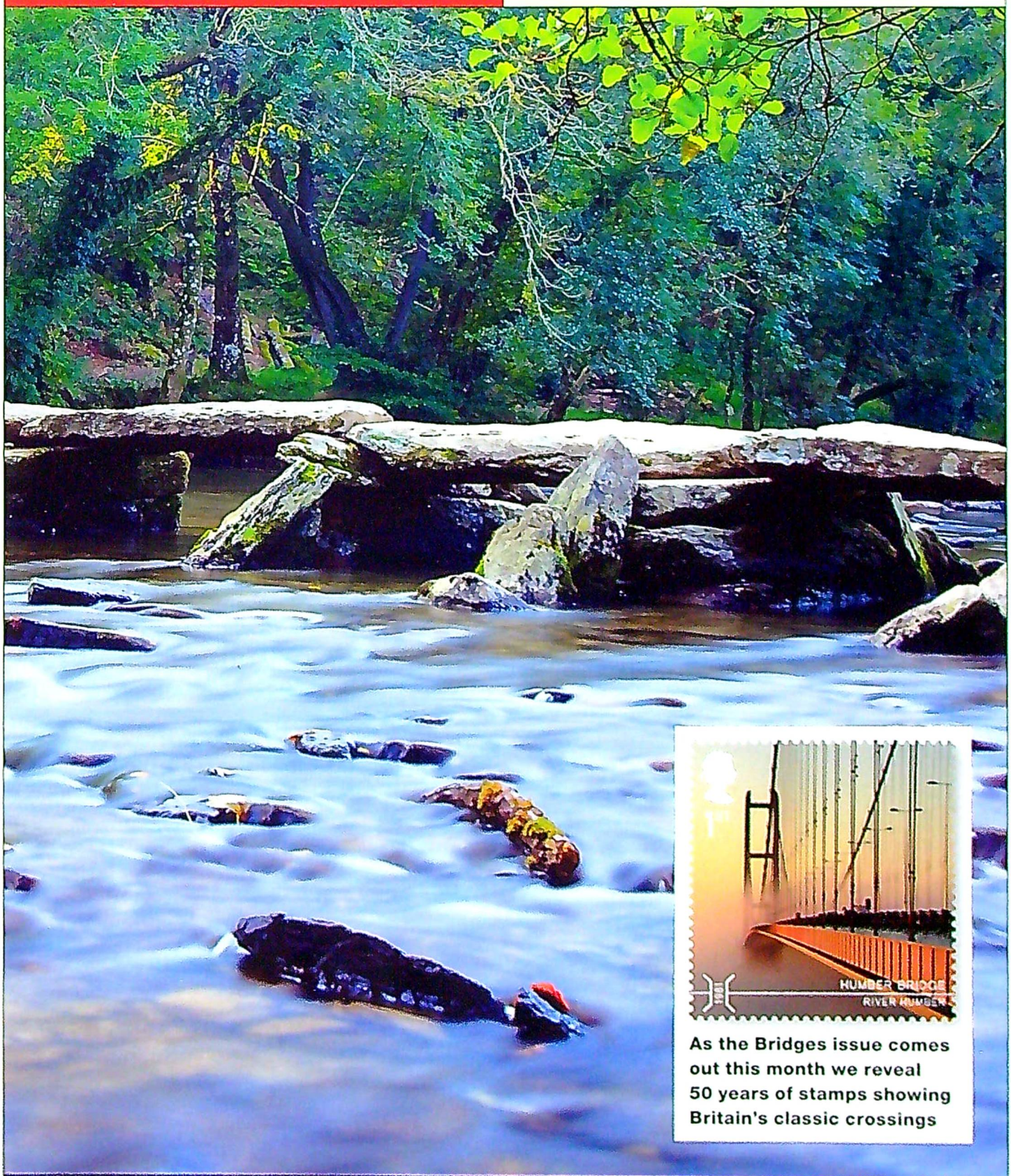
BRITISH PHILATELIC

Bulletin

The magazine for collectors of UK stamps

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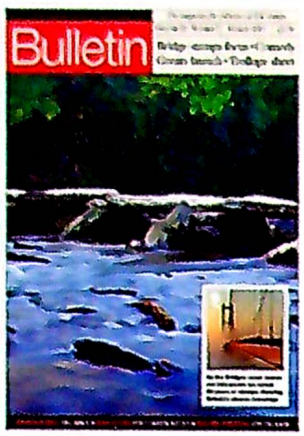
Bridge stamps focus • Comedy Greats launch • Trollope sheet



As the Bridges issue comes out this month we reveal 50 years of stamps showing Britain's classic crossings

JOHN HOLMAN THE BIBLE • WAR STORY POST OFFICE RIFLES • MACHIN PREVIEW 2015 RELEASE

Issues and withdrawals



Cover: Somerset's ancient Tarr Steps and the Humber Bridge are among ten landmark British bridges celebrated in the new Special Stamps set issued on 5 March. See page 208 for background details and page 167 in February's *Bulletin* for your philatelic Preview

Information about Royal Mail products is that which is available at time of going to press. Issue dates shown in advance are subject to change. Stamps are not shown to scale. Stamp sizes are listed on Preview pages. Royal Mail is not responsible for opinions and information provided by independent feature writers.

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Royal Mail

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5 March	**Issue** Alice in Wonderland: Medal Cover (cupro-nickel Medal).
5 March	**Issue** Bridges: Stamps (2 x strips of 5 x 1st Class se-tenant), Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards (10 in set).
18 March	**Issue** The Post Office Rifles: Commemorative Sheet (10 x 1st Class Union Flag Stamps).
24 March	**Issue** Definitives: £1.33 Amber Yellow, £1.52 Orchid Mauve, £2.25 Plum, £2.45 Spruce Green, £3.15 Aqua Green, £3.30 Rose Pink.
25 March	**Withdrawal** Remarkable Lives: Stamps (2 x strips of 5 x 1st Class se-tenant), Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards.
27 March	**Withdrawal** Commemorative Sheets: 100th Anniversary of the Territorial Army AV001, Prince Charles 60th Birthday AV003, Journey to the Moon AV004, 150th Anniversary of Big Ben AV005, 800th Anniversary of Cambridge University AV006.
1 April	**Issue** Comedy Greats: Stamps (2 x strips of 5 x 1st Class se-tenant), Stamp Book (2 x 1st Class Comedy Greats Stamps, 4 x 1st Class Definitives), Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards (10 in set).
24 April	**Issue** Anthony Trollope: Commemorative Sheet (10 x 1st Class Union Flag Stamps).

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 15CDB, 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.

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Mr B Graham
20 Marton Avenue
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Royal Mail Tallents House 21 South Gyle Crescent Edinburgh EH12 9PB

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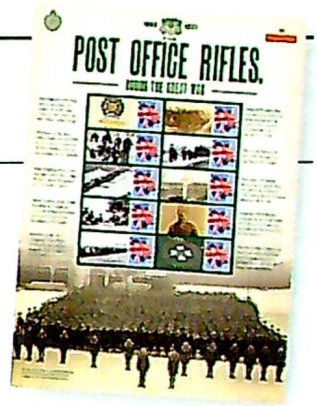
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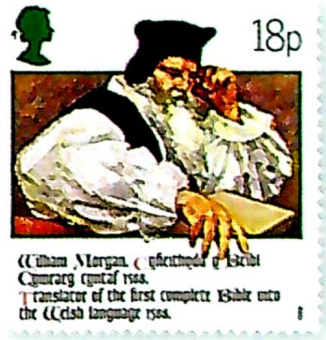


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● **Royal Mail Editor** William Doherty, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB ● **Publishing Editor** Kate Shaw, HMS President (1918), Victoria Embankment, London EC4Y 0HJ ● Price £1.50 from Post Office Ltd philatelic outlets 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
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Correspondence

Sheet shocker

What a shock I got on Monday 19 January when I wanted to order my usual various stamps and was told that the Generic Sheet AT084 was sold out! Well, I have been keeping my late husband's collection going for over nine years and I have *never* had such bother. I did not think it necessary to order from the *Bulletin*, as I have always waited for the Royal Mail order form.

Somebody is making a killing already on eBay.

As I get different stamps/booklets/sheets every month I cannot put a regular order in with you, and all our nice and efficient philatelic counters have been closed... I am really angry! And I am sure I am not the only one.

I have contacted a dealer who very kindly helps me fill gaps on my sheets. Even he has not got any and was surprised when I told him.

Maike D Drummond, Sunderland

I am sorry that you have been unable to purchase the Smilers® 2015 Generic Sheet and for the disappointment and frustration this has caused. Demand for this sheet from both customers and stamp dealers has significantly exceeded our expectations . It has proved even more popular than the last Smilers® Generic Sheet issued in 2010.

While we do not have any stock left at Tallents House, I understand that there are still sheets available from some Post Offices. If we receive any unsold sheets back from Post Office Ltd or our overseas distributors we will make these available for sale as soon as possible.

Paul Malone, Senior Product Manager, Royal Mail Stamps and Collectibles





Unadopted Games design



I read with interest the article about the Royal Mint Coin Cover with the Churchill stamps from the Prime Ministers series, and other 2015 stamps commemorating the death of Winston Churchill (page 150, January *Bulletin*).

As we are reminded of this era, I thought that readers might be interested to see Abram Games' unadopted design for that issue (above), based on Yousuf Karsh's 1941 photograph showing Churchill's famous 'V for Victory' sign.

Naomi Games, the Estate of Abram Games

Thank you for sending us this 1965 design proposal. We do not usually publish rejected stamp designs, for obvious reasons, but readers will recognise many layers of historic significance in this one: between 1965 and 1967, Abram Games was a member of the Stamp Advisory Committee of the Council of Industrial Design, and David Gentleman was a student of Games at the Royal College of Art.

William Doherty, Royal Mail Editor

Keep the mail coming...

The Editor welcomes your letters and the senders of those published will receive a Prestige Stamp Book as a thank-you. Send your letters to: The Editor, *British Philatelic Bulletin*, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB. You can also email: bulletin.enquiries@royalmail.com.

Green and bear it

Anyone collecting the Inventive Britain issue may notice a colour error on the Prestige Stamp Book Machin pane (YP190) bearing the 81p value. The stamp is printed in Sea Green rather than the intended Holly Green. This was due to the printer referring to an out-of-date production standard ●

Royal Mail Update 2015 Machin definitives and Country definitives go on sale this month. The full philatelic range of mint stamps in new colours includes First Day Covers, Presentation Packs and alternative postmarks







FD 1508-PL



FD 1508-TH

Machin definitive stamps New postal rates come into effect on 31 March, with four new Machins issued in readiness on 24 March.

- Amber Yellow: £1.33 is the new rate for Royal Mail International Standard Letters in Zone 1 and 2 that weigh from10g to 20g.
- Orchid Mauve: £1.52 covers Royal Mail International Standard Letters for Europe, from 20g to 100g.
- Plum Purple: £2.25 is the tariff for Zone 1 and 2 on Royal Mail International Standards Letters from 20g to 100g.
- Spruce Green: £2.45 is for Air Mail Europe Large Letter up to 100 grams.
- Aqua Green: £3.15 Air Mail Rest of World Zone 1 (ROW1) Large Letter up to 100 grams.
- Rose Pink: £3.30 Air Mail ROW2, Large Letter up to 100g.

Machin definitive First Day Cover The elegant cover, designed by Robert Maude, features the Royal Mail coat of arms and can be ordered from the address on page 194 or online at www.royalmail.com/stamps. Price: £17.28 (£14.40 overseas); order number DF062. Please quote *Bulletin* code 15CDB. ▸

Machin Definitive Stamps – Specifications

Date of issue	26 March
Number of stamps	Six
Stamp format	Definitive
Stamp size	20mm x 24mm
Printer	De La Rue Security Print
Print process	Gravure
Perforations	15 x 14
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 is a leading Machin expert and writes regularly for the *British Philatelic Bulletin*. See his website at www.deegam.com.



Definitive Stamps Presentation Pack The traditional Presentation Pack, shown above, contains information written by BPMA Curator Douglas Muir, who gives you an expert insight into the Machin story. Price: £14.50.

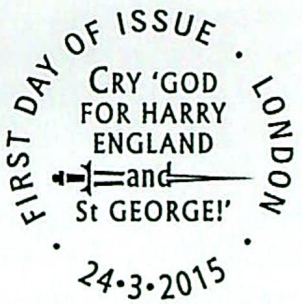


Country definitive stamps and Presentation Pack The sharply designed Country stamps, with their detailed reliefs of national emblems – of England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales – are available individually in their two new values of £1 and £1.33, as a country set for £2.33, or in a classic Presentation Pack, as shown above, for £9.85.

Unstamped Royal Mail First Day Cover envelopes (price 30p) for each Country are available from main Post Offices and philatelic outlets approximately one week before the stamps go on sale. Four First Day Covers are available, with a choice of the Tallents House postmark or an alternative mark for each of the four capital cities. Price: £3.27 (£2.73 overseas) each.

Orders for Serviced First Day Covers have to reach Royal Mail by 24 March 2015. Customers may also send stamped envelopes on the day of issue to Royal Mail, Tallents House (address on page 194) for the Tallents House, Edinburgh postmark ●





FD 1509-PL



FD 1510-PL



FD 1511-PL



FD 1512-PL

Country Definitive Stamps – Specifications

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

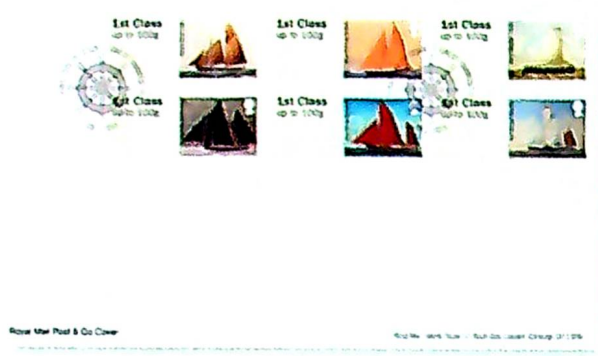
Above: First Day Covers with a different postmark and scenic illustration for each country represented. Order from the address on page 194 or online at ww.royalmail.com/stamps. Please quote *Bulletin* code 15CDB

Postmark order numbers for First Day of Issue definitives, 24 March 2015

	Tallents House	Pictorial	Non-pictorial
UK Machin definitives £1.33, £1.52, £2.25, £2.45, £3.15, £3.30	FD 1508TH	FD 1508 PL	FD 1508 NP
England Country definitives £1, £1.33	FD 1509TH	FD 1509 AP	FD 1509 NP
Northern Ireland Country definitive £1, £1.33	FD 1510 TH	FD 1510 AP	FD 1510 NP
Scotland Country definitives £1, £1.33	FD 1511 TH	FD 1511 AP	FD 1511 NP
Wales Country definitives £1, £1.33	FD 1512 TH	FD 1512 AP	FD 1512 NP



Post & Go Update Martyn Fry reports on new underprints and overprints at home and away



Spring Stampex saw the introduction of the new Working Sail Post & Go stamps from Royal Mail, and a 'Spring Stampex February 2015' overprint was available on Post & Go Machin and Union Flag stamps.

Guernsey Post joined the Post & Go community with the launch of the Guernsey Flag stamp alongside the Union Flag in its new exhibition machine.

Jersey Post also had a new issue with its Protected Species set, which was partnered by the Jersey Flag stamp dispensed with a Spring Stampex overprint.

Trollope 200 at the BPMA The BPMA introduced a 'Trollope 200' underprint on 18 February on machine A001. The underprint, which will be on Machin stamp designs only, will run until the end of April. (Also in celebration of the bicentenary of Anthony Trollope's birth is Royal Mail's Commemorative Stamp Sheet, to be issued next month and previewed on page 221.)

Perth overprint Royal Mail Post & Go machines will be at the 86th Scottish Congress at the Dewar's Centre in Perth on 17 and 18 April. Union Flag and Machin stamps will be on sale carrying an exhibition overprint.

Widening the circuit As part of the move towards extending the Post & Go exhibition circuit, as previously announced in the *British Philatelic Bulletin*, Royal Mail will be taking machines to the annual Essen exhibition from 7 to 9 May. Union Flag and Machin stamps will carry an exhibition overprint. There are no plans to make these stamps available through Tallents House.

New machine in Somerset A Post & Go machine will go live at the Fleet Air Arm Museum in Yeovilton, Somerset this month. The machine will carry a location ID of 'The FAAM'.

Navy and Marines VE Day Machines A002 and A005, at the National Museum of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Museum respectively, will carry a 'VE Day 70' underprint from Friday 8 May until Friday 29 May.

Taipei Stamp exhibition A Royal Mail Post & Go machine will be at the Taipei 30th Asian International Stamp Exhibition from 24 to 28 April. The machine will be part of the International Security Printers stand and feature exhibition commemorative labels instead of the usual stamps.

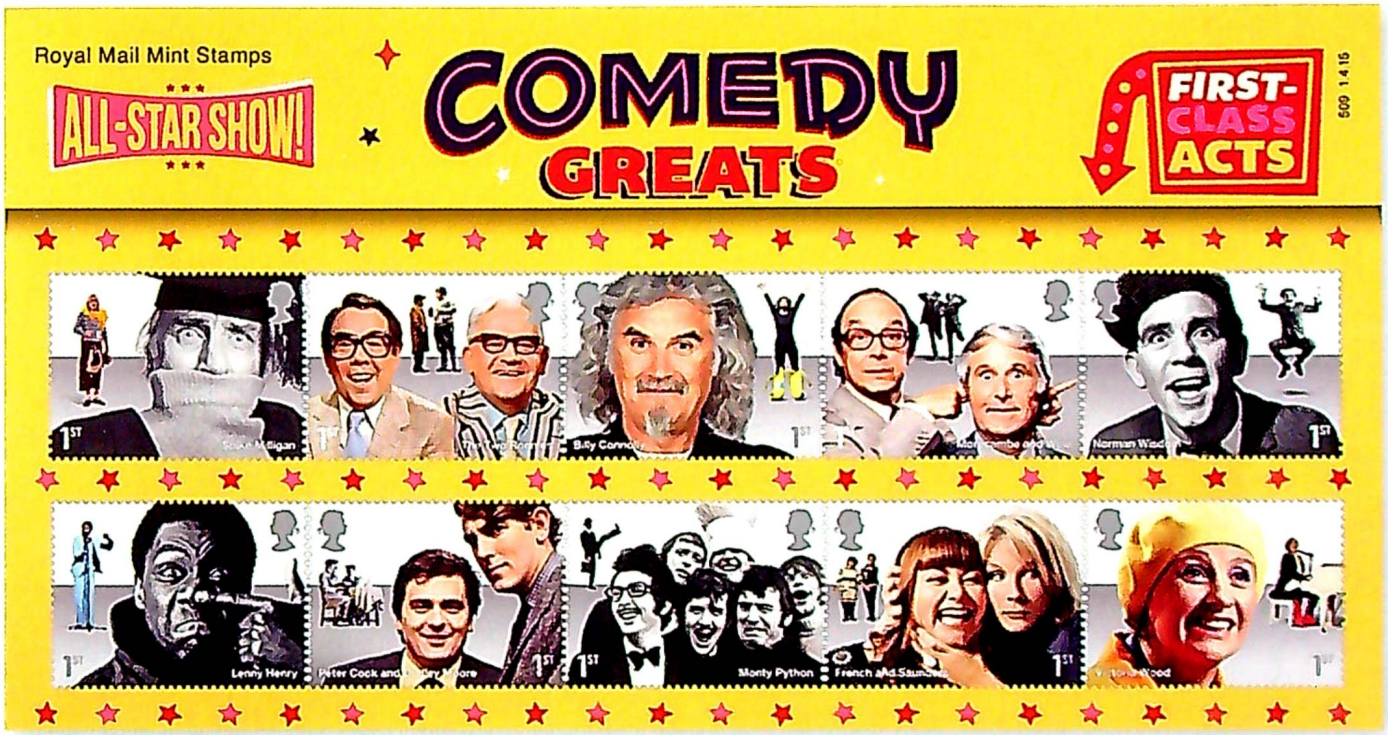
Extended trials The Post & Go trial at Crewe and Bradford North Enquiry Offices, which began in December, has been extended from 31 January for six months. As part of the trial extension, machines M002 and M003 have replaced the Stampex units previously installed. The new machines have an additional 'Fees payable' facility as the first part of a trial development for mails operations as well as the capability to add further 'pods' similar to machine A001 at the BPMA •

Send your questions about Post & Go to bulletin.enquiries@royalmail.com.



Above: the BPMA's 'Trollope 200' underprint celebrates the bicentenary of postal pioneer Anthony Trollope's birth

Conor Masterson



A great set of humour The Comedy Greats issue applauds our finest funnymen and women

THIS ISSUE CELEBRATES brilliantly distinctive British humour by paying tribute to generations of comic geniuses – from Norman Wisdom and Spike Milligan to French and Saunders, Lenny Henry and Victoria Wood via Morecambe and Wise and Monty Python. These are revered practitioners from the past 60 years, including many whose work is considered a landmark in comedy. Released on April Fool's Day (naturally), the issue also features a Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards and a Retail Stamp Book.

Above: the Comedy Greats issue Presentation Pack

Below: the legendary lovable underdog Norman Wisdom



Stamp by stamp All ten stamps from the Comedy Greats issue, a mix of black and white colour images, come as First Class values.

Spike Milligan Before Milligan, British comedians were constrained by convention, but in his wake they were free to be funny in all manner of ways. The main inspiration of *The Goons*, he liberated a generation of comedy lovers with a refreshingly surreal comic style.

The Two Ronnies Ronnie Barker and Ronnie Corbett became a duo for *The Two Ronnies* in 1971. ▸

Comedy Greats Stamps – Prices

Stamp set, Code AS84A	£6.30
Presentation Pack, Code AP400	£6.80
First Day Cover Stamps/overseas, Code AF390	£8.04/£6.70
Stamp Cards (set of 10), Code AQ219	£4.50
Retail Stamp Book, Code UB382 (see page 202)	£3.78

Comedy Greats Stamps – Specifications

Date of issue	1 April
Number of stamps	Ten
Stamp design	The Chase
Stamp format	Landscape
Stamp size	41mm x 30mm
Number per sheet	25/50, 2 x se-tenant strips of 5
Printer	International Security Printers
Print process	Lithography
Perforations	14.5 x 14
Phosphor	Bars as appropriate
Gum	PVA



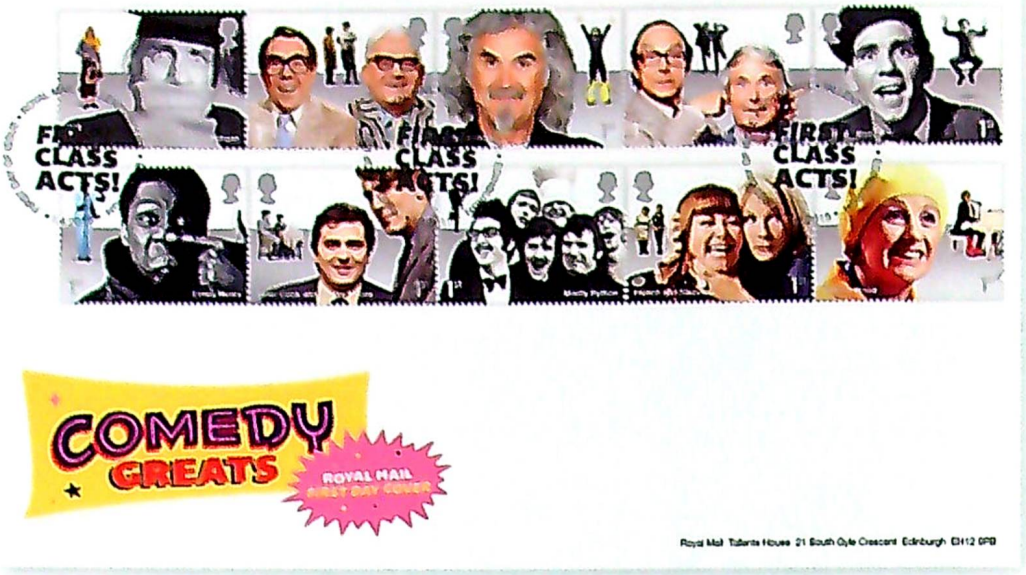
FD1513-TH



FD1513-PL



FD1513-NP



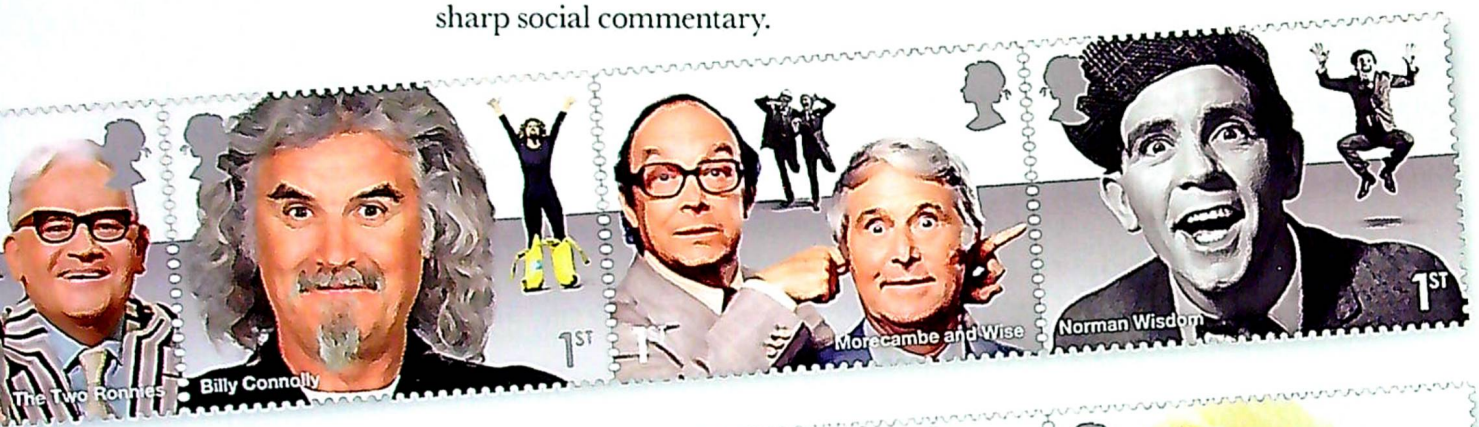
◂ Their remarkable range included spoof news reports, sketches, stand-up and sit-down solo spots, mini-serials and musical send-ups.

Billy Connolly Raised in the shadow of the Clyde's shipyards, this working-class comic has entertained two generations with long, meandering, earthy stories of ordinary experiences that strike a chord with huge audiences.

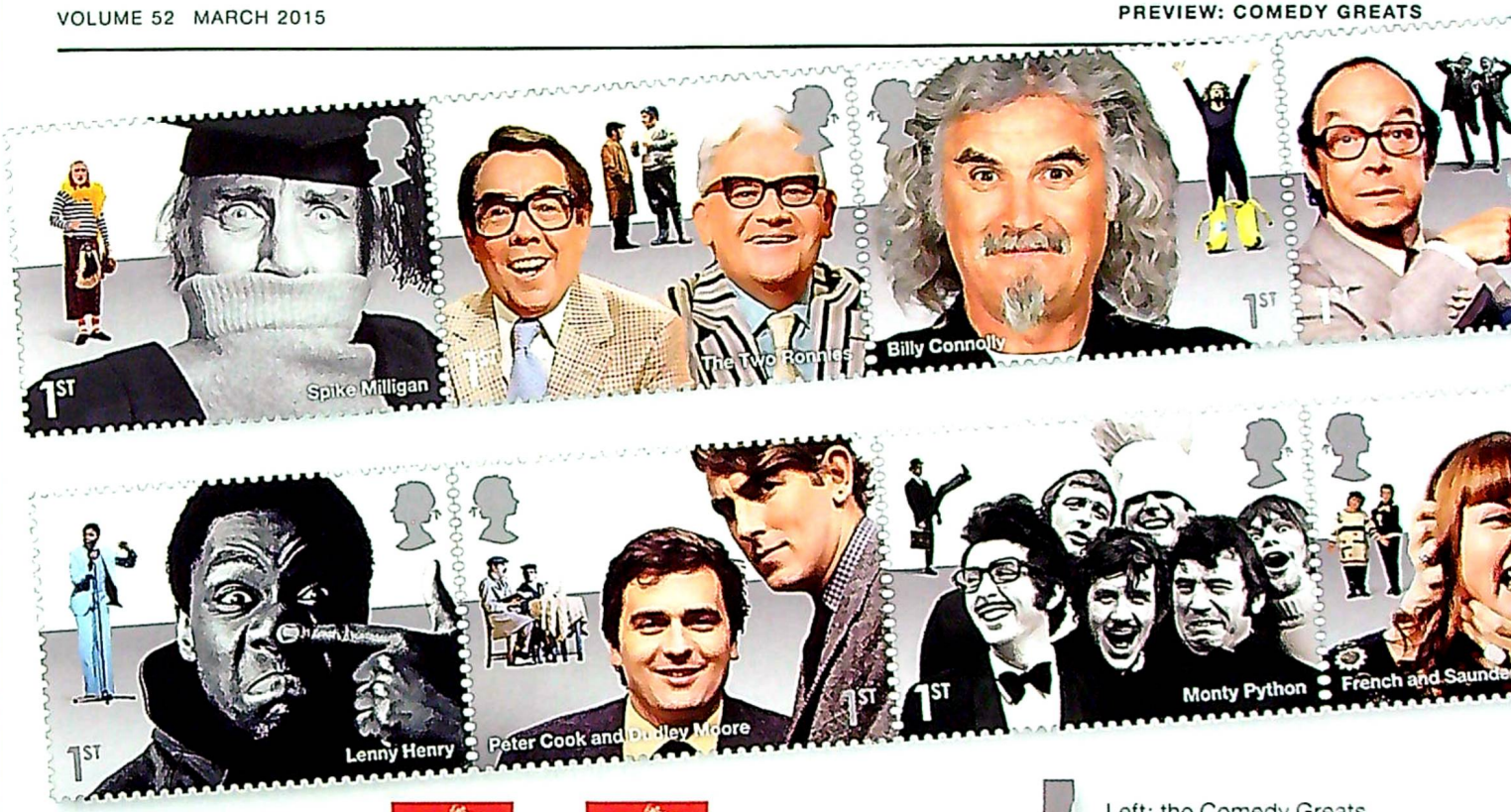
Morecambe and Wise Eric Morecambe and Ernie Wise did it all: patter in front of the stage curtain, varied sketches, sitcom-style domestic scenes, musical parodies and elaborate Hollywood-style pastiches. Celebrity guests queued up to appear alongside them as their television show became a major viewing event.

Norman Wisdom This working-class Londoner was the indomitable little man in a flat cap and cheap suit who, as hapless Norman Pitkin in a string of slapstick movies, overcame hazards at every turn to claim an improbable moral victory.

Lenny Henry Influenced by Mike Yarwood and Richard Pryor, Lenny Henry developed a popular comedy style that combined mimicry with some sharp social commentary.









Left: the Comedy Greats Retail Stamp Book

Facing page: the Comedy Greats set First Day Cover, the Tallents House postmark, altnernative pictorial postmark and non-pictorial postmark

Peter Cook and Dudley Moore Cook and Moore brought the avant-garde to mainstream Sixties TV with their programme *Not Only... But Also...* and created a comic style both literate and surreal.

Monty Python Relentlessly inventive, *Monty Python's Flying Circus* presented refreshingly funny comic classics such as the Ministry of Silly Walks, the all-Spam menu and a cross-dressing lumberjack. As a result, the Python team acquired cult status.

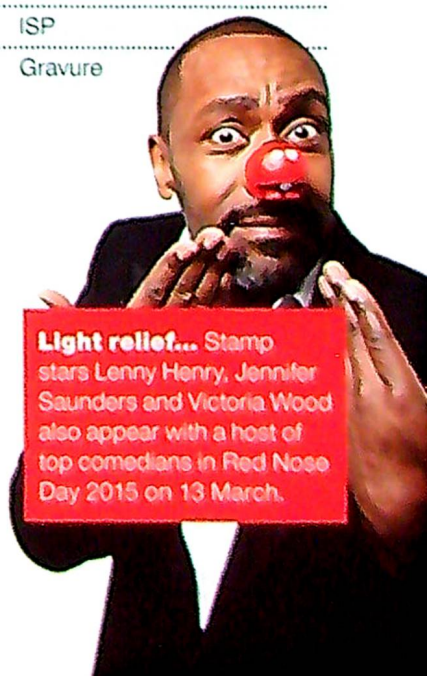
French and Saunders Starring in several series of *French and Saunders* and combining sketches on society, gender and celebrity, Dawn French and Jennifer Saunders won deserved applause for their versatility.

Victoria Wood She is widely regarded as the country's most distinguished female comedian, thanks to inspired creations such as *Acorn Antiques* and *Dinnerladies*.

Comedy Greats Stamp Book – Specifications

Issue date	1 April
Book format	4 x Royal Mail Red 1st Class Machin definitives, 1 x Comedy Greats Norman Wisdom, 1 x Comedy Greats Morecambe and Wise
1st Class stamp format	Portrait 20mm x 24mm
Special Stamp format	Landscape 41mm x 30mm
Printer	ISP
Print process	Gravure

Orders for Serviced First Day Covers should reach Royal Mail by 1 April. Send stamped self-addressed envelopes on the day of issue to Tallents House (address on page 194) for the Tallents House, Edinburgh postmark, quoting *Bulletin* code 15CDB. Two alternative marks have the Laughterton, Lincoln location, with the pictorial mark bearing a 'Ha! Ha!' motif •



Light relief... Stamp stars Lenny Henry, Jennifer Saunders and Victoria Wood also appear with a host of top comedians in Red Nose Day 2015 on 13 March.



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

UK diary dates



7 March Streetley Philatelic Society Stamp Fair, Collingwood Centre, Pheasey, Birmingham B43 7NF, 10am to 4.30pm. 14 dealers, Society displays, car parking, refreshments. Admission 20p, children 10p. Information: Brian Hyner, 0121 357 5340, brianhyner@googlemail.com.

7 March Welsh Postal History Society meeting, Aberystwyth. Information: Peter Brindley, 01248 352682, peter@wps.wales.org.

14 March GB Philatelic Society display: Penny Reds Explained (B Barrell and M Williams), RPSL, 41 Devonshire Place, London W1, 11am onwards. Information: Peter Tanner, 01753 887755.

14-15 March Salisbury Stamp Show, Andover Leisure Centre, West Street, Andover SP10 1QP. Information: www.salisburystampshow.co.uk.

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

28 March Westbex 2015, Thatcham & District Philatelic Society Stamp & Postcard Fair, Kennet School, Stoney Lane, Thatcham RG19 4LL, 10am to 4pm. 22 dealers, parking, refreshments. Includes country meeting of National Philatelic Society at 1.30pm. Information: G Stewart, 01635 866942.

10 April Strand Stamp Fair – details above.

11 April Telford Stamp, Card & Coin Fair, Belmont Hall, Wellington Centre, Telford TF1 1LU, 10am to 3pm. Free entry. Enquiries: Bob Hemmings, 01694 720192.

17-18 April Scottish Philatelic Congress, Dewar's Centre, Perth.

25 April GB Philatelic Society President's Display by Bob Galland – Undeliverable Mail from 1764 to the Present Day – RPSL, 41 Devonshire Place, London W1.

25 April Midland Philatelic Federation Convention, hosted by Banbury Philatelic Society, Blessed George Napier School, Banbury •

Exhibitions



London 2015 Europhilex will be the biggest philatelic event in Europe this year. It runs from 13 to 16 May at London's Business Design Centre, home of Stampex and the venue for the international exhibition in 2010. It commemorates 175 years of postage stamps, 150 years of Stanley Gibbons catalogues and 125 years of international exhibitions in London. The first day is for ticket holders only. Tickets, at £10 each, are available on the Europhilex website, www.london2015.net, or by sending a sterling cheque payable to 'SWE London 2015' to Mrs Deborah Gooch, London 2015 Europhilex, Greystones, Green Lane, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 2BX.

There will be some 377 competitive exhibits in Traditional, Postal History, Aerophilately, Revenues, Postal Stationery, Open, Youth and Literature classes by entrants from 34 European countries. These include 31 exhibits of British stamps, postal history and literature relating to British material. Eight are in the Traditional (stamps) class, nine in Postal History, one in

Revenues, two in Open, one in Postal Stationery, and ten in Literature. The Traditional exhibits include GB Line-Engraved, First Low-value Surface-printed Stamps, £5 Orange, Edward VII Essays & Proofs, Decimal Castles 1988-99, College Stamps of Oxford and Pre-decimal Machins.

Among the Postal History exhibits are British Mail Overseas 1840 to UPU, Spoon Cancels, Handstruck Marks of Uniform Penny Post, British Army Post Offices 1915-20, Exeter Postal History and Private Posts to Uniform Penny Post 1600-1840.

Literature entries include Books on the World's First Postage Stamp (Penny Black), Prepaid Parliamentary Envelopes, University Mails of Oxford and Cambridge and Perkins Bacon Archives. Three prominent British philatelic magazines are entered: *The London Philatelist* (Royal Philatelic Society London), *The Stamp Lover* (National Philatelic Society), and *Gibbons Stamp Monthly.*

A full listing of the exhibits and exhibitors can be seen at www.london 2015.net, so visitors can plan in advance what they want to see at the show. On from 7 to 9 May, the European Championship for Thematic Philately in Essen, Germany (pictured right) will form the thematic arm of Europhilex and the winning entries in nine classes will be displayed at Europhilex.

The Court of Honour at Europhilex will display outstanding items highlighting major developments in postal history from the 17th century to the present day. See www.london2015.net for more details, or Stamp Scene in the December 2014 issue of the *Bulletin* •



Stamp-related exhibitions and events

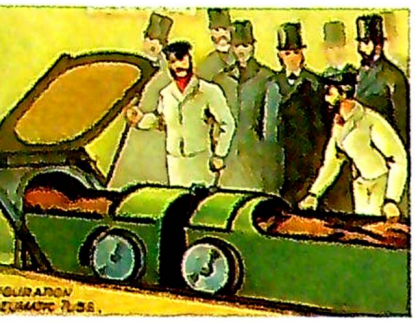
2015 marks the 800th anniversary of Magna Carta. An exhibition called Law Liberty Legacy at the British Library in London will display Magna Carta along with its American descendants, the Declaration of Independence and Bill of Rights. The exhibition runs from 13 March until 1 September (there is an admission charge). Visit www.bl.uk/magna-carta for information about the exhibition and a series of related talks and events. Royal Mail stamps marking the Magna Carta anniversary go on sale on 2 June.

2015 is also the bicentenary of the birth of Anthony Trollope, novelist, travel writer and Post Office employee credited with the invention of the pillar box. A Royal Mail commemorative sheet is issued on 24 April (details on page 221). The British Library is mounting a display focusing on Trollope's approach to authorship, which will include the manuscript of his autobiography, printed editions of his works, correspondence and personal effects. The display runs from 3 March until 7 June, admission free. An event, A Celebration of Anthony Trollope, will be held at the Library on 23 April from 6.30pm to 8pm. A panel of speakers will give their reflections on Trollope's work, followed by questions from the audience. There is an admission charge for this event. See www.bl.uk/whats-on for more information.



Sherlock Holmes stories featured on five stamps issued in 1993, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle appeared on an Eminent Britons stamp of 2009, and Peter Cushing starred as Holmes on a Great Britons stamp of 2013. An exhibition, Sherlock Holmes: The Man Who Never Lived and Will Never Die, is on at the Museum of London until 12 April (admission charge applies) • ▸

British Postal Museum & Archive



The BPMA, 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 Saturday 14 March, 11 April and 9 May, 10am to 5pm (but closed the following Mondays). On show at Freeling House until April is a display of photographs of Mail Rail, to be followed from May by an exhibition for the 175th anniversary of the Penny Black (exact dates to be announced).

Visit the BPMA website, www.postalheritage.org.uk, for details of other exhibitions: Post Office in the Community (at Blists Hill Victorian Town, Shropshire) and Last Post: Remembering the First World War (at Coalbrookdale Museum of Iron, until 27 March). An exhibition, The Post Office in Pictures, will be on view at the Old Courthouse, Westgate, Thirsk, North Yorkshire, from 30 March to 11 April. Some 25 BPMA exhibitions can be seen online, including Aerial Post, regional stamps, Machins, David Gentleman, postal vehicles and letter boxes. A set of six Last Post postcards is on sale at the BPMA shop, priced £3.75.

Also see the website or the BPMA Events Guide (see below) for details of the Archive tour (8 April, 3pm to 4pm), tour of the BPMA Museum Store at Debden in Essex (4 March and 1 April, 1pm to 3pm; 6 May, 10am-12pm and 1pm to 3pm), Pillar to Post London walking tours (21 March, 26 April and 23 May, 11am), and two talks in London: Unstitching the Uniform (Guildhall Library, 26 March, 6pm to 8pm) and My Dear Tony... (Phoenix Centre – next to the BPMA – 30 April, 7pm to 8pm). An event, called The Post Office Went to War, will be held at Debden on 9 May, from 10am to 4pm (evening talk and refreshments, 4pm to 5pm). A charge applies to some events. Contact the BPMA for a copy of the Events Guide: phone 020 7239 2570 or email info@postalheritage.org.uk. Email friends@postalheritage.org.uk for details of the activities of the Friends of the BPMA. Annual membership is £21, with a reduced rate for over-65s •

Society journals



The Winter 2014 issue of *TPO*, journal of the TPO & Seapost Society, announces that a new book by Keith Morris and Mike Dovey, called *TPO Postmarks of Great Britain & Ireland*, is soon to be published. Articles in *TPO* include Midland TPO – Going South, War Emergency Postal Communications – TPO Services, and London & Holyhead TPO Tax Mark, as well as notes and features on rail and ship mail worldwide. For details about the Society contact Julian Jones: 19 Richmond Lane, Romsey SO51 7LB or visit www.tpo-seapost.org.uk.

The December 2014 issue of *Eastern Angle*, bulletin of the East Anglian Postal History Society, includes the features, Colchester Town Sub Offices, A Postal History of Stilton, Huntingdonshire, Hadleigh Mileage Marks, and Packet Handstamps of Hemel Hempstead, Peterborough, Romford, and Southend-on-Sea, 1980-2011. An important feature of this journal is its excellent coverage of current developments – including post office openings, closures and relocations – often accompanied by photographs of the offices. For more information, contact John Copeland: 20 The Vale, Brentwood CM15 4UP or visit www.eaphsc.webs.com.

The November-December 2014 issue of *Topical Time*, magazine of the American Topical Association, includes articles on Topics (thematics) on Postmarks; 350th anniversary of New Jersey, and Foreign Thematic Exhibit Websites. Being the Christmas issue there is a major feature entitled A Philatelic Window into Santa's Evolution, showing stamps depicting Santa Claus. The British stamps of 1981 and 1997 are among the many illustrated.

There is also extensive coverage of the activities of the ATA's numerous units and chapters. For ATA details contact: ATA Office, PO Box 8, Carterville, IL 62918-0008, USA, or see www.americantopicalassn.org •

Film about famous philatelist

In June 2014 we featured the unique British Guiana One-Cent Magenta stamp which sold at auction that month for $9.5 million. It had been owned by John E du Pont, a noted philanthropist, philatelist – and wrestling enthusiast. A new film called *Foxcatcher* tells the story of du Pont's relationship with brothers Dave and Mark Schultz whom he hired to help train wrestlers, including his own private wrestling team known as Foxcatcher. In 1996 du Pont murdered Dave Schultz and was sentenced to prison where he died in 2010. In the film du Pont is played by Steve Carell, with Mark Ruffalo and Channing Tatum as the Schultz brothers •

Local stamps

A new set of local stamps (local carriage labels) was issued by Rona, a small island off the east coast of Skye, in December. The three stamps feature photographs taken in 1933 and 1934 of the MacRae family who lived on the island until moving to Kyleakin on Skye in the late Forties.

The new stamps, each bearing a £1 value, feature James, Flora and Christopher MacRae and are printed in sheets of nine, three of each stamp, in horizontal se-tenant strips. They are available at face value, plus postage and packing. Enquiries: Bill Cowie, Rona Lodge, Isle of Rona, Portree, Isle of Skye IV51 9RA, ronalodge@isleofrona.com, or call 07831 293 963 •

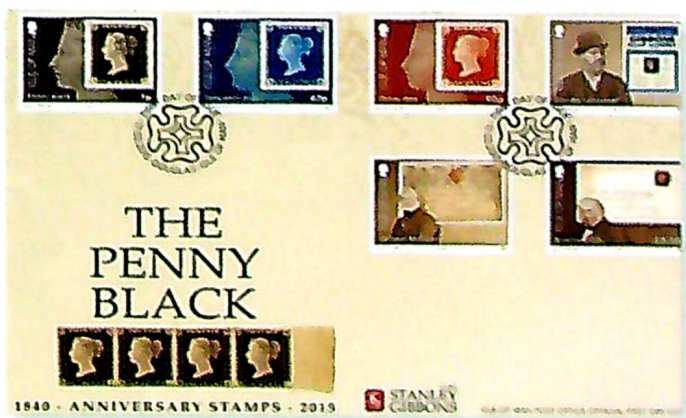


Stanley Gibbons tribute

The Isle of Man Post Office is commemorating the birth of Edward Stanley Gibbons in a new six-stamp issue marking the 175th anniversary of the Penny Black, the world's first adhesive postage stamp used in the public postal system.

The stamp set shows the Penny Black, Twopenny Blue, Penny Red (which replaced the Penny Black), Stanley Gibbons and two more greats of philatelic and postal history William Mulready and Rowland Hill.

This historic issue was released on 17 February. For more details, viist awww.iompost.com •



Bridges on stamps

Historic links



TARR STEPS Exmoor National Park, Devon

Tech specs 55m crossing comprising 17 gritstone slabs weighing up to two tonnes each.

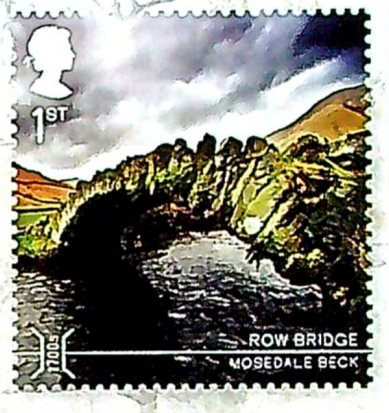
Need to know The 15th-century 'clapper' bridge (a term derived from Medieval Latin *claperius*, meaning a 'pile of stones') crosses Devon's River Barle near a cluster of 5,000-year-old Bronze Age burial mounds.

Claim to fame A local myth claims the Devil built the bridge and refused to let anyone cross it. The Devil was challenged by a brave parson who strode on to the bridge to meet him. Satan relented and agreed locals could use the bridge – except when he wanted to sunbathe on it.

Released on 5 March, the Bridges issue spans the history of crossings that connect our world – from ancient stepping stones to steel-built triumphs of modern engineering. Andrew Neish reports

ROW BRIDGE

Wasdale Head, Cumbria



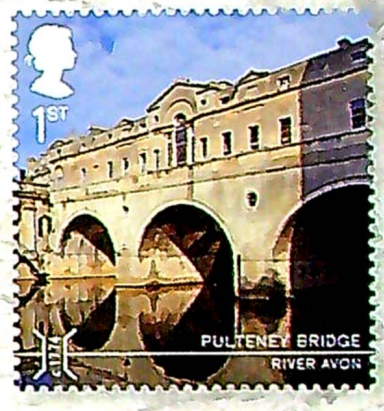
Tech specs 4.5m single span, self-supporting bridge built from slate wedges with 1m-wide pathway.

Need to know This 18th century packhorse bridge over Mosedale Beck in the Lake District was constructed without parapets so the stonework would not interfere with cargo panniers strapped to horses' flanks.

Claim to fame The bridge is on an old 'corpse road' – the route for taking the dead of Wasdale Head to Eskdale for burial. Legend says you can still see the ghost of a horse that vanished in the mist along with the coffin it carried.

PULTENEY BRIDGE

Bath



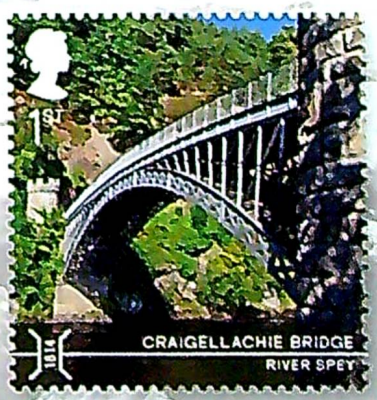
Tech specs Made from Bath stone and featuring three semi-circular arches, a pedimented central pavilion, and rows of shops.

Need to know Robert Adam's 1774 design straddling the River Avon is one of the world's most beautiful classical bridges, but its origins were rather more prosaic. Local worthy Sir William Pulteney had the bridge built to link Bath with the family's 600-acre Bathwick estate, which he hoped to transform into a money-spinning property development.

Claim to fame The bridge mimics an unbuilt design by legendary 16th century Italian architect Andrea Palladio for Venice's Rialto. And it stars in the 2012 *Les Misérables* movie, when Russell Crowe's suicidal Inspector Javert jumps from it into the Avon, which doubles as the Seine.

CRAIGELLACHIE BRIDGE

Moray, Scotland



Tech specs Craigellachie is a 46m-long single-arched span of Welsh cast iron. It is crowned with four stone castle-style towers sporting mock arrow slits.

Need to know The bridge over the River Spey, designed by pioneering engineer Thomas Telford and finished in 1814, was revolutionary for its time. Using iron to create a long, shallow arch allowed a construction which would not have been possible with masonry.

Claim to fame In 1994 Craigellachie Bridge was the scene of a historic last parade for the Queen's Own Highlanders (Seaforth and Camerons) and the Gordon Highlanders before they amalgamated to become The Highlanders (Seaforth, Gordons and Camerons).

PONT GROG Y BORTH/MENAI SUSPENSION BRIDGE

Menai Strait, Wales



Tech specs The 305m-long bridge's 176.5m central span was originally held by 16 wrought iron chains – these have since been replaced by steel chains.

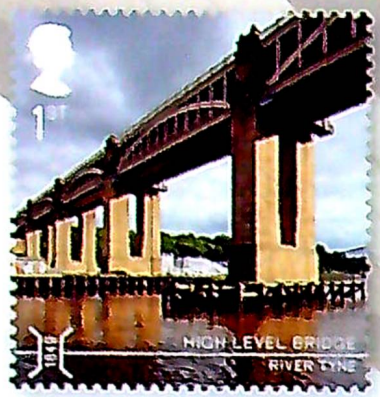
Need to know Completed in 1826 and connecting Anglesey to the Welsh mainland, Thomas Telford's design was the world's first great suspension bridge. At 30m high, it allowed tall masted ships to pass easily underneath.

Claim to fame It is mentioned in the poem *Haddocks' Eyes* in Lewis Carroll's Through the Looking-Glass, when the White Knight tells Alice he had completed a design 'to keep the Menai bridge from rust by boiling it in wine'.

Bridges on stamps

HIGH LEVEL BRIDGE

Newcastle upon Tyne



Tech specs A 408m-long two-tier road and rail bridge with 40m-high piers and made of cast iron, wrought iron and sandstone.

Need to know World-renowned engineer Robert Stephenson's spectacular 1849 design, one of the most visually stunning of Britain's Railway Age, spans the Tyne to link Newcastle and Gateshead.

Claim to fame Copying the recent Parisian love lock craze, Tyneside couples have made local headlines by inscribing padlocks with romantic vows and securing them to the bridge before throwing the key into the Tyne.

ROYAL BORDER BRIDGE

Berwick-upon-Tweed



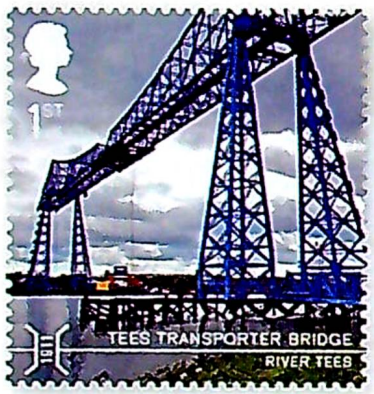
Tech specs A masonry viaduct 658m long (including its approaches) with 28 semi-circular arches 18m wide.

Need to know Robert Stephenson's bridge on the River Tweed, opened in 1850, was a vital new element in Britain's growing network to link London and Edinburgh. Despite the bridge's name, the railway actually crosses the border four kilometres north of Berwick.

Claim to fame Queen Victoria and Prince Albert officially opened the bridge on 29 August 1850. Victoria had to give her permission for it to be called the Royal Border Bridge.

TEES TRANSPORTER BRIDGE

Middlesbrough



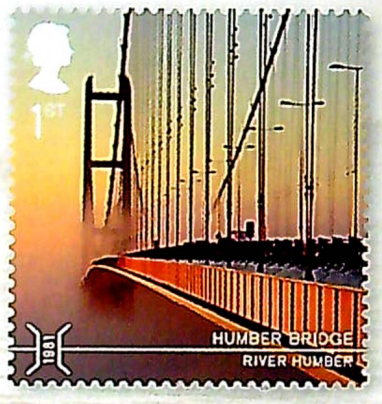
Tech specs This lattice steel engineering wonder comprises two cantilevered trusses spanning 259m, used to bear a gondola car for people and vehicles across the River Tees via an electric pulley system.

Need to know Completed in 1911, the Tees is the world's biggest operating transporter bridge. The gondola crossing takes two minutes.

Claim to fame A 2002 episode of the TV series *Auf Wiedersehen, Pet* showed the cheeky labourers dismantling the bridge for it to be reassembled in Arizona after being sold to a rich American. Some incensed viewers believed this was really happening, and complained.

HUMBER BRIDGE

Hull



Tech specs A steel and concrete suspension design 2,220m long with a 1,410m central span.

Need to know This huge edifice, with its soaring 155.5m-high towers, was for 16 years the longest single-span suspension bridge in the world. Its construction required 480,000 tonnes of concrete and 27,500 tonnes of steel.

Claim to fame Poet Philip Larkin, a Kingston-upon-Hull resident, was commissioned to pen a poem to celebrate the opening of the road bridge in 1981. The result was *A Bridge for the Living*, which was set to music.



PEACE BRIDGE

Derry/Londonderry

Tech specs 235m-long self-anchored suspension bridge.

Need to know Built to bring together divided Protestant and Catholic communities living on separate sides of the River Foyle, this 2011 design features two masts with a system of cables that overlap mid-river to create a symbolic handshake.

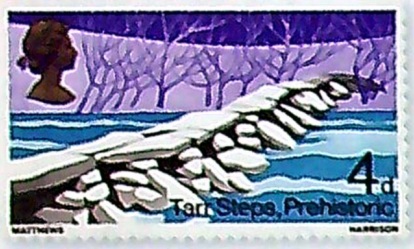
Claim to fame The world record for the largest gathering of brides was broken on the bridge in 2013 when 748 women wearing bridal gowns crossed it together to raise money for a local hospice.

Turn over for more British bridges on stamps ▶

Bridges on stamps

50 years of classic crossings The Bridges set is the latest of many bridge-themed issues

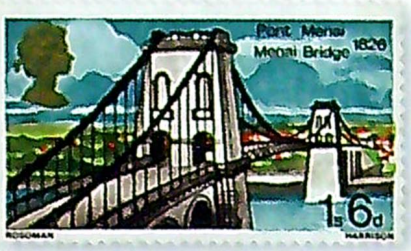
This month's splendid Bridges issue has inspired our philatelic trip back in time through Royal Mail's archive (now accessible online at www.rmspecialstamps.com), where we have selected all the stamps showing bridges. See how many you can name – it is surprising how familiar some of these structures seem, even for those who have never crossed the particular bridge portrayed on a stamp...



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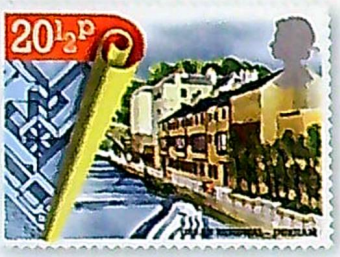
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1 British Bridges 1968: Tarr Steps, Prehistoric; Aberfeldy Bridge, 1733; Pont Menai/Menai Bridge, 1826; M4 Viaduct, 1965. **2** 62nd Inter-Parliamentary Conference 1975. **3** London 1980 International Stamp Exhibition 1980. **4** British Engineering Achievements 1983: Humber Bridge. **5** Urban Renewal 1984: Durham; Perth. **6** 350 Years of Royal Mail Public Postal Service 1985. **7** 900th Anniversary of the Domesday Book 1986. **8** Industrial Archaeology 1989: Ironbridge, Shropshire; Pontcysyllte Aqueduct, Clwyd. **9** The Age of Steam 1994. **10** Millennium Series 1999: The Workers' Tale/Milltowns; The Travellers' Tale/Linking the Nation. **11** Millennium Projects 2000: People and Places/Gateshead Millennium Bridge. **12** Bridges of London 2002:



11



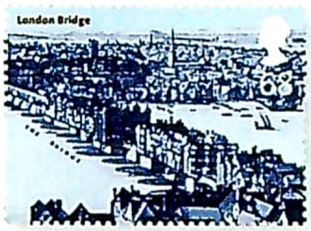
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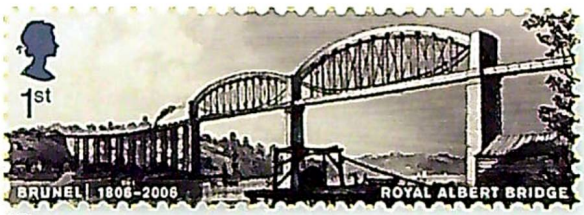
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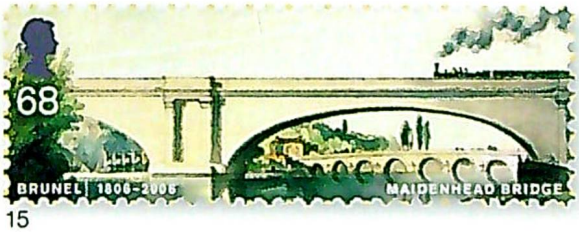
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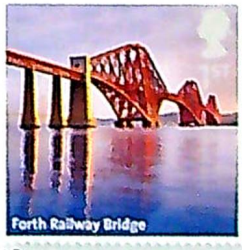
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Tower Bridge; Millennium Bridge; Blackfriars Bridge; London Bridge; Westminster Bridge. **13** A British Journey 2003: Scotland/Glenfinnan Viaduct, Lochaber. **14** A British Journey 2004: Wales/Pont Abermaw, Cymru/Barmouth Bridge, Wales. **15** Birth Bicentenary of Isambard Kingdom Brunel 2006: Royal Albert Bridge; Clifton Suspension Bridge; Maidenhead Bridge. **16** World of Invention 2007. **17** Celebrating Northern Ireland 2008: Queen's Bridge, Belfast. **18** Pioneers of the Industrial Revolution 2009: James Brindley, Canal Engineering. **19** UK A-Z 2011: Carrick-a-Rede; Forth Railway Bridge; Ironbridge. **20** UK A-Z Part 2 2012: Tyne Bridge. **21** Welcome to London Olympic Games 2012. **22** Welcome to London Paralympic Games 2012: Basketball; Weightlifting.

First-class heroes

A new stamp sheet out on 18 March pays tribute to the plucky postal workers who fought for the Post Office Rifles in the First World War



THEY WERE ordinary men of extraordinary courage. They swapped the safe routine of civvy street for the shell-infested alleys of the Western Front. They also earned some of the nation's highest honours for valour: the Victoria Cross, the Military Cross, the Distinguished Service Order. These were the men of the Post Office Rifles – two battalions of postmen, clerks and sorting room boys who fought their way through some of history's most infamous battles, including Passchendaele, the Somme, Ypres, Cambrai and Loos.

Now the Post Office Rifles are being honoured with a Commemorative Sheet. Ten illustrated labels, adjacent to Union Flag stamps, tell the story of this fighting force, part of the City of London Regiment, during the Great War. The Sheet, out on 18 March, also contains a fascinating history of the unit before 1914. The backing card narrative goes on to detail the key First World War battles involving the Rifles, as well as one of its greatest heroes

The Rifles: a brief history

The Post Office Rifles are best remembered for their service and sacrifice in the Great War but they won battle honours in the Egyptian Campaigns of 1882 and in the Boer War of 1899-1902.

The unit was formed in 1868 under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel John Lowther du Plat Taylor. This volunteer regiment of 1,000 postal workers was called the 49th Middlesex Rifle Volunteers (The Post Office Rifles). Their first duty was to protect postal assets after bomb attacks on Post Office buildings by Irish independence fighters in Manchester and London.

In Egypt in 1882, as the British fought with local forces for control of the Suez Canal, the Rifles set up postal and telegraph systems. And they saw action in the Boer War of 1899 during efforts to establish military postal operations in South Africa.

After war was declared in August 1914 two battalions of Post Office Rifles were formed – the 1st and the 2nd. These were now dedicated combat units, a first for the Rifles. Postal operations were run by the Royal Engineers Postal Section. The 1st Battalion went to the front on 18 March 1915, the 2nd arrived at the start of 1917. They later became part of the City of London Regiment, and formed the 8th Battalion.

They fought and they paid the price. By 1918, 12,000 men had enlisted in the Rifles, 1,800 were killed and 4,500 were wounded. Following a series of restructures after the war, the specific Post Office make-up of the unit had disappeared by 1921. Yet the Post Office Rifles' legacy has survived. Today 162 Regiment of the Royal Logistics Corps runs postal operations in theatres of war and Royal Mail employees volunteer to serve in it, ensuring that the spirit of the Rifles lives on.

Sergeant Alfred Knight (see below right). Also part of the commemorative pack is an A3 facsimile of a 1915 recruitment poster for the Rifles. The Sheet comprises ten First Class Union Flag stamps and accompanying labels that feature the operational life and personalities of the Rifles:

Embroidered card The Post Office Rifles badge appears on a greetings card.
Riflemen 1910 This label shows troops from the unit, one of which is Frederick William Barker, with his son leaning on his shoulder.
Rifle practice Members of the 2/8th Battalion of the Post Office Rifles, City of London Regiment undergo weapons training at Cuckfield in Sussex.
Military message A Signal Section of the 2/8th Battalion at Cuckfield. The man on the far right of the picture is Scout J R Riordan, who invented the 'transmitting instrument' he is operating.
Joining up Recruits of 'H' Company, Post Office Rifles march in Regent's Park, London in 1914.
Doing his bit Sergeant Thomas May (below, front row, second from left) joined up early in the war and was invalided out of the Army in 1916.
Mobile force Soldiers of the Cycle Section of the 2/8th Battalion Post Office Rifles out on patrol.
Last resting place This is the grave of Captain Home Peel, who was killed on 24 March 1918 during the last German attack of the First World War.
Salute the brave Sergeant Alfred Knight fought in the Third Battle of Ypres in 1917 and won the Victoria Cross.
Badge of honour Before going off to fight in France the Rifles were stationed at Fovant in Wiltshire, where the troops proudly carved their badge into the hillside •

If any of these stamp labels bring back memories of relatives who fought in the Post Office Rifles, please send your reminiscences to the Editor and we will do our best to print all that we receive.





A brave Knight

Sergeant Alfred Knight won the Rifles' only Victoria Cross with a one-man blitz against a German machinegun post at the Battle of the Menin Road in September 1917. The former Nottingham postal clerk had already earned glory in May at Bullecourt for ferrying wounded comrades from the field under intense fire. Knight's cool courage earned him his sergeant's stripes.

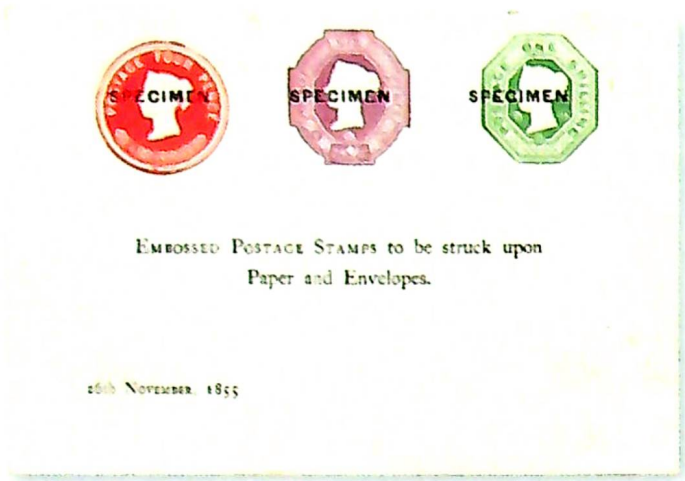
But on 20 September at Menin Road, during the Third Battle of Ypres, his bravery was of a different order entirely. Knight and his comrades of B Company, 2/8th Battalion were pinned down by an enemy machinegun as they slogged it out with the Germans for control of Wurst Farm Ridge. As more and more Tommies fell to the machinegun, Knight knew he had to act. He leaped up and forward, storming the position alone, taking on 12 Germans single-handed. He shot one, bayonetted two, prompting the rest to flee, and captured the enemy gun. This action won him the VC.

But Knight was not finished. He later saw troops of D Company stalled in their attack on a position called Hubner Farm. He grabbed a few of his own men and helped D Company assault Hubner. The German defensive fire was furious. Bullets splashed into the mud around Knight, hit his helmet and blew all his kit away. He reckoned that only a cigarette case in his jacket pocket protected him against one of the rounds that struck home.

Knight survived the war. He became a Second Lieutenant in the Sherwood Foresters in 1919 and went back to the Post Office in 1920.

D is for Dies and Date plugs

Colin Baker explains how the fertile mind of a teenage inventor gave us a rich collecting niche



Above: Postmasters Notice. The first dated postage stamps were struck on Postmasters Notices in 1855.





Top: a 2½d die proof. Impression of a 2½d die, drilled and ready to take date plugs.
Above: 2½d die in maroon. The same stamp but with the date plugs inserted

THE POSTAGE STAMPS introduced in Britain in 1840 were in many ways an extension of the tax system. Just as taxes were collected on tobacco, medicines and playing cards, and duty paid on legal documents, so the stamp was really a receipt or token for money paid to the Treasury.

Nobody liked paying these taxes, and in the past some people deliberately tried to defraud the Treasury to avoid paying them. Treasury officials in turn were continually trying to find ways of preventing any loss of revenue.

Many stamps were torn when a package was opened, but it was not unknown for some of the high-value revenue stamps used on legal documents to be reused. Such was the skill of the faker that reuse of stamps was often difficult to detect and prove. The Treasury needed a foolproof system of preventing the reuse of revenue stamps.

It was Henry Bessemer who provided the answer. He is probably best known for inventing the steel-making process that still carries his name. (The Bessemer method blows air through molten pig iron to burn off the impurities and create steel, a process that he called 'the manufacture of iron without fuel'. He is also credited with other inventions, including making gold paint using finely ground brass.)

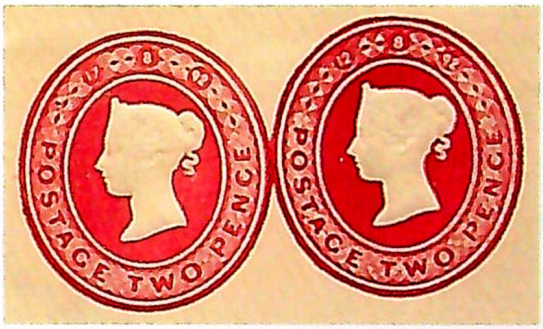
In his early years Bessemer turned his inventive mind to to revenue stamps. At the age of 19, in 1832, Bessemer proposed to the Treasury that revenue stamps should be perforated and embossed with their date of striking. This would help to prevent the reuse of these stamps, as in fraud situations the date on the old stamps would not match the date on the document.

In addition, Bessemer's fiancée Anne Allen suggested it would make the stamps even more secure if the date was included within the stamp design. Bessemer was taken with this new idea and devised a method of drilling the dies used for embossing revenue stamps and inserting changeable date plugs.

He took this to the Treasury officials, who readily accepted the scheme. Bessemer received no payment, but 45 years later he did receive a knighthood, partly in recognition for his invention of dated stamps.

Dated stamps worked very well for legal documents. It was a simple process to check that the date of a stamp was the same as that on document to which





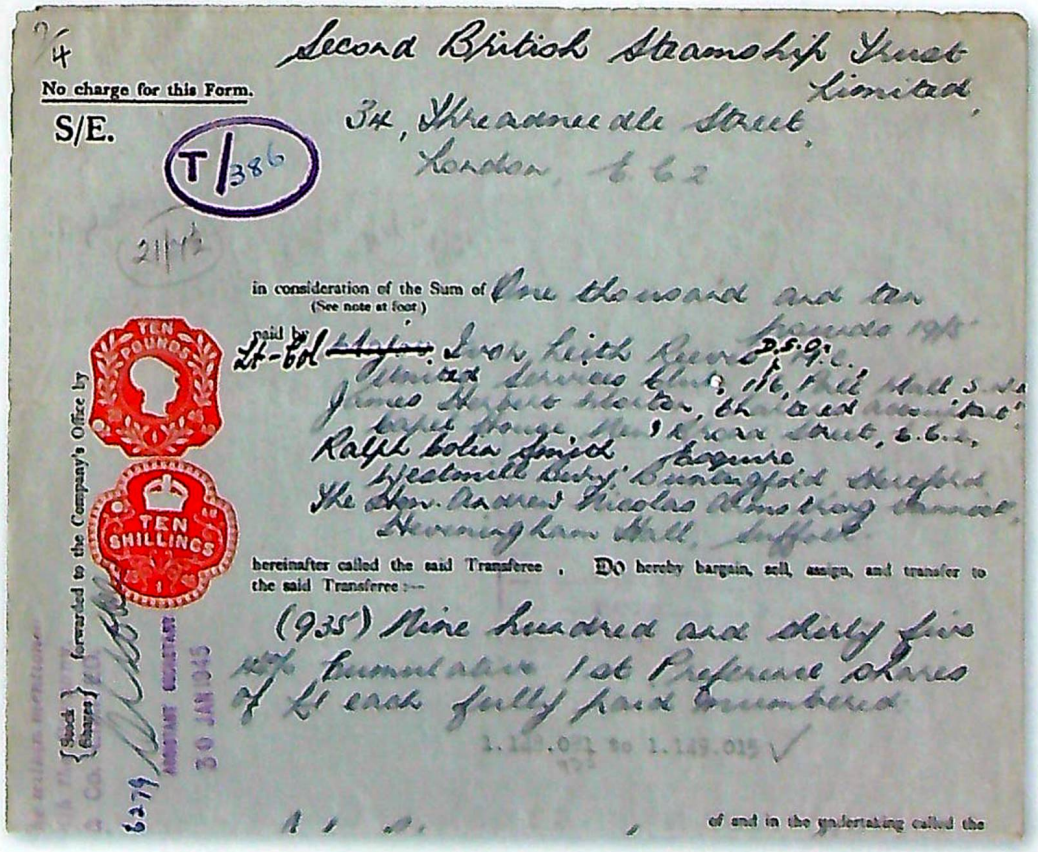
Left: 2½d + 2½d envelope. An envelope with two 2½d stamps struck on different days - 6th and 25th April 1892

Above: 2d + 2d stamps. A pair of 2d stamps struck on different days - 12th and 17th August 1892

it was attached. But for lower value postage stamps, it was an entirely different matter. It was not unrealistic to expect stamping offices to impress thousands, or even tens of thousands, of stamps on envelopes each day, all with the same date incorporated within the stamp.

The stamped envelopes could then be used at any time in the future (until Victorian stamps were eventually demonetised – deemed of no monetary value – in 1915). Thus, there would seem to have been little benefit in using dated dies for impressing postage stamps. Despite this, the system of date dies was in use from 1855 until the 1880s, when it was gradually phased out. To avoid wasting expensive embossing dies, the date holes were filled with rosettes in 1894 •

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





Above: 1½d stamp. The dates were usually positioned around the bottom of the border, but this was not always possible, as in this 1½d stamp

Left: fiscal stamps. A document with £10 10s 0d (ten guineas) of dated fiscal stamps paying the duty on the transfer of shares

Take three covers Symbols of remembrance, birthday greetings for the hosts of Scottish Congress, and a tribute to Comedy Greats

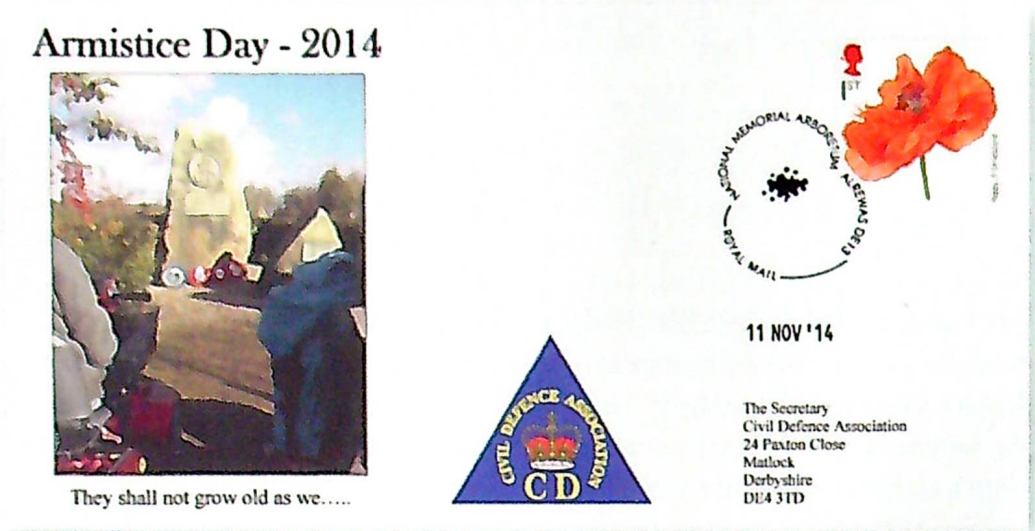
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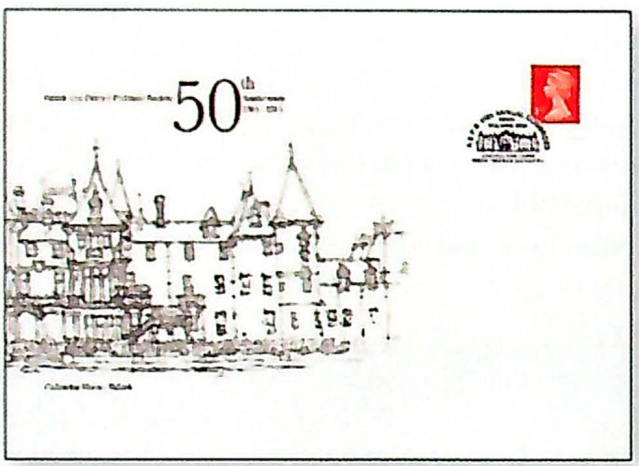
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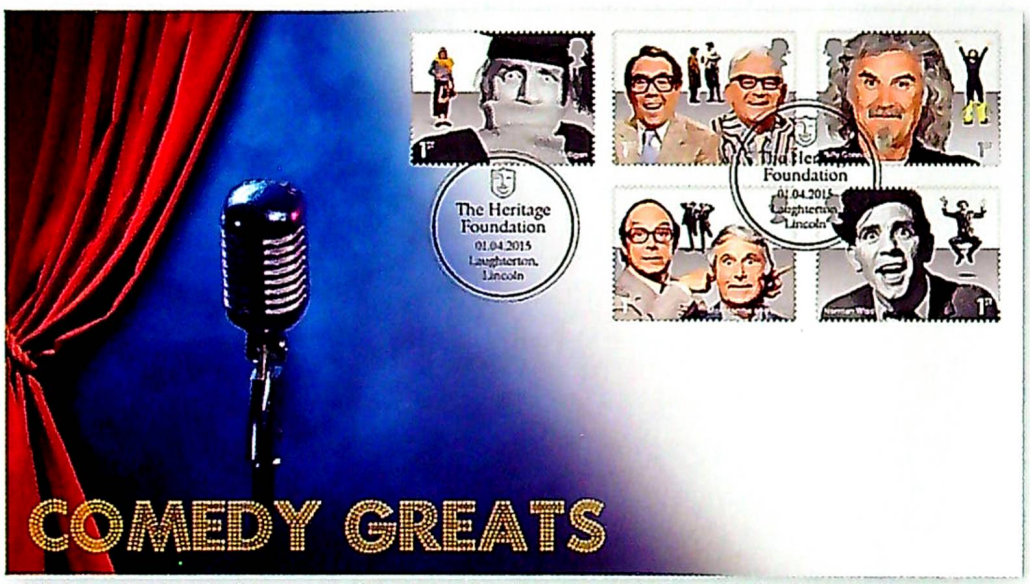
Cover producers wishing to announce a recent or forthcoming cover should submit copy of up to 75 words and a high-resolution image of the cover. Announcements are published at the discretion of the Editor.
A special Covers and Sheets insert is under discussion for our May edition.
Send submissions for May *Bulletin* by 20 March to the address on page 194 or email rmbulletin@rocketmail.com.



Poppy Day The Civil Defence Association has again produced a limited edition cover to mark Armistice Day 2014. Its Poppy Stamp is cancelled with the Permanent Philatelic Postmark for The National Memorial Arboretum. **Price** £10 including p&p ●



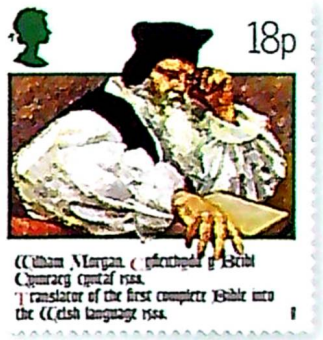
Congress cover Depicting historic Callendar House in Falkirk, this cover marks both the 50th birthday of the Falkirk and District Philatelic Society and the 86th Scottish Philatelic Congress in April. **Price** £1.50 serviced; 50p unserviced plus p&p ●

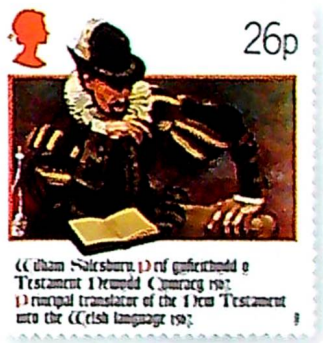


With laughter in mind An ideal gift for fans of British comedy, this Buckingham Cover features a classic stand-up microphone and stage curtain, with Royal Mail's Comedy Greats postmarked in Laughterton, Lincolnshire. **Price** £15.95 plus £2.45 p&p (ref: BC521/Bulletin) ●

This Month in History John Holman revisits stamps that commemorate the translation of The Bible into Welsh

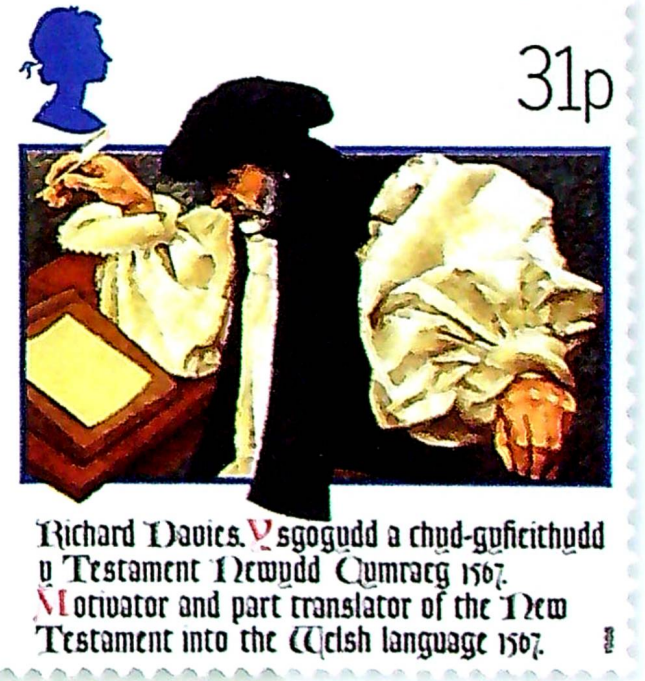
On 1 March 1988 Royal Mail marked the 400th anniversary of the translation of The Bible into Welsh with a stamp set featuring four scholars involved in the work. On the 18p stamp was Bishop William Morgan, the first person to produce the complete Bible in Welsh, in 1588. On the 26p and 31p values were William Salesbury and Bishop Richard Davies, who worked together on the Welsh version of the New Testament, completed in 1567. Appearing on the 34p stamp was Bishop Richard Parry, the chief editor of the revised Welsh Bible of 1620.





The stamps were designed by Keith Bowen, who wrote about how he researched them in the *Bulletin* of March 1988. He had visited archives in Wales and was pleased to have had the opportunity to hold an original 1588 Bible, which he described as 'a very real and rare, black-lettered tome'. At St Asaph Cathedral Bowen encountered the four men shown on the stamps 'carved in life-sized, sandstoned Victorian splendour'. When he visited Llanrhaedr-ym-Mochnant, where Bishop Morgan lived, he learned that the cleric was not well-liked by his parishioners and went about carrying a loaded pistol.

The stamps were well-designed and captioned, with The Queen's silhouette at top left and the value at top right. They were printed by Harrisons in six colours on phosphorised paper. The 18p is known in imperf pairs, catalogued by Stanley Gibbons at £7,500. Two constant varieties are listed in the Stanley Gibbons Specialised Catalogue – a red spot is in the background above Salesbury's right shoulder on the 26p and grey lines appear across the writing tablet on the 31p. The text on the Royal Mail First Day Cover and in the Presentation Pack was in Welsh and English. The British Philatelic Bureau first day postmark featured Morgan's signature while the alternative postmark for Ty Mawr, Wybrnant, Gwynedd showed Morgan's birthplace and was also inscribed bilingually. This postmark was applied at Caernarfon.



Six special sponsored handstamps were in use on the day of issue – five in Wales and one for the Forces Postal Service. Covers were also posted for the Spring Stampex special handstamp, the stamps going on sale on the opening day of the exhibition. Some collectors and dealers posted covers for relevant local operational postmarks and for the 'Jesus is Alive!' slogan in use at the time.

The stamps were withdrawn one year after issue, with numbers sold ranging from just over five million of the 34p to nearly 33 million of the 18p first-class letter rate stamp.

In the annual Favourite Stamp Poll, *Bulletin* readers voted the issue their third most popular of the eight sets of stamps of 1988. One reader thought the stamps 'a change from the usual "stylized" rubbish – the stamps project real people about whom I felt compelled to find out more'. Another likened them to 'miniature portraits', calling them a 'quality' set. And an inspired reader in Italy found that, as a result of seeing the stamps, 'both mind and imagination are strongly pushed into the mysterious, magic 17th century of doctors, anchorets and holy monks of ancient Wales' •





Right: this handsome sheet tells the story of Richard's life and the discovery of his body in 2012

Below: Richard will be buried in a ceremony at Leicester Cathedral later this month



Richard III RIP The once-forgotten monarch is celebrated in a commemorative stamp sheet

Orders and enquiries

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Quoting Bulletin code 15CDB

The official laying to rest of Richard III takes place this month, after his body was abandoned and forgotten in an unmarked grave for over 500 years. Richard was killed at the Battle of Bosworth in 1485. His remains were found under a Leicester car park in 2012, and he will now be interred in a ceremony at Leicester Cathedral on 26 March. BFDC's sheet, commissioned by the Richard III Society and bearing ten Union Flag stamps, shows images and symbols from the king's life: his birthplace at Fotheringhay, him fighting at Bosworth, his Standard, Great Seal, and the white rose of Yorkshire •

Man of letters Post box pioneer and author Anthony Trollope stars in a Royal Mail sheet



In April Royal Mail will be issuing a Commemorative Sheet to mark the bicentenary of the birth of Anthony Trollope, one of the most successful and respected English novelists of the Victorian era, who had a long association with the Post Office.

Anthony Trollope began his career with the Post Office in 1834 when, at the age of 19, he became a Post Office clerk at St Martin's-le-Grand in London. His early career was not especially distinguished, but as his work responsibilities grew so did his enthusiasm for the postal service during an innovative and interesting period of its history, with the introduction of the penny post and the steady organisation of efficient delivery routes.

Seven years later, when a vacancy arose for a surveyor's clerk in the west of Ireland, Trollope applied for the job and was successful. The position, which would involve a lot of travel, gave him the opportunity to escape office life in London and embark upon a new phase in his career. He would go on to work in different parts of Ireland, England and Wales, which he would later write about in his many novels.



One of Trollope's key achievements was his determined lobbying for the introduction of pillar boxes in Britain. Such facilities already existed in France and so during a review of postal services in the Channel Islands, he recommended that pillar boxes be trialled in St Helier, Jersey, in 1852. The following year they were introduced to mainland Britain, in Carlisle, and in 1855 London's first pillar box appeared.

The Anthony Trollope Commemorative Sheet comes with an informative insert card. It is issued on 24 April, the date of Trollope's birth in 1815 and costs £14.95. To order, write to the Tallents House address on page 194 or visit www.royalmail.com/specialsheets, quoting *Bulletin* code 15CDB •

Bridges on stamps WIN this month's superb Special Issue









Bridges Brainteaser

To welcome in the new Bridges issue we have created a quiz on stamps celebrating river crossings of all shapes and sizes. Get the answers right and you could win the Bridges Presentation Pack and Stamp Cards.

1 The Humber Bridge on this new Bridges stamp moved a poet to write a ditty about it called *Bridge for the Living*. What was his name?

a Larkin **b** Parkin **c** Barkin'

2 The name of a Scottish town features on this stamp in the 1968 British Bridges set. What is it?

a Abergavenny **b** Abbathemovie **c** Aberfeldy

3 This stamp from the Bridges issue shows the beautiful faux-Venetian Pulteney Bridge in Bath. Which legendary architect designed it?

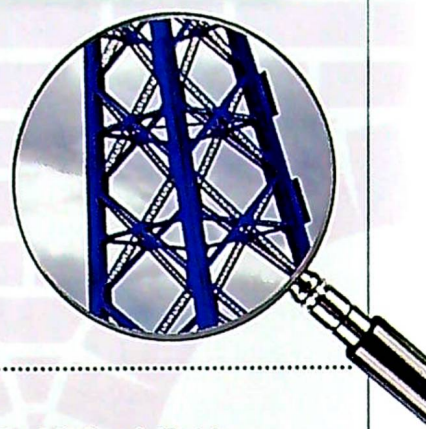
a Robert Redford **b** Robert Adam **c** Robbie Williams

4 What is the name of this bridge featured in the 2002 Bridges of London issue?

a Blackfriars **b** Backfires **c** Deepfatfryers

Name That Stamp

From the detail shown beneath the loupe on the right, identify the stamp, its value and year of issue.



How to enter

Send your answers, marked 'March Bridges Brainteaser' and/or 'March Name That Stamp' to: Bulletin Prize Draws, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB, or email them to: rmbulletin@rocketmail.com.

Closing date: 17 April 2015.

Prizes: The senders of the first five correct entries drawn from the postbag after the closing date win the Bridges Presentation Pack and a set of Bridges Stamp Cards.

December solution and winners

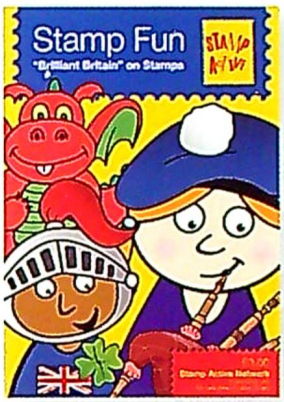
Bumper Bulletin Christmas Quiz Solution 1a, 2b, 3c, 4b, 5a, 6c, 7b, 8b, 9a, 10b, 11b, 12c. *Winner* P Kirsten of Morden wins the bumper prize. Forty runners-up receive a copy of Douglas Muir's must-have book, *A Timeless Classic – The Evolution of Machin's Icon* •

Prize draw 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; 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.

Stamp images: © Royal Mail Group Ltd



STAMPEX GIVES YOUTH A BOOST



It was good to see more youngsters attending Spring Stampex. Stamp Active's 'Bring a child to Stampex' scheme means that any adult taking a youngster to the Stamp Active stand is entered in a prize draw. And first prize was an 1840 Penny Black!

Stamp Active is a national organisation working to develop stamp collecting among the young. At Stampex its members also launched a new Stamp Fun activity book called *Brilliant Britain*, showed displays by young collectors, and hosted Kids Corner and the much-loved children's philatelic auction. Visit www.stampactive.co.uk for more details and events •



A FIRST-CLASS MIND

We all know stamp collecting is for young geniuses like you – but did you know that the founder of the modern postal service was also a child prodigy? Sir Rowland Hill, the mastermind behind the world's first postage stamps including the Penny Black, taught astronomy aged just 12 at his father's Birmingham school •

Cowell creation Stamp art is a great hobby to run alongside collecting. This brilliant portrait of Simon Cowell made from 21,000 stamps clearly has the X factor! Artist Peter Mason creates pictures of the famous with used postage stamps – his subjects have included William and Kate, Richard Branson, Barack Obama, Vivienne Westwood and Madonna. He has also presented Sir Bruce Forsyth and Sir Cliff Richard with stamp portraits of them that he created. For inspiration go to www.thepostpopartman.co.uk •





Are you a stamp champ? Fancy a bit of philatelic fame and fortune? Well, both could be yours if your display comes top in the 2015 British Youth Stamp Championships. Entries will be displayed at Autumn Stampex so your efforts will be admired by major collectors and dealers! The overall winner receives £100 and each age category winner gets a £25 cash prize.

The competition is run by Stamp Active – go to www.stampactive.co.uk/competitions to download an entry form. There is also a guide for entering (pictured). Forms have to be in by 7 August and the closing date for sending in your stamp display is 14 August. Happy stamping! •

A YEAR FOR THE YOUNG



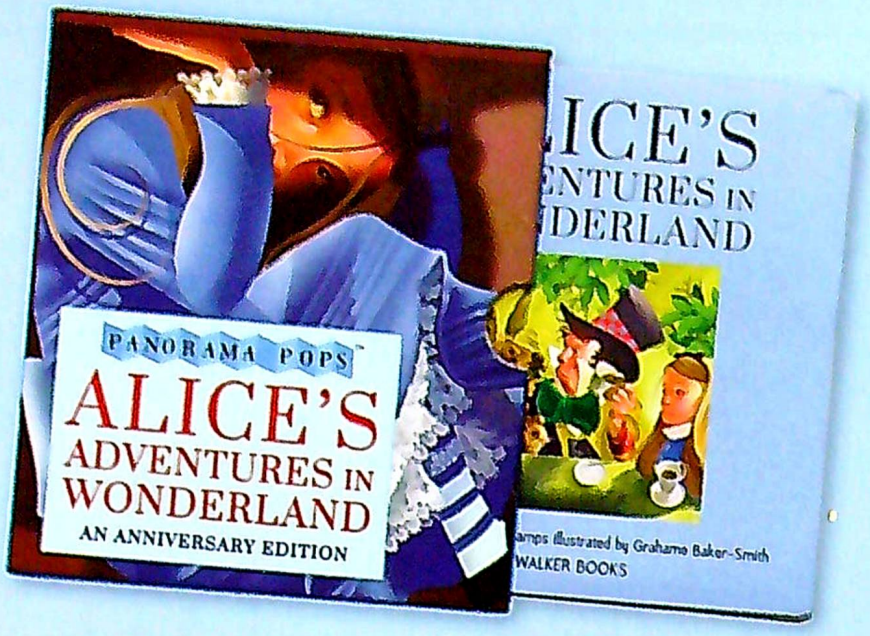
2015 is proving to be a brilliant year for British stamp collecting as the nation marks the 175th anniversary of the Penny Black's release.

In the coming months there will be plenty of activities, stamp issue releases and shows to celebrate. So if you are just getting into stamps, or have a pal who might be interested, then for starters get along to London 2015 Europhilex in May. There will be lots for kids to enjoy.

The exhibition is at Islington's Business Design Centre and is Europe's biggest stamp event this year. It celebrates the Penny Black milestone, 150 years of Stanley Gibbons Catalogues and 125 years of international exhibitions in London. The 'Court of Honour' will contain extraordinary items of philatelic history. Artefacts include the Royal Charter signed by King Charles I in 1635 that opened up his Royal Mail for use by the public and Sir Rowland Hill's original 1839 sketch that formed the basis for the Penny Black and Twopence Blue designs.



Europhilex is on from 13 to 16 May. See www.london2015.net for details •





Wonderful gifts

A gleaming medal cover and an irresistible children's book feature Royal Mail's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* issue

These charming collectibles inspired by Lewis Carroll's classic make perfect presents. The Alice's Adventures in Wonderland Medal Cover is out on 5 March – World Book Day – and the pop-up book with the Alice stamp artwork is available now •

Order at www.royalmail.com/wonder or call 03457 641 641 quoting code 15CDB

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