

April 1993



British Philatelic Bulletin

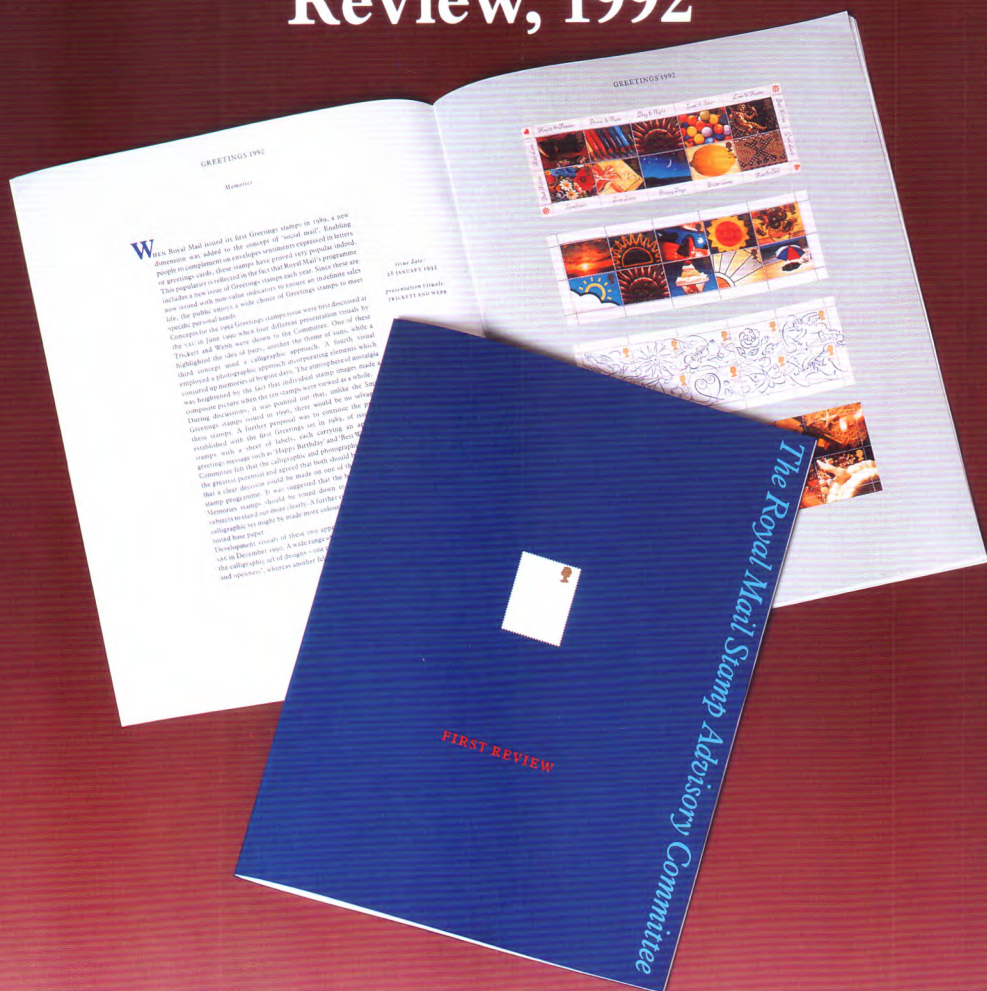
Volume 30, No: 8 The Royal Mail Magazine for Stamp Collectors Price 70p

The results from the stamp poll of special and greetings stamps issued during 1992.



Your favourite stamps of 1992

Stamp Advisory Committee Review, 1992



For the first time collectors can read of the "behind the scenes" work of the Royal Mail's Stamp Advisory Committee.

The Review illustrates the designs considered by the Committee for the 1992 Special and greetings stamps.

The Review charts the progress of each issue through the SAC from

initial design concepts to final acceptance for Royal approval.

48 A4-size pages. 200 designs illustrated in full colour. Price £9.87 from British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH

EH3 5TT, Collections, philatelic counters and selected post shops.

On sale 5 April 1993.

Early ordering advised.



Royal Mail

British Philatelic Bulletin

The **British Philatelic Bulletin** is published monthly by Royal Mail, 76 Turnmill Street, LONDON EC1M 5NS.
Editor: JR Holman

Price: 70p single copies from Collections, philatelic counters, and National Postal Museum.

Annual Subscriptions:
 UK and Europe £8
 Rest of World: £11.50.

Subscriptions should be sent to:
 British Philatelic Bureau
 20 Brandon Street
 EDINBURGH EH35TT.

Binders to hold 24 issues, price £6.75. Available by post from British Philatelic Bureau (address above) and to callers only at National Postal Museum, King Edward Street, LONDON EC1A 1LP.

Royal Mail also publishes the fortnightly **British Postmark Bulletin** giving details of forthcoming special handstamps and postmark slogans. Available on annual subscription from British Philatelic Bureau (address above) UK & Europe £10, Rest of World £21.75.

Copyright

Unless copyright attributed to specific authors, all articles and features may be reproduced without formal permission, but acknowledgement should be given to British Philatelic Bulletin. Requests to reproduce copyright articles should be sent to the Editor, 76 Turnmill Street, LONDON EC1M 5NS.

Designed by Angus Mathieson
 Design, 50 Britton Street,
 London EC1M 5NA.

Typeset by Pinnacle Phototype,
 11/12 Great Sutton Street,
 LONDON EC1V 0DD.

Printed in Great Britain by
 Raithby, Lawrence & Co Ltd,
 LEICESTER LE3 5AY.

Contents

Europa – Art in the 20th century	176
Marine Timekeepers Stamps – The Illustrator	178
Southend on Sea Philatelic Service – Post Office moves	178
Pad Printing for Special Handstamps – Bomb Sight Accuracy	179
Gems from the R M Phillips Collection – 1840 Trial Cancels	185
Music Philately in Bolton – Successful exhibition	186
National Postal Museum News – New Postcards	187
6p Definitive printed by Enschedé – New Variety	187
Collections, Philatelic Counters and Post Shops – Counters Policy	188
Competition – Win £75 worth of philatelic products	189
Exhibitions – Forces Sweethearts, John Harrison	190
Events – Guide to exhibitions, fairs and displays	190
Postmark Postcards – Sussex and Royal Mail history	190
Definitive Colours – Pre-decimal Machin stamps	191
Postbag – Readers' Letters	192
Book Reviews – Royal Naval Vessels, Firsty Day Covers	194
Society News – Ship Stamp Society	194
Posting Boxes – George V Wall Boxes	194
Six Month Digest – New Issues October 1992–September 1993	195
April Digest – This month's comings and goings	196

Main Feature

1992 Special Stamps Poll

182

“...you never think about people's reaction to your work whilst doing it. You just do what you think is right at the time... I just want people to enjoy the stamps, the more that do, the better I like it.”

Keith Bowen, stamp designer, on learning that his Wintertime stamps were Bulletin readers' most popular set of 1992.

Over 2100 Bulletin readers voted for their favourite sets and individual stamps of 1992. Wintertime was the clear winner as the top set, the Wintertime 18p, 28p and 39p were the most popular individual stamps. *Full poll results and readers' views on pages 182-185.*

Europa – Art in the 20th Century



11 May 1993

Four stamps under the Europa title will be issued on 11 May, all depict major works of 20th century British art.

Britain's artists have made a unique contribution to the modern art movement, and their achievement is recognised in this set of stamps. It is Royal Mail's contribution to "Art in the Twentieth Century", which has been adopted by Europe's postal administrations as the theme to be celebrated in 1993. The images presented – from a sculptor, a printmaker, and iconographer and an abstract painter – are symbolic of the enormous and exceptionally varied talent that has been fostered in the past ten decades among the artists of the United Kingdom.

The values cover the inland 1st class and EC basic rates (**24p**), Europe, non-EC basic rate (**28p**), Worldwide postcard rate (**33p**), and basic airmail letter rate (**39p**).



The **24p** stamp features the "Family Group" by sculptor Henry Moore, a 152cm high bronze created in 1948-9. It is now at the Henry Moore Foundation, Much Hadham, Herts.

The **28p** value depicts a detail from Edward Bawden's "Kew Gardens" – a lithograph after a linocut, 101 x 63cm, dating from 1936. It is now at the Cecil Huggins Art Gallery, Bedford.

The **33p** denomination shows Sir Stanley Spencer's painting "St Francis and the Birds" – an oil on canvas, 71 x 61cm, produced in 1953 and now in the Tate Gallery, London.

The final value, **39p** features Ben Nicholson's "Still Life Odyssey 1", dating from 1947. This oil on canvas, 69 x 56cm, is reproduced on the stamp courtesy of the British Council, London.

This issue marks the first appearance of the new Europa symbol on a set of Royal Mail special stamps. As a logotype, it takes the place of the familiar CEPT symbol that had been used for a number of years by the Conference of European Posts and Telecommunications Administrations.

The stamp has been designed by Ashted Dastor, FCSD, FSTD, who also designed the presentation pack.

Technical Details

Printers:	Harrison & Sons Ltd
Process:	Photogravure
Size:	37 x 35mm
Sheets:	100
Perforation:	14½ x 14
Phosphor:	Phosphor Coated Paper
Gum:	PVA Dextrin
Presentation Pack:	No. 237, price £1.55
Stamp Cards:	Nos 152 A-D, price 21p each

First Day Facilities

Unstamped Royal Mail first day cover envelopes will be available from main post offices, the Bureau, Collections, and philatelic counters around a week before 11 May, price 21p.

The Bureau will provide a first day cover service – collectors may order the Royal Mail cover bearing the stamps cancelled with a pictorial "First Day of Issue" postmark of the

ROYAL MAIL



MINT STAMPS

IN THE 20TH CENTURY



Mask of 1928 refers long known statue ending in figure in the British Museum. (Henry Moore Foundation, New York)



Spencer had a fine collection of drawings, many in his hand and some painted. Nothing like the one seen, but the style for his Christ in the Wilderness series, known to the Tate Gallery Archive.



Works such as 'Stones in Campagna' (1916) have some relation to conventional ideas of 'style', but with paintings like 'Kiss' (1916) (above) Nicholson's images had become so strongly defined as the ones simple the deeper tracks of art and perception. (Pioneer collection)

energy implicit in his studies from Easter to the end of the 1920s. 'Sculpture is a life-long struggle to grasp reality in terms of space. It is an element most intellectually and imaginatively exacting pursuit. I can think of no other space between forms, the holes in things are an obsession with me. Space is an element as important as what is solid and material.'

EDWARD BAWDEN (1903 - 1989) Bawden's work is firmly rooted in the scenes and traditions of his native country and, in particular, of the eastern counties. Born in Braintree, an ironmonger's son, he lived in Essex for most of his life. As a water-colourist, he had, as one of his contemporaries observed, 'the remarkable ability of reducing complex forms to a direct shorthand pattern of brush strokes, from the large shapes down to small details this sprightly calligraphy is sustained'. Equally at home with book illustration, murals, poster advertising, even fabric design, he allowed his talents generous room for manoeuvre. His greatest achievements were probably his linocuts, which helped elevate a craft skill to an art form.

STANLEY SPENCER (1891 - 1959) Spencer was a true original, a member of that tradition of idiosyncratic British artists stretching back at least as far as William Blake. 'The intention in all my work is towards happiness and peace', he wrote. 'Painting was a means of self-analysis, and many of his canvases are suffused with an intensely personal spirituality. He invested everyday objects and scenes with unexpected significance, painting the Resurrection or the Crucifixion as though they were happening in Cookham, the Thames-side village where he lived. Pushing the old pan on which he carried his easel and paints, he was a familiar sight in the area.'

BEN NICHOLSON (1894 - 1982) Born in Denham, Buckinghamshire, Nicholson came from a family of gaiters. He had little respect for the teaching he received at the Slade School of Art, preferring to spend his time playing billiards with Paul Nash. 'I think the billiard-ball, so cleanly geometrical in form and so ringingly clear in colour against the mass-green of the baize, must have appealed to my aesthetic sense', he later recalled. He wanted to stress the physical nature of the materials he was working with, the reality behind appearance in his painting. The surface was often heavily pitted, scraped and incised. Always there was the overriding concern with form and balance.

ROYAL MAIL
FIRST DAY COVER

NEW & interesting material for the collection of the British Philatelic Society, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000.



IN THE 20TH CENTURY

Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorbie Road
ILKESTON
Derbyshire
DE7 4AB

Bureau or London SW, price £1.82 (including VAT) to UK addresses £1.55 to overseas addresses (no VAT). Orders for first day covers must be received at the Bureau by 11 May.

Collectors may send their own stamped covers, on the day of issue, for the Bureau or London SW cancels, to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, 53 Nine Elms Lane, LONDON SW8 5BB. The outer envelope should be endorsed "Pictorial First Day of Issue postmark".

First Day Posting Boxes will be provided at most main post offices for collectors who wish to post covers to receive the standard, non-pictorial "First Day of Issue" handstamps.

Details of other special handstamps, sponsored by Royal Mail, stamp dealers and others, will be found in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – the Royal Mail's magazine for postmark collectors. It is available on subscription from the British Philatelic Bureau: £10 UK and Europe, £21.75 Rest of World (Airmail).

There will be no souvenir covers; these have now been discontinued.

Marine Timekeepers Stamps

The four stamps issued on 16 February to commemorate John Harrison have generated considerable interest amongst collectors, particularly for the reproduction of the intricate detail of the mechanisms of Harrison's timekeepers. Readers will be interested to know that these illustrations are the work of David Penny, FBHI, FSAI. Mr Penny was born in 1949 and graduated in illustration from Hornsey College of Art in 1970. After working in publishing for a short while, he became a freelance illustrator and has worked for the British Museum, *Sunday Times Magazine*, the National Maritime Museum, and many overseas clients.

He is a part-time lecturer at the Royal College of Art, past Chairman of the Association of Illustrators, Honorary Fellow of the British Horological Institute and Fellow of the Society of Architectural & Industrial Illustrators. From 1986 to 1992 he was Editor of *Antiquarian Horology*, and has written in many magazines.

Mr Penny's illustrations were used as the main features of the stamp designs by Howard Brown, who has previously designed the 1991 Map issue.

The Marine Timekeepers stamps, presentation pack and stamp cards are still available from the British Philatelic Bureau, Collections, philatelic counters and selected post shops, price £1.24 per set of stamps, £1.55 pack, 84p set of stamp cards.

Southend on Sea Philatelic Service

The Post Office at Weston Road, Southend on Sea, Essex closed after business on Saturday 13 March 1993. The counter and philatelic counter services have been re-sited into new premises nearby at: Southend on Sea Post Office, 199/201 High Street, SOUTHEND ON SEA, Essex, SS1 1LL.

The philatelic service now forms part of the new Postshop, incorporated into a large open plan office. The opening hours have been extended to offer an improved service as follows:

Monday	0845-1730
Tuesday	0900-1730
Wednesday	0900-1730
Thursday	0845-1730
Friday	0900-1730
Saturday	0900-1600

The move enables us to offer counter, retail and philatelic services from a prime High Street location in premises designed to meet our customers requirements.

Post Office Counters Ltd



Pad Printing for Special Handstamps

IAN H FRASER, CEng, MIMechE

Project Manager – Philatelic Automation Royal Mail Research & Development

Two years ago Royal Mail Stamps asked Royal Mail Research and Development (R&D) to investigate the possibility of replacing the ageing philatelic cancelling machines currently being used in the Special Handstamp Centres (SHCs) and the British Philatelic Bureau to produce high quality impressions of privately sponsored designs.

These machines were of Swiss origin and, although were generally acknowledged as providing the best philatelic quality of cancellation, were limited in their application. The machines could only operate with slow drying oil based inks which made obtaining good impressions on glossy surfaces (post cards, photographs, etc.) almost impossible to achieve and the maximum impression size of only 33mm diameter constrained the sponsors design options. In addition to these factors, maintenance of the Swiss machines was proving to be expensive, primarily due to the cost of spare parts.

R & D investigated various methods of printing impressions (including the traditional rubber or metal dies), and concluded that offset pad printers provided the best solution. Pad printing is technically an indirect gravure printing process directly related to a process

invented several hundred years ago in Europe. Originally used in the Swiss watch making industry to decorate watch faces, pad printing has evolved into one of the major technologies used to print symbols and characters onto the surfaces of objects, in particular, three dimensional plastic parts.

Today as much as 90% of the decoration in the interior of a car is applied by pad printing, the symbols on control panels, direction indicator and windscreen wiper handles, buttons and knobs are applied by pad printing. The economy and versatility of pad printing make the process attractive to many markets such as printing onto the face of calculator and computer keypads, bottle tops, model cars, plates, tablets and even golf balls. It is the widespread use of pad printers, and consequential good value for money, that allowed their use as a philatelic canceller to be a viable option for Royal Mail.

Transfer Pad

Perhaps the most important element in the pad printing process is the transfer pad (also known in the industry as a tampon). It is the job of the pad to pick up the inked image from a printing plate and transfer it to the item (the sequence is shown in the diagram). Pads are made of a mixture of silicon rubber, silicon oil and other fillers. The shape and hardness of the pad are crucial to the successful transfer of images. The largest possible pad is used to keep distortion to an absolute minimum and the conical shape achieves good "roll-off", minimising the possibility of air entrapment. It is the pad which guarantees a good print even on surfaces including irregularities (such as across the stamp/envelope edge on First Day Covers).

The printing plates (known as clichés) are made from various materials including hardened and lapped steel, steel shim and plastic, the type selected depending upon the printing application and the volume of items to be printed. For most production environments the hardened steel clichés are used with which several million impressions can be attained. For the Royal Mail requirements these would be "over-kill" and following R&D trials with both the steel shims



LSC 4500 Pad Canceller at Royal Mail Research & Development Centre, Swindon.



Ian Fraser tests a full-size mock-up of the Pad Cancellor.

(known as foils) and the plastic plates, we concluded that the foils offered the most cost effective printing plate for typical sizes of cancellation runs in the SHCs.

In preparing a cliché, a clean steel foil is dip coated with a photosensitive chemical which is allowed to dry on the surface. A clear positive (black image on clear film) is placed over the cliché surface which is then exposed to ultraviolet light in a vacuum exposure frame. The vacuum exposure frame ensures that no air is trapped between the foil cliché and the film which would reduce the quality of the image. The ultraviolet light cures or hardens the exposed photosensitive coating (i.e. that not covered by the image on the film) and the remainder can then be washed away revealing the original steel surface. The foil cliché is then immersed in an acid solution and the revealed surface (which is a direct representation of the impression on the film) is etched to a depth of approximately 0.025mm.

Good Print Quality

The inks used in pad printers are similar to those used in silk screen printing but they have what is known as a higher pigmentation and tend to be faster drying. High pigmentation gives the printed impression a high contrast, even with very fine detail – black areas on a cancellation look black and not mottled or grey. The fast drying solvents used in pad printing inks allow good print quality on very glossy surfaces since the ink does not have to be absorbed into the substrate, but securely dries on the surface. Premature drying of the ink whilst it is being used in the machine is prevented by the hermetic seal around the ink pot and the cliché.

Having concluded that pad printing offered the best possible quality of cancellation, R&D

purchased and trialed two 'standard' industrial pad printers to establish whether the technology was operationally viable in the "office environment" of the SHCs. Our task was to convert a piece of machinery that was originally designed to operate in a factory, printing over a conveyor belt of identical products, into a specialised stamp cancelling system that would be manually fed with items of various shapes and sizes.

There were two main challenges, firstly additional equipment had to be designed around the standard machine to allow the operator to accurately align the customer's product for cancellation in exactly the desired position, and secondly, the machine had to be incorporated into a workstation that would provide a comfortable environment for the operator.

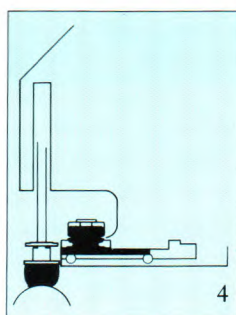
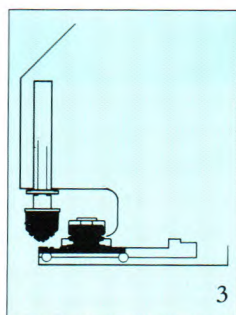
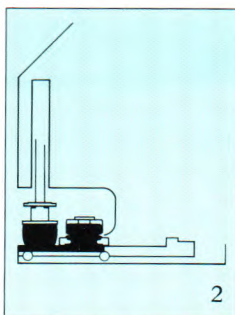
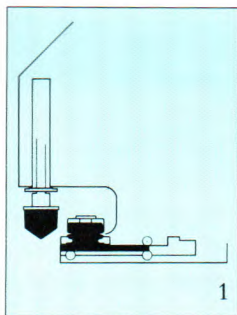
Bomb Sight

Various methods of alignment were considered and tested including projecting "cross wires" like a bomb sight, low powered laser line generators, fixed and movable guides or fences and finally a closed circuit television system. The CCTV system proved to be the most versatile arrangement and is now fitted to all the RM pad cancellers.

A monochrome CCD camera is fixed in such a position and with a carefully selected lens so that a full size image of the cancelling zone is produced on a small TV monitor screen placed alongside the operator. To set up the system, the operator loads the appropriate cliché into the machine and prints an impression onto a piece of clear vinyl film (the type used to produce peelable stickers for windows – car licence holders, etc.). The film is removed from the canceller platen and replaced



Gavin Barnett (Industrial Design Consultant) and Ian Fraser with the finished machine.



Explanation of Method

1. Ink is flooded over the surface of the printing plate so that the impression is filled with ink. A 'doctoring' device then moves across the printing plate which removes excess ink from the surface and only leaves ink within the engraved or etched impression. The then exposed upper surface of the ink which is left in the etched impression begins to dry and becomes tacky.

2. A silicon rubber pad then descends onto the printing plate and the tacky surface of the ink adheres to the surface of the pad. As the pad rises the impression is transferred onto the pad as it

recovers to its undistorted shape.

3. The printing plate is then moved away from the area of the pad, so that the pad is in a position above the item to be printed. As the ink is transferred to the pad, the surface of the ink which was in the base of the etched impression becomes exposed to the atmosphere and begins to become tacky.

4. The pad then descends onto the item below and the tacky surface of the ink adheres to the item (with a greater level of adhesion than between the ink and the pad). Therefore as the pad rises, the ink is transferred to the item.

with a piece of scrap paper or card. The operator then prints an impression onto the card that is left in position on the platen. The image printed onto it is then visible on the monitor screen, thus providing a datum for the cancellation position.

The operator then places the piece of film onto the monitor screen and positions it so that it aligns with the projected image, thereby transferring the datum to the face of the screen. The piece of card can then be removed and the operator then uses the monitor to accurately align further cancellations by positioning the customer's product relative to the overlaid film. Some practice is needed to gain familiarity with this system but once proficient, the operators achieve a very good cancelling accuracy.

In addition to the cctv system a versatile alignment fence allows the operator to ensure that the products remain parallel with the horizontal axis of the cancellation as they are positioned, thus preventing skewed impressions.

Industrial design consultants were employed to develop an ergonomically correct and aesthetically pleasing workstation which includes such features as the alignment systems, task lighting, storage facilities for clichés and inks and the necessary support equipment provided with each machine. Initial design schemes were

presented and scale models made of potential solutions from which a full size mock-up was constructed. This was used for ergonomic tests, covering such points as operators reach, viewing angle of the monitor, leg-room, access to storage space, ease of cliché changing, and led to the production of the prototype pad canceller.

The result from the development was christened the LSC4500 – Low Speed Cancellor (as opposed to the high speed systems used in the Bureau) and 4500 designating the maximum size of impression (bounded by a circle of 45mm diameter) which can be printed.

The prototype LSC4500 was trialed in the London North SHC and with minor modifications lead to the design and manufacture of the production standard version. Eighteen LSC4500 were produced at the R&D Centre and distributed throughout the UK. The product has attracted considerable interest from overseas administrations and Royal Mail Research & Development are manufacturing systems for what could prove to be a world-wide market.

© Royal Mail R & D

Editor's note: The trial Pad canceller at the London North SHC was illustrated in the Bulletin of September 1991 (page 8).

1992 Special Stamps Poll

In the December *Bulletin* we asked readers to nominate their three favourite sets of special and greetings stamps issued during 1992; also their favourite individual stamp from the 48 stamps in the 10 issues. Some 2128 of you responded – an increase of nearly 150 on the 1991 figure. We thank all who voted, especially those from overseas. Voting forms were received from no fewer than 45 countries. Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China (Republic of), Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Portugal, Qatar, St Lucia, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, USA and Zimbabwe.

Points were allocated for each vote for the sets: three points for the first choice, two points for the second, and one for the third. This enables us to get a clear picture of the relative popularity of each issue. The final figures were:

Wintertime	3311
Happy & Glorious	2260
Christmas	1933
Civil War	1140
Greetings	1119
Gilbert & Sullivan	865
Tennyson	855
Green Issue	516
Europa	220
Single European Market	115

Separate figures were also compiled of overseas votes:

Wintertime	507
Happy & Glorious	392
Christmas	300
Greetings	238
Tennyson	237
Civil War	173
Gilbert & Sullivan	128
Green Issue	106
Europa	50
Single European Market	17

The voting for the favourite individual stamp was as follows (*Note:* stamp number as per December *Bulletin* in parentheses; H & G = Happy & Glorious):

Wintertime 18p (1)	198
Wintertime 28p (3)	196
Wintertime 39p (5)	195
Christmas 24p (35)	127
H & G – Queen and P. Andrew (8)	125
H & G – Commonwealth Tour (10)	108
Gilbert & Sullivan 18p (24)	92
Europa – Columbus 24p (17)	86
Wintertime 33p (4)	83
Green Issue 24p (29)	74
H & G – Garter robes portrait (7)	73
H & G – Armed Services portrait (9)	68
Christmas 18p (34)	63
Greetings – Penny Red (45)	55
H & G – Coronation portrait (6)	53
Green Issue 39p (32)	51
Europa – Raleigh (18)	42
Single European Market 24p (33)	35
Tennyson 33p (13)	31
Wintertime 24p (2)	28
Tennyson 24p (11)	27
Tennyson 28p (12)	24
Greetings – Flower Spray (39)	23
Christmas 33p (37)	20
Gilbert & Sullivan 28p (26)	17
Greetings – Marbles (47)	17
Civil War 24p (20)	14
Civil War 28p (21)	13
Christmas 28p (36)	13
Tennyson 39p (14)	10
Greetings – Model Car (42)	10
Green Issue 33p (31)	9
Greetings – Bucket & Spade (48)	8
Europa – Expo (19)	7
Civil War 33p (22)	7
Gilbert & Sullivan 39p (28)	7
Christmas 39p (38)	7
Europa – Olympics (15)	6
Gilbert & Sullivan 33p (27)	6
Greetings – Double Locket (40)	6
Civil War 39p (23)	5
Gilbert & Sullivan 24p (25)	4
Green Issue 28p (30)	3

Bulletin Supplement

Commemorative Covers

Information given here is based on details supplied by the cover producers; requests for further information should be directed to the relevant producer and not to the Bulletin office.



Orchids



Dendrobium vesiculatum



Benham (A Buckingham) Ltd, The Green Shop, The Heath, Farnborough, Kent GU14 7JF (UK)

Orchids. Benham have produced a set of five official covers for the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew decorated with specially selected photographs of orchids which complement the beautiful stamps. Each photograph has been carefully printed onto a silken fabric and mounted by hand into a golden frame. The cover carries all five stamps and a special pictorial postmark featuring the Kew Gardens Royal crest and the wording Richmond, Surrey. The five covers cost £4.99 each.

The Benham luxury postcard set for the Orchids issue features five specially commissioned delicate paintings of orchids. The paintings are printed on "silk" and mounted by



hand into golden frames. Each postcard carries one stamp and the five special pictorial postmarks feature: The Botanic Gardens Park, Belfast; The Botanic Gardens, Glasgow; The Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh; The Botanical Gardens and Glasshouses, Birmingham, and The Oldest Botanic Gardens in Britain, Oxford. This set of five postcards costs £12.50.

Orders/enquiries: Benham (A Buckingham) Ltd, The Bayle, FOLKESTONE, Kent, CT20 1SD. All major credit cards accepted, please add 50p for postage & packing. 24-hour hotline: 0303 850041.

Orchids. A set of seven first day covers is available from the Cambridge Stamp Centre to commemorate the Orchid Issue of 16 March 1993. Each envelope will be personally autographed by celebrities. It is expected they will include Susan Hampshire, Angela Rippon, Alan Titmarsh and Joyce Stewart – author of numerous scientific publications on orchids and Chairman of the Organising Committee for the 14th World Orchid Conference and Show in Glasgow in April 1993. Only 10 sets exist. Further details available from: Cambridge Stamp Centre, 9 Sussex Street, CAMBRIDGE CB1 1PA. Tel: 0223 63980.



BLAIR CASTLE
BRITISH DEER SOCIETY
30th ANNIVERSARY 1993



British Deer Society. 1993 marks the 30th anniversary of the founding of the British Deer Society and a limited edition commemorative cover has been produced to mark the occasion. The illustration shows Blair Castle in Scotland, venue for the 30th anniversary celebrations, with line drawings of three of the native species of deer. The 18p "Wintertime" fallow deer stamp and additional postage will be cancelled with a special handstamp showing the Society logo. Price £5 each. Orders/enquiries: BDS, Beale Centre, Lower Basildon, READING RG8 9NH.

Scout Week. The "Scout Week", formerly known as "Bob A Job Week", is traditionally held in April when Scout groups raise funds. A collection of three illustrated Philatelic-coin event

covers including the last day of the Shilling ("The Bob"), with text on scouting is available. Price £5.50 per collection.

Also available is a unique "Year of the Scout" cover (numbered 250 only) with three hand stamps of different Scout anniversaries. The cover pays tribute to the late Ralph Reader CBE, the well-known scout gang show producer. Price £5.30 each. All prices include inland postage and packing (overseas add 70p postage). To help the Scout movement a 50p donation for each collection/cover sold will be sent to the Scout Association. Orders/enquiries: G Eldridge, 177 Mousehole Lane, Bitterne, SOUTHAMPTON SO2 4TD.

Art in the 20th Century. To coincide with this issue A G Bradbury is publishing two limited edition first day covers:

Royal College of Art

This cover, LFDC 114, features in full colour "Near-future Grand Prix Formula Study" by David Woodhouse from the Vehicle Design Course at the College. The College's Royal Arms also appear on the cover and a specially sponsored postmark. Covers with full set of stamps and limited to 1000 numbered copies cost £5.95, or £12.50 signed by Stirling Moss.



Sir Joshua Reynolds

An engraving of Sir Joshua Reynolds appears on the Victorian Prints cover (No. 76). Reynolds was the first President of the Royal Academy of Arts and the covers will be franked with a specially sponsored handstamp in London W1. Covers with full set and limited to 500 cost £6.75. A number have been signed by Marmaduke Hussey, Chairman of the BBC and a Trustee of the Royal Academy of Arts, price £9.75.

Prices include UK P&P Overseas please add £1 extra and remit in Sterling. Orders/enquiries: A G Bradbury, 3 Link Road, LEICESTER LE2 3RA.

Royal Signals Museum of Army

Communications. Covers are being issued to raise funds to build a major extension to the Royal Signals Museum of Army Communications at Blandford. The series will consist of 20 covers; the first four have already been issued and the rest will follow over the next three years. Each cover commemorates a particular historical event and highlights an aspect of Army signalling and the part played by this in the event commemorated. Each cover is date stamped by the British Forces Postal Service.

Some of the covers will be carried aboard a RAF aircraft over the site of the event and a limited number of "special flown" covers will be signed by a distinguished person who has, wherever possible, a family or other connection with the event illustrated.

Covers cost £2.50 each, "flown" covers £3.50, "specials" £5. Now available are: 1. Peninsula Campaign 1811 – the Gamble Radiated Cart; 2. Crimea 1855 – the Cable Plough; 3. Indian Mutiny 1857 – Semaphore on the Lucknow Residency; 4. Zulu War 1879 – Heliograph at Tugela River. Orders/enquiries about future covers: New Museum Project Office, Royal School of Signals, BLANDFORD CAMP, Dorset, DT11 8RH.



Royal visit to Royal Mail Birmingham.

Royal Mail Birmingham sponsored a special handstamp and cover to commemorate the visit of HRH The Princess Royal to Birmingham's main sorting office on 3 March 1993. The covers can be purchased by collectors. Price £3 each. Cheques should be payable to "Royal Mail" and orders sent to: HRH Princess Royal Cover, Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail Street, BIRMINGHAM B1 1AA. All proceeds from the sale of the covers will be donated to The Save the Children Fund of which The Princess Royal is president.

Greetings – Pocket Watch (44) 3
 Greetings – Key (41) 2
 Greetings – Pearl Necklace (46) 2
 Europa – Paralympics (16) 1
 Greetings – Compass (43) 1

For interest, the “Winners” of earlier stamp polls were: **1986** – Nature Conservation; **1987** – Flowers; **1988** – Linnean Society; **1989** – Birds; **1990** – Queen Mother’s 90th Birthday; and **1991** – Maps.

Six of the best – your favourite stamps



Least favoured by Bulletin readers



The *Bulletin* Editor personally read all your comments and 1992 Yearbooks have been sent to the five readers whose comments were thought to be particularly apt or interesting. Their comments, and those of other readers, are quoted below.

Wintertime

This was clearly the most popular set with both British and overseas readers, receiving much praise and little criticism. R Steven of Edinburgh wrote: “They epitomise everything that is best about British stamps, superb artwork and a truly British theme – the weather!” S Simmonds of Essex was so impressed he bought complete sheets of the 18p stamp to use throughout the year. “Can there”, he asks, “be a greater tribute to a stamp than this – I wanted to use it?” D Winter of Gloucestershire liked the inclusion of the second class stamp in this set; he “was still using them in the Summer!” Mrs H Bloom of Suffolk now lives in a town but is a country girl at heart; the Wintertime stamps brought back “happy memories”.

Keith Bowen’s artworks were well-liked, not just for the animals but the country scenes. N Aykroyd of Saudi Arabia found the stamps “beautifully evocative – you can almost hear the frost crunching under your feet!”. H Rennie of Hampshire believes these designs will never date; Mrs M Boys of France reported the artistry much admired by “my young French pupils”. Mrs S Harveson of Hertfordshire found this “simply one of the most attractive sets of recent years ... 1992 was a vintage year for UK stamps.” Many of you praised the realism of the designs, summed up by Miss A Klein of Kent “... natural and easily recognisable and don’t look like the ravings of an inebriated maniac as I fear some stamps do”. A number of you liked this set so much you used them instead of the Christmas issue on your festive mailings; some commented that the stamps would make ideal Christmas cards, others favoured them as future definitive stamps. G Kidd of West Yorkshire not only liked the stamps but found them “further enhanced by the lovely first day cover.” Miss M Phillips of Wiltshire thought it “funny that the sheep are dearest and the deer is cheapest.”. B Harries of London thought the set would have been better “had you included a robin instead of a hare.” For G Yeomans of East Sussex “they well illustrated the bleak survivalist mood of 1992.”.

Happy & Glorious

That many of you were glad to see the end of

1992 was evident by your comments on Britain's economic problems and the your sadness at the difficulties facing the Royal Family. Many quoted The Queen's famous *annus horribilis* speech at the Guildhall and expressed sympathy for The Queen herself, who you clearly think represents the Commonwealth with great dignity and is worthy of respect. Many of you were not so complimentary about other members of her family. The five stamps were generally seen as a worthy tribute to 40 years of public service but a number expressed doubt about the silver frames and the values. P Payne of Switzerland asked: "why the silly little boxes for the values? They ruined what were otherwise a nice set of stamps.". W Wyles of West Sussex thought this would have been the best set "but for the haphazard positioning of the rate – it looks as though they were omitted and added as an afterthought, completely ruining the set.". A S Bonney of Middlesex disliked "the hideous irregular silver trim", R Curd of Essex gave "a slight shudder at the peripatetic value" but R Wilson of Wirral praised the use of "much imagination in the composition of the pictures used". F Marcucci of Italy also liked the composition as "perfect notwithstanding the unusual grey edge."

From the USA J Graham wrote; "I look upon stamps not just merely as labels but as miniature works of art – in which form, colour, substance, all play a part but in which the ability to evoke memory, conjecture and thought is uppermost. Happy & Glorious touches upon what is missing in the United States." J Ball of Surrey described this set as "original and modern... quite the best set of special stamps for many years." Mrs F Law of Wolverhampton liked "the challenge for the collector to complete sets of used stamps, of a low value".

The final opinion on this set goes to Mrs E Mitchell of Newcastle upon Tyne who believes that "having been relegated to a corner of most stamp issues, The Queen deserves to be the main subject of a whole set. I hope we don't have to wait 10 years for the next set."

Tennyson

Although seventh in the popularity chart, this issue gave rise to some strong feelings in terms of design and the educational value of special stamps. D Gee of Kent admired "the subtle inclusion of characters with the author's portrait... increases the informational content of the stamp without fussiness." The Tennyson stamps made such an impact on Sophie Poplawsky of New

York that she obtained a book of his poems from her local library. J Bramman found them "the best literary commemorative issue yet", a view shared by H Sentence of Germany who thought them much better than the Robert Burns and Thomas Hardy stamps. G Clark of Coventry and I Crofts of Worcestershire praised the pre-Raphaelite art, commenting respectively on the "perfect evocation of the Victorian era" and "a treat for all lovers of art and literature." S Jones of West Yorkshire liked the gold signatures; C Spencer of Berkshire was inspired to verse; "with apologies to Tennyson (Miller's Daughter, first verse)":

"Twenty eight pence of clear vignette
Double portrait, minuscule size
One only of this perfect set
Unalloyed pleasure to ones eyes."

"The pre-Raphaelite girl looks out
On a portrait. Praise is hurled.
A product that is without doubt
A postage stamp out of this world."

R High of Cheshire receives a *Yearbook* for his comments on the Tennyson and other issues: "There is really no reason for poor lettering (Green issue) or apparently incompetent execution (Single European Market). The Tennyson series combined a genuine anniversary of an important contribution to our culture with careful, ingenious and striking design."

Europa

The main comment on this issue was one of disappointment that stamps commemorating Columbus and Operation Raleigh formed part of the same set with the Olympic and Paralympic Games and Expo '92. Several of you suggested they should have been issued as two sets, each with its own first day cover and presentation pack. But there was not universal agreement on this, Miss R Hanson of Spain thought the "events so varied but successfully combined in one issue", and D Williams of Liverpool commented: "The Olympic and Paralympic stamps are simple in design, utilising strong colours and The Columbus and Operation Raleigh stamps are more subdued and the eye is drawn from them by their neighbours. Yet the designs are evocative and elegant." Mr Williams also commented that "the Bulletin article on the design of these stamps increased my enjoyment of this issue enormously." The article in question, by the stamp designer, Keith Bassford, was published here in April 1992 (pages 182-3).

There was praise for the decision to include a

Paralympics stamp. Miss M Shiers of Herts thinks it "so encouraging to see disabled sports represented alongside those for able bodied people. A tribute to those who came up with the idea and a tribute to all our athletes who went to Barcelona." T Rettedal of Norway commented favourably on the Royal Mail's decision to include a Paralympic stamp, the Paralympics were he says largely ignored by the media in Norway. The Royal Mail were proud to be sponsors of both the British Olympic and Paralympic teams; the Princess Royal praised the determination of disabled athletes at the press launch of the stamps.

Civil War

Whilst some of you found the designs too detailed and the captioning too great, there was near universal acceptance that this was a worthwhile subject for a stamp issue and of high educational value. M Davies of Bristol thought the "interesting and informative" designs "much more likely to appeal to the general public". T Huntington of W Yorkshire opined: "Clear, concise, colourful – and very helpful in teaching National Curriculum History too!" I liked the comment by a lady in Co Durham who had better remain anonymous: "They are clear and informative especially to a thickhead like me!"

A Austin of Berkshire remarked "How nice to purchase a genuine commemorative issue – the description on each left overseas collectors in no doubt as to the purpose of these educational stamps." This view was shared by Miss W Wimbush of Kent, observing: "The Civil War set commemorates an event of national significance. Too many stamps are merely 'pretty' – an attempt to interest us in something with which we do not wish to get involved." P Circus of Surrey noted "They are a vivid reminder of what happens when the rights and wishes of the people are overridden – perhaps a relevant message today for the European Commission?"

A Rutter of Italy noted the "perfect balance between text, images and colours" ending his remarks, "A very difficult choice from World Best Stamps!" A Taylor of Essex praised the "clarity of the stamp value – helpful to users and Post Office staff." J White of Northumberland thought the set "almost looks 3D, is perfectly balanced, the colours not aggressive." He noted an important point for collectors: "Even after franking the design is still strong."

Your views on other 1992 sets next month

Gems from the R M Phillips Collection

208. 1840 Trial Cancellations

The Phillips Collection is noted for its many fine examples of the Penny Black, mint, used and on cover. Especially interesting are the trial cancellations of 1840. Shown here are two horizontal pairs of 1d black from plate 1a. In both cases the left-hand stamp has been cancelled by the Maltese Cross handstamp in red ink. The right-hand stamp in the first pair (corner letters QG-QH), bears a circular datestamp, applied in black ink, inscribed "EX/13 MY 13/1840". The corresponding stamp in the second pair (corner letters TK-TL), bears a similar circular datestamp inscribed "E/14 14/1840"; this time applied in the same red ink as the Maltese Cross. Both are affixed to paper, one including the wording "Obliterating Stamp/dated stamp/black composition".



These pairs can be seen on page 1 of Volume XI in the Phillips Collection in the National Postal Museum, situated in London's Chief Post Office. The Museum is open Monday-Friday, 9.30am to 4.30pm.

Music Philately in Bolton

IRENE LAWFORD

To mark its 1992 Presidency of the European Community, Great Britain sponsored the European Arts Festival from July to December 1992. There were over 600 Festival events around the country. Bolton, Lancashire was the venue for the European Organ Festival and International Organ Competition (10-17 October) on account of its organ, considered to be one of the finest in Great Britain. A varied programme of musical events was offered; not the least of which was my exhibition of Music Philately and Musical Postcards.

The exhibition was superbly sited in the Bolton Museum and Art Gallery. Six frames were devoted to "Composers of the Romantic Era". To complement this were 10 frames as an "Introduction to Music Philately", and several frames of Musical Postcards including some beautiful Organ cards. Festival participants and local visitors were fascinated by this, to them, new approach to musical appreciation. It was good publicity for stamp collecting in general.

The Museum and Art Gallery has an active Education Department. The Schools Liaison Officer, Christine Madden, had arranged for me to be fully occupied. Every day I had up to four groups of 20-30 Primary School children (aged

7-11) whom I introduced into the mysteries of stamp collecting. We all had fun and they learnt a lot through participation – the funniest part was watching them come to terms with stamp hinges! The British Philatelic Trust, had most generously provided me with "give-aways", in the form of books, booklets, tweezers, stamp hinges, maps and magnifying glasses.

One of the educational highlights was the "Design-a-Music-Stamp" competition I had devised for the children. The success of this venture was guaranteed by the generous collaboration of various departments of Royal Mail, from whom I had solicited some fine prizes to distribute to the children. The children were thrilled, and on their behalf I would like to thank: Royal Mail National (Youth Philately Section); the British Philatelic Bureau, Edinburgh; the National Postal Museum, London; Post Office Archives; and the British Philatelic Trust. There were almost 200 entries! Winning designs were subsequently on display in the Museum.

For me, this was an entirely new type of venture into promoting Stamp Collecting. I had planned and executed the whole exhibition and educational programme, at which I was in active attendance for two weeks; and had created an enterprising and popular competition.

Irene Lawford is President of the Philatelic Music Circle and Editor of 'The Baton'. Details can be obtained from her at 22, Bouverie Gardens, KENTON, Middx, HA3 0RQ. An article by Mrs Lawford, entitled "Symphony of Stamps" was published in the Bulletin of July 1992. Ed.



Irene Lawford surrounded by eager children from Sunning Hill School, Bolton at Bolton Museum & Art Gallery, October 1992 (Photo: Christine Madden).

National Postal Museum News

Although primarily a philatelic museum the NPM, with an eye to the future, is enlarging its collection of paintings and artefacts. New cards, to be issued on 6 May, feature items from this side of the Museum's holdings.

93/6 "The Country Letter Carrier" by J P Hall, 1859. At the time this picture was painted country letter carriers were not issued with a official uniform but they were often given a uniform of sorts by the local populace. In this case the letter carrier seems to have been given an old Mail Coach Guard's uniform.



93/7 "The Royal Day Mail at Snaresbrook" by James Pollard, 1848. The coming of the railways saw the end of the colourful mail coach era. The last London "patent" coach ran in 1846 and the PO then occasionally used existing local "coaches" to carry mail. The mail guard can just be seen at the rear of the coach.

93/8 "Weight collecting" postal scale in brass and mahogany. This ingenious scale was patented by Robert Willis in 1840 and manufactured by Joseph and Edmund Ratcliffe of Birmingham.

93/9 A tin-plate model of a six-wheeled GPO van, c1950. Manufactured by Mettoy, with clockwork action and GVIR monogram.



93/10 Model of a LMS Travelling Post Office from the reign of George V. This model was used by the PO Public Relations Department to demonstrate the working of the bag changing apparatus.

Complete sets, price £1.25, can be ordered from: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT.

A special Museum handstamp will be available on 6 May 1993. Cards/covers to receive this should bear at least 24p postage (UK/EC) or appropriate overseas rate and be sent to: Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, KEB, LONDON EC1A 1AA. Please ask for "NPM Special/6 May". The Museum's regular Maltese Cross cancel will also be available.

6p Definitive printed by Enschedé

A new variety of definitive stamp will go on sale at the Bureau, Collections and philatelic counters on 27 April 1993. The 6p stamp, printed for the first time by Joh. Enschedé en Zonen of Haarlem, Holland, will incorporate some new features as part of the Royal Mail's continuing programme to improve the security of stamps. Elliptical perforations will be included for the first time. The base paper is free of optical brightening agents and the two overprinted phosphor bars have fluorescence added to improve recognition.

The stamp is not regarded as a new issue and no first day of issue facilities will be provided.

Previous definitives printed by Enschedé were the 8p in 1979 and the 18p Light Green in 1991. Other definitive values will be printed by Enschedé and will be introduced as demand dictates during the year. The 1p, 5p and 10p values are expected to be issued on 8 June.

Technical details

Printer:	Joh. Enschedé en Zonen
Process:	Photogravure
Size:	20 x 24mm
Perforation:	15 x 14, with an elliptical perforation on each vertical edge.
Paper:	Unwatermarked, coated, non-phosphor, free of optical brightening agents, overprinted with two phosphor bars with added fluor.
Gum:	PVA

Collections, Philatelic Counters and Post Shops

MIKE BUCKLEY

Assistant Retail Buyer, Post Office Counters Ltd

Many readers who are Post Office Counters' customers will be aware of the changes we are making to our philatelic service outlets.

In 1990 we converted the Philatelic Counter at Windsor into the first Collections shop. In the years that followed, 15 Collections were opened to serve the specialist needs of collectors. Although appreciated and liked by our customers, Collections failed to achieve the results expected of it.

One of the problems with the Collections concept is that it never managed to appeal to the "ordinary" customer. The "ordinary" customer being the one looking for a gift, who admired the

Presentation Packs and First Day Covers but like so many Philatelic Counters, the product is often not on display and the customer who is unsure about stamp collecting remains confused as they are often afraid to ask questions.

In a concerted effort to improve the environment in which the philatelic service is offered, we took the most successful elements of Collections, the open display and the range of products available, and combined them with the relaxed retail surroundings of a Post Shop. We have attempted to make the atmosphere more welcoming to the casual customer. Many of the new Post Shops that offer the product on open



The Post Shop at Bath

Special Stamps but was unsure what stamp collecting was all about and what all the different products available were for. These customers often thought that Collections was an exhibition and not a shop!

At the same time as the network of Collections shops grew, so did our greetings cards and stationery outlets located in Post Offices. There are now around 150 of these Post Shops nationwide.

Post Shops have always sold and will continue to sell a selection of philatelic products like

display, have easy to understand point of sale that explains what the many collectable products are. By offering the full philatelic service in some Post Shops, we are trying to promote stamp collecting to a much wider audience.

The many customers who will purchase pens, writing paper or greetings cards from the Post Shop may never have seen a Presentation Pack of Royal Mail Stamps. Whilst they browse around the shop, the open displays will give them the opportunity to examine and admire these products for the first time. It may even re-ignite a

passion for stamp collecting from the childhoods of some of our customers. By having open displays in Post Shops, we believe that the interest in philatelic products will increase. This will be of benefit to both ourselves and stamp collecting in general.

Existing Customers

However, we are not just interested in gaining new business and new customers. We are determined to serve the needs of our existing customers as well.

We know that some of our customers have been concerned about changes being made to their local Philatelic Counter or Collections shop. Admittedly some complaints have been justified as we have experienced minor teething problems at shops that were opened at the beginning of the programme.

The philatelic side of a Post Shop is supplied by Royal Mail with the same products as stocked by the British Philatelic Bureau in Edinburgh.

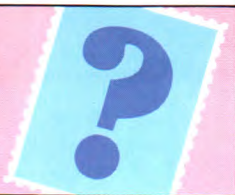
Some regular customers have built up close relationships with the staff at their local philatelic office. These customers may be concerned that the high level of service given to them in the past will not be maintained in Post Shops that offer the philatelic service. Of course new members of staff need time to settle into their new roles and familiarise themselves with all aspects of their job. We are sure that all our customers will be patient. New members of staff employed to work in the philatelic Post Shops are given training and have shown a willingness to learn about stamp collecting and realise the importance of good service to all their customers.

I hope that I have managed to calm the fears you have about the changes that we are making. If any readers have any questions about the new Post Shops or any of Post Office Counters' philatelic service network, then I will be only too glad to help.

On a final note, as well as the Philatelic Counters that we have converted to Post Shops offering the philatelic service at Bath, Croydon, Durham, Edinburgh, Glasgow (George Square), Southampton and Nottingham, we have opened two new shops: one at Romford (where the philatelic counter closed in 1989) and one at Stratford Upon Avon. A number of Collections outlets, Belfast, Birmingham, Brighton, Bristol, Cambridge, Colchester and Guildford are now operating as Post Shops.

Editor's note: Mr Buckley can be contacted at: Post Office Counters Ltd, Room 107, Drury House, 1/16 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 9UA.

Competition



Win £75 worth of British stamps

Enter this month's competition and stand a chance of winning £75 worth of current British philatelic products of your choice – stamps, stamp books, postcards, albums, etc. Answer the questions below, the answers will be found in this month's *Bulletin*, and send with your name and address on a postcard to: April Competition, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail National, 76-86 Turmill Street, LONDON EC1M 5NS to arrive by 28 May.

The sender of the first all-correct entry drawn will be invited to order £75 of philatelic products; five runners-up will be sent presentation packs of the Roman Britain stamps. Answers and winners' names will be published in the July *Bulletin*.

1. Sir Stanley Spencer's painting "St Francis and the Birds" can be seen in which London Gallery?
2. The Forces Sweethearts exhibition has been sponsored by which organisation?
3. Who designed the "Art in the 20th century" stamps?
4. What colour was the 4d Machin definitive stamp issued in 1967?
5. Who is the Project Manager – Philatelic Automation, Royal Mail Research & Development?

The competition is not open to staff (and their families) of Royal Mail National and its agents. No correspondence will be entered into; the Editor's decision will be final.

The winners of the January competition were: J Payne of Coventry (£75 worth of philatelic products); D Ward of London E17, N Wilde of Derbyshire, J L R Domenech of Spain, T Foster of Kent and B Olsen of Denmark (Orchids presentation pack).

The answers were: 1. Bicentenary of Ordnance Survey; 2. 40; 3. John Mackay, 4. Rupert; 5. Mr Michael Heron.

Our thanks to all who entered.

Exhibitions

Forces Sweethearts

This exhibition, sponsored by Royal Mail International, is on show at the Imperial War Museum in London until October 1993. The subject of wartime romance is a topic never before covered in a major special exhibition. It represents the human side of war, so often obscured by the conventional images of battlefield action and technological might.

The exhibition explores the special nature of relationships between men and women in wartime, and the way in which war brought people together and pulled others apart. It examines the images of women that men took to war with them and how these have changed since the First World War. It shows the importance of the "pin up" – girlfriend, wife or fantasy figure – in keeping up the morale of troops fighting at the front.

Radio, television and newspaper appeals were made for material to include in the exhibition. The items loaned ranged from wartime wedding dresses to faded "last letters".

A lavishly-illustrated hardback book, written by actress Joanna Lumley, is available at the exhibition, price £16.95.

All enquiries about the exhibition should be addressed to: Exhibitions Officer, Imperial War Museum, Lambeth Road, LONDON SE1 6HZ. Tel: 071-416 5323.

John Harrison

Sir Christopher Wren's renowned Old Royal Observatory at Greenwich, the most important scientific site of its time in the world, has undergone dramatic refurbishment and restoration, creating "a brand new visitor experience". The "new" Observatory, opened on 24 March, unravels the extraordinary phenomena of time, space and astronomy and explores the revolutionary ideas and decisions which made Greenwich the centre of world discovery.

Highlights of the "new" Observatory include an exciting new presentation of the international Meridian Line, marking the beginning of all time and space on earth; Wren's 17th-century masterpiece, the eight-sided Octagon Room; a giant digital clock showing GMT to the nearest tenth of a second; "hands-on" Science Stations for children and a sound and light show in the darkened dome, which houses the largest refracting telescope in the UK.



The Observatory reopening celebrates the 300th anniversary of the birth of John Harrison, the unsung genius who designed and built a series of chronometers 250 years ago. The chronometers, now kept in full working order at the Observatory, were clocks which kept accurate time at sea, solving the problem of determining longitude and paving the way for some of the greatest world discoveries of all time. A special exhibition celebrates Harrison's inventions.

The Observatory is open: Mon-Sat 10am-6pm, Sun Noon-6pm. Admission: Adults £3.75; Concessions £2.75. All enquiries to: National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, LONDON SE10 9NF. Tel: 081-858 4422.

Events

until 19 Apr 93. "People in the Post" exhibition at NPM, LONDON EC1. Open Mon-Fri 9.30-16.30.

until 28 May 93. "Britannia Depicta" exhibition at NPM.

until Oct 93. "Forces Sweethearts" exhibition at Imperial War Museum, Lambeth Road, London SE1. Sponsored by Royal Mail International. Enquiries: Exhibitions Officer, Imperial War Museum, 071-416 5323.

24 Apr 93. Railway Philatelic Group Convention at Foresters' Institute, St Nicholas Place, Leicester. Open to public 10.30-16.00. Displays of stamps, postmarks; specialist dealers. Admission free. Enquiries: Peter Johnson, 12 Maplewell Drive, LEICESTER LE4 1BD.

24 Apr 93. Association of Essex Phil Societies. Spring Stamp Day at Laindon Community Centre, Basildon. Enquiries: L C Stanway, 25 Clay Hill Road BASILDON, Essex, SS16 5DD.

24 Apr 93. Telford Phil Soc Stamp & Postcard Fair at Belmont Hall, Wellington, Telford, 10.00-

16.00. Enquiries: P Morris-Jones, 190 Holyhead Road, Wellington, TELFORD, TF1 2DW. Tel. 0952 223926.

15 May 93. Poole & District PS "Twinning Exhibition" (with philatelic society from Oporto, Portugal) at Poole Arts Centre, 10.00-16.00. Dealers will be present. Enquiries: Barry Proctor, 38 Lulworth Avenue, POOLE, Dorset, BH15 4DJ.

15 May 93. North West Federation of Phil Soc Convention, Exhibition and Stamp Fair. Hosted by Lostock & District Phil Soc, at Lostock Parish Centre, Tempest Road, Lostock, Bolton. 10.00-17.00. Enquiries: R Hargreaves, 26 Heaton Road, Lostock, BOLTON, Lancs, BL6 4EE. Tel. 0204 492800.



1951 National Savings Stamp Card – an item featuring Britannia in the "Britannia Depicta" exhibition at the National Postal Museum.

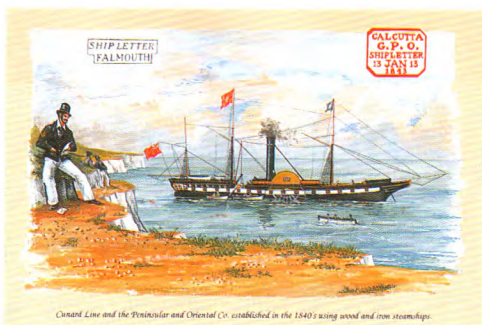
Student Stamp Designs

In November 1992 (p. 64) we gave details of the RSA Student Design Competition exhibition. This can be seen at Cardiff Institute of Higher Education, Howard Gardens, CARDIFF CF2 1SP (5-26 May).

Postmark Postcards

Two new postcards have been produced by the Sussex Postal History Society; one showing 12 old handstamps of West Sussex, the other 14 old handstamps of East Sussex. A small number are available used with the Worthing First Day of Issue handstamp on various commemoratives. Price 40p per pair unused, £1.10 used; postage 25p. Orders/Enquiries: John E O Hobbs, 12 Ophir Road, WORTHING, W Sussex, BN11 2SR. Cheques payable to "J E O Hobbs (SPHS)"; mint stamps are acceptable.

Token prints of Caernarfon have produced four attractive colour A5 size postcards featuring



Royal Mail history and postmarks: 17th century Royal messengers, Dockwra postmark, etc.; 18th century – mail coach and Lad Lane London marking; late 18th early 19th century – Bellman, Penny Black and Penny Red; 19th century – mail ship and ship letter postmarks. The cards cost 75p each. Wall charts also available. Full details from: Token Prints, Llanddeiniolen, CAERNARFON, Gwynedd, LL55 3AB. Tel: 0248 670269.

Definitive Colours

In September 1991 we published a list of the official Royal Mail colours of the decimal definitive stamps issued since 1970. We received a number of requests for a similar listing of the pre-decimal Machin stamps of 1967-69. The colours were, of course, published here at the time of issue but we are happy to repeat them below:

1/2d orange
1d gold
2d maroon
3d spectrum violet
4d olive brown sepia (1967)
4d scarlet (1969)
5d Stewart blue
6d crimson
7d Paris green
8d scarlet (1968)
8d eggshell blue (1969)
9d Winchester green
10d olive brown
1s aconite violet
1s 6d tropical turquoise & Garter blue
1s 9d tangerine orange & olive brown
2s 6d peat brown
5s raspberry red
10s sapphire blue
£1 blue-black





Queen's Head On Special Issues

J K Bird of Oxfordshire writes:

"I have analysed totals for the different types of portrait used on commemoratives, following the last occasion that the Wilding portrait appeared (February 1966 – Westminster Abbey issue). My survey has included greetings stamps and the latest Castles – in other words all stamps that do not have the definitives' Machin head. However, miniature sheets and the 1984 postage labels have been excluded from the totals.

"Portraits used fall under five headings:

a. The David Gentleman head in silhouette (abbreviated GS). This portrait was the immediate successor to Wilding, and starting in May 1966 was used for 13 consecutive issues but only intermittently thereafter. It was last used in 1974 for the UPU Centenary issue. The two strands of the bow at the back of the head stretch out almost horizontally.

b. The Machin laurel-leaf bandeau head in full detail (MD). This was first used in 1968 for the Bridges issue, and last used in 1989 for that year's Anniversaries issue.

c. The Machin laurel-leaf head in silhouette (MS). This was first used on the 9d Votes for Women stamp in the 1968 Anniversaries 4 – stamp issue, which followed the Bridges. It was a 'mixed' issue – see d below. This portrait is by far the most frequently used. The two strands of the bow point downwards.

d. Issues with a 'mix' of portraits b. and c. (MM). There have not been any instances since decimalisation.

e. Other miscellaneous portraits (OP). These have been used on the 1972 Silver Wedding, 1977 Silver Jubilee, 1980 International Exhibition, 1986 60th Birthday, and 1992 40th Anniversary issues.

· "Up to Christmas 1992, there have been 206 issues made up as follows:

	GS	MD	MS	MM	OP
Pre-decimalisation	14	3	11	3	-
1971-1972	3	11	156	-	5

"It would seem, and rightly so, that the Machin detailed head will not be used again. It is inappropriate for The Queen's advancing years. For the same reason, I believe that designers should not persist with the bow; it makes the silhouette head look girlish and has now disappeared from our coinage.

"The Machin silhouette head is not sacrosanct, any more than was the Gentleman silhouette. Either by accident or design, that was altered three times. In 1966 (Christmas) and 1967 (Paintings and Christmas), the strands of the bow on these stamps were so short and close together



HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN



HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN



that it looked as though The Queen's hair was tied in a bun! So let's cut off the 'pigtails' from the Machin silhouette head. It is this portrait, and not the definitives' head that needs updating."

The "David Gentleman head in silhouette" referred to by Mr Bird was an adaptation of the coinage head by Mrs Mary Gillick (1881-1965). Mrs Gillick's head was used on the pre-decimal coinage, superseded by a Machin head from 1968. Ed.

Melville National Youth Stamp Competition

The Philatelic Congress of Great Britain instituted in 1949 the Melville National Youth Stamp Competition in memory of one of the greatest of all philatelists and philatelic writers, Frederick J. Melville (1882-1940), founder of the National (formerly Junior) Philatelic Society.

The Melville Youth Committee of the British Philatelic Federation has recently modified the rules for this competition. The classes are now: A - 19-21 years; B - 16-18 years; C - 14-15 years; D - 12-13 years; E - 8-11 years; and F - up to 7 years old.

All ages will be taken as at 31 August in the year of the competition.

Mr Peter de Dulin, of the Committee, writes:

"I would encourage all members of Stamp Active, all 'Juniors' under the age of 21, and any parents who are reading this who have children, to consider entering the Melville this year. We now have a very high standard of junior philately in this country, but we desperately need more youngsters to become interested in the hobby. It is so much more fascinating than computer games, and other electronic devices. Where else can you find out about different countries of the world, or cultures, or themes in just one book (your stamp album)?

"I hope those adults who run the Stamp Active clubs will encourage their youngsters to try their hand at Melville. If you need any help or advice please don't hesitate to contact either John Davies or myself. The Melville Committee is holding regular workshops up and down the country, and would be willing to come to your school or club to give help, advice, and a fun day for all.

If you are interested, contact me, Peter de Dulin, Tudor Lodge, 12 Hazeldene Road, WESTON-SUPER-MARE, Avon, BS23 2XL, or Mrs L Hampton, 188 Exeter Road, EXMOUTH, Devon, EX8 3DZ."

Mr John Davies, organiser of Stamp Active, can be contacted at: 3 Longfellow Road, BANBURY, Oxon, OX16 9LB. Ed.

Oldest Datestamp

Mr O de Rousset-Hall of Leicestershire writes: "Regarding the query on page 117 of the January *Bulletin*, the oldest datestamp in daily use that I know of is at Brinkley, Newmarket (Suffolk). It was issued in June 1929 and still gives a clear impression.

"Changes in Post Office practice regarding datestamps that occurred in the late 1920s and early 1930s makes it unlikely that any survive that are significantly older. A new design of steel datestamp with a quick release handle and standard date type was introduced in 1928 when the practice of recutting ceased. At that time many small offices used Climax daters but these were phased out in the early 1930s along with steel datestamps that had incomplete addresses.

"As a result a large number of rural offices received new double circle datestamps in this era, and up to 1934/5, the same general style of lettering as that at Brinkley. Many of these survive at offices; the county names of which were not altered at the 1974 Local Government re-organisation, but I know of only two offices of 1929 vintage (Lidgate and Moulton - both Newmarket) and one from early 1930 at Spa Common, North Walsham (Norfolk).



"Unfortunately the steel impression proof books of that era have not survived so it is not possible to check the age of impressions at PO Archives, but the stamps themselves have the month and year of manufacture punched on the obverse of the striking head often preceded by a letter code identifying the contractor.

"What is more remarkable is that some datestamps of that era survived at Branch Office Counters until they were swept away by the introduction of self-inking datestamps in 1992. Examples were Leicester/5 and Leicester/7 at the Bishop Street counter until May 1992. Some of that era may well survive at offices not connected to ECCO+ (PO Counters automation programme).

"Even more remarkable is that a screw head circular datestamp survived at Wymington, Rushden, Northants until the office closed in 1988."



1991 supplements is available at a special price of £25 (including P/P UK/Europe; £5 surface postage overseas). Membership/Encyclopaedia enquiries to the Secretary: T Broadley, 33A Ridgeway Road, Timperley, ALTRINCHAM, Cheshire, WA15 7HA. Remittances should be payable to: "Ship Stamp Society".

The Ship Stamp Society has published a **Check List of Royal Naval Vessels**, listing Royal Navy ships which have appeared on stamps and which have been mentioned in the Society's Journal *Log Book* (Vols 1-20 No. 1). This useful work lists over 900 ships in alphabetical order with date and type of vessel, reference to the *Log Book*, year of issue, and Stanley Gibbons catalogue number of the relevant stamp(s). Thus we are informed that the *Dreadnought* was built in 1906, is a battleship and was shown on a British stamp of 1982 (S. G. 1190). The cruiser *Edinburgh*, built 1938, is depicted on a South Georgia issue of 1974 (S. G. 41). The listings were compiled by D. A Rouse and the late A W Fenion. 52 pages, paper covers. Price £2.80 UK/Europe, £3.50 overseas, post-paid. Available from: D A Rouse, 7 Meadway, WARLINGHAM, Surrey, CR6 9RW.

The First Day Publishing Company announces the publication of the 1993 edition of **Collect GB First Day Covers**. This is the 21st edition of this reference catalogue, which has been considerably expanded to include more detailed listings and illustrations of both covers and postmarks from 1840 to date. There are separate sections for commemoratives, definitives, regional issues and booklets/coils etc. The catalogue was previously published by Benham (A Buckingham) Limited. The 1993 edition is priced at £4.99 and is available from W H Smith, most major stamp dealers and stamp shops, as well as from: First Day Publishing Company, PO Box 947, LEWES, E Sussex, BN8 6ZS at £5 postage paid within the UK.

Society News

The Ship Stamp Society, formed in 1970, caters for thematic collectors of ship stamps, from canoes to passenger liners. The annual subscription of £10 includes the monthly illustrated magazine, *Logbook*, and exchange packets (UK circulation only). Meetings are held at British maritime locations. The society publishes an *Encyclopaedia* of all named vessels appearing on stamps; the work with 1989, 1990,

Posting Boxes

140. George V Wall Boxes

Our photographs this month show George V wall boxes in Wiltshire and Dorset. The first photo, submitted by Mr P B Stockitt, shows the box outside the old post office in the village of West Kington, near Chippenham. The office, Mr Stockitt tells us, closed over 10 years ago, but the box is still emptied twice a day.



The second illustration shows a box set in a Purbeck stone pillar enveloped in a *Pyracantha* bush outside the post office/general store at Corfe Mullen, Wimborne, Dorset. The photograph was submitted by Mr V E F Eyre of Wimborne.

I have on file a considerable number of photographs and transparencies sent in by readers for this "Posting Boxes" feature – enough to last for the next few years. I regret I cannot accept any more and should be grateful if readers would not send any more in. Thank you.
Editor.

Readers interested in letter boxes are reminded of the existence of the Letter Box Study Group – details of which can be obtained by sending a stamped addressed envelope to the Secretary: Sally Jones, 43 Miall Road, Hall Green, BIRMINGHAM, B28 9BS.

Six Month Digest

Listed below are the issues of the past six months and the proposed dates of issue for stamps until September 1993. Any change in these dates will be notified in the Bulletin. British Philatelic Bureau order codes are quoted where known.

6 Oct	Christmas aerogramme (QX015)
13 Oct	Single Euro Market stamp (AS521)
13 Oct	Single Euro Market pack (AP108)
27 Oct	Tolkien Prestige Stamp Book (YB004)
27 Oct	Christmas stamp cards (AQ230)
27 Oct	Mail Pack C4, 1st class (RV001)
27 Oct	Mail Pack C4, 2nd class (RV002)
27 Oct	Mail Pack C5, 1st class (RW001)
27 Oct	Mail Pack C5, 2nd class (RW002)
10 Nov	Christmas stamps (AS522)
10 Nov	Christmas pack (AP109)
10 Nov	Christmas stamp book (UB063)
10 Nov	1992 Collectors' Pack (AR027)
10 Nov	1992 Yearbook (AY031)
1 Dec	50th Anniv Aerogramme (QO028)
1 Dec	Aerogramme Pack (QO027)
5 Jan	Swans stamp cards (AQ236)
19 Jan	Swans stamps (AS528)
19 Jan	Swans pack (AP110)
19 Jan	Greetings stamp cards (JQ001)
19 Jan	NPM "People in the Post" cards (NQ917)
2 Feb	Greetings stamps (JB006)
2 Feb	Greetings stamps pack (JP002)
2 Feb	Marine Timekeepers stamp cards (AQ242)
9 Feb	50p book – Postal History No 1 (TB021)
9 Feb	£1 book – Educ. Institutions No 1 (TB022)
9 Feb	10 x 1st class book/W (UB065)
9 Feb	Pen Pal Aerogramme Pack (QA029)
16 Feb	Marine Timekeepers stamps (AS534)
16 Feb	Marine Timekeepers pack (AP111)
16 Feb	High Value stamp cards (FQ001)
2 Mar	£10 Definitive stamp (FS100)
2 Mar	£10 Definitive pack (FP009)
2 Mar	Orchids stamp cards (AQ247)

2 Mar	"Air Cards" (4 designs) (RQ001)
16 Mar	Orchids stamps (AS539)
16 Mar	Orchids pack (AP112)
16 Mar	4 x 1st class book/W (UB067)
16 Mar	10 x 2nd class book/W (UB066)
23 Mar	Scot. Aerogramme (Curling) (QS031)

Forthcoming

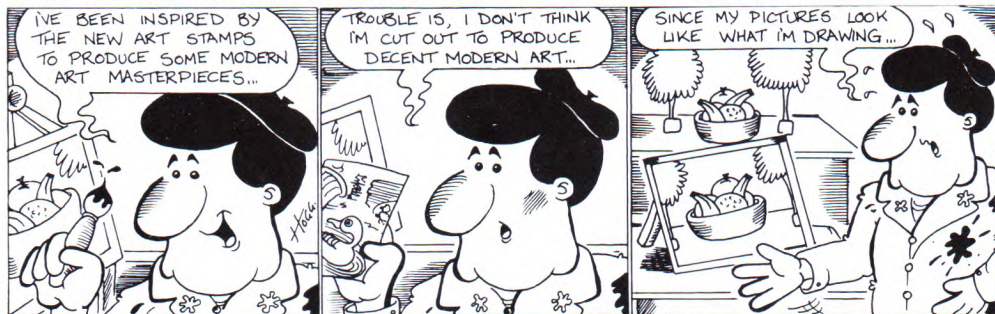
6 Apr	50p book – Postal History No 2
6 Apr	£1 book – Educational Institutions No 2
6 Apr	10 x 1st class book/H
6 Apr	10 x 1st class book/W
6 Apr	10 x 2nd class book/Q
6 Apr	4 x 1st class book/H
6 Apr	4 x 2nd class book/W
27 Apr	6p Definitive, Enschedé
4 May	Europa stamp cards
6 May	NPM "Gems of the Museum" cards
11 May	Europa stamps and pack
8 Jun	Roman Britain stamp cards
8 Jun†	1p, 5p, 10p Defs, Enschedé
15 Jun	Roman Britain stamps/pack
22 Jun	Scot Aerogramme (Q. Margaret)
6 Jul	50p book – Postal History 3
6 Jul	£1 book – Educational Institutions 3
13 Jul	Inland Waterways stamp cards
20 Jul	Inland Waterways stamps/pack
10 Aug	Beatrix Potter prestige book
7 Sep	Autumn stamp cards
14 Sep	Autumn stamps and pack

Notes:

The Walsall 10 x 1st book of 9 February bears a reference to Greetings books on the back cover. The 4 x 1st and 10 x 2nd books (16 March) have stamps with PVA Dextrin gum. The stamps in the 6 April 1st and 2nd class books have elliptical perforations on vertical sides.

W = Printed by Walsall Security Printers;
H = Harrison & Sons; Q = House of Questa.
† = Provisional date of issue

CUSTOMER KNOWS BEST.



April Digest

Issued in April/early May

5 April: *Stamp Advisory Committee Review* (1992 stamp programme). Price: £9.87.

Available from: British Philatelic Bureau, Collections, Philatelic counters and Post Shop Plus outlets.

6 April: 50p and £1 books containing 2 x 1p and 2 x 24p stamps and 2 x 2p, 4 x 24p stamps and 2 labels respectively. Second in Postal History and Educational Institutions series.

Printing: 50p Harrisons, photogravure; £1 Walsall, lithography. Stamps on ACP. The £1 book has straight edges at left and right sides of pane. Both books have stamps with PVA Dextrin gum.

6 April: 10 x 1st class and 4 x 1st class books printed by Harrison, 10 x 1st class and 4 x 2nd class books by Walsall and 10 x 2nd class book by Questa. All stamps are on OBA free paper, are perforated all round with elliptical perforations on vertical sides. Walsall 1st class stamps now have two phosphor bars instead of being printed on phosphor coated paper.

Note: All 6 April books available initially from the Bureau, Collections, and philatelic counters; they will be available from other outlets as stocks of earlier issues are used up.

27 April: 6p definitive, printed by Enschedé. Elliptical perforations on vertical sides, two phosphor bars.

Available initially from Bureau, Collections, and philatelic counters, from post offices as stocks of Harrison printing are used up.

4 May: Europa (Art in the 20th century) stamp cards, Nos. 152A-D, price 21p each.

6 May: National Postal Museum "Gems of the Museum" postcards, price 25p each.

Available from National Postal Museum shop and by mail order from British Philatelic Bureau, Edinburgh.

Withdrawn in April/early May

6 April: Europa '92 stamps, pack, stamp cards, and souvenir cover.

13 April: Scottish Aerogramme – Nature of Scotland.

27 April: 50p book (Archaeology 3) and £1 (Punch 3).

5 May: National Postal Museum "People in the Post" postcards, issued 6 May 1992.

Please note: The opening of the NPM's "Let's Collect Stamps" exhibition, announced for May has been postponed. A new date will be announced later.

Errare est humanum

To set the record straight, the Marine Timekeepers stamps are printed on paper with PVA gum, *not* PVA Dextrin as stated in the February Digest. The preview of the Orchids stamps (February, p.130) stated that these stamps were printed on phosphor coated paper. This is true of the 24p, 28p, 33p and 39p values; the 18p stamp has one phosphor band.

Royal Mail at Gardening Fair

Royal Mail will have a stand at the first Spring Gardening Fair at the Wembley Exhibition Complex, 8-12 April. The popular Orchid stamps will be on sale.

A special handstamp will be used on 8 April. Collectors may send covers, by 8 April, to receive this handstamp to: Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, KEB, LONDON EC1A 1AA. Ask for Gardening Fair handstamp. Covers should bear at least 1st class postage (24p). A souvenir cover is being produced: enquiries to: J & M Arlington, 45 Lakenheath, LONDON N14 4RL, Tel. 081-886 6744.



5 014721 100654