

BRITISH PHILATELIC

The ROYAL MAIL magazine for stamp collectors

Volume 43 Number 11

JULY 2006 £1.20

Bulletin

Victoria Cross issue : A visit to Cartor : Changes of 1966



2.50pm The teams and the match officials are presented to the Queen and receive the national anthems.

2.57pm Team Captains Bobby Moore and Uwe Seeler exchange pennants as England win the toss.

4.45pm The resulting free-kick is scrambled home by Weber. It's 2-2. Extra-time is now inevitable.

4.33pm Peters seizes on a rebound in a packed German penalty area. Quick volley and England lead 2-1.

4d ENGLAND WINNERS

World Cup 1966

HARRISON AND SONS LTD

5.00pm The deadlock is broken by the World Cup's most debated goal. Over the line? Yes, England lead 3-2.

5.30pm World Champions England wave the crowd and perform celebratory lap at Wembley.

5.22pm When people are on the pitch, they think it's all over. It is as Hurst nets his third. England 4-2.

Forthcoming issues and withdrawals



Cover England's 1966 World Cup victory was marked by the 'England Winners' stamp. Four decades later, Royal Mail remembers the occasion with a new 'England's Finest Hour' generic sheet, issued 6 June. Photograph by Geoff Dann.

Issues Some items available only from Royal Mail Tallents House and Post Office Limited philatelic outlets at main post offices in Bath (limited availability of selected items only), Birmingham, Brighton, Bristol, Cambridge, Canterbury, Cardiff, Chester, Colchester, Coventry, Croydon, Durham, Edinburgh, Exeter, Glasgow, Grimsby, Harrogate, Leicester, London (Trafalgar Square & Eastcheap), Newcastle upon Tyne, Norwich, Nottingham, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Southampton, Southend-on-Sea, Stevenage, Stratford-on-Avon, Stroud, Truro, Windsor and York.

Royal Mail Tallents House 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB, UK. Telephone order line (08.30-17.00 Monday to Friday): 08457 641 641; from overseas +44 131 316 7483. Minimum handling charge UK £1.30, Europe £1.55, rest of world (airmail) £2.15. Some products can be ordered on Royal Mail's website: www.royalmail.com/stamps

4 July	Issue Generic Smilers sheet 'For Those Special Moments' with pictorial definitive-size stamps (as issued in books, October 2005).
4 July	Withdrawal End of War miniature sheet.
11 July	Issue National Portrait Gallery stamp cards.
17 July	Issue Stamp book 6 × 1st Smilers 2005 stamps with cover change to include PIP information (note: will be distributed from Tallents House on 25 July).
18 July	Issue National Portrait Gallery stamps, presentation pack and medal cover.
18 July	Withdrawal Motorcycles stamps, pack and stamp cards.
25 July	Issue Castles ingot cover no4, Carrickfergus Castle.
25 July	Withdrawal Northern Ireland 42p stamp printed by Walsall; 6 × 1st book showing LOVE stamp on label on inside front cover.
1 August	Issue Definitives: 1st, 2nd (revised design), 1st Large, 2nd Large, 12p, 14p and pack containing these six stamps.
4 August	Withdrawal London 2012: Host City miniature sheet and presentation pack.
15 August*	Issue Stamp books: 4 × 1st Large; 4 × 2nd Large (self-adhesive) • Roll 500 × 2nd class standard definitive (PIP design).
22 August	Withdrawal Changing Tastes in Britain stamps, presentation pack and stamp cards.
31 August	Issue Year of Three Kings miniature sheet (£3 Machin definitive and reproductions of George V, Edward VIII and George VI 1d stamps).

*Date to be confirmed, or changed, in next month's *Bulletin*.

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The **British Philatelic Bulletin** is published monthly by Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ • **Editor** J R Holman • **Price** £1.20 single copies from Post Office Ltd philatelic outlets • **Annual subscription** £12.95 UK & Europe; £17.95 elsewhere. Send subscriptions to Royal Mail Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB • **Binders** (to hold 24 issues) £8.50, storage boxes (about 30 copies) £9.95 available by post from Royal Mail (Edinburgh address, above) • Royal Mail also publishes the fortnightly *British Postmark Bulletin*, giving details of forthcoming special handstamps. Available on annual subscription from Edinburgh address above: £12.25 UK and Europe, £24.95 rest of the world • **Copyright** Design & text Royal Mail Group plc, unless attributed to a specified author. All requests to reproduce any article should be addressed to the Editor, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ • **Design** Robert Maude • **Printed** in Great Britain by Beacon Press • **ISSN** 0953 8119 • Royal Mail is a trading name of Royal Mail Group plc. Registered in England and Wales no 4138203 registered office 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ

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This month The Editor previews this issue



John Holman, Editor

TWO OF THE ARTICLES this month recall England's World Cup victory 40 years ago. Even non-football fans like myself can remember the excitement of the event and the almost equally exciting philatelic activity surrounding the World Cup Winners stamp, which made newspaper headlines as it sold out on the day of issue. The 4d stamp was offered at up to 15s (75p) – 45 times its face value. However it later proved there were enough to satisfy philatelic demand and today's SG catalogue price is just 30p. At the time of writing, we wait to see if the current England team can match their predecessors of 1966. If they do, Royal Mail will be producing a commemorative issue, following the popularity of the Rugby World Cup and the Ashes stamps.

In May I invited comments on the plans for the London 2010 exhibition and I thank those who responded; I hope to publish some of your comments next month. If you haven't commented, I would still like to hear from you about what you expect of the show itself at the Business Design Centre and the related displays at other venues in London. Of the letters received so far, no one has commented on an admission price. I note that standard admission to this year's Chelsea Flower Show was £39 (with reduction for late afternoon or evening admission), and was intrigued to read in a national newspaper that English football fans going to Germany for the World Cup are likely to spend on average £4500 on match tickets, travel and accommodation. I always find it interesting to compare stamp collectors' views with what others think about and are prepared to spend on their hobby. Food for thought perhaps.

This month's stamp issue has a particular interest for me. When I worked at Stanley Gibbons in the Strand in the 1980s I quite often spent my lunch break looking at some of the portraits at the NPG, especially those of the 17th and 18th centuries. The Gallery has been much developed since then, and is a fascinating place to visit – if you haven't been there, I can thoroughly recommend it. JOHN HOLMAN, EDITOR •

Stamp scene News and upcoming events: Glenn Morgan keeps you posted

Enquiries Peter Denly, 9 Oaklands Park, Bishop's Stortford CM23 2BY, or denly@petel.or.fsnet.co.uk or visit www.brit-thematic-assoc.com (this is only a page on Stamp Domain and has incorrect subscription prices and contact details).

Society publications *Themescene* is the journal of the British Thematic Association, and its March issue contains the customary mix of society business and articles that makes every issue such an interesting read to thematic collectors. It contains the second article on the thematic use of airmail, records the origins of the Carmelites, discusses Dorus Rijkers, the famous Dutch lifeboat man, and other articles as well as all the 'usual features', as the front cover proclaims. It was good to see a newly introduced Junior Page, which is sub-headed 'definitely NOT for adults', and it is hoped that it proves popular among the next generation of collectors •

The January and March issues of the Great Britain Collector's Club quarterly publication *The GBCC Chronicle* are to hand. They contain several useful articles between them including features on mail to Lyman and Sons of Montreal, unpaid and underpaid mails, squared circles, peacekeeping operations in the former Yugoslavia, official seals, forgeries, plate repairs and more. American collector and writer Larry Rosenblum's regular *Mostly Machins* series is always my first read, as he clearly has his finger on the pulse of what is going on in current British philately, despite the geographical distance separating him from the 'action'. As one who regularly wastes time trying to find essential basic information about a society for Stamp Scene, I must applaud this society for the manner in which the inside front cover always contains everything that a prospective member, journalist or advertiser could require, including subscription and advertising costs and full contact details for all of the society's officers. Many worldwide societies could learn lessons from the GBCC, for not all readers are members – a point clearly missed by most organisations •

ABPS News for April contains reports on activities of the ABPS and its member societies, and includes an interview with its new treasurer, Hugh Feldman, a diary of forthcoming events, new stamp releases, details of society meetings, a news round-up and other information of use to anyone with an interest in British philately •

ABPS Awards Two prestigious annual awards that recognise philatelists at the 'grass-roots' of the hobby have recently been announced, and the Association of British Philatelic Societies offered 'its congratulations to all these hard-working people and wishes them well in their future endeavours for the hobby'. The Congress Medal is awarded to Kenneth E Norris for services to philately over a long period. He has been a delegate or a deputy delegate to the Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies since 1969, with responsibilities for several of the functions of the ASPs. He has attended all ABPS AGMs and biennial exhibitions, has served as convenor of workshops and seminars, and worked extensively to help make Glasgow 2000 a success. A member of many societies, he has also taken an active part in school stamp clubs. His contributions to our hobby appear endless, and Ken is understandably deemed a worthy recipient of the Congress Medal.

Ten philatelists received the ABPS Award of Merit for contributions to the hobby: David Allen (Petersfield & District ps), Michael Clarke-Williams (Portsmouth & District ps), James Fryer (Bolton ps), William D Hogg (North West Philatelic Federation), Julian H Jones (Hampshire Philatelic Federation), Gwen Killpack (Banbury Stamp Club), Donald R Knight (Barnet ps), Brian Presland (Hampshire Philatelic Federation), and last but not least, the partnership of Lynn and Malcolm Roberts (Enfield ps).

Finding collectors willing to give their time, invariably with little reward other than the sheer pleasure to be derived from being a participative member of the hobby, is to be applauded in these days when there is a tendency for people to put themselves first, or complain about the work undertaken by others without the slightest intention of helping out themselves! •

GBCC enquiries Secretary/treasurer Parker A Bailey, 17 Greenwood Road, Merrimack, NH 03054 USA. E-mail him at pbaileyjr@worldnet.att.net or visit website www.gbstamps.com/gbcc

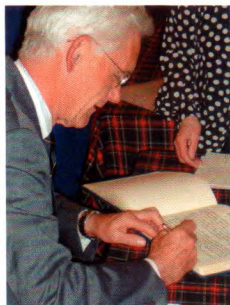
Membership fees outside of North America are US\$35 (member) or US\$50 (patron).

Larry Rosenblum's website www.gbstamps.com is also a regular must-see.

ABPS enquiries Mike Brindle, ABPS, PO Box 199, Thetford IP24 3WX, or website www.ukphilately.org.uk



Kenneth Norris, awarded the Congress Medal for services to philately over a long period.



Jeff Stone signing the Book of Scottish Philatelists.

Scottish Congress The 77th Annual Congress of the Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies was held on 21 and 22 April 2006 in the Dewar's Centre, Perth. The host Society was the Caledonian Philatelic Society, this year celebrating its centenary. There were 50 dealers present, along with a number of Society stands. There were over 150 frames of displays – from the host society, the National Competition entries and the Junior Competition. The winners in the Junior Competition, where the standard was encouragingly high, were: 13-15 years Shona Norval; 9-12 years Patrick Adamson; and up to 8 years Ahren McTaggart. The formal events started on Friday evening with the Tom Rielly Display, commemorating one of the best loved and hardest working of Scottish philatelists, who died in 2001 (see December 2001 *Bulletin*, page 102). This year's display was given by Stewart Gardiner. This was followed by a Civic Reception and welcome by Bob Scott, Provost of Perth, and the annual dinner. Following the dinner, the awards were presented.

Award winners were: General Class (Bridge of Allan Trophy) – William Mitchell; Scottish Postal History (Bruce Auckland Centennial Quaich) – Rev Alan Roy; Aerophilately (Acrophilatelic Shield) – Archie Hunter; Social Philately (Iain T Boyle Vase) – John L Colman; Postal History (Glasgow 800 Cup) – Jackie Scott; Literature (Robson Lowe Salver) – Dundee & District ps; Best First-Time Entrant (Cowell Salver) – John Brown; and Best Presentation (Dr Hirst Bowl) – Ian Evans. The ASPs Award of Merit was presented to John Mackie of the St Andrews ps, and the McConnell Medal to David Rossall of the Ayrshire ps. As shown opposite, Jeff Stone, of Aberdeen ps became a signatory of the Book of Scottish Philatelists. *Report from Colin G Campbell* ●

Methodist PS Enquiries

T M Smart, 11 Northwood Park, Woodlesford, Leeds LS26 8PE.

Methodist PS The society was founded in September 1970 for the study and encouragement of philately associated with Methodism and the Methodist contribution to United Churches and Ecumenical activities. Membership is £8 per year, with a quarterly newsletter and a cover service where most Methodist related covers and stamps are sold to members on a subscription basis. A friendly exchange of information and material between members is encouraged. The spring 2006 issue comprises 24 A5 pages with the use for the first time of colour, bringing to life many of the items illustrated within. There are articles on the National Children's Home, The Sinking of the *Montevideo Maru*, The Word of God Light of the World, Brian Thompson's Bible, Methodism in Lesotho, plus others so there is plenty to interest the collector of such material ●

United Nations Archive At a sale held in Geneva in 2003, the entire United Nations Postal Administration's stamp and pre-production archive was sold in bulk by auction. It now appears that the sale may not have received official disposal approval from within the organisation, and the wonderfully named Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), the UN's investigative arm, has been investigating the situation for some time to ascertain how it was ever sold in the first place.

It appears that the value received by the UNPA (around us\$2.5m) could be as little as one quarter of what it has been making when broken down into either individual or smaller lots, although there is nothing to suggest that the Swiss auction house is at fault in any way.

It is not uncommon for stamp printer archives to come on to the open market and the forthcoming sale of the Heraclio Fournier of Spain archive will contain material from many of the postal administrations that they printed stamps for, but I cannot recall a 'country' selling its whole archive before. Britain and Australia did both dispose of some duplicate material in auction sales held a few years back. These were not too successful for various reasons and have not been repeated ●

An extensive and fascinating report by Fox News on this whole UN fiasco can be found at www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,193181,00.html

Tokyo Stamp Show The Japan Philatelic Society held Stamp Show '06 in Tokyo, 28-30 April. This is an annual national stamp exhibition with various events for younger collectors and beginners. The main event this year was inviting Finland's famous character Moomin. Royal Mail was there with a stand selling British stamps, where a special cachet was used. The JPS's British Stamp Study Group prepared a 1995 1st class stamp pane over-printed 'Stamp Show '06' and sold them at the venue in Asakusa, Tokyo ●



Bulletin readers wanting one of these panes should send five international reply coupons to: Michihiko Yokohagi, 11-4 Shimorenjaku 2chome, Mitaka-shi, Tokyo 181-0013, Japan.

Friends of BPMA Why not consider becoming a Friend of the British Postal Museum and Archive? There has never been a better time to join, as it has a packed programme of events on offer, and has made big strides towards helping make a combined BPMA museum and archive site a reality. Membership gives you the chance to help Britain's national collection reach a wider audience, and for you to take part as a volunteer, working with the BPMA on projects and keeping an eye out for objects that may enhance the collections. The excellent quarterly *BPMA Newsletter* keeps members informed on activities, and the exclusive Friends colour journal *Cross Post* is packed with interesting articles on postal-related subjects. These publications, coupled with discounts on BPMA/Friends events and merchandise, all come as part of the inexpensive membership subscription. The Friends has recently attained charitable status and its Councillors are now Directors of the newly formed company, so everything is on a firm footing to enable the Friends to make a great impact on the BPMA's exciting future ●

Enquiries Avicé Harms, 13 Amethyst Avenue, Davis Estate, Chatham ME5 9TX. Membership is £15 (UK) or £20 (overseas) per annum.

New dealer listing Mike Holt has recently published his price list number 33 of GB material from the present reign. This quality 80 page colour A4 publication offers collectors the chance to add some superb material to their collections, from under £10 up to thousands of pounds, and includes some buying prices. It features a complete revision of the DLR Byfleet and Dunstable ATN press printings, and a specialised listing of England Emblem Definitives ●

Enquiries Mike Holt, PO Box 177, Stourbridge DY8 3DE; email sales@mike-holt.com or visit www.mike-holt.com

Enquiries The Duncannon Partnership, 4 Beaufort Road, Reigate RH2 9DJ. Telephone 01737 244222.

Enquiries Honorary Librarian, Glenn H Morgan, National Philatelic Society, 107 Charterhouse Street, London EC1M 6PT, or visit www.ukphilately.org.uk/nps

Lighthouse publications A new 2006 84-page full-colour product guide for stamp and coin collectors has appeared. It contains full product information, pricing and ordering details for the entire Lighthouse range. Enquire as opposite, or visit www.duncannon.co.uk and www.hawid-uk.com ●

Library bequest The National Philatelic Society library has recently benefited from a major bequest in the will of its long-time member William (Bill) Parmenter, who died last November. Bill had specialised in the philately of Latin and South America, and almost 2000 items of philatelic literature – mainly from this geographical area – has either been sorted into holdings, or the duplicates and non-philatelic material sold to society members. The sale proceeds will be used to further enhance the library, which is accessible not just to NPS members but to anyone interested in the hobby on payment of a small daily charge of £2. Bill was a regular attendee at the annual Philatelic Congress of Great Britain until his health prevented him, and was a popular member of the NPS. He had a good sense of humour and is sadly missed ●

Falmouth packets book 144 pages, paperback (pub 2003), 37 photographs. Available from Tor Mark Press, United Downs Industrial Estate, St Day, Redruth, Cornwall TR16 5HY, or by email from sales@tormarkpress.prestel.co.uk, priced at £9.99 (presumably plus postage and packing).

Book review A few *Bulletin's* back I mentioned that *The Falmouth Packets 1689-1851* by Tony Pawlyn (ISBN 1 85022 175 8) seemed to be out of print. I am pleased to say that the publisher, Truran Books, advises that copies are still on sale. At its peak, over forty vessels were employed as mail-packets working out of Falmouth, ferrying official dispatches, mail, passengers and bullion. Built for speed and lightly armed, these small vessels had to contend with not only the elements but hostile navies and privateers.

The book is the result of many years work, and covers the organisation of the service, packet commanders, life on board and the inevitable problems of 'free trading' which led to the notorious mutiny of 1810. It is illustrated with contemporary documents and portraits and supplemented with modern photographs recording the visual evidence to be seen today of what was once a significant industry giving Falmouth prosperity and international status. Complete with indices of ships and people, a glossary of maritime terms and various appendices, the book will appeal to both the maritime historian and the general reader who is interested in this largely uncelebrated piece of Cornish and maritime history.

Its value to the postal historian interested in the historical maritime mail from or to Cornwall is obvious, so buy a copy for your philatelic library, dig out your ship mail and expand on the write-up in your albums by checking the information in the ship listings. Included are not just Falmouth vessels, for there are also details of French and American privateers, a Spanish packet, prize vessels and naval vessels from Britain and France.

This enjoyable read concludes with the demise of the service, due to the introduction of steamships and the withdrawal of the sailing ships. This technological change resulted in the closure of the Packet Station after more than 150 years, although the service was briefly revived in the First World War on mail to and from Bilbao. It took Falmouth and its people many generations to become the prosperous town that it is once more ●

Royal Mail news New issues and products

• Withdrawals • Joint stamp issue awards



Special issues The special stamps programme continues this month with the National Portrait Gallery which was previewed here in May. The 10 stamps feature famous Britons from Shakespeare to Dame Cicely Saunders. Next month we issue a miniature sheet marking the 70th anniversary of 'The Year of Three Kings' – George V, Edward VIII and George VI (31 August), and the 150th Anniversary of the Victoria Cross stamps (21 September) are previewed in this *Bulletin*.



The set for October will be on the theme Sounds of Britain, and depicts Asian Sitar, Caribbean Bass player, Latin American Maracas, Irish fiddle, and Black American Blues. Two of the stamps bear the EUROPA logo. They were designed by CDT and printed by Cartor Security Printing.

In response to public interest and in support of significant national activity in the next few years, Royal Mail will issue a series of three miniature sheets to coincide with Remembrance Day in 2006, 2007, and 2008. The first, entitled 'Lest We Forget' goes on sale on 9 November 2006, to commemorate the 90th anniversary of the Battle of the Somme. The sheet will bear one new special stamp with a Remembrance design plus four country stamps. As the sheet will be printed in gravure, it will include the first Northern Ireland country stamp printed by this process. Further details to follow.

The 2007 stamp programme will include an issue commemorating the 60th wedding anniversary of The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh •

The Sounds of Britain stamps, shown at proof stage, at 64% actual size.

Definitive update Details were given in last month's *Bulletin* regarding the new Pricing in Proportion definitive stamps which go on sale on 1 August. These comprise revised standard 1st and 2nd class, larger-size 1st and 2nd class inscribed 'Large', and 12p and 14p values to cover the difference between the rates for standard and large letters. All these stamps will be gummed, the 'Large' stamps printed in sheets of 100, all others in the usual size sheets of 200.

Books containing four 1st Large and four 2nd Large will go on sale on 15 August, price £1.76 and £1.48. A roll (coil) of 500 × revised standard 2nd class stamps will also be available. Rolls of 500 1st class and 1000 1st class and 2nd class will be issued later. Self-adhesive business sheets of 100 revised standard-size 1st and 2nd class stamps, also books of six 1st and 12 × 1st and 12 × 2nd are in production; date of availability to be announced.

The 37p and 49p definitives will become redundant. The 49p stamp will be withdrawn from sale at Post Office branches but the 37p stamp will remain on sale until stocks are exhausted ●

Smilers service For details, telephone 0845 074 2000 (UK customers) or +44 131 316 7489 (overseas).

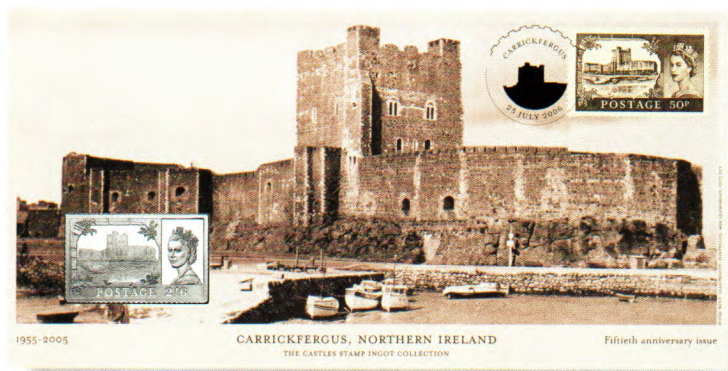
Generic & Smilers sheets A new generic sheet, entitled 'For Life's Special Moments', containing all six of the small-size pictorial stamps issued last October will be available from 4 July (shown in May *Bulletin*). A further generic sheet of Christmas stamps (10 × 1st class and 10 × 2nd class) will be available from 7 November. Two 'Smilers' sheets for Christmas, one each of 20 × 1st class, and 20 × 2nd class, will be available for customers to have their own images printed on the labels. For details of the Smilers service call the numbers opposite, or visit www.royalmail.com/smilers ●

First day covers Readers are reminded that the price of Royal Mail FDC envelopes will be 30p from the National Portrait Gallery issue. The colour of the 'Winged Horse' definitive stamps FDC envelope is being changed from grey to red with effect from the Pricing in Proportion definitive stamps to be issued on 1 August ●

Airpacks withdrawal Three of the four designs of airpack (c4 size, Europe and Worldwide versions) were withdrawn from sale at Post Office branches on 31 May. These feature the 'Greetings from Great Britain!' designs – fish and chips, sticks of rock, and deckchairs on beach. Still on sale are the airpacks with a map of the world printed on the reverse. Price £2.99 Europe, £3.99 Worldwide c4 size, £4.49 and £5.49 c3 size ●

Coming off sale Any remaining stock of the End of the War miniature sheet comes off sale on 4 July, and the Motorcycles stamps, presentation pack and stamp cards on 18 July ●

New Minister Following the government changes in May, the new minister in charge of postal matters at the Department of Trade & Industry is Mr Jim Fitzpatrick MP. The new Secretary of State for Trade & Industry is the Rt Hon Alastair Darling MP ●

**Carrickfergus Castle cover**

Bears the 50p Carrickfergus Castle stamp from the 2005 miniature sheet, cancelled by a special Carrickfergus date-stamp, and has a silver ingot of the 2s6d Carrickfergus Castle stamp of 1955. Price £24.95.

Coin, medal and ingot covers A National Portrait Gallery medal cover will be available from 18 July, price £14.50. This bears the 10 NPG stamps cancelled by a special London postmark. This will be followed on 25 July by an ingot cover featuring Carrickfergus Castle, the final cover in the Castles series. A coin cover will be issued with the VC stamps on 21 September ●

Joint issue awards Members of the International Philatelic Society of Joint Stamp Issues Collectors chose the Greta Garbo stamps issued by Sweden and the USA as the Best Joint Issue of 2005. The stamps were designed by Gustav Malmfors (Sweden) and Carl T Herrman (USA). Second place was awarded to France and Vatican for the Vatican Museums/Louvre Museum issue of November 2005, and third place to Australia and Great Britain for the World Heritage Sites sets of April 2005. The selection was made among 31 joint issues released in 2005 by 48 postal administrations, comprising some 124 stamps and 14 souvenir sheets. Omnibus and territorial issues were excluded from the contest ●

Storing your Bulletins Binders and box files are available for storing this and the *Postmark Bulletin*. The sturdy box files, in maroon for the *Philatelic Bulletin* and green for the *Postmark Bulletin* are available from Royal Mail Tallents House, price £9.95 each. The files will store 30 copies of the *Philatelic Bulletin* and about 50 of the *Postmark Bulletin*. The traditional binders for the *Philatelic* and *Postmark Bulletin* cost £8.50 ●

Box file order codes

Philatelic Bulletin PB349
Postmark Bulletin PB350

Binder order codes

Philatelic Bulletin BB001
Postmark Bulletin PB322

Prize draw Win a definitive stamp collection

FOR THIS MONTH'S DRAW we have a definitive stamp collection – presentation packs containing Machin definitive and country stamps in a special folder (current price £28.95). Five runners up will be sent the empty folder (price £6.99) in which to house their packs. To enter the draw, simply write your name and address on the back of a postcard and send it to: Definitive Stamps Draw, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ, to arrive by 31 July ●

Treasures of the BPMA

Martin Robinson looks at designs for the 1966 World Cup issue, and the ensuing controversies

Two proposed designs for the 1966 World Cup issue: David Caplan's flag design, which was withdrawn because of its inclusion of the North Korean flag, and a David Gentleman design based on photographs by Peter Boyce.



THE WORLD CUP FINALS were held in England for the first time in 1966 and the Football Association was keen to have them marked by a set of stamps. The GPO was enthusiastic about the idea, believing the event would enjoy sufficient national and international interest to come within the stamp issuing guidelines newly established under Postmaster General Anthony Wedgwood Benn. In January 1966 the GPO invited submissions from four artists – N Sharland, W Kempster, M Goaman and T Carter, as well as the printing firms of Harrison & Sons and Bradbury Wilkinson. By late February 39 designs had been submitted, including some by David Gentleman, who had been asked by Wedgwood Benn to work on designs for all issues of stamps. In early March, the Stamp Advisory Committee viewed the designs submitted and considered only Kempster's work worthy of colour essays, whilst Gentleman was asked to rework five of his designs. Another artist, David Caplan, had asked if he might submit designs, and was invited to do so.

Three denominations were proposed, for Inland, European and Airmail rates, and at a meeting later in March the Committee recommended two designs by Caplan and one by Kempster. All the designs considered (and some unsolicited ones submitted via the FA by Alan Robinson, Secretary

of the Portsmouth Society of Association Referees, which the Committee did not see) are held in the BPMA collection.

Subsequently the PMG seems to have intervened directly in the matter, as the three designs he submitted to The Queen for her approval were a flag design by Caplan, an action design by Kempster, and a vertical design by David Gentleman showing two players in action; all three had the recently approved silhouette of The Queen. At the end of March she approved the designs as submitted, but that was not the end of the matter.

Before the stamps went to Harrison's, the GPO consulted the Foreign Office about the accuracy of the flags depicted on Caplan's 153d design, and a problem then emerged. At that time the British Government did not recognise the government of North Korea, but a North Korean team was taking part in the tournament held in this country. Whilst the FA, a non-governmental body, was to be allowed to fly the North Korean flag alongside those of the other nations during the competition, the flag's appearance on a British stamp was viewed differently, and the GPO was asked to remove it. The PMG informed The Queen of this difficulty, and suggested another of Caplan's designs as a substitute, one showing three players jumping for the ball. This was accepted.



Much of the press coverage following the launch of the stamps dealt with the rejection of Caplan's flag design: some felt the decision was justified but others treated it with derision – the *Sun* described it as 'Bumbledom gone mad'. Even more embarrassing for the GPO was that Caplan himself was outspoken in his criticism of the decision in press interviews, saying it was juvenile and that he disliked the substitute design, even though it was his own. The Stamp Advisory Committee suggested that in future, instructions to artists should make it clear that statements to press should come only from official sources.

Gentleman's design also attracted comment: it had been based on photos taken by a free-lance photographer of two of his friends, who were not footballers and had apparently been fuelled during the session by light ale and cigarettes. Gentleman had been asked to make the features of the

two players anonymous, and as it represented the Inland rate this stamp was the one which became the most familiar, particularly as the design was used again after the competition, to mark England's victory.

As anyone who was collecting British stamps at the time will recall, this 'overprinted' stamp also caused some controversy. As a matter of fact the stamp was not overprinted, but new cylinders were prepared and the whole stamp reprinted in photogravure. This time, the comment was not about the design but the fact that in order to minimise the delay between the victory and the stamp issue, only 100,000 sheets or 12,000,000 stamps were produced, which was estimated to be sufficient for three or four days' supply. With the popularity of the subject, and the announcement of limited quantities it was inevitable that this led to queues, and even some ugly scenes, as post offices sold out within a short time, and some collectors speculated by buying much larger quantities than they would otherwise have done – not that it did them any good, for the price sank rapidly when their hoarded sheets appeared on the market! It had been intended to make the stamps available only in England, including the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man, but they were also sold at Army Post Offices abroad, in Edinburgh to mark the beginning of the Festival, and in some Monmouthshire offices which normally sold English definitives as well as Welsh regional stamps.

The full story of this entertaining issue can be found in the BPMA's *Special Stamp Histories* nos 43 and 45 •

In addition to its regular opening times (Monday to Wednesday and Friday 10.00-17.00, Thursday 10.00-19.00), the BPMA is also open on Saturdays on 12 August, 14 October, and 9 December, from 10.00-17.00. Archive Tours are held at 14.00 on the last Thursday of every month until November and Museum Store Tours at 14.00 on the second Wednesday of every month until October. Details of exhibitions, lectures and film shows are given in our Events listing. For further information contact the BPMA on 020 7239 2570 or see website www.postalheritage.org.uk •

Curious characters from the National Portrait Gallery

It is nice to know that not only the high and the mighty are to be found on the Gallery's walls, but rather more humble folk as well. Rosemary Bennett introduces three such individuals who share space with figures more familiar in British history.

THIS YEAR is the 150th anniversary of the founding of the National Portrait Gallery, an occasion marked by the issue on 18 July of a set of commemorative stamps. The setting up of the gallery was proposed by Philip Henry Stanhope, 5th Earl Stanhope, a man of broad and varied interests, who had been a politician and who was also an historian and a trustee of the British Museum. No doubt he imagined that the collection would contain the portraits of the great and the good, which of course it does, but, perhaps surprisingly, other humbler folk have also been commemorated there, and three of these are the subject of this article.

One such person is 'The Female Soldier', Hannah Snell (1723-92). Hannah was born in Worcester, the daughter of a hosier and a dyer. Both of her parents died when she was 17, and three years later she married a Dutch seaman whom she continued to love in spite of the fact that he deserted her when she was pregnant. After the tragic loss of her baby, she determined to find her husband. Borrowing a set of men's clothes from her brother-in-law James Gray, she set off for London. She must have looked convincing, for when she later went on to Coventry, she became a victim of the press gangs and found herself in General Guise's Regiment of Foot.

Nothing daunted, Hannah marched with the regiment to Carlisle. Although at some point she is claimed to have received five hundred lashes, she still managed to keep her sex a secret. After a time, unsuccessful at finding her husband, she deserted.

Travelling to Portsmouth, she enlisted in Fraser's Regiment of Marines, still hoping to trace her husband. She was made assistant-steward and

cook aboard the sloop *Swallow*, and sailed for the East Indies. A dangerous period in her life then followed, during which she was engaged in action at various places, including Pondicherry. She was wounded several times, on one occasion in the groin, but still she managed to keep her secret by enlisting the help of a native woman to extract the bullet.

Eventually, Hannah received news of her husband, but it came too late; he had been executed in Genoa. Having so completed her self-imposed mission, Hannah decided that she would return to being a female.

Back in England in 1750 she confided her true identity to some of her old shipmates, and soon the tales of her adventures had spread throughout the country. Finding herself suddenly famous, she capitalized on her notoriety and sold her life's story to a publisher in London. She was also to appear on the stage, dressed as a Marine, and singing sea ballads and carrying out her old drill routines. She managed to get a pension because of her war wounds, and later moved to Wapping where she took a public house, renaming it 'The Female Warrior'.

In 1759 she married again, this time to a Newbury carpenter named Samuel Eyles. This marriage produced two sons, one of whom, George, eventually became a London attorney. Samuel died some years later, and in 1772 she married for the third time. By 1785 she was again in London, and a few years later her mental health began to fail. In 1792, aged 69, she died in Bedlam Hospital; a sad end to an extraordinary life. She was buried in Chelsea Hospital among the other old soldiers, which would no doubt have pleased her greatly.



From left: 'the female soldier' Hannah Snell, by John Faber Jr after Richard Phelps, 1750; George Parker Bidder, known as 'the calculating boy', by William Brockedon, 1825; and Thomas Parr, by Cornelis van Dalen after an unknown artist, 1635. All © National Portrait Gallery, London.

Also to be found in the Gallery is the likeness of George Parker Bidder (1806-78), of Devon, who became known as 'The Calculating Boy'. George was born in Mortonhamstead, the third son of a stonemason, and at a very early age astounded adults with his ability to perform extremely complicated calculations in his head. When he was about seven, his father decided to profit from his son's talent by exhibiting him at fairs and shows, calling him 'The Calculating Prodigy'. Together they travelled around the country visiting various towns including Brighton, Norwich, Oxford and Cambridge. Perhaps surprisingly, the little boy does not seem to have been harmed by this experience, but is reputed to have enjoyed himself, laughing and joking with his adult questioners. For about a year, George went to school in Camberwell, but then his father took him on his travels again.

However, the year 1816 saw a change in his life. While in Edinburgh, he met Sir Henry Jardine, who arranged private lessons for him, followed by studies at Edinburgh University. After university he spent a year with the Ordnance Survey, and then took up Civil Engineering. Work on surveys for the London Docks and on various railways and canals helped to make his name, and his fame became such that he travelled to other countries giving advice. But in spite of his success, George never forgot his family and assisted and supported his parents and siblings.

Perhaps one of the most amazing characters whose portrait appears in the Gallery is Thomas Parr, who is claimed to have lived to the age of 152! Thomas is said to have been born in Shropshire in 1483, the son of a farmer. For many years he lived a bachelor existence, but, in 1563, at the

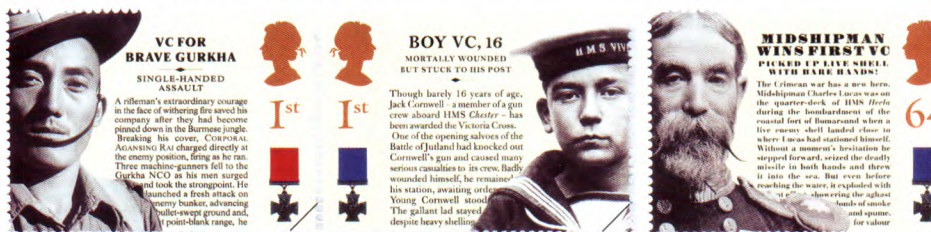
age of 80, he surprised his friends (and possibly himself) by getting married. He and his wife Jane had a son and daughter but both died in infancy.

Thomas must have developed a liking for the ladies, for, at the age of 100, he was unfaithful to Jane and fathered a child by another woman. Presumably she forgave him, but some years later she died, and for 10 years Thomas remained single. Then, at the age of 122, he took the plunge again! His second wife was a widow, and was also called Jane. This time the marriage was childless, but his wife confirmed that it was a normal marriage in every sense.

In 1635 the Earl of Arundel, who had estates in Shropshire, persuaded Thomas to go to London to meet King Charles I. He was carried there in a litter, and on arrival was treated like a VIP. Crowds came out to see him, he was wine and dined, and the King even arranged for a jester to amuse him. Sadly, however, after a healthy life in the open air and a plain diet, the excitement, rich food and city pollution proved too much for the old man, and only a few weeks into his holiday he died. Perhaps feeling rather responsible for his death, King Charles ordered that he should be buried in Westminster Abbey. During his audience with the king, Thomas had been asked for his recipe for a long life, to which he had replied, 'Keep your head cool by temperance, and your feet warm by exercise. Rise early, go soon to bed, and if you want to grow fat (prosperous) keep your eyes open and your mouth shut'.

It is nice to know that it is not only the high and mighty who are remembered in the Gallery, but more humble folk as well. If readers are unable to visit the Gallery, those with internet access can visit their website: www.npg.org.uk/live/search ●

The Victoria Cross A new issue celebrating



1st class Agansing Rai and Boy Seaman First Class Jack Cornwall.

64p Midshipman Charles Lucas (awarded the very first VC, for hurling a live shell over the side of his ship during the Crimean War) and Captain Noel Chavasse.

72p Captain Albert Ball and Captain Charles Upham.

SIX COLOURFUL STAMPS, a miniature sheet and a prestige book go on sale at Post Office branches and philatelic outlets and at Royal Mail Tallents House on 21 September to mark the 150th anniversary of the introduction of the Victoria Cross by Queen Victoria in 1856. The stamps, designed by Atelier Works, are printed in horizontal se-tenant pairs. The stamps are overprinted with panels of phosphor, and the year of issue ('2006') can be seen reversed out of the phosphor, similar to the 2005 Christmas stamps. The stamps will be issued to Post Office branches in sheets of 30. However, sheets of 60 with gutter margins will be available from Post Office philatelic outlets and Royal Mail Tallents House.

MINIATURE SHEET The miniature sheet includes the 20p VC stamp from the 1990 Gallantry issue as well as the six new VC stamps, price £3.56. The new stamps are printed in vertical se-tenant pairs of each value, as opposed to horizontal pairs on the normal sheet stamps. The sheet measures 190 x 67mm. The new stamps have phosphor panels, the 20p stamp an all-over phosphor. Please note that the original 20p Gallantry stamp was printed in gravure; on the miniature sheet (and prestige book – see p338) it is litho.

Technical details

Printer Joh Enschedé Stamps

Process Lithography

Stamp size 41 x 30mm

Sheets 30 and 60

Perforation 14.5 x 14

Phosphor Phosphor panel

Gum PVA

Gutter pairs Vertical

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Unstamped Royal Mail FDC envelopes will be available from main Post Office branches and philatelic outlets about a week before 21 September, price 30p. The cover features the VC medal. Orders for FDCs with the stamps or miniature sheet cancelled by a pictorial first day postmark of Tallents House or Cuffley must reach Tallents House by the day of issue. Price £4.42 UK or £3.77 overseas with stamps, £4.66 or £3.97 with miniature sheet.

Collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue to: Royal Mail Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB (for Tallents House postmark), or to one of Royal Mail's Special Handstamp Centres (Cuffley postmark) marking the outer envelope 'FDO633' (Tallents House), or 'FDO634' (Cuffley). Covers can be posted or handed in at main Post Office branches for the Cuffley postmark. A non-pictorial Cuffley is also available from Special Handstamp Centres, request 'FDO634 NP'.

Sponsored handstamps for 21 September will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from Tallents House (£12.25 UK/Europe; £24.95 elsewhere). For a sample copy write to: The Editor, British Postmark Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ.

150 years of the most prestigious decoration

BAR TO VC FOR ARMY DOCTOR

RESCUED WOUNDED FROM NO-MAN'S LAND

Captain Noel Chavasse, RANMC, has been posthumously awarded a second Victoria Cross in recognition of his gallantry in tending British casualties at Passchendaele.

"SELF-SACRIFICE BEYOND PRaise"
Capt Chavasse, an accomplished athlete, won his first VC on the Somme. He ignored the constant bombardment of machine guns and artillery, helping the injured, the threat of poison gas was



MISSING IN FRANCE CAPTAIN BALL FEARED LOST

THE most famous of all British airmen, Captain Albert Ball (D.O.B. 1886), has failed to return to his airfield. He was last seen at dusk over enemy lines. Unconfirmed reports in German papers claim his plane was brought down by Lt. von Richthofen. Barely 22 years old, Capt. Ball has already accounted for nearly 72 enemy aircraft. Sometimes he is depicted in single-handed combat with loss or more enemy planes at a moment's notice. A religious man, who derives pleasure from reading a small prayer book he has made



DOUBLE VC FOR COLDITZ HERO

A VC-winning officer who had been given up for dead, but was later liberated from Colditz, has been awarded a second Victoria Cross. Captain Charles Upham, an outstanding New Zealander, is only the third man in history to achieve this double honour.

OUTSTANDING GALLANTRY
Upham's first VC was in recognition of sustained bravery during organized fighting in Crete in 1941. A year later, confronting Rommel's tanks in the Western Desert, his courageous leadership earned a second VC, though badly wounded, he led a



1856-2006



"Who would
true valour see,
Let him come
hither."
JOHN BUNYAN
21.9.2006

"Who would
true valour see,
Let him come
hither."
JOHN BUNYAN
21.9.2006

VICTORIA CROSS

1856 - 2006

ROYAL MAIL, FIRST DAY COVER



ROYAL MAIL TALLENTS HOUSE
"Who would
true valour see,
Let him come
hither."
JOHN BUNYAN
21.9.2006

A pack (at right, price £3.90) and stamp cards (£2.10 set) will be available from main PO branches and philatelic outlets and Tallents House.

The pack has been written by General Sir Peter de la Billiere, leader of the UK forces during the first Gulf War, designed by Atelier Works, and printed by Walsall Security Printers. It features the VC recipients on the stamps, with images from contemporary press and other sources.

There are seven stamp cards, one for each stamp and one for the miniature sheet.

150 YEARS OF THE VICTORIA CROSS

STORIES OF VALOUR

by General Sir Peter de la Billiere

"Neither rank nor long service nor wounds nor any other quality whatsoever save the merit of conspicuous bravery shall be sufficient qualification for the Order"

So stated the original Victoria Cross Warrant. Together with two other important conditions, these terms formed the basis of the Warrant instituting the Victoria Cross signed by Queen Victoria on 29 January 1856. It stated further that the VC should be awarded to only "those officers or men who have served us in the presence of the enemy and performed some signal act of valour or devotion to their country".

The first three awards were made to the Royal Navy with Midshipman Charles Lucas gaining the first in June 1854 when serving on HMS *Hood* in the Baltic Sea. The medals are cast from the casabe of two Russian artillery pieces captured at Sevastopol during the Crimean War. At a time when rank and privilege dominated society, the inception of an award open to all ranks proclaimed the Queen's sense of egalitarian principles. Two of the three recipients of the double VC, or VC and Bar, were doctors while Major Charles Upham, a New Zealander was the only 'combatant' to be awarded a Bar.

At Gallipoli, in August 1915, Captain Noel Chavasse of the Royal Army Medical Corps was seen creeping from shell-hole to shell-hole in broad daylight, completely exhausted and totally fearless, directing his stretcher-bearers, giving first aid and personally helping to bring in the wounded. Nearly a year later after his battalion suffered cataclysmic casualties, he was fatally wounded and refused first aid. Lying on a stretcher, with his dying words, he asked the nurse to give his fiancée a message: "Give her my love, tell her duty called and called me to obey".

Another non-combatant was the Reverend Theodore Hardy, an Army Chaplain serving with the Lincolnshire and Somerset Battalions during the First World War. Telling his superior that he could not bring in sufficient

THE VICTORIA CROSS

1856 - 2006



1. Private John Douglas rescues a fallen officer in Lang's Mall, South Africa in 1880. First Recipient of the Victoria Cross



2. Rescuer of Rear Admiral Charles Lewis with his heroic deed post.

3. Captain Card receives the letter of Lady and the letter of the day.

4. Clipping from The Western London News about Reverend Hardy receiving his VC from King George V.

5. Painting of Noel Chavasse (left) and his fiancée (right) by the artist.

SEPT. 1907

DOUBLE V.C. FOR BISHOP'S SON

Second V.C. for the late Victoria Cross recipient, the son of a Victoria Cross recipient, Captain Lord Geoffrey Chavasse, R.N.C., was awarded the Victoria Cross for his gallantry in the Battle of the Somme. Although severely wounded, he led a charge which inspired a victory, later



BRINGER-DOWN OF 12 GERMAN PLANES AND A SAUSAGE

LIEUT. ALBERT BALL, D.S.O., R.C.

Lieut. Ball's last of bringing down a German aeroplane after a "bracket" of "bracket" aeroplanes, he then took a respite for visiting his German daughter, Mrs. (Lieut. Ball), who is a member of the Royal Air Force from Birmingham. He returned at the end of the war, and has been awarded both D.S.O. and the V.C.



ROYAL MAIL TALLENTS HOUSE
"I only did
my job"
WILLIAM LEEFE
ROBINSON VC
HERTS
21.9.2006



KNIGHT

ALFRED JOSEPH

The London Regiment (Post Office Rifles), Western Front, Belgium 1917

On 20 September 1917 at Albert's Section, Ypres, Sergeant Knight's platoon came under heavy fire from an enemy machine-gun. Without regard to his personal safety Sergeant Knight rushed through the barrage to capture the machine-gun nest single-handed. Under continuous fire he carried out several more acts of conspicuous bravery, taking command of his own platoon and others when their officers were killed or wounded.

Sergeant Knight, who was later promoted to Second Lieutenant, is the only Post Office Rifleman to have been awarded the Victoria Cross.



BEHARRY

JOHNSON GIDEON

Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment, Iraq 2004

On 1 May 2004 Johnson Beharry's Warrior armoured personnel carrier came under fire from rocket-propelled grenades, and many of the soldiers inside, including the platoon commander and gunner, were injured. Driving through the ambush, Beharry led a convoy of five Warriors to safety, then helped his wounded colleagues out of the vehicle to safety while still under fire.

In a second ambush on 11 June 2004, Beharry received serious head injuries; despite this he took control of the vehicle and threw his colleagues to safety before lapsing into unconsciousness.



The VC prestige book panes

VC stamps: 1st Rai, 64p Lucas, 72p Ball

VC stamps: 1st Cornwell, 64p Chavasse, 72p Upham

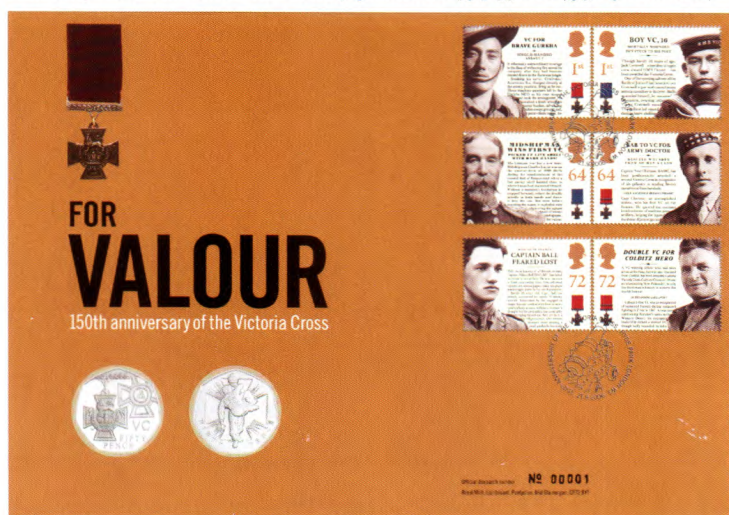
Definitives: 4 x 1st class (revised design, as issued 1 August) and 4 x 50p with label featuring the VC medal

Gallantry stamp 4 x 20p (1990 stamp)

VC prestige book The PSB (£7.44) was designed by Atelier Works, with text by Bernard Cornwell, and printed by Enschedé. Mr Cornwell, the novelist and creator of Sharpe, is a distant relative of Jack Cornwell VC. The design of the book is based on the VC medal presentation box, reproducing a medal and distinctive red ribbon. Illustrations include Queen Victoria presenting medals to recipients and the cannon from which brass is used to manufacture the medals. There are biographies of the recipients honoured on the stamps, and of Alfred Joseph Knight, the only member of the Post Office Rifles awarded the VC, and of Johnson Gideon Beharry of the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment, awarded a VC for service in Iraq in 2004. The VC and Gallantry stamps are printed in lithography, the definitives in gravure.

Royal Mail's serviced FDC bears the definitive and label stamp pane cancelled by Tallents House or Cuffley postmark (£4.33 UK, £3.69 overseas) ●

Coin cover A VC coin cover, encapsulating two 50p coins, will be available from Royal Mail Tallents House, priced £15.50.



Elizabeth: Queen & Icon

A look at the exhibition showing now at the British Postal Museum & Archive in London



Celebrating the 80th birthday of HM The Queen, the exhibition features GB, Empire and Commonwealth stamps, as well as artwork and photographs, which illustrate the course of her long life.

THE QUEEN first featured on a 6¢ stamp from Newfoundland issued in 1932, the charming portrait of the six-year-old Princess being taken by Marcus Adams (above, top left). Other early portraits depicted on stamps were taken by Cecil Beaton (above, top right) and Dorothy Wilding. Another Court photographer, Bertram Park, made a collection of these, and other royal photographs, which was denoted to the BPMA, and some items from the collection are now displayed for the first time.

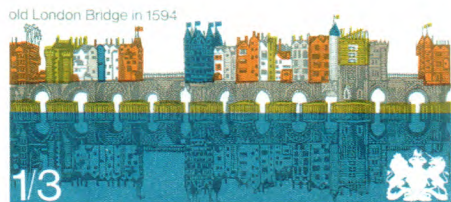
The lack of a British stamp for the wedding of Princess Elizabeth and Prince Philip in 1947 caused an outcry, and designs were prepared the following year to mark the birth of Prince Charles, the King's first grandchild (above, bottom left). But George VI was not keen on the idea, and nothing came of it. The proposed stamp is shown in the exhibition.

Following The Queen's accession, a preliminary photographic sitting by Dorothy Wilding took place at Clarence House to produce portraits for use by the Post Office and Royal Mint. The Queen wore a tiara, but it was felt a coronet would be better, and a second session was held in April when she wore the diadem made for George IV in 1821 and worn by Queen Victoria on the Penny Black and all subsequent stamps of her reign (see *Bulletin*, July 2002 p329-331). The new photograph was approved by The Queen in May, and graced all British definitives until 1967 (above, bottom centre). ►



Above left: Cecil Thomas's embossing design initialled by The Queen. Top centre: John Farleigh's letterpress design. Top right: proposals by David Gentleman with 'Great Britain' and a coat of arms replacing The Queen's head and, below, some of his work on refining the silhouette head.

Opposite: Arnold Machin's laurel wreath cast, introduced in 1968 (top); a 1968 essay (bottom left), with the first of the issued Machins and a new Pricing in Proportion stamp. At far right is a detail from the cast used for the definitives.



An interesting section of the exhibition is concerned with postal stationery, which could not be printed by the same methods as stamps, and thus different types of designs were needed. Cecil Thomas was commissioned to create a design for an embossed stamp. The Queen liked his Tudor rose design but felt that there were 'too many roses'; when he submitted his modified design Thomas noted that The Queen's comments had led to a 'much improved' design. Unusually, The Queen herself wrote 'Appd ER' on a bromide of the final design, this rare item being a most striking item in the exhibition. Registered envelopes bearing the new design went on sale in November 1954. For postcards and lettercards the printing process was letterpress, and the design used was by John Farleigh; the new cards went on sale in April 1955. These designs by Thomas and Farleigh were used on all British postal stationery (other than airletters) until replaced by versions of the Machin head in the late 1960s.

The mid-1960s saw a revolution in British stamp design. The new PMG Tony Benn, along with stamp designer David Gentleman, wished to see The Queen's head removed from special stamps – Benn for political, and Gentleman for design reasons. Various suggestions were made to reduce the size of the head or replace it with the country name. In November 1965 The Queen agreed to the use of a silhouette head, and various heads were considered, including that by Mary Gillick used on the coins. This was adapted for use by David Gentleman; a selection of his work on the project features in the exhibition. The first use of the Gillick/Gentleman head was on the 1966 Landscapes stamps, as described in James Mackay's article in the May *Bulletin*. Various of Gentleman's designs produced for Benn without The Queen's head are also on show.



Naturally, part of the exhibition is devoted to the Machin head – with around 180 billion stamps printed so far, undoubtedly one of the most reproduced images of all time. 'It resulted', says Douglas Muir, 'from the ferment unleashed by Benn's quest for more interesting stamp designs and the argument over The Queen's head'. Designs for a new definitive series were submitted by several artists, but Machin's initial work was preferred by the Stamp Advisory Committee. For over a year, he strove to simplify his designs, which featured The Queen wearing a tiara. As

with the Wilding portrait, a diadem was favoured, and Machin revised his sculpture to include the same George IV diadem as on the Wilding stamps. Following further modification, at The Queen's request, the final version was approved and the plaster cast photographed to get the right image for the stamps, which went on sale in June 1967. It was originally intended that a smaller version of the Machin head would be used for special stamps, but this didn't work, so Machin created a new cast which could be used as a detailed drawing (half-tone) or as a simple solid silhouette. Introduced in 1968, it has been used for nearly all special stamps since, as well as the current country stamps.

The exhibition finishes with the recent issue marking The Queen's 80th birthday, designed by Sedley Place. Also shown are alternative proposals, including one by Why Not Associates based on 'Equanimity', the holographic portrait by Chris Levine, commissioned by Jersey to commemorate 800 years of allegiance to the crown.



The 'Elizabeth: Queen & Icon' exhibition was devised by Douglas Muir and designed by Conical Ltd of St Albans. This article is an abridged version of Douglas Muir's interesting exhibition brochure. 'Elizabeth: Queen & Icon' is showing at the British Postal Museum & Archive, Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London WC1X 0DL, until Spring 2007. Open Monday to Friday 10.00-17.00 (Thursdays until 19.00) and selected Saturdays. Phone 020 2739 2570 for details •

1966 and all that Richard West remembers a defining year

FEW WOULD DENY that the 1960s was a defining decade for British stamps. It began modestly, with the first two-colour special issue in 1960, but collectors still seemingly came way down the pecking order as far as the Post Office was concerned.

The seeds of change came in 1963 with a dramatic rise in the number of special issues, often printed in full colour. Printing techniques had not been perfected, so missing or misplaced colours were rife, meaning one could, if lucky, pick up an error over the post office counter. The same year brought us the Philatelic Bureau, the *Bulletin* and 'first day of issue' postmarks. In 1964 we had the first commoner (Shakespeare) on a British stamp, and more significantly, on 19 October Anthony Wedgwood (Tony) Benn became Postmaster General. He was not long in the office, but managed to send ripples along the corridors of Post Office Headquarters. He liberalised the criteria for new issues and, as is now well known, sought to omit the monarch's portrait. In 1965 he brought us the issue in memory of Churchill, whose portrait was more prominent than The Queen's, plus Britain's first se-tenant block, for the Battle of Britain.

However, in many respects 1966 was to prove the most significant year. It began with the Robert Burns issue; no anniversary, simply a set to honour one of Scotland's greatest writers. Although the stamps look fairly standard in their approach, even if Burns can't seem to decide on which side to part his hair, Benn had in fact given the invited artists a free hand. However, there was a limit to how much innovation could be tolerated.

The pair issued to mark the 900th anniversary of Westminster Abbey may not seem remarkable, but it was the last special issue to use the Wilding portrait (except for Jeffery Matthews' set for the 60th birthday). The Wilding portrait had never been popular with designers, who considered it restrictive. David Gentleman's replacement silhouette had its debut on the Landscapes issue of 2 May (see May *Bulletin* p275). Although here it was used fairly large, its advantage was that it could be reduced if required: it remained in use until the new Machin portrait came along.

In May, Benn announced that later in the year Britain's first Christmas stamps would be issued. These would be designed by children in a competition, with entries to be submitted by 20 June. Over 5000 were received, with the winning designs used for the two stamps and first day cover.

The Post Office Tower was officially opened in 1965, for which two stamps were issued, and on 19 May 1966 it was opened to the public. Items posted there received a special cancellation, while the stamps were sold in vending machines. However, they were not produced in rolls for this purpose, but contained in small envelopes with either a block of four of the 3d or a pair of the 13gd.

As summer drew closer, expectations rose: the World Cup was being held in England, and three stamps were issued on 1 June to mark the occasion. While the nation was gripped by World Cup fever, Benn was undertaking one of his final acts as PMG. He held a seminar on 23 June to discuss concepts that David Gentleman had developed for British stamps, many of which would come to fruition. Seven days later, on 30 June, Benn was appointed Minister of Technology. However, most were more concerned about the football, the outcome, we are often reminded, being a win for England against West Germany on 30 July.

It was decided to celebrate by amending the 4d World Cup design, adding the inscription 'England Winners' (not an overprint as many still mistakenly believe), the new stamp being issued on 18 August. A shortage of time to print the new stamps, added to which Harrison and Sons were currently printing the British Technology set (it seems ironic that Benn had moved to Technology), meant it was possible to print only 12 million 'Winners' stamps. For a 4d value, this was very low, but for the number of sets of special issues usually sold, it was normal. But the Post Office made a mistake (or did it?), revealing the quantity in advance and starting a panic. A week before issue, the Philatelic Bureau announced that, as of midday on 12 August, it would take no further orders, having already received orders for over 12,000 sheets, or nearly 1.5 million stamps. ▶





At the time, the Bureau was located on the sixth floor of the Telegraph Building in St Martins-le-Grand. On the day of issue, the queue stretched down all six floors and around the outside of the building; soon customers were being restricted to a block of four. Across England there was news of customers fighting for the stamp, and it was even quoted on the Stock Exchange. At the time, I was working for a stamp wholesaler in Brighton. He had ordered 200 sheets, and I went to collect them from the Bureau. Not only was I able to bypass the queue, but I think that if those waiting, not necessarily patiently, had known I had 24,000 of the stamps, I might have been lynched!

Stamps were brought to the public's attention. At the time the post offices at King Edward Street and Trafalgar Square were open 24 hours a day, and new stamps went on sale at midnight. Huge crowds started to form well before 12am for the next issues, particularly for the Battle of Hastings set on 14 October, another British first with its set-tenant strip to resemble the Bayeux Tapestry.

Meanwhile, another significant event occurred. On 2 April 1965 Benn, as PMG, had accepted on behalf of the nation the Great Britain collection formed by Reginald M Phillips. Phillips' idea was that his collection should form the basis for a new National Postal Museum. In a converted room in King Edward Building, where the London Chief Office was then located, a temporary museum was opened by Edward Short, the new PMG, on 12 September. The initial display was a survey of 19th century British stamps, and on the follow-

ing day, the first day of public admission, there were 543 visitors. The museum closed in 1968 in preparation for its official opening by The Queen, in expanded premises, in February 1969.

The Philatelic Bureau, not ideally positioned in London, was moved to Edinburgh, where it opened on 1 November at Waterloo Place. The first new issue handled from its new home was on 1 December, when the Christmas stamps Benn had instigated were put on sale, although the designs were not to everyone's taste.

Changes continued, and early in 1967 came the first postbus, while the summer of that year brought us the Machin definitives. In 1968 came the first set of 'Anniversaries' stamps and the first booklets with pictorial front covers. During 1969 the Post Office became a corporation, the change marked by four stamps printed in lithography, and the first 'Prestige' stamp book, the £1 *Stamps for Cooks* was issued. Nevertheless, there are many good reasons to suggest that 1966 was the most significant year of the decade! •



A visit to Cartor

Glenn Morgan discovers the reasons for a specialist stamp printer's worldwide reputation



Left: at the entrance to Cartor's premises at La Loupe ('the magnifying glass'), France.

LAST SEPTEMBER I was given the opportunity of visiting Cartor Security Printing. Their premises are in the heart of the French countryside, just south-west of Paris in a small town of around 3700 inhabitants called La Loupe, which translates as 'the magnifying glass'. Equally appropriate is that they are located in Avenue Rowland Hill, in the Gutenberg industrial zone.

Cartor (the name derives from *Carte d'Or* – a symbol of excellence and quality) was formed in 1974 at L'Aigle in Normandy, where it remained until early 1999, and has specialised in the printing of high-quality postage stamps ever since. Its reputation has been based around the continual development of, and investment in, new printing processes and it endeavours to react rapidly to the needs and wishes of postal administrations around the world – now of course also including Royal Mail.

In 1995 Cartor was taken over by Gilles le Baud who provided the sound financial and legal structure that enabled them to support future growth prior to the next stage of the company's development. This occurred in June 2004 when it became an important element of the newly-formed International Security Printers group (ISP), having been bought outright by Walsall.

ISP was the result of a plan to unite some of the biggest and best names in stamp production, including Walsall Security Printers and Courvoisier Security Printers. ISP acts as an umbrella and marketing name, and has facilitated the combining of resources, improvements in collective buy-

ing power and the sharing of technologies and expertise, enabling the group to provide an unrivalled range of products and services. A massive 99% of Cartor's production is in postage stamps; up from probably around 50% just five years ago, such is their desire to be known throughout the print and postal industries as a specialist stamp printer, not just general security printers.

Within the group, it is Walsall that undertakes the high volume reel-fed printing; Cartor does the small- to medium-sized litho sheet-fed runs, while Courvoisier (now situated in building two within the French plant) produces the shorter-run gravure reel-fed stamps on its Moser machine. This press was once sited in Switzerland; it then moved across to Walsall when they purchased the company, and is now at Cartor. It can print and perforate in-line and cut into sheets in one operation, and looks as if it will carry on forever; such is the quality appearance of this old workhorse. It is perhaps possible that if a shorter-run Royal Mail stamp issue was required in gravure it would suit this press and so might be used at some point in the future, maybe so adding the Courvoisier brand to the others in our British stamp albums for the first time.

At this point I enquired as to what the break-point was between using lithography, rather than gravure and assuming that a client had not specified the process to be adopted in the contract. It appears that production of up to ten million special stamps is currently suited to lithography, due to its low set-up costs (disposable plates can be



Above: Cartor's Vice President Ian Brigham (left) and Gilles Le Baud, Vice President, Special Projects. Shown here is some of the company's output, including issues containing wood from HMS *Victory* (Cayman Islands 15c) and pieces of the Rock of Gibraltar (Gibraltar £1).



produced in-house by Cartor at minimal cost), while gravure is better suited for higher volumes (where the initial setup for the sub-contracted engraving of the cylinders costs many thousands of pounds).

It was not long before Royal Mail's own stamp production staff had visited Cartor, and subsequently authorised them to produce stamps for the United Kingdom, the first item apparently being the Pacific Explorers Exhibition Smilers sheet issued early in 2005. Orders (or 'warrants', as they are known) are placed by Royal Mail with Walsall, who then decide what part of the group is best placed to fulfil the printing based on type of stamp, print volume, printing capacity at each plant and the urgency of the order.

During my visit, the Ashes cricket miniature sheet was being perforated and was just days away from being placed on sale across the UK. This was one of Royal Mail's 'fast-track' issues that clearly suited production methods at Cartor. The precision perforators used allow movement tolerances up or down of a mere half of a perforation hole, and were manufactured by James Burn International. They have an automatic feed that moves the sheets forward, manoeuvres them into alignment and then the stamps are perforated with a conventional die tool.

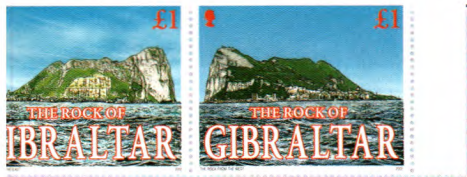
Once perforating was complete, the primary sheets would have been put through a 'massicot' – named after the inventor of the machine and

having no connection with the mineral form of lead monoxide – which would cut the sheets into single miniature sheets. For reasons obvious in the context of French history, the term 'guillotine' is not used when talking about cutting paper.

Four of the six new self-adhesive Smilers (the kind which can be personalised) were in various stages of completion. These sheets were printed on a six-unit Heidelberg press (so enabling Hexachrome printing, when required), which has an additional unit on the end to simulate perforations by kiss-cutting the depth of the paper in the same pass to within a fraction of a millimetre.

Once the stamps were dry, phosphor ink was applied on a pass through a single-unit Heidelberg. Phosphor will sink into the coloured inks if applied during the initial pass through the printing units, reducing the output of the phosphor, and potentially affecting readability by the sorting equipment used at the Mail Centres. Quality control phosphor-reading equipment provided by Royal Mail allows Cartor to monitor batches constantly for variation in signals.

In the examining, packing and despatch area, a large order for self-adhesive miniature sheets placed by a Far Eastern country was in progress during my visit. Printed stock was being checked for any errors by the skilled and highly focused team of exclusively female examiners, prior to being counted by machine, then packed, labelled and despatched to distant shores.



THE ASHES ENGLAND WINNERS 2005

The examination area is also home to a collator that is used for prestige stamp book assembly of covers, panes and interleaves. The printed components are produced as two columns of five books, which are then cut into single columns, sewn with thread (or stitched, ie stapled), bound with tape over the spine area and cut into single finished books. It should be noted that conventional booklets of water-activated or self-adhesive stamps are also produced at Cartor, albeit not for Royal Mail due to the large volumes that they require. The stamps are printed, perforated or kiss-cut, merged with the printed covers (in the case of water-activated stamps), cut into singles, folded, and finally rouletted along the spine to assist in opening. Coils are one of the few stamp products not produced at Cartor.

Next came the paper store, which contains the base stock used in printing the stamps, be it Tullis Russell Coates' water-activated paper or an Avery self-adhesive stock, both types of which need to be acclimatised for several days prior to use, to assist with optimal running through the presses.

My tour was complete, leaving only the offices, waste destruction area and 'repro' rooms unexamined, for they are strictly out of bounds to all visitors, due to the nature of what might be on view and the risk of breaching the confidentiality and trust that its clients place in Cartor.

Gilles le Baud (Vice President, Special Projects) and Ian Brigham (Vice President, Cartor)

showed me an album containing many of the innovative stamps that they are particularly proud of. These included stamps with actual pieces of the Rock of Gibraltar incorporated and another with real wood from HMS *Victory*. There were also stamps with micro-printing that can only be seen under a very strong magnifying glass, 'scrambled indicia' stamps where an image or words are invisible until viewed through a decoder and stamps and miniature sheets in every manner of size and shape. Rose, coffee and perfume scented stamps were there too, as were embossed, metallic foil, thermographic and holographic stamps. Many of these specialised finishing operations are done on four Heidelberg platen presses that have been especially adapted to undertake this work.

There appears to be no end to how the once-humble postage stamp can be enhanced these days – either for security or decorative reasons – and Cartor is at the forefront of developing still further these printing features. It is all about 'designing for the process' and only incorporating these features on stamps where they will take an issue from the mundane to the extraordinary.

All too soon my visit was over and I was on my way back to Paris via the attractive medieval town of Chartres, reflecting on all I had seen. It is clear that the enviable reputation enjoyed by Cartor around the world is fully justified, and I take this opportunity of thanking their staff for their help and for answering my many questions •

Philately online Ron Negus looks at two merged Societies



MY COLUMN in the March 2003 issue of the *Bulletin* looked at the website operated by the Great Britain Decimal Stamp Book Study Circle (GB DSB SC). In January 2006, the GB DSB SC merged with another major society that specialised in GB issues – the British Decimal Stamps Study Circle (BDSSC). The result is the formation of the Modern British Philatelic Circle, now developing its own website (address above).

This website explains that the GB DSB SC was founded in 1971 to deal with the study of decimal stamp books. Since then, the numbering systems it introduced for cataloguing booklets have become adopted as the worldwide standard. The BDSSC did not come into being until 1975, and it dealt primarily with the collating and reporting of information on the decimal stamp sheet issues. Because of the obvious overlap of interests shared by members of both study circles, it seemed sensible that they should join forces.

The new Circle will continue to produce the award-winning magazine entitled *The Bookmark Journal*. The website includes examples of a couple of pages from past issues of the magazine to allow prospective members to judge its style and content. Circle members also receive copies of the 'Deegam Reports', as they appear. These are updates for the *Deegam Handbook*, which is produced by the prominent *Bulletin* author, Douglas Myall, with complete details of Machin issues. This Handbook – now available in electronic format as well as in print – was reviewed in this column in August 2005.

On the new site, the opening screen offers separate entry points for members and non-members. The non-members' selection takes the user to a menu which covers the basic historical and

<http://mbp-circle.co.uk> Details of how to join the Modern British Philatelic Circle are given on the site. Postal enquiries should be sent to the Membership Secretary at 3 Buttermere Close, Brierley Hill, West Midlands DY5 3SD.

administrative details of the Circle. An application form for membership can also be printed out here for completion and submission by post.

Entry using the members' route provides full access to the website, via its own menu, and this is where illustrated details of booklets and sheet issues appear. At present, whilst booklet information is comprehensive, data about those stamps only issued in sheet format is being incorporated as quickly as possible. When the site was viewed in April, the commemorative issues for the period 1953 to 2006 had been completed. Work on the definitives is planned to start later in the year. Internet Explorer is recommended for viewing these pages, as problems may be caused by other browsers.

The booklets section of the site reflects the fact that the GB DSB SC has been in existence longer, and some of its own former site information has been transferred. It has been redesigned, however, and the Decimal Books Series pages are of particular note. These provide an index to each of the series of booklets issued to date, with three navigation buttons. The first says 'View Series' and gives a chronological listing of the relevant booklets. A second button is entitled 'QuickFind Books' and shows the covers of each issued booklet. Clicking on any illustration here expands into a new page showing back and front covers of the booklet, plus minimum descriptive information. The final button, with the heading 'QuickFind Panes', gives examples of all the various combinations of values that were used inside any chosen booklet cover. This image can be displayed separately with detailed production information, including known varieties.

The Modern British Philatelic Circle site covers all aspects of modern GB philately. It will be of interest to all collectors of stamps and related material, regardless of format, issued since the beginning of the reign of Queen Elizabeth II. ●

New catalogues for GB collectors

STANLEY GIBBONS

Stanley Gibbons
GREAT BRITAIN
CONCISE
STAMP CATALOGUE



IN COLOUR



STANLEY GIBBONS

Stanley Gibbons
GREAT BRITAIN
VOLUME 3
QUEEN ELIZABETH II
PRE-DECIMAL ISSUES



Specialised Stamp Catalogue

STONEHAM

New
STONEHAM
GREAT BRITAIN
STAMP CATALOGUE



In Full Colour

13th Edition

MARKET PRICES

THREE NEW EDITIONS of popular catalogues are fresh off the presses. Stanley Gibbons *GB Concise* started life in 1986, and this 21st edition runs to 372 pages with listings to the Ice Age Animals set. Illustrations for special issues include Royal Mail first day postmarks for Tallents House (formerly Bureau) and alternative place with separate prices given for FDCs with the two cancels; Stoneham quotes just one FDC price. SG lists definitives and commemoratives in chronological order whereas Stoneham separates the two – easier to use if you are only interested in one type.

The 11th edition of SG's *GB Specialised Catalogue – Elizabeth II Pre-Decimal Issues* has been re-set in a new, hopefully easier to read, style, and the black & white illustrations, re-scanned from originals, are generally improved, although some illustrations of varieties are not clear. This is the catalogue to use for more detailed information and if you are interested in constant varieties.

The *SG Specialised* states that part of the printing of the 1960 3d General Letter Office stamp was printed on chalk-surfaced paper, but it is not listed and priced. Stoneham, however, lists and prices it at 60p unmounted mint/50p used. I cannot recall seeing this variety offered by dealers – and wonder if it actually exists.

The *Stoneham GB Stamp Catalogue* was originally published in 1978 with a further 11 editions up to 1998. The new, 13th edition, is published by the Machin Collectors Club but is not limited to the Machin stamps, covering the whole gamut of GB stamps from 1840 to the present day, including officials, fiscals, telegraph and circular delivery stamps. The book is arranged into more than 20 different sections, each with its own page numbers, which makes it difficult to ascertain the total number of pages. Stamps are numbered with different prefix letters for each section – less easy to use than SG numbering which is the main system used by dealers in listing their stock and processing orders. However one advantage of Stoneham numbering is the ease of calculating the number of commemorative stamps of the present reign; beginning with C1 for the 1953 Coronation 2½d we reach C1825 with the 2005 £1.12 Christmas stamp. The prices quoted are described as 'genuine market values' so the 1929 PNC £1 is valued in Stoneham at £700 unmounted mint and £400 used, compared to £1000 and £550 in the SG *GB Concise* catalogue. The £1 stamp from the 2003 Coronation prestige book is £50 mint £45 used in SG, but only £25 mint or used in Stoneham.

John Holman •

Stanley Gibbons catalogues available from Stanley Gibbons Ltd, 7 Parkside, Ringwood BH24 3SH (telephone 01425 472363). GB Concise £24.95, GB Specialised vol 3 £29.95.

Stoneham Catalogue available from Machin Collectors Club, 8 Jannys Close, Aylsham NR11 6DL (telephone 01263 733586), price £15.95.

Competitions Win £200 in two easy-to-enter competitions



April identify The detail was from the 34p Sport (football) stamp of 1988. The winner was H Nissen of Denmark.

April knowledge Answers: 1) Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh; 2) green; 3) Washington DC, USA. The winner was R Clark of Hertfordshire.

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

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

- 1 Who designed the 1935 Silver Jubilee stamps?
- 2 Where is the Stampex exhibition held?
- 3 In which year were the flags of NATO countries shown on a stamp?

Send your answer (addressed to either the July *Identify* competition or the July *Knowledge* competition), name and address on a postcard or back of a sealed envelope to: British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ. The senders of the first cards drawn in each competition on 11 August will receive £100. Runner-up prizes of presentation packs, stamp cards or FDCs will be awarded in each competition. Competitions not open to Royal Mail employees •

Events

until Spring 2007 'Elizabeth: Queen & Icon' exhibition at British Postal Museum & Archive (see p339).
Enquiries 020 7239 2570.

until 17 July BPMA 'Brunel Speeding the Mail' exhibition at Powderham Castle.

1 July Midland Federation Convention, hosted by Streetly PS. Includes AGM of Association of British Philatelic Societies.

6-9 July 88th Philatelic Congress of GB, hosted by Caledonian Philatelic Society, at Normandy Hotel, Renfrew. (Marks centenary of Caledonian PS).

18-31 July BPMA 'Brunel Speeding the Mail' exhibition at Tamar.

1-18 August BPMA 'Brunel Speeding the Mail' exhibition at Tiverton Museum, Devon.

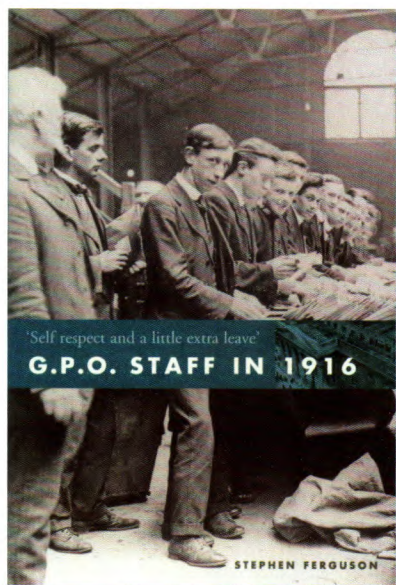
20-29 August BPMA 'Brunel Speeding the Mail' exhibition at Didcot Railway Centre, Oxfordshire.

30 August - 20 September BPMA 'Brunel Speeding the Mail' exhibition at Steam Museum of the Great Western Railway.

30 August - 2 September Picture Postcard Show 2006, Lawrence Hall, Royal Horticultural Halls, Greycoat Street, London SW1. Open Weds 11.00-20.00, Thurs, Fri 11.00-19.00, Sat 10.00-17.00. **Enquiries** 020 8886 0469 or 0151 339 5422 or see website www.postcard.co.uk

A Stamp Fair and Auction Diary, published six times a year, can be ordered from S Reeves. It covers events throughout the UK and includes postcard fairs and auctions. Annual subscription £4 UK, £6 Europe, £12 USA & Canada. PO Box 109, Enfield EN3 5QF; telephone 020 8292 5361; e-mail fairs@stampdiary.com

Late news



'Self respect and a little extra leave'

G.P.O. STAFF IN 1916

STEPHEN FERGUSON

1916 remembered To mark the 90th anniversary of the Easter Rising, the Irish Post Office has recently published an attractive book entitled *Self respect and a Little Extra Leave: GPO Staff in 1916*. Written by Stephen Ferguson, it tells the fascinating story of the Rising and of the lives of the staff who worked at the GPO in Dublin, the key building in the story of the Rising. As well as the lively text, the many illustrations bring the story to life. The title for the book comes from a memo from the Secretary to the PO in Ireland, A H Norway: 'My staff as a whole did their work out of self-respect. But I think a little extra leave would be much appreciated.' The 64-page book is available from Philatelic Bureau, GPO, Dublin 1, Ireland, price 10 euros •

International Reply Coupon We regret the wrong illustration was used for the current coupon in the June *Bulletin* (page 294). The coupon currently on sale features an illustration of a mountain scene, and was shown here in March 2002 (p201). A new design is expected to go on sale at main Post Office branches on 31 July •

Auctions Grosvenor's GB sale on 18-19 May realized some £987,441 (including buyers premium and VAT). The highest single price realized was £49,042, paid for the recently rediscovered example of the 1d black Master Die proof before insertion of the corner stars. An amusing hand-illustrated Mulready caricature envelope sold for £5646, while a strip of 1840 1d plate 4, with red Wotton-under-Edge Maltese Crosses was sold for £11,762. A George V ½d Cyprus green went for £7998 (catalogue value £7500), and a block of four of the 1966 Birds issue 4d, with four colours missing, probably the most spectacular of the GB missing colour errors, achieved £8234. For enquiries regarding this sale, or future Grosvenor auctions, telephone 020 7379 8789 or see website www.grosvenorauctions.com •

Harmers' 16 May 'Lanterna' Collection sale realized £623,142 (inc buyers premium). The top price paid was £86,454 for a superb block of 12 1d black with red Maltese Cross cancels, two of the stamps showing double letters. The block was estimated at £30,000. Some £58,812 was paid for a pair of 2d blue with full original gum and sheet margin at left worded 'the Labels ABOVE this'. This item, which was estimated at £20,000, was described as in a 'deep rich colour and about as near to perfection as one could wish to see'. Many items achieved less exalted prices; for example two fine 1d blacks, with bold red Maltese Cross cancellations and good margins went for £176 and £141 (estimated at £100 each). For enquiries telephone Harmers, 020 8747 6100 or see website www.harmers.com •

Spink's GB Stamps and Covers sale on 11 May amounted to a total £767,200, and included a 2d Mulready letter sheet uprated with two 1d blacks (plate 1a) used from Whitechurch to London on 15 May 1840; this item achieved its upper estimate of £22,000. A near complete reconstruction of plate IV of the 1d black (only DK missing), neatly mounted with plate varieties and characteristics noted, sold for £21,000 (estimate £800-10,000). For enquiries telephone Spink on 020 7563 4000, or see website www.spink.com •

Celebrating the National Portrait Gallery



On 18 July, to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the founding of the National Portrait Gallery, Royal Mail will issue 10 colourful 1st class stamps, featuring portraits of noted figures from William Shakespeare to Dame Cicely Saunders.

From top: set of 10 stamp cards: £3 • first day covers cancelled with Tallents House or London WC2 postmarks: £4.18 UK, £3.56 overseas (orders must be received by 18 July) • Royal Mail/Royal Mint medal cover – stamps cancelled by a special 18 July London WC2 postmark and encapsulated medal showing Shakespeare and a Thomas Carlyle quotation featured on the NPG building: £14.50 • set of stamps in presentation pack £3.70 (set of stamps only: £3.20)

Royal Mail

Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB
Telephone orders: UK 08457 641 641; overseas +44 131 316 7483

Handling charges: £1.30 UK, £1.55 Europe, £2.15 elsewhere



Royal Mail



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