

BRITISH PHILATELIC

The ROYAL MAIL magazine *for stamp collectors*

Volume 46 Number 10

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Bulletin

Navy Uniform issue • David
Gentleman BPMA exhibition



**Mythical Creatures: a new
issue featuring six creatures
from Britain's richly imagined
world of folklore and legend.
On sale 16 June.**



Forthcoming issues and withdrawals



Cover A detail from *The Destruction of Leviathan*, the dragon in the sea, by Gustav Doré (1832-1883). Rosemary Bennett describes imaginary creatures on page 310 of this *Bulletin*; Royal Mail's Mythical Creatures issue was featured here in February.

Availability All items available from Royal Mail Tallents House (address below). Selected items are available at Post Office branches and Post Office philatelic outlets at the main post offices in: Bristol, Cambridge, Chester, Colchester, Coventry, Croydon, Durham, Edinburgh, Exeter, Glasgow, Grimsby, Harrogate, Lichfield, London (Eastcheap & Trafalgar Sq), Newcastle upon Tyne, Norwich, Nottingham, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Southampton (High Street & Hedge End), Southend-on-Sea, Stevenage, Stroud, Trowbridge, Truro 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 £1.45, Europe £1.55, rest of world (airmail) £2.15. Some products can be ordered on Royal Mail's website: www.royalmail.com/shop

2 June

Issue Miniature Medals Collection No 1: Army Medals (& Army Uniforms stamps)

9 June

Withdrawal Classic Carry On and Hammer Films stamps, presentation pack, stamp cards, stamp book with Carry On advert and stamp cards & stamp set

9 June

Withdrawal 2007 Scouts Centenary prepaid post-cards

12 June

Withdrawal St Paul's medal cover

16 June

Issue Mythical Creatures stamps, presentation pack and stamp cards

30 June

Withdrawal 14p, 46p and 78p definitives • 2007 definitives presentation pack (16p, 48p, 50p, 54p, 78p stamps)

16 July

Withdrawal Air Displays stamps, presentation pack, stamp cards and generic sheet

21 July

Issue 40th Anniversary of Moon Landing commemorative sheet

21 July

Issue Silver Stamps Collection: 56p St David's Cathedral stamp

28 July

Issue Miniature Medals Collection No 2: RAF Medals (& 2008 RAF Uniforms stamps)

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This month The Editor previews this issue

BY THE TIME you read this we should, hopefully, be enjoying some warm summer days and some of you may be thinking more about your gardens than your stamp collections. Nonetheless, there are some interesting events coming up over the summer including SWINPEX (Swindon 13 June), Stafford Stamp Show (19-20 June), ThematiX '09 (Twickenham, 26-27 June), Midpex (Coventry 11 July), and, of course, the annual Philatelic Congress of GB (Manchester 16-19 July). If you are visiting London, don't forget the David Gentleman exhibition at the British Postal Museum & Archive – see Richard West's article in this *Bulletin*.

Our stamp issue month is Mythical Creatures, and Rosemary Bennett writes on this interesting subject. We preview the Navy Uniforms stamps and prestige book, to be issued in September, coinciding with Autumn Stampex. Details are also given of another prestige book, on the Treasures of the BPMA – this interesting and well-produced book goes on sale on 18 August, the same day as the Postboxes miniature sheet, which was previewed here in April. The sheet and the book will appeal to all with an interest in postal history, the book featuring some of the many wonderful items in the BPMA collections.

In March I went along to the BPMA to hear about some of the events and activities that take place next year as part of the Festival of Stamps. Some of these events are well-known annual fixtures in the philatelic calendar, but others are new ventures and it all promises to be a busy philatelic year. Some of the events confirmed are listed below in Stamp Scene. It is important that all collectors will use the events next year to encourage others to go along and find out about our wonderful hobby. 2010 should be a good recruiting year • JOHN HOLMAN

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



Tony Conder

Tony Conder retires Tony Conder, the founding CEO of the British Postal Museum & Archive (BPMA) retired from the BPMA on 9 April 2009. During his five years as CEO he led the establishment of the combined archive and museum collection based at Freeling House in London. Brian Goodey, the Chairman of the Postal Heritage Trustees, noted: 'Tony's enthusiasm and advocacy have put the BPMA on the heritage map, bringing postal icons to new audiences. In beginning the search for a new CEO, we can confirm business as usual. All current projects, as well as curatorial and exhibition innovations, are ongoing'. I will personally miss Tony's help and friendship down the years, especially as we were involved in several projects during his term of office, including the transferring of the National Philatelic Society library to Freeling House, and I wish both him and his wife much happiness in their retirement together •



Gibraltar King Henry VIII 1509-1547

500th Anniversary of the
Accession to the Throne

Hampton Court Palace
East Molesey,
Surrey, England



Royal issues from the Rock The Gibraltar Post Office has recently issued an attractive set of stamps on the theme of Henry VIII which perfectly complement our own Tudor series. Henry VIII (1491-1547) was King of England and Lord of Ireland, later King of Ireland and claimant to the Kingdom of France, from 21 April 1509 until his death. Henry was the second monarch of the House of Tudor, succeeding his father, Henry VII. He was a significant figure in the history of the English monarchy.

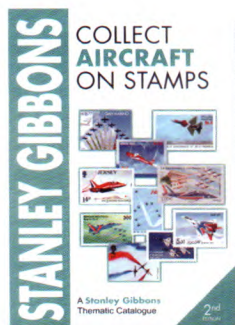
Gibraltar has dedicated a stamp series and a miniature sheet to Henry VIII and each of his six wives, plus his ship the *Mary Rose*. Face values of the counter sheet stamps range from a very reasonable 10p through to just 51p, while the miniature sheet bears a £2 face value and shows Henry VIII outside Hampton Court Palace. Shown above are the miniature sheet and one of the eight individual stamps in the set, featuring Anne Boleyn.

Gibraltar Post Office has also issued stamps depicting the Royal grandchildren. They describe this as 'a very special stamp issue as it's the first time HM Queen Elizabeth II's grandchildren have all appeared in stamps'. The issue comprises eight stamps: eight gutters pairs and a limited edition special folder presented inside a laminated sleeve containing all the stamps and gutter pairs alongside informative text and portraits of the royal. The centre pages display the Royal family tree.

The Queen's eight grandchildren are: Viscount Severn and Lady Louise Windsor born to Prince Edward, Earl of Wessex and Sophie, Countess of Wessex; Peter and Zara Phillips born to Princess Anne, The Princess Royal and her first husband, Capt Mark Phillips; Princess Beatrice of York and Princess Eugenie of York born to Prince Andrew, Duke of York, and Sarah, Duchess of York; Prince Henry of Wales and Prince William of Wales, sons of The Prince of Wales and the late Diana, Princess of Wales ●

The miniature sheet and two of the eight individual stamps in the Henry VIII issue; and two of the eight stamps in the Royal Grandchildren issue.

Enquiries Visit website www.gibraltar-stamps.com and choose stamps/stamps 2009/ Henry VIII from the menu.



Collect Aircraft on Stamps

Available from the SG Strand shop, or by post.

New aircraft catalogue After 14 years, Stanley Gibbons has published a second edition of *Collect Aircraft On Stamps*. Compiled by Ian Hamilton, it lists over 24,000 stamps (twice the number in the first edition) which depict over 1600 identified aircraft types and more than 180 identified airships and balloons. These listings are based on the simplified *Stamps of the World* catalogue and thus exclude watermark and perforation variations. The listings are alphabetical by country, giving the year of issue, value, brief description of design and SG catalogue number and price. The catalogue includes a Chronology of Aviation since 1670, classification index of aircraft types and a sectional index of 11 categories – Forerunners, Post-Wright Aircraft to 1914, Civil Aircraft, Helicopters, etc. Each sectional index is further divided and each entry gives country and SG numbers for relevant issues. 304 pages, illustrated in colour, card covers, A4 size. Price £34.95. Available from SG Strand shop, or by post from Stanley Gibbons, 7 Parkside, Ringwood BH24 3SH; UK mail order freephone 0800 611622 •

Enquiries Free admission is by ticket only, on application to: The Stuart Rossiter Trust, c/o David Beech, The British Library, Philatelic Collections, 96 Euston Road, London NW1 2DB, or email: drbeech@btinternet.com. Early application is advised.

Stuart Rossiter Memorial Lecture The Stuart Rossiter Trust is pleased to announce that the 2009 lecture will be given by Tom Slemons, at 17.00 on 6 November at the Royal Philatelic Society London, with the title *British County Postal History, Research and Discovery*. Tom Slemons FRPSL will tell attendees about his research and the information available from many varied sources, and how he is bringing the information together to give a clear picture of the postal operations, postal markings, and other aspects of county postal history. Tom will explain, with the aid of a Power Point presentation and a display, how his experience in the research and discovery process can help others with interest in British County postal history. His forthcoming books on Suffolk postal history will show how the many parts of the postal history puzzle came together. Tom Slemons was awarded one of the Julian Chapman Memorial Scholarships for 2008 to help him undertake research work for his Suffolk postal history books •

Birmingham PS Visit www.birminghamphilatelic.co.uk for details of the society and some useful articles.

Advance notice From 12 September 2009 to 9 January 2010 collaboration involving the Birmingham Philatelic Society and the Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery (BMAG) will see an exhibition that celebrates the 125th anniversary of the Birmingham PS, founded 1884. This is believed to make them the UK's second oldest local stamp club, behind Plymouth (founded in 1876). More details will be supplied nearer the time •

Enquiries More information will be provided as the year progresses. In the meantime visit www.ironbridge.org.uk for the latest news about the post office, and many other attractions of Blists Hill.

Blists Hill This Victorian town opened its own reconstructed Victorian post office on Saturday 4 April as part of the Canal Street development project. Note that this is not an operational Post Office, although it is understood that cards and letters can be mailed from the site. This new post office was developed by the BPMA, using archival records of an old post office close to the Ironbridge Gorge Museum site and will, in due course, incorporate a working stationers within the premises, as was often the case in days gone by. From around December of this year there will be an upstairs gallery looking at the role of the Post Office in the community •



The Friends watch Frogmore Mills Fourdrinier machine in action, and a demonstration in the letterpress print shop.

Friends of BPMA The Friends visited the Frogmore Paper Mill at Apsley in Hertfordshire recently, where the Paper Trail Project is located. The Victorian Fourdrinier papermaking machine was in operation at the time of our visit, and it was fascinating to see this ancient machine belching steam. I have mentioned the mill previously (Stamp Scene February 2008) and now that I have been in person, can recommend it as a great day out for anyone interested in industrial machinery and papermaking techniques. The shop, restaurant and, during the summer months only, the opportunity of a canal trip all add to the fun of this 'visitor experience' ●

Paper Trail Project Frogmore Mill, Fourdrinier Way, Apsley, Hemel Hempstead HP3 9RY, or www.thepapertrail.org.uk

Friends of the BPMA Write to Avice Harms, Membership Secretary, Friends of the BPMA, 13 Amethyst Avenue, Davis Estate, Chatham ME5 9TX. Annual membership is £15 (UK) or £20 (overseas).

Linn's goes digital *Linn's Stamp News* is an excellent American weekly newspaper that keeps its readers up-to-date with the world of philately, naturally with an American slant. By the time the printed edition reaches the UK, the news is not as current as it might be, but now the complete edition is available online on the day of publication at 90% less than the price of the printed version. A subscription for 52 issues of *Linn's*, plus 12 issues of *Scott Stamp Monthly* and several bonus features such as an Archive of previous issues of both titles dating back to the beginning of 2008, costs a mere us\$9.99 (£7.32 when I subscribed in February). A weekly email advises when the latest edition has been uploaded, and it is also possible to subscribe to a free monthly newsletter about the latest stamp issues and news from around the world. Articles of particular interest can be printed in colour or black and white on your home printer and new content is always under consideration, making a subscription even better value over time ●

ABPS/FIP joint seminars On 6-8 November this year the Association of British Philatelic Societies and FIP will host a series of seminars on Aero-philately, Postal Stationery, Revenue Philately and Traditional Philately. If you wish to attend, contact Stamp World Exhibitions – details opposite ●

Stamp World Exhibitions Suite 101b, Business Design Centre, 52 Upper Street, London N1 0QH, or email briantroutter@btinternet.com

Popular dogs Our Working Dogs issue was the fourth most popular set of 2008 in our *Bulletin* readers poll, and second most popular with online voters – see April *Bulletin*, p243. Down under, Australia Post also issued a Working Dogs set in 2008 and this was voted the favourite set by its customers. The five 50c stamps featured German shepherd, Australian cattle dog, beagle, border collie (voted the favourite of the set) and Labrador ●

Enquiries To see the range of carriers and to place an order visit www.stampstore.uk.com

StampStore Walsall Security Printers' specialist fulfilment division, The Philatelic Bureau, has recently opened 'StampStore', a new worldwide one-stop online shop for the philatelist. On offer is a range of specialist solutions designed to help collectors store, protect and display their collection in pristine condition. This range of cost-effective black stamp carriers, or stockcards, has been designed to suit the majority of individual stamps, strips and sheets and is manufactured to the same quality as the carriers used by many leading stamp authorities around the world. The materials are carefully selected for safe, long-term archiving, from the special 270gsm acid-free black stamp board and permanently bonded 75 micron optically clear polyester foil cover sheet to the low rated pH adhesive bonding.

On launch day I purchased a sample pack of carriers for this review. It was a simple case of clicking on the carrier format required, adding the items to the shopping basket and following the instructions. The order was received the next day in a Jiffy bag bearing postage stamps and was accompanied by a copy of my invoice/despatch note and a leaflet about the full range of carriers available. This was a very efficient online delivery service and I can confirm that the carriers function as I would have hoped.

The carriers vary in price depending on the size chosen, but all are in packs of 10 supplied within a reusable StampStore plastic envelope. Typical carriers include a small size (stock number M000AA), measuring 148 x 103mm overall with a single strip at £1.60, and a large card (stock number M00004), measuring 152 x 206mm overall with four strips at £2 per pack. Postage and VAT is added to these prices at the Checkout.

The Philatelic Bureau was established by wsp in association with the Dutch Postal Service, TNT. Purchased outright in 2000 it has developed into a highly successful, independent philatelic bureau service. It has produced over 7 million FDCs and 8.5 million presentation packs, including the processing of many of the more recent stamp issues for Royal Mail ●

BPMA and Ancestry The BPMA has partnered with leading social and family history website Ancestry.co.uk to make Post Office appointment books from 1831 to 1960 fully searchable and available online for anyone researching their family history. Prior to 1831 appointment records were not kept uniformly over the country and separate series were produced. In 1831 centralised employment records were first created by the Post Office by copying the relevant minute numbers and brief details relating to appointment, transfer, dismissal, resignation, retirement, or death. The BPMA already has these appointment books microfilmed. The next stage is to scan the microfilm and then create a linked index on www.ancestry.co.uk, making these fascinating records fully name-searchable for the first time. More details will be available when the project is nearing completion ●

PostExpo 2009 This annual postal industry event will this year be held at the Deutsche Messe, Hannover, Germany on 29-30 September. Over 4000 visitors from 100 countries attend and help shape the future of the postal services around the world ●



Jersey issues On 21 June, Jersey Post will issue a miniature sheet containing a £3 stamp to mark the centenary of the Head Post Office in Broad Street, St Helier. The stamp features the façade of the Post Office, c1909, with telegram boys outside; the miniature sheet surround shows a view of Broad Street at the same period. Both images were painted by Colleen Corlett from photographs of the time. Another miniature sheet, with a £3 stamp, follows on 1 July to mark the 40th anniversary of the investiture of HRH The Prince of Wales at Caernarvon Castle. The stamp features the Prince, in ceremonial robes, kneeling to pay homage to The Queen. The sheet was designed by Andrew Robinson •

Enquiries Jersey Philatelic Bureau, Postal Headquarters, Jersey JE1 1AB; telephone 01534 516320; email stamps@jerseypost.com

Festival of Stamps 2010 Teams around the country are working hard to prepare their stamp fair events in support of next year's national Festival of Stamps. A number of events are still to be confirmed, but the provisional programme is as follows. (All dates are in 2010. Philatelic Federation and Philatelic Association are abbreviated PF and PA.) •

27 March Thames Valley & District PF 'WestBex10', Kennet School, Thatcham, Berkshire

16-17 April Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies, Perth

24 April Midland PF, Arden School, Knowle, Solihull

8-15 May Festival of Stamps London 2010, Business Design Centre

22 May Federation of South Wales Philatelic Societies, The Princess Royal Theatre, Civic Centre, Port Talbot

5 June Association of Essex Philatelic Societies 'StampEssex – Festival of Stamps', Weston Homes Community Stadium, Colchester

12 June Yorkshire PA 'YPA Convention', Pudsey

3 July Wessex PF, Cornwall PF and Somerset & Dorset PF 'SWIPEX 2010', Guildhall, Plymouth

10 July Kent PF 'KENTPEX 2010', Tonbridge School, High Street, Tonbridge

22-25 July Philatelic Congress of GB, Holiday Inn, Kenilworth

21 August East Midlands & East Anglian PF, Girton College, Cambridge

11 September Federation of Surrey Philatelic Societies, United Reformed Church Hall, Addiscombe Grove, Croydon

24-26 September North-East of England PF 'Nephilex 2010', The Royal Station Hotel, Newcastle upon Tyne

9 October (World Post Day) Association of Sussex Philatelic Societies 'The South of England Stamp Fair and Sussex Convention', Showground, Ardingly

16 October Hampshire PF, Wickham

24 October Cornwall PF 'Cornex 2010', venue to follow

Enquiries Visit website www.hiddenartshop.com and choose the designer's name from the drop-down menu.

Stamp mirror Fancy yourself on a British stamp? Of course you do. OK, so aside from on Smilers labels we all know that this is not feasible. However, Soner Ozenc, who is a product designer working on a wide range of materials and manufacturing technologies, has produced the ideal substitute. He markets a wall mirror that is frameless with perforated edges and a cut-out of Her Majesty's head, as used on British stamps, at top right. So, every time anyone admires themselves in the mirror the 'stamp' image changes. This fun item appears to be well produced in laser-cut acrylic, is British made and comes in different sizes (small at £17.95, medium at £37.95 and large at £47.95) and colours (silver or gold mirrored surface) ●

The Cinderella Stamp Club

For further information write to: Roger Hudson, PO Box 172, Coventry CV6 6NF, fax 024 7666 7428 or see www.cinderellastampclub.org.uk

Cinderella anniversary The Cinderella Stamp Club celebrates its 50th anniversary this month with a special meeting and anniversary dinner. The Club is an association of philatelists, amateur and professional, who are interested in local, telegraph and railway stamps, revenues/fiscals, forgeries, bogus and phantom issues, Christmas, Red Cross, TB and other charity seals, registration labels, advertisement and exhibition labels and many other items – the so-called 'Cinderellas of Philately'. The Club includes many distinguished names amongst its members. Annual subscription is £18 UK, £20 overseas surface mail, £25 airmail. The Club's journal, *The Cinderella Philatelist*, is published quarterly and each issue includes a free gift of an interesting Cinderella item ●

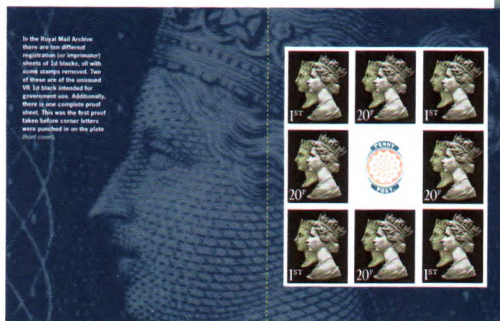


Peter Westwood

Collectors honoured We were pleased to hear that Peter Westwood signed the Book of Scottish Philatelists at the Scottish Philatelic Congress in Perth in April. Signing the Book is the highest honour in Scottish philately, and Peter's name is recorded alongside many famous names. This recognises his years of research and publications on Robert Burns, including the philatelic aspects. He wrote the copy for the Robert Burns presentation packs of 1996 and 2009, and was involved with the Robert Burns coin cover. Peter has designed many Burns labels since the 1960s – see the January 2009 *Bulletin*, p143. He has had considerable involvement with the Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies, designing Congress covers and hand-stamps in 1976, 1983, 1988, 2001 and 2008, and has provided designs for covers for the Dundee Philatelic Weekend since its inception. He was a founding member of the Alba Stamp Group and Kirkcudbright Philatelic Society and continues to serve and publicise philately in many ways. He designed the Mungo Park stamps issued by Gambia in 1971, and in 1986 published a book on the philately of David Livingstone. For these and his work in designing commemorative covers for Scottish philatelic events he received the McConnell Medal at the ASPS Congress in 1993. Amongst his books on Robert Burns are *The Deltiology of Robert Burns* (postcards, 1994), *Jean Armour, Mrs Robert Burns* (1996), and *The Definitive Illustrated Companion to Robert Burns* (2004). It is appropriate that he should sign the Book of Scottish Philatelists in the 250th anniversary year of Burns's birth.

Jim Haggart of Edinburgh Philatelic Society received the ASPS Award of Merit for his services to his local society ●

Royal Mail news New issues and products



Treasures of the BPMA prestige book The third of this year's books will be issued 18 August. It features treasures of the British Postal Museum & Archive, selected by the book's author Douglas Muir, the BPMA's Curator Philately. The book is printed by Cartor, and will cost £8.18.

The front cover of the prestige book features a section of the unique proof sheet of the Penny Black, probably the most valuable item held at the BPMA. This year marks the 40th anniversary of the opening of the former National Postal Museum by HM The Queen.

The first day cover envelope features the top of a Penfold pillar box. Orders for serviced FDCs bearing the definitive stamp pane cancelled by a Tallents House or London EC1 postmark should reach Tallents House by the day of issue. Price £3.18 UK customers, or £2.77 overseas customers. Collectors can send their own covers on the day of issue to Tallents House (for TH postmark), or to their nearest Special Handstamp Centres for the London postmark, marking the outer envelope 'FDO921' or 'FDO922'. The TH postmark features a mail coach, and the London postmark a 'Hen & Chickens' parcel delivery bicycle of the 1880s. Details of sponsored handstamps in use on 18 August will be given in the *British Postmark Bulletin* •

Treasures of the BPMA The book will contain four panes:

Pane 1 Top and bottom rows: 1st, 20p and 1st double-head Victoria/Elizabeth II stamps, as issued in 1990 (20p) and 2000 (1st). Middle row: 20p, label (Treasury Essay design), 20p.

Pane 2 Four 20p Royal Mail Coach stamps from the 1988 Lord Mayor's Show issue (originally printed gravure by Harrison).

Pane 3 The four Post Box stamps from the miniature sheet also to be issued 18 August.

Pane 4 Top and bottom rows: 17p, 22p, 17p. Middle row: 62p, label showing GPO logo, 62p.

Commemorative and exhibition sheets The next commemorative sheet, on sale from 21 July, marks the 40th anniversary of first Moon landing. The sheet contains 10 1st class Union Flag stamps with attached labels featuring events from the launch of Apollo 11 on 16 July 1969 to the parade for the astronauts in New York in August. One label shows what is regarded as one of history's most iconic images, Buzz Aldrin pictured on the Moon. The sheet is supplied in an illustrated pack telling the story of man's fascination with the Moon and the events leading to 'one small step', written by Sir Patrick Moore. He describes the Moon as 'our faithful companion in space... the source of the utmost fascination to us'. Amongst the illustrations is a detailed map of the Moon, created by Sir Patrick, used by NASA for the Apollo 11 lunar landing. The commemorative sheet, designed by the Chase design agency, was printed in litho by Cartor. Price £13.50.

Two further commemorative sheets are to follow: 150th anniversary of 'Big Ben' (18 September), and 800th anniversary of the University of Cambridge (7 October). There will also be a Big Ben medal cover, price £14.75.

Exhibition sheets are planned for Thaipex 2009 (3 August), Italia 2009 (21 October), and Monacophil 2009 (4 December). Price £8.35 each. Further details will be published shortly •

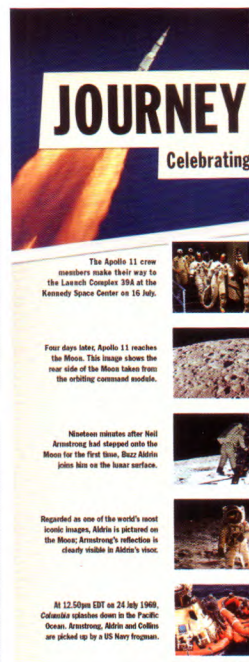
International Reply Coupon Shown below (at bottom left) is the new IRC which goes on sale at main PO branches on 3 August, to replace the coupon issued in 2006 which remains valid until the end of 2009. For further information on the new coupon, see the October 2008 *Bulletin*, p63. An article on IRCs, by Michael St J Wright, was published here in October 2007 •



CASGLIAD STAMPIAU ARIAN YR EGIWYSI CADEIRIOL
THE CATHEDRAL'S SILVER STAMP COLLECTION

EGIWYS GADEIRIOL TYDDEWI
ST DAVIDS CATHEDRAL

From left to right: St David's Cathedral silver stamp cover (21 July); new-design IRC (3 August); Moon landing commemorative sheet (21 July); NAFAS retail book (21 May); and Tudors cachet cover (21 April).



The Apollo 11 crew members make their way to the Launch Complex 39A at the Kennedy Space Center on 16 July.

Four days later, Apollo 11 reaches the Moon. This image shows the rear side of the Moon taken from the orbiting command module.

Nineteen minutes after Neil Armstrong had stepped onto the Moon for the first time, Buzz Aldrin joins him on the lunar surface.

Regarded as one of the world's most iconic images, Aldrin is pictured on the Moon; Armstrong's reflection is clearly visible in Aldrin's visor.

At 12.50pm EDT on 24 July 1969, Columbia splashes down in the Pacific Ocean. Armstrong, Aldrin and Collins are picked up by a US Navy tugboat.

Tudors cachet cover Shown below is the second of our Monarchs cachet covers, bearing the Tudor stamps and a special Hampton Court cachet and postmark. This cover is available from Tallents House, priced £9.99. The earlier Houses of Lancaster & York cover is still available, also £9.99 – see *Bulletin*, May 2008 (page 268). Our photograph shows *Bulletin* Editor John Holman (right) and the Director of Hampton Court Palace, Mr Rod Giddins, launching the cover outside the Palace. One of The Queen's Beasts (as shown on 1998 stamps) can be seen in the photograph •



Silver stamps The fourth in our silver stamp collection, reproducing the 56p St David's Cathedral stamp (opposite page) will be issued 21 July, price £24.42. The collection includes the 56p stamp on a card cancelled with a special St David's handstamp. Collectors placing a regular order for this collection receive a booklet about Cathedral stamps and a collection box •

NAFAS stamp book Shown below is a retail book issued last month to mark the 50th anniversary of the National Association of Flower Arranging Societies. The book contains four 1st class definitives and two flower stamps, originally issued as greetings stamps in 1997. Printed by Walsall, it is available from Tallents House, price £2.34 •

Special stamps This month's special issue is Mythical Creatures, out on 16 June. The stamps were previewed here in February. A feature on Mythical Creatures, by Rosemary Bennett, is published in this *Bulletin* (p310). This month we preview the Navy Uniforms issue, on sale on 17 September •



At 9.32a (GMT), in little over 1 start of 1

Chief pro television Moon for the leader

The tent to Armit their trip probably

The crew outside 1 Eagle on lift-off to

In August astronaut in New York, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the city's history at that time.



THE COURT OF
KINGS AND QUEENS
HAMPTON COURT PALACE

Royal Mail cachet cover
ROYAL MAIL, TALLENTS HOUSE, 21 SOUTH DILE CRESCENT, EDINBURGH EH7 2PB

Generic sheets The first two Castles generic sheets are now available – Northern Ireland (17 March) and England (23 April), price £8.35 each. They were shown here in March (p202) and April (p233). Similar sheets for Scotland and Wales will be issued on 30 November 2009 and 1 March 2010. Still available are the ‘Glorious’ (England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and UK) generic sheets (March 2007 to September 2008), price £8.35 each. These were featured on the back page of the March *Bulletin* •

Machin identifiers The recently issued security versions of 1st and 2nd class stamps (standard and Large Letter) incorporate changes to the printing, die-cutting and self-adhesive laminate. To assist the production and quality processes, the stamps also include a feature to identify the stamp’s original format, ie business sheets of 100 or the various stamp book formats. Stamps from sheets of 50 do not carry any identification. The identifiers comprise a changed letter in the word ROYAL or MAIL in the wavy line background pattern in the top right-hand corner of the stamp. The changed letters are: B (Business Sheets); T (Retail Book × 12); S (Retail Book × 6); F (Retail Book × 4); and C (Custom Retail Book, eg Design Classics). The main reason for the inclusion is to differentiate by format rather than value, therefore only the 1st and 2nd class stamps will carry identifiers, not the 50p or high values which are all sheet stamps. Identifying a stamp’s original format will help Royal Mail to correct any production issues which may arise, for example, problems reading the phosphor signal on the stamps •

2009 First day postmarks The special issues for the rest of 2009 are listed below, with the alternative First Day of Issue postmarks •

16.06 Mythical Creatures: Dragonby, Scunthorpe

18.08 Post Boxes miniature sheet: Wakefield

18.08 Treasures of the Archives prestige book: London EC1

01.09 Fire & Rescue Services: Hose, Melton Mowbray

17.09 Royal Navy Uniforms (stamps and PSB): Portsmouth

08.10 Eminent Britons: Britannia, Bacup

03.11 Christmas: Bethlehem, Llandello

Forthcoming withdrawal dates 14p, 46p, and 78p definitives 30 June • pack issued 27 March 2007 containing 16p, 48p, 50p, 54p and 78p definitives 30 June • Carry On and Hammer Films issue (including stamp book) and 2007 prepaid Scout Centenary postcards 9 June • St Paul’s medal cover 12 June • Air Displays stamps, pack, stamp cards, and generic sheet 16 July •

The BPMA Freeling House,
Phoenix Place, London WC1X
0DL (near Mount Pleasant).
Phone 020 7239 2570 or see
www.postalheritage.org.uk

British Postal Museum & Archive Now on show is a special exhibition honouring the eminent stamp designer David Gentleman, who has designed more than 100 issued stamps for Royal Mail since 1962. See Richard West’s exhibition report on page 307 of this *Bulletin*, and Douglas Muir’s article ‘Off with Her Head!’ in the June 2007 *Bulletin* (pages 306-310).

The BPMA contains the collections of the former National Postal Museum and Post Office Archives. Opening hours are Monday to Wednesday and Friday 10.00-17.00, Thursday 10.00-19.00, also certain Saturdays – see website for dates, and for details of BPMA lectures and other events •

Concorde at 40 Brian Asquith's collection

CONCORDE'S FIRST TEST FLIGHT took place on 2 March 1969. To mark this year's 40th anniversary a Concorde generic sheet was issued on 2 March and Concorde was included in the Classic Design set issued in January. We are pleased to feature two more pages from the award-winning Concorde collection of Brian Asquith, concluding the four-month series begun in the March *Bulletin* (page 218) •

FASTER THAN A BULLET - The Concorde Story

Anguilla
4 May 1969

GB 4d Concorde used in Anguilla



Top: a Forces Air Letter sent from Field Post Office 1046, established on Anguilla after restoration of colonial rule by British troops in March 1969. Two years earlier, the island had claimed independence from the British Caribbean Associated State of St Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla.

Below: errors of date covers sent from Field Post Office 385 (Senenlager, Germany), and Harlow, Essex.

FASTER THAN A BULLET - The Concorde Story

Field Post Office 385,
Senenlager, Germany
2 March 1969

Errors of Date



Charlotte Street, Harlow
2 March 1969



Concorde Study Circle For details contact Brian Asquith, Alandale, Radcliffe Gardens, Carshalton Beeches SM5 4PQ.

Navy Uniforms

The third and final set in the



THE THIRD AND FINAL set in the series on service uniforms goes on sale at Post Office branches and philatelic outlets and Royal Mail Tallents House on 17 September. The issue, honouring the 'senior service', features Naval uniforms and comprises six stamps and a prestige stamp book. The stamps, like the Army and RAF Uniform sets of 2007 and 2008, are printed as seven-tenant triptychs – three 1st class and three 90p stamps. Each stamp bears an illustration by the artist Graham Turner, representing the many Naval uniforms since the 18th century. The Queen's silhouette and value/service indicator are positioned top right on all six stamps.

The stamps were designed by Atelier Works and printed in litho by Cartor. For an article on Atelier Works, Graham Turner and the designing of the RAF Uniforms stamps see the September 2008 *Bulletin*.

FIRST DAY FACILITIES The FDC envelope has been designed by Atelier Works. Orders for serviced FDCs must reach Tallents House (address below) by the day of issue. Collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue to: Royal Mail, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB (Tallents House postmark), or to the nearest Special Handstamp Centre (Portsmouth postmark), marking the outer envelope 'FDC0925' (Tallents House) or 'FDC0926' (Portsmouth). Covers can be posted or handed in at main Post Office branches for the Portsmouth postmark.

For details of sponsored handstamps and addresses of the Handstamp Centres see the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from Tallents House (£12.25 UK/Europe; £24.95 elsewhere). For a free sample copy, write to: The Editor, British Postmark Bulletin, Royal Mail, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HQ.



The Navy on stamps This new set of stamps will add to those issues which have previously honoured the Royal Navy: 1951 2s6d high value definitive (HMS *Victory*), 1982 Maritime Heritage (left, 29p), 1988 Spanish Armada, 1990 Gallantry (the Distinguished Service Cross and Medal), 1994 D-Day (HMS *Warspite*), 2001 Submarines and Flags (White Ensign and Jolly Roger), 2005 Battle of Trafalgar, and 2006 Victoria Cross (Boy Seaman Jack Cornwell and Midshipman Charles Lucas) •

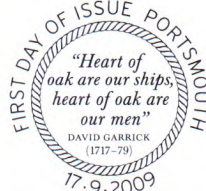
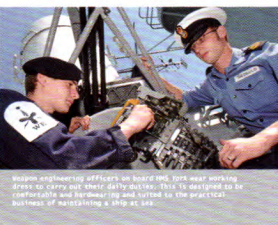
series on British military dress



The stamps 1st class (from left to right): Flight Deck Officer 2009, Captain 1941 and Superintendent WRNS 1918. 90p: Able Seaman 1880, Royal Marine 1805, and Admiral 1795. The illustrations are by Graham Turner.

Prestige stamp book The book, entitled *Royal Navy Uniforms*, is described on the following page. Prestige book first day covers will be serviced with the pane of definitives and crown label, shown at bottom left on the following page.

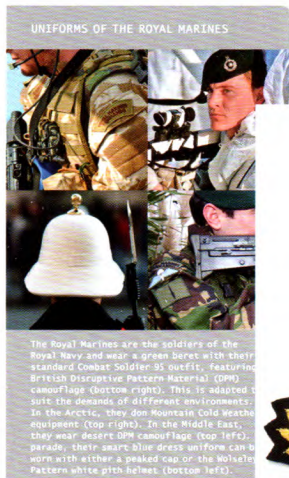
Set of stamps	£3.87
Presentation pack	£4.40
Prestige stamp book	£7.93
FDC envelope	£0.30
Serviced FDC: stamps (UK customers)	£4.92
Serviced FDC: stamps (overseas customers)	£4.28
Serviced FDC: book pane (UK customers)	£3.34
Serviced FDC: book pane (overseas customers)	£2.91
Stamp cards set	£2.34
Cachet cover	£9.99



Modern Navy Uniforms

FUNCTION OVER STYLE

THE ROYAL NAVY IN THE 21ST CENTURY EMBRACES MANY DIFFERENT TASKS THAT DEMAND PARTICULAR EXPERTISE FROM SERVICE PERSONNEL. WHETHER IT IS A FLIGHT DECK OFFICER DRESSED IN HIGH-VISIBILITY JACKET AND HELMET OR AN ON-BOARD MISSILE OPERATOR WEARING AN ANTI-FLASH HOOD, THESE ARE FUNCTIONS THAT REQUIRE SIMPLE, PRACTICAL CLOTHING WITH LITTLE ROOM FOR DECORATIVE STYLE.



The Royal Marines are the soldiers of the Royal Navy and wear a green beret with their standard Combat Soldier 95 outfit, featuring British Disruptive Pattern-Aztec (DPM) camouflage (bottom right). This is adapted to suit the demands of different environments: In the Arctic, they don Mountain Cold Weather equipment (top right). In the Middle East, they wear desert DPM camouflage (top left); parade, their smart blue dress uniform can be worn with either a peaked cap or the bolshate Pattern white gilet helmet (bottom left).



Royal Mail First Day Cover



ROYAL NAVY UNIFORMS

Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorbie Road
Ilkeston
Derbyshire
DE7 4AB

Royal Mail Tallent's House 21 South Gyle Crescent Edinburgh EH12 9PE



Navy Uniforms A new prestige stamp book

A NEW PRESTIGE STAMP BOOK, entitled *Royal Navy Uniforms*, contains four panes of stamps, as shown here.

The book has been written by Tim Newark, designed by Webb & Webb Design Ltd, and printed in litho by Cartor Security Printing. This is the first time the 17p and 90p definitives have been printed in litho; the 1p was printed in litho by Questa in 1996. The Flag stamps were originally printed in gravure, and subsequently the White Ensign stamp was produced in litho in generic sheets. The serviced FDC will bear the definitives and label stamp pane, as shown on the previous page •

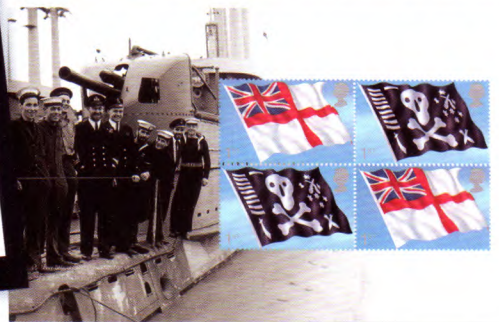
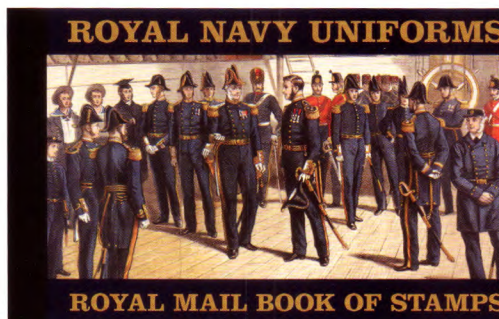
Navy Uniforms PSB The book will contain four panes:

Pane 1 90p Navy Uniforms stamps (strip of three)

Pane 2 1st class Navy Uniforms stamps (strip of three)

Pane 3 Definitive stamps: top and bottom rows 17p, 1p, 17p; middle row 90p, label (crown), 90p

Pane 4 Top row 1st class White Ensign and Jolly Roger stamps from the 2001 Flags miniature sheet; bottom row same stamps in reverse order



David Gentleman Richard West reports on the new BPMA exhibition opened last month

DAVID GENTLEMAN is one of the nation's most distinguished artists and designers, whose work has been familiar to stamp collectors for nearly 50 years now. It was in 1962 that designs by David were first selected for British stamps, the National Productivity Year set of that year, and over the years more than 100 of David's designs have been used, the most recent one being the 'Millennium Timekeeper' miniature sheet, issued to mark the dawning of the year 2000.

The latest exhibition in the Search Room of the British Postal Museum & Archive at Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London (part of the Royal Mail Mount Pleasant complex) which opened on 7 May focuses on three aspects of David's stamp work. It includes sketches and artwork most of which have not previously been on public display, demonstrating the versatility of David's abilities, embracing a multitude of subject matter.

Stark and forceful Part of the exhibition focuses on the Social Reformers set of 1976, stamps that were not without their critics and controversy. It was initially intended that the set be on the theme of Trade Unionism, but this was quickly 'watered down'. Nevertheless, David's ideas were stark and forceful, as he grappled with various concepts from a fairly formal depiction of workers, to his adopted use of the entire sheet to emphasise the repetitiveness and drudgery of the lives of many. Yet, by inter-locking his designs (see page 309) he emphasises that strength comes from unity.

It could be argued that David's most influential work for Royal Mail took place in 1965, when he was invited by the then Postmaster General, Tony Benn, to produce his 'album' of design concepts. David took not only a wide variety of subjects, demonstrating how these could produce most effective stamps, but also, now most famously, looked at ways of portraying The Queen and at alternatives to the Royal portrait. At the time there was great dissatisfaction among stamp designers at the need to include the portrait by Dorothy Wilding into every design; David conceived the alternative of the cameo portrait, based on the effigy by Mary Gillick that was at the time used on British coins.

While images of the designs within the 'Gentleman Album' have been seen previously, the many sketches and ideas David prepared as he worked towards his final designs have never been previously shown in public. ►



Some of the more than 100 stamps David Gentleman has designed for Royal Mail since his first issue in 1962.



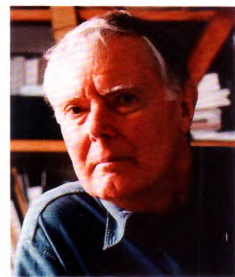
Unadopted designs for the National Trust, proposals for Regional (1994) and England (2001) definitives, and one of the 'royal cypher' designs in the 1965 'Gentleman' album.



Unadopted designs No designer finds his or her work is accepted on every occasion, and over the years there have been times when Royal Mail has selected a different approach to that which David has adopted, or has decided not to proceed with a particular stamp issue.

Part of the exhibition takes a look at designs by David that did not appear as issued stamps, from ideas for the International Botanical Congress of 1964, to designs for the small-size pictorial England 'Country' stamps issued in 2001. One of the sets shown is that on the theme of Nature Conservation, originally titled 'Ecology and the Environment'. It is one of David's deepest regrets that in the end, this theme was felt to be too sensitive for Royal Mail to proceed. The exhibition also explores another subject close to David's heart, The National Trust, and examines the proposed designs he produced for the stamps issued in 1995 to mark the centenary. Another series which did not come to fruition was the proposed Regional definitive issue of 1994, for which David prepared designs, featured in the exhibition.

The 'Gentleman on Stamps' exhibition will continue until the Spring of 2010, which is particularly fitting as in March of that year, David will celebrate his 80th birthday. His has been a distinguished career, and although designing stamps has been just one small demonstration of his many undoubted talents, this exhibition will provide visitors with a greater insight not only to his skill, but also his deeply held convictions and commitment to social responsibility. ●



David Gentleman

Editor's note There have been several features about David Gentleman and his stamps in the *Bulletin* over the years. His first issue, 1962's National Productivity Year, was the subject of a feature article in November 2002, and David wrote about his 1970 Philypia and 1974 Fire Service issues in September 1970 and May 1974. William Aubrey Witham reviewed his stamp designs in November 1997. David's books *Design in Miniature* and *Artwork* were reviewed here in May 1972 and October 2002. (*Artwork* is still available from Tallents House.) David has twice been awarded the Reginald M Phillips medal for stamp design, as reported here in July 1969 and August 1979. A report of an earlier exhibition of his work at the National Postal Museum was published in December 1969. Designs from his Gentleman Album were shown in August 1966 and in Douglas Muir's article 'Off With Her Head!' in June 2007. Some of David's unused stamp designs have been reproduced – 1962 NPY issue (November 1967), 1963 Lifeboat Conference (February 1967), 1967 definitives (May 1986), 1968 Anniversaries (June 1968) and 1972 BBC (September 1972) ●



079461



TOTAL SHEET VALUE £10



Left: David Gentleman's first and most recent issues, National Productivity Year (1962) and Millennium (1999). Above: the Robert Owen stamp from the 1976 Social Reformers set.

Mythical creatures in folklore and fable



This month's Mythical Creatures issue reminds us of our rich cultural heritage of myths and legends. This set depicts some of the curious creatures that inhabited the imagination of our distant ancestors, while previous issues have depicted several others.

THE TWO 1st class stamps show a dragon and a unicorn respectively. The dragon is now closely associated with Wales (Celebrating Wales miniature sheet of 2009, and the third stamp of The Queen's Beasts se-tenant strip, 1998), but in previous centuries it featured in the folklore of many other countries. In Britain, dragon traditions are thought to date from at least the time of the Saxons and Vikings – perhaps even from as far back as Celtic times or the Roman occupation. Early dragons were wingless and could not breathe fire, but their breath was said to be poisonous. They are often referred to as 'worms', from the Saxon word 'wyrn', and had snake-like bodies.

Medieval folk attributed many unexplained happenings to dragons. Strange sights in the sky were said to be dragons, and were thought to foretell misfortune. For example, the monks of Lindisfarne claimed to have seen flying dragons shortly before an invasion of the Vikings. And in several parts of the country there are tales of fierce dragons which terrorised the neighbourhood until they were banished by a priest or slain by a brave young knight. Some of these stories are thought to relate to real, but much more ordinary, beasts such as the Bistern Dragon of the New Forest which could be killed only by a knight coated in birdlime and ground glass. Some historians believe that this was actually a particularly ferocious wild boar.

The Unicorn also appear in the writings and legends of many countries, and in ancient times people firmly believed in their existence. As well as on one of the new 1st class stamps, a unicorn also appears on the fifth of The Queen's Beasts se-tenant strip of 1998. In early stories it was often depicted as a wild, beautiful creature, but more like a goat than a horse, which could only be tamed or captured by a pure young virgin. Should a unicorn come upon such a maiden sitting in a wood, it would trustingly lay its head in her lap like a child. Unfortunately, if hunters could persuade a virgin to attract a unicorn in this way, they could then kill it – the only way this could be done. Unicorns are mentioned in The Bible, although this is thought to be a mistranslation. As might be expected, this gave the tradition authenticity and confirmed people's belief in these lovely creatures.

Giants, mermaids and the little people One of the new 62p stamps depicts a giant. In years gone by, many giants were said to roam this country, and some must have been of colossal stature, given the feats they are claimed to have performed. In Cornwall a giant called Bolster could plant one foot on Carn Brea, a hill near Camborne, and the other on the cliffs at St Agnes six miles away. And in Northern Ireland, there is a legend that the Giant's Causeway (shown on several stamps) was built by the giant Finn Mac Cool so that he could walk to Scotland to fight his rival Benandonner.

The new special issue, by Rosemary Bennett



Pixies and fairies also figure prominently in our folklore, and are shown on the new 62p and 90p stamps. Pixies are said to be mischievous little creatures who love to play tricks on humans, although the Dartmoor pixies are supposed to be helpful to the local people. Pixies usually dress in green, are fond of music and dancing, and are often described as beautiful little creatures. Unlike fairies, they have no wings, and according to tradition are mainly found in Devon and Cornwall, although some people say that their name is derived from 'Picts', the ancient race which once inhabited Scotland. They are always ready to fight the fairies, and won a great battle against them at Buckland St Mary in Somerset.

Legends of fairies are more widespread, and their behaviour can vary between kindly and malignant. Such tales were very prevalent in the Isle of Man, where many still believe in them. On the island, the Elder is known as 'the tree of the fairies' who are supposed to play in it and swing from its branches; when these move in the wind, the 'little people' are said to be swinging. Other tales tell of humans who marry fairies. Often, the human behaves in some way which the fairy has forbidden, such as striking her or referring to her 'sisters', (the other fairies), and she disappears. However, in one Welsh folktale, although the fairy wife leaves her husband, her sons have inherited knowledge which enables them to become great physicians.

The other 90p stamp of the 2009 set shows a mermaid, and a belief in these strange creatures was also widespread in past centuries. From Cornwall comes the legend of Morveren, the mermaid of Zennor, which tells of a young man named Matthew Trewella, a wonderful singer, who fell in love with her. He went to live with her in the land of Llyr below the waves – where some people say he can be heard singing still. Another story comes from Marden, in Herefordshire, where a mermaid is reputed to have made off with the church bell and taken it to the bottom of the river. Many more mermaid tales can be found throughout our islands. In some the mermaids are benign – in others they are far from well-intentioned towards humans. In a few stories a merman figures rather than a mermaid. ►

Opposite page: the heraldic Scottish unicorn on a George V 5s of 1939; and the City of London's dragons on the 31p value in the 1984 College of Arms Quincentenary issue.

Above: the six new Mythical Creatures stamps, issued on 16 June.



From top left: a griffin, a yale and a dragon, on three of the 1998 Queen's Beasts stamps; a Welsh dragon and Scottish unicorn in the 2008 Country definitives anniversary sheet; a dragon and a phoenix from the Children's Stories issue, 1998; and a dragon from the Celebrating England sheet of 2007.

Below: the Welsh dragon for Regional definitives, redrawn by Jeffery Matthews; an earlier version was used from 1971. The pre-decimal Welsh issues had featured dragons by Reynolds Stone.



Griffin, yale and phoenix Other mythical creatures which have appeared on stamps are the griffin, the yale (the first and third in The Queen's Beasts set-tenant strip of 1998), and the phoenix (the 37p in the Children's Fantasy Novels issue, 1998). The grif-

fin was said to be half eagle and half lion, having the forequarters of the former and the hindquarters of the latter. It was reputed to be a very intelligent creature, and the female was supposed to lay her eggs in a mountain cave with a very narrow entrance. She would then stand guard over them to protect them from mountain lions. Folk must have once believed in the griffin for it is mentioned in the writings of St Hildegard of Bingen, a 12th century German nun.

The yale is less well represented in mythology. It is usually depicted as an antelope or mountain goat type of creature, and was said to have large horns which could swivel in any direction. It makes an appearance on some heraldic devices, where it represents proud defence. The yale was included by Pliny the Elder in his *Natural History*, so at that time it must have been believed to exist.

Perhaps the best known of this trio is the phoenix, which occurs in the legends of many lands including Egypt and Greece, and is closely associated with fire. Always referred to as a beautiful bird, the phoenix is said to live for 500, or, in some legends, 1000 years. At the end of this period, it builds its own funeral pyre and is then reborn from the flames to begin its life-cycle all over again.

The 2009 Mythical Creatures stamps, and previous Royal Mail issues, illustrate some of the intriguing folklore of Britain. We are fortunate enough to have in these islands more of these fascinating stories than most other countries. It is therefore appropriate that our mythology should be portrayed on our stamps, adding yet another dimension to our rich and varied philatelic scene •

The world of online philately by Glenn H Morgan FRPSL

SMILERS SHEETS have now become an accepted stamp format that will have existed for a decade by May next year. Interest in these items does not appear to be reducing, and the steady stream of new sheets helps to maintain the interest of collector and non-collector alike.

This website has a sub-title of 'Everything for the GB Smilers Collector...' and it would be difficult to disagree, although increasingly it offers more than just GB, now incorporating the Isle of Man issues, a listing of worldwide personalised stamp issuing countries (around 20), and a guide to the groundbreaking Australian issues.

The *Customised Stamp Sheets of Great Britain* catalogue (£19.95) covers the years 2000 to early 2007, and it is the many subsequent sheets that are the main focus of this website. The domain owners have clearly amassed a vast amount of information on Smilers since the catalogue was launched, and this site is the first and logical place to get hold of information about more recent and forthcoming issues. The sheet listings are split into eight separate categories, namely: Generic (c72 sheets issued in total since 2000), Customised (112), Themed (340), Business Customised (225), Commemorative (6), Isle of Man (13), Kids Packs (4), and the recent Universal Mail UK hang-sell sheets (10). Every sheet is illustrated, and as much detail as is available is also incorporated against each entry.

The 'Smilers News' section gives hot-off-the-press information about the world of Smilers collecting and is added to regularly. Much of the information never makes it into the mainstream philatelic press and is therefore archived at the end of each quarter to provide an ongoing record.

Another recommended feature is the 'Smilers Notes'. These are information sheets in PDF format giving background information on particular aspects of Smilers collecting. Nineteen have been produced so far, the most recent being about the Elizabeth Hurley charity sheets auctioned by Royal Mail on eBay in March this year. Others include details of Smilers publicity material, the four Beatles sheets which were not approved for issue by Apple Corps Ltd and the Cancer Research Presentation Packs of 2003.

The site also includes sales lists for the British and Australian sheets and the opportunity of purchasing the catalogue, a list of 15 dealers who sell Smilers, FAQs, a site search engine, and a 'Have Your Say' page, while contact details of the webmasters complete this extensive site.

This is a professionally designed website that does much to provide a positive image of the hobby of stamp collecting to the outside world; it is easy to navigate and has been viewed by over 30,000 visitors. You must bookmark www.smilers-info.com if Smilers sheets are of interest to you, and thematic/topical collectors would do especially well to check out the listings, as many themes have been covered on the labels ●

www.smilers-info.com This professionally designed site is a must for anyone interested in Smilers, and for thematic collectors too.

Mainly Machins Douglas Myall's report for specialists: new

Security stamps De La Rue's business sheets and Walsall's booklets with security *xv1s* were officially issued on 31 March, although some offices and retailers obtained supplies of booklets a few days earlier. Walsall used the same colour cylinders as for the last of the pre-security books with an additional cylinder to print the iridescent ink. Cylinder combinations known to date are as follows with the numbers in the sequence: colour, iridescent / phosphor. Six by 1st: w5 w1 / w2; 12 × 1st: w5 w1 / w1; 12 × 2nd: w4 w1 / w2; 4 × 1st Large: w1 w1 / w1; 4 × 2nd Large: w1 w1 / w1.

An earlier Walsall book of 6 × 1st was issued on 10 March but this had a block of four security Machins flanked by two of the Design Classics special issues – the k2 telephone box and Routemaster bus. There will be two more in this popular series of mixed Machin and special stamp books, and I will return to the subject next time. As with all such recent books, the unremoved strip at the right, which carries the cylinder numbers in definitive-only books, is occupied with other matter. Up to now this has meant that cylinder books do not exist. However, this latest book has cylinder numbers in an unusual position. A string of seven colour numbers and one phosphor number, all w1, appears underneath the invitation to visit the Royal Mail website. This means that the cylinder numbers cannot be seen without opening the book. I understand that this feature will also appear in subsequent books of this series. Unlike the first mixed books, no images of the special contents appear on the front cover, but because of the mixed contents the cover is red, whereas books of six definitive *xv1s* are gold.

De La Rue business sheets do not contain the printer's name so can be distinguished from Walsall's, which did. Of course, the stamp content is different too as they have the new security features, including the oval slits. You can distinguish De La Rue's security stamps from Walsall's by the shape of these slits. Each DLR oval has two parts; each Walsall one has four, there being a small gap in the centre of each curve. Only time will tell if this will be constant, but it is a useful tip.



You might wonder why the two large letter *xv1s* are available in counter sheets of 50 as well as in business sheets of 50, both printed by De La Rue. One reason may be that these are separate printing contracts and the same firm may not always hold both. Business users also have their own dedicated staff at Royal Mail.

I am still receiving mail asking how best to obtain used examples of these new stamps and there has been a lot of discussion on the internet with sundry weird and wonderful chemicals, many of them dangerous, having their advocates. I still think it best to keep them on piece, provided you select them from white envelopes. After all, this is how you collect mint examples of self-adhesives, complete with substrate or backing paper. I wonder what the publishers of conventional catalogues will do when asked to supply used security stamps. Will they even list them?

New conventionally gummed stamps Four new Machins and eight new country pictorial definitives were also issued on 31 March. These are all conventionally gummed pva, and have none of the recent security features. The Tallents House *Preview* for these issues caused some confusion as it illustrated the 17p cylinder block as a self-adhesive with rouletted divisions. This image does not look like a mock-up so self-adhesive versions may

issues of definitives, Post & Go, Castles and Smilers for Kids



New conventionally-gummed Country stamps issued on 31 March. The England pictorials are all double-pane printings, so exist with the marker dots at both left and right. The 56p Scotland and Wales have the dot at left, and the right-hand box greyed. Conversely, the 56p Northern Ireland has the left-hand box greyed, as that part of the cylinder printed the 56p Wales. Marker dots are in the colour of monochrome stamps, but for multicoloured stamps it is the black cylinder which prints them.

be in the pipeline. It would make sense for at least the 56p, 62p and 90p stamps to be issued in this form, making it applicable to all stamps of 50p or more and to inland NVTs. The 12 new stamps do have one new feature. The grid position system which indicates the original position of the counter sheet on the printer's sheets has been adapted for them. The cylinders print sheets of 400 stamps which are then split into two counter sheets of 200. Hitherto, the left- and right-hand sheets have been distinguished by adding a dot to the numbers in the right-hand sheet, producing the familiar 'no dot' and 'dot' cylinder blocks. In addition, left-hand blocks from De La Rue's ATN press have a vertical line running the length of the sheet which is used as a registration guide for the online perforator. The new sheets have a two-position grid; a marker dot is printed in the left or right box as appropriate and the other box is left blank. The Machins and the England pictorials are double-pane printings, so all exist from both positions. The other six country pictorials are single pane and the values are paired so that a 400-stamp set of cylinders will produce 200 of each stamp. Pairings are: 56p Wales left + 56p N Ireland right; 56p Scotland left + 90p Wales right; 90p Scotland left + 90p N Ireland right. In these cases the box without a marker dot is greyed out because it cannot exist (see illustration above).

These pictorial definitive designs have now been used on several different values; seven in the cases of Wales and Scotland. The designs for Scotland were selected by public vote in 1999. New designs were promised once the new Scottish Parliament building was occupied. This happened in 2004, so maybe it is time to change these now very familiar designs.

Faststamps This was the name given to stamps bearing the Machin head and two phosphor bars vended by the Post & Go machines being rolled out nationwide. The official term is now Post & Go Stamps. Labels (without Queen's head) from these machines are acquiring simulated perforations at top and bottom. At time of writing, perforated labels are dispensed by some machines, others are still producing the imperf labels.

The five Machin stamps were issued 31 March in a special carrier or pack. They were produced entirely by gravure. This was necessary because the quantity required could not easily be obtained from the Wincor Nixdorf machines. This makes the stamps noticeably different from machine-vended ones, as the service indicators on those are thermally printed. The location code on the pack stamps is that of Bristol, where Faststamps were first sold. The last two digits, which normally indicate a transaction number, are 01 to 05, and are allocated to the five stamps; 01, for example, is the 1st class standard letter stamp, and 05 is the 20g Worldwide airmail stamp. These packs, available from Tallents House, are the only source of the all-gravure Post & Go stamps so make sure you get yours while they last.

Faststamps are very difficult to soak off, and I have been asked if they have the new laminate recently introduced. This is currently in use on all self-adhesive stamp sheets, stamp books, business sheets, generic sheets, Smilers and Christmas from 2009 onwards. The Post & Go stamps are currently not on a dedicated stamp laminate; they use thermal laminate. Alternative processes are being tested with a view to moving the Post & Go stamps over to standard. ►

Castles The second in this series of generic sheets was issued on 23 April. This one features English castles, and the selection is interesting. My own choices would have included Leeds castle which is not, of course, in Leeds – maybe there will be another series some time? Unlike the Northern Ireland sheet issued on 17 March, these 1st class NV1 stamps are not definitives; the design, although the size of a standard definitive, is of the flag of England, first issued on 23 April 2007 on the Celebrating England miniature sheet. In my opinion, to be a definitive a stamp must be on extended sale and be available from post offices. It is worth noting that this is the first time the English flag stamp has been issued as a self-adhesive.

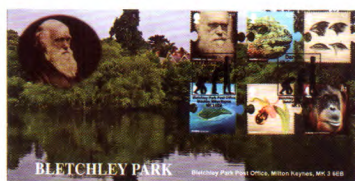
Smilers for Kids These A4 sheets contain 20 1st class stamps from what I call the 'social series', attached to round labels featuring popular characters in children's literature. The second set was issued on 30 April, and consists of four sheets. The one featuring Roger Hargreaves' Little Miss Sunshine includes the balloons stamp, as does the Noddy and Big Ears sheet. The sheet featuring Wild Cherry from the Flower Fairies books by Cicely Mary Barker includes the gazania flower stamp. The Beatrix Potter sheet, which features the world of Jeremy Fisher, has the Hello stamps. Each is also sold, in sheets of 10 stamps, in a pack with other material designed to appeal to youngsters and their families.



Two of the four new Smilers for Kids packs: Noddy and Big Ears, and Jeremy Fisher.



Commemorative covers New this month



Bletchley Park Post Office Darwin issue FDC (250 with stamps, 50 with miniature sheet), features Bletchley Mansion, built a year after Darwin died, and the Park – a naturalists' delight, with rare plants and trees, and a well-stocked lake. **Price** £15, postage £1.50



Cambridge Stamp Centre Cover marking 100 years of naval aviation, featuring the attack on the *Bismarck* by Swordfish aircraft. The stamp is cancelled with a WWII Operations special datestamp. Covers signed by John Moffat, a Swordfish pilot. **Price** £24.95 plus postage



Buckingham Covers has worked with Peter Firmin, creator of Ivor the Engine, to design a Mythical Creatures cover. Ivor's friend Idris the Dragon features on the cover, which bears the Mythical Creatures stamps postmarked Bala Merioneth, Wales, on the day of issue. Peter Firmin has signed a limited number to aid the Society for the Protection of Animals Abroad.

Prices £10.95 or £24.95 ●



The Stamp Centre has produced this limited edition first day cover for the James Bond stamp issue, which has just been signed by Richard Kiel, who is best known for his role as the 7 feet 2 inches tall steel-toothed 'Jaws' in the James Bond films *The Spy Who Loved Me* and *Moonraker*. Only 100 covers have been signed by Richard and demand for this cover is expected to be quite high. **Price** £24.99 plus £1.25 postage and packing (£2.50 overseas). Credit card payments are accepted with no transaction charges ●



M Tanner This Charles Darwin/Galapagos Islands miniature sheet cover (25 numbered copies) also carries a 1st class Darwin stamp, with images of HMS *Beagle* on her voyage, a Galapagos snake devouring a lava lizard, and the young Darwin on his return to the UK. Postmarked three times 'Theory of Evolution'. **Price** £17.99 plus £1.50 worldwide postage. A postcard of the overall image is included. Visa/Mastercard accepted. Extra postcards 60p each plus postage if ordered separately. Postcard might show Mary Rose/Henry VIII cover also ●



GB Covers An official issue of 40 FDCs featuring Pembroke Castle, birthplace of Henry VII, the first of the Tudors, and 30 miniature sheet covers. All are cancelled with a special 'Tudor Rose' handstamp. Each is signed and numbered. **Price** £16.50 including postage. Remittances payable to GB Covers ●

Orders and enquiries

Bletchley Park Post Office

The Mansion, Bletchley Park,
Milton Keynes MK3 6EB.
Telephone/fax 01908 631797.
www.bletchleycovers.com

Buckingham Covers Warren

House, Shearway Road,
Folkestone, Kent CT19 4BF
Telephone 01303 278137.
www.buckinghamcovers.com

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9 Sussex Street, Cambridge
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GB Covers 102 Regal Way,

Kenton, Harrow HA3 0RY. e-mail derek@gbcovers.co.uk

The Stamp Centre 79 Strand,
London WC2R 0DE

M Tanner 180 Whitehorse

Road, West Croydon CR0
2LA. Fax/Answerphone 020
8684 9757 (for credit card
orders only)

Cover producers wishing to announce a recent or forthcoming cover should submit copy of up to 75 words in the style above. The text should briefly describe the cover, state the stamps and postmarks it will bear, and give retail prices and an address for orders and enquiries. Announcements are published on a first-come-first-served basis and may be modified or shortened. Copy for consideration for the August *Bulletin* should be sent to The Editor (address on p291) by 8 June. Copy for September should arrive by 8 July. The Editor regrets he cannot enter into correspondence or telephone conversations concerning announcements in this Covers section.

Prize draw Win a Smilers for Kids collection

FOR THIS MONTH'S DRAW we are offering the eight packs so far issued in our Smilers for Kids series (four packs October 2008, four April 2009). These will be sent to the senders of the first two cards drawn on 30 June. To enter, write your name and address on the back of a postcard and send it to: Smilers Draw, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HQ ●



Competitions Enter for a chance to win the 2008 Yearbook



March identify The detail was from the 2001 Pondlife 1st class stamp. The winner was C Waite of Devon.

March knowledge Answers: 1) blue; 2) Clive Abbott; 3) China. The winner was G K Anson of Missouri, USA.

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 June *Identify* Competition. Secondly, test your philatelic knowledge by answering the questions below. Send your answer to June *Knowledge* Competition.

- 1 In which year did Sooty feature on a stamp?
- 2 Who designed the 1996 Christmas stamps?
- 3 Where is the Philatelic Congress of GB being held next month?

Send your answer (addressed to either the June *Identify* competition or the June *Knowledge* competition), name and address on a postcard or back of a sealed envelope to: British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HQ. The senders of the first cards drawn in each competition on 17 July will receive a Yearbook. Runners-up in each competition will receive presentation packs, FDCs or stamp cards. Royal Mail employees are not eligible for the competitions ●

Events

Until further notice David Gentleman exhibition at BPMA. See page 307. **Enquiries** 020 7239 2570.

28 May Tour of Royal Mail Archives, Phoenix Place, London WC1, 17.45. **Enquiries** 020 7239 2570.

1 & 3 June Open Evening (1 June) and Afternoon (3 June), BPMA Store, Debden, Essex, 18.00. **Enquiries** 020 7239 2570, e-mail info@postalheritage.org.uk

6 June Ringpex 2009 stamp and postcard fair at Greyfriars Community Centre, Ringwood, Hants, 10.00-16.00. **Enquiries** C Mount, 01452 474310.

13 June Family Open Day at BPMA Store, Debden, Essex, 10.00. **Enquiries** as above.

13 June Swinpex at St Josephs School, Ocotol Way, Swindon, 10.00-16.30. Includes Railway Philatelic Group Convention and BTA meeting.

19-20 June Stafford Stamp Show '09, Staffordshire County Showground. **Enquiries** 01785 259 350, www.jrs-stamp-shows.co.uk

20 June Discover Session: GPO Street Furniture at BPMA Store, Debden, 10.00. **Enquiries** as above.

20 June Yorkshire PA Annual Convention at Sheffield Wednesday Hillsborough Conference Centre, 10.00-16.30. Over 30 dealers, specialist society meetings. **Enquiries** 0114 230 2020, www.sheffieldps.org.uk

26-27 June Thematix '09 stamp fair (trade section of former Thematica exhibition) at Harlequins Rugby Club, Twickenham, Middx. **Enquiries** P Cant, 01256 415699 or B Lee, 020 8397 2332.

30 June Walking Tour: GPO London, organised by BPMA. Starts Farringdon Station, London, 13.00. **Enquiries** 020 7239 2570 ●

Late news



Mythical Creatures Collectors are reminded that the sheets of these stamps include images (eyes of the creatures, above) in the top, bottom, left, and right margins – see the May *Bulletin*, p265 •

Scottish Congress The 80th Annual Congress of the Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies, held in Perth on 17-18 April, attracted over 600 collectors who found much to do as they visited the dealers and viewed the displays in the national, open, junior, and postcard competitions. In the national exhibition, David Watson won the trophy for the best presentation for his Australia – Northern Territory Datestamps & Overprints 1869-1939. Norman Watson's 'The Stamp That Shaped a Nation' told of the rejection by the GPO of a Robert Burns stamp in 1959. Determined Scots began to produce their own propaganda stamps, labels and cachets – his display included some rare postal items from this controversial and highly politicised period.

The junior entries were of a very high standard with three gold medals awarded, to sisters Claire and Lynne Mitchell, and Abbie Skilton •

New Miniature Medals Collection Available from 2 June is the first in a new 'Stamps and Miniature Medals' collection jointly produced by Royal Mail and Royal Mint. Housed in an attractive presentation box, the collection will comprise miniature versions of the Military Cross and the Army Long Service and Good Conduct Medal, both in 0.925 silver; a set of the Army Uniforms stamps (2007) and a booklet, written by the military historian



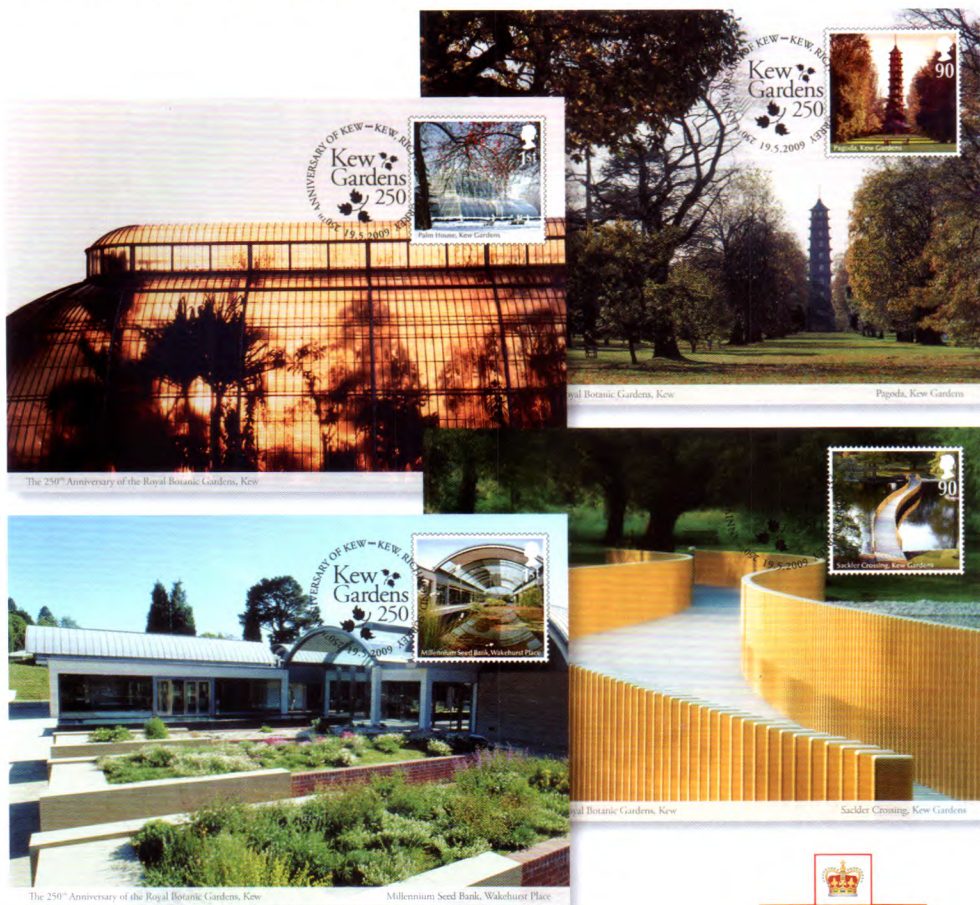
Richard Holmes, about Army medals in general and the MC and Long Service and Good Conduct medals in particular. A limited edition of 1000. Available from Tallents House. The Collection continues with RAF and Royal Navy medals •

Post & Go machines Machines are scheduled to be installed during June and early July at main Post Office branches in: Bury St Edmunds, Edinburgh (at Frederick Street and St James), Exeter, Exmouth, Halifax, Harrogate, London (at North Finchley & Camden High Street) and Paignton •

People news Four noted collectors will sign the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists at the Philatelic Congress in Manchester next month. They are: George Barker (UK), Dr Geoffrey Kellow (Australia), Barbara Mueller (USA), and John Sussex (UK). A profile of George Barker by Richard West was published in the October 2001 *Bulletin*. Some 342 philatelists from 40 countries have signed the Roll since its inception in 1921. Of the present 68 signatories, from 25 countries, 12 are from the UK. The Congress Medal for 2009 is being awarded to Frank Soutar, who has served philately at a local, Scottish and UK level for many years, particularly in the fields of youth philately, exhibitions, and promoting the hobby •

Rather belatedly, we record the death last year of Margery Wharton, a former maths teacher well-known for her collection of Falkland Islands stamps. She was also a keen thematic collector of rugby stamps and wrote an article on the subject published here in October 1995 •

The Kew Gardens maxicard pack



Kew Gardens maxicard pack This distinctive pack contains four postcards and a miniature sheet. The cards feature different photographs of the Kew sites from those shown on the miniature sheet stamps, and each card has the relevant stamp affixed on the front and cancelled with a special Kew 250th anniversary postmark. A mint miniature sheet is also included.

Royal Mail, Tallents House,
21 South Gyle Crescent,
Edinburgh EH12 9PB

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