

BRITISH PHILATELIC

The ROYAL MAIL magazine *for stamp collectors*

# Bulletin

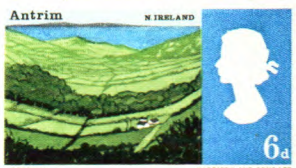
Volume 43 Number 9

MAY 2006 £1.20

1966 pictorial stamps issue •  
National Portrait Gallery

## Harlech Castle

WALES



## Forthcoming issues and withdrawals



**Cover** Leonard Rosoman and a detail from his artwork for one of the 1966 Landscapes stamps. This month sees the 40th anniversary of this issue, as James Mackay reports on page 275. Portrait by Baron Studios. © National Portrait Gallery, London.

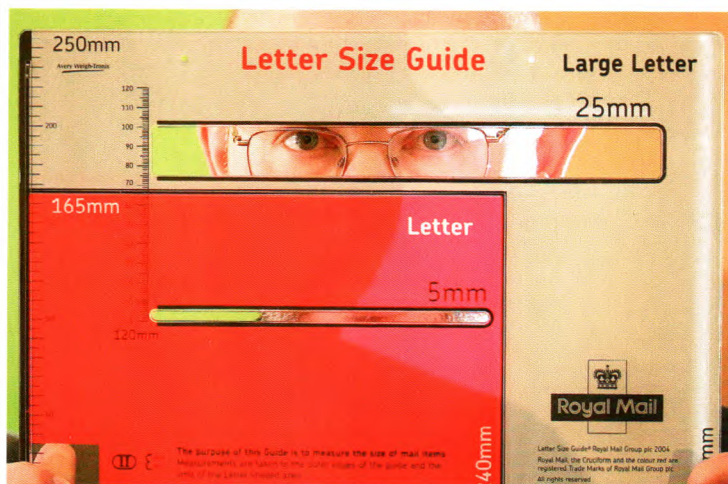
**Acknowledgements p274** TL & BR Jeremy Dixon, Edward Jones © Dennis Gilbert/VIEW; TR © National Portrait Gallery, London; BL © Andrew Putler

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

|                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>28 April</b> | <b>Withdrawal</b> <i>Letters by Night</i> prestige stamp book.                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>9 May</b>    | <b>Withdrawal</b> England, Scotland and Wales 42p country stamps printed by Walsall (issued 5 April 2005).                                                                                                   |
| <b>16 May</b>   | <b>Issue</b> Business sheets (100 × 2nd class & 100 × 1st class definitive stamps) with amended text in sheet margin regarding validity of stamps.                                                           |
| <b>20 May</b>   | <b>Withdrawal</b> World Heritage Sites joint coin cover.                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>25 May</b>   | <b>Issue</b> Washington 2006 World Stamp Exhibition Smilers sheet (Hello stamp and exhibition labels).                                                                                                       |
| <b>30 May</b>   | <b>Issue</b> World Cup Winners stamp cards.                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>6 June</b>   | <b>Issue</b> World Cup Winners stamps, presentation pack, Smilers sheet ('England's Finest Hour' with 20 1st class World Cup stamps and 20 labels showing 1966 World Cup Final) and Bobby Moore medal cover. |
| <b>6 June</b>   | <b>Withdrawal</b> Trooping the Colour stamps, miniature sheet, presentation pack and stamp cards.                                                                                                            |
| <b>13 June</b>  | <b>Issue</b> Modern Architecture stamp cards.                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>17 June</b>  | <b>Issue</b> The Queen's 80th Birthday commemorative document.                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>20 June</b>  | <b>Issue</b> Modern Architecture stamps and presentation pack.                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>20 June</b>  | <b>Withdrawal</b> White Ensign Smilers sheet.                                                                                                                                                                |

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Above: David Dale holds a plastic measuring template, used to determine letter sizes. Post Offices will keep these at every counter position and on the public side of the counter if space permits. Similar templates will be available for purchase, and free cardboard templates are available from [www.royalmail.com/pip](http://www.royalmail.com/pip). Before the introduction of the new system, a leaflet and paper template will be sent to every home in the country.

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

**Washington 2006** The major international exhibition this year opens at the Washington DC Convention Center on 27 May and runs until 3 June. The exhibition, under the auspices of the American Philatelic Society, with support from the American Stamp Dealers Association and US Postal Service, has a budget of \$3.3 million, and takes as its themes: The Role of the Post Office Uniting the Country; Children – they are the Future; and Moving the Mail in the 21st century. Highlights include exhibits from the collections of HM The Queen and Prince Albert of Monaco (marking the 50th anniversary of the wedding of his parents, Prince Rainier and Grace Kelly), new US stamp issues and first day of issue ceremonies, special daily postmarks, and the John Lennon stamp album from the Smithsonian National Postal Museum. There will be over 60,000 album pages on display from collectors worldwide, dealers and overseas postal administrations (including Royal Mail), autograph sessions, and tours of the Smithsonian NPM.



We conclude our series on rarities that will be on display with one of the most famous and popular errors ever to have been accidentally released by a postal administration. The 1918 'Inverted Jenny' is the most famous of US stamp gems.

Washingtonian William T Robey couldn't believe his good fortune when, on 14 May 1918, he walked out of a post office with a full sheet of the most famous US postal error, the 24¢ airmail invert, or 'Inverted Jenny'. Three stamps featuring a Curtiss Jenny biplane were issued that year, of which the 24¢ was the first and highest in value, issued for use on mail flown on the first scheduled airmail service in the USA. Robey carefully examined the stamps he was shown by the postal clerk and noted that they were slightly off-centre. The clerk suggested he return later that day, when

a new supply would be available. On his second visit, he was astonished to find a full sheet of 100 stamps with the Jenny inverted. He bought the sheet, and then searched at other post offices for another, but found no more.

News of Robey's good fortune spread rapidly and the Post Office Department halted sales of the 24¢ airmail to conduct its own search, but it, too, found no more. Robey sensibly refused to be persuaded by a postal inspector to resell his sheet to the government and kept his find. He sold the sheet intact for \$15,000 to Eugene Klein of Philadelphia, who numbered each stamp by position before selling it to Col Edward H R Green for \$20,000. Green saw no reason to keep the sheet intact and broke it up, keeping for himself a block of eight containing the plate number, three special blocks of four and 18 singles, 13 of which were straight-edge copies; a total of 48

stamps. The block of eight was later sold and divided and one of the blocks of four subsequently broken up by New Orleans dealer Raymond H Weill.

The saga continues. In 1955, one of the blocks-of-four was stolen at the American Philatelic Society (APS) convention. Before her death, the lady to whom it belonged willed her interest in the stolen stamps to the American Philatelic Research Library, should they be found. In 1977 one stamp from the block (remember Mr Klein had numbered each stamp) was found. It sold in 1981 for \$115,000 and the proceeds went to the library. A second stamp has since been recovered and the search for the remaining two continues. In 1979, early in the brief investment mania in stamps, a businessman paid \$500,000 for the famous 'Princeton' block of four. By the time it was auctioned again, in December 1982, the boom in stamp investing had gone bust and his block realized only \$175,000. Three positional blocks of four of the inverted Jennies were auctioned by Christie's New York on 12 October 1989. The plate block sold for \$1,100,000; the centre line block for \$550,000; and the guideline block for \$528,000.

Thus does the odyssey of these 100 stamps with their quaint little aircraft flying upside down continue to excite the public's interest and spur a collector's hope of one day being the fortunate finder of a postal error ●

**Washington 2006 British Exhibitors** There will be 51 philatelic displays or items of literature from United Kingdom entrants at this show and brief abbreviated details of exhibitor and subject follow: Dr J Alexander *Supermarket philately*, A Anyon *Columbia revenues*, M Birks *Nicaraguan airmails*, S Blatt *Indian fiscals and stamp papers* catalogue, B Cartwright *Madame Joseph forgeries* and accompanying book, K G Clark *Russo-Japanese war* and three publications *Russo-Japanese war*, *Kiku Shimben* and *PH of Japan's wars*, \*Corny *South Africa civil censorship*, J Dahl *Revenues of Portugal*, H Feldman *Postal History* journal, K Fitton (deceased) *Seychelles airmails*, S Foster *Roses*, J Griffith-Jones *Zanzibar postage dues*, A Griffiths *Prince Edward Island*, J Grimwood-Taylor *PO rates*, J Hackmeyer *France Ceres*, D Hunter *Sugar*, B King *Denmark*, J Levett *France Ceres*, C Lewis *Newfoundland*, P Lister *UK aerial post*, D Littlewort *Nyassa keyplate flaws*, L Marley *Whales*, \*Mayflower *Mulready stationery*, B Moorhouse *Chaco War*, I Paton *Texas to McKinley*, R Payne *Perkins Bacon revenues*, P Pearson *Norfolk PH*, D Pillage *From sea to shining sea*, C Podger *Cyprus revenues*, E Proud *Aden and states*, plus three books on *PH of Aden and Somaliland*, *Leeward Islands* and *Ascension*, *St Helena and Tristan*, A Rigby *St Kitts-Nevis*, Roger Caversham\* *GB stamp genesis*, P Rogers *Cinderella Philatelist* journal, Royal Expert Committee\* *Grinnell Hawaiian Missionary* book, G Sattin *Soldiers of Crown in Asia*, B Sole *Bicycles*, D Stirrups *Spanish PO and Gibraltar*, D Tett *POW and civilians in E Asia* book, M Tyler *France and Colonies* journal, F Walton *Sierra Leone DLR stamps*, N Watterson books on *Sarawak and Brunei* and *Br N Borneo, Brunei and Sarawak*, R Wheatley *Netherlands E Indies stationery*, and finally Dr A Woo *The Early Bird*. (\*pseudonym)

Royal Mail, the *Bulletin* Editor and its writers wish all of the British exhibitors the very best of luck in their chosen competitive classes ●

In March I invited readers' comments on plans for the 2010 London exhibition, offering to publish a selection of letters. To date, just one of our 25,000 readers has responded! Do I take this to indicate that *Bulletin* readers are almost totally apathetic towards the exhibition? If so it raises the question of the level of Royal Mail's involvement with London 2010, if a large number of its more serious philatelic customers are not that interested. I hope this is not the case and therefore repeat my invitation to readers for your comments. ED.

**London 2010 - Festival of Stamps** The next British international stamp exhibition was launched at a press reception at Stampex. This was a chance to learn progress to date and to dispel rumours such as Royal Mail's non participation.

Brian Trotter, Chairman of the BDC show, outlined plans and introduced three speakers. Dr Alan Huggins, Chairman of the Advisory Board,

set the scene for the various planned activities. He firstly recounted the history, circumstances and funding of previous UK internationals and explained how world postal administrations were under intense financial constraints, preventing large shows from being held. There was a need to balance 'aspiration against financial and organisational reality'.

Following consultation, six conclusions were evident. 1) The world of philately expected a UK 2010 show; 2) financial resources predicated against a major FIP world show; 3) London was the preferred location for organisational support, accessibility and visitor appeal; 4) Business Design Centre to be venue due to affordability, access and operational familiarity; 5) institutional participants would seek to optimise investment; and 6) the matching of BDC capacity with prospective show content had to be resolved.

Tony Conder, CEO of the British Postal Museum & Archive, spoke about the Festival of Stamps. BPMA is working closely with the Royal Collection and the British Library to develop a long-running series of events in 2010, before, during and after the main exhibition. London museums and attractions are being approached to develop their own exhibitions and the Big Lottery fund for financial support to link in with local communities and education. Interest has been shown by museums and galleries, which will help introduce the hobby to a wider market and will tie-in with the programme of cultural events which leads up to the Olympic Games.

Brian Trotter explained how all of the BDC would be used, outlined the extensive building facilities and how everywhere was accessible by lift. The competitive exhibits area would be handled in a novel manner to effectively double available floor space. This will be achieved by having half the classes displayed on days one to four, with the remaining classes appearing in the same frames during the final four days. What a great idea! May 2010 will be 100 years since the accession of King George V to the throne, and a one-frame competitive class will be incorporated into the show. A website will be established shortly covering all aspects as they evolve, and preliminary designs for the exhibition logo were displayed. Support from dealers, ABPS, Royal Mail and exhibitors will generate funds, but sponsorship will be sought to meet any shortfalls from these sources. Brian concluded by stating that a crucial element of this undertaking was people. There was a strong team in place, but more volunteers will be sought.

Julietta Edgar announced Royal Mail plans and recalled its involvement with British internationals for half a century. They will take stand space, and will develop a range of products to promote the show and to support Royal Mail's attendance. The show theme of King George V, the philate-

list King, will no doubt be incorporated into products, perhaps annually from 2008, but it was too early to announce specific plans. Julietta, Head of Royal Mail's Philatelic Sector, announced that Royal Mail had already provided financial support to secure the BDC venue, and was looking into what further support it could give. She reminded everyone present that stamps reflected the cultural heritage of the UK, and that the festival would build on this by introducing stamps to a wider audience, and that Royal Mail's main priority was to ensure that the show catered for all, from the absolute beginner, right up to serious philatelists.

A question-and-answer session covered such matters as entrance fees, transportation around the events and FIP status. The journalists were then given a tour of the BDC to see the extra space not utilised for Stampex.

The *Bulletin* will provide regular updates, but in the meantime keep the dates 8-15 May 2010 free, start preparing your competitive exhibits, think about helping as a volunteer and, above all, be sure that you are part of 2010 and what promises to be a great year for our hobby ●

**French stamp show** Mention was made last October of a show to be held in Paris this summer. More details are now available on a new French language only website. This is a stylish site in the form of a mock notebook that is easy to navigate, even if French is not a language that you understand and reveals that the event promises lots to see and do. These Salon du Timbre exhibitions are sponsored by La Poste, the French Post Office, who ensures attendance by the non-collector by also including non-philatelic displays (last time there were Renault Formula One cars, for example). However, there is still much to attract existing collectors, and what could be more pleasant than beautiful sunny Paris in June! ●

**Spring Stampex** Towards the end of February, London hosted Stampex at its usual home of the Business Design Centre in Islington. It was the usual successful mix of dealers, displays and meetings, but perhaps above all else the chance to renew friendships. Royal Mail issued its Brunel stamps on the second day of the show to large acclaim and long queues and the organisers produced another popular Business Customised Sheet on the subject of Brunel and thematic stamp collecting.

The highlights for me were the press launch for London 2010: A Festival of Stamps (see left), and the British Thematic Association display on the Village Green. The BTA mounted a large display of material from many members on a diverse range of subjects, and there was an above-normal interest in viewing this excellent material. Christine Earle, the BTA Chairman, said the hope had been to provide visitors with inspiration for their own collections, as most displays were just that – displays. Some members even stated on their front pages that the material was being shown in a non-competitive way, and the exhibition within an exhibition proved that they had met their objectives of bringing thematic philatelic collecting to the masses. An excellent booklet was given to each visitor recording for posterity details of each display, and also providing helpful collecting advice ●

**Enquiries** Commissariat Général, Service National des Timbres-poste et de la Philatélie, 28 rue de la Redoute, 92 266 Fontenay-aux-Roses CEDEX France. Website [www.salondutimbre.fr](http://www.salondutimbre.fr)



Young collectors enjoying the Stampex Stamp Active area.

**Omnibus issues** The Crown Agents have announced that five of their countries will be issuing stamps to mark Brunel's bicentenary; details to follow. Gibraltar, St Lucia, and Solomon Islands will issue World Cup stamps, there will be a number of issues for Washington 2006, and St Helena and Solomon Islands will issue Victoria Cross 150th anniversary stamps •

**'Boots' update** Thanks to reader John D Jeffery, it is possible to provide more details about the North East Philatelic Weekend Boots labels mentioned in my article in last November's *Bulletin*.

In 1999 a colourful booklet cover depicting a montage of all that is great about the North East was printed by Questa and contained a Boots branded label and a gutter block of four of the Gateshead 'blinking eye' Millennium Bridge stamp, both privately overprinted.

In 2001 Questa printed a booklet cover for the organisers of the weekend which depicted the *Rocket* train in its most original form and livery and contained two differently overprinted and unbranded labels. The catalogue listing in the November *Bulletin* should be amended as below •

**Publicity overprints** Boots branded (B) and Unbranded (U)

|      |                                                                                                                                                     |   |
|------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| 1999 | 23rd North East Philatelic Weekend (swallow bird, <i>Rocket</i> train and 'NEPW Promotes Philately' overprint)                                      | B |
| 2001 | 25th North East Philatelic Weekend ('Swallow Hotel – Gateshead' wording, swallow birds and dates) overprint                                         | U |
| 2001 | 25th North East Philatelic Weekend ('Campaign for Rocket to Return to Tyneside' wording, <i>Rocket</i> train and 'NE Philatelic Weekend' overprint) | U |

**Rossiter lecture** Entry is free but by ticket only, and tickets are limited. Apply to: Stuart Rossiter Trust, c/o D F Tett, PO Box 34 Wheathampstead AL4 8JY, enclosing stamped SAE. Refreshments will be provided.

**Rossiter lecture** The Stuart Rossiter Trust is a charitable trust supporting research and publication relating to the history of communication through postal systems of the world. The Trustees have announced that the 2006 lecture will be delivered at 17.00 on 27 October 2006 at the Royal Philatelic Society London. Entitled *The Other Side of the Counter*, it will be delivered by Robert Johnson who will discuss the development of Post Offices services in the period from 1860 to 1970 in countries all over the world (other than letter, postcard and printed paper post) and how post offices organised systems and paperwork to deal with these services. The Trust is actively seeking new works for publication; see [www.rossitertrust.com](http://www.rossitertrust.com) for further information if interested •

**Enquiries** Jersey Post, PO Box 55, Jersey, Channel Islands JE4 8XJ. E-mail [stamps@jerseypost.com](mailto:stamps@jerseypost.com) or visit [www.jerseypost.com](http://www.jerseypost.com)

**Jersey innovation** The philatelic design and marketing team at Jersey Post has come up with a new innovation on stamps depicting Sea Shells by creating a world first in stamp printing techniques. The £2 miniature sheet bears an oval-shaped stamp depicting an Ormer shell pictured against a decorative underwater sea-floor background view. The complete ms contains several different and very special printing techniques which have resulted in Jersey Post becoming the first postal administration in the world to produce a postage stamp design which has been embellished with embossed, translucent, iridescent, hot-stamped holographic foil •

**ABPS dealer patrons** The ABPS invites the philatelic trade to join them in supporting youth philately by becoming dealer patrons in 2006. All money received will go directly to support the work of The Stamp Active Network/National Youth Stamp Group. Their work includes youth corners at major national and regional events, organisation of the national stamp competitions and the Planet Stamp website ([www.planetstamp.co.uk](http://www.planetstamp.co.uk)) and much more. Potential Patrons are invited to make a donation of £100 or more to help secure the future of our hobby. It is hoped that stamp dealers and suppliers reading this *Bulletin* will support these important youth philately initiatives by sending a cheque to the ABPS, at the address opposite •

**Dealer patrons** Please send a cheque (payable to the ABPS) to ABPS, 3 Longfellow Road, Banbury OX16 9LB.

**Society publications** A new American Topical Association 110 page checklist of Worldwide Space Stamps has appeared, compiled by Karen Cartier. The listing is in country order followed by date of issue, Scott catalogue number and a short description. It is available to members only at 50¢ for the first page or \$1.00 for International and 15¢ per additional pages for this and all 483 checklists that are currently available. Membership in the ATA is \$20 per year for US addresses or \$39 for two years. International membership is \$30 per year or \$55 for two years. Payments can be made by Visa, MasterCard or PayPal, to the address or website opposite •

**ATA** PO Box 57, Arlington, TX 76004-0057 USA. Website [americantopical@msn.com](mailto:americantopical@msn.com)

A new, revised *Catalogue of Joint Stamp Issues 2006* (ISBN 2-9526079-0-7) replaces the 1997 production. In 736 pages, it describes in the English language around 1300 joint issues from around the world and illustrates in black-and-white 3400 stamps. Updates will be available to members of the International Philatelic Society of Joint Stamp Issues Collectors with the regular newsletter. The book costs euro 49, or us\$60, both plus postage •

**IPSJCIC** For details of the Society write to Richard Zimmermann, 124 Avenue Guy de Coubertin, 78470 Saint Rémy lès Chevreuse, France, or see <http://rzimmerm.club.fr>

**People news** Somewhat belatedly, we offer our congratulations to Dot Tilbury, Head of the Isle of Man Philatelic Bureau, on receiving the MBE in the New Year Honours List for her 'services to cycling, philately and to the community in the Isle of Man' •

We are sorry to record the death in February, at the age of 87, of George T Knipe, designer of the 1948 Silver Wedding issue (together with Joan Hassall) and also the 5d, 6d, and 7d values of the Wilding definitives. He attended High Wycombe School of Art and was trained in the photogravure process by Harrisons before the war in which he served in the Royal Artillery. He rejoined Harrisons after the war ended, being employed as a commercial layout artist and designer in their London office. He retired to Norfolk where he enjoyed painting. The photograph at right shows retouching being carried out on a negative of one his Wilding stamps •



## Royal Mail news New issues and products

**Definitive and country stamp changes** As many readers will be aware from reports in the national press, Royal Mail is to introduce a new system for the prepayment of mail. This will take into account the size as well as the weight of the item. Known as 'Pricing in Proportion', the new system will be introduced in August, and the background to the change is given in a special article in this *Bulletin*. Changes to the copy printed in stamp books and on business sheets are being made in anticipation of the new system. Books of 6 × 1st (£1.92), 12 × 1st (£3.84), and 12 × 2nd (£2.76), will go on philatelic sale on 25 April and at Post Office branches and retail outlets as existing stocks are used up. The text on the back cover will read: 'Valid for items up to 60g before 21 August 2006. Under new pricing structure from 21 August 2006 – valid for postal items up to: 240mm Long; 165mm Wide; 5mm Thick; 100g Weight.' The amended business sheets of 100 1st and 2nd class stamps (£32 and £23) will be available from 16 May.

New definitive stamps will be required as a result of the new pricing structure – these will comprise modified 1st and 2nd class stamps with the service indicator in larger size at the top left of the stamp, and similar larger size stamps (30 × 24mm) marked 'Large' for use on the larger size letters. The changes will affect sheet stamps (gummed and self-adhesive) and those in booklets and coils (rolls). The first of these new definitives will go on sale on 1 August. Further details will be given in next month's *Bulletin* •

**Correction** On the World Cup stamps, The Queen's silhouette and value are positioned at left, not at right as stated in the April *Bulletin*.

**Special issues** The Wembley Stadium miniature sheet, scheduled for 11 May, has been postponed. A new date of issue will be announced in due course. The 'England's Finest Hour' Smilers sheet, also announced for 11 May, has also been postponed and will now be issued with the World Cup Winners stamps on 6 June. The 1st class stamps in this sheet will now be the World Cup Winners stamp rather than an amended version of the 2002 World Cup (crowned lion) stamp as originally intended. Also to be issued in June is a set featuring Modern Architecture; both sets were shown here in April.

In this month's *Bulletin* we preview the National Portrait Gallery issue (18 July). The 10 stamps reproducing portraits of important figures from the 16th to the 20th centuries will appeal to all interested in portraiture as well as British history. The issue marks the 150th anniversary of the founding of the National Portrait Gallery, now near Trafalgar Square, London.

A miniature sheet on 31 August will mark the 70th anniversary of 'The Year of Three Kings' – George V who died 20 January 1936, Edward VIII who reigned 20 January - 10 December 1936 and George VI whose reign started on 11 December 1936 following the abdication of his elder brother. The sheet, designed by Together Design and printed by De La Rue, contains a Machin £3 stamp and reproductions of 1d stamps from the reigns of the Three Kings – grandfather, uncle, and father of The Queen. The national floral emblems of the constituent countries of the UK are shown in the four corners of the sheet which measures 126 × 73mm.

The stamp issues for the remainder of the year are: Victoria Cross, 21 September; Sounds of Britain (Europa issue – Cultural Diversity theme), 3 October; and Christmas, 7 November. The Victoria Cross issue will comprise se-tenant pairs of 1st, 64p and 72p, depicting Corporal Agansing Raj, Jack Cornwell, Midshipman Charles Lucas, Captain Noel Chavasse, Captain Albert Ball, and Captain Charles Upham. The stamps were designed by Atelier Works, and printed in litho by Enschedé. The stamps will also be issued in a miniature sheet and prestige book.

The Sounds of Britain stamps, designed by CDT and printed in litho by Artor, feature: Asian sitar (1st), Caribbean bass player (42p), Latin American maracas (44p), Irish fiddle (50p) and Black American Blues (72p).

Finally, the Christmas stamps will feature a snowman, Father Christmas, reindeer and a Christmas tree. The values will be 2nd, 2nd Large, 1st, and 1st Large for UK mail, and 72p and £1.19 for overseas postings. The 'Large' stamps are issued in connection with the new Pricing in Proportion system. The stamps, other than Large, will be standard definitive size, the 'Large' stamps 30 x 24mm. Further details will be given later in the year •



#### Bobby Moore medal cover

Available from 6 June, price £14.95 plus handling charge. A limited edition of 15,000, available from Tallents House and from the Royal Mint. Early ordering is advised.

**Special covers** The third Castles ingot cover is now available. It bears the £1 Caernarfon Castle stamp from the 2005 miniature sheet cancelled by a special Caernarfon postmark. The silver ingot reproduces the design of the 5s Caernarfon Castle stamp of 1955. Price £24.95 plus handling charge. The two previous covers in this series, still available from Tallents House, feature Windsor Castle (23 September 2005), and Edinburgh Castle (17 January 2006). The last in the series, featuring Carrickfergus Castle, will be available from 25 July. Collectors who place a regular order for this Castles series will receive a free booklet, miniature sheet and collection box.

A special Bobby Moore Medal Cover will be available from 6 June, day of issue of the World Cup Winners stamps. The cover will feature Bobby Moore (1941-93) captain of England's 1966 World Cup team, and bears the six World Cup Winners stamps cancelled with a special West Ham, London E13 postmark. The medal, produced by the Royal Mint, depicts Moore, and the illustrated filler card gives details of his illustrious career •

### Customised Smilers sheets

For details of how to order a customised version (with your own image printed on the labels), telephone 0845 074 2000 (UK customers) or +44 131 316 7483 (overseas), or see the Smilers leaflet. Orders using digital photos can also be placed over the web: see [www.royalmail.com](http://www.royalmail.com)



**Correction** In the listing of generic sheets (*April Bulletin*), the 2003 Christmas ice sculptures 1st and 2nd class values should have been described as Star and Spiral, not the other way around.

**Smilers sheets** The next generic Smilers sheet will be issued on 25 May for the Washington 2006 exhibition. This sheet will contain 20 1st class Hello stamps (originally issued March 2002) with labels showing a US mail box and 'Washington World Philatelic Exhibition 2006'. The sheet margin includes the red plane from the stamp design, and the Washington 2006 logo. The World Cup Smilers sheet will now be issued on 6 June, postponed from 11 May (see p266). Both sheets, printed in litho by Cartor, cost £6.95 each.

A generic sheet containing 20 1st class definitive-size Smilers stamps, first issued in stamp books last October, will be available from 4 July. The stamps in the Smilers sheet will be printed in litho, whereas those in the book were printed in gravure. The sheet is entitled 'For Life's Special Moments' and includes four each of the LOVE and Hello stamps, and three each of the letter box, teddy bear, flower and flag designs. The sheet border features a townscape incorporating the six key elements of the stamp designs – some are not that easy to see, so study the design carefully.

The White Ensign Smilers sheet, issued last June, will be withdrawn from sale on 20 June. This comprises 20 of the White Ensign flag stamp with labels featuring signal flags with messages. The sheet was illustrated here in May 2005 (page 266) and again in Glenn Morgan's article on Smilers sheets in last month's *Bulletin* ●

**British Postal Museum & Archive** Now on show at the BPMA is a new exhibition, 'Elizabeth: Queen & Icon' marking The Queen's 80th birthday. The BPMA, at Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London WC1X 0DL (near Mount Pleasant sorting office), is run by the Postal Heritage Trust, and comprises the former Post Office Archives and National Postal Museum. The BPMA's exhibition 'Brunel: Speeding the Mail' is currently touring the West Country – see our Events listing for venues and dates. An online version of the exhibition can be seen on [www.postalheritage.org.uk/exhibitions](http://www.postalheritage.org.uk/exhibitions) ●



Silver reproductions of The Queen's Birthday stamps, produced by the Royal Dutch Mint, from the commemorative document. Shown larger than actual size.

**The Queen's Birthday commemorative document** The latest in the series of commemorative documents will be available from 17 June, The Queen's official birthday and the day of the Trooping the Colour ceremony. The document bears the eight Queen's 80th Birthday stamps, cancelled by a special London SW1 postmark, and silver reproductions of the stamps produced by the Royal Dutch Mint. The handsomely produced document includes some fine photographs of Her Majesty, as Princess and Queen, and details of some of the most interesting stamps (British and Commonwealth) depicting her. The background stories include biographical information on some of the artists and photographers whose images of The Queen have been used on stamps. The document, produced in a limited edition of 2006, costs £80 plus handling charge and is available only from Tallents House •

**Graves at Kensal Green** Last month we featured the grave of Isambard Kingdom Brunel, photographed in Kensal Green Cemetery, London by Harry Reeves, who used to work at the National Postal Museum. This month we feature another of Harry's photographs, this time of the grave of William Mulready (1786-1863), whose famous design was used on pre-paid envelopes and lettersheets issued 166 years ago this month. The design however was ridiculed by the public, and caricatures were produced by various publishers; the envelopes were withdrawn from sale early in 1841. The British Postal Museum & Archive holds a collection of Mulready material, including proofs and the historic woodblock of the design, engraved by John Thompson. This was acquired by the former National Postal Museum in 1991, and was featured in the NPM's 'The Philatelic Year 1991' report (page 15) and on page 129 of Douglas Muir's *Postal Reform & The Penny Black* (1990). Next month we will feature the grave of Anthony Trollope, best-known as a novelist, but also the Post Office Surveyor who introduced posting boxes in the 1850s •



**Going off sale** The Trooping the Colour stamps, miniature sheet, presentation pack and stamp cards go off sale on 6 June, the End of War miniature sheet on 4 July, and the Motorcycle stamps, pack, and cards on 18 July. Order now if you still need these for your collection •

## Pricing in Proportion David Dale explains the new system

**Background** The basic structure of Royal Mail's prices for the main 'letter' services has been unchanged for many years. The introduction of the 2nd class post in 1968 was the last major change. The 1971 switch from imperial to metric weights merely converted existing weight steps. The current pricing system is based primarily on weight, with 16 steps in 1st class up to 1kg. Above this, 1st class prices increase by a set amount with each 250g of weight. In theory there is no limit to the maximum weight of 1st class, but in practice this is constrained by the maximum sizes of 610 × 460 × 460mm. 2nd class has 12 prices to a maximum 750g and is subject to the same maximum sizes as 1st class. There are no minimum sizes.

The dependence on weight, derived from Rowland Hill's reforms which came into effect in 1840, has stood the test of time as a practical method of pricing mail. However, it is doubtful whether, even in Hill's day, it was more cost reflective than the previous system based on distance and number of sheets of paper. Today, two developments have rendered it increasingly unsatisfactory.

Firstly, whereas once nearly all lightweight mail items were letters of one or more sheets of paper, today a good proportion are CDs, DVDs, printer cartridges and the like. Birthday cards may contain a badge or a CD, while advertising mail contains pens and magazines carry a wide variety of items on their covers. This means that weight is no longer reliable as a proxy for size.

Secondly, the standardization of mail handling means that the cost of handling changes when the method of handling changes. These changes are driven mainly by size rather than by weight. They typically occur when a mail item will not fit into a standard sorting frame, or pass through a machine, or fit into a letter box.

Royal Mail has decided to follow the example set by many overseas postal administrations, and introduce a system of pricing mail which is based on size and weight. The proposals were first published in March 2002, and following three years of public consultation they were approved by the postal regulator, Postcomm, in August 2005.

**The formats** There will be three sizes for mail: Letters, Large Letters and Packets. The first size will include the majority of mail items, including letters in DL and C5 envelopes, postcards, aerogrammes and most greetings cards. However, the limits of 240 × 165 × 5mm and 100g will exclude envelopes containing a pen or a badge (due to the 5mm thickness limit), and will exclude larger birthday cards and advertising mail (due to the length and width limits of 240 × 165mm).

The second size will include most magazines, brochures, DVDs, CDs, larger greetings cards and any letters in C4 envelopes. The limits of 353 × 250 × 25mm and 750g will exclude mainly goods such as books, posters and printer cartridges, although the thickest and heaviest of catalogues and telephone directories will exceed the limits.

The third size is best considered an 'everything else' category. It will include any item which exceeds any of the limits for a Large Letter. An item more than 353mm long or 250mm wide or 25mm thick or weighing more than 750g will be priced as a Packet, up to the maximum sizes which are mentioned above and which do not change.

Letters will have one price, up to the maximum weight of 100g. The distinction between 1st and 2nd class mail will be unchanged, so there will be one price for a 1st class Letter and one for a 2nd class Letter. There will be four weight steps or prices for Large Letters and five for Packets. The maximum weight for 2nd class will increase to 1kg. There will be no weight limit for 1st class, and no minimum sizes.

**Using the new system** About 85% of stamped mail will fall into the first size and will be priced as Letters under the new system. These prices will be the same as the old 0-60g stamp prices. This means that people can continue using 'ordinary' definitive stamps under the old and new systems. A 1st class 32p stamp will be valid to pay postage up to 60g until 20 August. From 21 August it will be valid to pay postage up to 100g, provided that the item is no longer than 240mm, no wider than 165mm and no thicker than 5mm.



New stamps: 2nd class Letter, 1st class Letter, 2nd class Large Letter and 1st class Large Letter. Further details next month.

Around 11% of mail will be classed as Large Letters. This category will include a wide variety of items, but, for most people, Large Letters will be the larger kind of greetings cards. The greetings card manufacturers, the retailers and Royal Mail are all equally concerned to reassure and inform people who wish to send larger cards. Greetings cards will carry small logos which will denote the format – generally either a Letter or Large Letter. These logos have already begun to appear on cards and will become more prevalent with time. Royal Mail will produce and sell a Large Letter stamp, and many card retailers will stock these – making them easily available to people buying larger cards. At present there are some greetings cards which are just over the maximum dimensions for a Letter. It is expected that the number of these will reduce with time, as manufacturers adapt to the new sizes.

Around 4% of mail will fall into the Packet category. In general, packets are currently taken to a post office so that they can be weighed and a stamp or postage label can be purchased. This is unlikely to change under the new system. There will be no specific stamp for the Packet prices, as people are unlikely to want to keep them at home.

Royal Mail believes that most people will not need to use a measuring template (see page 259, once they are familiar with the new system). The key point is that standard envelope sizes fit easily within the size limits. Anyone using a DL or C5 envelope and using up to ten or twelve sheets of paper can be confident the item will pass as a Letter. Similarly a C4 envelope with up to 100 pages should fit readily within the limit for a Large Letter. There is no readily available standard envelope size between C4 and C5, and as one is twice the size of the other, it is not difficult to distinguish between them.

**How mail use will change** This is a rebalancing exercise which will see no overall increase in the nation's mail bill. Letters will either remain at the same price or, if they weigh more than 60g, decrease in price. Lightweight Large Letters will increase in price, but any items weighing more than 100g will see significant decreases. Packets weighing less than 500g will typically increase in price, whilst above that weight there will be decreases.

Few changes are expected for stamped mail. Most items will not change in price. People who now spend £2.00 or more on the larger greetings cards are likely to continue to buy them, even if the stamp increases by 12p or so. Most people post packets so infrequently that changes in price are unlikely to affect them. In the world of business mail however, the price changes will be sufficient to affect the cost/benefit ratio of advertising mail. Pen mailings by charities will face significant increases and may be discontinued. Other large-size direct mail may be redesigned to be smaller. Many mail order catalogues on the other hand will decrease in price and may take advantage to mail more addresses, or to add more pages and more products, with larger illustrations. Heavier items will see significant price decreases, which may favour online shopping and E-Bay trading.

**Next steps** The longest and most detailed consultation in Royal Mail's history is over, but before the new system can be introduced there will be the biggest and most expensive communications campaign Royal Mail has undertaken. Communications to businesses have been underway for some nine months, but in July and August there will be widespread advertising of all kinds, covering all sections of society including the disabled and disadvantaged. Size pricing is likely to be introduced for international mail at a later date ●

# The National Portrait Gallery 1856-2006



The stamps are designed by Peter Willberg, who designed last year's Jane Eyre stamps. The presentation pack, first day cover and pictorial First Day postmarks are designed by Andrew Ross.

## Technical details

**Printer** De La Rue Security Print

**Process** Gravure

**Stamp size** 27 x 37mm

**Sheets** 30 and 60

**Perforation** 14

**Phosphor** Two bands

**Gum** PVA

TEN 1ST CLASS STAMPS, printed as a se-tenant block, featuring portraits of famous Britons in the National Portrait Gallery go on sale at Post Office branches and philatelic outlets and Royal Mail Tallents House on 18 July. The issue marks the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Gallery. The 10 subjects are: William Shakespeare, attributed to John Taylor, c1610; Sir Joshua Reynolds, self-portrait, 1747-49; T S Eliot by Patrick Heron, 1949; Sir Winston Churchill by Walter Sickert, 1927; Sir Walter Scott by Sir Francis Leggatt Chantrey, 1820; Virginia Woolf by George Charles Beresford, 1902; Charles Darwin by John Collier, 1881; Mary Ann Seacole by Albert Charles Challen, 1869; Emmeline Pankhurst by Georgina Agnes Brackenbury, 1927; and Dame Cicely Saunders by Catherine Goodman. The portrait of Shakespeare was the first one acquired by the NPG, so it is especially appropriate that it is included in this issue.

The Queen's silhouette, printed in silver, is positioned upper right, with the service indicator at top left. The name of each subject and 'NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY' is at the bottom of the stamp with the year '2006' in the stamp border at lower left.

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.

**FIRST DAY FACILITIES** Unstamped Royal Mail FDC envelopes will be available from main Post Office branches and philatelic outlets about a week before 18 July, price 25p. Orders for FDCs with the stamps cancelled by a pictorial first day postmark of Tallents House or London WC2 must reach Tallents House by the day of issue. Price £4.18 UK or £3.56 overseas.

1856-2006

The National Portrait Gallery  
Celebrating 150 years

Royal Mail First Day Cover

Mrs J Robinson  
200 Manorbie Road  
Ilkeston  
Derbyshire  
DE7 4AB

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



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 (London postmark) marking the outer envelope 'F0625' (Tallents House), or 'F0626' (London). Covers can be posted or handed in at main Post Office branches for the London postmark. A non-pictorial London postmark is available from Special Handstamp Centres, request 'F0626 NP'. ▶

Above: pictorial handstamps. Sponsored handstamps for 18 July will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin* (see p259 for subscriptions). For a sample copy write to: The Editor, British Postmark Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ.



A pack (detail left, £3.70) and stamp cards (£3 per set) will be available from main Post Office branches and philatelic outlets and Tallents House.

The pack was written by John Cooper, former NPG Head of Education and author of *Great Britons: The Great Debate*, which accompanied the BBC TV series and a national poll to find the greatest Briton of all time. The pack relates the story of the NPG, and shows visitors studying the portraits on display.



'Damn him!' said an exasperated but admiring Thomas Gainsborough of his rival portrait painter Sir Joshua Reynolds. 'How various he is!'

As much might be said of the National Portrait Gallery – and all its visitors. You will see literary enthusiasts enthralled by the fragility of the only authentic portrait of Jane Austen, fashionistas revering the notorious pink of Andrew Logan's bust of Zandra Rhodes, school children entranced by the magnificent Tudor kings and queens, and art students finding inspiration in Hogarth's impasto. You might catch an exhibition of contemporary photography, a display of mid-nineteenth-century drawings or an intriguing video portrait. You can enjoy a lunch in the restaurant with a view of Nelson's head, browse and buy in an eclectic bookshop, hear a lecture on – or by – a major cultural figure, listen to music, learn practical skills in the studio or perhaps borrow a ruck sack of activities to engage your young companions. You have to pay for your lunch, but a lot of the rest is free, particularly the permanent collection. The National Portrait Gallery is a major national cultural resource, displayed with full explanatory material, supplemented by IT as appropriate.

The gallery was founded in 1856, during a time of great pride in British military, economic and industrial success. Much of the credit for this pride was ascribed to outstanding individuals – the 'heroes' of our history, in the words of the historian Thomas Carlyle, those worthy of hero-worship. Carlyle and other prominent figures lobbied hard to secure the support of Queen Victoria's cousin Prince Albert and (often) the agreement of Lord Palmerston's government for the establishment of an exemplary gallery of national portraits.

The founding trustees of the gallery decided to make a rule for themselves that they

would bow to the celebrity of the person represented rather than the merit of the artist

when they were acquiring portraits, and that they would attempt to avoid all political or religious prejudice but – in a crucial divergence from hero-worship, they would not

consider great faults and errors – as any sufficient ground for excluding any portrait.





From top, left to right: Balcony Gallery, 2000; the premises at Bethnal Green in 1885; the Gallery's main entrance; and the Ondaatje Wing main hall, 2000.

The NPG is open daily 10.00–18.00 (Thursday & Friday until 21.00). Admission is free, but charges are made for special exhibitions.

**The NPG** The Gallery was established in 1856, at the suggestion of the 5th Earl of Stanhope. Both Houses of Parliament approved, and Stanhope was elected as chairman of the board of trustees. Sir George Scharf, book illustrator and lecturer, was appointed as secretary, charged with setting up the Gallery. It opened in Great George Street, Westminster in January 1859, with 57 portraits on display. A need for more space led to a move to South Kensington (1869), then to Bethnal Green (1885), and finally to its current home in St Martin's Place, near Trafalgar Square and the National Gallery, in April 1896. The building cost £96,000. The premises have been extended over the years, most recently in 2000. The collection, of over 10,000 portraits, covers famous Britons and those who have made a notable contribution to our history and culture. William Gladstone tops the list of the most portraits of a male (65), and The Queen is the most depicted female (50 portraits). A selection of NPG portraits is on permanent display at Monacute House, Somerset; Beningbrough Hall, North Yorkshire; and Bodelwyddan Castle, Denbighshire •

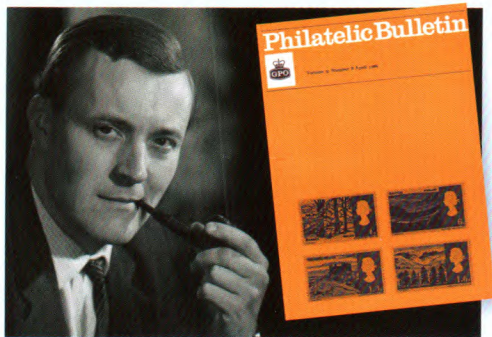
## A major philatelic first James Mackay on the introduction of pictorial stamps and the Queen's silhouette 40 years ago

THE STAMP ADVISORY COMMITTEE met on 11 August 1965 and submitted a list of nine possible subjects for stamps in 1966. At that time the only definite issues were those for the 900th anniversary of Westminster Abbey and for Robert Burns, but the Committee proposed a further nine events or anniversaries: 900th anniversary of the Battle of Hastings; centenary of the Royal Aeronautical Society; the bicentenary of the birth of John Dalton; 50th anniversary of Accident Prevention; 50th anniversary of the Royal College of Nursing; 14th World Conference of the International Council for Bird Protection; opening of the Severn Bridge; Enterprise Neptune; and the investiture of the Prince of Wales at Caernarfon Castle (The last-named did not actually take place until 1969, and was then suitably celebrated by a set of five stamps and an aerogramme.)

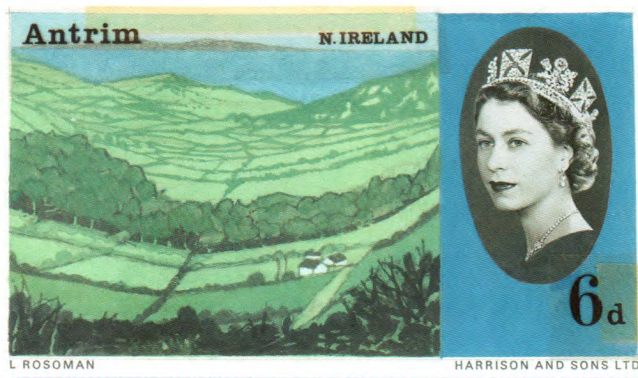
This list was submitted to the PMG for him to select six to add to the two already chosen. Tony Benn, however, had his own ideas. He wished to get away from purely commemorative issues and focus on a more purely pictorial approach. In an internal memo of 21 September 1965 he accepted the Battle of Hastings issue for October 1966 but replaced the other suggestions with issues for the World Cup (June) and Christmas (December), along with pictorial issues showing birds (July) and British technology (September). He proposed an issue on 4 April 'possibly a multiple design stamp and possibly showing some regional landscapes'. If the landscapes included coastlines, he argued that this issue could 'embrace Enterprise Neptune'. He added that this first pictorial issue might meet the earlier demands for regional stamps made by Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

On 27 October Benn announced in Parliament the special issues for Burns, Westminster Abbey, World Cup, and Battle of Hastings and stated that special pictorial issues were to be introduced, although gave no further details. His statement was reported in the *Bulletin* in December (vol 3 no 4) with the comment 'This opens up all sorts of exciting ideas and we eagerly await further information.'

At a Committee meeting on 11 November the notion of linking the landscapes set to Enterprise Neptune was raised, but the PMG now pressed for a series depicting typical landscapes from the four countries of the UK. In December the Council of Industrial Design supplied a list of six artists for this project, including Lynton Lamb, designer of the Castles high values, Leonard Rosoman, William Kempster, Peter Robertson and David Gillespie. On 22 December they were formally invited to submit artwork. ▶



**A revolution in policy towards new issues occurred in the period when Tony Benn (Anthony Wedgwood Benn) was Postmaster-General in Harold Wilson's first Labour government. Collectors of GB stamps may be familiar with the results, but the details of how these changes came about have never yet been fully revealed.**



Above: Leonard Rosoman's artwork for the 6d, one of his four designs selected as first choice by the SAC. Essays were printed with the Wilding portrait, and with alternative cameos. Some essays are shown above; the approved version is on the front cover.

**Royal discussions** In November The Queen had discussions with the Prime Minister and the PMG regarding the use of her portrait on pictorial stamps. Her Majesty originally had no objection to the omission of her effigy from these stamps, but later changed her mind, and as a result the compromise of a silhouette profile was agreed. In fact, the artists were given the option of using the Wilding three-quarter facing portrait.

By 17 January 1966 a total of 43 designs had been submitted, ranging from four each from Lamb and Rosoman to a massive 16 from husband and wife team, David and Anne Gillespie. (Some of these designs were featured in the *Bulletin* of July 1966.) The Committee met on 26 January and selected Rosoman's four designs as their first choice, the runners-up being four designs by the Gillespies. A further quartet of Gillespie designs was subsequently taken to proof stage.

Independently, David Gentleman submitted four designs with a coastline theme, with a silhouette profile derived from the coinage effigy by Mrs Mary Gillick. These, too, were taken to proof stage, so when the Committee met again they had 24 proofs to consider.

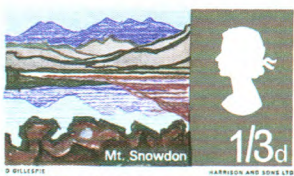
Gentleman's designs were much deeper than the standard landscape type of the period and, were rejected because full sheets of 120 would not fit into the portfolios used by post office counter staff and there was 'a strong possibility of Union complaint'. The PMG also liked the idea of issuing the stamps as a set-tenant block of four but Harrison and Sons rejected this as 'technically impossible'.

Time was now pressing, if the stamps were to be released on 25 April, and in the end Benn was reluctantly forced to abandon the

Gentleman designs which he had ardently championed as 'a real first'. In the end Leonard Rosoman's designs won the day and were issued in four different denominations: 4d landscape near Hassocks, Sussex; 6d Antrim, Northern Ireland; 13d Harlech Castle, Wales; and 16d Cairngorm Mountains, Scotland. By late February James Fitton, acting Chairman of the Stamp Advisory Committee, met the PMG to finalise the submission to The Queen. Even at this late stage Benn was still pushing the Gentleman designs, but Fitton strongly disagreed, and in the end only the designs selected by the Committee at its meeting of 26 January were sent to the Palace.



Designs by David Gentleman included these two versions of the Hebridean coast: with a profile derived from the Gillick coinage head, and a coat of arms alternative to a portrait.



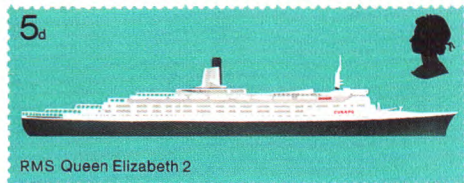
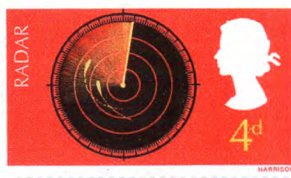
On 25 February the PMG wrote to The Queen, pointing out that a series of pictorial, rather than commemorative, stamps was 'an entirely new venture for this country' and as a result 'it would be appropriate to use a new profile effigy of Her Majesty in the design'. As a result, essays were submitted in both Rosoman and Gillespie designs, with the Wilding portrait and the coinage silhouette as alternatives. The Queen was in the Bahamas at the time, but she cabled her decision to the PMG and this was confirmed by letter from Buckingham Palace on 2 March.

The approved essays were forwarded to Harrison's the following day. A week later, however, doubts regarding the proposed date of issue had arisen because it might clash with the General Election, called for 31 March. It was feared that election fever would have a detrimental effect on any promotion of the issue in the general media. As a result, the Director of Postal Services recommended that the issue be postponed until 2 May. The PMG approved of this, and the decision was officially announced on 11 March.

**Press launch** On 6 April the Post Office staged a briefing for the media and revealed the new stamps. The press release described the landscape stamps as 'the first British stamps not linked to some current event or important anniversary'. Prominence was also given to the new 'cameo' portrait of The Queen, developed by David Gentleman. Leonard Rosoman was hailed as 'a newcomer to British stamp design'. He would subsequently design the Menai Bridge stamp (1968) in the same genre.

The stamps went on sale on 2 May. They were produced in both plain and phosphor versions, and the 6d and 1s6d values exist with an inverted watermark. There were a number of interesting constant varieties, particularly the missing D in the printer's imprint on the 6d – 40,000 sheets were printed before this error was noticed and corrected. Numbers sold ranged from about 6.5 million of the 1s3d to over 91 million of the 4d. There was no presentation pack but the Philatelic Bureau provided a FDC service. Special First Day of Issue postmarks were provided especially for this issue at Lewes, Sussex; Coleraine, Co Londonderry; Harlech, Merioneth; and Grantown-on-Spey, Morayshire. Covers bearing these relevant local postmarks are worth looking out for. ►

Above left: 1s6d essays with alternative portraits. Centre: essays from the SAC's second choice set, by the Gillespies, with two alternative portraits. Right: two further Gillespie designs, essayed at the PMG's request, with cameo adapted by David Gentleman.



Continuing the break with tradition: 1966 British Birds, 1966 British Technology, 1967 British Discovery & Invention, 1967 British Wild Flowers and 1969 British Ships.

**Significant issue** The designs were doubtless derived originally from photographs but were drawn after the manner of tourist posters of the period. A further year would elapse before the use of purely photographic reproductions in full, natural colour occurred, with the release of the first set devoted to British paintings, and this trio also marked the adoption of the format which David Gentleman had envisaged in his landscape essays.

At the time many philatelists and probably most laymen did not appreciate the significance of this 'first'. After all, a set of four landscape stamps was issued two years earlier, but they were clearly inscribed as celebrating the 20th International Geographical Congress. But that this was, indeed, a major break with tradition was soon re-inforced by other issues of a purely thematic nature, notably the charming British Birds set of 8 August 1966. Whatever had been the 'technical impossibility' raised by Harrison's had vanished within months, as this set was produced as a se-tenant block. It was followed a year later by the similar series on British wild flowers and then British paintings and finally British discovery and invention (September 1967) – one of the ideas raised by Tony Benn back in September 1965.

In many cases what appears to be a purely thematic set according to the Benn doctrine has, in fact, a topical or commemorative element. Thus the British Ships set of January 1969 actually celebrated the launch of the *QUEEN*, which made her maiden voyage to New York the following May.

Nevertheless, the thematic sets, often giving equal prominence to subjects in the four countries of the UK, proved to be an immensely popular medium with collectors and general public alike. In the early years this policy was regarded as something of a catching up process, Britain having lagged well behind the rest of the world in the matter of pictorial stamps.

In more recent years, however, the choice of subjects has reacted more to market forces and a sustained effort by Royal Mail's marketing team to gauge what the public wants. The Fashion Hats issue of 2001, for example, was created in response to a need to satisfy the growing body of female collectors. Similarly, the sets devoted to animals and birds which have heralded the new year since 2001 strike a responsive chord with the public. This trend is also in line with the policy of the annual Europa issues (50 years old this year) which have employed distinctive themes since 1974 •

This article is based on an unpublished official history of this issue prepared for the former National Postal Museum. A number of these histories were published by the NPM in book form and in its Philatelic Year annual reports.

Text © James Mackay 2006 Stamp illustrations: BPMA

## Business customised sheets Update 1 by Glenn Morgan



The two versions of the first BCS sheets produced as part of initial trials, commissioned by Eagle Coaches of Bristol for their 75th anniversary. These sheets are only rarely offered for sale.

THE FIRST listing of business customised stamps (BCS sheets) appeared in the August 2005 *Bulletin*. These sheets are produced at the request of business customers, mainly the philatelic trade. In the intervening months new sheets have appeared, so this update picks up where the first article left off.

These sheets have now begun to appear on self-adhesive paper, as happened with personalised Smilers last October, so a new column has been added, as has a column for the main supplier of each sheet, with contact details at the foot of the listing to assist readers in obtaining any sheets.

Readers may be aware of a sheet produced for Basingstoke Philatelic Society's 70th anniversary, which is now being sold for around £45-£60 (c150 printed). Note that this is not a BCS sheet, having been produced with lasered labels by Royal Mail as part of the Personalised Smilers service on the flowers design blank label base-stock; hence their exclusion from this listing.

Occasionally, BCS collectors have the opportunity of buying proof items from the producers of these sheets. Two recent examples concern Rushstamps' sheets, when they offered for sale the 2003 Rushstamps Anniversary pair of Walsall Security Printers bromides showing the stamps in an imperforate form (£150), and the second offer was for similar items but related to the Collect British

Stamps sheets (£250). Only two sets of each were provided by the printer to the customer and these are legitimate proofs. However, readers should be aware that it is sometimes possible to get hold of images taken from CD-ROMs of the final artwork (also imperforate), but produced for press publicity purposes and later printed on any quality home printer in any quantity. These are of some interest to specialists, but are of little financial value, being so easily replicable.

Thanks to an eBay purchaser, it is possible to illustrate the two versions of the first BCS sheets produced as part of the initial trials, as commissioned by Eagle Coaches of Bristol to mark their 75th anniversary. These are rarely offered (prior to a recent sale, I had only ever seen one pair sold since they were first issued five years ago) and the vendor states that there are only four other sheets on the market, as the remaining surviving sheets are held by the Eagle Coaches founding family. Eagle is believed to have been one of a few companies to initially have trialled the concept of BCS sheets, but no other sheet types have so far surfaced. An Eagle pair sold in December 2005 for very high sums. Both the Hallmark and Cartoons stamp versions were each at a fairly steady £180 until the closing seconds when successive late bids pushed the final price up to £645 per sheet. ►

My thanks go to Graham Cooke, Graham Eyre, Allan M Grant, Graham Howard, Ian Gordon, John R Vincent and Ken Weatherill for keeping me advised of new issues and for updating me on older sheets.

In recent months I have had several communications from readers, indicating that they would like to collect BCS sheets, but they believe that the average new-issue price is higher than can be justified in the philatelic market. Each sheet costs a producer c£7.00, excluding design fees, advertising costs and any image or logo licencing costs that may be incurred for numbered sheets of 10 and where the print run is 1000-1999. They generally sell for £20-£30 (or, in Australian money, A\$47.52-A\$71.28 – read on) when first issued.

I have previously stated that memorabilia collectors have created a ready market, have spare cash, and that they are probably responsible for continuing to drive the price of these items ever upwards. There is an argument that BCS sheets are an attractive collectable which would have a greater philatelic market if they were to be printed in larger quantities (costing the producers less per sheet), and if sold at a more acceptable price.

I thought it might be interesting to compare British sheets with those of Australia, where AusPost, the originator of personalised stamps, has offered a similar business service to that of Royal Mail since 2000. An SES (Special Event Souvenir) sheet is a landscape (sometimes portrait) format A4 sheet of 10 (mostly) or 20 stamps (rarely) with a tab and customised or designed border design. The stamps are always to the left of the label, unlike in Britain where the reverse is true. They have a firm following among collectors, where entertainment, transport and sports appear to be the favourite subjects depicted, in much the same way as Royal Mail's BCS offering. The main difference is that there are two series because AusPost is also a creator of these sheets.

Print runs tend to be around 10,000 copies for most AusPost items, which are marketed exclusively by them via their Bureau at A\$15.95 (£6.71), but which can be as low as 800 copies. Privately commissioned business sheets, which are not generally sold by AusPost, are normally in a smaller

run, where the usual minimum run for these customers is set at 500 sheets. However, and mainly where there is a sponsorship deal involved, there have been smaller runs – in one case of only 25 sheets. Business customers, including some quite recently, have sold sheets from A\$11.95 (£5.03) up to around A\$120 (£50.51), where the print-run was one-tenth of the average British sheet, and had a railway-related theme. The larger runs are generally priced around A\$45 (£18.94) when first released.

Perhaps there is not really much difference in a stamp dealer's mark-ups on either side of the world, and I guess the phrase 'the market price will prevail' is a truism in any free economy.

My thanks to Craig Chappell for verifying the Australian portion of the text above. Craig, who is a stamp dealer and a writer on P-Stamps (the Australian name for Smilers), will send a copy of his latest personalised stamp list to any *Bulletin* readers who email him (craigchappell@bigpond.com.au) or who write to him at PO Box 521, Clayfield 4011, Australia.

Another company illustrates over 30 examples of the Australian sheets in colour at <http://shop.lvovsky.com/stampsnstuff/stamps/esssheets.htm> for any readers interested in looking at some Australian SES sheets.

**Catalogue listing** The list opposite has not been produced from any official records, as sponsors' details are a matter of commercial confidentiality, so other sheets probably remain unrecorded, especially if they were not produced for, or made available to, the philatelic market.

Reports of missing sheets, updates to information for recorded sheets, or details of forthcoming issues would be welcomed at glennmorgan@hotmail.com please. Of particular interest is the issue date and name of the printer, which is rarely available and never appears on the sheet margin. The exact order in which sheets were issued within any year is not feasible, since there is rarely an exact date of issue. Where the First Day of Availability (FDOA) date is known, it is shown. For convenience, each sheet in this list is now numbered sequentially ●

| Year | No       | Theme                                   | Design                                      | FDOA    | Stamp  | Quantity           | Price   | Printer | Gum | Supplier |
|------|----------|-----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|---------|--------|--------------------|---------|---------|-----|----------|
| 2005 | 61       | Football                                | Liverpool: Champions of Europe              | July    | UF10P  | 2005N              | £25     | Cartor? | WA  | BE       |
|      | 62       | Movies                                  | Hammer Films: Frankenstein                  | July    | P10P   | 1000N              | £30     | Cartor  | WA  | SC       |
|      | 63       | Television                              | Dr Who: The 5th Doctor Peter Davison        | July    | P10P   | 1000N              | £30     | Cartor  | WA  | SC       |
|      | 64       | Television                              | Dr Who: Latest Series The Monsters          | July    | H10P   | 1500N              | £30     | Cartor  | WA  | SC       |
|      | 65       | Movies                                  | Captain Scarlet                             | August  | P10P   | 1000N              | £30     | Cartor  | WA  | SC       |
|      | 66       | Aviation                                | Farewell Concorde 1969-2003                 | Sept    | UF10P  | 1000N              | £30     | Cartor? | WA  | BE       |
|      | 67       | Bikers                                  | Carl Fogarty, world champion                | Sept    | UF10P  | 1000N              | £30     | Cartor  | WA  | SC       |
|      | 68       | Comics                                  | 'The Dandy'. Main characters                | Sept    | UF10P  | 1000N              | £25     | Cartor? | WA  | BE       |
|      | 69       | Comics                                  | 'The Beano'. Main characters                | Sept    | UF10P  | 1000N              | £25     | Cartor? | WA  | BE       |
|      | 70       | Comics                                  | Dennis the Menace and Gnasher               | Sept    | UF10P  | 1000N              | £25     | Cartor? | WA  | BE       |
|      | 71       | Football                                | Chelsea FC, Heroes 2004/05 season           | Sept    | UF10P  | 1000N              | £25     | Cartor? | WA  | BE       |
|      | 72       | History                                 | Gunpowder Plot 400th anniversary            | Sept    | UF10P  | 1605N              | £20     | Cartor? | WA  | AB       |
|      | 73       | Philately                               | Autumn Stampex: Nelson and Trafalgar        | 14 Sept | WE10P  | 3000U              | £10     | Cartor? | WA  | ST       |
|      | 74       | Shipping                                | 20th anniversary <i>Titanic</i> discovery 1 | Sept    | UF10P  | 1000N              | £25     | Cartor? | WA  | BE       |
|      | 75       | Shipping                                | 20th anniversary <i>Titanic</i> discovery 2 | Sept    | UF10P  | 1000N              | £25     | Cartor? | WA  | BE       |
|      | 76       | Animals                                 | Cats                                        | October | UF10P  | 1000N              | £25     | Cartor? | WA  | BE       |
|      | 77       | Aviation                                | Red Arrows 40th anniversary                 | October | H10P   | U                  | £30     | Cartor? | WA  | WE       |
|      | 78       | Childhood                               | Teddy Bears                                 | October | B10P   | 1000N              | £25     | Cartor? | WA  | BE       |
|      | 79       | History                                 | 1936: Year of the Three Kings               | Dec     | UF10P  | 1936N              | £20     | Cartor? | WA  | AB       |
| 2006 | 80       | Royalty                                 | 80th Birthday of Queen Elizabeth II         | 01 Jan  | UF10P  |                    | £       | Cartor? | WA  | WE       |
|      | 81       | Aviation                                | 30th anniv of Concorde's first flight 1     | 21 Jan  | UFS10P | 1000N <sup>1</sup> | £45     | Cartor? | SA  | BU       |
|      | 82       | Philately                               | Spring Stampex: Brunel and thematics        | 22 Feb  | HC10P  | U                  | £10     | Cartor? | WA  | ST       |
| Due  | Military | The Victoria Cross – 150th anniversary  | April                                       | UF10P   | 500N   | £30                | Cartor? | WA      | AB  |          |
|      | Aviation | 30th anniv of Concorde's first flight 2 | 26 May                                      | UF10P   | 1976N  | £20                | Cartor? | SA      | BU  |          |

## NOTES AND ENQUIRIES

## Stamps key

B Teddy Bear (1991 Greetings)  
H Hello (2002 Occasions)  
HC Hallmark Cheers (Hallmark Occasions)  
P Planets (1991 Greetings)  
UF Union Flag (2001 Flags and Ensigns MS)  
UFS Union Flag (2005 small-sized Flag from stamp book)  
WE White Ensign (2001 Flags and Ensigns MS)

The number after the letters = stamps in sheet. P = portrait, L = landscape format.

**Quantity** Number of sheets produced.  
'N' following the quantity indicates that each sheet bears a unique serial number and a print run figure. 'U' indicates an unnumbered sheet. The sheet marked <sup>1</sup> is numbered as having had 1976 copies printed, but only 1000 were produced.

**Price** The approximate (unsigned) sheet price, based on recent dealer listings and online auctions. Many lower (and higher) prices are charged. Add £5-£25 for signed sheets, depending on signatory.

**Printer** ? indicates uncertainty.

**Gum** Water activated (WA) or self-adhesive (SA).

**Enquiries** For prices, postage and availability, contact the suppliers as follows.

**AB** Adrian Bradbury, 3 Link Road, Stoneygate, Leicester LE2 3RA. www.bfcd.co.uk

**BE** The Benham Group, Freepost, RLXU-CXUT-HZJH, Kelvedon Park, London Road, Rivenhall, Witham, CM8 3HB (UK enquiries) or Benham, Unit K, Concept Court, Shearway Business Park, Folkestone CT19 4RG (overseas). Telephone 08708 500 654. www.benham.co.uk

**BU** Buckingham Covers, 135 Sandgate Road, Folkestone CT20 2BY. Telephone 01303 850688. www.buckinghamcovers.com

**RS** Rushstamps (Retail) Ltd, PO Box 1, Lyndhurst SO43 7PP. www.rushstamps.co.uk

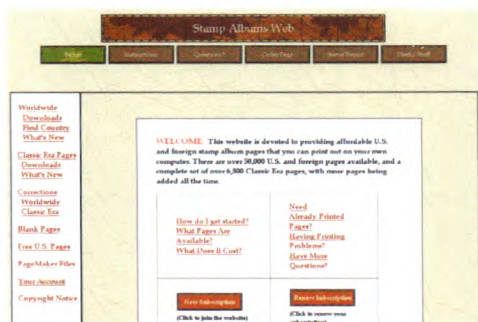
**SC** The Stamp Centre, 79 Strand, London WC2R 0DE. Telephone 0207 240 3778. www.scificollector.co.uk

**ST** Stampex sheets available only at the show, or afterwards from stamp dealers.

**WE** The Westminster Collection Ltd. Telephone 08708 500 505. www.westminstercollection.com

Many of the above and earlier sheets are also available from Benham and Rushstamps (see above) and from The Stamp Bureau (email thestampbureau@gmail.com or visit www.thestampbureau.com)

# Philately online How to print album pages, by Ron Negus



IN ONE of my earliest columns in this series, published in the December 2000 *Bulletin*, I reviewed a site which had been operating for a only few months. Its aim was to provide printed album pages for all countries of the world via the internet. I felt it would now be appropriate to revisit the site and to see how much progress had been made with this tremendous task.

The site (address above) is hosted by an American collector, Bill Steiner, who took early retirement in 1998 from his job as a systems designer/programmer with the US Department of Defence. He decided to make the provision of a complete set of affordable worldwide album pages his goal in life. When I first visited his website in 2000, he had completed just over 20,000 pages towards this objective.

Today, this number has grown to an impressive 56,500 pages, each providing printed spaces (with Scott catalogue numbers) for stamps issued by all countries. This total includes 6,500 that are called 'Classic Era' pages – defined as up to and including the KGV1 issues for the British Commonwealth, and up to and including 1940 for all other countries. A few sample pages are included that can be printed off in order to examine the quality on the user's own printer, before committing to a subscription.

Under the main heading 'Status Report' a listing is given to show which date ranges are currently available from the website for each country. Countries for which work is still in progress are indicated, but Bill sensibly says that he is not able

**www.stampalbums.com** The site is well constructed and easy to navigate. A 'Frequently Asked Questions' page deals with the more common queries, and an e-mail address is provided, allowing users to contact the author if necessary.

to answer questions regarding completion dates for these. His long experience in systems development has taught him that predictions of when parts of a computer project will be finished are so often wrong.

A practical feature of the site is that all pages are also available on a CD-ROM disc. This is very useful for anyone without regular internet access, or with a slow modem connection. The CD is updated monthly and contains everything available from the website.

To use the site requires paying a membership fee of US\$20. This fee provides a username and password combination which allows downloading and printing anything from the website for a period of 12 months. A CD-ROM copy costs \$30, but this can also be purchased together with the website subscription for a combined total of \$40 for a year. Payment can be made by all the major credit cards, or by PayPal, cheque or cash.

A special arrangement applies if you only require the pages for United States issues. After having bought the US pages from the website, up-to-date, supplementary pages for subsequent years can be obtained free. This is because a lot of customers of the site are US-only collectors, and Bill felt that the annual \$20 subscription was too high if only pages for each new year's issues were all that was required.

This website will appeal to collectors who restrict themselves to the basic issues of a particular country, or who collect some of the smaller, less popular stamp issuing states. It allows them to print out pages that meet their display needs. These cannot always be satisfied at an economic price by purchasing the commercially available printed album pages. Bill Steiner is to be congratulated on having kept the project on track for so long. The value of the site can be seen by the fact that it has received more than 850,000 visits since its inception •

## Bulletin poll A selection of voters' views, by Glenn Morgan



LAST MONTH saw the publication of the results of the annual *Bulletin* stamp poll designed to find the favourite stamp set and single from the 2005 issues and to announce the *Bulletin* author with the most votes. This month, comments from some voters' forms are recorded.

**General comments** Unlike last year, the general comments were incredibly negative. 'I must say that by the time 1 November was reached I was glad to philatelically draw breath'; 'they are just churned out and are never seen on mail'; 'another year of dreadful, meaningless, rubbish designs most of which were incomprehensible'; 'not a vintage year, but by no means the worst, either'; 'a disappointing year' and 'let's hope that 2006 has more original stamp designs, as 2005 has been yet another disastrous year. Take a look back to the 1970s when stamp designs stood out as real miniature works of art!' were several of the views expressed by voters. 'Once again too many stamp issues for one year – and in too many formats. No fewer than three issues were not part of the planned programmes, but later additions'.

The way that some designs had been cropped was noted by one reader, citing stamps 32 and 41 in particular. There was 'a plea for a 2nd class stamp in every issue' and one voter concluded 'not an easy choice – so many of the "stamps" are totally unsuitable to this job'. A reader in a reflective mood asked 'will Royal Mail ever sur-

pass The Penny Black or the Machin for quiet, efficient symbols of good taste and effectiveness? These two adhesives say more about Britain than all the coloured labels – and there are FAR TOO MANY of them each year'.

Royal Mail has steadily increased the number of miniature sheets available to collectors, and readers picked up on this point: 'miniature sheets were strictly limited to one every few years. Now they are appearing like wallpaper. No doubt this is the Post Office's way of generating more income' and 'overall there were far too many ms. Jane Eyre had a miniature sheet as well as a prestige book which for a dreary issue would kill off the new collector before he had begun' were typical comments about this point.

Again the opportunity was taken by readers to complain about the fact that the (well-liked) ms for Trafalgar (and the recent 2006 Brunel issue) did not fit on its stamp card, and 'Can I ask that this specific point be brought to the attention of the Stamp Advisory Committee. Alternatively, stop producing ms cards' summed up views. Perhaps Royal Mail product managers could take note, as this is an annual objection from its customer base.

One disillusioned voter said that he '...stopped buying British stamps after the Millennium disaster issue and you haven't enticed me back yet!'

By way of balance, I will let three voters have the final say when they state that 2005 was 'overall a pretty good year and next year looks even better!'; 'I've noticed a marked improvement in the design of British stamps over the last year' and '...congratulations on a very good year. No "duds" at all'.

**Specific issues comments** Taking each issue in turn, the following comments consist of many of those provided, so if there is a negative emphasis on a particular issue, this is the slant from voters, and not from me.

● **FARM ANIMALS** 'Would have been better if photographs had been used, like last year's woodland animals set'; 'why no indication of the breeds de-

picted?'; 'probably not to everyone's taste' and 'absolutely dire' were comments made about this interesting and distinctly different artistic treatment of British farmyard animals. These stamps brought back to me happy childhood memories of my mum reading story books comprising thick, shiny cardboard pages with rounded corners, so the comment 'sweet, but as if from an infant's first reader' is probably about right.

● **BRITISH JOURNEY – SOUTH WEST ENGLAND** This set scored particularly well in voting this year compared with the previous sets in the series. The '...views of my home area touched my nostalgic vein and as they showed such stunning views, I've voted them number one'; but 'too dull' and 'uninspiring' were responses from those perhaps less familiar with the locations depicted. Last year the allegedly unnatural colours used were objected to, which was successfully addressed with this part (and the 2006 concluding set) of the series.

● **JANE EYRE** This set failed to inspire much positive comment and '...truly hideous', 'appalling', 'dismal', 'awful', 'ugly and dull', 'a set of ugly old women', '...one of the worst designs ever inflicted on us' and 'Jane Eyre was plain, not grotesque, and the set was very disappointing' summarized most feelings. However one reader thought 'I am guessing that not too many people will have liked these dark sketches, but I did. It prompted me to dig out the book and read it again...and *Wuthering Heights*, too'.

● **MAGIC!** Surprisingly, the only responses to this issue, which utilised innovative interactive effects, were 'uninventive' and 'magic is a wonder, full of surprises. I had hoped an artist might have expressed these qualities'.

● **ROYAL WEDDING** '...as nice a design as Princess Anne's' was, I assume, a compliment, and 'Charles and Camilla looked great on Stamp 28. It was nice to see someone in the Royal Family look so happy' summed up the positive views of one of our American readers, as did 'the Royal Wedding stamps should have been issued as singles, not just as a MS, as they deserved to be used postally more'. 'On close inspection one wonders if the designer was a Camilla fan. Can I put the 30p stamp up for "the stamp with the greatest

number of chins ever portrayed on a Royal person" for a Guinness record?' was an amusing, albeit disrespectful, response that came all the way from a reader living in Thailand.

● **WORLD HERITAGE SITES** 'a very good choice to show the essence of both countries' and 'uninspiring' were two conflicting opinions. Almost everyone who voted for this issue also voted for the British Journey South West England stamps and one reader believes that Royal Mail has 'got scenery (stunning or gentle) off to a tee'.

● **TROOPING THE COLOUR** This was a high-scoring issue that resulted in just the one noteworthy comment, where a voter asks 'why do we have a photograph of a guardsman who appears to be blowing his nose in his glove (stamp 38)?' Take another look; he certainly could be thought to be lacking a handkerchief!

● **MOTORCYCLES** 'Nice, but monotonous', 'all look the same' and 'boring and repetitive', were three anti-comments, but this was balanced with 'the BSA makes a lovely simple composition – a classic motorcycle' and a long-term biker stated the stamps 'reminded me of the splendid sights and sounds of the single cylinder machines' dum, dum, dum, dum throb as they burnt past you on the A4!'

● **CHANGING TASTES IN BRITAIN** Based on voting alone, this set was almost universally disliked. 'Good to see the return of original artwork rather than photographs with labels' and 'I loved the child-like simplicity of the stamps, except that it was difficult to work out the food/drink being depicted' were the closest things to generous observations. 'These were quite ghastly – like banana republic labels', 'pointless and gaudy' and 'worst set of the year – appalling' were more typical responses. Picking up on the healthy eating campaign underway by government and consumers, one reader asked 'why was someone eating chips ever illustrated? It would have been far better to have portrayed healthy foods which children and adults are encouraged to eat'. This is an interesting point, as such a subject would have fitted perfectly well into the theme of 'changing tastes', as more of us make efforts to comply with the Five-a-Day crusade.

● **CLASSIC ITV** Considering that we are allegedly a nation of TV watchers, it was surprising that this issue did not score higher and that only two views on the issued stamps were expressed, which on the one hand was 'horrible posters' and on the other 'has every attribute that I'd look for in a set; lettering in keeping with the subject... Queen's head and value distinct and well placed, with the Inspector Morse stamp very cleverly done'. The absence of *Coronation Street*, despite this being the result of an open vote by TV viewers that favoured *Emmerdale*, 'seems to border on the criminal'.

● **THE ASHES** 'Winning the Ashes, great though it was, did not justify an issue, nor the use of pictures of living persons' and 'truly embarrassing. The Australians usually win and they've never bothered to issue four stamps because it's such a regular occurrence. What next?' were some quite strong views expressed against this issue.

● **TRAFALGAR** Royal Mail was on to a winner with its commemoration of the Battle of Trafalgar set, but even here a couple of anti-comments were received. 'An issue well worth celebrating – I liked it a lot', 'magnificent' and 'the cream of the crop' summed up most voters' opinions. The only complaints were 'even the Trafalgar stamps were the second-worst issue, and only the comic book characters from Alderney were worse. They should have been bigger and should have shown much better battle scenes. The Commonwealth issues were superb', and 'a splendid opportunity was missed with the Trafalgar set; the same width, but greater height, would have shown the paintings to maximum advantage'.

● **CHRISTMAS** The final issue of the year seemed to meet the demands of those who felt that another secular issue was inappropriate, and that it was 'so lovely to have a Nativity issue once again'. Not all agreed with the treatment though, and 'why so politically correct?', 'let's go back to non-religious subjects' and 'worst issue ever' were the opinions of some readers. 'As Hindus are upset with the 68p stamp, may Christians be upset that the most used Christmas stamp, the second class, shows brown faces?' was an extreme and possibly ill-informed view from one lady reader.

The numerous comments made, especially the negative ones, prove Royal Mail does not really stand a chance of satisfying all of its customers, all of the time, despite going to great lengths to produce an interesting and varied programme each year. Let's also not forget that people are more likely to take the opportunity to complain when it is presented, rather than to praise!

I close with a reminder for Royal Mail received from a Merseyside reader who says 'you are supposed to be running a postal service, not selling collector's items'.

Special thanks to all who returned the voting form, especially overseas readers, who responded from Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Cyprus, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong SAR, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Macao SAR, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Philippines, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand and the USA ●

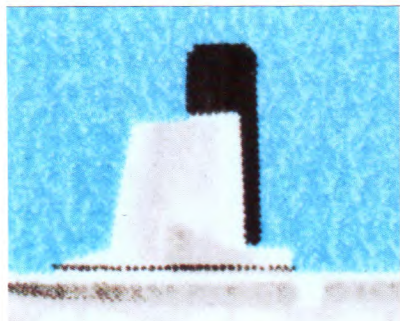
## Special prize draw Win a Royal Mail World Cup collection

FOR THIS MONTH'S DRAW we have sheets of 25, a Smilers sheet, and a set of stamp cards of the World Cup Winners issue (6 June) for the sender of the first card drawn on 31 May. Five runners-up will be sent World Cup Winners presentation packs. To enter, write your name and address on the back of a postcard and send it to: World Cup Draw, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ ●

**Prize draw winners** The winner of the Brunel Draw (January) was H Nissen of Denmark; runner-up prizes went to S Williams, Hants; K Bowler, Canada; Mrs J Benford, Nottinghamshire; D Neighbour, Somerset; and Mrs J Lucas, Lincolnshire.

The winners of the Mystery Prize Draw (February) were: Mrs E Bowater of Worcestershire; J Mackin, Co Tyrone; P Witter, Liverpool; K Anson, USA; A Bishop, Wiltshire; Mrs S Brennan, Surrey; Miss D Murray, Fife; J Brewer, New Zealand; S Ling, Singapore; and I Smith, Macau.

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



HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN



Sixtieth Birthday 34p

**February identify** The detail is from the 1986 Queen's 60th Birthday stamp. The winner was A Burton of Lincs.

**February knowledge** The Answers: 1) Orange; 2) Tree & Leaf; 3) H Waller. The winner was Mrs P Katsouda, Greece.

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

- 1 In which years did Sir Henry Raeburn feature on a stamp?
- 2 What colour was the George V £1 definitive?
- 3 Who is Head of Royal Mail's Philatelic Sector?

Send your answer (addressed to either the May *Identify* competition or the May *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 16 June will receive £100. Runner-up prizes of presentation packs, FDCs or stamp cards will be awarded in each competition. The competitions are not open to Royal Mail employees ●

## Events

**Until Spring 2007** 'Elizabeth: Queen & Icon' exhibition at British Postal Museum & Archive, Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London WC1. **Enquiries** 020 7239 2570.

**24-30 April** British Postal Museum & Archive 'Brunel Speeding the Mail' exhibition at Saltash Library, Cornwall.

**1-10 May** BPMA 'Brunel Speeding the Mail' exhibition at Porthcurno Museum, Cornwall.

**6 May** Federation of South Wales Phil Socs Annual Convention Stamp & Postcard Fair at Princess Royal Theatre, Civic Centre, Port Talbot, 10.00-16.30. Admission 50p. Dealers, Kids activities, refreshments. Souvenir card. **Enquiries** G Prior 01656 740520.

**11-31 May** BPMA 'Brunel Speeding the Mail' exhibition at Newton Abbot Museum, Devon.

**13 May** Worpex 2006 annual stamp & postal history fair with postcards at Oldbury Park Primary School, Oldbury Rd, Worcester, 10.30-16.00. 30 dealers. See [www.worpex.com](http://www.worpex.com)

**19-21 May** NE Philatelic Weekend at Swallow Hotel, Gateshead. **Enquiries** Val Beeken 0191 3861931.

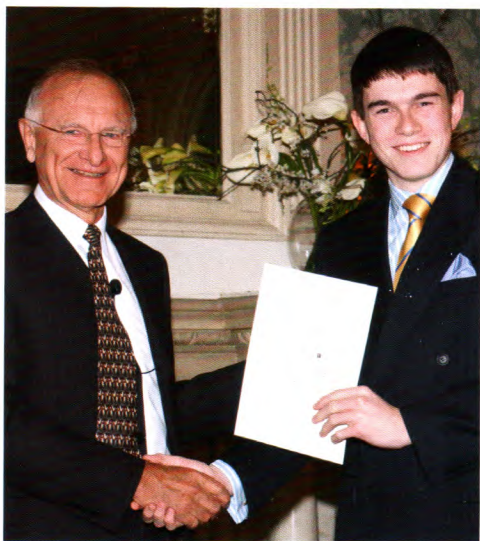
**27 May-3 June** Washington 2006 international stamp exhibition. See Stamp Scene, p260-61.

**1-22 June** BPMA 'Brunel Speeding the Mail' exhibition at Torbay Museums, Devon.

**23 June-17 July** BPMA 'Brunel Speeding the Mail' exhibition at Powderham Castle.

**24-25 June** Thematica at Carisbrooke Hall, Seymour Street, London W2. Sat 10.30-17.30, Sun 10.30-17.00 ●

## Late news



**Rowland Hill Awards** Shown here is Simon Moorcroft (right) collecting his runner-up certificate at the Rowland Hill Awards ceremony in March. Report and more photographs next month •

**Royal Mail stamps** The cylinder numbers and colours of the Architecture stamps are: w1 yellow w1 magenta w1 cyan (blue) w1 black w1 phosphor for all values.

Readers are reminded that the *Great Western* 68p stamp on pane 3 of the Brunel prestige book is printed in litho, whereas the original (issued in April 2004) was printed in gravure. The new litho printing is listed as No 2614 in the Stanley Gibbons catalogue supplement in the April issue of *Gibbons Stamp Monthly*.

Collectors of cylinder/plate blocks may have noticed that the new 72p Northern Ireland stamp carries four numbers – D1A in black twice, D1A magenta and D2A yellow. The previous 68p stamp had just one black cylinder. The additional black was used to improve the depth of the dark area behind the strands of the pottery vase. Overall, this has produced a slightly darker image, more biscuit in colour than the dark cream hue on the now obsolete 68p value •

**Mailboat on show** The ‘Curioser and Curioser’ exhibition, at the British Library in London until 8 June, includes one of the famous St Kilda mailboats from the Library’s Philatelic Collections. These mailboats were used to send mail from the remote island of St Kilda to the mainland. The letters were contained in a sealed wooden box, kept afloat by an inflated sheep’s bladder •

**Washington 2006 exhibition** The Queen’s exhibit includes mostly items from the Caribbean, but also the 6 May cover bearing 10 Penny Blacks and one page of Perot Provisionals from Bermuda. Some of the material has not been shown before in the USA. Invited exhibits, from individual items to multi-frame displays, include the Alexandria ‘Blue Boy’ cover with its contents, a love letter of 1847; proof panes of the 5¢ and 10¢ US 1847 issue; and the Dawson Hawaiian Missionary cover of 1852 bearing 2¢, 3¢ and 5¢ stamps. Material from the Smithsonian National Postal Museum ranges from 1847 essays to a rare block of wine revenue stamps. A display marking the 300th anniversary of the birth of Benjamin Franklin includes two commissions signed by him. Collectors of non-US material will not be disappointed: David Feldman’s ‘A Treasury of Rarities’ includes the Mauritius Post Office proof, the Western Australia 4d swan issue with inverted frame, and India’s 1854 inverted head. The National Postal Museum will have John Lennon’s childhood stamp album on display as well as its own online philatelic research tool, Arago. For more information see the exhibition’s website: [www.washington-2006.org](http://www.washington-2006.org) •

**Obituary** Harold S Wilson, the leading authority on TPO postmarks, has died, aged 86. Mr Wilson was an engineer who worked for British Railways. As well as TPO postmarks, he collected and wrote about the postal history of Derby (his adopted home) and Australian airmails. His collections were sold by Cavendish last November. The key item, the earliest known TPO marking (1838) went for a record price of £5000 (est £1500), acquired by the British Postal Museum & Archive •

# Royal Mail generic Smilers sheets and album



Royal Mail celebrates the Washington 2006 exhibition, the major philatelic event of the year, with a new generic Smilers sheet on 25 May. It comprises 20 of the Hello stamp with labels depicting a US mail box, and carries the exhibition logo in the top margin. Price £6.95. Other generic Smilers still available are: White Ensign (until 20 June), Classic ITV, Animal Tales, and Fun Fruit & Veg, all at £6.95 each, and 2005 Christmas, at £6. Handling charge £1.30 UK, £1.55 Europe, £2.15 elsewhere.

An attractive album is available to house your Smilers collection, priced £16.50; slipcase £7.50, continuation pages for 2003, 2004, and 2005 £5.99 each.

Handling charges: album and slipcase £2.95 UK, £5 Europe, £14 elsewhere; continuation pages £1.30/£1.55/£2.15. Buy the album and any other product and pay only one handling charge of £2.95 (UK only).

## Royal Mail

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