

BRITISH PHILATELIC

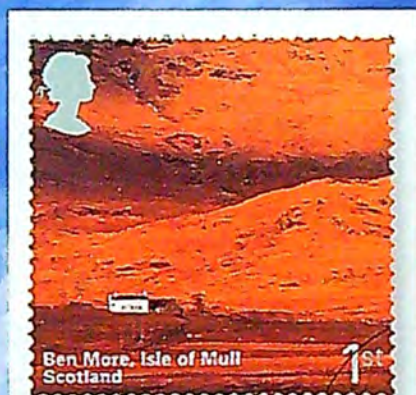
The ROYAL MAIL magazine *for stamp collectors*

Bulletin

Volume 40 Number 10

JUNE 2003 £1.10

The new Elizabethan Age •
A British Journey • Walsall



A 10-part series of philatelic journeys begins in July, with a set of six stamps featuring Scottish landscapes.



Forthcoming issues and withdrawals

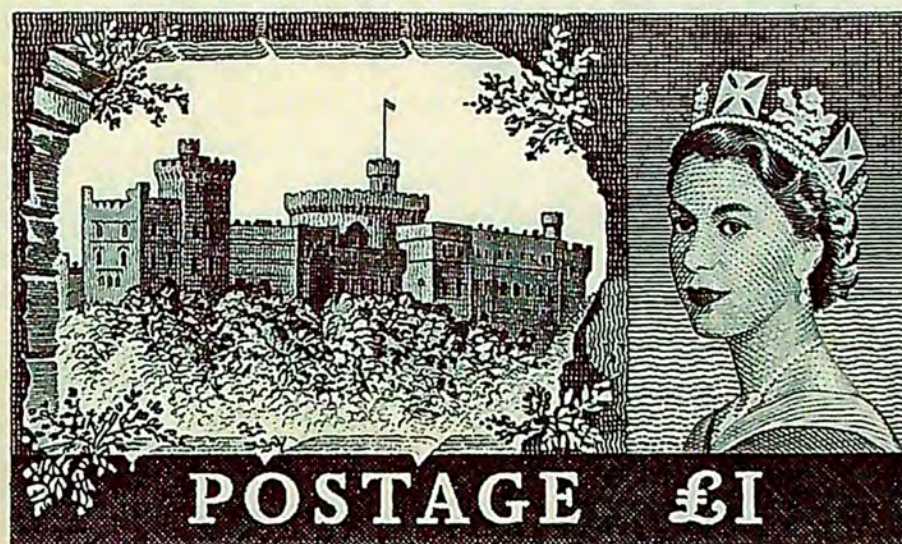


Cover Ben More, on the Isle of Mull, seen from the shore of Loch Scridain. Ben More is the subject of the 1st class in Royal Mail's new stamp issue, previewed this month. Photograph by Dennis Hardley.

Issues Note some items are available only from Royal Mail Tallents House Edinburgh and Post Office Limited philatelic outlets at main post offices in Bath, Belfast, Birmingham Brighton, Bristol, Cambridge Canterbury, Cardiff, Chester Colchester, Coventry, Croydon Durham, Edinburgh, Exeter Gatwick Airport, Glasgow Grimsby, Guildford, Harrogate Leeds, Leicester, Liverpool London (Trafalgar Square and Eastcheap), Manchester, Newcastle upon Tyne, Norwich, Nottingham, Oxford, Plymouth Portsmouth, Southampton Southend-on-Sea, Stevenage Stratford-on-Avon, Stroud Truro, Windsor and York

2 June	Issue Coronation anniversary stamps; presentation pack; prestige stamp book; coin, banknote and ingot covers; ingot and coin pack; commemorative postal order and Royal Mail phone cards.
4 June	Withdrawal Scotland 2nd and 1st class stamps printed by Walsall.
10 June	Issue Prince William of Wales stamp cards.
17 June	Issue Prince William of Wales stamps and presentation pack.
1 July	Issue £1.50, £2, £3 and £5 definitives printed in gravure, also presentation pack.
3 July	Withdrawal 40p, 45p and 65p Machin definitives, 65p Country stamps for England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.
8 July	Issue A British Journey: Scotland stamp cards.
15 July	Issue A British Journey: Scotland stamps, presentation pack, and stamp book containing 4 x 1st class definitives in gold and 2 x 1st class Scotland stamps (all six stamps self-adhesive).
15 July	Withdrawal Commonwealth Games stamps, presentation pack and stamp cards.
29 July	Issue Pillar to Post ingot cover no3.
29 July	Issue Smilers sheet: 20 x 1st class Cartoons stamps and labels.

Contents



One of the high value stamps of the new reign, issued in 1955.

The new Elizabethan Age

In 1953, the Coronation was seen as the dawn of a new age, and a chance for a fresh start. Glenn Morgan looks back at some of the stamps, postal history and events of fifty years ago **298**

The **British Philatelic Bulletin** is published monthly by Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ. • **Editor** J R Holman • **Price** £1.10 single copies from Post Office Limited philatelic outlets • **Annual subscription** £11.75 in UK and Europe; £16.75 rest of the world. Subscriptions should be sent to Royal Mail Talents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB. • **Binders** to hold 24 issues, price £7, are available by post from Royal Mail (Edinburgh address above). • Royal Mail also publishes the fortnightly *British Postmark Bulletin*, which gives details of forthcoming special handstamps. Available on annual subscription from Edinburgh address above: £12.25 UK and Europe, £24.95 rest of the world. • **Copyright** Design & text Royal Mail Group plc, unless attributed to a specific author. All requests to reproduce any article should be sent to the Editor, *British Philatelic Bulletin*, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ. • **Design** by Robert Maude • **Printed** in Great Britain by the Perivan Group Limited • **ISSN** 0953 8119 • Royal Mail is a trading name of Royal Mail Group plc. Registered in England and Wales, number 4138203, registered office 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ.

Issues and withdrawals for June and July **290**

This month The Editor previews this issue **292**

Stamp scene Societies; New catalogues; Exhibitions; Tennis legends on stamps **292**

Royal Mail news New printings of definitives; Special issues; Revised high values; Cartoons Smilers; New banknote and ingot covers **295**



The Coronation A look back at some proposed designs from 1953 **302**

A British Journey: Scotland A preview of the first issue in a new series of cross-country philatelic journeys **304**

Printing at Walsall Glenn Morgan reports on a visit to the famous security printers **308**



Mainly Machins Report for specialist collectors, by D G A Myall **312**

On a mission Prashanthini Shanthakumar, by Richard West **314**

Cover corner **315**

Philately on-line Ron Negus revisits Stanley Gibbons websites **316**

Postbag Letters to the Editor **317**

Special draw Win a sheet of the Coronation stamps **317**

Competitions £200 to be won in two easy-to-enter competitions **318**

Events **318**

Late news **319**

This month The Editor previews this issue

JUNE is an important month for collectors of Royal stamps, with issues for both the anniversary of The Queen's Coronation and the 21st birthday of our future king, Prince William of Wales. We anticipate great demand for both sets of stamps. In this month's *Bulletin* Glenn Morgan, author of the acclaimed book *Royal Household Mail*, recalls some of the philatelic implications of the Accession and Coronation 50 years ago. We also feature some of the many designs submitted for the Coronation stamps in 1953.

June will also be an important month in the philatelic world with a new person taking on what is arguably the top job in British philately – the Editorship of the Stanley Gibbons Catalogue. There can be hardly a collector in the UK who has not at some stage used a SG catalogue – from the simplified *Stamps of the World* or *Collect British Stamps*, through the standard 22-part catalogue, to the highly detailed five volumes of the GB Specialised Catalogue. The post of Editor has been ably carried out for the past 18 years by David Aggersberg who now feels it time to take a well-deserved rest after 36 years at SG. Keeping up with listing over 10,000 new stamps from around the world each year is some task and David has fulfilled it with distinction. Taking over this onerous job will be Hugh Jeffries, Editor of *Gibbons Stamp Monthly* since 1988. Hugh is a philatelist through and through. He comes from a philatelic family – his father, grandfather and great-grandfather all being collectors. We wish him well in his new job and await with interest what changes he will make to the SG range of catalogues. In producing catalogues of British stamps, Hugh will continue to have the valuable assistance of Robert Oliver who has worked at SG for nearly half a century. Douglas Myall, commenting on Robert's knowledge and experience, once wrote of Robert: 'At any meeting of "Machin editors" he would surely be offered the chair'. It is good to know that these important 'tools of the trade' for both collectors and dealers are in such good hands. JOHN HOLMAN, EDITOR •

Stamp scene Exhibitions • Auction news • Catalogues • Publications • Tennis legends

Thematica 020 8343 2434

Exhibitions Thematica will be held at the Carisbrooke Hall, Seymour Street London W2 (near Marble Arch) on 29-30 June. Opening hours are Saturday 10.30-17.30, Sunday 10.30-17.00, admission free. Leading thematic dealers will be present. A special souvenir sheet will be available featuring Jeffery Matthews stamp designs. Visitors can see the 10 most popular stamps of The Queen's reign from those nominated by collectors (see March *Bulletin*, page 196), and will be able to vote for their all-time favourite. If your top three matches the overall selection, you could win a free weekend trip to the French national stamp exhibition in Paris with £250 spending money. The runner-up will receive £100 •

Midpex 2003 will be held at the Midland Sports Centre for Disabled, Tile Hill, Coventry on 28 June. Open 10.00-16.00. Some 60 societies (including the GB Philatelic Society) and 40 dealers will be present. Admission 50p •

The 55th International Stamp Fair and 42nd 'Europa' exhibition will take place at the Palace of Tourism in Riccione, Italy, on 29-31 August. The event has established itself as the start of the philatelic year and is the only one of its kind in Italy, accorded international status by the Government. The exhibition attracts about 20,000 visitors annually, many on holiday in Riccione, the most elegant of the Adriatic Riviera resorts. Admission to the exhibition is free •

Coronation exhibition To mark the 50th anniversary of the Coronation, a special exhibition at Windsor Castle brings together material from the Royal Archives, Royal Library and Royal Photographic Collection to illustrate the ritual and symbolism of Coronation from the 17th century to the present day. Amongst the items on show are The Queen's own order of service for the Coronation and the pen she used to sign her Coronation oath; the Bible on which George III took his oath; and the manuscript of the music composed by Elgar for the Coronation of George V in 1911. The exhibition will be on show until 21 September except 16 June (Garter Day) and last admission will be at 15.00 on 1 July •

Auctions Spink will auction Stamps & Covers of the World on 4 June, followed by British Empire Stamps & Postal History (10 July) and GB Stamps & Postal History (25 September). Enquiries to the address at right, or see website www.spink-online.com •

Cavendish auctions during June comprise: GB Specialised (5th), World-wide (6th) and Messengers & Philatelic Literature (9th). Enquiries to the address at right, or see website www.cavendish-auctions.com •

New catalogues The 2003 edition of the popular *Great Britain Concise Catalogue* was published by Stanley Gibbons at the end of April, price £18.95. Other recent catalogues include a *Commonwealth Simplified Catalogue* (1840 to date) with colour illustrations, price £39.95; the 2003 edition of *Collect Channel Islands and Isle of Man Stamps* (£13.95) and a loose-leaf *Canada One-Country Catalogue* price £9.95 in black & white, £19.95 in colour. Postage £3.50 on UK orders under £50; overseas postage on request •

Societies' publications The January *Newsletter* of the British Decimal Stamps Study Circle contains detailed reports on the new printer for the Northern Ireland E stamp, the Wildings 1 miniature sheet, and Christmas stamps and books, and contributions by Edgar Smith on Mounting and Writing Up and a review of the stamp issues of 2002. Sent out with the *Newsletter* are News Sheets giving details of new printings of definitives (with cylinders, printing dates, etc) and snippets of information on recent and forthcoming issues. Whilst the information contained in BDSSC publications is invaluable, the tone of reporting is at times sarcastic and anti-Royal Mail •

Midpex enquiries M Benford, Cloudhill, High Street, Shutford, Banbury OX15 6PQ.

Comune Di Riccione Palazzo del Turismo, I-47838 Riccione, Italy. Telephone +39 0541 692194.

Enquiries Ticket Sales and Information Office, The Official Residences of The Queen, London SW1A 1AA. Telephone 020 7321 2233. information@royalcollection.org.uk

Spink 69 Southampton Row, London WC1B 4ET. Telephone 020 7563 4000.

Cavendish Philatelic Auctions 153-7 London Rd, Derby DE1 2SY. Telephone 01332 250970

Stanley Gibbons Publications Parkside, Ringwood BH24 3SH. Telephone UK order line 0800 611622. or +44 1425 472363 from overseas.

BDSSC For details contact the Editor, Trevor Jones, 111 Railton Jones Close, Stoke Gifford, Bristol BS34 8XY.

The April issue of *The Bookmark Journal* of the Great Britain Decimal Stamp Book Study Circle reports in depth on the Microcosmos prestige book, the 'Hello' book (4 March), Enschedé 1st and 2nd class business sheets, and includes a brief report on the new Universal (Europe and Worldwide) books of 27 March. Robert Bostock writes on Harrison window book covers, and Roy Ingram on booklet packaging and carton labels, and Brian Morris examines imprint variations on 50p vending books. The President's message includes the revelation that Douglas Myall has spent an estimated 10,000 hours compiling the latest edition of his *Deegam Machin Handbook* (to be published this Summer) – that is probably more hours than most collectors spend on their hobby throughout their lifetime! Sent out with *Bookmark* is issue 51 of Douglas Myall's *Deegam Report* – essential in keeping his Deegam Publications up-to-date •

Enquiries Bernhard Weiss,
Florianweg 57, 47574 Goch,
Germany.

Methodist Philatelic Society
Contact Terry Smart, 11 North-
wood Park, Woodlesford,
Leeds LS26 8PE. Telephone
0113 282 6988.

The March issue of *Rundbrief*, published by the German GB study group, Forschungsgemeinschaft Grossbritannien EV, contains worthwhile articles on Victorian 'Returned for Postage' markings, registered mail, the VR Penny Black, stamped to order newspaper wrappers, Irish telegrams, and new issues (Wilding miniature sheet, Birds of Prey, Occasions, Secret of Life, and Fruit & Veg). There is a useful list of articles and features in other GB magazines •

The January *Newsletter* of the Methodist Philatelic Society includes features on Hugh Bourne, the 150th anniversary of whose death was marked by a special handstamp for Englesea Brook, Crewe in October 2002, and Christopher Hopper, the 200th anniversary of whose death was the subject of a special Society cover in March 2002. Amongst the interesting items of news is a report from the *Lancashire Evening Telegraph* that a vestry at West Bradford Methodist Church near Clitheroe serves as a post office on Monday and Wednesday mornings. The previous West Bradford PO closed in August when the sub-postmasters retired •



Tennis legends Rod Laver and Margaret Court join a select group who have appeared on Australian stamps during their lifetimes. Shown at 84%.

Wimbledon legends stamps Two of the world's great tennis champions, Rod Laver and Margaret Court, have been named 2003 Australia Post Australian Legends. Four stamps featuring Laver and Court were issued by Australia Post on 24 January and both were presented with 24-carat gold replicas of their stamps. Rod Laver is the only player ever to win the Grand Slam twice (in 1962 and 1969). The Grand Slam is the rare feat of winning the four major 'grand slam' titles in one year – the Australian Open, French Open, Wimbledon, and the US Open. Margaret Court won 62

grand slam events in both singles and doubles – more grand slam titles than any other player in history. In 1970 she became the only Australian woman to achieve the Grand Slam. Court and Laver are shown on the stamps with the Wimbledon trophies in 1965 and 1969 respectively. This year's Wimbledon Championships takes place 23 June – 6 July •

Royal Mail news

Definitives withdrawals • Special issues • Ingots • Cartoons Smilers

Revised high value stamps Future printings of the £1.50, £2, £3 and £5 definitives will be in gravure rather than recess (intaglio) in line with the values from 1p to £1. Stamps from the new printings will be available from Tallents House and Post Office philatelic outlets from 1 July and from Post Office branches as supplies of the recess printed stamps are used up. The new stamps will be printed by De La Rue in sheets of 200. Colours will be: £1.50 terracotta, £2 slate blue, £3 purple, and £5 grey blue. Iridion ink will be used, as with the current £1 stamp, and each will have two phosphor bands. Cylinders will be D1 colour, D1 iridion ink, D1 phosphor. Existing recess-printed high values will remain on philatelic sale until further notice.

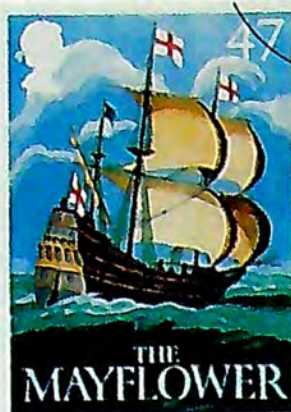
Unstamped Royal Mail FDC envelopes will be available from main Post Office branches and philatelic outlets about a week before 1 July, price 25p. The envelope is the standard one for definitive stamps, showing a detail (winged horse) from the Royal Mail Group plc coat of arms. Orders for serviced FDCs with the four stamps or cancelled by a pictorial first day postmark of Tallents House Edinburgh or Windsor must reach Tallents House (address below) by the day of issue. Price £13.93 UK or £11.86 overseas. Collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue to: Royal Mail, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB (Tallents House postmark), or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Wexham Road, Slough SL1 1AA (Windsor postmark), marking the outer envelope 'FDO3 33' (Tallents House), or 'FDO3 34' (Windsor). Covers can be posted or handed in at main Post Office branches for the Windsor postmark. Details of other handstamps for 1 July will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from Tallents House (£12.25 UK/Europe; £24.95 elsewhere). For a sample copy write to: The Editor, British Postmark Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ.

An illustrated pack containing the stamps (price £11.85) will be available from Tallents House, main Post Office branches and philatelic outlets •

Definitive stamps Any remaining stocks of the obsolete 40p, 45p and 65p Machin definitives, also 65p Country stamps for England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales will be withdrawn from sale at Tallents House and Post Office philatelic outlets on 3 July. These stamps were withdrawn from sale at post offices on 3 July 2002 when the relevant postal rates were increased. Stocks of the Scotland 2nd and 1st class stamps printed by Walsall will be withdrawn from philatelic sale on 4 June.

Books of 12 2nd class stamps now cost £2.40, books of six and 12 1st class stamps £1.68 and £3.36 respectively. New printings of the three international stamp books (E, 42p and 68p stamps) are now available with 'The Real Network' slogan added to the Royal Mail logo on the front cover. Also now available are rolls of 500 1st class stamps (gold) and 2nd class Welsh country stamp, both printed by De La Rue •





Forthcoming special issues There are two sets of special stamps this month: Coronation Anniversary (2 June), followed by 21st Birthday of Prince William (17 June), both previewed in last month's *Bulletin*. The issue for July – A British Journey: Scotland – is previewed this month, on page 304. The stamp programme then continues with Pub Signs (12 August: two are shown at left, at proof stage), Transports of Delight: A Collection of Classic Toys (18 September), the British Museum (7 October), and Christmas (4 November) •



Postmark for the third Pillar to Post ingot cover.

Coin, banknote and ingot covers A range of special covers will be available from Tallents House from 2 June. All feature The Queen wearing the Imperial State Crown on Coronation Day. A coin cover bears the 10 Anniversary stamps cancelled with a special London SW1 gold postmark showing Westminster Abbey and with the new £5 (crown) Coronation Anniversary coin encapsulated. Price £15.95. The ingot cover bears the five stamps showing the Coronation and procession cancelled by the Westminster Abbey gold postmark and with a silver and gold-plated ingot of the 1953 Coronation 1s3d stamp. Price £39.95. The banknote cover bears the stamp reproducing Cecil Beaton's official Coronation portrait of The Queen cancelled by the Westminster Abbey gold postmark. Set within the cover is a £5 note, with special cipher QC03, and the Coronation £5 (crown) coin. Price £44.95. A pack containing the ingot of the 1953 Coronation stamp, the new £5 coin, and an original 1953 Coronation coin is priced £49.95. All three covers and the pack are produced in limited editions and early ordering is advised. Only 2003 packs have been produced.

The third Pillar to Post ingot cover will be available from 29 July. The ingot reproduces the E stamp from the Pillar to Post set (October 2002). A pair of the stamps is cancelled by a special London postmark in the style of the Airmail handstamp in use in 1934. The cover is available from Royal Mail Tallents House, price £29.95. The final ingot covers are scheduled for October and January. A storage box is free with regular orders.

The first in a new series – 'Victorian Stamp Ingot Collection' – of attractive folders containing silver ingots of Victorian stamps is now available. This features the Penny Back, the world's first and most famous adhesive postage stamp. Price £26.95. The Collection will continue with the 1847 embossed 1s (24 June), 1870 1/2d (12 August), 1882 £5 orange, 1881 1d lilac, and 1887 'Jubilee' 1s stamps. The Victorian Stamp Ingot Collection, and a collection device in which to house them (free with regular orders), will be available from Tallents House, Edinburgh only •

Publication 9 Available from Royal Mail Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB. Price £2.95.

Bulletin publication Copies of publication 9 *The Wildings: The First Elizabeth 11 Definitives* will be withdrawn from sale on 27 June. This was given free with the April 2002 *Bulletin* but readers wanting additional copies should order now (order code PB362) Publications 1-8 are out of print •

Smilers sheets A new Smilers generic sheet containing 20 1st class Cartoons stamps will be available from 29 July, price £6.15. Also available will be sheets of 20 with your personalised image printed on the labels, price £14.95. For order form and further details phone 0845 074 2000 (UK customers) or +44 131 316 7489 (overseas). Orders for generic and/or personalised sheets should be sent to: Royal Mail Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB •

Going off sale The Commonwealth Games stamps, presentation pack and stamp cards will be withdrawn from sale at Tallents House and Post Office philatelic outlets on 15 July •

Rowland Hill Awards draw winner Nomination forms for the Rowland Hill Award for Post Office Excellence were entered in a draw for £100 worth of Royal Mail philatelic products. The winner was Maurice Elgar who nominated Haslam Crescent Post Office in Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex. This office, run by Mr Harjit Walia, won the Award, Mr Elgar commenting 'I cannot speak too highly of Mr Walia and the service he provides' •

Bulletin draw winners The winners of our Packs Draw in the March *Bulletin* were: E Hudson of York; D Hunt, Denver, USA; D Bagley, Co Dublin, Ireland; Ms S Innes, Edinburgh; and B Rogers, Middlesex •

New printings The 2nd class Welsh stamp printed by De La Rue (previously by Walsall) is now available from Tallents House and Post Office philatelic outlets. The cylinders used were D1 yellow-brown D1 orange-brown D1 black D1 phosphor. The overall impression is a lighter brown, with less distinct detail on the leek and background. The 1st class Machin in gold has been printed in gummed sheets of 200 by De La Rue. Cylinder D1 gold D1 phosphor. It will go on philatelic sale from 1 July and be available at Post Office branches as required. An earlier printing of this stamp (in sheets) was made by Walsall in 1997 •



The dawn of the second Elizabethan Age

The death of a reigning monarch marks both the end of an existing era, and the start of a new one. So it was in 1952 with the death of King George VI and the beginning of 'the second Elizabethan age'. The Coronation gave Britain, indeed much of the world, something to celebrate following years of conflict and rebuilding. It was seen by many as an occasion that would offer a new start to life.

We are rarely prepared for death in our personal lives and it appears to be no different in public life. As a result, there was no overnight change in postal arrangements, even within the Royal Household or the GPO. The Royal Family went into immediate mourning, and tradition dictated that this would be for a period of six months.

From a collecting viewpoint, this manifested itself in the form of mourning stationery. Some government departments also used mourning stationery, both here and in overseas outposts of the Empire. Another obvious impact related to The King's Flight, which was, not surprisingly, renamed The Queen's Flight and the stationery required updating to reflect this.

The Royal Household must have been a hive of activity at this time. There was a funeral to prepare for, a new Monarch was on the throne and there was an eventual Coronation ceremony to enact. Like a well-oiled machine, they rose to the occasion by dusting down the 'How to...' manuals last used back in 1936 and set to it.

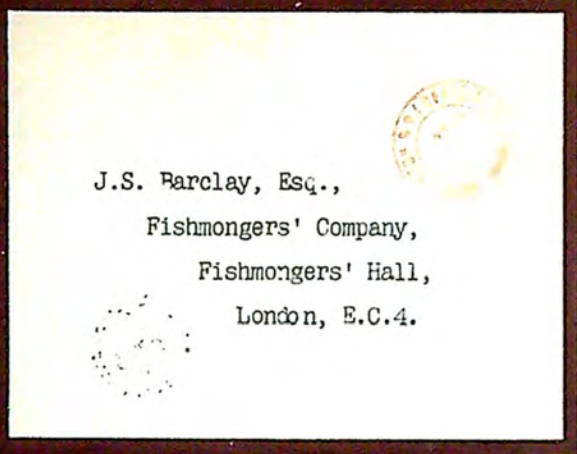
Postal history I will not dwell on the funeral, as this is a Coronation anniversary issue of the *Bulletin*; suffice to say that there would have been invitations to send out, acceptances to process and letters of thanks for the condolences expressed to despatch. These will all have created collectable items of postal history. Preparations for the Coronation will again have created many opportunities for collectors. It must be remembered, though, that the interest in postal history collecting at that time was nowhere near as popular as it is today. That does not mean that there is not a lot of collectable material available, for then, as now, an item of mail from the Royal Household would very often have been saved and handed down through the generations, eventually reaching the philatelic market.

Black Coronation stamps The printing industry's Penrose Annual was published each year to showcase the best of print. In 1954, this volume was not only the source of the black, perforated Coronation stamps from Harrison and Sons, it also contained a large selection of Coronation official stationery and ephemera. Much of this material will not have a direct philatelic link, but should be of interest to readers at this time, 50 years on from the event. It will be especially useful to collectors interested in the recently formed philatelic discipline of social philately. This branch of the hobby positively encourages the incorporation of ephemeral items alongside traditional covers and stamps and is gaining in popularity every year.

The special markings used at Royal residences were some time in gestation. I presume it is not correct protocol to prepare for a new Monarch until the previous one has died, even when imminent death is expected. Indeed, the use of the certifying stamps of King George VI continued for almost five months, from early February through to about the end of June.

Opposite Mourning envelope (top left) for King George VI – the border is always wider for a Monarch than for other members of the Royal Family. The Penrose Annual of 1954 (top right) is the source of the black perforated Coronation stamps printed by Harrison & Sons, and a large selection of Coronation material. Special markings were used at Royal residences (bottom right).

by Glenn H Morgan



SUPERIOR
DUTY PASS



Background to the Coronation

EARL MARSHAL'S PRESS BUREAU
4513



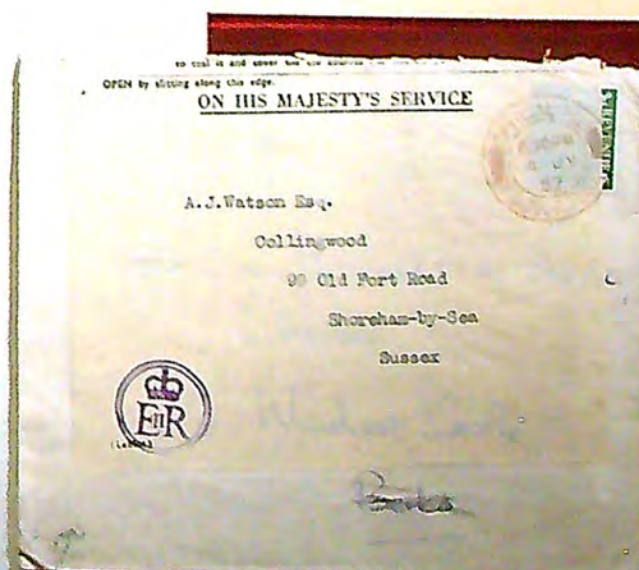
Design: F. C. C.



Design: Edmund Dineen



Design: M. C. Turner-Bell



Printed in black ink by Harrison & Sons Ltd.
by permission of His Majesty's Stationery Office



New postage stamps The first postage stamps bearing Elizabeth's effigy were issued on 5 December 1952, 10 months after her accession. The remaining low value definitives were issued in batches, and the full range was not completed until February 1954. The four high value stamps took even longer, not being issued until September 1955.

The GPO also had many operational items to change beyond basic sheet printed stamps, such as forms and postal orders, coils and stamp booklets. There was also the range of pre-stamped stationery, including envelopes, lettercards, wrappers, postcards and aerogrammes (including a Coronation souvenir edition) to print. These were all introduced over a considerable period of time, with existing George VI stocks being used up first. This was as much about being able to produce newly designed stocks quickly as it was about being economical. Indeed, it was not until March 1954 that the mixed reigns stamp booklet panes finally ceased production.

It is interesting at this point to consider how stamp-printing techniques have advanced in the past 50 years, as work on the new definitives and Coronation issue took over a year. Compare this to the speed with which the issue mourning the tragic death of Diana, Princess of Wales, was completed. The stamps were on press before her funeral had even taken place although, as readers will recall, the issuing of the stamps was subsequently delayed. Royal Mail's 'fast-track' printing process is even quicker a mere five years on, such is the pace in printing technology.

Royal visit Harrison and Sons held the Royal Warrant for stamp printing, and the new Queen paid them a visit to see her forthcoming Coronation stamps on press. A commemorative presentation card was subsequently produced for publicity purposes. Harrisons had previously produced a similar card with the 1½d and 2½d Wilding portrait definitives – the first of the new reign. Both items are available from auctioneers and dealers occasionally and make an interesting addition to a Royal or British collection.

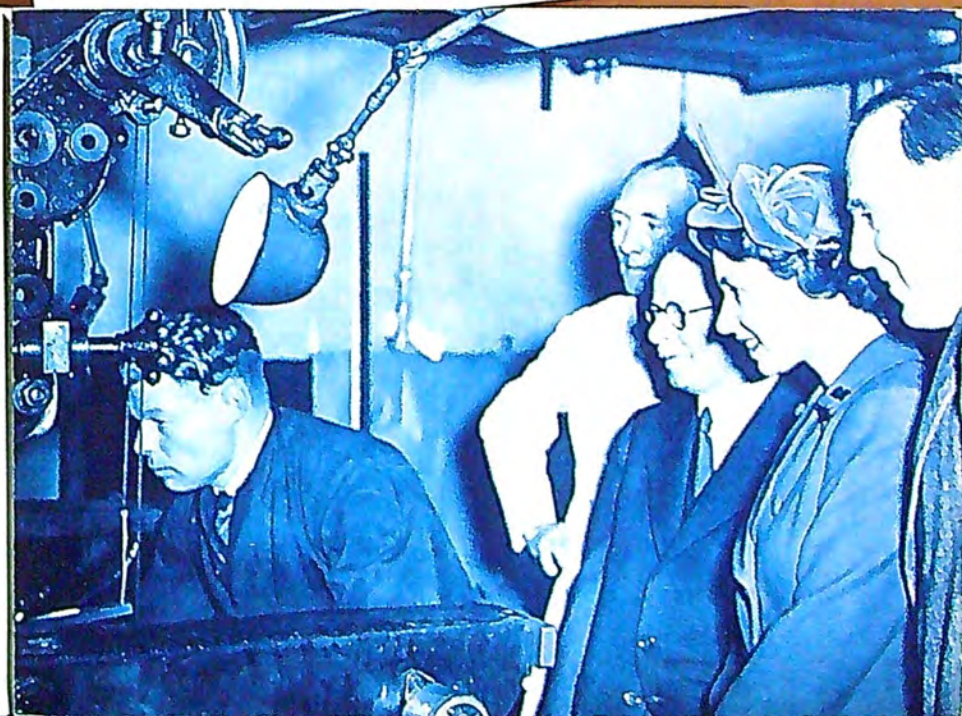
This short survey of postal arrangements in the first few months after The Queen came to the throne reveals how long it took to effect change. Let us hope that it is many years hence before we learn how quickly the process could be acted on nowadays •

Glenn Morgan is Librarian of the National Philatelic Society. An interview was published in the February 1998 *Bulletin*.

Right and below: Harrison & Sons' presentation card and wrap-around folder marking the new Queen's visit in 1952. They had earlier produced a similar card containing the first two stamps of the new reign (bottom right). Bottom left: Coronation stamp with a Balmoral Castle postmark.



THE ACTUAL VISIT
On November 19th, 1952, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II visited the High Wycombe works of Harrison and Sons Limited, to witness the production of the first postage stamp of her reign. In her last few weeks before the end of her reign, Her Majesty became the first to give a visit to Great Britain to witness the production of a stamp.
Messrs Harrison have been proud to receive her Majesty as the wife of George VI.
The production of postage stamps by the photographic process has averaged 14 million per day.



The Coronation As the anniversary stamps go on sale, we look at some designs of 1953



Ten 1st class stamps go on sale on 2 June – the 50th anniversary of The Queen's Coronation in 1953. The stamps feature scenes from the Coronation ceremony and procession, and informal celebrations in the form of local events such as street parties. Full details were published in last month's *Bulletin*.

THE CORONATION itself was commemorated by an issue of four stamps – 2½d, 4d, 1s3d and 1s6d designed respectively by Edgar Fuller (1898-1964), Michael Goaman, Edmund Dulac (1882-1953), and Michael Farrar Bell (1911-93). Dulac was the subject of an article, by Philip Parker, in the May *Bulletin*. Michael Goaman is happily still around, one half of the well-known stamp design team with his wife Sylvia. He told the *Bulletin*: 'It was interesting to recall our memories of the Coronation issue as it was our first introduction to stamp design; the beginning of many years involvement in this field, both for the GPO and the Commonwealth. The 4d value was Sylvia's concept, of a Tapestry effect using the National flowers: she felt that it was a suitable surround for the Queen's

portrait. The finished artwork was mine, as was the close runner-up; a design of hands holding the crown above the portrait, which gave us an extra chance of acceptance.'

Some 75 designs were submitted by leading artists of the time, and a number are shown opposite. Four were reproduced on National Postal Museum postcards – three of these are shown opposite top, with Michael Goaman's issued 4d, and the fourth, his runner-up design, is shown above.

A special Coronation air letter (aerogramme, shown opposite) was issued bearing a 6d version of the 1s6d adhesive stamp by Farrar Bell. The air letter design was by Stuart Rose.

Collectors may recall the attractive Queen's Beasts stamps issued in 1998. The beasts shown on the stamps were based on those created for The Queen's Coronation – six-foot high sculptures which supported shields of Royal Arms and badges and were conceived to symbolise The Queen's royal descent and to guard Her entrance to Westminster Abbey. They were the idea of Sir George Bellew, Garter King of Arms 1950-61, who is known to philatelists as designer of the George VI 10s and £1 high values of 1939 and 1948 and the UPU 1s stamp of 1949. The Coronation beasts were moulded in clay and final castings made in plaster. A later carved set can still be seen at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. For further information see the January 1998 *Bulletin* (pages 132-33) and the presentation pack for the Queen's Beasts stamps.

Shown opposite is the Coronation anniversary special postal order, produced by Post Office Ltd, available from 2 June from Tallents House and Post Office postshops, price £14.95. Postal orders, first introduced in 1881, remain a popular and convenient way of remitting small sums of money; they are available at Post Office branches in amounts from 50p to £20 •



Counterfoil

To be detached and kept by the sender

Ten Pounds

See over for conditions of use



Issuing Office

Date Stamp

The Queen's Coronation
Commemorative Postal Order

1953-2003



Please pay

Ten Pounds

Received signature

Please do not mark or write below this line



Not negotiable

Issuing Office

Date Stamp

A British Journey: Scotland The first set of



Technical details

Printer De La Rue

Process Gravure

Stamp size 35 x 35mm

Sheet size 50

Perforation 14.5

Phosphor One band 2nd class, two bands others

Gum PVA

Gutter pairs Vertical

Cylinder numbers & colours

All values D1 silver • D1 black
• D1 magenta • D1 yellow •
D1 cyan (blue) • D1 phosphor

SIX STAMPS featuring the magnificent Scottish scenery – the first in a 10-part stamp issue entitled 'A British Journey' – will be available from Post Office branches and philatelic outlets and from Royal Mail Tallents House Edinburgh from 15 July. There will also be a stamp book (see below).

The stamps feature: 2nd class Loch Assynt, Sutherland; 1st class Ben More, Isle of Mull; E (European) rate Rothiemurchus, Cairngorms; 42p Dalveen Pass, Lowther Hills; 47p Glenfinnan Viaduct, Lochaber; and 68p Papa Little, Shetland Islands. The Queen's silhouette is printed in silver at top left, with the value or service indicator at bottom right. The location shown on the stamp appears as a caption at the foot of each design. The stamps are the work of Phelan Barker Design Consultants, using photography by Colin Baxter Photography Ltd (Loch Assynt, Ben More, Rothiemurchus, and Papa Little), Gary Smith (Dalveen) and Peter Jordan (Glenfinnan). It is intended that these stamps will remain on sale at Post Office branches in Scotland until further notice.

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Unstamped Royal Mail FDC envelopes will be available from main Post Office branches and philatelic outlets about a week before 15 July, price 25p. Orders for serviced FDCs with the six stamps cancelled by a pictorial first day postmark of Royal Mail Tallents House Edinburgh or Baltasound, Unst, Shetland must reach Tallents House (address below) by the day of issue. Price £3.27 UK or £2.79 overseas. Baltasound was chosen for the alternative postmark as it is the most northerly Post Office branch in the UK.

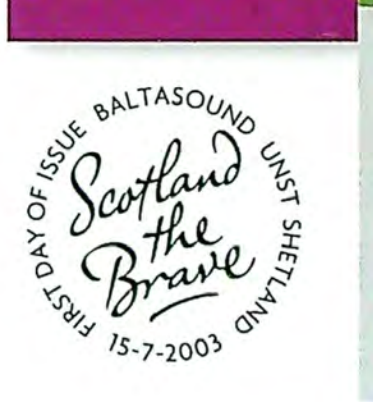
Collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue to: Royal Mail, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB (Tallents House postmark), or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Rutherglen DO, Duchess Place, Rutherglen, Glasgow G73 1BT (Baltasound postmark), marking the outer envelope 'FDO315' (Tallents House), or 'FDO316' (Baltasound). Covers can be posted or handed in at main Post Office branches for the Baltasound postmark.

STAMP BOOK A book containing four 1st class definitives (gold) and two 1st class British Journey: Scotland stamps will be available, price £1.68. All six stamps are self-adhesive.

Details of other 15 July hand-stamps will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from Tallents House (£10 UK and Europe; £21.75 elsewhere).

For a sample copy write to: The Editor, British Postmark Bulletin, Royal Mail, 2-14 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8HQ.

stamps in a new series of philatelic journeys



PHILATELIC PRODUCTS A well-illustrated pack containing the six stamps (price £2.80) and stamp cards (25p each) will be available from Tallents House, main Post Office branches and philatelic outlets. The pack, designed by Howard Brown, includes text by Alexandra Morgan.

The pack includes some facts and figures about Scotland: its population of 5,062,000 (69,500 Gaelic speakers); land mass of 78,783 sq km; and the population of its largest cities, Glasgow (577,869), Edinburgh (448,624), Aberdeen (212,125) and Dundee (145,663). Scotland also boasts the oldest working post office in the world – Sanquhar, Dumfriesshire (since 1712), and the highest and most northerly post offices in the UK, at Wanlockhead, Dumfriesshire (451m) and Baltasound on Unst in the Shetland Islands •

Among the many interesting illustrations in the presentation pack (above) are: a road sign in Gaelic; tossing the caber; Callanish standing stones; the Up Helly-Aa fire festival; Loch Ness; the Scottish Exhibition Centre; Morray Firth dolphins; the Millennium Window in St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral in Edinburgh; and the Falkirk Wheel.

Scottish scenery on stamps

Opposite, top row: the Cairngorms on 1966 Landscapes 1s6d; the Jacobite monument and Loch Shiel at Glenfinnan, 1981 National Trust 14p; and fallow deer in Scottish forest, 1992 Wintertime 18p.

Middle row: Carnoustie, 1994 Scottish Golf Courses 30p; Ben Arkle, Sutherland, by the Prince of Wales, 1994 25p; the Braemar Gathering, 1994 Summertime 41p.

Bottom row: the West Highland line near Bridge of Orchy, 1994 Age of Steam 19p; woodland at Doire Dach, 2000 Millennium Tree & Leaf 65p; and an aerial view of Luskentyre, 2002 Coastlines 27p.

The Scottish landscape For many visitors to Scotland, it is a country of mountains, midgets and mists – a landscape that is never forgotten. Add to that the friendliness of its people, its excellent food and drink, its historical buildings, and distinctiveness from the rest of the UK, and any holiday in Scotland is a memorable experience. The landscape varies from the rolling hills of the Lowlands to the bleak grandeur of the Western Highlands, the rich soils of the agricultural east, and the unique and diverse scenery of the Hebrides, Orkney and Shetland.

Although over the years numerous stamps have featured aspects of Scottish history, agriculture and way of life, relatively few have depicted its magnificent scenery. Some of these are shown opposite.

Many fine Scottish views featured on the attractive series of Scottish aerogrammes (airletters) issued from 1974 onwards. Two of the best were entitled 'Nature of Scotland', issued in 1992 and 1997. An article on the second of these aerogrammes was published in the *Bulletin* of July 1997. The Nature of Scotland was the subject of a book sponsored by the former Scottish Post Office Board in 1992 and another book on the remote island of Eriskay was published in 1997 (see *Bulletin* January 1998). A pleasing design for a stamp showing the 'Hebridean coast' was prepared by David Gentleman in the 1960s – this unissued stamp was shown in the *Bulletin* in December 2000.

Scottish scenery featured in *The Scots Connection* prestige book of March 1989, Scottish farm buildings on the cover of a 10p stamp book of January 1979, and Click Mill, Dounby, Orkney on a 50p book of January 1990. Two sets of postcards featuring Scottish postbuses (some in scenic settings) were issued by the Scottish Post Office Board in November 1979 and July 1980, and a set of six cards featuring crofting went on sale in June 1986. A Royal Mail prepaid 'aircard' showing a painting of the Isle of Arran by renowned artist Craigie Aitchison RA was issued in September 1997.

The first day cover envelope for the current Scottish country stamps shows a Highland scene near Loch Fyne and the presentation pack shows the 'fairytale' castle of Eileann Donan and Loch Duich.

Since 1970 local stamps (local carriage labels) have been issued by the Summer Isles, off the west coast of Ross and Cromarty, near Ullapool; stamps featuring the Mountains of Assynt-Coigach were shown in the *Bulletin* of June 1998.

Several articles appertaining to Scottish landscape and the postal services in rural areas have been published in this *Bulletin* in recent years. These include features on the Road to the Isles (October 1998), Isle of Islay (September 2000), Iona (January 2001), and Loch Lomond (March 2001), Sanquhar and Wanlockhead post offices (January 1994 and August 1995), and postbus services (June 1998). Photographs of the post offices at East Yell, Shetland, and Broadford, Isle of Skye were shown in November 1996, and the office at Achateny and the most westerly postbox at Portuairk on the Ardnamurchan Peninsula in March 1996. An article on the most northerly post office – at Baltasound, Shetland – was published in the *British Postmark Bulletin* of 9 November 2001 •



Stamp printing at Walsall Glenn Morgan is given a VIP tour

I WAS recently one of 10 collectors given the rare opportunity of visiting Walsall Security Printers at its West Midlands factory. The original Walsall Lithographic Company, was founded in 1894, while Walsall Security Printers Limited (wsp) was established in 1966 to concentrate on the specialist skills required for postage stamp printing.

The first stamp contract Walsall as a town was renowned for its leather products in the 19th century and Walsall Litho was established to print catalogues for the harness and saddlers businesses. It was the purchase of a German letterpress 'seal' machine in 1913 that indirectly led to the first stamp contract for wsp 50 years later! The King of Tonga had a requirement for an issue of stamps embossed on gold foil and De La Rue (DLR) recommended Walsall for the job.

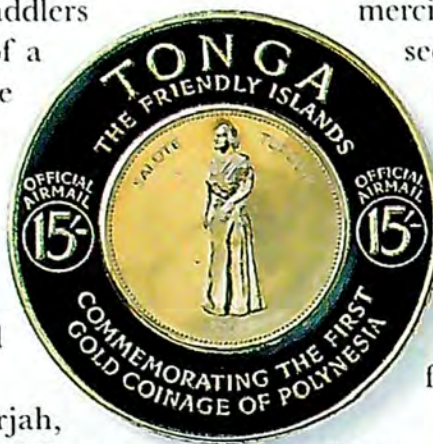
Over time, Sierra Leone, Sharjah, Bhutan, and probably others joined Tonga in issuing through Walsall stamps that were die-cut and shaped as bananas, maps, coins, etc. It has taken almost 40 years for this joint concept of self-adhesive and die-cutting to be generally accepted.

To this day, wsp are specialists in self-adhesive stamps, with water-activated (gummed) versions now accounting for only around five percent of its business. How times change, as cost was always a stumbling block to the mass introduction of self-adhesive products. Self-adhesive paper used to cost around twice that of water-activated paper; whereas now self-adhesive stock is comparable to the cost of water-activated.

By 1969, the company was producing stamps for the Crown Agents and Inter-Governmental Philatelic Corporation. In 1987, they were first appointed as a supplier to the British Post Office. Expansion continued with the installation of a new Chesnut photogravure stamp printing press in 1997, largely to meet Royal Mail requirements for a Machin head in gravure.

Interactive stamps As readers of this *Bulletin* will know, Royal Mail recently entrusted production of the 'fruit and veg' interactive stamps to wsp. This new stamp issue certainly lives up to Royal Mail's slogan 'Stamps stimulate', causing much discussion among collectors as to the appropriateness of such an issue. Well, I like them!

Walsall Print Group (wpg, the holding company of wsp), has recently been divided into three operating divisions that each focus on their key production capabilities: brand protection, commercial label production and, of course, security printing. The group, which for a short time was known as the Millennium Print Group, is still a family-owned business run by two brothers, John and Adrian Aspinall. Not a large company as such, but they are a major employer in Walsall, and have been for well over 100 years.



Stamp production Our host for the day was Brian Janes, a person well known to many of the 10 visitors, as we had met him previously at Harrison and Sons and later at De La Rue before he was given the chance to work at wsp in a similar role.

We were initially given an introductory talk that ended up as a question-and-answer session, such was our quest for knowledge. We were then taken to see the 'repro room', where the artwork, in whatever format it is provided in, is scanned into a computer, manipulated for colour, stepped into sheets, output to film and then printed from the cylinders. As Walsall use mini-webs, these cylinders are a far more manageable size than those used on the giant Harrison Jumelle press which was recently taken out of commission following the closure of the famous High Wycombe print plant.

On press at the time of our visit were the forthcoming Prince William birthday stamps and, when released, we shall all be looking out for corner blocks with an 11/03/03 print date as a sou-



ST. MATTHEW'S CHURCH, WALSALL



ISLE OF MAN 26



ISLE OF MAN 22



venir of our visit. Also on press during our visit were the first class gold booklets, each reel of which contains 3000 metres of stamps, and there were dozens of these printed reels, all part of around 200 million books produced annually for Royal Mail.

Courvoisier is a brand and company that WPG purchased a while ago, and we saw the gravure press that had been moved over from Switzerland and which is now used for production of short-run overseas orders. Built like a tank, this Chambon press is set to run and run, and looks so sturdy compared with the modern Chesnut presses on site.

It is interesting at this juncture to compare WSP with DLR, as Walsall saw value in retaining and promoting the Courvoisier brand; whereas DLR has a long history of buying, then removing from the market place, all proof that their purchased companies had ever existed. Waterlow, Bradbury Wilkinson, Harrison and now Questa are all halloed names that have met this sad fate.

The contract for Royal Mail business sheets is now with Walsall, and we witnessed the stripping of the matrix from the web on the second class definitives. We then saw them trimmed to size, concertina folded, banded into fifties and packed into boxes and labelled ready for shipment to Royal Mail stores at Hemel Hempstead.

Finishing and packing The finishing department was also trimming into singles, folding, counting and packaging into twenty-fives the first class booklets. These were then wrapped in clear film, undertaken on a machine initially designed to cello-wrap boxes of cigarettes. It had been suitably adapted to enable ink-jet printing of the production date, adding a barcode and the printer name. Each pack was then individually weighed to avoid any 'overs or unders' before being boxed, labelled and shipped out to stores.

A little-known aspect of WSP's capabilities is the philatelic bureau that they have established. Much of the enclosing into presentation packs and affixing and cancelling of stamps on first day covers is undertaken for the Dutch TPG and, increasingly, others, on-site.



Universal stamps The recent Universal Machins from Royal Mail are an example from the WSP bureau, where Walsall created coils from the web of booklets. These were then fed into the applicator and directly affixed onto FDCs. Similarly, stamps from these same coils were die-punched into singles, giving the appearance of water-activated stamps, a process that they had perfected for the Dutch contract. It must be stressed that the coils used never left WSP and so are unavailable for purchase.

Depending on whether one or both columns of the original booklets were used, there are a maximum of four different backs to each Universal stamp that will be of possible interest to collectors of Machin singles. (Readers may recall that the definitive 'coil boxes' and the Christ-



5 maal € 0,65



mas 2001 and 2002 self-adhesive issues contained in presentation packs had the backing paper visible around the stamp.)

Interestingly, the two Universal Machin booklets were printed side-by-side on the web, as this proved the most economical method of production, so shared colours and the paper stock (an Avery product) will be identical in books, FDCs and packs. Examination of the issued stamps will reveal whether the booklet and coil die-cutters used were identical or not, as we could not examine them together.

A commemorative set for an unspecified European post office proved interesting from a volumes viewpoint. The top value had 50% of its print run destined for post office counters and the other 50% was reserved for philatelic sales. On

that basis, collectors must at least cover the cost of stamp production and provide, I suspect, a healthy income as well. It was also surprising to learn how low a commemorative print run can be these days – in this case a mere 200,000 sets.

Being a long-term, serious collector and scrupulously honest, I could never have betrayed the trust placed in me during our visit. I must admit though, that I did see some wonderful items that would be star pieces in my collection. Items like the Machin stamps with either no value or 'oop' value being used by machine minders for colour matching purposes. Then there were the imperforate booklets and stamps awaiting die-cutting or perforating, plus the essays with obsolete face values and 'approved for production' proofs. Still, I will always value my own reputation higher than that of my stamp collection...just!

Had I attempted to steal anything I was bound to be caught anyway; they are not called security printers for nothing. Hundreds of commercial printers in Britain can print, but there are now only two Royal Mail approved stamp printers in the UK – and for a reason. WSP will have invested considerable sums of money on many overt and covert security features that effectively monitor the premises, staff and visitors constantly.

We had arrived at 10.30 and left, after a sumptuous lunch, over four hours later, having been treated royally – even our name badge had VIP on it! It is obvious that Walsall runs a slick, professional operation and has employees who clearly enjoy their roles. Staff at all levels were so keen to share their knowledge and to answer the many questions posed, referring first to their line manager if they were ever uncertain as to whether it was appropriate to answer or not. They were a credit to themselves and the company.

So, a big 'thank you' goes to the Friends of Postal Heritage for requesting the visit, to Royal Mail for sanctioning it and to WSP – Brian in particular – for giving us such an enjoyable and informative day •

For details of events organised by the Friends of Postal Heritage, contact the Secretary: Mrs A Harms, 13 Amethyst Avenue, Davis Estate, Chatham ME5 9TX.

Mainly Machins New issues and printings, and a definition



This page: book of universal NVIs paying the 40g weight step for airmail to Europe, and stamps from the presentation packs showing part of the book's back cover on their reverse sides.

Opposite page: the Extreme Endeavours book and DLR's new 20p, 33p and 41p.

Universal NVIs Two books of four stamps issued on 27 March have aroused great interest. They are the 'universal' Non Value Indicators (NVIs) which pre-pay the 40g weight step for airmail to Europe and worldwide. Their airmail function is clearly indicated by a vertical line of chevrons at the right, although an airmail label is still required, and each book contains four of them, printed by a separate cylinder to the stamps. Like all NVIs they are valid in part payment for other mail, including inland mail. This is why they were accepted on first day covers.

These stamps are the first bi-coloured small format Machin definitives since 1976 when the 9p and 10p stamps were re-issued in a single colour. (Large format Machins were issued to pre-pay the first weight step for national parcels from 1983 to 1986. The head and background on these stamps were printed in different colours.)

One book of each type was printed side by side with eight books around the cylinders so that each revolution produced 16 books. They were printed from a common set of cylinders. The ultramarine cylinder printed the head, text and cylinder number on the Europe stamp and the blue chevrons on both stamps while the red cylinder printed the head, text and cylinder number on the Worldwide stamp and the red chevrons on both stamps. A single phosphor cylinder printed the bars on both stamps. The paler shades of The Queen's head were achieved by etching it less deeply than the chevrons. The normally white strips which appear at the right of other

self-adhesive books contain the same coloured chevrons as the stamps, although larger, and every eighth book contained the cylinder numbers. These were w1 ultramarine, w1 red and w1 phosphor. They were printed in between the coloured chevrons in both columns of books.

If you bought the presentation pack you will have noticed that single stamps in it had parts of the same printed substrate as used for the books. This is because they were punched out at Walsall before the books were actually cut out and folded. Thus there are actually four varieties of singles of each NVI, one for each position in the block. The stamps used on the official first day covers were also taken from the main printing, but slit to single stamp-wide coils. WSP affixed the stamps to envelopes supplied by Royal Mail by a clever machine which placed a pair of stamps on each envelope before seeking out another pair for the next one.

Extreme Endeavours book Another book in the mixed definitive/specials series was issued on 29 April, printed by De La Rue at Byfleet from new cylinders. These are numbered D1 magenta, D1 yellow, D1 cyan, D1 black, D1 gold and D1 phosphor. The phosphor is different from that used at the High Wycombe plant and is the same as that used by WSP and the former House of Questa. De La Rue's former phosphor gave an afterglow only when irradiated with short-wave ultra-violet. It was brought into general use in 1987. Collectors call it a phosphor. The newer phosphor

of a definitive, by D G A Myall



also has an afterglow when excited by long-wave UV and is supplied under the trade name Novaglo, a Latin-based word meaning 'new glow'. To differentiate it I have dubbed it A2. The addition of B indicates that it also fluoresces blue in both wavelengths.

Because of the extra width of the Everest team stamps a new arrangement has been adopted. Instead of four definitives flanked by a special at each side, the special stamps have been placed one above the other in the left panel, and the block of four gold Machins is on the right panel. These gold Machins are new; they are the first De La Rue self-adhesives with A2B phosphor.

The book is also the first in this series with Royal Mail's new strapline on the cover. Collins' dictionary defines strapline as: 'a subheading... in any advertisement'. In this context it refers to the text 'The Real Network' which appears underneath the cruciform logo on the front cover. (This is being added to all books of self-adhesives. The first of these appeared in March. All of them were printed from cylinders w1 colour and w1 phosphor.) Another innovation is that the date of issue is now printed on the back cover. I like this series of books; even with the cover closed one can see which specials are inside by the design on the front.

New 20p, 33p and 41p – short lives A few weeks before the tariff change of 8 May, it became necessary to replenish stocks of the 20p, 33p and 41p sheet stamps and these began to appear in post



offices toward the end of March. Following the closure of the High Wycombe plant all De La Rue's stamp production had been moved to Byfleet, home of the ATN press originally installed there by Questa. (See *Bulletin* February 2000). This required the making of new cylinders. The numbers for all three values are D1 (colour) and D1 (phosphor) and all exist both no dot and dot. The dot is much larger than normal, more of a spot really (above). The De La Rue silhouette logo appears in the bottom of the left margin and is thus part of normal cylinder blocks. The no dot block has a 1mm vertical line at the left in the colour of the stamp. Presumably, this pattern will be followed when other values come to be printed. The three values mentioned, however, were withdrawn from general sale on 7 May so will have had a short life.

The 20p 2B green stamp was previously printed on the Jumelle press (from cylinders 16/47, 17/45 and 17/47) and the bars were printed with AB phosphor whereas the new printing uses A2B phosphor (see above). The colour of this new stamp is a distinct shade, being brighter and with more yellow in it. Another way of distinguishing between the two printings is to look at the gap between the base of the value and the bottom of the frame. The gap measures 3mm on the Jumelle stamp but 3.3mm on the ATN version, a difference which is easily distinguished with the naked eye. The other two values also use A2B phosphor, but the colour is well matched to their Harrison's predecessors.

How do you define definitive? An interesting discussion of this topic took place recently on the internet. Most countries issue so-called commemorative stamps as well as definitives. Many of the latter are pictorials, a fact which some thought qualified them as commemoratives. In the UK, we have another group. Stamps depicting birds, flowers, insects etc do not commemorate anything but are thematic, although the subjects are usually indigenous to these islands. Royal Mail called these 'special issues', a term which now embraces true commemoratives as well. The consensus of the discussion was that the defining characteristic of a special issue is that it is on limited sale while a definitive is on sale for an indefinite time. ('indefinitives'?) This works well enough but there are some GB stamps which do not fit it exactly. The 'double head' stamps issued in January 1990 to 'commemorate' the 150th anniversary of the penny black were officially described as 'special definitives', indicating their hybrid nature. They were to be on general sale only for the rest of that year. Similarly, the brownish olive Machin issued

10 years later commemorated the new millennium and was taken off sale at the end of the year.

Despite their limited period of sale I have always regarded the 'double head' and 'Millennium' stamps as definitives, while recognising their special nature. The line, if there really is one, between definitives and specials will get considerably blurred in July with the first country view stamps, showing Scottish landscapes. They will be on general sale for the usual period for special stamps but will be retained at post offices in Scotland until further notice. This set will be followed by issues for Northern Ireland (March 2004), Wales (June 2004), London (July 2004), and possibly other parts of England at later dates. I am disposed to regard these stamps as specials rather than definitives but what do you think? We already have pictorial definitives for all four countries of the UK and I do not think that we should have two sets of pictorial definitives on concurrent sale. Regardless, I shall definitely be collecting the country view stamps if they are all as beautiful as those for Scotland •

Text © D G A Myall 2003

On a mission Prashanthini Shanthakumar, by Richard West

PRASHANTHINI SHANTHAKUMAR is one of those remarkable youngsters who has really taken to stamp collecting. Now 15 years old, it was ten years ago, living in Sri Lanka, that she watched her uncle with his collection. She was fascinated by what she saw, not so much the detail, but the colours, designs and shapes of the stamps. She started to collect, in an old exercise book, gathering as many stamps as she could, usually donated by her uncle and other friends.

It was when she acquired her first printed album that the full world of stamps really opened up to Prashanthini. She discovered that you can learn so much from them: she was particularly eager to learn more about the Commonwealth.

In 1966 she came with her family to England. Her father found information on the Royal Mail Collectors Club, which she joined, broadening



her experience further. That year she also joined the London Tamil Centre, and a little later the Centre started a stamp club, meeting every Saturday. Through this Prashanthini learned about competitions, and decided to enter one organised by Thematica (the thematic exhibition held in June and November in London), and came away with a bronze medal. This in turn led to visits to exhibitions, not least to Stampex (at the Business Design Centre in January and September), enjoying the many activities for young collectors provided there by the National Youth Stamp Committee.

Visiting exhibitions inspired her to collect by theme. Prashanthini is also keen on dance, so what better than to collect dance and music on stamps? Other interests include royalty and wildlife, so further collections have been developed

on Royalty, animals and birds. These have been entered in various competitions, not least the Stamp Active Competition (held each year as part of Autumn Stampex: more details from Jean Wood, telephone 0191 252 8733).

However, she does not concentrate just on her own collection. Prashanthini has persuaded many others to collect, not least her own sisters and cousins. She was elected onto the Committee of the stamp club at the London Tamil Centre, helping its membership to grow from just two or three to nearly 20. For a year she edited the ambitious newsletter published by the group twelve times a year, keeping members well informed about all that is happening with youth philately and providing games and quizzes, and is currently the group's President. She is anxious to find new ways

of improving the club, which includes free stamps for those who attend frequently, and the chance for swapping, perhaps even with members of other stamp groups.

But time still has to be devoted to school, where she particularly enjoys science, maths and information technology. However, back to stamps, she keeps in close contact with her uncle still in Sri Lanka, each sending the other the respective new issues: Prashanthini in fact still regards Sri Lanka very much as home. And her campaigning work to encourage others to collect continues, pointing out how much she has learned about the world, its people and cultures, its history, its flora and fauna. A testimony to her success at enthusing others is her father, who has now started his own collection – on aviation •

Cover corner

THIS MONTH HRH Prince William of Wales celebrates his 21st birthday. Shown below is a very special birthday cover. It was sent Special Delivery from Buckingham Palace on 21 June 1982, the Prince's birthday, to Roy Mason, MP at the House of Commons. Realising the significance of the postmark's date, Mr Mason (now Lord Mason of Barnsley) asked Sir George Pinker, The Queen's Gynaecologist who delivered the Prince, to sign

the cover. Sir George not only signed it but also arranged for the other members of his delivery team to add their names. The Special Delivery label on the cover adds to the attraction of this cover. We are grateful to Lord Mason for allowing us to illustrate this unique cover. Other signed covers from his collection were shown here last October (pages 50-55) •



Below: 1982 Mauritius stamp showing the baby Prince leaving hospital with his parents.



Philately on-line Ron Negus revisits Stanley Gibbons sites



www.allworldstamps.com The All World Stamps home page also has links to other Gibbons sites. These include those for Auctions, *Gibbons Stamp Monthly* and information about new issues from around the world at the Stamp Café.

WHEN I last reviewed the Stanley Gibbons website in the *Bulletin* in April 2001, the exercise to transfer their well-known catalogues to the internet had just started. In the intervening two years, Gibbons have been working very hard to extend coverage and to provide collectors with a range of new on-line options.

The starting point that led to my earlier review was the appearance of the first few countries to be included in the on-line version of the world famous Stanley Gibbons catalogues. These were made available at www.allworldstamps.com. The design of this site has now been revised and catalogue listings are available on-line for all countries. These listings have been derived from either the company's main British Commonwealth (Part 1) catalogue, or from Gibbons' *Stamps of the World* publication. Access to these pages for any country, which show the same basic information as in the printed versions, is free.

For a fee, subscribers can add information to catalogue entries to build up an individual record of their collection. From this detail, a Wants List can be derived and printed out, and a separate procedure allows duplicate stamps to be recorded to create an Exchange List. The virtual collections that are recorded in this way can also be valued (at catalogue prices) in sterling, us dollars, Australian dollars, euros or Japanese yen. These extra options are currently available for £22.95 per year.

The opening screen on the All World Stamps site is very easy to navigate. It contains a simple search box giving a list of country names. When

the required country is selected, a second screen is displayed that shows any sub-divisions of reign or period that issues from that country are catalogued under. Any of the listed options can then be selected to allow the actual catalogue entries to be exhibited on the screen in date order. If more than one page is needed to show all the items within the chosen sub-category, a counter is available at the bottom of each page to allow further navigation.

The standard page shows the year, title of the issue, the catalogue numbers of individual values, their face denomination, colour, and mint and used catalogue prices. If available, a thumbnail image of the design is also included. Clicking on this small picture provides an enlargement of the stamp concerned in colour. Apart from the main search facility, an advanced search option is also available. This allows catalogue pages to be called up using actual SG numbers, or a consecutive range of these. Alternatively, entering a range of years in addition to the country name can make the selection.

Over the two years since I wrote about this site, significant improvements have been made to make it much more user-friendly. Many of the changes have come about as a result of feedback from collectors. This is encouraged via a 'Contact Us' screen that allows e-mailed suggestions to be sent directly to the design team. Whilst not all can be implemented immediately, the team are keeping a wish list, so further changes can be expected in the future. In the meantime, the site is well worth the attention of all collectors ●

Postbag Letters to the Editor

Royal Horticultural Halls As Managing Director of the Royal Horticultural Halls & Conference Centre in Westminster, I draw readers' attention to the fact that the Royal Horticultural Society celebrates its bicentenary in 2004. As part of the celebrations, an exhibition will be mounted during the Society's Great Autumn Show in September to depict the Royal Horticultural Halls and their extraordinary history of events over the past 100 years. As the organiser of this event I am hoping your readers have interesting mementoes, catalogues, brochures, stamps or articles relating to any of the non-horticultural shows and events that have taken place in both the Lindley Hall and Lawrence Hall since 1904 and 1928 respectively, as well as the historic philatelic exhibitions such as International Philatelic Exhibition (1906), Jubilee International Exhibition (1912), London International Stamp Exhibition (1923), and APEX International Airpost Exhibition (1934). All these took place in our first Hall at 80 Vincent Square; more recently the Halls have been home to Stampex and currently Philatex.

Other notable events included Schoolboys and Schoolgirls Exhibitions (1926 through to the late 1950s), The Model Engineer Exhibition (for 30 years from 1918), Applied Arts and Handicraft Shows, Medical and Nursing Shows, Hairdress-

ing, and Dog and Pigeon Shows. In 1939 the 71st Crystal Palace National Cage Birds exhibition took place in what was then called the Old Hall. For 30 years, big band dances and social functions took place in the Halls where the Canadian Pitch Pine wood floors created wonderful natural dance floors. Hundreds more events took place reflecting a rich pattern of social history.

Do any of your readers remember any of these or have material relating to them? If so I would be interested to hear from them with a view to displaying items, on loan, during the event. RENE DEE, Royal Horticultural Halls & Conference Centre, 80 Vincent Square, London SW1P 2PE; e-mail rened@rhs.org.uk •

Amy Johnson In your preview of the Extreme Endeavours stamps (March *Bulletin*) you state that Amy Johnson was lost after her plane caught fire. I have read a great deal about Amy Johnson and have not come across this before. She would have run out of fuel (4½ hours maximum for the Oxford aircraft she was flying) and baled out – probably thinking the barrage balloons on the Thames barges indicated she was over land. It was snowing at the time as well as low cloud. I am looking forward to getting the special stamps. SHEILA ALLAN, AYR •

Special draw Win a Coronation Anniversary stamps sheet

THE CORONATION ANNIVERSARY ISSUE was the last printed by De La Rue at their High Wycombe works. The last day of printing was 20 December and we have a sheet from the last batch printed – number 0522952. This may indeed be the final sheet printed to go into public circulation.

For a chance to win this special sheet simply write your name and address on the back of a postcard and send it to: Coronation Draw, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ to arrive by 30 June •



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



March identify The detail is from the 1967 Francis Chichester stamp. The winner was I Winrow of Derby.

March knowledge Answers: 1) E Ripley; 2) Sound & Vision; 3) 1980 and 1987. The winner was D Hunt of USA.

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

- 1 Who designed the 1996 Classic Sports Cars stamps?
- 2 In which year did Lord Tennyson feature on stamps?
- 3 What is the name of the thematic stamps exhibition held in London each June and November?

Send your answer (addressed to either the June *Identify* competition or June *Knowledge* competition), name and address on a postcard or back of a sealed envelope to: British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ. The senders of the first cards drawn in each competition on 11 July will each receive £100. Ten runner-up prizes of presentation packs or FDCs will be awarded in each competition.

The competitions are not open to Royal Mail employees •

Events

7 June Ringpex 2003 (Ringwood PS Stamp and Postcard Fair) at Greyfriars, Christchurch Road, Ringwood. 10.00-16.00. 12 dealers. Admission free. Enquiries C Mount, 01425 474310.

7 June Yorkshire Phil Assn 57th Annual Convention at Ecclesfield School, Sheffield. Includes Stamp Fair. 09.30-16.30. Enquiries J Hartley, 0114 230 4155.

7 June Kent Federation Day/Stamp Fair (hosted by Maidstone & Mid Kent PS) at Invicta Girls Grammar School, Huntsman Lane, Maidstone, 10.00-16.00. Over 20 dealers in attendance. Enquiries B Stone-street, 01622 675784.

19-22 June Welsh Philatelic Society meeting at Plas Tan y Bwlch, Maentwrog, Gwynedd. Enquiries P Gaywood, 2 Fairways, Fulwood, Preston PR2 8FX.

28 June Midpex 2003 at Midland Sports Centre for Disabled, Tile Hill, Coventry. See p293. Enquiries M Benford, Cloudshell, High Street, Shutford, Banbury OX15 6PQ.

28-29 June Thematica 2003 at Carisbrooke Hall, Seymour Street, London W2. Near Marble Arch. Dealers, UK thematic societies, displays and competitive exhibits. Open Sat 10.30-17.30, Sun 10.30-17.00. Enquiries 020 8343 2434.

4-6 July Philatelic Congress of GB at Swallow Hotel, Gateshead. Talks, social events, etc. Enquiries C Garside, 0191 384 5468.

29-31 August 55th International Stamp Fair and 42nd 'Europa' International Philatelic Exhibition at Palace of Tourism, Riccione, Italy. See p293 •

Late news

Royal Mail update De La Rue have now printed the English 68p and Scottish 2nd and 1st class stamps on the ATN machine at Byfleet (formerly Questa). The use of the ATN as opposed to the Jumelle machine at High Wycombe necessitated the manufacture of new cylinders: English 68p D1 purple D1 silver, Scottish 2nd D1 new blue D1 blue D1 silver, 1st D1 rose-red D1 deep rose-red D1 greenish yellow D1 silver. The phosphor cylinder is D1 on all three. Supplies of the new printings will be distributed to Post Office branches as required; there will be no first day of availability.

New £5 and £10 Royal Mail phone cards will be available from Tallents House from 2 June. The £5 card reproduces the Coronation Anniversary stamp showing the Cecil Beaton portrait of The Queen; the £10 reproduces the stamp showing The Queen in the Coronation Chair •

Changes to Country stamps The current country stamps are incurring poor machine readability rates due to low phosphor signal. As the stamps are primarily for postage use, we must produce a new set to overcome the problem. All 16 current country stamps (England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales 2nd, 1st, E and 68p) will be reissued in the same basic design but with a narrow white border around each stamp. These will go on sale on 14 October 2003 with first day covers, presentation packs, and stamp cards. Royal Mail regrets these new printings, but the stamps must meet the postal delivery standard required •

Philatelists honoured The Royal Philatelic Society London has awarded its London Medal to Ron Negus, well-known to *Bulletin* readers, for his work as the Society's Archivist and his contribution to its distinguished journal, *The London Philatelist*. Jane Moubay has received the prestigious Lindenberg Medal by the Berlin Philatelic Club. Previous British recipients were Robson Lowe, Ron Lee, and John Marriott.

The British Philatelic Trust provides books on philately to youth stamp groups. Donations are sought from collectors in memory of postal his-

tory collector and dealer Michael Jackson, who died in January, to provide more books for young collectors. All donations and enquiries to: BPT, 107 Charterhouse Street, London EC1M 6PT •

Auction news Harmers' 24 April sale included four artist's drawings for the 1969 Architecture issue – these realised between £188 and £282. Imperf, undenominated proofs of Machin head stamps in deep and pale lilac and deep and pale turquoise made £494 (est £380). A fine collection of protective underprints with many scarce items exceeded all expectations, achieving £5587 (est £600). On 26 June Harmers will auction the 'Koh-i-Noor' GB and Commonwealth 'Specimens' collection. Enquiries: Harmers, telephone 020 8747 6100.

The Spink sale on 24 April included stamps and postal history. A collection of family correspondence, 1710-1810, with straight-line postmarks, etc, made £1,955 (est £300-400), and an almost complete submission for the 1839 Treasury competition realised £27,600 (£10-12,000). A fine block of 48 of the 1841 1d plate X (EA-HL) went for £23,000 (£10-12,000), and a complete sheet of the 1929 £1 PUC stamp made £10,925 (£8-9000). In contrast a collection of Elizabeth II commemoratives, in five volumes plus carton, mostly in cylinder blocks, with a face value of over £634, made £241.50 (est. £300-400). Prices realised in the first sale of the stock of William Frazer ranged from just £3 to £7475 for a stock of Indian Feudatory States (est £1000-£1200). Enquiries: Spink, telephone 020 7563 4000 •

Enschede anniversary Shown here are the two Netherlands stamps marking the 300th anniversary of printing firm Joh Enschedé. This issue was noted in the May *Bulletin* •



Coronation anniversary commemorative souvenirs



Banknote cover Above left:
Price £44.95. Limited edition
of 10,000. Order code AB001

Coin cover Above right:
Price £15.95. Limited edition
of 40,000. Order code AN032

Mugs Left: Price £19.95.
Order code PY778

To celebrate the 50th anniversary of The Queen's Coronation, Royal Mail and Royal Mint have developed a unique collection of commemorative coins and note covers.

Coronation banknote cover This exquisite banknote cover features a mint £5 banknote with an exclusive QC03 cipher, a Royal Mint 2003 Coronation £5 coin with a striking contemporary design, and the 2003 Coronation stamp displaying the Cecil Beaton portrait of the newly crowned Queen. The edition number and the SW1 postmark are printed in gold.

Coronation coin cover This commemorative coin cover features all 10 of Royal Mail's 2003 Coronation stamps and a Royal Mint 2003 Coronation Crown. Both sides of the coin are displayed. The cover itself features both the edition number and the SW1 postmark printed in gold.

Coronation mugs A set of four classic bone china coffee mugs. White with a gold rim, one Coronation stamp of 1953 is featured on each mug: the red 2½d, the blue 4d, the green 1s3d and the deep blue 1s6d. Manufactured exclusively in the UK for Royal Mail.

Royal Mail

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



5 014721 103112



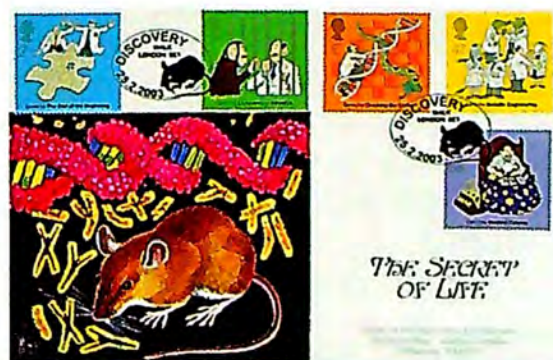
Review

The information service *for*
collectors and cover producers

JUNE 2003

Special announcement to cover producers The number of requests for announcements in this Review has grown rapidly in recent months. Regrettably we must now restrict announcements to one cover per producer per month •

GB Covers Hand made, limited edition, full set FDCs are produced by the founder and Life President of GBFDC (Association of Collectors of GB First Day Covers) for Association members. The one produced for the Secret of Life stamp issue is illustrated with a painting commissioned specially for this FDC from Barry Hawkins of Bristol. Strictly limited to 95 signed and numbered, a few remain for sale to the public at £16.50 each including informative insert, postage and stout packing •



Orders and enquiries GB Covers, 102 Regal Way, Kenton, Harrow HA3 0RY (waldo@metronet.co.uk)

Dawn Cover Productions offer an unusual 'double' issue in a limited edition of 100 numbered covers. The original cover shows the steam locomotive named *Sheffield United* pulling a mail train across one of the bridges in Sheffield, and for lovers of trams, one of the Sheffield trams is also in the painting by the late G S Cooper. The special handstamp was used on the first day of issue for the Rowland Hill stamp but has been additionally handstamped by the 'Mail Rail' postmark used at Mount Pleasant in London on 15 March 2003. This time one of the stamps used

was of the *Mallard* steam locomotive as it was passing a mail bag exchange apparatus. Each cover also includes a limited edition postcard of the painting. Price £9.50 postpaid •



Orders and enquiries Dawn Cover Productions, 27 Ashfield Road, Davenport, Stockport SK3 8UD. Telephone 0161 483 1297.

Fourpenny Post A cover for the Prince William stamps features the Prince as a baby and now. Blank (unserviced) covers, with filler card, cost £2. Serviced with pictorial first day postmark £7.60 or £11.25 with cds. Postage £1 UK, £2 overseas. Send 70p stamped addressed label for list of past FDCs and sample cover or see www.fourpennypost.co.uk. Payments by post or by UK debit card through Nochex on website •



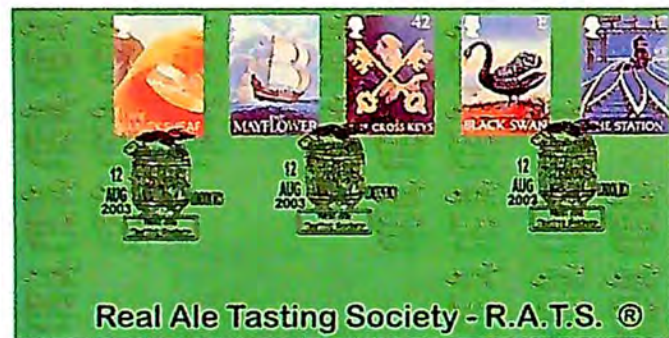
Orders and enquiries Fourpenny Post, 30 Dinsdale Avenue, Wallsend NE28 9JD. Telephone 0191 262 8844. e-mail enquiries@fourpennypost.co.uk

M Tanner offers a cover of the *Titanic* having its funnels fitted, limited to 35 numbered copies. Price (including postage) £16.99 UK or £17.99 overseas. A 44p Workers' Tale *Titanic* stamp is cancelled Belfast 27 March 2003 RMS *Titanic*. Covers include a colour filler postcard of the artwork. Additional postcards cost 60p each plus postage at 40p UK or £1.20 overseas per order if ordered separately. The *Titanic* series has now reached No 11. A different cover similar to 44p stamp is also available at the same terms. A different very limited maximum card £8 UK/£9 overseas for this handstamp issue also. Visa/Mastercard accepted, with £1 charge per transaction. Send three 1st class stamps for lists •



Orders and enquiries M Tanner, 180 Whitehorse Road, West Croydon CR0 2LA. Fax/Answerphone 020 8684 9757 for credit cards only. e-mail tacovermaxipostcard@talk21.com

Payne First Day Covers offer a cover for the Real Ale Tasting Society and the Pub Signs stamps, cancelled by a specially sponsored London WC1 handstamp. Only 35 numbered covers will be done. Price £20 postpaid UK, overseas add £1. Sterling or Euro cheques only please •



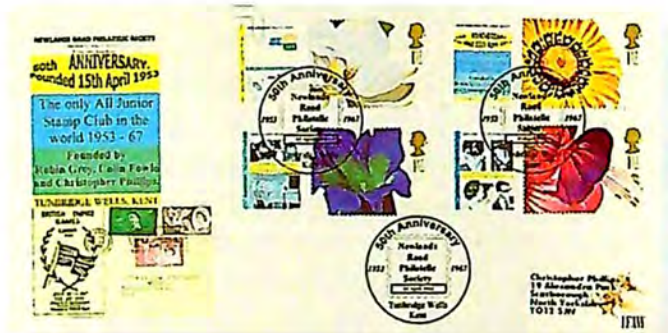
Orders and enquiries P M Payne, 16 Rue Berthollet, 75005 Paris, France. Telephone 00331 47071051. e-mail: ppayne@cybercable.fr

Buckingham Covers A double dated cover which is both a FDC (29 April) and a 50th anniversary commemorative 29 May is autographed by Sir Edmund Hillary and features his photograph of Sherpa Tensing. Double dated signed: £17.95. Also available is an unsigned FDC with full set of six Endeavour stamps £8.95 or signed Edmund Hillary £22.95. Other covers will be available, including NZ special stamps and a 1953 New Zealand Crown Coin version: £29.95 + p&p •



Orders and enquiries Buckingham Covers 136 Sandgate Road, Folkestone, Kent CT20 2BY. Telephone 01303 850688.

Chris Phillips offers a cover to commemorate the founding, on 15 April 1953, of the famous Newlands Road Philatelic Society – the only serious all junior club, never run or organised by adults. The cover bears four different labels attached to Flowers Smilers stamps, on a cover marking the event, with a special Tunbridge Wells postmark of 15 April 2003. Strictly limited to 40 sets. Price £8 or £4 to original Club members, cash or UK cheques only. Mr Phillips is keen to contact former Club members – see www.philatelic.org.uk and <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/newlandsroadphilatelicociety/> •



Orders and enquiries C Phillips, 19 Alexandra Park, Scarborough YO12 5JN, Telephone 01723 368475.

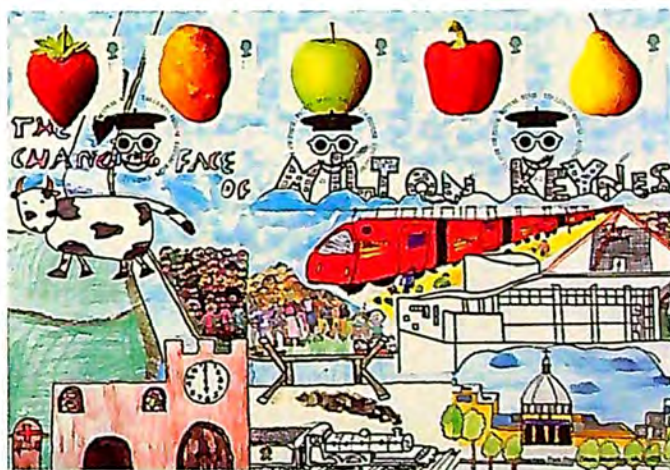
Benham Queen Elizabeth I, the last monarch of the house of Tudor, died 400 years ago on 24 March 1603 at Richmond Palace. A coin cover has been produced to mark that occasion and to celebrate the reign of one of England's greatest Queens. The cover depicts Elizabeth I in an impressive image taken from a miniature portrait by Nicholas Hilliard, and encapsulates a bronze-coloured piece with a further depiction of the Queen in all her regal splendour. The large black 1st class NV1 is postmarked Richmond, on the anniversary of her death and is shown above the 1968 4d Elizabeth I stamp with a Tudor Rose cachet. Order code C03SP17, price £29.95 plus postage £1.75. Please mention the *Bulletin* when ordering •



Orders and enquiries Benham House, Tontine Street, Folkestone CT20 1SD. Telephone 01303 226777.

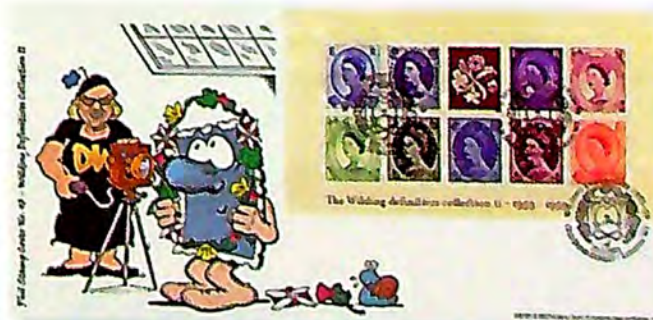
Chapman & Mitchell On 25 March Chapman & Mitchell Covers at Bletchley Park Post Office serviced a cover for the Fruit and Veg issue. The design was the result of a schools competition on 'The Changing Face of Milton Keynes'. The competition, organised in conjunction with the local BBC, Milton Keynes Gallery and the Education & Business Partnership, was judged by independent art experts, and the design was kept secret until the day of issue. The eight schools whose designs were chosen visited Bletchley Park to help Royal Mail launch the stamps. As part of the fun they created their own FDCs with the stamps using blanks of the cover they designed. The Enigma cinema also showed a short film produced by Royal Mail in 1968 – the year Milton Keynes first took shape. From the comments made by the children Bletchley Park po seems

to have created a new generation of collectors. The doubled-sided c5 cover is available to collectors as a set of two. Limited edition of 200. Price £12.50 •



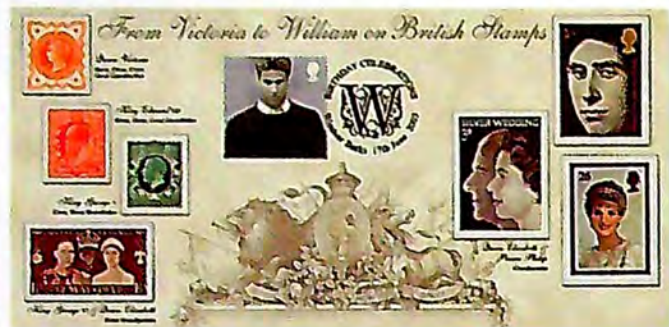
Orders and enquiries Chapman & Mitchell Covers, Bletchley Park Post Office, The Mansion, Bletchley Park, Milton Keynes MK3 6EB. Telephone 01908 631797. www.bletchleycovers.com

Phil Stamp Covers has produced this humorous cover for the issue of the Wilding Definitives Collection 11 miniature sheet. Dorothy Wilding was known to be a little eccentric, so she may have appreciated the illustration of 'Phil' posing for her photograph. The cover is cancelled with an 'Old Bond Street, London W1' handstamp. Phil is drawn by the cartoonist J Edward Oliver, whose work has regularly appeared in the *Buster* comic. This limited edition cover, of only 100 copies, is priced at £12.55 plus £1.20 postage and packing (£2.30 overseas) and is part of a unique collection which will appeal to the young and the young-at-heart alike •



Orders and enquiries Phil Stamp Covers, 33 Whitehead Close, Dartford DA2 7PR. Telephone (Steve Oliver) 01322 278674.

A G Bradbury On 17 June Royal Mail marks the 21st birthday of Prince William with a set of four stamps. For this issue Adrian Bradbury offers a cover featuring genuine mint stamps depicting the ancestry of the Prince from Queen Victoria (his great, great, great, great grandmother) to the present reign (1972 Silver Wedding stamp featuring his grandparents, The Queen and Prince Philip). In addition stamps feature his father, Prince Charles (1969 Investiture) and his mother, Diana, Princess of Wales (1998 memorial set). The covers cost £19.75 each with a specially sponsored Windsor postmark featuring a decorative 'w'. Price includes postage worldwide •



Orders and enquiries A G Bradbury, 3 Link Road, Leicester LE2 3RA. Telephone 0116 2705367. Order online at www.bfdc.co.uk – just type 8353 in the stock code box.

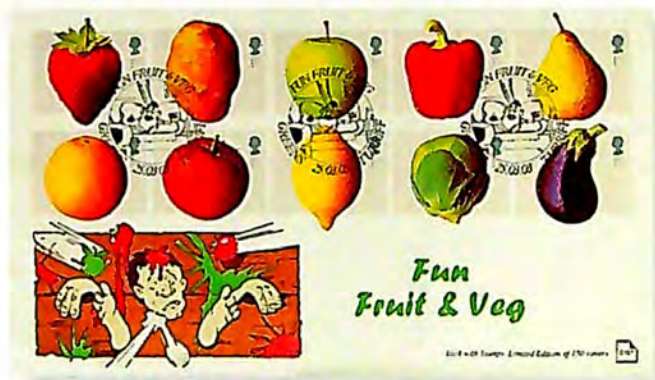
Methodist Philatelic Society A cover serviced 31 January marks the centenary of the birth of the Rev Donald Soper (later Lord Soper of Kingsway) who died in 1998. The cover shows Lord Soper with the dates of his birth and death and is inscribed 'The Prophet of the Soapbox'. It bears a 1st class definitive cancelled by the Tower Hill, London EC3 pictorial handstamp. Price £1.75 plus postage. Send foolscap SAE for list of earlier covers. (For details of the Methodist Philatelic Society contact T R Smart, 11 Northwood Park, Woodlesford, Leeds LS26 8PE.) •

Orders and enquiries R J Macmillan, Cluny, 11 Cullaloe Court, Dalgety Bay, Dunfermline KY11 5HW.

Philatelic Congress A cover for Congress 2003, (Swallow Hotel, Gateshead, 4-6 July) will depict the Gateshead Millennium Bridge. It will be a limited edition numbered 1-100. Each will bear the 1st class xvi depicting the Bridge issued in 2000, cancelled by the Newcastle upon Tyne Cathedral special handstamp dated 5 July. Covers contain a filler leaflet about the bridge, and will be posted as soon as possible after the close of Congress. They should be delivered in a plastic protective transparent wrapper. It is hoped that a small number will be signed by the Mayor of Gateshead. Price £1.50 or £2.50 signed. Orders should be received by 1 July •

Orders and enquiries John D Jeffery, 40 Valley Drive, Low Fell, Gateshead NE9 5DH.

Stick with Stamps produced 150 covers for the Fruit & Veg issue: 100 bear their official handstamp of Greens, Turriff; the remaining 50 have cds for Cherry Tree, Garden Farm, King Edward, Leek, Pear Tree, Ripe, The Green and The Orchards post offices. £12.50 each, postage and packing £1 to any destination. They have also sponsored two handstamps for Extreme Endeavours – Polemarch Street, Seaham, Co Durham and RRS Discovery, Dundee, with polar covers. Three covers and two handstamps will follow for the Coronation Anniversary set •



Orders and enquiries Stick with Stamps Ltd, PO Box 3437, Milngavie, Glasgow G62 7YP. Telephone 0141 955 1945. www.stickwithstamps.com

Cover producers wishing to announce a **recent** or **forthcoming** cover should submit typed copy of up to 100 words. Please follow the style above: the text should give a brief description of the cover, state the stamps and postmarks it will bear and give retail price and address to which collectors should send orders or write for further information. Announcements are published on a first-come-first-served basis, and may be modified or shortened at the Editor's discretion. Copy for consideration for the August 2003 Review should be sent to The Editor, *British Philatelic Bulletin*, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ by 9 June. Copy for September should arrive by 8 July. The Editor regrets he cannot enter into correspondence or telephone conversations with collectors or cover producers concerning covers announced in this Review.