BRITISH PHILATELIC

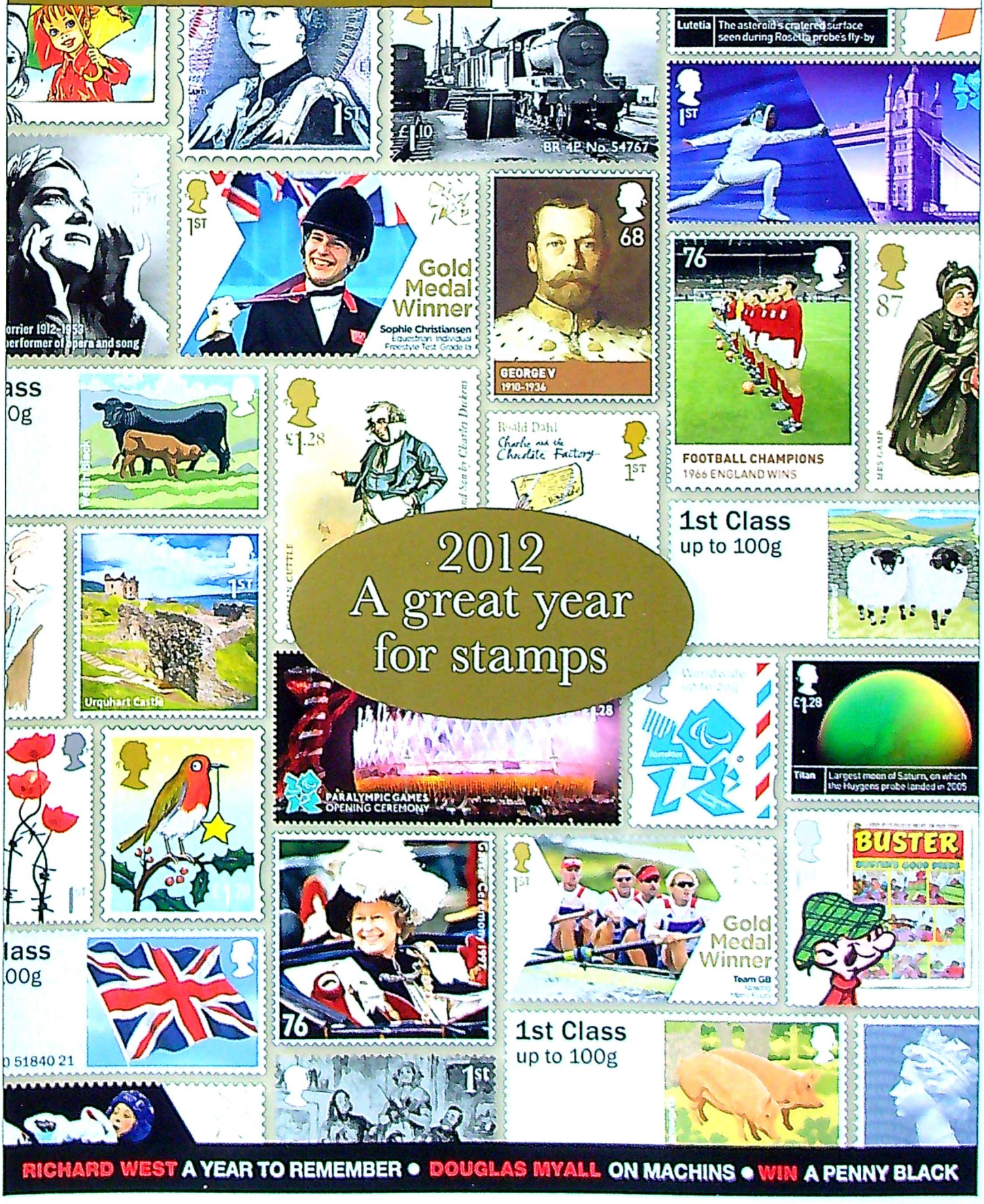
Bulletin

Volume 50 Number 4

The Royal Mail magazine for stamp collectors

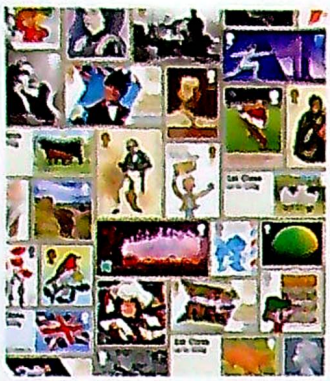
50TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR | DECEMBER 2012 £1.20

Goodbye 2012 • New Year preview • Santa on stamps



RICHARD WEST A YEAR TO REMEMBER • DOUGLAS MYALL ON MACHINS • WIN A PENNY BLACK

Issues and withdrawals



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31 December	**Withdrawal** All London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games products: Stamps since 2009, Miniature Sheets, Presentation Packs, Stamp Cards, Stamp Sheets, Stamp Books, Covers, Stamp and Post Card Packs, Stamp and Pin Packs, Stamp and Coin Packs, Stamp and Booklet Packs, Stamp Canvases
31 December	**Withdrawal** 2010 Year Book: Year Pack, Year of Presentation Packs
3 January	**Issue** Definitive Colour Palette revision – 'Royal Mail Red' 1st Class and 1st Class Large, 'Slate Grey' 50p, 'Wood Brown' £1; values 1p, 2p, 5p, 10p and 20p colour unchanged but with iridescent overprint: Stamps, Presentation Pack, 6 x 1st Class Stamp Book, 12 x 1st Class Stamp Book, 4 x 1st Class Large Letter Stamp Book, 100 x 1st Class Business Sheet colour change, 50 x 1st Class Large Letter Business Sheet
9 January	**Issue** London Underground: Stamps, Miniature Sheet, Stamps and Miniature Sheet Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards, Stamp Book 4 x Machins 1st Class and 2 x London Underground stamps, Coin Cover
9 January	**Withdrawal** Roald Dahl: Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards

To order philatelic items, including those listed on the right, contact Royal Mail Tallents House at the address below. Minimum handling charge UK £1.45, Europe £1.55, rest of world (airmail) £2.15. Some products can be ordered on the Royal Mail website: www.royalmail.com/stamps. Selected items are available at Post Office branches and philatelic outlets at main post offices in: Bristol, Cambridge, Chester, Colchester, Croydon, Durham, Edinburgh, Exeter, Glasgow, Grimsby, Harrogate, London (Eastcheap and Trafalgar Square), Norwich, Nottingham, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Southend on Sea, Stevenage, Stroud, Trowbridge, Truro, York and Newport, Isle of Wight

Royal Mail Tallents House
21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB. Telephone order line (08.30 to 17.00 Monday to Friday): 08457 641 641. From overseas: +44 131 316 7483

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Royal Mail

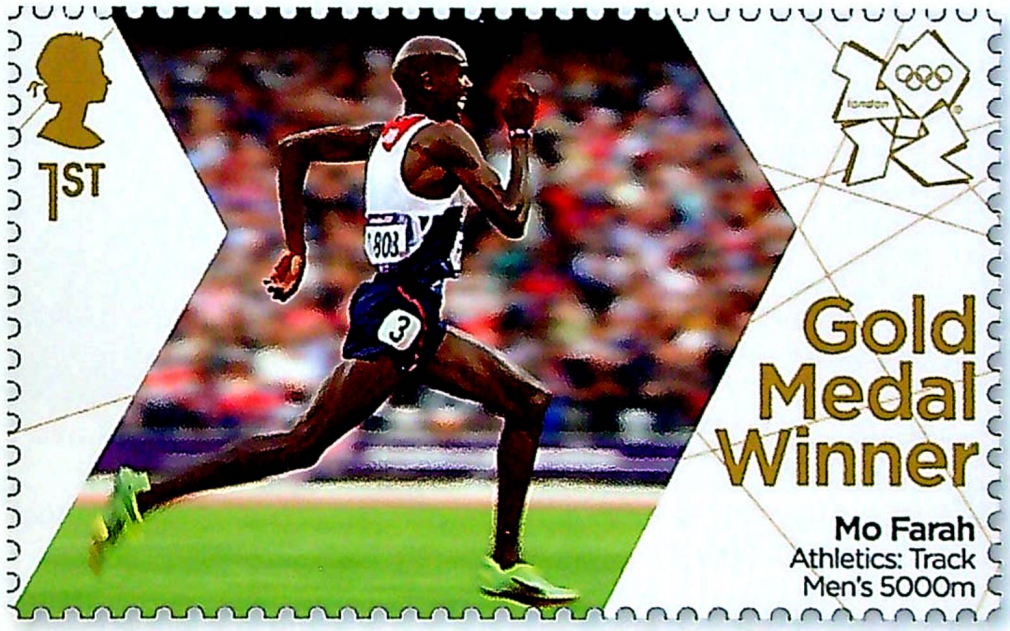
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Correspondence



Spreading the stamp joy...

Would it be possible to remind your readers that the Stamp Active Network (SAN) will make good use of any used stamps they can send us over the coming months? This year's Christmas issue and indeed any stamps are welcome.
Ian Varey by email

Of course, Ian. Step up, readers – we have organised a Freepost address to help you support Ian's work with young collectors. Even if you only get one Christmas card with a stamp you can bear to part with, please clip it off and send to SAN/ Doherty, Freepost EH3647, Edinburgh EH12 9PB.

Ian is pictured above receiving the 2012 Bill Hart Award for outstanding service to youth philately.

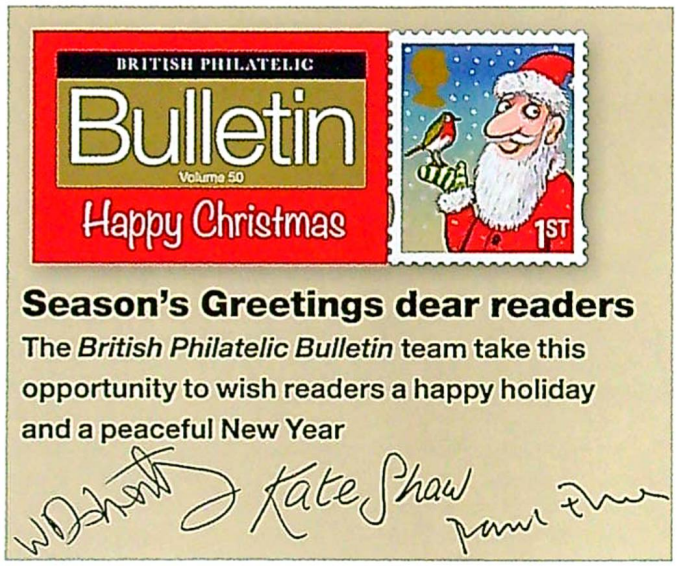
Another good cause that welcomes used stamps is Prostate Cancer UK, a charity partner of Royal Mail, which is committed to match funds raised by staff and friends, up to £1million a year for two years. For more details and another Freepost address, visit the Royal Mail teachers' website at www.teacherspost.co.uk.



Make my day

I have a dream and a great hobby. I collect postage stamps, but I have no friends who collect GB stamps. Please could you pass on my address to your readers so that we can exchange letters and perhaps exchange some stamps. Sorry, but I speak only a little English, learned in school. I am a 70-year-old pensioner and grandfather.
H Brust, Odmuehlhang 14, Kaufbeuren, Germany

May your dream come true, Herr Brust, and lovely to hear from the charming city of Kaufbeuren. We hear that its Christmas market boasts the world's largest 'natural' Advent wreath – more than eight metres wide and with 1.5-metre-tall candles.



Season's Greetings dear readers

The *British Philatelic Bulletin* team take this opportunity to wish readers a happy holiday and a peaceful New Year

Write to... The Editor, *British Philatelic Bulletin*, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB. Or email bulletin.enquiries@royalmail.com.

All readers' letters published will receive a thank-you gift. There is no 'First-class Letter' prize this month, but there are extra prizes in the Christmas 2012 quiz on page 126.

© Alamy: Dan Froude

Ring in the new... change of colour for three Definitives issued in the New Year



Above: the First Day Cover, available until 3 January, is designed by Robert Maude and features a detail of the Royal Mail Coat of Arms

Red letter days The new Royal Mail Red definitive is issued on 3 January 2013, replacing the 'Diamond Blue' first-class definitive that has marked The Queen's Diamond Jubilee year. In common with all the current definitives stamps, it will carry an iridescent overprint of the words Royal Mail. This colour change has come about not only because the Diamond Jubilee has ended, but also because of the need to improve the degree of differentiation between stamp colours in Mail Processing Centres.

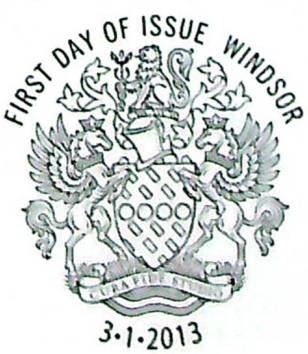
The 50p Definitive will change from Light Grey to Slate Grey and the £1 Definitive from Ruby to Wood Brown. Other values, including second-class, hold the same colours until the next tariff change.

The introduction of the new colour palette is marked by the issue of a First Day Cover, Presentation Pack and Stamp Books – 12 x First Class, 6 x First Class and 4 x First Class Large.

Watch out for more details and a retrospective round-up of 2012 Machins in *Bulletin* •

New colour Definitives	
Design	Original bas relief by Arnold Machin
Sheet format	1st Class – Portrait 1st Class Large – Landscape
Stamp size	20mm x 24mm Portrait 30mm x 24mm Landscape
Printer	De La Rue Security Print
Print process	Gravure
Perforations	Kiss-die cut simulated
Phosphor	Bars
Gum	Self-adhesive







Left: the customary plain and pictorial first-day postmarks for the new definitives issued on 3 January

Stamp designs © Royal Mail Group Ltd 2013



Mind the gap Part 2 preview of the first special issue of the New Year – London Underground





Top: Miniature Sheet First Day Cover, £3.52.
Above: two pictorial first-day cover postmarks: the W2 postmark was chosen because Paddington W2 was one of the first tube terminals; the Tallents House postmark features the iconic 'Underground' signage

When the Tube opened it 1863, it was the world's first underground train system, a high-tech wonder associated with great art and design as well as cutting-edge engineering. To mark the 150th anniversary of its inauguration, a special London Underground stamp issue is released on 9 January. As well as six special stamps focusing on the history of the Tube (for details and technical specifications, see last month's *Bulletin*, page 72), a Miniature Sheet showcases the fascinating design heritage of London Underground posters.

Designed by NB Studios, the London Underground Miniature Sheet uses the long-format size to show three iconic London Underground posters on each stamp. Many poster designers commissioned in the early years of London Underground – including Tom Eckersley, Edward McKnight-Kauffer and Abram Games – also produced iconic work for the Post Office.

Miniature sheet – stamp by stamp

First Class Let the Tube take you away – to *Golders Green* (1908), *By Underground to Fresh Air* (1915) and *Summer Sales* (1925).
77p The slick combination of advanced transport and attractive destinations: *For the Zoo* (1921), *Power* (1931) and *The Seen* (1948).
87p Life in the fast lane with the Underground: *A Train Every 90 Seconds* (1937), *Thanks to the Underground* (1935) and *Cut Travelling Time, Victoria Line* (1969).
£1.28 Going somewhere special? *Go by Tube: The London Transport Collection* (1975), *London Zoo* (1976) and *The Tate Gallery by Tube* (1987).

Full philatelic fare Also in the London Underground issue is a fully illustrated Presentation Pack (£8.80), containing the six London Underground Stamps and Miniature Sheet on a separate carrier. Inside the pack Oliver Green, former Head Curator of the London Transport Museum, describes the history of the London Underground and, on the Miniature Sheet carrier, its design heritage. The pack is designed by NB Studios and printed by Walsall Security Printers.

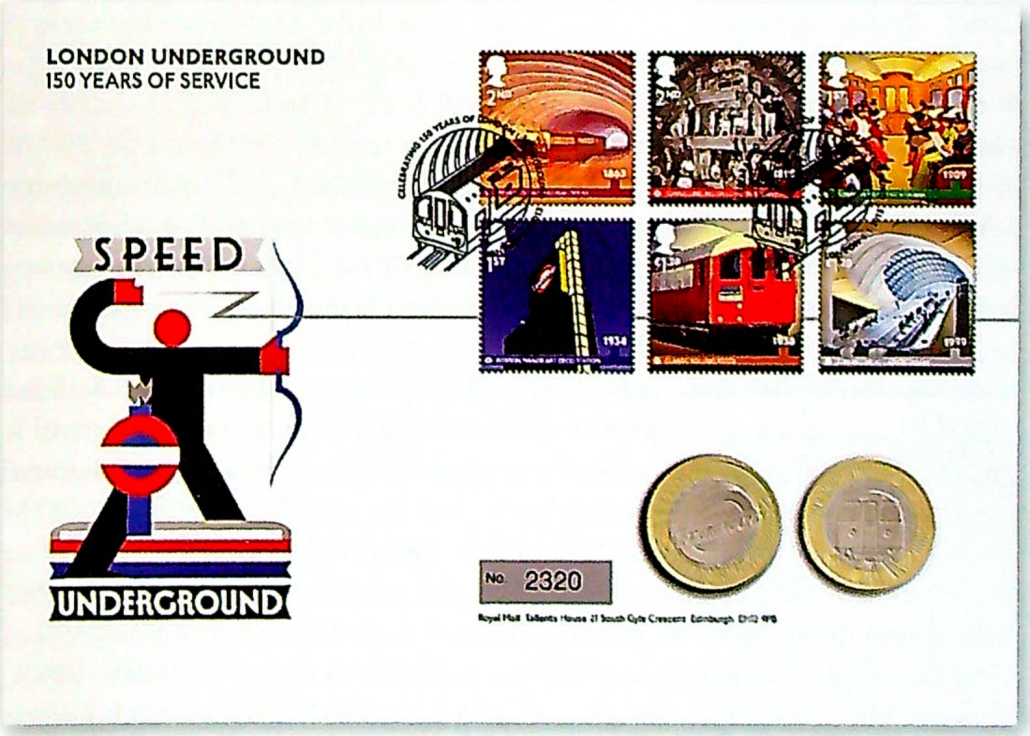
The London Underground Coin cover is produced in association with the Royal Mint and in a limited edition of 10,000. It carries the six sheet stamps with two London Underground commemorative £2 coins (see below). The London Underground coin was created by British designer Edwina Ellis and bears the London Underground 'roundel' logo and an edge inscription of the famous advice: MIND THE GAP. The obverse features the current portrait of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II by Ian Rank-Broadley FRBS.



Above: two of the four London Underground Pin Badges, £5.95 each

Just the ticket The London Underground Stamp Book contains two First Class London Underground stamps showing the 1933 Boston Manor Art Deco Station and four First Class Machins.

Eleven postcards bearing enlarged images of each of the London Underground Stamps and the Miniature Sheet go on sale about a week before the stamp issue date. Printed by Fulmar Colour Printing Company Ltd, the postcard set costs £4.95. Watch out for more Tube tales in a future *Bulletin* •





Above: special postmark 'Celebrating 150 Years of London Underground'. Orders for serviced First Day Covers must reach Royal Mail by 9 January.
Left: London Underground Coin Cover, £19.95.
Below: stamp book of four Royal Mail red Machins and two London Underground specials, £3.60.

London Underground Miniature Sheet Specifications	
Number of stamps	Four
Size of sheet	183mm x 74mm
Design	NB Sutdios
Stamp format	Landscape
Stamp size	60mm x 30mm
Printer	Cartor Security Printing
Print process	Lithography
Perforations	14.5 x 14.5
Phosphor	All over
Gum	PVA



Stamp Scene John Holman keeps you posted on events and activities in the philatelic world



Above: Paris Postal Conference centenary – one of 12 special stamps issued in 1963

Anniversaries 2013 marks the 50th anniversary of the setting up of the Philatelic Bureau (Tallents House) and this *British Philatelic Bulletin*, which started life as the Bureau's newsletter in September 1963. We also celebrate 60 years of Stampex, which was first held as the 'Coronation Year National Stamp Exhibition' in January 1953. (The name Stampex came three years later).

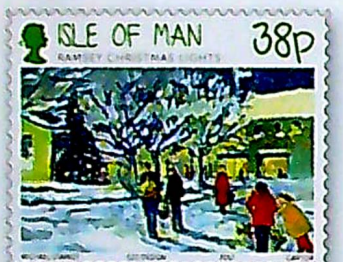
A number of philatelic societies and stamp clubs commemorate significant anniversaries next year. The Liverpool Philatelic Society, one of the UK's oldest, will be 125 years old. Celebrating their 75th anniversaries will be the Arbroath & District Stamp & Postcard Club, Ayrshire Philatelic Society, King's Lynn Philatelic Society, North Herts Stamp Club, City of Preston Philatelic Society, TPO & Seapost Society, Wakefield Philatelic Society, and Wallington & Carshalton Stamp Club. The Harland Stamp Club, Truro Philatelic Society, and Midlands Philatelic Federation celebrate their golden jubilees, and the Stratford-upon-Avon Philatelic Society its silver jubilee. King's Lynn will hold an anniversary dinner in May. The TPO & Seapost Society will hold a special meeting at the Royal Philatelic Society London in July and will produce a 75th anniversary publication. I look forward to including in Stamp Scene details of celebratory events organised by these societies during 2013 and invite the society secretaries to send details to the address on page 100 •

Below: poster by W Machan, printed by Fosh & Cross Ltd in 1945, held at the BPMA. Christmas stamps from the Isle of Man Post Office, with artwork by Michael Starkey



New museum one step nearer The British Postal Museum & Archive (BPMA) has announced that the Heritage Lottery Fund has confirmed a 'first-round pass' as part of a two-stage application for financial help to move its collections into a new home, with development funding of £250,000 being awarded. The new BPMA will be situated in Calthorpe House in London, near to the Mount Pleasant mail centre. Fundraising activities for the museum are continuing, and it is hoped it will open in late 2014.

The BPMA, currently located at Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London WC1, has two exhibitions on view: the 2012 Diamond Jubilee display at Freeling House and 'Post Office in the Community' at Blists Hill Victorian Town, Ironbridge, Shropshire. Among some 25 online exhibitions on the BPMA website at www.postalheritage.org.uk are: Aerial Post, regional stamps, Machins, David Gentleman, postal vehicles and letter boxes. For full information on BPMA services and events, and for opening hours, call 020 7239 2570 or e-mail info@postalheritage.org.uk •





Island stamps Six Christmas stamps from the Isle of Man Post Office s went on sale on 20 October, featuring original artwork by island based artist Michael Starkey. They feature: 38p Ramsey Christmas lights, 41p Glen Auldyn, 71p Castletown Police Station, £1.05 Sulby Glen, £1.16 Martin's Sweet Shop, and £1.73 Lake Lane, Peel.

The designs reflect Christmas scenes and activities on the Isle of Man. The set

Royal Mail Group Ltd/The Bridgeman Art Library

costs £5.44 mint or CTO used or £6.19 in presentation pack. The stamps were printed in sheets of 20 by Cartor, with the 38p and 41p values also in self-adhesive format.

The Isle of Man Yearbook for 2012, with 80 pages, produced in a limited edition of 1000, is now available, price £62. Orders/enquiries: Isle of Man Philatelic Bureau, PO Box 10M, Douglas, Isle of Man IM99 1PB, phone 01624 698430, e-mail stamps@iompost.com

Jersey Post's current Christmas stamps feature scenes from Charles Dickens's *Christmas Carol*, painted by Mark Wilkinson and described on page 75 of last month's *Bulletin* •

First World War anniversary 2014 marks the centenary of the start of the First World War and no doubt Royal Mail will issue appropriate stamps. Three stamps in a Lest We Forget series were issued between 2006 and 2008 to mark the 90th anniversaries of the Battles of the Somme and Passchendaele and the Armistice.



In October Prime Minister David Cameron announced some of the events to be held in 2014 to mark the centenary, with some £50 million set aside for projects such as new memorials, poppy-planting, educating children about the Great War and improving the Imperial War Museum. An advisory board to plan the centenary will include former Defence Secretaries Tom King (now Lord King of Bridgwater) and George Robertson (now Lord Robertson of Port Ellen), the historian Professor Hew Strachan and writer Sebastian Faulks. National commemorations will be held on 4 August, the day Britain joined the war, and on 1 July 2016, marking the centenary of the first day of the Battle of the Somme •



Top: the Lest We Forget stamp triptych, first issued in 2006. Above: Gunner Jack Ward of 9th Medium Regiment, Royal Artillery, holds aloft two geese destined to become Christmas dinner – a photograph from the fascinating collection at the Imperial War Museum

Stamp fairs The next Strand Stamp Fairs will be held at the Royal National Hotel, Russell Square, London WC1 on 11 January and 15 February, open from 9am to 4pm. Some 20 to 30 dealers will attend. This popular fair has been held since 1969. Enquiries 020 8946 4489 or see www.stampshows.net

The York Racecourse Stamp & Coin Fair will be held at York Racecourse, York YO23 1EX on 18 to 19 January, open Friday 11am to 6pm and Saturday 10am to 4pm.

The Manchester & District Philatelic Traders Association Stamp Fair will be held at Sale Grammar School, Marsland Road, Sale M33 3NH on 12 January, 10am to 4pm •

Society meetings Society meetings The National Philatelic Society's first meeting of 2013 will be on 14 January when Ian Harvey displays 'GB Booklets: Production & Promotion' and 9 February when Christine Earle shows 'They Also Served'. Both will be held at the Welsh Centre, 157-163 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8UE, starting at 2.30pm. A seminar (admission by ticket) on 'How to use e-bay to buy and sell stamps' is planned for April. For further details of these meetings, and Society membership, ▸

visit the NPS website, phone 01582 762284 or e-mail npsmemsec@ukphilately.org.uk.

Forthcoming meetings at the Royal Philatelic Society are: 'Cape of Good Hope from 1864' (Robert Johnson, 10 January), 'The Loss and Restoration to Denmark of North Schleswig' (Birthe King, 24 January), and 'Blindman's Mail' (Gavin Fryer, 7 February). Non-members are welcome at RPSL meetings by prior arrangement with the Admin Office on 020 7486 1044. For full details of the Society visit www.rpsl.org.uk

The GB Philatelic Society is the main society for collectors of GB stamps, especially pre-Elizabeth II issues. At the next meeting, on 26 January, John Davies will display 'A Jubilee Reminiscence' (11am) followed by the Society's Competitions (2pm). This meeting will be held at the Royal Philatelic Society London, 41 Devonshire Place, London W1. For details of the GBPS contact Peter Tanner, 13 St Hubert's Close, Gerrards Cross, Bucks SL9 7EN or visit www.gbps.org.uk •







Above: saved for the nation – *HMS Victory* and the eponymous iron bridge at Ironbridge have both featured on special stamp issues

Preserving the past Two icons of British history, both of which have featured on several stamps, are being saved for the nation. Some £50 million is being spent conserving *HMS Victory* and restoration specialists are changing from modern to ancient methods to save the timbers. Hemp and pitch are being used in the restoration instead of synthetic mastics to stop rain causing rot, as modern materials cannot cope with the expansion and contraction of the wood.

HMS Victory featured on the George VI 2s 6d high-value stamp of 1951, 1982 Maritime Heritage 24p value, and in the set marking the bicentenary of the Battle of Trafalgar, issued in 2005.

Secretary of State for Communities Eric Pickles has recently announced that £12 million will be available to restore and protect the Ironbridge Gorge and its famous cast-iron bridge. Ironbridge Gorge became a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1986 and is visited by more than 500,000 tourists each year, but shifting river banks are causing cracks in the ironwork. The bridge featured on the 19p stamp in the Industrial Archaeology set of 1989 and on one of the recent UK A-Z stamps •

New catalogues Stanley Gibbons has published new editions of its Indian Ocean and Leeward Islands catalogues (£18.95 and £27.95 respectively).

The former features the issues of British Indian Ocean Territory, Maldive Islands, Mauritius and Seychelles. It includes several newly listed varieties and many price revisions since the last edition six years ago. The Leeward Islands catalogue lists the stamps of Anguilla, Antigua, Barbuda, British Virgin Islands, Montserrat, St Kitts and Nevis. Both are available from the Stanley Gibbons shop at 399 Strand, London WC2R 0LX or by post from Stanley Gibbons Publications, Parkside, Christchurch Road, Ringwood, Hants BH24 3SH. Phone 01425 472363 or e-mail orders@stanleygibbons.com.

Michel has recently published the 2012/2013 edition of its Great Britain Specialised Catalogue, with some 5,500 colour illustrations and about 50,000 updated price quotations. There is a revised list of Maltese Cross

postmarks, based on the latest research results, and some 2,700 'individual quotations' for the extensive Machin definitive series. The catalogue contains 1,006 pages and costs €79.

Also now out is Volume 2 (N-Z) of Michel's Australia/Oceania/Antarctic Catalogue, covering the stamps of Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand (with Ross Dependency), Norfolk Island, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Pitcairn Islands, Solomon Islands, Samoa, Tokelau, Tonga (& Niuafo'ou), Tuvalu, Vanuatu (and New Hebrides), and Wallis & Futuna Islands.

The 926-page catalogue costs €79. Enquiries to Schwaneberger Verlag GmbH, Ohmstrasse 1, 85716 Unterschiessheim, Germany, e-mail vertrieb@michel.de or visit www.michel.de •



This month in 1953 – one of the sunniest Christmasses on record. John Holman recalls its new Wildings

In 2012 we have been celebrating The Queen's Diamond Jubilee and this month marks the 60th anniversary of the issue of the first British stamps depicting her as monarch. Two stamps, 1½d and 2½d values covering basic UK postage rates, went on sale at 24,000 post offices across the UK on 5 December 1952, the Post Office wanting them available in time for Christmas mail.



Above: Wildings reissued in decimal currency for a miniature sheet of 2002. Below: this year's first-class Wilding reincarnation on the Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Definitives Miniature Sheet

Other values, between ½d and 1s 6d, went on sale on various dates up to February 1954. All carried the Wilding portrait of The Queen and the national floral emblems, in five designs by Enid Marx, Michael Farrar Bell, George Knipe, Mary Adshead and Edmund Dulac. The stamps, known to collectors as the 'Wildings' went through many variations in their 15 years of service, until replaced by the Machins from 1967 onwards. The Wilding stamps were invalidated, along with other pre-decimal stamps, from 1 March 1972. However that was not their final demise, as the designs have been reissued, with decimal values, in various miniature sheets and prestige books in recent years. The 1½d and 2½d values made their reappearance, as first- and second-class stamps in a prestige book in 2002. To try to match the originals, they were printed on uncoated watermarked paper. This time the paper had a '50' (years) rather than a Tudor Crown watermark. One second-class stamp in each prestige book has a diagonal watermark resulting from the printing of the stamp at an angle.

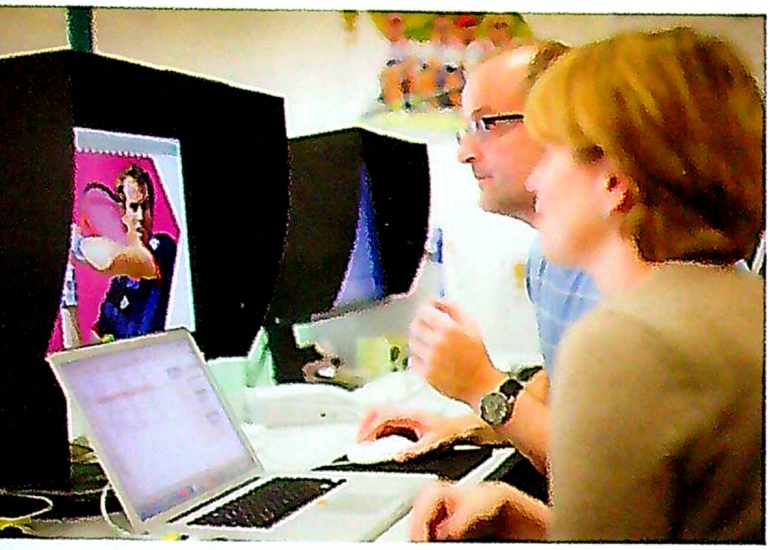
The most recent incarnation of the Wilding image is in a first-class stamp (similar to the one-shilling stamp of 1953) in the very popular Diamond Jubilee Miniature Sheet issued in February. Few collectors buying the new 1½d and 2½d stamps back in December 1952 would have predicted the great number of stamps that would be issued during The Queen's long reign •



A year to remember Richard West looks back at a truly historic 12 months for UK philately

2012

It's been a remarkable year, to no small extent thanks to the Olympic and Paralympic Games. We know that Royal Mail had been building up to the event over many years. The major commemoration, which demanded meticulous planning over many months, was to celebrate every gold medal win with a new stamp the very next day. The idea was not new, although Royal Mail added its own twist: rather than using stock photographs of the winning athletes, it chose to reproduce shots of the athletes actually winning the event or on the podium receiving the gold medal. It was a bit of a gamble – while there were expectations that Team GB would achieve good results, this could not be guaranteed. Indeed, for the first few days of the Games there could well have been fears within Royal Mail that a big mistake had been made.



Marcus James and Catharine Brandy working on the next-day stamp production during London 2012

Golden days of Team GB Then, overnight, fortunes changed, when the first Team GB gold medal was won on the fifth day, Wednesday 1 August. The gold medals started to come Team GB's way and the public loved the idea of being able to visit their post office the very next day to buy the stamps. Plus Royal Mail had the brilliant idea of painting pillar boxes gold in the hometowns of the Team GB gold medal winners. Events such as the Olympic Games inevitably generate a wealth of souvenirs, but it is probable that the Gold Medal Winners stamps from Royal Mail proved by far the most successful and popular.

By using a standard pre-printed 'border' design, Royal Mail was able to design, print and distribute each stamp, setting a deadline of 12 hours from start to finish, the aim being to have the stamps on sale by midday. Six printers scattered across the United Kingdom were used to add the picture of the winning athlete and appropriate text. In reality the time scale was bettered, and many offices had received their supply by start of business. Even when one of the printers was unable to print three of the stamps, contingency plans immediately swung into action and the shortfall was met by a printer in the Midlands.

For a number of valid reasons, Royal Mail initially had not planned





Photography: Conor Masterson; Dan Froude





One of the popular golden postboxes and the Miniature Sheet marking the opening of the London 2012 Paralympic Games. Below: Kate Stephens, designer of the Diamond Jubilee pictorial stamps

to celebrate the Paralympic Games gold medal wins in a similar way. However, as the Olympic Games progressed, opinions changed, and it then seemed only right to continue the series. The issuing pattern was not quite the same, but the process was virtually identical. Thus there was a total of 29 Olympic Gold Medal Winners stamps, all first-class and issued in miniature sheets of six, and 34 Paralympic Gold Medal Winners stamps, again all first-class, but issued in miniature sheets of two.

The demand for these stamps not only hit post offices, but more especially the Royal Mail operation at Tallents House, kept busy for several weeks fulfilling the many orders. Will we ever witness its like again?

Other Games-related items spanned a wide range of covers, some including coins or medals, new definitives and three miniature sheets. The new definitives formed part of a generic Smilers® sheet illustrating the venues used for the Games. Perhaps less well known is the fact that those who could enter the Olympic Village were able to obtain customised sheets with either first-class or Worldwide versions.

Incidentally, the gold pillar box idea also spread to the Isle of Man, celebrating the Manxman member of Team GB Men's Team Pursuit Cycling event.





The Diamond Jubilee The celebrations in 2012 began earlier, to mark The Queen's Diamond Jubilee. Royal Mail changed the colour of the first-class definitive to Diamond blue colour, with a 'Diamond Jubilee' security text, issued appropriately on 6 February, the day of The Queen's Accession in 1952. It also forms part of a miniature sheet of six first-class stamps featuring portraits of The Queen that have appeared on stamps, coins and banknotes.

A set of stamps was issued on 31 May, for which Kate Stephens carefully selected eight photographs that marked major landmarks during each decade of The Queen's reign. These ranged from her addressing the United Nations to the first televised Christmas message, from the annual appearance ▸

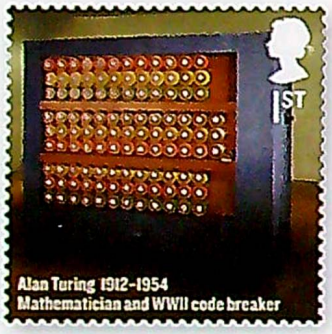


A Stamp Set and Miniature Sheet marked the bicentenary of Charles Dickens' birth

at the Trooping the Colour to the now eagerly anticipated 'walkabouts'. The series that Royal Mail has been issuing since 2008 featuring our Kings and Queens concluded on 2 February with the Age of the Windsors and Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, bringing us neatly up to the present reign.

From locomotives to literature Also featured during the year have been the Classic Locomotives of Scotland issued on 8 March (England had featured in 2011), while on 10 April came the second, and final, part of the A to Z of the United Kingdom, 14 stamps taking us from Manchester Town Hall to ZSL London Zoo, and including Station X at Bletchley Park. Interestingly, the set on 23 February featuring Britons of Distinction also recognises the work of Alan Turing, whose birth centenary was in 2012.

Below: philatelic tributes to Alan Turing and Bletchley Park





The creations of Roald Dahl (10 January) and the evocative writings of Charles Dickens (19 June) both resulted in new sets with miniature sheets (and a Prestige Stamp Book for Roald Dahl), while ten famous characters from British comics were featured on 10 March. It is sad that by the end of the year *The Dandy* will no more appear in its long-familiar printed form.

Many of 2012's outstanding events have, of course, been celebrated by other postal administrations, including the Bailiwick of Guernsey, Isle of Man and Jersey. Charles Dickens was remembered by Alderney, while Jersey has taken *The Christmas Carol* as the basis for its Christmas stamps; the Diamond Jubilee was naturally marked by all three Post Offices. Alderney and the Isle of Man also remembered the centenary of the disastrous maiden voyage of the *Titanic*.

This tragedy was not the subject of a separate set of stamps from Royal Mail, but featured on a Commemorative Sheet. Other events marked in this way were the 150th anniversary of Notts County Football Club, the last Goon Show, and the 50th anniversary of the first James Bond film, the sheet depicting the most popular film posters as selected by a public vote.



Post & Go developments – Sheep in the British Farm Animals series and the re-issue of the Birds of Britain robin for Christmas

Postal developments Despite this rich variety of subject matter and outstanding designs for our stamps, it cannot be denied that the humble stamp is seen less on the mail these days. Much is initially generated by other companies, but in the end still the best way of ensuring a door-to-door delivery within the required time is to use Royal Mail. During the year much of our mail, however originated, has begun to remind us that it is delivered by Royal Mail, a fact reiterated by a postmark slogan.

Staff at post office counters deal with a multitude of requests – and not just for Gold Medal Winners sheets – so those posting mail are being encouraged to use the Post & Go machines. Much collector interest has resulted in this new generation of stamps, overprinted with the service required at the time of purchase. The highly popular pictorial designs, introduced in 2011 with Birds of Britain, have continued in 2012 with British Farm Animals (Sheep: February 24; Pigs: April 24; Cattle: September 28). Making the Robin design from Birds of Britain available for Christmas mail will only increase the appeal. However, it is the special overprints that have been of greater significance for many collectors.

These began at Autumn Stampex in 2011 with a special overprint in honour of Arnold Machin, appropriately on the Machin 'Post & Go' stamp: this overprint was only available at the exhibition. It has been followed in 2012 with two overprints to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee, again only available at the Stampex exhibitions: on the Machin design at the Spring event, and on the Union flag design at Autumn Stampex. This was followed by a special 'Perth' overprint being applied to both the Machin and Union flag designs at the ABPS (Association of British Philatelic Societies) National Exhibition and Philatelic Congress, held in Scotland's newest (or re-instated) city during October.

There is no doubt that further such overprints will appear, including the one for the Post & Go machine now located in the reception of the British Postal Museum & Archive (at Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London WC1X 0DL).

Below: artist's impression of the new BPMA, backed by the Heritage Lottery Fund and Royal Mail



A new home for a unique archive Major news during the year was that the BPMA is to have a new home. It will be at Calthorpe House, across the road from Freeling House. Over the years hopes of a new home have been ▸



Above: Tallents House First Day of Issue handstamp, marking 60 years since The Queen's Accession in 1952

raised – and dashed – many times. This time the project has both Royal Mail and Government support, planning permission has been granted by the London Borough of Camden, and funding provided by Royal Mail and the Heritage Lottery Fund. There is still a long way to go, but all the signs are now positive.

Exhibitions Of course, it is not only the Post & Go machines that bring collectors to the national exhibitions. This year collectors have demonstrated that the hobby is still very much alive by visiting both Spring and Autumn Stampex, and the ABPS exhibition in Perth.

There was a tinge of sadness as the final Philatex was held in the Spring of this year. The event emerged following the move by Stampex from the Royal Horticultural Halls in London's Westminster to the Business Design Centre at Islington. Philatex was first held in 1997 at the venue in Westminster, but its sale by the Royal Horticultural Society meant Philatex had to cease. Many of the dealers have moved to Stampex, resulting in all available space being occupied at the Autumn event in September.



Organising exhibitions is becoming increasingly costly, so it is little wonder that there are now far fewer international events. During the year there was just one major event, in Indonesia – for the international exhibition in Jakarta Royal Mail issued a generic Smilers® sheet. Another such sheet celebrated the Year of the Dragon, likely to be the first of 12 such 'Lunar New Year' sheets.

Below: the late Sir Cyril Humphrey Cripps, whose collection has caused a stir



What auctions reveal The stamp auctions revealed some fascinating hammer prices in 2012. With the *Titanic* sinking in mind, MacDonnell Whyte sold for £7,100 a postcard written by a passenger and posted during her final stop at Queenstown (now Cobh) in Ireland. The lot also included a later postcard of the ship signed by five survivors.

Much attention has been focused on the sale of the collection that was formed by the late Sir Cyril Humphrey Cripps, being sold by Spink as The Chartwell Collection. Hammer prices for some of the items include: £80,000 for a corner imprimatur from the second registration sheet of the Penny Black, registered on 15 April, 1840; £350,000 for a marginal block of twelve of the Twopenny blue of 1840 from plate 1; £110,000 for a set of four die proofs of the 1913 Seahorses in the issued colours; and £5,800 for an unadopted essay by M C Farrar-Bell for the 6d Wilding stamp.

In April Grosvenor Philatelic Auctions sold all seven recorded examples of the 23p Machin with the '17 pin perforation' variety resulting from a



QUEEN ELIZABETH II
THE DIAMOND JUBILEE



No.

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



Above: a display of London 2012 specials at Stampex.
Left: Diamond Jubilee Coin Cover.
Below: the Plate 77 discovery

repair of the perforation drum. Prices ranging from £300 for a marginal pair to £1,500 for a cylinder block of six seem to be bargains.

Developments down-under One of Great Britain's rarest stamps is the Penny Red printed from plate 77 (the number '77' appears within the stamp design). There are often reports of finding the stamp, but inevitably it is not. However, during the year Stanley Gibbons sold an example, on piece, for £550,000, said to be the finest example in private hands. It was sold to a collector in Australasia.

Next year the key events will be in Australia (Melbourne) and Brazil (Rio de Janeiro). Thinking of Australia, and the Olympic Games, the idea for Gold Medal Winners stamps originated at the Sydney Games in 2000: this year Australia Post again issued stamps to honour its gold medal winners. Will Royal Mail use the idea in 2016 for the Games in Brazil? •



Another view Douglas Myall asks: why so many different colours for the Machins?

One of the features of the Machin series that makes them so attractive to collectors worldwide is the range of colours used. Three more are to be added next month, making a total of 118 official colour names used since 5 June 1967. (This figure does not include unintended shades.) Why so many? There are several reasons, both aesthetic and operational, and this article seeks to answer the question. Colours need to work for mail sorters, both human and mechanical, and these perceive colours differently.

We start with the premise that there needs to be only one stamp for each service, both inland and worldwide, but with a few additional values to make up intermediate weight steps. The current design was launched before decimalisation and the range of values was determined by the rates set on 17 May 1965. This required 18 stamps. It included one addition to the range. The zone C airmail letter rate had been 1s 9d since 1966 but no Wilding stamp had been issued for it. The Machin stamp for this service was bi-coloured (orange and olive brown), the first such stamp for more than 50 years. The colours were chosen after tests for ease of recognition and their official names were adopted from the British Colour Council's *Dictionary of Colours for Interior Decoration.* Eighteen months later, two new colours were used for the 4d and 8d because of a problem with the dark sepia of the original 4d. This obscured the cancellations and caused some confusion with the 1d stamp under artificial light.

A new range was required when the currency was decimalised. A starting list of 40 colours was whittled down, first to 25 after tests with the mail sorting machines and then to 14 after human recognition tests at the Applied Psychology Unit at Cambridge University.

Although the machines were activated by phosphor overprints the strength of the signal was affected by the underlying colour. It became apparent that yellows, browns and other dark colours tended to cause trouble. (There were three basic versions of the Machin head, with the background either uniformly dark, uniformly light or gradated from left to right.) Later developments in phosphor inks showed that very pale colours, such as the 10½p of 1976, were also unsatisfactory. Machin himself had strong opinions on colour. He favoured the darker ones for preserving the relief effect of his image. (See the Royal Mail film *From Picture to Post*). He



Right: 1985 essays of the colour palette created by Jeffery Matthews. printed by Harrison using an image of the head of Thomas Richard Harrison

did not much like the gradated background and it was little used after 1976.

Another factor that affects the way machines 'see' colours is the use of iridescent and pearlescent overprints as a security measure. When the £5 Brown was trialled with a pearlescent ink (Iriodin®), it appeared too dark, so printing was scrapped and the Brown replaced by a new colour – Grey blue. Make-up values are semi-permanent and their colours are especially important. Now that some of them have been given the iridescent overprint for the first time, their colours have been under review and some have been changed this month in consequence.

At one time, the printers were left to source and mix the colours themselves and had to ensure consistency by eye and the skill of the press minder. In 1984 the designer Jeffery Matthews was asked to review the colours used. His brief included the aim of presenting The Queen's head to greater effect. This meant abandoning the gradated and light backgrounds and required colours suitable for a uniformly dark background. Harrison printers conducted essays to assess the tonal range of the gravure process using Matthews' formulations. The end result was a palette of 30 colours which have served well since the first, the 2p Dark Green, was issued on 23 February 1988. An account of this exercise was published in the January and February *Bulletins* of 1993.

The designer did not name the colours himself. While they were being essayed at Harrison, they were referred to as JM1, JM2 and so on. In Royal Mail's 40th anniversary commemorative document, *The Colourful Art of Arnold Machin*, 16 of these essays are shown. The names were allocated by Royal Mail – JM16, for example, became known as Flame. And for the first time, stamp printing inks were made to a formulation and printers were supplied with samples for on-press comparison to achieve consistency.

Even 30 colours did not prove sufficient and four more colours were added later: Grey Blue, Orange, Pink and Ruby, which was introduced specifically for the 40th anniversary of the Machin. Other colours that are not from the palette have also been used, such as Black, Gold, Brownish Olive (for the millennium stamp) and now Royal Mail Red, Slate Grey and Wood Brown. There may be more to come, as some of the darker palette colours, such as Dark Brown, are less easily distinguished by today's mail sorting machines.

The biggest cause of the need for new values and thus new colours is a change in the tariff. Since decimalisation in 1971 there have been 32 of these and another may occur later in 2013. At each change, some values become obsolescent but are still valid and must be replaced with different ones that can be clearly distinguished in a variety of lighting and other conditions. This is particularly important where key values are concerned. The gradual building up of the colour range was shown year by year in Royal Mail's 40th anniversary booklet, *Timeline*, published in 2007.

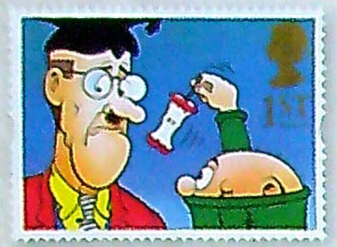
As stated above, Royal Mail names all of the colours it uses and a list of those used from 1971 to 1991 was published in the September 1991 *Bulletin*. These names have been printed in the margins of counter sheet stamps since 2007 and blocks showing the name are very collectable. The official names are not used by everybody and catalogue publishers are apt to use names of their own devising, especially if they also publish a colour key. This is a very subjective matter and in the main, I prefer to use the official names •



The colour names as they appear in the margins of stamp sheets for the new definitives issued on 3 January

A tasty collection

It's time to whet your appetite for feasting, as we conclude our gourmet journey through food-themed UK stamps



1


2


3



4

1993 Children's menu The 1993 'Gift Giving' Greetings set with its children's stories stamps is full of food in a literary kind of way. Wilfrid from the Bash Street Kids of *The Beano* fame has an apple core for the Teacher (1) and in the *Tale of Peter Rabbit* stamp, Peter has a basket under his arm with his five-a-day vegetables and a loaf (2). Interestingly, this illustration does not actually appear in *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*. In *Father Christmas Goes on Holiday*, Raymond Briggs wrote about what Santa does for the rest of the year – going on holiday somewhere warm, for example – and the Briggs stamp features an ice cream cone (3). A colourful cake is the centrepiece of the *Rupert Bear* stamp.



5

1993 Season well The Four Seasons, Autumn set of 1993 focuses on fruit-bearing flora, including a luscious blackberry bush and pear tree (5 and 6)

1994 Pass the porridge We return to children's stories for the Greetings set of 1994. The only stamp showing food is the Three Bears' porridge (7), but the idea of food pervades all the stamps in the issue: Alice's 'Eat Me' episode and Orlando the Marmalade Cat both feature. And surely Paddington Bear has some marmalade sandwiches in that pack of his!



6

1995 Edible art On the Springtime stamps of the Four Seasons issue, plant sculptures by Andy Goldsworthy are created from the leaves of two nut trees, the sweet chestnut (11) and the hazel (12).

2000 Millennium munch Deft hands peeling a potato (8) and a combine harvester moving across a field (9) both feature in the Millenium Series, A Farmer's Tale. And from the same year a hen's egg under magnification sits on a 65p stamp (10) illustrating the Centre for Life in Newcastle, one of the Millennium Projects (tenth series) Body and Bone.



7

2003 Coronation chicken? Marking the 50th Anniversary of the Coronation of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, five stamps capture the pomp and

Top: Wilfred the Bash Street Kid , Peter Rabbit, Father Christmas and Rupert Bear –all with tasty snacks to hand. Above: fruity Four Seasons stamps and the Three Bears with their famous porridge habit. Right: humble spud, harvest view and an egg



8

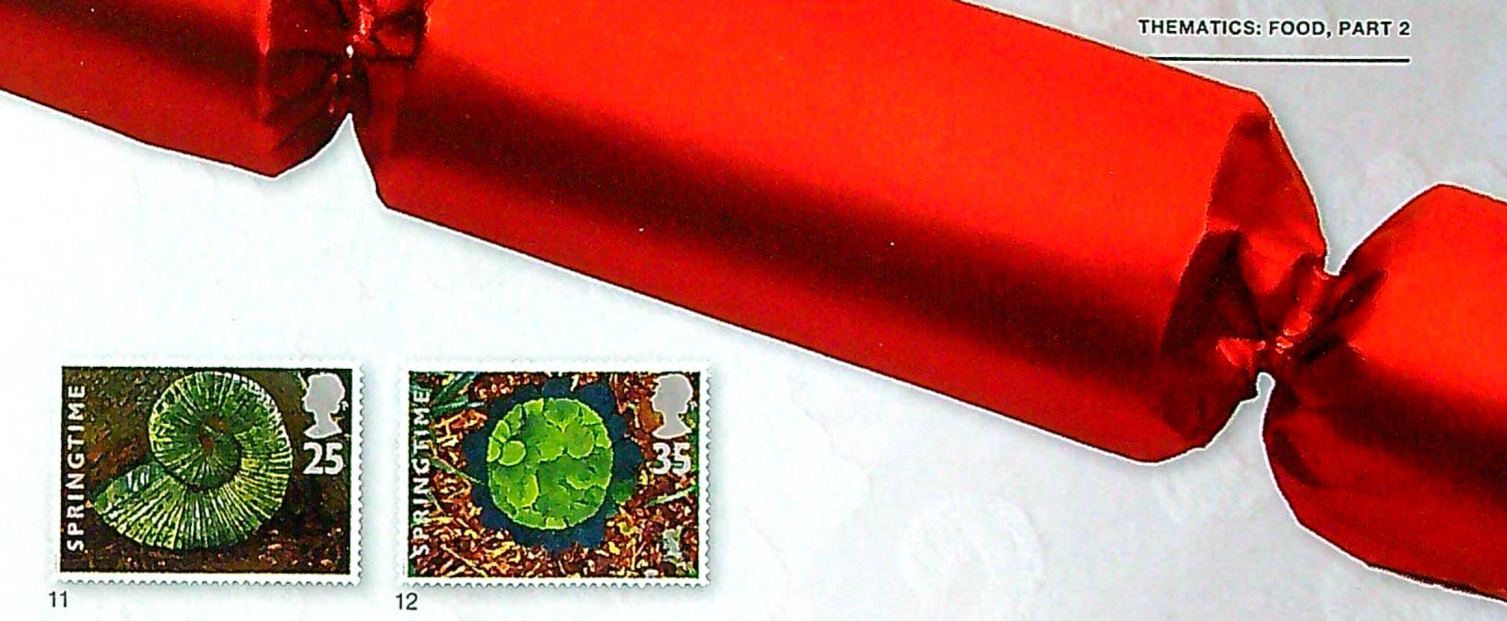


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10

© Alamy, © iStock



11 12

ceremony in glorious technicolour; the other five stamps, in black and white, show how the rest of the country celebrated – with food of course. Coronation chicken was the signature dish of the year, but visible on the Street Party stamp (13) are sandwiches, Swiss roll, chocolate roll and cake – probably Madeira.

2003 Eat and be merry Royal Mail's contribution to the 2003 Europa theme – Poster Art – focuses on Thirties-style British Pub Signs. One of the five stamp shows The Barley Sheaf (14), the basis of many traditional vittles.

2003 Funnyface fruit The Fun Fruit and Veg (15 to 24 overleaf) was guaranteed to make the kids smile and comprised eight stamps, each featuring a single fruit or vegetable. The stamp pack came with a pane of sticky-backed moustaches, hats, eyes and speech bubbles, so customers could personalise their letters. A tasty idea that many still regard as being ahead of its time.

2005 Cuisine and culture The Changing Tastes in Britain series, issued to align with the Europa theme of Gastronomy, indicated just how much the nation's food habits had developed over the years. The stamps features rice, tea, sushi, pasta, chips and an apple (25 to 30) – a delicious demonstration the multi-cultural flavours of UK mealtimes.

2006 A sticky issue In the Animal Tales issue, Paddington Bear has marmalade tucked under his arm (31) and the *Very Hungry Caterpillar* appears to have taken two bites out of the stamp!

2007 Lick of the bunch The stamp you would love to lick in the Beside the Seaside set is the one sporting a huge ice cream cone complete with Flake – the classic beach holiday treat (32).

2010 Sounds appetising The Album Covers issue features ten iconic LP designs, from Bowie's *The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust* and the *Spiders from Mars* and The Clash's *London Calling* to *Parklife* by Blur and the Rolling Stones' *Let It Bleed*. The Stones cover has a (rather Seventies) cake made by Delia Smith on the front of the album(33). A stamp showing the back of the album sleeve would have been less appetising – it had the cake smashed into pieces!

2010 Celebrate the cake There is something to help everyone celebrate on the Smilers® Miniature Sheet issued in January 2010 – the popular 'Happy Birthday' cake stamp (34) is part of a set that offered personalised labels.

2010 One for the girls The Girlguiding UK Miniature Sheet marks the centenary of the Girl Guides movement. The stamps show typical ▸

Left:Andy Goldsworthy's plant sculptures use hazelnut and chestnut leaves.
Below: children tuck into 1953 street party in the 2003 stamp issue marking the 50th anniversary of the Coronation. And the ancient food staple of barley is celebrated in the stamp series of pub signs



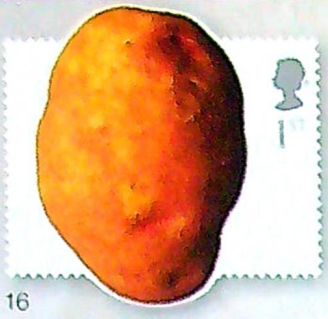
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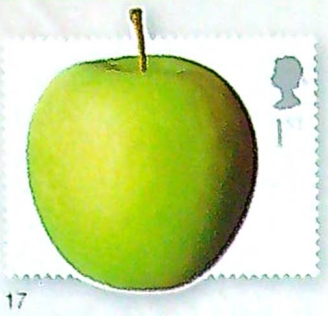
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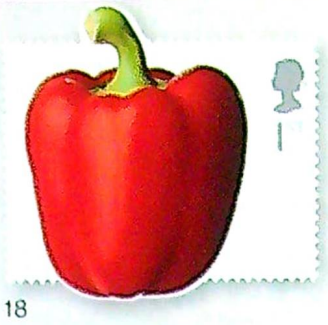
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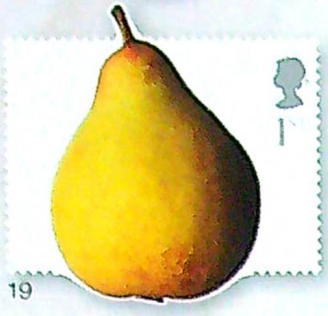
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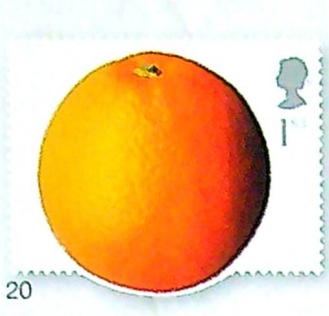
18

Right: the Fun Fruit and Veg stamps of 2003 came with stick-on eyes and mouths to add individual character.

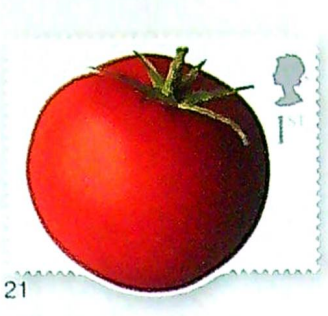
Below: each stamp in The Changing Tastes of Britain set of 2005 aligned with the Europa theme of Gastronomy



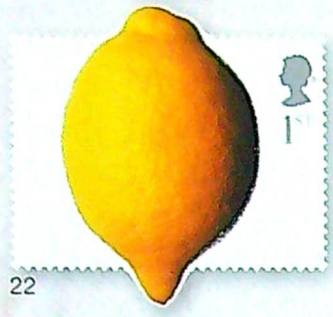
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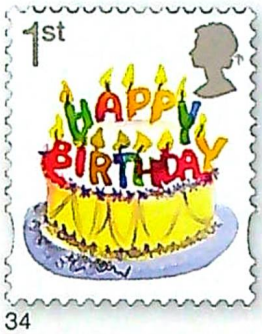


32



33

Left: Paddington with marmalade, a giant ice cream, a musical cake, a birthday cake, a cupcake and honey for tea.
Below: Gromit and pud, a sweet cherry design, and the gigantic peach



34



35



36



37

activities and another thing most girls love: a cupcake with a swirly pink topping sits proudly on the Brownie stamp (35).

2010 Hello, honey Back once again to children's books and food – which could make a good thematic all by itself: in the Winnie-the-Pooh issue, Royal Mail's contribution to the PostEurop theme for 2010 of 'children's books', the famous bear tucks happily into his honey on the 97p stamp (36).

2010 No cheese, please Forget the Wensleydale – on the Wallace & Gromit Christmas stamps, the dish of the day is the Christmas pud on the 97p (37).

2011 Cherry good show 2011's William Morris & Co issue celebrates the work of the interiors visionary and his design company. Philip Webb's panel of cherries, now in the V&A Museum, is depicted on one of the first-class stamps (38).

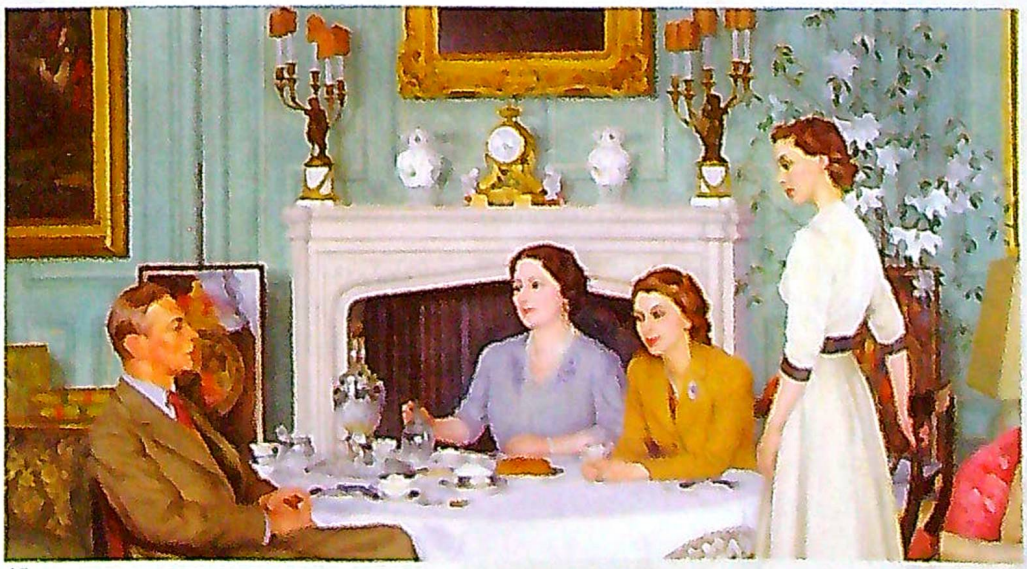
2012 Big and juicy Food is a giant theme in this year's Roald Dahl issue. Granted, there are no illustrations of the Big Friendly Giant's notorious snozzcumbers, but the fruit on the James & The Giant Peach stamp is satisfyingly huge (39). Finally and not on a stamp but illustrating this year's Presentation Pack of the House of Windsor and Saxe Coburg-Gotha issue – a very royal teatime of 1950 •



38



39


40

Left: a very British teatime – from the painting *Conversation Piece at the Royal Lodge, Windsor* by Sir James Gunn – features on the House of Windsor Presentation Pack. Showing the royal family sharing food in an informal setting reflected changing perceptions of the monarchy after the Second World War

© National Portrait Gallery, London



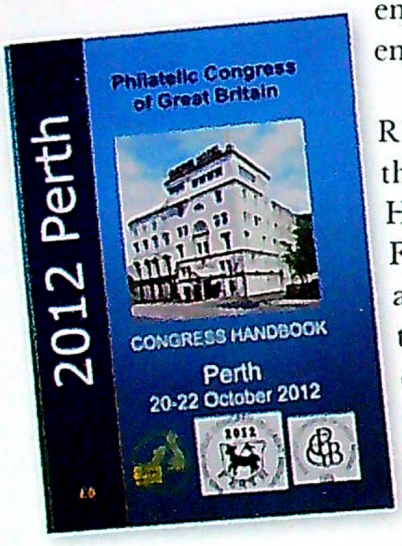
Bagpipes, a bus conductor and 500 philatelists

There was a piper, a vintage bus and a warm Scottish welcome at this year's ABPS Congress in Perth. Report by Dane Garrod

SOME OF THE world's most respected stamp experts were rewarded for their services to collecting when they gathered for the 94th Philatelic Congress of Great Britain in Perth. Hundreds of delegates met at the Queen's Hotel, close to the fast-flowing River Tay and a handy caber's toss from the city's railway station, for this major annual event, packed with excellent displays, presentations and well-deserved award-giving.

Above: the Queen's Hotel in Perth, host to this years National Philatelic Congress, and the special postmark commemorating the occasion. Below: the 2012 Congress Handbook

A man of honour Under the auspices of the ABPS, the Congress awards the Congress Medal to an individual who has consistently contributed to philately. This year the award went to Phil Kenton. Unfortunately, Phil was not well enough to attend, but fellow collector Susan Oliver accepted the honour on his behalf. In addition, eight collectors received the ABPS Award of Merit for outstanding voluntary service to British philately at regional, specialist and local society level: congratulations to John Barker, Graham Chadwick, Robin Holley, Jean Osborne, Peter Phipps, Barbara Priddy, Graeme Stewart and Michael Thompson.

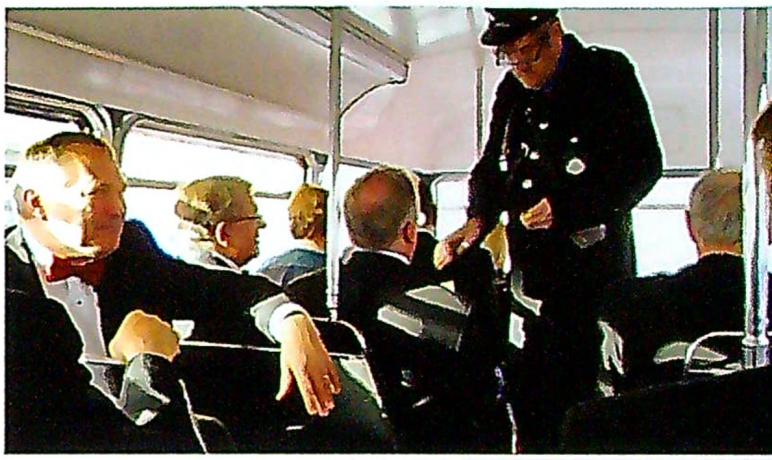


Expert presentations During Congress, from 20 to 22 October, delegates enjoyed the standing displays by local society members and were also entertained by six knowledgeable presenters on a diverse range of subjects.

These were Roy Erskine on 'Wilsons of Bannockburn', newly elected RDP Jamie Gough on the 'Universal Postal Union', Douglas Muir giving the annual Kay Goodman Lecture on 'Returned from Czechoslovakia', Hugh Jefferies on 'The Stanley Gibbons Catalogue – Past, Present and Future', Jeff Stone on 'What Happened to Agathon Fabergé's Collections', and a presentation by Congress Chairman Ron Harkess on 'The Battle of the River Plate'. You may remember the film about this famous confrontation between the British Navy and the German pocket battleship Graf Spee. Well, here was the proper story, with envelopes and photographs to illustrate it. For this most interesting display, Ron was awarded the Stanley Gibbons Cup.

Photographs: Dane Garrod; James Cooper





Above: Chris Harman, Richard West and Douglas Muir on the bus to St John's Kirk.
Left: Congress Chairman Dr Ron Harkess OBE is congratulated by John Baron

Distinguished collectors A highlight of Congress was the ceremonial signing of the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists (RDPs), seen as the world's most coveted philatelic honour. Delegates were taken by vintage Routemaster bus – genuine old-style bus tickets included – to the ceremony at Perth's beautifully restored St John's Kirk, where the ceremony took place.

The new signatories were: Jamie Gough from California, Dr Robin Gwynn from New Zealand, Belgian-born Patrick Maselis and Michael Sefi, well-known to readers of the *British Philatelic Bulletin* as Keeper of the Royal Philatelic Collection. The ceremony was heralded by the entrance of a piper in full tune, escorting in honoured guests that included Councillor Liz Grant, Provost of Perth & Kinross.

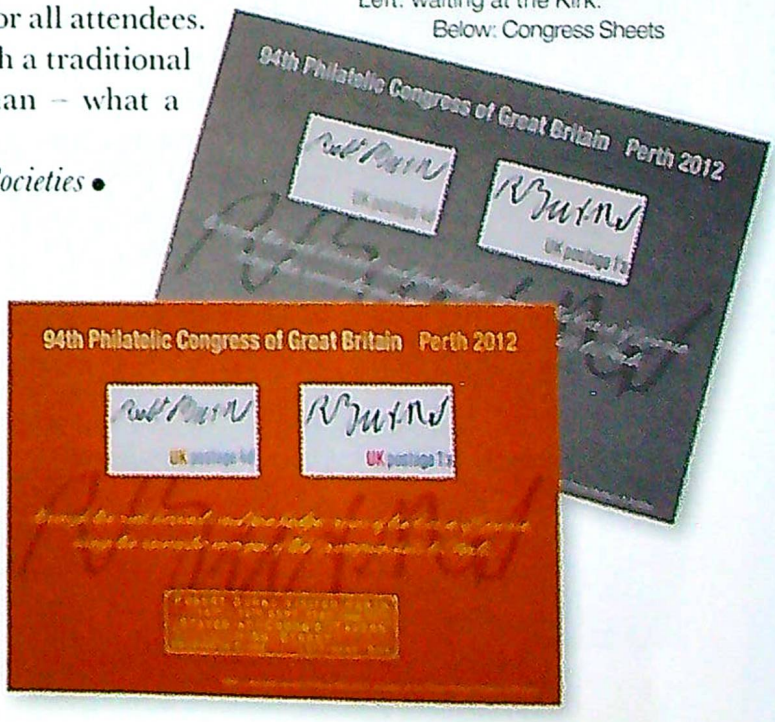


Above: Alex Haimann, winner of the 'Four Sheets' event.
Left: waiting at the Kirk.
Below: Congress Sheets

Party time in Perth The social side of Congress is as important as the philately, and there were memorable celebratory moments, including the Awards Dinner for the RDPs and the full banquet for all attendees. The banquet welcomed back Alastair the piper with a traditional Scottish grace spoken in Gaelic by an Englishman – what a unifying force philately can be!

Dane Garrod is the ABPS Representative for Specialist Societies •





It all began in Botchergate Martin Robinson describes some of earliest pillar box designs



In an earlier article in this series we referred to the first pillar boxes erected in the Channel Islands in 1852 at the instigation of Anthony Trollope, the famous author who also worked as a Post Office surveyor. The usefulness of the roadside boxes soon overcame public suspicion about their security, as people no longer needed to go all the way to the nearest post office to send off their letters.

The first box on the British mainland was installed in Botchergate, Carlisle, in 1853. The box no longer exists and there is no record of its appearance, but it was supplied by local ironfounder Messrs Abbott and Co and may be the one shown in an anonymous sketch preserved in the Post Office Archives. For the next five years the Post Office's district surveyors were allowed a surprisingly free hand in choosing the design and manufacture of pillar boxes erected in their areas. In spite of their age and comparatively small numbers, examples of many of them still exist, either in the Postal Heritage collection or even still in use on the street. Others, sadly, are known only from old photographs or drawings.



1

One of the very oldest pillar boxes still in daily use on the British mainland dates from 1856 and stands near an isolated cottage at Barnes Cross near Sherborne in Dorset (1). On either side of its vertical posting aperture are plates bearing the maker's name: John M Butt & Co of Kingsholm Ironworks, Gloucester. Another example is in the Haverfordwest Town Museum (this example was rescued from use as a farmer's gatepost) and a third is in the Post Office's own collection and has the maker's name on the base; this is a slightly earlier version dating from 1854. These boxes were made for the Post Office's Southern District, and a similar box bearing neither maker's name nor royal cipher is to be found in private use at the Royal Naval Hospital in Plymouth (2).

Further similar boxes were made for the Post Office's Eastern District in 1855 by Andrew Handyside & Co of the Britannia Ironworks, Derby (3). Two of these are still in service in Framlingham, Suffolk, and a third can be found in the Museum of Lincolnshire Life in Lincoln.



2

Other boxes were made by John Blaylock & Co of Carlisle and Laidlaw & Sons of Glasgow (both in 1856), but no examples of these survive. We do still have a rectangular box made by Thomas Ashworth of Burnley for the Northern District and Ireland. Our illustration shows a solitary example photographed in the National Museum of Ireland store in 1989 (4). The collection plate, added later, conceals the fact that the original posting aperture was vertical.

In Scotland – and India In the Post Office collection is another single example of an early box, surmounted by a large crown, this time made by Suttie & Co of Greenock in 1856-57 (5). These were for use in Scotland but some, with a horizontal rather than a vertical posting aperture, were later exported to India, where a few are still to be found in use. One, photographed by a *Bulletin* reader, was shown in an earlier article in this series.

Meanwhile, in London, six boxes manufactured by H & MD Grissell were erected in 1855 on Fleet Street, Strand, Pall Mall, Piccadilly (two) and


3

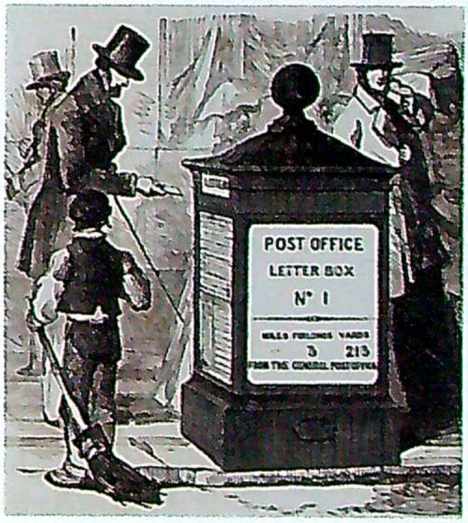

4


5



7

Rutland Gate. They were five feet high and rectangular, with a large iron ball on the roof and the horizontal posting aperture covered by a flap. None of these survives but Post Office Archives has a photo of one in a contractor's yard in 1905, and there is a famous contemporary engraving of one from the Illustrated London News dated 24 March 1855 (6).



6

These boxes, although technically adequate, were not well received by the public and the Post Office asked the Government's Department of Science and Art to come up with a better design. Fifty of these ornate boxes, decorated with masks and festoons of flowers, were made by Smith & Hawkes of Birmingham in 1857 (7). An additional feature was a compass tile set in the roof. There was a serious design fault, however, in that the posting aperture was in the roof and could let in rainwater if the flap was left open. Later models had the aperture below the cap of the box. By modern standards this is a small box, standing only 4 feet (1·2m) high. The Post Office's collection has two of these, and there is another in a recreated Victorian street in the Museum and Art Gallery in Peel Park, Salford. More early pillar boxes in the next article •

For more information, contact the Letter Box Study Group at 38 Leopold Avenue, Handsworth Wood, Birmingham B20 1ES or via www.lbsg.org

Reader's letter: Victor Gilmour has sent a photo of a George V pillar box with its aperture sealed which he found while visiting Kleve in western Germany. He points out that Kleve is also spelt Cleves, as in Anne of Cleves, Henry VIII's fourth wife. James Robinson shows another GVR pillar box in use in Luzern, Switzerland, which was presented by its twin town of Bournemouth in 1991, on the occasion of the 700th anniversary of Swiss nationhood. I see that Kleve is twinned with Worcester and assume that Mr Gilmour's box was a similar gift.

Please send your photographs to The Editor at the address on page 100.
We regret that we cannot promise to return photographs.



Follow the stars of Stampworld UK

The first of our series of features for children looks back on a successful year for young collectors

Did you know..?
The first UK Christmas stamps were issued in 1966 and designed by children



Youngsters can get helpful tips and inspiration from the Stamp Active Network at www.planetstamp.co.uk

IT HAS BEEN a first-class year for young collectors – they have really made their postmark on the world of stamps. Sorry about the stamp puns, but there may be more! British children have shown huge enthusiasm, knowledge and skills in their collecting efforts throughout 2012. You only have to look at the brilliant entries for youth competitions to see how well they have done and, in some cases, how they are changing the face of philately. We thought *Bulletin* readers would like to know what's happening in the junior ranks and we hope you will share these pages with younger readers over the holidays.

Thematic collecting often helps children to develop expert interests and discover amazing stories from the world around them – just as it does for adults. Some Royal Mail special issues may even align with subjects studied in schools as part of the National Curriculum. In the UK this year popular themes for young collectors have included ships, Concorde, America, Elvis Presley, Princess Diana, royalty and cartoons.

A champion to watch in 2013 must be Rhys Evans from Haverfordwest in Wales, named Young Collector of the Year by the Stamp Active Network group for child philatelists. Other young winners are shown below, but philately is less about competitions than about the thrill of spotting one tiny piece of paper that perfectly fits into your collection •

Congratulations to these 2012 competition winners...

Anne Dummer trophy for young collector of the year
Awarded to Rhys Evans for his commitment to philately and his efforts to encourage other children to collect.

British Youth Stamp Championships
Class C (age 14-16):
Rhys Evans for *From Canoe to Concorde* – Small Silver Medal; Claire Mitchell for *Let There Be Light* – Large Silver.
Class D (age 12 and 13):
Toby Assan for *The American Dream* – Silver-bronze; Morgan Bugler for *Down to the Sea in Ships* – Silver-bronze; Lynne Mitchell for *A Helping Hand* – Large Silver; Lynne Mitchell for *Bobbing Along on the Canal* – Large Silver.

Special Awards
Melville Cup (Best overall entry) and Stanley Gibbons Trophy (Best entry in Class C)– Claire Mitchell for *Let There Be Light.*
Benham Trophy (Best entry in Class D) – Lynne Mitchell for *A Helping Hand.*
ADPS Trophy (Most promising entry) – Morgan Bugler for *Down to the Sea in Ships.*

Brilliant Britain
Age 7 and below: 1st Chloe Linwood, 2nd Lily Linwood, 3rd Amber Cummins.
Age 8 to 9: 1st Shannon Allen; 2nd Rachel Moore; 3rd Stephanie Haye.
Age 10 to 12: 1st –Natasha Kaaba, 2nd Rachel Foster, 3rd Chloe Liddall.

Photograph: Dan Froude







Left: the prancing Father Christmas of 1997. Below: Raymond Briggs' solid Santa of 2004, a computer-generated image of 2006, and this years US stamp, which has a print-run of 75 million!







Santa round-up As stamps by Gruffalo illustrator Axel Scheffler are issued for Christmas, we pay tribute to other top Santa stamps

He is everyone's favourite superhero, always fiercely determined to finish his mission on time for the magic moment on Christmas Day when you find a huge pile of pressies under the tree. Here we celebrate Santa on British stamps, though we have sneaked in a new one from the USA too!

Fancy a festive theme as your next collecting challenge? Join the British Thematic Association for access rights to global Christmas stamp checklists. Find out more at brit-thematic-assoc.com

What a cracker In 1997 the five-stamp Christmas issue, finely illustrated in Victorian style, marked the 150th anniversary of the traditional Christmas cracker. Father Christmas rides across the night sky on a huge cracker, has a giggle on top of a giant snowball, appears as the Man in the Moon pulling a cracker with two children, bursts through wrapping paper and, finally, tip-toes into a snow-covered chimney with a sack full of crackers. All of which is... cracking!

Heavy-weather hero In the 2004 Father Christmas series by artist and author Raymond '*The Snowman*' Briggs, Santa braves the elements to make your festive dreams come true. He starts his delivery on a calm moonlit night but then battles through windy weather, uses an umbrella in the rain, and a torch in fog, and shelters from snow and hail – but by sunrise on Christmas Day all is calm again.



Computer Christmas Japanese digital illustrator Tatsuro Kiuchi, who works exclusively on computer, brought Santa up to high-tech date with instantly recognisable symbols of Christmas for the 2006 issue: Santa, Snowman, Reindeer and Christmas Tree. See more of Kiuchi's work at http://tatsurokiuchi.halinc.jp.



Poetry in motion Californian artist Paul Rogers was inspired by a classic festive poem to create an image of Santa zooming over the rooftops for the US Postal Service's 2012 Santa and Sleigh Forever stamp set. At www.drawger.com/paulrogers you can see how he developed his designs from scaled drawings •

General STAMP knowledge quiz

All you need to take part is a detailed knowledge of UK special issues – or your 2012 subscription to *Bulletin*







1 Name the British animator who appeared on the video activated by the Christmas stamps of 2011.

2 Six stamps showing characters from Roald Dahl's classic children's books formed the first special issue of 2012. How did the character on the £1.10 stamp try to disguise themselves?

3 A ten-stamp issue celebrated the Dickens bicentenary this year. On what date, and in which town, was Charles Dickens born?

4 In the Dickens issue, which character represented *David Copperfield* and what was the value of the stamp?

5 What are the denominations of the banknotes that feature in the Diamond Jubilee Definitives issue?



6 The Britons of Distinction issue pays tribute to the courage of a secret agent. What was her name and which organisation did she work for?

7 The House of Windsor and Saxe-Coburg-Gotha Miniature Sheet shows a rare British victory. What was the event and what was the score?

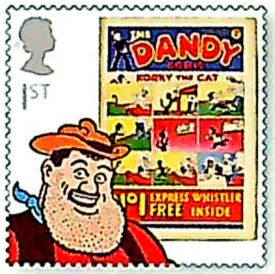
8 Which famous place of learning appeared in the UK A-Z Part 2 issue released on 10 April, and who founded it?

9 Vivienne Westwood is one of the designers celebrated in the Great British Fashion issue. Which notorious music group did she design for and what is the name of her famous shop in Chelsea?

10 On a £1.10 stamp in the Diamond Jubilee issue, The Queen is shown at a major sporting event. What was the event and where was it held?

11 A stamp in the same issue shows The Queen making the first ever Christmas television broadcast by a British monarch. When and where was this broadcast filmed?

12 Desperate Dan of *The Dandy* fame starred with nine other famous cartoon characters in the Comics stamp set this year. But which character



Rules and regulations 1 The closing date is 25 January, 2013. 2 Promotions are open to all readers aged 18 and over, except employees of Royal Mail Group Ltd, their business associates and immediate families. 3 Responsibility cannot be accepted for entries which are incomplete, damaged or not received for any reason. Proof of posting is not proof of receipt. Prizes must be accepted as offered; they are not transferable and there are no cash alternatives. 4 Winners are notified within 28 days of closing date. 5 For prize draws where readers must answer a question or solve a crossword, winners will be the senders of the first correct entries drawn at random by an independent person after the closing date. 6 Promoter's decision on any aspect of the promotions is final. No correspondence will be entered into. 7 Entry implies acceptance of these rules. 8 Prizes are subject to suitability and availability. The promoter reserves the right to a) substitute a prize of equal or greater value if circumstances so demand and b) to suspend or cancel or hold void any of the competitions or prize draws at any time without notice. 9 Winners' names are available 28 days after closing date; send an SAE to William Doherty, *British Philatelic Bulletin*, Royal Mail, Tallents House, 21 South Ble Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB. 1st Floor, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HQ. The promoter of the Christmas Quiz is Royal Mail Group Ltd, 100 Victoria Embankment, London EC4Y 0HQ.

appeared on the front cover of the *Dandy* launch issue and what did he steal?



13 Royal Mail printed stamps showing all the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic gold medallists just 24 hours after their victories. How many in total were in the series?

14 Why was 'London E20' chosen as a first day of issue postmark for the Welcome to the London 2012 Olympic Games set?

15 Name the four iconic London landmarks that appear on the Welcome to the London 2012 Paralympic Games issue.

16 In the Post & Go British Farm Animals – Cattle issue, the Red Poll breed is featured. What have 'polled' cattle *not* got?

17 The Space Science issue features a mission to Saturn. What was the name of the spacecraft involved, and which two astronomers was it named after?



18 Which well-known illustrator's work appears on the Christmas 2012 stamps – and on the £1.10 stamp, what is the robin holding in his mouth?

19 Which 'royal' was entered on the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists at the ABPS National Exhibition in Perth, and what is his professional title?

20 What animal appears on the postmark used for the Perth exhibition handstamp?



Below: one lucky readers will receive this luxurious leatherbound 2012 Yearbook *and* a catalogue-standard Penny Black housed in an attractive frame, accompanied by a certificate of authenticity signed and dated by a Stanley Gibbons director



How to enter the prize draw....

Once you have finished the quiz, send your answers and name and address to: BPB Christmas Quiz, *Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB* to arrive by 27 January 2013.

Normal rules and regulations apply – please see facing page.

The sender of the first correct entry drawn from the postbag after the closing date wins the Royal Mail 2012 Year Book and the framed catalogue-quality Penny Black stamp shown right, which comes with a certificate of authenticity.

Ten lucky runners-up will receive special Christmas prizes of 2012 stamps packs and stamp-related products.

October puzzles solutions and winners

Name that stamp: Flaming Star Nebula C31, from the Sky At Night special stamp issue of 2007.

Winners: J Bruce, Aberdeenshire; I McIlwraith, Hants; Rev P Hanna, County Cork.

Space Qiz: a) SOHO stands for Solar and Heliospheric Observatory, b) Sir Martyn Ryle, c) Osborne Ross Design, d) 1966, e) 26km. **Winners** J Poole, Glasgow; J A Paulson, Derbyshire; NJC Foley-Fisher of County Westmeath.

Message for November Puzzlers following the delay in printing and distribution of November's *British Philatelic Bulletin*, the closing date for entries to the prize draws on page 95 is extended to January 18, 2013.

Win a night of luxury...



Once again Blakes, the sumptuous boutique hotel in South Kensington, is offering an overnight stay for a lucky *Bulletin* reader. By entering our prize draw, you could win a night in one of Blakes' luxurious rooms and enjoy the glamour of the restaurant and bar, famous for exclusive style, service and the best Martini in London.

The prizewinner and a guest can stay in a luxury double room on Friday 22 February 2013 – perfect if you want to catch the final days of Stampex* – or on another date of your choice, subject to availability.

How to enter Send your name and contact details to: *BPB*/Blakes Draw, HMS President, Victoria Embankment, London EC4Y 0HJ or email bpbdraw@rocketmail.com with 'Blakes' in the subject line. **Closing date** Friday 18 January 2013. The first entry drawn wins the prize as described. Entrants must be 18 or over. Full terms and conditions apply, as shown on previous page •

** Stampex runs from 20 to 23 February at the Business Design Centre, London N1. For details, see future Stamp Scene pages of* Bulletin.

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