BRITISH PHILATELIC

The magazine for collectors of UK stamps

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Bulletin

2017 Special Stamp Programme
• Preview: Windsor Castle issue

7 2017 2017 2017 2017 2



Happy New Stamp Year

JOHN HOLMAN STAMP SCENE • BAKER'S A-Z TELEGRAMS • WIN ANCIENT BRITAIN SPECIALS



Keeping you posted A message from Royal Mail Stamps and Collectibles MD Matthew Parkes

As I write this, it is hard to believe that it has been over a year since I took the helm at Royal Mail Stamps and Collectibles. And what a year it has been! The astonishing issue celebrating Her Majesty's 90th Birthday remains a highlight for me. The image of our beautiful Miniature Sheet, featuring four generations of the Royal Family, was used across the world, raising the profile of our Special Stamps in a way we could never have imagined. It was heartening to see so many people engaging with Special Stamps for the first time.

2017 marks the fiftieth anniversary of the introduction of Arnold Machin's iconic Machin sculpture. We will be commemorating this historic milestone with its own stamp issue, which will, I am sure, be of particular interest to many *Bulletin* readers.

A calendar of our 2017 Stamp Programme is on page 160. We have an exciting year ahead, beginning with our wonderful Ancient Britain issue (see page 148). I would love to hear your feedback so please do write in to the *Bulletin* and let us know what you think about the stamps we create.

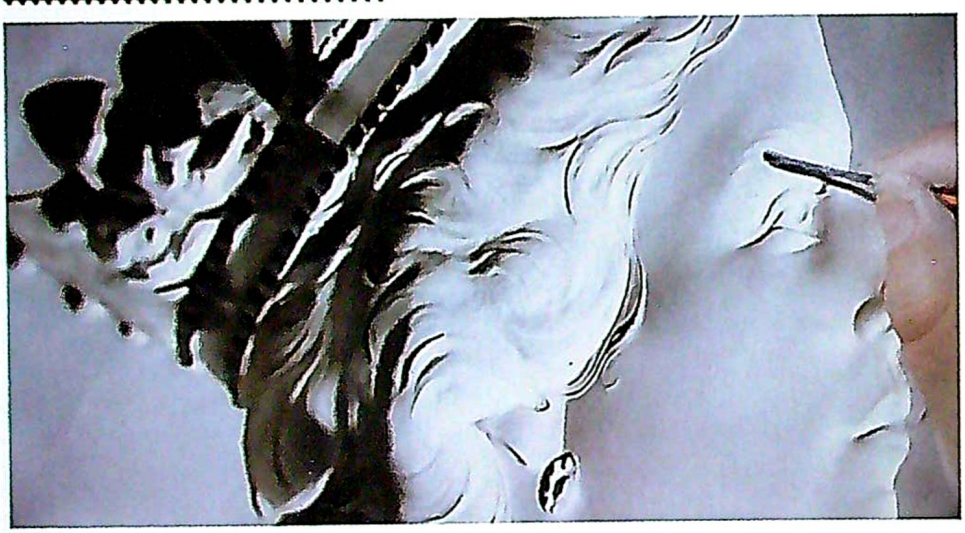
With warm wishes for a peaceful and prosperous 2017 •

Matthew Parkes

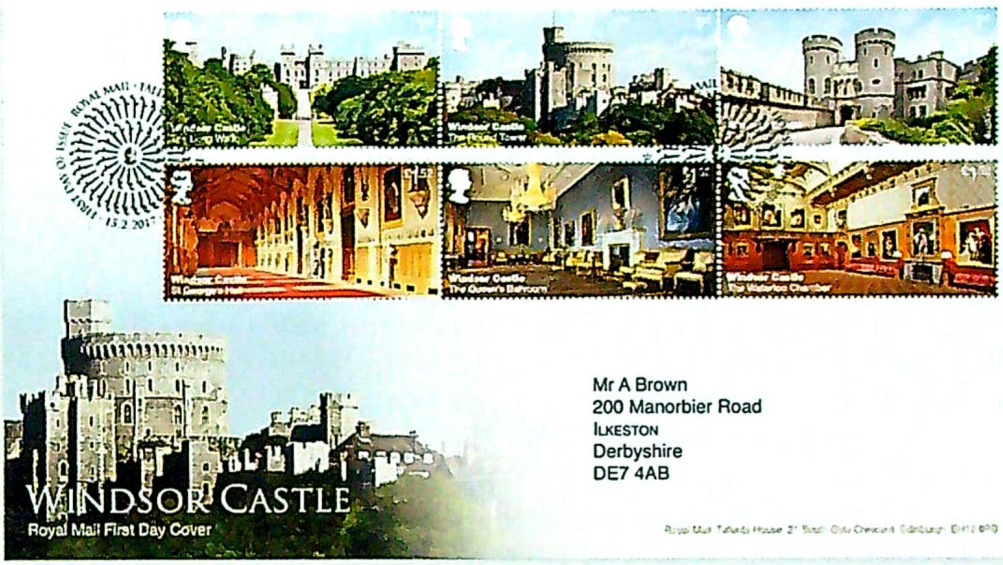


Left: the Ancient Britain stamp issue released on 17 January

Below: sculptor Arnold Machin working on the design that made philatelic history



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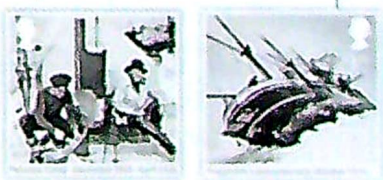
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Royal Mail Editor William Doherty, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB ● **Publishing Editor** Kate Shaw, 26 Throgmorton Street, London EC2N 2AN ● Price £1.95 from Post Office Ltd philatelic outlets or by order from Post Office branches ● **Twelve months' subscription** £18.95 UK and Europe, £24.95 rest of world. Send subscriptions to Royal Mail Tallents House (address above) or subscribe online at www.royalmail.com/bulletin ● **Binders** (to hold 24 issues) £8.50, and storage boxes (about 30 copies) £9.95, are also available by post or online ● Stamp images © Royal Mail. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or parts is prohibited without prior permission of the Editors ● **Printed** in Great Britain by Zenith Print & Packaging Ltd ● **ISSN** 0953 8119 ● Royal Mail is a trading name of Royal Mail Group Ltd. Registered in England and Wales, number 4138203. Registered office: 100 Victoria Embankment, London EC4Y 0HQ

2016
2017

The turn of the stamp year

With friends of the *Bulletin* we look back at 2016 and forward to stamping highlights in 2017

Even as we step forward into a new year of GB philately, it is also the time for reflection on the year that has just closed. In addition to the pleasures of correspondence from *Bulletin* subscribers – particularly lively in 2016 – and meeting new readers at exhibitions, we always enjoy exploring the fascinating background stories behind so many stunning Special Stamps.

Just flicking through the inviting pages of the 2016 *Royal Mail Yearbook* and browsing through the year's Special Stamps on the online Favourite Stamp Poll brings back rich memories for the *Bulletin* editorial team: the thrill of discovering that the *James Caird* boat featured in the Shackleton issue is actually housed in a local school; interviewing actors who were performing the very lines on the Shakespeare stamps; meeting the son of 'British Schindler' Nicholas Winton, from the British Humanitarians set, and looking through his father's stamp album with him; our heated but fun discussion about where we should hang the Animail stamps on the *Bulletin* front cover; fielding readers' probing questions at Stampex about the coded mysteries hidden in the Agatha Christie set (at last we can answer them – on page 151). Now the burning question is: what will be the result of the Favourite Stamp Poll and how many readers will vote for their favourite stamp online (see left)?

On the following pages you can share with leading UK philatelists their six key memories of 2016 and their six highlights for the year ahead. As always, readers, your own perspectives are most welcome for the *Bulletin* letters pages.



Above: voting in the Favourite Stamp Poll 2016 will be open until the end of January at www.bpb.london/poll



Association of British Philatelic Societies
Chair John Baron

Highlights of 2016

• Several societies reached significant milestones with various types of celebration. ABPS congratulates these philatelic hubs. In Macclesfield the Secretary has held office for 50 years – special congratulations to Peter Kirk!

• Changes on the ABPS Executive: Neil Ritchie is Secretary, Maurice Buxton our webmaster, Rufus Barnes the new Vice Chair responsible for Federations, and Barry Stagg and George Henshilwood joined the committee. Graham Winters will be the new Chair.

• Congratulations to Jean Osborne for receiving the Congress Medal for 2016 and to the winners of the Award of Merit.

• The ABPS is grateful to Stanley Gibbons for sponsorship of events throughout the year.

• Two Stampexes and an additional philatelic event at York.

• The ABPS Congress in Cambridge was the best I have attended, with great company and speakers.



Looking forward to 2017

• A new ABPS website with more interaction.

• We will make a concentrated effort to develop our relationship with societies that are not ABPS members

• This year's Congress is in Cardiff in July.

• Nominations for Hon. Vice Presidents.

• I urge all to compete in the inter-Federation competition.

• Please continue to support Stamp Active Network's youth competitions!



Richard West of the Stamp Advisory Committee (SAC)

Favourite 2016 stamps

•The Great Fire of London. The storybook approach relates the events in an eye-catching way, which immediately appealed to the SAC.

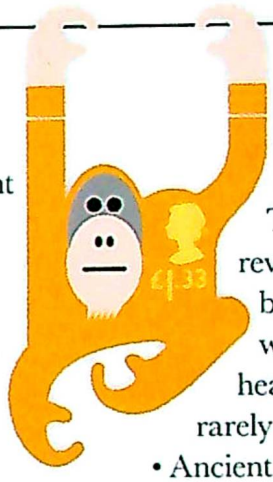
• Royal Mail 500. Encapsulating 500 years of history in six stamps was never going to be easy, but the posters on the Miniature Sheet and six ways of transporting mail on the Post & Go stamps provide memorable images.

• 400th anniversary of the death of William Shakespeare. It was a challenge to find a new approach to the Bard, and to ensure the calligraphy suited the quotations.

•Agatha Christie. Dark and mysterious, the six stamps need a little ingenuity to reveal their subtle secrets – so appropriate in mirroring the work of this famous writer.

• Beatrix Potter. In a year that has recalled the best of British literature, the delicate illustrations celebrating the characters brought to us by Beatrix Potter provide a stark contrast to those for Agatha Christie and Shakespeare and are a delight to behold.

• Animail. Clearly not everyone's idea of a postage stamp, but a novel concept that found great appeal with many members of the SAC.



Six to watch in 2017

• 50 Years of the Machin definitive. An anniversary that appeals to collectors; there can be no doubt this iconic stamp design will be celebrated in fine style.

• Windsor Castle. Having been treated to views of Buckingham Palace in 2014, we have a chance to see the richness of Windsor Castle, both inside and out.

•Songbirds. The stamps reveal the full beauty of birds which we often hear but perhaps rarely see.

• Ancient Britain. An imaginative set with an innovative approach, one that challenged the designer teams but which all agreed produced informative and appealing stamps.

Toys. One to look forward to if you are nostalgic about those toys in the attic!

• As in the past two years, Royal Mail is keeping details about certain issues under wraps – there are two 'wait and see' issues this year, with a Preview of the first in March.

STAMP ACTIVE



Stamp Active Network Chairman John Davies

Youth news 2016

• Launch of a new Stamp Active activity book *All Creatures Great & Small.*

• Spring and Autumn Stampex attract more young collectors with popular new games and activities.

• Kidstamps free postal club continues to grow.

• Record support received from Stamp Active dealers and patrons.

• Youth competition workshop for young exhibitors.

• Rt Hon Alan Johnson MP becomes Stamp Active patron.



Youth events 2017

• Spring Stampex features displays on the Royal Family and...

• ... a free daily stamp art workshop with Suzanne Ray of Art Stamped.

• For the first time both Stampexes have Youth Competitions.

• We are optimistic about seeking more support.

•Autumn Stampex will show the British Youth Stamp Championships and the one-page national competition on 'My Favourite Things'.

• More development at www.stampactive.co.uk.

2016 2017





President of the Royal Philatelic Society London (RPSL) Frank Walton

Highlights of 2016

• 19 May – I apologise for a very personal choice here but, after 20 years of regularly attending meetings at the 'Royal', I finally had the honour of giving a presentation myself. A wonderful day.

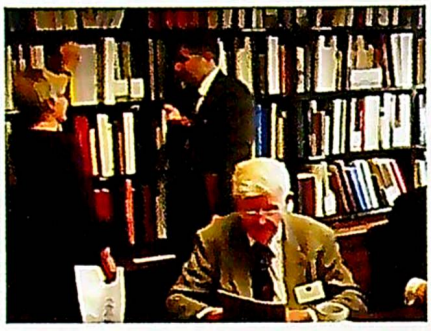
• 30 May – after several years of hard work by volunteers, the magnificent contents of the Crawford Philatelic Library were launched on the Global Philatelic Library website as a free resource to researchers.

• 31 May – fantastic RPSL Dinner in Central Park, New York during the NY2016 stamp exhibition.

• 15 September – display from the collection of Her Majesty The Queen to the Royal, a magnificent collection of British Guiana and Barbados material.

• 1 October – RPSL annual membership list published, showing the tenth consecutive year of growth. There are now 2,265 members from 83 countries.

• 9 November – decision made to seek a new home for the Royal as its current headquarters building, 41 Devonshire Place, London, is old and unsuitable.



'The Royal' in 2017

• Relaunch of the RPSL website.

• Detailed planning phase of move to new premises.

• Publication of four new major philatelic handbooks.

• Many more outstanding philatelic displays at No.41.

• Hosting international symposium of scientific philately.

• Welcoming Patrick Maselis as the first overseas resident President of the RPSL.

BTA

BRITISH THEMATIC ASSOCIATION



British Thematic Association Chairman Barry Stagg

Highlights of 2016

• Launch of www.britishthematic.org.uk – the new website of the British Thematic Association (BTA).

• The well-attended BTA AGM with The BEF in France displayed by Jim Etherington.

• Displays by BTA and British Postmark Society in joint Autumn Stampex meeting.

• Our bi-annual weekend gathering, in Oxford, with three entertaining displays: Alice in Wonderland and Beyond, A Whale's Tale and Ireland's Invasion of the World.

• Annual BTA competition entries displayed at South of England Stamp & Postcard Fair. Grace Davies won the BTA Cup and Janet Nelson the John Fosbery Trophy.

• BTA members gain gold at national and international exhibitions: Spring Stampex, World Stamp Show NY 2016 and PHILATAIPEI 2016.

BTA key dates 2017

• 20 May – joint meeting with Guild of St Gabriel in London, members giving displays of 12 sheets with a religious theme.

• 10 June – AGM at Swinpex.

• 8 July – attending Midpex.

• Autumn Stampex meeting.

• BA Competitions on display at South of England Stamp & Postcard Fair.

• Hoping for successes in Europe, including Essen and Finlandia 2017.



Royal Mail Head of Stamp Production Martyn Fry

Post & Go 2016

• Five new static machines established on *HMS Trincomalee* and *HMS Caroline*, at Explosion! Museum of Naval Power in Gosport, the Royal Corps of Signals in Blandford Forum, and at the Shakespeare Centre in Stratford-upon-Avon.
• Pictorial overprints were introduced to Royal Mail Post & Go stamps at Autumn Stampex.
• Updated software showing animated images on screen.
• 'Post a parcel' tested at the political conferences.
• Pictorial stamps introduced to Enquiry Offices to align with Post Offices.
• Self Service Kiosk (SSK) labels introduced to Post Office self-service machines for parcel barcoding.

Post & Go 2017

•Mail by Rail set shows TPOs and Mail Rail.
• New-style Machin Anniversary Post & Go stamps in June.
• Royal Mail at MIDPEX in July.
• More Enquiry Office machines across the country from April.
• New static sites.
• Proposed exhibition programme:
5-18 February: Spring Stampex, Business Design Centre, London.
21-22 April: 88th Scottish Congress, Perth.
8 July: MIDPEX Warwickshire Exhibition Centre.
13-16 September: Autumn Stampex.

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From the Bureaux



Jersey Post Head of Philatelic Melanie Gouzinis

'I was delighted to be invited to give a presentation in Beijing at a philatelic awards ceremony in December. We have found a real desire among Chinese collectors to use stamps as a means to learn about cultures of other countries. Also, stamps issued by Jersey Post gained third prize in the 12th China Annual Best Foreign Stamp Poll' •

Sarah Read Isle of Man Post

'2016 has been a landmark year for Isle of Man Post and through our varied stamp programme we have continued to develop strong links with scientific and aeronautic communities – there are even 2016 covers that have been into outer space and back!

Our limited edition Yearbook features every stamp of 2016 plus stories and pictures behind every design' •

Royal Mail Yearbook 2016

As a homage to the place of letter writing in postal history, the chapters of this book contain photographs of real-life correspondence alongside every single pictorial stamp issued last year. One example is a letter which the Antarctic explorer Ernest Shackleton wrote to his wife Emily; another is a note from Richard Quiney asking old school chum William Shakespeare for help obtaining a loan of £30! •







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



13 January Strand Stamp Fair, Royal National Hotel, Bedford Way, London WC1H 0DG, 9am to 4pm. Admission is free. Enquiries: Kate Puleston, 020 8946 4489.

14 January National Philatelic Society meeting: Beyond the Back of the Book by Chris Tennant, Welsh Centre, Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8UE. Display (2.45pm) preceded by Members' Auction (12.50pm). Enquiries: Peter Mellor, 01582 762284.

14 January Telford Stamp & Card Club Fair, Belmont Hall, Wellington TF1 1LU, 10am to 3pm. Free entry, good range of stalls. Enquiries: B Hemmings, 01694 720192.

20-21 January York Racecourse Stamp & Coin Fair, The Grandstand, York Racecourse YO23 1EX, Friday 11am to 6pm, Saturday 10am to 4pm. Admission free, bar/buffet. Details: www.stampshows.net, 01793 513431.

21 January North West Kent Postcard Club Postcard Fair, St George's Church Hall, Gravesend DA11 0TB, 9.30am to 3.30pm. Dealers, displays, local books, car parking nearby, refreshments. Enquiries: 01474 325507.

28 January East Malling Stamp Fair, East Malling Village Hall, New Road, East Malling ME19 6DD, 9.30am to 3.30pm. Stamps, postal history, postcards, stamp displays, free car park, refreshments. Details: www.mallingstampfairs.weebly.com, 01474 325507.



28 January GB Philatelic Society meeting at Royal Philatelic Society London, 41 Devonshire Place, London W1. Things I Like by Ray Barton (11am), Society Competitions (2.15pm). Enquiries: Peter Tanner, 01753 887755.

4 February National Philatelic Society meeting: Anglo-French Postal History 1580-1900 by Tony Allen, Welsh Centre, Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8UE. Display (2.45pm), preceded by Members' Auction (12.50pm). Enquiries: Peter Mellor, 01582 762284.

10 February Strand Stamp Fair: see 13 January for details.

15-18 February Spring Stampex, Business Design Centre, London N1.

18 February GB Philatelic Society meeting at Spring Stampex. GB Perfins by Richard Husband (2.15pm). Enquiries: Peter Tanner, 01753 887755 •

2017 events

STAMPEX

Spring and Autumn Stampex will be held in London from 15 to 18 February and from 13 to 16 September. Spring Stampex will be a full national exhibition with all classes and countries, but focusing on the former Ottoman Empire. There will be around 100 trade stands including Royal Mail with its usual sales stand and Post & Go area. New Special and Post & Go stamps will be issued during the exhibition. Stampex enquiries: 01342 830225, info@thepts.net.

The Southern England Stamp Show, billed as the biggest and best two-day stamp show in the region, will be held at the Farnborough Leisure Centre, Westmead, Farnborough, Hants on 10 and 11 March. Open Friday 10am to 5pm, Saturday 10am to 4pm. Free admission, programme and raffle tickets.

Extensive parking nearby. The Show, formerly the Sailsbury Stamp Show, will include nearly 60 dealers covering most aspects of philately. See www.southernenglandstampshow.com.

The Scottish Philatelic Congress takes place at the Dewars Centre, Perth on 21 and 22 April, hosted by the Lanarkshire Philatelic Society. The Tom Riley Display will be given by Professor Iain Stevenson. The Congress cover and special handstamp will commemorate the Cameronian Regiment in 1917. A special postcard will depict famous people born in Lanarkshire. Midpex, the specialist society exhibition, is at the Warwickshire Exhibition Centre, Leamington Spa on 8 July, the 99th Philatelic Congress of GB in Cardiff from 27 to 30 July, and Stampa (Irish national stamp exhibition) from 6 to 8 October in Dublin.

Major international exhibitions will be staged in 2017 in Melbourne, Australia (30 March to 2 April), Tampere, Finland (24 to 28 May), Bandung, Indonesia (3 to 7 August), and Brasilia, Brazil (24 to 29 October). The Melbourne 2017 Stamp & Coin Show is at the Caulfield Racecourse about 15 minutes from the city centre with good transport links. The competitive exhibits – 1,000 frames – will be in 14 classes including postal history, postal stationery, thematics, open, youth, literature and modern philately (1980 onwards). Non-competitive displays – 200 frames – will be in a special exhibition, Royalpex 125, by members of the Royal Philatelic Society of Victoria to mark its 125th anniversary. Postal administrations attending include India, Macau and United Nations, and stamp printers Cartor will have a stand. For more information see www.melbourne2017.com.au.

The Tampere show marks the centenary of Finnish independence – see www.finlandia2017.fi for details. The MonacoPhil 2017 exhibition, featuring '100 iconic stamps and documents', is on from 30 November to 2 December. Items from the collections of The Queen, Prince Albert II of Monaco, ten postal museums, and from prestigious private collections are on show •

Railway letter stamps

The Nene Valley Railway, a heritage line near Peterborough, has issued railway letter stamps since 1986. Its 2016 Christmas issue features one of its Santa Special trains, pulled by the locomotive City of Peterborough. The stamp, issued on 8 November, is available in a sheet of nine (£2.25), on FDC with full set of Royal Mail Christmas stamps (£15), or with two Royal Mail First Class Christmas stamps (£5). Postage £1. New railway stamps will be issued in March, June and September, as well as a range of covers for Nene Valley Railway events. For full details contact Nene Valley Railway (Stamps), Wansford Station, Stibbington, Peterborough PE8 6LR •



Forthcoming auctions

Spink's auction on 24 January will include the David Pitts Collection of British Caribbean and British Post offices in Central and South America. Enquiries: 020 7563 4000 •

New catalogues

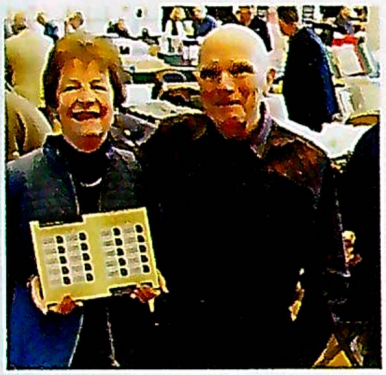
Stanley Gibbons has recently published the 2017 edition of its popular *Collect British Stamps* catalogue, listing all basic stamps from the Penny Black to the 2016 Christmas issue. Prices have been fully reviewed, with many increases to Machins and regionals (country stamps) as well as earlier issues. The Post & Go section has been completely updated. Price is £14.95. The 2017 edition of ▸

Stamps of the World is now available at £275 for the set of six volumes. The 6th edition of the New Zealand catalogue costs £25.95. All are on sale from the Stanley Gibbons shop at 399 Strand, London WC2 and by mail order from Stanley Gibbons Ltd, Donnington Priory, Oxford Road, Donnington, Newbury RG14 2JE, phone 01425 472363 (Monday to Friday 9am to 5.30pm), or email orders@stanleygibbons.com. *Collect British Stamps* is also available from Royal Mail Tallents House in Edinburgh •

Society news

Since 1925 the Royal Philatelic Society London has been based at 41 Devonshire Place in London, an imposing 'heritage' building that dates from the 1790s. Now the need has arisen to find more suitable premises. In recent years the Royal has expanded in terms of membership (to over 2,000), attendance at meetings, and its collections, and continues to do so, meaning that 'No. 41' is no longer fit for purpose. The Society's Council has looked hard at ways of renovating its headquarters, but no affordable scheme has been identified that fulfils all of its needs. The current President, Frank Walton, explains: 'Although every member has very fond memories and attachments to our Marylebone home, the level of support for the decision to seek a new home has been overwhelming.'

Every year the Royal considers publications for the award of the prestigious silver-gilt Crawford Medal, for the most valuable and original contribution to philately published in book form. It is open to both members and non-members of the Society. The Royal invites nominations of books published in 2015 or 2016. Nominations, with brief details of the book(s), should be emailed to: secretary@rpsl.org.uk, or sent to Royal Philatelic Society London, 41 Devonshire Place, London W1G 6JY by 1 February 2017. Readers wishing to visit the Royal, or be a guest at one of its meetings, should call in advance on 020 7486 1044.



The 26th Leeds Philatelic Society's Stamp Fair at the end of November was a huge success. Society Assistant Secretary Richard Smith says the fair is an important event in the yearly calendar. 'At fairs, collectors can examine philatelic material closely before buying – something not possible when internet buying,' he points out. 'Dealers are also able to strengthen their relationship with their customers and the event advertises the activities of our society locally, which may help in getting more members.' Society Treasurer Yvonne Wheatley arranged for a special Smilers® sheet to be produced during the society's 125th anniversary year. The stamps on this unique sheet include the Leeds Philatelic Society's logo alongside the Penny Black Smiler®.

'The sheets have been extremely popular with members and other philatelists,' reports Yvonne. 'We believe that initiatives like this help to give a society its individual identity and could also help increase membership.' The Smilers® sheet is available from Yvonne by emailing her at whyareuu@outlook.com. This year the Leeds Stamp Fair is on 17 and 18 November at Pudsey Civic Hall, Leeds. Richard and Yvonne are pictured left at the recent Leeds Stamp Fair.

The Poole, Bournemouth & District Philatelic & Postcard Club celebrates its 50th anniversary this year. (The old Bournemouth & District Philatelic Society, I am told, ceased some years ago. A list of philatelic societies with anniversaries in 2017 was published in November's *Bulletin* and erroneously showed the Poole and Bournemouth & District societies as separate entities.)

The Scarborough Philatelic Society, now approaching its 80th anniversary, welcomes new members. Future meetings include Members' Night (3 January) and Chairman's/President's Night (7 February). On 7 March the speaker, the Rev. Walden, offers Wacky-Wacky – an evening of fun and frivolity. Contact Chris Phillips on 01723 368475 or email chris@philatelic.org.uk for details •

Obituary

John Clifford West, who died in October aged 94, was an electrical engineer, academic and university administrator. He was Professor of Electrical Engineering at Queen's University Belfast from 1958 to 1965, and from 1965 to 1978 at the University of Sussex where he set up a Philatelic Unit in 1970. In 1979 West moved to the University of Bradford as Vice-Chancellor until he retired in 1979. West was awarded the CBE in 1977. His collecting interests were mainly South American and European postal history of the 18th and 19th centuries, and in particular the postal history of Chile. He edited *Chile News* for the International Chilean Philatelic Society London. He served on the British Philatelic Trust from 1989, and signed the Roll of Distinguished Philatelists in 2000 •

Stamps on TV

REVIEW John Holman gives his verdict on a BBC documentary on stamps...

Many years ago BBC Two broadcast a series entitled *In the Post* but I am not aware of any other programmes on stamp collecting until *Penny Blacks and Twopenny Blues: How Britain Got Stuck on Stamps* was shown in the *Timeshift* series on BBC Four on 14 November. The hour-long programme was presented by Andrew Martin, novelist and freelance journalist, who admitted to being a collector in his youth. The content of the programme was a somewhat odd mix, covering the introduction of stamps in 1840, design of modern commemoratives, rare stamps and stamp auctions, and eventually stamp collecting itself. Although the story jumped about somewhat from subject to subject it was interesting throughout and included some good footage. There were some familiar faces – stamp designer David Gentleman, Douglas Muir, Senior Curator, Philately at The Postal Museum and former *Bulletin* Editor, Hugh Jefferies of Stanley Gibbons, and auctioneer David Feldman.

Martin enthused over the Penny Black, which he described as 'The Queen at night' due to its colour. Not surprisingly perhaps, he overplayed the role of Rowland Hill; there was no mention of James Chalmers. Hill was credited with the design of the Penny Black following the suggestion by a colleague that the stamp should show the image of a young woman and Hill chose Queen Victoria. In fact, a number of designs in the Treasury Competition featured a Queen's head and that submitted by a Scottish baronet was very similar to the issued stamp. David Gentleman explained the problems of stamp design and some of his iconic designs from the 1960s were shown.

There was a bit too much for my liking on rare stamps, auctions and investment. We were shown the British Guiana 1c magenta being sold in 2014 for $9.5 million, and the equally unique Swedish Three Skilling in yellow rather than green. This was once owned by the eccentric Count Ferrary who clearly fascinated Martin. Reconstructions showed the cloaked figure of Ferrary visiting stamp shops to acquire items for his collection – one of the finest ever formed. Ferrary, the illegitimate offspring of Genoese nobility, was described as a ▸

'shambling maverick' who raised the social status of stamp collecting. Ferrary was a customer of Stanley Gibbons and Martin visited the current shop, talking to Hugh Jefferies about the famous catalogue. An early slim edition was shown alongside the current six-volume *Stamps of the World*.

The early history of stamp collecting was investigated: in London collectors met in the side streets near Birchin Lane in the City to exchange stamps but were often moved on by the police. In Paris collectors met in the more refined venue of the Tuileries Garden. Martin explained that in the 1950s and 1960s everyone was supposed to have a hobby and the default hobby was stamp collecting, often practised on a rainy day when stamps from around the world provided a picture gallery, a travel brochure of exotic places. There was a patriotic element about collecting British stamps, but many collectors unpatriotically preferred foreign stamps which were then 'more exciting than our own'.

As far as I was concerned, Martin saved the best to last – the final 15 minutes dealt with stamp collecting as it is today. He visited the Trafalgar Square Post Office on the day of issue of the Pink Floyd stamps in search of collectors servicing first day covers. But he found only one person in the queue after the new stamps – a Pink Floyd fan rather than a collector. He surmised that collecting FDCs was now much less popular than in the past, but had he visited on the day of issue of new Post & Go stamps he may have found more collectors 'milking' the machines and posting covers.



He visited Erene Grieve, left, who runs the Stamps in Schools project to introduce pupils to the history of stamps and to the idea of starting their own stamp collection. She was filmed at one of her workshops with schoolchildren. The children looked interested, and Erene was enthusiastic about getting more youngsters involved. Andrew Martin went on to attend a meeting of the Croydon Philatelic Society, watched some of the displays, and talked to Pauline McBroom – the Commonwealth Department Supervisor at Stanley Gibbons – about her cats thematic collection. Pauline was jolly and enthusiastic and, for me, she and Erene were the stars of the show. More time might have been given to thematic collecting as an important way of attracting new people to the hobby. Modern stamps were rather neglected, too.

I asked two relatives, both non-collectors, to watch the programme and give me their comments. Both enjoyed it, found it interesting, and one said Martin treated the subject with respect. Both liked the section on the school stamp club; one was less interested in the section on the stamp society, which he thought showed stereotypically older collectors. He was surprised by the sums of money achieved by rare stamps, and found the section on stamp design interesting as he knew of David Gentleman's other artistic works. Neither of my relatives, however, were inspired to become collectors, and Andrew Martin did not suggest at the end of his programme that he might himself return to the hobby of his youth.

Generally the programme showed the hobby in a positive light, even if perhaps with a bit too much emphasis on the past and on monetary value. I hope it will encourage some new collectors. Jasper Rees, writing in *The Daily Telegraph* the next day, said of the programme: 'This quirky tour down memory lane was a lovely valediction.' While I agree with the first part of his description, I hope he is wrong about the second. Stamp collecting – there is life in the old dog yet •

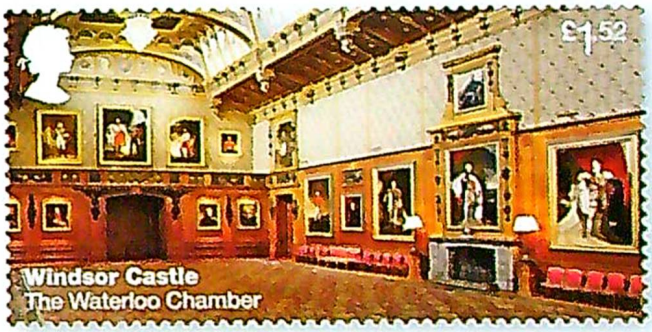












A working palace Next month new Special Stamps celebrate the history of Windsor Castle, home to British royalty for almost 1,000 years



FD1704-PL

THE WORLD'S OLDEST AND LARGEST INHABITED CASTLE is celebrated in a comprehensive new issue released on 15 February. Three of the six stamps in the Windsor Castle set show majestic views of the historic landmark's imposing exterior, in part dating back to the early 12th century when the first stone keep was built during the reign of Henry I. The other three stamps in the set reveal richly decorated rooms inside the Castle.

On an elegant Miniature Sheet, four more stamps focus on the exquisite ornamentation and colourful history of St George's Chapel, in the Castle environs, which is regarded as the spiritual home of the Order of the Garter and an outstanding example of Perpendicular Gothic architecture. Also in the new stamp issue is a Stampex Miniature Sheet, Press Sheet, Presentation Pack, Stamp Souvenir, Stamp Sheet Souvenir, Stamp Cards, Prestige Stamp Book, Retail Stamp Book and Medal Cover. ▸

Windsor Castle Stamps – Specifications	
Date of issue	15 February
Number of stamps	Six
Stamp design	Up
Stamp format	Landscape
Stamp size	60mm x 30mm
Printer	International Security Printers
Print process	Lithography
Number per sheet	30/60
Perforations	14.5 x 14.5
Phosphor	Bars as appropriate
Gum	PVA



Left: the Windsor Castle Miniature Sheet focuses on the interior decor of St George's Chapel – on the First Class stamps are the nave's fan-vaulted roof and a roof boss dedicated to Sir Reginald Bray, one of the Chapel's benefactors. On the £1.33 values are garter banners and St George's Cross roof boss in the quire

Below: the Windsor Castle Tallents House and non-pictorial alternative postmarks

Windsor Castle Miniature Sheet – Specifications

Date of issue	15 February
Number of stamps	Four
Stamp design	Up
Stamp format	Square
Stamp size	35mm x 35mm
Sheet size	115mm x 89mm
Printer	International Security Printers
Print process	Lithography
Perforations	14.5 x 14.5
Phosphor	Bars as appropriate
Gum	PVA

Stamp by stamp The Windsor Castle Special Stamps comprises three First Class and three £1.52 stamps. The Miniature Sheet features two First Class and two £1.33 values.

The Long Walk Laid out by Charles II in 1685, the Long Walk leads from the Castle to the Great Park and covers a distance of three miles. First Class

The Round Tower This stone keep on the motte was begun by Henry I and rebuilt by Henry II. It now houses the Royal Archives. First Class

The Norman Gate Despite its name, the gate was created in 1357 by Edward III as the main entrance to his new royal palace from the Lower Ward. First Class

St George's Hall Resplendent with Knights of the Garter heraldry, the Hall occupies the site of Edward III's private chapel and great hall. £1.52

The Queen's Ballroom This room was originally built as a dancing chamber for Catherine of Braganza, the wife of Charles II. The walls are hung with magnificent paintings by court painter Sir Anthony van Dyck. £1.52

The Waterloo Chamber This room a setting for Sir Thomas Lawrence's portraits of the allied commanders who defeated Napoleon in 1815. £1.52

Orders for Serviced First Day Covers must reach Royal Mail by 15 February October. Send stamped envelopes on the day of issue to Royal Mail, Tallents House (the address is on page 160 – quote *Bulletin* code 17BUL10) for the Tallents House, Edinburgh postmark. The mark shows pistols and a helmet from the Queen's Guard Chamber at Windsor Castle. The alternative postmarks have the location Windsor and the pictorial version shows the Round Tower •



FD1704-NP



FD1704-TH

Acknowledgements: The Long Walk © Michael Jones/Alamy Stock Photo; The Round Tower © Peter Lane/Alamy Stock Photo; The Norman Gate © villorejo/Alamy Stock Photo; photographs of St George's Hall and The Queen's Ballroom by Mark Fiennes – Royal Collection Trust/© Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2017; photograph of The Waterloo Chamber by Relic Imaging – Royal Collection Trust/© Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2017.



Above: Prestige Stamp Book cover; Pane 1 showing two First Class and two £1.52 Windsor Castle stamps; Pane 2 with a First Class and a £1.52 value; Pane 3's eight definitives; Pane 4 with the Miniature Sheet stamps



Above: the Windsor Castle Medal Cover's postmark



Above: the Retail Stamp Book with two Miniature Sheet stamps and four definitives

Windsor Castle Retail Stamp Book – Specifications

Date of issue	15 February
Stamps	2 x 1st Class Windsor Castle, 4 x 1st Class Machins
Printer	Walsall Security Printers
Print process	Gravure



Cut out for the job

Charming animals crafted from very cleverly cut paper have helped make Lunar New Year stamps sheets an international favourite. Andrew Neish meets the woman who brought them to life

No one could call stamp illustrator Rebecca Sutherland an art snob – junk mail and Blu Tack are often tools of her trade. Yet her philatelic creations are as classy as you like. Rebecca's beautiful paper cut-out illustrations grace no less than six Chinese New Year Generic Sheets, 2011's RSC 50 Years Miniature Sheet, the Smilers® set of 2015 and the Alice in Wonderland Coin Cover from the same year. Her intricate work has also appeared in a Royal Mail Yearbook.

Rebecca brings a philatelist's keen eye as well as artistic talent to her Royal Mail commissions. She has been collecting stamps since childhood, and her passion has not abated. Stamp albums recline on the shelves of her busy studio in the Georgian townhouse she shares with husband Jim Sutherland, a leading stamp designer, in south London. On the studio walls are blown-up images of the 1972 Christmas issue, a philatelic favourite that

Photographs: Dan Froude.
Stamp image © Royal Mail Group Ltd



inspires Rebecca in her own work. 'Stamps are beautiful little works of art, pieces of culture and history scaled down into miniature, and, of course, a pleasure to work on,' says Rebecca, 51, whose latest commission, the Lunar New Year of the Rooster Generic Sheet, celebrates the Chinese new year starting on the 28th of this month.

The characterful rooster cut-outs strutting across the Sheet are bold, animated and fun, rich in character and detail. Yet Rebecca's creations often come from humble beginnings. She has been known to use paper salvaged from junk mail flyers, pages from magazine ads, and file page dividers. 'I could buy thick, high-quality paper but the truth is,' she explains, 'it's too difficult to cut well and get an elegant finish.

'To make my cut-outs I need paper that bends and curls without cracking. That's why I'm not snobbish about paper. I'll source it from anywhere ▸

IN A NUTSHELL

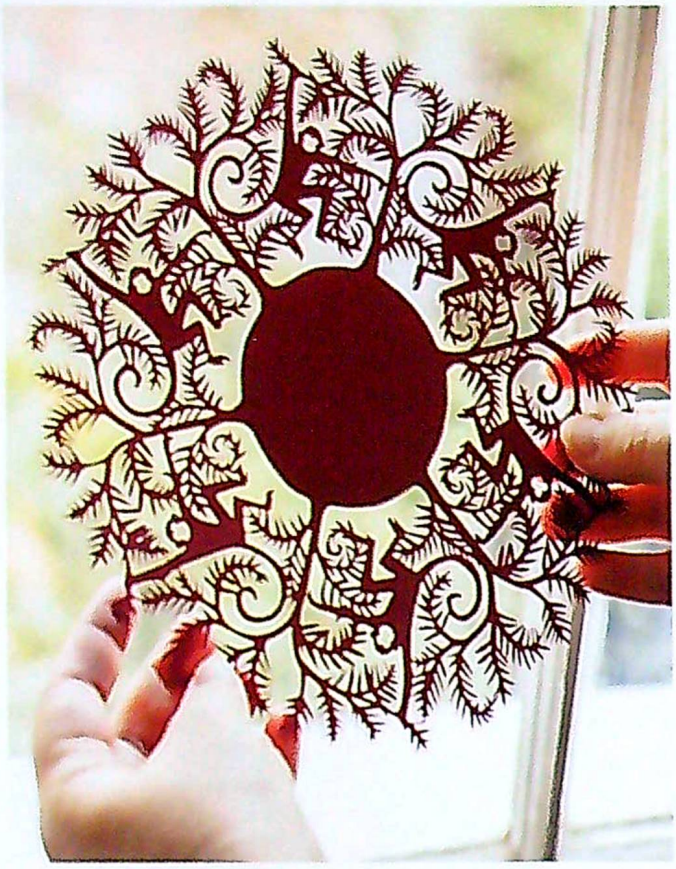
Sutherland on stamps

Stamp collecting runs in the family. My father collected avidly, as did his mother before him, I collect, and now one of my daughters has started.

I started collecting when I was seven or eight. My dad saved every stamp so as a girl I was given these torn of bits of envelope and my collection grew. I've also now inherited lovely first day covers with all the addresses and names of every member of my family. They're very precious, like family photographs.'

Christmas stamps are special. I have an album devoted to them. My favourite issue is the 1972 set with the angels, and it's inspiring having pictures of them on my studio wall.

For me collecting is a visual thing. I have GB, Gentleman which I love, Swiss, German, and very graphic designs are a favourite. But I react to stamps visually: it sounds a bit odd but sometimes I tend to group my collection in terms of colour. It's the aesthetic that really matters.





it's having the right colour that counts, not the quality.' And humble Blu Tack is pivotal in Rebecca's work. She creates texture, depth and a three-dimensional quality in each illustration by building it up from separate layers of cut-out paper. A cut-out Generic Sheet animal is therefore not one piece of paper but a modular masterpiece comprising elements bonded together by Blu Tack. 'As well as creating all these effects, using Blu Tack means I can change different parts of the creature if the Royal Mail team don't like a particular bit,' explains the artist.



Top: artwork for Year of the Monkey and Rebecca's work on the 2011 Miniature Sheet depicting RSC theatres. Below: one of the orginal creatures that march around the Year of the Sheep sheet

For example, Royal Mail Stamps and Collectibles Design Manager Catharine Brandy wanted the roosters' legs changed ('She thought it looked like they were wearing wellingtons!' chuckles Rebecca), so it was a simple matter of whipping them off and replacing them with new ones.

Rebecca adds: 'Catharine also wanted to change the beaks so the roosters had their mouths open and were chattering, which made the images more animated.' When creating the Lunar New Year Sheets, Rebecca must consider cultural as well as artistic issues. Royal Mail uses an expert in Chinese culture and symbolism, who advises the Stamps and Collectibles teams on, among other things, colour in the cut-outs.

'Some colours are considered unlucky in Chinese culture so they're avoided, but of course others are lucky and we focus on those. We decided on a range of golds for the roosters, demonstrating prosperity, says Rebecca. She is also briefed on the personal traits of individuals born in a particular year, according to Chinese tradition, which is then reflected in the artwork. 'Rooster people' are considered confident, courageous and observant – and these qualities perfectly captured by Rebecca's swaggering, strutting, wide-eyed cockerel.



While tiny animals are a Sutherland speciality, she has also produced huge yet exquisitely delicate floral tableaux for shop windows. It seems her paper-cutting talents can be turned to any subject. (Not surprising, really, as she has been cutting out paper art



Above: a selection of Rebecca's Lunar New Year Generic Sheets featuring a beautifully animated menagerie of dragons, snakes, sheep, horses, monkeys – and roosters from this year's design

since childhood, and remembers creating paper Nativity scenes when off school while poorly.) Rebecca's artwork on the 2011 Miniature Sheet celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Royal Shakespeare Company is a dramatic case in point. A tweak here, a fold there, different colour tones for those hallowed walls to create depth, and the RSC theatres in Stratford-upon-Avon come to three-dimensional life.

And all with the help of a scalpel and cheaply cheerful yet pretty paper. Rebecca uses a knife rather than scissors to achieve a clean cut. But she will also combine technology with tradition, creating templates for more complicated cut-outs on her Mac, then using the template as a guide for cutting by hand.But why the love for paper cut-outs? 'I like the fact that on its own, paper is simple, flat, without any dimension, and yet you can use it to create art with depth and real presence.' She is absolutely right. Discovering Rebecca Sutherland's highly animated, characterful art would make anyone hesitate to chuck away their junk mail •

IN A NUTSHELL

Sutherland on work

Designing stamps 'The best moment is actually winning a brief to illustrate stamps – it's a huge privilege to work on stamps because they're such a valuable currency, such a significant part of our culture and heritage.'

Favourite stamp project 'The RSC Miniature Sheet was the most delightful experience because it was all about a lot of creative people co-operating to bring together many different artistic strands to produce this single, lovely piece of work.'

Good illustration 'Anything that makes me think about things – or even gives me a pang of jealousy and makes me think: I wish I'd done that!'

Bad illustration 'Work that's so poor you simply don't notice it.'

Influences and inspiration 'Fine art, because you learn a lot from the past, so Turner, Constable and most of the Impressionists; David Gentleman; the *Mr Benn* illustrator David McKee; Hungarian folk art; and Grayson Perry is adorable.'

Everyday scenes

New pictorial stamps show

Released on 17 January, new Ancient Britain Special Stamps blend scientific fact and photography with informed imaginative drawings to create a unique timeline of the development of our island people.

The eight designs evoke moments of everyday events and scenes in prehistoric life, from the making of public monuments around 9000 BC to the erection of hill forts in 50 BC (i.e. soon after the end of the Ice Age



The Battersea Shield
1st Class A fine example of skilled metalworking, with Celtic decoration of circles and spirals.
Location Found in the Thames at Battersea, London in the 1850s.
On display in the British Museum, London.
Time 300 – 50 BC, before the kingdoms of Ancient Britain were lost to the Roman in AD43.
Just imagine An ancient warrior holding the shield in battle ●



Skara Brae Village
1st Class Inside one of the small structures arranged along a subterranean alleyway, which would have been part of a larger settlement.
Location The Orkneys.
Home to early farmers who settled to grow crops and keep animals, after being nomadic hunter-gathers.
Time 3100 – 2500 BC in the Neolithic period.
Just imagine Family meals below ground, around the indoor fire ●



Starr Carr Headdress
£1.05 Made from red deer skull, extensively carved and shaped.
Location Vale of Pickering, Yorkshire, along the edge of what was once Lake Flixton.
Worn by Hunter-gatherers, many of whom had migrated westward across Europe.
Time Around 9000 BC at the end of the Holocene period.
Just imagine Your doctor wearing one of these to communicate with animal spirits ●



Maiden Castle Hill Fort
£1.05 The largest hill fort of its type in Britain. Its earthworks lay over an even older settlement.
Location Near Dorchester, Dorset.
Built by Iron Age warriors.
Time Around 400 BC.
Just imagine Hundreds of hill forts changing the landscape. Some, like Maiden Castle, became the headquarters of emerging tribal systems ●

ANCIENT BRITAIN SPECIAL STAMPS
This timeline of Britain's ancient history takes you on a stamp journey into the distant past...



Ice Age: 110,000 to 12,500 years ago. Creatures from another epoch battle each other on the frozen wastes of Ice Age Britain.
Issue: 2006 Ice Age Mammals, Giant Deer.

Stone Age: 5,000 years ago. Mainland, the largest of the Orkney Islands, is home to historically important Stone Age sites, including a tomb, two stone circles and the settlement of Skara Brae.
Issue: 2005 World Heritage Sites Stamp: Heart of Neolithic Orkney, Scotland.



of ancient times

the history of Ancient Britain

through to the era immediately prior to the Roman Conquest of Britain). As well as celebrating different aspects of culture, the stamp set also takes us on a virtual tour around different geographical regions of the British Isles, from Orkney in the far north to Dorset in the south, and from County Antrim in the west to Norfolk in East Anglia.

For full philatelic details, see Preview on page 68 of December *Bulletin*.



The Drumbest Horns

£1.33 Four complete cast bronze horns were found in a bog in 1840.

Location Drumbest, near Ballymoney, County. Antrim. Exhibited at the Ulster Museum, Belfast.

Made and played by Highly skilled Bronze Age Britons and expert hornblowers.

Time About 800 BC.

Just imagine Upland areas were in decline and in preferred low, wet places people left fine gifts for the gods of the watery underworld ●



Avebury Stone Circles

£1.33 Britain's – and the world's – oldest Neolithic stone circle, with a flat central space some 350m across.

Location Wiltshire near Marlborough.

Mystery holes in the stones, some over a metre long, are not conclusively explained.

Time 2500 BC.

Just imagine People made pilgrimage here, to celebrate, to grieve, and to seek spiritual and physical healing ●



The Mold Cape

£1.52 Dazzling upper part of an elaborately crafted garment, made by hammering out a 700g (1½lb) piece of gold.

Location Found at Bryn Yr Ellyllon (Goblins Hill), Mold, Flintshire. Now exhibited in the British Museum, London.

Time 1900 – 1600 BC.

Just imagine The cape was chosen for the funeral of an important, slightly built person, buried in a stone-lined cist with rows of amber beads and a bronze knife ●



Grime's Graves Flint Mines

£1.52 Around 600 mine shafts are currently known, some up to 14m (46ft) deep, but only a handful have been excavated.

Location Norfolk.

Time Flint was mined from 3000 to 1900 BC.

Who worked there? Possibly the very first British miners.

Just imagine Every family depended on the mines, because flint was used to make all edged tools and weapons ●



Stone Age: 5,000 to 2,500 BC.
The earliest monument at Stonehenge was a circular ditch, dating from around 3000 BC.
The stones followed 500 years later.
Issue: 2005 World Heritage Sites, Stonehenge, England.



Stone Age: 1000 BC or 1400 AD.
Issues: A 1968 stamp has Tarr Steps as Neolithic, but by the time the Steps appeared again on the 2015 Bridges issue. experts believed it to be 15th or 16th century.

Roman Britain: 70 AD.
The spa city of Bath has its roots in ancient Britain when the occupying Romans in Aquae Sulis, as Bath was then known, constructed baths round natural springs and a temple dedicated to the goddess Sulis Minerva.
Issue: 2012 UK A-Z Stamp: Bath, Roman Baths.



Wonderful world Covers featuring the Ancient Britain set reveal the allure of our prehistoric world

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www.bfdc.co.uk

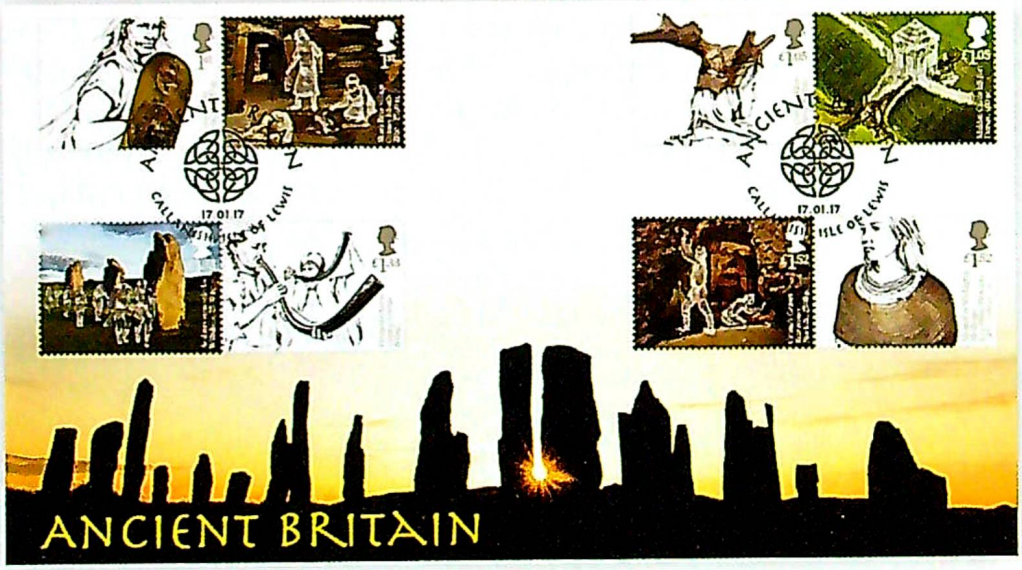
Fighting for survival The drama and adventure of surviving in prehistoric times is reflected in the first of two richly illustrated matching BFDC covers portraying a deer hunt. The action aptly takes place at Swanscombe, Kent – scene of significant finds from the Stone Age – with a party of *homo neanderthalensis* taking down a deer on a river bank 400,000 years ago in the Lower Paleolithic era. Their prey is the now extinct Clacton fallow deer, killed by a wooden spear. Numbered limited edition of only 60 pairs. £39 per pair (incl p&p). Cheques should be made payable BFDC Ltd •





Buckingham Covers
Warren House
Shearway Road
Folkestone
Kent CT19 4BF
01303 278 137
www.buckinghamcovers.com

Monumental magic Buckingham Covers' tribute to the Ancient Britain issue is this intriguingly beautiful cover showing Scotland's mysterious Callanish Stones on the Isle of Lewis, the largest island of the Outer Hebrides. The design features the arrangement of standing stones placed in a cruciform pattern with a central stone circle, as well as the full set of eight Ancient Britain stamps highlighting magnificent prehistoric sites and artefacts. These covers will be postmarked in Callanish, Isle of Lewis on the first day the Ancient Britain issue is released on 17 January. The Callanish Stones are being highlighted in Scotland's 'Year of History, Heritage and Archaeology' this year, so this is a very fitting start to the 2017 stamp calendar. £19.95 plus £2.45 UK p&p (code: BC552) •



Cryptic Christie decoded

The most mysterious stamp set of 2016 was without doubt the Agatha Christie issue and the time has come to reveal its intricate secrets and put stamp sleuths out of their misery

The six-stamp Agatha Christie issue marked the 100th anniversary of the writing of Christie's first crime novel, *The Mysterious Affair At Styles*, and featured scenes from Poirot and Miss Marple tales. In addition to the evocative images illustrating the mysteries, the stamps contain a mixture of cryptic, coded 'clues' associated with each title. The clues were applied by a mixture of fiendishly clever artwork, smart typography and technology, including UV ink, thermochromic ink and micro text.

On the day in September when the Agatha Christie set was issued, many readers who visited the *Bulletin* Stampex stall told us they were intrigued and mystified by the secrets hidden on the new set. We also met a lot of intrigued Christie fans at the splendid anniversary event in Torquay, Christie's birthplace. While we at the *Bulletin* were able to talk to them about the stamps and the stories they represented, we could not point out all the hidden elements, simply because the Stamps and Collectibles team had understandably kept a few secrets under their hats. Now you can read the whole list of hidden clues below, to check against your own finds •



A Murder is Announced

The spotlight is meant to represent a clock, and the clock numbers are printed in UV ink.

• The word 'Switzerland' appears in micro text on the little clock face that is set at 6.30pm (both the word and the time are significant to the story).

• The small ads page from the newspaper that features 'A Murder is Announced' is in micro text in the paper held by the woman in black.



The Body in the Library

• The body outline on the stamp is printed in UV ink to be seen with a UV pen.

• The arrangement of the hat, glasses and book ribbon represents an outline of detective Miss Marple.

• Book titles of all Agatha Christie's books and short story collections (not featuring Hercule Poirot) published before *The Body in the Library* appear in micro text on the spines of the books on the shelf.



And Then There Were None

• A silhouette of a person's head forms the outline of the mysterious island to which the guests have been invited.

• The moon's reflection in the water features the *Ten Little Soldier Boys* poem in micro text.

• The reflection of the house light in the water has the name of the guests' enigmatic host, 'U.N. Owen', in micro text.

There is a final puzzle that stretches across the entire issue, but you may already have worked out the answer to this one yourself. On each stamp a single letter is printed. Put together the six letters form the first name of 'The Queen of Crime'...



The Murder of Roger Ackroyd

• An outline of Hercule Poirot's head appears in the flames in the fire.

• The blood-stained letter hanging from the dead man's hand includes some words taken from the letter that the victim Roger Ackroyd read aloud before his death.

• A silhouette of the murderer holding a knife is created by the shadow of the armchair.



The Mysterious Affair at Styles

• The skull-like image created by the two men in hats sitting around the table with the lamp is reproduced in miniature on the poison bottle.



Murder on the Orient Express

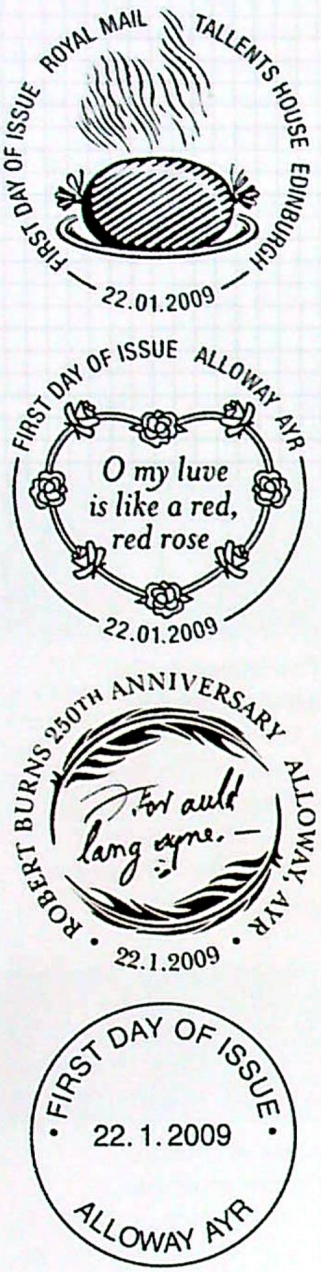
• The smoke from the train combined with the crescent moon forms a silhouette of Hercule Poirot.

• There is thermochromic ink over the second window so that when a thumb is placed on it a half-hidden person wielding a knife is revealed.

• The names of the suspects Poirot interviews during his investigation are presented in micro text along the bottom of the stamp.

This Month in History

John Holman takes us back to 1975 when an aerogramme celebrated the world-renowned Scottish poet Robert Burns



Above: the range of handstamps for the 2009 issue marking the 250th anniversary of Robert Burns's birth

This month Scots throughout the world will celebrate the birthday of Robert Burns, Scotland's national poet. In 1959, however, the Post Office did not choose to mark the bicentenary of the poet's birth by issuing stamps, and was heavily criticised. The only concession was allowing the sub post office at Alloway, Ayrshire, where he was born, to open on the anniversary – a Sunday. Many thousands of covers were sent in by collectors and dealers for the Alloway datestamp on the anniversary date (see This Month in History in the January 2014 *Bulletin*). Seven years late, in January 1966, Burns was finally honoured with two stamps, and further issues marked the bicentenary of his death in 1996 and the 250th anniversary of his birth in 2009.

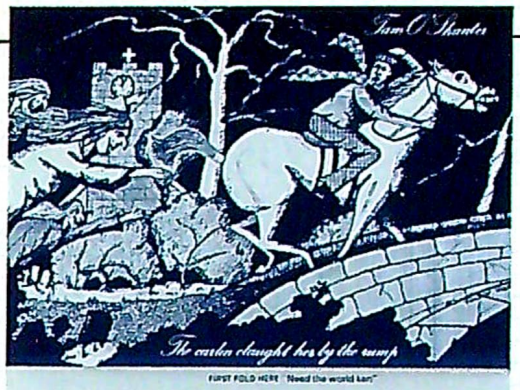
Less well-known than the stamps are two Scottish aerogrammes which featured Burns – the first issued in January 1975. This was the second in a series of Scottish aerogrammes, or air letters; the first, showing the Jacobite Monument at Glenfinnan, went on sale in May 1974. This was sold at main post offices in Scotland, philatelic sales counters throughout the UK and from the Philatelic Bureau. The December 1974 edition of the *Bulletin* announced the issue of the Burns aerogramme, which would be sold at all post offices in Scotland as well as at the Bureau and philatelic counters. The aerogramme bears an imprinted 6p aerogramme stamp depicting a VC10 airliner (as used on definitive aerogrammes from 1968) and was sold at 7p – 1p over the postal value. Two phosphor bands were positioned to the left of the imprinted stamp.

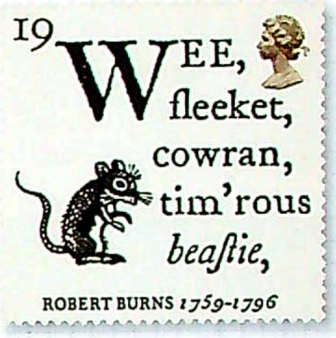
The front panel shows a portrait of Burns inscribed 'Rabbie Burns', and above the 'BY AIR MAIL/AIR LETTER' box are the appropriate words by Burns: 'Man to man, the warld o'er', from *A Man's a Man for A' That*, his classic 1795 song calling for equality and for people to be judged on their character rather than their wealth and social standing. The back panel featured a field mouse with the inscription 'Wee, sleekit, cow'rin' tim'rous beastie', from Burns's poem *To a Mouse*. The words also appear on the 19p stamp of the 1996 bicentenary set. Other quotations from Burns are printed on the back panel. The illustration on the main panel of the aerogramme is of Tam O'Shanter riding his horse Maggie chased by witches (carlins), with the wording 'The carlin claught her by the rump'.

The illustrations were created by Fraser Haston, who studied at the Edinburgh School of Art and is a noted artist of landscapes, city scenes and portraits. The aerogramme was printed by McCorquodale & Co Ltd. Two shades of the blue paper are noted, one much paler than the other, almost grey-blue. Examples on the paler paper are known with the overprint 'SPECIMEN' in black on the imprinted stamp – sent out as samples to the press.

The aerogramme went on sale on 13 January when a 'First Day of Sale' handstamp was used, showing a plough (reminding us that Burns was a farmer) and his famous line 'The man's the gowd for a' that', again from the poem

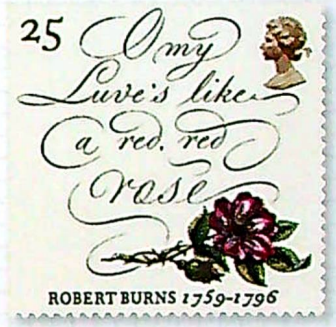


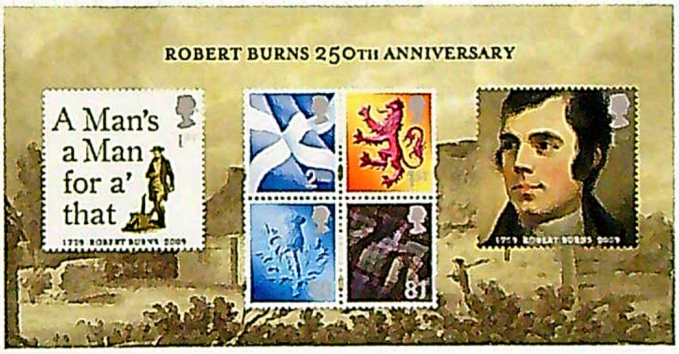




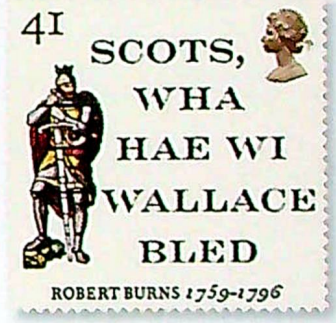














A Man's a Man for A' That. The handstamp was used at Alloway, Ayr, Dumfries, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Greenock, Kilmarnock and Mauchline. The eight postmarks were reused, but without the 'First Day of Sale' wording, on 25 January 1975 for Burns Night celebrations.

In 1977 a quantity of the Robert Burns aerogrammes were given a private pictorial overprint, in a numbered edition of just 247, by Aviation Philatelic Productions to commemorate a British Caledonian Airways McDonnell Douglas DC10-30 aircraft, serial number G-BEBM, being named *Robert Burns: The Scottish Bard.* A 3p Scottish stamp was added alongside the 6p aerogramme stamp to make up the first-class rate and both were cancelled by the Ayr datestamp of 12 March 1977. The next day the aerogrammes were transported from Prestwick to Gatwick in a 52-minute flight, and a British Caledonian Airways arrival datestamp was applied on the reverse.

Robert Burns was also shown on the 29th Scottish aerogramme issued on 4 April 1989 to mark the centenary of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery in Edinburgh. In addition the aerogramme portrayed Prince Charles Edward Stewart (Bonnie Prince Charlie), Robert Louis Stevenson, Mary, Queen of Scots, Sir Walter Scott, Flora Macdonald, Robert Adam, Sir Compton Mackenzie, David Hume and Sir Harry Lauder. The last Scottish aerogramme was issued in 1997. Aerogrammes were withdrawn from general sale at post offices in February 2012 and from philatelic sale on 31 March that year •

Above: the 2009 Robert Burns special stamp issue

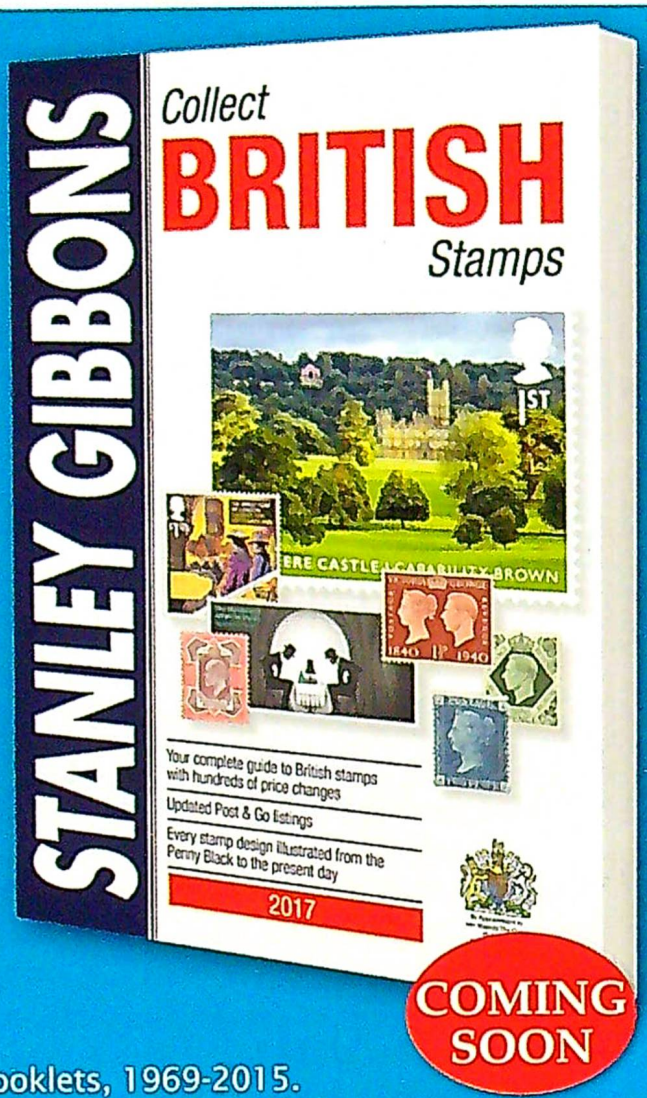
Top (clockwise from left): the 1/3d stamp from the 1966 Robert Burns stamp set; the main panel of the 1975 aerogramme showing Tam O'Shanter; the back panel; 1966's 4d stamp; the 2009 issue Miniature Sheet; the aerogramme's front panel

Stanley Gibbons
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2017 Collect British Stamps

• 320 Pages • 68th Edition 2017

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T ... is for telegrams

Colin Baker tells the story of the telegraph system that helped revolutionise communications in Britain

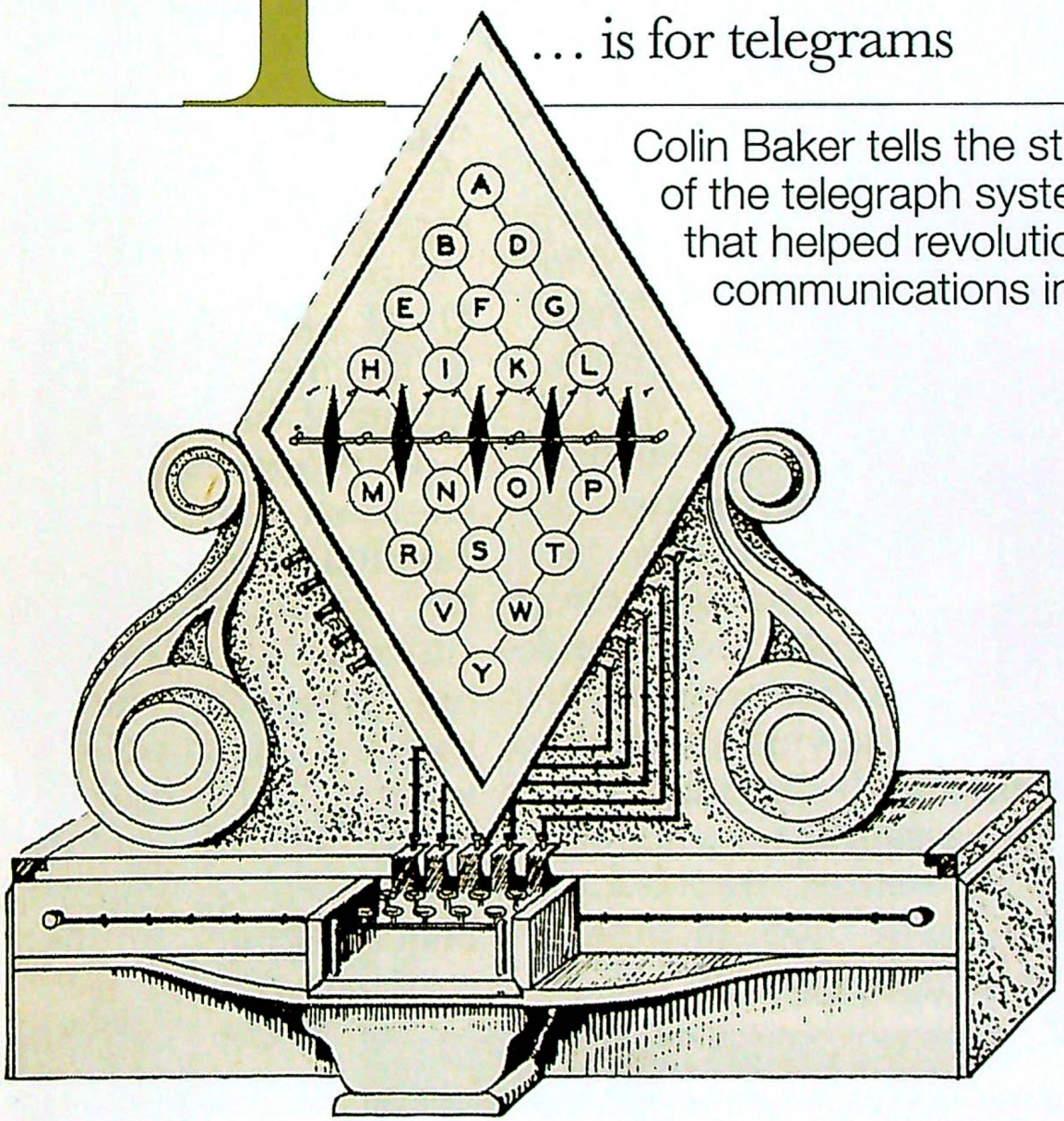


Fig 1 Telegraph apparatus of 1831

From the middle of the 19th century until the telephone became a well-established feature in homes and offices, telegrams were essential for sending short messages quickly and securely. The apparatus for sending a telegram, the telegraph, was the product of a number of different experiments and inventions by scientists and engineers. It was Charles Wheatstone and William Cooke who created the system used in Britain. The system involved five pointers which, operated by electromagnets, turned to indicate letters on a board and spell out words. The telegraph was first used to send a message for the Great Western Railway Company on 25 July 1837 over a distance of 1½ miles from Euston Square to Camden Town railway stations.

The telegraph system arose from the railway companies' need to know where their trains were and whether they experiencing any problems. Indeed railway ▸



Fig 2

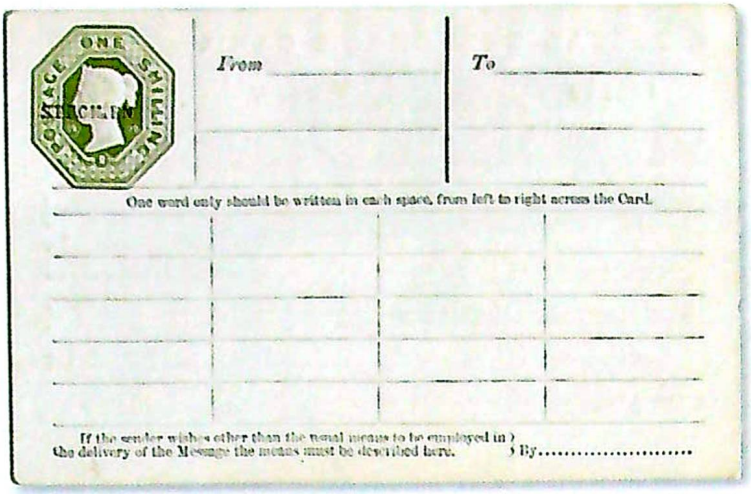


Fig 3

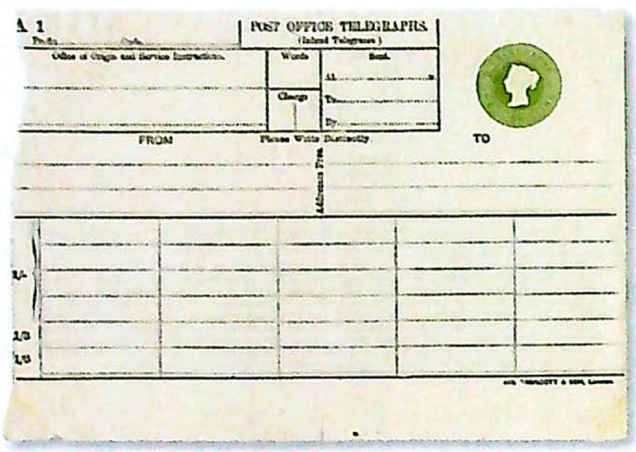


Fig 4

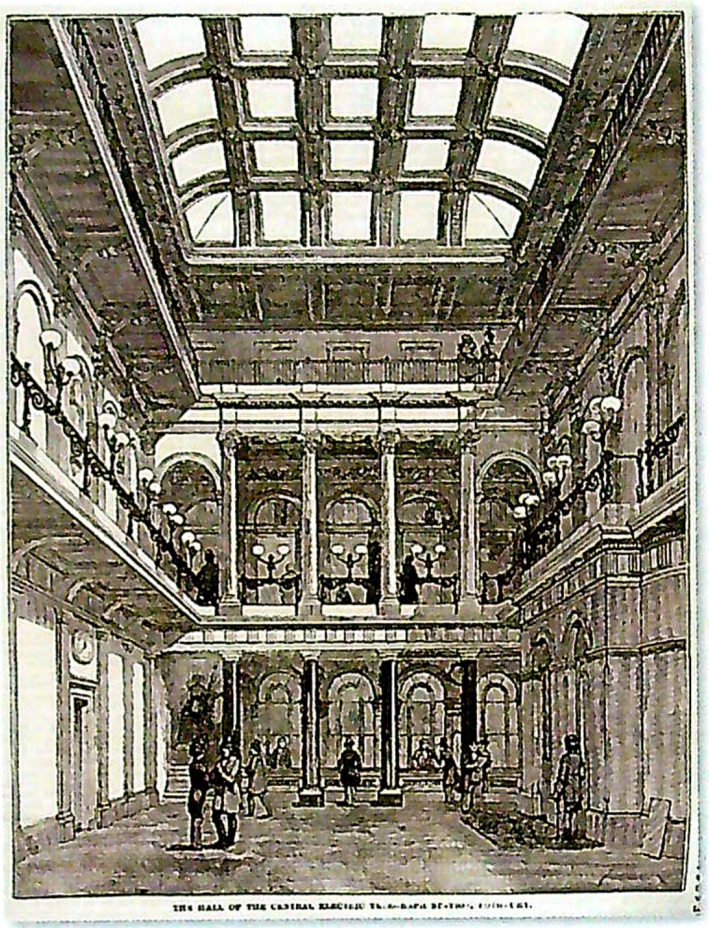


Fig 5

Fig 2 Telegraph operators
Fig 3 The telegram card which could be posted to the telegraph office
Fig 4 One shilling telegraph form 1875
Fig 5 Lothbury telegraph station hall in the City of London

companies were pioneers in the development of the telegraph, but the business opportunities were obvious and numerous other companies soon set up public telegraph systems.

This network of systems was a fragmented affair with charges varying across the country. The government felt it would be much better if the telegraph was under its control rather than in private hands and by 1870 the Post Office had taken over every private company. The charges were then rationalised at 20 words for one shilling, and prepaid forms were made available for those who sent servants or office clerks to the telegraph station. This helped prevent the messengers from throwing away the forms and keeping the money they had been given. In addition the Post Office produced telegraph cards, which also

ANNO TRICESIMO PRIMO & TRICESIMO SECUNDO

VICTORIÆ REGINÆ.

C A P. CX.

An Act to enable Her Majesty's Postmaster General to acquire, work, and maintain Electric Telegraphs. [31st *July* 1868.]

WHEREAS the Means of Communication by Electric Telegraphs within the United Kingdom of *Great Britain* and *Ireland* are insufficient, and many important Districts are without any such Means of Communication:

And whereas it would be attended with great Advantage to the State, as well as to Merchants and Traders, and to the Public generally, if a cheaper, more widely extended, and more expeditious System of Telegraphy were established in the United Kingdom of *Great Britain* and *Ireland*, and to that end it is expedient that Her Majesty's Postmaster General be empowered to work Telegraphs in connexion with the Administration of the Post Office:

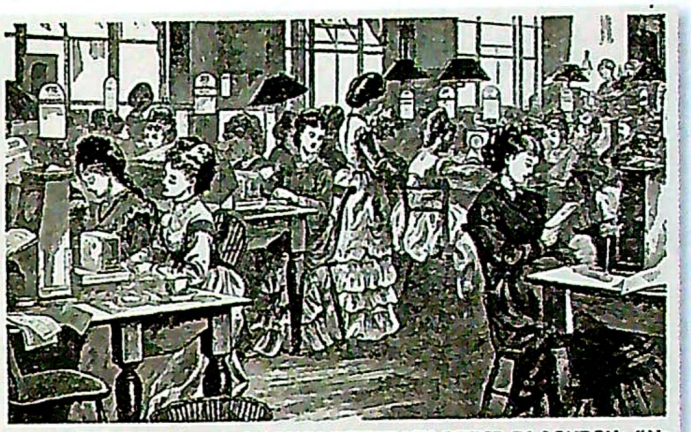
May it therefore please Your Majesty that it may be enacted; and be it enacted by the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the Authority of the same, as follows:

Preliminary.

1. This Act may be cited as "The Telegraph Act, 1868." Short Title.

12 M 2. The

Fig 6



OPERATORS AT WORK IN THE MAIN TELEGRAPH OFFICE IN LONDON: "No fewer than 339 females are employed in this office alone, while the district branches are worked by a staff almost wholly composed of young and generally well-bred women, an experiment which has answered to perfection. Both the Government and the public reap the advantage of this, since a trustworthy staff is obtained for far smaller salaries than would be paid to a similar class of men"

Fig 7



Fig 8

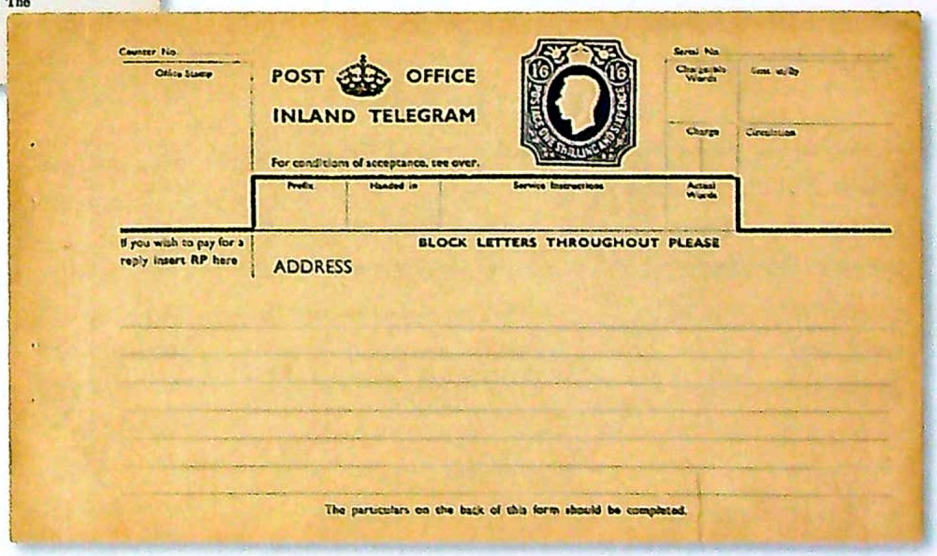


Fig 9

cost one shilling. A message would be written on the card and put in the nearest letter box. At the sorting office it would be separated from the rest of the mail and immediately transferred to the telegraph station. This was not a popular means of sending a telegram and the idea was soon dropped.

The telegram rates changed from time to time, requiring new forms to be issued, in addition to changes being made whenever a new monarch acceded to the throne. In the beginning there were forms for inland and foreign destinations, and for use at the Stock Exchange, but by 1951 when the last form was issued, only one standard form remained. The telegraph had been a huge success story, but the cheaper, easier and quicker telephone system had taken over. The telegraph service finally ceased operating on 1 October 1982 •

Fig 6 Telegraph Act 1868
Fig 7 Female telegraphists 1871
Fig 8 Electric Telegraph Co envelope for delivering telegrams
Fig 9 The last prepaid telegram form issued 1951


1

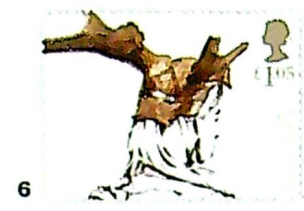

2



3


4


5


6

Ancient Britain brainteasers

To celebrate the arrival of the Ancient Britain stamp issue on 17 January our quiz whizzes back through the millennia for stamps with a prehistoric flavour. Get these brainteasers right and you have the chance to win the complete Ancient Britain set – Special Stamps, Presentation Pack and Stamp Cards

1 Here two prehistoric giant deer are having a bit of a bust-up – but in which issue?
a) Ice Age Mammals
b) Nicely Aged Mammals **c)** Middle Aged Mammals

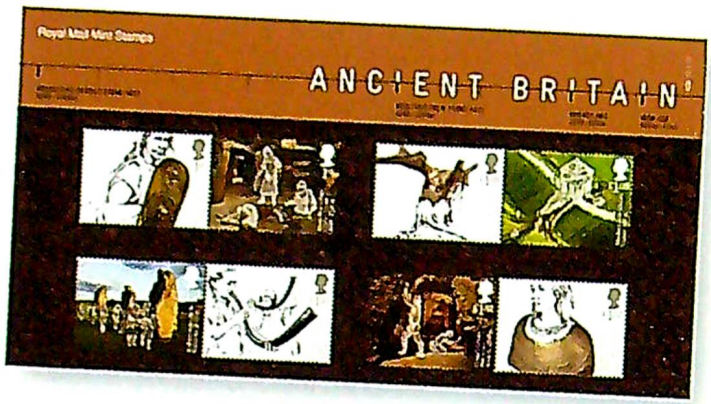
2 Featured on a First Class Ancient Britain stamp issued this month, this shield was discovered in which location?
a) Bexhill-on-Sea
b) Barnsley **c)** Battersea

3 This mysterious stone circle from Orkney appears on the World Heritage Sites stamp set, issued in which year?
a) 2008 **b)** 2005 **c)** 1995

4 This bridge was believed to be neolithic when it appeared in the 1968 British Bridges set but when it featured again in the 2015 Bridges issue recent research had concluded that the crossing was more likely to be 16th century. What is it called?
a) Star Steps
b) Tarr Steps
c) Tarbuck's Steps

5 Digging deep in their Norfolk mine on the new £1.52 Ancient Britain stamp, these keen beans are on the hunt for what?
a) Pokémons
b) Truffles **c)** Flint

6 Around 10,000 years ago the headdress on this £1.05 Ancient Britain stamp would have been used as a hunting disguise or in rituals. What was it made of?
a) Deer antlers
b) Oak branches
c) Human bones



How to enter Send your answers, along with your contact address or phone number, marked 'Bulletin January Quiz', to Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB.
Closing date 16 February 2017.
Prizes The senders of the first three correct entries drawn at random win the Ancient Britain Special Stamps, Presentation Pack and Stamp Cards.

Rules and regulations 1 Promotions are open to all readers aged 18 and over, except employees of Royal Mail Group Ltd, their business associates and immediate families. 2 Responsibility cannot be accepted for entries which are incomplete, damaged or not received for any reason. Proof of posting is not proof of receipt. 3 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 stated. 5 For prize draws where readers must answer a question, 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 The Editor.

Issues and withdrawals

7 January	**Withdrawal** Shackleton and the *Endurance* Expedition: Stamps (2 x 1st Class, 2 x £1, 2 x £1.33, 2 x £1.52, se-tenant pairs), Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards (8 in set).
17 January	**Issue** Ancient Britain: Stamps (2 x 1st Class, 2 x £1.05, 2 x £1.33, 2 x £1.52, se-tenant pairs), Presentation Pack, Stamp Souvenir, Stamp Cards (8 in set). Preview on page 68 of November *Bulletin*.
17 January	**Issue** Smilers® Album Continuation Pages and Standard Album Continuation Pages.
6 February	**Issue** 65th Anniversary of the Accession of HM The Queen: £5 Large Sapphire Blue Machin Definitive, Presentation Pack.
15 February	**Issue** Windsor Castle: Stamps (3 x 1st Class, 3 x £1.52), Limited Edition Exhibition Miniature Sheet only available at Stampex (2 x 1st Class, 2 x £1.33), Miniature Sheet (2 x 1st Class, 2 x £1.33), Press Sheet (16 Miniature Sheets), Presentation Pack, Stamp Book, Prestige Stamp Book, Stamp Souvenir, Stamp Sheet Souvenir, Stamp Cards (11 in set), Medal Cover. See stamp design feature, February *Bulletin*.
15 February	**Issue** Post & Go Royal Mail Heritage: Mail by Rail: self-service stamps in six designs, Collectors Pack. Preview on page 100 of December *Bulletin*.
17 February	**Withdrawal** Royal Mail 500: Stamps, Miniature Sheet, Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards, Prestige Stamp Book.
18 February	**Withdrawal** 175th Anniversary of the Penny Red: Generic Smilers® Sheet, Stamp Book (6 x 1st Class).



Front page: sixth in a series of Generic Stamp Sheets celebrating the Lunar New Year. 2017 is the Year of the Rooster, from 28 January 2017 to 15 February 2018. Fireworks definitive stamps are complemented by labels showing scenes of celebration from across the UK. Design by hat-trick. For more details, see Philatelic Preview on page 38 of October *Bulletin*. Paper cut-outs by Rebecca Sutherland – see page 144. Stamp sheet image © Royal Mail Group Ltd.

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ROYAL MAIL STAMP PROGRAMME 2017



Special Stamps

17 January	Ancient Britain
6 February	65th Anniversary of the Accession of HM The Queen, definitive
15 February	Windsor Castle
14 March	Music Giants
6 April	Racehorse Legends
4 May	Songbirds
5 June	Machin Anniversary
20 June	Windmills and Watermills
13 July	Landmark Buildings
31 July	First World War 1917
22 August	Classic Toys
14 September	Ladybird books
20 October	To be confirmed
7 November	Christmas 2017
20 November	To be confirmed

Post & Go Stamps

15 February	Royal Mail Heritage: Mail by Rail
5 June	Machin Anniversary 1967 - 2017
13 September	Royal Mail Heritage: Mail by Air

Stamp Sheets

20 March	Opening of The Postal Museum
24 May	2017 FIP Exhibition Sheet Finland
16 November	Lunar New Year of the Dog

Stamp titles and issue dates are subject to change.
All information is correct at the time of going to press.

Collectors' note There are Prestige Stamp Books for Windsor Castle, The Machin Definitive and First World War 1917

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