BRITISH PHILATELIC

Bulletin

50th Anniversary Year 2013

The Royal Mail magazine for stamp collectors

VOLUME 50 | ISSUE NUMBER 6 | £1.20

Doctor Who • New Post & Go • Are you an Austen man?



Jane Austen's novels are celebrated in a special stamp issue on 21 February

FIRST DAY OF ISSUE • STEVENTON • BASINGSTOKE • 21.2.2013 •

"Do any thing rather than marry without affection"

WIN NEW ISSUES • JOHN HOLMAN UK STAMP SCENE • CHECKLIST 2012 DEFINITIVES

Issues and withdrawals



Cover: Peter Salt with photograph by Branislav Ostojic. Stamp Image © Royal Mail Group Ltd. A special stamp issue released this month celebrates the work of Jane Austen and marks the 200th anniversary of the publication of *Pride and Prejudice*.

7 February	**Issue** Lunar Year of the Snake: Generic Sheet
20 February	**Issue** Post & Go Second Class Machins: Second Class and Second Class Large Stamps
21 February	**Issue** The Work of Jane Austen: Stamps, Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards
22 February	**Issue** Post & Go, Freshwater Life 1 – Ponds: Stamps
23 February	**Withdrawal** Britons of Distinction: Stamps, Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards
20 March	**Withdrawal** Comics: Stamps, Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards
21 March	**Withdrawal** Lunar Year of the Dragon: Generic Sheet
26 March	**Issue** Doctor Who: Stamps, Miniature Sheet, Generic Sheet, Stamp Book 6 x 1st, Presentation Pack, Stamp Cards, Pin Badges

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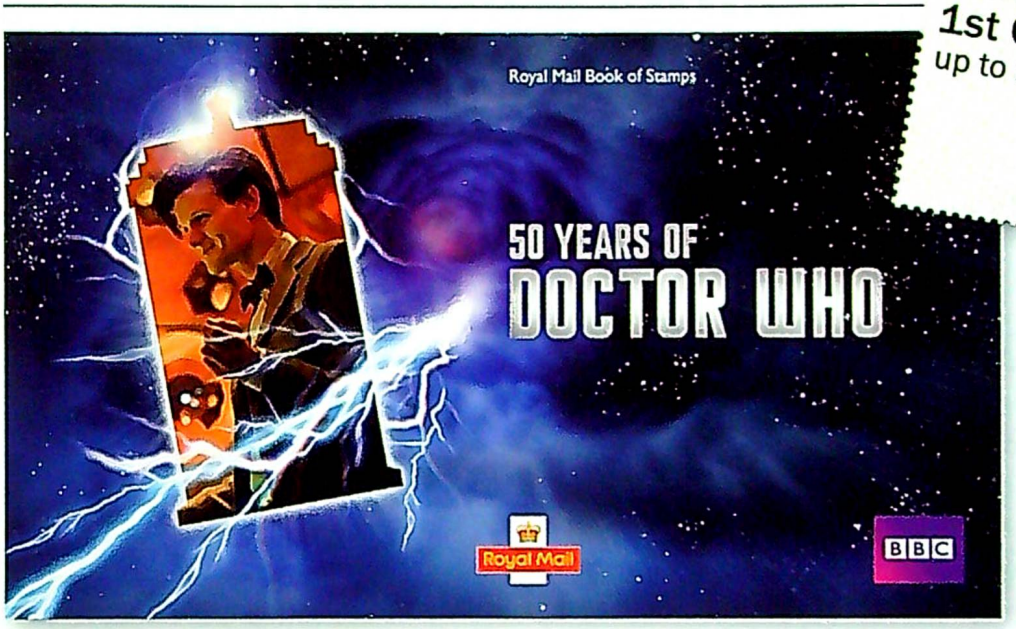
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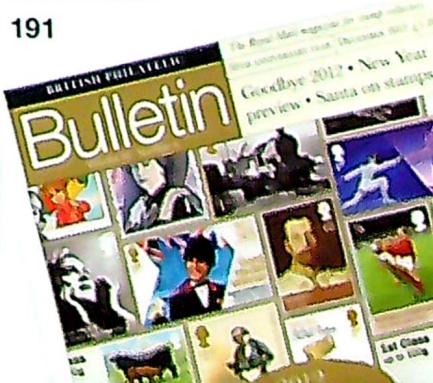
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Correspondence



Glorious food

Although I am not a thematic collector, I often enjoy skimming through *Bulletin* articles on themed UK stamps. So I was pleasantly surprised to find myself engrossed in the detail of the recent two-part article 'A Tasty Collection' (page 90 and page 116, last November and December's *Bulletin*). By the time I had finished reading I found I had worked up quite an appetite!

You asked for any more examples of food on UK stamps. For escargot enthusiasts, dare I suggest the snail on the 62p Pixies stamp of the 2009 Mythical Creatures issue? And also two 1989 stamp books with food illustrations.
James H Cooper, Blackburn

Hmm... the snail might prefer to keep its job in the pixieland transport corps rather than be served up with garlic butter! Thanks for mentioning those stamp books, shown right, which would definitely belong in a foodie collection. Inside they both offered a set of five recipe cards with envelopes, written and tested by Henrietta Green and illustrated by Flo Bayley. The recipes were for baked prawns in butter, home-made mushroom soup, chicken and herb balls, three fruits marmalade and summer pudding. A 1984 book showed a birthday cake and the first ever PSB famously contained 12 recipes from the Dairy Book of Home Cookery by permission of the Milk Marketing Board of the day (see John Holman's This Month in History, Volume 49, page 105).



Letting off steam **What happened?!**

It's almost December as I write and just receive November issue of the *British Philatelic Bulletin* today! This means I am unable to order anything in good time.

What's happened to *Bulletin* being delivered just a few days from the beginning of each month? Any chance to improve?
Mr D J Fowell, Loughton

2012 brought a variety of new challenges to the *Bulletin* team. Inevitably some of these resulted in print deadlines being pushed back and your *Bulletin* delivery service being disrupted. Thankfully those issues are all behind us now. We move into 2013 back on track, ready to deliver timely and relevant news in an informative and entertaining way. Look out for a special golden gift for all our readers renewing their subscription this year.
William Doherty, Royal Mail Web Content & Magazines Manager

Correction The British Auto Legends stamp issue is scheduled for release on 13 August and not 29 August as reported in November *Bulletin*.

First-class letter

California calling

Regarding your 'Happy Half-century to *Bulletin*' item in the October edition, I looked back into my storage boxes and found that I first subscribed in the 1960s. At that time, I retained only articles I wanted for future reference and so I do not have the complete volumes of *Bulletins*. Since then I have kept the whole magazine.

I did find a reference to the September 13, 1965 issue of the Battle of Britain stamps; and another reference to the 2/- stamp book containing eight 3d stamps 'going on sale between 16 May and 30 September 1966'. I did not find anything earlier than these references. So 1965 must be my start year.

As a lad born in Glasgow in 1928, I started my collection when I was about ten years old and got into British Empire stamps. And I still have my first Stanley Gibbons Catalogue of 1944 'with Egypt and Iraq'! I emigrated to California in 1958 but I cannot remember how I found out about the *Bulletin*. The main thing is that I have subscribed to it all these years in order to keep up with British philately, even though I cannot attend Stampex and all the other UK activities celebrating this great hobby.

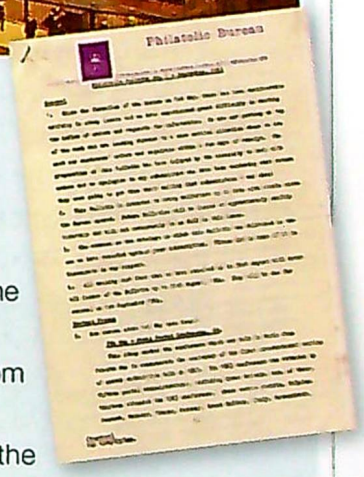
As for the changes to *Bulletin*, my age alone will tell you that some of the fine print is a bit hard on my eyes! The size of the publication creates its own restraints I suppose. Apart from that, keep up the good work!

David A W Young, Newport Beach



We very much enjoyed receiving your letter from the Sunshine State in our chilly winter. There are no plans to print *Bulletin* in a larger format, but perhaps we should offer subscribers a convenient magnifying glass? Please spread the word about *Bulletin* among your Californian collecting chums.





Another 'golden' reader...

Larry Rosenblum's letter in the November issue reminded me that I subscribed to *Bulletin* from the first issue and still have the original typewritten issues from Volumes 1 and 2 issues.

I also remember visiting the Philatelic Bureau when it was first set up at the GPO Headquarters in St Martins-le-Grand, London, to buy stamps – particularly phosphor varieties – on the first day of issue. I support Larry's request for a searchable electronic version of back issues of *Bulletin*. And I do hope the normal delivery times can be restored, so that I am able to receive the various notifications well in advance.

P W Constable, Barnet

Electronic versions are underway. It's going to be a long haul and we'll keep you posted. We preview all new stamps in the edition preceding the month of issue and hope that normal delivery times are re-established by the time you read this.

Keep the mail coming...

The Editor welcomes your letters and the senders of those published will receive philatelic delights as a thank-you. Occasionally we award a *Bulletin* binder to the writer of a 'First-class letter'. Send your letters to: The Editor, *British Philatelic Bulletin*, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB. Remember, you can also send e-mails to: bulletin.enquiries@royalmail.com

Royal Mail news Devotees of Machins, literature and wildlife get ready for stamp inspiration in February and beyond



Right: the new Second Class and Second Class Large Machin Post & Go stamps, issued on 20 February

New issues during Stampex Royal Mail will be issuing 2nd Class Post & Go stamps on Wednesday, 20 February 2013, coinciding with the first day of the Stampex Exhibition in London (more details in Stamp Scene on page 171). The stamps will be available in standard 2nd Class and 2nd Class Large versions from the Royal Mail self-service Post & Go machines, as well as in sets from the Royal Mail stand, online at www.royalmail.com/postandgo and by mail order from Tallents House in Edinburgh (address on page 162).

These stamps are being issued in preparation for subsequent availability through the Post Office Limited Post & Go facilities. Because specific Post Office Limited machines will need to be converted to accept these new Post & Go's, customers should note that the 2nd Class Post & Go stamps will *not* be available through post offices to coincide with the first day of issue.

Also during Stampex, on 21 February the Jane Austen special issue goes on sale (see preview in January *Bulletin* on page 152 and the background feature on page 180). On 22 February the first set in the new Post & Go series swims into view with Freshwater Life I Ponds (see preview on page 150 and a fascinating focus on the Emperor dragonfly stamp on page 180) •

Marking 50 years of *Doctor Who* classic television They may not have heard about it on Mars yet but news of the special *Doctor Who* issue is getting Earth-based fans all starry-eyed in anticipation. The issue, showcasing the eleven Doctors and arch-villains the Daleks, commemorates 50 years of the much-loved BBC series, first broadcast in 1963.

The BBC announced the stamps on Boxing Day, making an exciting late Christmas present for fans. National newspapers also ran the story over the December holiday period, describing the Doctors from the first –William Hartnell – to the current lead Matt Smith – each are to feature on their own First Class stamp. Second Class stamps in a Miniature Sheet show the Doctor's most vicious enemies, including the Daleks and the Cybermen. The TARDIS appears on a First Class stamp on the sheet.

To mark the launch on 26 March, Royal Mail is giving you the chance to win *Doctor Who* prizes – see www.royalmail.com/doctorwho for details. In addition, look out for a competition in the March issue of *Bulletin*. This issue also carries a feature about the programme – longest-running science fiction series ever shown on television. As usual, your *Bulletin* preview appears more than a month ahead of the issue date and it begins on the facing page •

***Doctor Who* ahoy!** Your preview of a unique new stamp set that lands on Earth next month

THE UNIVERSE'S favourite Time Lord is being honoured with a stellar stamp issue. *Doctor Who*, the longest running science-fiction series on Planet Earth, celebrates 50 years with special stamps featuring all eleven Doctors and a Miniature Sheet with those fiendish enemies, the Daleks and the Cybermen.

First broadcast on 23 November 1963, *Doctor Who* became compulsory Saturday teatime viewing for children and adults alike, attracting audiences of over 15 million. The programme has won five BAFTAs and featured guest appearances by the likes of Sir Derek Jacobi, Kylie Minogue and Simon Pegg.

The *Doctor Who* special issue, launching on 26 March, comprises eleven First Class stamps and a five-stamp Miniature Sheet, both designed by London consultancy GBH.



Travel back in time through 50 years with next month's special stamp issue, featuring all the faces of the Doctor – from today's Matt Smith back to the start with William Hartnell

Doctor Who specials – stamp by stamp

Eleven First Class Stamps will be printed over three sheets. The first will feature Matt Smith (the current Doctor), David Tennant and Christopher Eccleston; the second, Paul McGann, Sylvester McCoy, Colin Baker and Peter Davison; and the third will feature Tom Baker, Jon Pertwee, Patrick Troughton and original Doctor William Hartnell.

The eleventh Doctor: Matt Smith The youngest actor to play the Doctor, Smith faces old enemies the Silurians and new villains such as the Silence.

The tenth Doctor: David Tennant Spiky haired and wearing pinstripe suit and trainers, Tennant's Doctor was a garrulous extrovert battling against the Cybermen and new aliens like the Krillitanes and the Weeping Angels. His companions included Rose Tyler (Billie Piper).

The ninth Doctor: Christopher Eccleston With his leather jacket, jeans and Northern accent, Eccleston was a radical departure from previous Doctors in the rebooted 2005 series that saw the reintroduction of the Daleks and the Autons.

The eighth Doctor: Paul McGann In a 1996 made-for-television film, McGann's Doctor regenerates in a San Francisco hospital mortuary after being caught in a gangland shooting.

The seventh Doctor: Sylvester McCoy The Doctor for ▶



Above: First Day Cover, Stamps No.2, revealing die-cut TARDIS image on the filler card within

Below: Stamp Book with First Class TARDIS. Watch out for a full description of this and the Doctor Who Prestige Stamp Book in next month's *Bulletin*



two years, he was an outwardly bumbling eccentric with the habit of playing the spoons. Bonnie Langford played his first assistant Mel.

The sixth Doctor: Colin Baker Kitted out in a multi-coloured frock coat, yellow trousers and orange spats, Baker's Doctor appeared on screen from 1984 to 1986 and was a bombastic and overbearing egoist – in the nicest possible way.

The fifth Doctor: Peter Davison Davison, who played the Time Lord from 1981 to 1984, wore a costume based on an Edwardian cricket outfit. More of a team player than previous Doctors, he had a five-strong squad that included an air hostess, an alien assassin and an android.

The fourth Doctor: Tom Baker Baker has played the Doctor longer than any other actor to date, from 1974 to 1981. His striking take on the role is the one most often referenced in popular culture – with wild curly hair, staring eyes, absurdly long scarf and ever-present jelly babies. And let us not forget his assistants, including the savage Leela and robot dog K-9.

The third Doctor: Jon Pertwee Starring in the first series filmed in colour, Pertwee played the Doctor as a 1970s dandy in frilled shirts and velvet suits. A bit of an action man, he worked with the

***Doctor Who* Stamps – Specifications**	
Date of issue	26 March
Number of stamps	Eleven
Stamp design	GBH
Stamp format	Landscape
Stamp size	41mm x 30mm
Printer	Cartor Security Printing
Print process	Lithography
Number per sheet	24/48
Perforations	14.5 x 14
Phosphor	All over
Gum	PVA

***Doctor Who* issue – Prices**	
Presentation Pack No.482	£9.70
Miniature Sheet	£2.60
First Day Cover Stamps No.1/overseas	£2.64/£2
First Day Cover Stamps No.2/overseas	£6.24/£5.20
First Day Cover Miniature Sheet/overseas	£3.60/£3
Prestige Stamp Book	£13.77
Retail Stamp Book	£3.60
Generic Sheet, 20 x 1st Class TARDIS	£12.00
Smilers® Sheet of 10 1st Class Stamps	£9.99 excluding p&p
Smilers® Sheet of 20 1st Class Stamps	£18.25 excluding p&p
Stamp Cards, set of 17	£7.65



Doctor Who Miniature Sheet – Specifications	
Number of stamps	Five
Size of sheet	115mm x 89mm
Design	GBH
Stamp format	Special: Square Definitive: Portrait
Stamp size	Special: 35mm x 35mm Definitive: 20mm x 24mm
Printer	Joh. Enschedé Stamps
Print process	Gravure
Perforations	Special: 14.5 x 14.5 Definitive: 15 x 14
Phosphor	Bars as appropriate
Gum	Self-adhesive

military taskforce UNIT to save Earth from creatures such as the Autons, Silurians and Sea Devils.

The second Doctor: Patrick Troughton During Troughton's tenure from 1966 to 1969, the show featured faster-paced stories with more aliens. Troughton, often described as a cosmic hobo, favoured a baggy suit and bow tie. He was assisted by oh-so-Sixties Polly (Anneke Wills), sailor Ben (Michael Craze) and Highlander Jamie (Frazer Hines) among others.

The first Doctor: William Hartnell The debut Doctor was an irascible Edwardian who initially adventured through time and space to fulfil the show's first intention of educating children about history and science. He was aptly accompanied by his granddaughter and her two teachers. Hartnell's second series, with the introduction of the Daleks, set the seal on the show becoming one of the world's longest-running science-fiction series.

Miniature Sheet, stamp by stamp

The Miniature Sheet features the Doctor's favourite mode of transport and some of his most notorious enemies:

First Class – TARDIS The Doctor's ship is a TARDIS (Time and Relative Dimensions in Space), famously larger inside than out, but also unreliable, with a faulty chameleon circuit ensuring that the ship remains stuck in the shape of a vintage police phone box.

Second Class – The Ood Humanoid in appearance until you get to those tentacles on the lower portions of their faces, the Ood, a slave race, speak through a translator device connected to their 'mouth' by a tube.

Second Class – Cyberman Originally humanoids from Earth's twin planet Mondas, Cybermen implanted artificial parts into their bodies to become cold, calculating cyborgs and regular arch-enemies of the Doctor.

Second Class – Weeping Angel If two Weeping Angels look at each other, they are trapped in stone form until an outside force moves them apart, so this ancient race of aliens cover their eyes while they are moving, giving the impression that they are weeping.

Second Class – Dalek Super-villain Davros created the Daleks on the planet Skaro by implanting mutant Kaled bodies into robot shells. They are bent on universal domination and their favourite word is well known – 'Exterminate!' ▸

Below: pictorial and plain postmarks are available as alternatives to the Tallents House, Edinburgh First Day postmark. Cardiff was chosen because it is the place where the BBC production team for *Doctor Who* is based











Above: *Doctor Who* blank Smilers® Sheet offers plenty of scope for personalisation
Above right: *Doctor Who* Generic Sheet

First Day Covers Available with either the three recent Doctor stamps or the eight Doctors from the original series. A third First Day Cover features a Prestige Stamp Book Pane and there is also a Miniature Sheet First Day Cover with an insert written by *Doctor Who* expert Gary Russell. Orders for Serviced First Day Covers must reach Royal Mail by 26 March. Customers can also send stamped envelopes on the day of issue to Royal Mail, Tallents House (address on page 162) for the Tallents House, Edinburgh postmark.

Presentation Pack The fully illustrated Presentation Pack contains all the stamps and the Miniature Sheet within its own separate carrier. Inside Gary Russell writes about each regeneration of the Time Lord.

Prestige Stamp Book Designed by GBH and written by Gary Russell, the PSB takes a look at how the show has progressed through the eleven Doctors, with a section about the alien villains. You can read full details of the five unique stamp panes of the *Doctor Who* PSB in your next issue of *Bulletin*.

Retail Stamp Book This features two *Doctor Who* First Class Special Stamps (first Doctor, William Hartnell and present Doctor, Matt Smith) and four First Class TARDIS stamps. The *Doctor Who* stamps differ from the Sheet stamp issue, as they will be printed in gravure instead of lithography and are self-adhesive.

Generic Sheet This will comprise 20 First Class TARDIS definitives with labels featuring four different incarnations over time of Cybermen, Daleks, Silurians, Sontarans and the Master.

Smilers® The TARDIS stamp will be offered as part of the Smilers® label service at www.royalmail.com/smilers or via the Smilers® iPhone app. All stamps are First Class.

Stamp Cards Seventeen postcards bearing enlarged images of each of the *Doctor Who* stamps, Miniature Sheet stamps and the Miniature Sheet go on sale about a week before the stamp issue date of 26 March. Printed by Fulmar Colour Printing Company Ltd •

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



Events

7 February Royal Philatelic Society display 'Blindman's Mail' (Gavin Fryer), 41 Devonshire Place, London W1, 1pm. Non-members welcome by prior arrangement with the Admin Office on 020 7486 1044.
8 and 9 February Liverpool 2013 Fair, Liner Hotel (formerly Gladstone Hotel), Lord Nelson Street, Liverpool L3 5QB. Friday 10.30am to 5pm, Saturday 10am to 4pm. Enquiries: Fred O'Reilly 01226 765069 or Terry Barnett 0151 486 2610.
9 February National Philatelic Society display 'They Also Served' by Christine Earle, Welsh Centre, 157-163 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1, 2.30pm.
15 February Strand Stamp Fair, Royal National Hotel, Russell Square, London WC1. 9am to 4pm. Phone 020 8946 4489 or see www.stampshows.net.
20 to 23 February Spring Stampex, see below.
22 February GB Philatelic Society display 'German Propaganda Forgeries' by Claudio Cassuto, Stampex, London N1, 2pm.
9 March National Philatelic Society display 'Wembley 1925 & 1925 (Ramon Goode), Welsh Centre, 157-163 Gray's Inn Rd, London WC1, 2.30pm.
15 and 16 March Salisbury Stamp Fair, Five Rivers Leisure Centre, Hulse Rd, Salisbury SP1 3NR, Friday 11am to 4.30pm, Saturday 10am to 3.30pm.
22 March Strand Stamp Fair, Royal National Hotel, Russell Square, London WC1.
23 March National Philatelic Society country meeting at Westbex 2013, Kennet School, Stoney Lane, Thatcham, Berks RG19 4LL, 1.30pm.
16 April NPS seminar 'How can philatelists use online shopping to the best advantage?' by Francis Kiddle, the Phoenix Centre, Phoenix Place, London WC1X 0DL, 1.30pm. Places are limitied and cost £5 (£3 for NPS members). For details visit www.ukphilately.org.uk/nps or call 01582 762284 •

Stampex – this month

Spring Stampex – at the Business Design Centre, Upper Street, London N1 from 20 to 23 February – will include displays of cinderella and revenue stamps and related items. Some 200 frames of material will be shown and a number of seminars are planned.

As usual Royal Mail will have a stand offering the full range of stamps and philatelic products. Second Class Post & Go Machins, Jane Austen and the Freshwater Life – Ponds Post & Go series will be available from the Royal Mail stand on 20, 21 and 22 February respectively, as well as a wide variety of topical philatelic material and sheet stamps.

Stampex is open on Wednesday 11.30am to 7pm, Thursday and Friday 10am to 6pm, and Saturday 10am to 5pm. Admission is free and visitors receive a free programme of the exhibits and standholders, which contains a free postcard (shown right) that can be posted to receive the exhibition postmark. The postcard reproduces an unused design for a 30p stamp honouring ▸





Above: Stampex Smilers® sheet of British inventors

John Harrison. The design is inscribed 'The Man Who Found Longtitude'. Four stamps marking the tercentenary of Harrison's birth were issued in February 1993.

At the Stampex enquiry desk visitors can buy the latest Stampex business customised Smilers® sheet which bears ten First Class Union Flag stamps with adjoining labels honouring British inventors: Alexander Graham Bell (telephone), Charles Macintosh (waterproof raincoat), John Harrison (marine chronometer), Emily Jayne Cummins (evaporative refrigerator), Herbert Cecil Booth (powered vacuum cleaner), Sir Christopher Cockerell (hovercraft), Michael Faraday (electric motor technology), Sir Giles Gilbert Scott (red telephone box), James Bowman-Lindsay (incandescent lighting), and Sir Tim Berners-Lee (World Wide Web).

This year marks the 60th anniversary of Stampex, which started as the 'Coronation Year National Stamp Exhibition' in January 1953; the name 'Stampex' was adopted three years later. Since the 1980s Stampex has been held twice a year, the Autumn show incorporating the former British Philatelic Exhibition. Stampex enquiries: phone 01273 594110 or send an e-mail to info@philatelic-traders-society.co.uk •

Forthcoming auctions

Cavendish will auction the 'Otis Collection' of GB cancellations in March. The company will have a stand at the international exhibition in Melbourne in May. Enquiries to Cavendish: call 01332 250970, e-mail stamps@cavendishphilau.demon.co.uk, or visit www.cavendish_auctions.com.

Grosvenor's sale on 7 March will include the John du Pont collection of Falkland Islands stamps and postal history. Among the highlights of ths collection are two red and four black 'franks' – the first Falklands postal marking, before adhesive stamps were introduced. Contact Grosvenor on 020 7379 8789 or visit www.grosvenorauctions.com •

Postal history on TV



Cyril Parsons, a Friends member and a BPMA volunteer, featured in a special edition of the popular programme *Wartime Farm* on BBC One. Historian Ruth Goodman (pictured left with Cyril) and archaeologist Peter Ginn recreated the conditions that prevailed in rural Britain during the Christmas of 1944. Cyril's contribution focused on the role of the Post Office during the war when the postal service was vitally important as a means of maintaining morale and keeping families in touch, particularly with evacuees and those in the armed forces. Cyril talked about a range of ways in which the PO kept services going and the contingencies put in place to cope when bombing interrupted them •

East Anglia Anniversary

The East Anglian Postal History Study Circle has recently celebrated its 50th anniversary. The Circle, covering Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Huntingdonshire, Lincolnshire, Norfolk and Suffolk, publishes a useful journal 'Eastern Angle'. The December 2012 issue contains a round-up of postal news in the counties based on reports in local press, radio and TV. Ken Smith writes on Suffolk and Norfolk boundary changes and Essex post offices, Gerald Daldry on the postal history of Colchester, Bob Ricketts on Huntingdonshire Rural Posts, and Ron Pegg on the Sub-Office Datestamps of Norfolk. Sent out with this issue was a 50th anniversary booklet detailing the Circle's history and listing its officers and publications. Most meetings are held in Stowmarket and the annual subscription is a modest £10. For further information contact John Copeland, 20 The Vale, Brentwood, Essex CM15 4UP or see www.eaphsc.webs.com •

Letter Box Study Group

The Letter Box Study Group (LBSG) has for many years recorded details of British and overseas letter boxes and publishes a very well produced Newsletter (a 52-page A4 magazine) as well as other publications and postcards. The current winter Newsletter reflects the vitality of this Group, with a listing of 28 new members. Nearly every page carries colour illustrations of boxes, including the ones recently painted gold to celebrate UK sporting success at the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

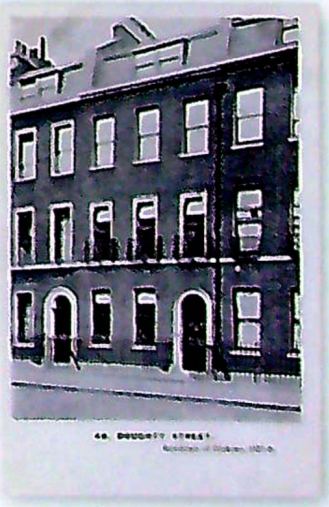
There are features on Penfold boxes, boxes in Sudan, Suriname, Svalbard, Swaziland and Sweden (in an A to Z of Overseas Boxes series), boxes in the Republic of Ireland, and crested china pillar boxes. For information on LBSG membership contact Val Scott, 38 Leopold Avenue, Birmingham B20 1ES, e-mail membership@lbsg.org or visit www.lbsg.org •



Charles Dickens bicentenary

Last June (page 305) in a feature on the background to the Charles Dickens special issue, we gave details of Dickens events marking the bicentenary of his birth. I noted that the Charles Dickens Museum in Doughty Street London WC1 was closed. It reopened in December after a £3 million revamp and now includes a visitor centre and cafe. Dickens lived there from 1837 to 1839, writing *Oliver Twist* and *Nicholas Nickleby* and finishing *The Pickwick Papers*. The Museum is open daily 10am to 5pm (last admission 4pm), admission £8 adults, £6 concessions, £4 children aged six to 16. For further details phone 020 7405 2127 or e-mail info@dickensmuseum.com A feature on Dickens' various homes was published in *The British Philatelic Bulletin* in October 1993 (page 35), coinciding with the issue of A Christmas Carol stamps.

In November 2012 a copy of *A Christmas Carol* with a personal note by Dickens on the flyleaf to the widow of a close friend was sold in New York for £21,800 ($35,000). It has been acquired by the people of Malton, North Yorkshire, the town said to have inspired Dickens to write the book. On arrival in Malton the book was given a fine welcome by the local Dickens Society, which runs a Dickens museum in the town •





Above: the Charles Dickens Museum, Doughty Street Right: Mr Bumble, from the 2012 special issue marking the bicentenary of Dickens' birth

Doughty Street postcard by Goldwin of Rochester © Mary Evans/Grenville Collins Postcard Collection

From the islands

The Isle of Man Post Office issued six stamps on 11 January, featuring 'The Chronicles of Man and the Lewis Chessmen', the subject of an exhibition, 'The Forgotten Kingdom', at the Manx Museum until 9 March (Monday to Saturday, 10am to 5pm, admission free). The Chronicles, the earliest written accounts of the island, document many of the most significant events of the medieval age. These beautiful medieval manuscripts and a selection of the wonderful Lewis Chessmen are in the exhibition, on loan respectively from the British Library and British Museum in London. The six stamps cost £5.51 mint or cancelled to order, or £6.26 in a presentation pack.



Above: Lewis chessmen, portrayed on stamps from The Isle of Man Post Office

Six stamps issued by the Isle of Man on 6 February mark the 60th anniversary of the Coronation of HM The Queen. The set costs £5.59 mint/used or £6.34 in pack. This is followed on 20 February by six stamps marking the 150th anniversary of the Isle of Man Constabulary and a miniature sheet for the Isle of Man Fire & Rescue Service. The Constabulary stamps cost £5.59 (£6.34 in pack) and the miniature sheet £3 (pack £3.75). To order or make an enquiry contact Isle of Man Stamps & Coins, PO Box 10M, Douglas, Isle of Man IM99 1PB, or visit www.iomstamps.com.

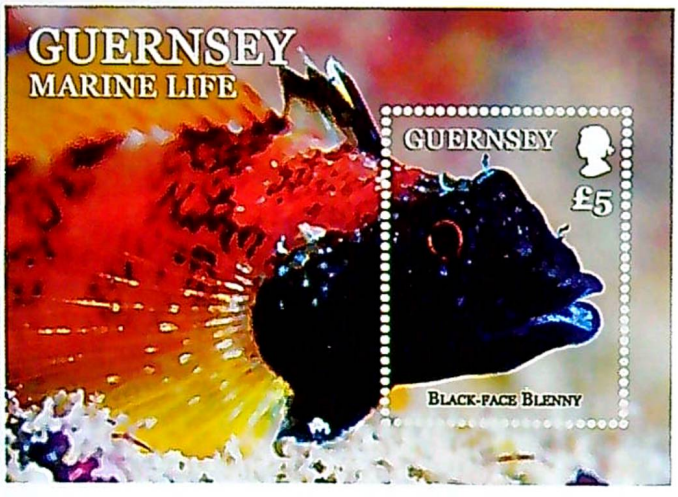
Below: Frosts and Nature stamp set from Jersey Post



Jersey Post chose seasonal flowers for its first stamp issue of the year on 8 January. Frosts & Nature is a six-stamp set showing a selection of paintings by artist Michael Pollard, of plants and flowers that can be seen around Jersey during the winter months.Each incorporates the magic 'sparkle' of frost. Mr Pollard is a popular artist among stamp collectors and is well known for both his natural history and children's book illustrations.

This month Jersey Post issues a set of six stamps and a miniature sheet on the subject Royal Legacy of Queen Victoria – Edward VII (see page 191 for more details). Enquiries to: Jersey Philatelic Bureau, Freepost JE793, Jersey Post, Jersey JE1 1AF; or visit www.jerseystamps.com

Below: Black-face Blenny on this months' Guernsey mini sheet that offeres smartphone access to a documentary film



Guernsey Post On 20 February a Marine Life stamp set and miniature sheet from Guernsey Post offer a close-up of the fish in the Bailiwick of Guernsey: when the stamp is viewed using the standard camera on a smartphone or tablet, an exclusive three-minute mini-documentary can be activated, showcasing the fish in their natural habitat and including the rarely seen Black-face Blenny.

Also on 20 February Guernsey and Alderney offer philatelists the Giant panda and local beetles respectively. For details, visit www.guernseypost.com/philaelic-bureau •

Stamp images © The Isleo of Man Post Office, Jersey Post and Guernsey Post

Checklist of 2012 definitives A full list to complete your records of last year's Machin, London 2012 and Jubilee definitives



Please note We quote Royal Mail order numbers (prefixed DS, YB etc) as given on Tallents House stock lists • Key to printers: C = Cartor, D = De La Rue, E = Enschedé, W = Walsall • Printing process: G = gravure, L = litho, I = intaglio • Unless otherwise stated, definitive and country stamps are self-adhesive, have a perforation gauge of 15 x 14 (with ellipses at lower left and right sides) and two phosphor bands (2nd class standard size one band) • The dates quoted are those on which the stamps were first available from Tallents House; in some instances they may have been available at Post Offices earlier to meet postal needs •

Counter Sheet Definitives

5 January 1st Class x 2 Olympic and Paralympic Games (DS959); Worldwide 20g x 2 Olympic and Paralympic Games (DS960); all four D, G.

6 February 1st Class Diamond Jubilee (DS461) D, G with iridescent ink.

25 April 1st Class Large Diamond Jubilee (DS901) W, G with iridescent ink. 87p Orange (DS870); £1.28 Emerald (DS128); £1.90, Rhododendron (DS190); all W, G. ▸









Top: two stamp books containing Jubilee definitives. Above: Miniature Sheet featuring six definitives, including the Diamond Jubilee Machin. Right: pane 1 of the Diamond Jubilee PSB has 4 x 1st Wilding stamps from the Miniature Sheet and 4 x 1st class Diamond Jubilee Machin definitives

Country definitives

England

25 April 87p, Oak (ES870); £1.28p, Tudor Rose (ES128). All C, L, PVA.

Scotland

25 April 87p, Thistle (SS870); £1.28p, Tartan (SS128).
27 June 1st, Tartan (SS601); 2nd, Thistle (SS501). All C, L, PVA.

Wales

25 April 87p, Daffodil (WS870); £1.28p, Prince of Wales Feathers (WS128). All C, L. PVA.

Northern Ireland

25 April 87p, Linen (IS870), £1.28p Parian China (IS128). All C, L, PVA.

Prestige Stamp Book mixed-value panes

10 January 2 x 2p, 2 x 10p, 4 x 68p + central label with drawing of Dahl by Quentin Blake. In Roald Dahl: Master Storyteller Prestige Stamp Book (YB047). Machin pane W, G; pictorial stamp panes C, L, PVA.

31 May 4 x 1st Diamond Blue, 4 x 1st Wilding + central label with logo by Katherine Dewar. In the Diamond Jubilee Prestige Stamp Book (YB048). Defin pane W, G, PVA.

27 September 3 x 1st Olympic Definitives, 3 x 1st Paralympic Definitives, 1 x Worldwide Olympic Definitive, 1 x Worldwide Paralympic Definitive + central label with '2012' design. In the Welcome to the London 2012 Olympic Games; Keeping the Flame Alive Prestige Stamp Book (YB049). C/W, L, PVA.

Miniature sheets

6 February 6 x 1st Diamond Jubilee Definitives Miniature Sheet (MZ083). W, G with special techniques, PVA.

Stamp books

5 January 6 x 1st Olympic Definitives 2012, S Coe Vision Quote display (UB338); 6 x 1st Olympic Definitives 2012 with Key Dates display (UB339). Both W, G.

6 February 12 x 1st Diamond Jubilee Definitives (UB340). W, G.



Top: Diamond Jubilee definitives in the Classic Locomotives of Scotland Stamp Book. Above and right: Presentation Packs of Royal Mail 2012 definitives and Country Stamps. Above right: mixed-value pane in the Roald Dahl PSB

25 April 4 x 1st Large Diamond Jubilee Definitives (UB341). W, G.

31 May 4 x 1st Diamond Jubilee Definitives + 2 x Diamond Jubilee pictorials showing The Queen on her Golden Jubilee (UB342). W, G.

27 September 4 x 1st Diamond Jubilee Definitives + 2 x 1st Classic Locomotives of Scotland stamps showing trains BR D34 Nos. 62471 and 62496 (UB351). W, G.

1 October 6 x 1st Diamond Jubilee Definitives with display quote from Elizabeth II on her accession in 1952 (UB355). W, G.

Pictorial (Smilers®) generic sheets

20 January 20 x 1st Fireworks greetings + labels with traditional scenes of Chinese New Year, 'Lunar New Year of the Dragon 23 January 2012 - 9 February 2013' (AT070). C, L.

18 June 20 x 1st Hello stamps + labels depicting a variety of views of Indonesian landscape and traditional celebrations – 'Salam dari Pos Kerajaan Inggris – Hello from Royal Mail – Indonesia 2012' (AT071). C, L.

27 June 8 x 1st Olympic Definitives, 8 x 1st Paralympic Definitives, 2 x Olympic Worldwide, 2 x Paralympic Worldwide + labels showing illustrations of Games venues – 'London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games Venues' Smilers® Sheet (AT072).

Commemorative sheets

10 April 10 x 1st Crown Seal Smilers® + labels featuring a variety of images of the *Titanic* story – 'Royal Mail Ship Titanic, Commemorating The 100th Anniversary' (AV016).

1 May 10 x Union Flag stamps + labels with film posters, 'Celebrating 50 Years of James Bond' (AV017).

5 October 10 x Union Flag + labels featuring Spike Milligan, Harry Secombe and Peter Sellers – '40th Anniversary of the last Goons Show' (AV018).

8 November 10 x Fireworks greetings + labels showing footballers. '150 Anniversary of Notts County Football Club' (AV019) •

This month in history John Holman revisits the old oak tree that featured on the front page of the *British Philatelic Bulletin* 40 years ago, in Volume 10



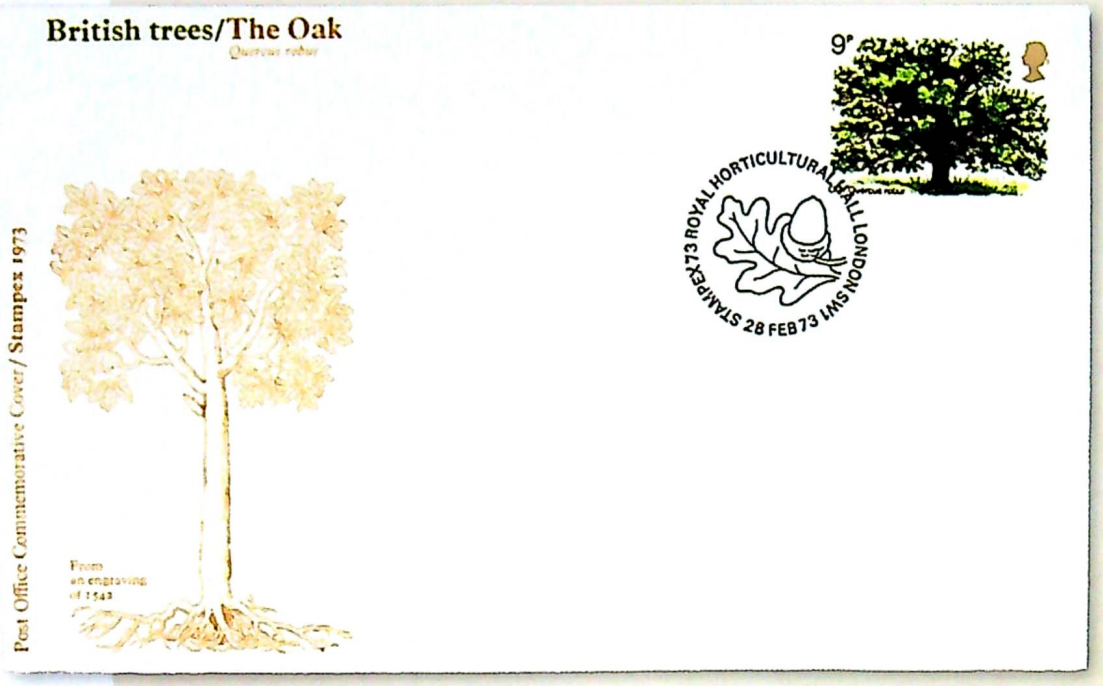
Below: Stampex First Day Cover from February 1973, with Oak *Quercus robur* stamp designed by David Gentleman and featured on the front page of the *British Philatelic Bulletin* of March 1973

In February 1973 the Post Office issued the first of what was intended to be an occasional series on British Trees. As 1973 was designated Tree Planting Year, the stamp rather appropriately featured an oak tree, probably Britain's most iconic and popular tree. The 9p stamp (overseas rate) was designed by David Gentleman and shows the tree in full leaf. Mr Gentleman prepared two designs and the unused one showing the tree without leaves was illustrated in *Bulletin* in April 1973 (page 13), where it was noted that a fully leafed tree had been deemed 'more appropriate'.

The stamp was printed by Harrisons in six colours and overprinted with two phosphor bands. A number of errors are known – missing brownish-black colour (value and inscription); missing brownish-grey (Queen's head) and phosphor; phosphor omitted; and one broad band instead of two phosphor bands. One constant variety is catalogue listed – a broken letter k in 'Oak' – found on the second stamp of row 9 in the sheets of 100.

The Oak stamp went on sale on 28 February during Stampex, where the Post Office sales counters and display frames were designed as trees (see May 1973 *Bulletin*, page 4). The Post Office produced a Stampex commemorative cover showing an oak tree from an engraving of 1542, in addition to the regular first day cover. Covers could be posted at the exhibition for the regular Stampex handstamp, or for a special one showing an acorn and oak leaf as the central motif. Other special handstamps in use on the day of issue were Hatfield Broad Oak, Plant a Tree, and Tree Planting, Westonbirt Arboretum. Also sought by first day cover collectors are covers cancelled by the circular datestamps of Oakham, Four Oaks, Sevenoaks and other tree-related places.

The stamp was withdrawn on 17 February 1974. Sales had amounted to 5,875,100. Some 96,722 Presentation Packs were sold and the pack can be found with German language insert card. Only one more stamp was added to the intended series– a 10p stamp showing a Horse Chestnut, issued the following February •



Notes for young stampers, parents and teachers 2013 is set to be an exciting year for young collectors, with this sporty design competition

Next month a nationwide competition to find the best 'Future Gold Medal Winner' stamp designer is launched in UK schools by Royal Mail in association with iChild.

You will find updates on all the details in future issues of the *British Philatelic Bulletin*, but to get ahead of the game, you can download the new Royal Mail Smilers® app from the App Store for iPad or iPhone. (The app is also available from Google Play Store early February). Once it is downloaded, just select the 'Future Gold Medal Winner' stamp template, which you will need to help you design your personalised photo stamp in the correct shape. The template can be downloaded for free, and you will need this for the competition, so file it away safely!

We recommend a visit to www.iChild.co.uk to check out the Sporting Dreams activities and education resources that support the "Future Gold Medal Winner" stamp theme. You will also find handy stamp collector sheets and much more! Please pass this information onto arty and/or sporty schoolteachers in your neighbourhood •

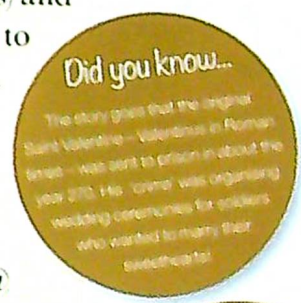


Above: this Sporting Dreams Education Resources pack is available to UK teachers

Stamp detective Now you can download a clever 'stamp detective' to discover hidden secrets of your collection! Online tool retroReveal analyses an uploaded image of a stamp to show hidden or difficult-to-see details such as postmarks and overprints. It can also 'remove' marks, making it easier for you to study an actual stamp in its entirety. Using image processing technology, retroReveal separates the stamp picture into different 'colour channels'. Postmarks, for example, can appear more distinct in a particular channel. RetroReveal is a free website service from the University of Utah in the USA – go to retroreveal.org, scan in your stamps and get detecting! •

British Postal Museum and Archive New stamp collectors are usually keen to discover the wonders of the British Postal Museum and Archive (BPMA). Its collection includes registration sheets, essays (trial stamps) and printers proofs of all stages of British stamp production from 1840 to the present day – as well as highwaymen's pistols, unused designs and other philatelic treasures too numerous to mention here. If you have a passion for stamps and/or are doing some serious research into postal history, the best way to see this amazing philatelic and postal history collections is by making an appointment with the Curator of Philately, Douglas Muir – just call 020 7239 2570 or e-mail info@postalheritage.org.uk.

The BPMA, located at Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London WC1, near the famous Mount Pleasant sorting office, is open Monday to Friday 10am to 5pm (Thursdays until 7pm). This can vary a bit, so before you plan a visit, check opening times at www.postalheritage.org.uk •





The men of Austen

And how, pray, does the work of Jane Austen appeal to the manly philatelist? We explore the modern message for men behind this month's new stamp issue – from which lady philatelists may also take courage



Top: the gentlemanly no-fuss superstar – in the 1995 ITV adaptation of Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, Colin Firth reaffirmed to the world the desirableness of Mr Darcy

Pride and Prejudice stamp: Elizabeth Bennet studies a portrait of Mr Darcy in one of the Jane Austen stamps issued on 21 February. For stamp details and the Austen quotations that inspired the illustrations by Angela Barret, see Preview on pages 152 to 154 of January *Bulletin*

STRONG, STOICALLY SILENT, emotionally challenged, with a heart that thumps oh-too-quietly beneath his manly breast. Yes, it is Mr Darcy, expert brooder and manful sporter of the stiff upper lip. 'Go on, tell her you love her,' you want to shout. 'No? What about a sly kiss, then?'

But you know he will not, not until the final pages of *Pride and Prejudice* unfurl. Because Mr Darcy, like all Jane Austen's heroes, is a slow-burner. And like all her novels too – where emotions are trapped in the web of Georgian polite society, and love will only out when heroes and heroines have gone through all sorts of agonies before passion slowly, cautiously, breaks the bonds of the social mores of the time.

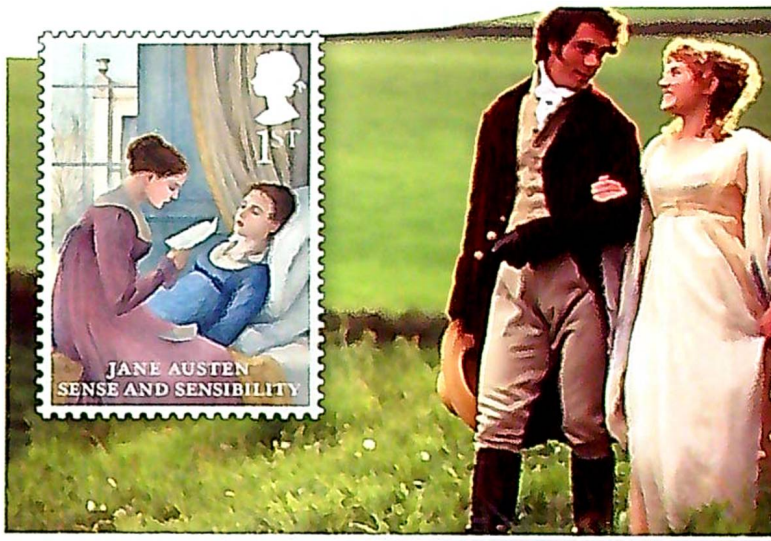
You only have to look at this month's new Jane Austen stamps here to see what we mean. The studied poses, the cautious, measured interaction between man and woman. Bodices and breeches remain decidedly unripped.

British behaviour So, 200 years later, what has changed? Well, not much when you really think about it. Yes, we have had the 'New Man', the rise of metro-sexuals and Beckham wearing a skirt, but in our heart of hearts we British men know we can leave all public shows of hysterical emotion and hand-kissing larks to the Continentals. Let the French smoulder provocatively and the Italians weep with passion in order to hook a hot date. We continue in the belief that a lady likes an upper lip that is good and stiff, heroic endeavour that is nice and noiseless. Among Austen's dreamboats, bores and scoundrels alike, where there is true love to be declared, it is best conveyed in a solid, manly sort of way.

And to some extent we have Jane Austen to thank for this. No matter how

Stamp images © Royal Mail Gorup Ltd. Photographs: AF Archive/Alamy, ITV/Rex, Getty Images





'modern' British men become, the stoical pride of Austen's heroes remains the role model – the idea of 'getting on with it' without a fuss, whether that means we carry on putting up a shelf after hitting a thumb with the hammer or continue pushing forward with a leg wound in Helmand.

Austen's men can be seen as the prototype of The British Male, the serious, reserved hero, that particular breed of emotionally controlled (but not emotionless) manliness. Austen's influence on the way British men view themselves cannot be denied.

Just think of some of her leading gentlemen. Colonel Brandon from *Sense and Sensibility*, solid, serious, dependable – still many a British mother's fantasy of the perfect son-in-law if she is being honest with herself. Brandon loves flighty Marianne Dashwood, but he is 'old' at 35, and she prefers the dashing, charming, younger Mr Willoughby. Plain quiet words and reliable moral strength triumph, however, and Brandon wins her hand.

Sense and Sensibility stamp: when Marianne Dashwood is distraught at being painfully spurned by cad John Willoughby, she is comforted by her elder sister Elinor

Top left: in the 1995 Columbia movie Alan Rickman effortlessly interprets Colonel Brandon's respectful conversational tone with Elinor while he is inwardly simmering with resentment over the wooing ways of Willoughby (top right, played by Greg Wise) with Marianne (Kate Winslet)

Centuries of sensibility In *Northanger Abbey*, Henry Tilney is more lively than Brandon, can be a bit of a teaser and sometimes has unseemly outbursts of pride. But he too is serious, especially as a clergyman in his duty to his parish. He also slags off then-trendy Bath. And, importantly, bangs on about the shallowness of fashion. How British male is that?

But have we always been like this? Well, no actually. British reserve as we know it today, helped along by Austen and the extraordinary changes in Georgian society, was certainly not always the norm. Roll back a couple of ▸

Northanger Abbey stamp: Catherine Morland's penchant for horror leads to problems

Below left: in the 2007 TV film, Henry Tilney (JJ Field) steps in to guide Catherine (Felicity Jones) away from the dark side





centuries and we find Elizabethan men letting it all hang out. They were notably 'emotional', hard-drinking, hard-fighting, passionately pursuing the girls at every opportunity. In the 17th century, just two generations before Austen, even Italian visitors to London were shocked at their hosts' behaviour.

Into Georgian times now, and being in touch with one's emotions, giving vent to public expressions of feeling, were still as welcome as ever. In fact, emoting was becoming fashionable, with the Brits following what has been dubbed the 'cult of sensibility': in an increasingly sophisticated, urban and urbane society, having complex emotions was considered a sign of refinement – for men as well as women. Being called sentimental was a definite sign of approval. Such things, however, were soon to change...

> 'Men were attempting to navigate their way between manliness, emotion and restraint'

The swan song of sentiment The journey from Elizabethan Renaissance Ape Man through Georgian New Man to Modern Stiff Upper-Lipped Man was charted in a recent television programme, *Ian Hislop's Stiff Upper Lip – An Emotional History of Britain*. In it Hislop reveals a contradiction, during the Georgian area, in the British male psyche (sounds familiar?). Yes, British men were acolytes of sensibility, but the opposite virtue of reserve, of moderation, of self-control – then called 'politeness' – was also becoming quite the thing by the time Austen took up her pen. No wonder we poor blokes are so confused today.

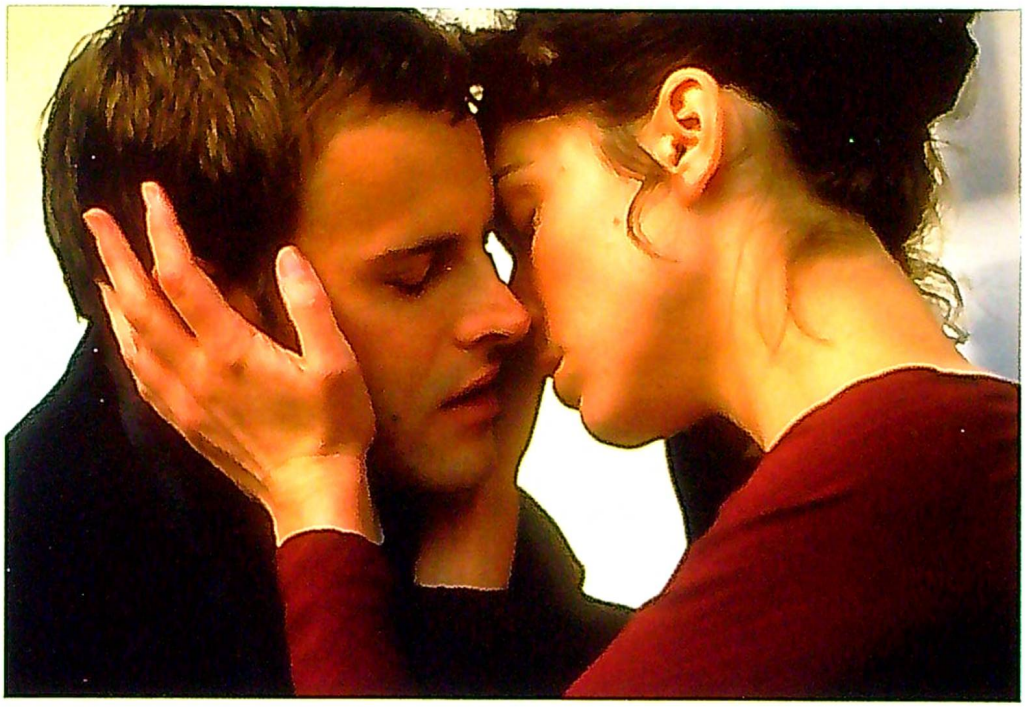
As Hislop puts it: 'In Jane Austen's day, although many were guided by



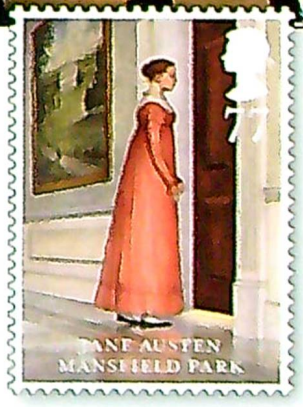
Photograph: Sony/Everett/Rex Features

Persuasion stamp: years after Anne Elliot breaks off her engagement to her first love he returns to town a suave and succesful naval captain

In the 1995 fim version (below) Captain Frederick Wentworth is played by seriously hunky, Belfast-born Ciarán Hinds







Mansfield Park stamp: Fanny Price pauses to take courage before facing the family – and her beloved cousin

Above left: in the 1999 comedy-drama loosely based on Austen's novel, Edmund Bertram (Jonny Lee Miller) eventually gives up his plantation for devoted Fanny (Frances O'Connor). She has waited an age for him and meanwhile escaped the advances of the lustful Harry Crawford (played by American Alessandro Nivola, top)

the cult of feelings, men were also influenced by another, sometimes contrary, 18th century fashion: politeness. And it would be politeness that prepared the ground for the stiff upper lip.

'In the 18th century, not unlike today, British men were attempting to navigate their way between manliness, emotion and restraint.'

Blame it on the Revolution Luckily modern British men can blame the French for being so damnably British, so uncomfortably inflexible in the top lip region. The excesses of the French Revolution in 1789 and The Terror that followed horrified British polite society. The rule of the mob, murders of 'decent' aristocrats in the street, the public executions – all were seen as uncontrolled sensibility, the venting of emotion, gone mad.

'In the face of turmoil across the Channel, British culture was about to change,' observes Hislop. 'Once so fashionable, sentimentality began to be seen as dangerously subversive.'

Good gracious, could sensitive British men risk being infected by the same madness? Would British society go the same rotten way as the French? Yes they could; yes it might. So the British solution was to crank up on our reserve and wind down our emotions. No longer was this only a matter of social refinement – now it was about the defence of the realm. And in the midst of these changes was the great society observer Jane Austen, both recording and influencing the turn of the social tide in her novels.

As Hislop says: 'A new code of conduct was emerging, which prized constraint and control. Jane Austen captured this better than any other writer of the day, as again and again she explored the theme of how far one should express one's emotions. Austen created a new sort of English romantic hero, whose unlikely defining characteristics were restraint and reserve.'

Cue Austen's wonderfully British males of literary fame who have somehow managed to walk off her pages and with shoulders back, chin up and upper lip just stiff enough to inhabit the real Britain today. A number ▸

Photograph: Moviestore Collection Ltd / Alamy; United Archives GmbH / Alamy





Emma stamp: Mr Knightley is given a cool farewell by Emma

Top: Knightley (Jeremy Northam) tentatively moves in for a canoodle in the 1999 movie, with Gwyneth Paltrow as Emma

of dramatic adaptations of Austen's novels have brought her a new audience via television and cinema screens.

Fitzwilliam Darcy, a central character in *Pride and Prejudice*, has gained global admiration through the on-screen performance of Colin Firth. Mr Darcy is master of understated British manliness and reserve. Darkly proud and aloof, he both infuriates and mesmerises Elizabeth Bennet until he shakes off enough male pride to successfully propose to the girl he has always loved with a passion he could not show.

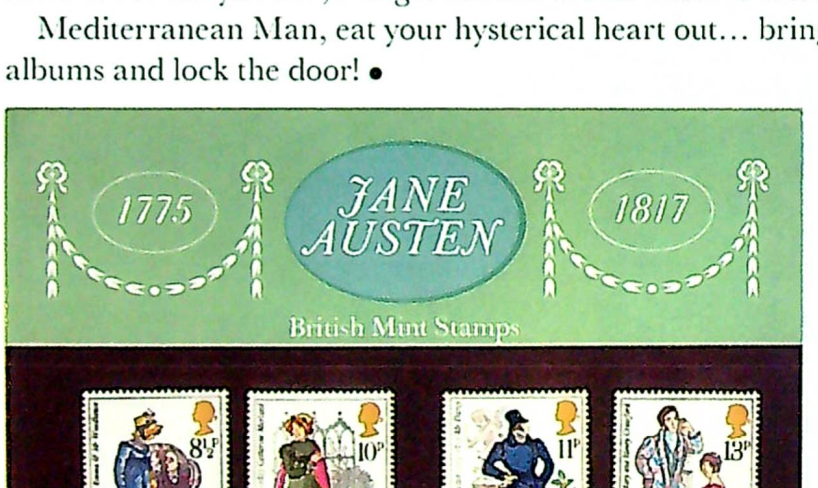
In *Persuasion*, Captain Frederick Wentworth, honourable, beautifully mannered, is shattered when Anne Elliot is persuaded by her godmother to break off her engagement to him. But like any brave Brit male, he is able to harness all his reserves of blokeish self-control to convince himself he no longer loves her (even though he does, of course, the poor blind fool).

In *Mansfield Park*, honest, upright, kind clergyman Edmund Bertram is in mortal danger of appearing wet. But when his vocation is mocked, and he is told that 'a clergyman is nothing', Edmund mans up nicely, saying: 'I cannot call that situation nothing, which has the charge of all that is the first importance to mankind.' Nice one, Eddy boy, you tell 'em.

Then take brothers George and John Knightley from *Emma*, who greet each other after a long time apart with an exchange befitting two business associates. Austen neatly describes this as an exchange that 'succeeded in the true English style, burying under a calmness that seemed all but indifference, the real attachment which would have led either of them, if requisite, to do everything for the good of the other'.

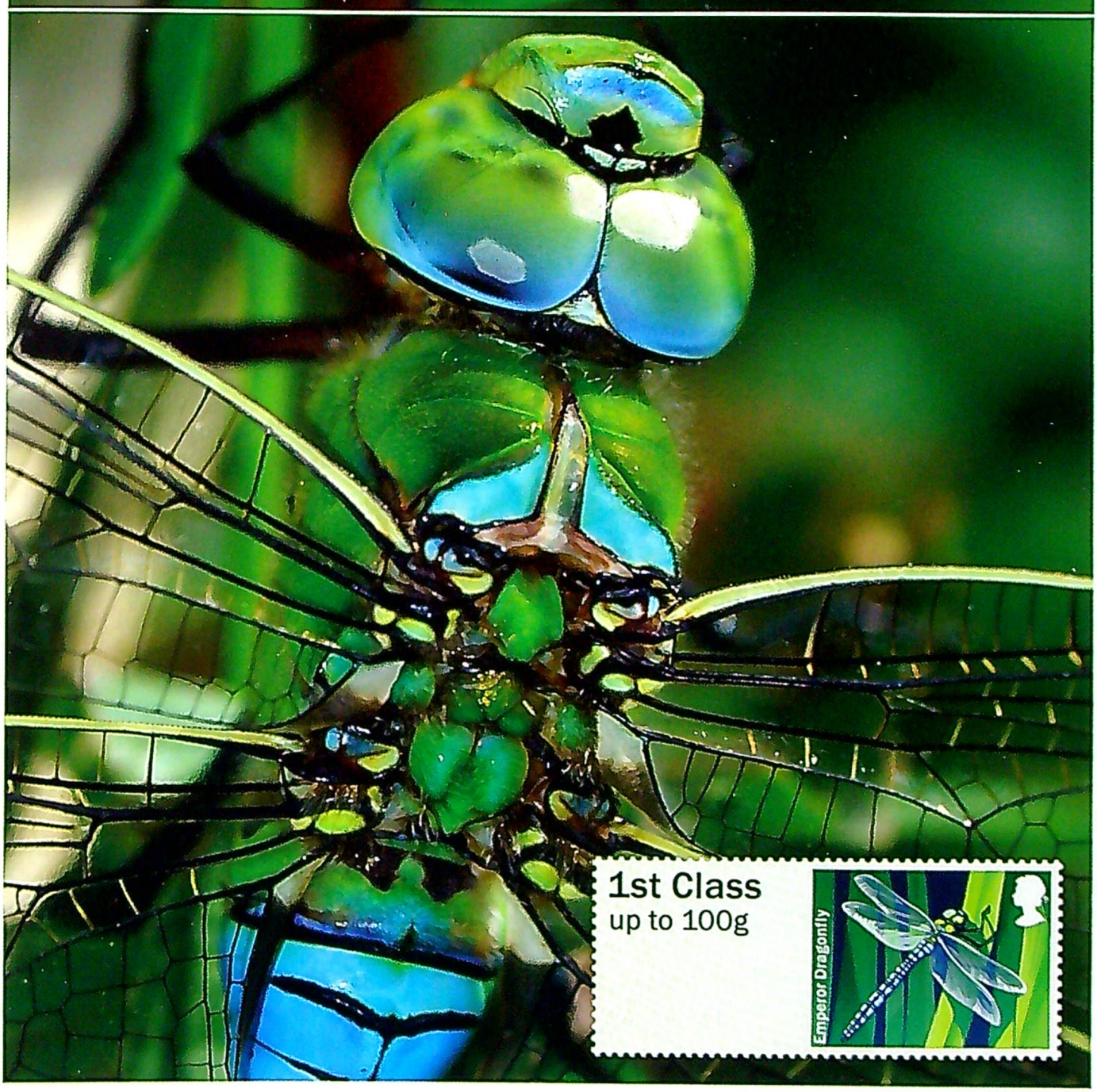
But it is this rather beautiful line, delivered by George to sweetheart Emma Woodhouse, that shows the British male at his measured, manly best: 'If I loved you less, I might be able to talk about it more'.

Mediterranean Man, eat your hysterical heart out... bring me my stamp albums and lock the door! •



Right: Jane Austen was last honoured on Royal Mail stamps in October 1975 with this set illustrated by Barbara Brown. Mr Darcy gets a stamp of his own, Mr Woodhouse has to have a sit-down, and Henry Crawford lounges in garments of appropriately loud pattern

Stamp images © Royal Mail Group Ltd. Photograph: Pictorial Press Ltd/Alamy



What big eyes you have, Emperor!

The Emperor Dragonfly is one to be watched by the rest of the pondlife released this month in the new illustrated Post & Go issue

NO JOKES about pond life in front of this big boy – he is not someone you want to mess with. The Emperor Dragonfly, Britain's largest, is a highly efficient killing machine and will rule any pond he patrols for prey. With a 12cm wingspan the 8cm-long, Emperor has the most impressive physique in the ▸

Above: delicate gossamer wings and the exoskeletal battle armour of the Emperor Dragonfly, close up and in this month's new Post & Go issue

© FLPA Nature - Alamy

Guides to Emperor-spotting

The Wildlife Trusts' *40 Places to See Dragons* is a handy guide to spotting dragonflies in beautiful locations – from Black-Tailed Skimmers and Ruddy Darters amid the reeds on Somerset's Westhay Moor to Golden-Ringed Dragonflies and Azure Damselflies at Falstone Moss in Northumberland. You can find the guide at www.wildlifetrusts.org.

Why not build a pond and protect dragonflies and other water dwellers? BBC2's *Springwatch* programme has a really easy way to do it – in a tin bath! See: www.bbc.co.uk/programmes.



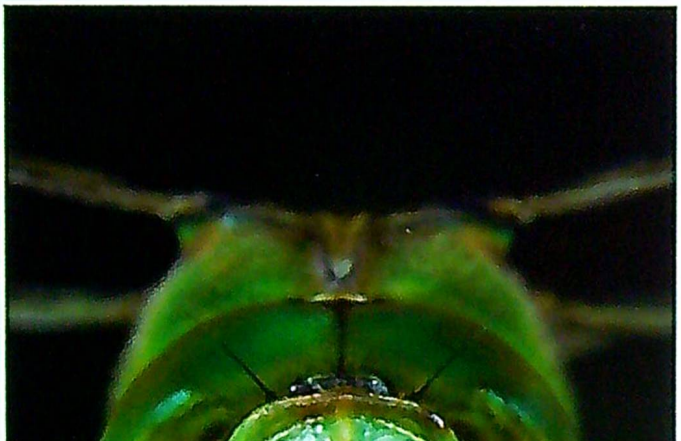
Above: the *Anax imperator* larva can re-create lost limbs. Below: the hugely powerful eyes that give the dragonfly its strategic hunting advantage

business, and every 'bone' in his exoskeletal body seems hell-bent on hunting.

For all their stately, iridescent beauty, dragonflies are rampaging carnivores who devour the equivalent of a fifth of their body weight every day. And hunting is a high-stakes game the Emperor plays with deadly accuracy. He feeds on almost any flying insect, including butterflies and even other dragonflies. Midges, mosquitoes and flies are also on his menu.

The Emperor – scientific name *Anax imperator* and also known as the Blue Emperor – appears with other fascinating pond creatures on stamps in the first set of the 2013 Post & Go series Freshwater Life, released on 22 February. But the colourful, finely illustrated images cannot, of course, tell the full story of life – and death – in and above the average British pond. (Or lake or canal: Emperors haunt them too.)

Indeed, the next time you take a leisurely stroll round your local pond on a lazy summer afternoon, all might seem peaceful but above you any number of aerial battles may be raging. Look up to see an exquisite cornflower-blue male Emperor slicing through the air. He will be defending his territory fiercely, patrolling the water almost without cease, scoping out intruders and looking for females to mate with. Male rivals will be attacked and killed if necessary.



Ruling the pond The Emperor's killing technique is bold and fast, snatching prey in mid-air and often eating them in flight. There are two secrets to his success. First, his vision. Huge eyes, the biggest in the insect world, with around 30,000 lenses, make spotting prey simple – victims can be observed up to 15 metres away. Dragonflies' all-round vision allows them to keep those victims in sight at all times, no matter how deft their aerial manoeuvres. Larger, forward-facing lenses on the upper part of the eyes, however, mean that a dragonfly will often attack flying prey from below and behind.

Secondly, his powers of flight are extraordinary. With its two sets of broad wings, a dragonfly can move forwards, backwards and sideways, changing direction rapidly. The Emperor's top speed is around 25mph and it cruises at about 10mph.

Bad boys Emperors are bad boys but they are pretty bad babies too. Even as larvae, slowly developing underwater in a pond for two years after hatching, they prey on a wide variety of

© NaturePics, Alamy, Juanvi Carrasco, National Trust Images/Paul Harris

Size matters

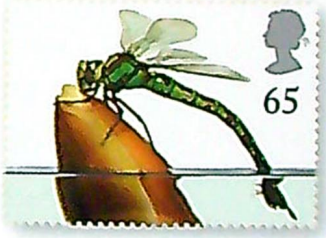
Dragonflies pre-date dinosaurs and have been flying in our skies for around 300 million years. Fossils show their wingspan was once a whopping 75cm. Compare that with the world's biggest dragonfly today and there is simply no contest – the *Megaloprepus coerulatus* from Central America weighs in with a wingspan of just 19cm. And the world's tiniest dragonfly, the *Nannophya pygmaea* from east Asia, is only 1.5cm long with wings a mere 2cm wide.



creatures, from insect larvae and worms to snails, tadpoles and small fish. Once a target is selected, the larva's spiny jaw whips out and nabs it, impaling it on those spines. Nasty. Of course the dragonfly larva is vulnerable to attack too, from waterbirds and fish, but it can replace limbs lost in attacks by moulting.

With killing and survival powers such as these, no wonder Emperors are going places. You will find them all over the south of England and south Wales, but there is evidence that the population is spreading northwards, and they have now been found in Ireland too. And this is at a time when dragonflies are battling for survival as ponds, their natural territory, are disappearing under the shadow of progress. But the Emperor's continued success is hardly surprising: like any great imperial figure, he is simply finding new lands to conquer.

For full philatelic specifications of this issue and the other new stamps in the Post & Go series, see page 151 of January *Bulletin* •





Above: the female Emperor, like the male, can cruise at around 25mph
Below: other UK stamps portraying the dragonfly – in the 1985 Insects and 2001 Pondlife stamp sets



Female Dragonfly, top, D C Larkin EFIAP

A species under threat

Robust the Emperor may be, but the British dragonfly population in general is under threat. Huge swathes of the dragonfly's natural habitats have been wiped out: the number of ponds has halved in the last 50 years and the draining of farmland and pollution have also taken their toll. Three species have died out during that time and a third of the 42 species seen in Britain are threatened. But there are safe havens amid the upheaval, such as the Dragonfly Centre at the National Trust's Wicken Fen National Nature Reserve near Ely in Cambridgeshire.

In this wetland region in the summer you can watch thousands of dragonflies and their smaller cousins, damselflies, representing no less than half of Britain's species. You may well see, for example, the Emperor, the Hairy Dragonfly, Emerald Damselfly and Red Eyed Damselfly.

Wicken Fen is said to be one of the best places in Britain to observe dragonflies – see a glowing, richly coloured cloud of them filling the summer air and you will understand why.

From June to August, the Dragonfly Centre, opened by BBC TV's *Springwatch* presenter Chris Packham, runs a number of 'dragonfly safaris', dragonfly biology courses and macro photography masterclasses to help you take stunning close-ups of these beautiful insects. To find out more phone 01733 204286 or visit www.dragonflyproject.org.uk.

Self-service innovations John Newcomb traces the development of Post & Go machines



1

Above: Birmingham BO label bearing the launch date of Post & Go

Below: an early label with serrated edges at the top and bottom

Stamp-selling machines have been around for many decades and the trial of Frama machines (1984 to 1985) was not the only such experiment by the Post Office. Post & Go was launched on 29 January 2007 at Birmingham BO (1), closely followed by Maidstone and Belfast BOs using Pitney Bowes and Fujitsu equipment. Only inland first and second class letters and packets up to 6kgs could be accepted. Customers weighed their postings, paid for them, the machine printed the appropriate dated label (giving one day's grace) and the labelled items were to be placed in an adjacent box. In October 2007 the experiment was extended to six more offices: Gorton (Manchester), The Galleries Bristol, Doncaster, South Shields, Sunderland and Clapham Common.

In October 2008 Wincor Nixdorf machines replaced the previous equipment; Ludgate Circus BO London EC4 took over Gorton's machine. One Essentials office, Old Town, Hastings was added. The new machines first went live at the Bristol site. Some international mail could now be accepted and Fast Stamps (2) could be purchased and taken away for use later. These were printed in five variants: First Class letter; First Class Large letter up to 100g; Europe up to 20g; Worldwide up to 10g and Worldwide up to 20g. At the same time redesigned labels (for use on the spot) now broadly came into line with Horizon labels, differentiating between First Class Large letters over 100g (1LL), First Class packets (1PK), Second Class letters (2L), Large letters (2LL), packets (2PK), and International Airmail letters over 20g (A), also printed papers and small packets.

Post & Go's began to be recognised as 'real' stamps and philatelic interest increased, although some collectors had regarded the labels as collectable from the outset. From then on developments came thick and fast. Facilities with Wincor Nixdorf machines now total 147 sites, many with multiple kiosks. A list of these can be viewed at www.postandgo.co.uk. An unattended suite of four machines was set up in a lobby in Tudor Street next to the vacated Ludgate Circus BO which closed in April 2009. From early 2009 labels have serrated top and bottom edges (3). Two successive design changes were made to the labels in 2009, the latter incorporating features of the SmartStamp.



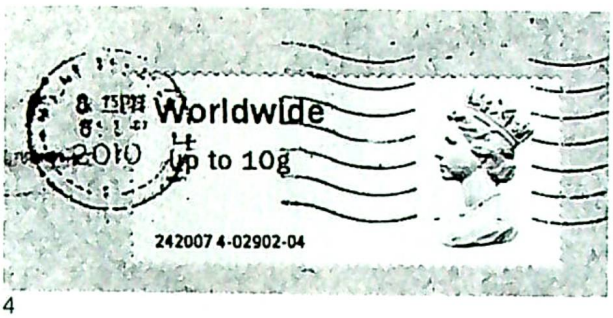
2



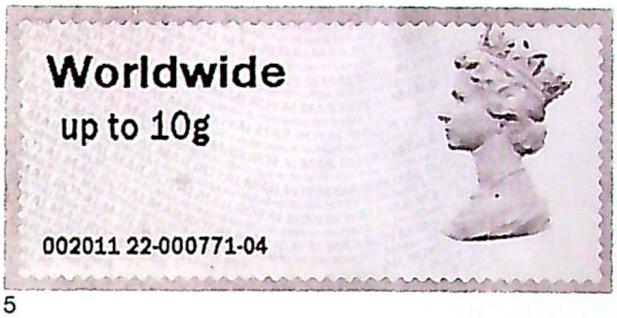
3

The first pictorial set of Post & Go stamps featured birds. To make space for the picture, the printed wording was shifted to the left in smaller typeface. This conversion started at the Ludgate Circus lobby on 8 September 2010 (4) and proceeded to the 30 selected offices due to issue Birds 1 on 17 September. In a few kiosks not all the old font was adjusted in time for the pictorial stamps.

Post & Go stamps had finally attained full status as collectibles and a great deal of philatelic interest resulted, not least in the occasional printing errors! From 24 January 2011 (Birds II issue), the pictorial stamps went on sale at all Post & Go offices. Spring Stampex in February 2011 saw the introduction of new Hytech desk-top Post &



4



5



6



7

Go machines. They printed strips of five Machin stamps in a subtly different typeface from that of the Wincor Nixdorf (5).

Post & Go Birds III and IV followed in May and September 2011 and at Autumn 2011 Stampex a number of novelties appeared. On sale through the Hytech machines from 14 September were:

- a strip of Post & Go stamps bearing a tribute to Arnold Machin including for the first time a Worldwide up to 40g value (6).
- a strip of the previously issued Birds III without the 40g value.
- (from 16 September) a strip of Birds IV issued that day with the 40g value.

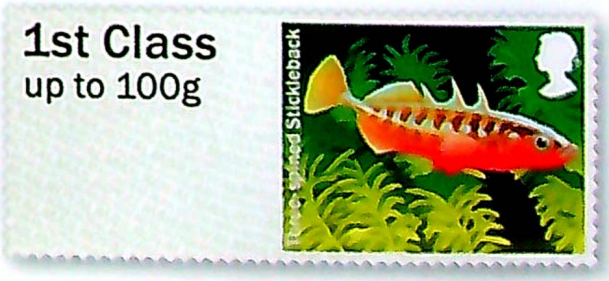
Spring Stampex 2012 saw Hytech machines issue Diamond Jubilee overprints (7). And the appearance of the 40g Worldwide value at Stampex was a foretaste of Post & Go 'Version 2', first seen at Broadway BO London SW1 on 14 October 2011. This enhancement provides the new value, a collector's strip of six values and a certificate of posting option. To avoid the need for customers to go to the main counter for their certificate to be stamped, counter staff on duty on the public side at some sites carry a special date-stamp for this purpose.

At two major philatelic events at Perth, from 19 to 22 October 2012, two Hytech machines were used. They dispensed overprinted Machin Head and Flag Post & Go. Early in November last year (no fixed first day of issue), the Robin, previously seen as part of the Birds I, reappeared in Post & Go machines. And a Christmas Post Shop – a new venture – was open at Stables Market, Camden, London NW1 daily, including Sundays, from 16 November to 24 December 2012. Two Hytech machines issued Machin Head and Robin Post & Go stamps.

A Hytech Post & Go machine was recently installed at the British Postal Museum and Archive (BPMA) London – for the first time not at a temporary exhibition. It went into service on 3 December 2012, issuing overprinted Post & Go stamps. The facility continues to evolve and the philatelic side of Post & Go is really taking off – the second class Post & Go stamps will be further innovations. Watch this space! •

Above clockwise from to left: type change to accommodate the first illustrated Post & Go stamps; Hytech machine style; Arnold Machin novelty at Autumn Stampex 2011; and 2012 Diamond Jubilee overprint

Below: this little tiddler – a three-spined stickleback – is due to be released on 22 February 2013, one of the Post & Go Freshwater Life set



Prize draws for sharp minds and warm hearts this Valentine's Day



a



b



c



d, e

JANE AUSTEN QUIZ As Valentine's Day approaches, we focus on the romantic relationships portrayed on this month's new special issue of Jane Austen stamps.

The five questions below relate to the stamps labelled a) to e) above. Clue: you can find all the answers at your fingertips…

a) Jane Austen died before deciding on the title for her novel *Persuasion* – so who chose it?

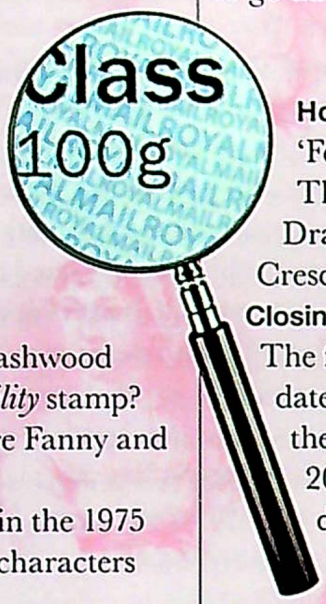
b) What are the first names of the Dashwood sisters shown on the *Sense and Sensibility* stamp?

c) In the novel *Mansfield Park* how are Fanny and Edmund related?

d) Mr Darcy has a stamp to himself in the 1975 Jane Austen issue. What other male characters appear in the issue?

e) Name the designer of the 1975 special stamps commemorating the bicentenary of Jane Austen's birth in 1775.

NAME THAT STAMP From the detail shown under the magnifier below, identify the stamp its name and date of issue. Clue: this stamp will be ready to go during February Stampex.



How to enter Send your answers, marked 'February Quiz' and/or 'February Name That Stamp' to: Philatelic Bulletin Prize Draws, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB.

Closing date: 11 March 2013.

The first correct entry drawn after the closing date wins the complete Jane Austen issue and the Bradbury Valentine First Day Cover of 2012 (shown below). Five more winners drawn receive philatelic prizes •



Prize draw 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. The cost of transport to and from a prize venue, where applicable, is not included. 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, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB. The promoter is Royal Mail Group Ltd, 100 Victoria Embankment, London EC4Y 0HQ. November and December puzzle solutions and prizewinners are not available at time of going to press and will be published in a future issue of *Bulletin*.

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Jersey Philatelic Bureau issue The Royal Legacy of Queen Victoria series begins 5 February

IF YOU HAVE AN INTEREST IN ROYALTY ON STAMPS you may be sorry that the Royal Mail Kings and Queens stamp issues are completed. But fear not – another royal series is just beginning. On 5 February Jersey Post launches a new series entitled The Royal Legacy of Queen Victoria.

The first in the series is a six-stamp issue celebrating Edward VII, Victoria's eldest son. It features handsome statues of Edward as King, from different cities across the UK.

Edward VII tackled his kingly duties with gusto, and the new stamps show him as a stately, mature figure. But he was a bon viveur before becoming king. Gambling and partying were all part of his rebellious lifestyle, and he was a leading figure in London society. It may be that Edward's rebellious streak was due to tensions arising from the strict educational regime imposed on him as a child. It became clear that he would not measure up to his father's expectations and, perhaps partly because of his shortcomings, Edward developed unconventional ways that distressed his parents. Even when married, he had long-term mistresses, including Jersey-born actress Lily Langtry.

Edward succeeded his mother and was crowned in 1902. As a relative of many European monarchs, he could ably assist in foreign policy and helped to pave the way for the Anglo-French Entente Cordiale of 1904. He was also the first British monarch to visit Russia. Edward died on 6 May 1910 and was succeeded by his eldest son, George V, whose enthusiasm for stamps began the Royal Collection.

For enquiries and orders, write to Jersey Philatelic Bureau, Jersey JE1 1AB, call 01534 516320 or visit www.jerseystamps.com. The Royal Legacy of Victoria; Edward VII will be available at Stampex from Jersey Post, Stand 108 ●



Above: the six-stamp series features statues of King Edward VII in cities across Britain

Below: the Miniature Sheet carries a stamp showing a statue of Edward VII in Queen's Park, Toronto, opened by Edward in 1860 in honour of his mother. The statue of Queen Victoria shown on the surround is in Victoria Park, St Helier, Jersey



The Royal Legacy of Queen Victoria
Issue date: 5 February 2013

Prices
Stamp values: 45p, 55p, 60p, 68p, 80p, 88p
Stamps First Day Cover/Presentation Pack: £5.06 each
Miniature Sheet: £2
Miniature Sheet First Day Cover/Presentation Pack: £3.10 each

Technical details
Stamps, Miniature Sheet, Presentation Packs and First Day Covers created by True North
Stamps printed by Cartor Security Printing, in four colour process offset lithography and gold metallic ink in sheets of ten
Stamp die size: 30mm deep x 40mm wide
Overall Miniature Sheet size: 75mm deep x 110mm wide
Stamp within Miniature Sheet die size: 30mm x 40mm



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