

BRITISH PHILATELIC

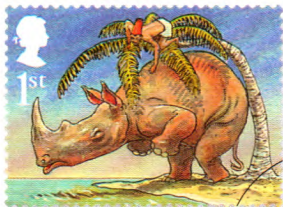
The ROYAL MAIL magazine for stamp collectors

Volume 39 Number 4

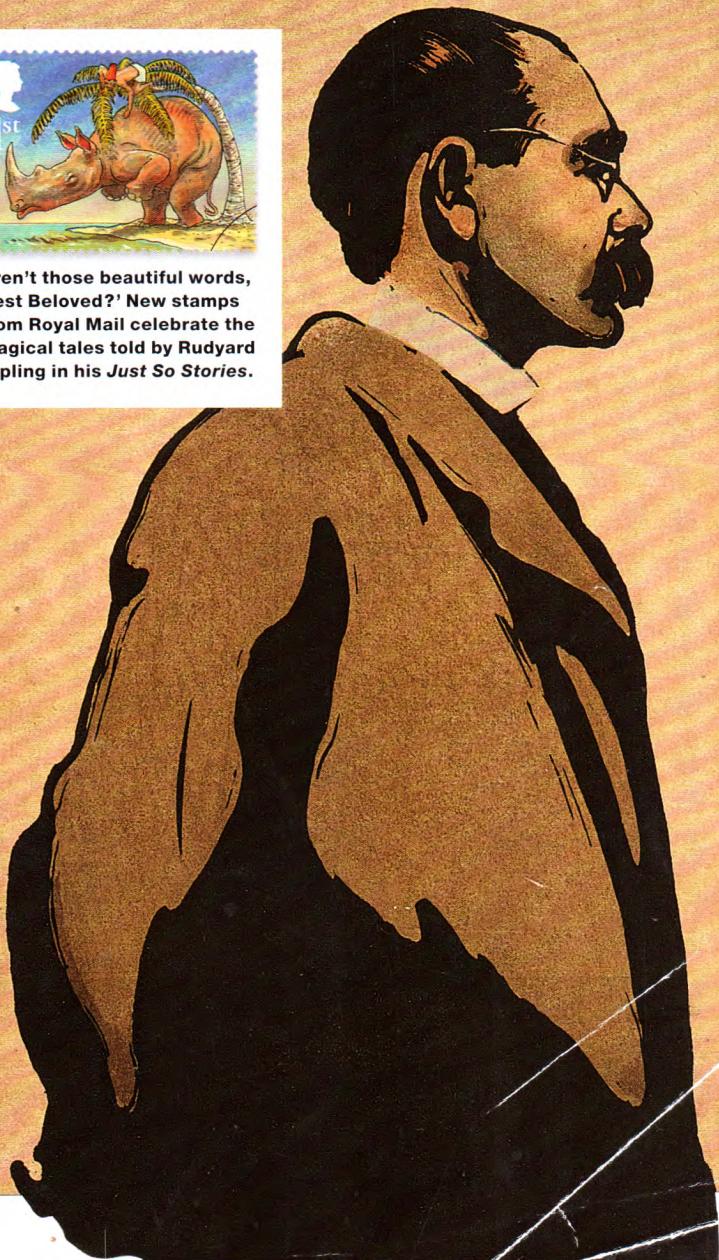
DECEMBER 2001 • 85P

Bulletin

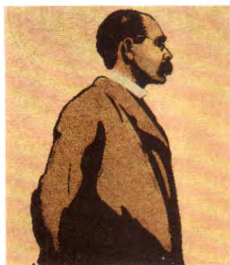
Cast your vote in our stamp
poll • Christmas carol issues



**'Aren't those beautiful words,
Best Beloved?'** New stamps
from Royal Mail celebrate the
magical tales told by Rudyard
Kipling in his *Just So Stories*.



Forthcoming issues and withdrawals



Cover Portrait of Rudyard Kipling by William Nicholson, from the 1897 *New Review* series. Royal Mail's new issue marks the 100th anniversary of publication of the *Just So Stories*. Portrait © The British Museum.

November competition We regret that the wrong stamp was shown in the November Identify competition, thus rendering the competition void. We apologise for this, and to make amends there will be an additional £100 prize draw in January. Readers' entries for the November competition will be automatically entered in the replacement January draw.

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

8 January

Issue Kipling: Just So Stories stamp cards.

15 January

Issue Kipling: Just So Stories stamps in sheetlet of 10, and presentation pack.

15 January

Withdrawal Millennium – The Future stamps, presentation pack and stamp cards.

28 January

Withdrawal Queen Victoria label stamp book.

31 January

Issue Golden Jubilee stamp cards.

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The **British Philatelic Bulletin** is published monthly by Royal Mail, 2-14 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8HQ. • **Editor** JR Holman • **Price** 85p for single copies, from Post Office Limited philatelic outlets • **Annual subscription** £9.50 in UK and Europe; £13.50 rest of the world. Subscriptions should be sent to Royal Mail Talents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB • **Binders** to hold 24 issues, price £7, are available by post from Royal Mail (Edinburgh address above) • Royal Mail also publishes the fortnightly **British Postmark Bulletin**, which gives details of forthcoming special hand-stamps. Available on annual subscription, from Edinburgh address above: UK and Europe £10, rest of the world £21.75 • **Copyright** Design and text Consignia plc, unless attributed to a specific author. Requests to reproduce any article should be sent to the Editor, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 2-14 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8HQ • **Design** by Robert Maude • **Printed** in Great Britain by The White Dove Press • **ISSN** 0953 8119 • Royal Mail is a trading name of Consignia plc. Registered in England and Wales, number 4138203, registered office 148 Old Street, London EC1Y 9HQ

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Richard Beith January	September, October, November
Christine Finn May	
Fred Gee May	Glenn Morgan October, November
Christian Hartig November	Douglas Myall March, June, August, October, December
Brian Jones June	Ron Negus each month
Lionel Jones February, May, July, September, October	Martin Robinson February
James Mackay January, March, June, September, October, November	Richard Saundry July
Dorothy Martin December	Margaret Shaida January
Jean Matheson July	Brian Sole January
Alan Moorcroft July, August,	Eddie Weeks March
	Richard West each month

ONCE AGAIN we invite you to vote for your favourite stamps and *Bulletin* writer of the year. The special stamps issued during 2001 are shown on pages 116-117. Tell us your top three sets and favourite individual stamp on the enclosed voting form. All forms will be entered in a prize draw: the first five 'out of the hat' will each win £100. Remember to return your voting form by 18 January. The favourite set of 2000 was Tree & Leaf, with the 19p Owl stamp in the Above & Beyond set the most popular individual design. I await with interest your decision this year.

We are also asking you to vote (on the same form) for your favourite *Bulletin* writer – listed

above, with the months their articles were published. All voting forms go into a second draw; the senders of the first two drawn each win £100. The favourite author will receive £100 and the runner-up £50. Last year's winner was Douglas Myall, with James Mackay second. Please note that articles by Royal Mail staff are excluded.

Details are given this month of the first special issue for 2002 – commemorating the much-loved *Just So Stories* of Rudyard Kipling. We also have our now customary article on Christmas stamps by Dorothy Martin, and show some of this year's Christmas stamps from other countries.

A listing of definitive stamps issued during 2001 will be published next month. Meanwhile, on behalf of Royal Mail I wish all *Bulletin* readers a happy and peaceful Christmas and New Year. JOHN HOLMAN •

Stamp scene Stampex news • Publications • Punch • National Youth Stamp Group

Autumn Stampex Despite the appalling events in the USA and the threat of closure of Angel underground station, nearly 6000 collectors visited Autumn Stampex at the Business Design Centre, London from 19-23 September. There were more entries in the senior and junior competitions than for many years, and this time judging took place in the frames during the show with the results announced on the Friday morning. The awards were presented at a luncheon on the Saturday by Nigel Fordham, head of the Crown Agents Stamp Bureau. Alan Griffiths received two gold medals together with the Harmers Diamond Jubilee Trophy for his display of Prince Edward Island, and the Argyll Postal History Salver for the postal history of the Province. Another double winner was Annabel Todd who collected both the Silver Mailcoach and the Stanley Gibbons Cup for her display of the Egyptian first issues.

David Harrop of the Manchester Postal Museum put on an interesting display of material relating to telegrams, including an ancient motorbike used for telegram delivery. The GB Philatelic Society, Concorde, Ceylon and British Decimal Stamps Study Circles, Wreck and Crash Mail Society, and Bird Stamp Society all held meetings at the exhibition.

We now look forward to Spring Stampex 2002 (27 February - 3 March) with major displays by the Royal Philatelic Society London, Scandinavian Philatelic Society, and Forces Postal History Society. The Stampex organisers remind us that there will also be 'a few stamps and covers for sale as well' •

Publications update The September issue of *Rundbrief*, published by the German GB study group, Forschungsgemeinschaft Grossbritannien eV, contains useful notes and articles on Victorian stamps – 1841 2d blue, 4d and 8d values, and 5s used on cover – also features on new issues, literature reviews, questions and answers, and wants and offers. The 30-page magazine is well-illustrated; text in German •

The September issue of *Themescene*, journal of the British Thematic Association, includes special features on the Belgica exhibition, Looking at Architecture, the BTA AGM, Memorabilia, and Thematics in Israel as well as regular columns by BTA officers, book reviews, and illustrations of selected postmarks from the *British Postmark Bulletin*. For anyone involved in thematic collecting, *Themescene* is sure to contain something of interest •

The October issue of *The Bookmark Journal*, published by the Great Britain Decimal Stamp Book Study Circle, is the last by Editor Hanns Jorg Fasching after 10 years at the helm. This highly specialised journal includes news on self-adhesive books, the Punch & Judy book, book carton labels, point of sale material (posters, shelf-edge cards, etc), reports of previously unrecorded book varieties, and details of the Circle's activities. Distributed with it is *Deegam Report* no 42, which is compiled by regular *Bulletin* contributor Douglas Myall, as an update to his various Deegam publications. He includes a useful summary concerning the recent dispute of the part played by Professor John Hedgecoe in the development of the Machin design •

The 2002 edition of *Collecting British First Day Covers*, by N C Porter, designed, edited and published by Adrian Bradbury, is now available. It lists all known special postmarks for each stamp issue and is the only reference work of its kind to have been published every year since 1981. All FDC and postmark types are listed in an easy-to-follow format. Prices for special handstamps are given in a two-column price structure – for ordinary (or commercial) covers and for the official (or sponsored) cover. Relevant cds and slogan postmarks are also listed. Mr Bradbury acknowledges that the continued success of the catalogue is due in part to the tremendous support given by FDC enthusiasts who assist in its compilation. The 2002 edition is available through good stamp shops or direct from the publisher, price £9.95 plus £2.05 postage. If ordering direct from the publisher you receive five free covers worth around £10 •

Forschungsgemeinschaft Grossbritannien For details of this study group contact: Bernhard Weiss, Florianweg 57, 47574 Goch, Germany.

British Thematic Association For details of the BTA contact the Membership Secretary: Ian Paton, 15 Humberstone Road, Cambridge CB4 1JD.

GBDSBSC For details of this study circle, contact Tony Wilkins, 3 Buttermere Close, Brierley Hill, DY5 3SD.



Orders A G Bradbury, 3 Link Road, Leicester LE2 3RA.

PMSC For details contact the Secretary: Ray Downing, 166 Mitcham Lane, London SW16 6NS.

Vol 24 No 2 (2001) of the Postal Mechanisation Study Circle's journal *Ident* is devoted to one single, but very substantial article by Austin J Barnes on the phosphors and fluors used by the British Post Office for both stamp recognition in ALFS and for phosphor dot/bar coding dot indirect coding/sorting systems. The article contains a fair amount of chemical terminology but will be of considerable interest to specialist collectors. The article is divided into six sections: Introduction to Luminescence, Development of Phosphors by the Post Office Research Station, Automatic Letter Facing (Stamps) Phosphors, Automatic Letter Sorting (Address Coding) Phosphors, Postscript, and Bibliography. The useful Bibliography lists over 70 articles including quite a number from this *Bulletin*. Dr Barnes was the co-author, with Colin Peachey, of a series of articles on PO Mechanisation published in *Stamp Collecting* in 1970-71, pre-dating the formation of the PMSC. His *Ident* article is a major piece of work •

Punch on Italian stamps The 40L shows Pulcinella, and the 50L Pulcinella with Arlecchino and other mascheras of Commedia Dell'Arte.



Punch on stamps In the write-up on the Punch and Judy stamps (August *Bulletin* page 370) we featured a West German stamp of 1989 showing Punch. This led Maria Longhini Stefano of Italy to send us these three Italian stamps of 1974. As a collector of British stamps, Signor Stefano tells us how much he enjoys reading the *Bulletin* •



Obituary Tom Rielly, who died of a heart attack in September, was arguably the outstanding Scottish philatelic activist of his generation. Born at Edinburgh in May 1932 and educated at George Heriot's School and Edinburgh University, he was employed from 1957-1992 by British Hydrocarbon Chemicals (later BP) at Grangemouth.

A lifelong stamp collector, he developed a special interest in the stamps and postal history of Aden (where he spent his National Service with the RAF), Scottish postal history in general and St Kilda in particular, and collected anything and everything to do with posting boxes of the world. Quiet and unassuming, with a pawky sense of humour, he worked tirelessly for the good of the hobby. A founder member of the Association of British Philatelic Societies (and later Chairman of its Awards Committee), he helped to organise the first of the biennial philatelic events, Newcastle 96. He was Organising Secretary for the Philatelic Congress of Great Britain when it came to Edinburgh in 1993, instrumental in found-

ing the Dundee Philatelic Weekends, and instigated the second day of the Scottish Congress, and twice President of the Association of Scottish Philatelic Societies (1984 and 1993). Tom was awarded the McConnell Medal in 1984, signed the Book of Scottish Philatelists and was awarded the Congress Medal in 1998, and last year elected a Fellow of the Royal Philatelic Society. He held the highest offices in both the Scottish and Edinburgh Philatelic Societies, was a founder member of the Alba Stamp Group in 1971, later its President and Editor, also a founder member of the Scottish Postal History Society in 1978 and its President in 1985.

Tom was very active in St Ninian's Church, Corstorphine, a very knowledgeable devotee of Robert Burns and, with his wife Anne, a volunteer guide for the National Trust for Scotland at Gladstone's Land, Edinburgh.

I end on a personal note. In April this year I attended a meeting of the Strathclyde Postcard Club where Tom gave a display of St Kilda postcards. At the end he asked what I thought of his show; I said I coveted one item, a postcard of 1959 showing a view of the island. He was puzzled, since the card was perfectly ordinary; but I pointed out that it was the first card I ever wrote to the girl who later became my wife. Immediately Tom took it down from the frame and handed it to me, saying that it had a far greater sentimental value to me than a philatelic value to him. This generosity was characteristic of a man who loved philately but gave to the hobby far more than he ever got out of it – and that was considerable. *James Mackay* •

National Youth Stamp Group The Group reports a successful Autumn Stampex, especially at the weekend when lots of youngsters joined in the various activities arranged for them. These included the now well-known auctions and a Punch and Judy show (this was also enjoyed by some adults present). On the Saturday the awards of the British Youth Championships, sponsored by Stanley Gibbons Ltd, were presented by Graham Cooper, the new Sales Director of that company. The winners of the Stamp Active Competitions, sponsored by Cavendish Philatelic Auctions, received their awards from TV chef Ross Burden who is a keen philatelist and James Grimwood-Taylor, Chairman of Cavendish. There were some 134 entries – the most there has ever been. Mr Cooper also presented a cheque for over £1400 to the NYSG on behalf of Stanley Gibbons.

After 15 years of hard work on youth philately, John Davies has stood down as Chairman of the NYSG, earning him the Bill Hart Award for outstanding work in youth philately and the ABPS Award of Merit.

Anne Dummer of the NYSG thanks the British Philatelic Trust, Philatelic Traders' Society, Insurance & Banking Philatelic Society, and Royal Mail for their support, also the many individual collectors who send in stamps for distribution to young collectors at Stampex. These are greatly appreciated – more are needed and should be sent to Mrs Dummer at 2a Bryant Road, Kettering NN15 6JE; telephone 01536 519959 •



TV chef Ross Burden presents a prize at the Stampex Youth Awards.

Royal Mail news 2002 stamp programme

• Nobel Prizes • 2001 Yearbook and Pack

2002 Stamp programme The special issues for next year are listed below. All sets will contain five stamps unless otherwise stated.

The Golden Jubilee set will feature five portraits of HM The Queen by Dorothy Wilding (1952), Cecil Beaton (1968), Lord Snowdon (1978), Yousef Karsh (1984) and Tim Graham (1996) – details next month. In addition the jubilee will be commemorated by a prestige stamp book, and coin, banknote and ingot covers. The prestige book will contain new ‘Wilding’ definitives and the ingot cover will carry a silver replica 1953 Coronation stamp.

A new range of presentation packs for the low value and high value definitives, and the Scottish and Welsh country stamps will be available from March. There will be four new books containing a mix of self-adhesive special stamps and definitives •

15 January Kipling (10 × 1st class self-adhesive stamps)

06 February Queen’s Golden Jubilee (stamps and prestige book)

05 March Occasions

19 March Coastlines (10 × 1st class stamps)

09 April Circus

02 May Aircraft

21 May World Cup (stamp and miniature sheet)

16 July Commonwealth Games, Manchester

10 September London Bridges

24 September Astronomy (miniature sheet and prestige book)

08 October Post Boxes

05 November Christmas

Royal Mail Stamp Album

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

Royal Mail Stamp Album In August we listed the stamps issued January–June that will be needed for the 2001 supplement (continuation pages) for the album. We list below the stamps issued July–December.

Special stamps: Pondlife (10 July), Punch & Judy (4 September), Nobel Prizes (2 October), Flags & Ensigns miniature sheet (22 October), Christmas (6 November).

Provision will also be made for two panes from the ‘Unseen & Unheard’ prestige stamp book (22 October) containing the Submarines stamps with changed perforation to those issued in April; the panes with self-adhesive Punch & Judy and Submarines stamps (4 September and 22 October respectively); and the Smiles greetings and Christmas stamps from the ‘Smilers’ sheets (3 July and 9 October).

Prices: vol 1 £79.95 (issues 1952–70); vol 2 £99.95 (1971–89); vol 3 £109.95 (1990–99). Sets of pages only are: vol 1 £29.99; vol 2 £49.99; and vol 3 £59.99. Binders only cost £49.95. Continuation pages for 2000 and 2001 issues are £9.99 each •

Collect British Stamps The 2002 (53rd) edition of the ever-popular Stanley Gibbons *Collect British Stamps* colour checklist is now available, price £8.50, from Royal Mail Tallents House as well as from Stanley Gibbons Strand shop and Publications centre at Ringwood, and stamp and book shops •

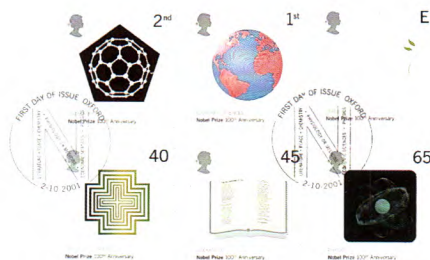
NOBEL PRIZES



The Nobel Prizes are the most highly regarded of international awards. They are conferred annually by four institutions (three Swedish and one Norwegian) from a fund established under the will of Alfred Nobel, the Swedish chemist and industrialist. In his will, Nobel specified that awards would be founded in the fields of Physics, Chemistry, Physiology or Medicine, Literature and Peace, and the first Prizes were conferred on 10 December 1901, the 49th anniversary of the founder's death. A sixth award, the Prize for Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel, was established in 1968.

Each year proposals for candidates to receive the six Prizes are received by the relevant committees. They submit their recommendations to the four institutions which confer the awards. On 10 December the Nobel Prizes are formally presented – the Peace Prize in Oslo and the other Prizes in Stockholm. Each award comes in a gold medal, a diploma bearing a citation and a sum of money.

Prizes may be awarded to individuals or jointly to two or three persons. The Peace Prize alone may be awarded to institutions and associations. In the first century of Nobel Prizes, a total of 514 UK citizens have received Nobel Prizes, including some of the greatest names in their respective fields.



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Available from Royal Mail 24 hours at www.royalmail.com

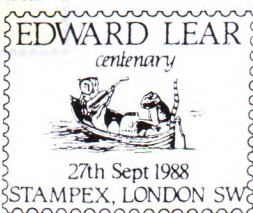
Nobel Prizes commemorative document The document, issued with the stamps on 2 October, contains a numbered card bearing the six stamps cancelled by a special 'First day of Oxford' postmark, a card giving information about the Nobel Prizes and the stamp issue, both enclosed in a card coloured folder on which is printed a chart listing all the UK Nobel Prize winners from Sir Ronald Ross (Medicine 1902) to John Pople (Chemistry 1998) and John Hume and David Trimble (Peace 1998). The document is available from Royal Mail Tallents House, Edinburgh, price £5.95 •

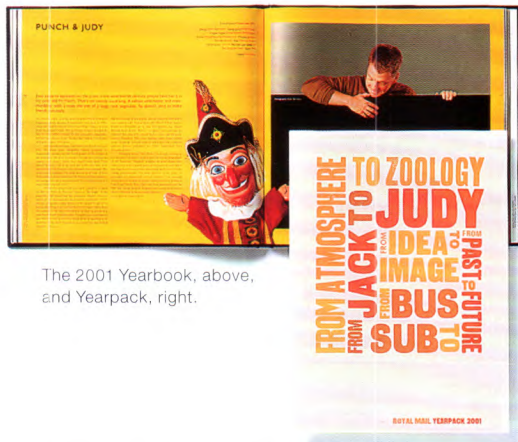
Coming off sale Any remaining stocks of Christmas stamps, stamp books, presentation packs, stamp cards, and airletters will be withdrawn from sale at post offices after business on 24 December. Supplies will remain available from Royal Mail Tallents House and Post Office philatelic outlets until next November. Only two of the 25 Millennium issues now remain on sale. The Sound & Vision set will be withdrawn from sale at Tallents House and PO philatelic outlets on 4 December and The Future on 15 January •

Owl and the Pussy-Cat Poetry lovers, young and old, voted Edward Lear's *Owl and the Pussy-Cat* their favourite children's poem in a nationwide poll organised by the BBC to celebrate National Poetry Day on 4 October. A drawing of the owl and the pussy-cat by Edward Lear featured on the 19p stamp in the set marking the centenary of Lear's death, and on the special handstamp used at Stampex in September 1988. Voted sixth favourite poem was *Talking Turkeys!* by Benjamin Zephaniah, author of *Carnival Days* in the presentation pack for the Carnival stamps of 1998 •



The Owl and the Pussy-cat went to sea
In a beautiful pea-green boat,
EDWARD LEAR • 1812-1898





The 2001 Yearbook, above, and Yearpack, right.

2001 Yearbook & Yearpack The 2001 Yearbook, now on sale, contains information and spaces for all the special issues of 2001: Millennium – The Future, Occasions, Cats & Dogs, Weather, Submarines, Buses, Fabulous Hats, Pondlife, Punch & Judy, Nobel Prizes, Flags & Ensigns (miniature sheet), and Christmas. As always the book gives interesting background stories to each issue, with details of the designers. Price £27.95 standard version or £75 deluxe leather-bound edition. The latter is available only from Royal Mail Talents House.

The 2001 Yearpack, containing the same special stamps, is also now available, price £20.90 ●

Nomination forms should be sent by 11 January to: Rachel Lonsdale, Stamps & Collectibles, Royal Mail, 2-14 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8HQ.

Rowland Hill Awards Last month's *Bulletin* included a form for readers to nominate the post office they consider provides the best philatelic service to its customers. From nominations a short-list will be prepared for final judging in the Post Office Excellence section of the Rowland Hill Awards. The criteria are set out on the nomination form. All nomination forms will go into a draw and the winner will receive £100 worth of Royal Mail philatelic products. Enquiries about the Rowland Hill Awards should be sent to Rachel at the above address, or phone 020 7847 3339 ●

Bulletin box files As an alternative to the binders for storing this and the *Postmark Bulletin*, we now have available sturdy box files for both publications. The files, in maroon for the *Philatelic Bulletin* and green for the *Postmark Bulletin*, are available from Royal Mail Talents House, price £8.50 each. Order codes: PB349 (Philatelic), PB350 (Postmark). The files will store 30 copies of the Philatelic and about 50 of the Postmark Bulletins.

A limited number of recent back issues of the *Philatelic Bulletin* are available from Royal Mail Talents House, Edinburgh, price 85p each. For earlier issues contact Mr Maynard Davies who offers bound reprints of volumes 1 and 2, photocopies of issues from vols 3-6 and original copies of most issues from vol 7 onwards, also a limited stock of used binders ●

Maynard Davies enquiries (with SAE or IRC): Maynard Davies, Merrilees, New Road, Alderminster, Stratford-upon-Avon CV37 8PE.

Christmas posting dates The recommended last posting dates for Christmas mail are: airmail outside Europe 7 December, Eastern Europe 10 December, Western Europe 14 December, UK 2nd class 18 December and UK 1st class 21 December. For further details contact Royal Mail Customer Services on 08457 740 740 (local call), or for latest dates for Forces mail 08457 697 978 ●

High Values winners The winners of our draw for High Value stamps in the September *Bulletin* were: R Heighton of Leicestershire (blocks of four), and Miss E Chiarroni-Lage of Spain, M Keen of Surrey, and L Bauwen of Belgium (single sets) ●

Key events of 2001

January The Post Office announces its change of name to Consignia • Self-adhesive stamp books issued • Successful Youth Day held at Royal Philatelic Society

February Hong Kong international exhibition attracts 220,000 visitors • Britain's first self-adhesive special stamps (Cats & Dogs) issued • First 'Occasions' stamps issued

March GB beats Belgium, France and Portugal to win Nations Cup at Spring Stampex • The Post Office becomes Consignia plc and the first company granted licence to operate postal services by Postal Services Commission (Postcomm) • Tallents House Edinburgh officially opened by David Gentleman • First Postbag (presentation pack for children) launched • The Rowland Hill Awards in London – Francis Kiddle receives Outstanding Achievement Award • British Philatelic Trust publishes accounts for 1999-2000 – £49,296 spent in support of exhibitions and £42,536 on philatelic development

April The Owl stamp (Above & Beyond issue) is announced as the most popular special stamp of 2000 • First English country stamps issued • 30th anniversary of GB Decimal Stamp Book Study Circle

May Stamps from Royal Philatelic Collection auctioned at Spink – raised £³/₄ million • 25th Anniversary North East Philatelic Weekend held at Gateshead • Royal Mail receives Silver Award for 2000 Millennium stamps at Designers and Art Directors awards in London

June Belgica international exhibition, Brussels – Court of Honour included material from the Royal Philatelic Collection, British Library, and Royal Philatelic Society London. For the first time ever a thematic exhibit was nominated for the Grand Prix International • 30th anniversary of *British Postmark Bulletin* • Insurance & Banking Philatelic Society celebrates its 50th birthday

• George Barker retires as Editor of *The London Philatelist* • Following general election Patricia Hewitt is appointed as new Secretary of State for Trade & Industry (the department in charge of Consignia) with Douglas Alexander as Minister of State in charge of postal matters

July Sir John Marriott, Keeper Royal Philatelic Collection 1969-95, dies, at age 78 • Margaret Morris awarded Congress Medal at Philatelic Congress of GB at Hereford • Exhibition of the life and work of Arnold Machin opens at Royal Academy in London • Successful GB Philatelic Society weekend held in York

August Gavin Macrae replaces Mark Thomson as Managing Director of Royal Mail Stamps & Collectibles and Chairman of the Stamp Advisory Committee • Philanippon '01 international exhibition in Tokyo – British collectors awarded two large gold and six gold medals

September Mrs A E Todd wins Silver Mailcoach Trophy at Autumn Stampex • Hays is granted licence by Postcomm to operate business postal services in London, Edinburgh and Manchester

October Nobel Prize stamps issued – first British set printed by no fewer than seven printing techniques. Comments by Prof Brian Josephson in the presentation pack cause controversy in the scientific community • Hafnia 2001 international exhibition Copenhagen • Consignia announces 'financial crisis' – £1.2 billion of savings to be made by 2003 • The Postal Mechanisation Study Circle celebrates its 25th anniversary • Hugh Feldman international gold medal collection of English Postal History auctioned by Cavendish

November First British self-adhesive Christmas stamps issued • H O Fraser collection of GB Victorian stamps auctioned by Spink

December £1 million stamp promotion at post offices •

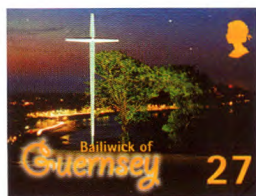
Christmas stamps

Some of the new issues, with a poem inspired by Royal Mail's stamps

SHOWN HERE are some of this year's issues from around the world. Royal Mail's Christmas stamps, featuring robins, inspired a poem from Mr Robert Duncan Martin of Canterbury. Pages from Dorothy Martin's Christmas stamp collection are shown on the following pages •



*A robin on a stamp arrives
With news of Jesus Christ at birth,
A robin from the hopes that thrives
In the future countryside on Earth;
A promised land in which to dwell
In peace afar from this city hell.
Each robin on a stamp will bring
A spirit in ascent from town
Released en-route to Christ the King
In Whom to mould a natural crown;
A promised land of harmony
With God and Christ eternally.
And robins in a host convey
Our spirits rising to restore
A rural landscape in which to stay
Like blooms to flower forevermore;
And rooted in the Lord at birth
Together here to save the Earth.*



Christmas carols

This month, we present a few pages from Dorothy Martin's collection

WHEN THE CAROL REACHED England c1300, it was in the form of a story and it had a religious theme. During the reign of Henry III (1509-45), carols were still being written; in fact Henry was a skilful poet and musician himself and wrote the carol 'Green Groweth the Holly'. At this time lavish banquets were held typified by the boar's head, decorations of holly, ivy and mistletoe and a roaring yule log. Prior to the 16th century, carols were passed on by oral tradition which accounted for the many variations. The first printed edition was published by Wynkyn de Worde in 1521.

With the coming of the Elizabethan Age, the carol began to change and the sacred element became more and more important. Some of the old carols were taken from ancient times, when the Christmas Plays and pageants of the 15th century travelled from place to place on horse-drawn wagons stopping in towns and villages so the public could watch the scenes and join in the music; for instance the Donkey Carol belonged to the scene of the Holy Family's escape to Egypt. The Coventry Carol also originated from the Mystery Plays. The Holly and the Ivy originates from a pagan custom which took place in cold winter months when people needed cheering up. They lit a log fire in the open amid the evergreen trees and plants, and danced around it singing joyful songs and carols. This festival became known as the Festival of Yule and had hints of paganism expressing the male and female symbolism of the trees. Carols were also being written by leading composers such as William Byrd and were performed in church and at court.

In the olden days the Town Watch went around from house to house calling the hours and making sure all was secure. Later the Town Watch became the Town Musicians who in turn became the Town Waits who 'walked the parish' and were suitably rewarded. At Christmas time they would be invited into the big houses and offered mince pies and a glass of punch from the wassail bowl. Workers would also sing carols under the windows of their employers and be rewarded with their Christmas boxes.

Carol singers developed from The Waits and became a Christmas tradition to which the Victorians gave a new lease of life. They rescued, collected, and composed new carols, which they had published. Adults took to the streets often accompanied by children, warmly wrapped up, to go carol singing from house to house either to benefit themselves, or on behalf of charities. Some of the most popular carols in Victorian times were 'O Come All Ye Faithful', 'The First Nowell', 'Good King Wenceslas', 'Hark the Herald Angels Sing', 'Silent Night', and 'Once in Royal David's City'.

The word 'carol' comes from the old French word *carole*, meaning a type of song originally written and played as a courtly dancing song. Some say it originates from the Latin *caraula*, also meaning a singing dance. Carols were always joyful and were sung at any feasting and celebration, not necessarily of religious significance, but on occasions such as the May Day and Midsummer Day festivities.





'Silent Night' originates from Austria. The words were written in 1818 by Josef Mohr, the vicar of St Nicholas Church, Obendorf, when he discovered that mice had eaten the bellows of the church organ and there would be no music for Christmas. He took the words to Franz Gruber the local schoolmaster and church organist, who composed the music for guitar accompaniment, and so they had music on Christmas Day, with Mohr and Gruber singing the solo parts of the new carol.

In 1853 a volume of old Swedish songs was set to new words and music which gave us the well-known carol 'Good King Wenceslas'. Wentzel was a nobleman of Bohemia and later became the patron Saint. He was rewarded with great joy when sharing his wealth and good fortune with the poor and needy; he visited the sick, and built many churches.

Charles Wesley wrote the first version of 'Hark the Herald Angels Sing' in 1763, but it is interesting to note that Prince Albert also wrote a setting for this carol. 'The Twelve Days of Christmas', originally a parody by 13th century minstrels, was a Victorian forfeit game involving a test of memory to get the verses in the right order. It is noticeable that it is usually in the last four verses where variations of 'order take place'!

'Little Town of Bethlehem', another well-loved carol, was written by the American Bishop P Brooks for his Sunday School, and was inspired by a ride from Jerusalem to Bethlehem. Another carol, perhaps not quite so often sung, is the Boar's Head Carol. This is one of the oldest printed carols in existence. It is sung at Queen's College, Oxford every Christmas as a garlanded boar's head is carried into Hall on a silver platter. Everyone attending the dinner is given a piece of evergreen and this is an annual ceremonious occasion.

We owe the Festival of Nine Lessons and carols to Edward Benson, the first Bishop of Truro, who devised a service of readings and carols in the 1880s. The idea spread to his old university, King's College, Cambridge, and is now broadcast world-wide every Christmas.

People of all races and creeds sing carols at Christmas in every part of the world, regardless of climate and circumstance. A more modern series of carols which takes place every Christmas has been held in Australia

Victorian Era

The definition of a carol is a poem which has a number of verses each interspersed with a refrain. A true carol also has a religious content. The wassailers were the ancestors of modern carol singers. They would walk around from house to house and be rewarded for their efforts. Some of the older carols preserved only in the oral tradition, began to be revived in the Victorian era and appeared in printed collections. The first were published c.1844. The town 'watts' applied to the town musicians who 'walked the parish' at Christmas time and were suitably rewarded.

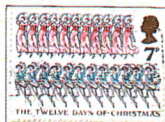
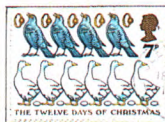
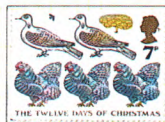


Carol singing is a Christmas tradition to which Victorians gave a new lease of life. Children took to the streets wearing mufflers and hats to sing carols, often accompanied by adults.

"The Twelve Days of Christmas," originally a parody by 13th Century French *Musiciens*, was a Victorian forfeit game involving a test of memory to get the verses in the right order.

Designed by Jennifer Tombs
Christmas Island 1977

Jennifer M. Tombs



since 1937. Carols by Candlelight takes place at Melbourne on Christmas Eve when about 270,000 people gather on the banks of the river to sing carols and raise money for charity, so not only sharing their joy in celebration of the birth of Christ, but also to share their personal good fortune with others who are less fortunate. A Christmas Eve service is held annually in the Hilton Park, Wilmington, North Carolina, where thousands of people gather to sing carols round the largest decorated Christmas Tree in the world.

Not only do people enjoy singing carols both old and new, in all places of worship and in their homes, but carol singing helps to keep the true meaning of Christmas in the forefront of people's minds in these days of fast and hectic living when they can be so easily distracted. May this tradition go on for ever ●

Mrs Martin, below, and two of her album pages



Just So Stories 100 years of Kipling's magic

Technical details

Printer Walsall Security Printers

Process Gravure

Size 37 × 27 mm

Sheetlet size 213 × 64 mm unfolded

Perforation 15 × 14 die-cut

Phosphor Two bands

Gum Self-adhesive

Colours Black, cyan (blue), magenta and yellow

TEN 1ST CLASS STAMPS featuring the Animal stories from the famous *Just So Stories* by Rudyard Kipling go on sale at post offices, Royal Mail Tallents House and Post Office philatelic outlets on 15 January.

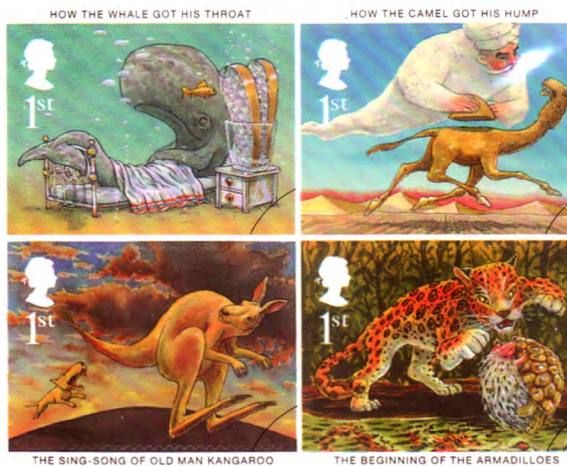
Like the Cats & Dogs issue last February, the stamps will be printed on a self-adhesive laminate which incorporates a moisture soluble gum layer between the face paper and adhesive; the stamps can be peeled from the laminate. The stamps are arranged in two rows of five, and the sheetlet rouletted between columns 2/3 and 4/5 for folding by the user.

The stamps were designed by Izhar Cohen, born in Israel in 1963 and educated in Jerusalem, Paris and London. While still a student, he was commissioned by several of the more important Israeli newspapers, and later worked in Paris for *L'Express*, and *Le Figaro*. He illustrated the presentation pack for the Weather stamps, issued last March.

The stories featured are How the Whale Got His Throat • How the Camel Got His Hump • How the Rhinoceros Got His Skin • How the Leopard Got His Spots • The Elephant's Child • The Sing-Song of Old Man Kangaroo • The Beginning of the Armadillos • The Crab that Played with the Sea • The Cat that Walked by Himself • The Butterfly that Stamped.

The Queen's silhouette and 1st indicator, top left, are in white, 'reversed out' of the background colour.

Opposite: Kipling telling his *Just So Stories* to his children Elsie and John, and their friends, on their way to South Africa in 1902.



Sponsored handstamps for 15 January will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from Tallents House (£10 UK and Europe; £21.75 elsewhere).

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

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Unstamped Royal Mail FDC envelopes will be available from main post offices and philatelic outlets about a week before 15 January, price 25p. Orders for FDCs with the stamps cancelled by a pictorial first day postmark of Tallents House or Burwash, Etchingam must reach Tallents House by the day of issue. Price £3.59 UK (including VAT) or £3.06 overseas (no VAT).

Collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue to: Royal Mail Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB, or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Wexham Road, Slough SL1 1AA (Burwash postmark), marking the outer envelope 'FDO201' (Tallents House), or 'FDO202' (Burwash). Covers can be posted or handed in at main post offices for the Burwash postmark. A non-pictorial Burwash postmark is also available from the Special Handstamp Centre, request 'FDO202 NP'.

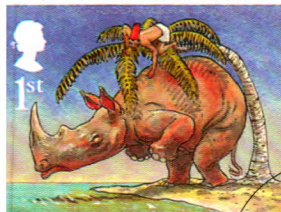


Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorbie Road
Ilkeston
Derbyshire
DE7 4AB

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



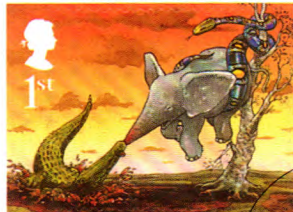
HOW THE RHINOCEROS GOT HIS SKIN



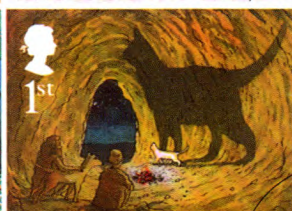
HOW THE LEOPARD GOT HIS SPOTS



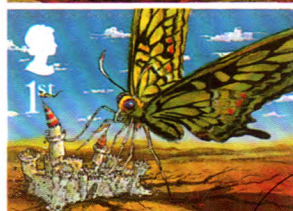
THE ELEPHANT'S CHILD



THE CRAB THAT PLAYED WITH THE SEA



THE CAT THAT WALKED BY HIMSELF



THE BUTTERFLY THAT STAMPED





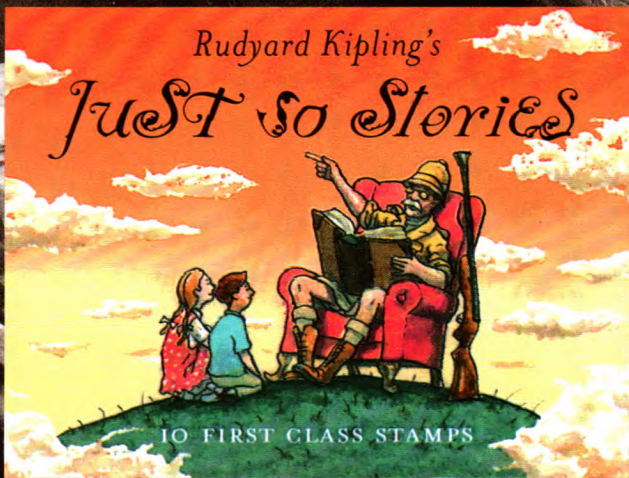
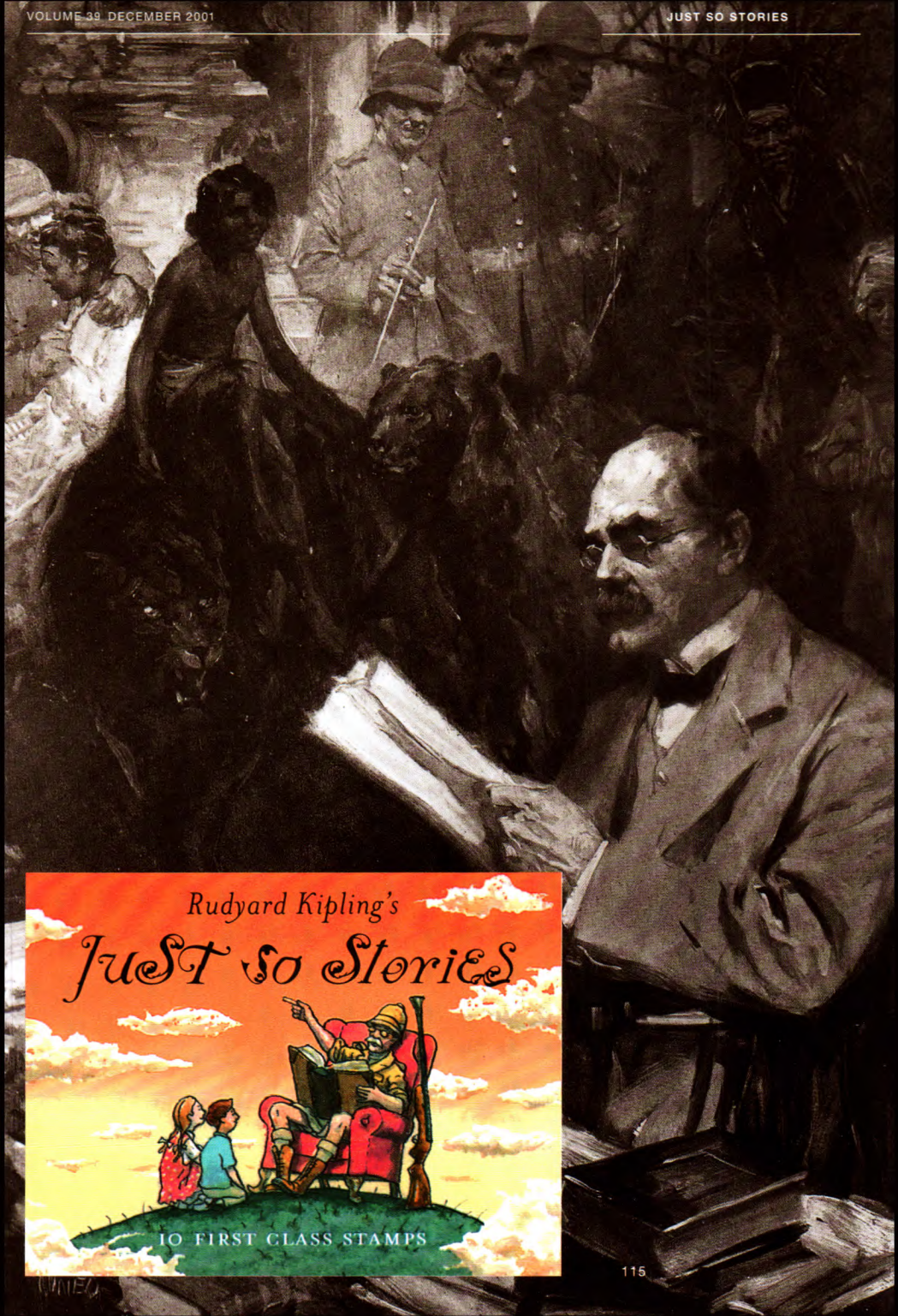
A well-illustrated pack (price £3.05) and stamp cards (25p each) will be available at main post offices, and from Tallents House and philatelic outlets. The pack (right), was written by Craig Raine, a contemporary poet and Kipling devotee, and includes illustrations by Izhar Cohen, the designer of the stamps.

Opposite Kipling and some of the characters he created in *Mandalay* (1890), the *Jungle Books* (1894, 1895); *Soldiers Three* (1889), and *Kim* (1901). The *Just So Stories* were published in 1902, and *Puck of Pook's Hill* in 1906. Painting by Cyrus Cuneo, the father of Terence Cuneo, whose work featured on the Famous Trains stamps of 1985.

The sheetlet of stamps can be folded by the user, forming a 'booklet' with a front cover as shown opposite.

Rudyard Kipling The son of John Lockwood Kipling, illustrator of *Beast and Man in India*, Rudyard Kipling was born in Bombay in 1865 and educated at the United Services College, Westward Ho!, Devon. His literary career started with journalism in India in the 1880s; many of his early poems and stories were originally published in newspapers or for the Indian Railway Library. He returned to England in 1889 and achieved rapid success by the publication of poems in the *Scots Observer*. From 1892 to 1896 he lived in Vermont, USA, thereafter at Rock House, Maidencombe, Devon 1896-97 and The Elms, Rottingdean, Sussex, 1897-1902 where he wrote much of the *Just So Stories*. He finally settled at Bateman's near Burwash in Sussex from 1902 until his death in 1936. Bateman's, now in the care of the National Trust, is preserved as it was in Kipling's day. Kipling was an early devotee of Feng Shui – that at Rock House caused him depression – 'a gathering blackness of mind and sorrow of heart'. However when he first looked over Bateman's, he felt 'her Spirit – her Feng Shui – to be good'. Pook's Hill is visible from the house. Kipling loved travelling and visited South Africa during the Boer War.

His output was vast and varied, but his fame rests principally on his short stories dealing with India, the sea, the jungle, army, navy and other subjects. He is sometimes regarded as the unofficial Poet Laureate and as the poet of the Empire. He received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1907 and is buried in Westminster Abbey •



2001 Favourite stamps poll

FOR THE 16TH YEAR running we are inviting you to vote for your favourite stamps. Shown below are the special stamps of 2001. Tell us your top three sets and favourite individual stamp (numbered 1-61) on the enclosed voting form. Remember to return your form by 18 January for entry in our prize draw •



The Future 1



2



3



4



Occasions 5



6



7



8



9



Cats and Dogs 10



11



12



13



14



Cats and Dogs 15



16



17



18



19



Weather 20



21



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Submarines 24



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**Buses 28**

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**Punch & Judy 41**

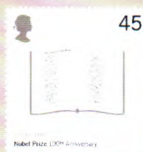
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**Christmas 57**

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Mainly Machins Specialist collectors report by D G A Myall

Right: Christmas books of 12 × 1st class, comprising three panels, and 24 × 2nd class, comprising 5 panels. Stamps on both are self-adhesive.

Far right: the Jolly Roger and White Ensign, from the Flags & Ensigns set, were issued in a self-adhesive book on 22 October.

Opposite page: Front cover and two panes of the Unseen & Unheard prestige stamp book.



Christmas books That is how Royal Mail refers to them but they are unlike any previous Christmas books. In the October *Bulletin*, the Editor adds '(folded sheetlets)' to their description and this gives a more accurate idea of their nature. There are two products: one containing 12 of the first class stamp, the other 24 of the second class stamp. The first comprises three panels; the second has five panels. In each case, the top panel has a blue barcode, the Royal Mail cruciform logo, the figure 12 or 24 as appropriate and three stamps; the bottom panel also has three stamps, the printer's imprint and contact details in English and Welsh. The other panels have six stamps. All are self-adhesive with die-cut perforation outlines but no ellipses.

The stamps were illustrated in the October *Bulletin* where the cylinder numbers and colours were given. The first class stamps have two gmm vignetted phosphor bars while the second class ones have a 4.5mm bar offset to the right. I haven't seen the sheet issues at the time of writing, so I don't know whether these are the same. They have different phosphor numbers because, of course, the layouts are different.

The sheet issues have a feature which has not been seen on any previous GB issue: the printer's sheet is divided into three counter sheets, the third having a double dot to distinguish it from the normal no dot and dot sheets. This feature is illustrated in the October *Bulletin*.

Reaction to 'just peel and stick' stamps has been generally favourable. However, the general public has so far been exposed only to books of them and these first ever sheets of self-adhesive GB Christmas stamps will be a good test of their popularity. In the USA there has been a trend back to conventionally gummed stamps on the ground that self-adhesives produce 'clutter' and so are not good for the environment. This could be partially addressed by removing the gummed surround to the stamps, known as the 'matrix', before issue, as was done with all the Enschedé self-adhesive Machin coils. Unfortunately, this would also remove the booklet cylinder numbers unless another place for these could be found.

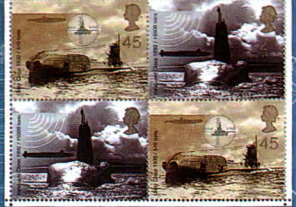
What shall we call the self-adhesive products?

While the sheets of 50 are no problem, what is the correct terminology for the other Christmas products? In the Bureau's Preview notes they are called both books and sheetlets but are given the UB prefix which is used only for books. So which are they? Is the one with 12 stamps a book and the one with 24 stamps a sheetlet? The panels on both are fan- or concertina-folded, ie, with each panel alternately folded inward and outward. In this they closely resemble the sheets of 100 self-adhesive Machin NVs issued on 22 June 1998 and 4 September 2000. These, too, had five fan-folded panels with the content and cruciform logo on the top panel. This had four stamps; the other



Your steadfastness and grit have been beyond all praise and will form glorious pages in our naval history when it is written.

Commodore Sydney Hart, Submarine, Fleet, 1918



Great deeds are done in the air and on the land; nevertheless there is no part to be compared to your exploits.

William Churchill, to the Submarine Service, WWII



Flags and Emblems

Issued October 2001

panels had 24 stamps. These products were called sheets and this may be why the Christmas offerings are called sheetlets as well as books.

When the first self-adhesive NVIs were issued in 1993, the 20 stamps were on a backing sheet folded into three panels. The *Bulletin* (December 1993, p96) stated the contents to be 'two panes of nine stamps and one of two'. This was generally accepted, notably by the GB Decimal Stamp Book Study Circle under its Editor, Hanns Fasching, although some collectors queried it at the time. In the last of my *Bulletin* articles in the Decimal Stamp Book series, published here in March, I mentioned the problem of the two Cats & Dogs products, one having 12 stamps folded into three panels and called a book, the other having 10 stamps unfolded but rouletted into three panels and called a sheetlet. Thus there is no clear dividing line between books and sheetlets and the fact that both terms have been applied to the folded Christmas products illustrates the difficulty. I do not think that there is any problem so far as coils are concerned; they are distinctive enough. The problem is where to draw the line between a sheet(let) and a book.

I confess that I do not have a fully satisfactory answer at this time. However, I offer the following tentative suggestion. Since all these products can be regarded as consisting of a varying number of panels each with a varying number of stamps, maybe we could retain the conventional

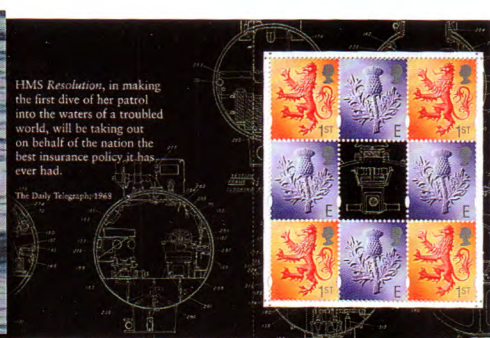
terms and redefine them for self-adhesive products as follows.

- Book: comprising up to three panels and either folded or rouletted for folding.
- Sheetlet: comprising (a) up to three panels but neither folded nor rouletted for folding; or (b) three or more panels, whether folded or not, with a total not exceeding 25 stamps.
- Sheet: comprising any number of panels with a total of 26 or more stamps.

What do you think? Have you a better idea?

Unseen & Unheard prestige stamp book There is no problem with terminology here. This is a conventional stitched book with four stamp panes and six interleaves. It is the first decimal GB stamp book with no Machin stamp in it. What are things coming to?

The book commemorates the centenary of the Royal Navy submarine service. Submariners have always deservedly attracted tremendous admiration for their courage. It takes a very special breed of men and women to volunteer for the 'claustrophobic cigar'. The interleaves and stubs in the book contain a brief but engrossing account of the origin and development of these boats and of the exploits of their crews. More information was given in the March and September *Bulletin*. The four submarine stamps were first issued on 10 April in sheet form while two copies of the 1st class stamp were also issued in a self-adhesive ver-



Above: two more panes from the Unseen & Unheard PSB.

Right: Punch and Judy issued as self-adhesive stamps in a book, 4 September.



sion with four 1st class Machins in a book a week later. This is why these stamps in the prestige book do not qualify for FDC treatment. A third pane contains four 1st class Flags & Ensigns stamps which were issued in a miniature sheet on the same day as the book. They are not available in normal sheets. Two of them, the Jolly Roger and the White Ensign, appear, along with four 1st class Machins, in self-adhesive form in a book also issued on 22 October. The phosphor bands on these are 10mm wide compared with 6mm on the miniature sheet and prestige book stamps. This is because they overlap the die-cut perforations which are inside the boundaries of the designs. Single stamps thus have bars of the same width whatever their source but, of course, the self-adhesives have only simulated perforations.

The last pane in the book is the now traditional se-tenant pane of eight with a label in the centre. It was illustrated in the September *Bulletin*. The eight stamps are four of the Scotland 1st lion pictorial alternating with four of the Scotland 1st thistle stamp. These were printed by Questa and differ slightly from the sheet versions which were printed by Walsall. The former were sideways printed; the swarf left by the APS perforators used is at the right of the holes when viewed from the

back of the stamps whereas it is at the top on those from Walsall. Also, the ellipses are different shapes, Questa's being fatter and rounder than Walsall's. Questa are known to use APS perforators with the thinner type of ellipses so it is not impossible that the booklet stamps exist in two versions. This pane is already known with phosphor bands displaced downward, giving stamps from the top row with short bars at the top. This kind of variety is very popular with collectors.

Punch & Judy book In this article I have mentioned two of the books of six self-adhesive 1st class NVT stamps comprising four red Machins and two special issues, one at each side. There was another issued on 4 September. This has Punch at the left and Judy at the right. These were printed by Questa and have simulated perforations; the sheet stamps were printed by Walsall and have conventional gum and perforations.

These three books are the first of a new series intended to bring special issues to the attention of a wider public who buy their stamps from their local supermarket, newsagent or petrol station etc, and who may not have known of the existence of special issues, many of which are on sale at post offices for only a very short time ●

1840
BATH
Postal Museum,





Bath Postal Museum.org in Japanese

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日本語

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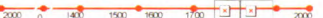
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'Victorian Post Office' featuring 'Money values in 1840' 'Salaries for staff in Victorian England' 'Victorian Pop songs' and 'How to make a traditional Quill pen'

History of the famous **British post box** - Complete history of the different styles of post box manufactured from the first in 1854, through to modern boxes produced in 1998

Site Navigation

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Information, exhibitors & biographies

Curator's Office

Contact information, press, petitions, meeting lists, maps, and entrance rates

www.bathpostalmuseum.org Readers who wish to support the work being done by the volunteers at the Bath Postal Museum can become 'friends'. Details can be obtained from Bath Postal Museum, 8 Broad Street, Bath BA1 5JL, or e-mail: info@bathpostalmuseum.org.

MOST collectors associate the birth of the postage stamp with the issue of the Penny Black on 6 May 1840. However, four days before the official launch date, the postmaster at Bath had used a Penny Black on a letter. This early usage is one of the many postal history facts described on the website from the Bath Postal Museum at www.bathpostalmuseum.org. Biographies of two early postal pioneers who were both closely associated with the city, Ralph Allen and John Palmer, are also included to explain the important role they played. A timeline at the head of each page on the site provides a summary of the major developments in communications from the Ancient Egyptians to the present day.

The site is attractively laid out, well illustrated, and allows for easy browsing around its various sections. A special feature on the Victorian Post Office includes information on activities carried out there and shows some of the equipment used. An interesting page in this part explains how to cut a quill pen – a necessary skill in early Victorian offices.

Under the main heading 'Archives', there are separate pages describing and illustrating some of the Museum's exhibits of Wreck Covers and of Victorian Valentine Cards. The covers, recovered from shipwrecks throughout the world, are on loan from the collection of the late Adrian Hopkins, who was the subject of an article in the *Bulletin* in July 2001. The valentine cards include

many examples of the attractive lace and paper lace cards that became more fashionable after the introduction of penny postage.

Many readers of the *Bulletin* find the regular items about Posting Boxes of interest. They will enjoy the page of the Bath website which outlines the history of the British post box and illustrates many of the designs. These pictures are taken from metal cast miniatures of the actual boxes which are sold by the Museum. They complement other models showing Post Office uniforms through the years, which are also for sale. A number of other gifts and souvenir products are also carried in the shop and are described in the price list. The website includes a secure on-line ordering facility, so that any items can be bought using a credit card. Recognising that the city of Bath is a major tourist attraction, the website also provides a special section in Japanese.

The Museum encourages school visits and the site provides outline details of the services offered. These include quizzes, activity sheets, teachers' notes and guided tours for school parties. For the younger visitors, the shop sells a wide range of Postman Pat merchandise.

This site is a fine example of how information of interest to stamp collectors can be combined with the commercial approach needed to attract visitors to the Museum itself. Even if you cannot make the journey to Bath, you can still enjoy a virtual visit. You will find it worthwhile. ●

Post Office Heritage Collections

THE FIRST BRITISH 1½d stamp was prepared in 1860, required for a proposed increase in postal charges. Some 10,000 sheets were printed in rosy-mauve. The increase failed to gain Parliamentary approval and the stamp was not issued. Most of the printing was destroyed in 1867; those that have survived have the catalogue status 'prepared for use but not issued'. When a 1½d stamp for 'printed matter' was required in 1870 the same printing plates were used to produce stamps, this time in rose-red.

Shown here are proofs produced in February 1871 on the instructions of Ormond Hill, son of

Sir Rowland, who worked as his father's assistant on stamp production. The printers were instructed to provide the Board of Inland Revenue 'for the supply of the Postmaster General, six proofs in black and six in the proper colours, from each of the ½d postage die, the 1d, the 1½d, and the 2d'. Hill added 'and I shall be glad if you will at the same time, take a similar number of each for me to keep, and a few from each die in two or three other colours.' Some 29 examples of the four values are in the R M Phillips collection, housed at Consignia Heritage Services •



Proofs of the ½d in black, green, rose-red (issued colour) and orange.

The Phillips Collection can be seen by appointment: Consignia Heritage Services, Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London WC1X 0DL. Telephone enquiries 020 7239 2570.

Posting boxes 207

WE END THE YEAR with four overseas boxes. The first is of a British Elizabeth II box, painted yellow, photographed in northern (Turkish) Cyprus by Dr J Twomey of Devon. It is similar to one featured here in December 1985. The second illustration is of a now typical Lions head Spanish posting box, some set into the wall and others, like the one below, on a wall-mounted box. It is in the beautiful village of La Alberca, near Salamanca. The photograph was submitted to us by Roberta Hanson of Malaga, Spain.

Our third and fourth subjects are boxes from Hungary and Laos photographed by Ray Stockall in a display of about 40 boxes at the Deutsche Post pavilion at the Expo 2000 exhibition in Hanover. Mr Stockall describes the Laos box as rather 'like a bird box!' •

For details of the Letter Box Study Group send a SAE or IRC to the Membership Secretary, Mrs V Scott, 38 Leopold Avenue, Handsworth Wood, Birmingham B20 1ES. The Group produces interesting publications and postcards.



Alan Moorcroft

Richard West talks with someone who has discovered the many benefits the hobby can bring

ALAN MOORCROFT may not be regularly hitting the philatelic headlines, but he is one of those collectors who through ambition and determination has created a medal-winning collection, and is prepared to put much back into the hobby.

For Alan, collecting started with the desire to achieve his Scouts' badge; this meant Saturday morning visits to a local stamp shop, using his pocket money to buy the low values of Commonwealth new issues. These were properly mounted and written up in loose-leaf albums, which Alan still owns today.

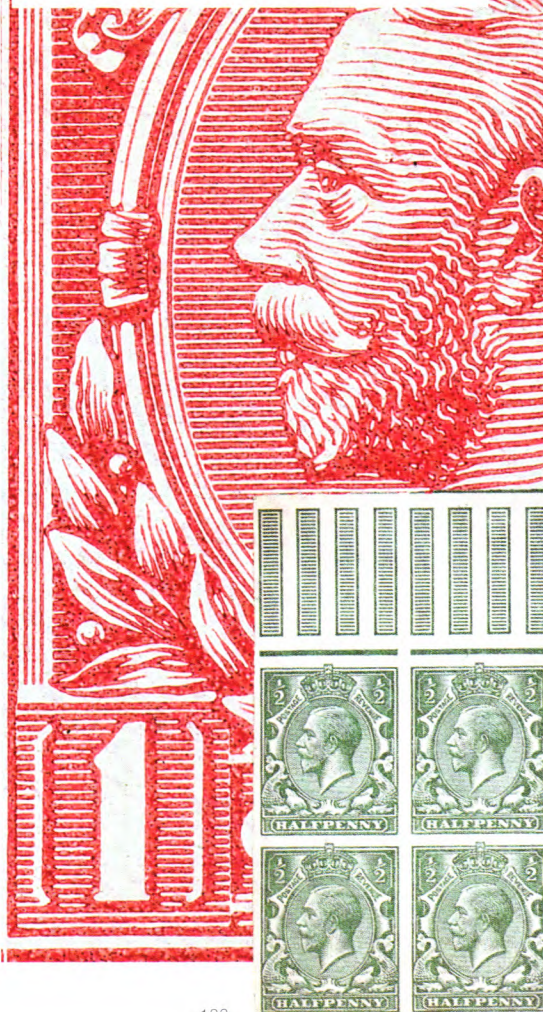
But, as with many, the collection was put to one side for a number of years. The collecting urge returned when Alan, now in his late 20s, discovered that the dealer from whom he had originally purchased had moved. The new shop was just two doors away from Alan's own menswear business in Colchester. The question was: what to collect? The dealer suggested the new stamps being issued by the Channel Islands. So a start was made on the new issues, and tracing back to the earlier stamps.

Discovering postal history Soon, a purchase was to instigate a significant change: he bought Stanley Gibbons specialised catalogue of the stamps – and postal history – of the Channel Islands. Alan had not previously appreciated that postal history could be collected, with items going back hundreds of years. He found himself hooked.

He joined his local, Colchester, Philatelic Society, and admits at first feeling somewhat out of his depth, a situation with which I am sure most of us can relate. But quickly Alan's basic philosophy of life came to the fore: that with hard work and application you can achieve anything you set your mind on. Such an attitude has often worked well: he was the only secondary modern pupil at college studying business studies; he passed his professional accountancy examinations first time despite have studied by correspondence course while working full time.



Alan Moorcroft's authoritative series on the George V Royal Cypher issue was published here in five parts from July to November this year. We hope Alan will write further articles for the *Bulletin*.



Over the years he has joined several philatelic societies, and indeed maintains his membership. Like many, he has found the friendships that come through membership so invaluable, while of course, the social side apart, such contacts often bring essential new information to improve the collection. One society which had a considerable and rewarding influence was the Channel Islands Specialist Society, of which he was the Secretary for eight years.

His Channel Islands Postal History has been exhibited both nationally and internationally, and has won several gold medals. But that is not the limit of his collecting; he also includes Essex Postal History and the British Campaign of the Napoleonic Wars. But Alan is not only interested in postal history: stamps have always held a fascination. So it was back to the original dealer for more guidance. (The dealer concerned in fact retired from business five years ago.)

Original research After some consideration, the advice was to try the Royal Cypher issue of King George V. It offers a great deal for the specialist, particularly with shades, and allows for original research. The key word here is 'research', for Alan is prepared to delve around to answer questions.

His research has taken him to such places as the British Library Philatelic Collections and Consignia Heritage Services. As a result he has answered some (but not all) of the questions that have taxed collectors over the years. This collection, which includes many important pieces, has been displayed to many societies, and achieved the Silver Mailcoach at Stampex.

One of his joys is helping other collectors, and continuing his own researches. He is extremely active within The Royal Philatelic Society London, and has recently taken over from Michael Farrant as Treasurer. Again he finds the contacts he makes with so many other collectors at the 'Royal' so invaluable, and makes great use of the society's library. But he still enjoys the regular meetings of the Colchester Philatelic Society and keeping in contact with the many friends he has made there over the years.

Meanwhile, back at home he has an understanding wife and a 12 year old son who is starting to take an interest in the hobby. And time must be found for the vegetable allotment.

Alan is delighted he discovered our hobby, which has given, and continues to give, many hours of enjoyment •

Postbag Letters to the Editor

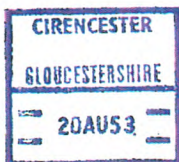
Mistaken identity The Duke of Connaught (July *Bulletin*) wasn't Edward VII's uncle – he was a younger brother by some nine years. The Kiribati 12c has the later Queen Mary on it, as correctly noted in the text, but incorrect in the caption. Haakon was the VII of Norway. I doubt the caption year as 1955 as the stamp appears to mark the King's 50th birthday and Queen Maud had died in 1938. Haakon was, I think, in his eighties when he died in 1957 so the stamp would date to the 1920s when Maud was still his consort. MAURICE SOKEL, CYPRUS

The Norwegian stamp showing King Haakon and Queen Maud was indeed issued in 1955 (SG 459), one of two commemorating the King's golden jubilee; he reigned from 1905 until 1957. ED •

Family of Edward VII On page 332 of the July *Bulletin* the text on the right is correct but an error crept into the caption (bottom left), which asserts that Princess Alexandra appeared on both the St Kitts and the Kiribati stamps. The dates on these stamps are the years in which the two princesses married their respective husbands. Princess Alexandra, illustrated on the St Kitts stamp, did become Princess of Wales in 1863 when she married Prince Edward. The Kiribati stamp features a likeness of her future daughter in law Princess May of Teck, who became known as Princess Mary when she married Prince George in 1893 when their titles were Duke and Duchess of York. They did not become Prince and Princess of Wales until 1901. Hence on the Kiribati stamp

the caption 'Mary Of Teck' and the apparent association of the date 1893 with the title Princess of Wales are both slightly misleading. M HARDING, GUILDFORD

Parcel post machine marks and labels Mr Mackay's article in the September *Bulletin* included a reference to labels, printed in violet ink, resembling contemporary bus tickets, which were issued at post offices in the Irish Republic but not known to have been used by the British PO. I enclose a copy of a 13s9d Parcel Post label dated 20 AU 53 issued at CIRENCESTER, GLOUCESTERSHIRE, printed in violet ink, which I have in my collection of parcel labels, from an unknown source. The original gum is intact so I would be interested to know if this could be an example from a trial 'Plessey' machine not previously recorded used at a UK office. A ROBETS, STOCKPORT ●



Prestige books May I correct two mistakes in Lionel Jones's article on Northern Ireland prestige book labels (February). The central label on the mixed pane does not show a shamrock but a flax flower. The Giant's Causeway stamp used on the picture postcard in the book was adapted from the 22p National Trust stamp of 1981, not 1991. I have been receiving the *Bulletin* since 1968 and still very much look forward to reading it each month. ROBERT BOSTOCK, COURNON D'AUVERGNE, FRANCE ●

Bath Postal Museum The team at the Bath Postal Museum was most interested to read the article on Adrian ('Hoppy') Hopkins by Ron Negus (July *Bulletin*). The article states that 'some covers' from the famous collection are in the archives of the BPM. We are glad to report that, thanks to the generosity of Hoppy's daughter, Ann Hopkins-Clarke, the Museum now has the major part of the collection. The Museum is planning a special

exhibition of wreck covers, opening in November. Although Hoppy died long before the BPM was founded, his widow, Mrs Brenda Hopkins, was a patron of the Museum until her death, aged 89, in August 1984. The family connection has been maintained; Ann Hopkins-Clarke has been a trustee since 1984. IVAN HOLLIDAY, Editor, Friends' Newsletter, *POSTED!*, BPM ●

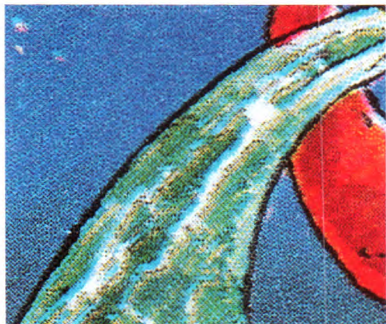
Stamp size I applaud the size of the Flags and Ensigns stamps – almost back to the size of most commemorative stamps issued from 1935 to 1970. At double the size of the definitive stamps they had a distinctive appearance, which gave them their 'specialness'. Somehow the size used for most decimal issues and the square format stamps do not have the same appeal. Or maybe I am just getting older and nostalgic for the stamps of my youth! JOYCE FERGUSON, PLYMOUTH ●

Aerial post I was interested in Cover Corner (September) about the 1911 Coronation Aerial Post flight, also in James Mackay's article on the subject in the *Postmark Bulletin* of 14 September. In that article he mentions a National Postal Museum postcard to mark the 70th anniversary of the flight in 1981 – the card (No 6 in the Museum's Special Series cards) reproduces the design of the cards and covers of 1911. There was another NPM card in 1997 (reference NPM 97/9) showing the pilot Gustav Hamel in his Bleriot No 2 plane for the Windsor to Hendon flight on 17 September 1911. The card also shows the mailbag label for this flight indicating the weight of mail carried as 23lb 12oz. PETER DAWSON, BASINGSTOKE

The NPM card of 1997 is shown here. ED ●



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



September identify The detail is from the Jolly Roger stamp in the *Flags & Ensigns* miniature sheet. The winner was P Bell of London.

September knowledge The answers: 1) David Gentleman; 2) *Settlers' Tale*; 3) 1972. The winner was J Smith, Dumfries.

Ten runner-up prizes were also sent for each competition. Our thanks to all who entered.

FIRSTLY, identify the stamp from the detail above. Send your answer to December *Identify* Competition. Secondly, test your philatelic knowledge by answering the questions below. Send your answer to December *Knowledge* Competition.

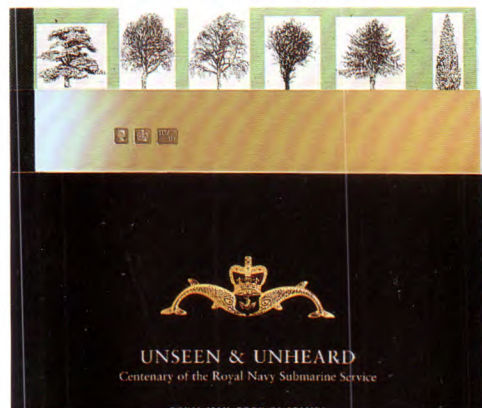
- 1 Who designed the 1992 Single European Market stamp?
- 2 Which set of Millennium stamps features Mile End Park, London?
- 3 Which famous stamp company has its headquarters at 399 Strand, London WC2?

Send your answer (addressed to either December *Identify* competition or December *Knowledge* competition), name and address on a postcard or back of a sealed envelope to: British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 2-14 Bunhill Row, London EC4Y 8HQ. The senders of the first cards drawn in each competition on 18 January will each receive £100. Ten runner-up prizes of presentation packs or FDCs will be awarded in each competition.

The competitions are not open to Royal Mail employees •

Special draw

WE HAVE *Special by Design*, *Treasury of Trees* and *Unseen & Unheard* prestige books to give away to the senders of the first 10 cards drawn on 11 January. Simply write your name and address on the back of a postcard and send it to: Prestige Books Draw, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 2-14 Bunhill Row, London EC4Y 8HQ •



Events

Until further notice Postal Memorabilia displays at Museum of Lincolnshire Life, Burton Road, Lincoln and Manchester Postal Museum, Wythenshaw Park, Manchester (open 10.00-16.00). **Enquiries** D Harrop, 15 Hawthorn Road, Stockport SK4 3DQ.

Until January 2002 Exhibition: Chand Collection of Classic Mauritius stamps at British Library, 96 Euston Road, London NW1. Open Mon-Sat 09.30-18.00, Sun 11.00-17.00. **Enquiries** 020 7412 7635/6.

1 December Welsh Philatelic Society and Federation of South Wales Philatelic Societies joint meeting at Castle Hotel, Llandovery. **Enquiries** P Gaywood, 01772 713917.

15 December Sidcup Phil Soc Fair at Emmanuel Hall, Hadlow Road, Sidcup •

Late news



Golden Jubilee stamps Illustrated above, at proof stage, are designs for the Golden Jubilee stamps to be issued on 6 February •

Cavendish Auctions Hugh Feldman's collection of English postal history was the highlight of the sale on 20 October – top price of £9200 was paid for a letter of 1674 bearing a London Bishop mark and rare 'ESSEX/POST.GOES/AND:COMS:/EVERY./DAY' marking. A 1st Afghan War Campaign letter of 1839 made £3680 (estimate £500). Cavendish celebrate their 50th anniversary with a special sale on 23 January – enquiries Cavendish Philatelic Auctions, 153-157 London Road, Derby DE1 2SY. Telephone 01332 250970 •

Christmas As many readers will be aware, Royal Mail is running a £1 million stamp promotion at post offices. Customers buying 12 1st class Christmas stamps receive a gamecard that could contain a £1m, 'platinum' stamp. The finder of this unique stamp will win £1 million. Thirty runner-up prizes totalling £500,000 are also on offer.



Readers are reminded that they can obtain sheets of Christmas stamps showing robin in letterbox and Santa Claus with personalised labels by mail order from Tallents House Edinburgh until 11 January. Sheets are also available from photo-booths at Trafalgar Square, London WC2; St

James Centre, Edinburgh; Spring Gardens, Manchester; St Andrew's Street, Cambridge; Castle Gallery, Bristol; and High Street, Canterbury post offices until 31 January. For order form for sheets with personal image phone Tallents House Edinburgh on 0845 074 2000 (UK) or +44 131 316 7489 (overseas).

Sheets of 20 × 19p robin and 10 × 1st Santa Claus stamps with printed greetings labels are available from Tallents House Edinburgh and Post Office Philatelic outlets, price £3.99 and £2.95 respectively. See page 9 of September *Bulletin* for further details •

Collectors Club The November issue of *Stamp!*, the Royal Mail Collectors Club magazine, includes an interesting feature on the Christmas stamps showing robins. We are told that the robin is Britain's national bird with over 6 million breeding pairs. Laura Mould of Kettering won a silver prize in the Stamp Active Competition at Stampex in September with her display 'I Spy' illustrating stamp terms from A to Z. Some pages from Laura's collection are shown to encourage other young collectors to try their hand at creating their own entry. In addition there are the cartoon adventures of Sammy the Stamp Bug, jokes and drawings sent in by readers, and a Christmas message from Editor Simon Eddy. A supplement includes members' swaps and pen pal requests, and puzzles. The Club is for young collectors up to age 12; members receive a fun starter pack, membership card, something in the post each month, six sets of stamps a year and *Stamp!* magazine six times a year. Annual subscription is £15 UK, £22.50 overseas. Application forms from: Collectors Club, Freepost NEA1431, Sunderland SR9 9XN •

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