

February 1993



Royal Mail

British Philatelic Bulletin

Volume 30, No: 6 The Royal Mail Magazine for Stamp Collectors Price 70p



Royal Mail Stamp Cards



Royal Mail's very popular Stamp Cards were introduced in 1973 – some are now highly-priced collectors' items. From now on cards will be produced for greetings stamps and some definitive issues, as well as special stamps.

Five cards reproducing the 1992 £1, £1.50, £2 and £5 Castle and

the 1993 £10 Britannia stamps will be available from the British Philatelic Bureau, Collections and philatelic counters from 16 February. Cards showing the 1993 Greetings stamps are now on sale.

At 21p each, stamp cards are ideal to send to your friends, philatelic or otherwise.



Royal Mail

Stamp cards are available from the British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT. Also on sale at Collections, philatelic counters, selected post shops and mail post offices.

British Philatelic Bulletin

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Editor: JR Holman

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Rest of World: £11.50.

Subscriptions should be sent to:
British Philatelic Bureau
20 Brandon Street
EDINBURGH EH3 5TT.

Binders to hold 24 issues, price £6.75. Available by post from British Philatelic Bureau (address above) and to callers only at National Postal Museum, King Edward Street, LONDON EC1A 1LP.

Royal Mail also publishes the fortnightly **British Postmark Bulletin** giving details of forthcoming special handstamps and postmark slogans. Available on annual subscription from British Philatelic Bureau (address above) UK & Europe £10, Rest of World £21.75.

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Main Feature

£10 Britannia Definitive

124

Shown on front cover



Britannia first appeared on British stamps in 1913 – on High Values designed by Sir Bertram Mackennal.

Royal Mail's first £10 postage stamp features Britannia – representing the spirit of the British people.

The large format stamp, incorporating security features and Braille embossing, goes on sale on 2 March – opening day of Spring Stampex (Britain's national stamp exhibition).

£10 Definitive

2 March 1993



Britain's first £10 postage stamp, depicting Britannia, goes on sale at post offices, the British Philatelic Bureau, Collections, and philatelic counters on 2 March 1993.

The stamp, for use mostly on overseas mail, features Britannia – a popular and heroic figure, representing the spirit of the British people. The image of Britannia was first used on Roman coins over 1800 years ago. The name derives from the Celtic, *brit*, which possibly meant “to paint with wood”. She is usually shown by the ocean, symbolising that Britain is an island.

After the Romans left our shores, Britannia disappeared from use until the 16th century when she is found in a book on navigation by John Dee, kneeling on shore in homage to Queen Elizabeth I. Following the union of the English and Scottish crowns, Britannia was much in vogue. Charles II chose a Court beauty Frances Stewart, Duchess of Richmond (1647-1702) to model Britannia for use on coins, this design changed little over 300 years. Britannia is still featured on the 50p coin and on banknotes.



She first appeared on a British stamp in 1913 – on the 2s.6d, 5s, 10s and £1 “Seahorse” design, by Sir Bertram MacKennal (1863-1931). The Seahorse design was reproduced on the “Stamp World 90” miniature sheet. The helmeted head of Britannia symbolised the nation on the 1951 Festival of Britain logo by Abram Games; the two stamps commemorating the Festival both featured Britannia.

Britannia featured on early colonial stamps of

Barbados, Mauritius and Trinidad, produced by Perkins, Bacon & Co, printers of the Penny Black.

This new stamp, designed by Roundel Design Group, using illustrations by Barry Craddock, continues the tradition of Britannia on stamps. Her new depiction reflects the best of contemporary Britain.

Roundel Design Group originated in the ICI in-house design department. It was part of the Edman Group from 1971 to December 1988 when Michael Denny, together with partner John Bateson, successfully concluded a management buy-out from the parent group. Roundel Design Group work for a variety of clients including British Rail, London Underground, Royal Mail National, Rover Group, ITN, Monotype, and Grand Metropolitan. The company is a founder member of the Transport design consortium, an association of graphic, interior, architectural, product and engineering designers, working in the transport industry.

Security features

This is the first ever Braille stamp to be produced by Royal Mail. Embossed with the number 10, the stamp is an excellent example of Royal Mail combining customer and security needs.

As well as Braille embossing, other security features are incorporated in the stamp to counteract the threat of forgery. These include the use of metal inks, visible security fibres in the base paper stock, and two elliptical perforations at the top and bottom of the stamp all of which help towards defending the stamp from replication by new high-tech photocopiers. The stamp is on OBA-free paper (OBA = Optical Brightening Agent).

The larger-size format (60 x 41mm) has meant the number of stamps per sheet being reduced to 25 (5 x 5); there are no gutters or check dot (“traffic lights”) on the sheet. The sheet is perforated through all four margins.

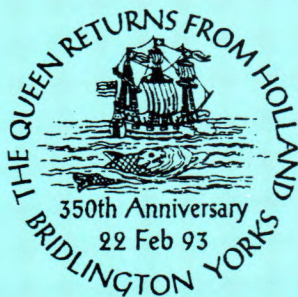
Plate numbers 1A (x10) appear in a single colour in the top left hand corner of the sheet representing the colours used to print the stamp. For security reasons Royal Mail is not announcing the colours used to print this stamp.

Bulletin Supplement

Commemorative Covers

Information given here is based on details supplied by the cover producers; requests for further information should be directed to the relevant producer and not the Bulletin office.

Civil War. On 22 February 1643 Queen Henrietta Maria, wife of Charles I, returned to Britain from Holland where she had been ceaselessly active collecting arms and ammunition for the Royalist cause. She landed at Bridlington, where she was subjected to a bombardment by Parliamentarian ships. Violent storms had kept her at sea for nine days during which she said to her terrified attendants, "Comfort yourselves, my dears, Queens of England are never drowned". Benham is honouring the 350th anniversary of the Queen's return with a cover reproducing van Dyck's famous portrait of the Queen printed on "silk" and framed in gold (the portrait once hung in Charles I's bedchamber). A special Bridlington postmark will be applied. Price £3.50, postage 50p. This cover will be number nine in the **Civil War Series** which started in January 1992. This collection, limited to 1000, will run for seven years and include approximately 51 covers, price £3.50 each. Details of an album to house this collection were published here last month. Order/enquiries: Benham (A Buckingham) Ltd, The Bayle, FOLKESTONE, Kent, CT20 1SD.



The Swan Sanctuary. A wood-engraving by Thomas Bewick (1753-1828) graces the official first day cover for the Swan Sanctuary at Egham, Surrey which began operating in a small back garden in the early 1980s. In December 1989, with the help of Runnymede Borough Council, an area of disused land was made available, and the project of building the first purpose-built hospital began. It comprises nursing ponds, rehabilitation lakes, operating theatre, X-ray room, washing room for oiled swans, etc. The special covers, limited to 250 numbered copies, cost £9.75 each with the full set of Swan stamps and special Egham postmark. Order/enquiries: A G Bradbury, 3 Link Road, LEICESTER LE2 3RA. Overseas please remit in Sterling and add £1.



John Harrison Tercentenary. A G Bradbury has been appointed official cover producer for the three principal clock societies in the UK, producing covers for the Marine Timekeepers stamps (16 February):

British Watch & Clock Makers' Guild

The cover features a full colour night scene of Big Ben with the Guild's coat of arms superimposed in silver-leaf. Limited to 1000 numbered copies, price £5.95 or £9.75 signed by the Marquess of Northampton – Guild President. Special postmark – Burnham on Crouch, Essex.



Big Ben with Watch & Clock Makers' Guild



A G Bradbury, Watch & Clock Makers' Guild, L.F.C. No. 102

British Horological Institute Ltd

The cover features a fine engraving of John Harrison with his "H4" clock and the Institute's

... gold-leaf Limited to 500 numbered copies, price ~~£6.75~~ or £9.75 signed by the Institute's President. Special postmark – Newark, Notts.

Antiquarian Horological Society

The cover features Harrison's first timekeeper reproduced in gold-leaf by courtesy of the National Maritime Museum. Covers with full set and limited to 500 cost £6.75 or £9.75 signed by the Society's Chairman. Special postmark – Ticehurst, Wadhurst, E Sussex.

All these covers bear the full set of stamps. Order/enquiries: A G Bradbury, 3 Link Road, LEICESTER LE2 3RA. Overseas please remit in Sterling and add £1.

£10 Britannia

On 2 March Royal Mail will make philatelic history by issuing the first ever British £10 postage stamp. To coincide with this issue A G Bradbury has produced a special cover depicting a die-stamped portrait of Britannia surrounding an early Victorian engraving of Windsor Castle. The covers will be franked with a specially sponsored handstamp at Windsor also featuring Britannia. Price £22.50 (including p&p). Overseas please add £1 and remit in Sterling. Orders/enquiries: A G Bradbury, 3 Link Road, LEICESTER LE2 3RA..



European Council Meeting, Edinburgh.

Lothian Regional Council commissioned a special cover to mark the meeting of the European Council held in the Palace of Holyroodhouse on 11 and 12 December 1992. The cover features a sketch of the Palace; gold lettering detailing the event, the dates and the venue, and the Regional Council's "Lothian in Europe" logo. The Single European Market



EUROPEAN COUNCIL

11/12 December 1992

Palace of Holyroodhouse, Edinburgh

stamp was cancelled with a specially designed handstamp. Price £2.50 per cover, postage 40p. Orders and enquiries to: Lothian Regional Council, Department of Corporate Services, Room 4.2, George IV Bridge, EDINBURGH EH1 1UQ.

Late News

Greetings Stamps

We wish to clarify the printing details given in January Bulletin (page 108). The stamps and labels are printed as one unit with a narrow gutter between. The pane is mounted into the book cover using this gutter margin. The stamps and labels can thus be removed separately.

Waterstone's are producing their own first day covers bearing the Greetings stamps cancelled with a WATERSTONE'S LONDON handstamp. These covers will be on sale at most of their 90 UK shops. We are sorry to announce that covers will not now be cancelled on site at selected Waterstone's Bookshops on 2 February as announced in the Supplement in the January Bulletin. Any disappointment is deeply regretted.

PO Archivist Honoured

We offer congratulations to Jean Farrugia, the Post Office's Archivist who received the MBE in the New Year Honours. Mrs Farrugia is well-known to many philatelists and postal historians, not least as the author of *The Letter Box* (1969) – the standard work on this popular subject.

Marine Timekeepers

The first day cover bears four stamps *not* five as stated in January Bulletin (page 100). Any confusion is regretted.

Editor's Thanks

The Editor thanks all readers who sent Christmas cards, some from warm climes, far removed from cold, damp December London. The cards brightened the office and were much appreciated.

Bulletin Exclusive Offer— Royal Mail Albums

These three albums are ideal for collectors of Royal Mail First Day Covers, Presentation Packs, and Stamp Cards (Postcards).

The First Day Cover and Presentation Pack albums each hold up to 70 covers/packs; the Postcard Album holds 130 Royal Mail stamp cards (sometimes referred to as PHQ cards).

Royal Mail albums are made of hard wearing leather-look material with gold-embossed covers. All take continuation leaves to extend their

capacity and keep your collection up to date.

Bulletin readers can buy each of these three albums at £2 off the usual prices. Complete the order form overleaf and return, by 30 April 1993, to the British Philatelic Bureau. Telephone enquiries: 031-550 8989.



Order Form Please return to:

British Philatelic Bureau,
Freepost,
EDINBURGH,
EH3 0HN

PRODUCT NAME	CODE	PRICE	QTY	TOTAL
First Day Cover Album	PA134	£13.75		
Presentation Pack Album	PA135	£13.75		
Postcards Album	PA136	£13.75		
TOTAL				

Mr/Mrs/Miss: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

My payment of £ _____ is made:

☐ from the existing credit balance in my Bureau Account

☐ by Cheque (payable to British Philatelic Bureau)

☐ by Money Order/British Postal Order

☐ by Girobank Transfer/Transcash 110 0009

Please write your personal reference number on the back of any payment.

☐ from my existing Continuous Credit Card Charge Instruction

☐ from my existing Variable Direct Debit Instruction

☐ by Access/Master Card

☐ by Visa

Card Number

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Expiry date

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My personal
reference number:

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I understand that any overpayment made with this order will be left on credit in my account.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Offer subject to availability. Please allow 28 days for delivery. Offer closes 30 April 1993.

92 AMA



Martyn Fry, Assistant Manager-Stamp Production, writes:

In the autumn of 1990, Royal Mail embarked on a programme to increase the security of British stamps. The result was the re-designed and technically advanced Castle stamps which put Royal Mail stamps at the forefront of security stamp design.

This new £10 Britannia stamp confirms and extends that position with the inclusion of a number of new features acting together to present a considerable deterrent to potential stamp fraud. While there is no specific evidence of a problem at present, action has been taken now to put in place measures to combat the increasing sophistication of colour copiers.

As a development of the **elliptical perforations** used on the Castle stamps, these new style ellipses, there are four in all, are proportionately larger in keeping with the dimensions of the flagship of the range.

Metallic inks (foil blocking) cannot be accurately reproduced by today's sophisticated colour copiers but technological developments could soon overcome this particular obstacle, and reinforces the need to apply several layers of security for the long term protection of the stamp.

The embossing of stamps has been used in previous designs but the adaptation into **Braille** form as a means of identifying the value is new and follows discussions with the Royal National Institute for the Blind.

The addition of visible and non-visible **fluorescent fibres** to the OBA free base paper means that checking through UV detection equipment can provide an additional security measure.

The selective use of **fluorescent ink** produces a dramatic highlighted effect when viewed under UV light conditions.

Technical Details

<i>Printers:</i>	The House of Questa
<i>Process:</i>	Offset lithography
<i>Size:</i>	60 x 41mm, horizontal
<i>Sheets:</i>	25
<i>Perforation:</i>	15 x 14, two elliptical perforations at top and bottom of stamp
<i>Phosphor:</i>	Non-phosphor
<i>Gum:</i>	PVA
<i>Presentation Pack:</i>	No. 28, price £10.30
<i>Stamp Cards:</i>	Nos D1-5, price 21p each (cards feature – £1, £1.50, £2, £5 and £10 stamps)

First Day Facilities

Unstamped Royal Mail first day cover envelopes will be available from main post offices, the Bureau, Collections, and philatelic counters approximately two weeks before 2 March, price 21p.

The Bureau will provide a first day cover service – collectors may order the Royal Mail cover bearing the £10 stamp cancelled with a pictorial "First Day of Issue" postmark of the Bureau or Windsor price £12.05 (including VAT) to UK addresses, £10.26 to overseas addresses (no VAT). Orders for first day covers must be received at the Bureau by 2 March. Collectors may send their own stamped covers, on the day of issue, for the Bureau or Windsor cancels, to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT, or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail Windsor, Peascod Street, WINDSOR SL4 1AA. The outer envelope should be endorsed "Pictorial First Day of Issue postmark".

First Day Posting Boxes will be provided at most main post offices for collectors who wish to post covers to receive the standard, non-pictorial "First Day of Issue" handstamps.

Details of other special handstamps, sponsored by Royal Mail, stamp dealers and others, will be found in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – the Royal Mail's magazine for postmark collectors. It is available on subscription from the British Philatelic Bureau: £10 UK and Europe, £21.75 Rest of World (Airmail).

There will be no souvenir covers; these have now been discontinued.

NPM Britannia Exhibition

An exhibition on the subject of Britannia on stamps, banknotes, and coins opened at the National Postal Museum on 12 January, and will be on show until May. A special handstamp will be used at the Museum on 2 March – day of issue of the £10 Britannia definitive. Full details will be given in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – the Royal Mail magazine for postmark collectors. Covers to receive this cancel should be sent to: Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, King Edward Building, LONDON EC1A 1AA; ask for NPM Special – 2 March.

The Museum, located in London Chief Post Office, King Edward Street, LONDON EC1A 1LP, is open Monday-Friday, 9.30am to 4.30pm, admission free. It is a few minutes walk from St Paul's underground station.

The Future of the Bulletin

The *Bulletin* started life 30 years ago this year, shortly after the setting up of the British Philatelic Bureau. It has always provided information on forthcoming British stamps and background articles on stamps, postal history, and stamp collecting. It does not, I have to tell you, make any money for Royal Mail. Indeed it has been heavily subsidised by other Royal Mail activities for many years. Most publishers would have closed it down long ago.

A recent review looked at several options – (1) cease publication, (2) charge the full cost to subscribers, (3) change the nature of the *Bulletin* to make it a fully commercial magazine, taking advertising, on sale generally. You will be pleased to know that the first option was rejected. The subsidy will be closely monitored and it may be necessary to increase the subscriptions fairly substantially before too long – although we will keep any increase to the absolute minimum.

It would help matters if we could attract more subscribers and strenuous efforts are being made by Royal Mail in that direction. Existing readers can help by recommending the *Bulletin* to fellow stamp collectors. If you would like a sample copy sent to a potential subscriber, please send me his or her name and address and a copy will be forwarded.

This brings us to transforming the *Bulletin* into a fully-fledged commercial magazine. There are strong arguments both for and against, and many factors to be considered – not least what existing readers feel about it. I would envisage a 72-page A4 – size magazine, with a mix of black and white and colour illustrations. The usual *Bulletin* features would continue but the greater number of pages would enable us to provide more on past issues, history of the postal service, news of events – exhibitions, stamp fairs, etc., and of course advertisements from stamp and cover dealers. We might even consider more features on non-British stamps. At present the *Bulletin* is restricted to British issues, overseas stamps are usually only mentioned in articles on thematic collecting and stamp design. I would be interested in receiving your comments on this option. I must stress that no decision has been

taken, so all views will be welcome and given careful consideration both by myself and my senior colleagues. I regret I will be unable to reply personally to all letters. Meanwhile it is business as usual; any major changes to the *Bulletin* will be announced here in due time.

Consideration is also being given to Royal Mail National staging "philatelic and social events" for collectors. These could include visits to places of interest to collectors, e.g. museums, printers, designers, talks and displays relating to British stamps and stamp collecting which would involve RMN staff and outside experts. These events would give collectors the opportunity to meet with one another and talk directly to Royal Mail staff and external experts about stamps and philatelic matters. Events would probably be held in London and major cities with a small charge made to cover the administration and catering costs. If you think such events would be worthwhile, or you have ideas for consideration do please write in. Again nothing has been decided, and all suggestions are welcome. We are eager to know if many of you are interested, potential participants in such events. All letters should be addressed to: The Editor, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail National, 76 Turnmill Street, LONDON EC1M 5NS. Please keep letters fairly brief – I don't want to spend so much time reading them that I don't have time to produce next month's *Bulletin*!

I look forward to hearing from you.



J R HOLMAN *Editor*

British Special Issues

Our features on British Special Issues of the past began in August 1974 and have proved very popular. Readers have suggested that we reprint past articles in booklet form and speed up the publication of articles on more recent issues. The latest article on the 1984 Christmas stamps, was published in November 1992. It is proposed that features on the issues of 1985 onwards will be published in booklet format; available from the Bureau at a modest price. We aim to publish the 1985 booklet during 1993; with further booklets on the issues of 1986–92 to follow. In due course, we hope to publish the articles on the 1924–84 issues in booklet format – we are looking at the best way of doing this.

We will publish here details of these Special Issues booklets as they become available.

Orchids

16 March 1993



Five stamps marking the 14th World Orchid Conference, Glasgow 28 April-2 May 1993, go on sale at post offices, the British Philatelic Bureau, Collections, and philatelic counters, on 16 March 1993.

The **18p** stamp features *Dendrobium hellwigianum* which is widely distributed in the mountains of east New Guinea. It was discovered by Franz Hellwig (1861-89), an early explorer of the New Guinea interior. The flowers of this species vary from greyish blue to purple, to occasionally white or pale yellow. The leaves are unusual in that they are almost round in cross-section.



The **24p** stamp depicts *Paphiopedilum Maudiae* 'Magnificum' which is a particularly good clone of *Paphiopedilum Maudiae*. This is a man-made cross between two fine green-and white-flowered varieties – *Paphiopedilum callosum* var. *sanderiae* from south-east Asia and *P. lawrenceanum* var. *hyeanum* from Borneo. This classic hybrid, raised at the end of the last century, remains popular in orchid collections.

The **28p** value shows *Cymbidium lowianum* which has long, arching spikes with up to 40 flowers on each. It was originally introduced from Burma in 1877.



The **33p** denomination features *Vanda Rothschildiana*, a cross between *Vanda coerulea*, a blue-flowered species from the Himalayas and Thailand, and the spectacular *Vanda* (*Euanthe*) *sanderiana*, a native of the Philippines which has pink flowers with brownish chequered markings.

The final value, **39p**, depicts *Dendrobium vexillarius* var. *albiviride* which is from New Guinea. *Vexillarius* means "standard bearer" and, rather appropriately, it was a very fine primrose-coloured form of this which was named "Queen Elizabeth" to commemorate a visit by The Queen to the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, in 1985.

The five stamps cover the following postal needs: 18p basic 2nd class inland rate; 24p basic 1st class inland and EC rate; 28p Europe, non-EC basic rate; 33p worldwide postcard rate; and 39p basic airmail letter rate.

The first world orchid conference was held in St Louis, Missouri, in 1954. This event now takes place every three years in a different continent and hemisphere, drawing together thousands of people of all nationalities, languages, cultures, ages and professions. Only once before has it come to Britain (London, 1960), so for many its staging in Glasgow in 1993 will be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to see such a spectacular

ROYAL MAIL MINT STAMPS

ORCHIDS

20c (6) 1994



Photograph: The Herbarium, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew
Specimen: *Ophrys sphegodes* (Common Spotted Orchid)

The double rubers of some European species were used as both a cure and an aphrodisiac, and gave rise to the name given them by the ancient Greeks: for *orchis* literally means 'testicle' in Greek. Shakespeare included 'dead men's fingers' and 'long purples' in *Ophelia's* garland. Around the time also, the fragrant *Laelia* plantlets, the first commercial orchid product, was being introduced into Europe by the Spaniards returning from the New World. By the 1820s WILLIAM HOOKER, in Glasgow, and later at Kew, was describing species sent home by plant explorers such as GEORGE URBEN SERNER in Guatemala, THOMAS LORE in Java and his



William Hooker (1785-1833)
First Secretary of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew



orchids
the first
world
wealthy
World-4
Albans -
employed
more exact

own son, JOSEPH, in
Sikkim. JOHN LINDLEY,
senior secretary of the
Horticultural Society of
London, was producing
a major work on

the classification of the orchids. The species vary greatly and are classified into several sections, one of which, *Oxyglossum* (meaning 'sharp tongue' because of its lip shape), has its centre of distribution in the high mountains of New Guinea. As a result of collections made by staff of the Royal Botanic Garden at Edinburgh during several expeditions, some of these attractive, dwarf, sub-alpine species have been introduced into cultivation.

Slipper Orchids were originally all included in the genus *Cypripedium*. They share, among other characteristics, a pouched or slipper-like lip, hence their common name. They occur in temperate regions of the old and new worlds - there is one very representative in Britain - and in the tropics where the American species are classified in *Selenipedium* and *Phaiacypedium* and the Asiatic in *Paphiopedilum*, the last two both popular with the amateur orchid grower.

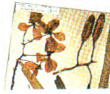


Cymbidium lowianum

Photograph: *Cymbidium lowianum* (Loddiges)
Specimen: *Cymbidium lowianum* (Loddiges)

Cymbidiums have for centuries been cultivated in eastern Asia, particularly China where they were held in high esteem by Confucius 2,500 years ago. They have been depicted on ornamental paintings and porcelain for hundreds of years. They are, perhaps, the best known of the exotic orchids, being widely available as pot-plants, cut-flower spikes or as individual 'button-holes'.

Vandas are recognised by a distinctive habit of growth and large, showy flowers and are distributed in tropical regions of the old world from India south and east as far as the Solomon Islands. The name is Sanskrit in origin and the genus has been popular among orchid hybridisers, giving rise to many spectacular cultivars.



Vanda rothschildiana



Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorbier Road
ILKESTON
Derbyshire
DE7 4AB

wealth of orchids displayed under the one roof. The conference will be held at the prestigious Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre; the displays of orchids will be open to the public.

Stamps to commemorate the conference are also being issued by the Jersey Post Office (26 January 1993).

The stamps were designed by Pandora Sellars. Mrs Sellars was born in Herefordshire in 1936 and received her artistic education at Hereford and Cheltenham School of Art, eventually specialising in printed textiles. She has worked as a freelance botanical illustrator for the Kew magazine and other publications. Her husband's orchid collection provides her with inspiration for her work.

perilously close many species are to extinction then it will be more than ample return for any effort I have put into these designs".

Technical Details

<i>Printers:</i>	Harrison & Sons Ltd
<i>Process:</i>	Photogravure
<i>Size:</i>	41 x 30mm, horizontal
<i>Sheets:</i>	100
<i>Perforation:</i>	15 x 14
<i>Phosphor:</i>	Phosphor Coated Paper
<i>Gum:</i>	PVA Dextrin
<i>Presentation Pack:</i>	No. 236, price £1.75
<i>Stamp Cards:</i>	Nos 151 A-E, price 21p each

First Day Facilities

Unstamped Royal Mail first day cover envelopes will be available from main post offices, the Bureau, Collections, and philatelic counters approximately two weeks before 16 March, price 21p.

The Bureau will provide a first day cover service – collectors may order the Royal Mail cover bearing the five stamps cancelled with a pictorial "First Day of Issue" postmark of the Bureau or Glasgow price £2.03 (including VAT) to UK addresses, £1.73 to overseas addresses (no VAT). Orders for first day covers must be received at the Bureau by 16 March.

Collectors may send their own stamped covers, on the day of issue, for the Bureau or Glasgow cancels, to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, EDINBURGH EH3 5TT, or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail Glasgow, George Square, GLASGOW G2 1AA. The outer envelope should be endorsed "Pictorial First Day of Issue postmark".

The Glasgow pictorial postmark features the salmon from the city's coat of arms.

First Day Posting Boxes will be provided at most main post offices for collectors who wish to post covers to receive the standard, non-pictorial "First Day of Issue" handstamps.

Details of other special handstamps, sponsored by Royal Mail, stamp dealers and others, will be found in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – the Royal Mail's magazine for postmark collectors. It is available on subscription from the British Philatelic Bureau: £10 UK and Europe, £21.75 Rest of World (Airmail.)

There will be no souvenir covers; these have now been discontinued.



Her first stamp work was for the Jersey Post Office – the 13p stamp in the Jersey Lilies set (28 January 1986, S. G. 380) features her illustration of the Jersey Lily (*Amaryllis belladonna*); followed by three stamps in the Europa: Environmental Conservation set (21 April 1986, S. G. 386/8). She describes her work on the Royal Mail Orchid stamps as an "artistically rewarding project". She worked closely with staff at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew and Edinburgh. Mrs Sellars comments: "Most people have an image of orchids as large showy blooms seen in florists shops or worn in corsages by celebrities. If these stamps can make people more aware of the great beauty and diversity of this genus and how

Royal Mail Philatelic Products

BARRY BURKE *Products Manager, Royal Mail*

This month, I would like to tell you about two new products which I know will be of interest to all serious collectors (which is how I define *Bulletin* readers!)

Aircards

Many overseas post offices produce pre-paid postcards, a fair number of these postcards being pictorial. I am often asked by collectors why Royal Mail does not do likewise, particularly given the number of tourists who come to the UK each year. Well, on 2 March a set of five pre-paid postcards will be issued which I am sure will be of interest not only to tourists but also to collectors in general and Aerophilatelists and postal stationery specialists in particular.

2 March is an appropriate issue date as it is the opening day of both Stampex and Eur-Apex (the exhibition for everyone interested in aerophilately) and 1993 a significant year as it marks the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Royal Air Force.

The four postcards, to be known collectively as "Aircards", will be illustrated with very appropriate images trawled from Post Office Archives.

A feature which will be of particular interest is the emblem being used to show postage has been pre-paid. *Bulletin* readers will probably recollect the 1988 CEPT special stamp issue on the theme of Transport. We have taken the artwork used for the 34p stamp from this set and adapted it by removing the CEPT emblem and amending the value artwork so it now reads '33' – 33p being the worldwide airmail rate for postcards. The original photograph on which this stamp design was based is featured on the picture side of all four cards. A traditional blue airmail indicator will also be pre-printed on the reverse of these cards.

As many collectors will consider this pre-paid emblem, printed on the reverse of the cards, to be a "new issue", Aircards will be accepted for first day of issue cancellation. First Day Cover posting boxes will, of course be open on 2 March as this is also the issue date for the new £10 definitive stamp.

Aircards will be obtainable from philatelic

counters, Collections and Post Shop Plus outlets priced 75p each or £3 for the four card set. They will also be available from the British Philatelic Bureau in sets only priced £3 and from the Royal Mail stand at Stampex. The organisers of Eur-Apex have sponsored special handstamps for each day of the joint exhibitions, so the Royal Horticultural Halls will be well worth a visit next month.

At time of writing (December 1992), I am afraid we do not have any finished examples of Aircards to illustrate; these will appear in next month's *Bulletin*.

Stamp Advisory Committee Review

Since its inception in 1968, the work of the Stamp Advisory Committee has seldom received due credit. The Committee has worked behind closed doors, the results of its deliberations only becoming apparent when a set of stamps is finally issued.

It is probably true to say that the stamp-buying public – and indeed many philatelists – have only sketchy knowledge of the Committee's vital contribution to every stamp issued by Royal Mail. As a result, the story behind the development of stamps remains largely untold (or occasionally mis-told), and the reasons behind a particular choice of designs being made, shrouded in mystery and open to mis-interpretation.

A new publication, *The Stamp Advisory Committee Review*, has been designed to redress the balance by providing detailed and accurate documentation of the Committee's deliberations and decisions, the result of which was the 1992 stamp programme. The *Review* features full-colour illustrations of all presentation visuals and artwork seen by the Committee and this is the first time such material has been comprehensively featured in a single publication.

As such, we believe the *Review* will prove a unique and invaluable research document for years to come and a fascinating read for anyone with more than a passing interest in British stamps.

To be published on 5 April, *The Stamp Advisory Committee Review* will be available by mail order from the British Philatelic Bureau and from philatelic counters, Collections and Post Shop Plus outlets, price £9.87. As it is the first time such a document has been published by Royal Mail and demand is an unknown quantity, we are only printing a limited quantity of the *Review* initially, so *Bulletin* readers are advised to place orders early to avoid disappointment.

Jeffery Matthews's Colour Scheme for Machin Definitives

The Background Story: Part 2

ANGELA REEVES, FCSD FSTD *Design and Editorial Manager, Royal Mail*

Continued from January

Translation to Printing Ink

The next stage was to translate the paint swatches into actual printing inks, ultimately to be seen on the stamp by the public.

Ken Scrimgeour of Harrison & Sons Limited, The Post Office's main stamp supplier, came to see me in January 1985 to see the colours and discuss the way forward. He was head of Harrison's extensive laboratories and had years of experience of formulating colours in printing inks. This is skilled work as the actual chemicals in the inks can react with each other to produce very odd results, for example, some greens go black when mixed with certain yellows.

We then called a round-table meeting to explain what we were trying to achieve to all concerned at Harrison's, both administrative/managerial and printing staff. It was essential to carry them with us into an exercise which was to be rigorous and exacting. We explained all our thinking, including reminding everyone of the Cambridge report and how expediences in the intervening period had eroded the original intentions and image of this elegant stamp design. I visited Ken's lab to examine colours – literally a finger smudge on paper from a palette of mixed ink. We discussed the breakdown of each colour into its constituent parts, looked at the balance of one part with another, and at the actual "starting points", whether, for instance, a blue was warm or cool based as this would influence the final colour.

Ken set to work in his lab, virtually disappearing without trace until he presented 16 plus ink swatches on paper at a meeting in Finsbury Square with Jeffery and myself on 10 June 1985. On first sight, our hearts sank and neither of us knew what to say. We had both become so accustomed to the thick and even quality of the paint colours that we forgot that ink, smudged and streaked on by hand is very different, almost thin and watery by comparison. However, when we really looked into the actual colour of the inks and Ken explained that the final, printed result would be flat and even, we realised that he had done an exceptionally good job.

He had also proofed the "Harrison head" on a flat-bed press in his lab to give some effect of the tonal breakdown of the ink. Jeffery and I asked for some changes, fairly minimal, to be incorporated at the next proofing stage.

First, some explanation. When a colour is printed by gravure the depth of the gravure cell will determine how strong the colour is. A shallow cell will print a thin film of ink which allows the light to penetrate it and reflect off the white paper behind the ink (printing inks being semi-transparent). The result is a pale version of the basic colour. Deeper gravure cells print thicker films of ink which do not allow the light to reach the paper and, therefore, the colour is darker. The cell depths are not only adjusted to show the image (for example, light and dark areas within The Queen's head), but also for the tone of the colour to be used – a dark blue requires much deeper cells overall than a pale green.

Another aim with this colour range was to make the tones of the colours as close as they could be and avoid contrasting colours by using thin or thick ink films. So the next stage was to take each of the 16 colours and proof them on the same cylinder, actually on press. The cylinder used, 18p number 4 made in July 1984, was chosen because the cell structure aided the effect we wished to achieve: deep cells around the head to achieve a solid colour background and shallow cells within the head to make for a light image in this area. We could compare the tonality of each colour as we were working from a common control base.

These sheets were presented to me in October 1985. Only two sheets for each colour were ever pulled; one sheet of each was destroyed by Post Office security staff at Harrison's and the final sheets rest, currently, in a safe at Harrison's. Eventually they will go to the National Postal Museum. Some sheets have had small amounts cut from them, sent to The House of Questa to match colours for these stamps they print – Country (Regional) stamps and national definitives in prestige stamp books.

All To No Avail?

The exercise seemed to be progressing well and



the blow, when it came, was quite unexpected (at least, by the Design Division). The colours themselves were fine, the problem lay in attempting to use a system of *pairs* of colours. Suddenly it was realised that, when a tariff changed, there was no guarantee that old values would remain unused – they might indeed merely change roles. For example, the old 1st class rate might become the new 2nd class rate (unlikely but possible). The Royal Mail has a rule that states that a value may not change colour unless there is at least a three-month gap between the old colour/value combination and the new one (to enable old stocks to be used up and to avoid confusion for those sorting mail). Given a system that requires the 1st class (value X, colour light blue) suddenly to become 2nd class (value Y, colour light blue) this rule could not be maintained. The system could not be made to work.

Had all this work been done in vain? Despite not being able to use the colours as a colour system, we decided quite simply to use the

colours as and when tariff changes gave us the opportunity to introduce these new, stronger and more pleasant colours into the range. Royal Mail Stamps supported this view and the first results appeared in July and August 1988: 2p Dark Green, 4p Light Blue, 5p Ash Pink, 14p Dark Blue, 19p Flame, 20p Sea Green, 23p Light Green, 27p Rust, 32p Dark Turquoise, 35p Dark Brown, and 75p Dark Grey.

The unused colours remaining are: Sand, Light Tan, Purple, Crimson, and Light Grey.

Exercise Repeated

However, our current range of colours was not large enough for the complete range and in the spring of 1988 we were asked to provide another 16 colours. Once again Jeffery was involved and we held our first meeting on the second batch of colours in June 1988. The problem now was that as the first 16 colours covered the available colour spectrum fairly broadly, could we find “holes” in this spectrum that would leave room for new colours, still strong in tone and hue and

easily memorable? This task was difficult and we do not think the second batch of colours were so simple or easy to use as the first batch. We recommended that they be used for the less usual and less used rates.

We looked at all available ink references to obtain an idea of the sorts of colours we had not used already. Once again Jeffery went back to basics mixing all the colours from scratch; no existing inks mixes were used.

Jeffery submitted his new "palette" for final presentation on 3 August 1988. Once again Ken Scrimgeour took the paint chips for ink matching. Jeffery's complete colour palette is as follows: Purple*, Mauve, Shocking Pink, Ash Pink*, Old Gold, Flame*, Rust*, Rhododendron, Dark Maroon, Salmon Pink, Terracotta, Light Tan*, Red, Dark Brown*, Dark Grey*, Dark Green*, Dark Blue*, Dark Turquoise*, Sea Green*, Light Green*, Sage Green, Sand*, Slate Blue, Ultramarine, Light Blue*, Emerald Green, Lime Green, Stone, Olive Green, and Light Grey* (*denotes from the first range).

It should be noted that Crimson (never used) from the first range, was discontinued so that Red and Dark Maroon could be included (a gain of one colour).

The colour of stamps which form part of the permanent range are unlikely to change are as follows: 1p Dark Maroon (almost as previous colour), 2p Dark Green, 3p Shocking Pink (almost as previous colour), 4p Light Blue, 5p Ash Pink, 10p Light Tan, 20p Sea Green, 50p Sand, and 75p Dark Grey.

Since then Bright Blue and Black were added for two of the Penny Black Anniversary Definitives of 1990.

The Future

The follow up to this exercise is that Royal Mail is considering using stamp paper with no optical brightness as part of an evolving "green" policy. Because this paper is warmer in hue it can change the colours slightly and this process will have to be checked for each of 31 colours to make sure it does not adversely affect them. So the work of monitoring the colours in constant, operational choice never really ceases.

© Angela Reeves

Editor's Note: For details of the values of stamps on which Jeffery Matthews colours have been used, readers are referred to the *Bulletin* of September 1991 (pp. 14-15).

Eur-Apex '93

A major exhibition of aerophilately will form part of Spring Stampex at the Royal Horticultural Society halls, Westminster from 2-7 March 1993. Over 500 frames of exhibits will be on show. Eur-Apex '93 is being organised by the British Aerophilatic Federation, and sponsored by Harmers of London and the British Philatelic Trust. The organisers state:

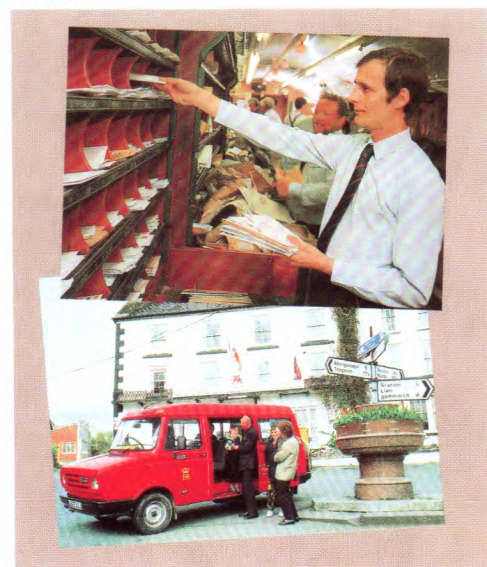
"Such has been the response, that the frame availability has needed to be stretched to the limit. A truly international flavour with exhibits from all continents with a preponderance of first time exhibits. The literature class is likewise well supported.

"With this support from exhibitors and the help and sponsorship from many quarters, Eur-Apex '93 is assured of success and will undoubtedly leave a landmark in UK philatelic exhibitions. Gone are the "fringe" and "poor relation" tags given to aerophilately in the past – it now confirms its rightful place in our hobby."

Further information from: EUR-APEX '93, 21 Lynton Close, Hurstpierpoint, HASSECKS, W. Sussex, BN6 9AN.

NPM Postcards

Shown here are two of the five postcards issued by the National Postal Museum on 19 January. They feature a Post Bus at Llanwrtyd Wells, Wales; and sorting mail on a Travelling Post Office.



Gems from the R M Phillips Collection

206. 1883-4 10s Cobalt

The Queen Victoria 10s stamp issued in April 1884 exists in ultramarine and cobalt shades on both white and blued paper. The cobalt shade is the rarer of the two, on page 40 of Vol. XXXIX of the Phillips Collection can be seen some five used single examples of the 2s6d, 5s, and 10s stamps on blued paper, and a magnificent block of six of the 10s in cobalt on blued paper. This block bears six clear impressions of the Belfast datestamp of 21 August 1884. This rare cobalt stamp, is catalogued by Stanley Gibbons at £3750 for a used single (S.G. 177a, 1992/93 Part 1 catalogue).



The Phillips Collection can be seen at the National Postal Museum in London's Chief Post Office, King Edward Street, LONDON EC1A 1LP. Open Monday-Friday 9.30am to 4.30pm, admission free. The NPM is a few minutes walk from St Paul's Cathedral and underground station.

Competition



Win £75 worth of British stamps

Enter this month's competition and stand a chance of winning £75 worth of current British philatelic products of your choice – stamps, stamp books, postcards, albums, etc. Answer the questions below, the answers will be found in this month's *Bulletin*, and send with your name and address on a postcard to: February Competition, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail National, 76-86 Turnmill Street, LONDON EC1M 5NS to arrive by 26 March.

The sender of the first all-correct entry drawn will be invited to order £75 of philatelic products; five runners-up will be sent presentation packs of the Orchids stamps. Answers and winners' names will be published in the May *Bulletin*.

1. Which Court beauty was the model for Britannia on coins in Charles II's reign?
2. In which city is the 14th World Orchid Conference being held?
3. How many frames of exhibition will be on show at Eur-Apex '93?
4. Who wrote *The Penny Post 1680-1918*?
5. What is the date of issue of the new "Air-Cards"?

The competition is not open to staff (and their families) of Royal Mail National and its agents. No correspondence will be entered into; the Editor's decision will be final.

The winners of the November competition were:

C Bond of Missouri, USA (£75 worth of philatelic products); T Jones of Bristol; P King of Dorset; W Irving of Zimbabwe; J Nelson of Middlesex; and A Soulsby of Cleveland (Swans presentation packs).

The answers were: 1. Yvonne Gilbert; 2. Whitehall (Horseguards Parade); 3. 10 November 1992; 4. 6d; 5. National Postal Museum.

Our thanks to all who entered.

New Stamp Books

Shown here are the covers of the 50p and £1 machine books which will be available from the British Philatelic Bureau, Collections, and philatelic counters from 9 February. The books will be available from machines at post offices and other retail outlets as supplies of earlier books are exhausted. These books start a new series of cover designs.

The theme for the 50p book is "Postal History" – this first cover design features Airmail handstamps. The £1 book design shows the University of Wales, the first in the series on Educational Institutions. The University of Wales celebrates its centenary in 1993. The £1 book contains stamps printed by Walsall Security Printers – see January *Bulletin* (page 103) for details.



A new NVI book with a cover change is also to be available from 9 February 1993. The book will contain 10 x 1st class NVI stamps; the cover will feature an advertisement for the new "Gift Giving" greetings stamps, depicting Rupert Bear. It will be printed by Walsall Security Printers Ltd in offset-lithography on advanced coated paper with PVA Dextrin gum.

This book is intended to be available for a limited period only – throughout February and March or until stocks of this variety are used; thereafter we will revert to standard red book covers.

Swans – Cylinder Numbers and Colours

The cylinder and colours used were as follows:
 18p: 4A (Gold) 1B (Greenish Yellow) 1C (Olive-Bistre) 1D (Light Green) 1E (Vermilion) 5F (Grey Black) P3 (Phosphor)

24p: 1A (Gold) 1B (Yellow Ochre) 1C (Bright Green) 1D (Grey-Brown) 1E (Light Blue) 1F (Slate)

28p: 1A (Gold) 1B (Greenish Grey) 1C (Cinnamon) 2D (Blue-Green) 2E (Bistre-Brown) 1F (Orange-Vermilion) 1G (Grey-Black)

33p: 1A (Gold) 1B (Ochre) 1C (Apple Green) 1D (Olive Brown) 1E (Yellow Orange) 1F (Blackish-Olive)

39p: 1A (Gold) 1B (Yellow Ochre) 1C (Bright Green) 1D (Cobalt) 1E (Yellow-Brown) 1F (Slate-Black)



Postal Stationery Update

A pictorial aerogramme will go on sale on 9 February 1993, price £2 per pack of six. The aerogramme, printed by McCorquodale Envelopes Limited, has been designed by DMB&B Direct to promote the Royal Mail International Pen Pal Club. The packs will be available from the British Philatelic Bureau, philatelic counters, and Collections.

In November 1992 (page 66) we gave details

of Royal Mail National's "Mail Packs" which are on trial sale at about 100 main post offices in the Midlands and also available from the Bureau, Collections and philatelic counters. These packs bear postage paid symbols valid for UK postage up to 500g C4 size or 350g C5 size, not up to 350g and 250g as stated earlier. The approximate sizes of the packs, once sealed for use, are: C4 – 310 x 250mm, C5 260 x 185mm.

In March 1991 (p. 148) we illustrated a Royal Mail International "Air Pack" which went on trial sale in London and Anglia areas in September 1990, and nationally in April 1991. A new printing of these packs has additional white space alongside the printed postage impression for affixing adhesive stamps to prepay additional postage on packs above the weight permitted by the impression. Air packs are available from main post offices, but are *not* available from the British Philatelic Bureau, Collections, or philatelic counters. Most offices should now have the new printing of these packs.

Philatelic Counter Handstamp

Please note that the reference number for the Trafalgar Square Philatelic Counter handstamp is 2124 *not* 2123 as stated in the June *Bulletin* (page 227). This number should be quoted when sending covers to the Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail City of London, KEB, LONDON EC1A 1AA. No 2123 is the handstamp for the London Chief Office Philatelic Counter which shows St Paul's Cathedral. Covers for this should also be sent to the above mentioned Special Handstamp Centre.

Royal Mail Cover of Quality Awards, 1992

Royal Mail invites entries for its second "Cover of Quality Awards" competition to promote excellence in First Day or Commemorative Cover design, original approach and commercial success.

There are four individual category awards in the competition – the best of these will receive the award for "Cover of Quality 1992". A certificate of commendation will be awarded to runners-up. The individual categories are Charity/Community; Commemorative; Promotional; and General. One entry per category is allowed from each manufacturer. Each category winner will receive a trophy and the winner of the Charity/Community section will receive £1000 for that cause. Entries are welcomed from both small and large organisations.

Mr Colin Pawson, Royal Mail's Head of Philatelic Marketing says: "We are keen to build on our relationship with cover producers. By doing so, we demonstrate our commitment to support the hobby, and the cover producers. We have seen some excellent covers in past years, which combine originality, good design, and commercial support. It is this which we want to encourage. We hope to see many producers, charities and other organisations submit their best work."

The Cover of Quality Awards will apply to all covers produced from January to December 1992. Closing date for entry is 31 March 1993; the Awards will be presented in May. Entry details and application forms are available from: Mr Kris Menon, Royal Mail National, 76-86 Turnmill Street, LONDON EC1M 5NS.

Definitive Stamps – Printing Numbers

In September 1991 we announced the introduction of printing numbers (some collectors call them "warrant numbers") in the margins of sheets of definitive stamps. In



response to requests, we list here the numbers used to date – we hope this will be of help to readers who want to know which numbers have been used so they can seek examples for their collections.

Table of Printing Numbers overleaf

2p	Green	721
3p	Dark Pink	727
4p	Deep Turquoise	790 921
5p	Ash Pink	731
6p	Lime Green	676 865
10p	Light Tan	730 822 889
18p	Light Green	611 672 732 733 820 870 898 910
20p	Sea Green	710 866 922
24p	Rust	673 682 683 712 734 735 821 871 899 911
30p	Sage	808 890
33p	Emerald	681 809 867
34p	Purple	863
50p	Sand	728 810 891 923
75p	Dark Grey	729 868 924

Posting Boxes

138. Shop Boxes

This month we feature two posting boxes sited in shops.

The first photograph, submitted by Simon East of Andover, Hants, shows a George V box which stood outside Bentall's in Kingston Upon Thames. Mr East comments: "Not only is it an unusual colour and design, but contrary to what is usual for George V boxes, (namely the omission of the 'V'), it has the 'V' inserted beneath the 'GR'."



The second illustration features another George V box, this time in a hardware shop in Chichester, West Sussex. "The shop had a sub post office in it", writes Micheal Darby of Chichester, who sent in the photograph, "but the box was well away from that area." The shop had ceased trading by 1990.

I have on file a considerable number of photographs and transparencies awaiting publication in this "Posting Boxes" feature. I regret I cannot accept any more and should be grateful if readers would not send any more in. Thank you. Ed.

Readers interested in letter boxes may like to join the Letter Box Study Group – details of which can be obtained by sending a stamped addressed envelope to the Secretary: Sally Jones, 43 Miall Road, Hall Green, Birmingham B28 9BS.

Six Month Digest

Listed below are the issues of the past six months and the proposed dates of issue for stamps until July 1993. Any change in these dates will be notified in the Bulletin. British Philatelic Bureau order codes are quoted where known.

1 Sep	Green Issue stamp cards (AQ224)
8 Sep	4 x 33p book (UB062)
15 Sep	Green Issue stamps (AS516)
15 Sep	Green Issue pack (AP107)
15 Sep	NPM Artefacts postcards (NQ914)
15 Sep	NPM Machin postcard (NQ915)
22 Sep	50p book – Sheriff's Millennium (TB019)
22 Sep	£1 book – Sheriff's Millennium (TB020)
22 Sep	4 x 1st class book/W (UB055)
22 Sep	4 x 2nd class book/W (UB054)
22 Sep	10 x 1st class book/W (UB057)
22 Sep	10 x 2nd class book/W (UB056)
22 Sep	10 x 1st class book/H (UB061)
22 Sep	10 x 2nd class book/H (UB060)
22 Sep	10 x 1st class book/Q (UB059)
22 Sep	10 x 2nd class book/Q (UB058)
29 Sep	Single European Market stamp card (AQ229)
6 Oct	Christmas aerogramme (QX015)
13 Oct	Single Euro Market stamp (AS521)
13 Oct	Single Euro Market pack (AP108)
27 Oct	Tolkien Prestige Stamp Book (YB004)
27 Oct	Christmas stamp cards (AQ230)
27 Oct	Mail Pack C4, 1st class (RV001)
27 Oct	Mail Pack C4, 2nd class (RV002)
27 Oct	Mail Pack C5, 1st class (RW001)
27 Oct	Mail Pack C5, 2nd class (RW002)
10 Nov	Christmas stamps (AS522)
10 Nov	Christmas pack (AP109)
10 Nov	Christmas stamp book (UB063)
10 Nov	1992 Collectors' Pack (AR027)
10 Nov	1992 Yearbook (AY031)
1 Dec	50th Anniv Aerogramme (QO028)
1 Dec	Aerogramme Pack (QO027)

1993

5 Jan	Swans stamp cards (AQ236)
19 Jan	Swans stamps (AS528)
19 Jan	Swans pack (AP110)
19 Jan	Greetings stamp cards (JQ001)
19 Jan	NPM "People in the Post" cards (NQ917)

Forthcoming

2 Feb	Greetings stamps and pack
2 Feb	Marine Timekeepers stamp cards
9 Feb	50p book – Postal History No 1
9 Feb	£1 book – Educational Institutions No 1
9 Feb	10 x 1st class book/W

9 Feb

16 Feb

16 Feb

2 Mar

2 Mar

2 Mar

16 Mar

16 Mar

16 Mar

23 Mar†

6 Apr

6 Apr

27 Apr

6 May

11 May

1 Jun

15 Jun

15 Jun†

6 Jul

20 Jul

Pen Pal Aerogramme Pack
Marine Timekeepers stamps and pack
High Value stamp cards
£10 Definitive
Orchids stamp cards
"Air Cards" (4 designs)
Orchids stamps and pack
10 x 2nd class book/W
4 x 1st class book/W
Scot. Aerogramme (Curling)
50p book – Postal History No 2
£1 book – Educational Institutions No 2
Europa stamp cards
NPM "Gems of the Museum" cards
Europa stamps and pack
Roman Britain stamp cards
Roman Britain stamps/pack
Scot Aerogramme (Q. Margaret)
Inland Waterways stamp cards
Inland Waterways stamps/pack

Notes:

The 4 x 33p book (8 September) has revised text and contains stamps on paper with PVA Dextrin gum. The previous printing (September 1991) had PVA gum.

The NVI stamp books (22 September) include the revised wording about the use of NVI stamps on overseas mail but do not have the Olympic/Paralympic logos on the front cover.

The Walsall 10 x 1st book of 9 February bears a reference to Greetings books on the back cover. The Walsall books (16 March) have stamps with PVA gum.

W = Printed by Walsall Security Printers;

H = Harrison & Sons; Q = House of Questa.

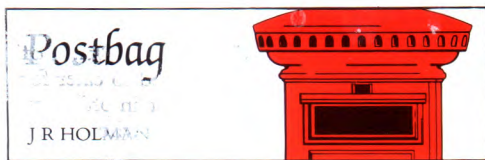
† = Provisional date of issue

1994 Special Stamp Programme

Royal Mail is pleased to announce preliminary details of the 1994 special stamp programme. This will include the third set of "Seasons" stamps – Summertime. The dates of issue and values will be announced later.

The subjects are:

January	Railway Mania
March	Silver Jubilee of Prince Charles's Investiture
April	Picture Postcard Centenary
May	Europa: European Discoveries
June	Liberation
July	Golf
August	Summertime
September	Sherlock Holmes
November	Christmas



1971 Decimal Definitive First Day Covers

Reports continue to come in of covers serviced at offices which remained open during the 1971 strike.

Mr C J Groves-Kirkly has submitted photocopies of covers with clear impressions of the 15 February 1971 circular datestamps of Shenley Church End, Bletchley, Bucks; and Bugbrooke, Northampton.

D M Williams of Bristol reports a cover of the ½p-9p stamps bearing the OLDLAND COMMON BRISTOL circular datestamp of 15 February 1971. The cover, produced by Cotswold Covers, bears a private cachet NO SPECIAL CANCELLATIONS WERE IN USE DUE TO THE POSTAL STRIKE.

Mr Williams writes: "I have been following the correspondence concerning the inaugural decimal issue on 15 February 1971 with interest. I have an attractive cover with a POSTING DELAYED BY THE POST OFFICE STRIKE 1971 cachet. Were all the cachets identical? I have always hoped that you could include a series on First Day Covers. There is tremendous scope, I feel, for such a feature. It could include coin covers, signed covers, TPO covers, paquebots, etc. Collectors could write about their favourite covers and describe their attempts to track down elusive items – sometimes success is achieved by rummaging in a shoe box at a jumble sale!"

In answer to Mr Williams's query about the 1971 "Delayed" cachets – no they were not all identical – they are many different variations. These cachets have been recorded by James Mackay in his *Postal History Annual* for 1981, 1982, 1984 and by Brian Pask and Colin Peachey in *Twenty Years of First Day Postmarks* (British Postmark Society, 1983). Copies of the *Postal History Annual* may still be available from specialist philatelic literature dealers; the Pask & Peachey book is available from Colin Peachey, 19 Moorland Road, HEMEL HEMPSTEAD, Herts, HP1 1NH, price £3.50.

I note Mr Williams's comment on articles on first day cover collecting and will be happy to consider for publication short articles (up to 500 words) from collectors about their favourite first day or commemorative cover.

Mail by Bus

David Loudoun of Buckinghamshire writes, having read the piece on postbuses in October (page 44): "...when I was aged between 4 and 10 years I lived in Lairg and Rosehall in Sutherlandshire and we had, as I recall, 3 routes out of Lairg before 1934 carrying mail, passengers and freight to Tongue, Scourie and another place. These were Royal Mail Red vans run by the then GPO, were chain driven and probably made by Trojan or Clyno – I am sure of this because I travelled on them."

We should be interested to hear from any readers who have photographs of the bus referred to by Mr Loudoun, or can add further information. A number of pre-war bus services carried mail; Mr J W Walton wrote about such a service in Cumberland in the 1920s in "Postbag", June 1992, page 232.

Save the Machin

Since publication of readers' views on the Machin definitive in November, a small number of you have written in support of retaining the design.

Mrs B J Simmons of Devon suggests "a three-quarter profile or full face portrait or series of portraits [of The Queen]; the photographs of Her mother (2 August 1990 issue) and of The Queen herself (21 April 1986) show how much kinder this angle is likely to be than full profile". Mrs Simmons says she loves Mrs Bolton's idea of a series showing the Kings and Queens of England but thinks such a series "would make introduction of new values difficult, and if Elizabeth II were on the highest value, would be rarely seen. We would probably find ourselves with Mary I and James II on our 2nd and 1st class stamps". I would not object to James II, Mrs Simmons – he was, in my view, one of our most interesting monarchs although his reign was short and much criticised.

S K Cole of Avon comments: "The thought of the head of our sovereign being replaced (or displaced) by pictorial design for the definitive issues is horrifying, particularly bearing in mind some of the absolutely repulsive designs that have been appearing at times recently.

"It must be accepted that perhaps a design based upon a more recent portrait may be necessary, but even this thought is disconcerting when thinking of the deformed portrait of the Queen on our new banknotes. If she were the first Elizabeth seeing the portrait I think a number of heads would have rolled. Although I have to use the banknotes I try to avoid looking at them. If our postage stamps carried a portrait with such

a false and unflattering likeness I would no longer want to collect them."

Etienne y Peremans writes from Belgium: "Two comments you report about give two good reasons to keep and go on keeping the Machins: they are 'obviously British' (Dr Spooner) and the United Kingdom's postal position is not that of a 'banana republic' (E Bannister). In a monarchy, the Sovereign's effigy has to be the main design for definitive issues, as the *Royal Mail* has always done it. The Commonwealth and foreign stamps reproduced in your article show perfectly the evils Britain could resist thanks to the Machins: poor designs (Sweden, Spain, USA), tourist propaganda (Isle of Man, Jersey, Zimbabwe), inexpressive items – at least for definitive series (Australia, New Zealand, Norway, Italy, Belgium), and ugly things (Germany, Netherlands, France). But Hong Kong has a perfect ... Machin head!

"As a perfect design, the Machin head offers only two possibilities: to be replaced by another perfect design (the only one I know is the Maklouw head used on coins since 1985), or remain in use for the whole reign, as one did for Queen Victoria."

Egbert Dwelly of W Sussex, a collector for over 60 years, is much concerned that the Machin might be "supplanted" by pictorial stamps. He writes: "We have an honourable name to uphold in the world of stamp design, let us be very, very wary before I we sink into the production of pretty labels."

War-time Air Letters

In the December *Bulletin* (page 89) we gave details of the introduction of air letters (aerogrammes) for civilian use. Air letters to which adhesive stamps had to be affixed went on sale on 7 December 1942, air letters with an imprinted 6d stamp were officially issued on 18 June 1943. Mr A S Goldstone has written in saying that although 18 June was the official first day, he believes the air letters were not available until July. He has an example of the air letter with imprinted stamp cancelled at Sutton Coldfield on 12 July 1943. He would be interested to hear, via the Editor, of examples postmarked prior to this date; does any reader have one actually postmarked 18 June?

All letters sent to the Editor are carefully read; matters of general interest will be dealt with in "Postbag" or other sections of the Bulletin. The Editor regrets that he is unable to reply personally to all letters – to do so would seriously delay production of this, and the Postmark Bulletin.

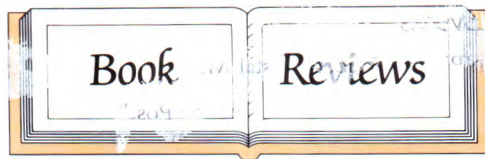
Society News

The **Great Britain Collectors Club of Australia** has recently been formed to cater for collectors of all facets of Great Britain philately. It is intended primarily for those who live in Australia, but overseas collectors are also welcome to join. Scattered across the whole of the country, the principal means of contact will be by a regular quarterly magazine, *The GB Collector*, the first issue of which rolled off the presses in September. Readers who are interested in joining should write to: Michael Sanig, PO Box 147, Tumby Umbi, NSW, 2261, Australia, enclosing a stamped-addressed envelope (Australian stamps) or international reply coupons.

The **Astro-Space Stamp Society**, formed in 1986, publishes a quarterly magazine *Orbit* which includes many illustrations of Space stamps and covers, postal auctions, checklists, and free gifts. New members of the Society receive a free copy of the 1992 Checklist of Stamps featuring Halley's comet, earth stations, astronomers and astronomy. UK membership is £7.50, overseas £12.50. Junior members pay £1 less, and receive a "Space Shuttle" eraser. Application forms are available from: Rev Tony Bird, 37 Avondale Road, BRIDGNORTH, Shropshire, WV16 5DL (enclose SAE or two IRCs).

The **Guildford & District Philatelic Society** has a steadily increasing membership wishing to share knowledge and learn more about their hobby. Many, unable to visit regularly, join for the successful "packet" of members booklets which circulates frequently. These give everyone a chance to fill spaces in their collections without moving from home. Members may sell surplus material at each meeting. The secretary arranges a full and varied programme with society and guest speakers, also informal bourses, and "swap and natter" evenings. New members are always welcome. Telephone Mrs Trisha Stokoe on 0483 416066, or Vic Ditcham on 0483 232410 for further details.

The **Revenue Society of Great Britain** is planning some interesting future activities. Members will be giving a display at the Royal Philatelic Society on 18 February. The Society hopes to hold a meeting at Spring Stampex on 6 March and is exploring the possibilities of a joint meeting with the GB Philatelic Society and staging the platform display at a future Stampex. Details of the Society from: I D Crane, 15 Springbank, Eversley Park Road, LONDON N21 1JH, Tel. 081-886 6776.



A paperback edition of **The Penny Post 1680-1918** by Frank Staff has recently been published. Such has been the relentless march of inflation that this first paperback edition of Mr Staff's seminal work is four times the price of the hardback edition which first saw the light of day in 1964.

Although written by a postal historian essentially for the guidance of students of postal history and collectors of material pertaining to the penny posts, this book contains a great deal of material of general interest to the layman in general and the social historian in particular. Mr Staff has the happy knack of putting the growth of the local posts, the evolution of Uniform Penny Postage and the epic campaign for Universal Penny Postage into the context of the socio-economic history of each period.

Rowland Hill has perhaps unfairly hogged the limelight on account of his reforms of 1839-40, but this book restores the perspective, tracing the development of the agitation for cheap postage back to John Hill in 1659. Even the claims of William Dockwra to have pioneered the first penny post in London (1680) are challenged and Mr Staff adduces convincing evidence in favour of Robert Murray. Later chapters deal with the campaigns for Ocean and Imperial Penny Postage led by Elihu Burritt and John Henniker Heaton which came to fruition in 1908. The dream of Universal Penny Postage was on the point of realisation when the First World War intervened and even inland penny post disappeared in June 1918 when the minimum letter rate was raised to 1½d.

It is a great pity that no attempt has been made to update the text from the hardback version of 1964; in particular the section on provincial penny posts should have been expanded in light of published research by Auckland, Oxley and others in more recent years. The valuable works by Douglas Muir and James Grimwood-Taylor on the advent of Uniform Penny Postage, published to coincide with the 150th anniversary, ought also to have been taken into consideration. Nevertheless, as a brief introduction to the penny postal system the text is still basically sound. 219 pages. Price £9.95. Available from bookshops or

the publishers Waterworth Press, PO Box 60, CAMBRIDGE CB2 2NT.
James Mackay

The sixth (1993) edition of **Collect Benham Covers** is virtually twice the size of the fifth i.e. 176 pages. It provides a full listing of all Benham First Day Covers for Great Britain (including small 'silks' and postcards). Guernsey, Jersey and the Isle of Man. Profusely illustrated, it is ideal for thematic collectors, who can pick out the covers that suit their theme. The listings are arranged in five main sections: GB Large Covers; Definitive and Regional; Small "silks"; "Silk" cards, and Others (Jersey, Guernsey, Isle of Man; Railway). The prices are Benham's own selling prices. Some of the early Benham covers are now in short supply and command high valuations, for example the 1980 Birds set of four small "silk" covers is priced at £85. Available from good stamp shops, or direct from: Benham (A. Buckingham) Ltd, The Bayle, FOLKESTONE, Kent, CT20 1SD. Price £4.99.

In 1979 Douglas Muir and Martin Robinson published **An Introduction to British Postal Mechanisation** – a most useful guide to those new to an interesting, but complicated subject. Supplements were published in 1981 and 1983 and a third supplement, sub-titled "Into the Nineties – Development 1983-1992" is now available.

The Royal Mail's mechanisation plan was completed in 1987 with the opening of the London West MLO (Mechanised Letter Office). However changes continue. MLOs are refurbished, or move into new buildings, and new machinery is introduced. In his introduction to the supplement Mr Robinson lists the "remarkable number of development" in the years 1983-1992. "Some" he says "could have been foreseen, others not". The "main strands" of the development are: national introduction of opacified coding tape; introduction of standardised desk and operator idents; quality of service idents; optical character readers; third generation coding desks; ink jet printed messages; installation of culler-facer-cancellers; packet sorting and flat sorting machines; new letter sorting machines; 4-state codes and OCR/video sorting systems; and Frama and Smart Mail trials.

As well as giving a clear and concise description of these developments, he gives useful information on collectable material to look out for – changes to postmarks for instance. A number of offices now include the designation "MLO" in their postmark, others "CFC" (Culler

Facer Cancellor). A German Klüssendorf stamp cancelling machine was introduced at London SE1 in February 1991 for postmarking larger sized prepaid envelopes; first and second class dies were used, applied in fluorescent pink ink. A second machine was brought into use at Liverpool in July 1991. This is used for a variety of work – large flats, pre-paid mail, missorts and cancelling ordinary stamped mail. At Liverpool this Klüssendorf cancel is applied in black. The Klüssendorf trials are part of an ongoing effort by the Royal Mail Research Centre to improve the quality of machine postmarks. As well as trying new machines, they have concentrated on developing new inks and improving routine machine maintenance.

Another development is the use of ink-jet printed postmarks. Slogans have been used at Liverpool, Dartford and London SE1; Royal Mail has also been trying to develop ink-jet printed marks in a more conventional format, i.e. with a town/time/date section plus a slogan of some kind. Marks of this kind have been trialled at Birmingham. Postal Mechanisation literature is rich in abbreviations (ALF, FCT, etc) so the glossary at the end of this book is most welcome.

This well-written and illustrated book is available from: Martin Robinson, 31 Tuckwell Close, Stockton, RUGBY, Warwickshire, CV23 8JP, price £1.75. Copies of the original book and supplements 1 & 2 are available, price £3.50 inclusive, from: Postal Mechanisation Study Circle, 27 Elizabeth Road, Hunters Ride, HENLEY-ON-THAMES, Oxon, RG9 1RA.

Last April we stated here that Part 6 of British Stamp Booklets by Dr Jean Alexander and the late L F Newbury would be the final part. We are please to report that this is not so, Dr Alexander is working on a least one further part.

Events

NPM = National Postal Museum

until May 93. "People in the past" exhibition at NPM, LONDON EC1. Open. Mon-Fri 9.30-16.30.

until May 93. "Britannia" exhibition at NPM.

20 Feb 93. Scout & Guide Stamps Club annual exhibition at Baden-Powell House, Queen's Gate, South Kensington, London SW7, 11.00-17.00. Admission free. Enquiries: P J Duck, 256 St Margaret's Road TWICKENHAM TW1 1PR, Tel. 081-891 5746.

27 Feb 93. Rayleigh Phil. Soc. Annual Stamp Day exhibition & fair at Mill Hall, Bellingham Lane, Rayleigh. 10.00-17.00. Admission free. Dealers, refreshments, GB stamps & postal history displays. Enquiries: R E How, 5 Dabys Road, ROCHFORD, Essex, SS4 1RA, Tel. 0702 544632.

2-7 Mar 93. Spring Stampex at Royal Horticultural Society Halls, London SW1. Enquiries: STAMPEX, 107 Chaterhouse Street, LONDON EC1M 6PT.

Note: Includes Eur-Apex '93 airmails exhibition.

24 Apr 93. Association of Essex Phil Societies. Spring Stamp Day at Laindon Community Centre, Basildon. Enquiries: L C Stanway, 25 Clay Hill Road BASILDON, Essex, SS16 5DD.

24 Apr 93. Telford Phil Soc Stamp & Postcard Fair at Belmont Hall, Wellington, Telford, 10.00-16.00. Enquiries: P Morris-Jones, 190 Holyhead Road, Wellington, TELFORD, TF1 2DW. Tel. 0952 223926.

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February Digest

Issued in February/early March

2 February: Greetings stamp book containing 10 x 1st class stamps featuring "Gift Giving" (characters from books, magazines, films, etc), and 20 greetings labels, price £2.40.

Designer: Newell and Sorrell

Printing: Harrison & Sons Ltd, photogravure, 41 x 30mm, printed on non-phosphor paper overprinted with 2 phosphor bands. PVA Dextrin gum. Perf 15 x 14, elliptical perforation on each vertical side of stamps.

Pictorial First Day of Issue Postmarks: British Philatelic Bureau, and Greetland.

Presentation Pack: No. G2, price £2.70.

9 February: 50p and £1 books containing 2 x 1p and 2 x 24p stamps and 2 x 2p, 4 x 24p stamps and 2 labels respectively. First in Postal History and Educational Institutions series: 50p – Airmail Handstamps; £1 University of Wales. *Printing:* 50p – Harrisons, photogravure; £1 – Walsall, lithography. Stamps on ACP. The £1 book has straight edges at left and right sides of pane.

9 February: £2.40, 10 x 1st class NVI book with advertisement for Greetings book on cover.

Printing: Walsall; stamps now on ACP, with PVA Dextrin gum.

9 February: Pen-Pal pictorial aerogramme. Pack of six, price £2. Available from British Philatelic Bureau, Collections, and philatelic counters.

Note: This aerogramme is being issued in conjunction with Royal Mail International's Pen-Pals Club.

16 February: Marine Timekeepers stamps – 24p, 28p, 33p, 39p.

Designer: Howard Brown.

Printing: The House of Questa, offset-lithography, 35 x 37mm, sheets of 100, PVA Dextrin gum, phosphor coated paper.

Pictorial First Day of Issue Postmarks: British Philatelic Bureau, and Greenwich.

Presentation Pack: No. 235. Price £1.55.

16 February: Stamp cards reproducing designs of £1, £1.50, £2 and £5 Castle high values (24 March 1992) and £10 Britannia high value (2 March 1993). Nos D1-5, price 21p each. Available from British Philatelic Bureau,

Collections, and philatelic counters.

Pictorial First Day of Sale Postmark: Windsor.

2 March: £10 Definitive – Britannia.

Designer: Roundel Design Group, illustrations by Barry Craddock.

Printing: The House of Questa, offset-lithography, 60 x 41mm, sheets of 25, perf 15 x 14 with elliptical perfs on top and bottom edges, non-phosphor, PVA gum.

Pictorial First Day of Issue Postmarks: British Philatelic Bureau, and Windsor.

Presentation Pack: No. 28, price £10.30.

2 March: Orchids stamp cards, Nos 151A-E, price 21p each.

2 March: Air-Cards – 4 postcards showing historic air mail posters, etc. Each card bears imprinted 33p stamp. Price 75p each or £3 set of four. Available from Bureau, Collections, and philatelic counters.

Withdrawn in February

5 February: Happy and Glorious stamps, presentation pack, stamp cards and souvenir cover.

6 February: National Postal Museum Queen's Accession cards, and King Edward Building card.

Note: These cards will be withdrawn from sale at the British Philatelic Bureau on 6 February; they will remain on sale at the National Postal Museum.

24 February: Wales prestige stamp book.

Late News

From 16 March 1993 Walsall 10 x 2nd class and 4 x 1st class NVI books will be available from the Bureau, Collections and Philatelic counters containing stamps with PVA Dextrin gum; previous printings had PVA gum. No first day facilities will be available.



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