

BRITISH PHILATELIC

The ROYAL MAIL magazine *for stamp collectors*

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Bulletin

NPY issue's 40th anniversary
• Wildings miniature sheet



Forthcoming issues and withdrawals



Cover Royal Mail's Christmas stamps, featuring flora of the festive season, will be issued this month. The Christmas airletter is previewed on page 71 of this issue. Photograph by Geoff Dann.

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

29 October

Issue Christmas stamp cards.

5 November

Issue 2002 Christmas stamps, presentation pack, stamp books, Christmas cards (three sets of five designs in a pack) and airletters (national and Welsh versions); 2002 Year Book and Year Pack.

5 November

Withdrawal 2001 Christmas stamps, presentation pack, stamp cards, stamp books, airletters and Santa Pack; 2001 Year Book and Year Pack.

5 December

Issue Wilding definitives miniature sheet, presentation pack and stamp cards.

11 December

Issue Queen Mother coin cover (available only from Talents House).

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The British Philatelic Bulletin is published monthly by Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ. ● **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 Tallents 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 handstamps. 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, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ. ● **Design** by Robert Maude. ● **Printed** in Great Britain by Perivan Group Limited. ● **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 EC1V 9HQ

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Stamp scene Chester 2002 • España 2002 • Thematica • Societies news



Chester 2002 Further details are available on the exhibition website: <http://www.chester2002stamps.co.uk> which has links to local hotels, the ABPS site, etc. Alternatively contact Paul Gaywood, 2 Fairways, Fulwood, Preston PR2 8FX.

Above: a Penny Black cover of 5 May, before the stamp was officially valid, from the Royal Philatelic Collection.

Chester 2002 The fourth Association of British Philatelic Societies' national exhibition will be held at Chester Racecourse, Chester, from 29-30 November. This follows successful exhibitions in Newcastle upon Tyne, Hove, and Glasgow in 1996, 1998, and 2000. The main theme will be Traditional Philately together with Social Philately, which was included at Glasgow 2000 and which has developed dramatically since. The Inter-Federation Competition at senior and youth levels is open to all federations affiliated to the ABPS; the disciplines for displays at the senior level will be Aerophilately, Thematics, and Postal Stationery. A Research class is being introduced to encourage collectors to share their knowledge, expertise and labour.

An eight-frame display from the Royal Philatelic Collection will include three frames of Boer War (Mafeking) material; the Kirkcudbright wrap-per bearing 10 Penny Blacks sent on the first day of validity, 6 May 1840; a Penny Black cover of 5 May before the stamp was officially valid; Hong Kong Victory stamp; unissued Singapore and Malayan Union Victory stamps; GB 1957 Scout Jamboree material; and past Commonwealth Games 1958, 1970, and 1986. Over 20 specialist societies and over 40 dealers will have stands. The exhibition will be open Friday 10.00-17.00; Saturday 09.30-16.30, admission free. The show catalogue will cost £1 and there will a prize for one purchaser. There will also be a raffle to help finance the event. A stamp design competition is being held amongst schools all over the UK, and the two winning designs will be printed as a miniature sheet by Enschedé and given away with the catalogue. Anyone unable to visit the exhibition can obtain the catalogue and miniature sheet by sending £1.30 (cheque or mint GB stamps not over 50p values!) to Paul Gaywood at the address opposite.

There will be workshops for children and one on using the web for research (philatelic or other!) •

Thematica The second of this year's Thematica exhibitions will be held at the Carisbrooke Hall, Seymour Street, London W2 on 22-23 November. There will be the usual mix of displays, dealers' and society stands aimed primarily at thematic collectors. Visitors will be given a free souvenir sheet featuring two proposed designs for new GB definitives in the early 1980s. The sheet was also given out at the Thematica exhibition in June. Any remaining after the November show will be destroyed. They are bound to be collectors' items of the future •

España 2002 This specialised world Youth exhibition will be held at Salamanca, Spain, 17-22 November, a change of venue and dates from those originally announced. Salamanca is European City of Culture this year, and a major university centre with about 60,000 students. Some 40 countries will take part in the exhibition, with 288 exhibits in 904 frames. The Literature class will include electronic media. In addition to the exhibits, there will be dealers, a display of stamp boxes, and an exhibition called the 'History of Writing, Manuscripts, Letters, etc'. The exhibition is being organised by the Spanish Federation of Philatelic Societies and the Spanish po with support from the City of Salamanca and other institutions •



Societies news Brian Sole has succeeded Norman Batho of the USA as President of the Bicycle Stamps Club. The Club's quarterly magazine, *Bicycle Stamps*, contains news and many illustrations of new issues and new finds. The annual UK subscription is £11 •

The June Newsletter of the Concorde Study Circle includes information on the recent Concorde stamp (Airliners set), first day covers and postmarks, numerous Concorde philatelic souvenirs, videos, and postcards. An interesting read. The annual UK subscription is £10 •

The September Newsletter of the Insurance & Banking Philatelic Society of Great Britain, edited by Brian Sole, includes a technical report on the Commonwealth Games stamps, Royal Mail postage labels and the new international reply coupon, and a feature on the Bath Postal Museum. Meetings will be held in London on 11 November and 2 December and in Manchester on 11 November and 9 December. Membership of the Insurance & Banking Philatelic Society is open to all employed in, or retired from, the financial services industry •

The quarterly publication of the Association of British Philatelic Societies, although entitled a 'newsletter', is in fact a well-produced 60-page magazine, edited by Richard West, a regular contributor to this *Bulletin*. The September issue includes information on the Chester 2002 and Thematica exhibitions (November), Rowland Hill Awards, new Royal Mail issues, and reports of activities of local and specialist societies, with photographs of some recent events. Annual UK subscription is £6 (£5 for ABPS affiliated members). Add £2 for addresses in Europe, £3.50 elsewhere. Orders and enquiries: Geoff Longbottom, Mill Close, Hickling, Norwich NR12 0YT •

The British Virgin Islands Philatelic Society has produced two airmail labels to commemorate The Queen's golden jubilee. The Society started issuing and using special airmail labels in 1995. They became popular with collectors and are now listed in the MAIR Air Mail Labels Catalogue. Address enquiries to: Dr Giorgio Migliavacca, PO Box 704, Road Town, Tortola, British Virgin Islands •



Bicycle Stamps Club Send SAE to Brian Sole, 3 Stockfield Road, Claygate, Esher KT10 0QG for details.

Concorde Study Circle Brian Asquith, Alandale, Radcliffe Gardens, Carshalton Beeches SM5 4PQ.

Insurance & Banking PS For details send SAE to the Membership Secretary: C John Pearce, Elm House, Temple End, Great Wilbraham, Cambridge CB1 5JF.

Royal Mail news 2003 stamps • Christmas • Postcard books • 2003 Yearbook and pack

Date	Title (stamps in set)	Alternative postmark
14.01	Birds (10)	Hawkshead, Ambleside
04.02	Occasions (6)	Merry Hill, Wolverhampton
25.02	Medical Science (5)	Cambridge
25.03	Children's set (10)	Pear Tree, Derby
29.04	Extreme Endeavours (6)	Plymouth
02.06	Coronation Anniversary (10)	London SW1
15.07	Scotland (6)	To be announced
12.08	Pub Signs (5)	Cross Keys, Hereford
09.09	Transport/Toys (5)	Toye, Downpatrick
07.10	British Museum (5)	London WC1
04.11	Christmas (5)	Bethlehem, Llandeilo

2003 stamp programme Next year's special issues are shown left, with the alternative first day postmark. A first day postmark will also be provided, as always, for Royal Mail Tallents House, Edinburgh. Prestige books will be issued for the Medical Science and Coronation Anniversary issues. The Occasions stamps feature multiple-choice messages; Medical Science DNA and the Human Genome. A new Smilers sheet containing Flow-ers greetings stamps will be issued 21 January; other Smilers sheets may follow later. Coin/bank note or ingot covers are planned for the Birds, Medical Science, Children's, Extreme Endeavours, Coronation, and British Museum issues •

Farewell Consignia Earlier in the year our Chairman Allan Leighton announced that Consignia would be changing its name to Royal Mail Group plc. The new company title comes into effect from 4 November. The Consignia name, introduced in March 2001, proved unpopular with customers and staff and few will be sorry to see it go. Businesses within Royal Mail Group plc will continue to operate under the Royal Mail, Parcelforce Worldwide, and Post Office Ltd titles •

Birds of Prey Shown here, at reduced size, are the Birds of Prey stamps to be issued on 14 January. A full preview will be published next month •



Queen Mother coin cover The latest coin cover, produced jointly by Royal Mail and Royal Mint, will be available from 11 December, price £15.95. It bears the four Queen Mother memorial stamps cancelled by a special Glamis postmark and the Queen Mother memorial £5 crown coin. The reverse of the coin features a portrait of The Queen Mother by Avril Vaughan, the obverse bears the standard coin head of The Queen by Ian Rank-Broadley. This cover is available from Royal Mail Tallents House •



Christmas cards Boxes containing three each of the Christmas stamp images (without Queen's head and value) reproduced as Christmas cards will be available from Tallents House from 5 November. The cards contain the message 'Season's Greetings' and have details of the design and the Royal Mail logo on the back. These colourful cards are ideal to send to stamp collector friends and relatives at home and abroad •

Christmas cards Box of 15 cards and envelopes, price £6.95.



Christmas Shown here is this year's Christmas airletter and the 2nd class Christmas stamp book on sale from 5 November. A bilingual version of the airletter will be sold at Post Office branches in Wales. The 1st class stamp book was shown in last month's *Bulletin*.

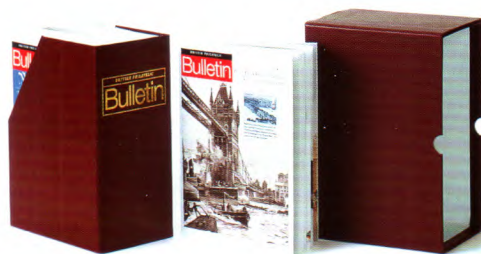
Following last year's Christmas stamp promotion, 'find the £1 million stamp', this year's promotion is linked with the second Lord of the Rings film, *The Two Towers*. Customers buying a book of 12 1st class Christmas stamps will receive a character game card and the chance to 'find the one ring and win £1 million' as well as win a range of branded merchandise. The 2001 promotion saw sales of 1st class stamps rise by 12 per cent on 2000.

The 2001 Christmas stamps, stamp books, presentation pack, stamp cards, airletters and Santa Pack will be withdrawn from sale at Royal Mail Tallents House and Post Office philatelic outlets on 5 November. Also to be withdrawn will be the 2001 Yearbook and Yearpack •

Correction Only the book of 1st class stamps will refer to the £1 million promotion, not both books as stated in the October issue.



2002 Yearbook and Yearpack The new Yearbook, on sale from 5 November, will contain information and spaces for all the special issues of 2002: Kipling, Golden Jubilee, Occasions, Coastlines, Circus, Queen Mother, Airliners, World Cup (miniature sheet), Commonwealth Games, Peter Pan, London Bridges, the Astronomy miniature sheet, Pillar Boxes, and Christmas. As always, the book gives interesting background stories to each issue, with details of the designers. Price £32.50 standard version (order code AY074) or £75 de luxe leather-bound edition (AY075). The latter is available only from Royal Mail Tallents House. The 2002 Yearpack containing the same special stamps will also be available from 5 November, price £26.95 (AR054) •

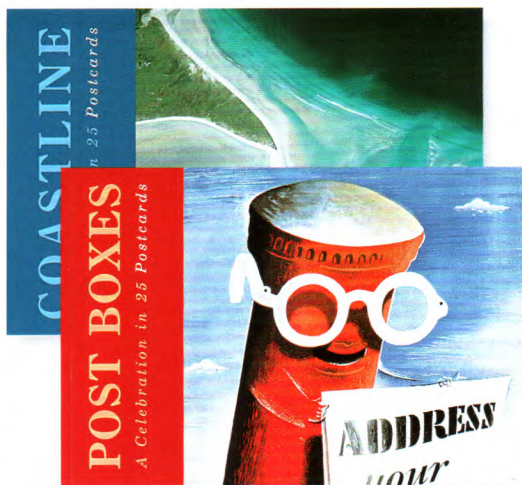


Bulletin box files As an alternative to the binders for storing this and the *Postmark Bulletin*, we now have available sturdy box files for both of these magazines. The files, in maroon for the *Philatelic Bulletin* and green for the *Postmark Bulletin*, are available from Royal Mail Tallents House, priced at £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 •

Framed definitive sets Available next month will be a new framed product which includes the whole of the definitive stamp range available in 2002, including the new Wilding miniature sheet to be issued on 5 December. The product consists of a dark wood frame with cream mounts and includes the following stamps: Country definitives – England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, and Wales 1st, 2nd, E, and 68p; Wilding miniature sheet, high value Machins £1.50, £2, £3, £5, and complete set of available low value Machins 1p, 2p, 4p, 5p, 8p, 10p, 20p, 33p, 37p, 41p, 42p, 47p, 50p, 68p, £1, 2nd, 1st, and E. Dimensions: 480 × 555mm. Available from Royal Mail Tallents House, price £49.95 •

Self-adhesive stamps Royal Mail Business & Consumer Markets report that in 2001 59.3 per cent of all stamps sold in the UK were self-adhesive. Definitive stamp books amounted to 30.6 per cent, sheets of 100 stamps 15.9 per cent and Christmas stamps in sheets and books 12.8 per cent. Next year BCM will review production costs and consumer reaction to see whether we should convert the remaining range to self-adhesive. The higher production costs and stamp quality will be important factors in reaching a decision •

Postcard books Readers are reminded that books containing 25 postcards related to the Coastlines and Pillar Boxes stamps are now available from Royal Mail Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB, priced at £5.99 each. Order codes: Coastlines book PB366, Post Boxes PB367. The Coastlines book includes high quality reproductions of Richard Cooke's 10 Coastlines stamps, and another 15 of his photographs of Scottish islands and Borders, Northern Ireland, North Wales, the West Country, and East Anglia. The Post Boxes book celebrates a much-loved aspect of UK street furniture – with 25 high quality cards, five featuring the new stamps and 20 reproducing superb 1930s-1960s PO advertising posters including designs by Rowland Emmett, Tom Eckersley, Abram Games and W Machan •



Pillar boxes display A window-board display of pillar boxes can be seen at Heritage Services Consignia until the end of the year. Included are the boxes chosen for the Pillar to Post stamps (8 October) and other boxes from their wide-ranging collection, such as an example of the first type of box installed in the Channel Islands in 1852. Heritage Services are located at Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London WC1X 0DL; telephone 020 7239 2570. Open Monday-Friday, 09.00-16.15. It houses the collections of the former Post Office Archives and National Postal Museum. The stamp collections can be seen by appointment only. Phoenix Place is near the Mount Pleasant Sorting Office; the nearest Underground stations are Farringdon and King's Cross St Pancras •

Collect British Stamps The 2003 (54th) edition of the ever-popular Stanley Gibbons *Collect British Stamps* colour checklist will be published on 29 November, price £8.95. It will be available from Royal Mail Tallents House in Edinburgh as well as from Stanley Gibbons Strand shop and Publications centre at Ringwood, and stamp and book shops •

Rowland Hill Awards Last month's *Bulletin* included forms for readers to nominate persons for eight categories in the Royal Mail Innovation and British Philatelic Trust sections of the Rowland Hill Awards. The criteria for nomination are set out on the forms. The Awards, sponsored by Royal Mail, the British Philatelic Trust and the Philatelic Traders' Society, were initiated in 1997 to recognise individuals and organisations who have made a major contribution to philately during the year. The awards for 2002 will be made at a ceremony in London next March. Forms should be returned to Rachel Lonsdale at Royal Mail or Susan Ellis at the British Philatelic Trust (addresses on forms) by 31 December. All forms will be entered into a prize draw for £100 worth of Royal Mail philatelic products •

Awards enquiries Should be sent to Rachel Lonsdale, Stamps & Collectibles, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ. Telephone 020 7250 2038.

Royal Mail Collectors Club This is the only club aimed solely at young collectors up to age 12, catering for their every collecting need. Members receive a fun starter pack, membership card, six sets of stamps a year, and a bi-monthly magazine, *Stamp!*, edited by Simon Eddy, providing news of the latest special stamp issue, free stamp offers, and more. The September issue has space and the Astronomy stamps as its main theme, but also gives information on the London Bridges stamps (with a map of the Thames showing the location of the bridges and nearest underground stations), Pillar Boxes stamps, and the usual jokes, Sammy the Stamp Bug and cartoon, and a competition to win a family ticket to the National Space Centre in Leicester. A supplement to the magazine includes members' swaps and pen-pal requests, puzzles, and an order form for items from the Club shop. For an application form write to: Collectors Club, Freepost NEA1431, Sunderland SR9 9XN. Annual subscription is £15 UK, £22.50 overseas •

Royal Mail Deluxe Album In September we listed the stamps issued January - June that will be needed for the 2002 supplement (continuation pages) for the Royal Mail Deluxe Stamp Album. We now list below the stamps issued July - December.

Special stamps: Commonwealth Games (16 July), Peter Pan (20 August), The Bridges of London (10 September), Astronomy miniature sheet (24 September), Pillar to Post (8 October), Christmas (5 November).

Definitives & country stamps: 37p, 42p, 47p and 68p definitive stamps and the English, Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish 68p country definitive stamps, all issued 4 July.

Provision will also be made for the NVT booklet containing 4 × 1st class definitives and 2 × 1st class Bridges of London stamps (10 September), Christmas Smilers Generic Sheet (1 October), Smilers Generic Sheet (1 October), and the Wilding definitive miniature sheet (5 December).

The Deluxe album is available from Royal Mail, Tallents House. The Binder and pages can be purchased in three volumes: Volume 1 covering issues 1952-70 price £79.95 (order code PA634); Volume 2 for 1971-89 price £99.95 (PA635); and Volume 3 for 1990-99 price £109.95 (PA636). Sets of continuation pages for 2000 and 2001 cost £9.99 each (codes PWO21 and PWO23 respectively). Empty binders with slipcase are available, priced at £49.95 (PA194) •

Special draw Win one of our mystery prizes

We have 20 mystery prizes this month: yearbooks, prestige books, first day covers, presentation packs and Royal Mail publications, etc to give away to the senders of the first 20 cards drawn on 29 November. You will not be disappointed!

To enter, simply write your name and address on the back of a postcard and send it to: Mystery Prize Draw, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ •

The Wilding definitives collection 1, 1952-53

A miniature sheet to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Wildings



The Wilding definitives collection 1 ~ 1952 - 1953

THE FOURTH MINIATURE SHEET this year goes on sale at main Post Office branches, Tallents House and Post Office philatelic outlets on 5 December, 50 years to the day since the issue of the first Elizabeth II stamps, the famous 'Wilding definitives'. The sheet, priced at £2.21, contains nine stamps and a label reproducing the UK national floral emblems as shown in the bottom left hand corner on the original 2½d, 3d, 4d and 4½d stamps.

The stamps in the sheet are of the following values (in the design and colours of the original value, shown in parentheses): 1st (1½d), 2nd (2½d), 33p (5d), 37p (8d), 47p (1s), 1p (½d), 2p (1d), 5p (2d), and 50p (1s3d). The sheet, which measures 123 × 70mm, was designed by Rose Design, with type by Mike Pratley. The original stamp designs are by: Enid Marx ½d-2d (1p, 2p, 5p, 1s); M C Farrar Bell 2½d (2nd); George Knipe 5d (33p); Mary Adshead 8d (37p); and Edmund Dulac 1s and 1s3d (47p and 50p).

To match the originals as closely as possible, the miniature sheet is printed on watermarked, uncoated paper with a tint around the stamps giving the effect of a creamy paper as used for the Wilding stamps until 1962.

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Unstamped Royal Mail FDC envelopes will be available from main Post Office branches and philatelic outlets about a week before 5 December, price 25p. The design reproduces the national floral emblems as shown on four values in the Wilding series. Orders for FDCs with the miniature sheet cancelled by a pictorial first day postmark of Tallents House Edinburgh or Windsor must reach Tallents House by the date of issue. Price £3.01 UK (including VAT) or £2.57 overseas (no VAT).

Technical details

Printer De La Rue

Process Gravure

Stamp size 20 × 24mm

Sheet size 123 × 70mm

Perforation 15 × 14, with ellipses on vertical sides

Phosphor 2nd class one band, others two bands

Gum PVA

Watermark '50' (Golden Jubilee)

Paper Uncoated, cream tint to stamp borders



The Wilding definitives collection 1 - 1952 - 1953



Special Stamp Issue 2002 - 2003



The Wilding definitives collection 1 - 1952 - 1953



Collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue to: Royal Mail Talents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB, or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Wexham Road, Slough SL1 1AA (Windsor postmark), marking the outer envelope 'FD0229' or 'FD0230'. Covers can be posted or handed in at main Post Office branches for the Windsor postmark. Details of sponsored handstamps will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin* - available on subscription from Talents House. For a sample copy write to: The Editor, British Postmark Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ.

Covers for first day and sponsored postmarks can bear the complete sheet or any stamps from it subject to a minimum 19p postage ●

A well-illustrated presentation pack containing the miniature sheet (below) will be available from main Post Offices and philatelic outlets, price £2.60. The pack features portraits of The Queen and Duke of Edinburgh by Dorothy Wilding studios.

Stamp cards will reproduce five of the nine stamps, price 25p each.

On 5 September 1952 the world's first stamps to bear an image of the Queen were issued by the GPO, featuring the Dorothy Wilding portrait. The two designs by Eustace Mars and Sir Eustace Bell were adopted by *Gilbey Stamp Monthly* which compared the floral chain on the 1d green to a 'Chinese pattern' - similar to the national device on the earlier stamps of Manchuria - and the 2½d magenta-red was reminiscent of the German Colonies' Jubilee issue of 1914, with its 'H.C.' assembling corner letters on Victorian stamps. The stamps were well received; one journalist noted: 'We have not heard a single adverse criticism of these two new stamps. It was desirable for the other stamp designs to be issued relatively soon after, and the 5d orange, 5d magenta and 1s blue were subsequently issued on 6 July 1953.'



The Wildings Planning of the first definitive issue of The Queen's reign began shortly after her accession on 6 February 1952. Later that month The Queen was photographed at the studios of Dorothy Wilding, a leading London society photographer. On this occasion The Queen wore a tiara. The images were not considered entirely suitable and a further session was held in April when The Queen wore the famous diadem made for King George IV. An image from this second session was approved for use on the stamps. Designs using the approved head were submitted by leading artists and designers and a Committee set up to select the best. Following Royal approval, work started on the 1½d and 2½d values, covering the two main inland rates. In mid-November when Harrisons were printing 100,000 of the stamps each week, the Postmaster General, Earl de la Warr, announced that these first two values would go on sale on 5 December in time for Christmas postings. The designs were well received by collectors at the time. Further values followed in batches, the series being completed on 8 February 1954 – two years and two days after The Queen's accession. The stamps are always referred to by collectors as 'the Wildings' after Dorothy Wilding. The Wilding stamps remained in use until 1967 when they began to be replaced by the current Machin design. George Knipe's design (5d-7d) was brought out of retirement for 20p, 26p and 37p stamps in *The Definitive Portrait* prestige stamp book of 1998, and Enid Marx's and M C Farrar Bell's 1½d and 2½d were reissued as 1st and 2nd class stamps in the *A Gracious Accession* book issued in February to mark The Queen's golden jubilee. Another miniature sheet, with other values from the Wilding series, will be issued in May 2003 •



Dorothy Wilding's photograph used on the stamps that bear her name. Information on the design and printing of the original Wildings can be found in Bulletin Publication 9, *The Wildings: The First Elizabeth II Definitives*, included free with last April's *Bulletin*. Copies of the publication are still available from Royal Mail Tallents House, priced at £2.95 (order code PB362).

Dorothy Wilding's success as a photographer was unusual for a woman of that time, as was her feat of simultaneously maintaining studios in London and New York. She had a flamboyant personality, and this photograph shows her posing with the large-format studio plate camera she used for her portrait work.

The diadem on the stamps is currently on display in the Royal Treasures exhibition at The Queen's Gallery, Buckingham Palace, until 12 January (see July *Bulletin* p329).



National Productivity Year

The Editor looks back 40 years to the first set of stamps designed by David Gentleman



Today's collectors will find it hard to believe, but there was but a single set of special stamps in 1962 – comprised of three values, totalling around 9p in today's money. This set, issued on 14 November, marked the opening by the Duke of Edinburgh of the Macmillan government's National Productivity Year, aimed to revitalise the economy. The subject may not sound too exciting, but the stamps were amongst the most interesting of the 1960s.

TO BEGIN WITH, they were the first designs by David Gentleman, then aged 32. Other designs were submitted by Kenneth Briggs, Peter Gauld, Faith Jacques, and Jeffery Matthews, and stamp printers Bradbury Wilkinson, De La Rue, and Harrison & Sons Ltd. Their unadopted designs, also unused designs by David Gentleman, were shown here in November 1967.

Not only were they the first stamps by David, but the first to be issued in both plain and phosphor-lined versions, the first to have 'traffic lights' in the sheet margins, and the first for which a missing Queen's head error was discovered.

The designs David is on record as describing National Productivity Year as a 'Stalinist-sounding' subject, and the stamps are not amongst his favourites. In a paper given to the Royal Society of Arts in 1974 he said: 'My first set of designs, for National Productivity Year, got off' pretty lightly considering how bad they were. The NPY arrow symbol had to be included, and I decided to use some more arrows to suggest a sudden national upsurge of energy; but arrows are almost as dated as symbols as they are as weapons, and the only thing they really signify is the designer's inability to think up anything better.'

I recently asked David for his views on the stamps now. He replied: 'Looking at these stamps again after a 40 year gap, and in the light of your own affection for them, perhaps my earlier judgement on the designs was a bit harsh. What I really still most dislike is the subject itself – propagandist and exhortatory – and the fact that, like all stamp subjects at that time, they still had to commemorate a passing event. They couldn't just say "Let's all be more productive": productivity stamps without a "Year" tacked on wouldn't have been eligible as a subject. When working on the Album three years later, one of my aims was to break down this rigid commemorative strait-jacket so that stamp subjects could become more interesting.

'The reasons I like the 3d design best of the three are firstly that, despite including the map of Britain as well as the arrows, it looks very simple; and secondly that, since most of the design is in the purple printing, it doesn't depend on the two cylinders being printed in perfect register. There

David Gentleman's new book *Artwork* was reviewed in last month's *Bulletin*. It is available from Royal Mail Talents House price £27. Order code 03 AAC.



David Gentleman at the opening of Talents House, 21 March 2001.

are no places where two colours overlap or white hairline cracks can open up between them, and it would have to be printed badly out of register before anyone would notice. This is not so true of the other two designs, where I was still feeling my way.'

On the 2½d stamp 'units of productivity' are represented as children's toy blocks, each adorned with an upward-thrusting arrow; and on the 3d 'nation-wide productivity' is indicated by two overlapping arrows superimposed upon a map of the UK. On the 183d, soaring arrows depicted in close formation, possibly inspired by the Farnborough Air Show, represent 'unified productivity'. The Queen's head was set within an oval frame, a device used by David on the Battle of Britain stamps in 1965. In his new book *Artwork*, David tells us that he thinks the 3d the best of the three and the one he took most trouble over.

The designs were welcomed by the Editor of *Gibbons Stamp Monthly* as the uniformity of style made for a coherent group – many previous British sets, by different designers, were rather a mixture of design styles. *Stamp Collecting* noted that the 3d stamp omitted the Shetland Islands from the map of GB, and in a Parliamentary debate on stamp issues, in March 1963, Roy Mason MP (later PMG) criticised the NPY issue and pressed for more pictorials related to industries, literary personalities and other themes.

Varieties and errors As James Watson pointed out here in 1976, there were numerous mishaps in paper and printing, providing a host of flaws and varieties for collectors. There were three printings of the 2½d resulting in distinct shades: myrtle-green and carmine-red, deep green and bright carmine-red, and blackish olive and carmine-red.

The second is the scarcest; the phosphor version is from the third printing, ie the blackish olive shade. The SG *Specialised* catalogue estimated that the three printings amounted to 62, three, and 34 million stamps respectively. The 3d comes from at least two printings – listed in the *Specialised* catalogue as light blue and violet (plain and phosphor), and the scarcer light blue and deep bluish purple (plain only). Three cylinders, 2A, 2C and 2D were used for the violet colour – cylinder blocks of 2A are quite scarce. Only 2D was used for the phosphor version.



Different shades of green on the 2½d Queen's head.



Getty Images



Top: a half sheet of the 3d with missing Queen's head error was displayed on the Stanley Gibbons stand at Stampex in 1963.

Above, from left to right: the retouched arrow on the 2½d value, the unretouched arrow, and the 'lake in Yorkshire'.

Damage to the green (1B) cylinder of the 2½d led to numerous repairs and retouches – all to be found listed and illustrated in the *Specialised* catalogue. These constant varieties make an interesting display and it is worth checking copies in your collection against the *Specialised* catalogue to see if you have any. There were also a number of interesting varieties on the 3d, especially the lakes in Scotland and Yorkshire and 'Kent omitted' varieties. There are no major varieties listed for the 1s3d, although three minor flaws are recorded in the *Specialised*.

For those interested in major errors, The Queen's head (blue colour) can be found missing on the 3d and 1s3d values. The discovery of a sheet of the 3d with 76 of the 120 stamps with this error caused quite a stir in the philatelic world and in the national press. A half sheet was displayed on the Stanley Gibbons stand at Stampex in 1963 before being broken up for sale to collectors. Copies were priced at £85 – the current valuation is £800. The 1s3d error was not discovered until sometime after and is now priced at £4000 in the catalogue.

Imperforate 'imprimatur' stamps, both plain and phosphor, all with upright watermarks, exist from the National Postal Museum Archives sales of the 1980s. These are unpriced in the catalogue. I have also seen offered in auction catalogues the two lower values imperf and overprinted with horizontal lines – these are thought to be printers' waste.

Watermark and phosphor The watermark is inverted on the 2½d and 3d stamps. Edge cracks were discovered in the paper after coating, and it was feared that the brittle paper would disintegrate during the gumming process. To obviate this, the edges were trimmed prior to gumming and subsequently fractured and trimmed to size in the usual way, but the extra trimming process resulted in the finished reels of paper being wound in a reverse direction to normal, and printing from these reels resulted in the inverted watermarks. The 1s3d was reeled and printed in the normal way, with upright watermark.

Phosphor-lined stamps were produced for sale in the Southampton, Liverpool and London SE1, 5, 11 and 15-17 districts where ALF (Automatic Letter Facer) sorting machines were in use. The phosphor was applied by the flexography process, resulting on the 3d and 1s3d with stamps from the first and sixth columns of sheet (adjoining left and right sheet margins) having a narrow band at left or right. These are separately listed in the *Specialised* catalogue, with an unpriced 'left-hand band omitted' 3d variety.

Sheet markings Multicoloured stamps meant the need for more printer's marks in the margin and 'traffic lights' or coloured check dots were introduced with this issue, printed in the right-hand sheet margin opposite the final stamp in the sheet on the dot panes of the 2½d and 3d and on all sheets of the 1s3d. Autotron marks – coloured bars which serve as an electronic control on colour registration – are also found; these were introduced the previous year, as were the colour designations 'G GREY G RED', 'G BLUE G MAUVE' and 'G BLUE G GREEN' printed on the sheet margins but usually trimmed off prior to issue. Worth watching out for. Readers interested in sheet markings are recommended to read the useful notes on these in the sg *Specialised* catalogue. The markings found are recorded under 'Sheet Details' in the listing for each stamp issue.

Pre-release and first day This set provided some excitement even before it was issued! Indeed even before the designs were made public, supplies had been issued in error at the Ladywell post office in Lewisham (south east London) on 16-17 October. Some stamps used on the mail were obliterated using an 'E' handstamp (normally used for Express mailbag labels), and the date on the machine postmark scratched through. It is believed that about 350 of the 3d stamp were sold, about 60 of the 2½d and just 20 of the 1s3d. Examples were also posted later at a number of offices in the Home Counties. This early release was recorded as the 'Lewisham Leak' in GSM at the time, and I recall seeing one of the 'leaked' 3d stamps in the sg window in the Strand prior to the day of issue. Somewhat surprisingly I have never come across the pre-release covers offered for sale over the past 40 years – one assumes they remain the pride and joy of a few collectors.

In 1962 there was no Philatelic Bureau or *Philatelic Bulletin*, Post Office first day cover, first day postmarks or presentation pack. Collectors of FDCs could buy blank covers produced by the Philatelic Traders' Society/British Philatelic Association and others, and mail them on the day of issue to



receive usual handstamp or machine postmarks. A National Productivity Year slogan was in use at 39 main sorting offices, 1 November - 8 December, and FDCs bearing this slogan are worth seeking. Even scarcer is the 'Export & Prosper' slogan used at all but one of the London district offices, 1-28 November - covers with the slogan used at London NW1 are priced at £275 in one FDC catalogue. It is worth looking for on the NPY stamps even if not on a FDC. The key FDC for the phosphor stamps is that bearing the Southampton 'T' machine postmark, indicating that it was processed by the ALF machine.

Sales and withdrawal The stamps were intended to remain on sale at post offices until 18 July 1963; being issued in November, large quantities of the 2½d and 3d were used on Christmas mail. They were available from the new Philatelic Bureau when it opened in May 1963, and were finally withdrawn on 1 April 1964, although stocks of the 3d plain stamp had run out before then. The sales figures were: 2½d 99,240,000 plain and 7,320,000 phosphor; 3d 182,580,000 and 13,320,000; 1s3d 8,832,000 and 1,320,000. As with all Elizabeth II pre-decimal special stamps, they remained valid for postage until 28 February 1972.

Conclusion David's NPY stamps remain one of my favourite issues of the 1960s and the one on which I 'cut my philatelic teeth', buying cylinder blocks with my meagre pocket money and studying the varieties recorded in GSM at the time. I remember looking despairingly at the 3d missing head error at Stampex - at £85 it would have cost me over 300 weeks' pocket money! Some of David's later issues - Lifeboat Conference, Shakespeare Festival, and Battle of Britain are also firm favourites. Reviewing the NPY set, 40 years on, has been enjoyably nostalgic ●

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vol 3 (10th edition, 1998)

Philately on-line Ron Negus visits a postal history website



FORCES POSTAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Contact:

Membership Secretary

Keith Tranmer
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Newbury Park
Ilford, Essex, IG2 7TP
ENGLAND

Publication Sales

NEWS

2001 Harry Cope Memorial Award for Literature for CDSG editor
Graham Mark, FRPSL, for his publication *British Censorship of Civil Mails during 'World War I, 1914-1919*

UPDATED info of 50th Anniversary Celebrations in 2002
"All-Day" Meeting & Lunch Sept 14th.

ANOTHER 50th ANNIVERSARY that is being celebrated in 2002 is the jubilee of the Forces Postal History Society. When it was established in 1952, the few dedicated collectors of military mail who formed the nucleus of the Society would never have imagined that it would grow to a band of over 350 collectors spread around the globe. They would certainly not have foreseen 'computers' being involved in publicising their activities. But both these things are now fact, and the website is well established.

The site can be found at <http://homepage.mac.com/ww2censor/fphs/fphs.html> and includes all the details needed on how to become an active member of the Society. Members are collectors who are interested in the postal history of the Armed Forces of all countries, at all times, in war or peacetime, including the various peace-keeping activities sponsored by the United Nations. Their collections cover the study of postmarks, cachets, stamps and stationery, postage rates, prisoner-of-war mail, censorship and the organisation of military postal services.

Support amongst the members is strongest for the armed forces of the Crown – the Army, Royal Navy and the RAF – with First and Second World War items being eagerly sought. Others collect on a one-country basis, but irrespective of their field of study, the Society encourages groups of members having similar interests to pool their knowledge and support further study into their chosen topic.

The result of much of this co-operative research is published in articles in the quarterly

Forces Postal History Society Membership secretary of the Society is Keith Tranmer, 100 Ramsgill Drive, Newbury Park, Ilford, Essex IG2 7TP. Sales of publications are handled by Peter L High, 94 Winkworth Road, Banstead, Surrey SM7 2QR.

Newsletter that is sent to all members. The Society has also produced a number of authoritative handbooks on particular aspects of military postal history, and the site contains a priced listing of those still available for sale. Monthly meetings are held in London and details of the current programme of speakers are listed on the site.

An interesting section of the site contains examples of civil and military postal history covers that are included to whet the appetite of collectors who may not have considered this area of collecting before. These pages are intended to show a diverse range of different examples of both censored and military mail. Members have contributed most of the images shown, and this is a growing section of the site. An index to the covers is given by category and country.

Also included are the membership details, subscription rates and an application form that can be printed out and sent to the membership secretary with a cheque. The overall site is neat, easy to navigate and contains all information needed to decide if the subject will be of interest for new collectors without being over-elaborate.

Apart from the material that is available from the Society through its regular auctions and exchange packet, collectors of military mails can find items for sale through the specialised dealer, Roger Barton of St Neots, Cambridgeshire. His printed list has now also been made available on the web and can be found at www.warcovers.com. This well illustrated site, updated every four weeks, shows covers arranged into date groups and includes material from campaigns for the period from 1850 to date.

Regular readers will be pleased to hear that at the international exhibition in Seoul in October, the Czeslaw Slania site, which I reviewed in this column last month, received the top award and was declared FIP Overall Best Web Site 2002 ●

Changing attitudes

In the conclusion of his series, Richard

WHILE the 'wind of change' was sweeping across the Post Office in terms of the services provided for stamp collectors, notably regarding first day covers, not all who worked for the organisation were clearly comfortable with the more liberal arrangements. As previously mentioned, maximum cards were certainly a contentious issue; I wonder how many of the 'rules' introduced were aimed more at the cards than the covers. Consequently it became a requirement that a full set of any new stamps was required to receive a 'First Day of Issue' marking. Later this was softened: provided at least the first class rate of postage had effectively been paid, a 'first day' or indeed any applicable handstamp would be applied (relaxed if a set includes a 2nd class value).

There was the question of the 'embarrassing item', meaning that any design had to be confined to the left-hand half of the cover, leaving the right-hand half blank for stamps and address. Certainly all items had to be addressed. Today, as we are aware, first day cover designers can be far more ambitious, creating a startling juxtaposition between cover, cancellation and stamps – although the address remains a requirement.

At one time covers could only receive one cancellation. So if covers linked similar occasions (such as the 80th, 90th and 100th birthdays of the Queen Mother) it would not have been possible to have just a single cover, bearing the appropriate stamps and cancelled on their respective days of issue. Again, attitudes have now softened, and more than one cancellation is permitted on a cover, referred to as 'dual postmarking'. Furthermore, it is now acceptable to have stamps and cancellations from more than one stamp-issuing authority (not to be confused with the 'combination covers' which form a fascinating aspect of postal history).

It has also become easier to obtain examples of postmarks. Items can be sent for re-posting, as long as the outer envelope is posted by the day the required postmark is in use. One advantage has been that, even if a private organisation has designed and sponsored a handstamp, probably

to use on its own covers, all collectors have been able to secure an example. Plus, of course, we now have the Special Handstamp Centres, dedicated offices where a cancellation will be applied to a standard required of the collector, even if this means a delay in the item being delivered.

Even the dreaded maximum cards are permitted, provided a stamped, addressed envelope is provided for their return after cancellation.

Sadly for some postmark collectors, the general availability of postmarks has recently been broken for the Commonwealth Games: however, Royal Mail realises that for postmark collectors this is not acceptable, and hopefully such a restriction will not re-occur.

All this is probably enough to send shivers down the spine of a purist collector. The thought that first day covers are not actually processed on the actual day of issue is totally wrong to some. What would such collectors make of covers serviced by the Philatelic Bureau, where every process is automated, from the sheets of stamps being 'burst' into single stamps, stamps affixed to the covers, to the postmark virtually 'printed' to ensure the perfect product.

Even worse is the thought that posting boxes remain open well after the day of issue, so that covers can continue to be posted for the first day cancellation. This has occurred several times: when an issue has been released without much advance warning (such as the memorial set for the Queen Mother), or where the date of issue has had to be changed at a late stage. There is, of course, the classic example of the release of the low value decimal definitives, as recorded last time, where the stamps were issued on February 15, but the boxes remained open until nearly a month later.

The answer for those who like to feel their covers are truly 'first day' is not to bother with any of the special handstamps, but to opt instead for a purely operational marking. It depends on how you view a first day cover: is the special handstamp part of the cover being created, rather than simply a statement of a time, date and place

West recalls how the present day first day cover has evolved



A cover with an example of 'dual postmarking': for the Aircraft issue of 1997, also stamped and cancelled with an Isle of Man Spitfire stamp.

of posting? Even back to the days of Shakespeare Festival, demand for first day covers was such that cancelling took many days to complete. The Handstamping Centres make the actual place of posting irrelevant – first day covers now receive the same pictorial handstamp irrespective of where each philatelic posting box is located.

One aspect over which the Post Office has long held its ground has been the question of 'hand-back'. This has been particularly pertinent at international stamp exhibitions held in London. At overseas exhibitions it is common practice for covers to be handstamped and handed straight back to the collector. Many of the visitors have come from afar, and do not wish to have covers (souvenirs of the exhibition) potentially spoiled by having to pass through the postal services of more than one country. When we pay the postage, we are paying for a service. Might that service involve simply handstamping a cover and handing it back?

Nevertheless, it has taken much to persuade the Post Office to provide a 'hand back' service, even at international events – equally, not all collectors are convinced such a service is right.

Many overseas Post Offices keep fully serviced first day covers on sale for some considerable time after the day of issue. In Great Britain, as

we know, you cannot generally buy serviced first day covers over the counter, and certainly not after the day of issue. (This can of course vary with some post offices, who might make separate arrangements with a first day cover supplier.) The exception, surprisingly, comes with p.x.c.s, the relatively new concept of the Philatelic Numismatic Cover, which combine stamps with a coin or a medal: these remain available, certainly through the Philatelic Bureau, apparently until the supply is exhausted. As these are produced in conjunction with the Royal Mint, presumably different criteria apply.

Creating your own Following the great rise in popularity of the first day cover in the 1960s, many companies starting offering unstamped pictorial envelopes appropriate for each new issue. Gradually their numbers have declined, and today are few. There remain, however, the envelopes provided by Royal Mail for each issue. These have an advantage: clearly they are created with the designs of the stamps in mind.

For a time Royal Mail not only provided the envelopes as 'first day covers', but also as 'commemorative covers' which could be used after the day of issue, but clearly would not as such receive a 'first day' cancellation.



PNC for the Berlin Airlift pane; a Royal Mail commemorative cover for the Village Churches issue; a TPO marking on the 1975 Railways issue; a Royal Mail Concorde souvenir cover; and four covers for the 2001 Weather stamps.

The whole area of commemorative covers is, of course, huge, with many events being marked by a souvenir cover and a special cancellation (see above centre, Concorde's first commercial flight to Washington). Often such covers bear an appropriate stamp. Frequently these are, albeit incorrectly, referred to as 'first day covers'. From time to time Royal Mail has itself issued commemorative covers, to mark special occasions.

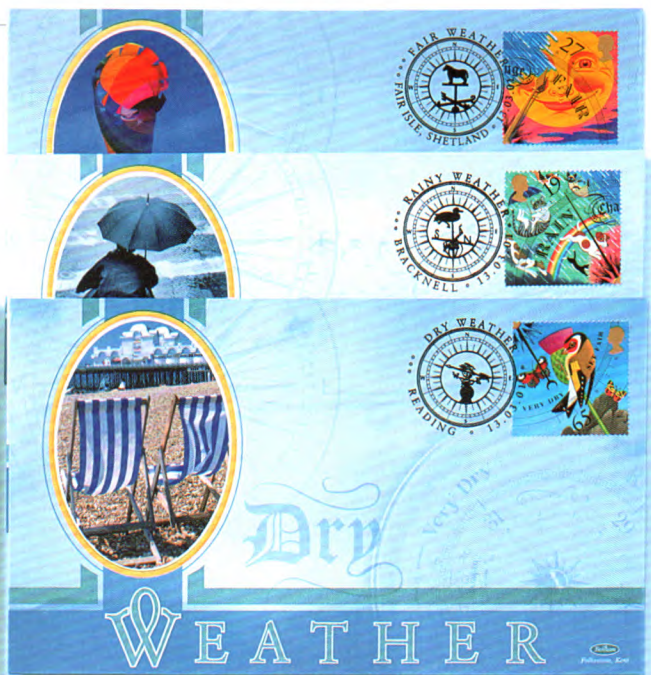
Operational markings There are many collectors who still prefer to have an operation mark on their covers, whether it be a circular datestamp applied over the post office counter (for a service such as 'Special Delivery') or a machine cancellation. There can be added interest if the place chosen has a connection with the theme of the stamps.

Other operational marks which have been applicable include those which were applied by the Travelling Post Offices. For any stamp issues with a 'railways' theme, these TPO marks proved particularly appropriate (see above, centre). Likewise the use of 'Paquebot' markings for issues which depicted ships.

Handstamps However, it is with pictorial handstamps that the greatest expansion has taken place. The fact that these are so easily sponsored has meant that their use has proliferated, notably for first days of issue, but also, as just mentioned, for other commemorative purposes.

The Post Office has helped: now each new issue has a pictorial handstamp available from Tallents House (Philatelic Bureau), and a separate design from a location appropriate to the theme of the stamps. This second handstamp is applied to covers posted in any of the philatelic posting boxes. A non-pictorial handstamp is also available.

When there was a widespread network of philatelic counters, each had its own pictorial handstamp – these no longer exist. For a time pictorial handstamps were also available from several key locations, such as the National Postal Museum, the London Chief Office, the post office at Trafalgar Square and at Windsor. Again these are no longer available. However, pictorial handstamps are still in use at a number of towns and cities around the UK, known as 'Permanent Philatelic Postmarks'. Examples can be obtained through the respective Special Handstamp Centres.



And today Today first day covers are a 'collectable' in their own right. There is a handful of suppliers who provide a complete package, doing their utmost to supply their collectors with a product which is different and attractive, even startling. There seems no end to the skill, ingenuity, and imagination of these producers. Often there are links with appropriate organisations, notably charities, offering the 'official' cover and cancellation. Autographs frequently form part of the equation. For some collectors, the resulting product is far removed from the simple requirement of proving when a stamp was first issued. These modern covers bring great pleasure to many collectors – can more be asked of a hobby?

Remember that the *British Postmark Bulletin* is available on annual subscription. Royal Mail also has available a booklet called *All About Postmarks*, which provides a guide to postmarking services (price £1.20).

Updates Thanks to readers, I can provide the following updates on information. Regarding Medical Mailing, Mr M. Tanner of Southampton reports the following:

• 4d Battle of Britain of 1965 with a machine 'first day of issue' cancellation for London SW1 • 4d Battle of Hastings of 1966 with a circular first day of issue handstamp for Battle in Sussex • 4d Discovery of 1967 with a circular handstamp for London SW • 3d Christmas issue of 1967 with both a machine 'first day of issue' cancellation and a circular handstamp, both for Bethlehem, Llandeilo.

He also has the 3d Botanical Congress with the machine slogan, but for Southampton.

Mr N Wood of Whitley Bay says he has a special cover from Tenor's Charities Wales, with the 5d Prince of Wales Investiture stamp with the machine slogan 'Investiture Day' in Welsh and English, but when he offered it on an Internet auction, no one seemed interested.

Finally, back to presentation packs, and British sets encapsulated in plastic. I wrote that the latest I had seen was for the 1974 Churchill set (see illustration in the *April Bulletin*, p239). Packs & Cards of Fleet in Hampshire report that they have seen one for the 1975 12p Inter-Parliamentary Conference stamp •

Kingston upon Thames & District Philatelic Society celebrates its 75th Anniversary

Brian Sole reports



This Poster Stamp was produced for Mrs. K. M. Dibben, the well-known Kingston-on-Thames Postage Stamp Dealer, by the Poster Stamp Association, and printed on Samuel Jones & Co's Butterfly Brand Watermarked Gummed Paper



Above, left to right: President Robert Webber, immediate Past President Geoff Davies, and Pat Grimwood-Taylor.

Left: Label for Mrs Dibben's 50th anniversary as a stamp dealer; she was the Society's first Secretary in 1927.

'A MEETING WAS HELD at The Lodge St James' Road Kingston-on-Thames on Monday October 24th 1927 at 8.30pm with the object of forming a Philatelic Society.' The first page of the Minutes Book includes a list of 25 persons present, commencing with Mrs Dibben (a stamp dealer in Kingston for some 60 years), owner of the premises. It was agreed, *inter alia*, to form the Society; elect Mr H R Harmer FRGS as President and Mrs Dibben as Secretary and Treasurer.

The first social occasion was a steamer trip to Chertsey, along the Thames, at a cost of £6. Members and guests could enjoy teas for 156d (7½p) but had to pay extra for strawberries and cream. Meetings were initially held at St James' Road and later at 14 South Bank, Surbiton. In March 1934, H R Harmer described his trip to America to buy the famous Hind collection. After agreement with the Hind Trustees, the collection was packed and sealed in cases and sent to New York, 'where Mr Harmer, with the help of eight detectives and an armoured car saw them stored in the Strong Rooms of the *Majestic*. Mr Harmer passed round for inspection a 1d PO Mauritius unused which he said was probably worth from £2,000 to £3,000'.

H R Harmer was President of the Society from 1927 to 1932, and Honorary President until his death in 1966, at the age of 96. W Ewart (Ebby) Gerrish was elected as President of the Society in 1947, 1949 and 1955. The names of Harmer and Gerrish have since been perpetuated on the Harmer Bowl and on the Kingston Cup, which remained the Society's premier trophy until 2001, when the Millennium Trophy was introduced. Kay Horowicz, the first Lady President, presented the Kay Horowicz Shield in 1978 for members who have never won a medal in a Society competition.

The Society held its first Dinner on 10 January 1939, at Zecta's, by Kingston Bridge, attended by nearly 50 members and guests. On the outbreak of war, meetings continued in members' houses, on Saturday afternoons. The minutes of the meeting on 4 July 1943 recorded that 'an invitation be sent through the Kinsman's Society to the GOC American Forces GHQ to allow a maximum of 6 soldiers to attend appropriate meetings of the Society.' Minutes of an ordinary meeting on 29 July concluded with the words 'During the evening there were two "flying bomb" alerts but no incidents'.

The Society has welcomed a number of eminent and distinguished philatelists over the years. They include P L Pemberton in 1934 when 'Inclement weather in the shape of heavy fog did its utmost to cancel the meeting', and Robson Lowe 'who gave us a very interesting and instructive lecture on the history of Postal Systems from the earliest reference in the Bible etc to modern times' in 1936. Other speakers include Gerald Davis on Burma (1963, 2002), Ron Lee and Alma Grunberg (1965) and Cyril Harmer, son of H R Harmer, on New Zealand Pigeon Post and the Franco-Prussian War, 1870 (1967). In more recent years, David Boyd and Graham Childs of Phillips and Harmers, and Francis Kiddle, Jane Moubray and Barrie Jay, all Past Presidents of the Royal Philatelic Society London, have given displays.

The Society participated in a stamp exhibition at Bentalls store, Kingston in 1952 and at the Guildhall, Kingston in 1961. In 1965 the Society contributed a profit of £271 to the local Spastics Society from the sale of souvenir covers with a special Guildhall cancellation. Further exhibitions, organised by the Society, were held at the Coronation Hall, Kingston (then the swimming baths) in 1977 and 1978, and at Surbiton Assembly Rooms in 1987, 1992 and 1994.

A 75th Anniversary Dinner was held on 4 September 2002 at the Foley Arms, Claygate, organised by the treasurer, Ian Amy; guests were welcomed by Robert Webber, President, and the toast to the Society was given by Michael Lockton, President elect of the Federation of Surrey Philatelic Societies. The main anniversary event will be the Stamp Fair and Exhibition at Kingston Grammar School on 26 October.

The Society meets on the first Thursday and third Friday evening each month at 8pm and on Tuesday afternoons at 2.30pm from September to June. Attendance averages about 20 at evening and eight at afternoon meetings. On 7 November there will be a Members' Meeting – Night Sky and 1 sheet competition, followed by a display 'All About Thematics' by myself on 15 November. For details of future meetings contact me at 3 Stockfield Road, Claygate, Esher KT10 0QG; Telephone 01372 467652 ●

Amphilex 2002 Report from Glenn H Morgan

AMSTERDAM was recently host to an international stamp exhibition at the RAI Centre on the outskirts of the city. Pre-show publicity indicated that there would be much to see and do during the five days. I had been looking forward to this Dutch show and to renewing my acquaintance with the friendly city of Amsterdam, and I was not disappointed.

I paid my five euros entrance fee and made my way to stamp printers Enschedé, Questa and Walsall for, as readers will be aware, these are three of the printers used by Royal Mail. De La Rue was not in attendance.

Perhaps not surprisingly, Enschedé, of nearby Haarlem, had the largest stand. They demonstrated perforating and had displays featuring artwork, dies, stamps, etc from their extensive archives of historical and modern stamps. For one euro, they sold an attractive publicity sheet designed by Inge Madlé (the engraver of the Enschedé version of the British castle high values). Inge showed visitors how stamps are engraved at regular intervals throughout the day.

Walsall gave away a sheetlet revealing their new logo, together with that of their recently acquired company Courvoisier. The design was of a typical British (Houses of Parliament) and Swiss (mountain) landmark. Recently produced stamps formed the basis of their display.

Questa seemed only to be showing current stamps of Jersey and Guernsey. Their reason for being at the show was not obvious, for they were not selling the stamps; neither were they offering any literature or souvenirs to visitors.

There was a fourth stamp 'printer' at the show, namely the Royal Dutch Mint. Back in 1852, they had printed the first stamp of The Netherlands and, last year, re-entered the stamp production market with a self-adhesive stamp manufactured (for printed is the wrong terminology) of pure silver. For one euro, they were selling AMPHILEX publicity 'stamps' that utilised a unique laser and die-cutting technique (see illustration, p90).



Souvenir sheets from Enschedé and Walsall.

Other souvenirs of the exhibition included daily handstamps and the show catalogue, which came bundled with an excellent thick handbook on the first issue of *Holland* for a mere 12 euros in either an English or Dutch edition.

Machin success The competitive exhibits were of a high standard but unfortunately, as is usual at European shows, they received little patronage from visitors. UK exhibitors fared well. Congratulations are due to Tony Walker for his exhibit 'Sterling Machins 1967-1971', which received a gold medal along with the jury's felicitations.

It was refreshing to see a modern-era exhibit do so well. Indeed, it was refreshing to see a modern-era exhibit! Let us hope that Tony's efforts will encourage others to consider entering displays of modern material and that judges recognise that it is not just the classics of philately that deserve to do well. I lost count of the number of (probably) unique colour trials and proof items included in his display.

The invited non-competitive exhibits, especially that of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, were popular due, I guess, to the publicity that they had received in advance of the show.

Entertainments It has become common at recent philatelic internationals for some form of (often loud) entertainment to be laid on, and AMPHILEX was no exception. However, they got it right by having a young woman pianist unobtrusively playing an ever-changing range of background music at set times during the day.

There were pirates, stilt-walkers and clowns to amuse the children and a slightly mad man took a Polaroid of you while you posed within an empty picture frame. Tombolas, PC workshops, huge murals, painting sessions, items from ships chandlers, a mailcoach, pneumatic mail demonstrations, old and new posting boxes and postal uniforms all added to the atmosphere for young and old alike.

It was good to see plenty of seating around the halls, with tables displaying copies of the latest stamp catalogues for you to peruse. These tables also had lots of free sales literature, including hundreds of cards promoting Autumn Stampex.

There were lots of dealers and postal administrations in attendance, and it is hoped that they did well. Certainly, on the opening day, crowds were five deep around many of the stands. Publicity had been well organised, as every posting box at least 35km beyond the city had posters on them and there was even television advertising. The organisers had predicted an attendance of 75,000 and I would be surprised if they had failed to reach this figure.

Congratulations to the Dutch PO, NBFV and NVPH, under the guidance of Ruud de Jong and Monique Hoogvliet, for producing such a well organised show with so much to see and do ●



The Royal Dutch mint 'stamp' souvenir, utilising the unique MSP (Minted Stamping Process) laser and die-cutting technique.

Roses bloom into gold Richard West talks to Sheila Foster

MUCH OF THE TIME they are almost inseparable, so it seems only fitting that, having 'interviewed' Christine Earle last month, this time it should be Sheila Foster's turn. Sheila and Christine have proved that British collectors can master the demands of thematic and produce gold medal winning collections.

There have been various factors in Sheila's life that have had a bearing on her collecting. She is a true 'Cockney', born within the sound of Bow Bells, and her first job was with the Post Office, as a telephonist with the GPO at the Museum and Langham Exchange, the site of which later became the Post Office (now British Telecom) Tower.

Married in 1955, Sheila has one daughter, Debbie, born in 1961. It was in 1972 that Debbie came home with three of the 4d Wilding definitives: she asked her mother to spot the difference. Sheila could not tell them apart, until Debbie turned them over and explained that each had a different watermark. This fascinated Sheila, and from that moment she became hooked on stamp collecting.

At first it was a joint Great Britain collection, helped by visits to the local library to read up as much about the hobby as possible. Then Sheila spotted an advertisement for her local Clapham and Balham Philatelic Society. There she was made most welcome, learning a great deal. However, it was the competition night which was to prove to be the real eye-opener. There were displays of Great Britain which put the mother/daughter attempts to shame. Not to be deterred, Sheila was aware of the growing influence of thematic collecting, so decided to switch horses – and started collecting horses on stamps. She admits the resulting collection was not very good, but was the best she could do.

Then came a visit to Stampex, and another one of her earlier influences came to bear fruit. During the war, Sheila had been evacuated to



Sheila Foster with the Ronald Lee BPE International Trophy

her grandparents in Essex, who had a fruit farm but, more importantly, she remembered her grandfather hybridising roses. There at Stampex she spotted the New Zealand definitives depicting roses: this would be the theme for her new collection.

This was entered into the Clapham and Balham competition, and it won. Additions and improvements were made and, after a few years, the expanded display was submitted to the national competitions staged

as part of Autumn Stampex. It received a silver-bronze medal. Sheila continued to develop the exhibit, taking up the advice offered by the late Franceska Rapkin, and other members of the British Thematic Association, until she realised her true ambition – her exhibit was awarded a gold medal.

She now decided to go 'International', entering her 'Roses, Roses, All the Way' in the exhibition in China in 1999, and receiving a large vermeil medal. Come Denmark in 2001, and further improvements, she was rewarded with a gold medal, plus felicitations.

Roses have not been Sheila's only interest: other collections she has formed include Europa, British Antarctic Territory, Great Britain window books, France, and more recently Scandinavia. She still finds a useful source of material are the auctions held by philatelic societies – bargains are there in abundance.

There has been yet a further influence in her collecting. Her husband, Joe, is a keen photographer. His photographic club devotes one meeting each year to an evening which is not purely 'photographic'. Sheila was persuaded to talk about stamp collecting. She decided to produce a display on 'The History of Photography'. This fascinated her audience, with one or two asking more about stamp collecting. Her article 'Photography', published in *Stamp Magazine*, was awarded the Rowland Hill Award for Journalistic Excellence for 1998.

Joe has always supported Sheila in her hobby, and accompanies her to overseas stamp exhibitions: in August they visited Amphilex in Amsterdam together. Joe is always amazed at the patience Sheila shows towards her stamps: the hobby has brought them many friends.

Apart from Clapham and Balham, Sheila is also a member of Camberley Philatelic Society, the National Philatelic Society, the British Thematic Association, and is on the Public Relations Committee of the Association of British Philatelic Societies. She will invariably be found help-

ing out on the Information Stand at Stampex; more importantly, she is keen to encourage and help others with their own thematic collections. With Christine Earle, she frequently leads seminars and workshops aimed at promoting a better understanding of thematics. She wishes more would exhibit, pointing out that many collectors have wonderful material, well worth displaying. As she admits, it takes time to develop a thematic collection, but with patience and perseverance, it is possible to achieve that gold medal – although you do have to abide by the rules ●

Postbag Letters to the Editor

Dates on stamps Two points about British stamp design have puzzled members of the Stubbington Philatelic Society recently. Whatever happened to the copyright symbol and year date, brought in to safeguard artists' designs? The last copyright symbol seems to be on the Christmas issue of 1998. The year date was also to help collectors of British stamps living overseas to place them. Why are some designs not put in the logical chronological/face value sequence? The Airliners set (May) show the 2002 Airbus on a 2nd class stamp while the 1952 Comet is depicted on the 65p top value. Similarly, the April 2001 Submarines 2nd class is graced by a 1992 Vanguard Class submarine while the 65p is illustrated with a Holland Class submarine of 1901. DAVE JOHNSTON, STUBBINGTON, HANTS ●

I showed Mr Johnston's letter to Jane Ryan, Head of Stamp Design. The copyright symbol is not a legal requirement and finished in 1998 although the year continued to appear in the captions on the Millennium stamps of 1999-2001. There are no plans to reintroduce the year although it may be included in captioning, as on the Queen Mother and World Cup (crowned lion) stamps. As regards the sequence of designs, Royal Mail has been criticized in the past for not showing the latest subject on the most used 1st and 2nd class stamps. It is our normal policy to show a current subject on the UK rate stamps in order to generate greater interest in the stamp designs. Hence the Vanguard and

Swiftsure class submarines and Airbus and Concorde on the 2nd and 1st class values. Similarly the Millennium Bridge features on the 2nd London Bridges stamp (10 September), maintaining the reverse chronology of this set. However for the Pillar of Post stamps (8 October), we have shown the earlier box first, leading up to the 1980 box on the 68p stamp. ED ●

Looking after your stamps I was very interested in Ron Negus's article (August) on caring for your collection and subsequently visited the website he mentioned. I gleaned much interesting new information, but I would like to add a couple of snippets which I have discovered for myself and may be of help to other collectors. For some years now, I have soaked off stamps in the prescribed manner but have dried them on an old print drier in the same way as photographs. The heat involved is not great as its intended use is for paper. It does a good job rapidly, drying 100 stamps at a time. The wet stamps are placed face down on the shiny surface which must be kept clean to avoid sticking, although rare or valuable stamps perhaps require further investigation before proceeding. The only problem I have encountered is that phosphor bands on darkly-coloured stamps, eg 1p maroon, show up when the stamp dries. In addition to heating stamps to remove oil stains, I have also found that this removes some dye stains caused by coloured envelopes. MRS S SMITH, SYSTON, LEICS ●

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WIN a very fine mint GB KGV 1919 5s Seahorse or a 2d Blue catalogued £425, or a QV 10s catalogued £375. Most collectors would like to own stamps such as the prizes offered in this month's *Bulletin*, but think that they are out of reach and are the preserve of auction buyers and dealers. Little do they know that there is an auction particularly designed for the benefit of collectors which prevents dealers from muscling in first! Unlike other auctions, Universal Philatelic Auctions is a postal auction, which does not allow dealers to view all the stamps or phone in at the last minute to snap up the bargains.

Moreover, in just the same way that you have confidence in buying from well known retailers – because you know they will refund you, if you are dissatisfied in any way – Universal offers exactly the same no quibble refund guarantee, subject to your returning items in the same condition as purchased, naturally. Perhaps this explains why Universal is one of the very few auctions in the world to attract bids from almost 1000 different collectors (and some dealers) each time. Or could it be their unique Reducing Estimate System? Unsold lots are reduced in estimate at increasingly deeper discounts until either sold or given away for absolutely nothing. At first sight it sounds a suicidal business practice, but Universal explains that it is easy to sell the best, but end up with the profit in the rest – which has not sold: not good for cashflow. Maybe this explains why collectors see other dealers offering similar stamps at unrealistically high prices and nothing new for sale. Such dealers, auctions included, can not afford to buy new stock, because they have not sold their old stock.

Most auctions offer 1000 lots or so, but at Universal you can choose from over 11,000. Yes, over *eleven thousand* lots in each auction, and approximately 1000 superb full-colour illustrations. Not surprisingly, catalogues cost £4 each; some collectors collect them.

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Catalogues are sent every quarter, so if you miss the November auction please expect your next catalogue in February. Write or phone anytime; you will be made most welcome •

First prize GB 1919 KGV 5s rose-red Seahorse, very fine mint full original gum, small hinge remainder, exceptionally fine colour and centring. Lovely example. SG 416, cat price £225.

Second prize GB 1840 QV 2d Blue, letters O-C, very fine colour, sound 3 margins example cancelled by preferred colour red Maltese cross. Particularly fine detail engraving example. SG 5, cat price £425.

Third prize GB 1883-84 QV 10s ultramarine, letters G-H, sound somewhat heavily cancelled but well centred example. SG 183, cat price £375.



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



August identify The detail is from the London Bridges 47p stamp. The winner was D Rouse of Isle of Wight.

August knowledge Answers: 1) Michael Goaman; 2) 1979; 3) Enschedé. The winner was I MacBean of Norfolk.

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 November *Identify* Competition. Secondly, test your philatelic knowledge by answering the questions below. Send your answer to November *Knowledge* Competition.

- 1 Who designed the 1989 Greetings stamps?
- 2 What industry featured on the 1964 4d Geographical Congress stamp?
- 3 In which building is Stampex held?

Send your answer (addressed to either November *Identify* competition or November *Knowledge* competition), name and address on a postcard or back of a sealed envelope to: British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ. The senders of the first cards drawn in each competition on 13 December will each receive £100. Ten runner-up prizes of presentation packs or FDCs will be awarded in each competition. Competitions are not open to Royal Mail employees. ●

Events

Until December Pillar Boxes display at Heritage Services Consignia, Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London WC1. Open Monday-Friday, 09.00-16.15. **Enquiries** 020 7239 2570.

31 October - 2 November Philatex (London International Stamp and Cover Show) at Royal Horticultural Halls, Greycoat Street, London SW1. Admission free. **Enquiries** 020 8946 4489 or 01793 513431.

2 November Cornex 2002 at Public Rooms, Liskeard.

2 November Midlands Phil Fed Autumn Assembly and Solihull PS stamp fair at Arden School, Knowle, Solihull.

9 November Maidstone & Mid-Kent Stamp Fair at Grove Park Community Centre, Maidstone (close to Junction 7, M20), 10.00-16.00. **Enquiries** B Stone-street, 01622 675784.

15-16 November Leeds Phil Soc Annual Stamp Fair at Pudsey Civic Hall, Leeds. Open Fri 10.30-17.30, Sat 10.00-16.00. **Enquiries** R Shiers 0113 2682370.

17-22 November Espana 2002 international youth exhibition, Salamanca, Spain (see p69). **Enquiries** UK Commissioner, Richard West, 020 8644 7834.

22-23 November Thematica II at Carisbrooke Hall, Seymour Street, London W2. Open Fri 10.30-17.30; Sat 10.30-17.00. Admission free.

29-30 November Chester 2002 at Chester Racecourse (see p68). Admission free. **Enquiries** P Gaywood, 2 Fairways, Fulwood, Preston PR2 8FX.

29 November - 1 December Monacophil 2002 philatelic exhibition – rare stamp displays, dealers. **Enquiries** Musée des Timbres et des Monnaies, Monaco. Telephone +377 9315 4150 ●

Late news

Northern Ireland new printing Shown here are the new De La Rue (left) and former Walsall printings of the Northern Ireland £ stamp. The new DLR printing went on philatelic sale from 15 October. Collectors will notice a shade difference, the new printing being rather lighter as the result of use of greenish yellow rather than pale orange for one of the printing inks •



Bulletin draw winners The winners of the Britannia FDC draw (June) were: J Beard, P M Hawkes, J J Lieb, E C Wright, Marie Burrows, G E Waygood, A J Scales, J A Holmes, R Scott, and C J Groves-Kirkby. Winners of the miniature sheet pack (July) were: P Jewell, K H Khoo, J Grace, Mrs K Williams, C E Fogelvik, R Bolton, Mrs Dianne Barber, C R Chugg, A J Moriarty, and F N Tilley. Sets of the five Occasions packs (August) have been sent to: D Will, R L Banton, C R Chugg, P Russell, and B R Normanton •

De La Rue buys Questa De La Rue, the world's biggest non-government printer of banknotes, announced at the end of September that it is to cut up to 350 staff in order to improve efficiency. It plans to close its site in High Wycombe, which prints stamps, travellers cheques and gift vouchers. DLR, which employs 3000 in the UK as part of its worldwide workforce of 7000, said it had identified 'significant duplication' across the businesses and would reorganise the manufacturing base to create 'highly focused centres of excellence'. DLR plans to develop its factory at Peterborough to focus on cheques; the site at Dunstable will concentrate on vouchers. DLR also announced that it was buying The House of Questa, based in Byfleet, which employs 75 staff, printing stamps and motor vehicle tax discs •

Prussian blue at auction The Grosvenor auction on 27 November will include the recently discovered fifth control number copy of the famous 1935 Silver Jubilee 2½d in Prussian blue (control w35, cylinder 34). Enquiries: Grosvenor, 22 Woodstock Street, London W1C 2AR •

Royal birthday stamps HRH Prince William of Wales has agreed to the issue of a set of stamps next June to commemorate his 21st birthday •

Bulletin back issues Mr D Pye wishes to dispose of 318 back issues, January 1975 to August 2000, with just two issues missing (vol 20 no 1 and 24 no 5). Any offers considered. Contact Mr D Pye, 1 Kingsmead, Nailsea, BS48 2XH. Michael Lyster has a complete run of vols 3-36 (1965-99) available for anyone who can collect. Phone him on 020 8455 9454 •

New overseas services Airsure, Swiftair, and International Signed For were introduced from 31 October, replacing International Registered, International Recorded, Swiftair plus Registered and Swiftair plus Recorded services. New Airsure and Swiftair pre-paid packs (C4 size) are now available at main Post Office branches, price £6 and £5.50 respectively •

Jersey pillar boxes Shown are two of six Jersey stamps marking the 150th anniversary of roadside posting boxes, to be issued on 23 November. Orders and enquiries: Jersey Philatelic Bureau, Postal Headquarters, Jersey JE1 1AB •



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