

BRITISH PHILATELIC

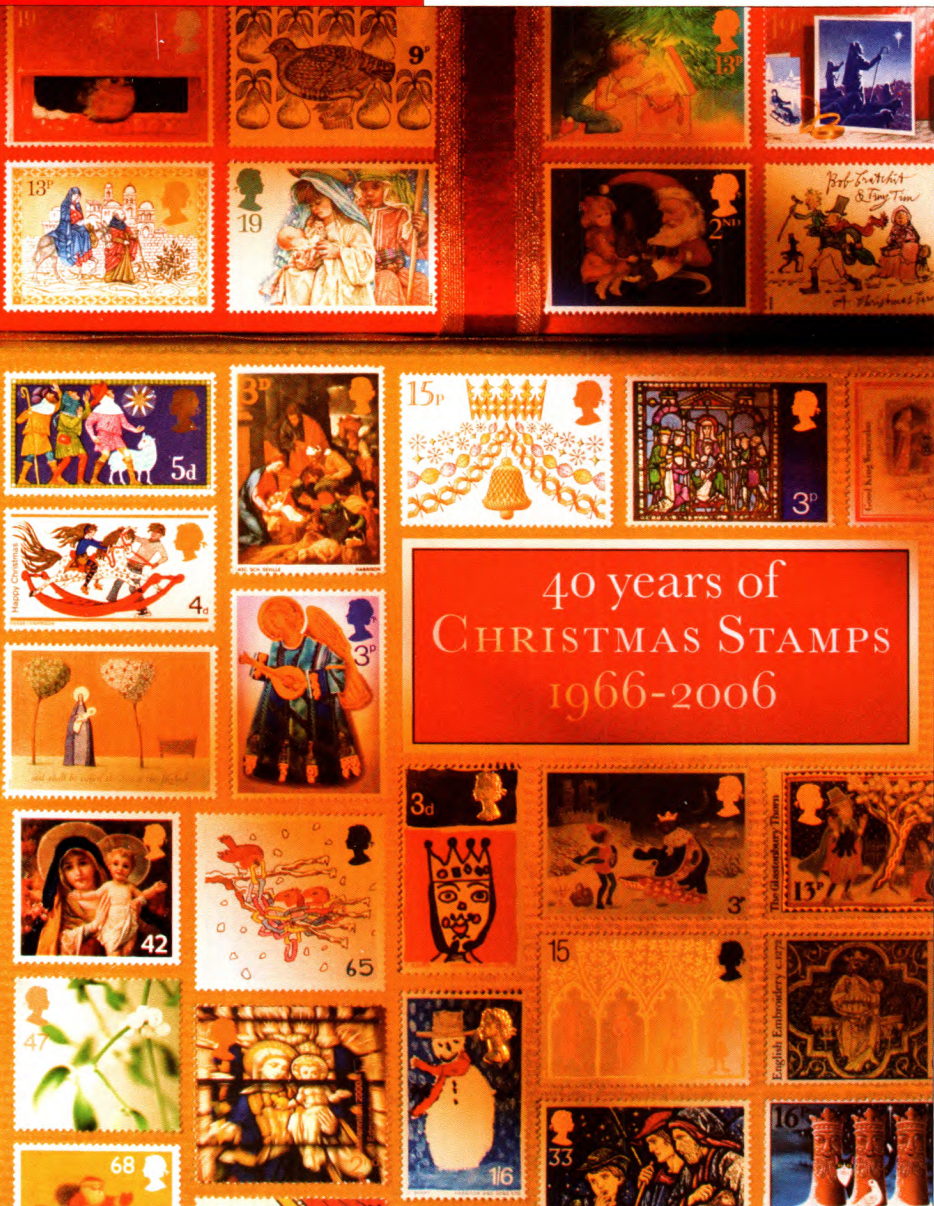
The ROYAL MAIL magazine *for stamp collectors*

Volume 44 Number 4

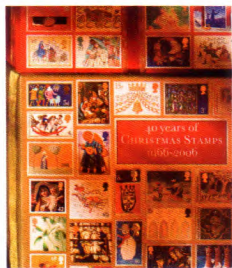
DECEMBER 2006 £1.20

Bulletin

Christmas past • Abolition of
Slavery • World of Invention



Forthcoming issues and withdrawals



Cover 40 years ago, Royal Mail issued its first Christmas stamps. This month, Dorothy Martin and Richard West look back to the beginnings of a festive philatelic tradition. Photograph by Geoff Dann.

30 November

Issue Celebrating Scotland miniature sheet and presentation pack • 2006 Miniature Sheet and Presentation Pack collections.

27 December

Withdrawal 2004 Yearbook (standard & de luxe versions) and Yearpack.

3 January

Issue Beatles stamp cards (11 cards: 10 stamps and miniature sheet).

9 January

Issue Beatles stamps, miniature sheet and presentation pack.

9 January

Withdrawal Animal Tales stamps, presentation pack, stamp cards and generic sheet.

16 January

Issue Stamp book: 5 × 1st definitive and 1 × 1st 'Love' • Unification of England & Scotland coin cover.

25 January

Issue Sea Life stamp cards.

A subscription to this magazine makes an ideal Christmas present for a philatelic friend or relation. It keeps them informed of new Royal Mail issues and events in the philatelic world and provides interesting articles by leading philatelists and postal historians. To book a subscription, send the name and address of your friend or relative to Talents House (address at left). Annual subscription £11.75 UK and Europe, £16.75 rest of world (airmail). Binders and storage boxes are available, at £8.50 and £9.95 respectively.

How Stamps Are Made Enclosed free with this *Bulletin* is a Royal Mail booklet, *How Stamps Are Made*. This is intended mainly for use by students involved in school/college projects, but we thought would also be of interest to *Bulletin* readers. Please note this booklet is not part of the *Bulletin* Publication series.

Royal Mail Talents House 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB, UK. Telephone order line (08.30 - 17.00 Monday to Friday): 08457 641 641; from overseas +44 131 316 7483. Minimum handling charge UK £1.45, Europe £1.55, rest of world (airmail) £2.15. Some products can be ordered on Royal Mail's website: www.royalmail.com/stamps



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The **British Philatelic Bulletin** is published monthly by Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ • **Editor** J R Holman • **Price** £1.20 single copies from Post Office Ltd philatelic outlets • **Annual subscription** £12.95 UK & Europe; £17.95 elsewhere. Send subscriptions to Royal Mail Talents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB • **Binders** (to hold 24 issues) £8.50, storage boxes (about 30 copies) £9.95 available by post from Royal Mail (Edinburgh address, above) • Royal Mail also publishes the fortnightly *British Postmark Bulletin*, giving details of forthcoming special handstamps. Available on annual subscription from Edinburgh address above: £12.25 UK and Europe, £24.95 rest of the world • **Copyright** Design & text Royal Mail Group plc, unless attributed to a specified author. All requests to reproduce any article should be addressed to the Editor, *British Philatelic Bulletin*, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ • **Design** Robert Maude • **Printed** in Great Britain by Beacon Press • **ISSN** 0953 8119 • Royal Mail is a trading name of Royal Mail Group plc. Registered in England and Wales no 4138203 registered office 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ

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ONCE AGAIN we invite you to vote for your favourite stamps and *Bulletin* writer of the year. The special stamps issued during 2006 are shown on pages 116-117. Tell us your top three sets and favourite individual stamp on the enclosed voting form. All forms will be entered in a prize draw: the first four 'out of the hat' will each win £50. Remember to return your form by 12 January. The favourite set of 2005 was Trafalgar, with the Trooping the Colour 1st class the most popular individual stamp of the year.

This year we also invite you to vote for your favourite first day cover envelope and presentation pack of 2006. Here you are asked to vote for the cover design and pack content and design, not the stamps for that issue.

We would also like you, once again, to vote for your favourite *Bulletin* writer, as listed opposite. All voting forms go into a second draw for two more prizes of £50. The favourite author will receive £100 and the runner-up £50. Last year's winner was Douglas Myall, with Dorothy Martin second. Please note that articles by Royal Mail staff, and Stamp Scene, are excluded.

There are three anniversaries this month, all of which are featured in this *Bulletin* – the 40th anniversary of Christmas stamps, the 70th anniversary of the abdication of King Edward VIII, and the centenary of the granting of Royal status to the Royal Philatelic Society London. The *Bulletin* has a strong connection with the Royal; several of our main contributors – Richard West, Dorothy Martin, Glenn Morgan, Ron Negus, and Richard West, as well as myself, are Fellows of the Society, and Ron has the added distinction of being the Society's Archivist.

On behalf of Royal Mail I wish you all a happy and peaceful Christmas and New Year. JOHN HOLMAN •

Stamp scene News and upcoming events: Glenn Morgan keeps you posted



Glenn Morgan

London 2010 Thanks to the complete *London Philatelist* on CD, I was able to find in volume 69, pages 14-15, January 1960 issue a mention of problems being experienced in 1960, not dissimilar to discussions currently underway regarding the forthcoming London 2010 exhibition. The piece states:

'The problem of frame space has again proved difficult for the organizers of the 1960 exhibition and it is explained in The Second Magazine that despite careful planning and economic use of space, frames will be substantially fewer than those asked for by the competitors.'

It is true that an International Exhibition of this stature can be too small and cause disappointment among the exhibitors who are not allocated the number of frames they desire, although this will not affect the judging in any way for the complete entry will be considered by the jury and not only the portion displayed.

It is equally true that a philatelic exhibition covering a large area of floor space with a great many frames is not so popular with the collector who is disinclined to turn his visit into an endurance test, and who senses the loss of an intimate atmosphere which is one of the hall-marks of most philatelic gatherings.'

Nothing has changed 46 years on, and the question of whether large amounts of space should be used to display private collections, or to hold more appealing (to some) features may eventually be solved by electronic judging. This has started to be trialled elsewhere in the world and I believe has great potential, especially if a small but balanced selection of winners of all levels is allowed to be shown at the show. (I would not approve of only gold medal displays, for I believe that visitors need to be able to relate to what is being shown, as occurred with the recent British Thematic Association display at Stampex where many visitors examined the sheets.

The innovative London 2010 proposal to show half of the displays for the first part of the show and then to switch to the remaining classes will help, but many will still claim that too much importance is being placed on competitive exhibiting at all internationals. What do readers think? •

Post Office Vehicle Club The club was formed in 1962 by a group whose interest in the GPO fleet started between the wars. Since then, the organization has expanded and with the publication of a number of booklets on the GPO fleet and its successors, the Post Office and BT, interest in Post Office vehicles has grown with the club. It was formed to bring together people interested in current operations and vehicle purchases. Today's new vehicles are tomorrow's preserved vehicles and they have set about building up a complete record of all vehicles operated from 1906 to the present day. (2006 has seen the centenary of the first GPO-owned vehicles in 1906.)

POVC's monthly journal *Post Horn* keeps members informed on current vehicle developments within Royal Mail, Parcelforce and BT fleets. Other regular features are details of historic vehicles discovered, whether for sale or restored. Other features cover a variety of related subjects including the transport operations of overseas Postal and Telephone administrations.

Annual membership is currently £17 (£22 Europe including Republic of Ireland, £28 rest of the world) including 12 issues of *Post Horn* •

POVC enquiries Write to Frank Weston, 32 Russell Way, Leighton Buzzard LU7 3NG, e-mail povehclub@aol.com, visit www.povehclub.org.uk or join the e-group at www.yahoo.com/group/povehclub for all the latest news.

Publications Now available is the reprint of *Post Office Stores and Telephone Vehicles*. This new third edition includes an extra eight pages of colour photographs, bringing the story up to 2005. Price £9.95 postpaid from povc Sales. Cheques should be payable to the 'Post Office Vehicle Club' •

A new postal stationery catalogue of Latin American countries containing stationery with railway and tramway motives is available. There are 550 different items from 22 countries listed with more than 400 illustrations. It comprises 140 pages of A4-size, and has been produced in English by its author Hans Eriksson. Price, including postage, is £20 to anywhere in Europe. A few copies of the Asia, Africa, and Romania catalogues are available at £25, £15, and £15 respectively, all postpaid •

POVC Sales 124 Shenstone Avenue, Norton, Stourbridge DY8 3EJ.

Enquiries Hans Eriksson, Storröretsågen 141, SE-16347 SPÅNGA, Sweden. Telephone +46-8-7604549. Email hans_eriksson00@hotmail.com

Orders and payment Enquire to: CD Sales, Island of Pabay, Broadford, Isle of Skye, Scotland IV49 9BP.

USA and Canadian locals The Island of Pabay advises that a modern USA and Canada Locals Post CD is now available, which is stated to be the only information available today. Commencing in the early 1950s it contains information on over 860 posts and if printed on A4 would cover over 1000 pages. Many stamps listed appear without date of issue or consecutive catalogue number, and no prices are given because so little material has been available for sale. Edited by Ralph Phillips and Alfred Jost, the CD is 334mb and the format is a series of Word documents, accessible by most PCs. Price for UK and Europe is £15 (Euro 20) including P&P. For recorded delivery within UK add £1.50. Other European destinations should add £6.50 (Euro 10). Enquire to CD Sales regarding preferred methods of payment ●

EFIRO UK Commissioner
Richard West, 39 Waverley
Avenue, Sutton, Surrey SM1
3JX.

EFIRO 2008 Romania is to host its first international stamp exhibition, in Bucharest, 20-28 June 2008. Being organised by Romania Post, the exhibition has FIP patronage, and will encompass all classes including Open Class, One Frame, Youth and Literature. The first bulletin and entry forms are now available from the UK Commissioner. Those requiring a copy should enclose an A4 SAE stamped to a total of 90p. Completed entry forms must be returned to the UK Commissioner by 15 January 2007 ●

Harmers Auctions 020 8747
6100. www.harmers.com

Auctions Harmers' 26 September All World Stamps & Postal History sale included much GB material. No fewer than 15 good/fine used Victorian £5 orange were on offer; the seven that sold achieved between £1000 and £4705. A complete sheet of 20 of the 1948 £1 Silver Wedding stamp made £294 (est £200), and a 1964 Forth Road Bridge presentation pack £223 (£100). An imperf pair of 1978 Cycling 9p stamps made £153, and an imperf block of four of the Machin 6½p centre band went for £470 (£250) ●

Cavendish 01332 250970.
www.cavendish-auctions.com

Cavendish's 'Worldwide and Great Britain' auction on 28 September included the Lady Southampton Collection of Royal covers and memorabilia. An 1897 cover bearing a 1d stamp cancelled by the London hooded scroll 'VR' datestamp made £500 (est £320); it contained a Christmas card from Princess Beatrice to Lady Southampton. A signed photographic card of the Princess went for £220 (£180). The sale included the late R S Binnie's collection of Scottish Postal History 1699-1972. A 1761 entire from the USA with 'GREENOCK' and 'SHIP' markings made £340 (£240) and a set of 68 covers/cards from Scottish islands, 1789-1972 made £280 (£150). Stamps sold included a block of 18 of the 1858-79 1d red plate 196 with plate number and part inscription in the sheet margin, which made £500 (£140) ●

Spink will hold a 'Stamps & Covers of the World' auction in London on 7 December. Enquiries 020 7563 4008 or e-mail catalogues@spink.com ●

BPMA British Postal Museum
and Archive, Freeling House,
Phoenix Place, London WC1X
0DL. www.postalheritage.org.uk

BPMA autumn lectures Two fascinating lectures have recently been held at the British Postal Museum and Archive. The first was on the digitisation of the Reginald Phillips collection and its availability online, and the second was a presentation by Andrew Davidson about his design work for Royal Mail. This included his recent commission for the Ice Age special stamps, where attendees were able to see the original woodblocks and proof pulls ●

Society publications A round-up of recent philatelic publications received at our offices.

Orbit is the journal of the Astro Space Stamp Society. Membership enquiries: Brian J Lockyer, 21 Exford Close, Weston-Super-Mare BS2 3RE •

The GB Journal and *The GBPS Newsletter* are both published by the Great Britain Philatelic Society. Membership enquiries: Peter Tanner, High-standings, 13 St Hubert's Close, Gerrards Cross SL9 7EN •

ABPS News is the official journal of the Association of British Philatelic Societies. Membership enquiries: ABPS, PO Box 199, Thetford IP24 3WX •

Topical Time and *Themescene* cover thematic collecting from an American and a British perspective respectively. Membership enquiries: American Topical Association Inc, 411A Lillard Road, Arlington, TX 76012-3698. British Thematic Association, 71 Churchward Avenue, Swindon SN2 1NW •

The *I&BPS Newsletter* exists for members past and present of the financial services industry. Membership enquiries: Brian Sole FRPSL, 3 Stockfield Road, Claygate, Esher KT10 0QG •

The Coros Journal is the quarterly journal of the collectors of religion on stamps. Membership enquiries: Mrs Verna Shackleton, 425 N Linwood Avenue #110, Appleton WI 54914-3476, USA •

Royal Mail news Christmas stamp award

• New issues and products • Posting dates

Christmas award Royal Mail's 2005 Christmas stamps recently won the prestigious St Gabriel Award for the best religious stamp series. The stamps celebrate Christianity with six representations of the Madonna and Child. The paintings are taken from five continents around the world. Legnago's Town Councillor for Culture, Clara Scapin, said that the top award was given to the British stamps created by illustrator and priest Irene von Treskow because 'they remind us of the Christian roots of Europe while extending an invitation to dialogue and respect.' Croatia was the recipient of a special award for religious stamps issued in 2005. The prize was presented for the Croatian stamp in remembrance of Pope John Paul II issued only a few days after his death. The late Pontiff had visited Croatia in 1994, 1998 and 2003. The award jury's chairman was Dietmar Fiedler, president of the International St Gabriel Society, and members included two well-known stamp designers, Eros Donnini and Franco Filanci. The St Gabriel International Award for Best Religious Stamp was established in 1969 in Verona and was named after a saint nicknamed 'the Lord's postman'. It is given to postal authorities for stamp issues of intrinsic artistic value and great religious relevance. The Award consists of a beautiful sterling silver plaque depicting the Annunciation – a true work of art by sculptor Enrico Manfrini. A special postmark designed by Filanci was used at the stamp exhibition held at Legnago in conjunction with the award ceremony. *Giorgio Migliavacca* •



The 1st class stamp from the award-winning Christmas set of 2005.



Edward VIII 1d ingot Price £27.95 plus handling charge.

Stamp ingots The ingots featuring stamps of the reigns of Victoria, Edward VII and George V have proved popular, and the series continues with six ingots reproducing Edward VIII and George VI stamps. The first, featuring the Edward VIII 1d stamp, is now available. The next, featuring the George VI 1d, will be available from 20 February. Handling charge on all ingots £1.45 UK, £1.55 Europe, £2.15 Rest of World. All orders and enquiries to Royal Mail Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB. UK order line 08457 641 641 (overseas +44 131 316 7483) ●

Year Collections The 2006 Yearbook and Yearpack, containing all the year's special stamps, are now available and will remain on sale until the end of 2008. Both contain all the special stamps of 2006 and the Lest We Forget miniature sheet. The standard version of the Yearbook costs £44.95 or £75 for the de-luxe, leather-bound version. The colourful Yearpack, price £39.55, includes concise background information on each of the special issues, with technical details of the stamps and illustrations of the alternative 'First Day' postmarks for each issue.

Two other Year Collections are available from 30 November. The 2006 Miniature Sheet Year Pack (£22.50) contains all seven of this year's miniature sheets (see back page of this *Bulletin*). Brief details are included about the subjects of the sheets. The 2006 Presentation Pack Collection (£44.95) contains packs for the 11 special stamp issues plus Smilers and the Lest We Forget and Celebrating Scotland miniature sheet packs (see back page) ●

Christmas posting dates The recommended last day for posting Christmas cards within the UK is 16 December by 2nd class service, and 19 December for 1st class. International airmail to Australia, New Zealand, South & Central America, Caribbean, Africa, Middle East, Asia and the Far East (except Japan) should be posted by 8 December, items for USA, Canada, Japan and Eastern Europe by 11 December, and Western Europe by 13 December. Check the Royal Mail website (www.royalmail.com) for further information. The vast majority of UK cards will qualify for the 'Letter' rate of 32p or 23p (1st or 2nd class). The weight limit is now 100g. For larger cards with any dimension over 240mm long or 165mm wide or 5mm thick, the 'Large Letter' rate applies: 44p 1st class or 37p 2nd class, up to 100g. If using Parcelforce Worldwide services for sending parcels by time-guaranteed and express services, check www.parcelforce.com for last posting dates.

As usual Royal Mail will assist Santa in replying to children who write to him at Santa, Reindeerland SAN TAI – such letters should arrive by 13 December. Royal Mail expects to handle around two billion items of mail this Christmas. Post Office branches will be closed on Christmas and Boxing Day, on New Year's Day and on 2 January in Scotland. Opening hours may vary over the holiday period so check with your branch for details ●



Coin cover A special cover, available from 16 January, will mark the 300th anniversary of the union of the English and Scottish Parliaments in 1707. The date is the anniversary of the ratification in Scotland, which became effective on 1 May 1707. The cover bears six of the Union Flag Smilers stamp (definitive size) cancelled by a special postmark and has a £2 coin encapsulated. Price £15.50, available from Tallents House •

Collect British Stamps The 2007 (58th) edition of Stanley Gibbons' ever-popular *Collect British Stamps* colour checklist is available from Royal Mail Tallents House, as well as from Stanley Gibbons, and stamp and book shops. *CBS* makes an ideal Christmas gift. Price £9.95, Tallents House handling charge £1.45 UK, £1.55 Europe, £2.15 rest of world •

Coming off sale The 2004 Yearbook and Yearpack will be withdrawn from sale on 27 December – order now if you still need these for your collection. The Animal Tales stamps, presentation pack, generic sheet and stamp cards will be withdrawn on 9 January. Remember the generic sheet contains self-adhesive stamps, the only source of these stamps in this format •

Prize winners The winners of the PIP draw in the September *Bulletin* were: J P Rogers, USA (1st prize); Mrs J Lucas, Lincolnshire; P Constantine, Buckinghamshire; Mrs C Coates, Somerset; K Ward of New Zealand; and A McAulay, Glasgow •

Storing the Bulletin Binders and box files are available for storing this and the *Postmark Bulletin*. The sturdy box files, in maroon for the *Philatelic Bulletin* and green for the *Postmark Bulletin* are available from Royal Mail Tallents House, price £9.95 each. Order codes PB349 (Philatelic), PB350 (Postmark). The files will store 30 copies of the Philatelic and about 50 of the Postmark Bulletins. The traditional binders for the Philatelic (PB001) and Postmark (PB322) Bulletins cost £8.50 each •



replies from GREAT BRITAIN and AUSTRALIA
 The British Postal Authorities commenced answering letters sent to Santa by children, in 1963. In 1964 a folding card was included, bearing a message written inside.



6.3. The Christmas Tree

The Christmas Tree would be collected from the countryside by the Victorian family amid much jollity and laughter. The children would enjoy bringing the tree home and there would be great excitement when they helped to decorate it with baubles and tinsel, candles and streamers, sweets and toys and small gifts.



Christmas Dorothy Martin looks at the first Christmas issue of 1966, and at some of the earliest festive traditions

CHRISTMAS 2006 marks the 40th anniversary of the first Christmas stamps to be issued by Great Britain. In spite of the first request for a special Christmas stamp having been received by the Post Office in 1957, and many more during the following years due to numerous other countries producing seasonal stamps, no action was taken until Tony Benn, the Postmaster General at that time, realised that thousands of children wrote to Santa Claus every year, and as a result introduced a special 'Reply Cover' with an illustrated meter slogan reading 'Reindeerland Christmas 1963'. Unfortunately I have never been fortunate enough to find one of these covers, although I do have a 1964 cover in my collection. This slogan cancellation lasted many years, with a few slight changes in the meantime such as an added bar slug in 1967, and later without the bar slug and without buffer bars.

In 1986 an illustrated cover appeared for the first time, part of the design depicting Santa in his sleigh drawn by reindeer. The Americans popularised the idea of Santa's sleighs being drawn by eight reindeer through the poem *A Night Before Christmas*, written by Clement Moore in 1822; their names were Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Comet, Cupid, Donner and Blitzen. Rudolph the red-nosed reindeer became a later addition to the team after a song of that name was published in 1939. Reindeer are exceptional in that both male and female have antlers. They are very strong and their hooves make them ideal for pulling sleighs bearing Santa and his sacks full of toys over the snowy roof-tops and icy land.

Christmas stamps The Postmaster General had decided that a design competition should be held amongst school children for the two stamps to be issued for Christmas 1966. Around 5000 entries were submitted and judged by eight well-known stamp designers. The winning designs were King Wenceslas by Tasveer Shemza, and Snowman by James Berry (both shown opposite, with Edward

Short, the new PMG). Ann Belshaw's Santa Claus design was used for the first day cover. The 2006 stamps also depict Santa Claus and a snowman, as well as a reindeer and a Christmas tree.

For some, Christmas is not the same without snow. They love to watch snowflakes falling from the sky, forming a fairy-like picture of their familiar surroundings. Youngsters cannot get outside quickly enough to snowball each other and make a snowman, with a carrot for its nose and buttons for the eyes, and an old scarf around its neck.

Christmas trees There are two schools of thought on the origins of the Christmas tree, the earliest dating from the 8th century when St Boniface, an English missionary in Germany, is said to have chopped down a sacred oak tree beneath which human sacrifices had been offered, and where a young fir tree miraculously appeared in its place. The Saint named the fir tree as an emblem of the new faith he had brought to Germany. Others believe that when Martin Luther was walking home one beautiful clear starry night in the 16th century, the sky so thrilled him that he uprooted a fir tree and fixed lighted candles on its branches to symbolise the starry heavens, from which Christ came to save the peoples of the world. The decorated Christmas tree was certainly an early German tradition originating through the Paradise Tree of their mystery plays c1776, in which they hung apples and lighted candles on a fir tree to represent the fruit and brightness of the Garden of Eden.

The custom spread to Scandinavian countries and to America, before eventually reaching England around 1829. There is no doubt that Prince Albert popularised the decorated Tree which was usually topped with a fairy, or a star to represent the Star of Bethlehem. In Victorian times fir trees were collected from the woods and carried home by children and their parents, who had great fun making paper chains to hang on them, and festooning them with tinsel and small gifts. ►

Origins of Santa Claus It is believed by some that Odin, chief god of the Vikings, could be the basis for the cheery, bearded generous Father Christmas; alternatively St Nicholas is more popular as the origin of Santa Claus. Nicholas was born in the 4th century in Asia Minor, to wealthy and devoutly religious parents. He became a priest and was made a Bishop when only 30 years old. He gave away all his riches and was renowned for his goodness and generosity. According to legend, he threw three purses of gold through the door of a poor nobleman who could not afford dowries for his beautiful daughters; on another occasion he dropped gold coins down a poor man's chimney, and they fell into a stocking lying on the fireside to dry. This is thought to be the origin of children hanging up their stockings to receive presents from Santa. The Bishop of Myra was eventually to become a Saint.

The mythology of Santa Claus can be traced through the Dutch immigrants who migrated to America. Holland's Sinterklaas made the transition from saintly bishop to the North American Santa Claus. In 1809, Washington Irving wrote of Santa as a tubby, jovial little fellow who flew through the air in a sleigh driven by reindeer. It took the well-known portrait drawn by Thomas Nast, a German immigrant in America, for him to become the jolly red-faced character wearing a long white beard and red-hooded cloak we all know and love today. Santa has certainly kept up-to-date with modern ideas and developments over the years, eg transport, from trains to cars, from aeroplanes to spaceships, instead of traditional sleighs drawn by reindeer. Instead of letters sent up a chimney, to postal contact or telephone, and more recently on the internet.

In modern times, the commercial Santa Claus can be found in most department stores, in a magnificently decorated grotto, much to the delight of youngsters. He also has many homes in various countries such as Iceland, Greenland and Finland, where some offer tourist attractions and facilities including sleigh rides drawn by reindeer. May he live on for ever and ever and continue to bring joy and pleasure to children all over the world ●

The first Christmas FDCs

FORTY YEARS AGO the British Post Office issued its first Christmas stamps. Public pressure had been growing for such stamps, but it was not until Anthony Wedgwood-Benn became PMG that anything materialised. Benn first thought that such stamps might carry a surcharge for charity, but it seems such notions were quickly dismissed. However, he was keen that the designs should be done by children, the winners of a competition staged through schools. He gathered leading representatives from the world of education for guidance, hoping that the stamps would be issued for 1966. The advice he received was that time prohibited a competition until 1967 at the earliest – not soon enough for Benn, who decided that the PO would hold its own competition, which attracted around 5000 entries. The issued stamps did not find universal favour; Ann Belshaw's third-place design was used for the Post Office's first day envelope.

At this time first day cover collecting was very popular, encouraged by the Post Office with 'first day of issue' cancellations and envelopes. By 1966 demand was considerable, particularly witnessed with the Battle of Hastings issue. The little Welsh village of Bethlehem was the obvious location to post covers of the new Christmas stamps, and a 'first day of issue' handstamp was provided, and has been for the day of issue of every Christmas set since, even though there is no longer a full-time post office at Bethlehem. It was quite a shock for the postmistress, accustomed to serving the occasional customer through a stable-type door. On the day of issue, 1 December, extra staff were brought in, and a room in a nearby pub was commandeered to provide space to cancel mountains of covers. Most collectors were content with the 'first day' handstamp, but the more resourceful would have used a special service so that the covers received the normal operational handstamp.

Over the years covers cancelled by operational handstamps from places with a clearly associated name such as Bethlehem, Nasareth or St Nicholas, Guildford, have commanded a premium price. Sadly, today such opportunities are virtually nil, as these small sub-offices are now no more.

Richard West on first day arrangements in pre-decimal days



Top left: PO first day envelope for Christmas 1966, cancelled with the large 'first day of issue' handstamp in use at the time. Top right: the smaller, neater handstamp used at Bethlehem.

Bottom left: a 1967 cover cancelled on the two dates of issue. Bottom right: a special handstamp was commissioned in 1968 to celebrate Selfridges Toy Fair.

Another alternative has been an appropriate slogan postmark, although these are more problematic on the basis of condition, as slogans are often far from perfect. In 1966, 'Post Early for Christmas' was in use.

Following comments about the 1966 designs, the new Postmaster General, Edward Short, felt that the 1967 Christmas issue should be religious in content, and recommended the use of famous paintings. He also flirted for a while with the idea of a charity surcharge, again to no avail. For the first and only time, the set was issued in two parts, the 4d on 18 October, and the 3d and 1s6d on 27 November, as Mr Short was keen that those mailing cards, etc, overseas could use special stamps. Thus there were two 'first days', and on this occasion the PO allowed covers to be posted twice, so as to bear all three stamps. Bethlehem was again the preferred place for the 'first day' handstamp, although once more the operational handstamp has proved much scarcer. In addition a machine-

applied 'first day' cancellation was used at Bethlehem, primarily for use of the bulk mailings to doctors undertaken by Medical Mailing. For the 'second' first day, two other appropriate slogans were in use: Cheltenham 'See the Christmas Illuminations', and Londonderry 'First Ever Christmas Present – God Gave His Son'.

The 1968 designs again caused controversy, as Rosalind Dease had chosen a theme of children playing with toys: many felt this failed to convey the spirit of Christmas, and Dease came in for a good deal of criticism. For those sending FDCs the pattern was much as before – operational handstamps being utilised by the more astute, and with a slogan 'first day of issue' being available from Bethlehem intended for bulk mailings, and with the Christmas Illuminations slogan from Cheltenham. However, FDC producers were becoming aware of the possibilities, and this year a complementary special handstamp was commissioned to promote the 'Christmas Toy Fair' at Selfridges. ►



The 1969 designs (left) were considered outstanding. A pictorial Bethlehem first day handstamp (above) was introduced in 1970.

In 1969 two Postmasters General were involved in the Christmas issue, the first being Roy Mason. Following the comments made about the 'toys' theme the previous year it was agreed that in 1969 the issue would be both religious and traditional. Mason felt that using paintings, as in 1967, was a sound idea, although not all were convinced that paintings translated well to stamps. The decision led to the next PMG, John Stonehouse, who agreed that contemporary artists be invited to submit designs on a religious theme. The result was one of the most successful Christmas issues from Royal Mail: three designs by Fritz Wegner. These were issued by the new Post Office Corporation – the role of Postmaster General having been replaced by the Minister of Posts & Telecommunications, initially John Stonehouse, and the Chairman of The Post Office.

Some debate took place over denominations. ThePost Office did not want a special stamp at 2nd class rate, 4d, as this might cause confusion in sorting offices. The Stamp Advisory Committee, on the other hand, believed that the majority posted their Christmas cards at 2nd class rate, and should not be denied using a special stamp: the SAC won.

For FDCs, there were the familiar 'first day of issue' handstamps including Bethlehem, the 'first day' slogan from Bethlehem, the Christmas illuminations slogan from Cheltenham, and operational handstamps from places such as Nasareth and Bethlehem. Another suitable slogan on this occasion publicised *Dick Whittington* at Lewisham Concert Hall, and a one-day circular handstamp was inscribed 'Jerusalem. Skellingthorpe. Lincs'.

Despite the fact that the 1969 designs had been so well received, there might not have been any Christmas stamps in 1970. There were fears that the task of printing the new decimal definitives was onerous enough for the stamp printers Harrison and Sons without adding a Christmas issue. A compromise suggested was to release just one stamp, showing the Christmas tree in Trafalgar Square, but the idea did not work. In the end, it was agreed to issue three stamps, as had become the norm. Stuart Rose, the Design Director for the Post Office, put forward the proposal that the designs should be based upon religious motifs, as found on sculpture, tapestry or stained glass.

Two sets of submitted designs were found to be equally pleasing, so those by Sally Stiff, based on the British Museum's De Lisle Psalter, were used for 1970, while designs by Collis Clements based on stained glass at Canterbury Cathedral were retained for use in 1971.

The issue resulted in a 'first', in that the first day of issue handstamp in use at Bethlehem was pictorial, in fact designed by Sally Stiff and based on her 4d stamp. Another suitable handstamp was that for Lilleshall Parish Church, celebrating its 1300th anniversary. Slogan postmarks were as previously, with 'first day' from Bethlehem and Christmas illuminations from Cheltenham, but this time one to promote Fairfield Christmas Circus was also applicable.

Following decimalisation, the pattern for FDCs would change, with more commissioned hand-stamps for new issues. The Christmas set would be the one constant in each year's programme – but more of that on another occasion ●

Philately online Ron Negus revisits an award-winning site



Welcome.

Scouts on Stamps Society International (SOSSI) is a nonprofit philatelic organization specializing in the collecting, study, and enjoyment of stamps and other postal items celebrating the Boy Scout and Girl Scout (Guide) movements. [Join Us!](#)



www.sossi.org Devoted entirely to Scouting in all its aspects, this site also provides an excellent model for anyone considering the creation of a single subject thematic on the internet.

AS CHRISTMAS APPROACHES, some readers will have the opportunity to employ their local Scout troop to deliver Christmas cards for them in their neighbourhood. 2007 marks the centenary of the formation of the Scouting movement, and this subject will be widely covered in the media next year. Royal Mail will issue a commemorative set for the occasion in July, and similar sets can be expected from other countries around the world.

One of my earliest columns in this series (September 2000) reviewed the website of the Scouts on Stamps Society International (sossi). At that time I explained that this body was founded in 1952, in Kansas, USA, and named the Scouts on Stamps Society. 'International' was added in 1956 to recognise the increasing number of countries that were issuing items relevant to the subject.

In the six years since my first review, this award-winning site (address above) has grown, and now claims to attract 1500 viewers on average every week. The site contains 7500 images of stamps and associated philatelic material about scouting spread over 2500 pages.

Navigation of such a large amount of information needs a good index. This is provided by a single click on the 'Site Map' heading on the home page. The map provides a listing of all the pages, arranged under the following five headings: Society Information, sossi Youth Stamp Collecting, Online Activities, Scouts on Stamps Catalogues, and Gallery of Information.

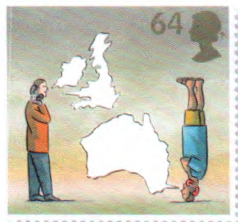
In the Society Information section is a summary of all aspects of the administration. This gives a history of its development, the constitution and bylaws, forthcoming events and full details of how to become a member of this non-profit making organisation. Subscriptions can be paid via PayPal, following instructions given here.

The Youth Stamp Collecting pages are aimed at scouts and girl guides to explain the attractions of the hobby. Online Activities gives links to other sites covering specialized Scout stamp themes, as well as links to purely philatelic sites. Scouts on Stamps Catalogues gives details of some thematic listings that have been produced worldwide. There are links in this section that give details of some of the local Scout posts that have operated in the UK, but they are not comprehensive. Parts of this whole section are restricted to members of sossi via user name and password access. The same restriction applies to the archive of articles that have featured in the Society's own magazine, the *sossi Journal*.

A few articles from the magazine, plus other specially written pieces, are available by subject in the final section, Gallery of Information. The coverage is very wide, and headings taken at random from the full list of 30 subjects include First Day Covers, Fakes & Forgeries, Postcards, Meter Stamps, Perfins and Triangle Stamps. Many of the main headings are further sub-divided, so the amount of information provided is immense. In this section, under the subject heading Exhibits Online, the user can see actual displays plus useful information about exhibiting in general.

The number of awards that this site has been given proves that it has maintained its high standard since inception. For collectors of scouting material it is an essential resource. For collectors of any other topical subject, it is worth visiting to see how well a thematic subject can be handled via the internet ●

World of Invention A new issue celebrating



Technical details

Designer Peter Willberg

Printer De La Rue

Process Gravure

Sizes Stamps 32 x 30mm.

Sheets PO branches will hold sheets of 30. Sheets of 60, with gutter margin, available from Tallents House and from selected PO philatelic outlets

Perforation To be advised.

Phosphor Two bands

Gum Stamps self-adhesive. Miniature sheet gummed.

Gutter strips To be advised.

THE FIRST of two special issues in March features major inventions. On sale from 1 March, it comprises six stamps, a miniature sheet and prestige stamp book. The stamps, issued in pairs, feature illustrations by Peter Till of: bridge and railway (1st class); telephone and television (64p); and world-wide web (internet) and space travel (72p). The stamps are printed on self-adhesive paper and have details of inventors Thomas Telford; Richard Trevithick and George Stephenson; Alexander Graham Bell; John Logie Baird; Tim Berners-Lee; and space travel printed on the reverse. The Queen's silhouette and value/service indicator are positioned top left on the 1st and 72p stamps, and top right on the 64p values. The year '2007' can be seen reversed out of the phosphor bands at left. The stamps will also be issued in a miniature sheet which is gummed, not self-adhesive.

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Orders for serviced FDCs must reach Tallents House (address below) by the day of issue. Collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue to: Royal Mail Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB (Tallents House postmark) or to their nearest Royal Mail Special Handstamp Centre (Menai Bridge, Gwynedd postmark), marking the outer envelope 'FD0709' or 'FD0710'. Covers can be posted or handed in at main post offices for the Menai Bridge postmark.

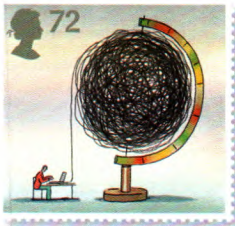
PHILATELIC PRODUCTS A well-illustrated pack is written by Eugene Byrne, a journalist specialising in science and engineering, and a science fiction writer. It includes biographies of Thomas Telford, James Watt, William Henry Fox Talbot, Sir George Cayley, Joseph Aspdin, Sir William Henry Perkin, Alexander Graham Bell, Charles Babbage, John Logie Baird, Thomas Harold Flowers, Sir Timothy Berners-Lee and Trevor Baylis. It has been designed by Morgan Radcliffe, with illustrations by Peter Till.

PRESTIGE STAMP BOOK A new book entitled *World of Invention: Technology to Change Our Lives* contains four panes of stamps. It features some interesting illustrations including a fine image of Telford's Menai Bridge, an early transatlantic airmail letter, a specimen of electro-telegraphy transmitted from Marseilles to Paris in 1863, and families listening to a Churchill broadcast on the radio and watching an early TV set. The book is written by TV presenter Adam Hart-Davis, designed by Russell Warren-Fisher and printed by De La Rue. All the stamps were printed in gravure on gummed paper.

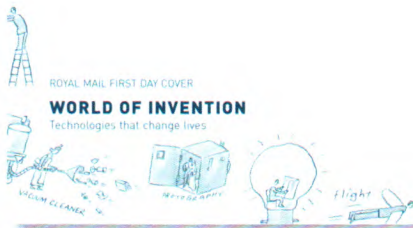


First day postmarks Details of sponsored handstamps and addresses of Handstamp Centres are given in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – see p114.

major scientific achievements



Mrs J Robinson
200 Manorbie Road
Ilkeston
Derbyshire
DE7 4AB



ROYAL MAIL FIRST DAY COVER

WORLD OF INVENTION

Technologies that change lives

Prestige stamp book World of Invention: Technology to Change Our Lives contains four stamp panes as shown.

1 Country stamps: top and bottom rows 2nd Scotland & 44p Wales; middle row 44p & 2nd.

2 Definitive stamps: top and bottom rows 1st (PIP design), 5p, 1st; middle row 5p, label (showing Rowland Hill), 5p.

3 Invention stamps: top row 1st (railway), 64p (television); bottom row 64p (telephone), 1st (bridge).

4 Invention stamps: top row 1st (bridge), 72p (space travel); bottom row 72p (internet), 1st (railway).

Inventions on stamps Many stamp issues feature inventions. Closely related to the new stamps are: 1964 Forth Bridges, 1967 Discovery (television), 1968 British Bridges, 1972 Broadcasting Anniversaries, 1975 Railways, 1976 Telephone Centenary, 1980 Liverpool and Manchester Railway, 1982 Information Technology, 1988 Transport & Communications (railways), 1991 Scientific Achievements, 1994 Age of Steam, 1995 Science Fiction (space travel), 1999 Inventors' Tale (computer), 2004 Classic Locomotives, and 2005 rrv •

World of Invention prices

Set of stamps/miniature sheet	£3.36
Presentation pack	£3.90
FDC envelope	£0.30
Serviced FDC stamps/miniature sheet (UK customers)	£4.42
Serviced FDC stamps/miniature sheet (overseas)	£3.77
Serviced FDC prestige book pane (UK customers)	£2.22
Serviced FDC prestige book pane (overseas)	£1.89
Stamp cards set (seven cards)	£2.10

The definitives stamp pane from the prestige stamp book will be available on a first day cover (see left) with Tallents House or Menai Bridge postmarks. Orders should be sent to Tallents House by the day of issue.



The Abolition of the Slave Trade Marking



Technical details

Designer Howard Brown

Printer Cartor Security Print

Process Litho

Size 27 × 37mm

Sheets PO branches will hold sheets of 30. Sheets of 60, with gutter margin, available from Tallents House and from selected PO philatelic outlets

Perforation 14 (to be confirmed)

Phosphor Two bands

Gum PVA

Gutter pairs To be advised

THE SECOND special stamp issue in March comprises six stamps, on sale from 22 March, featuring leading characters in the story of the abolition of the slave trade by the British Parliament. The stamps are printed in set-tenant pairs and depict: William Wilberforce and Olaudah Equiano (1st class); Granville Sharp and Thomas Clarkson (50p); and Hannah More and Ignatius Sancho (72p). Biographical sketches of each of the subjects are included in the presentation pack.

The year (2007) is printed in micro-text near the neck on each of the portraits on the stamps.

FIRST DAY FACILITIES The FDC envelope, designed by Howard Brown, depicts a plan of a slave ship. Orders for serviced FDCs must reach Tallents House (see address below) by the day of issue. Collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue to: Royal Mail, Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB (Tallents House postmark) or to the nearest Special Handstamp Centre (Hull postmark), marking the outer envelope 'FDO711', or 'FDO712'.

For details of other special postmarks see the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from Tallents House (£12.25 UK/Europe, £24.95 elsewhere). For a free sample copy write to: The Editor, British Postmark Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ.

PHILATELIC PRODUCTS The presentation pack, written by Tony Tibbles, Curator of the Slavery exhibition at the Merseyside Maritime Museum, Liverpool, tells the story of the long campaign to end the slave trade. It began in 1787 with the founding of the Society for Effecting The Abolition of The African Slave Trade. Finally, in February 1807, Parliament voted for abolition, and the last slave ship sailed from Liverpool in July. Britain then became a major campaigner to end the trade by other nations and the Royal Navy established a West Africa squadron to seize slavers and stamp out the trade. The evocative story is illustrated by some moving images of slaves, slave ships, contemporary posters and a map showing the main slave routes. The slave trade is not amongst the more glorious episodes in British history and it is good that some of those involved in bringing it to an end are honoured on the new stamps ●

William Wilberforce (1759-1833)
Olaudah Equiano (1745-97)
Granville Sharp (1730-1813)
Thomas Clarkson (1760-1846)
Hannah More (1745-1833)
Ignatius Sancho (1729-80)

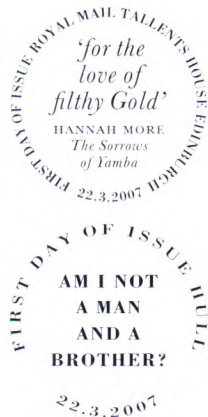
Set of stamps	£3.08
Presentation pack	£3.60
FDC envelope	£0.30
Serviced FDC (UK customers)	£4.10
Serviced FDC (overseas)	£3.49
Stamp cards set	£1.80



ABOLITION OF THE SLAVE TRADE

ROYAL MAIL FIRST DAY COVER

ROYAL MAIL TALENTS HOUSE 21 SOUTH GYLE CRESCENT EDINBURGH EH12 9PH



BRITONS
Strengthen the hands of your
GOVERNMENT!

EUROPE
 aware for freedom on some occasions and some examples... death

AFRICA

call in vain; the poor, unfeeling Africans are!

MEN, AND BRETHREN!

They have hearts and feelings like your own; they have Parents, Wives, Children and Friends

arrested! a desperate, deadly, open war, while the slave hearts still are
 and a desperate, deadly, open war, while the slave hearts still are
 arrested! a desperate, deadly, open war, while the slave hearts still are
 arrested! a desperate, deadly, open war, while the slave hearts still are

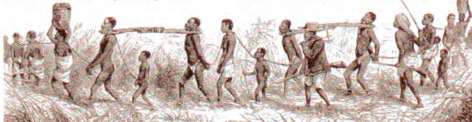
Misery and Desolation?

Detestation
OF THE
Slave Trade
BY INSTANTLY SIGNING
THE PETITIONS!

Above: Thomas Clarkson addresses a meeting of the Anti-Slavery Society, and a poster calling for the public to sign the petition against the slave trade. Above right: Toussaint L'Ouverture, who led a successful slave rebellion in St Domingue, defeating both the French and British armies. Right: An African dealer marches chained and yoked slaves to the coast for sale.



The first day envelope (above left) and presentation pack (left) are designed by Howard Brown. The pack was written by Tony Tibbles, the Curator of the Slavery exhibition at the Merseyside Maritime Museum in Liverpool.



WILLIAM WILBERFORCE
1759–1833
William Wilberforce was the parliamentary leader of the abolitionist campaign. Elected an MP in 1780, he is reputed to have taken the cause of slavery at

OLAUDAH EQUIANO
1745–1797
Equiano was a remarkable man. Kidnapped at the age of 11 and shipped into slavery he was eventually able to buy his freedom and establish himself as a

GRANVILLE SHARP
1730-1813
Granville Sharp held a minor government post in the ordnance department. A chance meeting in 1765 with Jonathan Strong, a young slave who had been

THOMAS CLARKSON
1760–1846
Clarkson's interest in slavery was stimulated while he was studying at Cambridge, where he won an essay competition on the subject. The essay was

HANNAH MORE
1745–1833
Hannah More was probably the most influential female abolitionist in Britain. She was born in Gloucestershire and spent most of her life in Bristol.

IGNATIUS SANCHE
1729–1780
Sancho was born into slavery aboard a slave ship off the African coast but was brought to England and taken into domestic service. He worked as a

Favourite stamps poll 2006

FOR THE 21ST YEAR running we are inviting you to vote for your favourite stamps. Shown below are the special stamps of 2006. Tell us your top three sets and favourite individual stamp (numbered 1-79) on the enclosed form. Remember to return your form by 12 January for entry in our prize draw ●

Animal Tales



British Journey: England



Brunel



Ice Age Animals



Queen's 80th Birthday





Queen's 80th Birthday

34

35

36

37



World Cup Winners

38

39

40

41

42

43



Modern Architecture

44

45

46

47

48

49



National Portrait Gallery

50

51

52

53

54



55

56

57

58

59



Victoria Cross

60

61

62

63

64

65



Sounds of Britain

66

67

68

69

70



Christmas

71

72

73

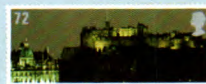
74

75

76

Lest We Forget
on miniature sheet

78



79

Celebrating Scotland
on miniature sheet

77



I like the new approach to the text whereby the book includes interviews/articles with or by some top celebrities – Ricky Gervais, David Dimbleby, Nigel Marven (tv presenter) and the young vc winner, Private Johnson Beharry, who put over a popular/expert view in magazine interview style. The idea was to give an ‘article’ approach rather than provide a running story as in previous year-books and I believe the concept works very well. The text includes technical details for each stamp issue, with most of the information that a collector would expect to find in a stamp catalogue.

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an absorbing annual publication, by Glenn H Morgan FRPSL



Opposite page, from left, the Yearbook's production team: Dean Price, Simon Ball and Marcus James. This year, for the first time, the book is in a one-piece presentation box, as shown here, instead of a slip-case.

The standard edition is priced £44.95, and the leatherbound deluxe version is £75. Details of availability are given below.

There are also enlarged quotes scattered throughout from several people associated with the yearbook in some way. I particularly liked a comment by Brunel concerning the future of the railways, where he stated that: 'The time is not far off' when we shall be able to take our coffee and write while going noiselessly at 45mph', and the chilling revelation by Nigel Marven on the Ice Age Animals stamps: 'The old belief was that ice age animals died out because of the effects of climate change, but we now think they may have been over-hunted. Unfortunately we're still doing the same thing to some species today'. This latter observation is a quite thought-provoking one, of course, and inspired me to pay a visit to the Zoological Society of London's zoo in Regent's Park to see a number of magnificent endangered creatures while I still can. Stamps (and the yearbook!) really can stimulate.

The text has been written for this year by Fay Sweet, with additional contributions from Tim Shackleton. Picture research was by Kathy Lockley; the design is by Ian Chilvers of the Atelier Works design group; and the printing was undertaken by Fulmar Colour Printing of Croydon, with the binding and finishing by F F Allsopp of Nottingham. The ISBN number is 0-946165-54-8 and the publisher is, of course, Royal Mail. The Managing Editor was Simon Ball, and Marcus James was the project's Design Manager; Dean Price liaised with the printers to ensure the quality of the production.

The original *Bulletin* announcement for the 1984 edition of the yearbook stated that 'this absorbing book will enrich the experience of everyone interested in British stamps, since it contains not only the special stamps, but also the fascinating facts behind them' and this maxim remains true to this day, 23 years later.

Some collectors may claim that the yearbook no longer contains all of the special stamps, since all but one ms is excluded. However, Royal Mail policy is to include each ms that has at least one new special stamp as part of its design, hence the Lest We Forget sheet being included to the exclusion of all the others. The poppy and barbed wire Lest We Forget 1st class design is currently unique to this sheet, although it is understood that it will be used for the next two years in similar sheets so will presumably be excluded from the yearbook in 2007 and 2008.

With Christmas approaching, the Royal Mail Special Stamps Year Book 2006 would make a high-quality gift for any collector of modern British stamps, or for a non-collector with an interest in the British way of life and its history. Or why not purchase a copy for your own library and see why I am such a fan of this annual publication?

The standard edition of the Yearbook (£44.95) is available from Tallents House and selected Post Office branches and Post Office philatelic outlets. The deluxe leatherbound version is available only from Tallents House (£75). Handling charges are £2.95 UK, £5 Europe, £14 rest of world •

A royal centenary One hundred years ago this month, The Philatelic Society London added a notable prefix to its name

THE IDEA of a society that would undertake the serious study of stamps gained ground in Britain in the 1860s. It led to a meeting on 10 April 1869 in the vicinity of the British Museum, when eight collectors formally constituted themselves The Philatelic Society, London. That was the modest beginning of the leading national philatelic organisation. The Society attracted most of the main collectors of the day, including the Duke of York, who became the President in 1896. He continued in this capacity after becoming Prince of Wales in 1901 until 1910 when, on his accession as King George V, he became the Society's Patron. During his Presidency his father, Edward VII, granted the Society the coveted Royal prefix.

In November 1906, the Earl of Crawford called a meeting at his home of the senior members of the Society's Council to discuss the possibility of seeking the approval of the King to add the word 'Royal' to the Society's name. The Earl had originally suggested that at the same time, the name should be changed to the Royal Philatelic Institute, in order to prevent confusion with the Royal Photographic Society if the initials RPS were to be quoted. However, Council preferred to maintain the original name, and suggested that the initials RPhS would overcome any possible confusion in this regard.

The Earl then wrote to the Prince of Wales on 8 November explaining what had been discussed. By return, he received the following message, in the Prince's own handwriting:

'My dear Lord Crawford,

Thanks for your letter of the 8th. Yes, I quite agree with the Council that it would be a pity if one lost our old designation &, therefore, I propose that we should be known in the future as "the Royal Philatelic Society of London". I think one ought to retain London denoting where our headquarters are.

Believe me,
Very sincerely yours,
George'

John Tilleard, the Society's Secretary, supplied Lord Crawford with a note of main headings and brief details of significant facts concerning the Society's history. Using these, Crawford wrote on 9 November to Home Secretary H J Gladstone (son of the former Prime Minister), asking him to 'lay the matter before HM the King, with the view of obtaining his gracious sanction'. Amongst the eight points put forward in support of the application were: that membership is open to amateurs only – the 'trade' being expressly excluded; that there are now upwards of 250 members, a number likely to be largely increased when the Society acquires a legal status; and that since 1892, the Society has issued its own monthly periodical, forming now 15 large volumes, and printed monographs on the history of the stamps of Great Britain and her Colonies, which are considered to be the standard authority, and have received the favour of the various governments. It was also noted that considerable assistance has been rendered to the Department of Inland Revenue in the detection of forgery and fraud against the Post Office and, last but not least, the Society's Royal connections: 'For the past 16 years the Society has been honoured by the Royal Family: HRH the late Duke of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha held the office of Hon President from 1890 till his death in 1899. HRH the Duke of York (now Prince of Wales) was Hon Vice-President from 1893 until 1896, and since that date has acted as President of the Society.' Mention was also made of the popularity of philately, 'a pursuit followed by a large and increasing number in all classes of the community. A very considerable and important trade has grown up in connection with it, and many dealers have large capital embarked in the trade. The literature on the subject is very great and there are many hundreds of periodicals dealing with it.'

The two International Exhibitions in London in 1896 and 1906, held under the auspices of the Society, were cited and it was noted that the in-

THE
London Philatelist:

THE MONTHLY JOURNAL OF

THE ROYAL PHILATELIC SOCIETY, LONDON.

VOL. XV.

DECEMBER, 1906.

No. 180.

The Royal Philatelic Society, London.



It is with the greatest gratification that we are privileged to be the medium of the very important announcement contained in the letter following, emanating from the Board of Trade:—

WHITEHALL, 28 November, 1906.

SIR,—I am directed by the Secretary of State to acquaint you that the application of the Philatelic Society, London, for permission to use the prefix "Royal" in the name of their Society has been graciously acceded to by His Majesty, who has signified his pleasure that the Society be styled "The Royal Philatelic Society, London."

I am, sir,

Your obedient servant,

HENRY CUNYNGHAME.

THE HONORARY SECRETARY,

THE ROYAL PHILATELIC SOCIETY, LONDON,

10 GRACECHURCH STREET, E.C.



The Royal Philatelic Society London
Patron: HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN



An Invitation to
The "Royal" Centenary Exhibition

Left: the official notification granting permission for use of the prefix 'Royal', reproduced in the Society's journal, 1906. (by permission of the current editor, Frank Walton).

Further details of the Society were given by James Negus in the *Bulletin* of March 1991; his brother Ron reviewed the Royal's website in the *Bulletin* of February 2003. Profiles of the current President, Chris Harman, were published here in May 1996 and September 2005.

insurance of the stamps shown in the 1906 exhibition amounted to over £400,000, which was then a considerable sum.

The submission ended with the statement that 'In the event of this application being favourably received, it is intended to apply for a Certificate of Incorporation of the Society under the Companies Act as an association not formed for profit, so as to gain a legal status.'

A little over two weeks later, Tilleard received an official notification that the King had granted the request, and the word 'Royal' could be added to the Society's name. The next issue of the Society's journal, *The London Philatelist*, reproduced this letter on its first page (as shown above).

Centenary exhibition To mark their centenary the Royal is staging an exhibition at its London home, 41 Devonshire Place, w1. This will be open on 8 and 9 December, for ticket holders only. Places are limited, so if you would like to attend please telephone immediately, on 020 7486 1044. The exhibition will contain selected items from The Queen's Collection, as well as from the Society's own Collections and Archives. It will give details of the Society and the way in which it fulfils its charitable objectives as a learned society. Visitors will also be able to see the Society's expertising facilities, reference collections and equipment •

The Editor is obliged to Ron Negus for help in the preparation of this article.

Mainly Machins Specialist collectors report by D G A Myall

Pricing in proportion This came into operation on 21 August and the signs are that it went smoothly. There was a small queue at my local post office as staff explained to customers why some letters would cost more than previously because of their large size. This concept was readily absorbed, but the 5mm thickness limit was more difficult, and I saw mail being passed through the office template in demonstration. However, this blow was softened in many cases because what used to be a second weight step letter costing 49p first class became a basic (up to 100g) large letter for 44p.

More PIP stamps On 12 September three books of self-adhesive NV1 letter stamps became available. All were printed in gravure by Walsall from cylinders w1 (colour) and w1 (phosphor) There were three colour cylinders with the same number: for books of 6 × 1st, 12 × 1st and 12 × 2nd. This is because all printers contracted to Royal Mail now have cylinders numbered from scratch for each layout. There were also three phosphor cylinders. The one for books of 2nd class stamps prints a 4.5mm wide centre bar on each stamp. Those for the books of six and 12 1st class stamps print two 4.5mm bars on each stamp, one at each side. They do not print the bars from 9mm wide bands, as each stamp is separated from its neighbour by 2mm gaps where the unprinted areas, the matrix, was stripped away. The book's content is indicated to the sight-impaired by notches cut at the top right, one for 1st class books and two for 2nd class. These are the normal length of 4mm. The size and weight limits of mail for which the stamps are valid are printed on the back covers.

A reprint of the book of six 1st class stamps, available from 2 October, has a label filling the space on the inside front cover. This has a picture of a smiling Queen, and text promoting stamp collecting, albeit only of special issues. A web address (royalmail.com/loveastamp) is included for further details, but was not working when I tried it. I couldn't access it via Royal Mail's home page either, but by the time you read this the link will probably exist; it should be worth a look.

Business sheets of 100 × 1st and 2nd class PIP letter NV1s were also issued on 12 September. These, too, were printed in gravure by Walsall but do not carry any cylinder numbers. The sheets are folded into five panels in the usual way. Four of them have 24 stamps, in three rows of eight. The fifth, and top, panel contains a row of four stamps with a blue barcode alongside. Above these, a coloured area, gold for 1st class and blue for 2nd, contains a statement of the sheet's content, the Royal Mail cruciform logo, a note of the stamps' validity, and telephone, web and fax contact details. These top panels are very popular with collectors especially as on the reverse they bear the date of printing in the form dd/mm/yy and a serial number. The dates of printing I have seen on the 1st class sheets are 27/07/06 and 09/08/06, and on 2nd class 26/07/06 and 07/08/06. There may be others.

You will know that rolls of 500 × 2nd class PIP letter stamps were released on 15 August; a similar roll of the 1st class stamp followed on 14 November. Meanwhile, rolls of 1000 of each class were issued on 3 October. The leaders, like the one of 15 August, are unchanged from those of the pre-PIP issues. Like those, the leaders are attached by sticking them over the face of the first stamp in the roll. This means that the rolls actually comprise 501 or 1001 stamps, although it would be difficult to use the extra ones.

Other business sheets The PIP sheets are the only ones with self-adhesive stamps but PVA-gummed Machin value stamps can be ordered online from Royal Mail's website (click the 'Online Shop' tab). These are in sheets of 100, created from counter sheets of 200 by horizontal separation at the mid-point. This means that sheets from the bottom half have the cylinder number and printing date. These cannot be supplied to order, so if you buy any it is pot luck which half you get. The whole of the current range of 17 stamps, from 1p to £5, is available. The high values are the ones printed by De La Rue in gravure. Each half-sheet is supplied with a card stiffener containing printed details of the issue.

MAINLY MACHINS



The 'Mainly Machins' series consists of six cards arranged in a 2x3 grid. Each card features a different design and a small white bird in the top right corner. The designs include: a yellow card with 'New Lady' in a cursive font; a blue card with 'HAPPY' in a bold, blocky font; a red card with 'THANK YOU' in a bold, blocky font; a blue card with '1st' in a bold, blocky font; a blue card with a white bird; and a blue card with a white bird.

Above: the new book of small-format Smilers, and the Lest We Forget miniature sheet.



Let's We Forget The first in a series of three miniature sheets on the theme of the First World War was issued on 9 November. It commemorates the fallen at the Battle of the Somme. It contains five 1st class NUTS. One is a special issue featuring red (Flanders) poppies with barbed wire stems. The three letters 'r' on the sheet are in the shape of a cross, often found in Christian burial grounds, and a reminder of the many young men who were killed during that infamous battle. The other four stamps on the sheet are the 72p country pictorial definitives, arranged in a block. All the stamps were printed in gravure by De La Rue. There are no cylinder numbers. The Northern Ireland 72p stamp is completely new as all previous values for this country are printed by lithography. The four current Northern Ireland stamps are to be printed in sheet form by De La Rue, and were meant to have been issued on the same day, but these have been deferred. ▶

Presentation packs The Somme sheet is available in a pack, but I had not seen it at the time of writing. Pack no 74 issued on 1 August containing the six new stamps required for the introduction of PIP is very interesting, and a must for all Machin collectors. This pack gives a brief description of how Arnold Machin made his famous plaster cast and has photographs of him at work. The whole of the inside (see previous page) is taken up by 21 captioned photographs, from the Penny Black (lettered CK) to the final head, showing the development of the design from one to the next. Many of the images are in colour. Fascinating!

Enschedé's 50p stamps There is another way to distinguish singles of Enschedé's 50p sheet stamp of 1996 and the same value in the 2006 Victoria Cross PSB: the head on the latter is set .35mm closer to the left frame. If you imagine a vertical line touching the point of the bust it will pass to the right of the figure 'o' on the sheet stamp, but through the centre of the figure on a PSB stamp.

Stamps online Whenever I see a newspaper article or a television report of an event of which I have some knowledge, it is always wrong in at least one particular. The latest example is the way that Royal Mail's introduction of online stamps on 19 September was covered. This scheme enables anyone with a computer and a printer to print postage straight onto envelopes, labels or plain paper, and pay by credit card. This postage must be used by the next working day. The media seized on the fact that this method did not use The Queen's head. One daily newspaper with a large circulation stated that the head had been 'banished' and that this 'ended a tradition dating back more than 160 years'. It was not, of course, the first occasion that evidence of prepaid postage omitting the head has occurred. The similar SmartStamp service, introduced in 2004, does not use it; post paid impressions have never shown it; Horizon labels do not have it, and neither do meter marks which have been with us for seven decades •

Text © D G A Myall 2006

Posting boxes



From left: a Ludlow type wallbox in Essex, an early version of a George V round-topped lampbox on the Hertfordshire-Middlesex border, and a box once used for airmail post, in Leamington Spa.

THIS MONTH WE FEATURE three George V boxes photographed by Mr P Lynch of Middlesex. The first he describes as a nicely presented large 'Ludlow' type wallbox at Tolleshunt D'Arcy in Essex. Mr Lynch mentions that the small collection plate holder is designed for a more modern lampbox, and the box is classified as type LWB 155/4 by the Letter Box Study Group. The second photo is of an early type of George V round-topped lamp box

with small crown and cypher. Later designs of the round-topped variety had much larger GR cypher without the crown. This box is on the Hertfordshire-Middlesex border, and is LBSG type LB 206. Finally we have a box in Brunswick Street, Leamington Spa. The large left-offset collection plate holder indicates that it was once used for airmail posts, and there are probably traces of blue paint under the red. This is LBSG type PB 27/5A •

Cover corner



THIS MONTH marks the 70th anniversary of the abdication of King Edward VIII and the accession of his brother, the Duke of York, as King George VI. Shown here, courtesy of Larry Rosenblum, is a cover produced in the USA to mark the abdication. A miniature sheet marking the Year of Three Kings (George V, Edward VIII and George VI) was issued in August and is still available from Tallents House, price £3 (order code MZ032) •

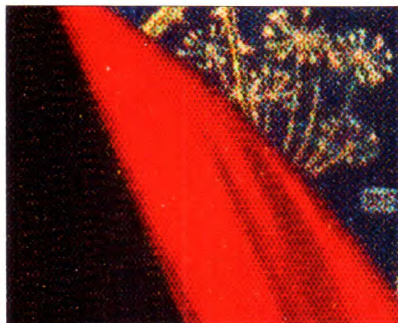
Special competition Win a mint unmounted 10s dark blue

THANKS to Omniphil Approvals, we offer a lucky reader a superb unmounted mint example of the key value in the 1939-48 high value set – the very difficult 10s dark blue (SG 478, catalogue value of £225). To enter, send your name and address on a postcard, with the answer to the following question: who designed the 10s dark blue? Send your card to: Dark Blue Competition, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 148 Old Street, London EC1V 9HQ by 5 January.

Omniphil are now celebrating 48 years of supplying stamps on approval. They have amassed another 152 1841 2d blues (SG catalogue value £75 each). Normally they give away to new clients one 2d blue with their third purchase, but *Bulletin* readers need only to write and request a selection of approvals, stating preferred countries (they stock most countries) and condition (mint and/or used). They will send you a genuine 1841 2d blue with the first selection of stamps on approval, yours to keep whatever you decide. Just return the approvals with payment for any stamps selected. First requests will receive the best 2d blues. Write now to Omniphil Approvals, Dept 2dB 1841 Offer, PO Box 10, Tewkesbury GL20 8YX, or telephone 01684 299278 •



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



September identify The detail is from the Victoria Cross 1st class (Jack Cornwell) stamp of 2006. The winner was M McDougall of Kent.

September knowledge The answers are: 1) Edward Short; 2) 1994; 3) Joh Enschedé. The winner is Mrs P Katsouda of Greece.

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

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

- 1 Who designed the 1966 Christmas stamps?
- 2 Which set of stamps features Lammastide?
- 3 Who was the President of the Philatelic Society when it was granted Royal status??

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

Events

Until Spring 2007 'Elizabeth: Queen & Icon' exhibition at British Postal Museum & Archive, Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London WC1. **Enquiries** 020 7239 2570.

1-3 December Monaco Phil 2006 at Monte Carlo, Monaco. Display of 100 rare stamps and philatelic items; invited displays of New Zealand, Chile, Prussia, Modena, etc from collectors who have received high philatelic honours.

5 December BPMA Film Show: Britain Can Take It (PO in Second World War) at Freeling House, 19.00.

8-9 December Royal Philatelic Society 'Centenary' exhibition (see p121).

22-24 February 2007 Philatex at Royal Horticultural Society Lawrence Hall, London SW1. **Enquiries** www.stampshows.net

28 February - 4 March 2007 Spring Stampex at Business Design Centre, Upper Street, London N1. **Enquiries** Stampex 01252 628006.

20-21 April 2007 Scottish Philatelic Congress at Dewar's Centre, Perth

28 April 2007 Association of Sussex Philatelic Societies Spring Convention at University of Brighton, Lewes Road, Brighton. Talk on The Queen's Philatelic Collection by Michael Sefi.

A useful Stamp Fair & Auction Diary is published six times a year. The annual subscription is £4 UK, £6 Europe, £12 USA & Canada. The Diary covers events throughout the UK, and includes postcard fairs and auctions. It is available from S Reeves, PO Box 109, Enfield EN3 5QF; telephone 020 8292 5361; e-mail fairs@stampdiary.com ●

Late news

Royal Mail update Plate numbers and colours of the Sea Life stamps (1 February) are: w1 silver w1 yellow w1 magenta w1 cyan (blue) w1 black) and w1 phosphor. The sheet format yields a horizontal gutter between two panes of stamps, ie a vertical gutter between individual stamps from the bottom and top rows of respective panes.

The cylinders for the Sky at Night stamps are: w1 yellow w1 magenta w1 cyan (blue) and w1 black •

Literature The Machin Collectors Club has published a pocket-sized 'Simplified' version of the Stoneham GB Stamp Catalogue. It lists and values all British stamps from the Penny Black to the recent Lest We Forget miniature sheet, in separate sections for definitives, special stamps, country issues, postage dues, and Framas. Price £5.95 plus £1 UK postage (£3 overseas) from Machin Collectors Club, 8 Jannys Close, Aylsham, Norwich NR11 6DL, website www.machins.org

The main Stoneham catalogue (see *Bulletin* July 2006, p349) is available from Royal Mail Tallents House at £15.95 plus handling charge: £2.95 UK, £5 Europe, £14 rest of world. Order code PB393.

The TPO & Seapost Society has published *Postal Markings of the Holyhead & Kingstown Packet 1860-1925* by A D Lovelock. The postmarks of the PO on board steamers of the City of Dublin Steam Packet Co, which sailed between Holyhead and the Irish port of Kingstown (now Dun Laoghaire) have long fascinated postal historians. This 120-page book, based on the author's collection, includes all postmarks used in the 65 year operation of the PO, with colour illustrations of the steamers on which they were used. Available from TPO & Seapost Society, 1 St Marys Drive, Fairford GL7 4LQ, price £35 postpaid UK, £37 overseas (£3 reduction for Society members).

The Autumn 2006 *Cross Post*, the journal of the Friends of the British Postal Museum & Archive, includes features on the Phillips Collection (which can now be seen online - www.postalheritage.org.uk/phillips); Mary Adshhead (1904-95); 'Moving the Mail' exhibition; restoration of a TPO car-

riage; the PO in the First World War; postcards of postmen at work; and Krag machine postmarks. The 52-page A4 magazine is a credit to Editor Richard West and the Friends. For details of the Friends contact Mrs A Harms, 13 Amethyst Ave, Davis Estate, Chatham ME5 9TX.

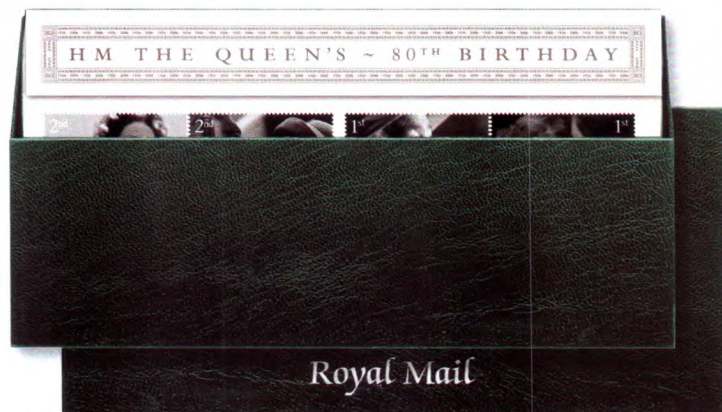
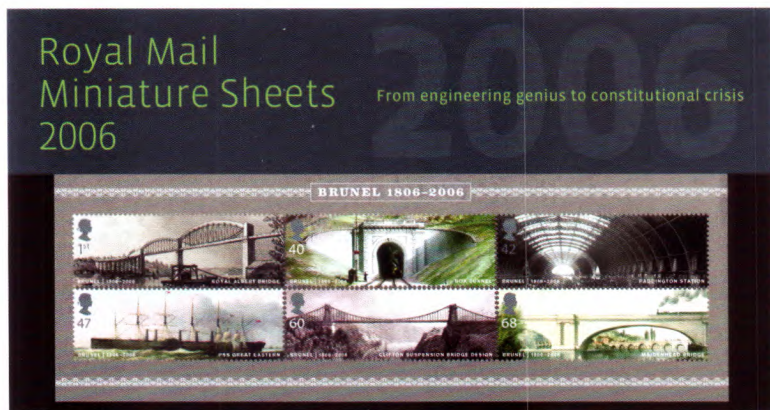
The October *Chronicle* from the GB Collectors Club includes features on Mostly Machins and Postcomm, Postwatch and NVIS; Official Seals of GB (repair seals Edward VIII-Elizabeth II); Redirection Charges; also news of the Club's activities. For further information contact Parker A Bailey, 2341 SW 86th Terrace, Davie FL 33324, USA or see www.gbstamps.com/gbcc •

Auctions Spink's GB Stamps & Covers sale on 26 October realised £595,163. Panes of Victoria 3d on 3d and 6d on 6d stamps made £17,000 and £20,000 respectively (est £15-20,000 and £16-22,000). An interesting 1908 cover bearing a tête-bêche pair of Sinn Féin propaganda labels used with Edward VII definitives went for £550 (est £500-600). For details of future auctions contact Spink on 020 7563 4000 or see www.spink.com •

Mail Vehicles on stamps Jersey Post has issued six stamps, a miniature sheet and a prestige book featuring island mail vehicles from 1969 (when Jersey took over postal services from the GPO) to the present. Prices: stamps set £2.95, miniature sheet £1.82, prestige book £10.67; plus postage (£1.40 UK, £1.60 Europe, £2.15 elsewhere). Orders to: Jersey Philatelic Bureau, Postal Headquarters, Jersey, Channel Islands JE1 1AB, e-mail stamps@jerseypost.com •

A World Heritage Site In 1989 Royal Mail issued a set of stamps featuring Industrial Archaeology. The 35p depicted the Pontcysyllte Canal Aqueduct in north Wales, which has been nominated as a World Heritage Site. If accepted by UNESCO, it will join 27 WHS sites in the UK, including the Tower of London, Blenheim Palace, and Stonehenge. For details of WHS sites shown on stamps see the February 2005 *Bulletin* •

Royal Mail gifts for Christmas



Royal Mail collections make ideal Christmas gifts for collectors and non-collectors alike.

2006 Miniature Sheet Collection An attractively packaged set of all seven miniature sheets of 2006: Brunel, Welsh Assembly, Year of Three Kings, Victoria Cross, Christmas, Lest We Forget, and Celebrating Scotland. Price £24.50 plus handling charge £1.45 UK, £1.55 Europe, £2.15 rest of world.

2006 Presentation Pack Collection Fourteen packs contained within this stylish black box embossed in silver with 'Royal Mail'. Price £44.95 plus handling charge £2.95 UK, £5 Europe, £14 rest of world.

Royal Mail

Tallents House, 21 South Gyle Crescent, Edinburgh EH12 9PB
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