

BRITISH PHILATELIC

The ROYAL MAIL magazine for stamp collectors

Volume 47 Number 3

NOVEMBER 2009 £1.20

Bulletin

Classic Album Covers • Air
Letters • Eminent Britons



Forthcoming issues and withdrawals



Cover This year's Christmas stamp design features a detail from a stained glass window by Henry Holiday, at Ormesby St Michael, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk. The stamps, on sale from 3 November, were previewed in the August *Bulletin*.

Availability All items available from Royal Mail Talents House (address below). Selected items are available at Post Office branches and Post Office philatelic outlets at the main post offices in: Bristol, Cambridge, Chester, Colchester, Coventry, Croydon, Durham, Edinburgh, Exeter, Glasgow, Grimsby, Harrogate, Lichfield, London (Eastcheap & Trafalgar Sq), Norwich, Nottingham, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Southampton (High St and Hedge End), Southend-on-Sea, Stevenage, Stroud, Trowbridge, Truro and York.

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/shop

3 November

Issue 2009 Christmas stamps, miniature sheet, stamp cards, stamp books (20 × 1st and 12 × 2nd), generic sheet, Christmas cards (1st and 2nd class designs), Smilers sheets (10 × 1st, 20 × 1st, 20 × 2nd, 10 × 56p, 10 × 90p), 2006 Smilers sheets reissued

3 November

Issue 2009 Yearbook (standard & de luxe versions), Yearpack, Miniature Sheet Collection; Presentation Pack Collection

3 November

Withdrawal 2008 Christmas stamps, miniature sheet, stamp cards, stamp books and generic sheet

5 November

Withdrawal Lest We Forget miniature sheets (2006, 2007 and 2008 designs), presentation packs, stamp cards and generic sheets

17 November

Issue Recorded Signed For Service definitives: standard and Large 1st class

30 November

Issue Scottish Castles generic sheet (20 × 1st class Flag stamp and labels)

1 December

Issue High Value definitives coin cover – new £1 coin and Machin high value stamp with security features

31 December

Withdrawal 2007 Yearbook (standard and de luxe versions) and Yearpack

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Eminent Britons Although eight of Royal Mail's new special stamps feature well-known men, Karen Foy has uncovered a story of female fortitude behind the other two stamps in the set **86**

The British Philatelic Bulletin is published monthly by Royal Mail, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HQ • **Editor** J R Holman • **Price** £1.20 each 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 Ltd unless attributed to a specified author. Requests to reproduce any articles should be sent to the Editor, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HQ • **Design** Robert Maude • **Printed** in Great Britain by Westerham Press • **ISSN** 0953 8119 • Royal Mail is a trading name of Royal Mail Group Ltd. Registered in England & Wales no 4138203 registered office 100 Victoria Embankment, London EC4Y 0HQ

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This month The Editor previews this issue

THE NEW STAMPS this month (3 November) are the traditional Christmas issue, featuring the Nativity story as depicted in the rich colours of Victorian stained glass windows. The stamps were shown in the August *Bulletin*. In addition the two Madonna and Child stamps, first issued in 2007, will again be available. This is the final set of special stamps for 2009, and in this *Bulletin* we preview the first set of 2010 which, like the first set of 2009, is on a theme of classic British design. This time the stamps feature record album covers, including some famous and iconic designs.

Last month Richard West wrote about the 50th anniversary of the introduction of postcodes, and this month he recalls the same anniversary for the introduction of phosphor on stamps. Graphite-lined stamps, also with phosphor bands on the front, went on sale in the Southampton area in November 1959. Colin Baker provides us with the third instalment of his review of airletters (aerogrammes), and Karen Foy looks at two of the 10 people who featured in last month's Eminent Britons stamp issue. All this, plus the usual Stamp Scene, Royal Mail News, competitions, and events listing, to help you get more from your hobby. JOHN HOLMAN, EDITOR •

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



This poster by H S Williamson, titled *Loading Air Mails for the Empire: Croydon 1934*, is one from a series which explored the historical development of Post Office communications through modes of transport.

Designs on Delivery: GPO posters 1930-1960 You may just have time to view this BPMA exhibition before its closure on 4 November. The exhibition is at the Well Gallery within the London College of Communication, and shows the cutting-edge of Post Office poster designs from 1930 to 1960. Drawing on work by some of the 20th century's leading artists and designers, it explores how the Post Office communicated itself as a modern organisation and advertised its expanding network of services. London College of Communication is at Elephant & Castle, London SE1 6SB. Telephone +44 (0)20 7514 6500. See website www.lcc.arts.ac.uk/docs/webmap.pdf to download a map of the location.

A free talk on the history and development of GPO poster art and communications, entitled 'GPO Poster Design', will be given at the BPMA in London by Dr Paul Rennie, Head of Context in Graphic Design at Central Saint Martins, London. The talk, on 10 November 2009 from 19.00 to 20.00, will draw on the unique collection of posters in the Royal Mail Archive. Enquiries to the BPMA: phone 020 7239 2570, see www.postalheritage.org.uk or email info@postalheritage.org.uk •

Catalogues A supplement has recently been published to *British Decimal Self-adhesive Postage Stamp Books*, compiled by Graham Eyre. The first edition of the catalogue was published in September 2005 by the Modern British Philatelic Circle (MBPC). It records all aspects of Royal Mail's self-adhesive stamp books in considerable detail, containing over 500 information packed pages, contained in a quality binder. It covers issues up to the end of 2004 and the first supplement consists of 175 pages of which 64 are new pages and 111 are updated. It covers all issues up to and including Christmas 2008.

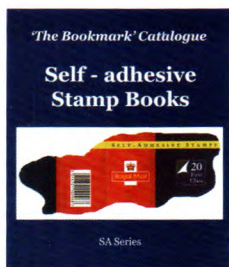
For anyone with an interest in what is still a comparatively new collecting area, (the first British self-adhesive stamp booklet did not appear until 1993), this catalogue and its first supplement is a must, as is membership of the MBPC. A staggering amount of detail has been amassed, enabling you to collect in a specialised manner, or on a more basic level.

There are two sets of prices covering the supplement or, since the number of new pages means it is unlikely that you can fit everything into your existing binder, a fully inclusive price for a supplement and an additional binder. These prices are: supplement only £11 UK, £14 Europe, £14 Surface Rest of the World, £18 Airmail ROW; supplement with binder £16 UK, £19 Europe, £20 Surface ROW, £26 Airmail ROW.

The original catalogue is still available priced at £29.50 (including UK postage) which generously includes free membership of the Circle for one year. For Europe the price is £35.50, (to cover additional postage), which also includes free membership of the Circle for one year. For the Rest of the World, email Keith Woodward for rates •

In September Stanley Gibbons published a new edition of the *Great Britain Specialised Stamp Catalogue Volume 2 – King Edward VII to King George VI*. A press release advises that this multi-award winning catalogue is the standard reference work for specialist collectors of the popular 'Four Kings' period of British philately, from 1902-52. Background information is given for all issues, with full details of plate markings, sheet arrangements, inks, papers and shades, with helpful guidance on identification. Essays, proofs and colour trials are listed and priced. Many plate flaws are illustrated and priced and numerous shades, not listed in the *GB Concise* catalogue, are also priced mint and used. Detailed listings of control numbers and marginal plate markings are provided for the specialist. Booklet panes, postage dues, officials and Channel Island issues complete the catalogue. Available from Stanley Gibbons, stamp dealers and book shops, price £39.95 •

Postage stamp machines Visit www.flickr.com/groups/stampmachines to see a new group whose aims are simply to share images of British stamp vending machines with anyone interested. At the time of writing there are already over 100 images, with more being added each week. Often, there is background information on an image, and more knowledgeable visitors can add information by way of a 'Comments' box. If you possess photographs of this important and specialised aspect of the history of the posts, why not 'post' them to the site and let like-minded folk enjoy them? •



To order a catalogue and/or a supplement, write to Keith Woodward, 14 Chedington Avenue, Mapperley, Nottingham NG3 5SG, or e-mail him at keith2@mbp-circle.co.uk

Payment: by sterling cheque, payable to MBPC, or by credit or debit card.



Edward VIII online The British Postal Museum & Archive (BPMA) has digitised all stamp artwork and proposed stamps from the reign of Edward VIII. The BPMA's online catalogue, at www.postalheritage.org.uk/catalogue displays the whole collection.

The death of King George V on 20 January 1936, and the consequent accession of Edward VIII, resulted in ambitious plans by the Post Office. It was decided that there would be three possible stamp issues. The first, with values to 1s, would be a temporary 'Accession' issue to be produced as soon as possible. This would be replaced by a special 'Coronation' issue. On the withdrawal of these commemoratives, the first denominations of a 'Permanent' issue would be released. The Accession stamps were very simple, and quite different from any previous stamps, which reflected the new King's desire for simplicity. They were based on a design by a 17-year-old schoolboy,

Hubert Brown, though the Post Office did not acknowledge this. Design work for the Coronation stamps was given to the stamp printers Harrison & Sons. A lot of the portrait work was by Eric Gill, and essays were also produced featuring royal castles and famous buildings. The essay of Windsor Castle would have been the first truly pictorial stamp. The King's abdication on 11 December 1936 brought the whole progress to an abrupt end.

Although only four postage stamps were issued during the King's 10-month reign, there is still a wealth of material in the BPMA collections, including all the work which went into creating the four Accession definitives – photographs, artwork, essays and issued stamps. The BPMA also holds all artwork and essays for the Coronation stamp, produced right up to the week of the abdication. Douglas Muir, Curator of Philately at the BPMA, commented: 'This is part of an exciting project to make our unique collection of GB philatelic material available to everybody. More stamps, artwork and registration sheets will be added to our catalogue in the coming year. Look out for announcements on our website'.

The BPMA will release further catalogues during 2009 and 2010, taking the cataloguing of stamp artwork into the reign of Queen Elizabeth II •

Jersey enquiries For further details, and to order current stamp requirements online see www.jerseypost.com

Jersey in 2010 Jersey Post has announced its provisional special stamp issue programme for next year. Subjects are Girl Guide Centenary, Children's Books, Maps, Petrology, Woodland Birds, Mail Ships, Jersey Regional Definitives, Roses, Anemones, Vintage Cars, Fresh Water Fish, La Cotte de St Brelade and Christmas Tree Decorations. Using top local and international artists, and stamp printers from Austria, Australia, France and Ireland, there is almost certainly something to meet everybody's interests here •

MonacoPhil enquiries Office des Emissions de Timbres-Poste (Stamp Issuing Office of Monaco), 23 avenue Albert II, MC 98050 Monaco, e-mail oetp@gouv.mc or telephone (00 377) 98 98 41 41.

MonacoPhil 2009 Held under the high patronage of HSH Prince Albert II of Monaco, a new International Philatelic Exhibition 'MonacoPhil 2009' will take place on the Terrasses de Fontvieille, 4-6 December 2009. In conjunction with the traditional exhibition of '100 of the world's rarest stamps and philatelic documents of the world', the show is turning the spotlight on Belgian Philately within a collective exhibition •



Gibraltar archive sold Just prior to this *Bulletin* going on sale, the complete 14 year official archive of unique stamp artwork and rare stamp proofs from Gibraltar was due to be auctioned. The proofs of most stamps produced by the Bureau between 1993 and 2009 were split into individual lots and sold in a special catalogue auction. Valued at £517,795, the sale was conducted by the British company Universal Philatelic Auctions (UPA) on behalf of Gibraltar Philatelic Bureau Ltd. The first 4000 copies of the £10 catalogue were generously made available free to collectors. This was a rare opportunity to acquire this type of material, especially if your collecting theme was represented among the lots. Any unsold items will be offered via the UPA unique reducing estimate and reserve system. This means that if you request the next free catalogue during November or December, then any unsold lots will be included in the January auction at 11% estimate (and reserve) price reduction, while any carried forward until the April auction will have a further 12% reduction, etc ●

Enquiries Universal Philatelic Auctions, 4 The Old Coalyard, West End, Northleach GL54 3HE. Telephone 01451 86111, visit www.upastampauctions.co.uk or send an email to info@upastampauctions.co.uk

Auction news Cavendish Philatelic Auctions has a vast online database of all Cavendish sales back to January 2000 with over 100,000 lots, with extensive search facilities by sale number and title, category, cross reference and free text. Pre-sale estimates and prices realised make this a most useful free resource from a company that has gone from strength to strength down the years. You must be a registered user to access this area of their site and a one-time free sign-up is all that is required. Cavendish is fully compliant with the Data Protection Act and will never disclose your details to a third party. The Cavendish website has recently been revamped and has a professional appearance and content that makes a regular visit essential ●

Cavendish enquiries www.cavendish-auctions.com

The next auction of Corbitt Stamps Ltd will be held on Thursday 12 November 2009 at the Swallow Hotel Gateshead. The sale starts at 12 noon and the catalogue is available online (address opposite). This auction house has expanded beyond postage stamps to include coins, banknotes, medals, postcards, cigarette cards and autographs and the sales catalogues can all be found on their website for these other collectables ●

Corbitt Stamps See www.corbitts.com for catalogue

Alliance Auctions holds regular stamp sales and their catalogues comprising around 1500+ worldwide lots per month can be downloaded from www.allianceauctions.com ●

Royal Mail news Our monthly update of new issues, products and publications



Lest We Forget return Sheets containing the three Lest We Forget stamps (2006, 2007 and 2008) will be put back on sale at about 1000 Post Office branches from 28 October. The stamps will be available for those wishing to use them in the period up to Remembrance Day (11 November) ●



Commemorative and exhibition sheets Two new commemorative sheets are available. The first, marking the 800th anniversary of the University of Cambridge, bears 10 1st class Firework stamps and labels featuring the achievements of eminent Cambridge graduates and the history of the University. The sheet is supplied in a pack which includes a timeline of the University from 1209 to the present. Price £13.50; see the August *Bulletin* (p361) for an illustration. Another commemorative sheet contains the new London 2012 Games stamps and adjoining labels – available from 22 October, price £13.50. Designed by True North, the sheet looks at what it takes to be an Olympic competitor, focusing on the sports featured on the stamps, and at the various venues where the competitions will be held.

A sheet for the Italia exhibition (21-25 October) is now available. This contains 20 1st class 'Hello' stamps with adjoining labels showing landmarks of Rome. A further sheet for the Monocophil exhibition goes on sale on 4 December. Price £8.35 each. Both of these sheets were illustrated in the September *Bulletin* (p15) ●

Games stamp book A book containing Olympic & Paralympic Games stamps is in preparation, and is expected to go on sale in January. Further details to be announced ●



The new Christmas generic (left) and Smilers sheets (90p shown below) were designed by Russell Warren-Fisher, and printed in litho by Cartor (the stamps in standard sheets are gravure by De La Rue).



Generic and Smilers sheets This year's colourful Christmas generic sheet, available from 3 November, contains eight each of the 1st and 2nd class, two 56p and two 90p Christmas stamps, with labels showing Nativity figures and verses from the Gospel according to Luke. Price £9.

There will be five new Smilers sheets: 20 × 2nd class (£9.50, or £8.50 each for two or more), 10 × 1st class (£7.50), 20 × 1st class (£13.50, £12.50 each two or more), 10 × 56p (£9.50, £8.50 each two or more) and 10 × 90p (£13.50, £12.50 each two or more). Each has a different background showing scenes from the Nativity story.

For customers preferring secular rather than religious stamps, reprinted 2006 generic sheets will also be available: 20 × 2nd class Snowman, 10 × 1st class Santa and 20 × 1st class Santa. Prices are as for the corresponding religious Smilers sheets. These sheets differ slightly to their 2006 counterparts, being inscribed in the bottom margin 'Christmas' instead of 'Christmas 2006' and with the copyright line amended to Royal Mail Group Ltd in place of Royal Mail Group plc. Handling charge of £1.41 on Smilers sheets orders.

The third of the Castles generic sheets, on sale on 30 November (St Andrew's Day), features castles of Scotland. The sheet will contain 20 1st class Scottish Flag stamps (as on the Celebrating Scotland miniature sheet, November 2006) with 10 labels (two of each) showing Edinburgh, Culzean, Stirling, Eilean Donan, Blair, Balmoral, Castle Stalker, Caerlaverock, Kilchurn and Cawdor castles (shown in September *Bulletin*, p15). The Northern Ireland and England sheets are already on sale (price £8.35 each); a Welsh castles sheet will be issued on 1 March 2010 (St David's Day).

A new set of Smilers stamps, for UK, Europe, and Worldwide use, is in preparation. Details will be published shortly. ●



Coin covers A new 'Olympic Countdown' coin cover, available from 22 October, bears the Olympic and Paralympic Games stamps and a Royal Mint uncirculated Countdown £5 coin, price £17.50. Designed by Neon, it looks at winning the bid and the initial preparation for staging the London 2012 Olympic Games. In a limited edition of 15,000, this is the first in a series of four covers for the run-up to the London 2012 Games

A new 'High Value Security Definitives' coin cover bearing the £1.50, £2, £3, and £5 high value stamps with security features and a 2009 £1 coin will be available from 1 December, price £15.95. The coin is one of the new designs by Matthew Dent, introduced on UK coinage in 2008. The design features the Shield of the Royal Arms; parts of the design are shown on other denominations, making up a composite complete design. The stamps on the cover will be cancelled with a special Windsor postmark. The cover design features the Machin head as used on definitive stamps, and the 'ROYAL MAIL' wavy-line background pattern on the security definitives. The cover contains an attractive and well-written filler card giving histories of UK high value stamps and £1 coins, and profiles of Arnold Machin and Matthew Dent. Machin designed the first decimal coinage (1968) as well as the definitive stamp. Matthew Dent was the winner from 4000 entries in a competition to design the new coins. Limited edition of 12,500.



New collectables A Military Uniforms Collection, now available, includes the three Military Uniforms issues (Army, RAF, Navy) in a 'cruciform' pack similar to those for the Lest We Forget and Brilliant Britain miniature sheet collections. The pack also includes a high quality replica Post Office Rifles cap badge, a wall chart featuring the uniforms shown on the stamps, and specially commissioned pictures of military uniforms, and stories from the history of the PO Rifles. Price £29.95 (order code PB408).

The fifth in our silver stamp collection, reproducing the 72p Westminster Cathedral stamp is now available, price £24.42. The final instalment in this series will be available from 26 January 2010, comprising the 81p St Magnus Cathedral, Kirkwall stamp •

The new Military Uniforms Collection (left) includes all three Military Uniforms stamp issues and a replica of a PO Rifles cap badge (above, shown smaller than actual size).

Special stamps Our annual Christmas special issue will go on sale at PO branches on 3 November. The stamps were shown in the August *Bulletin* (p368). Issues for 2010 are listed below. Please note some changes to the list in the March *Bulletin*. Further details will follow nearer the time of issue •

07.01 Classic Album Covers

02.02 Girlguiding (centenary)

25.02 The Royal Society (350th anniversary)

11.03 Battersea Dogs & Cats Home (150th anniversary)

23.03 Monarchs Part 3: House of Stewart (Scottish kings)

13.04 Action for Species Part 4: Mammals

06.05 Accession of King George V (London 2010 issue)

08.05 The King's stamps (London 2010 issue)

13.05 Britain Alone (commemoration of 1940)

15.06 Children's Books

27.07 Olympic & Paralympic Games

19.08 Stage Musicals

16.09 Great British Railways

12.10 Monarchs Part 4: House of Stuart (James I-VI/Anne)

02.11 Christmas

Coming off sale The 2008 Christmas Pantomime stamps and miniature sheet will be withdrawn on 3 November, and the Lest We Forget miniature sheets (2006, 2007 and 2008) on 5 November •



New Recorded Signed For stamps Stamps for use on Recorded Signed For mail sent at 1st class standard or 'Large' go on sale on 17 November. Price £1.14 standard (39p postage and 75p Signed For fee) or £1.36 'Large' (61p postage, 75p fee). The first day cover service will use the 'Winged Horse' definitive FDC envelope, with both stamps affixed

and cancelled with a Tallents House or Windsor postmark, price £3.34 for UK customers, £2.91 overseas. Orders for FDCs must reach Tallents House by the day of issue. These stamps are intended as valid only on mail sent by the Signed For service, an exception being made in the case of FDCs ●

Christmas cards The stained glass windows on this year's 1st and 2nd class Christmas stamps are being reproduced on Royal Mail Christmas cards, available at most main Post Offices. They will be sold in packs of 10 (five of each design), price £3 for one pack, £5 for two packs. For every sale a donation is made to Royal Mail Group's charity partner, Barnado's ●

Year Collections The 2009 Yearbook and Yearpack, both containing all of the special stamps of 2009, will go on sale on 3 November. The standard Yearbook costs £65, and the de-luxe, leather-bound version is £105. The Yearpack, £60, includes background information and technical details for each issue, and illustrations of the alternative 'First Day' postmarks. 2009 Miniature Sheet Year Pack and Presentation Pack Collections will also be available from 3 November, price £21.30 and £65 respectively. The 2007 Yearbook and Yearpack will be withdrawn on 31 December 2009 ●

Post & Go Machines are scheduled to be installed during November at main Post Office branches in Colchester, Luton, Sutton, Windsor and York ●

Collect British Stamps The 2010 (61st) edition of the ever-popular Stanley Gibbons *Collect British Stamps* colour checklist will be published in November, price £12.95. Since it was first published in 1967, over 3 million copies of this catalogue have been sold. It will be available from Royal Mail Tallents House as well as from Stanley Gibbons, and stamp and book shops ●

THE BRITISH POSTAL MUSEUM & ARCHIVE

The BPMA Freeing House,
Phoenix Place, London WC1X
0DL (near Mount Pleasant),
Phone 020 7239 2570 or see
www.postalheritage.org.uk

British Postal Museum & Archive Now on show is a special exhibition honouring eminent stamp designer David Gentleman, who has designed more than 100 issued stamps for Royal Mail since 1962. The exhibition features artwork for many of these, and some designs which have never been seen in public before. It also focuses on the revolutionary 'Gentleman Album' of 1966, which greatly influenced British stamp design – see also articles by Douglas Muir (June 2007 *Bulletin*), and Richard West (June 2009).

The BPMA is open Monday to Wednesday and Friday 10.00-17.00, Thursday 10.00-19.00, and on certain Saturdays – see their website for dates and details of BPMA lectures and other events. The BPMA contains the collections of the former National Postal Museum and Post Office Archives ●

Stamp design awards Motivgruppe Musik has announced the winners of the 'PMC Yehudi Menuhin Trophy 2009' for the most popular music stamp issued in the year 2008. The winning designs were chosen by the members of Motivgruppe Musik, music stamp collectors from all over the world who voted on the internet, and by visitors to several stamp exhibitions. Motivgruppe Musik is an International Philatelic Music Study Group, founded in 1959 with members in 36 countries. The Trophy was awarded to Swiss designer Beat Kehrli for his design of the Music set issued by Switzerland in March 2008. Second prize went to three of Royal Mail's Cathedrals issue. The organizers stated: 'With the illustrations, photographer Peter Marlow and designer Howard Brown have succeeded excellently to show the organs as harmoniously integrated components of the church rooms. Although the instruments aren't in the foreground of the stamps, the room filling sound of the organs is almost audible looking at the stamps.' Third prize was won by Magdalena Perez de Cerro for the Argentine stamp commemorating the centenary of the 'Teatro Colon', issued in May 2008 ●



2012 stamp issues Once again we seek your views on future stamp issues. You will find with this *Bulletin* a form for you to vote for five subjects only from a short list drawn up by Royal Mail's Stamps & Philatelic unit for issues in 2012. Send your completed form in by 30 November for entry in a prize draw to win one of six 2009 Yearbooks – remember to include your name and address. We look forward to receiving your votes, but regret that we cannot enter into correspondence on proposals for stamp issues ●

Exhibitions A touring exhibition in Scotland will be of interest to collectors of this year's stamp issues. 'Zig-Zag: The Paths of Robert Burns' is on show at the Hunterian Museum in Glasgow during November. For details of exhibitions relating to the 500th anniversary of the accession of Henry VIII, see the May *Bulletin*, page 287 ●

Submitting covers Readers are reminded that when submitting covers for special handstamps to Royal Mail's Special Handstamp Centres, the outer cover must bear full postage. Mail posted without payment, marked 'Free-post' (which does not apply to SHCs), or sent in the Royal Mail plastic 'see-through' envelopes used for the return of covers to collectors, may be subject to delay and refusal. Readers are also reminded that covers and cards submitted for handstamping must bear a return address – Royal Mail reserves the right to return any unaddressed items uncanceled. The address can be typed, handwritten (in ink or pencil), rubber-stamped, or by using an address label. However 'Post It' notes should not be used for this purpose as they can easily become detached.

The addresses of Royal Mail's Special Handstamp Centres are shown opposite ●

London Special Handstamp Centre Royal Mail, Mount Pleasant, London EC1A 1BB

Wales & The West Special Handstamp Centre 220-228 Penarth Road, Cardiff CF11 8TA

Scotland & Northern Ireland Special Handstamp Centre Rutherglen DO, Duchess Place, Rutherglen, Glasgow G73 1BT

Northern England Special Handstamp Centre South Shields DO, Keppell Street, South Shields NE33 1AA

Midland Special Handstamp Centre Birmingham Mail Centre, St Stephens Street, Birmingham B6 4AA

Posting boxes Photographs by our readers

THANKS to readers, we show four interesting boxes this month. The first, courtesy of Mr D Bradshaw of Worcestershire, is a Victorian wall box at Clegnash Historic Village, where life is carried on as 100 years ago, on the Isle of Man. The second photo shows an Elizabeth II box in Place Gutenberg, Strasbourg, in France. It was sent by W R Johnston of Malaysia who says: 'The notice says "Boîte aux Lettres en service". I don't know why La Poste is using a British post box, but other *Bulletin* readers might find it interesting'. Jo Allen of Co Wexford provides a photo of an Edward VII box, painted in Irish Post Office green, found at the entrance to Rosslare Euro Port Co, in Wexford, Ireland. Finally, Patrick Busher of Wexford sends a photo of the earliest letter box in use in Ireland, in Collins Barracks, Dublin, the oldest military barracks in Europe, now a military history museum. On the wall behind the box is a plate giving its history in both English and Irish •

Clockwise from top left: post boxes from the Isle of Man; Strasbourg, in France; and in Wexford and Dublin, Ireland.



The world of online philately by Glenn H Morgan FRPSL

LAST reviewed here in May 2002, the GBPS web-site has expanded and improved greatly over the intervening years. There are eight main sections to the site, and each is taken in turn below.

HOME PAGE: unusually extensive, this rapidly presents an overview of the site and the society, rightly known as the world's leading society devoted to the philately and postal history of GB. This includes a discussion group where questions on any aspect of GB philately can be posed, and answered. A glossary of terms listing has started, and additions and corrections are invited.

PROGRAMME: full details of the programme of events include location addresses and times, speakers and subjects to be covered. Usefully, there is also a link to a page that includes a report on a typical meeting, to entice non-members (and hopefully some existing members!) to attend.

BOOKS: the GBPS has a long and successful history of book and monograph publishing, and the site offers full details of around 20 of the most recent works. These cover many aspects of British philately, and members benefit from 10% off the retail prices. Online ordering is possible by credit card, or cheques can be posted to the society.

JOURNAL: The *GB Journal* is fast approaching 50 years of continuous publication and now benefits from colour printing and articles by many of the top specialists. The site offers a free downloadable cumulative index to volumes 21-46, sample PDF copies of seven issues of *GBJ*, and a style guide for prospective contributors. The contents and covers of several years worth of issues help to show the range of material that is written about.

NEWSLETTER: previously a very slim publication with little of lasting value, these days this has become a worthy magazine in its own right, with each issue crammed with research and information pieces that are too short for inclusion within *GBJ*. The site enables a sample copy in PDF format to be downloaded.

LIBRARY LIST: an extensive listing is broken down into 25 main British collecting subjects, a mine of information on what is available for members to borrow. It must contain hundreds of references and is a valuable bibliographic tool for everyone.

JOIN: this section provides an online application form for prospective members (£25 UK subscription, £27 Europe or world surface, £33 world air). Postal applications are also possible.

LINKS: a final area includes dealers, directories, societies, etc that relate to British philately and it then goes beyond the obvious by also including conservation and archival suppliers and how to find out-of-print books.

The Great Britain Philatelic Society has been serving its growing membership of over 700 since 1955, and this website is an extremely useful additional promotional and research facility that deserves your attention ●

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Classic Album Covers Royal Mail begins a

Top row: *The Division Bell*, Pink Floyd 1994; *A Rush of Blood to the Head*, Coldplay 2002; *Parklife*, Blur 1994; *Power, Corruption and Lies*, New Order 1983; and *Let it Bleed*, Rolling Stones 1969.



Bottom row: *London Calling*, The Clash 1979; *Tubular Bells*, Mike Oldfield 1973; *Led Zeppelin IV*, Led Zeppelin 1971; *Screamadelica*, Primal Scream 1991; and *The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars*, David Bowie 1972.



THE FIRST SPECIAL ISSUE of 2010 continues the Design theme of the first set of 2009, and features classic album covers. Ten 1st class stamps and a prestige stamp book go on sale at Post Office branches, Tallents House and Post Office philatelic outlets on 7 January.

The stamps were designed by Studio Dempsey, using photography by Andy Seymour, and printed in gravure by De La Rue in sheets of 25, each sheet containing five designs. The stamps measure 34 × 32mm, with die-cut simulated perforations on self-adhesive paper, and have all-over phosphor. The stamps will also be available in a souvenir sheet, traditionally gummed. This measures 223 × 188mm, in the shape of a record protruding from its sleeve, and was printed by Cartor in litho.

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Orders for serviced FDCs must reach Tallents House (address below) by the date 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 (Oldfield, Keighley postmark) marking the outer envelope 'FD1001' or 'FD1002'.

For details of sponsored handstamps and addresses of the Handstamp Centres see the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from Tallents House. For a sample copy write to: The Editor, British Postmark Bulletin, Royal Mail, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HQ.

PRESTIGE STAMP BOOK A new book, entitled *Classic Album Covers*, will be issued to coincide with the stamps. It was written by Phil Alexander, and printed in litho by Cartor. It contains four panes of stamps, which will be illustrated in a future *Bulletin* •



year of special issues with 10 striking images



UNDER THE COVERS

Every picture tells a story. Especially when it comes to classic album art...

Rolling Stones Let It Bleed

By the time Robert Rauschenberg came to design the sleeve for *Let It Bleed*, the American-born graphic designer had already made his mark by working on large-scale commercial projects for the likes of Pepsi, as well as creating the side sequences for James Bond movies. From *Raise It Up* and *Goldfinger*, his pop-art sensibilities were brought to bear on the Stones's 1969 effort. Rauschenberg's sleeve sculpture being based on the ritual site of 'Automatic Charger' (hence the cover shot suggesting a fully stacked record player) and augmented by the case imagery of their unknown code, Data Base.

Led Zeppelin Led Zeppelin IV

Guitarist Jimmy Page's quest for "total anonymity" meant that the world's biggest rock band released their fourth album without the interest of members or their name on its cover. One executive at Atlantic, the band's label, described this as "commercial suicide". In fact, 32 million people disagreed. The focal point of the gargoyle statue was a painting of a faggit-bearing old man (found by singer Robert Plant in a Reading junk shop, according to Page), which was related to a wall of a partially demolished house overlooking a bleak Dudley landscape dominated by a high-rise. For all its alleged mystique, the veneer was Zeppen's own ecological statement.

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David Bowie The Days After Tomorrow

These days, Heddon Street, a cut-throat old Robert Street in London's West End, boasts a number of gastro eateries. It is not the kind of place you would expect an alien to land. And yet, on a miserable, cold February evening in 1972, photographer Brian

Ward helped to conceptualise David Bowie's notion of the same-styled visitor seduced by the bewappings of mecca, fame and fanboyism. The result is a sleeve designed under the watchful eye of Bowie's ex-Ang Bee baritone and friend George Underwood, with artistry by Terry Pastor, both of them key to that juxtaposition of glam modernism with backward-looking, equally reflecting the pronouncements of 'Moonage Daydream' and 'Starman'.

Mike Dittfield Tubular Bells

There was a vague notion of



two-backs after Stanphill brought its title and its artistry. Design the man who, ubiquitous VHS, during a fortuitous brought back Magritte-rapier metal, a point, a cut over a mid-south coast. T proved to be a

The Clash

Paul his Fender Precision bass... remains one of rock's defining images who had joined the band on tour during the US tour in September 1979, where Bo Diddley was one of their support acts. Designed this sleeve, paying homage to Eric Rippey's debut album which captured him in full hip-shrugging form. Penne Smith's shot of Paul Simonon, emanating the Fender Precision bass on stage at the New York City Palladium during the band's legendary *Tune The Fifties* tour remains one of rock's defining images, and one that the perennially understated photographer has grown to like. "I just didn't think it was right for a sleeve at the time," she says. "Now, after all this time, it's OK."

Pink Floyd The Division Bell

It may not be as iconic as the giant arsons that accompanied 1973's *The Dark Side of the Moon*, but the serene creation for Pink Floyd's 1994 return, *The Division Bell*, was far more extravagant. Division Bell, was far more extravagant. Division Bell, was far more extravagant. Division Bell, was far more extravagant.

New Order Power Corruption and Lies

A graduate of Manchester Polytechnic, in 1979, Peter Saville's love of both modernism and classicism was immediately evident on his seminal work which adorned Joy Division's *Unknown Pleasures*.



gigante, metal heads deposed on Storm Thorgerson's CD artistry were drawn by Keith Brecken and sculpted by John Robinson, standing over nine feet tall and weighing more than a family car. These gargantuan objects were lifted to a level in Cambridge where they were photographed over a two-week period. The dramatic outcome proved fitting for what would ultimately turn out to be Pink Floyd's last studio recording - a 12-million-selling album sung at that.

Blur Positives

Despite their Colchester

Pink Floyd The Division Bell

second album was originally commissioned by *Q* and *Confused* magazine before being appropriated by the band. "Chris Martin saw the image and said, 'I want that on my album cover. So they called me up and told me,'" explains Sundberg.

Classic Album Covers prices

Set of stamps (self-adhesive)	£3.90
Souvenir sheet (gummed)	£3.90
Presentation pack	£4.40
First day cover envelope	£0.30
Prestige stamp book (PSB)	£8.06
Serviced first day cover stamps (UK customers)	£5.06
Serviced first day cover stamps (overseas)	£4.31
Serviced first day cover PSB pane (UK customers)	£4.14
Serviced first day cover PSB pane (overseas)	£3.53
Souvenir cover (souvenir sheet)	£5.50
Stamp cards set (10 cards)	£4.00

Presentation pack The pack (shown left) has been written by Phil Alexander, designed by Studio Dempsey, and printed by Walsall.

Shown below is the prestige stamp book first day cover.



Royal Mail 'Talents House' 21 South Gate Crescent, Edinburgh: EH12 9PH

British air letters Part 3: the history of the



In this third part of my brief history of air letters, I will look at those issues that went on sale in only one of the four countries of the United Kingdom.

ALTHOUGH their issue was restricted to only one country, the regional air letters were still postally valid throughout the UK. For those living outside the country of issue, they were available from the Philatelic Bureau in Edinburgh, and from other philatelic outlets.

The issue of the first of the regional air letters was rather strange. In 1972 the 31st World Congress of the International Federation for Housing and Planning (IFHP) was staged in Liverpool.

The standard 6½p definitive air letter was printed with the IFHP logo for the event, and was sold at a special post office set up at the Congress. The only other places they could be purchased were at the Liverpool head post office and the Philatelic Bureau in Edinburgh. This last point of sale gave the item official credence, making it more than just a private overprint.

The first regional air letter The first true regional air letter was produced in 1973 for use in Wales. It was based on the definitive 5p air letter, but included a vignette of a woman in Welsh national costume alongside the address panel. All the printing was in both English and Welsh, and the third panel on the reverse carried a stylised image of Snowdonia. The postage increase in September of that year gave rise to a second issue of the same air letter, this time using the 6p VC10 stamp, the only occasion when two air letters were released for one commemorative issue. Wales produced two more air letters in the same style, one printed with a Welsh harp, and the other showing the Victorian Pen-y-garreg Dam in the Elan Valley. It would be over 20 years before another Welsh regional air letter appeared.

Meanwhile, 1974 saw Scotland issue the first of many special air letters. Like the first Welsh issue, Scottish issues were based on the definitive air letter, with vignettes to the left of the address lines. All three of the panels making up one side of the air letter carried images appropriate to the subject – from festivals and anniversaries to buildings and tourist attractions. All the instructions were in both English and Gaelic. Altogether thirteen different air letters were produced in this style, a lucky number for collectors, as many more of these special air letters followed.

New Scottish air letters The 1981 issue celebrating Scottish flora and fauna was the first of many that were very different from those of previous years. No longer were they based on the definitive issue of the day. The air letter used the larger A4 format and was printed on white paper, which helped the images stand out. All three panels were used for the design, and often large images carried over from one panel to the next (see page 85).

Altogether 36 of this new type of air letters were issued. Since 1999 no further issues have appeared, and with the decreasing use of air letters in general it is very unlikely we will see any further issues in the future. ►

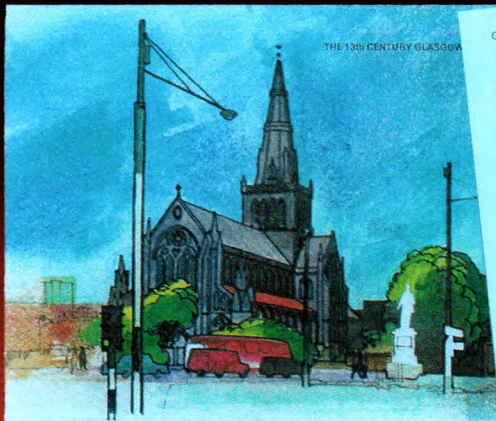
Opposite page Early regional issues had a separate image on each panel, as on the 1975 Glasgow issue at far left.

The 1973 Welsh special issue, top right, featured a woman in traditional costume on the front panel.

The Scottish special issue of 1975 (middle right) celebrated Robert Burns, and featured extracts from his poems.

The Scottish issue at bottom right featured the Kildalton Cross, with the instructions in both English and Gaelic.

once-popular regional issues, by Colin Baker



THE 13th CENTURY GLASGOW

FIRST FOLD HERE



PROVAND'S LORDSHIP, 1471

Sender's name and address
(please show postcode)

An Air Letter should not contain any enclos-
if it does, it may be surcharged or sent by or
mail.

DESIGNED BY JAMES SMITH MSIA
McCorquodale Printers Ltd.
SECOND FOLD HERE

Gyda'r Post Awyr/Llythyr Awyr
**BY AIR MAIL
AIR LETTER**
PAR AVION AEROGRAMME



"Man to man, the world o'er"
**BY AIR MAIL
AIR LETTER**
PAR AVION AEROGRAMME



**BY AIR MAIL
AIR LETTER**

PAR AVION AEROGRAMME

1175-1975



Let Glasgow Flourish

TO OPEN, SLIT HERE



By Air Mail - Air Letter
Par Avion - Aerogramme
Troimh'n phost-adhair/Litir-Adhair



The Kildallon Cross, Islay
Cross Chill Daltain, Ite



TRYCHINEB YNG NGOLEUDY SMALLS

Gedwyd y goleudy cyntaf o bren yn hwyr yf4770au gan ddefnyddio dyluniad arloesol. Roedd yn wythonglog, safai ar naw coes a defnyddid ysgol raff i gyrraedd llety'r heidwad. Digwyddodd trychineb yn ystod y blynyddoedd cyntaf y defnyddiwyd y goleudy: bu farw un o'r ddau geidwad. Gan ofni y byddai rhywun yn amau ei fod wedi cyllawni llofruddiaeth pe bai'n gollwng y corff i'r môr, gosododd ei bartner y corff mawr mewn bocs a'i glymu wrth reilen y llusern y tu allan. Dim ond pan gyrhaeddodd y llong gyfnewid o'r diwedd y daeth profiad annymhol y geidwad i ben. Wedi hyn, apwyntwyd tri cheidwad i'r goleudy ar y gaeig.



A 1998 set of three air letters related stories of lighthouses. The Welsh letter featured the Smalls Lighthouse (above).

POST AWYR
par avion

Aerogram
Aerogramme



Great
Britain
Postage
Paid

White Rocks, County Antrim, Northern Ireland



Sender's name and address
(please show postcode)

An aerogramme should not contain any enclosure: if it does, it may be surcharged or sent by ordinary mail.

One in a series of six aerogrammes illustrated by Ronald Macdonald
Printed at The House of Queens Limited for the British Post Office



FIRST FOURTHIRE

Sets of regional air letters In 1998 a new Welsh air letter appeared, one of a set of three issued that year for three of the four countries making up the United Kingdom. It told the story of the Smalls Lighthouse tragedy, which occurred towards the end of the 18th century. One of two lighthouse keepers died, and the other, fearing he might be accused of murder, kept the body of his colleague with him until the relief boat arrived and he could prove his innocence. This incident led the authorities to require that from then on three lighthouse keepers were always on duty at any one time.

This unfortunate incident was told in both English and Welsh, but only English was used on the Scottish air letter of the set. That story told of the mystery that surrounded the Flannan Lighthouse in 1900, when all three lighthouse men disappeared without a trace. It was believed the men must have been swept away by a giant wave, but with only a silent lighthouse as a witness, we will never know.

The third air letter in the set recounted the heroic story of Grace Darling. In 1838 she and her father rescued nine shipwrecked sailors sheltering on Big Harker, a rock a short way from the Longstone Lighthouse. The illustration on the air letter shows them rowing through mountainous seas towards the rock on the first stage of their epic mission.

Two other Welsh issues were made, each one forming part of a set of three. The first air letter featured *The Snow Spider*, a book by Jenny Nimmo. It was issued in 1998 as part of a set interpreting three different children's books. The Scottish air letter of this set focused on *The Boggart*, written by Susan Cooper, while the English version featured the book *Northern Lights*, by Philip Pullman.

The following year a set of three air letters was issued illustrating traditional country crafts. The Welsh air letter showed the skills of woodworking, harp making and Jacquard weaving. The second of the set looked at basket, crook and chair making in Scotland, while the third concentrated on the English crafts of glasswork, pottery and weaving.

By air mail
Par avion
Aerogramme
Trombin en avion - adhésif - Luftschiff



BRITISH AIR LETTERS

Below: one of many regional issues for Scotland, this one from 1991.

By air mail
Par avion
Aerogramme
Trombin en avion - adhésif - Luftschiff



Scottish Rugby XV
Triple Crown and
GRAND SLAM 1990



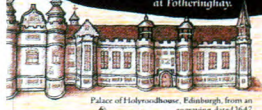
Designed and illustrated by Helen Paterson
in collaboration with Fiona Stoddart, Labeled
Printer at The House of Quilts
For the British Royal Office

FIRST FOLD HERE AND CELLO PHILLADH A1 850

Drawing of Mary below is based
on the portrait at Hagg Castle,
Glasgow, and on the miniature
by Nicholas Hilliard.

Lindisghow Palace, Lindisghow

Born at Linlithgow in 1542, Mary was sent for safety to France, where she married the Dauphin. On his death she returned to rule her troubled country successfully until her second husband, Darnley, was murdered. When she married Bothwell, the man accused of the crime, her lords imprisoned her, forcing her to abdicate. She escaped, was defeated, fled to England and after eighteen years of imprisonment, was executed at Fotheringhay.



Palace of Holyroodhouse, Edinburgh, from an engraving dated 1647



Harewood Castle, near Harwick, home of the Earl of Bothwell



The ruins of Fotheringhay Castle, near Kettering, from an engraving dated 1824



Loch Leven Castle, near Kinross, based on a reconstruction drawn in 1887

This 1987 issue for the 400th anniversary of the death of Mary, Queen of Scots, is an example of the new type of air letter introduced in Scotland in 1981. It demonstrates how the design could flow across all three panels of the letter.

The last regional air letter The last Welsh air letter celebrated the opening of the Millennium Stadium in Cardiff in 1999. It was the very last regional air letter to be issued, and only Christmas air letters have appeared since.

Many commemorative air letters were issued to celebrate Scottish and Welsh events and activities. Originally based on the standard air letter, they ended with issues that were beautifully designed, well illustrated and full of facts and information. As for England, few commemorative air letters have been issued to celebrate specific events. The only ones that we have seen are those in the sets for lighthouses, children's books and traditional crafts. Northern Ireland has issued none at all, although views of Irish scenes did feature in the Landscapes of Britain set. I think this is probably the end of the road for the once-popular commemorative air letter, and it is very unlikely that we will see any more regional air letters in the future ●

Female fortitude Karen Foy takes a look at

Although eight of Royal Mail's Eminent Britons are well-known and respected males, for this article I have decided to look at the two women featured in the set, and their admirable determination to overcome life's obstacles.

On 8 October 2009, a new set of special stamps celebrated the lives of ten of Britain's remarkable individuals. Commemorating the anniversaries of their births or important achievements, this eclectic mix of campaigners, sports heroes, arti-

sans and record breakers is sure to be a hit with collectors. All stamps are 1st class values, are 35mm square, and are printed in litho on two sets of five se-tenant strips. The subtle greenish grey colour scheme gives these stamps a timeless elegance which is carried through onto the themed backgrounds of each image and also onto the interior of the presentation pack.



Pride and prejudice Born in Spitalfields, London in 1759, Mary Wollstonecraft began her life as the daughter of a handkerchief weaver. By the age of 25, together with her sister Eliza and friend Fanny Blood, she had opened a school in the small village of Newington Green near Hackney. Brought up in the Anglican faith, Mary started to attend the local Dissenting Chapel, and it was here that she met the minister Richard Price and his friend, clergyman and political theorist Joseph Priestley. Both of these men belonged to the group known as the Radical Dissenters, whose views included rejecting traditional Christian ideas of original sin and eternal punishment, and instead thought that reasoning and individual conscience should be paramount when making moral decisions. In fact, Richard Price's opinions on the subject were

so strong that he wrote a book entitled the *Review of the Principal Questions of Morals*, and although he encountered a great deal of hostility, his ideals and outlook were also considered very influential.

Mary was fascinated by their beliefs, which helped to form her own opinions of the world around her. In 1786, her book *Thoughts on the Education of Girls* was published, where she suggested different subjects which would interest and stimulate young women, and questioned the methods used to teach them. By 1792, she had written the classic *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* – controversially arguing that women were not naturally inferior to men, but only appear to be because of their lack of education. Despite opposition, she continued to champion the cause, with both the subject of her book and her unconventional love life – which included an ill-fated affair with a married man – bringing her much publicity.

In 1793 – one month before Louis XVI was guillotined – Mary moved to France. In the midst of the turbulent atmosphere of the French Revolution, she fell passionately in love with American writer Gilbert Imlay. For a time they were happy, and she soon gave birth to their daughter Fanny.

two stamps in the new Eminent Britons issue

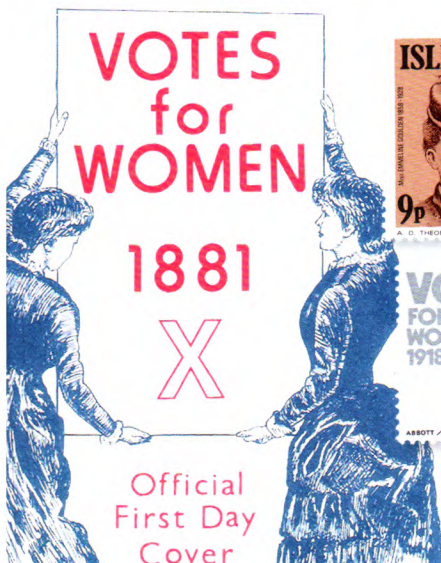
Mary took Imlay's name although the pair were never married. Imlay was not enamoured with a domestic life and, despite attempts to win back his affections, the pair split. A devastated Mary made an unsuccessful suicide attempt to no avail, and eventually returned to Britain as a single mother.

By throwing herself into her writing career, she gradually began to mix in literary circles once again, where she met philosopher and later founder of the Anarchist Movement, William Godwin. The affair resulted in Mary's pregnancy and the couple decided to marry to allow the child to be seen as legitimate. It was then discovered that Mary had not actually been married to Imlay, and the exposure lost her many of her friends.

On 30 August 1797, a daughter was born and, although the birth went well, complications arose which resulted in Mary developing fatal septicaemia from which she died several days later. Initially buried in Old Saint St Pancras Churchyard, her remains were later moved, with Godwin's, to Bournemouth where her tombstone reads: Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin, / Author of *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*: / Born 27 April 1759: Died 10 September 1797.

Whilst Mary's legacy of freedom and rights for women lives on in the work of others, she is still regarded as one of the founders of the feminist movement. From a philatelic point of view, Great Britain was celebrating the achievements of women pioneers as early as 1968 by commemorating the 50th anniversary of votes for women, with a similar issue from the Isle of Man in 1981. The Eminent Britons set may be Mary's first outing as an image on our stamps, but she joins a dedicated band of feminists who later followed in her footsteps. In October 2008, Royal Mail issued a set of six stamps entitled Women of Distinction – this featured other notables such as the suffragette Millicent Garrett Fawcett, pioneer of birth control Marie Stopes, and the campaigner for equal pay, Barbara Castle. ►

Below issues celebrating equal rights for women: 1981 Isle of Man Votes for Women; 1968 Anniversary of Votes for Women; and two of the 2008 Women of Distinction stamps. In the background is the first day cover for the 1981 Isle of Man issue.





Other issues, such as Australia's Votes for Women stamps of 1994 (see p67) and Canada's 1985 issue honouring feminist Emily Murphy and reformer Therese Casgrain (left), continue to mark the inroads made into equality for women worldwide.

Mary Wollstonecraft's second daughter was also named Mary. Through marriage, she went on to become Mary Shelley, wife of the radical poet Percy Bysshe Shelley and successful author in her own right of the classic gothic tale of Frankenstein which featured on one of the Horror Stories stamps in 1997.



Diligence and determination Acknowledged as a campaigner and founder of Mencap, Judy Fryd's life story brings us right up to date, as she fought over many years of the 20th century to achieve help and recognition for children with learning difficulties and a public voice for their parents. Born in Hornsey in London on 31 October 1909, Judy was the daughter of a Post Office sorter and spent her childhood in the area, at Minchenden School, before reading political science and economics at Ruskin College, Oxford. It was there that she met and married her husband John Fryd and later moved to Leeds.

Within two years, Judy had given birth to their first child, a daughter named Felicity, but it was not long before they realised that Felicity's development was not advancing as quickly as it should

have been. Although they sought help, the young family suffered numerous setbacks when Felicity was asked to be removed from various schools as her behaviour was too disruptive for the rest of the class.

It was the early 1940s, and Felicity's condition was diagnosed as juvenile schizophrenia, more commonly known today as autism. There was very little help for sufferers and their families, and even less understanding and support. At the end of her tether, Judy sent a letter to the magazine *Nursery World* suggesting that parents of children with challenging behaviour and learning difficulties should band together to raise awareness of their plight. To her surprise, she was contacted by 1000 mothers in the first month who wanted to join forces and find help.

For 25 years, Judy became the editor of a dedicated magazine called the *Parent's Voice*, and throughout the 1950s and 60s she campaigned for new developments and research into the difficulties experienced by the children and also for assistance and guidance for the families. It was previously thought that these children were uneducable and even if funding could be found to provide private schooling, they were denied free school milk and other post war vitamin supplements that were normally offered. If the fees proved too costly they were either looked after at home or sent to long stay

hospitals which did not cater for their needs. As a result, in 1971, Judy Fryd led a campaign which resulted in the Education (Handicapped Children) Act that overturned these earlier rulings and beliefs.

With a formidable force of supporters, Judy saw her little organisation grow into a massive UK charity with a turnover of £100 million per year, a staff of 5500 and over 20,000 dedicated volunteers. As a result, she received an MBE for her services in 1967 and, 29 years later, her work continued to be appreciated and admired when she was awarded a CBE in 1996.

Although Mencap as an organisation has not previously featured on a British stamp, they have encouraged people to collect and donate used stamps to raise money for the charity. This has not only helped to bring awareness to their work, but also provided a secondary use for the stamps of non-collectors which may otherwise have just been thrown away.

A quote of Dr Samuel Johnson, used as one of the first day of issue postmarks, reads 'Great works are performed not by strength but by perseverance' and aptly describes the challenges faced by both Mary Wollstonecraft and Judy Fryd. Through their foresight, determination and strong beliefs, they paved the way for others to follow and rightly deserve their place alongside the other notable personalities who make up this philatelic tribute ●

The coming of phosphor Richard West on the addition of phosphor to stamps in 1959

BEFORE ANY ITEM of mail can be cancelled or sorted, there is a basic requirement – that the envelope is facing the correct way, with the stamp in the top right corner (the practise established when the postage stamp was introduced), hopefully resulting in the address being upright. For years mail was sorted into this position manually but, as early as 1934 at the Post Office research facility at Dollis Hill in London, ways were being sought to undertake the task automatically. The basis has always been to detect the stamp, the initial attempts using photo-electric scanners proving unsuccessful. More successful was a machine developed in 1949-50, which relied on reflectivity to distinguish between the stamp and envelope. However, this did not meet the full requirements of the Post Office, wanting to go a step further, to distinguish mail at the cheaper 'printed paper' rate (later replaced by first and second class mail) from other letters.

The solution seemed to be adding something to the stamp to enable its detection. Ideas included strips of silver, or adding sodium chloride to the face of the stamp, but neither was thought practicable. Other ideas were using fluorescence (reference was made to optical brightening agents added to washing powder) and phosphorescence. The last of these was thought most satisfactory, equipment detecting the stamp by the afterglow resulting from being subjected to ultra-violet light. However, automated letter sorting (together with postal codes) using phosphor was being developed, and the fear was that the two would give conflicting signals. ►

So, in 1956 it was decided to give stamps tag treatment, namely applying lines to the back of stamps using colloidal graphite in naphtha, known as naphthadag ('dag' standing for Deflocculated Acheson's Graphite). It was agreed that such stamps be trialled in the Southampton area. Early in 1957 the stamp printers, Harrison and Sons, produced samples of the potential stamps, with the lines printed on the back of the stamps under the gum.

The Post Office had reservations over health concerns and the public's reaction to the black lines. Harrisons proposed the alternative of applying the naphthadag to the front of the stamps, under the design, but this created aesthetic problems. Also considered was applying the lines to the face of the stamp paper before it was coated. Nevertheless the idea adopted was to have two lines on the back of the stamps from ½d to 3d – the 2d printed paper rate stamp had just one line, so it could be separated from other mail. It was agreed that this experiment would not apply to commemoratives.

For a while there was discussion over priorities at Harrisons, and whether work on the new Regional definitives should proceed first: however, design development on the Regionals delayed that project. Graphite-lined stamps were put on sale in the Southampton area on 19 November 1957, for use with the experimental Automatic Letter Facing equipment, known as 'ALF'. The stamps were issued a month before ALF came into use – on 19 December – to increase the chances that all letters posted in the area would bear the new stamps. In 1959 the range of values so treated was extended to include the 4d and 4½d. The public reaction to the stamps was certainly not adverse, but it had always been recognised that graphite was not the long-term answer (metal, such as paper clips, within the envelope could affect the results), as having to print both sides of the paper increased production costs: the phosphor option had to be developed.

Phosphor developed In April 1959 Harrisons successfully produced a phosphorescent printing ink for use on the face of stamps. At a meeting held at PO Headquarters on 19 August 1959 it was reported that the phosphor had given a satisfactory signal, especially from the white (unprinted) areas of the face of the stamp, and was medically acceptable: it reacted to a different wavelength to the phosphor used for coding. However, not all the equipment in use at Southampton could be simultaneously adapted to detect phosphor, as opposed to graphite. Initially it was possible to convert only one machine to use a phosphor scanner in place of a graphite scanner.

Therefore it was temporarily necessary to have stamps providing both graphite lines and phosphor, so Harrisons overprinted remaining graphite-lined stamps with phosphor (two bands on all values to 4½d, except the 2d with one band). The doubly-treated stamps were issued 18 November 1959 – thus it was 50 years ago that phosphor first appeared on British stamps.

The Post Office agreed to phosphor overprinting on condition that once the move was made to stamps with just phosphor bands, these be applied as part of the printing operation in order to keep production costs down. Compared with the other values, the phosphor applied to the 4d and 4½d values was less dense so as not to spoil the look of these stamps with their



Above: first day covers for the phosphor-graphite stamps of 50 years ago.

Right: a cover that passed through the Automatic Letter Facing equipment at Southampton, the stamps having graphite lines on the back.

pale coloured backgrounds. Officials at Post Office Headquarters were also concerned that the postmark might be erased from the 'phosphor' part of the stamp. Alternatives suggested were applying the phosphor under the stamp design, or including the phosphor in the paper coating.

In December 1959 Harrisons advised that it could now produce stamps for full phosphor scanning. As a result, all the equipment at Southampton could be converted: the machines were taken out of service on 18 January 1960. Southampton reverted to using the cheaper ordinary stamps, it being agreed, as had happened previously, that the phosphor versions would not go on sale until one month before the converted machinery came into use. The stamps with phosphor bands only were put on sale on 22 June 1960.

There were still some concerns, mainly affecting the stamps needing just one band, as any misplacement in printing the bands on the stamps could result in two-band stamps. At a meeting on 30 January 1964 it was agreed that the answer was to print the band over two stamps, on alternative columns, so that one stamp had a single band down the left-hand edge and its neighbour has the band down the right-hand edge.

Two bands in error An interesting saga appears in files at the British Postal Museum & Archive. Post Office Stores noted on 7 August 1964 that 90,000 2½d sheets had been incorrectly printed at Harrisons with two phosphor bands, rather than one (the result of using the wrong cylinder). 27,000 sheets were destroyed as badly printed, but the question concerned the fate of the remaining 63,000 sheets. It was agreed that the stamps would be distributed to areas not requiring phosphor stamps (any Postmasters querying the stamps to be told that they were non-phosphor), and that Harrisons be paid for the stamps as if they were the non-phosphor version. ►

The BPMA files continue: 'We will make no announcement at all to philatelic or other interests about these stamps and we should be glad to have your [Post Office Stores] assurance that in these circumstances you can see no reason why any public notice – philatelic or other – will be drawn to them. You will, of course, ensure that these stamps are not sent to the Philatelic Bureau (or to Edinburgh HPO) as stock – either of normal or phosphor.'

Naturally stamp collectors spotted the mistake, and it is listed in Stanley Gibbons' *Great Britain Specialised Stamp Catalogue Volume 3*.

The automatic facing experiments were extended to Glasgow, Liverpool and London, and later to Norwich, until the mechanised cancelling and handling of mail spread nationwide in 1969/70.

Great Britain had been a pioneer in the work of automatic letter facing, with Canada being the next to adopt the idea, with trials in Winnipeg that started in May 1963 ●

Text © Richard West 2009

Commemorative covers New this month



Nene Valley Railway A cover was serviced on 18 August, the day of issue for the Royal Mail Post Boxes miniature sheet. The cover bears an NVR railway letter stamp and the miniature sheet/stamp is cancelled by a special Penfold postbox handstamp. **Prices** £6.50 miniature sheet, or £3.50 single stamp. Postage 50p ●



Bletchley Park Post Office FDC (edition of 500) for the ICC World Twenty Final at Lord's, in London, featuring a painting of the Cricket Club at Entebbe by Kathleen M Persse. A 1st class Union Flag stamp with a cricket ground label is cancelled by a 21 June special handstamp. **Price** £12.50 plus £1.50 postage ●



GB Covers A limited edition of 40 official first day covers has been produced, featuring a portrait of William Shakespeare and his house in Stratford-upon-Avon. Serviced with the set of Eminent Britons stamps and cancelled with a special Shakespeare Way, Feltham, Middx handstamp. Each authorised and numbered. **Price** £16.50 plus £1.50 postage and packing. Remittances payable to GB Covers ●



Scottish Bible Society This cover, issued for the Society's bicentenary, bears a Scottish St Andrew's Cross stamp with orange 9p stamp to make up the 1st class rate. Cancelled by an Edinburgh CDS on 4 August, the bicentenary day. An insert shows how the 150th anniversary was marked, then known as the National Bible Society of Scotland. **Price** £2 postpaid; remittances to Scottish Bible Society ●



Buckingham Covers Two Eminent Britons FDCs. A Sir Arthur Conan Doyle cover features a Sidney Paget illustration for *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. Five Eminent Britons stamps (including Conan Doyle) are cancelled with a Sherlock Holmes postmark. **Prices** £10.95; signed by actor David Burke £24.95; signed by Mr Burke and his successor Edward Hardwicke £44.95. A Sir Matt Busby cover bears the other five stamps with Manchester postmark. Available signed by Manchester United manager Sir Alex Ferguson, and by one of the 1968 Man Utd European Cup winning team. ●



Royal Naval Philatelic Society FDC serviced 18 August for the 500th anniversary of the laying down of the keel of Henry VIII's *Mary Rose*. Supplied with eight postcards of the ship and artefacts. A Henry VIII stamp is cancelled by a special Forces Post Office postmark. **Prices** Five versions: plain £10.90; special (with extra 1982 *Mary Rose* stamp) £17; double-signed £15.30; triple-signed £21; multi-signed £52. 50% reduction for RNPS members (membership £20 on joining, £5 annually thereafter). ●

Cover producers wishing to announce a recent or forthcoming cover should submit copy of up to 75 words in the style above. The text should briefly describe the cover, state the stamps and postmarks it will bear, and give retail prices and an address for orders and enquiries. Announcements are published on a first-come-first-served basis and may be modified or shortened. Copy for consideration for the January *Bulletin* should be sent to The Editor (address on p67) by 6 November. Copy for February should arrive by 7 December. Royal Mail cannot enter into correspondence or telephone conversations concerning announcements in this Covers section.



M Tanner Cover produced for the Postboxes issues (edition of 10 numbered copies) with a filler postcard, featuring images from Colne Valley Postal Museum. Postmarked Wakefield 18 August. **Prices** With a generic sheet 1st class and label (above) £14.99; with miniature sheet £16.99; with PSB pane and Birmingham Penfold postmark £15.99. Add £1.50 to all prices for worldwide postage. Postcards 60p each. Irish postbox covers also available. ●



Mid-Suffolk Light Railway Museum A cover serviced 5 July for the MSLR's visit to the Mid Norfolk and Wells & Walsingham Railways, featuring steam locos at the MNR and WWR. Two MSLR carriage labels and a Royal Mail 1st class stamp are cancelled by Stephenson Locomotive Society special handstamp. **Price** £3.25. Labels: block of six £1.50; A5 sheet £3; A4 sheet £6, perf or imperf. Postage 60p UK, £1.10 Europe, £1.50 elsewhere. Please make remittances payable to B R Reynolds. ●

Orders and enquiries

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to order by credit card, via PayPal.

Nene Valley Railway

(Stamps) Wansford Station,
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Telephone 01780 784444.

Royal Naval Philatelic Society

19 College Road, HM Naval Base, Portsmouth PO1 3LJ.
Telephone 023 92 815494.

Scottish Bible Society

S R Brown, 14 Buchan Drive,
Perth PH1 1NQ

M Tanner

180 Whitehorse Road, West Croydon CR0 2LA.
Fax/Answerphone 020 8684 9757 (credit card orders only)

Prize draw 2009 Pack Collection to be won

WE HAVE TWO of the new 2009 Presentation Pack Collection for our prizes this month. To enter, simply send you name and address on a postcard or back of a sealed envelope to: 2009 Draw, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HQ by 30 November. ●

Competitions Enter for a chance to win the 2009 Yearbook



August identify The detail was from the 1975 7p Sailing stamp. The winner was A Sidaway, Kirkcudbrightshire.

August knowledge Answers: 1) D Davis and J Boon; 2) Brown; 3) 1963. The winner was M Tauru of Finland.

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 What were the colours of the 7d and 10d Machin stamps issued in 1968?
- 2 Who designed the 2009 Stained Glass Windows Christmas stamps?
- 3 In which year was a stamp featuring St Giles Cathedral Edinburgh issued?

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, 35-50 Rathbone Place, London W1T 1HQ. The senders of the first cards drawn in each competition on 18 December will each receive a 2009 Yearbook. Runner-up prizes of presentation packs, FDCs or stamp cards will be awarded in each competition. These competitions are not open to Royal Mail employees •

Events

Until Spring 2010 David Gentleman exhibition at British Postal Museum & Archive, Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London WC1. **Enquiries** 020 7239 2570, e-mail info@postalheritage.org.uk.

Until 9 January 2010 Philatelic exhibition at Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery for the 125th anniversary of Birmingham PS. Includes material from the Society and from the Thomas Evans collection. Admission free. **Enquiries** A Spencer, 0121 459 7650

5-7 November Autumn Philatex (London International Stamp & Cover Show), Lawrence Hall, Royal Horticultural Halls, London SW1. Admission free. 110 dealers. **Enquiries** www.stampshows.net

13-14 November Stafford Stamp Show 2009 at Staffordshire County Showground, Weston Road,

Stafford. Over 50 dealers. Friday 11.00-18.00, Saturday 10.00-16.00. Admission free. **Enquiries** 01785 259350, e-mail info@john-rice-stamps.co.uk

14 November Bolton PS all-day auction at Radcliffe Masonic Hall, Bury New Road, Bolton. Viewing from 09.30, auction 12.15. 1200 lots. **Enquiries** B Fielding 01204 307252

4-6 December Monacophil, Monte Carlo, Monaco. See page 70. **Enquiries** www.oetp-monaco.com

24-27 February 2010 Spring Stampex at Business Design Centre, London N1. Includes One Frame National Competitions. **Enquiries** 01252 628006

Throughout 2010 Festival of Stamps events, London and around the UK. See www.london2010.org.uk •

Late news

Royal Mail update The new Recorded Signed For stamps (see p76) are printed in gravure by De La Rue in sheets of 50, self-adhesive. These include the security devices introduced for definitives last February. Perforation gauge is 15 x 14 for the standard stamp, 14 for the 'Large' stamp.

Cylinder numbers and colours for the Classic Album Covers stamps (7 January) are: D1 black D1 cyan (blue) D1 yellow D1 magenta and D1 silver. There are six cylinder number position guide boxes. The stamps have all-over phosphor, and there is a gutter between horizontal strips of five of the stamps. The year '2010' is reversed out of the phosphor. The accompanying prestige book contains two panes, printed facing one another, containing the 10 Album stamps and two panes of definitives: 4 x 10p, 2 x 5p and 2 x 22p with label; and 4 x 20p, 2 x 54p and 2 x 62p with label. The 20p/54p/62p stamp pane will be used on the official first day cover as shown on page 81.

Ten new stamps, designed specifically to meet the needs of customers ordering business customised and Smilers sheets, will be available from 26 January. They will also be offered in a gummed miniature sheet and self-adhesive generic sheet, for collectors who do not use business customised or Smilers services. The four Smilers stamps comprise two 1st class featuring a birthday cake and wrapped present, a Europe rate stamp depicting a bird with envelope in its beak, and a Worldwide stamp showing a plane flying a 'Hello' message. (The Europe and Worldwide stamps are valid on mail weighing up to 20g). The six Business Customised stamps feature a seal and crown, the 2006 Lest We Forget poppy stamp, and four methods of transport – a plane, ship, train and car. The stamps are designed by Hat-trick (seal & crown), Andrew Davidson (transport), Annabel Wright (cake and present), and Lucy Davey (Europe and Worldwide), and printed in litho by Cartor (miniature sheet) or in litho by Cartor (generic sheet). Price £4.58 miniature sheet, and £9.70 generic sheet. There will be a presentation pack containing the miniature sheet and a set of stamp cards. Further details shortly.

The first Olympic and Paralympic Games stamp book (mentioned on page 72) will be issued on 7 January, containing Judo and Paralympic Archery stamps plus four 1st class definitives. The second book, to be issued on 25 February, will contain Track Athletics and Basketball stamps, and four definitives •

Bulletin back issues Mr B E Whiffin has a complete run of the *Bulletin* from September 1985 to December 2008 for anyone willing to collect from the south west Greater London area. Contact Mr Whiffin on 020 8549 2600 •

Post & Go In addition to the towns listed on page 76, Post & Go machines are expected to be installed in November at main Post Office branches in Chesterfield, Croydon, London (Albemarle St, w1), Orpington and Plymouth •

Obituary Michael English, designer of the 2001 Buses and 2004 Vintage Motorbikes issues, died in September, aged 68. He studied at the Ealing Art School and, with Nigel Waymouth, formed both a graphics team and the rock group, Hapshash and the Coloured Coat. Amongst his best-known works was the Coke bottle cap (1970), and marketing graphics for companies such as British Airways, Porsche, and Swiss Air. His obituary in *The Guardian* stated that 'his real talent lay in romanticising the chill seductiveness of the machine age, a talent reprised with designs for special postage stamp issues' •

Two million stamps The national press reported the accumulation of 2 million stamps (including 1 million UK stamps) by deceased postman Alan Roy, who began saving stamps as a boy. The vast accumulation will be sold at auction by Elliotts of Wimborne, Dorset on 28 November. Hugh Jefferies, Editor of the SG Catalogue, commented: 'It is very uncommon to collect stamps in this manner. He has obviously gone for quantity over individual rarity' •

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