

BRITISH *PHILATELIC*

The ROYAL MAIL magazine *for stamp collectors*

Bulletin

Volume 37 Number 8

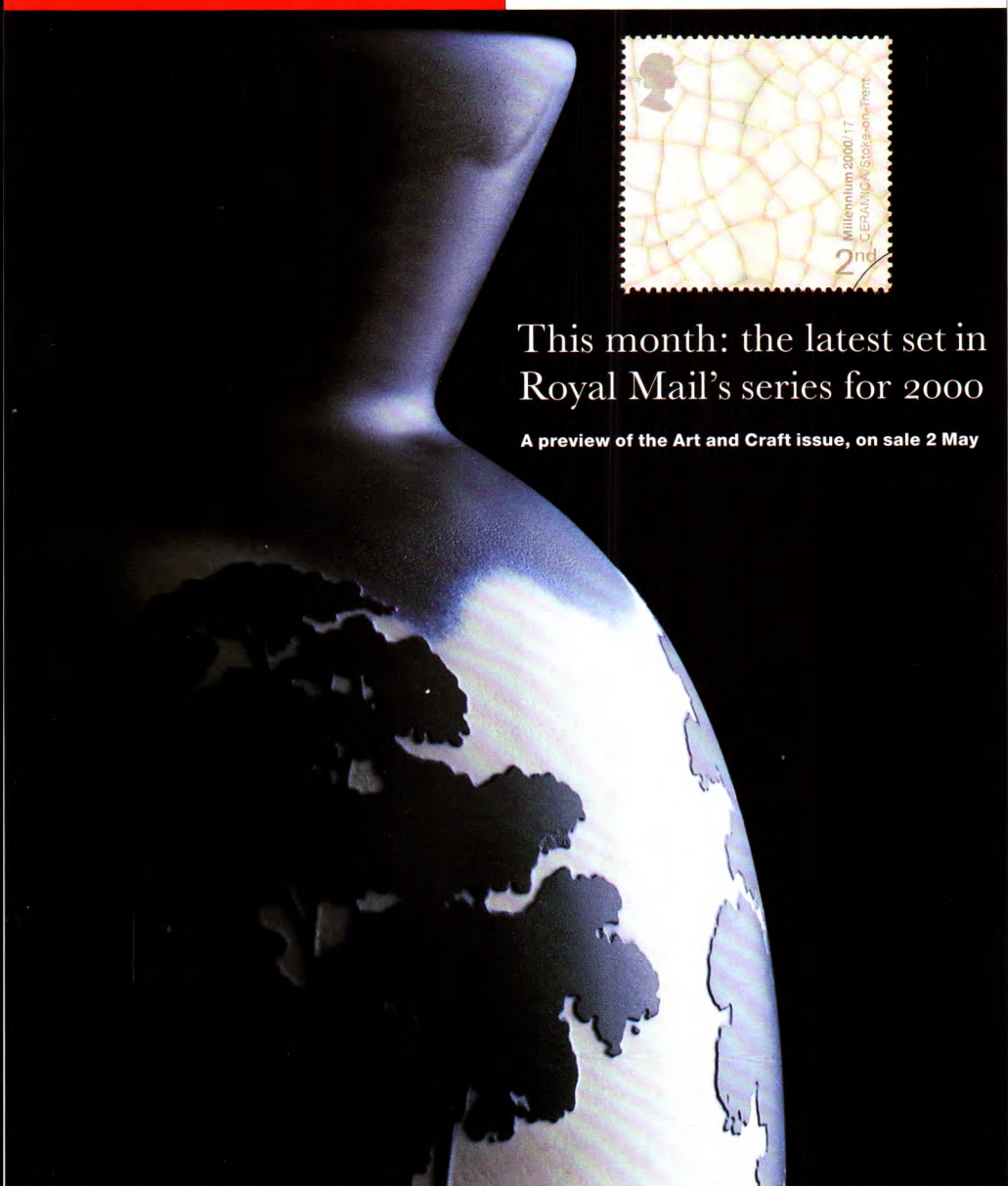
APRIL 2000 • 85P

Results of 1999 Bulletin poll
• Millennium Art and Craft



This month: the latest set in
Royal Mail's series for 2000

A preview of the Art and Craft issue, on sale 2 May



Forthcoming issues and withdrawals



Cover The 2nd class of the Art and Craft set represents Ceramica, in Stoke-on-Trent, where the rich heritage of the Potteries is celebrated. The RainForest vase by Moorland Potteries, who are closely involved with Ceramica, shows the three-dimensional quality of their unique etching technique. Photograph by Geoff Dann.

Revised handstamp

Please note that the Scottish Congress handstamp shown on p1 of the *Commemorative Covers Review* in March was revised slightly before use on 18 March. The modified handstamp is as shown on p7 of the *British Postmark Bulletin* of 3 March.

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

4 April

Issue Millennium Life and Earth stamps and presentation pack; Botanic Garden of Wales commemorative label book and coin cover. (Unfolded pane and coin cover available only from Bureau).

20 April

Withdrawal 37p, 43p and 63p definitive stamp coils.

25 April

Issue Millennium Art and Craft stamp cards.

25 April

Issue National definitives: 8p, 33p, 40p, 41p, 45p, 65p and presentation pack • Country stamps: N Ireland 1st NVI, 40p, 65p; Scotland 65p, Wales 65p. Also available in presentation packs.

27 April

Issue Stamp books: £1 (3 × 1st, 1 × 2nd), £2 (6 × 1st, 2 × 2nd); £1.60 (4 × 40p), and £2.60 (4 × 65p); 4 × E (European rate) with amended phone number.

2 May

Issue Millennium Art and Craft stamps and presentation pack.

4 May

Withdrawal Craft aerogrammes: England (and N Ireland), Scotland, Wales.

7 May

Withdrawal N Ireland 20p, 26p, 37p & 63p; Scotland 20p, 26p, 37p & 63p; Wales 20(p), 26(p), 37(p) & 63(p) and presentation pack.

22 May

Issue Stamp Show 2000 miniature sheet – eight Machin definitives in Jeffery Matthews colours. Price £2.59 or £4.99 in exhibition card • ‘Smilers’ stamps: sheet of 10 greetings stamps printed with 10 personalised labels or Stamp Show logo • Stamp cards – Pictorial label panes (4): Berlin Airlift, Rugby, Postman Pat and National Botanic Garden of Wales.

23 May

Issue Stamp Show miniature sheet containing Millennium definitives and £1 1953 Coronation stamp; stamp cards (3) showing full miniature sheet, 1st Millennium definitive, and £1 Coronation stamp • Stamp Show prestige stamp books (*Definitive Stamp*, *Profile on Print* and *Special by Design*) in special folder. Available only from Bureau and Stamp Show 2000.

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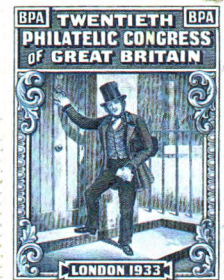
Announcing your favourite stamps and Bulletin authors of 1999, as voted by readers from around the world **238**

The **British Philatelic Bulletin** is published monthly by Royal Mail, 2-14 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8HQ • **Editor** JR Holman • **Price** 85p for single copies, from Post Office Counters philatelic outlets • **Annual subscription** £9.50 in UK and Europe, £13.50 rest of the world. Subscriptions should be sent to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT • **Binders** to hold 24 issues, price £7, available by post from British Philatelic Bureau (address as above) • Royal Mail also publishes the fortnightly *British Postmark Bulletin*, giving details of forthcoming special handstamps. Available on annual subscription from British Philatelic Bureau (address above) UK and Europe £10, rest of the world £21.75 • **Copyright** Unless copyright is attributed to a specific author, any article or feature may be reproduced without formal permission, but acknowledgement should be given to *British Philatelic Bulletin*. Requests to reproduce any copyright articles should be addressed to the Editor, 2-14 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8HQ • **Design** by Robert Maude • **Printed** in Great Britain by The White Dove Press • **ISSN** 0953 8119

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This month The Editor previews this issue



THIS MONTH'S Royal Mail News section gives advance information on some of the products for Stamp Show 2000. Some products are still being worked on so information published here is subject to change, and further details will be included next month. The wide range of products on offer should ensure that there is something to appeal to most tastes. My favourite British stamp of the current reign is Edmund Dulac's 193d Coronation issue so I was pleased to see that this has been selected for reproduction on one of the two Stamp Show miniature sheets. Dulac was shown, at work in his studio, in *The Definitive Portrait* stamp book (1998) – the first in the Stamp Show series. He is also remembered for his work on the George VI definitives.

We announce in this issue the results of the 1999 Favourite Stamps and Favourite *Bulletin* Author poll. The results of the stamp poll came as a bit of a surprise to me but less so your favourite author as I had received during the year a number of letters appreciative of his articles.

Included with this *Bulletin* is the seventh in our Bulletin Publication series, an introduction to the use of new technology for stamp collectors. It is written by one of our regular contributors, Ron Negus, who will shortly be starting for us a series of follow-up articles aimed at helping collectors appreciate how new technology can assist in philatelic endeavours. I hope you will find Ron's booklet interesting. JOHN HOLMAN •

Stamp scene Exhibitions • Societies news • Manchester Museum • Philatelic concert

Stamp Show 2000 *Bulletin* readers hardly need reminding that Britain's first international stamp show for a decade will be held at Earls Court, London SW5, 22-28 May. Admission will be £10 on the opening day, £5 other days, children under 16 free (see opposite for free ticket registration).

A Millennium Club has been set up for visitors who want to relax in a peaceful atmosphere whilst touring the show. Following the successful pattern established at London 1980 and Stamp World London 1990, a special area will be set aside in the Cromwell Suite at Earls Court for Club members to relax, have a drink or buffet lunch in convivial surroundings. Members will be able to invite two guests at a time (a fee payable for each guest). Membership includes a season ticket to the exhibition, the exhibition catalogue plus a special free gift.

The social highlight of any world stamp exhibition is the Palmares when the major awards in the competitive displays are announced. The Palmares for Stamp Show 2000 will be held on 27 May in the Nine Kings Suite of the Royal Lancaster Hotel which has its own car park and excellent transport links with Earls Court and central London. The nearest tube station is Lancaster Gate (Central Line).

Millennium Club Application forms from Brian Asquith, 107 Charterhouse Street, London EC1M 6PT.

Palmares Application forms from Mrs Anabelle Todd, 107 Charterhouse Street, London EC1M 6PT.

ROYAL MAIL STAND The specially designed Royal Mail stand results from much imaginative planning. Collectors will be able to buy a wide range of products and young visitors will find much to enjoy. There will be a self-selection area as well as traditional counter service. The range of exhibition products, including miniature sheets, are described in Royal Mail News. Millennium stamps will be available pre-packaged as presentation packs or gutter or cylinder blocks. Young visitors can take part in various games and competitions as well as having a go at designing their very own cover. The theme of the stand will be 'Perspectives on Britain'. Ten key British stamps have been chosen to reflect 1000 years of achievement: Shakespeare and the Globe (artistic achievement), Rowland Hill (communications), Oak tree (countryside), Dalek (entertainment), Sir Isaac Newton (progress), Henry VIII (royalty), Bobby Moore (sport), SS Great Britain (travel), War Graves (war and peace), and National Nature Week (nature). Each theme will be explored through other stamps from around the world.

INFORMATION Stamp Show 2000 is sponsored by Royal Mail and supported by the Fédération Internationale de Philatélie (FIP), the Association of British Philatelic Societies (ABPS), Philatelic Traders' Society (PTS), British Philatelic Trust (BPT), Royal Philatelic Society London, Stuart Rossiter Trust Fund, International Federation of Stamp Dealers' Association (ISFDA), and the National Philatelic Society (NPS). Patron of the exhibition is HM The Queen, items from whose collection will be on display in the court of honour. Sadly Her Majesty will not be visiting the exhibition.

NATIONAL YOUTH STAMP GROUP The theme for the Group's stand at Stamp Show 2000 will be 'Above and Beyond'. Young visitors will be given a special folder with lots of activities inside for them to do on this theme. Each activity will earn them points which can then be added together until they have enough to have a go at the 'lucky dip' which will contain many gifts of philatelic material. If you are going to the Show and have young relatives interested in stamp collecting bring them along; they can be left participating in the various activities while you browse around the show knowing they are quite safe. If you are interested in starting up a stamp club but not sure how to get started or need some advice, visit the NYSG stand. The NYSG is a voluntary group of people who promote the hobby of stamp collecting among the young; they can help supplying material and also arrange workshops in your area. The Group always welcomes sponsors and donations of material for the workshops and new junior clubs •

Welsh Philatelic Society The January 2000 issue of the WPS's *Newsletter* contains the fifth update to Roger Broomfield's book *The Undated Postmarks of Wales, 1840 to 1860*, a listing of Post Office closures in Wales, features on postal history, a listing of Welsh special handstamps, January-July 1999, and an interesting account of local stamps from Bardsey Island. The 28-page illustrated journal is essential reading for all interested in Welsh philately •

Visit Stamp Show 2000 free

To pre-register for free tickets write to: Stamp Show 2000, Royal Mail, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TX or call 0845 720 2000 (UK only) or +44 (0)20 7253 9900 (overseas) by 1 May.

Stamp Show 2000 enquiries

107 Charterhouse Street, London EC1M 6PT. Telephone 0845 720 2000 (UK) or +44 (0)20 9900 (overseas).

Further information is also available on website: www.thestampshow2000.co.uk

NYSG enquiries

Mrs Anne Dummer, 191 Bath Road, Kettering NN16 8NF.

Telephone 01536 519959.

WPS enquiries Write to the Secretary: Paul Gaywood, 44 Gillow Road, Kirkham, Preston PR4 2JS.

Cricket Philatelic Society

Details from: Derek Gallimore,
30 Pinewoods Avenue, Hagley,
Stourbridge DY9 0JF.

Concorde Study Circle

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

Cricket and Concorde The January 2000 issue of *Wickets*, newsletter of the Cricket Philatelic Society, contains an auction of some scarce labels and covers, illustration of a signed cover for the NatWest Trophy final between Essex and Lancashire on 7 September 1996, reports of new cricket stamps, and an article on W G Grace. Membership of the Society is £4 UK, £9 overseas (airmail).

The Concorde Study Circle celebrated its 21st anniversary last year. Its latest *Newsletter*, a 32-page magazine, includes features on the 30 years of Concorde, new stamps and postmarks showing the aircraft, the British Concorde's 1999 Total Eclipse Flight (covers serviced of course), and Concorde postcards and phonecards •



Exhibition enquiries Hafnia
01, PO Box 2001, DK-2770,
Denmark.

Internet www.hafnia01.dk

The British Commissioner

for Hafnia is Tony Brander, 10
Garden Close, East Grinstead
RH19 4JS.

Hafnia 01 Bulletin No 1 is now available for this world philatelic exhibition to be staged at the Bella Center, Copenhagen, 16-21 October 2001 to mark the 150th anniversary of the first Danish stamp. The exhibition will cover the traditional, thematic, literature and open classes and is being organised by the Danish Philatelic Federation, Danish Stamp Dealers' Association and the postal authorities of Denmark, Faroe Islands, and Greenland. Patron of the exhibition is HM Queen Margrethe II of Denmark who has appeared on almost 100 Danish stamps since she became Queen in 1972. Her Majesty designed a Danish stamp in 1985 and has also designed Christmas seals. The Bella Center is Scandinavia's largest trade fair, trade mart and congress centre and Northern Europe's only purpose-built venue for the simultaneous staging of fairs and conventions. It comprises 1115,000 sqm with meeting rooms, auditoriums, congress facilities and exhibition halls. The Bulletin contains interesting features on Copenhagen, Danish stamps and postal history as well as the regulations for the exhibition •

For further news of Glasgow
2000, see page 255.

Glasgow 2000 Further information has recently been published about this major national exhibition to be held at the Scottish Exhibition and Conference Centre, Glasgow, 17-19 November. Collectors visiting the exhibition who want to book accommodation at the Forte Post House Hotel, Glasgow or to attend the Civic Reception (17 November), Awards Banquet and/or Local Sightseeing Tour (18 November) should contact K E Norris, 30 Luss Brae, Hamilton ML3 9UT for a booking form which should be returned by 30 June.

Some 60 dealers, auction houses and stamp printers will participate in the exhibition. The sponsors of the exhibition are The Post Office and Clydesdale Bank with a further 26 organisations as donors and supporters, including the City of Glasgow, Joh Enschedé printers, and various Scottish philatelic societies. A number of individual collectors have donated and further donations are welcome and should be sent to Ian MacPherson, Ardnacraig, 28 Oldhall Drive, Kilmacoll PA13 4RF, payable to ASPS GLASGOW 2000. A souvenir cover will be printed from the winning design following a competition open to students in the Scottish Colleges of Art; this is an exciting idea and the committee feels sure that something special will ensue. The closing date for entries is 1 May •

Rowland Hill nominations The finalists for the 1999 Rowland Hill Awards are as follows. The winners and runners-up will be announced at the Awards Ceremony on 6 April and will be published next month. Please note that the Rowland Hill Awards ceremony is for invited guests only ●

ROYAL MAIL INNOVATION AWARDS

Stamp Innovation Sedley Place Ltd and Barry Lewis; Tutssels Ltd; De La Rue Security Printers; Walsall Security Printers; Joh Enschedé Security Printing; The House of Questa

Product Innovations Tony Grodecki, Benham Ltd; Stuart Northcoate, Complete Collections Ltd; Jon Strettle, Fourpenny Post; Jonathan Butt, Prinz Publications (UK) Ltd & West Cornwall Stamp Centre

Journalistic Excellence: Broadcast Media Jim Davies; Harry Hawkes; Fay Sweet, Just Radio and Susan Marling, Just Radio

Journalistic Excellence: Philatelic Writing Clive Ackerman; Dr James Mackay; Ron Negus

Post Office Excellence The Galleries Branch Office, Bristol; Haslingdon Post Office; Romsey Branch Office

BRITISH PHILATELIC TRUST

Youth Worker Anne Dummer; Pamela McDowall; Pamela Hiscock

Young Collector Charlotte Rookes; Kettering Stamp and Philatelic Society, Junior Section; Scott Wilson

Authorship/Research Victor D Vanderelde; Michael Furnell; Ron Negus

Community/Teamwork David Harrop; Stamp Lincs '99; Midpex '99; Dorothy Martin/Desmond Graham

New Horizons Cavendish Philatelic Auctions; Stanley Gibbons plc; ABPS

THE PHILATELIC TRADERS SOCIETY

Retail Development Argyll Etkin Ltd; Cavendish Philatelic Auctions Ltd; Murray Payne Ltd

Business Development Andrew Vaughan Philatelics; Dauwalders of Salisbury; Euro-Yu Stamp Collecting

Personal Contribution Frank Huxley; Frank Jones; Ronald G Shelley

Omniphil Approvals offer Readers may wish to consider trying a selection from Omniphil Approvals, who were the main sponsor of our competitions for the last few years. In return for requesting an approvals selection – for home viewing – Omniphil are renewing their offer of a free GB 1841 2d blue (SG cat £55), yours to keep whatever you decide. There is no obligation to purchase, just return the selection, paying for any stamps selected. Offer is open to the first 200 collectors replying ●

Manchester Postal Museum Set in the heart of Manchester's historic Wythenshawe Park, the Museum provides an added attraction for visitors. The Park, famous for the 16th century Wythenshawe Hall, which was subject to a siege during the English Civil War in 1643, provides wonderful sporting facilities, community farm and horticultural centre. The Postal Museum forms part of a row of cottages within the horticultural centre. Well-known postal memorabilia collector David Harrop from Stockport has loaned the exhibits from his collection, and Royal Mail has provided a vintage Victorian pillar box. The cottage is typical of a rural type post office situated in small hamlets and villages throughout Britain. This particular post office has a small sorting office at the back. Adjacent to the post office is a small annex containing vintage post boxes and cycles. The Museum, the idea of Manchester City Council, will cater for school visits, postal historians and anyone who wishes to view this innovative display. Please ring the Park office for an arranged visit. As well as the exhibits at Wythenshawe, David has permanent displays at Manchester Transport Museum, Bole Street, Cheetham Hill, and at Royal Mail premises at Hamilton Street, Oldham and Exchange Street, Stockport ●

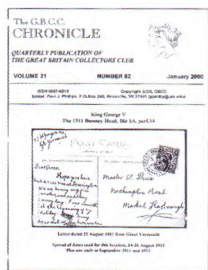
Omniphil Offer Write, telling them all countries collected, and whether you collect mint and used: Omniphil Approvals Free Bulletin Blue Offer, PO Box 29, Stroud GL6 6RW.

David Harrop can be contacted via the Wythenshawe Park office: telephone 0161 998 2117.



The Postman's Knock Concert In celebration of the Millennium, the Postal History Society is organising a unique event of interest to philatelists and postal historians. Many collectors are familiar with the Victorian music hall through the wonderful engraving of the London postman on the front cover of *The Postman's Knock* (left, as shown on 1933 Philatelic Congress label). Other titles such as *Aerial Post*, *Royal Mail Gallop*, *The Postman's Birthday*, *Overland Mail*, *The Parcels Post*, and *Philatelic Waltzes* evidence the wide esteem in which the postal services were held by the general public. It is not often that we have the chance not only to see the illustrated covers of these music hall songs, but also to hear some of them performed in public.

On 24 June there will be a public recital at the Blackheath Concert Halls, Greenwich, London SE10 starting at 10.30 for 11.00. Tickets cost £8 each. Orders and enquiries to John Scott, 60 Tachbrook Street, London SW1V 2NA ●



GB Collectors Club For details contact the Secretary-Treasurer Janet Gordon, PO Box 42324, Cincinnati, OH 45242-0324, USA.

Membership is \$18.50 for residents of North America, \$27 elsewhere.

David Gentleman interview The January 2000 issue of the GBCC *Chronicle*, quarterly journal of the Great Britain Collectors Club, contains features on Machin stamps and books, plating engraved Victorian stamps, George V 1911 Downy Head 1/2d, postal history, and Second World War covers. The Club's President, Gordon Milne, interviews stamp designer David Gentleman. In answer to the question 'What first encouraged you to apply your skills to stamp design?', Gentleman replies: 'An invitation from the Post Office in 1961 or 1962 to design three stamps for National Productivity Year, which was, in hindsight, a Stalinist and unappealing subject. But I was too elated at being asked to mind!' Five other designers were asked to submit, 'we didn't get much of a brief – only a leaflet about NPY, a copy of its logo, and minutely-detailed instructions about the Queen's head. Artwork had to be the equivalent of a finished visual, clear enough to be understood. Two sets each by a different designer were selected by the Committee (not composed of Post Office officials) and these designers then had to perfect them ready for reproduction.' When asked if he were working on further designs for Royal Mail, Mr Gentleman replied: 'I've always enjoyed good relations with Royal Mail; but stamps are only one of very many things that interest me.' To Milne's comment 'it would appear that the 1999 Millennium series has not been popular with the British public', Gentleman responded: 'It has been a courageous experiment to extend the range of stamp designers to include painters, sculptors, textile designers, etc. Some of them, in my opinion, have been extremely good, whereas others haven't come off at all. But public reaction is an unreliable guide in such matters.' ●

Royal Mail news New postal rates, stamps and books • Stamp Show 2000 souvenirs



New postal rates, postponed from 3 April, now come into effect from 27 April. The 2nd class basic rate will remain 19p but 1st class will rise by 1p to 27p. There will be increases on heavier weight letters, eg 33p and 41p for 2nd and 1st class letters between 60 and 100 grams. The new basic letter and postcard rate for Europe will be 36p (covered by the E rate stamp), airmail postcards will now cost 40p and the two lowest airmail letter rates will be 45p (up to 10g) and 65p (to 20g).

Six new definitive stamps, to cover the new rates, will go on general and philatelic sale from 25 April: 8p old gold, 33p slate blue, 40p grey blue, 41p red, 45p rhododendron, and 65p dark turquoise. The stamps were printed in gravure by De La Rue in sheets of 200. Ink cylinder 1, phosphor cylinder 47 was used for each value. There is no new 27p stamp, the new 1st class Millennium nvi stamp, issued 6 January, is being sold instead. From 27 April this will cost 27p.

Four entirely new stamp books will be available from main post offices, the Bureau and philatelic outlets from 27 April. The £1 and £2 vended books contain 3 × 1st flame (orange) and 1 × 2nd class and 6 × 1st flame and 2 × 2nd class nvi stamps, printed in gravure by Questa. New £1.60 and £2.60 books, printed in gravure by Walsall, contain 4 × 40p and 4 × 65p stamps for overseas postings.

Books containing 1st class and E rate stamps remain on sale with revised prices – £1.08 (4 × 1st), £2.70 (10 × 1st), and £1.44 (4 × E). Books of four and ten 2nd class stamps remain on sale at 76p and £1.90 respectively.

New 1st nvi, 40p and 65p stamps for Northern Ireland, also new 65p stamps for Scotland and Wales will also go on sale on 25 April. The Northern Ireland stamps are in the 1971 design showing the crowned hand of Ulster and the Machin head of The Queen. The 1st class stamp was first issued in the *Special by Design* prestige stamp book on 15 February; this is its first appearance in sheets of 200.

The Scottish and Welsh 65p stamps are in the same designs as the 64p values issued last June featuring tartan and the Prince of Wales's feathers. Both stamps bear a silhouette of The Queen as used on special stamps.

The existing 1st class and E rate nvi stamps for Scotland and Wales remain on sale at the new prices of 27p and 36p respectively. Presentation packs containing the new 65p Scottish and Welsh stamps cost £1 each, a pack for the three new Northern Ireland stamps costs £1.70 •



Book cylinders

£1 & £2 Q1 Q1

£1.60 & £2.60 W1

A new printing of the E rate book with new phone number for postcode enquiries will go on philatelic sale on 27 April.

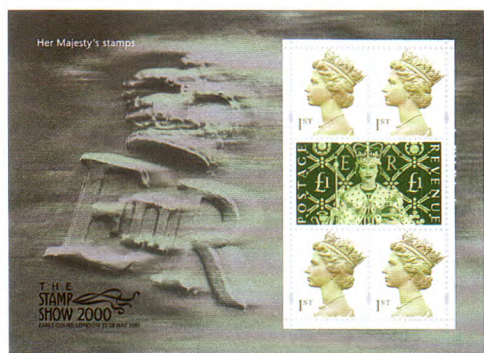
New printings of the £1.50-£5 definitives, by De La Rue, go on philatelic sale 11 April.



Stamp Show 2000 miniature sheets and 'Smilers' stamps The first international stamp show in the UK for 10 years will be staged at Earls Court, London SW5 on 22-28 May 2000. Royal Mail will issue two miniature sheets and Smiles greetings stamps with personalised labels attached. There will also be a new stamp book, and seven new stamp cards.

DEFINITIVES MINIATURE SHEET The first miniature sheet, issued on 22 May, contains eight Machin definitives and two labels printed in colours from the Jeffery Matthews colour palette. The top row comprises: 4p light blue, 6p lime green, label showing crest red, 10p light tan and 31p purple; second row £1 mauve, 5p ash pink, label showing palette grey blue, 64p sea green, and 39p shocking pink. The sheet will be printed by De La Rue in gravure on phosphor coated paper, making a new variant of each stamp; previous printings had two phosphor bands. The Stamp Show logo appears in the bottom sheet margin. Price £2.59 or £4.99 supplied in special exhibition card. The miniature sheet will be available from the Bureau, philatelic outlets and at Stamp Show 2000; the sheet in the exhibition card will also be sold at selected main post offices.

A first day cover envelope will be available about one week before issue and pictorial first day of issue postmarks will be provided for the Bureau and Earls Court, London SW5. Serviced covers with either postmark can be ordered from the Bureau, price £3.46 UK, £2.95 overseas. As usual collectors will be able to submit their own covers bearing the complete sheet or stamps from it (subject to minimum 19p postage) for the two pictorial or a non-pictorial Earls Court postmark. Covers should be submitted on the day of issue to the British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT (Bureau postmark, request postmark NO FD0011) or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Mount Pleasant, London EC1A 1BB (Earls Court postmarks: FD0012 pictorial or FD0012NP non-pictorial).



Stamp Show 2000 miniature sheet: price £2.08 or £2.45 in a presentation pack.

STAMP SHOW 2000 MINIATURE SHEET The second sheet, on sale from 23 May, bears five stamps: top and bottom rows two 1st class Millennium XVI definitives, middle row £1 value in the design of the 1953 153d Coronation stamp designed by Edmund Dulac (1882-1953). Like its predecessor, the new £1 stamp is printed in deep yellow-green. The original 1953 artwork (now in Post Office Heritage collections) was used in preparation of the £1 with the new £1 value tablet by the typographical designer Andrew Boag. To the left of the stamps are the EHR royal cypher, as shown on letter boxes, and the Stamp Show logo. Print-

ing is in gravure by De La Rue on phosphor coated paper – so creating a new variant of the Millennium definitive – all earlier printings having two phosphor bands. The sheet and pack will be available from the Bureau, philatelic outlets, Stamp Show 2000 and selected main post offices.

The miniature sheet was printed in sheets of 21 (3 × 7) with 'traffic lights' in the left margin opposite sheet 3 and cylinder numbers in the right margin following sheet 6: 1A pale stone 1B slate-green (used for the £1 stamp) 1C brownish-olive (Millennium definitive) 2D grey-black 2E silver 2F black (sheet background). They were, of course, trimmed off when the sheets were guillotined into single units

A FDC envelope will be available about a week before issue and first day postmarks will be provided for the Bureau and London SW1. Serviced covers with either postmark can be ordered from the Bureau price £2.86 UK, £2.44 overseas. Collectors can submit their own covers with the complete sheet or stamps from it for either postmark or a non-pictorial London SW1 handstamp. Covers should be sent to the British Philatelic Bureau (quoting reference FD0013) or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Mount Pleasant, London EC1A 1BB (London SW1 postmarks: FD0014 or FD0014NP).

SMILERS STAMPS Visitors to Stamp Show 2000 can personalise their mail with their own portrait. Sheets of 10 'Smiles' 1st class NV1 greetings stamps attached to labels bearing a personalised portrait, will be available to visitors, price £5.95. This follows the successful launch of such labels by Australia Post at the international stamp exhibition in Melbourne last year. Similar stamps with personalised labels are also available from the Swiss Post Office. The Smilers sheet will be available only at Stamp Show 2000 or from the Bureau. Visitors to Stamp Show 2000 will be able to use photo-booths to have their image printed on the labels. Sheets of stamps ordered from the Bureau, price £2.95, will have the Stamp Show logo printed on the labels. As the stamps are not a new issue, no first day cover or first day postmarks will be provided. Collectors however can post mail bearing the stamps and labels for the Stamp Show 2000 postmarks.

STAMP BOOK A £2.70 book containing eight 1st class Millennium definitives and one each of the National Space Centre stamp from the Above and Beyond set (January) and the London Zoo stamp from the Life and Earth series (April) will be available from 26 May. The two special stamps will be of 1st class NV15, thus making a variant of the Space Centre stamp which was originally a 26p value. The stamps are printed by Walsall in gravure. The original 26p Space Centre and London Zoo stamps were printed by Questa and De La Rue respectively.

The book will be on sale from the Bureau and philatelic outlets and some main post offices. A first day cover envelope will be available, price 25p, and first day postmarks provided for the Bureau and Leicester. The Bureau will supply covers bearing the pane of the two special stamps cancelled with either postmark, price £1.05 UK, 90p overseas. Collectors can forward covers for these postmarks to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT (postmark reference FD0015) or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, St Stephens Street, Birmingham B6 4AA (Leicester: FD0016 or FD0016). A non-pictorial Leicester postmark is also available from the Handstamp Centre (FD0016 NP).

STAMP CARDS Four new stamp cards will be available from the Bureau, philatelic outlets and at Stamp Show 2000 from 22 May. These feature the Berlin Airlift, Rugby, Postman Pat, and National Botanic Garden of Wales stamp book labels. Three further cards will be available from 23 May – Stamp Show 2000 miniature sheet (Millennium definitives and £1 ‘Coronation’ stamp), Millennium definitive, and the £1 ‘Coronation’ stamp. The cards cost 25p each.

STAMP SHOW POSTMARKS A different exhibition postmark will be available each day, together with a general postmark in use throughout the exhibition. Posting boxes will be provided at the Royal Mail stand and covers can be sent to the Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Mount Pleasant, London EC1A 1BB. When sending covers indicate the postmark required as follows:

General postmark	SS001 followed by date required (22-28 May)		
Daily postmarks	Reference	Date	Subject
	SS002	22 May	Art and Entertainment
	SS003	23 May	Royalty
	SS004	24 May	Environment
	SS005	25 May	Transport
	SS006	26 May	Technology
	SS007	27 May	Sport
	SS008	28 May	Youth

Obsolete stamps withdrawal Stocks of 7p, 26p, 31p, 38p, 39p, 44p, and 64p definitives, also 26p, 38p and 64p Northern Ireland and 64p Scotland and Wales country stamps will be withdrawn from sale at post offices on 26 April.

Vended books containing 1p, 2p, 19p and 26p stamps, also books of 4 × 38p and 4 × 64p stamps are also to be taken off general sale. All remain on philatelic sale until further notice. All remaining stocks of the £1.50, £2, £3 and £5 Castles stamps, the presentation pack and stamp cards will be withdrawn from philatelic sale on 4 August, and the £10 Britannia stamp on 30 December.

To Pay labels are now only available from the British Philatelic Bureau; any remaining stock will be withdrawn on 31 May •

PO films gain awards The Millennium Miniature ‘Photography’ film won three gold awards for best short, best international video, and best video at the New York Film & Video Festival. The ‘Linking the Nation’ film also won silver award for best short. The awards were received by Sue Mason on behalf of the PO Film Unit and Royal Mail Stamps & Collectibles. The films, made in conjunction with Lord Attenborough and the National Film & TV School, were broadcast on Channel 4 in February 1999 as part of the launch of the Millennium Collection. The videos will be on sale at Stamp Show 2000 or can be ordered from the PO Film Library on 01795 426465, price £12.95 •

Welsh pictorial label book A new £1.04 book containing four 1st class Millennium definitives and a pictorial label commemorating the opening of the National Botanic Garden of Wales will go on philatelic sale from 4 April. Unfolded panes will be available only from the British Philatelic Bureau. A coin cover, bearing the label pane cancelled by a special postmark and encapsulating the new £1 Welsh Dragon coin, will be available from the Bureau, price £12.95 •

2001 stamps The special stamp programme for next year is: January Millennium, The Future; February Family Pets; March Weather; April Submarines; May Buses; June Hats; July Pondlife; September Nobel Prizes; October Puppets; and November Christmas. The prestige stamp book, scheduled for October, will be on the subject of the Royal Navy. Dates of issue will be announced later in the year •

Cylinders and colours

W1 brownish olive (stamp) •
W1 black • W1 light green •
W1 purple • W1 brownish
olive • W1 mauve (label) •
W1 phosphor

Post Office Heritage Collections A unique 1d Black block



THE BLOCK illustrated this month continues our features commemorating the forthcoming 160th anniversary of the Penny Black. This unique block – two rows of three and a seventh stamp below (not shown) is from Plate 1 (1a) before it was hardened. The stamps show no sign of plate wear so are unquestionably from a very early impression from the unhardened plate. The stamp lettered OA shows the re-entry common to both states of the plate. That lettered QA has the double Q canton throughout the life of this plate. Stamp PA shows no doubled letters whereas stamps from the second state of the plate do. Stamp PB has additional lines outside the P square – bound only on the first state printings. The vertical guidelines of the north east squares of most stamps are clearer than those found on the second state. This magnificent item is in Vol 3 of the Reginald M Phillips Collection, at Post Office Heritage Collections •

To make an appointment to view this item, write to Post Office Heritage Collections at Freeling House, Phoenix Place, London WC1X 0DL, or call 020 7239 2570.

Bulletin stamps poll The Editor announces your favourite

IN DECEMBER we invited you to vote for your favourite set of special stamps of 1999, also your favourite individual stamp and *Bulletin* author. This was our 14th annual stamp poll and as in previous years we received a good response from collectors in all parts of the world.

Favourite set As always, points were allocated for each vote for the set: three points for first choice, two points second, and one point third. This enables us to get a clear picture of the relative popularity of each issue. The voting was as shown opposite.

For interest, past winners were: 1986 Nature Conservation; 1987 Flowers; 1988 Linnean Society; 1989 Birds; 1990 Queen Mother's 90th Birthday; 1991 Maps; 1992 Wintertime; 1993 Autumn; 1994 Age of Steam; 1995 Christmas; 1996 Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust; 1997 The Great Tudor (Henry VIII); and 1998 Lighthouses.

Favourite stamps For comparison, the favourite individual stamps of 1996, 1997 and 1998 were the Wildfowl & Wetlands 19p, Henry VIII 26p, and Endangered Species 20p.

I have to say I was somewhat surprised that the Scientists' Tale stamps proved so popular as there was little in the letters I received at the time to suggest this. However, again judging by your letters during the year, I was not surprised by the very low scoring individual stamps, particularly the Inventors' Tale 63p. I will be interested to see your voting for this year's 'photographic' Millennium issues in 12 months time.

Favourite Bulletin authors This was the fourth year we had conducted this poll. After three years, we have a new winner – James Mackay topped the poll, with Douglas Myall in second place, Dorothy Martin third and Francesca Rapkin fourth.

Over 1500 of you cast your votes and a good number added comments about the articles – it is good to know that you enjoy the features we publish each month.



Draw winners All the voting forms went into the proverbial hat (really a large cardboard box) for the two draws. The first drawn in the FAVOURITE STAMPS draw was E G Clarkson of Yorkshire who wins £400. Runner-up prizes of £100 each were sent to R McCoy, USA; P J French, Essex; and K G Koch, Canada. The winner of the FAVOURITE BULLETIN AUTHOR draw was P Hussey of Australia, who receives £150. James Mackay also receives £150 as favourite author.

Our thanks to all of you who cast your votes. My thanks also to Barbara Best of Royal Mail's Design Division who, for the fifth year, counted up all the votes. The 2000 poll will be announced in the December *Bulletin*.

December prize draws The winners of the three prize draws in the December *Bulletin* were: YEAR-BOOK – Dr K Barclay of Cheshire; E Bowater, West Midlands; K Smith, Co Durham; and T Larkin, Portugal; POSTAL REFORM BOOK – Squ Ldr F Nickles, Cornwall; G Gilmurray, Merseyside; E Menninger, USA; and G Mahoney, Devon; HIGH VALUE DEFINITIVES – E Bunn, Hertfordshire; R White, Leicestershire; J Choppen, Essex; and W Naples, Tyne & Wear •

stamps and Bulletin authors of 1999, and prize draw results



Favourite stamps The numbers following each value are as in December's *Bulletin*.

Scientists' Tale 64p 32	254	Artists' Tale 44p 47	18	Soldiers' Tale 26p 38	2
Settlers' Tale 26p 14	92	Settlers' Tale 63p 16	17	Miniature sheet 64p 49	2
Inventors' Tale 20p 1	89	Citizens' Tale 26p 26	16	Miniature sheet 64p 50	1
Soldiers' Tale 19p 37	88	Royal Wedding 64p 54	16	Inventors' Tale 63p 3	0
Workers' Tale 26p 18	81	Scientists' Tale 19p 29	14	Patients' Tale 26p 10	0
Farmers' Tale 26p 34	72	Settlers' Tale 43p 15	13	Miniature sheet 64p 51	0
Christians' Tale 19p 41	37	Farmers' Tale 19p 33	12	FAVOURITE SETS	
Travellers' Tale 64p 8	35	Miniature sheet 64p 52	12		
Entertainers' Tale 64p 24	34	Workers' Tale 64p 20	11	Scientists' Tale	1791
Scientists' Tale 26p 30	33	Travellers' Tale 43p 7	10	Settlers' Tale	1070
Christians' Tale 26p 42	33	Citizens' Tale 19p 25	8	Workers' Tale	798
Travellers' Tale 20p 5	30	Artists' Tale 19p 45	8	Millennium miniature sheet	783
Patients' Tale 20p 9	30	Settlers' Tale 20p 13	7	Farmers' Tale	750
Royal Wedding 26p 53	30	Artists' Tale 26p 46	7	Christians' Tale	683
Workers' Tale 44p 19	27	Artists' Tale 64p 48	7	Entertainers' Tale	647
Entertainers' Tale 26p 22	27	Inventors' Tale 26p 2	5	Royal Wedding	538
Christians' Tale 44p 43	25	Patients' Tale 63p 12	4	Travellers' Tale	447
Entertainers' Tale 19p 21	24	Workers' Tale 19p 17	4	Soldiers' Tale	419
Entertainers' Tale 44p 23	24	Soldiers' Tale 64p 40	4	Artists' Tale	347
Soldiers' Tale 44p 39	23	Farmers' Tale 44p 35	3	Inventors' Tale	213
Farmers' Tale 64p 36	22	Inventors' Tale 43p 3	2	Patients' Tale	160
Travellers' Tale 26p 6	21	Patients' Tale 43p 11	2	Citizens' Tale	131
Scientists' Tale 44p 31	21	Citizens' Tale 44p 27	2		
Christians' Tale 64p 44	18	Citizens' Tale 64p 28	2		

Art and Craft is the fifth of Royal Mail's 12 Millennium sets for 2000, inspired by Millennium projects throughout the UK.

The pottery glaze depicted on the 2nd class represents Ceramica, a museum celebrating the Staffordshire Potteries

• The 1st class value shows a detail of the new Tate Gallery of Modern Art, soon to open at Bankside in London •

The 45p value depicts the Cycle Network artworks. More than 1000 artworks make this one of the biggest outdoor sculpture projects in Europe • The photographic collage on the 65p value, *The Lowry*, represents Salford's new arts centre while reminding us of the artist's distinctive work •



Ceramica With a series of displays and galleries, this museum in Stoke-on-Trent brings the aesthetic and industrial heritage of Staffordshire potteries to life. Children will learn about the craft's history, when kilns burned day and night to fulfil orders from around the world, and budding artists can design their own pieces.

The Art and Craft issue will go on sale at post offices and philatelic outlets on 2 May.





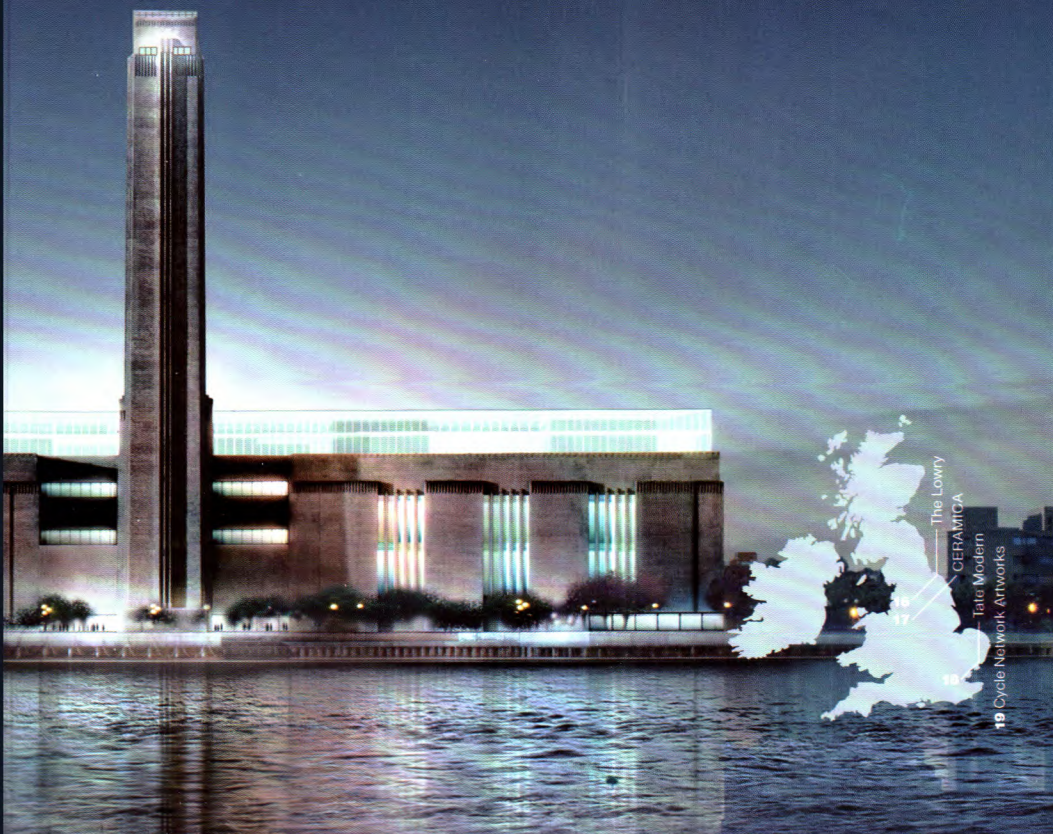
Tate Modern The magnificent old Bankside Power Station in London, designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, will be the new home for The Tate Gallery's collection of 20th century art. The Tate's site at Millbank, built with funds from Sir Henry Tate, was opened in 1897 and extended from 1910 to 1987.



Cycle Network Artworks Grants of £43.5 million support the National Cycle Network, a major Millennium project which will involve over 3000 miles of construction spanning the country, from the north of Scotland to the South East and South West, throughout Wales and in Northern Ireland.



The Lowry This new arts complex in Salford includes two theatres, as well as the Lowry Gallery housing 55 oil paintings and 300 drawings by Salford's greatest son. Aiming to attract 770,000 visitors a year, the Lowry Centre project has cost some £98 million, supported with lottery grants of £64 million.





A well-illustrated presentation pack (above, price £1.95) and stamp cards (price 25p each) will be available at main post offices and philatelic outlets.



Technical details

Printer Joh Enschedé Stamps

Process Gravure

Size 37 × 35mm

Sheets 100

Perforation 14 × 14.5

Phosphor One band 2nd class; two bands others

Gum PVA

Gutter pairs Horizontal

Cylinders and colours

2nd 1A greenish yellow ● 1B magenta ● 1C new blue ● 1D black ● 1E silver ● 1G grey-brown

1st & 45p 1A greenish yellow ● 1B magenta ● 1C new blue ● 1D black ● 1E silver

65p 1A greenish yellow ● 1B magenta ● 1C new blue ● 1D black ● 1E dull silver ● 1F silver

Phosphor number 1G 65p, 1F others.

Ceramica is at Burslem Old Town Hall, in Stoke-on-Trent. Plans at this museum include the Infinity Kiln, where visitors can step into a mirrored box stacked with pots and see them fired. The story of the Wedgwood company, perhaps the best-known of all British pottery firms, was told in two prestige stamp books issued in 1972 and 1980.

The Tate Modern will open this year. The Tate Gallery at Millbank houses the national collection of British paintings and 20th century paintings and sculptures. At least two earlier stamps feature paintings in the Tate: John Piper's *Ruins of St Mary-le-Port* (1968 Paintings) and Sir Stanley Spencer's *St Francis and the Birds* (1993 Contemporary Art).

Cycling has featured on few British stamps. In 1978 four stamps marked the centenaries of the Cyclists Touring Club and British Cycling Federation, and the 26p stamp in the 1999 'Travellers' Tale set featured Sara Fanelli's representation of women liberated by cycling.

Paintings by L S Lowry have featured on two earlier stamps: *Children Coming Out of School* (1967 British Paintings 1s6d), and *Children Playing* (1995 Greetings in Art). Lowry's *Going to the Match* fetched £1.9 million at a Sotheby's auction in November 1999 – a record price for this artist's work. The painting – an oil on canvas, painted in 1953 – is said to be based loosely on Lowry's memories of Bolton Wanderers' former ground at Burden Park. The work was purchased by the Professional Footballers' Association.



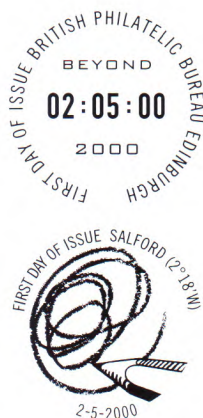
Future Millennium issues

Stone and Soil	04.07.00
Tree and Leaf	01.08.00
Mind and Matter	05.09.00
Body and Bone	03.10.00
Spirit and Faith	07.11.00
Sound and Vision	05.12.00

FIRST DAY FACILITIES Unstamped Royal Mail FDC envelopes will be available from main post offices and philatelic outlets about a week before 2 May, price 25p. Orders for FDCs with the stamps cancelled by a pictorial first day postmark of the Bureau or Salford must reach the Bureau by 2 May. Price £2.25 UK (including VAT) or £1.92 overseas (no VAT).

Collectors may send stamped covers on the day of issue to: British Philatelic Bureau, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TT, or Special Handstamp Centre, Royal Mail, Forth Street, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 1AA (Salford postmark), marking the outer envelope 'FD0009' (Bureau), or 'FD0010' (Salford). Covers can be posted or handed in at main post offices for the Salford postmark. A non-pictorial Salford postmark is also available from the Special Handstamp Centre, request 'FD0010 NP'.

Details of sponsored handstamps for 2 May will be announced in the *British Postmark Bulletin* – available on subscription from the Bureau (£10 UK/Europe; £21.75 elsewhere). For a sample copy write to: The Editor, British Postmark Bulletin, Royal Mail, 2-14 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8HQ. Covers may bear just the 2nd class Art and Craft stamp for any philatelic postmark in use on 2 May.



MILLENNIUM PHILATELIC PRODUCTS A well-illustrated Art and Craft pack (price £1.95) and stamp cards (25p each) will be available from main post offices and philatelic outlets. Each of the Millennium packs this year includes a specially commissioned poem. The Art and Craft poem is by Salford-born John Cooper Clarke who achieved notoriety in the late 1970s in the Punk Rock phenomenon when he was dubbed the 'Punk Poet'. His deadpan delivery and wry wit is in huge demand on the poetry circuit as well as in schools.

Next Millennium issues The sixth set in the Millennium 2000 series will be issued on 6 June. Entitled People and Place, this features Millennium Greens; Gateshead Millennium Bridge; Mile End Park, London; and 'On the Line' (Meridian line through Greenwich). Further details will follow next month ●



Machin pre-decimal definitives In the second of his two

FROM THE ARTICLE last month, it was apparent within the range of normal stamps of the pre-decimal series there was much scope for study and research. Equally during their 53 month life there is a fascinating complement of unintentional varieties and errors, which are selectively considered in this essay.

Paper anomalies Before examining the more obvious errors like missing colours, it is perhaps logical to start with paper anomalies, which are not common. Un-gummed paper is found, and a paper split variety is known on a 3d vertical coil where faulty manufacture causes the coil to split horizontally when delivered from the tight coil in the vending machine.

Five values are known printed on uncoated paper, where the fine chalk coating applied to the paper to enhance the quality and definition of the printing was omitted. The 1d, 4d and 5d arise from the *Stamps for Cooks* booklet, the 10d from sheets emanating from the Southampton area, and a single cylinder block of the 3d is known. The poor quality printing on the portrait is easily seen on the uncoated paper.

Paper folds, particularly if they occur after printing and before perforation can produce some remarkable shapes if the pieces are separated along the lines of the mis-perforation. Such items are not listed in Gibbons or elsewhere but add greatly to the visual appeal of a display. These folds occur most commonly and dramatically on sheet stamps but also occasionally in booklets.

Creases in the paper prior to printing result in longer or wider stamps than normal when the crease is flattened out, but like paper folds these are of display rather than philatelic importance.

Colour varieties Missing colour or colour omitted is only recognised in the 1s6d value which is a bi-coloured stamp, and known with the pale blue colour missing on the GA, PVA and phosphorised cylinders. Apart from the other bi-coloured stamp, the 1s9d, the remaining values



articles, Tony Walker looks at accidental varieties and errors



Far left, a 'dry print' error arises when the press is inked-up or at the end of a run, when ink is running out. Left, an example of a paper fold. Above, this block from a booklet sheet shows the layout of sheets from which booklets are guillotined.

are all monochrome. However even these values are known missing colour, an error that arises when the print machine is being inked up or at the end of a print run when the ink is running out. These 'dry prints' create partially blank or in extreme cases, totally blank stamps, which technically therefore are colour omitted on a monochrome stamp.

Despite modern-day industrial technology, a consistent ink colour was not maintained, and the 4d sepia and 6d carmine values display significant shade variation. These should not be confused with over inking (dark) or under inking (light) varieties, which are only transient.

Whilst of far less visual impact, phosphor bands, applied as part of the printing process provide a plethora of varieties and errors covering misalignments and omissions. A scarce non-phosphor stamp is the 8d red the colour of which was changed to light blue on 6 January 1969 after only six months on sale. One of the most scarce

phosphor varieties occurs on the *Stamps for Cooks* set-tenant pane, non-phosphor on the front but with the phosphor bands printed on the gummed side.

Perforation errors The article last month gave a summary of the 'normal' stamp varieties arising from technical changes and design development during the life of this series. Phosphor bands either misplaced or omitted on some of the more scarce combinations of head type and gum types (ie 4d vermilion head A, gum arabic) produce very rare items.

Unlike phosphor band errors, perforation anomalies can be eye-catching, and even the simplest and innocuous variety can provide an interesting insight into the technical aspects of perforation. The 'blind' perforation is a case in point. A block or strip of stamps where the 'blind' perforation is repeated will indicate the number of rows in the perforating comb, and whether a vertical or horizontal comb was used. Again, these are not listed in the catalogues, but are interesting additions to any collection.

Imperforate stamps however, do have catalogue status and are invariably created through the malfunction of the perforation comb. They are found on sheet stamps, booklets and the 1d vertical coil. Close examination of these errors will reveal the type of perforator used, and in booklets whether the pane was upright or inverted.

Sheets from which booklets are guillotined differ from the sheet stamps, although each dot and no dot pane comprises the same 240 stamps in 20 horizontal rows of 12. The difference arises from the introduction of a binding margin between vertical rows 6 and 7 in each pane, and the fact that half the stamps are printed upside down (inverted). A well documented chance purchase from Richmond Way Post Office on 26 August 1970 clearly shows this upright/inverted layout. However, it is a gross misalignment of the guillotine used to separate the composite sheet of booklets in a 4s6d May 1968 booklet that shows the inter-pane binding margin between rows 6 and 7.



The misalignment of the guillotine on a 1968 4s6d booklet reveals the inter-pane binding margin between rows 6 and 7.

1d imperforate coil error, with punctures in the gutter caused by the vending machine.

The booklets were perforated by a two row horizontal perforating comb which travelled up the sheet, and imperforate booklet panes vary depending on whether they were upright or inverted in the sheet, and where the guillotine cut. Such panes can be 'imperf' usually with only the top or the bottom of the pane showing any perforations, or 'part imperf' where half the pane is imperforate. Examples exist in the 4d sepia, 5d, 3d and 1d values, the latter two being particularly scarce.

Imperforate sheet stamps are less complicated and the 3d value, imperforate down the right margin is relatively common, as are smaller blocks of the 5d, although some such stamps were known to have been stolen.

The 1d imperforate coil error is interesting and indicates the probable use of a three row perforating comb as there are three imperforate horizontal gutters; the two small punctures in these gutters arise from the feed mechanism of the vending machine.

In this article only the more substantial varieties and errors have been described, and in many

cases there is a large number of different examples, particularly in paper folds, perforation misalignment and encroachment, phosphor band misplacement and in the variation of shades. Additionally there are many constant printing varieties of which a number are listed in the more specialised catalogues.

In the article last month space allowed only the consideration of the main characteristics of normal stamps. Some aspects (booklet perforations for instance) were not examined.

Nevertheless it is evident there is a wealth of material for study and enjoyment within this relatively short-lived issue; the simplicity of the design also provides the opportunity for attractive mounting and display, and being a design recognised by the youngest of collectors, it is not difficult to capture the interest of all age groups at Society meetings and displays •

Some of the items described in Mr Walker's two articles will be included in his exhibit at Stamp Show 2000 next month. This, and other Machin exhibits, will be well worth seeing. ED

Decimal stamp books 50 Specialist report by D G A Myall

150% actual size



Millennium Machins printed by Walsall, far left, and Questa. This stamp is in a new colour, called brownish olive by Royal Mail.

The '1st' indicator on Questa's printing is much further to the right than it is on stamps from other sources.

The Millennium Machin It isn't often that we see a new version of The Queen's head on definitive stamps so the issue of the Millennium Machin 1st class NVI on 6 January is of great interest. The head, which is a version of what is universally known to collectors as head B, is much larger than normal and fills the available space on the stamp. To achieve this, there is no frame and so the background is uncoloured. The stamp was issued in books of 10 printed by Walsall and Questa and in sheets printed by De La Rue. It also appears on a pane of eight plus a central label in the *Special by Design* prestige book, issued on 15 February. The new image will be in use for the whole of the year 2000 except in normal books of four which will have flame stamps. The larger head will not be used for value stamps.

I don't normally include sheet stamps in my regular articles but I am going to do so this time, because I am going to show you how to become a Machin expert. Royal Mail goes to great lengths to ensure that all its contracted printers produce identical stamps. To this end, Walsall and Questa were supplied with a digitised version of the new image by De La Rue. One might think, therefore, that it would not be possible to identify from which of the several sources a single stamp originated. It is just this kind of puzzle which so fascinates collectors and 'Machin maniacs' in particular. By studying the stamps, using only a $\times 10$ glass and an ultra-violet lamp, it is quite easy to say, not only which firm printed the stamp, but even, in the case of the Walsall version, which of their two panes it came from. Here's how it is done.

Perforations As I expect you know, the worldwide standard for measuring the perforation gauge is the number of holes in 2cm. Since the short side of GB definitives is only slightly more than that, one can get a quick measurement by counting the number of holes on such a side, allowing for the two half holes at either end. The stamps in the Walsall pane of 10, and the De La Rue sheet stamp, have 15. The other Walsall pane and the Questa pane have 14. This is a very simple way of separating the two Walsall stamps.

Direction of printing All three firms perforated the stamps on line using an APS machine. This leaves traces of powdered gum and paper (swarf) at the holes which can easily be seen with a glass. On the two Walsall panes this is at the top of the holes. On the Questa and sheet stamps, it is at the bottom. To collectors, this indicates that the direction of printing was inverted and upright respectively. (Actually, it means that the cylinders were mounted differently.) This difference enables the Walsall versions to be distinguished from the others.

Value types and settings Even a casual glance at the panes will show that the 1st indicator is set differently on the Questa stamp. Although all printers used the same image, they were left to add the indicator themselves. For the same reason, the thickness of the figure and letters varies; the booklet stamps have thicker elements than the sheet stamp. So, thin elements equals DLR; thick elements equals either Walsall or Questa but the placement of the indicator distinguishes these.

Phosphor bands The standard width of phosphor bands for producing 2-bar stamps is now 9mm but the specification allows some tolerance. All the Millennium stamps have 9mm bands except Questa's which have 9.5mm bands. You can see the difference by holding the stamps to a light source (a window in daylight is fine) and looking along them toward the light. The difference is easily seen if you place one stamp over another and look at both at the same time. An ultra-violet lamp is not necessary for this. However, if you possess such a lamp, you will be able to notice other differences. There are two kinds of lamp favoured by collectors. One emits short wave irradiation at 253.7nm; the other emits long wave at 365nm. Philatelic suppliers sell lamps for each of these ranges. If all you want to see is the fluorescence, either will do. If you want to check the phosphorescence, it is best to use a short wave one but be very careful because short wave uv is very harmful to the eyes and these must be shielded. Under short wave uv, the stamps from all four sources have an afterglow. Under long wave uv, all have an afterglow, except the sheet stamp. This is because the composition of the phosphor ink is different: that used by Walsall and Questa is made by Novaglo. The fluorescence (what you see while the lamp is still switched on) also differs. On the sheet stamp, this is a dull grey-blue. The Novaglo ink is a much brighter blue, although there are some small differences in different batches. To sum up, check the width first; this will separate the Questa stamps. Then look at the fluorescence; this will separate the sheet stamps. In view of the other differences in the printings mentioned in this article, checking for long wave afterglow is probably unnecessary for source identification so, in this case, the uv lamp you have is irrelevant.

Vertical gap There is another, unintended, variable which separates the three printers' products. You will need the magnifying glass for this. Because of the larger size, not all of the head could appear on the stamp without distorting the image. Some of the corsage had to be omitted. The amount varied very slightly, leading to slight



differences in the size. The easiest way to see this is to view a vertical pair and measure the gap between the base line of one stamp and the tip of the diadem on the one below it. This gap is smallest on the Questa stamp, only .1mm. It is largest on the Walsall version, .5mm on the pane of 10 and .6mm on the pane of eight. The sheet stamp is in between, .2mm.

Putting it all together There are other differences between the various stamps, such as the shapes of the ellipses and the appearance of the paper or gum, although all are pva, but you will need to have become familiar with these before you can rely on them. I hope I have given you enough information to be able to look at a single Millennium Machin and say with certainty who printed it and even, in the case of the two Walsall stamps, which is which. Now that you know what to look for you can see how easy it is to become a Machin expert. So, even although Royal Mail try hard to produce a standard product, you can defeat their efforts. I don't suppose Royal Mail will mind; they might actually prefer that you want four stamps rather than just one!

Cylinder numbers The panes in the Walsall books of 10 were printed on a Chesnut press from cylinder w1. This appears only against the lower row of stamps and the covers are 50mm high, showing that the books were made up on the Bickel machine. The phosphor bands are, as stated above, 9mm wide; however, those at the left of panes from column 4 of the cylinder are only 6.5mm wide. The stamps themselves are unaffected by this. The panes in the Questa books

code enquiries tel: 0345 111 222
 tomer Services Helpline tel: 0345 740 740
 nday to Friday (calls charged at local rates)
 phone 0845 600 0606 (for the deaf and hard of hearing)

stcode enquiries www.postcodes.royalmail.co.uk
 tel: 08457 111 222
 stomer Services Helpline tel: 08457 740 740
 tphone 0845 600 0606 (for the deaf and hard of hearing)

Opposite: the two Walsall printings of the 38p, from overseas postcard rate, left, and prestige books (150% actual size). The image from the prestige book is about .5mm shorter. Above, phone numbers old, top, and new in books of 4 × 1st class.

were printed from cylinder Q1. This can appear against either the top row of stamps or the lower row. The numbers printed of each variety are equal. Neither firm prints the phosphor number on the panes as issued. The sheet stamps were printed from cylinders 1 and 47 (phosphor).

Special by Design prestige book The last of the trilogy of books celebrating Stamp Show 2000 to be held in London in May was printed by Walsall and issued on 15 February. Called *Special by Design*, it marks the immense contribution to British stamp design made by Jeffery Matthews and gives a designer's view of the factors involved. Matthews is an expert on heraldry and a consummate calligraphist. His work on the emblems for the country issues and the 'double head' stamps for the 150th anniversary of the Penny Black is well known. He also re-drew the numerals for all values and these were introduced gradually from March 1983. His other contributions to Machins include the horizontal format of the self-adhesives and the palette of colours used for all definitives since 1984. Examples of Matthews' work are included in the stamps and text of this most attractive book.

All the stamps in the book are new in one respect or another. For example, all of them are perforated 14 instead of the usual 15 × 14. The issue of the country and double head stamps as 1st class non value indicators are the first of their kind. The book contains a pane of 4 × 19p plus 2 × 38p. These stamps have a startling new feature. They are the normal size but the images are not, being about .5mm shorter all round. This applies to the whole design, not just the head.

New books issued in March The February *Bulletin* announced that the five 'standard' retail books with NVIs would be available from the Bureau from 14 March with a new telephone number for postcode enquiries. The stamp contents and perforations are unchanged. Panes of 4 × 1st flame are from cylinder w3, first seen in March 1998; panes of 4 × 2nd are from w4 and may also exist from w5 which was first reported last December; panes of 10 × 1st are the Millennium version and are from w1 (Walsall) and Q1 (Questa); panes of 10 × 2nd are from Q1. The Walsall numbers in the books of four are at row 1 of the pane, in the book of 10 they are at row 2; Questa numbers appear either at row 1 or row 2. Books with value stamps for overseas mail do not contain a telephone number for postcode enquiries.

Postman Pat This children's character will appear in person at Stamp Show 2000. A book of four 1st class Millennium NVIs printed by Walsall and featuring Pat with a Royal Mail van on a colourful label was issued on 21 March. The cylinder numbers are w1 for each of the six colours used for the stamps (brownish olive) and label (black, new blue, magenta, blue and greenish yellow) and for the phosphor bands. The numbers are set further into the pane margin than are those on the panes of 10. Unfolded panes are available from the Bureau. This service originated with the first commemorative label book issued in 1994 for the tercentenary of the Bank of England. In that case, the label was at the left and became creased when the covers were folded during bookmaking. Unfolded panes were issued by the Bureau to meet complaints from collectors and the service has continued for subsequent label panes even although the creasing problem was solved by printing the label at the right of the stamps.

For the first time, the front covers contain an indication of the special contents. Pat is pictured giving us a 4-digit wave. The text printed on the yellow tab reads: Postman Pat Label Inside, instead of just referring to a 'special' label. The book is likely to be a popular item at the Show ●

The Richard West column The vital role of the volunteers

AS THE SECONDS tick by to the time when the doors open at Earls Court on the Stamp Show 2000, perhaps it is time to think about just how a major world stamp exhibition comes into being.

There has to be, of course, a great deal of professional expertise, being provided on this occasion by Royal Mail among others. But such exhibitions would just not become reality were it not for the voluntary efforts put in by so many, equally acting professionally.

Consider for a while the competitive displays: the exhibits of stamps, postal history, thematics, and so on, from collectors scattered across the world. Each exhibitor has put in many hours of work in creating a display which it is hoped will appeal to the visiting public – and perhaps at the end of the exhibition achieve a reasonable award.

The entries from each country are brought together by the individual national commissioners, who need to keep in touch with collectors in their respective country, seeing that the requirements of the exhibition are met, and finally arranging for the material to come to London. For many of the commissioners this, of course, does mean a visit to London, but those who come personally must be on hand throughout the event to deal with any queries about their collections.

For the Stamp Show 2000 there is a Commissioner General, Keith Fitton, whose task is to co-ordinate the work of all national commissioners, of which there are over 50, to ensure all works smoothly. The Commissioner for the UK is Tony Brander, who has brought together a superb array of excellent material from a large number of British collectors.

Accurate records need to be kept at all stages, from the receipt of applications to exhibit at the Stamp Show 2000 to the final return of material to the owners. Much of the



Richard West, Editor at Large,
Stamp Magazine

task of recording all the information is being undertaken by Christine Earle. As at all London 'international' far more requests to exhibit were received than could be accommodated. A team spent many hours analysing applications to ensure a fair and balanced final selection.

Once entries reach the exhibition organisers, tight control is essential: the collections are the pride and joy of their owners and have great value,

not least in that they represent the culmination of years of research and endeavour. Pat Rothnie is in control of the handling of the exhibits.

A large team of volunteers will be needed to mount the exhibits in frames – and, of course, dismount them at the close of the exhibition. These volunteers need to work long hours both before and after the exhibition is open to the public. The team of over 150 volunteers involved in this, and many other tasks, is being co-ordinated by Major Richard Pratt.

As soon as the exhibits are mounted, and before the exhibition officially opens its doors, the team of judges will begin its work. The jury at the Stamp Show 2000 will comprise some 40 experts from around the world. True, their travel to and from London, and their accommodation in London is provided, but they need to work very hard to complete the task on time. With some 3500 frames of exhibits to judge, it will mean

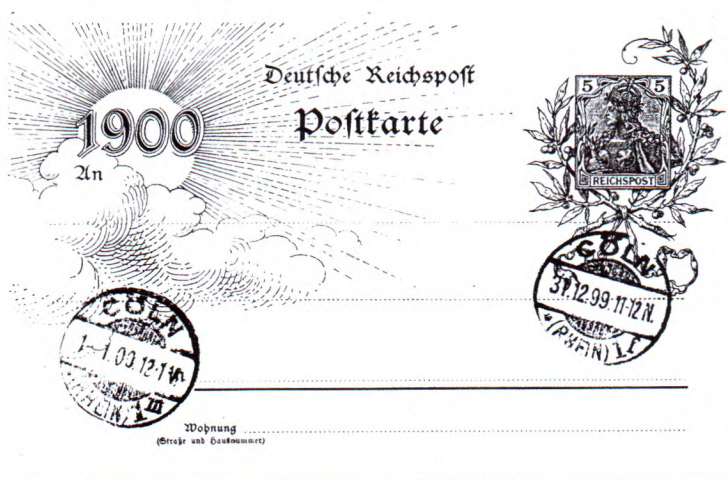
early starts and late finishes for at least the first four days. And their work does not end there: on the Saturday morning the Jury will be available to talk with exhibitors, while on Sunday they will be at the ceremony during which many of the awards will be presented.

So as you view the exhibits, spare a few moments to think that they are there because a vast team of collectors is providing time and talents free and willingly! ●



Keith Fitton, Commissioner
General, Stamp Show 2000

Postbag Letters to the Editor



New century cover This postcard from the 1900 Germania issue carries the double dates 31.12.99 11-12N and 1.1.00 12-1V. The card is stamped in COLN (Cologne, now spelled KÖLN). No address is shown.

New century cover In Cover Corner (February, p172), James Mackay talks about 'new century double dates' and asked for further information. I enclose a photocopy of another postcard of the German Imperial Postal Services, Germania issue, for 1900 (shown above). The card shows double dates: 31.12.99 11-12N and 1.1.00 12-1V. The card is stamped in COLN (Cologne), today's spelling: KÖLN. No address is shown. It was possible to have postal pieces being stamped and take them home, as long as the postal clerk had some sympathy with you! This was not against the rules. The two postmarks are different, showing identification numbers 1F and 1M which indicates that the person indeed went to the post office on the two different dates. I hope this adds a little bit to the story. GERO SCHMITZ-LE HANNE, FRPSL, KREFELD, GERMANY •

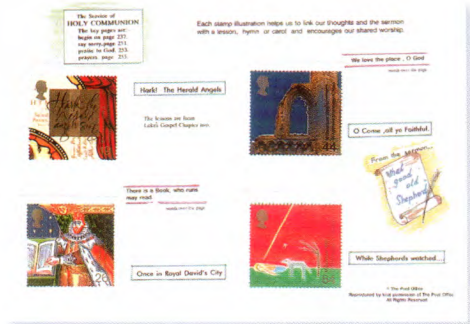
Purpose of stamps In contrast with many of your correspondents I am generally very pleased with the designs of the Millennium series of stamps. However, two features need to be highlighted because we seem to have forgotten two of the main purposes of stamps, ie the pre-payment of postal rates and the adoption of designs which deter fraud. Firstly, am I alone disgusted that

there has not been a single design at the European rate? If we are keen as a nation to show our philatelic designs to the world, why omit perhaps the most important economic part of it, viz Europe? I'm sure, with monthly instalments, that the 19/26/44/64p formula need not be sacrosanct. Last summer there was not even a pictorial world postcard rate stamp issued. Shame!

Secondly, I'm surprised at the preponderance of dark colours in the stamps, making cancellations seem almost invisible. When these 'invisible' and often illegible postmarks are combined with the dark blues and blacks of recent issues, one wonders what the level of fraudulent re-use is.

Thanks for a great magazine. FELIX ORMEROD, SURBITON •

Queen Elizabeth Avenue Your reviewer of a FDC catalogue (February *Bulletin*) asks about the location of the Queen Elizabeth Avenue Post Office. It is in Walsall, West Midlands. I have the cds on FDCs of the 1977 Silver Jubilee and 1997 Golden Wedding issues. This cds is to be found on page 43 of Bradbury's *Collecting British First Day Covers 2000* where Walsall is mentioned, also see page 90 of the Booth FDC catalogue. F ALDRIDGE, BARNSTAPLE •



Christians' Tale With the kind permission of the Post Office, the Christians' Tale set was reproduced on a service sheet for the Christmas Eve service of Holy Communion at the remote but well attended church at Hubberholme, in the Yorkshire Dales. They were used both to illustrate and set the theme for the worship, and sermon along with parts of the Book of Common Prayer traditionally used. The church is famous for its Elizabeth 1 rood loft and is visited each year by hundreds of fell walkers and tourists. I, a retired priest, assist the incumbent in this group of parishes. In designing and conducting the service I found the stamps a wonderful opportunity for a guide to the Christian Faith and its heritage.

There was in the stamp designs, a hymn of faith, a book of its origins and a reminder of beloved places of worship with, not least, the joy of the Christmas message depicted with skill and simplicity. The congregation, some philatelists and others were delighted to take much more notice of the Millennium stamps. They took away the service sheet as a souvenir of the last service of the century and well appreciated their active worship link with the Christian Tale and the Royal Mail Millennium Stamp series. REV DONALD WILLIAMS, SKIPTON ●

Millennium Mr Warne (January Postbag) is quite right to indicate that a baby is 0 years old until it achieves 1 year. The only problem is that it is not the way we have calculated the calendar. Just as there isn't a 0 of March, but the first day of March is 1, so the measurement of our centuries started with the first year being designated as 1 AD, with obvious arithmetical implications. For hundreds of years, the new century has always been celebrated on 1 January in 1701, 1801 etc. The celebration of the Millennium earlier this year was therefore mathematically inaccurate and quite out of keeping with the traditional observance of these matters. PHILIP CIRCUS, KINGSWOOD, SURREY ●

Posting boxes 193

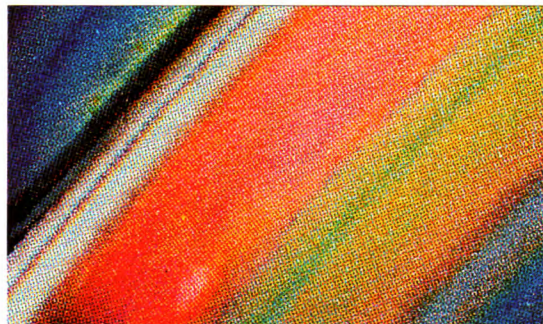
READER C John Pearse of Cambridge submits this month's photographs of letter boxes in the Republic of Ireland.

The Edward VII wall box is in the wall of a large house at Doctors Cross, New Ross, and the Victorian pillar box is in Wexford city centre. Both boxes are painted in the green livery of An Post, the Irish Post Office. Other British post boxes in the Republic of Ireland were featured here in December 1998.

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



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



January identify The detail is from the Millennium definitive. The winner was D Hamilton, Hampshire.

January knowledge Answers: 1) Perkins, Bacon & Petch; 2) Edinburgh; 3) David Hockney. The winner was K Somerfield, Birmingham.

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

1 What is the colour of the Millennium 1st class NVI stamp?

2 When did a postbus feature on a British stamp?

3 Who designed the 20p Patients' Tale stamp honouring Edward Jenner?

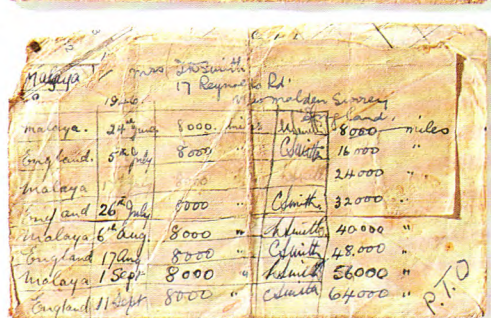
Send your answer (addressed to either the April *Identify* Competition or the April *Knowledge* Competition), name and address on a postcard or back of a sealed envelope to: British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 2-14 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8HQ.

The senders of the first cards drawn in each competition on 19 May will each receive £100. Ten runner-up prizes will also be awarded in each competition.

The competitions are not open to Royal Mail employees •

Cover corner

AN INTERESTING AND UNUSUAL cover was submitted by N T Smith of Hertfordshire. Found amongst his late father's papers, the cover was 'relayed' by them in correspondence between the Far East and England in the 1940s. 'In all', writes Mr Smith, 'it travelled approximately 152,000 miles until I was repatriated home for demob early 1947'. The envelope made no fewer than 19 journeys between Malaya and England from June 1946 to February 1947, each of 8000 miles. The date of each message is recorded on the inside and back of the envelope. The envelope was originally addressed to Mr C Smith in New Malden Surrey and posted with an Edinburgh meter mark of May 1946. An economy label was then affixed and addressed to his son. The George VI 2½d Victory stamp was cancelled with a New Malden machine postmark of 15 June 1946 •



Special draw Win a first day cover signed by David Bellamy



WELL-KNOWN ECOLOGIST and TV personality Dr David Bellamy launched the Fire and Light stamps at Dynamic Earth in Edinburgh on 1 February. Dr Bellamy kindly signed a number of covers which were then postmarked with a pictorial Dynamic Earth handstamp.



To win one of these covers send your name and address on a postcard or back of a sealed envelope to: Bellamy FDC, British Philatelic Bulletin, Royal Mail, 2-14 Bunhill Row, London EC1Y 8HQ by 28 April. The senders of the first six cards drawn will each receive a signed FDC ●

Events

6 April Rowland Hill Awards Ceremony, Banqueting House, Whitehall Palace, London SW1. Admission by invitation only

8 April North of Ireland Phil Soc Annual Exhibition and Fair at St Nicholas' Church Hall, Cadogan Park, Lisburn Road, Belfast, 10.00-16.30. Dealers in stamps, postal history, postcards and accessories. Admission free. **Enquiries** N Scott, 028 90 795530

8 April Maidstone & Mid Kent Phil Soc Stamp Fair at the Grove Green Community Centre, Maidstone, 10.00-16.00. Close to Junction 7, M20. **Enquiries** B Stonestreet, 01622 675784

8 April North-East of England Phil Assoc 51st Annual Convention at Greencroft Comprehensive School, Annfield Plain, Stanley, Co Durham, 10.00-16.30. Free admission. Display on Zeppelin mail, dealers, NEPA competition. **Enquiries** H Roche, 01207 570003

15 April Ashford (Kent) PS Stamp & Postcard Fair at Norton Knatchbull Grammar School, Hythe Road, Ashford, 10.00-16.30. **Enquiries** D H Todd, 01233 639927

15 April Annual Convention of Federation of South Wales Phil Socs, Princess Royal Theatre, Port Talbot, 10.00-16.30. Admission 50p. 16 dealers; competition; society display; Kids Korner; refreshments; limited free parking; souvenir postcard. **Enquiries** G N Prior, 20 Heol y Sheet, North Cornelly, Bridgend CF33 4EY

15 April Sussex Federation Convention hosted by Burgess Hill PS marking its 50th anniversary

15 April Camberley & District Stamp Club public auction of stamps, postal history, part-collections, albums, kiloware, etc at Morgan Centre, High Streey, Crowthorne. 600 lots, on view from 11.30. Auction stars 14.00. Catalogues price 30p from: Dr J F Pugh, 14 Hillsborough Park, Camberley GU15 1HG

17 April-7 May STAMP Lincs 2000 at Museum of Lincolnshire Life, Burton Road, Lincoln

29 April StampEssex 2000, Spring Lodge, Witham

6 May Thatcham & District PS Millennium Stamp Fair at Newbury College, Oxford Road, Newbury, 10.00-17.00. Stamps, postal history etc. **Enquiries** Graeme Stewart 01635 866942 ●

Late news

Stamp Show tickets A wallet comprising a ticket for the opening day and all subsequent days will be available from mid-April, price £10. The wallet includes the Millennium Timekeepers miniature sheet with Stamp Show 2000 overprint in the top margin •

Orders Stamp Show 2000, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TX, or phone 0845 720 2000.

SG auction Britain's rarest stamp Stanley Gibbons is delighted to have been chosen to auction what is probably the only known unused example (in private hands) of Britain's rarest normal postage stamp – the Edward VII 6d overprinted 'I.R./OFFICIAL'. Apart from a near complete sheet in Post Office Heritage, only 14 examples are known to exist – three are in the Royal Collection and four in the National Museum of Ireland. This unused example was auctioned by Harmer, Rooke in 1964 for £3200 and by SG in 1972 for £10,000. It will be in SG's 'Rarities of the World' sale just before Stamp Show 2000 •

Enquiries David Crocker or Colin Avery, Stanley Gibbons Auctions, 399 Strand, London WC2R 0LX.

Social Philately at Glasgow 2000 This major national exhibition will be the first in the UK to include Social Philately as a full fledged competition class. Some 24 entries totalling almost 100 frames have been entered. They range from studies of postal orders and the Post Office Savings Bank to mail by motorbike and masonic connections. Promoting this class at the Stamp Show 2000 will be Pat Scott of Cavendish Auctions, who won the gold medal at Australia 99 in Melbourne. Pat will be conducting a workshop on this subject on 25 May (14.30-16.30). Anyone interested in this subject should take the opportunity to spend some time at this seminar. Social Philately is in its infancy, but unquestionably it will develop into a major collecting and exhibiting class in the future. This is a great opportunity to hear all about it •

Glasgow 2000 Publicity Officer, James Mackay, 67 Braidpark Drive, Giffnock, Glasgow G46 6LY. Telephone 0141 633 2564

Excellent displays at Spring Stampex The exhibition organisers, the Spanish Study Circle and the Ship Stamp Society are to be congratulated on the fine displays on show at the Business Design Centre in early March. The Spanish displays, to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the first Spanish stamp, covered stamps from 1850 to recent times, colonial issues, postal history, postcards, postmarks, meters, 'frama' stamps, etc. etc. The Court of Honour featured material from the Manzanares Collection of the first Spanish stamp (the first time parts of the collection had been exhibited outside Spain) and early Spanish stamps from the Tapling Collection in the British Library. This includes the 1851 2 reales stamp printed in error in the colour of the 6 reales stamp, ie blue instead of red. Only three examples of the error are known.

The 'Ships 2000' exhibition lived up to the earlier Birds and Railways exhibitions of 1998 and 1999. There were two invited displays – Transatlantic Mails (Jane & Michael Moubray) and Air-Sea Mails across the North and South Atlantic Oceans 1926-39 (Frank Jones) and some 48 competitive entries on everything from ship marks and postal history to modern thematic issues. Anyone interested in ships, shipping and navigators would have found something engaging •

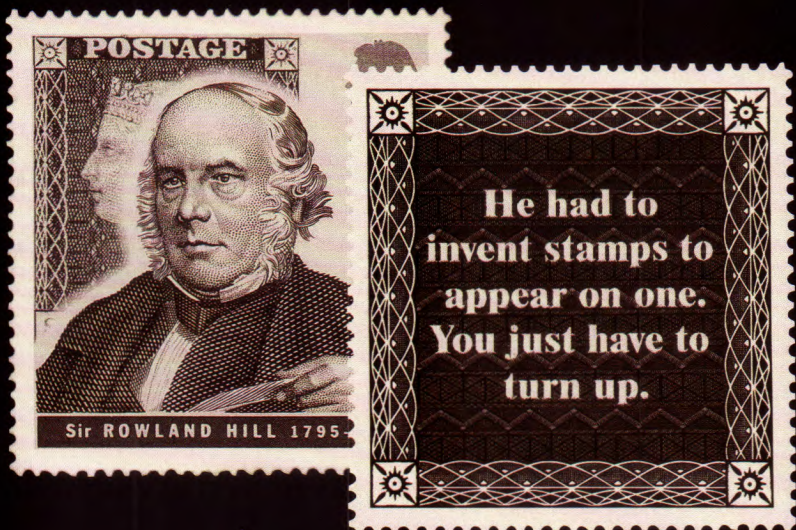
The Ship Stamp Society Philip Cant, 51 Ketelbey Rise, Basingstoke RG22 4PE

The Spanish Study Group Mrs J F Richardson, 16 Fairfield Avenue, Luton LU2 7ER

Autumn Stampex, including the National Competitions, will be held at the Business Design Centre, Upper Street, London N1, 20-24 September. Enquiries: 020 7490 1005 •

People Michael Colvin MP, who died in a fire at his home on 24 February, served on Royal Mail's Stamp Advisory Committee, 1980-83 •

Definitive withdrawal The 6p and 30p definitives will now be withdrawn from sale at the Bureau on 29 May, not 29 February as originally intended •



You won't have to go to the effort Rowland Hill did for your philatelic debut. Simply come to The Stamp Show 2000 in Earls Court, London, May 22-28 and strike a pose for a personalised Smilers Stamp.

Plenty of other rarities will be on display as well. Including a privileged viewing of items from Her Majesty The Queen's Private Collection, many on public display for the first time.

Browse our Definitive Exhibition and you'll find every stamp we've produced since Mr Hill's Penny Black. You'll also get to view some exceptional modern stamps from around the globe, kindly on loan from the British Library.

The eagerly anticipated results of the FIP international stamp competition are also expected to be quite breathtaking.

Come along and make or create your own discoveries at the biggest stamp show in a decade.

By reserving a first day ticket for £10 now, you'll receive a complimentary Millennium Timekeeper miniature sheet and free entry on the remaining days. If you just want to come on days 2-7, pre-registering also allows you to get in for free, otherwise you'll pay £5 per day. To take advantage of this offer write to

The Stamp Show 2000 ticket desk, 20 Brandon Street, Edinburgh EH3 5TX, phone us on 0845 072 2000, or visit www.thestampshow2000.co.uk



Get into stamps

